



# ~ ~ ~ The Mooring Buoy ~ ~ ~

Volume 2, No 12, December 2012

## From the Commodore

Winter is on it's way. Carey and I hope everyone had a fantastic Thanksgiving holiday. It is our favorite holiday ... good food, family, and friends ... and you don't have to buy a present. Just eat and watch football!!!

This newsletter passes along a Christmas puzzle ... just something different at the holiday period ... and provides you a serious article on winterizing your boat, in addition to the normal topics.

We happily report that 60 people have decided to renew their membership as of today and we have a vibrant and healthy club. Thanks to those that decided to stay around and enjoy the fun and camaraderie.

## New Members

We want to welcome Phil and Patti Rogers who have joined our group. They live in Dumfries, VA and keep their boat, a 35' powerboat, at Coles Point Marina. Phil is on the Board of PRYCA next year. Those that plan to attend the PRYCA Change of Watch in January will see him there. Phil will be inducted into the PRYCA Bridge as Fleet Captain. Welcome aboard Phil and Patti.

## Events

**WYA Change of Watch, Nov 10.** A beautiful Change of Watch is now in the history books. Go to our web site, [www.wya-va.com](http://www.wya-va.com) to see pictures and details of the events. We thank MJ, Carey, and Katherine for decorating and all of you for attending and sharing the event.



### 2013 Bridge

Commodore – Phil Bolin  
Vice Commodore – Chris Smith  
Rear Commodore – Carey Bolin  
Secretary – Mary Jane Smith  
Treasurer – George Cajigal  
Immediate Past Commodore – Diane Burton

### Contact WYA

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***A Holiday Puzzle***

Below are two pictures. Look carefully and circle the 10 differences in the pictures. The answer is on the next page. Don't go to the next page until you find all 10 differences ... unless you want to read all about winterizing your boat and just can't wait. Printing this page also works ok if you use normal print mode.

Before



After





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Here is the answer to the puzzle. Circles in picture below show the 10 differences. You might have to look hard but the circles are there.

Answer Key



### *Preview of Upcoming Events*

2013 Plan Fest will be held Saturday Dec 1 at The Lighthouse in Colonial Beach at 11 am. We will meet in the upstairs “Captain’s Lounge” and plan our 2013 year. After that, we will adjourn to the restaurant for a Dutch treat lunch.

After the lunch those that have signed up will help decorate Bill Bowman’s 68’ Burger. For those who signed up but with a tight schedule though you must be aboard by 4:30 pm as we will proceed at 5 pm to the Potomac for the Lighted Boat Parade. Separate instructions have been provided to those signed up for the boat parade event.

### *Trivia*

Here are pictures from our past. Always fun! Part of the Change of Watch group at breakfast Sunday morning after the 2012 COW and a beautiful picture of the Cherry Blossoms in Wash DC at last year’s Cherry Blossom festival.





### ***Birthdays***

Let's all give best birthday wishes to Kathy Dow on Dec 4 and Sue Ritter on Dec 18.

### ***Anniversaries***

And let's give hearty congratulations to the following couples celebrating an anniversary: Gary and Pat Ralston on Dec 5, Chris and MJ Smith on Dec 19, Tim and Pat Fields and Ross Jebson and Kathy Dow both on Dec 20.

### ***AND HERE IS a serious article from Seaworthy Magazine: Who Needs to Winterize?***

This link gives you the article copied below PLUS extra links to more information. You can just read it here or go to the link for additional good info.

<http://www.boatus.com/seaworthy/winter/>.

Of all 50 states, which would you guess had the most freeze-related claims? New York? Maine? Michigan? Guess again. An examination of the BoatUS Marine Insurance claim files found that balmy California had more winterizing claims than any other state, including any of the "deep freeze" states.

While winters may be much colder in the deep-freeze states, the bitter temperatures are a fact of life and preparations for winter are taken very seriously. But in the more temperate states, like California, Florida, Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, and Georgia, winter tends to be relatively comfortable in most areas with only an occasional cold spell. And if the forecasts aren't taken seriously, they can do a lot of damage.

### ***Storage Ashore***

In some parts of the country, where winter means several months of bitterly cold weather, storing boats ashore is the norm. In warmer climates, however, ice and snow may occur infrequently, and the choice between storage ashore and storage in the water is open to discussion.

Storage in the water means you might get a jump on the boating season next spring. On the other hand, boats stored ashore (on high ground) won't sink. If you have a choice, storage ashore is a safer bet. Storage ashore may also be less expensive over the life of a boat, since a hull surrounded by air for several months each winter is less likely to develop blisters than a hull that remains in the water. These blisters, the fiberglass equivalent of rot, occur on many boats when water soaks into the laminate below the waterline.



One note of caution: The vast majority of the claims in temperate states involved boats that were being stored ashore. Since water retains heat longer than air, boats surrounded by air are more vulnerable to a sudden freeze than boats surrounded by water. Even a brief cold spell that lasts only a night or two can do considerable damage. In temperate states, boat owners must winterize engines and freshwater systems, especially when boats are stored ashore. In deep freeze states, boats stored ashore must be winterized earlier than boats stored in the water.

