



# The Starting Line

November 2009

Small Yacht Sailing Club of Oregon ♦ P. O. Box 5502 ♦ Portland, OR 97228

## 2009 Officers & Committee Chairs

### Commodore:

Rich Jones  
(503) 706-2541 (work)

### Rear Commodore:

Karen Anderson  
(503) 806-0945 (work)

### Vice Commodore/

#### Race Captain:

Alden Andre  
(503) 618-1951 (work)

### Secretary:

Scott Ferre  
(503) 699-1780

### Treasurer:

Karen Anderson  
(503) 806-0945

### Membership:

Jan Burkhart  
(503) 701-5706

### Newsletter Editor:

Jim Sinclair  
(503) 206-4245

### Cruising:

Gib Colistro  
(503) 771-7575

### Social:

Anna Pagliarulo  
(503) 789-0586

### Historians:

Bill & Vicki Sanborn  
(503) 286-9257

### PHRF Rater:

Dave Hickman  
(503) 288-0062

### OCSA/PHRF Representative:

Phil Campagna  
(503) 735-0982

## COMMODORE'S COMMENTS:

### A Good Time Had By All...

As the closing event of the '09 sailing season, we couldn't have asked for a better SYSCO Awards Banquet than the one everyone enjoyed on October 17<sup>th</sup>. The food was great (thank you Anna and Sasha Kaplan at "And She Cooks"). The music was great (thank you Columbia Crossings and Sonny Hess and her band). And best of all, the attendance was fantastic (thank you members and friends of the Small Yacht Sailing Club of Oregon).



To add fun to the night, we had a goodly amount of door prizes to give away (thank you A, Martin, Merit, Cal20, Ranger20, J24 and Cruising Fleets). Heck, we had wine, stopwatches, gear and gift cards, and a wide assortment of garb and what-nots.

And for the sailors who competed all year in the many events presented by SYSCO, we had a vast array of awards to bestow on some very deserving recipients.



During dinner, the SYSCO board had the pleasure of recognizing the accomplishments of many skippers and their crews.



Once again this year, Columbia Crossings co-sponsored the SYSCO/Columbia Crossings Regatta. Phil and Anna Campagna and their crew on the J24, Bite Me, won the regatta's overall trophy known as the Columbia Crossings Cup.

Here is Phil receiving the award from SYSCO's good friend at Columbia Crossings, Loren Davis.

Proving it was another very competitive year of Racing on the river, the battle for the 2009 SYSCO Commodore's Trophy was very, very close. After competing in two SYSCO regattas, and two 5-week series of races, less than two points separated the top three boats. After the numbers were checked and double-checked, like last year, Allan Weber and his crew on the J24, En d'Nile was the winner.

Here receiving the award from Edie Felix (center) are Allan Weber and Connie Grate.



And for their dedication to the sport of sailing, their support of SYSCO, and for the numerous times they raced and cruised their C&C 38, Cool Change, giving new sailors an opportunity to learn our sport and experienced sailors an opportunity to hone their skills, Sandy and Frank Noragon were honored with the 2009 SYSCO Sailor(s) of the Year Award.

Shown are Frank and Sandy receiving their well-deserved recognition from Karen Anderson, SYSCO's rear commodore for 2009.

See you on the water,  
Rich Jones  
SYSCO Commodore for 2009



**WE NEED YOU...YES YOU!**

Nominations are still open for the following positions on the 2010 SYSCO board:



- Vice Commodore & Race Captain: .....
- Secretary: .....
- Program Chair: .....
- Poncho Engineer: .....

Please consider signing your name on one of the dotted lines. Your crew will thank you, your fleet will thank you and SYSCO will thank you. (The last sentence inspired by George M. Cohan).

**THE NEXT SYSCO MEMBER & FRIENDS MEETING  
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup> AT THE  
DELTA PARK ELMER'S RESTAURANT**

We start gathering at approximately 18:18 for chit-chat and grub. The meeting starts at approximately 18:57. This meeting will include nominating and electing the SYSCO board for 2010.

After business is taken care of, we will be treated to a presentation by Frank Colistro about building and training a crew for sailing on the river and offshore.

