

St. Paul Yacht Club Anchor Line

STPAULYACHTCLUB.ORG 651-292-8964 100 YACHT CLUB ROAD B-1, ST. PAUL, MN 55107

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COMMODORE'S REPORT

Welcome to the St. Paul Yacht Club!



The St. Paul Yacht Club (SPYC) has been in continuous operation on Harriet Island since 1912. SPYC has a history so rich that you could lose yourself exploring it. Whether this is your first, tenth or twentieth year, we are glad you are here.

Any adventure on the river will teach you something. Sometimes those adventures are welcome while others are learning opportunities. And just like no two trips on the river are the same, no two years at the marina are quite the same either.

Building on our traditions and recognizing the ever-changing nature of the club and the river, we will be refreshing our strategic plan this year. A guiding principle in thinking about how we operate the club this year and for the next decade to come, we will focus on sustainability and repeatability.

The SPYC mission and vision are the bedrock that the strategic plan is built upon, so it bears sharing these with new and existing members.

Mission

- Dedication to safe and affordable boating through cooperative efforts
- Fostering a greater interest in motorboating and the Mississippi River
- Service to members and community

Vision

- Maintaining quality facilities and services at the same quality as the Harriet Island Park System

- Strengthening our connection with the river for environmental stewardship and community service
- Creating a floating village with character exhibits the standard for a good neighborhood with vessels in good, safe, and working order and a well-maintained dock system making a livable community.

Making all of this work starts with our members. We have 11 members on the SPYC board elected by their peers in the marina. Their responsibility is to guide us on setting appropriate processes and procedures. The board, working with our Marina Manager Kristina Cummings, Dock Master Brian Koskie, staff, and volunteers, ensure that we execute our mission and vision. Ultimately our goal is to remove surprises in the marina's operation and enable our members to truly enjoy the club, the river, and the wildlife surrounding us.

Changes that we can look forward to this year include:

Gas Dock

We will have a new fuel dispenser pump installed this spring



SPYC Upper Harbor (September 2016)

to bring reliable fueling through the season. The new pump will be chip card ready to ensure security and trustworthy payment processing.

Pump-outs

We will also have a new pump-out system installed in the service well next to the clubhouse. The pump is from the same manufacturer as the pump in the lower harbor that has operated reliably for years in the lower harbor.

Harbor Maintenance

As returning members are well aware, we have the challenge of effective harbor maintenance. Fortunately, we are well-positioned to maintain both the Upper and Lower Harbors this year.

This year we have received congressional funding for the Core of Engineers (COE) to clean out our Lower Harbor from the Raspberry Island Bridge toward the City Dock. The shore-side and Miller docks will be floating again! We thank Barbara Haake for her tireless efforts in securing the funding to make this happen.



SPYC Lower Harbor (April 2020)

We will, of course, also be resuming our own dredging operations to maintain the Upper Harbor starting this spring. Our operations committee will develop the dredging plan primarily driven by river levels.

We are poised to have a great boating season on the river despite the challenges. I look forward to seeing our members returning, bringing life back to the marina after a long winter, and getting ready for a season full of fun and adventure.

— Bill Tschohl

EXPLORING SPYC AND BEYOND

There are amazing opportunities to explore both land and sea at SPYC!

WALKING, BIKING, AND SCOOTING

We are all here primarily for boating, but opportunities for adventures by land are easily within reach. If you want to go for a stroll, we have Harriet Island and Lilydale Regional Park right next to us. Raspberry Island is also a short walk from anywhere in our harbors. The Westside of St. Paul, just up Wabasha St., has some great food and pubs just a short trip from our harbors. Scooters and bikes are readily available for rent at Harriet Island to enable greater exploration of the parks and downtown St. Paul.



Harriet Island Park - stpaul.gov (undated)

BOATING ON THE INCREDIBLE RIVER SYSTEM

The mighty Mississippi, Minnesota and St. Croix rivers are all accessible from our St. Paul Yacht Club harbor, starting right at our harbor entrances.

