

MARKS OF THE COURSE



Carlyle Sailing Association • Philippi Harbor • Carlyle Illinois • CSA-Sailing.org

Editor: Mike Niehoff

Editors Note: This is a very important special edition of the Marks to describe the significant changes that are taking place within the association. The CSA board of directors met twice in December to set a course for the future of CSA. The articles here in have critical updates for members and friends of CSA.



By Ted Beier

There is so much to report this month that the volume of information is more like a tree than splinters. Much is happening in regard to our initiative to re-examine CSAs business model and increased effort to grow membership, that was mentioned last month. The topic deserves a separate article; see elsewhere in this issue. With the resignation of Director Bernstein as chairman, Vice- Chair Beier led the meeting.

1. The meeting started ½ hour early so that the Board members could help Vice-Commodore Bowling assemble the 2017 membership contracts for mailing. Director Leimbach supported the effort by supplying “Carlyle Woodchuck Chili” and Fritos. You should be receiving your 2017 contract via US Mail very soon, and as discussed at the annual meeting the dues is up slightly. However, you can recoup the increase by returning your contract before 15 February, so do it now.

2. Commodore Davis reported that the plans are in place for the Commodore’s Banquet on 28 January at Schlafly’s in downtown St. Louis. Reservation information will appear on the website very soon, and time is getting short, so do not tarry. The cost will be around \$40 per person.

3. It was announced that the proposal for upgrade of the CSA Facility developed by Mike Pitzer’s and Tom Baker’s committee has been included in total as an appendix to the

Corps of Engineers’ Carlyle Lake Masterplan thanks to the efforts of Carlyle Lake Association (CLA). This Corps document, updated every ten years or so, authorizes projects for improvement of the Carlyle Lake Project, and is a major step in our getting our requested harbor upgrades. It is a good example of how CLA is working for us.

4. Commodore elect Stevenson presented an overview of the 2017 season schedule. Highlights include: (1) Racing start on 30 April (a week earlier) and including an additional pursuit race weekend, (2) addition of several informal social/regatta weekends that will feature a combination of distance/pursuit and buoy races plus good parties. (Those who want more social events have been heard.), and (3) increased opportunities for our junior sailors to have additional events and participate in club races.

5. A motion was passed to attempt as much exposure in the *Carlyle Lake Visitors Guide* magazine as possible; including a full-page, color ad, descriptive article on CSA, and the cover picture. Cost is \$425. A major goal of this is to kill the locally held idea that CSA is a private club instead of a place where the public is welcome. For example, “Open House” will be called “Try Sailing Day” as the publication editors thought that the term open house implied privacy otherwise. Also, it was suggested that when taking guests for a sail we try to get them to steer and learn a little, weather permitting.

6. Tom Wyman has resigned from the Board, citing insufficient time to participate fully, and his resignation was accepted. Tom is one of the three persons elected to the Board by the CSA membership, and his term runs through 2017. Action on his replacement was tabled for a future meeting, as there will be another board member election this spring.

7. Rick Bernstein’s resignation as Chairman of the Board was accepted. His request to re-

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main as a board member, but with a six month leave of absence to start a new business was tabled. Director Leimbach was elected chairman, and Director Beier remains vice-chair.

8. A motion was passed to allow members to store "tow vehicles" on the CSA property during the season for a fee (TBD). Apparently, several are being stored in the Carlyle area, and we can provide more convenience, and use the money.

9. The state of the observation building furnace was discussed. There have been rumors that since residue from the local fauna had been expelled, it is functional again. Is this true? Who has the intel? If not true, what will it cost to fix it? There is a move to have the building functional for winter activities; for the juniors in particular.

10. A motion was passed to invite last year's adult sailing seminar participants to the Commodore's Banquet.

11. The next Board meeting will be 18 January at the "warehouse".

Get your banquet reservations in ASAP, and let's make it a great party.

Ted Beier
Board Vice-Chair



CSA Membership Development and Organizational Model

By Ted Beier

On 3 December, the CSA Board members and several others met with Bill Faude for a full-day workshop. Bill, a national caliber Lightning sailor, is a marketing professional, and who currently leads Harken Yacht Fittings marketing efforts. Bill is a very skilled workshop facilitator, and guided us to many insights. Following are some of the insights we developed that day, and the first steps that the CSA Board is taking; certainly out of many more actions in the future. All of you will be hearing much more about this as time passes, and will be asked to participate. If, after reading, you want to jump onboard now, please contact a Board member.

