

## Commander's Message



Firstly, I must thank and congratulate all who have been involved in the Vulcan Power Squadron summer activities. In particular, I would like to congratulate two of our newest members, Donna Macon and Lee Stubbs, on their successful construction of the winning cardboard boat [see separate article on the cardboard boat race at Goose Pond].

For the last six weeks or so, I seem to have been heavily involved in family affairs and the need to keep children and grand children happy.



*[Editor's Note: A happy and proud moment for John and Catherine this summer, was the achievement of their daughter, Elizabeth, who recently graduated with honors from medical school in England, and has begun her internship. Congratulations Elizabeth!!! For those of you who may not know, Elizabeth is a member of USPS and Vulcan Power Squadron. She took and completed the USPS public boating course taught by VPS, at the tender age of eleven!]*

As I write this, it is now two days since our oldest daughter and her children left BAMA, but I still feel exhausted from the whirlwind of frenetic activity in keeping four active children and their parents entertained. The last few days of this consisted of eight of us, ranging in age from one year to 64 years old, all camping aboard a 37-foot Lagoon Catamaran in the Vinoy Marina [see picture], in St. Petersburg, Florida. Unfortunately, the weather was not ideal -- we managed only 3.5 hours of (gorgeous) sailing and the rest of the time we watched the rain and lightening all around us. In the end, we decided to pack up early and come home...but I couldn't do so without first having a last minute look at the "Salvador Dali" Museum. What an exhibit!



Now that we have been back home a few days, it is time to start packing my bags again. This time it is for a trip to the Seattle/Vancouver area. For the first couple of days I will attend the USPS 2010 Governing Board Meeting [30 Aug – 5 Sep] in Bellevue, Washington, where I will represent Vulcan Power Squadron. I am still struggling to decide on what sessions to attend, as the organizing committee seems to have put together a very interesting agenda. [See link at bottom of USPS home page: [www.usps.org](http://www.usps.org).]

After leaving the USPS meeting, I'll go with Catherine to Vancouver, to visit our son, and then go on to Victoria, to join



our friends there on their newly-acquired secondhand Island Packet mono-hull sailboat [on the trailer above; shipped to the west coast from Maine]. I should be back in time to attend the VPS Executive Committee meeting that will be held on Thursday, 16 September.

I look forward to seeing you all at Mike and Linda Mahan's home in Brierfield, for our Fall picnic on 18 September (an email with details and directions will be sent out), and at our next squadron meeting on the 23rd, at the Red Lobster restaurant in Vestavia Hills. Our speaker will be Christy Martin, from Huntsville, publisher of Life On The Water Magazine ([www.lifeonthewater.com](http://www.lifeonthewater.com)).

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## 2010 District 17 Fall Conference

**The annual District 17 Fall Conference will be held in Columbus, Georgia, during the weekend of 22-24 October, 2010, at the Doubletree Hotel.**

**Address: Doubletree Hotel Columbus  
5351 Sydney Simons Blvd.  
Columbus, GA 31904  
1-706-327-6868**

**[http://doubletree1.hilton.com/en\\_US/dt/hotel/CSGDTDT-Doubletree-Hotel-Columbus-Georgia/index.do](http://doubletree1.hilton.com/en_US/dt/hotel/CSGDTDT-Doubletree-Hotel-Columbus-Georgia/index.do)**

**Directions:** Go to [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com) and enter the address for the hotel.

**Overview:** Check-in time at the hotel on Friday, 22 October, is at 1500 (3:00 p.m.). There will be a fun, casual dinner that evening. The normal business meetings will be held Saturday morning. Educational seminars, presentations and roundtable sessions on Saturday afternoon, include: Fire Extinguishing Training Video; Onboard Weather Forecasting Seminar; Using VHF and VHF/DSC Marine Radios Seminar; Revitalizing Squadrons Presentation & Roundtables; and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR)/Georgia will be the topic for the Commanders Informal Discussion.

On Sunday morning, District Education Officer, Margaret Sherrod, will conduct On-the-Water Boat Operator Certification Skills Demonstration/Testing Powerboat Handling for the USPS Boat Operator Certification. Details of the requirements and skills will be sent to D-17 Squadron Education Officers. Upon receipt, this will be disseminated to the VPS membership via email. If you are interested in participating in this testing, send an email to Margaret Sherrod at [DEO@usps-d17.org](mailto:DEO@usps-d17.org), and to P/C Jim Nye, VPS Squadron Education Officer, at [seo@vulcanonline.org](mailto:seo@vulcanonline.org).

For more information on the Fall Conference and planned activities, visit the District 17 web site: [www.usps-d17.org](http://www.usps-d17.org).

## Comments on the 2010 Annual USPS Governing Board Meeting

By District 17 Commander Jeff Wise, SN

Hi **All Y'all** (plural for Y'all): The Fall Governing Board was last week [30 Aug – 5 Sep] in Seattle, and I'm happy to say that I have returned, despite my best efforts to stow away on a Westbound trawler. Having said that, D-17 has four members cruising the San Juan Islands (Northwest of Seattle) and carrying our flag with the USPS district from Seattle. I wanted to go, but I am so dedicated to the district that I came home to write this article.

