

# AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB

For Boaters, By Boaters®



# THE DRUM

A Publication of the Finger Lakes Chapter

<b>In this issue...</b>	
<b>From The Commander .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>From the Executive Officer.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>From the Education Director .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>From the Assistant Education Officer....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Membership Thoughts .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Water Lines .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Upcoming Classes &amp; Seminars .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>    Marine Electrical Systems .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>    Sail Course .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>    Marine Communications Systems ....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>    How To Register .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>    Looking for Something?.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Long-Term Class Schedule.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>USPS News: Local, District, National &amp; More .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>    New Member Welcome .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>    Happy Birthday! .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>    Marinas Set to Reopen .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>    Notice to Mariners: NY Canal System Status .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>    USPS Boat Operator Certification Program .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>    Update: Short Film Debut at the D/6 Spring **Fall** Conference! .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>    Free Vessel Safety Checks.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>    Got News? .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Why Your Membership Is Important.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>GPS Celebrates 25 Years of Operation</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>The Last Word .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Calendar of Events.....</b>	<b>17</b>

## From The Commander

*By Jim McGinnis, AP*

## Letter to Our Membership

Woohoo! NYS Marinas are open!  
We are all wondering about the  
future of everything we do. What  
will boating look like going for-  
ward? How do we change our  
boating behaviors?

First as always on the boat, we want to be safe. This letter from National Safe Boating Council describes some guidelines for Safe Boating in the COVID-19 world.

<https://safeboatingcampaign.com/news/tips-for-navigating-social-distancing-restrictions-while-boating/>

## Short Version:

- Wear a mask on the dock and in any public areas.
  - Bring only immediate family (that live with you) on the boat.
  - Wash your hands after touching gates and pump-out/gas dock facilities
  - No raft ups and no beach parties



- But you can still power and sail to your hearts content.

## For ABC-FLX - What are we doing differently?

As you know, we put on hold our in-person classes, meetings and social gatherings. We postponed our District 6 Spring Meeting in Corning, and our ABC class scheduled for mid -May at the Coast Guard Facility in Ithaca. The Marine Electronics Course is being held online.

For our June Dinner Mtg and future events, we will have to see what we are able to do safely as the immediate crisis of the virus recedes and we get back to a more normal way of living.

## What stays the same?

We will always emphasize Safety and promote boating Education. The Bridge and Executive Committee met on-line on 4/14/20 and the Advanced Piloting Class is continuing in an on-line meeting format. We are working to stay connected to each other through our Website [www.ABC-FLX.org](http://www.ABC-FLX.org) Facebook, The Drum, and e-mail. Again, please let me know if we can help our membership in any way.

## What's new?

On-line meetings and local classes: Zoom Video is a hot stock right now. Everything is moving to video conferencing. We are embracing this technology using Free Conference Call.com and CISCO Webex as we all work and meet from home.

**BOC:** Charlie Fausold wrote an article for The Drum about the USPS Boat Operator Certification (BOC) Program and we are working to integrate this into our educational offerings to be able to offer even more learning options to our students. To enhance Boater Safety, a demonstration by our students of key boating skills builds confidence and provides a validation of the lessons learned. We have long emphasized “On the Water” training starting with the ABC class to Boat Handling and Sailing. Adding a certification test is an extension of that key principle. This program will begin to take form this year and we are preparing for it.

On-line Education Opportunities abound:

If you or anyone in your circle of boating family and friends hasn't taken America's Boating Course (ABC), please find the course online at:

<http://www.americasboatingcourse.com/index.cfm>

(The course is not required for USPS members but certainly a good idea and a refresher.)

Want a little Sail training right now? Try this “Learn to Sail” Video. Just 25 minutes!

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lo2PtgqI8Sc&feature=emb\\_rel\\_end](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lo2PtgqI8Sc&feature=emb_rel_end)

Finally, you might know that May 16th starts National Safe Boating Week: May 16-22, 2020.

The simple message: **“Ready, Set, Wear It”** (Wear your Life Jacket.)

Now we can add: **Life Jacket, Masks and 1 Fathom of distancing!**

## COVID-19

If you are affected or know of a member affected in anyway please reach out to me. We will do whatever we can to help! Shopping runs or other errands, we can help. Stay Safe and wear a mask when in public situations where you are not able to assure the social distancing guideline of 6 feet.

Hope to see you back on the water soon!

- Jim, SV Brewster  
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## The Drum

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## From the Executive Officer

By Phil Cherry, S

### Focus on the Long Term



I struggled with what to write about this month. Perspectives and opinions change so quickly when we're

faced with adversity. So, I thought about what issue and topic might transcend the crisis of the day and still be timely in its relevance and importance, and then I came back to Earth..., literally.

