



**Minutes**  
**The Cruising Club of America**  
**Fall Meeting of Members**  
**Semiahmoo Resort, Blaine, WA**  
**September 19, 2025**

1. Commodore Jay Gowell called the meeting to order at 1445 Pacific Time.
2. Secretary Pat Montgomery confirmed that there was a quorum.
3. Commodore Gowell welcomed all Members and expressed appreciation for the strong turnout and participation at this Fall Meeting. He noted the continued vitality and outstanding volunteer effort throughout the Club, stating that the CCA “continues to hum along beautifully.”
4. There was a motion made and seconded to approve the minutes from the Annual Meeting of Members, which was held on 3/07/2025 in New York. The motion carried.
5. Commodore Gowell expressed deep appreciation to the Pacific Northwest Station for hosting the Fall Meeting and the San Juan Islands Cruise, crediting Bruce Johnson, Mary Baker Anderson, and Deanna Polizzo, among others, for a “wonderful few days of meetings” that enabled members to connect more personally. He also highlighted the broad success of the Western Isles Cruise, with 62 boats and members from five sister clubs, where members had the opportunity to cruise, socialize, and strengthen connections with other international sailing organizations.

He noted that the Western Isles success reinforced an idea “percolating for a couple of years” — the emerging effort to establish a Western Europe Station, now being explored with enthusiasm by Rob and Nina Beebe and others who live or sail regularly in Europe.

Jay emphasized that volunteer leaders are what keep the CCA “firing on all cylinders.”

He remarked that he is “constantly amazed by the energy, thoughtfulness, and effort” contributed by members across the Club and expressed gratitude for those who continue stepping up to support communications, safety at sea, publications, stations, and cruising initiatives. “That’s not to say we cannot do better — we strive to every day,” he added.

The Commodore concluded his remarks with a moment of appreciation for Jesse Terry, recognizing his dedication in leading the Next Watch program. He shared that Will Gammell has agreed to assume leadership of this important effort, reflecting the Club’s commitment to preparing and mentoring future CCA leaders.

6. Vice Commodore Anderson reported on representing the Club at several conferences of the International Council of Yacht Clubs (ICOYC) during the past year. He described the unique value of CCA’s participation as the first virtual club recognized in this global network and noted opportunities to share expertise in Cruise Management, Safety at Sea, and Publications. Chace emphasized that while some issues discussed at ICOYC conferences relate more to clubs with physical facilities, membership offers CCA stronger connections in the

worldwide sailing community. He invited members interested in future conferences to participate, explaining that they are open to CCA members who may attend at their own expense, and encouraged anyone interested to contact him or Bruce Johnson, who is also assisting with ICOYC coordination.

7. Treasurer Kathleen O'Donnell noted that her written report was included in the meeting materials but highlighted several important updates. She announced the start of the 2026 budgeting process, explaining that she would be reaching out to committee chairs and responsible officers to review year-to-date spending and to provide input for next year's financial needs.

She reminded members that, under IRS and insurance requirements, all stations' financial resources and physical assets are legally assets of the Club, since the CCA operates under a single tax identification number. She emphasized the need for stations to report valuables such as trophies, which should be appropriately insured, as a matter of sound stewardship and club-wide financial responsibility.

In closing, O'Donnell reiterated the importance of timely responses from committees and stations, noting that proactive coordination enables the Financial Affairs Committee to deliver the annual plan and budget efficiently and on schedule.

8. Secretary Pat Montgomery thanked the Commodore and stated that her report stands as filed.

9. Historian Doug Adkins reported that his written remarks were submitted in advance but shared two brief additions. First, he encouraged Rear Commodores and Post Captains to "please engage your historians," noting that CCA history is best preserved when stations actively support local recordkeeping and archival work. He then thanked Sheila for her exceptional work as author of the Club's newest historical publication and urged members to "buy her book — it's absolutely wonderful," emphasizing that it marks the next significant step forward in the Club's legacy documentation following the foundational work of Jack Parkinson.

Commodore Gowell added his personal appreciation, remarking that Adkins had "hosted a wonderful party at his home and the disco was fantastic," drawing warm laughter and applause from the room.

