

“FILES & PROFILES” FROM THE DISTRICT

“The Dixie District” District 17
November 2007 Issue



The Fall District 17 Conference was well attended, but not attended enough. We missed having representation from all our squadrons. While ten of our squadrons were present with voting delegates, five of our commanders were not in attendance. It is so very important that we make every effort to be present, or to send members of each squadron to take back information to their members. With the addition of breakout sessions to our meetings, an enormous amount of knowledge can be gained by attending.

Thank you to **Molly and Lloyd Cox** for the large banner that will now be used for our district meetings. It was hand painted by their daughter, Susie and can be hung either inside or outside, since it is made of rain proof material.

A lot of planning and hours of work go into putting on a district meeting. Many members were involved in making this one a success. In addition to the Meetings Committee, my sincere thanks go to **Commander Donnie Blackburn and the Memphis Squadron**. Memphis hosted the registration table, completely furnished the hospitality room and along with the **Music City Squadron** furnished several excellent door prizes.

The **staff of the Old English Inn** were gracious and hospitable to us all weekend, **Scott Myatt** entertained us during and after dinner, and the breakout sessions were both entertaining and informative.

We appreciate **Joan Cadham** and **Judy Isherwood** flying in from Canada to speak to us, and to **Robert and Nancy Baldrige** for representing the Chief Commander. Hopefully they enjoyed the Cajun food, since they hail from Baton Rouge, LA!

Speaking of food, many of you said that the *Cajun Cookers Restaurant* served the best food that we have had at our meetings. **Chef Darrell Hicks** has been feeding Jackson folks for a long time and he really outdid himself for us over the weekend. You might want to ask the three gentlemen below what they thought of the quality (and quantity) of the food served.



(Herman Green, Jack Cook and Danny Tompkins hovering around the buffet. Isn't it nice when a photo can be shot unexpectedly? Yes!)

Below is an overview of the meeting, including important information to discuss with your own squadrons. This information is “Time Sensitive”, so please read carefully and bring your squadron's wishes to the spring meeting to be held in Chattanooga in the spring. Mark your calendars:

**The Comfort Inn Suites
and Conference Center
6710 Ringgold Road
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37412
07-09 March 2008
(423) 893-7979**

1. A proposal was presented to establish a leadership progression for district officers. The proposal was sent to the Rules and Planning Committees for review and will be considered at

the Spring Conference. The proposed progression would be Administrative Officer to Executive Officer to Commander. The Education Officer, Secretary and Treasurer would not be included in the chairs and could serve multiple year commitments. At the present time, the Education Officer is a three-year term and the secretary and treasurer are now serving one year terms.

2. A proposal was present to restructure the Nominating Committee to have one representative from each squadron serve on the committee. The proposal was sent to the Rules and Planning Committees and will be considered at the Spring Conference.

3. A draft for updating the district by-laws was presented by the Rules Committee to bring the district by-laws into conformity with the recent national changes and revised by-laws.

The squadron commanders have been instructed to review these with their Executive Committee and Squadron and to provide written approval to D/C Janis Owen by **15 January 2008**. If a squadron does not respond with either an approval or a disapproval by that date, it will be assumed that squadron approves and accepts the changes.

This method is being taken due to the unwieldy amount of information to be voted upon. The document (Bylaws) is twenty pages long; waiting until the Spring Meeting to present this would present a time problem attempting to get the information presented. With the spring meeting not convening for another four months, the squadrons will have plenty of time to discuss the changes. **Readers please note: Every squadron commander has received a copy of all three proposals as presented above. Contact your commander for followup information.**

4. The district is putting together a workable Policies and Procedures Manual. To this end, the District Secretary has pulled all the proposals that have been acted upon from those minutes, beginning in 2000 to the present. The Executive Officer Danny Tompkins and Administrative Officer Mike Scher requests members let them know what topics should be included in this Manual. They suggest that emails include, "What

would the district do about . . .?" or "What is the procedure for. . . .?" An example might be "How are the National Public Relations monies, set aside for D17, allocated among the squadrons?"

5. The Spring issue of our district newsletter *The Dixie News* will be distributed differently than in the past. The D/17 newsletter editor Dick Raymond will send electronic copies to each squadron commander, secretary and newsletter editor. It will be necessary for the squadron to distribute the newsletter to the squadron members. At the most recent district newsletter mailing, of the approximate 970 copies, 25% were sent electronically with a 50% rejection rate due to "bad" email addresses. The remaining 560 were remailed.

It is logical to assume squadrons have better up-to-date e-mail addresses and postal addresses of their members. Squadrons will be reimbursed for any mailing costs relating to the district newsletter.

6. At the time of each squadron Change of Watch the historian's report is due. During the Commanders' Reports would be an excellent time to turn in the historian's report. We had very good response with the reports this year; plan for 2008 to be just as excellent.

7. Our squadrons hosted seven joint on-the-water events this year. Forward to Mike Scher any dates to be placed on the district calendar for 2008. Already the date for the Watts Bar Invitational has been set for **13-15 June 2008**. Every year this event just keeps getting bigger and bigger! It is important that as many squadrons as possible join together for fun and camaraderie this summer.

