

COMMUNITY LEARN TO SAIL

Southern Idaho Sailing Outreach Newsletter | Fall 2025



It's Been a Full Year

SISO and our partners City of Boise Parks and Recreation and Idaho Parks and Recreation have successfully completed another fun and rewarding summer of youth sailing at Lucky Peak Reservoir. Not only did the reservoir stay full during all eight camps, but we also had a full year of teaching more than 70 kids the joy of sailing. In addition to teaching, other news includes:

- Prior to the start of the youth sailing season, the SISO Board decided it was time to refresh the Sailing Center outdoor classroom with 13 cubic yards of new gravel. The new gravel provided a fresh and inviting environment for outdoor instruction. **Thank You** Rushman Sand & Gravel for donating the gravel.
- New this year, Southern Idaho Sailing Association (SISA) in conjunction with SISO put on not one, but two highly competitive Dinghy Thingy Regattas.
- Sustainability of the youth sailing program is coming to fruition as youth sailing graduates took on active roles assisting instructors with the day-to-day operations of sailing camp.

The City hired two Sailing Instructor Assistants. The positions were filled by youth sailing graduates, Oliver Smith and Rylee Saba.

Youth Volunteers: Lila Hofenditz, Katelyn Giffen and Liam Wardwell, all youth sailing graduates volunteered this year. Lila exceeded all volunteer expectations by volunteering for four camps!

These positions provide excellent experience and knowledge for young sailors to become US Sailing Small Boat Certified Instructors.

- Parents accessed daily camp photos via a shared QR code.
- Mother Nature provided plenty of opportunities to navigate through weather conditions that provided memorable teaching moments.

Thank you for being part of our success. Thanks to your support, the 2025 youth sailing camps offered a year of enjoyable learning for everyone.



Thank You to Our 2025 Volunteers

We could not have done it without you. Your enthusiasm and shared knowledge were invaluable. We are very grateful to you and your time working side by side with the instructors helping make the 2025 Youth Sailing Camps fun, educational and a safe environment for all those that participated.

◆ Eric Davis

◆ Tina Klamt

◆ Lynn Sander

◆ Katelyn Giffen

◆ Michael McKinniss

◆ Michael Sullivan

◆ Lilla Hofenditz

◆ Marty O'Toole

◆ Catie Wardwell

◆ Steve King

◆ Peter Palmer

◆ Liam Wardwell

◆ Kent Reetz



Opening Doors

By Oliver Smith – Sailing Instructor Assistant

Over this summer, I applied for and received the assistant instructor job for the 2025 batch of sailing camps. I was scheduled for 3 basic learn to sail camps, one of which was the all girls camp, and 1 intermediate learn to sail camp. I was understandably nervous for my first week, which was the week right after school got out for me. When I came to work on the first day, however, I felt right at home. Having done all of the camps in the past, I felt extremely comfortable working with the equipment. And of course, my coworkers were the centerpiece of my whole experience. Every day, they came to work with an outright positive mood, and were ready to get the day started right away. Every morning, each of us were delegated a task that helped us get ready for the day, be it fetching the chase boats, or cleaning off the docks after the geese had a chance to roost. No matter what was assigned, everyone did their tasks with diligence.

Being an assistant instructor was my first paid job, and I would say it was the best first job anyone could have. There was plenty of physical activity to keep me healthy and get my heart rate up (that also came with watching the campers sail), lots of mental stimulation and planning which helped me stay in the flow for school when it started back up, and also many socializing opportunities with the campers and fellow instructors. The uniqueness of the job will also be a nice line in my resume and college application as my time there involved many valuable lessons and activities that I'll remember for my lifetime.

I would highly recommend this job to any youth sailor who has a genuine interest in sailing as the job offers many learning opportunities and it opens many doors to sailing related activities in the future. I've also made many friends, and I've learned that the sailing community is chock-full of kind and caring people that share a genuine love for sailing and helping each other out. I plan on returning to my post next summer and I may even pursue a full sailing instructor certification.



