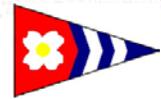




of TARS & TERNS

Newsletter of the Northern Virginia Sail & Power Squadron

www.usps.org/localusps/nva/ott/ott.htm



June 2005

Vol XXXIX No 6

SQUADRON BUILDS A BRIDGE

Feb 2005 .Your NVSPS has been actively involved in the construction of the new Woodrow Wilson Bridge on the beltway in northern Virginia. 1/Lt Brian Middleton, AP reports that P/C Dick Durgin, JN met with Chris Claggett, the project's safety engineer way back in 2003. Employees of American Bridge and Edward Kraemer & Sons, Inc. regularly use small boats to cross the Potomac to access work sites on the bascule construction, so Dick reviewed the different boating regulations of the three jurisdictions governing the Potomac River. Chris then requested our help in educating their employees in boating safety. Dick recommended that they study the America's Boating Course (ABC) and offered to proctor the examination for them. To date 18 bridge workers have taken and passed the ABC.

Nearing completion



On 21 February 2005 Chris conducted a tour of the construction site for Dick Durgin, Brian Middleton, and P/C Gale Alls, SN. Chris expressed his appreciation to the NVSPS and also asked us to remind our members to slow down while passing under the

bridge. Check out the mariner's alert at www.wilsonbridge.com



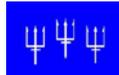
Chris Claggett (center) with some NVSPS Pros

Photos by Brian Middleton



Cdr Keith B. Segerson, P

From the Commander



We're off and running! That is, we're supposed to be out on the water; finishing up advanced NVSPS courses; attending meetings to hear GREAT speakers on timely and important topics; and looking forward to enjoyable social events with our fellow NVSPS members. I wrote these words in late April anticipating them being incorporated into my oT&T report for May. I was sitting in Ohio at the computer looking out the window at SNOW falling in late April. I was certainly not engaged in all of these enjoyable activities and felt that just when I was buying in to the theory of global warming, I had to scrape snow off my father's car and couldn't see the flowers on the apple trees because they were covered with snow. One just had to love it!

I was in Ohio to care for my ailing father who ultimately passed away in early May. He lost his wife (my mother) after 66 years of marriage last November and struggled ever since. At nearly 90 years of age, he saw and experienced many things. One thing that he and my mother always cherished was the friendships they made in their 23 years on active duty in the Air Force and those they made while engaged in social and volunteer activities. Bringing this back and relative to your NVSPS, I am involved due, in a very large part, to those true friendships that exist in our wonderful organization. I can't count how many times that I have asked for (and in some cases, not asked for) and quickly received assistance, guidance, support, and encouragement from so many of our members. I tend to make friends easily, but know that our membership consists of such a great body of individuals that "belonging" to the NVSPS is exceptionally important to me. It's great knowing that when I ding up my propeller because I wasn't paying 100% attention for that exact moment, that I won't be totally crucified – just totally embarrassed by my true and long time friends. My excuse is that my boat is just faster and it's harder to do everything right! That's a good reason isn't it? I'm not sure what I'll come up with when, and if, I ever get a bigger (and slower) vessel!

Our speakers for our next meeting are John and Lynn Walker, long time members of the NVSPS. They engineered and executed an around-the-world excursion on their own sail boat a number of years ago. Their story, pictures, and artifacts will astound those in attendance. As many of you know, I am not the most formal person in meetings, I do work to streamline them and focus more on the speaker, membership networking, and general friendship fostering. So please make plans to come to our next all-hands meeting as it promises to be exciting and fun. We've seen an increase in attendance, so please arrive early to get a seat. Extra chairs have had to be set up for the past few meetings, as attendance and participation are growing. New members are also attending in record numbers. Come and meet our new members, hear a great speaker, and enjoy the camaraderie of your fellow NVSPS members.

