



## THE HARBOR LIGHT



### Report from Andy Cummings

We had a very successful Change of Watch at the beautiful, new Innis Arden Golf Club. When all goes well, as it did, these events appear easy to arrange. They are not. I want to thank Susan Ryan and Joe Grieco for setting up this annual meeting and celebration. Susan also was our emcee extraordinaire and Susan Darcy, District 2 Commander, helped officiate.

But the memorable star to the show was Police Chief Jim Heavey. After swearing in the new bridge, he gave us a stand-up comedy routine, which also included some highlights about boating safety in our local waters. We are continuously grateful to Chief Heavey for his endless support of America's Boating Club of Greenwich.

I want to thank the membership and the bridge for your confidence in me to be your sole Commander for the coming year. Fortunately, I take the reins of a strong and successful organization. We are strong financially and we are strong in terms of membership and membership involvement. In fact, Susan Darcy presented us with a National award for the highest membership growth among all Squadrons. Our strength and success are the results of the efforts of many.

Two of our bridge members are retiring this year: Howard Sklar (Co-Commander) and Mike Ryan (Treasurer). Perhaps my greatest pleasure serving as Co-Commander last year was the opportunity to work with Howard. Howard is a tremendous resource and I am delighted he will stay involved. As Treasurer, Mike Ryan kept us organized and on budget. Among other important contributions, he leveraged the high interest rate environment to earn interest on our reserves. Thank you, Mike, for passing forward a sound financial state. Our new Treasurer, John Coppinger, is already busy getting up to speed and I look forward to working with him.

I was pleased to present the Commander's Achievement Award to Joe Grieco, who overwhelmingly deserves this award. The award, which originated in 1964, is given to someone who made outstanding contributions in the past year. Joe is known as "Mr. Detail," and as Administrative Officer he ran all events "on time and under budget." Joe could not be present at the Change of Watch, but his daughter Lauren accepted the award on his behalf.

I look forward to a fun and safe 2024 boating season. We have a speaker from Leetes Island Boatworks on April 17, a clambake on July 28, and on the water activities to be announced. So stay tuned and get

involved. On a special note, the Commander's Cocktail Party will be May 18. (Yes, it is a Saturday this year!)

If you have suggestions or ideas, please drop me a note - andycummingsct@gmail.com

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### Report from the Educational Officer, Susan Ryan

There were 4,757 better boaters last year. That's the number who took America's Boating Club's Safe Boating Class nationwide. Greenwich is pleased to have contributed to that statistic.

In 2023 we graduated 39 students from the Safe Boating Class and expect to have 40 in our upcoming class. As well as that class, we had 21 students in Essential Navigation and 10 in this year's Marine Navigation class, 8 in Partner in Command, and 10 in the CPR Class.

At this time of year we like to acknowledge our fine team of instructors. These include Assistant Educational Officer Frank Palmieri, Cynthia Mollica, Andy Papademetriou, Bill Strong, Dave Cassuto, Bob and Terry Henry and Alan and Arlene Karpas. But really, there's just one person responsible for the whole of our educational program – Andy Cummings.

There are Three Kinds of Crew:

- Crew who never take the helm
- Crew who would only take the helm in an emergency
- Crew who want to take the helm more often

Our Partner in Command Program is for ALL KINDS OF CREW who want to be ready to take the helm. Andy will conduct this class **Jun 22** from 9am - 12noon at Mianus River Boat & Yacht Club, 98 Strickland. Cos Cob. [Register here](#) \$50 members \$90 non members.

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### Best Practices When Navigating with a Chartplotter From our new Safety officer, Frank Palmieri

GPS and chartplotters are truly a modern-day miracle. Over the last 30 years, GPS has made navigation much more accurate, easier and safer than at any time. While greatly enhancing traditional navigation, it has also produced its own unique set of challenges that the prudent sailor needs to be aware of to use them safely.