10. Dr. Jeffrey Wisch, Fleet Surgeon, reported that as part of his role on the Bermuda Race Organizing Committee, the George Washington Maritime Medical Access Group will provide medical coverage for the Newport-Bermuda Race. He explained that this partnership will offer round-the-clock consultation services for a 30-day period, ensuring that even returning vessels will remain covered. Wisch described this as "a value-added gesture" for the fleet and emphasized that the collaboration includes a customized medical and medication supply list specifically tailored for offshore racing.

He also noted that a new Medical Advisory Committee has been formed (an evolution of the earlier COVID Task Force) and continues to advise club leadership and stations on health and safety issues. Weekly communications from the committee have included topics such as COVID, influenza, and tick-borne diseases, with published articles in *Waypoints* and an upcoming piece on dengue fever.

11. Fleet Captain Ernie Godshalk summarized an active and successful year of CCA cruising, noting that recent highlights included the Transatlantic Crossing and the Western Isles Cruise, both of which drew strong participation and collaboration with international clubs. He commended the Chesapeake, Boston, and Pacific Northwest Stations for their own local cruises and events, describing the PNW gathering as "spectacular."

Looking ahead, he outlined cruises through 2029, including the Grenadines Cruise in January 2026, a Bermuda Cruise following the Newport-Bermuda Race, and a New England Islands Cruise led by Ray Cullum. Cruises for 2027 will include the Spanish Virgin Islands (led by Roel Hoekstra) and the Bras d'Or Cruise (led by Peter Rugg

and the Bras d'Or Station). Future destinations under discussion include the Bahamas, French Polynesia, the North Channel of Lake Huron, and Ireland in 2029 at the invitation of the Irish Cruising Club.

Ernie closed by noting that member proposals such as Mark Lenci's Great Barrier Reef Cruise keep CCA's cruising spirit vibrant, adding with a smile, "If you have a great idea for a cruise, please see me — we're always looking for new horizons."

12. The Commodore noted that each of the Rear Commodores and Post Captains had submitted written reports in advance of the meeting (those reports can be found on the Fall Meeting Section of the CCA website) and invited each to share a highlight or addition to those reports.

a. Bermuda - Les Crane reporting for Rear Commodore Somers Kempe.

Les reported that activity in the Bermuda Station continues in preparation for the upcoming Newport–Bermuda Race. He noted ongoing collaboration with the Bermuda Tourism Authority on post-race arrangements and highlighted plans for the CCA Members Party traditionally hosted at Buddy Rego's home. Crane also shared that James Watlington is organizing the post-race cruising program and that promotional communications would be issued soon. Report stands as filed.

b. Bras d'Or – Rear Commodore William B. Greenwood III.

Rear Commodore Greenwood highlighted an active year for the Station. He participated in the Marblehead to Halifax Ocean Race, noting it was a great chance to meet fellow CCA members sailing "down east." The Station also hosted a Next Watch reception organized by his son Will Greenwood and Hugh Gooday, welcoming younger members including Jesse Terry, who sadly passed away soon after but had made "a very big impression" on all present. Greenwood also reported that the Canadian team defeated the American team in the Commodores' Challenge, the friendly rivalry sailed in alternate years with the Newport–Bermuda Race. He closed by noting the season's end and the arrival of "ski season."

c. Boston – Rear Commodore Nick Orem

Rear Commodore Orem reported on the success of the Mass Bay Cruise, which began in Provincetown and proceeded through Boston, Marblehead, Salem, and Manchester-by-the-Sea, concluding in Gloucester. Nineteen boats and forty-two members participated, and he was pleased to see "lots of people without gray hair," a sign of growing engagement from younger members. He thanked volunteers and participants and noted that his written report stands as submitted.

d. Buzzards Bay Station — Post Captain Raymond J. Cullum

Not present. Report filed.

e. Gulf of Maine Station — Post Captain Barney Baker

Not present. Report filed.

f. Narragansett Bay Station — Post Captain Edward "Ned" Jones

Not present. Report filed.

g. Chesapeake Station — Rear Commodore John Devlin

Rear Commodore Devlin reported a busy year with well-attended luncheons and a spring cruise and announced an upcoming fall cruise to the Northern Neck of Virginia; a destination not visited in years. Eighteen boats and forty-

eight members had registered, with more expected. He added that the Station set a goal of nine new members and had already confirmed seven, with others under review. His report stands as filed.

