



Minutes
The Cruising Club of America
Annual Meeting of Members
New York Yacht Club
Friday, March 6, 2026

1. Commodore Jay Gowell called the Annual Meeting of Members to order at the New York Yacht Club at 1500 ET.
2. Secretary Pat Montgomery confirmed that a quorum was present.
3. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the September 19, 2025 Fall Meeting of Members at Semiahmoo. The motion carried.
4. Commodore Gowell welcomed members who had traveled from throughout the United States, Canada, Bermuda, and Europe, and reflected on the strength of the Club's volunteer leadership and its growing recognition as an authority in offshore cruising and seamanship. reviewed the work of the Club during his term, noting disciplined financial management, a balanced budget without a dues increase, strengthened financial controls, more predictable use of endowment funds, continued attention to governance and leadership responsibilities, and the creation of the Cruise Resources Committee. He cited progress in long-range planning, publications, cruising programs and member orientation, as well as the formation of the Western Europe Station. He thanked the many volunteers whose work sustains the Club and gave particular recognition to Pat Montgomery and Deanna Polizzo for their service.
5. Vice Commodore. Chace Anderson stated that the report stands as submitted. He described the Vice Commodore's role as supporting the Commodore and participating broadly in Club activities and said that the experience had prepared him well for the responsibilities ahead.
6. Treasurer. Kathleen O'Donnell reported balances of approximately \$2.35 million at Fidelity, \$179,671 in Bank of America checking, \$165,385 in savings, and \$51,814 at Schwab. Approximately 85 percent of 2026 dues had been paid, and she asked the Stations to assist in reaching members whose dues remained outstanding.
7. Secretary. Pat Montgomery stated that the report stands as submitted. In concluding her service as Secretary, she expressed appreciation for the opportunity to work with the Club's leadership, Stations, Posts, committees and members, and said that she looked forward to continuing to support the CCA.
8. Historian. Douglas Adkins stated that the report stands as submitted and invited members to bring ideas and historical material to him. He spoke warmly of Sheila McCurdy's forthcoming history of the Club and recognized the extensive work of Sheila and the Publications Committee in bringing the project toward publication.

9. Fleet Surgeon. Jeffrey Wisch reported on the Club's continuing emphasis on medical preparedness offshore, the new Medical Advisory Committee, Medical Moments in Waypoints, and preparations for medical support during the 2026 Newport Bermuda Race. He also noted the updated Fleet Surgeon memorandum and the remote medical support available to members.

10. Fleet Captain. Ernie Godshalk reported that the Grenadines Cruise had been highly successful. He reviewed upcoming cruising plans, including Bermuda and the New England Islands in 2026, the Spanish Virgin Islands and Bras d'Or in 2027, and developing plans for later years. He also noted revisions to Flag Protocol that permit certain Club officers to fly the member-aboard flag at the starboard spreader in addition to their officer flag.

11. Reports from Rear Commodores and Post Captains followed:

- Bermuda Station. Somers Kempe was not present. In his absence, Jay briefly reported on preparations for the Newport Bermuda Race and the post-race cruise. Carol Feathers was recognized for her on-the-ground work in Bermuda. More than a dozen boats and approximately forty people were expected for the cruise, and additional participation was welcomed.
- Bras d'Or Station. Erwin Wanderer stated that the report stands as submitted and emphasized the value of Club cruises in identifying and engaging qualified sailors. He noted that the Newfoundland Cruise had led to new members in that area and that similar outreach had resulted from the Western Isles Cruise.
- Boston Station. Brian Guck reported that Boston and its three Posts remained very active, with approximately twenty-seven events along the coast and close to 500 members. He welcomed new members and invited those present to the Wharf Rats luncheon on April 22.
- Buzzards Bay Post. Ed Van Keuren was not present; the report stands as submitted.
- Gulf of Maine Post. Barney Baker was not present; the report stands as submitted.
- Narragansett Bay Post. Ned Jones was not present; the report stands as submitted.
- Chesapeake Station. John Devlin stated that the report stands as submitted. He highlighted the recognition of five fifty-year members at the Station's holiday luncheon and reported strong membership recruitment: eight new members against a goal of nine in 2025, with a goal of ten for 2026 and four already approved.
- Essex Station. Gretchen Biemesderfer described the Station's collaboration with Boston and New York in responding to proposed U.S. Coast Guard changes to aids to navigation, noting that many aids had ultimately been retained. She also described a well-attended flare-disposal and training event at Stonington Harbor Yacht Club.
- Florida Station. Clint Bush III stated that the report stands as submitted. He noted preliminary discussion of a possible 2028 Fall Meeting in Florida and a possible 2028 cruise involving the Bahamas and Florida Keys.
- Great Lakes Station. Newly elected Rear Commodore Rob Emery reported that the Station will host the 2027 Fall Meeting at the Royal Canadian Yacht Club in Toronto in conjunction with RCYC's 175th anniversary.
- New York Station. Peter Becker spoke of the Station's objective of reversing recent out-migration and returning to growth. He recognized Membership Chair Hiroshi Nakajima and former Rear Commodores for their work and encouraged continued member engagement.

