

## **A History of the United States Power Squadrons ®**

The story of the United States Power Squadrons began in Boston in the early 1900's. Most recreational boating was confined to sailing craft and a few larger steam yachts generally manned by professional crews. Yacht clubs taught and promoted the spirit of sailing and had little to offer owners of the new gasoline powered vessels.

A self-taught navigator named Roger Upton persuaded his colleagues at the Boston Yacht Club to allow him to organize a club within the club for the "gasoliners." Upton was elected rear commodore in 1912 and placed in charge of the unofficial power boat division of the fleet. He kept the division's 36 members busy with studies, cruises, races and drills modeled after naval maneuvers so that they would be of possible use to the U.S. Navy in time of war.

The power boat division's quest for recognition received a boost that summer when 20 power yachts accompanied the sailing yachts on their annual cruise to Portland, Maine. During the cruise a screeching nor'wester dismasted or disabled many of the sailing yachts. Under Upton's command the power yachts towed all disabled sailing yachts safely to port. *Motor Boating Magazine* reported in a six-page photo story, "The fellows of the Powerboat Division provided meritorious service and emerged from the ordeal crowned with glory."

In January 1913 the executive committee of the Boston Yacht Club voted to officially establish the power boat division and named it "Power Squadron." Squadron members were required to pass an examination of advanced piloting subjects in order to join and fly the new squadron pennant above the yacht club pennant.

The power squadron idea grew, and in February 1914 representatives of many yacht clubs met at the New York Yacht Club to join together in a national organization to be known as the United States Power Squadrons. Two months later the Governing Board approved the bylaws, divided the Atlantic Seaboard into six districts, and appointed

boards of instruction and examination. Members were required to participate in at least three on-the-water drills yearly in addition to knowing the rules of the road, the compass, buoys, chart bearings, etc. In March 1915 the present USPS flag was adopted.

The squadrons grew and the educational program was developed to keep pace. On-the-water drill requirements became subordinate to courses of study which included Navigation by 1917. One of the principal objects of the squadrons was to be of service to the Navy in time of emergency. So as World War I approached, Charles F. Chapman approached Assistant Secretary of the Navy Franklin D. Roosevelt volunteering the entire USPS instructional program to train men for naval coastal defense. Secretary Roosevelt accepted and local squadrons organized schools which trained over 5,000 men who entered the armed services. Squadron members used their nautical education to serve the U.S. in many capacities during World War I.

Interest in both yachting and the squadron ebbed following the war. Many yacht clubs went out of business. In 1919 the squadrons had dwindling membership, were \$450.00 in debt and its leaders considered disbanding. Vice Commander A. B. Bennett believed the squadrons could be revived and he proposed three changes to the constitution: (1) making membership in the national organization primary and local squadron membership secondary; (2) eliminating all boat drills and maneuvers; and (3) eliminating membership in a yacht club as a requirement for membership. Elected to Chief Commander in 1920, Bennett worked tirelessly to invigorate the membership and education program and at the end of four years there were over 400 members, \$400 in the treasury and no debt.

The advanced grade program was established in 1932 with the introduction of Advanced Piloting. By 1938 there were 4,406 members and the Governing Board established seven divisions, later changed to districts. The U.S. Power Squadrons celebrated their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a dinner-dance at New York's Hotel Astor. President Roosevelt sent a letter of congratulations and, later that year, accepted honorary membership in USPS.

Less than 24 hours after the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 Vice Commander William Sayers sent a telegram to President Roosevelt and to the Secretary of the Navy offering USPS support for America's war effort. For the second time in 24 years, President Roosevelt accepted this support with appreciation. During World War II over 3,000 USPS members entered the armed forces. USPS developed courses in first aid, signaling, motor mechanics, air navigation, weather, seamanship and instruction techniques. Classes provided instruction for both service personnel and civilians. Thousands of squadron members served with the Red Cross, Merchant Marine and other war-related services.

USPS grew rapidly after World War II. Recreational boating was booming. That growth required paid staff, office space and changes in administration and organization. The first USPS office was a three-room apartment in Englewood, New Jersey. By 1974 USPS membership had grown to more than 70,000 in 425 squadrons. The next year the Governing Board voted to move squadron headquarters from New Jersey to Raleigh, North Carolina. Construction on a modern office and warehouse began in 1978. Today it includes a library and up-to-date computer system to handle all requirements of USPS, including membership and inventory control.

By 1982 the Governing Board recognized that boating was a family-oriented activity and changed the constitution and bylaws to permit women and other family members to become active members. By 1995 women made up 27% of USPS membership. Boating Safety, a program for youngsters ages 10–16, was launched in partnership with U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

In the following decades, education continued to drive USPS's mission and success. Public courses included the Squadron Boating Course, Boat Smart and Chart Smart. Advanced and elective courses included: Seamanship, Piloting, Advanced Piloting, Junior Navigation, Navigation, Weather, Cruise Planning, Sail, Engine Maintenance, and Marine Electronics. Other courses were developed: Skipper Saver, USPS Video Boating Course, Instructor Development, Leadership Development and Operations Training.

New services were offered to members. A marine insurance program offered comprehensive coverage with discounts for educational achievements. A no fee credit card with cash-back incentives which benefit local squadrons was made available. A Port Captains Program developed a network of experienced boaters who could provide local knowledge to squadron members traveling in unfamiliar waters.

Financial benefits of USPS membership grew. BoatU.S. offered U.S. Power Squadrons members discounts for membership, towing services and other important services. USPS members also received discounts for airline travel and automobile rentals.

New times called for new ways of doing things. During the 1990's the constitution and bylaws were streamlined into new USPS Bylaws. USPS updated the pledge. Squadrons were offered the option of adding "Sail and" to their squadron name to more accurately reflect their members' interests.

USPS members worked with NOAA to keep nautical charts up to date through a Cooperative Charting Program. Some squadrons took responsibility for specific charts and received credit on the chart.

The United States Power Squadrons and United States Coast Guard Auxiliary partnered to educate outside the classroom and developed the computer-based America's Boating Course. USPS members were trained to perform vessel safety checks in cooperation with USCGA.

Change is the one constant in the life of the United States Power Squadrons but the mission remains the same: to promote safe boating through education. USPS's 60,000 members in 450 squadrons are dedicated to that mission.

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Source: USPS Operations Manual 2005  
USPS web site

## **A History of Potomac River Power Squadron**

### **Parent Squadron of Northern Virginia Sail and Power Squadron**

The Potomac River Power Squadron is the oldest chartered and still active squadron in the United States. Only months after the formation of the United States Power Squadrons, men in the Washington, D.C. area formed a class to study for the examination required for admission to USPS. On 8 May 1915, 22 people took the exam given by the Board of Examiners and Instruction. It was reported that 19 passed the exam and three were “questionable” but passed later.

The Potomac River Power Squadron was chartered on 25 May 1915 by Executive Order #12 and designated as local squadron #14. A. B. Bennett was the first commander of Potomac River Power Squadron and ultimately served ten years in that position.

A. B. Bennett was Chief Commander of the United States Power Squadrons from 1920 to 1923, a critical time in USPS history. USPS members had served ably in the U.S. Navy during World War I and wanted no more of small boat maneuvers based on anything connected with the Navy. In 1919 Chief Commander H. M. Williams reported that local squadron secretaries did not answer his letters, there was no money in the treasury and USPS was \$450 in debt. He recommended that the Governing Board members chip in to pay the debt and then disband USPS.

Vice Commander Bennett believed the squadron could be revived with a few changes to the constitution. He thought national membership should be open to “any worthy man” who passed the exams, not only yacht club members. He proposed more emphasis on the education program and the elimination of all war-type boat drills.

Bennett’s ideas were adopted and he was elected Chief Commander. There was no list of members. So, he and Secretary James Bresnahan, also from Potomac River Power Squadron, sent letters to one thousand people on the mailing list of *The Ensign*, informing them of the program changes, and asking each to sign on and pay one dollar dues for 1920. The 161 who responded were appointed as Local Boards of Examiners and urged to start classes to prepare men for the spring entrance exams. It was hard work but at the

end of Chief Commander Bennett's fourth year, there were over 400 members and \$400 in the treasury. Most important, United States Power Squadrons organization was saved.

