Bay Mesh
Official Publication of
America's Boating Club Houston
'Where the Cowboys Ride the Sea'

Vol. LXXV **December 2022** No. 5

## *Houston Sail and Power Squadron Annual Meeting Ballot – January 2023*

**Nominees for Bridge Officers:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Commander | P/C Amy L. Taylor, S |
| Executive Officer | Lt/C Roger Runnels, P |
| Squadron Educational Officer | Lt/C Alan W. Cross, AP |
| Administrative Officer | TBD |
| Secretary | P/R/C Scott D. McDonald, SN |
| Treasurer | Lt/C Monica Cross, AP |

**Nominees for Squadron First Lieutenants:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Assistant Squadron Educational Officer | 1st/Lt Stephen C. Sheward, S |
| Assistant Administrative Officer | P/C Chris Leavitt, SN-CN |
| Assistant Secretary | P/Lt/C John L. Glaeser, SN |
| Assistant Treasurer | 1st/Lt Deborah Collings |

**Nominees for At-large Members of the Executive Committee:**

| | |
|---|---|
| P/C Susie Becvar, AP | Lynn McKee, P |
| Frank Amsler, P | Adam Salazar |
| Linda Crowl | Lt Jana Wesson, AP |
| Warren Fields, P | TBD |
| Lisa Guenthert, AP | TBD |

**Nominees for the Nominating Committee: (one time election for three-year term)**

P/C Susie Becvar, AP (1 year)
Cdr Amy L. Taylor, S (2 years)
P/C Catherine M. Leavitt, P (3 years

**Nominees for the Rules & Bylaws Committee: (one time election for three-year term)**

P/C William S. Haddock, AP (1 year)
P/Lt/C John L. Glaeser, SN (2 years)
Warren Fields, P (3 years)

**Nominees for the Auditing Committee: (one time election for three-year term)**

Mark E. Taylor, AP (1 year)
Edwin J. Roland, SN (2 years)
P/C Susie Becvar, AP (3 years)

Respectfully submitted,
Nominating Committee

## *Poop Sheet December 2022*

December 7
Board of Directors Meeting – Teleconference

December 10
Kayak Rendezvous – Buffalo Run Park

December 14
General Meeting – Auntie Pasto's

December 25
Merry Christmas, ABC Houston!

January 1, 2023
Happy New Year, ABC Houston!

January 4
Board of Directors Meeting – Teleconference

January 11
General Meeting – TBD

January 14
America's Boating Course – Home Port

January 25-29
Houston Boat Show – NRG Center

February 1
Board of Directors Meeting – Teleconference

February 4
America's Boating Course – Home Port

February 12
Leave No Trace Workshop – Home Port

*Watch your email for event announcements!*

AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB®
For Boaters, By Boaters™

## Bay Neigh

Official Monthly Publication of
America's Boating Club - Houston
District 21

2021 DISTINCTIVE COMMUNICATOR AWARD NEWSLETTER

Editor
Lt Jana Wesson, AP

Assistant Editor
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**Home Port**
6910 Bellaire Blvd #15
Houston, Texas 77074
www.uspshouston.org


## Bridge

Commander ..... Cdr Marie Vu, P
Executive Officer ..... Lt/C Al Meyer, JN
Educational Officer ..... Lt/C Alan W. Cross, AP
Administrative Officer ..... Lt/C Roger Runnels, AP
Secretary ..... Lt/C Scott McDonald, SN
Treasurer ..... Lt/C Monica K, Cross, AP
Immediate Past Cdr ..... P/C Amy L. Taylor, S

## Squadron's 1st Lieutenants

Asst. Educational Officer..... 1st/Lt Stephen C. Sheward, S
Asst. Administrative Officer..... 1st/Lt Chris Leavitt, SN-CN
Asst. Secretary ..... P/Lt/C John L. Glaeser, SN
Asst. Treasurer ..... 1st/Lt Deborah Collings

## Executive Committee

All Bridge Officers…
P/C Amy L. Taylor, S
Susie Becvar, AP
Corey Bloom
Warren Fields, P
John L. Glaeser, SN
Lisa Guenthert, AP
Adam Salazar
Steve Smallwood
Mark E. Taylor, S
Jana Wesson, AP


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## PRAYER

Lord God Almighty, whose most Holy Incarnation is yearly observed at the time of the winter solstice, whose Only-Begotten Son was hailed as the light that shineth in darkness, hasten the day, we pray thee, when the sun of righteousness will banish all the darkness of this world and Thy fixed beam guide all the nations of the earth into Thy blessed service and peace.

