June 24, 2020

It’s time to get out on the water and enjoy the beauty and serenity of Maine.

The Northeast Harbor Fleet is excited to open our 97th year of operations with a very different twist. Your flag officers and committee members have been diligently focused on determining what we can do and how we can do things safely. You have all been asked to do your part and familiarize yourselves with our Fleet Policies and to agree to our waiver electronically. Our staff and your own household will deeply appreciate always arriving with your face covering in place and washing your hands at our many hand sanitizing and washing stations.

The Fleet has some great new opportunities for youth sailors to get out and mess around in our 20 new Tera sailboats. The boats should be arriving within the week and come up dry after a capsize. Rigging, sailing and unrigging lessons will be available on the SS web pages as soon as the boats get delivered and our multi-talented field of instructors produce them. Sailing lessons are being offered in a limited way of one-on-one instruction with sailors acquiring skills sailing solo with an instructor coaching from a safety launch. Rowing and Learn-to-Sail lessons have been tabled until next season as these sailors need much closer physical attention in the learning process.

Furthermore, there are four new RS Ventures coming for families to take out for a fun sail on the Great Harbor. These are a well and simply rigged, open cockpit keelboat which has the jib on a furler and an asymmetric spinnaker which launches from the bow tube. They will sit on moorings and we really want to encourage members of the same family to give them a spin. Also available for a more comfortable sail with a gaff rigged mainsail are two Arey’s Pond 14’ catboats. Again, we will post videos so you can learn how to rig and sail them on the SS web pages. The SS Board members are anxious to hear your opinions on these two boats as they would like to pursue acquiring boats for learn to sail lessons and for family recreational sailing in 2021. Of course, the amazing Magic Bus IOD Class sailboat is also available for those who feel comfortable in this completely rebuilt beauty which was an incredibly generous gift of David Schoeder. Lessons are also available for these platforms and we have flexibility for weekend times as well.

Racers will be enjoying a very full schedule with limited crew size unless sailing with family or household members. The Race Committee has required a daily tracking document which will assist in identifying contact tracing if we have an outbreak. Daily trophies will be awarded for oldest team, youngest team, and first all family entry. In a step back in time, more fixed race buoys have been anchored out on the Harbor as handling inflatable buoys by teens in a mark boat is off the table for this summer.

Our launch service is anxious to give folks a lift out to their boats with a max capacity of 4 people per ride this year. The Philip M Caughey has already passed its Coast Guard exam and Steve Lawson, Chloe
Vincenty, Simon Hulbert and Will ‘Wilson’ Hanson are back to keep this service running quickly and efficiently this season. The State of Maine requires all marina operators to not allow customers to handle the hose. As a result of this new standard and the fact that we need the launch sanitized after each ride our organization is fully committed to keeping all facets safe. The SS and Fleet owned boats shall be cleaned thoroughly after each use. Charlie Quimby is leading up this Clean Team and will be available to spray off your own personal boats between 11 and 5 all seven days of the week. The Clean Team will wipe off Ventures, Catboats, Magic Bus, SS skiffs and the Teras after every use as well.

The Fleet is thoroughly committed to keeping everyone safe while enjoying this wonderful recreational opportunity and providing access to the water. Your cooperation in passing through as efficiently and as safely as possible is greatly appreciated. Maine is a gorgeous but extremely fragile resource which all of us must diligently protect. Likewise, our staff, their families, and your families need to stay safe this summer. Please don’t let your guard down.

Finally, our staff is available via email or cell at any time. Please try your best to minimize face-to-face contact this summer and lead by example in everything you do. Next year should be a lot different but we will safely have lots of fun this year, too.

My best,

Franny Charles, Manager

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