

Dear Junior Sailor's Parents and OCYC Friends:

My parents were avid sailors who joined Ocean City Yacht Club in the summer of 1966 so that their children could experience the joy of sailing from the start. Of course having children could not interfere with their own sailing, so there was meticulous planning in both my sister's and my birth (we are both May babies) so that my mother could be back in the International 110 by the start of the OCYC sailing season in June. How's that for planning? Growing up, the Club was my summer home and I was on the water at least 5 days a week. I started off learning to sail, and then race, in the Sunfish. By age 13 I moved on to the Laser, GP-14, and International 110, competing weekends in the MAYRA regattas. I was very fortunate to have supportive parents that drove me to every regatta spring, summer and fall. I think they were very happy by the time I was able to drive myself so that they could have a chance to sleep in on the weekends.

From a personal perspective, when I was a kid I raced a lot more against adults rather than kids of my own age. I knew I wasn't going to win, but I kept after it because I loved sailing and I wanted to learn and improve. It was a different time, and there was a strong adult racing series going on every weekend at the Club and at the MAYRA events. Sailing changed once I arrived at college, more structure, highly competitive and a focus on the importance of the team over the individual. Olympic campaigning in the Finn class was an experience which took me all over North America and Europe, competing with the world's top sailors, and experiencing many different cultures.

I give back to the sport of sailing by coaching and encouraging new sailors. I am passionate about sailing because of the many things it teaches you: Physics, risk management, fitness, how emotions affect decision making, responsibility, and most importantly, perseverance. In sailing you never stop learning, every time you go out on the water is a chance to learn something new.

I believe the best way to learn and improve, is to sail whatever different types of boats you can. Our mission is to provide as much help and support for these kids when possible. To encourage and motivate them to open their eyes to the broader sailing world out there. I would love to see these kids sailing with adults, crewing for adults, sailing against adults – there's no question in my mind that it would be a positive experience for them. Whether they wish to be cruisers or racers, our goal is to develop knowledgeable, competent sailors, and instill in them a love of sailing and the sea that will serve as a foundation for their future.

I would like to welcome Brown Bear aboard as Co-Director of our Jr. Sailing Program. Brown was a great inspiration and motivator for me and my crew when we began competing in the GP-14 class as teenagers in 1981.

Looking forward to a great season,

*Brian Huntsman*

“Nothing else really matters when you're on the water.”