

Chapter 13

MEMBERSHIP MANUAL

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> [13.1] Preface [13.2] Who, What, Where, When and Why [13.3] USPS University [13.4] USPS Membership Webpage [13.5] Member Benefits [13.6] Recruiting [13.7] Membership Requirements [13.8] Types of Membership [13.9] Dues Categories [13.10] Dues [13.11] Headquarters Collection of Dues (HQAB) [13.12] Reinstatement Policy [13.13] Squadron Membership Chairperson [13.14] District Membership Chairperson [13.15] National Membership Chairperson | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> [13.16] Dialogues with Prospective Members [13.17] The Interview - General [13.18] Interview Environment [13.19] Effective Questioning Techniques [13.20] Basic Squadron Facts and FAQ [13.21] Educational Opportunities [13.22] Social Activities [13.23] Discover Involvement! [13.24] What is Involvement? [13.25] Forming a Retention / Involvement Team [13.26] New Member Assimilation [13.27] Mentor / Buddy Program [13.28] Orientation Program [13.29] Involvement |
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13.1 Preface. United States Power Squadrons is recognized as the foremost boating educational organization in the world. To maintain our reputation and to continue as a vital organization, we must attract new members and retain our present membership. Only if we are successful in doing this shall we continue to grow and be able to continue our work in education, in promoting boating safety and in service to the public to whom we are dedicated.

Membership is the foundation of USPS. We need members to staff and attend our educational courses. We need capable, involved and dedicated members to form and chair our committees and provide the leadership for all of our efforts to ensure a bright future for USPS.

Every member of USPS is a member of the Squadron Membership Committee and shares the responsibility for recruiting new members and retaining current members.

Community Outreach Programs and Youth Activities are excellent initiatives designed to increase community awareness of USPS and engage our members in actions which benefit our retention/involvement program.

All of us should be committed to welcome new

members aboard and integrate them into the squadron with the ideals to which we subscribe.

13.2 Who, What, Where, When and Why of United States Power Squadrons. Before 1900, most recreational boats were sail-powered; everything relating to recreational boating was geared to sailing. There were a few steam-powered boats, but they required large crews. Shortly after the turn of the century, gasoline-powered craft became available and many boaters bought them; power boating became a popular activity.

Since skills and education were all directed to sailing at that time, power boaters found themselves in a skill and knowledge gap. In 1912, Roger Upton decided to fill that gap by forming an unofficial Power Boat Division of the Boston Yacht Club. A year later, that division became "The Power Squadrons."

Power Squadrons received considerable media attention. Interest began to spread. During 1913, over 70 power-boat clubs and owners' associations met at the New York Yacht Club. At the second meeting of this group, United States Power Squadrons was officially formed.

Desiring some unique identification, this new group designed the ensign including a fouled

anchor, encircled by 13 stars on a red field with 13 vertical blue and white stripes, as shown here.



To protect the USPS Ensign, Roger Upton applied for and received a United States design patent, number 48,803, issued in April 1914, which expired in 1928. To permanently protect the flag, however, trademark and copyright registrations were obtained, both of which have been maintained ever since.

On 6 April 1917, Charles F. Chapman sent a letter to the Navy Department, offering the services of USPS instructional program to train men for the Naval Coastal Defense. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, formally accepted the offer. Over 5,000 students attended these classes and entered the military. As a result of their USPS training, many earned commissions in the U. S. Navy. During both World War I and World War II, USPS supported the war efforts by training many naval navigators.

Thus, from the club-within-a-club beginning of USPS at the start of the twentieth century evolved the largest private, fraternal, self-supporting, non-profit, non-governmental and non-military organization of power boaters and sail boaters in the world.

Over the years, USPS has expanded throughout the United States and the Caribbean. There is

even a squadron in Tokyo, Japan. Now, a member is one of approximately 40,000 members in 440 squadrons. We work, study and play with members of our neighboring squadrons. Several nearby squadrons have joined together into a “district,” one of 33 geographically-related districts in USPS.

Our educational courses have been continuously developed, improved and expanded since USPS's early days so they remain current. Each of those courses is available when and where you choose - with members of your own squadron, members of other squadrons, or independently.

In addition to our educational programs, we enjoy cruises together, we perform a host of civic services and we have all sorts of fun: picnics, parties, et cetera. Don't miss out on these.

13.3 USPS University is now up to speed and gaining momentum. There are three important aspects of the University: choices, current information and real skill development. Choices offers material tailored to your interests rather than “one size fits all.” Current information is essential in knowing how to use today's equipment. Real skill development means more hands-on training. The implementation of USPS University satisfies the three key aspects through: Updated and expanded courses, USPS University Seminar Series and Boat Operator Certification (BOC). We have updated many of our core courses and are continuing to update all of our courses. Marine Electronics is being rewritten into three entirely separate courses. These updated courses are shipping at triple the rate of prior years.

USPS University is here with new programs targeted to a range of boaters and types of boating. The hallmark of this concept is the Seminar Series. These short seminars are targeted to specific topics and needs with a two-hour format and valuable take-away guides. Each seminar provides credits toward the soon to be released Boat Operator Certification program and credit toward elective courses.

Ten seminars are now available in the USPS University Seminar Series and more will be available soon. These seminars represent our future and

the best way to attract experienced boaters to become members while giving our current members a reason to stay involved. The first of the four levels of Boat Operator Certification, Inland Navigator, is ready to begin followed shortly by the second level, Coastal Navigator. BOC introduces formal, on-the-water skill demonstrations and the issued certificates provide widely-recognized credentials to those who complete these programs.

