

# SOLO CHALLENGER

*The Official Newsletter of the Great Lakes Singlehanded Society*



## Officers

|                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| <i>President</i>      | <b>Russ Krock</b>      |
| <i>Vice President</i> | <b>Jeff Marshall</b>   |
| <i>Treasurer</i>      | <b>Luke Brockman</b>   |
| <i>Secretary</i>      | <b>Brian VanWieren</b> |

## Directors

**Jack Jamison**  
**Mac McKenzie**  
**Elisabeth Reichling**  
**Ben Thorsen**  
**Matt Rubsam**

## Winter Edition 2026

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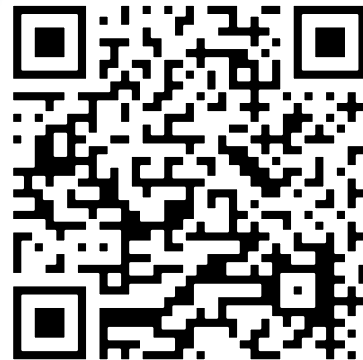
# AGM

# TOL

## City of Toledo

**It's Not Too Late to  
Sign Up!**

**REGISTER**



*(Click or Scan)*

***Friday***

20:00 - ????: Shakedown Mixer

***Saturday***

16:00 - 17:00 Check-In & Open Bar

17:00 - 18:00 Annual General Membership Meeting

18:00 - 19:00 Singlehanded Social Hour

19:00 - 21:00 Dinner and Presentation

21:00 - ????: Socializing and Sea Stories

## A Few Notes About the AGM

Russ Krock, your esteemed President of the GLSS, has graciously offered to buy the first round at The Heights rooftop bar at the Toledo Downtown Renaissance Hotel on Friday night. So if you're not sure whether to arrive Friday or Saturday, this is a

great reason to come a day early. Russ tells me that he's starting his tab for his Shakedown Mixer around 2000.

Also, if you come to Toledo either Friday or early Saturday, there are a number of us who are planning to

head to Tony Packo's Cafe for lunch on Saturday around 1130. The original Tony Packo's is at 1902 Front Street, across the Maumee River and just a couple of miles from the hotel. It's hard to resist Tony Packo's legendary hot dogs and spicy pickles!

# Annual General Meeting Preview

The only item up for vote at the 2026 AGM is the slate of new Directors to join the Board. Luke Brockman is going to be leaving the Board, and we thank him for his valuable service. In his place, the Board nominates Tom Cooper. In addition, Elisabeth Reichling and Brian

VanWieren have graciously agreed to serve another term. Biographies for the three Director candidates are included below for your information in advance of the AGM. We appreciate the willingness of these candidates to offer their time for the benefit of the GLSS.

## Tom Cooper

I am retired from owning and operating an engineering and construction company that I founded over 40 years ago. I successfully transitioned ownership to my employees.

I sail out of Muskegon, Michigan. I previously owned and sailed a Gozzard 41 Laura Jane and currently sail a C&C 115 SilverWing.

I have completed most ASA sailing courses and hold an Offshore Safety at Sea certification. I have been a member of the Great Lakes Singlehanded Society (GLSS) since 2022.

I have completed two Chicago to Mackinac Challenges—first aboard my Gozzard and most recently in 2025 aboard my C&C 115. I also completed the Chicago Super Mac and return in 2023, as well as the Port Huron to Mackinac Challenge.

During my first year competing, severe weather forced me to withdraw. The following year, I returned and completed the challenge successfully. Although I initially knew no one, I quickly discovered the community to be welcoming and inclusive. I strongly believe in encouraging new participants, helping them succeed, and fostering an environment where newcomers feel supported. At the same time, I believe each sailor must put in the effort required to reach the start line and complete the challenge.

## Brian VanWieren

A member of the GLSS since 2005 with 10 challenges completed. I have been on the board for the last two years as the recording secretary and would like to

continue to serve on the board for another 3 years, if elected.

My wife and I run an American Sailing Association affiliated sailing school and charter business in Marquette Michigan. I was voted in the top 1% of all American Sailing instructors two years in a row and hold a 100ton Masters license. I have been sailing for 36 years and have sailed the Atlantic, Caribbean and all of the Great Lakes except Lake Ontario.

I would like to foster more singlehanded sailing on Lake Superior by hosting a scramble in conjunction with the Marquette Yacht Club and Duluth Yacht Club, especially on years when the Trans Superior does not take place.

## Elisabeth Reichling

As an avid solo sailor with over 30 years of experience navigating Lake Michigan and Lake Huron, I have developed a wide understanding of maritime challenges and innovations for solo sailing. My commitment to promoting solo sailing is demonstrated through my involvement with multiple GLSS events, including 8 Solo Mac Challenges (7 on Lake Michigan and 1 on Lake Huron) and the Lake Michigan Solo Scramble. I have been the Solo Mackinac Challenge Director for 8 years. Additionally, I have represented the GLSS at various solo sailing presentations over the years. As a current member of the GLSS Board of Directors, I have contributed to initiatives that enhance sailor safety. I am enthusiastic about fostering a vibrant community of solo sailors and hope my insights will benefit the current and future members of the Great Lakes Singlehanded Society.

# 2026 Calendar of Events

|                 |                                                                                      |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| January 23/24th | Annual General Meeting – Toledo, Ohio                                                |
| May 30th        | Solo Shakedown<br>Erie, PA<br>Muskegon, MI<br>Sandusky, OH<br>St. Clair, MI          |
| June 20th       | Mackinac Solo Challenges, Super Mac, Super Mac & Back<br>Lake Huron<br>Lake Michigan |
| July 11th       | Lake Ontario Solo Challenge                                                          |
| August 8th      | Lake Erie Solo Challenge (20th!)                                                     |
| August 28th     | Lake Michigan Singlehanded & Doublehanded Scramble                                   |
| September 12th  | Lower Lake Huron Solo                                                                |
| September 19th  | Sandusky 45005 Solo                                                                  |
| September 26th  | St. Clair Solo                                                                       |

• Visit [www.solosailors.org](http://www.solosailors.org) for updates and more events.



## Editor's Note

*Rob Burger, Editor*

Rob became a member of the GLSS when he completed the 2014 Lake Erie Solo Challenge in his Beneteau Oceanis 41, *Storm's Harbor*. If you have any content, questions, corrections, etc., for the *Solo Challenger*, please email Rob at [gr8laksalr@me.com](mailto:gr8laksalr@me.com).

### Notice to Mariners

"The US Notice to Mariners provides timely marine safety information for the correction of all US Government navigation charts and publications from a wide variety of sources, both foreign and domestic." Go to <https://msi.nga.mil/NTM> where you can download the latest or historical Notices, subscribe to automatically receive email with the latest edition attached, or perform a customized search of the online database.

## WEBSITE SPOTLIGHT

The GLSS maintains a number of trophies, which are earned or awarded on a regular basis. Go to <https://www.solosailors.org/trophies/> to see the descriptions of each trophy and a list of past recipients.