
JOHN GARDNER TSCA NEWS NOTES

The Latest from Around our Chapter

This is the latest in a string of semi-weekly “Notes” designed to keep us connected, up to date and perhaps even provide some items of interest or paths to pursue as we sequester. Spring shows her face every day or so which turns our thoughts towards getting ready for the water. That’s a good thing. In the meantime, please feel free to share what attracts your interest, which activities engage you and where we can find the links to pursue them. Send them to smallcrafter@gmail.com. Just like the NY Times, whatever news fits, we print.

Until May 20 we remain under Connecticut’s “Stay Safe, Stay at Home” Executive Order. The Governor has set criteria to re-open after May 20 which include various parameters including hospitalizations, outbreaks, testing, tracing and protection of vulnerable populations. Guidelines for the first reopening phase include opening outdoor dining and outdoor museums. Mystic Seaport plans to reopen their outside facilities May 23rd. Our John Gardner Small Craft Workshop is considered to be an outside activity so it remains on the Seaport calendar. Updated information is available at <https://www.mysticseaport.org/event/small-craft-workshop/> including the latest Letter to Participants and Registration form. We remain optimistic that our Chapter’s signature outreach event will occur.

Now to Remind Us of what Blue Water Looks Like:

This just in from Member Jim Friedlander down Florida way:

“Thanks Bill for keeping us all reminded that there is something besides the corona virus. We’ve been using our Rhodes 19 a lot. It’s the perfect way to sequester. We have a group of sailing friends here who like to do overnights in their small boats and have been envious. The Rhodes doesn’t have any facilities for sleeping but we have decided to see if we can squeeze our old bones forward of the centerboard and spend a night at Cayo Costa. The camping facilities are closed but you are allowed to anchor in Pelican Bay. I’ll send a report if we survive. In the meantime, here are a couple photos of us sailing north of Pine Island.



A week later Jim sent us a photo of he and Kathy camp-cruising in company:



“Here we are at anchor at Mondongo Rocks near Patrico Island, our first overnight on the boat. It was cozy but the wonderful weather, near full moon, warm water, and good friends made us want to do it again. The cat ketch is a Presto 30 owned by Phil and Carol Garland. We rafted for dinner and then anchored for the night. This summer I'll make a canopy to give us some shade and get a swim ladder. It is getting a bit tough to haul ourselves out. Cruising in a Rhodes 19 may not be for everyone but we like it. Jim”

Biking to Hiking Trails

Member Andy Hoets sent us a nice note about our article on hiking Knox Preserve:

“I ride my little folding bike there all the time to do little bird watching. I was there just this morning.” and followed it up with “The other day there were Glossy Ibis and this morning Snowy Egrets” And in reply to my query of favorite places, he was good enough to share:

“My standard bicycle-birding trips are a follows;

Knox Preserve

Barn Island WMA

Beebe Pond Park

Bluff Point State Park

Haley Farm State Park

Harkness Memorial State Park

Avery Farm Nature Preserve

Pequot Woods Park which is next to the house”

“Some of these get closed because of too many people. I submit my sightings to Cornell Lab's eBird. I also prefer walking the trails than riding. This way I can see more wildlife than scaring them.” And his favorite? “Barn Island for the variety of habitats.” Thank you, Andy.

And this from Syma Ebbin, who we featured in a photo in the last “News”, of she, her husband and son cleaning up trash along Thomas Road in the Birch Plain Creek watershed:

“Thanks for the shout out! Happy Earth Day!” and later, “We actually went out to Pine Island last Saturday and picked up trash. We found a few lobster traps and lots of nylon monofilament! Love (Ralph Szur's photo of) the ramps (wild leeks). We have been foraging and eating them for the past few weeks. They are wonderful, sauteed with eggs or in a primavera pasta. Syma”

To further encourage us to get out of our armchairs and social distance on the trails, check out Beth Sullivan's twice monthly blog on the Avalonia Land Conservancy's web page or at <http://avaloniaetrails.blogspot.com>. Beth takes us on outings from the woods to the shore. Words by Beth; photos by Beth & Rick Newton. The latest: The Birds are Back! Osprey at Pafford Marsh (just north of where 1A again meets Rt 1 in Stonington), Bluebirds at Knox Preserve and Trout Lilies along a wooded path near you. I wish I could rattle off the names of birds and plants like she does. Beth was a leader on the rehabilitation of Dodge Paddock/Beal Preserve as they beat back the phragmites and re-opened the marsh to salt water.



