



Minutes
The Cruising Club of America
Annual Meeting of Members
Annapolis Yacht Club
Thursday, October 17, 2024

1. Commodore Jay Gowell called the meeting to order at 1500 hours.
2. Secretary Pat Montgomery confirmed that there was a quorum.
3. The Commodore welcomed attendees and emphasized the value of in-person interactions. He praised the energy and dedication of CCA leaders and highlighted ongoing efforts to keep The Cruising Club of America a leader in the world of offshore sailing.
4. There was a motion made and seconded to approve the minutes from the Annual Meeting of Members, which was held on 3/01/2024 in New York. The motion carried.
5. The Commodore opened his report with a heartfelt thanks to Vice Commodore Chace Anderson, who regretted he was unable to attend the Fall Meeting events. Jay thanked Chace for his unwavering support, counsel and wisdom as Vice Commodore. The Commodore also thanked Deanna Polizzo, John Devlin, Margie Robfogel, Dorothy Goldweitz, Susan Devlin and the entire Chesapeake Station Fall Meeting team for organizing a fantastic few days of meetings and events. The cruise the previous evening was a particular highlight, providing a great opportunity for members to connect in person. Special appreciation was extended to those who traveled long distances to participate. Jay remarked that the CCA is thriving thanks to the hard work and thoughtfulness of its leaders. And while there is always room for improvement, ongoing initiatives aim to enhance an already outstanding club and its offerings. Our agenda includes reports from many dedicated individuals whose energy and commitment continue to inspire.
6. Vice Commodore Chace Anderson's report was given by Commodore Gowell, who stated that in addition to the filed report, the Vice Commodore's job is to support the Commodore which Chace has fulfilled beyond expectations.
7. Treasurer Kathleen O'Donnell's report stands as submitted. A few areas were highlighted, such as the operational improvement achieved by transitioning our CCA bank account to the Bank of America which provides more flexible financial management and reduced banking fees. Also noted was the Club's annual revenue of \$425,000 of which \$170,000 goes to our publications. Plans are underway to review reductions in our credit card processing fees (\$10,000/year) and to assess our publication efficiency. A new team (Publications Committee) has been formed to evaluate all business aspects of our publications, including possible cost-saving measures for publications. While exploring options, Kathleen emphasized maintaining current quality standards, saying, "*We will keep the quality as high as it presently is.*"

8. Secretary Pat Montgomery thanked the Commodore and stated that her report stands as filed.
9. Doug Adkins gave the Report of the Historian and stated that his report stands as submitted. Doug praised his team of editors for their ongoing support and noted the challenges of maintaining historical records independently. Doug stressed a desire for members to suggest topics for columns such as *“Lore from the Lazarette”* and encouraged corrections when errors were noticed. He humorously added, *“The likelihood is I’m going to get in significant trouble over something I’ve written, and this may be my last report!”*
10. Fleet Surgeon, Dr. Jeffrey Wisch, said his report stands as submitted. He emphasized the lingering impacts of Covid-19, sharing the example of a major outbreak on a recent cruise and reminded us that Event Planners and Cruise Chairs need to apply appropriate precautions. Also mentioned, for those planning cruises – the role of Medical Officer should be formally defined. Additionally, information on stocking your medical kit is available on the website and in the Yearbook.
11. Fleet Captain, Ernie Godshalk said his report stands as submitted and added the following summary. The 2024 cruise program has been a success, with five completed cruises and a sixth set to begin tomorrow. Each cruise has provided valuable experiences and insights. Looking ahead, several cruises are planned or under consideration for the coming years, with a world of possibilities available. The key to a successful cruise lies in knowledgeable leaders familiar with specific regions. Members are encouraged to step forward as cruise leaders or committee members, as organizing a cruise, while demanding, is highly rewarding. Anyone with expertise in a particular area or connections to potential cruise leaders is urged to contribute.
12. The Commodore noted that each of the Rear Commodores and Post Captains had submitted written reports (those reports can be found on the Annual Meeting Section of the CCA website) in advance of the meeting and invited each to share a highlight or addition to those reports.
 - a. For the Bermuda station, Les Crane spoke in absence of Somers Kempe. Les noted that the station welcomed the crews from the recent Newport Bermuda Race but were disappointed in the participation in the post-race cruise around Bermuda. The station would entertain planning for a cruise following the 2026 race, providing there is sufficient interest in and commitment to a cruise following the race.
 - b. RC Bill Greenwood experienced technical difficulty and could not be heard. His report stands.
 - c. RC Nick Orem noted that the Boston Station report stands as submitted. In addition, Nick highlighted the successful participation of the Boston Station in the Saint Andrews Cruise and welcomed anyone cruising in the area next summer, to join the Mass Bay cruise. The Station also has their Annual Meeting and New Member Dinner coming up in November.
 - d. For the Buzzard’s Bay Post, Ray Collum was not present, but his report was filed.
 - e. For the Gulf of Maine Post, Peter Driscoll was not present, but his report was filed.
 - f. For the Narragansett Bay Post, Ned Jones was not present, but his report was filed.

