

Starting Line



January 2012

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SYSCO

Small Yacht Sailing Club of Oregon

www.syscosailing.org

From the Commodore

By Michael Nance, Commodore



Happy New Year to everyone! Now that the Holidays are behind us, it is time to look forward to the 2012 racing and cruising season. First of all, I would like to thank and welcome Tod Bassham as our new Treasurer, David Long as our new Secretary, and Petra Gilbert as our new Newsletter Editor. We still have a huge opening for someone to step up as Race Committee Chair/Vice-Commodore. Being an all-volunteer club, without volunteers we would not have a club now and will not have a club in the future. For what it is worth, we will be using online registration this year and Rich Jones will be available as our Principle Race Official for the majority of events, so this position will be much less daunting than in years past. There must be someone out there willing to take the plunge! Anyone?

The Portland Boat Show is Jan. 11-15 this year. Thanks to all who have volunteered to staff the SYSCO booth! As of press time, all time slots have been filled! We have lots of booth upgrades planned for this year including a new video slideshow on a flat screen, new tri-fold membership applications, sails hanging from the rafters and Gary Bruner came up with a great idea to get new people interested in sailing and possibly joining SYSCO. We are going to offer a "WIN A FREE SAILBOAT RIDE" lottery where visitors can fill out an information card and



drop it into a fishbowl. As of press time, we already have 14 boats that have offered to take folks out! If you go to the boat show, be sure and stop by the SYSCO booth and say hello.





The 2nd Annual SYSCO Fleet Night is scheduled for Monday, January 23 at Rose City Yacht Club. This is an opportunity to meet others in your fleet, share boat details and racing ideas, plan fleet events and choose your 2012 Fleet Captain if your fleet hasn't already done that. We will also be presenting a brief review of some of the changes to the OCSA General Sailing Instructions, new OCSA Course Charts and online race registration for 2012. There is also a strict 100 person capacity at the floating Rose City Yacht Club. So please RSVP early with Stephanie Rice at stepherr@comcast.net so she can plan on how much food and drink to order and to make sure we do not go over capacity. We were right at the limit last year! The cost is \$5 per person at the door for pizza, and beer or soda.

See you there!

