



## COMMODORE, Larry Sprague

Welcome to another year of sailing and comradeship on the high seas and littorals!

We will have our first monthly gathering at Carey Hilliard's on Monday, February 14<sup>th</sup> (St. Valentine's Day). From all accounts, the cases of COVID should be way down, so we will be able to enjoy each other's company with little fear of infection.

This year, we will be sending meeting minutes from our previous meeting to the membership prior to our monthly meeting. The minutes will be emailed, so be on the lookout for them.

We are in need of two additional Board Members:

**Cruise Chair**  
and an  
**At-Large Member**

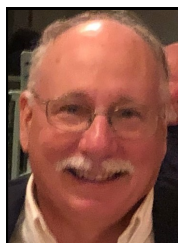
I am currently double-hatted, serving as Commodore and Cruise Chair. The Executive Board meets the first Monday of the month at 6:00PM at my house in Commodore Point West.

We have already laid out the cruising plan for 2022. Nothing is set in stone so, if you have a desire for us to go to another destination, please feel free to let me know. One of the primary purposes of our club is to get out onto the water, so we want the par-

ticipation in the cruises to be as high as possible.

I look forward to seeing everyone at our first meeting next month. Until then, fair winds and following seas.

**See the cruising calendar on page 2.**



### MEETINGS:

**Every second Monday of the month at Carey Hilliard's,  
3316 Skidaway Rd.  
Order dinner at 6:00;  
meeting at 7:00.**

### WEBSITE:

[www.geecheesailingclub.org](http://www.geecheesailingclub.org)

### EMAIL ADDRESS:

[geecheesailingclub@hotmail.com](mailto:geecheesailingclub@hotmail.com)

### FACEBOOK:

Geechee Sailing Club

### GEECHEE SAILING CLUB'S UPCOMING PARTIES & CRUISES

#### Socials:

*Saturday, Feb. 26, 4:00 p.m. -  
Oyster Roast at Marsh  
Harbor Clubhouse*

*Saturday, March 26, 4:00  
p.m. - Chili Cook-off at  
Marsh Harbor Clubhouse*

#### Cruises:

*March 19-20 - St. Patrick's-  
Regatta (see Angela's report  
on page 7)*

*April 9-10 - Shakedown  
Cruise to Half Moon River*

*May 28-30 - Cruise to south  
end of Wassaw Island*

*(See page 3 for further list-  
ings)*



**THE MEETING THIS MONTH  
WILL BE  
JUDY HELMEY OF  
MISS JUDY CHARTERS!**



**TRUST ME...  
YOU DON'T WANT TO  
MISS THIS ONE!**



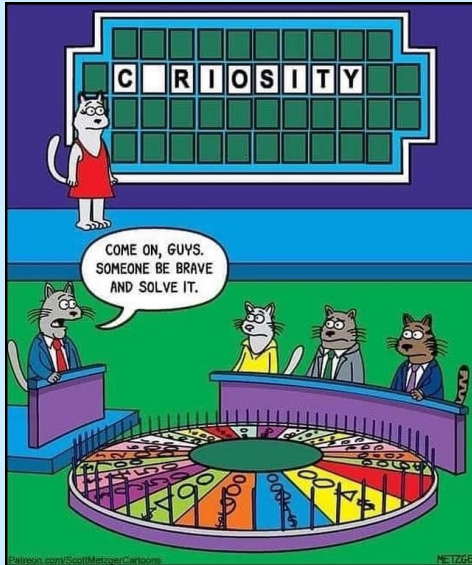
## VICE COMMODORE, Linda Howard

Sooo looking forward to this meeting on **February 14** with Judy Helme! Bring someone special and enjoy Valentine's Day with a dinner and entertainment!

Then **March 14** Beverly and Dick Long from the former Sail Harbor Marina & Boatyard will be speaking on memories and laughs of the past.

I will let you know about future speakers as we get closer to those months.

**STAY TUNED!**



## SECRETARY/TREASURER, Dawson Long

As your Secretary and Treasurer for 2022, I want to report to you on the balance of our accounts. The Vanguard Fund balance as of December 31, 2021 is \$20,547.32. The current balance of the checking account is \$3,887.78.

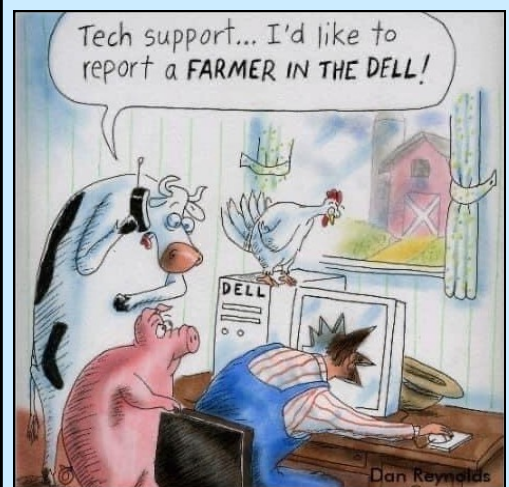
There are 8 distinguished people who paid their dues this year. If you paid your dues for this year last year, you deserve a golf clap.

