

# The Jib Sheet

August 2021

Newsletter of the Rochester Canoe Club



## Commodore's Column

John Powers

### Jack Rutz Sunfish Regatta

On July 24, we made the trip to Willow Bank Yacht Club on picturesque Cazenovia Lake. It had been two years since I was to an away regatta and it felt great to be back to normal. Back to normal is how everyone treated it, like a normal, perfectly perfect summer Saturday. Food was served from the paid kitchen staff, kids were running around in bathing suits and splashing on big floaty toys in the lake, and the little Jack Rutz Sunfish regatta was

happening in the center of the three by half mile lake. The NOR anticipated five races with one throw out, and that's exactly how it went down. Each race was an Olympic triangle taking approximately 30 minutes to complete. The wind was predictably unpredictable, shifting at will and ranging from 5 to 10 mph, but averaging closer to 5. In total, 13 boats registered but one dropped out due to equipment failure. That left RCC supplying exactly half the fleet. Skippers ranged in age from 10 to 77. New RCC member, Graham Leonard took first place with a perfect score of 4! While I don't have the entire score sheet, here is how team RCC placed:

1. Graham Leonard
2. Steve Powers
6. Kira Munger (also a new member)
8. Heidi Riegel
9. John Powers
11. Tim Hammer





# Vice Commodore's Report

Tom Lee

Allow me to start with some general rambling comments, then I'll get to the preaching, begging and pleading. So, off the top of my head:

Thanks to all our members who have volunteered in the projects beautifying our grounds. It's looking goooooood.

Thanks ANDY for the new grill and getting our Thursday picnics going this year. You are a grill-master extraordinaire! They have been well attended and the side dishes all you chefs prepare have been delissssh. WOW! YUM!

Thanks Commodore John! Having mark-set boat #1 back is a pleasure. Great work!

Thanks Bill Dexter for captaining the RC Laser fleet. It's a blast and a challenge. But, we all get to blame the weeds when Steve Powers spansks us most races. How he manages to avoid the weeds remains a mystery. Thursday July 22<sup>nd</sup> provided no wind on the West shore, we took the fleet out on the Phyllis K to search the bay for wind. We found it on the East shore off the large break wall over there. BEST WIND EVER! Bill Dexter was ruling that evening, til the last race. I was leading on the down wind, Bill in his heroic attempt to catch me suddenly augured into a wave in a spectacular fashion snapping his mast off. That was exciting without all the wetness and possible bodily injury...

Jackie Ingham offers her professional skills as the chief judge and race committee – nobody does it better.

Having spent many Sundays these two seasons on a mark-boat watching the Sunnies, one thing stands out. The vast improvement Heidi Reigl is achieving mastering her tacking skills (spent a lot of time in chains last year, isn't happening this year) and her speed is up. Should be a solid run at MOST IMPROVED SKIPPER.

Now the preaching, begging and pleading:

Our club depends upon member involvement to operate. The vice commodore has the duty to have the mark-set boats staffed each Sunday through our standard seasons, Spring, Summer and Fall. I would like to leave my successor a data base that would be useful in accomplishing that.

Things to consider:

All members are expected to support the racing activities of the club, if possible. Those of us with physical limitations are exempt. You may be exempt, if you do not feel capable of performing a water rescue for any reason. I would think all racers are fit enough to perform mark-set duty.

We need to keep in mind;

Under a new law, known as Brianna's Law, all motor boat operators:

- Born on or after Jan. 1, 1993 will need a boating safety certificate beginning in 2020.
- Born on or after Jan. 1, 1988 will need a boating safety certificate beginning in 2022.
- Born on or after Jan. 1, 1983 will need a boating safety certificate beginning in 2023.
- Born on or after Jan. 1, 1978 will need a boating safety certificate beginning in 2024.
- All motor boat operators regardless of age will need a boating safety certificate beginning in 2025.

I want to recognize our young members who have already accomplished receiving their boating certificates, and having informed me of the fact. Thanks Adam Gesner, Natalie Hammer and Heidi Reigl. Would all others inform me of their current status, whether received a certificate or birthdate qualified.

Also, let me know your comfort level at operating a power boat in a stressful situation and your opinion on physical capability to perform all that may be necessary to assist in any situations that may occur.