As always, the Governing Board was amazing, invigorating, and encouraging. The qualifications, spirit, enthusiasm, and skill of the members present always impresses me. You've heard me ramble on about the praise that flows from the USCG, NOAA, NASBLA, BoatUS, and the Foundation for Boating Safety, and there was plenty of it to go around again. Like our conferences, the Saturday morning session conducts the formal business, passes out awards, includes departmental reports, and tends to be a bit boring, but the real meat is in the other meetings that take place. There are dozens of committees meeting and doing real work; Education department meetings strategizing on new courses, course content, homework and exam questions, and how best to keep up with technologies; Marketing and Public Relations committees discussing how to get the word out; Squadron Development and Squadron Activities committees meeting how best to revitalize squadrons—the list goes on and on—all enthusiastic and energetic members trying to make USPS the premier boating education and boating enjoyment organization in the country. I can only pass along a few of the highlights.

The National Leadership Development committee has put together an 8-hour training course for district and squadron administrative officers. Now that sounds dry doesn't it? Well, let me tell you that it is perhaps the best, most interesting, most entertaining management course I've ever seen. The people who put it together are professional, nationally-recognized trainers from industry, and they've done a superb job. Imagine if you can, a squadron Executive Committee with Snow White as the commander, and the seven dwarfs as committee chairs. I know, Grumpy! He was on my Ex-comm! If I had just known what they teach in this course, I would have known how to use him to help the squadron. D-17 is hosting the course in Atlanta, in November, and we hope to offer the follow-on XO/DXO course at our Spring Conference.

"A member is a member is a member." The Governing Board modified the national by-laws to remove all references to Family members. They are no more. Everyone is an Active Member or an Additional Active. To many squadrons this doesn't make much difference, but now formerly family members can serve on the bridge, vote, and earn real (not "family") Merit Marks. Squadrons and Districts have about 18 months to correct their by-laws to match those of national's.

The Governing Board approved a \$2 increase in the national dues in a surprisingly quick and quiet vote. The original

proposal was to approve a \$2 increase each year for the next five years, but that's not how the motion came out in the meeting, so at this point, I believe that it is a one-time increase. In their defense, I think the organization has done a great job of cutting costs. For example:

Merit Marks after the first [of the year] will be distributed via a PDF file, rather than mailing a printed certificate. This action alone will save \$12,000 each year.

USPS has just signed an agreement with Brunswick Corp (manufacturers of Sea Ray, Meridian, Hatteras, Tracker, and others) to jointly market and support the teaching of our courses. Brunswick has selected about 40 dealerships to participate in a pilot program where each dealership buys a display and stock of our course textbooks, and offers their facilities for use in course venues. Brunswick will be recommending our courses to their customers, and USPS has agreed to teach the courses to their customers at the participating dealership facilities. The dealership also gets a membership to USPS as part of the deal.

There was an outstanding presentation at the Squadron Development Committee [meeting] on Revitalizing Our Squadrons. VPS Cdr John Lonsdale-Eccles, JN, our favorite Brit in Birmingham, was there and has agreed to bring back what he learned. He has agreed to do a seminar in Columbus. Don't miss this one—it promises to be a highlight.

The bottom line? USPS' program is strong and getting stronger. We're still losing membership, but there are signs that we may be turning that around, too. The Educational Department is aggressively writing and updating courses and seminars. We're going after new markets and new sources of members. I felt a more positive vibe at the national meeting than I've felt in recent years. The leadership is up-beat—now we need to jump on the bandwagon! I'm excited about our future.

Hope to see "all y'all" in Columbus!

## Training for District and Squadron Administrative Officers in Atlanta, on 13 Nov

"Earlier this year, the USPS Leadership Development department initiated the first of three leadership classes aimed at providing the foundation our prospective squadron and district leaders need to manage and lead our unique volunteer organization into the future. The first of these classes focuses on the skills of the squadron [SAO] and district [DAO] administrative officers. The other classes, focusing on the skills of executive officers and commanders, will be phased in over the next two years and must be taken in sequence.

The SAO/DAO program has already been presented in Orlando and several other US cities. It will be presented later this fall in Atlanta [13 Nov] (see basic details below). The USPS education fund [will] pay the course cost (excluding hotel, transportation, etc.) for incoming and sitting district and squadron administrative officers. Other bridge and committee officers and members are encouraged to attend for [a fee of] \$50 per student to help defray materials and printing costs.

More information is available on our district website ([www.usps-d17.org](http://www.usps-d17.org)) and from your squadron education officer.

**Encourage your squadron to develop new leaders and to send current and prospective officers to this valuable training.**

**SAO/DAO Training - Sat, 13 November 2010  
- 0800 to 1600.**

### Hyatt Place Atlanta Buckhead

3242 Peachtree Road, NE  
Atlanta, GA 30305  
Phone: 404-869-6161

Room rate is \$79 per night, plus tax. No parking fees. Includes complimentary continental breakfast.

