

The  
United States  
Power  
Squadrons®

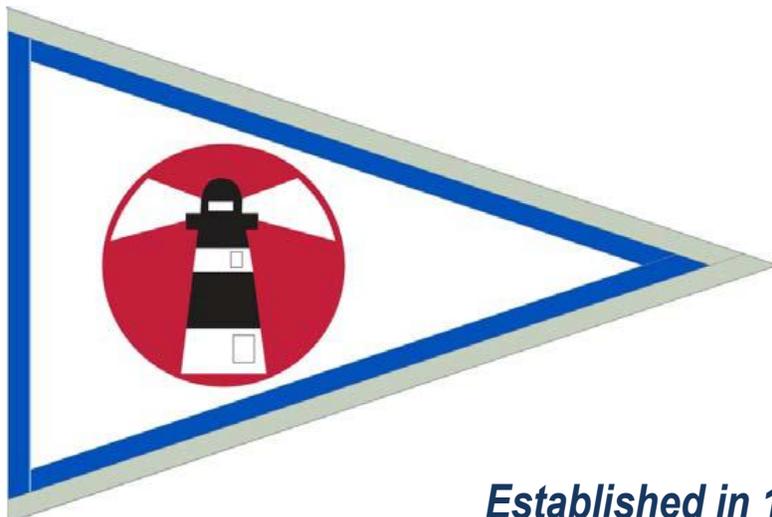


dedicated to  
making boating  
safer and more fun

# Handbook for Members

## Great South Bay Power Squadron

A unit of  
The United States Power Squadrons®



*Established in 1941*

Your New Friends Who Save Lives With  
Safe Boating Through Education,  
While Having a Great Time  
With Sail and Power Boats

*Come for the Boating Education...Stay for the Friends<sup>SM</sup>*

# The Pledge of The United States Power Squadron®

*I do solemnly pledge to:*

*Abide by the bylaws of the United States Power Squadrons;  
Promote high standards of navigation and seamanship;  
Maintain my boat and operate it legally;  
Render assistance whenever possible; and  
Conduct myself in a manner that will add prestige, honor and respect to the  
United States Power Squadrons.*

## Our Mission Statement



To increase our members nautical knowledge and skills through the study of navigation, seamanship, and safe boat handling.



To promote safe boating education courses and programs for the benefit of our members and the boating public.



To encourage our members, and other boaters to abide by the rules of the road.



To encourage and promote overall safety in recreational boating.



To expand the Vessel Safety Check Program to educate the public regarding required, and recommended safety equipment.



To provide a means to foster social and fraternal relationships among our members and boaters.



To provide, as a civic service, boating safety through education to the recreational boating community

## Welcome to the Great South Bay Power Squadron!

A new member joining the Great South Bay Power Squadron (GSBPS) will receive his certificate of membership and take The United States Power Squadron® Pledge, usually with fellow members at a regularly scheduled membership meeting. Typically, a new member will also receive a lapel pin soon after joining.



Name tags can be ordered from the Squadron Treasurer for those who wish to attend meetings with other GSBPS members. Replacement name tags may also be ordered from the Squadron Treasurer.



This member handbook should provide an opportunity for you to find your area of interest or expertise for your contribution to the tradition of service.

## 1. United States Power Squadron History

Before 1900, most recreational boats were sail-powered; everything relating to recreational boating was geared to sailing. There were a few steam-powered boats, but they required large crews. Shortly after the turn of the century, gasoline-powered craft became available and many boaters bought them: power boating became a popular activity.

Since skills and education all were directed to sailing at that time, power boaters found themselves within a skill and knowledge gap. In 1912, Roger Upton decided to fill that gap by forming an unofficial Power Boat Division of the Boston Yacht Club. A year later, that division became "The Power Squadron."

The Power Squadron received considerable media attention. Interest began to spread. During 1913, over 70 power-boat clubs and owners' associations met at the New York Yacht Club. At the second meeting of this group, the United States Power Squadrons® was officially formed.

On 6 April 1917, Charles F. Chapman sent a letter to the Navy Department, offering the services of The United States Power Squadron instructional program to train men for the Naval Coastal Defense. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, formally accepted the offer. Over 5,000 students attended these classes and entered the military. As a result of their USPS training, many earned commissions in the U. S. Navy. During both World War I and World War II, USPS supported the war efforts by training many naval navigators

## 2. The United States Power Squadrons® Ensign

Desiring some unique identification, this new group designed the ensign including a fouled anchor, encircled by 13 stars on a red field with 13 vertical blue and white stripes, as shown below.

To protect The United States Power Squadron Ensign, Roger Upton applied for and received a United States design patent, number 48,803, issued in April, 1914, which expired in 1928. To permanently protect the flag, however, trademark and copyright registrations, were obtained, both of which have been maintained since.



The United States Power Squadron ensign is flown as a signal to others that the boat is commanded by an active member of USPS in good standing. USPS is a national fraternity of boaters dedicated to better and safer boating through education and civic service.

The preferred location for flying The United States Power Squadron ensign is the starboard yardarm or spreader, underway or at anchor, or made fast to shore, on motor and sailing craft. It

may be flown from the stern staff in place of the U.S. or yacht ensign, but this is usually done only on smaller boats that lack a mast. On sailboats underway, it may be flown from the aftermost peak or leech in place of other ensigns.

### 3. The Origin of our Squadron

The Great South Bay Power Squadron received its charter and was formed on May 16th, 1941. Prior to this time, Great South Bay was a Division of South Shore Power Squadron.

Great South Bay's first meeting was held at Cooper's Hotel in Bay Shore and G. Rowe Whitcomb, JN, was sworn in as Commander. The membership numbered forty four.

Great South Bay's area included members from Amityville to Patchogue, spanned four townships and covered over twenty-five miles of Great South Bay shoreline.

In 1951, Great South Bay formed two new Squadrons to share in the responsibility of educating the public in safe boating practices; hence Captree Power Squadron to the West and Patchogue Bay Power Squadron to the East were born.

