

Date: October 13, 2017
To: USS Board members
From: Bruce Burton, President
Subject: October 2017 President's Report

Dear USS Board members,

It is with great anticipation that we attend our face-to-face (FTF) Board meetings in Bristol next week. So many staff have been instrumental in the successful planning and execution of the acquisition of and the move into our new home. My congratulations for a job well done! Most of all, we have started a wonderful partnership with Roger Williams University, as I mentioned last month. I cannot wait for all of you to see it.

Over the transom

National Sailing Hall of Fame Induction, NYYC Harbor Court

Last month the National Sailing Hall of Fame held their annual induction at New York Yacht Club, Harbor Court, Newport, Rhode Island. It was a wonderful event with cocktail parties Thursday and Friday nights that were privately hosted. Saturday was the banquet dinner with over 400 guests in attendance and Sunday was the induction with 400+ there to see the seven new Hall of Fame members receive their medals and give their speeches. New York Yacht Club, led by Com. Phil Lotz, did a magnificent job!

Our past president, Bill Martin, gave a very compelling address during his acceptance, the essence of which I share here. Bill noted that the strength of his efforts and his successes can be attributed to working like a redwood tree. Redwood trees, the tallest in the land, have very shallow roots and can only resist high winds by tying their roots to those of the adjacent redwood trees, thereby forming a matrix of strength. Their secure foundation can only be maintained by their secure hold on the adjacent tree's roots. It was a compelling metaphor for teamwork and reliance on one another to be successful. Congratulations to Bill for his induction!

The NSHOF invited me to speak Saturday at the Banquet and Sunday at the Induction. It was a great honor and my message was that we must align all of the leaders/organizations in our sport to look to the future and prepare for it, and that US Sailing is called upon to be that leader. Of course I gave a "shout out" to JJ Fetter, USS Board member and HOF inductee.



Bill Martin and Bruce Burton

Olympic Sailing Committee (OSC)

Last month I touched on the essential elements of the program from my perspective. We will have reports from Malcolm Page and Jim Campbell during the FTF meeting next week, so I will not fill space with that here.

We will convene an OSC meeting in Colorado Springs at the offices of the US Olympic Committee on November 13 and 14. The purpose of the meeting is to learn best practices from the USOC and other NGBs.

Independent Review

The OSC is commissioning a year-end review for the Board of Directors. It will consist of three elements:

1. Subjective Review (panel of expert sailors) led by Briana Provancha, 2016 Olympian
2. Objective Review (panel of business or organizational experts), led by Brian Geraghty, retired executive
3. Building the Base: Youth Development/Talent/Pipeline Review (panel of youth experts), led by Zach Leonard, Head Coach, Yale Sailing Team.

Hurricanes

At my urging, the association has reached out to affected clubs in Florida, Louisiana and Texas and offered US Sailing support. To my knowledge, at this point, we do not have any requests for support. Jack Gierhart will provide details of any of these requests on a timely basis.

Outgoing Board Members

US Sailing salutes and thanks JJ Fetter (San Diego, CA) and Com. George Hinman (Newport, RI) for their service on the Board.

JJ Fetter has been instrumental in leading and supporting many initiatives at US Sailing, including women and young women in competitive sailing, Olympic Team reviews, membership on the Olympic Sailing committee and chairing the Selection Committee of the OSC. She travels continually on behalf of the sport and is regularly seen at youth and college regattas, networking with young athletes, coaches, race officials and sponsors. She is a leader in the San Diego area for special events and takes on leadership roles when called upon. She has represented our Board well as an inducted member of the National Sailing Hall of Fame. JJ will remain a member of the OSC and chair of the Selection Committee. JJ is an exemplary volunteer and we wish her well in her future endeavors outside of US Sailing.

Commodore George Hinman has served our sport in leadership positions in so many ways. From defending the America's Cup to leading the American and New York Yacht Clubs, founding high school sailing teams in Vero Beach, FL and being a prominent voice for team racing competition, George has demonstrated leadership and dedicated volunteerism at every level throughout his life. George joined our Board as a designated director for Gary Jobson. Gary's insightfulness in choosing George came at the perfect time for offshore sailing at USS. Under George's leadership, we formed US Offshore and George took the helm of offshore to steer us in optimizing the department to provide significantly improved customer service for the next generation of offshore sailors in the US. Most of all, to me, George has been a mentor and a voice of sound guidance when solutions to complex problems are not obvious.

Over the Bow

Herreshoff and President's Award Nominations: Please provide me with your nominations for the Herreshoff and President's awards.

The Herreshoff is given for outstanding contributions to the sport of sailing.
The President's award for to those who have contributed above and beyond to the support and advancement of US Sailing and the sport of sailing.

OSC Meeting in Colorado Springs

The OSC will meet on November 13th and 14th at the US Olympic Committee headquarters to discuss strategy and governance of our Olympic Sailing Team. I feel it very important that the OSC learns "best practices" from the most successful sports. We should have good attendance at the meeting and will have dinner with the athletes on November 13th.

Thank you for your continued support,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bruce J. Burton', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Bruce J. Burton,
President