

“FILES AND PROFILES”

FROM THE DISTRICT

“The Dixie District: District 17 April 2006 Issue

COMMANDER’S COMMENTS



Fellow members of District 17, as I take the helm of our district this year, I am humbled by the confidence you have shown in selecting me as your commander. When I joined USPS seventeen years ago and signed up for my first education class, I never dreamed that one day I would be elected Commander of such a distinguished group and I sincerely thank you.

The years have been good to District 17. We have gained members and lost members. Some of our dearest friends have crossed the bar. We have gained squadrons and we have lost squadrons. We have seen our education program come of age with the new technology. Many of the improvements, if not all, have made us better members. Through it all, we have persevered, we have grown stronger, we have grown bolder, we have grown closer together and will be friends for a lifetime.

As we begin our journey through this next year, let’s consider some items we would like to accomplish, not the over used “goals” or the inappropriate “quotas” (words which conjure up feelings of pressure to perform and consequences of punishment if not completed) but the more user-

friendly terms of “items” or “accomplishments”. We will begin and continue to use terms that bring positive images of fulfillment and completion. C/C Marshburn has asked all districts and squadrons to increase their membership by a net of 1%. For District 17, with a membership of 992, that means a net increase of 10 members next year. That is less than one member per squadron. It has already been reported that D17, along with only one other District, D16, had a net increase in membership from 2004 to 2005. We can do it again! He has also asked each district to add one more squadron next year. As you all know establishing a squadron is no easy or quick task, but we can do our best to (at the very least) lay the ground work for a new squadron. Huntsville Squadron has already started this in the Tri-Cities area.

In summation, let’s work together to make District 17 the best it can be. Let’s work to make our Squadrons the envy of USPS and the boating community. And now, taking the last line from our utility pledge, “always remembering that this is a fellowship organization, dedicated to the advancement of boating and the self-education of members”.

Thank you again; I’ll see all of you in Birmingham in November.

Tom Carey, Commander

2006-2007 DISTRICT 17 COMMANDER AND BRIDGE



(l-r) D/Lt/C Janis Owen, JN – Executive Officer
D/C Tom Carey, SN – Commander
D/Lt/C Danny Tompkins, JN –Administrative Officer
D/Lt/C Dale Hamilton, AP – Secretary
P/D/C Jack Cook, SN – Education Officer
(Absent) D/Lt/C Mike Scher, AP - Treasurer

HUNTSVILLE'S HOSPITALITY

St. Patrick's Day saw the beginning of the District 17 Spring Conference in Huntsville. Friday night, about eighty members convened to offer their original limericks, show off the "wearing of the green", and catch up on visiting since they last saw each other in Marietta last fall.



(l-r:Elizabeth DeHart, Commander Harold Dehart and P/C Norma Martin.)

The Huntsville squadron did a superb job in hosting the weekend with Jim Chatfield serving as the Helmsman. Unless you have served on a committee to host a district conference, it is difficult to understand how many hours of preparation and hard work goes into it. The hospitality suite was a favorite place to meet and the food was excellent. Thank you, Jim Chatfield and the Huntsville crew for being terrific hosts!

After dinner, it was time for Commanders' Reports. We made quick work of that and finished the night offering limericks and then listened to Mr. James Smith on the autoharp. He performed popular tunes including "Danny Boy" (Would St. Patrick's Day ever be considered complete without hearing this favorite?). One interesting point of the evening is that Mr. Smith explained the history of each song he performed.

This meeting included more breakout sessions than usual. Our members had asked for more educational topics and stories of cruises to be included in these sessions. We have taken the critique sheets attendees filled out and are beginning to work on the requests of topics for the Fall Conference. More on that topic as the months go by toward the Fall Conference!

Please let your Meetings Committee know if you have a special topic you would enjoy hearing or would enjoy presenting.

These District Conferences belong to you, our membership. The content of these meetings can only be of good quality if you participate and let someone know your wishes.

