

Acton Action

Hueston Sailing Association

Revealing the Recycling Myth

Just what is recyclable and what do those bloody numbers on containers mean? Is it even worth it or should we be doing something else? Emily Petsko for the ocean organization Oceana reports.



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Suzanne Wolff in the film *Styx* pg. 5

HSA Set to Begin Season in June, Adapt Schedule

From HSA Commodore Laura Peters Beebe

The HSA executive committee gathered via a Zoom session on May 4th to discuss the upcoming sailing season in light of the Covid 19 pandemic. As we are sure you have heard, stay at home restrictions have been extended by Governor DeWine under the Stay Safe Ohio orders until the end of May.

As a result of the extended orders, I spoke with the park manager, Ken Elliot, to discuss what the park is doing. Ken indicated that the park office will be closed, the Hueston Room is not available for use, and the special activity permits have been rescinded for the month of May. (The special activity permit allows HSA to organize and conduct racing) As a result, Ken has indicated that the park would prefer HSA not participate in organized club activities during this time.

In order to respect our relationship with the park, the Governor's orders and our own member feedback (thank you for responding to the survey sent out), the executive committee

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You think it's bad now? In 20 years, our country will be run by people home-schooled by day drinkers.

Parents are starting to discover that the teacher was not the problem.

The Italian National Olympic Committee released a report detailing which sports are safest in a Covid 19 world. The study lists 387 sports and categorized them from 0 to 4, zero meaning nonexistent risk and four meaning very high risk. The factors were training, competition, and public presence. According to the study, sports that fall into the zero category with "almost no possibility of spreading the infection are disciplines like open water swimming, golf, tennis, and ... sailing."

Sailing an Essential Activity

“In civilizations without boats, dreams dry up, espionage takes the place of adventure and the police take the place of pirates.” Michel Foucault – French philosopher

As we contemplate the year of Covid 19 and the 2020 sailing season, we have been aware for a while now that things will be different. Over the winter months, staying in touch is always a little difficult, but we seem to be able to do without one another for a few months, especially after that foul at the leeward mark late last season is slow to become a dim memory.

There will be changes to the racing schedule, but we can handle that. There will be cancelled events, but we can handle that. There will be new procedures to follow, but we can handle that too. The thing that will be most difficult will be the social distancing.

We are a racing club for sure and we will race, but we are also a social club and that aspect will be somewhat diminished. Unless we are the curmudgeon who doesn't much care for the social side of sailing anyway, this is going to hurt. We will have to find ways around that and still be able to follow the protocols.

The good news is that we will still gather at the lake and do what we really love – sail. And race. For those who love this sport, it is as essential as anything we know.



HSA people help Pete Peters rig his Catalina 22 last week. Most wore masks and there was no embracing or kissing.

Some, like Pompey the Great (as quoted by *Plutarch*), put sailing above even life itself. “To sail is necessary; to live is not.”

2019: Stay away from negative people.

2020: Stay away from positive people.



HSA's Executive Committee met recently via Zoom. The more tech savvy like Joe Fulford and Jerry Brewster added backgrounds to their video. Joe had a shot from the movie *What About Bob*, the one with Bill Murray's character tied to the mast of a sailboat. Jerry had a couple of different ones, including one that showed stacks of hoarded toilet paper.

Zoom Comes to HSA

Many of us have had the Zoom meeting experience in our work or organization lives. We now count HSA among them. Last Monday on May 4th, the club's exec committee met to talk about plans for the 2020 season due to Covid 19.

Even octogenarians JoAnn and Jerry Callahan got into the digital video meeting (after a little coaching), and all were able to participate without much trouble. Uneven lighting for some aside, the meeting went well and lasted for about an hour and a half.

Next up, virtual racing on the lake via the Zoom app?

Revealing the Recycling Myth for Plastic

As an event to demonstrate support for environmental protection, Earth Day on April 22 was an annual reminder for those of us that use the earth (and that's all of us). As enthusiasts of a sport reliant on water, that puts sailors in the front row of those that need to lean in. This year 2020 is the 50th anniversary of Earth Day.

When an estimated 17.6 billion pounds of plastic enters our oceans every year, that's the equivalent of dumping a garbage truck's worth of plastic into the water every minute. With only 9% of all plastic waste generated being properly recycled, recycling alone is not enough to solve the plastic crisis.

by Emily Petsko for the ocean conservation organization [Oceana](#). Reprinted from Scuttlebutt by permission

The arrows with numbers that you find on your soda bottle (usually a No. 1 plastic made with PET, or polyethylene terephthalate), your yogurt tub (often a No. 5 made with polypropylene), and other everyday products are part of the Resin Identification Code (RIC) system that was created by and for the plastics industry in 1988.

