



THE DRUM



A Publication of the Seneca Sail & Power Squadron

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Seneca 2017 Change of Watch

The following nominations are presented for consideration by Seneca Sail & Power Squadron members for 2017.

Commander - Mark Erway
 Executive Officer - *Open*
 Administrative Officer - Karen Stewart
 Education Officer - James McGinnis
 Asst. Education Officer - Thomas Alley
 Treasurer - Marcia Taylor
 Secretary - Susan Morris

Executive Committee: Charles Fausold, Denis Kingsley, Ray Margeson, Thomas Taylor

Respectfully,

The Nominating Committee - Don Kloeber, Ray Margeson, Tom Taylor

From The Commander

By Mark Erway, AP

View From The Bridge

With the holidays and election behind us let's turn our thoughts toward 2017, knowing that it is only 105 days (from January 1st) until launch!

Every member of our Squadron is cordially invited to attend the Annual Meeting and Change of Watch coming up on Sunday afternoon, January 15th at the Elmira Holiday Inn (details elsewhere in this edition of the Drum). It is our annual meeting, which starts with a meal, includes election of officers, who will be installed by a District 6 Bridge Officer, and concludes with an overview and kick-off for 2017. We'd love to see all of our members come out, and especially our new members come join us for this very special event.

We're looking forward to another full season of activities. Our squadron is fortunate to have a well-qualified group of instructors and a full slate of educational offerings ranging from the entry level ABC (American's Boating Course) to Navigation (using a sextant and the sun and stars to determine location). If there is something you are especially interested in, please let us know.

Again, this year Seneca Squadron will be offering Junior Sail to area high school aged youth, a strong program that is successfully building new young sailors and reaches out to their families at the same time. With support from qualified



skippers and their boats this program has continued to show its viability and continues to get attention at the national level.

We also have a group of Vessel Safety Examiners who stand ready to serve all the boating community in our area. A vessel safety check is still the best way for any boat owner or skipper to be informed and reminded of the basic safety requirements that they are responsible for. The confidence gained by knowing your boat meets those requirements is well worth the thirty-minute visit.

Our AO, Karen Stewart, and I are working on a meeting schedule for 2017 that will include speakers and presentations that are informative and relevant, not only to boating, but to our environment and the variety of ways we can be engaged. The goal is to continue to enjoy our love of boating and the few recreational hours we have, and at the same time incorporate small ways that allow us to serve our community and enjoy the connections we have with each other as members of our Squadron. As always we are looking for suggestions of activities, speakers, programs, guests and educational needs that would be of

interest to our members. Please feel free to contact any member of the Bridge to share your suggestions.

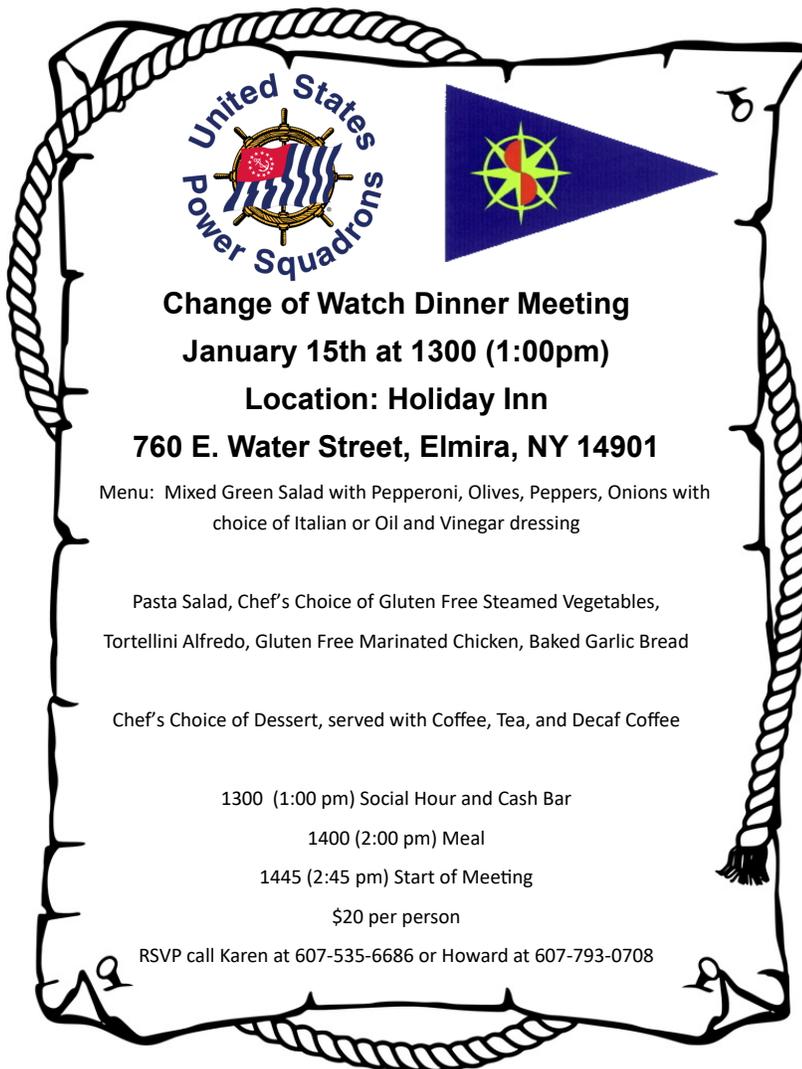
Now for some really great news. Our SEO for the last “dozen-plus” years has been Tom Alley, Senior Navigator and USCG 100 ton licensed Captain (so we truly can call him Captain Tom). He is also a consummate instructor and almost every one of us in the squadron have benefited from his ability to teach, instruct, inform, adjust, readjust and continue on in the face of adversity. Plus he is an innovator as we see through the Junior Sail program for one example. In our efforts to recognize Tom’s many skills and dedication, your Bridge nominated him for the District Chapman Award this past summer, and we were

