



# Flotilla

January 2012

News and views from the Outer Harbour Centreboard Club ( [www.sailohcc.ca](http://www.sailohcc.ca) )

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Thanks for the contributions in this issue: Peter Brayshaw, Jurgen Braunohler, Ralph Drake, Alan Hall and Adam Nicholson

Deadline for the next issue: **Wednesday, 14 March.**

The address is at the top of this page, and for heaven's sake, gitt yer words in on time — or before!

If you send an e-mail story to [writeme@kenelliott.ca](mailto:writeme@kenelliott.ca) please back it up with a call to: (416) 363-2974

## 2012 OHCC Executive

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## Commodore's Comments

I HOPE that everyone had a very enjoyable Christmas and a great holiday season, and I would like to thank everyone who contributed their time and efforts to our club's successful program last year.

Our facilities are now closed and our floating docks are stored on dry land until next season. A significant turnout by our members back in mid-October ensured that the yard was reconfigured for the winter. After the docks came out, our OHCC Annual General Meeting was held to update our members on current matters, membership, finances and so on, and to elect the OHCC Executive for the coming year. This was unanimously re-elected except for the following changes:

- a) Adam Nicholson was elected Rear Commodore;
- b) Katy and David Molyneux are now our Membership Secretaries;
- c) Dave Ross was elected Yardmaster.

Special thanks are due to those retiring from the executive: Bernie Bieber, Doug Gordon and John Reynolds for their contributions to our executive.

Our clubhouse is now boarded up and all equipment is stored and winterized.

The 39th OHCC Annual Dinner Dance was held at The National Yacht Club in November 2011. Bernie Bieber (Rear Commodore) once

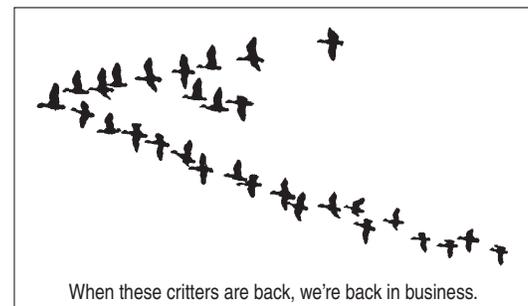
again did an excellent job presenting the yearly awards and John Reynolds helped with the event.

We will continue to offer a full, learn-to-sail program for kids and youth, working in conjunction with Toronto Sailing and Canoe Club. We will be able to provide learn to sail programs all summer long for youngsters from seven to 17 years of age. The Kids/Youth camps will range from Learn to Sail, White Sail up to Gold Sail. If you are interested, please contact Allan Hall 416 571-9105 for further details.

Our Executive met last month and we have already started planning the 2012 season. We will continue to work during the winter to determine what improvements are necessary to maintain the high standard of our club's grounds, facilities and programs. Those programs and infrastructure maintenance can only be achieved through the volunteer commitment by all of our members.

I look forward to another year of enjoyable sailing.

**Ralph Drake, Commodore**



When these critters are back, we're back in business.

Drawing: Roger Tory Peterson

## Vice Commodore's Report

**I**T IS amazing that as time goes on, history repeats itself again and again — despite the negotiations with the City, we *still* do not have a lease for our waterfront premises, providing us with some security of tenure. Until a new plan for the Portlands is published, we are unlikely to obtain one.

Waterfront Toronto (WT) and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority held a joint (and packed) public meeting at the Toronto Reference Library on 14 December, 2011. This was to look for new ideas to accelerate progress in developing the Portlands and appeared to be related to the City's recent unsuccessful attempt to take back control of development from WT. I offer a big thank you to members who attended the meeting and wearing their yellow jerseys. The CEO of WT spent some time in extolling the virtues of their achievements: wave decks, large commercial buildings on the edge of the Inner Harbour, parks where the main ingredient is concrete. He went on to estimate that the time to complete their planned development would be eight to ten years; and he advised that a new Stakeholders Committee was to be formed. A City Official responded and estimated that at the present rate of progress it would take some thirty years before the Portlands were developed, therefore there was need to accelerate progress.

Our site, as shown on WT's map, is part of their planning area. It became clear that the area of the Portlands North of the Ship Channel was in a flood plain area and that major development was dependant on the flood control plan for the

Don River being implemented. Finance appears to be the main impediment to the latter and while profits from WT's existing projects were to be ploughed back to cover future development costs and maintaining their bureaucracy, there was no clear source of funds for the massive costs of the planned Don/Keating flood diversion into the man made marsh.

