

# LIBERTÉ, THE SCHOONER

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 9

**March 21, 2009** Hello to everyone. I hope this finds you and yours doing well, and keeping your heads above water in these difficult times, offering a helping hand where you can. When the weather gets rough, we reduce sail, secure the deck, watch for chafe and take care of the crew.

During the Spring of 2008, I was already tired from the long hours of building out the interior and commissioning the boat. But finally, on April 27th we sailed for a brief shakedown cruise. My old friend, Chuck, and new friend, Butch, came along to hoist sails and beverages. It is indeed important to have a test run of all of the equipment. It was discovered that the coolers needed new hinges. The bamboo flooring was still not completely installed. To complete a four-day project in three is easy: one works 'til midnight. The bamboo flooring in the upper great room was completed and we started chartering the very next day.

The skies cleared for Pat's daughter's 30th birthday; a fine group, a fine sail and a fine way to start the season. On Sunday, May 11th, the Champagne Sail was cool but pleasant. Following that, the Fairchilds from Michigan were able to get in a sail just before a squall line came through. Five days later we were truly into the season. Both Scitor and Johnson Lambert were back onboard, followed the next day by two birthday sails, one of which had a cake with lots of frosting, making it delicious to clean up. Connie from the Chart House (congratulations on your baby girl!) and friends weathered the drizzle for their Champagne Sail. The bus tour afterwards was rained out, as was the Blue Angels practice day charter. It was a good call, as they only did a quick flyover in the murky weather. The following day was clear and bright, however, and the navy pilots put on quite a show. A bachelor party the next day was rocking with 22+ knots of wind, a hardy group and great music.

As Commissioning week came to a close, we had two events with very light breeze. First, the Roberts had a sail to celebrate their daughter's commissioning, enjoying the local sights as they're from Ohio. In the evening, Jane Van Essen (who had a group onboard for the Blue Angels just a few days earlier) threw a big dinner party for her daughter's commissioning. The next day we had three sails with Ava onboard. Quite experienced now, she can pitch in with the running of the boat and entertaining visiting children, but sometimes she just disappears below decks. On Monday, Bob from Las Vegas wanted to drive for most of the sail, and was actually a pretty good helmsman.



Ava

The following Saturday, Stacy Murray, who we see every year in Cape Cod, and friends arrived at our Annapolis dock to celebrate a couple of 40th birthdays. Unfortunately, a pouring rain arrived around the same time. Since the bulk of the group had come from so far away (New Jersey) and they had so much food, we had a dock party. It was a shame that it rained hard for their chosen time period. The weather was nice before and after, so we actually got Tidewater Dental out on the water that evening for a lovely sunset. Good thing we had Latin music, as one lady from Puerto Rico danced the entire time!

An afternoon bus trip was going fine until a line of fast-moving thunderstorms popped up on our radar. We lowered sails and motored fast to secure ourselves to the dock prior to the down-pour. Those that stayed on the dock or went into the Chart House stayed dry, but those that scampered to the bus got wet. Special kudos to Chuck, our local microclimatologist.

Ava's first grade class trip was another Pirate adventure aboard the *Liberté*. We had two professional pirates from Pirate Adventures ([www.chesapeakepirates.com](http://www.chesapeakepirates.com)) and two of our own scurvy dogs, Patrick F. and Chuck. Chuck was "late" for work and the kids made him walk the plank. He's a big guy and makes a big splash, both literally and figuratively. SOAR, a group of active retirees from Montgomery County, joined us for a few sails once again. A gentle breeze pushed us about all day. Chris H. assisted with the folks. A big thanks to Phil for arranging these trips every year.



**Ava and Tidewater Dental**

On June 7th, a group of bachelorettes were "treated" to quite a spectacle. We'd had a fine sail out into the Chesapeake with thunderstorms well to the North and moving northeast. There was a grand show of lightning. Then we noticed, both on the radar and visually, that the storm had grown and was moving our way. We quickly doused sail and began motoring home. The group seemed a bit concerned that Jane was very serious, until they saw that she was serious about how to continue the party. Luckily, *Liberté's* new galley had a big, beautiful sink which quickly became an ice-filled bar. Though we didn't get any rain, and the wind never went over 20 knots, we were prepared to let the bachelorettes party, thunderstorms or not.

