

# AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB®

For Boaters, By Boaters™



## THE DRUM

A Publication of the Seneca Sail & Power Squadron

**In this issue...**

- From The Commander..... 1
- From the (Acting) Executive Officer .....2
- From the Acting Administrative Officer..3
- From the Education Officer.....4
- From the Assistant Education Officer ....4
- Long-Term Class Schedule .....6
- Upcoming Classes & Seminars.....6
  - Junior Navigation Class .....6
  - America's Boating Class .....7
  - How To Register .....7
- From the Public Relations Officer .....7
- USPS News: Local, District, National & More .....8
  - Welcome New Seneca Squadron Members!.....8
  - Navigate the Erie Canal for Free .....8
  - Letter to the Seneca Squadron .....8
  - Got News?.....9
- VHF Marine Radio Usage – What Channel Do I Use?.....9
- Transiting the Welland Canal ..... 11
- USCG Boarding.....12
- The Last Word.....13
- Calendar of Events..... 14

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### From The Commander

*By Mark Erway, AP*

#### View From The Bridge

June is busting out all over!!! This is always a busy time for all of us, compounded by greatly increased physical activity and huge doses of abundant sunshine. Challenging, but thank goodness, finally!!! As the seasons change so do other things.



It is with immense pride that I have been following the emails for our SAIL class. 17 students, all fully engaged and enjoying the On-the-Water classes. All too soon the classes will end, followed by a review session and a final exam. For those who pass, it's something when Headquarters recognizes the accomplishment, well-earned and well deserved.



We also kicked off the JN (Junior Navigation) class with seven people on June 23<sup>rd</sup>. It is very rewarding to know that our members are taking some serious steps forward in our educational offerings.



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Now, here's some REALLY exciting news, and a proposal to our entire Squadron. We recently responded to an email from Marty Lafferty, who is the Grant Project Manager for America's Boating Channel ([america's-boating-channel.com](http://america's-boating-channel.com)). This is the online video offering for short, informative videos focused on education and training. Marty is looking for squadrons to be the host AND be

part of videos they have planned. Subjects cover things such as BUI, cold water survival, paddlecraft, SUP's, and navigating with GPS. What they are looking for are squadron members who are willing to use their boats, from kayak to open bow to sail to power cruisers. They will bring the cameras and direct all the action. *Members do NOT have any spoken lines, we just do what the directors asks of us.* They already have a U.S. Coast Guard approved storyline to follow so we only have to show up and be willing to follow direction. They typically shoot for five days, twice a day, from 10 am to noon and 2 pm to 4 pm, with times for food and fun before, during and after the actions shots. Not everyone is needed at all the shots on all the days, so if you commit to helping out you may only be needed for one or two sessions.

Marty met with Tom Alley and myself via a Go-To-Meeting on

the evening of June 20<sup>th</sup> where he made a very thorough presentation. We felt that the best proposal for Seneca would be either Cold Water Survival and/or Safety Tips for Paddle Sports. He even gave us a target date window of August 13 through 19. If there is enough interest we will email the requirements that scenario is built around, that being the number and types of boats and people required for the shots.

On a personal note, it is good to finally have *Weeble* in the water and safely at home in Slip #108 at the Allan H. Treman State Marine Park. Looking forward to shake-down cruises and some great sailing on Cayuga Lake.

Regards,

- Mark, SV *Weeble*  
[cmdr@SenecaPowerSquadron.US](mailto:cmdr@SenecaPowerSquadron.US)

## From the (Acting) Executive Officer

By Charlie Fausold, SN-IN



In USPS navigation courses we are taught to use our “Seaman’s Eye”

to stay in touch with our surroundings. In the navigation context this means being aware of landmarks to affirm that we are where we think we are, as well as how wind, currents and tides may

be affecting our anticipated course or position. And of course it also means keeping an eye on the weather.

I would like to suggest another element of the Seaman’s Eye, and that is observing fellow boaters. This time of year, especially, we experience an increase in visitors and new boaters who venture out onto Seneca Lake and other waterways in all kinds of watercraft, from paddle boards to high-powered speedboats. Sometimes

### The Drum

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these folks have limited experience operating their vessels, and they may be unfamiliar with local wind and water conditions. Far too few have taken USPS or other boater safety classes. This can be a recipe for trouble.

As USPS members we can sometimes use our “Seaman’s Eye” to spot problems before they occur: Overcrowded small boats; canoes, kayaks and paddleboards too far away from shore or downwind in the face of a freshening breeze; youngsters who overestimate their strength or skill; new sailors who haven’t yet mastered the ability to tack upwind; PWCs being operated too fast or in an unsafe manner; lack of PFDs in any situation.

