

Ship-to-Shore

The South Sound Sailing Society's Newsletter

Volume 56 Issue 2 October 2026

www.ssssclub.com/about/sss/news/newsletter

October Meeting: Pre-session Topics, Awards, and R2AK

Our October Meeting will include a boatload of Meeting pre-sessions, awards for the summer races, and tales from this year's R2AK, Race to Alaska.

Our topics for the pre-Meeting sessions, which start at 18:00 sharp, will include: Cruising location: Tides, currents, weather and bridges; Racing rules; Inspecting and identifying issues with sailboats; Line management and care; and Annual inspections, rigging and mechanical.

At the Meeting we will honor the winners in our summer racing programs, including Stars, Dinghy's and PHRF racers. In addition, Caitlin Kenney and Judi Kruller will share stories about their adventure in this summer's Race to Alaska.

Doors at the Olympia Yacht Club, 201 Simmons St NW, will open at 17:45, the pre-Meeting sessions will begin at 18:00, and the Meeting will commence at 19:00. The Meeting is open to Members, sailors who might be interested in joining our group, crew members, and significant others. Free parking is available in the lot south of the main Olympia Yacht Club parking lot.

Bob Butts, Emma Lee



Summer Star racing photo: from the Star Fleet

Commodore's Corner: VTS, AIS: Extra Eyes for the Sailor

Puget Sound is a challenging place to sail. Pleasure boats share the water with ferries, container ships, tankers, tugs and tows, often in narrow channels and busy traffic lanes. During our summer cruise to the Gulf Islands in Beautiful British Columbia I was returning to the San Juan Islands and about to cross Boundary Pass when I saw a large ship just south of Turn Point. I turned to my chart plotter and found the ship on AIS. It reported that the ship was moving at 10 knots and was 4.5 nautical miles away. I had about 3 nautical miles to cross the traffic lane running at about 6.5 knots. A quick calculation told me I did not have enough time to get across in front of the ship. To make things more interesting I also observed another ship following behind the first ship and another ship approaching from the north. After looking at all of the information visually and on AIS I was able to cross safely behind the first ship and before the other two ships arrived. The following is a quick summary of two tools, *Vessel Traffic Service*, VTS, and *Automatic Identification System*, AIS, that can significantly improve a sailor's situational awareness.

The U.S. Coast Guard operates **Vessel Traffic Service** Puget Sound, VTSPS, from Seattle. VTS monitors commercial vessel traffic using radar, AIS, VHF radio and other sensors. Its purpose is to improve navigational safety and help prevent collisions and groundings.

Recreational vessels aren't generally required to participate in VTS, but the Coast Guard strongly encourages smaller boats to monitor VTS communications. In Puget Sound, Seattle Traffic is primarily monitored on VHF Channel 14; Channel 5A is used in the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

R2AK Part 2 : Dues/Race Fee : End of Season Regattas : SSSS/OYC Joint Events



**Board meeting
October 6**

**Eagle Island Race
October 17**

**General Meeting
October 20**

Visitors Welcome

Doors open at 17:45 meeting starts 19:00

**Halloween Cruise
October 24**

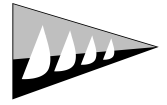
**Board meeting
November 3**

**Herron Island Race
October 7**

**General Meeting
November 17**

Visitors Welcome

Doors open at 17:45 meeting starts 19:00



VTs can be especially valuable when visibility is poor or you're approaching a busy traffic area. A pleasure craft can call Seattle Traffic and request a traffic report, giving the Coast Guard an opportunity to advise what commercial traffic is nearby and what movements may be developing.

Automatic Identification System, AIS is a radio-based system that allows equipped vessels to transmit and receive information such as vessel name, position, course, speed and heading. When connected to your chartplotter, AIS displays transmitting vessels directly on your electronic chart.

AIS is particularly useful for determining CPA, Closest Point of Approach, and TCPA, Time to CPA. These numbers help you understand whether another vessel is actually becoming a collision concern and how quickly the situation is developing.

AIS is not a substitute for radar or visual observation. Many pleasure boats, kayaks and other small craft don't transmit AIS, and AIS information can occasionally be inaccurate. Think of AIS as another source of information, not as permission to maneuver.

