

Starting Line



August 2012

Inside this issue ...

- From the Commodore
- Can this Marriage be Saved?
A Race/Cruise to Beacon Rock
- SYSCO August 2012 Meeting Minutes
- SYSCO Potluck 2012
- SYSCO BBQ 2012
- Thoughts from the Rear

SYSCO

Small Yacht Sailing Club of Oregon

www.syscosailing.org

From the Commodore

By Michael Nance, Commodore



By the time this goes to press, the Free Bowl of Soup Night Beer Can race supporting the Oregon Food Bank and the SYSCO/Columbia Crossings Cup will have come and gone. The weather forecast

is excellent for the weekend and there are post-race BBQs and music planned for both days on the lawn at Tomahawk Bay.

Congratulations are in order for several SYSCO racers who did quite well at the Whidbey Island Race Week, including Dragonfly (1st in class), Charlie Mike, Free Bowl of Soup, Skookum II, and Kermit. Additionally, Valis, a big Pacific Seacraft with Rich Jones aboard, won its class in the PacCup and is now on its way home to her new home in the San Juans.

The annual SYSCO Race & Cruise to St. Helens is coming soon on August 25 and 26!

Invitation: SYSCO extends a cordial invitation to its members and their guests to participate in this fun race and cruise event on the Columbia River.

Description: A casual weekend race & cruise to St. Helens on Saturday & back on Sunday.

Eligibility: The St. Helens Race and Cruise is open to SYSCO members and their guests. Bandit and pirate boats will be aggressively pursued by the Race Committee if, upon consultation with the SYSCO Membership Roster, they are determined to be





renegades. Races shall be governed by the current ISAF Racing Rules of Sailing including the national prescriptions of US Sailing, as modified by the OCSA General Sailing Instructions, applicable level or one-design rules, and the supplemental instructions of this notice.

Click here to register https://www.regattanetwork.com/clubmgmt/applet_registration_form.php?regatta_id=5084

Fair Winds!

