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

the Ensign®

Winter 2024



Cold water boating

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TRANSITING NEW YORK'S CHAMPLAIN CANAL
Hudson River offers scenic views

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OCTOGENARIAN ODYSSEY
Down East Circle Route Cruise, Part VII: Nova Scotia to Maine

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BLOCK ISLAND MEMORIES
Boater recalls warmer times on Long Island Sound

Ship's Store

JUST IN: NEW MERCH!

Promote America's Boating Club with our fresh swag! From polo shirts to travel mugs, new items are added to our online shop regularly. Check out the **See What's New** page for more.

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2/



3/



4/



1/ Men's Short Sleeve T-Shirt
M–XXXXL
$25–$35

2/ Ladies' V-Neck T-Shirt
S–XXL
$27-$30

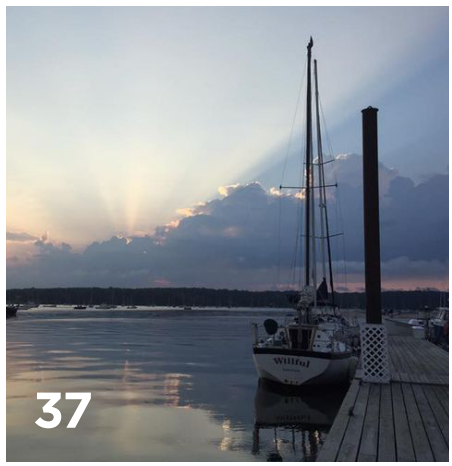
3/ Men's White Polo
S–XXXL
$40-$46

4/ Unisex UV Daybreak Shirt
S–XXXXL
$53–$62

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Craig D. Fraser
Chief Commander

Our mission continues

Keeping our focus on the future

BY CRAIG D. FRASER

As we start a new year, we must keep our focus on the future. Your board of directors and national committees have been working hard to make the future of our organization easier to navigate.

Here are some of the most notable advancements we've made to elevate us into the future:

District and club simplification: In 2022, new district and club bylaws were approved to simplify our organizational structure by requiring only a commander, educational officer and one individual as both secretary and treasurer. This simplification gives districts and clubs more latitude to re-energize their focus and future.

iMIS membership management system: iMIS is a cloud-based membership management system. Members will be able to log in to the new iMIS site and manage their member records, pay dues, set up auto pay, purchase Ship's Store merchandise, donate, join interest groups, engage with committees, update their email preferences and access their personal inbox. Districts and clubs will have access to customizable, branded microsite templates that ensure consistency across the organization. They can use the microsites to email members, create events and promote them to a larger audience via an organization-wide event calendar.

Social media strategic plan: The Social Media Team created a social media strategy and policy as well as a handbook to guide social media implementation at the national and local levels. Available online, these documents should be used to drive our social media initiative.

Communications policy: The Communications Department has put together a team of members and staff to create a communications policy, communications strategy and communications plan for United States Power Squadrons, America's Boating Club.

Cooperative Advertising Program: This fantastic program has been established to help support the advertising and public relations activities of clubs as they advertise and promote the image of their local club; United States Power Squadrons, Americas Boating Club; and local activities, courses, seminars and guides. Clubs may receive 50% reimbursement for their actual advertising and promotion dollars up to a maximum of $300 per squadron per fiscal year.

Kansas City Governing Board livestream: Livestreaming allows us to bring national meetings right to your home, making it easy for our members to learn what is happening throughout the organization. You can watch a recording of the 2023 Governing Board Meeting here. Livestreaming also allows us to support electronic voting, which started with the 2023 Annual and Governing Board meetings. Electronic voting gives clubs and districts a voice in the national organization's direction.

Marketing and Membership Plan: The Ad Hoc Committee on Reorganization developed a Marketing and Membership Plan to provide a comprehensive system for marketing, member recruitment and membership retention. The plan recognizes that membership is job one, and we must all live up to this promise! The plan details a proposal to significantly reorganize, integrate and improve our marketing, recruiting and retention. This project will be used to grow membership, provide brand recognition and move our organization into the future.

The efforts of United States Power Squadrons, America's Boating Club, continue with all national committees working with the board of directors to streamline and strengthen the organization. Through all this, we must continue to move forward. My thanks to our entire membership for all you do to make our organization great!

Stay safe and stay positive—our mission continues! ❖

Craig Fraser has been Chief Commander since February 2022. He and Liana Mihalca are members of Akron Sail & Power Squadron/7. While growing up, Craig spent his summers at his family home on Middle Bass Island in the Western Basin of Lake Erie. He enjoyed this time, which fueled his passion for boating. Today, he still spends his summers boating in the Western Basin of Lake Erie together with Liana, the children, and grandsons Xavier and Luca on their Jet Skis, their 245 Sea Ray Sundancer, Night Crew, *and 370 Sea Ray Sundancer,* Antares.

Clubs may receive 50% reimbursement for their actual advertising and promotion dollars up to a maximum of $300 per squadron per fiscal year.

Currents



2024

Feb 6–11
Annual Meeting
Orlando, Fla.

May 18–24
National Safe Boating Week

Jun 19–24
BOD Meeting
Raleigh, N.C.

Sep 22–29
Governing Board Meeting
Pittsburgh

Nov 13–17
BOD Meeting
Raleigh, N.C.



The Woodlands College Park High School

Schooling Texas youth in boating safety

In July 2023, outdoor educator Caprice Stephens, a teacher at The Woodlands College Park High School in the Conroe (Texas) Independent School District, reached out to America's Boating Club Houston. Her curriculum includes boater education certification, and she asked if we could teach the boating course to her students, allowing them to earn Texas boater education certificates.

Although teaching boater education to 111 high school students wasn't on our bingo card for 2023, we agreed and started planning. Would the course fit into a high school schedule? Could our instructors deal with that concentration of young people? We would soon find out.

We asked seven retired boating course instructors if they wanted to teach. All volunteered as well as another instructor who works at a college across the street from the high school.

After reviewing the course, we split it into manageable 45-minute chunks. Then other issues surfaced: How would we register the youth for the class? How would we handle the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department fee? How many students would need scholarships? Over the course of a week, everything fell into place, and we were ready to teach. Or so we thought.

On the first day of our two-week educational adventure, things went well. Although two instructors were late for the first period class and we had technical issues getting the PowerPoint to load, the plan was good; we had scheduled only about 35 slides for the first day. The class contains about 330 slides and nine short videos—an average of 44 slides per day. Interestingly, each day's 44 slides covered one topic—almost as if the course developers had planned the course for a high school program. In Texas, roughly 6,000 youth take the boater education class each year, most as part of a Future Farmers of America program. Maybe the developers did organize the material for a 55-minute class period?

The first week went smoothly until Friday. Since Stephens had to drive the girls' track team to a meet, we had a substitute teacher who forgot to come and get us in the security zone. First period always gets slammed. Although I can't speak for any other instructors, I was grateful for the weekend.

On Monday, we were in a new room. Our IT issues resurfaced but were soon corrected. In the end, we finished teaching on Wednesday and scheduled the test for Thursday. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department went over and above to help us out. We had several ESL students, so TPWD rushed us Spanish-language books and tests and developed a test grading sheet. It's great to work with people who have the same goals and objectives.

Once the 111 tests were graded and the results submitted to TPWD, we could step back and evaluate our efforts. We learned a lot, mostly that we did things right. The actual teaching part worked well for each instructor, and the material organization worked for the most part; sometimes the material exceeded the time frame, usually due to external issues. The staffing level was OK; no one got burned out. We learned that we needed to pay more attention to non-English speakers. While Spanish we could manage, Ukrainian and Chinese proved to be an issue.

Looking at the numbers, we had 111 students. Eighty passed, and 31 failed—a 72% pass rate. Fifty-one students registered and paid for a TPWD Boater Education Certificate. If our goal was to teach people to be safer on the water, we succeeded. *–Chris Leavitt*

Outdoor educator Caprice Stephens, CISD Coordinator of Health and Physical education Wade Haymark, and America's Boating Club Houston Educational Officer Alan Cross



Could your club or squadron benefit from a consultation with the social media team? We're available for consultations; email Amy Townsend.

Enhancing your club's social media presence

Have you ever wondered how to best use social media to promote your club or district? The social media team can help.

Looking to boost their social media presence, two clubs recently reached out to the social media team at national for guidance.

Everett Sail & Power Squadron/16, America's Boating Club of Snohomish County, requested a consultation with the team in September. The squadron's executive committee members gathered for a virtual Zoom meeting to discuss how they could best use social media, expressing a desire to retain and attract members. The social media team went over ways they could improve their social media presence, particularly on Facebook, and how they could delegate tasks among members to make the job easier.

Similarly, the social media team met virtually with the social media handler for District 22's America's Boating Club Cape Coral in October. The team discussed ideas for content and ways to encourage social media engagement.

For clubs or squadrons looking to increase their social media reach and engagement, here are some some effective social media tips:

- **Local content is best.** Videos, slideshows and photos of local members in the community attract the most attention and engagement.
- **Update your page often,** at least several times a week.
- **Highlight all aspects of your club:** educational, civic and social.
- **Add social media links** in your emails and newsletters and on your website.
- **Encourage all members to share your content** on their social media accounts.
- **Engage with people** who like and follow your pages.
- **Follow other clubs or squadrons** on social media, especially in your district and national.
- **Download the Social Media Squadron Playbook**, Social Media Policy and Social Media Content Calendar online for more tips and ideas.

