

May 2016 Storm Trysail Club Newsletter

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STORM TRYSAIL CLUB®

eNewsletter



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In This Issue...

Upcoming Events

Block Island Race

Start Friday, May 27,

Awards Ceremony

Sunday, May 29,

Stamford YC

Contact: Ray

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Commodore's Column

I wish to extend the Club's special thanks to retiring Vice Commodore Peter Rugg for his many years of loyal service. Peter served as the Club Treasurer from 2001 to 2013 before moving to Rear Commodore and then Vice Commodore. Under his leadership Block Island Race Week became a Sailors for the Sea Certified Silver Level Green Regatta and enhanced the Club's reputation for regatta management, as evidenced by winning the Special

**Grandmasters
Team Racing**

*June 3-5, Lake
Winnepesaukee, NH
Contact: Casey
Nickerson,
(603) 387-5427*

**Newport-
Bermuda Race
Pre-Start
Luncheon**

Thursday, June 19,
1130
Café Zelda
Thames St.,
Newport, RI
[Register here](#)

**Newport-
Bermuda Race
Cocktail Party**

Wednesday, June
22, 1600
Royal Hamilton
Amateur Dinghy
Club
Hamilton, Bermuda

[Register here](#)

**Junior Safety at
Sea Seminars,
Presented by
Storm Trysail
Foundation**

*June 22: Annapolis
Yacht Club,
Annapolis, MD*

Commendation Moosehead Committee Trophy for excellence in race management. Peter also played a central role in the creation of the Storm Trysail Foundation.

I also wish to thank outgoing Governors Jan Smeets and AJ Evans for their service to the Club.

The Club and the Foundation, in conjunction with SUNY Maritime College, ran a highly successful Hands-on Safety at Sea Seminar last month. Almost 300 people participated in a full day of lectures and drills, in the pool and on the water. Many thanks to Event Chairman and Past Commodore Charles "Butch" Ulmer and US Sailing Moderator and Past Commodore Rich du Moulin for a successful day. Some 60 Club members and others donated their time and expertise to the seminar. In addition, 11 ocean-going yachts were lent for the day for on the water training with storm sails and man overboard recovery. Thanks to all.

Looking ahead, 2017 will be a big year for the Club with the second hosting of Quantum Key West Race Week and the 27th edition of Block Island Race Week. The two committees are starting their planning under Past Commodore John Fisher and Vice Commodore Lenny Sitar, respectively. Please contact either of them or Whitney Kneisley in the office to volunteer.

And finally, good luck to all Bermuda-bound members. I look forward to seeing you at our party at the Royal Hamilton Dinghy Club Wednesday, June 22.

Lee Reichart
Commodore

Annual Meeting

One hundred and twenty-five Storm Trysail Club members gathered for the club's 2016 annual meeting at Stamford Yacht Club on January 9. Reports were presented by all flag officers and standing committee chairs. The official minutes of the meeting will be available at a later date.

A motion to accept the slate presented by Nominating

June 29: Shelter
Island Yacht Club,
Shelter Island, NY

July 22: Larchmont
Yacht Club,
Larchmont, NY

July 28: Raritan
Yacht Club,
Perth Amboy, NJ

July 29: New
England Science &
Sailing
Stonington, CT

August 1: Maine
Maritime Academy,
Castine, ME

August 18: Sail
Newport,
Newport, RI

For more
information or to
volunteer, contact:
Lisa Schinella, Storm
Trysail Foundation,
(914) 834-8857
or Kelly Robinson
krobins@rutgers.edu

Committee Chairman, Past Commodore John Storck, Jr., was moved a seconded from the floor. Secretary John D. Browning cast one vote in favor of the motion thereby electing the slate.