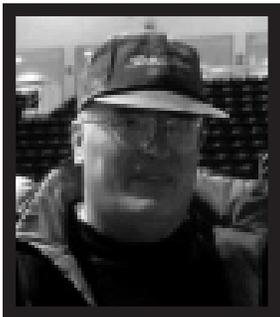
Answers to questions covering the Lake Ontario Park Plan, the security of tenure of the boating clubs (us) and access to the water were vague or non committal.

The only area of the Portlands not dependant on the flood control plan is the area south of the Ship Channel, that is the land immediately north and south of Unwin Avenue. In my opinion we can therefore expect to see some adjacent and near term development which could materially effect our existence.

The Outer Harbour Sailing Federation, our landlord and of which we are a member, held a meeting on 19 December to consider matters and it was decided that each club would act independently and attempt to get one of its members elected to the 30-member Stakeholders' Committee, which will hold its first meeting in January. The objective of the Stakeholders Committee is to provide input into the new Portlands Plan which is to be presented to the City Council in June/July, 2012.

In summary, it appears that all the efforts that all our members made a few years ago: attending Lake Ontario Park Stakeholders' Meetings, wearing their yellow jerseys, holding show-and-tell days, talking to politicians and so on, may have to be repeated all over again.

**Peter Brayshaw**



## Peter George Vasoff

**W**ITH great sadness, we announce the passing of Peter Vasoff at his home after a brief illness on October 26th at the age of 60. Beloved son of Olga and George Vasoff, cousin of John Oseida, dear friend of Rosemary Helmer, and former student of Pickering College. Peter will be greatly missed by his adoptive family at the St. James Town Sailing Club in Toronto where he was a member for the past 35 years. Internment services were held at the Mount Pleasant Cemetery in Toronto, on November 26th, followed by Celebration of Life service at Toronto Sailing and Canoe Club. Donations were made to Pickering College, Newmarket.

### A Tribute

St. Jamestown has advised Peter's family that they have created a new award, the Peter Vasoff Race Management Trophy to be presented to the

club member demonstrating excellence in Race Management. As we all know Peter was an excellent race manager whose skills were often called upon by the member clubs of the Outer Harbour Sailing Federation, the Lake Sailing Skiff Association, the Canadian Albacore Association, the Canadian Yachting Association and the Canadian Olympic Regatta Kingston. Peter will be sorely missed the next time the starting signal sounds but likely standing by in spirit.

Anere is a Tribute from St Michael's Major's Hockey Club in Mississauga:

After hearing the news of Peter's death, the Majors paid him a tribute and held a moment of silence just prior to their first game last year. The Majors commented:

"Peter Vasoff has been a strong supporter of, and will be greatly missed by, the team, staff and fans of the Mississauga St. Michael's Majors hockey club. 'Pistol Pete's' puck toss winning record will forever remain a legend of our organization."

## Youth Sail

**Y**OUR executive, volunteers and external organizations have begun planning next year's Youth Sailing Program. Recently Don Haddow, a fellow OHCC member volunteer and I, met with Navy League Branch representatives from the GTA to encourage their participation in our Youth Sailing program. I introduced Don to the Navy League Cadet (NLC) Youth Sailing parent representative, Bain Chin. I met Bain at an earlier 2012 kick-off meeting with the NLC Enterprise Branch executive. Bain volunteered to lead a parents committee formed by NLC Enterprise to ensure a closer working relationship with our club as well as greater awareness and participation in the program.

The purpose of the follow-up meeting was to offer the same program that we have been running with NLC Enterprise to other Toronto area corps in the Ontario Division of Navy League Canada. This increases the number of potential sailors by working with the executive administrators and commanding officers from five branches of Navy League and Sea Cadets.

Zoe Mulhall, president NLCC Enterprise led the meeting with Julie Giuntoli, commanding officer NLC Enterprise, providing historical context. Representatives from NLCC *Temeraire*, Mimico; and NLCC *Hawkins*, Oshawa attended the meeting with Zoe reporting an expressed interest from the two other Branch presidents representing *Ark Royal*, Toronto and *Prince of Wales*, Scarborough Corps who could not attend the meeting.