BOATING NEWS

NOAA outlines plans for nautical charts

NOAA's Office of Coast Survey's newly released Nautical Charting Plan describes the office's efforts to meet the needs of mariners and other users of nautical charts now and in the future. This includes rescheming NOAA's entire Electronic Navigational Chart product suite into a regular gridded layout, recompilation of ENC depth curves from feet and fathoms into meters, and other improvements to deliver authoritative, fit-for-purpose navigation products to users in a timely fashion.

The Nautical Charting Plan also describes the ongoing program to end the production and maintenance of NOAA's paper nautical charts and other raster chart products and services, which will be completed by January 2025. *–NOAA*

For more information, download the 2023 NOAA Nautical Charting Plan

USCG expands online ordering

The U.S. Coast Guard National Vessel Documentation Center's new eStorefront provides customers with an efficient means to electronically apply for products. Customers can securely apply for a multiyear (up to five year) Certificate of Documentation for recreational vessels or one-year COD for vessels with commercial or registry endorsements, or request an Abstract of Title or Certified Copy of COD.

To order using the eStorefront, go to the USCG website and select the "Order Products Online" tab. *–USCG*

Endowing a brighter future for United States Power Squadrons



Have you considered a charitable contribution to the United States Power Squadrons Endowment Fund? Making that contribution directly from your Individual Retirement Account may offer you tax savings. It's easy to do and may be tax beneficial whatever the size of your contribution, even if you plan to claim the standard deduction.

For more information, go to uspsendowment.fund/qcd.

AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB

United States Power Squadrons Endowment Fund Inc.

Providing Funds for Safer Boating



#ICYMI

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

America's Boating Club of Rochester/6 took part in a fire safety demonstration with Rochester Fire Department and Sea Scout Ship 303.

America's Boating Club - Wilmington/5 members enjoyed a Labor Day weekend raftup on the Patapsco River.

Catawba Sail & Power Squadron/27 was featured in **Lake Wylie Today** magazine for its work teaching boating fun and safety to underprivileged children for Children's Day.

San Joaquin Delta Power Squadron/25 members celebrated Labor Day with an annual seafood boil.

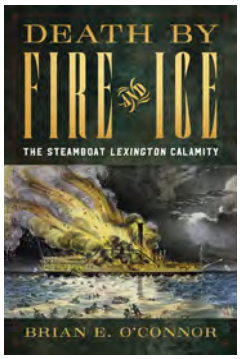
Bellingham Sail & Power Squadron/16 members enjoyed a rendezvous at Squalicum Marina.

America's Boating Club of Lake Murray/26 helped keep participants safe during a 25th anniversary dam swim.

Help our squadrons increase their reach.
Like their pages and share their posts!



Library



Death By Fire and Ice: The Steamboat Lexington Calamity
Brian E. O'Connor
Naval Institute Press, $29.95

The sinking of a steamboat

Of the 26 chapters in this excellently written and researched book, only eight deal with the 1840 sinking of the steamboat *Lexington* on Long Island Sound and the coroner's inquests into the deaths of 147 passengers and crew. (Four people survived.) The first nine chapters provide information on the steam engine's development and use on boats. These first chapters focus on the problems of converting from wood to anthracite coal resulting in increased heat and steam pressure, which ultimately led to the fire that sank the *Lexington.* The discussion of local, state and federal involvement in steamboat safety laws and regulations at the time illustrates the conflict as to who had what authority in this area.

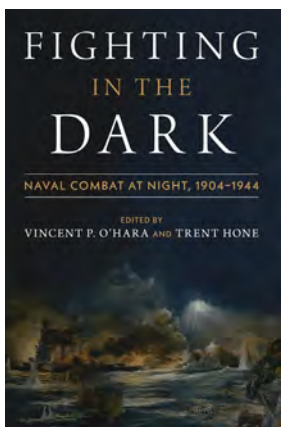
The book features an extensive set of footnotes, index and bibliography. It is well worth the cost for the information that it contains on the development of the steamboat. *–C. Henry Depew*

The history of night fighting

Before the days of radar and ship-to-ship radios, nighttime fighting on the water was a chancy affair. With few ways to identify a vessel in poor visibility, knowing who was who could be critical. This really became a problem when steamships entered the scene, as more than one country would purchase a vessel from the same firm and their silhouettes were indistinguishable.

This book summarizes the problems with nighttime combat and the attempted solutions starting with the Russo-Japanese War and ending with World War II. The book also includes a rumination on the future of nighttime naval fighting.

The book has illustrations, maps, photos, footnotes and an extensive index, with a handy list at the beginning to help readers understand some of the abbreviations used within. *–C. Henry Depew*



Fighting in the Dark: Naval Combat at Night, 1904-1944
Vincent P. O'Hara & Trent Hone (editors)
Naval Institute Press, $29.95



The aftermath of Hurricane Ian

Strapping saves

Hurricane Ian teaches boaters valuable lessons

BY TESSA BUECHLER

We didn't expect a hurricane forecast to hit the Florida panhandle or Tampa to slam Cape Coral as a Category 5, but Mother Nature has a mind of her own.

Before the storm, we considered boat insurance to be for accidents, on-the-water collisions and towing. Hurricane Ian taught us about the salvage, rescue and dock waiver clauses that would become so important to us.

Our boat was one of the lucky ones. After the storm, we found the 23-foot Key West dislodged from the lift—the boat's canopy was gone, the

lift frame had collapsed and the lift motor beams had fallen on the boat. Despite all this, it remained strapped in and suspended on the lift, and we believe the strapping saved our boat.

The water level and wind eventually floated and pushed the boat sideways on the lift, snapping the motor cables toward the sea wall. The boat was jammed in and going nowhere. The dock, the decking and the pilings all stood firm.

After numerous phone calls, we learned we would need a salvage and towing company to cut out and float the boat. The lift was going to be toast. After more calls, we found and contracted with Flagship Towing.

The tugboat arrived after a long, slow ride up the spreader canal. Two or three hours later, the towing company lifted the boat and moved it back onto the lift using two heavy-duty chainsaws, numerous ratchet straps and a diver in the canal to check around the vessel. When the workers released the final strap from the bow, the boat slid off the lift into the canal with grace and dignity, like the launching of the *Queen Elizabeth 2*. Luckily, we could temporarily tie it up to our cantilever dock. On closer inspection, the

It remained strapped in and suspended on the lift, and we believe the strapping saved our boat.





ABOVE: Flagship Towing workers help to remove the canopy frame.

RIGHT: A diver inspects the boat's hull for unseen damage and debris.

Boating Gone Bad

damage looked superficial. The T-top wasn't even bent.

The next challenge—finding a vacant lift in Cape Coral to move and store the boat—surprisingly didn't take long to complete.

We want to thank several squadron members who stepped up to help us through this process: Commander Scott Steele for helping find a vacant lift; Scott and Dani Fergen for offering a lead; Gerry and Janine Whistler for asking their neighbor if his lift was available; and Scott and Larry Rich for taking the boat out on the water to the new lift location—many thanks to everyone for their thoughts, effort, time and kindness.

Lessons learned: Strapping can save your boat, and check your insurance policy to be sure your dock and lift are covered. ❖

Check your insurance policy to be sure your dock and lift are covered.

This article originally appeared in The Buoys newsletter of America's Boating Club Cape Coral.

Tessa Buechler moved with husband Craig to Cape Coral, Florida, in 2018. They became boat owners in 2019 and joined Cape Coral Sail & Power Squadron/22 in July 2019 after taking an America's Boating Club class. They are actively involved in the Cooperative Charting and Vessel Safety Check programs, and they regularly contribute to their squadron newsletter. After Hurricane Ian, they are still in recovery mode. The dock and lift have been repaired, and the new canopy arrived in mid-December.





LEFT: The boat lift frame and motors are removed, revealing minimal damage to the boat.

ABOVE: Additional strapping was added to hold the boat before floating.



Our boat is back in action, thanks to the professionals at Flagship Towing.

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Know the hazards of cold exposure on board

BY GINO BOTTINO, MD

Onboard cold exposures pose a hazard to boaters, especially when air and water temperatures start to fall. Knowing what to look out for can help you prevent and treat cold exposure injuries.

Local cold injuries are usually categorized as one of the following:

- chilblain
- immersion injuries of the hands and feet
- trench foot
- frostbite

Full-body exposure can be divided into three categories:

- cold stress
- hypothermia
- immersion hypothermia

Chilblain

Although common, chilblain frequently goes unrecognized. Some people are especially prone to it, especially thin people and those with conditions such as diabetes and autoimmune disorders. Chilblain affects the skin, mostly the hands and face but also the lower extremities. It occurs in temperatures above freezing to 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

In chilblain, the skin appears bluish red with mild swelling. Sufferers may also feel itching, burning and occasionally pain when moving their fingers, hands and feet. If the exposure occurs regularly, chilblain can become a chronic persistent condition, leaving the skin discolored for long periods.

To treat, remove the offended areas from exposure, rewarm those areas and apply a soothing ointment (with or without steroids) to the skin.

