

Official newsletter of the
Atlanta Sail and Power Squadron

www.usps-atlanta.org



WATERLOG

United States Power Squadrons
Sail and Power Boating - America's Boating Club®

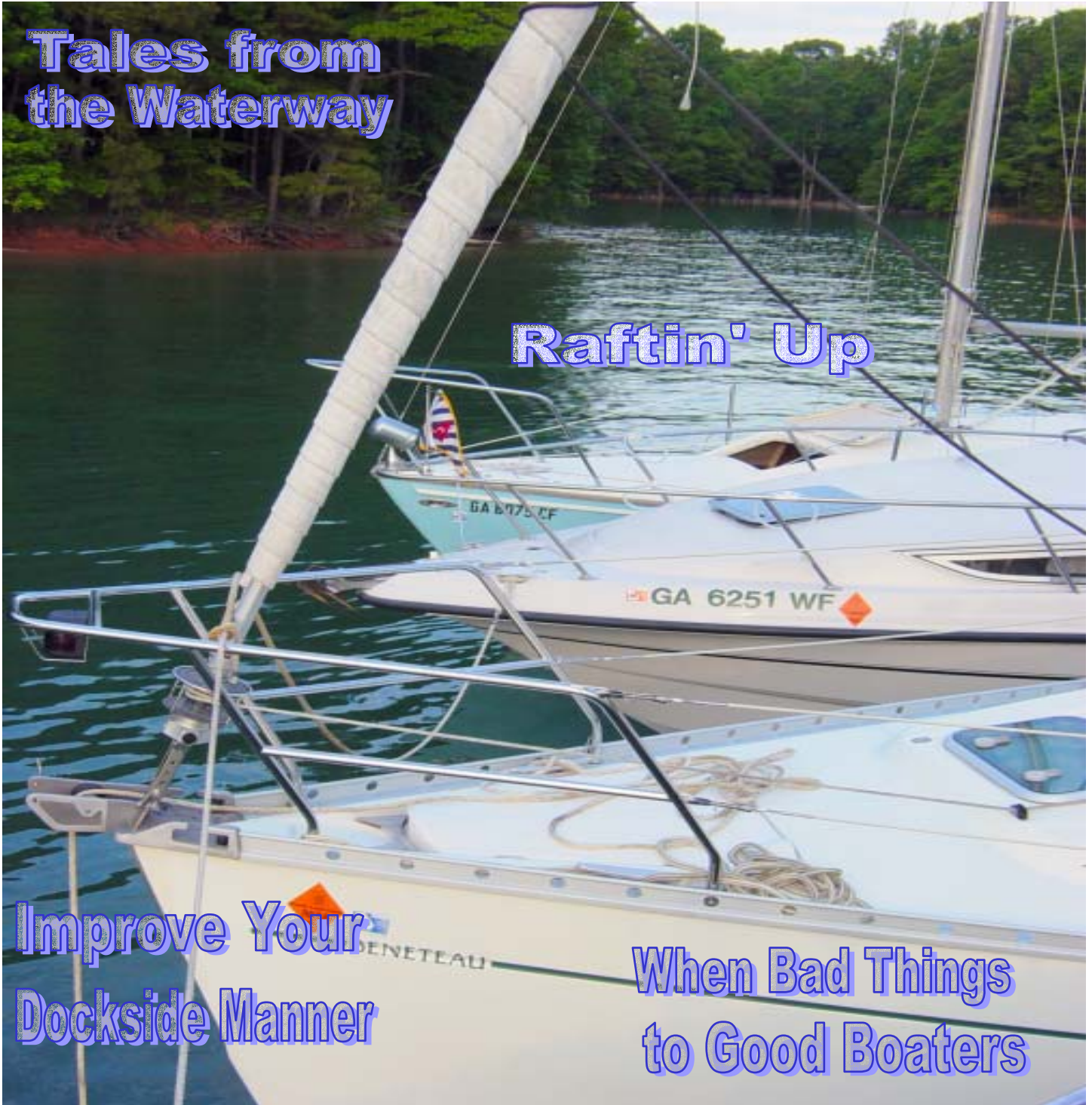


**Tales from
the Waterway**

Raftin' Up

**Improve Your
Dockside Manner**

**When Bad Things
to Good Boaters**



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The Waterlog

The Waterlog is published monthly, with at least 10 issues per year.

