

# CLIPPER

QUEEN CITY YACHT CLUB — JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1999

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## QCYC's catering under review

*A tax problem could cost the club money. It's a road Queen City has been down before.*

QCYC's restaurant and bar operations could change for the coming season. R&R Catering (now Saffron Catering), operator of the club's restaurant and bar facilities for the last couple of years is dissatisfied with its contract and appears reluctant to return to the club except on much more favorable financial terms - which means less favorable to QCYC.

Negotiations with Saffron's owner, Hosein, are ongoing. But a significant complication is the unpaid tax Saffron allegedly owes. Part of the amount is for taxes due on the QCYC's liquor licence. If Saffron doesn't pay what it owes, the club could be liable for a portion of it.

### Repeat performance

The club has had a similar experience in the past. It had to cover about \$8,000 in taxes on its liquor licence that the previous caterer failed to pay.

Treasurer Tony Araujo blames the recurrence on poor exchange of information regarding controls when he took over as treasurer in mid-term last year. When he discovered the problem, Tony withheld money from Saffron, but the club may still be on the hook for as much as \$10,000, he concedes.

Hosein is apparently attempting to pay the taxes. He is still interested in returning to QCYC, albeit with contract changes, which the club hasn't ruled out.

However, the board is exploring alternatives. A strong contender is Rembrandt Catering, operator of CBYC's restaurant and bar. The company has the support of House Chairman Bruce Beyers who got to know Rembrandt while playing in CBYC's house band.

Bruce says Rembrandt has visited the club and appreciates the inconvenience

of the Island, yet has submitted a proposal that Bruce says is in line with operating and rent expectations based on previous contracts.

Past Commodore Moira Coull, however, recommended caution in the selection process. She says she was unimpressed by a meal she and other board members had when they visited CBYC last year to assess the club's catering operation.

### Support for Hosein

She suggested that the club put the catering operation up for tender. If that were done, Saffron's proposal - assuming Hosein submitted a bid - could be compared with others.

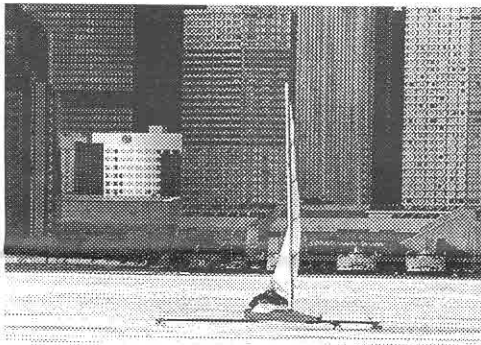
Moira admits to being a strong supporter of Hosein whom she hired to cater business functions at the club last season. In fact, she has asked him to cater her daughter's wedding reception this summer at QCYC. If another caterer were hired, however, the contract would typically include exclusive rights to food and beverage service at QCYC.

### Professionalism sought

Commodore Norrie Macdonald says CBYC has told him that it's happy with Rembrandt's quality of the service. The CBYC member (a professional accountant) who negotiated its contract with Rembrandt, endorsed the caterer's professionalism and has offered to help QCYC negotiate with the company.

One reason CBYC contracted with Rembrandt, Norrie says, was the company's organization and sound capitalization, attributes QCYC is looking for in its caterer in the future.

There is some evidence, he adds, that neither previous caterer, Steven Murphy, nor Hosein was particularly adept at bookkeeping.



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*"It's intended that, over time, the Clipper and ClipperNET will become very closely interconnected." – Communications chair Tony Cook*

## Board broadens communications

*The Publicity portfolio becomes Communications and takes on a wider range of responsibilities to serve members better*

By Tony Cook

Recognizing the need for improved communications within the club, the Board accepted my proposal as incoming Publicity chair to broaden significantly the communication committee's responsibilities. Along with the new duties comes a title change. The former Publicity portfolio is now Communications.

In prior years, the Publicity chairperson's role was primarily with editing and publishing the Clipper and, depending upon the design skills of the individual member, perhaps also assisting with various other club publications.

