

# 'FILES AND PROFILES' FROM THE DISTRICT

"The Dixie District" District 17  
April 2008 Issue

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW DISTRICT COMMANDER



Welcome to a New Year! The weather is finally starting to thaw out allowing us to scratch that itch and start getting back on the water. But also, our USPS is off to great beginnings in many areas.

After two years of great leadership from C/C Ernie Marshburn and the national bridge, we are much closer to being a modern organization. And I am sure those initiatives and spirit will continue on with C/C Creighton Maynard, the new Board of Directors and the new format of governance.

District 17 is off to a great new beginning. We are off to a great new beginning in great part to those who brought us to this point. First, from my personal standpoint, I have to give many, many thanks to P/D/C "Mother" Owen. You ain't been mentored, until you have been mentored by this lady for four years. It has been a ball. I would like to give special thanks to Lloyd and Molly Cox for the wonderful job they and the Chattanooga Squadron did in planning and pulling off a great District meeting. Anyone who has ever been involved in putting together an entire weekend like this knows how many countless hours are involved. Many Thanks. By the way, I believe this was the best attended District meeting we have had in some time. Thanks to everyone.

Of course it is the squadrons that are the core of the USPS. There is no doubt that District 17 has the best group of squadron commanders in place that we have had in many years. This was evident at the Commander's Round Table meeting at the District Conference. The energy and participation at that session were great. Yes, we do have challenges within our District. But, there is no doubt we have the best people we could have addressing those challenges. We really feel like we have much to offer to our members and to the boating public.

All that being said, I would like to end with some tag lines that all seem to tie together C/C Creighton Maynard's tag line for this year is "Boating is Fun. Let us show you how". I always loved P/D/C Marshall Herron's tag line of simply "Have Fun". And now I present to you "Laissez les Bon Temps Roulez", or

***"Let the Good Times Roll!"***

- - - - D/C Danny Tompkins, JN  
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### **"Reporting on the Annual Meeting" (a.k.a. Change of Watch)**

Blue skies and fair weather held nicely for the annual Change of Watch this year. When we gathered in Chattanooga at the Comfort Inn, it was a delight to meet again with dear friends for a fun and busy weekend.

Molly and Lloyd chaired the event and the Chattanooga Squadron outdid itself in hosting a true Southern Hospitality event.

The *Roaring 20s Party* Friday night met with much fun as we dined on good Italian wine and pasta. "Big Al" was in attendance as well as his moll and a few body guards.

After breakfast on Saturday morning, the district council met, with the conference meeting immediately afterward.

Four items of business were brought before the conference:

#### 1. from the Rules Committee:

During the Jackson District Fall Conference 2007, the Rules Committee, along with P/D/C Bob Ginsberg, SN presented a proposed update of the District 17 Bylaws. Each squadron commander was given a copy of the draft to take back to his home squadron to be studied and our squadrons to return at the Spring Conference to vote on these recommended changes. Rules Chair P/D/C Glenn Cowham formally presented the District Bylaw

changes proposed. The motion was made, seconded and approved unanimously.

2. from the Nominating Committee:

P/D/C Norm Oien, AP, Chair of the Nominating Committee presented the following slate of district officers to serve during the 2008-2009 Watch Year:

Commander: Danny Tompkins, JN

Executive Officer: D/Lt/C Mike Scher, AP

Education Officer: D/Lt/C Herman Green, AP

Administrative Officer: D/Lt/C Jeff Wise, SN

Secretary: D/Lt/C Jon Stewart, AP

Treasurer: D/Lt/C John DiPrima, AP

Ass't Education Officer: D/1<sup>st</sup>/Lt Bill Wehrum, JN

Assistant Treasurer: D/1<sup>st</sup>/Lt Dale Hamilton, AP

Nominating Committee:

D/Flg/Lt Margaret Sherrod, JN

(alternate: Lt/C Virginia Basler, AP)

P/C John Farmer, SN

(alternate: Lt/C Janene Allen, AP)