A few days later, George Pappas brought a group out for a huge cocktail party. Despite the lack of wind, it was a great sunset and we dropped them off at the Annapolis Yacht Club to continue their party. The next day, Tiffany returned with her girls lacrosse team from Texas. We're delighted to be a part of their Annapolis visit. (The soda bar was very, very busy!) Pepper Hamilton had a big luncheon sail once again, followed by Campbell Wealth Management with a group of their clients. We took a little scenic motoring cruise while waiting for the last four clients to arrive, then picked them up and headed out into the Bay for a charming sail.

Saturday, June 14, was an anxious day for Miss Jane, as we had not one, but two weddings aboard and the forecast wasn't good. The first event went smoothly as Mike and Tiffany had a lovely ceremony, then a little sailing and a little motoring with lots of great food in just a few sprinkles. Jim and Althea were married that afternoon. The group had some serious boating experience among them, and Jim's dad had an X-M weather watch showing the current Doppler radar. We observed the rain and thunderstorm cells approach in real time. Meanwhile, right after the ceremony the crew from a committee boat started yelling at us for crowding the race course and we easily avoided the approaching fleet of... one. We hoisted the fisherman and had a rousing sail before dropping it and the mizzen when the wind built up and gave us a perfect sail into Annapolis harbor. It was an absolutely perfect day, as we seemed to be in a bubble, with storms all around us. What a relief!

Joy put *Liberté's* skills, determination and flexibility to the test. A family reunion of 25 scheduled for 5pm, first they called to ask about coming at 6pm instead. Agreeing to the change (we're flexible when we can be), the group arrived later still because the bus got lost and dropped them off several blocks away. Now a group of 40 with lots of kids, I had to make some quick calls, first to get Jane and Ava back from the Eastport Arockin' festival to crew, and second to get more children's life jackets. We got off the dock a bit later still but had a fine family excursion. Ava was in her glory serving sodas to all of the children. On June 22nd, Corrin had her 60th birthday with a musician playing guitar, an easy breeze and a dinner spread that couldn't be beat.

The Midtown Group came out with us once again on June 27th. We love this group and it was sad that they couldn't get their annual swim in this year. Thunderstorms, lightning and swimming are not a good combination. We had a sunset charter from the Admiral of the Bay; it was a delightful sail. The U.S. Coast Guard was conducting boardings in the harbor but did not insist with us as we were on charter. Hughes Hubbard had a full day aboard the *Liberté*. The morning began with coffee and pastries, followed by a crab eating contest at Cantlers. We had a fine afternoon breeze with snacks and some dozing. I asked the "Super Cargo", "Does your group want to get back to the dock wet or dry?". "Dry, but not early," was the answer. My reply was that if it wasn't early, it would be wet. Literally, the rains arrived as the passengers debarked. We managed to get in another charter that evening and Emergent Solutions had a slow glide in front of the

Naval Academy. The last Sunday in June brought us Arent Fox and another very light breeze. Then the wind filled in for a sunset with Platinum Protection, an exciting sail with a great sunset.

The next day, Monday, June 30th, we departed for Cape Cod at 1630, 2 1/2 hours late according to the Captain. Jane & I were joined by Perry and Butch for the delivery. Though frustrated by the late departure, we've learned that it's better not to leave until actually ready, and on that day the guideline really paid off. Besides being ready, the delay allowed a monster of a thunderstorm to pass just ahead of us. That first night we anchored in Still Pond and had a fantastic steak dinner, followed by a bit of shut-eye.