The Mississippi River really is the star around here. The Mississippi National River and Recreation Area encompasses 72 miles and has been said to have more character than the entirety of the 2,350 mile-long Mississippi river. You can explore the river up to The Lower St. Anthony Falls lock and dam all the way down to the Gulf of Mexico. We are in Pool 2 between Lock 1 in Minneapolis and Lock 2 in Hastings. Pool 2 is considered the second-best walleye fishing area in Minnesota, only bested by Mille Lacs Lake.

Heading upriver from our harbors, you will pass underneath the Smith Avenue High Bridge and the historic Omaha Road Bridge 15 with its unique asymmetrical swing span. Continuing upriver you will encounter Pike Island, part of Fort Snelling State Park, which is at the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota rivers.



Confluence of the Minnesota (left) and Mississippi (right) rivers - Minnesota Pollution Control Agency File (undated)



Confluence of the Mississippi (left) and St. Croix (upper) rivers, Prescott, WI - United States Geological Survey (undated)

If you continue up and to the right, you will stay on the Mississippi River, but if you branch left, you would be on the Minnesota River. You can continue up the Minnesota River all the way to Shakopee, where you can listen to the kids screaming on the roller-coasters at Valley Fair. There are very limited locations to the beach, but the Minnesota River is always a great day excursion.

Up the Mississippi, you can beach and explore any of the parks or motor along and keep an eye out for deer, red fox, and a plethora of bald eagles. If you do choose to beach your boat for an afternoon, you can swim in the river for a refreshing respite from the heat or set up a chair and enjoy some snacks and refreshments. As most of the beaches are located in parks, don't set up a campfire or tent. The sand bar at Lock 1 is an excellent place to beach and relax for the day.

Heading downriver from our harbors, you will pass the Paddleford excursion boats along with the Covington Inn Bed and Breakfast (both are great for those chilly days or when you end up with the dilemma of too many guests or not enough boat). Continuing downstream, the Mississippi River shows its working river roots with the Upper River Services fleeting operations, the St Paul Downtown Airport, Union Pacific Railyard, and the multi-use barge terminal. Beyond that, you will be back to a wide-open river to explore with a multitude of islands, marinas, and beaches before you get to Lock 2 in Hastings. If you go through the lock, you can continue further south and branch off to the St. Croix River or go further south to more beaches. Just a few miles further on the Mississippi and you will arrive at Treasure Island Marina in Red Wing.



Prescott, Hastings, Red Wing on the Mississippi River, and Stillwater on the St. Croix all make great weekend trips, each with their own character to explore.

Remember, you can always ask your neighbor in the marina for tips and tricks on the best spots to visit. There are also plentiful resources on the internet for safely navigating the river, such as the Minnesota DNR's Mississippi River Guide and the Mississippi River State Water Trail.

SOCIALIZING AT SPYC

Providing members a venue to socialize beyond their boats and slips by hosting events is an important aspect at SPYC. As in previous years, the SPYC Social Committee hopes to have a jam packed season of social events to bring our members together for some fun on the docks and beyond.

Our first social event of the 2022 season was the Boot Hockey and Potluck held at the SPYC clubhouse and on the ice in the harbor. We had a great turnout and fantastic weather, and some seriously (well not so much) competitive boot hockey.



Boot hockey and potluck (February 2022)



The most up-to-date schedule of events is maintained on SPYC's website:

2022 SPYC CALENDAR

The current list of events

- April 12th - General Meeting (*Tuesday*)
- April 30th - Yard Party and Bonfire (*Saturday*)
- May 6th - TGIF Cinco de mayo! (*Friday*)
- May 14th - Season Kickoff Party (*Saturday*)
- May 21st - Captains Breakfast (*Saturday*)
- May 28th - Memorial Day Steak Fry (*Saturday*)
- June 5th - New boater orientation, Captains Picnic Lunch/Brunch, National Marina Day (*Sunday*)
- June 14th - General Mtg (Flag Day) (*Tuesday*)
- June 19th - Captains Breakfast (Alternate for flag day ceremony) (*Sunday*)
- June 24th - 25th Commodore's summer Cotillion/Ball (*Friday*)
- July 10th - Beach Party on Pike Island (*Sunday Funday*)
- July 16th - Dance Party at the Clubhouse (*Saturday*)
- July 30th - Party at the Club (Themed) (*Saturday*)
- August 12th - TGIF Irish Fest warm up (*Friday*)
- August 12th - 14th Irish Fair (*Friday*)
- August 27th - National Hot Dog Day Party (Sweet Corn) (*Saturday*)
- September 3rd - Giant Chicken Feed (*Saturday*)
- September 10th - Full Harvest Moon Dance Party/return of the Rib Kings! (*Saturday*)
- September 23rd - TGIF and Movie Night (*Friday*)
- October 8th - Halloween Party (*Saturday*)



DREDGING DIARIES

As mentioned in the Commodore's Report, harbor maintenance is a key challenge for both the Upper and Lower Harbors. The Operations Committee is responsible for planning and communicating the dredging plans for the marina.

