

Commodore's Corner
August 2011

One of the many rewards of parenting is watching your child grow into an independent adult who is a positive addition to their community while enjoying life. In a strange way, I feel like the Channel Islands Women's Sailing Association (CIWSA) is much like a child whom I have helped to nurture through its growing pains and am just now seeing the results of the hard work that goes into developing an idea into a reality. But just like the saying, "It takes a village to raise a child," so too does it take a village to make CIWSA successful.

As Commodore, I see my job as an organizational overseer, helping to sort through and coordinate the plethora of fantastic ideas our members suggest. Week after week, I flood our board members with emails and reminders, trying to gently nudge each one along in their individual directions utilizing their natural talents. This goes on much of the year until July when I take a vacation.

As many of you know, my husband and I spend a month every summer on the east coast. While last year there were just a few events on the schedule, this year, July held a full slate of activities. And in all honesty, I felt a bit remiss running away to sail, swim and frolic knowing I was leaving the board with a rather large agenda to accomplish. Don't get me wrong, I never thought for a minute that things wouldn't get done as we have an extraordinary group of Directors who is dedicated to the success of CIWSA. Beyond that, we also have many members who are eager and willing to jump in to help on a moments notice.

I guess what surprised (and delighted) me most, was as I sat back on the sidelines, I watched as CIWSA took on a life of its own and for the first time, I could really see CIWSA surviving, not just another year, but far into the future. Needless to say, I am so proud of all the women – and many men – who have supported our endeavors. Like any newborn, we have stumbled and fallen but always we have brushed ourselves off, got up and tried again.

Last year, the Skill, Thrill and Grill Day was cancelled due to some unforeseen circumstances. However, this year, the Skill, Thrill and Grill Day was a spectacular success! Twenty members participated in training with 8 coaches and 7 boats. The weather forecast called for ten to fifteen knot winds with gusts up to twenty-five. It did not disappoint. With strong winds and choppy seas our members braved the elements while our coaches, calmly and expertly, shared their knowledge. Basic sailing, sail trim, spinnaker and man overboard drills are just some of the skills that were practiced. For a thrill, a friendly race was run. And finally, the event culminated at CIYC with an afternoon meal where the conversation was filled with excited tales of how much everyone learned while having a good time.

Not only did I come home to enjoy the delicious barbeque held at CIYC, but I walked into a room filled with many new faces – thanks to the hard work of more of our members at the boat show.

It took many hours to coordinate, stock and decorate, and man the boat show booth. Again, I have to applaud all those members who participated in making this event such a success. Their enthusiasm and congeniality brought our membership up by 50%. We now have 49 members, eighteen new members this past month! (Please stand as I call your name so we can recognize you.) Welcome Kitty Fralic, Gail Bird, Ingrid Martin, Bobbi Balderman, Linda Van Akin, Jennifer Sparks, Faith Lopez, Lannie Legler, Suzanne Landry, Sarah Frefield, MaryJean Ballner, Michelle Smith, Josie Enfield, Mary Ann Wales, Rachel Chavs, Ginny Mathews, Kim Goodwin and Robin Clark.

There are so many to thank for our success, but first, I must thank our board members; without whom, the Channel Islands Women's Sailing Association would not exist. Each woman has participated in all aspects of the formation of this group, but here I will mention just a small portion of their contribution.

Vice Commodore, Jane Thomas – From the day she said, “What do you think about starting a women's sailing association?” to today, she has been a steadfast partner who has developed our on-the-water training program and coordinates our racers and cruisers within the community. As many of you know, Jane was chair of the very successful Skill, Thrill & Grill day.

Rear Commodore, Cindy Crocket – Cindy is a visionary, our idea person. She is everywhere and always finds the holes and fills them in. She has developed and oversees both the Communications and Membership committees and is responsible for designing the beautiful welcome packet. She was co-chair of the Boat Show Booth. Cindy's enthusiasm is contagious.

Secretary, Nannette Pecel – Nannette started out as treasurer and established our Quickbooks system. She is the keeper of the website, oversees the Historian committee and the Youth in Sailing Scholarship Foundation of which she is deeply passionate. Nannette quietly and graciously accepts any request I throw at her – and there have been many.