Local immersion exposures and trench foot

Unlike chilblain, these incidents occur when the extremities are immersed in cold water or feet have been left in shoes immersed in water usually below 60 degrees but above freezing. Wet feet lose heat 25 times faster than dry feet and the body restricts blood flow to these areas, causing injury from a buildup of toxic products and a lack of oxygen after prolonged exposure.

Clinical manifestations include swelling, skin discoloration and blistering as well as numbness, tingling, pain, itching and muscle cramping. Like chilblain, trench foot can be chronic, and secondary infections are

The term “frostbite” is reserved for those injuries where tissue destruction has occurred. Pain happens early on or not at all.

Frostbite treatment involves getting the patient to a medical facility followed by immediate, rapid thawing and rewarming of the exposed areas.

common. Treatment is the same as for chilblain.

Frostbite

The term "frostbite" is reserved for those injuries where tissue destruction has occurred. Pain happens early on or not at all. As the tissues freeze, only a sensation of numbness remains. The patient may not even be aware of the frostbite until someone mentions it. When the damage is superficial, the surface feels hard, but the underlying tissues feel soft when gently and firmly depressed. In deep frostbite, the entire area feels hard. Frostbite can cause permanent injury leading to amputations.

Treatment involves getting the patient to a medical facility followed by immediate, rapid thawing and rewarming of the exposed areas. In deep frostbite, the rewarming process can lead to serious complications and death, which is why patients should be transported to a treatment facility before rewarming occurs. Even moderate-size superficial frostbite can lead to serious complications and must be taken seriously. In situations when transportation to a treatment facility may be delayed, provide general warmth to the patient and plenty of fluids. Do not give alcohol, and do not attempt to rewarm the affected area; it's safer to wait and transfer the patient to an adequate facility for medical attention.

Hypothermia

Anytime you are exposed to temperatures below skin temperature, which averages around 92 degrees, you are subject to hypothermia. Six factors influence the development of hypothermia:

- The severity of the exposure (how cold it is)
- The physical medium of the exposure (water exposure cools the body 25 times faster than air)
- The duration of the exposure
- The degree of protection you are wearing or can achieve
- Your body type, size and general condition as well as sleep deprivation
- Alcohol, drugs and medications you take, and any diseases you may have.

It's easy to recognize the signs and symptoms of hypothermia in others, but sometimes it's hard to see them in ourselves. As the body's temperature drops to less than 98 degrees, your skin becomes pale, you may develop a headache and start shivering. At under 95 degrees, you may have trouble thinking clearly, stop shivering and become uncoordinated, making completing tasks quite difficult. At body temperatures under 86 degrees,

you enter a moribund state in which signs of death are present. Death occurs below 82 degrees.

All phases of hypothermia require treatment. Handle patients with a minimum of movement. Watch for vomiting. If it occurs, make sure the person vomits in a downward direction to avoid aspiration (suffocation).

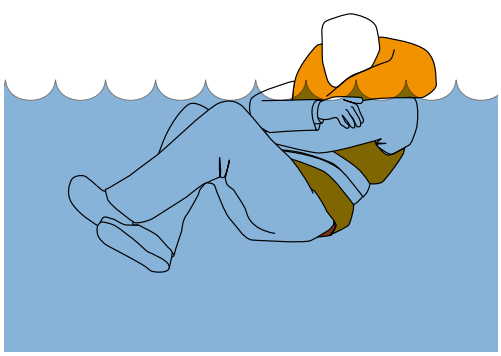
Do not massage; this makes the inner body colder by forcing cold blood in. Rewarm the patient slowly by moving them into a warm area or shelter. If the person has advanced symptoms—no shivering, confusion, slow breathing and pulse, call for help and transfer them to a medical facility.

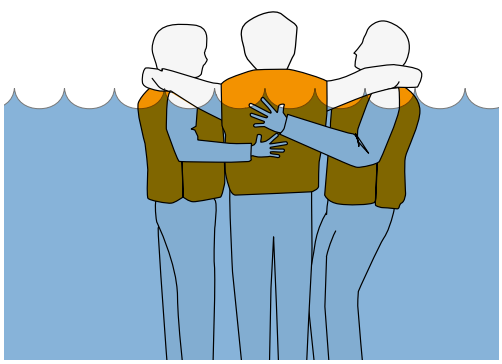
When you're on board and transfer could be delayed, nude body contact with a warm individual under a regular blanket works best. A nude body on each side of the victim may be needed in severe cases. No alcohol or stimulants should be given. Provide warm liquids only. It's important to provide emotional support and reassurance; a strong will to live greatly enhances survival.

Be aware that simply initiating treatment for severe hypothermia does not ensure survival. Rapid rewarming can lead to a sudden death syndrome, which can sometimes be reversed by cardiopulmonary resuscitation. This is why rewarming should be done in a medical facility if possible. Obviously, knowing CPR can be very helpful, and I encourage everyone to get training.

Immersion hypothermia

When a person is wet from any cause, their body temperature drops 25 times faster than when dry. It can occur in water temperatures under 70 degrees. In the water, use the HELP position to reduce heat loss (Heat Escape Lessening Posture). To assume this posture, cross your feet and bring your knees up to your chest, with your arms pulled into your sides across your knees. If you're in a group, huddling in groups of two or three works best.





LEFT: The HELP position can help reduce heat loss.

RIGHT: If you're in a group, huddle in groups of two or three.



Knowing the dangers of cold exposures and how they occur will help you handle or avoid these situations.

HYPOTHERMIA SURVIVAL TIMES

Water Temp. (°F)	Exhaustion or Unconsciousness	Expected Time of Survival is....
32.5	Under 15 Minutes	Under 15–45 Minutes
32.5–40.0	15–30 Minutes	30–90 Minutes
40–50	30–60 Minutes	1–3 Hours
50–60	1–2 Hours	1–6 Hours
60–70	2–7 Hours	2–40 Hours
70–80	3–12 Hours	3 Hours–Indefinitely
over 80	Indefinitely	

Treatment begins by removing the person's wet clothes and drying them. Then, proceed as detailed previously.

Like everything else on board our boats, prevention is the key to a safe and happy trip. Knowing the dangers of cold exposures and how they occur will prepare you to handle these situations and avoid them when possible.

If you must enter cold water, always go feet first to lessen the shock to your system and allow for cold adaptation. Wear plenty of protection; clothes help by trapping air and warming the water around your body, reducing the circulation of cold water. Never dive into cold water as this can result in acute vertigo, disorientation, vomiting and cramps. Do not eat or drink (especially alcohol) before going into cold water. If it's an emergency, wear as many articles of clothing as practical, and always wear a life jacket! ❖

Gino Bottino, MD, has 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.



Paddlecraft navigation

BY JIM GREENHALGH

Using both a paper chart and GPS to navigate through Florida's Ten Thousand Islands, where most of the islands look the same

Having a basic understanding of marine navigation allows paddlers to know where they are, where they are going and how to return safely.

Paddlers can learn the basics of marine navigation by taking America's Boating Course. Then, they can boost their skills by taking America's Boating Club seminars covering chart reading, GPS, tides and currents, marine compass use and the rules of the road.

Over the years, I've learned more than a few things about paddlecraft navigation pre-planning, GPS use and on-the-water navigation skills that might help my fellow paddlers.

Trip planning

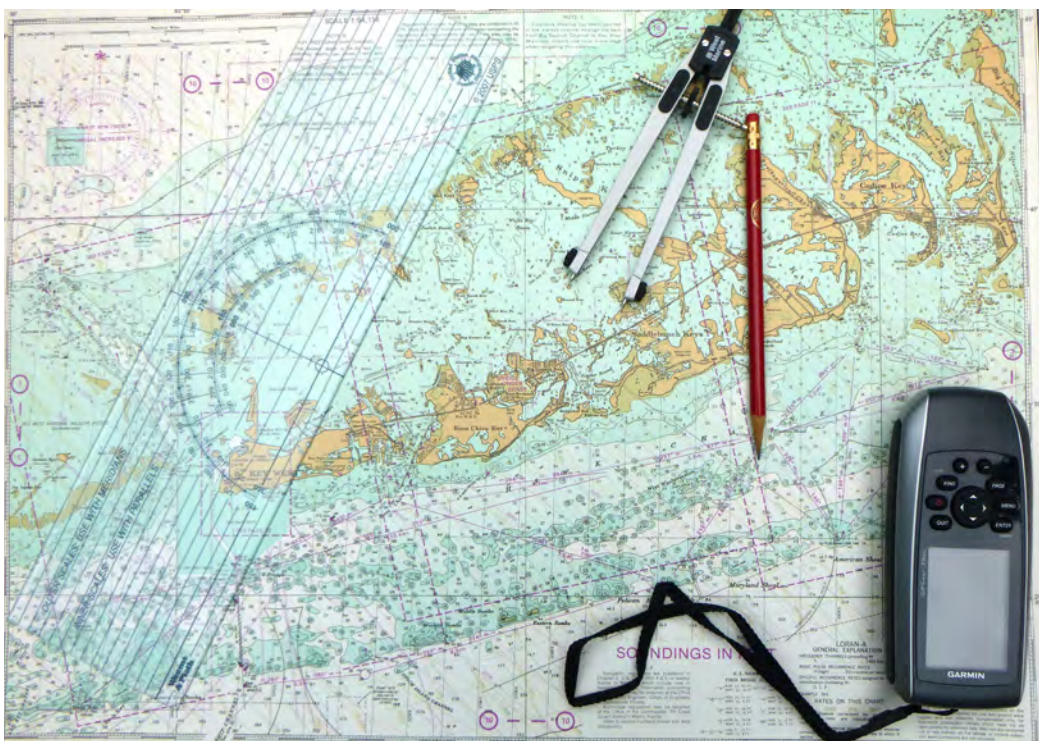
Without the luxury of a well-fitted navigation station, paddlers would do well to perform trip planning and charting at home before departure. Once on the water, continued chart plotting becomes difficult; a small handheld GPS is the best way to obtain a position fix.

