



New or Prospective Member's Guide to
Useful information about
Raleigh Sail and Power Squadron

By

P/C Ed Deyo, SN

And

Bunie Deyo, SN

New or Prospective Member Guide to Information about RSPS/USPS

United States Power Squadrons (USPS) is a national organization that promotes education, community service, and fraternal activities among boaters. It is broken down into districts (often states), and the districts into Squadrons (usually cities.) Raleigh Sail and Power Squadron (RSPS) is one of those squadrons. USPS and RSPS are 100 percent voluntary organizations with the exception of a few paid employees at USPS headquarters in Raleigh, NC. All the other people that assist in meeting the goals of the squadron are volunteers.

RSPS business (payment of bills, collection of funds, planning for various activities and more) is handled by the Bridge and Executive committee . The Bridge consists of a Commander, Executive Office, Education Officer, Administrative Office, Secretary, and Treasurer.

The Commander oversees the operation of the Bridge and Executive committee. The Executive Officer, is in charge of External Activities (community services), the Administrative Officer, is in charge of the internal activities (meetings, cruises, membership activities.) The Education officer is in charge of the teaching of the courses and recruiting other members to teach them. The Treasurer is in charge of the funds of the squadron. The Secretary maintains the minutes of the meetings, records of member's achievements, and is in charge of publishing the squadron's newsletter, Bowlights,

The Executive Committee (Excom) consists of the Bridge plus Members – At - Large and the immediate Past Commander. The three members at large bring the member's concerns to the Excom and the immediate past commander (last year's commander) helps provide continuity and advice.

Educational Opportunities

We offer advanced courses and elective courses to members. The advanced courses are related directly to the proper operation of a boat and finding your way in inland, coastal, or offshore waters. Each of the **Advanced Courses** builds on the previous courses and should be taken in basically the following order:

Seamanship – This course discusses the basics of boat handling. It includes such subjects as the types of boats, how to properly dock a boat, handling a boat in heavy seas, the US and International rules of boating (COLEGS), basic terminology, marlinspike, safety requirements, boat trailering and PWC operation, marine radio operations and many other needed subjects.

Piloting – This is the introductory course to operating your boat on inshore, coastal and near shore waters. The course covers both traditional and electronic

methods of determining courses through waters using nav aids (aids to navigation) while avoiding potential hazards. The course covers the make up of nautical charts and the symbols on it. The course covers the operation of the GPS and some of its features. Piloting includes a basic navigation program to plan routes through the waters.

Advanced Piloting – This course picks up where Piloting stops. It teaches traditional and electronic techniques to find your way through inland waters and near shore waters with available nav aids. Operation of radar, depth finders, and other electronic equipment are included. Use of the chart plotter is expanded. Also, included is information concerning computing tides and tidal currents. At the completion of this course you should have a good understanding of navigating in inland and near shore waters.

Junior Navigation – This is the introductory course of off shore navigation (nav aids are generally not available.) It includes a discussion of time, time zones, pilot charts, use of the nautical almanac, methods to determine course and distance without charts and teaches the fundamentals of celestial navigation.

Navigation – This course is an in depth study of offshore navigation, including celestial navigation using all the available celestial bodies including, the sun, the four navigational planets, the stars and moon. Also, included is the Capt'n (with all NOAA charts of the US navigable waters) and Visual Passage Planner software and how to use them for offshore navigation. Other software and manual methods are used in navigational and celestial sight planning and sight reduction.

Elective Courses are courses not necessarily about handling a boat, but related to boating. These courses can be taken in any order desired.

Engine Maintenance - This course introduces the basic operation of the marine engine, including inboard engines, outboards, diesels, and inboard/outboard. Also covered is the winterization of the boat engines, how to do the normal maintenance, and some repairs to the engine. This course will not make you a mechanic.

Cruise Planning - This course discusses long and short distance travel via boat. It includes discussion about most items needed, how to plan for the period of time you will be on the water. The course is applicable for either an afternoon cruise, or a week or longer cruise. It covers the distance planning, scheduling arrivals, supplies, spares and many other items that you will need sooner or later when traveling on the water.

Marine Electronics – This course covers most things that are electronic on a boat, from the depth finder, to the chart plotter, and the various radios found on a boat. It includes guidance for installing your own equipment, how to troubleshoot

equipment and electrical problems on the boat. It also includes the use of the radar unit, and how to interpret the radar screen and many other items.

Sail - As the name indicates this course is all about sailing. It includes the various types of boats, rigging, what the various lines do (there are no ropes on a sailboat). It also includes the art of trimming the sail to get the best results from the boat on the various points of sail. It covers apparent and true wind, proper anchoring and mooring techniques and many other items.

Weather - This course describes how and why weather happens. It teaches you to interpret the skies so you will know what weather is on its way. You will learn to read and interpret the NOAA weather charts and be able to make competent forecasts for the next few days.

Instructor Development - This course helps you make better presentations both in the classroom and in the board room. It teaches techniques to outline your presentation and the aids to the presentation.

USPS boater certifications –This is a newly created series of seminars/courses/hands-on that allow you to be certified as a boat operator in various situations. The certifications are inland, coastal, advanced coastal, and offshore. Some or all of the previously mentioned courses are prerequisites for obtaining the boating certifications.

