

COMMUNITY LEARN TO SAIL

Southern Idaho Sailing Outreach Newsletter | Fall 2024



2024 Marks Five Years of Youth Sailing



SISO, in conjunction with Boise City Parks and Recreation, Idaho State Parks, our sailing instructors, and our volunteers held seven sailing camps with over sixty youth sailing participants this year. This brings us to five successful and rewarding years of Youth Sailing Camps in the Treasure Valley. **We are proud of this achievement, and it would not have been possible without our partners, donors, volunteers, and the kids that participated in the City of Boise Youth Sailing Camps.**

This year, kids of all levels - including beginners, intermediate and race camp sailors - experienced some of Mother Nature's moods including early summer rain and cold temperatures, thunderstorms, record heat, and wildfire smoke. **However, these environmental challenges did not stop sixty plus young sailors from accumulating over 2,100 hours of outside time.** This time was well spent having fun, meeting new friends, overcoming challenges, learning new skills, teaching, helping their peers and sailing fast. Unfortunately, we were forced to cancel the last scheduled camp due to the lake levels quickly falling to accommodate the Army Corps of Engineers Turner Gulch Boat Ramp reconstruction project.

This summer also brought changes to the SISO Board including welcoming new Board Members Jordan Rank and Catie Wardwell. In addition to becoming part of the leadership team, Jordan and Catie joined Mike McKinnes and Liam Wardwell who all became new volunteers this sailing season. Other changes included accepting Kent Reetz's decision to step down from the Board. Kent will continue to volunteer his time and expertise, however, and will remain a valuable part of our team in his new role.

The youth sailing program has not only taught kids the sport of sailing but has recently provided opportunities for kids to volunteer and become assistant instructors. **It is becoming evident that kids seeing their peers taking on these rolls is encouraging other kids to become volunteers and assistants and eventually become US Sailing Certified Instructors.** These new students are following in the footsteps of our first set of youth sailors that successfully became certified instructors. These young instructors include Emma Palmer, Molly O'Sullivan, Austin Giffen and James Giffen. These young instructors have become key to staffing the summer program.

Young sailors and new instructors represent the realization of SISO's goal of introducing the lifelong sport of sailing to Idaho youth and developing a new generation of sailors who will go on to share their passion of sailing as sailing instructors. **None of this would have been possible without the valuable support of our donors. A huge Thank You to each of you!**

First Annual Dinghy Thingy Regatta Raised Flying Colors

By Steve Christiansen, SISO Board Member / Lead Instructor

An opportunity to race in a fun-filled regatta required an early morning wakeup call, but that did not deter fourteen energetic sailors of all ages. As early as 6:30AM sailors began arriving to rig their boats in preparation for the skipper's meeting and an 8:00AM start.

Eight youth sailor graduates from the Boise Parks and Recreation Intermediate Sailing Camp and/or Racing Camp participated in this regatta at Lucky Peak Reservoir, the same venue where they learned to sail. Three of them are now US Sailing Certified Instructors and teach youth sailing camps. The other six competitors are members of our sister recreational sailing organization SISA, and have a mix of sailing backgrounds.

The regatta included an incredibly competitive RS Zest, Laser and an Open Class fleet.

The first start took advantage of a cool morning breeze of 6.6 knots. Fourteen boats jockeying for their position on the starting line made for exciting boat handling. The morning breeze kept the sailors highly focused as the wind direction changed multiple times during races. The competitors quickly realized they should not count themselves out of the race if they had a bad start. The shifty wind provided opportunities for sailors to move up in their fleet and added a bit of uncertainty to race leaders which made for competitive racing. As the morning progressed, the temperature began to rise with boats finishing the last of four races in 0.5 knots.

As the wind began to fade away, the race committee decided to call it a day before it got too hot. Back at the SISO Sailing Center, a very tasty potluck lunch was provided, race results were announced and plenty of camaraderie added to a great morning of sailing.

