



Dear Weekapaug Yacht Club Members,

April 22, 2019

Happy spring! Wise people have always told me to keep communications short and to the point and most of the time I do. But with this letter there is a lot to say, and I'm so excited about the coming season that, well, I just don't want to write a short letter. Instead, I'm going to structure this long letter so you can get top level information with the first and last sections, additional details by reading the "Exciting & New" section, and then, if you are still with me, you can dive down into the weeds for season-specifics in the "Details & More" section. We have heard your feedback and we have made a lot of changes this year to what we do and how we do it.

Important Details and Dates

Online registration for 2019 Weekapaug Yacht Club memberships and programs will open on Wednesday, May 1, 2019.

Weekapaug Yacht Club will offer programs and activities over the course of two one-month-long sessions in July and August. The 2019 Summer Schedule will be as follows:

- July session will begin on Monday, July 1 and end on Friday, July 26, with the July Awards Dinner scheduled for Saturday, July 27.
- August session will begin on Monday, July 29 and end on Friday, August 23, with the August awards dinner on Saturday, August 24.

Yacht Club Sunday at the Weekapaug Chapel and the Blessing of the Fleet will take place on Sunday July 7th followed by the traditional cookout at the club.

Sailing programs have a new and more rigorous curriculum that will focus on developing a love for sailing. Our goal is to make it social and make it fun, but with a strong emphasis on the development of the skills and confidence that build fast sailors. All sailors will be encouraged to participate in races and regattas, but no one will be pressured to do so. When possible we plan to have sailors of various abilities on the water at the same time so they have more company when rigging and sailing to and

Top 10 Reasons to Join The Club!

1. *Rigorous and fun new sailing programs*
2. *New paddle-sports and boating center*
3. *New focus on member services and ensuring a welcoming atmosphere*
4. *Expanded social events for families, kids and adults*
5. *New camp curriculum with highly-qualified teachers*
6. *Sailing program overseen by Ted Sherman and Art Ellis*
7. *Swimming lessons with colligate coaches*
8. *Two-week memberships available*
9. *Nature tours by kayak and motorboat*
10. *New online registration – it's never been easier to join!*

from the training waters. Once on station, they will split into appropriate groups for their age and ability. Generally, beginner programs will sail in the morning, when the wind tends to be lower, and more advanced will sail in the afternoon, when the breezes freshen up. Please see the details section for specifics.

Membership levels will include the following:

- Family Membership (\$550) is a full-season membership for an adult couple and all immediate family members 26 or younger. It includes eligibility for moorings and all programs, access to the dock and dinghies, and discounted and/or no-charge access to our rental fleet.
- Patron Membership (\$200) is a full-season membership for a senior adult (60+) or a senior adult couple (2 people) who want to support the yacht club, attend the club's many social events, use rental boats and access the boat ramp.
- Associate Membership (\$250) is a full-season membership for a single adult or an adult couple who wants to race and use rental boats, and enjoys participating in the club's many social events.

Moorings will be available to all who had them last year and new members and boat owners as well. Westerly has been working out the details of its harbor management plan and there are new rules and requirements this year. All moorings in town will henceforth need to be registered with the town and approved by Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC). This will involve a \$25 application fee and then a yearly \$250 registration fee on top of the normal and historic WYC mooring fees. The mooring transfer agreements have been executed and WYC will handle the registration of the moorings. We will add the town fees onto your individual mooring rental agreement.

WYC is the gateway Quonochontaug Pond and we encourage casual boaters and non-sailors to join the club and get in on the water fun. We will be adding programs, services and membership options for all those who want to maximize fun on the water and enjoy social interaction in a nautical setting. This includes a new paddle sports and small boat center. Read on for details!

Exciting & New!

This winter our board of directors went through a five-year planning process and came to a number of important conclusions. The following points highlight year-one changes and areas of focus that I would like to share with you.

- Through the vision and planning process we developed a mission statement for the club. This statement encapsulates what the club is, what it does, for whom and what our values are.

