



THE (QUIET) GREAT SALT POND

If you have never seen the Great Salt Pond during the winter months, here is a small snapshot of what you might see, not the bustling activity seen during the summer months. It's January and our island's Great Salt Pond is quiet now. There are no boats at anchor. Both private and rental moorings are winterized, out of service. Marinas have pulled their floats. On-shore facilities, restaurants and stores, are shuttered. If a hardy transient boater were to cruise into New Harbor in mid-winter he would find no guest services, not even a dinghy dock. This is not a New Normal, though, emptiness traceable to the Coronavirus pandemic. It is the Old Normal. This is the way the Pond usually looks in winter: empty.

Looking both backward and forward, there is good news to report. Harbormaster Kate McConville reports that in spite of the pandemic the 2020 season in the Pond was busy. If there was some downturn, visitors and resident boat owners still were out on the water by the thousands. Boaters were able to obtain

fuel and water, and have holding tanks pumped out, without undue health risks. In many cases, visitors felt safer living on board than they would have been on shore. Thus the Great Salt Pond remained a favored summer vacation spot. Looking at the season ahead, the forecast is for more of the same. The Harbors Department is expecting the Great Salt Pond to have a busy 2021 season, filled with boats large and small, open as usual to fishing, shell fishing and swimming. If past patterns prevail, the season will come to life about Memorial Day and run until Columbus Day, with restaurants, marinas, taxis and other services widely available. While there can be no guarantees with a health crisis as great as this one, this is the current expectation and the basis on which the Harbors crew is making its plans and preparation.

To all of you, please stay safe and healthy and we look forward to seeing each and every one of you on the Pond this year! Let's keep it clean, keep it safe, and keep it Great!

OUR MISSION: To protect and enhance the environmental quality of the Great Salt Pond, including its shorelines and wetlands, and to promote appropriate and productive uses of the Pond's resources by residents, visitors and local businesses.

FUNDING: Individual contributions, membership dues, special events, program grants. IRS 501(c)3 non-profit. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Please consider becoming a member of The Committee for the Great Salt Pond. For information and details, visit our website at cgspbblockisland.org.

