**Press Release – BYRA / VISA 2017 Night Race**

Friday, July 7 the Blackwater Yacht Racing Association (BYRA) and the Virginia Inland Sailing Association (VISA) staged the sixth annual Night Sailboat Race on Smith Mountain Lake. This year’s race was run out of the Pelican Point Yacht Cub facility on the Blackwater River and competing yachts sailed from Pelican Point to the BU5 marker in Bull Run and returned to PPYC.

We enjoyed an amazing moon this year rising early at 7:00 pm and shining bright by 9:30. Crew member Amanda Bigalke from Lynchburg remarked “Could not believe how easy it was to trim the spinnaker. It was like daylight out there.” The wind lightened up early as is often the case but remained strong enough to make this a pleasant ride. The west breeze turned southerly shortly after the start and boats tacked down to the BU5 turning mark. Crews called in their time to the race committee as they rounded the BU-5 marker. This provided a track on the race progress. It also gives the committee data to score the race as a shorten course if boats could not finish by the time limit. Sailing on SML at night is always a magical experience and this one was just that special.

After finishing the race and docking boats in the harbor, racers joined the race committee on the Pelican Point pier and a huge cheering section developed to cheer on the remaining competitors. The bright moon provided the finish line audience with a great view of the sailing tactics. The final three boats finished close together to applause and screams from the shore. All competitors beat the midnight time limit.

The Midnight post-race party and awards have always been a big finish to this event and BYRA Rear Commodore Eric Johnson provided great chicken and pulled pork barbeque. All boats came home with awards to share. The ride home is always a special bonus since the lake is so quiet and calm at 1:30 in the morning. The top finishers are listed below along with the elapsed and corrected times.

 BOAT NAME SKIPPER ELAPSD CORRECTED

 J/24 “Rascal” Pete Phillip 2:09:48 2:01:18

 J/22 “Catch 22” Jim Schaible 2:26:08 2:15:42

 Harbor 20 “Courageous” Mike Maloney 2:36:07 2:17:33

 S-2 27 “Felicite” Eric Johnson 3:19:48 2:55:41

 O’Day 25 “Debra Ann” Carl Perdue 3:35:37 3:02:41

 Columbia 29 “Willawaw” Gary Conover 3:38:06 3:06:36

 Hunter 28.5 “Gigi” Jeremy Smith 3:42:36 3:17:16

**PHOTOS & CAPTIONS**

IMG\_7042 - Some of the Night Race Sailors Hanging Out Laaate at PPYC. We know how to party!

IMG -11 Night Race Nearly Full Moon lights up the water (Photo by Scot Podosek)

Submitted by: Pete Phillip

 BYRA Fleet Captain