



DISTRICT 20

Membership Newsletter—Volume 67 Issue 1
Winter-Spring 2025

TRIDENT

UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS®

is AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB®



D20 Spring Conference 2025
Friday - Saturday March 28— 29, 2025
Holiday Inn Elgin

Internet Addresses
USPS: www.usps.org
D/20: www.uspsd20boating.org

**UNITED STATES
POWER SQUADRONS®**

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not necessarily those of D/20 and USPS

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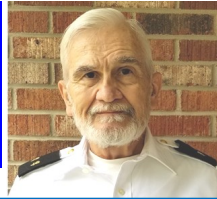
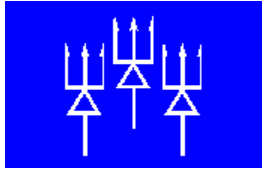
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**TRIDENT
DEADLINE
15 SEPTEMBER
2025**



**DISTRICT
COMMANDER**

D/C Jesse Bowen, JN

Over the last several weeks, many of those of us who own boats have been hauling them out and preparing them for rest until the spring sun returns. I hope everyone had a great boating season! This time of year causes me some regret that we live in a region with just a partial-year boating season. (Although we do get to skip the hurricanes – no small benefit of Great Lakes boating.) But I am also reminded of that famous quote from Kenneth Grahame's classic *Wind in the Willows*, when Water Rat says to Mole: "*Believe me, my young friend, there is nothing—absolutely nothing—half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats.*" Sage advice, indeed!

Yet that quote also causes me to ask whether we are passing on that advice to younger generations. How many of our children and grandchildren have taken up our boating lifestyle? True, there are more barriers than there used to be. Cost of a vessel and its upkeep are often cited. As an example, in 1960 a 19' Christ Craft runabout went for \$3500, at a time when median family income was about \$3000. However, list price of a 19' Sea Ray runabout is in the range of \$55,000 and current U.S. median income in Illinois is about \$78,000. So comparatively, initial ownership cost is actually a smaller percentage of income.

I think it is more likely that younger families just have many more choices when it comes to how they spend their time and income. Sports, the online world, and other family activities vie for attention in ways that weren't as common several decades ago. The future of our local squadrons, our district, and indeed our national organization will depend on finding ways to broaden the appeal of both boating and involvement in America's Boating Club.

Perhaps we also need to spread the allure of boating evoked in a later episode of *Wind in the Willows*, when Sea Rat conveys to Water Rat his goal: "*...at its destined hour, the ship of my choice will let go its anchor... We shall break out the jib and the foresail, the white houses on the harbour side will glide slowly past us as she gathers steering-way, and the voyage will have begun!... Take the Adventure, heed the call, now ere the irrevocable moment passes!*"

Happy Holidays to all, with wishes for a quick return to boating in the spring.

D/C Jesse Bowen, JN
District Commander



**DISTRICT
EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Cdr Frank D'Amico, AP

The D20 Fall conference was held in Peoria, IL at the Marriott Pere Marquette. We conducted business as usual with D/C Jesse Bowen, JN, giving us a recap of the Governing Board Meeting Items.

Squadron Commanders / representatives gave a brief report on the activities of their squadron. Fox Valley, Michigan City, Rockford and Skokie Valley held America's Boating Club Courses. Mid-Illini held a Boat Handling class in preparation for the BVI Flotilla (January 2026). Squadrons held various cookouts, dinners and special events to keep their members engaged. Rockford and Skokie Valley reported on VSC inspections. A copy of Squadron reports can be found in [my D20 Conference report](#).

Boat Show Chairman Stf/C Mike Ludtke, SN-ACN has been very busy preparing for D20 return to the Chicago Boat show on 8 January 2025 to 12 January 2025. This year it was held at the Donald E. Stephens Convention & Conference Center in Rosemont, IL. With the approval of the Council and the assistance of P/D/C Karen D'Amico, AP (Marketing Chair), three National brochures were customized for D20 to be distributed at the boat show. The brochures include the [America's Boating Course](#), [Member Education](#), and VSC. With the help of Squadron Commanders and Squadron Educational Officers, I was able to collect information on classes that will be offered by each Squadron in their area. Inserts with class information, location, cost and contact were created. One listing courses to be placed in the [America's Boating Course](#) brochure and the other listing advanced classes to be placed in the Member Education brochures.

