

# DSSA Membership Handbook

Welcome to the Duluth-Superior Sailing Association! This handbook is designed to give you a brief history of the DSSA, our mission and to outline the benefits and responsibilities of membership.

The mission of the Duluth-Superior Sailing Association is to offer the joy of sailing to the entire Duluth-Superior community, regardless of skill level, physical capabilities, or financial means. The DSSA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that relies on donations to help support and run our various sailing programs. We are committed to providing sailing opportunities for all, regardless of ability to pay. We offer youth scholarships for camps, annual memberships, and lessons!

We partner with such organizations as Northland Adaptive Recreation, Mentor North, Wounded Warrior Project, Denfeld High School, REACH Program - Youth Adult Partnerships, Harbor City International School, Northwoods Children's Services, Duluth Parks, UMD, Park Point Community Club, and Duluth Rowing Club to provide the wonders of sailing to their programs and participants.

## **What DSSA also offers!**

- Youth Sailing Camps (Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced)
- Adult Group Lessons
- Adaptive Sailing with Northland Adaptive Recreation
- Private Lessons for all ages (It's never too late to become a Sailor!)
- Open Sailing for DSSA Members
- Group Intro to Sailing Events
- Friday Night Racing
- Cruise Boat reservations for DSSA Members
- Day Memberships for Guests
- Formal Sailing Certifications through American Sailing Association (ASA)

## **Member Benefits and Expectations:**

Annual DSSA Memberships provide access to our day sailor fleet during open sailing hours and our cruise boat fleet during open sailing hours and off hours. The season starts Mid May and goes to October 1st weather permitting. Annual Memberships also provide access to DSSA sailing clinics, dinner at our annual party, lower costs to adult group lessons, free cruise boat checkout test, and possibly more as our program grows!

The DSSA is a member driven organization. While there are paid staff members on duty at all times, it is expected that you treat the association property and equipment with care and respect. Equipment damage often results in boats being out of commission for some time, a loss to you and all others in the organization. The cost of maintaining boats and equipment directly affects the cost of memberships and fees. With that said, here are some general expectations of members.

- Treat staff and fellow members with respect. This also includes other boaters not a part of the DSSA.
- Treat all equipment with respect and care.
  - Put all equipment used away as you found it. If you don't know where it goes or how it should be cared for, ask.
  - Report missing or broken equipment to the staff.
  - Please bail the boats and leave them clean after you are done. There is cleaning equipment at the pier.
- Take out only boats that you are absolutely sure you can sail safely in given conditions.
  - **The pier staff have the final say on what boats you can use in certain conditions.**
  - You can always take lessons on boats that you are not familiar with. This may be required if the staff see fit.
  - If you are struggling on the water or struggling to dock properly you may be asked to take a refresher lesson before your next open sailing outing.
- Clean up after yourself. If you bring food or gear to the pier, please make sure that everything you bring leaves with you.
- Promote the organization!
  - Grab flyers from the pier and distribute them anywhere you see helpful.
  - Tell people about us!
  - If you're not sure what kinds of outings or groups we can accommodate, ask the Waterfront Director. We have a lot to offer the community!
- Volunteering
  - We rely on members to assist with setting up in the spring, put away in the fall, and general maintenance year round.

- Check the website or pier calendar for current volunteer opportunities.
- You can contact **volunteeringdssa@gmail.com**
- Note that there are plenty of tasks that need attention during the off season.

## **GENERAL PIER RULES**

1. PFDs worn and secured at all times by members while on docks, ramps, or on boats.
2. Listen to the pier staff's directions at all times.
3. Avoid boat collisions at all times.
4. Close-toed shoes must be worn at all times on our pier and on all boats.
5. No running, no pushing, and no glass at the DSSA sailing pier.
6. No smoking or alcohol.
7. Follow the rules of the road while on the water at all times.
8. Any participant sailing with the DSSA must first sign our Annual Waiver of Liability.
9. Our No Alcohol or Drugs Policy requires that participants not be under the influence of alcohol or recreational drugs.

### **Commonly asked questions:**

Q: Can I reserve a boat?

A: Cruise boats can be reserved by a DSSA certified captain through the Waterfront Director. Payment is required for cruise boat reservations. All day sailors are available on a first come first serve basis during open sailing hours.

Q: Can I bring a guest sailing with me?

A: Yes! Full Members may bring guests. Guests need to complete our annual waiver of liability and pay for a day membership.

Q: Can I sail with my young child?

A: If the weather conditions are suitable, you or the captain is experienced in the boat you are taking and you have an appropriately sized life jacket for your young child. Staff will help you assess conditions, appropriate boat and your experience to make sure all outings are safe and enjoyable.

Q: Do I have to take lessons before I can sail? (I sailed a long time ago and think I remember how).

A: The pier staff is instructed to assess the ability of sailors before allowing them to take out a boat. If you can demonstrate competence, then you will be allowed to sail on your own. If the staff feel you need further instruction in order to sail safely, they will ask you

to sign up for a lesson or sail with a more experienced member. Sailing with other members is a great way to build your experience and competence.

Q: What about the cruise boats? What do I need to do to sail those!

A: Our cruise boats are defined as boats with auxiliary power (ie: outboard or inboard engine). As with any boat, access to the boat is determined by your ability to demonstrate competence. You need to pass the cruise boat checklist to become a DSSA certified captain to reserve and use the boats.

A: If you are new to sailing, the first step is to take lessons and become a competent sailor during open sailing hours. Then move on to cruise boat lessons before completing the cruise boat checklist.

Q: Can I sail on Lake Superior?

A: Only auxiliary powered cruise boats can sail on Lake Superior.

Q: Is the pier open today for open sailing?

A: Check the pier calendar on our website. If the pier is closed because of weather or a group event it will be noted. In most instances, we will also post on our instagram page.

Q: What's the weather like down there?

A: Here's a couple apps for wind and weather.

Sailflow - Click on an individual station on the map for more information and forecast.

Weather Underground - Current wind and weather with forecast.

Windy - Click on an individual station on the map for more information and forecast.

## **A Brief History**

The DSSA was formed in 1979 as a joint venture of the American Red Cross and Duluth Parks and Recreation. The organization was originally named the Twin Ports Youth Sailing Association. Sherry Boyce, of the St. Louis County Extension was deeply involved in setting up the organization. Back then the program was conducted out of the Spirit Lake Marina. A significant part of the program consisted of Duluth community groups building small wooden sailing prams that were used for youth sailing instruction.

In 1994, the organization was incorporated as a 501 (c ) (3) non profit and was renamed the Duluth Community Sailing Association. The program moved to its current location on Park Point. and the programming was moved to the pier near the boat launch in the park at the South end of Duluth's Park Point. In 2003 the programming was expanded to include adults in a successful effort to replace the funding no longer

provided by the Duluth Community Schools and Duluth Parks Department. We have also partnered with Northland Adaptive Recreation to bring sailing experiences to sailors with disabilities.

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