

Membership Handbook

2012 - 2013



Sanibel Captiva

Sail and Power Squadron

A Unit of the United States Power Squadrons®



Sanibel Captiva Sail & Power Squadron

Member Handbook

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Our Burgee Design

A painting by the wife of then-squadron executive committee member Dick Creter, AP, was chosen as the basis for the design of the SCSPS burgee.

The background of the burgee is white, representing the clarity of the air and sunshine around the islands. The flags at the hoist are the international code flags for “SCPS” which stand for the original name: Sanibel-Captiva Power Squadron. The historic Sanibel lighthouse appears on the center of the burgee. The chevrons on the fly represent the two islands of Sanibel and Captiva and the solid blue at the tip of the burgee represents the mainland. Blue was used to remind us of the beautiful blue sky.



A Brief History

The United States Power Squadrons® (USPS®) is a worldwide boating fraternity dedicated to high standards of seamanship and an appreciation of yachting traditions. The originating Squadron was a splinter group from the Boston Yacht Club. USPS was founded in 1914 to help educate boaters in the use of the newly developed power boats. At the beginning of WWI, the Squadron assisted with Naval Training.

It is now the largest non-profit volunteer organization of recreational power and sail boaters. The national, non-governmental, non-profit safe boating organization has grown to approximately 40,000 members in more than 400 Squadrons located in 33 Districts.

The Mission of the USPS is

“To promote recreational boating skills and boating safety through education, hands-on training and civic activities while providing fellowship for members.”

The Sanibel Captiva Power Squadron was chartered in 1975 by 53 founding members. It is a squadron belonging to District 22, one of 18 Florida Gulf Coast squadrons. It rapidly grew to be, and currently remains, the largest volunteer organization on the islands.

In 1999 our name was changed to include “Sail” and became the

Sanibel Captiva Sail and Power Squadron.

Our Squadron is located in the USPS District 22, which is the largest District in the country with 18 Squadrons covering the West Coast of Florida from Marco Island to the Florida/Georgia border.

Our Organization



Our squadron is governed by an elected **Executive Committee (ExCom)** which includes the elected Flag Officers, also known as the Bridge, and four Members-at-Large.

An organizational chart is shown on the next page.

A **Nominating Committee (NomCom)** consisting of the three immediate past Commanders and two other elected squadron members spend time throughout the year interviewing for and then nominating a proposed slate of officers. Members are also invited to volunteer to serve as leaders by calling the NomCom Chair at any time.

The nominated slate is voted on by the members at the **Annual Business Meeting** held in January. In February, the new officers are “pledged in.” They commence governing and leading the squadron at the annual “*Change of Watch.*”

The **Bridge** consists of the following Flag Officers:

the **Commander (Cdr)**, responsible to the members;

Executive Officer (XO), responsible for civic activities;

the **Squadron Educational Officer (SEO)**,

Administrative Officer (AO), responsible for fraternal activities;

the **Secretary**, responsible for communications;

