

Gal' Warnings

COMMODORE'S QUARTERS



By Patti Eagan

Saturday, May 20 will be "Introduction to WSA Day". Vice Commadore and Daysail Chair Laura Guggenheimer is organizing this event. It is designed to let the community know how much WSA has to offer - it is also the perfect way to get new members psyched to join our group! The day starts at SCCYC with talks by our race, daysail and cruise programs. We then go to the dock to get a brief talk on the fundamentals of sailing. Everyone who has paid up their membership and signed a waiver can then participate in a daysail. WSA is really one of the best-kept secrets for great sailing in Marina del Rey - it's time to get the word out to others!

Laura could really use some help with this event. Volunteers please contact her at Laura.guggenheimer@gmail.com if you can help.



2005 WOW winners Barbara Duker and Stine Cacavas share their secrets to success at the April 2006 meeting

May 9 Speaker:

Yumio Dornberg on downwind trim

Social Hour 6:30, Business Mtg 7:30, Speaker 8pm

June 13: SUMMER PARTY

Cruise News

By Fran Weber-Melville

- **May 19-21:**
Catalina: Avalon on May 19 - 21
- **June 10-11:**
Catalina Harbor

The cruise to Avalon May 19-20th needs a bit of help from the WSA skippers!!!

Our cruise to Avalon in May needs a bit of support from our skippers...we have interested crew but the boats to carry the party animals over are a bit scarce!! Please contact me asap if you are planning on going on the cruise and how many party animals you are willing to house for the weekend...For life planning reasons, we need to have the boat

assignments made by the May meeting. Skippers can either call me at 310 738-3205 or email me at cptfran@aol.com!!!

Volunteers needed for the Boys and Girls club youth sailing program

Don't forget the Boys and Girls club sailing program volunteer program

If you have some time during the week on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday from about 2:30 to 5:30 and can volunteer to help with the boys and girls club junior sailing program, the

program could use some help. Also, there is the opportunity to volunteer during the summer for the summer sailing program in Mothers Beach! Most of the kids come from challenging home life and have never even seen the beach even though they live in Venice. You have the chance to play a big part in changing the lives of these youngsters and probably take away far more than you give...just one of those kids smiling as they sail the boat from the shore is enough to steal your heart away! If you need more information regarding the program just contact me, Fran Weber-Melville 310 738-3205 or cptfran@aol.com.

Skipper's Meeting

There will be a meeting of all WSA *skippers* (*only skippers!*) on Tuesday May 16, 2006, from 7-9pm at South Coast Corinthian Yacht Club (13445 Mindanao Way). Please let me know if you have any items you would like to discuss with your fellow skippers, and I'll be glad to put it on the meeting agenda! *Please RSVP your attendance to: Marianne Liggett, WSA Skipper's Liason* (Email: mligg@sbcglobal.net telephone: 818-222-6703 or 818-590-8460)



Member spotlight: Marla Forrest

By Sue Service

Each month I'll be profiling one of our members. I thought this might be a good way for us to learn more about the people that make our club great!

Marla Forrest (member #784) has been a WSA member for about 2 years now. She is from the SF Bay area, and has been sailing for 25+ years. Marla enjoys all aspects of sailing: racing, daysails, cruising, she does it all! She is racing in the Newport-Ensenada race this year with Fred Young, on his Schock 35 *Perfect Circle*. When asked what she enjoys most about WSA she didn't hesitate to say "the monthly programs". Marla believes that WSA is well-respected in the local sailing community for the quality of our speakers!



Wanna Race?

By Kim Stuart

Racing News for the WSA, spring 06

April 10th marked a cloudy start to the first WSA race clinic scheduled for 2006. SMWYC was host to a number of interested skippers and crew, and the topic was split between Introductory Racing and Sunset Series strategy.

Marylyn Hoenemyer and Art Engel joined the seminar as representatives of CYC. Marylyn's pointers on tactics and etiquette, coupled with Art's succinct and easily understandable explanation of rules changes, made for an interesting morning in the classroom. Start line strategy, continuous obstructions, faux pas like barging the committee boat, these were all covered by our speakers.