The goal of this first ever Dinghy Thingy Regatta was to provide more opportunities for kids to sail beyond the summer sailing camps, provide more time on the water, continue sailing with friends, meet experienced lifelong sailors and enjoy a tasty meal after the last race. All of which was accomplished with flying colors.

A big THANK YOU to all the competitors, volunteers and family members providing support and SISA for an excellent job running this regatta. SISO and SISA are extremely excited to see the amazing turn out for this event and are looking forward to planning the 2025 Dinghy Thingy Regatta schedule. Stay tuned.

Race results can be viewed at: <https://idahosailing.org/racing-2/race-results/>

Photos can be viewed at: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/PXuqNT5rv4Y49g8C9>.



Skippers working on their starting strategies prior to the first race of the regatta.



Sailing downwind required focus in a tight fleet.



Sailing the start line with less than five minutes before the start.



Tight mark rounding at the weather mark.



Sail trim and boat trim requires full concentration in light wind.

How Sailing Can Help to Combat “The Anxious

By Catie Wardwell, SISO Advisory Member

Each day after dropping my 14-year-old son off at Racing Camp the first week in June I took full advantage of the quiet car ride home: I listened to the book “The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness” by Jonathan Haidt. The book was filled with statistics and data centered around the arrival of smartphones and explored the loss of the “play-based childhood” and the “phone-based childhood” that developed as a result.

Haidt makes the argument that “All children are by nature antifragile...[but] require exposure to setbacks, failures, shocks, and stumbles in order to develop strength and self-reliance.” As parents we protect our children, but the more we protect them from the small challenges that life offers, the more we build their fragileness. **As I listened, I realized how many life experiences learning how to sail provides.** By default, the kids are in a natural tech-free environment learning how to take responsibility for themselves, their boat, and others on the water around them.

Mistakes will always be made while sailing but from these mistakes children will hone their communication skills from each other while developing their resilience to situations that can be applied to other areas of life off the water. **Campers are forced to prepare for the unexpected and rely on their instincts while applying their sailing knowledge to the practice of sailing. Rarely do kids get to learn in such an instantaneous cause and effect learning environment.** If they accidentally capsize, they feel the consequence and learn how to prevent it in the future. If they are going slower than their peers, they want to go faster and so learn how to read the water and take advantage of their sail shape to catch the wind. Kids in sailing camp are proving that they are “antifragile.”

Let’s do the next generation a favor and build opportunities for them to learn these “antifragile” life lessons through sailing.

Source: Haidt, Jonathan. 2024. *The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness*. Penguin Press.



Making new friends.



Sailing provides opportunities for exploration.



Learning from others on how to sail fast down wind.



Self-rescue of a capsized boat is great example of self-reliance.

History in the Making

By Peter Palmer, Chairman

It has been five incredible years of teaching over 300 kids the sport of sailing. This could not have happened without the vision of a few who developed a simple concept which gives young sailors guidance, encouragement, equipment and resources. **This concept provided a path to the incredible partnerships, donations and the dedication of many to support Treasure Valley Youth Sailing.**

Over a period of seven years, what began as a concept turned into a world class youth education program that we can all take pride in. Here's a brief history of our progress over the years:

2017: A Concept Envisioned

In the fall of 2017, a group of "mature" sailors - members of Southern Idaho Sailing Association - gathered at a local pub to discuss the future of sailing in Southern Idaho. **The demographics were obvious... in order to keep our sport alive, we needed to bring a younger crop of sailors into the sport.** A concept was hatched - on the back of the proverbial cocktail napkin - to develop a youth sailing program.

A group of Southern Idaho sailors meet and develop a plan for a youth sailing program.

Southern Idaho Sailing Outreach is created as an Idaho not-for-profit corporation.

2018: Our Organization is Formalized

We create a website, promotional materials, and begin an aggressive fund raising campaign.

SISO applies for and receives a grant to purchase and install docks at Lucky Peak Reservoir.

We receive 501(c)(3) non-profit status from the Internal Revenue Service.

Partnerships are formalized with City of Boise, Idaho State Parks, Ada and Boise Counties, and US Sailing to help further our goals.