Thank you to all that helped bring this event together. I am confident that the new location and material will drive more individuals to take the America's Boating Course and increase awareness of our organization.

With the help of our Boat Show support. The Council members also reviewed various marketing materials that we will be using at the show. These marketing options will be used to promote our squadrons and district education and member benefits. This is a good time to start planning your squadron's spring boating classes so that we have a complete list to promote at the boat show.

For 2024, there were 144 vessel safety checks performed by 20 examiners. Resulting in 129 vessels passing. For 2023, there were 158 vessel safety checks performed by 19 examiners. 148 vessels passed. Thanks to all the Examiners for your continuing

efforts in this important program.

P/D/C Dennis McNamara, JN (Chairman Legislative Committee) included a full report on various ongoing legislative programs including a very important issue that the U.S. Coast Guard has implemented.

Currently, if someone wants to check to see if their boat has any recalls you may go to our website at www.uscgboating.org/content/recalls.php. From there you can search by MIC, Company, Model and Model Year. While the search results will provide recall information related to those fields, it will not identify if a specific boat is affected by a recall, and it can be a little labor intensive to determine if a recall applies to a particular boat. However, if you go to www.nhtsa.gov/recalls you can simply enter your car's specific VIN number to check for recalls on your car and get recall information on various other automotive equipment. Karen and I will be attending the USPS Annual Meeting in Orlando, FL in February. I hope to get some additional information on the progress of iMIS, the Facebook optimization process and the general status of USPS.

March 28th and 29th have been set as the date for D20's Spring Conference and Change of Watch. I would like to thank Skokie Valley for accepting the responsibility of hosting this event. The Spring Conference will be held at the Holiday Inn & Suites in Elgin, IL. Skokie Valley has been busy planning activities and a speaker for that weekend. The registration form is listed in this issue of the Trident.

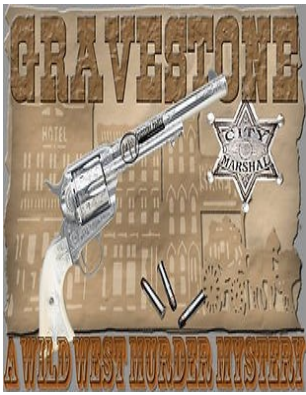
I have been very fortunate that most of the Squadron Commanders have been active and receptive to my inquiries and requests for information on their activities and events. I hope to continue this in the new year.

I hope D20 members will be able to attend the upcoming Conference in Elgin to hear about what is going on with Squadrons across the District.

Wishing you Happy New Year.

D/Lt/C Frank D'Amico, AP

District Executive Officer



WILD WEST
MURDER
MYSTERY
JOIN IN FOR A
"WILD" GOOD
TIME!



**DISTRICT 20 Spring
CONFERENCE**

28 - 29 March 2025

**HOLIDAY INN & SUITES
CHICAGO NORTHWEST - ELGIN**

**495 Airport Road Elgin, Illinois
60123**

Room Rates: King Standard \$115 per night, Double Queen Standard \$125 per night, Junior King Suite \$129 per Night, and King Executive Suite \$135 per night. Room block is limited.

Make reservations by 13 March: use this link: [United States Power Squadron District 20](#) **Group Code: USP** or call 847-488-9000 and reference "United States Power Squadron District 20" to receive the discounted rate.

Rank	Name	Grade	Squadron	Email	Telephone
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Lunch: Price \$32.00 per person. All lunches include Bennigan's potato soup, coffee and soda station.

- #1 _____ Very Berry Salad
- #2 _____ Turkey O'Toole
- #3 _____ Grilled Chicken Ceasar Wrap

Dinner: Includes Cream of chicken & wild rice soup, rolls, seasonal vegetables, potatoes, and NY cheesecake. Coffee and soft drinks.