A Boat Operator Certification (BOC) is a new program for USPS. With BOC, we will be certifying our members as recreational boat operators at one of four levels ranging from certification to operate on rivers and small lakes up to ocean crossings. We are now rolling out the first level, Inland Navigator. To manage this program, we are training certifiers who will observe and document skill demonstrations and help members with other aspects of the program. We plan to have certifiers in every squadron. Each certifier will report to one of eight regional chairmen of certifiers, also called regional certifiers. Each district is assigned to one of eight geographic regions. Regional certifiers have one or two assistants, depending on the membership in the region and report to the National Educational Officer (NEO). Some certifiers are also specially trained to teach the U. S. Sailing Association Safe Powerboat Handling on-the-water course. They are called Master Certifiers and

will also report to the regional certifier or in some cases could also be a regional certifier.

We are preparing a web site that will have more information, including the complete certification manual, certifier training presentations and contact information for the assigned regional, assistant regional and advanced certifiers as well as useful forms and tools for certification. The regional certifiers are now running training seminars for certifiers in their regions.

13.4 USPS Web Page contains information about educational courses, National Committees, upcoming National Meetings and much more.

13.5 Member Benefits. USPS has expanded services for its members over the years. One of the most important enhancements to membership today is the boat insurance program. Special terms, coverage for older boats and personal service are just some of the benefits of the USPS Insurance Program. The Member Benefits Committee can also provide information on discounts for airline reservations and auto rentals. We have our own USPS credit card for members who enjoy using that convenience. Discounts are available on Dell computers and on various software packages. Long-term Care Insurance is also available to USPS members.

BASICS OF RECRUITING

SECTION 1 ... THE BASICS



13.6 Recruiting. United States Power Squadrons is a private, non-profit, educational and social organization of people interested in boating and dedicated to the advancement of safe boating through education. USPS, consisting of hundreds of squadrons nationwide and internationally, is the world's largest boating education group.

As a member driven organization and to assure continued success, recruiting new members is important. Our long history is built on membership. This is a fact of life! USPS Public Boating Courses and other National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) approved courses are prime markets to recruit future leaders at all levels of the organization. They have students of all ages who are eager to learn and are waiting to be asked to be contributing members, so that we

will all benefit from their talents and abilities. A key part of bringing new members into USPS is interviewing candidates to ensure a continuous influx of new members who can benefit from USPS programs and who will have a commitment to advancing those programs.

In the past, almost all of our new members were recruited at the squadron boating classes which are taught to the public. This is still our main source of members. Traditionally, during the class, USPS is introduced to them. At the end of the class, on “graduation” night, one-on-one interviews are conducted. Typical questions and answers follow in “Recruiting Dialogues - Interviewing Guidelines.”

The 2007 Governing Board temporarily

waived the course requirement for three years. However, squadrons may elect to require the passing of a NASBLA “approved” boating course as a requirement for membership.

We are now recruiting from the community, neighbors, churches, schools, yacht clubs, marinas, family and friends. This is a good practice because we do this every day in other aspects of life. We ask our co-workers to lunch, neighbors for coffee, et cetera. We surround ourselves with friends. This is what we now do to recruit members for our squadron. We ask them to attend a meeting or an event. These people take part in our activities. They get to know us. They learn about our member educational courses. They become members.

No matter how you recruit, there are some forms and information which you should know before you approach anyone. Know how much the dues are for the year, the types of membership, dues categories and who should receive the completed forms (that is, Membership/Recruiting Chair; Secretary, Treasurer or Roster Chairman). Be familiar with the forms. There are different forms for new members, for transfers, for the spouses of current members as well as reinstatements. A copy of the completed form is sent to Headquarters so that the member can be processed. There are people in your squadron who need this information so be sure to check the bottom of the form for distribution listing.

13.7 Membership Requirements

- Must be able and willing to contribute time, energy and skills to the objectives of USPS
- Must be accepted by the Squadron Executive Committee
- Must be at least 18 years of age
- Must have paid all applicable entrance fees and dues as required by National, District and Squadron
- Although USPS currently has no educational requirement for membership, squadrons may elect to require the passing of a NASBLA “approved” boating course as a requirement for membership.

13.8 Types of Membership

Active Member

- Takes courses
- Attends meetings
- Votes
- Holds elected or appointed office
- Earns merit marks
- Receives *The Ensign*

Additional Active Member

- Takes courses
- Attends meetings
- Votes
- Holds elected or appointed office
- Earns merit marks

Family or Apprentice / Sea Scout

- Takes courses
- Earns family merit marks
- Family members under the age of 18 are classified as junior family members
- Attends meetings but cannot vote
- Apprentice/Sea Scout membership extends from age 12 to end of the dues year of 23rd birthday
- Apprentice/Sea Scout members receive *The Ensign*

13.9 Dues Categories

Active Member

- This category is a single member or the primary member to whom the family unit is attached and pays full dues for National, District and Squadron.

Family Unit

- A family unit consists of members in addition to the Active Member who reside in the same home. Members in the unit can be Additional Active Members and/or Family Members. There is one payment for the family unit no matter whether the unit consists of the Active Member and one or twenty additional people.

Apprentice/Sea Scout

- These are young people who are not part of the family unit, but are members on their own and do pay annual dues.

