The Deep 6
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District Webmaster
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Please report any errors or omissions to the editor:
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Cover: Classic movie posters from classic adventure films.
District Commander’s Corner

By D/C Nancy Bieber, P

I hope all you non-essential people out there aren’t as bored as I am right now. Even though I’m retired, I thought I was essential to the boating community I serve and to the persons for whom I prepare tax returns through AARP. But New York State says I’m non-essential. In any case I’m staying home, having groceries and prescriptions delivered, and keeping myself and my community safe from the coronavirus. Some of you might be able to use this time to do some boat projects that are always there. My boat isn’t located at home, so I can’t even prepare that for the upcoming boating season, if we ever get to have one. To all of those who are working to care for others or provide needed supplies and services, I thank you.

As you all probably know, the District 6 Spring Conference and Change of Watch had to be cancelled. The Bridge worked hard with me to put on a teleconference which turned out to be very successful. Many thanks to Tom Alley and Dave Daniels for teaching us how to use Free Conference Call. Tom was our organizer and moderator. Dave was our informer, sending out information on how and when to sign in. A Change of Watch was not held as the Bridge remains the same with the exception of Maxine Flagg who has opted not to continue as Treasurer as she is not in town for our meetings. Jim Sharpe was appointed to fill the vacancy until the Fall Conference when a formal Change of Watch will be held. This was a wonderful opportunity for many of us to learn about virtual meetings. This format looks like the way of the future and can be used for other meetings or classes.

Reports and awards were presented, keeping our members up-to-date with current information. Robert Kucharek of Susquenango received his Emeritus Award for 50 Merit Marks. Richard Gassner of Utica and Katie Young of Susquenango received their Life Membership. District 6 received National recognition for third place in Membership Growth, and Syracuse received fourth place for Squadron Membership Growth. Iroquois Sail and Power Squadron, along with Marshall and Sandy Shear received recognition for the recovery of Geodetic Marks. Distinctive Communicator Awards recognized Rochester, Seneca, Susquehango, Swiftwater, Syracuse, and Utica for their publications. Seneca and Susquehango received Distinctive Communicator awards for their websites. Iroquois, Ithaca, Rochester, Seneca, St Lawrence, Susquehango, Swiftwater, Syracuse, and Utica received a USPS Educational Fund Certificate of Merit. Congratulations to all of the individuals and Squadrons for a job well done.

There were no submissions from our District for the Chapman Award last year. Consider submitting an exceptional instructor from your squadron for this award. I know there are many great instructors in our District deserving of this honor.

Tom Alley, Dave Olds and Bill Herrick have researched and purchased a new projector, microphone and other necessary supplies for the District. The equipment is state-of-the-art, wireless and will be an asset for the District for many years. Additional equipment and supplies will be added in the future. We also are designing a new banner for the District’s use at meetings and events that will be available by our next Conference.

There are two new apps available for your phones. The ABC app is available to all members and will show the courses and seminars you have taken. The SOBOS app is scheduled to be available in April. It will supply NOAA Charts with no electronics needed and provide situational awareness, so you know where you are. There will be a Float Creation option to share with your family or friends and will update to your last known position to show your location in case of an emergency.
America’s Boating Channel has a video showing numerous ways to enjoy boating. Katie Alley of the Finger Lakes Chapter is showcased in this video during the On the Water Activities segment. Way To Go Katie. The next phase of America’s Boating Channel will highlight ATON’s. All USPS members are eligible to submit videos for the next production. No more channel marker videos are needed. They have plenty of them. This summer, as you’re boating, video something that you feel would be interesting to others to view on America’s Boating Channel and send it in.

As only one rendezvous per Commander’s Watch will be held, there will not be a District Rendezvous this summer. If your squadron will be rendezvousing, you might want to invite other squadrons to join you. You could also set up some informal get-togethers with other squadron members who boat in your area. The possibilities are endless.

Bridgett Arieno will be our Governing Board Representative. The Governing Board Meeting will be in Raleigh, North Carolina from September 8th to 13th, 2020. A trip to the USPS headquarters, a Dinner Mystery Theater presentation, a tour of local breweries, and a bus tour of Historic Raleigh are planned for your entertainment in addition to all the meetings. Our Fall Conference will be held in Corning, New York from November 13th to 15th, 2020. Thanks to Jim McGinnis and the Finger Lakes Chapter for once again agreeing to host. Hope to see you all there.

Looking forward to another Boating Season, and hope we get to have one. In the meantime, Stay Home, Stay Safe, Stay Well.

- Nancy
Commander, D/6

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Smiles While Sequestering

My house got TP’d last night...
It’s now appraised at $875,000!
District Executive Officer’s Report

By D/Lt/C Rick Hibbs, SN

Happy Spring!

Enjoying the quarantine? I’m working (slowly) on refinishing the steps of my boarding ladder. Slowly, because I don’t have any other boat projects at home! Doing yard work this time of year is unusual for me, but the weather has been too cold to go work on the boat, and we had to postpone our bareboat charter in the British Virgin Islands from today to June 5th. That assumes we can do it then!

After two classes of Piloting (to become Marine Navigation!) we were shut down. We attempted to continue via FreeConferenceCall, and got through two more classes (sort of). But this week all but one student bailed as a function of the quarantine and its impact. We’ll try again when we can meet face to face. Hard to teach use of the plotter when not in the same room. (any suggestions?)

We’ve had to delay start of ABC3 classes for a month (that’s optimistic, too!)

National is closed per North Carolina restrictions, so no idea when materials on order will arrive, or if we can order exams.

We did a tele-Spring Conference!

I hope you are all staying safe, healthy, and looking for things to keep you occupied until we get the all clear! My wife Bridgett and I have been enjoying cooking, exercising, reading, and occasionally doing trips that have to be done. I’m not allowed to go to the store because of my age! We’re planning menus for more than one day at a time, using what’s on hand so Bridgett doesn’t have to go to the store more than once a week.

I will be working on the slide show of our bareboat charter in Greece from last June. And hoping we’ll eventually be able to do some boating this season! Looking forward to any news from any one!

How are you dealing with the COVID-19 situation? Text, e-mail, or call me!

- Rick

Executive Officer, D/6

Smiles While Sequestering

Health Tip: If you keep a glass of wine in each hand, you can’t accidentally touch your face.
As most of you know, sadly we had to cancel our spring Council/Conference in Corning scheduled for the end of March due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19). Thankfully, our D/6 Commander Nancy Bieber stepped right up and was integral in arranging approval for meeting virtually. A huge thank you to Nancy and also to DEO and The Deep 6 Editor Tom Alley for setting everything up from the technical side and walking us through several practice sessions so that we could at least pretend we knew what we were doing. District Secretary Dave Daniels also chipped in with a practice run as well. What a great example of a group working together..... Hmm, seems we could use that on another level at this time, but that’s another story.

Since this virus has our country and most of the world in social distancing (I prefer the term physical distancing since it is at a time like this when we need to keep in touch the most with family and friends) and/or lockdown mode, reaching out to potential members in traditional ways (vessel safety checks at marinas, classes, seminars in public places, etc.) is not possible. P/R/C Priscilla Clarke has offered a few ideas to circumvent these limitations. In her spring report, Priscilla suggests reaching out to friends via computer, cell or landline, offering seminars or Squadron Executive and General meetings through a free program such as “FreeConferenceCall” (which we used for our conference). She also mentions Facebook groups as another option, stating that we must use the technology available to reach out.

P/R/C George Clarke provided two important reports on Membership Retention that he brought back from the National Meeting in February. The reports offer invaluable information and are available to view along with Priscilla’s at the Google Drive D/6 File Cabinet site.

