

Currents

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Hot topics

- **Brunswick partnership growing (see article on this page)**
- **Online interactive education partnership offers more USPS seminars (see article on this page)**
- **Partnership with Mariner's Learning System provides low-cost Coast Guard licensing opportunity (see page 2)**
- **Virtual Trainer offers new possibilities in boating education (see page 3)**



Hot Links

Reserve the Virtual Trainer

www.usps.org/php/bsvt

Take an online seminar

www.usps.org/edonline/

Ed Dept. Home Page

www.usps.org/eddept/

Inside this issue

Online interactive seminars	Pg. 1
Mariner's Learning System Discount	Pg. 2
Boating Skills Virtual Trainer	Pg. 3
Update on USPS seminars	Pg. 4

Brunswick Dealer Advantage Program Grows

The Brunswick Dealer Advantage/U.S. Power Squadrons Program (BDA) continues to expand. Our growth in the program since the Annual Meeting in Jacksonville, FL has been steady. When we left Jacksonville we had 119 squadrons participating. Since February of this year we have enjoyed 12% growth -- 14 (BDA).

new squadrons have joined since our Jacksonville meeting!



We now have 133 squadrons involved, 1/3 of USPS squadrons. At least one squadron is actively participating within 30 of our 33 Districts. We have plenty of room for continued growth and will continue our efforts along with our partner (Brunswick) to increase our participation numbers.

Your Program Partner Relations Committee Team – Stf/C John D. Miller, JN; P/R/C Dick Pfenniger, SN and R/C John Malatak, AP are in constant contact with

Districts and/or squadrons that are not certain if there is a participating dealer within their respective geographical areas are asked to contact either Stf/C Miller, P/R/C Pfenniger or R/C Malatak to obtain requested information. (See contact information and links at the end of this article.) We have an agreement with Brunswick as to how and to whom we share this information, thus certain protocols must be followed.

Stf/C Miller and R/C Malatak reached

(Continued on page 2)

Interactive Online Learning Growing

The USPS Interactive Online Program has just implemented a new seminar - *Basic Weather and Forecasting Winds and Storms*. This is the *Basic Weather and Forecasting Winds and Storms* renamed to appeal to non-USPS boaters. It provides the student many interactive elements, including videos, opportunities to drill down for more information, automated graphics and an interactive

(Continued on page 3)

Online Boating Courses and Seminars

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America's Boating Course

Partner in Command

Boating On Rivers, Locks and Lakes

Weather for Boaters

(BDA Continued from page 1)

out to all D/C's and DEO's in June to obtain information on activity being tracked by squadrons participating in the BDA. To date (August) response to our questions are less than stellar and highlights one of our continued organizational difficulties – communication.

BDA Customer Service Representatives will again be making contact with their dealers and partner squadrons rekindling the relationship and assisting with the establishment of various seminars and

courses. With the listing of Brunswick Dealers in hand, we can now identify those geographical areas where there are no Brunswick dealers so we can more accurately define the exact number of squadrons who have potential Brunswick partners.

We will provide updates periodically throughout the remaining part of this calendar year. This number will then give us a more realistic number of squadrons that need to participate to establish 100% participation of eligible squadrons in the program.

For more information on the BDA Program please contact one of the Program Partner Relations personnel listed below.

BDA Contacts

R/C John Malatak, AP (Chr)

john.malatak@comcast.net

Stf/C John D. Miller, JN

viper6miller@gmail.com

P/R/C Dick Pfenniger, SN

rcp37@juno.com

Mariner's Learning System

Mariners Learning System™ (MLS) offers Coast Guard approved Captain's Licensing courses that can be taken online in the comfort of your home or on the road and at your own pace.

They have incorporated an intuitive learning approach that's direct, clear, and effective. They provide a methodical, well-organized program of professionally produced, on-demand lectures, videos, and companion manuals.

As previously announced, USPS and MLS entered into an agreement which entitles USPS to serve as a distributor of MLS courses. The intent of this agreement is to provide USPS with the ability to:

- (1) Offer all MLS courses to our members at a significant discount. As an example, the OUPV Captain's course (better known as the "Six-Pac" license) List Price is \$795, our Member

Price is \$535.

- (2) Offer all MLS courses to non-members at a special price; and
- (3) Offer all courses through our Ships Store.



You can purchase any of these MLS offerings at the USPS Ships Store at: <http://store.shopusps.org/Catalog/Captains-Licenses/>

In addition to offering deep discounts to our members, we will also be expanding our MLS partnership by providing

proctoring services to MLS students who have successfully completed the curriculum and are ready to 'sit in' and take the U.S. Coast Guard Captain's License Exam. (More information on this element will be forthcoming).

MLS will also be providing a monthly technical e-Newsletter that will be available on our USPS website that will speak to various technical elements such as interpreting the NavRules, Seamanship for the Mariner, Navigation for the Mariner, Maritime Law, etc. — all things that a Licensed Captain and prudent mariner should be aware of.

