

KEVO'S BOATING TIPS & MORE

BY
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WBSG/PICYA Scholarship Program

I was sitting in my office banging out my usual follow-up document for a Pacific Powerboating client's lesson on my laptop when the phone rang. It was my good friend and business associate Mr. Kelly Lam of Matchstick Marketing Solutions (www.mymatchstick.com).

At first I thought he was going to present one of his famous and ingenious ideas to promote and grow my business. But then he started talking about one of his clients, the Western Boaters Safety Group. He said they are a 501(c) non-profit organization and they want to give some support back to the boating community. What they had in mind was to offer three scholarships for high school seniors and college age students associated with Northern California yacht clubs. I said okay, what's the catch? He said there is none!

Okay, I said, let's take it to the next step. Tell me what you've got and what can I do to help. Kelly said they wanted to contact all of the yacht/boat clubs in Northern California, but had no idea how to do so. I told him about my good buddy and Past Commodore of the Pacific Inter-Club Yacht Association (PICYA) Mr. Vern Bendsen. He said this is exactly the type of organization they were looking for.



So Who the Heck are These Organizations?

THE WESTERN BOATERS SAFETY GROUP (WBSG):

Western Boaters Safety Group (WBSG) is a non-profit association designed to meet the needs of boaters by promoting safe boating practices throughout the western United States. They represent more than 28,000 boaters.

Members benefit from legislative advocacy for the interests of boaters everywhere. WBSG is a "watchdog" for crucial legislation influencing the recreational boating industry, utilizing the substantial political influence of WBSG when appropriate. WBSG also offers Marinedex, which is a comprehensive network of WBSG-approved repair facilities that recreational boaters rely on for quality assurance.

Members also benefit from the group's purchasing power with preferential insurance rates and enhanced coverage through the Aquapac Millennium Boat/Yacht Insurance Program.

With a dedication to continuous boating education, WBSG has specifically developed a semi-annual newsletter that provides insightful

loss prevention techniques, safe boat practices and other informational articles from boating specialists. (Including me!)

For more information about Western Boaters Safety Group, visit www.wbsg.org.

PACIFIC INTER-CLUB YACHT ASSOCIATION (PICYA):

"The purpose of this corporation is to constitute an association of yacht clubs and boating organizations to promote inter-club communications, activities, the social activities relating thereto and to organize and conduct programs to enhance the general welfare of member organizations." (Mission statement)

The Pacific Inter-Club Yacht Association (PICYA) was founded in San Francisco on May 12, 1896, to improve communication between yacht clubs, establish uniform racing rules, and encourage yachting. The organization started off with five charter clubs. Today there are 100 member clubs in Northern California with a combined membership of approximately 15,600 boating families. Opening Day on the Bay is the largest PICYA-coordinated event. PICYA has coordinated this event since 1917. For more information on the Pacific Inter-Club Yacht Association, please visit www.picya.org.



(Left to right) Mr. Joe Cecchini, President, Western Boaters Safety Group (WBSG); Ms. Marge O'Keefe, grandmother to scholarship winner Ms. Elizabeth Doyle and Commodore of Floating Realty Yacht Club; Ms. Elizabeth Doyle, scholarship winner; Ms. Francine Doyle, Elizabeth's mother; and Mr. Vern Bendsen, PICYA Staff Commodore and WBSG/PICYA Scholarship Program Chair.

OK, Back to the Story...

The plot was hatched. One (sunny) Sunday May morning my wife Susan (the Admiral), Uncle Bob (the boat dog) and I were out on our boat, *Her Way*. We spent the weekend with the Sacramento Bayliner Club at the Riverboat II restaurant on the north fork of the Mokelumne River. I invited Kelly down to the boat so we could talk face-to-face about what he had in mind. He informed me with dark glasses on that my mission, should I decide to accept it, was to contact PICYA and see if they would be interested in hearing The WBSG proposal. If I or any of my cohorts get caught, WBSG will disavow any association with me. (Or something like that!)

Vern and I have a few capers behind us so we were used to working together. So when I presented the idea to him he said... "Here we go again!" Then he said: "What's the catch?" I said there is none!



PICYA Director Mr. Jack Michael and his wife, Mary Lee.