Keep in mind, keep the stern away from any person(s) in the water, while motor is running, neutral is not good enough. Do not enter the water to assist a struggling individual, use the boat hook to hook a shoulder strap. A fully qualified life guard will only enter the water as a last resort. There are many instances every year of water tragedies with the struggling victim and the would be rescuers. Have in mind, before taking to the water in a mark-set boat, how you will proceed in an emergency situation. Flying by the seat of your pants, can lead to a less than desirable result.

I hope I didn't convince you to avoid mark-set duty at all costs. As in all activities, you can take a lot of pride in a job well done. I want to point out that I have never been disappointed in how many of our members have conducted themselves on the water assisting our racers. I have been disappointed at other sailing clubs. Let's build on the great record we have.

Sincerely,  
Tom Lee



## Thursday Grillin Night on the RCC Patio

THANKS to Andy Heyer, Chris Connelly and Bruce Gellertly for all they have done this season to make Thursday Nite Grillin' such a success. It has become a weekly highlight for many of us and a good way to meet and welcome our newest members. Kudos to you all!  
~ Pat Tompkins



# Anchors Aweigh RCC 2003 Babies

*I'd like to thank Stacey Stehle for her idea for this article. The timing is most appropriate as each of the young adults born in 2003 are ready to embark on the next adventure...college.*



Sophia Gorton

Andrew Connelly

Adam Gesner

Kate Stehle

**Picture taken in 2005**

Photo provided by Stacey Stehle

August 2021



Kate Stehle

Sophia Gorton

Adam Gesner

Andrew Connolly



August 2021

### Colleges Attending in Fall 2021:

**Kate** - Cleveland Institute of Art (major - Animation)

**Andy** - Alfred State (major - Nursing)

**Adam** - RIT (major - Mechanical Engineering)

**Sophia** - RIT (major - Exploratory Program)

# Things New Members Should Know About - But Maybe Don't

By George Smith

New members of the Rochester Canoe Club are given a lot of information – membership categories, dues, boat fees, and other features of a successful, long-standing social organization. There is “lore” – the history, the name, and some of the personalities. Perhaps you have already learned the basics: how to lock and unlock the gate, reminders regarding washing and putting away your dishes (and taking out the trash), and setting and re-setting the goose fences.

Here are a few additional things you should know that perhaps you haven't heard – “nice to know” features of RCC membership:

- The Canoe Club and its waterfront are a beautiful spot for family activities, however, our waterfront is “one big water hazard” – beaches, docks, and bulkhead – and children need to be supervised.

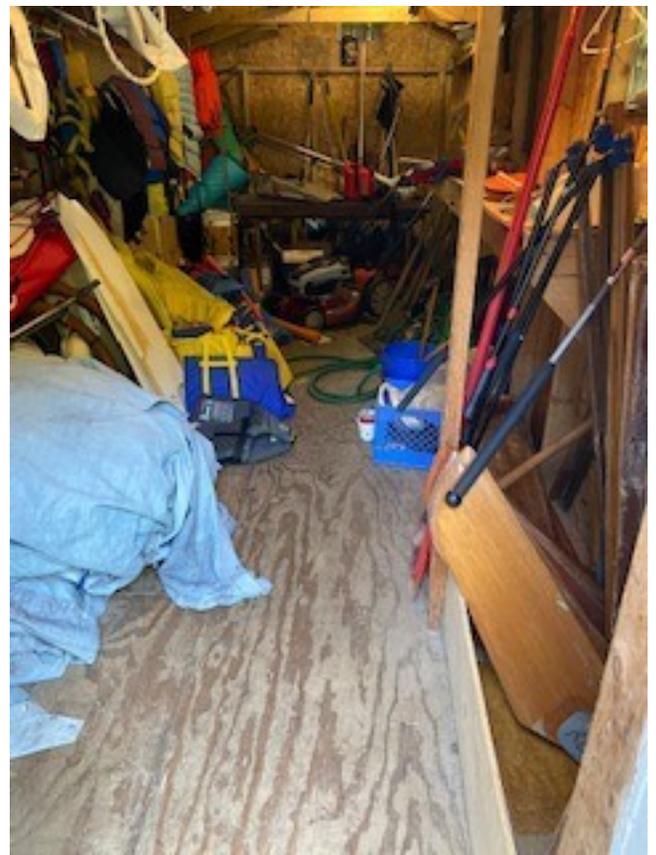


Beautiful waterfront but potentially hazardous

- **LIFE JACKETS are a partial solution.** RCC has many, many life jackets – in all sizes - for your family and guests to use. They are stored in “**The Shed**” at the base of the stairs leading to the clubhouse and outdoor shower. Please help yourself and make sure to hang them when you put them away to ensure good air circulation (and minimize mold growth).