Michael Nance, Commodore

~~~\_/\_) ~~~

The annual SYSCO Race & Cruise to St. Helens is coming soon on August 25 and 26!



# Can this Marriage be Saved? A Race/Cruise to Beacon Rock

By Tod Bassham

As readers of these occasional articles may recall, I recently acquired a Merit 25, Nausicaa, at the insistence of my wife, Deedie, who found its lean, low-decked profile irresistible. While Deedie loved its racy looks, she does not love to race, and so to me was left the joyous task of campaigning the boat through the winter series, the Frostbite, the spring regattas, the SYSCO spring and summer series, etc. The boat had come loaded down with 30 years' accumulation of junk. I ruthlessly stripped everything off Nausicaa that did not make her go fast, replacing bulkheads with Styrofoam stringers, glass windows with duct-tape and cellophane, and the port-o-potty with a plastic pee bucket that doubles as the beer cooler. Yes, the crew begged for a separate ice chest or even a second plastic bucket dedicated to beer, but I sternly resisted those whiners. As racers know, every ounce counts.

Meanwhile, my fair-weather sailing wife spent the cold, wet winter months making or buying all kinds of frou-frou items for the boat: lace curtains, hanging planters, a ratcheting stainless steel paper towel dispenser, even cockpit cushions, fer the love o' mike. I wanted to ask her: what's wrong with sitting for eight hours on non-skid fiberglass? Once the nether regions go numb it is actually quite comfortable, I could have pointed out. But some marital instinct for self-preservation told me to just let this one go.

Deedie patiently waited until the July 4 lull in the racing calendar to announce that Nausicaa would



thenceforth assume her namesakes' character as a beautiful Homeric princess, bedecked with gewgaws and pretty frilleries. She insisted that a proper head be installed, as well as sunbrella-covered memory foam settee and v-berth cushions. She hung up the lace curtains, the hanging planters, and the ratcheting stainless steel paper towel dispenser. The pee/beer bucket she jettisoned in disgust, and replaced it with a monstrous cooler with a built-in wine spritzer, which barely fit down the companionway. Finally, she insisted that the sail locker/v-berth be emptied of the racing sail inventory, leaving only a single ancient cruising headsail and a single chicken chute. Satisfied, she declared that we would now sail this gaudy, overloaded, underpowered, floating perfumery upriver to Beacon Rock State Park, in the Columbia Gorge.



Well, I put my foot down, I can tell you. That is, I can tell you, but I couldn't really tell Deedie. One look at the happiness on her face as she knitted cupholders to hang on the lifelines, and the words died in my throat. If it killed me, I had to accept that Nausicaa was no longer a sleek racing machine, but a plodding cruiser.

Still, I had to break the news to Deedie that with our limited sail inventory, and the strong currents in the Gorge, we would not be sailing fast. "That's all right," she responded, "I don't want to sail fast."

Not...Want...To...Sail...Fast? The words seemed familiar, but their collective sense escaped me. For a minute the world spun wildly like a broken top, devoid of form and meaning. But with a massive, audible shifting of mental gears I was able to see, briefly, through cruiser-colored glasses. Yes, I could understand now: it doesn't really matter how fast you sail. Nor does it matter how much junk is lashed on deck or hanging from the lifelines, or how much algae is hanging off the bottom-paint. Sailing is not all about winning races. It's about...what? I groped for an answer, but the vision faded. Well, I hoped I would find out.

Our crew on the Beacon Rock trip included our daughter, Joie, her boyfriend, Gaelan, and our anxious mini-schnauzer, Loki. The two teenagers arrived dragging distended duffle bags crammed with an improbable number of impractical items, including enough clothes to change into new outfits every



watch. As we heaved the bags aboard I glumly watched the boat sink below its trim line. We cast off, and wallowed upstream to our first stop, Sandy Beach on Government Island. A delicious dockside dinner, and a gentle rain that fell considerably after we tucked into our berths for the night, ended the day. Deedie slept in the v-berth, while I bunked down on the sole, between the two smoldering volcanoes of teen hormones sequestered in their separate quarterberths. My snoring, I am informed by reliable sources, is a sure antidote to romance.

Not...Want...To...Sail...Fast? The words seemed familiar, but their collective sense escaped me.



The next morning a modest west wind tempted us out into the current. Despite recent spinnaker lessons with her women's sailing group, Deedie was nervous about flying the kite. The spinnaker proposition was put to a vote of the masses, and the result was two hands yes (Tod and Gaelan), two hands no (Deedie and Joie), and one paw hell no (Loki). Vox populi et canis having spoken, we poled out the genoa and went wing-and-wing, in classic cruiser fashion. By early afternoon we reached Rooster Rock State Park, where we met Gaelan's parents, Jan and Usha, aboard Dauntless, their 20-foot cedar-built, gaff-rigged Drascombe lugger with lovely tan-bark sails. The two boats tucked behind Sand Island for the night, anchoring in a lagoon with a sandy beach, submerged forests, and towering cliffs on either side. Amazingly, we had this sublime anchorage to ourselves. The kayaks came out, and we explored the hidden recesses of the jungle. We rafted up for a potluck sushi dinner, then drifted apart for slumber. A nearly full moon rose over Larch Mountain, drowning the stars. This is actually somewhat ... pleasant, I thought to myself. Maybe there is more to do with sailboats than just race them around the buoys.

The next morning was the Fourth of July, and we were awakened by three sportboats full of young men, beer and fireworks roaring up to our private beach. We beat a hasty retreat into the heart of the Gorge. A brisk westerly wind against the three-knot current had Gaelan and I casting longing glances at the spinnaker bag, then glowering looks over at



Dauntless, who was taking advantage of her shallow draft and higher sail area/displacement ratio to slip ahead of us in the eddies. But now Deedie felt the stirrings of a strange emotion: an irritation at the sight of another boat's transom, an ungovernable urge to overtake that boat and sink it below the horizon. Doing that would be somewhat...pleasant, she thought to herself.

