



the Binnacle

Monthly Newsletter of the Lake Champlain Yacht Club, Inc.

Commodore: John Harris Vice Commodore: Steve Walkerman

December, 2004

Binnacle Editor: Muddy Bilges

<http://www.lcyc-vt.org/>



Commodores Corner from John Harris

The last of the boats have left their mooring, the 2004 sailing season has come to an end. Given what is going on in Iraq, Sudan, Ukraine, and here at home with the presidential election, watching the news every night certainly reminds us just how lucky we all are to live in VT (or close by) and to enjoy the beauty of boating on Lake Champlain. Much closer to home, October saw the untimely passing of Bibs Francis, who had been an active and valued member of LCYC and, as a successful businesswoman, of the Lake Champlain maritime community for over 25 years. Bibs, her smile and her helping hand will be sorely missed by all.

October 15-16, with an outstanding Awards Dinner and Fall Workday, brought the 2004 LCYC Summer season to an official conclusion. Some noteworthy highpoints of the awards dinner were the debut of the side curtains for the south awning, which provided the extra space we really need to accommodate us all and the inauguration of 3 new perpetual awards for our Junior Sailors including the "Endurance" trophy for best sailor, sponsored by Luis Gonzalez, a Most Improved Sailor trophy and the Bruce Hill Sportsmanship Trophy which, much to Bruce's surprise and delight, was awarded to his grandson John. The highlights of the annual meeting held on Fall workday were the election of 4 new members of the Board of Governors (Dennis Bowen (Social), Uli Holzinger (Grounds), Bob Turnau (House), Rick Heath (Stewards)) and the passing of several bylaws changes proposed by the Board. Most notable was the creation of a new "Associate" membership category aimed at increasing the number of younger members and the vitality of one design dinghy sailing at LCYC.

2004 was a very good year for LCYC. The most obvious improvement to the club this past year was the long awaited ramp to the docks; other improvements to the grounds and house included repairs and additions to our fleet of picnic tables, new BBQ grills, waterless urinals, and a rack for moorings winter storage. In the Harbor, we installed 4 new moorings, bringing us up to our 155 permitted moorings and allowing us to accommodate 4 additional Full members. Under the watchful eye of our "Boat Czar", Bill Aldrich, we have continued to invest in long term maintenance and repair of the club launches and powerboats. Most would agree that our boats are in the best shape they have been in in years. The LCYC Web Site has grown in content, timeliness of

information (e.g. race results posted within hours) and user friendliness. The Web Site is well on its way to becoming THE information resource tying the club together. Our Social Events were all very well attended and enjoyable. The biweekly Burger Burns continue to be the backbone of both our regatta and social programs. The Ladies Cup Friday night dinner and the Saturday post race Bove's Lasagna picnic both came off very successfully and made for a great Ladies Cup weekend serving a broad cross section of the club. This year was arguably the best year ever for the LCYC Junior Sailing Program, both in terms of participation and results. Largely due to the addition of Optmists to our fleet the participation in our program and the skills growth of our younger sailors is greatly enhanced. The Opti is the most popular youth training boat in the world; 74% of the skippers who medaled at the 2004 Olympics are former Opti sailors. 2004 was a great year for our Junior Sailors on the racecourse, with one team winning the Annual "Cheeseburger in Paradise" regatta on Lake George and another advancing to the Sears Cup National Triple-handed Championship. As evidenced by our Regatta programs, the big kids were having fun too. Highlights include hosting the Etchells New England Championships and the first LCYC Finn/Europe regatta, and reinstatement of a lake wide PHRF series, won by Peregrine on a tiebreaker. The turnout for the Ladies Cup was one of the best in recent memory.

[Continued page 3](#)

Article	Page
Commodore's Corner	1
Capital Plan 2005	2
In Memory of....	3
Officers Classified	4

2005 Capital Plan from John Harris

At the November and December meetings one of the major focuses of the Board was developing and approving the Capital plan for 2005. This process included not only review and discussion of capital items put forward for consideration, but also careful analysis of the club's finances with respect to past capital expenditures, the current balance in our capital fund, the outlook for capital income over the next couple of years and how large a contingency fund we should maintain for unexpected expenses. For those not familiar with the financial structure of the club, there are 2 primary sources of income into our capital fund: 5% of annual dues, as required by our bylaws, and 100% of initiation fees. The latter, historically, has provided the bulk of our capital funding. Our current outlook is to have approximately \$40K in our capital fund at year end. Our historical spending rate over the past 9 years has been roughly \$22K/year. We felt that a contingency fund of about \$15K was adequate, given that most catastrophic expenses we might incur would be covered by insurance. The most unpredictable factor, on a year to year basis, is the number of new members. We have averaged 11 new members per year over the past 9 years, although there has been significant year to year variation. Looking forward to 2005, it is a bit difficult to judge what our intake of new members is likely to be. We have a considerable backlog of approved applicants, but the outlook for mooring availability is limited to a large number of existing members without moorings requesting moorings for 2005. Given all this, we took a conservative view that we only took in 5 new members for 2005. The result of all this discussion and analysis was the approval of the following items in the 2005 capital plan.