Michael Nance
Commodore
S/V Estrella Del Mar
~~~\_/) ~~~

**2nd Annual SYSCO Fleet Night**  
**Monday, January 23**  
**Rose City Yacht Club**  
**RSVP [stepherr@comcast.net](mailto:stepherr@comcast.net)**



## From the Rear

By Jim Sinclair, 2012 Rear Commodore

By the time you read this, the 2012 Portland Boat Show will probably be history. I hope you all had a good experience there. I was thrilled and pleased to see so many members step up to volunteer for booth duty. And speaking of the booth, a big thanks to Michael Nance for the new video display and to Gary Bruner for the Win A Sailboat Ride promotion.

Your board has planned a great year ahead. Note that we dropped the poorly attended Spring Regatta and replaced it with the Summer Solstice Regatta in warmer weather. Also, be sure to check out the new local rule changes in the 2012 OCSA Race Book. (Race Books will be available at the Boat Show and at our Fleet Night on Jan. 23)

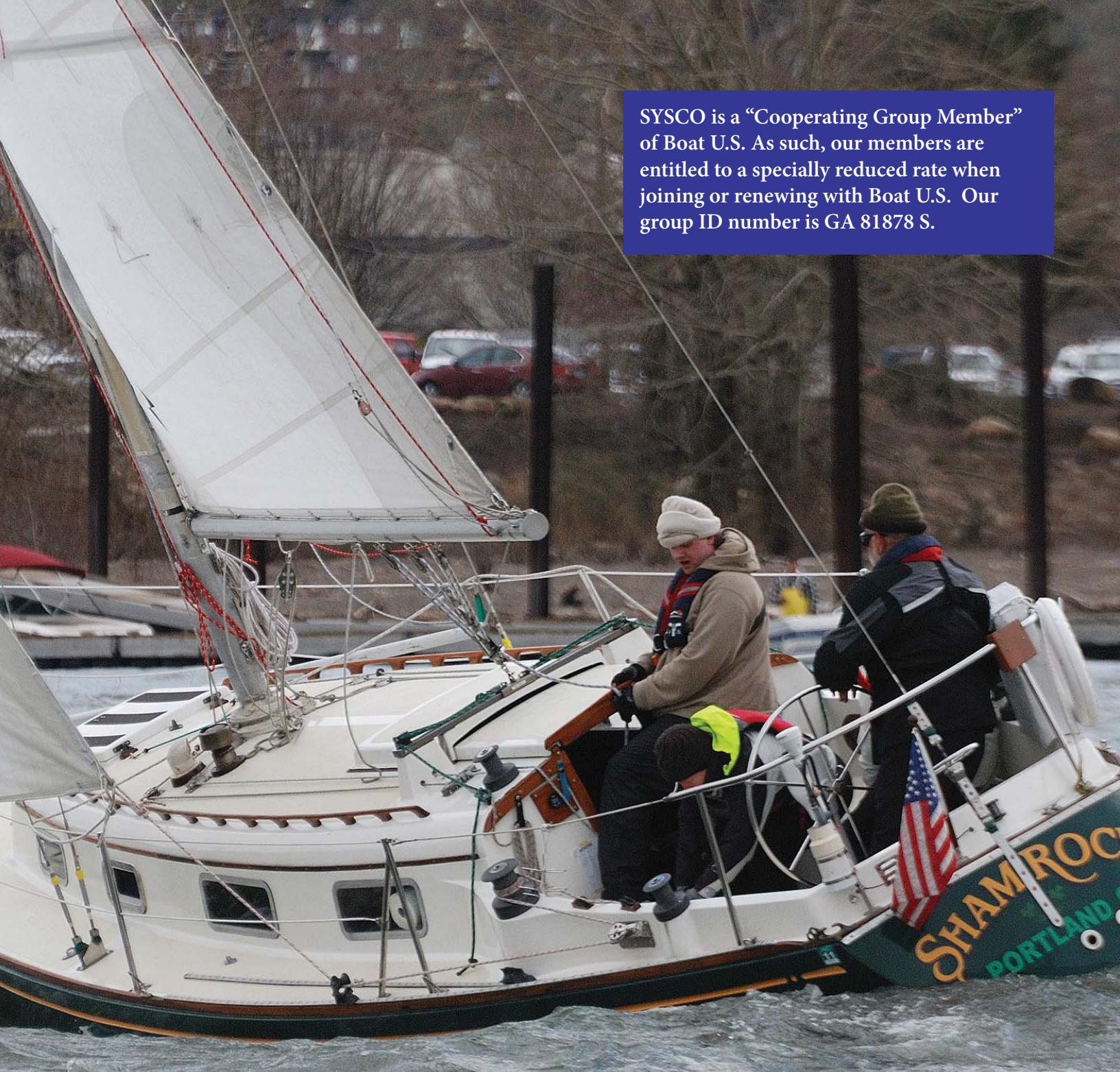
The Cruising Schedule is not final yet but you can count on all the usual holiday trips and our annual Delta Cruise to Astoria and back, stopping at all the exotic locations along the way. Looks like 28 July to 5 Aug, but watch your newsletter for more details. I hope to see more boats participate in SYSCO cruises this year, it's a great way to get to know other SYSCO members.

Be safe and have fun,  
Jim Sinclair  
2012 Rear Commodore

Race Books will be available at the Boat Show and at Fleet Night on Jan. 23.



## Benefits of Membership



SYSCO is a “Cooperating Group Member” of Boat U.S. As such, our members are entitled to a specially reduced rate when joining or renewing with Boat U.S. Our group ID number is GA 81878 S.



# Finding Nausicaä or Confessions of a Serial Polygamist

By Tod Bassham

Ever since the first hunter-gatherer lashed two logs together, held up a scrap of fur to catch the wind, and ventured out onto the briny Neolithic deep, an adamantine bond has existed between man and boat. It is possible that those who remained on shore to raise children and fend off saber-tooth tigers harbored a wee resentment at this milestone. Perhaps a peevish tone crept into the greeting the cave-wife gave to the returning ur-mariner. But there is no turning back the wheel of history, and over the ensuing millennia, generations of sailors' wives have struggled to accept the Other Woman in their life.

My story differs from other sailors' only in the details. When I hit the midway point on my allotted fourscore and ten, the family doctor told me that I was overdue for a mid-life crisis. I dutifully researched the options, and decided that my continued existence would have meaning only if I possessed one or more of the following: a red Maserati GranCabrio convertible, (2) a red-headed mistress, or (3) a used sailboat. As to the sailboat, my limited research suggested the Ranger 20 as the beau ideal of a sailboat, the nautical equivalent of the Maserati. Any one of these choices would result in a very satisfying mid-life crisis, but I confess the combination of all three dazzled the imagination: I saw myself driving around town in the Maserati, mistress at my side, towing a Ranger 20 behind.

