



# 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.8

October, 2007



## Commander Sends

We all leave our boats on shore power to keep refrigerators running and batteries charged, but without surge suppressors in the dockside electrical box, it's not a good idea. One of our members recently discovered that lightning had struck near his marina, destroying his instrument clusters and both engine control modules. The damage is over \$3,000, and he's talking to his insurance company now.

A bolt of lightning travels at 100,000 MPH and carries 40 kiloamps of current. Depending on the length of the bolt there are typically hundreds of millions of volts or about 40 trillion watts. Things are hot where lightning and ground meet. A lightning strike can reach 50,000°F due to the high current and the resistance of the Earth. Nice to watch, but you don't want to be there when it's happening.

When lightning strikes the marina's power line, the current travels right down the dock to your boat and breaker panel. The problem is that the fastest short-circuit thermal rise time for a standard marine breaker is 200-400 milliseconds, which means the lightning gets by before it trips (or melts/explodes inside the breaker panel).

Once it gets past the breaker panel, it flows directly to all the outlets and devices wired to AC power. One is the battery charger, which converts 110 VAC to 12 VDC. When the high current/voltage hits the battery charger, it jumps across its transformer coils into the DC wiring. All of this happens within half a second of lightning striking the power line.

Now let's talk about your electronics. The input is 12 VDC. Many devices further step this down to 3-5 VDC at 50 milliamps for the operation of their microcircuits. If the device is electrically on standby, (uses a soft switch as opposed to mechanical switch, knob or button), the high current travels directly into the device and destroys the microelectronics inside. Even if the device is turned off with a mechanical switch

**Leave your boat on shore power during a storm?**

(such as an accessory switch on the console) devices can be damaged due to the tremendous difference between the normal ground and the positive voltage. When the high voltage enters the device through the ground conductor, it escapes through the circuitry into other components that are grounded, destroying the circuitry

Another aspect of lightning is the damage it causes where you don't think it would. After a lightning strike, the

shore-power connectors can be severely damaged, especially if you're using a "smart-Y" adaptor. Look for burn marks or discoloration. Under normal use, about 60% of the conductor connectors (the metal male/female prong/sockets) are making contact. But when sudden, extremely high current passes, the connector surfaces that are not touching will arc, and the carbon that occurs creates resistance, reducing the capacity of the connector. Resistance causes the connector to get hot, and in extreme cases, cause a fire. After the strike, circuit breakers might trip under only moderate load conditions. This is a result of damage to the thermal collar in the breaker, and it will need to be replaced. You should inspect the boat's wiring looking for signs of discolored, burnt, or melted insulation, especially where the wires are crimped to terminal connectors, as this will cause intermittent problems in the future.

My advice, buy high-quality surge suppressors for the dockside power panel to your boat. It's well worth the money if you ever experience a nearby lightning strike.

**CDR G. Jay Nelson, AP**  
[gjaynelson@aol.com](mailto:gjaynelson@aol.com)

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## NVSPS BRIDGE



**COMMANDER**  
Cdr G. Jay Nelson, AP  
703-437-0064  
[gjaynelson@aol.com](mailto:gjaynelson@aol.com)



**EXECUTIVE OFFICER**  
Lt/C William Blanding, AP  
[smodim@comcast.net](mailto:smodim@comcast.net)



**EDUCATION OFFICER**  
Lt/C Rick Baker, AP  
(703) 318-5899  
[rickbaker6@verizon.net](mailto:rickbaker6@verizon.net)  
ASST: 1/Lt Richard Unis P/C/



**ADMIN OFFICER**  
Lt/C John Shivik, AP  
[jshivik@cox.net](mailto:jshivik@cox.net)  
ASST: 1/Lt Ron Larson, P



**SECRETARY**  
Lt/C Clara Blanding, AP  
[claralee@comcast.net](mailto:claralee@comcast.net)  
ASST: 1/Lt S Sams-Grohoski