P/D/C John Cook, SN

(alternate: Cdr. John Haluska, AP)

P/C Bob Allen, AP

(alternate: Cdr. David Huntley, JN)

P/D/C Glenn Cowham, SN

(alternate: P/C John Smith, P)

P/D/C Janis Owen, JN

(alternate: D/1st/Lt Margaret Edidin)

Planning Committee:

P/C Lloyd Cox, AP

P/C Mac Hogle, AP

Lt/C Patricia Hakanson, JN

Lt/C Janene Allen, AP

Lt. Ben Birdwell, AP

P/C Mike Litke, SN

Rules Committee:

P/D/C Glenn Cowham, SN

P/C Bill Swann, P

P/D/C Tom Carey, SN

Auditing:

P/C Philip Duffy, SN

D/1st/Lt Connie Williamson

D/1<sup>st</sup>/Lt John Miller, AP

A motion was made to approve this proposed slate of officers; the motion was seconded and voted "Aye" unanimously.

3. from the district executive officer:

Proposed Amendment to  
District Policies and Procedures

"The Policies and Procedures of District 17 shall recognize that the nomination and election of a person to the position of District Administrative Officer implies that said person is committing to serving, not only as the District Administrative Officer, but also to serve subsequently as District Executive Officer and then as District Commander.

The Policies and Procedures of District 17 shall recognize that having held the positions of District Secretary and/or District Treasurer are not prerequisites to being nominated to the position of District Administrative Officer.

It is further recognized that having held the position of District Secretary and/or Treasurer does not give preference or prejudice to being selected or nominated to the position of District Administrative Officer."

This proposal was submitted as a formal motion, was seconded and approved by "show of card" vote.

4. from the district treasurer:

Proposed Change of Bylaw Relating to  
Nominating Committee

2.9.1 The Nominating Committee shall consist of a chairman and one member from each squadron in the District. All terms shall be for a period of one year. For voting purposes, a quorum of the Nominating Committee shall be representative from one half of the squadrons, rounded up if necessary.

2.9.1.1 The chairman shall be the most immediate Past District Commander, able and willing to serve. Should no Past District Commander be available or willing to serve, the current District Commander or other past district lieutenant commander as the District Commander shall appoint shall serve as chairman. The Chairman shall be a non-voting member of the committee, except in such cases as may be necessary to break tie votes.

2.9.1.2 The remaining members of the Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee of the squadron they represent, shall be active members of that squadron, and shall insure that they bring forward to the Nominating Committee any members of their respective squadrons who have expressed a desire or willingness and ability to serve at the District level. Should a squadron representative resign or otherwise be unwilling or unable to serve, the squadron Executive shall appoint a member from the squadron to serve the remainder of the

unexpired term. Should a squadron Executive Committee fail to appoint a representative to the Committee, the District Commander may appoint a representative from that squadron.

2.9.1.3 No member of this committee shall be eligible for nomination by the committee to any elected bridge office of the district for the following bridge year.

2.9.1.4 The Nominating Committee shall annually nominate a candidate for each elective district office and its nominating report shall be mailed first class, hand delivered, or e-mailed to the district secretary not less than 45 days prior to the date of the fall district conference. The Nominating Committee shall report their slate of nominees during the business session of the fall district conference and submit a written report of the Committee proceedings to the District Secretary.

The above proposal was presented as a formal motion, seconded and voted affirmatively. The by-laws of the district shall be updated to reflect this change.

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After the morning business session was completed, the Chief’s Representative, **R/C Jean Hamilton, SN** discussed various issues in the traditional “Town Hall Meeting”.

Lunch was supplied by the Chattanooga Squadron with our Norm Oien heading up the crew. This meal provided a chance for different squadron members to enjoy discussing situations within their home squadrons and what strategy works best in making a success of various projects.

The rest of the afternoon was spent in breakout sessions. A broad spectrum of topics was available to the attendees, but one of the most popular seemed to be that of Fiberglass Repair. John Hearn from Chattanooga did a “hands on” presentation of this; he has been asked to present his session again at a future conference. Perhaps we can entice him to host a session outside during nice warm weather.

