



STONINGTON HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION



Newsletter—Volume 12

Spring/Summer 2023

Harbor Happenings



Clay Burkhalter Photo

From Our Chairman: *Jay Spalding*

Another successful year in the Harbor from your Stonington Harbor Management Commission! Great results were observed by Harbormaster Donch and our Commissioners, as our slow no wake (SNW) and anchorage buoys have been effective at managing traffic. Harbormaster Donch has been keeping a close eye on the shoaling near Sandy Point and has been working hard to have this situation addressed. The entire Commission has been monitoring mooring use in the Harbor and providing information back to Harbormaster Donch. The new Harbormaster vessel will hit the water this spring ready for another busy summer. Look for our new vessel in the Harbor or by Sandy Point and wave hello.

We found it necessary to raise the mooring fees this year since costs have caught up with us after twelve years with no increases. I hope you find the new fee very reasonable considering the services we provide to protect access and safety to our beautiful Harbor.

In addition to all of these on-the-water efforts, we are still working with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to update the Stonington Harbor Management Plan.

Please feel free to contact me directly with any concerns: jspalding19@gmail.com

The SHMC meets in person on the 2nd Monday every month at 7:00pm
in the Stonington Police Station Public Meeting room. **The public is always welcome!**

The Harbor Management Plan, Agendas and Minutes are available on the Stonington Town website:

<https://www.stonington-ct.gov/stonington-harbor-management-commission>



From Our Harbormaster: *Eric Donch*

March 1st was like Christmas! As I recall, it had snowed the day before, and our new boat was delivered by Rowmarine. Just like the old boat, which was an excellent work platform, the new boat is a 20ft Ocean Scout Bristol. Improved construction materials will make this a reliable vessel for years to come. We will be using the same reliable Yamaha engine on the new boat, since it only has 823 hrs. on it. The SHMC budget will allow for replacement of this engine in four or five more years.

Do not be surprised when a new face returns your waves on the water this season. We have very qualified individuals for the Deputy Harbormaster position, and I look forward to working with whomever is our final choice. We will be splitting our time on the water so we are more available in the Harbor. Having a second qualified person on our team also means a more timely response to any emergency situations on the water. Please make our new Deputy as welcome as you have made me over the years. We truly enjoy when boaters greet us on the water (and around town).

This winter we were able to assign (35) new moorings to individuals who have waited patiently on our Waitlist. Commissioner Degler has been hard at work making numerous calls giving vessel owners the good news and assisting with any required details. These new mooring holders replace individuals who gave up their moorings as well as filling open locations in the Harbor. Many of you will have new neighbors this season, please make them feel welcome.

If you have any concerns regarding spacing of vessels around you, please contact me ASAP so we can work out any needed solutions.

As always, PLEASE be courteous to other boaters, those underway, anchored or on their moorings. Look over your shoulder while underway and ensure you are not producing a wake that will cause issues.

Remember, you are responsible for your wake and any damage it may cause.

**I look forward to seeing everyone on the water this season. Say "Hi" and introduce yourself to our new Deputy.
As always, please feel free to contact me with any issues you may have.**

Stonington Harbormaster
Eric Donch

VHF - Ch 9 and 72
when on the water

Cell (860-303-5046)

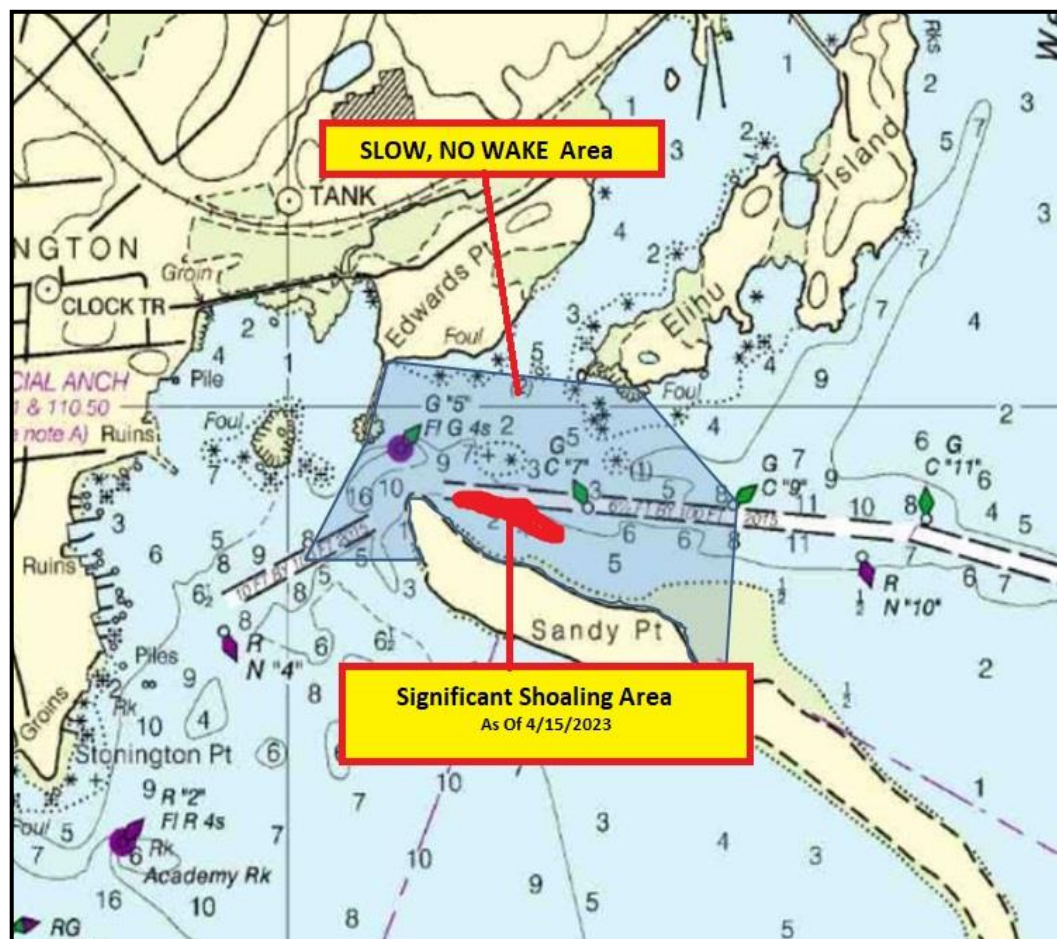
harbormaster@usa.com

Sandy Point Channel Shoaling—**ALERT!**

On the “not so good news” side of things, it appears we have had severe shoaling in the channel near the west end of Sandy Point.

Myself, the Stonington Harbor Management Commission and many others from the Pawcatuck River and the Town of Westerly have been working to obtain emergency dredging by the Army Corps of Engineers for the channel. The US Coast Guard has also been involved in these efforts. We will continue to work with all possible agencies to restore the channel to its 10ft depth as soon as possible.

Vessels that draw more than 6ft should be cautious when transiting the area, especially at low tide.



DEEP Information: <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Boating/Boating-and-Paddling>

or Email: deep.Boating@ct.gov

Stonington Harbor Mooring Grid



Online Mooring Update

In 2019 the Stonington Harbor Commission signed a contract to use the electronic harbor monitoring tool, "Online Mooring". This change has offered a more efficient process for renewals, Waitlist tracking and Harbor monitoring.