Note: *NOAA is in the process of canceling individual traditional paper and raster nautical charts as it transitions to vector electronic navigational charts, which will be complete in January 2025. Visit the Office of Coast Survey for more information and download the latest U.S. Chart No. 1, which displays the symbology used on ENCs. Look for future articles on this subject as this program is updated.*

First, paddlers must decide where they would like to go. Then, they should locate a nearby launch and acquire charts of the area. Paddlers can find many guidebooks on the market as well as much information online, including charts for both coastal or river trips. Visit nauticalcharts.noaa.gov to find coastal charts for the entire U.S., including the Great Lakes. Find charts for popular rivers and lakes by searching the name online. When using older paper charts, get the latest magnetic variation at NCEI Geomagnetic Calculators.

Waterproof charts are a must aboard paddlecraft. Paddlers can purchase waterproof charts or carry paper charts inside clear waterproof chart cases designed for use on small boats and paddlecraft. I produce my own waterproof charts using an inexpensive paper cutter and laminator available at most big box stores. On laminated charts, use a waterproof felt tip marker to plot course and other information. When the trip is complete, simply wipe it clean using rubbing alcohol on a paper towel. On laminated charts, measure distances using a marked piece of line, as regular navigational dividers can puncture the laminate.

Paddlers planning coastal trips should always consult the tide and current tables using NOAA Tides and Currents. Find information about the latest



Trip planning using navigation tools

conditions on specific rivers by searching various online river gauge sites. Don't forget to factor weather forecasts into your trip plan. Find information at weather.gov/marine and other weather websites.

To perform time, distance and speed calculations during trip planning, paddlers need to know their vessel's various speeds. A typical sea or touring kayak cruises around 3 knots and can reach a top speed of 5 to 6 knots for short periods exclusive of wind or current. Most sea kayakers use a speed of 2 knots for trip planning to account for wind, current and other factors. These speeds differ depending on the paddler and type of paddlecraft used. Paddlers should test their boats using GPS.

GPS

Many paddlers use GPS to navigate. You'll find many handheld waterproof, floatable marine GPS units on the market. GPS units often come with coastal charts installed and the ability to add additional charts and inland maps. Some paddlers use them to track their progress on every trip while others use them as needed. They're useful for navigating in restricted visibility and fog, nighttime paddling, locating specific points or navigating to destinations over the horizon. I recommend removing the batteries from portable electronics when not in use. Older batteries can corrode and damage electronics. When reinstalling the batteries, make sure you have a watertight seal before use. I speak from costly experience on both counts. Many paddlers never learn waypoint navigation: using GPS to plan a course and direct them to their intended destination. Consider learning this useful skill by taking How to Use GPS online or from a local squadron or club.

LEFT: Paper chart inside a waterproof chart case

RIGHT: Plotting courses on a DIY laminated chart using a permanent marker, which can be erased with rubbing alcohol







Navigating in fog with a handheld GPS and a foghorn

Navigating on the water

Some touring kayaks come with deck-mounted compasses. If yours doesn't, look for a portable compass that can be strapped to the deck of your paddlecraft. When packing gear in or on a paddlecraft, keep electronic or metallic objects as far from the compass as possible to avoid introducing deviation. All paddlers should learn how to use a compass and paddle a compass course.

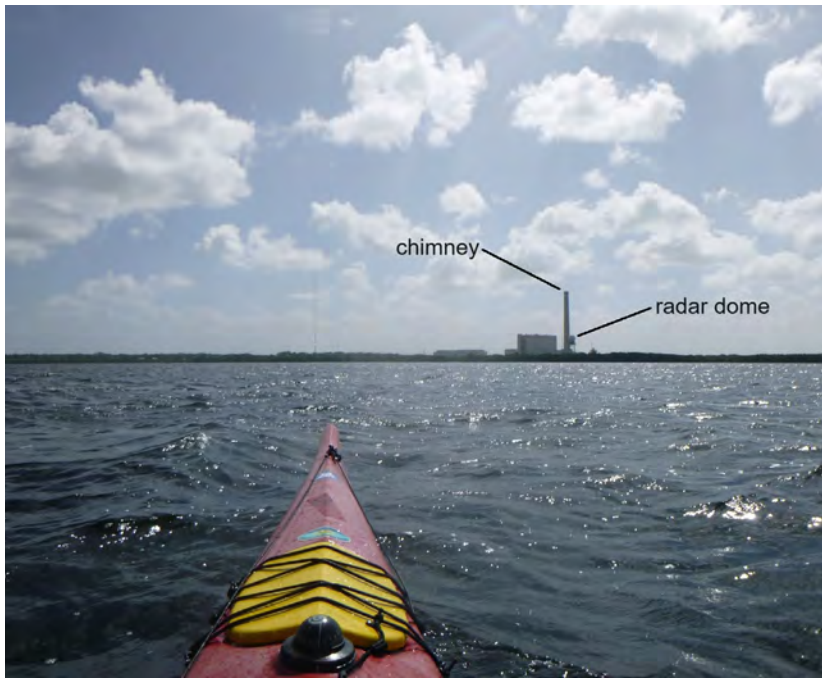
Time, distance and speed calculations

When underway on a sea kayak, it's easy to perform time, distance and speed calculations in your head. At a relaxed paddling pace, the average speed of a sea or touring kayak is around 3 knots. This means the kayaker will cover one nautical mile in about 20 minutes, one-half nautical mile in about 10 minutes and one-tenth of a nautical mile every two minutes. You need to factor the presence of wind and current into the actual cruising speed, but you can quickly figure out your estimated time en route.

Shorter and wider, recreational kayaks have a slower cruising speed, around 2 knots. Longer, slender racing vessels have faster cruising speeds. To determine an average cruising speed for navigation planning, check the cruising speed of your own paddlecraft using a GPS.

Ferry angle

When navigating to a specific destination on open water, boaters often encounter winds or currents that set them off course. Navigators learn to use vectors to determine a vessel's actual heading to maintain course to the destination. Paddlers refer to this angular difference as the ferry angle, and a visual range is the easiest way to determine that vector. To demonstrate (see photo), I am paddling a course toward a range formed by a chimney located about a half mile behind a radar dome. A 10- to 12-knot crosswind is coming over the port (left) beam. To maintain course down the range and keep the objects in alignment, I must steer the boat about 20 degrees upwind. That is the ferry angle.



Demonstrating the ferry angle by paddling toward a natural range formed by a chimney and a radar dome

If I continually point the bow only at the chimney, the crosswind would push me off course, resulting in me paddling a longer circular course. Any stationary objects can be used to form a visual range, including trees, land features, structures or aids to navigation (navigational buoys and beacons located on the water). With GPS training, you can determine the ferry angle by creating a route on the GPS and correcting for course deviation displayed on the screen.

ATONS

All paddlers should learn to use the aids to navigation system, or ATONS. By understanding ATONS, you can locate your position on a chart and anticipate other boat traffic to avoid collision. In the U.S., we use the red-right-returning rule: When returning from sea or proceeding upstream, keep the red aids on the right side and the green on the left to remain in the channel. Most of the time, paddlers can stay out of the channel to avoid boat traffic, unless shallow water forces them in the channel. Minor channels may be marked by only a few intermittent red or green aids, so it's important that you apply the rule to know the channel's location.

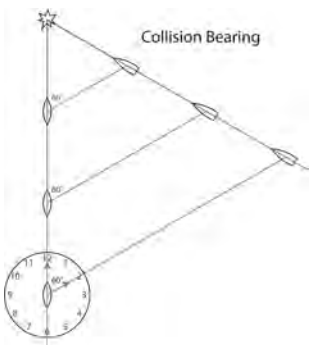
Unfortunately, powerboaters often must alter course to avoid collision with paddlers who don't understand the U.S. aids to navigation system.



A group of paddlers holding outside the ICW channel as a larger vessel passes

Collision bearings

Mariners use collision bearings to avoid colliding with other vessels. A helmsman at the boat's pilot station can use a stanchion, rigging or other onboard object to line up a view of an approaching vessel. If the other vessel remains in the same position as it progresses, it's on a collision course and corrective action is needed. Since paddlers usually have the smallest, lightest and least powerful vessels on the water, it's critical for us to avoid collisions with other vessels, which could prove fatal. On a paddlecraft, we don't have objects at eye level to line up collision bearings, so I have learned to use clock positions (see illustration). In this example, you see another vessel closing with your boat that remains in your 2 o'clock position, regardless of speed or angle of closure. This means you are on a collision course with that vessel, so it's best to take early action and change course to avoid a collision.



