

Penobscot Bay Sail and Power Squadron

A Unit of the United States Power Squadrons



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Now Hear This!

October 2011

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Executive Committee meets the second Wednesday of each month ALL are welcome!!
Check our website, www.pbsps.org for the time, location, and updates.



Commander's Corner

Autumn is here. Those of us who are returning to a regular work schedule, or are mostly warm-weather boaters, are making plans for the seasonal haul and decommissioning chores. Maine Maritime Academy's flagship the State of Maine is back in port and the Academy's sail training fleet is on the floats. Images of sunsets over schooners in Buck's Harbor are fading



PBSPS 2010-2011 Bridge

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I spent 24 September in Alfred, Maine, at the Fall Council Meeting of USPS District 19, swapping stories with representatives of the District's other nine squadrons (Amoskeag, Aroostook, Kennebec River, Lakes Region, MidCoast, Portland Head, Portsmouth, Wawenock, and Winooski), from Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. District 19's Fall Conference will be held 4-6 November at the Holiday Inn in Concord, NH, hosted by Amoskeag. All are welcome, and the registration is available on the District web site (www.usps.org/d19/).

I would like to urge you all to become acquainted with the web sites that are available to provide you with information about programs, activities, and policies at all levels of United States Power Squadrons. I certainly hope that you are all familiar with our own web site (www.pbsps.org) and that you visit it regularly to keep track of upcoming courses and programs offered by the Squadron. The site also provides information on our monthly Executive Committee meetings, which are always open to the membership.

The USPS web site (www.usps.org) provides a tremendous amount of information that you will find useful. Some of it is available to the general public, but some of the more interesting stuff is available only to members. When you first visit the site, you will see tabs entitled "Site Index" and "How do I..." The Site Index lists everything that is available on the site, but the "How do I..." provides answers to a particularly useful set of questions, such as, "How do I find out about member benefits?", "How do I obtain a Maritime Mobile Service Identity?", and "How do I become a certified boat operator?"

Be sure to check out another great resource, the USPS Monthly Broadcast, which provides information on all sorts of USPS activities and changes.

www.usps.org/newpublic2/broadcast.html At this site, you can sign up for a regular e-mail of this broadcast by providing your name, e-mail address,

and certificate number. You can also sign up on the same electronic form for electronic delivery of the USPS Compass and the Ensign iMag.

This is just a small sample of the great deal of information that is available from the Squadron, District, and USPS National to help you keep up with USPS activities and to find very helpful boating advice.

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find information on upcoming Squadron courses, the dates for the Squadron Christmas party and Founders Day celebration, pictures from our summer rendezvous.

As always, I urge you to contact me, Squadron Education Officer Scott Miller, Party Chair Judy Crone, Boating Activities Chair Rob Crone, or any other Squadron leader to voice your recommendations for courses, activities, or anything else you can think of to help make your Squadron thrive and meet your interests. It is also not too early for anyone interested in becoming more active in Squadron leadership to let me know how you would like to participate. (A list of all elected and appointed officers may be found by clicking "Bridge" on the Squadron web site.)

Dave



Upcoming Events:

Ahoy All!

At this point in time I have two parties scheduled.

The first is our annual **Christmas Party**. It will be held on December 10, 2011 at the Sea Dog Restaurant in Bangor. The social hour will begin at 1800 and dinner will start at 1900. A speaker has yet to be chosen. An invitation will be sent out with more information.

The second party is our annual Founders Day Dinner. It will be held on February 4, 2012 at the Sea Dog Restaurant. The social hour will begin at 1800 and dinner will start at 1900. A speaker had yet to be chosen for this event also.

The date for our Change of Watch is to be determined.

Respectfully Submitted,
P/D/Lt/C Judith M. Crone, JN



Education Events

Enhance Your Skills: Education Opportunities

As the 2011 boating season comes to a close, it's time to consider how we're going to be ready for 2012. What better way than to spend a few hours this winter enhancing our boating knowledge and skills?

The US Power Squadrons offers a wide variety of courses and seminars, ranging from fundamental knowledge of seamanship, piloting and navigation (the courses resulting in advanced "grades") to the practical skills associated with trailering, anchoring, boat handling, sailing, etc. In addition, there are a variety of elective courses to enhance knowledge of a particular aspect of boating, such as marine electronics, diesel engine maintenance, weather, etc.

Across a cycle of a few years, it is our objective to offer all of these courses, seminars and electives for which there is adequate demand.

Winter/Spring Course Offerings

This year, we're going to go "back to basics" and offer the first two of the Power Squadron's five Advanced Grade courses—Seamanship and Piloting.

Seamanship

The eight-week Seamanship course builds on the skills and knowledge introduced in the Power Squadron's public America's Boating Course. It covers basic marlinspike (knots, hitches and line handling), navigation rules, the responsibilities of the skipper, basic boat care and maintenance and what to do in various emergencies and conditions, among other topics. It provides a foundation for both more advanced navigational courses and is designed to provide a rapid introduction to being a competent boater as either skipper or crew. This course is highly recommended for all new members and recent ABC graduates.

