

## International Order of the Blue Gavel

### Spring Regional Meeting

Doubletree by Hilton Lloyd Center Portland, Oregon

June 7, 2018

**Call to Order:** The Spring Regional Meeting was called to order by President Tony Durieux on June 7, 2018 at 10:40 AM PDT.

**The Pledge of Allegiance:** Past President Vern Bendsen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call of Executive Committee:** Present: President Tony Durieux, Immediate Past President Rosalie Davis-Green, President-Elect Bud Higginson, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Sherry Barone, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Buzz Busanz, Treasurer Marshall Nemoy, and Secretary Mary Eiffert. AVPs present: NW Lani Lightle, SW Kathy Smith, SE Karen Shea. Appointed Officers present: Communications Director Mary Nye Meyers and Recording Secretary Marsha Landreth. Absent: Legal Officer Joe Dowdell, NCVP Mark Vadaj, and NEVP Steve Tisack.

**Quorum:** The Recording Secretary confirmed that a quorum was present and all officers had signed the attendance log.

**Approval of agenda:** A motion to approve the agenda was made and seconded. Motion carried.

**Introduction of Past Presidents:** Vern Bendsen was recognized.

**Self-introduction of Members and Guests:** District 10 Director Joyce Jackson-Coomber, District 10 President Rodney A. Coomber, District 11 Director Shelia Anderson, District 14 Director Liz Allison, District 15 President SMYC chapter Susan Rodriguez, District 15 Past Director Gary S. Hall, District 16 Vice President Tom Shideler and Monica Shideler, District 19 Linda Bendsen.

**Approval of the minutes of the previous Regional Meeting:** Buzz Busanz's title will be changed from AVP to 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President to correct the minutes. Vern moved to approve the minutes as corrected; Sherry seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** Marshall reported that IOBG is solvent. He discussed administration problems at the IOC.

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President's Report:** Sherry Barone spoke on recruiting and retention. There has been a continued focus and strategy in increasing IOBG membership, with the new brochures and PowerPoint charts to recruit and retain the inactive chapters, new chapters and new members. Executive Committee will be awarding a District Achievement Award pin based on retention and growth and the competition has ignited the districts. Communication is critical and AVPs and Districts continue to have meetings to share ideas monthly and quarterly. Working this year with NEVP Stephen Tisack and SEVP Karen Shea is a pleasure as they continue working hard for representing and communicating with districts. Civil minded activities, sailing, and community service is part of the activities on the East Coast. The team is working diligently to add new and in-active chapters to IOBG; four were added this quarter. Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maine and international countries are some of the focus for this year as the boating season is beginning. Hemingway Yacht Club will be discussed by Karen. Sherry will be happy to go to New Zealand to present the new charter.

**President Elect's Report:** Bud Higginson reported that over the last several years the membership has declined, as have other organizations. The most common question asked is what does IOBG do for me? A possible answer to that question is to develop some sort of reciprocity for active IOBG members among yacht clubs that have IOBG chapters. Bud recently met with the commodore of the Venice Yacht Club to discuss this issue and agreed upfront that it would be up to the yacht clubs to set the terms of such an agreement. The intent would be to develop terms that would be acceptable to all yacht clubs with IOBG chapters. Making this project work is not an easy task, as it will take a lot of time and effort on the part of many members and the full

support of the Executive Committee. Bud opened this topic for discussion. Karen reported that in District 8, Gulf Harbors in Newport Richie changed house rules and bylaws to allow IOBG members to come in. Bud believes that an IOBG member would have to contact the yacht club in advance. Some people come to stay three months, so those would have a limit. Reciprocity would be difficult to standardize across the board. It would not be fair if your club gives reciprocity yet you can't go into another club. Marshall added that SDYC has a policy that if you are from a distant yacht club, you are welcome; but if you want to use the swimming pool but your club doesn't have one, you can't use theirs. It is a reciprocal in kind.