In addition to Chief Commander Bennett (1920-1923), Potomac River Power Squadron has provided USPS with three other national leaders:

Chief Commander Theodore I. Coe, JN (1916-1917)  
Chief Commander J. Edwin Lawton, JN (1929)  
Chief Commander Arthur Middleton, N (1938-1940)

Today, the Potomac River Power Squadron continues to set the standard for squadrons nationwide. Under its leadership five new squadrons were established, of which Northern Virginia Sail and Power Squadron is one:

1916 – Patapsco River Power Squadron  
1953 – Patuxent River Power Squadron  
1967 – Northern Virginia Power Squadron  
1970 – Prince George's Power Squadron  
1971 – Rockville Power Squadron

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Source: USPS Operations Manual 2005  
NVPS Directory 1980

## A History of Northern Virginia Sail and Power Squadron

### 1967: Launching NVPS

One of the charter members of the Northern Virginia Sail and Power Squadron has written that 15 February 1967 was a beginning, an end, and a continuation. Nineteen men of the Northern Virginia Division of the Potomac River Power Squadron met on that date to organize a new squadron to be known as the Northern Virginia Power Squadron. It marked the end of Potomac River Power Squadron's responsibility for USPS activities in Northern Virginia. Most importantly, it marked the continuation of the U.S. Power Squadrons' motto, "Safe Boating through Education."

Things happened fast during the first few months of 1967. The first general meeting was held in April at the Old Dominion Boat Club in Alexandria. By the time the charter was signed on 14 May 1967, there were 80 members present. The charter signers were:

W. W. Abbott, Jr., JN  
Gale Alls  
Thomas W. Barnes, S  
Norman E. Barron  
Ronald E. Beckman, AP  
Leroy S. Bendheim  
Joseph T. Bernard, AP  
Donald R. Berry  
William R. Black  
Stanley F. Bolin, S  
Joseph S. Campbell, AP  
Roy E. Carlson, AP  
James D. Carroll, AP  
John G. Chambers  
James W. Christian  
Joseph D. Coker, AP  
Ralph W. Crain, Jr.

Charles R. Criss  
John H. Crowe, AP  
Thomas Culbertson, AP  
Lee D. DeArmond  
H. R. Dichtenmueller, S  
Guy W. Dwyier  
Harry J. Eby, S  
William C. Eldridge, AP  
Clifford W. Ford, N  
Burton J. Goodyear, S  
Ralph H. Graham Jr, S  
Hubert L. Hall  
Alan R. Hart  
E. Ross Hart  
Russell D. Hartz, N  
James F. Head  
Ronald C. Horn

Alan Isicson  
Jack Isicson, AP  
Herbert Jacobs  
E. M. Jennison, Sr., AP  
Joseph L. Jones  
Kenneth L. Jones  
Edward Katz  
James P. Keller, S  
William M. Kelly, JN  
Harry L. Keneman, S  
William W. Kennedy, S  
Robert E. Kloske, AP  
Earl L. Koberg, N  
George R. Kraft  
Frederick H. Kruck  
Myron Loewinger, AP  
Robert B. Malone, AP

Thomas J. Martin, AP  
James D. McClanahan  
Elmore P. Mudd  
Virgil H. Muus, S  
Benjamin Noble  
Joseph J. O'Meara, N  
William W. Pinkerton, S  
W. C. Redfearn, Jr., AP  
Richard E. Reedy, S  
Clyde P. Reeves

A. H. Reynolds, Sr., AP  
Anthony Rizzo  
Milton E. Rome, AP  
Stephen I. Rome  
Irving H. Rosen  
Arthur Schintzel  
Wayne L. Shedd, S  
Yeve L. Smith  
Edward H. Spearman  
George M. Stone, S

Charles M. Stratton  
Paul J. Temples  
William R. Warren  
John C. Watson  
Walter E. Weaver  
Robert M. Whiting, AP  
Roy E. Williams  
Archer M. Wilson, AP  
Claude R. Yates, III

The newly signed charter was presented for ratification by the membership at a general meeting on Charter Night, 11 July 1967. The first treasury report showed a balance of \$253.98. At that time, members could purchase USPS uniforms at Levinson's on King Street in Alexandria for \$63.50

Former State Senator Leroy Bendheim was chosen to lead the first Bridge. Officers were installed at a dinner dance on 21 July 1967 held at the Hospitality House Motor Inn in Arlington. They were:

Commander – Leroy S. Bendheim  
Executive Officer – William C. Redfearn, Jr.  
Educational Officer – Russell D. Hartz  
Administrative Officer – Robert B. Malone  
Asst. Admin. Officer – Robert E. Kloske  
Secretary – William C. Eldridge  
Treasurer – Jack Isicson  
Members at large:  
H. R. Dichtenmeuller  
E. Ross Hart  
William M. Kelly

Elected officials took note of the new squadron. Congressman Joel T. Broyhill presented Northern Virginia Power Squadron with a United States flag that had flown over the U.S. Capitol. Virginia's Adjutant General, Major General Paul M. Booth presented the squadron with a Virginia State flag that had flown over the State Capitol in Richmond.

The new squadron invited members to submit designs for its burgee. The design chosen was created by Nancy Redfearn, wife of the Executive Officer, and was approved in September 1967. The burgee reflects the squadron's origin and geographic location. The blue herringbone stripes and red field simulate Potomac River Power Squadron's pennant. The Dogwood blossom represents Virginia's state flower and led to the nickname "The Flower Power Squadron." The four petals represent the four primary areas served: Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax and Prince William Counties. The burgee is symmetrical and cannot be flown upside down. The burgee design was approved by the

USPS Etiquette Committee at the Governing Board meeting in San Francisco, CA in September 1967.

The Volume 1, Number 1 issue of the squadron newsletter dated July 1967 announced a contest to name the new publication. The winning entry was designed by Lillian Rizzo. The *of Tars & Terns* banner first appeared on the August 1967 issue. The newsletter accepted advertising at the rate of \$10.00 per ¼ page per issue. By January 1968 the cost of advertising was increased to \$2.50 per inch. The squadron charter appeared in the November 1967 issue.

Northern Virginia Power Squadron differed from other squadrons from the beginning. At that time, only men were permitted to join USPS and attend general meetings. Most squadrons had ladies auxiliaries with names like The Gulls and The Nautigals that held concurrent meetings. Wives were permitted to take courses and were designated “Certificate Holders.” Women certificate holders could receive *of Tars & Terns* for the price of \$1.00 per year. One of the first major decisions by squadron members was to invite their wives to attend the monthly meetings “pending the establishment of a ladies auxiliary.” No auxiliary was ever deemed necessary, and women have been valued participants ever since.

The Northern Virginia Power Squadron got off to a fast start with its educational program. Instructor training began on 22 June 1967. That fall the squadron presented classes in Piloting (free), Seamanship (\$12.00), Advanced Piloting (\$12.00), Junior Navigator (\$18.50), Navigator (\$16.50), Engine Maintenance (\$10.00), Sail (\$10.00), and Weather (\$10.00) at T. C. Williams High School in Alexandria. The first member to complete a “Full Certificate” was Russell D. Hartz. He began taking USPS courses on 22 January 1963 and completed all courses then offered by 26 May 1969.

In December Northern Virginia Power Squadron members celebrated a successful first year with a holiday party planned by George Stone, chairman of the Hospitality Committee. The December *of Tars & Terns* announced the Christmas Social with the notation, “Bring your wife.” Santa visited with gifts for everyone. Party-goers donated nonperishable food which was given to deserving families through the Arlington County Department of Human Resources. This established a squadron tradition of generosity that continued for many years.

### **1968: Casting off**

In 1968 William C. Redfearn, Jr. was elected as the second NVPS Commander. The Change of Watch Dinner Dance was held at the Country Club of Fairfax at a cost of \$12.50 per person and arranged by George Stone. In June Treasurer Jack Isicson reported that 100% of the squadron’s 1967 members had renewed their membership for 1968, a strong vote of confidence in the new squadron.

Twenty boats joined the first rendezvous of the summer held at Clayton's Marina on Smith Creek in July. Ten boats participated in the navigation contest. Al Reynolds arranged the second rendezvous at Selby Bay Yacht Club in August. Besides the navigation contest, participants enjoyed a square dance in the clubhouse. That summer Commander Redfearn presented a trophy to the squadron to be awarded each year to the NVPS member and boat with the lowest average error in all NVPS navigation contests in a year. It was named the Commanders Trophy and the first winner was Russell D. Hartz on his yacht *Alma* with an error of 31 seconds.

In June *of Tars & Terns* featured an article proposing that NVPS purchase a building suitable for meetings and classes as some squadrons had done. That idea proved to be difficult to accomplish in the Northern Virginia real estate market and eventually faded away.

Northern Virginia's education program on the other hand was cruising at full speed. District 5 awarded the squadron the Prince Henry Award for the highest percentage of members completing Junior Navigator and Navigator in a single year. Five members became Junior Navigators and five became Navigators. In 1968 NVPS graduated 90 new Pilots and 35 new Seamen. NVPS received the District 5 Caravelle Award for the greatest percentage increase of members completing Piloting and Seamanship -- first place in 1968 and 1970, second place in 1969.

By November members who owned trailer boats had organized and were busy planning events for summer 1969.