- g. For the Chesapeake Station, RC Bev Crump noted that his report stands as submitted and welcomed the CCA to the Chesapeake Station. Beyond the meeting, a Cruise is schedule to begin on Friday with 33 boats signed-up – our largest cruise in recent memory.
- h. RC Tow Wadlow said the Essex station report stands as filed, adding that the Essex station is small and in good shape, as demonstrated by having a class of seven new members and growing the station to a recent high of 88 members – one short of the 1999 record of 89. And thanks to Historian Jeb Embree, we know that we have brought our average age down from 1999 and our current membership is making a lot of contributions including record attendances at events.
- i. Florida RC Atle Moe was not present, but his report stands as filed.
- j. Great Lakes Station RC Peter Balasubramanian noted station highlights. Rob Evie hosted a well-attended gathering for the Great Lakes Station in Birmingham, MI, with another event planned for November. The spirit of adventure remains strong among members, with Brian and Melissa Hill currently sailing in the Pacific Indian Ocean near Madagascar and Sean O’Brien completing a journey from the Great Lakes to Bedeck in Bradford, though an article from him is still pending. Amanda and I are preparing for a transatlantic voyage from the Canary Islands to Saint Martin in December. Additionally, the Great Lakes Station is proud of Andrew McTavish for his participation as crew on *Carina* in the Newport Bermuda Race.
- k. New York RC Peter Becker report stands, and his New York station was pleased with its recent raft-up, planned more in the future and credited the efforts of Cruise Chair Scott Craft.
- l. PNW RC Doug Adkins began by stating that the Pacific Northwest station is active and healthy, sponsoring two regional cruises and regular meetings with speakers. He reminded us that the PNW station will be hosting the fall 2025 meeting and encouraged all to join the cruise that will precede the meeting September 10th through the 17th. The cruise will remain in America and feature short legs, great weather, informal parties, and an invitation to Doug’s little beach house. The cruise will conclude in Bellingham to kick off the Fall Meeting on September 18th.
- m. Chuck Hawley, RC of the San Francisco station, noted that his report stands as filed with two additional points. First, the station continues to hold robust monthly meetings featuring special guests. Most recently, renowned oceanographer Dr. Sylvia Earle delivered an inspiring talk. Second, about membership we have discussed both new younger members and female members as cohorts that need to grow, but the main goal should be members. Chuck threw out the challenge to all RCs to get 10% of their respective station membership in new applications before our next full meeting.
- n. Steve Calhoun reported for Southern California RC Jim Eddy. Steve reported that the station had a successful Sea of Cortez Cruise with great weather and an enthusiastic group. Two accomplished sailors were recently admitted to the station ranks and SoCal has an active social calendar with four lunches a year and an annual dinner. Additionally, Steve mentioned that this is a Transpac year, which occurs every other year opposite the Newport Bermuda Race. Of note, the Commodores of the Transpac in 2025/2027/2029 will all be CCA members which may be an opportunity for the Club to increase its visibility on the west coast.
- 13. The Commodore noted for planning purposes that the Fall Meeting of Members will be hosted by Southern California in 2026 followed by Great Lakes in 2027. Moving on to Committee Reports,

Jay reiterated that reports were submitted in advance of this meeting and then invited committee chairs to add to those reports if desired.

- a. Mark Grosby submitted the Archives report but was unable to attend the meeting.
- b. Steve James noted that his report stands as submitted and hoped that all would attend the Awards Event that evening.
- c. Brad Willauer announced that the Bermuda Race Foundation report stands as filed and then reminded us that the Bermuda Race Foundation is a 501c3 organization and invited members to support the BRF with a tax-exempt contribution. Commodore Gowell provided brief historical context explaining that the formation of the BRF was intended to de-risk the race for the CCA by establishing a separate entity and ensuring the event's sustainability, particularly in the event of the loss of major sponsors. To secure long-term stability, efforts are underway to build an endowment that will generate annual funding to help offset the costs of hosting what is regarded as one of the premier classic ocean races.

