

# WINDS OF CHANGE

## *Ms. Race Sails on*

BY LORI DRAZ

Ten sailboats and their captains and crews came together at Atlantic Highlands Yacht Club (AHYC) for the 14th annual Ms. Race to benefit 180 Turning Lives Around. This year's race theme, "Winds of Change," symbolized both the growing trend of women racing on their own, and the courageous women who make the choice to change their lives with 180's support.

Race day on Aug. 18 started with a captain's meeting and breakfast. After greetings from Commodore Ed Yates and expert sailing instructions from skilled racer and three-time Ms. Race winner Elaine Haher, the captains and crews headed to their boats.

Out on the water, the teams circled the start/finish buoy, getting ready to begin the race with the new Pursuit Race format. This year's sailboats were A Good Hair Day, Celtic Star, Coda, Confiscated, Cygni, Magic, Overlap, Saint of Circumstance, Serenata, and Vici.

The race started on Course 2 in light erratic winds that had all the boats struggling to round the first two marks. Boaters cheered their competitors as one by one the sailboats rounded the NM buoy after the dead air zone; it was heartening to hear the ovations. Anticipated thunderstorms never materialized, and the winds picked up to 8 to 10 knots for the last two legs of the race.

Ann Myer and her crew from Raritan Yacht Club raced her J105 Magic to the first-place finish. Karen Harris on her J120 Cygni finished second this year. Donna Syers and her crew of 15 - including two 4-year-old girls - came in third on her boat, Overlap. Spectators, friends and families had as much fun as the women participating in the race.

Many thanks go out to everyone who made the day a great success. Andrew Roberts and Jack Flannery, along with members of the Sandy Hook Bay Catamaran Club, got the race off to a good start. Videographer Rob Kneller along with Michele Krug, photographer Ann Schoeller and her husband, Mike, and photographer Ivy Dash captured exhilarating images of the day.



Thanks also goes out to the AHYC race committee and the Atlantic Highlands fireboat that was out on the bay in case of an emergency.

The fellowship continued after the race as the crews, family and friends convened at the club for the Ms. Race Event and Awards Ceremony. Yates greeted the Ms. Race teams and committee members, and DJ Bill Sabanski provided music throughout the evening. Guests enjoyed appetizing food and a delicious cake featuring the Ms. Race logo. Lynn Lucarelli, Director of Development for 180 Turning Lives Around, gave her continued heartfelt thanks to Ms. Race participants, sponsors and donors, and then presented the Ms. Race trophies.

Ms. Race chairs Eileen Campbell and Diane Kropfl were enthusiastic about the fundraising results: The day's events raised over \$10,000 for 180 Turning Lives Around, bringing total donations for the life of the event to over \$130,000.

Sponsors included Premium Event Sponsor AT&T; Miller & Gaudio; Lockwood Boat Works; Construction Risk Partners; Zager Fuchs; Pettit; Luth-in Associates; Withum; Laura Oncea on Confiscated; Koi Sushi and Hibachi Restaurant, and many more.

Ms. Race organizing committee members who worked to make this year's race a great event were Kay Curtiss, Jean Evertsen, Karen Harris, Janice Miller, LuAnn Rathemacher, Bill Sabanski, Emily Smith, advisors Aleen and Steve Colitz, social media support from Gianina Arturo, and post-race volunteers Amanda Finn of 180 Turning Lives Around and Deisy Aguilar.