### **1969: Underway**

Robert Malone became the third Commander at a Change of Watch Dinner Dance held at Knights of Columbus Activities Hall in Arlington in April 1969. NVPS and Potomac River Power Squadron teamed up to man the Boat Show booth and both squadrons signed up many students for the free Piloting class. Squadron dues were \$15.00 in 1969.

Squadron skippers participated in two NVSP rendezvous that summer, the first at Selby Bay Yacht Club and the second at Clayton's Marina. They also participated in navigation contests sponsored by the Potomac River Power Squadron at Kent Narrows, Chesapeake Yacht Club and Placid Harbor. The first NVPS sailboat to enter a squadron navigation contest was *Lively* skippered by William Kelly, N in 1969. He also took third place at District 5's sail contest at Sue Island in July. Commander Bob Malone won the Commanders Trophy onboard *Bo-Nan-Do* with the smallest error in all navigation contests (48 seconds).

Commander Malone originated The Cooperative Charting Trophy to be given each year to the member who submitted the greatest number of chart corrections. In 1969 the trophy went to Robert E. Kloske, AP.

By 1969 NVPS had 290 active members. Commander Malone submitted recommendations for merit marks for 94 members who had contributed substantial service to the squadron that year.

### **1970: Rendezvous**

Robert Kloske was elected the fourth Commander at the annual meeting at the Old Dominion Boat Club. The Change of Watch Dinner Dance was held at the Holiday Inn in Alexandria. The new bridge wore the regulation blue Uniform A with white shirt, black tie, cap with white top, black shoes and socks. Outgoing Commander Malone presented new Commander Kloske with watering cans to “perpetuate Flower Power.”

Boats from Potomac River Power Squadron participated in many NVPS rendezvous and performed well enough in navigation contests to take home several coveted trophies. Rendezvous were held at Tall Timbers, Solomons Yacht Club, Selby Bay Yacht Club, Chesapeake Yacht Club, Windmill Point and Morely Creek. Up to 100 people attended these events which included covered dish suppers that were a gourmet’s delight. To make navigation contests more challenging, they were run both during the day and at night.

The District 5 Summer Council and Rendezvous was held at Baltimore Yacht Club at Sue Island. Five Northern Virginia boats were among 77 boats completing in the navigation contest. *Paulinda* with Al Reynolds at the helm finished in fifth place with a 15 second error. Al Simon’s *Simple Simon* of Potomac River Power Squadron took first place with a 2 second error. NVPS narrowly avoided taking home the dreaded Sour Puss award given to the team scoring the highest error in the contest.

Over 100 people and 21 boats attended the rendezvous at Windmill Point in August. On Saturday evening everyone car pooled to the nearby home of Gale and Evelyn Alls for a pot luck dinner. Eight boats ran the predicted log contest on Sunday. *Bay Quest* with skipper William Abbot won with an error of 0.889% and received the Commander’s Trophy for 1970. Participants were highly competitive. *Voltare* lost a rudder pin during the contest. Capt. Newby managed to finish the contest with only 6% error by having the first mate and observer in the bilge move the rudder by hand on voice command.

## 1971: Cruises

William Eldridge was sworn in as the fifth Commander by D/Lt/C Leland Parsons. The squadron had 397 members with 100 attending a single rendezvous. Squadron members owned 223 boats operating between the Rappahannock River and Annapolis, with 34% in the Potomac River. At that time Potomac River Power Squadron had 1,087 members and Annapolis Power Squadron had 415 members. Northern Virginia's members were actively involved in all aspects of squadron activity and earned 119 merit marks in 1971.

Commander Eldridge aboard *Kathy El* led the first squadron cruise that started in Alexandria and traveled to Kinsale, Crisfield, Oxford, St. Michaels and ended at the District 5 Rendezvous at Maryland Yacht Club in Baltimore. Six Northern Virginia boats participated in the District 5 navigation contest. The team placed fifth out of 20 teams. Administrative Officer Claude Yates on *Miss Ann* came in 16<sup>th</sup> with an error of 49 seconds. The other five placed between 25<sup>th</sup> and 80<sup>th</sup> place. P/C Bob Malone on *Bo-Nan-Do* placed third in the night contest. The squadron had a full summer of rendezvous, predicted log and navigation contests. Potomac River Power Squadron's helmsman W.W. Chambers and navigator Edna Chambers onboard their boat *Coloneh* won the Last Chance Trophy that year. Northern Virginia hosted the D/5 Sail Regatta at Placid Harbor over the Labor Day weekend.

Another first occurred in July when Derek Scorer received the first "non-citizen certificate" issued by NVPS. Non-citizen participation in educational courses had been approved by USPS the year before. Derek Scorer became a U.S. citizen in 1975, and he became NVPS Commander in 1984.

During the spring 45 members took Seamanship at T.C. Williams and W. T. Woodson High Schools and all passed the exam. Eleven members passed Advanced Piloting, 20 passed Marine Electronics, and 15 passed Engine Maintenance.

Commander Eldridge created the "Spirit of Flower Power" trophy for exceptional service to the Commander in generating membership participation. It was awarded to Andy McGehee for 1971-72. In 2001 that trophy was permanently awarded to Martha Jane Dodd for her work as Membership Chairman. She had won it for four straight years.

## 1972: Sailors

In 1972 NVPS elected sailboat owner William Kelly as the sixth Commander. The Change of Watch dinner dance was held at the new Holiday Inn on Route 50 in Falls Church and cost \$12.50 per person. Members were actively involved in all aspects of squadron activity and earned 147 merit marks, 28 more than in 1971. D/Lt/C Don Leeper swore in 22 new members at the Founders Day ceremony. New members outnumbered 11 charter members on that evening with a total of 139 people attending.

The squadron held five rendezvous in the summer of 1972. The high point of the busy summer was a Cooperative Charting rendezvous held at Commander Kelly's home on Maddox Creek. The cruise that year was to the upper Chesapeake Bay, starting at Castle Marina and proceeding up the Chester and Sassafras Rivers.

Squadron photographer Alan Hart was chosen to photograph Chief Commander Cosdon's visit to the White House in September.

Marge Kloske handcrafted a special cat-o'-nine-tails for NVPS Change of Watch ceremonies. It was made with pink ribbons and dogwood blossoms. It was passed from outgoing Commander to incoming Commander each year.

### **1973: On Air Recognition**

With almost 500 members and under the leadership of seventh Commander Claude Yates, NVPS received some well deserved publicity. For many years beloved radio personalities Frank Hardin and Jackson Weaver kept morning commuters entertained with their zany chatter on WMAL. Jackson Weaver often spoke of his 40' cruiser *Jack Tar* on the air. In 1973 NVPS Member at Large Dick Murphy had the pleasure of presenting a membership certificate to Jackson Weaver on his radio show. NVPS's programs and message of safe boating received almost 30 minutes of priceless publicity.

The Squadron Boating course was offered in September at four locations in Northern Virginia. It ran for 12 weeks and was free to students. Most advanced and elective courses cost members \$6.50 plus \$5.50 for the examination.

Seventeen boats participated in the 1973 cruise in the lower Chesapeake Bay, starting at Kinsale and going to Tides Inn at Irvington, York River Yacht Haven, Holiday Harbor in the Elizabeth River (including tour of the fifth District Headquarters of the U.S. Coast Guard in Portsmouth) and ending at Narrows Marina at Gwynne Island.

Fred Larsen onboard *Betts II* won the navigation contest at Windmill Point in the final rendezvous of the season. He was the first winner of the perpetual Last Chance trophy presented by Clifford Ford in 1970. Bob Malone onboard *Bo-Nan-Do* won the Commander's Trophy for scoring the lowest average error for the year in all navigator's contests.

NVPS's accomplishments were consistently recognized by District 5 and national leaders. National held annual competitions for presentations that promoted the USPS Boating Course. A very talented group of NVPS members organized slides of the squadron's first cruise into a quality audio-visual presentation that earned top honors at District 5 and first place nationally. Commander Yates accepted the Commanders Cup

award from Chief Commander Cosdon at the National Governing Board meeting in Pittsburgh. Copies of the NVPS presentation were given to every squadron nationwide to be used to publicize the Squadron Boating Course.

NVPS members distinguished themselves so often in both educational innovations and navigation contests that Potomac River Power Squadron friends give the squadron a nickname: "Flower Power Squadron." Four inch Flower Power patches were made for informal use so that NVPS members could show the flag without wearing the full uniform.

In 1973 a fire occurred at the Old Dominion Boat Club, the squadron's long-time meeting site. Meetings were then held in several locations before settling in 1974 at the Howard Johnson Motor Lodge on Route 1, Arlington.

### **1974: Cruise in Place**

James Head became the eighth Commander. Trailer boaters sponsored the first squadron picnic of 1974 at Sweden's Point. James O. Shepard established The Trailer-Boat Trophy to be awarded to the member whose trailer boat scored the lowest average percentage in all NVPS predicted log contests. The first winner was J. David Newell onboard *Green One* (7.84%).