### QCYC on the Web

The new Communications Chair retains overall Board responsibility for the Clipper and adds to the portfolio responsibility for the club website (ClipperNET).

A committee member will now manage each of these publications. Wayne Lilley and Jim Yates, both professional journalists, have assumed the duties of editor and webmaster respectively. (The Unofficial site that Jim ran so successfully last season has now been incorporated into the club site - [www.qcyc.on.ca](http://www.qcyc.on.ca) - that was initially established by Rosalind Ross).

### Electronic Clipper

It is intended that, over time, the Clipper and the ClipperNET will become closely interconnected. In fact, we hope to make the Clipper available for download through the website. Items that, until now, have been made available only on club notice boards (race results, schedules, classifieds, announcements, photographs and such) will begin to appear on the website.

### E-mail addresses needed

A combination e-mail/fax broadcast list is being developed that is currently being used to alert members to such critical information as the location of the next Pub Night, updates to the website and urgent news items. To add your email or fax number to the list, contact me by fax at **416-449-4611** or e-mail at the address at the bottom of the column.

Other areas that will involve the Communications committee include the co-ordination of various club promotional programmes, such as the general membership brochure, Junior Club promotional material and advertising. (For more information on advertising which is now being accepted in the Clipper as a means of defraying costs, check the masthead of this issue on page 8) As well, the committee will assist in the development and production of the club roster.

**Tony Cook, Communications Chair**

<http://www.qcyc.on.ca>

email: [tony@slide-express.ca](mailto:tony@slide-express.ca)



## Editorial

*Board members relieved of making reports as the Clipper becomes independent*

By Wayne Lilley

Previous Clipper editor Ken Rodmell warned me (rather gleefully, now that I think about it) that his least enjoyable chore was badgering Board members to submit reports. Evidently, report-writing was a duty unanimously loathed.

It explains, anyway, the response at the January meeting when the directors were told reports were no longer required. It was a thing to behold. Adults weeping in relief. Offers of beer. So pleased was the Board, in fact, that it agreed to let the Clipper attend meetings as an observer, and report on events instead.

That might not sound like a quantum change. But it is. It puts the venerable Clipper on a new tack. In the past, the editor has been a Board member. Although the Board still funds the Clipper (under the auspices of Communications chair Tony Cook), it's now independent from the Board.

### New communications initiative

The change is part of Tony's strategy, outlined to the left, to improve communication. I believe the Clipper can – and I hope will – contribute to that goal. One way is by increasing transparency. Greater awareness of what's going on – and why – makes it easier to identify and correct problems before they grow. And to spot strengths to build upon. The Clipper can better do both as an objective observer than as Board organ.

### Improvements already on the way

The issue you're now reading is the first one under the new operating initiative. But the Clipper is a work in progress. Warren Lee's design skills are certain to improve the look of future issues. In terms of content, I'm open to any story ideas or issues you wish to have covered and hope to find a balance that will continue to offer the liveliest membership on the lake the liveliest, most informative and entertaining newsletter possible.

There are some things the Clipper won't do. It won't shrink from controversy, for instance, and it distinctly won't publish rumour and innuendo. Its first responsibility is to QCYC members. And that includes those on the Board who are among QCYC's most diligent volunteers.

### Checks in place

The Clipper won't operate unfettered. I expect Tony Cook, my boss, will question content. In journalism (a condition from which Tony confesses he is still recovering) that's viewed as "interference from the suits." The term hardly fits QCYC, so we've agreed to the more pretentious "creative tension."

But you are the ultimate check. I expect you to let me know when the Clipper appears not to be staying the course. I welcome any and all contributions, comments and criticism. The idea is to involve members more in both the Clipper and QCYC. After all, they belong to all of us.



*"The money has to come from somewhere." – Treasurer Tony Araujo, wrestling with a 95% property tax increase.*

## Fees up for 1999. Associates hardest hit

Setting a fair fee structure is a conundrum for Treasurer Tony Araujo, especially when relating one membership category to another

**M**inimum billing remains the same for 1999. But that's the only fee to escape hikes in the new Queen City dues structure approved by the board in January.