When we see such situations, we should take the opportunity – if presented with one – to offer some friendly advice (which could include taking a USPS course). We may need to initiate

an intervention or rescue. And in extreme cases it may be necessary to report a situation to law enforcement. Whatever the scenario, expanding our concept of “Seaman’s Eye” contributes to a safer boating environment for all.

- Charlie

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#### Post Script

Four days after submitting this article for publication was cool with a fresh breeze blowing 10-15 knots out of the North and a petty good chop on the lake. Two young people in a 4-foot pedal boat – suitable for a duck pond - accompanied by a third youngster in a kayak, were pretty far out and caught our attention. I kept an eye on them with my binoculars, and after awhile it became apparent they were in trouble. The kayak had flipped over, and the pedal boat was drifting downwind, away from their dock of origin. It

turns out the bow rope had wrapped around the propeller of the pedal boat, rendering it inoperable. Fortunately, they were all wearing PFDs.

Since my boat was in the shop I enlisted the services of a neighbor and his boat, and we went out to offer assistance. By this time the mother of the kids, who were visiting Grandma for the day, had come out in a second kayak to tow them in. However, she was making little progress towing the over-crowded pedal boat and overturned kayak into the wind and chop. And in her haste to rescue the kids she had forgotten her PFD.

We were able to tow everyone back to their dock no worse for the wear, and I was thankful that my “Seaman’s Eye” had once again proven the value of a USPS education.

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## From the Acting Administrative Officer

By Ray Margeson, AP

Just two items for your consideration at this point:

Vessel Safety Examinations are available from certified examiners in our Squadron. These Vessel Safety Examinations are done at no cost to you and can give you peace of mind that you are on the way to being a safe boater. The

exam takes about 30 minutes and can be done on the hard or in the water. Squadron Safety Examiners are Don Kloeber, Mark Erway, Jim McGinnis and Ray Margeson. Feel free to contact any one of them for your exam.

Do you have a Seneca Sail and Power Squadron name tag? If

you don’t I have some that have been created. If you don’t, please contact me with the name(s) of those who need the name tags.

**Boat safe as a proud member of America’s Boating Club.**

- Ray

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## From the Education Officer

By Jim McGinnis, AP



We are providing an ABC class to the Watkins Glen Youth Camp

the week of July 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>, 8:30 to 10:30 AM aboard the Seneca Legacy. If you would like to help out with the hands-on “Boating Safety, Aids to Navigation and Rules of Navigation” activities let me know. The students have a lot of fun with that on a make-believe cruise. We will offer a second ABC Class this year in August on 8/9, 8/16 and 8/18 at the Watkins Glen Yacht Club.

This week we concluded the 8-week Sail Class taught to 17 students on 13 separate class dates by Tom Alley and a team of eight instructors/coaches from our Seneca Sail and Power Squadron (aka

“America’s Boating Club of the Finger Lakes”). We had six sailboats volunteered to participate in the class and five were available on one special Thursday night for a mini-race organized by the instructor team. I say special since I saw 31 knot wind speed in the marina at 4 PM at we raced at 7PM in 12 to 15 kts steady.

I made a pitch to the Sail class at their last class session to join us as crew on Sail Boat Races sponsored by the Finger Lakes Yacht Club since many of our members are dual members with the FLYC. Ted Carleton crewed for Jim Morris and Phil Cherry crewed for Tom Alley just last week. One class member asked, “What if we don’t know how to race?” Welcome aboard! We all develop our race skills each week. Racing is the fastest and way to learn and improve performance.

*“Every day, I like getting up because there's another challenge”*

– Roger Penske.

Just go racing.

Tom Alley and Jim Morris kicked off the next class “Junior Navigation” on Saturday, 6/23, with 7 students. This course builds the skills required for celestial navigation using sun sights with a sextant. Each of the students received a sextant to take home and work with over the summer. There was some inspired talk about becoming one with our tiny blue water planet and the solar system.

Commander Mark, the state of Education in America’s Boating Club of the Finger Lakes is strong.

- Jim

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## From the Assistant Education Officer

By Tom Alley, SN

SV Tomfoolery



It’s been another busy spring and early summer for the Seneca Education Department. This pattern will continue

into the summer with another host

of activities to keep everyone mentally challenged.

### Sail Class is Winding Down

As you read this, our Sail students will be busy preparing for their final exam on July 3<sup>rd</sup>. We have 17 enthusiastic participants in this class and an outstanding supporting cast of instructors. Many, many thanks to all those who volunteered not just their time, but

also their boats to make this class such a success!

A special thanks to the Man Upstairs who provided us with perfect weather for our on-the-water sessions. We had ideal winds on most occasions, and on an evening when we didn’t, we had pea-soup-thick fog, which provided our students with the perfect opportunity to learn just how disorienting fog can be! They were

amazed to discover that they had veered off course and gotten lost less than 100 yards out of the marina! Students then had the opportunity to learn how to read a compass and follow a depth contour back to the harbor entrance.