The fuel crisis of 1974 threatened to cancel the summer cruise but determined members would not give up their fun and developed something new: "Cruise in Place." Participants spent the week at Gwynne Island and had a great time.

Squadron sailors who were not troubled by fuel shortages organized several sailing events. Derek Scorer authored a sailing column in *of Tars & Terns* entitled "Rag Haulage." Many members signed up for the spring Sail course.

In the fall 12-week Boating Courses were presented free to the public at four locations: New Garfield High School (Woodbridge), Minnie Howard Middle School (Alexandria), W. T. Woodson High School (Fairfax), and Joyce Kilmer Intermediate School (Vienna).

Roland Tiede wrote a series of newsletter articles describing his trip from Maine to the Chesapeake Bay bringing *Julia T* home and how the knowledge and skills he had learned in the squadron courses made it all possible.

### **1975: Building Membership**

Membership participation was encouraged under George Stone, the ninth Commander. The squadron instituted a policy requiring members to wear their nametags at all meetings. Those members who forgot their nametags were required to donate 25 cents to

the educational fund. Some members thought that a program of dancing girls would be beneficial to meeting attendance. Actually, in later years the wife of a past commander and her belly dancing group performed at several meetings. We have no reliable information on attendance at those meetings. On a more serious note, Bill Kelly presented an excellent program on his transatlantic delivery voyage from Plymouth, England to the Virgin Islands.

NVPS hosted the District 5 Summer Council and Rendezvous at Calvert Marina, Solomons, MD with members handling all details of registration, docking, flag ceremonies, entertainment, cocktail parties and dinners. Slip rental was \$.25 per foot. NVPS received high praise for a successful weekend which produced a \$846.00 surplus returned to District 5. NVPS skippers distinguished themselves in the day and night navigation contests, taking home six out of 12 trophies presented.

Three NVPS sailboats (*Samantha*, *Windsong*, *Julia T*) completed the District 5 Sail Regatta in August north of Baltimore. Strong wind and rain turned back several of the 42 competitors. Sam Weaver aboard *Samantha* became the first winner of the squadron's sailboat trophy.

The trailer boaters sponsored a squadron picnic at Sweden Point Marina. Eleven boats attended and five participated in the predicted log contest on Saturday afternoon. Six boats and other campers spent the night. At 0900 Sunday 22 members enjoyed a pot luck breakfast of pancakes, homemade sausage, eggs, fruit and gallons of coffee. Four hours later at 1300 they consumed eight dozen crabs, three cases of beer and two cases of soft drinks. Before heading home at 1700 they topped off with two orders of barbecued ribs.

Dave Newell created a teaching aid for Instructor Qualification that won first place in the National Training Aid Award competition. At the District 5 Educational Conference in Hunt Valley, NVPS won second place in the Commander's Cup and third place in the PRO scrapbook competition.

### **1976: Fitting Out**

Ronald J. Sowers, JN rounded out the first decade by becoming the tenth Commander, the first who was not a charter member. He became the first recipient of a trophy which honored the memory of Dean C. Lindquist, JN who died on April 26, 1976. Dean was Chair of Local Boating and an instructor. He was an enthusiastic competitor in navigation contests. Dean was Senior Engineer with the Naval Air Systems Command. His coworkers decided to honor him by creating a trophy to be given to the best navigator participating in all contests in a season. It was presented to Commander Sowers by Robert A. Weinberger of the Naval Air Systems Command who was also a member of the Rockville Power Squadron.

In March the Raghaulers hosted a Fitting Out Party at the Recreation Center at Pennsbury Village, Springfield. Over 100 sail and power boating members enjoyed wine and cheese while watching a feature film entitled "High Performance Sailing."

NVPS won second place at the District 5 Spring Conference Teaching Aids contest. It was designed to teach students what makes a boat sail when some will only drift. It was a simple sailboat named *USS Woodie* made from a sock box from Woodward & Lothrop (hull), a sweater box from Garfinkels (sail), coat hanger (axil), four large thread spools (wheels). Rubber bands were used to stop leeway and turn it into forward motion as the keel does on a sailboat. When not in use, all the parts were stored in the Garfinkels box.

The summer cruise was another Cruise in Place at Gwynne Island but not because of a fuel crisis. The cruise fleet had become so large that few marinas could handle all the boats.

### **1977: Atlantic Ocean Cruising**

The winter of 1977 was very cold on the Chesapeake Bay. Old watermen claimed the ice was the worst since 1918. Changing tides and ice combined to damage many piers and boats. In *of Tars & Terns* Jay Waple wrote:

It has been so cold the Bay did freeze,  
The rivers stopped and the creeks did seize;  
Pilings were raised and boats were sunk,  
By gnashing ice and lack of pump.

By spring, things looked brighter. The squadron's first long distance cruise was to the District 5 Summer Rendezvous in Atlantic City hosted by Absecon Island Power Squadron. Past Commanders Bob Malone and Bill Eldridge co-chaired the cruise. Following a weekend rendezvous at Solomons Island, the NVPS fleet of six took off in the rain for the north end of the Bay, stopping near the C&D Canal. From there they proceeded through the Cape May Canal, past Cape May and into the Atlantic. The trip through Absecon Inlet to Atlantic City was hair-raising for the smaller boats but all made it safely. Many other members joined the fleet by car.

The highlight of the three day rendezvous was when the Northern Virginia three-boat team won first place out of 17 teams competing in the navigation contest with a total error of only 1 minute 31 seconds. *Peridot* scored 4 sec., *Kathy El* scored 39 sec., and *Hu-Ke-Lau* scored 48 sec. Jim Settle's 4 second error onboard *Peridot* placed him first out of 37 individual boats competing. The homeward cruise took the fleet to Cape May,

Cohasset River off the Delaware Bay, the C&D Canal and Fairlee Creek on the Chesapeake Bay.

The NVPS newsletter *of Tars & Terns* remained outstanding, winning first place for the National Publication Award in 1977-78.

NVPS hosted the District 5 Fall conference at the Sheraton National Hotel, Arlington. Approximately 450 conferees came from 38 squadrons to attend meetings and training seminars. Member Matt Hynes and his Fairfax High School Marimba Band entertained on Friday night. At Saturday's banquet the Fairfax Jubilairs sang barber shop harmony.

The Charles S. Kent Memorial trophy was first awarded in 1977 to P/C William M. Kelly, N as the sailboat skipper whose seamanship, dedication, service, participation and citizenship best exemplify the principles of the USPS. The NVPS Educational Award was created by James Settle in 1978 to recognize the importance of the education program to the success of the squadron. Its first recipient was Richard B. Church, N.

### **1978: Participation with Fun!**

By 1978 NVPS membership had fallen from 500 to around 400 members. Sign-ups for squadron boating courses had slowed. The Executive Committee encouraged everyone to actively seek friends who would make good members. There was an official registration form entitled "Propose a Friend for Member."

Commander Settle announced at the Change of Watch that the theme of his watch was "Participation with Fun!" The squadron wasted no time in pursuing that theme and scheduled a full summer of rendezvous at Calvert Marina, Solomons, Clayton's Marina, Ocean Pines, Olverson's Marina, Tides Lodge, Fairlee Creek and Placid Harbor plus the cruise in the lower Chesapeake Bay. Two boats tied for first place with an error of 3 seconds early in the Last Chance navigation contest: *Sea Amigo* skippered by Bill Alberts and *Peridot* skippered by Commander Jim Settle. Trailer boaters participated in Predicted Log contests.

Following model bylaws issued by national, NVPS revised its bylaws to change the size and voting members of its Executive Committee. Under the new bylaws, there would be one elected Member at Large for each 50 squadron members (or fraction thereof). Previously these positions were appointed. The revised bylaws were published in the December *of Tars & Terns*.

### **1979: Go with *Gusto***

Membership may have been dropping but membership involvement was strong as documented by the 83 merit marks awarded that year.

An Instructor's Aids course was presented in January to study the psychology of adult learning and the use of teaching aids for squadron courses. To be eligible to take the final exam, students were required to attend 75% of the classes and qualify in four of the following five: slide projector, overhead transparencies, 16 mm movie projector, chalkboard, magnetic board.

Concerns about gasoline supplies caused the summer cruise to be named the "Do Your Own Thing Cruise." Rather than travel to several ports, activities centered on a single destination -- Somers Cove Marina. Cruisers enjoyed Crisfield's restaurants and shops, took tour boat trips to nearby Smith and Tangier Islands and did some fishing. That October John and Lynne Walker departed Solomons, MD for their around-the-world trip aboard their 41' sailboat *Gusto* to the envy of many power boaters.

### **1980: Mid-year COW**

First lady Joan Simmons began a regular newsletter column entitled "Tern Talk" to report on issues of particular interest to the women of NVPS. It contained recipes for onboard dining, news of squadron family members, etc.