"What do you all think about hoisting the spinnaker?" Deedie finally asked. Joie and Loki howled, but the vote was now 3-2 in favor of shifting into boogie. Up flew the chute, Deedie at the helm, yours truly on trim, Gaelan on the foredeck, and Joie and Loki acting as grumpy, moveable ballast. The



wind increased, and we rocketed upriver, punching through the growing chop and occasionally surfing off the swells. Deedie realized, with a shock, that sailing fast was fun. Recalling tricks she had learned in her spinnaker class, Deedie began issuing crisp orders to her crew, demanding better trim, faster gybes, and increasingly subtle weight distributions. Gaelan and I hopped around like possessed beings in response to her whipcrack commands, while Loki's mournful cries echoed off the cliffs. Sensing the threat, Dauntless had gone deep into her sail locker: jib, flying jib, staysail, main, mizzen, main topsail, a gollywobbler, even main and mizzen studdingsails poled out on a boat hook and a deck brush. To no avail against a well-trimmed symmetrical spinnaker on tall Bermuda rig, dead down wind. As Nausicaä pulled even, and then inched ahead, Deedie took one hand off the straining tiller to salute a worthy foe. If this is racing, she said to herself, it isn't half bad.

The two boats met up again at the Beacon Rock anchorage, which, unbelievably, was empty of other boats. After kayaking, hiking, and another excellent supper, we spent a moonlit night at what seemed our own private dock beneath the towering monolith. In the distance was the faint crackle of fireworks, but the



stars and moon were far more splendid to us than the pathetic flashes and mutterings of mankind.

That night, I confessed to Deedie that cruising was perhaps not a complete waste of time; she admitted that racing sailboats did not entirely suck, and there we decided to leave it. Sometimes in a marriage—as in sailing—it is the things left unsaid that say the most.

Sometimes, in a marriage, it is the things left unsaid that say the most.



# SYSCO August 2012 Meeting Minutes

## From the Board

The meeting was held at Elmer's, Delta Park and was called to order at 7:05 p.m. on Aug. 6 by Commodore Michael Nance. Also present were Michael's wife, Liz, Warren Dalby, Jan Burkhart, Tod Bassham, Bill Sanborn, Don Woodhouse and Gary Bruner.

## Financial Report

Treasurer Tod Bassham handed out a current financial statement. Tod says this has been an expensive year and that we won't make our budget, most likely. The most expensive outlay yet to come is the annual Awards Banquet. Karen Anderson will be contacted to make sure that PYC has been reserved for that even. Some discussion revolved around whether or not we need a band, since one would be expensive, and only a few members actually dance after awards are presented. Jan Burkhart and Tod will contact a couple of members who don't seem to have paid their dues yet. Tod reported that the 'donation' jar at the 2 barbeques was contributed to generously, and that cash from the jar went immediately to help pay for beer at the events. It was moved, seconded and passed to send a \$100.00 check to LoveInc., in honor of long time SYSCO member Pat Brown who recently passed away. Pat's husband, Bob, served two years as SYSCO Commodore in the past. Her memorial service was last Saturday. Many boats cut short the Delta Cruise as a consequence.



## Membership

Chair Jan Burkhart reported that we have four members who have renewed of late, bringing the SYSCO membership count to 122, although two of those are 'comped' memberships (one regular and one associate) and nine are associate memberships. Jan said there are plans being discussed to improve the membership handbook, thanks to SYSCO



volunteer Scott Stevenson. Jan also mentioned that congratulations are in order for several SYSCO racers who did quite well at the Whidbey Island Race Week, including Dragonfly (1st in class) ,Charlie Mike, Free Bowl of Soup, Skookum II, and Kermit. Additionally, Valis, a big Pacific Seacraft with Rich Jones aboard, won its class in the PacCup and is now on its way home to her new home in the San Juans.

### **Racing**

Race Committee Chair Warren Dalby reported that racing is nearly over for our season, but we have the Columbia Crossings Cup coming up on Saturday. Only 11 boats have yet signed up, and more race committee is needed. Bill Sanborn agreed to use Upstart for the committee boat and Gary Bruner will run Pancho. Jim Foster will help out on the RC boat. The only race left after that will be the Long Distance Race to St .Helens. After just two weeks, the CYC Summer Series is fraught with protests and requests for redress from the RC, so we were fortunate, after all.

### **Pancho**

A report was given by Gary Bruner. He will put the race gear back on the mark boat and make sure she has fuel before the CCC. We'll let Pancho sit in her slip at McCuddy's until the end of the month since moorage is paid and she might be needed if the CYC boat should fail. Gary will need help with haul-out and storage, and a new tarp may be necessary to cover Pancho for winter. Mike may be available to help with that duty. The flags and race gear will be stored at Sanborn's.

### **New Business**

There was some discussion about the Awards Banquet, including making sure Stephanie Rice is on board, perhaps not having a band this year.





Also discussed was a letter from Rock Kent about a change he'd like to see next year. Having the OCSA book online would be helpful to many, he says. The rub is that it's the sale of the book that supports the efforts of OCSA, so a financial change would be necessary... The discussion was then tabled.

Ribbing of Secretary Dave Long occurred after he showed up at 8 p.m. just as the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Stand in secretary

Gary Bruner



# SYSCO Potluck 2012

SYSCO potluck at Cathlamet Sunday July 29, 2012



# SYSCO BBQ 2012



# Thoughts from the Rear

By Bill Sanborn

Many of us who have cruised to SYSCO and other events are always excited when the Willard comes in to the dock or raft up, while Bob can put that boat anywhere, it was always fun to take the bow line, and exchange greetings with Pat, "Hi Billie," as she handed you the oversized line, and followed by a hug. Vicki and I have been close friends with them for 30 years, introduced them to SYSCO and they became friends with everyone they met.

The next time I meet the Willard at a dock or raft up it won't be the same. Pat Brown sailed away on July 21, and is now rafted up in Heaven. But Bob will carry on and will maneuver the Willard like only he can, but we will need to be ready to help him with that oversized bow line.

