

# The Potomac Ribber

Newsletter of the Potomac River Power Squadron Sail & Power Boating  
A District 5 unit of the United States Power Squadrons®. Established 1915.

Washington, DC  
March 2007



District 5 members! This is the last call to help with the Governing Board meeting that we are hosting in Norfolk, 5-9 September! We need all sorts of help from selling raffle tickets to assisting with the arrival of members from across the country! Please contact P/D/C Bill Selden ([bill@cpdean.com](mailto:bill@cpdean.com)) or P/R/C Tom Dougherty ([tdougherty@simcare.net](mailto:tdougherty@simcare.net)) if you want to get involved. It will be fun!

Each squadron was asked to donate a gift that may be mailed to Mrs. John Bain, 2220 Normandstone Dr., Midlothian, VA 23113. These will be used for door prizes at the Shipmates' Luncheon. The value should be between \$15 and \$20 and should reflect the squadron's particular personality.

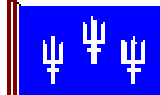
Donations for the raffle are also needed. If you have something you would like to give, please call D/Lt Pat Smith at 410-822-3339. She does not have e-mail.

Join the Mermaid Brigade! Come to Norfolk!

Check future D/5 newsletters, *The Mark 5*, for details about the Fall Governing Conference.

## WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**The Commander's strategic goals appear on this page. Bridge officer's reports are on page three and four. The safety report is on page four. The member survey is on page five. The Change of Watch insert is between pages four and five.**



## Howard Takes Command by Cdr Howard Gasaway, P



Our Change of Watch was spectacular held at the Chesapeake Yacht Club, Shady Side Maryland on March 3, 2007. I would like to thank our participants and guests who were in attendance. A special thanks to D/C Kay Simkins and Al Simkins for their support in attending our 92nd Change of Watch. Other VIP guests were: Delegate James E. Proctor, Jr. Maryland House of Delegates, District 27A and Vincent C. Gray, Chairman of the District of Columbia City Council. Also, Kudos goes out to P/C Collesta (Bonnie) Gaskins, P/C John Wilmot, JN, P/C Carl Muhlbauer, SN, P/C Tom Dillon, AP, Lt/C Janett Gasaway, 1st Lt Lorraine Roberson and Lt Laverne Glascoe. Our thanks for all of the support we received from Cordell & Sharon Vitkun, and to their staff at the Chesapeake Yacht Club for doing a fantastic job in hosting this event.

Next I would like to thank you, the membership, for entrusting me to be your commander for 2007. It is indeed a great honor and pleasure to serve in this capacity. Also, you have elected very qualified people to serve on the Bridge and we are eager to get started and carry out the goals and objectives of the squadron.

I would like the 2007 boating season for Potomac River Power Squadron to be a fun year for each member in the squadron and for the community as a whole. This is certainly possible given all the diverse and talented people in our squadron, each one of us, giving a little to get a lot. We have many members who already have given of their time to put together another excellent rendezvous, interesting dinner meetings with guest speakers, as well as our Founder's Day and Change of Watch,

Flag Raising Ceremony, Crab Feast and Dinner Christmas Party. The benefits of belonging to an organization such as PRPS go way beyond the education and social opportunities offered.

I would like to share with you my vision, and challenges for 2007

1. Increase our Squadron membership by 10% or more - *Each of you today pledge to bring in one new member.*
2. Community involvement in outreach programs - *Be more involved with volunteer service for example: Christmas in April, River Clean up Project or adopt a Project.*
3. Membership Educational Program/Classes; Potomac River Power Squadron Membership Course (increase) - *Training additional Instructors. We are on the move again with a Boat Smart class of 17 students going on today at the Capital Yacht Club and advance courses in progress.*
4. Fund Raisers - *Keep the cost of our dues down and meet increasing expenditures*

In Closing I am looking forward to the new challenges that come along with this position. Your support is very much needed and appreciated. Thanks also to all who participated in the 2007 Washington Boat Show held at the Convention Center this past February.