Please note: all correspondence from Online Mooring is sent via email from: "alerts@onlinemooring"

Our Accomplishments This Past Year:

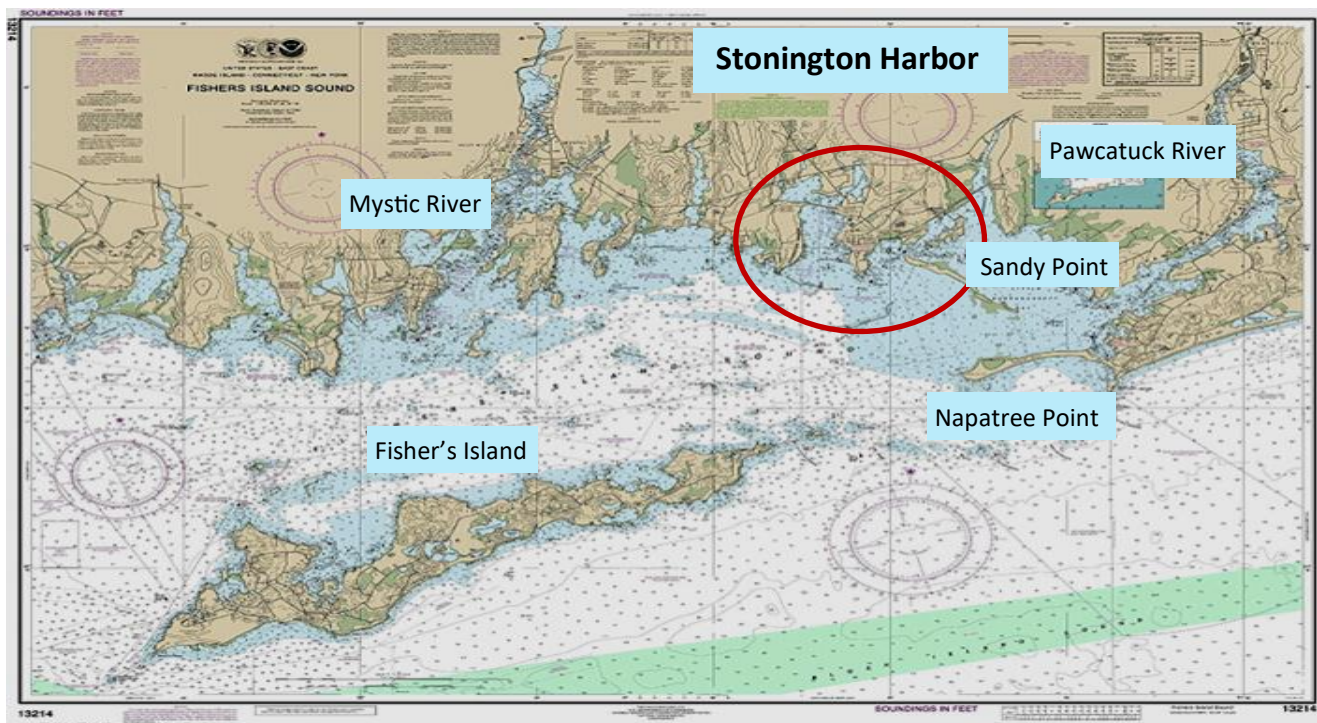
- 35 new mooring assignments have been made for 2023 boating season.
- Harbor is now 90% full for private moorings.
- Future new mooring assignments will be issued from the Waitlist ONLY when a current mooring holder gives up their mooring.
- System has been updated with mooring holders from the East Side, Wequetequock Cove and Osbrook Point.
- All mooring vendors have been trained and have entered their inspection data into the system.
- 99% of renewals were paid with credit or debit cards.
- New Waitlist Renewal fees were issued in September to all Waitlist Applicants to remain on Waitlist.

Mooring Pointers:

- Credit Cards are preferred method of payment for all renewals.
- All vessel changes on moorings require a vessel change form AND approval of Harbormaster Donch.
- Littoral moorings DO NOT convey when a house is sold that abuts the Harbor proper. The new owner has to apply for a mooring. (*littoral = harbor shoreline property owner*)
- When a mooring is given up, contact must be made with the mooring inspection vendor regarding gear.
- Moorings cannot be rented to others.

For Online Mooring Assistance—questions or concerns, please contact:

Melanie Degler—Commissioner/Mooring Administrator—mdegler16@gmail.com



REMINDER:

Please No Rafting
of any unattended
vessels in our
Harbor.

Rafting on private
moorings in the
Harbor is allowed
overnight
PROVIDED
there is a watch
person on board
at all times.

**No vessel may
be left
unattended
while rafted.**

Rafting is NOT
ALLOWED if
inclement weather
is expected or
occurring.

Boating Safely After Dark



We all look forward to summer and being on the water. Whether you sail, fish, work, or are a guest on the water, awareness and safety are the key to good memories of summertime.

When traveling at night or in unfamiliar waters, there is no situation made better by going fast.

- If you go into areas where there are known hazards, be extra careful and always make sure you have an exit plan to return to safe water.
- Another helpful strategy is when you go out at night, go to the same places you go during the day because you will be familiar with the hazards, challenges, and safe areas of that particular location.

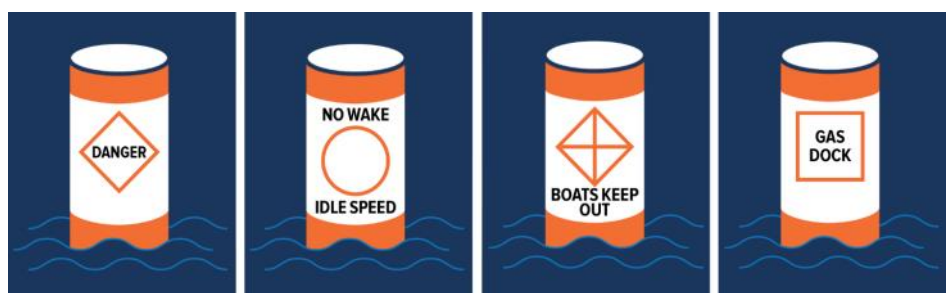
Other things to keep in mind when boating at night include limited visibility. You simply cannot see as well in the dark as you can during the day.

- Do your best to preserve your night vision by dimming all the instruments and avoid looking at bright lights directly.
- Understand the lights on other boats, and aids to navigation (ATONs).
- Listen to the sounds of the night, a plethora of noises will give you a good idea of where you are, where ATONs are, and if there are other boats present.

Compass, landmarks, ATONs, and charts are helpful and reliable fixed points to guide you through the water.

- It is important that you understand and have a working knowledge of your electronics and navigation instruments.
- Be confident in the accuracy of your location, both on the plotter and with visible aids to navigation simultaneously. Practice with the way the display works and learn how to make changes to your chart plotter on the go.

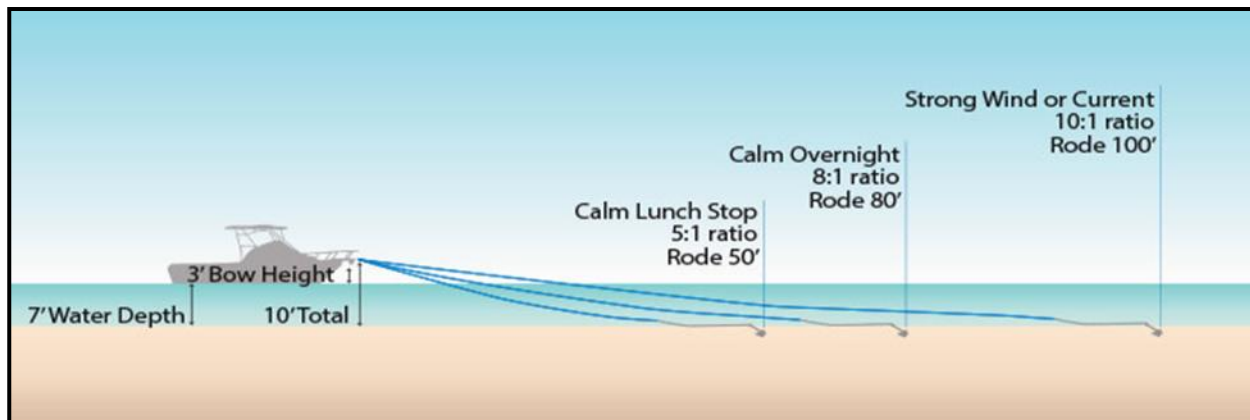
**If boating during the day or night, you always want to
be safe and come home with good memories.**



Anchoring—Proper Scope

Your anchor holds best when the load on it is closest to horizontal, not vertical. To determine this, add the depth of the water to the height of the bow from the water, then multiply that by 5 and pay out that amount of rode for a "lunch hook" when you will be aboard, awake, and watching in calm conditions. If the tide is coming in, adjust for it so you rest at 5-to-1 scope at high tide. If it is windy or you go ashore, pay out at least a 7-to-1 scope. If you are spending the night on the hook, pay out an 8-to-1 scope.

