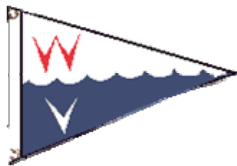


# THE CHAMPLAIN BREEZE



Winooski Valley Sail and Power Squadron Inc.  
Vermont Unit of  
United States Power Squadrons, Inc.®

JULY/AUGUST 2008



## Basic Skills Can Save the Day

Good weather is upon us, finally, and we can look forward to some carefree days on the water. When things on a boat are good, they are very, very good. But when trouble hits it is often fast, frightening and sometimes fatal.

The Cruising Club of America polled its 1,100 members to determine what concerns they had about safety at sea and received many responses from women. They developed a seminar called Suddenly Alone.

One concern was having the skipper fall overboard, leaving them alone to conduct a rescue and operate the boat. The CCA offered this list of skills that will very likely be essential in an overboard situation. You should know how to:

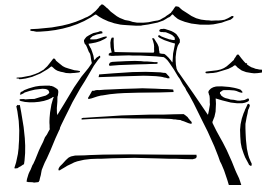
1. Put a line on a cleat and lock it.
2. Tie a clove hitch and a bowline.
3. Heave a throw rope into the wind.  
(On Dream Weaver I made a throw line from a cheap softball with a hole drilled through it and a light line attached leading to a heavy line. Almost everyone can throw a softball).

4. With a throw rope that comes packed in a sack, practice throwing it a second time without re-stowing it in the stuff sack.
5. Perform pre-starts and start the engine.
6. On a sailboat, tack and jibe as both helmsperson and sail trimmer.
7. Make a Lifesling recovery in port and while under way, if your boat is equipped with a Lifesling.
8. Create a crew-overboard search plan.

In a previous issue of the Breeze we itemized the skills necessary to stabilize a situation in which the captain is overboard or disabled. Even couples who have sailed together for years may not have all these essential skills. Know how to:

1. Locate your life jacket and put it on.
2. Clip on to a jackline or strongpoint that will hold your weight if you fall or are thrown overboard. A safety harness is required for this.
3. Raise, lower and reef sails.
4. Start and run the engine.
5. Use the autopilot, if equipped.
6. Locate an appropriate place to anchor, determine scope, use the windlass, if equipped.
7. Deploy and retrieve the anchor.
8. Rig fenders and docking lines, including bow, stern and spring lines.
9. Dock the boat, including backing it, in various wind conditions.

Have a great boating season.  
Dave Schaefer  
Secretary



### COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Summer is "officially" upon us even though it may seem more like April with all the rain. Hopefully though, we are all on the water and enjoying it.

One of the highlights of the summer will be a picnic on Saturday, August 16, 2008 from 4 to 6 pm at the Maritime Museum in Vergennes. Come early by boat or car and enjoy the many fascinating exhibits (specifics in another article). I hope to see you all there.

In the fall, for any of you interested in reviewing or expanding your boating knowledge, we will be offering "Seamanship". The course has recently been updated, so even if you have taken it before you might want to take it again. It will start on Thursday, September 18, 2008 at 7 pm at the Coast Guard Station in Burlington and run for eight weeks. Please e-mail me as soon as you can at [lednicky.vanhoven@mac.com](mailto:lednicky.vanhoven@mac.com) or phone 233-5960 to register.

This year our major task is membership involvement. Without it, our squadron will cease to exist! We have approximately 70 members and only a small percentage of you are actively involved in the squadron. How can we get you more involved? We need your input - more courses, more activities? What would encourage you to get more involved? Please e-mail me with your ideas at [lednicky.vanhoven@mac.com](mailto:lednicky.vanhoven@mac.com)

Next year is the Lake Champlain Quadricentennial. It is the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the French explorer Samuel de Champlain's travels on our lake. As the leading boating organization in the world we should be actively involved in commemorating this historic anniversary. I encourage you to come up with ideas for an activity we can be involved in as part of this celebration.

I hope you all have a safe and enjoyable boating season!

Commander Dick Lednicky

### Winooski Valley's Summer Rendezvous at the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum

Join us for a picnic at the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum. You can come by boat or by car. Directions are available on the museum's web site at: [www.lcmm.org](http://www.lcmm.org)

Come early to enjoy the exhibits at the museum. The museum is open at 10 am. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$9 for seniors, \$6 for students 5-17 and children under 5 are free. Members of the museum are free.

In addition to the museum's wonderful maritime exhibits, there is a special event scheduled for the day of our rendezvous. The following information is taken from the museum's web site:

#### Rabble-In-Arms Living History Weekend August 16-17

**Perhaps the most famous of all LCMM events, this year's Rabble will include demonstrations of maritime machines, re-enactors, construction and use of a traditional field kitchen, and special eighteenth-century-themed workshops.**



(Enactors aboard the Philadelphia at the museum.)