Looking ahead, 2026 will mark the centennial of the partnership between the CCA and the RBYC in organizing the Bermuda Race. Although the first New York-to-Bermuda race took place in 1906, it was in 1926 that the CCA fully embraced ocean racing to enhance offshore seamanship. The upcoming centennial will be a significant milestone in the race's storied history and will be chaired by Andrew Kallfelz whose report followed.

- d. Andrew Kallfelz began by noting that the Bermuda Race Organizing Committee report stands as submitted. He then highlighted that in 2024, significant changes were made to the race, marking the first time in years that both the starting line and course length were adjusted. The organizers ensured strong media coverage to spread the word, and the response was overwhelmingly positive. Moving the start to Fort Adams proved to be a success on all fronts—participants enjoyed it, spectators had better access, and sponsors were pleased with the increased visibility.

While the race wasn't without its challenges, and a few incidents did occur, steps are being taken to address them and improve future events. A detailed report was submitted, highlighting key aspects of the race. Next, Andrew shared a two-minute highlight reel, offering a visual recap of the event's successes.

- e. Bob Medland noted that the Bonnell Cove Foundation report stands as filed with an update. Yesterday the Foundation reviewed requests for two grants bringing the total to twenty-one organizations approved for a total of \$100,000. The Foundation received thirty-seven requests for grants totaling approximately \$300,000. Historically, the Foundation can meet about 1/3rd of the requests. Bob then reminded us that the Bonnell Cove Foundation is also a 501c3 and would welcome your continued support to help narrow the gap and he thanked all the donors that make their work possible.
- f. Wilson Fitt, whose report stands as filed, was unable to attend.
- g. Julie Kallfelz noted that the Communications Committee report stands. She then took a moment to note that the Communications Committee continues to thrive thanks to the dedication of its member volunteers. From world-class publications to regular email and social media updates, the team's efforts ensure high-quality communication both within the organization and to the broader public. Each of these initiatives, whether it is the *Gam*, *Voyages*, the *Yearbook*, *Waypoints*, the website, or

social media—is a testament to the hard work of many committed individuals. Looking ahead, the committee is focused on maintaining this high standard while also exploring ways to improve efficiency and manage costs. Producing top-tier communications can be expensive, so efforts are underway to streamline processes without compromising quality. Additionally, the committee is developing a branding kit to centralize CCA’s visual assets. This resource will include official logos, PowerPoint templates, letterheads, and other branding materials, ensuring consistency and accessibility. Currently in draft form, the kit is expected to be refined with input from members and finalized by March. The committee’s work continues to evolve, driven by collaboration and a shared commitment to excellence.

- h. Rowena Carlson noted the Environment of the Sea report stands. As Chairperson of EOS Rowena announced that she will be stepping down and will be looking for a candidate to take over. Plans are to have a successor in place for the March meeting.
- i. Deanna Polizzo, Chair of the Events Committee, opened her report by encouraging members to mark their calendars for upcoming events, emphasizing the importance of participation. She highlighted the club’s busy year in events and provided key updates. The next major gathering will be the Annual Meeting on March 6-7 in New York, marking the next in-person opportunity for members to connect. She extended her gratitude to the Chesapeake Station for successfully hosting the current event and acknowledged the Pacific Northwest Station for their efforts in organizing the upcoming Fall Meeting in September 2025.
Deanna also followed up on an earlier point from the Commodore, announcing plans for new events centered around major races, following the successful luncheons and gatherings in Newport and aboard Arabella in Bermuda after the Bermuda Race. These events aim to raise club awareness in the CCA and drive membership growth, with possible future expansion to other major races across the country. She invited members to share recommendations on additional races the committee should consider.
Finally, she encouraged both in-person and virtual attendees to make an effort to attend events in person, recognizing the hard work involved in organizing them and reinforcing the idea that the club thrives when members gather and engage. She closed by thanking everyone for their participation.
- j. Peter Griffin posited the Financial Affairs Committee aims to safeguard members' finances rather than impose additional costs. The report stands as submitted, with ongoing collaboration with Treasurer Kathleen to review the 2024 financials and prepare the 2025 budget. Appreciation was expressed by the committee chairs who have submitted their budget proposals. A draft budget has been reviewed, with further revisions planned before presenting a final version for approval at the December board meeting.
- k. Phil Dickey’s Gam report stands as submitted. He added that the Gam has a valuable role in filling the void between Waypoints and the Yearbook, by reporting on the Stations’ activities in a more detailed way than other communications. Also, it is the vehicle for communicating our new member biographies.
- l. Liz Baylis’s report on Guest Moorings stands. Liz reiterated the committee’s desire to expand the list of guest moorings and yacht clubs willing to share docks with members. Members who belong to clubs with available moorings or docks were encouraged to provide that information for inclusion in the book and website. Additionally, a challenge was noted in maintaining accurate records, as the committee is often unaware when mooring stewards become inactive or unresponsive. Members