Great South Bay's burgee was the first to be authorized to a USPS Squadron by The United States Power Squadron National Governing Board. Great South Bay's newsletter, the Great South Spray, has consistently been a first class award winning monthly publication.

Three of Great South Bay's past Commanders have had the honor to serve as District Commanders of USPS District 3, and two as a past District 3 Educational Officer.

District 3 of which we are a unit, encompasses the area from Brooklyn to Montauk. In 2013, 16 Squadrons comprised District 3. There are 33 Districts that make up the National Organization.

Social reforms of the 1960's and 1970's brought dramatic changes in membership policy; in 1983 the Great South Bay admitted its first women members.

Great South Bay's members' affection for boating and organized cruises and rendezvous had earned it the "boating squadron" reputation that is envied throughout District 3.

In May 2016, Great South Bay will celebrate seventy-five years of public service, self education and fraternal boating. Great South Bay is proud of its history, its achievements, its reputation and its tradition, and is dedicated to promoting safe boating on the Great South Bay.

At the start of 2013, the GSBPS consisted of 205 members.

### 4. Great South Bay Power Squadron Past Commanders

	* Deceased		
1941	* G. Rowe Whitcomb, JN	1948	* George N. Coulter, JN
1942	* Joseph J. Carlin, N	1949	Reginald T Elton, N
1943	* Howard C Coleman, AP	1950	* Archer H Quick, AP
1944	* Harold C. Albertson, AP	1951	Raymond J. Schofield, N
1945	* Arthur F. Thorstensen, N	1952	* Clemense A Lominska, N
1946	* V. Aldric Beere, AP	1953	* Ben R. Bromberg, JN
1947	* Alfred Parks, AP	1954	William J. Wihstutz, JN
		1955	William W. Shelbourne, AP
		1956	* Harry C. Dumper, JN
		1957	* John T. Koleda, N
		1958	* Thomas F. Kiely
		1959	* Edmund O. St. George, N
		1960	* Richard C. Miller, AP
		1961	* Vernon F. Clifford, SN

1962	Ervine A Gaggin, AP	1981	Robert D Johnson, AP	2000	George C. Morrissey, AP
1963	* William J. Schmidt, N	1982	* Ross Robbins, SN	2001	Salvatore G Marsala, AP
1964	Donald I Smith, AP	1983	John G. Hannan, JN	2002	Ruth A Marsala, AP
1965	* Kenneth E. Steenbuck, N	1984	* James M. Dondero, AP	2003	Joseph Barrato, AP
1966	Edward J. Vana, JN	1985	* Eugene F. Kuliberda, SN	2004	Thomas J. Picora, SN
1967	* Bernard J. Rose, AP	1986	John E. Goebel, SN	2005	Arthur Huebner, JN
1968	* Gordon L. Brooks, N	1987	Angelo V. Giovanniello, SN	2006	Peter Cichanowicz, P
1969	* Louis G Kaufman II, SN	1988	Irving Smyle, AP	2007	Joseph Milano, Sr., AP
1970	* Louis F. Burgermeister, JN	1989	* Richard J. Recame, P	2008	Joseph Gagliano, JN
1971	* Wilbur P. Gumbs, AP	1990	Barry M. Schwartz, AP	2009	* Gary LaMarca, AP
1972	A. Wayne Overton, N	1991	Peter A. Richichi, SN	2010	Luann Kazanecki, SN
1973	James McGuinness, AP	1992	* John E. Hudzik, AP	2011	Rick Sinacore, P
1974	Robert A Van Jones, SN	1993	Lawrence W. Postel, SN	2012	Thomas Pilek, AP
1975	* Arnold Hillier, AP	1994	* Albert Hesketh, SN	2013	Kevin Miller, AP
1976	Edward Wray, AP	1995	Anthony Zuaro, SN	2014	Alicia Pilek, AP
1977	* Warren A Alber, JN	1996	* William T. Ford, JN	2015	Suzanne R. Mora, JN
1978	* Jerald P. Ernst, AP	1997	Michael Dowgiallo, SN	2016	Suzanne R. Mora, JN
1979	Charles K. Meyer, AP	1998	Lawrence D McCourt, AP		
1980	Donald J. Salerno, AP	1999	Marie DeVito, AP		* Deceased

## 5. Great South Bay Education Officers

1965	Walter Schlenitz, JN	1995	Barbara Hesketh, N
1967	Ken Steenbuck, N	1998	James F. Milton, AP
1971	Louis Kaufman, N	2001	Luann Kazanecki, SN
1980	James Dondagro, AP	2004	Lawrence Postel, SN
1983	Richard Plunkett, SN	2007	Michael Becker, JN
1985	Lawrence Katz, N	2010	William Wedin, JN
1986	Peter Richichi, SN	2013	Richard Fogel, JN
1989	Ralph Bauer, JN	2016	James M. Milton, JN
1992	Thomas Picora, AP		

## 6. The Great South Bay Power Squadron Burgee

Before 1941, when the Great South Bay Power Squadron was formed, we operated under the name of Great South Bay, Division of South Shore Power Squadron, Freeport, NY. During the period of 1936 to 1938 a decision was made that we were entitled to have our own Burgee. Ben Bromberg and Aaron Jacobsen were granted permission to design our burgee. They spent the evening at Aaron's house on Smith Avenue in Bay Shore considering several ideas. The outstanding one was the Fire Island Lighthouse.

The following is an excerpt from a memoir by A.B. Jacobsen.

*The Great South Bay Pennant is triangular, while with a blue border and in image of Fire Island Light in black and white on a circle of red.*

*The pennant was designed by Aaron B. Jacobsen and Benjamin R. Bromberg for the Great South Bay Division of the South Shore Power Squadron in about 1936-1938. Fire Island Light was chosen as a prominent, outstanding and well known feature in Great South Bay. It was a nautical and simple design. It was approved for use by the Great South Bay Division under the auspices of South Shore Power Squadron.*

*After Great South Bay Power Squadron was chartered in May 1941 the membership voted to retain the Division burgee as the Squadron pennant on July 25, 1941.*

All Squadrons in USPS have heraldry for their burgee that is a story behind the design that helps to commemorate at least a portion of the history of the founding of the Squadron.