Making It Work for You

The real power comes from combining these tools. Before entering a busy area, check your AIS targets and listen to VTS. Identify large vessels early, note their courses and speeds, and plan your route before you're committed to a crossing.

When necessary, VHF Channel 13 is used for bridge-to-bridge navigational communications. A clear, concise call can help eliminate uncertainty when maneuvering near a large vessel.

If you regularly cruise Puget Sound, consider installing an AIS transceiver, rather than just a receiver. A transceiver allows you to see other equipped vessels while also making your own sailboat visible to commercial traffic.

The goal isn't to rely on electronics instead of good seamanship. It's to use every available source of information, your eyes, radar, AIS, VHF, VTS, charts, and the Rules of the Road, to

build an accurate picture of what's happening around you.

For the Puget Sound sailor, VTS and AIS are essentially extra sets of eyes that give you more time to make good decisions.

After traveling over 725 NM this summer I found these tools very valuable. There were



Summer Star racing photo: from the Star Fleet

times that these tools were not as important, like in the South Sound where the shipping traffic is much less, but it is still valuable to see on the chart plotter that there are other pleasure craft out there and what they are doing. And other times like crossing the Straights of Juan de Fuca or coming into Admiralty Inlet that these tools gave you situational awareness that you can't get without them.

Kim Turver, Tangent

Editor's note: The traditional way to judge a crossing situation is to take a compass bearing on the vessel in question and watch to see if it changes. If it does you are OK. If it remains constant, you are on a collision course and need to take action. If you can line up two objects on your boat, say a shroud and something on your cabin top, so that they point to the vessel you don't need a compass. You have a bearing. If they stay aligned, you better do something.

It's October Do I need to Pay Dues?

At the Meeting in September I announced that if you are a Member that renewed your Membership in May of this year your dues are now good until September of 2027, yes the board voted to give you the summer for free. We will all be on a September renewal from this time forward.

If your renewal month is September, and you have not yet paid your dues you need to do so. Come to the next Meeting and you can pay then. If not, please go to our web site and log into the Member area. Then you will see a selection for Annual Dues & Race Fees. Select that and you are on your way to another fun year of Racing or Cruising or both! Or you can mail us your check.

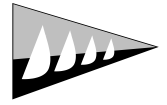
As you will see the Annual **Dues are \$70.00** and PHRF **Race Fee is \$35.00** You will need to make separate payments for each if you are a racer. Also if you are a racer please make sure to renew your PHRF dues because you will not be scored if your dues are not up to date [PHRF dues are good for the calendar year, Ed.] You don't want to win the race and find out it didn't count.

Kim Turver, Tangent

S-t-S Report

At the last Meeting I pointed out that to get the benefits of Membership you need to be an active Member, active enough to get your name, or boat name, in the S-t-S. You get the most out of Membership when you share experiences with other Members. One way to do this is to write us and share your sailing stories. It is Members who make this rag interesting.

Steve Worcester



Cruise News

Penrose Point Cruise, October 3 - 4

Our next Cruise is at Mayo Cove at Penrose Point State Park. Now, if you are a Member of the South Sound Sailing Society, or just someone who likes to argue passionately with inanimate fiberglass objects and stare blankly at piece of canvas while screaming, "Starboard, you idiot!" you should probably write that down.

Halloween Cruise October 24 - 25

It was originally scheduled for October 31, because, you know, that is when Halloween actually occurs. However, due to some mysterious force of nature, most likely a scheduling committee consisting of people who have suffered severe head trauma from a rogue boom, it has now been changed. Don't ask questions. Just dress your boat up like a pirate or a giant zucchini a week early and deal with it.

Vaughn Bay Cruise

Looking back, our First Cruise of the year was on Labor Day Weekend. We were blessed with light variable winds, which is nautical terminology for "absolutely no wind whatsoever." This meant we were able to *sail*, which involved standing on deck and blowing desperately into the sails, and/or motorsail, which involved turning on the loud, stinky diesel engine and pretending we were sailing purists. Seriously, we got a few knots of wind. Geeze, it is always too much or too little with those Wind Gods!