The main insights of the meeting were:

- 1. What is our goal? At least 50 new "membership relationships" for CSA in 2017.

2. Who is our audience? Primary, people who already identify with sailing on some level, have some understanding, could start sailing soon, and who may not know about CSA. Secondary, people who might want to try sailing that can be convinced, "now is the time".

3. What do we want them to do? Answer our ad appeal from a dedicated web landing page and leave contact info so that **WE** can draw them in to CSA activities. Provide testimonials, Carlyle sailing and social videos and pics, contact links, etc. After that, introduce to the current CSA website.

4. What are the impediments that we must combat? Lack of knowledge that high caliber sailing can exist for THEM in the St. Louis area. Attitude that sailing is very time demanding, demands of boat ownership, weather dependent activity so not always fun, not friends with any sailors.

5. How to combat these? CSA must make obtaining good sailing experiences as easy as possible, offer alternatives to owning a boat, and offer friendship. Provide fun activities for non-sailing members of the family so they want to come to CSA. Offer highlight events that combine sailing and social activities.

Some product development ideas put forward:

1. New Member Relations

New members are gold. Attitude shift among current members needed to make sure their first year is fantastic. New member emphasis at socials. Photo of each new member on club bulletin board. Welcome email to current members introducing each one with photo.

2. Conversion Strategy---Adult Sailing Seminar Graduates

These people are already qualified. They've found CSA and they've come out. They **MUST** be converted to membership. Seasonal membership options should be available. They should graduate to options for crewing in coming weekends...this should be provided to them. Add 1-2 'alumni weekend' events so they can come out later their first summer.

3. Skillset Improvement For Existing Racers

Entice fleet sailors to haul their boats out and **STAY** after racing. Multi-Fleet debriefing each race day. We're all sailors. We were all out there...we can learn from each other. We cannot afford to self-divide by fleet any longer.

4. Lease Boat Program (Pay For What You Use)

The rise of Air B&B, car-sharing services, UBER/LIFT points to a real trend. People are willing to pay more to use services they don't have to maintain. CSA should consider buying a fleet of boats and lease them seasonally/monthly/daily. Fee for this would be a premium vs. traditional private-ownership Regular Membership. Call them "Fleet CSA" members and charge them 30% more than regular. Money is **NOT** the barrier. Time is the barrier.

5. Revised Rental Program

Add the requirement that day renters must reserve the boat through a CSA web-interface so that you get contact information and can begin to market them. They should know that CSA's intent is to get them to become members. Consider a 'rental' membership. Seems like a small group is being served with this option, this option is outside the core business model of CSA. Consider discontinuing this program and merging the users with the Lease Boat Program above.

6. Little Whales (Weekend Regatta Clusters)

Consider hosting 3-4 race weekends where more than the normal number of races are scheduled. Prizes are awarded for each of these. These MUST have a regatta party, and can be draws for sailors from other local venues. They could include regional regattas CSA hosts for its classes. If a member sails 3 of these events they will have sailed as many races as they might in a normal sailing season...and have freed up weekends to build 'Family Capital'.

7. Weekend Insurance Policy

The prospect of driving an hour to CSA from St. Louis only to waste the day sitting on shore can keep some members at home...or their families at home. At the very least, it isn't a draw, but an unfortunate part of the sport. Adding other things that can be done on water or in the harbor vicinity is insurance that the day doesn't get wasted.

As a beginning to work on these ideas, after some deliberation, the Board has formed three committees for initial actions. It must be emphasized that these are "initial bites", and there will be much more to follow. If you want to get involved now, contact the cognizant persons as there is plenty of effort to go around.

1. Customer Contact – Mike Pitzer, Bronson Bowling, Scott Stevenson, Al Redzus, Bill Kessler. Contact sources of sailor data to build database such as sailing magazines, US Sailing. Develop advertising, contact approach and method. Develop and post new domain/landing page. Set up documentation methods and contact scheme/schedule for queries. Create secure roster on CSA website.

2. New/Current Member Benefit Implementation – Dave Leimbach, Jerry DeWille, Sebastian Bautz, Patti Davis, John Folwell. Implement mechanisms for camping, pets at harbor, OB usage, deck/playground development, swimming benefits, no wind activities, and "lost member engagement. Form an ambassador committee to engage and mentor new members. Energize current membership for buy-in. Drive more social interaction among membership, reduce fleet segregation. Develop alternate dues payment mechanisms, consider auto pay, credit card.

