



HEGSETH ESTIMATES IRAN WAR AT \$37.5B

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SMOKED SALMON A FAMILY AFFAIR

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Smooth sailing



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JASON RYAN/STAFF

Members of the Bishop Gadsden Yacht Club race model sailboats twice a week on the retirement community's Quay Pond. They often invite young sailors to join in the fun, as they did for a regatta on June 9.



Teens experience excitement and agony as they race their radio control model sailboats during a regatta at Bishop Gadsden's Quay Pond on June 9.

Boat captains of all ages race their small vessels at Bishop Gadsden Yacht Club

BY JASON RYAN
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JAMES ISLAND — Robert "Bob" Johnstone III will tell you he's done more sailing in the last six years at Bishop Gadsden Episcopal Retirement Community than he has in the rest of his long, accomplished life.

It's quite a claim considering the sailing legend has devoted much of his existence to boats.

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ing popular, high-performance watercraft as a co-founder of the sailboat maker J/Boats and then the founder of the powerboat company, M/JM Yachts.

Now, at 92 years old, Johnstone still goes bananas for boats. He sails at least twice a week at a pond just down the street from his home with other members of the Bishop Garden Yacht Club, though for these regattas he doesn't ever don a life vest or even set foot offshore.

That's because the sailboats at this yacht club are merely 3 feet long. The sailors who manipulate

Please see **SAILING**, Page A6

Graham funeral services planned in DC, SC

BY IAN GRENIER
igrenier@postandcourier.com

COLUMBIA — Plans are set for two funeral services honoring the late Lindsey Graham after his sudden death July 11 from a torn aorta.

The first service on July 28 will be in Washington, D.C., with another planned the next day in Columbia, according to the office of U.S. Sen. Darline Graham, whom Gov. Henry McMaster tapped last week to finish her brother's term.

"I am grateful to all those who have come together to help honor and remember Lindsey," Graham said in a statement.

The July 28 service will start with a private ceremony at the U.S. Capitol. A military team will carry his remains into the Rotunda, where there will be a short program honoring his service in the U.S. Senate. It will be livestreamed.

Afterward, his body will go to the Washington National Cathedral for a 2 p.m. funeral service, which will include remarks from President Donald Trump. Other notable attendees for the an invitation-only service will be announced later. The ceremony will be livestreamed on the cathedral's YouTube channel.

Please see **GRAHAM**, Page A6

Folly mulls future of short-term rental cap

BY MEGAN FERNANDES
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FOLLY BEACH — City Council will hire an outside company to evaluate the city's controversial

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SAILING, from A1

them don't tug on lines and push a tiller but instead stand along a strip of grass at pond's edge and fiddle with the joysticks of radio control transmitters held in their hands.

One joystick turns the rudder of a small sailboat. The other joystick trims the sheets, to use sailing parlance. Or, in terms landlubbers might understand, the other joystick loosens and tightens lines controlling the sails of the fancy toy, which are painstakingly rigged just like those of a traditional, full-size sailboat.

In the hands of the right old salt, the sleek miniature sailboats can really be made to move. In good wind, the boats glide across the water and cut nimble, sharp turns through Quay Pond, neatly rounding the assorted sailing marks in the pond, which are floating decoys of mallard ducks and Canada geese.

Established in 2020 during the pandemic, when competitors socially distanced themselves and stood 6 feet apart along the rim of the pond, the yacht club has continued operating even as the health crisis has passed, hosting regattas at 10 a.m. every Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Some die-hard radio control sailors sometimes leave Bishop Gadsden's campus to head to James Island County Park, where the Charleston Model Yacht Club meets at 11 a.m. on Wednesdays and Saturdays for its own races.

Sometime Bishop Gadsden hosts youngsters, too. On June 9, sailors young and old crowded the shoreline of Quay Pond for a set of exciting morning races.

The wind on Quay Pond is notoriously tricky, as nearby buildings disrupt the breeze, which can sometimes already be light. But that didn't cow the young guest competitors, many of whom brought their own sailboats that they had previously assembled in school.

Sailing meets STEM

In the past two years, students at seven Charleston-area schools have participated in a program that teaches them to assemble and rig their own radio control sailboats as well as the science behind sailing, including strategies for effectively harnessing wind power. The program got off the ground (or on the water) thanks to a fundraising campaign organized by Johnstone that allowed the Lowcountry Maritime School to purchase 50 DragonFlite 95 sailboats, a popular type of model boat commonly known as DF95s that measure 95 centimeters long.

"You want to give the kids something that's hot," said Johnstone, ever the successful marketer.

Lowcountry Maritime Schools had already been running a plywood boatbuilding program in local schools, teaching students to construct



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JASON RYAN/STAFF

The wind above Quay Pond at Bishop Gadsden Episcopal Retirement Community on James Island can be tricky and spotty as it streams and shifts around surrounding buildings. Sailboats cross the pond on June 9.

their own watercraft from scratch and then float their creations at a year-end celebration.

Johnstone's gift afforded the nonprofit the chance to expand its programming and reach more students.

"He brought the concept to us. We took the concept, wrote the curriculum and made it happen," said Brandon Clark, an educator and the director of development for Lowcountry Maritime School.

Clark is the DF95 guru at the Mount Pleasant-based maritime school. He's seen firsthand how the program has motivated students to learn more about boating and sailing.