Lines of Rope and Ties to People

By Lila Hofeditz – Volunteer

Driving up for the first time to Spring Shores Marina, I had no idea what to expect. I had moved to Boise during COVID a year earlier and had yet to explore what Idaho had to offer because of the circumstances. I was in complete awe from the drive alone: The cinematic hills, bluffs, and winding water were entirely unexpected. They put me a little more at ease with the nerves I was experiencing by embarking on doing a sailing camp.

To be honest, after the first week I wasn't completely hooked on the actual sailing part since I struggled with keeping track of everything I needed to have control of. However, I was enthralled with being out on the water and that brought me back for the next year. The kind of peacefulness I felt on the water is truly difficult to describe. I signed up for another intermediate camp along with the newly added racing camp, and the racing camp is really where my complete love for sailing culminated. With basic camp and two intermediate camps under my belt, I finally had total confidence in my sailing skills and could now apply those skills to racing strategy and tactics. I learned that I love "sailing smart" and doing all that I can to give myself an edge in races. I continued doing multiple camps the following year and with each year I could feel myself honing my skills and truly just loving the community that came along with the program.

At the end of that summer, I thought to myself, "what's the next step in my sailing journey? How can I continue this for years to come?" and I realized that I was finally old enough to volunteer for the camps and learn about a different side of the program. I am so glad I had that thought, because volunteering for SISO this summer has been so rewarding and has been so eye-opening into the work that goes into making these camps so great. I knew I would love helping to teach kids about sailing, but I did not realize how much volunteering would continue to deepen my love for sailing. One of the most impactful things about volunteering was the talks I would have with the older instructors while on the safety boats watching the sailors. Having so many different generations come together because our love for sailing created such an irreplicable dynamic. I've gotten advice about college and life, as well as listening to stories of some truly incredible sailing excursions. With each conversation I learned more about what makes sailing so unique: it can connect the lives of people who would never have crossed paths under any other circumstance. I can't wait to see who else sailing will bring me, and how it will continue to impact my life.



Achieving Confidence

By Rylee Saba — Sailing Instructor Assistant

I was thirteen years old when I first started sailing. When my parents signed me up for a week-long sailing camp with SISO, they didn't know how much it would impact my life.

I remember the first time I stepped onto a sailboat. Being out on the lake alone with only a few hours worth of instruction was definitely nerve-wracking, but the feeling of the soft breeze and the warm sun beaming down on me made me relax a little. I remember feeling the pull of the mainsheet and the resistance of the tiller, and then slowly figuring out how to gain control of the boat. It was a lengthy process to build confidence on the water, but eventually my white-knuckle grip on the mainsheet eased, and I learned to trust the boat, and myself a little more.

Over the next few summers, I kept coming back, and I kept getting better. My confidence and abilities had grown so much over the years, and I truly had so much fun in the weeks that I had spent on the lake. Once I became old enough, it only felt natural to step into the role of assistant instructor. I wanted to give back to the program that had given me so much over the past few years.

At the beginning of the year when I was 16, I submitted an application to the city for the assistant sailing job at these very camps, and a few weeks later, I was offered the job to my delight. As summer approached, I wanted to make sure I was ready, so I started brushing up on my skills by watching sailing videos and reviewing the basics. I felt confident going in, although I wasn't quite sure about my ability to teach. On the first day of Basic Sailing Camp, I showed up a little nervous, but ready.

I quickly learned that being an assistant instructor was very different from being a student. It wasn't just about knowing how to sail, but about being able to explain the workings behind everything while busily rigging boats and leading drills. I also learned that I needed to stay calm when things didn't go as planned. The messy and unpredictable moments, like chasing down rogue sailboats and fishing falling hats (and campers) out of the water ended up being some of the most rewarding and memorable experiences.