With just a sliver of the moon rising over the silhouetted trees in the early morning, we got underway through the C&D Canal, to the Delaware River and on into the Delaware Bay. We motored throughout a calm day and made it out into the Atlantic in the late afternoon. Hoisting sails to an easy southwest breeze and a roly swell from the South, we proceeded out into the ocean. By morning, we were all tired of the roll (mostly Miss Jane) and calls to jibe were muttered about. But Butch had brought fishing poles and lures and we were gonna catch us a fish! So we rolled for another hour plus to reach the Hudson Canyon, but nobody had pulled out the rods and prepared them. We jibed and passed over several large fish slicks, but by the time the gear was ready, the fish were gone.

The day turned out to be a beauty and while the Captain caught up on some much-needed sleep, the crew began Happy Hour a bit early and cranked up the music. Enjoying the sail and the sunshine, they were joined by a group of porpoises for a while. (You can see them on YouTube if you search for *Liberté* and dolphins). All in all, a delightful trip that brought us into Falmouth on July 3rd.

July 4th weekend got started early this year as the Bowens had their houseguest holiday sail. Then Bonnie and Stephen had their big fireworks party: a smooth sail, lobster rolls and champagne. On Saturday morning, we had a small group and our new crew, Mr. Andrew, had a chance for some training and we all refreshed on the man-overboard and fire drills. We did not have last year's crewing problems. During the winter we'd interviewed several excellent candidates and were about to commit to one when Mr. Andrew emailed. His resumé greatly resembled my own at his age.



**Putting up sail in Vineyard Sound.**

He and Mr. Perry proved to be an excellent team on the big, active charters. And so we moved on into an extremely busy season. On Sunday, July 6th, there was a steady southeast wind at 10 - 12 knots and a hazy sky and the Murphy clan celebrated an 80 birthday. That night the Mullheiser group took over the aft deck. Monday was a day off and Tuesday's sunset sail was Mr. Andrew's first solo. With only 17 people onboard, but 20 knots of wind, in two hours we passed West Chop, East Chop, West Chop again, Nobska and Surf Drive. "Wow! What a sail!"

Wednesday, July 9th was an active day. The high bilge alarm was activated that morning. Someone had left the faucet on and the drain closed. Thankfully it wasn't too messy to clean up. The afternoon was a charter for Bette's husband's 70th. With lots of food and drink, I'd asked both Andrew and Perry to crew. A stiff breeze was up and the first reef in the main was set. We sailed to Nobska, off of Woods Hole and then past West and East Chops to Oak Bluffs. We were working our way back up into Vineyard Haven when the mainsail shredded, luff to leach. The crew rushed to take the sail in. "Gentlemen," I calmly stated, "She's torn so there's no rush. Let's have a nice, clean drop." And so they did, then raised the mizzen and finished a fantastic sail. It certainly helped my nerves to know there was a brand-new mainsail in the bag in the hold. By Thursday afternoon we were rigged and ready to roll. Four generations of the Hough family enjoyed a lovely sunset. Pete Thurston and his gang from Bankers Life made it to Lamberts Cove. The breeze laid down a bit for Headlines' full party of appetizers and ribs. Jack threw a huge party for Megan's 30th birthday. The weather cooperated with a special one-tack past Nobska and the Airplane House to the Elizabeth Islands. Chinese food was a great idea, too!

On July 14th, Cindy's birthday sail was canceled because of rain. (This will be an ongoing theme...) The Red Hat Society came aboard for a sunset/moonrise. Then Jill's corporate group had a lovely night with a beautiful sunset and moonrise. On the 17th, Mr. & Mrs. Ledoux threw a lovely party for their son, Matt, and his fiancée, Steph, as part of their pre-nuptial events, just before the rehearsal dinner at the Flying Bridge. Three days of calm winds in a row, it was this sail that demonstrated the lack of powerboats: calm, still and flat. There was just enough wind to sail against the tide. No boat wakes, no motorboat noise, just the *Liberté* off Falmouth Town Beach on a lovely night, all alone. The high price of fuel was definitely making its mark.



The Captain gives the "spiel".

