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View From the Bridge

Greetings from your officers of the Bridge,

One of our goals for updates in this space is to bring each of you current news about what the Club is up to - as well as what those entrusted with charting its direction may be planning. For those of you who attended our annual meeting, you got a snapshot of some of the things coming up for this year. And if you were there, you know that we are focusing on three primary areas in addition to the annual activities we've all come to expect and appreciate. In my opinion, the most important of these areas is volunteerism – so let me spend the next paragraph preaching just a bit – then I'll move on to the update.

We are all aware that the Blue Water Sailing Club is a 100% volunteer organization. As a result, we count on, and hope, that pretty much everyone will take a “turn in the barrel.” We want each member to not just attend our events and cruises, which is important in its own right, but to try serving on a committee, give a presentation, run a cruise, or join us on the Board of Governors. We didn't get selected because we had some divine insight on the club, we just raised our hands. There are all sorts of roles from a minor commitment of time, to those that are a heavier lift. But what they all have in common is that you'll get to know more members of your club; you'll form deeper friendships; and you'll probably find out that completing a job well done with people you enjoy can actually be a lot of fun. If you want to help out, please keep an eye on the Beacon where we post notices of those areas needing volunteers. Any of us on the bridge will be happy to help you match your available time and bandwidth to the needs of the club. As your incoming commodore, I'm really grateful for the terrific group of volunteers we have on the Board this year, and I look forward to continuing our work together.

The two other areas on which the Board has focused this year came from our strategic planning committee's recommendations as well. We have put in place an effort focused on assuring the club's long-term viability and vitality. The club is very healthy right now, and we want to be sure that does not change. All sailing clubs are being challenged by the declining sailing population in the US, combined with boat purchases happening later in life for most families. As a result, we are not alone in seeing our prospective membership pipeline somewhat decreased or stretched out. So, we have expanded our membership committee, identified entry points for future members, and plan to embark on some true marketing activities. In the past, almost 100% of our new members came from existing members who met and referred prospects to the club. **THAT WILL REMAIN** our primary referral for new members. So each of us needs to keep this in mind, and to continue the focus on inviting sailors looking for education, activities and fun, into our club. But we will be trying to put our name out there in other ways as well.

The third area of focus is on membership. The goal for this committee, which has also been expanded, is to simply welcome and help retain new members. We believe this should be as easy as making sure they form new friendships quickly, and take part in club activities early. The role of existing members in this area is also very important. So don't be surprised if the membership committee reaches out to you, asking for your help in making our newer members feel a full part of our club. In the meantime, please be pro-active in this regard, and look for new faces at each of our activities.

As we roll into fall and winter, our on-land events are kicking off, so keep an eye out for those in the Beacon. And while the rest of you are heading south, working on your boats, or going skiing, your Board of Governors will already be working to set up an exciting summer for 2018. Thanks in advance for any role you may play in helping us do what we do!

Fair Winds,
Roy Greenwald