# 2007-2008 Bridge

Potomac River Power Squadron

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## MARCH 2007 GENERAL MEETING PROGRAM

“More Power To You”

Wednesday 21 March 2007

Rosensteel Knights of Columbus

We have often heard that electricity and water do not mix. The availability of shore power to boaters has become universal, but there are dangers associated with working with it on your boat.

We have asked a representative with PEPCO to come and explain various aspects of shore power (AC) and the risks associated with its use at our March meeting.

Why not bring a boating buddy, guest, or prospective member with you to hear about D/5 from our District's leader. The Program will start at 8:00 p.m. Refreshments (sandwiches, hors d'oeuvres, cash bar) will be available at 1930 (7:30 p.m.)

## SQUADRON MEETINGS

The Squadron meets on the 2nd Tuesday and 3rd Wednesday of each month except in July and August.

The **Executive Committee** meets on the **2nd Tuesday at 7:30 pm;** Rosensteel Knights of Columbus Members are welcome.

**Membership Meetings** are held on the **3rd Wednesday at 7:30 pm;** Members and guests are welcome.

**All Meetings** are held at the Rosensteel Knights of Columbus 9707 Rosensteel Avenue, Silver Spring

**For directions - visit the Potomac River website at**  
[www.usps.org/localusps/potomac](http://www.usps.org/localusps/potomac)

## PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

The “*Potomac Ribber*” is the official publication of the Potomac River Power Squadron (PRPS). Its goal is to inform members of activities and developments at PRPS and the national and District 5 level of the United States Power Squadrons (USPS) and to carry other information useful to the members.

PRPS, District 5 and USPS are non-profit organizations dedicated to the promotion of safety on the water through boaters education.

The Potomac River is published every month except for a combined July-August issue. Articles and submissions are appreciated and are due by the 15th of the month.



P/C Thompson (left) is recognized for his service as squadron commander by D/C Simkins at the Change of Watch. More photos in this issue.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### Internet Sites:

#### **Potomac River**

<http://www.usps.org/localusps/potomac>  
*Editor's note, the web site is temporarily inactive.*

#### **District 5**

<http://www.sb.usps.org/d5/index.html>

**USPS** <http://www.usps.org>

### Phone Numbers:

**For information on USPS, its Squadrons and the public courses:**  
1-888-FOR-USPS (367-8777)

**Boat/US Information Service on available boating course:**  
1-800-336-BOAT (2628)

**PRPS Cooperating Group # at Boat/US**  
GA 80130P

Get 1/2 price on your Boat/US membership!

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**EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT**  
By Lt/C Allen Jox

If you attended the Washington, D.C., Boat Show last month, you are one of many who are seriously thinking about being prepared for the upcoming boating season. It seems that this show always informally marks the beginning of our preparation activities.

This year the PRPS booth at the Boat Show received many visitors. To me it seems there was a marked increase in interest in PRPS activities over previous years. Much of the interest focused on the courses being offered at all levels. It will be interesting to see what our SEO, Lt/C David Howe, will say about course attendance in his reports at future Squadron meetings.

The increased traffic experienced at the PRPS booth was due, in large part, to the location of the booth. CDR Howard Gasaway, PRPS' coordinator for the Boat Show, made sure the booth would be located in a high traffic area. It worked. Thanks must go to Howard for his solid leadership in this effort and to all those who took one or more tours manning the booth.

From the Change of Watch Ceremony on March 3rd, the new PRPS Bridge and Executive Committee members are now in place for the 2007/2008 fiscal year. Correspondingly, a new budget has been approved. We, too, are looking ahead to this new boating season. CDR Gasaway has assured us that we are all going to have fun, no matter what our endeavor is. We should all be looking forward to a good year. So, for those of you who are not as active as you used to be, come back and join the fun!

*XO Report continued on page 4*



**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S REPORT**  
By Lt/C Tony Brown, P

I bet you don't know this about our squadron. There are 156 of you card-carrying, dues paying members of Potomac River Power Squadron. Sixty-eight of you have boats. Eighty-two of you have Merit Marks. Those facts say that the United States Power Squadrons is doing something right and that you are dedicated to its purpose. But, I don't see that many of you at our meetings and events. We're going to work on that!