July 18th saw three charters, each with a perfect situation. Elder Care was out in the morning before the wind and waves came up. Oceanna entertained family and friends on a lively sail in the afternoon as part of her pre-wedding events. Finally, Barbara's full dinner sail saw diminishing winds and waves for a perfect cruise. The next day we sailed with a large fleet of traditional, classic and modern sailboats off West Chop. Later we sailed home at 9.5 knots. Then Come Wine with Us had a rough evening of it until we arrived in the lee of Vineyard Haven. They always have a busy and delightful sail. July 20th had us fogged in, so we had a dock party for Briarwood. Clearing in the afternoon brought wind, a reef in the main, a tear in the jib, an 80th birthday party and 9+ knots of boat speed.

Monday brought rain and wind so I spent my "day off" sewing the jib together, pampering the engine and steerage. We got off on Tuesday evening with Celine and her group of nurses for a sunset with scudding clouds. The next evening, family and friends celebrated an 18th birthday on the aft deck with guitars and lovely voices serenading the cruise. Katherine Brennan brought her dental office out for a calm sail. During the sunset, Perry managed to get the Red Sox - Yankee game on his cell phone, at a passenger's request. This was the week that Chuck came to visit for a few days, so there was always something going on besides sailing. Chuck and Ava set up a mini-aquarium in a bucket, complete with rocks, shells, seaweed and a live crab they caught using a chicken neck. Then one evening, Perry showed Chuck around town; they both managed to lose their flipflops at the beach. (We can only imagine them singing "Kumbaya"...)

### 2009 Calendar

**April 24 - June 28\*..... Spring Sailing Season in Annapolis**  
**July 4 - Labor Day..... Sailing out of Falmouth, MA on Cape Cod**  
**September 15 - October 9 ..... Fall Season in Annapolis**

***\*Sunday Champagne Sails in May & June in Annapolis 11am - 1pm \$30 per person***

On the afternoon of Saturday, July 26th, we sailed past two very large, very modern sailboats. It was a rare sight as these vessels generally motor about, but both were under sail. Perhaps even the wealthy noticed the \$5 per gallon fuel prices. That night Ed and Gail had their big summer party, a highlight for Miss Jane and myself as well. The weather cooperated with 15 knots of breeze and a glorious sunset.

The Franklin Senior Center had a perfect sail with ten knots of wind on a slack tide. Enough to move, but not too hardy. The day remained calm, and we sailed on cat's paws and vespers. The lack of powerboats meant no noise, no wakes, no outside intrusions: quite magical. On August 2nd, the Malloys celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with gourmet sandwiches for the adults and "garbage food" (kid food brought in giant garbage bags) for the children. Miss Claire had the calmest sail and the girls sang a cappella. On August 3rd, Phil threw a party for his wife's birthday. (Sorry we couldn't pick up in Menehaunt.) What a sail, with 18 - 22 knots of wind and a reefed main. At West Chop a classic gaff-rigged schooner tacked 50' off our windward quarter and pressed on with us, still 50' off, into Vineyard Haven.

That night I made the infrequent bad-weather call. I thank the regulars who vouched for the *Liberté*. Scattered showers approached from the North and we were unable to avoid them. By 7pm, most everyone was soaked. A cool north wind filled in with a brief rainbow. The wind died off but a sloppy sea remained and we rolled around. An absolutely gorgeous sunset with crescent moon perhaps saved the crew from a keel-hauling. Everyone was invited to return on another day and try it again on us.

On Saturday, Doug and family came out for a sail. It's always a pleasure to see the old crew, and Doug was one of the first and one of the best. That evening we had our first pocket sunset of the season, a half moon, a lovely night and a great party with dancing on deck. August 10th brought the Falmouth Roadrace, and as usual, brother Frank had his post-race sail. It was a tough one this year with shifty winds and lots of boat traffic. But they had lots of beer, plenty of Buffett and "More Cowbell!" That evening Trish celebrated her 50th and we had to motor home from Falmouth Heights.

