

Official newsletter of the  
Atlanta Sail and Power

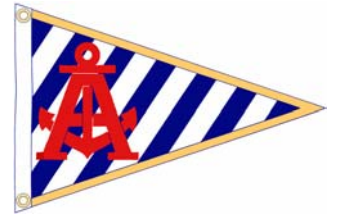
[www.usps-atlanta.org](http://www.usps-atlanta.org)



# WATERLOG

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

## Safe! Smart! Fun!



**2008 Bridge Takes Office**

**New Membership Options**

**Rollin' on the River**



**Become a Boat Certifier**

**Cruise Planning for the ICW**

**In This Issue**

Commander's Corner	2
ASPS Celebrates 55th Change of Watch	3
March Members' Meeting Features Riverboat Captain	3
Welcome New Members	3
Education News	3
District 17 Change of Watch Sees Two Atlantans on Bridge	4
First 2008 OTW Event Dodges Mother Nature	4
Spring Cruise—A Week on the Scenic ICW	4
ASPS Members Missing	4
USPS Considers New Membership Options	5
Meet Your Treasurer	6
Bulletin Board/Calendar	7
Lessons Learned	8
USPS Takes the Lead in Boat Owner Certification	9
AFTerthoughts: It's Spring!	10



Cdr. David Herndon, JN

**Commander's Corner**

Boating that's safe, smart and fun! That's what we're about.

This new theme that captures the three aspects of ASPS membership was introduced at the Atlanta Boat Show in January with a new set of banners serving as the backdrop for our booth. Many members saw it for the first time at the Change of Watch in February. Our syndicated columnist with *Lake-side on Lanier*, PR Chair Capt. Greg Clark, was so taken by the theme that he is now using a new photo with his byline. It's Greg on his PWC wearing a life jacket and a big smile. A picture is worth a thousand words, and the picture says it all – being safe and being smart while having fun on the water.

Speaking of the Change of Watch, what a great event! Lots of thanks to the Ashford Club for their great support; to my wife, Lisa, who handled most of the decorations and logistics; to P/C's Margaret Sherrod, Hans Meier and Frank Taylor for their advice and counsel; and to Ed and Genie Troncalli for building the symbolic bridge. (See photos on the following pages.)

The COW was intended to be a bridging event in a number of ways. Beside the obvious: changing of leadership while continuing the fine traditions of the squadron, this event also served as the initial steps in building bridges to our fellow recreational boating organizations on Lake Lanier. We were pleased to have representatives from Lake Lanier Sailing Club and the Coast Guard Auxiliary with us at the COW, and we have established contacts with a number of other organizations. Our objective is to look for ways we can complement one another in meeting the common goal we share: safe boating.

At the March ExComm, the leadership learned of two important new initiatives from the National organization: new membership options and the Boat Operator Certification (BOC) program. Both these items are described in more detail elsewhere in this *Waterlog*. Every member should become familiar with them. Please send me your thoughts, questions and comments about the membership proposals as indicated in the article. The leadership must develop a position on the membership proposals over the next several weeks.

But wait, there's more! We've already had a raft-up, and we're only a few weeks away from what promises to be a terrific ICW cruise. Tom Haas, our on-the-water leprechaun, worked his magic to avoid the devastating storms on March 15, and got several boats together on the 16<sup>th</sup> for an afternoon of fun on the water. Doug and Patti Watson have all the details worked out for a 6-day Charleston-to-Wilmington adventure. It promises to be a scenic, relaxing and enjoyable week on the water.

It's going to be a great year!

Happy boating!

The Waterlog

The *Waterlog* is published at least 6 times per year along with an abbreviated companion the *Watertwig*.

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 editor 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.

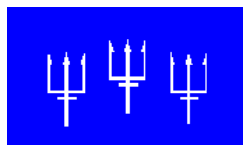
Special thanks to Beth Guler for production of the Life on the Water section

**Please send comments and suggestions to:-**

Lt. Lisa Herndon, AP  
Lt./C David Herndon, AP



Cover photo by Glenn LaBoda. Dolphin enjoying a bow wake on the Ashley River



# Squadron Happenings

## ASPS CELEBRATES 55th CHANGE OF WATCH

On Sunday, Feb 17, the Atlanta Squadron celebrated their 55th Change of Watch at the Ashford Club. Seventy-five members and several special guests attended the event to see the 2008 Bridge Officers sworn in by Atlanta's own D/LT/C Danny Tompkins.