The 2016-2017 Flag Officers and Governors are:

Flag Officers 2016-2017

Commodore	Lee Reichart
Vice Commodore	Leonard Sitar
Rear Commodore	Alton J. Evans, Jr.
Secretary	John D. Browning
Treasurer	James D. Anderson

Governors 2016-2017

Steve Benjamin
Ed Cesare
Wally Miller
Ben Hall

Governors 2017-2018

Jesse Fielding
Kevin McNeil
Casey Nickerson
Steve Taft

Annual Award Citations

The Hugh Kilmer Trophy

Awarded to **Ken Read**, who skippered the 100-foot maxi sloop *Comanche* to a new 24-hour world monohull distance record of 618.01 nm during the 2015 TransAtlantic Race. Trophy accepted by Past Commodore **Rich du Moulin**.



The Monte-Sano Trophy for

Racing Excellence

Awarded to **Steve Benjamin**, who skippered his 40-footer *Spookie* to victory in all four offshore races entered in the 2015 racing season. Trophy accepted by Past Commodore **Bob Towse**.



The Owen C. Torrey Memorial Trophy
Awarded to Past Commodore **Eric Kreuter** for his Outstanding Service to the Club as Commodore and as an essential leader of many Storm Trysail Club Block Island Race Weeks.



The William Snaith Memorial Trophy
Awarded to **McCurdy & Rhodes** and **Scott Kaufmann**, designers of the yacht *Carina*, winner of the 2015 Annapolis to Newport Race. Trophy accepted by **Ian McCurdy**.



The Richard M. Stimson Offshore Navigation Trophy
Awarded to **Larry Fox** as the Storm Trysail Club member with the best combined fleet positions among the races entered.



The John B. Thomson, Jr., Trophy for Racing Program Excellence

Awarded to **Steve & Heidi Benjamin** for the *Spookie* racing program.

The James D. Bishop Perpetual Trophy

Awarded to Past Commodore **Charles "Butch" Ulmer** for his work to promote and run the Intercollegiate Offshore Regatta.

(Photos courtesy of Howard McMichael, McMichaelYachts.com)

Annual Legal Report

January 9, 2016

To: John Browning, Secretary

From: Robert E. Mitchell, Legal Committee

I'm sorry I can't be with you tonight but I'm working overtime to complete our new Havana Station. Raul Castro has been most helpful but wishes to receive a substantial portion of our dues, which I'd planned to apply to the expenses of the Legal Committee, including my salary and year-end bonus.

I'm pleased to report that the 18th Rikers Island Race Week will be held again this spring on beautiful Flushing Bay. The highlight of the Week will be the running of the Timex Invitational Cup, which has attracted international attention. We invited Louis Vuitton to sponsor the qualifying series for the Cup Race but they declined. Luckily, Dollar General Stores stepped in as our sponsor. This makes more sense because that is where most of our members shop anyway.

The opening ceremony will start off with the National Anthem, sung as a duet by Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, and accompanied by that popular new musical group, The Port Tackers, consisting of all the contenders for the Republican nomination for President. This will be followed by a benediction by Fleet Chaplain, Al Sharpton, and a short address by Mayor Bill DeBlasio, who will discuss his plan for Affordable Boat Slips for Homeless Boat Owners.

Our Lay Day will be exciting this year. Caitlyn Jenner will be running a Fashion Show which will feature clothes designed to be worn by either men or women sailors. Martin Shkreli will have a booth where you can buy shares in his hedge funds. As a special for our members, you will receive a coupon for a free aspirin from his drug company for each dollar invested. It is expected that he will soon have a permanent office at Rikers Island. Our Race Week Dinner will be held in the luxurious Rikers Island eating facility and

will consist of Mexican food prepared and served by the famous Chipotle food company. Free shots for E.coli will be available at the First Aid Station.

As we don't know what class of boat will be used for the next America's Cup races, we have purchased an old J Boat named *Cannabis* to serve as our Challenger. We have been assured by our Naval Architecture Committee that hydrofoils can be attached if needed. The boat will be operated as a drone to save our members from going into training to sail her. Rikers Island has offered the use of the Inmates Lounge as a base station from which to operate the drone equipment. A Storm Trysail Club Coloring Book will be distributed to each of our members so a contest can be held to choose a color for the boat. The winner will receive a free box of crayons.