Hospitality Get-Together - 12 November 2010 -1830

Sign up for this class and find the hotel link via USPS Leadership Development website: <http://www.usps.org/national/ot/TransitionfromWarriorstoChieftainAtlanta.htm>."

## 2010 AGLCA Fall Rendezvous

The **America's Great Loop Cruisers' Association** will hold its annual Fall Rendezvous at the Joe Wheeler State Park Marina and Lodge, in Rogersville, Alabama, beginning on Sunday, 24 October, and lasting through Thursday evening, 27 October. Participants include those who are currently cruising America's Great Loop, those who plan to do so, and those who are just interested in learning more about the Great Loop Cruise. It is a great opportunity to "walk the docks," see the different kinds of boats that people cruise the Loop in, meet and talk with the cruisers, and learn from their cruising experiences. There will be speakers and presentations on a variety of boating topics related to cruising the Loop. Much of the information presented will cover cruising that section of the Loop from the Tennessee River, down the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway to Mobile, around the Gulf, and up the Intracoastal Waterway on the East coast. This is an invaluable experience, and a "must-go-to" event for anyone planning to cruise America's Great Loop. For more information, visit the AGLCA web site: <http://www.greatloop.org>.

To get to Joe Wheeler State Park from Birmingham, drive north on I 65 to Athens (Exit 351). Turn west on U.S. 72, go through Athens, towards Florence, to Rogersville. The entrance to the Park is on the left-hand side of the highway on the west side of Rogersville. Driving time from Birmingham, is approximately two hours.



# One More Time...

## Welcome to Vulcan Power Squadron!

In our last issue of the Nimbus, we introduced the following new members to USPS and Vulcan Power Squadron. Missing, were the pictures we took of the swearing-in process at the April and May monthly squadron meetings.



From left to right, in this picture taken at the April meeting, are: Stu Johnson, Donna Macon, Ernie Schoolmaker, and Richard Dudley.



In this picture, Lee Stubbs is being sworn in by P/C Jim Nye.

New members missing from the pictures, are Tom Fisher, one of the six graduates of The Squadron Boating Course, Stu Johnson's wife, Michelle, and Bill Camp (reinstated member). We hope to get their pictures at our September meeting.

To help you associate the faces and names of our new members, their names and backgrounds are repeated below. Be sure and introduce yourselves to our new members at the September meeting, and welcome them to our squadron.

**Bill Camp** first joined USPS and Vulcan Power Squadron in March, 1973, and completed the Seamanship and Piloting courses. At some point in time, Bill let his USPS membership lapse, and then at the 2010 Birmingham Boat Show, he visited the VPS booth and expressed a desire to be reinstated. An architect by trade, and now retired after 32 years of working at UAB, Bill and his wife, Anne, spend time both in the Birmingham area and in Gunter'sville. Bill's boating interests include both sailing and power boating. They have a 15-foot wood Windmill sailboat, and an 18-foot ski boat. They have cruised in the Gulf of Mexico, on Eladio and Sara Ruiz de Molina's 50-foot sailboat.

**Richard Dudley** and his wife, Kim, have a small power boat runabout, and have been boating nearly two years. Richard visited the VPS booth at the 2010 Birmingham Boat Show, and signed up for The Squadron Boating Course.

**Tom Fisher** is new to boating. In January, Tom and his wife, Suzette, took delivery of a 2006 Formula 330 SS, "TAYLEX," which they keep on Lake Martin. **VROOOMMM!!!**



**Stuart Johnson** has been boating over forty years. Stu's wife, **Michelle**, joined USPS as a Family Member. They are presently shopping for a trawler, and making preparations to cruise America's Great Loop.

**Donna Macon** has been boating for the past twenty-nine years. Her first boat was a 1960 Crosby runabout. Donna has also owned a Bayliner and personal watercraft (PWCs). She is now the proud owner of a Sea Ray 240 Sundancer, "Macon Waves", which she keeps in a wet slip on Lake Martin.



**Ernie Schoolfield** has been boating most of his life. He originally hails from the Texas Panhandle, is a U.S. Naval Academy graduate, spent nine years on active duty "driving" Navy ships, retired from the U.S. Naval Reserves as a Captain, retired after 17 years with BellSouth, and is now "retired-retired." When he's not traveling or working on home projects, Earnie spends some of his time tending to his fleet of recreational boats that he keeps on the Warrior River. These include an Albin 27 Family Cruiser, a 20-foot pontoon boat, and a 15-foot Boston Whaler.

**Lee Stubbs** is a sail boater, with over forty years of boating experience. He is now retired, after spending 32 years as a firefighter in Mountainbrook. Lee currently has a 21-foot, "trailerable" Sea Pearl cat ketch. Past boats include a 1971 24-ft Irwin sloop, a 22-ft Chrysler sloop, a 14-ft kayak, a sailing kayak, a 16-ft canoe, and a 13-ft whitewater canoe. Lee bareboated sailboats in the Caribbean for 8-10 years, and has been on several rafting trips.