There were two awards “presented” during this virtual conference; the first from the National Membership Committee for District Growth and Retention for which our District placed third. It was for a -1.63% growth, but according to our Commander, the second-place award was also a negative number.

The second award was a Fourth Place awarded to Syracuse Sail & Power Squadron from National for Squadron Growth and Retention with 4% Growth! Outstanding!

Congratulations to the District and the Syracuse Squadron.

As for boating this summer, we will have to adopt a wait and see attitude to determine if our marinas or boat launches will be open and available to get our boats in the water. I know our marina was planning on opening but at this point, that remains in question. I could easily work on my sailboat; it is usually a solitary project and one that could keep me at an acceptable distance from others. Sailing it, however, although I’ve done it alone, is much easier with multiple hands available and much more fun. Therein lies the problem – physical distancing on a 28-foot boat is not easy!

Let’s hope the researchers can come up with a vaccine or treatment for this dangerous virus soon so that we can not only preserve life but get on with our usual activities of daily living.

Be smart out there and stay safe.

- Linda

Administrative Officer, D/6
Education Corner

By D/Lt/C Thomas Alley, SN

Social Distances
As I write this column, we’re in the midst of “social distancing” and, as a result, we’ve just finished up our very first online District Conference. Thanks to the efforts of many people, this conference went well. I am interested in hearing comments from other attendees, as I was on the transmitting end of things and didn’t really hear or see what everyone else did.

The good news is that most of the constraints we are living under were put into place after the USPS Annual Meeting in February. Because of this I have plenty to tell you in this column.

The USPS Annual Meeting was held near Jacksonville, FL. Aside from getting out of the cold weather for a few days, these trips are really enlightening in that one gets to see the “big picture” and get a feel for what ideas and initiatives will be getting implemented in the coming years. It’s also a great place to meet the people whom we otherwise only just hear about and to create relationships with other “boat addicts” across the country.

I spent two days in meetings split between subjects involving IT and Education. A third day was spent reviewing teaching aids submitted by various Districts and attending seminars on various topics. Here’s a high-level summary of what I think is most important to us in District 6.

IT Activities
There are two major areas of activity that will have a far-reaching impact on routine operations of all Squadrons and Chapters. The first is the rewrite of software that processes Merit Mark submissions.

Under the current system, Merit Mark nominations are made via DB2000 and then these are uploaded to the servers at headquarters in Raleigh, NC for review and processing. The new system will be entirely web-based and will (hopefully) eliminate many of the chronic problems experienced with the current system. A development version of the software was demonstrated at the conference and it looks very nice! Oh, and because it’s web-based, Mac users no longer have to jump through hoops to make it run on their systems.

Look for the new version to be operational in time for this year’s Merit Mark nominating season. A full-scale demonstration of the new system can be expected at the Fall Governing Board Meeting this September in Raleigh.

The next major area of effort deals with DB2000. The program, now 20 years old, is nearing (some would say it has long passed) its end of life. Furthermore, it is supported by a single individual who is advancing in years and has asked to be allowed to reduce his level of involvement.

As a result, the National IT Committee has decided to initiate an effort to replace DB2000 with a web-based system that integrates more tightly with the data repositories on the national servers. Preliminary design work has started, but there is much more that will need to be done. Expect to hear more about this in the coming months. As this is a large project, DB2000 is not going away any time soon. Realistically, it will be next year before the release of a replacement will be possible.

National Web Site
Anyone who was online in mid-February noticed that the national web site was down quite a bit, beginning the week of the Annual Meeting.

At first it was thought there might have been a power failure in the headquarters data center, but it was later determined that the national web site was the target of a “distributed denial of service” (DDoS) attack. After 10 days of effort by a team of very dedicated volunteers (several of whom have day jobs to contend with in addition to their volunteer duties), the web site was brought back online. Many kudos to Carl Filios.
and others on the national IT Committee for their hard work to put things back together.

The good news is that no data was taken from the web server. (Membership data is stored on a different machine that was not affected by the attack.)

The bad news is that we will likely never determine the origin of the attack. There was no communication demanding anything to make the attack go away, so it appears it was done out of maliciousness alone.

Educational Activities

It goes without saying that the Education Department is busy. You already know about the realignment of the Advanced Grade courses (Seamanship, Piloting, Advanced Piloting, Junior Navigation and Navigation) to courses with updated titles that make their content a little clearer (Boat Handling, Marine Navigation, Advanced Marine Navigation, Offshore Navigation and Celestial Navigation).

The Boat Handling class, released last year as a pilot, was released in its final form in January of this year. Additional “tweaks” will occur as the course is further refined to support both traditional classroom environments along with online training options.

In prior years, there were two committees responsible for developing and maintaining the content of the remaining four courses. These two committees have now been merged into a single “Navigation Committee”. This should greatly assist in maintaining coordination of the content between the courses such that they continue to be a single program through which navigators can enhance and grow their skills.

As was the case last year, there continues to be much discussion about online classes, blended learning, remote teaching, and everything that goes with this. I asked around to see what other squadrons were doing in this area and, unfortunately, was approached by a number of SEOs and DEOs who wanted me to help them get pointed in the right direction to begin their own remote learning efforts. Once again, it appears that District 6 is being a trailblazer!

On the public side of boating education, ABC3 will remain the flagship introductory course. Expect it to see an increasingly vital role as very little of the material in this class is repeated in Boat Handling. New national boat training standards issued by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) will have an impact on the next version of the course, but until these standards are defined, it’s anyone’s guess as to what these changes will look like.

Credentialed Programs

One of the larger trends that has been underway for over a decade is the transition from emphasizing the Advanced Grades toward the credentials offered by the Boat Operator Certification (BOC) program. Historically, squadrons in District 6 have not taken a leading roll in this transition. Based on what I’ve seen at the national conferences, I think this area needs a bit more focus.

As your DEO, I’d like to challenge all of the D/6 Squadron Education Officers to re-think their educational programs and to begin restructuring them around the BOC certification levels instead of having them organized solely around the five Advanced Grade courses. I recognize that this is not a short term effort and it is something that needs to continue long after my tenure as your DEO ends.

As your current DEO, however, I can offer to help coordinate these activities across our District in a manner where we can share resources and pool our efforts for maximum effectiveness. As a first step, I’d like to hear your ideas to see how we can get this off the ground.

One of the significant roadblocks to the BOC program is having a sufficient number of “certified certifiers” available to conduct the skills-based assessments of BOC candidates. It was announced at the Annual Meeting that this should no longer be a problem as the National Education Department will ensure that certifiers are available to any District or Squadron that requests them, and they will be made available at no cost to the District or Squadron.

Who can refuse an offer like that? Let’s get started!
Legislative Trends

On the legislative front, we are all familiar with Brianna’s Law in New York, but there are parallel efforts for other legislation across the country that could have a future impact on our local boating.

Florida, for example, is considering legislation to extend its requirement for boating safety education to all non-motorized vessels.

Texas has enacted Kali’s Law, legislation requiring kill switches on all vessels under 26-feet in length. My understanding is that other states are looking into this as well.

Tennessee is considering legislation to limit lighting that either obscures or otherwise confuses navigational lighting – both on boats and on shore-side facilities (e.g., docks). If you’re considering installing “underwater mood lighting” on your boat, you may want to rethink this, as the US Coast Guard has expressed an interest in this legislation as well.

We are all familiar with (or should be!) with the use of dive flags in areas where scuba diving is taking place. Well, there is considerable legislative interest to expand the practice of flying appropriate signal flags whenever there are any type of swimmers in the water around a vessel. (Technically, the “diver down” flag has no legal significance, so you go diving or snorkeling, you should also fly the “alpha” flag to signify your boat is engaged in underwater operations.)