We were incredibly fortunate to have a midday flood tide, which was a huge relief for those of us with deep drafts. This enabled us to navigate the shallow, skinny bay entrance without holding our breath, crossing our fingers, or making sudden, desperate promises to God.

We also had some actual, historical-looking boats join the party. Sailors on two different Carolina-designed skiffs participated:

John Schroeder skippered a 20-foot all-wood Carolina Sharpie featuring a Sprit Sail Rig, which looks suspiciously like a Lateen Rig to anyone who doesn't spend their weekends reading 19th-century shipwright manuals.

Samantha Ritchie and Dave Stewart co-skippered a 17-foot wood and epoxy Carolina Cat-Ketch, which is a very impressive sequence of words.

I understand that on Labor Day afternoon, John actually captured drone footage of a Grey whale hanging out in the bay. We are currently trying to get this video onto our SSSS Facebook page, assuming we can find a teenager who not only understands how to operate Facebook but



Fall Series Race 3 photo by DeWayne Enyeart

additionally how to get the video out of the drone.

The highlight of the weekend, however, was Saturday dinner. We were all able to squeeze ourselves into the cockpit of Commodore Turver's Beneteau 46. This cockpit is so ridiculously massive that it will soon earn the official moniker of the Taj Mahal of sailboat cockpits. You could have hosted a professional bowling tournament there.

Cindy Turver graciously prepared the entire Saturday meal, using a highly sophisticated culinary recipe that consisted of: beer, salad, beer, casserole, beer, dessert, more beer. It was delicious. Did I mention the beer?

The whole thing wrapped up with a colorful sunset, calm seas, and mild winds, which was the perfect ending to a Saturday spent relaxing on a giant floating plastic patio.

Randy Richter

Budd Inlet Star Fleet Fall plans

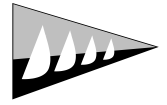
The Star fleet has completed two days of getting boats back on trailers and tarped up for the winter. The **Star Fleet fall meeting is at Tugboat Annies Viewpoint Room October 5, 1800.** If you are interested in getting in on the fun next year come join us. The **2026 season trophy awards will be held on October 20 at the SSSS Meeting.**

Some of us are using our travel Stars to compete in other regattas. The Star District 6 Championship (OR, WA and BC) is being hosted at CYC in Seattle October 10-11. Derek DeCouteau, David Geeraerts, and I will be there. Derek is also going to Florida in late October, November for the Star North Americans in Tampa and Worlds in Miami.

As things wind down for the Star Fleet, this is the time to expand the sailing experience with recruiting some of our new Fleet members into the joys of sailing in other fleets/boats that take part in the winter sailing. For those of you that are old enough, the Smothers Brothers had a song about Cowboys and outfits. The translation is get yourself an outfit and go sailing. There are plenty of good days in the coming months to go racing and my experience is most of it does not include rain or snow.

We are working on getting another 5-6 boats in the Fleet. There are several boats on Facebook Marketplace in the Tacoma/Seattle area that are perfect for our fleet. Contact us through the SSSS web site. <https://www.ssssclub.com/2024/04/stars-contact-us/>

Dave Branch



Portsmouth Racing

We had a good summer, ending with our traditional Regatta and Potluck. We will recognize Season Winners at the October Meeting.

Any of you are interested in extending your racing season into the winter months? Tucker Smyth has a deal for you. He is looking for people to crew on one of several Melges 24s that are racing here in the PHRF program. They are trying to start a Melges 24 one design fleet and they are very close to that goal. If any of you are interested contact Tucker or Garner Miller and their email addresses are in the group above or if you have any questions that I can answer, email back to me.

And Tucker, the list above has some very good sailors in it.

Jim Findley, Dinghy Fleet co-chair

Star Season Results

Place	Sail	Sailor(s)	Boat	Total
1	75	Dave Branch	Puffin	1.48
2	10	Derek DeCouteau		2.7
3	35	Tim McClure		3.8
4	33	Chris Reitz	Corvus	3.93
5	30	Jim Findley	The Flag Ship	4.31
6	27	Cheryl Rogers	Upstart	4.38
7	19	Luke Wolcott	Brewster	5.16
8	3	Vickie Lau		6.05
9	38	Perry Sparks		6.23
10	82	Garner Miller		6.25
11	4	David Geeraerts	Rubicon	6.39
12	11	Richard Wells	Northern Sky	6.48
13	30	Colin Machado		6.82
14	80	Vicky Sheldon		7.18
15	27	Camryn Darragh		7.18
16	81	Chuck Queen		7.25
17	3	Murray Buckman		7.36
18	75	Hannah Burnett		7.59
19	38	Kris Hicks-Green		7.61
20	19	Mikaela Legarsky		7.61

Joint SSSS-OYC Events In the Works

The Olympia Yacht Club joins with SSSS a couple of times each year to put on events suited to sail boats and sailors.

