

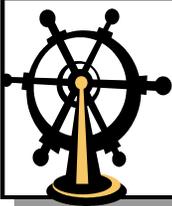
Cape Henry

Virginia Beach Sail and Power Squadron
A unit of the United States Power
Squardons®

Flashes

December 2013

Volume 46, No. 8



From the Helm

Cdr Bill Schwieder, AP

Happy Winter Solstice, meaning the sun reached its southernmost declination and is now heading North, it's the first day of winter, and Christmas is just a couple of days away. See the highlights of our Christmas Party in this issue. The annual Grand Illumination Parade and Chili Dump took place on a weekend that was very chilly with blustery winds. Despite the cold weather, the Chili Dump was attended with a good turnout (over 15) and four squadron boats. Other boats chose to cancel due to the stormy weather and predicted sea conditions in the bay. I want to thank Scott and Cathy McKinley along with John and Virginia Stout for their enthusiastic leadership in making this a very memorable event.

While the Chili Dump was underway, your SEO, Admin Officer and Commander were in Cambridge, MD at the Hyatt Regency. We participated in the D-5 Fall Conference focused on education. Throughout the many sessions we were reminded of the critical importance our educational offerings mean to squadron membership for both recruiting and retention. From the basic boating course to the advanced grade and elective courses, educational offerings make the USPS exceptional among all boating organizations. In addition to our certified instructors, we have a growing selection of online courses. Eventually, most USPS courses and seminars will be available online as well as in the classroom. USPS is unique in its ability to provide access to marine related education.

Along with 5 other students from D-5, I just completed an extensive Canadian Sail and Power Squadron Electronic Navigation course. The entire course was conducted using *GoToMeeting* internet tools. Students and Instructors completed weekly 2-hour classes from their homes. The purpose of this experiment was to make recommendations on adjusting the Canadian course material for future USPS students. I was very

impressed with the breadth and quality of this material. I expect this to become a USPS offering during 2014.

If you have attended any recent meetings since you probably enjoyed meeting several of our newest and most active members. The Switzers and the McKinleys and the Nelson family quickly made their presence known with a high level of involvement and enthusiasm. Jamie and Jen Switzer will be relocating to Florida in the near future due to Jamie's business. A Florida squadron will gain two members full of energy and the willingness to participate and make a difference. When Scott McKinley retires from active duty as a USCG Captain, he and Cathy are thinking of following a dream and becoming "Loopers" like our members the Christensens whose boat is currently waiting out the winter on the Great Lakes. Susan Nelson and her son Zach are bringing their same enthusiasm and dedication they have for the Sea Scouts to VBSPS. In addition to volunteering to help with squadron events, Susan was recently elected to serve on the Executive Committee and Zach was recently appointed to serve as Squadron Supply Officer. I should add that the Switzers, the McKinleys and Susan Nelson all received a coveted Merit Mark for exceptional service to our squadron in their first year of membership along with 21 other members.

I want to thank Evelyn Miles for donating a large number of items for us to use to raise additional funds. We will auction these items in the spring. The January Dinner Meeting is on **January 8th**, the 2nd Wednesday at the Cypress Point Golf Course Club House. Even though the meeting is only 7 days after New Year's Day, don't miss it.

To our newer members, please take advantage of the opportunities that build lasting friendships. Don't be bashful about trying out the new experiences that active squadron participation offers. Besides enjoying the on-water fun events, plan to take some classes and watch for course offerings from our SEO. Have questions? Call someone on the Bridge. Volunteer for an assignment.

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EXPAND YOUR LEADERSHIP HORIZONS

Serving as Officer or Committee Chair?

ATTEND WINTER TRAINING SESSION

14-16 February 2014

**Conference Center at the Maritime Institute
Linthicum Heights, Maryland**

If you have been contacted by the Nominating Committee to fill an Officer or Committee position for next year, or if you would like a leadership position later in the future, the District Winter Training Session is for you. This weekend event prepares incoming squadron officers and committee members to assume their positions with the confidence instilled by knowing what you are supposed to do.

It is a great weekend at a great location! The Maritime Institute is the graduate school of the Merchant Marine. It is a self-contained campus with classrooms, simulators, auditoriums, hotel, and an award winning dining facility. It is near BWI Airport, an easy drive up the Baltimore-Washington Parkway from Washington D. C.

To sign up, go to District Website www.uspsd5.org. For questions or for more information contact SEO Dick Nitschke at nitschke@infionline.net or 757-440-9069.

The Report Card



Lt/C Richard Nitschke, SN
Squadron Educational
Officer

do not make that presentation. The lesson plan is submitted for grading. There is no final examination.

Successful completion of the ID course will significantly contribute to your communication skills before an audience in any situation. It also earns you the coveted "USPS Certified Instructor" designation, which is good for four years. *Sign up today*

NEW INSTRUCTOR DEVELOPMENT COURSE

We all know United States Power Squadrons has an impressive offering of educational courses. A variety of subjects are available to boaters wishing to increase their knowledge and comfort level in their nautical hobby. Among them is a course named **Instructor Development**.