Amen

Rev. Pierce Middleton
Past USPS Chaplain

# COMMANDER'S CORNER

December 2022 Bay Neigh
Cdr Marie Vu, P

Good day everyone! Well, Winter is trying to be here (both in Houston and Las Vegas). Life is great, and I do appreciate everyone on the Bridge and the Board who are supporting your "away from home" Commander. Las Vegas is fun, the work is great, but I do miss all y'all!

The Houston Squadron hosted the District 21 Fall Conference. We were able to have a lot of the Conference at the newly renovated Home Port. Everyone who attended was impressed with our facility and the repairs, modifications, and updates we've made. The Fall Conference was focused on education, with meetings and workshops during the conference to provide an opportunity for an exchange of ideas for improving teaching and for discussion between instructors and leadership on effective presentation of both National education materials and homegrown education courses. It was all that and more – as many attendees who presented demonstrated that the District stands heads-and-shoulders above many other Districts in the Nation. It was interesting during some of the presentations – like saying "The King has no clothes" type of interesting.

We are doing great! Our focus on education, safety, and fun is proving a winning combination of work efforts. Our kayaking leads have introduced the *Kayaking Rendezvous* where members who kayak just hit the urban waterways for a day of fun. The Squadron has run out two on-the-water training programs, and that is new to us – it will be great.

This next year will be even more fun than you can imagine. We are going back to the Houston Boat Show and will again partner with Texas Parks and Wildlife. We are planning, for the District, a wonderful summertime adventure that spans from the Lower Rio Grande Valley, along the Texas Gulf Coast, to Lake Charles, Louisiana. Wait till you hear about that adventure!

Last issue, I talked about a slogan we still use, "Come for the Education, Stay for the Friends". That is so true these days. Our Squadron has a lot of friends, and it is fun to see the relationships grow. So, as this year ends, ask yourself what you'd like to be involved in, what adventures we can help you with, and how many friends in the Squadron want to have fun with you!

# Focus on Boating Education

**Lt/C Alan W. Cross, AP**
**281-451-1146**
**uspsseohouston@gmail.com**

*Together, we make boating better*

The Old Year is about completed, and the New Year is just around the corner. To everyone who took a course or seminar this year – Thank You!

I am especially thankful for every *student* who took a course. You learned something, and you helped the Squadron make a difference by being educated on how to become a better, safer, recreational boater. Whether your boating passion is kayaking, sailing, or long-distance cruising, your efforts for self-education are appreciated. In 2022, we had 233 students – 66 students in boater safety courses and 167 in other advanced, elective and on-the-water courses. It was a good year for education, and 2023 will be even better.

Year 2023 is starting out with a great selection of courses. Look at your needs for your recreational boating type and see what course is good for you. The Squadron calendar is the place to start – see what fits your needs and schedule and sign up. Remember, if you don't see a course that fits your schedule, click the "Request a Course" button and the Education Department will see what we can do for you.

More than "just courses" are offered by the Education Department. We have a bevy of seminars, a good collection of hands-on experiences (like how to use a sextant); all easy, fun, short and just a nice time to be with friends learning a little something new. This coming year during the cold winter months, we'll be having workshops at Home Port on things like "*How to Trailer Your Boat*" to "*Proper Loading and Unloading Your Kayak*", "*Using your VHF Radio*", and many more like-minded experiences in education.

So – from all of use in the Education Department – *Thank You* for a great year!

If you have fun and a passion for a subject and would like to present or be part of the Education Department, drop me an email or give me a call. We are all volunteers who really have fun teaching. Be a part of our fun.

If you don't visit the Squadron calendar for a complete list and breakdown of educational offerings, here is a short list of courses on the calendar for this year. Sign up early!

**Marine Communication Systems**
Home Port and some classes are teleconference
Begins on Monday, February 6, 2023 7:00 pm

**Cruising and Cruise Planning**
Teleconference
Begins on Wednesday, February 22, 2023 7:00 pm

**Marine Navigation**
Home Port
Begins on Monday, March 6, 2023 7:00 pm

**Advanced Marine Navigation**
Home Port
Begins on Monday, March 13, 2023 7:00 pm

**Sail**
Teleconference
Begins on Tuesday, June 6, 2023 7:00 pm

**Boat Handling**
Home Port
Begins on Monday, September 18, 2023 7:00 pm

**Marine Electrical Systems**
Home Port
Begins on Monday, September 25, 2023 7:00 pm

**Contact**. To contact me, best way is uspsseohouston@gmail.com or call me on the cell at 281-451-1146.

## *Leading the Way in Education*

*By Lt/C Alan W. Cross, AP*

Believe it or not – the Houston Squadron is a national leader in education for the recreational boater. We have a number of Instructors that are recognized by the National organization for their efforts, and the Squadron itself has been in the Top 3 for the last 4 years (nationally) for educating members and the general public. Yes, we offer all the boater safety courses and all the navigation and all the elective courses, but do you know what else we teach?

