

ILYA HALL of Fame

presented by ILYA Bilge Pullers



ILYA Hall of Fame will announce the honoree class of 2005 at the Winter Inland. The ILYA Hall of Fame was organized in 2002, the brainchild of Bilge Puller's past Admiral Dick Casper. To date, twelve ILYA competitors and contributors have been honored in the Hall of Fame.

The process of electing an honoree is an elegant one and begins with nominations from any ILYA member. These nominations are forwarded to any ILYA Past Commodore, or any Bilge Puller's Past Admiral. From there, nominations go to a screening committee and, if qualified, are placed on the ballot as either an outstanding contributor or an outstanding competitor. The ballot is then sent to all Past Admirals and Past Commodores who are then asked to vote for up to 10 nominees in each category. Any nominee receiving a vote on 70% of the ballots qualifies.

In addition, qualified nominees from the first half-century of the ILYA's existence can be placed into the Hall of Fame by a unanimous vote of the Historian's Committee. This committee, made up (no surprise here) of Past Admirals and Past Commodores, seeks to fill the void where the memories of our current electors leave off.

How you can be involved:

All members of the ILYA can participate in the nomination process. Simply contact any Past Commodore of the ILYA, or Past Admiral of the ILYA Bilge Pullers. Any biographical information you can provide would be helpful. All names will be forwarded to the screening committee for consideration.

The first three elections to the Hall of Fame have produced a group of honorees that is extraordinary. In the near future, you will be able to read more about these extraordinary sailors on the ILYA web site. Here, with the briefest of introductions, are the members of the Inland Lake Yachting Association Hall of Fame:

John W. Taylor (White Bear Yacht Club) was the Association's founder. It was Taylor's vision that unified the clubs of the upper Midwest around A-scow and B-scow sailing. He called together representatives from 10 clubs around the upper Midwest on August 24, 1897 to form the Inland Lake Yachting Association. He was the Association's first Commodore (the office was called "president" at that time) and organized the first ILYA annual regatta on White Bear Lake in August 1898.



Otto L. Schmidt (Geneva Lake Yacht Club) served as Commodore of the ILYA from 1914 to 1935. He also served as President of the Northwestern Regatta Association, 1913-1915. During a time of significant upheaval in the ILYA—with the splitting off of the NRA—Schmidt undertook to mediate the differences between the organizations. After significant effort, he united the two associations in 1915, almost certainly assuring the survival of the ILYA. His 21-year tenure as Commodore of the ILYA is unprecedented, and ended only due to failing health.



John D. Buckstaff (Oshkosh Yacht Club) was an eight-time ILYA Champion in class A, winning the Annual Regatta in 1909, 1914, 1916, 1920-22, and 1925-26. Dominated A-boat sailing in the Oshkosh Yacht Club. The dominant A-scow sailor and ice boater of his era, he was inventive and innovative in A-scow construction and rigging. He is also an honoree in the state of Wisconsin's Athletic Hall of Fame.



Ernst C. Schmidt (Geneva Lake Yacht Club) was to become known simply as, "Mr. ILYA." Organized, able and generous, he served as Secretary of the ILYA from 1935 to 1962—a remarkable 27 years. Schmidt also served as Secretary of the Lake Geneva Yacht Club and was so widely respected that he was made an honorary member of the Minnetonka Yacht Club. ILYA Class A champion in 1911 and Class C champion in 1914.



Maynard W. "Mike" Meyer (Pewaukee Yacht Club) is remembered as much as a fierce competitor in the E scow as for his abundant service to the ILYA and the Pewaukee Yacht Club. A two-time Class E Champion and winner of several invitationals, he also served as Commodore of the Association from 1965 to 1966. Mike chaired the Rules Committee for many years and was the principle race officer at many ILYA invitational and championship regattas.



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William “Curley” Perrigo (Pewaukee Yacht Club) was a seven-time ILYA Champion in classes E and A between 1951 and 1979. Curley was a dominant figure in Pewaukee Yacht Club racing, and won the prestigious Felker Cup four times in his A-scow career. He was also one of the people instrumental in the revival of the A scow through donating his boat for use in the creation of what would ultimately become Melges Boat Works’ first fiberglass mold.



Edward A. Malone (Oshkosh Yacht Club) was arguably one of the most beloved figures in the ILYA during his decades of service as measurer, race officer, and judge. He was a charter member of Oshkosh’s M-16 fleet, but in the ILYA, was known more for service than silver. He served nine years as Measurer of the association, and many more as race officer and judge. His race management credentials also include the Mallory Cup finals, Adams Cup finals, 1967 Pan Am Games trials, and many National E events.



Harry H. “Buddy” Melges, Jr. (Geneva Lake Yacht Club) has been widely regarded as the finest competitive sailor in the world. A twelve-time ILYA Champion in three different classes, his record in the ILYA is unequalled. Bud is a three-time Rolex Award winner as the world’s outstanding yachtsman, and has won the America’s Cup and Olympic gold and bronze medals. He is the former president of Melges Boat Works, where he transformed a regional boat building company into an international leader in the racing sailboat business. Honored in the International Sailing Hall of Fame, Melges is the only ILYA Hall of Fame honoree elected on a unanimous ballot.



John O. Johnson (White Bear Yacht Club) began building scows in 1896 and was a pioneer and major figure in the rapid evolution of the scow shape that has remained largely unchanged since 1900. He founded Johnson Boat Works, builder of scows for over a century. Johnson designed Classes Y, D, and created the basic form for Class X that is used today. In the Corinthian days of the ILYA, Johnson crewed on many winning scows, both at the Inland Lake Yachting Association’s Annual Regatta and on White Bear Lake.



Arthur W. Best (Cedar Lake Yacht Club) is best known for his service as an ILYA race officer and judge. After a brief sailing career on Cedar Lake, Art began a tenure of service to the ILYA that included service as Commodore from 1969-1970. Art was active in ILYA Race Management for over 40 years. Art attended the first-ever meeting of Bilge Pullers at the Mapleton Inn, and went on to become Admiral of the Bilge Pullers from 1963-1964. A dedicated conservationist of Cedar Lake, he served as that yacht club’s Commodore and started the CLYC sailing school.



John G. “Jack” Ordway (White Bear Yacht Club) was the dominant sailor of the early 1900's. He began his remarkable career by winning the first of two ILYA Class B championships in 1902 at the tender age of 15. At age 18 he began a string of six ILYA Class A championships over a twelve-year period. Late in his ILYA sailing career, duels between Ordway and John Buckstaff were legendary. Illustrative of his dominant record was the 1906 Annual Regatta, where Ordway won the Felker Cup, the Sawyer Cup, and every race in the Class A Championship.



John S. Pillsbury, Jr. (Minnetonka Yacht Club) won five ILYA Class A championships and remained a competitive force in the Annual regatta for a quarter of a century. He won championships in 1938, 1940, 1949, 1960, and 1963, and during that span, he finished out of the top four places only twice. He served as Commodore of the ILYA from 1957-1958. In 1952, Pillsbury and his family donated the Pillsbury Cup, the ILYA’s most coveted prize.



I.L.Y.A. BILGE PULLERS