



The Locks Are Open – They're Closed – They're Open!



Part II.

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... Continued from last week's Independent ...

Perhaps since the time of the Montaukett sachem Mongotucksee, mariners and local businesses have wanted to connect the Peconic and Shinnecock bays. The 4,700' isthmus is clearly the most convenient place to dig a canal – and dig they have since the time before the Revolution. There was only one problem. The Peconics and Shinnecock bays are on different tidal cycles or clocks. This requires significant mechanical management. This column is about that.

A Refresher on Lock Protocol

The locks are operated 24 hours a day. The operator controls all movement of boats through the lock by light signals. All canal locks and lift bridges monitor marine radio channel 13 and cellular phones. 631-852-8299 – don't call anyone but the operator!

When approaching the lock, boaters should stop at a safe distance and follow specified signals. Boaters should give three (3) short blasts on the horn or whistle.

Lock operators will reply with lights in the following manner:

- Green: Lock is ready, craft may advance.
- Red: Craft must wait.
- No Light: Craft must wait or tie up to approach wall.
- Six flashes of red or green: remain stopped and await further instructions.

On entering the lock chamber, all boats must be equipped with adequate mooring lines and fenders. As you near the walls of the lock chamber, have your crew members ready to loop their lines – not tie them – around the snubbing posts. Serious injury can result from using your hands or feet to fend off a wall. Use a boat hook or fender.

As soon as the water in the lock chamber reaches the proper level, the gates will be opened; boaters should cast off all lines and proceed at a reduced speed to exit the chamber in station order.

If you are interested in being a volunteer member of USCG Forces, email me at JoinUSCGAux2008@aol.com or go direct to MaryJo Cruickshank, who is in charge of new members matters, at FSO-PS@emcg.us and we will help you "get in this thing..."

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For information call Jim Mackin @ 631.324.2500