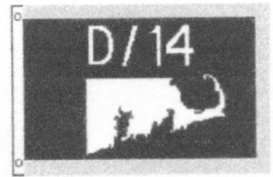




The MA-RI-NER



District 14 United States Power Squadrons®

www.usps.org/localusps/d14

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Claire Blackburn, P, Editor

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All District 14 squadron members are invited to attend, participate and enjoy the fellowship

SPRING CONFERENCE AND CHANGE OF WATCH

When: 7 March 2009

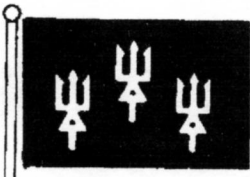
Where: White's of Westport

See insert for details and registration



V/C Richard M. Peoples, SN

V/C Peoples, of Indialantic, FL, is a member of Banana River Sail and Power Squadron. He joined the Mansfield Power Squadron in 1972. He served on several committees before beginning his journey up the bridge to Commander in 1981. In District 7, he was Secretary and Newsletter Editor. Since moving to Florida, he has been the D/23 Finance and Leadership Development chairman. With Banana River, he is the Rules and Leadership Development chairman and has served on the Executive and Finance committees. He has taught Boating, Seamanship, Piloting, AP, LD, IQ and Junior Safe Boating. On the National level, he has been an aide to two chief commanders and served on the Ensign and IQ committees. He has served on the budget committee for nine years, the last three as Assistant Treasurer/Budget Officer. He is a life member with 32 merit marks. V/C Peoples will deliver the Chief Commander's message.



From the Commander....

D/C Arthur F. Kimber, SN

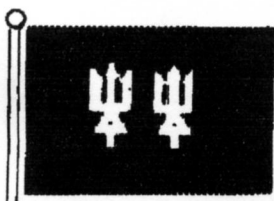
This is my final message in *The MA-RI-NER* as your District Commander. It has been a distinct pleasure and privilege to serve you as D/C for the past two years. I firmly believe that USPS has much to offer the recreational boating community through our educational and civic service initiatives. We have a full range of skill building tools, from novice to expert, to offer in our educational programs – courses and seminars. Our presence in the community is a constant reminder to the public that safe boating resources are available.

The past two years have seen enormous improvements in the way USPS is structured and operates. A few are worth mentioning: modernized governance structure; National leadership that tends to listen to what is being said at the grass-roots; the birth of USPS University with a re-write of most of our core courses to focus on electronic navigation; the introduction of an array of two hour seminars on relevant topics for experienced boaters; the initiation of boat operator certification in four categories; and a vastly improved liability insurance program that allows us to do on-water training.

All of these tools are designed to enhance our Squadron programs. In the final analysis USPS is only as successful as its individual Squadrons. I have found that there is a great deal of pride among members of D-14 in their Squadrons. However, Squadron life has not been without its difficulties – lack of member participation; problems recruiting leadership at the Bridge level; not enough teachers and proctors for the education program; problems recruiting and retaining members.

Does that mean that we should call it quits? BY NO MEANS!! This is a time for those who care about the Squadron to commit to its renewal. Just like anything that is worthwhile, it will take work. It will take a core group to come together and stay together to develop ideas to give new energy to a limited number of quality programs for the membership and non-member boating public. Neighboring Squadrons might share instructors/proctors. Social and civic activities can be shared. Above all else, communication is the key to success. Members need to feel that they know what is going on and that their involvement is important. Reaching out to people on a personal – one-on-one basis – will work wonders.

It is my hope that as we enter 2009 we will begin to see a renewal and revival in our individual Squadron life. District, while it cannot do the job at the local level, is a resource for information and technical support.



Executive Officer.....

D/Lt/C William R. Taylor, AP

This is the last issue of *The MA-RI-NER* before District 14 enters a new year. I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the various Chairmen of the Committees which comprise the Executive Department. Your participation has been of great assistance to me in my two years as District Executive Officer.

This past boating season was a good one for those who had sailboats. Those who have power boats suffered from the price of gasoline and diesel fuel and so, if their boat was large enough, it became a popular place to entertain at the slip. Those of us with smaller power boats drift fished or fished while anchored in an active area to a greater degree than before. We can only wonder what the cost will be next summer.

Right now prices for petroleum products in the United States are much lower. The reason is said to be that our conservation has resulted in a surplus in the oil supply channels. Our newspapers say that this is causing a decline in the demand for importation of bulk petroleum resulting in a sharp drop in the price at the pump. It is said that Iran, Venezuela and Russia, all of whom depend heavily on income from oil sales, are having serious financial problems from the current low price per barrel. You can be sure that OPEC will be working very actively to “correct” this situation.

This coming year, no matter what the result of the oil situation, should be a good one for you to become more active in your squadron and or District 14. That includes USPS classes and/or Seminars. This will make you more proficient when you use your boat, which is what you want. Here is the chance to take an active part in this organization. If someone from the Nominating Committee asks you to serve on a committee or serve as an officer in either your Squadron or on the District level don't give him/her the brush-off. Taking an active part in this organization is another way to indirectly learn more about boating and a way to improve the organization through your efforts.

DID YOU KNOW? According to the USPS National Directory, in 2008 we had 440 Squadrons averaging 94 members, 33 Districts averaging 1,246 members, for a grand total of 41,129 members.



Vessel Safety Check – P/D/C W. Lee Blackburn, SN, Chairman

The calendar year 2008 is over and with it another year of the VSC Program is complete. In case anyone is not sure what this program involves, it is a courtesy examination of your boat (Vessel) to verify the presence and condition of certain Safety Equipment required by State and Federal regulations. The Vessel Examiner (VE) is a trained specialist and is a member of USPS or the US Coast Guard Auxiliary. The VE will also make certain recommendations and discuss safety issues aimed at making you a safer boater.

This is not a boarding or a law enforcement activity. No citations will be given as a result of this encounter. You will receive a copy of the evaluation so that you may follow the suggestions given. Vessels that pass will be able to display

