



## View from the Bridge

*Commodore Tom Atkinson*

I think we all agree that the weather this summer and fall was disappointing as the rain never let up, making a mess of the river for two weeks in July and forcing us to cancel our Cross Sound Challenge regatta. Nor could we hold our decommissioning ceremony outdoors for the second consecutive year. Let's hope for better weather next boating season. In the meantime, relax, recharge your batteries, and enjoy some winter activities.

2024 dues are remaining the same as 2023, but the capital assessment is doubling in order to pay for three capital projects – a split duct heating and cooling system which will lower our utility bills and provide more even temperatures throughout the building, a new front door to improve safety and appearance, and replacement of the

River Room east facing double window which has been leaking for years. The capital assessment is being doubled for 2024, but is subject to reduction thereafter. Safe Harbor is providing the labor to install the door and window, but we must pay for the HVAC system and materials as the very narrowly written lease does not obligate them to pay these costs.

My term is over at the end of the year. I'm proud to have served as your Commodore, and lucky that Covid had passed - Chris got a bum deal. The 2024 officers and board are a strong group. Former Fleet Captain and board member Joe Pelletier returns as Rear Commodore, Dave Furtak is our new Treasurer, and Elizabeth Nocera is our new Secretary. Brian Fresher, Joe DiRenzo, and Peter Martin are joining the board as Members-At-Large.

Enjoy your holidays!



**Commodore Tom Atkinson passing the flag to incoming Commodore Bill Robinson**

# IN & AROUND THE CLUBHOUSE

## Membership Report

I am happy to report that we welcomed back Ruth and Peter Emblin as well as Jessi and Jason Kneier as they rejoined the Club this Fall.

Kindly remember to wear your name tags on Friday nights and check out the New Members' Board so we can give a warm welcome to our new Corinthians!

Regarding ECYC membership, we currently need fifteen more members to reach our goal of 200 -- the more members we have the lower the dues. One of the best ways to gain new members is through our current membership. So please spread the word and feel free to contact me at [membership@ecyc.org](mailto:membership@ecyc.org) or 860-510-1916 if you have a referral, questions or would like more information.

**Patti Pickering, Membership Chair**

## Galley Update

**The Galley will be closed for the month of January**

**The Old Lyme Country Club Opens Its Doors to ECYC Members During Our January Shut-Down!**

ECYC Members are requested to call or email the Old Lyme Country Club for reservations and availability.

Dining Room Tel:  
(860) 434-9728, x3

Email: [dining@oldlymecc.com](mailto:dining@oldlymecc.com)

Billing will be handled via your ECYC membership account.

Please bring your ECYC Club Card with you as proof of membership.

More information is available on their website at [www.oldlymecc.com](http://www.oldlymecc.com) and Facebook at [www.facebook.com/oldlymecc/](http://www.facebook.com/oldlymecc/)

## Celebrity Chefs Cook Up a Feast in the Galley for Halloween



# Annual Meeting Highlights

2023 was a successful year - we should finish the year close to breaking even financially, we have 184 members (same as last year at this time), and we had a full slate of events. Dining continues to shine thanks to chef Lori and her staff, we had a record four entertainment events with live music including Caribbean Night steel drum band, July 4th surf guitar band, Sea Chanteys with the Jovial Crew from the Gris, and a Veterans Day swing band from Boston. We hosted a women's regatta for eastern Connecticut sailors which we plan to make an annual event.

The River Room was painted white to make it brighter, and new furniture has been acquired which will be in place when the club reopens in February. Barb Doyle revamped our website and added a Members Only section. New sails were purchased for our four Ideal 18s after a fund-raising campaign initiated by club manager Jean Little. Dues are remaining the same for 2024 but the capital assessment is being doubled to pay for three capital projects as discussed in detail in View from the Bridge.

Treasurer Bill Foster, Secretary Joan Sauvigne-Kirsch, and Board members-at-large Scott Beckwith, Lisa Frank, and Jim Hammel have decided not to continue and are thanked for their service to the club.