Thanks to the Watkins Glen Waterfront Festival, the marina was inaccessible for teaching purposes during one of our scheduled OTW sessions, so we gathered nearly the entire class the evening before to run a short race and give everyone a taste of sailboat racing in a fleet of five boats. (Racing is covered in Appendix A and B of the Sail student manual.) As with our session in the fog, the reviews were highly positive, and we may have hooked a few more racers to join us each week.

#### **JN Class has Kicked Off**

The Junior Navigation (JN) class is kicking off with seven motivated students. The first session was held on June 23<sup>rd</sup> where the class was introduced to the care and feeding of a marine sextant.

Unlike the Sail students, the JN students did not have ideal weather and were confronted with totally overcast skies. While they couldn't take actual sun sights, the students did get plenty of practice and some pointers on how to get started taking actual sights.

Another bonus this time around is that Seneca has been fortunate to acquire enough sextants that every student can have their own for the duration of the class.

#### **D/6 Rendezvous**

As I write this, we are just a little over a month away from the District 6 Rendezvous in the Thousand Islands. Seneca Squadron is sending a fleet of three boats through the New York canals to attend, and preparations, at least aboard *Tomfoolery*, are well underway. There is still a flurry of activity that needs to be completed, but I'm hopeful that the majority of the items on the "to-do" list can be completed before we untie the dock lines.

It's not too late to join the fleet, so if you are the least bit interested, contact me. You'll have the benefit of some experienced skip-pers to mentor you through the process of not just preparing for an extended cruise, but also to be there to help you during the actual voyage.

#### **Coming Soon**

On a more landlubberly note, steps have been kicked off for the next refresh of the Seneca Squadron web site. The purpose of this revision is to begin implementation of the new USPS branding standards where the name "America's Boating Club" is heavily emphasized. A new domain name has been purchased and will be rolled out soon. Watch for notices in your email, online, and in future issues of the *Drum*.

- Tom

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# Long-Term Class Schedule

Seneca Education Department

Courses	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Public	ABC	ABC	ABC	ABC	ABC	ABC
Basic	Sail	Seaman- ship	Sail	Seaman- ship	Sail	Seaman- ship
Advanced Level	Advanced Piloting	Piloting	Advanced Piloting	Piloting	Advanced Piloting	Piloting
Senior Level	Junior Nav- igation	Navigation			Junior Nav- igation	
Electives	Engine Maint.	Cruise Planning	Marine Electronics	Electronic Navigation	Instructor Training	Marine Comm.
Seminars	Anchoring	GPS Nav	Power Boating	Paddle Smart	Trailing and Docking	Partner in Cmd.
Self Study	Any Class	Any Class	Any Class	Any Class	Any Class	Any Class

## Upcoming Classes & Seminars

### Junior Navigation Class

Started June 23<sup>rd</sup>

*NOTE: Though the class has officially started, it's not too late to sign up. Contact SEO Jim McGinnis or ASEO Tom Alley for more information.*

You have no doubt noticed that, as you progress through the various USPS "grades" that the subsequent courses are offered on a less frequent basis. For example, the AP class is only offered every 2-3 years (at best). I'm writing you today to make sure all of you are aware that we will be starting our next JN (Junior Navigation) class, the successor to AP, this summer. We have not offered this class in, I believe, nearly four years.

The Junior Navigation class is a completely different way of approaching the subject of navigation. Even if you never plan to venture offshore, it is an interesting class that combines a bit of astronomy, Earth science, and a touch of physics to the art of navigation. After taking it, you will find a new awareness of things that happen in the sky above your head. In short, if you're a curious individual, I think you'll find the class quite engaging.

The JN class is composed of two parts. There is the classroom portion where you will learn the theory and the process of navigating using nothing more than the sun, a sextant, and a timepiece. Then there is some "field work" you need to do to demonstrate your ability to step through the mechanics of executing the sight reduction process. As with all USPS

advanced grade courses, there is a final exam to certify your understanding of the subject. The classroom sessions can be completed in 8 to 16 weeks (depending upon whether we meet each week or every other week). The field work can be completed in 2 or 3 weekends, assuming the weather cooperates. All field work must be submitted in a sight folder before any JN student can qualify to take the final exam.

Historically, we have seen a high attrition rate among students who have completed the class but failed to complete their sight folders. Part of the reason for this is that the classes typically ended in late winter or early spring, making for weather conditions that discouraged going outdoors to take sights. As a result, we're going to flip things around a bit and walk everyone through the field

work FIRST (while the weather is nice), and then show you what to do with all of the numbers you've collected later.