If anyone has seen Frank sailing his Cascade 36, Wy'East, then you know there is a skipper who knows how to gather up mass quantities of sailors to sail a boat.



**RACING NEWS**

Well what have I done since the last news letter. I went on the fall colors cruise and had a great time. This is an activity that I have not done with SYSCO yet... cruising. It was a blast and the people were great. I have put it in my calendar for this year and next to make all of the cruises. The (unofficial – ed.) winter racing is in full swing with a lot of boats coming out every Sunday. They range from 22ft up 52 feet. It will be interesting to see how many there are when the weather really turns nasty though. On my boat we will be wearing shorts and t-shirts with the full enclosures up and heater on.

We still need a race captain for next year. I would hate to see everyone come out for a race and no race captain to run it.

Here is the latest update to my nose art that is going on my boat. It may not help me go faster but it will make the boat look better.



Alden Andre

## A Thank You from OWSA

A BIG thank you to SYSCO for helping make the 10th Annual Sail for the Cure: Our Cup Runneth Over a huge success! According to 2009 event Chair, Jeanine Hohn, "The sailing community was amazing again this year. Even in a period of economic downturn, they did not let us down. In fact, they supported us even more than in the past with some incredible donations. Not to mention they were there with us, in force, on another beautiful Sail for the Cure day." With SYSCO members help, OWSA donated over \$35,000 dollars to the Oregon and SW Washington Komen for the Cure®



In the largest-ever Sail for the Cure, over 564 skippers and crews sailed 101 sailboats during the on-the-water games. Reception visitors enjoyed over 30 "Bras for a Cause," and bid on more than 150 donated goods and services. OWSA also collected 22 ponytails that will be made into approximately 4 wigs for those fighting cancer. It was clear the entire community turned out to fight breast cancer.

Each year brings us one step closer to defeating breast cancer. But the fight continues, as does OWSA's commitment to giving back to the community through Sail for the Cure. Plans for the 11th Annual Sail for the Cure: Making Breast Cancer Walk the Plank are underway. The family friendly day will be Sunday, September 26 on the Columbia River and at the Portland Yacht Club.

Exciting changes are in store for next year's pirate themed event. For information about the 2010 event, contact [SFCRegistration@owsa.net](mailto:SFCRegistration@owsa.net)

## GUEST EDITORIAL (from Sailing Anarchy)

### Saving Sailing - Saving Racing

From the book Saving Sailing, by Nicholas Hayes

Of the approximately 1.2M registered sailboats in the United States, only about 20% are actively raced. Sailboat racing, like all sailing in the U.S., is in decline, with a meager 3/10ths of 1% of the population, including kids, doing it today (compared with about 3% of the population just 30 years ago). Racing is down almost 88% (you read that right) since 1979, shedding almost 6 million participants.

Let's look at the facts.

A few races (less than 2% of all starts) are major media events, hosted by professional managers who provide services like entertainment, provisioning, coaching and photography, who rally spectators and sponsors and publishers, and promise branding on a large scale. These are the exception, not the norm. But these are also the events that most will see in a late-night mention on cable TV and that shape the public's view of sailing in general.

The vast majority, more than 98% of all starts, are far more modest. Most races began with a few sailors saying, "Let's go here to there and see who gets there first" followed by a gradual evolution to something more complex and socially interesting. Since racing often involves an assortment of buoys to define a course and

time keepers to set starts and finishes, most events are the product of systematic volunteerism, coalescence and cooperation on par with that found in a large church or temple. Many yacht and sailing clubs can trace their roots to basic race organization, often provided by member-racers who took turns setting buoys and time to make racing possible for their competitor-friends.

Once the racing begins, favorite flavors emerge. Most sailboat racers fall into one of two categories: 68% who sail on a boat designed for dual, triple or more purposes and 32% who prefer racing identical boats.

If you visit any of the online discussion boards regarding sailboat racing, you will inevitably confront a heated debate of the merits of handicapping verses sailing one-design. There, sailors will often insist that their favored design is the solution to waning participation. As you might guess, one-design sailors want their design to be the popular standard, and handicap sailors do not see how a one-design fleet will meet their needs. It is notable that only 7% of all the sailboats in the U.S. meet a one-design criteria.