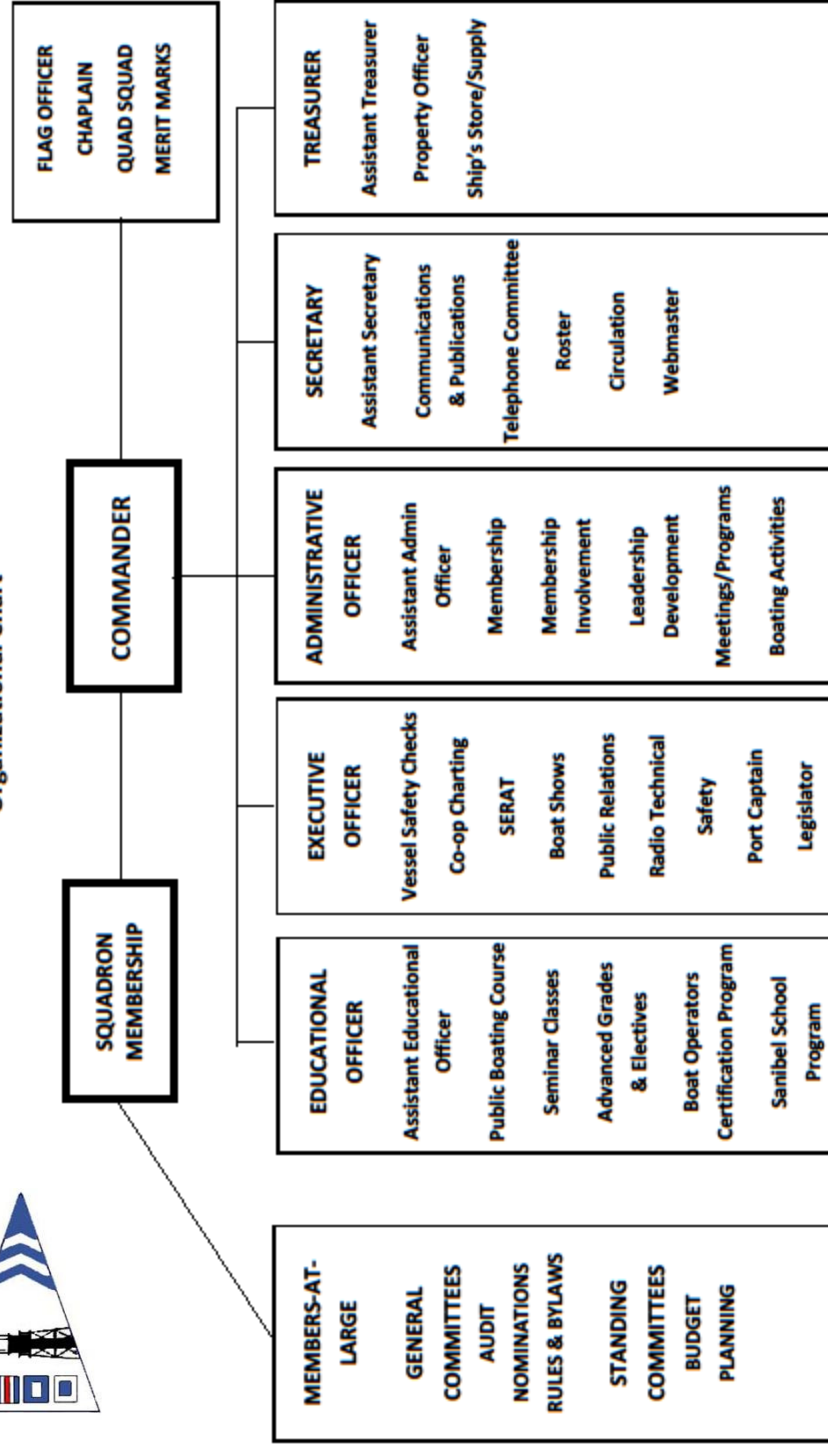
and the **Treasurer**, responsible for property and financials.

The **Members-at-Large** include the immediate Past Commander and three members who are active within the organization to represent their fellow members. Ideally, they are “in training” to become future squadron leaders. The “normal” steps of progression are to serve as the Admin Officer, Executive Officer, then Commander.



SANIBEL CAPTIVA SAIL & POWER SQUADRON

Organizational Chart



Meetings & Social Events

The **Executive Committee** meets on the **first Thursday of the month**, except July and August, to review and approve our squadron activities. Meetings are currently held at the Bank of the Islands on the corner of Periwinkle Way and Casa Ybel, in the boardroom at 0900. Committee Chairs are encouraged to attend to present reports on the plans and current activities of their committees. “ExCom” meetings are open to all members: questions and suggestions are welcome.

Bridge Officers are expected to attend all meetings at the squadron and district level as well as encouraged to attend the USPS National Governing Board and Annual Conference to represent our squadron.



General Membership Meetings are held the **3rd Tuesday** of the months of September, October, November, January, March, April, May, and June. There is no fee to attend these meetings, however, there is a \$17.00* per person charge for the *dinner*.

