



## President's Message

Ahoy,

As president of the National Women's Sailing Association, one of the many things I am thankful for is

your membership. I am happy to have you aboard! Please let me or our membership coordinator, Elise, know what you are interested in learning, sharing or contributing in any specific way, especially if you want to volunteer.

There are several opportunities for pitching in to promote the sport of sailing; helping with our educational efforts, AdventureSail®, conference in June or helping us to better keep in contact with other members.

Here are a few upcoming opportunities for learning and getting together with other women sailors. Our long-time board member, Gail Hine, will present her 30th Sailing Convention for Women on February 1 in Newport Beach, CA. Registration opens on December 10 at [sailing-con-ventionforwomen.com](http://sailing-con-ventionforwomen.com).

Registration opens Dec. 1 for the February 8-9 All Women's Diesel workshop at Narragansett Sailing LLC in Barrington, RI. The hands-on course covers the diesel engine plus the drive train including the stuffing box. Register early, there are only five spots open for the ever popular course.

And save the date, June 6, for our annual Conference in Marblehead, MA.

I hope to hear from you about your expectations and goals for your membership.

Thank you for your support!



# Take the Helm®

Official Newsletter of the National Women's Sailing Association

#2 FALL 2019

## WOWZR! That was fun.

On November 1-3 women from across the nation gathered in the middle of the Sonoran Desert to learn to race sailboats. In and of itself, that seems odd and improbable, but it is not the bigger story. Two weeks later, two boats crewed by WOWZR! — Women on the Water Zonie Regatta participants raced in the last days of Arizona Yacht Club's fall series. Earlier in the week, ten percent of the attendees at Arizona Yacht Club's general membership meeting had attended WOWZR!

Hosting a step-aboard event is a big undertaking, but doing so only for women sailors at Lake Pleasant, near Phoenix, Arizona, was nothing short of audacious. Bruce Andress, of Tumbleweed Sailing, pitched his idea to the National Women's Sailing Association. Debbie Huntsman, president of the Association (NWSA), was compelled to listen. The concept aligned perfectly with NWSA's mission: to enrich the lives of women and girls through education and access to the sport of sailing. Better yet, Tumbleweed agreed to shoulder the expense for the event, facilitating an affordable learning opportunity for women sailors.

Nine high-quality women sailors from across the nation were recruited by NWSA to present racing seminars and provide on-board coaching. Coaches included Debby Grimm, five-time Gulf Yachting Association Women's PHRF Champion; Fran Webber, recipient of the prestigious Southern California Yachting Association Peggy Slater award; Margaret Bonds-Podlich, crewmember on the 2006/2007 US Sailing Team, campaigning the three-woman Yngling while vying for a slot in the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Two NWSA board members, Linda Newland and Debbie Huntsman, highly regarded instructor and program director



at Alameda Community Sailing Center Emily Zugnoni, life-long sailor Kim Adam all agreed to come to the desert for WOWZR! Locals Lynn Buchanan and Wendy Larson rounded out the group of instructors.

Availability of race boats was a limiting factor for the event. Over the sweltering Arizona summer Tumbleweed worked on choosing the boats — closely matched PHRF rated J24s and Merit25s — then finding and preparing eight boats for racing. NWSA worked on inviting women through social media, their website and connections with other women's sailing organisations. Tumbleweed sent information and invitations to regional yacht clubs and sailing organisations as well.

The beautiful saguaro-studded shoreline and lavender mountains stacked in the distance surrounding Lake Pleasant were selling points. The legendary desert weather—cool at sunrise, warming quickly—average overnight low of 53° and afternoon high of 76° was another attractive asset. Wild burros, bald eagles and javelinas often seen in the Lake Pleasant Regional Park would catch the imagination of potential participants. Referring to sailing in Arizona, a WOWZR! participant posted on Facebook, "I might be too distracted to sail!". And importantly it was already clear women were hungry for hands-on sailing education where they could network, sail, and learn with other women.

NWSA stated a 2019-20 goal of bringing high-quality learning opportunities to underserved communities.