Increases (see chart below) for this year range from a low of 3.6% (up \$5 to \$145) for out-of-town members to a high of 17.9% (up \$50 to \$330) for associate members.

Senior members, who make up the biggest membership group, will also see a \$50-fee hike (4.2%) to \$1,250.

Treasurer Tony Araujo justified increases on the basis of higher costs, notably a 95%-property tax hike. "The money has to come from somewhere," he said.

While associates appear to be faring worse than other categories, Tony noted that their fees haven't been rising at the same rate as other categories.

"Senior members' fees have gone up 5-6% annually while associates' have risen only about 2% annually for the last five years," Tony pointed out.

Even with the hike, an associate membership is good value, he added, since one tender pass is included. For many Islanders, a majority in the associate category, membership offers cheaper transportation than the Island ferry.

Tony admitted he would like to raise the fee further, perhaps by a percentage more in line with the fee hike for all members.

However, if he did so, he would also have to raise dinghy members' fees even higher than this year's 4.5%-increase (to \$345) to keep them above associates' fees.

Associates and dinghy members have essentially the same benefits, except that dinghy members can dry-sail and store a dinghy for the summer.

"If the associate membership fees are set higher than dinghy members', it would be cheaper for associates to become dinghy members, even if they don't own a boat," said Tony.

Although a possible option is to raise dinghy members' fees in proportion to associates' fees to maintain a differential, it is felt the move might stifle the current healthy growth of fleets such as the Stars which have enjoyed a rebirth at QCYC.

One solution favored by Membership chair Gerry Doyle is to unbundle the tender pass from associate and dinghy memberships as a means of determining whether associates were actually interested in club activities or inexpensive, convenient transportation.

The cost of joining QCYC will also rise this year. New senior members' initiation fee will rise 33.3% to \$2,000 for 1999. An exception will be made for those who contacted QCYC at the boat show where the advertised initiation fee of \$1,500 will continue to apply.

## Storage fees scrutinized

Are out-of-town members getting a break on boat storage?

**O**ut-of-town members who store boats in the QCYC yard have been taking advantage of loose interpretation of their membership class, in the view of the Board.

Out-of-town membership was originally designed to accommodate members taking boats out of the club for a period. But the club's practice of granting out-of-town members a one-year grace period, during which they could store their boats, has caused problems. Some former senior members who have asked for the grace period have assumed that winter storage would be provided indefinitely at the same rate as senior members pay.

Given that senior members' dues are \$1,250 this year, and out of town membership is only \$145, the Board believes the inexpensive storage fee is unfair, particularly since out of town members are, by definition, seldom in the yard to move the boats during haul-out and launch.

To rectify the situation, the club is seeking higher storage fees. But even storage fees slightly below commercial marinas' \$3.35/sq. ft. rates, have irked at least two out of town members who have boats in the yard.

Harry Anderson, who owns *Taxidancer*, and Nicole Clarke, owner of *Circe*, have both expressed surprise at being billed at the higher rate.

Another boat, *Opus 1* would be similarly billed but the owner has apparently abandoned both his senior membership and the boat, leaving the club to cover cost of disposing of the remains.

### What we paid... and what we'll pay in 1999

Category	1997	1998	1999	+%age
Initiation	1500	1500	2000	33.3
Senior	1155	1200	1250	4.2
Sr. min. bill	150	150	150	0
Associates	265	280	330	17.9
Assoc. min. bill	75	75	75	0
Assoc. 2nd adult	210	220	240	9.1
Assoc. child	75	80	85	6.3
Dinghy	315	330	345	4.5
Dingy min. bill	75	75	75	0
Dinghy 2nd adult	210	220	240	9.1
Student	90	90	95	5.6
Senior Associate	580	600	625	4.2
Out of town	135	140	145	3.6

### Tender passes to cost more

Family and spouse tender passes, priced at \$110 and \$90 respectively since 1995, will rise an average of 12.4% this year.

Family tender passes will cost \$125 each while spouse tender passes will cost \$100. Individual return fares will remain at \$4 as will one-time guest passes.

