

the Tar Talks

A Publication of the Norwalk Sail & Power Squadron

Commander's Message - Cdr Laura Shaw, AP

This cold weather rolls around too fast after a boating season that's over before I can blink. Hopefully your boats are safely tucked away and properly winterized for the long winter months ahead. My boat, Lady Evelyn, is parked in the driveway and covered with shrink wrap. Thank you to the member who wisely advised me not to store the mast and sail in the boat like I did last year, lest any mice make a nice, cozy nest in there! (Yes, your Commander made this dumb move last year, and was lucky that the sail survived intact.)



This is a good time to look back on the boating season you just had and make an honest assessment of your skills. Were they up to par? Did you run into any situations where you weren't sure what to do, or wondered if you should've handled something differently? Are you confident you can pilot the boat if your GPS fails? Could you handle a man overboard situation without panicking, or figure out if you can make it under that bridge without tearing the electronics off the top of the mast? We'll be sending out notices in the spring detailing upcoming courses being offered by Norwalk and other squadrons that can help you in all these situations and more. And if you have questions about what to do in a particular situation, email us and we'll get back to you with an answer.

We're also looking for members to become Vessel Examiners (the course will be coming up in the spring, probably April), as well as those who've taken interesting boating trips to give a presentation to the squadron. Unlike your relatives, we really DO want to see your vacation pictures! Drop us an email so we can schedule your talk for next season. Or send us a story about it with a picture or two for The Tar Talks.

If you have an idea for an event, seminar, course or program you'd like us to present, let us know that, too. We value your input.

In the meantime, watch your mail for an invitation to our annual "After-The-Holidays" Holiday Party! This tradition started a couple of years ago when our Holiday Party, which was scheduled in December before Christmas, was cancelled at the last minute due to a snowstorm. We rescheduled it for early January, and it was such a success that we decided to continue that tradition.

Happy Holidays, and hope to see you at the party!
Commander Laura

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Welcome New Members

Scott Martin
of New Canaan

Mathew and Jeanette
Vetro of Trumbull

Henry Cheever
of Riverside

Congratulations

are due to -

- Jim Hamren for achieving the grade of JN
- David Pierce, Mark Reifers and John Sullivan for passing Seamanship 101 taught by Jeff Scott. We wish them success on part 2 of this foundational course.

Safety Corner - Marine Communications

Digital Selective Calling (DSC)

Digital Selective Calling (DSC) is a feature of some VHF radios that provides, upon activation, a digital distress signal. During a distress alert, DSC provides identification, nature of distress, and an exact position when connected to a GPS. It also provides an excellent means of making a routine individual call to another DSC equipped boater using their 9-digit Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI). A valid MMSI can be obtained from the Federal Communications Commission, BoatUS, and SeaTow. The Coast Guard shore network also maintains a voice guard on channel 16 VHF and 2182 kHz.

To test your VHF DSC radio, exchange routine calls on CH70 with another suitably equipped vessel. It is illegal to send a false distress to test your radio.

If you receive a DSC distress alert, do not answer immediately. Allow a USCG station to contact the distress vessel. If no contact is heard, call the distress vessel on VHF CH16. Once you have made contact, call the USCG on VHF CH16 or by any available means and tell them you are relaying a distress. Give them the vessel's position, identification, nature of distress, and vessel description.

Note that cellular phones generally cannot provide ship-to-ship safety communications or communications with rescue vessels. If you make a distress call on a cellular phone, only the one party you call will be able to hear you and none of the boats in your immediate vicinity will know you are in trouble. Locating a cellular caller is hard to do. If you don't know precisely where you are, the Coast Guard will have difficulty finding your location on the water. Use your DSC VHF radio.

Satellite EPIRB'S

The most useful system for automated distress alerts is the 406 MHz Electronic Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB). It provides rapid alerting, identification (if properly registered), and accurate location to search and rescue authorities. The EPIRB has a built in homing beacon on 121.5 MHz. USCG aircraft have the ability to home in on this signal. This important safety device and can be purchased or rented.

Adapted from the USCG Navigation Center of Excellence web site

Note: USPS publishes The Boatowner's Guide to GMDSS and Marine Radio, available from USPS HQ at 1-888-FOR-USPS (8:30 -4:00, M-F)

Time for 2007 Bridge Nominations

The nominating committee has begun their work building our Bridge for 2007/2008. They need your help both to volunteer and to suggest people who may be willing to serve. Commander Laura Shaw would like to do something else after her 4 years in office, and SEO Bill McClenaghan will be stepping down from the Bridge after his 4 years in office. We all owe them a great deal. Contact Fred Zinsser, 203-846-3136 or Fred.Zinsser@hexcel.com with your candidates.