<u>Committee Item</u>	<u>Budget</u>
<u>Boats</u> Maintenance and Repairs to the Milo and Whaler	\$3,000
<u>House</u> Repair Cracks in Clubhouse Chimney	\$1,000
<u>Docks</u> Replace/Upgrade Electrical and Water Service	\$3,000
<u>Grounds</u> 50% Accrual for 2006 replacement of main dock crib*	\$5,000
<u>Sailing Pgms</u> 2 Optimist Sailboats w/ dollies	\$4,500
<u>Regatta</u> Down payment for Race Committee Boat	\$10,000
Total Capital Budget	\$26,500
Total 2005 Cash outlay	\$21,500

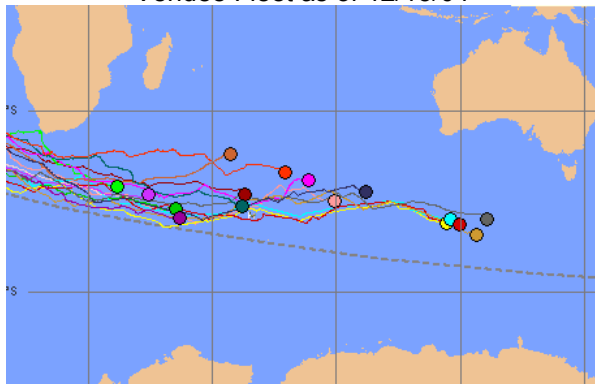
*non cash item for 2005

A couple of items bear a bit more explanation. The electrical systems on the docks are in serious need of repair. The plan, under the leadership of our Docks Chair Mike Barker and Dave Kelton, is to replace and upgrade the existing system to both improve reliability and maintainability. The main dock crib, while still serviceable, needs replacement in the not too distant future. After consulting with several club members with expertise in the construction field, \$10K was determined to be a fairly conservative estimate for this project. The plan is to accrue for 50% of this expense in 2005 and the balance in 2006 with a plan to do the crib

replacement in Fall 2006. As portrayed in the table above this is not a cash outlay in 2005. The addition of 4 Optimists to our Junior Sailing programs 2 years ago has been an astounding success. Having only 4 Optimists, however, has been a constraint to both our instructional programs and the ability of our Junior Sailors to participate periodically in regattas without leaving the instructional programs high and dry. The addition of 2 Optis should help alleviate both constraints. As has been the case in past years, excess income from the Junior Sailing programs will pretty much cover the cost of these boats.

The Board also allocated funds toward the purchase of a race committee boat as part of a broader race management plan for the club. As articulated in our strategic planning session this summer, having a vital and high quality Regatta program is one of the top imperatives for the club. Having top quality race management is a critical element of achieving this imperative. Not only is racing one of the life bloods of LCYC, but those who race spend a tremendous amount of time, money and effort in this endeavor and the club has an obligation to put on the best races we can. Over the past several years we have taken some steps, most notably hiring and training Jesse Kuehn as our Principal Race Officer, to improve our race management. However, despite these improvements, our race management is still not at the level it should be. Also, Jesse is not returning next year and this reinforced the need to have a structural and long term sustainable solution to high quality race management. After much discussion, examination of race management at other Yacht Clubs and careful consideration of options, the Regatta committee developed a plan to address this fundamental issue. The plan has two key and interdependent elements. The first is the formation of a "race management group" or "race committee". This will be a group of approximately 8-12 club members who are committed to becoming the core of our Race Committees going forward. This core group, with assistance from other club volunteers, would run essentially all of our races. The intention is for this group to be trained and experienced in regatta management, including having one or more of them go through the formal US Sailing Principal Race Officer training and certification program. The Regatta committee is already in the process of recruiting members of this group. The second element of the plan involves the RC Boat itself. The RC boat serves several critical needs. First is providing a platform that is properly equipped and suitable for use in all reasonable sea and weather conditions. Second is providing a platform that is functional, accessible and comfortable for use by the Race committee, particularly some of our more senior members, and also that makes it easy to both get out on the race course quickly and to run races. Lastly, the RC boat is a key element of attracting members to be part of this group. In terms of the boat itself, we are looking for something functional, not extravagant.