extremely pleased when District 6 bestowed that honor at the Fall Conference in Binghamton. We were recently notified that Tom is one of three members nationwide that will share in receiving the National Chapman Award to be bestowed at the National Conference in Orlando this coming February!! Congratulations Tom!! It is wonderful to see his efforts and dedication recognized and rewarded in such a special way.

Regards,

- Mark

cmdr@SenecaPowerSquadron.US



The Drum

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Report from the Public Relations Officer

By 1/Lt Howard Cabezas, S

SV Ruthie

Happy New Year everyone! I hope 2017 welcomes you all in a healthy, warm and cozy way. As I sit in my kitchen by the wood burning stove drinking a fresh cup of coffee and looking out the window beholding a winter wonderland on Kindred Farm, I am tempted to hunker down, catch up on some reading or maybe finish some house or barn projects. All good things to do. That is, unless you own a boat.

My friends, with 104 days before our season begins at the Village Marina, we've got work/play to do, and there's no time like the present! Let's make 2017 the year that boating safety, education and outreach are our prime focus. Let's drink the last of the

Christmas eggnog, wipe the cookie crumbs from our face and get our heads into the world of boating. Assessing our boating equipment, making a list of what must be replaced or repaired is priority for boating safety. Having a life sling and checking the dates on flares and fire extinguishers and replacing them now would be brilliant. A second list would be the upgrade/improvement list. This list keeps us in the game, helps us assess what purchases or time investments may be in our future and helps us to budget plan for these necessary expenses. Then there's the third list. A wish list. Necessary? Heck no. Just darn fun and makes the winter that much warmer!

Speaking of fun, having youth participate in Junior Sailing at the Village Marina takes a good community of boaters and makes it even better! Introducing children to boating is a lifelong gift of love, learning, and wild adventure! Children bring the boating community fresh perspectives and vibrant energy. So, who do you know that has children? This dynamic program, with its award-winning coaches, welcomes high school age children to grow, enjoy nature and make new friends!

Enjoy this beautiful season and all it has to offer,

- Howard

From the Education Officer

By Tom Alley, SN



In Retrospect

We're finishing up what has been a busy year.

Last January we started a Boat Maintenance Seminar with ten students where we completely

refurbished a 12-foot daysailer. Students learned how to work with fiberglass, epoxy, two-part paints, non-skid, and varnish. They also got some hands-on experience with sewing a sail and setting up rigging. In late February, the completed project boat was auctioned off at a fund raiser for St. Mary Our Mother Elementary School where the proceeds were split with the Seneca Squadron.

After that, planning efforts went into high gear for spring and summer activities. A Seamanship class was run in late spring in Watkins Glen and the third year of our Junior Sailing program kicked off in May.