Lighted Ships Parade, December 4-5

The first of those events is the OYC Lighted Ships Parade. While still in the early planning stage, the organizers plan to repeat last year's successful two-day program. Because lighted sail boat rigging makes such a striking holiday display, the OYC Bridge encourages participation by all South Sound sailors. As for the event itself, OYC will coordinate with the City of Olympia, the Olympia Downtown Alliance, and local officials to set up a decorated boats contest, with a best sail boat category and, I'm sure, fabulous prizes. Event organizers also plan to set up a dockside display of parade entrants on Friday night, before the parade. OYC will encourage entrants to spend the night at Percival landing and will open the clubhouse to participants at a Thank God It's Friday pizza feed, \$10 at the door.



Towing Stars to the haul out photo by Dave Branch

The actual parade will take place on Saturday evening, with entrants parading past the judges' boat docked at Port Plaza and continuing around Budd Inlet and back to Olympia. Paraders are typically feted by honking horns, flashing lights, beachfront fires and the occasional fireworks display.

The OYC clubhouse will be open to returning boaters

with cocoa and snacks, and the prizes announced and awarded that evening.

Stay tuned to this newsletter and the OYC Event Calendar for more details on event activities and registration as the organizers firm up plans for this year's event.

Toliva Shoal Race, February 12-14

The other event is truly an OYC/SSSS joint enterprise; the South Sound Series Toliva Shoal Race. The Toliva race is one of the Southern Sound Series winter sailing events. Also in the early planning stages, Toliva brings together OYC members, including power boaters, and SSSS sailors to put on a sometimes blustery race event from Olympia Shoal, around Anderson Island and the Olympia Shoal mark, wind permitting. This event also spans the weekend and includes a TGIF dinner. Plus race organizers offer a hearty Saturday morning breakfast and after-race refreshments. Stay tuned to the Ship to Shore, and the soon-to-be-updated Toliva Shoal Race Details web page, for updates as they become available.

Marvin Young, OYC Fleet Captain Sail, (360) 584-2951

The Toliva Committee is open to/seeking volunteers. If you might like to help talk to Marvin, Bob Hargreaves, or yours truly Steve Worcester

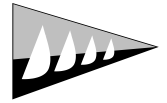
SSSS Donates to OCS at Meeting

As we have done for decades, the Toliva Shoal Race Committee donated the profits from the Race to Olympia Community Sailing. At the last Meeting we handed them a check, for \$550; the money is to go into their scholarship fund and pay for a kid to participate who otherwise could not afford to. Your support of Toliva Shoal Race also helps OCS.

The Club also donated \$330 to OCS at the Meeting. We put on a free continental breakfast for the Salish 100 sailors, as they started from Olympia. Many of those sailors left tips. We donated the tips to OCS.

As we near the end of the year, you might be thinking of making charitable gifts ... Remember, these are the people who will buy your boat.

Steve Worcester



End of Summer Regattas

Summer racing ended for the Portsmouth and Star Fleets on the second weekend in September, with their regattas. The Star Regatta was Saturday, dinghies on Sunday. Yours truly was on the RC boat for both regattas. They were very different events, but they both ended the same: a bunch of happy sailors at a BBQ.



Saturday we shared the bay with the PHRF Fleet. So we set the course a



little closer to home than normal. But it did not matter as neither the Stars nor the PHRF boats need room to stretch out and show their speed. We set up for a northwest wind, which it was at times. But it slowly clocked to an easterly. Wind speed too slow to measure. Still we got two races in. Then off to a Fleet members house for food and drink.