## Education Officer

P/C Jim Nye, AP  
seo@vulcanonline.org



### The Squadron Boating Course

A Fall course will be scheduled as soon as there are at least five or six students (preferably ten) ready to attend. Graduates of this course are our main source of new members. Squadron members are strongly encouraged to actively seek out and identify new candidates for this course and membership in USPS. If you know of anyone interested in taking the USPS public boating course, please have them contact Jim Nye, via email, at seo@vulcanonline.org.

### Seamanship Course

Currently, nine members have the Seamanship course materials. The course will be scheduled to start as soon as we can find a location to teach it. I could really use some help from the membership in finding classroom space. Please let me know if you have any suggestions.

### Piloting Course

The Piloting course will be offered after the current Seamanship students have successfully completed the Seamanship course and examination.

### Weather Course

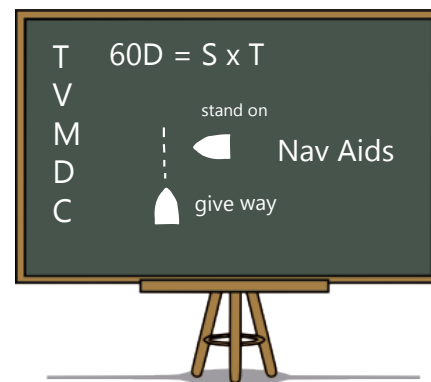
Current plans are to offer the ten-session USPS Weather course sometime in the Fall. If you are interested in signing up for the Weather course, please contact Jim Nye, SEO, as soon as possible, so we will know how many sets of the student course materials to order.

Since the Weather Course is an elective course, it can be taken any time, without regard to the order of taking the core courses, which have to be completed in sequence before USPS will grant credit for them. The core courses are: Seamanship, Piloting, Advanced Piloting, Junior Navigation, and Navigation. The elective courses are: Weather, Cruise Planning, Marine Electronics, Engine Maintenance, Sail, and Instructor Development.

If you are a BoatU.S. member, look at the *Special Weather Section*, beginning on page 49 of your Aug/Sep 2010 issue of BoatU.S. Magazine ([www.BoatUS.com/Magazine](http://www.BoatUS.com/Magazine)). On page 54, author, Michael Vatalaro, advises: **“Take a [weather] course, read a book, or just observe. Mastering weather will keep you and your crew safer.” “As boaters, we have no excuse for having a poor understanding of weather; it’s too important.”**

### Boating Education Courses

One of the incentives and special benefits of membership in the United States Power Squadrons, is access to the rich set of advanced boating education courses and seminars. Every squadron member is encouraged to expand his/her boating knowledge by taking advantage of the USPS courses available. Expand your boating skills by exploring the variety of available courses. You can find descriptions of each of the USPS boating courses and seminars on line at the USPS web site: <http://www.usps.org>. Let your Squadron Education Officer know what your boating course interests are, and he will help you get started. Don't grow stagnant! Remember, “Boating IS Fun...We'll show you how!”



### Take a USPS Course!

- Expand your boating knowledge & skills.
- Become a safe and knowledgeable boater.
- **Boating is FUN...we'll show you how!**

## Administrative Officer

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sao@vulcanonline.org



## Social Waypoints

**Editor's Note:** For the past several years Vulcan Power Squadron has joined the Huntsville Sail and Power Squadron on the Tennessee River for an annual on-the-water activity, with each squadron taking turns as host. In recent years, this activity has been a Poker Run. Last year was our turn to host the event, which we did at Joe Wheeler State Park. However, severe stormy weather on the day of the scheduled Poker Run discouraged us from getting out on the water, so we spent the day visiting and playing games in the Joe Wheeler State Park Lodge. This year, the Huntsville squadron asked us if we would be interested in participating in a cardboard boat race, as something different. As with many activities, the list of Vulcan members who initially expressed interest in participating, narrowed down to a few just before the event. Our participants included Bert Burford and his granddaughter, Destini, Donna Macon, and Lee Stubbs. Bonita Burford and Ed Morgan cheered from the shoreline. Originally scheduled for 7 August, the 2010 Joint Cardboard Boat Race was held at Goose Pond, on Saturday, 21 August. Though new to USPS, both Donna and Lee are long-time boaters, who bring fresh ideas for innovation and "thinking out of the box," as illustrated by Lee's article below, and the great pictures they took.

## And The Winners Are....

### Thinking Outside The Box, Having Fun, and Winning!



### By Lee Stubbs

While waiting for the rain to let up at the Squadron picnic this past June, I listened to Bert Burford tell John Lonsdale-Eccles about a cardboard boat race that Huntsville Sail and Power Squadron was going to host this August (as opposed to a poker run). Odd as it may seem, after having read about cardboard

boat regattas several years earlier, I had given considerable thought to building and racing a cardboard craft. I told Bert that I would definitely be interested. It was later, when it was time to order the boat "kits", that I discovered Bert and John were working individually with their families and I needed to order my own kit and form a team. The first person who came to mind was Donna Macon, another new squadron member who had been in my boating class. One phone call later and she was on board. In fact, she offered her garage as our workshop and had it all set up and ready to go when I arrived on Sunday afternoon, just six days before the race.