Every day I learned something new, whether it be through teaching the campers or just talking with the other instructors. I had the opportunity to work with some incredible people and hear stories from them. Some told me about their adventures on long sailing trips across the ocean, and others shared their experiences in different careers. These conversations opened my mind and sparked new ideas about what my own future might look like.

This upcoming year, I'm planning on working toward earning my full instructor certification through the generous support of SISO. I'm so grateful for everything they've provided me, as well as so many others over the years. I'm also so thankful to all the people I have been able to connect with through this program. The relationships I've built through SISO have not only made each summer more meaningful, but also inspired me to keep growing both on and off the water. I'm incredibly excited to see what my future holds, but I know for sure that sailing will always be an important part of it.



The Joy of Sailing in Their Own Words



I'm Kaavya. I'm 13 and in the beginner camp. I really like sailing when there's high winds, and capsizing is really fun as well. Thank you for making this camp possible and giving me this valuable opportunity.

My name is Lily. I am 13 years old, and I am in the beginner camp. I love sailing, especially with a crew member on board. Thank you for making this camp possible.



The Joy of Sailing in Their Own Words

Continued



My name is Stella and I am 13 years old. I am in basic sailing camp. I loved learning how to sail and am definitely coming back next year! Thank you for making this possible.



My name is Bele'n and I'm 16 years old. I'm in the basic sailing camp and it's really fun. I love when there is heavy winds because I can go fast. Thank you for making this camp possible.



My name is Ainoa. I am 11 years old. I am in the beginner sailing camp. I love when we sail and work on team building. Thank you for making this camp possible.

Nautical Knowledge

As autumn winds rise, knowing how to reef your sails is an essential skill for every sailor. *Reefing* means reducing the sail area to maintain control and balance when the wind picks up. It's one of the oldest and most important practices in seamanship.

The word *reef* comes from the Old English and Dutch word *rif*, meaning "to draw together" or "roll up." In the days of tall ships, sailors "took in a reef" by tying part of a massive square sail to the yardarm, thereby reducing its size in heavy weather. The tradition continues today, just with smaller sails and simpler gear.

On modern sailboats, reefing typically involves partially lowering the mainsail and securing it to the boom, reducing the power of the wind on the rig. A well-timed reef keeps the boat flatter, steadier, and faster through the gusts. As the old mariner's adage goes, "*If you think it's time to reef, it's already past time.*"

Our RS Zests make this process even easier. They can be reefed without any special lines by removing the boom-vang, adjusting the outhaul, turning the mast to roll up the mainsail, and reattaching the boom-vang at the desired amount of sail area.

Whether it's a tall ship or a training dinghy, the principle is the same: less sail = more control and smoother sailing when the wind tries to knock you down.



The lead boat sailing with a full mainsail followed by a boat with a reef in the mainsail to reduce sail area.



This crew member is reefing the mainsail which keeps the boat well under control as the wind continues to increase. Photograph by Paul Duddy, used with permission

Sailing to Hawaii

Sailing to Hawaii is a dream for many sailors. Some make it happen; others continue to dream. Some enjoy cruising the approximately 2,400 nautical miles, others race in the Transpac Race from Long Beach to Honolulu or the Pacific Cup from San Francisco to Kaneohe Bay. Boise Parks and Recreation Youth Sailors sail to Hawaii every Thursday morning, June through July. They set sail from the Sailing Center at Spring Shores Marina with Hawaii (Chimney Rock Picnic Area) as their destination, approximately 0.75 nautical miles.

You may ask how in the world did Chimney Rock become Hawaii? Looking across the lake, you see green grass, shade trees, a sandy beach, and volcano-like geological features. The temperature is also a few degrees cooler than the Sailing Center, which is a bonus.