Here are the details:

- **When:**
  - The next sight-taking session will be on Saturday, July 14<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am. We will hold additional sight taking sessions every few weeks throughout the summer.
  - Classroom sessions to begin in September or early October at a date/time/place convenient to all.
- **Where**
  - Field work will be at Seneca Lake, either on the water or at an agreed-upon location to facilitate suitable solar observations.
  - Classroom location will be determined by the class later in the summer.
- **Instructors:**
  - Tom Alley
  - Jim Morris
- **Cost:** \$150 per student (includes textbook and a current nautical almanac). \$74 for each additional family member.

The squadron will make sextants available for use with the course.

(Depending on the class size, you may have to share, and, unfortunately, we will definitely make you give it back when the class ends!)

Once you complete the JN class, you will be eligible to take the N (Navigation) course, which is really the second half of an education in celestial navigation. That course will be run in a similar format to the JN class and will begin in the summer of 2019.

If you thought AP was fun and interesting, I'm confident that you'll find JN even more so!

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## America's Boating Class

### Starts August 9<sup>th</sup>

Seneca's youth-focused ABC class will be held from 7-9 p.m. on Thursday evenings, August 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> at the Watkins Glen Yacht Club.

An optional on-the-water component will be offered on Saturday morning, August 18<sup>th</sup>, at the Watkins Glen Village Marina.

Following the on-the-water session, a pizza lunch will be available for all students at the Watkins Glen Yacht Club at noon. Immediately after lunch, the final exam will be administered. All exams will be graded and certificates will be awarded to passing students that afternoon.

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## How To Register

If you are interested in getting more details about any of these courses, or better yet, to sign up, please contact either of the following individuals:

SEO Jim McGinnis, Seneca Squadron

[seo@SenecaPowerSquadron.US](mailto:seo@SenecaPowerSquadron.US)

ASEO/ADEO Tom Alley

[aseo@SenecaPowerSquadron.US](mailto:aseo@SenecaPowerSquadron.US)

or

[adeo@uspsd6.org](mailto:adeo@uspsd6.org)

Or you can go to the national web site ([www.usps.org](http://www.usps.org)) and register under the "Find A Boating Class" tab on the member home page.

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## From the Public Relations Officer

*By Howard Cabezas, P*

Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July! There is a lot going on in the squadron this summer. We have been invited by National for squadrons to participate in filming some of the America's Boating Channel videos, this would be a great way to get our name out to other boaters. We also have decided on America's Boating Club of the

Finger Lakes as our new name. Our new web address is [www.abc-flx.org](http://www.abc-flx.org), which right now redirects you to the Seneca Sail and Power Squadron web page, until we get the new site up and running. Just a reminder that we are part of the Watkins Glen Area Chamber of Commerce, so if you have some spare time stop

on in to the office on Franklin St. and see who else is part of the chamber. One last thing if anyone needs any brochures for anything, let me know and I will get you some.  
Happy Sails!

- Howard

[PRO@SenecaPowerSquadron.US](mailto:PRO@SenecaPowerSquadron.US)

## USPS News: Local, District, National & More

### Welcome New Seneca Squadron Members!

Jeff & Claudia DeMeritt  
Kiera Eddy  
The Seip Family: Fred, Laurie,  
Greg and Gabriel

### Navigate the Erie Canal for Free



Dear Fellow New Yorker,

We invite you to cruise the Erie Canal for FREE all season long!

Join us for another great boating season as we continue to commemorate 200 years of Erie Canal history by marking the 100th anniversary of the current 524-mile Canal System's opening in 1918. As part of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's initiative to reimagine New York State's canals, the State is once again waiving tolls for recreational vessels all season long.

[Take a virtual tour of New York State's historic canal system!](#)

From the Great Lakes to the majestic Hudson River, New

York's Canal System begs to be explored. Today's canal system hums with watercraft of every kind. Travel by canoe or kayak, pontoon or packet boat. Marinas can outfit any adventure or launch your own craft from our many access points.

You can also enjoy the [Canalway Trail](#), a 360 mile multi-use trail—much of it along the canal's former tow-path—that is ideal for cycling, walking, jogging and other seasonal trail activities. And don't forget to explore all the quaint villages and farms that line the canal's western shores as well as take in canal-side and downtown shopping and dining.

There's never been a better time to experience a vital piece of New York's heritage, visit unique destinations and be a part of a history that is still being written every day.

Have a great boating season.

- NYS Canal Corp

### Letter to the Seneca Squadron

*By Maggie MacBlane, S*

*[Maggie is a member of Seneca Squadron and one of our Junior Sailing alumni and coach. Last fall she left to study at SUNY Maritime and is currently aboard their training ship Empire State VI in the Mediterranean Sea. The following are excerpts from an email she asked to be shared with the Squadron. -Ed.]*

Hey, Captain!