For additional information about this new and exciting opportunity contact:

Stf/C John D. Miller at:

viper6miller@gmail.com

or

R/C John Malatak at:

john.malatak@comcast.net



(Online—Continued from page 1)

glossary. Work is underway on several other seminars and on the first course, *Cruising and Cruise Planning*.

This summer's reduced price promotion was successful, so *Weather for Boaters* has been implemented using a promotion offering discounts on all our seminars through the month of September.

You can sign up for an online seminar at this URL:



<http://www.usps.org/edonline/>

Virtual Trainer Launches New Era in Boating Education

The aerospace industries know that simulators are a valuable training tool for pilots. Simulators allow an operator to gain experience, at a low cost and without risking damage to equipment or injuries if mistakes are made. The Educational Department is pleased to announce that simulation training has come to boating! As a result of creative thinking, a lot of work and Coast Guard grants, USPS is now the proud owner of five Boating Skills Virtual Training (BSVT) units available for use by the USPS districts and squadrons.

The BSVT embodies high-end technology featuring three computer screens with a rotating field of vision up to 225 degrees, a responsive steering wheel with console switches for horn and navigation lights and a Mercury Marine throttle. It reacts to variable settings for trim, current and wind. (See figure below.)

Students may maneuver through simulated exercises in a virtual envi-

ronment, without the risks of a real boat on the water. The helm seat can be set up at a regular desk or conference table.

The realistic boating experience is the result of sophisticated water physics software developed by Virtual Driver Interactive (VDI) and funded by a U.S. Coast Guard grant. Other participating partner



organizations include the National Safe Boating Council, the BoatUS® Foundation, Brunswick Marine, Mercury Marine and Boston Whaler.

The prototype unit was Beta tested at the USPS annual meeting in January 2014. Members had the chance to drive the unit and gave feedback which was used in the

further development of the fully functioning unit that debuted at the international Boating and Water Safety Summit held in Nashville, Tennessee in April 2014.

The five units now owned by USPS feature nine exercises tailored to complement the Practical On-The-Water curriculum. The units are designed to have a live instructor

who can adjust the controls for additional advanced training in heavy winds, strong currents, and day/night scenarios.

The BSVT units feature nine exercises tailored to complement the Practical On-The-Water curriculum. For example, when you run the leaving the dock scenario, you can see the pier on your starboard side. On your dashboard you see your compass, tach and speedometer. These instruments respond as you maneuver along with the displays. Wind and current data are provided on the far left of the displays. (See figure above.)

The BSVT units feature nine exercises tailored to complement the

(Continued on page 4)



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Download a PDF of *Currents* in color with links at: www.usps.org/eddept/misc/currents.htm

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This web site has additional information with questions and answers regarding cost, time-frames and procedures.

Also visit the external BSVT website at this URL, www.usps.org/boatingskillsvt, to view videos of this exciting new addition to the educational curriculum. Squadrons, districts or external organizations may also purchase their own units by contacting USPS Headquarters Customer Service or Virtual Driver Interactive. For further program questions, call USPS customer service at 888-367-8777 ext. 0 or e-mail BSVT Project Manager Lisa Herndon at: lisa@herndon.net.



(Trainer—Continued from page 3)

Practical On-The-Water curriculum. The exercises include: Departing the Dock, Working with Spring Lines Maneuvering in Fairways, Pivot Turns, Moorings, Docking, Running a Slalom Course, Crossing/Overtaking/Meeting other power and sail vessels and Emergency Stop

You can also do the night simulation. In this exercise, you first see the scene during daylight. (See fig-



ure at above.) Then the scene switches to night time. In the direction of the moon you will see the water and objects illuminated. You also see illuminated instruments on the dashboard display.

USPS HQ is now accepting reservations to use the trainers via the res-

The URL is:

www.usps.org/php/bsvt.



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Update on USPS Seminars

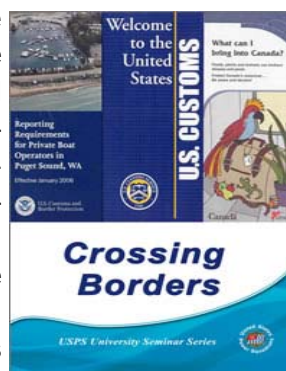
The Marine Environment committee has created several seminars for USPS members and squadrons to continue our mission of boating education.

Late last year, in collaboration with the BoatUS Foundation, we made the seminar *Boating on Rivers,*

Locks and Lakes available online. The material in the seminar was updated and created numerous interactive graphics, added video, and still images to facilitate learning online. USPS members can take the seminar at a discount. It can be accessed at this website:

<http://www.usps.org/edonline/>.

We also completed a new seminar entitled, *Crossing Borders*. This seminar was developed to



inform boaters about the proper procedures for visiting neighboring countries.

We focused on border regulations with Mexico, Canada and the Bahamas since they are the countries most visited by boaters from

the United States. Of course, this seminar will be most useful for our squadrons in border states and long range cruisers.

Boating on Rivers, Locks and Lakes

