WEST SOUND · ORCAS ISLAND

NEWSLETTER

Sail Orcas

END OF SEASON 2026



NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The 2026 season has come to a close, and it was a full one — the Orcas Island Sailing Team had a very busy NWISA spring and fall season, traveling to 10 weekend regattas, a women's clinic and a home scrimmage. Thanks to our staff of instructors and volunteers, our summer youth sailing camps were a huge success, running morning and afternoon sessions of lessons for nine weeks. Back again this summer was our evening women's learn-to-sail class. We also added two very well received sessions of adult coed lessons.

Volunteers staffed two open houses that featured free sailboat rides and barbecue for all. Tuesday evening open Laser sailing was back for the first time in a few years and ran weekly May–August. The sailing team sailors and parents hosted a Midsummer Splash Regatta, which was tons of fun!

Thank you to our sailors for showing up and racing hard, to Coach Tate Wester for leading the sailing team's NWISA program, and to the parents and volunteers whose driving, cooking and encouragement make seasons like this possible.

BURKE THOMAS

President, Sail Orcas

Sail Orcas
Teaching a Lifelong Sport

WHO WE ARE

Sail Orcas is a volunteer-run nonprofit that exists to share the joy of sailing with youth and adults, by providing high-quality instruction and easy access to boats and facilities. We teach this lifetime sport by promoting safe boat handling, teamwork, sportsmanship, camaraderie and marine stewardship.

SEASON AT A GLANCE 2

ORCAS ISLAND SAILING TEAM 3

HOW TO DONATE 4

THE 2026 SEASON

SEASON AT A GLANCE

150
youth took sailing lessons

24
adults took sailing lessons

~225
people across 2 open houses

14
members on the NWISA sailing team

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS: SUMMER

Lessons were the heart of the summer, with 150 youth and 24 adults taking lessons, introducing new sailors to the water and building the skills of returning ones.

Far more lessons were actually given than that, because many sailors came back for repeat classes — and each class of lessons consisted of four sessions, three hours long.

Our two open houses brought about 225 people down to meet the program, and the 14-member spring/fall NWISA sailing team helped carry momentum all year.

Beyond the lesson program, Tuesday evening Laser sailing kept experienced sailors racing through the summer, and we hosted an affordable youth regatta sailed in open skiffs and FJs — low-cost racing that gives young sailors a start line close to home.



Young sailors in life jackets gather in a circle with their instructors by the harbor.



Adult coed summer learn-to-sail class.



Summer open house: free barbecue and sailboat rides.

HIGH SCHOOL RACING

ORCAS ISLAND SAILING TEAM

Practices ran three days a week, both spring and fall quarters, coached by Tate Wester and a host of volunteers. The team participated in 10 NWISA off-island regattas, a clinic and 2 home scrimmages.

During the summer, sailors traveled individually to NWYRC regattas and hosted the Midsummer Splash Regatta on West Sound.

THE LEAGUES

NWISA is the Northwest Interscholastic Sailing Association, which runs high school racing. **NWYRC** is the Northwest Youth Racing Circuit of summer youth regattas.



The Sail Orcas team in front of the Orcas Island Yacht Club building.

14
sailors on the team

10
NWISA regattas off island

3
practice days a week, spring and fall

SUPPORT

HOW TO DONATE

As a volunteer-run program, we rely on gifts to keep boats maintained and to support our coaches, so we can keep instruction high-quality and access easy for island families. Your gift is tax deductible.

ONLINE

ORCAS ISLAND COMMUNITY FOUNDATION — SAIL ORCAS FUND

This fund is used to support the activities of Sail Orcas.

oicf.fcsuite.com/erp/donate/create/fund?funit_id=1178

BY MAIL

DONATION BY CHECK

Mail to:
Sail Orcas
P.O. Box 1226
Eastsound, WA 98245

DONATE TO THE RACE TEAM

IN MEMORY OF ROBERT HARRIS AND JAKE WHITE

Gifts to the race team in memory of Robert Harris and Jake White can be made through the donation link below.

JAKE WHITE SCHOLARSHIP FUND: SAIL ORCAS

To support Sail Orcas participants who need subsidies to participate in club activities and travel, including covering fees and equipment costs.

oicf.fcsuite.com/erp/donate/create/fund?funit_id=3153



ROBERT HARRIS



JAKE WHITE

Thank you for making mariners of hundreds of kids over the past 25 years — and, with your help, for keeping us afloat for next season.

— BURKE THOMAS, PRESIDENT, SAIL ORCAS

