



IMPACT REPORT 2025 Sailing Season

Honoring those challenged by cancer by harnessing the power of wind, water, and sail

2025 marked a transformative year for Sail Beyond Cancer Vermont. We welcomed new leadership with the appointment of our Executive Director and Board Chair, strengthened our governance, and expanded our reach across the state. With the launch of a new fundraising event, the addition of many passionate volunteers, and recognition as recipients of support from the Lake Champlain Dragon Boat Festival, our community of care grew stronger than ever. What remains constant, however, is the heart of our mission: providing free, private sailing experiences on Lake Champlain for individuals and families challenged by cancer.



As nominations increased and demand continued to grow, so did our network of partners, donors, and volunteers who believe in equitable access to Lake Champlain. Together, we deepened our impact ensuring that more Vermont families could experience connection, respite, and peace on the water.

"Our day out sailing was wonderful, beyond belief...Being able to bask in the sunshine with my buddies on a gorgeous sailboat after spending most of my summer days recovering from major surgery, it was hands down the best possible way to end this summer on a positive note." Rose D. 2025 Passenger

First and most importantly thank you. Truly, thank you! Because of more than 2,500 volunteer hours in 2025, SBCVT delivered one of our most impactful seasons to date. You are truly the wind in our sails.

Together we achieved: 94 total sails

- 85 mission sails for individuals challenged by cancer
- 5 memorial sails and 4 community partner sails

We are also proud to have welcomed our new Executive Director, Kelli Shonter, whose leadership is already strengthening and expanding our mission. Additionally, we added two new board members, Jeffrey Small and David Venmen. With more than 50 sails already in the queue for 2026, the momentum is strong. In just a few months, Tranquility will splash again and another season of hope will begin.



*Peter Gunther, MD
SBCVT Board Chair*



What made our sailing season successful?

*A community of supporters that **Nominated! Donated! Volunteered!***

What we anticipated



What we accomplished



Where we are headed in 2026

NOMINATIONS & MISSION SAILS

Approximately 75 mission sails

Total sails completed: 94
Total guests: 547

Goal: 100+ mission sails (based on current fleet)

DONOR SUPPORT

Maintain funding to support mission sail program

Surpassed 2025 funding goal and paid off the loan to fully own Tranquility

Operating Goal: \$167,000

VOLUNTEERS

A stellar group of seasoned volunteers working together

89 fully qualified volunteers, donating more than 2,500 hours!

Goal: Add 10 new volunteers to our Onboard & Offboard teams

As I reflect on my first year as Executive Director of Sail Beyond Cancer Vermont, I am filled with gratitude and awe. In 2025, I had the privilege of witnessing the power of this mission firsthand - watching families breathe a little deeper, laugh a little more freely, and reconnect beyond treatment rooms and diagnoses. Time and again, I saw how a few peaceful hours on Lake Champlain can gently push cancer to the background and bring connection and joy to the forefront. What moved me most was not only the impact on our guests, but also on our volunteers and community partners who show up with compassion, skill, and open hearts.



This year reaffirmed that Sail Beyond Cancer Vermont is far more than a sailing program, it is a community coming together to ensure that no one facing cancer walks alone. With growing demand, expanded partnerships, and strengthened organizational sustainability, we are eager to share this mission more widely and increase access to Lake Champlain for families across Vermont. The impact is real, powerful, and lasting for all involved. Thank you for believing in this work and helping us set sail toward an even stronger future.

It's an exciting time and I hope you will join us in 2026 as we continue to honor those being challenged by cancer One Sail at a Time!

Kelli Shonter, Executive Director
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