Saturday night profiled the Chief’s message to the district, delivered by his representative, R/C Jean Hamilton, SN. She brought into focus the importance of obtaining and retaining members, as well as other issues facing the organization as a whole including communications, education and having fun within USPS.

Several awards were distributed:

Life Membership Award

went to **P/D/C Ben Owen, SN**. This award indicates that a member has received 25 Merit Marks and is awarded free membership for the rest of his life.



Ben has served us as commander of both the Olympia Squadron (D/16) and the Vulcan Squadron (D/17). He served our District 17 as Commander during 2002. Congratulations, Ben!

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Educational Funds Awards were distributed to the following squadrons for consecutive years of contributions: (Note: The USPS Educational Fund is not directly related to the Educational Department, but assists in funding many of the organization’s projects.)

Music City	-	10
Rome	-	18
Knoxville	-	19
Montgomery	-	19
Oak Ridge	-	19
Atlanta	-	20
Memphis	-	20
Muscogee	-	21
Johnson City	-	23
Vulcan	-	31

Distinctions in Journalism Awards: Our District 17 achieved this award as well as four of our squadrons:

- “The Dixie News” – Editor **P/C Dick Raymont, JN**
- “The High and Dry” – Editor **Lt. Lisa Herndon, AP**
- “Scuttlebutt” – Editor **P/C Dick Raymont, JN**
- “The Agonic Line” Editor **Lt Veronica O’Hearn, P**

Website Awards: Were issued to the Huntsville and the Music City Squadrons.

- Huntsville Web Master – **P/C Tom Hamilton, AP**
- Music City Web Master – **Lt. Norm McBurney**

Educational Awards were presented by DEO Herman Green, AP.

Senior Navigator Award – Given to **D/Lt/C Jeff Wise, SN**. Jeff is currently our District Administrative Officer. He also has served as our district Web Master for the past several years. This new SN wears even more hats: editing and publishing the district annual roster, serving as Vessel Safety Check Chair. He is also active in teaching classes, even going to nearby squadrons to assist in teaching programs. Congratulations, Jeff!

National Chapman Award – awarded to our own **P/D/C John P. Cook, SN**.



The Charles F. Chapman Award for Excellence in Teaching recognizes outstanding USPS instructors. Once a year, each squadron nominates one outstanding instructor to its district. The DEO forms a committee to select one nominee within their district for national judging. In the final judging, the Chapman Award Selection Group of the Instructor Development Committee recognizes the five winners who represent the organization's most effective volunteer instructors.

Only five nominees are awarded this. . . one of the most coveted awards found within our organization. . . throughout our country.

It is with great pride that we announce to you in our district that one of these five national awards went to our own **P/D/C John Cook, SN**

Jack was nominated by the Costa de Oro Power Squadron, District 13. He is an associate member and he temporarily resides in Avila Beach, California. He is a member of the Chattanooga Squadron in District 17. He has been a USPS member for 28 years and has 27 merit marks. He teaches Seamanship, Piloting, Advanced Piloting and Junior Navigation. USPS salutes one of its best!!

## FIFTY YEARS OF SERVICE



**P/V/C Frank Wedge, SN and Anita**

During the USPS Annual Meeting in Dallas on 23 February, P/V/C Frank Wedge, SN, was honored for his 50 years of dedication and service. Such an award is nice and well-intended but pales when compared to Frank's contributions. Frank has taught all the courses, run the chairs in squadrons and districts, served on the National bridge, has started squadrons. . . he has done it all. Maybe a simultaneous two-hour standing ovation by all USPS members would be more appropriate!

- - -from the "Now Hear This!"

Knoxville Editors Janene and Bob Allen

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## A RETIRING COMMANDER BIDS A FOND FAREWELL (FROM THE DISTRICT CHANGE OF WATCH)

"Tonight is a bitter-sweet moment for me, just as it has been for every other district commander during the time that his work is finished and is relegated to the next officer in line for this august position.