Collision bearing illustration by Tristan Davis taken from "Navigation Rules for Paddlecraft" by Jim Greenhalgh

Get more training

While this article includes some tips and tricks that I have learned about navigating paddlecraft, all paddlers could benefit from more detailed training in basic marine navigation. United States Power Squadrons, America's Boating Club, offers several classroom and online courses and seminars that teach chart reading, trip planning, rules of the road, and the use of both traditional and electronic navigation. With additional training, you will always know where you are and where you are going, ensuring you have fun and arrive home safely. ❖

Jim Greenhalgh of St. Petersburg Sail & Power Squadron/22 is a senior navigator, vessel examiner and instructor, having taught boating safety and navigation since 1991. He draws on his vast sail and powerboating experience as a lifelong boater and avid sea kayaker. Jim leads trips for the Kayak Adventure Group, a sea kayaking club based on Florida's west coast that he co-founded. He also wrote Navigation Rules for Paddlecraft, a must-read for all paddlers.



Southern wall of Champlain Canal

Transiting New York's Champlain Canal

Enjoy the scenic views, but be mindful of your air draft

BY BEVERLY AND TOM GILBERT



Tom with Tena and Frank DeBaggis on *MISS B'haven*

In early August 2023, we traveled a portion of the Champlain Canal with Tena and Frank DeBaggis, starting from Coeymans, New York, on the Hudson River.

The 60-mile-long Champlain Canal begins just north of Troy, New York, on the Hudson River and ends at the south end of Lake Champlain. The canal has 11 locks, numbered 1 through 12; lock 10 is nonexistent. Speed restrictions range from 5 to 45 mph, with many uncharted areas considered no-wake zones. We opted for sailboat speeds, known to some as trawler speeds. With views like these, why would you want to rush the experience?

Both the Hudson River and Champlain Canal are well-marked with navigational aids. However, you pass under a variety of bridges, so it's

important to know your air draft and read your charts for posted clearances—unless you dislike your antennas or other appendages. The New York State Canal Corp. claims to maintain a 21-foot minimum clearance; however, we received notification that a New York canal bridge was temporarily down to 19.5 feet clearance.



Beverly and Tom Gilbert at the helm station aboard *MISS B 'haven*

Even though the Hudson River is tidal and canals are not, the canal's unfavorable downstream water flow significantly impacted our speed over ground. Likely the result of recent extraordinary rainfall, the flow may have only been unfavorable by 1 knot, but it was surprising for a body of water that's not tidal.

During our trip, lock openings were restricted in an attempt to curb the spread of an aquatic invasive species. As we recently learned, the restrictions were implemented to mitigate the spread of the round goby.

We signed up for notifications, so we knew about this change. Anyone planning to transit any New York locks should sign up for Notice to Mariners to receive important daily updated information about lock operating schedules. Approximately two daily notifications reflected open/closure/operating changes, often due to regular and unplanned maintenance.

The canals.ny.gov website also provides distances between each canal and visuals of posted speed limits. However, factor in additional no-wake zones, and allow extra time for unplanned wait times at each lock. As for any voyage, be sure to have updated charts for navigational and bridge clearances on board.

Great company and the Champlain Canal's stunning scenic views made this a spectacular voyage. ❖

Beverly and Tom Gilbert have been sailing together for more than 30 years while living in the Berkshire Mountain region of Western Massachusetts. One of their first dates was on a borrowed 420 on the Connecticut shoreline, and their honeymoon was spent bareboating in the British Virgin Islands. Since then, they have been sailing throughout New England and portions of New York. They are currently enjoying their time together in the Hudson River region on their Tiara 3100 Express Cruiser, named the same as some of their previous sailboats, MISS B 'haven.

This article originally appeared in The Berkshire Log newsletter of Berkshire Sail & Power Squadron.

Octogenarian Odyssey

Down East Circle Route Cruise

PART 7

BY WANDA WHITE STOVALL



SIMONE TIEBER





Part VII: Halifax, Nova Scotia, to Southwest Harbor, Maine

Dockside in Halifax, Nova Scotia

To celebrate both of us turning 80 and our 60th wedding anniversary, my husband, David, and I took a long-distance cruise on the Down East Circle Route. The journey took more than 2,000 miles from New York Harbor through the Erie Canal and the St. Lawrence River, around Nova Scotia, and down the New England coast, ending back in New York Harbor.

Read parts one through six online.

September 21-23: Halifax, Nova Scotia

Our plane from Texas landed in sunshine, but dark clouds moved in and the wind increased soon afterward. Our taxi driver told us a large storm with lots of rain was on the way.

The first raindrops fell as we unloaded our suitcases from the taxi. We hurried to the nearby dock and hoisted everything on board as quickly as possible. Just as we closed the door, the rain came in torrents.

Monday dawned sunny and beautiful. We walked seven blocks to a large grocery store adjacent to the cruise ship terminal. Although our shopping list was small, we filled our cart to overflowing. With cabinets, refrigerator and freezer filled, we were well provisioned for the rest of our journey.

Taking advantage of another sunny (but cool) day, we toured Halifax and visited Fairhaven Cemetery where many of the *Titanic* victims are buried. We also visited the small but impressive Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, which





LEFT: David on *The Bottom Line* in Halifax, Nova Scotia

RIGHT: Fairhaven Cemetery

exhibited mostly regional artists such as Maud Lewis, whose brilliant colors and exceptional talent won her national acclaim.

The Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, located on the waterfront near our boat, featured extensive displays of Halifax history and many models of the large seagoing vessels that once cruised the area. Black and white photographs detailed the devastation caused when two ships collided in Halifax Harbour on Dec. 6, 1917. The explosion leveled everything for miles, killing many people and injuring thousands. In response, the state of Massachusetts provided immediate medical aid, supplies and construction help to Halifax. Since 1971, Nova Scotia has sent a large evergreen Christmas tree to Boston in gratitude.

September 24-25: Lunenburg, Nova Scotia

Weather reports indicated favorable winds for our journey from Halifax to Lunenburg. As we cruised near the shore, we enjoyed postcard perfect views of lovely villages surrounded by towering evergreen forests on white beaches or rocky shores.

We arrived at our dock at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic minutes before the 5 p.m. closing time and were welcomed with great help securing our lines. Eager to walk about, we promptly left the boat for a quick tour of the charming town. Situated on a high hill above the sea, Lunenburg's colorful 19th-century homes and buildings are an architectural treasure. Settled by German, Swiss and French farmers who quickly became shipbuilders and fishermen, the town reflects the prosperity and traditions of its founders. Remarkably intact, Lunenburg was spared the fires





and natural disasters that devastated many towns of this period. Many residents are descendants of the original settlers. In 1995, the city was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

We toured the town via horse-drawn carriage, which was a great way to avoid climbing the steep hills. The imposing black and white Lunenburg Academy building sits atop a hill. Formerly a public school, the building was designated a National Historic Site in 1983 and is currently undergoing restoration.

LEFT: Lunenburg, Nova Scotia

RIGHT: Wanda and David take a horse-drawn carriage in Lunenburg.

September 26: Shelburne, Nova Scotia

Before 8 a.m., we left Lunenburg during a calm we hoped would continue once we reached the open sea. To our amazement and delight, we enjoyed glass-smooth seas all the way to Shelburne, approximately 85 nautical miles. Cruising away from shore to avoid shoals, we could still see Nova Scotia's beautiful rocky shores, sandy beaches, and thick, tall evergreen forests.

The approach to Shelburne proved straightforward with few hazards, all clearly marked. Settled by British Loyalists who left the future United States after the Revolutionary War, the town became a shipbuilding and fishing center. With a population of about 2,000 residents and empty storefronts during our visit, the city's economy appeared to be struggling.

After docking at the Shelburne Yacht Club and Marina, we received a warm welcome from Mary, the assistant manager. She invited us to the club's weekly social event that evening. After a long walk through the town to



Sandy Point Lighthouse in Shelburne, Nova Scotia

experience its history and architectural beauty, we went to the yacht club party.

From the deck off the club's second-floor main room, we got a breathtaking view of the bay. In the main room, yacht club burgees decorated the dark wooden beams of the vaulted ceiling. Club members and guests enjoyed food and drinks. The evening's menu was southern fried chicken with bacon cornbread, mashed potatoes and buttered carrots. Although we ordered just as they ran out of food, we nevertheless enjoyed the ambiance and the members' warm greetings.

We ate dinner on board while David consulted the installation and operation instructions for our new macerator/waste pump. Although the pump seemed to work after being fitted with a new hose, it once again stopped pumping out waste. Many marinas in this area do not have pump-out facilities, which could create a problem for us.

September 27: Yarmouth, Nova Scotia

With good weather and mild winds predicted, we forewent a day in port and continued to Yarmouth. This 75-nautical mile journey took us from the south to the west shore of Nova Scotia. We chose the outside passage to avoid encountering the many shoals, islands and shallow water on the





LEFT: David in Shelburne, Nova Scotia

RIGHT: Shelburne, Nova Scotia

inside route. Although longer, the outside passage held fewer hazards and no tide changes to contend with.

Yarmouth had a great marina with floating docks that easily accommodated *The Bottom Line*. Fellow boaters greeted us and lent aid in docking. Throughout our journey, we have enjoyed the friendliness of Canadians and their willingness to help.

