

AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB

Golden Isles



For Boaters, By Boaters™

A monthly publication of America's Boating Club Golden Isles

Upcoming Events

February

- 15 - Club Social - Allison DuPuis from Jekyll Museum, Voyage of the Wanderer
- 19-27 - ABC's National Meeting in Ponte Vedra, FL
- 20 - Litter Pickup at Liberty Ship Park at 2pm

March

- 1 - Content for *The Porthole* due
- 8 - *The Porthole* distribution
- 15 - Club Social - St. Patrick's Day

April

- 9 - ABC Class at UGA
- 19 - Club Social - Kim Campbell from Coastal Georgia Historical Society

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Commander's Message



Cdr Jerry Lamb

As I'm writing this, a blizzard warning is in effect for the New Hampshire town we are visiting. Yes, I wish I was on the island, but it made me think how lucky we are. When I sailed in New England, there were only armchair adventures from Halloween to Mother's Day. At home, we have boated every month of the year since we got a boat. Yes, it can be a bit chilly in February but there is at least one beautiful day each month. Let's count our blessings.

Last month, I noted that the EXCOM was holding a planning committee meeting in mid-January. Although virtual instead of the planned in-person meeting, it was very productive with many good ideas discussed and debated. The result is a set of goals for next year – and beyond – as well as actions to meet those goals. Before setting goals, we looked at our mission:

Mission – The current and long-standing mission of the club and the national organization is to: **Promote recreational boating safety through education and civic activities while providing fellowship for our members.**

The EXCOM agreed that the mission is accurate and appropriate to what we do and why we exist and that accomplishing the mission should be our focus. A discussion of the goals and actions follow.

Membership growth – To accomplish the goals, the Club's viability requires not only new members, but new members that will be engaged and contribute. The following was discussed:

Goal – Attract New members – We need to expand the ways in which we find new prospective members and make it "smoother" for someone to complete the membership process. This may mean trying new venues, such as tables at marinas, partnering with other organizations or hosting prospective member events, but personal contacts are the surest method for convincing someone of the benefits of joining. To that end, a packet for current members with talking points and an easy set of forms will be needed.

Goal – Retain ALL members – The national report noted that many new members drop out within the first two years. However, a current member who does not participate in club activities is also lost. We need a Club committee structure where members contribute their expertise and energy; for too long a very few have shouldered the burden of running the club. That makes the club fragile when those people move on. Case in point, a South Carolina club had to disband when the leadership moved. Also, we need to provide a diversity of cruises, outings, classes/demonstrations, and socials to appeal to more people.

The other goals build on the first and have the members, both new and current, accomplish them.

Commander's Message continues on next page.

Commander's Message Continued

Education – The education program is doing better than some clubs, with multiple courses. Attracting new members will let us offer more advanced courses like Boat Handling and Weather. The primary competitors for our ABC course are USCG Auxiliary courses, BoatUS, and National's on-line courses.

Goal – Increase class attendance and courses offered – The ABC course is often the entry point for new members, and we need to promote this more heavily and in different manners, emphasizing that our local aspect is superior to on-line or “canned” courses. For our February class, we used social media, specifically [NextDoor.com](https://www.NextDoor.com), at the suggestion of a new member, George Carellas. As a result, the class is completely full and there are already five prospects for the April class. These students are potential students for more advanced courses, as are our current members who haven't taken them.

Civic Activities – The Club currently does several good civic projects, including litter pickup at Liberty Ship Park, cooperative charting, vessel safety checks, and philanthropic activities like donations made to International Seafarers, the local Youth Sailing Team, and FOAR from Home. These should be continued and used to promote awareness of the club locally. This has been done recently through newspaper articles.

Goal – Publicize Club's civic activities -- We do a lot of good work, and lately have received some good publicity. We need to continue our publicity efforts and expand them.

Goal – Increase VSC numbers – The key to increasing our VSC numbers is to increase the number of qualified examiners; this will allow us to visit more marinas and advertise VSC “Fairs” at them.

All the above requires effort and effort requires people. You can expect to see an updated committee structure and needs over the next few months. Please keep thinking about what you can contribute to the Club and remember:



Jerry



Administrative Officer's Report



AO Eileen Berta

Brrrr...not much boating going on today, as I write this we are anticipating our first hard freeze this weekend! But two weeks ago Mr. Berta and I took advantage of a bright, crisp 70+ degree January day to get one last day of boating in for a while. After making our final inspection of the remaining pylons around the site of the Golden Ray, we cruised past Jekyll and up the Little Satilla for a leisurely Bloody Mary brunch on the water. We remember our earlier years boating in NJ, where right now marina yards are cluttered with rows of white shrink-wrapped boats, waiting for Spring. How lucky are we to live and boat in our beautiful Golden Isles!!

