



# THE TRIDENT

DARIEN SAIL & POWER SQUADRON  
DISTRICT 2, UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS®

Our website: [DSPSCT.org](http://DSPSCT.org)  
December, 2020

**DSPS WANTS YOU**



**TO TEACH BOATING**

For over 25 years, DSPS has enjoyed a reputation for excellence in boating education. Much of this reputation has been based on our unique Coastal Boating Competence course. Our two stellar instructors, Dick Woods and Frank Kemp, along with numerous volunteer “table teachers” through the years, have taught thousands of boaters not just the bare minimum needed to obtain their Connecticut Safe Boating Certificate, but information they need to stay safe on our local waters – Long Island Sound.

We’ve introduced students to nautical charts and why they’re necessary even in this age of GPS and electronic navigation. We gave them a waterproof chart of Western Long Island and plotting tools and taught students how to use these tools. We’ve taught them how to use marine VHF radios, and why

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## The Bridge

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P/C Frank Kemp, JN-IN

Roger Klein

Neal Konstantin, AP

## Advisors

P/D/C Jeff Gerwig, AP-IN

Peter Lasalandra, AP

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these radios remain important notwithstanding the ubiquity of cell phones. We've taught students about knots and lines, anchoring, and local knowledge about nearby maritime points of interest.

This year, however, the squadron has been hit by a double whammy: Dick and Frank have retired from full-time teaching and the coronavirus has kept us from giving in-person classes.

The squadron's current plan is to present a slightly-modified Coastal Boating Competence course starting the first week of February, 2021. The course will be on-line, via Zoom, and it will be taught by a team of squadron members. The current plan is to have six two-hour sessions, one per week, for six weeks, and to include almost everything that our traditional course covered except hands-on plotting.

That's where you, dear reader, come in. We need more instructors. And we need them soon.

Specifically, we need instructors who are willing to teach the following topics from the USPS textbook – *America's Boating Course*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (“ABC3”):

- Chapter 3 Section 10 – Anchoring
- Chapter 4 Section 13 – Water Sports Safety
- Section 14 – Trailing
- Section 15 – PWC Operation

There are, of course, many other topics. If you would like to teach one or more of the other sections in the ABC3 textbook, we would be glad to have you. You can find the Table of Contents of the ABC3 textbook here: <https://tinyurl.com/ABC3Contents>

If you're willing to help, please email us – ASAP – at [DSPSCT@Gmail.com](mailto:DSPSCT@Gmail.com)

## A Kayak Adventure – With Machine Guns

After kayaking the 126-mile Rideau Canal and its 47 locks, we started looking for a new adventure. I had always wanted to kayak around Manhattan Island, and we started researching what that would entail. Well, we promptly found out that the waters of the East River can be very treacherous, with the tidal currents merging with the Harlem River at a point named Hell Gate. My wife, the wiser of the two, thought that this was a “Crazy Idea.” I was shot down! But of course, if I could find a buddy who was willing to go along regardless ... and kayaking tours are given regularly ... and some offer a circumnavigation, well, then, of course I would do it.



My good buddy, Shawn Munday, a lot younger and a lot stronger than I, was intrigued. We started planning and soon realized that we would need two days if we were to be guaranteed to have daylight while we were on the water. Our first leg would be about 12 miles from Dyckman Street, just below the Henry Hudson Parkway, to the last pier where we could pull our kayaks out, just south of Chelsea Piers.

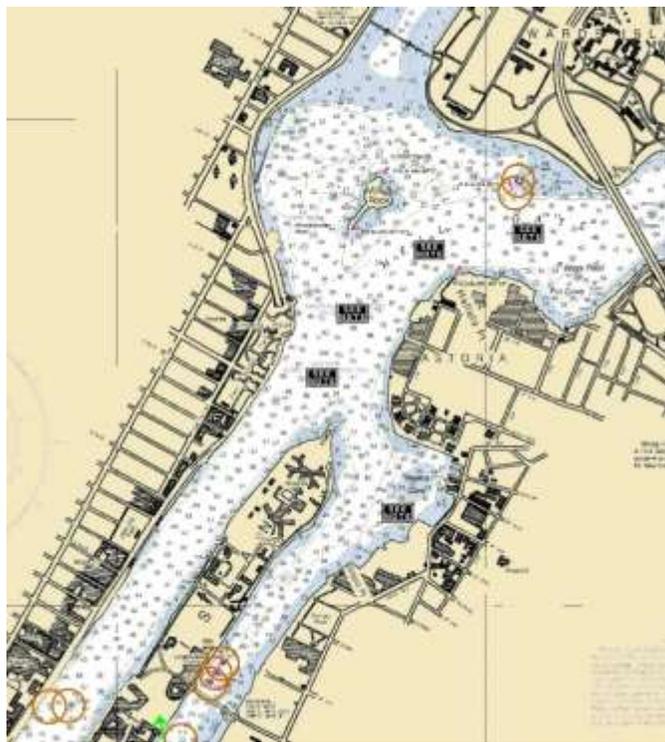
What a relaxing, beautiful ride: the sun was out, cool fall weather, great views of Manhattan, life had never been better. We had skirts to keep the water out of the kayaks, a hand pump for bailing, life jackets with a whistle and flashlight