Over the summer we taught Sail and we executed the fourth year of teaching our ABC Youth class. Several squadron instructors and coaches also spent nearly two weeks with the Junior Sailors on a trip to Lake Ontario and back. That trip surpassed its promise to be an adventure and this led to other opportunistic educational activities as *Tomfoolery* received a new forestay and furler. Not long after that, another ad hoc seminar on repowering was conducted for four students when *Tomfoolery's* engine had to be swapped out.

Things settled down a bit in the fall, but there were still some noteworthy accomplishments.

We were contacted by the National Education Officer asking us for some details around Seneca's youth program, especially around the ABC class. Our Youth Committee Co-Chairs, Katie and Maggie, were also the featured speakers at the Squadron's October dinner meeting. In November, our Youth Co-Chairs were also invited to be presenters as the D/6 Spring Conference in 2017.

Yes, it's been a busy year!

On The Horizon

If you've looked over the list of nominees for the Change of Watch / Annual Meeting for Seneca Squadron, you will have noticed some names in different places. As a result, after 12 years as your SEO, this will be my final column in *The Drum* in this capacity. Following the Change of Watch, I will step down to become the Assistant SEO to provide a smooth transition of SEO duties to the very capable Jim McGinnis.

I'm excited about this change on several levels.

First, it will provide a "fresh set of eyes" to oversee our squadron's nationally recognized educational program. This is a change that's desperately needed within our squadron so that we can grow our educational efforts to the next level.

Second, this change will allow me a little bit of extra time so that I can answer the nomination to be the next Assistant Education Officer for District 6 beginning in April. This position has

been vacant since the Ken Green took on the DEO role last year.

relinquishing control to a very capable successor. Please welcome Jim to his new role and provide him with the same level of support that I've enjoyed these many years.

Wishing you fair winds and following seas!

So, while I won't be going away or jumping ship, I will be taking my hand off its educational tiller and

- Tom

SEO@SenecaPowerSquadron.US

Upcoming Classes and Seminars

By Seneca Squadron Education Department

Junior Navigation

Junior Navigation is the first of two celestial navigation classes offered by the USPS. In this course, you will learn to navigate using the sun, a sextant and a watch. We will begin the class in the February timeframe and it will extend into the spring and possibly the early summer.

If you are interested in taking this class, please contact Tom Alley as soon as possible.

- **What:** Junior Navigation Class
- **When:** February thru May/June

- **Where:** Various locations in Corning, Painted Post and Watkins Glen.
- **Prerequisites:** Advanced Piloting
- **Cost:** ~\$150 (USPS members)
- **Instructors:** Tom Alley & Jim Morris
- **Registration:** Tom Alley (SEO@SenecaPowerSquadron.US) no later than January 6th, 2017.

What's Next?

You tell the us! What classes are you interested in taking while we wait for the next boating season to begin?

Send your requests to:

SEO@SenecaPowerSquadron.US

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Policy reminder: It has been our practice in the Seneca Squadron to offer scholarships to our outstanding students. If you receive a perfect score on the final exam of any of the Advanced Grade or Elective courses, the next course is on us! (In plain English: It's free. No charge. Gratis. Got it? Good! Now sign up for a class!)

News from Seneca, District 6, and National

Racing Rules Updated

By Tom Alley

Every four years the world is treated to the spectacle of the Summer Olympics. After the conclusion of the games, the International Yacht Racing Union (IYRU) convenes to adjust the Racing Rules of Sailing.

Modifications are made to address areas of confusion or to correct unintended consequences of earlier changes or to enhance competition. The modified rules are then in place for four years until the conclusion of the next Olympics.

For those readers of this newsletter who enjoy the sport of sailboat racing, updated rule books are now available from retailers and sailing organizations to cover the 2017-2020 racing timeframe. Take advantage of the cold winter months to curl up with a copy while we wait for our boats to be relaunched in the spring!

mail with instructions on how to log in and make use of some of the new feature.

Please activate your account as soon as possible and, if you find anything on the new site to be amiss, please notify the webmaster immediately.

info@SenecaPowerSquadron.US

New Website Launched

By Tom Alley

Seneca Sail & Power Squadron's new web site was officially launched on Wednesday, December 28th. All SSPS members should have received an e-

My Boatbound Experience

By Jim McGinnis, AP

SV Brewster

Last Christmas Holiday Season 2015 I rented a Hunter 29.5 Sailboat in Tampa Bay through Boatbound. Boatbound is a website you can join

for boat rentals and charters. It is a boat sharing website that allows you select the location, type of boat and schedule for a boat rental. You can

also list your boat for a rental by another member.