It is published by and for the squadron members by the staff of the Squadron Secretary and is mailed to the listed address of all current members and advertisers.

All members in good standing, and approved non-member advertisers may submit articles and items for publication. They receive no gratuity.

The editors reserves the right to revise, change or reject any materials submitted to the Waterlog, consistent with standards of accuracy, fairness, good taste and available space, subject to the approval of the Squadron Commander.

Please send comments and suggestions to:-

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Cover photo: The 15 May Raft-up

Commander's Message



Cdr Hans Meier, JN

Well another 30 days has flown by. Where is the year going?

Congratulation to the new Commander's Light House award recipients:

Lt. John D. Speiser, S for his great work in the Chaplain's area; Lt. R.M. "Mac" Barrier, P in the area of membership involvement and training; Lt. Lisa P. Herndon, AP and Lt. David B. Herndon, AP for their great work on keeping the squadron information flowing by way of the "Waterlog"; Lt. Patti Watson and Lt. Doug Watson for their planning of great squadron activities and their most current the great ICW trip from Savannah to Fla. This cruise brought back travel outside of the metro area which has not been done in a number of years. It was a great trip.

Way to go for all those squadron members that completed the Operational Training (OT), the word on the street was that it was the largest class we have had in a long time.

Also, way to go to all those members that completed Instructor Development (ID). We look forward to these people doing a lot of training for the squadron for the months and years to come.

If you missed the May general meeting you missed the best general meeting we have had in a long time. We had an outstanding presentation by the members that went on the ICW trip. Members who went on the trip - Past Commanders included—kept telling me, "What happens on the ICW, stays on the ICW." Nevertheless, they told us a lot. They did this presentation with overheads, pictures, computer pictures, a handout of ICW flag communication rules, video and tied everything together with poems and topped it all off singing ballads. So as Commander I am going to close my comments on this event by saying "What happened at the general meeting stays at the general meeting."

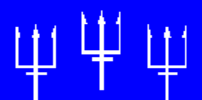
I would also like to thank Lt. Elliot Hammer for putting on a great Safety Week as he always does, and thank also all members that help Elliot make this program work again this year.

Commendations to Lt. Eric Harris, S, for his work on our new web site and getting some of the old bugs worked out. If you have not seen it, please go out and look it over at www.usps-atlanta.org. If you have any comments, please let Eric know as he has told me many times it is a "Work in Progress and he needs input from everyone".

Thanks to Lt/C Jeff Wise, N, for handling the June Excomm meeting for me while I was on vacation. More thanks to Lt/C Margaret Sherrod, JN, for handling the June General meeting while I was being inducted as an officer at another organization (Rotary) and could not be two places at one time. It sure is great to have a great Bridge.

Please remember that the membership initiative this year is the "Power of One." You are encouraged to bring guests to any and all squadron events – and be sure to wear your name badge. I look forward to seeing everyone at the next event and are you signed up for the TENN trip? Places to stay are going fast so get with Paul and make your reservation.

P.S. Also congratulation go out to P/C Danny Tompkins, JN, who at a meeting did not only do the "Power of One" he did the "Power of Two" and I look forward to the two new members he is bringing in.



Squadron Happenings

ATTENTION, NEW MEMBERS!!

By Lt Mac Barrier
Chairperson, New Member Involvement



What is my definition of a “new member”? Well, specifically, it refers to those of you who do not become actively involved in the squadron within two years of joining.

If this definition includes you, what are you missing? Primarily you’re missing a lot of fun meeting great people who enjoy boating as much as you do. In addition, you will also pick up new and better ideas on safety, maintenance and navigation, just to name a few.

You paid for membership in this fine organization, so you might as well avail yourself of its benefits. How do you do this? Simple—come to our meetings, on-the-water events, classes and seminars. Remember, if you don’t give us a chance to see you, then there is no way we can get to know you and what you are looking for us to do for you.

Meetings and classes are usually no problem. Just show up and we will get to know you and what your areas of interest are. We will take it from there.

On-the-water events, however, are another thing. We hear a goodly number of reasons for not coming to these events. The most common one is, “I don’t own a boat.” Folks, that is not a valid reason. Approximately forty percent of our members don’t own a boat. Our boat owning members always have space on their boats and will welcome you aboard. We have never left anyone on shore that expresses a desire to come out and participate in our events. Just give the On-the-Water Chairman, or myself, a call and we will put you in contact with a skipper—especially a fun person like you. Our telephone numbers are in your roster,

Please come out and join the Squadron at all of its activities. We need you and your ideas to help us become a better organization not only for you but also for the boating community. See you at our next activity. OK?

