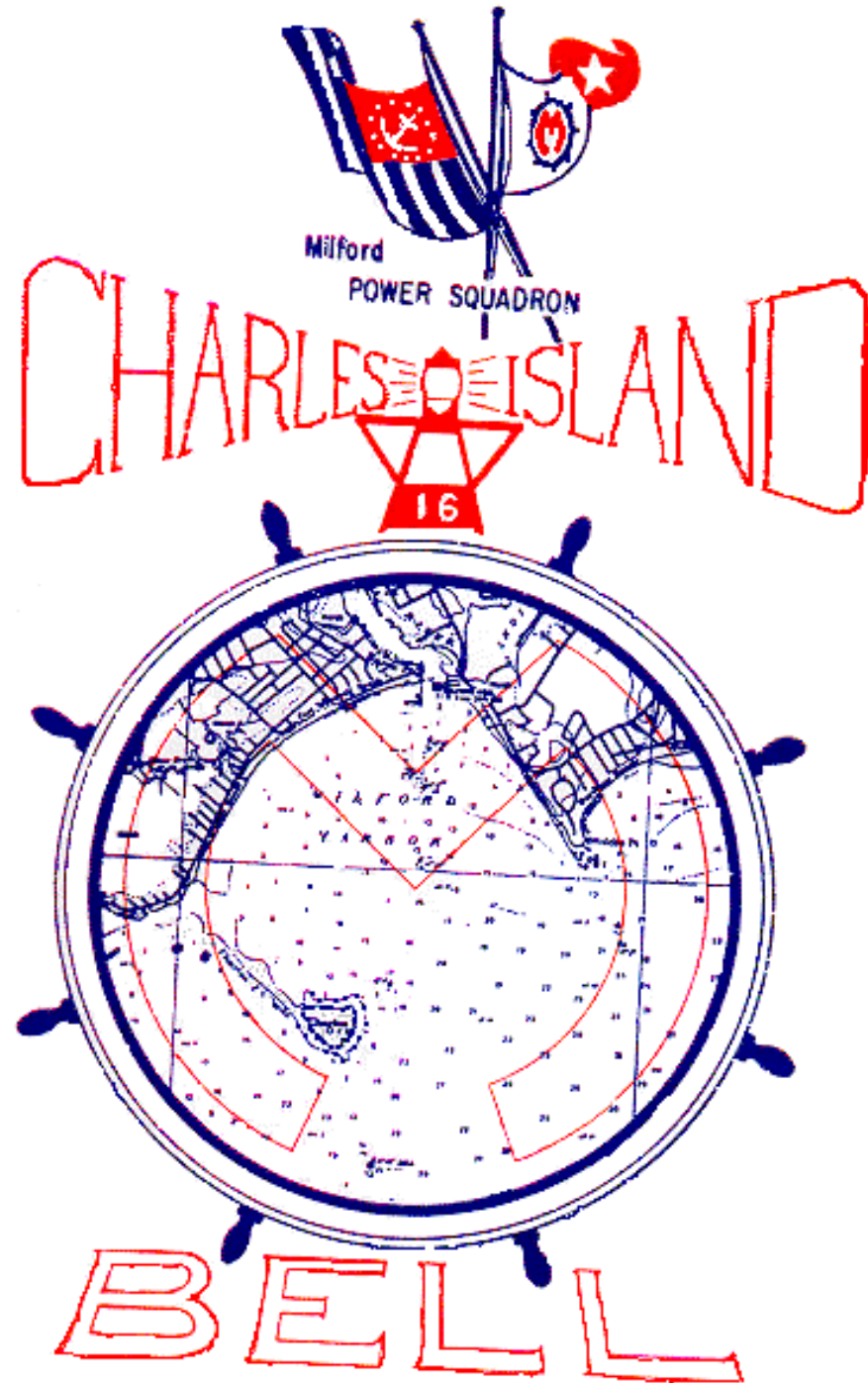


January 2011

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First Class Mail



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Please pay our website a

Visit and key in

www.usps.org/localusps/milford

SAVE THESE DATES

- **January 12, 2011 Post Holiday Party
Agustyn's Blue Goose, Stratford 6:30PM**
- **January 29 Hartford Boat Show –
carpool –
email: bruce_ross66@yahoo.com**



Commander Bruce Ross and wife Cathy

Your Milford Power Squadron Bridge



Bridge Members shown in the group photo are Gabe Cordova, Hank Chmielewski, Bill Rinckel, Bruce Ross, Bill Carotenuto, and Al Mongillo. Your Bridge and committee chairpersons are actively working to get out into the community and serve the boating public. Please support our efforts by volunteering your time to support these activities. Contact Cdr Bruce Ross at 203-378-9780, or at bruce2sail@aol.net.

