United States Power Squadrons® is America's Boating Club®

the Ensign®

BOATING EDUCATION, FUN AND SAFETY

Fall 2020
theensign.org



Chester River fest

PLUS

Looping through the Gulf

Murphy's Law

Replacing the head

Ship's Store

SHOW YOUR PRIDE IN AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB



Style, no sweat

The Devon & Jones royal blue-and-white women's shirt is designed for fashion and function. Made of fishing shirt fabric—92% nylon and 8% spandex—this CrownLux Performance shirt wicks moisture away, making it great for boat wear. **$45–$55** (S–XXXL)

Buy here



Buckle up

Accessorize in style while championing boating safety and education with this America's Boating Club full-color belt with nickel buckle. Instead of holes, the NexBelt ratchet-style belt uses a locking buckle mechanism. **$67**

Buy here

Scarf smarts

You can accessorize in any season with this gray-and-white Charleston fringed scarf. It's super soft and shows off the America's Boating Club logo. **$20**

Buy here



Fishing for comfort

Enjoy a peaceful morning on the lake in this teal blue men's Columbia Tamiami fishing shirt. The quick-dry Omni-Wick and Omni-Shade material will keep you safe, dry and protected from the sun to extend your time on the water. (M–XXXL) **$80–$91**

Buy here





Tote or tuck

With this collapsible utility tote, you can carry all your provisions on board and flatten it for storage. A steel rim helps the tote keep its shape, and handles make for easy transport. **$40**

Buy here

To order, call 888-367-8777 ext. 0 or visit www.shopusps.org for more great deals.

contents

the Ensign
Vol. 108 No. 4 **Fall 2020**

Bridge 4
National Educational Officer Bill McManimen

Soundings 5

Currents 6

Boating Gone Bad 10

Destinations 12
Chester River festival

Provisions 16

Shipshape 17
Canvas reprise, trailer maintenance & much more

Ship's Library 21

Waypoints 34

Last Horizon 38

In Memory 39
P/C/C Richard W. Miner, SN

Classifieds 40

Bitter End 41
Western Flyer, Transom Tales & more

Stem to Stern 43





22 Cruising America's Great Loop

Part three of this series continues the journey of a lifetime, as the cruisers travel from Fairhope, Alabama, to Key West, Florida.



28 Getting a Head

When the head craps out mid trip, it's both the final straw and the beginning of one boater's search for the perfect replacement.



31 A Storm to Remember

One family survives a terrifying voyage on Lake Champlain thanks to quick thinking and power squadron training.

Cover photo: *Kalmar Nyckel* and *Lady Maryland* on the Chester River. Photo by Bob Gilbert

THE ENSIGN (ISSN 1949-2294 online) is published four times per year by United States Power Squadrons, a nonprofit corporation located at 1504 Blue Ridge Road, Raleigh, NC 27607-3906.
Copyright © 2020 United States Power Squadrons

In the offing

In our Winter 2021 issue, Loopers head to the Florida Keys, we take a look at anchoring in the Keys and much more.

These are special times



Bill McManimen
National Educational Officer

These are special times. Sure, we have challenges, but each challenge brings with it an opportunity. The COVID-19 pandemic brought turmoil to our presenter-led classroom courses. We immediately worked on expanding and enhancing our online presence and made more of our material available for stay-at-home students.

Our traditional boating classes faced challenging local, state and federal regulations, but we found opportunities. Our Educational Department worked with the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators to develop and perfect a temporary emergency virtual classroom initiative that allows our squadrons to continue to offer the "America's Boating Course – 3rd Edition" to any interested boater. USPS, NASBLA and the states developed a new delivery process that promoted social distancing while allowing a squadron's certified instructors to emulate a classroom environment and provide an approved examination proctoring method.

For the squadrons that participated, the delivery process has worked so well that we are recommending that it become a permanent alternative to NASBLA-approved course delivery and be added to our existing approvals for in-classroom, online, and home study.

To meet the needs of our cyber squadron members and others who continue to have a thirst for knowledge but are unable to attend traditional classroom offerings, we have made more student and instructor material available in e-book format. Squadrons can use virtual classroom delivery techniques and supplement their lectures with electronic student material. The only printed copy required is the examination.

We have several complete courses available in the America's Boating Club virtual classroom, which includes everything from registration and payment through the final examination and individual course credit.

We invite all members to share in these opportunities. Start by visiting either the USPS or the America's Boating Club website and reviewing the myriad offerings. The America's Boating Club website "Learn" section has a list of courses, seminars and webinars you might consider.

If you have time or expertise that you want to share, many of our squadrons, districts and national committees need your talents.

One more thing, please remember that for everything that you do, "Membership is Job One." We can embrace these opportunities and create a better, stronger America's Boating Club. These are special times.

V/C William J. McManimen, SN

the Ensign

Publications Director
Yvonne Hill

Managing Editor
Amy Townsend

Assistant Editor
Tina Tibbitts

Design
estudio-5.com

Creative Director
Simone Tieber

Regular Contributors
Larry Byrd, C. Henry Depew, Bridget Doerner, Charlie Feldschau, Craig Grosby, Peter Hames, Tom Hudson, Ed Jones, Larry MacDonald, Richard McCandless, Dave Osmolski, Beth Schwab, John Schwab, Larry Stout, Bonnie Thibert, Bob Zimmerman

ensign@hq.usps.org

888-367-8777

Advertising
Yvonne Hill
888-367-8777 x226

AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB®
For Boaters, By Boaters™

HEADQUARTERS

United States Power Squadrons
PO Box 30423
Raleigh, NC 27622

contactme@hq.usps.org

888-367-8777 Ext. 0

Fax 888-304-0813

M–Th 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m. ET

Submissions may be sent to The Ensign, PO Box 31664, Raleigh, NC 27622-1664 or ensign@hq.usps.org. The editor reserves the right to edit and modify materials in a style that best serves the needs of The Ensign. Articles, opinions and advertisements do not reflect USPS policy or endorsement unless so designated. Projects described in The Ensign may be based on copyrighted or patented plans or descriptions that require permission for use or reproduction.

Six stages in a boater's life

For years, my family's fun and entertainment have been based on boating. My boating life had six stages. Yours might be similar.



ESTUDIO-5.COM

1 FIRST STAGE

A neighbor's boat inspires a young couple to go to a boat show. They agree to buy a light blue boat. The husband says they can make the boat payment, not mentioning the docking, insurance and storage costs. They take a basic boating course with America's Boating Club to learn how to operate the boat. She learns the head is a toilet and a fender is that thing you hang over the side to keep from bashing the dock. They both learn to put the plug in the stern before launching to keep the light blue boat from sinking.

2 SECOND STAGE

By now, the couple has learned to trailer the boat, pull their kids around the lake on water skis or an inner tube, and maybe even fish. The husband decides they need a bigger boat. At the boat show, they find one with two outboards and a little cuddy cabin so they can cruise the bay and anchor out overnight. Realizing they need to read a chart, use a compass, and learn what those strange posts and cans in the water mean, they join America's Boating Club, take many great courses, and become experienced boaters.

3 THIRD STAGE

The husband claims they bought the wrong boat: The cabin is too small, and it has no shower or galley. His wife agrees. They pick out a bigger boat at the boat show. A friendly salesman gives them a good deal. The bigger boat has radar, a depth finder, GPS, AIS, MFD, MMSI, DSC and autopilot. They take courses on how to use all these new electronics.

4 FOURTH STAGE

Seeing that the boat costs a lot of money, the husband decides to do all the maintenance himself. He takes the Engine Maintenance course, changes the oil and all the filters—oil, fuel and air—and cleans the bilge. In spring he washes and waxes the hull, paints the bottom, and changes zincs. His wife buys new drapes and dishes for the cabin. They cruise the Intracoastal Waterway or the bay on their well-equipped boat.

5 FIFTH STAGE

With the kids out of the house and close friends moving away, they go to the boat show looking for a smaller boat. Surely the friendly salesman will give them a lot of money on their trade-in as well as a bargain on a smaller boat. The wife agrees to the deal as long as she can retrieve her new drapes and dishes before the trade.

6 SIXTH STAGE

The couple thinks a retirement village condo sounds pretty good. If they sell the house and move in, they won't have to cook. She thinks donating the boat to charity would be a fine idea. He agrees to keep teaching America's Boating Club courses. They realize the friends they've made through the club over the years will last forever.

–John Wilmot

This article first appeared in Anchor Watch, the newsletter of Annapolis Sail & Power Squadron/5.

CORRECTIONS

Leonard Kroll's name was mistakenly listed in Last Horizon in the Summer 2020 issue due to a clerical error made when squadrons merged. Mr. Kroll is alive and well, and we regret any inconvenience this error may have caused.

On p. 7 of the Summer 2020 issue, a photo caption incorrectly identified the name of the trophy held by Debi Rowe and Joan McCarron. It is the District 9 Trophy.

Currents

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM AROUND THE BOATING WORLD



2020

Oct 21–25
CPS-ECP AGM
Windsor, Ontario

Dec 19–22
BOD Meeting
Raleigh, N.C.

2021

Feb 14–21
Annual Meeting
Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.

2022

Feb 6–13
Annual Meeting
Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.



America's Boating Club of the Crystal Coast partners with the National Park Service to remove debris left by hurricanes Florence and Dorian from Cape Lookout National Seashore. Here, members load debris at Shackleford Banks. Photo by David Aitken

How to grow a squadron: Follow up with interested boaters

Fort Macon Sail & Power Squadron/27, America's Boating Club of the Crystal Coast, has grown significantly in the last few years. In 2019, it was second in growth among large squadrons, adding 26 new members and having excellent member retention. The secrets to its success have been holding a significant event, providing free seminars, staying in contact with members and non-members, and partnering with other local groups.

The squadron held an aids to navigation cruise with two other squadrons in fall 2019. Seventy-five people attended a nav aids presentation, had dinner, and boarded a boat for a day and night tour of the navigational aids off Morehead City, North Carolina. Half a dozen new members joined. The cruise had been originally scheduled for September but was rescheduled for October after the boat broke down. Several people joined the squadron ahead of time because of a price differential for members. One person who attended the cruise became a member nearly a year later.

The squadron had excellent attendance at its free seminars. Having previously hosted three to four free seminars each fall, the squadron increased its offerings, scheduling seminars every other month throughout the

year. Conducted in coordination with the local maritime museum, the seminars covered topics of interest to local boaters. The squadron collected names and email addresses at each seminar and followed up with the participants. Each seminar resulted in one or two new members joining the squadron.

To remain in the public eye, the squadron publicizes its activities in the local newspaper and magazines.

The Fort Macon Squadron partnered with the National Park Service to help clean up Cape Lookout National Seashore. Many members who joined the cleanup don't normally attend squadron meetings. (See page 34 of this issue.)

The squadron contacts every member for renewal. Probably 10% report that they had forgotten, had lost their voucher, or just needed a reminder. The squadron also contacts non-renewals to find out why they didn't renew. No one has ever said there was a problem with the squadron; most have simply aged out, stopped boating or moved.

The squadron maintains a non-member contact list for follow-up when scheduling a new seminar or course. The contacts are put on the "friends" email list for the Cannon Soundings newsletter and are typically removed only if requested.

New members have come from a variety of areas, each contributing to the growth of the squadron—the navigation cruise, seminars, cyber members, ABC classes, personal referrals, and vessel safety checks.

If there is a silver bullet to growth and retention, it is follow-up. Just keep contacting people who have shown some interest in boating.

–Bob Howd

BOATING NEWS

COAST GUARD SEEKS INPUT ON SHALLOW DRAFT WATERWAYS

If you operate in navigable waters less than 12 feet deep along the East Coast, the U.S. Coast Guard would like you to take a five-minute online survey to assess the East Coast Shallow Draft Waterway Systems. Your input will help the Coast Guard determine the Aids to Navigation requirements in the shallow draft waterway systems. The survey will be open until Nov. 1, 2020.

The survey is geared toward all recreational boaters, commercial operators (construction/cargo/fishing) and local and state agency boat operators.

Questions include years of experience, waters where you operate and how often, what navigation tools you use (radar, electronic charting systems, etc.), your concerns and more. Please share the survey with fellow members and other boaters. If you have questions or comments, email CGNAV@uscg.mil using the subject line "Shallow Draft WAMS." *–USCG*

SEA TOW FOUNDATION TO PROVIDE SAFE FLARE DISPOSAL

The Sea Tow Foundation has begun working with the U.S. Coast Guard to develop a flare disposal pilot program for boaters in Florida. In this 2021 pilot program, a mobile incineration unit would traverse Florida to safely dispose of flares collected at events around the state.

The Coast Guard requires all boaters to carry both day and night flares (also known as visual distress signals) any time they operate on coastal waters, the Great Lakes, or on waters connecting to these areas. However, flares expire after less than four years and must be replaced to meet the Coast Guard carriage requirements.

Simply throwing expired flares in the trash is an environmental and health hazard as they contain highly toxic chemicals, and storing expired flares is a safety hazard because they are unstable and unpredictable. Currently, no single agency or organization handles the disposal of flares in the U.S., and state agencies provide unclear requirements about the proper disposal of flares.

Plans for Sea Tow Foundation's flare disposal program are still in the early stages, but a new website at flaredisposal.com has been created and will have more information as it becomes available. The Sea Tow Foundation hopes local clubs or squadrons in Florida will be interested in participating in the flare disposal program. Interested clubs can contact Gail Kulp at gail@boatingsafety.com.

–Sea Tow Foundation



ETIQUETTE TIPS FOR SAFE, FUN DAYS ON THE WATER

The coronavirus pandemic is leading to more recreational boaters and paddlers hitting the water, all trying to have fun safely. The BoatUS Foundation shares some etiquette tips to make for a positive day on the water for paddlers and boaters alike.