We will be running a race from Rikers Island to Devils Island. The race was approved by a special committee appointed by The New York Yacht Club and The Royal Yacht Squadron to determine whether Devils Island would be an appropriate location for the after race ceremonies and would have suitable quarters for the members of the special committee.

I am pleased to report that none of our members are serving time in maximum security prisons.

REMEMBER---WHEN IN TROUBLE CALL 1 800 STC LAWS or VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT www.shark.com.

Respectfully Submitted,
Robert E. Mitchell

Read by Secretary John Browning

Quantum Key West Race Week



Book it - the next Quantum Key West Race Week is scheduled January 15-20, 2017. The event will feature the same successful format as in past years: one day of pre-race Registration and practice, followed by five days of inshore and short offshore course racing off the island of Key West.

"Our competitors and sponsors were extremely happy with how we managed the regatta this past January, even in our first year," said event chairman John Fisher. "We had many challenges - such as the very windy weather for a few days during the event - but all our feedback has been positive, so we are going forward with plans to organize this event for 2017. We want everyone to know our decision and plan for the dates now to get their housing, dockage and other logistics in place to join us again in January."

The Notice of Race is being drafted now and will be available soon, as will the event website to start accepting entries. Once open for entries, the first discount entry deadline will be earlier this year, on July 1st, to help deliver the best value to those teams who can commit early to attending the 2017 event.

"We are always open to constructive input from our classes and the racers they represent," said Dick Neville, Race Committee Chairman at the Storm Trysail Club. "With their input and our own observations we felt there were many new innovations we introduced this year that helped increase the entries from previous years, so we intend to keep these in place, but also improve on what we learned."

Storm Trysail Commodore Lee Reichart said, "Key West Race Week was a tremendous challenge to organize for the first time, but it was also very satisfying for the great value we

feel we delivered to our participants and our supporters. We are extremely grateful to all our sponsors, especially Quantum and the Keys Tourism Development Council, and among our participants everyone we have spoken with wants to come back."

Read more at: [Storm Trysail Club Announces Dates for Quantum Key West Race Week 2017](#)

Member Profile

Peter Willcox: A life amid activism and sailing

Storm Trysail Club member Peter Willcox has been a captain for Greenpeace for more than 30 years. The child of activist parents who participated in the tragic Selma to Montgomery march in 1965, he's been bombed, detained and arrested on numerous occasions.



Peter Willcox (right) and his daughter, Anita (courtesy Ron Weiss).

Now, his life story is encapsulated in the book *Greenpeace Captain: My Adventures in Protecting the Future of Our Planet* (Thomas Dunne Books and St. Martin's Press) Co-written

with Club member Ronald B. Weiss, it is a riveting read with Weiss doing a terrific job of compiling the highlights of Willcox's career.

"I would like to sincerely thank Russian President Vladimir Putin. Without your two-month, all-expenses-paid vacation in Russia this book never would have happened," Willcox wrote in his acknowledgements chapter.

Willcox was captain of the Greenpeace vessel *Arctic Sunrise* in September 2013 when it was boarded and seized by Russian commandos. Greenpeace was protesting Russia's Arctic oil drilling by having activists scale the Prirazlomnaya drilling platform.

Willcox, along with 27 crew members and two freelance journalists, was arrested at gunpoint and the ship was towed to Murmansk, off of the Barents Sea. Russia wound up charging the activists with piracy and they were detained for two months. Phil Radford, executive director of Greenpeace USA, said the reaction of Russia was the stiffest response the organization has encountered from a government since France bombed the *Rainbow Warrior* in New Zealand nearly 30 years earlier.