In support of Commander-elect Herndon's theme of "building bridges," a replica of St. Augustine's Bridge of Lions—complete with the lions—was available for photo ops, courtesy of P/C Ed Troncalli.

Guests enjoyed a social hour, followed by a buffet lunch.

Outgoing Commander Frank Taylor presented the Nelle Moon Award, given annually to the member who does not hold elected office who makes the greatest contribution to the Squadron. The 2008 winner is the Atlanta Sail and Power Squadron Auxiliary. The award was accepted on behalf of the Auxiliary by Nancy Leathers.

Cdr Taylor also presented the Commander's Award, an annual award presented at the discretion of the Commander to a member who has gone "above and beyond" in service to the Squadron. This year's winner was Jeff Batson, who served both as Secretary and as BoatSmart Chair during 2007.



*Genie and Ed Troncalli on the "Bridge of Lions"*

Special guests included the Commodore of the Lake Lanier Sailing Club, Jim Chenik and his wife Penny, and Douglas Townes, representing the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

In his inaugural remarks, incoming Commander Herndon emphasized two initiatives: marketing the



*ASPS incoming Cdr David Herndon takes the oath of office from D-17 XO and Cdr-elect Danny Tompkins*

Squadron through the new "Safe! Smart! Fun!" initiative, and building bridges to other recreational boating organizations through cooperation and collaboration.

## MARCH MEMBERS' MEETING FEATURES RIVERBOAT CAPTAIN

An overflow crowd attended ASP's March members' meeting at Jocks and Jills on Thur, Mar 20. The featured speaker was Capt. John Farmer, master of the *Star of Knoxville*.

New members John and Carrie Holland, and Richard and Terri Dukes were welcomed and sworn in.

Capt. Farmer described the work of a riverboat captain. He has commanded excursion boats on the Mississippi and the Tennessee Rivers.

*Capt. John Farmer*



His current command, the *Star of Knoxville* is a 125-ft sternwheeler that displaces 200 tons. Two 8.2 liter diesels power the functional split stern wheels. The *Star* draws only 3.7 ft, but her stacks are 34-1/2 ft above the waterline.

Capt. Farmer, a member of the Muscogee Power Squadron, has commanded over 1500 river cruises; has more than 3500 hours on the river; and has served over 100,000 passengers. Learn more at [capt-farmer@navcal.org](mailto:capt-farmer@navcal.org).

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



*Richard and Terri Dukes*



*John and Carrie Holland*



*Lee Torbush  
Transfer from Lk Murray  
Squadron*

## EDUCATION NEWS

*By Patti Price, Squadron Education Officer*

Most Winter Classes are coming to a close. Piloting and Cruise Planning students are waiting for their tests to be graded, and Marine Electronics students are still going strong. Don Williams, through Chart Smart, instructed nine people in basic navigation. ASPS had 13 graduates from the February Boat Smart class.

Congratulations to the following students for successfully completing courses.

**Engine Maintenance:** John D. Washburn

**Seamanship:** John D. Washburn, Marilyn Washburn

**Advanced Piloting:** Tom Haas

**Sail:** Mary Hars, Brian Jernigan, Konny Light, John Martin, Pam Napier— Pfaff, Mark Pfaff, Frank Taylor

**Junior Navigation:** Dick Anthony, David Herndon, Brian Jernigan, Glenn LaBoda, Kevin Schoonover, Dave Crumbley, Patti Price,

**Navigation:** Roy Stegall

In addition, Jeff Wise achieved Senior Navigator status (full certificate).

Jeff Wise is teaching a three night GPS seminar on March 17, 24, and 31. The class will be held at Heiskell from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Come join the FUN and get SMART!

# Squadron Happenings

## DISTRICT 17 CHANGE OF WATCH SEES TWO ATLANTANS ON BRIDGE

The D-17 COW took place on Saturday, Mar 8, at East Ridge, TN. The COW was part of the regular D-17 Spring meeting.

P/C's Danny Tompkins and Jeff Wise were sworn in as members of the D-17 Bridge for 2008; Danny as District Commander, and Jeff Wise as Administrative Officer. Thirteen members of ASPS have some official responsibility with D-17 this year, and four of those individual hold multiple District jobs.