Let's just say our rental experience was eventful. The boat was located in a small marina near the Tampa Bay Bridge. We got to the specific boat location by instructions from the boat owner and arrived there a few minutes early. Gary briefed us on the particulars of the boat. He mentioned that the depth sounder was not working. He also gave me a map (chart) that advertised restaurants and boat rides around the border. Not a great sign. Gary took us on a 30-minute check ride to run the engine, hoist the sails, etc. He did tell me that Tampa Bay was very shallow and to stay in the marked channels when leaving and entering the marina. People run aground all the time. The Hunter 29.5 draws 4 feet. The engine and everything else seemed to work well. We were off.

We religiously followed the channel marks heading out of the marina and found some steady breeze across Tampa Bay. Within a few minutes my son Scott and I had the boat heeled a bit and approaching the hull speed of 7 knots. We sailed across the bay and up toward the city of Tampa at the top of the bay. We were with my wife and another couple who really enjoyed the sail. We had brought a lunch with us on board. We sailed for a few hours and headed back towards the bay bridge. Beautiful day.

Looking at the map we found that we would need to sail back a half an hour

or so to get to the entrance to the channel. We saw a few other sailboats cutting across an area that showed shallower water and figured that if the locals can make it, we can too. We just needed to make it across a couple hundred yards and we could get back in the channel. The tide was coming in but it is only a foot or so rise anyway. Just before we made it to the channel, we ran aground in the soft sand and it appeared to get even shallower ahead of us. We started the engine and tried heading back to deeper water but could not get free. A power boater stopped by and said that he had run aground a few months ago in his sailboat. We tried tipping the boat to reduce our draft with the spinnaker halyard to the power boat. Maybe because of the winged keel on the Hunter, that did not free us. We tried a few other things but finally called Gary on his cell phone. No answer. He had left his cell on another boat and was away from the marina. Finally, we got out the rental agreement and found the phone number for Sea Tow. Towing insurance came as part of the Boatbound Rental agreement. Great. We called them and they were at the boat in 45 minutes. Gary had told me that if Sea Tow came to make sure they attached to the anchor point, not the deck cleats. Sea Tow had pulled a deck cleat out of the boat once before. The Sea Tow guy attached to the anchor point and tried pulling us to deeper water. We were not moving. He pulled until the anchor point pulled

out of the boat! Then he hooked a bridle to both front cleats and pulled again. This time we started sliding forward and in a minute we were floating in deeper water. We said goodbye to the Sea Tow operator and headed back to the channel opening. We made it back to the dock without any other problems. By this time we were in touch with Gary and he was waiting for us at the dock. He was not too happy about the towing event as you can imagine but the issue was resolved with him through the insurance and were on our way.

So I would say that I learned quite a few things. Have a good chart for the area you are sailing. Don't try to guess the depth without a depth sounder in shallow water. Don't think you can do everything the locals do when you are new to an area. (There was a narrow, unmarked, probably temporary, deeper water path that was between two sandbars that the locals knew about and we did not.) Most all though, we had a good day and a good experience with Boatbound.

- Jim

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Boatbound's web site can be found at:

<https://boatbound.co>

Coast Guard Begins Breaking Ice In Western Great Lakes

By Mark Gill, USCG

USCG Great Lakes

SAULT SAINTE MARIE, Mich. – U.S. Coast Guard Sector Sault Sainte Marie commenced Operation Taconite Monday, December 19th, in response to developing ice conditions in the commercial ports of western Lake Superior and the St Marys River.

Operation Taconite is the Coast Guard's largest domestic ice-breaking operation, encompassing Lake Superior, the St. Mary's River, the Straits of Mackinac and Lake Michigan.

As a result of the operation, certain waterways may close after due consideration is given to the protection of the marine environment, waterway improvements, aids to navigation, the need for cross-channel traffic, such as ferries, the availability of icebreakers, and the safety of island residents, who in the course of their daily business use naturally-formed ice bridges for transportation to and from the mainland.

Monday, the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Alder, homeported in Duluth, Minnesota, was directed to manage the ice-breaking needs of western Lake Superior. The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Biscayne Bay, homeported in St. Ignace, Michigan, was dispatched to break ice in the St Marys River. As ice growth continues on the Great Lakes in the coming days and weeks, additional Coast Guard icebreakers will join the operation.