h. Essex Station — Rear Commodore Gretchen Biemesderfer

Rear Commodore Biemesderfer shared two highlights. The Station took part in a flare-off event with the Stonington Harbor Yacht Club, where members safely disposed of expired flares despite cold and rainy conditions—an occasion that produced some humor when an alternate use was identified - “repairing asphalt on a driveway.” She also detailed the Station’s lead role in coordinating responses to the U.S. Coast Guard’s proposed removal of aids to navigation, mobilizing members from New York through Maine to submit testimony that prompted the Coast Guard to conduct a formal study before acting. Her report stands as filed.

i. Florida Station — Rear Commodore Clint Bush III

Rear Commodore Bush reported in person, noting that the Station remains highly active with regular luncheons and a new cruise program planned for the coming year. He remarked that the group continues to focus on recruiting new members and strengthening participation across Florida’s coasts, adding with a smile, “we’re still trying.” His written report stands as filed.

j. Great Lakes Station — Rear Commodore Peter Balasubramanian

Not present. Report filed.

k. New York Station — Rear Commodore Peter Becker

Rear Commodore Becker joined remotely to present his report. He thanked Deanna Polizzo for her work as Event Chair and recognized Scott Kraft, Cruise Chair, for organizing a mini-New England Cruise that drew wide participation. He also previewed upcoming programs featuring Ronnie Simpson, Adam Laurie, and Sheila McCurdy, reflecting the Station’s active schedule of educational and social events.

He paused to express the Station’s deep respect and mourning for Jesse Terry, whose enthusiasm and friendship left a lasting impression on the CCA community. His written report stands as filed.

l. Pacific Northwest Station — Rear Commodore Douglas D. Adkins

Rear Commodore Adkins thanked members who organized and supported the Pacific Northwest events throughout the year. Report stands as filed.

m. San Francisco Station — Rear Commodore Chuck Hawley

Rear Commodore Hawley reported that the Station had met its goal of growing membership by 10 percent, welcoming ten new members this year (not including resignations or Final Voyages). He credited active recruitment and welcoming events for growth. Report stands as filed.

n. Southern California Station — Rear Commodore James A. Eddy

Rear Commodore Eddy reported on an active year of social and sailing programs and confirmed that Southern California will host the 2026 Fall Meeting in Newport Beach, California, inviting members from across the Club to attend. Report stands as filed.

13. Committee Reports

a. Archives – Mark Grosby

No report was given.

b. Awards – Jim Quanci

Jim shared his appreciation for Steve and Karen James and other members of the Awards Committee for their patience and guidance during his first year as chair. He said the committee's selections for this year's awards were approved by the Governing Board the previous day. He encouraged members to suggest candidates for next year's honors, reminding everyone that "it's always good to have people in the queue for us to look at and consider." His report stands as filed.

c. Bermuda Race Foundation – Brad Willauer (reported by Chace Anderson)

Vice Commodore Anderson stepped in for Brad, explaining that the Foundation is leading a major capital campaign to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Newport–Bermuda Race. He noted the "wonderful reception" the effort has received during its early, silent phase and expressed optimism about raising permanent funding to secure the race's future. He added that the campaign is particularly important given the shifting sponsorship landscape, saying, "We're somewhat dependent on a small group of large sponsors... and that's behind the need to build permanent capital."

d. Bermuda Race Organizing Committee (BROC) – Andrew Kallfelz

Andrew reported that planning for the next Newport–Bermuda Race is going smoothly, with 74 entries already registered. He thanked the committee for producing and publishing the 2024 Incident Reports, encouraging everyone to read them, as they've directly shaped this year's revised safety regulations. "They're really valuable," he said, noting appreciation for all the time and care invested by the report review team.

e. Bonnell Cove Foundation – Bob Medland

Bob reported that 23 grant applications were received this cycle, requesting a total of \$185,000. The Foundation approved 15 grants totaling \$61,000, and for the year to date, 30 grants have been awarded for a total of \$126,000. He reminded members that only about 12% of CCA members donate, urging broader participation: "We need more donors." The Foundation's purpose and programs are detailed in his filed report.