I provided an overview of the sailing program for the newcomers and relayed OHCC's interest in building on the program established by NLC Enterprise for Navy League Cadets. After two years we learned that working closely together can have advantages. For instance, we approached sponsors in the last two years who contributed up to 50% of the cost of one week's sailing lessons. This made it possible for NLC Enterprises to offer a week of subsidized sailing to their cadets that was convenient for the families taking advantage of the program. Two years ago, eight signed up and six participated. Last year, two signed up and too part. The main problem in last year's drop in attendance was a lack of awareness by parents that learning to sail was an option. NLC would like our help establishing more sailing curriculum for NLC Enterprise Cadets. We have a Mirror dinghy that could be refurbished and used to train cadets. These would benefit from another Saturday sailing event like the one we hosted in 2010, where parents and cadets got out on the water with members introducing them to sailing.

We discussed expanding the program to the

other interested corps, and offering spots to both Navy League and Sea Cadets. The program is an opportunity for youngsters to learn White Sail I, II, and III and to continue at their pace through more advanced Bronze Sail programs designed for youth ten to seventeen.

One of the ways we can work together is to include fund-raising so that more youngsters can attend the sailing school. We attempted to run a car wash, and have discussed holding a dance for all ages. Another possibility is a fund raiser at OHCC after Docks In, where cadets could spring clean club boats. The money raised in this way will go to the sailing school and build a foundation for learning to sail. It will also encourage the sponsors to do more. Our executive approached sponsors to subsidize the cost of a week of sailing lessons for each child, and so far Starbucks has provided four coffee services for an OHCC/Youth Sailing event.

I promised to do a presentation to the Ontario Division and National organizations so that they understand what we are doing and can look for ways to work together. For instance Navy League of Ontario has its own learn to sail centres. However, nine to thirteen year old Navy League Cadets can't attend. We would also like to see Sea Cadets participating in Bronze courses and they could potentially become instructors in the sailing school. We also discussed the need to understand each other's organizations including the liability, insurance and responsibility of volunteers to have CIPAC clearance if they plan to work with youngsters on an ongoing basis. Then there is the longer term challenge of building a feeder system for young sailors interested in competing at the provincial, national and international levels.

As a follow up to the meeting, Bain Chin and I visited OHCC to inspect that Mirror dinghy. We are going to follow up with the Sea Cadets to see if they have space to store it while it is repaired. Don Haddow was successful in getting a referral from the new CO at HMCS York to help NLCC Enterprise hold a billeted Parade Competition on its ship's deck. Zoe Mulhall is arranging a follow up meeting with Navy League of Ontario. Other initiatives include developing safe sailing curriculum and a manual on boat building. In that regard I will be approaching Jurgen Braunohler and Leo Savitsky, a retired navy Lieutenant and marine engineer who is a member at TSCC. This season, the bookings were done online and now that we have a new web site we can start promoting the school early in the New Year through online advertising.

It is my hope that we continue our effort to build the school and widen the outreach started with the cadets. To do that we need more hands on deck to help plan and expand what we are working on. If you want to help us boost the program, and run a sailing orientation day one weekend in the summer, -please let us know. Alan Hall

## Website 2012

**W**ORKING as ever towards our goal of creating a meeting place on the web, we will be adding features and build out the member-only area of our site.

To do that we need your input, so consider this to be your personal invitation to get involved in posting content and participating in the ongoing maintenance of the website.

For instance, you could take on the development of content of a particular class of boat — not all the dinghy classes in our club are represented; and you might want to update or revise the existing ones. Peter Benison noticed that the CL 16 and 14 profile on our web site

was dated 1990 and provided an update from the company for the web site. I will be updating our Facebook page with Navy League Cadet pictures taken during our Saturday sailing orientation day last year.

There are other possibilities: if you want to add information about racing or related topics just approach the executive and we'll set you up with the right tools and access.

So please take a look at [www.sailohcc.ca](http://www.sailohcc.ca) and email us with your ideas and suggestions. We're counting on you to make OHCC's website even better in the coming months.

Alan Hall ([alan.hall@sympatico.ca](mailto:alan.hall@sympatico.ca))

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## Rear Commodore

**W**hen you read this, the holiday season will be over, and all the dinghies will have been packed away long ago for the winter. In my opinion, we had a great sailing season last year, with many boats out on the line, and occasionally a few too many for our comfort.

As some of you are enjoying your winter activities, now is a great time to start thinking of this coming sailing season, and what your goals are. Is it to win more races? Or to move up in the fleet? Or just to know your way around the course better? There are many ways of fulfilling your goals. Remember the five P's: "Proper Preparation Prevents Poor Performance." Some of you may notice I didn't do that before the Albacore Internationals, (but hey, I got married around then!).