And lucky to fish here too! Our January Zoom presentation with Captain Brooks Good reminded us again of the plentiful shrimp, shellfish and fin fishing opportunities the Golden Isles offers. Captain Brooks shared his knowledge gained from years fishing the area and was generous with his time to answer our questions. He didn't reveal all his secret spots, you'll have to wait till our club fishing outing to find those. We're hoping to have enough interest among members to run a trip with Captain Brooks when the weather improves.

February Social - Tuesday, February 15, 6pm

Sadly, Covid cases continue to exceed safe levels here in Glynn and Camden counties, with over 3200 cases reported in the past two weeks and a transmission rate that is more than 25 times what is considered acceptable. Hopefully you will all understand why, out of an abundance of caution, we are going to meet via Zoom again in February.

Since 1976, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month. Here in the Golden Isles there are so many stories to be recounted in recognition of this month, and we're going to look at one with a maritime aspect. This February, Allison DuPuis, Museum Educator, with the Jekyll Island Museum, will share with us the story of The Wanderer, the penultimate documented ship to bring an illegal cargo of people from Africa to the United States, landing at Jekyll Island on November 28, 1858. Please plan to join us to learn more about this important piece of Jekyll Island history.

ZOOM Instructions

Please log in on time

Go Online: www.zoom.us or launch the Zoom app

Login: Meeting ID 2388268407, Password: hRAZr5

Or click here to join: [Click Here to Join](#)

Coming up

We look forward to lessening Covid transmission allowing us to meet confidently in person by March, when we'll be "wearing the green" at our St. Patrick's Day Celebration, and to hearing from Kim Campbell from Coastal Georgia Historical Society in April.

By the time you read this, our guys from FOAR from Home and Courageous will have reached Antigua, completing their heroic mission. We have invited them back to tell us about their adventure and allow us to celebrate them and their commitment to preventing veteran suicide. We'll let you all know as soon as we have a date firmed up.

Eileen

On Becoming a Safety Vessel Examiner



XO Cynthia Lamb

A Vessel Safety Check (VSC) is a voluntary examination of a personal, pleasure boat (vessel) by a certified examiner to verify the presence and condition of certain safety equipment required by state and federal regulations. There are 15 items that are assessed during each VSC ranging from boat registration documents to life jackets to visual distress signals to fire extinguishers. There is no charge for these safety checks, and no consequences if you don't pass.

As most of you know, Vessel Safety Checks are one of the most important services that the club provides. After a call went out a few months ago from our former Executive Officer and current Vessel Safety Examiner Chairman, Ed Reynolds, for more safety vessel examiners, I decided to look into becoming one. When I told Ed that I was interested, he sent me the link to the manual that I needed to read/study, so I could eventually sit for the required exam.

Given my new interest in becoming a vessel safety examiner, I learned that our national organization has conducted thousands and thousands of vessel safety checks over the years. Given this fact, I wondered what lessons I could learn from all these vessel checks. In particular, I wondered what caused boats to fail the VSC most often. The member area of the national website (AmericasBoatingClub.org) has a section devoted to Vessel Safety Checks. I found all kinds of reports, forms, and data but couldn't find anything that identified which of the 15 items on the checklist were the biggest culprits. Are boaters not displaying their registration numbers correctly? Do they not have fire extinguishers that are readily accessible? What are these boaters doing wrong?

Being the Excel-loving geek that I am, I decided to analyze the data myself. I downloaded data for every VSC performed across the country for the years 2018-2021. I looked at national data and looked at Georgia data. This is what I found out.

- 75,237 vessel safety checks were performed during these 4 years by all the Power Squadrons across the country with 92% of boats passing
- 968 vessel safety checks were performed in Georgia with 93% of those boats passing
- Interestingly, the top 3 violations were the same nationally and for Georgia. They were:
 - **Visual Distress Signals:** All vessels must be equipped with U.S. Coast Guard approved visual distress signals. Visual distress signals must be properly stowed and readily accessible. Each visual distress signal must be in serviceable condition and not past its expiration date. Boats longer than 16 feet in length must carry approved day and night devices/signals. Boats that failed in this area, either did not carry a sufficient number and type of approved signaling devices or their signals, e.g., flares, were expired.
 - **Navigation Lights:** Recreational vessels are required to display navigation lights between sunset and sunrise and other periods of reduced visibility. Boats 16 feet or greater must be able to display proper navigation lights at night. Reasons for failing this area included inoperative lights, lights that were discolored or cracked, lights that could not be seen from a sufficient distance, and the wrong configuration (red light must be on the port side, green on the starboard side, etc.).
 - **Registration/Documentation:** All boats equipped with propulsion machinery engines must be registered in the state of principal use or else documented by the U.S. Coast Guard. Owners or operators must carry the original state certificate of number (registration) or U.S. Coast Guard certificate of documentation on board the vessel at all times and must be prepared to present it. Boat owners that failed in this area either did not have the documentation on board or the identification numbers displayed on the vessel did not match their documentation.