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attached, paddle floats to assist in getting back into a swamped kayak, and a handheld VHF radio.

Our next leg was more eventful. With tidal currents being the main concern, we wanted to time our passage at the convergence of the Harlem and East Rivers at low slack tide. That meant we would have to put in at Dyckman with the first light of dawn. We paddled up the Hudson to the Harlem river. On the Harlem River we witnessed the Columbia Rowing team practicing in their shells. All a very nice time, until we ran out of Harlem River.



We were where we had feared the most: the tidal strait known as Hell Gate, which connects three major bodies of water: Upper New York Bay, Long Island Sound, and the Hudson River via the Harlem River. The tidal flow can reach speeds of up to 5 knots depending on the lunar cycle and prevailing weather.

The current was coming right at us. Paddling as hard as I could, I couldn't have been making a mile an hour. We found that if we paddled next to the bank wall the current was less, so we were hugging that but still making little progress. We had decided beforehand that if things got too rough we would exit our plan, turn around, pull out our kayaks, and go home, and this is what I now had decided to do. But Shawn, being younger and stronger, was a hundred yards ahead of me and couldn't hear my yelling over the ambient noise of the river.

So I paddled harder, and didn't gain on him.

I paddled as hard as I could, and didn't gain on him.

This is when I realized that we hadn't really thought this one through: I had the VHF radio and he had the cell phone, so neither of us could call the other. This state of affairs continued for an hour, which seemed like four hours to me, when, much to my dismay, Shawn started to leave me further behind! I just stayed after him and figured he would sooner or later turn around to see my condition and I would use the international signal of waving both my hands over my head, or better yet, I could tie my white tee shirt to my paddle and signal my defeat.

Just then something amazing happened – my speed picked up: we had broken through the strong upstream current to a moderate upstream current, and this is why he had pulled further ahead. I worked hard and caught up to him and commented to him, "That was a tough stretch."

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“It sure was,” he said. I never let on that I had been on the verge of giving up.



Although the current was still coming at us, we were making headway by hugging the shore wall. Unfortunately, there was no beautiful view of Manhattan from this wall. As we approached what I now surmise was 46<sup>th</sup> Street, two patrol boats with manned machine guns at the bows zipped up to us out of nowhere!

I yelled at Shawn, “Keep your hands visible out on your paddle.”

“What are you doing here?” someone demanded.

“Well,” I hesitated, hoping to lighten up the situation, “We’re kayaking.”

“Well you can’t be here, you have to be out 175 yards from here. This is the United Nations.”

I confessed my ignorance, and he offered me a line and said, “Tie this on and I’ll tow you out.”

At this moment, I remembered my Boating Safety class, where someone had asked Sid Zacharias, a 90 year old seaman, “What happens when you go faster than the hull speed of a boat?” He thought for a minute and said “You’ll sink.”

A 25-foot patrol boat with two oversized motors on its stern can plane at over 40 knots, which is far more than the hull speed of a 9-foot kayak. I told Shawn and the man who offered me the line, “We’ll just hold on to it rather than tying it on,” and that’s what we did. Both of us let go after a very short time: I had felt the kayak sucking down as the speed increased and as soon as the bow was dipping under I let go! Sid Zacharias was right! The \$80 I had spent on that six-week Power Squadron Course on boat safety had just paid off like hitting the jackpot!

A while later, we grew hungry. We had planned to walk into the city, stretch our legs, and eat at a restaurant. On the lower East Side we spotted a pier with some luxury boats docked, so we headed in and pulled up our kayaks. We were tidying up our gear when an large angry man with a thick Brooklyn accent demanded to know what we were up to. I told him of our plan to get something to eat.

