



NEWS FOR PETTIPAUG YACHT CLUB MEMBERS



FORE & AFT

PETTIPAUG.COM

4TH EDITION

AUGUST 2015



Connecticut River from River Road in Deep River at sunset.

Mid-Summer at PYC

Activities are in full-swing at PYC! Check out Sandy Sanstrom's custom designed very sturdy, very whimsical new **Blue Jay Sail Shed** (photo at right). Daily and nightly, Sandy, Paul Mikulak and others have progressed the "renovation project" to the point where each of us can visualize and



anticipate the opening of the new PSA center. This edition of Fore & Aft is devoted to the dedication of Sandy and generations of others who have given so much to Pettipaug and asked so little, BRAVO!

By Priscilla Robinson, Editor

News & Updates

JULY 18TH MID-SUMMER PARTY & REGATTA

Louisiana Bayou Fete: Hosted by Event Chairman David Courant and



2015 SUMMER EVENTS

All event at PYC unless indicated otherwise.

August Races

PYC Race Chairman
kdesign@snet.net
860.395.8285

• **ONE DESIGN REGATTA**
August 22 @ 1300

FLEET CAPTAINS

Lasers: Patrick Connelly
860.463.0577

Optis: Ernst Zwikker
954.294.8332

MC Scows: Chris Moore
860.391.2040

Blue Jays: Priscilla Robinson
860.526.2775

Please contact John Kennedy if you are interested in helping with Race Committee duties.

Women's Sailing Group

Mary Risseeuw with the help of Rosie Willis, the Carlsons, Connie Brown and many others, the creole-themed Mid-Summer Party was a huge success. There was Southern-



style food and Bourbon Street fun! The food table was unmatched for quality and variety of tasty treats from cajun chili and jambalaya to freshly-fried lobster cakes (Thank you Kathy David!). Linda Shemwell, from Louisiana, officiated the dance contest by teaching the Zydeco footwork, then judging the contest. After a difficult decision Paul Mikulak and dance partner Stephanie Taylor (pictured above) were declared the winners and crowned King and Queen of the party.

Marine Tag Sale: Not as big of a success but some members walked away with great deals, like Corey Manero who purchased used but good-quality water skis for \$20. In total about \$100 was made to put towards the club's restoration projects.

Mid-Summer Handicap Regatta: With more than 17 entrees the regatta was held that afternoon before the party. The tide was low but the breeze was up propelling the MC Scows to take first, second and third place. [Click here for the Race Results.](#)

HOUSE & GROUNDS

We have made great progress on our renovation project this past month. Our new room has been framed out we can now envision what a great space this will be for our PSA program once it is complete. In addition, I am sure everyone who has come to the club has noticed our beautiful new Blue J Sail Storage Shed.

Thank you to Sandy Sandstrom (photo at right) who had the vision and skill to enhance our club grounds with this beautiful building. The entire renovation



project continues to move forward under Sandy's guidance and with help of volunteer club members, so thanks to all who have contributed thus far.

We are pleased so many are using the club this summer. Remember if you bring a boat down to PYC for the summer to let me know so we may provide you with a PYC sticker. Also, the club attendants are on duty Saturday and Sunday from 9-5. Please introduce yourself when you come down and they will be happy to help you.

Kathryn Ryan, Rear Commodore: kryan1@snet.net

MC SCOW UPDATE

Chris Moore and Bob Wynkoop attended the MC National Championship Regatta at Pewaukee Lake, WI where 93 boats competed



for three days. Chris exchanged club burgees with Pewaukee YC. He was delighted to see PYC on their flag. It will be hung in the Commodores Room.

Priscilla Robinson
probins02@snet.net
860.526.2775

• TUESDAY SAIL

@ 5 p.m. (or when you arrive) Short meeting, boat rigging, hoisting, sailing and post-race camaraderie. Please bring something to share.

• SAIL/RACE WITH MC SCOWS

Thursdays @ 5 p.m. This is a great adventure! Women can use 420s, Blue Jays or perhaps try an MC Scow. Cook-out follows sailing. WSG will contribute to this effort.

MC Scows

Bob Wynkoop
wynkoop@sbcglobal.net
860.324.4586

• MC SCOW GET TOGETHER

Thursday evenings @ 5p

• NOR'EASTER REGATTA

Aug. 22-23

Keuka Lake, NY

Powerboat Courses

Paul Risseeuw
prisseeuw@aol.com
860.767.1995

• Aug. 2, 17, 18, 19, 20

• Sept. 5

(All classes start at 0830)

PYC Ship's Store

Marian Carson
Lcarson5@comcast.net
860.767.1929



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**Marilou Griswold, Linda Shemwell, Diane Chodkowski,
Priscilla Robinson, Kathryn Ryan and Laura Nunno**

Photo by Jeff Brainard

WOMEN'S SAILING GROUP AT PYC TAKES TO THE RACES!