*Chief's representative R/C Jean Hamilton administers the oath of office to incoming D-17 Cdr Danny Tompkins*

The meeting featured a Roaring Twenties party on Friday night. Most of the party-goers showed up in full 20's regalia—flappers and zoot suits. Saturday's agenda included workshops on the new National membership proposals (see article, pg 5), using the DB2000 national membership database, and fiberglass repair. The first meeting of incoming Cdr Tompkins' Commanders' Roundtable also took place. On Sunday, D/SEO Herman Green conducted an introduction to the new Boat Operator Certification program (see article pg 9).

At the COW ceremonies on Saturday evening, ASPS was recognized for 20+ years of contributions to the Educational Fund, and *The Waterlog* won the Distinction in Journalism award for the sixth consecutive year.



*The Atlanta contingent at D-17: Hans Meier, Sharon Meier, David Herndon, Ben Owen, Tim Tyson, Lisa Herndon, Jeff Wise, Meg Haas, Tom Haas, Carol Jordan, Julia Haas, Pat Wise, , Jim Jordan, Danny Tompkins, Margaret Sherrod, Margie Tompkins, Don Williams. Not pictured: P/D/C Janis Owen, Judy Williams.*

## FIRST 2008 OTW EVENT DODGES MOTHER NATURE

ASPS's inaugural on-the-water event for 2008 planned for Saturday, Mar 15, had to be rescheduled when powerful storms pounded the Atlanta area for the second consecutive day. OTW Chair Tom Haas made the decision early Saturday morning to reschedule for Sunday based on the National Weather Services severe storm warnings. It was a good call as strong winds and golf ball-size hail battered Lake Lanier Saturday afternoon.

But as they say, "If you don't like Atlanta weather, just wait a while." The next day, Palm Sunday, was a beautiful spring day, perfect for a raft-up.

Four boats and twelve people enjoyed a fine day on the water, celebrating St. Patrick's Day.



## SPRING CRUISE—A WEEK ON THE SCENIC ICW

Doug and Patti Watson have been hard at work putting together the details of what promises to be a great week on the water. This year's cruise will begin at Isle of Palms Marina, Boats arrive and launch on Sat, Apr 26.

On Sunday, the flotilla cruises about 60 miles to Georgetown, putting in at Georgetown Landing. Following an afternoon of relaxation and sightseeing, we'll enjoy cocktails at the Ships Store and dinner at Lands End restaurant.

On Monday the flotilla continues north from Georgetown to North Myrtle Beach and will pass through perhaps the most scenic part of the east coast ICW along the Waccamaw River.

On Tuesday, the route continues on the ICW to the Cape Fear River, and then up the Cape Fear to Wilmington for a two-night stay.

On Thursday we head back south to the Myrtle Beach area, then a long run back to Isle of Palms on Friday.

This promises to be another in our tradition of relaxing and fun spring cruises.

## ASPS MEMBERS MISSING

John and Liz Calvert, members of ASPS, were reported missing on Mar 3.

John, 47, and his 45-year-old wife run several businesses in the Hilton Head area, including managing boat slips at the marina where they live. Elizabeth also practices law in nearby Savannah.



They live part time on their 40-foot yacht in the gated Harbour Town community. They also have a home in Atlanta.

On March 3, they disappeared. A week later, the man they had trusted to oversee their Hilton Head finances and administrative work, Dennis Ray Gerwing, apparently took his own life, leaving behind questions about his possible involvement in their disappearance that frustrated authorities are struggling to answer.

According to anonymous sources quoted by The State newspaper of Columbia, Gerwing left two suicide notes acknowledging he had stolen money from the Calverts' businesses.

But almost two weeks after the couple vanished, no hint of them has turned up. Authorities have searched by land, sea and air.