We are boaters. You will hear more about our cruise schedule **and** we want to hear more about yours. It could be that we would like to cruise with *you!*

USPS is developing new education courses for the Internet age. We think that will make it easier for busy members to boost their nautical skills. Ask us about USPS University!

We are going to party, but you may have to travel to get there. Join us for the PRPS Hospitality Suite at the 2007 Spring Conference. You don't have to attend the conference to party with us at our suite at the Princess Royale Hotel, Ocean City, Saturday evening, 31 March. If you are a member, it's your suite, too. See me at the next member meeting, Wednesday 21 March, and I'll tell you more.

Oh, bring a guest! Dinner's on us.

**OLD SALT'S QUIZ:**

You are equipping your eighteen foot runabout for your family of four. As part of your equipment, you purchase six Coast Guard approved Type II (wearable) PFDs. Does this satisfy the Federal requirement for PFDs?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Yes for fresh water, no for salt water
4. Yes for Inland and Western River waters, no for Great Lakes and International Rules Waters

*Answer on page 4*

**SALE**

**50% OFF** all in-stock  
PRPS-logo merchandise.

Come to MARCH Member meeting!



**A BOATER'S THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH**

By P/C Carl Muhlbauer, SN

Keep current. Take Advanced Piloting!

**RIBBER VIA E-MAIL**



The Ribber will be e-mailed to all members we have correct e-mail addresses for and we will have it attached to our Web Page. **Please e-mail [dyskokyd@verizon.net](mailto:dyskokyd@verizon.net) to update your e-mail address.** Please put Ribber in the subject column. We will continue to bulk mail the Ribber to all members.



## EDUCATION OFFICER'S REPORT

by Lt/C David Howe, P

*Basic boating courses are planned for March.*

*Noon, 24 March 2007\*, Chesapeake Yacht Club  
4943 Hine Drive Shady Side, MD 20764*

*The course is free. The optional text book is \$20.00*

*To Enroll, contact me at 301-949-7545, or by email at:  
davidporterhowe@hotmail.com.*

*You may also contact the instructor, Cdr Howard Gasaway,  
P, at 202-583-7121*

*Basic Boating is open to all!*

### Executive Officer Report, continued from page 3

I encourage you to complete and submit the 2007 PRPS Survey that will be accompanying the February issue of **The Ribber**. The result will have a meaningful impact on formulating future activities. Those of you who have received **The Ribber** electronically should already have the survey in hand.

I hope there are a good number of you planning to attend the D/5 Spring Conference in Ocean City, MD, the end of March. I'm looking forward to seeing you there - more fun!

The final item I would like to bring to your attention is the upcoming 2007 Cooperative Charting Workshop to be held in Norfolk on May 4 & 5. This is a community service activity that has you doing something very worthwhile while you're on the water. Please see the Spring 2007 issue of **Mark 5** for details.

This article wouldn't be complete if we didn't offer a hearty "Thank You" to the retiring PRPS Bridge, particularly P/C Errol Thompson, for the fine job done this past year.



### **Old Salt's Quiz Answer:** from page 3

Boats 16 feet in length and over must not only have one approved wearable PFD for each person on board; they must also have at least one approved Type IV (throwable) PFD, such as a buoyant cushion or a ring buoy.

## SAFETY OFFICER'S REPORT

by Lt. Eugene Roberson



### Electronic Equipment On Your Vessel

I will start by saying I talk a lot about my past experience. Well, experience is the best teacher good or bad. I take my appointed position very seriously. What I know I will share with everyone I can. If I help only a few boaters I feel worthy of my position I now hold.

The right type of electronic equipment on your vessel is very important; chart plotters, radar, VHF Radios, Loran, GPS, compass, the list goes on. One word of caution, please do not buy cheap electronic equipment because they are not as reliable and the longevity is limited.