**TREASURER**  
Lt/C Steven Hall, P  
(703) 242-8566  
[sdhall01@verizon.net](mailto:sdhall01@verizon.net)  
ASST: 1/Lt Joel Bailey AP

### AT LARGE

Lt George Degnon, P 703-448-8766  
Lt Tom Martin, AP 703-820-7671  
D/Lt Walter D. Lazear, AP 703-620-1821  
Lt Jay Karjala, P 703-818-8676  
Lt Francis Williamson, AP 703-440-9074  
P/C Keith Segerson, P 703-670-2270

### of Tars & Tern DISTRIBUTION

Lt Manette Lazear, AP  
D/Lt Walter D. Lazear, AP

### of Tars & Terns EDITOR

Lt Pete Soballe, AP (202) 337-0960  
[psoballe@yahoo.com](mailto:psoballe@yahoo.com)

## "EXECUTIVE PRIVILEGE"

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

Clara and I are just finishing up a two-week cruise down to Portsmouth VA. Unfortunately we've been docked in Deltaville VA for the past three days waiting for the wind and waves to settle on the bay. Three days ago we plowed and pitched through 4+ foot short period seas. As I watch the boats pack in behind and in front of us on the linear dock (we're side-tied starboard to), I'm wondering how to get the boat off the dock and moving towards home. Oh, there's another linear dock on our port side with boats on it too. The winds are predicted at 15 kts on our beam in the morning and we will have to back off the dock (the boat backs to starboard) and down the boat-lined alley. How will this turn out? We'll use a combination of spring and bow lines to ensure the wind doesn't catch the bow too soon which would increase our stern to starboard rotation. Speaking of docking and the use of lines, Charles T. Low has a neat little book called "Boat Docking, Close Quarters Maneuvering for Small Craft". It's well written with diagrams that cover almost every basic docking situation you can expect. It's an easy read and at times very humorous. I highly recommend it for everyone to have in their boating library. Docking is an important safety issue that only comes with knowledge and lots of practice.

Personal note: Clara and I will be moving to Annapolis in the next couple of months or so.

## Cruise News

**Fall cruise to Tilghman Island 19-21 Oct.** The highlight of this annual event is the magical Tilghman Island Day, Sat 20 Oct. There'll be food, events, food, and more events, and an ice cream dessert. This is a popular destination since the cruising for both sail and power is painless (except for an occasional storm, fog, pestilence, & plague). Science has found a cure for scurvy, so bring plenty of limes & lemons for your favorite libation. Check it out: [http://www.tilghmanmd.com/TILDAY\\_2007.pdf](http://www.tilghmanmd.com/TILDAY_2007.pdf)

Phone: 410-886-2300 Fax: 410-886-2118

**Cruise Director: Joe Jarocki, AP** [jpjgaj@vzavenu.net](mailto:jpjgaj@vzavenu.net)

## A Great Holiday Deal

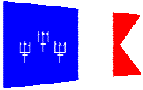
Share the joy of the holiday season with fellow NVSPS members by posting a message in the Dec issue of *oT&T*. Just make a tax-deductible contribution of any amount to the NVSPS Flower Power Fund. Your donation will become part of the Flower Power Fund, the interest from which supports squadron educational and other programs.

Examples of messages are "Happy Holidays and Safe Voyages in the New Year from the crew of ----" and "Blue Skies and Fair Winds in the New Year from ----"

**Your donation must be here by 10 NOV** to meet the newsletter deadline. Please send your 3-line message and check payable to "NVSPS Flower Power Fund" to :

**P/C Dick Durgin, JN, Chair, Flower Power Fund**  
703 560-9106 [rjdurgin@aol.com](mailto:rjdurgin@aol.com)  
308 George St. SW, Vienna, VA 22180





## Admin Officer's Report

**Lt/C John Shivik, AP**

The fun hasn't stopped yet. More activities are on the way! Want a bigger boat? There may be a chance to talk to Santa and Mrs. Claus at the Annual Holiday Party! You are cordially invited! The Holiday Party is scheduled for 8 Dec, 1830 - 2330, at the American Legion in Fairfax City. Details and reservation forms will be in the November *oT&T* and the NVSPS website. Please mark your calendar and get your reservations in early.

