

# Currents

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### Hot topics

- New boating course coming soon (see adjacent article)
- New seminars available (see adjacent article)
- New Weather course is imminent (see adjacent article)
- National TA contest deferred (see note on page 3)
- Boat Operator Certification Insurance resolved (see note on page 4)

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## America's Boating Course 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition

*America's Boating Course 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (ABC 3)* will be available to order from Headquarters on 31 October 2008.

This course has been certified by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) and recognized by the U.S. Coast Guard. It has been extensively revised and re-

written to address new technological developments and meet updated state requirements.

*ABC 3* can be completed in one of three ways. Participants will be able to take the course on the Internet, as a CD based course, or in a classroom setting. All students will receive a comprehensive full-color text and a

self-study animated and narrated CD. The book and CD serve as easy-to-use references after the course has been completed.

The course has two parts. Part I, the NASBLA required material, has four chapters, each requiring about 2 hours of instruction. The chapters are as follows:  
*(Continued on page 2)*

## Coming Soon—Weather 2008

At the 2008 Annual meeting we reported that the next edition of our Weather course had been rewritten, and had been Beta tested.

We expected Weather 08 (Wx08) to be in the final stages of printing and distribution at the time of the Annual Meeting. But as we were preparing the material

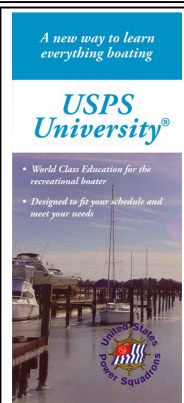
for printing, it became apparent that the color graphics in the Beta edition would not print with the level of quality we expected.

During the spring and summer, all the graphics were recolored, resized, and retouched. Then a final revision was made to the sequence of presentation. We now expect

Weather 08 to be in the final stages of printing and distribution at the time of this Governing Board meeting.

In Wx08 we consolidated our material into one Weather course. The chapter titles are:  
*(Continued on page 2)*

## USPS University—New Seminars



Seminars continue as the most exciting part of our new USPS University program. They have engendered wide interest and are providing a direct route to attracting experienced boaters to USPS.

To date, over a dozen seminars have

been released and more are in the works.

Some of the latest topics in the USPS University series include: *Trailer Your Boat, Paddle Smart™, Marine Radar, Anchoring,*

*(Continued on page 3)*

(**ABC 3**—Continued from page 1)

- Chapter 1 - Section 1: Getting Started  
 Section 2: Required Safety Equipment  
 Section 3: Going Boating
- Chapter 2 - Section 4: Navigation Rules  
 Section 5: Navigation Aids  
 Section 6: Lights and Sound Signals  
 Section 7: Government Regulations  
 Section 8: State and Local Regulations
- Chapter 3 - Section 9: Finding Your Way  
 Section 10: Anchoring  
 Section 11: Adverse Conditions and Emergencies  
 Section 12: Communications Afloat
- Chapter 4 - Section 13: Water Sports Safety  
 Section 14: Trailering

Section 15: Personal Watercraft Operation  
 Section 16: Knots and Lines

Part II, is an optional extension that provides an introduction to Piloting. Chapter 5 is taught in 4 hours (two 2-hour sessions) and has 2 sections;

Section 17 - Introduction to Navigation  
 Section 18 - Charts

The instructor manual is being completely redone and a new PowerPoint® slide disk will be available.

A parallel effort is also underway to significantly upgrade the existing Internet ABC courseware. This “face lift” will augment the existing online and disk-based graphics with new material and align it with the flow of the new boating course manual.

Only the material in Part I of the text will be covered in the home study CD. The new disk will be included in the release of *ABC 3* on 31 October.

(**Weather**—Continued from page 1)

1. The Atmosphere: Temperature and Heat
2. Wind, Pressure, and Waves
3. Water, Humidity, and Fog
4. Stability, Clouds and Precipitation
5. Thunderstorms, Tornados, Lightning, and Optical Effects
6. Mid-latitude Weather and Storms
7. Tropical Weather and Storms
8. Forecasting

#### Appendices

- A—Regional Weather  
 B—Weather Glossary  
 C—Homework & Exercise Answers

*USA Today's The Weather Book* will **not** be included in our student kit going forward. Instead, we have embedded many of *The Weather Book* color graphics into our student manual. We have also included weather graphics from the National Weather Service, from Bowditch, and from university meteorology departments.