Life Members

- Life members have paid dues at least 25 years as active members and received 25 active merit marks. Life members are not assessed National dues; however, they may be assessed District or Squadron dues based on district or squadron policy or bylaws.

Entrance Fees

- At the time the Active Member applies for membership, an entrance fee is included along with National, District and Squadron dues. This is a one-time fee. No entrance fee is required for members of the family unit.

13.10 Dues. Historically, there were two methods of dues collection: 1) Headquarters Collection of Dues and Anniversary Billing (HQAB); and 2) Traditional Billing. At the Annual Meeting in Anaheim on 02/21/09, HQAB was voted as the singular dues collection process effective June 2009. Squadrons not using HQAB were switched at that time.

13.11 Headquarters Collection of Dues and Anniversary Billing (HQAB). Under Anniversary Billing (the AB of HQAB) a member's anniversary date is set to the first day of the month he or she joins. So a new member joining on 15 September would have an anniversary date of 1 September. A new member pays a full year's dues when joining and is not invoiced again until two months prior to his anniversary date the next year. Members belonging to a squadron prior to that squadron's shift to HQAB have a 1 June anniversary date.

Under HQAB a member sends his or her renewal directly to Headquarters. It then processes the renewal, extracting its part of the total amount and making a direct deposit to the district and squadron for their portion. Members have the option to pay with a credit card using a secure online program to do so.

Since Headquarters is both invoicing and collecting dues and since member renewal dates vary throughout the year, several tools have been developed to assist squadrons in member retention and accounting. The USPS website at URL

www.usps.org/dues/reports offers member status reports and district and squadron deposit reports.

13.12 Reinstatement Policy. In the event a member is late in paying his dues, or after a year or more, elects to rejoin, the following policy is established:

- Headquarters will automatically send a dues bill to every non-paying member for one more year. Consequently there are two kinds of member non-renewals tracked by HQ staff.
 - 1) Individuals in nonrenewable status up to one year, herein termed "late."
 - 2) Individuals who have been in this status more than one year are called "reinstatements."

Please note that those members who have not paid dues and are thus termed "late" or "reinstatements" ARE NOT members and are not entitled to member benefits until their membership has been reestablished.

Definitions:

- LATE payee: Paying dues anytime after the due date up to 12 months (one year) past the due date.
- REINSTATEMENT payee: Non-renewals paying after 12 months (one year) of non-renewed status.

Payment Procedure

- LATE Payee: regardless of billing cycle, any member paying late must pay an annual dues amount to rejoin. (No change in anniversary date.)
- REINSTATEMENT Payee: member pays an annual dues amount and anniversary date is reset using the month dues are paid.

Forms. Several forms are used in processing membership. When completing these forms, be sure to print clearly, use dark ink and include the squadron's four number identity code and the District number. These forms can be mailed or faxed.

Headquarters can be reached toll free at:

1-888-367-8777 Voice, 1-888-304-0813 Fax

To download these forms, go to the national membership committee home page at: www.usps.org/national/membership then click on "Forms for Membership."

Of course there are many forms available for specific uses:

- New Member Form Memcom1 - used for NEW members only
- Personnel Change Form HQ102 - used for name and address changes, when a member dies or when there is a resignation
- Reinstatement Form HQ103 - used for reinstating members
- Transfer Form HQ110 - used for transferring members whose current dues are paid. If their dues have lapsed, use HQ103
- Change of Status Form HQ 104 - used for changing the status of a current member from one membership category to another. For example, if someone is a family member and wants to become an additional active member, use HQ 104. Also, if a member wants to bring in a new member such as a spouse and/or child living in the same home, this form is used
- MemCom 20 - used to order Membership forms and supplies

13.13 Squadron Membership Chairperson Responsibilities

- Have the ability to identify individuals who will become an asset to the squadron
- Work with the Boating Course Chairperson to develop methods to follow up with prospective members
- Be familiar with all membership requirements, dues, entrance fees, forms, et cetera
- Be aware of activities and procedures in:
 - Education
 - Administration
 - Social events
- Be efficient and well organized in the timely processing of documents required. Use new

- web tools to register new members on line
- Make recommendations to the Squadron Executive Committee on voting in new members to the squadron
- Prepare articles for publication in the squadron newsletter
- Publish the names and contact information of new members in a timely manner
- Attend district conferences and membership committee meetings in the district
- Turn over to successor all files, records, reports, communications and documents

13.14 District Membership Chairperson Responsibilities

- Assist and advise the Squadron Membership Chairmen
- Train and inform Squadron Membership Chairmen through meetings and seminars at district conferences
- Act as a liaison between squadrons and national
- Communicate information from National Membership Committee to Squadrons
- Keep the National MemCom informed through communications with the assigned Area Representative
- Prepare articles for publication in the district newsletter
- Prepare an annual membership timetable and calendar of events and submit to the District Administrative Officer (DAO)
- Prepare a detailed written annual report at the end of the watch year as requested by the DAO
- Turn over to successor all files, records, reports, communications and documents
- Attend national meetings as often as possible

13.15 National Membership Representative Responsibilities. Members of this committee serve as liaisons between National and the district(s) they serve and the squadrons therein. Their main objective is addressing the focus of membership in all areas of recruiting, member involvement (retention) and youth activities. Appointment to this committee is made by the Rear Commander. Specific job duties expected of members of this committee are as follows:

- Be the eyes and ears of the National Membership Committee, encouraging communication up, down and across USPS
- Be active and knowledgeable about the district you serve
- Be willing to give at least five hours a month to being NMR
- Monitor the progress of each squadron in the district
- Assess the problems of the district/squadrons you serve and suggest ways (through the District Administrative Officer and District Membership Chairmen) to aid district/squadrons having problems
- Attend and participate in district conferences. Send a report to the NMR Coordinator following the conference, sharing success stories and activities of interest
- Communicate all information passed to you from National to the district/squadron commanders, administrative officers and membership chairs of the district according to the NMR procedures
- Contribute a prepared document for publication in *The Ensign* as assigned (about once a year). Articles are due to the Staff Commander for review by the Rear Commander two months prior to publication
- Participate in National Membership workshops, meetings and Expo at the Annual and Governing Board Meetings
- Conduct or aid the District Membership Chairs with workshops, roundtables or seminars on topics relevant to USPS or the district
- Report to the NMR Coordinator current items that could motivate or enhance Membership Recruiting Involvement and Youth Activities of other districts/squadrons
- Represent the National Membership Committee and USPS in a professional manner in all matters with National, District and Squadron officers and members

13.16 Dialogues with Prospective Members.

These dialogues are referred to as interviews. This is the means of finding out enough about the other person to enable the Squadron to utilize the skills and interests of the new member. The material below lists key factors in the interview. More

detailed guidance is provided to help you fine-tune your technique later in this chapter.

13.17 The Interview - General

You are in control of the discussion

- You can direct the flow of the exchange by the questions you ask
- Let the prospective members do the most of the talking
- Answer their questions directly and simply.
- Follow the 20/80 rule, that is ask questions 20% of the time and spend 80% of the time listening
- Be sure to relate the benefits they will receive as a member

The conversation should be relaxed and as productive as possible

- Listen objectively - keep questions simple
- Don't string too many questions together

Remember you are trying to gather useful information about the candidates'

- Interests
- Family
- Type of boat - sail or power
- Reason for applying for membership

The prospective member may ask questions about

- The squadron and USPS
- Membership requirements, time/involvement expected or required
- Advantages and benefits of membership

Stress Benefits, Education, Social Activities and Civic Services performed and enjoyed by Squadron Members.

Make sure prospective new members are given at least two telephone numbers and an email address in the event they have additional questions.

13.18 Interview Environment. Any interview can be a threatening prospect. You should take whatever steps you can to provide a relaxed atmosphere with a minimum of distraction if possible.

An informal environment (perhaps an informal social event) where conversation flows naturally allows the prospective members to ask the questions they want answered. In the ideal case, the prospects are not aware that “an interview” has just taken place, but rather they just had a pleasant conversation with an interesting person who cleared up some things they had been wondering about.

You must know what your squadron has to offer. The following is a template listing key elements common to most situations. You should have at least the following types of information readily at hand. This list should be customized as needed to fit specific squadron's circumstances.

Be sure to display or have available:

- The USPS ensign
- Recent copies of *The Ensign*
- Copies of district and squadron publications (copies to take home, if possible)
- The squadron roster
- Representative education course materials
- A current Port Captains roster
- The squadron burgee
- A current calendar of social and boating events
- The 'Benefits' handout

13.19 Effective Questioning Techniques.

Holding an effective discussion depends largely on your ability to ask suitable questions that will draw out the information you need and want without leaving the prospects feeling that they have been “grilled”. Experienced interviewers have found that a number of different question types are effective, depending on the circumstances and the personalities of the individuals involved. You should be familiar with several and able to switch from one approach to another as the circumstances dictate.

- Open ended questions - These questions call for an explanation in response, rather than a simple “yes-no” answer and begin with “who, what, when, where, why.” For example:
 - “How did you get interested in boating?”
 - “What do you think about ... ?”
 - “What do you do for relaxation?”

- Mirror comments -In this technique, the interviewer repeats or restates a comment made by the interviewee, often in the form of an implied question, looking for expansion on the original idea. For example:
 - “So you became interested in boating because your friends are boaters?”
 - “So your spouse would like to do some sailing?”
- Reflective questions -These are questions that cause the other person to stop and rethink what was just said. For example:
 - “I'm ready to move on to another subject. Aren't you?”
 - “Don't you think your spouse would like to take courses, too?”
 - “Well, it sounds as though you are interested in other programs!”
- Additional information questions - These, as their name implies, seek more information or expansion. For example:
 - “That's interesting. Can you tell me more about it?”
 - “I'm not sure I understand what you mean. Could you tell me more about it?”
 - “Why do you want to do that?”

13.20 Basic Squadron Facts and Frequently Asked Questions. Fill in the information required to fit your situation, then commit to memory or keep as ready reference.

- The Squadron currently has about _____ members.
- It was originally chartered in _____.
- The current squadron commander is _____.

Active Membership - Full membership privileges and responsibilities including voting, holding office, earning Merit Marks, taking educational courses, paying dues, participating in meetings, receiving the *The Ensign*, wearing the USPS uniform and flying the USPS Ensign. Active members must be at least 18 years old.

Additional Active Member - Same membership privileges as Active Member except with

reduced dues; does not receive *The Ensign*; must reside in the same household as an Active Member, but does not have to be the Active Member's spouse.

Family Member - Family Members of USPS may be admitted in the same manner as Active Members. Persons eligible as Family Members shall be related to an Active Member and shall reside with the Active Member. Family Members cannot vote or hold an elective office and are not included in the membership representation at District and National governing boards and meetings.