Community Services

Community Service activities are designed to help the public better understand boating, its dangers and pleasures, and/or make the waters more pleasurable and safer. Some of the things RSPS does to further Community Services are outlined below.

Public Boating course This is the course that most of you have recently completed. It explains many of the basics in boating, but unfortunately can not include many of the things that are needed. The public boating courses presented by RSPS are approved by NASBLA (National Association of State Boating Law Administrators) and meet the educational requirements of all states that require a boat operator certification. A plus is many insurance companies will give you a discount on your boat insurance upon completion of this course. This is the only boating course we offer to nonmembers of USPS.

Safe Boating Week Annually, in May, we observe Safe Boating Week, and plan activities around it. For the last several years RSPS has been able to have the Governor of North Carolina to issue a proclamation announcing Safe Boating Week and that it is sponsored by USPS and the US Coast Guard Auxiliary

Big Sweep is a world wide project that helps clean up the rivers, oceans, lakes, streams etc. RSPS participates in this program generally at Falls Lake and Cape Lookout. We pick up and carry out many pounds of odd items each year.

Water Fest is sponsored by Wake County for elementary students and includes many different facets of information about water, including how water is cleaned, delivered, and disposed of. RSPS specializes in teaching the students about boating safety, particularly the use of PFDs (personal flotation device), also known as a life vest or life jacket. This three day festival reaches over four thousand students every year.

Co-op Charting is a cooperative effort with NOAA (the people who make the charts we use) to find and report differences between what the chart shows and what's actually on or in the water. We note things such as new or relocated navaids, difference in actual water depth versus charted, new significant objects near the water that can be used as a navaids. RSPS sponsors the 11545 NOAA chart, which covers Beaufort, Morehead City and Cape Lookout, NC.

Vessel Safety Check This is a service to all boaters that USPS and Coast Guard Auxiliary perform. Our vessel safety inspectors examine the boat for compliance with all the safety and equipment requirements for a vessel of the size and type of the inspected vessel. Any exceptions are noted and explained to the owner/operator. A successful inspection results in an inspection certificate that is applied to the boat. There is no charge for this service and no penalty for not passing. If an agency that enforces boating laws performs a similar inspection that was not passed, a citation could be issued. Some insurance companies will give a discount for having a vessel safety check.

Fraternal Activities Fraternal activities are what we do to get together and have a good time when we are not doing the items previously mentioned.

Membership Meetings with speakers -Typically we will have external speakers for the monthly meetings. The meetings include meals. The speakers range from representatives from boat manufacturers, to weather forecasters, authors, professional mariners, or many other people that talk about subjects relevant to being in or on the waters. The meetings are free, but the meals average around \$15.

The meetings are generally held at the Knights of Columbus (4301 Columbus Club Dr, Raleigh, NC) for ten of the twelve meetings each year and generally on the 1st Tuesday of the Month. In August, we meet at an area lake (recently it has been Lake Jordan) on the Saturday following the normal meeting date. In March, the meeting is the Change of Watch, where the old squadron's officers are relieved and the new officers are sworn in. That meeting is the first Friday of March. It is held at a location chosen by the out going commander and is a more formal affair.

Organized Cruises Members of RSPS plan and hold a multitude of cruises for members both at the coast and on the inland lakes. We generally start the cruises in April and finish them with the Pirate cruise in November.

Inland or lake cruises consist of about 4 to 6 inland lake cruises and get together. These range from an afternoon on the water to a cruise and camping weekend. Some of the lakes that are often visited include Falls Lake, Jordan Lake, Kerr Lake and Lake Gaston. The Kerr Lake cruise typically includes a trip, by water, to Clarksville, VA, for lunch and shopping.

The coastal cruises consist of 8 to 10 cruises ranging from a weekend cruise to a 10 day cruise. We generally have a "Slow Boat" cruise in the spring. This cruise is designed for sail boats and others that are not in a hurry and circumnavigate the Pamlico and Albemarle sounds. During the summer, we generally have a long summer cruise, which heads south on the ICW to such locations as Wrightsville, NC; Wilmington, NC; Georgetown, SC; Myrtle Beach, SC; or Charleston, SC. Our cruises also include places like Cape Lookout, Ocracoke, Washington, NC, and just anchoring in a creek with a group of boaters.

The RSPS website is www.rsp.org. Check the website for information about courses, community services, the year's calendar of events, etc. The members' section, which requires a password, has a roster and other useful information.

Click on the link for the Bowlights (newsletter) for the latest news about course dates and locations, meeting schedules, cruises, and other items of interest.

As a bonus there are a number of things that can be purchased at a discount as result of being a member of USPS. These include membership and towing insurance with Boat/US, towing from Sea Tow, electronic charts from C-Map, discounts at some national boating supply companies, plus many other items, including discounts on some software and computers. Some of these discounts are considerably more than the membership fees.

RSPS is similar to many other endeavors, the more active you become in the squadron, the more that you get out of it. When you start attending meetings and trying a few cruises, you will start out with some acquaintances that seem like pretty good folks. After a while, you will notice that these acquaintances have turned into good friends.

In summary, we hope that your association with RSPS is long term and highly enjoyable. We have many things to offer you, part of which we have outlined in this document. And we believe that you have a lot to offer RSPS.