



# of TARS & TERNS

Newsletter of the Northern Virginia Sail & Power Squadron

[www.usps.org/localusps/nva/ott/ott.htm](http://www.usps.org/localusps/nva/ott/ott.htm)



October 2005

Vol XXXIX No 9



MV Adventures & Tender

## D5 Coming to Silver Spring

**4 - 6 Nov 2005.** P/C John Wilmot, JN, of the Potomac River Power Squadron invites all of our member to take the opportunity to meet our parent squadron and your nextdoor neighbors at the D5 fall educational conference at the Holiday Inn in revitalized Silver Spring. Friday night there's a western party with square dancing. A famous caller assures that he will get you out on the dance floor, however maybe you should visit the cash bar first. Saturday will begin with the Educational Expo, the Teaching Aids, and the Ships Store. Meetings will be held on all of the USPS classes. Luncheon for members and guests will be served in the beautiful round dining room. Afternoon sessions will be scheduled for Power Point and other classes, plus a special

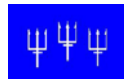
session on effective communication at Boat Shows. After a short stop at the cash bar, our Saturday evening Banquet will feature your choice of Prime Rib or Crab Cakes.

The Conference will reconvene at 0900 on Sunday morning after Church Services. The Bridge plans to adjourn by 1100, so you still have a chance to see Silver Spring's complete facelift, including restaurants, movie theatres, and a myriad of shops -- you can "Shop 'til you drop". So it is all settled- Come on over and join us- we're sure you'll have a great time! Details & registration at the D5 homepage <http://www.usps.org/localusps/d5/>



Cdr Keith B. Segerson, P

From the Commander



**FALL BOATING IS HERE!** Without doubt this is my favorite time to boat. The Potomac waters tend to calm and there are fewer boaters on the water. As well -- given that I don't have air conditioning on board, I don't fry when out on the water!

**Equally as exciting** was the WONDERFUL speaker at our September meeting. Steve Chaconas is a professional angler who gave a very interesting and entertaining presentation on all aspects of fishing the river, tournaments, water quality, grass and how to "co-mingle" with those speedy fishing boats that zoom all around us. Steve was exciting to listen to and had many of us in stitches with his quick wit and humor. Those that stayed home missed a fun evening. My thanks to Clara Blanding for bringing her famous homemade cookies; they were certainly enjoyed by all.

**In July I gave some background** on USPS and how the national, district, and squadrons are organized. Now I want to point out some of the benefits of membership in the USPS. We all know the educational, networking, and social benefits, vessel safety exams, speaker information, etc. But did you know that being a member offers:

- BoatUS/West Marine Discounts if you've had a Vessel Safety Check
- BoatUS boat insurance discounts. Check with your agent for details
- C-MAP discounts (leading producer of vector digital charts used in chart plotters) Check their web site: [www.c-map.com](http://www.c-map.com) for details
- Dell Computer Discounts. Check their web site: [www.dell.com/ghc](http://www.dell.com/ghc) and use Member ID: CS25031302 to enter the discount store.
- Nobeltec Navigation Software and Vector Charts at a 25% discount. Call 1-800-598-4976 You must provide your USPS certificate number to qualify.
- Maptech Discounts on products used for educational purposes. For details check [www.maptech.com](http://www.maptech.com). You'll need to work with Jay Nelson or me for discounts.
- Personal Computer Software and Hardware Discounts on Microsoft, Lotus and other leading software products. Check: [www.techsoup.org/discountech](http://www.techsoup.org/discountech)
- InFocus (leader in digital projection equipment) offers dramatically reduced prices for equipment ordered directly from InFocus.

**Please contact me** by phone or e-mail if you have questions or if you have suggestions regarding improvement of your NVSPS.



### SQUADRON CALENDAR

#### October 2005

- 1 D5 Ops Training  
*Eastport (Annapolis)*
- 15 2005 Merit Marks Due  
*Send them to rjdurgin@aol.com*
- 15 Weekend Cruise  
*Tilghman Island MD*
- 19 **Oktoberfest**  
and All Hands' Meeting @ 1930  
*Fairfax Yacht Club*  
**(DATE CHANGE! )**

#### November 2005

- 4 - 6 D5 Fall Conference  
*Silver Spring MD*
- 9 All Hands' Meeting  
*BoatUS, Alexandria*

#### December 2005

- 2 Winter Party  
*details pending*

**NVSPS BRIDGE**  
Officers &  
Chairs



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Lt Russell S. Grasso, AP (703) 499-8557  
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**Merit mark reminder**

Recommendations are due by 15Oct05. Officers and committee chairs may e-mail names and a brief description of the services performed to Jean Durgin, Merit Mark Chair [rijdurgin@aol.com](mailto:rijdurgin@aol.com).