## Officers & Governors 2024

**Bill Robinson** moves to Commodore  
**Patti Pickering** moves to Vice Commodore  
**Joe Pelletier** is the new Rear Commodore  
**Dave Furtak** is the new Treasurer  
**Elizabeth Nocera** is the new Secretary  
**Jon Gibbs** continues as Fleet Captain  
**Dan Rennie** continues as a member of the board  
**Brian Fresher, Joe DiRenzo, and Peter Martin** are new members of the board  
**Tom Atkinson** moves to Past Commodore and is a member of the board

## Annual Awards

*Corinthian (outstanding service to the club) -*  
**Peter Decker**  
*A. Justin Wasley (yacht with best ECSA racing record) -*  
**Dorian, Chris Morano**  
*Thomas B. Clark (winner of the fall river race that we host) -*  
**Jeff Going**  
*Sailing Achievement (most outstanding sailing accomplishment) -*  
**Chris Morano**  
*John Phillip Sousa (most impressive sailing voyage) -*  
**Herschel Connor**  
*Summer Dinghy Series (outstanding small boat racing sailor) -*  
**Tom Atkinson**  
*Copper Drip Pan (outstanding clubhouse maintenance) -*  
**John Fernandes**  
*Commodore (unselfish energy for improving the club) -*  
**Chris Morano**  
*Founders (created an environment of spirit and good fellowship) -*  
**Patti Pickering**  
*Keel (unselfish effort and expertise) -*  
**Terry Stewart**  
*Good Spirit (spouse of absent first mate) -*  
**Sigrun Morano**  
*Governors (contributed to the success of the Ideal 18 program) -*  
**Jean Little**  
*Baby Sailor (new baby sailor born during the year) -*  
**Ada Snyder**  
*Oliver "Michael" Birch (new this year - dedication to improving the galley) -*  
**Corinne Kilty**  
*Chair Man (special award - dedication to keeping the deck chairs clean) -*  
**Norm Dorval**



# ENTERTAINMENT NEWS

## Veterans Day Commemoration

The club honored Veterans Day with a prayer by Chaplain Dan, recognition of the five veterans attending (Jeff Going, Terry Stewart, Melanie Carr, Tom Atkinson, and guest Bill Stanolis), a plated dinner, music by the Back Bay Rhythm Makers swing band from Boston, and dancing. The band included a female vocalist and was outstanding. The club was decorated with a USO theme and several attendees dressed up in 1940's attire. The highlight was an appearance by Rosie the Riveter.



Tom Atkinson in uniform with the memory table



The Back Bay Rhythm Makers a swing ensemble from Boston



Gillian Nixon, Cheri Calabrese

## Trees in the Rigging & Corinthian's Got Talent

The Trees in the Rigging boat parade returned after a several year absence due to the efforts of the Connecticut River Museum, Safe Harbor, and the Essex Historical Society. Sixteen boats entered the parade thanks to Safe Harbor's offer to allow them to tie up at their docks until after the parade (most boats are pulled from the water for the winter before this event). The parade was followed by our Corinthian's Got Talent show which included our multi-talented galley staff singing their hearts out (including songs by Shania Twain and Alanis Morissette), Stephanie Owen and her sister Beth performing the song "Sisters" from the movie White Christmas, Bill Robinson and Chris Morano giving it a go, and a duet by Sharon Tracy and beau Jerry Carroll, among others that entertained the crowd. Kudos to all the participants, and to Chris for organizing this fun event.



Bill & Stephanie Robinson's Oyster in the boat parade



The Galley Crew & Family



Jon Gibbs playing the congos for a talented group of members

# Holiday Cheer at the Club



Katherine Berry

Thank you to all of the volunteers who helped decorate the club for the holidays! Katherine Berry, Nancy Briggett, Christine Gemelli, Gillian Nixon for the tree, mantle, etc. and Glenn Jacobsen and Brian King for the holiday greens in the flower boxes out front.



## Childrens' Holiday Party



Twenty-one children attended the annual holiday party where they participated in frosting cupcakes made by chef Norma, enjoyed a musical performance by Sunny Train, and played games. The highlight was Santa's visit and Chuck Grusse's reading of *The Night Before Christmas*.

I would like to thank all that helped make this party a success for our youngest club members and grandchildren of members. We could not hold such wonderful events without all your help.