That decision would backfire on President Vladimir Putin and the Russian government as protesters all over the world took up the cause of what became known as the "Arctic 30." Among the notable figures to publicly take up the cause were South African bishop Desmond Tutu, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, British Prime Minister David Cameron, musicians Paul McCartney and Madonna, and 13 Nobel Prize winners.

Willcox admits to being shaken by the lengthy incarceration, rightfully concerned he could spend years in a Russian jail. As was the case with the French sinking of the *Rainbow Warrior*, the Russian detention of the "Arctic 30" brought more publicity to the protest and negative attention to the government than the original action could have hoped.

"Russia escalated the situation for no good reason whatsoever and was operating illegally when they arrested

us," Willcox said. "It proved to be a very effective action on our part."

Indeed, it is widely believed to be the most publicized campaign ever launched by Greenpeace and put Willcox's name in newspapers, magazines and other media outlets around the world. As captain, Willcox served as spokesman for the "Arctic 30" and was interviewed extensively.

Willcox first joined Greenpeace in 1981 when he spotted a "sailors wanted" ad in *National Fisherman*. He originally signed on with Greenpeace as a deckhand on the *Rainbow Warrior*, the organization's flagship vessel. Shortly thereafter, he was promoted to captain of the original *Rainbow Warrior*, a fishery research trawler launched in 1955.

Shortly after being named captain, Willcox began lobbying the Greenpeace leadership to equip the *Rainbow Warrior* with a sailing rig. His reasoning was both tactical and practical: Sailing the vessel whenever possible would be the perfect symbol of environmentalism and would also reduce fuel consumption and costs.

Willcox was thrilled when the retrofitted vessel performed well in downwind conditions in the Pacific Ocean en route to the Marshall Islands where the *Rainbow Warrior* evacuated the residents of Rongelap Atoll, which had been contaminated by radioactive fallout from the United States' most powerful nuclear weapons test at nearby Castle Bravo on Bikini Atoll.

In May, 1985, Willcox and Greenpeace moved 350 Rongelapese - who suffered from a high rate of leukemia, thyroid cancer, birth defects and miscarriages - and all of their possessions a hundred miles away to the island of Mejato.

Two months later, Willcox and the *Rainbow Warrior* were berthed at Marsden Wharf in New Zealand when the French government blew up and sank the vessel. The French government's action was an attempt to prevent Greenpeace from protesting its planned nuclear weapons test at the

Moruroa Atoll. But the explosion and subsequent sinking led to the drowning death of Greenpeace photographer Fernando Pereira, and Willcox remains angry that there weren't more severe repercussions.

"France has never apologized or paid any price for that murder. Fernando was the only crew member with two children, and his son and daughter were left with a massive void for the rest of their lives," Willcox said. "It is still mind-blowing to me that France went so far. Greenpeace did not represent any sort of threat to the French government. It was a dramatic overreaction on their part."

Willcox first learned to sail at the behest of his father, Roger, a longtime member of the Mamaroneck Frostbite Association. Father and son would race the family's Islander 32, *Stardust II*, in numerous overnight races on Long Island Sound.

"At some point in my youth, our family motto became, 'When all else fails, go sailing!' There's no better way to learn how to sail than to go racing," Willcox writes in his autobiography.

Willcox agreed to the book after prodding from Weiss, a marketing and branding consultant. The two first met in 2007 and have sailed hundreds of miles together. "The idea was to write it as an adventure story, not a morality tale or wonky Inconvenient Truth-style environmental book," said Weiss, who is also a Storm Trysail Club member.

Willcox, who has done the SORC about a dozen times and 10 Newport-Bermuda Races, initially applied to join the Storm Trysail Club in 1976, but jokes that he was "too radical and crazy to get into such an austere organization." Five years ago, Willcox was sponsored again by Andrew Weiss and Larry Fox. This time, his more than 400,000 nautical miles of ocean passage-making was impossible to ignore.

-Bill Wagner

Storm Trysail Club

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