Later on that same day I had a meeting on the boat with PICYA Commodore Mr. Manuel Mier and Vern. At this point I was clear on what exactly was on the table in terms of \$\$\$ and the parameters of what I could agree to on behalf of WBSG. It turns out the Western Boaters Safety Group was proposing three \$2,500 scholarships. I gave them the parameters of the proposal. The scholarships would be judged on academic achievement, community involvement and communications skills. If it was acceptable at this point, I was authorized to address the board of PICYA with a formal proposal. Manuel asked: "What's the catch?" I said there was none!

It was a blistery evening on the shores of SF Bay at the Berkeley Yacht Club. The sun was setting and the PICYA board was meeting inside. I checked in and got my guest badge before bellying up to the bar and waiting for my turn at bat. The bartender (I forget his name but he was a member of the Ebony Boat Club) asked me what I was doing there. I told him and he seemed to approve and wished me good luck. (Thanks.)

Vern introduced me to the board, officers and about a dozen onlookers associated with PICYA. My first thought was that these guys and gals have heard a lot of BS over the years and were not about to cut me any slack. I was right. They wanted details. After my presentation I asked if anyone had any questions. They all raised their hands at the same time and said in unison: "What's the catch?" I assured them that there wasn't any. A motion was forwarded to pursue the offer and it was unanimously approved.

Initially, WBSG and PICYA agreed to joint management of the program. Both groups formed committees to manage the program.

I was invited (and accepted) to be a member of the WBSG committee as an outside observer with an objective point of view. But it was soon very apparent to WBSG and I that we had an excellent partner in PICYA and that PICYA could be counted on to manage the program effectively and efficiently. In late May of '06 both committees agreed that the PICYA committee would take control of administrating the entire program.

Crunch Time

The clock started ticking in early June of '06. Deadline was Oct. 30. PICYA had to organize, delegate, initiate, communicate, promote, evaluate and award these three scholarships in five months. I've been involved in many organizations over the years and quite frankly I've never seen the mobilization of all available resources in a timely and efficient manner from a "joint committee" involving two bureaucracies in my life. This is a direct compliment to the two-committee chairmen, Mr. Kelly Lam of WBSG and Mr. Vern Bendsen of PICYA. (Great job you guys.)

Fast forward to the annual PICYA awards banquet at the Encinal Yacht Club in Alameda on Monday, Nov. 6, 2006. The winners were chosen and it was a time for congratulations:

Mr. Richard Driscoll

Graduated from St. Ignatius College Preparatory School in San Francisco 6/06. He is a freshman at the University of California San Diego, pursuing a degree in Mechanical/Aerospace Engineering. Richard's parents are members of the Richmond Yacht Club.

Ms. Elizabeth Doyle

Graduated from St. Francis Drake High School in San Anselmo, CA., 6/04. Elizabeth is enrolled in the College of Marin in the Registered Nurse Program. Elizabeth's grandmother is a member of the Floating Realty Yacht Club.

Mr. Brooks Reed

Graduated from Scotts Valley High School in Scotts Valley, CA, 6/05. Currently Brooks is a sophomore at the Massachusetts Institute



Mr. Vern Bendsen, PICYA 2006 "Yachtsman of the Year."

of Technology (MIT) pursuing a degree in Mechanical and Ocean Engineering. Brook's parents are members of the Santa Cruz and St. Francis yacht clubs.

Thank You, Joe

Mr. Joe Cecchini, President of Western Boaters Safety Group, generously provided all funds for the 2006 WBSG/PICYA Scholarship Program. Joe has generously agreed to support the WBSG/PICYA Scholarship Program for 2007. Joe, none of this could have come to pass if it weren't for your generosity in providing funding for this very worthwhile program directed at Northern California yacht clubs. All of us in the Northern California boating community owe you a debt of gratitude. Thank you so much!

One more thing: Congratulations to Mr. Vern Bendsen for being chosen "Yachtsman of the Year" by PICYA for 2006!

So What Is My Tip This Month?

If you belong to a yacht/boat club in Northern California and have a child getting ready for higher or vocational education, take advantage of this great program. If you don't belong to a yacht/boat club, this program represents one more reason to consider joining one. For more details on the WBSG/PICYA Scholarship Program, visit www.picya.org.

As always feedback is appreciated. I can be reached at 925/890-8428 or kevo@yachtsmanmagazine.com.

Be safe & happy boating! ☺