



## President's Letter

Dear Members-

I am very enthusiastic about being your new president. Following in Val Cook's footsteps will be a challenge. Thankfully Val has left her office with NWSA financially in the black and with good forward momentum. Three of the four officers are all new to the positions but not with their involvement with NWSA. Our Vice President, **Linda Newland**, now residing in the Pacific Northwest, has been leading women's events for quite some time.



Several new relationships have been initiated already. Our Treasurer, **Becky Squires**, is a no-nonsense woman who also loves using the technology to its maximum. Becky is also responsible for our merchandise. So, feel free to direct any comments on logo gear to Becky. And to maintain continuity between the changes in the other officers, **Dar Collins** continues to be our secretary. Dar keeps everyone on schedule and pointed in the right direction. She is quick to handle the memberships. I am fortunate to be working with them. Our entire board is committed to promoting sailing. You'll find the list of board members elsewhere in this newsletter.

We are committed to doing a better job of communi-

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# Take the Helm®

Official Newsletter of the National Women's Sailing Association

SUMMER 2009

## 2009 Women's Sailing Conference — Great Instruction, Great Weather

The Corinthian Yacht Club hosted the 8th annual Women's Sailing Conference on June 6 and once again the weather was near-perfect. Despite the economy, there was a near-capacity crowd. The Conference, whose primary sponsor is BoatU.S., included a day-long series of classes and workshops, giving the novice-to-expert women sailors who attended a terrific opportunity to network with other women while learning new skills or brushing up on old ones. The classes were followed by a cocktail hour on the deck of the clubhouse and a gala dinner with speakers and prizes.

Organized by the National Women's Sailing Association, the conference included 10 on-land workshops covering a variety of sailing topics and five on-the-water coaching clinics. This year the on-the-water training included sessions in crew overboard, boat systems, sail trim, introduction to sailing, racing and spinners, and reefing and flaking sails. The land-based workshops included charting and plotting, electronic navigation, an in-the-water session on life raft deployment, knots, diesel engine trou-



bleshooting, suddenly single-handed, and understanding the wind.

The majority of participants were from Massachusetts and New England, but some participants came from as far as Texas, Canada, North Carolina and Florida.

After dinner, the audience applauded Maureen McKinnon-Tucker as the recipient of the Leadership in Women's Sailing Award, given annually by NWSA and BoatU.S. McKinnon-Tucker, partially paralyzed from an accident over 10 years ago, is a leader in adaptive sailing and won a gold medal at the 2008 Beijing Paralympics last summer.

Conference participants were also inspired and entertained by keynote speaker Beth Schwarzman, as she chronicled her remarkable voyaging lifestyle, living aboard and sailing the world with her husband and children.

The raffle and silent auction ended the evening, raised over \$1,000 for NWSA's AdventureSail® program for at-risk girls and enabling the 2009 Women Sailing Conference to further NWSA's goal of enriching the lives of women and girls through education and access to the sport of sailing. Mark your new 2010 calendars now for June 5, when the 9th annual Women's Sailing Conference will take place again at the Corinthian Yacht Club in Marblehead.



*More pictures on page 7*



## NWSA

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Photo by Rebecca Waters, Sail Magazine

## Paralympic Gold Medalist Honored with Leadership in Women's Sailing Award

Proving that despite a major setback, the will to sail and compete at the highest level can prevail, Maureen McKinnon-Tucker was honored with the annual Leadership in Women's Sailing Award at ceremonies capping the day-long Women's Sailing Conference held June 6 at Corinthian Yacht Club in Marblehead, MA. The award is co-sponsored by BoatU.S. and the National Women's Sailing Association. The award honors a male or female who has a record of achievement in giving something back to the sailing community as well as inspiring and educating women.