IS YOUR BOAT SAFE?

Lt Patti Price was featured on an *11 Alive* news story highlighting Boat Safety Week that aired during the 6:00 pm newscast on 22 May. In this story, Patti performed a vessel safety check on Pamela Keene's pontoon boat. The VSC was performed at Aqualand Marina's public dock area. She also owns a sailboat, and this was the first time she had participated in a vessel safety check. *11 Alive* sent a reporter and a cameraman to film the inspection. The filming was a bit rushed due to a light rain and the threat of more serious weather. Items covered on the newscast included PFDs, flares, fire extinguishers, and proper ventilation for engines.

TALES OF THE WATERWAY:

Captains and Crews Share Stories from the ICW Cruise at General Membership Meeting

Atlanta Squadron members at the Foghorn Grill on 20 May for the May General Membership meeting. The program featured pictures and stories of the ICW cruise presented by the captains and crew of four of the boats on the cruise: Paul Marsal of the *Uptick*, Ed Troncalli and crew of the *Sea Deck*, Glenn and Sheryl LaBoda of the *Melee*, and David and Lisa Herndon of the *Quintessence*.

Each captain and crew presented their photos from the cruise and shared their poetic renditions of their experiences during the week. See page 4 for these creative, if somewhat off-key, descriptions of the cruise.

Cdr Meier presented his Commander’s Lighthouse Awards to Lts Doug and Patti Watson in recognition of their planning and coordination of social and on-the-water events, to Lt John Speiser in recognition of his service as Squadron Chaplain, to Lt Mac Barrier in recognition of his work as Member Involvement chair, and to Lts Lisa and David Herndon for editing and publishing the *Waterlog*.



Cdr Hans Meier, Lts Patti and Doug Watson



Cdr Meier, Lt Mac Barrier



Lt David Herndon, Cdr Meier,
Lt Lisa Herndon



P/D/C Bob Ginsberg introduced his fiancé, Pat Aronoff. They are planning a June wedding

Squadron Happenings

ICW ADVENTURES

The following are the poetic accounts from the crews of the various boats on the ICW Cruise:

Crew of Melee – Glenn and Sheryl Laboda

Hickory Dickory Dougherty's dock.
That's where the party started to rock
A low country boil
And check the oil
Then we all headed south like a flock

Crew of Sea Deck – Ed and Genie Troncalli, Tim and Barbara Tyson, Margaret Sherrod, Kevin Schoonover, Carol Jordan (tune: Gilligan's Island theme)

On Sunday the crew of the *Sea Deck*
Headed South: Red-Right-Return
But little did they know how much
Their foreheads would burn
(their foreheads would burn)

The first day saw a lot of rain
They had to button down
There was enough rain in the air
They thought the boats would drown
(They thought the boats would drown)

The second day began with rain
It really really poured
But never would the crew become
The least bit bored
(The least bit bored)

They tiptoed through the shoals
And tried to miss all the sand
But *Uptick* had enough of that
They found some dry land
(they found some dry land)

The boats turned back to offer help
And aid on this cruise
But what they found they needed most
Was plenty of booze
(was plenty of booze)

At four o'clock the tide came in
To Florida they went
The sunshine – with them all the time –
Was heavenly sent
(was heavenly sent)

They ate and drank and hiked and slept
For five whole days and nights
Who cares if they got sun-burned
Or had mos-quito bites
(or had mos-quito bites)

With *Quintessence* home
The fleet's complete
And everybody's here...

We have *Gideon*....

And *Pelican Rock*...
And *Sea Deck* and *Melee*
There's *Uptick*
We had *Hooked* (a while)
The Pow'r Squad Fam-lee
(The Pow'r Squad Fam-lee)

Crew of Gideon - Roy and Mary Stegall (tune: Gilligan's Island theme)

The ICW waterway cruise
Began on May the first
We gathered at the Dougherty's house
And there we quenched our thirst
(And there we quenched our thirst)

On Sunday we did cruise along
In rain to Jekyll Isle
But the hotel van forgot our call
So we sat and sat a while
(Yes we sat and sat awhile)

On Monday we continued south
Across St. Andrew's sound
But sadly we did miss the mark
And then we ran aground
(And then we ran aground)

So now all boats are headed north
To see what we might see
Our boats are all Savannah bound;
Thank God we're floating free!
Thanks God we're floating free!