**The Shed**



**•Note the life jackets hanging in the back left corner. The padlock on the shed, the door, and the entry gate all utilize the same key.**



**•If you and your guests want to play lawn games, we have some. They are located inside the clubhouse in the lefthand bank of cubbies – corn hole, bocci ball, can jam, a volleyball net, and a few other things.**



•Posts for the volleyball net are concealed by the cedar trees near the boat hoist. Note the DIY bases made from old wheels.



•Also inside the clubhouse is the RCC “Lost and Found” – the temporary repository for items left behind both indoors and out. “Lost and found” typically gets emptied once or twice a season. This is the lower right hand cubby.



•“Club boats” – watercraft owned and shared by the entire RCC membership – Sunfish, Optimists, and assorted paddleboards/windsurfer boards. Most of these watercraft are at the northeast corner of the property, adjacent to the north beach.



•Two Sunfish are fully rigged, covered with “RCC” covers, and on dollies located conveniently close to the water’s edge on the north beach. Only one of the two covered and fully-rigged RCC Sunfish is shown here.



**•Several other Club Sunfish hulls are on the nearby rack – note the lettering says “RCC” on their transoms. These boats are mainly used for Sailing School. Sails are in the clubhouse, and other hardware (rudders, tillers, centerboards, mainsheets) is in the shed. Some assembly required (DIY – ask someone for help if you need it).**



**Smaller sailors can sail the Optimists.** The square-ish Optimist hulls are on an adjacent rack, and sails and other hardware are in the shed. ‘Optis’ are designed to be sailed by small children, but adult help is required for “rigging” (assembly).



**Enjoy!**  
**Please ask another club member if you ever have any questions or need additional help.**

# Update on Joe Seiffert

By Rob Seiffert

Joe Seiffert is a Junior member at RCC and raced in the Sunfish class last year. Joe has not been around this summer because he has been attending Oakcliff Sailing Academy since January. Since attending Oakcliff, he has participated in Charleston Race week, the Annapolis to Newport Race, and most recently he just completed the Bayview to Mackinaw race on Lake Huron.

As a high school senior navigating through the debacle of COVID schooling, Joe was eager to attend Oakcliff and moved to Oyster Bay in January. Our decision to send him to Oakcliff was primarily motivated by giving him a better school experience than he was receiving at home. If he is forced to do school online, at least at Oakcliff he can learn the skills of a trade that he is passionate about and make the connections he needs to advance his career in the sailing industry all the while taking an online school program that is accredited in all 50 states by USPA ( US Performance Academy). Joe was able to transfer his high school credits to USPA and received his high school diploma in June.

Oakcliff Sailing Academy is a youth and adult training center for athletes who have progressed beyond traditional coaching methods and want to take the next step in their career. Located in Oyster Bay, New York they offer trainees a proving ground to develop their skill set and professional network in the three big areas of competitive sailing: the America's Cup, the Olympics, and the Ocean Race.

After spending the last 6 months training with Oakcliff, he has learned and grown so much. He started off in January with a trip to Dauphin Island Alabama to train on a 49er FX. After returning to Oyster Bay for a few weeks, they loaded up two Melges 24s and headed to Charleston Race week. After Charleston, he started match race training and competed in the US Sailing Rose Cup match racing regatta hosted by RYC in June. He took a break from match racing training to head to Annapolis for the Annapolis to Newport race aboard Oakcliff's Farr 40 Blue. Finally, he just returned from Mackinaw Island Michigan where he crewed on Oakcliff's OC 86 for the Bayview to Mac race.

The friends he made and people he met along the way provides him a sailing network that he will be able to rely on for the rest of his sailing career.

