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Front and back of Commemorative Skipper's bags

Pencil in These Dates!

Spring Meeting and Lunch
Saturday, March 6
(details in Spring newsletter)

Tentative 2010 Cruising Calendar
see page 7

Watch for all Upcoming Events and make Reservations at

Celebrating 35 Fabulous Years!

Annual Fall Meeting Marks the Year

This year the I-36 Association celebrated 35 years of cruising and racing events, lifelong friendships, and shared caring for our beloved Islander 36 vessels. At a glittering celebration on November 7, 2009, the Association's rich history was remembered in pictures and stories. Past commodores including **Lou Zevanov** and **Ron Damsen** kept the laughter and tears flowing.

Bill Higdon, the I-36 Association's only honorary member, who passed at age 90 earlier this year, was beautifully remembered by his I-36 family at the meeting. Ron prepared a moving tribute to Bill, captured in a video available on the website and UTube. **Dennis Bush** read a letter with a special invitation to the Association from Bill's son Jim, reprinted on page 6.

The now traditional groaning table of door prizes did not disappoint. Prizes donated by members and vendors, including coveted hand-crafted items were generously provided for the raffle.



Donna (Schneider) Block shares the story of the Schneider Trophy as Ron looks on.



Lou Zevanov entertains the crowd.



Door prizes galore!



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of San Francisco Bay
www.Islander36.org

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Commodore's Corner

From Corky Stewart, Commodore

As we wind down another sailing season and my tenure as Commodore comes to a close, I have to say to myself, where has this year gone? If it's true that "time flies when you're having fun," then we *must* be having a blast! There have been a lot of good times for our I-36 Association this year, however, this past summer we also had to sound Eight Bells for our long-time friend and fellow sailor, Bill Higdon. Now there was a guy who knew how to work hard and have fun along the way! For those of you who didn't know Bill or even those who did know him and want a good read about his interesting life, read the reprint of Barbara Henderson's article from the October 2004 newsletter on page 3 of this edition. Bill lived his life to its fullest and we will miss him.

Do you remember the year, 1974, 35 years ago? No? Well, here are just a few of the noteworthy tidbits of history from 1974:

- *The speed limit in The U.S. was reduced to 55 mph*
- *Nixon Watergate Saga unfolds*
- *Author Peter Benchley's novel, Jaws was first published*
- *Patty Hearst was kidnapped*
- *Jimmy Connors and Chris Evert reigned at Wimbledon*
- *BART begins 1st Trans-Bay Service*
- *The price of gold hit a record \$188/ounce*
- *Hank Aaron tied Babe Ruth's home-run record*
- *Dorothy Hamill won as U.S. Female Figure Skating Championship*
- ***Islander 36 Association Founded***

Time has a way of pushing some things into the past as distant memories, faded dreams or forgotten tragedies. Other things become classics, like our beloved "classic plastic" I-36 sailboats and the friendships they help us to forge through our common bond of The I-36 Association. This year we will be celebrating the 35th year of The Islander 36 Association with our Fall Meeting on Saturday, November 7th. We will take a look back at our history, as well as install our new Commodore, Michele Williams and our slate of Association Officers. Our next sailing season is right around the corner and I encourage everyone to become more involved with the activities available with The I-36 Association. If you haven't already done so, please contact Michele or any of the incoming officers about how you can help out with any of the activities which add to the fun of our Association.

I hope that 2009 has been a good year of sailing for you and that the economy is turning around in your favor. It has been my pleasure to be your Commodore this year and I look forward to working closely with Michele as we continue the legacy of The Islander 36 Association. Here's to another great 35 years of our organization!

Fair Winds and Following Seas,

~ Corky



Born to Soar: Bill Higdon

Based on interviews and excerpts from Bill's unpublished autobiography, *Thoughts and Memories*

by Barbara Henderson

Anyone who's cruised San Francisco Bay with the Islander 36 Association knows Bill Higdon as an affable fellow and an astute sailor. And there's some-thing in those twinkling, knowing eyes that suggests he's packed a lot of living into his 84 years.



Bill Higdon

The Higdon's are a hardy bunch--Bill's parents lived into their 90's, and three of his four siblings are alive. Bill was born with club feet but played varsity football in high school; he survived a number of physical injuries and three killer diseases (Empyema as a child, lung cancer in his early 50's and colon cancer at age 60). The lung infection was so serious he lost the ability to walk for a time. But Bill says he's had a "lucky life." He's had three wives (claims his string of crushes on girlfriends started in 2nd grade), and three children (many of you know Jim, his youngest).

