

**AMERICA'S  
BOATING  
CLUB<sup>®</sup>**



**Grand Traverse Bay**

**For Boaters, By Boaters<sup>™</sup>**

# **Member Orientation Manual**



**GTBay Web Site**

**[www.gtbayboating.org](http://www.gtbayboating.org)**

**The Pledge of the United States Power Squadrons**

I do solemnly pledge to:

Abide by the bylaws of the United States Power Squadrons;

Promote high standards of navigation and seamanship;

Maintain my boat and operate it legally;

Render assistance whenever possible; and

Conduct myself in a manner that will add prestige, honor,

and respect to the United States Power Squadrons

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## **WELCOME**

The American's Boating Club – Grand Traverse Bay welcomes all boating enthusiasts of the Grand Traverse Bay area and their families to our boating club. As a member of our organization, we hope that you and your family members will further your boating skills, meet new boating friends and enhance your boating experience. GTBay Boating Club will help you fulfill these objectives. This manual provides an overview of the club and the opportunities it provides to its members.

## **WHO WE ARE**

The United States Power Squadron - America's Boating Club is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to making boating safer and more enjoyable by teaching classes in seamanship, navigation and related subjects.

## **A BRIEF HISTORY**

Before 1900, most recreational boats were sail-powered; everything relating to recreational boating was geared to sailing. Shortly after the turn of the century, gasoline-powered craft became available, many boaters bought them and power boating became a popular activity. Since skills and education were all directed to sailing at that time, power boaters found themselves with a skill and knowledge gap.

In 1912, that gap in power boating education was addressed by forming an unofficial Power Boat Division of the Boston Yacht Club. That division became known as "The Power Squadron". The Power Squadron received considerable media attention and, during 1913, over 70 power-boat clubs and owners' associations met at the New York Yacht Club. This group officially formed the "United States Power Squadrons" and, desiring some unique identification, designed the USPS ensign including a fouled anchor, encircled by 13 stars on a red field with 13 vertical, blue and white stripes, as shown here.



Starting as a club-within-a-club at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the USPS has become the largest private, fraternal, self-supporting, non-profit, non-governmental, and non-military organization of power boaters and sail boaters in the world.

Our educational courses have been continuously developed, improved, and expanded since USPS' early days so they remain current and up-to-date. Each of those courses is available for you to take when and where you choose with members of your own squadron, members of other squadrons, or independently.

A complete history of the United States Power Squadron-America's Boating Club can be found on the National Headquarters website at [www.usps.org](http://www.usps.org).

## **GENERAL ORGANIZATION**

United States Power Squadrons -America's Boating Club national headquarters is located in Raleigh N.C. The national organization is subdivided into 35 separate districts encompassing all 50 states plus a number of international locations. Our America's Boating Club - Grand Traverse Bay is part of District 9 headquartered in Detroit, Michigan. District 9 is comprised of 17 local squadrons, 16 of which are located in the Lower Peninsula of Michigan and 1 squadron in northern Indiana. District membership is about 1,124.

## **HISTORY OF GRAND TRAVERSE BAY**

Through the efforts of Wallace Willman and Ken Marnett, the Grand Traverse Bay Power Squadron was formed with the organization's charter signed by USPS Chief Commander Charles F. Chapman June 9, 1947.

Our Squadron pennant indicates, on the blue field, "GTB" which stands for Grand Traverse Bay. The "IX" which separates "GTB" is the Roman numeral 9 which is our District. On the red field the "45N" stands for Latitude 45 degrees North which crosses the center of Grand Traverse Bay. The gold edge was added when we reached our 50th anniversary.



In 2017 USPS made a name change from United States Power Squadron to America's Boating Club and suggested all squadrons change their names in recognition of the changing times and the needs of the modern boater. Grand Traverse Bay Sail and Power Squadron made the change and is now America's Boating Club – Grand Traverse Bay ([www.gtboating.org](http://www.gtboating.org)).

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

**Promote recreational boating safety through education and civic activities while providing fellowship for our members.**

## **HOW OUR SQUADRON IS ORGANIZED**

The Executive Committee is composed of all elected officers (Commander, Executive Officer, Education Officer, Administrative Officer, Secretary and Treasurer, collectively known as the "Bridge") plus three Members-at-Large. All positions are for one year.

The Executive Committee is responsible for the planning and execution of all member activities, education courses, internal and external communications and for the financial stability of the squadron.

The Executive Committee meets monthly with the exception of the summer months of July and August. Meeting dates and locations are posted on the web site. Meetings are open with all members invited.

**The Commander** presides over all membership and executive committee meetings and is responsible for the overall functioning of the Squadron and the management and direction of the Bridge Officers. The Commander is the chief liaison between the Squadron and the District.

