



## President's Message

Your board continues to offer year-round resources to enable, improve and advance skills and opportunities for our members. We strive to administer, plan, reinvent and begin new events, all with the goal to enrich the lives of women and girls through education and access to the sport of sailing.



Throughout the summer, NWSA and Women sailors from coast to coast have been sharing the joys of sailing with underserved girls by hosting an AdventureSail®, and young girls have received Learn to Sail Youth and the Sue Corl Youth Scholarships.

This Fall there are NWSA women sailing events in Phoenix, AZ and Port Townsend, WA. Look for two west coast events for women sailors this month in Alameda, CA and in Corona Del Mar February 2020. We are happy to introduce Dr. Shirley Cassara, the 2020 chair for the NWSA Women's Sailing Conference in Marblehead, MA in June 2020. If you'd like to see an event in your area that will help expand opportunities for women's sailing, let us know so we can help.

Through our social media we helped bring attention to the international role sailing has taken in protecting our environment. Inspired by our participation in greeting Greta Thunberg, we have plans and ambitions moving forward to make each NWSA event and program greener than ever.

Fair winds,  
Debbie Huntsman

# Take the Helm®

*Official Newsletter of the National Women's Sailing Association*

FALL 2019

## 2019 Women's Sailing Conference June 1 Marblehead, MA

The day went from sun and gentle breezes, to fog and no wind, back to sun and some wind, to end with a raw foggy evening for the 18th conference at the Corinthian Yacht Club, in Marblehead, MA. Nevertheless the spirits of the 100 women gathered to learn, share and get revved up for the summer were in high gear. Many new friendships or at least acquaintances were made that day. The women were primarily from the East Coast, and one of the registrants had a guest coming from France, who also signed up! It appears she had a good time and took home a couple of raffle prizes.

The 20 different workshops, some on-the water and some on land, kept women occupied from 9 to 5. A former district Power Squadron commander lead four workshops with the Boating Skills Virtual Trainer. Women enjoy learning how something operates before they get behind the wheel. And with the virtual trainer, women could make a few bumps without doing damage to any one or anything!

In between, women would check the silent auction table which closed down prior to dinner. Some really good values were obtained while supporting the AdventureSail® program. The 50+ raffle items were just as varied. Those proceeds went to the Sue Corl Youth Sailing Scholarship for an underserved teenage girl to advance her sailing experience.

Debbie Huntsman thanked the Corinthian Yacht Club for hosting the event for the past 17 years. She presented the NWSA pennant to Annie Harris, Corinthian's first female commodore.

Huntsman also presented the 2019 BoatUS/NWSA Leadership in Women's

Sailing Award to Pat Dieselman during dinner. Pat is a role model particularly for any woman taking up sailing as an adult. Pat caught up and passed many who grew up sailing. She has been part of the conference committee and a workshop leader for many years. She has been involved with the local AdventureSail® for many years as well. It was nice that her family was present for the presentation.



Pat Dieselman and Corinthian Yacht Club Commodore Annie C. Harris

Haley Lhamon, of Bainbridge Island, WA, brought the evening to a close with a talk on the 2018 win at the R2AK event. The R2AK was only sail, row or paddle - no engines allowed on the boats, and they sailed a Melges 32. Team Sail Like A Girl with an all female crew won the grueling 750 mile race from Port Townsend, WA, to Ketchikan, AK. First time for a monohull to win. First time for an all woman team to win. The photos, maps with trackers and videos put attendees on the boat with Haley. An inspiring end to an inspiring day.

*See bio on Pat Dieselman on page 2*



## NWSA

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Membership allows us to provide the seminars and workshops to all members. Current members get first notification of events. We appreciate your continued support.

[www.womensailing.org](http://www.womensailing.org)

## Pat Dieselman receives Leadership in Women's Sailing

Growing up in Salem, Massachusetts, Pat and her sisters and brother enjoyed their summers "messing around in row-boats or motor boats" and fishing. Sailing was not part of her life.

In 1988 Pat met John Dieselman, a competitive sailor and owner of a J-29, *Pegasus*. That is when Pat began her immersion into sailing and the sailing lifestyle. She took sailing lessons at Community Boating in Boston and spent summers learning the ins and outs of sailing and racing on *Pegasus* with John and his sons.