Currently there are no channel closures; however, the implementation of Operation Taconite does place additional measures on commercial shipping in the Western Lakes, St. Marys River, and the Straits of Mackinac. These measures include restricting tanker transits to daylight only in the presence of ice, reducing speeds by two miles per hour in various locations, and requiring additional voice and position reporting points throughout the area.

Recreational users there are reminded to plan their activities carefully, use caution on the ice, and stay away from shipping channels. Recreational users and island residents should stay tuned to local media resources for the status of waterway closures.

Further inquiries can be made by phone to Mark Gill or to Vessel Traffic Service St. Marys River at (906) 635-3232.



Photo 1: The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Alder clears ice from the deck of the cutter as the ship transits through Lake Superior Dec. 14, 2016. The Alder and other Great Lakes Coast Guard cutters commenced Operation Taconite, the Coast Guard's largest domestic ice-breaking operation, encompassing Lake Superior, the St. Mary's River, the Straits of Mackinac and Lake Michigan, Dec. 19, 2016. (U.S. Coast Guard photo)



Photo 2: The Coast Guard Cutter Alder approaches the Portage Lake Lift Bridge

in Houghton, Mich., Dec. 16, 2016. The Alder and other Great Lakes Coast Guard cutters commenced Operation Taconite, the Coast Guard's largest domestic ice-breaking operation, encompassing Lake Superior, the St. Mary's River, the Straits of Mackinac and Lake Michigan, Dec. 19, 2016. (U.S. Coast Guard photo)



Photo 3: The Coast Guard Cutter Alder breaks a path through the ice in the Keweenaw Waterway near Houghton, Mich., Dec. 16, 2016. The Alder and other Great Lakes Coast Guard cutters commenced Operation Taconite, the Coast Guard's largest domestic ice-breaking operation, encompassing Lake Superior, the St. Mary's River, the Straits of Mackinac and Lake Michigan, Dec. 19, 2016. (U.S. Coast Guard photo)

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Nine Facts About The Winter Solstice

Collected by Tom Alley, SN

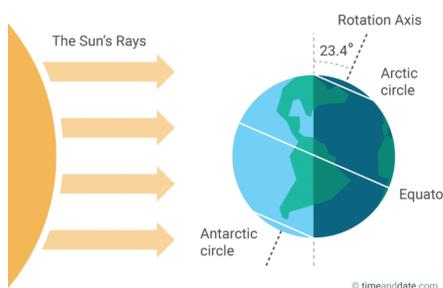
SV Tomfoolery

As boaters, we tend to pay a lot of attention to the environment around us. This includes the weather as well as some celestial events. Reader's Digest recently assembled some interesting trivia about the winter solstice, which occurred this year on December 21st. If you haven't taken the JN course, yet, here are a few things you might have missed.

The solstice is actually a time.

Contrary to popular belief, the winter solstice isn't a day. It's the specific moment in time when the sun is above the Tropic of Capricorn, a circle of

latitude below the equator. This is the southern-most point the sun ever reaches from our perspective on Earth. For 2016, the winter solstice happens on December 21st at 10:44 UTC.



Our winter solstice is the Southern Hemisphere's summer solstice.

While we in the Northern Hemisphere are bundled up in our winter coats, our neighbors in the Southern Hemisphere are soaking up the summer sun. Equinoxes and solstices are opposite on opposite sides of the globe. So if you're looking to escape our shortest day of the year, pack your suitcase and experience the longest day of the year on the other side of the globe.

It's not always on the same day.

The winter solstice can occur on December 20th, 21st, 22nd, or 23rd.

However, it's rare that the sun reaches its lowest point on the 20th or 23rd. The last time winter solstice fell on December 23 was in 1903, and it won't happen again until 2303.

The darkest day of the year has nothing to do with Earth's distance from the sun.

During the winter months, Earth is surprisingly close to the sun. It reaches its perihelion (the point when the planet is closest to the sun) just a few weeks after the winter solstice. The reason we have cold weather and extended hours of darkness, especially on the solstice, is because of northern hemisphere of the Earth tilting away from the sun.

Its name is Latin.

The word "solstice" is derived from two Latin words: "sol," which means "sun," and "sistere," which means "to stand still." On the winter solstice, the sun reaches its southern-most position (directly above the Tropic of

Capricorn) and appears to stand still. Fitting, right?