**Pat Atkinson**

## Pre-New Year's Eve Dinner

Sixty-four people attended Chef Lori's delicious dinner of prime rib, scallops and duck on Friday two days before New Year's Eve. This is the second year dinner has been served the Friday before New Year's per the galley's preference, both well attended. Conversation was lively and there was much laughter.



Incoming Commodore "Baby" Bill and outgoing Commodore "Father" Tom dressed for the occasion

# ECYC ON THE WATER

## Tri Club River Series

The 2023 Tri Club River Series wrapped up in October, and it was Toby Doyle and his crew of ECYCs that took home the overall trophy aboard Flo. The series consists of three races hosted by EYC, ECYC, and PYC and is traditionally held over the first three Saturdays in October. The series typically sees a wide range of PHRF cruising boats, and this year was no different. Eleven boats from three clubs battled it out in courses that sent the boats south to Calves Island and as far north as Seldens Creek.

In the Willets Race hosted by EYC, **Toby Doyle** took 1st on Flo, while his long time nemesis Celebration (under new ownership but still helmed by **Jeff Going**) made a bid for the Port/Starboard Award by running hard aground off the Essex shore. Minimizing adverse current is often a game of chicken, as sailing close to shore can be a winning strategy. But as anyone who's raced in the river can attest (present company included), it's only a matter of time before you find a sandbar...or a log...or rock pile!

In the Clark Race hosted by ECYC, Celebration would have her revenge as Jeff Going and new owner Jordan Schweidenback took home the top spot, besting Toby Doyle's Flo by just over one minute on corrected time. Many thanks to **Jane Reilly**, **Dan Rennie**, and **Terry Stewart** for their Race Committee work aboard Tashtego and Oyster!

The series finale was PYC's Birch Race, and it was Doyle again on Flo winning the day and also taking home the overall series win. Celebration kept her keel afloat with a 3rd, but it was **Sharon Tracy** and **Jon Gibbs** aboard Blue Heron in 2nd, finding a number of favorable shifts to finish ahead of Flo by 2 minutes, but behind by 2 minutes on corrected time.

Congratulations to our winners and let's help spread the word to more skippers in 2024. Having participated in these races for the last 10 years or so, these are fun, informal races unique to the river, but offer up an array of challenges for any sailor worth their salt!

## Fall Frostbite Results



Toby Doyle & crew



Tom Atkinson & crew

Corinthian's dominated the fall frostbite results, sweeping the Etchells class and taking the top two spots in the Ideal 18 class. **Toby Doyle** comfortably won the Etchells series and took home the Old Salt Trophy (top skipper over 55.), with **Bill Robinson** in second and **Chris Morano** with crew **Joe Pelletier** and **Dan Rennie** in third. **Tom Atkinson** won the Ideal 18 series and The Frostbite Achievement Award, **Jim Hammel** in second, and **Cindy Gibbs** and crew **Jane Reilly** finished a close fourth. Matt Melius showed great improvement this season, with several top three finishes.

# Congratulations Corinthian Sailors



Congratulations to all of the Corinthian sailors who raced in the Frostbite Yacht Club Fall Series.

Several ECYC members raced in the Duck Island Yacht Club summer series and attended DIYC's Annual Awards Dinner which was held at our club in December.

**Chris Morano** with his crew **Dan Rennie** & **Joe Pelletier** won first place in the Etchells class, **Toby Doyle** and his crew captured second place. **Tijae Pelletier** helmed a J105 to a third place finish in DIYC's Shirley Hall Women's series.

ECYC and Pettipaug Yacht Club member **Sarah Dubois** won the prestigious Robin Starr handicap race at Pettipaug on decommissioning day October 28th . Three sleek MC Scows and four Sunfish sailed the race. While the scows finished ahead of the Sunfish, it was "revenge of the nerds" as all four Sunfish finished ahead of the scows on corrected time in a fluky breeze.