NOTE: When you calculate scope, do not include the chain at the anchor end of the rode unless there is more than 6ft or so; the chain's job is simply to weigh down the anchor.



In this example, if you are anchoring in water that is 7ft deep and your bow is 3ft above the waterline, water depth (7) + bow height (3) = 10ft, which means for a lunch hook you should put out 50 ft of rode (10ft x 5).



Winter Sticks in the Harbor — **WOODEN STICKS ARE BEING PHASED OUT!**

A **winter stick** should have enough scope to ensure that it does not submerge at any tide and brightly painted. Winter sticks were previously made of wood using an unpainted 4x4 or 6x6 board. Many do not have a weighted bottom or heavy chain, and tend to just float at the surface **and are a hazard to boaters.**

The Commission recommends purchasing a commercial product such as a Jim-Buoy model 510, shorty winter stick style or a Taylor Made Sully Stick Winter Mooring Buoy.

Jim-Buoy Model 510



Taylor Made Sully Stick Winter Mooring



Dinghy Dock Usage & Etiquette – Friendly Tips:

Dinghies are everywhere, dinghy docks are crowded, and we have limited resources. Here are some helpful tips and reminders so everyone can maximize usage and summer enjoyment:

- **No overnight use!**
- **Always leave your outboard down!** Raised outboards can damage other boats.
- **Use only one line off the bow!** No side tie-ups and do not tie bow and stern.
- **Have a long painter/bow line.** This allows others to push aside your dinghy and nose up to the dock and unload. If you tie with a short painter, others will have to climb over or through your dinghy.
- **If there are only a few cleats on the dock, tie a loop at the end of your painter.** There is room for a lot of looped painters if no one has cleated their painter.
- **If other dinghies are at the dock, try to tie your dinghy painter below the earlier arrivals.** They will most likely be leaving before you. You might not want them to have to untie your dinghy and retie it. Passing your painter up through the loops of other painters is known as “dipping the eye.”
- **When you lock your dinghy, do not trap another dinghy’s painter.** Be sure the cable is long enough to allow others to nose into the dock to unload.

Don't Be This Guy!!



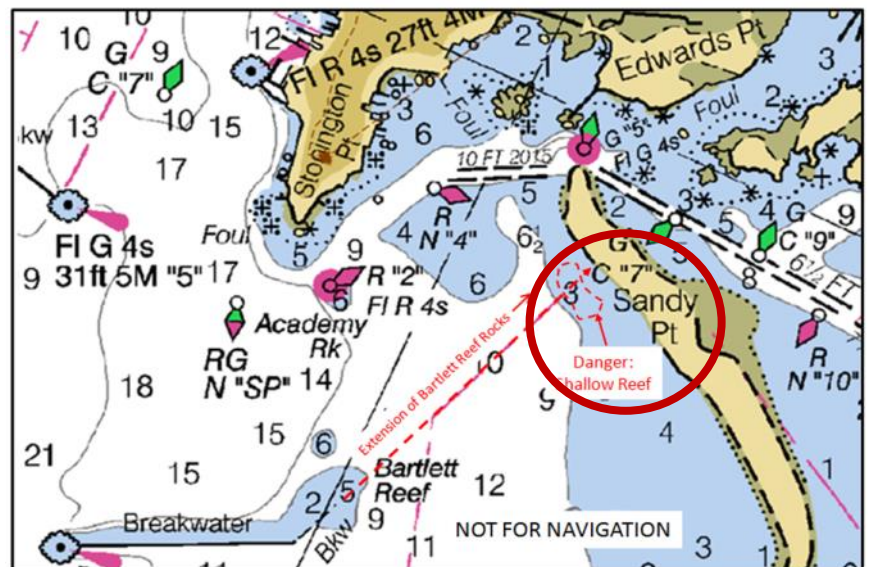
Beware of the Reef Off Sandy Point—2023

Hit rock bottom recently? Join the club! Many of us go to Sandy Point in a small boat and anchor near the NW end of its SW facing shore, looking out toward Fishers Island Sound and Latimer Light. But beware of an extensive broad and shallow rocky reef that starts 50-75 yards or so off the beach and is most visible at low tide. It may be part of a subterranean reef that extends from the rocks at the NE end of Bartlett's Reef (i.e., outer breakwater) and re-surfaces as this reef off the beach at Sandy Point.



During the summer months with normal tides, the water depth over the reef varies from 1-3 ft and can easily damage props and lower units. In the winter with extreme tides (as shown in the picture from 2014 when bushes were still there!), the reef is clearly visible at low tide. And yes, those white dots are seagulls perched on the reef!

This chart shows the approximate location of the reef. On the water, on a calm and sunny summer day, it can be distinguished by a broad area of sea grass with red and brownish-green sub-surface rocks. So tread lightly and slowly in this area if you have to, and consider kicking your outboard up for shallow draft conditions.



*Or better yet, stay away from the reef altogether and
avoid an embarrassing tow home!*

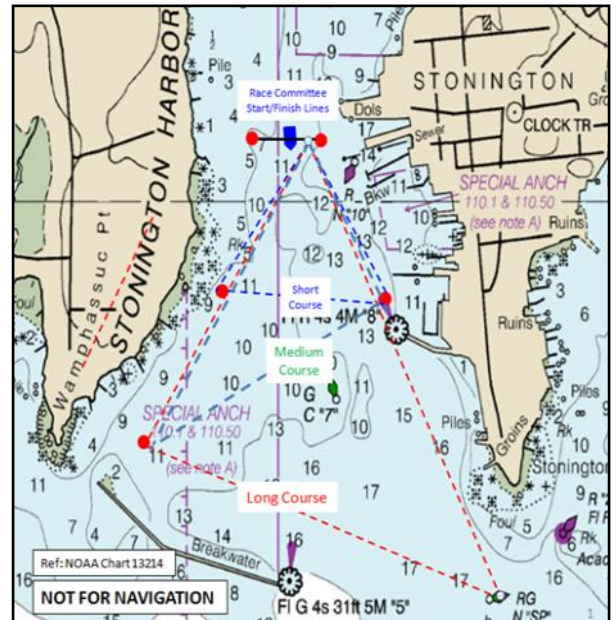
Wednesday Night Sailing

Wednesday Night Sailing was started in 1969 by the newly formed Stonington Dinghy Club (SDC) and has been a community event ever since. It is a 10-week racing series open to **any sailboat 20 ft. or less**, sailed by anyone, of any age, and any skill level. Some boats in the current fleet include Ideal 18, Laser, Sunfish, JY-15, JY/Hunter-14, Cape Dory 10, Cape Cod Frosty, Sea Dog, Optimist, 420, 470, Bic, RS Aero, 29'er, Highlander, custom designs and multi-hulls...any and all small boats are welcome! Wear your lifejacket and bring whatever vessel you have. You and your boat will be assigned to a class. Check out this excellent video for some history of this series: <https://vimeo.com/580067140>.



For more detailed information, check this website: <https://www.sdcwednightrace.com>.

