

Dear PHRF-LE Members;

With the entire country, and indeed the world in the midst of the coronavirus catastrophe, PHRF-LE hopes that you are staying well and doing your part to keep your family, friends and community as safe as possible. It seems that everything has turned upside-down in just a few weeks. Jimmy Buffett was on the radio the other day appropriately singing "Where it all ends I can't fathom, my friends; if I knew, I might toss out my anchor." While we don't know exactly when it will end, it surely will. PHRF-LE 's meetings are being held electronically via "Go-To-Meeting" for as long as the situation dictates. Yet, thinking about the upcoming season is an excellent way to keep your mind off what seems to be an endless stream of bad news!

This is the second year of the PHRF-LE Newsletter, and we hope you enjoy this method of staying in touch. The newsletter attempts to keep you up-to-date on developments with competitive sail racing on Lake Erie; it has taken the place of the once-a-year letter that used to accompany your certificate renewal forms. In addition to this newsletter, PHRF-LE attends and makes a presentation at the I-LYA Spring and Fall meetings that in normal times enable in-person discussions with all members. We welcome any feedback and constructive criticism you may have.



## RENEW YOUR CERTIFICATE ....

The vernal equinox and Spring officially arrived March 20, and we will be venturing back into the boatyards to check, inspect, repair and improve our boats for the coming year. This is always an exciting time as we renew friendships with fellow sailors and prepare for the upcoming season (while keeping the appropriate distance!). As Spring is the season for renewal, it is also the time to renew your certificate.

PHRF-LE is in the midst of the certificate renewal season, with initial emails sent in early February. If you have not received your renewal form, let us know ASAP! The certificates remain at the same \$35.00 as last year when you return it by May 15. After May 15, the fee is \$50.00, so get it in early! If your boat or contact information has changed, simply update the data on the renewal form.

**New Renewal Payment Options!** You can save a stamp and pay your PHRF renewal by email from your online banking if it offers "Pay with Zelle". KeyBank, Fifth Third, Bank of America and others offer this service at no charge. Use the email [phrfl@gmail.com](mailto:phrfl@gmail.com) for this service. For our Canadian members, please use an old-fashioned check.



## New 'CLUB' Rating Certificate

The PHRF-LE Class Rule has only four (4) requirements for a Regular Rating Certificate: a) Auxiliary propulsion system, b) Adequate accommodations for cruising, c) Bow Pulpit and Lifelines, and d) Self-bailing cockpit or internal flotation. Owners with boats that are missing one or more of these items that desire a rating certificate will now be issued "C" Club Rating Certificates, updating PHRF-LE Class Rules 10.1.2 and 9.1.1.

PHRF-LE has always tried to accommodate a number of boat designs that do not fit the minimum requirements for a Regular Rating Certificate. We are pleased to announce that the category for these boats will now be called "Club Rating Certificates" in order to encourage these boats to participate in club races. The term "restricted" will no longer be used. PHRF-LE hopes this change in terminology will encourage boats to participate in all of your club-level events that are offered and dispel any concept of exclusion.

The entire PHRF-LE Committee gives our thanks to those who serve on the many race and event committees this year. These volunteers have spent countless hours planning regattas, races and all the activities that go along with them, and have also had to plan for cancellations and multiple contingencies due to the restaurant, business and social restrictions currently in effect.

If you are getting a new sail this season, you are welcome to send the sail maker's measurement sheet as PHRF-LE will accept that in lieu of having a Club Measurer do it.

Please encourage any boat at your club without a certificate to join PHRF-LE and obtain a certificate. Why does getting a PHRF-LE certificate make sense?

1. Your club race organizers can rely on PHRF-LE to assign ratings that are consistent throughout Lake Erie.
2. PHRF-LE Certificate ensures fair sailing by verifying each boat competes with sail and rig sizes that have been measured by an impartial 3<sup>rd</sup> party and rated appropriately, and modifications to the boat are reported.
3. The boat will be accurately identified. Sometimes even the owners do not know if they have an XYZ-30 with a standard, tall or optional rig, shoal or deep keel, or which production version of the model they have.
4. Competitors will not criticize your club volunteers for a boat's rating.
5. Owners can appeal the rating.
6. If they are a Cruiser, they will be able to easily enter any race that interests them during the season.
7. Cruising Credits are only applied through the certificate, not a local race committee.
8. Race Organizers can look up current certificate holders by Owner, Club, Sail Number, Handicap or Boat Name on the [www.PHRF-LE.org](http://www.PHRF-LE.org) website.
9. Certificate holders receive an included subscription to the PHRF-LE Newsletter where your club and your events are promoted throughout Lake Erie.