Before we began, there was a brief discussion about what our goals were and I asked, "What do you want to do?" Her reply echoed my sentiments exactly, "I want to WIN!" We threw out the pictures that showed how to build a box with a pointy end and started thinking: how do you take a refrigerator box and turn it into something stable, fast and straight-tracking, yet maneuverable? We noodled that one for a while, then took an old pizza box and started cutting, folding and taping until we had the hull shape we wanted; then it was just a matter of scaling it up.



We spent the rest of the evening laying out and cutting the hull and bulkheads. We continued the build over several evenings with the garage door closed, so no spies could learn of our plan or copy it. I can't tell you much else about the build because our methods and processes are proprietary team secrets, but when she was done she was a beauty! With a LOA of 11 feet, a beam of 28 inches, a shallow "V" bottom, hard chine and a slight rocker, she was long, lean, and sexy!



Race day. Donna was confident of victory...I was not. Our little boat looked good and was well-sealed, but still an untested design. Would she meet all of our criteria and perform to our expectations, or would she be ill-handling and turn turtle rounding the first mark? - Serious concerns.

Another consideration was who else might have looked at the pictures and thought they could build something better? Huntsville is full of engineers and rocket scientists - men with advanced degrees who might be capable of designing and building a craft that would make ours look like a 3rd-grade science project. It was a long drive from Birmingham to Scottsboro, with such thoughts weighing on my mind.

We arrived at Goose Pond an hour early - no sign of the Huntsville Sail and Power Squadron, but the Boy Scouts were arriving.



I had heard that a couple of Boy Scouts would participate in the race, but I had no idea that they would field a half dozen boats. I looked at all their boats - some painted, some not - but all built to the highest level of the abilities of twelve-year-olds.



I felt nauseous - I wanted to get in my truck and drive off; I hadn't come to beat up a bunch of Boy Scouts. The boys, however, awed by our sleek double-ender, and sure they had no chance against it, didn't seem to be bothered in the least. They loaded their *Super Soaker* water guns and had a huge water battle before the race. When did we lose that carefree spirit?

Race time! I was relieved to learn there would be two classes of boaters. Boy Scouts would race Boy Scouts, adults would race adults and the winners of the Scouts would race the winner of the adults in the final. We drew lots to decide who would race whom in which heat. I drew a high number and was in the fourth and final heat. I helped steady the boats at the start, so the contestants could get in and ready themselves to race.



I watched from the start line - some boats never made the first





mark before disintegrating or capsizing; others slogged on as their paddles became soaked, rendering them the equivalents of cooked noodles. It became quickly apparent that this was more than a race of speed - it was a race of attrition! No matter how careful the builders were in their construction, the water found a way to enter and begin softening the structures of all the boats.



At last the time came for Heat 4 - the moment of truth - how would our #12 fare? We put her in the water. I eased myself into the cockpit and she settled in, leaving us just a couple of inches of



freeboard, which validated our decision to deck the entire boat. I gave my hips a slight wiggle and found that our small craft was rock steady. I gave the sign I was ready. When the horn sounded I started out, making smooth, easy paddle strokes, not wanting to overtax the flimsy PVC and cardboard paddle. It was flexing quite a bit but working. While I was testing my paddle, another boat pulled alongside - I stroked a little more forcefully. The other boat moved ahead and I realized it was time to go all out. Better to lose from equipment failure than to lose from not

utilizing the equipment to its fullest - so I dug in and overtook my opponent at the first mark.



Rounding the mark was easy - she turned like a sports car and tracked toward the next mark as if she were on rails. I was digging in now, leaving the other boats behind. I rounded the second mark and headed toward the finish knowing we had succeeded in building a solid little boat that performed up to our expectations.



All of the boxes with pointy ends had no chance; we went on to win our class and then the overall fastest. In the end we won not only on speed and agility, but by also having a boat that would hold together for three full turns around the course.

Hats off to the Huntsville Sail and Power Squadron, for coming up with this event - it was truly fun - and while others may not have had as much fun as we did, I think a good time was had by all. For me it was an enjoyable experience all around, from conceptualization to construction to competition. The cookout was great, as was the fellowship, and I can't say enough about the Scouts. What a great thing to include them in this event, and what a great group of young men; they brought more life and more fun to this event than would have been had otherwise. We all need to remember, too, that these young men are our future: the future of our country, the future of boating, and the future of the USPS. Good job Huntsville, and good job Scouts! I hope we will be able to do this again next year. It will be fun, and I'm certain if we do, participation and the levels of fun, fellowship and competition will be even higher!

