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Squadron plans classes in 2026 for members; first time since 2017

By P/C Dan Bartell SN-ACN

While I have been a Squadron Educational Officer 15 times before, I haven't been one since 2017. I find that many things are still the same, but many things have changed in the world of squadron education.

Charlotte has had an outstanding public boating course program taught by our talented certified instructors: D/C Bo Ibach SN-ACN, P/C Brevard Myers SN-ACN and P/C Marvin Chaney SN. While our last class on April 18 had a disappointing turnout with multiple cancellations the night before, we are looking forward to another class on May 16.

What surprised me is that Charlotte has not taught anything but Boating Courses since 2017. That includes core and elective courses and seminars.

There have been many updates and improvements to the educational offerings from National since last time I was a SEO and I hope to make them available to our members. More on this later.



Dan Bartell talks about plans for virtual classes to be conducted by ABC-Charlotte instructors.

As a reminder to us old folks and as an introduction to our newer members, the squadron offers a curriculum of courses that result in a member having a grade after their name. Until recently it could be summarized by this matrix:

Original Course	New Course	Grade
Seamanship	Boat Handling	S
Piloting	Marine Navigation (N1)	P
Advanced Piloting	Advanced Marine Nav (N2)	AP (requires S + P)
Junior Navigation	Offshore Navigation (ON)	JN (requires AP)
Navigation	Celestial Navigation (CN)	N (requires JN)

If you had a grade of AP, JN or N and you completed three elective courses, you had achieved Education Proficiency and you had your grade underlined as AP, JN or N. In addition, if you have a grade of N and completed six elective courses you had achieved Educational Proficiency and had a grade of SN for Senior Navigator.

If this isn't complicated enough, it has gotten more complex. National has recognized that their curriculum was oriented towards blue water navigation, so they are developing an Inland Boating (IB) core course. I don't know when it will be available; however, it should be excellent. National also decided that those completing ON, CN and IB deserve special recognition, so they have created the following grades: Offshore Mariner (AP + ON = OM); Celestial Mariner (AP + CN = CM); and Inland Mariner (AP + IB = IM). You can also become a Senior Navigator as an OM, CM or IM by completing seven elective courses.

OK where does that leave us? I would like Charlotte to begin offering the core curriculum courses, elective courses and seminars again. To see the cover page for those currently offered, go to [this page](#).

For core courses, Marine Navigation would be my preference. For elective courses I would like to see us offer either Engine Maintenance or Marine Electrical Systems; and for seminars, the new Marine Batteries seminar. Look at the covers and if you see one that would be of interest or you would like further information, contact me [Dan Bartell](#). Note that seminars have a fixed cost of \$25 if you wish to get credit for the course in addition to the charge for any materials. You can however "audit" a seminar for no additional charge but no credit.

How and where would we teach these offerings? It is very difficult to locate a facility and to find a suitable time for all students to attend. As a result, I intend to make these offerings online using one of the many conferencing apps (for instance ZOOM). This would allow interactive sessions with our instructors who can impart local knowledge and answer questions. It would also mean that if you miss a session, it will be recorded and you can view that session online, at your convenience, with the instructors available to answer questions.

Courses are in the form of either paper or e-books (your choice) and the course exam can be taken online.

This is a new endeavor for our squadron, and it is currently in a planning stage. Keep tuned and comments are highly encouraged.

Dan Bartell is ABC-Charlotte educational officer.



It's ABC-Charlotte's and ABC of the Catawba's annual event for deserving children in the Charlotte area.

2026 Children's Outing is scheduled for May 30

By D/C Charles "Bo" Ibach III SN-ACN

Fellow members, coming at us like a freight train is our 2026 Children's Outing at the Red Fez Club. Remember that this event is for deserving children in the local area. They will be enjoying a great day on the lake with boat rides, swimming, fishing, face painting, a bounce house and lots and lots of food.

I have been hard at work securing donations to cover this event and especially thank Dockmasters for covering the cost of the Red Fez Club. Wendy's will be giving us the condiments, napkins, and cups, Publix will cover the drinks and we have cash donations to cover gas and other incidentals, especially the hamburgers and hot dogs. Catawba has reinstated Flowers Bakery to cover the buns and they also cover the bounce house and life guards. Pink Portables will cover 2 of the ADA potties and we'll cover the other two.

I'm hoping to have a good idea of attendance by the week of 5/11 but have heard from a couple already; I'm up to about 75 so far. Not sure how many Catawba is hoping to have come.

