



AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB
UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS®



CHARLOTTE



Side Lights

September 2025

Volume 64 Number 7

View from the Bridge

Spread the word: We are a social organization

By Charles "Bo" Ibach III

What is the United States Power Squadrons or America's Boating Club?

We're an organization that is now 111 years old: one that is made up of many recreational boaters intent with a goal of having fun, being safe and hopefully continuing to educate others on the rules and respect for being safer boaters.

Sadly, as times change, so many members of the younger generation have seen fit to no longer be interested in joining — let alone participating in — an organized club, especially one that has so many gray-haired members. Thus, our ranks continue to dwindle over time. There have been many efforts to entice younger people to join but with little success.

However, we have the perfect draw for increasing our membership and that of our District. That draw is our property at Merit Mark Point on Lake Wylie. Boaters, especially those who dry store their boats or those who rent slips at various marinas, generally have no place to go when they're out on the lake. So, Merit Mark Point is the perfect place for them to go. We need to continue to get the word out to these potential members that we have the facility that they can enjoy for a nominal sum — all year long!

When we add new members, we need to continue to encourage them to participate in other activities that we have been enjoying for so many years. These include our barbecues, Children's Outing, summer get together functions, coastal rendezvous, Christmas party, etc. And we need to let them know we're a social group first and foremost.



Photo by BREVARD MYERS JR.

Correction: Brevard Myers Jr. took this photo of Commander Bo off the South Carolina coast. Newsletter editor Ken Elkins incorrectly gave himself credit for the shot in the July-August Side Lights.

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If our club on the National and District level had similar draws, America's Boating Club would be in much better shape.

So as Commander of Charlotte for the fourth time and hopefully the incoming Commander of District next year, I challenge all of us to see what we can do to reach out to prospects and let them know about us and the benefits of joining America's Boating Club-Charlotte, a unit of the United States Power Squadrons.

Charles "Bo" Ibach III SN-ACN is commander of ABC-Charlotte and Executive Officer of District 27 and is a U.S. Coast Guard licensed captain and is "a friend to all members."

Coastal Rendezvous on Oak Island at Blue Crab Shack

By John A. King II

Hello, America's Boating Club-Charlotte.

Connie and I are very excited to be hosting you on September 19, 2025, at our beach house on Oak Island during the Coastal Rendezvous/Coop Charting event. Our address is 2802 East Yacht Drive (be aware that there is a 2802 West Yacht Drive as well). If the house, a.k.a. Blue Crab Shack, is Blue, you are at the right one.

Our theme will be a Red, White and Blue Party. Be sure to wear something Red, White and/or Blue. We also will have a game or two to play. And the one with the coolest, craziest or wildest accessory to the outfit just might win something. There will also be some trivia about the ocean, the coastal area, boating and maybe even the United States Power Squadrons/America's Boating Club.

Chef Brevard "Boyardee" Myers will be stirring up his great Low Country Boil. It's delicious and well worth the voyage to the coast. In addition, all those with last names starting A to K should bring an hors d'oeuvre or a side dish. Those last names starting with L-Z should bring a dessert.

Can't wait.

P/C John A. King II AP and Capt. Connie W. King, aboard Carolina STARR



The Lorie Ann cruises off Southport, the site of ABC-Charlotte's 2025 Coastal Rendezvous.

How to get on the water safely

By Brevard Myers Jr.

Find a boat to purchase at the annual boat show, go down to the waterfront, hop on the boat with family and friends and go have fun on a local lake. Or just use the more economical route and rent or buy a canoe or kayak, toss it in the water and go. Sounds easy, but is it safe? What should a boat operator know ahead of this time?

P/C Ken Elkins asked if I would write an article about boating safety and getting on the water safely. What I can stress most is wear your personal floatation device.

However, there are two main safety areas to address – the boat and the operator's education.

Boating in general

- **Start Small** – If you are new to boating, start small. Get comfortable with the boat as you learn the skills needed. Launching, docking, anchoring and operating in large open water and in tight conditions are skills that take practice. It's best to start with a small boat, which is easier to pilot.
- **Get guidance** – A mentor, boating club, seminars or safe boating classes offer guidance for your boating. For hands-on experience, a knowledgeable boater onboard with a novice operator can be a great help, especially in our coastal waters. Learn about safety and hazards associated with boating. For example, putting gas in a boat is much more hazardous than putting gas in an automobile. Rules of the road are important. The navigation system and navigation skills using a chart and a GPS (separately from each other) are important, especially at the coast or at night. Know systems and operation of your boat. (Where is the drain plug when I need it? What is a blower and how do I use it?) Know courtesy practices and use them at the boat ramp. The ramp is for launching a boat, not setting the boat up to launch, loading equipment or doing maintenance.

The Boat and Equipment

When I first started boating, I would reference the Federal Boating Guide brochure for required equipment. That was to help keep me legal while in the water. That is not enough to be safe on the water. Some equipment such as dock lines, anchor and anchor line, first aid kit and other personal items may be needed to for safe operation of your boat. These are not included in the required items. Consider safety as the goal with all things boating.

