

This past month the International Laser Class Association made two important announcements that will directly impact the North American Region: Eric Faust, Vice Chairman of the North American Region, was hired by ILCA to be its General Manager and at the recent World Council meeting in Boltenhagen, Germany, Tracy Usher, Chairman of the North American Region, was elected to succeed Heini Wellmann as the President of the ILCA. In order to concentrate fully on their new duties, both Eric and Tracy will step down from their North American Region positions.

The North American Region will need to elect successors to fill these two important positions. In order to provide as smooth a transition as possible, the Executive Committee has determined that the best process is to hold elections for Chairman and Vice Chairman during the normal Fall election period, and use temporary appointments (as allowed under Section 4.9 of the ILCA-NA Bylaws) to continue the duties of the committee through the Summer. This simultaneously provides continuity during the current sailing season while allowing prospective candidates ample time to prepare themselves for the election, and for the eventual new Chairman and Vice Chairman to be "up to speed" on all issues facing North America when they begin their new roles.

As the senior member of the Executive Committee, having served as Secretary since 2004, LauraLee Symes has agreed to serve as interim Chairman of the North American Region. As the next most senior member, Evan Lewis, who has served in the Member at Large position since 2010, has agreed to serve as interim Vice Chairman. To fill the two vacancies created by their stepping up, Jon Deutsch, the District 11 Secretary, has agreed to serve as interim Secretary and Christine Neville, from District 24, has agreed to serve as interim Member at Large. Clay Johnson will remain in his position as Treasurer.

It is hoped that during the course of the Summer Sailing season a healthy discussion occurs over choosing new representatives for the North American Region, in particular for the ILCA-NA Chairman who will be the North American representative to the World Council.

Note from: LauraLee Symes:

I am so pleased to have had the opportunity to serve on the ILCA-NA Executive Committee with Tracy Usher and Eric Faust over the last eight years. While I'm sad to see them leave, I'm confident that the Laser Class world-wide will be in excellent hands with Tracy and Eric in these key leadership positions.

As the interim chair, I plan to maintain the momentum and continuity we have worked so hard to build in the North American region. Our mission will continue to be to maintain excellence and enjoyment in Laser sailing, facilitate the production of great regattas, and support a strong Laser sailing community in North America. If there is anything we can do to improve your Laser sailing experience, please don't hesitate to be in touch.

My immediate focus as interim chair will be on the great sailing season we have ahead of us. All of the regattas are on the calendar, the NORs are posted (or will be soon), and our hosting clubs are ready to offer you a stellar racing experience, with great competition and camaraderie unparalleled in any other sailing class.

As members of the Laser class, you can help in three very important ways:

1. Take your Laser out sailing!
2. Spread the word about the fun and excitement of Laser sailing
3. Encourage your friends to join the Laser Class Association

Please join me in welcoming our two new Executive Committee members Jon Deutsch and Christine Neville and congratulating Tracy Usher and Eric Faust on their new roles within our Laser Class. I look forward to seeing you on the water this summer!