The next evening was Cindy's rescheduled birthday party. It rained in the morning and we had to cancel once again. Though the afternoon became sunny and gorgeous, by 7pm it was pouring; no wind, no sunset. But Cindy definitely got her birthday sail in the next night with three sunsets: on the water tower, on Nobska lighthouse and finally in the pocket. A hat trick!

Cory & Emily kicked off their wedding weekend with an afternoon sail and lots of rum. Then Hank from the Falmouth Yacht Club had a night cocktail cruise. A southerly breeze permitted us to ghost along Surf Drive beach. With the quiet music, we could hear the waves gently hitting the beach. We watched the lightning bolts approach from the west, sailed home and secured to the dock just before the rain arrived.



The Captain

August 16th was a day of remembering for Carl Hatfield and his family, celebrating the life of mom, Gerry. The afternoon wind came up, resulting in a hearty sail back. "She'd like that", we heard several say. That evening the wind eased and with the sunset, the moon rose and we had a lightning show to the north. The next afternoon we had a grand slam: Woods Hole, West Chop, deep into Vineyard Haven, off to East Chop, Oak Bluffs and back to Falmouth Heights. Elsa, my niece as well as crew, drove us home on a real powersail. That evening Come Wine with Us was aboard again. It was a blustery evening, not exactly ideal for tasting red wines. Andrew did a masterful job stalling the vessel in the lee of Nobska. The waves calmed and the wind eased and we sailed on, albeit slowly. Elsa managed to keep the food and drinks upright. (Side note: Come Wine with Us is a wine touring group, visiting wineries, restaurants and different historical and cultural sites. See more at [www.ComeWineWithUs.com](http://www.ComeWineWithUs.com)) The afternoon of August 19th proved somewhat exciting. A fine north wind found us sailing almost to Tarpaulin. On the return trip a huge thunderstorm approached and *Liberté* dropped all sail. It passed just east of us; a few big drops of rain, a gust of up to 40 knots and it was all over. We hoisted sails again but the storm left us with no wind, so we motored home.

The Preuss family arrived to spend a few days aboard with us. Jane's sister, Lee, and nephew, Brendan, were in town, so they joined Jane and Ava on the Preuss' boat for the first day, running down to Chappaquiddick Island and playing on the beach, then heading to Oak Bluffs for Illumination. Jonathan has to fish everywhere he goes and in O.B. that resulted in a large eel. The next day I took off, despite being a perfect sailing day of bright blue skies and a 12-knot breeze. I spent the day with my family and Eric and Amy and their kids on the beach just below the Tarpaulin Cove lighthouse. For the day, I was the passenger and it was very, very, very, very nice.

Perry's last sail of the season was full to capacity with a lovely sunset and a gentle breeze; perfect. The Sloate family had too gentle of a breeze and we actually had to motor a bit to keep things steady. Dad had a great 70th birthday party nonetheless. The afternoon saw a bit more wind and lots more of my family. Jane and Ava were aboard as well as Auntie Sue, Big Mike, his soon-to-be fiancée Kristen and her family visiting from California. The next day Cynthia and Stefan continued celebrating their daughter's wedding with a lovely Champagne brunch sail.



Emma and the big eel! (Yuck!)

The last Saturday of the season was drizzle, drizzle, drizzle. Brother Frank served the bar for Megan's dad's 65th birthday one-month-early, apparently the only way to fool him. This was also, unexpectedly, Andrew's last day as he fell ill, and Jane filled in as crew. Dave Welch and Curt Millington arrived that night in anticipation of the trip south, and the timing worked out great. Sunday was a fine day for sailing and with Jane, Dave, Curt and Ava too, the *Liberté* was fully staffed. Pup even had a chance to come out for a sail; nothing like putting it off until the last moment. Roo Bar came out for their annual end-of-the-season sail. I can only hope that their sail was as fun for them as our crew dinner was delicious at the restaurant the next night. Labor Day's last sail ended with a slow drift, a clear sunset and a big Tietje family party on the aft deck.

