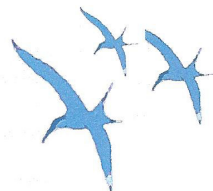




of TARS & TERNS



Volume XLVII Number 10

December 2012

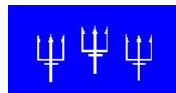
“Mark” Your Calendar

NVSPS Meetings and Events

December 1 – Holiday Party
(this will include a brief membership meeting)

There is no EXCOM meeting for December

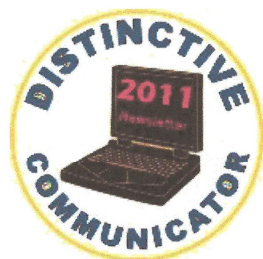
January



Commander Sends . . .

Cdr. Jay G. Nelson, AP

Well it is official; the boating season is over for 2012 and the Christmas season is now in full swing. Personally, I would rather be on the boat. I know this because Chris and I went to the shopping 'maul' this past weekend to do some Christmas shopping and brought our marriage precariously close to an untimely end. Rest assured, the season of 'brotherly shove' is alive and well. Don't get me wrong I really like Christmas, or at least the spirit of Christmas. It just strikes me that we as humans have this bizarre need to include a wide array of self-induced anguish to experience a few days of brotherly love and human kindness. Oh sure, the season is rife with the outward signs of joyousness and good will. After all, festive lights and decorations abound, carolers are caroling, shoppers are shopping, Santas are Santaing (or whatever) and people seem to having more fun than decent people should be having all at one time. But after all, without all of this to balance the true spirit of Christmas, all of this would be nothing more than a birthday celebration.



Northern Virginia
Sail and Power Squadron
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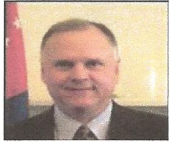


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Scheduled Meetings:

Unless otherwise noted, the General Membership Meetings will be held at the BoatUS* Headquarters facility at 1900. Any changes will be posted in this newsletter or on the Squadron web site.

BoatUS Headquarters and meeting location:

880 South Pickett Street, Alexandria VA.

From the Capital Beltway, take the VA-613/ Van Dorn Street exit, exit number 173 (aka exit 3), towards Franconia. Turn left onto South Van Dorn Street / VA-613 North. Turn left onto South Pickett Street. Go less than .5 miles and turn in at the BoatUS sign and go to the lighted parking lot in the rear. Proceed to the entrance.



*Do you or one of your friends
need a vessel checked?
Or want to become an examiner
yourself?*

*P/C George Nartissov,
ganh@verizon.net*



of TARS & TERNS
The Official Publication of the
Northern Virginia Sail and Power Squadron
<http://www.nvsp.org>



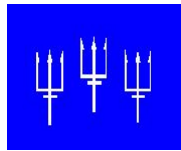
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Commander Sends Continued. . .

Parking at the shopping malls during Christmas presents yet another seasonal challenge. It seems that to ensure a parking space in the mall parking lot you must actually arrive at the mall at least three hours before it actually opens. After that, mall parking modus operandi becomes one of the more interesting holiday spectacles, where the joyous holiday spirit quickly succumbs to the pursuit of the all-elusive parking space. Shoppers prowl about observing the parking area like a massive chess board; carefully noting every movement and positioning themselves to pounce upon any potential opportunity. The trick is to avoid direct eye-contact with the other mobile prowlers, lest you display the weakness of compassion, courtesy and manners – then that %@\$! takes your parking spot. I find that parking well away from the mall, while resulting in a lengthy walk, is rewarded with an actual parking spot that does not involve vehicle carnage. I like to think of this as “the miracle between 3rd and 4th streets.”