We have reintroduced topics such as wind-driven waves and optical phenomena, which we had omitted from our current edition. The three day



weather map analysis is retained from prior Wx editions, as we believe it to be a worthwhile exercise in understanding how weather systems move. In addition, we have incorporated many Internet-based forecasting aids and links.

The Instructor CD contains PowerPoint images of some 250 weather graphics used in the Wx08 Student Manual, in order by chapter and page. In addition, we have included numerous supplemental weather-related slides on the CD for optional use by the instructor.

## Mini-Courses

Some topics deserve more than a single brief seminar session. They will be presented in a series of seminar or mini-courses.

Two examples are **Advanced Powerboat Handling** which will be available within the month and **Partner in Command** which will be available in early 2009.

**Advanced Powerboat Handling** provides extensive coverage of this topic of interest to all boaters. The three-part seminar can be delivered in 6-8 hours, and can be even coupled with on-the-water training.

**Partner in Command** provides basic training for someone who is regularly aboard but is not the primary boat operator and yet may be called upon to take over for the skipper in an emergency. This seminar replaces *Skipper Saver*.

(Seminars-Continued from page 1)

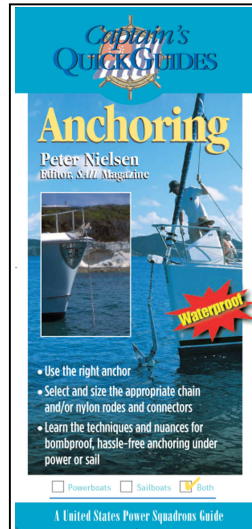
### *Knots, Bends, and Hitches for Mariners, and Hurricanes and Boats*

*Paddle Smart™* was described in the last issue of *Currents*. The trailerboating seminar includes a new McGraw-Hill USPS guide called **Trailer Your Boat** written by Bruce Smith. This book covers all aspects of trailerboating including the tow vehicle and hitch, as well as handing both at the ramp and on the road. The seminar also features excellent PowerPoint slides and video provided to us by the Coast Guard.

**Marine Radar** is an increasingly popular and essential tool. Unfortunately, most of what has been written on radar has been oriented toward the commercial user. Our new seminar is aimed at practical applications for recreational boaters. It explains how to interpret radar displays, how to adjust the radar for various conditions, and the rationale for selection and installation of marine radar. It includes extensive PowerPoint slides with animations, and an excellent reference book written by Kevin Monahan.

**Anchoring** is a continuing learning experience for every boater. This semi-

nar explains about the various types of anchors and how they work and why you would select a particular anchor for specific conditions and boats. Various techniques are explained and supporting data is provided for properly sizing anchors and rodes. The seminar comes with a waterproof quick guide and extensive seminar notes.



**Knots, Bends and Hitches** is a popular and practical topic for everyone. This seminar includes a die-cut knot “board” and lines in addition to the USPS guide, *Knots, Bends, and Hitches for the Mariner*, and notes. Participants receive a handy take-away guide and knot kit.

**Hurricanes and Boats** is the first of a series of low-cost shorter seminars which are ideal for meetings and outreach. This seminar covers the important topic of preparation to protect your

boat from a hurricane.

Many insurance companies are requesting hurricane plans from boat owners. This seminar provides the basics for such a plan. Seminar notes are available for distribution to the participants.

## New Teaching Aids Competition for 2010

The Teaching Aids Committee recently announced that the teaching aids program and competition is undergoing some renovations. Because of this, **the national competition has been suspended for the 2009 Annual Meeting in Anaheim.** In its place, the committee will present a “**Teaching Aids Extraganza**” at the 2009 annual Expo. On display will be some of the best teaching aid entries from previous years, as well as demonstrations on how to prepare a winning entry for the competition.

The **national competition will resume at the 2010 Annual Meeting** in Orlando. Districts with an annual TA competition will be encouraged to submit the Best of Show winners for both 2008 and 2009 at the national 2010 competition.

## Trawler Fests

In Norfolk, our NEO & AsstNEO met with Amy Pinter who is the event manager for Trawler Fest. It turns out that our seminars are a perfect match for this substantial audience. We have presented tailored seminars at three Trawler Fest events so far this year (Stuart, FL; Anacortes, WA; Greenport, NY) and will do so at Solomons, MD late this month.