Location: The Sanibel Community House
2173 Periwinkle Way, Sanibel, FL

Time: 1800 Social Hour and Cash Donation Cocktails
 1845 Business Meeting & Announcements
 1900 Buffet Dinner
 1945 Guest Speaker

These monthly get-togethers provide a time for old and new members to socialize and keep informed of the Squadron’s activities. New members attending for the first time are greeted at the door, introduced to others and pledged into the Squadron.

*dinner price is subject to change

Guest Speakers are invited to present a variety of topics of general interest to our members.

The “uniform” of the day is Squadron Shirts with Name Tags. Both are available through the Ship’s Store which is open during the meetings. You may also contact the Ship’s Store via email at

ShipsStore@SanibelCaptivaSPS.org

. Otherwise, Island Casual wear is appropriate, even shorts.

Members are encouraged to attend the social hour and meetings even if not partaking in the dinner. The dinner is a catered buffet which includes appetizer, salad, main course, dessert and coffee.

Reservations for dinner are required no later than the ***Friday*** prior to the meeting to ensure that there will be enough for all.

Members are reminded via e-mail to send reservations to:

RSVP@SanibelCaptivaSPS.org

Please include your name, names of guests and the number of people in your party in your reservation. Please bring a *check or correct cash payments* to the “docking station” at the door.

Cancellations are accepted until Noon on Monday prior to the meeting, otherwise “No Shows” are billed for reserved dinners.



December Charter Party — The Charter Party is a semi-formal dinner and dance hosted by our Commander. Taking advantage of the festive holiday season, it is held in observance of receiving our charter in September 1975 and to honor our founding members.

In the *Spirit of Giving*, squadron members are asked to bring gifts and/or make a monetary donation to local community food banks and/or children’s support groups.

While our annual budget includes an amount to subsidize the cost, attendees are charged a nominal fee to attend. Dressy Island attire with name tags is appropriate.

Change of Watch (COW) — Each February finds the Squadron Change of Watch ceremony when new officers are pledged into their offices. This historic and traditional ceremony celebrates our yachting heritage, recognizes the volunteer efforts of the preceding year and welcomes the new bridge. It is attended by our members, District Officers, and members of neighbor squadrons.



New Members Reception — Held every spring after the final **ABC3** course, this informal reception gives all new and trial members an opportunity to meet our current officers and major committee chairs to learn more about how our squadron works and what volunteer opportunities are available. All members new to the squadron since the previous reception are invited and encouraged to attend.

Cruise and Rendezvous (C&R) — These social events are planned as boating excursions where members and their guests gather on boats and cruise to restaurants for pre-arranged luncheons. ***You do not need to have a boat to participate - the Cruise Leader will assign you to someone who does!*** C&R arrangements are made by volunteer Cruise Leaders under the guidance of the Boating Activities Chair and held at least monthly from October through May.

Rendezvous time is generally set for 1130. Many locations are also accessible by car for land cruisers and in case of inclement weather.

Detailed information for each C&R, including payment arrangement and sign-up instructions, can be found in the ***Soundings***. Date



reminders are also emailed to all members. Some luncheons are pre-paid, others are “order-off-the-menu”. Reservations are always required, for headcounts and for making boat assignments.

Theatre C&R — In March or April we often cruise (east) up the Caloosahatchee River to the City of Ft Myers Yacht Basin. A short walk across the waterfront brings us to a comfortable restaurant or bistro for our luncheon. Then it’s on to an afternoon at the Florida Repertory Theatre. This is always a great time and not to be missed.

Multi-Day Cruises — Assorted cruises, planned utilizing member boats or public boats and usually with land cruisers in mind, are held over the course of the year to various destinations. Featuring adventures and fun, field trips, and other activities, these events linger on in the memories of members. Volunteer Cruise Leaders choose the destination and make the preliminary plans.

Each **November**, District 22 coordinates a two-night, three day cruise to a marina on the west coast of Florida. Each of the District’s Squadrons take turns over the years hosting and planning the event, which means every so often our squadron steps up to plans the venue and meals, or the entertainment and games. This is an opportunity to meet, talk to, and play with members of other nearby squadrons. While our squadron works to coordinate boats and attendees, “Land Cruisers” are welcome and hotel accommodations are available nearby. Information is provided in the **Soundings**.

