

Old Lyme Rowing Association Members Handbook



**Created for the convenience of friends
we have not yet met
By a motley crew of over-educated, under-compensated
rowing addicts
With the exclusion of the one published
author amongst us**

Table of Contents

Welcome.....	3
Governance	4
Boathouse ownership and relationship to Regional School District 18	4
The Facility	5
Programs	8
Equipment.....	9
Swag.....	10
Communication	11
Policies	13

Welcome

The Old Lyme Rowing Association community is delighted that you have concluded that ‘...there is nothing-absolutely nothing-half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats’ (Wind in the Willows, Kenneth Graham).



We want to make your integration into our community as swift and seamless as possible, and the creation of this handbook is an expression of this intent. Nevertheless, we have undoubtedly overlooked important details, and for those, we encourage you to reach out to any of your friendly comrades.

Although Ratty probably did not require this of Mole, we would be remiss if we didn't insist first off, that you complete your USRowing waiver. The Old Lyme Rowing Association website (www.oldlymerowing.org) which you undoubtedly accessed to join, also provides a link to the US Rowing website (www.usrowing.org) where you can complete their waiver. Please be sure to select Old Lyme Rowing Association as your affiliation, so it becomes visible to our registrar.

Blood Street Sculls was established by Fred Emerson in about 1965 as a crew of notorious guys who rowed Fred's equipment out of his red barn on Blood Street. Fred's red barn still stands at the north end of the lake in a section fondly referred to as 'Emersons' (as in, 'Let's warm up to Emersons').

Fred loved to share his passion for rowing, and started programs for kids and colleges throughout southern New England, as well as starting a program for Lyme Old Lyme High School. Blood Street Sculls became an engine for Fred to promote rowing for kids, and particularly girls, culminating in hosting the first women's national championship in 1971.

Old Lyme Rowing Association was subsequently created as an umbrella organization whose primary mission is to support Lyme Old Lyme High School crew and also to promote rowing for the shoreline community. Blood Street Sculls moved out of Fred's barn to Hains Park and under

the aegis of Old Lyme Rowing Association proudly maintains its name, history, and unique logo as the banner under which adults compete. Blood Street Sculls also is the team for which Juniors compete, when not competing for their high schools in the Spring. In 2016, through grants from the State of Connecticut and the Town of Old Lyme the current boathouse was built.

Governance

Old Lyme Rowing Association is governed by a board of 11 voting members, and 2 non-voting student representatives. Five of the eleven voting members are adult rowing members, and four are parents of current Junior athletes. The remaining two seats are held by the coaches of Lyme Old Lyme Highschool boys and girls crew. The board has a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. The board also has several standing committees including:

- **Equipment:** responsible for keeping our fleet up to date and in good repair
- **ICrew:** responsible for implementing a new application for communication and organization of our members, workouts and competitions

The Director of Rowing oversees all masters rowing activities. This includes allocation of equipment, providing coaching, maintenance and other duties. The men's and women's captains work with the Director of Rowing to ensure that their respective constituencies are served. The men's and women's captains delegate some of their responsibilities to others, as they see fit.

For a list of current board members, consult our website (www.ouldlymerowing.org), or check the bulletin board in the boathouse.

The board meets every six weeks, and all members are welcome to attend and contribute to the discussion.

Boathouse ownership and relationship to Regional School District 18

Regional School District 18 (RSD 18) administers public schools in the towns of Lyme and Old Lyme.

When the new boathouse was built in 2016, with the assistance of a STEAP grant from the State of Connecticut, it was mandated that the structure be owned by the Town of Old Lyme (the grant recipient). The Town of Old Lyme leases the boathouse to RSD 18. OLRA entered into an agreement with RSD18 which allows OLRA to access the boathouse to maintain the equipment and run programs such as Blood Street Sculls junior and adult programs.

OLRA purchases all of the equipment using its own funds as well as funds from an RSD 18 budget. Once purchased, ownership of the equipment is transferred to RSD 18 and it is insured under the RSD18 insurance policy. OLRA therefore does own the equipment but administers its use and maintenance

Lyme Old Lyme high school Crew calls our boathouse home, and is typically active from 2pm-5pm from March through the end of May. They compete only in sweep boats, and you will find their sweep oars painted blue and white.