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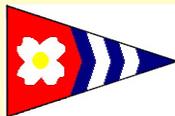
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SHIP'S STORE



Need a new burgee, sport shirt or name tag?

Contact P/C Paula Bailey, AP
 (703) 444-5169



Lt/C Glenn A. Fahey, P:

EXEC'S MOMENT



For those of you who have boats, I hope you are fully enjoying the season by now. For those who don't currently own a boat, please feel free to join in on the squadron activities. Boat ownership is not a requirement to participate in the activities of the NVSPS. Fun is to be had by all.

Our Cooperative Charting Chairman, Lt. Ed Phillips, AP led a group on a geodetic marker identification day on Saturday, May 7th. Seven people participated, and had a fun "hunt" for these geodetic markers after meeting for breakfast. This was a land-based activity in which anyone who is interested could participate. Ed will be leading more of these in the future. If you are interested, please contact Ed at potter339@earthlink.net or (703) 771-7096.

At our all-hands meeting in May, Lt. Tom Martin, AP gave us his legislative update. Tom reports that there is a senate bill that would eliminate public access to National Weather Service information. This would make it so that the NWS would only be used for emergency weather alerts. All other weather related information would have to be accessed through private means. The weather reports we get on our VHF weather radio band on WX-1, WX-2, WX-3, etc. are quite valuable to the mariner. It would be a shame to lose this and access to other NWS weather data. As taxpayers, we have already paid for the services of the NWS. If you want your voice heard on this issue, please contact your senator.

Lt. Elaine Colen, our Vessel Safety Check Chair, along with the squadron's Vessel Examiners, continue to do a great job performing numerous Vessel Safety Checks throughout our region. By the time you read this, we will have completed National Safe Boating Week, and performed Vessel Safety Checks at Fairfax Yacht Club on the Family Picnic Day, and also at West Marine in Woodbridge for trailer boaters. If you would like to become a Vessel Examiner, please contact Elaine at elsc97@aol.com. This is a great way to participate in a squadron activity, even if you don't have a boat. It's also great way to see many different kinds of boats while helping out fellow boaters.

Have a safe boating season!



**"Lighthouse" Speakers Tony & Alma Pasek
 at May's all-hands meeting**





SQUADRON CALENDAR

JUNE 2005

- 1-5 USPS Spring Governing Board
Charlotte NC
- 8 All Hands' Meeting
at BoatUS headquarters
- 17-19 D5 Rendezvous
Southern Chesapeake
- 24-30 Summer Cruise
details in April oT&T
- 26 Navigation contest
Sassafras River

JULY 2005

- 4 Rendezvous with Richmond VA PS
- 13 All Hands' Meeting
at BoatUS headquarters
- 15 - 21 D5 Summer Cruise
North & Southbound
- 21 - 24 D5 Summer Rendezvous
Solomons Island MD
- 23 - 31 Boy Scout Jamboree
Camp AP Hill VA

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

May 18, 2005

In attendance:

BRIDGE: Commander, CDR Keith Segerson, P
Executive Officer, Lt/C Glenn A. Fahey, P
Administrative Officer, Lt/C Martha Jane Dodd, P
Secretary, Lt/C Clara L. Blanding, P
Treasurer, Lt/C Jeffrey D. Hester, S
Assistant Education Officer, 1stLt Brian C. Middleton, AP
Assistant Administrative Officer, 1stLt William Hammett, AP

MEMBERS AT LARGE: P/C Richard J. Durgin, JN P/C John A. Shivik, AP
D/Lt Walter D. Lazear, AP Lt Ronald H. Larson, P

COMMITTEE CHAIRS & OTHERS

P/C Edwin J. Dodd, JN Lt Jean P. Durgin, AP

The executive meeting was held at Neighbors Grill in Vienna. The meeting was called to order at 1930. A quorum was present. Minutes from the last meeting were not available for distribution.