Tabriz, (Persia) was Bill's birthplace December 20, 1919; his father worked for Near East Relief following WWI. After the family returned to the States, Bill was joined by three more brothers and a sister, and grew up in Kansas City, with a view of an amusement park over the rooftops, providing a spectacular display of electric lights at night. He attended 7 schools in his 8 primary years. Bill discussed mechanical and scientific matters with his grandfather, and, with brother Bob, designed various experiments, like the aerial tramway from the house to the garage roof; little brother Pud was usually the guinea pig, but always managed to survive.

Bill recalls that Halloween in his high school days was more trick than treat so he and friends would put neighbors' porch gliders on their roofs. And then there was the time he got "taken for a ride" to Texas, trying to recover a family watch stolen from him, and wound up in the pokey. But he always seemed to have a friend or relative in the right place to get things squared away.

When Bill was just in the third grade, his aunt took him out to a local air field, and Bill's interest in aviation was sparked. After graduating from high school, he took a summer job there, sweeping up, and befriended the two airfield mechanics; for a month he went up with a flight student on days off and lunch hours. He attended Kansas University, but funds for course materials got spent on a model T, and his fraternity rent went to buy a partnership in a plane. Painful recovery from foot surgery and eye injuries contributed to his dropping out, but he got his wish and went to Parks Air College in Kahokia, Illinois.

Bill never had to look for work. That's not to say he didn't talk his way into a few jobs, sometimes asserting qualifications that were a bit of a stretch, but he was adept at quickly learning



Bill in the spring of 1944, as a civilian contract flight instructor for the Army Air Corps, Mustang Field, El Reno, Oklahoma.

whatever was required. Bill worked as an airplane mechanic, acquired a pilot's license, became a flight instructor for the Army, was a crop duster, went into business with 3 others to help build the Scott's Valley Airport and establish a GI flight training school; piloted the company president of Aero Industries Technical Institute, worked for California Eastern Airlines as a Flight Crew Training Supervisor, then became a Systems Engineer (trouble shooter) for Garrett Air Research Manufacturing. He then joined Douglas Aircraft,

and was a Flight Test Engineer on the B-66 and the C133. After the second time he almost had to bail out, he got out of the test flight business.

From 1958-83 Bill worked for Lockheed, initially claiming expertise in "telemetry," then quickly read up on it in the company library. When the designer of that system came by, wanting to meet the "expert", Bill complimented him on the design and its stability and from then on, Bill could do no wrong, progressing in the company, ultimately to the Space Systems Division, retiring as Senior Staff Engineer at age 63. In one of his jobs at Lockheed he was being considered for, they proudly showed him how they punched computer programs for satellite systems into milar tapes. Bill took one look and said, why not do it with electronic signals on magnetized tape? They laughed, but two weeks later called him back to develop just such a system. In 1971 he worked on computer-simulated satellite systems--remote piloted vehicles (a/k/a "spy planes"). Son Jim recalls going to see the first satellite that had been brought back from space, that his father had worked on.

In June of 1965 Bill married current wife Marge in Kansas City. She was racing snipes so Bill "got on board." He claims the first thing he did was to run the boat into the dock. They moved to northern California in 1966 and sailed 11 foot Sunflowers, exploring the Delta. In 1978 Fred Harbaugh, a co-worker and I-36 owner, sold Bill a partnership in "Seaward", which Bill sailed quite a bit, and learned as he sailed, self-taught, as he'd done with most things in his life. When Harbaugh bought back his share in 1999, Bill acquired Blockbuster. He joined the Islander 36 Association in 1985 at the age of 66 and has been a cruising regular.

Bill admits he made a lot of mistakes in his life, but says he never really had to pay for them - things just always worked out for him - he's had a lucky life.

FOGers Rendezvous - All Islanders Invited!

Don Grass, Coordinator

Islander owners known as FOGgers (Freeport Owners Group) will be holding a rendezvous to Two Harbors, Catalina after Labor Day on September 10-12, 2010. We would like to make this an All Islander event, and extend an invitation to all Islander owners to attend.

Friday the 10th, Islander owners will start arriving. On Saturday the 11th we will have a get acquainted BBQ on the beach. Bring you own meat, and a side dish that can be shared. Sunday afternoon on the 12th there will be a dinghy raft up for those who wish to attend. Bring drinks and finger foods to share and meet other rafters. Sunday night you are invited to meet for dinner at the local restaurant, followed by drawings for door prizes.

All Islander owners who would like to attend the rendezvous are urged to contact **Don Grass** by email at dgrass1@cox.net. Please include the number of people in your party, and the name and size of your sailboat. While this time of the year is not hard to find moorings, this information will be very helpful to the Two Harbors Harbormaster.