Conclusion

As you can imagine, there was a lot more discussed at all of the meetings I attended and there are many more highlights I could share. However, there is a lot to digest here and the intent of this article is to give you an awareness of the general direction everything is heading.

If you have questions or concerns, please reach out to me. If you have ideas or suggestions, please share them as well. The most important thing, however, is that you NOT sit back and wait for National or District to tell you what to do. That approach won’t end well.

- Tom
  Education Officer, D/6

Smiles While Sequestering

Happy hour is starting earlier and earlier. If this keeps up, I’ll be pouring wine on my cereal!
From the Assistant Education Officer

By D/1st/Lt Leslie Smith, JN

As you all know, that COVID-19 virus madness has put the brakes on almost everything. I hope you are all staying home and practicing the “Social Distancing” to stay safe. I also hope that all who are reading this, and your loved ones, are virus free.

I started an ABC class on March 18th to run for five consecutive Mondays at a local High school. We got through two sessions when they closed the school (rightfully so). Originally, it was supposed to reopen on April 15th, but like every other school in New York, we’ll have to wait until at least May 1st. On the surface it sounds like a major inconvenience, but compared to what other people are forced to endure, this sounds petty. Hopefully we will be able to restart in May, but really who knows? So what do we do?

Hopefully this is the first and last pandemic we will see in our lifetime. Having said that, who really knows? A few short months ago could any of you have imagined this?

For me, it forced me to think about other instructing methods. We’ve had online courses for a while now and I’ve received some feedback both good and bad. In my view NO online course, regardless of the subject, is as effective as instructor led classes. There’s discussion now about “virtual classes”. This is where there is an instructor and everyone in the class has some type of computer with them. A little while ago we had a successful Instructor Recertification seminar using this method. I have also given classes this way in my professional life. Yes, there are some bugs to work out, too many to list here in this short column. Even so, I think that with the knowledge we have collectively we can figure it out. Yes, this will take a long time, but in my view it will be worth it.

Stay safe!!

Respectfully submitted,

- Les

Assistant Education Officer, D/6

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**Smiles While Sequestering**

Today’s Weather:

Room temperature.
A Message from the District 6 Secretary

By D/Lt/C David Daniels, SN

First, a recap for the first-ever District 6 teleconference meeting from the viewpoint of the District Secretary. Holding a teleconference was the best alternative when the COVID-19 virus shut everything down. It was a complete success thanks to the several practice sessions held prior to the actual event. Yes, there were a few bumps along the way, but in general, most folks were able to hook up and hear the verbal reports by the Bridge and to see the PowerPoint slides displayed by the moderator, DEO Tom Alley. The few technical issues encountered had to do with local computer settings for audio and video. Permission must be given to the teleconference app to use the microphone and the video camera. Windows 10 makes it hard to locate these options and to activate them. At least one couple had to resort to using a cell phone for the audio and a laptop to see the slides. At the peak, there were 45 connections.

I, for one, will continue to use teleconference facilities to stay in touch with family and friends while we continue social-distancing for the remainder of the Spring. A really BIG thank you to DEO Tom for giving us this new skill.

At this time of year, all of the squadron Change-of-Watches are complete. If you are new to a squadron leadership position and must use DB2000 for the first time, you may be somewhat amazed, even confused, by the many features designed into this robust app. The DB2000 app is Windows ONLY and requires a successful install and the proper password(s) before you can download your squadron database. If you are completely new to DB2000 and are having difficulties with the proper installation on your Windows based computer, then contact me (email address below) and we will setup a one-on-one work session, maybe even a teleconference work session.

Next topic for this column is just an update on district-wide communications from the District Secretary. The National IT Committee created, a long time ago, an Information Center with a BROADCAST TOOL FOR DISTRICT OFFICERS. This tool has turned out to be essential in this time frame with so many meeting changes. It has been used to provide numerous messages to the 500+ members of D/6 regarding the Spring Conference in Corning, then its cancellation, and finally for conducting the teleconference. One unique note is sent to each person in the District with an email address. That way it does not appear as a ‘blast’ to hundreds of people and categorized as spam.

NOW HIRING: The District is continuing to look for a new District Webmaster. After many years of exemplarily service, P/D/C Jerry Zambroski, P has indicated it is now time to pass this activity on to another person. P/D/C “Z” will stay involved, help train a new webmaster, and make a seamless transition. We can not thank Jerry enough for his dedication to D/6 and for the many awards and recognition that the D/6 website has achieved.

Now, let’s focus on the new online District File Cabinet. All of the reports presented in the teleconference meeting and the associated minutes are now online and are available to all members of the District. Copy and paste this link into your browser to directly access the Google Drive teleconference folder:

WANTED: DISTRICT 6 WEBMASTER

Interested? Questions? Contact the District Secretary

D/Lt/C Dave Daniels, SN  ddaniels1@stny.rr.com  607-765-6288

Many, many thanks to the out-going webmaster - - P/D/C – “Z”
Here is a screen shot of what you will find. Click on the “reports” and/or the “minutes” folders to locate the various teleconference files. There is even an audio & video recording of the entire teleconference meeting (recorded by Tom Alley using the FreeConferenceCall app).

Respectively submitted,

-Dave
Secretary, D/6
A Message from the (New) District 6 Treasurer

By D/Lt/C James Sharpe, AP-IN

The times we are in with the Coronavirus has affected all aspects of our Power Squadron organizational life. Meetings are either cancelled or go virtual. We keep our distances. Because of these circumstances, I have not yet been able to meet with my able predecessor, Maxine, to make the necessary changes for this position, i.e., new bank, signatory authorizations, records or checks. So at this point, we are acting jointly, and keeping in touch. I do have the latest software download to my Quicken program for the district financial records so that Maxine and I will be able to coordinate transactions and the recording and reporting thereof.

I am pleased to have been appointed to this office by the bridge and hope to serve the function for the District appropriately.

Like all of us, I am looking forward to the boating season, despite the anticipated high water levels predicted for Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River where Kay and I do our boating. Having been a sailor for much of my life, this year I will be a motor boater primarily as I sold my 22-foot Catalina last fall as the family prefers our 25-foot Sea Ray. The decision to sell my sailboat, however, will not end my desire to sail from time to time and I have found a marina in Sackets Harbor that rents sailboats from 22- to 25-feet, so I will be able to continue my preferred mode of transportation. Any of you sailors in my boating area that need an experienced hand, do give me a call.

One of my off season projects this spring was rebuilding my 14-foot fishing boat. Last year, with one of the grandsons and myself, out for a day of fishing on Butterfield Lake in Redwood, the wooden floor under my seat gave way and I found myself flat on my back while the boat still underway and doing circles. Towed it home to Jamesville, and proceed to completely take out the rotted floor and raised deck forward (the boat being close to some 50 years old) and replacing same. This spring it got a fresh coat of paint. Looking forward to doing some more fishing!

So stay safe, and be optimistic about our health and boating life.

- Jim
Treasurer, D/6

Smiles While Sequestering

This is stupid. I just tried to make my own hand sanitizer and it came out as a rum and Coke.
Late Breaking: Shutdown Leaves NY Canal Season in Limbo

Lock Repair Work Was Halted in March; No Opening Date Has Been Set

By Rick Karlin

APRIL 22, 2020 - ALBANY – With the season just a month away, boaters, marina operators and tourism businesses along the 525-mile state canal system are wondering when the waterway will be open, or if it will be fully open at all this summer.

That’s because the Canal Corporation, a subsidiary of the New York Power Authority, abruptly halted work on the locks that were being overhauled back in March when the COVID-19 virus was just emerging as a threat in the state and nonessential workers were sent home.

Canal Corp. Director Brian Stratton referred questions to parent organization NYPA.

A NYPA spokesman said: “Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Canal Corporation has suspended all nonessential construction and maintenance activities along the canal system.”