Lt/C Glenn A. Fahey, P:

**EXEC'S MOMENT**

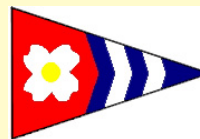


The NVSPS will have a booth at the National Capital Boat Show at the Dulles Expo Center in Chantilly VA. It's not too early to start planning: from Thursday to Sunday, 9 -12 March, 2006, NVSPS attends this fun event every year, and we're looking for volunteers to staff the booth for 2-hour shifts. If you're new to the squadron, don't worry; we can pair you up with more experienced members. This is a great opportunity for new members to learn more about the squadron and to meet other members. Working at the booth is very easy and it's really a lot of fun to tell the public what our organization is all about. As a bonus, if you volunteer for 2 hours, your admission to the show will be free! Please contact our Boat Show Chairman, Lt Mike Triggs, AP, at (703) 212-8580 or [yaskipperm@aol.com](mailto:yaskipperm@aol.com)

Our Cooperative Charting Chairman, Lt Ed Phillips, AP will be conducting more of his marker location / recovery days this fall. This is a fun, land-based activity that involves locating and updating information on US Geodetic and Coast Survey markers. Many of these markers that we locate are close to shoreline of the Chesapeake or one of its tributaries. These can be used as "benchmarks" for the nearby waterways, and our work helps keep charts up to date and boaters safer. If you are interested in participating in one of these marker hunts, please contact Ed at [potter339@earthlink.net](mailto:potter339@earthlink.net) or 703-771-7096.

*With or without a boat, I hope you enjoy this fall season!*

**UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT**  
**SHIP'S STORE**



**Need a new burgee, shirt or name tag?**

**Contact Cory-Jeanne "CJ" Houck-Cox, S, 703-642-0818 or**  
[cjhouch\\_nm@yahoo.com](mailto:cjhouch_nm@yahoo.com)



*SV Celestial in Herring Bay*





Lt/C G. Jay Nelson, AP

## EDUCATION

**Our fall program** is off to a good start. We are currently running Piloting and Cruise Planning, with more to begin soon.

**We've had a glitch with Engine Maintenance** scheduled for 22Sept. Due to instructor non-availability, we need to postpone that course until we can work it back in. If you're interested in taking it, contact me and I'll make sure you're added to the notification list.

**We're sending brief notifications** about each upcoming course to members who provided us with an e-mail address. To keep this e-mail traffic to a minimum, we're only sending notices to those who have not already taken the course. If you have not received a course notification this season, it's because we don't have an e-mail address for you or you've already taken Piloting and Cruise Planning. If you haven't seen anything from us and would like to be included on our distributions, send your e-mail address to [gjaynelson@aol.com](mailto:gjaynelson@aol.com) with "Add to Course Notice" in the subject line. Conversely, if you have been receiving these notifications and would prefer not to, send me an e-mail message with "Remove from Course Notice" in the subject and we'll ensure that you're no longer disturbed.

### Here Our Advanced courses:

- Cruise Planning, Thur @ 7:00 PM, 8 Sep – 27 Oct  
Instr: Jay Nelson AP – [gjaynelson@aol.com](mailto:gjaynelson@aol.com) (703) 437-0064
- Piloting, Tue @ 7:00 PM, 13 Sep – 01 Nov  
Instr: Jay Nelson
- Engine Maintenance, TBD  
Instr: TBD – [gjaynelson@aol.com](mailto:gjaynelson@aol.com) (703) 437-0064
- Instructor Development, Thur @ 7:00 PM, 14 Nov – 19 Dec  
Instr: Dick Durgin, JN – [rjdurgin@aol.com](mailto:rjdurgin@aol.com)
- GPS Seminar (3), Wed @ 7:00 PM, 16 Nov, 15 Mar, 3 May06  
Instr: Jay Nelson (FREE TO MEMBERS)
- Marine Electronics, Thur @ 7:00 PM, 5 Jan – 4 May06  
Instr: Dwight Bues AP – [dbues@aol.com](mailto:dbues@aol.com) (703) 404-8728
- Seamanship, Thur @ 7:00 PM, 5 Jan – 13 Apr06  
Instr: Rick Baker AP - [20rjbaker04@cox.net](mailto:20rjbaker04@cox.net) (703) 318-5899
- Advanced Piloting, Thur @ 7:00 PM, 10 Jan – 18 Apr06  
Instr: Jay Nelson
- Weather, Thur @ 7:00 PM, 16 Feb – 15 Jun06  
Instr: John Shivik, AP – [jshivik@cox.net](mailto:jshivik@cox.net) (703) 273-3351
- Sailing, Thur @ 7:00 PM, 20 Apr – 22 Jun06  
Instr: Rick Baker AP - [20rjbaker04@cox.net](mailto:20rjbaker04@cox.net) (703) 318-5899

**Sailing by Rick Baker is new this season.** This offers a lot of practical seamanship and boat handling-- even to power boaters!