In the spirit of Fred Emerson, our facility has served as an incubator for nascent high school crews along the shoreline. Valley Regional Crew got its start rowing out of the Fred Emerson Boathouse. Old Saybrook High School Crew currently uses our boathouse and equipment during the Spring high school season and will continue to indefinitely.

The Facility

Location: The Fred Emerson Boathouse is located on Post Road in Hains Park in Old Lyme.

Season: The boathouse is open for the rowing season from March 1 to December 15. Until the water temperature exceeds 50 degrees, all rowing boats must have four or more oars (singles and pairs are prohibited for safety reasons). Please refer to the State of Connecticut DEEP regulations regarding personal flotation devices. A modest supply of PFDs is maintained at the boathouse and are available for your use.

Hours:

- Weekdays: open at 6am
- Weekends: open at 7am
- Per our agreement with RSD18, rowing is permitted between 5:30am and 9pm
- Before dawn and after sunset, all boats must be off the water

Parking: Parking is available only in the parking lot east of the bathrooms. The driveway adjacent to the boathouse is for trailer use only. Between Memorial Day and Labor Day parked cars must display one of the insignia below:

- Old Lyme residents: a beach sticker available at Town Hall for \$25
- All others: a Hains Park parking pass, available from OLRA for \$25

Keys: RSD18 has generously allowed OLRA to hold 36 keys. Each key has an access code associated with it, which disarms the boathouse alarm system. These keys have been distributed to coaches, captains, board members and others who frequently require access to the boathouse. These people are instructed to generously provide access to members when required, but not to share their key or access code. **DO NOT** access the boathouse without a code to disarm the alarm. Doing so will cause a very annoyed policeman to appear. The keyholders are also responsible for ensuring that the last person to leave the boathouse is a keyholder, so that the alarm can be armed.

Bathrooms: There are no bathrooms in the boathouse. Park bathrooms are in the concrete building east of the basketball court. The bathrooms are managed by the Town of Old Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission. If they are not unlocked, a key can be found in the boathouse.

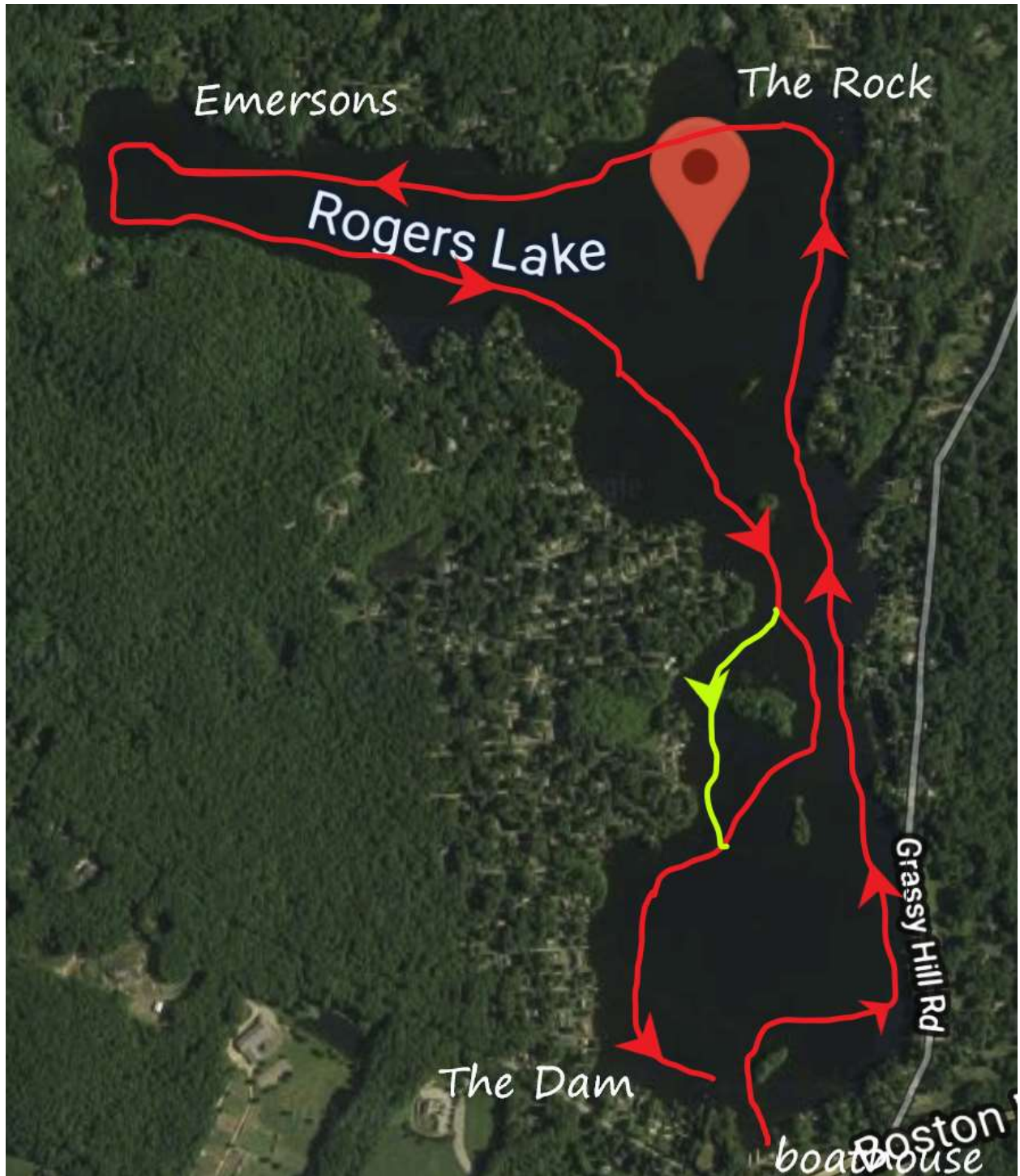
Garbage: Recyclable materials are disposed of in the large green container. All other garbage goes in the blue container. It is the duty of the most recent former OLRA president to ensure that the containers are rolled to the curbside on the appropriate day.