The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Earth Day was just this past week. April 22<sup>nd</sup>. My sister's birthday. She's just a few years older than the event. I asked her what it felt like to share her birthday with Earth Day. She said it wasn't a problem because Earth Day wasn't that big a deal. I winced. Problem is, she's right. It's been 50 years since we first celebrated the earth and we're faced with some of the same environmental problems we had back then. Earth Day has made a difference. It laid the foundation for bipartisan support of monumental federal legislation like the Clean Water Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, FIFRA, NEPA, CZMA, RCRA, CERCLA and the rest of the alphabet soup

of bills passed by congress in the 70's and 80's.

These were each landmark pieces of legislation for their time and each had a significant impact and dramatically improved our air, water and lands. River's don't catch fire anymore and it's now possible to drive down the New Jersey Turnpike or in downtown LA without choking to death from the smog. Chemicals now have detailed labels on them, and companies must publicly report their air, water and land emissions to the EPA. Those laws, and the spirit that is Earth Day have made a huge difference in our country.

But what of the next 50 Years? Those statutes, while literally saving lives, are still allowing pollution to occur and do not entirely relieve us of environmental risk. They were often written to set a standard, above which you couldn't do something and yet still allowing pollution...just not in "excess". I was reminded of this after life shut down due to the Coronavirus. Have you seen the pictures of Los Angeles' air quality pre and post the Pandemic? The difference was remarkable, but sad in the fact that LA is still dealing with smog, now 50 years later. We still have hazardous air days with air pollution from cars, trucks, and commerce, water pollution from humans, animals and

*SV Harmony*

industry and solid waste problems resulting from our wasteful society that prioritizes disposable above sustainable. What we get for that is polluted air in our lungs, polluted water that turns our lakes into harmful algal blooms, and litter and landfills dotting our beautiful countryside.

When we climb out of this morass that is Coronavirus (and we will climb out of it sooner or later), it's important for us to focus on what really matters, and that's relationships. Relationships with each other, our family and friends and yes, the Earth. We still have environmental problems, and some, like harmful algal blooms in Seneca Lake and climate change, are getting worse. We must all do our part in addressing these woes, whether it's bringing our own grocery bags to the store, buying an electric vehicle or investing in better water treatment technologies, we must take action. The trick will be to maintain that focus amidst our daily struggle to combat this virus and getting us back to normal. Hopefully normal includes a renewed long-term focus on the Earth.

- *Phil*

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# From the Education Director

By Charlie Fausold, SN-IN

## Viral Impact



Like most everything else our educational programs have been impacted by the na-

tional pandemic. We have suspended all in-class programs including Marine Electrical Systems, Sail and ABCourse until such time as social distancing restrictions are lifted. After a hiatus of a few weeks our Advanced Pi-

loting class has resumed via a distance learning platform, and consideration is being given to doing the same with Marine Electrical Systems.

Navigation wrapped up just in time. Congratulations to the participants for completing that rigorous class, the capstone of our five-course navigation series.

The Instructor Development Recertification seminar was re-configured and conducted via Webex. Doing so allowed us to open the program up to other USPS members from around District 6 and fourteen were re-certified for another four years. Congratulations to ABC-FLX members Tom Alley, Tom Taylor, Dennis Daniels, Mark Erway, Denis Kingsley, Don Kloeber, Ray Margeson, and yours truly.

America's Boating Club/USPS has distinguished itself over the decades by offering quality educational programs, and key to that is having trained instructors who keep up with the state of the art. Thank you all!

- Charlie

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# From the Assistant Education Officer

By John Flick

## ESD – Electric Shock Drowning



You are risking your life when you swim in a freshwater marina that has AC or household electrical power.

You should never ever ever swim around boats and docks powered with electricity because you are in mortal danger of electric shock drowning (ESD), a silent killer.

Some of you may be thinking that I've gone mad as a result of COVID confinement and/or you may be thinking, "I've gotten in the water at my marina for years or even decades". If you've taken the splash with the dock lines in place, then consider yourself lucky. What follows is important information so please read on.

Every year, there are deaths at both inland freshwater marinas and those located in areas of brackish water. How does this catastrophe strike?

We all have observed the effects of gravity on rainwater that lands on hills and high points. The water eventually works its way to sea level or lower elevations taking the path of least resistance. As it turns out, electricity also takes the path of least resistance. Electricity that leaves its source is like a boomerang completing a complete round trip path, again, being

lazy and taking the easiest route available.

