Secretary's Department Newsletter

Secretary's Department COMMITTEES
www.usps.org/national/secretary/

Flag & Etiquette
www.usps.org/national/fecom/

Historian
www.usps.org/national/historian/

Information Technology
www.usps.org/national/itcom/

Operations Manual
www.usps.org/national/om/

Publications
www.usps.org/national/pubcom/

Ship's Store
www.usps.org/national/shipstore/

The Ensign
www.usps.org/national/ensign/

Headquarters
www.usps.org

**Editor/Web Publisher
Webmaster**

In this issue:

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SERVICE IS OUR PLEDGE

Greetings from the National Secretary

The results are in and VHQAB from a technical standpoint has been a great success with only a few minor glitches. One continuing problem that plagues us is e-mail addresses; members who would never change their telephone number unless they moved out of an area code, think nothing of changing their e-mail address. This greatly complicates communications between headquarters and local squadrons. As we become more and more dependant on e-mail I am sure that member's habits will change and e-mail will stabilize as the most efficient and preferred means of communication. Some interesting facts that come from headquarters collection of dues is that just under 19% of those members that renewed did so by credit card, with over 50% of that number renewing on line. Renewal rates for the three test districts were better than for the organization as a whole (82.4% versus 80.0%) Districts 10 and 15 had a combined renewal rate of almost 86%, but unfortunately District 16 had a renewal rate of only 78%. Next year several additional districts will be added to the test program.

One of our more recent initiatives is the development of a national database of every person that takes one of our three boating courses. USPS® can use this database to market the benefits of membership to an ever-growing audience. This is where the software known as the Boating Course Assistant (BCA) comes in. The BCA developed by D/Lt/C Ken Guscott, JN of ITCom can be used in teaching any of our three basic boating courses, the Boating Course®, Boat Smart® or America's Boating Course®. Once the student's names and demographic data have been entered the software will print out ED 26 and 27 forms as well as course completion certificates and membership application forms. R/C Robert Baldridge, N, Assistant National Secretary and Kathy Kesterson, Manager, Administrative Services at headquarters have developed the necessary software to allow the retrieval of data from the BCA on students that have taken one of our boating courses. Now with the new software at headquarters we can electronically add those students to our Boating Class database. I encourage squadrons to begin using the BCA, it will ease the administrative burden and at the same time help us realize our goal of having a database of students that have taken our boating courses.

V/C Frank A. Dvorak, SN

Privacy Statement

State Flags on Recreational Boats

The Flag & Etiquette Committee is always being asked, where on my boat do I fly all of the flags that I have? The problem is that recreational boaters generally want to fly more flags than their boats have places for. Many of today's boats are manufactured with almost no place to fly a flag and some boat manufactures do not even provide a place to fly the national ensign. Unfortunately, many boaters try to solve the problem by flying every flag they own on one halyard. It's not unusual anymore to find a boat that is flying one national ensign above another (something that should never be done.) What boaters should be doing is limiting the number of flags they fly on their boat to the number of available points of display. They should also fly only flags that convey some specific information about their boat or its personnel (i.e., nationality, maneuvering situation, club affiliation, office held, etc.).

This brings us to state flags. USPS® protocol says that a yacht should only wear a state flag if (a) she's state-owned, (b) the governor is embarked or (c) some official state business is being transacted on board.

" ..where on my boat do I fly all of the flags that I have?"

Nautical flag code is based on long standing traditions. Traditionally, three flags were considered essential to mark a vessel's identity. A vessel always displayed the ensign (country), the yacht club burgee (fleet), and a private signal (master). Position number one (stern or peak of the gaff), the point-of-honor, was reserved for the ensign, the burgee was flown at position number two (bow on powerboats or foremost masthead on sailboats), and the private signal was flown from position number three (signal masthead on powerboats or the second mast aft on sailboats). If there was no club affiliation, the private signal was moved to the number two position. An officer flag was displayed in lieu of a private signal.

If a state flag is flown because the vessel is state owned, the state flag would be worn as a house flag (or private signal.) If the state flag is flown because the governor is embarked or because some state business is being transacted on board, the state flag would be worn in place of an officer flag.