There are **no registration fees** or requirements other than to check in with the Race Committee (RC) on the water by 5:50pm for your boat's class, course assignment and finish side of the RC boat. The small outboard RC boat is anchored west of the harbor channel, and about in-line with the public fishing platform at the Town Dock. Each class is assigned a separate starting time, with a warning signal followed by a 3-minute count-down sequence. The signal for the first class is at 6:00pm. It is always only one (1) race, sailed on either a port or starboard rounding triangle, with 1 or 2 laps as announced by the RC, and **always within the harbor**. The largest and fastest boats start first and sail the **"Long Course"**, a few minutes later followed by medium sized boats sailing the **"Medium Course"** and then the smallest boats sailing the **"Short Course"**. Expect to be off the water no later than 8:00pm and usually around 7:30pm or earlier if the wind holds. Remember... the summer wind often goes light in the harbor after 6:00pm and usually during the races! For more detailed information, check out this web site: <https://www.sdcwednightrace.com>.



The 2023 racing season will be ten (10) weeks that starts on **June 14th** and ends on **Aug 16th**. To account for vacations, **only 7 weeks are required** to qualify for a participation glass and the numerous other season awards, such as winners in the various class boats, most improved sailor, youngest sailor, best performance boat/skipper, etc. There also are a variety of special perpetual trophies such as newly developed "Sandy L. Bragdon Trophy" (shown here) specifically to celebrate women in sailing, and the coveted "McCagg Cup", a large silver trophy awarded to those that most embody the essence of the sport. This casual racing series is great fun and a low pressure way to enjoy friendly racing, develop new sailing skills, renew old friendships, make new friends, and enjoy après race activities on shore right after the races each evening.

And...that's right...totally no cost racing!

Slow No Wake in the ENTIRE Harbor

IMPORTANT: SNW means BOTH SLOW AND NO WAKE!

Service in the Harbor:

Cardinal Cove Marina:
860-535-0060

Dodson Boatyard:
860-535-1507

Don's Dock:
860-535-0077

Mechanic Street Marina:
(formerly known as
Greenhaven Moorings)
860-495-2042

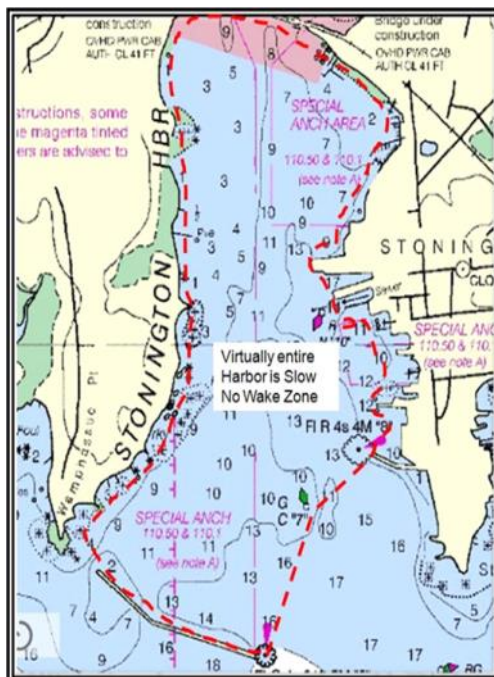
VHF in Stonington Harbor:

Harbormaster — 72

Pump Out Boat — 8

Dodson Launch — 78

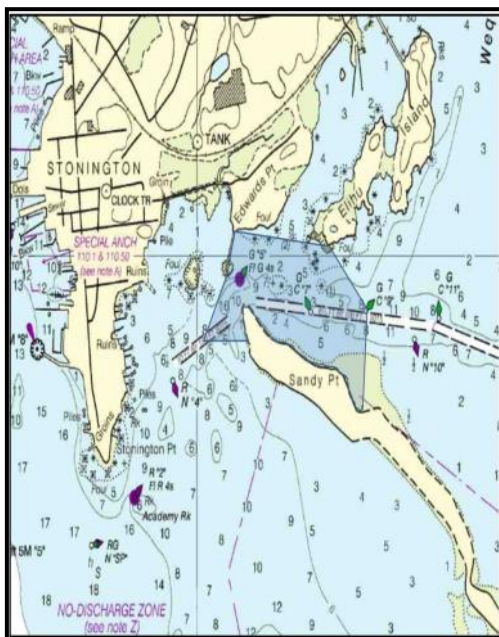
Stonington Yacht Club
Slips — 78



Each year, this newsletter has reminded boaters and sailors that all of Stonington Harbor is designated by law as a “slow-no-wake” (SNW) area.

A new SNW zone has been created in the channel around Sandy Point. Both SNW areas are shown on the accompanying two charts. The Commission received many positive comments from boaters and residents living on the waterfront facing the Sandy Point channel last year. We are pleased to see most boaters have respected our new SNW zone last season!

The Commission thanks all those who complied with the SNW regulations last season, and we look forward to even more compliance again this season!



SNW zones are two-fold: boats must move slowly enough to be safe and at the same time produce no wake. So a jet ski might produce no wake at speed but the speed is dangerous. On the other hand, a large, slow-moving vessel may produce a huge, dangerous wake.

Let's all be aware of our speed and our wake. This will make our Harbor and the Sandy Point area safer for all to enjoy.

“The boat is calling, I must go!”

Annual Blessing of the Fleet This Year — July 30, 2023

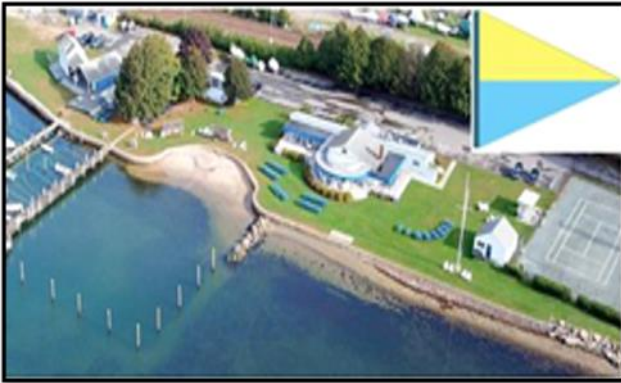
Every year on the last full weekend in July, the annual Blessing of the Fleet remembers Stonington's fishermen who made their livelihood providing fish for the nation and all too often have died at sea.

The celebration will start at 10:30am with the traditional Fisherman's Mass at St. Mary's Church in the "Boro", followed by a street parade and procession to the Town Dock for the ceremonial Blessing of the Fleet.

The Blessing continues with a parade of the decorated commercial fishing boats with their families aboard to a site just outside the Harbor for the laying of a flowered anchor-shaped wreath.



The Wadawanuck "Wad" Club



Established in 1908, the "Wad Club" is a private club located at the head of Stonington Harbor. The Club offers sailing, swimming, tennis and dining to members, their guests and invited visitors. The Club operates from Memorial Day to mid-September and hosts sailing regattas and other athletic events during the summer season.

With permission, the "Wad Club" provides their dry sail area as a small sailboat launch site for many events, including the Special Olympics Regatta, Stonington High School Sailing Team and the Annual Hospice Regatta fundraiser.

The Wad Club does not offer tie-up or shore facilities for transient boaters, unless invited and accompanied by Club members.

Waterfront Commission

The Waterfront Commission's charter, approved in 1967, is to study the waterfront area, tidal waters and pier facilities in the Town of Stonington and make recommendations and reports concerning the same to the Town Selectmen, and other municipal, regional, state and federal authorities as required. The Commission consists of seven members who serve without pay for a term of five years. They meet at 6:00 PM on the second Wednesday of each month (except August) in the Town Hall lower floor meeting room at 152 Elm Street and the public is always invited.

The Commission is empowered to enact and enforce regulations to operate and administer the facilities under their jurisdiction which includes the Town Dock area, the Stonington Small Boat Association (SSBA) boat storage and launch area, and Donahue Park which is southwest of the Route 1 bridge over the Pawcatuck River. A major focus of the Commission is the Town Dock area occupied by the Southern New England Fisherman's and Lobstermen's Association (SNEFLA).