"The light bulb goes off. It creates a love for the sport," said Clark. "We're trying to create a whole new generation of sailors and boat owners."

He mentioned one student who recently moved from the United Kingdom who discovered his passion through the maritime school's weekly instructional workshops within Charleston schools.

"He never knew he liked sailing until he did our RC sailboat program," said Clark. "Now it's all he wants to do."

Other students have followed their passion for the model sailboats and started sailing lessons in full-size boats through Charleston Community Sailing, which operates from docks on the Ashley River in downtown Charleston. Next school year Clark plans to take students in the radio control sailboat program aboard the recently-relaunched tall ship Spirit of South Carolina, where they would learn to read compasses and sextants and absorb all sorts of other nautical knowledge.

"We're feeding students into real sailboats," said Clark. "We want people to have access to boats and sailing without being a member of a yacht club."

The student-sailor perspective

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Now back in Charleston, the rising sophomore at James Island Charter High School sails a DF95 she previously built at Camp Road Middle School and sometimes competes at Bishop Gadsden against sailors a couple times her age. Her competition includes Rusty Pickett, a Navy veteran who formerly commanded the nuclear attack submarine L. Mendel Rivers, which is named after the late, longtime congressman from Charleston.

Eden held her own on June 9, piloting her blue sailboat, #81, to a third-place finish in her best race.

If she had her choice, Eden said, she prefers being aboard a full-size sailboat in turquoise waters, where she can be hands-on with the boat and enjoy the live-aboard lifestyle. But radio control sailing, she said, is a nice substitute.

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Sailing at Bishop Gadsden with an older crew has impressed upon her the reverence and respect that the older men have for the sport. Though the competition can be stiff — Navy vet Pickett wore suspenders featuring skulls and crossbones to the June 9 regatta — Eden said everyone is friendly and encouraging.



Bob Johnstone, the 92-year-old commodore of the Bishop Gadsden Yacht Club, pedals home with a small fleet of radio control sailboats on June 9.



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Always the sailor

Johnstone has spent a lifetime trying to see the big picture, attempting to understand assorted consumer markets and satisfy demand.

After graduating from Princeton University in 1956, he served in the Army and then began a business career with Quaker Oats, serving as CEO of subsidiaries in Colombia and then Venezuela. While in Colombia for his job with the food company, he made his first attempt to create a model boat club.

Handheld radio control units were not available to the masses at that time, so competitors sailed their boats by setting them loose in the water and occasionally redirecting the vessels by poking their small hulls with poles.

Without the trim and rudder controls, continually prodding a toy boat with a pole is perhaps not the world's most exciting pastime, especially for people not totally gaga over sailing. This sailing club was one of Johnstone's few flops, though there was no shame in trying.

"The plan was to sail them on the pond as they do in the Model Boat Basin in Central Park, turning them away from the shore with long sticks. Only one model got completed — mine," Johnstone later wrote in his memoir, "Maverick Marketer: Time to Get Creative."

The subtitle is a constant refrain throughout the book, as Johnstone relates business

and personal challenges and how he found solutions. He writes toward the end of the book how he was vindicated 60 years after the failure of the model boat club in Colombia with the creation of the Bishop Gadsden Yacht Club.

The book also details how Johnstone and his brother Rod famously founded their company J/Boats in 1977, producing a line of sailboats that would prove both high-performing and exceedingly popular. Bob Johnstone writes about the challenges of marketing to an ever-shifting market and how he eventually also founded a powerboat company, MJM Yachts.

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The energetic sailor, who moved to Bishop Gadsden in 2018 with his wife, Mary, is proud that his idea for Lowcountry Maritime School's radio control program has experienced such a strong start, especially since anyone can hop aboard and join in the fun.

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“You want to give the kids something that’s hot,” said Johnstone, ever the successful marketer.

Lowcountry Maritime School had already been running a wooden, rowing skiff boatbuilding program in six local middle schools, teaching 200 students to construct 18 watercraft from scratch and then float their creations at a year-end celebration.

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“They all have really good tips and are very generous ...,” said Eden. “They’re genuinely so excited and happy about the new generation getting into sailing and learning and enjoying it as much as they do.”

Competitors young and not-so-young kept a laser focus as they competed in a model sailboat regatta on Quay Pond at Bishop Gadsden Episcopal Retirement Community on June 9, 2026.

Also sailing that day was Walton Macpherson, with a silver sailboat, #24. The Bishop Gadsden regatta served as a warm-up for the rising 9th grader, who traveled to Morocco later in June to compete in the Optimist World Championship, where he battled intense 30-knot winds on his first day on the water.

The elite sailor was introduced to radio control sailing this past school year when Lowcountry Maritime School partnered with First Baptist School.

“It was so fun to build, the teamwork was great!” Walton said of the year-long model boatbuilding program, adding that the DF95s provides students “a taste of sailing” without too much expense.

He mentioned that one of his buddies from school even discovered his own love of sailing through building and operating a model boat.

“Actually, he wants to go out with me on the water,” said Walton.

Walton's father, Nick Macpherson, echoed his son's praise for the radio-control sailboat program and complimented Johnstone for spearheading such a successful endeavor.

"He's an inspiration to the young kids, for sure," said the elder Macpherson.

While it's fun to play with the model boats, he said, what's really important is the introduction to sailing the program provides.

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