## 7. Official Publication – *The Spray*

*The Spray* is the official Great South Bay Power Squadron publication. *The Spray* is published 10 times annually and may be found on our website at [www.GSBPS.org](http://www.GSBPS.org).

## 8. The Squadron Bridge

Great South Bay Power Squadron is managed by the “Bridge”, officers elected by, and responsible to, the membership. The Bridge is assisted in its duties by an Executive Committee elected from our membership; and by Committee Chairpersons and members who carry out programs, functions, and activities of the squadron. The Great South Bay Power Squadron Bridge consists of the Commander, Executive Officer, Education Officer, Administrative Officer, Secretary, and Treasurer. Bridge officers are elected for a term of one year at the annual meeting in January and installed at the Change of Watch meeting, usually in February.

## 9. The Executive Committee

The Executive Committee consists of Bridge Officers (Commander, Executive Officer, Education Officer, Administrative Officer, Secretary, and Treasurer), the immediate Past Commander, three Active members elected from the general membership, and Chairman of Rules Committee as provided for in the Squadron Bylaws. The other members of the Executive Committee, that are in addition to the Bridge Officers, are also elected for a term of one year at the January Annual meeting and installed at the Change of Watch early in the following year.

The Executive Committee typically meets on the first Wednesday of each month and has general charge of the policy, management, and finances of the Squadron. Members of the committee are vested with and have legal custody of all the property of the Squadron. The Executive Committee appropriates such sums as may be deemed advisable, within the limits of the current resources of the Squadron, for the normal and usual operation of the Squadron, including Squadron, District, and USPS functions.

The Executive Committee:

- Votes to approve membership applications recommended from the membership committee.
- Carries on the normal business of the Squadron between meetings of the membership
- Establishes committees and appoints members, thereto, as may seem advisable in the best interests of the Squadron.
- Approves or disapproves the Commander’s appointment of members to offices and committees.
- With the advice of the Treasurer, designates depositories insured by an agency of the United States government in which the squadron’s funds shall be kept, and approves all expenditures.
- Enforces the authority given to it under Squadron Bylaws and acts as necessary to advance the best interests of the squadron consistent with the policy and authority of USPS.
- Invites the Law Officer to its meetings when legal expertise is desirable. The Law officer has the privilege of the floor at such meetings but is not entitled to vote.

## 10. Types of Membership

There are a number of different types of membership, each one designed to meet a specific need.

- a. Active. The active member pays full dues and enjoys all of the privileges of membership, including a subscription to the *Ensign*. Holding elective office, voting at General Meetings, earning Merit Marks, taking educational courses, wearing of a USPS uniform or blazer, and flying The United States Power Squadron ensign and Squadron burgee on the member's boat.
- b. Additional Active. In a home where two persons are active members, one may take the status of "additional active" member. The difference is that only one copy of the *Ensign* is sent to the home. There is a savings in the national dues for the Additional Active member. Minimum age for joining USPS as an Active or Additional Active Member is 18 years old.
- c. Life. Members who have earned 25 Merit marks (25 years of active work for the squadron) are designated Life members and are exempt from national dues.
- d. Associate. A member may be an active member of only one squadron; however, the member may be an Associate member of another squadron. An associate member is put on our mailing list but is not permitted to vote or hold office in the GSBPS. Associate dues are payable annually on the anniversary of the associates joining.
- f. Apprentices. The apprentice program is designed for interested persons between the ages of 12 and 23 [Bylaw 3.8] [3.8.2]. An apprentice accepted by a squadron is issued an appropriate certificate in accordance with USPS Bylaws. This certificate does not confer any title or grade, nor permit the wearing of any insignia, nor the display of any insignia on a vessel, nor the display of The United States Power Squadron ensign.

## 11. Dues and Anniversary Billing

The United States Power Squadrons® recently changed its billing procedures to allow for anniversary billing. Members who joined prior to the adoption of anniversary billing have an "anniversary date" of June 1<sup>st</sup>; members joining after that date have an "anniversary date" that coincides with the month they joined the Squadron.

Dues notices (renewals) are mailed and/or emailed from USPS headquarters to every member or household. The dues cover the ensuing 12 months.

Membership types and billing categories are different. For billing purposes, two categories exist: single and family unit. A single unit is a primary active member; a family unit is a primary active member and all other attached members (additional active or family).

Regular dues reflect amounts billed to renewing members; new member total reflects regular dues plus a one-time entrance fee for name tag(s) and administration. All dues collected from members are apportioned among USPS, USPS District 3, and Great South Bay Power Squadron.

If you have any questions regarding Membership, please contact the Membership Committee at [MembershipCommittee@GSBPS.org](mailto:MembershipCommittee@GSBPS.org). Our Membership Application can be found on our Website at [www.GSBPS.org](http://www.GSBPS.org).

## 12. Certificate Numbers

Each new member is assigned a Certificate Number by USPS. The number appears on a member's certificate as well as on the membership card issued to each member. When enrolling in a course, the member must have his certificate number available.

## 13. Uniforms, Rank and Grade

At squadron meetings, social events, and educational affairs, officers and members may be seen in uniform. Members are not required to have or wear a uniform. To add uniformity and dignity at formal and official occasions The United States Power Squadrons<sup>®</sup> has adopted a modified navy style uniform. Insignia on the uniform reflect the member's rank, educational achievements and merit marks (one for each year of active work contribution) Members may also wear the regulation blazer with a USPS emblem.