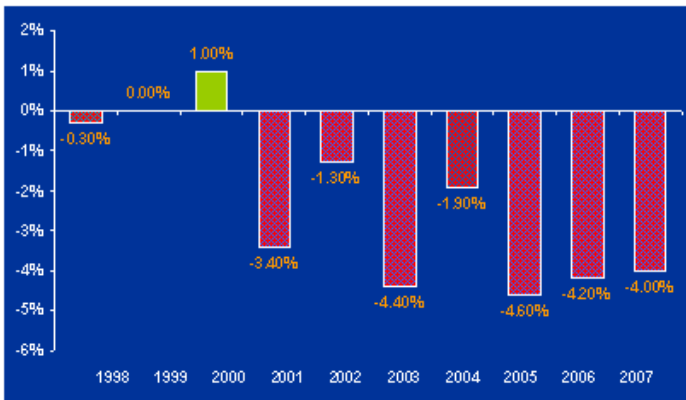
# Squadron Happenings

## USPS CONSIDERS NEW MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS

The USPS National Membership Committee is considering new options to build membership. These options target the on-line community and they emphasize our strong educational offerings. In addition, other alternatives to make dues payment simpler and more convenient for current members are also on the table.

It is important to note that these are options for consideration. They have not been adopted or implemented.

These initiatives were formulated to address the decade-long trend of declining membership (see chart below). The USPS has lost nearly 11,000 net members over this period.



The USPS website has a link labeled “How to become a member?” This link gets more than 200 hits per week. That represents a potential market of 10,000 prospective members each year – a number that may grow as states increase requirements for boat operator education or certification.

The options outlined below are intended to reverse this trend by appealing to a new target market – those who find us on the internet - and by offering a more compelling product that is easier to obtain and use.

The first option offers a one-year membership bundled with the purchase of *America’s Boating Course* (the replacement for *BoatSmart*). Through the USPS website, an applicant would complete an application form and pay dues and course fees by credit card. Both individual and family memberships would be available.

Another option is to offer *America’s Boating Course* through the website without a bundled membership, and use that transaction to gather information on potential members for follow-up contact.

Any of these options may necessitate two changes to our dues structure: (1) moving to 100% anniversary billing, and (2) adopting a national standard fee schedule.

“Anniversary billing” means that members’ annual dues become due on the month he or she joins the organization. In the current structure, all members’ dues become due in June, which means that a new member who joins in any month except June pays pro-rated squadron, district and national dues for the remainder of the fiscal year. This is cumbersome and can be very confusing to potential

members. Anniversary billing offers a number of advantages as well as to the local squadrons.

A standard national fee schedule means that the current variability if squadron and district dues will be replaced by a standard dues schedule based on the average of these dues across the country. The proposed national dues structure for a new member would be:

	Proposed Individual	Proposed Family	Notes
Non-pro-rated entrance fee	\$25.00	\$ 25.00	ASPS adds \$44 to national entrance fee
Annual national dues	\$33.50	\$ 53.25	
Annual local squadron dues	\$22.25	\$ 33.37	National range \$2-\$99; ASPS \$25
Annual district dues	\$ 7.25	\$ 10.88	National range \$0-\$14.25; D-17 \$10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$90.00</b>	<b>\$122.50</b>	

Under this arrangement, local squadrons or districts that charge more than the standard rate would agree to accept the lower amount. Squadrons or districts that currently charge less will receive the amount they currently charge and National will retain the difference.

The combination of anniversary billing and a standard fee schedule facilitates national marketing initiatives through the website, or targeted to national and regional events such as TrawlerFest and boat shows.

Under the option to bundle a one-year membership with the on-line purchase of the *ABC* course material, then \$35 would be added to the totals above. With the website-based membership option, someone becomes a new member essentially when their credit card transaction clears. At that point, they are unaffiliated with any local squadron, and have yet to demonstrate any competence related to boating beyond an interest in membership.

Under the option to bundle a one-year membership with the on-line purchase of the *ABC* course material, then \$35 would be added to the totals above. With the website-based membership option, someone becomes a new member essentially when their credit card transaction clears. At that point, they are unaffiliated with any local squadron, and have yet to demonstrate any competence related to boating beyond an interest in membership.

National will immediately send an on-line response to the new member with information about local squadron(s) in their area, and will copy the local squadron(s) with that information. At that point it becomes the local squadron’s responsibility to build the relationship with the new member. The other web-based option is to sell the *ABC* course without a bundled membership for \$59.95. The applicant could also choose to request assistance, counseling, etc. from local squadrons for an additional \$29.50 – total cost \$89.45. In this scenario, the local squadrons and/or district educational departments would need to commit to support the program.