The CT State Bond Commission recently approved a \$250,000 grant to the Town of Stonington for renovations of the North Pier at Town Dock. These grant funds augment the \$900,000 federal grant already provided to the Town. These combined funds should cover the cost of the much-needed rehabilitation work and upgrades at the Stonington Town Dock.



Please be aware that you may see construction equipment and activities dockside and waterside at and around the Town Dock over the coming months.

SPOTLIGHT ON STONINGTON BOAT WORKS 1938-1965

Stonington Boat Works: 1938-1965 (by Jesse Diggs and Rob Palmer, son of Henry Palmer, Jr. All photos provided by, and copyrighted to, Rob Palmer.)

A Young Man with a Passion and a Dream, from Basement to Boat Yard: **Henry (Hank) R. Palmer, Jr.** was born in 1911 in Stonington CT at a time when wooden boats ruled the waters and Stonington was an epicenter of commercial fishing. As a youth he experimented with making small boats that were both loud and fast, even building one in the basement of his rented home while attending Brown University (Class of '36). After graduation he briefly entered the "corporate world" with a brokerage firm but never lost his dream to get serious about boat building. So in 1938 Hank leased a small former boat yard in Stonington on the corner of Gold and Church Street and established "Stonington Ways".

The Need for Speed had to Wait...The Palmer 20: Although that first site had several small buildings and a workshop, the most profitable feature was a working marine railway. It was of sufficient capacity to haul the local fishing fleet boats for repairs and maintenance thus providing some immediate income. So Hank had to delay extensive production of his first love and his own design, **the Palmer 20 shown [here](#)**. Sadly, there is no evidence of significant sales. It was a handsome inboard utility that Hank had hoped to produce as a work skiff or with some added features, a production pleasure "runabout". But a storm was brewing and coming fast.



Hurricane of '38 Breeds Opportunity: Hank's business of servicing the commercial fishing fleet was dramatically altered when the Hurricane of '38 destroyed most everything except the marine railway. Government disaster relief funds allowed the boat yard to recover quickly. The storm had damaged most all commercial boats and the business turned to building replacement vessels of his own design, a rugged 28 ft lobster boat with a new bow built for speed. After the storm his facilities were limited so he secured temporary use of a barn where the current Boro firehouse exists (prior to construction of the viaduct bridge) and launched boats across the street at Ellwell's Boat Yard, now Dodson's Boat Yard.



Hank Palmer, January 1939



Bigger Boats need Bigger Facilities: The temporary barn site was soon outgrown and abandoned as the original Church St site was being rebuilt even bigger and better. With new work for larger commercial boats the facilities required annexing land to the south to what is now Wayland's Wharf and acquired a new name, Stonington Boat Works, Inc. These new facilities were expanded to include several more buildings, workshops, a 175 ft dock with finger piers and a marine railway. The photo here shows Hank at the door of the temporary barn in 1939. Although he still longed to build the Palmer 20, there was a larger commercial market and "bigger fish to fry".



Meeting the Needs of the local Commercial Fishermen: Work ramped up and Hank collaborated with naval architect Winthrop Warner (Middletown, CT) to develop a new era of 57 ft offshore draggers carrying a

payload of 45,000 lbs of fish. The main building was expanded again to allow building of several boats simultaneously and more efficiently. By 1947 over 20 of these commercial fishing boats were built and the harbor was alive with commercial activity. The boatyard attained a well deserved reputation and recognition.



Post-War Desire for Recreational Boats: With the end of WW II, the American public prospered and Hank recognized their desire for recreational boats. He formed a new collaboration with naval

architect Henry Scheel (inventor of the modern Scheel keel) to design, build and market a new class of speedy and comfortable powerboats. The "Stonington 40" was the first of its class and led the way for custom built boats for discerning clients.

More Storms, Devastation and Re-building: In August 1954, Hurricane Carol hit Stonington at high tide and the entire boatyard was awash, damaging buildings and commercial boats. But a dedicated crew allowed the cleanup to be fast and the yard was quickly back in business.

Expanding into Motor Yachts and Sail: Longer boats with upscale accommodations led to the concept of adding a mast with a steadying sail and voilà, a Motorsailer emerged! This class of recreational boats proved to be extremely popular, receiving national and world-wide acclaim and accolades and is still popular today. It was not long before the boatyard and its' classically designed and ruggedly built sail and power boats received national and international recognition attracting worldly clients. Shown to the right is an advertisement from Yachting Magazine in 1957.

The Local Team Did it All: For over 25 years, Stonington Boat Works was a major employer in the "Boro" with a full-time staff of 20-30 carpenters, mechanics, craftsmen and support staff that built each boat by hand. Many descendants of these craftsmen still reside locally and have fond memories of those days gone by and the history they made.


The End of the Wooden Boat Era: With declining sales and the rise of fiberglass boats, the boatyard closed in 1965 after having built over 90 boats during its' heyday. Although condos and Wayland's Wharf have replaced Stonington Boat Works, remnants of the marine railway still exist. **And the Palmer family legacy is still evident around Stonington even today.**

Having your boat BUILT is half the fun


—at Stonington, U.S.A.—where you can watch and appreciate the work!

ALL FACTORS CONSIDERED, the cost of lifetime, sea-proved Stonington boats (built to your designs or ours) will surprise and please you.

While specializing in motor sailers, we solicit and welcome the opportunity to build wood boats 30 to 60 ft., any type. Proof of Stonington's versatility and facilities is found in the 3 quality-built craft pictured here. WRITE US YOUR REQUIREMENTS.




TOMADRUS. Neilsen - designed keel and centerboard sloop. 41' OAL, 28'6" WL; 11½' Beam; 4'8" Draft.



BERRIAN. One of the many Scheel-designed, Stonington-built Auxiliaries. Particularly planned for extensive family or 2-couple cruising, even under severe weather conditions.

Real sea-boats, these lively yet sturdy motor sailers will come about readily and unaided in air as light as 6 MPH. They will point to within 4 points of the compass.

With auxiliary sail there's no need to worry about mechanical failure!



GAIL ANN. Eldredge-McInnis - designed heavy power cruiser. Twin cabins. Diesel Powered. 45' OAL; 14'2" Beam; 5' Draft.

Stonington BOAT WORKS, Inc.

STONINGTON • CONNECTICUT

Tel.: Jefferson 6-9456

America's Largest Builders of Motor Sailers

OCT '57 YACHTING

The United States Coast Guard (USCG) has officially classified stand-up paddleboards (SUP) as a vessel. SUPs must comply with federal Navigation Rules and “carriage” requirements when operated beyond the limits of designated swimming, surfing or bathing areas.

**For stickers, you may contact
the Harbormaster
or
CT DEEP at (860-434-8638)
or
iffoundsticker@d13cgaux.net**

Vessel Identification Sticker

IF FOUND - CONTACT

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Phone: _____

Use waterproof marker-Place in a visible, weather protected area.

To report a boating emergency in Connecticut, use VHF Channel 16 or call (860) 424-3333.

The Boating Safety Seven



1. Wear your life jacket
2. Take a boating safety class
3. Carry all required safety gear
4. Use your engine cut-off device
5. File a float plan
6. Be aware of weather and water conditions
7. Boat sober, and be considerate of others



Photo by Jerry Donovan

CMTA Recognition of Women in Boating



Cassandra Greaves is the Service Manager for **Don's Dock Marina** in Stonington, one of our permitted mooring vendors for the Harbor. When she started her journey in the marina business in March 2014, she was not yet knowledgeable regarding boating (or even what port and starboard were!).

Cassandra started her marine industry career with administrative duties and answering basic questions from customers, but now she assists in running all operations of the marina as well as the service department, demonstrating a fierce determination to grow and learn the industry. Her boss and mentor, Ian Hetherington, consistently encourages her continued growth. She confidently assists customers with their diverse boating needs to ensure they have a safe and enjoyable boating season, and now even experienced boaters look to her for recommendations and guidance. Several women have told her she helped them start a new journey into the boating world.