- According to the Coast Guard, despite advances in electronics, failures in watchkeeping and operator inattentiveness are a leading cause of accidents and deaths. A possible contributor is that it is much too easy to become mesmerized by that electronic display. There is no substitute for simply looking around you and assessing the status of the ship moment to moment. As a skipper, you must have situational awareness.
- The GPS, with WAAS enabled is incredibly precise and can place you to within 10 to 15 feet of a target. However, placing waypoints directly on buoys and running at night or in poor visibility has resulted in collisions. It is a good practice to offset waypoints from physical objects.
- The accuracy of a GPS/chartplotter is, of course, very dependent on satellite signals. Check that a sufficient number of satellites and signal strength are being received by your unit. Most have an icon that readily shows the current status. Also, check that your chartplotter is not in simulation mode. As silly as it sounds, incidences of boats becoming lost or disoriented have occurred for that reason.
- Charts used on most chartplotters are ENC type which allows for much greater information to be layered onto the chart without causing clutter. However, it also means that some objects disappear while other appear at various magnifications/scales. When planning a route, it is a good idea to alternately zoom in and out to enable seeing all possible charted hazards. Do not over zoom as much detail is lost.
- Make sure the chartplotter is set up to display the proper units. A good idea is to set it to the same units as the paper backup chart for the boating area, usually nautical miles, knots, depths in feet and with directions in magnetic applying the proper variation. For most charts the latitude and longitude should be in either degrees, minutes and seconds (hddd<sup>0</sup> mm' ss'') or degree, minutes and tenth of a minute (hddd<sup>0</sup> mm.mm') format. Also make sure it is set up for the latest chart datum- WGS84 or NAD83.

- Check you have downloaded the chart for the area you will be boating in before you go so it resides in your chartplotter files. There may not be internet access while boating so you cannot count on grabbing charts as you go. Having the most updated chart is critical. The chartplotter is only as good as the charts they are using and in the real world, coastline, locations of buoys, obstructions, wrecks are constantly changing. Updating charts while you have internet access has become a simple procedure with most chartplotters.
- When reading coordinates make sure it is the ship's actual position and not a waypoint.
- When planning a route, be very wary of auto-routing features. They are not always accurate, and the route must be checked and adjusted manually if needs be.
- Recognize that the boat's heading as read off the ship's compass will most likely be somewhat different than the magnetic heading shown on the GPS. The boat is always moving a bit sideways even as you move forward due to current and wind. The GPS is measuring the ship's actual direction of travel, while the compass measures the direction in which the point is pointed.
- Electronics can and do fail for various reasons. Know how to manually navigate without a GPS. The US Navy recognized that electronics are not meant to be standalone and teach traditional navigation methods to their officers. Have paper charts aboard with a good compass and the knowledge to use them. Also, consider a backup portable device to your primary system that runs independent of the ship's electric system. If using a portable device, be sure you have a way to replenish the batteries either with a charger or replacing batteries.
- A good habit for the recreational boater when out of home waters is to write down the time, Lat. and Long. position of the boat from the GPS, direction of travel and speed each hour, on the hour. This takes seconds to do and if you do get into trouble, you can refer to your notes and be no more than an hour away from you last known position. Since you know the direction of travel and time of the last known position, you can estimate your current position by Dead Reckoning. If the boat is in trouble, you can also relate that info to the Coast Guard who will estimate your current position making rescue much more likely and timely.

In summary, always maintain situational awareness by looking around. Consider a backup portable electronic device which have become much more affordable. Learn how to use your devices to their best advantage and to use traditional means of navigation when the situation calls for it. Take a Marine Navigation course such as the one provided by America's Boating Club.

#### References:

- 1) *Navigating Safely: Understanding Your Chartplotter* – Coast Guard Boating Education Website 2/19/2020.
- 2) *Have GPS, Digital Charts and Radar Replaced the True Art of Navigation?* – Ralph Naranjo Practical Sailor published 12/19/2007, updated 11/24/2021.
- 3) *Avoid a GPS-Induced Accident* – Steve Henkind Sail Magazine Nov. 21, 2008 updated 12/12/2023.
- 4) *Limits of Chartplotters: Avoid Being Led Astray By Well Meaning Electronics* Boat US Magazine 2/2015.
- 5) *Who is Driving Whom?* Bob Arrington Power and Motor Yacht Magazine 1/18/2018.
- 6) *Safe Navigation in Poorly Charted Waters* Darrel Nicholson Practical Sailor 11/22/2021.
- 7) *Danger Bearings* USCG Boating Safety Web Site Kevin Falvey 9/26/2011.