Joe will be attending Jacksonville University this fall and studying History, Political Science and Sports Business. He will also be active with the JU sailing team.



**Annapolis to Newport race  
Farr 40 Blue**



## Annapolis to Newport race - Joe Seiffert

This year's Annapolis to Newport race went off without a hitch for our two Farr 40 teams: Oakcliff Red and Oakcliff Blue. After a week of training in Oyster Bay, the teams delivered the boats to Annapolis where they got a taste of just how powerful the ocean can be. They powered through 12 foot seas and 25 knots winds that left most of the crew seasick and dreaming of land. When they finally made it to Annapolis three days later, they had all had a few well-earned offshore stripes and enjoyed a couple of days doing the final tune-ups and some practice sailing in a gorgeous sea breeze. The race started in light winds on Saturday but, to the delight of all the racers, a sea breeze picked up immediately after and they spent about 18 hours on a long upwind beat out of the Chesapeake Bay. Blue rounded the Chesapeake Light Tower ahead of Red and both boats flew their A2 kites for the better part of the two and a half day trip to Newport. With the exception of some fog towards the finish, the teams saw champagne conditions with sunny skies and 8-15 knots of breeze that left their foulies hanging in the bow for most of the trip.



**49er FX - Alabama Training Trip**



**Charleston Race Week**

# ROC CITY SAILING 2021 Learn to Sail Program

by Ralph Simpson



## The Team:

RCS Board Members (the business planners, organizers, facilitators) – Tara Shedlosky, Dan Blasdell, Jim Malecki, Dan Fien, Ralph Simpson.

RCS Sailing Instructors (the ones who make it happen!) – Mark Weider, Adam Gesner, Natalie Hammer, Wyatt Williams.

RCS Volunteers and Supporters (the ones we can't do without!) Jean Blasdell, Danica Eskind, Alex Eiffert, Jim and Pat Tompkins, Andy Heyer, Phil Lange, Tom Lee, Tim Hammer, Doug Kaukeinen, George Smith, RCC, ... the list is long ... see more here ... <https://roccitysailing.org/our-sponsors/>.

Our thanks to everyone who participated in our Take-Out Fund Raiser event on April 7<sup>th</sup> at the Tap and Mallet.



# The 2021 ROC City Sailing Program:



We kicked things off in June with a few private sailing lessons on the Flying Scot and Capri 22. July was filled with our half-day, week long Learn to Sail Classes. 6 classes, 70 students (12 adults, 58 youth), all beginner sailors ... but not anymore!

Not enough people wanted to take a learn to sail class during the short week of July 5<sup>th</sup> so we focused on more private lessons and our first Small Group Adventure Sail. Very successful! The Flying Scot is proving its stability and roominess to take on small groups of 6 or even 8 people for a cruise on the Bay. The Capri 22 fits this role well too.

On June 24<sup>th</sup> the Rochester Area Community Foundation notified us the grant request we submitted for funds from the Ralph C. Wilson Foundation was approved to facilitate our planned **Urban Youth Sailing Program** in partnership with the City of Rochester Department of Recreation and Human Services.

The late June grant approval did not give us enough time to get off the start line and run the full program we had planned (one full week of learn to sail classes and four Adventure Sail afternoon sessions) but we were able to grant scholarships to ten city youth who registered for our last week of July classes.

We also piloted an Urban Youth Adventure Sail on Aug. 9<sup>th</sup>. An afternoon with eleven Rochester city school youth taking a cruise on the Bay followed by shoe and land exploration of the RCC property. All with a focus on the environment, water, land, wetlands, animals, water quality, plants, challenges, stewardship and of course a little sailing education while we were out on the water. We were pleased to have volunteers from the Seneca Park Zoo Urban ecologist team, and our own Dr. George Smith (RCC member and Brighton High School Biology and Environmental Science teacher) help us run the Adventure program. George helped with the land portion and Tom Lee helped me on the Flying Scot. It was a fun afternoon!

The Urban Youth Sailing pilot programs we were able to run this year will help us run a full program in 2022 using the majority of the grant funds we were awarded this year. The grant enables us to provide scholarships to get youth out on the water sailing that otherwise would not be in a position to take a sailing class.