Etiquette for paddlers

- Make sure you are seen, though this may be harder than you think. If your kayak, life jacket or clothing is a neutral or dark color, recreational boaters find it harder to see you from a safe distance as glare increases and waves kick up. Wearing bright clothing and life jackets, using warning flags, painting paddle blades bright colors, and adding reflective tape to the tips can help boaters see you.
- Try to cross channels at a 90-degree angle. If you're with a group, cross together instead of stretched out in a long line. This reduces the time spent in potentially hazardous waterways where boats may be limited in navigation by size, draft or maneuverability.
- Even if you have right of way, practice defensive paddling to prevent collisions and mishaps. Try to avoid heavy boat traffic and pick a route away from congestion. Typically, it's safest to pass astern of other vessels and let them cross in front of you. Some boats have awkward blind spots that reduce good visibility at certain trim angles, so never assume a boater can see you.

Etiquette for boaters

- Put down the phone, minimize distractions and be on active lookout for small craft. The U.S. Coast Guard reports that operator inattention and improper lookout top the list for contributing factors to accidents. Consider learning the SCAN (search, concentrate, analyze and negotiate) method to help you safely navigate around paddlers and other traffic on the water.
- While you may not be in an official slow speed zone, show courtesy and slow down in areas where paddlers congregate. Be mindful of your wake. One way for boat operators to check their courtesy is to ask themselves, "If my son or daughter were in the kayak I am about to pass, what would I do?"
- Accept and understand that some paddlers may not understand the rules of the road or all the safety risks inherent to small-craft operation. Paddlecraft are highly maneuverable, so it's good to give a little more breathing room on the water when you can. Everyone has a responsibility to avoid a collision.

–BoatUS Foundation





#ICYMI

In case you missed it, here's what's been happening in the boating world on social media.

- **America's Boating Compass** launched the first video of its Knots to Know series in August, starting with the cleat hitch. A new video will debut every month through February 2021. Make sure to subscribe to the YouTube channel!

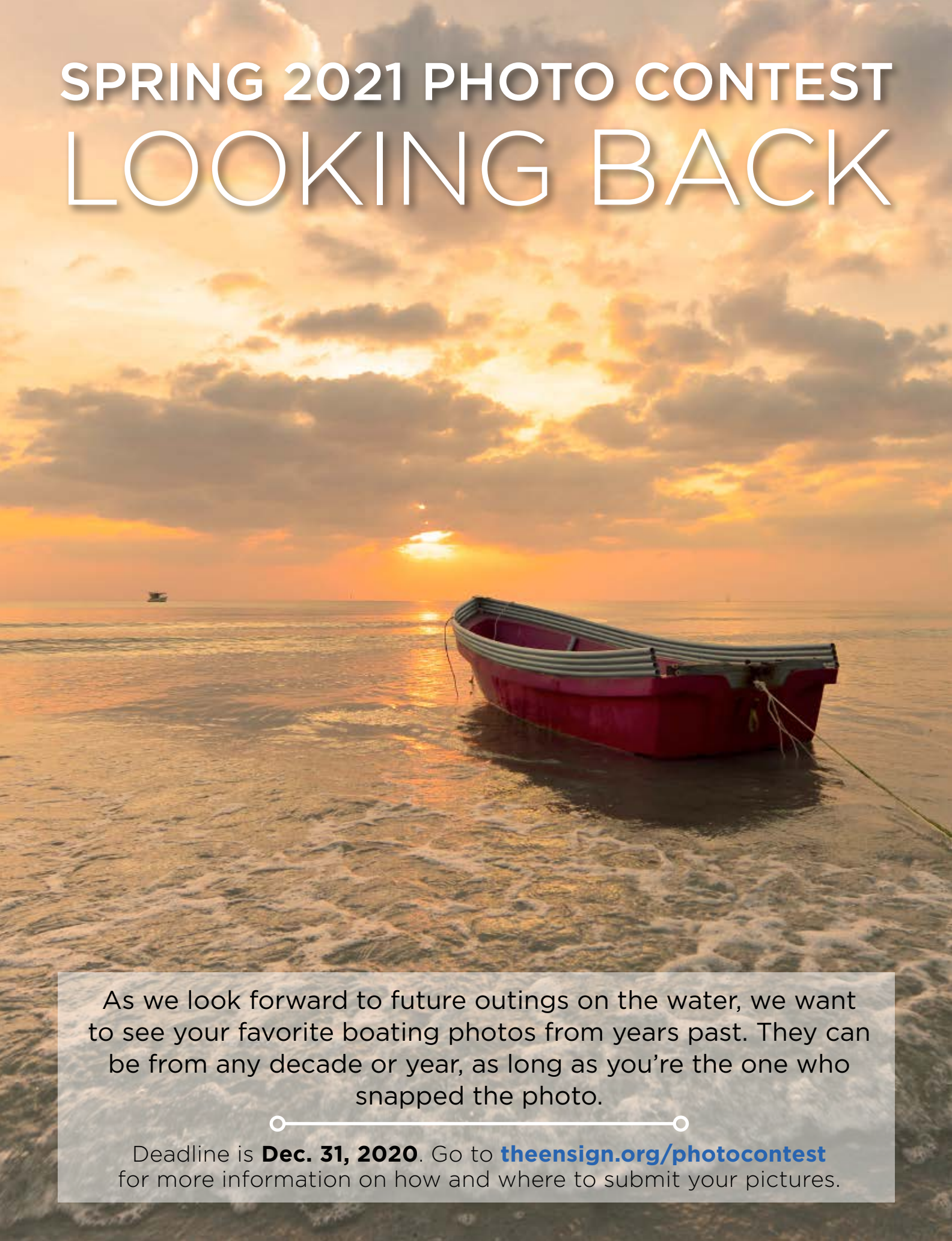
- **Boat Live 365** is holding a Facebook contest throughout the month of September: Squadrons that like and repost Boat Live 365 on Facebook every single time will be eligible to win a free Boat Live 365 event pack. This prize pack includes a custom event banner and all the promotional goodies needed to advocate for boating safety in your community.

- **America's Boating Channel** debuted its fourth season of boating safety education videos, which cover topics from social distancing for boaters to electric shock drowning.

Sign up with your Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn account to join the America's Boating Crew and become a social media ambassador for America's Boating Club!

SPRING 2021 PHOTO CONTEST

LOOKING BACK



As we look forward to future outings on the water, we want to see your favorite boating photos from years past. They can be from any decade or year, as long as you're the one who snapped the photo.

Deadline is **Dec. 31, 2020**. Go to **theensign.org/photocontest** for more information on how and where to submit your pictures.



Stuart Zwang's ailing 1997 Chevy Tahoe near Sheboygan, Wisconsin

Murphy's Law

After a trip to Door County, one boater learns what can go wrong, will go wrong

By Stu Zwang

We try to go to Door County for about four days every year. We go far up into the peninsula, and I trailer our 23-foot open-bow Larson. We launch at Sister Bay, where we can go north to Washington Island, south to Egg Harbor, or west to Menominee. My goal for this cruise was to return to Washington Island, specifically Rock Island State Park, which is only accessible by boat.

We had to travel through Death's Door, the strait between the peninsula's tip and Washington Island. I had been to Washington Island before and had no trouble. This year, the water was calm—for the first two hours, until we could see through the passage at Gills Rock. Then the water went from calm to 3-foot whitecaps. The swells knocked our small boat off course, and

water splashed into the boat.

My wife and son, salty crew dogs that they are, decided this rocking and rolling wasn't a fun or worthy adventure. We turned back but still enjoyed the day.

We headed home the next day. My tow car, a 1997 Chevy Tahoe, has about 111,000 miles on it. Contrary to what my son and son-in-law believe, it's not a Rent-a-Wreck reject. Both kids learned to drive in this car. They took it to school with them. My daughter even learned how to deploy an air bag in it.

We made it to Egg Harbor when the Tahoe started to cough, hesitate and misfire. I pushed on, figuring I would repair it when I got home. Then the dashboard fell apart. This rattle proved noisier than the radio, so we decided not to listen to Patsy Cline cry about her lost love.

At least I had the car under control, or so I thought, until the left front tire blew. It was shredded. You could see its insides as well as torn steel belts on the outside. It was my turn to rediscover the immutability of Murphy's Law.

I pulled way, way over to change the tire. No problem. Except the jack stand and assorted tools were in the back. Do you have any idea how much junk can fit in the back of a Chevy Tahoe?

After pulling everything out on the safe side of the car, I went to work. My son played the opening theme from the "Beverly Hillbillies" as well as "Dueling Banjos" on his cellphone to accompany me. He also called the Sheboygan County police. An officer came, saw what was going on, and asked for my license and registration. At least they were in good order.

I got the spare tire out, and the police officer positioned his squad car to help divert traffic. Mr. Murphy again had my name on the tip of his tongue. The lug nuts wouldn't budge.

We called a tow truck, thinking the driver would be able to remove them in an instant. Twenty minutes later, the tow truck arrived, and the driver took out his cross bar. He could not budge the lug nuts, either. He took out his impact wrench; the battery was dead.

We made it to Egg Harbor when the Tahoe started to cough, hesitate and misfire. I pushed on, figuring I would repair it when I got home. Then the dashboard fell apart.

The only thing left to do was to tow the car, which meant we had to unhitch the boat and reload the car. The car was loaded onto the flatbed tow truck. The tow truck could only have two passengers, so the nice officer transported my son in the back of his squad car. Knowing discretion is the better part of valor, we did not take a picture of him in the rear of the squad car.

After we arrived at the shop in Sheboygan, it took the tow truck driver another 45 minutes to put on the spare. Fortunately, we include towing on our car insurance. After a $20 deductible and three dollars for sodas, we were back on the road. Unfortunately, the spare wasn't meant to haul a boat. That meant a trip to Goodyear for two new front tires. Forty-five minutes and $200 later, we picked up the boat.

We had doubled our four-hour journey back to Highland Park with no trouble at all. Remember the loss of power in the Chevy? A spark plug wire falling out of cylinder #3 took all of five minutes to fix.

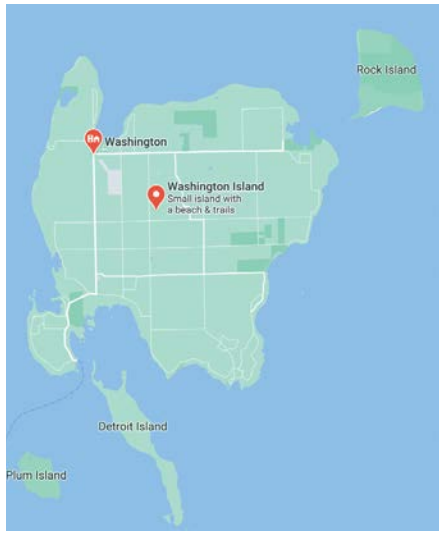
The next day, we decided to go back to Waukegan, tootle around in Lake Michigan, and leave the boat at our in-out service. The water was calm, and we had a great time. I was able to get the boat back to the dock with no problem.

I keep the trailer sans boat in my spare driveway. While I drove the empty trailer back home, Mr. Murphy woke up and remembered my name. First the brake failure light went on. The steel brake lines on this 20-year-old car had started to leak in three places. New brake lines were only $500.

At home, I looked at the trailer. The 16-month-old right front tire was completely shredded. Trailer tires don't have warranties. A new tire was $80. Amazon sent me the rubber welting for $20 so I could stop the dashboard rattle.

My boat car is back together and doing OK, despite what my son thinks. Last night he made me a vodka martini using Death's Door Vodka.

Stuart Zwang rented boats in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, before joining Skokie Valley Sail & Power Squadron to learn more about boating. A senior navigator with inland and coastal navigation certifications, he is currently District 20 administrative officer. He and his wife, Lorri, enjoy boating on Lake Michigan aboard their 23-foot open-bow Larson. This article first appeared in the squadron newsletter, Running Lights.





Three days on the Chester



Tall ships *Kalmar Nyckel* and *Lady Maryland* with the Chesapeake Bay skipjack *Sigsbee* on the Chester River.



Wooden boat festival lures boaters to Chestertown, Maryland

By Susan Gilbert

Photos by Bob Gilbert

The Sultana Downrigging Weekend Tall Ship and Wooden Boat Festival in Chestertown, Maryland, has become a favorite fall mini-getaway for my husband and me. In 2018, we took our third trip to this charming town to view interesting ships, Chesapeake Bay work boats, beautifully preserved Chris-Craft powerboats and antique cars.

Sponsored by the Sultana Education Foundation, the festival takes place on the banks of the Chester River. Proceeds from the three-day event support the schooner *Sultana*. Each year *Sultana* takes more than 4,500 students from many Maryland ports onto the Chesapeake Bay for hands-on programs in environmental science and history.

During the festival, boaters can enjoy sailing on a tall ship or a restored skipjack, watching the crab boat races, or viewing the restored boats—in and out of the water.

In past years we've sailed on the *Pride of Baltimore II* and the *Meerwald*, an oyster schooner built in New Jersey. This year we got tickets to sail on the *Kalmar Nyckel*, a beautiful replica of the first Swedish ship to arrive in Colonial America.

Unfortunately, Saturday morning dawned rainy and windy. We set off hoping for the best, but it wasn't to be. The other ships sailed, but *Kalmar Nyckel* did not. Too tall above water, the ship was feared to be unable to maneuver well in the tight quarters of the



Tall ships *Sultana* (background) and *Lady Maryland*



The crew of the *Pride of Baltimore II* works on the rigging before sailing.