He added, “To support the canal’s continued use as a prime recreational waterway, we are currently evaluating operational options to ensure New Yorkers will have access to the canal system this season.”

But no firm opening date was offered.

And canal supporters say there’s been little hint that the locks will be finished and put in place any time soon. Moreover, in some spots with low water levels, access to the canal has been closed off entirely.

Without the locks operating, it wouldn’t be possible to travel the length of the system, from Waterford to Buffalo and north through Lake Champlain on the Erie and Champlain canal systems.

Locks allow boats to be raised or lowered at various points in the canal, depending on whether there is a drop or rise in the waterway’s natural elevation.

“Those locks need to be repaired before the canal can open,” said Erin Tobin, vice president for policy and preservation at the Preservation League of New York State.

“The boating season is only so long,” added Scott Croft, vice president of public affairs for the Boat Owners Association of the United States.

The bulk of the upstate boating season is little more than three or four months: June, July and August, with parts of May and September.

While work on the canal has halted, Croft and others have noted that repairs and improvements to state parks, sites operated by the Department of Environmental Conservation, as well as street and road repairs, are continuing through the pandemic.
“Why is NYPA not completing the work when all the other agencies are?” asked Croft.

The shutdown also comes as NYPA and the Canal Corp. are in the midst of an ambitious multi-year $300 million “re-imaging” effort aimed at boosting tourism and development along the canal, which runs through some poor Rust Belt areas of upstate.

For years, flotillas of economic development experts, planners and community boosters have been trying to bring more tourism, industry and economic vitality to the area using the canal as an attraction.

And while there has been varying success with these efforts, a failure to open the canal would hurt the existing tourism trade in communities along the waterway, from Buffalo through Central New York up through the Lake Champlain area.

The canal is also a deeply embedded part of the region’s life and history.

“New York’s canals are an integral part of the social fabric and identity of communities all along upstate waterways,” Bob Radliff, executive director of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission, wrote in a recent letter to Gil Quiniones, president and CEO of NYPA. He was urging quick resumption of repairs to get the canal open.

The corridor around the canal generates $307.7 million in economic activity and supports 3,240 jobs while generating $34.9 million in tax revenue, according to a study referenced on the commission’s website.

“Should you get your boats ready or not?” is the question that people are asking, said Bob Stopper, a longtime boater and volunteer greeter in the town of Lyons between Rochester and Syracuse.

He said about 350 boats stay there overnight during a summer season. That may not be a lot compared with major tourist destinations, but it helps out in a small town like his.

“For this little community that’s a lot of extra people and a lot of tourists,” he said.

Right now, Stopper said, not even early season anglers have been able to get on the canal for some fishing, since the launch near his home has been blocked off and the water is only about four feet deep near the shore.

Not all of the spots or launches along the canal are closed due to low water, however, NYPA said. Still, with locks closed, a vessel can only travel so far.

The giant metal gates for the lock near Stopper’s home, Lock 27, are awaiting repairs, a process that typically takes a good month.

“The gates are on the ground waiting to have the welds put on them,” he said.

The Canal Corp. has a regular cycle in which all 57 of the system’s locks are overhauled once a decade during the winter months when the canal is closed to boat traffic.

NYPA said that eight of these locks are closed, including those at Whitehall, Niskayuna and Yosts in Montgomery County.

Some of them are in or near popular tourist spots. The Champlain Canal lock in Whitehall, for example, lets boaters enter Lake Champlain.

Overall, boating is a big industry in New York, generating an estimated $8 billion annually and supporting up to 100,000 jobs, said Eric Kreuter, President of the Empire State Marine Trades Association, which represents Marina owners and related businesses.

His group successfully pushed to have marinas declared essential businesses, and Gov. Andrew Cuomo over the weekend signed an executive order allowing them to open.

Many are opening in preparation of a season — which for those along the canal may or may not come.

“If we do not put boats in the water now, there will be no summer season,” said Kreuter.

This article was posted at https://digital.olivesoftware.com/olive/ODN/AlbanyTimesUnion/shared/ShowArticle.aspx?doc=HATU%2F2020%2F04%2F22&entity=Ar00110&sk=F22940CB&mode=text#
District 6 Membership Committee Report

One Year Period Ending February 29th, 2020
Respectfully submitted by P/C Thomas Dixon, P and P/D/C Chris Tertenik, SN

**March 31st, 2020**

**National:** 24,602 Members 2019
22,852 Members 2020
-1,750 LOSS

**D/6:** 558 Members 2019
543 Members 2020
- 15 LOSS

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Membership Committee:
Chair, D/Lt Tom Dixon, P
PRC Chris Tertenik, SN
Call for Articles!

By Tom Alley, Editor, The Deep 6

I hope you’re enjoying each issue of The Deep 6. As you can tell, it’s not a one-man show, but relies on the efforts of many people so that we can get the wonderful content that we have.

In 2020, each issue has enjoyed a “theme” of sorts. The Winter (February) issue was focused on projects related to our boats and maritime interests. This issue is all about voyages and adventures in the hopes of inspiring you to expand your boating horizons this coming boating season. Our Summer (August) issue will be themed along the lines of “Back to School”.

As such, I’d really enjoy hearing your stories about things you’ve learned – be they from the USPS or from boating in general. Did you experience a revelation in a particular subject? Is there a story on how you were able to apply what you learned in a real-life situation? Is there something you learned from a real-life situation that you want to share? How about a story in how you might have inspired someone else to learn and build upon what you helped teach?

On a more tactical level, does your Squadron have a way of filling seats in its classes that you’ve found to be effective? Please share how you do it! Are you teaching classes differently than you did 5 or 10 years ago? Let’s hear about it!

And it’s never a poor time for sharing laughter. If you have an amusing or humorous story about “learning a lesson”, we could all use a good chuckle in these challenging times.

Please send your stories and ideas to to me: theDeep6@uspsd6.org

I look forward to hearing from you!

- Tom

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Last GPS IIA Satellite Retired from Service

By Airman 1st Class Jonathan Whitely, USAF

The 2nd Space Operations Squadron initiated the disposal of the last operational GPS IIA satellite, satellite vehicle number 34, April 13 to 20, at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado.

The GPS satellite program currently uses 31 satellite vehicles to transmit precise position, navigation, and timing signals to more than 6 billion users around the world. To support the Air Force’s GPS III modernization efforts, 2nd SOPS operators phase out older models to make room for the new GPS III satellites. The disposal of SVN-34 marks the end of a 26.5-year era in which the satellite outlived its 7.5-year design life by 19 years.

“As we continue to manage the influx of GPS III (the newest iteration of GPS satellites) and maintaining other vehicles in a residual status, we have to be cognizant of effective risk management,” said Capt. Angela Tomasek, 2nd SOPS GPS mission engineering and analysis flight commander. “As SVN-34 continued to age, we had to manage its aging components and likelihood of having a critical malfunction. We are at a stage where we are confident in the robustness of the overall GPS constellation to remove the last remaining IIA vehicle.”

Units conduct satellite disposals when a satellite reaches the end of its operational life and no longer requires daily caretaking and maintenance.

“We push the satellite vehicle to a higher, less congested, ‘disposal orbit’ to eliminate the probability of collision with other active satellites,” Tomasek said. “[Then,] the vehicle is put
into a safe configuration by depleting the leftover fuel and battery life and shutting off the satellite vehicle transmitters so no one else can access the satellite in the future.”

Once SVN-34 is in its final orbit, 2 SOPS will hand over full tracking responsibility to the 18th Space Control Squadron at Vandenberg AFB, California, where it will be treated and cataloged like every other space object April 20.