When Pat and John married seven years later, they traded the J-29 for a cruising boat. Together they explored Mass Bay, Buzzards Bay and Maine. They did bareboat-chartered sailing trips with the Blue Water Sailing Club (BWSC) to Turkey, Croatia, Greece, France and the BVI's.

Pat realized that most of the BWSC women had never taken their boats out without their husband. Thus, she initiated week long cruises for women empowering them to take the helm. Blue Water Women Cruises have been an annual event for the past 23 year. Pat became the first female Race Committee Chairperson of BWSC, and then she went on to be commodore a few years later.

When Pat and John became members of Corinthian Yacht Club (CYC), Pat

organized weekend cruises to Scituate for the Corinthian women. Pat was the first chairperson of the CYC Sailing Committee established in 2003. A year later, Pat joined the CYC race committee. She is currently Race Committee Co-Chair with John. In that position, Pat organizes the summer schedule for the committee members, runs races, hosts several social events and coordinates with John the training program for committee members. Pat is on the board of the Salem Chapter of Healing Winds USA, an organization that offers sailing to individuals with cancer.

Pat was part of the initial NWSA Women's Sailing Conference committee in 2001, and has been part of that event and as a workshop leader for many years. She has also volunteered in NWSA's winter workshops for women in Marblehead.

Pat has been volunteering at the AdventureSail® event for young girls at risk at Courageous Sailing Center for more than 20 years. She also organized an AdventureSail® out of the Corinthian Yacht Club with other women boat owners for a day sail to Misery Island. Although Pat and John no longer have a boat, Pat continues to sail with others. She encourages women to move beyond their comfort zone and give back to the sport which has become her passion.

## Cassara Volunteers for Conference Fundraiser

Shirley Cassara, Ed.D., long-term member of NWSA and enthusiastic conference attendee — almost since the beginning — knows the value of the confidence and empowerment she has gained and how they accumulate and are enriched with each new conference. "It has allowed me to bravely expand my adventures on the water from dinghies to crewing on a tall ship, and to volunteering to help children with their nautical knowledge and skills."

Cassara stated, "I am humbled and honored to step into Joan (Thayer)'s skilled Sperry's to carry the conference forward."



<https://www.womensailing.org/events-education/womens-sailing-conference/>

# 18 AWESOME YEARS!

Dear WSF Board members  
(up to 6/1/19!)

I was so tied up with post conference matters that I had not taken time to share my appreciation for yet another thoughtful recognition until now. Thank you for the lovely artist's proof "Honor" done by our most talented president, Debbie, on my retirement from the 18 years of chairing the NWSA Women's Sailing Conference. The print is on my wall where I see it every day.

The journey has been full of adventure and challenge. Each year was different, but the enthusiasm and appreciation received for running the conference kept me coming back. Of course, I never did this alone. The conference takes a lot of committed women to pull it off, and 24/7 365 watchfulness. Sue Corl and I were very fortunate to have started off on the right foot, thanks to the graciousness of Gail, the master of women's conventions. It was an honor and a privilege to have had the support to do the conference for this amount of time. I will support the next conference chair as much as needed.

Sincerely,  
Joan Thayer

Chair  
18th Women's Sailing Conference  
National Women's Sailing Association  
A program of the [Women's Sailing Foundation](#)



**WOWZR!** (Women on the Water Zonie Regatta) sponsored by Tumbleweed Sailing November 1-3 at Pleasant Harbor Marina near Phoenix, Arizona. Includes: Daily Lake Pleasant park entry, step-aboard sailing on one design boats (Etchells and J24s), meals, race seminars, on-the-water coaching, regatta entry and more! (Transportation and lodging are not included.) Early bird registration \$275. Registration October 1-27- \$295.

As you may know, NWSA promotes and coordinates sailing opportunities, education and events designed for women and taught by women sailors across the nation. WOWZR offers a unique chance for 'landlocked' women lake sailors in the Southwest (and beyond) to get high quality hands-on coaching.

Towards that goal, NWSA and Tumbleweed Sailing have collaborated on WOWZR, a weekend step-aboard event designed to help women become better sailors while learning about rules and issues associated with sailboat racing and regattas and provide on-board coaching.

