

~~_/_) ~~ WRSC Important information for October 2009

Fall War this weekend – Sunday October 4th -

Registration: 10:00 a.m.

Racing: 11:00 or so.....

Invite friends

BBQ to follow racing

Important Dates

The fall clean up day is scheduled for Saturday October 17 with Sunday October 18 as an alternative rain day.

Please send a note to water.rats.commodore@sympatico.ca if you are going to help out to go against your Work or Pay hours.

Our annual AGM is on Sunday November 8 10:30 at St Jamestown sailing club as this will be warmer and more comfortable than at Toad Hall (Water Rat Sail Club).

Christmas Party

Saturday December 12th at ABYC – BOOK it off now.....as we sold out last year!

Important Issues that affect our club:

Seems that each year there are events that threaten our existence of our little sailing club, the Olympics, Expo, the Waterfront Toronto Revitalization plan with a pending move, (by the way, this has been put on the back burner because of funding, the world wide economic situation and we don't expect to be moving for about 10 or more years). This year we have been hit hard by property assessments by MPAC that implicate the property tax situation that the club has to pay the city. We are not alone by the huge tax increases as this has affected every sailing club in the Toronto area as well as community clubs. Our property tax has increased 7-fold from last year as it went from approx. \$1200 in 2008 to \$8600 in 2009 with even further increases in store for next year and the follow 2 years.

We are not taking this increase lightly and will be fighting the increases along with other sailing clubs. The Outer Harbour Sailing Federation have grouped together and employed Altus Corp to help our cause in fighting these massive increases. We also need your help as this can have a serious effect on the viability of our club, as not only will we have to potentially raise fees but it could be come so expensive that it is financially not feasible. Contact your Councillor and MPP and voice your concern about these unfair and huge tax increases. Below is an update from the Commodore of the OHSF regarding the issue:

MPAC: - At the Council of Commodores meeting this past Monday 14th September, Dave Gibson from Altus Corp. presented an update and a Q & A regarding the MPAC issue. They are representing six clubs. The Outer Harbour Sailing Federation is grouped as one club for their purposes under 275 Unwin Ave.

He reported that all of the RfRs(request for re-assessment) that have returned so far are unfavorable, this was entirely expected. I asked Mr. Gibson his estimate regarding the length of time the ARB might expect to see closure; he replied it could take five to seven years to emerge with a court decision, which completely consumes our four year assessment phase-in period. Mr. Gibson reiterated the advice to meet tax obligations where possible.

I feel we should be upbeat on this as much as possible but also realistic and prudent in that we must plan these increments into our budgets / membership fees for the coming four years, and to collaborate on this issue collectively. This will be an agenda item at the next meeting. The way forward is clearly swinging to a political approach to run parallel with the ARB process, to assemble an agenda and plan a strategy to press for changes at the Ministry level. This item is top priority with the Council of Commodores. If any of you know of anyone at our clubs with good political contacts, please contact Tobin or myself (Paul Chandler)

We have paid this year's tax bill from our reserve funds as this was not expected or planned in advance and along with increases in our lease terms with the city, we have experienced significant operating increases for our club. Water Rats enjoy perhaps one of the lowest annual fees of any sailing club in a major urban center anywhere in the world, however once you add up costs such as taxes, leases, insurance, garbage, toilets, race committee costs; it leaves us very little afterwards from the \$150/member to fund improvements, BBQ's, gas, maintenance and general expenses. We have been diligent as a club to control costs and expenses in order to keep the membership fees extremely low, but the tax implication is our single largest cost now.

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Changes

Most of you may have noticed this summer that the club grounds have been well kept as we employed the services of club member who has been cutting and trimming the grass on a regular basis. We have used the funds generated from the 'Work or Pay' honourum from last year to fund this service. The cost that we have been charged is very reasonable and the club grounds have never looked so good.

In the next couple of weeks, you will notice a new sign on our gate as the old one has become un-useable. We are getting close to getting a shipping container for club storage and member access for gardening equipment and a home for our new tractor that we bought 2 years ago. Also to be housed in the container will be a permanent generator that will provide power and lighting for our BBQ and as well as an electric winch to help the heavier boats in and out of the water via the ramp.

Help Needed

We need ongoing help to clean our beaches to the end of the season, as well as volunteers for the BBQ and Race day on October 4.

We would also like to have a couple of members to help out on our Christmas party to help plan activities and events as well as 2 people to do a telephone calling to sell tickets to the annual event. Of course this will count as your Work or Pay hours.

Executive

Our AGM is coming up and if you would like to run for the various positions for the 2010 year and feel that you can make a significant contribution please let me know water.rats.commodore@sympatico.ca All posts are available except Badger (past commodore). We are especially looking for a treasurer to become Money Rat immediately, we would like this person to have an accounting/finance background

WANTED – OWNERS:

ATTACHED ARE PICTURES OF BOATS WHO REQUIRE OWNERS (as there are no identifying labels)...If you see your boat in the picture below....please label your boat, otherwise it will go up for auction to the highest bidder....

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