During the rest of August and into September we will wrap up our season with some private and semi-private lessons and small group adventure sails.

It has been a great season. Mark Weider and our team of sailing instructors are receiving accolades from all the youth and adults enjoying our programs and learning what sailing is all about. Thank you RCS team and to all our volunteers and supporters!

So ... consider *joining the team* as a board member, sailing instructor, part time instructor, volunteer, financial supporter, ... purchase an RCS T-shirt! Every little bit helps us achieve;

**Our mission:**

“To educate and facilitate the sport of sailing for the Greater Rochester Community in a safe, fun, and affordable environment.”

and ...

**Our vision:**

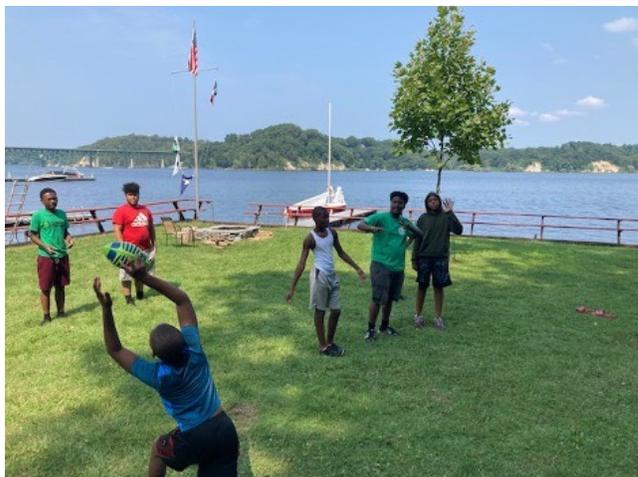
“Sailing for all that wish to learn.”

Have fun sailing the Bay!

Ralph and the Roc City Sailing Team

<https://roccitysailing.org/>

### ***Urban Youth Sailing Program***



# 2021 Don VanVechten Memorial Sunfish Regatta

June 26, 2021

By Doug Kaukeinen

28 of the friendliest Sunfish sailors eagerly headed out to the racecourse in a S/SW breeze ranging from 5 to 15 mph. The slightly overcast skies kept the majority of powerboats at bay for the day. Adam Gesner, the regatta coordinator, held the skipper's meeting and introduced his grandfather, Jim Tompkins, as the PRO for the event. It was decided to take a short lunch break on the water rather than waste time sailing to shore for lunch and then back to the racecourse. Eight races were run with a variety of courses (WL-1, WL-2, and MG) to keep the racing fresh. In the end, the battle for 1st place was amongst the top 3 sailors with only 4 points separating them. Mike Ingham prevailed with no finish worse than 4th. Dan Hesse won four of the races, but had to score a 7th, making him 2nd overall. Eric Gesner sailed very consistently and placed 3rd. Many thanks to all the volunteers involved that made the regatta happen.