“This disposal marks the end of an era in GPS history,” said Lt. Col. Stephen Toth, 2nd SOPS commander. “There are senior leaders and long-time contractors [who] launched and operated the IIA satellites at the beginning of their careers [who] are now here to see it end. It is an opportunity to reflect on the legacy and heritage of 2 SOPS and GPS to see how far we have come.”

Rick Hamilton
CGSIC Executive Secretariat
GPS Information Analysis Team Lead
U.S. Coast Guard Navigation Center
703-313-5930

NY Marinas to Reopen!
By Kevin Webb  BuisnessInsider.com

Marinas, boatyards and marine manufacturers have been permitted to reopen in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut as the metropolitan region continues to treat the coronavirus pandemic.

These waterfront areas were closed for weeks as strict social distancing rules were implemented across the region. New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy, and Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont announced the reopening with a joint statement on Saturday, April 18.

"Our states share workforces, resources, public transit, and we all share a connection on the water," Governor Lamont said in the statement. "This is yet another example of how our states have shared interests, which is all the more reason to collaborate on these kinds of decisions. This decision provides uniformity across our marinas."

The areas will only be available for personal use, so chartered services and rentals will remain suspended. Nearby restaurants will still be limited to take-out or delivery service as well. The three states said they’ve adopted this shared policy to ensure there was no confusion or efforts to shop between states for waterfront access.

"Throughout this pandemic, we’ve worked closely with our friends in neighboring states to implement a uniform regional approach to reducing the spread of the virus," Cuomo said. "Aligning our policies in this area is another example of that strong partnership, and will help ensure there is no confusion or ‘state shopping’ when it comes to marinas and boatyards."

Connecticut, New Jersey, and New York are members of an 18-state regional coalition coordinating a plan for recovery once the coronavirus pandemic reaches a more manageable stage. Cuomo announced the coalition on April 13.

New York has most coronavirus cases of any state in the US, with 236,732 infections and 17,140 deaths, according to data from the CDC and NBC News. New Jersey has the second-most, with 81,420 cases and 4,070 deaths. Connecticut has had a much slower rate of infection, with 17,550 cases and 1,086 deaths.

On Sunday Gov. Cuomo said he believed that New York has passed the peak rate of infection and could continue to stem the spread of COVID-19 with proper action.

Comments? Questions? Your Two-Cents?
Do you have comments about any of the contents of this issue? Please send your letters to the editor (theDeep6@uspsd6.org) and we’ll share the best/most insightful here!
Educational Opportunities in District 6

Scheduling Note
Please note that the dates and times for the courses listed herein are planned and not necessarily definite. Because it was still unclear when New York State would “un-PAUSE” its restrictions on public gatherings, the dates here are necessarily fluid. What is important is that these classes will happen, and that you can still sign up for them if they interest you. The instructors of each class will keep you apprised of any schedule changes that become necessary.

Inland Navigator
America’s Boating Course (ABC3)
Utica Sail and Power Squadron
Begins May (or when facilities reopen). Contact SEO David Schulz at: david.schulz@verizon.net

Boat Handling (BH)
Susquenango Sail & Power Squadron
Begins May/June 2020. Contact: D/Lt Les Smith at adeo@uspsd6.org

Syracuse Sail & Power Squadron
Begins May/June 2020. Contact: Tess Freedman at tbfreedm@gmail.com

Marine Electrical Systems (MES)
Seneca/Finger Lakes Chapter
Begins May 2020 (online). Contact: SEO Charlie Fausold at: seo@abc-flx.org

Coastal Navigator
Marine Communication Systems (MCS)
Seneca/Finger Lakes Chapter
Beginning fall of 2020. Contact Charlie Fausold at: seo@abc-flx.org

Syracuse Sail & Power Squadron
Beginning fall of 2020. Contact Tess Freedman at: tbfreedm@gmail.com

Advanced Coastal Navigator
Marine Communication Systems (MCS)
Seneca/Finger Lakes Chapter
Begins Fall 2020. Contact: SEO Charlie Fausold at: seo@abc-flx.org

Offshore Navigator
No classes or seminars scheduled at this time.

Other Classes & Seminars
Sail Course (SA)
Seneca/Finger Lakes Chapter
Summer 2020 (OTW). Contact Charlie Fausold at: seo@abc-flx.org

Publicize Your Training Opportunities!
If your squadron is planning to offer any type of formal or informal class, seminar or hands-on training opportunity, please let the editor know so we can publicize it here. Not only is it a great way to get more folks interested and signed up, but it’s also a great socializer and way of meeting USPS members from neighboring squadrons!

Send information to theDeep6@uspsd6.org.
A Continuing Saga for MV Avatar

By Paul Flagg

15 years ago last June, the Flagg’s and Rouse’s teamed up to purchase and enjoy MV Avatar together. What followed was 14 years of an enjoyable partnership relationship, the sharing of overhead and other ownership costs between the two families, and many great boating experiences for us and others who were able to share our adventures with us.

Many of you will recall our participation in D6 events, including our first trip to the St Lawrence to attend PDCZ’s Rendezvous at Riveredge Resort in Alexandria Bay, docked behind the Ron Premo’s cruiser and alongside Chris and Marti Tertinek’s sailboat, respectively. Since then, Avatar visited Eastern Connecticut, Montreal, the Rideau and Trent-Severn Canals in Canada, the Intra Coastal Waterway from NYC/Northern New Jersey to Fort Lauderdale and back again as well as several local rendezvous on Seneca and Cayuga Lakes.

In November of 2018, after putting Avatar up for sale, we were fortunate to have (almost immediately) four interested buyers. One couple for whom we showed Avatar, showed up in a foot of snow with Avatar on the hard at Frontenac Harbor Marina. They had been talking about getting a trawler, were thumbing through the ads enroute to a daughter’s hockey game from eastern Ohio to Ogdensburg and wondered if there was any chance to see the boat! Once on the boat, they wondered how they could get it to Boston Harbor and we committed to get them through the locks to Albany and described the relative ease to go the rest of the way. Over time they disclosed their plan to live aboard Avatar on weekends through the winter (they reported 200 other “live aboard” boats in Boston Harbor through the entire winter!) in order to attend their kids’ hockey games, both of whom had full ride scholarships to Northeastern University. The summer plan for Avatar was as the “Bed” part of “Bed and Breakfast” in Boston Harbor. We then learned of something called “SleepAfloat.com” which provides these types of accommodations in various metropolitan harbor locations on the East Coast, and likely others throughout the country.

In late May, Avatar left Frontenac Harbor at the North end of Cayuga Lake for the last time. Bryan, Maxine and Paul did their best to train the new owners and their crew and ultimately get them to and through the Waterford Flight at Albany. They then reported a great following trip to Boston... a few days in NYC at the 79th Street Boat Basin Marina, trip over to the Statue of Liberty, thence around Manhattan to the East River, east through Long Island Sound, and the Cape Cod Canal to Boston.

Photo 2: Leaving Frontenac Harbor for the last time.

Photo 3: Entering Lock CS-1 at the north end of Cayuga Lake.
Photo 4: Lock CS-1 with P/D/C Flagg and crew.

Photo 5: Leaving the Waterford flight of locks.

The pictures illustrate entering and leaving CS-1 for the last time, Waterford (last locks on the Erie Canal) and Avatar’s new “home” in Boston Harbor just short blocks from Boston’s Freedom Trail of historic sights and available for the overnight enjoyment of guests to the city. Hopefully they have accomplished their planned insulation and winterization before this very early snow and cold weather hit Boston!