*Continued on page 5*



A program of the  
Women's Sailing Foundation

## NWSA

P.O. Box 588

Marblehead, MA 01945

email: [wsf@womensailing.org](mailto:wsf@womensailing.org)

## Board of Directors

Debbie Huntsman, President

Barbara Robinson, Treasurer

Joyce Hersh, Secretary

Valli Cook

Susan Epstein

Gail Hine

Linda Newland, Immediate

Past President

Elise Read

Amye Sinclair

Susanna Winder

## Advisory Council

Betsy Alison

Janet Baxter

Bernadette Bernon

Doris Colgate

Pat Dieselman

Nancy Erley

Sally Helme

J.J. Fetter

Linda Lindquist-Bishop

Barbara Marrett

Kristan McClintock

Sheila McCurdy

Vicki Sodaro



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)

## AdventureSail® New Orleans – August 2019 Lake Pontchartrain New Orleans, LA

Written by Danielle C. Stacey

On a mid-August morning six lucky young ladies had the opportunity to experience the joys of sailing on Lake Pontchartrain as participants in AdventureSail® New Orleans 2019 sponsored by the National Women's Sailing Association (NWSA) in partnership with the Lake Pontchartrain Women's Sailing Association (LPWSA).

The event serves as an excellent opportunity to introduce young girls to the sport of sailing. This year's participants included troop members from the Girl Scouts of Southeastern Louisiana. The New Orleans Yacht Club graciously hosted the event and several club members skippered their boats for the event, including Elliott Brett, who has previously participated in the event. "I feel driven to teach others to sail. The beauty of AdventureSail® is that it's a fun way to reach an audience whose natural exposure wouldn't have brought them into the sailing community," said Brett. "I also recognize the importance of encouraging women to excel and lead in traditionally male-dominated activities such as sailing. AdventureSail® makes it easier, focusing on the young ladies as much as it focuses on the sailing."

Participants began their day on the water with a group photo in their new AdventureSail® t-shirts donated by the NWSA. Lifejackets provided by the New Orleans Coast Guard were distributed and a safety briefing was delivered by LPWSA member and boat owner, Ella McCulloch. The girls then met the volunteer skippers, their crew, and were welcomed to board their vessels for the day.

Overall the conditions were excellent for an introductory sailing experience with light winds and skies of wispy white clouds. While aboard the girls learned about the different parts of a sailboat as well as how to harness the wind to move a sailboat across the water. The girls got to try their hand at different crew positions on the boat including trimming the main sail and taking the helm.

Although the girls could have stayed on the water longer, they returned to their home port of the day for pizza graciously donated by Big Easy Notary and Auto Title followed by a presentation from guest speaker Alanna Austin, member of the Tulane University Sailing Team. Ms. Austin shared personal stories of her introduction to sailing and explained how her experiences in the sport have opened many doors for her thus far. "The most important thing is exposure," said Austin. She encouraged the event's participants to join their school sailing teams even if it meant being the only girl on the team. "Sailing needs a group of ladies to take the first step for the next generation."

After her presentation, Ms. Austin led the girls through a series of Jeopardy style questions for prizes donated by US Sailing. As parents and guardians arrived to collect their now seasoned sailors, each girl received information on the NWSA junior membership and scholarship. Without a doubt AdventureSail® New Orleans 2019 was a successful event and achieved the mission of introducing young girls to sailing!





## Events for Women Sailors

**February 1, 2020**

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

**February 8-9, 2020**

**Marine Diesel Engine Workshop for Women**  
8am-4pm both days  
Narragansett Sailing LLC  
Cove Haven Marina,  
101 Narragansett Ave.  
Barrington, RI 02806

*Registration opens December 1*  
\$440 for members  
\$505 for non-members  
**ONLY FIVE SPOTS AVAILABLE!**  
This course will not turn you into a diesel mechanic, but it will give you the knowledge to diagnose the normal things that cause a diesel to fail, and know whether you can fix it or if you need to call in a mechanic.

**June 6, 2020**

### **Women's Sailing Conference**

at Corinthian Yacht Club  
Marblehead, MA



### **Visit us on Facebook**

<https://www.facebook.com/Womens-Sailing-FoundationNational-Womens-Sailing-Association-175044185840300/>

### **Check out our website and blog**

<https://www.womensailing.org/blog/>



**Making Changes Come About®**



**AdventureSail®**  
**New Orleans**  
**August 2019**  
**Lake Pontchartrain**  
**New Orleans, LA**

## AdventureSail® South Hampton, New York September 2019

Saturday, September 14 was a beautiful day for a sail — with sun, wind, and great skipper volunteers. 2019 was the 20th year for Val Cook and Charlene Kagel to coordinate AdventureSail with Breakwater Yacht Club and the town of South Hampton. Thank you! Breakwater Yacht Club coordinated an all-girls-win race. Every girl who participated won a trophy. The outcome was pleasing as shown in the post event photo — what a nice group. Three girls' programs participated: Big Sister/Big Brother, The Butterfly Effect and I Tri (I try)!