- **Safety items for the boat** – Personal floating devices, a "throwable device," fire extinguisher, whistle or horn and other needed equipment. Refer to the items listed in the Americas Boating Club – Vessel Safety Check. [VSC-Vessel Safety Check Form PDF](#)
- **Weather** – Is the weather a factor for my boating activity? Consider the forecast for temperature, wind (and resultant waves), rain etc. that may influence the boat or comfort of the passengers. Is the boat capable of dealing with the weather factor? Are the operator and crew capable of dealing with the weather factor?
- **Navigation & Navigation Charts** – Will you need a compass? Have you reviewed charts for your navigation area? Are they adequate and up-to-date? Coastal charts can be investigated and high-resolution custom charts downloaded as a PDF file from NOAA's chart site. <https://nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/>

NOAA also has the primary ENC (Electronic Navigation Charts), multi-layer digital charts for use on certain personal computer charting programs such as OpenCPN. <https://opencpn.org/> Google Maps is nice, but it will



Brevard Myers Jr. writes on boating safety.

not help with navigation aids, channels, expected water depths, currents, tides and route information available on charting programs. Many apps are available as an aid to navigation. Know where you are going before you leave the shore.

Note - Packaged navigation units such as Garmin, Simrad, Lowrance and others are not official navigation products. Legally they are an aid to your navigation and their chart data/information is not meant to be your primary or official navigation information source. Official navigation charts from NOAA are updated weekly with updated Notice to Mariner information corrections. When is your product updated?

- Emergency equipment – Personal flotation devices, first-aid equipment, fire extinguisher, communication equipment (phone, phone service availability, VHF radio, VHF radio range, EPIRB [Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon]), potable water and more.

The Vessel Operator

The vessel operator is the most important safety factor. It is the vessel operator and not the owner who is responsible for the legal and safe operation of that vessel. All the items listed above require skills, and the operator needs to understand and use them effectively. The operator needs to understand the limits of the vessel and of his experience when deciding about the safe operation of his vessel.

- Use a Float Plan – We want everyone to make it to home port safely. To verify that the vessel has returned, arrange for a responsible person onshore to have the vessel's boating schedule and information. This includes 1) when and where a trip is started, 2) route/schedule, 3) when and where you plan to return, 4) vessel description, 5) people onboard and 6) emergency contact information. This is the "Float Plan." If you do not check back or are otherwise "missing" with no contact by phone, etc., the responsible party can report the vessel late or missing so that help can be started. The Float Plan gives others a chance to find you.

An Educated Boater is A Safer Boater. With the America's Boating Course, we are reaching out to the public to help educate them about many aspects of boating. The Vessel Safety Check helps boaters verify that their vessel exceeds what is required by law so that they are safer on the water.

The Cooperative Charting Rendezvous coming up this month offers a great opportunity to learn about coastal boating. Commander Bo Ibach and I are scheduled to have our boats on the water in the Southport area. This includes the largest portion of the Cape Fear River, the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, the Atlantic Ocean and Cape Fear. I have boated in all these areas with my 15-foot skiff so do not let size intimidate you. We welcome any member who wants to bring their boat also. We can arrange for members with experience to assist newer coastal boaters.

We encourage vessel operators to seek education and have their vessels inspected each year. I do.

Lt/C Brevard S Myers Jr. SN-ACN is Squadron Educational Officer.

America's Boating Club-Charlotte

A unit of the United States Power Squadrons

District 27

Chartered April 10, 1961



2025 BRIDGE OFFICERS

Commander
Educational Officer
Executive Officer
Administrative Officer
Secretary
Treasurer
Immediate Past Commander

D/Lt/C Charles "Bo" Ibach III SN-ACN
Lt/C Brevard S. Myers Jr. SN-ACN
Open
Lt/C Warren François
Lt/C Rose Samonds
P/Lt/C Mary D. Chaney JN
P/C Jack Moore AP-IN

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2025 MEMBERS AT-LARGE

P/C Dan Bartell SN-ACN
P/C Doug Drum Sr. AP
P/C Marvin Chaney Jr. SN
P/C William G. Granger P-IN
Lt Shaun Haycock

Lt Pat Mencil S
P/C David Stewart AP
P/D/C Paula Stewart AP
P/C Jack Moore JN-IN

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The opinions expressed in the articles of this publication are those of the writers and are not necessarily those of the America's Boating Club-Charlotte or the United States Power Squadrons.

Happy Birthdays!