Norwalk Sail & Power Squadron 2005 Bridge

Commander:

Laura Shaw, AP
203-858-4568
BoatNSPS@optonline.net

Executive Officer:

(open)

Administrative Officer:

Fred Zinsser, AP
203-846-3136
Fred.Zinsser@hexcel.com

Educational Officer:

Bill McClenaghan, AP
203-838-4984
wmcclena@aol.com

Treasurer:

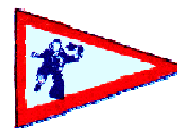
Les White, S
203-438-0765
Polarisii@aol.com

Secretary:

Jim Hamren, JN
914-533-6090
hamren@
optonline.net

Members at Large

P/Lt/C Mike Brown, SN
P/C Irwin Kotcher, P
P/C Bill McGirr, AP
P/C Tony Mobilia, AP
P/R/C Kel Weber, SN



The opinions expressed by contributors are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Norwalk Sail & Power Squadron or USPS. All members are invited and encouraged to submit items for publication. Email Jim Hamren hamren@optonline.net

Annual After-the-Holidays Party

Saturday January 6, 2007, 6:30 PM
Ambrosia Mediterranean Restaurant
16 River Street, Norwalk
(203) 853-0211



\$30.00 per person
Beer and Wine will be provided
Cash Bar for Cocktails



Menu:

Appetizers: Sampler of Mediterranean Delights
Choice of Soup or Salad

Entrée Choices (select 1):
(all entrees served with potato or rice and vegetable)
Roast Prime Rib of Beef
Chicken Marsala
Filet of Salmon Florentine

Dessert and Coffee

RSVP to Fred Zinsser
203-846-3136 or Fred.Zinsser@hexcel.com

Bring a new unwrapped toy for The Children's Bank



D/2 Winter Council

Saturday
January 27, 2007

Best Western Hotel
Poughkeepsie, NY

Spring Conference

Friday & Saturday,
March 30-April 1
2007

**Hosted by Storm King
Power Squadron**

Best Western Hotel
Poughkeepsie, NY

Complete program and
registration materials are on
the D2 web site

In the Spirit of the Season -

Help Support Our Troops

Please help make everyday life a little easier for our troops by donating items for care packages from the list below. The Marine Corps League will pick up the items, box and ship your contributions to units in Iraq and Afghanistan. The MCL is continuously accepting goods (and funds) to help support this vital program. The list below contains specific requests from the Marines in the field:

- AA batteries
- Powdered drinks
- Fruit Cups
- DVD movies (new or used)
- Beef jerky
- Gum or hard candy
- Dried fruit
- Sunflower seeds
- Men's white socks
- Slim Jims
- Sunscreen
- Chips / snacks
- Bug repellent
- Smokeless tobacco
- Prepaid phone cards
- Toiletries
- Music CD's (new or used)
- Cereal Bars



Donations may be made at the NSPS After-the-Holidays Party or in the lobby of the Norwalk Inn. Contact P/C Bill McGirr for more information at Goldcoastbill@hotmail.com, or (203) 406-4399.

Educ Dept Update

The Norwalk public boating class was canceled this fall due to lack of students. Eleven students passed in the Wilton class, taught by Kel Weber. Three more students will be taking the exam in December and I am sure they will also pass the course. In addition, we had 16 people take and pass the test for Personal Watercraft Operation. Seven of these people already had a Safe Boating Certificate and paid our squadron to take the PWC test. - Bill McClenaghan

Ship 6 update

Sailing season for Ship 6 has ended, and CELEBRATION's been hauled and winterized – many thanks to Cove Marina for their services in hauling the boat and providing winter storage, as well as to Ocean Rigging who donated their services to un-step the mast. NSPS members Mike Brown and Tony Mobilia worked hard to winterize the boat, and are now hard at work on replacing the mast step before spring.

Due to an unfortunate engine problem this summer, CELEBRATION didn't see as much sailing time this year as she normally does, but the engine's now been fixed, and other maintenance issues including the mast step are being addressed. She should be fit as a fiddle and ready to go in the spring.

Cove Marina has graciously agreed to provide a slip and winter storage for Celebration for half the usual cost, and the Sea Scout Committee (including Mike Brown, Tony Mobilia, Dave Tom and Laura Shaw) is busy at work developing fundraising ideas. Boy Scouts of America rules prohibit the scouts from soliciting for donations (although they are allowed to accept them), so we're working on a number of ways they can raise the kind of money required to pay the bills without spending the entire sailing season fundraising instead of sailing.

We're also planning a large recruiting effort for new scouts in the early spring, and will kick off the season with a flare demo. If you know of any teenagers between 14 – 19 years of age who are interested in the program, please contact Skipper Kai Horan at 203-249-8138, or Laura Shaw at 203-858-4568.

the Sea Scout Committee



c/o Jim Hamren
21 Wakeman Road
South Salem, NY 10590-2118

FIRST-CLASS MAIL