Being an enlightened 21st century man, I decided to present these options to my lovely red-headed wife, Deedie, and let her choose what course my mid-life crisis would take. The Maserati she rejected out of hand, as too expensive. The mistress was a tempting option, with several potential upsides for Deedie, but ultimately she rejected that option as too tacky. That left the Ranger 20, a popular shoal-draft daysailer built in Kent, Washington between 1972 and 1983. Deedie reasoned (correctly) that I couldn't get into too much trouble in a sailboat with a 17-foot waterline length and a maximum theoretical—very theoretical—hull speed of 5 knots. She further reasoned (incorrectly) that it couldn't cost very much to fix one up.

The verdict rendered, off I went to Craigslist, and soon found Pumpkin Seed, a neglected 1976 Ranger 20 with a white hull and blue trim. Neglected she was, but dear to me, and I spent countless hours and over \$XX,XXX.XX fixing her up. [*Editor's note: actual amount redacted on the order of the bankruptcy court*]. That beloved old boat taught me how to

*"...my continued existence would have meaning only if I possessed one or more of the following: a red Maserati GranCabrio convertible, (2) a red-headed mistress, or (3) a used sailboat. "*



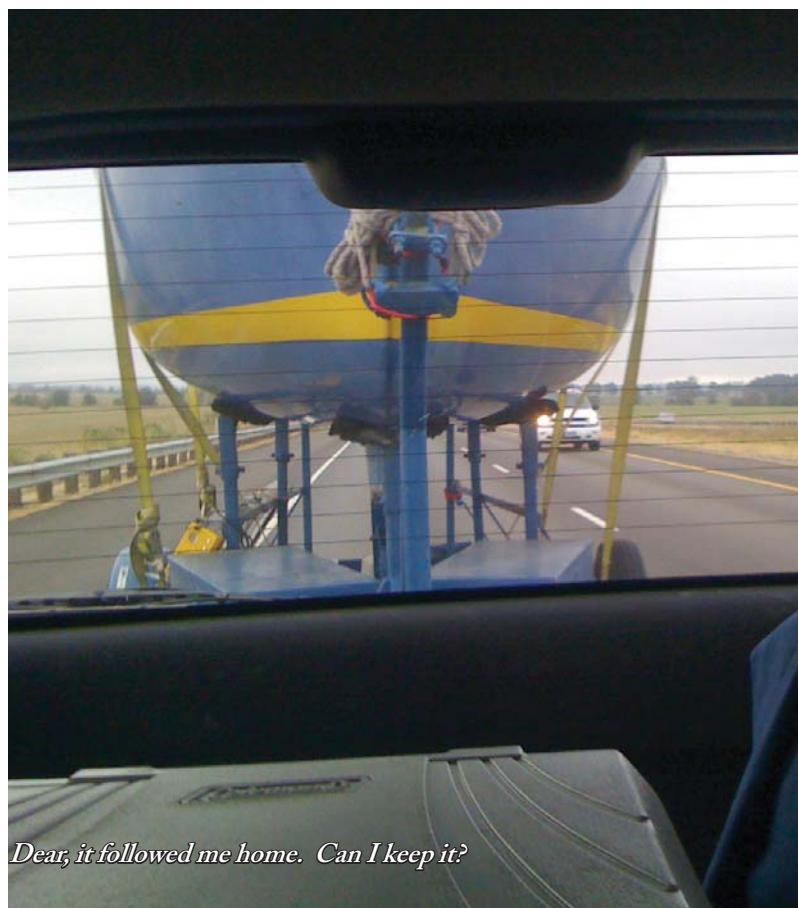
sail. Equally important, I found the wonderful and supportive Columbia River Ranger 20 fleet, which introduced me to the joy of losing sailboat races. “It’s a very important job bringing up the rear of the fleet,” they reassured me. I was soon promoted to rear-admiral of the fleet, a post of honor responsible for crossing the finish line only after all Rangers are securely tied to the dock drinking beer.

I had always hoped Deedie would love *Pumpkin Seed* as much as I did, but in fact, there was constant marital strife, particularly at the end of the month when the West Marine invoices rolled in, or on those occasions when I was so busy grinding fiberglass that I forgot the children’s birthdays. More than once I was reminded darkly that if I loved that boat more than my family I could jolly well move my belongings permanently to her cramped V-berth.

But this past summer something changed. Deedie was invited to a female-only Wednesday night sail aboard a Merit 25, a sleek racing boat with a large cockpit, a deep keel, and four capacious berths. Deedie realized that her dissatisfaction with her husband’s sailing was not the time away from family, or the vast expense, but rather his stubby little boat. She discovered that she really enjoyed sailing something longer, faster, beamier, with more endurance for extended voyages. One day, she met me at the dock after I returned from another last place finish, and announced that our continued marital bliss depended on whether I could satisfy her desire for waterline length. I expostulated

that size doesn’t really matter—surely, it’s what you do with what you have—but her mind was made up. She was in love.

I will submit to you, dear reader, that when one’s wife demands a bigger sailboat, it is the sailor/husband’s solemn duty to respond, “Yes, ma’am, how big?” I further submit that it is exceeding bad form for a husband to disagree with his wife regarding when to cast off one mistress and acquire another. In these matters, it seems to me that the most punctilious



*Dear, it followed me home. Can I keep it?*



regard must be paid to spousal whims, no matter how irrational and hormonally driven. Oh, I myself was not immune to the siren call of an additional five feet of waterline. My racer's heart thrilled at the prospect of being rear-admiral of the Merit 25 fleet. But was I ready to cast off my boon companion, whose snug cockpit had sheltered me from many a storm, whose fiberglass curves I had polished and caressed so these many years? Was I ready to become a serial polygamist?