As a young woman making a positive contribution to the industry, Cassandra finds her experience extremely rewarding!

**Thank you Cassandra Greaves, for being a trailblazer in
the Connecticut Boating Industry!**

**For more information on the CT Marine Trades Association
(CMTA): info@ctmarinetrades.org**



***“As soon as I get on my boat, something inside me
changes. Then I really feel what living is.”***

~ Laura Dekker

Stonington Shellfish Commission News—2023



Currently, six aquaculturists operate oyster farms in Stonington waters, two in Little Narragansett Bay. One farm is located south of Elihu Island and the other west of the Barn Island Wildlife Management Area. Most of the remaining farms are in the Mystic River. As payment for using town bottom, oyster farmers provide funds to help support the Shellfish Commission. They also provide shellfish for the Town's recreational beds.

The farmed oysters we received in 2022 were placed in recreational Areas A and B. In addition, the Commission purchased clams harvested from Stonington waters from a local commercial shellfisherman and transplanted them into all of our recreational areas.

The link below shows where recreational shellfishing is permitted: [http://stoningtonshellfishcommission.org/recreational/Shellfish Map Current_20220220.pdf](http://stoningtonshellfishcommission.org/recreational/Shellfish%20Map%20Current_20220220.pdf)

Stonington shellfishing permits are available at Don's Dock and Stonington Town Hall.

It is important to remember that the waters of Stonington Harbor and Little Narragansett Bay are closed to recreational shellfishing. The oysters grown commercially in Little Narragansett Bay are transplanted into deep water to cleanse them before they can be placed into recreational beds or sold at market.

Information on shellfishing in Rhode Island waters at: <http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/water/shellfish/>

The Sailors Blessing:

*"May the seas lie smooth before you. May a gentle breeze forever fill your sails.
May sunshine warm your face. And kindness warm your soul."*

Photo by Ann Baldelli



Photo by Ann Baldelli



Stonington Harbor Yacht Club—Public Programs

Stonington Harbor Yacht Club (SHYC) seeks to support the local community, broaden access to and protect the natural resources of Stonington Harbor. Open year round, SHYC provides programs for those who share this common love of the water and community. The Club offers several membership categories such as under 35, military, off-season social; new members are welcomed throughout the year. SHYC has many activities listed below that are open to the general public.

The public is invited to sail Saturday mornings in season, 10:00 am-12:00 pm, subject to the availability of a qualified Stonington Harbor Yacht Club member. Please make reservations through the SHYC front desk (860) 535-0112 at least five business days in advance. Participation is limited to two outings per individual. The cost is \$25 per person. Come check out our IDEALS 18!

Spring and Fall Racing Series: SHYC weekly hosts Saturday afternoon races for a variety of one design boats including Ideal 18s, Lasers, Sunfish and other craft inside the harbor. Following racing soup, cocktails and camaraderie offered inside the Club each week. Race for a day, sail for the series, everyone is welcome. For 2023, spring racing dates are April 15th to June 10th. Fall racing dates are Sept 16th to November 6th. Sailing Instructions and Registration Information are on the club website: <https://shyc.us/public-racing>

Big Boat Regattas: The Big Jack Regatta is Sept 19th a pursuit style race, starting off in Watch Hill and sailing across to Block Island. This regatta is open to any sailboat over 20ft and generally concludes with a fun evening on Block Island and a leisurely sail back on Sunday. The second big regatta is the Red Lobdell Regatta-September 23th, with races for both one-designs and big boats on two different courses followed by cocktails and awards party. Sailing Instructions and Registration information are available on their website. <https://shyc.us/public-racing>



Special Olympics: SHYC supports the local area Special Olympics sailors and their able-bodied partners. They help by contributing their fleet of Ideal 18s on Tuesday evenings July through September for training and culminating in the state regatta held the second weekend in September. Volunteers are always welcome.

Wounded Warriors Outing: The Club is planning an excursion on August 26th for our local veterans. An exciting day of sailing on Ideal 18s and cruising aboard members larger boats. This is SHYC's way of saying "thank you" by offering a relaxing day enjoying the wind, water and sunshine.

Educational Lectures and Presentations are offered from September through May and are open to the public. These talks center around a variety of topics, mainly on maritime themes. Examples of the past events include: Signaling and life-raft safety, sea level rise in Fisher's Island Sound by Save the Bay, panel discussion about the Rolex Fastnet Race, Mystic Seaport's Rosenfeld Collection, and On-the-Water race clinics all were attended by many in the Stonington community. [Information is on the SHYC website calendar.](#)

For more information regarding any of the programs described above or the simple membership process, contact Tricia Walsh at SHYC for details at 860-535-0112, ext. 1, or by email at twalsh@shyc.us

Stonington Harbor Yacht Club is located at 32 Water Street in Stonington Borough.

New England Science & Sailing (NESS) Update

NESS is an accredited education nonprofit that provides standards-based experiential learning through ocean based platforms that empower students with leadership, teamwork, confidence, and problem-solving skills to ensure academic success. NESS does this by creating a love of learning through ocean-based experiential programs, including marine science, sailing, power boating, and adventure sports. NESS's education model guides students to achieve a "love of learning" and ultimately become agents of their education by integrating academic engagement, hands-on experiential learning platforms, and standards-based STEM education programs. This comprehensive approach fosters an enriching learning environment that promotes academic achievement and enhances students' overall development. Ocean adventure educational programs provide experiential STEM classroom and field expeditions that enable students to explore real-world problems and encourage active participation, critical thinking, and problem-solving. Through NESS programs, students develop SEL skills along with a deeper understanding of their classroom studies and lifelong learning while having fun in a dynamic, safe, and challenging environment.



WHAT NESS TEACHES:

- Aquaponics
- Biomimicry
- Buoyancy
- Chemistry
- Earth Sciences
- Engineering
- Geology
- Geometry
- Marine Anatomy
- Marine Biology
- Meteorology
- Oceanography

HOW NESS TEACHES :

- Biodiversity Sampling
- Field Studies
- Fishing
- Kayaking
- Marine Science Labs
- Paddleboarding
- Powerboating
- Sailing
- Snorkeling
- Surfing
- Tide Pooling
- Windsurfing



Special Olympics 2023

2023 marks the 17th year Special Olympics Connecticut (SOCT) will hold a training program capped off by a regatta for Special Olympians on Stonington Harbor. During July and August, approximately twelve Special Olympians ranging in age from ten to sixty will practice for approximately two hours in the Harbor on Tuesday evenings in Ideal 18s provided by the SHYC, Wad Club and NESS.

During these sessions the athletes, with their coaches/partners, experience the joy of sailing, its technical attributes and develop a competitive team spirit on the water. Juliette Kotfer and Christan Fernald are a wonderful example of one of our Special Olympics teams. These athletes, along with their partners, Maxime Percy and Patricia Tellekamp, designated Team 4, take to the water in a wide variety of sea and weather conditions. During this time, they sail their Ideals along a course and around buoys, learning the characteristics of the boat and how to work together, all while competing with other Olympians to achieve numerous prescribed goals of the sport. The process of both

piloting the boat and trimming its sails promotes “a great deal of trust and self-assurance on the boat, and their confidence is raised because they feel safe with their partners”.

The highlight of this summer program is the 2023 SOCT Unified Sports Fall Festival Sailing Regatta scheduled for September 9th and 10th. In this event as many as fifteen race teams including as many as fifty sailors from across Connecticut converge at the Wad Club. Activities include a weekend of good, spirited competition on the Ideals, celebrating their athletic achievements with picnics and awards. As many as forty individual volunteers from the Stonington area participate in and support this program promoting good health, fitness and “inspiring inclusion and respect for all people”, on and off the water. This year’s Presenting Sponsor is Mohegan Sun.