Sea Scouts man a replica of *PT-109*.

Chester River in 25- to 35-mph gusts.

Despite the rain and not being able to sail, we found the Chester River shore area much improved. Gone were the muddy paths leading to the docks; now, stable, level pavers provided accessibility for everyone. A beautiful new building replaced the tent that once housed the festival information center. The food, beverage and music tent, which features seafood and bluegrass music, had a new location with a paved path leading into it.

From the harbor, a short walk up tree-lined streets takes you to shops and restaurants in the main part of town. The farmers and artisans market can be found in the green area in the middle of town. It's easy to be lured there by smells of home-baked goods. You can find locally produced jams and jellies, wonderful skeins of local wool, and many local artisan products. Chestertown has a variety of bed and breakfasts for anyone who wants to stay for more than one day of the festival.

After walking into town in the rain with no sign of the weather clearing, we decided to head home. However, on the way home we heard from friends that the Maritime Museum in St. Michael's was having its annual Oyster Festival that same weekend. A big hot bowl of oyster stew sounded wonderful, so off we went to the next adventure.

A lifelong boater, Susan Gilbert began fishing with her dad as a young child on lakes and rivers throughout the South. She has recently crewed on a catamaran up and down the Intracoastal Waterway and to the Bahamas. Susan and her husband, Bob, enjoy living on and exploring the shores of the Chesapeake Bay. She is currently assistant administrative officer for Annapolis Sail & Power Squadron/5. This article first appeared in the squadron newsletter, Anchor Watch.

BOB GILBERT



Davis Instruments Secure Removable Chafe Guards
$29.99 per pair
davisinstruments.com

No-slip grip

Secure Removable Chafe Guards protect braided and three-strand cordage from chafing over a cleat, cap rail or anchor roller, and where two lines cross. When a line needs adjustment, the chafe guards are easy to move into position and pliable enough to fit through chocks. Made from UV-stabilized nylon webbing, these 16-inch-long chafe guards have hook-and-loop fasteners that grip 3/8- to 1-inch lines without slipping.



Schmitt & Ongaro 9" Top-Mounted Grab Rail
$63.30
schmittongaromarine.com

Hold steady

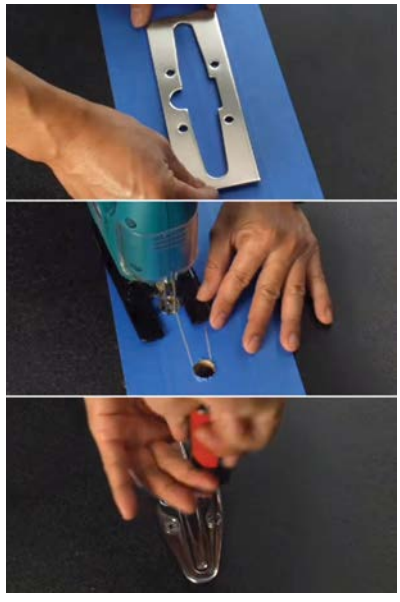
Made of stainless steel with a rubber insert, the 9-inch Top-Mounted Grab Rail is soft and comfortable to the touch. The tough and abrasion-resistant grab rail provides a solid handgrip, even when wet. It's easy to install, and once in place, all hardware is completely hidden for a custom appearance.



Ritchie Navigation Life Light
$24
ritchienavigation.com

Supreme beam

The USCG-approved innovative Life Light provides 300 hours of full brightness and is visible for over 2 miles. It activates when immersed in salt or fresh water and deactivates when removed. The compact rescue strobe attaches to any personal flotation device or life raft with the included lanyard and hook-and-loop strap. Its housing is virtually indestructible, completely sealed and guaranteed against leakage and corrosion.



Neat cleats

Made of corrosion-resistant, marine-grade stainless steel for exceptional durability, these pop-up cleats require only basic tools for mounting. They push flush into the deck when not needed, eliminating a common tripping hazard. Available in 4½-inch, 6-inch, 8-inch and 10-inch sizes to suit a wide range of boats, they offer the same secure holding power as a standard cleat.

Accon Marine 202 Series Pop-Up Cleats
Starting at $114.42
acconmarine.com

Store more

Available in a wide range of sizes and styles, Soft-Mate holders let you add storage wherever needed to hold everything from cellphones to binoculars. Made from a soft, flexible PVC compound, they won't scratch boat finishes and are forgiving if bumped, helping to prevent injuries. Downward-slanting top and bottom edges on each Soft-Mate product prevent lines from catching on them.

Beckson Marine Soft-Mate Holders
Starting at $18.10
beckson.com



Shipshape

ANSWERS, TIPS AND ADVICE TO HELP YOU GET THE MOST OUT OF THE BOATING LIFE

QUICK TIPS

Life jacket care

A new video from America's Boating Channel, "Life Jacket Care," shows you how to get more wear out of your life jacket. Also covered are special considerations for inflatable and foam-filled jackets as well as tips for replacing your life jacket.

Assessing your risk

If you happen to contract COVID-19, you have the disease 100%. However, the severity of your illness depends on the viral load of your exposure. Wearing a face covering not only prevents you from unknowingly spreading infection, but it also decreases the viral load of your exposure. Wear a face covering in public, and use this chart from the Texas Medical Association to assess your risk of getting COVID-19 from various activities.
–Jeff Short, M.D.

Email your questions, tips and advice to ensign@hq.usps.org.



SHUTTERSTOCK

On a roll

Storing and maintaining your canvas and vinyl panels By Dave Osmolski

Dave Osmolski is taking a break from this column. In the meantime, we thought you'd enjoy this article from Summer 2016.

Boats of all sizes have canvas and clear vinyl panels to keep the weather out. During the boating season, these panels have a place and use, but storing these relatively fragile panels in the off-season can become a problem.

Sun exposure deteriorates both canvas and vinyl. Cold, windy weather makes vinyl brittle, and the wind can cause it to crack and break. Unless you wrap your boat, exposing these panels to the elements in winter drastically decreases their useful life.

MAINTENANCE

Canvas/vinyl panels are fastened to the boat's superstructure with snaps, zippers and slide channels. During the boating season, especially in salt water, you must rinse and maintain these mechanical fasteners to keep them from corroding and becoming unusable.

Snaps should be lubricated with zipper wax or a waxy lip balm when installed and several times during the summer. Lip balm is often cheaper than many proprietary grease sticks labeled for boating. Unlike many oils, these lubricants won't dry out or flow onto and stain canvas, making them better for keeping your zippers zipping. They can also un-jam a sticking zipper pull. You should also lubricate the slides that fit into the slide channels.

When unsnapping snaps, always use a tool designed for this purpose. It looks like a narrow spatula with a heavy blade and snap-shaped groove in the end. Insert the blade with the groove under the snap, and unfasten the snap using leverage without pulling on the fabric or vinyl.

Before removing the panels from the >>

>> superstructure, wash them with fresh water and allow them to dry. Remove water spots from the clear vinyl portions with a proprietary spot remover. Some spots can become permanent if not removed before storage. Lubricate and treat all fasteners and zippers. If your boat is stored at a facility near salt water, fasteners and zippers that are a part of the superstructure can and will develop corrosion during storage that could render them useless come spring unless you prepare them beforehand.

STORAGE

Although canvas panels can be folded and stored out of the way on a shelf over the winter, folding vinyl causes permanent creases that can crack over time. Most panels are a combination of vinyl and canvas and should not be folded. Unless the panels from your boat are large, say, over 8 feet in any dimension, you can make a compact and safe storage for them. Combination vinyl and canvas panels can be hung over large diameter plastic pipe against an unused wall in a garage or dry basement.

I mounted a 4-inch diameter plastic pipe against a wall in my garage to hang my panels on. At 10 years old, my panels are still as clear and bright as new. To keep from scratching the vinyl with the zippers and snaps, I layer the panels with discarded terry cloth bath towels.

If you don't have a wall available, simply roll the panel/terry cloth sandwich around the plastic pipe, making sure the outside layer is a towel. Secure the roll with twine or, better yet, hook-and-loop straps. Stand the roll in the corner of your garage or dry basement like a rolled-up carpet. The rigid plastic pipe prevents it from sagging. If your garage doesn't have a ceiling, place the roll on the rafters to keep the panels safe, dry and ready for easy installation come spring.

David H. Osmolski of Charlotte Power Squadron/27 has been repairing boats since high school when his first boat, a canvas-covered canoe with cedar ribs, leaked in gallons per minute and required constant repair.



Boating tips for older adults

By Gino Bottino, MD

With the average age of Americans advancing and the cost of boats increasing, most new engine-powered boats are bought by older boaters. Regardless of age, a skipper must be responsible for the safety of the boat and everyone onboard.

As an operator, you must be aware of your abilities, limitations, and health, including sight, hearing, mobility, stamina and mental acuity. You must also keep in mind the abilities and limitations of your crew: As we get older, so do all our family and friends.

Before leaving the dock, you should check equipment, monitor the weather and complete your predeparture checklist, but you should also gather your crew to ask them if they feel well and are comfortable with their situation and any tasks they've been assigned. Ask if they have any special needs or if you should be aware of any conditions that could affect the trip. Make sure the medical box is stocked appropriately and consider having an automated external defibrillator onboard and someone trained to use it.

Assign a back-up skipper or two. Someone who can start and stop the boat, dock the boat, anchor in an emergency and use the radio to call for help, without any assistance from you.

Holding a man-overboard drill will prove to yourself and your crew that you are all up for this physical challenge, while learning proper rescue technique. Do this at least once a season with your core crew.

Age creeps up on us, and most of us are in denial. In our minds, we're still young and think we can do anything. Yet, it's difficult to act age-appropriate when we don't acknowledge the reality of our age.

Facing reality means understanding the normal human aging process and knowing what signs to look for in ourselves and others. As we age, we may

- become forgetful or fuzzy-headed
- learn more slowly and retain less information
- have slower hand-eye coordination
- experience vision changes
- have less stamina and more fatigue
- lose flexibility
- lose balance and agility
- become agitated more easily
- not process language or make decisions as quickly
- lose strength
- take longer to process information, making multitasking more difficult

While it's unlikely anyone will have all of these symptoms, take precautions to ensure the safety of yourself and your crew on the water.

BEFORE A TRIP

- Plan shorter, less strenuous trips during daytime hours.
- Don't go out alone. Share duties with others.
- Rely on lists and notes.
- Downsize or change boat type to accommodate your physical abilities.
- Get regular physical checkups.
- Exercise regularly to stay in shape. Biking, tai chi and yoga are great for boaters.
- Practice boarding the boat safely. (Install a ladder or ramp on the dock.)
- Look for handicap signs for easier loading and unloading.
- Relocate electronic equipment (GPS, radar, radio, etc.) for easier access and screen visibility.
- Add additional rails, safety lines and non-skid tape on highly traveled areas. Deck-mount attachments allow you to put stand-up bars and pole handholds in strategic places.
- Assign a lookout to watch and listen for hazards and call them out.
- Plan trips earlier in the day when energy is the highest.
- Don't overload the boat.
- File a float plan with family or friends using the new America's Boating Club app.
- Practice throwing dock lines, docking and backing the boat.
- Stock your first-aid kit with emergency medicines geared for yourself and your passengers.
- Take a CPR course.
- Teach passengers how to walk downstairs backward (facing the steps) and to use the three points of contact (both feet firmly planted while holding on with one hand) when getting on and off the boat.

It's difficult to act age-appropriate when we don't acknowledge the reality of our age.

WHEN YOU'RE UNDERWAY

- Keep the cabin hatch closed and latched to prevent anyone from falling in.
- Keep fingers out of lines when cleating.
- Always wear a life jacket, especially when going forward on the bow for line handling or anchoring.
- Watch out for mooring lines when embarking or debarking.
- Inform the crew of speed changes, turns, waves and wind changes that could cause them to lose balance.
- Have crew members, including yourself, announce where they are going on the boat.
- Have your lookout announce all approaching boats.
- Practice what ifs: What do you do when something goes wrong?
  - What if someone falls overboard?
  - What if your boat has a mechanical problem?
  - What if someone gets hurt?
  - What if you have a heart attack or stroke?
  - What if the weather changes?
  - What if the electronics go down?

  Make this a game with the crew to help them learn about boating and be prepared when something goes wrong.

Special thanks to Harrison Valante, who has presented these ideas during District 2 conferences.

Gino Bottino, M.D., has had wide experience in medical practice and emergency medical matters. A member of United States Power Squadrons First Aid Support Team (FAST) and the Safety Committee, Gino also has a background in competitive sail racing and is familiar with health-related problems afloat.



ISTOCK



Am I on a collision course?

By Capt. Katherine Redmond

How can you tell if you are on a collision course with another vessel?

Let's suppose you're taking a little cruise on your local waters, and you see a boat off your starboard side, about 1,000 feet away. It's angled slightly in your direction, but you cannot tell if there's any eventual danger of collision.

EARLY WARNING

Instead of waiting until you get close to the vessel, you can obtain an early warning by locating a fixed object on your boat, such as a cleat or stanchion, and visually aligning it with the other boat. After a few minutes, moving along at the same speed and the same direction, try to align the same fixed object with the vessel on your starboard side. If the object is at the same alignment as before, your vessels will eventually collide. Therefore, you must change speed or direction to avoid close contact.

CHANGING COURSE

When changing course, do so emphatically. If your turn will be to port, leave no doubt in any vessel operator's mind as to where you are heading. Although you may have learned the navigation rules on meeting, passing and crossing in America's Boating Course, not everyone knows or obeys the rules. Stay alert to other vessels' movement, even when you have the right of way. Keep in mind that you must do all you can to avoid a collision, even if it means breaking the rules!