I also appreciate the whole idea of Christmas decorations, although there is a bizarre logic that dictates in keeping with the spirit of brotherly love and human kindness, we go out and kill a small tree and ornament the carcass with festive lights and bulbs. At our house, the logistics of household decorating are mind boggling. Every year in early December it seems that sanity, and any modicum of interior decorating sense, slips away in favor of inordinately bright red and green trimmings and a wide array of effervescent Lilliputians, rodents, cherubs and pixies wishing me a Merry Christmas from every corner of the house. I also find it curious that snow figures so prominently in Christmas lore, carols and decorations. There certainly couldn't have been much snow in Bethlehem on the 25th of December, or the three Wise Men would have never made the trip in those open-toe sandals.

Alas, Christmas morning comes and the fruits of all of our Christmas toil are shared with our loved ones – in a ninety second torrent of wrapping paper and ribbon. Then, we desperately try to figure out what we are going to do with the rest of the day, seeing as how all of the shopping malls are closed.

But for all that Christmas might not be, there is truly much that Christmas is. It is a time to slow from the daily rat race just a bit and reflect on loved ones and dear friends. It is a time to renew old friendships and mend fences. It is a time when the awareness of the compassion for others that exists in all of us is elevated. It is a time when our hearts and hands go out to those less fortunate. It is also a time when personal reflections and commitments are rejuvenated. All in celebration of the birth of someone you may or may not believe in, but has come to represent all that is good in human beings and possible for humankind.

With my errant humor aside, I sincerely wish all of you, and your families and loved ones, the very best of the holiday season and peace and prosperity in the coming New Year.





**Executive Officer –
Lt/C Steve Hall, AP**

More on Docking...

I applaud Mary Jane's tips on docking techniques in last month's OT&T. Let me add a few of my own thoughts on what can be one of the most satisfying or terrifying events in a boater's day on the water. My experience was with Java Belle, a 44 ft Kadey Krogen trawler with a single engine and a bow thruster. Java Belle weighed in at 44,000 lbs., so stopping her was not an instantaneous event and required some forethought. I backed JB into her slip at Hartge's Marina on the West River with fixed, not floating docks.

One advantage to fixed docks is they generally have wooden pilings delineating the slips. These pilings are your friends and can be very helpful on a windy day. However, don't put your fenders out until you are fully stopped at your final position, or you are likely to get one hung on a piling when you are backing in and may actually tear it off the boat as it tries to stop 44,000 lbs of momentum. The rub rail on your boat is there for a reason and is strong enough to withstand the force of the wooden pilings.

Floating docks or bulkheads are a whole different story as they are generally made of metal and don't have wooden pilings to fend off of. In this case do have your fenders deployed in advance as your rub rail is no match for the metal dock. In either case, GO SLOW! Mary Jane is absolutely correct that almost a dead stop is the way to go. Don't be in a hurry, and if you missed your approach, don't be afraid to turn around and start over. Maybe you misjudged the wind and let the boat slide past your slip. Back up or turn around and do it again. No one will laugh at you, and in fact they will give you credit for not trying to force the situation.

With a single engine and bow thruster I was taught to center the rudder and steer with the bow thruster when backing. Using the rudder in reverse is a tricky maneuver and can be avoided with a bow thruster or twin engines.

Finally, I mentioned the pilings are your friends. They are particularly helpful if the wind is blowing away from the dock. Just bring the boat up alongside the piling and pivot around it backing in. And then, when backing in if you can get your spring line over a forward piling, backing against it will pull the stern in to the dock. Simple, isn't it.

Lt/C Steve Hall, AP





**Education Officer –
Lt/C Sean P. Gallagher, AP**

Chalk Talk

By now, all or at least most of you have your vessels ready for Old Man Winter. My weather pundits are forecasting a moderate winter with some periods of heavy snow. I certainly hope those periods are short and merciful !! On the training front, we have our courses listed on the National website and ready for your enrollment. If you have questions or comments, please email me at SEO@NVSPS.ORG. Given our spotty performance in number of students trained over the past 18 months, we are pulling together a tiger team to look at improving our enrollment through membership and public relations efforts. By the time you read this, the planning meeting to organize the effort will have already taken place but we always need new ideas so don't be bashful. Send your input to me or the CO and we'll include it in the next round of discussions. I anticipate that we will be looking for additional staff to augment the current committee chairs in specific functional areas, so be thinking about how you can contribute. This squadron of 158 members can't run well on the backs of the same 20 people.