Crew of Pelican Rock: Bill and Kathy Dougherty, Doug and Patti Watson

The *Pelican Rock* had four aboard
And not a navigator among us
We talked and discussed to reason accord
Then follow the GPS to settle the fuss

Crew of the Uptick – Paul and Edy Marsal, Danny and Margie Tompkins, Bob Ginsberg

Uptick is quite a pretty boat
One of the neatest vessels afloat
And even when she's on wet sand
She still looks mighty grand!

We listened intently on "68"
Hoping to hear support from our fellow mates
The Lebeda's knew of our plight
And tried to help with all their might

They sucked our line into their turbine
At which time Glenn said:
"We're through and so are you."

Never the less the *Uptick* crew had run in the sun
But the tide had won
So Captain Paul took lots of grief
And floating free was quite a relief

* * * * *

The crew of *Quintessence*, David and Lisa Herndon, still traumatized from their day stranded on the tidal flats, received the Water Repellent Boat Award at the End-of-the-Line party. That inspired the following:

The Water-Repellent Boat

Our boat has made many a cruise
Along the Waterway
And more than once she's paid her dues
On a sandbar for a day.
She seems to seek the shallow places
And run upon the ground,
And there we sit with reddened faces
Till the tide comes back around.

Chorus:

'Cause she's a water-repellent boat.
A water-repellent boat.
She's rather sit in the mud than float,
'Cause she's a water-repellent boat.

After all these misadventures
I think I understand,
That when upon the sea she ventures
She tries to find dry land,
So when planning a waterway cruise
It's now well understood.
You pack enough snacks and booze
For six hours in the mud.

Repeat chorus

* * * * *

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Ed Lee
3801 Parian Ridge Rd NW
Atlanta, GA 30327
welee@bellsouth.net
404-233-8450

Karen and Ward Alexander
2102 Shillingwood Dr
Kennesaw, GA 30152
karenalex@earthlink.net
770-422-6655

Welcome back

Greg, Holly and Ryan Judge
140 Enclave Circle
Atlanta, GA 30342

gjudge@southestpest.com
404-843-1163

Squadron Happenings

SQUADRON KICKS OFF SUMMER WITH ANCHORING CLINIC AND RAFT-UP

Summer got started a little early on Saturday, 15 May, when the Atlanta Squadron met for an anchoring clinic at the Holiday Marina Pavilion, and followed it up with a raft-up on Lake Lanier.

Lt Mac Barrier led the anchoring clinic. Mac taught the basic techniques for solo anchoring, as well as for rafting up. He also shared a number of tips to make anchoring easy, safe and effective.

The raft-up included seven boats, nineteen people and two dogs. There were great *hors d'oeuvres* to share, lots of stories to tell and even a little singing. Eric and Mary Harrs chose this event to celebrate their seven-



The Harrs family celebrates their 17th anniversary



The raft-up breaks up at sunset

teenth wedding anniversary.

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS ?

*by Sif/C Laura Teatero, SN
National Membership Committee*

At this time of year when you receive your Renewal Notice, you may reflect on the question of why you joined USPS, as you decide if you should send a check for your renewal or decide not to bother.



Perhaps you joined because you attended a raft out, had a great time and made some good friends. Or was it because you bought a new boat and the reduction in insurance for Power Squadron members looked very attractive? If you had just purchased a new boat you were probably considering the safety of your family and wanted to learn more about safety on the water. Or did the appeal of contributing to your community through the various civic programs offered by your Squadron make your decision?

Whatever your reason for joining 2-3 or 10 years ago, those same opportunities are there for you today. You now have the opportunity to 'give back' and help other new members by teaching a course, by helping them with their new vessel, and by greeting them when there is a social event. Yes it's all there for YOU. Reach out and take / give all you can. DON'T DELAY. SEND YOUR CHECK TODAY

UPCOMING EVENTS

by Lt Patti Watson

LUAU BEACH PARTY RAFT-UP

On Saturday, 26 June we will have a Luau Beach Party Raft-up.

Starting about 1300hr, come by boat and we'll raft up and dingy to the beach for games, music and food.

