



## **CREW NEWS**

**March 21, 2017**

### **\*\*\* Don't Mess with Texas "Trash Off"**

If you are not going to the Space City Sprints at Clear Lake April 8, don't feel left out. We have an alternative event for you! During this annual event held by the City of Sugar Land, GHRC cleans up a section of the Oyster Creek shoreline which takes an hour or two after our row (and after forcing down some bagels and coffee). This helps us reaffirm our non-profit standing by serving the Sugar Land community, as does our other event – National Learn to Row Day, coming up in June.

Ellen Tarver is coordinating the Trash Off and needs you to sign a registration form (on the fridge in the lovely trash can folder) to get the tee shirt and some equipment. We are aiming at going along the shoreline by the 59 bridge this time. Everything you need will be supplied, and you can keep anything you find! Abby was really excited about the tire she found last year! The city cleans up the pile of plastic bags afterward. No training required. Let's do our small part to keep our home water clean.

### **\*\*\* Boat Christening and Renaming Ceremony**

As if we need more opportunity for fun, we will be holding a boat Renaming and Christening Ceremony and reception at the boathouse Saturday, April 1 at 10:00 AM (after the club row). We have the honor of having 4 boats christened by 4 outstanding women – the wife of an original GHRC Board of Directors

member and a club legend; a Gold Medal club rower and fundraiser; a Sugar Land City Council member; and GHRC's first female member. Also, the Rector of a southwest Houston Episcopal Church has agreed to add her services, as well.

The names for the boats will be determined this week after the club voting concludes Wednesday. If you have not voted, check your e-mail now.

The ceremony is based on traditional nautical lore and will be interesting for all ages. While some profess to be sceptics, most rowers don't want to take a chance when sitting at the starting line. The good fortune and safety provided by a proper name and christening could be the difference! Ask Caitlin her thoughts on rowing a boat with no name!

There will be champagne (for boats and attendees), soda, cake, toasts, balloons and fun as we perform the ceremony and dispose of the left over libations, as prescribed in the reception following. Bring your family and friends to see this infrequent and traditional event in person rather than on ESPN later.

### **Gotta key?**

Members of the Board met with First Colony Community Association, our landlord, on several ideas for the future. One is the re-keying of the boathouse doors. We have not had any problems or instances involving unauthorized use of keys, it has been 8 years since we opened the boathouse. FCCA agrees locks should be changed out periodically when multiple people have keys. We will be going over the procedure for exchanging old keys for new as we determine the best process.

### **Wanna sign?**

Also, we are also working on a sign designating GHRC's presence at the boathouse and some repairs that need to be addressed.

### **Boat transporting info from our boat insurer**

Now that we are getting back into spring regattas and transporting boats, please review our Insurance Program Safety Guidelines below. Even if you are not a regular competition rower, there are safety guidelines that we need to follow while here at GHRC. I am listing all 8 points below, and especially pointing out last year's insurance industry's trend in claims – transportation losses were way up for 2016, mostly **due to failed straps**. Review # 3 and 4 below and take the time to be safe when travelling. Learn how to secure a boat and trailer from an experienced member.

1. Trailers without proper hitches, safety chains and automatic brakes will not be approved for shell transportation. Undersized vehicles will not be permitted to tow trailers. Operators must be experienced driving such a vehicle and be over 21 years old.  $\frac{3}{4}$  ton vehicles strongly recommended.
2. When car topping, be sure to secure Bow and stern to bumpers with safety lines. (Certain car racks do not require the extra lines.) Transport of large boats on undersized vehicles is not permitted.
3. Proper tie down of boats susceptible to wind damage is mandatory. This includes during transporting or temporary storage. Use strong materials. Motors must be secured properly to launches when in use and locked up when not in use.
4. Tie down straps need to be inspected regularly and replaced when needed. Most boat manufacturers sell proper straps. When traveling, inspect tie downs each time you stop to be sure they are secure. When in doubt, use more or double up on tie downs.
5. Use extreme caution when rowing in marginal weather conditions, especially when driftwood is a danger. Make sure coxswains and bows know how to stay parallel to a large wake to avoid hull damage.
6. Security must be provided when boats are stored outside and overnight at regattas and in other transportation situations.
7. We discourage rowing in the dark, but acknowledge that it may be unavoidable in certain circumstances. Boats must be properly lit bow and stern when rowing in marginal light.

8. Rowing in areas with known submerged hazards is strongly discouraged, especially when water levels are lower than normal. New hazards become a problem in shallow water:

### **GHRC business card**

We now have a business card! There is card holder on the whiteboard at the boathouse and members can take a few to hand out when appropriate. We find we get visitors at the boathouse or when we are out and about who are rowers or are interested in the club from conversations. The card provides the e-mail, website, boathouse address making it handy to pass on the info. Check them out!

### **Website update**

Check it out! Many people were responsible for updating and reorganizing the place where most new rowers find us. Now it is more useful for existing members, as well. You do have a shortcut on your desktop, don't you?!

Spring is always a busy time with longer evenings and something almost every weekend. The creek is busy with more activity by kayakers, dragon boats, paddle boarders and fishermen. We need to be careful, friendly and tolerant. There are great opportunities to teach and learn. Good luck to all racing at the Space City Regatta – a good place to try out racing.

Let us know what else GHRC can do to help you. While we can't do everything, we welcome ideas.

Dave Anthony

President