Junior Family Member - An Active Member's dependent child under the age of 18 may be admitted as a Junior Family Member, with all the privileges of family membership.

Apprentice/Sea Scout Membership - Available to anyone 12 to 18 years of age meeting the educational requirements of membership. Enjoys reduced dues and receives a copy of the *The Ensign*. Sea Scouts can extend membership to the age of 23 when they are required to transfer to Active Membership.

Advantages of membership:

- Subscription to the bi-monthly magazine *The Ensign* published both in printed format and on-line
- Subscription to district publication
- Subscription to squadron newsletter
- Access to basic and advanced educational courses
- Social and boating activities
- Port Captains roster
- Availability of discounted boat insurance (varies with carrier and local information)
- See *The Ensign* for toll free numbers.
- Free one-year membership in BOATUS for discounts on marine supplies
- Application for USPS credit card with which a portion of value of purchases is refunded to squadron and there is a low initial interest rate on balance
- Discounted computer hardware (Dell) and software (TechSoup) products

During the interview, you are permitted to

answer any questions the candidate may have about USPS or the local squadron. If you are uncertain how to answer any questions, do not hesitate to bring others who may be more knowledgeable into the conversation. Don't guess. It is acceptable if you don't know something, but giving out wrong information is not.

13.21 Educational Opportunities. Instructors volunteer their time and only a nominal fee is charged for student manuals.

Frequency Of Course Offerings

Most advanced grade courses are offered annually; however, this depends on squadron needs. Elective courses are scheduled based on demand and availability of instructors.

13.22 Social Activities. The following types of events should be included when touting the squadron.

Types of Social Events:

- Land and water events
- District and National Annual Meetings and Changes of Watch, Governing Board Meeting, Squadron monthly meetings, rendezvous, dinners and courses
- Frequency of Events: Scheduled events, all seasons of the year
- Planned Cruises: Held throughout the cruising season, planned by squadron members
- Rendezvous:
 - District _____
 - Squadron _____

TALK ABOUT OUR CIVIC ACTIVITIES

- America's Boating Course: Eight-week course
- Seminar Programs - Check out National Education Department website
- Cooperative Charting with NOAA and Skipper Saver Programs for members and non-members
- Participation in National Safe Boating Week (with other organizations)
- Youth involvement activities - sponsor Sea scout ships; poster contests, Community

Activities

- Vessel Safety Examinations (VSCs)

CONCLUSION - SIGNING THEM UP!

- Make a reasonable effort to ensure that the individual would be a worthy addition to the squadron
- Assist with completing a Membership Application Form (MemCom 1) with the prospect. (See Forms Appendix A for instructions)
- Ask for a check payable to your Squadron. A credit card is permitted since you are using the Headquarters Anniversary Billing. Use the headquarters credit card form
- Have the new member sign the MemCom 1
- Complete the Member Interest Survey form
- Make sure the new member has at least two telephone numbers and an email address for his/her use in case he/she needs information or thinks of a question
- Introduce the potential new member to the Commander, Membership Chair and any other squadron members in attendance - make him/her feel a part of the squadron
- Deliver all forms to the Membership Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, et cetera after the interview is completed

MEMBER INVOLVEMENT EQUALS RETENTION

SECTION 2

13.23 Discover your squadron's potential ... Discover Involvement!

- The link between the constructive involvement of our members and their retention is well known. Members who enjoy contributing and working in their squadrons in the educational, social, or civic elements of our organization are a vital part of the squadron family. The challenge is to encourage our USPS members to willingly and enthusiastically step up to the myriad of opportunities in a squadron. We must get them to share their expertise, enthusiasm and energy so they will feel rewarded and self-fulfilled. Unleashing this potential benefits the individual member and the squadron.
- The Membership Committee should use the information gleaned from the interview process and the skills/interest survey to help get the new members aboard.
- Since the orientation program will probably be the first total exposure to squadron leadership and organization for the new member, a well organized and rehearsed orientation program is necessary. Members who see a professional and dynamic presentation which explains the rich and proud heritage of our organization and details the workings of the squadron can't help but be impressed. This will encourage a willingness to seek out opportunities that utilize their individual talents.
- For many newer members, the educational opportunity was the magnet that attracted them to seek membership. Timely scheduling of the educational classes to meet that expectation is important. It has been shown that early education of newer members is one of the main elements of retention.
- The Retention / Involvement Team should make new members feel welcome at social activities. For some members, the social and civic element of our organization can provide

satisfying achievements.

- Involvement is a people-first process. Helping new members discover a base of shared attitudes, beliefs and values, the Involvement Team provides a bridge between new members and the rest of the squadron. The Involvement Chairs are path-finders in this innovative and creative role. They propose new ideas and initiatives for the squadron to consider and potentially undertake. Creativity and innovation might challenge some of the traditional ways squadrons have approached involvement in the past, but a new focus on member involvement will provide rewards to the squadrons. Sometimes, just a simple new idea might be the motivating factor that establishes a new direction in a squadron.

Involving Members is not a new concept. What is new is the intensified focus that we are asking you to bring to this element of membership in our organization. In the future, our organization will surely benefit from this increased investment in our members as we continue to develop a vital people-first attitude. This commitment extends to helping our community and youth initiatives. Ultimately such involvement will promote not only the well being of the squadron, but energize and strengthen USPS at all levels. This potential energy resides in each squadron. Rediscover and cultivate this potential. Be USPS proud. Get involved!

