

# RIVERSWEST

SPRING 2007



QUARTERLY

[www.riverswest.org](http://www.riverswest.org)

RIVERSWEST IS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION WHOSE MISSION IS TO ENCOURAGE PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE CONSTRUCTION, RECREATIONAL USE AND THE HISTORY OF LOW-IMPACT BOATS.

## President's Column

*Richard Stover, RiversWest President June, 2007*

This last year has been one of loss for myself and for all of us in the RiversWest community. I lost both of my parents, in December. We lost Rob DeVoe and Sam McKinney. The Oakes Park site was lost as well.

I have been dealing with the aftermath of my parent's death, which has kept me busy. However, with the advent of spring, my thoughts are turning to other things. What better way to honor the memory of our nautical friends than to forge ahead with our dreams and plans?

I'm planning a trip the first two weeks of August, to Barkley Sound, on the west coast of Vancouver Island. Anyone interested? I'll be trailering my sharpie schooner and ferrying it over to Vancouver Island to launch at Port Alberni.

### *We will need volunteers all through the summer for the following activities.*

- ◆ The boatbuilding program, for disadvantaged youth is on for May and June.
- ◆ RiversWest boats will be going into the water this summer, after some basic upgrades to the dock.
- ◆ Ongoing improvements to the shop will happen, whether or not Peter is able to get us a grant.
- ◆ The first RiversWest boat show, at Pier 99, will be September 15th, the weekend after Port Townsend's show. Planning for our boat show will take place at the shop on the first and third Saturdays of each month, until September.
- ◆ Call me, or anyone on the Board, if you are interested.

The website is being brought up-to-date; check it out and let us know how we are doing.

I'm looking forward to seeing you at the shop or on the water this summer.

Richard Stover, RW President  
[Rm\\_stover1@msn.com](mailto:Rm_stover1@msn.com)  
503-282-3856



## Portland Wooden Boat Show

*Richard Stover, RiversWest President and Boat Show Coordinator*

RiversWest is sponsoring Portland's annual Wooden Boat Show again this year. It will be held the weekend of September 15th-16th. The traditional venue has been changed from the downtown location on the Willamette River to our new facility at Pier 99 in North Portland Harbor, next to the Marriott Courtyard and the I-5/N. Marine Drive interchange.

For exhibitors, there is dock space available and plenty of parking for everyone.

Now, is the time to share your love of low impact boating, whether as a boat builder, sailor, oarsman or novice. Enjoy the boating camaraderie, bring the kids and help them participate in building their own model boats. Yes, there will be good food to fill out the festivities.

Of course, all of this requires the efforts of many volunteers, lots of coordination, exhibitors and vendors. This is a very special occasion to build friendships, learn more about the world of small craft, meet new customers and bring the whole family on board a new adventure.

To know how to become involved in the show, email Richard Stover: [rm\\_stover1@msn.com](mailto:rm_stover1@msn.com).

## RiversWester Commissions Student Built Green Vessel

Capt. Peter Wilcox, Past President



The winds had built to well over 35 knots, with gusts much higher, when the tide in the middle of the Georgia Strait turned against the winds. Almost instantly our 25' wood sharpie yawl was knocked flat on her beam by towering breakers. When it happened again, just moments later, I knew we were in real trouble. After righting, we survived the Georgia Strait "southeaster" by pulling up our centerboard, to stop tripping on the giant swells. That experience, seven years ago, while sailing from Anacortes to the Broughton Archipelago near the top of Vancouver Island, made it clear that we needed a more appropriate vessel. And, from a comfort perspective, Raven's four-foot headroom was too low for even our youngest! If we were to continue our goal of yearly explorations up the inside passage to the Charlottes and Alaska, we had to sell Raven, which had given us 13 years of magical family cruising.