My wife and I left Deale, Maryland about 10:00 P.M. to spend the weekend in Annapolis and I put my waypoints into my Loran and Chart Plotter. About 10 minutes into the bay everything stopped working including the starboard engine. We proceeded to Annapolis on the port engine. We had to refer back to the old ways, that is compass and chart. I changed my plans and traveled from buoy to buoy until we entered Annapolis. This is why it is so important to keep an up to date chart and a compass that has been checked for accuracy. Also this is why it is very important for boaters to take the Basic Boating course.

After tying up at the marina I started looking for the electrical problem. Well if you have an electrical problem you start at the battery, I looked at the cables and they looked ok. I pulled on the positive battery cable and it came apart very easily from the battery post. I found the problem and before going back to Deale I replaced all of the battery cables. Since that day I have not had any problems of that kind.

I have stated over and over please check your electrical wiring and cables. It can save you a lot of headaches.

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## The SOUTHBOUND D/5 Summer Cruise to Crisfield is being chaired by Potomac River's own P/C John Wilmot, JN

14-19 July 2007, Return 22 July 2007

Information concerning the Southbound Summer  
Cruise can be found at

[http://members.cox.net/commanders\\_cruise\\_2007/  
SB\\_info.htm](http://members.cox.net/commanders_cruise_2007/SB_info.htm)

-or-

you may contact the Southbound Cruise Chairman at

[johncwilmot@msn.com](mailto:johncwilmot@msn.com)

410-798-5102

# Potomac River Change Of Watch: A Photo Essay

By Lt/C Tony Brown, Photos by Nancy Gorman

Remember this old joke?  
What do you do for a living?  
I'm an actor.  
Really! What Restaurant?

When I told a friend that I joined the United States Power Squadrons, he said "Really. Which utility company?"

I can't wait to tell him that I went to the Change of Watch so that he can ask (wait for it . . . wait for it) Really! Which time piece?"

USPS and Potomac River Squadron are not like the Coast Guard Auxiliary. We are not associated with the Navy, but we do follow maritime tradition.



Your 2007-08 squadron officers (from left): 1st/Lt Lorraine Roberson, 1st/Lt. William Chambers III, JN, Lt/C J.D. Williams, P, Lt/C Janett Gasaway, Lt/C Anthony Brown, P, Lt/C Allen Jox, and Cdr Howard Gasaway, P.



P/C Carl Muhlbauer, SN, is presented with the Member of the Year Award.

*Continued next page*

Boaters are party animals, so Changes of Watch and Flag Raisings are perfect excuses to have one, a party, that is. These two pages show a few scenes of Potomac River's change of watch on 3 March when now Past Commander Errol Thompson stood down and Commander Howard Gasaway assumed squadron leadership.

Miss the party? Look for information about the Flag Raising and join us. Stay tuned.



D/C Kay Simkins and Al Simkins. Alicia Wilmont is saying "no more of that delicious chicken for me."

On long sea voyages, ship's crew work in shifts. To stand a watch is to be in control of a vessel during a shift. When the shift ends, the replacement crew arrives to take over operations, a change of watch. A Change of Watch (COW) is also the formal change of command of a vessel or maritime installation. In the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard, the new commander will say to the outgoing commander "Sir, I relieve you." The relieved commander responds "Sir, I stand relieve."

USPS follows a similar tradition. A district officer will inform the outgoing squadron commander that he/she has fully discharged their duties and may stand down, whereupon the commander formally dismisses the bridge officers.

The district officer next swears in the incoming squadron commander, who calls upon the new bridge officers who are then formally invested in office and ceremonially presented with their flag of rank.

In the summer, the commander and bridge officers gather to raise their flags in a ceremony to mark the start of boating season.

Which is the point of everything!



DC City Council Chairman Vincent Gray remarks during the Change of Watch.



Squadron Commander Howard Gasaway, P



D/C Kay Simkins, AP

**2007 Change of Watch: A Photo Essay, continued from previous page**



Errol Thompson, fourth from left, rejoins his fellow past commanders.



**PRPS MEMBER SURVEY**

All of USPS is contemplating changes. Changes to programs, membership, member retention, marketing, and other activities that will move us ahead. We need to interest new members, retain present members and improve and expand our programs and activities. Please take a few minutes and fill out the following survey. If you have concerns or constructive ideas- jot them down! This will help your squadron bring you the programs, classes, and activities you want.