General meetings were moved from Howard Johnson's back to the Old Dominion Boat Club. Rendezvous, navigation contests and predicted log contests ran throughout the summer and were as popular as ever with members. Former Squadron Education Officer Russ Hartz, who had moved to Florida, donated PFD's, fenders, anchor, tools, boat hook and other boat equipment for a silent auction to benefit the squadron. The auction took place at the Commander's cocktail party on 13 August 1980.

In August Commander Robert Simmons was transferred by the Federal Aviation Administration to Norfolk to serve as Liaison Officer to the Commander-in-Chief, Atlantic Fleet, U.S. Navy. The squadron was sorry to see Bob and Joan leave but wished them "fair winds and following seas." Executive Officer H.H.D. Heiberg, Jr. moved into the Commander's position and served the squadron well through the remainder of the year. The following year he was elected to serve as Commander for the entire year.

The National Governing Board asked that squadrons discuss the question of admitting women to full membership so their representatives would be able to vote on it at the annual meeting in January 1981. So the 6 October 1980 general meeting was devoted to a discussion of the issue. Members and women's certificate holders were invited to

speak for up to five minutes. The total time for presentation, discussion and vote was limited to 45 minutes. Only male members were permitted to vote by secret ballot. The final vote was 86% FOR women's membership, 10% AGAINST and 4% No Opinion.

The annual Holiday Party was held at Old Dominion Boat Club on the regular meeting night. It featured a traditional Christmas tree decorated with ornament favors for the ladies who were asked to provide refreshments. In keeping with NVPS's tradition, members brought nonperishable foods for distribution through Arlington County Department of Human Resources to needy families.

### **1981: Adjusting Sails**

It was a year of budget squeezing. Annual dues rose 6% to \$40.00. The squadron needed to find ways to economize. The Executive Committee decided to offer paid advertising in *of Tars & Terns* in an effort to defray the cost of printing the newsletter. Advertising space was limited to 20% of the issue and ads were to run for six months minimum. Costs ranged from \$21 for 1/8 page to \$60 for a full page per issue. In December Windmill Point Marine Resort advertised a New Year's package that included motel accommodations, New Year's Eve buffet dinner-dance and New Year's Day champagne brunch for \$60 per person double occupancy. NVPS members were invited to post holiday greetings in the December newsletter for the bargain price of \$5.00.

The squadron was also able to save money on postage. Up until this time, the newsletter had been mailed to members by first class mail. To take advantage of non-profit bulk mail rates, mailing labels had to be generated in zip code order. NVPS members were able to borrow an Apple computer from Computerland of Annapolis, type in the membership list and print mailing labels.

The District 5 Radio Technical Committee sponsored the "District 5 Net" every Monday evening at 1900 on a frequency of 3.930 MHz. The Net Controller was Karl as K4DCA out of Callao, VA. All amateur radio operators were invited to join in.

The February 1981 *of Tars & Terns* included a centerfold – a pullout poster announcing USPS Boating Courses scheduled at three locations in Northern Virginia. All members were encouraged to display the posters on bulletinboards throughout the area in hopes of recruiting students for the ten-week classes. This method of getting the word out was the brainchild of Ernie Pataky.

A two year effort to improve Cooperative Charting techniques resulted in high honors for the Northern Virginia Power Squadron which was designated the #1 squadron in the nation with over 5000 credits in 1981. NVPS received the most improved squadron award from national and District 5. Robert Myers won the national first place award for an individual in Cooperative Charting with 2000% above the requirement for the

National Honor Roll. His entry was a detailed channel and waterfront area survey of Belmont Bay and the Occoquan River with both aerial and water photographs and voluminous data. Bob became NVPS Commander the following year.

### **1982: Course Correction**

A special meeting of the Governing Board was called to order by Chief Commander Raymond Finley, Jr. on 11 September 1982, for the purpose of voting on two amendments to the USPS constitution and bylaws. The first amendment deleted all references to gender and removed the word “male.” It passed by a vote of 616 to 67 and allowed women to become fully participating members of USPS. A second amendment was also passed creating a Family Membership Plan for spouses and children ages 12 through 25. NVPS amended its bylaws to conform to USPS bylaws.

NVPS Secretary John Hays announced that the directory would be printed from a computerized list being prepared by Treasurer Derek Scorer for the first time in squadron history. In addition, some of the information usually included in the directory was being moved to a new “Squadron Handbook.” The handbook would contain the USPS pledge, NVPS bylaws, information about squadron officers and their responsibilities. Copies would be given to new members to acquaint them with the squadron.

The annual summer cruise began at Calvert Marina in Solomons with a July 4 navigation contest and picnic. From there the fleet cruised to Oxford, Baltimore and Herrington Harbour where another navigation contest and sail contest took place.

In May the bridge invited all members to a “Dining Out” at Flagship Restaurant in Washington, DC. For \$12.50 diners could choose shrimp, chicken or beef. It was so successful that a second Dining Out was held in October and combined with Awards Night. Trophies for summer navigation contests and predicted log contests along with perpetual trophies were awarded that evening.

The Governing Board met at the Hilton Hotel in Washington, DC and many NVPS members handled arrangements, welcomed attendees, monitored sessions and managed the many details of the meeting. NVPS ladies spent eight months and their own funds handcrafting boutique items (dolls, jewelry, wreaths, pillows, handbags, ornaments and more) to sell at the meeting. They made \$806 and donated it all to the squadron.

Members who had achieved the grade of Junior Navigator or Navigator formed the “Navigators’ Club of NVPS.” Thirteen attended its first meeting at the Fort Myer Officer’s Club. They later held annual competitions for taking sights which they called “Shoot-outs.” Prizes were given for two body fix, three body fix, Polaris (single LOP) for LAT, Meridian Transit (single LOP for LAP).

### **1983: Safe Boating Week**

Mayor Charles Beatley of Alexandria presented a Safe Boating Week proclamation to NVPS urging all boaters to take the free safe boating classes given by the Power Squadrons. Commander William Alberts and Rear Commander Robert Malone accepted the proclamation on behalf of NVPS and USPS.

NVPS celebrated Safe Boating Week in June by sponsoring a booth at the Alexandria Waterfront Festival. Past Commander Bob Myers loaned his boat and trailer for the display so that members could explain the uses of safety equipment to festival goers in a realistic way.

Seven NVPS boats cruised to Atlantic City for the District 5 Summer Rendezvous and Council. Six boats participated in the navigation contest. The three team boats, *Kathy El*, *Gracie* and *Sea Amigo*, finished in fourth place, only 2 seconds behind the third place winner.

A southern bay cruise began in August at Clayton's Marina with a rendezvous and navigator's contest. Then the fleet steamed off to Tides Lodge and Marina off the Rappahannock River. On Tuesday night a few hearty cruisers anchored out in the Piankatank River. On Wednesday the fleet regrouped and cruised to York River Yacht Haven, planning to fish along the way. On Saturday they cruised to Glebe Point Campground on Wicomico River. Special events included a tennis match and model sailboat races in the swimming pool.

### **1984: Navigator's Trophy**

In 1984 the Isicson family presented a trophy in honor of Jack Isicson for the best single score of the year in the NVPS navigators contest by an NVPS boat navigated by her owner. Jack was NVPS's first treasurer. The first winner was Dan Black (00.53 seconds) aboard *Gemini*. The member who most often won this trophy was Past Commander William S. Alberts aboard *Sea Amigo*.

### **1985: "Excitement 85"**

The theme of the National Governing Board meeting held in Baltimore Inner Harbor in September was "Excitement 85." Following the meeting, six NVPS boats joined 50 others from squadrons around the nation for a week-long cruise in the Chesapeake Bay. Chief Commander Steere's boat came from Texas. Many members from distant squadrons chartered sail and power boats locally. Many members followed by car.

As the fleet left Baltimore they paraded by Fort McHenry in formation. From there they traveled to Annapolis, St. Michaels and Oxford. At the St. Michaels stopover, the national Executive Officer was embarrassed when his boat ran aground in the harbor.

Spring Boating Courses were especially successful with 143 people taking the exam and 44 of those expressing an interest in becoming NVPS members.

The sailors scheduled two cruises. Potomac River boaters hosted an Octoberfest pot luck at the Seaport Marina on the Occoquan.

Mayor James Moran of Alexandria presented Safe Boating Week proclamations to NVPS in both 1985 and 1986 encouraging all boaters to take advantage of safe boating courses offered by the squadron.

The annual holiday party at the Old Dominion Boat Club featured a Sing Along under the direction of Rockville Past Commander Edward Wise with piano accompaniment by his wife Ruth. Party goers celebrated the true spirit of the season by donating \$450.00 for the Children's Hospital fund dispensed through the Harden and Weaver radio program. In addition, they collected food items for West Virginia flood victims and distributed it through the Alexandria Salvation Army.