2010 All Islanders Rendezvous:

June (TBD)

Annual Port Ludlow, Washington All Islanders Rendezvous, Puget Sound
Coordinators: Doug & Eileen Penny

July 9-11:

5th Annual Canadian All Islanders Rendezvous, Thetis Island
Coordinators: Bert & Carey Vermeer

September 10-12:

FOGers Rendezvous
Two Harbors, Catalina,
Coordinator: Don Grass

September 17-19:

3rd Annual SF All Islanders Rendezvous
Encinal & Oakland Yacht Clubs,
Coordinators: Rick & Sandy Van Mell

Looking Forward to 2010

Message from Newly Elected Commodore Michele Williams



I am pleased to be next in the prestigious line of Islander 36 Commodores. My personal sailing history began when one of those past Commodores met my mother 6 years ago. **Harry Farrell** (who I'm sure was just being nice to the new girlfriend's daughter) invited me to join him in a race. He said I could go below if I got nervous. I think my response was along the line of – "What, and miss all the fun?!" Little did he know what he was creating. That first season was spent in the cockpit of *Pacific High* and the company of Harry and yet another Commodore – **Art Fowler**. The two of them together gave me the foundation of the Corinthian spirit I have today. **Dennis Bush**, who was Commodore that same year, now sails with us on *Pacific High*. Beyond that, I have also had the benefit of the knowledge and humor of **Rick Van Mell** and **Lou Zevanov** – two more highly regarded Commodores. Thus, my sailing pedigree – through no fault of my own – is rich in Islander 36 experience.

As the first female Commodore, I'm honored to be working with the group who will bring the Association through 2010.

- Vice Commodore – **Robert Aston**
- Measurer – **Kris Youngberg** return to that position
- Secretary – **Dennis Bush** steps in to replace **Judy**
- Treasurer – **Pat Salvo**
- Membership Chair – **Bob Knickerbocker**
- Co-race Chairs – **Tom** and **David Newton**
- Co-cruise Chairs – **Mary Gleim** joins **Carol Williams**
- Co-newsletter Chairs – **Debra Tucker** joins **Kathryn Munn**

The Association is in good hands with this group and I'm thankful for their willingness to be involved with the leadership of the organization. This is a wonderful group filled with some of the nicest people I know. I'm looking forward to the challenges and pleasures of the coming year.

I wish you all a warm and wonderful holiday season.

~ Michele Williams



2010 Officers installed at Fall meeting.

From Tom and David Newton, Fleet Co-Captains

Another great year of racing is in the record books. We thank all skippers who participated in the racing season this year. The commitment of time, money, and effort needed to campaign your boat benefits every I-36 owner when our class is represented on the line. Congratulations to Spinnaker Cup series winner **Kit Wiegman** and his crew on *Cassiopeia*, and to the **Newton brothers** (that would be us) and the crew of *Captain Hooke* for winning both the Championship series and the Nationals Regatta.

~ *Tom and David*



Islanders queue up on the approach to the finish in the race to Vallejo. Finishing line-up: 1-*Casseopeia*, 2-*Captain Hooke*, 3-*Diana*, 4-*Luna Sea*, 5-*Orion*.



Zingara trimmed for speed in the South Beach Race.



Orion heads out for the South Beach Race

***I-36 Championship Series
Racing Results 2009***

Boat Name	Place
<i>Captain Hooke</i>	1
<i>Windwalker</i>	2
<i>Pacific High</i>	3
<i>Tenacious</i>	4
<i>Luna Sea</i>	5
<i>Zingara</i>	6
<i>Mischief</i>	7
<i>Orion</i>	8
<i>Lean Times</i>	9

Find more pictures and racing videos on the Islander 36 website at: www.Islander36.org.



The Nationals Regatta race committee looking good!



Captain Hooke out front in the Nationals Regatta.

Fall Meeting Awards and a Special Invitation

Each year the I-36 Association honors deserving members with the presentation of perpetual awards including the Schneider Trophy for outstanding contributions to the Association, the Bill Hidgon Racing/Cruising Award for active participation in all Association events during the year, and the Winton Annual Cruising Award for outstanding contribution to the cruising program.

Racing awards include the Hammond Trophy for the season championship, the Winton Nationals Trophy for the winner of the I-36 Nationals, and the I-36 Perpetual Crew Trophy for outstanding service as a race crew member..

Clockwise from top left: (1) Sandy and Rick Van Mell receive the Winton Cruising Award, (2) The Newton brothers receive the Hammond Trophy, and also win the Winton Nationals, (3) Beau Woodward is awarded the I-36 Perpetual Crew Award, and (4) Dan Knox receives the Schneider Trophy. Dan also received the Bill Hidgon Racing/Cruising Award.