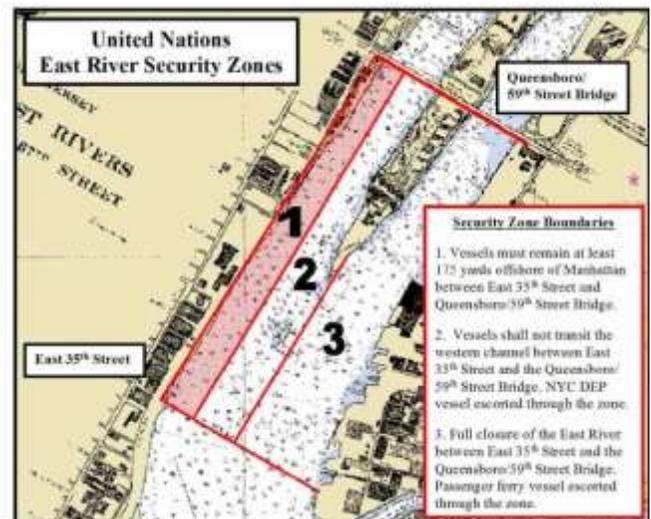
“Well I charge for that!” he said.

“How much?” I asked. “Twenty dollars,” was his reply.

I took out my wallet and was pulling out money when he snarled, “Forget about it,” and turned and started to walk away. We walked under the FDR Drive and on until we found a diner and ate.

The rest of the trip was uneventful, except fighting the current of the Hudson as we rounded Battery Park. We found that the piers were slowing down the current and made our life a little easier. We got back to the same pier where we had pulled out at the end of the first leg of our adventure. We high fived, and went home with big smiles on our faces.

Mark Dam, *Commander*, Darien Sail & Power Squadron



## Speaker Series

DSPS began its 2020-2021 Speaker Series on November 8 with a “virtual” talk by William McKeever – Shark Documentarian, Movie Producer, and Author of *Emperors of the Deep: Sharks –The Ocean’s Most Mysterious, Most Misunderstood and Most Important Guardians*.

All of our currently-scheduled speakers will be presented via Zoom. We will return to in-person events when conditions permit. The links needed to join the Zoom events will be included in reminder emails as the time for each event approaches, so keep an eye out for these emails.

If you need to update your email address, please go to <https://www.usps.org/cgi-bin-nat/tools/myprofile.cgi> You will need to log in using your USPS Certificate Number and PIN. You can also send an email to [DSPSCT@Gmail.com](mailto:DSPSCT@Gmail.com).

Our speaker for December will be Bill Lynn, native of Rye, NY, onetime Rowayton resident, and currently residing in Marblehead, MA. Bill is the President and Executive Director of the Herreshoff Museum in Bristol, RI. A world class sailor in his own right, Bill has spent his life sailing competitively up and down the East Coast. Bill is also Managing Director of the Classic Yacht Owners Association.

The Herreshoff Manufacturing Company (HMCo.) was founded in 1878 by brothers John Brown Herreshoff and his younger but better-known brother Nathanael Greene Herreshoff, the “Wizard of Bristol.” It operated until 1945. HMCo. designed and built over 2,400 boats, both power and sail, including the mega-yacht *RELIANCE*, the largest boat to ever sail in the America’s Cup. Known for pure innovation, grace, and beauty of design, Herreshoff vessels have nearly mythical significance in the world of yachting.

*RELIANCE*, built for the 1903 America’s Cup races, was a package of superlatives relating to its advanced structural and materials engineering, the number of crew required to sail it, its incredibly short build time and its sheer size. Bill’s presentation covers the backstory of HMCo., the rise and growth of the company, and the design and build of *RELIANCE*.

Sun., Dec. 13	<b><u>Bill Lynn</u> – Director, Herreshoff Museum – “The Herreshoff Manufacturing Co. and the Design and Build of <i>Reliance</i> for the 1903 America’s Cup.”</b>
Sun., Jan. 10	<u>Thomas Halaczinsky</u> , Author/Filmmaker – “Archipelago New York”
Sun., Jan. 31	<u>Captain Lada Simek</u> , Educator/Master Scuba Diver – “The Oceans, Above and Below”
Sun., Mar. 14	DSPS Change of Watch; Mark Andreas – “Sailing in the Arctic”



**Happy Holidays & Best Wishes for the New Year!**