BRIDGE OFFICER REPORTS

Commander, CDR Keith Segerson, P

- Expressed his appreciation for the support he has received from the Squadron following the loss of his father. He and his family very much appreciated the flowers and fruit basket that were sent on behalf of the squadron.
- New Member Mentoring: We need to formalize the program of assigning a mentor to new members to make them feel welcome, provide squadron information and encourage participation in meetings and activities. In instances where this has been done, the members have become more interested and involved in the activities of the squadron. So far, only Excom members have been assigned as mentors.

Action:

1. Decide who will coordinate and how mentors will be assigned (potentially Martha Jane Dodd or Clara Blanding coordinate).
 2. Could mentors also be other active squadron members who are not on the Excom?
 3. Ask for volunteers at the next meeting for members who would be interested in acting as a mentor. (Form a mentor committee?)
- New Members: Some new squadron members have reported that they are not getting the packet of information that are given out to members who join after taking a basic boating course. New members who join following a class are given packets immediately; Martha Jane Dodd follows up with them approximately 30 days later. However, if a member joins from another source (non-squadron basic course, transfer, etc), no system has been in place to send them the same information and they are "missed".
- Action: Martha Jane will send new member information if membership application notes referral from source other than a squadron basic boating course. Keith will continue to send letters and certificates to all new members when they complete Seamanship.
- The next Excom meeting is scheduled for June 8th at 1830, prior to the meeting at Boat US. Keith will be out of town and Glenn will chair both meetings. Please review the Action items and be prepared to report back at that meeting.

Executive Officer, Lt/C Glenn A. Fahey, P

- West Marine: There was some discussion regarding offers West Marine has given in the past for boaters who have their vessels inspected. The availability varies by store. Free T-shirts for vessels that pass inspection, or coupons for 10% off required safety items can be offered. It is not known if the West Marine in Woodbridge will be offering either of these.
- Inspectors should bring a step stool/ladder when performing checks on trailered boats as getting into them can be a challenge.
- Experienced Boater Program: There was considerable discussion regarding a new program that may be offered to experienced boaters who have not passed a basic boating course but who have experience that may be substituted for a class. People who qualify may be able to take some sort of proficiency test that will allow them to join the USPS and enroll in advanced boating courses. There is some information about this on the D5 website. It is unclear how these individuals will be considered qualified – whether they must take a proctored exam or if a non-proctored online exam is sufficient.
- We need to get the word out to the public that this is available to experienced boaters. One method would be to pass out flyers at our VSC's to boaters.

Action:

1. Glenn and Jeff Hester will download the sample flyers and make copies to be passed out at our VSC's..

2. VSC's would be a good place to also hand out packets on membership in the squadron. Can a flyer be created with information specific to our squadron and given out at the same time (or give packet currently being given new members)?

- Boy Scout Jamboree: A Boy Scout Jamboree is scheduled to be held at Ft. AP Hill from July 25-Aug 1. There will be a booth there representing the USPS. Since the location is approximately 2 hrs. away from us it might be best for the squadrons located closer to the event to participate. Anyone wishing to participate will need to fill out applications forms for security clearance.
- Vessel Safety Examiner: Everyone is encouraged to become a Vessel Safety Examiner. It is fun, easy and you can complete the course at home. Contact Elaine Colen if anyone wishes to become certified.

Assistant Education Officer, 1stLt Brian C. Middleton, AP

- Basic Boating Courses: National and District are now allowing students who take an ABC course on line to also take the examination on line in a non-proctored setting and still be eligible for squadron membership and advanced courses.
- On-line courses are attractive since they can be completed at home at a time determined by the student as opposed to an 8-week fixed commitment to take the squadron course.
- Squadrons are notified by national when an individual signs up for an on-line ABC course but not if they actually take and complete a non-proctored examination. This makes it difficult to follow up on potential new members. In reality, very few people who sign up for the course actually complete the course by examination. However, receiving information on people who actually take the exams would provide a viable source for potential squadron membership. We have never targeted these people in the past for membership since the exam information is not available.
- General group discussion concluded:
 - This is a good group to target once they pass an exam although separating out those who are taking the course only to meet state boating requirements and those who are interested in education and further opportunities is impossible. However, some may be "converted" once they receive contact from us.
 - A generic letter could be sent to those who complete an on-line examination detailing squadron membership and general information. However, this can only be done if examination information is provided to us from the national level.