Therefore, please mark you calendars for Saturday, May 30, 2026, to be at the Red Fez Club either by boat or on land. This is our main civic service project each year so let's be there to make the day super special for all attendees.

Also, please mark your calendars for Saturday, September 12, 2026, as we are joining forces with Catawba with their Fall Children's Outing that again is going to be at the Red Fez Club. I'm using this date as an overrun to try to manage attendance so we're not overwhelmed in either event.

Bo Ibach is America's Boating Club District 27 Commander and coordinator of the annual Children's Outing.



Here is the family fishing boat with a 10-year-old Ken at the engine. The bow has been removed in preparation for the redesign.

My First Boat: Homemade with a dangerous bow

By P/C Ken Elkins JN

My first boat wasn't actually mine; it was my family's fishing boat. What it lacked in store-bought sleekness, it made up for in the danger of riding in a sheet-metal craft with a blunt bow and absolutely flat bottom.

But I get ahead of myself. Let me give you some background about the first family watercraft.

I grew up in Columbus, Georgia, the youngest in a family of four sisters and a brother. My brother was the closest in age but was 13 years my senior.

That meant that mostly I remember growing up as the only child. My sisters were long gone with families of their own. I do remember my brother (we called him Bubba) living in the house, but he was often away during the day working and on weekends racing his purple 1957 Chevy on nearby drag strips.

My mom and dad really enjoyed fishing. On weekends we would take trips to an area north of Columbus called Lick Skillet, named for soldiers during the Civil War who were often hungry and had to lick the skillet of the previous day's fish meal while waiting for the next meal to be caught from Mountain Oak Creek.

We would pack up the car and drive the 30 miles or so to Lick Skillet landing and rent a boat to navigate to the mouth of the creek at the Chattahoochee River. (That's right, the river of Alan Jackson's song). I spent the time looking for snakes, which I really didn't like, while they fished.

I was maybe 10 years old in the early 1960s when we moved to a cabin that we had cobbled together from a wooden-sided travel trailer and additions that included a full bathroom and a regular-sized bedroom.

We needed a boat since we lived on the water (OK, on a creek). Conveniently, the husband of one of my sisters worked in a sheet-metal shop of a local manufacturer. My brother-in-law James made us a 14- to 16-foot boat of sheet metal. The seats were wooden and later he added a keel of wood so the contraption would actually go in the direction in which you pointed it.

