

February 14, 2008

## Greater Houston Rowing Club

20<sup>Years</sup>  
in a  
ROW

Happy St. Valentine's Day, GHRC.

I saw the first Roseate Spoonbill on the Creek in January - a lovely sighting.

**Thank you Cynthia Gualy!** Cynthia donated her single to the club. It is a Felker single and it lives on the top rack near the door where the wood boat was.

**Other special thanks go to Will Castle** for the boat slings he donated to us. It will be a welcome change to travel to races and not have to haul around the large (and heavy) wooden ones we've been using.

**Check out the updated GHRC Web site:**  
<http://greaterhoustonrowingclub.com/>

I hope it's useful to you. I've added a *club* calendar that includes races for the coming year and other club events. Check it periodically for announcements, updated calendar, race info & links to hosting clubs, regatta central, Row2K and USRowing. Coming soon: GHRC online photo gallery & downloadable GHRC race results.

**The Heart of Texas sprint**, organized by Austin Rowing Club, is March 8 and 9 (Saturday and Sunday). Boats used for the race will be gone from boathouse on Saturday AND Sunday. For now, this will include one of the fours, the quad, and the double. The eight and one four will remain, as well as most of the club singles. I will keep you posted if this changes.

**The next MARS is scheduled for March 22.**

Thanks to those folks who braved the cold for the last one. Better weather should increase our work potential.

**This year's USRowing Learn to Row Event** (LTR) is scheduled for April 19<sup>th</sup>.

HWD Custom Homes, one of the homebuilders along the Creek, has generously offered to sponsor and organize the event to benefit our club and a local charity. They're looking for new and creative ways to get folks down to the water - all of their projects are waterfront custom homes. We started a conversation with them in January and we think we've found a good fit with combining LTR with a series of 500 Meter Mini Sprints (an intra-squad scrimmage). There will be land-side activities, too. The tentative name right now is:

HWD Homes Presents  
"Lake Pointe Classic" Regatta  
and Exhibition

A Waterside Charity Competition and Festival  
Benefiting  
The Greater Houston Rowing Club  
and  
?

HWD will finalize a charity this week. LTR will be run as it has been in the past. The mini sprints will be run like horse races with shoreline "betting" on six separate races. The "betting" will raise charity money. In addition to running the event, HWD has agreed to help with the purchase of a new pair/double for the club. GHRC will provide manpower for teaching (LTR), racers, equipment and boats. The event will be held on a perfectly straight and wide 500-meter stretch of water behind the new

medical building on the other side of the creek. (FYI it's upstream on a stretch the water we'll access with the new boathouse - part of the horseshoe around Fluor.) Depending on the day's success, HWD has hinted they want to make it an annual event. Jere Crean is organizing the event for the club. He'll need our help. He will fill us in on more details, as he knows them.

#### Boathouse Update:

Dave Anthony and I are meeting with Les Newton of Planned Community Developers (PCD) on Friday. As you know, Les is one of the founding members of GHRC and he's been the major muscle in the promise of a new boathouse. After a long conversation with Les about First Colony Community Association's (FCCA) involvement, all involved (FCCA board member included) have decided we cannot wait around for their potential positive impact on the project. There is too much political strife among the board currently (I'll explain the details over coffee at the bagel shop if you're interested) and FCCA is not prepared for a discussion of their early involvement with the building of the boathouse. For now, we have to proceed, as Les's company has a timeline to their commitment to build the project.

The process will proceed VERY quickly now that we have a clear understanding of all interested parties and a schedule. PCD must break ground within 12 months. They have to in order to remain involved. Our meeting this week will discuss budget and our club's funding potential within the time frame outlined. Boathouse amenities, must-haves, and value engineering decisions will be made - Dave and I will show up to the meeting with our pencils sharpened. Marty Pedowicz will head fundraising efforts for our club. I've had to get some "let's get real" and specific info from him on short notice to prepare for the meeting with Les. You all will be hearing from Marty in the near future as we begin formal efforts to fundraise for the new boathouse.

A permanent home is a very big and necessary step for GHRC. The new boathouse will mean we're here to stay for generations to come! Oyster Creek ain't no Thames, y'all, but just like us, those clubs on that river started with a core group of dedicated members looking to find a permanent home on water perfect for rowing.

**20** Years  
in a  
ROW

Did you know that 2008 is the club's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary? GHRC was founded in August 1988. We'll have to do something special for that.

I think I promised to make this month's newsletter shorter than last month. If I did, I lied. It's a good sign, I think.

See you on the water.

Your Commodore,  
Kerry Whitehead