Action:

1. Find out if we can get information from on-line exams from national/district levels.
2. Assign someone to contact these people once we get the information.

- Credit Cards: An article in the Ensign argued that one problem with enrolling new members is our lack of ability to accept credit card payments (both at squadron and national levels). This has been an ongoing discussion at all levels. Although interest in membership immediately following the completion of a basic boating course exam is high, members are lost if we cannot obtain payment immediately. Many people no longer carry cash or checks due to the increasing acceptance of check/credit cards. There is an "opportunity cost" to not accepting credit cards.

Action:

1. Jeff Hester will look into the squadron pursuing our own credit card contract.
2. Consider an interim solution with a "join now but bill me later" option. (Who would bill?)
3. Would it be appropriate for Richard Davis to represent our preferences at the upcoming conference in Charlotte or will this cause a conflict of interest due to his position at district level? Can another one of our members attend this meeting from June 1-5?

Administrative Officer, LT/C Martha Jane Dodd, P

- Plans are underway for our Spring Fling on May 21 at Fairfax Yacht Club. Approximately 25 people have signed up to attend the event. This will be held in coordinate with the VSC's at that location the same day. If anyone is available, help would be appreciated in setting up and taking down the event.

Secretary, Lt/C Clara L. Blanding, P

- Squadron member and instructor, Rick Baker, has indicated that he would be willing to coordinate a member cruise at a remote location that would involve chartering power and/or sail boats in areas like the Bahamas or Caribbean if there is interest by our members. He has coordinated this type of event before for other organizations. It is a good opportunity for people who wish to charter in remote locations but who would prefer the support and planning of an organized event.

Action: Clara will ask Rick Baker to write up a paragraph with the idea and submit it to oT&T to see if there is any interest.

Treasurer, Lt/C Jeffrey D. Hester

- The dues we pay to D5 have been increased. It was discussed and agreed that member dues need to be raised proportionally to cover this expense. Renewal notices have already been sent out for this year so existing members will not be affected this year. However, new member dues may be raised starting with the fall class season.

Action: Jeff will find out exactly how much the increase would be per member and report back.

- Audit: The annual audit needs to be done with the change of board. The auditing committee needs to be contacted to perform the audit.

Action: Jeff will contact the Chair of the Auditing Committee, George Degnon, to contact his committee and start the process.

- There was a question about the payment return address on the dues statements. The address is Jeff's company address and will be changed or clarified next year on statements.



COMMITTEE and OTHER REPORTS

of Tars & Terns and Member Directory, D/Lt Walter D. Lazear, AP

- Issues of the newsletter will be published in May, June and July but not in August. It will resume in September.
- Requests for updates, corrections to the annual Member Directory have been sent out and responses are coming back. Plans are to publish the Directory in June.

P/C John A. Shivik, AP

- Traditionally the fall D5 conference has focused on education. To date, interest in this has been low. D5 would like input on what they can do to attract interest in this meeting. Is there some type of program we would like to see offered?

Meeting was adjourned at 2130.