Help is needed for OUR squadron. YOU are the future of our squadron. What do you want to do? Just what do you want from your membership and your squadron? Contact a bridge member.

By the way, this newsletter has a lot of effort behind it. The editor and distribution team continue to excel in having a newsletter that contains the "I need to know" essentials. Do you have an article to contribute and share?

Mentioning contributions – your voluntary donation to the Flower Power fund will get your holiday greetings and best wishes to all members published in the *oT&T*. The donation goes directly to the Flower Power fund to support our educational programs. Submit your greetings to appear in the Dec *oT&T* to P/C Dick Durgin, JN prior to 10 Nov along with your donation to the NVSPS Flower Power fund. Your donation is tax deductible and you'll receive a letter that meets IRS record requirements.

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

Our All Hands' meeting 10 Oct will be at the Fairfax Yacht Club thanks to P/C Ed and Lt/Cdr Martha Jane Dodd. *This is an International Potluck*. What a way to try different foods and fill one's diet void! So please bring a main dish, salad or dessert with a foreign, ethnic, or whatever flair at 1900 so we can start with a great meal. NVSPS will provide beverages, cups, plates, cutlery and napkins. Donation (made out to NVSPS) is \$5 per couple. Single, \$2.50. Children, free. Please contact me or 1stLt Ron Larson, P. Directions to the Fairfax Yacht Club are on this page, and on the NVPS WEBSITE.

## Directions to FYC

**(10 Oct 07 @ 1900, RSVP by 03 Oct)**

**10721 Old Colchester Rd, Mason Neck, VA 22079. On the Occoquan River 38° 41'N, 77° 15'W**

**From the Beltway:** South on I-95, exit for Woodbridge via US Rte 1 south. Left at Furnace Rd, the first light. Go under the railroad, then straight across Old Colchester Rd. down the private lane to FYC. Park at any open space.

**From Fredericksburg:** North on I-95, exit for Rt 123 east to Rt 1. Left on Rt 1, cross the Occoquan river. Right at Furnace Rd, first light. Go under the railroad, then straight across Old Colchester Rd. down the private lane to FYC.

Enclosed is my check made payable to NVSPS for \_\_\_\_\_ reservations @ \$5.00 per couple, \$2.50 per single, Children under 13 FREE, for the 10 Oct International Pot Luck at FYC. Please bring your favorite ethnic, foreign or whatever special dish or dessert to share!

Member Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Guest(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

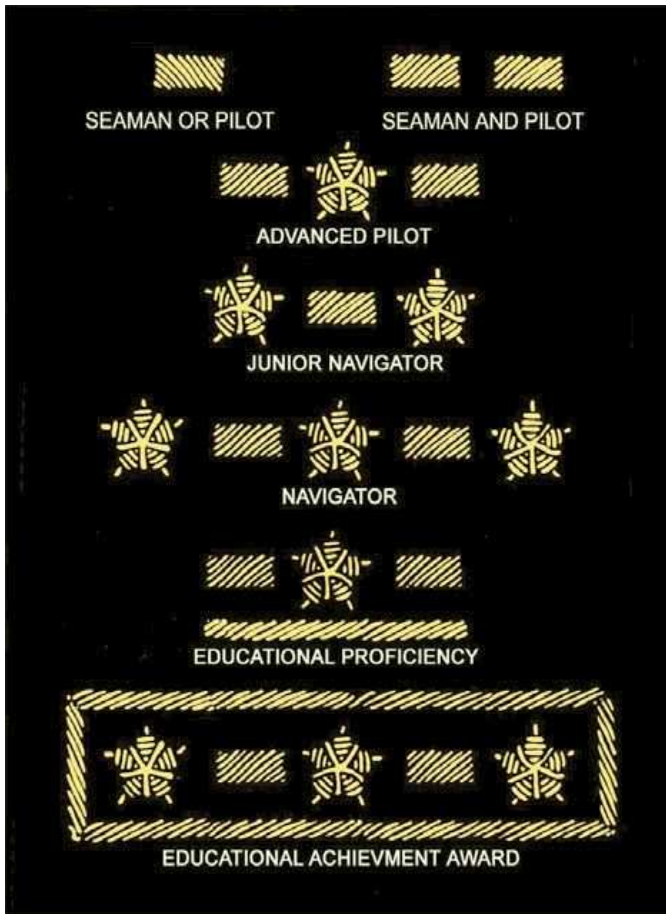
Yes, I can help with Setup  Cleanup  and Have fun