Again, these are only proposals. The ASPS Bridge and ExComm welcome your input on this. Please send your comments to [co@usps-atlanta.org](mailto:co@usps-atlanta.org)

# From the Bridge



## THE 2008 BRIDGE SQUADRON OFFICERS

Commander	David Herndon	commander@usps-atlanta.org
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Administrative Officer	Kevin Schoonover	admin@usps-atlanta.org
Secretary	Jeff Batson	secretary@usps-atlanta.org
Education Officer	Patti Price	edu@usps-atlanta.org
Treasurer	Margaret Haas	treasurer@usps-atlanta.org
Assistant Treasurer	Julia Haas	
Assistant Secretary	Nan Putnam	
Assistant SEO	Pat McGrath	

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Cdr David Herndon, Chairman  
 Lt/C Carol Jordan, Vice Chairman

Patti Price	Jonathan Blackwood	Jeff Batson
Sheryl LaBoda	Frank Taylor	Margaret Sherrod
Michael Litke	Charlie Cox	Margaret Haas
Patrick McGrath	Kevin Schoonover	Tim Tyson
Doug Watson		



Cdr. David Herndon



Lt/C Carol Jordan  
Executive Officer



Lt/C Patti Price  
Education Officer



Lt/C Kevin Schoonover  
Administrative Officer



Lt/C Jeff Batson  
Secretary



Lt/C Margaret Haas  
Treasurer



1st/Lt Nan Putman  
Assistant Secretary



1st/Lt Pat McGrath



1st/Lt Julia Haas  
Assistant Treasurer

## MEET YOUR TREASURER An Interview with Meg Haas

*How did you get into boating?*

Well, I actually got into boating quite unexpectedly and anxiously, but also-then and still now, very excitedly! I really love, love, LOVE boating, it turns out. It was really Tom's dream first and for far longer. As a kid, he enjoyed boating with his family way back when, on the then very new Lake Lanier – first on a 23' cruiser, then a houseboat. I too grew up around a lake, a pretty big one in fact – as in one of the five Greats – Lake Ontario. in upstate New York; then too there were all those Finger Lakes. But alas, I was boatless! Though on a Navy mine sweeper in WWII, my professorial father was no boater; so the occasional water skiing excursion with friends on Irondequoite Bay was about all the boating I knew as a kid. All that was A LOT of years ago, of course. But ever since, Tom has wanted back into boating. In the meantime, we got into deep sea fishing – on other peoples' boats. I surely do wish we'd gotten into boating – AND all the fine folks and new friends we've found in ASPS – much sooner, when our kids were younger, though who knows how back then in the midst of all that scouting, sports, dance, PTA, etc., etc.

There's always too much to do for all of us; and to know boating is definitely to love boating – when I see young families out on the water now, can't help but think that could and should have been us! So I wish I known how much I was going to love it a whole lot sooner, but I figure we're making up for lost time now – and, yes, loving it!

*Is "Pokie Dot Girl" your first boat?*

Many fish and many years later, it was time for a boat of our own – our fishing cruiser, "Pokiedot Girl." She's our first, though probably not our last. (We think a lot lately about a trawler someday on the Great Loop!)

*Tell us about her catchy name.*

As for her name, well, let's just say Pokie Dot Girl is a nickname I acquired in a dance contest on my very first (BLIND) date with Tom at Al's Corral here in Atlanta some 38 years ago. While we only came in second that night, I was forevermore "Pokiedot Girl" – destined to be our future first boat's namesake so many years later.

By the way, I think dance contests must be a recurring theme for the Haas family's two Pokie Dot Girls – as Tom and I recently found ourselves winning the Charleston contest in Chattanooga at the District 17 Spring Conference Roaring Twenties night earlier this month. (Only three contestants to be sure – two from ASPS no less; still, it was first place this time, rather than second on the night I first became Pokie Dot Girl.) And, if you want to know the rest of THAT story – it involved something about an undoubtedly too-short polka dot mini-dress, rodeo riders and not knowing how to buck dance, some say – well perhaps you'll just have to catch me someday in a weak moment at one of our fabulous raft-ups!

## ???JANUARY PUZZLER ANSWER???

Who invented the life preserver? *Leonardo Da Vinci*

# The Bulletin Board

Minutes of the Executive Committee meetings, you can signup at:  
[Http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aspsusps/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aspsusps/)  
 Please provide your certificate number when making your request to join this Yahoo Group

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

Send email changes to the Waterlog editors! And clear your spam filters for the following address:  
[herndons@bellsouth.net](mailto:herndons@bellsouth.net)  
 Don't miss the news!

