



The  
**SOLO  
 CHALLENGER**



*The Official Newsletter of the Great Lakes Singlehanded Society*

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**Winter 2006**

**A NOTE FROM THE  
 PRESIDENT  
 Paul Schloop**

GLSS members and friends,

I am very happy to be the new president of the GLSS and to be able to give back something to an organization that has given so much to me. I would like to thank past President Tony Driza for all his hard work over the last year and to thank all the people who have made the GLSS a respected and important part of solo sailing.

We now have in addition to our signature Port Huron and Chicago to Mac races, a Trans Superior Solo. As well, we have our Lake Michigan Scramble, our Lower Huron race and St. Clair Solo races. We are also investigating a Lake Erie race, which could happen as early as next year if all progresses well. We are running a booth and seminars at Strictly Sail and two Safety Seminars ---one for the Lake Michigan side and one for the Lake Huron side and our membership is growing. And, best of all, we have a great bunch of sailors to meet, befriend, and learn from.

Just a quick note to all potential racers, I was going through the check out counter of a local grocery store with my wife the other day and couldn't help noticing all the magazines at the check out area. To think that these are the most read papers in the USA today, really gives me pause. There are entirely too many people who lead their lives through other people, through celebrities--- as strictly voyeurs, not leading a life of there own. I urge all of you that have thought of doing a race like ours to do more than just dream about doing it. The hardest part of this race for a new solo sailor---- is leaving the dock.

Once you do it you will not regret it and will find that the actual race is easy compared to that first step of letting go and just *doing* it. Leave the dock behind! Besides, we have a saying that, "*We sail solo to be with our friends.*"

Through doing this race, I have met people that will be lifelong friends, join us!

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**The 2006 AGM**

The venerable Bayview Yacht Club in Detroit was the setting for the 2006 Annual General Membership Meeting that was held on January 28, 2006. Even winter took a hiatus as spring-like temperatures and bright sunshine greeted the attendees.

The afternoon kicked off with appetizers and some free drinks, courtesy of the Society in recognition of a record-breaking year. In terms of participation in our events, and resultant heft of our bottom line, it far exceeded anything we have experienced in recent memory. The eighty attendees lost no time in catching up on the happenings in fellow members' lives since the previous AGM in Chicago – it was truly a relaxed and cordial start to the festivities.

The business of the Society was dispatched without a hitch and outgoing President Driza welcomed the newest Members to the Society: Tom Agerter, Chris Eagen, David Herring, John Hoskins, Tom Hughes, Mike LaBore, John Lubimir, Bob Meador, Elisabeth Reichling, Bill Tucker, Brian VanWieren, Ken Verhaeren, Bill Vesey, and Ron White. This group of fifteen represented the single largest increase in the membership of the Society since an identical number were granted membership in 1981.

Outgoing Board members Jim McLaren, Dan Pavlat, Erik Johnson, and Al Merrithew were acknowledged and thanked for their many years of service on behalf of the Society. A Board proposed slate of Directors to fill the resulting vacancies was announced, and saw Rob Robins return to his old seat on the Board, and first time Directors Jon Jacobs, Mike Mahar, and Mike Osborn were elected to terms on the 2006 Board. Rob will be filling out the remainder of his one-year term, while the others were elected to normal three-year stints.

The prior year was highlighted with the running of Super Macs, and for the first time in GLSS history, there were finishers in both directions. The multihullers held down the Chicago to Port Huron end of the course with Matt Scharl and Jim Lyden successfully completing the event. The monohull group of David Wagner, Dan Pavlat, Jon Jacobs, and Patrick Nugent in PHRF 1A, and Tony Driza, Bill Erdmann, and Wes Bush completed the course in the opposite direction, finishing in Chicago. All were presented their medallions and place flags by the 2005 Mac Race Chairman Blair Arden, and given a nice round of applause. Congratulations gentlemen, for a Challenge well met!

The inaugural Trans Superior Solo Challenge was held in 2005 as well, and commemorative vests were presented by Race Co-Chairs Dan Pavlat and Dick Lappin to those skippers who entered the race, and medallions were presented to the successful finishers. In the Superior Division: Eric Thomas, John Ayres, Wally McMinn and Mike LaBore were recognized. The Michigan Division sported finishers Tony Driza, Dick Lappin, and Bill Tucker, and medallions were presented in the Ontario Division to Dan Pavlat and David Herring. New member



*Past President Jim Ratliff (l) and Dan Pavlat with the Trans Superior President's Cup Trophy*

and President's Cup winner Tom Agerter was not present to receive the President's Cup from Past President Jim Ratliff, but the trophy, donated by Jim, was displayed, and it is a real beauty! Thanks Jim, for your ongoing generosity on behalf of the Society!