September

Dan Bartell, Ken Elkins, Evelyn Johnson, Sandy Moore, Shaun Haycock, Gerald Privette, George Rogers Jr., Travis Simpson, Paula Stewart, Nichole Williford, Mary Williams



Calendar of Events for September 2025

September 2025

Day	Event	Time	Location/Details
2	Rock-On Rowing (women's rowing)	9:15 a.m.-1 p.m.	Pat Hakanson's home
4-7	USPS Fall Governing Board	Various (Details Page 7)	Grand Rapids, Michigan
9	Rock-On Rowing (women's rowing)	9:15 a.m.-1 p.m.	Pat Hakanson's home
15	ABC-CLT ExCom Meeting	6 p.m. dinner; 7 p.m. meeting	Jocks & Jills
16	Wylie Gator Rowing (men and women)	10 a.m.-2 p.m.	Pat Hakanson's home
18-21	ABC-Charlotte Coastal Rendezvous	Various (Details Page 2)	Southport and Kings' home
30	Rock-On Rowing makeup day	9:15 a.m.-1 p.m.	Pat Hakanson's home

Jocks & Jills – 4109 South Stream Boulevard, Charlotte
MarineMax Lake Wylie Marina – 310 Blucher Circle, Lake Wylie, S.C.
Pat Hakanson's home – 6812 Old Ridge Road, Waxhaw
Kings' beach home – 2802 East Yacht Drive, Oak Island 28465

Indoor Commander's Picnic a success thanks to MarineMax

By Commander Charles "Bo" Ibach III

On July 12, I held our annual Commander's Picnic. This year, to make things more comfortable and on the request of a squadron member, I reached out to MarineMax – Lake Wylie and to our member Carl Holbrooks, general manager of the marina, to see if we could use their showroom as a location. Carl graciously agreed and since he was also inviting his customers and staff, he agreed to get MarineMax to contribute \$400 toward the event.

With that in place I agreed to cover the remaining amount due. We secured a catered barbecue lunch from Hillbilly's BBQ and Steaks in Lowell, which was free to all those attending. We had more than 30 members to attend including District Commander Connie Shay and her husband Greg.

We dined on barbecue, slaw, potato salad and tea. Carl also was gracious enough to let us use the main showroom, which was much easier for a lot of us to access.

It was nice not to have to cook for this luncheon as I've done for so many years. The marina was cool and dry when compared to Merit Mark Point, the usual venue of our Commander's Picnic. A big thank you goes to Brandy and others at MarineMax, who cleaned up after us.



KEN ELKINS

Dan Bartell and J.J. Rodgers enjoy barbecue at the Commander's Picnic.

I hope that all in attendance had a great time. I believe that MarineMax would be amenable to us repeating next year at the marina if that's the choice of your next Commander.

On another subject, on August 2, Donna and I went to Jordan Lake near Cary as the guests of Raleigh Squadron to participate in their annual picnic of burgers and hotdogs. We had a nice time and met many of their members.

Commander Charles "Bo" Ibach III SN-ACN is also District Executive Officer D-27.



Bo and Donna Ibach (center of photo) attended America's Boating Club of Raleigh's annual picnic in August.

America's Boating Club Fall Governing Board set in September

Love to travel? Don't do it alone! Come to Grand Rapids, Michigan and meet up with other single travelers and friends! Enjoy the area while enjoying the company of existing friends while meeting new ones, too.

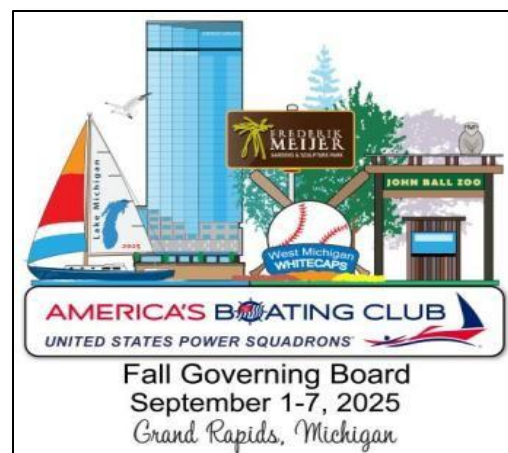
The education team has some great sessions planned to get everyone up to date on the new course changes, the new ExamGen system and great fellowship. Whatever your interests are in USPS, join the conversation. Seminars, meals, events with a little business thrown in.

Reminder: Attendees pick their meals, the number of days, the sessions to attend, etc. It is customized to meet your interests. Together Everyone Accomplishes More!

Some of the highlights of the meeting are the visiting the Frank Lloyd Wright house "Meyer May," taking in a minor-league baseball game – the West Michigan Whitecaps, Grand Rapids Public Museum and Planetarium, Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum and finish the week with a performance by the Sweet Adelines.

Oh yeah, there will be movie time, meals and well, Michigan in the fall. Who could ask for anything else?

For more information, check out <https://portal.americasboatingclub.org/>.



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PORTABLES



John and Connie King on the water *Drawing by the late Carl Foesch*

Friends of the Squadron

America's Boating Club-Charlotte is fortunate to have the following sustaining sponsors:

- Marvin and Mary Chaney
- Ken Elkins and Joann Infante
- John and Connie King
- Paula and David Stewart
- Anonymous sponsors