As Yarmouth is near the Bay of Fundy, noted for having the world's greatest tide differential, the bay in front of the restaurant experienced a high tide, which rapidly covered large areas of exposed muddy bottom. We returned to the boat in time to watch the Baylor-Iowa State football game on TV and prepare for our long day of cruising across the Gulf of Maine to Southwest Harbor, the final destination of our 2014 epic journey.

September 29: Southwest Harbor, Maine

Weather reports indicated that the mild early morning winds would become stronger near noon. Departing minutes after 7 a.m., we watched a beautiful sunrise as we headed into the ocean. The smooth water gave us several hours of idyllic cruising.

A good current increased our speed by almost 2 knots. Although the afternoon brought stronger wind, the waves remained friendly, and we had an uneventful crossing of the Gulf of Maine. Despite keeping a sharp lookout throughout our journey, we did not see any whales, which are often sighted in this area.

Our approach to Southwest Harbor brought back great memories as we passed Seal Harbor and Northeast Harbor, two of our favorite places in this





LEFT: Northeast Harbor, Maine

RIGHT: Southwest Harbor, Maine

area. Carefully avoiding the many rocks and shoals, David skillfully brought us into Dysart's Great Harbor Marina. Micah, the harbormaster, and Miller, our friend and helper from previous summers, stood ready to catch our lines and give us a warm welcome. Delighted to see them, we quickly arranged for fresh lobster for dinner (pulled from the lobster pot adjacent to our dock and steamed in seawater by Miller). After warm conversations with our friends and a wonderful lobster dinner on the aft deck, we felt at home.

We enjoyed a tremendous feeling of accomplishment knowing we had completed a journey of approximately 2,000 miles from New York through Canada to Maine. We planned to leave *The Bottom Line* in storage at Southwest Harbor and return in May to enjoy the cool summer months and complete our Down East Circle journey back to New York Harbor. ❖

The journey ends in Part VIII of the "Octogenarian Odyssey," out in Spring 2024.

Wanda and David Stovall live in Fort Worth, Texas. She is a retired speech pathologist, and he is a semi-retired certified public accountant. Their boat remains at a lovely marina near Wickford, Rhode Island, where they spend five months of the year enjoying delicious seafood and great boating experiences in this beautiful area.

Block Island Memories



Overnight sail kicks off weeklong adventure

BY JEFF TAYLOR

As I look out my back window watching the snow gradually cover the backyard, the radiator emits a reassuring hiss of heat that warms me to the bone. Although it's only mid-afternoon, the distant sun, a white-gold disc, shines dimly through the low clouds. The silvery light outside seems to come from everywhere at once, filtered through the clouds and reflecting off the thick blanket of wet snow. With snow covering every twig with white frosting, the world looks like it's made of spun sugar.

As I start to daydream, everything seems translucent and surreal. The radiator's warmth takes me right back to the long hot days of last summer's sailing season—a beautiful time spent mostly on OPBs (other people's boats). I recall the passage Troy Sill and I made to Block Island, Rhode Island, on his Columbia sloop *Willful*.

Smooth sailing to Block Island

In 2016, we spent a week or so touring a few of the small towns along western Long Island Sound. We were happy to hang out on the boat awhile

Fog sets in.



Troy Sill's Columbia sloop *Willful*

but not very ambitious about traveling far and wide. In 2018, though still severely limited in terms of time, we wanted to push our horizons farther east and planned to head for Block Island in one shot, knowing it would take us at least 24 hours to get there. Planning to sail right through the night and arrive sometime after daybreak the next day, we left early in the morning on the last day of July.

It was almost dead calm when we dropped the mooring in New Rochelle. We motor-sailed for a while across glassy smooth water in the early morning haze. Then, the wind picked up and blew a sweet, steady 10- to 12-knot southwesterly all day long. The sun was warm and bright but not blistering. Steering was a pleasure, leaning back into a cushion propped against the cockpit coaming and taffrail. The captain kept busy in the galley, feeding me breakfast and then sandwiches and drinks all day. He did his share of the steering as well, while all I had to do was soak it all in and go below for a nap when I was tired. The sun rose before us, marched to the meridian high up in the south and slowly set behind us. The day was gone before we knew it, but half a year later, the pleasant memory seems as if it all happened just a few minutes ago.

If anything, the night was even sweeter. It was still warm and clear, and the wind kept up as steady as an old friend, making steering a pure, easy joy. Troy had cooked up some stew before sundown and kept food and drink coming into the cockpit all night long. The moon shined its bright light down on the sound from sunset until it sank below the western horizon, a few hours before dawn. I remember feeling like this was all going to be over too soon, that I was going to be sad when we arrived. The only thing steadier than the wind was the captain, relieving me before I got tired, so I alternated between steering through that beautiful starry night and napping below—sleeping the sleep only sailors on a passage know. Sleeping underway in those conditions is magical—with no worries and no noise except the gurgle of water passing the hull. The boat's motion is as

gentle as a baby's cradle. I woke up in a different state of consciousness, with a quiet sense of purpose and no hurry. It was like waking up in a different age, centuries ago, when people had time to just live.

The eastern end of Long Island Sound is a special place with wide vistas. From the middle of Block Island Sound, we could see Plum Island and Orient Point behind us to the west in the last moonlight well before dawn. Fishers Island and the Connecticut and Rhode Island shore were visible to the north, and Gardiner's Island and Montauk Point could be seen far away to the south. For a long time, Block Island appeared as a faint glow on the eastern horizon. Beyond "Block," as we started calling it, was the limitless Atlantic Ocean.

Of course, we were lucky to have such easy, favorable conditions for the whole 120-mile passage with only two crew aboard a 27-foot sailboat. The calm and quiet conspired to put us in the perfect state of mind to be utterly transported by the long-awaited dawn.

We caught sight of the Block Island shore before sunup. At first an indistinct mass on the fuzzy horizon, it became unmistakable in the glow of the coming sun. When the sun rose above the horizon, the island emerged into the pristine light of a brand new day. By this time, the Block Island North Lighthouse stood out clearly at the north end of the island, and it wasn't long before we heard and saw the red number 2 bell buoy at the entrance to Great Salt Pond, the island's main yacht harbor. We cranked up the engine and motored in.

It's a small harbor—barely a mile from end to end. The place seemed totally deserted and eerily quiet at such an early hour, although hundreds of pleasure craft of all sizes and descriptions slept on anchors and moorings. We had arrived.

Anticlimactic arrival begets pleasant adventures

Block Island has a certain cachet to those from Long Island, lower Westchester or City Island.

If you can get there in your sailboat, you can claim all Long Island Sound as your personal cruising ground. Or so it seemed to us. After dreaming of making this passage for years, we reveled in the accomplishment and bought a pennant showing the island's outline (no need for any writing) to prove our membership in the exclusive Block-and-back club. For the moment, we furled the sails and motored up to the deserted fuel dock where we strolled up and down, savoring our victory.

It was still warm and clear, and the wind kept up as steady as an old friend, making steering a pure, easy joy.



Sunset over Long Island Sound

Everybody on Block Island seemed to be asleep. We tried to raise the port captain and two or three marinas by VHF and cellphone but got no answer. Every single one of the several hundred moorings in the protected harbor was occupied, and there was no sign of life anywhere. The wind was calm and the sky clear. We had traveled all night from New Rochelle Municipal Marina in about 22 hours. Although we had just completed an epic voyage of historic significance, it was a bit anticlimactic.

Finally, a teenager showed up to open the marina office and fuel dock. He told us to motor around the mooring field and wait for somebody to leave. That was the system.

We got back on the boat and started motoring slowly back and forth through the fleet. We noticed two or three other bigger, more expensive boats also idling back and forth. Although a brass band would have been a more appropriate welcome, we bore it all like the intrepid salty dogs we'd proved ourselves to be.

Then, the engine died. Why are so many of my salty dog stories punctuated by this fateful phrase? I would have left it out of this story altogether,

except that it led to further, mostly pleasant, adventures.

When attempts to restart the engine failed, we whipped out the sails and focused on maintaining steerageway in the cramped, crowded mooring field. A glance in the bilge revealed a ghastly quantity of engine oil, which led us to fear catastrophic engine trouble. Poor Troy wondered if he would lose his beloved *Willful*, as the cost of replacing an engine could be more than the lovely modest craft was worth.

With no moorings available and anchoring proving impossible, we finally reached the port captain, who put us on a private mooring while we waited for help. We got towed about 10 miles to Point Judith, where we spent the night and came across the most honest, decent, competent and unassuming pair of diesel mechanics it has ever been our pleasure to meet. They replaced the minor leaky gasket, refilled the engine oil, cleaned out the bilge, gave us free dockage for the night and sent us on our way, all for a couple hundred bucks.

After a lovely dinner and a big breakfast the next morning in Point Judith, we set sail right back to Block Island so we could conquer the place properly.

We docked alongside the pier. Although a bit touristy, Block Island has great restaurants and beautiful saltwater vistas. Everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves, and so were we. We went to some of the tourist trinket boutiques and bought souvenirs—a thing I would never do normally—but on this occasion, we felt a special need for anything that said "Block Island" on it. Although we landed intent on conquest and booty, I fear the onshore pirates made out better than we did. We stayed a couple of days and loved every minute.

The remainder of our week aboard left us ample time to make our way home in leisurely fashion, with a stop or two along the way for showers, restaurant dinners and a good night's sleep. I can't think of a better way to spend a summer vacation, and the memories will keep us warm for many a cold winter's day. Let it snow. ❖

Then, the engine died. Why are so many of my salty dog stories punctuated by this fateful phrase?

