

# US Sailing Sailor of the Week

## December 4, 2009



## Ronnie Ashmore

### Western Carolina Sailing Club

For over 30 years, Ronnie Ashmore of Anderson, S.C., has played a valuable role in improving the overall operation of the Western Carolina Sail Club (WCSC). He does so for the love of sailing and the deep pride he takes in supporting his home sailing club.

Last October, Ronnie co-chaired the 2009 Hospice Regatta hosted by the WCSC. Over the past ten years, this event has raised more than \$213,000 for Hospice of the Upstate, an organization that provides compassionate care and supportive services to residents throughout the Upstate of South Carolina and Northeast Georgia. This year, over \$31,000 was donated to the organization. This was \$6,000 over their initial fundraising goal. Ronnie was ecstatic with the turnout this year. An impressive 81 boats and 350 sailors competed. He was also happy to see the WCSC represented well on the race course. Overall winner, Marc Bailey, will represent the WCSC at the 2010 National Hospice Regatta in Rochester, N.Y (first week of June).

Ronnie, who is also president of APAC Ballenger Paving, has donated large amounts of his time to WCSC, especially in the area of improving the harbor's breakwater. The harbor breakwater system at WCSC is composed of over 2,200 tires floating in 18 tire bundles laced together with rubber straps in a pattern designed to dissipate wave action coming into the harbor. A great deal of maintenance and repair is required for the breakwater system to be effective. Each year his crew performs various maintenance tasks on the breakwater including, replacing straps, adding floatation to sunken bundles, and moving the breakwater as lake levels change. Ronnie has displayed the proper leadership while directing crews of workers during these difficult tasks.

Ronnie was born and raised in Greenville, S.C. For the past 20 years, he has lived on Lake Hartwell in Anderson. His first experience in a sailboat came in 1974. While spending the weekend with friends at a lake house near Columbia, S.C., Ronnie decided to jump in the docked Sunfish and sail around a small island, not too far off. He decided this was something he'd like to learn more about. After graduating from Georgia Tech the following year with his degree in civil engineering, Ronnie bought a used 15-foot Chrysler Mutineer, some sailing instruction books, and learned how to sail. Sailing has been a big priority for Ronnie ever since he got hooked back in 1974. "During my 36 years of sailing, there were many short periods of inactivity, but today, I take every reasonable opportunity to get out on the water to day sail or crew on any boat when I am not racing my Buccaneer 18," said Ronnie.

Ronnie and his wife Gloria have enjoyed couples racing on their Tanzer 26. All three of their sons, ages 25 to 29, know how to sail. His son David lives close enough to be Ronnie's steady crew aboard his Buccaneer 18, "Ramblin Wreck". They have been racing together for several years now, including every Buccaneer 18 North American Championship since 2003. Ronnie also has two grandsons who have attended the WSCS junior sailing program.

"Ronnie has donated without fanfare or complaint large amounts of his time to the WCSC especially very challenging tasks that improve our club," said Carl Ulbrich, 33-year member of the WSCS. "Ronnie is an honest, unassuming person of impeccable character."