Please write the checks to Geechee Sailing Club. You may mail them to Dawson Long at 1910 Skidaway Road, #37B, Savannah, GA 31404. If you mailed them to the Post Office Box, that is fine. Please communicate your plans to [dawson@fivepointsrealty.com](mailto:dawson@fivepointsrealty.com).

We would like for you to share with us any plans you have to get out on

the water this winter. I write this as an optimist when it is 26 degrees outside. At least we are not the Green Bay Sailing Club.

In the winter months, I suffer from the bigger boat dreams. So I will need some counseling from members who have overcome this affliction. I look forward to the boating adventures of this new year!



## CRUISE CHAIR, Larry Sprague

Below is the cruise calendar for 2022:

**April 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>** – Half Moon River – Shakedown Cruise

**May 28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>** – Memorial Day Weekend- South End of Wassaw ([Saturday-Monday](#))

**June 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>** –North end of St. Catherine's ([Friday-Sunday](#))

**July 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>** - Beaufort Water Festival (July 16-25)

**August 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>** – Daufuskie (Formerly Marshside Mama's)

**September 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>** – Labor Day – Harbour Town, Hilton Head ([Friday-Sunday](#))

**October 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>** – Bluffton Arts Festival (Oct 15<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>). Friday night at Freeport Marina or in creek across the river from the marina ([Friday-Sunday](#)).

dont be afraid to get old,....



**When I was young, I was poor. But after years of hard work, I am no longer young.**



I will be bringing some of each to our meetings. If you want to give me an idea in advance of how many, you can call or text me (Linda Howard, 658-7398). Everyone loves them, so you won't be disappointed. The bottles are \$10/each and the mugs are \$12.





## MEMBERSHIP CHAIR, Georgia Byrd

### Membership thoughts ... A little something to add to your calendar!



Looking for a quick and fun getaway by boat or land? Craving to crew among an action-packed fleet of fast sailing vessels? After living in Charleston for the past nine years, we've sampled an event that some Geechee Sailing Club members might recall.

Charleston Race Week (CRW) is back, so don your Sperrys and check out the schedule for April 28 - May 1 along the country's most picturesque venue. The three-day event is one of the largest keelboat regattas in America and features competitive sailing in the following classes: Melges 24, VX One, J24, J88, J105, RS 21 and Melges 32.

Charleston Race Week hasn't always been this well-known. The first few events were held in the heat of summer's sun, and the rosters were comprised of teams from around Charleston, Savannah, and the Wilmington, NC, areas. In the early part of the last decade, CRW began its transformation into a nationally recognized event, attracting sailing enthusiasts from all over the world and some big-time sponsors.

Now in its 25th year, the regatta was established in 1996 by members of the Charleston Ocean Racing Association (CORA). The event

actually came into being when CORA's officers opted to merge two area regattas into one – the South Atlantic Yacht Racing Association's PHRF Championships and the Charleston Palmetto Cup, a local championship event. That year, on the initial scratch-sheet, there were 29 entrants. Last year, amid the challenges of the pandemic and with Southern hospitality at an all-time high, the race committee pulled off a couple of high action races as Covid-positive racers pulled out, leaving a high tide of emotion to make 2022 bigger and better.

#### Let's go!

A two-hour drive through the scenic Low Country or a leisurely sail or cruise north will get you to the action. To watch by land, there are several vantage points around Charleston Harbor that offer prime views of the racing and hundreds of new hotel rooms around the city at the end of the day.

Here's a list of the best watch points:

White Point Gardens on the Charleston Peninsula – The racing on Circle 1 (J/80s, J/88s, and VX One Designs) takes place right off the Charleston Peninsula. One of the best places to catch that action is from the seawall that surrounds White Point Gardens at the far southern end of the peninsula. This area is commonly called The Battery. There is on-street parking here.

Demetre Park on James Island – The racing on Circle 2 (J/70s) takes place between Castle Pinckney in the middle of Charleston Harbor and James Island in an area that is called the South Channel. The best vantage point for seeing this action is Demetre Park on James Island. There is limited parking here.

The Charleston Maritime Center – The racing on Circle 4 (J/22s and J/24s) will take place just south of the Ravenel Bridge and north of Castle Pinckney in the vicinity of the South Carolina

Aquarium. One of the best viewing areas will be the Charleston Maritime Center, which is just off Concord Street. There is free parking on-site as well as a parking garage very close by.

If the easy chair is your style, follow the action online at [charlestonraceweek.com](http://charlestonraceweek.com) and on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.