On Tuesday morning, Dave and Curt got right to it and we started our prep for departure. That afternoon, Larry Morar, Ric Ruffhead and Eric Preuss arrived. We settled a bit, organized a bit and completed our preparations by sunset. Then it was off to Roo Bar for that great crew dinner. There was a small hurricane off the coast of Florida and it headed south to Cuba. Seeing a window of opportunity to get to Cape May, we decided to leave early Wednesday morning rather than waiting for the afternoon tide. We departed at 4am for Annapolis: Captain Chris, Dave, Eric, Larry, Ric and Curt. This was a strong crew and we had a lot of fun. We cleared Gayhead at 6am under a clear sky with a northwest breeze of 12 - 15 knots. With full sail, we moved along the rhumb line for Cape May at about 8 knots. Eric had the fishing lines out and caught a bluefish by 7:45am. As the day wore on the wind faded and by 3pm our speed had dropped to 5 knots or less, so we put the engine on. By sunset the sea was glassy and we lowered all sails. Our course was south of the rhumb line as winds were expected to come up from the south the next day and I wanted the angle for sailing.

That evening on into the night was smooth motoring. But around 2am a long, choppy swell came up from the south. About every 5 minutes *Liberté* would get a rhythmic hobbyhorse motion going and finally plunge her bow deep into a wave. This would essentially stop the boat; the prop would cavitate, making an unholy racket. Slowly our speed would come back and a few minutes later we'd repeat the process. It made the few hours until dawn pass very slowly. With the arrival of false dawn I could better judge our situation: a nasty 3' choppy swell on the bow with less than 5 knots of southerly wind just off our port bow. Curt, Ric and I hoisted the jumbo jib, the main and the mizzen. The booms on the centerline and sheeted in tight helped smooth out the roll and we powered better into the chop. By midmorning we'd raised the yankee jib and barberhailed it in tight and raised the fore as well. The log notes a 3/4 knot gain in boat speed as a result.



Eric, Curt and the Captain having a good time offshore.

By this time the crew was awake, feeding on a big breakfast. They did a little fishing and enjoyed an early happy hour. We were in a good spot: no fishing boats, no trawlers, no tankers, ships or tugs. I went to bed, comfortable in the knowledge of an experienced, alert and attentive crew. The steady noise of the engine and easy motion made for a deep sleep. I was startled awake by the engine slowing down. What could it be? A ship, a squall, mechanical problems? I flew from my bunk headed for the cockpit. I could see Eric at the helm, looking right at me, his hand out flat like a policeman. "Easy, Capt'n, fish on." Well, that's still worth getting up for. It was a fair-sized dorado (also known as mahi-mahi).

As it had taken a while for them to land the fish and the engine had cooled down some already, we took a quiet break. It had been 24 hours of running and I needed to check over the engine carefully prior to running the Delaware Bay. The quiet was nice and we were making 4 knots without the fisherman, so we hoisted the fish and steadied out at 5 knots. We had a lovely 8 hour sail to the Delaware Bay entrance. As we turned to the north, the 10 - 12 knot apparent breeze fell to zero, so we cranked up the engine again. As we moved up the Delaware, the tide worked in our favor and we made it straight to Annapolis, arriving at 11:30am, 14 hours after entering the Delaware Bay.

**2009 CAPE COD SCHEDULE & FARES**

**July 4 - Labor Day, 7 Days a Week:**

	Adults	Children*
<b>10:30am - 12:30pm</b>	<b>\$ 20</b>	<b>\$ 15</b>
<b>2pm - 5pm (3 hours)</b>	<b>\$ 30</b>	<b>\$ 20</b>
<b>6:30 - 8:30pm Sunset**</b>	<b>\$ 30</b>	<b>(Adult fare only)</b>

Please plan to arrive ½ hour before scheduled departure time.

\*Children are 12 years old & under

\*\*The sunset sail will leave ½ hour earlier starting the week of August 10th though the end of the Summer season.