"Our mission is to advance the love of small-boat sailing and racing and to introduce the joy of being on the water to members of all ages and abilities. Our club emphasizes water safety and a respectful and welcoming culture that promotes fair play and good fellowship as well as stewardship of the natural environment."

- WYC should be the **gateway to fun on the pond** for all of the Quonnie Pond community – sailors and non-sailors alike. To attract and serve a broader membership we are building a fleet of **kayaks, SUPs and small boats**, complete with new equipment, new racks and dedicated staff. Why bother with ownership when you can have a courteous attendant carry the craft of your choosing to the water, outfit you for your outing and then put it all away? This will be a great new resource for the community and will open up a wonderful Weekapaug asset that too many have never really had access to.
- We are determined to make the club **more welcoming and user friendly**. Board members will work with the staff to establish service standards that maintain the fun and friendly atmosphere of the club, but take it up several notches. Signs will be added to welcome members and guests and provide direction, while helpful staff will be out and about the club and not in the office.
- In our planning and review process, the board recognized that **sailing** is the central pillar that the club is built on and we are committed to producing a vibrant full-spectrum program that produces fast sailors in a fun and supportive atmosphere. To that end Ted Sherman has been officially named as **Sailing Program Director**. Ted has created new sailing class curricula that include more rigor, more drills and more thorough training of instructors. New Board member Art Ellis, who is a past Commodore of the club and an internationally recognized sailor, is assisting Ted with content, training and oversight of the programs. Both Ted and Art are long-time professional schoolteachers and coaches. Julia Haidar and Sam Johnsen will round out the management team as co-head instructors, with Julia focused on 420s and Sam on Optis. The two are experienced and well-loved instructors who passed through the ranks of the WYC program and know the ropes. All together they will manage seven instructors who will be with the kids from chalk talk, through rigging and then out on the water. The ten days before opening day will be devoted to training our instructors and staff. WYC has a proud history of sailing and we are on-course to do that heritage proud.
- **Kiddie Camp** is a tradition at the club, but a term we are trying to use less. Sure there are crafts - maybe even ones involving macaroni and white glue - but first and foremost Little Mariners and Jr. Crew will be an introduction to sailing, boats and fun on the water. Add to that water safety, engaging educational activities that explore our natural wonders and we have a program that is meaningful and engaging. In 2019 we will follow a curriculum that board member Kristin Revill helped develop and we will employ education professionals in oversight and counselor positions.
- We are also expanding the **social schedule**. Rear Commodore Brooke Horgan and her social committee will be producing the traditional favorites and adding in fun new events for families, kids and adults.
- Kate Scott is our new **club manager**. Kate has years of experience at the club and she has the spirit and experience to cheerfully and respectfully interact with club members and do the job well. This is an important first step because we want an open, positive, welcoming vibe to permeate the club and all we do. We will be looking to Kate to help lead the way. Go Kate!

- **Swimming** is such an important life skill, particularly when living around the water. I am pleased to report that this year we have two professional coaches on staff who will be conducting lessons and workshops for various ages and skill levels. We are still working out the programs, so check back when registration opens in May.
- We will offer several **guided kayak paddles** during the season and weekly **motorboat tours** of the pond – all with a nature theme.
- **New online registration** and enrollment system that is easier to use, more intuitive, and quicker because it is integrated into the WYC website.

Our overarching goal through all of this is to reinvigorate programs and align the club with contemporary interests and expectations, while delivering a traditional experience that delights club members.

Details and More

This is where you will find many specifics regarding various programs and events.

Camp:

- Camp will run in two-week increments - weeks 1 & 2; 3 & 4; 5 & 6; 7 & 8.
- Camp will utilize a curriculum developed by educators that is fun, educational and developmentally significant. It will focus on marine topics and introduction to boating.
- Coach Lena Mentyka, who is a graduate of and swimmer with American University, will head Camp. She will be joined by returning counselor Bridget Bacon-Blaber and Mya Thieme, a rising senior in the Elon University School of Education, who has completed extensive student teaching rotations.
- Little Mariners is open to children who are age 4 by start of session and Jr. Crew age 6. Most children age out of Jr. Crew by age 8, but some might advance to beginner Opti by seven, depending on instructors' evaluations of their skill and comfort level.