Anyone on the District Bridge works hard; perhaps harder than most realize. We strive to make a difference in the lives of the squadrons we have been asked to shepherd. We hope we make a difference.

For my part, know that I am pleased and proud to be a part of this particular bridge, especially in my role as commander. I thank those who agreed to be a part of it and who have worked hard this past year making their contribution. They are truly a great group of men and women; I salute them. I thank them.

During my Watch, I have been able to associate with some of the finest men and women I

have had the pleasure of knowing. Given the vast diversity of our membership, we in District 17 are a remarkably harmonious group. We work and play with little friction. There are many members at the district level who worked hard to make a lot of things happen. (Actually, I mentioned to one of the bridge several weeks ago how nice it was this year working with them and that I had not heard a cross work between them. He responded, "Well, we were afraid to!")

From the earliest days of our organization, we continue to gather as people who find solace in being on the water. We study to be better educated so we may return safely from our adventures. We gather and share meals. We gather and share life, births, deaths, success and sometimes the lack of it. We gather as like-minded individuals who profess a love of the water. Given time, we grow to love and respect one another.

Often we see geese flying in a "V" formation. They seem to know exactly where they are going and where they have been. They appear to be very intent in flight and their loud honking noise can be heard hundreds of feet away.

Scientists have been very interested in their flight patterns and behavior, and many studies of geese have uncovered a unique system of teamwork and support among the flocks as they travel. It has been found that as each bird flaps its wings, an uplift is created for the bird immediately following it.

By flying in a "V" formation, the entire flock has at least a 71% greater flying range and efficiency than those of the individual goose flying on its own.

Whenever a goose falls out of formation, it will suddenly feel the drag and resistance of trying to fly alone without the others, and it tends to get quickly back into the formation with the others.

The leadership of the geese flock changes periodically. Though he will lead for some distance, when the leader begins to tire, he will rotate back into the flock and assume a position there while another goose assumes the lead position at the point. The goose is tired and has dropped back into the flock.

My time as your Commander is over tonight. And I suppose, like the goose, I am getting a little tired. It would be naïve of me to think I could have made long-term changes in the district. It

simply cannot be accomplished when a commander has only one year to initiate some changes and then not have enough time built into his Watch to put these ideas into practical application. But that is why we need to have a bridge that will ensure continuity and progress.

I do hope some members feel that during my Watch the squadrons have had a voice in what is going on and feel that they are being heard.

I have many people I need to thank; friends that have supported me since the time I first was elected to the bridge. Tom Carey, thank you for mentoring me every step of the way. (I followed Tom through the chairs). I hope what you taught me, I have passed on to the person following me.

It is an honor to have you, my friends, here with me tonight. It is an honor to have served you this year, and like the geese flock, it is time for a new leader to fly point.

So, to Danny Tompkins, my Executive Officer, my sidekick, my sounding board: These wings (my epaulets) have a few scars, and perhaps a little buckshot. But they have served me well. Wear them with as much pride as I have.

Thank you!"

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## HOW SPERM WHALES SLEEP



Whales are mammals. And like other mammals, they need to sleep. Trouble is, they live in the sea and that is a tough place to simply shut down and catch a few Zs. So, how do they beat drowsiness without drowning?

A recent study suggests that sperm whales, at least, may be of two minds when it comes to sleep. . . snoozing with one side of their brain at a time, even as they perform rhythmic dives.

The study found that sperm whales worldwide spend about 7% of their time in such "drift-dives" (which might also be called "drift-off-

to-sleep-dives”). The dives occur most often between 6 p.m. and midnight, and they can be either head-first plunges or tail-first drops.

“Because the drift dives are quite short (averaging around 12.7 minutes in duration) and are broken by the need for the whale to move to the surface to breathe, it seems that they sleep over short interrupted periods,” said the study’s author. The researchers think one side of the whale’s brain rests while the other “keeps watch” during dives. Then the two sides switch until both are refreshed.