Jeff Taylor of City Island Sail & Power Squadron/4 is a life member and past squadron commander. He has helped teach America's Boating Course as well as Sail, Junior Navigation and Navigation. He received the Charles F. Chapman Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2017. Jeff has been cruising and racing sailboats on Long Island Sound for over 30 years and has traveled up and down the East Coast as far south as the West Indies.



District 33's Boqueron and Arecibo squadron members tour the U.S. Coast Guard facilities in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Boqueron Squadron Commander Heriberto Abraham receives a USCG challenge coin from USCG Capt. Robert M. Pirone.



D/33 members visit Old San Juan Coast Guard facilities

In April 2023, members of two District 33 squadrons, **Boqueron** and **Arecibo,** visited the U.S. Coast Guard facilities in Old San Juan.

Greeted and accompanied by USCG Deputy Commander Capt. Robert M. Pirone, the members got to visit the ships and tour the facilities.

Capt. Pirone presented a USCG challenge coin to Boqueron Commander Heriberto Abraham, and in turn, Abraham presented the captain with his flag as a symbol of his friendship and gratitude.

At the end of the day, the group visited the Sea Museum in Old San Juan. – *Damaris Ortiz*



Bermuda cruise participants gather on the grand staircase of the Celebrity *Summit*.

Bermuda cruise delivers fun and memories

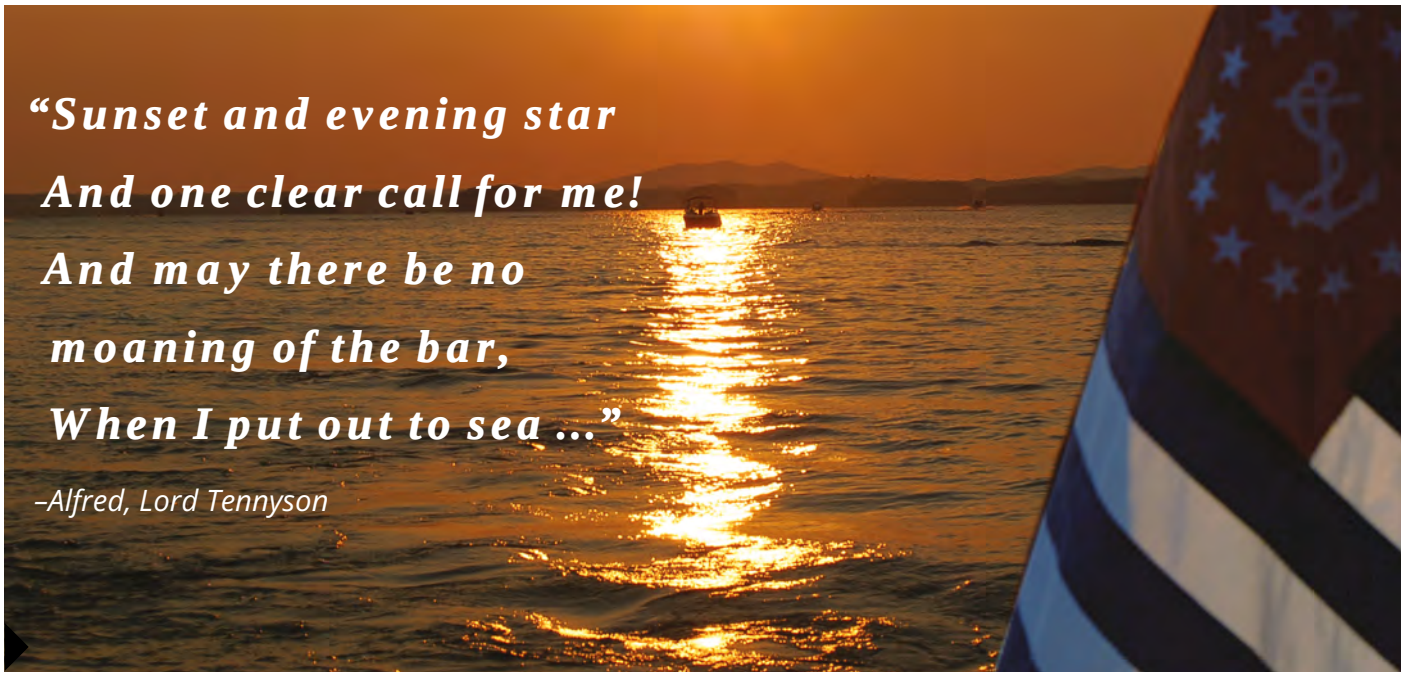
Staten Island Sail & Power Squadron/4 invited members and friends from District 4, Great Kills Yacht Club and Richmond County Yacht Club to join its seven-day cruise to Bermuda on June 11, 2023. In all, 25 people accepted the invitation.

Participants cruised aboard Celebrity *Summit* out of Bayonne, New Jersey. All squadron guests received a free drinks and gratuities package, ensuring a merry time would be had by all. Seven days before the cruise, my wife, Margaret, and I hosted a meet-and-greet at our home for the participants. Everyone enjoyed the party and became friends before the cruise.

While in Bermuda, members traveled to local attractions, some swam with the dolphins, some went to St. George's on the island's far side, and others explored various beaches. Every night, many members attended District 4 Commander Ted Wallace's pizza party at 11:30 p.m. before heading to bed.

The day before we returned to New Jersey, my wife and I held a cocktail party in our cabin to celebrate the end of the cruise. After arriving back home, everyone said they had a great time and started asking where we were going next year. To top it all off, the squadron picked up two new members during the cruise. *–Don Heap*

Last Horizon



DEBRA ALLEN

MERIT MARK AWARDS

Senior Member,
5 merit marks

Life Member,
25 merit marks

Emeritus Member,
50 merit marks

⚓ Indicates online obituary

R/C Nancee Anne Adams, AP
Birmingham (MI) Squadron/9
Senior Member, 8 mm

Lt Frank Ardis Jr., P
Mansfield (OH) Squadron/7
Senior Member, 21 mm

Lynn D. Baker
Smith Mountain Lake (VA) Squadron/5
2 mm

Lt Ronald J. Boksa, P
Fox Valley (IL) Squadron/20
Life Member, 25 mm

P/C Hubert H. Bordeaux, SN ⚓
Cape Fear (NC) Squadron/27
Emeritus Member, 59 mm

P/Lt/C Nicholas N. Chronis, JN
Lake Pontchartrain (LA) Squadron/15
Senior Member, 17 mm

P/C Mark Stephen Cohen, JN
Beverly-Marblehead (MA) Squadron/34
Life Member, 43 mm

Bruce C. Dungan, P
Smith Mountain Lake (VA) Squadron/5
Senior Member, 5 mm

Alveta F. Egbert, S
Columbus (OH) Squadron/29

P/C Joseph P. Fazzari, JN
Catawba (SC) Squadron/27
Senior Member, 13 mm

William R. Ghen, AP ⚓
Beverly-Marblehead (MA) Squadron/34
Life Member, 26 mm

Mabel M. Graf
Hempstead Bay (NY) Squadron/3

P/Lt/C Donald G. Joyce, AP
Charlotte (NC) Squadron/27
Life Member, 26 mm

Leonard Kalb, AP
Raritan Bay (NJ) Squadron/4
Senior Member, 13 mm

P/R/C Daniel Katz, SN
Port Washington (NY) Squadron/3
Emeritus Member, 53 mm

Jessie Patricia Katz, SN
Port Washington (NY) Squadron/3

P/D/C Thomas F. Krupa, AP
St Petersburg (FL) Squadron/22
Life Member, 27 mm

P/C Chester M. Landis, SN
Mount Clemens (MI) Squadron/9
Life Member, 47 mm

Stella D. Lawson, S
Naples (FL) Squadron/22
Senior Member, 10 mm

P/C Caryl A. Lemke, P
Skokie Valley (IL) Squadron/20
Life Member, 32 mm

P/D/Lt/C Robert A. Merlino, AP
Pittsburgh (PA) Squadron/7
Life Member, 41 mm

Gladys C. Prutsman
Columbus (OH) Squadron/29

P/Lt/C Jerome Rapkin
Annapolis (MD) Squadron/5
Senior Member, 15 mm

P/C June D. Reasons, P
Cape Lookout (NC) Squadron/27
Life Member, 38 mm

P/V/C James E. Roeber, SN
Spokane (WA) Squadron/16
Emeritus Member, 53 mm

Janet W. Sample
Cyber Squadron

P/C Thomas S. Sample, AP
Ocean City (MD) Squadron/5
Life Member, 39 mm

Michael Sforza
Smithtown Bay (NY) Squadron/3
Senior Member, 9 mm

P/C James A. Skeoch, P
St. Lucie River (FL) Squadron/8
Life Member, 39 mm

P/C James L. Swindal, JN ⚓
Middletown (CT) Squadron/1
Senior Member, 20 mm

Nancy C. Thompson, P
Ventura (CA) Squadron/13

Scott Thompson
Tacoma (WA) Squadron/16

P/Lt/C Henry O. Wagley Jr., JN
Peace River (FL) Squadron/22
Life Member, 30 mm

P/C Kenneth W. Weeks Jr., AP
Hartford (CT) Squadron/1
Emeritus Member, 55 mm

Elise N. Wengenroth, AP
Syracuse (NY) Squadron/6

Lt David G. West, P
Sebastian Inlet (FL) Squadron/8
Senior Member, 21 mm

P/C Alice Marie Whittemore, AP
Anchor Bay (MI) Squadron/9
Life Member, 36 mm

P/D/C Terrell F. "Smoke" Williams, AP
Galveston Bay (TX) Squadron/21
Senior Member, 15 mm

HOW TO SUBMIT

Family, squadron commanders or other authorized representatives may submit reports of USPS members who have crossed the bar.