## MBYC Challenge Cup



Jim Hammel and Tom Atkinson sailed the Manhasset Bay Challenge Cup together the weekend of October 7<sup>th</sup> in Port Washington, New York. Jim and Tom also sailed this race last year. One boat per yacht club can enter – six clubs entered this year including an entry from Texas and another from California. A minimum of three races of at least four miles length are required. The host club chose to sail the race in Ideal 18s. Last year, only one race was completed due to lack of wind so there was no winner. A cold front was forecast to pass through Saturday, with rain and afternoon thunderstorms with the wind shifting from southwest to north. Jim steered the first race, getting a decent start and gaining the lead after a favorable wind shift in the oscillating 12-15 knot southwest breeze. Thereafter it was a battle between us and the team from California who rounded the first windward mark with a slight lead, extending it on the spinnaker run. They covered us tightly on the second beat, extending their lead every time we tacked. We later found out their skipper was a nationally ranked match racer who had never sailed Ideal 18s before but spent a day sailing with Ideal 18 expert Dave Perry two days prior to learn the boat. Fate intervened on our behalf – their jib sheet broke as they approached the second windward mark and we passed them while they made repairs. We held a good lead around the leeward mark, but they got a favorable wind shift shortly after rounding and were quickly on our tail. They tried to engage us in a tacking duel but we figured that was a losing strategy based on the first beat and sailed for the finish line, winning by a boat length. During the starting sequence for the second race when everyone's attention was focused south towards the windward mark, a violent 35 knot gust hit the fleet from behind with no warning – the cold front had arrived! The race committee quickly cancelled the start and the fleet struggled to get their sails down as the wind continued to blow 25 -30 knots for the next hour. Fortunately, the fleet was northwest of the yacht club and were able to make it back under bare poles with minor damage to some boats. We debated whether to return to Port Washington Sunday since that was also the first day of fall frostbiting. We decided not to, figuring the California team was unbeatable. It turned out there was a steady 25 knot breeze Sunday in Manhasset Bay and they did not sail, whereas it was a delightful day of sailing in Essex. So for the second year in a row, there was no winner. We'll try again in 2024.



## **A Note about Club Committees**

As required by the Bylaws, a list of committee members was posted on the downstairs bulletin board two months ago. The list includes instructions to either add your name to the list if you want to join a committee or cross your name out if you are listed on a committee that you do not want to be on. Please do not allow your name to remain on the list if you are not an active participant of a committee. Committee Chairs may strike people from the list when it is time to publish the 2024 roster if they are certain that a member is not an active participant. The Board thanks all active committee members for recruiting new members, maintaining our clubhouse, and organizing and running entertainment and racing events.

## **Important Notice about Communications**

### ***Bell 8 Being Moved Within Our Website***

The Bell 8 newsletters are being moved to the Members Only section of our website since they contain information about club operations and members that should not be in the public domain.

If you have not already established your account to access the Members Only section, here are the instructions again:

- ▣ Go to [essexcorinthian.org](http://essexcorinthian.org) and click on Member Log In in the upper right hand corner
- ▣ Follow the instructions to create your account with your email address.
  - ▣ Once you add your email, you will have to be verified by the webmaster in order to take the next steps. Please allow some time as emails will be verified once daily.
  - ▣ Once verified, you will receive a confirmation email and can then return to the website, click on Member Log In in the upper right hand corner and complete the information your profile.
- ▣ Logging in requires your e-mail address and the password you selected.

***The Essex Corinthian Yacht Club's Bell 8 Newsletter is a quarterly publication issued by the Essex Corinthian Yacht Club of Essex, CT.***

***For general questions on ECYC please refer to our website at***

***[www.essexcorinthian.org](http://www.essexcorinthian.org),***

***email us at [ecyc@essexcorinthian.org](mailto:ecyc@essexcorinthian.org),***

***or snail-mail to Essex Corinthian Yacht Club PO Box 759 - Essex, CT 06426***

***Telephone: (860) 767-3239***

Members are encouraged to submit articles and pictures of their club stories, sailing adventures/mishaps to the Bell 8 editor

Contact: [communication@essexcorinthian.org](mailto:communication@essexcorinthian.org)

Let's get Social!

Find us on Facebook at: [www.facebook.com/EssexCorinthianYachtClub](http://www.facebook.com/EssexCorinthianYachtClub)

Instagram at: [www.instagram.com/essexcorinthianyachtclub](http://www.instagram.com/essexcorinthianyachtclub)

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