Upcoming Schedule of Events

January 12 -

Post Holiday Party at Agustyn's Blue Goose on Ferry Blvd in Stratford. 6:30 - \$25 per person.

Saturday January 29 Squadron Road trip - Hartford Boat

Show --. Carpool - email bruce_ross66@yahoo.com for more information.

Milford Adult Education - America's Boating Course, Safe Boating Course for CT Boating Card - Foran High School. Google "Milford CT adult education" for more information.

Later in the year:

Spring Council Meeting - February

Spring D1 Conference - March

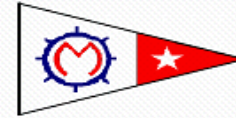
Change of Watch - April/May

Essex Island Rendezvous - end June

Commander's Report

Commander's Report for January 2011

Dear Fellow Members of the Milford Power and Sail Squadron.



Another great year has ended and a new one is beginning for the Squadron.

Last year we held several Safe Boating Courses, held the Holiday and Change of Watch dinners, completed an excellent number of Vessel Safety Checks, held our annual

boating Raftup at Charles Island, participated in the Milford Oyster Festival, attended the Spring and Fall Council Meetings and the Spring and Fall District 1 Conferences, attended the Essex Island Rendezvous and held seven Bridge Meetings throughout the year.

I want to thank Gabe Cordova for publishing five editions of the Charles Island Bell. I wish to thank our team of very active Vessel Safety Examiners: Henry Chmielewski, Bill Rinckel, Bob Post and our newest certified examiner, Al Mongillo. I'd like to thank Bob Post for offering the spring and fall Milford Adult Ed Safe Boating Courses this year.

I was particularly impressed by our attendance at the D1 Fall Conference where we had Al Mongillo, Henry Chmielewski, Bob Post and George Buffinton who received re-certification

as Squadron Instructors this year. Everybody also won a prize in the raffles which was very rewarding.

For the coming year, I'd like us all invite our boating friends, neighbors and relatives to become a member of the Squadron. If we can bring even 2 or 3 new members aboard, we will be doing very well. It's easy to do -- invite people from your marina or boat club, your neighborhood or school. You can even sign up on line.

Also coming up this year, I encourage you to attend the Post Holiday Party on Wednesday January 12 at

the Blue Goose, holding several safe boating courses and seminars, and will be car pooling to the Hartford Boat Show at the end of January for anybody who'd like to go.

I'd like to encourage you to visit the USPS.org web site to learn more about member benefits like discounts, insurance packages and courses online and visit the D1 website to

learn about activities in the other Squadrons. Please also visit the Milford website at www.usps.org/localusps/milford to find out what's going on.

Finally, please let me know what activities, information and resources you'd like the Squadron to offer you - its members - to make boating more enjoyable to you. You can always call or write me. I look forward to seeing many of you throughout the New Year.

Happy, healthy and prosperous 2011 to all!

Bruce

Bruce Ross - P Commander, Milford Power and Sail Squadron

On Buying a Kayak

There are lots of different kinds of kayaks: made of several materials, some made for quick rivers & rapids, some for slow rivers & ponds, others made for larger lakes and sea kayaking. Most are "sit inside" but increasingly, many more are "sit on top".

There's nothing to stop you from fishing in any kind of kayak, but some are a lot better suited and outfitted for fishing than others. Some have built-in floatation, while others come with a small chunk of foam inside that's virtually useless when the boat is swamped.

Most people have no idea how unstable and unseaworthy these crafts really are. If you talk to 100 kayakers, only a few would know what to do if they fell out of the boat. Many of those who have fallen out will not have been able to get back into their boats and continue on their way. Most of them swim the boat to shore being unable to get back in.

But of those 100 people, ask them how many have paddled out one or two miles from shore. Lots of them have, especially if large bodies of water are nearby - large lakes, major estuaries or open ocean. You regularly hear about folks who paddle out to nearby islands. They have no idea how much trouble they're in if the water's below 60 degrees, in currents and chop or in bad weather.