Sailing Classes

- As mentioned above, Ted Sherman, who has overseen the WYC sailing programs for years has been officially appointed by the Board as Sailing Program Director. For 2019 Ted has completely restructured the Opti and 420 sailing programs and instructor training.
- Former Commodore, world-class sailor and nominated Board member, Art Ellis, will assist Ted Sherman in training the sailing instructors before the season starts and coach the instructors in how make sailing fun and productive.
- The Beginning Sailing program that introduced children to sailing by riding in a Beetle has been replaced with a program that will introduce children as young as seven to sailing in Optis. The emphasis of this program will be on fun, non-competitive sailing. Children will be able to sail in an Opti with a friend.
- The Beginning Opti program will also emphasize making sailing fun for children who have some experience in previous WYC Junior Crew or Beginner Sailing

(Beetle) classes and who look forward to sailing competitively in the Intermediate and Advanced Opti classes.

- Co-Head Instructor Sam Johnsen will oversee the Opti instructors, teach in the program and will be responsible for contacting parents of children in the Opti programs on a weekly basis to give them feedback on their children’s progress.
- Intermediate and advanced Optis will get intensive coaching from Sam, Ted and Art. Our goal is to develop successful competitors who will win races and, in time, grow into our 420 programs.
- There are two fee levels for Opti classes – one with a club boat and one without.
- Replacing the Adventure A and B sailing programs is a new Beginning 420 program that will be a more structured version of the Adventure program as originally envisioned. This new class will be less competitive and will focus on skills, while making 420 sailing enjoyable and fun.
- Sailors interested in racing 420s will enroll in the 420 Advanced and Race Team program. Ted, Art and Julia have plans for them!
- Co-Head Instructor Julia Haidar will supervise the 420 instructors. Like Sam, she will be responsible for contacting parents of children in the 420 programs on a weekly basis to give them feedback on their children’s progress.
- The club will have a new smart TV set connected to the internet so Ted, Art and the instructors can show training videos to WYC sailors throughout the summer and review video of our on-the-water training sessions.

	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri
AM	Beginner Opti & Beginning Sailing 9am - 12pm 420 B 9am - 12pm	Opti Regatta All Day	Beginner Opti & Beginning Sailing 9am - 12pm 420 B 9am - 12pm	Opti Regatta All Day Adult Paddleboard 9am - 12pm	Beginner Opti & Beginning Sailing 9am - 12pm
PM	Intermediate Opti 1pm - 4pm Advanced Opti 1pm - 4pm	420 A 1pm - 4pm	Opti & 420 Races 1pm - 4pm Adult Sailing 1pm - 4pm		Intermediate Opti Advanced Opti Adult Sailing Adult Sailing 420 A 420 B All 1pm - 4pm

This is the schedule for sailing classes as planned. Please double check the website when registering as it will reflect any schedule adjustments.

Regattas

Opti regattas will take place on most Tuesdays and 420 regattas will take place on most Thursdays. The Nat Earl Regatta will be held on Tuesday July 9th and the Mary Rafferty “Girl Power” Regatta will be on Wednesday August 7th. This year WYC will host the Leo Telesmanick Beetle Cat World Championships on August 10th & 11th

Events Around the Club

Following is a simple list of the larger events planned for this summer. Of course there will also be the favorites like Bingo, movies for the kids and evening games. We will also have a variety of cocktail events for the grown-ups. Best to check the club calendar for specifics.

