

UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS

AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB



Mark 4



Official Publication of District 4 - A Unit of United States Power Squadrons



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Spring Is Here!

Can the 2024 boating season be far off?

In this Mark 4 issue, we share Past D/C Ted Wallace's farewell message to D/4. Ted was a strong leader and remains a good friend and supporter of the entire district's family of squadrons. We bid him a fond farewell although we know he won't be far away.

We share our new D/C Joe Velez's inaugural message to all D/4 members.

Looking back, we share photos from the D/4 Spring Conference, the District Memorial Service, and a St. Patrick's Day party hosted by Raritan Bay.

Wondering what to do for the upcoming National Safe Boating Week in May? Read the item on page 10 for an idea.

Don't miss the articles on the remaining pages. They contain fun and interesting info. You decide which is which.

We mourn the passing of P/C/C Ernest Marshburn. Ernie died much too soon and he will be remembered as a great friend to D/4. Rest in peace, Ernie.

As always, Mark 4 welcomes articles and other notifications of your events and activities. Please send them to :

D4Comm@uspsdistrict4.org

Feel free to contact me with questions and suggestions at: cjvarga@optimum.net or by phone at (732)673-1383.





**Welcome Your 2024-25
District 4
Leadership Team**



Please join us in congratulating our recently elected leadership team for the 2024-25 watch year. We wish them fair winds and smooth seas along with wisdom and perseverance throughout the year.

District Commander - Joseph A. Velez, AP

District Executive Officer - Scott Myers, P

District Educational Officer - Richard W. Mohrbutter, Jr., AP

District Administrative Officer - Mary E. Davis, AP

District Secretary - Mike J. Bodnar, P

District Treasurer - Chris L. Windeler, SN-ON

District Assistant Educational Officer - Gary Mandarano, SN

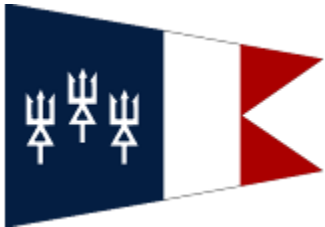
District Assistant Secretary - Csaba J. Varga, JN

District Assistant Treasurer - Marlene Oslick, AP

District Flag Lieutenant - Joseph F. Balbo, AP

District Chaplain - Joel C. Jones, Jr., SN

Jr. Past District Commander - Theodore O. Wallace, AP-IN



Farewell Message

P/D/C Ted Wallace, AP-IN

As my tour of duty as District Commander draws to a close, I find myself reflecting on the incredible journey we have shared over these past years. Serving as your leader has been both an honor and a privilege, one that I will cherish always.

Our boating organization is not just about navigating the waters; it is about building a community, fostering a spirit of camaraderie, and promoting safety and stewardship of our beloved waters. Together, we have achieved remarkable milestones and weathered challenges with resilience and unity.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to each and every one of you for your dedication, passion, and unwavering commitment to our mission. Whether you are a seasoned sailor or a novice enthusiast, your contributions have been invaluable in shaping our organization into what it is today.

I am immensely proud of all that we have accomplished together; from organizing successful rendezvous and educational workshops to promoting environmental conservation efforts and advocating for boating safety initiatives. Each of these endeavors has strengthened our bonds and enriched our experiences on the water.

As I step down from my role, I have full confidence in the capable hands of our incoming leadership team. I know that they will continue to uphold the values that define us and lead our organization to even greater heights.

Although my time as District Commander may be ending, my commitment to our boating community remains steadfast and I look forward to continuing to work alongside each of you in the future.

Thank you.

Cdr Ted

District Spring Conference

9 March 2024

Holiday Inn, Clark, N.J.

The District Spring Conference was held on March 9th at the Clark, NJ Holiday Inn. The attendees from across the district were joined by a contingent from our friends from District3. The agenda included a videotaped recording of Chief Commander Ralph Bernard's message. The C/C's representative Ruth Witztum took questions from the floor. Then attendees received an enlightening visual presentation by DEO Richard Mohrbutter of numerous boating mishaps that clearly demonstrated the urgent need and value of our organization's services. Attendees enjoyed a tasty multicourse buffet luncheon and had time to catch up with old friends and to make some new ones as well.