Got a complaint? A suggestion? An idea for a better Squadron? Just want to add your 2¢ worth? Whatever it is, send it to [cdr@usps-atlanta.org](mailto:cdr@usps-atlanta.org)

**PLEASE RSVP FOR MEETINGS!**  
 WE WANT TO MAKE SURE THE RESTAURANT IS PREPARED TO ACCOMMODATE YOU!

Open Ramps on Lake Lanier:  
<http://www.lakelanier.info/boat-ramps/>

**BECOME A MENTOR**  
 Are you a friendly, enthusiastic and well-established member of ASPs? Of course you are. And that makes you perfectly qualified to be a New Members Mentor.  
 A Mentor's job is to introduce new members to the Squadron, show them who we are, what we do, and why and how we do it. It involves making sure they know about meetings, raft-ups and other events, and making sure they get acquainted with the rest of us at these events.  
 Be a Mentor!  
 Contact Genie Troncagli for more info.

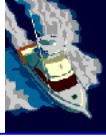
## USPS EVENTS: APRIL 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10 Excomm Mtg	11	12 New Mbr Orientation, Raft-up, Fleet Blessing
13	14	15	16	17 General Membership Mtg	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26 Spring ICW Cruise
27 Spring ICW Cruise	28 Spring ICW Cruise	29 Spring ICW Cruise	30 Spring ICW Cruise			

## USPS EVENTS: MAY 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Spring ICW Cruise	2 Spring ICW Cruise	3 Spring ICW Cruise
4	5	6	7	8 Excomm Mtg	9	10
11	12	13	14	15 General Membership mtg	16	17 Raft-up Nautical Gadget Day & National Safe Boating Wk
18 National Safe Boating Wk	19 National Safe Boating Wk	20 National Safe Boating Wk	21 National Safe Boating Wk	22 National Safe Boating Wk	23 National Safe Boating Wk	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**LOCATION CHANGE:** General Membership Meeting at Jock's and Jill's Restaurant at 7160 Jimmy Carter Blvd. in Norcross, GA  
**LOCATION CHANGE:** ExComm Meetings at ALDO's on Roswell Road at Hammond Drive



# Life on the Water

## LESSONS LEARNED

*Excerpts from Roy Stegall, aboard the S/V Gideon*

February is when we really started putting some miles under the keel as we moved up the east coast. Even with past boating experience, there are still things to learn. A wise man learns from his mistakes; a wiser man learns from the mistakes of others. "Lessons Learned" is the theme for February. I count five of 'em.

We left Boot Key harbor to go north on the ocean side, using Hawk Channel. This is pretty well protected on the north end of the keys, but it's almost the open ocean on the southerly end where the reef is deeper and not as continuous. The forecast was for 2' to 4' waves. We didn't see any 2' waves, but we found some 4' and 5' waves, all right!

The boat was pitching through the waves with the whitecaps coming over the bowsprit. It's 5' above the water. Mary and I both felt queasy. I had three jerry jugs tied to a fender board lashed to the starboard stanchions. The jugs started sliding back and forth, and the lashings on the fender board loosened. The darn things were sliding three feet forward and backward on the deck! I put on a lifejacket and went forward with a handful of dock lines and re-lashed everything to get the jugs secured. I did it... but by the time I finished I was really sea sick from working on the pitching and rolling deck. Gee, now I think I understand why other cruisers have these boards bolted onto the stanchions! The same thing applied to the dinghy, which started swinging and banging on its hoist lines on the davits. I rigged five more lines (a total of seven lines, counting the two hoists) to secure the dinghy and keep it stationary.

### **LESSON ONE: Things need to REALLY be secure when you go offshore !**

Another lesson learned was that we both need to take our seasickness meds before doing this. Bonine has less of a sleepiness effect than other seasickness meds. We used that the second day (which also saw calmer seas) and didn't have the same problem. Gee, why would two people who get seasick decide to sell everything and go cruising?