It is also important to understand that in order for your Conference Planners to deliver modest rates of lodging that a minimum number of fifty rooms per night be bid. Various complimentary items at times can also be negotiated with a commitment of fifty rooms; otherwise we do not have leverage with which to work and the price increase must be passed on to our members. We have been fortunate to have worked with excellent hotel managers and caterers since functioning as your Planners. Consequently, we have been successful in keeping the prices modest. However, we cannot commit to a level beyond our means and need your assistance in keeping the prices to you reasonable.



(P/C Bud Martin sports his Dr. Seuss hat on Friday night)

We will continue to make every effort to deliver your wishes in location and content of these events. In return, encourage more members to attend the meetings with you. Everyone will benefit from increase in attendance. . .in knowledge of safe boating and in visiting with our new and old friends! * * *

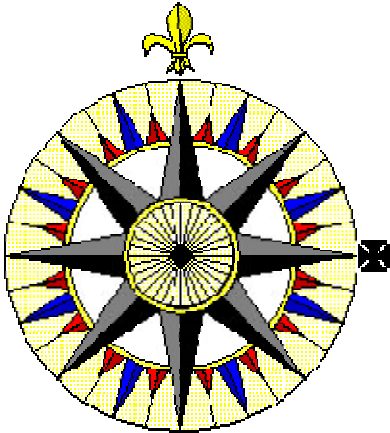
ORIGINS OF THE COMPASS ROSE

The compass rose has appeared on charts and maps since the 1300s when the portolan charts first made their appearance. The term “*rose*” comes from the figure’s compass points resembling the petals of the well-known flower.

Originally, this device was used to indicate the directions of the winds (and it was then known as a wind rose), but the 32 points of the compass rose come from the directions of the eight major winds, the eight half-winds and the sixteen quarter-winds.

In the Middle Ages, the names of the winds were commonly known throughout the Mediterranean countries as “*tramontana*” (N), “*greco*” (NE), “*levante*” (E), “*siroco*” (SE), “*ostro*” (S), “*libeccio*” (SW), “*ponente*” (W) and “*maestro*” (NW). On portolan charts you can see the initials of these winds labeled around the edge as T, G, L, S, O, L, P, and M.

The 32 points are therefore simple bisections of the directions of the four winds (but the Chinese divided the compass into twelve major directions based on the signs the first things they had to know were the names of the points. Naming them all off perfectly was known as “boxing the compass”.



There is no absolute standard for drafting a compass rose, and each school of cartographers seems to have developed its own. In the earliest charts, north is indicated by a spearhead above the letter “T” (for “*tramontana*”). This symbol evolved into a fleur-de-lis around the time of Columbus, and was first seen on Portuguese maps. Also, in the 14th century, the “L” (for “*levante*”) on the east side of the rose was replaced with a cross, indicating the direction to Paradise.

The colors on the figure are supposedly the result of the need for graphic clarity rather than a mere cartographical whim. On a rolling ship at night by the light of a flickering lamp, these figures had to be clearly visible. Therefore the eight principle points of

the compass are usually shown on the compass rose in black which stands out easily. Against this background, the points representing the half-winds are typically colored in blue or green and since the quarter-wind points are the smallest, they are usually colored red.

- - from the GIS Notebook Contents
by Bill Thoen

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Change of Watch

P/V/C Spencer Anderson chaired the Change of Watch. Your new district bridge includes, with each officer’s e-mail address:

Tom Carey, SN Commander
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Janis Owen, JN Executive Officer
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Jack Cook, SN Education Officer
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Danny Tompkins, JN Administrative Officer
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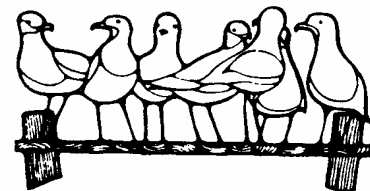
Dale Hamilton, AP Secretary
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Mike Scher, AP Treasurer
mpscher@aol.com

Jeff Wise, N Assistant Treasurer
jeff@usps-atlanta.org

The commander and bridge function at the pleasure of the membership. They are available at any time to answer questions or be of assistance to our membership.