After a short break for lunch and boat rigging, followed by a bit of delay with the committee boat at the gas dock (yours truly was on board urging Alex Perez and Larry K from SMWYC to move it along, I can assure you), the starting line was setup and the first of four practice start sequences began. Luckily in

practice the rule concerning outside help is relaxed, since some of our teams had issues remembering the format for the practice (and the PRO didn't think to print out instructions just as if it were a race, lol) and radio'd in for instructions.



Aqua Cheetah flying the spinnaker. Does it rock any harder than this?

Buoy maintenance is a very time consuming part of the ASMBYC's program from what I have seen. Buoys disappear – SS went off on vacation this winter and had to be replaced just in time for Sunset Series, other ones come to visit without invitation – a white spar floating horizontally in the water -- floating in the perfect spot to hole an unwary mariner in the dark – and all the while most of us in the marina don't realize just what kind of work it takes to keep them all in place and on station.

So with the SS buoy missing on Sunday, we had to call the race on a preset course that really wasn't all that friendly with the wind. The choice to square up to the mark and skew the line seemed like the right one – until we realized the committee boat was drifting and starting to drift more quickly. What a great time we all had watching each race boat try to keep up with a moving target of a start line!

We re-set the line after the second practice, and actually managed to hook the prop with the anchor rode --- the only thing we caught on that anchor all day! The good natured teams, including Wayne Brandow's *Aqua Cheetah*, Marylyn's *Blarney* and Jennea Jordan's *Chekkers*, didn't complain about the line moving but worked right with it.



Blarney jockeys for position at the start

On the fifth sequence, we ran a practice race to S mark and back. While waterline and ratings suggested that *Aqua Cheetah* would take the honors, the all girls Martin 242 with Marylyn driving sped away from the competition and didn't look back. And speaking of girls, almost all the boats were all girls – Wayne of course gets an “honorary girl pass” since he's very kind and generous with his time and his boat to help out with ladies sailing events. Anyone whose got the opportunity to sail with Wayne, whether it's a daysail or a racing practice event should most definitely take him up on the offer. His boat is fast, he's patient and knowledgeable and likes to pass his skills on to others.



Kim and Alex teaching that mark who is boss

In closing, a heartfelt thanks for SMWYC, Art and Marylyn, Alex and Larry, as well as the participants who came out to practice and learn on what seemed to be a rainy day in the making, but actually became a sunny afternoon filled with fun and learning! Any skippers with boats that are looking for crew, or crew that are looking for rides, by all means drop me a line – kim.stuart@comcast.net or booyaaracing@comcast.net – and I'll be happy to mention it in email updates.

Cruising Belize

By Betsy Lindsley

Amazing winds, warm water, gorgeous fish, pristine cays--we've just been to Belize, of course. During the last days of March, Susan Bonner and Betsy Lindsley plus friends from Fairwind YC, Captain Dick Gross and his wife Niva Oghigian, First Mate Mark Zyga and his friend Maria Marin, and Gus and Gusta van Driel, spent a fantastic ten days in this island paradise.

Since none of us had seen this beautiful country before, we decided to arrive three days early and do a bit of sight-seeing before picking up our boat. We flew by American Airlines from LAX (via Dallas) to Belize City, the former capital and largest city, and then took a Tropic Air puddle jumper to Placencia, the little port town where we were to pick up our boat from Moorings.



Susan Bonner beside beautiful turquoise waters

Placencia is located on a 15 mile long peninsula on the southern coast, with the gorgeous Caribbean to the east and a narrow lagoon to the west. We stayed next to the Moorings HQ for three days--some of us in the charming Dianni's guest house, some in posher beach cabanas. There were cute restaurants (one where you could throw horseshoes while waiting), good bars and brews (like rum punch & the local beer, Belikan), reggae dancing, and the friendly handsome locals. The people

spoke a lilting English to us (Belize is the former British Honduras, and they all learn English in school), but among each other they speak (if they were of African descent) a patois they call creole, or one of three different Mayan languages (if they're Mayan) or Spanish (if they're immigrants from the north). Plus you can see the occasional Mennonite and a slew of Anglo ex-pats. Real estate is booming in the area as people discover this wee bit of paradise and put up their cottages on stilts (beware storms and hurricanes!).



