

A Promotion for a Heading South Gathering in 2013

Are you planning to head south this Fall? Heading to Florida, the Bahamas, or the Caribbean? One of the best things about cruising is the folks you meet along the way, and SSCA offers many great opportunities to meet like-minded folks who are heading your way. It is helpful to talk to others about the best routes, great places to visit and anchor, and how to fix all the things on board that seem to have gremlins. SSCA sponsors informal get-togethers where new and experienced cruisers can gather and talk about their plans. If you are new to cruising you will have the chance to pick the brains of fellow SSCA members who have been out a while and know the ropes. You will meet folks in the summer and fall as you make your way South, folks with whom you will reconnect in many anchorages along your way.

The first "Heading South" gathering is scheduled for the end of the northern migration in Essex CT on June 22-24, 2013 and will be followed by one at the Downeast Gam in Islesboro, Maine August 3-4, 2013. Another will be held during the Annapolis Gam in the Chesapeake September 27-29 (the "Heading South" dinghy raft-up will be Thursday, September 26). Watch for details about these gatherings and for announcements about others along the way.

Outline for a Heading South Gathering

1. Introduction
 - a. "What we will do today is bring together these new cruisers with those who are more experienced and are willing to share our knowledge and listen to the questions you might have. There are a variety of different approaches but we have lots of experienced cruisers who will be happy to share their views with you."
 - b. Introduce moderator/facilitator – keep this short – you are less important than the group.
2. Solicit areas of interest
 - a. Take notes so nothing gets left out. Weave topics into your overall outline.
 - b. One of your goals is to promote camaraderie between experienced cruisers and newbies and among the year's "class" of newbies.
 - c. Be on the lookout for ways to promote leaving a Clean Wake – no speeches – just a comment between questions.
 - d. Encourage good seamanship.
 - e. Power cruisers are as welcome as sail cruisers – watch your own choice of words to avoid making power cruisers feel unwelcome.
3. Questions to get things rolling:
 - a. Who is heading South for the first time this year?
 - b. Who is heading South SOON?
 - c. Who has been South a number of times before?
4. Potential Issues

- a. Off shore vs. the ICW
- b. Strategies for the Jersey Coast and Delaware Bay
- c. Passing and being passed on the ICW
- d. Bridges, timing and courtesy
- e. Off shore or thorny path to the Caribbean
- f. Schedules and guests
- g. Wind with current
- h. Provisioning
- i. Communication
- j. Anchoring
- k. Medical
- l. Pets
- m. Kids
- n. Clean Wake
- o. Any other topic raised