So far summer sea term is really cool. I've stood watch and had class, only. The rotation of the days is supposed to be 3 days of watch, class, then work. But we're still getting into the swing of things and are under special circumstances as our captain is leaving us in a few days and being replaced by someone new. We also have a 3-day anchor period off the coast of Palma de Mallorca for STCW training. Once we eventually leave Italy, things should settle into a regular routine and I'll start chipping and painting in no time.

For berthing, I'm in a 51 man hold that is only occupied by 43 girls. I can't imagine it being filled to capacity as it's already a tight squeeze it seems. Makes *Tomfoolery* sleeping arrangements seem luxurious (which they are thanks to the host). I'm allotted one gear locker for all of my belongings and one rack. The racks are set on top of each other three at a time (in other holds it can be up to 4 or 5 tall). I'm center rack which has proven to be ideal.

No storms so far, only minor squalls and a little rain. Wind is whipping, usually, and the swells are not too large, but still make the ship roll. The rolling period is long, so it isn't too awful (i.e., I haven't gotten sea sick yet).

Watch is a whole new experience. I've had lookout watch mainly. On lookout, the bridge wing, bow, stern, and bridge messenger all rotate every 45

minutes or so during the 4-hour watch period. Our watches are set up on a 4-on/8-off cycle.

On lookout watch, I've seen dozens of whales and dolphins riding on the bow wave. As bridge messenger, I basically do whatever I'm told to do, as the messenger really has no set duties (other than making coffee). I've been taking visual bearings (before we lost sight of land obviously) on the quarter hour and plotting GPS fixes on the charts (with supervision of course, no upper classman or mate would trust a freshman to plot correctly on the official charts their first time). I have also learned how to make old school coffee.

For classes, I'm taking *Rules of the Road*, *Shipboard Operations*, and *Terrestrial Navigation*.

For *Rules*, I brought the *One-Minute Guide to Rules of the Road* text book that was part of one of the USPS classes I took, thinking it would come in handy. It was definitely a good move! I bought the standard *Rules* text, which is very dry, but is a requirement for the class. I use the *One-Minute Guide* mostly though, especially for learning lights, which I have a quiz on soon.

*Shipboard Operations* is mainly a review of basic firefighting procedures that was taught during the year.

*T-Nav* is also a review of the course that I took during the spring semester, however I didn't think I could forget so much in just a 6 week period. Set and drift problems have proven to be my worst enemy by far.

The food is okay. Much better than what is served at the main campus, but that doesn't say much. So far, I've been enjoying peanut butter and strawberry jam sandwiches that I make myself. Tomorrow I have messman duties. I have to report to the galley at 0500 and the shift is over at 2000. Looks like I'll be making better acquaintance with the food than I originally thought.

We sailed through the Straights of Gibraltar yesterday. It was amazing. It was a beautiful day out and I could clearly make out Morocco and Spain. Obviously, some people were blasting "Africa" by Toto on their loud speakers.

How are the Junior Sailors? I know that *Tomfoolery* needs a new backstay but what else needs repair before Ontario?

What is the itinerary for the trip and who plans on going?

Let me know as much as you can, emails are becoming more exciting to receive than they were before shipping out.

- Maggie

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To reach Maggie via e-mail, please contact the Editor. You can track the progress of training ship Empire State VI on their web site at:

<http://www.SUNYMaritime.edu>

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## Got News?

By Tom Alley, Editor

Do you have any squadron-related news or announcements? Contact your editor and have it printed here. We're happy to publicize anything of interest to our members, whether it's for the Seneca Squadron or one of our neighboring squadrons.

Contact Tom Alley –

[editor@SenecaPowerSquadron.US](mailto:editor@SenecaPowerSquadron.US)

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## VHF Marine Radio Usage – What Channel Do I Use?

By Tom Alley

SV Tomfoolery

If you're old enough to remember the citizen's band (CB) radio fad, or if you use one of the newer "family band" radio transceivers, you can pretty

much do whatever the radio will let you do. One of the big differences between these services and VHF marine radio and other radio is that there are

some limits you are expected to know. One of the most significant is: What channels am I allowed to use?

The Federal Communications Commission web site ([www.fcc.gov](http://www.fcc.gov)) has a nice page that summarizes how each VHF marine channel should be used. According to the FCC: *“Ship stations may communicate with other ship stations or coast stations primarily for safety, and secondarily for navigation and operational efficiency. The FCC regulates marine communications in cooperation with the U.S. Coast Guard, which monitors marine distress frequencies continuously to protect life and property. All users of marine radio, whether voluntary or compulsory, are responsible for observing both FCC and Coast Guard requirements.”*

VHF channel usage, as defined in the FCC rules, specifically 47 CFR 80.371(c) and 80.373(f), can be summarized as follows: **Channel 16 – Distress safety and calling** – Use this channel to get the attention of another station (calling) or in emergencies (distress and safety).