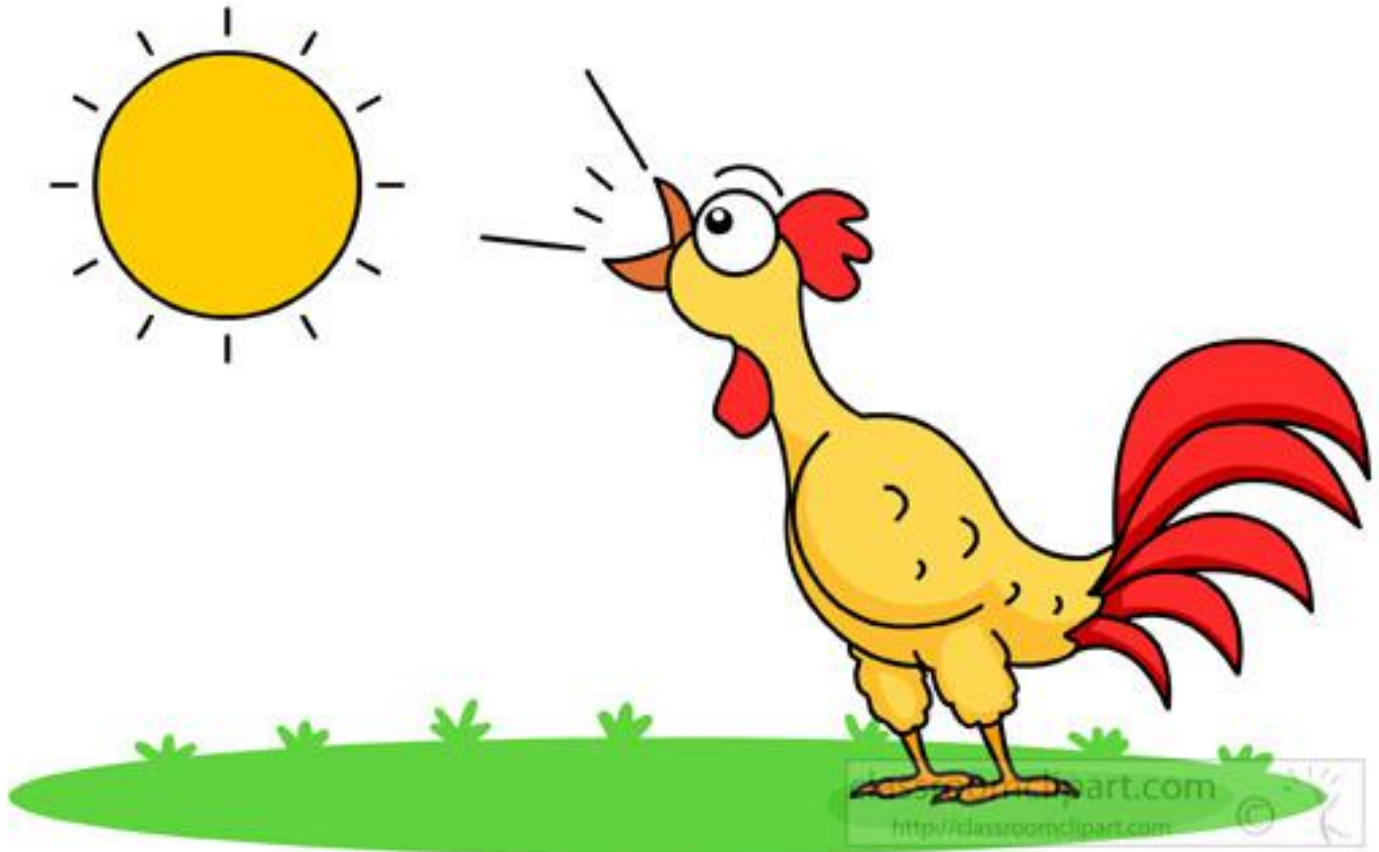
There was a major design flaw in this vessel. The bow was absolutely flat and vertical so that before you got the boat on plane, you were pushing through gallons of water. When you throttled back, the bow again dipped back into the water and the impact cast you forward as you tried to sit on the wooden seats.

James went back to the drawing board and decided to rip off that vertical bow. Look at the photo that accompanies this article. It shows that bow removed and ready for something new.

James designed an enclosed, pointed bow with a bit of an uplift on the bottom. I don't have a photograph of the redesigned bow, but it was an interesting and confusing thing that looked like the front of a pontoon float.

Attached to the boat, it worked perfectly. The lightweight metal boat would scoot along at a fast clip powered by a 9.8 horsepower outboard. Eventually, I learned to water ski behind that boat when I could wrest it away from my parents.

I have fond memories of doing my homework in that boat while on after school fishing trips with Mom and Dad. They were pulling in bream, crappie, bass and catfish. I was scanning the water and nearby banks looking for snakes. I'm still afraid of those things.



Chicken-Q enjoyed by more than 30 Squadron members

By P/R/C John Rodgers SN-CN

It was a beautiful afternoon on Lake Wylie on April 11 and 33 members, including five from Catawba, enjoyed Merit Mark Point and our annual Chicken-Q.

We had the usual fare of Bo's chicken, MMP beans and slaw along with a great selection of appetizers and desserts. Everyone said that the food was up to its usual high standards.

After lunch, the Commander conducted a brief meeting, the highlight being the presentation of a Life Member certificate and pin to P/C Will Granger P-IN. This award is presented to members after they have earned 25 merit marks: quite an accomplishment. Some cooperative charting certificates were also presented.

The Chicken-Q is one of the two fundraisers that we hold to help to support Merit Mark Point. The other is the fall pork barbecue, which will be held on October 24. Mark your calendar now.

John J. Rodgers is the editor of the ABC-Charlotte Roster and coordinates the Chicken-Q.



D/C Charles R. "Bo" Ibach presents Life Membership to America's Boating Club to P/C Will Granger.



Relatively new members Jacqueline and Travis Simpson chat with P/D/C Pat Hakanson SN and P/Lt/C Barbara Bartell S.



Commander Warren François shows off a District 27 2025 Growth Award for increasing membership.



J.J. Rodgers pulled off a trifecta: a Triple Anchor Award for competing in all three forms of Co-Op Charting, Second Place in the D/27 Co-Op Charting for 2025 and placing in the ABC National Co-Op Charting competition.