Sailing to Chimney Rock may not be open ocean sailing, but it provides learning opportunities for the young sailors on how to prepare for a big crossing. Before the sailors leave the dock, they learn about preparing for an open ocean passage and the provisions and equipment they should have aboard. Also discussed are weather conditions and how to prepare for adverse weather. Key considerations for this crossing include maintaining awareness of other vessels, ensuring an adequate supply of food and water, carrying radio equipment, first aid supplies, wearing life jackets, and reviewing the weather forecast prior to departure.

As the sailors venture out to make the passage, some are nervous while others are energized and ready for the challenge. Before too long sails are trimmed and the fleet is making progress across the lake. Utilizing their sailing skills they safely reach the sandy beach of Hawaii. This is a big achievement for most. They sailed a boat to Hawaii without even having a drivers license.

The day in Hawaii features engaging activities and collaborative exercises, including blindfolded knot relay races designed to enhance teamwork. Other games include jump rope with sixty-five consecutive jumps being a record. Tug of war between girls and boys is not a sure bet nor is the limbo as far as who is going to win.

After lunch, each young sailor writes handwritten thank you notes to two SISO donors, expressing appreciation for their support. This exercise offers a valuable learning experience, encouraging personal expression and focus in an otherwise digital world.

As with any journey, there comes a point when it is necessary to return home. The onset of midafternoon local trade winds from the west signals that this moment has arrived.

Just a note of recognition and thank you to the US Army Corps of Engineers for maintaining Chimney Rock picnic grounds, otherwise known as Hawaii.



Nautical chart to Hawaii



Catching the morning breeze to Hawaii



Tug of War - Ready, Set...



Thank you notes - postcards from Hawaii



How low can you go?



A bit of cardio training before lunch



Team building through blindfolded knot relay

DINGHY THINGY REGATTAS

JULY 19 and AUG. 2, 2025

Sailboats 15' and under | Spring Shores Marina, Lucky Peak ID



First start underway in the light morning breeze



Tight traffic always makes for an exciting race



Never too young to begin racing with your dad

Regatta News

Following the considerable success of last year's inaugural Dinghy Thingy Regatta at Luck Peak Reservoir, the Southern Idaho Sailing Association (SISA) organized two regattas this year. The participating skippers included graduates from Boise Parks and Recreation Intermediate and Racing Camps as well as members of SISA, forming a highly competitive field.

The regattas commenced with participants rigging their boats amid promising wind conditions. However, as the races began, shifting breezes presented challenging, light wind scenarios that tested competitors' skills in boat balance, sail trim, and concentration. Fleet positions frequently changed, with some skippers benefiting from advantageous wind shifts on certain parts of the course, while others capitalized on brief gusts to gain ground. Often, leading boats encountered lighter air, allowing trailing competitors to close the gap, resulting in tightly contested racing with no assured outcome for those in front.

Upon conclusion of the racing and storing of equipment, participants enjoyed a communal potluck meal. This provided an excellent opportunity for camaraderie while race results were tallied and final standings announced.

The race committee efficiently managed all seven races, ensuring a positive experience despite variable wind conditions. The event was well attended, with 20 competitors contributing to its success.

Thank you SISA for hosting the Dinghy Thingy Regattas, which offer increased sailing opportunities for families within the local community.



Thank you for participating in the 2025 Dingy Thingy Regattas - looking forward to next year

"A Picture Is Worth A Thousand Words"



For centuries, the admiration of the sea and sailing vessels have captured the eye of photographers across the world. Words cannot convey the adventure of yachts racing across a stormy ocean or even small boats sailing across Lucky Peak Reservoir. Our crew of instructors and volunteers have been capturing such images at Lucky Peak.

To view 2025 youth sailing photos visit:

[SISO Photos and Videos](#) | [Southern Idaho Sailing Outreach](#)



Help Make Youth Sailing Possible

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!

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

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On the Edge

Meaning: On the edge of (something). Very close to doing something or of having some imminent event happen, especially that which is bad or disastrous.

Example: Sailing on the edge.

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THANK YOU! Your generous financial support gives Idaho's youth the opportunity to learn and grow through sailing.

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