The rank for elective offices is shown on the member's blue uniform by gold tridents and by sleeve stripes of specified number and width or by shoulder insignia of tridents on summer whites. For example, the commander's insignia is four stripes with three gold tridents above them. The Executive Officer, Education Officer, Administrative Officer, Secretary and Treasurer hold the rank of Lieutenant Commander (Lt/C) whose insignia is three stripes with two gold tridents above them. Elected assistants; Assistant Education Officer (ASEO), Assistant Treasurer, Assistant Secretary serve with the rank of first lieutenant (1st Lt. or 1/Lt.). If their rank is noted on the member's blue uniform it will be noted with one stripe and one red trident above it. Committee Chairman and officers appointed by the commander hold the rank of Lieutenant (Lt.).

A Past Commander (P/C) wears the designation of the previously held office but with silver tridents instead of gold. A District Officer's rank varies in that it is preceded by a D/ as in D/C (District Commander), D/Lt/C (District Lieutenant Commander) or P/D/C (Past District Commander)

## 14. Officers' Flags

One officer presides over all of our membership and Executive Committee meetings and performs all of the other tasks normally accomplished by the president of any corporation or similar group. To provide a nautical sort of recognition and honor to the office of our chief executive, he or she holds the rank of "Commander," (Cdr) and receives a special flag to fly. The flag includes three tridents with short staffs on a blue field, as shown here.



Each of the following officers gets lots of help from the rest of us through the various committees to which we belong. Their areas of responsibility are generally described below,

The Executive Officer (XO) is our "senior vice president". Second in command, the XO performs the Commander's duties when the Commander is unavailable. This member is responsible for the *external* functions of the squadron, such as public relations, cooperative charting, boat show booths, legislation of interest to us as boaters, radio technical information and safety issues and is also liaison to District.

The SEO (Squadron Educational Officer) is responsible for the entire educational program of our squadron. This officer may well be our busiest member (having the most fun), because he or she supervises our busy educational program, both the courses offered to the public and those for our members only.

The Administrative Officer (AO) is responsible for all of the *internal* functions of the squadron, (as opposed to the XO's external functions). The AO's tasks include recruiting and retaining members; keeping us involved in squadron activities; arranging for membership meetings, programs and entertainment; and setting up cruises.

The Squadron Secretary, our records-keeper. Just as does the secretary of any organization, this officer records and keeps minutes of all of our meetings and safeguards our legal documents. Our secretary also maintains the squadron membership records (database), and is responsible for publishing our newsletter and roster of members.

The Squadron Treasurer manages all of the financial transactions of the squadron. In addition to keeping the financial records, the Squadron Treasurer presides over the Ships Store officer and Property officer.

Each of the Executive, Educational, and Administrative officers, as well as the Secretary and Treasurer, is a Lieutenant Commander (Lt/C). The flag of a Lt/C has two short-staffed tridents on a red field, as shown here.



The Bridge officers are elected at our annual meeting, installed at our Change of Watch and serve until our next Change of Watch. Usually, our SEO, Treasurer and Secretary serve for three consecutive one-year terms, but our other Bridge members usually serve for only one or two one-year terms.

Flags designating yacht club or USPS officers are rectangular in shape, blue (with white design) for senior officers; red for next lower in rank; and white (with blue design) for lower ranks. Other officer flags may be swallow-tailed or triangular in shape.

An officer flag is flown in place of the owner's private signal on all rigs of motor and sailing vessels except single-masted sailboats, when it is flown in place of the club burgee at the masthead. On smaller motor boats without a signal mast, a USPS officer flag may be flown from a radio antenna, preferably to starboard, either singly or beneath The United States Power Squadron ensign.

## 15. Communications with Members

Communication with members is accomplished by telephone calls, email, mailed announcements, meetings and through the Squadron newsletter; *The Spray*

### a. Monthly Membership Meetings

General Membership meetings are typically conducted on the fourth Friday of each month. From September to June. Date, time and location are announced in *The Great South Spray*. Some dinner meetings may be scheduled for the monthly meetings. The Holiday Party meeting in December and the Change of Watch meeting early in the year are two different types of dinner meetings that may be held. All members are invited to attend all meetings, whether they participate in the dining or not.

Unless there is other time consuming squadron business, general membership meetings will have a program of general interest to the membership scheduled by the meetings program chair.

### b. Squadron Newsletter – *The Great South Spray* (“The Spray”)

The official GSBPS publication, has meeting announcements and general information on the planned activities of the squadron. The *Spray* is published 10 times per year. A PDF version is available on the GSBPS web site. [www.GSBPS.org](http://www.GSBPS.org)

### c. Direct mail

From time to time, between publication dates of *The Spray*, or when urgent notice is desirable, a direct mail reminder or notification may be mailed to all members.

### d. Email

GSBPS Members who have access to email, and have provided an address to the secretary, will receive updates and reminders of meetings and other squadron activities from the Squadron Secretary via *Sail Angle*.

e. Calling Post

A telephone committee will make announcements and reminder follow-up calls regarding significant and urgent Squadron activities and events.

f. Squadron, District and USPS web pages

Great South Bay Power Squadron Web Site [www.GSBPS.org](http://www.GSBPS.org)

District 3 Web Site [www.usps.org/localusps/d3](http://www.usps.org/localusps/d3) and/or [www.WeBoatSafe.org](http://www.WeBoatSafe.org)

United States Power Squadron Web Site [www.usps.org](http://www.usps.org) contains information about educational courses, National Committees, upcoming National Meetings and much more. You will need your certificate number to log into the members' page.

g. *The Ensign* The United States Power Squadrons® National Publication

All members receive a copy of the official National publication *The Ensign*.

## 16. Squadron Almanac

A Great South Bay Power Squadron Almanac is published annually and distributed to members. It contains the name, grade, address, spouse's name, phone number, email address, and boat information of each member. Also included is a listing of the current Squadron Officers and Committee Chairpersons. USE OF THE ROSTER FOR OTHER THAN SQUADRON BUSINESS OR PERSONAL USE IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

Member information is maintained in a file by the Squadron Secretary and is updated as changes in member status are brought to the attention of the Secretary. Changes to educational grade are sent to the Secretary by USPS National Headquarters after a course has been passed. Members should send changes in phone number, address, email, or boat information to the Squadron Secretary. The Secretary's file is used to prepare the Almanac and member mailings.

