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At the Helm

As I sit here writing up lists of things I absolutely must do plus those items that should have already been done, my mind is wandering toward my commitment to USPS®.

First, let me say I'm not that enthused about all the decisions USPS has made over the years (another time for that), but I do have a strong belief in their stated goal of making boaters safer. Hopefully, we do instill in them, not only more knowledge but also a love for the water.

But let's face reality- I'm only one person and we need lots of others to step up and be counted. What does that mean? It's more than just agreeing with the mission. It's making a conscious effort – maybe even volunteer to help. Small steps are really the best!

Probably it is a generational thing, you want someone to recognize your talents, give you some accolades in front of your peers. After all, you were brought up with your folks saying no one likes a braggart or in other words, no "eye eye eye eye". And of course we all know there is a generation that seems to have a gas bottle under their arm which blows up their heads more every time they tell you all the stuff they've done and how wonderful they are. Give me a break!

So it boils down to this, we need your help – not a big deal, all you have to do is sign up to take a course (Piloting and Weather are being offered). Already taken those? Send a note to the SEO Carl, ASEO John or me asking for whatever course you would like to take. Me, I absolutely loved Cruise Planning – definitely a course for dreaming of the ultimate cruise – even a weekend cruise. Of course if you want to learn more about USPS, there is a short seminar called "OT in 3" – Operations Training in 3 hours.

Yes, there are other seminars – short but giving you more information to make your boating experiences uneventful – the most important thing. I also would strongly recommend the CPR/First Aid course offered again by Mike Jezak. Absolutely terrific – no, I'm not going to become an EMT but I feel much more confident to be able to help in an emergency situation.

What else can you do? You can sign up for one of the many social events (The Dock Party is an easy way for this one). Joining others at the Daileys' Onota Boat Livery for a cookout – bringing something to share – sign up soon with Mike that you're coming.

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The opinions expressed in "The Log, by the Editorial Staff or Contributors are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Berkshire Sail and Power Squadron or those of the United States Power Squadron.



BSPS & USPS CALENDARS

September 13 -- Berkshire Leadership Team Meeting

September 19 -- Weather Course begins, 6:45 PM at the First United Methodist Church

September 20 -- Piloting Course begins, 6:45 PM at the First United Methodist Church

October 7-8 D2 Fall Conference -- at Maron Hotel in Danbury.

October 13 -- Berkshire Leadership Team Meeting

November 15 -- Articles due for the next edition of the BSPS LOG

Like Us on Facebook



Read informative articles about boating

See announcements for courses and social events

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Berkshire-Sail-and-Power-Squadron/528850690570303?ref=hl>



BSPS Info Line
413-266-1130

Do you know that we have an informational telephone line? Call to learn details of upcoming events. Refer your boating buddies for information on upcoming on Public Boating classes and

Berkshire Sail & Power Squadron

Forty Three Years of Service to Boaters
 1974 - 2016

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In **LIVING COLOR at:**

http://www.usps.org/d2/d2_squadron_news.html

Please Remember...

All members are requested to notify our commander or editor of the death of any other member or a member's family as soon as possible. We want to express our condolences in a timely manner and we need the help of all our members to this end.

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At the Helm

Want to help in other ways?

Of course you can always help our excellent editor, Peter Samsel, and submit a story of one of your cruises – Peter is always looking for them. Or just let me know – I promise you won't get in over your head – especially if you didn't have a life jacket on! Just think, taking a course makes you a safer boater – signing up for social events gives you lots of fun along with good food and of course boating stories!

Don't forget, are you in need of a boat inspection? It's free! Just contact John Holden to arrange for the inspection – remember John can do paddle boats too. 413-441-3769. I know I want to go on the search for geodetic marks being led by Dave Trudeau and Carl Filios. Sounds like a good community service plus more laughs. Interested? Contact either one to sign up.

Lot of courses, events and service PLUS! What are you waiting for? Sign up today – you'll be really surprised how much you'll learn and also enjoy doing whatever you choose.

As I said before, we want to keep you informed and **"Keep Berkshire Alive and Have Lots of Laughs and Fun Doing It!"**. Join in the mission – as the commercial says **"Try it, You'll Like It!"**

Susan Darcy, JN

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO BE SAFE



We perform FREE Vessel Safety Checks all season and even out of season. A VSC will ensure you have all the necessary Federal and State required safety gear on board. We also provide a review of IMPORTANT but not required gear, such as First Aid Kits and Radios.

Experience has shown that vessels displaying a VSC sticker are less likely to be stopped for routine safety checks. While not the most important reason, it might save you time and needless anxiety over a routine stop

Please call me, John C Holden, SN at 413-441-3769 to schedule your appointment. *John Holden, SN*

Why Attend a District Meeting?