THE COCONUT TELLS THE STORY (PART 2 of 3)

Located somewhere near Staniard Creek, east side of Andros Island, Bahamas, anchored off a small cabana along the beach, alone, I realized I had a long difficult sail to one of my destinations, Hatchet Bay, west side of Eleuthera. Along the way is a great spot to rest, a place where Sid and I had spent some time, the Nassau Harbor Club; he liked to go to Paradise Casino. The next morning I raised sail and headed NE toward the Berry Islands and Chub Cay to enjoy sailing and fishing the deep blue waters of the Tongue of the Ocean. There was no time this trip to visit Chub Cay, a favorite spot in transiting to the Outer Islands so I headed into the North West Providence Channel. Heading out from the beach, I could not overlook the beautiful coral reefs beneath. Out a little further, the water was a deep blue; no wonder, the depth goes quickly to 2,000 feet. There are three rows of reefs, each about twenty feet deeper as they go out. Along these reefs the most dynamic of the sport fish, the Mako shark, patrols for his meal. Catching a Mako would be fun, I thought and quickly attached a long steel leader and a ballyhoo to two large hooks; the bait was real and looked good to me. Hours later, following just outside the reefs, I changed my bait; nothing was happening. Then it dawned on me; Flicka Sköäl was only going 2.5 knots, no wonder. Mako Shark strike at fish going much faster. It was now getting late in the afternoon and I was still in the northwest channel, well beyond the reefs; I had better head to Nassau; it was quite a way off; the breeze was light.

Getting dark now; I could see the lights of Nassau Town in the distance. It had been a policy of ours, Sid and I, not to sail at night in the Bahamas; the coral heads are treacherous. I decided to sail several miles north of the entrance keeping Hog Island Light in view. This was tiring and I was still exhausted from the sail over, but I managed. With light of morning I sailed toward a spot between the radio tower and Hog Island Light. Just as I was approaching the entrance a very large cruise liner came up behind. Best I let her go in first; there wasn't room for both of us. Now came the arduous task of beating up the slew between Nassau and Paradise Island against a tide of 2.5 knots or more, but the wind was strong and Flicka Sköäl liked strong wind. First to port, then to starboard, back and forth. I noticed a large Bahamian fishing sloop, with a long boom doing the same thing; it was a race on his part and soon became one for me. I reached Potters Cay Bridge well ahead and then I spotted the Nassau Harbor Club marina ahead to port. My last tack, or so I thought,

was to port across a sand bar, which I had to bounce over. Standing along the dock was the dock master, a rather large, jolly faced Bahamian whom I'd gotten to know well in the past. He grabbed my line as I said hello and requested a slip. OK Olin, take slip 13 and let go my line. Of course my little engine did not work; it hadn't worked since leaving Fort Lauderdale. I had to tack again and then again letting the current take me back a little and then sail in four slips to #13. No time to think; I threw a line to someone standing nearby, lowered the main, secured more docking lines, and looked up. The guy who caught the line complained "Don't you know how to throw a line?" Apparently I hit him hard with it. Then it was my turn on the dock master "How come you let my line go?" Secured and exhausted I found a lounge chair in the shade and fell fast into a deep sleep.

Konk! Two feet from my right side a coconut fell from its tree and hit the concrete. I awakened to two heavily suntanned and bearded guys staring at me. "We thought you would never wake up." They had sailed from Denmark in a 28-foot Great Dane and were relaxing in the Bahamas before sailing home to Dufuski Island, South Carolina. Bob, the owner, two years later sailed single-handed to England to enter a cross Atlantic race, east to west. I was a complete novice compared to Bob. We became good friends and with the experience of being a helicopter mechanic in Viet Nam for the CIA, he was able to fix my outboard engine, a wet sparkplug.

To be continued.

D /Lt Charles H. Olin, AP



P/C Paula Bailey, AP with details of the summer cruise at May's all-hands meeting



MONTHLY ALL-HANDS MEETING

2nd Wednesdays at 1930 (any changes posted herein and on the web)
 at BoatUS 880 S. Pickett St., Alexandria

From I-495 take Van Dorn Exit #173 (old #3) north.
 Turn Left on S. Pickett

Or.. From I-395 take Duke St. Exit #3 east, turn right on Van Dorn.
 Turn right on S. Pickett.

Then... Go less than 1/2 mile and turn in at the BoatUS sign.
 Enter from the lighted parking lot behind the building.



America's Boating Club

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