### **LESSON TWO: Take seasickness meds before going on the deep blue sea !**

The second day at Dinner Key we had a nasty surprise. After going ashore for a few hours in Coconut Grove, we got back and couldn't find the boat. Oh no... there it is... a half a mile away! The anchor had dragged while we were ashore. We chased down the boat in the dinghy, got aboard, and all was well. (The boat was soft aground, but I maneuvered and got it off). The anchor had 7:1 scope, and we had "backed down" to set it firmly. And, it had held fine for over 40 hours - a night, a day, a night, and half of the next day in windy, blustery conditions. I figured it was well set, but that's obviously wrong! Another "lesson learned" the hard way.

### **LESSON THREE: Set an anchor watch in bad conditions. Someone stays on board or stays awake at night. An anchor that is "set" may still drag later.**

Here's the weather report for the outside route:

SEAS BUILDING TO 10 FEET MONDAY ...SUBSIDING TO 6 FEET BY TUESDAY

Guess what... we chose to follow the ICW! We anchored by the Venetian Causeway in Miami, and then continued north the next morning. The channels were nice and wide, and there was lots of interesting shore side scenery to watch.

Next stop was Lake Sylvia in Fort Lauderdale. Fort Lauderdale is incredible; it's like Beverly Hills with canals and yachts. Wow! Great sight seeing! Lake Sylvia is flagged in some cruising guides as not a legal anchorage any more, but there were other boats there. Another cruiser gave us the secret dinghy route to the Southport Raw Bar, with dinghy dockage and nearby shopping and laundry. We stayed two nights while some weather passed over.

Passing Jupiter Inlet, we ran hard aground. The inlet is confusing. My chart plotter showed the ICW passing on the west side of red "2". Chart 11472 shows the ICW passing on the east side of red "2". As I looked in front of me, there were two buoys; a "2" and a "2A". It's coming up fast... quick! What to do? I followed the chart and went east of "2", but west of "2A". BAD DECISION! The boat stopped dead in the water and humped upwards and then down as the keel ran aground over the shallow bar. Hey, no fair... I was in charted 10' of water! Idle. Neutral. Reverse. Forward. Left rudder, right rudder. Reverse again, and rev it up.... ah... we're moving again.

### **LESSON FOUR: Buoys are moved to adjust for changing channels. So, when in doubt, follow the buoys that you actually SEE. (not the chart or the chart plotter).**

I grounded again, hard, in the ICW behind Ponce Inlet. This time from inattention. There was a dog-leg curve, and I cut the corner slightly. Same result; it was a hard stop as the boat humped upwards and then down over a shallow bar. Again, I was able to maneuver and get off and going. The chart plotter showed I was in deep water the entire time. (Ha!)

### **LESSON FIVE: Don't cut corners, don't trust the chart or chart plotter. Watch the depth sounder, and PAY ATTENTION!**

Find the complete text of Roy's and Mary's logs and more photos at: <http://www.windsongsail.com/2/Stories/Stegall/storiesStegall.aspx>



### ??MARCH PUZZLER??

Without changing the order of the digits 1-9 as shown below, insert two minus signs (-) and one plus sign (+) to create an equation that equals 100.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9





# Life on the Water

## USPS TAKES THE LEAD IN BOAT OWNER CERTIFICATION

USPS has introduced a Boat Operator Certification (BOC) program that is at the forefront of national boating education and safety initiatives. Under this program, an applicant must demonstrate academic knowledge of boat operation, navigation and safety as well as the ability to perform basic maneuvers on-the-water in order to receive certification.

Four levels of certification will be offered:

- Inland Navigator
- Coastal Navigator
- Advanced Coastal Navigator
- Offshore Navigator

Each level builds on the previous one, and is more demanding in its requirements. The Inland and Coastal certifications are available now; the Advanced Coastal and Offshore programs will be introduced in late 2008 or 2009.

Operator certifications will provide a recognizable credential of recreational boating competency; will facilitate boat chartering and operation in foreign waters; and may result in lower insurance rates. It is also an excellent preparation for a Coast Guard Captain's license.

The program, as currently structured, is outlined in the table below.