McKinnon-Tucker was featured in the "Top Women in American Boating" article in the May 2009 issue of *BoatU.S. Magazine*. Over a decade ago she fell off a seawall and the injuries left her partially paralyzed. Despite using a wheelchair, she has doggedly pursued competitive sailing. After being the first woman named to the U.S. Disabled Sailing Team and winning a silver medal in the 2007 world championship, McKinnon-Tucker went even further in 2008 and won a gold medal in the Beijing Paralympic Games, along with the late Nick Scandone in the SKUD-18 class.

In presenting the award at the conference, Elaine Dickinson, coordinator of BoatU.S.'s Women in Boating initiative, said, "Maureen's indomitable spirit and upbeat attitude are the essence of what leadership is all about. She turned adversity into achievement and inspires everyone who meets her or hears her story."

She has also served on numerous boards and committees advocating for those with spinal cord injuries and is a peer mentor for those recently disabled; she is the adaptive sailing coordinator at the Piers Park Sailing Center in Boston, MA. The mother of two, Maureen is a Marblehead, MA, resident and her web site is [SailChallengeInspire.org](http://SailChallengeInspire.org).

*Edited from BoatUS Press Release June 9th*



## Maureen Mckinnon-Tucker Nominated for ESPY Award

For the best in movies, there are the Academy Awards. For the best in television, there are the Emmy Awards. Music has the Grammy Awards, and theatre has the Tony Awards. For sports, there are the ESPYs.

Hosted by ESPN, the ESPYs gather top celebrities from sports and entertainment to commemorate the past year in sports by recognizing major sports achievements, reliving unforgettable moments and saluting the leading performers and performances. The 2009 show was on July 19th.

Among the 37 categories, 2008 Paralympic sailing gold medalist Maureen McKinnon-Tucker is one of the four nominees in the "Female Athlete with a Disability" category. There's not another sailor in any other category. Maureen and teammate Nick Scandone overcame long odds to reach the Paralympic Games, let alone dominate the event. Nick lived with ALS just long enough to win the gold, while Maureen balanced her paralysis with training and attending to her 2 year old son's battle with his brain tumor (he's now 9 months post-treatment and currently cancer-free).

The recognition each nominee receives during the televised awards show is immense, but to see Maureen on the same stage as the elite athletes of the world would be epic. The winner in each category is determined by online voting. Every sailor needed to support their sport in the easiest way possible.



## Making Changes Come About®

### 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).

In addition, for women and girls, we continue to reach out to other women's organizations: **Sisters Under Sail** a 501©3 organization which sails the tall ship Unicorn, was founded and is operated by Dawn Santamaria along with her husband and 3 daughters. Their goals are very similar to NWSA – provide opportunities on a tall ship for teenage girls so that the girls gain confidence in themselves, improve their self esteem, and observe strong female role models. There is also an opportunity for our members to be involved with this organization. Please check out their website, [www.sistersundersail.org](http://www.sistersundersail.org).

### Sailing Connections for NWSA Members

The charter company **Seascape Sailing** is owned and operated by Diane Edwards who has been living and sailing in Greece for the past 15 years. Diane signs on the novice and the experienced for a unique sailing experience in Greece, Turkey and soon Thailand. The personal touch is still evident with this sailing team. Seascape wants you to experience the sail, the land, the people and the food. They succeed! So, for anyone who is ready for the live-a-board experience and not yet feeling ready to skipper her own boat, see some of the best of the Greek islands with the Seascape team. Visit their website, [www.seascape-sail.com](http://www.seascape-sail.com).

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## AdventureSail® Around the U.S.

The NWSA AdventureSail® program continues to be strong across the country. NWSA/WSF has continued its partnership with community programs focused on girls to offer the girls an opportunity to experience the sport of sailing. In Grass Valley, California, located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains, the yacht club has partnered with the Friendship Club; in Charlestown, Massachusetts, at the Courageous Sailing Center, NWSA has partnered with the Big Sister Association of Greater Boston; in Marblehead, Massachusetts, we have partnered with Girls Inc.; in Sag Harbor, New York, Breakwater Yacht Club has partnered with Little Flower Children's Services and Big Sisters; and in Racine, Wisconsin, the yacht club has partnered with the YWCA.