The squadron will have a picnic at the museum from 4-6 pm. For further detail about the picnic, contact Dick Lednicky at:

[Lednicky.vanhoven@mac.com](mailto:Lednicky.vanhoven@mac.com)

We hope to see you there!

### CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION PRESENTED AT CHANGE OF WATCH



Peter Brownell, Commodore of the Royal Savage Yacht Club, is awarded a Certificate of Appreciation at our Change of Watch in May for his efforts in organizing a successful Vessel Safety Check Day at the yacht club in June, 2007, the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Coast Guard's VSC Program. The presentation was made by P/D/C Everett Stebbins, Area Representative of the USPS Vessel Safety Check Committee. Lt. Brownell is also our Squadron Web Master.



The Vessel Safety Check (VSC) program represents a unique alliance between the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and the United States Power Squadrons.

By providing free vessel safety checks for recreational boats, Auxiliary and Power Squadron members identify potential safety problems, prevent boating accidents, allow the Coast Guard and state marine law enforcement personnel more opportunity/time for the protection of our nation's waterways and save lives.

There are approximately 13 million registered recreational boats in the United States and less than 1% are currently checked for safety requirements each year. Most boaters are eager

to have their vessels checked, but there are far too few Vessel Examiners (VEs) to meet the

potential demand. If you enjoy helping others, you would likely enjoy helping fellow boaters by assuring their vessels meet minimum state and federal requirements by providing them with a Vessel Safety Check. Your satisfaction is the thanks usually received from the boater when either you apply the USCG VSC decal or, if unsuccessful, you explain the items that need correcting and hand him/her a West Marine coupon for a 10% discount on the safety items needed and arrange a recheck. Your pay is the thanks you receive from me and our squadron for your involvement in helping us all be safer boaters and the thanks and Merit Mark you receive from the Chief Commander upon completing ten Vessel Safety Checks, successful or not.

Another member of our squadron is in the process of qualifying as a Vessel Examiner for the Vessel Safety Check program. His completion of the qualifying program will bring our number of examiners in the squadron to three. This is a great improvement but, more examiners are needed. If you are interested, think you might be or have questions, contact Everett W. Stebbins at: 802-862-2760 or [esteb22760@aol.com](mailto:esteb22760@aol.com)

Vessel safety checks work and you just might save someone's life.



A few years ago the Executive Committee discussed involvement in Sea Scouting. Sea Scouting is part of the Boy Scouts of America's Venture Scouting program. Open to young men and women, this program seeks to address participant interest in boating skills and promote knowledge of our maritime traditions. USPS supports Sea Scouts and some squadrons sponsor a Scout group or Ship.

At the time we discussed this, there was no Ship in our area. Today there is one established at Coast Guard Station Burlington. In a meeting

P/D/C Everett Stebbins and I had with their Executive Officer, a need for help was indicated.

Local Coast Guard personnel have three year rotating assignments which does not allow them to provide the stable leadership which would help these young people.

What can we do to help? I've met with BSA Senior District Executive, Erik Tanney. A Scout Ship is run by the young people themselves. What's needed is guidance. If some of us step up to assist with guiding the group, it would be greatly appreciated.

If anyone has interest in helping, please contact me at home for further information. My number is (802) 893-8589 and email is [vtspencers@comcast.net](mailto:vtspencers@comcast.net).

**CONGRESS PASSES CLEAN WATER BOATING ACT of 2008**

In past issues of The Champlain Breeze, we discussed the court mandate to the EPA to develop guidelines and permitting processes for water runoff and bilge water discharge for ALL boats, including recreational boats. Last year, H.R.2550 and S.2066 were the bills under consideration. Each was different but their intention was to continue the 35 year exemption of recreational boats.

Work was done to make House and Senate proposals identical. H.R. 5949 and S.2766 is the result. These successfully passed out of their respective committees and now each body passed the measure on 22 July. The joint bill is headed for and expected to be signed by the President.

The Governmental Affairs website of BoatUS has posted an overview of the draft permit process from the EPA if these bills had not passed. These rules or something similar will go into effect 30 Sept 2008.

The article is too long to include here but can be viewed at the following BoatUS website: <http://www.boatus.com/gov>

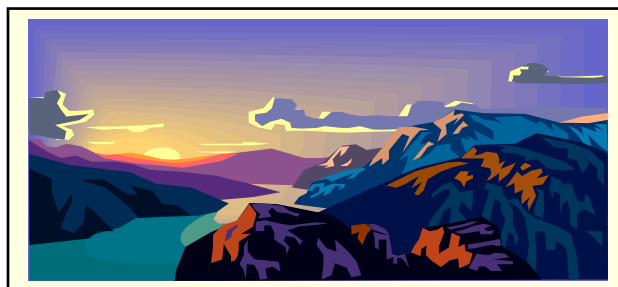
P/D/C James Spencer, SN

**ORION FLARE LAUNCHER RECALL**

A defective opening mechanism in some 12-gauge plastic flare guns manufactured by Olin (now Orion Safety Products) prior to 2000 may not open wide enough to accept a flare cartridge. Guns with a modification to correct the possible problem are marked with U.S. Coast Guard approval code 160 028//12/1.