2019: Youth Sailing Camps Begin !!!

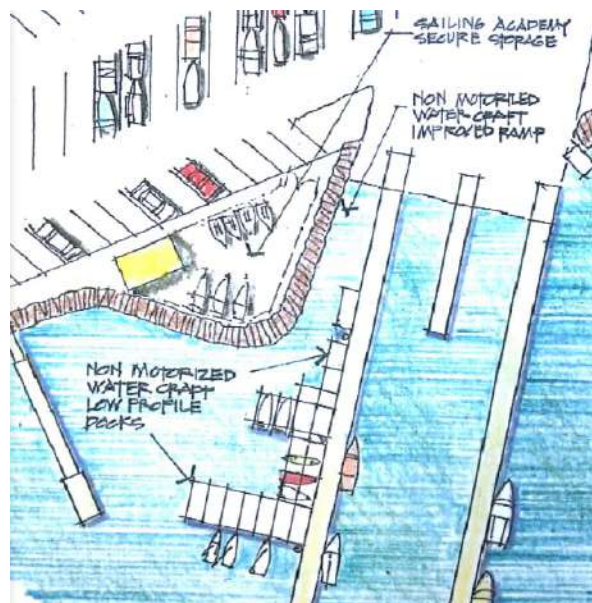
Our fund raising efforts allow us to purchase 10 youth instructional sailboats and two used coach/safety motor boats.

Nine SISA members become certified sailing instructors through completion of the US Sailing Small Boat Instructor course.

We conduct two week long youth sailing camps after only one week of marketing.

2020: COVID Shutdown

In spite of our success and enthusiasm, public health concerns during the COVID epidemic dictated that we cancel our plans for youth sailing camps. Instead, we continued to focus on fundraising, marketing, and developing our infrastructure.



Sailing Center Concept Sketch.



Idaho State Parks and Rec assemble new docks.



Getting the word out to the Treasure Valley.

History in the Making Cont.

2021 - 2024: Smooth Sailing

2021 saw our first full summer of youth sailing camps, and our camps have continued every summer since.

In 2023, we introduce the first of our Racing Camps to further the skills and experience of those who have graduated from our Beginner and Intermediate Sailing camps.

We have now graduated over 300 youth sailors from our week long sailing camps.

To date, at least six sailing camp students have progressed through the beginner and intermediate camps and gone on to become Certified Sailing Instructors.

SISO continues to invest in its infrastructure with the acquisition of a storage container, additional sailboats, and two brand new Boston Whaler chase/safety motorboats - thanks to our generous donors!

We have had a very successful history; in eight years we turned a concept into a remarkable opportunity for the youth of the Treasure Valley. **Our momentum is strong, and we are thankful for the incredible community support of our efforts. A big thank you to everyone who has helped make this possible!**



Accepting delivery of RS Zest sailboats.



Christening the Doris D.



SISA Members become certified sailing instructors.



Shade sail masts under construction.



RS Zest fleet rigged and ready to sail.

The Joy of Sailing in Their Own Words



"My name is Oliver. This is my 4th year doing sailing camp. I keep coming back because of my instructors, the community and of course sailing. I hope to become an instructor for SISO in the future. Thanks for donating."



"My name is Kestrel, and I am participating in the racing/ advanced sailing camp this week, I learned all about strategies and tactics for racing! My favorite part has been sailing fast in stronger winds. Thank you so much for supporting SISO and making this week possible!"



"My name is Auden and I'm taking the beginner sailing camp this week. My favorite part of camp is capsizing boats (on purpose) and then righting them. I also learned how to rig the boat and how to dock properly. Thank you so much for supporting our camp."



"My name is Mar! and I'm taking the beginner sailing camp. My favorite part of this camp is sailing for hours! I also learned how to save myself & the boat when capsizing. Thank you for supporting this camp."

SISO Welcomes New Members to the Board

Welcome to the Board our new members, Jordan Rank and Catie Wardwell. We are grateful and excited to have Jordan and Catie join the Board. They both bring a background of sailing expertise, youth education and management skills. Their passion for sailing and youth education provides the perfect fit to the SISO Board.