The annual dues notice, which is sent to each member, contains an area for updating roster information. Changes noted will be entered into the Squadron's files.

## 17. Squadron Education Program

The Squadron Educational Officer (SEO) is responsible for all public and member courses and programs. As a result, the Educational Department is fairly large and involves a number of our members. The SEO has an Assistant Squadron Educational Officer (ASEO) who helps guide this department's work.

a. Public Course Offerings

Public courses and programs include The ABC Boating Course. These are free of charge to everyone, with the only cost being for the texts, materials, and any fees charged for classroom use.

b. Advanced Grades

A major element of safe boating is knowing your responsibilities as well as knowing how to move your boat from one place to another, whether across the marina or around the world. Many people think that anyone can get into a boat and drive it with no special training. Perhaps they can. *But*, they won't be safe—nor will anyone else on the water at the same time they are.

Our Advanced Grades courses present a series of information that is important for you to know to be safe and to get where you're going with the least trouble. We recommend that you take them in the following order, but you may take them as they become available, if the instructor approves. The instructor will ensure that you have sufficient background to absorb the material without delaying the progress of other students in the class. Our Advanced Grades Courses are:

- 🚤 Seamanship
- 🚤 Piloting
- 🚤 Advanced Piloting
- 🚤 Junior Navigation
- 🚤 Navigation

**Seamanship (S)** is our boat-handling course. It covers your responsibilities as a skipper. You will learn the basics of anchoring, line handling, rules of the road, and marlinspike seamanship, i.e., some basic knots, bends, and hitches—more than those taught in our public courses.

Your accomplishment in completing Seamanship is recognized by all of us, with our sincerest congratulations, by awarding you the right to attach the suffix S after your name. In addition, *if* you have a uniform (you don't have to have one), and/or *if* you have a blazer (you don't have to have one of these, either), you may display the award shown here on its breast pocket.



Your primary course in navigating your boat within sight of land, **Piloting (P)** will show you how to get from where you are to where you want to go, safely and directly. You will learn how to plot your course and position on a chart, the various types of charts available, the different types of aids to navigation, and how to use a compass effectively. Upon successful completion of this course, you may display the award shown here on its breast pocket.



After completing Seamanship and Piloting, you'll want to take **Advanced Piloting (AP)** to complete your near-shore cruising education. You will learn sophisticated methods of finding and plotting your position. You'll also learn how to avoid dangerous-water conditions, figure out if there'll be enough water to enter your marina, too much water to get under the bridge, or if the current is too strong for your boat to get through the pass quickly. You'll also learn how to determine your compass' deviation and to prepare a deviation table for your boat.

If you have the background and skills to do the work, you may study and complete Advanced Piloting before you take Seamanship and/or Piloting. However, if you do, you will not have earned the AP grade designator until all three of those courses are successfully completed. Upon completion of all three, you will have earned that privilege and may use the emblem below on your breast pocket.



Members who complete Seamanship, Piloting, Advanced Piloting *and* any three Elective Courses have earned the **Educational Proficiency Award**. Your breast-pocket grade designator may be underscored, as shown here, to display your award.



When you've completed your near-shore cruising education, it will be time to learn how the more adventurous seamen travel the high seas. **Junior Navigation (JN)** is the course that will tell you everything you've wanted to know about electronic navigation, and will also introduce you to celestial navigation—finding your way using only the stars and planets. Or, what to do when the batteries die.

Once again, if you're able, you may take JN before completing the earlier courses, but your grade designator will not be "JN" until Seamanship, Piloting, and Advanced Piloting have all been completed. And, as you may have guessed by now, when you complete these four courses, you will have earned the right to change your name's suffix to JN and display this breast pocket emblem.



And now, the full dose of celestial navigation! In **Navigation (N)** you will learn nearly everything there is to know about finding your way using only a sextant and celestial bodies. In fact, you'll even learn how to find where you are in emergency, lost-at-sea situations when you don't even have a sextant. When you take navigation, you will learn not only how to use celestial navigation, but its theory—why it works.

When you've completed all of Seamanship, Piloting, Advanced Piloting, Junior Navigation, and Navigation, once more you are entitled to change the suffix used with your name to N and display the breast pocket emblem shown here.



Advanced Grades courses may be taken in any order you wish, but, as described above, your grade designator will always depend upon which courses you have completed. Although you can self-study any or all of these courses, and challenge any course's examination to obtain permanent credit, we encourage you to take them with other student members. Students always bring their own experiences to the classes and share them, so you will learn things not found in the texts. You will also develop lifelong friendships with your fellow students due to the love for boating we all share.

When you complete all of the Advanced Grades and Elective Courses, you will have earned the **Educational Achievement Award** and have acquired a classroom-level nautical education equal to that from any military or service academy. Is there more to learn? You bet! Where do you go to learn it? Out on the water: put what you've learned to use and go out and practice it.

In the meantime, however, you have earned the privilege of showing the symbol **SN (Senior Navigator)** as a suffix to your name and displaying the emblem shown below on your breast pocket.



Is the use of these grade-designator suffixes bragging? Maybe, but there really are two important reasons we use them. First, they help us to inspire our friends and fellow-members to "be all they can be," and to absorb as much education as they can.

Second, when you go out in public with your grade-designator emblem on your breast pocket, non-members often ask you what it means. Tell them, and tell them what USPS does for the public, and how we do it. We want everyone to be the safest boater possible. Safe Boating Through Education!

c. Elective Courses

Elective Courses may be taken at any time, and in any order you choose. These courses are:

🚤 **Cruise Planning**

🚤 **Instructor Development**

🚤 **Engine Maintenance**

🚤 **Marine Electronics**

🚤 **Sail**

🚤 **Weather**

d. Educational Department Staff

So, how do we accomplish all this education? Clearly, it takes a lot of work. We're all unpaid volunteers, so the only way it's humanly possible to put on all these courses and create so many educated safe boaters, is with a lot of help.