Our plan is to offer the course on Tuesday evenings from 6pm to 8pm beginning November 8, 2011 and will continue for eight weeks. (We'll decide at the first class whether to skip one or two weeks around the holidays and push into early January 2012. And there will be an opportunity for one or two additional sessions to allow students to catch up if they need to miss a class.) Location: either Ellsworth or Bangor, depending on class composition. As is PBSPS practice, the course instruction is offered for free; the only charges are a pass-through of any classroom rental costs (not more than \$10 per student) and for student materials (if needed): \$55.50 (includes USPS *Seamanship* student kit, a *One Minute Guide to the Nautical Rules of the Road* book and a knot practice board.

Piloting

Piloting is the second of the five USPS Advanced Grade courses and is the first course in the sequence of courses on navigation, covering the basics of coastal and inland navigation. This course focuses on navigation as it is done on recreational boats today and embraces GPS as a primary navigation tool while covering enough of traditional techniques so the student will be able to find his/her way even if their GPS fails. The course includes many in-class exercises, developing the student's skills through hands-on practice and learning. Ten classes of two hours each normally are scheduled for presentation of this course. In addition the students have seven days to complete the open book exam.

We plan to offer this course in the spring, starting the end of January and finishing by early April. As with the Seamanship course, the specific dates and location will be flexible depending on student demand. As is PBSPS practice, the course instruction is offered for free; the only charges are a pass-through of any classroom rental costs (not more than \$10 per student) and for student materials (if needed): \$37.50 (*Piloting* student kit) up to \$84.00 (*Piloting* student kit, *Weekend Navigator* book, course plotter, ultra-light dividers).

Questions?

Please call or email Scott Miller, Squadron Education Officer, with any questions or to sign up for one or both of these courses: (207-374-2003; scott@ustiger.net). Alternatively, you can locate our courses and sign up via the USPS web site: <http://www.usps.org/cgi-bin/nat/eddept/cfind.cgi>.

Vessel Safety Check (VSC) Report – October, 2011

The Vessel Safety Check program has had a great growing year. We have had two squadron members complete the Vessel Examiner training earlier this year. Both are in the process of completing their mentored vessel safety checks with current squadron vessel examiners. Once this is

accomplished, the new vessel examiner(s) can then begin to perform vessel safety checks on their own.

Currently, we have four (4) qualified vessel examiners. Three (3) VE's have completed their certification for 2012. Another VE is just one (1) VSC short of reaching her certification which should be completed soon. Once we certify the new VE's, the squadron will have a total of six (6) Vessel Examiners. With this increase in VE's we should see our VSC counts climb and reach a new high next year.

We just completed September and we are already ahead of 2010 total vessel safety check count. Last year we had a total of 48 vessel safety checks. So far this year, we are standing on 61 and still counting. We have until mid November to complete any vessel safety checks and get them submitted to National.

Good job everyone!

Respectfully submitted by
Lt. Arlan Martin, AP PBSPS VSC Chairman

Great Rendezvous – Wish You Were There

The Bucksport Bay Festival Rendezvous on July 26 was a very busy and interesting day. There were lots of activities going on at the Festival, including fireworks in the evening. Thanks to Larry Sherwood for hosting the barbeque and vantage point for fireworks viewing on his boat, *Sisu*.

Real drama at Fort Point

Our annual Fort Point rendezvous is always one to remember. It was a small group this year, but we all had a great time and great food. Again this year, the real adventure came with the wind.

The day started out with light rain and some fog, but the forecast was for clearing with a chance of showers. As the morning progressed, the weather began to clear.

Several of us were standing on the dock marveling at the way the fog was interacting with the sea. Larry Sherwood was taking some pictures when Howard and Elaine Towle come into view in "Madison's Trace". It was quite dramatic when they materialized out of the fog like a ghost.

People began arriving around 1100, and we congregated on around the Towle's boat. We even got in a couple of Vessel Safety Checks.



At noon we migrated up to the picnic area and had a great lunch and some super conversation.



Around 1300 we were all commenting on the developing Cumulonimbus clouds (Thunder Heads) that were forming to the north of us. General speculation was that the clouds were probably over Hampden and not an immediate threat to the picnic. The weather was otherwise spectacular.

Not much more thought was given to the weather until we heard a crack of thunder that was comically timed with a witty remark made by Judy Crone. At that point we decided that it would be a prudent to pack things up and head home.

When Howard and Elaine were shoving off, the wind was picking up a little, but did not seem unmanageable. It turns out looks can be deceiving. They sailed right into the jaws of a different storm in their McGregor 25. As soon as they passed Fort Point light, they ran into four foot seas and strong winds. They had a wild ride home to Stockton Harbor, but fortunately made it safely.

SAFETY LESSON LEARNED

I recently had a hard lesson about keeping handheld radios charged. I routinely listen to NOAA weather on my handheld. It had been many months since I last charged the unit. I assumed that because I got perfect reception, the battery was sufficient to operate the radio. However, when I went to use it at the Fort Point Rendezvous a couple of years ago, I found that it would not transmit, even though I could receive clearly. Howard Towle, who is an experienced HAM radio operator, explained to me that a radio takes significantly more power to transmit than to receive. It is scary to think what would have happened if I had been in trouble and needed the radio to get help. **Lesson learned – Keep your handheld radio charged or you may not have the power to transmit.**

P/C Rob Crone

Penobscot Bay Sail and Power Squadron

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Postmaster: Return Requested

Remember to Always Wear Your Lifejacket

Happy and SAFE Boating!!!

“Boating is fun... We'll show you how!”

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