**The Executive Officer** is second in command and performs the Commander's duties when the Commander is unavailable. The Executive Officer is responsible for all external functions of the squadron including public relations, cooperative charting, boat show booths, legislation of interest to the members, radio technical information and safety issues.

**The Squadron Education Officer** is responsible for the supervision of all courses, seminars and programs offered. Training courses may be for members only or may include the public. The SEO is responsible for the ordering of course materials, the recording and submission of test results and participant grades. The SEO maintains liaison with partnering educational organizations and institutions.

**The Administrative Officer** is responsible for all internal functions of the squadron to include recruiting and retaining members, informing members of squadron activities, arranging of member meetings, programs and entertainment, and setting up cruises.

**The Secretary** records and keeps minutes of all meetings and safeguards squadron legal documents. The secretary is also responsible for membership records, the member roster and publishing the squadron news letter (The 45<sup>th</sup> Parallel).

**The Treasurer** manages all financial transactions of the Squadron and maintains all banking relationships.

**Members at Large** add independent balance and input to the Bridge officers on the functioning and activities of the squadron. This position serves as a good introduction to the officer positions and allows for observation and participation in the internal functioning of the squadron.

## **GTBay ACTIVITIES**

Throughout the year, the activity calendar of GTBay is geared to involve our members and their families in a variety of social, public service and joint boating activities. Participation is always open to members and participation is elective. Dates, times and locations are available on the GTBay website ([www.gtbayboating.org](http://www.gtbayboating.org)).

**Monthly Dinner Meetings** are held on the first Thursday of each month with the exception of the summer months of July and August. All members and their families are welcome to enjoy a good meal, a guest speaker, good fellowship and a short business meeting. Meetings are held at The Elks Club of Traverse City with a 6:00 PM social hour and 7:00 PM dinner followed by a program and meeting.

**Monthly Executive Meetings** are open to all members. Meetings are held the third Wednesday of the month at 6:00 PM normally at The Cottage restaurant in Traverse City. The time and location are posted on the GTBay website.

**Monthly Lunch with the Commander** is an informal and unofficial gathering of members for lunch and conversation at 12:00 PM held on the second Thursday of the month at a local restaurant in Traverse City (The Cottage). All are welcome. Both the time and place are usually set but are posted on the GTBay website.

**Boating Education Course Training** Central to the mission of America's Boating Club is the sharing of knowledge with the aim of making the boating experience a safe and enjoyable recreational activity. Training courses can range from multi-week formal classroom instruction held at the Great Lakes Maritime Academy to informal one hour mini-seminar presentations discussing timely boating topics held at local Traverse City venues. All are open to both members and the public. Advanced registration is required.

**Vessel Inspection Program.** The Vessel Safety Check Program is an effective proactive preventative safety program unique to the recreational boating community. It insures that key marine safety equipment is present, is within prescribed functional limits, and is compliant with Federal, State, and local regulations. It provides the examiner an opportunity to discuss with the recreational boater the purpose of the marine safety equipment, to clarify various Federal, State, and local regulations, to emphasize specific safety procedures and practices, to answer any boating related questions and to encourage additional boater education.

**Boating/Social Activities.** During the summer months the boating season comes alive in Traverse City and GTBay schedules various group boating cruises of varying duration and destination. These include the Shakedown Cruise, The eQuality Cruise, The Bay Cruise with the Island Picnic, and The August Rendezvous Lobster Bake plus other short cruises and social gatherings throughout the summer. For many events, a boat is not necessary and all are welcome to join in the festivities and fun. See the GTBay Website for schedules and destinations.

## **MEMBER BENEFITS**

As an America's Boating Club member you can enjoy select discounts on an array of boating products and services, insurance; car rental, lodging and much more. For a complete list and description of these programs access the national website at [www.usps.org](http://www.usps.org).

## **BOAT/U.S. AFFILIATION—GROUP #GA80205P**

Grand Traverse Bay Power Squadron members who are members of BOAT/U.S. pay annual dues to BOAT/U.S. at half the regular rate because of an agreement between the two organizations. When you get your BOAT/U.S. dues notice, put your group number GA80205P on the return card and pay only half of the annual dues.

## **SQUADRON ROSTER**

The Squadron Roster is sent to all GTBay members as a PDF file and is updated during the year. It contains the name, grade, address, name of spouse, phone number, and boat information for each member.

Use of the Roster for other than Squadron business or personal use is strictly prohibited. Any abuse of this policy should be called to the attention of the Squadron Commander as soon as possible.