Our next boat was to be a lovely, but tired 33' Ed Monk Sr. bridgedeck cruiser. Royal Scot needed loads of aesthetic, structural and systems work, but she was elegant, amazingly efficient with her 85 hp. Perkins diesel, had a unique local history, and fit our budget. Furthermore, with seven trips

up the west coast of Vancouver Island under her keel, she was a proven passage-maker. It took a lot of my time, but only a surprisingly modest amount of money, to make her sound and reliable again. Running on clean 100% bio-diesel, we took Royal Scot on joyful

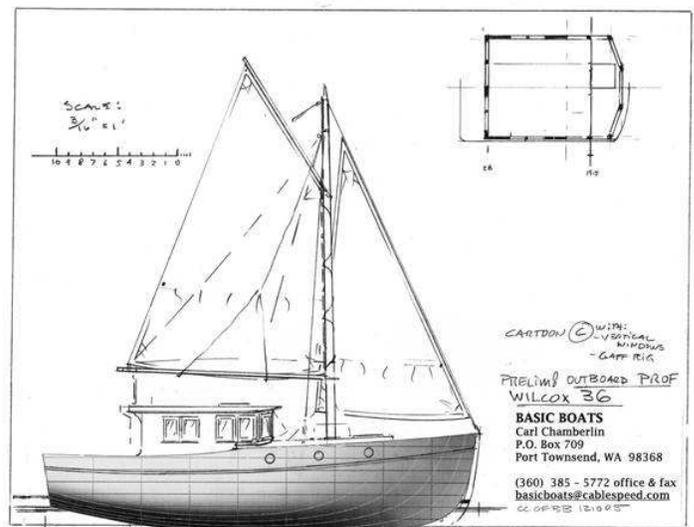
voyages up and down the Columbia from Astoria to Lewiston, Idaho and many places between. But we longed to be sailing again and passed her on to a new and appreciative owner, right after celebrating her 60th birthday.

Determined to find a sea kindly pilot-house sailboat that could safely take us on trips to the far north and for off-season cruising in the San Juan and Gulf Islands, we began shopping for vessels of either metal or wood, the two hull materials I believe to be sustainable and enduring. Metal boats in our size range were generally aluminum and too costly, while the newest wood boat we found that met our needs, was over 20 years old. We did not want another fixer!

In 2005, we attended the Port Townsend Wooden Boat Festival, as we had for the prior 21 years. Frankly, we did not expect to find a vessel meeting our requirements, but

did notice a couple of lovely wooden cruising boats that were brand new. These sported intriguing signs reading: "Need Large Boat Commission for Wooden Boatbuilding School." Enticing as the message was, we were sure that a new boat in the size we felt we needed, would not fit our budget. But we inquired anyway. As it turned out, the school sorely needed a large project and we wanted a new wood boat just as much. A deal was struck and the dream of a new, low-impact motor-sailer began to become reality.

Located in a cluster of classic waterfront buildings, in Port Hadlock, WA, the NW School of Wooden Boatbuilding was commissioned to build our dreamboat. Founded by legendary Northwest boat builder Bob Prothero, the school is intended to help keep commercial wooden boatbuilding alive on the West Coast. It is an inspiring place that continues to build inspiring vessels. Master builder, Richard Wilmore, and his flotilla of talented and hardworking students, have finished the hull, decks, cockpit, forward interior, and mainmast, and are working on the house and other spars as this is written. Launching is scheduled for Fall 2007.



## RiversWest Third At Risk Youth Boat Building Program



This spring, RiversWest is leading its third At Risk Youth boatbuilding program in cooperation with Multnomah County. Other community boatbuilding operations, such as Seattle's Center for Wooden Boats and ones in Alexandria, Virginia and Portland, Maine, have made similar programs a centerpiece of their activities. Ultimately, such community activities have proven to be a keystone to their success and longevity.

The GOALS program of the County's Juvenile Justice Department is comprehensive and challenging for these kids; family involvement is a requirement. The youth choose among several programs, with ours focused on developing basic construction skills. These young men and women have been in trouble and it's our job to give them a little redirection and inspiration. Interestingly, the last time we taught boatbuilding to such a group, two were offered entry-level boatbuilding positions at Schooner Creek Boatworks.

The program is organized on a volunteer basis, but we pay our lead instructors as with all RiversWest classes. RiversWest is reimbursed for the use of its space and tools, plus a helpful and not insignificant stipend. Part of our fee for this service is that we will

be keeping the boat and oars the students build for our livery, with a perpetual once a year free rental for all of the kids involved. The youth also get a good set of basic tools. County staff has said that ours is the most cost-effective of the programs available. Teaching such a tough group is not easy, as the following account by Dan Pence attests.