Each event is tailored to the locale, using the boats that are available. The participants are usually young girls between the ages of nine and fifteen who need a positive recreational environment and activities which promote positive team values. The boats are sometimes owned by individuals who donate their time to host the girls. Other times it is a community facility that donates the boats and NWSA coordinates the women volunteers.

There is no right way or one way to host an event. In Massachusetts, the girls are introduced to sailing on a Rhodes 19. Almost immediately the girls are trimming the sails, getting the feel of the boat as it glides through the water. And then they are steering the boat. What



an awesome experience as the widened eyes and the grins widens across their faces.



In New York, the boats are bigger and the girls can move around a bit more. But they can take the helm and trim the sheets. Often times, the wheel is bigger than the young girl. Sometimes there is a little competition involved and probably bragging rights to go along with it, trophies and food.

But no matter what the format is, the end results are generally the same: a huge step on the rung to gaining confidence in oneself; the joy of being congratulated on a job well done, after all



this is a team sport and everyone has to pull together to make the boat move, and the knowledge that she can do this sport. These events are also rewarding for the volunteers. The women have been positive role models and leave with as much pride in themselves as the young girls. No question or action is put down. Only thumbs up and let's do it again.

The women who have been coordinating the AdventureSail® programs are committed to helping the next generation of young women to acknowledge their individuality. Each of these programs has been ongoing for at least 10 years, no small feat in these challenging times.





## Events for Women Sailors

**September 10-13** — Long Beach Sail & Power Boat Show. Thursday, 9/10 is Women's Day - entry is FREE; seminars for women offered.

**October 10, 2009** — Ladies Day at Lake Pleasant, AZ. Small seminar of sailing workshops for women on Lake Pleasant (just north of Phoenix). Put on by LPSC. Contact Debbie Huntsman at [huntsmand@mac.com](mailto:huntsmand@mac.com) for info.

**February 6, 2010** — Southern California Yachting Association's 21st Women's Sailing Convention, Newport Beach CA. Contact Gail Hine at [hine@scya.org](mailto:hine@scya.org) for info.

**March 13-14, 2010** — NWSA Diesel Engine Workshop with Mack Boring in Middleboro, MA. Information on website later this year.

**June 5, 2010** — NWSA's 9th Women's Sailing Conference, Corinthian Yacht Club, Marblehead, MA. [joan\\_thayer@comcast.net](mailto:joan_thayer@comcast.net) for more information.

Check the website for updates on all our events! Go to [www.womensailing.org](http://www.womensailing.org)

*Take the Helm*



*Spinnaker Rigging Workshop*

## West Coast SCYA Women's Sailing Convention

Southern California Yachting Association (SCYA) held its **20th** Annual Women's Sailing Convention on Saturday, February 7 at Bahia Corinthian Yacht Club, Corona del Mar, CA. Attendees reported a fantastic day filled with interesting workshops and super networking. Of course the weather in Southern California in February was glorious!

The Convention is the model for NWSA's Women's Sailing Conferences. Organizer, Gail Hine, continues to be at the forefront of west coast women's educational seminars.

E-mail Gail at [hine@scya.org](mailto:hine@scya.org) to get on the mailing list for next year's event, Feb. 6, 2010.



## Director Profile: Gail Hine

Skippering for the past 40 years, with a passion for racing on her 24-ft sloop, HUMMER (with a excellent performance record), Gail has been a leading force in promoting women's sailing. She began these efforts in 1975 with a six-seminar per year "Women's Instructional Sailing Program" at her local Redondo Beach YC which she organized for next 9 years.



Gail conceived, created and has produced the annual Southern California Yachting Association's Women's Sailing Conventions for the past 20 years. This convention has generated national awareness and participation, as well as a couple of clones—in Alameda CA and in Marblehead MA where NWSA's Women's Sailing Conference is held.