Work Parties: OLRA is responsible for light maintenance of the boathouse. Occasionally a work party will be called to perform maintenance of the facility or equipment. It is expected that all members will volunteer some small portion of their time to maintenance. No particular skill is required. In worst cases, you may be required to operate a broom.

Hains Park Rules: The boathouse follows the rules of the park; no grilling, no alcohol and no parking outside of the parking lot

Weather: If thunder or lightning has been detected, boats are not allowed to launch. If fog is such that the first island is not visible from the boathouse, boats may not launch.

Rogers Lake Traffic Pattern: Boats are encouraged to follow the traffic pattern illustrated below. In challenging conditions, crews may occasionally circle in a protected portion of the lake such as the west shore. The green arrows indicate an alternative return route. This passage is navigable only by singles and doubles. It is rumored that this route is favored by 'old men', thus the name 'Old Man's Alley'. Other locations on the lake have colloquial names that have not been memorialized here to protect the innocent.



Emersons

The Rock

Rogers Lake

Grassy Hill Rd

The Dam

boat house
Boston

Programs

Junior rowing

OLRA has its roots in fostering junior rowing. Fred Emerson's passion for rowing was focused on igniting that excitement in young athletes. Many illustrious American rowers took their first strokes on Rogers Lake. OLRA's primary mission is to support Lyme Old Lyme high school crew.

Under the Blood Street Sculls banner, OLRA also administers the following Junior programs:

- **Summer:** from mid-June through early August in the early morning. A system of equipment sharing has been designed to ensure that kids and adults can all row before work. This program is focused on development of proper technique with limited racing.
- **Fall:** from September through the end of October, after school. This program is for accomplished athletes and is focused on racing performance.

Adult rowing

OLRA seeks to cultivate the skills of adult rowers from the inexperienced to former collegiate athletes.

- **Inexperienced:** OLRA encourages anyone interested in learning about rowing to attend National Learn To Row Day, celebrated on the first weekend in June. Subsequent to that, we encourage adults to enroll in our Learn To Row programs held Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings through June and July. Learn To Row 2 is a bridging program running from late July into mid-September. After completing Learn To Row 2, it is our hope that developing rowers can be integrated into team boats with experienced athletes
- **Experienced:** If you bring to OLRA experience rowing from another club or school, we invite you to integrate into boats appropriate for your enthusiasm and skill. The boathouse is open weekdays at 6am, and you are welcome to participate in an unstructured practice. Being unstructured, this is usually primarily sculling. On weekends, the boathouse usually opens at 7am. Practice is a bit more organized, with captains taking the lead to organize boats and perhaps some friendly competition. If sweep is your preference, you are more likely to enjoy that on the weekend (when coxswains can be procured). The boathouse is also open for practice on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Typically, our women's sweep team practices at this time. To ensure that the equipment of your choice is available, we recommend that you make a reservation on the iCrew application. If you want to row with someone, you are advised to make arrangements in advance. Many of our athletes use WhatsApp to communicate about rowing and training plans and you are encouraged to join this conversation.