BE A GOOD SAMARITAN

Be aware that under the "Good Samaritan Law," you are legally obligated to help another boater in distress, unless it puts you, your crew or your vessel in danger. This law has been practiced on the water for time immemorial, and it protects you as well as any other boater who needs help.

Capt. Katherine Giampietro Redmond of Palm Beach Sail & Power Squadron/8 is a NASBLA-honored boating safety instructor with a Six-Pack Towing Captain's License. Author of "The Chartracker Navigation Guides" and "7 Steps to Successful Boat Docking," she created boatinglady.com to provide boating guidance for women.

Trailer maintenance keeps it rolling

While a friend was trailering his boat to a boatyard, the trailer collapsed from a broken axle, damaging the boat as well as the trailer. Looking closely at pictures, I could tell that the trailer had been poorly maintained.

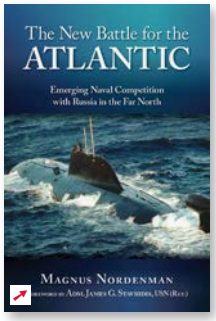
Proper trailer maintenance is critical to safe boating, particularly in a seaside environment where a trailer sits unused for several months. A frozen or overheated wheel bearing, a flat tire without a spare or a jack, or a broken spring can ruin your day. Take precautions to ensure your trailer can handle the load:

- **Check the hitch and ball** on the tow vehicle and trailer; make sure they're the correct size, in place, and tight.
- **Lubricate the hitch** and grease the ball.
- **Use safety chains** strong enough to support the trailer's tongue weight.
- **Use hooks with safety latches**, instead of S-hooks, to hook chains to the hitch.
- **Ensure running lights** are operational.
- **Check the tires**, including the spare, for defects and proper inflation.
- **Grease, repack or replace wheel bearings** as needed.
- **Service the trailer's brakes** (if installed).
- **Ensure boat tie-downs** are secure.
- **Wash down the trailer** after every immersion.
- **Use the proper size ball** for the receiver, particularly if you tow other things besides your boat.
- **Tighten the trailer's nuts** before every outing.
- **Talk to your insurance agent** to ensure you are adequately covered for physical damage to your trailer, damage to your boat on the trailer, and liability for damages to other property or people in case of a serious accident. *–Ed Bauer*



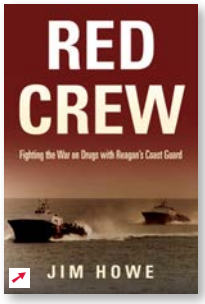


ESTUDIO-5.COM



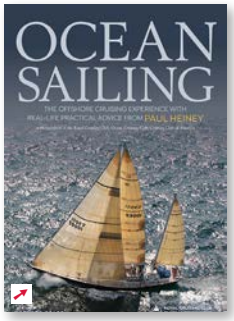
The New Battle for the Atlantic
Magnus Nordenman
Naval Institute Press, $38

The North Atlantic saw German and Allied submarine activities in both world wars and Russian submarine activities in the Cold War. Magnus Nordenman discusses sea control of the region in today's technological environment. His excellent book would appeal to anyone interested in maritime control and logistical support. *–C. Henry Depew*



Red Crew
Jim Howe
Naval Institute Press, $21.95

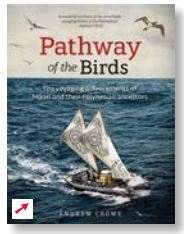
To combat drug smuggling in the 1980s, the U.S. Coast Guard created a fleet of three surface effect ships with four rotating crews. Jim Howe of the Red Crew takes us through non-stop adventure with drug smuggling interdictions and rescuing boatloads of immigrants and hapless boaters. *–Dave Osmolski*



Ocean Sailing
Paul Heiney
Bloomsbury, $35

This readable book includes experiences of sailors from three cruising clubs on all aspects of ocean cruising. Notable is the chapter on transitioning from water back to land. Those considering offshore cruising should read this excellent book. *–C. Henry Depew*

Navigational know-how



Pathway of the Birds
Andrew Crowe
University of Hawaii Press, $39

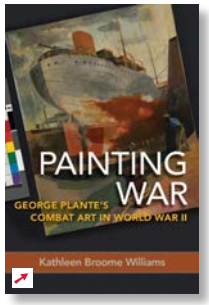
Skilled wayfinders helped the Māori and their ancestors to settle nearly all the archipelagos across the Pacific Ocean without any of the instruments early European explorers had at their disposal.

How did these ancient Polynesian navigators accomplish this extraordinary feat? Natural history writer Andrew Crowe discovers the answers to this question as he traces the movement of the Polynesian peoples in each area of the Pacific Ocean: Southeastern, Northern, Central, Southern and Western. Each section deals with the islands in the area and their role in the migration effort.

In chapter 5, Crowe discusses the navigational efforts of the voyagers, and in chapter 12 he covers the return voyages of the explorers.

Full of color photographs, this excellent book includes many maps, a complete list of endnotes, a comprehensive index and a bibliography for further research. *–C. Henry Depew*

The art of war

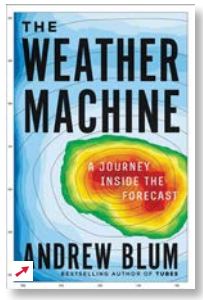


Painting War: George Plante's Combat Art in World War II
Kathleen Broome Williams
Naval Institute Press, $29.95

George Plante, a young Scottish artist, volunteered as a radio officer on British vessels carrying food and supplies from New York to England in the Battle of the Atlantic. For over two years, his vessels dodged U-boats and survived heavy weather. When off duty, he painted, wrote letters and sketched life onboard, providing a unique record of this important maritime campaign. His paintings became propaganda art to rally Americans for Britain's war effort.

After his vessel was torpedoed and sank, Plante was rescued and returned to the UK. He was reassigned by the British Ministry of Information to work with the Americans in Egypt and Italy where he created art as overt propaganda to demonize the Nazis and Fascists and arouse opposition among occupied peoples. Plante used his artistic talent in both milieus. This well-researched and documented account by Kathleen Broome Williams, Plante's stepdaughter, expands and enriches the historical record. *–Peter Hames*

On the horizon



The Weather Machine
Andrew Blum
Harper Collins, $25.99

To find the weather in the next town, you check your phone. You see forecasts for the state, the nation, the continent. Satellites and supercomputers, international agreements and global corporations, rival models, and giant data inputs are all at your service. We demand to know the weather to farm, invest, travel, ship, build—and of course to sail.

Yet daily weather maps have only been possible for past 50 years. The web has delivered our forecasts only for 25. Today, six-day forecasts are as reliable as a two-day outlook was in 1975.

The "weather machine" is "one of the world's most widely used and highly valued public goods." Will crowdsourcing and smartphones change things? Should big corporations or private equity firms own and sell forecasts? Will poor nations be left behind? Andrew Blum ends his book of history, science, travel and investigation by weighing possible futures of forecasting. *–Richard McCandless*

Cruising America's Great Loop

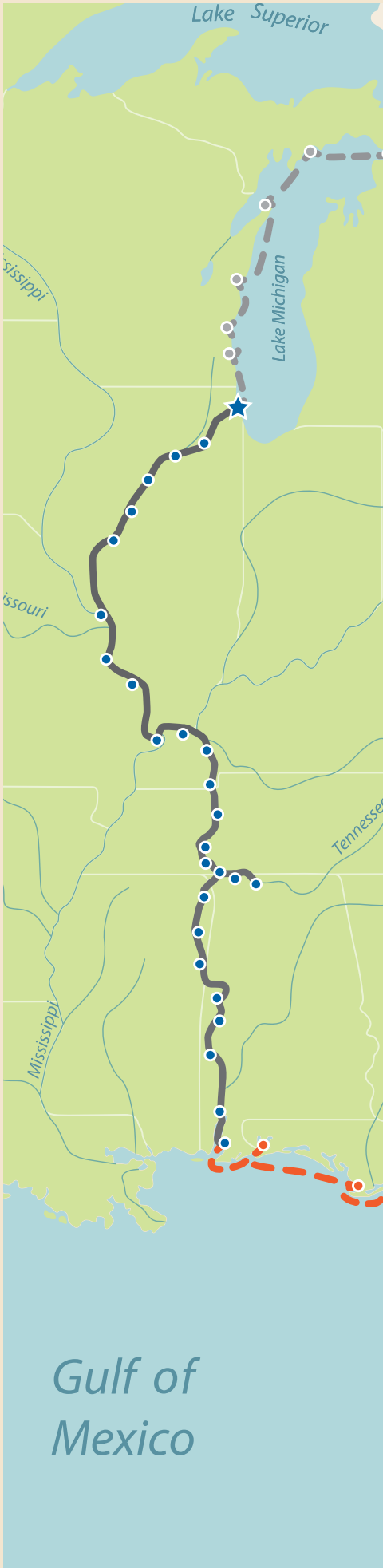
Part 3: The Florida Panhandle and Gulf of Mexico

By John Simons

Our Great Loop adventure took one year and covered 6,500 miles. We departed from Waukegan Harbor in mid-September 2015 and, after making a series of left turns, returned to Waukegan Harbor in September 2016. Our crew consisted of John and Priscilla Simons and Dale and Andy Arnold.

Hundreds of "Loopers" make this trip each year. America's Great Loop Cruising Association conducts seminars to help Loopers prepare for the adventure.

Part one covered our journey from Waukegan, Illinois, to Grand Rivers, Kentucky. In part two, we cruised from Grand Rivers to Mobile, Alabama. Part three takes us from Mobile, Alabama, to Key West, Florida.





Traveling 6,500 miles in one year, four Loopers recount their trip circumnavigating the eastern U.S. and part of Canada.

Rest and repairs

We entered Mobile Bay on Nov. 1, 2015—the first day our insurance rider allowed us to be in the Gulf of Mexico due to hurricane season. We had completed the first segment of the Loop, Chicago to Mobile, having cruised 1,460 miles and purchased 1,633 gallons of diesel fuel.

Now in salt water with tidal changes, we entered Mobile Bay greeted by two dolphins swimming in our wake. Hundreds of pelicans and seagulls chased the shrimp boats. We cruised south down the wide, shallow bay and turned east to go to Fly Creek in Fairhope, Alabama.

We stopped at Eastern Shore Marine, a working boatyard not a marina, to get our oil changed. With the channel open to the west, the slip is lumpy. However, the cast of characters the place attracts makes it interesting.

Jeanne from *Knot Now* came over with a ukulele while I was playing mine on the afterdeck. She'd inherited the instrument from her father, who had passed away recently. She'd been practicing so she could play "Amazing Grace" for her mother when they spread his ashes in the ocean. She heard another ukulele after she stopped playing and eventually figured out it was me. Priscilla grabbed her ukulele, and the three of us had a little jam session.

The maintenance work went well. The yard changed the boat's engine oil and filters, the generator oil and filter, the zincs in the engine and generator, and the transmission fluid.

Work on the blowers didn't go as well. They needed to be replaced, which delayed our departure two days. Instead of cruising to Pensacola on Sunday, we would depart on Tuesday.

Fairhope, AL » Port St. Joe, FL

After seven days in Fairhope, we cast off, cruised south on Mobile Bay, and entered the Intracoastal Waterway. We stopped briefly at Pensacola, Florida. Since we were chasing a weather window to cross the Gulf to Tarpon Springs, we decided to make a long run outside the ICW from Pensacola to Port St. Joe.

As we blasted east at 25 mph along the Florida Panhandle, the starboard engine transmission malfunctioned. The engines throttled down and back up on their own. When we arrived at the Port St. Joe Marina, the starboard engine stalled. We went to the fuel dock using the port engine and bow thruster. After fueling, we put the starboard transmission in neutral and started the engine. The boat lurched forward. We tried again with the same result. This was one of those crystalline moments when you are genuinely happy to have a boat partner. Three weeks and $15,000 later, we had a new ZF transmission installed. In the meantime, we became experts on Port St. Joe.

To pass the time until we could cross the Gulf, we took long walks twice a day, went to the Port St. Joe Salt Air Farmers Market and wandered around gift shops.

We spent a lot of time cruising in our dinghy, an 11-foot Avon center console (steering wheel and controls) with a 40-horsepower Mercury engine with electric start and tilt. The dinghy also has an electric bilge pump and navigation lights. We didn't put our boat name on our dinghy for security reasons. When the dinghy is at the dock, the boat name could alert potential thieves that the anchored boat is unoccupied.

As we waited for repairs, we learned how few comfortable days there are for crossing the Gulf—five to six days each in November and December.

Good crossing conditions for me are average winds of 13 knots or less and average wave heights of two feet or less. The forecast conditions must be stable and sustainable during the entire 20-hour crossing, and at least three online weather sources must match.

With no suitable weather window available, Loopers began to stack up at the marina. As the days dragged on, more and more Loopers came. It was wonderful to see so many friends again.

With Thanksgiving fast approaching, we were contemplating roasting a small turkey in our microwave convection oven when a local sailor invited us and 40 other Loopers to Thanksgiving dinner at his home. We will always remember this magical event.

When the transmission work was completed, we took *Changing Latitudes* to the fuel dock to pump out and then headed out on St. Joseph Bay for sea trials. It was a treat to hear the engines run and the turbos whine for the first time in over two weeks. We brought *Changing Latitudes* up on plane, ran at 28 mph for 10 minutes, turned around and ran at speed on the way back. Everything worked as advertised. We'd be ready to cross the Gulf as soon as we got a weather window.