The upcoming District 2 (Berkshire is a member of District 2) Fall Conference will be held on Saturday October 7 at the Maron Hotel in Danbury, CT. If you've never attended a district meeting, this would be a good one to start with. In addition to the "business" a district has to conduct, there are other things that happen. A Fall Conference is usually called the "Educational Conference". Awards are presented to individuals and squadrons that achieved certain goals during the educational year (July – June). Last year we came home with a new sextant that will remain squadron property. That was based on completions of the Navigation course.

A district meeting is a good way to make new friends from other squadrons, and find out what else is going on in the district. Various district officers present topics of interest. There's always something on Education. In this case, we will hear the latest information obtained at the Fall Governing Board meeting in Pittsburgh (which will be over by the time you read this).

A highlight of this year's conference will be our speaker. André Dubois from the Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons will be making a presentation about the Costa Concordia - you probably remember that's the Italian ship that ran aground a couple of years ago. There were interesting stories at the time. André has done substantial research on the subject, and I got to hear his presentation at the District 6 Spring Conference. Based on hearing that, we invited him to speak at our Fall Conference. The presentation is well worth hearing and seeing. It's hard to believe that the crew of a ship could do things like that.

There will also be either a video by the Chief Commander or a GoToMeeting with a member of the National Bridge or other high level officer who will answer questions from the audience. Come take a look at life outside of the squadron. You might enjoy it.

Carl Filios, SN
Squadron Educational Officer SEO

Successful Dock Party

We had excellent weather for our Dock Party on Aug 27, in spite of our missing leaders, who are reported to be having the time of their lives in Pittsburgh. (We'll have to hear stories after they return!)

Thanks to all who came, and especially to Mike Jezak for arranging the event, and to Tom and Paula Dailey for hosting us, and for allowing their dog to share in the food, including the brownie stolen from Maria's hand!

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Confessions of a Captain - How the Navigational Rules of the Road saved my life

As a USCG Licensed Captain, a lot of opportunities come my way to earn a living. One of my favorites is working as a delivery Captain. I would like to share one of these trips that was like no other and nearly cost my crew and me our lives...



I was sitting in a restaurant in Annapolis Maryland a few years ago when I met a couple who had just bought a 58 foot boat that they needed to have moved down to Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. After the evening's festivities were over we agreed that I was going to help their family with moving their new toy.

On board would be the husband and wife who were both experienced boaters, their two children, a 9-year-old boy and a 7-year-old girl. The trip would take place in early December and be completed prior to the holidays. The planned route was that we would travel the length of the Chesapeake Bay and exit into the Atlantic Ocean once we were in Norfolk, Virginia. Once we were out in the Atlantic we would be traveling southward along the coastline ducking inside to the ICW in the event of bad weather or the need for additional supplies or repairs.

We departed at the crack of dawn and had an uneventful day. Along the way I would ask the owners questions that pertained to the rules of the road to check understanding and educate them whenever necessary. I also took the time to check out all of the electronics and autopilot controls. This boat was missing nothing and was appraised at 1.6 million dollars. Experience has taught me not to be impressed with the price, but with the operational functionality of the vessel. This was one impressive boat and much to my surprise everything seemed to be working. Now the only thing to worry about was my crew.

As the day progressed I determined that we were going to be heading out into the ocean after dark. The area around Norfolk is a very heavily traveled area by numerous recreational, commercial and military vessels. As day becomes night the area can become very challenging to

navigate even by an experienced Captain. I decided that it would be best for me to get some sleep prior to entering this heavily traveled area. A course was set, the autopilot was on and clear instructions to the crew were given. The most important instruction was to stay on the preplanned course and speed and not cross the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel area without waking me. I was assured all was understood and that my instructions would be followed. So I was able to now settle down into what nearly became my last sleeping moments...

I was abruptly wakened by the screams of sheer terror coming from the owner's wife requesting me to go topside and take control of the helm. I immediately jumped into action not asking any questions along the way. Once on deck I saw two of the brightest white spotlights I have ever seen shining directly on the helm. There was no time to think and analyze the situation; I immediately turned the helm hard to starboard. At that very moment the Captains of what was two very large seagoing tugboats pulling what appeared to be several barges also turned their wheels hard to starboard. All that I could do now was to wait for the impending impact of our vessels hitting to occur along with the cold rush of water and the effects it would have on the crew and myself. At this time of year the water temperature was around 42 degrees and the moon had not risen. If we went into the water hypothermia would have disabled each of us and we would perish within just a matter of a few minutes. The only thing on our side was that I have a rule on these trips that all crew must wear lifejackets while on deck. In this case I think the lifejackets would have just made it easier for the recovery of our bodies.

In what had seemed to be a lifetime it was all over. We had missed by no more than the width of a football. It was almost as if King Neptune himself had decided that it was not our time to go and stepped in to prevent this tragedy from occurring. The truth be told our survival was due more to knowledge than that of luck or by any intervention from the heavenly bodies.