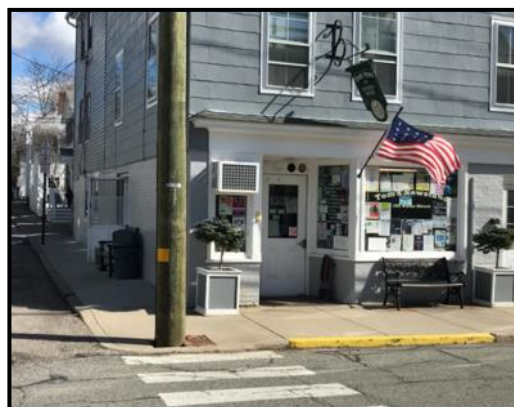
For further information about volunteerism in this very “Special” program, go through the SOCT website: <https://www.soct.org/get-involved/become-volunteer/>, or email Eileen Cicchese at ecicchese@groton-ct.gov. Sponsorships, donations as well as volunteerism can also be made by emailing Sharon Rozum at sahronr@soct.org.

Tom’s News—In the “Boro”

Need some food, drink or other provisions for your boat or home? Want to have the NY Times, WSJ, or other newspapers reserved for you every day for pickup inside or curbside?

How about searching the postings on the window and door for a variety of much needed home services? Or maybe get some candy and soda for the kids along with the milk, bacon and eggs that you just ran out of for breakfast? Perhaps (as many do) you just want to catch up on the local news, Borough activities, and have a friendly chat? You have come to the right place...**Tom's News** at 133 Water St. in the Borough.

Go there for most anything you need, as many have for over 25 years under **Tom Rezendes'** ownership, and for the 52 years prior to that as Keane's Newsstand! And if you have any unwanted loose change, you can always leave it in the jar on the counter to be part of over \$8000 collected by **Tom** and donated to the Youth Programming at the Stonington Free Library. His patrons are the present and the kids are the future.



Tom's News...a small piece of Americana that helps define the uniqueness of life in the "Boro".
Open from 5:00am to 5:00pm Mon-Sat, and 5:00am to 4:00pm on Sunday. Tom will be there!

Public Access to the Harbor



Wayland's Wharf



Dinghy Float near Stonington Commons

Other Public Access Locations:

- Town Dock Fishing Pier & Memorial
- Public Walk at Harboredge
- Foot of Omega Street
- Foot of Ash Street
- Wall Street - Dodge Paddock and Beal Preserves
- Foot of Church Street Vista
- Stonington Point/Dubois Beach
- Hand Launch Area: (*Elm Street & Route 1*)
- End of Palmer Neck Road—Barn Island State Boat Launch

Small Boat Association (SSBA)

Stonington Small Boat Association (SSBA) was established in 1976 adjoining the Town fishing docks. Their goal is to support safe and active sailing, boating, and kayaking. SSBA provides residents a “boat park” to store their small non-motorized vessels under 20ft and less than 300 lbs. such as Sunfish, Lasers, JY15s, kayaks and alike vessels. This all volunteer organization of sailors and paddlers is dedicated to maintaining and upgrading small boat access to Stonington Harbor. Currently, there are approximately 140 vessels in the Association area. The annual meeting is held each April and several work parties occur throughout the season. Applications for storage spaces are collected every April and can be found on their website: <https://ssba28.com> and at the Stonington Library.

For more information check their bulletin board on site:

Visit their website or Facebook page: www.facebook.com/Stonington-Small-Boat-Association

Contact them via email: StoningtonSmallBoatAssociation@gmail.com

Send a note to: **SSBA, P.O. Box 28, Stonington, CT 06378.**



NEW LIFE JACKET LABEL

ADULT UNIVERSAL
User Weight: >40 kg (>88 lbs)
Chest Size: 76-132 cm (30-52 in.)

PERFORMANCE LEVEL
70

TURN ABILITY
(SEE BELOW)

WARNINGS
(SEE BELOW)

Measured in newtons.

- Lower level number offers more mobility, comfort, and style with good flotation, and intended for near shore (calm water) activities.
- Higher level number offers greater flotation, turning, and stability in the water, and for offshore activities (greater time to rescue).
- There are areas where you may be boating near shore when rescue is hours away, and a higher level is needed.
- Be honest about your swimming ability. Poor swimmers may need a higher level to stay upright and easily tread water.

50

70

100

150

NEAR SHORE (CALM)
OFFSHORE (WAVES)

INCREASING TIME TO RESCUE

WARNINGS
Some life jackets are **NOT APPROVED** for:
 Water skiing
 Tubing
 Personal watercraft or wakeboarding
 White water paddling

TURN ABILITY
 Life jacket will turn an unconscious wearer face up—test before use.
 Life jacket will not turn an unconscious wearer face up.

USCG Approved 160.064/XXXXXX
TC Approved XXXXXXXX-X
ANSI/CANUL 12402-5
Model: XXXX Style: XXXX
Lot No. XXXX
Approval conditions state that this device must be worn to be counted as equipment required by vessels meeting Transport Canada or USCG requirements.

USCG APPROVED
APPROVED USE IN U.S. AND CANADA

CUSH (Clean Up Sound & Harbors) Update



Founded in 2008, this local non-profit's mission is to clean up and protect Fishers Island Sound and its coves, inlets, bays, rivers, and harbors. To accomplish this, CUSH volunteers have been collecting water samples in a systematic, long-term project that monitors the water quality of Stonington and Mystic Harbors, the Mystic River, Pequotsepos and Wequetequock Coves, and the major freshwater streams that feed them. This important work promotes public awareness of the continued marginal water quality in many of our local embayments and builds action plans to address water quality problems.

It has been found that the most degraded embayment is Wequetequock Cove and Little Narragansett Bay. Recently a coalition of abutting residents and business owners have discovered contamination in their ground water, the same groundwater that delivers bacterial contamination and nitrogen pollution into the Cove and Bay. Poor water quality is becoming a challenging problem for humans as well as the animals that call this embayment home.



To join the 100 member-donor-volunteers to continue CUSH's important work, **Questions may be directed to Chris Freeman:**
chris.freeman@mysticseaport.org

Gifts of support may be made on-line at:
<http://www.cushinc.org/CONTRIBUTE/>

Pyramid Moorings Are Preferred In Harbor

For many years, mooring anchors have ranged from concrete blocks to various metal structures. In Stonington Harbor, those inadequate anchors have been removed and traditional mushroom anchors have been required.

More recently, a newer mooring anchor, the pyramid type, has proved to be an improvement over the mushroom anchor.

For this reason, when new moorings are installed or older ones replaced in our Harbor, the Commission recommends the pyramid type mooring be used.

All of our mooring vendors are now offering the pyramid type of mooring anchor from Dor Mor or US Steel. Using modern mooring anchors and gear will ensure boats moored in our Harbor will be better protected in storms.

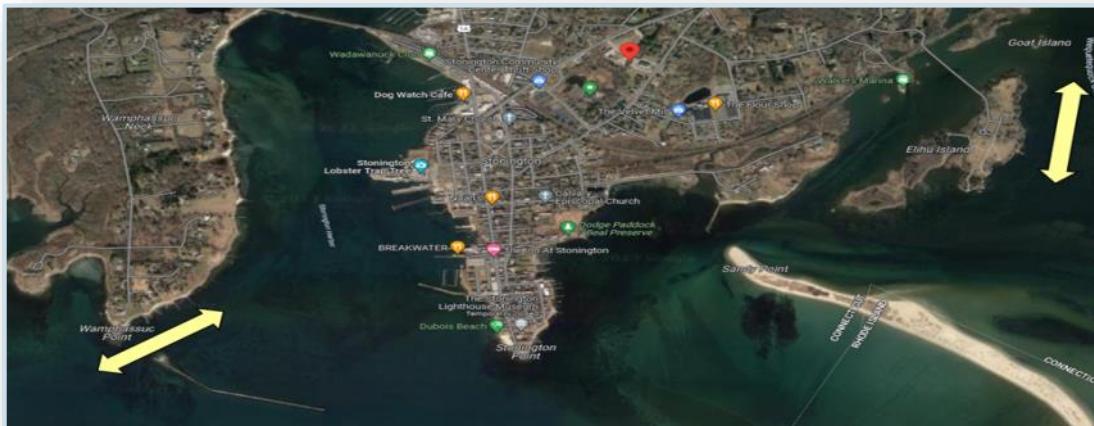


Slow Down Mario!

