



# 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)



Vol XLI, No.5

June, 2007



## Commander Sends...

Few boaters really take the time to understand, inspect or maintain their wiring, which provides everything from ignition to air conditioning and outlets. Faulty wiring can range from the inconvenience of something simply not working, to a catastrophic engine or bilge pump failure.

Good news: marine electrical systems are much less complicated than car systems. The bad news is that marine systems must deal with moisture, corrosion, vibration, and temperature extremes. So specific products and rigging techniques should be used to keep your system reliable and safe. This month I'll talk about the wire types and crimping. Next month I'll address wire gauges and securing techniques.

The stranded copper wire, you find at a hardware store should be avoided. It oxidizes very quickly and forms a green layer which will eventually degrade the terminal connection and fail. Always use a marine-grade, stranded, "tinned" wire. The use of tin in the wire prevents corrosion while increasing conductivity. Never use single-strand or "solid core" wiring, as vibrations will

cause it to break inside the insulation. This results in intermittent electrical problems that are very difficult to troubleshoot. You should also use wire colors that adhere to the Standard Marine Wire Code scheme to make inspecting and troubleshooting much easier:

<b>Standard Marine Wire Code Table</b>	
<b>Red</b>	Constant Hot
<b>Black</b>	Ground
<b>Purple</b>	Key-on Power
<b>Yellow/Red</b>	Neutral Safety
<b>Tan</b>	Water Temp
<b>Dark Blue</b>	Gauge Lighting
<b>Pink</b>	Fuel Sender
<b>Gray</b>	Tachometer
<b>Light Blue</b>	Oil Pressure
<b>Brown/White</b>	Trim Indicator
<b>Brown</b>	Bilge Pump
<b>Green/White</b>	Trim Down
<b>Blue/White</b>	Trim Up
<b>Green/Orange</b>	Independent Tilt Down
<b>Blue/Orange</b>	Independent Tilt Up
<b>Yellow/Black</b>	Choke Circuit
<b>Yellow/Red</b>	Starting Circuit
<b>Black/Yellow</b>	Ignition Cut-Off

Plastic-jacketed crimp terminals are good for most marine applications, but

the outer plastic shell provides very little protection against corrosion. In applying these terminals, always use a properly sized crimping tool. These are very inexpensive and available at any marine or hardware store. Using a standard pair of pliers to flatten the terminal for a crimp is not going to give you a proper connection. The crimping tool has a unique dimple in its jaws that allows the shank of the terminal to grip the circumference of the wire, ensuring a positive connection. Strip off enough insulation to fit the terminal onto the wire, and no more. Finally, never crimp the terminal from the seam. This tends to push apart the shank of the terminal, compromising the connection to the wire.

Although there's nothing wrong with plastic-jacketed terminals, I recommend using a high quality "bare" crimp and adhesive-lined heat shrink tubing. I cut the tubing into lengths about two inches long, slide the heat shrink well down the wire, crimp the terminal, solder the wire to the terminal, allow it to cool, then slide the heat shrink tubing down the wire to completely cover the shank of the terminal. Finally, shrink the tubing with a heat gun. This ensures a solid, watertight connection that will last for many years.

**CDR G. Jay Nelson, AP**  
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## NVSPS BRIDGE



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## "EXECUTIVE PRIVILEGE"

**Executive Officer: Lt/C Bill Blanding, P**

The Vessel Safety Check (VSC) process is "prevention through education, outreach and volunteer compliance" helping boaters gain respect for the boating environment. The goal is to minimize loss of life, personal injury, property damage, and environmental impact while maximizing the safe use and enjoyment of waterways.

The VSC Program also helps achieve voluntary compliance with federal and state boating laws, particularly with regard to safety equipment, while raising awareness about safety and environmental issues through voluntary contact by a Vessel Examiner (VE).

"You're in Command" is the USCG's public boating safety outreach initiative, which encourages all boaters to take responsibility for their actions on the water. As a boat owner or operator, you're responsible for your safety and that of your passengers. That's why we say: "You're in Command. Boat Responsibly!"