Member volunteers plan, teach, and proctor our courses; build teaching aids; distribute information about our classes to members so they know when and where to show up; and encourage them to attend.

Volunteer opportunities include:

**Instructors** for some or all of the topics in each course; or **Chairman for the course and Proctors** who aid instructors by helping the students; grading homework; arranging teaching aids and ensuring the aids are ready and operable; setting up and breaking down classrooms, etc.

As you become more familiar with our Squadron, we hope that you'll not only agree to help when you're asked, but will call and volunteer when you hear or read that someone needs help. Be There!

## 18. Squadron Meetings

There are two main types of Squadron meetings: General or Monthly Membership meetings and Executive Committee meetings. Various committee meetings will also be conducted on an as-need basis. All meetings are open to membership with the exception of the nominations committee meetings.

a. Monthly Membership meetings

Typically held on the fourth Friday of each month with the planned exceptions of July and August. Notices are published in *The Spray* to inform all members of the topic and meeting location as well as on our website. Most meetings are held at The American Legion Rusy-Bohm Post on Nassau Street in Islip behind Town Hall. Members are encouraged to bring guests. General Membership meetings are usually from 2000 to 2100.

b. Monthly Executive Committee/Bridge Meetings

Executive Committee meetings are normally held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month. The current location of Executive Committee meetings is the East Islip Library. Members are welcome and may participate in any discussion, but only executive committee members have the privilege to vote.

c. Committee Meetings

Committee meetings are held at the discretion of the Committee Chair to discuss pending Squadron business and action relevant to the committee's successful contribution to the Squadron. A list of major squadron committees can be found in Section 29 of this handbook. Members are encouraged to volunteer by service and involvement by choosing a committee of their interest.

## 19. Social Meetings

Many of our Squadron meetings have a social component along with the conducting of the current business of the squadron as well. Some traditional regularly scheduled meetings include: the Holiday Party Meeting in December and the Change of Watch early in the new Squadron Year. The main business of the Squadron for the Annual Meeting in January is the election of the new slate of officers for the coming new squadron year. The Change of Watch, held early in the calendar year, is a formal meeting where the new officers for the coming year are installed by the District Commander. Many of the District Bridge Officers and fellow District members often attend the Squadron Change of Watch.

## 20. Social Events

Our Squadron has several planned social gatherings for the purpose of more informally getting to know our new members and allow members a time for social interaction. Members are encouraged to bring the appropriate family members as well as guests. Some of the traditional social events that we have include;

Boating Season Kick-Off	Memorial Day Parade – East Islip	Holiday Party
Spring Picnic	Fall Picnic	Change of Watch Dinner Dance
Blessing of the Fleet	Fall Social	

Our General Meetings are followed by a Social period which serves as an opportunity to greet old friends and meet new ones. All social events are announced in The Spray.

## 21. District 3 Meetings

- a. District Change of Watch, usually in March
- b. Spring Council meeting
- c. District Rendezvous
- d. Fall Council and Educational Conference

District meetings are held in various regional locations within the geography of the District. Additional information on District Meetings can be found by visiting the District 3 Web Site [www.usps.org/localusps/d3](http://www.usps.org/localusps/d3) and/or [www.WeBoatSafe.org](http://www.WeBoatSafe.org)

## 22. On the Water Events

Scheduled on the water boating activities is one area where the Great South Bay Power Squadron really shines. The squadron schedules events for the Cruising Boater, the daytrip boater, and slower traveling vessels. It also coordinates near and distant cruising destinations to allow members to join us by land as well.

- a. Boating Activities Chairman

On the water activities and events fall under the Squadron Administrative Officer, with a Boating Activity Chairperson proposing a schedule to membership and seeking feedback. The Boating Activities chair finalizes the schedule and communicates through The Spray, membership meeting announcements, cruise planning meetings and email.

- b. Cruise Captains

Each boating activity or cruise has a Cruise Captain who co-ordinates pre-trip-planning, reservations, pre-cruise scouting, posting of notices in The Spray and communication to participants. This is a fun and responsible position which allows the Cruise Captain to assist fellow cruisers in having a relaxed and well planned cruising experience. Cruise Captains may volunteer by notifying the Boating Activities Chairperson.

c. Raft-ups

Raft-ups are daytime on water activities where Squadron members meet with their boats in a protected, but open, body of water large enough to safely accommodate a number of vessels. Members anchor their vessels in such a manner that the swim platforms (or transoms) are aligned to allow easy maneuvering between vessels. Members usually bring lunch, snacks, beverages and friends to share during Raft-ups. The Boating Activities Chair will schedule several Raft-ups during the boating season.

d. Traditional On-the-Water Events

Blessing of the Fleet – Watch Hill  
Raft Up – Connetquot River or Robert Moses Boat Basin  
Spring Picnic  
Fall Picnic – Atlantique Marina

## 23. Vessel Safety Examination

Vessel Safety Examination is a public service courtesy examination of your boat (Vessel) to verify the presence and condition of certain Safety Equipment required by State and Federal regulations. The Vessel Examiner is a trained specialist and is a member of the US Power Squadrons or the US Coast Guard Auxiliary. Any US Power Squadron member is eligible to be a Vessel Safety Examiner. The VSE will also make certain recommendations and discuss certain safety issues that will make you a safer boater.

- a. Vessel Safety Examination committee falls under the Executive Officer
- b. The VSE Chair leads the VSE committee composed of certified Vessel Safety Examiners
- c. Vessel Safety Examiners must complete at least 5 vessels annually to maintain certification
- d. The VSE Chair reports at least quarterly to the District VSE Chair.
- e. The VSE Chair will hold VSE certification training as needed to interested Squadron members.
- f. The Great South Bay Power Squadron takes the issue of vessel safety as a primary way to display public service to boaters in our communities.
- g. The Great South Bay Power Squadron annually publishes an honor roll of members that have a VSE conducted on their vessels.
- h. Some of the items verified during a Vessel Safety Check:

Proper display of numbers, registration/documentation, personal flotation devices, life jackets, visual distress signals, fire extinguishers, ventilation, backfire flame control, sound producing devices, navigation lights, state requirements, overall vessel condition.