In 1998, USPS published a revised nautical flag code, How to Fly Flags, Nautical Flag Display, as a guide for the recreational boater. The new code was developed in consultation with the U.S. Coast Guard, Coast Guard Auxiliary, New York Yacht Club and other yachting authorities. The goal of the new code was to accommodate the configuration of modern boats so that boaters would not find it impossible to properly fly their flags. While points of display have been established through long standing traditions, new configurations of boats, rigging, and the like have created a need to use antennas, fishing towers, outriggers, sailboat backstays, starboard and portside halyards and even limited double hoisting as alternatives. The How to Fly Flags booklet with the revised nautical code can be obtained from the USPS Ship's Store.

So why shouldn't you fly a state flag if your vessel is not state-owned or on some official state business. With the exception of "dressing ship" for holidays and special events, flags should not used for decoration, a resume, or badges of accomplishment (this is why a foreign courtesy flag should be removed after returning to U.S. waters.) You would not fly a state flag just because you live in (or like) a particular state anymore than you would fly

Chm Flag & Etiquette
Contact
R/C James Williams, JN

www.usps.org/national/fecom

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State Flags on Recreational Boats

Cont'd from page 2 - - the U.S. ensign because you live in (or like) the U.S. You may want to be patriotic, but by international agreement, the ensign worn by a vessel must be the ensign of the country that the boat is registered in--and that is not necessarily the country of the owner/operator. For example, if a U.S. boater keeps a vessel in Canada and registers it there, a Canadian ensign is worn by the boat. It does not matter if the vessel is cruising in U.S. water and/or has a U.S. owner/operator. A national ensign communicates the registry of the boat, not the home of the owner/operator or his patriotism. Likewise, a state flag should communicate that the vessel is either owned by the state or on official state business.

Any owner can choose to ignore long standing traditions and fly any flag (including the U.S. ensign) anyway that they want to since U.S. law does not prescribe any penalties for non-compliance and does not include enforcement provisions. Furthermore, the Flag Code is completely silent on nautical flag display and actions not specifically included in the Code may be deemed acceptable as long as proper respect is shown. To determine if proper respect is being shown in nautical flag display, we rely on long standing traditions.

Each state (and the federal government for the District of Columbia) can pass its own flag laws. Some states have flag codes that are very detailed and mirror the U.S. Flag Code with some additional state flag information added. The laws of other states are much simpler and do not contain much more than the flag's definition. Several states, however, have passed laws that prescribe how the U.S. ensign and a state flag should be flown on a recreational boat. Maryland is one such state. While the U.S. Flag Code does not provide penalties for certain flag conduct and does not govern certain practices, state law may do so. Therefore, it is always advisable to be aware of the applicable provisions of state law. Several states have a law that includes the following language:

Because the preferred location for the USPS ensign is also the starboard spreader, it may be flown beneath the [state] flag. Regardless of what the language in the state law says, the USPS ensign should never be flown on the same halyard as a state flag. Since a state flag is considered to be a private signal or an officer flag, it is not superior to the USPS ensign. Since these states have laws specifying how their state flag should be displayed, whenever it is necessary to fly a state flag on the starboard halyard, the USPS ensign should be removed from the halyard.

To summarize, since the Flag Code does not prescribe any penalties for non-compliance and does not include any enforcement provisions, you can fly a state flag anytime or anyplace that you want to as long as state law allows it. But why would you want to ignore the long standing nautical traditions that have evolved into the flag protocol that is used today.

Charles F. Chapman (1881-1976), USPS Chief Commander 1946-1947 wrote the following: To be rated a 100 percent boatman--in other words, a Seasoned Skipper--the owner or captain of a boat must know flags, what they mean, and how to fly them. In this connection, it has always been my feeling that yachtsmen would gladly comply with the protocol associated with the display of flags if they understood it.