Friday afternoon, WOWZR participants will meet and greet a group of amazing coaches and immediately begin learning with seminars at a spaghetti dinner. A lake orientation and local knowledge discussion will follow while sailors digest, catch up and become acquainted with new friends. The day will end overlooking a beautiful sunset on the desert lake.

Saturday will begin with breakfast and a morning of seminars ranging from basics to advanced sailboat racing, matching the participant's skill level. Sail trim, crew positioning, tactics, racing rules and other topics will fill the morning. Lunch will be a grabn'go. Then women cast off the lines for familiarization and fun practice aboard Etchells or J-24 racing sailboats. The afternoon will be spent learning from one another under the tutelage of nationally known women coaches at a very low ratio for ease of learning.

Sailors will return to slips and valet treatment – no boat work or clean up -- shuttles will carry participants to dinner and social mixer. Review of the day's activity and practice will be featured with commentary, praise and critiques by coaches. Q & A will help WOWZR participants understand the good, the bad and the excellent. After a skipper's meeting, (also a learning experience) it's off for a good night's sleep.

Sunday's racing! To accommodate travelers, we will begin early with a grabn'go breakfast at the lake. Stroll or catch shuttles to the waiting boats. The first start will be no later than 9:15 am as we try to get three (or more) full races in. No races will start after 2:00 pm. Racers will be met dockside by Sea Scouts (who are chartering us the boats) and will take care of putting the boats away. Shuttles will transport sailors to enjoy an awards presentation, food and MORE FUN.

We hope sailors will return to WOWZR annually to continually improve their sailboat racing skills. Check out the coaching talent, get information and register at <https://www.womensailing.org/women-on-the-water-zonie-regatta/>

## A Remarkable Young Woman



NWSA was invited to help promote a welcome flotilla for Greta Thunberg and Team Malizia upon their entry into the New York Harbor.

After a two-week Atlantic crossing on s/v Malizia II, a IMOCA 60 foiling monohull, the 16-year-old Swedish climate campaigner Thunberg arrived in New York on August 28, 2019 to participate in the United Nations Climate Change Conference.

While there she was slated to speak with world leaders about climate change and the need to unite to help make a change.

Alongside our Board Member and flotilla organiser Ayme Sinclair, boats from Sailors NYC, North Cove Sailing, Hudson River Community Sailing, New City Kids: Jersey City, Hoboken Sailing Club, and True North Sailing made up the welcoming flotilla.

The flotilla was organized with the UN Sustainable Development Goals Action Campaign and the generous support of many companies and organizations from the sailing community. NWSA board member, Barbara Robertson and member Nancie Rinaldi also sailed in the welcoming flotilla.

## NWSA members organize and join flotilla to greet Greta Thunberg.

By Barbara Robertson, NWSA Treasurer

"Amye Sinclair (new member of NWSA Board of Directors), did a fantastic job to organize the welcoming committee and distributing the sails with the goals. Several NWSA members were able to get on boats to join in the celebratory flotilla for Greta's sail into NY harbor. We know Nancie Rinaldi joined the group... Our boat's goal was "gender equality," and there was a woman at the helm. For those who haven't been here, sailing in NY harbor is special. I treasure every time I have seen Lady Liberty while under sail. So glad to have that thrilling moment."



## Coastal Safety at Sea Workshop October 26 Sponsored by Northwest Maritime Center Port Townsend, WA



Take advantage of a great price for BOTH US Sailing Coastal Safety at Sea online course (includes videos, test and certification) and a full-day of Coastal Safety skills learning lead by Sheila McCurdy, our 2018 Leadership in Women's Sailing awardee, and local Capt. Nancy Erley, world-class sailor and outstanding NWSA Conference presenter!

Course cost is \$125 for US Sailing members and \$135 for non-members. The fees include all instruction including; access to the US Sailing online Coastal Safety at Sea course, lunch, a light snack, and a 2019/2020 (good through April) NWSA membership for non members.