- Paul

Photo 6: Fake smiles from the former owners and great smiles from the new!
To the St. Lawrence River from Port of Oswego

By Les Smith

Several years ago, I thought it would be fun while travelling to the St. Lawrence River from Oswego to try something different. I had made the trip several times, usually keeping the east shore in sight. This time, I got out the chart and wondered what would happen if, instead of following the shore, I charted a real course? Back then there was no such thing as GPS. The plan would be to follow my compass to a buoy just west of Galoo Island (approx. 30 miles) then change course a little and head directly to the entrance of the river (approx. 16 miles). I calculated the compass settings for the two legs of the journey and was ready to go.

The next morning we started out. There was some fog, but we had 9 miles of visibility. I knew this because my depth finder had an “odometer” and after 9 miles we couldn’t see the huge cooling towers at the Nuclear Power Plant. For the next 45 minutes or so we could see nothing but water. I was thrilled because I had always wanted to go far enough offshore to be completely out of sight of land. My wife, not so much. We got to the 26th-27th mile and there was no sign of Galoo. With 9 miles of visibility it should be in plain sight. I assumed I had done something wrong which was a real possibility. So I told my wife, who wasn’t very happy now, that worst case this is a lake and we will eventually hit the north shore and head east to the river. We continued on, and at about the 29th mile I shouted, “Look there’s Galoo!!!”. The buoy was there too. We missed the buoy by only a few hundred yards after 29 miles by compass. What I hadn’t realized was that in that past hour the fog had gotten much thicker. Now, I estimated we only had about a mile of visibility. We changed course and, after the next 16 miles, we hit the river entrance almost dead center.

We all tell people that this works, but it really hit home when it actually did. As much as I’d like to take credit for navigation skills, I have to admit there was plenty of luck there too. For instance, my compass only had 5 degree divisions and no course follows that.

- Les

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Smiles While Sequestering

I never thought the comment, “I wouldn’t touch him/her with a 6-foot pole” would become a national policy, but here we are!
After many years racing and cruising on our Sabre 34 on Lake Ontario on our boat and then sailing in Turkey and Greece with friends (Deep 6, Winter 2017), we have now had the experience of river cruising, most recently going from Moscow to St. Petersburg on the Viking Rurik. The Rurik is a 433’ long and has a beam of 55’, it was built in 1988 and refurbished in 2012 including more powerful bow thrusters, more about this later!

In the 1990’s I had been in Moscow on business but did not get to do much site seeing other than an evening trip to Red Square and I had always wanted to visit St. Petersburg. We had taken a Viking cruise on the Danube with a group of friends a few years ago and when we discussed where we would like to go next, I suggested a Russian river cruise which we finally arranged in 2019.

Our 13 day cruise left Moscow and traveled the Volga-Baltic waterway to Lake Onega and then on to the Svir and Neva rivers to St. Petersburg. Since this article is about cruising, I will focus on that part of the trip and readers who would like to know more about the places we visited can go to the Viking web page that describes the Waterways of the Tzars trip.

The waterway was built in the 1930’s as part of the industrialization program carried out by the Soviet Union.
and updated in the 1960s including building seven new locks. The following description is an edited version of the information in Wikipedia:

Two locks were built on the Svir River (in 1936 and 1952); 3 locks were built on the Sheksna River. Major improvement of the Volga–Baltic Waterway took place in 1960–1964, and the new Volga–Baltic Waterway was opened on 5 June 1964. 39 old wooden locks were replaced with 7 new locks, and one parallel lock was built later in 1995. The locks' limiting dimensions are 210 m long, 17.6 m wide and 4.2 m deep, allowing passage of river-sea ships of up to 5000 tons displacement. Such ships were able to sail directly across the big lakes instead of using the bypass canals.

Six of the eight locks are located along 35 km of the northern slope, with a total lift of 80 metres. The only 2 locks (parallel) on the southern slope, with a lift of 13 metres are located near Sheksna on the Sheksna River, 50 km upstream from Cherepovets. The Lower Svir Lock is one of the two busiest locks on Russia’s inland waterways (the other one was the Kochetov Lock on the lower Don River).

The ship’s schedule was arranged to go through the locks at night and our budget cabin was located on the lower deck, right over the bow thrusters. In one stretch we went through several locks about 30 minutes to an hour apart and just as we were getting back to sleep, they would run the thrusters to move against the dock wall and jar us awake! Fortunately that was only one night of the 13 day trip.

Photo 8: The rivers and lakes that are part of the waterway are quite wide and long and extensive use is made of range marks to indicate the correct heading.

Photo 9: For those of us familiar with the locks in the NYS Barge canal and many of the other canal systems in North America know that one must tend long dock lines in most cases when ascending or descending the locks. In the Russian canal system, the locks have an interesting mooring bollard that travels up and down with the water level so that the boat can tie up to it and not have to tend the lines as the water level changes.

We did get a chance to tour the Bridge and ask questions of the ship’s officers with translation from one of the Viking tour guides. During the refit in 2012, the engine controls and the navigation equipment was upgraded so they had modern digital chart displays, GPS and the Russian GLONASS navigation systems. None the less, they also have a chart room at the back of the bridge where they follow the route on a traditional paper chart.
Photo 10: View forward from the bridge. The lady in the picture is the cruise guide translating between English and Russian.

Photo 11: View of the chart room at the rear of the bridge.

One night as we were coming off Lake Onega in a heavy fog and the Svir River controller ordered the ship to anchor for 5 hours. While our ship had modern radars, apparently there was enough other river traffic that was not equipped to navigate in fog so they shut down the river until the fog lifted. They did sound a fog horn during the night but this time our cabin location on the lower deck put us far enough from the horn that we slept through the whole episode. We only learned about the delay in the morning when they announced that to stay on schedule, they were skipping the stop at Mandrogy.

Along the way, especially close to Moscow and St. Petersburg, we did get a chance to observe some recreational boats, both sail and power as well as the floating Zombieland Quest game barge.

Photo Group 12: Sail and power boats encountered along the way.
Finally, one of the memorable places we visited in St. Petersburg was the Peterhof Palace that is located on the Gulf of Finland, about an hour from the central city by road.

However it has a ferry and hydrofoil harbor that can be reached faster by boat so it is a popular tour option but unfortunately Viking’s option was a bus tour. If one has time after the tour of the main palace and can walk the mile through the lower garden to the harbor, you can then visit the Imperial Yacht Museum. We made the walk but did not have time to visit the museum, maybe next time!

- Ira

Ira Goldman grew up along the New Jersey shore and started boating in (leaky) crab boats while in day camp. He has sailed on Lake Ontario for almost 50 years but along the way spent 4 years sailing in England and 11 years sailing on Long Island Sound when career changes resulted in relocation to those areas. He is now retired and has a 16-foot runabout and a Sunfish on Keuka Lake. He joined Rochester Power Squadron in the early 1970’s, then transferred to Iroquois where he was the SEO and later was the SEO and Commander of Housatonic River Squadron in D2, the SEO for Red Jacket squadron and is now once again a member of Iroquois. He is a SN and has taught a number of advanced and elective courses and is certified to teach the NYS Safe Boating Course. He is a past Commodore of Pultneyville Yacht Club and he and his wife, Sherry, have four children and seven grandchildren and live in Penn Yan, NY.
Venezuelan Navy Patrol Ship Sinks After collision with Cruise Ship

*The Maritime Executive*

This article originally appeared on *The Maritime Executive* web site on April 1st, 2020 (no, it’s not a joke), and is reprinted here with permission.

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While the *Resolute* was consulting with the home office, the Venezuelan Navy vessel allegedly fired shots and then purposely collided with the *Resolute’s* starboard side. The ramming was repeated, the firm said, until the Venezuelan vessel encountered *Resolute’s* hardened bulbous bow and sustained severe damage. *Resolute* did not suffer any harm affecting her seaworthiness, and after contacting maritime rescue authorities in Curacao, she waited on scene for one hour, her operator said. After MRCC Curacao released her from the scene, she got under way for Willemstad.