**[Editor's Comment: Congratulations, Donna, Bert, Destini, and Lee for your efforts and representation of our Vulcan Power Squadron! Hopefully, more squadron members will participate in this fun event next year.]**

# ADRIATIC CRUISE

By Eladio Ruiz De Molina, AP

In July, my wife, Sara, our daughter, Christina, and I went on a cruise in the Adriatic and Aegean Seas, and visited the cities of Venice, Dubrovnik, Athens, Izmir and Naflio. First we spent a day in **Venice** where we discovered the *vaporetti* boats that go from stop to stop picking up and delivering passengers. They are similar to buses on land. As you probably know Venice is composed of multiple islands and canals separating these different islands where people conduct a normal life. The canals were populated with *gondolas* mainly used by tourists.



Gondola and green marker near the Ducal Palace in Venice

Venice was full of architectural styles from different centuries, dominantly Byzantine Gothic from the Middle Ages.



San Marcos Basilica and Ducal Palace in Venice

We stayed in a quaint hotel in the wooded Saint Elena area of Venice with delightful sidewalk cafes which, in contrast with the center of Venice, had extremely good food with reasonable prices. On Saturday, July 24, we left Venice around 1600; it surprised me to see that upon leaving the canal, the green canal



lights and buoys were on the port side. Later on, I asked the captain whether or not he was on the correct side of the channel, and he said that in that part of the world the rule is "Green on green returning," exactly opposite what we do in the U.S. (the picture above was taken as we were leaving Piraeus).

We sailed all night and arrived at **Dubrovnik, Croatia**, on Sunday morning, 25 July.



Tender at Dubrovnik and medieval fortress at right

We took a tour through the medieval city, which is surrounded by a fortified wall. The patron saint of the city was Saint Blaise. In the Middle Ages, Dubrovnik was a rival of Venice and later on was governed by Venice.



From Dubrovnik we went by bus to **Cavtat**, a beautiful resort area where the marina was populated by boats of all sizes and types. The water was warm and crystalline. Cavtat is surrounded by mountains. The small cove had pleasant sidewalk cafes, shops and the Baroque church of St. Nicolas.

We departed Dubrovnik on Sunday night, and sailed all day on Monday, 26 July, in the beautiful waters in the Adriatic, with passing islands and beautiful sunsets. We arrived at **Piraeus** on Tuesday, the 27<sup>th</sup>, and took a tour bus to **Athens**.



We walked up and down hills to get to the Acropolis and finally with crowds of people we were able to see the Parthenon and the temple of Poseidon. To an engineer, the construction of such large edifices with the tools of the era was very impressive. These columns had to be carved, transported from the quarries and assembled with the lack of machinery we have today. Later on, we had lunch in Athens in what is known as *la Plaka*, an

old area of downtown Athens, full of picturesque buildings and shops.

After sailing all night, we arrived the next day, 28 July, in **Izmir, Turkey**, an industrial city full of commerce and life. We took a tour bus to **Ephesus**, one of the largest digs of a Roman city. It was a city where the Roman upper class lived almost as comfortably as we do today. It had infirmaries, libraries, large homes, running water, and a sewage system. At the time, the Aegean port was close to the city; however, over the centuries the river continued to silt the port and the Aegean is now miles from Ephesus.



Library at Ephesus, Turkey

On the way back to Izmir we had lunch at the Hotel Kismet, with a spectacular view overlooking a marina and the **Kusadasi Bay**; everyone was dressed in Roman attire and ate a four course Turkish meal.



Christina in Roman garb at Kusadasi Bay, Turkey



After lunch we went to a factory of oriental carpet weavers where we saw girls putting together beautiful carpets, and were shown many of their wares. They weave cotton, wool, and silk carpets.

White cocoons (see picture above), spun by silk worms, are first soaked in a large bowl of hot water to soften. They are then stirred and pushed into the water until the silk threads loosen. The ends of loose threads are inserted in the pulleys that are mounted on the top of the frame. From the pulleys, the threads are wrapped around a wooden device made up of slats arranged in a cylindrical shape (shown beneath the pulleys). Once the silk threads are wound onto this device, the operator turns a hand crank and unravels multiple cocoons at a time. Each cocoon produces hundreds of meters of silk thread. The threads are so fine that three or more have to be combined so they can be used for weaving.

Our last port of call was **Naflio**, a quaint small Greek town. From there we took a bus ride to **Mycenae**. Along the way we encountered walls, called Cyclopean walls, and arrived at Mycenae, the site discovered by Heinrich Schliemann who was the same amateur archeologist who uncovered Troy. After Mycenae we went to the **fortress of Palamidi in Naflion, Greece**, with beautiful views of the Aegean Sea and its turquoise waters.



View from Palamidi Fortress, Naflion, Greece

Next we sailed back to **Venice**, where we took time to visit the **Museo Storico Navale** and a chandlery as well as small shops and cafes. The museum was full of ship models of different sizes and eras as well as armament, uniforms and instruments. The chandlery was a small establishment on the Rio de la Croce, owned and run by a lady sailor, where I bought a chart of the area and where I learned that there are many charter companies in the Adriatic and the Aegean. The next day we flew back to Atlanta.