Following lunch, the annual election was held, presided over by R/C Witztum. That was followed immediately by change of watch ceremonies for both the new district officers and thereafter for several squadrons who were in attendance.

Always an important element of the Spring conference, awards were presented for both squadron and individual achievements. Photos of many of these awards are included on these pages. Outgoing D/C Ted Wallace offered a moving farewell speech. Incoming D/C Joe Velez offered a speech broadly outlining his vision for the district moving forward. Both speeches are included in this issue.



D/C Wallace says goodbye.



Joel Jones earns 50th merit mark.



Cdr Joe Velez accepts Life Member award for Russell Baker.



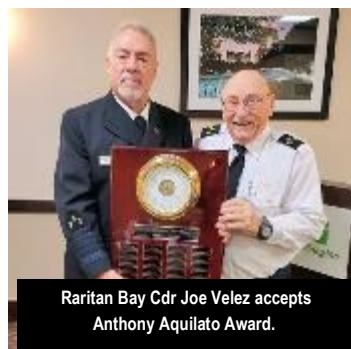
Cdr Mandarano accepts Life Member award for Jeff Taylor and 50-year membership award for John Clarke.



NY Cdr Scott Myers accepts 50-year membership award for Jack Prizzi.



City Island Cdr Barbara Mandarano accepts USPS Public Relations Award for producing safety video.



Raritan Bay Cdr Joe Velez accepts Anthony Aquilato Award.



Staten Island Cdr Don Heap accepts John Burns Safety Award.

More D/4 Spring Conference Photos

9 March 2024

Holiday Inn, Clark, N.J.



Raritan Bay SEO Joe Zindulis accepts Don Baker Memorial Exceptional Member Award.



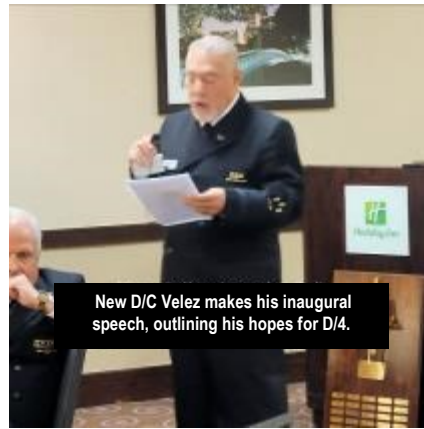
Cdr Joe Velez takes his pledge of office as new D/4 District Commander.



Our new D/C Joe Velez receives his D/C flag from newly minted P/D/C Ted Wallace.



New P/D/C Ted Wallace receives his well-earned P/D/C flag from D/C Velez.



New D/C Velez makes his inaugural speech, outlining his hopes for D/4.



Introducing our newest bridge officers, Admin Officer Mary Davis and Secretary Mike Bodnar.



Pictured are D/4 squadron officers in attendance who took their pledges of office. Best wishes to them all.



Eight of the ten D/4 Squadron Commanders who were in attendance.





District Commander's Message

Dear Fellow Members of District 4,

I am grateful to be able to address you as your new District Commander. It is truly an honor and a privilege.

At our recent district conference, we participated in a long-standing tradition in United States Power Squadrons: the change of watch of a new district commander. This is both a connection to our nation's largest non-profit boating organization and a new milestone in our district history.

We use those phrases lightly, but this is a big deal. Collectively, we make recreational boating better. We are more than your connection to the water. We are your source for unsurpassed education, community service, and access to an organization built by boaters for boaters. For more than a century, we've been steadfast in the belief that an educated boater is a better, safer boater. We've kept our promise to continue learning, teaching, laughing, and helping our fellow members enjoy all that boating offers.

We look forward to helping others build a lifetime of memories and we welcome all to a membership that delivers beyond boating.

We've come to understand that organizations operate by aligning resources, people, and processes to achieve goals and objectives. They establish procedures, hierarchies, and systems to facilitate communication, decision-making, and coordination among members.