### **1986: Cooperative Charting**

Summer rendezvous were held at Point Lookout (formerly Clayton's), Baltimore Harbour with tall ships review, Olversons Marina in Callao, Herrington Harbour, and Spring Cove in Solomons. There were three cruise directors, one each for power boats, sailboats and trailer boats. The annual power boat cruise began at Somers Cove in Crisfield and traveled to Norfolk and Gwynne Island. Trailer boaters went to Ocean Pines in Ocean City, MD.

Under the direction of Sherm Pratt and John Dabinett, Cooperative Charting activities were held during rendezvous at Spring Cove and Herrington Harbour. Many chart features were checked and double checked to identify changes in important navigation aids. Eighteen NVPS members volunteered to survey their marinas and submit a NOAA Small Craft Facilities Field Reports.

### **1987: Mr. Potomac River**

NVPS had the pleasuring of hosting Fred Tilp, a colorful man known as "Mr. Potomac River" at its March general meeting. Mr. Tilp devoted his life to educating people about the beauty of the Potomac River and "to inspire younger generations to preserve for posterity one of the noblest rivers in the world." In 1930 he established a unit of Sea Scouts at the Corinthian Yacht Club in Washington DC. He served as its leader for 40

years. He joined the Potomac River Power Squadron in 1932, achieving the grade of Navigator in 1933. He wrote and spoke extensively about the need to protect his beloved river.

Summer rendezvous were held at Tides Lodge and Marina on the Rappahannock River, with Richmond Power Squadron at Olverson's Marina, Callao, Spring Cove Marina, Solomons, Point Lookout Marina and Windmill Point Marina. Following the District 5 Rendezvous and Council, the summer cruisers traveled to the Sassafras River, Great Oaks at Fairlee Creek and Annapolis.

### **1988: Flower Power Fund**

The Flower Power Fund was established by Dr. Lloyd W. Hazleton and Mrs. Grace Murphy Hazleton to honor Dr. Hazleton's late wife, Harriet and Mrs. Hazleton's late husband, Dick Murphy. The Hazletons generously donated \$5000 to be placed into an account which would earn interest to support the mission of NVPS. Only the interest could be spent at the discretion of the commander with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee. Thanks to additional donations and interest since 1988, the balance of the Flower Power Fund has tripled. The Squadron has used the interest to purchase training materials, laptop computers, printers, etc. for the education program.

### **1989: Cruising Puget Sound**

Following the Governing Board meeting in Portland, Oregon, there was a national cruise through Puget Sound. Cruisers were bused from Portland to Puget Sound area with a stopover to see the volcanic eruption at Mt. St Helens. Two groups from NVPS and several from Richmond Power Squadron chartered boats on Lake Washington and proceeded through the locks to join the fleet in Puget Sound. Cruising there was very different from cruising the relatively shallow Chesapeake Bay with its soft mud bottom. Water depths in Puget Sound measured 100 fathoms or more and the bottom was solid rock. The highlight of the cruise was escorting the World War II battleship *U.S.S. Missouri* ("Mighty Mo") to her berth at Bremerton.

### **1990: Run Silent, Run Deep**

The squadron had a busy year of classes and on-the-water activities. Many members believe that the highlight of the year was a presentation by Captain Edward L. Beach, USN Ret. He is probably best known as the author of the novel, *Run Silent, Run Deep* as well as a dozen or so other books. That squadron meeting had the highest attendance of the entire year. Captain Beach spoke for about an hour and a half and kept everyone's undivided attention. After speaking, he autographed his books for NVPS members.

### **1991: Rookie Award**

In 1991 the squadron recognized the contributions of time and effort of new members with the awarding of a new perpetual NVPS Rookie trophy. The first recipient was James P. Lee. Later the award became known as the “Newer Member Award” and was replaced by a trophy that the winner could keep. Seventy-three members received merit marks for their substantial service to the squadron in 1991.

Trailer boaters camped out at Gale Alls’ home near the first rendezvous at Windmill Point. The next rendezvous at Olversons Marina in Callao featured a “Raw Egg Toss,” Bull Roast and a bonfire on the beach. The third rendezvous at Spring Cove in Solomons featured sail cruises for members who didn’t own boats or who owned power boats. There was also a Cooperative Charting Expedition. The fourth rendezvous was held jointly with the trailer boaters at Port Tobacco and included a crab feast. Last Chance was held at Ragged Point.

Northern Virginia hosted the District 5 Sail Regatta in Solomons over Labor Day weekend. Chuck Ehle’s *Windsong* finished first in its class as well as first over all.

Seven Boating Courses were given in the fall to 90 students. By December everyone was eager to see Santa at the NVPS Christmas Party at the Old Dominion Boat Club. Rumor had it that Santa used LORAN to guide his sleigh. Members donated \$485.00 for Children’s Hospital and four boxes of canned goods for homeless families.

### **1992: Silver Anniversary**

NVPS celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 14 March 1992 at the Elks Lodge in Fairfax. The celebration combined Change of Watch with a display of memorabilia from 25 years of service to Northern Virginia. P/C Ronald Sowers became Commander for the second time, having previously served in 1976-77. Five charter members were featured on the cover of the March 1992 *of Tars & Terns*: Gale Alls, Tom Martin, Alan Hart, Bob Malone and Don Berry.

Public safe boating education continued with seven Boating Courses presented throughout Northern Virginia in the winter-spring and nine Boating Courses presented in the fall. The squadron won the District 5 Membership Award in the large squadron category (over 200 members) for recruiting the greatest number of new members. NVPS also received a Cooperative Charting Honor Roll Certificate.

The 1992 annual cruise began with a joint rendezvous in Solomons with four other squadrons: Patuxent River, Prince George’s, Potomac River and Rockville Squadrons.

From Solomons the fleet cruised to Crisfield, intending to make a second stopover in Onancock. However, bad weather held the cruisers in Crisfield where they enjoyed good seafood at nearby restaurants. When weather cleared, they proceeded to the third destination at Tides Lodge up the Rappahannock River.

### **1993: Daytime Quest**

The District 5 Spring Conference was held in Baltimore. Northern Virginia's hospitality suite used a magic theme. Visitors received a colorful button showing the NVPS burgee with the message, "The Magic to Safe Boating is Education."

Spring Boating Courses were given at six locations and 111 passed the exam. In the fall classes were given at five locations. Students were charged \$25 for the text book and exam. Seven advanced and elective courses were offered to members at four locations.

The 1993 cruise began at the District 5 Rendezvous and Council in Crisfield and proceeded to Onancock, Salt Ponds in Hampton, Kingsmill on the James River, Waterside in Norfolk. Al Miller developed a Daytime Quest program to make it possible for members who did not have boats to join in the fun of cruising by arranging onboard guests and carpools. Members from Potomac River, Rockville, Prince George's and Patuxent River Power Squadrons were invited to join NVPS for its June rendezvous at Calvert Marina in Solomons.

Rendezvous were held at Calvert Marina and Ragged Point and Last Chance at Herrington Harbour South. There was a trailer boat event at Aquia Harbor with a predicted log contest.

Thirteen members posted Season's Greetings in the December *of Tars & Terns* in exchange for a donation to Children's Hospital.

### **1994: Incentive Awards**

William Henderson became Commander at Change of Watch which was held at Fort Belvoir Officer's Club. His wife Cathleen served as Executive Officer that year and became Commander herself the following year. Dickie Foster created unusual table centerpieces for the ceremony – living fish in bowls!

At the District 5 Spring Conference Northern Virginia highlighted Commander Henderson's heritage with a Scottish theme. It featured castle walls built by Dennis Jezierski, Scotch broth and shortbread. NVPS received awards for Safe Boating Week activities at the Alexandria Waterfront Festival and 3<sup>rd</sup> place Membership Achievement for Large Squadrons.

Spring Boating Courses were given at five locations and Seamanship, Piloting, Advanced Piloting, Weather and Sail were offered to members. USPS began a cash incentive awards program to encourage members to take advanced courses. Graduates received vouchers for \$4.00 or \$5.00 which could be used toward their next advanced course.

Nearly 300 students participated in the spring Boating Courses, with some classes having up to 60 students. To facilitate new member recruitment, all students were invited to a social held at the Kings Park Community Center in Springfield. Eighteen squadron members attended the gathering and shared their squadron experiences with 23 Boating Course graduates.

### **1995: CyberCruising**

NVPS welcomed Cathleen Henderson as its first female commander in 1995. Leadership skills must run in the family since her husband Bill Henderson had served as NVPS Commander the previous year.

U. S. Power Squadrons' first web site was established through the generosity of Ben Smith of Ronin House. Ben was voted an honorary member for donating his computer as a home for the web site. Its URL was <http://www.ronin.com/USPS/>. Later, USPS established its web site at <http://www.usps.org>. NVPS members were beginning to surf the web. Walt Lazear lead the way by writing an *of Tars & Terns* column called "CyberCruising" about using the Internet as a source of valuable information about all aspects of boating.

