

CHARTERED 4 DECEMBER 1972



P.O. BOX 511042  
PUNTA GORDA, FLORIDA 33951-1042

PEACE RIVER SAIL & POWER SQUADRON  
A UNIT OF THE UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS  
SAIL AND POWER BOATING

## COMMANDER'S NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2009

During these summer months of July & August, many members have migrated "North to Alaska" and points elsewhere. Our loyal *Pilot* editors are lounging and enjoying their well deserved respite. But have no fear, your Bridge, ExCom members, and Committee Chairs have continued their work keeping the Squadron and our activities going.

I am both saddened and heartened to report that D/Lt Bill Benner, whose cardiac by-pass surgery early in June was fraught with complications, is in excellent spirits and is recovering in the Fawcett Memorial Rehab center, Room 236 as of this writing. He and Carol have asked me to express their appreciation for the prayers, cards and cheering visits made by our squadron members. He is making good progress, and your continued encouragement and support will no doubt spur his recovery efforts. His days at the Rehab center are quite full, so a phone call to the hospital about his schedule might be a wise move.

The formal application/nomination documents in support of Stf/C Ann Scotten's nomination for the Chapman Award have been forwarded to National, well ahead of the deadline. We stand behind you, Ann, and look forward with anticipation to your receiving this award - which you so deserve.

Congratulations and a big "Squadron Thank You" for all that he does for the squadron to **P/C Ron Gensemer, SN**, recipient of the June, 2009 **Anchor Award**. Ron is a Life Member of USPS and a Past Commander. P/C Ron Gensemer has been a faithful member of the Education Department of PRSPS for years, having taught portions of the public Boating class and Chartist "forever." He has re-done the Chartist Power Point and produced a very elegant & professional "textbook/workbook" for the course. Ron is also a member of the Piloting Committee, teaching a large portion of that class and re-doing much of the material & the Power Point presentation. He is the "junior" member of the Planning Committee this year, which brings the promise of chairing it in time. He is joining the Marine Electronics faculty, beginning with the next offering of this newly revamped course. And as if that were not enough, he is joining the faculty, or, rather, the "crew" of JN & N this coming year. Ron can be counted upon to participate as an active delegate at our conferences without fail. He's served on or chaired virtually every committee. Ron truly is an anchor of our Squadron!

Stf/C Ann and R/C Greg Scotten have been busy these summer months, doing interview stints on the Charlie Scheu "Morning Mayor" show atop the Wyvern Hotel (May 13 & July 15) along with Ron Dafoe & yours truly. And, they've also been guests on Captain Tom Healey's "Boating Life" show (July 4). Their enthusiasm for the squadron is so contagious that after the May 13 show, we ran into a couple who were driving into Punta Gorda and stopped at the Wyvern to speak with us about the squadron. (Continued on pg 4)

**Member Involvement and Boating Activities**  
**1/Lt Jeane Anderson, AP & Lt Harold Anderson, AP**

**August 6**                    **Big M Casino Cruise** from Ft Myers Beach - AUGUST MORNING SPECIAL- **FREE!!!**  
No boarding fee and **free buffet**. Cruise starts at 1030; BE THERE at 1000 to check in. Bring your photo ID.  
Call Betty Campanella by July 27 at 833-3399.

**August 10-12**                    **Cruise to "Tween Waters** Resort & Marina, Captiva Island. Docking and rooms available at resort. Happy Hour "Docktales" at 1700, Dinner on the 10th at **The Green Flash** and the on the 11th at 'Tween Water's **Crows Nest** Restaurant (Prime Rib - 2 for 1). Pool and Beach available all day!  
Call Jeane & Harold Anderson at 575-9776 by August 3. Join us by land or sea.

**Sept. 6**                                **Italianfest Dinner** at the Punta Gorda Boat Club 1800-2100.  
Call Linda Bick 941 697-2163

**Sept 18-21**                    **Cruise to South Seas Plantation** Resort & Marina, Captiva Island-  
Call Carol Musco to see if space is available. 629-1467

**Nov. 16-19** -                    **KEY WEST Cruise.** Go by Fast Cat Cruise Boat (3 1/2 hrs - \$94.00 round trip) from Ft, Myers Beach or drive down. We are staying at B&B's, with 1/2 day snorkeling trip if you like, 1 group dinner & lots of time to explore historical sites, shops, etc.  
Call Jeane Anderson at 575-9776 to sign up and get B&B info.