You don't?! Well, let me tell you!

The Education Department believes that all the standard educational offerings from the Power Squadron are great, and will help you become a better, more educated and a safer boater. After all, having more education and being safe on the water means you'll have more fun on the water. Did you know the Squadron has other, ancillary education offerings that make you even better? Yes, we do.

For example, being prepared for an adventure, whether a half-day trip kayaking to a spot for better bird watching or preparing for a 42-day cruise to the Caribbean Island chains, means you should have a current first aid training. Yes, we offer a course called "First Aid for Mariners" that is both educational (on why you need the training) and the actual course. Sure, it's a 4-hour course, but we have an 8-hour course, and if you are going blue-water, a 16-hour course, and if you are really going out for a while, we have a 40-hour course. Now you know. Oh, by the way – we are the ONLY Squadron in the nation that offers this.

Being tied up to the dock or moored near a nice island is always good. Unless you have neighbors who are inconsiderate of those around them and the environment. Well, we have a course for that! It's called "*Leave No Trace Workshop*" taught by several of our Squadron members who are Leave No Trace Master Educators (of which there are very few in the nation). You'll learn about seven principles to make your outing more pleasant for yourself and others. Then, if you like what you learned, we offer a course on becoming an Leave No Trace Trainer. Oh, by the way – we are the ONLY Squadron in the nation that offers this.

How about operating a radio? Once (or sometimes twice) a year, the Squadron offers a class on becoming an amateur (ham) radio operator. You automatically become a member of the *Bay Neigh Amateur Radio Club* when you get your license. And we have some upcoming "experience seminars" where you can see, touch, and operate the radios. The radio study class is free and taught by qualified members of the Houston and Galveston Bay Squadrons. Oh, by the way – we are the ONLY Squadron in the nation that offers this.

Finally, the Squadron has a bevy of short, fun activities where you can learn something really cool like how to use a sextant or how to keep your boat from falling off the trailer or how to become a vessel safety examiner, or…, well, there are just too many to list here. The point is we are one of ONLY a few Squadrons in the nation that offers these types of activities.

Almost all these ancillary training offerings are FREE, offered at Home Port or in a nice outdoor setting, and are designed to help you become the best boater ever! So, check out the calendar, watch your emails for new offerings, and come have some fun and a picnic with us.

## *A Leap into Kayaking Adventures*

*By P/C Cathy Leavitt, P*

We here at ABC Houston have yet again taken a flying leap into a new adventure: kayaking excursions. Our first Level 1 kayaking classes began in the spring of 2019. Ever since that first class, students have expressed a desire to kayak more with the other students in their classes. Now, after having taught over 100 students, we are providing opportunities for those students who join ABC Houston to kayak with our new kayaking group. We, as a group have decided to try to kayak one to two times a month, either Saturday morning or Sunday afternoon. Since Saturday, October 8, 2022, we have had four excursions. Before each excursion so far, **Irmi Willcockson**, **P/C Chris Leavitt, SN-CN**, and I have done a reconnaissance of the waterway by kayak to determine whether that location is feasible. Each of the locations is different from the ones before and offers new things to learn and experience. This is designed to not only be a place to make friends and have fun, but also a place to practice newly acquired skills and learn more about kayaking.

Four brave souls went on our first adventure. All the trips are Level 1 and have a Level 1 instructor on the water. We launched at the Riva Row Boathouse near Lake Woodlands. We paddled between trails near Lake Woodlands Drive and several townhomes on Riva Row. We encountered a few other fellow kayakers enjoying the crisp autumn morning. We paddled under a bridge at Grogans Mill Road to the main part of Lake Woodlands. While hugging the protected southeast shore around an island, we saw many birds and a few turtles. We took our time traveling to the main part of the lake where it was choppy but also fun. It was enjoyable paddling around the beautiful homes and yards. Upon reaching Northshore Park on the north side of Lake Woodlands, a band was playing, so we decided to listen for a while from the water. We paddled next to a couple of stand-up paddle boarders and told them about our program before making our way back to Riva Row Boathouse. After putting the boats up, we met at la Madeleine Restaurant for a delightful lunch and great conversation.