\*The USCG's most recent boating-related accident statistics show:

- 697 fatalities, 3451 injuries,
- Nearly \$39 million in property damage.
- 87 percent of drowning victims were not wearing life jackets.
- Alcohol was a direct or indirect factor in about 25% of fatalities.
- About 70% of fatalities occurred on boats where the operator had not received boating safety instruction.
- The most reported accident was a collision with another vessel.
- But capsizing and falls overboard cause 59% of boating fatalities.

Overall, carelessness, operator inattention, excessive speed, and inexperience are the leading contributors. Recreational boating accidents are tragic because the great majority are preventable!

During 2006 our squadron's 13 VEs conducted 151 VSCs with 138 passing. This year I challenge each of you to become a VE with a squadron goal of over 200 VSCs. Contact Steve Shupack, AP, Vessel Safety Check Chairman (703) 283-2120.

We are still looking for a Boat Show Chairman---drop me an email if you're interested.

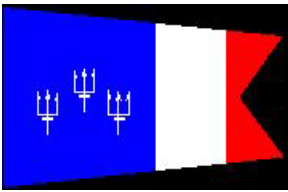
Remember "You're In Command"---be safe out there and ensure your boat has a current VSC!

## Cruise News

Greetings to all lovers of both wind and petroleum products. Tis sad but true, this year's summer cruises in the Solomons has been beached. Whether our hectic schedules, previous plans or water distance precluded many from participating, the bottom line is that there was not enough interest to continue with the weekend. It is our greatest hope that some interest surfaced, so alternative dates could be considered later in the summer/fall. If there's a group that would like to anchor out or perhaps travel to a favorite port-of-call, please let me or a member of the bridge know.

Many thanks.

**Joe Jarocki** [jjigaj@vzavenu.net](mailto:jjigaj@vzavenu.net)



## Admin Officer's Report

**P/C John Shivik, AP**

In May I mentioned having fun. The season is in full swing for us to learn and to enjoy. Upcoming events for our Squadron include many challenges that will hone our skills. Need help? More educational classes? Talking with other members really makes a difference. Sure, there are some of us that are new and don't have a clue. What better way than the "Mixer" starting 1900 on 13 June at BoatUS. Let's talk about boating or any other subject! This is the time for us to get together. Getting together means really enjoying our boating community and learning. There is one thing that I always remember as one who ventures on the waters (ocean, bay, rivers, lakes), there is someone who has been there and can offer wisdom to help navigating and enjoying the boating experience. On the other hand, what thoughts do you have that can better fulfill your needs? Please let us know.

The Picnic at FYC 19 May was fantastic. Best attendance ever. Many thanks to all who shared their time, superb culinary expertise, support, and boating knowledge with everyone. One-handed bowline, putting on a PFD and getting wet at the water balloon toss were a lot of fun. But safety was the key during the start of Safe Boating Week. Camaraderie, Fun, learning, sharing – there are opportunities during the next few months to enjoy a Rendezvous. Check it out with Joe Jarocki at [jpjgaj@vzavenue.net](mailto:jpjgaj@vzavenue.net). It's summer; let's get together (doesn't have to be formal) and have FUN!

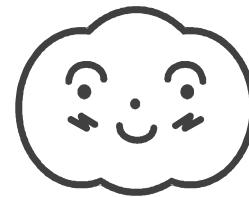
So what happened to the "Head in the Clouds" column? It's now intertwined with this article. If you were an avid reader of the column, you know that a good knowledge of weather conditions makes a boating experience safe and enjoyable. There are atmospheric signs that one can observe which will make your sojourn on the waters safer. Back in the 1700's, Mariners realized the impact of various conditions, including observations of wind and sea, on their journeys. Latitude was known, Longitude was a problem, Set and Drift, Dead Reckoning was the rule. With all the advances with GPS and Chartplotters there is a certain amount of complacency. But without knowledge of weather conditions, we place ourselves and those for whom we are responsible, at risk. As Benjamin Franklin once said, "Be Weatherwise and not Otherwise".