*[Editor's note: During a telephone conversation with Eladio, a few weeks ago, he mentioned that they had just returned from a cruise in the Adriatic, and briefly described the trip to me. Fascinated, I asked Eladio if he would consider writing an article for the Nimbus, and share some of the pictures they took. This article is the result. I want to thank Eladio very much for his efforts and for sharing their cruise experiences. I recommend that you take some time to explore the route and the history of the various places they visited (e.g., using Wikipedia and Google). I did, and thoroughly enjoyed the "armchair" visits. I would like to encourage other Vulcan Power Squadron members to consider sharing their cruise experiences also. If you're interested in doing so, please send me an email at: [NimbusEditor@vulcanonline.org](mailto:NimbusEditor@vulcanonline.org).]*

# SUWANNEE RIVER CRUISE

by Lee Stubbs

As Jim mentioned in the last issue of Nimbus, I am new to the Squadron and my interests lie in small craft. I have always had the urge to explore and poke around in out of the way places where most sane people wouldn't go, and small craft are so well suited to that. Paddle or sail, my shallow-draft craft can take me silently where most boats can't go. Be it a quiet anchorage across a shallow bar for a night of solitude under the stars, a small hidden cove for bird watching or even some fishing. I have been meeting many kindred souls down on the west coast of Florida - guys and gals who sail the shallow bays and paddle the wild rivers up and down the Gulf Coast.

It was with some of these new friends that I had the opportunity to paddle the Suwannee River this summer. The Suwannee is the last of the major rivers in the southeast that remains unspoiled, thanks in part to the State of Florida and the Suwannee River Water Board controlling development along its banks. The Suwannee herself deserves a great deal of the credit, as her frequent floods continually scour her banks clean of things man-made. Starting in the Okefenokee Swamp, she meanders 266 miles through southern Georgia and across Florida before she pours into the Gulf of Mexico, twelve miles north of Cedar Key. The Suwannee is what is known as a *black water* river; slowly flowing from the forested swamps, the leaves falling into the river decay, leeching out tannins that stain the water a dark red. Dark, yet not turbid, black-water rivers are unique to the southeastern U.S. and the Amazon basin.

Our host was Ted Jean, who generously opened his cabin to us and acted as our guide. Ted grew up in the Tampa area and now lives on the east coast, but he spends much of his spare time at his cabin and out on the river he so dearly loves.

We were a rag-tag looking bunch, with sit-on-top kayaks, touring kayaks, a rowing canoe and Tom Busenlener's square-sterned canoe with a trolling motor. Tom is physically unable to paddle long distances anymore, but he hasn't let that keep him off the water.

We put our boats in the water at the public launch site under the blue bridge, where Florida Highway 51 crosses over the Suwannee River (north of the town of Mayo), and paddled about



twenty miles down-river to the town of Branford, where we took our boats out. Ted's cabin was about midway, so we broke the trip into two days.

This was the last section of the river with shoals that make it

very dicey for power boats, so we didn't see any other boats out on the river until just before we reached Branford. What a treat it was to glide down this lazy, dark river with only the occasional trace of man's existence. Trees reaching out over the river, shading the layered limestone of the bank, a heron fishing in the shallows - I am sure it didn't look much different a thousand years ago when only the Indians were here, or even in the 1530's when De Soto first visited the area. It is a magical place and history is everywhere.



We visited the remains of the steamer, Madison, that was driven into the *spring run* at Troy Spring (a large spring on the west bank of the river), scuttled and burned during the Civil War to keep her out of Union hands. [Editor's note: the course taken by a spring flowing into a river is called a "spring run."] Every few miles, a spring would bubble up from the earth, its clear, cold water running off to co-mingle with the dark waters of the river on its long journey to the Gulf. There are more than fifty named springs that issue forth from the banks of the Suwannee, and they became welcome havens as the temperatures climbed up into the 90's, their cool waters a brief respite from the heat of the day. Some of the larger springs have been taken over by the State, made into State Parks and are frequented by locals.



The Suwannee has so many faces and so much to offer in the way of recreation, from Big Shoals, the only white water in the State of Florida, to the Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge in the delta. The Suwannee River Wilderness Trail starts in the narrower, faster flowing waters at White Springs, and extends 170 miles to the Gulf, with wilderness camps or other campgrounds within ten miles of one another. On the lower Suwannee, below Fanning Springs, there are many outfitters that will take you out on river tours; and the fishing is excellent. Did I mention the Suwannee River Sturgeon - the huge prehistoric-looking fish that leap completely from the water, scaring the beeggeezus out of you? Pretty cool as long as they don't land on you ..... it has happened!

If you like wilderness, and would like to have a look at what old Florida was like, then a trip to the Suwannee should be on your bucket list. See ya there!

## From the Webmaster

The VPS website ([www.vulcanonline.org](http://www.vulcanonline.org)) can use your input. Seen a link that you'd like to share with other boaters? Let us know about it. Maybe you've read a book that you think other boaters would enjoy. We've got a page just for that.