Our second adventure was on Big Island Slough on Sunday, October 30. Nine of us chose to work together putting the boats in the water via a kayaking cradle that worked great. This was a new skill for most of us. We voted to just relax and talk and get to know each other while paddling down the slough toward Armand Bayou. While paddling and talking, Irmi would tell us about the wonderful wildlife all around us: the osprey flying above us yelling for us to get away from his fishing territory, the turtles sliding off logs, small alligators slowly swimming far ahead of us, and huge fish continuously jumping around us.

The wonderful front-row view of the airshow from the water was serendipitous. The Blue Angels swooped down and circled right above us. It was awesome. We open ourselves up to such rich experiences when we get outside into nature. The greater Houston area is so full of activities that you never know what extra experiences are in store for you. Even though we did not kayak very far or very fast, we all had fun.

After returning to our "put in" point and taking the boats out of the water, we reviewed the excursion as a group. We call this "roses, thorns, and buds". We each said what we enjoyed (roses), what we did not like (thorns), and ways we can do things differently to improve the experience (buds). We discussed possibly splitting the group into a fast group and a slower group as some people are perfecting their forward stroke and others prefer a slower experience, while another group could go faster and explore more of the waterway while getting a stronger exercise experience. As long as we have two experienced Level 1 teachers with us, we could do that in the future. We would just need to coordinate and meet back at the "put in" location at the same time. This is OUR club. Within America's Boating Club Houston parameters, we want to provide the education and experiences that kayakers want and need to be safe on the water and have fun.

Our third adventure was at Sheldon Lake on Sunday, November 13. The weather had been very cold prior to the day of the paddle. However, on the day we launched, the temperature was in the 50s with calm winds. The water looked like glass, and the wildlife were playing all around us. We had the new people practice paddling through small patches of lily pads and tall reeds in preparation for other areas of the lake where lily pads were everywhere. There is a skill to not getting your paddle stuck. Once we were confident people probably would not panic while going through some of those areas, we set off to see some old docks that were now homes to many birds and turtles. We went by an observation tower and saw the dam from a short distance. The water level was down due to the drought, so no water was going over the dam. It was a very relaxing paddle teaming with wildlife to observe and photograph. We had a very large area to paddle, and some people practiced going very fast in places. It was such a beautiful cool day, and we were so delighted that we could be on the water with new friends doing something we loved. After we had put the kayaks back on the trailer, we discussed the trip. Most had a hard time coming up with any "thorns" as all people could talk about were the many "roses" for the day. It seemed that everyone left feeling full of joy and gratitude and ready for the next adventure.

*(Continued on Page 6)*

## *A Leap into Kayaking Adventures*

*(Continued from Page 5)*

We changed the location of our expedition on Saturday, December 10, 2022. The level of the water was so low at John Pundt Park that we were continuously going aground, and it would not have been fun. The new location was Buffalo Run Park in Missouri City. Everyone was there early and eager for our 9 AM start at the boat launch area. The weather was warm (in the 70s) and clear with the winds beginning very calm and ending with the winds 8 to 10 mph and very dark clouds rolling in.

The waterway consists of four interconnected large retention ponds that are teeming with birds and other wildlife. As we left the boat ramp, we went left through a six-foot wide and about 40-foot-long tunnel into one of the adjacent ponds. This was difficult because our paddles are longer than 6 feet and some of our kayakers expressed that they were claustrophobic but up for the challenge. We told them how we had put the paddles in the center of the boat and used our hands on the sides of the tunnel to push ourselves along. Everyone came through beautifully.

That pond was worth it. There was a bird box in one area with several low hanging branches. As we approached the shore near the bird box, Irmi pointed out two other bird nests. All seven of us rafted up together as Irmi taught us about the native plant life and invasive plant species as well as what the law is concerning bird nests and feather collection. I even learned something new. When we left that pond through the tunnel it was easier (even fun) the second time.

Each pond was a little different from the one before. We practiced our skills kayaking backward in one of them. That was fun for some and a challenge for others. The last pond was a little larger and had an observation tower in the middle with a pier leading to one side. It had the most bird boxes. In this pond, we just visited each other and raced each other. We just played and talked in small groups that kept changing. After a couple of hours, the rain clouds started to roll in and the wind picked up, so we paddled back to the boat ramp, and everyone pitched in to put up the boats. During our “roses and thorns and buds” discussion, one person who originally said they were claustrophobic said that the tunnel was their favorite thing. Some expressed a desire to kayak in Buffalo Bayou where there is a slight current or go down to Galveston State Park on the bay side. People shared many great ideas. We are all members of this club, and we make these decisions together. This is great fun for me. Everyone keeps coming back too!