Jordan and Catie both have kids that are learning the sport of sailing at an early age, which reinforces youth sailing sustainability to the Treasure Valley. Below is a look into their backgrounds.

Jordan Rank

Jordan, an Engineering Project Manager, has built a career overseeing large-scale infrastructure projects. His dedication to precision and leadership extends beyond his professional work into the world of competitive sailing, a passion that began during his youth on Lake Michigan.

This passion flourished when he attended the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, where he not only honed his skills but also became an instructor. Jordan taught cadets and high school students to sail on various hulls, including the J/44, Colgate 26, 420, and Club FJ. His mentorship helped shape the next generation of sailors, combining his technical expertise with his enthusiasm for the sport. Jordan's sailing journey literally reached new heights on the topgallants of the USCGC EAGLE, the fabled training barque of the US Coast Guard. A transatlantic voyage gave him invaluable experience in open-ocean navigation and deepened his love for the sea. Since then, Jordan's competitive edge has seen him participate in several prestigious sailing races, such as the Newport Bermuda, Annapolis to Newport, and J/111 Worlds.

Jordan now lives in Boise Idaho with his wife and two young sons. He is a member of SISA where you will see him racing on his Club FJ or on Dick Armstrong's Panacea. Whether leading a team on a major infrastructure project or navigating the complexities of an offshore race, Jordan brings the same level of focus, discipline, and passion to every challenge he faces.

Welcome, Jordan!

Catie Wardwell

Catie Wardwell is excited to bring her enthusiasm for cruising and sailing, and her background as an early childhood educator and public relations professional, to the organization.

Catie started taking ASA sailing classes in the Puget Sound during COVID and hasn't stopped, which culminated in a bareboat charter in the British Virgin Islands in 2023. Catie and her husband Will recently passed ASA 105 Coastal Navigation and ASA 106 Advanced Coastal Cruising as they explored the beautiful anchorages and marinas the San Juans had to offer. This included a 2 am sail through Deception Pass and a 40 mile trip to Port Angeles in the dark of night. Catie loved exploring Watmough Bay on Lopez Island and Inati Bay near Lummi Island.

Catie's son, Liam, has completed 3 SISO sailing camps and has more in his future. Her daughter, Eloise, will be attending sailing camp next summer! It will be exciting to see where the Wardwell family's next sailing adventures take them!

Welcome, Catie!



Jordan enjoying the view from the topgallant yard arm of the USCGC EAGLE



Jordan and his son Eli headed out for a sail on their Club FJ.



Catie and husband Will enjoying time in the San Juan Islands.



Catie at the ready with a mooring line.

Nautical Knowledge

Sailboat keels

In sailboats, keels serve two purposes: 1) as an underwater foil to minimize the lateral motion of the vessel under sail (leeway) and 2) as a counterweight to the lateral force of the wind on the sail(s) that causes rolling to the side (heeling). As an underwater foil, a keel uses the forward motion of the boat to generate lift to counteract the leeward force of the wind. As a counterweight, a keel increasingly offsets the heeling moment with increasing angle of heel.



Source: Wikipedia

Photo Credit: Graham Snook/Yachting Monthly



Through your generous donations, SISO is growing one step at a time. Our future is bright and youth sailing in the Treasure Valley is ALIVE!

Help Make Youth Sailing Possible

Youth sailing education in Southern Idaho is in great demand. Help make sailing accessible to all Treasure Valley Youth.

Be part of our success!

SISO is a nonprofit organization that promotes a healthy, active lifestyle through youth sailing education.

Thank you for considering becoming a program advocate today by making a tax-deductible donation.

- ❑ **Online:** sailingoutreach.org by credit card or PayPal
- ❑ **By check:** Payable to:
Southern Idaho Sailing Outreach Corporation
2117 N 14th Street · Boise, Idaho 83702



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FOCUS

Intransitive Verb: To concentrate attention or effort.

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