## Race Committee

Jim Tompkins  
Jackie Ingham  
Tricia Reinhardt  
Patty Tompkins  
Sara Gesner

## Safety Boats

Tom Lee  
Emily Spebroek  
Andy Heyer  
Paul Owens



**Dan Hesse - 2nd Place**

**Mike Ingham - Winner**  
with Regatta Chairperson Adam



**Eric Gesner - 3rd Place**



**Doug Kaukeinen- 4th Place**

*The Jib Sheet*

Photos by Judy Gesner



**Mark Weider - 5th**

*August 2021*

## 2021 Don VanVechten Memorial Sunfish Regatta

# Results

Place	Total	Name	Sail Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	15	Mike Ingham	81559	1	1	3	4	3	1	2	4
2	17	Dan Hesse	78545	7	4	1	1	2	7	1	1
3	19	Eric Gesner	84939	3	2	4	2	4	2	6	2
4	28	Doug Kaukeinen	11	2	6	2	3	1	5	9	10
5	36	Mark Weider	60673	10	5	5	5	10	3	5	3
6	44	Adam Gesner	7	4	3	6	14	11	4	4	12
7	52	Graham Leonard	81642	8	23	9	6	5	6	11	7
8	62	John Williams	3922	9	8	11	7	8	16	8	11
9	78	Ralph Simpson	79064	27	18	8	9	6	9	13	15
10	83	Jim Gindling	77731	11	7	14	30	30	10	3	8
11	84	Mike Fortner	57923	12	17	12	8	20	11	7	17
12	84	Alex Eiffert	80788	14	12	10	11	16	12	17	9
13	85	Mary Ellen Brown	81135	16	9	13	17	9	22	15	6
14	86	Kira Munger	81618	15	14	7	13	15	13	10	14
15	88	Bill Dexter	28777	5	11	19	12	12	19	16	13
16	89	Dan Blasdell	426	17	22	18	16	7	8	18	5
17	100	Kevin Lofftus	80900	6	10	25	10	19	18	12	30
18	111	Judy Gesner	60063	13	16	15	19	30	15	14	19
19	114	Alex Crerand	81452	20	20	16	15	13	14	20	16
20	132	Chip Toth	81264	23	13	17	18	14	17	30	30
21	138	Deirdre Santos-Kaukeinen	80766	19	27	20	20	17	20	24	18
22	146	Heidi Reigel	rcc1	18	21	21	23	21	21	22	22
23	147	John Powers	79386	21	24	23	22	18	24	19	20
24	159	Nicole Gindling	731	25	15	30	24	24	25	23	23
25	161	Sarah Hesse	3109	24	25	22	25	25	23	21	21
26	187	Bill Bradburn	3	26	26	24	21	30	30	30	30
27	191	Chip Bayer	40377	22	19	30	30	30	30	30	30
28	193	Philip Lange	79266	30	28	26	26	23	30	30	30
29	210	Johan Wolf	80540	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30



# Shore Side



By Andy Heyer

There have been a lot of changes going on at the club this season. We have made a concentrated effort to update and enhance the clubs infrastructure as well as adding plants to the landscape. Many of these projects were out of necessity.

The following lists new and updated projects:

- New ADA Compliant Bathroom was a welcome improvement to the club. We are still putting the finishing touches to that addition but what an amenity!
- Men's Locker room is getting an overhaul with new paint.

- New Stone Revetment Wall replaced a badly damaged timber wall that protected our access to the east lawn. Over 30 tons of rock went into that 36 foot section and hopefully will provide adequate protection from future high water. The permit to install took almost a year to get and we had to appease the DEC requirements with our plan. The metal fence was finally added and provides a safe and attractive border.



- The addition of the new grill area with the charcoal grill was to give members an option when cooking as well as provide a space for the gas grill and get it outside from the club house. The plan is to add a roof structure with power. This addition to the patio has been a welcome asset especially on Thursday nights. We have been averaging 35 or more this summer and the patio has been quite crowded but incredibly festive.



- Enhance Canoe Club Grounds - Trish Reinhardt and Andy Heyer created an informal Master Plan for the club grounds. The plan addresses key areas that need improvement. The idea is to plant more perennials and shrubs and maintain the established gardens. We will add to the plants around our sign at the top and come up with a plan for the playset for our lil' members. The hydrangeas and ornamental grasses added to the grill pavilion as well as the south beach are a wonderful addition to the landscape with more to come.

- Goose Fence Barriers - A committee has been established to address the goose fence barriers. We will be replacing the existing fences with an upgraded model that will be free standing, aesthetically pleasing and effective. We will also be planting some plants and shrubs that will act as a natural barrier and limit the amount of fence required.

Trish also created a job/task list to make it easier for members to jump in and help with various projects and weekly maintenance jobs. Hopefully we can get more participation keeping the grounds and club house looking its best.

Our time as members of this historic club requires active participation. It's our obligation to maintain and enhance the property for future generations of members and continue its legacy as a regional leader for competitive racing as well as teaching sailing for all.

---

## **Rochester Canoe Club Membership Committee**

Mary Ellen Brown and Andy Heyer

Greetings from the Membership Committee! We have had an incredible season adding to our membership. We have added 11 memberships so far this season. These members are very excited about joining us for some sailing on the bay.

We are excited that our updated membership process has helped these families and individuals become part of the club a lot quicker to provide them an opportunity to enjoy RCC right away. We appreciate the Board's willingness to address the bylaws and update them to a more modern approach to membership.