Below is the proposed schedule for Nov 12 – Apr 13. Please register on the National website. Don't see what you need, just ask as we still have some open spots on the calendar.

Have friends ? Invite them to participate. We need a minimum number of students enrolled in each course in order to make the course viable. We have been getting 1-5 students signed up in most of our courses which is not enough to allow the course to proceed.

Continued on page 8

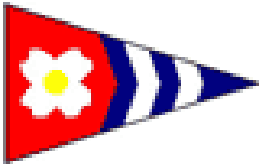


**Administrative Officer –
Lt/C Cathleen Sheffield, AP**

The Holiday party will be 1 December 2012 at the American Legion Hall in Fairfax City. It will be \$35 and \$40 (at the door) per person. We are collecting toys (unwrapped) for Fisher House.

The next big event will be the Change of Watch March 2013. I will have more information in the January Tars and Terns.
Everyone have a safe holiday and Happy New Year.





NVSPS Calendar

CHECK IT OUT

The NVSPS calendar has been updated
and is available at
www.nvsps.org

Vessel Safety Checks:

We are ending our 2012 season with 156 Vessel safety Checks! Thanks to the NVSPS Vessel Examiners: P/C Gale Alls, P/C George K. Degnon, Dave Hinkins, Norbert P. Hymel, P/C George Nartsissov (Chair), Robin A. Roberts, P/C John A. Shivik, John C. von Senden, and P/C Francis T. Williamson.

We hope that we have contributed to the safety on the water of the vessels that we examined. This has been a great outreach program to the community. I hope that next year will be at least as successful as this year. We always welcome new members to join the group. You can find out information on the National web site, www.usps.org and in the "Site Index" go to the bottom right column and click on "Vessel Safety Check". I will be happy to answer any questions regarding the program. You do have to take a test which can be taken on line. A study manual is also available on line.

This is a fun program and you will be contributing to boating safety!

P/C George Nartsissov, AP,
Chair, vsc@nvsps.org ,
703-425 0744





Treasurer's Report – Lt/C Ann Nartisssov, P

Financial Report: Our financial situation is continuing in the same direction: expenses are generally in line with our budget, and income dwindles due to lack of membership dues and education course proceeds. Although we have reserves, we prefer not to delve into them. This situation needs addressing.

Treasurer's trip to Tangier and Pokomoke City: In October George And I took a trip in our 30 ft boat (L'Attitudes) to Tangier Island and up the Pokomoke River to Pokomoke City. NVSPS friends had told us that there were good places to visit. We checked that weather forecast. It was favorable for a few days with a front scheduled to pass while we visiting Pokomoke City. No problem.

The trip to Tangiers was pleasant. Docking was tricky due to wind and current, but Mr. Parks of Park's Marina talked us in, and made sure our lines were secure. (He knew best, having lived there all of his 81 years.) We bicycled on all the roads, ate crab cakes and crab soup, and talked to the villagers who were very willing to stop and answer our questions about life on the island. At the end of the day the showers were hot. Good trip.

Meanwhile, the front moved quicker than predicted. So we had a brisk wind and following seas on the way to Pokomoke River. Also the GPS began to cut in and out. However, having taken the education courses, we got out our pre-plotted course, used our compass, and arrived at our destination. The entrance approaching the river was well marked, traveling close to the shoreline, and very shallow (3 ft in spots). Challenging. We had arrived at low tide. Oops.

Once on the river the depth was 20-30 ft. The water color is dark. The very entrance is through a tall forest of trees, which opens up into a wilderness of river meandering through tall marsh grass on both banks. The tall marsh grass transitions to shorter marsh grass with occasional small farms, to cypress trees lining the banks of larger farms, and fine old houses. No stores or marinas until Pocomoke City.

Pokomoke City had a good sports bar and restaurant right by the city dock by the city park. Bathroom facilities in the park were sparse. Showers were cold. But people were friendly and helpful. Nature walk through a cypress swamp was interesting.