Gail was the first woman to attain a number of positions and awards in the Southern California yachting community — an SCYA director, Commodore of Redondo Beach YC (1980-81), the first recipient of the 'Peggy Slater Award' in 1990, President of Recreational Boaters of California (1994), SCYA's 'Warren Ewert Trophy,' ASMBYC's 'Yachtsman of the Year,' the Pacific Coast Yachting Association's 1997 'Charles A. Langlais Trophy,' SCYA's 1998 'James Webster Trophy' for outstanding contributions to the yachting community, and BCYC's Newport Yachtsman of the Year in 1998 and 2002. She served as Commodore of Southern California Yachting Association in 1998.

She served on the Board of the California legislative advocacy organization as a Director of Recreational Boaters of California from 1981-2008, serving as its President in 1994. Gail is a member of WORS (Women's Ocean Racing Sailing Association) in Orange County, and US SAILING. She owns an advertising agency and graphic design business Team-Way Marketing & Design in Murrieta.

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## BoatU.S. and NWSA

We have signed on for another year as a Cooperating Group. That means that NWSA members are eligible for BoatU.S. membership at \$12.50, half the regular annual \$25 dues rate. We receive announcements with information that we pass on to you the member through our own website or our e-NWSA. There are discounts at West Marine retail stores with BoatU.S. membership—another good reason to get more for less.

Other benefits include:

- Discounts on fuel, overnight slips and repairs at more than 750 marinas nationwide
- On-the-water towing
- Access to high-value, low-cost group rate boat insurance
- Full year subscription to the award-winning BoatU.S. Magazine
- An effective lobby that fights unfair taxes, fees and government regulations that single out recreational boaters.

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 **GA8404B** when prompted to receive the special discounted rate.

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



## Mack Boring Teaches Women-only Diesel Engine Seminar in New Jersey— April 4th-5th, 2009



As any boater knows, having a well-maintained engine not only gives peace of mind while boating but can be a critical factor in an on-the-water emergency. So when women, especially sailors, wonder what are the critical parts of a diesel engine, how do they work together and how should they be maintained, one weekend at the Mack Boring Technical Center in Union, NJ, provided the answers.

The women's diesel engine seminar, organized by the National Women's



Sailing Association (NWSA), combined practical classroom/workbook time and hands-on applied engine time where the women got to physically work on an engine similar to the one in their boat. Participants for this class came from New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and McLean, VA.

"I used to assume you just turn the engine on and it goes," said one participant. After a harrowing experience alone on her local waterway, she decid-



ed to take a class which would help her avoid getting into this situation again.

The April 4-5 seminar covered engine lubrication, the electrical and cooling systems, how to service and maintain your engine, winterizing, and more. The types of tools needed to repair an engine were also covered, as well as how to access your engine and fuel systems, plus understanding your service manual. Each participant was assigned to an engine similar to her own. The class was geared toward those who haven't had much prior experience with diesel engines, and there was plenty of time for questions and answers.

"My husband took this course 10 years ago and he has since said it was the best investment we've ever made. So now, I'm taking it!" said Leslie Owen, from Pennsylvania.

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## Women's Sailing Conference - Marblehead - June



### FOG

By Gilbert W. Buffery

I strain my eyes, I poke along  
I jump at every horn or gong  
And dimly off the starboard bow  
I swear I see young Sinbad's dhow  
If not a dhow a Nile Ibex  
Or are my eyes just playing tricks  
In the fog

Fierce Norsemen with their yellow hair  
In dragon ships are hiding there  
With muffled oars on the water  
Each of them intent on slaughter  
Their battle axes thirst to bite  
My silver locks and part them right  
In the fog

You hear the surf but I say no  
'Tis ghostly sounds from long ago  
Well hidden by the swirling gloom  
Is cutlass slash and cannon boom  
Amashing down old Port-of-Spain  
So Morgan can his treasure gain  
In the fog

Ol' George he got the Hessian's goat  
At Trenton in small row boat  
In the fog  
And did not Drake all England rid  
Of the Armada and Madrid  
In the fog  
It seems quite logical to me  
But poets oft' are lost at sea  
In the fog



### Sea women...Listen Up!

By Renee R. Graham, first-time Conference attendee

On our 25th wedding anniversary, my husband surprised me with a 25-foot Catalina even though our combined sailing experience categorized us as rookies. A few years later I asked him blankly, if you get thrown overboard, what do I do? For our 30th anniversary, he surprised me with a one-day sailing conference for women. He obviously didn't like the thought of drowning.