The Mike Silverthorne Memorial Trophy has been awarded only once since its inception in 2003; that year it was awarded to Dave Rearick. There is not a prescribed set of criteria to determine the recipients, rather they are chosen by a committee comprised of those who knew Mike best. That committee, comprised of Alan Veenstra, Dave Rearick, Paul Schloop, Rob Robins, and Joe Turns had little difficulty in determining a recipient for 2006. It was presented by Dave Rearick to former President Jim McLaren in recognition of the unselfish and tireless



*Paul Schloop (l) and Jim McLaren – 2006 Mike Silverthorne recipient*

manner in which Jim has over the years given of himself to assist, particularly first time skippers as they made their way to Mackinac. His exploits on behalf of the Society are literally too numerous to expound upon, it was truly a memorable, very emotional moment as the Trophy changed hands. There isn't a more deserving member in the Society – Jim, we all owe you a debt of gratitude for your work on behalf of the GLSS.

Before wrapping up the meeting portion, Vice President Paul Schloop presented the 5/10/20 Races Completed Awards. Those earning a Five-Races Award were: Ron Wells, Joe Turns, Wally McMinn, Mike Mahar, Jon Jacobs, Mike Hanson, and Tony Driza. Receiving a Ten-Races Award were: Patrick Nugent and Harold Beaton, and the single Twenty-Races Award recipient was Blair Arden.

The podium was turned over to Vice President Paul Schloop and former President Jim McLaren who presented outgoing President Tony Driza with a GLSS handcrafted clock that Paul had constructed.

The meeting was subsequently adjourned – members and guests alike were treated to a fabulous prime rib buffet. The staff at Bayview really outdid themselves, and there weren't any half full attendees in the room!

While the dessert of hot apple crisp and ice cream was being plated, drawings were held for the dinner door prizes donated. A fabulous prize of a sailing session on board *Spirit of Canada* was donated by Derek Hatfield, and Erik Johnson was the lucky winner. Erik, we'll be expecting pictures when you get your ride on the currently under construction Open 60!

The podium was then turned over to our feature speaker, Derek Hatfield of *Spirit of Canada Ocean Challenges*, who spent the next hour and change regaling the audience with his exploits in the 2002-2003 Around Alone race. It was a fabulous presentation, replete with slides and some breathtaking video of the Around Alone race, and Derek received a well deserved round of applause at its conclusion. A fair number of members stepped up to make donations to Derek in support of his upcoming Five Ocean's Race, slated for October, 2006. It's not too late to make a donation through the GLSS (contact Tony Driza at [tdriza@wmis.net](mailto:tdriza@wmis.net) for details), or if you wish to make an individual contribution on Derek's website (<http://www.spiritofcanada.com>).

That concluded the events of the evening, and members were left to socialize a bit longer, or start making their way back to hotels, or home. The 2007 AGM will take place in Chicago, on February 3, at a location to be determined. Mark your calendars now!

## Another First for the GLSS

The past couple of years have seen quite a few "firsts" for the Society, and 2006 is continuing that tradition. To further increase the awareness of singlehanded/short handed sailing, the GLSS, under the auspices of past President Jim McLaren, conducted two seminars at the *Strictly Sail Show* in Chicago. These took place on Thursday, which was Opening Day of the show, and to reach out to the weekend visitors, another seminar was held on Saturday.



Both seminars were well attended, with an estimated 65 to 70 skippers looking to not only broaden their knowledge of shorthanded sailing, but also possibly compete in one of our events. New members of the Society Brian VanWieren and Elisabeth Reichling recalled experiences of their Solo Mac Challenges, including Brian's dismasting during the 2004 Chicago Mac. Veteran GLSS

skippers such as *Around Alone* competitor Tim Kent, Bill Dembek, Alan Veenstra, and Jim McLaren presented various aspects of singlehanded sailing, including tips, techniques, and safety considerations.

The seminars weren't the only GLSS activity at Strictly Sail – once again, the GLSS presence included an information booth. Volunteers from the Society pitched in to staff the booth, and answer questions from prospective singlehanded skippers. Those who worked the booth reported a lot of activity; the booth provided a convenient location to rendezvous with fellow members. Overall, GLSS presence at Strictly Sail was deemed a great success, and new skipper participation in our events is anticipated as a result.



Recognizing that venues such as Strictly Sail are important tools in publicizing the Society, Director Jon Jacobs was appointed Special Events Chair. Jon will be working with the rest of the Board to come up with improvements over the 2006 event, and look for other ways as well to expand our presence in singlehanded sailing circles.

## 2006 Open Houses are Coming

The calendar doesn't say spring yet, but plans are already well underway to host two Open Houses in March. There will be one in the *Chicago* area on **March 23, 2006 at Columbia Yacht Club**, and the presentation for the *Detroit* area skippers will take place on **March 29, 2006 at Great Lakes Yacht Club**. Both will feature some light appetizers and drinks will be available. Fellow members will be speaking on various topics near and dear to singlehanded.