This is not intended to be a technical article so let me try to explain this in a way that we can all understand it. The salt in our bodies makes us a significantly better conductor or path for the electrical current to follow than fresh water. The electrical current is returning to its source where it originated up on shore. This electricity shouldn't be in the water and we shouldn't be in the water but if both are present simultaneously, then horrible result can follow. The electricity or current will flow through our conductive bodies because our bodies offer less resistance than the fresh water.

Where does this electricity come from? The electricity comes from boats or marinas that have faulty wiring. The fault is like putting the black or live (ungrounded) wire of our shore power cord into the water. Please don't be lulled into a false sense of security at your marina. One sunny warm weekend day, you may take that short tube float off the transom and oh my goodness that clean fresh water feels so good cooling your hot skin. What's the problem you may ask? The problem is that over the course of the next week, Carl Clueless could rewire Ian Incompetent's boat in your neighboring slip or Timmy Transient with the budget electrical system could show up several slips down and make the water deadly with electrical current. There will be no red flags, no way of knowing the water is energized, and no

way of knowing something changed around your slip until it's too late and you are another calamitous victim. Please note that this danger can exist even if there is not a single boat in the marina.

We all have our own perceptions of how drownings might occur, perhaps it's the result of a uninformed weak swimmer in a rip current along the salt water coast, or the result of being in the wrong place at the wrong time during an accidental jibe (not wearing the appropriate life jacket), or maybe go-fast boaters partying excessively combined with high speeds during the wee hours of the morning. What actually happens in the case in which I write? We get in the water and the electrical current passes thru us paralyzing us such that we cannot swim or tread in an effort to keep ourselves afloat. It takes very little current to cause our muscles to contract losing voluntary control of muscle movement. Helpless, we sink and the air in our lungs is displaced with water cutting off oxygen to our brain and other vital organs and that's it, it's all over. I go into this level of detail in an effort to make a lasting impression.

For a number of us, being out on the water is among some of the most pleasurable activities in our lives. This tragedy has struck too many of our fellow boaters. If the family canine enters the water and struggles, then the child jumps in to try to help and..., I can't imagine this but these are the kinds of stories reported. If you witness someone struggling, throw a life

ring, get help, avoid extending an aluminum conductive boat hook, and those on foot, turn off shore power any way you can quickly. DON'T become a casualty by jumping in to try to help.

If you end up in the water by accident, there are things that can be done. For example, if you feel a tingle, then you should swim to where you don't feel a tingle. Are we going to know the exact location of the current source is or where the tingle free area is? This approach is likely counterintuitive as we aren't programmed to swim away from docks and boats for safety. Make every effort to stay out of the water.

Fortunately, there are efforts being made to prevent marina deaths or ESD. Education and new electrical hardware installed at marinas are partial solutions to this problem.

I would like to introduce you by way of this article to a pioneer in the area of ESD. Captain David Rifkin is living proof that one man can make a huge impact on the recreational boating industry by bringing awareness and campaigning for changes. I've had the

great opportunity to hear him speak on a couple occasions. We can applaud Captain Rifkin, co-founder of ESD Prevention Association, both for his extensive service in the US Navy and for leading the charge toward solutions to this silent killer.

Several states have tuned into this problem and are writing legislation to force marinas to conform to new updated electric codes and standards. Any power that goes to and from your boat should be in copper wire, not in the water. ELCI's (Equipment Leakage Circuit Interrupter) and GFP's (Ground Fault Protection) will shut off the power to the boat or dock if current is going where it shouldn't.

Marina owners have a responsibility to post danger signs and install the appropriate safety equipment. Boat owners have a responsibility to maintain their boats and only use ABYC trained competent professional electricians. Anyone enjoying marinas has a responsibility to stay out of the water.

If you are a swimmer, be patient, avoid the temptation, heed this

warning, and wait until the lines are cast off and you are away from the marina and electricity before you take the plunge. Never allow your children to swim at the marina. Please share what you've learned from this article with your fellow boaters and slip neighbors. Lets all be safe both at the marina and out there underway or at anchor.

I'm very excited about taking my next class and learning more. What's your next class or seminar? How about the Marine Electrical Systems (MES) class?