Equipment

Rigging: Boats in the boathouse are usually rigged and ready for use. All members should become familiar with rigging and unrigging boats. Instruction is given in the LTR program as well as at work parties and preparing for regattas. Rigging tolerances should not be changed without express permission of either captain or the Director of Rowing.

Cleaning of Boats after Use:

All boats should be placed in slings after use and wiped down. This includes both the hull and the interior of the boat, particularly the tracks. This is also a good time to double-check for damage and loose or broken equipment. If there is damage, follow the guidelines outlined below.

- If the appropriate captain or Director of Rowing is present, it is most efficient to show the issue to them
- Alternatively, the Equipment page in iCrew can be updated with a note. If you have not yet obtained iCrew access, this responsibility can be delegated to someone on the crew who does have access.

Boat Usage Priorities: The boat racks are marked with the appropriate average crew weight for each boat. The ranges are wide, and it is feasible for crews to row a boat whose range does not exactly match their weight. This is particularly true for athletes 130lbs and below, for whom relatively few boats are marketed, and for whom we have a very limited inventory. Nevertheless, it is prudent, and polite to choose the boat that best suits your crew's size. For example, if you take one of our well-loved doubles suitable for larger athletes, when a smaller boat would do, you may leave those larger athletes without a suitable choice.

The policy (found at the back of this manual) states that when two boats of equivalent size and rig are available to row (eg: the lightweight blue 4+ Athena, and the dark blue lightweight 4+ Eos) the crew should choose the older boat first, preserving our newest equipment for top crews and racing circumstances. When a designated crew is training for a specific race, they can gain permission to reserve and use a specific boat on a consistent basis.

When the Junior summer program is in session (late June through early August) an equipment sharing system is in place between the Juniors and adults looking to row in the early morning. Details are posted in the boathouse, and are found on iCrew.

When racing, it is important to notify the appropriate captain which boat you intend to use, so that the Director of Rowing can resolve any potential equipment conflicts with other adults, or the Junior program.

We are fortunate to have a wide selection of boats, and while you may not always get the boat of your choice, you will always have something that is appropriate and safe.

Signing Out Boats: All boats should be signed out via the boathouse logbook prior to leaving the boathouse and then signed back in upon return. It is the organization's intent that ultimately, this will be done through the iCrew application.

Boat Reservations: To ensure the availability of a boat of their choice, a crew may reserve a boat in iCrew. Reservations are not permitted more than 6 days in advance. Before taking a boat, a crew should consult the iCrew application (downloadable to your Apple or Android device) to ensure that the boat has not been reserved by another crew.

Launches: All members using the launches must have a valid CT Safe Boating license or equivalent and have received basic instruction from OLRA, as well as permission from either captain or the Director of Rowing. Launches should only be used for rowing related activities. Please reference the Launch Policy found in the appendix of this manual.

Maintenance, breakage and repair: Our boats and equipment are expensive and delicate. Please check boats for any damage or loose rigging prior to and after use. Do not row with loose nuts or rigging. Please make the issue known in the logbook and/or on iCrew. It is our expectation that members will be honest about the equipment we all share. It is also recommended that you notify either captain or the director of rowing when you observe broken or damaged equipment. Loose rigging should be addressed immediately by the crew that discovers the issue. If in doubt about how to address any issues, always err on the side of caution and contact either captain and/or the director of rowing.

Swag

There are several items with BSS logo available for purchase at the boathouse: t-shirts, technical tanks, and three types of hats. The captains, and many of the board members have keys to the office, and can execute transactions. We accept US currency and checks made out to Old Lyme Rowing Association.

Other items such as racing tops, jackets, legging pants all with logo are available via the online store. Twice annually, an online store is opened, where gear is ordered in bulk at slightly reduced prices. An announcement will be distributed through iCrew and posted in the boathouse. Online store openings are typically timed for delivery in July and November. If you must have gear outside of the online store, arrangements can be made through our local sales representative, at slightly higher prices.