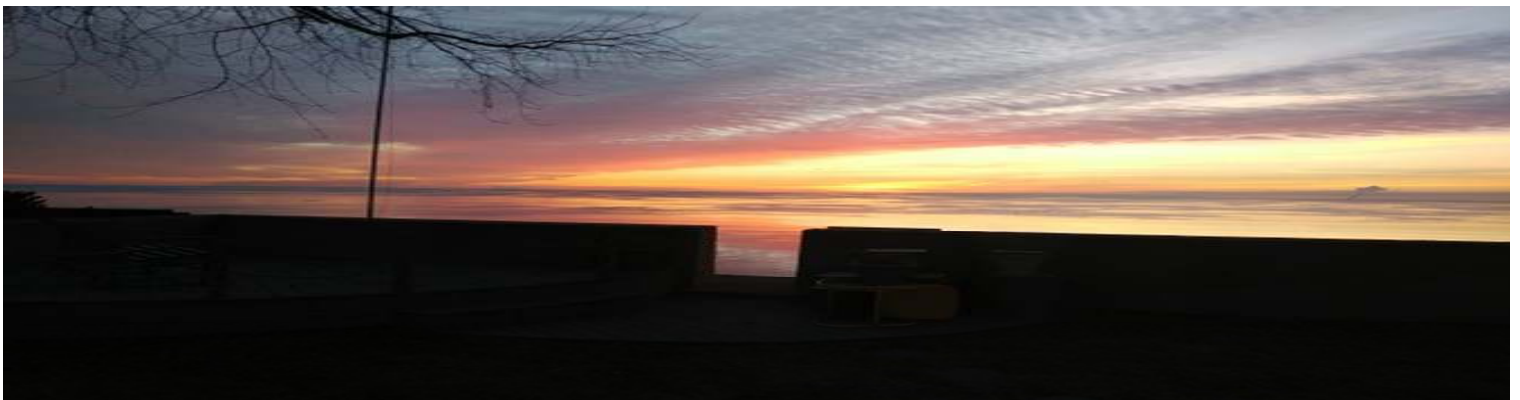


The *Catawba Island In-Water Boat Show* on April 24, 25 and 26 is still on the schedule pending health developments. No charge for entry or parking to see the newest yachts available, visit over 30 vendors and enjoy entertainment, food and refreshments from noon -5pm daily. You can even take a sail onboard one of Harbor North's boats! Stay up-to-date on the current status of the event at:

<https://www.catawbaislandboatshow.com>

**Mark Your Calendars (but use a pencil) :**

The *I-LYA Spring Meeting* scheduled for April 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> has been cancelled. Please refer to [www.I-LYA.org](http://www.I-LYA.org) for up-to-date information concerning I-LYA activities.



## PHRF COMMITTEE MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### CHRIS MERKLE

I was born in Toledo, Ohio where I grew up sailing with my father at the age of three, aboard a wooden Star boat called "The Red Star". My first National regatta was the Cat Yak Championships that were held in the Maumee River. I qualified for the Regional that year but was eliminated in the Finals. The following year I went all the way to the National championships and took a place in the top ten in the Nation, I was only eight. During my teens, dad purchased his third boat, a Pearson 28', where I learned how to race in the PHRF Fleet, mastered the art of "Flying a Kite" and gained experience behind the helm as well as in tactics. Through many more boats over the years I've accumulated 47 years of experience in sailing and powerboating. I became a member of North Cape Yacht Club when I was 18 years old and participated in assisting with many of the Club Functions and Work Parties.

In 1999 I met my wife Kimmie and moved to Lorain where we joined Lorain Sailing and Yacht Club. Since moving to Lorain I've joined several organizations and participated in many leadership roles. Including:

**Lorain Sailing and Yacht Club**

2002 New Dock Construction Committee, 2003 Fleet Capt, 2004 Rear Commodore, 2005 Vice Commodore, 2006 Commodore, 2007 Fleet Capt, 2008 Trustee

**Cleveland Sailing Association**

2003, 07, 09, 10, 11 Delegate, 2004 Rear Commodore, 2005 Vice Commodore, 2006 Commodore, 2008 Rear Commodore

**PHRF-Lake Erie**

Board Member and area measurer/handicapper since 2002-2011 Vice Chairman 2012-2018

**Interlake Yachting Association**

NCYC Member 1980 – 2001, LSYC Member 2002 – Present, LSYC Delegate 2002 – 2007, Tri-Area Challenge 2011

In my working life I am an experienced industrial sales account manager for the electrical supply industry. Most recently I am employed by Sandusky Electric as an Energy Sales Specialist focusing on energy efficient lighting, wind turbines, and solar energy. I also have experience working for Toledo Beach in boat yard maintenance, boat rigging and outfitting. As a side-job I currently own and operate a warehouse used for inside boat storage and general maintenance.