Kayakers have expressed a desire to have a clinic on how to shop for and transport a kayak. They would also like to take the weather seminar during the winter months. As we do more activities together, we feel the fellowship that ABC Houston offers. As kayakers practice their skills, they become stronger and more confident. Then they see how they can help others to learn what they have learned and do their part to keep this program going. It makes my heart happy to see everyone having fun and progressing so rapidly too. I am so glad we are doing this. I am having a great time.

# District 21 Spring Conference/Change of Watch

March 10, 11, 12, 2023
Cedar Mills Marina
Lake Texoma
500 Harbour View Rd
Gordonville, TX  76245

**Draft** Schedule:

Friday, March 10, 2023, registration and come and go dinner in Pelican's Lakeside room with Council meeting, TBA

Saturday, March 11, 2023, buffet breakfast followed by D-21 General meeting in Pelican's Lakeside room

Lunch on your own.

Saturday afternoon TBA.

Dinner and Change of Watch ceremony in Pelican's Lakeside room

Sunday, March 12, 2023 buffet breakfast in Pelican's Lakeside room before departures.

In order for us to finalize preparations, we need room reservations made with Cedar Mills Marina, **903 523-4222**.  They have cabins and RV sites.

The number of reservations made **WILL DETERMINE** total cost of conference. The decision date is **JANUARY 11**, 60 days out.  You are most welcome to make reservations after that date, but conference planning will be based on number of reservations made with Cedar Mills by **January 11, 2023**.

At this time, we envision meals to be ordered and purchased by attendees.  The buffet breakfast will simply be purchased by attendees.

Depending on the number of reservations made by January 11, 2023, the schedule and specific facilities will be finalized with further announcements.

Hosted by OKCSPS.  For questions, contact: Danny Goss, 405 613-8689 (no texts)

## Bay Neigh Articles

If you have a story or experience that would be of interest to our members, please E-Mail pictures and stories to Jana Wesson at beakboatgirl@me.com

America's Boating Club – Houston
6910 Bellaire Blvd #15
Houston, Texas 77074

### *Dec 2022-Jan 2023 Birthdays*

| | |
|---|---|
| Kenneth W. Campbell | 12/11 |
| Claire M. McDonald | 12/12 |
| Paul W. Balis | 12/14 |
| Olivia B. Cross | 12/16 |
| Kenneth W. Brooks | 12/17 |
| Susie Becvar | 12/18 |
| Frank M. Pattee | 12/19 |
| Matthew G. Vere | 12/22 |
| Terry L. McKee | 12/24 |
| Michael Collings | 12/27 |
| Patrice Lenhart | 12/27 |
| Wolf Guenthert | 1/1 |
| Lisa Guenthert | 1/1 |
| Robert Aikin | 1/1 |
| Sean C. Sheward | 1/1 |
| Pamela Tyllick | 1/1 |
| Jan R. Aikin | 1/1 |
| Raymond L. Brisson | 1/11 |
| David J. Balis | 1/13 |
| Dana Day | 1/16 |
| Linda Lennon | 1/16 |
| Cindy Van Praag | 1/17 |
| Jeny M. Ninan | 1/17 |
| Samuel Bonnett | 1/17 |
| Alan W. Cross | 1/18 |
| William E. Blan | 1/21 |
| Gavin Chander | 1/21 |
| Mark E. Taylor | 1/27 |

### *December Dinner Meeting*

Auntie Pasto's RESTAURANT

Wednesday, December 14

*America's Boat Club Houston* will hold its December general meeting at *Auntie Pasto's Restaurant* in Bellaire (TX). Our guest speakers will talk about the success of the Kayaking Rendezvous program. Everyone is invited to attend, member or not, and bring a friend!

6:30 PM Social gathering

7:00 PM Dinner

8:00 PM Kayaking Rendezvous Presentation

9:00 PM Adjournment

The event is Free, but individuals will order and pay their own meal, drink tab, and tip. Please register so we can let the restaurant know how many will be attending.

Visit Auntie Pasto's website for a presentation of their menu. Helpful hint: Desserts begin on Page 5.

### *Amazon Smile Gives Back to America's Boating Club Houston*

Are you going to buy something from Amazon? Don't go to amazon.com. Go to https://smile.amazon.com so that a percentage of your purchase will be donated to America's Boating Club Houston.