Dinner on the catamaran

Day one of our sight-seeing was a super trip up the Monkey River in a boat and a walk in the jungle. Our guide, Percy, was an amazing naturalist who grew up in the area, and he pointed out things we never would have found ourselves: iguanas, alligators, gorgeous birds (white herons, toucans, egrets, cormorants, kingfishers) termite houses, spiders and, of course, monkeys! Percy pounded on a tree with his machete and howled challenging monkey calls until a male "howler monkey" howled back at him. Percy also was a fountain of lore about what he calls "jungle medicine" and showed us plants to heal everything from heart disease to cancer to impotence.

On day two most of us went on a Mayan ruins tour. The big Mayan ruins are up north on the Yucatan peninsula, but late Mayan civilization extended down in southern Belize,

where we were, and there are some less imposing but fascinating monuments. The long drive to the area took us winding upwards through high jungle and Mayan villages of thatched huts on stilts with cute naked children playing in front. First we went to Nim Li Punit, where 25 stelae have been found (ceremonial slabs of stone with hieroglyphic carving), as well as a royal grave. Our Mayan guide was good at translating the hieroglyphics on the stelae. Then we on to Lubaantun, which is noted for its temple walls which fit intricately together without mortar. More forbidding are the large ball courts, where ritual games were played with a large, solid rubber ball - and the lucky winner (according to our guide) got to be sacrificed.

After a final day of exploring Placencia on Saturday, we moved aboard our luxurious 45' catamaran. We went in for a navigation briefing, and were reminded of a sobering aspect of sailing in Belize: the *good* part is: there are dependable prevailing winds, usually out of the east, and the inner waters are protected from big incoming seas by the great barrier reef that runs 200 miles up the coast (we weren't allowed beyond the reef). The *tricky* part is the charts: the only real ones are 150 year old British Admiralty charts which Moorings didn't even want to give us. The only guidance you have is a very good "Cruising Guide to Belize and Mexico's Caribbean Coast" by Freya Rauscher, with hand-drawn maps and good notations about routes and harbors--but it hasn't been revised for 13 years. So our orientation fellow (Shannon), while recommending good anchorages, would say things like "You can't take this entrance to Pelican Cays any more because it no longer exists since the storm of...".

The waypoints one could obtain from Rauscher's coordinates were very approximate, but fortunately Dick had gleaned key waypoints from Google Earth. The main

recommendations Moorings had were: do a lot of eyeball sailing, be sure to anchor by about 3:30, keep the light behind you in tricky areas, watch for reefs (brown) and shallows (light blue). The depths can go from 100' to zero in a New York minute. No ATON's. Two deep (70-120') channels, the Inner Channel and Victoria Channel run in between and parallel to the mainland and the barrier reef; otherwise one wends one's way carefully through minor channels and sudden shallow passageways with rocks and reefs.



Betsy on the catamaran's trampoline

As a send-off, a rainy storm blew through the night before we left, so Moorings had us anchor off shore so we wouldn't get banged up on the dock. Our plan was to go north from Placencia to the Pelican Cays (about 18 km) for the first night, and then to work our way south, cay-hopping, sailing, snorkeling. However to get there, we found ourselves in the storm's remnants, beating directly into a 20 km norther with rough seas, so we turned on the iron horse. However for the rest of the trip the prevailing winds (15-20km) and weather were super.