Port St. Joe
Indian Rock Beach, FL

When crossing the Gulf, you can make a fast crossing or a slow crossing. The fast crossing at 18 mph or more



Top: Pelicans and seagulls chase a shrimp boat in Mobile Bay.

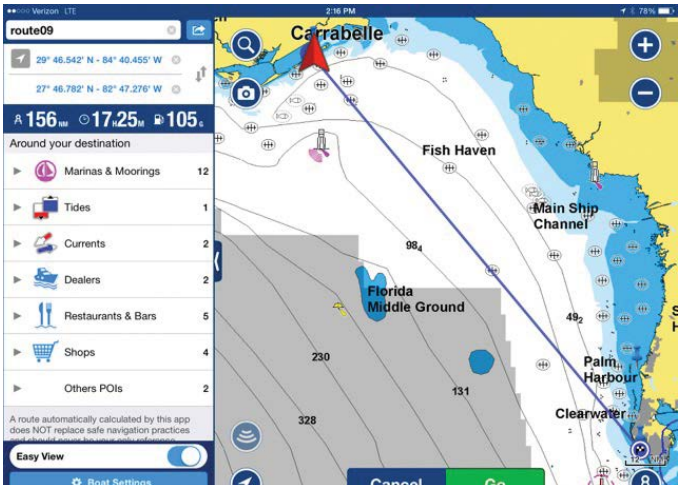
Top right: The course we took across the Gulf of Mexico

Right: Priscilla and Jeanne jam on the ukes at Fly Creek.









MOST-USED GEAR

We used the following items the most on our Loop trip:

- **iPad with Navionics app for route planning**—much easier than using the GPS at the helm
- **30-amp splitter** for getting shore power when 50-amp isn't available
- **Skipper Bob's cruising guides**—provide mile-by-mile detail; you can supplement with the Waterways Guide and Quimby's, but for us, Skipper Bob's is the bible.
- **Generator for anchoring out**—we don't have an inverter or a bank of house batteries to support an inverter, but the generator allows us to charge our devices such as iPhones and iPads using the 12-volt system.
- **Washing machine and dryer**—we do small loads on a regular basis and skip long hours in the laundromat. However, many friendships have been forged by boaters in laundromats.
- **Dinghy and motor**—it's fun to use to go exploring. When we start anchoring out for extended periods, it will become more utilitarian.
- **Electric teapot to boil water**—we boil a lot of water for coffee and tea and also have a 12-volt device for boiling water.
- **Three large teardrop fenders** protected the boat in all the locks.
- **Anchor chain snubber**—attached to the anchor, it takes the strain off the windlass at anchor.
- **Two cellular service plans**—we have phones on ATT and an iPad on Verizon. On the rivers, we often had connectivity with only one provider. This may not be much of an issue now that we're on the Gulf Coast.
- **Walking shoes**—a good pair allows you to get some exercise while in marinas, as few have gym facilities.



Port St. Joe Marina, our home for three weeks

Our Florida mentor Bill Valters commented, "What you will find on the east coast ICW is that the red cans are always on the 'land' side of the waterway. In other words, as you travel south on the west coast, they will be on our left, and as you travel north on the Atlantic side they will also be on our left."



allows you to cross in daylight. The slow crossing, 8 to 9 mph trawler speeds, takes all night. If you make a night crossing, don't plan on arriving in Tarpon Springs before 10 a.m. If you try to enter before then, you won't be able to see the thousands of crab pots in and around the channels with the sun in your eyes.

Running over a crab pot causes the rope to get caught in your propeller, which can stall your engine and bend your shaft. We have rope cutter blades on our shaft, which means the rope cutter should do its job if we run over rope. If it doesn't do its job, we'll find out.

At 10 p.m., we headed out into the Gulf with our buddy boat *Reflection* in the lead. The crew turned on its aft deck spotlights to make the boat easy to see. At 6 a.m. I hailed *Reflection* on the VHF radio to let them know we were diverting from their course and heading to John's Pass, which is south of their entrance to Clearwater. (I didn't want them to think I fell asleep at the wheel and headed off course.)

After entering the ICW, we went to a marina near Indian Rocks Beach, Florida, a lively town with lots of bars and restaurants, steel drum music filling the air, and festive Christmas lights displayed everywhere. We fueled up, taking on 348 gallons of diesel for $749. This was another time when it's good to have a partner on the boat.

The next morning, I put on my dive mask and went under the boat to check the props and shafts. Either we did not hit any crab pots or the line cutters did their job. Everything looked good.

Indian Rocks Beach Cape Coral, FL

The next day we headed south, traveled the 8 miles on the ICW to John's Pass, went out into the Gulf for 55 miles, and ended up in Venice, Florida. Along the way, we saw many more crab pots than we'd seen coming from Carrabelle.

Keeping track of the channel markers gets challenging when entering the ICW from the Gulf. Returning to the ICW from the Gulf the red markers are red, right, returning. But once you are in the ICW, the markers reverse, and the red is on the left.

Our Florida mentor Bill Valters commented, "What you will find on the east coast ICW is that the red cans are always on the 'land' side of the waterway. In other words, as you travel south on the west coast, they will be on our left, and as you travel north on the Atlantic side they will also be on our left."

We took the only available slip at the nice Fisherman's Wharf Marina in Venice, Florida. It wins the wasted paper award for having a seven-page transient slip agreement.

The next day, we got back on the Gulf headed to Tarpon Point Marina in Cape Coral near Fort Myers. We traveled 39 miles and entered the ICW at Boca Grande Pass, traveling 25 miles to Cape Coral. By traveling on the Gulf, we can enter the ICW south of the Boca Grande swing bridge. The bridge, which opens once per hour, has caused long delays for other



Changing Latitudes at Marco Island

Loopers by not opening on time.

Tarpon Point Marina is part of the Westin Cape Coral Resort at Marina Village. We found several bars and restaurants just a few steps away; our favorite, Pinchers, has 2 for 1 happy hour all day and amazing seafood.

A section of the ICW near Cape Coral is called the miserable mile because cross currents make it horrific for sailboats to maneuver in such a narrow channel. From green marker "1" to red "10," if you're outside the markers even a foot, you stand a good chance of running aground. Power boaters call it the miserable mile because it's a crowded no-wake zone due to numerous manatees.

Cape Coral >> Marco Island, FL

After departing Cape Coral, we cruised 50 miles to Marco Island on Sunday. The ICW does not extend all the way from Cape Coral to Marco Island, so we had to enter the Gulf at Wiggins Pass and reenter the ICW at Naples.

It was a bit more snotty (nautical term) than we anticipated. The winds increased and clocked to the east, giving us waves on the beam in the 2- to 3-foot range, a bit rolly. We were 10 miles offshore on a heading of 180, due south, and headed east-southeast toward shore. Two miles out, the seas flattened to about a foot, so we headed south again.

After 77 days, over 2,000 miles, a busted transmission and unfavorable weather windows, we made it to Marco Island, Florida, the place we had planned to be when we booked our flights to Boston eight months ago. Who says cruisers can't have a schedule? Priscilla and I flew to Boston to visit our daughter, Alison; her husband, Oscar; and our new grandson, Jackson. It's nice to get off the boat for extended periods of time and travel home.

When we got back to Marco Island, we took the dinghy to The Esplanade Shoppes, which has upscale shopping and dining and a long dinghy dock for day patrons.

Marco Island has an ordinance prohibiting the discharge of gray water from boats. The gray water is the water from the sinks and shower. Boaters have no way to comply because all gray water discharges over the side, and the city does not enforce the ordinance.

Marco Island >> Key West, FL

On Monday morning, Dec. 15, we shoved off at 8:30. We cruised at 25 mph, and the engines and transmissions performed perfectly. We had 1- to 2-foot waves off the port bow, but after two hours, the seas flattened to 1 foot or less. After dodging hundreds if not thousands of crab pot buoys, we arrived in Cayo Hueso (Key West) at 1:30 p.m. We had cruised 2,183 miles since departing Waukegan.

We stayed at the Galleon Marina, one of the few in Key West with floating docks. Amenities include a large swimming pool, hot tub, sandy beach, gym, fishing pier and tiki bar with live music. Be it ever so humble, the Galleon Marina was our home from Dec. 15 to Jan. 14.

In the next issue, we explore Key West, South Florida and the Bahamas.

John Simons is a member of Waukegan Sail & Power Squadron in District 20. He has his USCG Masters License 100 ton. In 2015–2016, John and his wife Priscilla cruised 6,500 miles on America's Great Loop aboard their 2002 Cruisers 4450 Motor Yacht Changing Latitudes. *John is a yacht broker with weberyachts.com. You'll find more of John Simons work on his blog at www.captainfatherjohn.com.*



Our dinghy



Getting a Head

What to do when your marine sanitation device craps out

By Steve Hodges

My wife, Susan, and I had sailed to Santa Cruz Island and stayed in Prisoners Harbor. Lovely weather, a lovely anchorage—what could be nicer than being on a sailboat in paradise? But the fun stops when the head does, and that signaled the beginning of the end for that trip.

THE JOKER CROAKED

This wasn't the first time the electric toilet had quit mid-trip. In 22 years, I've repaired *Frolic*'s toilet at several island anchorages, in the Sea of Cortez and even mid-Pacific.

Besides routine joker valve changes, the macerator blade had come loose, the undersized discharge lines had clogged, and finally, the plastic separator between the macerator and intake water chambers had disintegrated.

Familiarity breeds contempt, which was my reaction to the latest breakdown: Time to jettison this more than 25-year-old Jabsco system and move on to something with more regularity. But what?

THE DEEP DIVE

A visit to the internet led me to several online forums that dove into the murky depths of marine toiletry, and I came

away with a Eureka moment: bucket and chuck it! My flash of inspiration, with a simple waste management plan and proven effective offshore disposal, was quickly doused, however. I was reminded of several problems with that approach, including use in civilized anchorages or moorings and potential guest issues. So, what next?

THE REAL POOP ON MARINE TOILETS

Most of us are spoiled by the seemingly transparent simplicity of home toiletry. We're usually blissfully unaware of the complex infrastructure of these easy-to-use systems. Flush and forget. Not so in a boat, where *you* are the water and sanitation department with many options and possible outcomes, such as sinking if the installation doesn't take into account that much of the plumbing is below the waterline.

Instead of the simple wax ring that seals terra firma toilets, the typical boat head relies on gaskets, hoses, clamps, and seacocks to protect living areas from bad water. The marine toilet options, in kind-of increasing levels of complexity, include

- bucket-and-chuck-it
- port-a-potty
- composting
- hand pump
- electric, sea water (macerator)
- electric, fresh water (macerator and vacuum systems)

HEAD-TO-HEAD COMPARISONS

In spirited tête-à-têtes, Susan and I debated our options. We rejected port-a-potties for similar reasons as the bucket, including the risk of spillage and other logistical issues associated with disposal of stored materials.

Composting toilets are large. They also require separation of liquids and solids and frequent emptying of the liquid receptacle, a la port-a-potty. You also need to have certain types of peat mulch on hand and periodically dispose of the compost. So that option, while initially tempting (no plumbing needed), was nixed.

Since *Frolic* has a nearly new, well-vented, 13-gallon holding tank, with a fancy Y-valve to choose between deck or overboard pump out, why not use it? At this point in the evolving logic, I thought a tried-and-true hand-pump toilet was the way to go. I liked the idea of a manual system because I find them simple to use, and they eliminate another beef I have with electric (macerator) systems: noise. But Susan (who has never used a hand pump toilet) looked into it and discovered that one must turn valves this way or that in order to complete the flush cycle, which seemed way too complicated, especially for some visitors and grandkids.

Since our electric toilet had never had an electrical problem, and we're losing our hearing anyway, I couldn't argue. So, we chose electric, but would it use fresh or sea water to flush? The two are, among other things, distinguished by a propensity for odor.

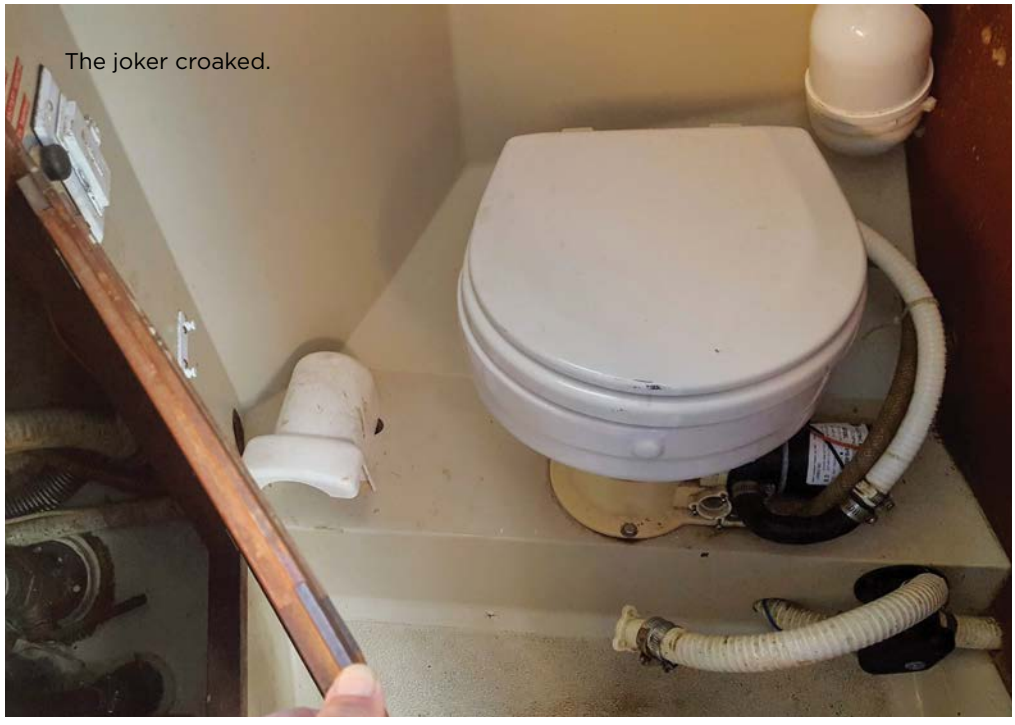
THE HEAD MISTRESS

By this point in my online research, I had found a voice of reason on these matters from a frequent contributor to the Cruiser's Forum. Peggie Hall, known as the Head Mistress, literally wrote the book on yacht odors, and I highly recommend "The New Get Rid of Boat Odors" if ever you desire to plumb these depths.