R/C James Williams, JN
Chairman FECom

Errata information for the current edition of How to Fly Flags, Nautical Flag Display can be found on the following webpage: http://www.usps.org/national/fecom/htfferrata.html

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Headquarters

We have entered another dues year already. Dues year 2005 started out with some new changes.   Three districts were in the trial mode for "AB" Billing, which is called Anniversary Billing. Members of the three districts that participated in AB were able to pay their dues on line, or by credit card or by check. With HQ AB it was a lot faster to update member's dues records because their invoices were scanned which automatically updated their dues. Scanning the dues notice saved a lot of time and prevented errors. Hopefully in the future all districts will participate in AB since it was a success.

It is also time to start getting ready for a new Merit Mark year. In Merit Mark year 2003 HQ processed 15,270 Active Members and 817 Family Members. Keep up the good work. We are looking forward to Merit Mark year 2004.

New Members, reinstatements, and transfers are processed on a daily basis. It normally takes 5-7 days to process new members . During dues time membership processing doesn't turn around that quickly because dues take priority.
Keep the members coming in.

Deliah Holloway, Membership Supervisor
Paula Brown, Headquarter's Staff

**Headquarters Director
Mary Catherine Berube**
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Publications

At this time of the year our Publications Committee Advisors are all busy reading the many newsletters they receive each month by mail and e-mail. They are also at work preparing for the end of year (1 October) evaluations for the Distinction in Journalism Award. We have added two new advisors. Lt Clare Cox was named advisor for Districts 3 and 32; P/C Cheryl Jarrell will advise Districts 7 and 25. Editors in these districts have been notified of the change.

The new look of adding an educational component to the Parade of Publications was well received. We will try to continue to use the Parade of Publications to present suggestions for improving publications. Hopefully this will give those who cannot attend our meetings an idea or two to bring back to their squadrons or districts. At the Jacksonville Governing Board we will feature ideas for using squadron publications as a member involvement tool. That will also be the topic of our open meeting.

We have recently learned that P/C Sue Farrell has passed away. Sue was advisor for Districts 1, 23 and 30 and will be greatly missed. If you are a member of any of these districts please remove Sue from your mailing lists. A new advisor will be named shortly**.**
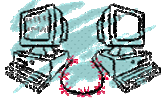
R/c Anne Schreitmueller, JN
Chairman
Publications Committee

*" At the GB ..
We will feature
ideas for using
squadron
publications as a
member
involvement tool."*

Chm Publications Com
Contact
R/C Anne Schreitmueller, JN

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POWER BYTE

DB2000 Seminar
2004 Fall Governing Board
Jacksonville, FL

By popular demand, the Information Technology Committee will conduct a DB2000 Seminar during the 2004 Fall Governing Board Meeting in Jacksonville. The session will be conducted by Stf/C Phil Arcuni, SN and D/Lt/C Ken Guscott, JN on Thursday 9 September 2004, from 1300 to 1700 in Grand Ballroom Section 4.

The presentation is intended for beginners, and will include the actual downloading of files, installing software (including IBM Client Access), obtaining rosters online, and basic operation. New features will be discussed and advanced features will be demonstrated. Time permitting, member's issues and problems will be discussed.

Toward the end of the session, Boating Course Assistant will be demonstrated.

If member questions accumulate, there will be time during the ITCom Open Meeting on Friday afternoon to continue discussion of DB2000.

Tentative Schedule

Part1 1300 - 1355 Phil Arcuni
　　DB2000 for beginners. Installation, downloading a roster, basic program operation.

Part 2 1400 - 1505 Ken Guscott
　　New features in latest releases.
　　Using advanced features of DB2000

Part 3 1515-1550 Phil and Ken
Interactive session with audience on their issues. Continued to Friday afternoon, if necessary.

Part 4 1600 - 1700 Ken Guscott
　　General introduction and operation of Boating Course Assistant.

Web Award Program for 2004 Announced

The Internet has become a way of life for many. It's a way of communicating, obtaining information, and it provides entertainment for those who surf the net. The Internet has become a vital tool for letting the public know about the United States Power Squadrons®. A simple search of the Internet for boating organizations, or other common search phrases, will lead one to information about USPS®. It may be a link to the national organization, or a link to one of over 300 squadron or district websites.

Because the Internet has become such an important part of the American way, it's vital that USPS put their best foot forward, so that any chance visit will provide information in an interesting and informative manner. We may only get one opportunity to interest the new boating enthusiast in becoming part of Americas Boating Club®.