The website is a great way to share photos of on-the-water activities. New photos also help us keep the website more current - a very important task for the webmaster!

Check out the website at [www.vulcanonline.org](http://www.vulcanonline.org). If you know of something we should add or maybe something we should change to improve the website, you're encouraged to submit it to our webmaster at [webmaster@vulcanonline.org](mailto:webmaster@vulcanonline.org).

**A Sailor's Glossary** - A history of current and not-so-current nautical words and phrases

**Lubber's Line**- The vertical line or mark in a compass bowl which represents the bow of the ship, enabling a course to be steered by bringing the lubber's line to the point on the compass card indicating the desired course. To "chase the lubber's line," is to be unable to hold a steady course.

**Lunar Observation** - The process of observing the moon's position relative to other heavenly bodies (lunar distance) to determine the precise time allowing a ship's longitude to be determined without the aid of a chronometer. Prior to the development of reliable, sea-worthy chronometers, navigators had to use these observations, along with Nautical Almanacs of predicted lunar distances, to establish the exact time so that other celestial observations could be used to determine longitude.

## **Trivia Questions...**

1) Thought to draw its name from the French or Venetian words for "forty" or "group of forty," this is a harbor restriction placed on a ship which has an infectious disease on board or has come from a port or country known to have disease. During this restriction, no one may leave the ship. While practiced earlier, the restrictions became law after a Council of Health held in Venice in the 14th Century.

2) From the Greek word for "diary," this is an astronomical almanac in which are tabulated the predicted celestial positions of heavenly bodies against a standard time, usually Greenwich Mean Time.

**See answers below.**

1) Answer: **Quarantine**

2) Answer: **Ephemeris**

## **Recommended reading**

***Latitude Hooks and Azimuth Rings: How to Build and Use 18 Traditional Navigational Instruments***  
by Dennis Fisher (176 pages, paperback)

Given my sometimes challenged attention span, I really like the way this book is laid out. With the exception of the first chapter, each chapter stands alone, covering the construction and use of a traditional (read "really old") navigational instrument. For this reason, the book can be read in any order you like and you can skip over chapters without affecting your enjoyment of other parts of the book.

More than the how-to on building these devices, I liked the mini history lessons on why these devices were used in the first place. That said, the challenge to give the reader the information needed to actually make and use the instruments requires the author to include details that a theoretical introduction might leave out.

As for the projects themselves, some, like the Kamal and Latitude Hook, are quite simple. Others, like the Astrolabe, Astronomical Ring, and Sundial, will have to wait for my carpentry skills to improve.

As I say on the website (you have visited the website, right?), "Even if you don't build any of these old devices, you'll gain some great insights with this book. It demonstrates not only how the ancients navigated, but also how one can use simple devices and a bit of trigonometry to accurately determine things like latitude and range."

***Editor's Note: If you have read any good boating-related books that you would like to share with VPS members, please prepare a brief synopsis, as Steve has done with this book, and email it to me at [NimbusEditor@vulcanonline.org](mailto:NimbusEditor@vulcanonline.org).***



# 2010 VPS Calendar of Events

	<b>January</b> 21 January  28 January	Executive Committee Meeting  Annual Business Meeting
	<b>February</b> 1-6 February 18 February 25 February	2010 USPS Annual Meeting - Orlando, FL Executive Committee Meeting Annual Change of Watch Dinner Meeting
	<b>March</b> 18 March 19-21 March 25 March	Executive Committee Meeting D-17 Spring Conference General Membership Meeting
	<b>April</b> 15 April 22 April	Executive Committee Meeting General Membership Meeting
	<b>May</b> 1 May 13 May 27 May	Cahaba River Canoe Float Executive Committee Meeting General Membership Meeting
	<b>June</b> 7 June 12 June 19 June	Instructor Development Course start New Member Orientation Cruise Annual VPS Picnic
	<b>July</b> 8 July	Executive Committee Meeting
	<b>August</b> 21 August	Joint VPS-Huntsville Cardboard Boat Race
	<b>September</b> 16 September 18 September 23 September	Executive Committee Meeting VPS Fall Picnic General Membership Meeting
	<b>October</b> 21 October 28 October	Executive Committee Meeting General Membership Meeting
	<b>November</b> 18 November	Executive Committee Meeting
	<b>December</b> 2 December	Annual VPS Christmas Dinner Party



The United States Power Squadrons ([www.usps.org](http://www.usps.org)), America's largest non-profit boating organization, with over 60,000 members, is comprised of 450 squadrons, organized into 33 regional districts. Vulcan Power Squadron ([www.vulcanonline.org](http://www.vulcanonline.org)) is part of District 17 ([www.usps-d17.org](http://www.usps-d17.org)), which serves the inland areas of Tennessee, North Carolina, Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina. The activities of the thirteen squadrons in D-17, include a wide variety of boating and sailing adventures in water areas ranging from the massive and beautiful rivers and reservoirs of the Tennessee Valley to peaceful mountain lakes and whitewater rapids, to the mighty Mississippi.

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