- Within a day or two of July 4th @ 8pm – Bonfire and fireworks viewing at the club
- Friday, July 5th @ 5pm – Kick Off to Summer Cocktails and Raw Bar - honoring commodores past and present.
- Sunday July 7th @ 11am - Blessing of the Fleet with a barbecue right after.
- August 8th @ 7:30pm– Star & Planet Party and bonfire and s'mores at the club
- July 27th @ 6pm – August awards night and potluck dinner.
- WYC and the Weekapaug Foundation for Conservation alternate years for major fundraisers. Last year we hosted the really successful Margaritapaug event. This year the Foundation has its turn, so let's all support the Foundation! WYC will be back with an exciting big event next summer.
- August 14th – Wine tasting with Helen Johannesen.
- Saturday 8/17 @5pm Sandbar Party! Flotilla down to the third pond sandbar for drinks and picnic.
- August 24th @ 5:30pm – August awards night and pot-luck dinner.

Winter Updates

The off-season wasn't really off this year – it was a winter with a lot of moving parts. If you would like to learn more, read on!

- This winter the breachway from the third pond to the ocean was dredged for the first time since it was constructed by the state in 1961. This was a joint effort by the Town of Charlestown, the State of RI, Salt Ponds Coalition and a number of other entities. The final bid came in significantly higher than expected, so the hat was passed and WYC donated \$15k to the cause. In the end, a last minute grant offset some of deficit and so all donors received a little over 30% back. The channel to the ocean is much deeper now and the flow in and out with the tides is better. This should help maintain water quality through the summers.
- Westerly is the last town in the state to develop a harbor management plan. They have been working on it for years and this is the year that it comes to fruition. The process resulted in drawn-out negotiations in which Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) sought to open the mooring fields of Weekapaug, Watch Hill and Shelter Harbor to the public. WYC and Weekapaug Fire District have worked closely on this topic and, with the extensive assistance of Rick Constantine and Richard Sherman, we developed a strategy of offering limited access (up to three moorings) in exchange for retaining significant control over the assignment and management of moorings. For now the issue seems to be resolved. WHYC and WYC will be treated like marinas and will be allowed to manage the mooring fields and assign and move around boats as our individual harbormasters see fit. As mentioned in the first section, all moorings will need to be registered with the town and yearly town fees will be charged. You don't need to do anything with the town. WYC will register the moorings, pay the fees, and then we will assign you your regular mooring and issue your complete bill.

- The board has been proactively looking at risks associated with sea-level rise and what they mean to the long-term survival of the club. Chuck Delamater has been extremely generous with his time and we have allocated moderate financial resources to establishing facts on the ground and to understanding the risks and viable strategies. Again, this is an ongoing process and one that will help ensure the club is around for generations to come.
- In late fall our building crew replaced the steps into the club. This was one of the final stages in re-building the exterior of the club – almost all of which was done by our own volunteers, with Charlie Anthony, Ted Sherman and Bill Boll leading the way. Thanks to them and the many others who have chipped in!

And a Few Final Points

This has been a busy winter behind the scenes at the club and around Weekapaug. A giant thank you to Rick Constantine and Richard Sherman for working so hard to help guide us through the Westerly harbor management process and the associated risks to our mooring field. Thank you to all the board members who lend their time and expertise to make sure we have a great club year in and year out – they earned their pay this year! That is supposed to be a bit of humor; they are volunteers, of course, so please thank them for their efforts when you see them next! And thank you to the volunteers who do so much for the club year in and year out. Please watch for additional details in upcoming communications and check dates and program details via the calendar on our website at www.WeekapaugYachtClub.com.

We look forward to seeing you around the club and on the water in just a couple of months! Until then, may fair breezes blow in a favorable direction!



Mark Bullinger, Commodore

Weekapaug Yacht Club Offices and Board Members

Commodore: Mark Bullinger
Vice Commodore: Charlie Warner
Rear Commodore: Brooke Horgan
Treasurer: Chuck Delamater
Secretary: Ted Sherman

Board Members

Bill Adams
 Bill Boll
 Charlie Anthony
 Jason Gefaell

Susan Kelly
 DeeDee Buffum
 Heather Cady
 Kristin Revill
 Art Ellis (Acting until approved at annual meeting)