**Channel 6 – Intership safety** – Use this channel for ship-to-ship safety messages and for search and rescue messages to ships and aircraft of the US Coast Guard.

**Channel 22 – Coast Guard Liaison** – Use this channel to talk to the Coast Guard (but first make contact on Channel 16).

**Channels 68, 69, 72, 78 – Non-commercial** - Working channels for voluntary boats. Messages must be about the needs of the ship. Typical uses include fishing reports, rendezvous,

scheduling repairs and berthing information. Use channels 67 and 72 only for ship-to-ship messages.

Great Lakes – Add channels 79 and 84 in the list above.

Mississippi River and Southwest – Add channel 67 in the list above.

**Channel 9** is available for intership, ship, and coast general purpose calling for noncommercial ships.

**Channels 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 18, 19, 79, 80 – Commercial** – Working channels for working ships only. Messages must be about business or the needs of the ship. Use channels 8, 72 and 88A only for ship-to-ship messages.

New Orleans area – Add channels 1 and 63.

Puget Sound – Add channel 67 for ship-to-ship messages.

Great Lakes – Do not use channel 88A.

**Channels 24-28, 84-86 – Public Correspondence (Marine Operator)** – Use these channels to call the marine operator at a public coast station. By contacting a public coast station, you can make and receive calls from telephones on shore. Except for distress calls, public coast stations usually charge for this service.

**Channels 12, 14, 20, 65, 66, 73, 74 and 77 – Port Operations** – These channels are used in directing the movement of ships in or near ports, locks or waterways. Messages must be about the operational handling movement and safety of ships.

In certain major ports, channels 11 and 12 are not available for general port operations messages. Use channel 20 only for ship-to-coast messages. Channel 77 is limited to intership communications to and from pilots.

New Orleans – Add channels 1 and 63.

Houston and New Orleans – Add channel 5 in the above. Channels 75 and 76 are also available for navigation-related port operations or ship movement, but output power is limited to 1 watt.

**Channels 13 and 67 – Navigational** – (Also known as the bridge-to-ship channel.) This channel is available to all ships. Messages must be about ship navigation, for example, passing or meeting other ships. You must keep your messages short. Your power output must not be more than 1 watt. This is also the main working channel at most locks and drawbridges.

**Channel 17 – Maritime Control** – This channel may be used to talk to ships and coast stations operated by state or local governments. Messages must pertain to regulation and control, boating activities, or assistance to ships.

**Channel 70 – Digital Selective Calling** – Use this channel for distress and safety calling and for general purpose calling using only digital selective calling techniques.

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# Transiting the Welland Canal

By Tim Finkle

RCR Yachts

Several of us at RCR have been going through the Welland Canal lately, something we do each spring and fall as we deliver boats with or for customers going between Lake Erie and Ontario. Many of you reading this have done the trip before and perhaps many times, however things have changed recently and Dad writes a little about our trip and what we learned earlier this week on a Back Cove 32...

On Monday Tim, the owner and I took a BC 32 from Buffalo to St Catherines Marina. Cleared the Buffalo harbor at 0630 and arrived Port Colborne public dock at 0800. Boat ran great into a sloppy Lake Erie chop in 16+ knots of west wind that had been blowing for awhile. I was pleased with the way it handled the seas, we kept up a comfortable cruising speed of about 16 knots with no problem. Got to the canal and were prepared for the usual wait. There was a SeaRay 40 that arrived right after us, then a CS36 sailboat showed up so they planned to send the three of us through together. They told us we would start at about 1100 which ended up being more like 1230 by the time the three of us entered the canal. We were thrilled to only have to wait 4.5 hours to get in after the delays we have been hearing about. Canal speed limit is 8 knots but the two powerboats were slowed down by the CS 36 which could barely make 6 knots. That guy is a story by himself, he is on his way to

Nova Scotia expecting to arrive in late July. We got to St Catherines Marina at 745PM.



Photo 1: Back Cove 32 in Port Colborne.

Fortunately, the CS 36 guy had to hire a local line tender as he was alone. I got to speak to the line tender Norm all the way through. We also got to ask the two canal staff a bunch of questions over the course of the transit so this is what we learned:

There is no day of the week or time of the day that you can plan on to avoid waiting. It all depends upon commercial traffic and staffing.

The canal is owned by the Canadian Government but leased to and operated by a consortium of five shipping companies (Algoma, CSL, etc.). The commercial ships now transit without canal staff assistance in the locks. They have large electro magnets that attach to the side of the ship and act as fender/guides while the ships raise or lower in the locks. The locks are all managed remotely from the operations command center. Everything is covered by an array of cameras. They have cut staffing

to the absolute minimum this way.