We were able to start up Thursday Grillin again. It's a wonderful way to come down and meet your fellow members and enjoy the patio and incredible setting. We have made great use of the new grill area which has helped make more room on the patio. Guests are always welcome!

The club is looking very good this year and we hope our members will continue to actively participate in helping the club look amazing as well as assist when we host regattas. We have made a huge effort to improve the shore side repairing the bulkhead and enhancing the landscape. Its looking fabulous! RCC has two upcoming events: our Thistle Fleets Fall Frontier Regatta September 11 & 12 and the Sunfish Masters National Championship October 9 & 10. Consider volunteering to support the event and help prepare our property so it's ready for the event. We have recently created a job board that has been emailed out to the membership and posted at the club house to make it easier for you to know what needs to be done.

As always, please reach out to friends, neighbors co-workers etc if you think they may be interested in joining you as an RCC member. Our members are our greatest asset in recruiting people to join.

# 75th Annual Thistle Nationals

Cleveland Yachting Club

August 2021

By Delia Ingham

Pulling into CYC's hot parking lot in a long line of Thistles waiting to be unpacked, vans emptying of weary but excited travelers reignited something inside of me.

Going into the Nationals I felt that I would not be able to pull my own weight, literally. As a crew member on a high performance team I'm expected to hike all day, see wind and shifts, and move around the boat with the ease of a dancer. Unfortunately, I have not been on a boat much. Combine this with aging and a couple of injuries, my confidence was low. I was worried I might let my teammates, Mike and Dan down.

Though I was not prepared, CYC was. Who wouldn't enjoy a week of big tents, live music, lawn games, good food, and drinks with 500+ friends and family?

All this is wonderful, but the best part for me was family. This year 4 boats had Ingham's on them. Besides my 3969 with Mike driving and Dan Fien as middle, there was 3966 with Sam Ingham, Sam's wife Tanya Cuprak, and their middle Jon Duffet. Mary Ellen Ingham-Brown was on Don Stehle's boat with Bill Dexter. And Roy Ingham sailed with Nicole and Jesse Shedden. I have seen this all around me at Thistle regattas my whole life. Husbands, and wives, parents, grandparents and children competing together and against one another. Learning and teaching while loving (almost) every minute of it. Thank you CYC for hosting our family reunion!

Oh, and then there was sailboat racing. 97 teams made long legs necessary (the beats were 1.1-1.5 miles long). Even with that distance, windward marks were often a huge pileup with the fleet being competitive and deep. 10 races over seven days is a long regatta, fitness as well as mental toughness counts! Lake Erie had its infamous chop as well as light and shifty winds, strong puffs, oscillating breeze and a few waterspouts thrown in to spice things up. And did I mention the chop?



Photo ~ Aimee Fien



Sam was the creative mind behind our new names. 3969 is ING-1, Sam's boat 3966 is Ing-2, and Roy's boat would be Ing-3. Mike, who had always been super focused while racing, was aware of how our sons were doing. More than once in the middle of a race he stated, "Sam is right up there." or "Did you see how well Roy is doing?"

As each race came and went, boats jockeyed up and down the results board. I was becoming keenly aware that our son Sam and crew had a good shot at winning. It took them two races to get things going, but by the 3rd race they were a well oiled machine.

Watching Sam and his team receive the Championship award I realized that he has also earned the boat title "ING-1".

**Sam Ingham, Sam's wife Tanya Cuprak, and their middle Jon Duffet win the 75th Thistle Nationals!**



# *Thistle Women's Nationals 2021*

*By Mary Ellen Brown*

I was very excited to get the opportunity to skipper Paul, Alissa and Sammy Owen's thistle 3984 (Sneaky Duck) at the Woman's National event this year with my 2 good friends Alissa and Deirdre. We knew we had the skills and discussed what conditions we could handle. Getting practice time together on the water was a challenge between the Nationals skippers wanting time to prep their teams (with us on those teams), work and other obligations. We ended up being able to sail in Irondequoit Bay on a beautiful Friday afternoon where we practiced tacking, spinnaker sets and jibes. We learned the tiller was too long for Mary Ellen and could easily poke Alissa and catch in any sheet in the vicinity. After our first jibe, we asked ourselves "what do you do with the main during a jibe?". We are all crew and very busy during jibes resulting in very little knowledge of what goes on behind us. We then practiced a few pretend starts to get a sense of how the boat accelerates – conclusion...not like a sunfish.