Continued on page 8



Treasures Report Continued:

Went back to Tangier Island to be weathered in for a few days. Toured their museum of life since late 1600's. Arrived back at Solomons safely, and feeling refreshed.

This was a great trip, made so by having friends who gave us good, inspiring information, and by having the knowledge to navigate the water safely. This is what NVSPS has to offer. How can we sell it?

Chalk Talk Continued

Have a flair for promotions ? We could also use a public relations team to promote the courses, contact the membership and the public and get the word out.

Have an interest in teaching ? We need to prep additional instructors with the knowledge, technique and teaching tools required to teach USPS courses. We can also get you certified to teach state courses, important in our relationship with Fairfax County Park System classes. We can schedule an instructor development course as soon as we get candidates.

This is your squadron, let's keep it a good one!


Got questions, email them directly to seo@nvsp.org

Nov 12 – Apr 13 NVSPS Course Schedule

8 Dec 12 Cruise Planning
8 Jan 13 ABC-12
12 Jan 13 Eng Maintenance
17 Jan 13 Piloting
5 Feb 13 ABC-12
28 Feb 13 Adv Piloting
2 Mar 13 Marine Electrical Systems

Nov 12 – Apr 13 NVSPS Seminar Schedule

24 Nov 12 Mastering Rules of the Road
24 Nov 12 VHF/DSC Marine Radio
8 Dec 12 Anchoring
8 Dec 12 Using GPS
5 Jan 13 Knots Bends & Hitches
5 Jan 13 Boating on Lakes, Rivers & Locks
2 Feb 13 Basic Weather and Forecasting
2 Feb 13 Emergencies onboard
2 Mar 13 Marine Radar
2 Mar 13 How to use a chart



Happy Holidays and Best Wishes!
from the crew of the trawler *Loco*
Dick Cohen

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year,
Fair Winds & Following Seas!
Sean, Susan & Maggie Gallagher

Deck 'Dem Halls!
Chris & Jay Nelson

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!
Tom Martin
"Boat Less"

Christmas & Holiday Cheers!
Norbert & Alice Mary Hymel

Merry Christmas to all &
Smooth sailing in 2013
Ann & Steve Hall

Merry Christmas!
from *Sea Glory*
Francis & Georgia Williamson

Best Wishes for the Holidays!
from *Castle II*
Mike Card

May you have a Joyous Holiday
& a Happy New Year!
George & Ann Nartsissov,
L'Attitudes

Merry Christmas &
Happy New Year!
Cathy Sheffield & Sammy (the bird)

Happy Holidays & Safe Boating
in the New Year!
Ron & Donna Larson

Joy & peace this holiday season
& throughout the new year!
John & Sue Karjala, *Isleamour*

Season's Greetings from
P/C Alan & Mary Hart

Happy Christmas &
A Merry New Year!
Jere & Nancy Dando

Happy Holidays & Safe Voyages
in the New Year from the
"Lake Mates"
Walt & Manette Lazear

Season's Greetings!
Happy Holidays and a
very happy, healthy new year!
John & Robie Shivik

Season's Greetings &
Best Wishes to Everyone!
Richard & Irina Davis

Merry Christmas!
May Santa Claus bring you
calm seas & sunny days in 2013!
Gale & Evelyn Alls

Joyous Holidays &
Happy New Year to All!
Dick & Jean Durgin

Lt W. Lazear, AP
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MONTHLY ALL-HANDS MEETING

2nd Wednesdays at 1930 (any changes posted herein and on the web)
at BoatUS 880 S. Pickett St., Alexandria

From I-495 take Van Dorn Exit #173 (old #3) north.
Turn Left on S. Pickett

Or.. From I-395 take Duke St. Exit #3 east, turn right on Van Dorn.
Turn right on S. Pickett.

Then... Go less than 1/2 mile and turn in at the BoatUS sign.
Enter from the lighted parking lot behind the building.



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of TABS & TERNs

America's Boating Club