The Sailing Foundation, a 501(c)3 tax-exempt non-profit organization, is the premier promoter of youth sailing and Safety at Sea in the Pacific Northwest. Working closely with community-based sailing organizations, local schools and universities, and numerous yacht clubs, The Sailing Foundation’s mission is to advance the sport of sailing in the Pacific Northwest. We accomplish this through outreach, organization, and training.

**Banner:** The bow of Doug Fryer’s Night Runner passes Race Rocks on one of her many Swiftsure races. Doug liked to say, “Old age and treachery always beats youth and exuberance.” Night Runner’s success proved that adage true more often than not. Doug passed away this spring after nearly 50 years as a director of The Sailing Foundation. See page 3 for a tribute to Doug written by Dick Rose. (Photo: Jan Anderson)

**Bottom:** “Team Northwest” was well represented at the US Sailing Leadership Forum in San Diego this February. Four of our group members, including Sailing Foundation director Andrew Nelson, were presenters, while four others were first-time attendees. One of the best parts about attending this conference is mingling (remember that?) with the local and national leaders in our sport.

Safety at Sea 2020

Annually, The Sailing Foundation runs the only US Sailing International Offshore Safety at Sea with Hands-On Training course in the Northwest. We feel very lucky that it happened this year before the widespread arrival of COVID-19. All subsequent SaS seminars around the country were eventually canceled. This year a hybrid course with online learning modules and hands-on training was offered for the first time ever. It was very popular since it only required one day of in person training. Those who took the hybrid course had generally positive things say about the online content and liked the self-paced nature of the learning modules.

Also new for 2020 was the "Damage Control Trailer" (aka MacGyver trailer). Participants worked in teams to respond to a variety of flooding scenarios like a crack in the hull or ruptured hose (pictured above), while using different techniques and materials to fix the problem. Another highlight was a US Coast Guard rescue swimmer who shared their perspective on helicopter rescues. This was a very enlightening discussion, even for experienced sailors. Big thanks to all of the people and community partners who made Safety at Sea a success! CLICK HERE for SaS Video!
Not the year we were expecting

Going into this year, I thought we would be setting participation records at high school and summer regattas, and I was also excited about some new initiatives that we were going to roll out. Now, it’s hard just to remember what ‘normal’ life was like. This spring has made me appreciate many things. One being how important it is for people to connect with our waters. For many youth, their only access to the water is through sailing camps, classes, or high school sailing teams. We’re working with our partners to weather this storm together and ensure that those opportunities are readily available when we’re allowed to reopen.

The impacts of COVID-19 have touched us all in different ways. We have already trimmed our own operations down to a minimum. As we claw out of this crisis we anticipate:

• A greater demand for youth scholarships
• Developing new ways to deliver sailing programming safely and/or remotely
• Guiding partner organizations through hardships caused by COVID-19
• A need to catch up on training and certifying coaches/instructors

While a lot of uncertainty surrounds the remainder of this year, programs and sailors are innovating and adapting. Some positive trends that I’ve already observed include:

Kids sailing outside of organized practices/classes. Yes, this is how many of us learned (and fell in love with sailing) back before junior sailing and high school sailing were so widely accessible. For those kids that are lucky enough to have access to a boat, I highly encourage this activity, just be responsible. Make sure you check the weather/tides, have an adult on shore (or at least one who knows where you are), take a waterproof communication device on the water with you, and when possible use the buddy system. I hope this also encourages more kids to own their own boat. Even if it’s not a Laser or Opti, just having a dinghy to go mess around in is a great way to have fun.

Families are sailing together again. It’s great seeing social media posts of families, specifically parents and children, out together on bigger boats. Some clubs are running races with household crew restrictions, while some area learn to sail programs are looking at adding family lessons as one of the first steps in reopening. COVID-19 has forced families to spend time together, so why not make that time special? A silver lining to this year is that we’ll probably all look a little more closely at our work/life balance and the break-neck pace of modern family life. I will truly miss the time I got to spend with our two young girls during quarantine, especially the days we got out on our boat.

Grassroots local racing is happening and all ages are participating. With travel regattas canceled, big boat sailors without crew, and vacations and other plans postponed, there’s room in the weekly schedule again for local dinghy racing. Racers who are thirsty for competition are finding it in their backyard. I expect as we continue into summer we’ll only see more and more local and club level racing turnout from youth and adults that otherwise wouldn’t normally participate. The Seattle Laser (Aero) Fleet is already getting turnout that it hasn’t seen in years on Thursday nights. What’s really cool is that youth sailors make up almost the entirety of the Laser fleet. Fleets and clubs are all experimenting with their own organic no-frills racing formats. Some are utilizing “rabbit starts” or finding other ways to organize their own fun without race committees.

The optimist in me is hoping that some of these positive trends stick around, but the truth is that COVID-19 has taken a big toll on youth sailing. Organizations are trying to figure out how to best navigate the rest of 2020. As I write this, youth race teams are just beginning to resume in very small groups at only a couple of locations. Several smaller programs have opted to cancel all summer learn-to-sail classes, and those attempting to run programming are looking at a shortened season and/or reduced capacity once Washington State reaches Phase 3. Many organizations will be forced to spend down their reserves, delay improvements/big purchases, and reduce staffing. NWYRC regattas are out of the question until Phase 4. And then there’s the dreaded possibility that the fall high school/college seasons may be impacted too.

We’re all going to be faced with some tough choices in the near future. COVID-19 has halted much of the momentum that we’ve worked so hard to build over the past several years. It’s going to take some time, maybe a couple of years, for youth sailing to fully bounce back, but I’m confident it will once this storm has passed.