were asked to help identify outdated or incorrect listings. During COVID, efforts were made to verify mooring locations in Maine, but broader member engagement is needed to ensure accuracy. The committee welcomes any updates or new mooring opportunities.

- m. Tom Post's Investment report stands. In Tom's absence, Treasurer O'Donnell added that the investment account, managed by Tom Post and the investment committee, has seen remarkable growth, increasing by approximately \$500,000 since October 2022. Their diligent management and strategic oversight have contributed to this success, and their efforts are appreciated.
- n. Chris Otorowski, Interclub Relations, regrets that he could not attend.
- o. For the Long-Range Planning committee, Tim Surgenor delivered a (low tech) presentation on long-range planning, focusing on membership trends and strategies for growth. He began by acknowledging new members and emphasizing the importance of engagement in the membership process. Tim highlighted historical membership trends, noting that for decades, the organization maintained steady growth of 1-3% annually. However, after discussions around diversifying membership in 2015-2016, growth briefly increased before declining during the pandemic. The pandemic led to a significant drop in new members, from a peak of 70 in 2019-2020 to around 30, while also contributing to higher than normal resignations rates. He pointed out that only three stations had grown in the past four years, with most experiencing declines. He stressed that a slow and steady return to growth—aiming for 1-2% annually—was necessary to maintain the club's financial health and vibrancy. Increasing younger and women members was a key objective, but without lowering membership standards. Instead, the focus should be on creating opportunities for prospective members to engage with the club through races, safety and seamanship events, and collaborative activities with other organizations. To support this initiative, Tim encouraged members to refine their "elevator pitch" about the Club's value, actively introduce new candidates, and recognize those who successfully propose new members. He also suggested exploring new posts and stations, particularly on the West Coast, streamlining membership processes, and considering potential adjustments to dues. In closing, Tim emphasized that growth is a shared responsibility and urged members to actively seek and engage potential candidates to ensure the club's long-term success.
- p. James Phylfe, Membership Committee Chair, provided an update on membership trends and recent developments. He began by announcing the election of 31 new members, with an age range of 37 to 75 and an average age of 59, helping to slightly lower the club's overall average age. Among the new members, eight qualified as Next Watch, and three were women. James described the incoming class as highly impressive, with strong resumes and backgrounds.

The club currently has approximately 1,400 members. James outlined the numbers necessary to achieve the target of 1-2% annual growth, noting that the club loses 35 to 40 members each year due to passing. To meet a 2% growth goal, a net increase of 28 members is required annually, meaning roughly 70 new members should be brought in each year to offset losses. He emphasized that this is an achievable target.

To support this growth, the schedule for accepting new member proposals has been revised from twice a year to three times annually, with the next proposal deadline set for January 4. He encouraged members to reflect on their sailing experiences and consider recommending individuals who would be a strong fit for the club. While membership standards have remained unchanged for

over a century, he reinforced that strong character and demonstrated seamanship continues to be the key criteria for membership.

James highlighted recent membership outreach efforts, including events around the Newport Bermuda Race, which resulted in four to five new members and additional candidates in process. He encouraged hosting informal events that allow members to introduce potential candidates to the club. He also addressed the decline in younger and female members. While there has been an ongoing effort to engage younger sailors, he noted that women often face fewer opportunities to take leadership roles onboard. He urged members to provide women with chances to serve as watch captains and in other key roles, emphasizing that the club benefits significantly from their participation. In closing, James encouraged members to continue identifying and proposing candidates, stressing that the club's strength lies in its community and the shared passion for sailing.