## 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.



# Gail Hine presents Sailing Convention for Women

Plan **NOW** to attend on **2/1/20!**

- New educational land & water workshops
- Inspiring amazing featured speaker
- Learn from outstanding instructors
- Hear about women's sailing activities
- **Registration opens online on December 10, 2019**

February 1, 2020

Held at Bahia Corinthian Yacht Club 🚩 Newport Beach CA

[www.sailingconventionforwomen.com](http://www.sailingconventionforwomen.com)

Contact: [gail@sailingconventionforwomen.com](mailto:gail@sailingconventionforwomen.com)



**33 Workshops**  
Fantastic subjects that you  
won't find anywhere else all  
in one place on one day!



## Boat Repair Yoga 101

Rules for boat repair, based on 30+ years of sail boat ownership, daysailing, racing, and cruising, both coastal and offshore. . .

**Rule No. 1:** Anything on a sail boat that needs to be fixed will be hard to reach.

**Rule No. 2:** When fixing one thing there are at least two, and usually three or more, other unknown repairs that will also have to be completed.

**Rule No. 3:** Capt Ron said if anything is going to happen, it will happen out there, he forgot to add the corollary “at night.”

**Rule No. 4:** If you own a boat you have to enjoy working on it almost as much as sailing it, as you cannot do the latter without doing the former.

- Steve Maseda



WOWZR - Continued from page 1

Most of the WOWZR! participants hailed from inland areas in Arizona, Nevada, Colorado and Tennessee where sailing opportunities specially designed for women are few and far between. Yet some sailors already engaged in racing expressed a “we’ll see” stance while bluntly noting off-the-coasts women’s events were too often of a not-worth-paying for quality. While there are always inaugural event learning opportunities for organisers, the Tumbleweed team and spectacular cadre of coaches powered through all unforeseen glitches. The resounding post-event enthusiasm of WOWZR! participants defines and solidifies the fact that capable women teaching women stacks up to being exceptionally worthwhile. There was a lot of learning, sharing, enthusiasm and fun during the three days.

Coaches and participants focused on the recreation of racing. The weather was warm and glorious offering a bit of high winds, a bit of mid-day lulls, and mostly 8-12 breeze with interesting lifts

and knocks. Eight boats, eight coaches and eight participating crews with varying degrees of experience practiced tacking, gybing, spinnaker sets and douses, starts and roundings on Saturday. Sunday, a bit of crew shifting and rotation of coaches helped assure all women had a chance to learn from at least two coaches while the race committee ran four races. “The competition was fierce!,” said race PRO Dave Christensen, evidenced by the four way boat tie for second place, yet forgiving and very fun. As the event was coming to a close, coaches and participants began asking about WOWZR! 2020. And with that, Bruce Andress said “mark your calendars! November is a great time for WOWZR!”

NWSA and Tumbleweed Sailing envision a future on Lake Pleasant, and other venues, where seeing two boats racing with all women crew is no longer a novelty. Events like WOWZR! — Women on the Water Zonie Regatta will make that a reality. Look for WOWZR! at Lake Pleasant the first weekend of November 2020.



## For the Girls

NWSA continues to identify new opportunities beyond the AdventureSail® program. Scholarship funds are available to assist girls who, after participating in an AdventureSail® event, have expressed a desire to take lessons in a sailing program. Information on the scholarship program can be found at [www.womensailing.org/scholarships.htm](http://www.womensailing.org/scholarships.htm).