Each number signifies a different category of plastics – of which there are seven in total – and this system was designed to tell recycling facilities what type of resin can be found in any given object. As it turns out, they were never a guarantee that the item in question would be recycled.

“Resin Identification Codes are not ‘recycle codes,’” ASTM International, the organization that administers the RIC system, writes on its [website](#). “The use of a Resin Identification Code on a manufactured plastic article does not imply that the article is recycled or that there are systems in place to effectively process the article for reclamation or re-use.”

If you find this surprising, you're not alone.

According to a [survey](#) of 2,000 Americans that was conducted by the Consumer Brands Association last year, 68% of respondents said they thought

any item bearing an RIC would be recyclable.

(In an effort to reduce confusion, ASTM International altered the symbols in 2013, replacing the arrows with a solid triangle. However, manufacturers aren't required to change their equipment to incorporate the new symbol, which is why you still see the arrows on many plastic products.)

Consumers widely misinterpret RICs and, as a result, they “wish-cycle.” Many well-meaning and hopeful consumers place any plastic item with an RIC in their recycling bin, regardless of whether they will actually be recycled.

So instead of resulting in more plastic being recycled, this approach all too often slows down the sorting process, drives up recycling costs, results in higher rates of contamination, and ultimately sends more waste to landfills, incinerators, and natural environments. Our recycling wishes, in other words, are being turned into garbage.

The myth surrounding RICs makes us believe that plastic is recycled far more often than it actually is. In fact, only 9% of all the plastic waste ever created has been recycled, and many of those recycled items belong to just two of the seven resin

HSA Looking to June Opening (continued from page 1)

has determined that May club activities will be postponed and/or cancelled. Unfortunately this means we won't be enjoying each other's company at the Memorial Day potluck since the earliest date we can race is June 6th.

The committee also determined that it is in our best interest to cancel the first Intro to Sail originally scheduled for June 6-7. We are tentatively keeping the Intro to Sail for June 27-28 and will evaluate closer to the date. We are also cancelling Junior Camp. Although this will be the first year in many that we don't have junior camp, we don't feel comfortable being able to keep the kids social distanced and there may still be group size restrictions in July.

Although we are postponing racing at this time, Rear Commodore Joe Fulford is taking the lead on re-evaluating our racing schedule to determine how we can rearrange weekends to lose as few events as possible. After an initial discussion, it is looking promising that we may still be able to have a full calendar. More details on the calendar will come later this month.

Lastly, as a result of your feedback and best practices being recommended, the committee is looking into certain procedures that will be put into place when we do return to club activities. We are evaluating what race committee will look like, the sanitization of high touch areas, masks, and social distancing requirements. Much more to come on this as well.

As always, even though we can't participate in organized club activities at this time, sailing on your own can definitely be enjoyed – especially as the weather starts to warm up!



A Film for You: *Styx*

Don't let the title fool you. It's only about the mythological river in an allegorical way. The action is almost entirely on the ocean and has but two characters. Neither one of them says much. It is perhaps your film version of minimalist art.

The story, based somewhat on a true occurrence, centers around a single character named Rieke, a German doctor and paramedic played by German actor Suzanne Wolff.

Her annual vacation this year will be a trip in her sailing yacht *Asa Gray*. She has flown to Gibraltar for a trip to Ascension Island, one of the islands of Darwinian fame located in the middle of the southern Atlantic.

After several relaxing days and nights at sea, a terrible storm hits overnight. When Rieke awakens the next morning, she sees in the daylight and calm sea another boat, a fishing trawler. It is loaded with people, perhaps a hundred, and they are yelling to her for help.

She rescues a young teenage boy who was thrown overboard and swimming to her and then tries to contact an unknown coast guard for help. What follows will both terrify and dismay you.

It is more thriller/drama than sailing movie but there is plenty of sailing in it to satisfy. The film was shot at sea and the actor playing the central character, Suzanne Wolff, is an experienced sailor in her own right. She looks right at home behind the helm. But the entire ocean environment is part of the almost textbook ethics course in moral behavior.

We found this film on Kanopy (through the public library). It was released in February 2019 so its storyline is contemporary and timely. Unlike many other fictional films that involve sailing, you won't see any obvious errors in seamanship (like waiting until the storm hits before reefing). But you will be rewarded for your patience as these metaphorical boats drift in paradise. And hell.