**Attention: Proctors/Instructors & All Members:** The next Public Boating Class begins 1900h. September 9 through October 21, at the Punta Gorda Boat Club building. Not sure whether you are able to proctor? Come to the course, sit with another proctor & see if this is something you like to do. Help is always needed with photocopying, registration, A/V set-up, and, especially, greeting students. You can help promote this offering by clipping out the class schedules inserted herein and ask businesses you patronize to post them in a prominent place. Contact Stf/C Ann Scotten, SN to volunteer to help out. Phone 833-0752

**Notice from the Fundraising Committee:** Don't forget to save all of your items for our **Yard Sale** coming up in October. Ask your neighbors and friends to do the same. We will be collecting items from 5<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> of October at the Bayfront, with our Sale being held on **October 11<sup>th</sup>** at the Boat Club. The event will be indoors. Tickets for the **Sea Tow Raffle** are still available for our raffle on **October 27**. Our other big event is the **Panama Canal / Southern Caribbean Cruise** for 10 Days **sailing 13 March** 2010 on the Holland America Lines. We now have 13 couples. Please join us for great fun. It will also be very profitable for the squadron.                    D/1<sup>st</sup>/Lt Carol L. Musco, AP, Fundraising Chair

Reminder: Send your reservations for the **September 22 Monthly Dinner** Meeting to Harold Anderson, 7524 Carambola, Punta Gorda, FL 33955

**District 22 Fall Conference – October 1-4**, Sarasota, at the Sarasota Hyatt. Details and registration forms will be published in the September *Pilot*

**PRSPS FALL – WINTER COURSES  
2009 – 2010**

**Advanced Courses**

**Seamanship** – Mondays, 1900 – 2100; **Oct 5, 2009, Nov 23, 2009;** & **Jan 11, 2010 – Mar 1, 2010;**  
Contact: Greg Scotten, 941-833-0752

**Piloting** – Wednesdays; 1900 – 2100; **Oct. 7, 2009 – Dec. 9, 2009;** & **Jan 6, 2010 – Mar 17, 2010**  
Contact: Linda Nicholas, 941-505-1952

**Advanced Piloting** – Thursdays – 1900 – 2100; **Jan. 7, 2010 – Mar 18, 2010**  
Contact: Dick Treadway, 941-637-7078

**Junior. Navigation** – Wednesdays – 0900 – 1100; **Oct 7, 2009 – Jan 13, 2010**  
Contact: Ron Gensemer, 941-575-7856

**Navigation** - Tuesdays – 0900 – 1100; **Sept 15, 2009 – Dec 15, 2009** & **Feb 2, 2010 – Apr 27, 2010**  
Contact: Ron Gensemer, 941-575-7856

**Elective Courses**

**Weather** – Thursdays – 1000 – 1200; **Nov. 12, 2009 – Feb 4, 2010**  
Contact: JoAnne Jamrose, 941-575-7793

**Cruise Planning** – Tuesdays - 1830 – 2030; **Sept 29, 2009 – Dec 15, 2009**  
Contact: John Jorgensen, 941-575-0373

**Sail** - Mondays – 0900 – 1100; **Jan 4, 2010 – Mar 1, 2010**  
Contact: Bob Hill, 941-505-0067

**Engine Maintenance** TBD

**Marine Electronics**

<b>Marine Electrical Systems</b>	TBD
<b>Marine Communications Systems</b>	TBD
<b>Marine Navigation Systems</b>	TBD

(Cont. from pg 1) On May 20, I was proud to represent the squadron, and to receive a proclamation from the Mayor of Punta Gorda proclaiming National Safe Boating Week in Punta Gorda, extolling our efforts in promoting safe boating. Later that afternoon, several members attended the Freedom Boat Club's reception at Lashley Park, and distributed literature about our educational and other safe boating programs.

On the social scene, 19 members toured the new Muscle Car City Museum on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June. The July 4 weekend C & R to Fisherman's Village Marina included 23 boats and 50 boaters. Dinner at the Captain's Table on the third seated 24 members, while the July 4<sup>th</sup> Picnic before the fireworks display numbered 60. The ever popular Portobello's Pizza, Pasta & Salad on the 13<sup>th</sup> of July saw 18 members. No more Italian food for you 18!! Save your Italian food appetite for the **Italianfest** on 6 September. Games night at the Punta Gorda Boat Club was enjoyed by 26 members.

Welcome to new transfer members **Donald P. Robin** (pronounced, "Row-Bain") E231618 & **Sarah P. Robin** E231619; transferred from Winston Salem Power Squadron. Please **update your Directory**. They reside at 1001 Lucia Drive, Punta Gorda, FL 33950. Phone 347-7313. Welcome aboard Don & Sarah!! Looking forward to seeing you at our events and activities. I enjoyed working with you at the Chartsmart class on the 25<sup>th</sup> of July.

Moving to more serious issues: On 7 July, members of the Bridge and Committee Chairs met under the leadership of D/Lt Richard Clemm to begin preliminary planning for next year's budget. The free-falling national economy which hit like a bombshell last fall has also affected the fortunes of the squadron, resulting in many members opting to give up membership, thus affecting our income. Fewer new members came aboard this past winter, probably for the same reason. Dues income through June of this year is nearly \$600 less than at this point last year. Endowment income is about \$2250 less so far this year as compared to last year. A review of squadron expenditures for the March through June period show that your Bridge has been curtailing expenditures as well, to deal with the poor economic climate. This will lead to a very lean and tight budget for the coming year, and some hard decisions to make.