## 24. USPS A Tax Exempt Organization

- a. USPS and its Districts and Squadrons have been granted tax-exempt status under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 because of its nationwide educational activities. The status is very important to the organization. Preservation of the exemption is the responsibility of all USPS members.
- b. Squadron member activity – One part of the code states that *as an organization* we must avoid attempting to influence legislation or intervene in a political campaign on behalf of a candidate for public office. As individuals we may participate as much as we wish in trying to influence political or legislative matters. However, mentioning membership in USPS or a District or a Squadron is *NOT* permitted and could cause revocation of our status.
- c. Personal Deductions – Members who participate in the function of USPS in an official capacity may deduct on their tax return certain expenses as charitable contributions. These expenses include transportation; parking fees and tolls, reasonable expenditures for meals, and lodging while away from home, uniforms, postage, telephone bills, supplies, dues and other miscellaneous cash expenses.

## 25. USPS Boat Insurance Program

One benefit of membership in USPS is access to the exclusive USPS boat insurance program. This program operates on the premise that USPS members are “preferred risk” boaters. The program, designed by the St. Paul Fire & Marine Insurance Company, offers broad coverage at very competitive rates. The program is open to boats of almost any type, size, construction, and age, including antiques. Premiums take into account such things as educational achievement in USPS courses, boating experience, and claims history. Additional premium discounts are available as a member successfully completes Seamanship, Piloting, Advanced Piloting and Engine Maintenance.

## 26. Boat/US Affiliation Discount

Great South Bay Power Squadron members who are members of BOAT/US pay annual dues to Boat/US at a reduced rate because of an agreement between the two organizations. When you get your Squadron Certificate Number in the mail, call BOAT/US and provide it to them. They will apply the Squadron discount to your membership. If you have BOAT/US Insurance, please ask to be transferred to an underwriter to take advantage of the Insurance Discount as well.

## 27. Equipment Discounts

Check USPS web page for current list [www.usps.org](http://www.usps.org)

## 28. Membership Involvement

- a. Great South Bay Squadron Organizational Chart

See Organizational Chart on our website [www.GSBPS.org](http://www.GSBPS.org)

- b. List of committees and the Bridge Officer they report to

### Commander

Chaplain  
Flag Lieutenant  
Memorial and Gift Officer

Merit Mark Chairman  
Meetings and Quarters Chairman

### Administrative Officer

Predicted Log Chairman  
Skipper's Award Officer  
Cruise & Rendezvous Chairman  
Spring Picnic Chairman  
Fall Picnic Chairman  
Entertainment Committee Chairman  
Program Committee Chairman

COW House Committee Chairman  
Membership Committee Chairman  
THE ENSIGN Correspondent  
Boating Activities Committee Chairman  
Membership Involvement  
Port Captain

### Executive Officer

Public Relations Officer  
Photography Officer  
Radio Technical Officer  
Safety Officer  
Boat Show Chairman  
Cooperative Charting Chairman

District 3 Liaison Dance Officer  
Governmental Liaison Officer  
District 3 Rendezvous East Chairman  
Vessel Safety Check Chairman  
Environmental Committee

### Education Officer

Asst. SEO  
CH/LB/B Sachem  
CH/LB/B West Islip  
CH/LB/ East Islip  
CH/LB/AG  
CH/LB/EC

CH/USPS/GUIDES/Seminars  
CH/Teaching Aids  
Operations Training Chairman  
Leadership Development Chairman  
Partner in Command

### Treasury Department

Supply Officer

Asst. Supply Officer

## Secretary Department

The Great South Spray Editor  
Asst. Editor  
Business Manager  
Almanac Chairman  
Telephone Committee Chairman

Historian  
Computer Services Chairman  
Asst. Computer Services  
Website Chairman (Web Master)  
Asst. Website Chairman

## Additional Committees

Executive Committee  
Nominating Committee  
Auditing Committee

Rules Committee  
Local Board for Boating  
Budget Committee

## 29. How to Get on a Committee

Find a committee which interests you and get involved. Speak to any Executive Committee member listed in The Spray. The Organization Chart, and Committees List, illustrates how Great South Bay Power Squadron works. Committees have been, and will continue to be, established to accomplish our goals. Each committee is responsible to a bridge officer or to the membership.

Chairpersons and members of committees are volunteers who want to contribute their time, energy and expertise to help the squadron achieve its goals of self education, civic service and fellowship with boating oriented people. Most of us have an area of interest, or capability that can help the squadron achieve those goals.

There are opportunities for all. Some of the committees are active at specific times of the year. For example, the Boating Activities Committee, which plans and organizes our cruises and rendezvous, is active mainly during boating season. Other committees are active all or part of the year. In education, Teachers and Proctors are almost always needed.

Long-time members who are active often cite the following as their reasons for working to build and grow the squadron:

- **A good way to meet other boaters**
- **Personal satisfaction in helping others**
- **Good and worthwhile goals to support by work**
- **Learning through the experiences of fellow members**
- **Teaching as the ultimate form of learning**

Members who wish to volunteer are urged to call the commander or any of the bridge members or committee chairpersons.

- c. How to become a Bridge or Executive Committee Member
  - i. Attend meetings and participate
  - ii. Chair a committee and contribute to the success of the squadron
  - iii. Express interest

## 30. Membership Action and Involvement

- a. Next Steps - This members' hand book serves as an introduction to the value of USPS membership. The real value of membership in the United States Power Squadrons® and more particular in the Great South Bay Power Squadron is the involvement; activities, events and education that you, the member, plan to take advantage of and participate in.
- b. Find your level of interest for commitment to personal involvement and let the organization meet your needs; be it cruising partners, additional education, social activities or civic involvement surrounding boating education and safety.
- c. Contact an executive committee member (listed on the lead page of the Squadron newsletter, The Spray, or from the GSBPS Web Site). Attend any of the Squadron's regularly scheduled membership meetings and find an activity that interests you.
- d. The Great South Bay Power Squadron has a membership involvement committee that will assist in answering any questions that you have to achieve the most of your association with the Great South Bay Power Squadron.
- e. Your involvement, as well as your ideas, suggestions and participation will be what make the Squadron work for you. The primary goal of the United States Power Squadrons® is to make Boating Safer and more Fun.