f. Charts and Guides – Wilson Fitt

Not present; report stands as filed.

g. Communications – Julie Kallfelz

Julie gave an energetic and heartfelt update. She thanked the many editors and volunteers behind the Club's publications, website, *Waypoints*, and social media, calling communications "the connective tissue that binds together all of the work we do." She encouraged members to get involved, noting that effective communication "celebrates and shares the good work the CCA does with the broader sailing community." Her report stands as filed.

h. Cruise Resources – Ernie Godshalk

Ernie briefly noted he had nothing to add beyond his written report, which stands as filed.

i. Environment of the Sea – Maggie Salter

Not present; report stands as filed.

j. Events – Deanna Polizzo

Deanna thanked members of the Pacific Northwest Station for hosting a successful cruise and meeting, saying "everyone had a great time." She reminded attendees that the Annual Meeting will be held March 5–6, 2026, in New York City and welcomed Roddy Hearne to the committee to help strengthen representation from the West Coast. Her report stands as filed.

k. Financial Affairs – Peter Griffin

Peter outlined two proposed by-law updates to align with the Club’s fiscal calendar and financial control framework. He explained that the budget preparation deadline would move from October 1 to December 1, and that language referring to outdated banking procedures would be replaced with a clear statement about modern financial controls and safeguards. Both changes were approved later in the meeting.

l. GAM – Phil Dickey

Phil reported that production of *The GAM* continues smoothly, with a per-issue cost of \$13, which he humorously compared to “a glass of white wine at the bar.” He thanked the contributors and urged station historians to submit materials on time. His report stands as filed.

m. Guest Moorings – Liz Baylis

Liz was not present. Commodore Gowell noted that the list of approved moorings has continued to expand. The report stands as filed.

n. Investment – Tom Post

Not present; report stands as filed.

o. Interclub Relations – Chris Otorowski

Chris described his recent trip to Monaco, where he presented a 1773 perpetual trophy to the Royal Thames Yacht Club for its 250th anniversary. He said the gift, he said, “was well received—and quickly filled with champagne bottles.” He added that the next outreach effort would be directed toward RORC, now marking its 100th year, underscoring CCA’s continued friendship and collaboration with clubs abroad.

p. Long Range Planning – Tim Surgenor

Tim opened by apologizing for the earlier closed session, explaining that it allowed the committee to discuss candidly the progress of the current plan. He reviewed three ongoing priorities: membership growth while maintaining standards, member engagement, and awareness of the CCA’s activities, noting that the Communications Committee has made strong progress on the last. Membership now stands at 1,393, up from 1,300 in the last *Blue Book*, due in part to the inclusion of Blue Water Medalists. Tim said the committee has begun thinking ahead to the next long-range plan, with a new report expected in 2029, five years after the current one.

q. Medical Advisory – Jeff Wisch, M.D.

Jeff described the committee as an “evolution of the old COVID Task Force,” now focusing on broader health issues relevant to sailors. The group stays in touch weekly to share updates on COVID-19, influenza, and tick-borne diseases, and recently added dengue fever to its list of watch topics for members cruising south. Three medical articles have been published in *Waypoints*, and the committee is working with the George Washington Maritime Medical Access Group to explore offshore medical education and teleconsultation for members. “Otherwise,” Jeff said, “our report stands as submitted.”

r. Membership – James Phyfe

James reviewed membership numbers, confirming the total stands at 1,393. He reiterated the Club’s goal of growing by 1–2 percent each year — about 14 to 28 new members — but noted that losses from Final Voyages and resignations average about 50 annually, require us to add over 50 members to tread water. Recruitment remains a shared effort across all stations. His written report stands as filed.

s. Nominating Committee – Chris Otorowski

Chris reported the committee has met several times; work remains, but progress is “moving along nicely.”

t. Next Watch – Drew Plominski (reported by Jay Gowell)

Drew report stands as filed and Jay thanked Will Gammell who has agreed to take on a leadership role following the tragic loss of Jesse Terry, saying that Jesse’s impact will continue to be felt.

u. Publications – Richard Casner (reported by Doug Adkins)

Doug explained that the committee is actively reviewing all CCA publications (about a third of annual spend) amid major shifts in the publishing industry and supplier instability. The immediate priority is replacing a publisher to keep Sheila McCurdy’s book moving; an RFP effort has revealed both risk and potential savings/stability across vendors.