**Past President's Report:** Rosalie Davis Green reported on her two duties: audit committee and nominating committee.

- **Audit Committee** met by telephone conference call on 5-29-18; attending were P/P Rosalie Davis Green, President Elect B.E. "Bud" Higginson, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Robert P. "Buzz" Bisanz. All documents prepared by the IOBG Treasurer were reviewed. The very detailed journal entries supported the payments made. It is clear that the IOBG revenues were spent on the usual and customary expenses of the organization. The audit committee agreed that financially everything is in good order.
- **Nominating Committee's** work is in process. Application deadline was June 1<sup>st</sup>. There are candidates for each EC positions; no AVP candidate from the Northeast. A Candidate must belong to a yacht club in the Area and have served as District Director of the represented area. Process is ongoing.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President's Report:** Buzz Bisanz reported the progress year-to-date on his areas of responsibility. He thanked Sherry Barone for her input and hard work on updating the brochure. IOBG.org website has been updated and the majority of the updates are now complete. He invited everyone present to check it out. Buzz thanked Sherry Barone and North Central AVP Mark Vadaj for their time and effort to create the IOBG Power Point presentation that provides an electronic story of IOBG, which is on the Website and can be used as a powerful tool. Buzz thanked the AVP for their efforts in setting up conference calls within their assigned Districts. Buzz has setup a monthly conference call with his assigned AVPs and they are achieving success in that communication area. As the official liaison between the IOBG EC and the IOBG Auxiliary, Buzz reported that the Auxiliary is doing well.

**President's Report:** Tony Durieux spoke on the benefits of past commodores in the boating community. Engagement in the boating community is essential for retention and growth. If retention is strong, strong growth will follow. As he quoted, "once a commodore, always a commodore." The Blue Blazer Pin for Growth and Retention will be awarded to the district in each area that shows the most improvement.

**Executive Secretary: no report**

**Northwest Area Vice President's Report:** Lani Lightle reported on District 1 activities. April meeting was in Chelan, Washington, which is located 180 miles to the northeast of Seattle. The Opening Day of Boating Season was hosted by the Seattle Yacht Club last month. They have been doing this yearly for about 100 years. It is the biggest Opening Day of Boating Ceremony in the US. The activities included raising the IOBG flag at the SYC, an IOBG boat in the parade, watched the Washington Marching Band play for IOBG. He also represented IOBG at the Des Moines Yacht Club Opening Day ceremony, which is just south of Seattle. A summer picnic is planned at Port Townsend. Then in September, Port Ludlow Yacht Club, which is District 1's newest chapter, will have Change of Watch. District 1 has encouraged District 5 to join in their activities.

- IOBG Humanitarian Foundation Treasurer – Lani reported that he has received \$64 in donations from AmazonSmile as a result of members signing up to AmazonSmile and assigning IOBG-HF as the recipient of a donation. Spread the word to use AmazonSmile to increase the donation.

**Southwest Vice President's Report:** Kathy Smith report that the Southwest region has several goals for this year.

- Communication: They have quarterly teleconferences, with the objective to keep in contacts, and share and disseminate news of interest to the region. They also have a monthly Constant Contact Newsletter/Email Blast. They find this helpful in sharing activities, and getting reminders and deadlines out.
- Membership Retention: Districts 14 and 19 inducted 23 new members in January, and District 21 has been inducting new members during Opening Days in Orange County.
- Relevancy Projects: Most Districts have some activities that benefit others.
- Membership Appreciation: Many districts provide some type of incentive.

The Southwest Region is making membership its priority. Their plan is to make IOBG membership the goal for every Chapter board member.

District 6 – Kathy read a report from Hawaii. They are having a busy year. Activities for the year include assisting with the various volunteer positions at the 2018 Pacific Cup from San Francisco to Oahu. Kaneohe is the race finish host and R6 is on board with plenty of support. Election of officers will again be a BBQ at Kaneohe YC in October. Change of Watch and Induction of Members will be held at Waikiki YC in November, followed by a Christmas party in December.