- John

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*The ESD Prevention Association brochure was referenced in writing this article. Thank you again Captain David Rifkin for your huge contribution – the industry is indebted to you for saving lives and for making significant positive changes.*

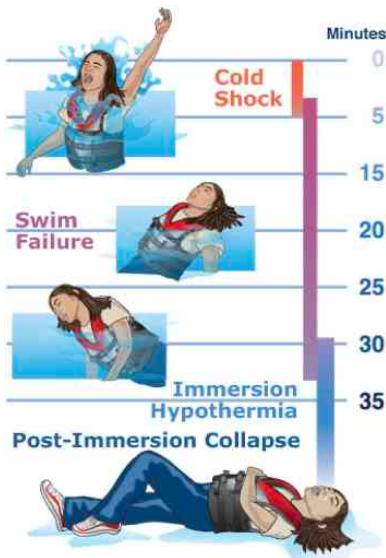
# Membership Thoughts

By Mark Erway, AP

## Membership Matters



This certainly is an interesting beginning to the boating season given the twin complications of COVID-19 restrictions and the cold, wet weather that seems to be hanging on relentlessly. Also, I saw a notice that the Canal System is not going to open for the near future. But hope shines brightly - Governor Cuomo has lifted most restrictions on marinas, and the month of May is right around the corner. Let's keep in mind that Safe Boating Week is coming May 16<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>, and as a member of America's Boating Club - Finger Lakes Chapter, each of us can (and should) share the message of safe boating, and boating responsibly. But let's not wait until May 16<sup>th</sup> to talk about boating safety.



We were very saddened to hear of a boating fatality on Seneca Lake, a few miles north of Watkins Glen, when two men who had paddled from the west side to the east side of the lake failed to return as planned before sunset. Around midnight a search and rescue helicopter found one man clinging to the overturned canoe. He was taken to Strong Memorial Hospital, treated and has been released. The other man was not found. A terrible accident, and we extend our sympathies to the families involved.

We all need to remember that the lake is very cold at this time of the year, somewhere in the neighborhood of 40 to 42 degrees. In water that is between 32 and 40 degrees loss of consciousness is expected within 15 to 30 minutes, and the expected survival time is approximately 30 to 90 minutes. The first reaction the body has when hitting cold water is to gasp. You can easily, and fatally, take water in during that moment.

There are tons of guidelines in regard to cold water survival, hypothermia, how to prepare for it and how to deal with it. In fact, one great resource is a video that was made by America's Boating Club in Watkins Glen - you can access it here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aKc-0EDmmqk>

If you have family or friends that want to go boating (for pleasure or fishing), especially paddle-boating, whether on lakes, streams or even ponds, please advise them of cold water safety

measures. And always, always, wear a life jacket and always let someone know where you are going and when you will return. The men in this accident had filed a "float plan" - they told their families where they were going and when they expected to return. When they didn't show up family members then notified the authorities, a search was launched, and a life was saved. Proper preparation and caution are of utmost importance.



Your membership matters, and you matter. As you take courses and learn more about boating responsibly and safely, what you tell family and friends matters. What you say to someone may matter in someone's life. It is a privilege to be a member, but with that privilege comes responsibility. Please take a moment and share your boating knowledge with someone you know, someone you meet, and especially with those you love.

Regards,

- Mark  
[membership@abc-flx.org](mailto:membership@abc-flx.org)

## Water Lines

By Glenda Gephart, Public Relations Officer

### Spread the Word



For 26 years, the Watkins Glen Waterfront Festival's Cardboard Boat Regatta has generated creative engineering

ing and imaginations run wild among participants. And for observers? A day on the Seneca lakefront and an appreciation for fun on the water. When not laughing at the antics of the cardboard boat racers, watchers could marvel at the skills of the safety crew in their kayaks.

Sadly, this wonderful Father's Day weekend event is another

victim of the COVID-19 pandemic that has affected every one of us.

Our ABC chapter was an active participant in last year's festival. Not in a cardboard boat (Another year, perhaps?), but on shore staffing an information table and helping the competitors pull their soggy crafts out of the waters of the Seneca Harbor Marina (Not an easy task!).

Sharing information about the club and the importance of boating safety was very easy. Members at our table were approachable and knowledgeable. They relished conversations about the hobby they enjoy.

They recognized the value of being at this lakeside event that attracts thousands. What better place to speak to new and potential boaters than at the water?

We will miss this opportunity in 2020. But spreading the word about the club and boating safety can still occur, and it's a job for all of us.

As we grow more eager for temperatures to get warmer and marinas to open, talk to your boating friends about the club. Remind family and neighbors about the new boating safety certificate laws. Stress the vital importance of responsible boating.

And don't forget to mention the fun!

- Glenda  
[pro@abc-flx.org](mailto:pro@abc-flx.org)

# Upcoming Classes & Seminars

To register for any of these classes or to get more information, please contact Education Officer Charlie Fausold at:

[seo@abc-flx.org](mailto:seo@abc-flx.org)

or call 607-207-7771

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## Marine Electrical Systems

With more and more electronics finding their way onto our boats – and into our lives in general – it makes sense to try to get a greater understanding of how they work and what it takes to make them operate properly and reliably.