That may sound like a strange way to sleep to you, but the study jibes with other research into how seafaring mammals snooze, not only whales, but dolphins too. To the researchers, what’s more remarkable than the means of sperm whale sleep is how little of it they seem to get. Based on their study, the scientists even suggest that sperm whales may spend less time sleeping than any other mammal.

Of course, that wouldn’t be the only remarkable thing about sperm whales. Topping out at more than 60 feet in length, and weighing over 50 tons, make sperm whales are the largest toothed animals alive. The only larger animals are non-toothed baleen whales. . Blue whales and fin whales.

Sperm whales also have the world’s biggest brains, though some species (including us) sport more grey matter per pound of body mass. They use those brains to communicate by clicking and to echolocate prey during dives to depths of 3,000 feet or more.

Such size and smarts have sometimes made sperm whales appear as fearsome sea monsters, most notably in the case of Hermann Melville’s Moby Dick, a whale that supposedly combined “unwonted magnitude” with “unexampled, intelligent malignity.” Of course, it probably never occurred to Captain Ahab that his scary adversary might just need a nap.

- - Steve Sampson

*Knowledge Newsletter  
February 2008*

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## **SQUADRON CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES FOR 2008**

### **May –**

*Asheville – 31<sup>st</sup> French Broad Canoe Trip  
Chattanooga – 10<sup>th</sup>: Island Cove  
Knoxville – 17<sup>th</sup>: Lock-Through and BBQ at  
Lenoir City Park*

### **June –**

*Chattanooga – 7<sup>th</sup>: Fish Fry at Vincent’s Place  
Chattanooga – 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>: Terrace View  
Knoxville: 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>: Watts Bar Invitational at  
Terrace View Marina*

### **July –**

*Knoxville -19<sup>th</sup>: Ice Cream Social and Raft Off  
Oak Ridge –12<sup>th</sup> Watts Bar Lake Rendezvous at  
Arrowhead*

### **Aug –**

*Chattanooga – 9<sup>th</sup>: Island Cove  
Oak Ridge – 9<sup>th</sup> - Ft. Loudon Rendezvous*

### **Sept –**

*Chattanooga – 13<sup>th</sup>: Island Cove  
Knoxville – 21<sup>st</sup>: Salmon Roast  
Oak Ridge – 13th Commander’s Steak Cookout*

### **Oct –**

*Knoxville – 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Fall Color Cruise  
Oak Ridge – 11<sup>th</sup>. Fall Color Cruise; Tellico Lake*

### **Nov –**

*Chattanooga – 8<sup>th</sup>: Privateer Yacht Club: Chili*

### **December -**

*Chattanooga - 14<sup>th</sup>: Christmas with the Cox’s  
Knoxville – 11<sup>th</sup> Holiday Gala  
Oak Ridge - 12<sup>th</sup> – Holiday Dinner*

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### **LAST HORIZON**

I am very sorry to inform each of you of the loss of Marge Lamb of Chattanooga. Marge was a Woman’s Certificate holder and the wife of now deceased P/R/C Lowery “Buzz” Lamb.

Marge was an inspiration to every one who knew her. She and Buzz were the former Secretaries of the Snipe Class (racing sailboats) International. Buzz was a Past Commander of Chattanooga and became the R/C of the Editorial Committee in 1990.

Buzz and Marge traveled all over the world for the Snipe fleet before their retirement and Marge did most of the detail work for Buzz in his R/C job.

The Privateer Yacht Club in Chattanooga will miss Marge’s smiling face and her boundless energy and the USPS has lost a strong supporter. May God grant her warm winds and fair sailing! We salute Marge and her strong presence in the sailing community and her many contributions to the work of USPS.

- - - Lt/C Herman Green DEO

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With boating activities on the water just ahead of us, think about rafting up with a nearby squadron or hosting a picnic with another squadron.

The more we get together, the more fun we have. Till next month,



boat safely and have fun. *Commander Janis*