Yachts must be tended to by two canal staff who follow the transit from one end of the canal to the other. After they collect the lines from you they drive to the next lock and meet you there to tend the lines again. We would often beat them to the next lock by water before they showed up by car so that added a bit to the transit time.

In order for a yacht to transit they must have two staff available to do the whole trip. Usually there is only one pair available. So you will wait at the other end until they finish their trip with the first group. If you are lucky they may have a second pair available, but sometimes there are none at all for a shift. The guys who tended our lines have other jobs at the canal. One fellow said he was glad to be outside instead of looking at computer screens indoors all shift. The paid hand told us the canal staff are also maintenance men who may be electricians or have some other job so when something breaks they have to do that job instead of tending to yachts transiting. If they did not have to attend to private vessels they would not need any line handlers at all.

Once we understood the new staffing arrangement we realized why planning a transit time is essentially impossible. They also give priority to commercial shipping.

I used to like to go through at night when it was cooler in the canal. But reading between the lines I would guess that there may be more of a staffing issue at night than in the daytime, so I would try day transit again next time. Of course, you still have

to deal with shipping traffic and that is unpredictable.

Plan to take plenty of clothes and food, a book, an iPad, and some friends so you can make it like going cruising for a week-end. 24 hours seems to be a

common length of time for the trip today, but we also heard two days and even one three day wait. We consider ourselves very fortunate to get through when we did.

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## USCG Boarding

By Rick Lenard

RCR Yachts

Lately we've been hearing about the Coast Guard boarding sailboats more so than in the past. Getting stopped by the CG should not have a sense of dread unless you are not compliant. Having the correct USCG approved safety gear and compliance with regulations should make a boarding go smooth for everyone.

What they'll ask for:

Current ownership papers, title or registration, state registration sticker (tax paid), registration numbers properly placed on the bow, unless documented then location of numbers below.

They may also ask for insurance coverage.

Required gear:

PFD or life jackets - one for each person aboard, type I, II, III or V and one type IV throwable device. They must be located such that they are immediately available-not under the bunk or in a closet!

Fire Extinguishers: One type B-1 for boats up to 26-foot, One B-II or two B-I up to 40-foot, one B-II, one B-I or three B-I up to 65-foot. The dial should be in the green zone. A Kiddie recall

last year has many extinguishers that are not compliant.

Visual Distress Signals on Coastal waters: Minimum of three day use and 3 night use or three day/night combination pyrotechnic devices. Non-pyrotechnic substitutes: one orange flag (day use) and one electric SOS signal light (night use) ALL MUST NOT BE EXPIRED-CHECK YOUR EXPIRATION DATES! It's ok to keep older flares but there must be non-expired flares on board.

Sound producing devices: Horn or whistle recommended to signal intentions or positions. Under Rule 33 of the navigation rules of the road (COLGRES), boats under 20m MUST have aboard a means of making an efficient sound up to 39'. Over 65-feet, a bell must be aboard. Check your air horn for positive use. A whistle on each life jacket is a plus!

Back fire arrestors: One CG-approved device on each carburetor of all gasoline powered engines built after 1940, except outboards. Arrestor should be kept clean to prevent contamination from propagating flame.

Ventilation of the engine room: A blower must be working for both gasoline and diesel engines. They do check that this is working! Yes, Diesels do have a blower!

Navigation lights: Even during the day if you're stopped, they should be working, check your bulbs.

Pollution regulation placards: 1-5"x8" Oil discharge and 4"x9" MARPOL Trash placards. Vessels over 39.4-feet with a galley must have a Waste Management Plan posted.

Marine Sanitation Devices (MSD-toilet and holding tank): Vessels with installed head facilities must have an operable CG-Certified Type I, II, or III Marine Sanitation Device. Any "Y" valve for discharge overboard must be located in such a manner or affixed to prevent accidental discharge of untreated waste into the water. Up to 65'-over 65' Type II or III MSD only. Have the "Y" valve open for the holding tank/not overboard or be prepared to be fined!

A copy of the Navigation Rules of the road: Boat operators

should have familiarity with the rules of the road but not required. Vessels over 12m (39.4-foot) are required to have a current copy of the USDOT USCG International-Inland Navigation

Rules of the Road aboard. A laminated copy is a good thing to keep on board. Be prepared; have a good look at your current flares, lifejackets, signaling devices, lights and

be safe out there. Being courteous to the Coasties goes a long way with the too!  
Have a safe boating season,  
- Rick

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## The Last Word

By Tom Alley, SN



While July is the unofficial mid-point of the summer, it sure feels like we only just got started, doesn't it?

Seriously, I still have some sweaters and jackets hanging on our hall tree that I haven't put away, yet!

Plans for our cruise to the District 6 Rendezvous up in the Thousand Islands later this month are firming up. Reservations have been made at various stopping points and the to-do list of items to complete prior to the trip is receiving increasing attention as the clock and calendar tick downward toward our departure date. I'm hoping for cooperative weather and my crew is anxious to get going to "bigger water" once more, as am I.