If you are interested in learning more about marine electronics – and electronics in general – please consider joining the Finger Lakes Chapter (Seneca) for the introductory marine electrical systems course beginning May 6<sup>th</sup>, online. Instructors: Tom Alley & John Flick.

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## Sail Course

If you have always wanted to learn how to sail, or if you've been sailing for a while and want to hone your skills to the next level, the Finger Lakes Chapter (Seneca) is happy to announce its

popular on-the-water (OTW) version of the USPS Sail course.

The course will take place in the early summer of 2020, beginning as soon as the Marine Electrical System course completes. Seats are limited, and they tend to fill up fast! The course will be taught in the Watkins Glen area and the OTW sections will be held in the Village Marina of Watkins Glen. To get on the list of potential students, contact SEO Charlie Fausold as soon as possible.

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## Marine Communications Systems

This is part two of the three-part Marine Electronics elective offered by America's Boating Club. After you master the basics of marine electrical systems, you'll be ready for a better understanding of marine communications and analog electronic instrumentation.

This course will be offered in the Fall of 2020.

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## How To Register

If you have questions about any of these courses, or better yet, to

sign up, please contact either of the following individuals:

Education Director Charlie Fausold, Finger Lakes Chapter:

[seo@abc-flx.org](mailto:seo@abc-flx.org)

or call 607-207-7771

Assistant Education Director John Flick:

[aseo@abc-flx.org](mailto:aseo@abc-flx.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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## Looking for Something?

The Finger Lakes Chapter of America's Boating Club will be happy to accommodate requests for courses not currently on our schedule of formal offerings. If there is an area in which you would like to get some instruction, please contact Charlie Fausold, the Chapter Education Director, with your request.

Available subjects for instruction can be found on the chapter web site:

[www.abc-flx.org](http://www.abc-flx.org)

# Long-Term Class Schedule

*Seneca Education Department*

Courses	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Public	ABC	ABC	ABC	ABC	ABC	ABC
Basic	Sail	Boat Handling	Sail	Boat Handling	Sail	Boat Handling
Advanced Level	Advanced Piloting	Piloting	Advanced Piloting	Piloting	Advanced Piloting	Piloting
Senior Level			Junior Navigation			
Electives	Marine Electronics	Electronic Navigation	Instructor Training	Weather	TBD	TBD
	Marine Communications		Engine Maintenance			
Seminars	Power Boating	Paddle Smart	Trailering & Docking	Partner in Command		Man Overboard!
	Trailering Your Boat	Advanced Powerboat Handling				
	Instructor Recertification					
Self Study	Any Class	Any Class	Any Class	Any Class	Any Class	Any Class

# USPS News: Local, District, National & More

## New Member Welcome

First, we welcome new members Andrew and Helene Price of Endicott, who officially became new members on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2019. We are pleased to have you aboard and hope you'll find classes and programs that will be of interest.

Next, we welcome Captain Dennis Daniels, who holds a USCG Master. He has been a long-time member of USPS, is a Past Commander and transferred to us from the Buffalo Squadron at the beginning of January. He has been an instructor for years, taught numerous Boater Safety Courses, and has been involved in other aspects of maritime education for many years. He brings a wealth of experience and capability to our club. Welcome aboard!

## Happy Birthday!

Best wishes to Finger Lakes Chapter members who are celebrating their birthday in next couple of months.

### May

- Ray Margeson
- Pat Mason
- Sue Morris
- Dan Kingsley
- Gabriel Seip
- Frank Broderick
- Greg Glaesemann
- Jim Morris
- Don Kloeber
- Phil Cherry
- Tessa Bell Cabezas

### June

- Dennis Daniels
- Jeff Barlow
- Anne Erway
- Bill Phoenix
- Ben Wigley
- Tom Taylor
- Claudia Demeritt

And we don't want to forget our neighbors in the Ithaca Sail & Power Squadron who are celebrating their birthdays:

### May

- Paul Flagg
- Tom Cowing
- Jesse Duplan

### June

- June Wollard

## Marinas Set to Reopen

*From BusinessInsider.com*

Marinas, boatyards and marine manufacturers have been permitted to reopen in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut as the metropolitan region continues to treat the coronavirus pandemic.

These waterfront areas were closed for weeks as strict social distancing rules were implemented across the region. New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy, and Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont announced the reopening with a joint statement on Saturday, April 18.

"Our states share workforces, resources, public transit, and we all share a connection on the

water," Governor Lamont said in the statement. "This is yet another example of how our states have shared interests, which is all the more reason to collaborate on these kinds of decisions. This decision provides uniformity across our marinas."