Communications & Publications

Squadron Level

Our squadron relies on the following methods of communicating with our members:

Newsletter — The *Soundings* is published and mailed to each member household on about the 25th of each month (except in May, June and July). Included are reports from our officers and committee chairs; a listing of all events scheduled for the next two months, articles about boating safety, member adventures and items of interest taken from other squadron newsletters; event announcements and reports; photos of our members having fun; classified ads; and other items of interest to our members. Submissions to the Editor are welcome:

Soundings@SanibelCaptivaSPS.org

Members are welcome to *opt-out* of receiving the hard copy, thereby saving the squadron some postage and printing costs, as well as lessening the environmental impact. The *Soundings* is primarily funded by paid advertising from local businesses, solicited by members, as well as the members “Anchoring” — sponsoring — individual pages. Refer to the current *Soundings* for rates and contact information.

Email — Members provide an email address for the use of squadron business. This address is shared only with your fellow local members and the National USPS and is not to be used for any other purpose.

Locally, members primarily receive emails concerning events and news of other members. Be sure to set up security levels to allow emails from the following sender:

Postmaster@SanibelCaptivaSPS.org

Any email sent to the *entire* membership must be approved by the Commander and must be sent via the Postmaster. Please respect other members privacy and computer security when communicating via email.

Squadron Website — www.usps.org/localusps/sancap

Our website contains everything you need to know about our squadron. Under the various tabs you will find our bylaws, digital copies of our handbook, the current and back issues of the ***Soundings***, the latest information about our Educational offerings and social events and calendar with all current and future activities shown in a standard calendar format (downloadable and printable, even linkable to your own digital calendar). Click on any event for the details of who, what, when, and where.

Membership Roster — Each year a Membership Roster is printed in a booklet form and provided to each member household. It contains a complete membership listing, including: phone numbers, addresses and emails as well as member IDs, ranks and grades, number of merit marks earned, membership status, boat names, and for fun: “up-north” destinations. Please respect member privacy and do not share this information with non-members: it is not provided for commercial use.

Once the Membership Chair has entered your basic information, the database is maintained on DB2000, the national membership database and by our Squadron Roster Chair. It is up to each member to provide changes by sending an email to:

Roster@SanibelCaptivaSPS.org

National and District Communications & Publications

www.usps.org — There is a wealth of information on the National website, much of it updated on a regular basis, including member information, dues renewal, national activities, details of educational

offerings and class schedules, etc. To get to “member only” pages, be sure to login using your member ID number and by setting up a password. All kinds of links to information is provided on the “How do I....?” page at

<http://www.usps.org/newpublic2/howto.html>

Email from National: watch for emails, *most notably your annual membership renewal notice*, from “nobody@usps.org.”

The Ensign is a full-color quarterly magazine, written and produced by USPS volunteers, that is printed and mailed to all USPS members.

The USPS Compass and Monthly Broadcast are brief newsletters with links to more in-depth articles sent via email from the national headquarters. Watch for emails from addresses ending in @hq.usps.org.

www.usps.org/localusps/d22/ — Information about District 22 is available at this website.

The **Beacon22** is the district newsletter, published four times a year containing articles and information from District Officers. It is included within the **Soundings** and posted on the District website.

About this Handbook

This Handbook has been produced through a collaboration of volunteers, including the current Membership Chair and Committee. Special *thanks* go out to Dotty Mount for her work in gathering new information and typesetting the major drafts of the Membership Handbook section. Thank you to our Roster Chair, Kate Fizer, who has diligently tracked and recorded the changing contact information details of our members in the Roster section. The Front Cover Photographs of Sanibel Island were contributed by SCSPS member Corky Boyd, P. A few member boats are pictured in the canal photograph. Layout and Design were contributed by Lt/C Victoria Ross, AP.

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Merit Marks, Ranks & Uniforms

The USPS uses a system of merit marks, ranks and grades to recognize, acknowledge and reward the volunteer time and educational accomplishments of its members.