Certification	Courses Required	Seminars Required	On-the-water Skills Req'd
Inland Navigator	-Boating Course (NASBLA approved) -Seamanship -Engine Maintenance - Marine Electrical Systems (currently ME 101)	-How to Use a Chart -Onboard Weather Forecasting -Using GPS -Using VHF and DSC/VHF Marine Radio	-Current VSC -Undocking -Anchoring -Weighing anchor -Picking up a mooring -Leaving a mooring -Docking -Person overboard -Use a hand-held fire extinguisher
Coastal Navigator	-Piloting course -Marine Communications (ME102) -Cruise Planning	-Marine Compass -Marine Radar -Marine Maintenance seminar series (2) -Plus any 2 selected by student	-Entering GPS waypoints -Plot GPS position -Taking bearings, plotting fixes -Dead reckoning -Route selection and entry -Running a route -Use of pyrotechnic distress signals

Experienced boaters may apply for waivers for some of the requirements. For example, a member holding the grade of AP will receive a waiver for the NASBLA boating course, Seamanship, How to Use a Chart, and Using GPS. Other waivers may be granted based on the boat owner's documented experience.

The program includes endorsements that can be added to the certificates. Endorsements are proof of an additional level of skill obtained through additional coursework or seminars. Examples of endorsements are:

- CAN Boating in Canadian waters
  - EURO Boating in European waters
  - IW Inland Waterways (locks, canals, rivers)
  - MEX Boating in Mexican waters
  - PAD Paddle Boats
  - SA Sail; requirement varies by level
- More endorsements will be available in the future.

The BOC program will require local squadrons to have a group of qualified certifiers. Certifiers must have attained the level of certification which they are certifying, or higher. They must be available to track a candidates progress through the requirements, including observe and "grade" the candidate's on-the-water skills.

More information is available at <http://www.usps.org/national/eddept/boc/main.htm#Requirements>.

To learn how to become a certifier, contact [co@usps-atlanta.org](mailto:co@usps-atlanta.org)

## BECOME A VESSEL SAFETY EXAMINER

Jim Jordan, Vessel Safety Chair, has an aggressive goal for 2008: 100 VSCs—and he is looking for a few good men and women to help him get there.

Here are the top 10 reasons why YOU should be a vessel examiner:

10. Less than 1% of the 13 million registered recreational boats receive a VSC.
9. More Vessel Examiners means more Vessel Safety Checks, and that means safer boating for everyone.
8. VSCs keep potentially unsafe boats off the water, and allow the Coast Guard and states to devote more resources to the protection of our waterways.
7. You might as well put all that knowledge you gained in USPS courses and on the water to work.
6. The VSC program is one of the USCGA's and the USPS's best ways educate boaters and attract new members.
5. You only have to inspect 5 boats each year to maintain your certification—probably less than three hours service.
4. VSCs can be done year around.
3. Staying current on VSC requirements makes you a better and safer boater.
2. Most boaters welcome and appreciate VSCs.
1. VSCs work! You just might save someone's life.

Interested? Contact Jim Jordan.



# AFTerthoughts

## IT'S SPRING!

By the time you read this, it'll be Spring. The Bradford pears are like giant snowballs along the roadside. The daffodils are peeking up through the leaves and mulch. The view through a wooded area that was a palette of browns and grays only a few days ago now shows a strong hint of bright green. Can the yellow snow be far away?

And the lake is rising. It has a long way to go, but at least it's moving in the right direction.

These are the days that make boaters itch to be on the water; to feel the wind in your face and the sun on your back; to hear the engine purr or the sails ruffle; to see the wake play out behind the stern as you move across the water. Yes, boating is very much a sensual experience, and nothing awakens those senses quite like the first days of spring.

Oh sure, many of us have the other part of spring boating to

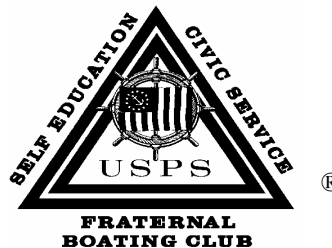
contend with: the de-winterizing, re-stocking, cleaning and repairing that's part of getting back on the water after many weeks on terra firma.

The low water levels will introduce new challenges this season. The biggest problem will be fitting the same number of boaters – or maybe more – into a reduced space. As we know, Lake Lanier could be a pretty crowded place at normal pool levels. Add to that the fact that several of our favorite coves are now dry land, the channels are not nearly as wide as they used to be, and there are underwater hazards that must be charted and avoided.

These challenges can lead to frustration on the water. Our job as “real boaters” is to prepare for these challenges and ensure they don't interfere with the deep pleasure of being on the water on a good boat with good friends.

Again, happy boating!

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STAMP