That said, we will tackle action items with our new district council based on our commitment to directly broaden the breadth and sustainability of District 4 squadrons. The district council will work to elevate the expectations of District 4 squadrons and to assist with drawing up plans regarding several key areas. Those areas are:

- Squadron educational capabilities and offerings
- Squadron social life
- Community involvement and public service activities (boating-related and non-boating-related)
- Insuring the financial strength and continued viability of squadrons
- Marketing and public relations (USPS national assistance is available to District 4 squadrons)
- Developing and optimizing member acquisition, development, involvement and retention efforts.
- Finding ways to optimize the utilization of squadron's resources (financial, human).
- Recognition of achievement and gratitude.
- Leveraging USPS national programs and resources such as America's Boating Channel.
- Explain and support the squadron's job as a recruiter, which is only completed once the new member is involved.

These things matter! Let's get these things done.

National Safe Boating Week is May 18–24, 2024. It's a week to remind ourselves and boaters everywhere to prepare for the boating season and to offer and look for opportunities to improve their boating skills. We should seek to help raise awareness of our organization and contribute to recreational boating safety through ideas such as:

- Community-wide safe boating events at local marinas, including relevant demonstrations, recruiting and information booths;
- Kids' education on boating safety;
- Man Overboard rescue demonstrations;
- Firefighting demonstrations with the local fire departments, including flare and smoke demonstrations/practice.
- Increased availability and visibility of USPS Vessel Safety Check examiners.
- USPS Squadron Boating Courses and Seminars.

We have significant challenges and great opportunities. With your help, we will meet them and make this next year the best in our history! Let's get to work!

D/C Joe Velez

Forty-third Annual District Memorial Service St. Alban's Church in Staten Island 17 March 2024



More Photos from the District Memorial Service St. Alban's Church in Staten Island 17 March 2024



Raritan Bay Squadron Hosts St. Patrick's Day "After Party"



March 21, 2024



National Safe Boating Week

May 18-24, 2024



What does your squadron have planned for this year's National Safe Boating Week?

What do you personally have planned to raise awareness?

Do you like spending time on boats? Do you like to see what other people's boats look like and what the latest designs and equipment are? Would you like to share your knowledge of boating but do not want to stand in front of a class as an instructor? Would you like to help your fellow boaters enjoy a safe experience on their boat? You can do all of these and more if you become a Vessel Safety Examiner.

Raritan Bay Squadron's SEO and VSC program chairman Joe Zindulis offered this succinct description of the VSC program's processes and benefits.

"We go out around our local docks and offer Vessel Safety Exams at no charge to the boating public. The exam takes about 20 minutes, and we work off a checklist of safety equipment that everyone must have. We do not check the mechanical status/capability of boats (power, sail, and paddle). We look at required safety equipment and specific problems that might lead to hazardous experiences on the water. A boat that passes the Exam receives a decal that we place on the boat (informing enforcement authorities that the boat has passed a Vessel Safety Check)."

"In addition to visiting our local docks, we typically meet at Spray Beach Yacht Club (on Long Beach Island) every summer. SBYC has hundreds of boats, and we spend a day there as a group of Examiners. People literally come up to us asking for Vessel Safety Checks, and we frequently have a line of boaters waiting for us."

"In order to become a Vessel Safety Examiner, you must have completed our USPS Seamanship course and be certified in the US Coast Guard Vessel Safety Program. This is where I come in. I will work through the educational side of the program with you. We could do this over a few hours during a Saturday or Sunday. The next stage is to take the on-line exam. Following that, you must complete five Vessel Safety Exams working alongside a certified Examiner. Then you are on your own, but you can also spend the day with us in May or June at SBYC. The time to become a certified Examiner is now. If you complete the exam in April or Early May, you will have the summer ahead of you."

"My wife Phyllis and I have been Vessel Safety Examiners for over ten years. During this time, we have answered countless boating questions and helped many boaters enjoy a safe experience. Most everyone is thankful for our efforts. Our best exams are those that fail. We know we are really helping these boaters, and they know it also."

Editor's comment: I personally like the idea of assembling a team of examiners from across the district to conduct "VSC days" at multiple locations around the district. Think of the visibility and public awareness of our organization that could generate. If you would like to become an examiner or learn more, please contact either our D/4 VSC program chairman P/D/C Jim Ulrich at Ulrichjw2@aol.com or call at 718-966-7085. Or you can contact Joe Zindulis at 609-577-1814 (evenings and weekends) or via email at :

jzindulis@optonline.net.