Finally, I would like to give a shout out to all of the high school and college seniors who were denied a final season, not to mention rites of passage like graduation and prom. The Class of 2020 is an inspiration to us all. Nothing can make up for this lost time, but one of the great things about sailing is you can do it your whole life. This isn’t the end, just an unexpected tack.

-Andrew Nelson
Youth Sailing Director
ysd@thesailingfoundation.org

Photo: Sarah Hanavan
**Remembering Doug Fryer**

The Sailing Foundation lost its longest serving director when Doug Fryer passed away on April 17, 2020. In 1971 Doug was one of the founders of The Sailing Foundation and has been associated with Foundation ever since – as a member of the Board of Directors, as President and as a leader in the group of Foundation members who developed the Lifesling and promoted the Foundation’s Safety at Sea program. The Lifesling has since become the most widely used man overboard retrieval system on cruising and racing sailboats the world over.

In 1984, Doug needed the Lifesling he always carried aboard his boat, *Night Runner*. Here’s the report of his use of his Lifesling from the US Sailing list of Case Histories of Crew Overboard:

**Case 24.** On November 2, 1984, the 42 foot cutter *Night Runner* was about to gybe at the leeward mark in the Seattle Yacht Club Grand Prix regatta. The wind was 25 to 30 knots, seas three to four feet. The boat had just recovered from a spinnaker guy broach when the spinnaker guy fouled during takedown. Crew member Thor Thorson fell over the side while gybing the main.

Fortunately, he was wearing a PFD and had been a "victim" in the previous weeks Lifesling tests. The skipper and two of the crew had also been trained in Lifesling use. *Night Runner* made a quick stop by going head to wind, the Lifesling was deployed, and Thorson got the sling on the first pass.

The boat hove to with jib down, main vanged out, and helm down, and Thorson was hauled aboard manually in the Lifesling. The jib was hoisted and the boat was back in the race having lost less than five minutes. She finished in the upper third of her class. Because the crew knew what to do, everything went smoothly.

Doug was a talented and highly experienced offshore racer and cruiser. He sailed in 47 of the annual Swiftsure Races, finishing consistently at or near the top of the fleet, 12 Victoria to Maui Races, and the 1980 Singlehanded Transpac from San Francisco to Kauai. And countless regattas on Puget Sound.

Doug also cruised extensively, and in 1998 the Cruising Club of America awarded him the Blue Water Medal, its highest honor, for “meritorious seamanship and adventure upon the sea.” The award recognized Doug:

For seamanship during a 21,000 mile voyage [in *Night Runner*] from Seattle to Seattle by way of Cape Horn. His 10 months were plagued with hurricanes, squalls, and gear failures. He managed to jury-rig repairs at sea, even a loose skeg and bad rudder on a 1000-mile leg from Cocos Islands to Acapulco. Other stops: Puerto Vallarta, the Falklands, Trinidad, Venezuela, Panama Canal. Past winners of the Blue Water Medal have included Rod Stephens, Eric and Susan Hiscock, Sir Francis Chichester and Eric Tabary.

Ashore, Doug was a highly respected attorney specializing in maritime law, and he served for four years as Special Assistant, for the Western District of Washington, to United States Attorney, Robert F. Kennedy. He often offered valued legal advice to the Sailing Foundation and remained an active member of our Board right up to the last weeks of his life.

For fifty years Doug was a key member of The Sailing Foundation. Thanks, Doug. You will be missed.

-Dick Rose

Photo: Jan Anderson
New GiveBIG Record!

A huge thank you to everyone who so generously gave during these uncertain times. The community came out BIG to support small local non-profits this year. Our community of supporters raised $5,207, of which $2,500 were matched by Sailing Foundation board members. We were blown away that we exceeded our GiveBIG goal. In addition, we set a new record for online donations. Your support means a lot and we sincerely appreciate it.

If you missed GiveBIG and would like to donate, please

Visit thesailingfoundation.org/support-us today!

Thank You!

Board Member Spotlight

Dick Rose

Winner of US Sailing's
Harmon Hawkins Trophy

This award recognizes Dick Rose for "his contributions to the sport of sailing in the field of race administration." I'm sure many of you are familiar with Dick's contribution to the Racing Rules of Sailing. Not only is he our resident expert, he chairs US Sailing Rules Committee, which is responsible for updating and publishing the Rules every four years. In addition to his tireless service on the Rules Committee, Dick has long served as The Sailing Foundation's vice president. Dick oversees our youth committee and administers our scholarship program which he is very passionate about. Thank you for all of your service to the sport of sailing!

Margaret Pommert

Winner of the 2020 BoatUS/National Women's Sailing Association's "Leadership in Women's Sailing" Award

This annual award recognizes "an individual with a record of achievement in inspiring, educating, and enriching the lives of women through sailing." Margaret Pommert has made a name for herself locally and nationally with her service and passion for safety, instruction, and women's sailing. She has served on our board since 2016 and does a phenomenal job organizing our annual Safety at Sea Seminar. She is a also a member of US Sailing's National Faculty and serves on the Washginton State Boating Advisory Council. We are very lucky to have Margaret on our board and couldn't think of a more deserving recipient of this award. Congrats Margaret!

Footer: Our annual Coaches Clinic narrowly avoided cancellation this year. It was a well attended event with coaches, team leaders, jr. sailing volunteers, and college sailors in attendance from all over the Northwest. We had a great slate of speakers covering a wide variety of topics from Kerry Poe (North Sails Oregon) presenting on sail trim, to Jen Guimaraes (US Sailing Youth Education Manager) offering tips on measuring success in non-profit organizations. Below, former varsity college coach, Blaine Pedlow, shared more than two decades of team racing expertise with the group.