But it also has other names.

Yule. Midwinter. The Longest Night. Solstice Night. The winter solstice has a variety of different titles, depending on the religion and heritage of the person you ask.

Many ancient civilizations celebrated it.

Scandinavian and Germanic groups in northern Europe called the winter solstice Yule, a 12-day celebration dedicated to the reawakening of nature, and offered sacrifices to their gods in hopes of abundant spring crops. Because of the increased darkness, families would burn logs for more light, which is where we get the concept of Yule logs. The solstice also fell during the Ancient Roman festival Saturnalia, which honored the god Saturn with days of parties, banquets, and presents.

**And some people still do.**

Modern-day pagans continue to celebrate the winter solstice by lighting candles, decorating their homes, and enjoying festive meals with family and friends.

It's rarely the coldest day of the year.

Just because there are only nine hours and 15 minutes (give or take) of sunlight on the winter solstice this year, that doesn't mean the temperatures will plummet. The majority of America experiences its coldest days of the year in January—something to look forward to in the coming weeks!

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The Last Word

By Tom Alley, SN



As I write this, we're just a few days from Christmas. As the year comes to an end we'll do our share of looking back, but once the

new calendars go up on our walls, it won't be long before we are looking forward to the next boating season and all the associated activities it will bring.

We will soon notice that the days are getting a little bit longer and that it's

not as dark when we get up in the morning to go to work or school. Eventually the first sure sign of spring will arrive: The boating catalogues! Following this will be the annual spring migration of the parcel delivery services to our front doors with the latest boating supplies and, before we know it, we'll all be clamoring for a slot in the boat launch schedule.

In the meantime, we will plan and dream. Some of us will make brief escapes to warmer climes, and others will take refuge in a book or a brightly colored boating magazine. Some will take a class and others will organize the activity calendar for our squadron or yacht club. However, we will all be

busy as we wait for the warmer days to once more scrape, sand, paint and just start messing around in our boats again.

Happy New Year!

- Tom

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As always, send your thoughts about this newsletter to:

editor@SenecaPowerSquadron.US

Calendar of Events

January 2017

- 1 Seneca *Drum* January issue publication.
- 15 Deadline for D/6 *The Deep 6* articles.
- 15 Change of Watch (1300)
Holiday Inn, Water St., Elmira, NY
- 17 Bridge Meeting (1900)
Kingsley Residence

February 2017

- 1 *The Deep 6* winter issue publication date.
- 19-26 USPS National Annual Meeting
Orlando, FL
- 21 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 21 Deadline for Drum Articles

March 2017

- 1 Seneca *Drum* March issue publication.
- 21 Bridge Meeting (1900)

April 2017

- 15 Deadline for D/6 *The Deep 6* articles.
- 18 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 25 Deadline for Drum Articles
- TBA Junior Sailing 2017 Organizational Meeting
- TBA D/6 Spring Conference & Change of Watch
Syracuse, NY

May 2017

- 1 Seneca *Drum* May issue publication.
- 1 *The Deep 6* spring issue publication date.
- 16 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 20-26 Safe Boating Week
- 26 Deadline for Drum Articles
- 27 Junior Sailing Boat-side Kick-Off Meeting
Watkins Glen Village Marina

June 2017

- 3 Junior Sailing regular sessions begin.
- 20 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 26 Deadline for Drum Articles

July 2017

- 1 Seneca *Drum* July issue publication.
- 15 D/6 2017 Rendezvous
Kingston, Ontario
- 18 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 21 Deadline for D/6 *The Deep 6* articles.

August 2017

- 1 *The Deep 6* summer issue publication date.
- 15 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 22 Deadline for Drum Articles

September 2017

- 1 Seneca *Drum* September issue publication.
- 10-17 USPS Governing Board Meeting
Dallas, TX
- 19 Bridge Meeting (1900)

October 2017

- 17 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 24 Deadline for Drum Articles

November 2017

- 1 Seneca *Drum* November issue publication.
- 1 *The Deep 6* fall issue publication date.
- 21 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- TBD District 6 Fall Council & Conference

December 2017

- 19 Deadline for Drum Articles
- 19 Bridge Meeting (1900)

Calendars are "living documents." For the latest information on squadron activities, please check our web site:

<http://www.SenecaPowerSquadron.US>

or our Facebook page:

<http://facebook.com/SenecaPowerSquadron>

for any last-minute changes.