The action is not limited to the races only. Make time to mingle with onlookers and crew! The Charleston Harbor Resort & Marina offers post-race parties each evening starting at 6 p.m. Live music and plenty of food and drink will be offered. Tickets are available nightly at the resort gate.

If you'd like to be a little closer to the action, apply for a crew position. For crew opportunities, log into [phlotilla.com](http://phlotilla.com) and register.



## SOCIAL CHAIR, Mary Ellen Sprague

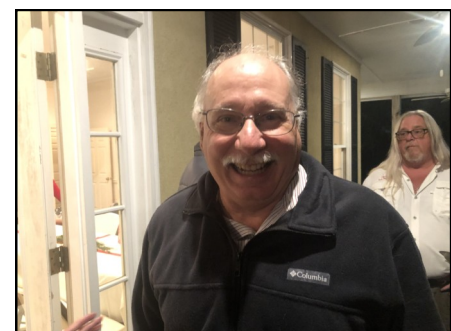
The Geechee Sailing Club held its annual gift exchange on December 13th at the Marsh Harbor Clubhouse.

However, it was far more than a gift exchange, Wonderful pot-luck food was had by all. Given the cold weather, most everyone stayed inside. Since this was the short hiatus between Delta and Omicron, there did not seem to be any infections resulting from the party.

Due to the weather, we had the gift exchange inside and seated with outgoing Commodore Dawson Long emceeing and providing the Christmas story. After much scrambling and laughter, we had our gifts.

Kudos to Tommy Howard for providing the clubhouse and decorations. Kudos to Linda Meyer and her team for once again organizing a wonderful event. Kudos to everyone who came, bringing food, presents, and good cheer. Great food! Great people! Great fun! Great time!

Our next social event will be an Oyster Roast at the same location on Saturday, February 26th. We look forward to seeing y'all there for another exciting event!





## COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR, Linda Howard

*I have been keeping this article since November and thought it was too good not to share. You will hear her at our meeting this month and will find that this is “right on!”*

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Judy Helmey landed her first fishing charter at the tender age of 14.

“I had my own boat at 14, and when too many people showed up one morning to go fishing on daddy’s boat, he told them to go with me,” Helmey recalled. “And that’s how it started, been fishing and running boats ever since.”

More than five decades later, Helmey is a Savannah icon. Her [Miss Judy Charters](#) is a go-to for locals and visitors. On Nov. 13, (2021) Captain Helmey, affectionately known as Miss Judy among boat captains, locals, and anglers across the country, turns 70 and celebrates 56 years of fishing Coastal Georgia.

Helmey got her start on inshore and offshore boats with her dad in 1956 at age 5. Her mother had just died in a car crash, and daycare wasn’t yet a cultural option. Her father did the only thing he knew and took her on his boat day in and day out, where stern, bow, and gunwales became her playpen at sea.

Shifting tides and dancing winds taught her the secrets of fish. Time of day and sky color told her about water, while wind and sun rallied as the ocean steadily raised her.

“Daddy didn’t have depth finders or GPS back then,” said Helmey. “He loved what he did, and studied and knew the tides and seasons and which fish were running when. I think that knowledge only comes when you really love something. I count my blessings everyday that I got to learn from him.”

Matt Williams, a lifelong fishing guide, has been a captain with Helmey for nearly 20 years. He considers her more close friend than employer as they fish together often.

The duo team once teamed for a memorable local TV segment. They were trying to land speckled sea trout, and Helmey was using artificial bait because she enjoys the added challenge.

“We were having a little trouble catching a fish — ok, maybe she was having a little trouble,” Williams said with a chuckle. “But when we’re together, we ramp each other up. We just work well. We eventually caught more than one fish, and by the end, the camera crew filmed dolphins, and she and I were just cutting up.

“That’s Judy. She sees stuff, everything, with bright eyes and never takes anything for granted. It’s how she can take a situation and make it a great memory for life.”

For 25 years Helmey has written a weekly fishing column in newspapers in Georgia and South Carolina. It highlights photos of happy charter clients posing with their catches and closes with one of Helmey’s personal anecdotes or one of her own special recipes. The weekly report also provides a window for fisheries management.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources likes to collect data from recreational anglers to get an idea of what species are being caught and harvested, and though DNR doesn’t directly use the fishing column as data, it is handy as a guide to understand some of what’s being caught near Savannah. Fisheries biologist and manager, Kathy Knowlton, has been visiting Helmey’s dock for 20 years gathering species data.

“Getting information from recreational anglers is all volunteer,” emphasized Knowlton. “And at some docks it must be intimidating when DNR shows up wanting to measure what everyone’s caught. But not at Miss Judy’s. She actively encourages everyone to share their fish for documentation.”