If you do not want to come by boat, we'll get there by land. Get your tropical shirts and grass skirts out and come and enjoy an old-fashioned luau. We'll have something roasting in the sand pit; you bring something to share and as always, whatever you choose to drink. A special prize will be awarded for the best decorated boats and maybe for some other things too. There will be a small charge for the meat or fish or whatever. Don't miss this one. It will be a time to remember. The exact location will be in the DR or you can call Doug Watson for directions. 770-458-1649. Please RSVP as soon as possible.

HOUSE PARTY AND RAFT-UP

P/C Ed Troncalli and Genie are hosting a house party and "dock-up" at their home on Lake Lanier on Sat, 10 July. Ed & Genie have graciously offered to supply the meats and asked that everyone bring a side dish as follows:

- If you own a power boat, bring hors d'oeuvres or salad
- If you own a sail boat, bring veggies or a dessert.
- If you are vessel challenged (you don't own a boat), bring whatever (chips, cookies, etc.)

You can RSVP and get directions on our website. Also please note on the RSVP what food you will bring.

???JUNE PUZZLER???

An American pilot was shot down over occupied France in 1943. He is rescued by the French resistance. They keep him hidden for several weeks while arranging to smuggle him out of the country. During this time, the pilot perfected his French until he could speak like a native. On the appointed night, he was taken to a small local tavern to meet his escort. While there, several German soldiers suddenly burst in. The officer in charge took one look around the room and said, "That's him. Arrest him!" The pilot had no distinctive clothing, looked no different from any of the other patrons, and spoke fluent French. How did the German officer identify him so quickly?



From the Bridge

EDUCATION UPDATE

by Lt/C Kevin Schoonover, AP



Lt/C Kevin Schoonover, AP
Education Officer

Course Update: This past Fall and Winter Semesters have been busy and in some cases quite long. The following squadron members have successfully completed all course work for the following:

Marine Electronics: James Cleveland, David Herndon, Lisa Herndon, Hans Meier, Margaret Sherrod, Jeff Wise

Piloting: Jim Benton, Mavis Benton, Jeff Clark, Eric Harrs, Mary Harrs, Jim

Jordan, Carol Jordan, Glenn LaBoda, Michael Lofton, John Means, Cynthia Means, William Nation, Jim O'Neil, Roy Stegall, Charles Troncalli, Wayne Flanagan

Advanced Piloting: Patti Price

Congratulations are in order for a job well done for both the instructors and the students!!

Fall Classes: Registration for the Fall 2004 semester will begin on July 1. Classes in Seamanship, Advanced Piloting, Engine Maintenance, and Navigation will be offered. The classes will begin at 7:00PM at the Heiskell School on September 13th.

Shiphape Boating: These days it's hard to find anything worth watching on TV! However, I have found a program that should have something in it for everyone. If you should be lucky enough to receive the DIY (Do It Yourself) Network in your area, try tuning to "Shiphape Boating". The program broadcasts on Saturday's at 10:00AM and 1:00PM, on Sunday's at 9:30PM, and early Monday mornings at 12:30AM for you night owls!

The host, John Greviskis, is knowledgeable and takes you step by step through a number of do it yourself type projects. Recent programs have included:

- Installing a Marine Stereo
- Understanding Battery Chargers
- Boat Ramp Etiquette
- Sizing and Installing Trim Tabs
- Basic Boat Operations
- Buying a Used Boat
- Bottom Paints and Coatings
- Safety Equipment
- Installing Radio Antennas

In addition to the show, you can visit their website at diynetwork.com and review the highlights from the program including step-by-step instructions on whatever the subject was for the week. The program is well worth the effort to watch and observe the minor tools and techniques required to install the many components on your boat.