JAMES HIGDON
skipperi36@yahoo.com

October 21, 2009

Dear Officers, Skippers & Crews of the Islander 36 Association San Francisco Bay Fleet:

Welcome to the 2009 Fall Meeting. I am sorry I am unable to attend, and I hope that this letter finds you all well.

One of my father's greatest pleasures over the last twenty or so years of his life was your friendship and support. He and I spent countless hours sailing the bay along side true friends.

*We watched the fires together
Shared our quarters for awhile
Walked the dusty roads together
Came so many miles...*

As all of you know, William Eugene Higdon, a man full of spirit and the love of life died on August 14, 2009. It was his last wish that his ashes be mixed with his loving wife's (Marge) and scattered in the San Francisco Bay. I can think of no greater tribute to him than to have his dear friends present when he begins his final earthly journey.

It is my wish - and Ron, Denis and Gary have agreed to work with me to make this happen - that those who have loved my father will climb aboard Islanders and escort Blockbuster to a designated spot off of Angel Island during the occasion of the Spring Meeting for the Islander 36 Association. There the ashes of my father and stepmother will laid into the waters of the bay to waltz in the current, dancing from this Earth, until each of us rises to join them.

As the Spring Meeting isn't until March, several details will have to be worked out. The idea will be to take a little time in the afternoon for the excursion. Returning to the yacht club, Bill Higdon Special Martinis will be on me. As Dad would have it, the situation will not be a somber one, but a celebration of life and what it is to live it. It is also a celebration of the Islander 36 Association and its boats and members. Dad loved you all, and I am proud to include you all among my friends.

Cheers

Jim Higdon
Blockbuster



Cruising Notes

From Anna Stewart and Carol Williams, Cruising Co-Chairs

It has been a great year for the Islander 36 cruises. Inclement weather cleared just in time for great weekend venues. We had ice cream parties, ball games, luaus, casual races, wine tasting, and pumpkin carving. Sometimes all simultaneously. It was a good year. Anna and I thank each and every one of you who made the effort to come out and support the cruising program. That is what makes this organization flourish. The level of enthusiasm is always at its peak from the time Skipper and Nancy arrive until the last boat departs for its home berth.

I would like to highlight the Coyote Cruise as the "special" cruise of the year. The club was outstanding in its hospitality – Glenn was amazing. How about that Sunday newspaper delivery to the boats! What a guy!!

However, it was an especially poignant time during which we took time to reminisce about all the great times we had during the Higdon era and his time with our organization. Bill Higdon stories were the topic of conversation during the weekend along with the "Higdon Martini" which the bartender had perfected before the weekend was over. It was our time to honor a remarkable man who showed the American dream is possible. Bill was our first racer/cruiser. That means he raced all the cruisers to our destination and won most of the time.

All in all it was a great year and we're ready to do it again. We have a new destination to offer along with some of our favorites. Your input on destinations is also solicited and appreciated.

~ Anna and Carol



A Higdon Martini toast to Bill at the Coyote Point Yacht Club Cruise.



Pumpkin carving for both young and younger at the Point San Pablo Cruise.

2010 Cruise Schedule (tentative)

March 6:

*Spring Meeting
San Francisco Yacht Club
Coordinators: Anna & Mary*

April (TBD):

Sailing Clinic for Racers & Cruisers

April 9-11:

*Encinal Yacht Club Cruise & I-36 Night
@ Svendsen's Marine Store
Coordinators: Charles & Kathryn
Hodgkins*

May 28-31:

Vallejo Yacht Club

June 11-13:

*South Beach Yacht Club & Bay Bridge
Series Baseball Game (A's v Giants)
Coordinators: Myphi Alloy & Dan Knox*

July 3-5:

Petaluma Cruise

August 13-15:

*Coyote Point Yacht Club
Coordinators: Dennis & Judy Bush*

September 3-6:

Labor Day Cruise

September 17-19:

*3rd Annual SF All Islanders Rendezvous
Encinal & Oakland Yacht Clubs,
Coordinators: Rick & Sandy Van Mell*

October (TBD):

*Nationals Regatta~Cruisers welcome!
Golden Gate Yacht Club*

October 15-17:

*Ballena Bay Yacht Club
Octoberfest!
Coordinators: Harry Farrell & Carol
Williams*

November 6:

*Fall Meeting & Awards Ceremony
Oakland Yacht Club
Coordinator: Robert Aston*

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Winter Newsletter, 2009 Islander 36 Association of San Francisco Bay

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