The Holiday party at Old Dominion Boat Club was a family affair. Members arrived with kids and grandkids carrying totebags and boxes filled with four dozen cookies for a cookie swap, a funny gift for a Switch and Swap Gift Gaggle, and canned goods or cash for needy families.

### **1996: Membership by Application**

Commander Jere Dando reported that the Spring Governing Board made major changes to USPS bylaws that would make a difference in membership recruitment. As appropriate for a public 501(c)(3) corporation, the squadron changed from requiring membership by invitation only to membership by application. This change simplified the application process and enabled boating course instructors to promote the benefits of squadron membership to their students, not previously allowed.

To make it easier for people to find information about NVPS boating courses, the Executive Committee obtained a recorded announcement phone service. The number was 703-758-4442. It was kept up to date with information about scheduled courses by the Squadron Education Officer. The number was listed on posters and other publicity materials.

Northern Virginia launched the summer boating season in May with a “Spring Fling” picnic at Fairfax Yacht Club, Occoquan. In June NVPS teamed up with Patuxent River Power Squadron for double the fun at Zahnisers Yachting Center, Solomons. NVPS celebrated Independence Day with Richmond Power Squadron at Olverson’s Lodge Creek Marina. Northern Virginia hosted the Saturday night cookout for 130 hungry people. Past Commanders Ron Sowers and Mike Foster cooked ten sirloin tip roasts over charcoal while other members prepared vegetables, salad and dessert. Richmond’s ladies auxiliary, The Nautigals, hosted breakfast on Saturday and Sunday. Last Chance was at Coles Point (formerly Ragged Point). The summer cruise to Solomons, lower Potomac River, Onancock and Crisfield was enjoyed by both power and sailboats. Trailer boaters gathered for a predicted log contest in Princess Anne, MD.

Charles Olin began his regular newsletter feature, “The Sailor’s Night Sky” to teach about the stars. He continued writing monthly articles for *of Tars & Terns* for ten years. His articles were of such great interest that they were reprinted by other squadrons.

### **1997: Excellence in Journalism**

The USPS National Publication Committee recognized *of Tars & Terns* with its “Excellence in Journalism” award. Under the editorship of Manette Lazear the newsletter had become one of the best in USPS. Dennis Jezierski took over the editor’s post in April and continued the award winning newsletter.

The Squadron Boating Course was scheduled at seven locations during the spring season. Charles Olin prepared a training aid entitled “Danger Bearing” which was displayed at the national meeting in San Francisco.

The February Founders Day pot luck dinner at Old Dominion Boat Club featured a crazy hat contest with prizes for the most outrageous creations. A summer meeting was held at the Great Falls Fire Station. Members watched fire fighting demonstrations and practiced proper fire extinguisher operation.

The summer cruise was designed by Past Commanders Gale Alls and Bill Alberts with both power boats and sailboats in mind. It started at Herrington Harbour South and went to Annapolis, Knapps Narrows, and Solomons. Rendezvous were held at Castle Harbor Marina on the Chester River and Mears Yacht Haven in Oxford with Last Chance at Solomons.

## 1998: Four Seasons

There is not one year that could be called “typical” but consider what was happening in the squadron by 1998. NVPS was prospering with 246 active members, an energetic bridge and a full schedule of winter classes and summer boating events.

**Spring:** Two weeks after NVPS’s Change of Watch, District 5 held its Spring Conference at the Princess Royale in Ocean City MD. Friday night’s hospitality room visits were an opportunity to show off the squadron’s hospitality and talent. Charles Olin designed a display of “Instruments of the Ancient Mariner” to be presented in the hospitality suite that had been turned into a replica of an old sailing ship. Each District 5 guest was offered a glass of grog and given a Pencil Sextant, a variation of an old instrument called the Latitude Hook.

**Summer:** The boating season kicked off with the May picnic and equipment swap at Fairfax Yacht Club. The first rendezvous was held in mid-Bay at Herrington Harbour South. There were two cruises, one to Annapolis, Kent Narrows and Tilghman Island and the second later on to Windmill Point, Salt Ponds, Kings Mill on the James River and Waterside Marina in Norfolk. The District 5 Summer Council and Rendezvous was held at Calvert Marina in Solomons Island MD.

For several years NVPS teamed up with the Richmond Power Squadron to hold a joint Independence Day celebration at Olverson’s Marina near Callao, VA. It was a full weekend starting with a Friday night cocktail party. On Saturday morning both bridges, dressed in summer white uniforms, gathered for a formal flag raising ceremony. That was followed by the captain’s meeting to plan the navigation contest scheduled to begin at noon. After the navigation contest, boats decorated in red, white and blue paraded through the creek, celebrating the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. NVPS’s best cooks spent the day preparing a delicious roast beef dinner to feed everyone at the marina. After dinner everyone danced to the tunes of a local DJ. Sunday morning’s continental breakfast sent everyone homeward with a full stomach.

In late summer there was a trailer boat event and raft-up in Mattawoman Creek, Potomac River. A fun summer of boating ended with the Last Chance Rendezvous at Spring Cove Marina, Solomons Island. As usual P/C Bill Alberts and his experienced crew aboard *Sea Amigo* won the navigation contest but everyone who participated received a USPS crying towel embroidered with “I knew I should have.....”

**Fall:** The education program went into high gear in September with Boating Courses scheduled at seven locations. Three advanced courses and three elective courses were offered. An intrepid crew of 12 searched for geodetic markers in Fairfax County in October to support the Cooperative Charting program. Fifty-six members received merit marks for their service to the squadron and its mission in 1998.

During that year many things were happening in the field of safe boating education. USPS released the videotape Boating Course in open or closed captioned format to enable persons with hearing impairment to learn about safe boating. The FCC announced that marine radio manufacturers would be required to include Digital Selective Calling capability in all new radios beginning June 1999.

**Winter:** Santa and Mrs. Claus visited the NVPS Holiday Gala dinner-dance at Belle Haven Country Club. Each guest received a wooden snowflake made by Commander Richard Durgin. At USPS headquarters work continued on redesigning advanced and elective courses in module format. The goal was to better accommodate students' busy schedules by dividing courses into more manageable short segments. The Governing Board approved a streamlined process for squadrons wishing to change their names to include "Sail and."

During 1998 ten NVPS past commanders worked diligently for the squadron in all departments. They were in charge of education, programs, nominations, cruise planning, editing the newsletter, membership involvement, teaching, and the Flower Power Fund. That is what inspired P/C Jere Dando and Nancy Dando to donate a ship's wheel trophy to be awarded annually to a Past Commander of NVPS for continuing outstanding service to the squadron. This trophy and others were presented by the Commander at Founders Day in February.

In March at the Change of Watch ceremonies, a new bridge was sworn in and began the next leg of the squadron's journey.

### **1999: Education Partnership**

By the fall of 1999 NVPS had formed a partnership with the Recreation Departments of Fairfax County, Arlington County and McLean. The departments advertised Squadron Boating Courses in their course catalogs and handled registration duties. Notices of boating courses reached almost every Northern Virginia household. Squadron instructors were able to spend less time on the phone registering students and more time preparing to teach the larger classes that resulted. One Boating Course at South Lakes High School in Reston had 55 students. Many of those students joined the squadron and became active members.

The Change of Watch at Belle Haven Country Club was a musical affair. Past Commander Dennis Jezierski played his violin while Mary Pierpont lead the attendees in a rousing sing-along. A couple of weeks later NVPS hosted a hospitality room at the District 5 Spring Conference. Visitors tried to steer a course laid out on Etch-A-Sketch boards.

Members could easily plan their summer boating trips by referring to a *Rendezvous and Cruise Schedule* compiled by Bob and Lindalee Fitton. It resembled a cruise guide written just for NVPS. Additional summer cruise details were available in the *CRUZ NUZ* written by Past Commanders Gale Alls and Bill Alberts, cruise co-chairs. The 12 boats of the northern cruise went to Bay Bridge Marina, Great Oak Landing and Mears Point. The southern cruise had planned to start at Salt Ponds and proceed to Windmill Point, Gwynn Island and Tides Lodge. Weather changed the plans somewhat but the group was able to tour a Navy installation in Norfolk and a Coast Guard Station at Milford Haven.

### **2000: Hospitality**

The NVPS hospitality suite at District 5 Spring Conference in Ocean City was a group effort from start to finish. The serious message was the importance of having an “abandon ship bag” prepared with basic survival equipment in case of emergency. The fun side of the message was in the presentation. Several members dressed as characters from the old TV show “Gilligan’s Island” and carried abandon ship bags appropriate to their character. For example, the millionaire’s bag contained cash and a bottle of sherry. Ginger’s bag had makeup and perfume. Mary Ann’s bag had baking ingredients. The professor’s bag had reference books and scientific instruments. The room was decorated with palm trees and refreshments were fresh tropical fruit and rum punch.