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***“The wind and the waves are always on the side of the ablest navigator.”***  
***Edmund Gibbon, Historian***

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### The Story Behind SoundWaters

**America's Boating Club is proud to contribute annually to SoundWaters. Before the Young Mariners merged with SoundWaters, each year we took 14 under served children through a 'learn to sail' program at Tod's Point and gave them our safe boating class. Check the photos at the end of the newsletter.**

**Below is from the SoundWaters website.**

#### **We Protect Long Island Sound Through Education and Action**

SoundWaters is a recognized and trusted organization locally and in the Long Island Sound region. We have sustained relationships built on shared value for over three decades that includes community, school, business, and political leaders.

We are committed to ensuring that no child or school will be excluded from our programs due to an inability to pay. The generosity of our supporters such as America's Boating Club of Greenwich enables our work, whether it's an education sail aboard the Schooner *SoundWaters*, summer camp scholarships for children, STEM education or workforce development at our Coastal Education Center and the Cohen SoundWaters Harbor Center. Typically, around 50% of the students we teach are from low-income communities and receive financial assistance.

### SoundWaters Sets Sail

When he read a series of articles in the *Stamford Advocate* about the dire condition of Long Island Sound, Len Miller recognized the plight of the Sound as an opportunity to increase learning and exploration and he set in motion a course of science and stewardship that continues to inspire over 30,000 students per year.

In 1990 Len led a small group of friends to purchase a replica of an 18th century Chesapeake Bay sharpie schooner. The 80-foot vessel was refit with education stations on deck and renamed "SoundWaters." The ship, with its six-person crew, immediately made an impact as the "floating classroom of Long Island Sound," sailing with students from its home port of Stamford throughout Long Island Sound. Sailing from April through October, SoundWaters, introduced 6,000 young people annually to the world of navigation and the science of conservation.

**Holly House Reborn.** Ten years later, SoundWaters programs had expanded into afterschool and science programs. There was literally no more room on the boat when then-Mayor, Dan Malloy approached SoundWaters with a partnership to renovate Holly House, a city-owned national historic landmark in Cove Island Park and use it as our land-based teaching center. With classroom, aquarium and lab space inside and Long Island Sound and Holly Pond in its backyard, the Coastal Education Center enabled SoundWaters to welcome schools and students 12 months a year. By 2016 SoundWaters was teaching students from 146 schools in 64 different communities. Adding in Camp SoundWaters and several after school and vacation programs, SoundWaters' student reach surpassed 32,000 per year.

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***"To sail is human... to power divine!" Preben Seier Kristensen***

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### America's Boating Channel™ Warns of Electric Shock Drowning

Electric Shock Drowning (ESD) is a little-known and often-unidentified killer, severely injuring and killing people every year. It occurs when faulty wiring sends electric current into water, which passes through the body and causes muscle paralysis that can result in drowning.

Faulty wiring or the use of damaged electrical cords and other devices on docks and boats can cause the surrounding water to become "energized," with no visible warning. Avoid getting in the water within 150 feet of where AC power is in use and learn how to test if dangerous electrical currents are in the water around your boat.

To help boaters understand the danger of Electric Shock Drowning America's Boating Channel offers the video "[Electric Shock Drowning \(ESD\)](#)." This shows how ESD causes deaths and injuries at marinas nationwide, including many undetected incidents. You will learn how to prevent ESD and how to install ground protection on docks and boats. Differences between salt and fresh water are explained.

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### UPCOMING EVENTS

Watch your inbox for details or contact [GreenwichSquadron@gmail.com](mailto:GreenwichSquadron@gmail.com)

Mar. 16 9 - 5pm Police HQ, 11 Bruce Pl, Greenwich. Safe Boating Class \$95 Register [HERE](#)  
 Apr. 17 7pm Greenwich YWCA 259 E. Putnam Av - Leetes Boatyard discusses Building a Viking Boat.  
 May 18 6pm 17 Tomac Av, Old Greenwich - Commander's Cocktail Party \$25 each. RSVP [HERE](#)  
 July 28 4pm Clambake Area, Greenwich Point Lobster Party \$55 RSVP [HERE](#)  
 Summer Sunset Cruises - every week from various Long Island Sound docks.  
 RaftUps - every month at our 1,000 lb mooring in Greenwich Cove.

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### CHANGE OF WATCH 2024



Carleen Lyden Walker discusses Maritime Security after members enjoyed Joe Grieco's fine food.



Greenwich's Young Mariners merged with SoundWaters. Program continues.



Andy & Susan & Boating Class



Fully loaded schooner



Carlos's bowline!

America's Boating Club | Tomac Avenue, Old Greenwich, CT 06870

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