You will be doing something very worthwhile for the boating public and having fun at the same time.

Based on an article by Lt/C Joe Zindulis (Raritan Bay) that appeared in Raritan Bay's Relative Bearings newsletter in March 2017.



**STATEN ISLAND POWER SQUADRON
ANNOUNCES OUR 2024 GROUP CRUISE
SEPTEMBER 22, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 29,
2024 FROM NEW YORK
ABOARD NORWEGIAN CRUISE LINE'S
"BREAKAWAY"
7-DAYS TO CANADA AND NEW ENGLAND**

**PORTS OF CALL: NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND – PORTLAND, MAINE -
BAR HARBOR, MAINE- SAINT JOHN, NEW FOUNDLAND & HALIFAX,
NOVA SCOTIA**

**OUR SPECIAL GROUP RATE: \$1362 PER PERSON BASED ON
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY**

FOR A CATEGORY BB BALCONY – OCEANVIEW STATEROOM

**RATE INCLUDES: ALL TAXES, OPEN BAR (BEER, WINE, SODA & COCKTAILS) –
2 NIGHTS DINING IN A SPECIALTY RESTAURANT- \$50 SHORE EXCURSION DIS-
COUNT PER ROOM- 150 MINUTES OF INTERNET PER PERSON**

NOT INCLUDED: GRATUITES AND OPTIONAL TRAVEL INSURANCE

\$125 PER PERSON REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT WILL RESERVE YOUR ROOM

BALANCE IS DUE: MAY 15

FOR NEW RESERVATIONS CALL SAL SCANNELLA AT

PRINCESS TRAVEL: 917 797 4959

TO CHECK AVAILABILITY AND PRICING

Climate Change is Affecting the Speed of the Earth's Rotation and Could Impact How We Keep Time, a Study Says.

Accelerating glacier melt from Greenland and Antarctica is adding extra water to the world's seas, redistributing its mass. That is very slightly slowing the Earth's rotation. But the planet is still spinning faster than it used to. The effect is that global timekeepers may need to subtract a second from our clocks later than would otherwise have been the case.

"Global warming is already affecting global timekeeping," says the study, published in the journal Nature.

Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) - which is used by most of the world to regulate clocks and time - is calculated by the Earth's rotation. But the Earth's rotation rate is not constant and can therefore have an effect on how long our days and nights are. Changes to the planet's liquid core have meant the Earth has been spinning slightly quicker.

Since the 1970s, to correct for this, about 27 leap seconds have been added to the global clock, with timekeepers planning on subtracting a second for the first time in 2026. This is known as a "negative leap second." However, the study finds that ice melt caused by climate change has partly offset that acceleration.

Ice sheets are now losing mass [five times faster than they were 30 years ago](#), meaning that the negative leap second change will not be needed until 2029, the study suggests. "It's kind of impressive, even to me, we've done something that measurably changes how fast the Earth rotates," Duncan Agnew, the author of the study, told NBC News. "Things are happening that are unprecedented."

The negative leap second has never been used before and, according to the study, its use "will pose an unprecedented problem" for computer systems across the world.

"This has never happened before, and poses a major challenge to making sure that all parts of the global timing infrastructure show the same time," Mr. Agnew, who is a researcher at the University of California, San Diego told AFP news agency. "Many computer programs for leap seconds assume they are all positive, so these would have to be rewritten," he added.

There has been some skepticism of the study, however. Demetrios Matsakis, former chief scientist for time services at the US Naval Observatory, told AFP that "Earth is too unpredictable to be sure" if a negative leap second would be needed any time soon.

Human activities like burning fossil fuels are causing world temperatures to rise. That temperature rise is having a huge effect on the environment, including the rapid melting of glaciers and ice sheets.

Source: WWW.BBC.COM, March 28, 2024; "Climate change is affecting the speed of the Earth's rotation and could impact how we keep time, a study says." © 2024 BBC - All Rights Reserved

They're Back and They're Worse Than Ever!

What To Do About Polyestermites?