This effort is spearheaded by Open House Chair Bill Smith, and he will be handling the arrangements for the Chicago presentation. Wally McMinn, Tom Munson, and Dan Pavlat are doing a tag team effort on the Detroit metro presentation. Please RSVP to Bill Smith - [wjsmith56@cs.com](mailto:wjsmith56@cs.com) for the Chicago presentation, and to Wally McMinn - [wally400@aol.com](mailto:wally400@aol.com) for the Detroit show. This is a great opportunity to bring a fellow skipper into singlehanded, and hopefully, they will use the event as a springboard to competing in one of our races later this season. The details of each seminar can be found by checking out the GLSS website:

<http://www.solosailor.org/>

If you would like to print a flyer to post at your Yacht Club, point your web browser to the GLSS website address above, and click on either Detroit or Chicago in the *News* area for all of the details.

It should be a fun evening all around – hope to see you there!

## Counting Down to the Mac Solo Challenges

The Notice of Race and all of the supplementary forms for the running of the **29<sup>th</sup> Port Huron to Mackinac Island and 10<sup>th</sup> Chicago to Mackinac Island Singlehanded Challenges** have been posted on the GLSS website. To download the forms to your computer, or just print them online using your browser, visit:

<http://www.solosailor.org/>

Follow the menu option under ‘Upcoming Races’. To accommodate those who may be experiencing computer problems or who may not have access, they are included with this newsletter. This is the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Chicago – Mac, and 2006 Mac Race Chairman Blair Arden promises a gala celebration on Mackinac Island. Mark **June 24<sup>th</sup> 2006** on your calendars, download and submit your applications as soon as possible. Early submissions help all of the volunteers working behind the scenes to plan for a great event!

## Be Part of the Team!

The GLSS Island Race Committee, headed by Gerylann Arden, is currently looking for people to be part of the 2006 GLSS Mackinac Island finish line committee. Race committee members are needed for shifts scheduled beginning Sunday, June 25<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm and ending by noon Wednesday, June 28<sup>th</sup>. Shifts are approximately 3-4 hours long with 6-8 hour breaks in between shifts.

Race committee members will have accommodations at the Mackinac Island Yacht Club from 3:00pm Sunday until 10:00am Wednesday. Rooms are shared by 2-3 people. Requests by couples / friends to share a room will be accommodated when possible.

This is a great way to contribute to the GLSS while spending time with some great people on beautiful Mackinac Island.

Anyone interested can contact Blair or Gerylann Arden at [islandRC@solosailor.org](mailto:islandRC@solosailor.org).

In your message, please give us your name, mailing address, phone number, and any other information you think will be helpful. Questions are also welcome.

## Website Updates

Hopefully by now, you’ve had a chance to visit the new website, and check out the new content. It’s not complete by any stretch, but we’re getting there. David Herring has done a fantastic job of re-programming the code for the entire site, and he is not finished yet. One addition that should prove really interesting, particularly to those who won’t be racing, will be the addition of a boat tracker that we hope to have ready for this year’s Mac Challenges. You’ll be able to see how your favorite boat is doing, and there will be information as well about the boat and skipper. Stay tuned for the rollout of this exciting new feature – there are a few wrinkles to be ironed out, but we’re on track!

New this year, is the option to pay your 2006 dues online using PayPal. Approximately one third of the 2006 member renewals and AGM reservations were handled through PayPal without a hitch. We’d appreciate it if you’d give it a try, even if you’ve had a prior experience that wasn’t what you had hoped for. If something didn’t meet your expectations, we’d like to hear about it, and improve it if possible. It really simplifies the record keeping, and cuts down on the number of trips to the post office and the bank!

Coming later this year will be a Ship’s Store where you will be able to order GLSS merchandise, and pay for it online using PayPal as well.

### Calendar of Events

*March 23, 2006 – Open House GLYC*

*Mar. 29, 2006 – Open House MCYC*

*June 24, 2006- 28<sup>th</sup> Port Huron - Mac  
10<sup>th</sup> Chicago – Mac*

*Sept. 8, 2006 Lake Michigan Scramble*

*Sept. 9, 2006 Lower Huron Solo*

*Oct. 7, 2006 St. Clair Solo & Big Al’s*

*Steak Roast*

*Feb. 3, 2007 AGM – Chicago, Illinois*

*Be sure to check the website often  
for details on these events!*

<http://www.solosailor.org/>

*Please keep the GLSS updated if you  
change your snail, email address, or phone  
number(s). Please send any corrections to:*

[tdriza@wmis.net](mailto:tdriza@wmis.net)

*Thanks!*