*PFD race at the squadron picnic*



*Power lunch at FYC*



### *The National Weather Service Wants to Meet YOU*

**27 Jun 1000-1200** the National Weather Service in Wakefield, VA will be holding a Marine User's Meeting for mariners who operate on Chesapeake Bay, the coastal waters off VA, NC, and MD, as well as Currituck Sound. Along with a tour of our office, we'd like to share some information about us and the forecast products we offer for mariners. In return, we hope to obtain feedback from you in order for us to improve on existing products and learn more about your needs.

Please e-mail me, Sonia Mark Flechtner, a meteorologist and Marine Program Leader here in Wakefield.

[sonia.mark.flechtner@noaa.gov](mailto:sonia.mark.flechtner@noaa.gov)

Thank you and I hope to hear from you soon!



## "Chalk Talk"

Education Officer Lt/C Rick Baker, AP  
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The *Seamanship Course* has been slipped until 10 July to allow more registrations to make the class a go. All of our new members since about May of 2006, should be Registering for this, if they've not taken it. This is primarily your first member course in the USPS. You can take Piloting first, but now is the time to take Seamanship. We offer Seamanship to get you on the water now to practice better boat handling, anchoring, planning, and reactions to adverse conditions. Then, during Piloting and Advanced Piloting in the fall and winter, we take you to the next levels of navigation so you can cross the Chesapeake Bay or take an off-shore voyage confidently using your chart, compass, and electronic navigation equipment. The redo of the Seamanship course makes it more concise, now 7 weeks instead of 13. The book is better, and the information is up to date. Please register by 5 June, so I can order the right number of books.

Or... please contact me if you'd like to teach Seamanship as the primary instructor or as a proctor.

**Course:** SEAMANSHIP (7 sessions, Tuesdays)

**Description:** Learn marlinspike seamanship, boat handling, anchoring and mooring, reaction to adverse conditions, and review the rules of the road. This is the updated Seamanship Course for 2007! It's shorter with less overlap with the boating course. Family members and significant others may share the books for a deep discount.

**Start Date:** 10 JUL 2007 **Time:** 1930-2130

**Location:** GMU Offices, 4031 University Dr,  
Fairfax, VA 22030

**Register by:** 5 June 2007 so we can order books! At least 15 in-class members registered are required to make this course a GO!

**Instructor:** Volunteer to teach this course!

**Register:** [rickbaker2006@verizon.net](mailto:rickbaker2006@verizon.net).

**Out-dated Flares?  
How to dispose of  
them...**



If you live in Fairfax County, remove the caps at both ends and soak the flares in water until they are completely saturated. Then dispose of them in your regular trash. The hazardous waste unit at the county transfer station will **not** accept them.

If you live in another county call your hazardous waste unit for instruction.



## In Sympathy

The squadron extends deepest sympathy to Cathy Sheffield on the death of her husband, Linwood Sheffield, AP, who died on May 16, 2007. Lin and Cathy are long-time active members of the NVSPS family. Together they taught many USPS boating courses. Lin served as Asst Education Officer 2000-01. They joined squadron cruises aboard TEXAS LADY. Cathy has served the squadron as Secretary, Asst Secretary and worked on several D/5 hospitality suites. We'll miss Lin.

## Sea Scouts

**1Jun, Atlanta GA.** Sea Scout Ship 1942 has been selected for the "2007 National Flagship" Award for the best Ship in the United States. They're the only unit in the country authorized to affix a fourth star to its flag.

Ship 1942 spent over 50 days on the water during 2006 (20 above national average) and received the Regional Standard Ship award. Ten of them stormed ashore at Camp Olmstead for a week and earned the Venture Outdoor Ranger Award. During their Chesapeake cruise, 23 completed the Venture Kodiak Leadership Course. Three headed off to become Advanced Leadership graduates. All of our youth and adults avail themselves of NVSPS member courses during the winter lay-up.