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Lashing the *Liberté* to the dock, the crew cleared the deck of the heavy stuff, helped with the sail covers and commissioned the dinghy. Chuck arrived as a welcoming committee. Dave Welch, after 20 straight hours on deck, went home. Ric and I headed for the shore showers, and upon our return, were unable to locate the rest of the crew. A search ensued, wandering over to the deli, to the pirates' lair, to the Boatyard. Fatigue concealed the obvious: we'd left three rogues, Larry, Curt and Eric, alone with a fully-operational dinghy and the establishments of Annapolis, a true sailor's town, just a short ride away. I think I took a nap. Upon awakening, my life had been completely organized for me: Eric had finagled a ride back to Norfolk; Ric, Larry and Curt were all headed home.

Dave returned and he and Chuck escorted myself and *Liberté* to Weem's Creek to wait out the approaching hurricane, Hannah. (Remember, when we left Cape Cod it was in Florida?) We dropped the big anchor, stripped off the jibs and lashed the other sails down. After a big dinner, I crashed, as did Dave, while Chuck went out in *Chevalier Blanc* (our dinghy, "White Knight") to help others secure for weather. On Saturday, with the storm approaching, we installed the anchor bridles and did a general tie-down. It blew about 50 knots and the Severn River was often a sea of white. With the high bluffs around Weems Creek, we had some gusts but were otherwise very well protected. Many, many thanks to the guys for their aid and support. By Sunday afternoon I'd hoisted anchor and was finally secure back at the Chart House.

The fall was fairly quiet as usual, with an assortment of bus tours and birthdays. Fortrex Technologies had 15 knots of breeze and full sail up as we passed an anchored warship, then an anchored submarine, and finally another warship. Mike, their boss, drove most of the time. On September 20th, Capt. Marty came aboard to perform the wedding ceremony for Mark and Jessy. It was very calm out and we had just enough wind to drift under sail into the sun setting over Annapolis. A few days later, Julia Turk, a dear friend from my Caribbean sailing days, stopped by on her way to Florida. She got to sail with us on a blustery day. That evening Julia, a fine artist, showed Ava some tricks of the trade.



**Mark & Jessy are married by Capt. Marty.**

Saturday, September 27th brought us heavy cloud cover and rain. Eric, from Palate Pleasers, called and offered one last time to release us from the catering ordered for that day's charter. All weather indications were for steady rain all day. I called Kevin O'Neill to cancel the sail, but he'd have nothing of that. "We're sailors!" So off we went for Lisa's 50th, laden with a beautiful spread of food, 36 passengers and steady rain. Patrick and Marcia were real troopers, helping out in the foul weather. We pretty much just motored about as there was no wind, carefully timing the serving of dinner with a break in the rain. With all the umbrellas, I had to stand up on a cooler to see over them.

Once again, we're at the end of the newsletter with so much more to tell. We went out for a fabulous start of the Great Chesapeake Bay Schooner Race (in 2009, we plan to be in the race), with just Jane, Chris and Bradford on board, later joined by Chuck in the dinghy. (Note to other schooners: we have no idea who that crazy guy was bombing around in a white inflatable at the start of the race...) Then we had impromptu guests when a delivery crew from France had nowhere to stay during Boat Show. The guys were great, giving Chris a chance to practice his French and Ava a chance to see the importance of learning it. Oh, and the *Liberté* made the cover of the 2009 Cape Cod Life calendar with a very cool shot of looking up into the rigging while under sail.

But most of all, we want to let on, for the few who don't know, about our plans to head South for the winter in November 2009. This does not change our schedule in Annapolis or Cape Cod, as we'll be back and running in both places. It just means living aboard year-round, not moving off or paying for an apartment. We will be seeing new sights, and hopefully, spending some time under palm trees and surfing. Though we have a destination (Puerto Rico), we're just going to take it as it comes. But rest assured, come April 2010, the *Liberté* will be back in Annapolis sailing through the Spring, then back up to Cape Cod at the end of June. Best wishes to all for a great year. Keep in touch; we'll do the same.

