



OCEAN CRUISING CLUB®

For Immediate Release

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## **Announcing the First Recipients of the New OCC Challenge Grant**

**Devon, UK, 17 October 2019** – Two recipients, Bert terHart and Jon Sanders, have been selected to receive the first OCC Challenge Grants. The OCC Challenge Grant helps facilitate meritorious voyages of adventure or environmental concern.

Baxter Gillespie, Chair of the OCC Challenge Grant Review Committee remarked, “The Committee was very impressed with both candidates’ initiatives, and we hope these grants will contribute to their success. We will be following Bert and Jon on their adventures and reporting progress to our members and friends throughout their voyages.”

**Bert terHart** is sailing from Victoria, BC this month hoping to be the first North American to complete a single-handed, unassisted, non-stop west-about circumnavigation via the 5 great capes using only traditional navigation. Bert is also undertaking a significant environmental outreach program during his voyage. The Review Committee was moved by the adventure of the project, the level of preparation, and the grassroots nature of his organization relying on volunteers and his own money. The Committee recommended that the OCC provide Bert with an OCC Challenge Adventure Grant for his communications and community outreach.

Bert remarked, “What can I possibly say to express my profound gratitude and appreciation? I am humbled and deeply honoured to be the recipient of so generous an award. Please pass on my heartfelt thanks to the entire Review Committee! To be the first awardee is truly an honour and I am deeply grateful and humbled. Let me also say what a huge relief it is knowing that, if need be, there’s a foot in the door in some far away place in the form of an OCC Port Officer!”

Web: <https://the5capes.com>

Facebook: <https://fb.me/the5capes>

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**Jon Sanders** is sailing from Fremantle, WA this month, west-about, on his 11th circumnavigation. Jon is looking to bring attention to ocean plastic and to collect data and samples of micro plastics in less trafficked areas. He anticipates between 10 and 11 stops which he intends to educate people and drop off samples that have been collected. Jon's is a relatively large, well-organized project. The Review Committee was impressed with the environmental nature of the project and proposed that the OCC award an OCC Challenge Conservation Grant for documentation, outreach, communication and education. The website for [No Plastic Oceans](http://NoPlasticOceans.com) has full details of Jon's project.

Jon Sanders responded, "This is not just another voyage for me even though it is my 11th circumnavigation of the world. This voyage is for everyone now and in the future. We enjoy our oceans; we get a large portion of the world's food from our oceans. So, we must make every effort to care for our oceans. I am just one person, but I hope I can make a difference. If one old sailor can make a difference, then you can too. I hope the video record of the voyage will encourage lots of young sailors to sail over the horizon as members of the Ocean Cruising Club. Don't be satisfied with being ordinary. Make a difference to our world. We can't afford plastic oceans."

Commodore Simon Currin offered, "We are so pleased to offer these grants to two very worthy recipients. We hope to help bring attention to their endeavours and will follow their exploits with great interest."

## About the Ocean Cruising Club



### ***The Worldwide Community for Adventure Sailing Since 1954***

The OCC is the "home port" for those who have sailed long distances across big oceans. With 48 nationalities represented among almost 2900 members, and Port Officers around the world, we have a more diverse membership and a more international reach than any other blue water sailing organisation.

The Ocean Cruising Club exists to encourage long-distance sailing in small boats. A Full Member of the OCC must have completed a qualifying voyage of a non-stop port-to-port ocean passage, where the distance between the two ports is not less than 1,000 nautical miles, in a vessel of not more than 70ft (21.36 m) LOA; associate members are committed to achieving that goal. This standard distinguishes the OCC from all other sailing clubs.

Our membership as a whole has more experience offshore than any other sailing organisation – in the number of circumnavigators, in the range of extraordinary voyages members have completed, and in the number of solo sailors and female sailors among our ranks. This is what sets us apart from other organisations, even as it draws us together as a group.



In 2019, The OCC established a Challenge Grant which encompasses two categories: The Conservation or Environmental Grant and the Adventure Grant. The OCC Conservation Challenge Grant is for members looking to make a difference with a specific conservation or environmental project that is centred around the ocean, marine or maritime environment. The OCC Adventure Challenge Grant seeks to fund individuals planning expeditions to remote areas featuring unexplored areas, difficult sailing routes, challenging multi-sport exploits, or similar world-class pursuits. Additional information can be found on the [OCC website](#).

Web: [www.oceancruisingclub.org](http://www.oceancruisingclub.org)

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