Lt/C Jeff Wise, N
Executive Officer



Lt/C Margaret Sherrod, JN
Administrative Officer



Lt/C Sheryl Laboda, S
Treasurer



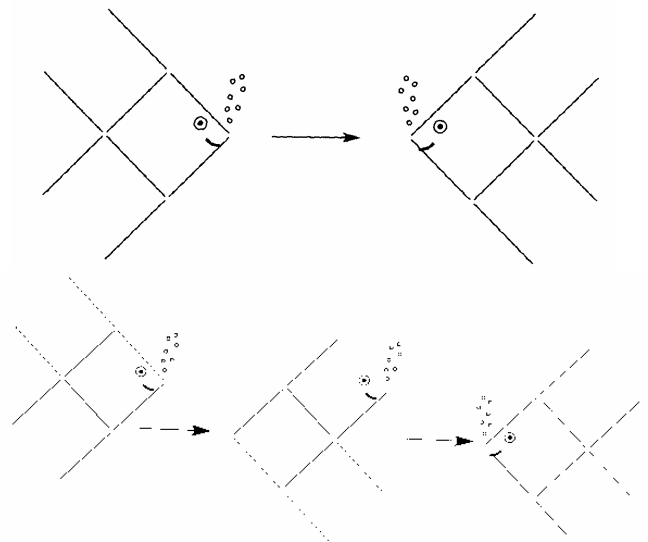
Lt/C Frank Taylor, P
Secretary



Lt/C Kevin Schoonover, AP
Education Officer

??? May PUZZLER Answer???

Harry the Happy Halibut is swimming to the right. Move 3 lines (and his eye, smile and bubbles) so that he swims to the left.



The Bulletin Board

Check out the latest District 17 Newsletter at <http://www.usps-d17.org>

New E-mail Address
 Richard and Linda Morrison:
 rem_lcm@bellsouth.net

New mailing address
 Haim M. Zukerman
 8750-12 Gladiolus Dr.
 Ft Myers, FL 33908

Corrected phone number
 Paul and Edy Marsal
 770-394-5247

Looking for property
 If you have in your possession any items that belong to the Atlanta Squadron or the district organization, please notify the Squadron Property Officer, Lt. Ryan Troncalli. Send him an e-mail at rtroncalli@troncalli.com identifying the property you have, where it is located and any other pertinent details.

Speakers at Upcoming Meetings
 17 June: Brandon Smith, Manager—West Marine store
 15 July : Ken Hodge, Boat detailing and restoration

TN River Cruise
 The Tennessee River Cruise is set for 22-25 July. Cruise Coordinator Paul Marsal has held 10 rooms at the Euclhee Marina for the Atlanta Squadron. Contact Paul at 770-394-5347, or tootiesfun@mindspring.com to reserve your room.

House party and "Dock-up"
 P/C Ed Troncalli and Genie are hosting a house party and "dock-up" at their home on Lake Lanier on Sat, 10 July. RSVP and get directions on our website.

See our newly redesigned website <http://www.usps->

USPS EVENTS: JULY 2004

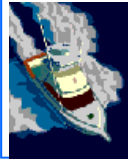
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 Indep Day	5 Indep Day observed	6	7	8 Ex-Comm Meeting	9	10 Raft-up & House party
11	12	13	14	15 Gen'l Members Meeting	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23 TN River cruise	24 TN River cruise
25 TN River cruise	26	27	28	29	30	31

General Membership Meeting at the Foghorn Grill, 3230 Medlock Bridge Rd, Norcross, GA

ExComm Meetings at the Hickory House, 5490 Chamblee-Dunwoody Rd, Dunwoody, GA

USPS EVENTS: AUGUST 2004

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12 Ex Comm Mtg	13	14 Boat Smart
15 Wa-terlog input due	16	17	18	19 Gen'l Members Mtg	20	21 Boat Smart
22	23	24	25	26	27	28 Raft-up and party
29	30	31				



Life on the Water

HOW MUCH WATER IS ENOUGH?

by Lt/C Frank Taylor, Jr.

After purchasing my boat two years ago at the Atlanta Boat Show, I spent countless hours reading books about boating in an effort to learn as much as I could about how to be a good captain. I was not new to boating but I figured I still had a lot to learn. I remember an article I read about navigating in unfamiliar waters. For some reason, one aspect of that article became embedded in my memory. The author had an entire section devoted to the concept of "what do I do now" where he listed several potential situations boaters could find themselves in and what a good captain should do.

I noticed the part about what you should do if you find yourself flying across unfamiliar waters up on plane and suddenly realize that you are in shallow water. According to the author, your first reaction is probably to pull back on the throttle. He pointed out that it is the last thing you should do. Pulling back on the throttle, of course, would cause the boat to come off plane, causing your drive and maybe the hull to come into contact with the bottom. Instead, he suggested that you stay on plane, head for deeper water and pray. I remember thinking that this was good advice but I would probably never need to worry about that. After all, I'm not a risk taker. Well, I was wrong.