But the argument is mostly wasted breathe, at least as suggested by the data:

Among 164 U.S. sailing clubs surveyed (by US Sailing) in 2007, there are 215 different, active one-design fleets, and another 3 or 4 fleets each of handicap racers of various pedigree. This means that sailboat racing as a whole has the burden of attempting to appease, or at least juggle, about 500 tiny special-interest groups, each with only a few dozen (or less) members but with very definite opinions about what is right and wrong in their sport. It also means that fleets must, by this market design, constantly shrink, rather than grow, to adjust to the latest fad.

Mathematicians have names to describe trends in group dynamics like these. Fragmentation is when the group is breaking apart, and in doing so, becoming weaker. Coalescence is when a group is coming together and as a result, becoming stronger.

When groups coalesce they gain buying power, competition increases and prices fall, creating access. That is precisely why sailing clubs formed originally; by tapping the buying power of a group, access to lakes and oceans and boats became a reality for the group.

Conversely, when groups fragment, entry barriers like financial or time costs rise. Without a club, an individual has to bear all costs of access, training or coordination. As cost and access barriers climb, popularity must eventually and inevitably drop, although it may not seem so at first.

Since about 1980, Americans have assumed that we would have unlimited discretionary income and the ability to buy into whatever personal entertainment we wish, without need to share access. A strange period of cheap money and ample toys created a false sense of unlimited buying power. It hasn't felt as if there was much need to coalesce, so many clubs witnessed major shortfalls in member recruitment — even as marinas expanded and prices for basic services increased. The average cost to dock a sailboat rose 8 times faster than inflation in the last 10 years, even as overall demand measured in usage dropped. Now, fewer people sail on bigger and bigger boats that consume more and more lake frontage.

More important perhaps, during this time, many clubs became sellers of support services, including those required for racing, as opposed to self-sustaining groups of volunteers. So in some places, only those that can afford to buy the time of others can afford to race, and those with time to spare and some interest can't. More people inside and outside of sailing think that sailing is a professional sport of sponsors and celebrities, when, according to the numbers, it isn't and will never be.

Basic supply and demand theory tells us that this had to end.

Now that the economic bubble has popped we can see that coalescence is healthy for a community in both good times and bad, but fragmentation is especially visible and threatening in the bad. What can be done?

It's pretty simple:

- Join a club, and if there isn't one within reach, form one
- Share boats if necessary
- Set a race course
- Enter whatever boat you have access to
- Take your turn doing race committee
- Take your kids and their friends

## MINUTES

### SYSCO Board Meeting Minutes November 2, 2009

#### Finance

- -Board is waiting for the trophy budget
- -Board waiting for the PYC bill
- -The awards banquet revenue was approximately \$2800, SYSCO will subsidize about \$500 to pay for the banquet.

#### Membership

- -Board discussed when to send out membership dues reminders for 2010.
- -Membership requested a mailbox key during the months membership renewals are received.

#### Racing

- -More boats are showing up for Sunday informal races. 20+ boats came out last Sunday.

#### Cruising

- -10 – 12 boats participated in the Fall Colors Cruise, the trip was well enjoyed.
- -SYSCO cruises are done for the year.

#### Old Business

- -Poncho needs to be hauled out, board discussed date and coordination needs.

#### New Business

- -Board discussed preparing ballot for boar member elections
- -Positions available for 2010:
  - --Race Captain
  - --Treasurer
  - --Secretary
  - --Program agenda planner
  - --Poncho Engineer
  - --Social Programmer
- -The next general membership meeting will be held November 16, 2009 at the Delta Park Elmers at 7:00pm. Come earlier for social time.
- -Race Book
  - --Board discussed next year's race schedule.
  - --Board discussed reviewing listings of boats in each fleet and the possibility of updating some of the lists.

- -PHRF races were well received and enjoyed by those that chose to race with the PHRF option. This program will continue next year and will take into account the lessons learned this year.
- -Board discussed whether or not to continue to hand out supplemental race instructions on the water at the races, or to include them in the race book. It was decided to continue to hand them out on the river to ensure that racers read the information.

Meeting Adjourned

Minutes prepared by: Scott Ferre, Acting Secretary