Sunday the threat of Force 4 to 5 winds may have scared some off, but the turnout was still good, including some who came up from Tacoma. And the threatened wind never arrived. Instead there was a Force 3 wind building for the last race. It started out from the northwest, backing slowly until it was southwest for the last race



and the predicted weather started to arrive. We had time for four races, the last provided an exciting end to the season.

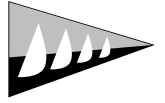
We discovered Port Madison YC had reserved the tables we had planned to use for the potluck/BBQ. They were kind enough to let us use a table so we could set up. That worked for us. We got to eat, awards were given out, the season ended on a good note.

Steve Worcester

Fall Dinghy Regatta

		Portsmouth Handicapping						Total
Position	Sail	Skipper	Type	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Race 4	
1	208831	Queen, Chuck	ILCA 7	2	1	1	1	5
2	2181	White, Brian	Lido 14	1	3	3	2	9
3	195939	Rulla, Chris	ILCA 7	3	2	2	4	11
4	4870	Miller, Ryan	Lido 14	4	5	4	3	16
5	8844	Wes	Lido 14	6	4	5	DNF	24
6	816	Baldrige, Darris	Harpoon 5.2	7	7	6	5	25
7	763	Nordgren, Layne	Harpoon 5.2	5	6	8	8	27
8	1304	Harting, Eric	Tanzer 16	8	10	7	6	31
9	184403	Shook, Bryana	ILCA 6	DNF	10	9	7	34
10	2620	Taft, Peter	Thistle	9	9	11	DNS	38





R2AK

Judi Kruller wrote us about their Race and return in emails as it progressed. She started the story last month. Their Race is over, now they are headed back.

We're aiming for Rebecca Spit tomorrow, then onward to Lund. We'll break in the new motor along the way.

On 07/05/2026 12:54 PM PDT Judi Kruller <jdstreet88@gmail.com> wrote:

We went to Lund and enjoyed the bakery and the sweater shop. We've done the eight hour break in maintenance process for the new motor. We didn't hoist since the wind was in our nose yesterday. and no wind the previous day. Today the NW wind is blowing a little harder than we would enjoy. If it abates we'll continue to Nanaimo, otherwise we'll sit and enjoy our books in the sunshine in False Bay.

We've met a few people here who are legends for sure. One, is Angus who was aboard Team *Mob Mentality*, *Mail Order Brides* back in 2015, they won the steak knives. There's another island resident that was aboard the first place boat that year, Team *Elsie Piddock*, named by a granddaughter who loved that book.

Seals are on the Earby Rocks taking naps, eagles and ravens flying overhead looking for lunch. The wind generator is spinning steady on Carl's boat.

We met Carl earlier when Ben was aboard. He admired my anchor hauling skills. I had pulled up the anchor before I even had a foot of chain on board; the anchor had hooked into a glob of chain. "It's not supposed to look like that!" Exclaimed Carl



while sitting in his dingy. I laughed and he pointed at me, "Aye! She's an anchor wench!" We've been laughing about that moment ever since.

Carl had recently traveled down from Wrangel. He said he's once sailed down to Panama Canal without a motor. Peter, who came over to greet us last night said he has sailed with Carl all over the world. Peter said when Carl sailed with him, he could sleep at night, because Carl was a trusted hand and could fix anything. In attached photo, the blue boat is Carls, the one farther is Peter's ketch. I didn't get a decent photo of Angus's boat that is at a dock behind a rocky ridge.



Happy Belated Fourth of July!

Judi

On 07/07/2026 9:04 PM PDT Judi Kruller <jdstreet88@gmail.com> wrote:

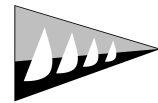
Madrona trees are beautiful. They're plentiful on Stuart Island. Boaters here all feel fortunate to be in Prevost Harbor. Us, too.

Yesterday, Caitlin and I checked in with US Customs in a clumsy way, and I of course was mistaken to be sitting at the picnic table, situated on the dock, when I clicked "accept video call with customs". Fortunately the agent wasn't ready to send me to jail. All you kids out there, don't leave the boat until you're approved to do so by the customs agent. Today, we hiked out to the Turn Point Lighthouse on a beautiful, peaceful walk through the forest on a county dirt road. We saw a treasure chest pop up T-shirt sale, hats, artistic postcards, and color books with crayons in a former Seattle PI newspaper dispenser. A few other boaters were playing frisbee in the school meadow. Further down the road is a farm with beautiful view of Mt Baker. Passing by one of the air fields we saw an ant hill with a cute sign.