Member information is maintained by the Roster Chair Jerry Williams, AP, and is updated as changes in member status are brought to his attention. Members should send changes in phone number, address, e-mail and boat information to the Roster Chair, [1970jwilliams@gmail.com](mailto:1970jwilliams@gmail.com).

## **Education**

For more than 100 years, United States Power Squadrons – American's Boating Club – has been leading the way on the importance of boater safety education, and as any one of our members will tell you, an educated boater is a better, safe boater. A brief listing of the boating courses available to you are listed below.

In the GTBay roster you will see the letters (S, P, AP, JN, etc.) listed after a member's name, this represents the courses the member has completed.

**America's Boating Course** provides you with basic boating knowledge to decide what type and size boat you need, what to do when meeting another boat in a crowded waterway, and how to recognize and handle hazards. Become a more competent boater, learn from the best, and enroll in America's Boating Course today. This course is offered as a classroom course. Successful completion meets the Michigan boating education requirements for an operator permit. Many boat insurance companies will offer discounts on boating insurance to boaters who successfully complete America's Boating Course. And, this course provides a sound basis for continuing your recreational boating education.

## **Advanced Courses**

Five Advanced courses are offered by USPS. They are designed to be taken in sequence because each builds on skills taught in the previous course.

### **Boat Handling (S)**

Building on the basics taught in the public boating course, Seamanship is the recommended first course for both power boaters and sailors. Students learn practical marlinespike, navigation rules, hull design and performance, responsibilities of the skipper, boat care, operating a boat under normal and abnormal conditions, what to do in various emergencies and weather conditions, nautical customs and common courtesy on the water.

## **Marine Navigation (P)**

Piloting is the first of the advanced navigational classes focusing on techniques for piloting a boat in coastal and inland conditions. The course emphasizes planning and checking along with the use of GPS for determining position, and introduces digital charting along with traditional charting, compass and dead reckoning skills. Plotting, labeling, use of the compass, aids to navigation and a host of related topics are included in this all-new approach to coastal and inland piloting.

## **Advanced Marine Navigation (AP)**

Advanced Piloting is the final part of the inland and coastal navigation series. This material continues to build on the base developed in Piloting, and includes practical use of additional electronic navigation systems and other advanced techniques for finding position. Among topics covered are: finding position using bearings and angles, collision avoidance using GPS and RADAR, what to do when the electronics fail, tides, currents and wind and their effect on piloting, and electronic navigation with GPS, chart plotters, RADAR, autopilots, etc. Application of course lectures takes place through practical in-class and at-home exercises.

## **Offshore Navigation (JN)**

Junior Navigation is the first of a two-part program of study in offshore (open coast) navigation. It is designed as a practical, how-to course using GPS for offshore navigation with sun sight taking using a sextant as a backup technique. The more advanced techniques for other celestial bodies and sights are for study in the subsequent Navigation Course. JN subject matter includes: basic concepts of celestial navigation; how to use the mariner's sextant to take sights of the sun; the importance and techniques of accurate time determination; use of the Nautical Almanac; how to reduce sights to establish lines of position (LOPs); and the use of GPS, special charts, plotting sheets and other navigational data for offshore positioning and passage planning.

## **Celestial Navigation (N)**

This is the second part of the study of offshore navigation. It further develops the student's skills and understanding of celestial theory. The student is introduced to additional sight reduction techniques for bodies other than the sun. The student develops greater skill and precision in sight taking, positioning and the orderly methods of carrying on the day's work of a navigator at sea. Of particular interest and importance is the navigation software that is explained and used in practices for planning and navigating in the offshore environment with the included software. Offshore navigation using minimal data and/or equipment, such as when on a disabled vessel or lifeboat is also studied.

## **Elective Courses**

Eight Elective Courses are offered by USPS. They cover separate and independent topics and therefore may be taken in any order according to a person's interests and time.

### **Cruising and Cruise Planning**

Designed for the mariner's that plans to cruise for a day or a week in either a sail or power boat. This course covers the following topics: cruise preparation and planning, boat and equipment, anchors and anchoring, security, chartering, cruising into neighboring countries, crew and provisioning, communications, navigation, weather, and emergencies. The manual includes sample cruises in four geographic regions of the US and detailed appendices.

## **Engine Maintenance**

Modern engines offer high reliability and good performance through the use of computerized systems for fuel delivery and engine timing. Most of these systems are “black boxes” that can no longer be serviced by weekend mechanics with ordinary tools. The Engine Maintenance course covers those repairs that do-it-yourselfers can still perform, teaches how to diagnose problems that might be beyond your ability to fix, and how to share information with your mechanic so the right repairs get performed. The Engine Maintenance course also covers basic mechanical systems such as drive systems (propellers), steering systems, and engine controls. The last chapter discusses solutions you might use to problems that could occur while afloat and away from a repair facility. Gasoline, diesel, and outboard engines are treated independently in this chapter.