Merit Marks — *The USPS is an organization of volunteers without whom there would be no Squadrons.* There are less than a dozen paid staff and warehouse employees working for the USPS national office.

A member's efforts must be worthwhile and reasonably substantial to receive the award. All the work a member does throughout the year is considered. Attending classes or general membership meetings is a privilege of membership and is not considered to be an effort made on behalf of USPS. However, teaching a class, working on a committee, being the featured speaker at a meeting, helping with dinner meeting set-up and clean-up and taking photographs usually counts toward earning a Merit Mark.

When a member earns five Merit Marks, he or she becomes a Senior Member and after earning 25 Merit Marks, he or she becomes a Life Member, at which time they are exempt from paying *National dues*.

Potential Merit Mark awardees are nominated by Committee Chairs and members of the Bridge. Details are meticulously entered into a special database within DB2000 by our squadron's Merit Mark Chair, reviewed by the current Commander, and then submitted to a National committee for final review. Upon final approval, the Chief Commander issues the Merit Mark certificate (which is sent via email to the member).

Ranks — Leaders and Committee Chairs and leaders are recognized with the following honorary titles:

Cdr denotes a Squadron's current Commander;

Lt/C denotes elected Bridge officers: Executive, Education,
and Administrative Officers, Secretary and Treasurer;
1/Lt denotes elected Assistant Officers;
P/C is a member who has served as a Commander in the past;
P/Lt/C is an honorary title denoting a person who served as a
Lt/C for at least three years;
Lt denotes current Committee Chairs.

Our squadron has several members who are currently or have
in the past served as District and National Officers . They are recog-
nized with the following honorary titles:

D/C for a current District Commander
P/D/C for a past District Commander
D/Lt/C for a current District Bridge Offer
1/D/Lt/C for a current District Assistant Officer
D/Lt for a current District Chair
Stf/C for an assistant chair of a national committee
R/C denotes one who is the chair of a national committee
C/C denotes the current Chief Commander of the USPS

For more information about Ranks, go to:

Flags & Uniforms — In keeping with its nautical heritage, the USPS
developed a set of uniforms and a flag system similar to other boating
organizations.

Within our Squadron there is not a lot of emphasis on the full
uniforms, however uniforms are part of USPS tradition and many
members enjoy them. Some of the squadrons within our District put
much more emphasis on uniforms and the “uniform of the day” is
specified for all official District and National events., specified in the
call to meeting or agenda. To learn more about USPS uniforms, go
to:

<http://www.usps.org/national/om/pdfs/opsmanab.pdf>

A Squadron logo shirt is always appropriate during the day at any USPS event as well as for our monthly meetings.

Our Change of Watch is a formal event. Bridge Officers who decide not to invest in uniforms will wear white shirts, ties and black jackets with slacks or skirts. Women wear a “cross-over” black tie.

Wearing a logo shirt indicates you are a member of the team!

Within our Squadron, the SERAT group, Certified Instructors and Vessel Safety Examiners each have distinctive shirts for easy identification at events.

Our Ship’s Store is open during monthly business meetings, where an assortment of shirts is on display. Sizes and colors may be ordered upon request. For more information, contact

ShipsStore@SanibelCaptivaSPS.org

During the Change of Watch, incoming Bridge officers are presented with flags which indicate their rank.

Flags are signals. Each flag and signal conveys to others something specific about a vessel or its personnel, whether it be nationality, club affiliation, maneuvering situation, office held or any number of other things. Like officers of most yacht clubs, USPS officers are accorded the privilege of flying officer flags. Moreover, USPS goes somewhat beyond yacht club practice in authorizing distinctive flags, not only for the customary elected officers but also for appointed lieutenants and a variety of past officers.

During the Change of Watch, the outgoing Commander and Lieutenant Commanders are presented with new flags.