After this fun digression, I began studying the manual, took a practice test or two, then felt ready to sit for the exam. It took me two tries to pass. I thought that was pretty good considering the test was not that easy. That was only step one though. To become certified, I have to conduct five vessel examinations under supervision from a qualified Vessel Examiner. That means I will get to tag along with Ed for a while. That should be fun.

From Chapter 1 in the Vessel Safety Check Manual, I learned that I will need certain supplies for my new role. I bought a new cool flashlight, got a copy of the federal and state boating laws, located a copy of the COLREGS, etc. The manual also states that "when more than one vessel examiner from the same organization are performing vessel safety checks at the same location, all participating vessel examiners should wear the same uniform." How interesting, I thought. I asked Ed Reynolds what he wears when he does the VSCs. He seemed somewhat puzzled by my question. I told him that the manual said that we have to dress alike so I needed to know what he wears. Ed then very nicely told me that there was "no need for that." (I'm pretty sure he knew I was kidding.)

So what's the bottom line here? Vessel Safety Checks are a great way for us to educate boaters through direct, face-to-face boating safety information exchanges. With this knowledge, we hope that boaters will become more involved in maintaining and operating their boats in a safe manner, taking boating safety courses to increase their knowledge and skills in boating, and promoting safe boating to others.

Cynthia

Club Education Officer Report



CEO Mike Moye, SN

We're not there yet, but I see a grand day dawning before us. Covid is not gone, but the world has found many ways to fight it. I believe that winning that battle will mean adapting and adopting a lot of things that are much different from the ways we've done things in the boating education arena in times past. As Sam Cooke sang in his 1964 song: "A Change is Gonna Come." Even though that song is ranked number three in Rolling Stones top 500 songs of all time, Sam's song is not exactly Yacht Rock. Anyway, I'm appropriating Sam's great lyrics to say that we're changing in boater education and that a "new normal" is already evolving in America's Boating Club here in our stretch of the water—Georgia's Golden Isles.

We felt good enough about the Covid situation (OK, you can never *really* feel good about Covid) that we agreed to offer a face-to-face ABC class this month. Our maximum for the space we often use is 18. Registrants reached the max a full week before the class began. For those folks who missed the cutoff, our next class is April 9, and the registration portal is already open, and folks are signing up. We know that a lot of folks are just eager to "get out of the house" and shed the cabin fever that is upon us all. However, I firmly believe that there is a strong desire among boaters in our area as well as "would be" boaters to gain knowledge about the proper way to operate a boat and how to stay safe in our waters.

Wanted: GISPS members who are willing to share their boating expertise with others. Our club is actively seeking individuals to join our instructional team. We need individuals who are willing to teach a section or two (or more) of the ABC Boating Course. We need folks to teach portions of the new Boat Handling course (Boat Handling is the new name for Seamanship). The contents of the new course are similar to the old but have been updated with obsolete information removed and newly developed information included. We also need folks who are willing to teach portions of the On-The-Water exercises that supplement Boat Handling and/or the ABC class. There are many more areas where you can volunteer as an instructor. We have a long list of seminars that have been requested. Finally, America's Boating Club has a unique and very different program for which we've already had inquiries. It's called the Jump Start Program and it is open to members and non-members alike. It is tailored to the needs of a brand-new boater and their desire to "learn about their boat." The student furnishes their boat, and you show them how to operate it. Jump Start is designed to be two hours long. Realistically, just how much can you cover in just two hours? Well, maybe not everything, but you can cover enough to "Jump Start" a new boat owner to continue their search for knowledge—hopefully through America's Boating Club. Remember, we're the place where folks "come for the education and stay for the friendship."

If you have any interest in any of the above opportunities and would like more information, we can help. I can share the slide deck for any of the chapters or sections for any of the courses mentioned. I can also furnish you with documents listing the recommended on-the-water activities that supplement the courses. Viewing these pieces of the courses will give you a better feel for the types of information you would be sharing with students and what types of resources and lesson supplements are available in support of your teaching efforts.