## **Instructor Development**

This course deals with effective communication for speakers and teachers—a quality that benefits the individual in all walks of life. It offers practical instruction in: preparing for teaching assignments, preparing for meeting presentations, effective teaching techniques, conducting efficient meetings, and selecting and using audiovisual aids.

## **Marine Electronics**

The new series of Marine Electronics courses is being structured into three new manuals: Marine Electrical Systems, Marine Communication Systems, and Electronic Navigation.

**Marine Electrical Systems (MES)** covers the practice of wiring your boat, including boat electrical wiring practices and diagrams, direct and alternating current power, galvanic and stray current corrosion, and lightning protection. Troubleshooting is emphasized throughout, so students should feel comfortable performing even tricky wiring tasks after passing this course.

**Marine Communication Systems (MCS)** is an in-depth, nine chapter review of communications systems available to the recreational boater. Radio history and spectrum definitions are presented along with definitions of radio circuits that the student should learn, to choose the best communications method for his/her situation. One chapter is devoted to the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) and another to FCC Rules and regulations. The remaining chapters cover High Seas radio (MF/HF and satellite communications) and other systems such as Family Radio Service transceivers. There is also a chapter on troubleshooting of radio installations.

**Electronic Navigation (EN)** covers all aspects of electronic navigation using GMDSS as the foundation for modern marine communications. GPS is taught as the primary method of position fixing. This is a systems course—not “how to” navigate—that focuses on the use of electronic devices to augment the practice of safe navigation on the water. Topics include GPS, the Automatic Identification System (AIS), RADAR, depth sounder and related instruments, electronic charting systems, and a working understanding of the electronic bus structures needed to tie these devices together. The EN course was developed in conjunction with the Canadian Sail and Power Squadrons.

## **Sail**

The Sail course serves the needs of the novice and experienced sailor, as well as the non-sailor, for basic skills and knowledge. The course starts with basic sailboat designs and nomenclature, rigging, safety, and sail processes and then tackles the physical aspects of sailing forces and techniques sail applications, marlinespike, helmsman ship and handling of more difficult sailing conditions, navigation rules, and an introduction to heavy weather sailing. Appendices provide an introduction to sailboat racing and sailing in Canadian waters.

## **Weather**

The safety and comfort of those who venture out-on-the water have always been weather dependent. In this course students will become keener observers of the weather, but weather observations only have meaning in the context of the basic principles of meteorology — the science of the atmosphere. The course focuses on how weather systems form, behave, move, and interact with one another and reflects the availability of all sorts of weather reports and forecasts on the Internet. It is a general weather course benefiting those sitting in their living rooms, as much as those standing behind the helm.

Each student receives: a Weather Manual - *USPS Weather* - an explanatory text with full color photographs and drawings covering weather in the United States and its coastal and inland waters; a set of three Daily Weather Maps - learning aids with a complete explanation of map symbols designed to develop weather map reading and analysis skills; and *NOAA's Sky Watcher Chart* - a reference to assist in identifying cloud types — helpful indicators of approaching weather.

## **ANNUAL AWARDS**

The general membership meeting in January includes the presentation of our special awards and the presentation of Certificates of Appreciation.

### **COMMANDER'S AWARD**

Presented by the outgoing Commander to a member or members that demonstrated an outstanding effort for the good of the Squadron during the past year.

### **MARNETT AWARD**

Given in honor of Ken Marnett, a charter member of the Grand Traverse Bay Squadron who taught AP courses for many years.

Chosen by the Squadron Education Officer and presented to a member who has performed an outstanding job in their role as an instructor.

### **HOMER HUMPHREY AWARD**

Given in honor of Homer Humphrey who transferred from the Chicago area and inspired the first group of GTBay members to enroll in a self-taught JN Class.

Selected by the Executive Committee, with recommendations from Squadron members, and presented to a member who has demonstrated impressive skills in navigation during the boating season.

### **BONE HEAD AWARD**

Awarded to a GTBay member that was involved in an unfortunate (laughable) event during a boating activity.

Presented by the current holder of this prestigious award.

### **MERIT MARKS**

Awarded to those GTBay members who do outstanding work for the Squadron during the year. Recommended by the GTBay Commander and Committee Chairs and granted by the Chief Commander of USPS.

### **CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION**

Given to those member's who support the Squadron but do not qualify to receive Merit Marks, e.g., spouses who are non-members or Women's Certificate holders.