Over the Memorial Day Holiday, my wife and I decided to head to Destin, FL for some much-needed relaxation. Of course, I can't go to Destin without taking the boat. We spent Saturday at a well-known gathering spot near the East Pass called Crab Island. There were about 300 boats out that day and we were one of them. The water is shallow so you can drop anchor and get out and walk around. It was low tide, so I had to trim the drive up, shut down the engine and walk the boat in the last seventy-five yards or so.

As we left later that day, I did the same in reverse, walking the boat out to deeper water, then climbing on board to start the engine. As we headed out, my depth gauge read ten feet so I slowly increased throttle until I was up on plane cruising at about thirty mph.

Suddenly, a beep from my depth gauge commanded my attention, and to my horror, it was reading two feet!!! A quick glance over the side verified that I was in very shallow water. That in combination with the fact that my boat drafts almost forty inches with the drive down made my heart skip about ten beats!! Visions of my outdrive being stripped from the transom started flashing through my head!! I grabbed the throttle to jerk it back to neutral but then I suddenly remembered that article I read in a magazine a couple of years ago. Instead of slowing down, I focused on an area that I knew was very deep water and headed straight for it. Yes, I did remember to throw up a few prayers as well. After about 300 of the longest yards of my life, I finally saw the depth indicator read four feet, six feet, ten feet. . .

It was then that my wife said, "Hey, what are you doing?"

"Oh, nothing honey. Just looking at the water. It sure is nice, isn't it?"

To this day, she doesn't know what happened and how close we came to having a bad vacation.

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE WATERWAY



Range markers
on the ICW

During the May cruise, we encountered a problem not uncommon on the ICW these days. We ran aground on a tidal flat on a falling tide about midway in the tidal cycle. As a result, we enjoyed a private island for the next seven hours as we watched the water around us recede to a distance of more than a quarter mile, then return to a depth of more than seven feet. And we weren't the only ones. Most of the boats on the cruise spent some amount of time aground. With many hours of ICW cruising under our belts, we were more than a little embarrassed to find ourselves in this situation. The reasons we ran aground were many—and all were avoidable mistakes.

First, make sure your charts are really current. Our charts were published in 2001, not exactly old. However, the buoys marking the river entrance we were trying to find when our unfortunate event occurred had changed significantly since those charts were published. Our chart indicated we should turn between buoys 29 and 31. The correct turning point was between buoys 23 and 21. We turned about a half mile too soon, and about the time we figured out we were not in the right place, we hit the mud. (Interestingly, I checked some of the on-line charts, which one would expect to be current, and some still show the old buoy numbering.) Confirm your charts are the latest available, and obtain the current Notice to Mariners for any updates.

Second, don't let the red and green picket fence that marks the channel lull you into a false sense of confidence. Ninety-five percent of the time, it's almost mind-numbingly simple to find the next marker on the chart, locate it visually and steer for it. It's that other five percent that can get you into big trouble. One reason I mentioned above: the charts may be in error. In addition, markers may be missing or in the wrong place because of storms. In conditions of poor visibility, it may not be possible to see the next marker. Make sure you have a back-up navigation plan. Usually following a predetermined course heading from marker to marker is sufficient, but sometimes it may be necessary to obtain fixes from terrestrial objects or GPS.

The overall condition of the ICW is a major concern. Silting, shoaling and the lack of proper dredging has made the waterway nearly impassable in many places at or near low tide. Try to plan your cruise times to take advantage of maximum high water. Our rule of thumb is to plan to cruise for six or fewer hours each day, and to depart two to three hours before high tide. This will help ensure adequate depth in the channel for the duration of the cruise. Another useful technique is to steer your boat as if you are piloting a tug pushing an eighty-foot barge in front of you. As you make your course to keep the imaginary barge at center channel, you'll tend to steer the safest course.

Finally, don't forget what you learned in Piloting and Advanced Piloting. Mark danger bearings and danger angles for charted shoals and obstacles in advance. When possible, take your bearings on fixed objects rather than buoys. Don't leave the charted channel unless you are absolutely sure where you are going and the course you will follow to get there. If you have a GPS or a chartplotter, make sure you keep in synch with your paper charts. A technique we've found useful is to use a small post-it note with an arrow on it to mark our position on the paper charts. This makes it easy to compare to the chartplotter and cross-reference the information from the two sources.

Cruising the ICW is fun, and as navigation goes, relatively easy. But you should never, never take it for granted.