Treasurer, Cathy Hummer – Cathy keeps our books in order, collects the mail, heads up the Ship's Store and Hospitality committee, and along with Kathy Villareal, is always available and willing to greet and welcome our members. She shows up at events, looks around to see what is needed, and then just does it. Cathy was chair of the Boat Show Booth.

Director, Mary Howard – Mary has been invaluable as our legal counsel, writing the by-laws, incorporation and taxes. But more than that, Mary is our inspiration. She began sailing just about three years ago and this year she competed in the Transpac Race – Long Beach to Hawaii and, on top of that, ended the race by participating in saving a kayaker who had been drifting in the sea for over four hours. She jumps in wherever she is needed and approaches any challenge with a smile and a will of steel.

Director, Bobbi Lehman – Bobbi offered to take on a board position, when last year, we suddenly lost our Formation Board Secretary, Lisa Donovan, to Leukemia. She immediately jumped in and chaired the very important (and challenging) event, our First Annual Youth in Sailing Fundraiser which raised over \$2500. As a pre-school teacher, she is very helpful at our meetings; taking complicated conversations and simplifying them for the average layman.

Three other people whose contributions must be noted:

Bonnie Chaney – Bonnie designed our logo, a year in the making. She also supplies our “Ship’s Store” with bags, tee-shirts and various other pieces of clothing. She is our photographer and has committed to work on our Historian committee. She is one of the six original Mystic Flyer group who conceived this baby and although she has not been a board member, she has consistently supported us in any way asked.

Eva-Maria Harre – Eva was our Communications Chair. Like a squall, she blew in and out of our community rather quickly. But while she was here she worked hard, and with a professional flare, kept us informed in a timely manner. Eva has moved back to her beloved Germany. We wish you much luck, Eva. Thank you.

Lisa Donovan - Our sister sailor, was the secretary for our foundation board. She had a great sense of humor, never complained and walked through her illness with a quiet grace. She is deeply missed.

And regarding the latest in our endeavors – and this is only about the month of July, a big thank you to our chairs, Jane Thomas, Chair of the Skill, Thrill and Grill event and Cathy Hummer, chair of the Boat Show Booth and Cindy Crocket, our co-chair of the Boat Show Booth.

To our coaches of the STG day, John Walls, Bill Cline, Curt Ingram, Randy Alcorn, George Fitch, Mary Howard-Ingram, Ev Anderson, Pam Yerger, Mal Usher, Nannette Pecel, and Jane Thomas.

To our boat owners who donated the use of their personal boats, John Walls and Randy Alcorn.

To our Fairwind members who provided us with boats; Jane Thomas, Ev Anderson, Pam Yerger, Mal Usher and Nannette Pecel.

Pam Yerger along with Nannette Pecel's help, planned, shopped and provided the food for the morning meeting and barbeque.

Thank you to Dana Hamilton and Cary Verstynen for setting up the grill;

To Dann Daggett and Jay Chattaway for cooking;

Suzanne Landry for preparing and sharing her delicious Quinoa;

Suzanne Landry and Maryjean Ballner for jumping in and helping serve the barbeque;

and CIYC for use of their facility.

To all those who participated in the Boat Show event; Cathy Hummer, Cindy Crockett Christie Crockett, Megan Cooper, Bobbi Lehman, Holly Anderson, Aixa Renta De Luca and Peter De Luca, Karen Branch, Kim Morris, Kathy Villareal, Nannette Pecel, Diana Lynn, Lennette Wood, Jane Thomas and Ingrid Martin.

Finally, thank you to our husbands and significant others. They share their boats, their expertise, grill, take photographs, and judge contests. And especially to my husband, Jay, who puts up with me while I spend countless hours on the computer, on the phone, and in meetings.

So you see, it does take a village to create a successful organization. We need everyone's help to sustain the momentum. I invite you to pause and reflect: Why are you here? What is it you want this club to provide? And how can you utilize your talents to contribute to the on-going success of CIWSA?

There are many ways to get involved. There are four board positions open for re-election in 2012 and in the coming months we will be asking for your help in a variety of ways. In September, the Board of Directors will be concentrating on developing an Advisory Board who can work with us in the implementation of committees. Please join us in designing the future of our association. I look forward to working with each and every one of you in as we continue to nurture the Channel Islands Women's Sailing Association and watch our baby grow.

See you on the water,

Terri Potts-Chattaway