In addition to some ambitious cruising plans, the FLYC racing season is well underway and we've been lucky with good race conditions for the first two events so far. As mentioned in

SEO Jim McGinnis' column, some of our Sail students have accepted the invitation to race with the FLYC fleet and, so far, have been loving it! I've told the story numerous times about my conversations with circum-navigators and how they were asked how they learned what they needed to know to cross oceans. Every one of them said, "Go out and do the local races with your club. Not only will it teach you how to sail, but it will also give you the confidence you need later on."

Racing gets you out on the water in conditions where, lacking a "purpose", you might elect to just stay at the dock. It teaches you how to make your boat go where it needs to go and not where it might want to head. (A useful skill if you find yourself uncomfortably close to a lee shore.) It teaches you to handle your boat in congested situations, drills the navigation rules into your head to where they become second nature, and above all, forms a bond between you, your boat and your crew.

Besides that, it's a lot of fun! Consider this your invitation to join us for a race or two or

more. Drop me an email for details.

In closing, I'll touch on what Commander Mark began our newsletter with, specifically the opportunity we have to participate in the filming of a couple of videos for America's Boating Channel. This sounds like a neat opportunity for us to show off not only our squadron and our locale, but also the fun we have on the water.

As Mark mentioned, we had a long conversation with Marty Lafferty, and our impression is that the filming process is pretty low-key and non-intimidating. We'd like to turn it into a social event for our squadron so that we all have yet one more excuse to come to the lake and enjoy each other's company. I hope you'll consider joining in the fun. After all, that's what boating is all about, right?

See you on the water!

- Your Editor, Tom  
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As always, send your thoughts about this newsletter to:

[editor@SenecaPowerSquadron.US](mailto:editor@SenecaPowerSquadron.US)

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# Calendar of Events

## July 2018

- 01 Seneca *Drum* July issue publication date.
- 10 Bridge Meeting (1900).
- 21 Deadline for *The Deep 6* articles. (D/6)
- 28 Departure of the fleet for Lake Ontario and D/6 Rendezvous

## August 2018

- 01-03 D/6 2018 Rendezvous. *Clayton Yacht Club, Clay-  
ton, NY.* (D/6)
- 07 *The Deep 6* summer issue publication date. (D/6)
- 09 America's Boating Course Session #1 (1900),  
*Watkins Glen Yacht Club*
- 11 Return of the fleet from Lake Ontario and the D/6  
Rendezvous
- 12-19 USPS Governing Board Meeting, *Minneapolis,  
MN* (National)
- 14 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 16 ABC Session #2 (1900), *Watkins Glen Yacht Club*
- 18 ABC OTW session (1000), *Watkins Glen Village  
Marina*
- 18 ABC final exam (1300), *Watkins Glen Yacht Club*
- 23 Deadline for *Drum* Articles

## September 2018

- 01 Seneca *Drum* September issue publication date.
- 05 Junior Navigation classroom sessions begin  
(1900), *location TBA*
- 11 Bridge Meeting (1900)

## October 2018

- 09 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 10 NYS Canals close for the season (1700)
- 21 Deadline for *The Deep 6* articles (D/6)
- 25 Deadline for *Drum* articles

## November 2018

- 02-04 District 6 Fall Council & Conference (D/6)
- 07 Seneca *Drum* November issue publication date  
(delayed to cover Conference activities)
- 07 *The Deep 6* fall issue publication date. (Delayed 1  
week to cover Conference activities.) (D/6)
- 13 Bridge Meeting (1900)

## December 2018

- 17 Deadline for *Drum* Articles

## January 2019

- 01 Seneca *Drum* January issue publication date.
- 08 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 15 Deadline for D/6 *The Deep 6* articles. (D/6)
- TBD Seneca Change of Watch

## February 2019

- 01 *The Deep 6* winter issue publication date. (D/6)
- 12 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 17-23 USPS Annual Meeting, *Orlando, FL* (National)
- 22 Deadline for *Drum* Articles

## March 2019

- 01 Seneca *Drum* March issue publication date.
- 12 Bridge Meeting (1900)

## April 2019

- 09 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 12-14 D/6 Spring Conference & Change of Watch (D/6)
- 17 Deadline for *The Deep 6* articles (D/6)
- 24 Deadline for *Drum* Articles

## May 2019

- 01 Seneca *Drum* May issue publication date.
- 01 *The Deep 6* spring issue publication date. (D/6)
- 14 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 18-24 Safe Boating Week (National)

## June 2019

- 11 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 14-15 Waterfront Celebration & Cardboard Boat Race,  
*Watkins Glen, NY.*
- 24 Deadline for *Drum* Articles

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.