- #1 _____ \$50.00 Chicken Marsala
- #2 _____ \$55.00 Grilled Salmon
- #3 _____ \$58.00 Grilled Ribeye

<u>No. Attending</u>		<u>Total</u>
_____	x \$32.00 Lunch	\$ _____
_____	Dinner Cost	\$ _____
TOTAL \$		_____

Schedule of Events

Friday 28 March

- 1500 — 1800 Registration (Conference Center)
- 1830 — 2100 Cocktails/Cash Bar
- 1900 — 2100 Wild West Murder Mystery
- 2100 — 2300 Hospitality Suites

Saturday 29 March

- 0700 — 1100 Friendship
- 0800 — 1100 Registration (Conference Center)
- 0900 — 0950 Educational Officer Meeting
- 1000 — 1050 CC Message & National Meeting Highlights
- 1100 — 1150 Guest Speaker, Ron Luttrell, Maritime Historian
- 1200 — 1300 Lunch and Raffle Prizes
- 1315 — 1330 Verification of Delegates
- 1330 — 1530 Spring Conference
- 1700 — 1800 Cocktail Hour/Cash Bar
- 1800 — 2030 Banquet and Change of Watch
- 2030—2230 Hospitality Suites

Dress Code:

- Friday night Western attire or casual
- Saturday: Uniform G (short sleeve shirt, no tie or Suitable business casual attire
- Banquet USPS dress uniform or suitable attire

Make checks payable to: Skokie Valley Power Squadron

Registration and check should be sent by **Wednesday, March 12, 2025** to:

Frank D'Amico
1240 Bison Lane
Hoffman Estates, IL 60192



Friday Night Activity – Wild West Murder Mystery

Join Bella Starry and the whole D20 gang at the Gravestone Saloon (in the Conference Center) on Friday March 28, 7:00-9:00 PM for a Wild West celebration and a murder mystery to solve. We will have a full bar, specialty cocktails, and saloon platters (cheeseburgers, potato skins, onion rings, egg rolls, and chicken quesadillas). Optional attire: western-style shirt, bandana, cowboy hat, and boots. Or are you one of those outlaws that threaten our town?

The story...

The presiding mayor of Gravestone, Arizona, must live in constant fear, for an unidentified killer has put bullet holes in the previous three sheriffs' backs. As a result, Gravestone is a lawless town run by a ruthless gang known as The Ranchers.

The famous Wylie Arp retired early as the Duck City, Kansas, sheriff. Wylie is one of the most feared lawmen in the United States—a legend in his own right. He left his life as a law enforcer and traveled west toward Gravestone with his brothers and friends, planning to sink his life savings into a business in what he believed to be a quiet and safe town. He intended to live the rest of his days stress-free as a civilian, but little did he know what awaited him in Gravestone.

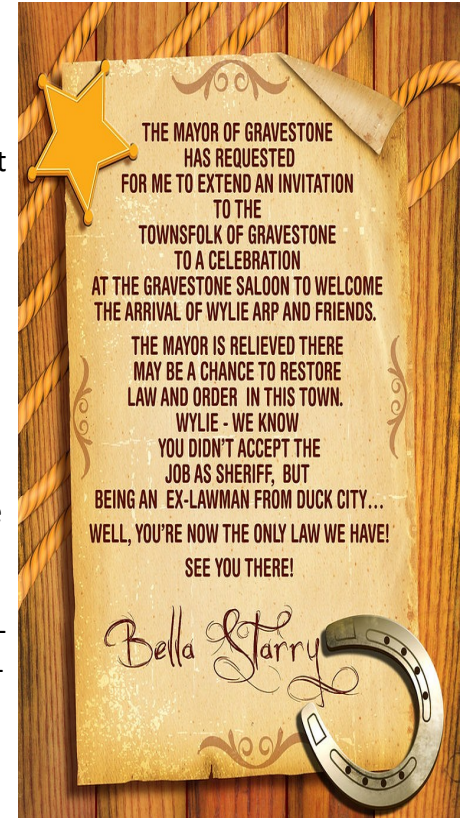
The mayor caught wind of Wylie's arrival and immediately requested that Bella Starry invite the town for a celebration. The mayor hopes that Wylie and his brothers will consider taking over Gravestone's law enforcement. Moreover, with Wylie's untarnished reputation, the mayor hopes it will be easy for him to get The Ranchers under control - or, better yet - run them out of town.

Wylie has a few days to settle in and get a feel for the town before everyone gathers for an exciting night at the Gravestone Saloon. Unfortunately, the sheriff's station is collecting dust, so preventing The Ranchers or other outlaws from attending the event will be impossible.

Not everything is doom and gloom, however. An elder in town has divulged that secret codes hidden around the city will lead to buried treasure in the Gravestone Cave on the outskirts of town. Many folks are already hunting for these codes but have yet to be discovered. The hunt has kept the outlaws busy, which has been good for the town.

