

# MRYC *Tidings*

WINTER 2011 VOLUME EIGHT ISSUE ONE

## *View from the bridge*

*By Philip A. Shreffler, Commodore*

By now, it's likely that we're all aware of the very positive changes that have taken place within MRYC just this year. Over the course of the past few months, your Board has worked hard—almost feverishly—to bring members the best Mystic River Yacht Club possible at the lowest cost possible, a vital club that looks toward the future with bright optimism.

We've negotiated the rent for our clubhouse down to half of what it was, allowing us also to reduce the membership dues for MRYC down to \$500 per year for both in-state and out-of-state members (along with a reduction in the Club initiation fee to \$500). But we still retain the expanded accessibility to the clubhouse that Mystic Shipyard agreed to late last year, and this means a remarkable increase in accessibility from the 24 days per year that we had in 2010 to about 170 days for our new six-month season.

More good news is that, though some of it is still under construction at this writing, our new and very esthetically-pleasing website is up and running. Members are encouraged to check it out at [www.mysticriveryachtclub.com](http://www.mysticriveryachtclub.com) and to share it with friends who may be interested in joining us as new members—which we have called the life-blood of our Club. Our Membership Committee, headed by the energetic and very able Bill Volmar, is working seriously to increase our numbers. But they can use your help in bringing in those friends and acquaintances who are interested in a club in this area and those who may be sitting on the fence.

But what's a yacht club if it's only a clubhouse and a website? Obviously, MRYC offers its members far more than that! The Racing Committee, spearheaded by Bob Davis, has already established an ECSA-sanctioned sail race, the Sails Up 4 Cancer Regatta, and is working on a Seniors Regatta to be sailed in JY-15s. The Cruise Committee, under the direction of Fleet Captain Jay McKernan, has



*Commodore Philip A. Shreffler*

tentatively planned some *ten* separate cruises that range from afternoon raft-ups and day-trips to overnight sojourns. There'll be Family Sailing in our JY-15 fleet during the summer, directed by Jeff Anderson. And the social calendar is taking shape now. We'll kick off the season with the Commodore's Dinner and Clubhouse Commissioning on Sunday, May 1, 2011. It will be the beginning of a spring, summer and fall filled with delightful nautical adventures.

And we look forward to greeting all of our MRYC family—plus a lot of new members—when the season gets underway!

# M Y S T I C R I V E R Y A C H T C L U B ' S



## Winter

### S O C I A L S C E N E

By M.E. Rich

Seaside towns are seldom at their best with the onset of winter. In New England that's especially the case as blizzards assault us, ice is a daily peril and darkness comes too soon and stays too late. For mariners these months are particularly poignant: we've brought our beloved boats ashore, swaddled them in shrink wrap and tucked them in their cradles with a blanket of snow; the wind in the boatyard rigging plays a lengthy lullaby, the fog rolls in snugly and our nautical adventures are at an end for months to come. But MRYC members are a hardy breed, and can find plenty of Holiday goings on to keep the season bright. Sure, some scoot away to warmer

climes but they'll pop back up again, once the ice floes have melted into a recognizable river and the mud brings forth May flowers.

So greeting the

Winter Solstice is a great occasion to gather by our ersatz fireplace and join in decking the halls, which is just what we did in December as 2010 drew to a close. As always, wreath-making pixies were in full swing on a very grey and blustery Saturday, December 11, with lovely evergreens provided by McQuade's in Mystic, thanks to Anne Wakim. Elves untangled strands of lights and reconstructed our tree for its annual duties as bearer of ornaments and glitter; they even made a miniature light-parade display around our model 12-meter yacht to add more cheer.

For Sunday's party on the 12th we had not only a dozen marvelous wreaths to raffle off but also a plethora of delectable cookies and treats to tempt the lucky winners. And in the welcome novelty category we got to make like Mitch Miller – er, Glee – and



crank up a karaoke machine for caroling as well as belting out a bit of Broadway. Spirits were high, outlooks jolly and the Yuletide gay, in that old-fashioned, festive way.

Interminable snow meant that we did our best imitation of hibernating mammals, but the call of the groundhog brought MRYC members over to the environs of Essex Ed for the EYC Valentine's Day brunch, a grand annual tradition for us. We got to settle in at the bar, staggering back from the buffet with plate after plate of treats, and while away a February afternoon in the company of friends and family. And we didn't forget to toast the eternal optimism of the local rodent, celebrating because in just a few weeks we'll feel the first warmth of the Equinox, and start preparing for the spring awakening that sends us back to the sea and to more MRYC adventures.



# SAILS UP 4 CANCER REGATTA

By Robert S. Davis and Philip A. Shreffler



Since staging regattas is a part of what yacht clubs do and also a part of our mission statement, we're excited once again to be hosting a major, Eastern Connecticut Sailing Association-approved regatta. The Sails Up 4 Cancer Regatta will be held on Sunday, June 26, 2011, in the waters of Fishers Island Sound with the shore party and awards ceremony immediately following.

Sails Up 4 Cancer is a non-profit organization founded by two-time cancer survivor, former MRYC Commodore and current Board member Bob Davis. Its purpose is to fund education, prevention and cures for all types of cancer through the art and enjoyment of sailing. And it's our Club's sponsor for the regatta.

According to the Sails Up 4 Cancer company overview, "SU4C will partner with local yacht clubs to host regattas. The aim is to have these regattas appeal to everyone and not just the racing enthusiast. In addition to the traditional racing format with various classes and types of boats, there will also be a 'Picnic Fleet.' This class of sailors will be composed primarily of those who have no interest in competitive sailing. The skippers in this class [of both sail and power boats] will be encouraged to take on board cancer patients and family members for a relaxing time watching the race.

"Contributions will be raised by the sailors, using traditional fund-raising methods, from family, friends and local businesses. Donations will not be limited just to money but also items of value that may be auctioned off at the Post-Regatta Shore Party. Boats will be encouraged to sail with their crews as 'teams' in honor of someone who has or had cancer.

"Awards will be given to sailors in two categories: first, in the traditional manner to the top three finishers in each class raced; and second, to the top three fund-raisers.

"The majority of the funds raised will be distributed to the Stand Up 4 Cancer

Organization and the Cancer Project. Remaining funds will be distributed at the discretion of the SU4C Board of Directors to organizations that best exemplify the Mission Statement."

The June 26<sup>th</sup> date for the regatta was granted at the ECSA Offshore Regatta meeting at the Essex Yacht Club on January 29, which was attended by Bob Davis, Vice Commodore Bill Volmar, Fleet Captain Jay McKernan and the Club's Commodore.

In addition to the fact that, after a hiatus, our Club is once again hosting a major regatta, it's really a privilege for MRYC to team up with SU4C for on-the-water fun benefiting what is undeniably the worthiest of causes.





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## TENTATIVE MRYC CRUISE CALENDAR FOR 2011 (Subject to modification or change)

May 21 – Raft-up at East Harbor or Watch Hill

June 10-12 – Overnight at West Harbor (dinner at Pequot House)

June 26 – Sails Up 4 Cancer Regatta

July 2-3 – Masons Island

July 15-17 – Niantic Bay Yacht Club

July 29-31 – Cuttyhunk

August 5-6 – Block Island

August 20 – Flat Hammock Raft-up and Bonfire

September 9-11 – Shelter Island Wine Cruise

October 7-9 – Essex Yacht Club

October 21-23 – Hamburg Cove