Jay underscored that Publications is looking at all titles—with special focus on Sheila’s book—and noted the RFP findings about vendors exiting lines of work, which may yield better pricing and stability.

v. Quartermaster – Andy Dickinson

Andy confirmed trophies were returned from New York to the IYRS 4th-floor display in Newport (alongside the Edward Kane Library); invited members to visit and said the plan is to return trophies to New York in the spring, then Bermuda in June.

w. Safety and Seamanship – William Strassberg

Bill highlighted continuing collaboration with the Newport Bermuda Race Organizing Committee on safety regulations and education, especially updates following the 2024 race incident reports. The committee also continues to update guidance on emergency preparedness and offshore training courses. His written report stands as filed.

x. Technical – Jim Binch

Jim was not present. Report stands as filed.

y. Trophy – Bob Darbee

Bob reported that significant recent trophy additions—including several trophies contributed by Chris Otorowski—make this a good time for a fresh appraisal that doubles as the master inventory for IYRS; this supports insurance and asset tracking. He noted the collection plus cases total roughly \$500k (a major tangible asset for a club without a clubhouse) and described the alarmed/video security that has proven effective in recent incidents.

z. Voyages – Dan Biemesderfer

Present and reporting: spring/summer were quiet for submissions, but pieces are now picking up. Dan asked members to send in stories—there’s still plenty of space to fill.

aa. Waypoints – Elizabeth Gowell and Mark Gabrielson (Reported by Julie Kallfelz)

Julie briefed on their behalf: *Waypoints* continues to receive lots of great content—sometimes more than they can fit—so editors are working to keep it engaging and digestible. She invited additional contributors and encouraged volunteers interested in an editor role to reach out.

bb. Web – Michael Moradzadeh (Reported by Julie Kallfelz)

Julie also briefed for the Web: praised Michael's ongoing responsiveness and the quality of the CCA site; invited members interested in helping with the website to contact her or Michael.

**cc. West Coast Working Group – Chuck Hawley**

Rear Commodore Chuck Hawley reported on the work of the West Coast Working Group, formed at the request of the Commodore to explore ways to increase the visibility of the Cruising Club of America on the West Coast. The group, which includes approximately eight members, is working in coordination with the Rear Commodores of the Pacific Northwest, San Francisco, and Southern California Stations and includes several Next Watch members to help develop the early framework of a strategic outreach plan.

Chuck noted that an initial report has been submitted and that the group is evaluating several areas of opportunity. These include the potential sponsorship of low-cost or break-even activities such as Safety at Sea seminars on the West Coast; partnerships with organizers of smaller or less well-funded races, including select singlehanded, Mexican, and coastal races; and increased editorial outreach through CCA-branded articles placed in regional sailing publications such as *Latitude 38*.

Chuck thanked the members of the Working Group for their contributions and noted that the effort will continue to evolve with feedback and at the direction of the Commodore.

**dd. Yearbook – Ray Cullum (Reported on by Barbara Watson)**

In the absence of Yearbook Editor Ray Cullum, Barbara Watson reported on his behalf. She noted that the Yearbook report stands as submitted and expressed appreciation to Michael Moradzadeh for his extensive assistance, both with the Yearbook and with the Western Isles Cruise. Barbara highlighted Michael's work with spreadsheets and data organization, noting their importance in planning and analyzing Club events. She also thanked Commodore Gowell for recruiting Ray Cullum to take on the Yearbook role, expressed appreciation to Ray for stepping into the position, and wished him well as the Club transitions to working with new printers in the coming year.

**14. Cruises**

Listed in report and previously covered by Fleet Captain Ernie Godshalk.

**15. Old Business**

Commodore Jay Gowell introduced one item not printed on the agenda: a short reminder about the Final Voyages process. Dave Curtin walked members through the steps: when a member passes, email the Rear Commodore directly (they're the "gatekeepers" for their station), who circulates locally and copies Final Voyagers; names are shared in Waypoints for three months and in *The GAM* twice yearly; bells are tolled at the Annual and Fall Meetings; and a full Final Voyage essay appears in *Voyages*. He emphasized, "we'd much prefer duplication than omission—send it straight to the RC."

