



Jibs and Jibes

Official Newsletter of the Webster Sailing Association

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jibsandjibes@comcast.net

Notices to Mariners

First race of the season

Racing season starts on Sunday, June 2 at 2 pm. The docks will be busy that day.

Calendar Corrections

The second full moon sail will be held on Sunday July 21 at sunset. The fourth full moon sail will be held on Saturday Sept. 21 at sunset.

Missing Byline

The iceboating article in the February issue should have the byline "Roger Livingston."

Membership

Deceased

We note the passing of Eleanor Trull Craver, a former member. She died on March 29, 2012.

Articles

Flares

Both the Coast Guard and the Massachusetts Environmental Police require all vessels to have night visual distress signals after sunset. If your

boat is less than 16 feet long, or is open and does not have a motor, then you do not need day signals. If you use pyrotechnic flares you must have at least three unexpired ones. Red flares may be used day or night.

I own red flares, but had never used one. It is hard to find a proper way of disposing of expired ones. Should I give them to the Coast Guard? To the Fire Department? To a hazardous materials dump? I didn't like having them accumulate in my basement, but it was one of those things "I would eventually get around to."

Last month I had the opportunity to attend an expired flare shoot-off on the Merrimack River sponsored by the Salisbury Harbormaster, Ray Pike. At dusk we fired off a collection of expired flares.

First the Harbormaster broadcast a warning that the following flares would not indicate an emergency. Then we saw demonstrations of red flares, orange smoke flares, and red parachute flares shot from a flare gun.

We all had an opportunity to try flares of our choice. I chose red flares. The trainer gave me goggles and thick leather work gloves. The first flare I tried was a dud—remember that they were all expired—but the second one worked. The trainer told me to hold it over the side of the boat to avoid burning the boat, and hold it more vertical than horizontal to avoid burning myself. It is easy to ignite. It lasts about three minutes, which seems long when you are holding "a roman candle," would seem longer if you were eager to abandon ship, and would seem short if you were trying to attract attention. It is a bright light but is only about five feet above the deck, which might be difficult to see in high seas. A parachute flare would solve that problem.

This was a good way to get rid of my expired flares. Now I have more confidence if I ever have to use one in “distress and need of assistance” at sea.



courtesy of Dvortygirl/Wikimedia Commons

Rub the end of the flare briskly against the coarse striking surface on the cap.

Letters

Webster Lake

This is a modified version of a letter from member Henry Neeser found on the WSA Facebook page. It addresses the question of who currently controls the Lake level and how they decide what the Lake level should be. With the closing of the Cranston Print Works, this has been a matter of concern to the community—

To the Town of Webster Residents:

I found out who is in charge of the water levels at the lake.

Galaxy Development LLC (GDLLC) of Auburn, Mass. purchased the Cranston Print Works property and has been developing the new East Village Square (site of the new Price Chopper), and also owns the land around the dam, sluice etc. I spoke with Michael O'Brien, and he was more than willing to tell me anything I asked him. He is a verry nice guy, and has only the best interest in preserving Webster Lake.

GDLLC created “Webster Lake Preservation Trust,” and has hired a private group to maintain the dam structure. The Trust is going to maintain the water levels in accordance with the US Army Corps of Engineers guidelines.

The dam has been closed tight for over 2 weeks. The lake is low because of the lack or rain. The lake is spring fed, but the springs aren't adequate to keep the lake full, as the higher levels are dependent on water runoff.

Anybody saying that the lake is being intentionally lowered does not know the facts. It is low, but it is not 4' low. It is about 1' lower than its average depth.

Photos



courtesy of Sally Mitchell



courtesy of Henry Neeser



courtesy of Sally Mitchell



courtesy of Susan Colby



courtesy of Susan Colby



courtesy of Henry Neeser



courtesy of Henry Neeser



courtesy of John Colby



courtesy of Henry Neeser

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67 TURKEY HILL RD
NEWBURYPORT, MA 01950-3420