District 10 – Joyce Jackson-Coomber reported that they have had an eventful start for 2018. They attended many Opening Days and enjoyed being part of some of the ceremonies with the induction of nine new members. There are several events planned for the upcoming months. The board is busy working on ideas for fund raising to assist in the installation process for Sherry Barone in 2019. Delinquent members are encouraged to renew their membership dues so that they can be part of IOBG.

District 11 – Shelia Anderson reported that they have 60 members. The board will be making phone calls to members to encourage them to rejoin IOBG. Westlake Yacht Club celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in March. The District presented them with a special plaque for their continued support. The District's annual wine tasting charity event collected \$530 to donate to the King Harbor Youth Foundation. District 11 co-hosted the Home Port Regatta in Marina Del Rey and attended the Race Starting Seminar.

District 14 – Liz Allison reported that District 19 held a large installation ceremony in February at Pittsburg YC and invited District 14. They will hold a summer Member Appreciation picnic in August. They will also be part of the "Summer Sailstice function.

District 15 – report read by Kathy. They are involved in "Make-A-Wish" fundraising and other activities.

District 16 – Vice President Tom Shideler reported on the Channel Islands Harbor and the concern that the commissioners are trying to amend the Land Use Plan to eliminate all yacht clubs, tackle shops, and recreational boating. This will allow a developer to build a new 400-unit apartment building where Fisherman's Wharf presently stands and to build apartments on other Harbor properties. These developments are contrary to the harbor's primary purpose as a recreational boating. For the yacht clubs to fight this will harm renegotiations efforts on the clubs' facilities.

District 19 - report read by Kathy. District 19 continues to have an outstanding leadership team. Over 110 people from Districts 19 and 14 attended the installation ceremony, officiated by IOBG International past President Vern Bendsen, in February at Pittsburg YC. Sixteen new members were inducted. Many events have been or will be held this year. Information of events can be found on the Website [www.iobgdelta19.org](http://www.iobgdelta19.org)

**Northeastern Vice President's Report:** Sherry Barone reported that the boating season has begun and that they are looking forward to summer boating and sailing after a long winter. Stephen Tisack is working with districts and chapters using IOBGs new marketing Power Point tool for recruitment. He is focusing on Boston

and New Jersey for club recruitment this summer. Karen Shea added that Stephen submitted his calculations for Retention and Growth Award.

**Southeastern Vice President's Report:** Karen reported that, in order to assist District 18 in increasing membership, she used the same strategy as on District 8, which was to send 11 letters along with the new brochure to the inactive chapters in North and South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee. She received one response with an application from Western Carolina Sailing Club. She sent 37 personalized letters to yacht clubs in the five-state area that have never had an IOBG chapter. She developed a spreadsheet for District 18, which has been successful in District 8. To date there are five members in District 18, along with two strong perspective members, which includes five yacht clubs. District 8 has not reached its 2017 membership of 230. District 8 has a DAA calculation of 89.38%

District 8 - Director Karen Shea reported on their winter meeting at Clearwater Yacht Club in January. The weekend included dining and dancing, Sunday Brunch, and fine weather. They have two reactivated chapters, giving District 8 25 chapters. They sent 49 personalized letters to inactive chapters along with brochures and reference to IOBG.ORG website and the Power Point presentation. The District works very hard at keeping members informed via website, newsletters, emails, and phone calls from their Executive Committee. Chapter Presidents work on several areas: Add an IOBG tab on their yacht club websites; have their clubs add IOBG members to their reciprocity rules; be an ambassador for the IOBG when they have regattas and other events.

District 18 - Director David Kowert reported that the district has three new prospective members. The district remains very focused on supporting the racing community in Charleston, primarily with committee boat work for local regattas and race management training. They are looking at hosting a boating skills training on the water for local race officials and operators of support boats.

