

## Growing USODA

Most of you come from programs that have well-established junior programs. Believe it that the majority of this country has not yet heard about the Optimist and its benefits. We get calls every day from someone at a Yacht club that realizes they need a strong Junior program if they are to survive in the 21 St. century. These individuals need all the help they can get from you. Many people at USODA are working on manuals, sections to US sailing Level one courses that are Opti pacific, regional directors to aid local groups, etc. They cannot do it a lone. What can you do? You can volunteer to your regional director to form a group to put on a small clinic at a near by club. You can be a mentor to the person seeking assistance. Most of these spark plugs as I call them, are up against an older board of directors that has not even noticed boats rarely leave the harbor and that the average age of club members exceeds 60. The spark plug needs your support to over come the obstacles that will be set before him. He needs ideas, help setting up tax-exempt status, help with ideas for financing etc. He needs your child along with several others to come out and show the parents of the new club how a young person can excel in the sport of sailing at a young age.

Selling the class to new programs is the best way we can stop the oddball training boats on the market today. It is the best way to provide long term grow and financing for USODA. It will help assure the resale value of you used Optimist when you have aged out. If you are going on a summer vacation think about arranging a half-day stop over at Yacht club along the way to put on a little show for the class. Kenneth Andreasen can probably set you up with a club in need.