A tip I have is: read sailing books, and not just

those on tactics, but also tuning, and handling. Also fitness is good to work on. You don't have to be training hard for an Ironman, but walks or short runs can go a long way. I remember reading an article that said: "If you can train to pull yourself out of the side of the pool without a ladder, and you can do that ten times, three times a week, you will be able to complete a self rescue and continue sailing." Now I think that would be good to do more than just that, but at bare minimum that would be great for your safety if you were sailing by yourself. And that will probably give you something to think about through these next few months of winter.

I look forward to the coming season in being your new Rear Commodore. If you have any questions or concerns feel free to contact me.

Happy New Year!

Adam Nicholson



## Drama on the *Philadelphia*

by Jurgen Braunohler

The USS *Philadelphia*, a 36 gun frigate, had just been detached, with the schooner *Vixen*, from the American squadron in the Mediterranean in 1803. Captain Bainbridge had orders to take her inshore and blockade the harbour of Tripoli, while Commodore Preble took the rest of the ships offshore for sailing and gunnery drills. Suddenly, a cry from the lookout announced two vessels fleeing the big warship for the safety of that port. The chase was no sooner on, however, when the *Philadelphia* lurched at a drastic angle, impaled on a reef. Her cannons pointed skyward, Bainbridge had no choice but to surrender to the Tripolitan gunboats that now surrounded him.

Northern Africa had long been a haven for pirates, and the corsairs that prowled those waters routinely seized ships of all nations. Their crews and passengers were sold into slavery in the Barbary states: Morocco, Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli. The women joined harems and the men became galley slaves, chained to the oars. Those of importance were ransomed for fortunes that were passed as tribute to the Sultan of Turkey in return for the autonomy these states enjoyed.

After the American War of Independence, the United States found itself without the protection of either the British Navy or one of its own against the Barbary pirates, or a treasury big enough to pay them the yearly tribute for safe passage of American ships. But it was an attack on the US Embassy in Tripoli, the chopping down of its flagpole and declaration of war against the United States to exact more money

in 1801, that brought the *Philadelphia* and her squadron out. In fact, it was the depredations of those corsairs that swung public opinion and defeated the efforts of the peace movement opposed to creation of a navy and military adventuring.

With the impetus to rebuild the navy, six big frigates of the *Constitution* Class had just been launched, followed by the *Philadelphia* and others. Nor was this all. The legendary Commodore Preble was about to forge a generation of captains who would gain fame commanding these ships, an elite group to be known as “Preble’s Boys.” The imprisoned Bainbridge was one of them and showed the cut of his jib by smuggling a message out to the Commodore when the USS *Constitution* and the rest of the squadron arrived back on the scene. Bainbridge and his over 300 imprisoned crew did not have long to wait.

Stephen Decatur was another one of Preble’s Boys, and he was about to earn his stripes. He commanded a captured trading ketch renamed the *Intrepid* and he had orders to sneak into Tripoli at night and burn the *Philadelphia*, which the Tripolitans had floated off the reef at high tide and towed into harbour. But they did not expect a raiding party to reach the ship where it was anchored under fortress guns. Nor did they expect any raiders to sail a boat that blended in with local vessel traffic.

Seventy-five men had volunteered aboard *Intrepid*, which slowly glided in on a moonless night. Then an unexpected gust caught her topsail aback and swung the ketch broadside to the *Philadelphia*’s loaded main gun battery. The crew held their breath but the pirates standing watch suspected nothing. “We’re without anchors! Can you throw us a line?” someone on the ketch shouted in Arabic. The pirates complied. No sooner were the two ships secured together when Decatur’s armed men swarmed in, driving the pirates overboard. The *Philadelphia* was then set on fire, to such effect the crew barely got off in time. Decatur himself took a flying leap overboard and landed in *Intrepid*’s rigging. All the noise and shouting drew attention and gunfire from shore.

With her anchor cables burned through, the roaring *Philadelphia* drifted in circles and was spitting cannon fire in every direction. Meanwhile, a ship’s boat, under oars, arrived from Preble’s squadron, took the *Intrepid* in tow. The *Philadelphia* had just reached the Pasha’s castle when she blew up with an ear-splitting blast that showered the streets with flaming debris. Her crew, too, would eventually be liberated. Mission accomplished, and the little *Intrepid* got away without a single loss of life.

Drawing: Jurgen Braunohler

