

# OFF SOUNDINGS CLUB



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Dear Member:

There is a great deal to report this January, even as our vessels quietly rest under cover. This Off Soundings Winter Letter comes to you early, because some of the issues are of keen interest to many in our membership, especially the question of whether we will sail in the Newport area in 1997.

Well over half of the members, and most of those who skipper regularly in our race series responded to the questionnaire that was mailed to you in December. We received many comments and suggestions, that will be very helpful in guiding the conduct of our race events in the future. Newport was most popular among crew members, and some skippers were also enthusiastic about this change. The bottom line, however, was that while a change from time to time would help spice things up, a surprising number of skippers said that they would not go to Newport. Since it is our desire to maximize participation, the Board of Governors voted last Friday to race to Block and Shelter Islands this spring and fall respectively. Our rendezvous will be at the Oar in Block Island and at Shelter Island Yacht Club in 1997, as has been our custom for the past several years. I should also mention that as a result of our survey, we received a very gracious and unsolicited invitation from the Mayor of Greenport Village to hold our shore side activities at their waterfront facilities. Vice Commodore Anderson will pursue this further to determine its feasibility for some future time.

I am very pleased to report that our membership now stands at 515 versus 512 at this time last year, and we have 6 prospective members ready to be posted. Thanks to all who have helped stem the erosion in our membership ranks, and a fervent request to others to identify qualified candidates so that we may enjoy continued progress in this area. For your convenience you will find Guest Invitations enclosed. Guest Invitations are often the first step in the membership process, and we hope to see many new guests this year.

It was sad to note that two members who attended our October Board of Governors meeting were absent last Friday. Past Commodore Paul van Dyke continues his recovery, albeit more slowly than we all would hope. John Brooks will assume the responsibilities of Membership Committee Chairman for the foreseeable future.

Less than two weeks after our October meeting at the Seaport, Fleet Surgeon Jack Haugh and his wife Pat were slain in their home in West Hartford. The Haughs were regular participants in Off Soundings and will be sorely missed. Dr. Warren Woodward has accepted the role of Fleet Surgeon, and we are most fortunate for his willingness to act in this capacity.

In response to suggestions from our membership, classes C1, C2, C3 and C4 will be reclassified so that C3 will emerge as a high performance (predominantly light displacement) class. Other boats which were in C1, C2, C3 or C4 will be reclassified into C1, C2 or C4 so that all three of these classes will be better balanced in terms of the number of boats and provide better racing in each class. Classification of all boats affected by this change will be determined by our Classification Chairman, Neal S. O'Connell. All are encouraged to speak with their class representatives (listed on page 2) with any other suggestions you may have to improve the racing in your class.

Finally, I am delighted to note that Off Soundings was awarded ECSA's Silvestry Trophy for excellence in race management. This is a wonderful tribute to Race Committee Chairman Wes Maxwell, Race Secretary Dick Roberts and all who serve on the Race Committee for a job well done.

Have a great ski season, and we look forward to seeing a large turnout at the Annual Dinner on April 12th at the Coast Guard Academy.

Sincerely,



William G. Gunther

P.S. New sailing rules are being published by U.S. Sailing and go into effect in April of 1997. There are seminars scheduled on April 4th in Milford, CT. and April 17th at the Coast Guard Academy both featuring Dave Perry.

<u>Class</u>	<u>Representative</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Phone #</u>
A-1	James Slimmon, Jr.	31 Saddle Ridge, Bloomfield, CT. 06002	(860)726-1048
A-2	Peter McFadden	85 Willowbrook Road, Storrs, CT. 06268	(860)429-0851
B	Edward Purcell, Jr.	4 Frazier St., Mystic, CT. 06355	(860)536-6732
C-1	Dana Seniff	81 Purtill St., S. Glastonbury, CT. 06073	(860)633-7447
C-2	William Healy, MD	1000 Asylum Ave., Hartford, CT. 06105	(860)522-3711
C-3	Carl Fast	2 Chestnut Hill Sq., Groton, CT. 06340	(860)691-1769
C-4	Steve O'Connell	81 E. Pattaganesett Road, #32, Niantic, CT. 06537	(860)739-2951
C-5	Milan Bartek	31 Trumbull Rd., Waterford, CT. 06385	(860)433-3560
CR1&2	Robert Edmands	419 Colonial Rd., Guilford, CT. 06437	(203)488-7221