Don't be Mario Andretti when driving through the cuts at Wamphassuc Point and Elihu Island!

Please be considerate of other boaters and mooring holders! Please do not make the Harbormaster chase you down and fine you! If you are a mooring holder, this could affect your future mooring rights. If you are not a mooring holder, this could affect your future ability to secure a mooring in the waters managed by the Stonington Harbor Management Commission.

We wish everyone a safe and enjoyable summer!



Stonington Police Marine Patrol

As we move into the summer months the Stonington Police Department Marine Unit would like to remind everyone of the top 5 safety issues we typically see on the water:

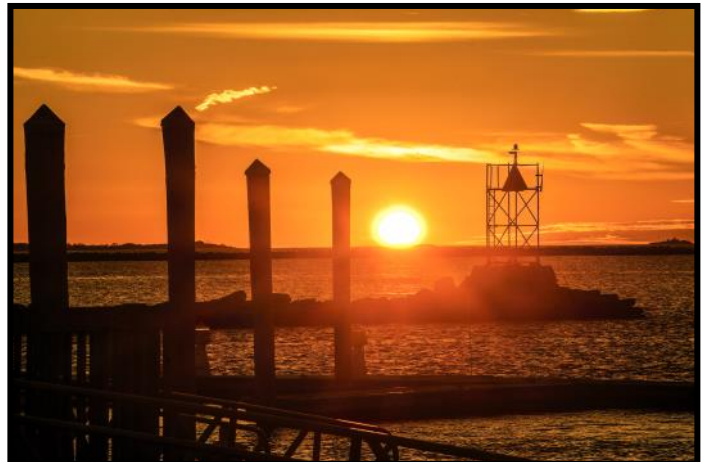
- Make every effort to wear your life jacket. At the very least make sure your life jackets are easily accessible at all times.
- **Reminder that all children under 13 years of age must have a life jacket on while underway.**
- Be prepared while heading out with a paddle craft. Be aware of conditions including weather, ocean temps, wind and current. Operate your paddle craft within your capabilities and avoid congested channels of navigation, which could impede your safety or the safety of others.
- **Do not allow individuals on your vessel to ride on the bow, gunwale or transom while underway. This is extremely dangerous for numerous reasons!**
- Watch your alcohol consumption while out on the water and drink responsibly. This applies not only to the captain of the vessel, but to the passengers as well.

Finally, be respectful of other boaters. Please watch your wake in the applicable areas. Do not attempt to pass vessels in congested areas when it is not reasonably safe to do so.



Take your time, enjoy the day and get home safely!

Visitors and Views of Our Harbor? (photos by Ingrid Fedderson)



*"The two best days in a boat owner's life are
the day they buy a boat, and the day they sell it."*

Year End Financial Reports for Year 2022

The Stonington Harbor Management Plan states all funds for the implementation of the Plan shall come from the mooring fees collected annually. No tax revenues from the Town or Borough of Stonington can be used. Each year a plan is developed to ensure current fees, plus funds carried over from the previous year, will cover expected operating expenses, planned projects and capital items.

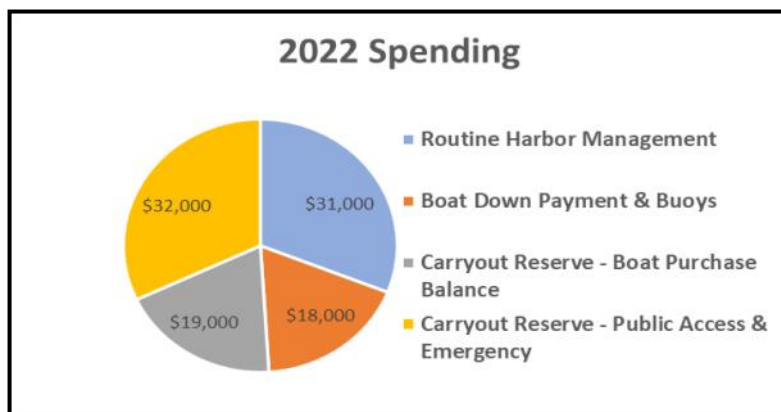
At every monthly meeting, the Commission reviews a Financial Report detailing income and expenses relative to the Stonington Harbor Management Plan (SHMP). The Financial Report is attached to the monthly meeting minutes and is available on the Stonington Town website.

INCOME:

- 18%—Commercial Mooring Fees
- 20%—Private & Special Use Mooring Fees
- 6%—Waiting List Fees
- 56%—Carryover from 2022

EXPENSES:

- \$29K—Routine Harbor Management
- \$23K—Boat Down Payment & Buoys
- \$21K—Carryout Reserve—Boat Purchase Balance
- \$20K—Carryout Reserve—Public Access & Emergency



Stonington Harbor Management Commission Goals

- ♦ To promote public awareness of the water-related facilities and activities available within the navigable waters within the jurisdiction of SHMC.
- ♦ To regulate use of the Harbor and the navigable waters within the jurisdiction of the SHMC in a manner that assures safe, orderly and efficient use of the water and the waterfront.
- ♦ To protect the natural and man-made resources of Stonington Harbor and designated waters.

Lee, Leeward, Leeway Meanings:

- **Lee** refers to the side of an object that is sheltered from the wind. To be "in the lee" is to be on the protected side of an object. A "lee shore" however, is to be avoided. The shore on the lee side of a vessel is considered more dangerous because the wind can drive the vessel onto the shore in inclement weather or if the vessel loses propulsion.
- **Leeward** means toward the lee (i.e., the opposite of windward.)
- **Leeway** is the leeward drift of a boat due to the wind.

****IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION****

Stonington Harbor Management Commission
152 Elm Street, PO Box 135
Stonington, CT 06378

Chairman—Jay Spalding: jspalding19@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.stonington-ct.gov>

Stonington Harbormaster — Eric Donch: harbormaster@usa.com Mobile: 860-303-5046/ VHF: 9 or 72

Online Mooring and Waitlist Administrator — Melanie Degler: mdegler16@gmail.com

Commissioners and 3-year Term Expirations:

Borough Representatives (5):

Sherman Crites, <i>Treasurer</i>	6/24
Jesse Diggs, <i>Vice-Chairman</i>	6/24
Bruce MacKinnon	6/25
Edward Smith	6/23
Joseph Williams, III	6/23

Town Representatives (5):

Melanie Degler	4/25
Tori Gimple	4/24
Caleb Rose	4/25
Stathis Manousos	4/25
Jay Spalding, <i>Chairman</i>	4/24

****MOORING HOLDER IMPORTANT DATES****

- ♦ **January 30th** Mooring Permit Renewal Applications Emailed to Current Mooring Holders from OnlineMooring.com
- ♦ **February 28th** Special Purpose Mooring Applications Due to Harbormaster/ Commission
- ♦ **April 1st** **Mooring Permit Renewal Applications Must Be Completed/ Paid Through Online Mooring**
- ♦ **April** Current Assigned Mooring Holder and Current Waitlist Posted at Town Hall
- ♦ **June 30th** **WINTER STICKS MUST BE REPLACED WITH APPROVED MOORING BALLS**
- ♦ **September 30th** Waitlist Renewals Emailed from OnlineMooring.com
- ♦ **October 1st** Winter Sticks May Begin to Replace Mooring Balls
- ♦ **December 31st** All Mooring Permits Expire