

**Volunteer Orientation**  
**Thursday, March 25, 2010**  
**Speaker's Notes**

**I. Welcome**

a. Information Forms

- Fill out the forms completely and legibly and turn them in before you leave. Returning volunteers might also wish to update their information.
- Email address is important—this is our primary way of contacting you. Be sure you keep it up to date with us.
- Check all of your volunteer interests. If there is anything not on there, feel free to add any notes on the back.
- Those interested in sail crew be sure to fill out the bottom part with your availability for training days.
- Please let us know if you have any physical limitations that we need to be aware of. Hearing. Going out on the bowsprit. It may not keep you from being a crew member, but may require adjustments in how we work with you.
- Sailing experience—none is necessary and, in some respects, none is preferred, as we need to know whether you might have any habits that need to be broken. Sailing a skipjack is not necessarily like sailing other boats. We have our own way of doing things and it is important for safety reasons that everyone learns how to do things the same way.

b. Session Outline

- Introductions
- Organization description
- Will go over non-crew volunteer opportunities first, as most are here to volunteer for crew. Others can leave if they want when we get to the crew activities.
- Questions: Feel free to ask, but don't be offended if I put your question off if it is something I will be covering later.

## II. Introductions

### a. Organization Description

- Introduce board members, current volunteers
- Invite new people to introduce themselves
- Nonprofit organization founded in 1992.
- Volunteers built the Nathan, which was launched in 1994. Still operated and maintained by volunteers, with some paid captain help.
- Skipjack is not a replica. Last skipjack built to be a dredge boat. Mission changed from dredging to tourism and education, helping to preserve the area's maritime heritage.
- Season: late April to early November, with training beginning early April.
- Two-hour Public Sails each Saturday we are in port and not otherwise committed from May 1 to October 31. Two one-hour sails one Sunday each month.
- Charters for any occasion. Skipjack committee members can charter the boat at a reduced rate.
- We act as an ambassador for Cambridge and Dorchester County, sailing to ports throughout the Bay.
- Special events: Memorial Day free sails, July 4 free sails & boat parade, Deal Island Skipjack Race, Baltimore Defenders Day, Cambridge Skipjack Race, Dorchester Showcase free sails, Patuxent River Appreciation Days
- Small organization. Need everyone to participate not just on the boat but in the organization, too. A lot of work is being done by a few people. We need new ideas. Bear with us if we struggle letting go of tasks sometimes.

### b. Meetings

- Monthly board meetings. First Thursday of each month. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.
- Annual meeting in November where board members are elected.
- Generally have a holiday party in December.

### c. Newsletter

- E-newsletter sent out periodically (often weekly in season) with links to our website and all important documents, notices of activities and meetings, and crew and training schedules.
- Please keep your email address up to date with us. Put [ccmiller@goeaston.net](mailto:ccmiller@goeaston.net) and [newsletter@skipjack-nathan.org](mailto:newsletter@skipjack-nathan.org) on your approved sender list.

### III. Administrative Volunteer Opportunities

- a. Schedulers, reservations, dockside help
  - Current most critical need is for help with reservations, scheduling and dockside check-in. Dana McGrath had been doing this on her own and got help last year from Linda Timbrell and Judy Myers. Judy cannot continue this year, so we need two or three other volunteers to coordinate with them.
  - We do not have a full time administrative person. If we can get several people all to work together, perhaps taking on different segments of the job, it would make it easier for everyone, but they all would need to work together. Email, answering machine, dockside check-in.
  - We also could use someone who could come in and figure out a better system for handling all of this.
  - If you are interested in helping us out, please contact Dana at [info@skipjack-nathan.org](mailto:info@skipjack-nathan.org) or 410-822-9152.
  - Shore help during free sails and special events
- b. Marketing, public relations, photography
  - Help distributing rack cards and brochures
  - People to serve on a marketing committee and advise how best to promote the boat\
  - Attend Museums & Attractions meetings to coordinate with tourism activities
  - More people to take photos to use in promotional pieces
- c. Website creation and maintenance
  - In process of changing website hosts
  - Need full reworking of website
  - Anyone who has qualified experience in creating websites contact Cyndy
- d. Friends list creation and maintenance
  - Need to build base of friends
  - To help promote the boat, charters, public sails
  - Resource on which to call for fundraising
- e. Fundraising
  - Make better use of our nonprofit status by applying for grants
  - Special events to raise funds for projects or ongoing expenses
- f. Special events planning and coordination
  - Friendraising & fundraising events
  - Volunteer recognition events
  - Coordination with community activities