Plastic Myth (continued from page 3)

Susan Freinkel, author of the 2011 book *Plastic: A Toxic Love Story*, told *Oceana* that “the only plastics recycled in any significant amounts are No. 1 and No. 2 plastics, which cover soda and water bottles, as well as milk, juice, and detergent jugs.”

A new [report](#) by Greenpeace takes this a step further, arguing that No. 1 and No. 2 bottles and jugs are the only plastics that can legitimately be called “recyclable” and advertised as such. That’s because they are the only resins that have “sufficient market demand and domestic recycling/reprocessing capacity,” according to the report. The remaining municipal plastic waste is often referred to as “mixed plastic.”

Ever since China shuts its borders to the world’s mixed plastics in 2018, the U.S. has struggled to find a market for its plastic waste, especially No. 3 through No. 7 plastics, which are less valuable.

Some states (like Florida) and cities (like Erie, Pennsylvania) have urged residents to recycle only plastic bottles and jugs, which are generally made of PET (a No. 1 plastic) or HDPE (a No. 2 plastic). Cuyahoga County, the second most populous county in Ohio and home to Cleveland, has adopted this approach.

In 2015, local authorities told residents to ignore the numbers and instead sort by shape, placing only higher-value plastic waste like bottles, jugs, tubs, and jars in their recycling bin. After China’s plastic import ban went into effect, the list of items you could actually recycle in Cuyahoga County got smaller. Now, only bottles and jugs (like laundry detergent containers) are accepted.

“[RICs] were never meant to determine recyclability,” says Diane Bickett, executive director of the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District, which

serves as a countywide resource for recycling information. “People have been confused about that since 1988, when they started appearing on the bottom of the packaging.”

Even with Cuyahoga County’s efforts, roughly a quarter of all items tossed in recycling bins are contaminated, and some of that is because of the unrecyclable plastics that are still being “wish-cycled.” In response, the Solid Waste District’s communication efforts are focused on getting a new message across: Waste reduction.

“We’re just trying to tell people that we’re not going to recycle our way out of our waste problem,” Bickett says. “There’s just too much material, and too much waste, being generated.”

Freinkel, in her book, talked to a plastic industry spokesperson who referred to recycling as “a guilt eraser.” The spokesperson told Freinkel that “as soon as they [consumers] recycle your product, they feel better about it.”

“Recycling,” writes Freinkel, “assures people that plastic isn’t just an infernal hanger-on; it has a useful afterlife.”

Of course, that is also a myth. We all need to separate the hopeful and increasingly fantastical act of recycling from the reality of plastic pollution. Recent data indicates that our recycling wishes, hopes, and dreams – perhaps driven in part by myths surrounding RICs – will not stop plastic from entering our oceans.

Instead, if we truly want to protect the environment and marine life, we need to campaign for more plastic-free choices and zones, and for the reduction of plastic production and pollution.

Annie Hill, Sailor

When she was 19, Annie Hill met a sailor named Pete in Britain. Despite never having sailed, she soon found herself cruising across the Atlantic with her new husband to the Caribbean just because they thought it was a better idea than getting a job and buying a house. They did it on a 28 ft. catamaran called *Stormalong* in 1975-76.

Forty five years and 190,000 miles later she continues to sail the oceans of the world and shun the idea of settling in one place with a house, a car, or any of the other conveniences or encumbrances of modern life.

She and her first husband Pete Hill built their first boat together, a two masted junk rigged schooner named *Badger*, and logged thousands of miles before splitting up in 2001. She remarried, to another sailor, Trevor Robertson, and the two carried on the sea life. Trevor was already well known for being the first person to winter in a sailboat frozen in the ice in both the Arctic and Antarctica. The couple also did the same thing in a bay in Greenland in 2004-5. (The boat was made of steel.)

Annie and Trevor later divorced and Annie left for New Zealand where she sails, often solo, on her own boat *Fantail*, a fiberglass boat she converted to a junk rig. The junk rig has been featured in all of her sailing experiences and featured in the books she has written about sailing and living frugally at sea, the most famous of which is *Voyaging on a Small Income*.

In 2015, she decided to build a more suitable boat, something she is working on at the moment on North Island in New Zealand. You can see her doing this at her blog called anniehill.blogspot.com.



Now in her mid 60's Annie is still sailing but doing it solo now aboard her junk rigged fiberglass boat *Fantail*. She is currently living in New Zealand and building her own new boat. Below is Annie wintering over in Greenland with then husband Trevor Robertson on his 35 ft boat called *Iron Bark*.



Annie, aboard her current boat *Fantail* in New Zealand



Annie and Pete Hill sailed the *Badger* to the Southern Ocean.