The areas will only be available for personal use, so chartered services and rentals will remain suspended. Nearby restaurants will still be limited to take-out or delivery service as well. The three states said they've adopted this shared policy to ensure there was no confusion or efforts to shop between states for waterfront access.

"Throughout this pandemic, we've worked closely with our friends in neighboring states to implement a uniform regional approach to reducing the spread of the virus," Cuomo said.

"Aligning our policies in this area is another example of that strong partnership, and will help ensure there is no confusion or 'state shopping' when it comes to marinas and boatyards."

Connecticut, New Jersey, and New York are members of an 18-state regional coalition coordinating a plan for recovery once the coronavirus pandemic reaches a more manageable stage. Cuomo announced the coalition on April 13.

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***Editor's Note:*** Our local marina, the Village Marina of Watkins Glen, NY, officially opened for business on Monday, April 27<sup>th</sup> and has started launching

*boats for the 2020 boating season. Go team!*

## Notice to Mariners: NY Canal System Status

April 23, 2020 – Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Canal Corporation has suspended all non-essential construction and maintenance activities, therefore the New York State Canal system will not open for through navigation of the locks on May 15<sup>th</sup> as previously announced. However, to support the Canal's continued use as a prime recreational waterway, the Canal Corporation is currently evaluating operational options to ensure New Yorkers will have access to the Canal system, if even potentially on a regional basis, this season.

We recognize that this is an extraordinarily difficult time and are sensitive to potential hardships Canal stakeholders, as well as many other New Yorkers, may experience. The situation with COVID-19 is ever-evolving and we are trying to adapt our plans accordingly. Future updates will be posted through our Notice to Mariners program. We appreciate your patience.

For updates and information, please visit [Canals.NY.gov](http://Canals.NY.gov) or follow us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#)

## USPS Boat Operator Certification Program

By Charlie Fausold, SEO

America's Boating Club offers an ever-expanding array of educational opportunities. But how do you make sense of all the possibilities? The Boat Operator Certification (BOC) Program provides a framework for planning your boating educational journey, tracking and being recognized for your progress, and realizing tangible benefits. It creates a path for you, with your boat, in your locations, through the tremendous array of boating classes offered. BOC validates what you have learned at different levels of recreational boating proficiency and develops the confidence to take your family and friends on the water safely and skillfully.

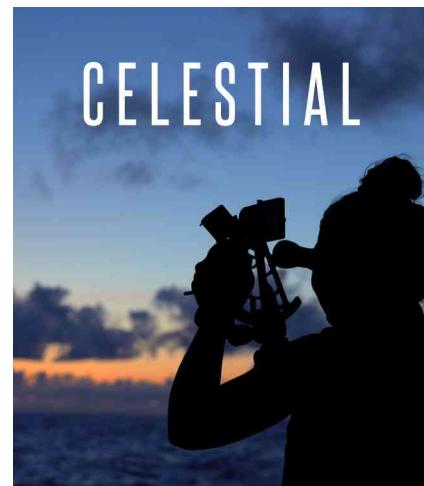
So what is it? To achieve certification at a given level, a candidate must complete Advanced Grade courses, Elective courses and USPS Seminars relevant to that level. In addition, candidates must demonstrate their proficiency in a set of practical skill tests on land as well as on the water. There are four BOC levels: Inland Navigator, Coastal Navigator, Advanced Coastal Navigator, and Offshore Navigator. The requirements for achieving each level of certification are listed on the ABC national website, and may be accessed by [clicking here](#).

BOC offers potential benefits beyond personal motivation and achievement. For example it may lower boat insurance premiums and/or facilitate bareboat

chartering. It will also position our members to meet new licensing requirements at various governmental levels, including internationally.

Under the leadership of DEO Tom Alley discussions are underway in District 6 about how to utilize distance learning and coordinate and schedule the educational offerings of different local squadrons so that members can progress through the various BOC levels in a reasonable timeframe. In the short term, ABC-FLX leadership is considering including some BOC activities as part of our planned rendezvous at Sampson State Marine Park this summer. Stay tuned!

## Update: Short Film Debut at the D/6 Spring \*\*Fall\*\* Conference!



With the change to an online Spring Conference, the screening of the short film, *Celestial*, has been rescheduled to occur at the District 6 Fall Conference on November 14<sup>th</sup>.

## Free Vessel Safety Checks

By Ray Margeson

ABC-FLX has a team of Vessel Safety Examiners that provide free vessel safety examinations to Coast Guard standards. This summer, your team will be doing group inspections at several marinas around the area. The team consists of members Mark Erway, Charlie Fasould, Don Kloeber and Ray Margeson.

We are looking for some volunteers to assist at these inspections and we are looking for anyone interested in joining us and thinking of becoming a certified Vessel Safety Examiner. Contact any of the named inspectors if you wish to be involved.