We sent 6 high school seniors off to college this Fall with scholarships valued at \$648,000. College-age Sea Scouts are majoring in everything from Marine Architecture to Cruise Ship Social Director.

Two of our Ship 486 Girl Scout Mariners earned Gold Awards, and 3 became Eagle Scouts. Ship 1942 added one new Quartermaster, bringing our total to 6 in the last 2 years, and five Venture Silver awards.



*Some of ship 1942 at the national honor bridge, Apr 2007*

Hundreds of Boy Scouts in various Troops in the National Capital Area Council have benefited by earning Sailing, Motor-boating, Oceanography, and Weather merit badges at the Ship 1942 annual spring weekend known as "Merit Badges Afloat". Other NCAC Scouts have participated in the past dozen years in the Ship 1942 summer 4-day BSA Life Guard training camps held in July.

**"Don't give up the ship"  
Tom Ballew, Skipper, ship 1942**

## WALTZING THROUGH THE SAN JUAN ISLANDS: VII

**"So this is Victoria?"**

The passage to Victoria was uneventful and smooth as glass. Jim and I caught Clara and Robin napping on the foredeck as our current-enhanced speed increased to over 10 kts. What a rush! We'd make the 34nm trip in no time.



*Clara and Robin actually had their faces sunburned as we "sped" down Haro Strait towards Victoria*

Well, almost. As we rounded the east side of Discovery Island we slowed to 2.2 kts for the last 6 nm. As we passed Clover Point, we switched the VHF to the Victoria Harbor channel. Horror raced through my mind as we heard a commercial vessel request, "...and can I get the harbor patrol to lead us in through the congestion and the dragon boat races?" Dragon Boat races, what's a Dragon Boat?! Visions of the harbor being crowded with Dragon Boats, ships, taxis, and seaplanes overwhelmed me. Still certain that this was a bad idea; we eased into the traffic lane and were met by the Harbor Patrol. Clara stepped out and peppered the officer with questions while I concentrated on not being scared by the unknown.

Fear is natural. I'm reminded of a book by Reese Palley, "There Be No Dragons. How to Cross a Big Ocean in a Small Sailboat." It taught me a lot about fear: usually we exaggerate and let our minds run wild. Once you've conquered what you feared, in most cases you'll find it was unfounded. When we rounded the corner to Victoria Harbor it wasn't as menacing as I'd imagined.

The harbor wasn't that crowded, the races were contained in the eastern shore area, and the northwest approach was open. We weaved our way around the perimeter and approached the dock, then started the usual process of determining where our slip was. We worked our way past customs, the seaplane dock, and the entrance to the slips, and were pleasantly surprised with a wide open slip area. We picked a space to lay our starboard (walk around) side to and started lining up to back in. OK, honestly, this was only our third time backing this boat into a slip. But there were no others docked around us and I had the luxury of concentrating on maneuvering SEA WALTZ. She slid right in and we tied her up to the bull rail. Another successful docking and we're in Victoria!



*Victoria Harbour, crowded?*

Victoria is the capital of British Columbia, called the "City of Gardens." First settled in 1843, it's filled with historic charm. It's home to British Columbia's Legislature and the Empress Hotel, known around the world for its sophisticated (expensive) afternoon tea. Totems stand in tribute to the town's native heritage in Thunderbird Park, parts of Chinatown still thrive, and there are shops and restaurants ranging from pub fare to world-class all within easy walking distance from the docks. Baskets of flowers adorn every street lamp along the waterfront.



*Robin and Jim with a new friend in Victoria*

We spent two nights in Victoria, tough duty, but someone had to do it! Clara's right, it is a "must see." The gardens, sights, shops, and restaurants were just what we needed to re-acclimate to the land-based world. Victoria was the one place that tempted us to eat on shore, assaulting Dungeness crabs. Each night we were greeted on our dock by two sea otters crunching the crabs they'd harvested from the harbor. By the way, we discovered that a Dragon Boat is a long canoe adorned with a dragonhead on the bow and tail on the stern. Inside sit 20 rowers plying their short oars to the beat of a drummer. This is an annual festival in Victoria and teams come from thousands of miles away. We felt it our duty to join the street party for this event.