## "CAPTAIN'S CORNER"

How much do you know about nautical charts? A good place to start is NOAA's *Chart 1*, available free at <http://chartmaker.ncd.noaa.gov/staff/charts.htm>.

1. The chart projection used for US coastal areas is:
  - a. polyconic
  - b. Mercator
  - c. gnomonic
  - d. UTM
  - e. NOAAcentric
2. Polyconic charts have no distortion as to size:
  - a. True
  - b. False
3. The main advantage of the Mercator projection is:
  - a. Physical features loose much of their relative shape
  - b. It shows the earth as it appears from space
  - c. Lines of Latitude and Longitude are at right angles to each other
  - d. Lines of Longitude curve as they do on a globe
  - e. Distance can be accurately measured from the Longitude scale

*answers on page 5*



*SV Celestial: crew & wannabe*

## "Welcome Aboard"

**New members sworn in at the last all-hands' meeting:**

**Robert Van Buskirk  
George Maglietta**



## OKTOBERFEST, 2005



Lt/C Martha J. Dodd, P

The NVSPS will have an "OKTOBERFEST" at 1930, 19Oct at the Fairfax Yacht Club, on the Occoquan River, Old Colchester Rd at Mason Neck. There'll also be a brief all-hands' meeting.

The main entree will be "RED, HOT & BLUE" Bar-B-Q Pork & Chicken with cole slaw, potato salad and baked beans. The Squadron will supply beer, colas, wine, tea, coffee, chips, pretzels and nuts. Fee is \$6.00 per person. Kids are free. Members are requested to bring a dish. I know the Squadron has some great cooks and bakers. Let's show it off at the Oktoberfest. Let your specialty be the item you bring.

**DEADLINE 12Oct** to confirm your attendance and specify your dish. Call Martha Dodd (703) 239-0551 or Bill Hammett (703) 239-3648. SEE YOU THERE !

## ADMINISTRATION

### Season's Greetings & the Flower Power Fund

How would you like to help your squadron and save some time and money during the holidays? It's easy! Instead of mailing greeting cards to squadron friends, send a donation of any amount to the Flower Power Fund along with your holiday greetings. Your message to all squadron members will appear in the December 2005 issue of *o' Tars & Terns*. Your donation will become part of the Flower Power Fund, the interest from which supports squadron educational and other programs.

Please send your 3-line message and check payable to NVSPS Flower Power Fund to P/C Dick Durgin, 308 George Street SW, Vienna VA 22180 by 10 November in order to meet the newsletter deadline. For more information, call Dick Durgin, 703-560-9106.



P/C Dick Durgin, JN; Chair, Flower Power Fund

### Head in the Clouds

We live in a beautiful atmospheric sea, yet many do not see. It is an ocean of tranquility and turbulence. I really love the weather and clouds, particularly cumulus. Just sit back and watch a puffy cotton ball type cloud (cumulus) on a hot, humid day start to vertically build. As the cumulus cloud builds a vertical tower, it can go high up into the sky and may develop a flat cloud top, called an anvil. Lightening is present. This cumulonimbus has developed into a thunderstorm.

Weather is ever changing and something we take for granted. "Be weather wise, not otherwise" so said Ben Franklin. Ah, but being weather wise can be a bit difficult at times. However, we must take the opportunity to study our outdoor surroundings so as not to be "otherwise". There is a tendency to focus on the microcosm and not the macrocosm. Thus there is to some, as they navigate on the waters, a surprise that a "storm" has just developed heading their way and Weather Radio just predicted "isolated" thunderstorms. Wow! Guess that boater found one ! If you have ever been in a thunderstorm out on the briny, you will never forget it for the rest of your life.

Hurricane season is officially 1 June to 30 November. The power that exists in a hurricane is unbelievable. It is one of nature's grandest machines with winds that can top 200 miles per hour, torrential rains and imbedded tornadoes. The reports of the devastation caused by Katrina and Rita should make every boater ensure that there is a plan to protect one's boat and property. Take precautions early. Don't wait until it's too late.