NVPS joined the Internet revolution in 2000 by establishing a web site linked to the national web site. It is [www.usps.org/localusps/nva/](http://www.usps.org/localusps/nva/). It provided information to members and to the public on all aspects of squadron activities. It listed meetings, classes, on-the-water events, current newsletter and links to other related sites.

To encourage renewed interest in navigation contests, *of Tars & Terns* ran a series of three articles about how a contest is run, what crew is needed and how to use a traverse.

A special feature of the annual summer cruise was Dave Moore’s wicked scavenger hunt. Cruisers spent hours searching for hard-to-find items such as underwear with nautical motif, fishing sinker, mermaid carved from a bar of soap and a live flying insect with wings attached.

### **2001: Gone Fishin’**

A dozen Northern Virginia anglers tried their luck aboard a boat from Scheible’s Fishing Center on the Potomac River in June. They spent eight hours fishing for bluefish, rockfish and anything else that would take the bait. All claimed they brought home enough fish for a nice fish fry.

*Of Tars & Terns* continued to win awards under Editor Allan Sager's direction in spite of the deliberate "mistakes" in the April Fool's issue. Dwight Blues wrote a series of articles entitled "Tech Tips" featuring good advice that goes beyond what members learn in Marine Electronics and Engine Maintenance. Charles Olin won "Best Feature Article" honors from District 5 for his long-running series entitled "Sailor's Night Sky: Enjoying the Stars." Thoroughly researched and footnoted, Charles's articles were often reprinted in other squadron newsletters. Charles later wrote a series entitled "A Sailor's Experience" about his sailing trips.

Northern Virginia's hospitality suite theme at District 5 Spring Conference was "Flag Smart." The crew wore matching t-shirts with signal flags spelling out the theme. Visitors to the suite learned flag etiquette, proper flag placement and flag signals.

USPS activities were expanded to include Vessel Safety Checks under an agreement between the U.S. Power Squadrons and the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary. Northern Virginia members immediately took Vessel Examiner training and began performing VSC's at area marinas.

### **2002: America's Boating Course**

The United States Power Squadrons and the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary collaborated to develop America's Boating Course (ABC) which enabled students to learn the basics of safe boating at home on their computers. They could take ABC online or by ordering a DVD and manual. Northern Virginia and local squadrons nationwide supported the students by answering questions and providing proctored exams. Many ABC students became active USPS members.

Boating Course instructors taught students new boating rules issued by the Homeland Security agency following the attacks of 11 September 2001. Boaters were urged to report unusual activity near or on the water, particularly in the vicinity of power plants, dams, naval shipyards and other critical facilities.

In June Northern Virginia vessel examiners observed National Safety Check Days by performing Vessel Safety Checks on trailer boats, PWC's, kayaks, etc. at the BoatUS Marine Center in Alexandria, VA. Throughout the summer additional members were trained and performed safety checks on dozens of boats at marinas in the area.

The Executive Committee of the Northern Virginia Power Squadron took the necessary steps to change the squadron's name to Northern Virginia Sail & Power Squadron. At last the squadron's name reflected the valued membership of all boaters, both sail and power. NVSPS updated its bylaws to reflect changes in national policy regarding Assistant Administrative Officers and other issues.

In July NVSPS hosted the District 5 Summer Council and Rendezvous at Herrington Harbour South. A committee of four couples worked for months finding an ideal marina and arranging for meals and tents and a million other details. Ruth Grasso made a beautiful quilt which was raffled off to raise funds for the event. When the big weekend came, dozens of Northern Virginia members wore matching blue shirts as they assisted with docking 80 boats and making sure the 300 attendees enjoyed a weekend of meetings, ceremonies, navigation contests and fun. Entertainment at the Saturday night banquet included karaoke singing and a caricature artist who captured the personality of every USPS member he sketched.

Northern Virginia also sponsored and supported the creation of a new squadron in the Aquia Harbor area to be named Mid-Potomac Power Squadron. Several NVSPS members were involved with planning and leadership for the new squadron.

### **2003: Sea Scouts**

Sea Scout Ship 1942 and NVSPS formed a partnership under the Memorandum of Agreement between the Boy Scouts of America and USPS. Sea Scout Skipper Tom Ballew coordinated joint education, fellowship and civil service programs. Ship 1942 won almost every award a Sea Scout ship could win that year: Ship of the Year, Scout of the Year, Sea Scouter (adult member) of the Year and Skipper of the Year.

At the July meeting P/C Bill Lazear (Naples) presented DepthWiz, a computer program he developed which uses GPS data and depth soundings to create a file that can be sent directly to NOAA under the Cooperative Charting Program. Bill had been a USPS instructor for 20 years and had extensive experience navigating large sailboats in the Great Lakes and the Atlantic. Later Jim Roberts taught a class in the use of DepthWiz.

The Squadron Education Officer Richard Durgin worked with the safety engineer on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge project to provide America's Boating Course training and examinations for bridge workers who use small boats in DC waters while working on the new Route 95 bascule bridge over the Potomac River.

The summer cruise was two-for-the-price-of-one with the northern Bay group cruising to Oxford and Cambridge and the southern Bay group cruising the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers. The two cruise groups ended their cruises together at Solomons Island to compare notes.

### **2004: Folklife Festival**

In June the USPS sponsored two booths and a large display tent at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival on the Mall in Washington, DC. Commander Keith Segerson co-chaired with P/C David Teets of the Richmond Power Squadron, coordinating on-site activities

and volunteer efforts. USPS members spoke to hundreds of visitors about boating safety during the two week festival using a small runabout as a training tool.

In March the theme of Northern Virginia's hospitality suite at District 5 Spring Conference was "Titanic: Lessons Learned." Commander Keith Segerson and Secretary Lt/C Cathy Sheffield hosted the suite in costume. Cathy's grandmother was a Titanic survivor.

Squadron Education Officer Jay Nelson began an *of Tars & Terns* series entitled "Captain's Corner" to test each member's knowledge of seamanship in a Q&A format.

### **2005: Lifesaving Award**

At the District 5 Spring Conference, longtime member Ben Fulton received the USPS Lifesaving Award in recognition of his rescuing a man whose boat was swamped near the Chesapeake Bay Bridge. The man drifted in the partially submerged boat for 13 hours through the night before Ben found him near Herring Bay on the morning of 11 October 2004.

At the June general meeting, associate members John and Lynn Walker described their two year circumnavigation of the globe onboard their sailing vessel *Gusto*. They described the places they visited, the people they met and the importance of the skills they had acquired through squadron courses.

The 2005 summer cruise started in Osprey Point Marina in Rock Hall and traveled to Georgetown Yacht Basin on the Sassafra River, Great Oaks Landing at Fairlee Creek and ended at Herrington Harbour North in Deale MD. Cruisers celebrated high school graduations of two younger crew members and participated in a zany scavenger hunt that featured soap carvings and unique business cards.

### **2006: Why Knot?**

Two weeks after Change of Watch ceremonies at Springfield Golf and Country Club, Northern Virginia members headed off to Ocean City for the District 5 Spring Conference. The theme of the hospitality suite was WHY KNOT? and naturally featured lots of instruction in knot tying. Members taught visitors how to tie a one-handed bowline, useful when rescuing someone who has fallen overboard. With a knot theme, pretzels were the perfect choice for refreshments. A committee of three couples prepared 300 colorful monkey fists for souvenir handouts.

Cruise Planner Joel Bailey lined up a busy summer of on-the-water fun including raft-ups and weekend sails to Oxford, St. Michaels and Tilghman Island. In June the annual cruise started at Baltimore's Inner Harbor East Marina, giving cruisers a big choice of

activities from shopping to museums to ethnic restaurants. The second stop at Langford Bay offered opportunities for kayaking quiet creeks. The final stop at Bay Bridge Marina provided cruisers a chance to look over new boats at the brokerage.

At the Governing Board meeting in New York in August, Tom Ballew, NVPS Youth Liaison and Skipper to Sea Scout Ship 1942 received the Finley Sea Scout Service Award for his outstanding civic, educational and fraternal leadership to Sea Scouts and USPS.

Sea Scout Quartermaster Stephanie Hebda realized a dream when she received a congressional nomination to the U.S. Naval Academy Class of 2010. Two other Sea Scouts were chosen to sail aboard USS Eagle, the Coast Guard Academy's 295-foot barque for a summer adventure.

### **2007: 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

The story continues and you are part of it! So, participate, learn and enjoy!

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#### Sources:

1979 NVPS Directory

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"Do You Remember?" by P/C William Alberts, SN

Many issues of *Of Tars & Terns*