This is an exciting summer season for WSG. We have 19 members with 95% attending on a weekly basis and many sailing on their own or with our brother group the Mc Scows on Thursday evenings. Stephanie Taylor, Marilou Griswold, Laura Nunno and new members Beth Mishler and Diane Chodkowski have stepped up to the plate and participated in both the One Design and Mid-summer Handicap Regattas. Both Laura and Stephanie have represented WSG on the PYC Race Committee and crewed on The Round The Buoy races on the Sound. Kudos to Linda Shemwell, Marianne McAllister, Katheryn Ryan, Sara Dubois and Sue Watts for patiently and generously sharing their skills and talent with us. Many of us would be stranded without the faithful and formable safety boat crew ... Mary Risseeuw and Rosie Willis. Each member of WSG brings her special talent on the water and when the last sail is neatly folded, the camaraderie and cuisine begins!

Meet the Members

WHERE HAVE ALL THE COWBOYS GONE?

My dad designed bridges at his office in Hartford. Each weeknight during the summer months he would make the trek to our summer cottage situated smack on the water in Branford. There, waiting for him was his youngest daughter, me, (he called me Shush ... go figure?) After swapping out his seersucker wear for a bathing suit ... off we would swim around a few of the small Islands. My dad never let me beat him until I could. For a few summers I was addicted to swimming and to Westerns. About twenty-five men reported to my father. They were engineers by day but come Friday afternoon they were weekend cowboys. They helped build one another's homes, fixed other people's boats and most anything else that needed repairing.

Many were quiet men. They respected each other, liked women, appeared to be good husbands and were cherished fathers. There was always a big hand available for a little kid to hold onto. They used their initiative and many innate talents to get things done; simply, quietly and correctly. Accolades were few ...

their achievements ample. They had the strength of character and courage to save lives and never discuss bravery nor pain that war had inevitably brought to them and their families. These were men you could count on ... men who were always there for the round-up.

Where is my John Wayne?
Where is my prairie sun?
Where is my happy ending?
Where have all the cowboys gone?

Written by Paula Cole

Cowboys have passed through each of our lives. We are fortunate as members of Pettipaug Yacht Club to still have so many amongst us. Nope, they don't wear Stetson's or strut around the grounds. They are too busy making things work, keeping things in order ... on the water, on the roof, on the computer. There seems to be a legacy of this type of fellowship that has permeated Pettipaug since its conception, and perhaps the reason why PYC continues to sustain its spirit. We are so very fortunate. These are great men who don't wary or whine ... they are our lucky stars that we have been able to count on. Since 1934, generations of family members have contributed their vigor, followed their moral compass and endured a love for Pettipaug Yacht Club. We, as 2015 members, are the beneficiaries of their vision and commitment.

Priscilla Robinson, editor

These are the four questions asked of this month's "Meet the Members."

Q1: Many of you have been long-time members of Pettipaug Yacht Club. Please tell us how long you've belonged and how you found this gem of a spot.

Q2: Please share a little about your background , your vocation and avocations, where you have previously lived and where you are presently living. Do you still spend time at Pettipaug?

Q3: Do you sail/powerboat out of Pettipaug? Please share an experience that you can't quite get out of your mind.

Q4: If you have a special summer from your youth that is reminiscent of a Pettipaug experience, please share that, or if you are a newer member, tells us what makes Pettipaug special to you, your family and your summer.

Sandy Sanstrom

Past Commodore 2004/05
PYC Board Member



I have spent the last few weeks working on

I have spent the last few weeks working on the club rehab project with a good group of people who have given the spare time they have to make improvements to our facilities.



The reason I spend so much time keeping PYC in repair was brought home to me this week when a tall young man walked by me and said "Hello Sandy", I didn't recognize him and had to ask one of the instructors who the person was. Miles Gibbs was the answer. Wow... a few years ago Miles was a PSA student, a normal boy who always had one foot in the mischief mud. Now he was a tall adult. Polite, poised, and self-confident. We caught up for a moment, he had just returned from a year studying engineering in Germany and interning for a major international electronics firm. He has a plan and will do great things.