The National Weather Service gives accurate information for a broad area and you should tune your VHF to the appropriate channel (WX 1 through 7) for your area. You should also strongly rely on your observations of local conditions. Learn how to read the weather signs and you'll know what to expect within the next 24 hours or more. A future column will address some of these weather signs so you can be safer on the water and land. May you have fair winds and following seas!



P/C John Shivik, AP



## SAIL THE BAHAMAS?

Absolutely, but do it with safety and comfort. USPS courses provide all the safety knowledge you'll need except about local conditions. To assure comfort: sail with experienced friends, at least one; do not sail in a boat of less than 34 feet; provide refrigerant with sufficient battery power; bring plenty of good clean water; and plan to sail before the hurricane season.

The gulf stream is a large, fast, warm current flowing north at about four knots. You need to calculate an average current velocity, determine a course from point of departure to destination, and leave at a reasonably early hour. It can be a rough crossing if the wind is from the north. To be safe leave from as far south as is feasible. In the event you miscalculate or unforeseen events occur, you do not want to miss Grand Bahama Island and West End, certainly not Memory Rock just north on Little Bahama Bank. The best entrance is between North and South Bimini. There, inside Bimini Harbour, you can obtain a transire for legal entrance; be sure to fly the "Q" flag on entering. If you arrive in good time, I advise the short sail south to Cat Cay for anchoring and dinner before sailing to the Northwest Channel Light, a distance of one night's sail.

Local knowledge of depths immediately ahead of the bow, where depth finders do not give enough advanced warning, can be obtained by "reading" the water. The color of the water is essential, especially in finding an anchorage. To read the water correctly you need to have the sun high and behind you. Coral heads and shallow sandy shoals abound, and even though your charts may indicate them, a change in water color is your safest bet. Deep blue water is deep safe water; it's found in the gulf stream, Tongue of the Ocean, east and west



*A loon and his boat*

### USPS: Value Added

"USPS membership can reduce insurance rates. I called BoatUS today and sure enough a 10% discount which translates to a \$40 refund for me. Close to half of my annual dues in money back!"

**Bill Hammett, AP**

sides of Cat Island, and the Atlantic side of the out islands. As you approach the shore from deep water, blue turns to light blue in around 10-15 fathoms. The sixty mile stretch between Cat Cay and the Northwest Channel Light is green water, averaging 12-20 feet deep. It's green because of extensive seaweed growth and rocks; a good place to find conch for next night's dinner. It's rumored that natives used to be afraid to go into the water and did their conch fishing from a boat with a 40-foot pole and a glass bottom. But to really find conch, you should dive in deeper water. Green water is safe. Yellow water is very shallow with a sandy bottom: beware. Heading south from New Providence and Nassau and along the western side of the Exuma Cays, there are many shallow bores and spits with sprinkled coral heads. Always keep a lookout at the bow in these waters for yellow water. Brown, black, or reddish water indicate coral heads; they can be spotted from the bow in time by a good lookout. White water is either a coral head awash or a fish feeding frenzy; don't always grab for your fishing rod.

To me the most enjoyable item I brought along was an 8' Avon Redstart inflatable and a 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> horsepower Sea Gull engine. After anchoring for the night, I inflated and set out to spear my fresh fish dinner. Be careful of fishing regulations! You could lose your boat and pay a heavy fine. Spear fishing with SCUBA gear is illegal, but a Hawaiian spear or sling may be permitted. There are seasons on lobster and some fish (middle of March to end of August). I've sailed and fished Bahamian waters for 18 weeks and never failed to catch dinner, had only three encounters with sharks, and a rather interesting stand-off with about 20 small barracudas (4 five-foot parents and 2 very large grandparents). All were between me and my boat!

Sailing the Bahamas can be a dream come true and an experience you will never forget.

**D/Lt Charles H. Olin, AP**

### CAPTAIN'S CORNER ANSWERS

1. B – Invented by Gerardus Mercator in 1540
2. B – Polyconic charts are very accurate (their primary advantage) as long as the chart is limited in extent. Used extensively for inland rivers and the Great Lakes.
3. C – Although landmass is distorted at the higher degrees of Latitude (both N and S), the lines of Latitude and Longitude are at right angles to each other, making them easier to plot.

Lt W. Lazear, AP  
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**MONTHLY ALL-HANDS MEETING**

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesdays at 1930 (any changes posted herein and on the web)  
 at Boat/US 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 Boat/US sign.  
 Enter from the lighted parking lot behind the building.



**America's Boating Club**

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