Nevertheless, Bella Starry has an agenda to keep everyone happy during the gathering: festive beverages, delicious food, and a few Wild West party games. So, hopefully, everyone will keep their guns holstered and be on their best behavior. But the question is—will Wylie help Gravestone or slip away in the night to move on to the next town?

We hope you plan to attend the celebration at the Gravestone Saloon Friday evening.



Ron Luttrell is the guest speaker on Saturday. He was the docent during the tour of the Kenosha Lighthouse at the Cruise & Rendezvous in August. Ron will share a presentation about lighthouses and shipwrecks on Lake Michigan. Mr. Luttrell is the Keeper and Historian of the Southport Lighthouse Museum in Kenosha

D20 Needs Your Help!

D20 is looking for squadrons who want to host or individuals who want to help organize upcoming District events like the Summer Cruise & Rendezvous, Fall Conference, and 2026 Spring Conference. Please talk to one of the D20 Bridge Officers if you can help.

The **Cruise & Rendezvous**, typically 1 day in July or August, should be a fun on or near the water event. The only requirement is a place to hold a short (1 hour) D20 Council meeting on a Saturday. We usually incorporate a group lunch before or after the meeting. Beyond that, we can take advantage of nearby entertainment options on Saturday. Friday night and/or Saturday night accommodations and activities are also optional depending on the location. The venue can be a marina, yacht club, restaurant, or other location with a private meeting space and food nearby.

The **Fall Conference** in October is a 1-day event celebrating educational achievements of our squadrons. It is held on a Saturday, usually with seminars or speakers in the morning, a group lunch, and Conference meeting / educational awards in the afternoon. Depending on the venue, it can include entertainment or hospitality suites on Friday evening. It does not include a formal dinner on Saturday evening. It may include a hospitality suite to gather after the Conference or evening dinner/entertainment, if desired. The venue can be a hotel, meeting hall, or other location that can be rented for the day with a restaurant or catering options.

The **Spring Conference** in March is a 2-day event that includes the District Change of Watch. It starts on Friday night where squadrons host individual hospitality suites. The host can also organize an activity for the whole District to gather Friday evening, since some squadrons do not opt to get a hospitality room. Saturday starts early with a friendship room coffee and assorted pastries, department workshops, seminars and a guest speaker. Group lunch at the venue. Conference meeting and elections in the afternoon. Formal dinner and Change of Watch in the evening. The venue is usually a hotel for this event.

An updated conference planning manual is available with all the details for any squadrons interested in hosting one of these events. Contact Karen D'Amico (the 2025 Spring Conference Chair) at kdamico@ameritech.net to get a copy of the conference planning manual.

The Annual Meeting is February 5-9, 2025. Many fun activities are Planned. Including:

THE OUTTA CONTROL MAGIC COMEDY DINNER
GATORLAND
TITANIC: THE ARTIFACT EXHIBITION
Family Friendly Feud—The game Show for Boaters
Roll Back the Clock — The 70's are BACK
Check it all out at <https://www.usps.org>



D/20 Nominating Committee Report

In accordance with the Bylaws of District 20, the following members are hereby nominated for election at the 2017 District 20 Spring Conference. All nominees have agreed to serve if

<u>Office</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Squadron</u>
District Commander	Crd Frank D'Amico AP	Skokie Valley
Executive Officer	Lt/C George Prescott, SN	DuPage
Educational Officer	D/Lt/C Fred Schuster, JN	Waukegan
Administrative Officer	L/C Clint Rahn, AP	Waukegan
Secretary	D/Lt/C Anita Donkers, AP	DuPage
Treasurer	D/Lt/C Joan Eichorst, SN	DuPage
Assistant Education Off.	Cdr Brian Markey, JN	Waukegan

Nominating Committee

Chair	P/D/C Rich Davidson, SN-ACN	Skokie Valley
Vice Chair	P/D/C Mike Ludtke, SN-ACN	Waukegan
2nd Vice Chair	P/D/C Jesse Bowen, JN	Waukegan
Member (1 year)	P/C Gerry Christman, AP	Mid Illini
Member (2 years)	Cdr Daryl Moore, AP	DuPage