**Send your check and this form to: P/C John Shivik, AP; 10815 Colton Street; Fairfax, VA 22032-3404**

## "Chalk Talk"

Education Officer Lt/C Rick Baker, AP  
703 318-5899 [rickbaker2006@verizon.net](mailto:rickbaker2006@verizon.net)

Congratulations to our members earning the Educational Proficiency Award (EPA) in 2007: Cdr Jay Nelson, AP; Lt Tom Ballew, AP; Lt Joe Jarocki, AP, and Bob Cox, AP. The EPA recognizes members holding the grade of AP [Advanced Pilot] with the additional successful completion of any three elective courses. A special uniform insignia is provided:



(Ops Manual, Para 6.48). Figure from OM Page B-6:

How do you earn the EPA? Start by registering now for the next set of Advanced and Elective Member Courses. For sure, our new members should be registering for the *Seamanship Course*, if they have not taken it. *Seamanship* and *Piloting* are the first member courses in USPS. We offer *Seamanship* to get you on the water to practice better boat handling, anchoring, planning, and reactions to adverse conditions. During *Piloting* and *Advanced Piloting* in the fall and winter, respectively, we take you to the next levels of navigation so you can cross the Chesapeake Bay or take an offshore voyage confidently using your chart, compass, and electronic navigation equipment. We

have scheduled some Saturday courses to satisfy your hectic and varied personal calendars. **Please register on time so I can order the right number of books.** At least 10 registered, in-class participating members are required to make any course a GO!

*And please contact me if you'd like to teach or proctor any of these offerings!*

**INSTR DEVELOPMENT** (Mon: starts 07 Jan @ 1900)  
10 sessions. Modern teaching techniques. Earn USPS and Virginia instructor certification. Free. Location: TBD, Falls Church. Instructor: TBD. *Register by: 01 Dec.*

**CRUISE PLANNING** (Sat: starts 12 Jan 1200-1600)  
5 sessions. Designed for members who plan to cruise for just a day or for a year--in either a sail or powerboat. Preparation and planning, equipment, anchoring, security, chartering, cruising outside the US, crew and provisions, voyage management, communications, navigation, weather, and emergencies. Includes a 12-mo planning timeline. The course is non-modular with one final exam. \$65; family members and significant others may share books for a discount. Location: TBD, Fairfax. Instructors: Bill & Clara Blanding, AP. *Register by 01 Dec.*

**SEAMANSHIP (S)** (Sat: starts 12 Jan, 0800-1200)  
4 sessions. Updated for 2008. Learn seamanship, marlin-spike, and boat handling. Review the rules of the road. \$80. Families and significant others may share books for a discount. Location: TBD, Fairfax. Instructor: Bob Manning, P. *Register by 01 Dec.*

**SAIL TRIM SEMINAR** (1 Sat, 09 Feb, 0800-1200 )  
(Open to Public too!)

New for 2008. Shows in clear and simple terms how to adjust sails for optimum performance under a wide range of conditions. Comes with prepared "student notes" and a waterproof Captain's Quick Guide written by North Sails. \$35. Family members and significant others may share materials for a discount. Location: TBD, Fairfax. Instructor: Bob Manning, P. *Register by: 01 Dec.*