**Deirdre Santos-Kaukeinen, Mary Ellen Brown, Alissa Owens**

I drove the boat to Cleveland Yachting Club a day early to get it measured and setup. John Baker put the mast up.

On the day of the woman's event, the first challenge was to get launched, sails up and safely out of the basin without hitting anything. Our RCC guys helped us get launched – thank you! The second challenge was to tack out of the narrow river to the lake on a beautiful sunny Saturday with many kayakers and powerboats enjoying their day. On each tack, we would have to head straight for some kayakers and we would have to reassure them we weren't going to run them over, then count down for a tack. We would then wave at the power boats to hurry past our stern. Then repeat the process on the other side of the river. We must have made 20+ tacks and the kayakers stopped looking terrified when we headed at them. What a way to get used to driving a thistle!

Saturday conditions were a light breeze with some chop – enough to have a decent upwind leg and a challenge to fill the spinnaker down wind. It would have been nice to have a little more breeze, but not too much more. We found we were pretty fast – we had no idea how we would stack up. Sneaky Duck can really point well! Alissa and Deirdre partnered with me to get us some decent starts and we sailed fairly smart with distinct improvements every single leg of the course. This was definitely a team effort.

I had so much fun sailing with my friends Alissa and Deirdre at the Women's Thistle Nationals, and we talked about doing it again! Hopefully, we can get some practice time in the boat and some pointers on how to sail it fast.

# Why I Sail with Friends

By Mary Ellen Brown

I love to sail with friends for many reasons. One of those reasons is safety in numbers. Please, NEVER SAIL ALONE in conditions that are challenging to you or if the water is very cold. Someone on shore can't help you if something happens.

At the Sunfish Tom's River Regionals this May, Mark, Doug, Mike, and I used Friday as a chance to get out on the water for some practice. My rudder was defective and came off my boat. Mark sailed over and suggested he tow me to safety. I pulled down my sail and put my main sheet on for a tow line. In parallel, Mike arranged for the Wasp Fleet RC that was holding practice races to tow me in. Mark towed me over to them, I tied everything up and put my feet up for the tow. I was so relieved. Without them, I would have had to get to a nearby beach somehow and figure out the next steps.

After Tom's River, we headed to Sayville, NY for 3 days of heavy air practice with PJ Patin. We got our wish for some amazing learning opportunities in big breeze and waves. At the end of one of our sessions, I attempted to pick up the mark and flipped. The mast immediately stuck in the mud. If I wasn't careful, I could have bent my spars. PJ sailed over and assisted me. I got my breath back, climbed in and was able to easily keep sailing. I capsized a second time later in the day and was able to finesse the mast out of the mud on my own with some coaching from Mike. Thank goodness for my wetsuit.

I think about being prepared and being part of a community who can assist when needed to keep everyone safe on the water. I am grateful for my family and friends who are so smart and capable and for all the safety boats when we race or have an event. I need to be prepared for adversity, not be a hindrance to my sailing partners and participate in the sport in a smart way.

These thoughts are not meant to discourage you from sailing but to have you put some thought into taking good care of yourself, your friends, and your boat.

Here are some thoughts:

1. Be aware of the conditions, your ability and if the boat can handle it.
2. Can you quickly and competently set up a tow line?
3. Understand your clothing and gear and how it can assist or hinder you.
4. Work with your friends:
  - A. To ensure everyone keeps track of and stays close to each other.
  - B. Someone on shore knows your plans.
  - C. Carry a VHS radio attached to your life jacket.
  - D. Your cell phone in a dry bag will not be accessible when you're upside down.
  - E. Cell phones don't like water.
  - F. The club has a VHS radio in the building a friend could monitor.
  - G. If you are being rescued, be prepared to leave your boat
  - H. Stay with your boat until you are rescued.



## From the Editor ~

*Thank you to all authors who contributed to this edition. All of us at RCC appreciate your time and effort in making *The Jib Sheet* engaging and fun to read!*

*The next publication will be in December. Please keep the articles coming. Submissions are due by **December 1**.*

*Lynda Bryant*