#### **IV. Maintenance Volunteer Opportunities**

- a. Skills needed for ongoing maintenance
  - Constant work on engine maintenance, line repairs, fueling, generally keeping track of the state of the boat, replacing hoops, electrical work
- b. Boat rigging and downrigging
  - Pre-season rigging: getting the pushboat back on and operational, putting the sails back on, reinstalling trailboards and any equipment that was removed for the off season, getting the life vest boxes back on, moving the chain to trim the boat
  - Post-season downrigging: removing pushboat, removing sails and taking them for cleaning if needed, removing life vest boxes, trailboards, other equipment, moving chain to trim boat.
- c. In-season maintenance weeks
  - In the water: June 21-30. Sanding, painting deck and cabins
  - Out of the water: July 19-29. Scraping, sanding, painting hull; any repairs that need to be done out of the water; Coast Guard hull inspection
- d. Off-season maintenance
  - Recondition blocks, replace lines, repaint davits and other items that can be done off season
  - Winterize the engines and other systems
  - Shovel snow off the boat
  - Help check on the boat regularly
- e. Christmas lights
  - Arrange for fire department assistance
  - Test lights and help get them installed and removed at proper times

## V. Docent Crew Volunteers

### a. New position

- Created in response to people wanting someone on board dedicated to talking to the passengers

### b. Contacts

- i. Training: Bud Marseilles – [iacpl16@comcast.net](mailto:iacpl16@comcast.net), 410-673-1025
- ii. Scheduling Sails: Cyndy Miller – [ccmiller@goeaston.net](mailto:ccmiller@goeaston.net), 410-770-9410

### c. Training

- Need to be able to answer questions from the various types of passengers we have on the boat—public sail general information, school groups, charters
- Focus on how skipjacks work, what they do, history of the Nathan, local maritime heritage as it relates to skipjacks, ecology of the Bay as it relates to skipjacks

### d. Status vis-à-vis sail crew

- i. Docent crew member who is not trained as sail crew is considered a passenger
- ii. Sail crew member who is also trained as a docent:
  1. If there is a full crew contingent in addition to docent, docent is passenger and should not be helping as sail crew unless there is an emergency.
  2. If docent crew is also serving as sail crew, primary responsibility is to the boat. Docent responsibilities are secondary.

## **VI. Sail Crew Volunteers**

### **a. Safety First**

- While we want our volunteers to have a good time and enjoy the experience, we are a commercial passenger vessel and safety is our number one priority.

### **b. Physical fitness**

- Very physical boat. No electric winches. Sails raised by hand.
- If you find you cannot handle the work, please let us know.
- Initial fitness form required before begin training—including updated ones from returning trainees.
- Before attain full sail crew status, will need form signed by physician—in packets or follow link from newsletter. Physician fitness forms are good for three years, but it is good to have your physician sign off on a new one each time you go in for your annual physical.
- If you develop any physically limiting conditions while serving on the boat, it is your responsibility to inform us. Depending on what it is, we may allow you to continue serving in a more restricted capacity until you are again fully fit, or we may ask you to take a break until recovered. A new physician fitness form may be required before you are allowed to crew again.
- Fitness forms are maintained by Anne Krebeck, who will inform you when you are due to have your form updated.