I consulted with Peggie, who's a wealth of practical information and fun to chat with. She's a proponent of freshwater flushes because old seawater left in the plumbing is a common source of odors; the abundant marine critters that live in seawater die and then stink.

Although tempted to go with fresh water, I was concerned about using more water; *Frolic* only has a low-capacity manual watermaker, and I have no plans to add an electric one. Peggie pointed out that I could get around the seawater aroma issue if I purged the toilet lines with fresh water before leaving the boat for long periods.

In fact, she said that if I teed off the head sink drain, I



The joker croaked.



The new head

could easily purge the system (by closing the seacock, filling the sink with fresh water and then flushing) and eliminate the intake anti-siphon loop. (Of course, an anti-siphon loop is still needed for the discharge; on *Frolic* it's mounted out of sight in the sink cabinet directly above the seacock.)

The loss of the intake loop simplified installation and eliminated the "admiralty" contention regarding my plan to mount the (in my lonely opinion, lovely bronze) anti-siphon loop on the teak bulkhead. We had a plan: an electric seawater toilet fed from the sink drain seacock.

INSTALLING THE HEAD

I chose the Raritan SeaEra toilet (with the integrated pump) because it's reputed to be reliable and relatively easy to maintain. I saved some money by combining Raritan's manual-to-electric conversion kit with our old porcelain bowl, as there was nothing wrong with the latter!

Electric macerator toilets offer the option of using 1-inch discharge hose, but don't do it! All our clog issues were associated with the 1-inch discharge plumbing, so I switched to 1½-inch hose and fittings throughout.

Since *Frolic*'s system can select, via a Y-valve, whether to pump to the holding tank or dump directly overboard, the change also meant a larger valve. I chose the Jabsco 45490-1000 and am impressed by its quality and relative ease of installation (the two outlet ports rotate).

The other vital tip Peggie offered was to use only high-grade sanitation hose, specifically Raritan Saniflex, which, after some price matching, I bought for $10 per foot (what a deal!). Peggie suggested using K-Y Jelly and heat to make it easier to install the hoses, and that was a great help in making the tight fits needed to prevent noisome leaks.

OTHER IMPORTANT TIPS

Only use unperforated 316 stainless steel hose clamps. Many of the perforated clamps in our 15-year-old plumbing were badly corroded; some broke apart as I removed them. The unperforated clamps, installed about the same time, were in much better condition, and none had failed. And, to ease installation, tighten the clamps with a socket wrench, rather than a screwdriver.

BOTTOM LINE

With only a few bumps, scrapes and back pains (boat yoga?) and costing less than a boat buck, the new system is in, and it works. Bonus: Although still noisy, the new toilet is quieter than the old one. So far, we are flushed with success.

Steve Hodges started sailing 50 years ago on the Chesapeake Bay and East Coast lakes. In 1977, he moved to Santa Barbara, California, where he sailed a 27-foot wooden boat. Since 1996, he has sailed on Frolic*, an Islander 36 built in 1974. After hundreds of trips to the Santa Barbara Channel Islands, the Sea of Cortez, San Francisco, and the Hawaiian islands (as part of the 2012 and 2014 Singlehanded Transpac races),* Frolic *and crew look forward to more time on the water, now with grandchildren. Steve and Susan have been members of Santa Barbara Sail & Power Squadron/13 since 1996.*

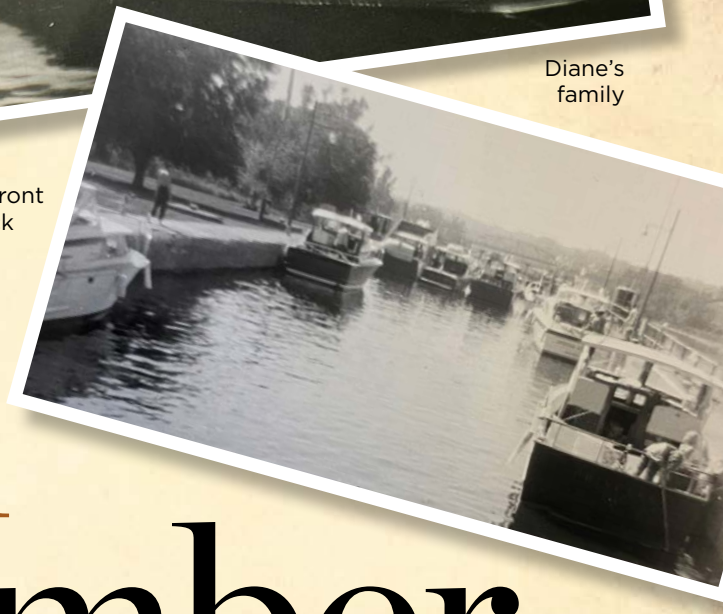
This article first appeared in the squadron newsletter, Signal Hoist.



Princess IV and two other boats from the convoy nestled in a Lake Champlain cove



Diane's family



Princess IV (front right) in a lock

A Storm to Remember

One boater recounts her family's terrifying ordeal on Lake Champlain

By Diane Ptak

One summer about 50 years ago, my family voyaged to Montreal for our annual cruise. We began our excursion at Waterford, New York, passed through the 11 locks of the 60-mile Champlain Canal, and entered Lake Champlain.

Dad, Mom and we five children—ages 3, 5, 10, 11 and 13—relaxed aboard *Princess IV*, our 24-foot twin-engine wooden-hull Trojan Sedan cabin cruiser (circa 1960). While leading a small convoy of boating enthusiasts north on the 120-mile-long lake, we encountered a horrific storm. Our boat took a beating. Luckily, we were riding with the current. The wind, waves and rain were another matter.

Having perfected his United States Power Squadrons Seamanship skills, Dad repeatedly examined our vessel instrument panel gauges—tachometer, engine hour meter, ammeter, engine temperature, oil pressure and the fuel gauge to the 50-gallon tank. Then he ran the bilge pump and Raytheon depth sounder. Despite knowing the lake well, he double-checked the compass and nautical charts to avoid crashing into rocks. He knew that when you hit rocks, the rocks win. He was also alert to unusual boat sounds.

Meanwhile, we children had donned our mandatory properly sized life preservers—a family policy. Dad figured we were all set. We had enough water in the 20-gallon water tank to carry us to the next marina, but he knew challenges could arise.

As we cruised north, a southeast wind picked up speed. Ominous storm clouds moved in, and the morning's gentle swells became substantial whitecaps. Dad shouted, "Batten down the hatches!" Mom hustled the four youngest children, all movable gear and belongings down the companionway into the lower deck cabin, where she secured the two-burner alcohol stove. The cabin door with a window panel banged shut and was locked tight. The oldest and second mate, I stayed on the back deck with Dad.

By afternoon the rough seas turned into monster waves—at least 7 feet high on the open lake. Yikes! Although stunned and scared, I tried to appear outwardly composed. The endless mountains of water rolling toward us were unfathomable. I imagined our vessel as a fishing trawler in the wind-whipped treacherous Bering Sea off the coast of Alaska. Each roller brought a wide, towering wall of water.

Lying in the port V-berth, my youngest sibling became restless as he lamented his exclusion. Dad cried out, "Hold on!" The curtains shifted. Mom swayed back and forth. An oversized tin of cookies went flying, spewing cookies onto the convertible laminate table, the carpeted floor and into the galley sink. The older siblings clung to each other and their cushioned dinette bench seats as objects slid about the cabin.

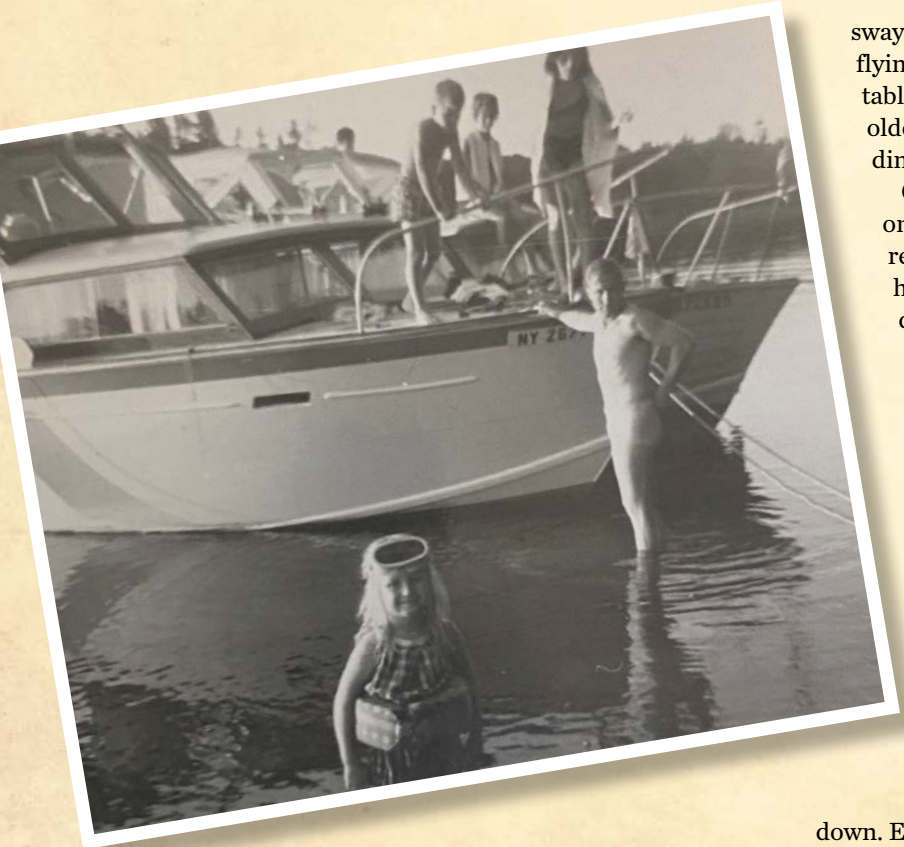


Dock and Coal Co. Marina in Plattsburgh

On the back deck, vigilance became our number one priority. We watched the wave patterns and size relative to the dimensions of the boat. From the high helmsman's perch, awareness of the wind speed and direction, coupled with knowledge about the boat's power, was critical. I drove the boat when Dad needed a break. Through the water-drenched front window, giant waves loomed large and foreboding, cresting in front of the bow. Water cascaded over the wide teak foredeck. Heavy spray coated the side windows, back deck, and main deck stern bench cushions. I pointed the bow slightly angled with each wave and ran at a speed that elevated the bow just enough so that it slid over the waves to minimize pounding and maintain upright control. The boat rose like Champ, the fabled Lake Champlain monster.

I pulled back on the throttle and briefly rode the wave's back. Then the boat slid rapidly down into the trough and hobby-horsed up and down. Exhausting and nerve-racking, this rough motion went on for several hours.

Back behind the wheel, Dad used bursts of power to maintain the boat's optimum position, giving it more power



Princess IV pulled up to the shore, with Diane's younger sister, Marie, in foreground



By afternoon the rough seas turned into monster waves—at least 7 feet high on the open lake. Yikes! Although stunned and scared, I tried to appear outwardly composed. The endless mountains of water rolling toward us were unfathomable.

as we ascended. Battling the storm took all our concentration. I maintained a sharp lookout in case random floating logs should cross our path.

Dad kept in radio communication with the other boats, though he had a tough time hearing with the heavy static and roaring wind and waves.

After some time, a barge, sure and steady, passed us by. As captain of the lead vessel, Dad shifted to starboard and dropped into its track, following the relatively calm waters in its wake.

As the Plattsburgh City Marina neared, Dad surveyed the waves, which allowed him to time and execute his turn safely and flawlessly. Finding the perfect moment, he shifted toward the port when he saw either a group of smaller waves or a long trough. The boat veered northwest toward Cumberland Bay, also known as Plattsburgh Bay, before the next wave. Changing direction is dangerous as it presents the beam, the widest and most vulnerable area of the boat, during rough water. Waves crashed over the nearly 2-meter-tall Plattsburgh breakwater. Dad guided the boat safely into the bay, where choppy water awaited. We relaxed a bit once we left the surging lake behind. Dad sounded our electronic trumpet boat horn to signal our arrival. Slowing to a crawl, we finally arrived at our destination.

Under darkening skies and pelting rain, three men with outstretched arms came into view on the starboard landing dock. Their warm welcome was a prayer answered. I cautiously made my way along the rain-slicked gunwale and dropped our silvery white boat fenders into place. Drained by our ordeal, we were grateful that the men helped with our landing and secured the mooring lines under Dad's direction. Then, with noticeable sea legs, Dad hobbled over to meet the other vessels and assist with their boats. At the first vessel carrying our Montreal friends, Dad jokingly asked, "Ready for ice cream?"

Everyone was safe, and we were glad to reach the security of land. Through this baptism by fire, we learned that you need experience, confidence and conservative boat handling to outwit the sea.