If at any time a squadron wishes a member of the district bridge to visit, please contact the district commander. It will be their pleasure to assist you in whatever needs you may encounter.



“The only ones among you who will be truly happy are those who will have sought and found how to serve.” –Albert Schweitzer

ENVIRONMENTAL HAPPENINGS

The newest committee has been officially welcomed into USPS. At the Annual Meeting in Orlando, the Environmental Committee changed from ad hoc status to a full fledged one with R/C Jean Hamilton, SN at the helm. By profession, R/C Hamilton is a geologist and is aware and concerned with the problems of the environment that is connected to the area of boating and clean waters.

With global warming, air and water pollution, and enormous littering covering our country and planet, the creation of the Environmental Committee was certainly timely. Statistics tell us that 400,000 square miles of Artic Sea ice have melted in the last thirty years, threatening polar bear habitat and further accelerating global warming worldwide. By 2030 the Glacier National Park will have no glaciers left, according to the U. S. Geological Survey predictions.

As responsible citizens and boaters, the cleanup needs to begin at the grass roots. It is refreshing to see boating clubs and communities bond in making their lakes and rivers a safer place, as seen in the following article. . . .

“A New Beginning” in 2006

Alabama’s lakes and rivers are meant to be places of beauty – not aquatic landfills.

That is the thought behind Alabama Power’s successful *Renew Our Rivers* cleanup campaign. After six years, with more than five million pounds of trash removed and thousands of volunteers participating, the effort is going strong and continues to spread across the Southeast.

Thanks to growing involvement by volunteers, homeowner and boat owner groups and Southern Company Generation employees at the plants and hydro dams, 18 springtime *Renew Our Rivers* cleanups will be held in 2006. The theme “A New Beginning” describes the continuing growth of the program, said Environmental Affairs Specialist Doug Powell.

“We achieved our five million pounds goal, we have hit the plateau and the hurricanes put tremendous destruction on the Gulf Coast. There have been cleanups before, but this one is different. *Renew Our Rivers* is still achieving and people are excited about it. Alabama Power started it and we maintain it and keep it going, but it is a grassroots effort. It belongs to the people. That’s what makes it strong.”

Spring Clean-Up Days are scheduled in every Alabama lake area this spring. Clean-up started at the Logan Martin Lake 11 March and will continue through 17 June. If you need to know the schedule for your lake, contact Alabama Power or me (N7LBW@juno.com).

I have included the schedule for Alabama Lake fillings this spring. In just another month, our lakes will be at full pool!

SPRING LAKE FILLINGS

Lake Name	Start Filling	At Elev.	End Filling	At Elev. E.
Smith	Feb 02	496	Apr 01	510
Weiss	Jan 01	558	May 01	564
Henry	Apr 01	507	May 01	508
Logan Martin	Apr 01	460	May 08	465
Harris	Apr 01	785	May 08	793
Martin	Feb 18	480	May 08	490

Alabama inland lakes are close to the hearts of many of us. Most of us are now aware of the hot topic relating to banning certain types of boats from the Alabama lakes. If you live in another state and think this will not affect you, you are right. . .for the moment! But what about next year? How soon will the politicians determine what kind of boat will be on the body of water that you most enjoy?

From the Birmingham News, Thursday, 06 April 2006: “The state Legislature gave final passage Wednesday to a bill that would limit houseboats as well as some large boats and high-speed boats from three east Alabama lakes. The Senate voted 25-7 for the bill, which passed the House last week. It will become law unless Gov. Bob Riley objects.

The measure limits or bans houseboats, high-speed boats and pontoon boats and boats longer than 30.5 feet. It applies to Weiss Lake, Lake Martin and Lake Wedowee.” It is interesting to note that Rep.Gerald Dial, from the Wedowee/Lineville area is one of the housing developers pushing strongly for the bill’s passage. Could be this boating issue will eventually affect us all.

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Commanders, bridges and editors:

Remember, this publication is only sent electronically and has a limited circulation. Promote and distribute the enclosed information as much as possible to your membership. If you need assistance in doing so, contact me at fritz_jaben@juno.com.