Life on the Water



Margie Tompkins, Edy and Paul Marsal at a "rest area" in St. Andrew's Sound.



Paul takes a fix on his position.



David and Lisa Herndon laid claim to their own island while their colleagues explored Cumberland Island.

WHEN BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD BOATERS—WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU RUN AGROUND

Running aground is more often an inconvenience than a danger; however, it can be a traumatic experience, especially if the grounding is unexpected and your vessel strikes the bottom when moving at significant speed. In this case, grounding can cause significant damage.

Whatever the circumstances, it is important to follow certain steps:

- Keep calm
- Check the crew for injuries
- Check for damage to the hull, steering or propulsion systems
- Check for any water coming in. If there is, stopping the leak has precedence over freeing the vessel.
- Determine which way deep water lies, if the tide is rising or falling, and if the wind and/or current are carrying the vessel harder aground.

The first instinct is usually to reverse the engine(s) and try and force the boat off. This action often will clog the raw water intake(s) and compound the problem.

If you are in a tidal area, the best technique is to have patience and wait for the tide to rise sufficiently to float you free (assuming, of course, your unfortunate event did not occur at high tide). In the meantime:

- Set an anchor. Make the bitter end of the anchor rode fast to the boat's stern cleats. Use the dinghy or life jackets to float the anchor as far out as possible. (Be sure to wear a life jacket.)
- If another anchor is available, set two anchors at acute angles off the stern.
- Keep the anchor rodes taut. Especially as the tide is rising, pull frequently on the rodes to kedge off the grounding.
- Protect the hull with any materials at hand
- Call for help. Set off distress signals if necessary
- Make ready the dinghy and make other preparations for abandoning ship.

What to do while waiting

While waiting for assistance to arrive or for the tide to rise:

- Take soundings around the boat to locate the deeper water or other obstacles.
- Ask other boats in the area to make as much wake as possible.

(Some folks on the ICW cruise had a Beatles' sing-along. Others spent several hours catching leaking diesel fuel from one tank and pouring it into the other.)

When to stay aground

If the hull is breached and you are taking on water, the boat is probably better off where it lies than in deeper water. You may want to take an anchor ashore to hold the boat or pull it farther up until temporary repairs can be made.

Source: Chapman Piloting, 63rd Edition, chpts 4 & 11



AFTerthoughts

IMPROVING YOUR DOCKSIDE MANNER

On a Saturday afternoon a few weeks back, we were enjoying an adult beverage on the dock after an evening and a day on the water. We noticed one of the boats from our dock coming in, so we walked down to their slip to help them dock.

The boat is the captain's first boat, a thirty-foot cruiser. He is still learning to handle a twin-screw vessel this size. Add in a crosswind, and you've got excitement on the dock. After the fourth or fifth unsuccessful attempt, more people came to assist. The poor guy must have made at least a dozen tries to back into his slip before he made it, with six of us helping out.

I feel for him. I've been there. Admit it, we all have. Ok, maybe it never took you twelve attempts, but we've all had our struggles getting into a slip.

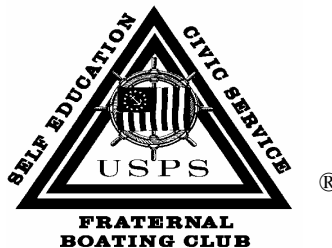
A wise boater and Past Commander once told me, "A man can sail single-handedly around the world. He can bring a thirty foot sailboat through a hurricane. But his skills are judged by how he docks his boat. The guy who only navigates to the gas dock and back, then slides the boat into the slip on the first try is judged a better boater than the true expert who may have to make a second or third attempt."

There are some basic techniques you need to know, but in my opinion, there are only two secrets to successful docking. These are: (1) practice, practice, practice; and (2) accept all the help you can get. Of course, perfect conditions and a bow thruster come in handy, too.

Another great piece of docking advice I heard from another Past Commander: "Never approach a dock or another boat any faster than you're willing to hit it." Because eventually, you'll probably hit it. Take it slow.

Let's face it, a good job docking is a pleasure to behold. Someday I, too, will feel confident putting an eighty-footer into a hundred-foot inside slip at maximum tidal current with a fifteen knot crosswind (yeah, right!). In the meantime, I'll work to perfect my technique, and I'll try to be there on the dock to catch a line from my fellow boaters coming in.

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STAMP