Finally, every new teacher probably needs a little help to get started and we can provide that help. It's not as difficult to get started as you might think. We have the PowerPoint slide decks, the instructor notes, and where needed, the teaching aids. We also have an instructor development course to help you develop teaching skills where needed.

Please give it some thought and let's talk.

Mike Moye, SN
Education Officer

Let's Talk Trash... making it go away!



Sharon Hindery, AP

This is an invitation to join us on Sunday February 20th at 2 PM. Although the SGHS Bridge Run has been cancelled, we will still spend an hour or two cleaning up the Liberty Ship Park underneath the Sidney Lanier Bridge for our First Quarterly Pickup.

But, hey, if this does not fit your personal schedule, we would like to invite you to one of the KGIB Marsh Madness events that Rick and I are leading.

- On Thursday, March 3rd at 2:30 PM we will be cleaning along Highway 17.
- On Wed March 16th, at 3:30 PM we will be cleaning up around and under the West Side of the MacKay River bridge off the Causeway to SSI.
- There will be many more opportunities as the March Marsh Madness schedule is still being finalized.

Feel free to reach out to me if you have questions or are interested in participating in any of the Marsh Madness events. 630-323-1206 or sharona53@comcast.net. We will have gloves, safety vests, bags and some litter picker upper things. We just need YOU to help make our parks, Highways and marsh a little cleaner. I look forward to seeing ya'll!

Sharon

The following article was printed in *The Brunswick News* on January 31, 2022

https://thebrunswicknews.com/community_life/boating-club-hosts-speaker/article_e88f6245-1f4a-5e43-8db3-eebeb56fb389.html

Boating club hosts speaker

Cynthia Lamb
Jan 31, 2022

America's Boating Club Golden Isles recently hosted Capt. Brooks Good of Coastal Outdoor Adventures.

Good, owner of Coastal Outdoor Adventures based on St. Simons Island, was the featured speaker at the boating club's January meeting.

He has spent most of his life fishing, hunting, exploring and working on the Coast of Georgia. He shared his knowledge of local fishing and his passion for coastal adventures with club members and their guests.

Pictured is **Capt. Good**.



National News



Are you familiar with America's Boating Channel? It has videos that are helpful in teaching and learning boating skills. It was formerly known as DML (Digital Media Library). To visit it, click [here](#).

The URL is <https://www.youtube.com/c/AmericasBoatingChannel>

District 26 Cruise & Rendezvous (C&R) May 5 - 8, 2022

Check out the events below for the 2022 C&R in Myrtle Beach, SC hosted by ABC North Strand. If attending, register by April 15, 2022 by completing the online registration form at <http://www.d26sars.com/register/>. Hotel information should be available soon.

Thursday 5 May

1630	1900	Walk Around the Dock with Optional Poker Run Visit NS members boats with snacks and cash drinks Map furnished at registration
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Friday 6 May

1000	1600	Lunch Cruise to Waccoca Wachee OR Sea Thunder Dolphin Cruise www.myrtlebeachwatersports.com/1487-2/
1700	1830	Commander's Reception
1900	2100	Sunset Cruise on Getaway Adventures Catamaran

Saturday 7 May

1000	1530	Lunch Cruise to Barefoot Landing Lunch and two hours of shopping time
1700	1800	Meet Anna Holmes - 1900s Lighthouse keeper
1700	1900	Dinner at the MBYC Officer's Club

Sunday 8 May

Breakfast @ local restaurants...Head for home.

America's Boating Club of Golden Isles Calendar Feb - April 2022

February

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19-27 - ABC's National Meeting in Ponte Vedra, FL

20 - Litter Pickup at Liberty Ship Park at 2pm



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Happy Birthday to:

Richard Jones
 &
Pieter van Steen

CONTRIBUTE TO OUR NEWSLETTER!

Please submit an article, picture, or even a link to a boating video that you feel other club members may enjoy. All newsletter content is due to Cathy Stortz cstortz777@yahoo.com by the first Tuesday of each month.



The Porthole is the official publication of America's Boating Club® Golden Isles sponsored by the United States Power Squadrons®. The National website is www.americasboatingclub.org. Our Club website is www.gisps.org. You may also follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/GISPS/>.



Our Club is part of the world's largest recreational boating organization with more than 30,000 members. We learn together, boat together, and help each other and other boaters on the water and on land.

Consider joining our Club to:

LEARN boating skills

ENGAGE with boating friends

CONNECT with the boating community

The only requirements for membership are a keen interest in boating-related activities and an eagerness to meet like-minded people whether power, or sail, or paddle boaters; however, **you don't need a boat to join**. Contact us through our website or Facebook page if you would like more information.