## Events for Women Sailors

**September 21-22, 2019**  
**NorCal Women's Sailing Seminar**  
 at Island Yacht Club  
 Alameda, CA

**October 26, 2019**  
**Coastal Safety at Sea**  
 at Northwest Maritime Center  
 Port Townsend, WA

**November 1-2, 2019**  
**WOWZR**  
 with Tumbleweed Sailing  
 Phoenix, AZ  
 See write up on page 3

**February 1, 2020**  
*Gail Hine presents*  
**Sailing Convention for Women**  
 at Bahia Corinthian YC  
 Newport Beach, CA



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**Gail Hine presents**  
**Sailing Convention for Women**  
 at Bahia Corinthian Yacht Club Newport Beach CA  
[www.sailingconventionforwomen.com](http://www.sailingconventionforwomen.com)

Contact: Gail Hine - 24926 Hayes Avenue • Murrieta • CA92562 • 951-677-8121 • gail@sailingconventionforwomen.com

The **Sailing Convention for Women** presented by *Gail Hine* will be held on Saturday, February 1, 2020 at the Bahia Corinthian Yacht Club in Corona del Mar, California.

We're expecting over 200 gals from perhaps a dozen states across the US... gathered to renew old friendships and make new ones!

Last year's workshops included several new subjects — Art of Motorsailing, Avoid Mishaps & Mayhem Aboard, How to Talk Like a Sailor, and many popular repeaters. Convention favorites are: Welcome Aboard for beginners, Diesels, Going Up the Mast, Docking, Suddenly Singlehanded, Weather, Sail Trim, Basic Navigation, Maintenance Mania, DIY

Canvas Projects, How to Heave a Line, Nighttime Sailing and Navigation, Winch Workshop, Spinnaker Rigging, Offshore Cruising, and Introduction to Sailing.

Many of our instructors have been volunteering and imparting their wisdom for many years. Prior attendees know that these fantastic mentors have so much knowledge and enthusiasm to impart, they come back for more and more.

Our featured speaker at dinner has yet to be selected. History tells that she be very inspiring!

For more information,  
[gail@sailingconventionforwomen.com](mailto:gail@sailingconventionforwomen.com)  
 or call 951-677-8121.



## BoatU.S. and NWSA

NWSA participates in the BoatU.S. Cooperating Group Program. That means that NWSA members are eligible for BoatU.S. membership at \$15, rather than the regular annual \$24 dues rate. We receive announcements with information that we pass on to you the member through our own website or our e-Breeze emails.

Other benefits include:

- 24/7 Towing Dispatch to over 600 towboats 300+ ports
- Roadside Assistance while trailering your boat
- Discounts on fuel, transient slips, repairs and more at 1,000+ boating businesses
- 6 issues the award-winning BoatUS Magazine
- Access to Boat Insurance from dedicated experts
- The Boater's Advocate - from local issues to Capitol Hill
- Highest level of shopping rewards West Marine
- Travel discounts from Star Clippers, The Moorings and more
- Discount on custom boat lettering and registration number

You can sign up for a BoatU.S. membership on line at [www.boatus.com/member](http://www.boatus.com/member). Give NWSA's Group ID number **GA 84104B** when prompted to receive the special discounted rate.

Or call BoatU.S. membership services toll free number 800-395-2628.



## NorCA Women's Sailing Seminar - Sept 21-22

The Northern California 27th Annual WSS will be held at Island Yacht Club in Alameda on September 21 and 22. This is in the San Francisco Bay Area. Mary Quigley and Linda Newland started this after attending and getting inspired by Gail Hine's Women's Sailing Convention in Southern California. We loved the concept of women learning about sailing from other women! Over the years we have followed that path and have been inspired ourselves in watching the enthusiasm as women connect with other women in learning, making new friends and networking to sail together.



We offer a fun, educational and inspiring full weekend of workshops and water activities for women of all levels. Breakfast, lunch and after seminar appetizer buffets are all included plus great raffle prizes.

All course tracks are \$295.00/person if registering before September 8, 2019. "Bring a friend" discount of \$250.75/person if signing up with two or more people. The fee goes up to \$325.00/person after September 7.