Vendee Fleet as of 12/15/04



2005 Capital Plan (continued from page 2)

The ideal boat would be a lobster style boat in the 25' range with an enclosed cabin, large open aft cockpit area and covered pilothouse. The enclosed cabin (with head) would be used for storage of all the regatta equipment, eliminating the considerable hassle of schlepping this up and down the stairs for every race and also freeing up the regatta room for much needed storage space in the clubhouse. The board approved the regatta committee to proceed with trying to find a boat that meets our needs and financial constraints. The rough price range we are targeting is around \$25K. The Board approved a down payment of \$10K and financing of the balance over a maximum of 5 years. The Board feels that this project is well within the financial capability of the club without constraining our ability to fund other necessary or highly desirable capital projects over the coming years. Once a suitable vessel has been located, the purchase and financing details are subject to Board review and approval before actually executing on the purchase.



In Memory of.....

We are saddened to report the recent passing of Norm Alpert. Norm was a distinguished academic, entrepreneur, businessman and an accomplished yachtsman. He was an active member of LCYC for almost 25 years and had served the club in many capacities during that tenure. In both his business and yachting ventures, Norm was well known for his passion for excellence and as an intense competitor and consummate gentleman. In the mid to late 90's Norm and the crew of his J/105 Lionheart dominated PHRF racing on Lake Champlain. All will sorely miss him; our condolences to the family.

Commodores Corner (continued from page 1)

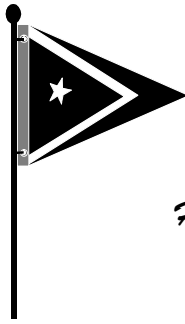
Participation, and the level of competition, in our Wednesday night series continues strong and PHRF racing appears to be experiencing a rebound from the downturn that started about 5 years ago. As for memberships, we welcomed approximately a dozen new members to the club in 2004 and continue to have a healthy backlog of new applicants. Also, the Board has spent a fair amount of time focusing on the future of the club and how to further strengthen the club and how it serves the membership. Last, but not least, as reported by Steve Walkerman at the Fall Annual meeting, the club continues to be in very sound financial condition. We have kept operating expenses well under control, made capital investments as planned in our 2004 Capital Plan, maintained the annual dues at the same level for several years now and still appear to be on track to modestly grow our cash reserves on a year to year basis.

Looking forward to 2005, what is the Board looking to do to improve the club (aside from getting the wind to blow on Wednesday nights)? First and foremost will be carrying out actions from our strategic planning session: 1) insuring we have a strong and engaged membership, 2) better serving our power boating and non-racing sailors and 3) strengthening our racing programs (Junior, Dinghy/One Design and PHRF). Some actions have already been implemented and others are still being developed. Second will be executing on our 2005 Capital plan. The final plan, approved by the Board, is published in this Binnacle.

Feel free to contact me, or any of the other Board members, with suggestions or ideas. Lastly, I would like to wish everyone a happy holiday season (I hope Santa brings everyone their favorite toys from West Marine!) and encourage you to attend the Change of Watch dinner in January. This is always a fun event and a great way to reconnect with your LCYC friends during our long off-season. Until then, enjoy the skiing....



Dock crew hard at work during fall workday



the Binnacle

Lake Champlain Yacht Club, Inc.
P.O. Box 411
Shelburne, VT 05482

Happy Holidays!



REMINDER....REMINDER...2005 CLUB DUES ARE DUE PRIOR TO DECEMBER 31, 2004

fold here

LCYC Classifieds

Join the Etchells fleet...USA 358 Mango Challenge is for sale to make room for a newer Etchells. Race ready. Contact The Reuter's for information.

For Sale... Fiberglass dinghy w/ varnished oars and bronze oarlocks (7' 11") fits in the back of a pickup; 2 hp, 4 stroke Honda outboard motor; used one season; excellent condition; both boat and motor cost \$2100.; asking \$1100. OBO; Peter Collins 863-4841

Wanted.....Upright freezer for the clubhouse. Contact Bob Platt @ 985-3074

2004 Board of Governors

- Commodore..... John Harris
- Vice Commodore & TreasurerSteve Walkerman
- Rear Commodore.....Steve Landau
- Secretary, Membership & Log..... Beth Thorpe
- GroundsCharlie Van Winkle
- Boats Bill Aldrich
- Communications Ernie Reuter
- Docks Mike Barker
- HarbormasterSteve Landau
- HouseBob Platt
- RegattaTris Coffin
- Sailing Programs Barbara Robitaille
- Social CommitteeSteve Adams
- Stewards & PersonnelKate Heath
- Cruising /RendezvousTed/Joanne Lattrell

Appointed Officers

- Fleet ChaplainChuck Bowen
- One-Design CoordinatorRick Stevens
- Club HistorianBern Collins
- Fleet SurgeonsDrs. Larry & Roberta Coffin
- Club LiaisonBruce Hill
- Auditors .. O'Brien, Doremus & Phillips
- PHRF Handicappers Gene Cloutier

Stewards

- Managing Steward:Ryan Heaslip
- Stewards: David Leopold, Alec Antell,
Kate Rabideau, Patrick Haley, Andy Dunn



John Harris