3. Planning, Oversight, Coordination – Ted Beier, Dick Shindel, Brock Tuffli, Rob Preston. Coordinate initiatives and consider impact on various CSA opera-

tions. Review membership and payment program impact on CSA budget/operations. Develop budget for initiatives. Develop details for an expanded club-owned rental/lease boat fleet.

Ted Beier
Board Vice Chair

Splinters from the Board II

By Dave Leimbach

Hey, Carlyle Sailing Association members and friends!

It is a great honor to be able to write my first Splinters article, an opportunity made possible by an even bigger honor of having been chosen by the board of directors to serve CSA as the chairman of the board. I accept this responsibility to do what I love to do.....help the club that has helped me in so many ways. I embrace the opportunity to give back to CSA the quality and value I have received from CSA ever since I accidentally got on Jim Antonacci's Hobie 16 in 1992 and went for my first sail and pitch pole. This reminds me that every sailor was introduced to the sport by someone willing to share the experience and launch them into a lifetime of sailing filled with adventure, friendship, and fun. At some point someone took the time and made the effort to introduce you to the sport that we all love. If you are already a sailor, you remember your first time sailing and the person or people who introduced you to sailing. Now I encourage you to take the time to call and thank them for changing your life. I just did. Jim was very appreciative and it was wonderful having a catch-up conversation with him. Try it, and if for some reason they haven't been sailing for a while, invite them back.

This is a very exciting time to be involved with the Carlyle Sailing Association Board of Directors because recently we all agreed that it is time to begin a new era. In another section of the Marks, Vice-Chair Ted Beier provides great detail of the board's strategic planning taking place. Vice-Chair Beier chaired the board of directors' meeting on Wednesday giving him the honor and responsibility of writing the Splinters; however, I could not wait another month to talk about the great things happening at CSA that will make you want to spend a lot more time having fun in 2017 at our club with your current and new friends.

Join us in our dream to create a place where people want to be, whether they are sailors or non-sailors. By restructuring the basis of our club, we envision the club filled with even more fun and excitement enhancing the benefits of existing members, new members, and our guests. Just a few of those exciting changes for 2017 include: camping on CSA grounds, pets being welcome on our property, and an agreement for CSA members to use

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the swimming pool at the campgrounds. Be sure to relax in the Observation Building (OB) using the new contemporary furniture that creates an inviting conversation pit. It's the perfect place to share great sailing stories. If you ever need to strike up a conversation with a sailor you've not met, just ask them, "How did you start sailing?" Or, "What kind of boat do you sail?" Then you can sit back and enjoy the conversation with the friend you have just made.

The future of CSA is not the sole responsibility of the board of directors; please follow their lead. It requires the commitment and involvement of all members utilizing their strengths to help make CSA better than ever. Teamwork makes the dream work!

Patti Davis, our retiring Commodore, has demonstrated how one individual can make a huge impact on the future of CSA. She is so excited about what is happening with the new CSA, that she has designed a position as social chair for the entire Club. She approached Scott Stevenson, our new Commodore, and Bronson Bowling, our new Vice-Commodore with her idea and a plan for making this a very exciting and busy year at CSA. Among the three of them, they have locked in a calendar with something happening every weekend. Since you have been reminiscing about how exciting it was when you first began sailing, start thinking now about how you can make the effort and take the time to help others join the fun. Invite sailors and non-sailors to come over and join us for these social events and invite would-be sailors to get them introduced to sailing. CSA is a great facility and has much to offer.

Speaking of teamwork, our 2016 team leader has been Patti Davis working very hard as our Commodore. January 28th is the Commodore's Banquet that honors her and the incoming officers Scott Stevenson (Commodore) and Bronson Bowling (Vice-Commodore). Patti has invested a lot of time this year and has done a great job for all of us. Please attend this event in a show of support for her and to welcome our two new flag officers. Make it a great time by inviting your sailing friends and fleet members to join us. It is a wonderful reason to get together with all of your sailing buddies. This is an important event that will help us get 2017 off to a great start.

Dave Leimbach
CSA Chairman of the Board
(Whose birthday happens to be July 29th.)



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