Let's break down the events that allowed me and my crew live another day to tell this story. First, each Captain involved had a thorough knowledge of the Rules of the Road that allowed the necessary actions to take place-avoiding loss of life. In this case there were three rules that prevented this situation from becoming a tragedy:

Rule 14 – Head-on Situation: This rule states that when two power-driven vessels are meeting on a reciprocal or nearly reciprocal course so as to involve risk of collision each shall alter her course to starboard so each shall pass on the port side of the other. This rule is why each Captain altered their course to starboard.

Rule 16 – Action by Give-way Vessel: Every vessel that is directed to keep out of the way of another vessel shall, so far as possible, take early and substantial action to keep well clear. In this case my vessel was considered the give-way vessel. We were clearly not following this rule prior to me taking the helm.

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Confessions of a Captain - How the Navigational Rules of the Road saved my life

Rule 17 – Action by Stand-on Vessel: This rule has 3 components:

1. When one of the two vessels is to keep out of the way, the other shall maintain her course and speed. Although I was not at the helm I am sure that the two tugs did hold their course and speed.
2. The stand-on vessel may take action to avoid collision as soon as it becomes apparent to her that the vessel required to keep out of the way is not taking appropriate action in compliance with these rules. The two tugs were not obligated to change course at this point. They did have the option according to the rules; however, they chose to hold their course and speed.
3. When the stand-on vessel finds herself so close that a collision cannot be avoided by the action of the give-way vessel alone, she shall take such action as will best aid to avoid collision. This is the moment that I took the helm. The tugs determined that my actions alone would not prevent a collision so they were bound by the Rules of the Road to change their course and speed or take any additional action to avoid a collision.

Now that the excitement was over and my knees stopped shaking my new target was the owner of the vessel who, from this day forward, has been known as reckless Randall. However, fate had once again stepped in. Reckless Randall's wife took him below and he was not seen on deck until the following morning. I am not sure what she had said to him but it was clear my input was no longer necessary.

From the SEO

There are two courses scheduled for the upcoming months. Piloting starts Tuesday, September 20th at the First United Methodist Church. Class will run 6:45pm to 8:45pm, for about 8 weeks. In this class you will learn correct plotting and labeling techniques which you will use in all courses in the sequence that follow (Advanced Piloting, Junior Navigation, and Navigation). The course concludes with an exam that tests your plotting skills and overall course knowledge.

➡ Please contact Carl Filios (cefilios@verizon.net or 413-822-9119) as soon as possible so that materials may be ordered. Alternatively, you may register [here](#) for the course. Note that member cost is \$40 and non-member cost is \$140. We will be using the text, Weekend Navigator, as well as the course plotter and dividers you should have from ABC. Class will not meet on the second Tuesday of each month.

The second course will be Weather. This is one of the best, if not the best course, that USPS offers. The course starts on Monday, September 19th at the First United

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From the Mouth of Moby Dick (The Squadron's Mascot)



Miscellaneous Snips - Quotes overheard at the Block Island Rendezvous and Recent Events with Berkshire Squadron.

- Okay, I understand this is a boating month but how could they give up being here to just cruise? Absolutely terrible! (Can't tell Moby I'm envious)
- Why are their huge windmills in the water?
- Where are the squirrels?
- Look at size of those drinks – they look like frappes!
- This is a lovely location – look at all the sticks!
- Oh it was 20# of Cat Food not Cat Litter? Still doesn't make any sense.
- Why do they have new phones? And that thing hanging around his neck?
- There will be Maine stories a'coming!

Get Involved – Just Jump In!



From the SEO (continued)

Methodist Church. The class will run about 8 weeks. This course covers everything from weather fronts and clouds to hurricanes and tornados. Member cost is \$60, and non-member cost is \$120.

➡ Please contact Carl Filios (cefilios@verizon.net or 413-822-9119) as soon as possible so that materials may be ordered. Alternatively, you may register [here](#) for the course.

We will likely schedule a seminar or two at a later date.

Carl Filios, SN
Squadron Educational Officer SEO

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(www.activecaptain.com)

Electrical Resistance

Electricity. We all love it. We use it and we respect it. But everyone knows it carries some danger along with its benefits.

We're in the middle of some major refit projects this summer. Replacing the electrical inlets is somewhere on the list, but not something to do this summer. That's where you get nailed.

So we're listening to Pandora on the TV and it "blinks" - the sound stops, the TV flickers, and then starts up again. Obviously the WiFi, right? It blinks again. And then everything turns off. And by everything, we really mean the air conditioning because it's something like 150 degrees this summer on the Chesapeake Bay.

Grab the flashlight - walk down to the electrical panels and one is off.

We must have tripped a breaker because too many things are turned on. We have 4 circuit breakers for each incoming power cable at various places to control selection and configuration. They're all on but showing no power.