Boaters with older flare guns should check the operation of the opening mechanism now and at the start of each boating season. If the breech will not open wide enough to accept a cartridge, the gun should be sent back for a replacement. Send defective guns to:

Orion Safety Products, Marine Division  
3157N 500 W  
Peru, IN 46970  
800-851-5260



**ON THE HORIZON**

- Aug 16**      **WVSPS Rendezvous at Maritime Museum, Vergennes**  
4 - 6 pm Come early to enjoy the exhibits at the museum!
- Sept 2-7**    **USPS Fall Governing Board, Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center**  
For details visit:  
<http://d9-usps.org/2008gb/index.html>
- Sept. 18**    **Seamanship Course Begins**  
Coast Guard Station Burlington.  
Contact Dick Lednický to register.  
[lednický.vanhoven@mac.com](mailto:lednický.vanhoven@mac.com)
- Nov. 14-16** **Multi District Conference**  
Ashworth Hotel Hampton, NH  
Watch the Breeze for details.



## WHAT YOU DON'T HEAR CAN HURT YOU

### SOUNDS OF SAFETY

Sooner or later, most of us encounter fog while on the water, and understanding sound signals could help you avoid a collision. While a GPS and chart plotter will tell you where you are, they cannot tell you what is around you. Radar, however, can be a great help if you know how to interpret the blips on the screen. Regardless of what equipment you have, the law requires sound signals, and you will be much safer knowing the basics.

Years ago, when only large boats had radar, I took a squadron cruise to Nantucket Island, Mass. In those days, all we had was a radio direction finder, which required you to interpret Morse code signals from ground stations in strategic locations. Fortunately, I also could rely on my Piloting and Advanced Piloting knowledge.

The squadron fleet left Martha's Vineyard on a reasonably clear day. A couple of hours out of Vineyard Haven, a fog rolled in and reduced visibility to 100 feet or less. However, we all knew fog signals. My son, Russ, took the helm, and I positioned myself in front of the mast, away from the engine noise, to better hear sound signals and scan the water ahead for other boats' wakes. In addition to my canister horn, I also had a horn that used lung pressure as I did not know how long the canister horn would operate. I sounded one long blast, and a powerboat about a quarter-mile starboard sounded another. Following my signal, the squadron sailboats to my port side also sounded signals. We continued signaling for three hours.

When my dead reckoning track said we should be off Nantucket Inlet, a hole in the fog revealed the powerboat that had been paralleling our course. The boat had a radar arm in motion, and I asked the captain if he could see the inlet. He said there was either a buoy or boat about four miles ahead. I realized that he didn't know what he was looking at, so we turned to starboard.

About a half-mile from Nantucket, the fog lifted, and we saw the inlet. Thanks to Advanced Piloting, my dead reckoning had led us right to it. As we approached the breakwater, the powerboat captain stuck his head out of the side of his boat and thanked me. I wondered what he was thanking me for, and after we were tied at the dock, I walked over to chat with him. The captain said he did not know how to use the radar and was following us. "You sailboat guys always know how to navigate," he said. We stayed with him a bit longer and taught him how to read the radar.

Inexperienced boaters can learn a lot from the captain's experience. A good knowledge of paper charts and sound signals is essential, especially if your electronics knowledge is limited or your equipment fails at sea. —Don Baker [From USPS Compass Vol. 2 No. 3]

### From the U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety Division

As many of you may recall, the U. S. Coast Guard Infoline (a toll-free phone number formerly referred to as the Boating Safety Hotline) was discontinued October 1, 2006 due to budget shortfalls. At that time, the Coast Guard requested our partner organizations to remove the 800 number from active websites and customer assistance phone services, and to discontinue the use of the number in all printed material.

It has recently come to the Coast Guard's attention that the CG Infoline 800 number (800-368-5647) has been privately reactivated and now leads to a secondary 800 number that is unrelated to boating safety when dialed. Due to the fact that the boating public is still continuing to attempt to reach us at this number, we are asking for your assistance in ensuring that your membership is aware that the Coast Guard Infoline/Hotline is no longer in use and to discontinue the placement of the number in all publications and services. Your cooperation and assistance in this matter is greatly appreciated, and thank you for all you do to make

recreational boating safer for our boating public.

**WINOOSKI VALLEY SAIL AND POWER SQUADRON BRIDGE OFFICERS  
2008 – 2009**

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TREASURER:	Ronald J. Senecal, S	802-483-4351	<a href="mailto:ronofvt@verizon.net">ronofvt@verizon.net</a>

**Winooski Valley's Website: [www.wvsps.com](http://www.wvsps.com)**

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