8. The election and installation of district officers will be held at the Spring Conference. District nominations for the 2008 bridge were presented as follows: District Commander – Danny Tompkins
Executive Officer - Mike Scher
Education Officer – Herman Green
Administrative Officer – Jeff Wise
Secretary – Jon Stewart
Treasurer – John DiPrima
Assistant DEO – Bill Wehrum
Assistant Treasurer – Dale Hamilton

9. Cooperative Charting – Ira Edidin (Knoxville) is chairing the district Co-op Charting Committee. Don Grotjan (Chattanooga) is chairing an effort to record all the buoys and marks on the Tennessee River and its tributaries. Look for more exciting reports from this committee when we convene in Chattanooga for the Spring Conference.

10. Merit Marks - The “drop dead” deadline for sending in requests for Merit Marks to the Area Monitor is 15 November 2007. As of 18 October 2007, only two individual members have submitted their requests to the district Merit Mark Chair. Now, you know and I know that one Merit Mark equals one year’s salary in the United States Power Squadrons. No matter our rank, our grade, or how many hours spent trying to grab hold of that tiny Mark that equates to twelve months of work. For goodness sake, please turn in your request in soon. To lose a year’s salary just because you keep “putting it on the back burner” for filing would be a shame. Pretend you are getting a refund from the IRS. That should get everyone cranking out the information on time!

Can’t remember how to file for your Merit Mark? Below is an article from Ben Owen, our District Merit Mark Chair. Any questions, just contact him.

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MERIT MARK SUBMISSIONS

One of the many privileges of being elected to a position at any level in USPS is that of deciding who among the people you work with is to receive a merit mark. One of the parameters of deciding is that you should know what the qualifications are to receive one.

Several qualifications exist and I certainly do not know them all; however I will try to take you through some basics as a quick guide.

First of all, a member should work at more than one project unless it is a huge project and must be important to the unit of USPS, nor should it be a project just to benefit the submitter. The work should not be simply for attending meetings, unless the individual has a report to give, teach or proctor a class. Attending any meeting is not just cause to receive a Merit Mark.

Normally we ask that the squadrons turn in their Merit Mark submittals about mid-September in case they are returned by the Area Monitor for

rework. My theory is that the earlier the Merit Mark recommendations are turned in (and done properly), the sooner that individual receives his Merit Mark and will not be inclined to call the commander inquiring, “Where is my Merit Mark?”

Simply put, those turned in early will get processed faster and will not need to “take a number and wait” because thousands of Merit Mark submittals are waiting in line ahead of you.

Make your submittals easier by including all items, but be brief, giving details but not long descriptions. I am required to turn in a limited brief on each one. Usually it is necessary that I cut out superfluous verbiage to get the document down to the maximum space allowed on recommendations.

You may mail your recommendations to me for any district work your associates have done, please have it turned in to me this week.

Please make every effort to work with me in doing a good job for you. And I thank you in advance for your promptness.

P/D/C Ben Owen, SN
District Merit Mark Chair

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AWARDS FOR OUR DISTRICT

V/C Robert Baldrige, SN presented Membership Growth Awards to four squadrons and Honorable Mention to two squadrons:



(Commander John DiPrima receives Growth Award from V/C Robert Baldrige for Chattanooga’s 12.5% increase in membership.)
(More awards listed on following page)



(Receiving Growth Awards are Cdr. Sharon Birdwell (Knoxville-Honorable Mention), Marshall Oathout (Music City), Margaret Sherrod (Atlanta), John DiPrima (Chattanooga) and Fred Thompson (Montgomery- Honorable Mention). Not Shown: Johnson City.



Commander John Smith from Asheville accepts the 50 year Membership Award for P/C James B. Galloway. Dr. Galloway was unable to receive the award in person, but sent his thanks for USPS honoring him. And we thank him for gracing us with his presence and leadership during these many years.



(Janene Allen, Knoxville Squadron, receiving the POO Award from D/C Janis Owen, for bringing ten new members into her squadron this year.)

At Norfolk the session for awards was given late on a Thursday morning. It was here that the Power of One Awards were presented, along with the Growth Awards. Our district received the Ten Member Power of One Award for Janene Allen. Since she could not be present to receive this award, we felt that the presentation should also take place in Jackson.

Affectionately know as the POO Award, we took one more step to label Janene's award ***The Pooh Award***, lending more pomp and proper respect to the occasion.



Lighthouse Uniform Company:

The Light is going out of the Lighthouse Company

Many USPS members also received this electronic message recently. Personally, I am sorry to see them go; their service was good. "Dear Janis H. Owen,

After 30 years serving the uniform needs of the U.S.P.S. the Lighthouse Uniform Company is changing course. As of January 1st, 2008 we plan to discontinue our U.S.P.S. business. As our way of thanking you for your years of patronage, we are offering to U.S.P.S. members a 60% discount off regular prices on the following items:

- Blazer Patches, Shoulder Boards
- Flags, Merit Marks, Cap Devices
- Sleeve Devices, Grade Insignia

All these items are 60% off. Limited to stock on hand - all sales are final. **THIS OFFER IS ONLY AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET.** If you buy a shirt, we will give you your Grade and Merit Marks for \$2 each (just to cover the cost of sewing them on). That is \$2 for the grade, and \$2 for the merit marks (no matter how many, 2 or 12 is \$2). For these specials, please go to the following link:

<http://catalog.lighthouseuniform.com/psq/>

Best Regards,
Ben Meyerson
Lighthouse Uniform Co.
1-800-426-5225