SUBMIT
LAST HORIZON

SUBMIT
OBITUARY



"Who is staring at the sea is already sailing a little."

–Paul Carvel

Pigeon Point Lighthouse

Located just 50 miles south of San Francisco, Pigeon Point Lighthouse was built in 1871 and first lit in 1872. The 115-foot-tall structure was built with a first-order Fresnel lens. Today, it features a DCB-24 aero beacon.

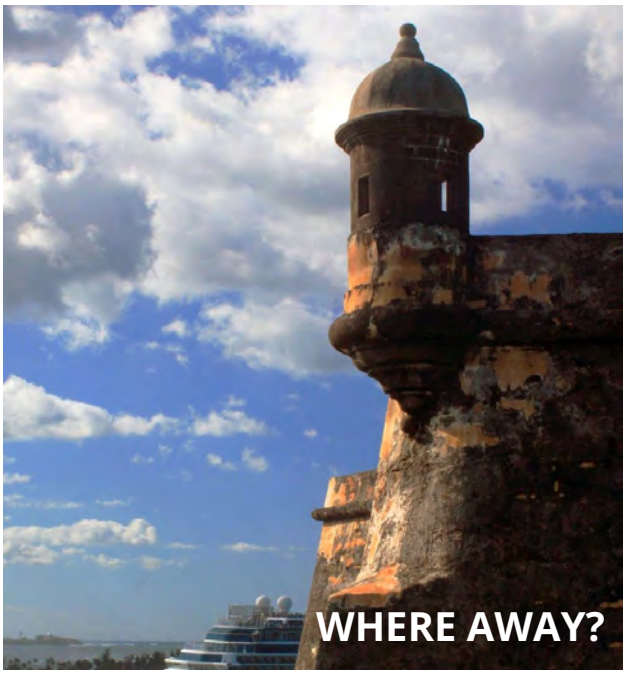
As you travel along California State Route 1, you can see both the Pigeon Point and Point Arena lighthouses, which are tied for tallest light on the West Coast.

One of the most picturesque lights on the Pacific coast, Pigeon Point stands on a rocky peninsula, a landmark for ships approaching San Francisco Bay from the south.

The point and lighthouse took their name from the ship *Carrier Pigeon*, which wrecked there in 1853. The land surrounding the lighthouse is preserved as a California State Historic Park; it's also on the National Register of Historic Places. Pigeon Point has a hostel for those wishing to stay overnight at the park.

The original Fresnel lens is now on display in the Fog Signal Room. A light mounted outside the lens room rotates with six beams and is still an active aid to navigation.

The lighthouse itself has been closed for repairs since December 2001, but you can view the lighthouse from the Pigeon Point Light Station State Historic Park grounds or take a virtual tour. *–Bridget Doerner*



ANSELMO MIRANDA

■ Email ensign@hq.usps.org by Feb. 15 with the location depicted here for a chance to win a gift from our Ship's Store. We will choose a winner at random from all correct responses. No one correctly identified the Fall 2023 location of Canal Park in Duluth, Minnesota. The Ensign is always accepting new photos for Where away? Send your photos to the above email for possible inclusion in an upcoming issue!



Tell us a story

The Ensign magazine features stories and photos from boaters like you. Join our award-winning team of contributors with your how-to projects, boating misadventures, exciting cruising yarns and everything in between.

Email us your story ideas or send us your photos and articles for publication in one of our upcoming issues. We want to work with boaters who have been there, done that and learned a lot along the way. Shoot us an email at ensign@hq.usps.org to get started.

We can't wait to work with you.

THE ENSIGN WAYBACK MACHINE

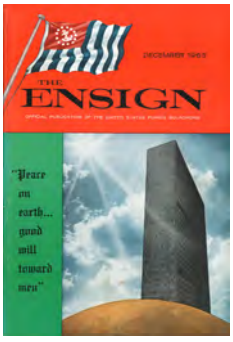
Potomac Pilot's Perilous Passage

Squadron Amateur Sailor Crosses Atlantic in 30-Footer

BY HARRY E. SMITH, AP, POTOMAC RIVER SQUADRON

DECEMBER 1963

The Civil Rights Movement and the assassination of President John F. Kennedy took center stage in 1963. The year also saw the introduction of ZIP codes and the full-scale eruption of Beatlemania in the United States. The following article appeared on p. 41 of The Ensign's December issue and is presented here in its original form. *–The Editors*



■ Stanley Jablonski, a member of Potomac Squadron, sailed his 30-ft. sloop *Amethyst* from Gdansk, Poland—a 6,000-mile voyage in open seas that lasted for 107 adventure-filled days. He was dismasted in the Baltic Sea, and in the North Sea and the English Channel he sailed through "some of the worst water!" When only 100 miles from the U. S. coast he was storm-tossed by hurricane Beulah.

Jablonski gained his experience on Chesapeake Bay, sailing small craft, but he never had been out on the ocean. He became conversant with the "know how" by having taken the Piloting course last winter, offered by the Potomac Squadron. Later he learned the technique of taking sun sights at high noon.

Leaving Poland, he carried no navigational aids other than a compass, charts, and a portable transistor radio. A stranger in England gave him a direction finder. Using his transistor plus his direction finder, he homed in on a lightship at the mouth of Chesapeake Bay during a heavy fog so dense he almost collided with another vessel before seeing it.

His auxiliary engine out of commission for four days, he sailed past Cape Henry. Having been wet for four days and sleepless for 48 hours, he dropped anchor off Ocean View, Virginia. That night a 30-knot Northeaster parted his anchor rope, which required him to signal for help.

The Coast Guard responded promptly and towed him two miles to a Norfolk marina. Crestfallen, he observed, "This is the worst part of the voyage, to come in on the end of a tow rope."

Sailor Jablonski first saw the likes of *Amethyst* in Georgetown, Maryland. He learned that it had been built in his native Poland and promptly ordered a duplicate and flew to Gdansk to take delivery.

He started home on 31 May but trouble soon overtook his adventure. Shortly thereafter high seas and winds of the notoriously rough Baltic

splintered his mast.

There were ships all about him but he had no lights. He fired 25 distress rockets without receiving any help. Eventually, a German vessel approached and offered to tow him in which would have given salvage rights to his boat, but all he wanted was a bearing to the nearest harbor. “When I declined to take their tow, they refused to tell me the bearing I requested and left me there,” he said.



Friendly Danish and German fishermen helped him repair his sloop after which he altered his intended course from the northern to the southern route across the ocean, having had quite enough of “cold hands that ached for days.” After wrestling with the gales of the English Channel, he rested at Weymouth, England. The next stop, 19 days later, was Canary Islands where a heavy marine growth slowed his progress to two knots. Sailing from the islands 1 August, he, of course, was very much aware of the hurricane season. He thought he “had it made” when he arrived within 100 miles of the coast though he tried in vain to pick up weather reports. Late one night he tuned in a Miami station which told him hurricane Beulah was no longer a danger to the mainland, but did not place the area of the big blow.

Arriving at Hayes Marina, Annapolis, after 6,000 mile voyage from Poland, Stanley Jablonski unloads his 30-ft. sloop *Amethyst*. Buildings of U.S. Naval Academy appear in background. Mrs. Jablonski sailed up the Chesapeake from Norfolk with her husband.

Six hours later, another report placed Beulah “520 miles northeast of San Juan,” which was only 60 miles away. He calculated the storm would pass between him and the mainland, so he took down his light sails, put up a storm jib, and drifted all night. “Soon the storm passed and, although I took a beating, I didn’t lose sail or go overboard.”

A flat calm followed Beulah’s passing. He tried without success for the next six hours to start the engine and finally resorted to a canoe paddle. Off Hatteras, he ran into cold, brawling seas. Everything aboard was soaked and he slept that way for two nights.

This North Atlantic crossing was a gruelling test for an amateur sailor but, with his sturdy craft in the snug harbor of Annapolis, he plans to sell the *Amethyst* and buy a larger boat. This conforms to the usual pattern of behavior of men who love boats and the open waters of God’s great out-of-doors. ❖

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$1 per word, $25 minimum. Artwork is $25 per column inch. Email materials to hilly@hq.usps.org for a free quote.

Spring deadline: Feb. 1, 2024

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

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Agenda Highlights

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Change of Watch Celebration: Enjoy a night of festivities, a delicious dinner and live entertainment during the 2024 Annual Meeting Dinner-Dance. We'll welcome the 2024 Board of Directors in style and raise our glasses to the adventures ahead.

Register Now to Secure Your Spot!

Don't miss the boat on this incredible opportunity to connect, learn and celebrate with fellow members and boating partners. Your presence aboard is vital to making this annual meeting unforgettable! Register for events before the **Jan. 10** early bird deadline to save big!

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