

CCBA Tilghman Island Gathering — Event Report

July 30–August 2, 2026 — Knapps Narrows Marina

Tilghman Island, MD

Hosted by Al and Catherine Renzi

The Chesapeake Catboat Association returned to Tilghman Island for a relaxed and memorable summer gathering that blended sailing, learning, and community. Eleven catboats of varying lengths and models filled the floating docks at Knapps Narrows Marina, creating a lively waterfront scene and an impressive display for both CCBA members and Tilghman residents.



On arrival day, members gathered for dinner at Big Macks, where Fred Sherriff presented Dave Park with a half-hull model of a Marshall Sanderling, recognizing Dave's long-standing contributions to the CCBA.



Attendance was strong: 40 catboaters participated in the various venues and parts of the program over the course of the weekend, and with the local Tilghman community joining in, 52 people attended Friday's **Catboat Builders of the Chesapeake** presentation at the Tilghman Volunteer Fire Company.

Friday morning began with Dave Park's well-received catboat clinic, covering catboat history, design evolution, and rigging approaches. The session concluded with a robust Q&A, giving members the chance to compare techniques, and share practical insights to improve their sailing and catboat performance. This peer-to-peer exchange set a collaborative tone for the rest of the weekend.



On the water, five instructional-sailing pairings were organized, along with several additional crewing opportunities for those wanting hands-on experience. Modest but steady winds on both Friday and Saturday allowed boats to explore the Bay side and the Choptank side comfortably, making for enjoyable sailing without pushing the limits.



Knapps Narrows Marina proved an ideal host, offering slip access, comfortable rooms, showers, and a pool. From the floating docks, members enjoyed views of the drawbridge opening and closing, the steady rhythm of workboats, and easy access to Gina's, Big Macks, and the Tilghman General Store.

On Friday afternoon, members had the opportunity to tour the Tilghman Watermen's Museum, where they explored exhibits on the island's history, workboats, and the people who shaped the community's maritime heritage. This visit provided meaningful context for the catboat traditions discussed throughout the weekend.

Friday afternoon's program at the Fire Company featured Rich Scofield and Marc Cruder, moderated by Al Renzi, presenting **Catboat Builders of the Chesapeake**. Their stories brought to life the craftsmanship of Maynard Lowery and Joe Liener, supported by half-hull models, historical context, and personal anecdotes. The

session concluded with a special moment: the presentation of a Fenwick Williams 16 half-hull model, crafted by Fred Sherriff, to Hall Kellogg of the Tilghman Watermen's Museum in honor of Maynard Lowery's legacy.





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Thanks to Hall Kellogg and the Tilghman Watermen's Museum, the Fenwick Williams 16 half-hull model is now installed in the museum, displayed alongside photos of Maynard sailing and working in his shop.





After the presentation, we made our way to Gina's on the Bridge for a buffet dinner including a make-your-own taco bar.



Saturday began with a group sail in the morning, taking advantage of the day's early light winds and giving members another chance to enjoy time on the water together.

In the afternoon, the group ventured over to Severn Marine, where attendees had the opportunity to view two Maynard Lowery catboats on the hard — **Catnipper** and **Miss Dalloway**. This hands-on follow-up to the previous day's presentation allowed Marc Cruder and members to examine Maynard's construction details directly, reinforcing the design vocabulary and craftsmanship discussed during the panel.





The day wrapped with a potluck dinner on the floating docks, where stories, food, and laughter carried well into the evening. Pete Peters, Doug Oeler, and Pete Doyle played Irish songs and sea tunes, adding a warm musical backdrop that carried the evening and made the gathering feel even more connected and festive.

Members departed early Sunday morning to stay ahead of stronger winds forecast later in the day.



The weekend showcased not only our boats, but the community and traditions that keep catboats thriving on the Chesapeake. It was a gathering defined by shared knowledge, good sailing, and a deep appreciation for the builders who shaped the boats we love.