To learn more about USPS Protocol, Etiquette and Flag Code, go to:

Squadron Commander



Lieutenant Commander



First Lieutenant



Education Program

The primary purpose of the USPS is educating *the boating public* to follow safe boating rules, maritime laws and learn on-the-water handling techniques which make boating safer and more fun for everyone. This is done through a number of courses and seminars developed by the USPS National Education Committee.

Our classes and seminars are taught by ***volunteer Instructors***. Courses have been designed to cover the basics of recreational boating for all types of watercraft. Topics include a wide range of boating subjects from basic seamanship, use of electronics, engine maintenance, charting and even an introduction to celestial navigation, as well as boating laws and regulations. All courses and seminars are open to members as well as to the public.

Our Education program, current schedule of classes and full course descriptions are included in more detail in our new booklet:

[2012-13 Boating Education Programs](http://www.usps.org/localusps/sancap/education.shtml)

<http://www.usps.org/localusps/sancap/education.shtml>

America's Boating Course 3 (ABC3) — is the most basic boating course. It is offered by our squadron several times each year. Meeting the National Association of State Boating Law Administration's (NASBLA) requirements, it also includes a section on Florida specific laws.



USPS has developed a series of programs targeted to a range of boaters and types of boating.

Courses and Seminars are described in detail on the USPS website and in our Squadron Educational Handbook.

The ***Advanced Grades*** are a series of in-depth navigational courses. Completion of the highest level course determines a member's "grade."

Elective Courses cover a wide discipline of courses that cover related boating topics other than navigation and are offered as part of

the instructed course curriculum.

The ***Seminar Series*** features short seminars targeted to specific boating topics and needs. Each seminar provides credits toward the ***Boat Operator Certification (BOC)*** program.

Recognition — Upon joining the USPS, members are given certificates on which to track their educational achievements by attaching the stickers received from National after successful completion of a course. Roster listings include a letter listed after the member's name indicating the latest level of proficiency:

**S — Seamanship; P — Piloting; AP — Advanced Piloting
JN — Junior Navigation; N — Navigation**

SN — Senior Navigator: a member who has successfully completed all the advanced courses and at least six of the elective classes. The SN indicates the member is a “full certificate holder” and that he or she has filled their educational certificate. An underline under any grade designation means a member has earned an Education Achievement Award by passing at least three elective courses.



The U.S. Coast Guard has asked Congress to establish requirements for standards of proficiency for recreational boaters. USPS has developed a certification program which is expected to be accepted as the national certificate for the USA.

There are plans for four levels of **Boat Operator Certification (BOC)**: Inland Navigator, Coastal Navigator, Advanced Coastal Navigator and Offshore Navigator.

A certificate of operator proficiency is valuable for members when obtaining insurance or when renting, chartering or leasing a boat.

Sanibel School Program — An important facet of our volunteer civic and education program is the course taught to all sixth graders

at the Sanibel School. This is a full eight-week/term class taught in conjunction with one of the sixth grade teachers by one or more of our dedicated Certified Instructors. Students learn about knots, nautical terms, different types of boats, local waters, electronics and communication equipment, rules of the road and more. With successful completion of the class, they earn their Florida Safe Boater's Certificate. They even have the opportunity to participate in the annual National Safety Poster competition. Split into teams, students compete for points throughout the duration of the course with the winning team earning a tour of the local Coast Guard facility and boats.

To learn more about becoming a ***Certified Instructor***, to find out more about our course offerings and/or to volunteer within the Education Department, contact:

Education@SanibelCaptivaSPS.org

Civic Service Activities

In addition to Fraternal and Educational goals, the USPS promotes several public safety programs to help make boating more fun for all.



Vessel Safety Checks (VSC) — This program provides public relations contact with other boaters. It helps boaters to achieve voluntary compliance with federal and state recreational boating safety laws, particularly with regard to the carriage of safety equipment while raising boater awareness about safety and environmental issues through volunteer contact.