- q. Bob Medland, Nominating Committee Chair, reported that his committee is continuing their deliberations and will file their report to the Secretary as required.
- r. Jesse Terry, Next Watch Committee Chair, was unable to attend. The report stands as filed.
- s. Bob Darbee gave both Quartermaster and Trophy Committee reports. Both reports stand as filed with a trophy update: Trophies are in Newport, in-transit back to Bermuda after engraving and in Annapolis for presentation this evening.
- t. Bill Strassberg submitted the Safety and Seamanship report but was unable to attend the meeting.
- u. The Technical Committee report stands as submitted by Jim Binch. Jim highlighted that the club should take great pride in its impact on the global sailing community, particularly in two key areas: keel attachment and monohull stability. Despite initial disagreements with European counterparts, the Cruising Club of America, and the Bermuda Race Organizing Committee, along with its Technical Committee, have been proven correct, prompting changes at the world sailing level to align with their standards. Additionally, the club pioneered the use of an advanced scoring system in this year's Newport Bermuda Race by integrating weather and current forecasts with expedition routing software, the BPP, and boats' own polars. This innovation has set a new standard, now being adopted by major races, including the Transpac, Marion Halifax, and Marion Bermuda races. The Club's technical expertise and leadership continue to shape the future of sailing worldwide.
- v. Bob Darbee, Chair Trophy Committee, reported above.
- w. Dan Biemesderfer, the editor of *Voyages Magazine*, noted that his report stands and provided a brief update. The *Voyages* publication is progressing well, with a steep but productive learning curve for its new editor, who has been receiving valuable support from Amy Green. A recent discussion in the Communications Committee meeting explored the idea of adding a "Letters to the Editor" section, with plans to introduce it in the 2026 issue. The feedback was positive, and additional input from members is welcome. Dan also emphasized the ongoing need for compelling articles. Members are encouraged to share interesting stories or suggest contributors who have noteworthy experiences to highlight.
- x. Elizabeth Gowell, editor of *Waypoints* said her report stands as submitted and noted that the monthly *Waypoints* newsletter is a collective effort made possible by the contributions of members who

submit articles, photos, and updates. Elizabeth expressed gratitude to regular contributors like Doug Atkins and Chuck Hawley for their columns on history and safety, as well as committee chairs and cruise organizers for providing timely news. Members are encouraged to continue sharing news and highlights. A call for content is sent out about two weeks before the end of each month, but anyone with relevant updates can reach out directly using the contact information provided at the bottom of the newsletter.

- y. Webmaster Michael Moradzadeh said his report stands as submitted with a couple of additions. The club's website serves a dual purpose: presenting the club to the public and supporting member activities. Special thanks were given to Chuck for his efforts in organizing documents and articles. For station and post officers, the website plays a key role in event coordination. Members are encouraged to ensure their events are included in the master calendar. Additionally, the website features an email tool that allows officers to communicate directly with their entire station—something San Francisco has utilized effectively. Members can also download an electronic membership card for immediate website access, though this feature had glitches, it is now operational.

For cruise organizers, a separate standalone site is available to streamline cruise sign-ups and organization. This platform allows non-CCA members to participate and manage payments without cluttering the club's main site. Discussions on currency options for transactions are ongoing.

- z. Barbara Watson, Yearbook editor, expressed gratitude to the Commodore for his persuasive efforts in securing an editor for the 2026 edition. Ray Cullum will take over for that year, with plans to collaborate in the upcoming edition to ease the transition. Appreciation was also extended to all contributors, especially our Webmaster, for their efforts in making this year's publication a success. Barbara will continue for the next edition before handing over responsibilities.
14. The Commodore called on Fleet Captain and Cruise Resources Chair, Ernie Godshalk to highlight the upcoming cruises. Ernie gave a quick review of those planned and areas under consideration. He encouraged everyone to review details on the webpage. Jay concluded by emphasizing the club's ongoing efforts to explore new cruising opportunities, mentioning potential destinations like the South Pacific and the Whitsunday Islands in Australia. He encouraged members with interest and local knowledge to step forward and take the lead in organizing future cruises.
 15. Commodore Gowell asked for Old Business and hearing none moved to a request for New Business.
 16. Also hearing none, the Commodore expressed gratitude to all attendees. In recap, Jay emphasized the club's publications as its clubhouse, highlighted the need for steady membership growth, and urged members to sponsor and engage new candidates. Personal experience underscored the value of early involvement, encouraging members to take active roles in strengthening the club's community.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1650 hours.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Montgomery
Secretary, The Cruising Club of America