The fair maidens of the NWSA conference were sea lovers and seasoned mariners with a rich flow of knowledge. Well-travelled sailors shared stories and taught classes while newcomers listened and learned. No one felt intimidated. As in all things, to be a good sailor you need experience, skill, and confidence. Practice makes perfect.

This was an informative, laid back conference, and I plan to return. My journal notes: Be proactive. Learn how things work. Know where things are. Know what to do when there's an emergency. On our 35th anniversary, I plan to sail my dear captain around the lake and save him if he falls overboard. Confidence is a beautiful thing, and so are those well-appointed 35 footers!

## President's Letter - Cont'd

cating with our membership and getting feedback as well. Reach out to us, and we will respond. I admit we've been quiet since June. That's because we're all out sailing. Soon the board will be "back in session" to nail down our 2010 programs.

Hope your summer has provided time on the water, and that NWSA has contributed to your enjoyment of sailing.

*Joan Thayer*



## Making Changes Come About - Cont'd

**Offshore Sailing School** has been hosting You Can Sail Escape for Women for several years. Participating in one of Offshore's Women's Week programs is the fast track to improving skills, meeting new friends and making long term sail connections. If you are interested in improving your sailing skills in an all female learning environment, use your NWSA membership for a discount and contact Offshore Sailing School [www.offshore-sailing.com](http://www.offshore-sailing.com).

**Capt. Nancy Erley** has been signing on women to sail *Tethys* in the Pacific Northwest for years. Nancy signs on the skilled sailor and the novice. If our members are looking for the opportunity to improve sailing skills and explore locations, such as Desolation Sound in British Columbia with a confident relaxed instructor, contact Nancy, [www.tethysoffshore.com](http://www.tethysoffshore.com).

Capt. Sharon Renk-Greenlaw, owner of **Women Under Sail**, in Freeport, Maine has also been teaching women on aboard her 44' ketch, *Avatrice*, for 15 years. Sharon has also been a workshop leader at our Women's Sailing Conference in Marblehead for the past several years. We are working on a partnership with Sharon for June 2010. Contact Sharon at [www.womenundersail.com](http://www.womenundersail.com).



## Mack Boring Workshop - Cont'd

Joan Thayer, president of NWSA and a longtime sailor, who also attended the seminar, said, "I always like to be prepared." Preparation, attendees found out, is key to a successful cruise, and that preparedness starts well before you leave the dock. Another student, Monica Holmes from Brooklyn, said, "I want to know what they're doing when they service my engine."

Instructor Larry Berlin has been teaching diesel workshops at Mack Boring since 1974. When asked what the difference is between teaching women and teaching men, Larry replied with a smile, "The men don't listen."

Larry will be teaching the same workshop in Marlborough, MA, March 13-14, 2010.

*Excerpts from writer Colleen Halverson of BoatU.S.*



## Profile Gail Hine - Cont'd

Gail was the 3rd recipient of the BoatU.S. and NWSA co-sponsored Leadership in Women's Sailing Award in 2001. In that same year, Gail became a member of the Board of NWSA. She provides the graphics and design services for NWSA and this newsletter. We are very proud to have this legendary and celebrated women's sailing mentor in NWSA.



**Time to rejoin NWSA.**  
Just go to our website at [www.womensailing.org](http://www.womensailing.org).  
Click on the membership balloon on the left of the home page and follow that to the pdf.  
The application form will be at the bottom of the membership page.  
Fill out and please send check!  
**We want you back!**