13.24 What is Involvement? It INVOLVES all members in Squadron activities and thereby RETAINS their membership.

Involvement Defined:

We have remained members of USPS because we became and remain INVOLVED. Someone, at some point, showed enough interest and took the time to get us involved. The goal of the Retention / Involvement Team is to focus on squadron activi-

ties to facilitate the participation of new members and inactive members. These might include:

- Attend social activities
- Help with civic or social activities
- Take a class
- Proctor a class
- Teach a class
- Serve on a committee
- Chair a committee

The Retention / Involvement Team

The Retention / Involvement Team must be very active year-round. It should consist of a chair and as many members as needed for the completion of the assigned responsibilities. The Team works with the entire squadron membership and the chair reports to the Membership Committee Chair. The Retention / Involvement Team is found at all levels of USPS: squadron, district and national.

Chartered Functions *

- Prescribe the recommended procedures for the involvement of all members, both new and established
- Prescribe the recommended Orientation Program for members and guidance to ensure that the program is provided as soon as possible
- Prescribe a system to ensure that members are assigned to committees and/or enrolled in educational classes
- Use follow-up procedures to ensure that all members are assimilated into the squadron and participate in squadron activities
- Be sure to target those members who have belonged for a while, but are not active yet

* Do not call a member who has requested that he/she not be contacted.

Team Goal

Develop and implement ways of involving all new and established members in squadron activities.

13.25 Forming a Retention / Involvement Team

Favorable qualities for the Retention / Involvement Team Chair:

- Enthusiastic and motivated
- Articulate and able to communicate and involve members
- Sets an example by participating in squadron and district events
- Has innovative ideas and suggestions
- Demonstrates leadership, tact and diplomacy
- Has basic knowledge of the workings of USPS squadron, district and national
- Has completed Operations Training
- Has familiarity with squadron bylaws
- Reliable, makes the time and is willing to put forth the effort
- Knowledge of all aspects of squadron activities: educational, administrative and social
- Interacts well with ALL members

The “number” to serve on the Retention/Involvement Team should be of sufficient size to keep in periodic contact with all of the squadron members, both new and established.

The Retention / Involvement Team's responsibilities may have been previously handled by one of the following committees and these committees, if established and functioning, should continue in these positions as Retention / Involvement support groups.

- Host Committee
- Greeting Committee
- Telephone Committee
- Personnel Committee
- Orientation Program Committee

The Retention / Involvement Committee works under the leadership of the **Membership Committee**. It is the responsibility of the Recruiting Team to acquire and process new members. It is the responsibility of the Retention / Involvement Team to assimilate and retain members. Sometimes there are fine lines differentiating the responsibilities and duties that may be shared. Often these assignments are handled by the same members as well as the Boating class instructors and proctors. Consequently, the members of each Team should have a good working knowledge of the duties and activities of the other and work together in harmony for the common good of the squadron.

Operations Training

- The Retention / Involvement Team can encourage new members to enroll in Operations Training. At the Orientation Program, it can be stated that Orientation is only a small exposure into the workings of the squadron and USPS, but Operations Training is the program that will round-out the new members' organizational knowledge. There is also a Leadership Development Program that is interesting and worthwhile.

Education

- The Retention / Involvement Team should encourage new members to take Seamanship and Piloting. Close cooperation with the Educational Department is needed to schedule these courses and Elective courses following the completion of the Boating Course.

Publications

- The Retention / Involvement Team should provide additional articles and material for squadron publications. A new member column will also make the publication more personal and interesting. Add a photo and a brief biography of the new members.

Public Relations

- The Retention / Involvement Team can act as support to internal public relations relative to new and inactive members.

Boating Activities

- The Retention / Involvement Team can provide participants for the activities. New members without boats can be invited as crew on other members' boats to meet at a land-based rendezvous point and participate in the social setting.

Cooperative Charting

- The Retention / Involvement Team can provide new participants for the program. Expe-

rienced members can take the new members on their boats and instruct them first, or provide a class on aeronautical charts. A social is suggested at the end of the day to share experiences and write up reports.

Officers/Committee Chairmen

- Committee chairs should contact the Retention / Involvement Team for assistance in filling positions and acquiring help. The Nominating Committee should also be given information about members wishing to move on to leadership roles.

13.26 New Member Assimilation. Get a list of new members from the Recruiting Team Chair as soon as the Memcom 1 (membership application form) is signed and payment of dues is received. Have new members complete the 'Member Interest Survey' form and provide a copy to ALL Executive Committee members: Involvement-Retention Chair, Email editor, Newsletter Editor/Distributor, et cetera, to begin the process of assimilation - getting the new members aboard. Involvement starts with prompt contact and assimilation of new members.

I-F-T-S? Involve From The Start

Assimilation Checklist

1) **Provide a "New Member Packet"** as soon as you receive confirmation of their paid membership. It should include:

- Welcome letter from squadron commander
- Squadron bylaws
- Squadron roster
- Squadron newsletter
- What's in it for You? brochure
- An invitation to the Orientation Program- should be a personal letter from commander, with a follow-up phone call from the Retention / Involvement Chair
- Membership handbook or data sheet on the squadron
- Schedule and content of classes
- Calendar for all squadron events

2) **Help new members develop their poten-**

tial. Call and introduce yourself to the new members as soon as possible. Explain that the new member Orientation Program will provide more information about the squadron and USPS and will be a really positive experience. Find out why they joined. Using the **Member's Interest Survey** information, focus on the talents and interests of the new members to explain how they can get the most out of the squadron. Inquire as to the make-up of members' families, including children, and their time available for squadron activities. Tailor their talents and time to the needs of the squadron and suggest areas/committees that compliment their skills.