Every cay was more beautiful than the last. Buttonwood, our second night's destination, was a gem: tiny, very white sand and palm trees, with a reef encircling the east side, offering our first day of excellent snorkeling, with so many fish of brilliant colors. The Queen Cays, our third anchorage, were three

lovely little islands in blue, blue water with even better snorkeling – as well as being one of only two places where Moorings had put in (four) mooring balls. Ranguana Cay, our next stop, is a popular fisherman's base where a local entrepreneur has set up some thatched cabanas where you can eat the catches of the day and drink Belize Mayan. Naturally this was a night to dine ashore.

Our southernmost stop was Nicholas Cay, where the snorkeling was perhaps best of all. It's right next to the barrier reef, and you can see the waves crashing over the reef while enjoying the calm, warm waters on the inside, with huge schools of fish, rainbow colors, manta rays, gardens of coral to caress carefully. Anchoring proved a bit tricky here, but Susan's driving, and our gentlemen's expertise laying two anchors prevailed. The greatest anchoring adventure was the last night, in Seal Cay, where two anchors were recommended but very hard to set. Mark kept diving down to check things out. The secondary (a Bruce) was finally set on a shelf with a steep drop off while the primary (a CQR) was insecurely set and depending on the longer chain rode. We all marked our GPS's and checked for movement every time we woke up in the night!

Our final day, from Seal Cay north and back to Placencia, was memorable sailing: 20-25 km of steady wind, and that catamaran flew! A great way to end a great trip of good boating, drinking, dancing on tables, playing scrabble, snorkeling, and eating. We recommend this trip!

Chekkers gets ready for Sunset Series

By Karen Kuchel

Jeannea Jordan and crew are planning to race *Chekkers* in the 2006 Sunset Series, in the cruising division. These photos document the process of getting ready!



Jeannea and her tactician Sam review strategy



Chekkers is protected by Watiki, the goddess of women sailors



New numbers on the mainsail so the race committee can score the winning finishes!

Upcoming Calendar of Events

May 2006

6-7 Sat/Sun	Yachting Cup – San Diego YC
6 th Sat	Baker Series Regatta – WOW/WAH warmup (MVYC/SBYRC/WSA)
9 th Tues	WSA general meeting SMWYC: Yumio Dornberg on downwind sail trim
13 th Sat	Berger race #3 to Pt. Dume DRYC
13 th Sat	Santa Monica Bay Race DRYC/SMWYC
16 May Tues	WSA Skipper's Meeting, SCCYC 7-9 pm
19 th Friday	Sundown Series starts DRYC
20 th Sat	Introduction to WSA – dockside at SCCYC and then on the water with a daysail!
19-21 Fri-Sun	WSA cruise to Avalon
23 rd Tues	WSA Board Meeting: SMWYC

...June 2006

3-4 Sat/Sun	Cal Race Week – CYC
10 th -11 th Sat/Sun	WSA Cruise to Cat Harbor
10 th Sat	Berger Series #4: MdR to Cat Harbor – DRYC
11 th Sun	Berger Series #5: Eagle Rock to MdR – DRYC
13 th Tues	WSA General Meeting – SUMMER PARTY - SMWYC
16 th Fri	Sundown Series – DRYC
17 th Sat	Start Clinic – SBYRC
23-25 Fri-Sun	Long Beach Race Week – LBYC/ABYC

Racers – be sure to review a copy of the 2006 ASMBYC calendar – you can get a copy at <http://www.asmbyc.org>

Daysails: Daysails take place on Saturdays and Sundays, and are not listed on this calendar – contact Laura Guggenheimer (wsadaysails@gmail.com) for up to date information!

2006 WSA BOARD and COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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**WOMEN'S SAILING ASSOCIATION
Of SANTA MONICA BAY, INC.
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MISSION STATEMENT:

- To promote and support women's Sailing based on the following principles:
- To provide education opportunities;
- To provide information on gaining access to Races, cruises and other Santa Monica Bay activities;
- To support "Youth in Sailing" community Service programs;
- To Support established sailing programs For women; and
- To enhance networking opportunities.

<http://www.wsasmb.org>.....Women's Sailing Assoc of Santa Monica Bay