**16. New Business – Proposed Amendment to By-Laws, Article XVIII (Peter Griffin)**

With no further old business, Commodore Gowell introduced the next item on the agenda and invited Peter Griffin to present a brief amendment from the Financial Affairs Committee.

Peter explained that two updates were being proposed to modernize Article XVIII, Financial Matters.

The first change moves the budget approval date from October 1 to December 1, aligning the process with the Club's calendar-year financial cycle, which has been in place since 2024. And the second change removes an outdated sentence referring to "drafts" and replaces it with language directing the Governing Board, with advice from the Financial Affairs Committee, to establish a framework of financial controls that supports the Commodore and Treasurer and safeguards the Club's assets.

After a motion and a second, the proposed amendments were adopted unanimously without discussion. Supporting documents with the precise language are included in the Appendix II.

17. Remarks

Jay thanked members for their work and attendance, echoed the call to sustain membership focus at the station level—"that's where the relationships are"—and reminded everyone that they are ambassadors for the Club. He closed by recognizing the officer team (Chace Anderson, Pat Montgomery, Kathleen O'Donnell, Doug Adkins, Ernie Godshalk) and saying, "Your Club is in good hands."

18. Adjournment

Jay noted the social schedule and adjourned at 4:15 p.m. PT ("the bar opens in 45 minutes").

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Montgomery

Secretary, The Cruising Club of America

## Appendix I

### Reports in Advance of Fall Meeting September 19 2025

## Appendix II

### **Recommended New Language Pertaining to the Cruising Club of America Financial Matters Language in Article XVIII of the By-Laws**

- 1) Due to the change in the fiscal year of the CCA from November 1 thru October 31 to a calendar year, it is necessary to revise the date for the completion of the budget to December 1<sup>st</sup> from October 1<sup>st</sup>, therefore, it is recommended that the first sentence of Article XVIII of the By-Laws be deleted and in its place the following be substituted:

***The Commodore and Treasurer shall by December 1 of each year prepare an annual plan and budget for the upcoming year consistent with the objectives and operating concepts of the Club for consideration and approval by the Governing Board.***

- 2) It is recommended that the third sentence in the fourth paragraph of Article XVIII of the By-Laws be deleted and replaced with the sentence below. This sentence is no longer applicable due to the discontinuation of drafts, the implementation of the Contract Authorization Policy, and the Financial Affairs Committee framework of financial controls.

***The Governing Board with the advice of the applicable committee(s), shall establish a framework of financial controls to assist the Commodore and the Treasurer in their responsibility to control the Club's operations in a manner consistent with the annual budget and to safeguard the assets of the Club.***

Respectfully submitted to the Secretary by:

Richard Casner

John Devlin

Ernest Godshalk

Peter Griffin

Kathleen O'Donnell

May 28, 2025

## XVIII. FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Commodore and Treasurer shall by December 1 of each year prepare an annual plan and budget for the upcoming ~~fiscal~~ year consistent with the objectives and operating concepts of the Club ~~by October 1 of each year, for consideration and approval by the Governing Board.~~

All funds of the Club shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the Club in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as the Governing Board may select.

The Governing Board may authorize any officer or officers, agent, or agents of the Club, in addition to the officers so authorized by these By-Laws, to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the Club and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances. In the absence of any such determination by the

Governing Board, contracts shall be signed by any two officers of the Club, at least one of whom shall be the Commodore, Vice Commodore, Secretary, or Treasurer.

All checks, drafts, or other orders for the payment of money, notes or other evidence of indebtedness issued in the name of the Club, shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent, or agents of the Club and in such manner as shall from time to time be determined by the Governing Board. In the absence of any such determination by the Governing Board, such instruments shall be signed by the Commodore, Vice Commodore or Treasurer. ~~No check, draft, or other order for payment of money by the Club is authorized unless it is within the budget.~~ The Governing Board with the advice of the applicable committee(s), shall establish a framework of financial controls to assist the Commodore and the Treasurer in their responsibility to control the Club's operations in a manner consistent with the annual budget and to safeguard the assets of the Club.

The Governing Board shall adopt and review from time to time a written investment policy for the assets of the Club.

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