Check out this video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTlhuaM2UYQ> and then go to our registration page for more details on the offered courses: <https://www.iyc.org/womens-sailing-seminar/wss-registration/>

Your WSS registration fee covers two full days including our Saturday workshops, breakfasts, lunches, one raffle ticket, after seminar appetizer buffets, a binder with class handouts and goodies from our sponsors – plus Sunday sailing and racing on San Francisco Bay!

## Accepting Nominations for the Leadership in Women's Sailing Award

The National Women Sailing Association is now accepting nominations for the Leadership in Women's Sailing Award on or before February 1, 2020.

As many of you know, the Leadership in Women's Sailing Award, co-sponsored by NWSA and BoatU.S. is given annually to a person who has a record of achievement for inspiring, educating and enriching the lives of women through sailing.

Since year 1999, seventeen (17) individuals have been recognized for achievements and in supporting women in the sport of sailing.

To make a nomination go to <https://www.womensailing.org/who-we-are/leadership-in-womens-sailing-award/>. For questions on making a nomination or more information email Val Cook at [Leadership@womensailing.org](mailto:Leadership@womensailing.org).

### Guidelines for Nominations

- The recipient can be a man or a woman who has made a lasting impact on women and sailing.
- The recipient has multiple accomplishments which include sailing endeavors, over a period of years in the US.
- Her/his work can be local, regional, or national, and should have a significant impact beyond a local area.
- Her/his work should have advanced the sport of sailing and expanded opportunities for women, helped educate women or otherwise enriched women's lives through sailing in the US.
- This award is to be considered (a sort of) "lifetime achievement award."
- Her/his impact on supporting or educating women in the sport of sailing is more than a personal accomplishment in competitive racing.

## Congratulations

Ella Beauregard is the 2019 Sue Corl Youth Sailing Scholarship recipient



## AdventureSail® in the Virgin Isl.

**Learn to Sail Scholarship**  
recipients in St. Croix, VI  
were Sidney James and Isabel  
Melendrez.



Sidney James brings boat back.



Isabel Melendrez at the helm.

## AdventureSail® - Boston, MA - Courageous SC



*June 8, 2019 Charlestown, MA* - Under blue skies and a good breeze, 20 pairs of big and little sisters from the Big Sister Association of Greater Boston gathered at Courageous Sailing Center for a few hours of sailing in Rhodes 19s.

There was a lot of traffic in Boston Harbor with ferries coming and going, sail and power boats eager to take advantage of the first good day of the summer. Most of the girls accepted the offer to steer the boat, while others were just as happy to enjoy the ocean.

At noon the boats returned to shore where burgers, chips, oranges and of course, chocolate chip cookies were waiting. Eating outside under the sun was a real treat. A group photo was taken and then those who wished to stay learned some basic knots and their applications.

The final treat of the day was a lesson in making a Sailor's Bracelet. We are grateful to Courageous Sailing Center for the use of the facility and the boats. We thank our 10 skippers who came from various parts of the Boston area to share their love of sailing with the girls. Everyone went away smiling.

## St. Croix YC hosts 1st AdventureSail®

St. Croix Yacht Club held a Girls' Introduction to Sailing Day on May 4th. The event was sponsored by the Women's Sailing Foundation and allowed the club to provide a free day of sailing to girls from all across the island between ages 9 to 12. Twelve girls participated.

It was a beautiful day for sailing in the Caribbean, with 10-15 kt breezes and sunshine. The girls arrived at 9 AM for check-in where they received the AdventureSail® shirts as well as SCYC water bottles and dry bags.

After a brief introduction of all the wonderful volunteers and safety rules of the club, the girls got to know each other a little better by playing a fun "human knot" icebreaker, then were fitted for lifejackets. The rest of the morning was spent sailing on two Rhodes 19s and two Optis.

The girls split into three groups, with two groups of four girls sailing on the Rhodes with volunteer skippers Meg Deegan, Deborah Swanson and Lake Sanford. The other group of four girls were able to try out the Optis with our high school sailor volunteers and organizer SCYC Summer Waterfront Manager Kelley Severns.