Images taken from the pier in Curacao show that the damage to *Resolute* appears relatively minor.

The government of Venezuela identified the lost vessel as the 1,500 tonne, 80-meter patrol ship *Naiguata*, and it has accused *Resolute* of improperly departing the scene after the casualty. "The action of the ship *Resolute* is considered cowardly and criminal, since it did not attend to the rescue of the crew, in breach of the international regulations that regulate the rescue of life at sea," the statement reads.

In a second statement attributed to Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro, the government in Caracas alleged that the *Resolute* collided with the *Naiguata* in an "act of aggression and piracy." Further, the government speculated that it could not rule out that *Resolute* "was transporting mercenaries to attack military bases in Venezuela, unloading them out there on the high seas."

Venezuela faces a strict sanctions regime imposed by the U.S. and allied nations. The United States contends that Maduro is not the country’s legitimate rule, and it has effectively blocked a large fraction of Venezuela’s oil exports. The nation’s petroleum-dependent economy has largely collapsed, and millions of Venezuelan citizens have fled to neighboring countries.

[Moral of the story: Don’t mess with an ice-class cruise ship! -Ed.]
Special thanks to Tony Munoz of The Maritime Executive (www.maritime-executive.com) for granting permission to re-print this article.

Photo 18: Damage as posted to website FleetMon.com.

Smiles While Sequestering

Just in case 2020 isn’t messed up enough already…, yes, that is a road-runner in his mouth…
Lynne and I just returned from Cape Coral where we bareboat chartered a 40-foot Leopard Catamaran from Southwest Florida Yachts (SWFY) for a several day cruise from the town of Cape Coral, past Sanibel, Captiva and up to Cayo Costa Island and Useppa Island.

We stayed on the dock in the Tarpon Point Marina the first night while we got acclimated to the boat. Around 8:30AM the next morning, Mark, the Captain from Southwest Florida Yachts, gave us the detailed boat briefing. We learned specifics of the systems (engine controls, sail control lines, shore power, generator power, dingy/engine/davit controls, anchor chain/windlass and bridle, plumbing/heads, freshwater system and boat lighting. It’s a lot to absorb if you haven’t done it before. With Mark on board, we coiled up the two power cables and cast off the dock. Mark had me take the boat over to the fuel dock while doing a short briefing on the twin engine controls. At slow speed, you just leave the rudders in the neutral position and steer with the two engine controls. There was no wind in the harbor that morning, so all went well. This boat can turn around in its’s own length with one engine forward and the other in reverse.

Mark offered to take us on an additional check ride, but we agreed I had the technique down, so we thanked him and headed out the channel. We motored all the way to our first night’s anchorage since we were able to use the jib on just one heading.

Note to self and anyone reading this: With a 5 foot draft you cannot leave the Inter Coastal Waterway channel in SW Florida! You will run aground. And even if you stay in the channel, you can still run aground, so watch the depth sounder like a hawk.

We had to go underneath a well-marked power cable across the ICW to Sanibel. That kept my attention but caused no issue as we checked and re-checked the chart and our air draft. We anchored in Pelican Bay in about 8 feet of water for the night and had no issues with the spot.

Our four guests took the dingy into shore and walked across Cayo Costa to the beautiful beach on the Gulf side. Other boats filtered in one by one picking an anchorage until just before dark. The next morning, after a big breakfast, we headed out Boca Grand Pass and set the sails in the Gulf in 10 to 12 knots of wind. It was just enough to get the big cat moving nicely.
While in the ICW we saw dolphins and a sea turtle. We had a Great Blue Heron step right up on the stern platform of the boat one night.

We also stayed on the dock at Useppa Island which is a unique private Island off Fort Myers/Sanibel area. The SWFY company are members of the Island Marina there and made the reservation for us.

We rented a four-person golf cart to drive around the island and enjoyed seeing the views, houses, boats and the restored Collier
Inn. We had a great dinner and drinks at the Collier Inn that night.

The whole area is famous for tarpon fishing and we saw the classic photos of the record tarpon taken over the years. Useppa Island also has a fleet of true Cat Boats which reminded me of days in Cape Cod, MA sailing those broad beamy boats with the mast stepped in the bow.

Photo 25: Classic cat boat.

Our weather was perfect each day until the last day when we got chased back to the Tarpon Point Marina in 20-25 knot winds and a 20-degree temperature drop to low 60’s. Returning to the dock turned out to be no issue even with the wind. We turned the boat back over to Mark and cleared out all our gear late that afternoon.

Great trip!
- Jim

Photo 26: The crew of SV Endless Summer.

Photo 27: 40-foot Leopard catamaran, SV Endless Summer.

Photo 28: SV Endless Summer at the dock.
Preparing for the “Big One”

By Tom Alley

Whether we admit to it or not, we all have our “bucket list” – goals we aspire to before our allotted time in this life runs out. For some this is a formal list. For others, perhaps it’s just a desire to experience something before we no longer can.

I readily confess to the degree of vanity it takes to having a somewhat-formal bucket list. It’s formal because it is very well defined. It’s informal because it’s not written down anywhere, but that’s because there’s only a single item on it at the moment.

I want to skipper my own boat on a bona-fide ocean voyage, go someplace relatively “exotic”, come back home, and do it using celestial navigation.

OK, I admit that’s a bit nerdish, but hey, I’ve been teaching this stuff for over two decades and I’d like to be able to say that I’ve actually used it not just when it counts but to have used it successfully.

About three years ago a venue for this goal presented itself. I was flipping through an issue of Ocean Navigator magazine and came across a short story about a 32-foot sailboat that had just won the celestial division of the 2017 Marion to Bermuda Race. Looking at the boat, she appeared very similar to mine. “Why can’t I do that?” was the question that immediately came to mind.

Not long after that, I was having a few beers with my crew (What could possibly go wrong in this scenario?) and I shared the article with them. By the time the gathering was over (and the beer consumed), the decision had been made to pursue this goal.

Research Phase

The next few weeks were spent surfing the Internet and collecting as much information about the race as I could find. The prerequisites were a bit daunting, but not impossible. I learned that the race had a formal mentoring program for first-time sailors interested in competing in the race. After a few more weeks of research and some emails to race organizers, I was paired up with my mentor and he started to provide me with hints and advice on how to prepare for the race in 2021.

Eventually, I reduced everything to a checklist with items that had to be purchased, capabilities that had to be present on my boat, and skills or training that was required for myself and my crew. It was frightening, because the list, typewritten, was eight pages long!

As the saying goes, a trip of 1,000 miles (or about 2,400 nm in this case) begins with a single step. I got to work. The logistics alone make prior trips seem like child’s play!

Prepping – The Sailor’s Way

The boat projects started. Everything had to be “hardened” to withstand the rigors of the open ocean. Hatches, doors, and access panels throughout the boat had to be able to be secured so they would not open, whether the boat was upright or inverted. Lockers needed to be configured such that their contents would remain contained. Boat systems had to be reviewed and, where appropriate, upgraded to improve their reliability and robustness.

Boats, it is rightly said, are a conglomeration of compromises. This became obvious from the outset. Having an unlimited budget would probably have made many of the decisions much easier. However, writing monthly tuition checks for two children introduced another level of complexity to the undertaking.

Along the way the boat’s entire plumbing system was replaced. After that, the electrical system received its own overhaul. (You read about...
**Cruise Planning – The Ultimate Test**

For those of you who have taken the Cruising and Cruise Planning (CCP) course, you probably remember some of the exercises you were asked to do. I can say with confidence, however, that anything you had to do for that class is nothing compared to figuring out the logistics for this trip.