**Legal Officer:** not present

**Communications Director:** Mary Nye Meyers needs reports electronically. Do not give her a written paper. June 23 is the deadline for Log. District Directors can send reports to the AVP or directly to Mary.

**Protocol Officer:** no report

**Recording Secretary:** Marsha reminded everyone present to sign in.

**Past President Liaison officer:** Stephen Willing absent

**IOBG Auxiliary:** Gary Smith increased visits to Districts, with Kathy Smith. They visited San Diego County, Los Angeles, Orange County, the Delta area, and Hawaii, where they got a firsthand view of an erupting volcano. The Auxiliary's main goal is to stabilize and increase the membership, which now stands at 296. Last year's membership was 301, an attrition of five members. An increase in dues payers will continue to be a goal this year, and always a goal in the future. Many districts are busy with activities to support local charities, varying from hospices, marine activities, and raising funds for children. Every district sets aside time for dinners, breakfasts, and special events to meet fellow members, celebrate holidays, and invite new members to join. These social occasions seem to be the tried-and-true method for recruiting members.

Al Eiffert reported that the last Change of Watch produced an interesting change to the IOBGA leadership, and their first male president. The Auxiliary will remain in good operating condition. The Auxiliary has some vacancies: a secretary, a second vice president, and one regional director. They have a healthy treasury and recently donated \$100 to the Humanitarian Foundation. The Auxiliary is exploring the idea of providing books to children who are underprivileged or do not otherwise have access to books. A pilot program is in the works.

**Boat US:** Marshall reminded the delegation that IOBG members receive a discount on membership and discount at West Marine. They have a towing service to members. Boat US has a competitive insurance program.

**Membership:** Sherry Barone announced that everyone is busy working on membership. IOBG's new power point to use for membership is being used Karen and Mark. IOBG has a great website thanks to Mary Nye

Meyers. Even though there has been a dip in membership, everyone is working aggressively to increase membership. There have been discussions on value and branding.

Vern Bendsen – The International Order of the Blue Gavel is a dying organization. When I was inducted into the Blue Gavel, the membership was about 3,800. Today, the membership is about 1,500; in 20 years the Blue Gavel's membership has decreased about 2,300, despite all the effort put into retention of members and the recruitment of new members. All our efforts have been the same year after year to retain members and recruit new members has NOT worked. What do we offer our membership? We can't offer them reciprocal privileges with other yacht clubs that have a Blue Gavel Chapter. What do we offer members? Can't offer reciprocals at other yacht clubs. Some yacht clubs have never heard of IOBG. EC needs to make decision on what we can offer. Need recruiting letter to yacht clubs who have never heard of IOBG. We all have met yacht club past commodores who have never heard about the Blue Gavel. What have we done to reach out to contact the hundreds of yacht clubs that are in the USA? Finding yacht clubs in every state is very easy. Just use the internet. What about recruiting yacht club past commodores in other countries? Finding yacht clubs in other countries is very easy. Just use the internet. Sherry Barone, Susana Araico, the Willings, and the Bendsens have all traveled to other countries and visited some of their yacht clubs. We explain what the IOBG organization is, as well as give them a copy of our brochure. Question they ask is: What can IOBG offer them? We then ask them, what would they like to get? The answer: Reciprocal privileges to other yacht clubs; news of major boating events locally and worldwide. The cost of membership needs to be stated in their currency. It will take money and consistent effort to do any of the above. The AVPs should make contact with the yacht clubs that are in the States that are in their area. Someone on the Executive Committee could be chair of a committee to make contact with other countries. The Executive Committee needs to make some decisions as to what we can offer members, such as: Reciprocal privileges with other yacht clubs. Place and news of major boating events - local, national, international – about government restrictions on recreational boating; recognition of rewards to boaters; special events that IOBG participates in. When the Executive Committee makes all or some of the about a reality, then a real recruiting letter can be sent to all yacht clubs in the USA, as well as to yacht clubs in major cities in other countries. A recruiting letter needs to be made that is a sales pitch and with the benefits of belonging to the Blue Gavel. As Past International President Bob Miller says, "you need to contact them a minimum of 3 times or more" and send the information to all the current flag officers, past commodores and the club secretary. That way you are bound to get someone to respond.