The Turn Point Lighthouse was built in 1893. Here is a stunning view of Haro Strait and the Gulf Islands BC. We were out there the day before waiting for 3 cargo ships to pass before we crossed the Y intersection. Inbound cargo ships traveling to Robert's Bank, will they take Active Pass that is up to the left, or turn right into Boundary Pass? We opted to wait and see, and take the last inbound ship's stern as they passed by at 12 knots, they were slowing down for a turn. Today, we were looking down at a passing outbound ship, a perspective shift indeed.

Back at the dock, two little kids collected some sea friends in their bucket. Shrimp, pipe fish, a little crab, and bull kelp. The youngest boy dragging the longer piece of bull kelp down the dock saying "Mine". Oh, my!

We've been meeting most of the boat dogs when their owners bring them ashore for the evening walks.



Our dock neighbors are mostly CDory owners, except for a nice couple with an American Tug. Their dog is named Willow. She recently discovered we give belly rubs, too.

We're looking forward to star gazing tonight, just like last night.

Judi

On 07/10/2026 12:00 PM PDT Judi Kruller
<jdstreet88@gmail.com> wrote:

Friday Harbor Transit driver Skylar looks like Steve from *Stranger Things* (Joe Keery). We took the long way to American Camp. Skylar has great stories that made the time fly.

The Rangers and Volunteers at the visitor center have a great location to work. The building construction started in 2020. The National Park site is stunning as well as the adjacent areas. We hiked out to South Beach, over to the lagoons via the forest, out to Cattle



Point, and back to South Beach. Steve, er Skylar, picked us up for a ride back to town. He helped us spot a black fox with white tipped tail headed down the field to some shrubs near old town lagoon.

Dave, Caitlin's husband, arrived shortly after 6. Pizza, ice cream, and stories filled up the evening. Today, we enjoyed crepes and then popped over to San Juan Canvas to talk with Alan about a sail bag enhancement. He bought the business 2.5 years ago from someone who owned it for about 12.5 years. Prior to that the business was Peter and Susan. Peter still comes in and sews a bit. 40 years ago my friend Nick Sailing and I spend the night there. Nick grew up on Orcas and we had met when we were working in the seafood industry in Alaska (Naknek in 1984, and Sand Point in 1985). I'm flooded with fond memories of our friendship. RIP Nick.

I'm aboard the *Chelan* headed to Anacortes. Caitlin and Dave are celebrating their anniversary this weekend while on the sailboat. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone soon. Thank you for traveling along via these emails with us. Your responses were a huge support. Thank you.

Judi Kruller

Ditty Bag For sale

San Juan 28, 50% partnership \$5,000. To purchase \$9,600. Constant upgrades including electric propulsion, B&G VHF, AIS, Depth and Zeus Chartploter. Hull professionally maintained. Contact Jeff Hogan at sailorhogan@gmail.com For complete specifications

*Theses ads are free for Members, run three months, and can be renewed.
Contact me by the Meeting to be listed.*

Volunteers Needed

Capt. Dennis Crowley AMS #1350

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If you are having a problem receiving the Ship-to-Shore, would like to submit a letter, article, or photo, run an advertisement, or have other questions or concerns contact the **Editor : Steve Worchester**

(360) 352-9283 e-mail: sts@ssssclub.com

Deadline for submissions is the third Tuesday of the month.

2026-27 SSSS Board Members

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Past Commodore	Bob Hargreaves	pastcommodore@ssssclub.com

PHRF Handicapper Rafe Beswick (360) 250-5252

D Class Handicapper Richard Bigley



A photograph showing two sailors on the deck of a sailboat. The sailor in the foreground is wearing a black cap and a red life vest, leaning over the side of the boat. The sailor in the background is wearing a tan cap and a black shirt, also leaning over the side. The boat's white hull and rigging are visible, along with a large white sail in the background.



South Sound Sailing Society
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