UPPER HARBOR

Last year we embarked on taking control of our own dredging destiny in the Upper Harbor by purchasing and deploying a dredger and storage infrastructure for bottom sediment.



SPYC dredger (July 2021)

We filled a few trucks with sediment we dredged out of the harbor. This year we expect to double that volume. We have the right crew and equipment to get this work done. They learned a lot in our first year of dredging operations last year and we will be building on that experience to make dredging operations predictable and repeatable.

This year the dredging plan will likely be as fluid as the river and will depend on river levels and the amount of material deposited by the river in the spring. We will focus on making the harbor entrance and the main channel navigable throughout the season. Maintaining the harbor channel will help slough sediment out of slips. We will also be clearing some of the most affected slips to help ensure boats stay afloat and are able to explore the mighty Mississippi and beyond.

LOWER HARBOR

It is official, the Lower Harbor (also known as the St. Paul Small Boat Harbor) will be dredged by the Army Corps of Engineers (COE) in the near future; maybe this year, maybe next, but it will be done. The COE has already started the process by surveying the Lower Harbor on April 1, 2022!



Dredging of the Lower Harbor (September 2018)

On March 15th, 2022, President Joe Biden signed the FY2022 Omnibus/Appropriations Bill that included our request for \$500,000 to dredge our Lower Harbor. The appropriation was in Congresswoman Betty McCollum's proposal that ten projects in her district receive funding from the congressional Community Project Fund (CPF). We were one of the ten projects Betty brought to Congress and got into the FY2022 Omnibus/Appropriations Bill.

As many know, we have needed the Lower Harbor dredged for years. It is the sole responsibility of the COE and the City of St. Paul to keep our Lower Harbor open per an agreement/law that was passed in the 1939 Rivers and Harbors Act.

Efforts to secure funding for the COE go back to the early 2000's when a budget line item was formally required by the COE to fund maintenance operations. The CPF funding is one-time funding which means that we will need to continue to work with the COE to ensure maintenance of the Lower Harbor is a permanently financed, budgeted item.

We have also discussed long-term solutions to the sediment build-up we get in the Lower Harbor, but that is another story (and of course, more money).



FROM THE EDITOR

This is the first issue of the Anchor & Line Newsletter since January 2019. That is far too long to go between issues and we intend to have at least three more issues this year including more fun and pertinent information for our SPYC membership and community.

Look for more updates over the summer and we'll see you on the docks and out on the river.

You can contact the Anchor & Line at anchorandline@stpauyachtclub.org.

SPYC CONTACT INFORMATION 2022

Commodore - **Bill Tschohl** - bill.tschohl@stpauyachtclub.org - 651-335-1719

Vice Commodore - **Mike Patten** - mike.patten@stpauyachtclub.org - 612-423-6265

Treasurer - **Lynn Adler** - lynn.adler@stpauyachtclub.org - 612-599-4545

Secretary - **Barbara Haake** - barbara.haake@stpauyachtclub.org - 651-442-1022

Board Member - **Brett Cummings** - brett.cummings@stpauyachtclub.org - 612-481-8681

Board Member - **Troy Janisch** - troy.janisch@stpauyachtclub.org - 608-576-7533

Board Member - **Andy Ristrom** - andy.ristrom@stpauyachtclub.org - 612-242-4118

Board Member - **Nathan Schuman** - nathan.schumann@stpauyachtclub.org - 651-295-7909

Board Member - **Diane Scovill** - diane.scoville@stpauyachtclub.org - 612-719-9769

Board Member - **Annie Stone** - anne.stone@stpauyachtclub.org - 612-756-1559



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