- Pacific Northwest Station. Susan Stillman stated that the report stands as submitted. She reflected on the success of the 2025 Fall Meeting and associated cruise, recognizing the many members whose teamwork made the events successful and emphasizing the importance of participation and engagement.
- San Francisco Station. Mary Lovely reported on the Station's monthly meetings and speakers covering boats, voyages and environmental topics. She noted that members continued to sail widely throughout the world and that the Station's membership was growing.
- Southern California Station. Bradley Avery was not present. James Eddy reported in his place and welcomed members to the 2026 Fall Meeting, October 22–23, at Newport Harbor Yacht Club in Newport Beach.
- Western Europe Station. Jonatan Brewin was not present. Chris Jones reported in his place. He said the new Station was developing a WhatsApp group to connect members and their boats throughout the region and was planning an initial social gathering followed by sailing activities. Jay clarified that Western Europe had already been formally established as a Station.

12. Committee Reports followed. The following updates and highlights were shared in addition to written submissions:

- Archives. Mark Grosby reported that the committee had adopted a file-naming convention for the Club's developing electronic archive and would make the convention available to Stations. The goal is to preserve Station material along with the Club's records.
- Awards. Jim Quanci was occupied with preparations for the Awards Dinner. Steve James briefly reported on the committee's work and the evening's award recipients and noted Jim's assumption of committee leadership.
- Bermuda Race Foundation. Brad Willauer stated that the report stands as submitted. He described the Foundation's fundraising effort to provide long-term financial support for the Newport Bermuda Race and reported an enthusiastic response, with 156 commitments received.
- Bermuda Race Organizing Committee. Andrew Kallfelz stated that the report stands as submitted. More than 160 boats were entered for the 2026 race, and he highlighted the 100th anniversary of the CCA–Royal Bermuda Yacht Club partnership. He thanked the large group of volunteers and Bermuda partners involved in producing an event that includes roughly 1,800 sailors, thousands of spectators and a substantial online audience. Jay encouraged members to experience the Fort Adams start.
- Bonnell Cove Foundation. Bob Medland stated that the report stands as submitted and thanked Club members who support the Foundation and refer worthy organizations. Doug Adkins had been elected to the Foundation board. Bob reported that the first 2026 grant cycle had generated requests totaling approximately \$316,000 from 36 organizations, while approximately \$75,000 was available for grants to 17 organizations, underscoring the need for additional donor support.
- Charts and Guides. Wilson Fitt was not present. Erwin Wanderer reported for him noted that Wilson was relatively new in the editor's role and noted the publication of a new 2026 guide covering Nova Scotia, the Bay of Fundy and western New Brunswick. Jay also called attention to the new Labrador guide edited by James Watson.
- Communications. Julie Kallfelz stated that the report stands as submitted and announced that the CCA Brand Kit was now available on the website under Member Resources. It includes

the official burgee image, digital files and approved colors, with further refinements anticipated.

- Cruise Resources. Ernie Godshalk had covered the committee's work in his Fleet Captain report and had no additional remarks.
- Environment of the Sea. Maggie Salter was not present. Jay noted that the Governing Board had approved the committee's new mission statement. No report was submitted.
- Events. Deanna Polizzo thanked members who had traveled to New York and noted that more than eighty members were present. She encouraged Stations to promote attendance at Fall Meetings, describing them as an important opportunity to see different parts of the country and to build relationships across the Club. The report stands as submitted.
- Financial Affairs. Peter Griffin, participating remotely, stated that the report stands as submitted. He highlighted the 2026 budget approved in December and the financial-control policies approved by the Governing Board in June 2025, and encouraged committee chairs and members to become familiar with those policies.
- GAM. Phil Dickey stated that the report stands as submitted and described the GAM's member biographies, detailed Station reports and photographic coverage of Club events. He reported that careful cost management had reduced the publication's real cost by approximately 10–15 percent over four years, with an issue delivered to a member's mailbox for approximately \$13.50.
- Guest Moorings. Liz Baylis was not present; the report stands as submitted.
- Investment. Tom Post was not present; the report stands as submitted. Jay expressed the Club's appreciation for Tom's management of the investment funds of the CCA, the Bermuda Race Foundation and the Bonnell Cove Foundation.
- InterClub Relations. Chris Otorowski stated that the report stands as submitted. He described the strengthening of interclub relationships during the Western Isles Cruise and noted anniversary presentations to the Royal Thames Yacht Club and the Royal Ocean Racing Club.
- Long Range Planning. Tim Surgenor noted that he had not submitted a written report. He identified three continuing priorities: building a more active and involved membership; returning to slow, steady membership growth with particular attention to women and younger sailors while maintaining CCA standards; and increasing the Club's profile and reputation for seamanship within the broader blue-water sailing community. He encouraged Stations and committees to align their work with those objectives.
- Medical Advisory Committee. Jeffrey Wisch had covered the committee's work in his Fleet Surgeon report; no separate report was given.
- Membership. James Phyfe reported that 21 new members had been admitted in February, bringing the rolling twelve-month total to approximately sixty, enough to offset recent attrition. He emphasized that membership growth depends on personal relationships and on members and Stations identifying qualified candidates. He expressed concern that the average age of new members was rising and that the proportion of Next Watch members was declining, while noting encouraging growth in the number of women joining the Club. Jay reinforced that candidate identification is the responsibility of members and Stations; the Membership Committee processes and evaluates proposals.
- Next Watch. Will Gammell was unable to attend because of illness. No additional oral report was given.

