

# The 2018 Ms. Race

## Winds of Change

By Diane Kropfl & Eileen Campbell

On Saturday, August 18, the Atlantic Highlands Yacht Club in Atlantic Highlands, NJ hosted the 14th annual Ms. Race in support of the charity 180 Turning Lives Around. The theme for this year's race, "Winds of Change," symbolizes the growing trend of women racing on their own with confidence and the rise in numbers of women with the courage to change their lives with the support of 180. A symbolic change was represented by the ten entries in the race which brought the number of boats to the peak level reached the summer before Superstorm Sandy. Another shift in the winds brought together three generations of women sailors to race on *Vici*, a Sabre 402.

Saturday morning found the captains and crews ready and eager to sail after lots of practice leading up to the day of the race. Race day started with the captain's meeting and a delicious breakfast array with donations by local sponsors. Expert sailing instructions were provided by skilled racer and three-time Ms. Race winner, Elaine Haher. After the captain's meeting, the crews



*Ann Myer and her team sailed Magic to victory.*

© Ivy Dash/Dash Photography

made their way to their boats. They were greeted by spectators, friends and families who are a major part of this special occasion and have as much fun as the women participating in the race.

Out on the water, the teams circled the Start/Finish buoy getting ready to begin the race with the new Pursuit Race format. The race started in light erratic winds that had all the crews struggling to round the first two marks. Boats cheered their competitors as one by one the sailboats rounded the NM buoy



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*Fifteen enthusiastic sailors raced Donna Syers' Beneteau First 40.7 Overlap to third place.* © Ivy Dash/Dash Photography

after the dead air zone; it was heartening to hear the ovations. Luckily, the anticipated thunderstorms never materialized, and the winds picked up to 8 knots for the last two legs of the race.

After the race, crews, family and friends convened at the club for the Ms. Race Event and Awards Ceremony. The Direc-

tor of Development for 180 Turning Lives Around, Lynn Lucarelli, gave her continued heartfelt thanks to Ms. Race participants, sponsors and donors and then officiated for the awarding of the Ms. Race trophies.

Congratulations to this year's winners! Ann Myer, an expert

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sailor and racer from the Raritan Yacht Club, handily raced her J/105 *Magic* to first place with support from her experienced crew. Karen Harris on her J/120 *Cygni* finished second this year, inching up once place from last year. Fresh from crewing in the Newport Bermuda Race Donna Syers was at the helm of the third place boat, her Beneteau First 40.7 *Overlap*, with her crew of fifteen including two 4-year-old girls.

The evening featured chance, silent and online auctions with donations from local sponsors plus a 50/50 with proceeds going to 180 Turning Lives Around. It was a fabulous day at the Atlantic Highlands Yacht Club, and best of all generous sponsors and donors helped raise over \$10,000 for this year's Ms. Race. Since its inception, the Ms. Race has raised over \$130,000. For additional information on 180 and the Ms. Race, visit 180nj.org and ahyc.net. ■



*Ms. Race participants strike a pose at the Awards Ceremony at Atlantic Highlands Yacht Club. © Ivy Dash/Dash Photography*

*Diane Kropfl and Eileen Campbell are the Co-Chairs of the Ms. Race.*

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