OLRA considers our logo to be a valuable asset. Use of the Blood Street Sculls logo for items not specified on the club-sponsored website hosted by our uniform vendor should be approved by the organization.

Communication

OLRA members do love to communicate. There is plenty of open chatter around the boathouse, and we hope that you feel welcome to join in. It is our intent that the atmosphere will be open and welcoming to all of your questions.

Once in the boat, the custom is to keep chatter to a minimum.

OLRA strives to keep our website current. Please visit www.oldlymerowing.org to find a wealth of information ranging from the useful (program dates and costs) to the curious (where did those boat names come from ?).

In the Spring of 2019, OLRA deployed iCrew which is a web-enabled application which allows us to communicate a variety of types of information. We strongly encourage all members to request an account. Information deployed on iCrew includes:

- A calendar of events
- Rowing sessions are posted, with the opportunity to indicate your participation
- A boat reservation system
- Discussions including the Sunday Letter
- Communication of repairs and indications of boats out of commission

The president writes a Sunday Letter weekly, which communicates news and reminds members of upcoming events. This letter is deployed through iCrew in a discussion called Sunday Letter.

Prior to the deployment of iCrew, Whats App was used in an informal fashion for communication. Some habits die hard, and many club members choose to communicate informally through several Whats App groups. You may inquire with either captain to be added to these groups. Be forewarned that while the resulting chatter can be incessant, and of questionable usefulness or accuracy, it is usually entertaining.

Social Events

OLRA holds its annual banquet locally every November. All members and their families are welcome to attend. The board works to identify an entertaining rowing personality to share their experience in the sport. Dress is casual, but typically does not include Lycra.

OLRA has developed a casual tradition that we call 'Vespers', although it has no religious implications. It is usually monthly, and members typically offer up a local beach or club to host the occasion. It is pot-luck, and dress often includes a bathing suit (only in summer, of course)

Work Parties

OLRA depends heavily on volunteer labor to maintain the fleet of boats and other equipment. Work parties will be announced periodically along with a brief description of the tasks that are

slated to be completed. It is the expectation that all members will attend some work parties, and no members are roped into attending all work parties. Even if you, or those you love regard you as 'not handy', please attend. If you can pull on an oar, then a role will be found suitable for you. Ultimately, you cannot help but learn how to use simple tools.

Policies

OLRA BOAT USE POLICY

(For submission)

1. **AVERAGE BOAT WEIGHT:** All rowers in singles and team boats will row boats that are appropriate for their experience and average weight. Rowers can refer to the magnetic plates displayed on racks for average weight information. The same average weight information can be found on a sticker inside the boat.
2. **BOAT USAGE:** The newest boats are reserved for experienced crews. Appropriate boat selection will be made by the head junior coaches and masters captains. Crews are to use the shells other than the newest when superior performance is not critical, reserving the newest shells for pre-competition practices and competitions.
3. **BOAT LIFTS:** OLRA requires that all rowers receive training on safety protocols when using boat lifts. Any rower that is not familiar with the operation of the boat lifts should ask for an experienced person to train them. When reaching for boats on the 4th rack or higher, boat lifts must be managed by trained individuals only.
 - Singles, doubles, fours, and quads will be accessed by placing the bow and stern decks on the rubber cushioned cradles on the horizontal lift bars.
 - Eights will be accessed by placing the metal lift arms between the 1-2 seats and the 7-8 seats. The metal arms should be placed directly on the gunwales, with the cradles (non-weight bearing) inside the boat.
4. **WIPING DOWN BOATS:** All boats should be fully wiped down, including tracks, after every row.
5. **EQUIPMENT AND BOAT REPAIR:** Rowers should write a note in the boathouse logbook of any failure, breakage or damage to a boat or equipment. Rowers should also follow up verbally with a member on the equipment committee ASAP regarding the written report in the logbook and any repairs that are needed.

**Old Lyme Rowing Association
Coxswain Policy**

Coxswains

Coxswains for Junior programs: Our Junior programs are dependent upon having coxswain participants. Therefore, it is agreed that any Junior participating as a coxswain the majority of their time on the water will be charged only half price. Junior (under age 18) coxswains when in a Junior boat will not be compensated.