Selecting a boat is not hard - it's about as tough as selecting a mattress. First thing is you have to know yourself. What do you like to do, and where do you like to go? How much time do you expect to spend sitting in a small boat? Do you like working hard or taking it easy? Do you like to go with the flow or paddle against the current?

Let's look at the kinds of parameters we ought to consider:

Weight - most kayakers move the boat around on top of their car or truck. In order to get the boat up or down, you have to be able to lift 40, 60 or 80 pounds depending on size and material. Add to that the wind.

Basic cheap boats are made of recycled plastic bottles. These are almost indestructible. And a 13 foot boat can weigh 55-60 pounds. A 16 footer is more like 70 pounds. For most of us types, this is heavy.

Pricing for plastic goes like this. A 12 footer new might be \$600, a 14 footer around \$850 and a 16 footer is \$1000-1200. Rudders and skegs add \$100-200.

Next tier is fiberglass - also heavy, but beautiful. They are structurally fragile though. Don't drop it in the driveway off the top of the car. These can be made very precision, with watertight bulkheads and detailed fittings. Usually 50% more expensive than plastic. They can take a lot of scratching from rocks.

Kevlar - about 1/2 the weight of plastic, these are light, but they can be double the price of plastic, or more. These too are pretty fragile. Scratches are not pretty and deep ones can weaken the structure. I've seen them separate - the hull from the topsides. No fun when this happens to you out in the surf.

There are Rec (recreational) kayaks that are short, have little floatation and no watertight bulkheads, and they're usually slow. There are whitewater kayaks that are stubby and flat-bottomed, fine in whitewater, but lousy on lakes and at sea. There are sea kayaks - long, narrow, deep vee hull, some with skegs or rudders - these track very well but turn like submarines - very slowly. Rec boats are a compromise of all these features.

There are sit inside boats. When these go over you go in, head first. You can purchase a spray - skirt for them, this keeps the water out. Whether spray tries to fill the cockpit, or you go over, you can do the Eskimo roll and stay dry inside. The spray skirt is the answer for sit inside boats.

The sit on top boats. You're more likely to see these at resorts and for rentals, because if you fall out, you just fall off - you don't capsize and invert like a sit inside. But you can't do an Eskimo roll either. Most fishing kayaks are sit on tops, since they can fit a lot of gear, you can easily get at tackle boxes and poles, but you need to strap everything down extremely well, or you can say goodbye to your expensive rod, reel and lures.

You can outfit your kayak with a small anchor, a sea anchor or even a 12 volt Minnkota electric motor.

Hull shape is important:

Flat bottom is good for initial stability, but lousy for secondary stability. Good for turning and maneuvering, bad for tracking in a straight line should winds and currents hit. Good in rocky areas and perfect for quick water and rapids.

Modified Vee with chines provide better tracking, less maneuverability and good initial stability with good 2ndary stability.

Deep Vee provides great tracking, very poor initial stability, great secondary stability, and poor steering.

Flat profile lengthwise provides good straight line tracking, while rocker (banana shape) provides for quick turns.

Length, like in many other endeavors, is very important. Because they are displacement hulls, longer boats are faster boats. A 10 foot boat goes a knot or more slower than a 16 foot boat. They take less work to go in a straight line. In sea kayaking where paddling distances can be more than 5 miles each way, this can amount to a few hours difference over an entire trip.

Extras are important - a loose fitting PFD to allow you to wear it always, to swing your arms freely is a good investment. A PFD with mesh on top and lots of floatation around the middle is a good choice. You can snug up the straps if you need to though. A lightweight paddle is not a luxury - it's a necessity.

For a person who won't do much whitewater, will not be out on the open sound or ocean, who may put your in the back of the pickup truck, would be a 13 foot plastic sit-on-top with a comfortable seat and storage compartments, and a 34 oz paddle is recommended.

You need a whistle. If you have a sit inside, get a paddle float, a baler and a pump. A dry bag allows you to carry anything that needs to stay dry - extra clothes, lunch, electronics, and charts. Bring along snacks and water, a spare single-blade paddle, a paddle leash, a compass, a space blanket and a white waterproof light or flashlight.

A good tie-down system is indispensable. If you have a built-in roof rack on your car or truck, you simply need a way to tie down the boats securely to the rack. You can go out and buy a special made rack, but only if your car does not have any type of rack built in. When you're tying down the boat, remember - knots slip, boats shift, lines fail. So always have a primary line, and a backup.

Bruce Ross - P Commander, Milford Power and Sail Squadron