Certified Vessel Safety Examiners go to marinas as well as public and private docks by appointment, coordinated with the VSC Chair. Members can become a Certified Examiner after taking an on-line course and then completing several boat inspections under the

guidance of an experienced certified examiner. A minimum of five inspections per year is required to maintain VSC examiner status. For more information on becoming a Vessel Safety Examiner, email VesselSafety@SanibelCaptivaSPS.org



Cooperative Charting — The Cooperative Charting Program of the United States Power Squadron is conducted in close coordination with the Marine Chart Division, National Ocean Service and NOAA. The program is a major public service of USPS. Members supply information to the Marine Chart Division of NOS/NOAA leading to corrections to nautical charts, small craft survey and range status. The Adopt-a-Chart subprogram provides for individual squadrons to assume responsibility to keep a chart or a portion of a chart in their local boating area up to date and get recognition on new editions for their work. We have been told that the Cooperative Charting Program is recognized as the most effective user-participation program in all the Federal services. A boat is not necessary to become involved in this worthwhile cause. All members can participate very easily and with minimal training.

SCSPS and three other nearby squadrons have adopted and are responsible for portions of Chart # 11427. In addition to reports turned in on an ongoing basis, our squadron holds an annual **“Co-op Rally”** during January and February. Squadron Members form teams and set out to inspect certain specific areas as assigned by the Co-op Chair. Our squadron and our district are among the top co-op charting participants in the country and frequently win awards for participation and contributions. For more information, contact:

Co-opCharting@SanibelCaptivaSPS.org



Squadron Emergency Response Assistance Team

(SERAT) — is now a sanctioned arm of the USPS whose mission is to render volunteer assistance to local fire departments, law enforcement and other marine agencies in the event of a water related

emergency. The primary function is to provide a team of qualified and experienced boaters with knowledge of local waters who are willing to donate time, effort and equipment to assist in the event of an emergency. Assignments may include water search and rescue, water related patrols and help in securing an area.

This program began shortly after Hurricane Charlie ravaged our area, resulting in the islands of Sanibel and Captiva being closed to everyone but rescue personnel for at least a week and open only to residents for several more weeks. On-the-water patrols could have provided additional security. With the support of the City of Sanibel fire and police departments, the SERAT members have co-ordinated training, purchased equipment and supplied member boats with basic search and rescue tools. In addition to boaters, land-based volunteers are trained in communications and other support roles.

Funded in part by grants and in part through dues, in 2010 & 2011 the Sanibel SERAT team introduced their program at National USPS meetings. Squadrons across the country are now working toward building rapport with their local law enforcement and adding SERAT to their list of Civic Service Programs. For more information and/or to join this group, contact

SERAT@SanibelCaptivaSPS.org



Opportunities for Volunteering

“Many hands make light work”



As you have learned by reading this booklet, there are many tasks to be accomplished in order to keep our squadron cruising smoothly. We meet our goals in boating education, civic service, and as a social group by working together. All of our jobs, small or large, “employ” volunteers.

What skills and talents do you have to contribute to help make *Boating Safe and Fun for ALL*? From volunteering and working with others, great friendships can develop. You might be directly responsible for saving a life. You can learn new skills from the amazing range of executives, professionals and leaders who belong to our squadron. Better yet, teach another member something new!

You get out of an organization what you put into it. It is always more fun to be involved than to be a “watcher”. Look around at the next meeting, class, or event you attend and think where you might fit in. Review this booklet and think about all the civic activities, committees, social gatherings, and classes that are taught and remember:

everyone making things happen is a volunteer.

Specific “help wanted” ads are published in the *Soundings* and announced via email. Contact our current Commander, a Bridge Officer or a specific Committee Chair to apply for a job!

***We look forward to volunteering together
and to fun, safe boating with you.***



SANIBEL-CAPTIVA SAIL & POWER SQUADRON

A Unit of the
UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS®

www.usps.org/localusps/sancap

Email Addresses for Bridge Officers

Commander

Commander@SanibelCaptivaSPS.org

Executive Officer

ExecOfficer@SanibelCaptivaSPS.org

Educational Officer

Education@SanibelCaptivaSPS.org

Administrative Officer

AdminOfficer@SanibelCaptivaSPS.org

Secretary

Secretary@SanibelCaptivaSPS.org

Treasurer

Treasurer@SanibelCaptivaSPS.org