



March 12, 2003

Dear Off Sounding Members,

Well...it's about time! As I looked to the thermometer outside my window this morning, Connecticut was finally above freezing... the first time in months! As the mercury goes up, so does the frequency of thoughts of warm days sailing with old friends and good times on Off Soundings Races.

Last fall we lost a dear friend, Dick Roberts. He did so many things for Off Soundings – Commodore, Race Secretary, Measurer, and Board Member. It is a fact that only a few people do the bulk of the work for non-profits such as Off Soundings. These people donate countless hours out of passion and dedication. Dick exemplified that special volunteer spirit. He will be sorely missed not only by Off Sounding, but also by Thames Yacht Club, ECSA, and United States Sailing Association.

One of the tests of a Club's vitality is its membership. We are staying constant at 500 strong avid sailors. Bob Edmunds, Membership Secretary, is always anxious to advance that number so keep your nominations coming. We need to keep the Off Soundings legacy alive with new younger members. A second test is the financial one. Bob Geary, Treasurer, has managed to hold our year-end cash balance to those of previous years. He has done it with a modest increase in dues and race entry fees while still upholding the quality of our parties and other events. My appreciation goes to both of these board members for keeping the backbone of Off Sounding in good health.

The most frequent topic discussed at Board Meetings is our race venue. Last fall with the help and support of Jamie Mills' we moved our shore party to Greenport, Long Island. The Towns End Inn was our gracious host. Being in a town with more facilities in one central area was a real positive. As Greenport continues the rebuilding of its waterfront, we will have a first rate docking facility capable of accommodating the whole fleet in one location. The racing venues on Block Island Sound in the spring and Gardeners Bay in the fall are still unbeatable and the Members' choice by far.

As always, Chuck Chorlton's Race Committee did an incredible job with great courses and plenty of variable conditions. Our spring series start and finish lines had a new look with Kim Granbery's rebuilt Chesapeake Bay fishing yacht. Henry du Pont's NOR' EASTER graced our lines once again in the fall series. Tommy Townsend's classic vessel was our stake boat both spring and fall. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to our committee, stake, and patrol boats. We could not run our races without these special volunteers.

Finally, I want to extend my best wishes to Vice Commodore John Brooks. John will assume the helm as Commodore of The Off Soundings Club at our Annual Meeting on April 5th. We are lucky to have John. He is a retired career Coast Guard Officer who has done extensive cruising and racing in our area.

Hope to see you at Block Island this spring!

All the best,
Commodore

Wes 