Sherry reported that her committee has been sending letters, working on an IOBG Master Card, discount for cruises, and other branding ideas. Need updated list of old members.

Karen reiterated that she keeps a spreadsheet to update information as it needs to be in one spot. District 1 is also doing this.

Sherry - Everyone is chipping in to help the Northeast recruit. Sherry suggested thinking outside the box. Sherry is hopeful that we will take up the challenge.

**National Boating Federations:** no report

**US Sailing:** no report. Buzz reported that he received an email from US Sailing invited the IOBG Executive Committee to be part of their conference call. Buzz will forward the email to Tony.

### **Old Business**

SEVP Karen Shea wrote a point paper. Subject: Should Commodore Jose Miguel Diaz Escrich from Hemingway International Yacht Club, Havana, Cuba be invited to join IOBG as an "honorary" or special category member? Problem: Escrich has been the only Commodore of HIYC since 1992 and is not a Past Commodore. Recommendation: IOBG Executive Committee approved the idea of inducting Commodore Escrich as an honorary member of the IOBG. If approved, SEVP Shea will draft a letter for President Durieux's signature to ask Commodore Escrich if he will accept an Honorary Membership in the IOBG in District 8. If accepted, SEVP Shea will plan a ceremony by either planning an IOBG Cruise to Havana or coordinate a ceremony for his next visit to Florida.

Motion to make Commodore Jose Miguel Diaz Escrich of Hemingway Yacht Club an Honorary member was moved and seconded Discussion – Buzz is against motion because he is still a commodore, not a past commodore. Mary Eifert reminded the group that we have had other honorary members because Japan has commodores for life. More opinions were heard. Vern called the Question. Marshall seconded the motion. Motion to stop debate carried. A vote was taken on the main motion, the majority voted in the affirmative, one vote in the opposition. Motion to make Commodore Jose Miguel Diaz Escrich an Honorary member carried.

Sherry brought up the name of the Commodore of Silver Gate Yacht Club who is also a candidate for an Honorary Member. Rosalie reminded everyone that the term of commodore is a one-year term; after that year, the person is eligible to be a member even if he takes on another term as commodore.

### **New Business**

Reciprocity as discussed by Vern during membership report: New chapters need a commitment agreement from the yacht club. Need a committee. Tony appointed Vern the committee chair. Vern selected Karen Shea, Kathy Smith, and Steve Willing to be on the committee with him.

### **Announcements**

Marshall reminded those receiving reimbursement to pick up reimbursement forms.

Marshall reported that Make-A-Wish, etc. are being put on this weekend in District 15. We should take an interest in their activities as a way for other districts to get more members.

Reservations at Jake's at 6:30. Meet at 5:00 in lobby.

Bud will be knighted Friday morning. He has chosen the Peace Rose. Buses will leave at 8:00.

When do the new officers take their positions, when the new president receives the blue gavel or at the ball when the officers are sworn in? In the past, the Regional Meeting was on Sunday morning after the ball, but in recent years the Regional Meeting has immediately followed the Annual Meeting. Vern moved that the newly elected officers transfer into new positions after the announcement of the results and the blue gavel has been passed. The swearing in at the ball is only ceremonial. Marshall second. The motion carried.

Vern asked how the directors are told of the decisions made by Executive Committee. A list of Executive Committee's actions are presented to the directors at the Annual Meeting for their approval.

Tony is pleased with everyone who is working on changes to help improve IOBG.

**Adjournment:** Vern moved to adjourn; Sherry seconded the motion. Motion carried. Tony adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marsha Landreth

Recording Secretary