Side Lights Editor Ken Elkins is proud of his District 27 Distinctive Performance in Publications Award.

2026 BRIDGE OFFICERS

Commander	Lt/C Warren François	commander@charlotteboating.org
Educational Officer	P/C Dan Bartell SN-ACN	education@charlotteboating.org
Executive Officer	Open	
Administrative Officer	Open	
Secretary	P/C Marvin Chaney Jr. SN	secretary@charlotteboating.org
Treasurer	P/Lt/C Mary D. Chaney SN	treasurer@charlotteboating.org
Immediate Past Commander	D/C Charles “Bo” Ibach III SN-ACN	pastcommander@charlotteboating.org

2026 MEMBERS AT-LARGE

P/C William G. Granger P-IN	P/C Jack Moore AP-IN
Lt Tom Frederick	P/C Brevard S. Myers Jr. SN-ACN
Lt Shaun M. Haycock	P/C David Stewart AP
Lt Pat Mencil S	P/D/C Paula Stewart AP

Calendar of Events for May and June 2026

Date	Event	Time	Location/Details
5/5	ABC-Charlotte General Membership meeting	1 - 3 p.m.	AmberJack Seafood & Steaks Restaurant
5/5	Wylie Gator Rowing Club	10 a.m.-2 p.m.	Pat Hakanson's home
5/12	Wylie Gator Rowing Club	10 a.m.-2 p.m.	Pat Hakanson's home
5/16	America's Boating Course	8:45 a.m.-5 p.m.	MarineMax Lake Wylie Marina
5/16-22	National Safe Boating Week	Various	Various
5/18	ABC-Charlotte Executive Committee Meeting	5 p.m.	Jocks & Jills
5/17	Vessel Safety Checks	10 a.m.-2 p.m.	Buster Boyd Landing
5/19	Wylie Gator Rowing Club	10 a.m.-2 p.m.	Pat Hakanson's home
5/22	Deadline for View from the Bridge June column	5 p.m.	Secretary
5/25	Memorial Day	All Day	United States
5/26	Wylie Gator Rowing Club make-up day	10 a.m.-2 p.m.	Pat Hakanson's home
5/30	Children's Outing	9 a.m.-2 p.m.	Red Fez Shrine Club
6/2	Wylie Gator Rowing Club	10 a.m.-2 p.m.	Pat Hakanson's home
6/9	Wylie Gator Rowing Club	10 a.m.-2 p.m.	Pat Hakanson's home
6/15	ABC-Charlotte Executive Committee Meeting	5 p.m.	Jocks & Jills
6/16	Wylie Gator Rowing Club	10 a.m.-2 p.m.	Pat Hakanson's home
6/19	Deadline for View from the Bridge July column	5 p.m.	Past Commander two years ago
6/23	Wylie Gator Rowing Club	10 a.m.-2 p.m.	Pat Hakanson's home

6/27	Vessel Safety Checks	10 a.m.-2 p.m.	Buster Boyd Landing
6/30	Wylie Gator Rowing Club	10 a.m.-2 p.m.	Pat Hakanson's home

Locations:

AmberJack Seafood & Steaks Restaurant – 4253 South New Hope Road, Gastonia

Buster Boyd Landing – Blucher Circle next to Papa Docks Shore Club, 3990 Charlotte Highway, Lake Wylie, S.C.

Pat Hakanson's house – 6812 Old Ridge Road, Waxhaw

Jocks & Jills – 4109 South Stream Boulevard, Charlotte

MarineMax Lake Wylie Marina – 310 Blucher Circle, Lake Wylie, S.C.

Merit Mark Point (MMP) – 4892 Power Squadron Lane, York, S.C.

Red Fez Shrine Club – 16600 Red Fez Club Road, Charlotte

May

Bruce Banbury, Brian Chambers, Dianne Garrison, Harry Hammonds, Carl Holbrooks, Joann Infante, William Ishee, Brevard Myers, Carol E. Smith, Scott Spivey, Wyatt Weaver and Larry Whitesides.

June

Valerie K. Cahill, Kathryn Louise Courtright, Guynn Francis, Joshua Gibson, Michael J. Ibach, Kenneth J. Mart, Thomas J. Nicolosi, Rose D. Samonds and Harpreet Singh-Gill



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

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Side Lights Staff

Editor	P/C Ken Elkins JN	publications@charlotte boating.org
Assistant Editor	Joann Infante	
Photographers and Writers		All Squadron Members

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