Next : **"How Did We End Up In The Adirondacks?"**



**Lt/Cdr Bill Blanding, P**  
**Lt/Cdr Clara Blanding, P**  
[smodim@comcast.net](mailto:smodim@comcast.net)

## Squadron Calendar

June 2007		
13 Wednesday 1900: Social 1930: Meeting	<b>All Hands' Meeting</b> at Boat US <b>Member/New Member Mixer</b> Heavy Refreshments: Bill and Clara Blanding Presentations by Committee and Event Chairs on areas for member participation.	Clara Blanding <a href="mailto:claralee@comcast.net">claralee@comcast.net</a>
16-17 Sat-Sunday	<b>26<sup>th</sup> Alexandria Waterfront Festival</b> Oronoco Bay Park, Alexandria, VA	<a href="http://www.waterfrontfestival.org">www.waterfrontfestival.org</a>
20 Wednesday 1900-2100	<b>Excom Meeting</b> GMU Conference Room, Fairfax	Jay Nelson <a href="mailto:gjaynelson@aol.com">gjaynelson@aol.com</a>
<b>WEAR YOUR NVSPS NAME TAG TO ALL EVENTS AND CLASSROOM SESSIONS</b>		

July 2007		
10 Tuesdays 1930-2130	<b>Seamanship Course</b> GMU, Fairfax. Register by 5 June 07. Min 15 needed. \$80. Instructor: TBD. USPS members only.	Rick Baker: <a href="mailto:rickbaker2006@verizon.net">rickbaker2006@verizon.net</a> 703-318-5899
11 Wednesday 1900: Social 1930: Meeting	<b>All Hands' Meeting</b> at Boat US Refreshments: Joe and Gail Jarocki. Meeting Topic: TBD	Clara Blanding <a href="mailto:claralee@comcast.net">claralee@comcast.net</a>
13-19 Thurs-Thurs	<b>D5 Southbound Summer Cruise to D5 Rendezvous</b> To Somers Cove Marina in Crisfield, MD. Sponsored by Potomac River Squadron. Details in <i>Mark 5</i> newsletter or D5 Website	Potomac River Squadron P/C John Wilmot, JN 410-798-5102
19-22 Thurs- Sunday	<b>D5 Summer Council and Rendezvous.</b> Crisfield, MD	<a href="http://www.uspsd5.org">www.uspsd5.org</a>
25 Wednesday 1900-2100	<b>Excom Meeting</b> GMU Conference Room, Fairfax	Jay Nelson <a href="mailto:gjaynelson@aol.com">gjaynelson@aol.com</a>
28 Saturday	<b>NVSPS Potomac River Rendezvous and Lunch</b> Join us by boat or car for a day and/or lunch on the Potomac River	Coordinator: TBD

### August 2007

**No monthly All Hands' Meeting or Excom Meeting in August - summer break**

### September 2007

5 - 9 Thurs - Sun	<b>USPS Fall Governing Board Meeting</b> Norfolk, VA	See The Ensign or USPS Website
7 - 9 Fri - Sunday	<b>40th Annual Maryland Seafood Festival</b> The Maryland Seafood Festival features outstanding Chesapeake Bay seafood delicacies and land-based fare, live entertainment, and beach activities. <b>Sandy Point State Park, Annapolis, MD</b>	<a href="http://www.mdseafoodfestival.com">www.mdseafoodfestival.com</a> <b>410-266-3113</b>
10 Monday 1900-2130	<b>Piloting Course</b> Location: TBD Registration: NLT 9 Aug 07 Min 10 Required. Instructor: TBD Cost: TBD. 9 Sessions,	Rick Baker <a href="mailto:rickbaker2006@verizon.net">rickbaker2006@verizon.net</a> 703-318-5899
12 Wednesday 1900 Social 1930: Meeting	<b>All Hands' Meeting</b> at Boat US Meeting Topic: TBD. Refreshments: Keith Segerson	Clara Blanding <a href="mailto:claralee@comcast.net">claralee@comcast.net</a>
13 Thursday 7 - 9:30 pm	<b>Engine Maintenance Course</b> Location: TBD. Instructor: TBD. Cost: TBD 14 Sessions, Registration: NLT 12 Aug 07. Min 10 Required	Rick Baker <a href="mailto:rickbaker2006@verizon.net">rickbaker2006@verizon.net</a> 703-318-5899
15-16 Sat - Sunday	<b>NVSPS Finally Fall Cruise</b> Chesapeake Bay. Destination : TBD	Coordinators: TBD