As I write this, the odd pieces of plywood and lumber laying around the RiversWest boatshop look more like storm debris than a boat. Two extra long plywood panels cut into odd shapes on the floor over by the refrigerator, a collection of sticks bristling with spring clamps is draped over saw horses is jammed in the corner. Another misshapen plywood panel is sticking out from underneath the water taxi, and on the crude bench in the center of the shop are more sticks either too long or too short for anything except a boat. This is the progress made during our first class.

It was quite an exciting first class. Volunteers Jim Litton, Mark Neuhaus, and I passed out tools, explained what they were for, then we put the teens to work sharpening their carpenter's pencils. It was just a couple moments before the first blood was spilled – a cut finger; very exciting. They each made a nice tool tray, decorated with interesting urban acronyms they were reluctant to explain- very interesting. We

*Capt. Peter Wilcox and Dan Pence*

had lunch down on the end of the dock - a beautiful day. We speculated where one would drift after falling in the water - turns out about half of them are afraid of water. I told them; "The best boat builders hate water." They may have believed me.

After lunch a couple students really needed to have a cigarette break - but denied because of county policy. This resulted in long breaks in the portapottie and frayed nerves. Then it got hot, our nerves were on edge, these students aren't used to my frenetic pace yet. There was some balking, I admit, but we mostly powered through and actually got a lot more done than hoped. After they left, the instructors hung out awhile to let our emotions settle - we agreed it was a good first day.

The boat is a rowing dory, drawn by Phil Bolger - the "Long, Light Dory." It will be 19'6" long with 4' of beam. It is a simple plywood boat, a stretched version of the popular 15' Gloucester Gull. This boat has adjustable seats to trim well for one, two or three people. It is also very fast and should be easily manageable in the North Portland Harbor's often swift current.

After the boat is finished, we will turn our attention to oar carving. Each student is expected to create a serviceable oar. On the last class, Thursday evening June 28<sup>th</sup>, the public and RiversWest members are invited. The remaining classes are each Tuesday and Thursday evening from 5:00 to 9:00 and Saturdays 9:30 to 4:30 thru June. Please come by anytime and see the fun.

## ***RiversWest Boat Building Summer Camp***

### ***Boat Building Summer Camp Ages 14+ set for August 2007.***



#### ***Course description:***

This summer, Rivers West is offering a 2 week summer camp of boat-building instruction and shop experience for students and others interested in wooden boat construction. 2 weeks of daily instruction and shop time will be held at the new Rivers West shop located at the Pier 99 Marina on the Columbia River, near Portland Expo Center. After brief introductions, work will start with

construction of your own shipwright toolbox to hold the tools you'll be using over the next 2 weeks. Our expert boatbuilding instructor will direct your team to construct and launch a 20' *Light Dory* designed by Phil Bolger.

Steps will include layout, cut out, assembly, epoxy/fiberglass work, finishing, painting, hardware installation, and oar construction.

Each of the student-campers will get to keep the tool box they make. The boat and oars will become the property of *RiversWest*, for use in its community boat livery (rental).

The boat livery program is designed to make it possible for families who cannot afford to own a boat, or have no place to store one, to be able to get on Portland's exceptional rivers.

*Dan Pence, Instructor*

An engraved plaque will be mounted in the boat with the names of the builders.

Once the livery is in operation the former builders will be given lifetime free access, on a once-monthly basis, during the summer livery hours.

#### ***Schedule:***

August 6-17, Mon-Fri 9am-3pm  
Limited to 6-8 participants. This camp culminates with a launching ceremony at our marina.

#### ***Cost including toolset:***

\$700/student camper

#### ***Registration:***

Phone Dan Pence, instructor:  
(503) 774-4207, or  
email: pence@pacifier.com.

#### ***Registration deadline:***

***07/20/07***

## ***Ferry Report***



RiversWest's Willamette Ferry System project has been effectively stalled for the past few months. The well documented problems of the aerial tram are probably a large part of why no local politicians have been willing to champion the project to date. This is in spite of the fact that the PDOT funded feasibility study

([www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=122319](http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=122319)) clearly af-

firmed the viability of the "central city circulator" river transit option that the RiversWest ferry committee had also concluded as the logical approach, and that funding was readily available for the city's recommended portion. The study also concluded that the three historic Crater Lake launches that RiversWest is preserving, "character vessels" as the report describes them, are appropriate, affordable, and desirable components of the system.