### **Storage in the Water**

If the boat must be left in the water, the thru-hulls have to be protected by closing all seacocks and gate valves. Leaving a thru-hull unprotected over the winter is like going on an extended vacation and leaving your home's front door open. Failure to close thru-hulls is a major cause of loss in the BoatUS insurance program. In a recent study of 40 winter-related claims, seacocks or gate valves left open caused or contributed to the sinking of seven of the boats in the sample group. It should be noted that raising and refurbishing a boat that sinks, even at a dock, is a daunting job that can keep the boat in the repair yard for many weeks over the spring and summer. Whenever a boat is stored in the water over the winter, all thru-hulls, with the exception of the ones for cockpit drains, must be closed or it could be on the bottom next spring. And all thru-hulls, especially the ones for the cockpit drains, must be double-clamped with stainless steel hose clamps at each end. This is critical. When water freezes it expands and will lift a poorly secured hose off of a fitting. The hose itself is also important. Lightweight hose and PVC tubing can rupture or crack. Use only a heavily reinforced hose, especially at cockpit drains.

If your boat has thru-hulls below the waterline that can't be closed, either because they are mechanically frozen open or have broken (typical with gate valves, which is why they are not recommended), it should be stored ashore for the winter.

Seacocks are closed by moving the handle down so that the handle is parallel to the hull. Gate valves are closed by turning the wheel clockwise. After the seacock or gate valve has been closed, remove the hose so that it drains and then use an absorbent cloth or turkey baster to eliminate any residual water, which can freeze and crack the nipple. (Taking off the hose also assures you that the valve has closed properly.) Reinstall the hose immediately and secure the two clamps.

It should be noted that thru-hulls above the waterline are not required to have seacocks and most don't. That doesn't mean that these thru-hulls aren't vulnerable. Ordinary plastic thru-hulls deteriorate in sunlight and have been broken when they were shoved underwater by the weight of snow and ice in the cockpit, which then sinks the boat. Plastic thru-hulls near the waterline are especially vulnerable and should be replaced with bronze or Marelon (the latter is the only type of plastic approved for marine use by U.L.).

### **Winterizing Contracts**



"I Thought the Yard Would Take Care of That!"

A casual agreement to take care of the boat, or worse, an assumption that a marina or boatyard automatically protects boats from an unexpected freeze can have chilling results:

Claim #920726. The skipper was seriously ill, so he called the boatyard and casually asked if they could winterize his houseboat. No problem! The boat was hauled and blocked. The engine's cooling system was drained and non-toxic anti-freeze flushed throughout the freshwater system. Unfortunately, an expensive winter cover that had been stored below was left untouched in a locker and the boat was left to endure the harsh Minnesota winter au natural.

### **Winterizing Engines**

Engines don't like to be idle, even for three or four months over the winter. BoatUS Marine Insurance claim files contain many stories of engines that froze and failed after skippers failed to winterize their engine properly. Generally, engine blocks that freeze and crack are not covered by a boat's insurance policy.

But even if the engine makes it through the winter, a half-hearted winterizing effort will come back to haunt you as the engine gets older and wears out prematurely. Unless it is winterized properly, moisture, acids and corrosion will continue unabated. Winterizing the engine is one job that is truly critical; follow the steps in the links at the web site cited at the beginning of this article.

### **Down Below**

Most marinas are like floating ghost towns over the winter, with little to deter prowlers. Electronics and other valuables that can be dismantled should be taken home for safekeeping. If you have an EPIRB, make sure it won't be activated accidentally.

Besides electronics, all flammables--spare cooking fuels, charcoal, paints, thinners, and varnish--should be stored ashore, preferably in a tool shed away from the house. All are fire hazards. Portable propane canisters should never be stored below on a boat, even during the season, as the canisters can rust and leak. Leave at least one fully charged fire extinguisher in clear sight.

Take home all food stuffs, including canned and bottled goods. Bunk cushions should be propped up, or better yet, taken home. Open various locker doors, hatches, ice box lids, etc., to circulate air and inhibit mildew. Metal zippers on cushions will benefit from a few squirts of a light lubricating oil.



## **On Deck**

If your boat could talk, it would ask--perhaps plead--for a winter storage cover. Winter covers, typically canvas or synthetic, are a terrific benefit to your boat's gelcoat and general well-being. Canvas covers tend to last longer but are also more expensive than their synthetic counterparts.

With any cover, a frame, either wood or aluminum, should be used to circulate air and prevent pooling on the cover. Merely draping an old tarp over a cabin may do more harm than good.

Shrink wrapping, a technique borrowed from grocery and department store packagers, is being used by some boatyards to keep boats dry over the winter. With shrink wrapping, heat is applied to a thin plastic so fits snugly over a plastic frame. At the end of the season the entire cover, including the frame, is disposed of. While shrink wrapping is very effective at keeping moisture out, it will also trap moisture inside and create horrendous mildew problems if vents aren't used along the entire length of the cover. Another problem: Cabins and decks painted with two-part polyurethane paints may peel or bubble. Vents should be used along the entire length of the cover. Inserting a series of foam pads between the hull and cover also allows condensation to escape.

There is more information at the link ... there are additional links to great info ...  
<http://www.boatus.com/seaworthy/winter/>

## ***Sign Off***

Signing off for another month. Send in articles if you want. We also take classified ads. Want to tell a sea story ... give it to me and I'll publish.