According to Knowlton, Helmey’s dock has been especially helpful during red snapper season, which for the past eight years has been restricted to a handful of days each year.

To understand the overall health of the fishery, biologists need an ear bone, the otolith, to determine a red snapper fish’s age. Red snappers can live up to 50 years, and the otolith grows like a tree with annual rings. Cutting into that bone and counting the rings reveals the age of the fish and provides a portal into how the larger population of red snapper is faring.

Recently, Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp appointed Helmey to the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, which oversees and conserves fisheries off the coasts of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. The appointment is not only a nod to Helmey’s dedication to

## COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR, Linda Howard (continued)

Science, but also acknowledges a lifetime of understanding the fishes and ecosystems on the Georgia coast.

"Miss Judy has been an integral partner in marine fisheries data collection for decades," Knowlton said. "She encourages her clients and charter captains to participate. Her passion for the fisheries extends far beyond her on-the-water experience, and includes creating an environment in which data are collected through partnership."

Tybee Island resident Steve Howell has been fishing with Helmeý for 20 years, and together they've gone on more than 80 trips. Equal parts client and friend, they share long running jokes, incessant teasing, and a constant, playful line of one-upmanship.

Through it all, Howell sees Helmeý as a rare and much-needed gem in the world.

"We always have fun, and she always keeps it light," said Howell. "Even when we're joking around, she's still making sure I have water and that I'm comfortable. And she loves what she does. What's amazing is Miss Judy's been doing this for 56 years, and she's still excited. Every time we go, she is still psyched to go, and you can just see it there in her eyes, how it sparkles like sunlight on the ocean."

(Savannah Now, November 14, 2021)

## RACE CHAIR, Angela Margolit

### Remaining Dates for the Frostbite Series this winter are: February 5, 19 & March 5

They will start at noon each day. Since there is no charge, a Google form is sent out a week before each race to anyone who has raced in the past. Please let me know if you want to sign up!

The US Sailing National Symposium, scheduled for here in Savannah on Jan. 27-29 at the DeSoto Hotel, has again been postponed due to the pandemic. Many people had already put a lot of time and effort into the event. Hopefully, it will eventually happen!

### Update on our 43<sup>rd</sup> St. Patrick's Regatta:

After much decision drama, and numerous conversations with all types of competitors, I decided against the banquet on Sunday evening. However, we can have an informal social gathering on Saturday. It will take place at Molly McGuire's on Wilmington Island. They have an outdoor "Oyster Deck" reserved for the skippers and their crews.

Doing this, we could keep the overall cost down to entice the smaller boats, and not have to worry about cancelling things at the last minute if Covid numbers go up again - which they might if Savannah has their St. Patrick's Day parade!

Like last year, we will have a virtual skippers' meeting on Friday night. The Fleet races will take place on Saturday for five classes: Spinnaker, Non-Spinnaker, Cruisers, J/24s, and Rhodes 19s.

Then on Sunday, we'll have the Pursuit Race, where start times are based on PHRF ratings. The finish line last year saw the last boat to start win by inches over the boat that started first!



**St. Patrick's Regatta**  
Geechee Sailing Club - March 19 - 20, 2022

**Mar 19 - 20, 2022**  
Geechee Sailing Club  
Savannah, GA

**About Event**  
The Geechee Sailing Club is the proud host of the annual St. Patrick's Regatta, now in our 43rd year! The event is scheduled for March 19 and 20 beginning with a competitors' Conference Call at 7pm on Friday, March 18. On Saturday we will have the fleet events, and on Sunday there will be a Pursuit Race.

**Quick Links**  
[Current Registrants](#)  
[View Online Storefront](#)  
[Register Online](#)



## FLOTSAM AND JETSAM

Unscramble each word, then take the letters that are underlined and unscramble them to come up with the last name of one of our members:

A R I T I V                      \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

U Q T R T

N L P T A

D L B E N

Answers to December's Scramble:    H A R M S

MARKET

HORSE

FAITH

SHIFT

## SUPPORT FOR OUR MEMBERS

This column is for club members to support other members "in need" (phone calls, visits, prayers, meals, etc.). Let me know of anyone you want to add. I won't go into a lot of detail on each here, but you can call them. I will also get approval before entering any names into this column. Please text me at 658-7398.

- Linda Meyer: Ongoing chemo.
- Linda Howard: Recuperating from major back surgery

## 2022 OFFICERS

Commodore ..... Larry Sprague  
Vice Commodore..... Linda Howard  
Secretary ..... Dawson Long  
Treasurer..... Dawson Long  
Social Chair..... Mary Ellen Sprague  
Cruise Chair.....  
Race Chair ..... Angela Margolit  
Membership Chair ..... Georgia Byrd  
Communications Chair/Editor.....Linda Howard  
Member at Large .....

For questions or comments, contact Linda Howard, Editor (912/658-7398)