3) **Notify Education Officer** of the new members' name, address, phone number and date new member packet was presented. SEO can follow-up immediately if a class is ready to start, or wait until after the Orientation Program.

4) **Contact the new members for pledge ceremony** within 30 days or sooner if possible. A letter should be sent from the Commander inviting them to the next general membership meeting where they will be pledged and their certificates will be presented.

5) **Presentation of the Orientation Program.** Schedule a date within 30 days and invite all new members and long-standing members. This will set the foundation for the new members' involvement in the squadron. Discuss the Operations Training Program and why it should be taken early.

6) **Education planning.** After the Orientation Program, the squadron educational officer or someone from the Education Department (i.e., Seamanship instructor) should contact new members to discuss their short and long term education plan. The goal should be for every new member to be signed up for Seamanship, an elective class and/ or Operations Training. A class schedule and explanation of the class content should have been provided in the new member packet.

7) **Assignment of a mentor or buddy** (See Mentor/ Buddy section)

8) **Publish "Meet the New Member(s)"**

information in your newsletter. Introduce your new members to the membership by printing the names including their family, background, and a short boating biography in the squadron newsletter. Be sure to include address and phone numbers so rosters may be updated. Confirm with the editor that their names have been added to the mailing list.

9) **General meetings/socializing.** Welcome the new members and their families when they arrive. Identify them with a special name tag or ribbon. You or their buddy should introduce them to other members, committee chairs and bridge officers. Be sure to seat them with familiar faces, either from class or a function. It is important always to include the family in your conversations. The commander should officially welcome them in the form of an announcement during the meeting.

10) **Committee involvement.** Supply the new member with a list of the committees and job descriptions that exist in your squadron. (This may already be part of the membership handbook sent to them in the new member packet.)

13.27 Mentor/Buddy Program.

Purpose of the Program:

- To provide a strong link between the squadron membership and the new members for the first two years
- To help the new members gain knowledge, experience and relationships and become an involved member quickly
- To encourage proper role modeling among all established members in order to promote retention of new members

Definition of a Mentor - A wise and trusted friend and teacher, a good role model.

Mentor/Member Selection Criteria - Strive for similar personal characteristics and common interests.

Mentor Selection/Approval Procedure - Selected by Retention / Involvement Team

Desirable Mentor Qualifications:

- Knowledge of USPS squadron, district and national organization
- Age, seniority, or rank are not a factor, USPS knowledge is
- Displays positive attitude and supports USPS and the squadron
- Experienced
- Displays conduct that is professional and enthusiastic at squadron activities

Duties of a Mentor:

- Introduce new members to bridge officers and membership at squadron activities
- Encourage family participation in all activities
- Maintain confidentiality of any privileged information revealed by members
- Sign-up members for the next Seamanship and attend Operations Training or Orientation with the members
- Help members discover interests and abilities
- Review Member Skills/Interest Survey form

Expectations of Members - Participate and share talents with squadron, give as well as receive. Get a commitment to participate from the new members.

13.28 Orientation Program

The purpose of this program is to have the new members:

- Learn about the Squadron
- Talk with Bridge members
- Meet other new members and sign up for a class
- Join a Committee
- Get Mentor/Buddy assignment in a casual setting

This is a suggested program which gives new members an overview of what the squadron and USPS are all about. Keep subjects focused at local squadron level. Set a date so new members may attend this program within their first 30-45 days of membership.

Present the program in a professional manner. This is their first exposure to the inner workings of the squadron. **Practice the program first so it will**

run smoothly.

Explain to the new members the duties of various committees and provide job descriptions for the various positions. Through discussion, determine their interest in the committee they would like to join.

A copy of all committees is in the Operations Manual and the commander should have a copy of the Job Descriptions Manual. Make sure all committee chairs get the names and telephone numbers of new members interested in their committees.

Expo Style - Set up like a cruise going from port to port - all committees represented, uniforms or squadron shirts, socials, rendezvous, et cetera.

Tables are set up for different committees and departments. Seamanship, Piloting and elective courses should be given plenty of display space. Other courses should also be displayed for general information purposes. Different uniforms and burgees, shirts and caps can be on display along with supplies that are available through your squadron.

Create an atmosphere that is fun with colorful name tags, balloons and decorations. Introduce the bridge officers, keep program brief and encourage socializing. A door prize drawing may be held for a burgee or a USPS item.

13.29 Involvement

General

- Annually have all members fill in the Member Interest Survey form. The form will give you current information on the members' interests and skills (see 'forms' for copy).