### **c. Drug testing**

- Coast Guard certified vessel. All captains and crew are subject to both initial drug testing and random drug testing (urine).
- Shore Works, on third floor of brick building next to Dorchester General Hospital ER
- Trainee will be advised when nearing full crew status and will be told to get initial drug test. Do not do so until told to do so. Will need to pay the initial fee. Fee will be refunded when pass test and have served at least three trips as full crew. Random tests are paid for by organization.
- Anne Krebeck also keeps the drug testing records.

d. Training

i. Training scheduling: Hermann Hasken – [haskenjrx2@goeaston.net](mailto:haskenjrx2@goeaston.net), 410-770-5414.

- Do not call or email Cyndy to sign up for training
- Full crew and trainees are all required to sign up for training.
- Do not just show up. Make sure you let us know if you are not going to show up. Too many people means less training time each. Too few may mean no training that day.
- Full crew and trainees are all required to come out for training, but need not come out each training day. For best results for new trainees, you should try to come out for training at least once or twice each week.
- We will try to put together a mix of full crew and trainees on each training so that full crew get refresher training and trainees get the benefit of learning both from the training captain and from other crew members.

ii. Training days

- Start out with three days a week. Monday and Wednesday evenings, 5-8 or 5:30-8:30, depending on amount of daylight, and Saturday mornings, 9-12.
- Starting times are when we leave the dock. Be there at least 15-30 minutes early to help get the boat ready. Part of being a crew member is getting the boat ready for the sail.
- Ending times may vary. If you need to be back by a certain time, be sure to let the captain know in advance.
- If you are going to be a little late for training, give the captain a call and let him know so that we can hold at the dock for you if we can.

iii. Equipment required

- Gloves are required. It is not just for your safety, but for the safety of the crew as a whole. There are times when you **MUST** let the rope run through your hands. If you cannot do so because you are not wearing gloves, there are times when it can endanger the boat, the passengers and the crew.
- Hats, sunscreen
- We provide water.
- Nathan hats may be purchased at any time. Crew shirts may be purchased once full crew status is awarded. Replacements of each are provided at no charge (within reason!) if hats are lost or shirts worn out with use. Nathan red t-shirts are free while supplies last.

iv. Skills and activities

- All crew are trained to do perform all function on the boat, including docking.
- Initial emphasis will be on refresher training for captains, mates and full crew, bringing returning trainees up to full crew status, and initial training for new volunteers.
- Helmsmanship, sail handling, pushboat handling, docking and line handling, safety drills including man overboard, navigation with and without instruments, night training, rigging, passenger care including special considerations for children and handicapped passengers.
- We do training on where and how to dredge for oysters using a hand scrape. There are special safety considerations that come into play in handling the dredge that must be observed both for crew and passenger safety. We have a demonstration permit that allows us to dredge any time of the year, but we must put the oysters back on the beds and keep counts of the live oysters and boxes for reporting to the Department of Natural Resources.
- Knots. See the knot pages link from the e-newsletter. Important that everyone is securing lines the same way on the boat. In an emergency situation, you should not have to stop to figure out how the last person tied a line. Three most important knots to be able to tie unassisted are cleats, sail ties and rolling hitches (snubbing lines).
- Getting the boat ready to go out and securing the boat upon return. Need to be prepared to arrive early and stay after a passenger trip until the boat is secured.
- Crew positions—on passenger trips, jib tenders have the bow watch and should have a 360-degree focus, including not only taking care of the sail, but also looking back and keeping an eye on the passengers. No passengers are allowed forward of the mast. When underway and at the bow, stand in front of or close to the mast or aft of the shrouds so that you are not blocking the helmsman's view. Crew are generally rotated through the positions of helm, main sheet hauling, main sheet tailing and jib tending. The mates help to organize the crew, especially for leaving the dock, docking and other close-quarters situations.
- Children—age twelve and under require life jackets. Adults need to be advised to look after their kids. Many think of the boat as a Disneyland ride and don't understand that a small unattended child can go overboard suddenly. The crew's responsibility is first to take care of the boat.
- Passenger boarding and disembarking, welcome and safety instruction. We are certified to carry 31 people including captain and crew, but as an organization we limit that to 20 passengers plus captain and crew.
- First aid and CPR training is required by the organization and will be provided to those who do not already have certification.