Masters Coxswains: The masters sweep boats shall compensate people to cox for them at a rate agreed upon by the OLRA Board. The cost of the coxswain will be covered by OLRA budget until that budget has been spent and then shared by all participants in the boat

It is in violation of NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) policy for athletes associated with an NCAA program to be compensated for participation in their sport. Said athletes can be compensated for coaching or assistant coaching roles.

Old Lyme Rowing Association Gift Policy

Gifts to Old Lyme Rowing Association

Old Lyme Rowing Association gratefully acknowledges gifts that anyone wishes to make. Since it is our practice that all users of the boathouse (Juniors and Adults) share all the equipment, it is the preference of the association that the gifts be unrestricted with regards to the group for whom the gift is intended. Since our Equipment Committee is best positioned to know what types and brands of equipment fit best in our fleet, it also our preference that the donor not specify a particular brand or boat.

In the event that a donor prefers to put such restrictions on a gift, the board reserves the right to review the gift in the context of our program to determine whether the organization is able to use the gift as intended.

The OLRA board also reserves the right to review gifts of used boats and all in-kind gifts. If, in the expert opinion of the Equipment Committee, the boat will not be useful in the context of our programs, the gift should be gratefully declined.

OLRA is a 501c3 tax exempt organization. All gifts and in-kind donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Receipts to that extent will be provided to document all gifts.

Old Lyme Rowing Association Guest Policy

Guest Rowers

OLRA aims to welcome fellow rowers from out of town, and around the world.

All Guests

All guests must have a host; a host is an OLRA member in good standing. All guests must complete a US Rowing waiver online and add OLRA/Blood Street Sculls to their list of associated clubs, so it is visible to our registrar. All guests must be familiarized with the lake

traffic pattern, as displayed on the laminated map posted in the boathouse. The host is responsible for alerting guests of any hazards that may be temporary due to the water level of the lake, or mooring habits of lake residents, as well as all state safety regulations.

Accompanied Guests

Guests rowing in the company of a member host need only satisfy the requirements above. Neither the guest nor the member host should abuse the privilege of extending the use of the facility to a non-member. In the event that the guest uses the facility in excess of ten days, he/she may be asked to take out an associate membership, or to make a donation.

Guests seeking to use OLRA boats unaccompanied

- A coach, team captain or their representative should review the guest's on the water skills to ensure that safe and appropriate equipment is assigned to him/her
- The guest should be informed of the schedule of times when the boathouse will be open. Under no circumstances should a key/code be shared with a guest
- In the event that a guest and a member want to use the same boat, the guest should defer to the member
- The guest should be asked to make a small donation to Old Lyme Rowing Association. \$75 per week is the suggested amount
- Guests should be supplied with a parking pass, which will be returned at the end of their stay. The president retains several parking passes for this purpose, and such parking pass can be obtained from him/her.

Guests seeking to use OLRA ergometers

- A coach, team captain or their representative should review the guest's skills to ensure that neither the guest nor our equipment is endangered
- The guest should be informed of the schedule of times when the boathouse will be open. Under no circumstances should a key/code be shared with a guest
- The guest should be asked to make a small donation to Old Lyme Rowing Association. \$50 per week is the suggested amount
- Guests should be supplied with a parking pass, which will be returned at the end of their stay. The president retains several parking passes for this purpose, and such parking pass can be obtained from him/her.

Guests who abuse this policy by visiting too frequently will be asked to take out an associate membership.

All guests are invited to purchase Blood Street sculls gear as a memento of their stay. Prices are posted in the boathouse, and checks should be made payable to Old Lyme Rowing Association.

OLRA reserves the right to refuse or revoke guest privileges.

**Old Lyme Rowing Association
Use of Launches Policy**

Use of Launches

For use in the context of an OLRA junior program or a highschool program, the launches should be driven only by authorized coaches. All coaches must have a Connecticut State Safe Boaters license.

The use of the launches outside an organized program is limited to members who have satisfied the criteria below:

- Must hold, and submit to the Financial Manager a copy of a Connecticut State Safe Boaters License or equivalent such as a similar document from a cooperating state or a maritime license
- Permission from the Director of Rowing as well as training on proper launch use from said director or his/her delegate

Launches may be used only for purposes directly related to OLRA approved activities.