

GLEAMING OCEAN SECOND RETREAT MINUTES

JANUARY 17, 2110, BERKELEY YACHT CLUB



The following minutes were taken at the second retreat of the Gleaming Ocean Program to discuss the lessons learned after our first three classes of the program and to develop policies and procedures for the coming year.

1. ANALYSIS OF SUCCESS: The survey of the third class was discussed in which the students uniformly praised the program and the mentors and wanted an extension of the class if possible. Nevertheless, it was agreed that we had problems involving availability of mentors; lack of clear curriculum; not achieving the curriculum we had set; and interaction with the school. It was decided to extend the third class so that it would equal the new proposed length of classes (ten classes) and Cory will discuss with Lighthouse the scheduling. The curriculum committee (BOB B, SCOTT, DAN, CORY, LOUIE AND DAVID O) is to propose a firm curriculum for this and future classes.

a. Generally, for future ten classes, we will have the try out sale; a night sail; the anchor out; the family sale. All the classes in between shall be considered by the Curriculum Committee. It is anticipated that Bear will be used for two of the sales in which working the sails is emphasized. There will be charting and quite possibly an overnight watch keeping sail. Stay tuned.

1. MULTI MENTOR SET UP: Since it is likely we will extend the length of our classes, it will be necessary to create “teams” of mentors and students so as to avoid the absence of a mentor on a weekend creating feelings of resentment or abandonment by the student. There will normally be a “lead” mentor and two other mentors who will interact with three to four students. Mentor Groups will be set by Cory initially and meeting with students before the first sail will be considered vital. It was emphasized that the mentor team must show up when scheduled, giving advance notice if unable to attend unless emergency. Students are extremely sensitive to feelings of rejection and abandonment. We can do more harm than good if we are flakey in our own attendance. At the same time, it is unreasonable to expect each mentor to make every sail if there are ten sails and the ability to “trade off” times off will be important to keep our volunteers enthused. Advance notice of inability to attend is critical. Emergencies are covered by the other mentors.

2. SCHOOL SELECTION TEAM; CORY, BEN, BOB B AND LES remain the school selection team for next year and will meet and further discuss criteria. A person within the school who will actively work with us is vital, it is agreed, and that we are not yet capable of handling gang related students.

3. MENTOR TRAINING Robin came and gave us some insight as to what she counsels teachers to do and agreed to work with the curriculum group to help develop an appropriate class setup. Sailing is a tool to allow a connection with at risk students with a group of volunteers who will attempt to demonstrate that

a world of adventure and opportunity awaits the students that is available with the right attitude, some work, and some luck. Our task is not to simply teach some students to sail. It is to build a feeling of community and team work with mentors, crew and other students in an atmosphere of adventure and excitement. That requires interaction that is far more than teaching to sail. Example, support, and being there is critical. We had very good success apparently with Lighthouse and this should allow us to build on our skills in the future.

4.. **OUR MESSAGE:** A group of adults care enough about them to volunteer to work with them to master some sailing skills, explore nature, form a crew, and give them an alternative place to belong. We are there because we care about them, are unpaid and dedicated to making this work if we can.

5. **CAPTAIN TEAMS:** As with the mentors, we form teams of captains given the longer classes. Ben and Lee are the initial captains but more must be trained on Benjamin. Very occasionally, a captain may be asked to mentor as well but the goal is to keep one captain dedicated to boat and boat safety, alone. The second captain will be considered the Crew Chief and will be also looking over the crew dynamics. Keep in mind that Catherine, Ken, Bob B, and others are already captains on Benjamin but we should complete and renew their certification so that they, at least, can serve as second captains.

6. **TRAINING.** Benjamin is a complex boat and Lee and Ben are to set up some familiarization sails with crew so they are familiar with its systems. The night overboard drill is in March and after that is completed, training sails for GO, not students, will be implemented. Note that a manual for Benjamin is on line at www.bluewaterfoundation.org.

7. **OVERALL REACTION:** Even students we felt did not particularly like the course praised it and want to continue. One even stated it was the best thing that had happened to her. This is extremely encouraging and indicates we are on the right course. We are developing our system of mentoring, curriculum, student and school selection and, ideally, this coming year will see that basic system set up and we can consider where we go from there.