- Trainees may go out on public sails at no charge to experience how the crew handles the boat and passengers in actual situations, providing that there is room on board and that the captain allows it.
- Following instructions and showing up. The captain and crew need to be able to depend on each other to do their jobs. The ability to follow instructions is critical and will be taken into consideration in awarding full crew status.

- e. Achieving full sail crew status
- Each trainee proceeds at his or her own pace. Full crew status depends on how often the person has trained, how quickly he or she picks up the skills, natural abilities, other factors.
  - The more often that you come out for training, the sooner you will be awarded full crew status.
  - The training captain keeps track of what skills each trainee has covered and makes a recommendation to the president when he feels a trainee is ready to be made full sail crew. At that point, the Crew Certification Committee is convened, consisting of the Vice President, Captains Rep, Crew Rep and/or other designees if there may be a conflict of interests involved. The Crew Certification Committee can take into consideration other factors besides crew skills to determine whether or not to accept the individual as a representative of the organization.
  - Once the individual has passed the drug test and been cleared by the Crew Certification Committee, he or she may start signing up for passenger trips.
- f. Signing up for sails: Cyndy Miller – [ccmiller@goeaston.net](mailto:ccmiller@goeaston.net), 410-770-9410
- The e-newsletter has a link to a web-based pdf page that is continually updated as people sign up for open crew slots. If you bookmark the page in your browser, you will always have the most current information. I update it very regularly as people sign up.
  - If a trip has a full crew contingent already, but you would like to go along, please sign up anyway. There are always times when someone may have something come up and need to be replaced and it is always good to have a backup crew ready.
  - Also, I will try to replace more experienced crew with others who may need the experience if it will not compromise the strength of the crew contingent.

g. Long-distance trips

- Annapolis, Deal Island, Baltimore, St. Marys, Solomons Island, Vienna most frequent overnight trips
- Captain has final approval of who participates on long-distance trips. Trainees are welcome and encouraged to come along, as it is great experience in handling the boat. However, full regular sail crew contingent is necessary for any trips where we will be taking out passengers at the visited port.
- On most trips, we sleep on the boat. Sleeping bags, on deck, under canvas.
- Crew members are responsible for most of their meals and all on-board food, but organization picks up the cost of occasional meals at other locations.
- Foul-weather gear necessary. Even on trips where there is no rain, conditions on the Bay may have spray flying and water on the deck.
- Conditions and facilities are different on each trip. Best to check with experienced crew about what to expect and what to bring.

h. Captains

- Will need copies of your licenses and TWIC cards for the boat, along with any license renewals and physical forms.
- You also need to sign up with Cyndy for any trips you wish to captain.
- We would like to grow our own captains and encourage crew members who have that aspiration to let us work with you to make it happen.

i. Food and Alcohol

- There is no drinking by crew on the boat. Anyone who shows up as crew for a trip and shows evidence of having been drinking may be asked by the captain to remain behind or to sit out as a passenger if underway. The individual may also be asked to submit to an alcohol test. Please do not put us in that situation. Do not drink before coming on board.
- If any passengers have alcoholic beverages on board, NO passenger is allowed to take the helm. It is not up to the crew to keep track of who has and has not been drinking among the passengers. They can come to the helm for a brief photo op, but politely remove any drinks from their hands before the photo is taken.
- Crew may not accept alcoholic beverages from passengers, if offered, while underway. Once back at the dock and done for the day, you may accept them. Crew may accept food offered by passengers while underway, but within reason and only if it does not interfere with sail duties. Do not “pig out” on passengers’ food. At all times, be aware that you are representing this organization.

j. Coast Guard Inspections

- Annual on-the-water inspection, including running the crew through its paces.