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@abc-flx.org](mailto:editor@abc-flx.org)

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## Got News?

By Tom Alley, Editor

Do you have any squadron-related news or announcements?

# Why Your Membership Is Important

By Charlie Fausold, SN-IN

It seems as though every year we get tragic reminder of why boating safety organizations like ours are so important. This morning Helene and I noticed an unusual amount of activity on the lake: Police and fire department boats, helicopters, and drones. It turns out two young men had set out the night before to cross Seneca Lake in a 14-foot canoe. The canoe capsized,

and one man was rescued while clinging to it in the center of the lake around midnight. He was being treated for hypothermia and the search is ongoing for the other man as I write this.

Needless to say, canoeing on Seneca can be a joyful experience, but doing so in April, at night, when the water temperature is 41 degrees is not a good

idea. Whether in one of our programs or more informally we cannot stress the importance of safe boating often enough. It is a responsibility all of us share and why your involvement and support for ABC-FLX is so necessary.

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# GPS Celebrates 25 Years of Operation

By First Lieutenant Tyler Whiting



## Civil GPS Service Interface Committee

The Global Positioning System marks its 25<sup>th</sup> year of operation Apr. 27, 2020.

On this date in 1995, the system reached full operational capability, meaning the system met all performance requirements. U.S. Air Force Space Command formally announced the milestone three months later.

“This is a major milestone,” Gen. Thomas S. Moorman Jr., former Air Force Vice Chief of Staff, said in 1995. “GPS has become integral to our warfighters and is rapidly becoming a true utility in the civilian community.”

Initially developed for the military to meet a critical need for determining precise location on the battlefield, GPS has also become an integral part of technology affecting the lives of billions of people worldwide.

“The United States Space Force’s continuing objective for the constellation is to ensure GPS remains the Gold Standard for global space-based positioning, navigation and timing,” said Gen. Jay Raymond, USSF Chief of Space Operations, and U.S. Space Command Commander.

Today, the U.S. Space Force operates the GPS satellite con-

stellation as a global utility – always available to everyone, everywhere on Earth.

“GPS is a free for use service provided by the Space Force that enhances everyday lives around the world,” said Brig. Gen. DeAnna Burt, USSF Director of Operations and Communications. “GPS provides the highest accuracy positioning and timing data. In addition to the essential capabilities it provides for the military, GPS underpins critical financial, transportation and agricultural infrastructure. It’s always available, whether for an ATM transaction or securing a rideshare.”

Its military capabilities first enhanced combat operations in 1990 and 1991 during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Allied troops relied heavily on the new GPS signal to navigate the featureless deserts in Kuwait and Iraq.

In the early 2000’s, during Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, GPS contribution to warfighting increased significantly. For example, the GPS constellation enabled accurate munitions, allowing the delivery of GPS-aided Joint Direct Attack Munitions with pinpoint precision and minimal collateral damage.



*United States Space Force*

Today, in addition to these and other GPS-enabled warfighting capabilities, Airmen conduct resupply missions with battlefield precision airdrops to combat forces with GPS-guided, parachute-delivered equipment pallets known as “Smart Pallets.”

The GPS operational constellation currently has 31 satellites, and the system is continually updated and modernized, making it a resilient system to maintain the signals required for accurate positioning, navigation, and timing around the world.

The first satellite of the new GPS III version, called Vespucci, was launched into space Dec. 23, 2018.

The 2nd Space Operations Squadron at Schriever Air Force Base, Colo., operates GPS. The squadron recently accepted control of the second GPS III satellite, called Magellan, on March 27.

GPS III is meeting users’ emerging needs and responding to tomorrow’s threats with improved safety, signal integrity, and accuracy. GPS III satellites are more accurate, have improved anti-jamming capabilities, and have doubled the design life; when compared to previous iterations of GPS. They are also designed to incorporate new technology and changing mission needs,

“The 25th Anniversary is a huge, momentous occasion for us. We take great pride in providing this global utility to

approximately six billion users worldwide," said Lt. Col. Stephen Toth, 2nd SOPS commander. "Celebrating this anniversary gives us a moment to

recognize how far we've come, but also to get pumped about what lies ahead for our program and our role in executing that."

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## The Last Word

By Tom Alley, SN

### Commissioning Complexities



As I sit down to write my column this month, I glance out the window to a cold, gray, damp and dreary

day. Quite a change from yesterday which was bright and sunny with temperatures around 60 degrees. I took advantage of the weather to pull the covers off of *Tomfoolery* and begin some long-overdue commissioning work.