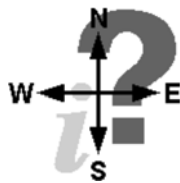
The last circuit breaker in the lazarette had a funny smell - and not a good funny smell. It was the smell of burning insulation. We manually trip the circuit and make a dash out to the pedestal nearly diving at the end to get there faster!

The pedestal breaker had tripped. Inspecting the cable, we found it normal on the pedestal. But it was blazing hot on the boat. Pulling it out found a badly charred hot pin and more insulation smell.

It's all fixed now but there are some major lessons learned. An electrical fire is the most common type of fire on a boat. But there are things you can and should do now:

1. Touch the cable connector cover where it plugs into your boat often. If it's too warm, shut off the power and investigate. Stop reading and go do this now!
2. 1-2 times each year, unplug the boat and remove all AC power. Unscrew the inlet port connector for AC power and inspect it. We have 4 of these on Red Head and found every one of the wires to be loose on every connector. That is where fires are born.
3. Clean the pins on the plugs taking great care to make sure there is no power applied. Spraying something like Corrosion-X to coat the pins is a great idea.
4. Stop using the old design of power connectors on your boat. Look into the SmartPlug products. They are better connectors with more metal making contact and additional safety capabilities. Their connectors grab the wires better and make for a much safer connection to outside power.

It's easy to put off electrical maintenance and resist making changes when everything is working. But that changes so quickly with electricity. Doing these 4 things this week can keep you, your crew, and your boat safer.



Ask Mr. Melville

Got a question about BSPS or USPS? Not certain what to do? Send a note to Mr. Melville.

Dear Mr. Melville. As few years ago, you published something called the Whale Gourmet. I loved one of the recipes especially a recipe concerning chicken. Could you reprint the recipe? Signed: *Unplucked Bird*

Dear "Feathered!" Thanks for the great suggestion. We've included the recipe below plus hints and hope others will submit their food ideas on a boat. *Mr. M.*

The Whale Gourmet (Recipes for Every Galley)

Only got a single burner in the galley? This column will try to show you how to have gourmet dinners with minimal fuss and do the dishes too! Submissions by everyone is encouraged and solicited. It just won't be a success without YOU!

Tanglewood Chicken

1 lb Chicken cut into either appetizer or entrée size pieces
 $\frac{3}{4}$ C Kikkoman Lite soy sauce $\frac{1}{4}$ C oil
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ginger 1 tsp sugar
 1 clove garlic minced.

Mix marinade. Put in a container large enough to hold the chicken. Place chicken pieces (either appetizer or entrée size pieces) in marinade container. Plastic zipper bags work really well (like Ziploc) but I double bag. Marinate until time to cook. Broil or grill about 5 minutes per side.

Note: For small boats or camping, great cooked ahead and eaten cold.

Variation: Use flank steak cut for skewers or in strips instead of chicken

Moby's Galley Hints for Big and Small Boats

Cook enough meat (chicken or beef) ahead and put in plastic bags the amount needed for each meal and then wrap each bag in foil folded over tightly to seal. Bring salad fixings washed and in bite size pieces and separated in containers or bags.

Put water on to boil for the rice (or pasta) - boil in the bag rice is suggested. When the rice is almost done, take the foil wrapped cooked meat and drop it into the rice water to heat. Fix salad and serve your gourmet meal.

Got an extra thermos? Put some water on to boil every time you light the stove then fill the thermos bottle. Then you can make tea, or coffee or clean up any time you want.



Decal Awareness Program (DAP)

There is a new replacement tool in the Vessel Safety Check (VSC) tool box called "DAP" acronym for "Decal Awareness Program". The flyers and posters were designed to display the three primary aspects of the United States Power Squadrons: EDUCATION, SAFETY, and CAMARADERIE. Using the Vessel Safety Check decal at its nucleus is beneficial, as it's a recognizable symbol. Another benefit of the flyer is Squadrons and VEs can add their contact information electronically from their computer. Also displayed on the flyer is the Quick Response

(QR) code for the USPS web site, plus a QR code for the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary VSC locator web site. This is a new National project that adheres to the USPS branding manual policy.

"Save a Life" boater safety signs were designed to be placed at recreational merchant locations & boat ramps. By including the form 7012, boaters will know in advance what is expected in order to pass a VSC. One of the signs is designed to have a Squadron address box and the other is a Universal sign that combines the USPS & USCGAUX.

With your leadership and support the Decal Awareness Program can increase the annual Vessel Safety Checks.

DAP Announcement quoted from Safety Committee Webpage. The Safety Committee page can be found by going to:

- usps.org
- [Member site](#)
- [Site index](#)
- [Safety Committee](#)

Member Site of the United States Power Squadrons® National Website