To encourage our many webmasters to provide the best promotion for USPS via the Internet, an awards program will once again recognize those websites that attain a level of excellence. The results of this program will be announced at the Annual meeting in Orlando in January 2005. A complete copy of the program rules is available at: http://www.usps.org/national/itcom/webawards/2004webawards.pdf

Contact the Chairman of the Web Award Committee for further information at websites@usps.org

WAM
8-2-04

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HISTORIANS COMMITTEE

Greetings from the 21 members of the Historians Committee

Congratulations to our squadron and district historians, thanks to their hard work, we have received 21 district and 265 squadron histories so far this year. District 15 and 28 have submitted all their reports for 2003. A few districts only have a few more reports to reach 100%.

We have completed a new interactive Squadron History form, soon to be posted on our web site at www.usps.org/national/historian/. It compliments the Squadron History form contained in DB2000. If you are not using the Squadron Historians report incorporated in DB2000 you may use this form until you're on board with DB2000.

P/C David Zeller, AP one of our valued members of the Historians Committee passed away recently. We will miss him.

Question of the month. Who was the first woman member of USPS® and when did she join?

See you in Jacksonville.

R/C Ed Bauer, SN

Historian Com
Information and forms can be found at
www.usps.org/national/historian/

Chm Historian Com
Contact
R/C Ed Bauer, SN

The Ships Store is gearing up for Jacksonville. We have a number of people on the Committee for different reasons will not be there. Our Committee will be slim, but we will get it done.

We have six new items for this meeting. One being a heavy jacket, 3 new shirts, a new fanny pack, and a new tote with wheels.

I can't believe it is time for the Fall Governing Board, but time sure passes when you are having fun.

R/C Sarah McCurry, S

Check out the
Dock Box Mark Downs
at the Ship's Store
while in Jacksonville

www.usps.org/national/shipstore

Sail And Power Boating — THE ENSIGN

The Ensign, by nature, can only be as good as the articles submitted by our membership. Fortunately, we have some very talented people who write articles for the magazine. Some of those people are members of an elite group known as *The Ensign* Correspondents. Recently there was a suggestion to add an Ensign Correspondent to each Vice Commander's area. These writers would make certain that we cover important news from the different major divisions of our organizations at the national level. Any Correspondent with questions about their duties should contact either P/Stf/C Henriette Kaiser Fox, SN or Stf/C Don Dunlap, SN for more information.

Squadrons should send every issue of their newsletters to their designated Ensign Reader. The Ensign Reader for the district will review the articles and look for ones that may be submitted to *The Ensign*. Unfortunately, some newsletters are sent to the wrong reader. Newsletter editors should check the web page for *The Ensign* to make sure they have the correct reader. Questions about *The Ensign* Reader program should be directed to P/D/Lt/C Barbara Leon, AP.

The Ensign Committee welcomes suggestions for making a great publication even better. If you have an idea for an article or a series of articles, contact R/C Ina Fay Zitter, JN or her assistant, Stf/C Don Dunlap, SN.

Stf/C Don Dunlap, SN

OPERATIONS MANUAL COM

The revised Operations Manual, current as of July 2004, is now on-line. Many thanks are due the members of the OM Committee for getting everything updated and ready for publication. There are still some minor changes to be made and proofing of the document to be done. Going forward we will be posting changes to the manual on the website.

After the Fall Governing Board in Jacksonville, CDs will be cut and inserted in the packets for the incoming commanders. CDs and printed versions will also be available at USPS headquarters.

R/C Patricia G. Gagliano, AP Chm OM Com

"The Operations Manual can be found on the USPS® Web site"
Click Here

National Meetings Calendar

2004	Fall GB Adams, Jacksonville, Fl	8—12 September
2005	Annual Meeting Rosen Ctr, Orlando, FL	5—9 January
	Spring GB Adam's Mark, Charlotte, NC	1—5 June
	Fall GB Hilton, Portland, Ore.	6—11 September
2006	Annual Meeting Rosen Ctr. Orlando, FL	4—8 January
	Fall GB Grand Hyatt, New York	15-20 August

Thank you to our Newsletter Article Contributors

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