How does a subject dealing with grooming instructors fit in with courses like Seamanship, Piloting, Junior Navigation, Marine Electronics, Engine Maintenance and Cruise Planning? It is simple. As we grow in knowledge it is natural to share it with others. As we ascend to officer positions, it is natural to want to make a good impression for ourselves and be a good representative of our organization.

Instructor Development provides you with tools in effective communications. It hones skills that can be used anywhere – speaking to a Sea Scout group – presenting a report on the Boat Show – teaching a Bible Study subject for church – presiding as commander of your squadron – presenting America's Boating Course to a classroom of students.

We have a new **Instructor** Development course. We will use it for the class starting 6 January. In eight sessions we will cover the essentials of good communications to an audience. Students will make three presentations – a 5 minute, a 10 minute, and a 15 minute. The 15 minute will be supported by a lesson plan. You will be graded by your peers – the other students in the class. Students must also do a lesson plan for an hour presentation, but they



Yeoman's Desk

Lt/C Charles Abatsis, AP
Administrative Officer

JANUARY MEMBERSHIP- MEETING

Our first monthly dinner meeting of the new year will be the second Wednesday of the month

Wednesday, 8 January 2014

Cypress Point Country Club

Social hour 1800 Dinner 1830

Meeting & Speaker 1930

Mark your calendar and watch for a flyer on the meeting details and dinner menu.



Navigation Lights

Let's talk navigation lights. Cruising at night can be beautiful. You may want to stay a little longer to catch that sun setting over the horizon, maybe mechanical issues cause you to stay out into the night or perhaps a storm blows up in the middle of the day causing limited visibility. To be safe, always check to be certain your navigation lights are operating properly before you leave.

LED or incandescent? Until recent years the standard for nav lights has been incandescent bulbs. The new LED lights are becoming more popular and the price is dropping as more are sold. Incandescent bulbs generate heat, suffer from corrosion at the base of the bulb or in the light socket and will burn out eventually. LED lights run cool, are sealed units that don't suffer from corrosion and may never have to be changed as they have life spans of 10,000 or more hours. LED bulbs are much easier on your batteries as they only draw milliamps compared to one to two full amps for incandescent bulbs.

Light switches like all switches on boats work longer and better when used frequently. Switches allowed to sit idle for long periods will corrode internally and fail to operate, especially in salt air. Bulbs will many times lose contact with the fixture due to corrosion. ABYC recommends: One operation, such as one switch or one position of a switch, shall display the complete navigation light configuration as required for the vessel while underway. Another switch or switch position shall display the anchor light only. Switch functions shall be appropriately labeled. I survey many older boats that are not switched properly.

The rules for proper light display on power driven vessels up to 20 meters (65 feet) including sailing vessels under power or motor sailing: A power driven vessel while underway shall exhibit a masthead light, sidelights and a

stern light. NOTE: A power driven vessel of less than 12 meters ((39 feet) in length may exhibit an all-round white light and sidelights instead of the masthead light forward and stern light. The sidelights may be combined in one lantern. The sidelights shall be placed not less than one meter (3 feet) below the masthead light or the all-round light. While at anchor and not in a designated anchorage area an all-round light must be displayed by all vessels.

Can your lights be seen? Minimum range requirements in nautical miles for power vessels (including sailing vessels under power and motor sailing are required to display the following:

For vessels less than 12 meters (39 ft): masthead light = 2 nm; sidelights or combination lights = 1 nm; stern light = 2 nm. All-round light may be used in lieu of masthead and stern lights and may also be used as an anchor light.

For vessels 12 meters (39 ft.) to less than 20 meters (65 ft.): Masthead light = 3 nm; sidelights = 2 nm; stern light = 2 nm..

Brighter lights are always better, but how can you tell what you have on your boat? With older lights it may be impossible to tell; newer lights are required to have the range marked on the outside of the light lens or case. The format would be USCG2NM, etc, Better visibility can be achieved by keeping your lenses clean inside and out and making sure they have not oxidized or changed color from age reducing the effective range. Replacement lenses can be purchased for most lights. When underway during reduced visibility or at anchor you want to be seen by other boats. Pay a little attention to your nav and anchor lights before you leave the dock and you will be safer on the water.

See you around the docks!

P/C Rick Milner, AP

Cape Henry Flashes

Editor/Publisher P/D/C Dick Nitschke, SN

Co-Editor/Publisher P/C Frances Zahn, AP

Staff Photographer - Any Member



Commander Bill Schwieder and Educational Officer Dick Nitschke accepting the first place award for the greatest increase in teaching advanced grade courses.



Above, various awards won by Virginia Beach Sail & Power Squadron at the recent District Fall Conference.



At left, the esteemed and honorable Past District Commanders enjoy front row seating at the Fall Conference in Cambridge, Maryland.

2013 VBSPS Christmas Party



Chili Dump and Grand Illumination





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District 5

America's Boating Club®