One of the Willamette Ferry Systems earliest supporters, Pearl/South Waterfront developer, Homer Williams, told me that he does not expect significant progress at the city until there is a change of vision and leadership; we

*Capt. Peter Wilcox, Chairman*

hope he is not right! I, with other committee members as often as possible, continue to meet with city commissioners, city staff, transit proponents, and others whom we hope might help the idea to break through. The extraordinary low capital costs of water transit, together with the benefits of added security ("eyes on the river") and a partial backup for the bridges, would seem to make it a natural.

Looking at what other cities have done with their waterfronts in the last 10-20 years make it apparent that it is past-time to get this highly sustainable and uniquely low capital needing economic excursion and transit project underway.

## Boat Shop Activities

Our move to Pier 99 has stimulated both the need and the enthusiasm for putting in the effort to create a more professional and efficient shop environment, and to generally get organized. In order to get things rolling fast we are meeting on both first and third Saturdays to engage in a variety of projects.



There are some really fascinating boat-building projects in the shop right now. We have 7 people building boats, as well as a group of people working on the Hall Templeton, painting and building a set of supports for a canvas cover. In addition the Youth boat-



building program is in full swing all day every Saturday, and for several hours on Thursday evenings.

Several shop upgrade projects have been completed, including building overhead racks for lumber storage in each bay, stairs at one end of the mezzanine and racks for the livery, both on the dock and in the shop. The lighting has been improved by the addition of several fluorescent fixtures, and in case anyone was not aware, we have rented

a chemical toilet for the shop. The bays have all been allocated to specific uses. Two are shop bays, one is reserved for shop projects, one is filled with the livery boats, and the others are all rented to boat builders.

There is a whiteboard in the shop with lists of projects, many of which are looking for volunteers. These include installing a window and an entry door, building shelves for the RW library, building a thermal plastic curtain to cover the big sliding doors to reduce infiltration of cold air during the winter. There are also some projects that are unfunded now, but for which we hope to get money from a grant. These include improving the wiring, installing two large gas space heaters which we have obtained, and building boat racks on the dock to free up one or more bays in the shop and to put the boats more conveniently near the water.



## Boat Shop Rates

*Tim Greiner and Jim Litton, Co- Shop managers*

**Shop space is available to members now at these rates:**

Full Bay 10' X 20' \$90/month Suitable for a boat up to 20'.

1/2 a Bay \$45/month Suitable for a small dinghy, canoe or kayak.

RiversWest Small Craft Center Inc. P.O. Box 82686, Portland, OR 97282

## Membership Form

**RiversWest is a non-profit membership organization whose mission is to encourage personal involvement in the construction, recreational use and history of low impact boats.**

Members receive: The RiversWest newsletter; Access to RiversWest boat shop (add space rent for project); Access to RiversWest boat building education programs; Invitation to all RiversWest boating and social functions; Right to vote for RiversWest officers and board members; Chance to be involved with RiversWest board if you so desire; Opportunity to volunteer and help with activities; Discounts at Crosscut Hardwood, Woodcrafters, Tap Plastics.

Our main support is the dues and donations from our members. Whether or not you are active at the shop or in our other activities, we hope you will want to support our advocacy for low-impact boats and boating in the Portland area. The more members we represent the more we have to say about the future of the programs that affect the boating we love and our planning for the future. Also see our web site at [www.riverswest.org](http://www.riverswest.org).

**Please return the following with your check to the address above.**

New member  Renewing member  Change of information  Additional donation

Name..... Home phone.....

Address..... Day/Cell phone.....

City/ST/Zip..... E-Mail.....

Dues:  Senior (65 and older) \$30.00  Youth (17 and under) \$30.00  General Membership \$50.00

Donations:  \$50.00,  \$100.00,  \$250.00,  other \$\_\_\_\_\_.

**Dues and donations to RiversWest qualify for tax deductions. Ask your tax advisor**

New members please note: To keep the maintenance of our membership list as easy as possible new membership dues received on or before June 30<sup>th</sup> are good for the current year, if received after June 30<sup>th</sup> count for the current and next year.

### RiversWest Board Officers

**President: Richard Stover,**  
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**Secretary/webmaster: John Bouwsma,**  
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***Please check your membership status; RiversWest needs your support.***

READ THE LABEL. The date next to your name is the year in which your membership expires. If the label reads '06 it is time to renew. Please keep us current with regard to address changes or other corrections.