Needs must. With a heavy heart, I placed dear *Pumpkin Seed* on the auction block, and began scouring the ads for a Merit 25. We found a much neglected, hence affordable, Merit 25 in California, 15 hours away. Two friends, Randy and Jeff, volunteered a tow vehicle, 48 hours of time, and a testosterone-fueled road trip. Deedie kissed me farewell, muttering "Return with my boat or else." Fifteen hours later we were in Santa Cruz, eying a dirty 1980 Merit 25 atop a rusty decrepit trailer. Most of the epic return trip remains a blur, but I distinctly recall pulling over at 4:00 in the morning somewhere in the Siskiyou passes, and staring bleary-eyed at the rusted out trailer fenders, which had collapsed onto the tires and half-melted them with friction. I pondered, for the first time but I suspect not the last, to what lengths a man will go to satisfy the nautical urges of his wife.



*Splashdown!*

Somehow we made it home, and as the travel-lift lowered the blue hull of our new Merit 25 into the water, I could tell from Deedie's star-struck expression that the moral advantage in our marriage had swung my way. Unlike my Ranger 20, this boat was her idea, an idea that I had grumpily acceded to. But now I recognized new vistas of marital jujitsu opening up for exploitation. Giddily I tested the waters by tossing out the suggestion that we trade one of our spare children for a new suit of sails. To her credit, Deedie rejected the suggestion, but only after giving it serious





consideration, and discovering that children—or at least our children—have zero trade-in value with the sailmakers of this world.

Still, I was now in the rare and fortunate position of a husband whose wife cares deeply about esoterica like drag co-efficients and the proper application of bottom paint. We worked together, perhaps truly for the first time in our 20-year marriage, to scrape and paint and sand the old boat. I reflected happily that, for a sailor, few things in life are as appealing as the sight of one's better half hanging headfirst into the bilge, singing as she scrubs rust off the keel bolts.

Even our children, long resigned to the nautical eccentricity of their father, and now their mother, mustered a little enthusiasm for the new boat. They decided to rename it *Nausicaä* (pronounced “nau-SI-kei-eh”), after a Homeric princess who rescues Odysseus from charges of public indecency. It also happens to be the name of the children’s favorite Japanese animé character, a young warrior girl and “windrider” who sails around in her wind-ship, battling bad guys in motorized airships. Doubly appropriate, I thought, since it turns out that in ancient Greek *Nausicaä* means something like “burner of ships.” Personally, I see nothing wrong with giving a beautiful young girl a name like “burner of ships”—wish I’d thought of it for my own daughter—but perhaps I am alone in this.

In any case, *Nausicaä* seemed a fitting name for a race boat, one that is either destined to burn the competition to the waterline or, more likely with me at the helm, self-immolate in the rear of the fleet. Many racing boats have a crude, trash-talk name, like “Bite This” or “Pass-U-By.” The beauty of a name like *Nausicaä*, I realized, is that on the one hand it is outrageously pretentious, with satisfyingly obscure literary and pop allusions. On the other hand it is also a subtle form of smack talk, something the old master mariner himself might have shouted out in defiance as he steered his vessel between Scylla, the six-headed monster, and Charybdis, the deadly whirlpool.