While the trip from Marion, Massachusetts to Bermuda is relatively straightforward, getting there (and back) is not, especially when you’re starting from a place like Watkins Glen, New York. In fact, the trip from Watkins Glen to Marion (~580 nm) is almost as far as Marion to Bermuda (645 nm).

For starters, one will have to traverse the Erie Canal. While the navigation is simple, the logistics are not. The canals are not open year-round and, when they are, they are only navigable during the day. Navigation aids are not lighted and many of the locks only operate during regular business hours. In addition, the canals can be closed by adverse weather – specifically excessive rainfall – as has happened multiple times in the past five years.

With the race beginning in mid-June, our boat needs to be in Marion by Memorial Day (end of May), meaning we would have to leave Watkins Glen at least a week earlier. Since the canals do not open before mid-May (in years when the weather cooperates), that doesn’t leave a lot of leeway for things to go wrong. This means we actually have to move the boat the preceding fall to some point beyond the canals. Well, now we need to find a place to haul out and store for an upstate New York winter!

You see how simple things get complicated in a hurry?

From the Hudson River to Buzzards Bay also promises to be interesting. We’ll be seeing places like Hell’s Gate, The Race, Long Island Sound, and get the full experience of dealing with a fair amount of commercial traffic, weather, and some challenging tides.

What probably made me say “Wow!” the most was that, upon finishing the race in Bermuda, we’ll just be halfway through our trip. Everything we will have done up to that point will have to be repeated.

That’s just the trip. There’s also a crew, which means they will bring clothes (for warm weather in Bermuda and cold weather in Buzzard’s Bay) and will need food and drink to be
sustained. Let’s see, do we store the canned vegetables with the spare alternator or with the toilet paper? Suddenly, a 35-foot sailboat starts to feel really, really small!

Anticipating the Race Itself

The race will pose its own challenges. First, it will be an open-water voyage and we’ll be on our own and left to our own resources. What if...? What if...? All scenarios need to be considered and, where possible, anticipated.

While celestial navigation will be the advertised focus of the race, there will be a fair amount of piloting involved, too. Not only will we be dealing with tides, we’ll be crossing the Gulf Stream, which has its own reputation for proving to be difficult at times. Aside from the squalls caused by the warmer water hitting cooler air, there is the current itself which could either help or hinder to the tune of up to 4 knots. Plus, the Stream moves around... And there are eddies...

No pressure, right?

Some Final Musings

As I write this, I’m just a little less than 50 days away from launching and there are still a number of things left to do to prepare the boat. After that, it will be cosmetic work only as we begin to test systems, tune and optimize all of the new equipment as we build familiarity with it, and focus on some creature comforts to make life more comfortable and fun. After all, the race will be just 25% of this entire voyage.

Early on in this process, my mentor told me that “two thirds of the race is just getting to the starting line.”

I think he was being optimistic.

So, stay tuned and follow the adventures of the sloop Tomfoolery, and her crew. With luck and good fortune, we will be at the starting line a little over 13 months from now.

- Tom

Tom and his family sail a 1965 Alberg 35 sloop, Tomfoolery, and are active racers and cruisers with the Finger Lakes Yacht Club in Watkins Glen, NY. Tom is also a USPS member since the late ’80s when he got serious about sailing and having fun on the water. He has been an Education Officer at Squadron and District levels for longer than he cares to remember. (c. 1995?) He also manages the Alberg 35 User Group web site (http://www.Alberg35.org). When he’s not sailing, thinking about sailing, or tinkering with his boat, Tom is either scuba diving, hanging out with fellow amateur radio operators, or (as a last resort) working as an engineer to support his sailing addiction and, if there’s any money left over, send his kids to college.

Smiles While Sequestering

I lost another audio book. I’ll never hear the end of it.
Interesting(?) Times

As I write this, residents of New York State have just finished the second week of the Governor’s NYS on PAUSE (Policies Assure Uniform Safety for Everyone) directive in order to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus. In the past month, we’ve seen the world change in ways none of us imaged as we were ringing in the New Year. It certainly brings to mind the saying:

May you live in interesting times.

Some of you might be thinking of the ironic coincidence that this curse and the current pandemic both seem to have originated in China. Unfortunately, this is an erroneous association. As your Editor, I must point out that a Chinese source to the saying above has never been found. Instead, the earliest reference to this saying is attributed to a paraphrasing of a letter from Joseph Chamberlain, the British Ambassador to China, in the late 19th Century.

Social Distancing

George Carlin had a fairly famous comedy routine on euphemisms. Were he still alive today I’m sure we would be hearing from him about terms like “social distancing”. I can imagine him going on, in his linguistically colorful manner, on how we’ve spent thousands of years to develop forms of government to get us to socialize in a generally nonviolent manner, only to have these same governments order us back to blatantly anti-social behavior in a matter of weeks following the appearance of a particulary virulent disease. Could it be that governments fear for their job security?

On a more serious note, I’m grateful that we have some wonderful technology to help make being alone less lonely. FaceTime, video teleconferenceing, social media, virtual-this and remote-that. Wonderful tools, yes, but only if you know how to use them. I hope you are able to take advantage of the current situation to learn more about them. Make lemonade from these lemons! Grow your skills! Most importantly, keep in touch with one another!

On Leadership

While many are content to wait for leadership to tell them what to do, it’s a poor model (in my opinion) for an organization to follow. Now, keep in mind that I’ve never been recognized for accomplishments as a “leader”, so my opinions might not carry much weight or authority, but since this is my column, I’ll blurt them out anyway.

In a prior issue of this newsletter, I opined about leadership and hierarchies and different ways that organizations can be managed (top down, bottom up, or both). Another analogy came to mind as I was putting this issue together, and that is of a ship.

Consider, if you will, that even on a ship the captain rarely takes the helm. Nor does the captain pull on the oars, trim the sails, or stoke the boilers. Rather, it’s the lowly crew that do these things, and often, it’s not just one crew member, but a team of them, composed of individuals having different skill sets and abilities, all of which complement each other to form a team capable of doing amazing things when they work together.

The moral of this story? Don’t be afraid to help steer, or row, or trim, or stoke fires. It doesn’t matter if you are an officer, committee chair, or even “just a member”. We need all of you to help pilot our ship (the USPS) to less troublesome seas!

- Your Editor, Tom

The editor has, once again, opened his big mouth. Please e-mail your comments to:

theDeep6@uspsd6.org
### District Calendar

#### 2020

**May**
- 1  Spring 2018 issue of *The Deep 6* publication date (D6)
- 16-22  Safe Boating Week

**June**
*No events currently scheduled.*

**July**
- 17  Deadline for *The Deep 6* articles. (D6)

**August**
- 1  Summer issue of *The Deep 6* publication date. *Theme: Back to School.* (D6)

**September**
- 8-13  National Governing Board, *Rahleigh, NC* (National)

**October**
- 16  Deadline for *The Deep 6* articles (D6)

**November**
- 11  Deadline for *The Deep 6* news updates from Council/Conference meetings.
- 13-15  District 6 Fall Council & Conference, *Corning, NY.* (D6)

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<td>Fall issue of <em>The Deep 6</em> publication date. (D6)</td>
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**December**
*No events currently scheduled.*

#### 2021

**January**
- 15  Deadline for *The Deep 6* articles. (D6)

**February**
- 1  Winter issue of *The Deep 6* publication date. (D6)
- 14-21  Annual Meeting, *Ponte Vedra, FL.* (National)

**March**
- TBA  D/6 Spring Council & Conference. (D6)

**April**
- 16  Deadline for *The Deep 6* articles (D6)

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Do you have an event that you think others should know about? Please let me know so that it can be included!

– Ed. ([TheDeep6@uspsd6.org](mailto:TheDeep6@uspsd6.org))