



BROAD SHEET

August 19, 2005

From the Commodore:

Rafting Up with the Chesapeake Morgan Association

Rafting Up may seem to be a daunting challenge for those who have never tried it. An article in the July 2005 issue of "The Ensign" got me to wonder if this is a barrier that keeps some new CMA members from becoming more active. Actually, rafting is quite easy, and the rewards of conviviality and camaraderie are well worth the effort. I'll tell you how easy it is; but first, let me tell you why we do it. We look forward to seeing old Morgan friends, meeting new ones (Morgan owners are always the most interesting folks you'll ever meet), sharing stories, learning, discussing projects, problems and solutions, and not least, sharing excellent food and drink.

Relaxation, enjoyment, no rules, no uniforms, no ceremonies.

CMA Raft Ups are scheduled for roughly once a month from May through October at different locations. In general, the host or anchor boat will arrive and bury its anchor around 2PM. Other boats arrive in their own time and tie onto the raft. Early arrivals might swim, crab, fish, explore by dinghy, or whatever the local attraction might be (napping qualifies). Around 5PM, nearly all the boats have arrived, and Happy Hour begins in earnest; each boat contributes a little something to the communal hors d'oeuvres (ranging from caviar to kolbassi to carrots – no one tries to out do anyone, just have fun together), and each boat provides its own favorite beverages. Around 6 or 6:30, folks return to their own boats to enjoy dinner with family and friends. Some of the folks will gather after dinner for sundowners.

Only if the weather is guaranteed calm will the raft spend the night; otherwise, before sundown the raft will break and each boat will anchor individually. On Sunday morning, the host or other boat might serve coffee or Bloody Mary' s (one notorious couple –she's a past commodore- makes fabulous eggs and sausage for all), and gradually the gang assembles once again for good company and conversation. Some boats like to leave early for home port or a day sailing, others will stay until after lunch, which can be another communal and convivial event, perhaps a photo op or two, then farewells until the next raft up.

Just a few common sense guidelines make rafting up easy for everyone. Some of these are adapted from The Ensign article by P/D/C Robert A. Peters of the Hilton Head Power Squadron.

1. Let the Raft Host know a few days in advance if you think you might be there. Check the website for last minute changes.
2. As you near the location, call the host on VHF 74. Ask if you will tie up on the port or starboard side of the raft.
3. Hang two fenders on the appropriate side of your boat, and get four dock lines ready (bow, stern and two springs).
4. Approach the raft slowly, from the quarter, on a slight angle aiming your bow toward the bow of your raft partner.
5. When along side, first pass your bow line to the raft boat, then pass your stern line, adjust until the boats are parallel, then pass and set your spring lines, adjust so spreaders are clear of one another. (Don't worry, "experienced" captains will be on the raft giving you plenty of advice and directions; and a dozen hands will be standing by to help you. That's what sailors do naturally).
6. Adjust fenders, kill the engine, relax, come over to the host boat and say "hi."

Hope to see you at a Chesapeake Morgan Association Raft Up in the near future.

Commodore Larry Breck
GOLDEN DAZE, Morgan OI-416