Rules Committee

Chair	Stf/C Robert Canfield, JN	Rockford
Member	P/D/C Natalie Witty, JN	Skokie Valley
Member	Cdr Mary A. Merrell, SN	Fox Valley

Audit Committee

Chair	P/C Janice M. North, AP	DuPage
Member (1 Year)	P/C Dave Salmann, JN	Waukegan
Member (2 Years)	Ron Dziagwa	Skokie Valley

Submitted by the Nominating Committee:

Terry Phillips, P (Chair)	Richard Davidson, SN-CAN	Mike Ludtke, SN-CAN
Gerry Christman, AP	Daryl Moore, AP	

Chicago Boat Show

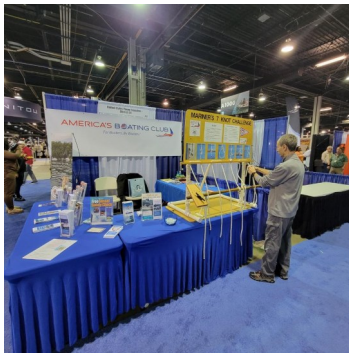
The Chicago Boat Show is moving out of Chicago to Rosemont in January 2025. This should attract more suburban boaters, and wanna-be boaters. This is the audience we need to reach. Most of our classes and events are held in the suburbs, not downtown Chicago. Another perk to the move is lower parking costs, at just \$15 for the day.

To increase our exposure with the public, we will have a 10x10' booth at the show, which runs January 8-12 (Wednesday to Sunday). We need your help. Volunteers to talk with the public about our classes and membership options, typically we ask for two or three hours for a shift. And more importantly we need the squadrons, or more specifically squadron educational officers, to have the classes in place and scheduled in HQ-800. If we can get the classes in place now, we can show the potential students when and where the classes will be held and even give them the option to sign up

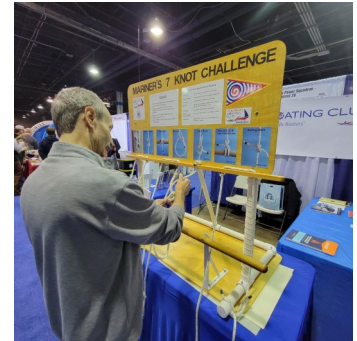
If you have questions or are ready to sign up, my contact information is below. You can learn more about the show at www.chicagoboatshow.com.

Mike Ludtke

BoatShow@wspsoating.org



The District 20 booth had many attendees stop by during the 2025 Chicago Boat Show. The Knot Board was one draw, another was the many brochures on boating. In anticipation of next year's show, suggestions were made by the volunteers.



District 20 Calendar 2024-2025

Oct. 25-26	Fall Education Conference	Pere Marquette Hotel, Peoria IL
Dec. 7	District Commander's Holiday Party & Council Meeting	Woodstock, IL
2025		
Jan. 8-12	Chicago Boat Show	Rosemont Convention Center
Jan. 15	Winter/Spring Trident Articles Due	Submit to Terry Phillips
Feb TBD	Northern Illinois Boat Show	Lake County Fairground
Feb. 1-10	National Annual Meeting	Orlando, FL
Feb. 27	Winter District 20 Bridge Meeting	6:30 PM via Zoom
Mar. 6	Winter District 20 Council Meeting	6:30 PM via Zoom
Mar. 28-29	Spring Conference & District COW	TBD / Holiday Inn, Elgin IL

The Cruise & Rendezvous was held in Kenosha, Wisconsin. There was good weather, and such fun at Harbor Park with food, music, and bundt cakes for dessert.

On Saturday the council meeting was held at Kenosha Tap House. That night was the comedy club, it was a busy weekend.



All of America's Boating Channel videos are available to USPS members to screen and download for free at bit.ly/USPSABC. This is very convenient for instructors who want to use the videos in the classroom without the need for an internet connection.





The officers: Cdr. Frank D'Amico, AP ; Cdr. Bryan Hunt, AP; D/Lt/C Joan Eichorst, SN; D/Lt/C Fred Schuster, AP; and D/C Jesse Bowen, JN

Fall Education Conference at Marriott Pere Marquette Hotel in Peoria on October 25-26th
 Meetings ended and the fun began.



Fred Schuster, Ellen Ludtke, Brian Markey, Bob Canfield, and Mike Ludtke