This started me tripping down memory lane, reviewing a big group of PSA students whom I had watched grow up sailing and becoming instructors, and the changes that I had witnessed. From one summer to the next the best of them would suddenly get "it". A new maturity, a new work ethic, a new bearing; respect for the job, their coworkers, and their students. You knew they were going to succeed in life; they had drive and were on a path. They had gained "it".

I can't say that they wouldn't have done just fine without the sailing academy, but it always feels good to see the success and think that PSA and sailing had some small part in their formation. This year there are several instructors and a few students who are heading in the right direction. Fixing all the worn out stuff and making changes to the building so that the academy can be better will enable more youngsters to find their "it". How cool is that!

Paul Mikulak has been one of the folk who has been working with me on the club and he has started a Haiku battle with me. This prompted the following which expresses my beliefs about the project:

*good works... flow like waves
upon the fabric of youth
break on unknown shores.*

Cameron Taylor

Past Commodore 2010/11

Q1: My wife Stephanie and I have been members since 2007. I first discovered PYC when looking for a location to landscape paint. Then Stephanie and I explored the area in my dory and her kayak. The big opportunity came during a RiverQuest cruise with



owners Mark and Mindy Yuknat. They gave us the skinny on the club and how to become members. They even offered to be our sponsors. (Thank you Mark and Mindy!)

Q2: I'm a graphic designer. I later found out that having computer skills was the only reason I was asked in 2008 to join the Board and become an officer. (I thought it was my cheerful personality.) They needed someone to update the club's website. I've been the webmaster and graphics guy ever since.

My wife and I live in Deep River moving from North Haven in 1999. And yes, we still enjoy the club, especially at cocktail hour.

Q3: We have sailed at PYC though presently we only own a kayak. (Sadly, my beloved Gloucester dory, after many resurrections from the grave, succumbed to dry rot.)

My greatest boating experience was sailing as crew from the Azores to Bermuda on a 39' ketch with five others. The twenty-day sail in July 1984 was pretty much on one tack. We experienced two tropical storms, two becalmings, and almost collided with another sailboat and a whale (not at the same time). I survived (barely) the adventure without considering mutiny or being thrown overboard or getting seasick. Would I do it again? Yes, but the accommodations would have to improve, like Cunard's QMII.

Q4: Starting when I was 12 my family for several summers spent two weeks at different cottages on Twin Lakes in northwestern Connecticut. We would rent a small boat with a 3-hp outboard and I became the local hero (meaning just to my family) by rescuing larger boats that had engine problems or ran out of fuel. PYC with its lake-like setting and rustic charm brings back memories of those wonderful and formative summers.

Paul Mikulak

PYC Board Member



Q1: I believe I joined in 2011, Cameron Taylor was Commodore. I joined Shoreline Sailing Club under the assumption that I would learn how to sail. Well, I had mentioned my frustration with my

assumption to a fellow member, Norm. He recommended that I give Pettipaug a look-see.

Q2: I have always wanted to sail since my service in the Coast Guard in the 1980s. However, as an enlisted Damage Controlman, I had limited exposure to navigation and boat-handling. After the Coast Guard, I received my Civil Engineering Degree from UCONN and began my career at the ConnDOT, where I am a Project Manager of Construction Projects. I raised a family in Marlborough. However, after a life change, I moved to Deep River. Yes.

Q3: I learned to sail from Thursday (and Thursday) with Mike and

Q3: I learned how to sail from Tuesday (and Thursday) with Linda. I was working nights on the I-95 Barrier installation project in Niantic at the time. Linda Shemwell generously offered her time and talent taking me out on the *Cherry Bomb* – her Blue Jay on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons throughout that summer. Our worst sail was being stuck in the horse latitudes and having to paddle back to Pettipaug with boogie-boards. However, our best sail took us up to Deep River Landing, where we saw a long sought after sighting of a bald eagle and then this crazy seagull with its butt in the air and barely keeping its head above water as it paddled its way to the shore with an oversized fish in its beak. The seagull was accompanied by a cormorant waiting for an opportunity. Then, as we sat sharing a cocktail at the club after putting the *Cherry Bomb* away, a hummingbird hovered up to within 5 feet of us in the rocking chairs.

Q4: Pettipaug is a treasure greater than anything supposedly buried by Blackbeard in this area. Pettipaug's location on the shore of a International Heritage Site; the lower Connecticut River is incredible enough. But, it is the camaraderie of Pettipaug members that brings it to life. And the sight of sailboats from the Sailing Academy or racing one in the regattas is why I volunteer my time to keep Pettipaug the quaint gem that it is.

P.O. Box 372, Essex, CT 06426 | Editor: Priscilla Robinson | Layout: Cameron Taylor



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