The mood in the marina matched the weather. I wasn't alone as a number of other boat owners had similar thoughts. The highlight was the sound of the travel lift launching the first boat of the 2020 season. When you hear that, you know that spring is here!

Last fall I had my mast unstepped in order to do some upgrades for our trip to Massachusetts next year. As a result, I had a "nonstandard" configuration, and it didn't hold up well to some of the winds we saw

this past winter. The mast supports failed and it wound up falling onto the deck. I made some temporary repairs to the supports, but these, too, failed and the mast wound up on the deck a second time.



*Photo 1: The first mast support failure. After the second failure, the 300-lb. mast dropped all the way to the pushpit rail.*

With the mast no longer supporting the tarps at a height where I could get things done on board, I decided to pull them off completely. Upon doing so I discovered a bird's nest with a couple of eggs in it, built in notch formed between the fallen mast and one of the failed supports, back under the tarp where it was protected from the

*SV Tomfoolery*

weather. Nuts. I hate it when that happens.

Turns out the nest belonged to a pair of mourning doves. Though I had spooked them when I removed the tarps, one of them kept returning every few minutes to check on the eggs and nest. Unfortunately, I was going to have to move the nest because the mast had fallen onto the companionway hatch, blocking entry into my boat.

Under the watchful eye of the parents, I moved the nest to another location on deck where they wouldn't get dropped or stepped on. I enlisted the help of a couple other folks to lift and move the mast (it weighs about 300 pounds) to clear the companionway hatch, and then secured the mast so it wouldn't attempt to succumb to gravity again.

Fortunately, the mast was positioned in a way that a small nook was formed between the mast and windvane, so I placed the nest there and secured it so it wouldn't slide or fall. Using a small piece of leftover shrink-wrap from another boat, I also set up a bit of a windbreak to offer some shelter. From what I

can see, the parents approved and were back in the nest with the eggs before I had my tools put away.



*Photo 2: New location for our mourning dove family.*



*Photo 3: New home passes inspection. Dad can be seen incubating the eggs.*

Looking up doves online, the eggs should hatch within 14 days and the chicks will leave the nest 14 days after that.

Given the amount of work I need to do on the boat, this shouldn't interfere with launching, so I'll keep folks posted on how the small family is doing.

See you soon!

- Your Editor, Tom

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*As always, send your thoughts about this newsletter to:*

[editor@abc-flx.org](mailto:editor@abc-flx.org)

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# Calendar of Events

## May 2020

- 01 Seneca *Drum* May issue publication date.
- 01 *The Deep 6* spring issue publication date. (D/6)
- 06 Marine Electrical Systems class begins, *online*.
- 12 Bridge Meeting, *Online*. (1900)
- 16-22 Safe Boating Week (National)

## June 2020

- 09 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- ~~19-20 Waterfront Celebration & Cardboard Boat Race, Watkins Glen, NY.~~
- 19 Deadline for *Drum* Articles

## July 2020

- 01 Seneca *Drum* July issue publication date.
- 14 Bridge Meeting (1900).
- 24 Deadline for *The Deep 6* articles. (D/6)
- 31 Finger Lakes Chapter Summer Sail/Power Event, *Sampson, NY*.

## August 2020

- 01 *The Deep 6* summer issue publication date. (D/6)
- 01-02 Finger Lakes Chapter Summer Sail/Power Event, *Sampson, NY*.
- 11 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 21 Deadline for *Drum* Articles

## September 2020

- 01 Seneca *Drum* September issue publication date.
- 06-13 Governing Board Meeting, *Raleigh, NC* (National)
- 08 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 12-13 Cruise to Geneva with FLYC.

## October 2020

- 13 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 16 Deadline for *The Deep 6* articles (D/6)
- 23 Deadline for *Drum* articles

## November 2020

- 01 Seneca *Drum* November issue publication date
- 10 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 13-15 District 6 Fall Council & Conference (D/6)
- 20 *The Deep 6* fall issue publication date. (Delayed to cover Conference activities.) (D/6)

## December 2020

- 18 Deadline for *Drum* Articles

## January 2021

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

## February 2021

- 01 *The Deep 6* winter issue publication date. (D/6)
- 09 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 07-13 USPS Annual Meeting, *Ponte Vedra, FL* (National)
- 22 Deadline for *Drum* Articles

## March 2021

- 01 Seneca *Drum* March issue publication date.
- 09 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- TBD District 6 Spring Council & Conference (D/6)

## April 2021

- 13 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 16 Deadline for *The Deep 6* articles (D/6)
- 23 Deadline for *Drum* Articles

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

<http://www.abc-flx.org>

*or our Facebook page:*

<http://facebook.com/SenecaPowerSquadron>

*for any last-minute changes.*