*I reflected happily that, for a sailor, few things in life are as appealing as the sight of one's better half hanging headfirst into the bilge, singing as she scrubs rust off the keel bolts.*





*The author discovers a mysterious hole in his deck.*

As a man with two mistresses, I too have had to steer a careful course. This is much easier, I've discovered, if the three form a true marriage of mind and heart. So, if one day on the river you see a beautiful woman at the helm of her blue-hulled Merit 25, you should know first of all that both the woman and boat are

spoken for. And if you see a grinning fool on the foredeck, trying to untangle a mess of spinnaker lines, well, that's me: a happily married man.



# SYSCO Jan. 2012 Meeting Minutes

## From the Board

The meeting was held at Delta Park Elmers on January 2, 2012.

Present were: Jim Sinclair, Petra Gilbert, Michael Nance, Jan Burkhart, Tod Bassham and Gary Bruner.

New Commodore Michael Nance rapped the gavel at 7:06 p.m. and began with a welcome and introductions, especially Petra Gilbert who is the new newsletter editor. It was voted to dispense with the reading and approval of minutes since they are typically sent to board members for edits and changes before publication in the newsletter.

## Committee Reports

**Financial:** Treasurer Tod Bassham distributed a proposed budget for 2012, which was approved by the board. He notes a carryover of \$10,232.59, a significant increase over past years, partly because we have members renewing memberships earlier than ever. Tod is predicting a \$16,303 total of additional income for the year and has budgeted expenses totaling \$17,000. Several bills were presented for payment, including our annual insurance payment, PO Box, and membership to US Sailing.

**Membership:** Chair Jan Burkhart reports that she is coming up to speed with the new Regatta Network software, with Michael Nance's tutelage. She reports that 35 members have already joined or renewed memberships. She suggested that a laptop and wi-fi connection would be useful for the Portland



Boat Show as well as Fleet Night, to facilitate new member signups and renewals online. She will make sure there is a clipboard at the Boat Show to take the names of people interested in SYSCO. The Board voted to approve the new membership of Kevin Robertson of Barcode, who won a free membership at the OCSA banquet and Jeff Eastes, a Ranger 20 skipper. Welcome, Kevin and Jeff!





**Racing:** Michael Nance gave the report since we still have a huge opening for someone to step up and fill the vacancy as Race Committee Chair. Michael mentioned that we have a need for a new fleet to step forward to run races since the Catalina 22 Fleet has not been filled for a couple of seasons. It was suggested and approved that the Cruising Fleet, which is large and growing, be split so that the Slow Fleet can run some races and the Fast fleet can take others in the Spring and Summer Series. Michael will confirm with Stephanie Rice that we'll have pizza and beer available for the Fleet Night on Monday, Jan. 23 at RCYC. Jan will send an email 'blast' to remind members to RSVP to [stepherr@comcast.net](mailto:stepherr@comcast.net) so we have the necessary food and drink, available for a \$5 fee at the door. At Fleet Night, Michael will show a short presentation on the need for a Race Committee Chair as well as changes to the racing scene this season, as approved by OCSA.