Without a doubt, my father's quick thinking and his United States Power Squadrons training in seamanship and navigation carried our little cruiser safely over the lake and into port in that storm.

Diane Ptak grew up in the Capital District of New York state. From six months of age, she spent most of her summers on the water with her family. When she was a teenager, her father taught her the nuances of navigational safety and to water ski. Currently, she enjoys kayaking and paddle boarding. She gives special thanks to the members of the Writer's Bloc of the East Greenbush Community Library—Eric, Matthew, and Rachel Ptak; Marie Capozzelli, William Newton; and Linda Dunn—for their insightful editing, support and seafaring contributions.



Diane at Fort Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain

Waypoints

SPOTLIGHT ON SQUADRONS AND DISTRICTS

NEWS AND UPDATES

HQ hours of operation

Effective October 5, national headquarters hours of operation change to **8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday.** When calling HQ at 888-367-8777, please leave a message with your name, phone number and the reason for your call. Someone will return your call as soon as possible. When screening calls, please be aware that headquarters calls originate from a 919 area code.

DAN Boater benefits

DAN Boater benefits must be paid by credit card only. Please do not send checks for payment of your DAN Boater member benefits.



Members of America's Boating Club of the Crystal Coast load debris on the LCM at Shackleford Banks.





Left: Debris piles ready for pickup

Right: Members aboard the LCM loaded with debris heading back to Harkers Island

Photos by David Aitken

Cleanup nets tons of trash

America's Boating Club of the Crystal Coast partnered with Cape Lookout National Seashore in North Carolina to clean up and remove debris left by hurricanes Florence and Dorian.

The National Park Service at Cape Lookout has no formal cleanup program. However, the club wanted to help, so it executed a volunteer service activity agreement with the park service and adopted a large area around Gehrman's Pond Trail (Wade Shore area) of Shackelford Banks. Only accessible by boat, the barrier island is home to a herd of wild horses. Over time, club members made several trips to the island in their boats and collected, bagged and removed trash. In October 2019 they collected big items and large wood debris that they piled up near the beach for later pickup.

On March 4, nine club members, including Commander David Gerhart and Executive Officer David Aitken, met at park headquarters on Harkers Island to load an all-terrain vehicle and containers on a Landing Craft Medium under the direction of Dr. Sue Stuska of the park service. The volunteers then took the LCM to Shackleford Banks. After loading it with the collected debris, they returned to park headquarters and unloaded it. Commander Gerhart estimates that they removed up to 5 tons of trash. He encourages boaters to join the cleanup effort by picking up debris whenever they visit the national seashore. *–J.B. Bagby*

This article first appeared in the squadron newsletter, Cannon Soundings.



JEFF SHORT

Taking care

In honor of the 50th Earth Day, Lorrie Short of Annapolis Sail & Power Squadron/5 picks up debris at a cleanup of Severn Run, the headwaters of the Severn River.

Signs educate public about boating safety

North Olympic Sail & Power Squadron/16 members started volunteering at John Wayne Marina in Sequim, Washington, in 2008. Several members use the marina's boat ramp or rent slips and wanted to help keep the grounds looking good by helping with cleanups, including brush and weed removal and debris removal from parking areas. The squadron also installed three professionally designed "Adopt a Marina" signs.

Last year, the squadron approached the marina about installing additional signs providing boating safety, regulatory and navigation information. In attached flyer boxes, the signs would also provide information on squadron boating safety courses, on-the-water training, seminars and vessel safety exams as well as information on boat accident reporting requirements.

After the signs were approved, members contacted the Washington State Parks Department for regulatory reporting information, and BoatUS for copyright authorization to use the artwork for the nautical rules of the road sign and the coastal aids to navigation sign. Members also contacted the Port of Port Angeles and the Clallam County Sheriff's Office Marine Division for possible grant funding to assist in financing fabrication of the signs. After layout design approval by the squadron executive committee, which also approved $550 to pay for the final design, the three aluminum signs were made and installed in January 2020.

"These colorful signs fit well at the marina and serve as valuable information to the many boaters that utilize the marina," said John Wayne Marina harbormaster Ron Amundson.

Colleen McAleer, Port of Port Angeles commissioner, added, "It's terrific when our nonprofits and our public entities work together."

We thank all the organizations involved in this project, with special thanks to the Port of Port Angeles for providing grant money to fabricate the signs. *–Ray Thomas*

This article first appeared in the squadron newsletter, Straitlines.



Ray Thomas, North Olympic Sail & Power Squadron/16, with harbormaster Ron Amundson



The coastal aids to navigation sign



District 29 members and guests tour Tiara Yachts.

Front row: Fred Zibbel, Robin Abel, Michelle Abel, Rickie Waugh, Loriann Czerniejewski and Frank Czerniejewski

Back row: Ruth Wilcox, Jason Snook, Phil Osborne, Larry Cole, Mary Strohmeier, Dan Strohmeier, Don Leutz, Karen Tesorero, Mike Milks, Jo Ann Scott, Keith Rooks, Lucia Rooks, Ann Zibbel, Jan Leutz and Chris Hoover

Boat's eye view

In early March, members of District 29 toured the Tiara Yachts plant in Holland, Michigan, a vast facility with over a million square feet under roof. Observing the boat building process from the ground up was enlightening. While visiting the Advanced Design Group, attendees viewed future design prototypes. Everyone enjoyed the very informative presentation.

–Jan Leutz

Rolling with the changes

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, Patty Pezely was sworn in as commander of America's Boating Club Valley Forge in a virtual teleconference change of watch. At least 16 members participated, and Bill McManimen officiated.



JOE PEZELY



Alex Ramsey takes care while clipping the hedges.



Charlotte Ramsey stays safe while pruning.

Safe at home

Wear Your Life Jacket to Work Day took on a new meaning while social distancing in the coronavirus pandemic. Ouachita Sail & Power Squadron/21 members Alex Ramsey and Charlotte Ramsey of West Monroe, Louisiana, donned their life jackets to work at home during National Safe Boating Week.

Staying on course

Golden Corner Lakes Sail & Power Squadron/26 began teaching America's Boating Course to 26 students on Feb. 25. The last class was scheduled for March 17 and the exam for March 24. When COVID-19 began spreading, the squadron canceled the last class but was determined to complete the course instruction and exam.

Instructors presented the last lesson using GoToMeeting on March 26. The next hurdle was giving the exam. A local grocery store had gone out of business, so the squadron decided to take advantage of the empty parking lot.

On June 2, students drove to the parking lot where the squadron had set up a table. After they took the exam in their cars, members graded the exams and gave out certificates. All 17 students passed the exam with flying colors. The youngest student, who was 12, scored a 96.

Completing delivery of America's Boating Course to students during the pandemic was a challenge, but we rose to the occasion because we're America's Boating Club.

–Ron Osburn



CAROL CALHOUN

Ron Osburn of Golden Corner Lakes Sail & Power Squadron/26 in the store parking lot on exam day.



CATHY LEAVITT

Taking a noon sight are Lisa Guenthert, instructor Chris Leavitt, Venkata Madireddy and Wolf Guenthert.



Taking a noon sight are Lisa Guenthert, Venkata Madireddy, instructor Chris Leavitt and Wolf Guenthert.

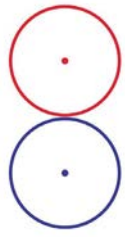


Figure X12

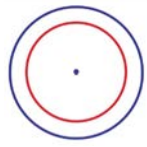


Figure R32

Workshop widens horizons

America's Boating Club Houston advertised a Celestial Navigation artificial horizon workshop through the REI website. Eight folks called about it, and two signed up on our club webpage and showed up. Three club members, who heard about it in their Piloting class, and my wife, Cathy, also showed up, giving us six workshop participants.

We used inexpensive plastic Davis Mark 3 sextants; molasses in a baking pan served as the artificial horizon. Both were accurate enough for students to practice on, and everyone had a good time during the workshop.

I picked the noon sight because the math is simple. Latitude = (90 – HS) ± Dec. HS comes from the sextant and Dec is looked up in an almanac. People who never went to school used this technique to cross the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

Mathematically it works, but our solutions were off, including mine, by 20 to 25 miles. After digging into the mystery, here's what I found.

Using an artificial horizon, we have a choice of two views. In one, you superimpose the mirror sun on top of the sun in the artificial horizon. This is called co-incident (Figure R32) and requires minimal adjustment. In the second, you bring the mirror sun to touch the top, just as it would touch the natural horizon (Figure X12). The difference between the two approaches is the number of corrections applied to the observation.

These corrections take what you read off the sextant and turn it into an accurate value. For the math folks: HS = Ho ± a bunch of well-known values. In our Marine Navigation course, you'll be introduced to all of them.

For what it's worth, the single correction needed for the superimposed (R32) view is found in the front of the almanac and is valid forever. The second (X12) view needs several corrections but works well using USPS Celestial Tools (provided free with membership). We used the R32 approach, but used Celestial Tools for the calculations, which resulted in the larger than expected error. Mystery solved. *–Chris Leavitt*

This article first appeared in the squadron newsletter, Bay Neigh.



DEBRA ALLEN

"Sunset and evening star
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no
moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea ..."

—Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Dianne Adams
Jacksonville (FL) Squadron/23
3 mm

James A. Arancio, P
Peconic Bay (NY) Squadron/3
Life Member, 13 mm

P/D/C Robert R. Aurner II, AP
Santa Clara (CA) Squadron/25
Senior Member, 13 mm

P/C Dudley L. Bauerlein, SN
Lakeland (FL) Squadron/22
Life Member, 34 mm

Robert J. Belliveau, SN
Marco Island (FL) Squadron/22
Life Member, 26 mm

P/C Ray J. Buellesbach, SN
Skokie Valley (IL) Squadron/20
Life Member, 45 mm

Kendra E. Bulla, P
Greensboro (NC) Squadron/27
Life Member, 32 mm

Lt J.C. "Ronnie" Campbell, P
Charlotte (NC) Squadron/27
Senior Member, 11 mm

Robert K. Cran, P
Fort Myers (FL) Squadron/22
Senior Member, 6 mm

P/Lt/C Janet Dean, AP
Pompano Beach (FL) Squadron/8
Life Member, 26 mm

P/D/C Wanderley "Van" Diehl, SN
San Luis Rey (CA) Squadron/28
Senior Member, 19 mm

P/C Joseph Edward Dupuy, S
Ouachita (LA) Squadron/21
Senior Member, 13 mm

P/C Frederic "Fred" Eddowes, AP
Richmond (VA) Squadron/5
Senior Member, 15 mm

D. Marian Franck, SN
Miles River (MD) Squadron/5

Harry G. Garrison Jr., AP
Charlotte (NC) Squadron/27
Senior Member, 13 mm

P/C Ed Z. Hanna, JN
St. Petersburg (FL) Squadron/22
Senior Member, 17 mm

Russell L. Hawkins Jr., SN
Austin (TX) Squadron/21
Life Member, 37 mm

P/C Lawrence Katz, JN
Sarasota (FL) Squadron/22
Life Member, 26 mm

Elizabeth "Betty" G. Kennedy, S
Main Line (PA) Squadron/5
Senior Member, 6 mm

Barbara A. Kirk
Hilton Head (SC) Squadron/26
2 mm

P/D/Lt/C John "Ed" E. Knapp, SN
Wawenock (ME) Squadron/19
Senior Member, 15 mm

P/C Henry "Hank" R. Krauss, SN
Vero Beach (FL) Squadron/8
Life Member, 47 mm

P/Lt/C Natalie Laffere, JN
Galveston Bay (TX) Squadron/21
Life Member, 26 mm

Myrna Levine
Sarasota (FL) Squadron/22
Senior Member, 9 mm

P/R/C Kenneth D. Link, SN
Fort Macon (NC) Squadron/27
Life Member, 34 mm

P/C David W. Mahey, P
Ann Arbor (MI) Squadron/9
Senior Member, 17 mm

P/D/C Kenneth O. Manning, AP
Galveston Bay (TX) Squadron/21
Senior Member, 12 mm

P/C/C Richard W. Miner, SN
Birmingham (MI) Squadron/9
Emeritus Member, 55 mm

Lt Frank Anthony Mula, AP
Crystal River (FL) Squadron/22
Senior Member, 12 mm

P/D/C Charles J. Newfield, JN
Hew Haven (CT) Squadron/1
Emeritus Member, 50 mm

P/D/C Lawrence M. Novak, SN
North Coast Ohio Squadron/7
Life Member, 34 mm

Gloria Parker, AP
Toledo (OH) Squadron/29
Senior Member, 22 mm

Edgar M. Price, P
Sebastian Inlet (FL) Squadron/8
Senior Member, 13 mm

Ted Rink, N
Vermilion (OH) Squadron/7
Senior Member, 16 mm

P/Lt/C Harry Sakjas Sr., SN
Pamlico (NC) Squadron/27
Life Member, 29 mm

P/C Fred J. Schilke, AP
Manchester (CT) Squadron/1
Life Member, 47 mm

P/C C. Robert "Bob" Snider, SN
Ann Arbor (MI) Squadron/9
Life Member, 34 mm

Ronald Wallace, P
Sanibel Captiva (FL) Squadron/22
Senior Member, 6 mm

P/C William "Bill" F. Ward, SN
Toledo (OH) Squadron/29
Senior Member, 21 mm

Paul L. Weller, AP
Tybee Light (GA) Squadron/26
Senior Member, 13 mm

P/C Lois M. Whitmore, SN
Lansing (MI) Squadron/9
Life Member, 29 mm

MERIT MARK AWARDS

Senior Member, 5 merit marks

Life Member, 25 merit marks

Emeritus Member, 50 merit marks

HOW TO SUBMIT

Family, squadron commanders or other authorized representatives may submit reports of USPS members who have crossed the bar at theensign.org/submit/last-horizon. Obituaries may be sent to ensign@hq.usps.org for publication on our website.