**ADV PILOTING (AP)** (Thurs: starts 28 Feb, @1900)  
12 sessions. Prerequisite: USPS Piloting course. Modern techniques for coastal and offshore navigation, using charts and electronics \$95. Families and significant others may share books for a discount. Location: TBD,. Instructor: TBD *Register by 15 Jan.*

**WEATHER SEMINAR** (1 Thurs 13 Mar, 1900 – 2130)  
(Open to Public too!)

New for 2008. Learn to forecast the weather from your boat! \$45. Family members and significant others may share the materials for a discount. Location: TBD, Fairfax. Instr: Lt/C John Shivik, AP. *Register by: 01 Feb:*



*Ship 1942 at BoatUS Headquarters*

## Sea Scouts Win Top Honors

Sea Scout Ship 1942 of Arlington VA was just awarded the "2007 National Flagship" trophy from NVSPS member and BoatUS founder Richard Schwartz.

Pictured here is the finest assemblage of Sea Scouting on the globe for 2007. Within this picture, besides Mr Schwartz, you'll find:

One NVSPS Commander

One very "beaming" Skipper of Sea Scout Ship 1942

One U.S. Naval Academy 3/C Midshipman

Four Quartermaster Sea Scouts

Seven Eagle Scouts

Six Venture Silver Awards

Two Girl Scout Gold Awards

Two BSA Lifesaving Heroism Awards

Two Catherine A. Mullikin Regional youth Volunteer Service Awards

Two Regional Leadership Awards

Three Council Leadership Awards

Eight Sea Scout SEAL graduates

Fifteen Venture Outdoor Ranger Awards

Two Northeast Regional Boatswains (past and current)

Two Silver Beaver Awards

Two Thomas J. Keane Adult Regional service awards

Four Scouter of the Year Awards

Two District Awards of Merit

**"Don't Give up the Ship"  
Tom Ballew, AP  
Skipper, Sea Scout Ship 1942**

## NVSPS Calendar

October 2007		
4-7 Thurs-Sun	<b>38<sup>th</sup> Annapolis Sailboat Show</b>	<a href="http://www.usboat.com">www.usboat.com</a>
10 Wednesday 1900: Social 1930: Meeting	<b>All Hands' Meeting and Octoberfest Pot Luck Dinner Fairfax Yacht Club</b>  Combination meeting and Pot Luck Dinner. See page 3 for details.	John Shivik <a href="mailto:jshivik@cox.net">jshivik@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-Sun	<b>NVSPS Tilghman Day Cruise</b> Tilghman on Chesapeake Marina Join the fun at Tilghman Island Day!	<a href="http://www.tilghmanmd.com">www.tilghmanmd.com</a>
24 Wed 1830	<b>Excom Meeting</b> GMU Conference Room, Fairfax	Jay Nelson <a href="mailto:gjaynelson@aol.com">gjaynelson@aol.com</a>
November 2007		
2-4 Fri-Sun	<b>D/5 Fall Education Conference. See Mark 5 Newsletter</b>	See Mark 5
3 Saturdays 1200-1600	<b>Piloting Course (P)</b> Location: TBD, Fairfax. Instructor: Tom Ballew. <i>Register by 20 Sep</i> \$95, 6 sessions	Rick Baker <a href="mailto:rickbaker2006@verizon.net">rickbaker2006@verizon.net</a> 703-318-5899
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 Wed 1900	<b>Excom Meeting</b> GMU Conference Room, Fairfax	Jay Nelson <a href="mailto:gjaynelson@aol.com">gjaynelson@aol.com</a>
December 2007		
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 Party and Buffet Dinner</b> Location: American Legion, Fairfax Join your fellow squadron members in welcoming in the holidays.	John Shivik <a href="mailto:jshivik@cox.net">jshivik@cox.net</a>
<b>No All Hands' nor Excom meeting scheduled for December - winter break</b>		
<b>WEAR YOUR NVSPS NAME TAG TO ALL EVENTS AND CLASSROOM SESSIONS</b>		