You may send tax deductible contributions to:

Women's Sailing Foundation  
c/o Barbara Robinson  
4 Turtle Back Road  
Essex, MA 01929



## Recommended Reading from Members

### *My Ship is So Small*

by Ann Davison

### *An Affair with the Sea*

by Peggy Slater

### *Red Sky in Mourning*

by Tami Oldham Ashcraft

### *Easing Sheets* (a mystery novel)

by L. M. Lawson

### *The Motion of the Ocean: 1 Small Boat, 2 Average Lovers and A Woman's Search for the Meaning of Wife*

by Janna Cawrse Esarey

### *Sailing the Pink Sea*

by Debbie Huntsman

## AdventureSail® Tumbleweed Sailing, Lake Pleasant, Phoenix, AZ

Although sailing is not at the top of the mind of most desert dwellers in Phoenix Arizona, there is a solid community of women sailors who sail primarily on Lake Pleasant and are eager to share the joys of the sport. A sailing outing was an unusual activity for the small group of girls from a greater Phoenix Boys & Girls Club in Mesa, AZ. The AdventureSail® was scheduled on September 14, as far past the end of the summer as possible but just before the sailing season starts in earnest. Even then, it was necessary to get an early morning start to avoid the highest afternoon temperatures, which still were surpassing 100 degrees every day. The weather cooperated, with a nice breeze and partly cloudy skies which kept it 'cooler' (under 100 degrees) long into the morning.

Each child helped crew Carpe Diem, a Catalina 27: releasing sheets, trimming, hiking and taking the wheel. Cookies, grapes, cutie oranges and energy bars were a big hit, as was the refreshing dip the girls enjoyed before returning to the dock. Some of the girls began to learn their third language, 'Sailish.' They enjoyed guessing then learning about the meanings of 'tattle tells', port, starboard, etc. and discovering how they could use the advantage given by many of the blocks, winches and other helpful devices found on the sailboat.

Thanks to the generous offer of boats, food, lifejackets time and energy of all the adults involved especially Arizona Yacht Club rear commodore Debra Heisler for the use of Carpe Diem, Tumbleweed Sailing for lifejackets and back up boat, and Sea Scout leader Wendy Larson, who made, as one girl described them 'the best' cookies and helped make it fun.



*Skipper, Deb takes a photo of the crew.*

*First brave girl to drive.*

*Taking creative photos.*

*After a fun day.*

*Before the boatload of fun.*

## 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.



## Coastal Safety at Sea Workshop



On October 26, in partnership with the Northwest Maritime Center in Port Townsend, WA, women took advantage of a great opportunity to take the US Sailing Coastal Safety at Sea online course then attend a full-day of learning coastal safety skills lead by Sheila McCurdy, our 2018 Leadership in Women's Sailing awardee. Well known locals Linda Newland, NWSA board member and notable distance racer and Capt. Nancy Erley, world-class circumnavigator and outstanding NWSA Conference were co-presenters. A Coast Guard rescue swimmer also joined the presenters with a rescue basket.

Participants first learned about laws and obligations pertaining to rescue. They saw standard safety equipment as well as a variety of new personal and safety gear for the boat. Women learned to safely ignite then handle both flares and smoke canisters. The group practiced hoisting a crew back aboard a sailboat, calling for help on a VHF, using a throw bag and messenger line and took a swim in full foul weather gear with the aid of their lifejackets. All these experiences and skills will make facing an actual emergency a practiced event.

Look for, or request, a Coastal Safety@Sea event for women (or couples) in your area.



## 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@women sailing.org](mailto:adventuresail@women sailing.org).



## AdventureSail® - Women's Sailing Association- Orange County - Dana Point, CA

WSA-OC's Inaugural AdventureSail® for girls was held in Dana Point on Sunday, August 11th. The girls from Laguna Beach Boys and Girls Club were greeted by WSA-OC members at the Ocean Institute who led them on a full day of adventure. They were treated to a lively discussion about marine life hosted by esteemed OI volunteer Dr. Milt McMennamin. After viewing sea life being fed lunch, the group walked to the picnic area and were met by member Yazmin Salazar who talked to them about overcoming obstacles in life and working together as a team. They then moved to the knot tying station, which was hosted by USCG Auxiliary and WSA-OC members, Sue and Chuck Hutchings.

Everyone enjoyed a delicious BBQ prepared by the men who support WSA-OC. After lunch the girls received their boat assignments. The girls enjoyed a two-hour sail and returned to the picnic area energized, talkative and excited. Susie Campbell closed the day with a conversation about the Blue Heart of the Ocean and presented the girls with a blue heart necklace to remember the day.