Social

- Promote socialization at educational classes
- Plan membership meetings with members' interests in mind
- Keep business to a minimum
- Always have a social period at your meetings (before, after, or both)
- Plan squadron activities for all members, not only for those with boats
- Organize events that include the entire fam-

ily: parties, picnics, et cetera. Members with children create an atmosphere for other families to join the squadron. Children are a great resource for energy that can be directed toward the squadron

- Make certain your general membership meetings are interesting, inexpensive and the hospitality is evident and plentiful. [Refer to the Program Planning Workbook available through the Operations Training Committee for suggestions on how to obtain and develop interesting programs]

Committees

- Ensure that every committee has an assistant to create a smooth transition from one chairman to the next. This develops jobs for your new members. Ask them to be members of a committee
- Personally ask members to participate. If new members are left waiting, enthusiasm decreases. Most people will say yes, if asked properly. To make it a positive experience, assign members meaningful tasks. Make sure they understand what is expected of them. Follow through to check on their participation and results. Thank the members for a job well done
- Rotate committee chairmen every two or three years
- Create a meeting and conference committee whose responsibility it is to generate ideas for participation in district conferences and to encourage members to attend. Utilize the Program Planning Manual

Squadron Telephone Committee and Email

Hot Line. The Telephone Committee and Email Hot Line are important links to personally keep members informed as well as stay in direct contact with new and established members. In today's busy world of emails, text messages and voice mail, a personal phone call made to members to invite them to participate is welcomed. In some squadrons, the telephone committee augments the email Hot Line and only contacts those members who do not have email. However, in emergency situations when word has to get out immediately the Telephone Committee calls all members, even though they will also receive email.

Purpose

- To get the word out quickly for events or emergencies
- To save time, expense (postage and labor)
- To keep in touch with members

Procedure

- Establish a Committee
- Appoint an Email Correspondent
- Appoint a Telephone Committee Chair and assistant chair
- Appoint a contact person for every 5-10 members
- The Telephone Committee should be comprised of enthusiastic members of the squadron who will be responsible for contacting members in anticipation of a program and who will persistently followup on all squadron members who do not attend general meetings or participate in squadron functions

Types of Messages

- Special meetings or functions, change of date/time in scheduled meetings and/or classes
- Report illnesses and other information to the chairman who will notify the bridge
- Death of a member: date, place, uniform (if requested) and time of service
- Commander's message of importance

There are many successful ideas and programs to enhance involvement. The following 28 points are suggestions for successful involvement and summarizes this section. Check out our website for more examples.

28 Points to Enhance Involvement:

- 1) Put Involvement article in squadron newsletter every month
- 2) Write a new biography on members each month for squadron publication
- 3) Write an interesting story on member's background for publication
- 4) Advertise in your newsletter the many benefits of USPS

5) Put thank you messages in your newsletters for a job well done

6) Set up an email announcement program with reminders for classes, meetings or events and up-to-the minute news

7) Make telephone and email communication on a regular basis

8) Staff each job with an assistant or several assistants

- Write a brief operating procedure for the assistant's job

9) Ask people to do a specific job - don't wait for volunteers

10) Schedule a special picnic with games; make everyone join in the fun

11) Schedule a travel dinner (that is, 3 hosts - hors d'oeuvres, chili, dessert)

- Have an informal wine and cheese party, a book review, dessert party

12) Complete the Member Skills/Interest Survey, analyze and fill jobs

13) Have enough members on your telephone committee and train them

14) Send thank you notes

15) Offer to take members who do not have a boat on a rendezvous

16) Work closely with the Membership Chairman, SEO, A/O, et cetera

17) Attend and proctor Boating Classes and Advanced Grade classes

18) Start a Mentor/Buddy System and follow it religiously

19) At meetings, ask new members to stand and say "hello"

20) Divide the work to get non-active members more involved

21) Recommend family members become active members

22) Advertise aggressively for upcoming classes (public and internal)

- Send postcards and make calls to new members regarding Seamanship, Piloting and elective courses - Get them in class!

23) Put articles in your local newspaper showing off your squadron's social, civic and educational activities

24) Offer a free dinner contest (that is, person who brings in the most new members)

25) Get members involved in Coop Charting and Port Captains programs

26) Support youth activities in your squadron. Sponsor a canoe trip environmental clean-up with them. Call the press and take photos

27) Work with a local Sea Scout Ship or a Boy Scout troop to teach a Boat Safety Course and serve as their educational resource

- Do something to perpetuate the future of your squadron with the younger generation. Sponsor a cardboard boat race, gutter races, dinghy races, youth poster contest, kayaking trip or other activities for youth!

28) Your involvement promotes the future of your squadron and USPS

BEWARE! NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR IMPEDES RETENTION!

Neglect

- No follow-up when a prospect shows interest

Incompetence

- The ill-informed, unkempt, unfriendly, unpre-

pared instructor/proctor and/or leader

Pessimism and complaints

- Against other members, leaders, paperwork, tests

Power Struggles

- Have no place in the squadron. People have enough of this at work. This is what they want to get away from

Overwhelming Members

- Do not overload members with the need for hard work, long hours and too many books, regulations and forms. People join for their own enjoyment. When they find participation is fun, they will respond. Not one of our hardest workers joined expecting to have so much fun!

Politics, Unpleasant Behavior or Remarks

- Turns people off and they stop going to meet-

ings and events. Look at attendance figures to judge the quality of meetings

Straying from the Basic Purpose of the Squadron

- It is a serious error to stray from the basic program. Members join expecting leaders to follow the basic tenets of the squadron, civic service, educational programs and fraternal boating activities. If members wanted a yacht club, they would have joined one

Repeating Past Mistakes

- Assures present failures! Squadrons can become weak when they insist on doing things the old way. Lack of new members and one-time guests are indicators of this problem

Lack of Involvement

- If members are involved, the Squadron lives and grows; if not, the Squadron may be weak and not attain its potential