January 2008		
7 Mondays 1900	<b>Instructor Development Course</b> Location: TBD, Falls Church. Instructor: TBD. <i>Register by 01 Dec</i> 10 Sessions. Free.	Rick Baker <a href="mailto:rickbaker2006@verizon.net">rickbaker2006@verizon.net</a> 703-318-5899
9 Wednesday 1900: Social 1930: Meeting	<b>All Hands' Meeting at Boat US</b> Bridge nominations for 2007-08 announced <b>Member/New Member Mixer</b> Presentations by Committee and Event Chairman on areas for member involvement and participation. Heavier than usual refreshments at this special meeting. Refreshments: Bill and Clara Blanding	Clara Blanding <a href="mailto:claralee@comcast.net">claralee@comcast.net</a>
12 Saturdays 0800-1200	<b>Seamanship Course (S)</b> Location: TBD, Fairfax. Instructor: Bob Manning <i>Register by 01 Dec</i> 4 Sessions. \$80.	Rick Baker <a href="mailto:rickbaker2006@verizon.net">rickbaker2006@verizon.net</a> 703-318-5899
12 Saturdays 1200-1600	<b>Cruise Planning Course</b> Location: TBD, Fairfax. Instructor: Bill and Clara Blanding, AP <i>Register by 01 Dec</i> 5 Sessions. \$65.	Rick Baker <a href="mailto:rickbaker2006@verizon.net">rickbaker2006@verizon.net</a> 703-318-5899
23 Wed 1830	<b>Excom Meeting and Planning Meeting</b> GMU Conference Room, Fairfax	Jay Nelson <a href="mailto:gjaynelson@aol.com">gjaynelson@aol.com</a>
February 2008		
13 Wednesday 1900: Social 1930: Meeting	<b>All Hands' Meeting at Boat US</b> Refreshments: TBD Meeting Topic: Skipper Saver Course for Sweethearts	Clara Blanding <a href="mailto:claralee@comcast.net">claralee@comcast.net</a>
19-23 Wed-Sun	<b>USPS Annual Meeting</b> Dallas, TX	Details in the <i>Ensign</i>
28 Thursdays 1900	<b>Advanced Piloting Course (AP)</b> Location: TBD. Instructor: TBD <i>Register by 15 Jan</i> 12 Sessions. \$95.	Rick Baker <a href="mailto:rickbaker2006@verizon.net">rickbaker2006@verizon.net</a> 703-318-5899
March 2008		
12 Wednesday 1900: Social 1930: Meeting	<b>All Hands' Meeting at Boat US</b> Annual Membership and Elections meeting, All Members should plan to attend. Refreshments: TBD Meeting Topic: Guest Speaker: TBD	Clara Blanding <a href="mailto:claralee@comcast.net">claralee@comcast.net</a>
13 Thursday 1900-2130	<b>On-Board Weather Forecasting</b> Location: TBD, Fairfax. Instructor: Lt/C John Shivik, AP <i>Register by 01 Feb</i> \$45, One session	Rick Baker <a href="mailto:rickbaker2006@verizon.net">rickbaker2006@verizon.net</a> 703-318-5899
15 Saturday	<b>NVSPS Founder's Day and Change of Watch Event</b> <b>Location:</b> American Legion, Fairfax	John Shivik <a href="mailto:jshivik@cox.net">jshivik@cox.net</a>
26 Wed 1830	<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>		



Lt W. Lazear, AP  
2014 Lakebreeze Way  
Reston VA 20191

NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
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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 the BoatUS sign.  
Enter from the lighted parking lot behind the building.



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**OF TARS & TERNS**

**America's Boating Club**