It took a team of 35 + WSA-OC members and volunteers to make this day a memorable event for the girls.

We salute ALL of you for stepping up, handling your part effortlessly, making the girls feel comfortable and in making this First Inaugural Event a seamless success.

Member comments after the event were very appreciative, supportive and thankful for including them in an opportunity to serve the local community. Many said this day was meaningful to them in so many ways.

Some comments from the girls were: "I will always remember this day, I got to drive and go on top of a boat" — Alexandria "We held on to the mast and thought we would fall off and the sharks would get us, but now I want a sailboat for Christmas" — Peggy Sue "I felt scared to drive the boat, but now I feel so strong" — Aubri

Members who graciously donated their boats and time for the event were: Barbara Kelley, Lisa Cullinane, Susie Campbell, Lisa Doliva, Maureen Vild, Brenda Highley/Gabi Schwaiger-Skipper. We could not have done this without all of you!

By participating, girls become eligible for a free NWSA junior membership as well as Scholarships provided by NWSA, WSA-OC and Dana Point Youth Foundation.

*Below:  
Members Sue  
and Chuck  
Hutchings  
teach the girls  
knot-tying  
skills*



*Photos by  
Kathleen  
Updyke*



## Blecher Wins Women's One Design Challenge

By Unknown author; probable source: The Log

Long Beach, CA (October 13, 2019) – Three bullets made all the difference for California Yacht Club's Allie Blecher, who won the 2019 Linda Elias Memorial Women's One Design Challenge by a mere two points.

Blecher finished the regatta in the Catalina 37 fleet with a total of 22 points. Liz Hjorth, competing for Women's Sailing Associate of Santa Monica Bay, was just a gust behind with 24 points while defending champion Casey Hogan, sailing for Newport Harbor Yacht Club, moved up the ranks to finish in third place with 29 points.

It's been a good year for Blecher. In August, she won the 17th U.S. Women's Match Racing Championship. Beka Schiff, who sailed with Blecher in that event, served as main trimmer this weekend. Blecher's name will go onto the perpetual trophy for a second time. She also won this event in 2013.

Lighter conditions, which Annie Gardner requested, resulted in a better day for her – placing 2, 1 and 7 to position her team to finish in fourth place.

Her Hawaii Yacht Club team was organized by Alle Tsai, on pit, as a means for women to grow, and the chance to experience high-level competition. Although there were several new racers aboard, Gardner has been sailing with Katie Pettibone, her tactician and another member of the America's team, since 1995.

"In terms of opportunities for women sailors, it's cool to see how far we've come," Gardner said. Although winds built, and rankings shifted, Hjorth, who also had an up and down day, held onto second place. How did they do it? "Channel girl power!" said Stine Cacaras, tactician and team manager. "As

a WSA team, whose entire purpose is to promote women in sailing, our crew has a wide variety of experience.

"We're always working with new people, coaching and teaching; bringing them up to a top-notch level of sailing." Moving the sailors to different positions on the boat, building skills, and teamwork is part of that process."



The addition of the Cal 20 fleet in 2018 is a symbol of that progress. Meeting the needs of a growing number of competitors interested in sailing is part of the organizing party's commitment to serving the women's sailing community.

As an added incentive, the organization also offered a new team trophy awarded to the yacht club with the best results in both Catalina 37 and Cal 20 fleets. This year, San Francisco Yacht Club was the recipient.

"The Cal 20s were offered primarily as an additional opportunity for women who wanted to advance into one-design sailing," said Co-Chair Cyndi Martinich. "The growing wait list indicated to us that there were more women who wanted to sail at this level, so we started looking for a fleet."

This celebrated regatta, hosted by LBYC and the Long Beach Women's Sailing Association with the support of the Long Beach Sailing Foundation, is named after Linda Elias, one of Southern California's most successful female sailboat racers, who died in 2003 after a nine-year battle with ovarian cancer. She was only 52 years old. The prestigious Peggy Slater "Yachtswoman of the Year Award" winner was an active leader of the Long Beach WSA and won this race as the Women's One Design Challenge in 1992, 1994 and 1996.

The regatta drew the biggest spectator fleet since the Congressional Cup series which carried friends and family who cheered on the teams over the two-day event.