**Pancho III:** New chair of the maintenance committee, Gary Bruner, reported that Phil Campagna was to meet with Bill Brennan today to look at the repairs needed to Pancho's hull and railings. No word had yet come about an estimate or timeline. Gary will take on the purchase of new PFDs as well as a new external speaker for Pancho. He'll also make sure that registration numbers are in place before the new season and that the battery is charged and oil in the lower unit changed before Pancho is needed in March.

**Program:** Chair Randall Poff was not in attendance, but it was reported that he has a prospect for the March general meeting. There will be no general membership meetings in January and February as they are replaced by Fleet Night and the SYSCO Chateau Social, respectively.

#### Old Business

It was moved and approved to install Davie Long, owner of Catalina 31 Brenda Lou, as the new secretary of SYSCO for 2012. Davie was not present, but, by speaker phone, promised to NEVER miss another board meeting! Thanks, and welcome, Davie, for stepping up.

SYSCO is in need of someone to step in as Vice Commodore and Race Committee chair for the season. The job should be much less stressful now with online registration and the presence of Rich Jones as our 2012 Principle Race Officer.

Jim Sinclair is still holding two awards from last season, one for Sugar Plum and one for Tangera, which he's very willing to give away to whomever wants them....

#### New Business

Mike will deal with the pre-renewal insurance form from Chubb Insurance.





**Boat Show:** We still have a need for a few volunteers for the SYSCO Booth at the show. Please sign up if you can, in response to the email ‘blast’ coming soon.

Michael Nance has re-done the slide show for the SYSCO booth, with new, better speakers and other upgrades. Jim Sinclair is working on making up new tri-fold brochures about SYSCO to hand out, with updated information and contacts.

Gary Bruner will bring an older, unused spinnaker to hang from the rafters for increased visibility. He also suggested that we’d get more visitors if we would offer a ‘lottery’ by which folks could “WIN A FREE SAILBOAT RIDE” by filling out a 3x5 card with contact information. If members could/would volunteer to take a few (three, four or more?) new folks out for a three-hour sailboat ride this summer on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon or evening, we could have multiple “winners” drawn from a fishbowl of interested folks. Arrangements for time could then be arranged between ‘winners’ and volunteers, as convenient for both parties. Please let Gary Bruner (360 721 3468 or molika@teleport.com) know if you are willing to help with this new project intended to introduce new folks to the sport. Gary will make a sign, an easel, get a fishbowl for entries and get the 3x5 cards.



Finally, it was moved and approved to pay South Coast Web \$7.95 per month for hosting the new SYSCO website. Michael Nance recused himself from the vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:08.

Respectfully submitted by outgoing Secretary Gary Bruner.



# Renew Your SYSCO Membership



Avoid a \$5 late fee by renewing your membership before Feb. 15.

Renew online at: [www.syscosailing.org](http://www.syscosailing.org)

If you have membership questions, please email or call Jan at [encountvid@aol.com](mailto:encountvid@aol.com) or 503-701-5706.