1. How long have you been a member of PRPS? \_\_\_\_\_ Present Grade held S \_\_\_ P \_\_\_ AP \_\_\_ JN \_\_\_ N \_\_\_

2. Would you like to take any Advanced Courses? \_\_\_ Y \_\_\_ N. Check the ones that interest you:  
S \_\_\_ P \_\_\_ AP \_\_\_ JN \_\_\_ N \_\_\_ Weather \_\_\_ Eng. Maint. \_\_\_ Marine Electronics \_\_\_ Cruise Planning \_\_\_

3. Would you volunteer to teach any of the above courses? \_\_\_\_\_ Which ones? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Was the quality of instruction good in the courses you have taken? Give a rating (5 is best).. 5 4 3 2 1

5. Do you like the location where we meet? \_\_\_ Y \_\_\_ N. If not, where would you suggest? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Is the food at the monthly meetings too much \_\_\_ too little \_\_\_ Would you rather meet at a restaurant? \_\_\_

7. Do you like the programs at the monthly meetings? \_\_\_ Y \_\_\_ N Should we meet earlier? \_\_\_ or later \_\_\_

8. Where would you like the PRPS Classes to be held? \_\_\_\_\_ Any ideas or Locations? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Please rate the following squadron Social Activities from 1- 5, (5-Excellent, 4-Good, 3-Fair, 2-Poor, 1-No)

A- Change of Watch	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1	E. Summer Cruise	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
B. D/5 Spring Conference	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1	F. D/5 Nav Contest	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
C. Flag Raising	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1	G. Crab Feast	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
D. Boating Raft-ups	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1	H. Boat Show	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1

10. Do you enjoy the Co-Op Charting Activities? \_\_\_ Y \_\_\_ N How about a Co-Op Charting weekend? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Do you have a boat? \_\_\_ Y \_\_\_ N Sail \_\_\_ Power \_\_\_ Length \_\_\_ Builder \_\_\_  
Do you like the Boating Raft-ups? \_\_\_ Y \_\_\_ N Cruises \_\_\_ Y \_\_\_ N

12. Would you like to see the Squadron have more Boating Activities? \_\_\_ Y \_\_\_ N What type? \_\_\_\_\_

13. How should we attract new members? Basic Boating Courses \_\_\_ Y \_\_\_ N or Recruit from the Dock \_\_\_

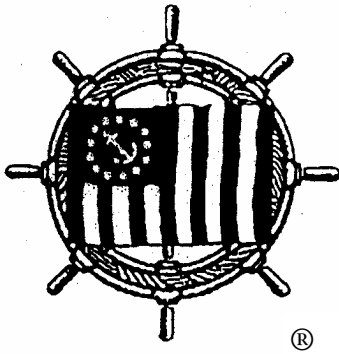
14. Last two questions are for new members. Would you attend a Conference or Squadron Activity if PRPS paid half of your fee? \_\_\_ Y \_\_\_ N.

Would you attend a Saturday Brunch or Breakfast meeting once or twice a year \_\_\_ Y \_\_\_ N?

**Please mail or hand this form to P/C Howard Gasaway, P, 2806 32<sup>nd</sup> Street SE Washington DC 20020 or bring to the next General Meeting.**

Please sign this survey \_\_\_\_\_, or if you prefer, send in as anonymous.  
*Thank you for taking the time. Your opinion is very important to us.*

*~ ~ Howard*



# THE POTOMAC RIVER POWER SQUADRON NEWSLETTER MARCH 2007 ISSUE



<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MARCH</b></p> <p>3 MAR CHANGE OF WATCH 13 MAR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 21 MAR MEMBER MEETING 29 MAR D/5 SPRING CONFERENCE, OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Mark Your Calendar!</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MAY</b></p> <p>8 MAY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 16 MAY MEMBER MEETING</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>APRIL</b></p> <p>01 APR D/5 SPRING CONFERENCE ENDS 10 APR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 18 APR MEMBER MEETING</p>		

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