What is Trawler Fest? It is a boating event for cruising boaters and those

who are interested in cruising boats. Trawler Fest is owned by *Passage-Maker Magazine*. Seminars and educational programs feature prominently in the four-day event. The event features boats to tour, exhibits, demonstrations, and a series of upbeat social events.

Surprisingly, a large percentage of the attendees were not familiar with USPS – but presenting our seminars is quickly changing that. These are some serious boaters with trawlers and other boats

ranging from 25 – 55 feet. The participants are eager to learn and our seminars have been well attended.

Trawler Fests provide us the opportunity to do vessel safety checks, showcase USPS, demonstrate equipment, and more. Trawler Fests are far better than boat shows for our purposes and provide a superb, enjoyable opportunity to attract boaters who really will enjoy joining USPS and participating in our organization.

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## Boat Operator Certification Update

**USPS insurance covering Boat Operator Certification (BOC) activities is now in place.** As soon as any USPS certifier steps aboard a boat to train other certifiers or perform a certification, USPS liability and hull insurance provides primary coverage.

**We need boats for training and certification.** Part of the training for Advanced Certifiers is on the water. Requiring candidates to provide the boat to be used for training is sometimes impractical. This is where a District or a group of squadrons in a particular area can help by arranging for a time, place and one of more boats to be made available for a day or two. The provided boats can be used to train new Advanced Certifiers or certify on-the-water skills for members. Let your regional certifier know if you can offer your boat. See the BOC web page for contact information.

## Notes for DEOs & SEOs

### Advanced BOC Certifiers Needed

**DEOs and SEOs** - Specially trained certifiers, **Advanced Certifiers**, are critical to the BOC program, and **we need more of them**. If you know a member who would enjoy being on the water, and is a skilled boat operator and teacher, ask them for a boating experience resume and submit it to the Regional Certifier in your area. Contact information for your Regional Certifier is on the BOC web page.

### Keep Your Instructors Informed

Information concerning course and seminar changes sent via the DEO and SEO E-mail Lists should be passed on to instructors as soon as possible. This information may include significant changes, updates, and study/exam question information. Also, encourage your instructors to consult the web site for their course before they teach each class.

### Course Instructor Blogs

We plan to set up Web Logs (Blogs) for each course so instructors can share ideas and solutions. SEOs-please submit course instructor names and e-mail addresses to Pat Governale at [pgovernale@optonline.net](mailto:pgovernale@optonline.net).

### Seamanship Via the Internet

Our members who cannot take a regularly scheduled *Seamanship* course can now take it via the Internet! For more information go to this URL:

[http://www.usps.org/national/eddept/s/online\\_sea.htm](http://www.usps.org/national/eddept/s/online_sea.htm)

### JN99 Must Be Completed by December 2008

Students have until this December to complete the sight folder, open book and closed book exams of *JN99*. **Students may NOT substitute *JN07* test elements for any part of *JN99* not completed.**

## New Marine Electronics Courses

The Marine Electronics courses are being revised from the ground up. Based on the three module format previously known as ME101/102/103, the ME curriculum will soon consist of three complete, standalone courses. (Note that successful completion of any 6 of the 8 electives along with all advanced grades courses will earn a member the grade of SN.)

**Marine Electrical Systems**, the first course in the new series, covers AC and DC circuitry found on today's recreational boats. Basic circuit theory is presented, along with detailed instruc-

tions on troubleshooting using basic tools such as the multimeter. Battery technology, corrosion, electrolysis, and lightning protection are also covered in the course.

**Marine Communications Systems**, the second course, includes a chapter on GMDSS, the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System. Digital Selective Calling is treated in depth as an alternative to traditional voice radiotelephony. Coverage of satellite communications systems, cellular phones, and AIS (the Automatic Identification System) is also provided.

Both of these courses are in final edit and we are seeking squadrons to beta test them. EMSCOM chose to wait until both courses were ready for release so that the ME101/102 text could be completely replaced.

**Marine Navigation Systems**, the third course, should be ready by early 2009. This course will describe the electronic devices available to the recreational mariner and should be a useful adjunct to JN and N. It will cover GPS, Radar, LORAN C, computer software for navigation and on-board networks.