Many years ago the entire boating industry and every boater learned about a then-new problem with fiberglass boats, namely osmotic blisters. A walk through a boatyard will reveal that the problem is still with us, but boatyards have learned to deal with this expensive problem. At last, a cure was found, and boat builders have developed resins and application methods that have substantially, although not completely, eliminated the problem in new boats.

And then several years ago the Environmental Protection Agency alerted boaters to a new and equally expensive problem with the gelcoat on fiberglass boats. Like the Zebra Mussels that first invaded the Great Lakes and killed off oysters and clams and completely fouled water intakes on boats, we were alerted to the problem of polyestermite. They were first noted in the Bahamas, and then a few were detected in Florida. It was assumed that they were transported to Florida by boats spending the winter in the Bahamas and then returning to Florida in the spring.

Now marine experts are reporting a resurgence of this damaging parasite. Like the Zebra Mussels, they are not native to U.S. waters, but with today's mobile society, critters in one part of the world are easily transported to another. If the environment is hostile the transported species soon die off. The EPA has been tracking the spread of Zebra Mussels for the past several years to see just how far the infestation will spread. There is not much they can do about them at this time, but ocean scientists are still searching for a method to control them.

Nothing has been written in the boating press at this point about Polyestermite. However, this spring their infestation was noted as far north as Rhode Island. Scientists had thought that Polyestermite could not survive in the colder northern waters, but the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection has now issued an alert for New Jersey boaters. An obscure article in the Federal Register has not received much attention by the press, but you can be certain that the pages of our boating magazines will soon carry large, bold headlines about this resurgent problem for boaters.

So what the heck are Polyestermite, and what is the problem? They are small barnacle-size snail-like creatures that attach themselves to bottoms of boats, pilings, and bulkheads. They seem to have an affinity for boats, however, because most are now made of fiberglass. Other than their slimy appearance, they do no damage to pilings and bulkheads. Fiberglass boats, however, are another matter. Polyestermite are not deterred by anti-fouling paints, and, in fact, they seem to thrive on them. They eat their way through bottom paint, and then have gelcoat for dessert. They seem to secrete a substance that dissolves gelcoat into a paste that is then consumed. What is left are areas about the size of a dime where the gelcoat is completely gone leaving the fiberglass and resin exposed to salt water. Interestingly, Polyestermite cannot survive in fresh water, but most of us operate our boats in salt water.

Once the gelcoat is consumed and the fiberglass and resin exposed to the water, the water begins to degrade the fiberglass resulting in expensive repair. Repair is similar to that for osmotic blisters. The gelcoat has to be taken down to the fiberglass, and several coats of special resin that these pests seem to abhor has to be applied, and the bottom then painted with anti-fouling paint. Whereas the anti-fouling paint itself still will be attacked by Polyestermite, they cannot penetrate into the fiberglass. And since most of us haul our boats during winter, other than pockmarks in the paint, no further damage is done.

The Federal EPA is preparing a twenty-page booklet fully explaining Polyestermite, and the procedure for their detection and repair of their damage. It also discusses preventive measures we can take to prevent their damage.

Whereas New Jersey is just now being invaded by Polyestermite, it is something with which we boaters will have to deal. The EPA says this booklet will be placed on its web site, but that probably will not occur until this summer. In the meantime, we can obtain copies from the EPA in Washington.

(Continued at top of page 14)



Editor's note: OK. OK. It's a fair point that by the time you read this Mark 4 issue, April 1st will be behind us. That's on me. Sorry. Yet, doesn't it make the April Fool prank a bit more "pranky" that it happened after the actual day?? Who'd have expected it late?

The forgoing article was first produced by Raritan Bay's late Donald E. Baker. Don had a great and wry sense of humor. He also had the gravitas to pull something like this off. When this was first published in Relative Bearings, word of the polyestermite plague spread far and wide to the extent that marine manufacturers and other authorities contacted Don to try to learn more about this previously unknown menace.

When it became understood that this was all a practical joke, Don had, in the words of Ricky Ricardo, "some 'splaining to do". If you're too young to know who Ricky Ricardo was, just google it. Better yet, just join the company of countless boaters who were pranked by a first-class great jokester, Don Baker. May he rest in peace.