26 Wednesday 7 – 9:00 pm	<b>Excom Meeting</b> GMU Conference Room, Fairfax	Jay Nelson <a href="mailto:gjaynelson@aol.com">gjaynelson@aol.com</a>
TBD TBD	<b>D5 Sail and Rendezvous Regatta.</b> <b>Check the D5 Website for details</b> Hosted by the Cambridge Power Squadron	<a href="http://www.uspsd5.org">www.uspsd5.org</a>
<b>October 2007</b>		
4 – 8 Thurs– Sunday	<b>38<sup>th</sup> Annapolis Sailboat Show</b>	<a href="http://www.usboat.com">www.usboat.com</a>
10 Wednesday 1900: Social 1930: Mtg	<b>All Hands” Meeting and Octoberfest Pot Luck Dinner</b> <b>Meeting Room at GMU, Fairfax</b>  Combination meeting and Pot Luck Dinner. Watch <i>oT&amp;T</i> for details.	John Shvik <a href="mailto:jshvik@cox.net">jshvik@cox.net</a>
11-14 Thurs – Sun	<b>36<sup>th</sup> Annapolis Powerboat Show</b>	<a href="http://www.usboat.com">www.usboat.com</a>
19-21 Fri-Sunday	<b>NVSPS Tilghman Day Cruise</b> Tilghman on Chesapeake Marina Join the fun at Tilghman Island Day!	Coordinators: TBD <a href="http://www.tilghmanmd.com">www.tilghmanmd.com</a>
24 Wed 1900	<b>Excom Meeting</b> GMU Conference Room, Fairfax	Jay Nelson <a href="mailto:gjaynelson@aol.com">gjaynelson@aol.com</a>
<b>November 2007</b>		
2-4 Fri- Sunday	<b>D/5 Fall Education Conference. See Mark 5 Newsletter</b>	
14 Wednesday 1900 Social 1930 Meeting	<b>All Hands’ Meeting at Boat US</b> Refreshments: Evelyn and Gale Alls Meeting Topic: Guest Speaker: TBD	Clara Blanding <a href="mailto:claralee@comcast.net">claralee@comcast.net</a>
28 Wednesday 1900	<b>Excom Meeting</b> GMU Conference Room, Fairfax	Jay Nelson <a href="mailto:gjaynelson@aol.com">gjaynelson@aol.com</a>
<b>December 2007</b>		
1 Saturday	<b>Alexandria Holiday Lighted Boat Parade</b> Join us aboard P/C Keith Segerson’s boat and in the lighted parade on the Potomac. Come early to decorate his boat! Warm boating attire	Keith Segerson <a href="mailto:segerson@gmu.edu">segerson@gmu.edu</a>
8 Saturday	<b>Squadron Holiday Get Together</b> Location:TBD Join your fellow squadron members in welcoming in the holidays.	John Shvik <a href="mailto:jshvik@cox.net">jshvik@cox.net</a>
<b>No monthly meeting scheduled for December - winter break</b>		
<b>No December Executive Committee meeting, winter break</b>		
<b>WEAR YOUR NVSPS NAME TAG TO ALL EVENTS AND CLASSROOM SESSIONS</b>		



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**MONTHLY ALL-HANDS MEETING**

2<sup>nd</sup> 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 theBoatUS sign.  
Enter from the lighted parking lot behind the building.



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**OF TARS & TERNS**

# America's Boating Club