And to continue our Sailing/Hiking theme, here are a couple of grandkids out for a hike with a pair of schooners they built with the assistance of George and Marla Surgent at last year's Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival in St. Michaels, MD. The "stream" they are navigating is a tributary of the Susquehanna at the Susquehanna River State Park.

Check out the Surgent's website at www.seaworthysmallships.com for a whole collection of kits from the sharpies in the photo to flatiron skiffs, log canoes and paddle boats. Great entertainment for young folks at the shore this summer. Plans are available, All use commonly available materials found at your local hobby or building supply store. None require glue. Sails are made from the newly available plastic bags.

And for a Small Screen Near You

Visit Mystic Seaport Museum's Digital Museum at <https://stories.mysticseaport.org> to see the latest videos. Sarah Clement, Museum Rigger, gives you a tour of the Rigging Loft, then teaches us knots. Have a spare length of line handy when you watch. Tour behind the scenes with Ken Wilson, Facilities Director, to learn interesting facts about the buildings, energy systems and future plans for the Museum. Join Walt Ansel, Senior Shipwright, as he walks you through the steps and techniques for building a half model. And my favorite, the Planking Demo with Seaport Shipwright Tom Daniels. Follow along as he picks off the bevels for a recently spiled plank. Or, what I really need to learn, watch Museum shipwright Chris Sanders to describe the fundamentals of sharpening different hand tools. This week it is knives. Armchair shop work.

For those who still Read Books

Member John Gearing shares this with us:

"In New York State we are under restrictions very similar to those in place in the Nutmeg State. In particular, our libraries are closed, which is a hardship for folks who now have time to read, but are running scant on materials with which to do so! I recently discovered that

archive.org, a group dedicated to building a massive online digital library, has figuratively "opened its doors" to the public during the corona crisis. I had previously used this website to find obscure texts from the late 1700's to support some research I was doing for a book on Schenectady, NY history between 1760 and 1800. I have been pleasantly surprised to learn that modern books are also available, not least among them books relating to boats and boatbuilding. When I did an "advanced search" on the word boatbuilding I found everything from Chappelle to Oughtred...available to borrow for 14 days. You can have up to ten books on loan at any one time. I'm currently reading L. F. Herresmhoff's "Sensible Cruising Designs" from the site, alongside Tony Bailey's "The Coast of Summer." There is no charge, though you do need to register. And for pure escapism, there is John D. MacDonald's Travis McGee series if, like me, you missed them the first time around. The site: www.archive.org. Cheers! John Gearing"

Thanks, John; I still remember those memorable first sentences in J. D. MacDonald's books like "We were sitting in a boat under the 17th Street Causeway when a body was pitched off the bridge and landed in our boat." Gets your attention right away.....

And if your Boats are on the Smaller Side

Mystic Seaport Ship Modelers have been busy even though they have not been able to meet: Justin Maguire's Schooner dousing sail on the left is at HO scale (1=87.5) on his home layout. Jeffrey Walshe's Skipjack 48 is just out for its first voyage on his fire pond.



If interested in joining or at least following this group, fire off an email to Bob Andrie at smallyachtsailor@gmail.com.

That's it for this issue. Keep those cards and letters comin' folks. Share with us what you are up to as you are confined to quarters. Just keep your car battery charged; don't sit down at Dog Watch listening to the radio waiting for Mother's Day dinner to be brought out only to find out the Jeep won't start...Karen had to come give me a jump start so we could make it home for dinner....Be Well. Be Safe. Think Summer. Bill & Karen