This takes us to another issue that has been of concern to the Bridge and ExCom. Since after hurricane Charley, we have had an agreement with the Punta Gorda Boat Club, whereby we have been paying them an annual sum of \$3,000 for use of their building for our classes and some of our social events. The agreement calls for some 66 event-dates per year, which include our public classes (20 dates), social events (6 dates), and our internal classes (40 dates). After the Bayfront was repaired, our internal classes moved back into the Bayfront, and we have been using the Boat Club facility for only about 30%-45% of the number of events agreed to. At the 9 July ExCom meeting, it was decided to offer the Boat Club \$1500 for use of their facility for up to 35 events for the coming year, reflecting both the reduced usage and our economic necessity. On 17 July, a team consisting of the Commander, Executive Officer, Administrative Officer and Squadron Education Officer met with the officers of the Boat Club for the purpose of improving communications for scheduling purposes and to discuss our future needs. It appears that there will be no conflicts with dates in 2010 such as occurred in 2009, since we shared our tentative schedules. The Boat Club Commodore agreed to present our offer to their Board of Directors at its August meeting, "without prejudice," but indicated his anticipation of a negative reception by their Board to our offer.

Responses to the questionnaire sent out by AO Ron Bick, AP have been received from 44 family names, analyzed by Ron & his committee, and discussed at the Executive Committee meeting (with your anonymity preserved). Approximately equal numbers responded ranging from those who rarely attend meetings, occasionally attend, and attend often. Here in a nutshell is what you told us from the data compilation and from the volunteered comments.

You told us that you like the social aspects of the meetings, especially seeing friends. All of you like the ambiance of the CHYC, its locale, and driving distance from home, but having a view of the harbor was not

important to over half of you. You dislike the current cost of spending an evening out for a dinner meeting, and many felt that \$13- \$16 was about right for a dinner meeting at an elegant place for dinner. The outside speakers were liked at least sometimes by everyone. Meeting length is about right for most; too long for many others. No one felt the meetings were too short. (Are meetings ever too short??) You asked us to shorten the officer's and committee chair's reports, and to keep them more current, looking forward, with material already published in the Pilot omitted. One person suggested placing written reports on the tables, presumably omitting oral reports. About 60% indicated that you would not attend meetings more frequently if the meals were less expensive and held at another location, yet elsewhere in the questionnaire 56% said that reducing meal costs and changing meeting location would entice you to attend more monthly meetings. I don't know how to react to those data. Concerning the food served: 90% responded that you liked the menu selections, at least sometimes, and 54% agreed that overall the food quality, wait staff, & club ambiance provides a good value for the money. Unfortunately, in my opinion, too many elements were lumped together in that question. I think everyone would agree with me that the waitstaff is superb: - friendly, competent, and eager to please; just as you all indicated that you like the ambiance of the CHYC. Reading between the lines, many of you were reacting to your perceptions of the value of the menu and the quality of the food served.

Here are some selected comments: "...don't like dinner meetings." "Consider meeting without a meal" (I wonder how many would come?) "Consider a luncheon meeting." "Reduce meal cost." "...split format...is not conducive to going to meetings and not eating..." "Were the commander so inclined, changes could be effected as a trial..." "...Nothing wrong with moving the dinner meetings around to less expensive location, then CHYC becomes special when we are here." (Commen - CHYC is closed to members on Tuesday, and opens for us on a year-long contracted basis. They will not open on an occasional basis - neither would I in their shoes.) "The two most recent price increases put the cost out of the good value range." "Yes, the touch of elegance is a big advantage." "Good facilities available for less..." "Quality of the food has changed."

Well, a sub-committee of the ExCom is looking into all of these questions and suggestions. We are researching other facilities for our dinner meetings. If we can find nice facilities, with good food at significantly lower prices, that provide us a private room away from bar noises and public traffic, that provides a quality dinner meeting experience, we will recommend a change of venue to the ExCom. Our contract with the CHYC runs through December, 2009. So, we will be there through at least the end of the year. Send your suggestions and ideas on possible venues to me. One suggested looking into the Isles Yacht Club. We are doing that, and we are planning on implementing many of the suggestions that you have made concerning the format of the meetings. Come to the September meeting to see what changes we can effect. Then, let us know how you feel about them. The Bridge and the ExCom appreciates your responses and your many suggestions. We want the monthly dinner meeting to be an enjoyable experience, where friends get together and welcome the fellowship of new members as well as veterans. I know that we won't please everyone, but we will do our best to make the meetings something more enjoyable.

Fraternally,

*Elliott M. Hartman*

Elliott M. Hartman, JN  
Commander

**Win a one-year SeaTow subscription**



*Peace River Sail & Power Squadron*

*Win a SeaTow one year's subscription \$149 value*

*Ticket Donation \$3.00 or 2 for \$5.00*



*Drawing to be held at the October 27th meeting*

The squadron is raffling a one-year SeaTow unlimited towing subscription as a fund raising event. All proceeds go to the squadron, as the subscription has been donated by SeaTow. Tickets are being sold at all squadron events or may be purchased by mail. To purchase by mail, simply mail payment and tickets will be sent by return mail. Ticket price is \$3 or two for \$5. Make checks payable to PRS&PS.

Mail to: Lt/C Ron Bick, AP  
15636 Havana Circle  
Port Charlotte, FL 33981



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