- Nominating. The Nominating Committee report was taken up under New Business.
- Publications. Richard Casner stated that the report stands as submitted. He thanked Douglas Adkins, Nick Warren, Carter Holliday and Mike McBee for their assistance in bringing Sheila McCurdy's Club history to completion after the loss of the original publisher, and recognized Sheila for the extensive work involved in the project.
- Quartermaster. Andy Dickinson stated that the report stands as submitted. He encouraged members visiting Newport to make use of the maritime library at IYRS, located near the Club's trophy collection. Jay thanked Andy for his work caring for and transporting the trophies.
- Safety and Seamanship. William Strassberg was in New Zealand and unable to attend. Ernie Godshalk reported for him, noting that the committee's meeting earlier that day had been standing-room-only and that the depth of the discussion illustrated the CCA's leadership role in seamanship.
- Technical. Jim Binch was not present; no additional oral report was given.
- Trophy. Robert Darbee participated remotely and reported completion of an updated appraisal of the Club's trophy collection. Including the trophies, custom travel cases and Newport showcase, the collection was valued at just over \$500,000. Copies of the detailed appraisal had been provided for the Club's permanent records. Bob also thanked Andy Dickinson for managing the considerable logistics involved in transporting the trophies.
- Voyages. Dan Biemesderfer reported that the 68th issue of Voyages was complete and at the printer, with delivery expected within a week or two. He encouraged members to submit accounts of their own adventures, emphasizing that contributors need not be professional writers or photographers.
- Waypoints. Jason Walsh reported for Mark Gabrielson and himself and stated that the report stands as submitted. He said the editors would focus on increasing readership, which historically had an open rate of approximately 20–25 percent, by examining layout, content and story length in collaboration with Michael Moradzadeh and the Communications team. Jay thanked former editor Elizabeth Gowell for her service.
- Web. Michael Moradzadeh encouraged members to visit the website and asked Station, Post and committee leaders to keep calendars, officer and committee listings, and other information current, noting that members rely on the website to learn what is happening throughout the Club.
- West Coast Working Group. Chuck Hawley, participating remotely, described an early-stage effort to use communication networks among offshore cruising sailors to identify potential qualified members while respecting privacy concerns. Jay also encouraged greater CCA visibility in major West Coast races and sailing events and indicated that modest financial support for appropriate outreach events could be available.
- Yearbook. Ray Cullum thanked Barbara Watson for her mentorship, Michael Moradzadeh for technical support, and the many members and leaders who provided information. He reported that the Yearbook had been reformatted for improved readability and urged members to keep their online profiles, boat information and Station data current. The report stands as submitted, with publication expected in the first week of May.

13. Written cruise reports were included in the Reports in Advance and were not read separately, as the principal cruising plans had already been covered in the Fleet Captain and Cruise Resources reports.

14. There was no Old Business.

15. The Nominating Committee slate was presented. The nominees were A. Chace Anderson, Commodore; Andrew F. Kallfelz, Vice Commodore; Timothy R. Surgenor, Secretary; Kathleen M. O'Donnell, Treasurer; and Douglas D. Adkins, Historian. Nominees for Governor, for terms expiring in 2029, were James A. Watlington, Bermuda; Dorothy Wadlow, Essex; Michael Geagan, New York; and Joseph W. Golberg, Pacific Northwest. There being no competing slate, the nominations were placed before the membership upon motion duly made and seconded. With 306 proxies represented, the slate was elected unanimously by voice vote.

16. Jay congratulated the newly elected officers and Governors and expressed confidence that the CCA was in excellent condition and would continue its leadership in offshore cruising and seamanship. Reflecting on his term, he spoke of the friendships and relationships strengthened through service to the Club and thanked the many members whose work had supported his administration. He concluded that it had been an honor and privilege to serve as Commodore. Jay then transferred the CCA burgee and Commodore pins to Chace Anderson, who assumed the chair as Commodore. Chace recognized the service of retiring officers, Governors and Rear Commodores, including Jay Gowell, Pat Montgomery, Buddy Rego, Bill Greenwood, Nick Orem, Ray Cullum, Spencer Kuhner, Doug Adkins, Mary Alice O'Neill, Chuck Hawley and James Eddy, and the members responded with applause. In brief remarks, Chace said that becoming Commodore was a great honor. He recalled being surprised when Bob Medland first approached him about serving as Vice Commodore and praised Jay as both an outstanding Commodore and an exceptional mentor who had included him closely in the work of the Club from the beginning. He thanked those who had supported him and looked forward to his term.

17. There being no further business, Commodore Anderson adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Ann Montgomery
Secretary