When was the last time you went out and looked for something to do? We're all so busy now with just the business of living that it's hard to juggle our schedules and find time to do the things we *should* do, much less the things we *want* to do. We don't go looking for work—we make it come and find us.

Even so, there are a lot of things that need to be done to keep the squadron fun, interesting, and worthwhile. That can only happen if each of us is willing to do just a little bit to help out. *T.E.A.M.* stands for *Together Everyone Accomplishes More*. No one can—or should—do it all, but if everyone does just a little, the job will get done, no one will be burned out, and everyone will have fun.

The Member Involvement Committee helps distribute the tasks that need doing among our members. This committee is like a "help wanted" agency. Its goal is to ask each of us to contribute at least a little time and effort to something that's worthwhile to all of us. When you get a call, we hope you'll be ready to respond and pitch in.

All that having been said, we sincerely hope you won't wait to be called. When you hear about something that interests you, or think of a new project that could promote boating safety, don't hesitate; pitch in and help. We guarantee no one will object when you do!

### 31. Merit Marks *(recognition for your contributions to the squadron)*

- a. Merit Marks are one of the tangible rewards for squadron service.
- b. Member involvement in significant work for the squadron starts with finding an area that interests you where you are already proficient or an area that you would like to increase your knowledge.

USPS offers no monetary compensation to any member – just the opportunity to perform voluntary service. The varied and valuable voluntary service does not go unrecognized or un-rewarded. A USPS member who “*performs substantial effort in furthering the interests, programs and objectives of USPS, its Districts and Squadrons*” may be awarded a merit mark by the Chief Commander. Each year recommendations are submitted which include a summary of services performed. Merit Mark information can be submitted by individual members or committee chairs via the merit mark submission form and forwarded to the Merit Mark Committee as designated by the Great South Bay Squadron Commander or directly to the Commander as appropriate.

Work deemed appropriate for merit mark recognition can be submitted via the merit mark form at any time during the year, but must be submitted no later than 1 November as the first group of submissions will be forwarded by 15 November of each year. The Squadron Commander submits merit marks to be reviewed by an Area Merit Mark Monitor and then forwarded to the Chief Commander for review and the awarding of the merit marks. Please note that this is one area that our Squadron Merit Mark Committee and Commander take significant care in timely submission and that The United States Power Squadron Chief Commander reviews every Merit Mark submission – usually more than 20,000. Only one Merit Mark will be awarded a member in a given year, no matter how large the contribution. When a member has received five merit marks, a designation of Senior Member is received along with the privilege to wear the Senior Member Insignia on The United States Power Squadron uniform. With the award of a member’s twenty-fifth merit mark comes a status known as Life Membership, a plaque awarded by the Chief Commander, a permanent membership card printed in silver and exemption from USPS dues. A member who achieves 50 Merit Marks receives a special award from the Chief Commander and the status of USPS Governing Board Member Emeritus.

### 32. Squadron Awards *(Typically awarded at the Squadron Change of Watch)*

- a. Skipper Award – Recognizes a member’s achievement in boating education and participation in Squadron activities.
- b. Pilot Award – Recognizes a member’s achievement of an advanced boating education and active participation in Squadron activities.
- c. Commodore Award – Recognizes a member’s achievement of a thorough boating education and enthusiastic participation in Squadron activities.
- d. Admiral Award – Recognizes a member’s achievement of a complete boating education and devoted participation in Squadron activities.

Additional information on how to qualify for each award can be found in the Almanac.

### 33. USPS National

As you become more familiar with the activities and opportunities available in our squadron and district, you will often hear people discussing "national" this and "national" that. It's important to realize that you, and I, and every USPS member everywhere, are "national."

All the word really means is that the 60,000 USPS members and the 450± squadrons, throughout the country, the Virgin Islands, and Tokyo work together to achieve our common goals. In order to do this, we elect a national body, called the Governing Board, and national officers. The officers' positions are essentially the same as those in our squadron and district, i.e., Commander, Executive Officer, Educational Officer, Administrative Officer, Secretary, and Treasurer, but their titles are a little different.

For example, our national commander has the title Chief Commander and the other five officers on the national Bridge are all Vice Commanders. Chairmen of the national committees, which also correspond to those we've discussed in our squadron, have the title Rear Commander, and their assistant chairmen are called Staff Commanders.

Of course, the work done at the national level is also somewhat different. For example, in the National Educational Department, committees are responsible for developing, writing, and publishing our courses and programs. Course committees are also responsible for creating and grading examinations.

Similarly, in the other national departments, the work done is not the same "front line" work we do in the squadrons and districts. Rather, squadron members working at the national level provide leadership, guidance, and structure. This helps us to ensure that all of the important work we do to achieve our common goals is accomplished in a uniform and legal manner throughout USPS.

The main operating body of USPS is the Governing Board, i.e., our national board of directors. The Governing Board (GB) elects our national bridge officers and other national officers. The GB meets three times each year—spring, fall, and at the same time as the members' Annual Meeting, usually in January. Every member is welcome at any of these meetings, and you will find reservation forms and a great deal of information about them in our national magazine, *The Ensign*.

The spring and fall GB meetings are held at different locations around the country, giving those who attend an opportunity to visit interesting places, and those who live in the vicinity of one of the meetings an opportunity to attend without having to travel far.

***Again, welcome to the Great South Bay Power Squadron,  
where there is a place for everyone.***

**Get involved, have fun, and most of all be safe on the water!**

**BOAT SMART.  
BOAT SAFE.**

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