Each girl on the Rhodes got a chance to "drive" at the tiller as well as crew with the main sheet as they sailed around Teague Bay. Girls on the Optis were able to learn about wind direction, tiller steering and tacking during a land drill and then were able

## Host an AdventureSail® Program

We are looking for volunteers to co-host AdventureSail® programs anywhere in the U.S. where there is a community sailing program or sailing club that has access to suitable sailboats and volunteer women sailors to serve as skippers and positive role models.

Our outreach program is designed to introduce girls ages 9-14, who are in need of a positive learning experience, to a team-building atmosphere where they can build self-confidence to overcome adverse living conditions. This is a one-day event combining team-building activities, introduction to basic sailing theory and a sailing experience where they can take turns at the helm and/or crew under the mentorship of an experienced woman skipper.

If you are interested in working with us to organize an AdventureSail® day in your area, please contact Val Cook at [adventuresail@womensailing.org](mailto:adventuresail@womensailing.org).

## Making Changes Come About®



*Continued on page 9*

*Continued from page 8...*

to try their hand at a capsize recovery and finally sail the Opti themselves with an instructor.

A great lunch of pasta and salad was served from the SCYC Galley while the girls listened to the high school sailor volunteers, Elyssa Franklin, Ariana Schwartz and Alex Tonintalk about their experiences sailing and opportunities they have had to travel to regattas.

After lunch the girls rotated groups with those that sailed on the Rhodes in the mornings trying out the Optis in the afternoons and the morning Opti group getting the chance to sail on the Rhodes.

We rounded out the day with a fun swim in the bay and a bounce on the club "bongo" water trampoline. Finally as parents and guardians arrived, each girl received a certificate of participation as well as a folder with information on the SCYC Summer programs and the NWSA junior membership and scholarship information. Overall the girls had a fun and safe day of sailing and most all reported that they loved it and wanted to sail more in the summer! It was a successful day of introducing young ladies of St. Croix to sailing!

Additionally two girls attending St. Croix's first event received Learn to Youth Sailing Scholarships. What a great start!



## Blecher wins US Women's Match Racing

Allie Blecher (Long Beach, Calif.) won the 17th U.S. Women's Match Racing Championship held August 16-18 in Detroit, MI. Blecher topped the final match 2-0 over Giselle Comet Nyenhuis (San Diego, Calif.).

Blecher, the 2010 Quantum Collegiate Female Sailor of the Year and a member of the US Sailing Team in 2013, won the Allegra Knapp Mertz Trophy for the first time in her second attempt. She finished runner-up in last year's championship held in San Francisco. This year she won an abbreviated final that was reduced to a best-of-three from a best-of-five due to thunderstorms in the Detroit area.

"This is a good one. This is the highlight of our season. We've been working towards this one in particular," said Blecher, who works as a sustainability integration project manager for Northrup Grumman in El Segundo, Calif. Her crew included main trimmer and tactician Beka Schiff (Los Angeles, Calif.), trimmer Krysia Pohl (San Francisco, Calif.), and bowperson Ali Blumenthal (Bellport, N.Y.).

"Last year we were sort of new to match racing, it was our first time facing Nicole (Breault, three time winner)," said Blecher. "We were in a good

spot against her at every start, but she had the boatspeed. We knew we were able to sail against her. This year we were coming in for the win. This one is a highlight, top of the list right now."

With the win Blecher is eligible to be invited to the 2019 U.S. Match Racing Championship hosted by St. Francis Yacht Club on October 3-6, 2019. The U.S. Women's Match Racing Championship grew out of the U.S. Women's Open Championship regatta that was founded in 1974 for fleet racing in doublehanded and singlehanded divisions.

The Allegra Knapp Mertz Trophy is presented to the winner in honor of Allegra Knapp Mertz, a four-time winner of the U.S. Women's National Championship and many years of service as Chairperson of the Women's Championship Committee. The Adams Memorial Trophy is presented to the runner-up in honor of Mrs. Henry (Adams) Morgan.

Janel Zarkowsky (Annapolis, Md.) finished third after winning a one race sail-off against Marilyn Cassedy (Lauderdale, Calif.), who finished fourth. Liz Hjorth (Marina Del Rey, Calif.) won the consolation round to place fifth overall, followed by Stephanie Wondolleck (San Rafael, Calif.) in sixth and Bridget Grobel (Chicago, Ill.) in seventh.