IN MEMORY

Past Chief Commander Richard W. Miner 1929–2020



Past Chief Commander Richard W. Miner died on Aug. 27, 2020. Born on Feb. 18, 1929, in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, Dick is survived by Nancy, his wife of 70 years; his daughter, Pam Miner (Ted Rogowski); sons Randy and Rick; five grandchildren; and four great grandchildren.

Dick graduated from Bloomfield Hills High School and went to the University of Colorado in 1948, where he met Nancy. They were married during his sophomore year. After graduation, Dick and his family returned to Michigan, where he managed the family grocery store. In 1955, he sold the store and opened Miner's, a business specializing in fine foods, liquor and gifts. Nancy operated a clothing bazaar nearby.

Dick bought his first boat, a 26-foot Owens, in 1960 and headed to Lake Huron. On that trip, he encountered fog and high wind and hit the rocks at Kettle Point. He kept the bent propeller as a reminder. Back home, he took a United States Power Squadrons boating course and joined Mount Clemens Power Squadron.

A founding member of Birmingham Power Squadron, Dick wrote an article for the first edition of Bilge Chatter, the squadron newsletter, and never wavered in his dedication to the squadron and our national organization. He continued his education and earned the grade of Senior Navigator in 1981.

Dick served on the squadron bridge, becoming commander in 1966. Then he moved up the District 9 bridge and became commander in 1973. After serving on the national bridge, Dick became our 40th Chief Commander in 1986.

His service continued for the rest of his life. During the 61 years he belonged to United States Power Squadrons, he earned 55 merit marks, becoming an Emeritus Member, the true pinnacle of achievement in our organization.

Throughout his life, he was a friend and a mentor to those of us privileged to have known and worked with him. We wish him fair winds and following seas.

We will miss him. *–Thomas H. Geggie*

ACCESSORIES

GETTING HARD FOR YOU OR GUESTS TO GET ON OR OFF YOUR BOAT?
WE CAN HELP!
"New adjustable gangplank system now available."
3 models for dock or boat mounting
SEE OUR VIDEO AT SAFASHOR.COM
Contact us at info@safashor.com
or call today 772-828-2696
USPS MEMBERS GET 20% DISCOUNT

INSURANCE

ATTENTION USPS MEMBERS Call 800-553-7661 for USPS Boat Insurance quotations. Lawrence Fox Agency, Massapequa, N.Y. Established 1959. Designated Agent USPS. Agent – GEICO Marine Insurance. www.boatinsurancestore.com

CONNECTICUT MEMBERS Yacht and small boat insurance with USPS or other marine companies. Please call Ross Hatfield at 203-256-5660. Keep your life jackets within reach.

MARINE SURVEYOR Captain John Reichardt Accredited Marine Surveyor, SAMS, AMS, ABYC-standards certified. Covering all of New England. Member ABYC, SAMS, USPS; 508-813-4053 captnjohn1@comcast.net captainjohnmarinesurveyors.com

CLASSIFIED RATES
$1 per word, $25 minimum. Artwork is $25 per column inch. Submit payment and materials to The Ensign, PO Box 31664, Raleigh, NC 27622 or email tibbittst@hq.usps.org.
Winter deadline: Nov. 1, 2020

Like us on Facebook!



Follow America's Boating Club at facebook.com/uspowersquadrons

MISCELLANEOUS







NAME TAG SUPPLIER Lake Norman Awards and Engraving offers USPS name tags in "ABC," "Branded" and "Traditional" styles. Call Dan Splawn for a current price list at 704-664-4662 or email him at LNAwards@msn.com



WANTED



NAVIGATION RALLY??? An interesting navigational challenge plus an enjoyable social activity. Discover the fun in a cruiser navigation rally. www.navrally.org

GOING DIGITAL Starting with the Fall 2020 issue, The Ensign magazine is now completely digital. You can find archives at theensign.org/archive.



COMPASS
Set a course for better boating — subscribe today!

Bitter End

A LIGHTER LOOK AT THE BOATING LIFE

Fate of the *Western Flyer*



In 1940, author John Steinbeck and marine biologist Ed "Doc" Ricketts chartered the *Western Flyer*, owned by Frank and Tony Berry, to take a research expedition from Monterey, California, to the Sea of Cortez. Built in 1937 at the Western Boat Building Company owned by Martin Petrich in Tacoma, Washington, the 77-foot boat was a sardine fisher. That six-week voyage led Steinbeck and Ricketts to write the best-seller, "Sea of Cortez: A Leisurely Journal of Travel and Research."

The Monterey sardine fishery collapsed in 1946–1947. In 1952, with a new owner, the *Western Flyer* fished perch, petrale sole, black cod and Pacific cod in Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia waters. By the late 1960s, overfishing caused the near collapse of fishing grounds. The *Western Flyer's* owner converted it to a crab fisher, renamed it *Gemini* and fished in the Aleutian Islands. In 1970, again under a new owner, *Gemini* became a salmon tender, delivering salmon bought at sea to canneries. After running aground in Alaska, *Gemini* bounced from owner to owner.

"Four hoarse blasts of a ship's whistle still raise the hair on my neck and set my feet to tapping."
–John Steinbeck

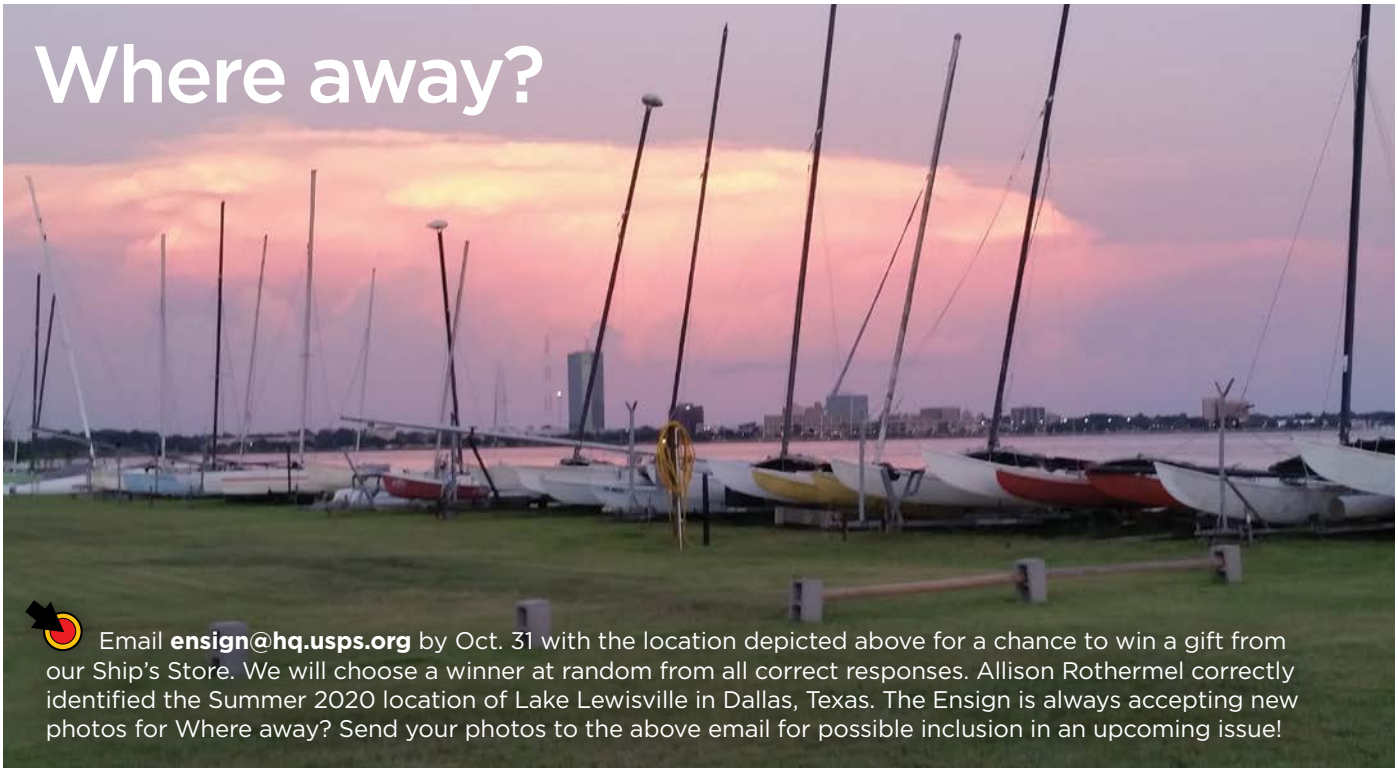
In 1985, Ole Knudson bought the deteriorating boat, intending to restore it. Bob Enea, Tony Berry's nephew, located the *Western Flyer* through its call sign, WB4044. By the time Bob persuaded Ole to sell the boat, it was used as a channel marker and loran beacon. Bob's finances fell through, however. Gerry Kehoe bought the boat in 2011 to restore it for a Salinas, California, hotel complex. Moored under the Twin Bridges on the Swinomish Channel near Anacortes, Washington, the boat sank twice before it was towed to a Port Townsend dry dock.

The boat's luck changed in 2015 when John Gregg, a fan of Steinbeck and Ricketts, bought the *Western Flyer*. He established the *Western Flyer* Foundation to restore the boat as a research vessel for schoolchildren. The *Western Flyer* will have a state-of-the-art electrical propulsion system, a marine biology lab and a submersible. The boat may be viewed weekdays at the Port Townsend Shipwrights Co-Op. To learn more or donate online, visit westernflyer.org.
–Michael Guelker-Cone

This article first appeared in Bell Signals, the newsletter of Bellingham Sail & Power Squadron/16.

THE MARTHA HEASLEY COX CENTER FOR STEINBECK STUDIES, SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY

Where away?



Email **ensign@hq.usps.org** by Oct. 31 with the location depicted above for a chance to win a gift from our Ship's Store. We will choose a winner at random from all correct responses. Allison Rothermel correctly identified the Summer 2020 location of Lake Lewisville in Dallas, Texas. The Ensign is always accepting new photos for Where away? Send your photos to the above email for possible inclusion in an upcoming issue!

NANCY ROGERS

TRANSOM TALES

When my wife, Sandy, and I bought our Ranger Tug 25, we wanted to rename it to fit us. I'm interested in boating and maritime history; Sandy has a large teddy bear collection. We had artist Linda Martin, a fellow District 16 member, create the graphic for *Nauti-Bear*. *–Craig Brown*



"The sea, the great unifier, is man's only hope. Now, as never before, the old phrase has a literal meaning: We are all in the same boat."

–Jacques Yves Cousteau



TRANSOM TALES

During an undergraduate chemistry research project, I synthesized hydrazones, so the group nicknamed me "Hydrazone Harry." This morphed into "Zone," my college fraternity nickname. It later inspired my CB radio handle and the name of my first boat. I continued the tradition with my second, *Twilight Zone II*. *–Steve Gatton*

CONTACT US

HEADQUARTERS
1504 Blue Ridge Road
Raleigh, NC 27607

Call 888-367-8777
Fax 888-304-0813
contactme@hq.usps.org
M–Th 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m. ET

General information
contactme@hq.usps.org
ext. 230

Help desk
help@usps.org

DEPARTMENTS

Accounting
jeffersonk@hq.usps.org
ext. 221

Education
millsmp@hq.usps.org
ext. 222

Grants
grants@hq.usps.org
ext. 213

Marketing
brownt@hq.usps.org
ext. 228

Membership
Districts 1–8, 27–34, 50
hollowayd@hq.usps.org
ext. 229

Membership
Districts 9–26
stevensl@hq.usps.org
ext. 219

Publications
news@hq.usps.org
ext. 226

Shipping
ruizc@hq.usps.org
ext. 214

MISCELLANEOUS

Merit Marks
padrol@hq.usps.org
ext. 212

Vessel Safety Checks
padrol@hq.usps.org
ext. 212

Educational Fund
PO Box 30423
Raleigh, NC 27622
awentworth@aol.com

GO ONLINE

America's Boating Club
americasboatingclub.org

USPS member website
usps.org

USPS Ship's Store
www.shopusps.org

The Ensign
theensign.org

America's Boating Compass
boatingcompass.org

USPS Member News
bit.ly/USPSMemNews

Change your address
addresschanges@hq.usps.org

Renew dues & contribute
usps.org/dues

Get member benefits
bit.ly/ABCbenefits

National Directory
bit.ly/USPSdirectory

Print your merit mark
bit.ly/printMM

USPS Operations Manual
bit.ly/USPSOpsMan

Submit VSC reports
bit.ly/VSCreport

USPS Endowment Fund Inc.
uspsendowment.fund

Boat Live 365
boatlive365.org

America's Boating Channel
americasboatingchannel.com



USPS Boat Insurance Program

Competitive Rates. Great Coverage. 24-Hour/365 Day Claims Service.

Savings Exclusively for USPS Members



Capitalize On Your USPS Membership

Enjoy superior service, reliability and coverage **EXCLUSIVELY** for dues-paying USPS members

- Premium credits available for USPS safety courses and vessel safety check!
- Small claims forgiveness
- 100% Hurricane Haul Out reimbursement up to $1,000
- 12 month navigation – no restrictions for winter layup
- 30-year partners with USPS

Take a minute of your time and get a quote by calling us at **1-800-763-8777** or get a quick quote online at **www.uspsboatinsurance.com**

*Coverage and discounts may not be available in all states and are subject to carrier restrictions.