



Darien Sail & Power Squadron

District 2, United States Power Squadrons®

[DSPSCT.org](http://DSPSCT.org)

[DSPSCT@gmail.com](mailto:DSPSCT@gmail.com)

October, 2025

## Some Roles to Fill

Every organization is as good as its people. Each member contributes to the goals and mission of the association, and some fulfill additional roles. Darien Sail and Power Squadron is a great group, but we do have some roles that we need to fill. These responsibilities are not too time consuming, yet they have a big impact on the success of what we do. Please let us know if you're willing to help out!

**Squadron hospitality:** Our events such as the Holiday Party, Change of Watch, and the Summer Start-up party, warrant a Hospitality Chairperson and volunteers. If you love to plan parties or can help in doing some of the shopping, set-up, decorating, venue selecting, etc, please let us know by emailing either [DSPSCT@gmail.com](mailto:DSPSCT@gmail.com) or [elliottfc.07@gmail.com](mailto:elliottfc.07@gmail.com)

**Squadron communication:** If you enjoy working with technology, including software such as Constant Contact, MailChimp or similar software applications, we could certainly use your expertise. If you can help, please let us know at either [DSPSCT@gmail.com](mailto:DSPSCT@gmail.com) or [padler@pipeline.com](mailto:padler@pipeline.com)

**Squadron website:** We need someone with the ability to move our website, [DSPSCT.org](http://DSPSCT.org), to a modern Content Management System so that a Squadron member will be able to manage and update the website without needing expertise with HTML, FTP, and other arcane technologies. If you're that person, please let us know at either [DSPSCT@gmail.com](mailto:DSPSCT@gmail.com) or [padler@pipeline.com](mailto:padler@pipeline.com)

**Squadron education – teacher or instructor:** We are in the process of revamping our educational offerings and seek instructors. Our Basic Boating Course will be offered in early 2026, which will be a springboard into additional courses. If you are interested in instructing or helping with



## The Bridge

Commander

Cdr Jeff Brown, S

Executive Officer

Lt/C Fred Elliott

Education Officer

*open*

Treasurer

D/Lt/C John Pedersen, SN

Admin Officer

*open*

Secretary

Lt/C Marilyn Ramos

P/C Lynn Wise Oliver, AP

P/C Geoff Axt, AP

## Members At Large

Peter Adler

P.J. Adler

Mark Bodian

Lorraine George-Harik

Gerry Raasch

## Advisers

Jeff Gerwig

Neal Konstantin

Roger Klein

Rob Steckel

Jim Travis

Marc Cohen

the Basic Boating Course, an advanced boating course, or a boating-related seminar, please let us know at either [DSPSCT@gmail.com](mailto:DSPSCT@gmail.com) or [padler@pipeline.com](mailto:padler@pipeline.com).

**Squadron education – administration:** In addition to teachers, we need a member to help with the administration of our education activities. This includes coordinating instructors and classroom venues, managing student registration, and reporting student grades to USPS HQ and (for the Basic Boating Course) to Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP). If you're interested in doing this important job, please let us know at [DSPSCT@gmail.com](mailto:DSPSCT@gmail.com) or [padler@pipeline.com](mailto:padler@pipeline.com).



### *Dock 'n Dine 2025*



The most successful Dock 'n Dine event this Summer was our July journey to Captain's Cove Seaport, in Black Rock Harbor, Bridgeport. We enjoyed a sunny day with a slight breeze for our 15 ½ nautical mile voyage. The return trip was a little choppiier as the winds gathered some speed, but not a problem for the skippers.

We arrived at Captain's Cove and were able to tie-up on the main pier. Commander Jeff Brown and his wife Mary Kay Daughters greeted us as did my son and grandson! Captain's Cove is an easy car ride, making it a popular Dock 'n Dine destination for 2026. The food was very good and reasonably priced. While my grandson liked his grilled hot dog and fries, the mint chocolate chip ice cream cone was "the best ever!"



There are 17 small shops, offering a wide range of items, from jewelry and sculptures to crafty knick-knacks, coffee and other wares plus Sea Tow, mooring gear and the Black Rock Boat works. Something for all!

Dock 'n Dine will be a part of our 2026 boating experience-we will hope for better weather for all our dates next season!

– Fred Elliott



## Against the Odds

By Cary Wang

*[DSPS member Cary Wang was one of the youngest sailors to complete the 2024 Newport Bermuda Race, crewing along with his father John Wang, aboard Monhegan, a J/44 owned by Martin van Breems of Sound Sailing Center. Competing in the St. David's Lighthouse Division, Monhegan crossed the finish line with a corrected time of two days, 22 hours and 56 minutes. Cary is a 10th Grader at Horace Mann School in Bronx, NY and a Pre-college Piano student at Manhattan School of Music.]*



The waning gibbous moon cast a silver light on the churning sea, with the sky dusted with a million stars. It was 2 am, and our heeled boat was being tossed like a toy in the wind and waves. I stood at the helm, bone-tired, clothes soaked with saltwater, and shivers running down my spine. But as I gripped the wheel, feeling the wind howl and the waves hiss past the hull, I found peace and resolution.

This was the biennial Newport Bermuda Race, a dangerous 636-nautical mile voyage across the treacherous Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf Stream, where 160 sailboats and their crews tested their grit. This year was different. Two boats were lost, and fifteen were forced to retire. No one predicted the endless strong upwind across the ocean. I embarked on my journey as one of the youngest sailors in the race at fifteen, determined to prove that I was capable of competing in the “Thrash to the Onion Patch.”

As the days blurred into an endless loop of scorching sunshine, salt-encrusted gear, and bone-chilling fatigue, I discovered the true meaning of resilience. We fought fickle winds that left us calm for hours with our sails flapping uselessly, only to be slammed with 25 knots and towering waves that heeled the boat with the rails dipping in the water. One moment I was walking towards the bow, and in the blink of an eye, a wave banged against our hull and sent me sprawling across the deck, my ribs slamming against the rail as I clung to the jack line. We faced other challenges – the booming snap of our jib halyard (twice) and breaking of the shackle, the 100 miles inside the Gulf Stream’s unpredictable currents, and the tough grinding of winches in 25 knots.

Amidst the hardship, I discovered my own strength. With every drenched watch, salt-sprayed meal, and night spent sleeping on a wet mattress under dripping saltwater, I learned to fight the exhaustion and find a second wind. Sticking to the plan was crucial, and I learned how ambition could quickly turn into recklessness. In the Gulf Stream, we decided to chase what we thought was a favorable wind shift, venturing off the rhumb line in pursuit of extra speed. It was a gamble that backfired. We sailed more miles, and our advantage vanished. As a team, we learned to anticipate, communicate, and trust each other. We celebrated small victories together, laughed in the face of adversity, and emerged from the challenge stronger.

The ocean also offered moments of beauty. The sapphire Gulf Stream was marked by cotton candy-like small cumulonimbus clouds. Sleek silver





dolphins surfed by our side as the sun set. Looking up at the night sky, countless stars blazing above the boat, the moon glimmering on the water, I was reminded about how small we were but also our connection to something greater.

I also recognized the cleanliness of the pristine water. Looking down from the deck, the surface reflected the sky perfectly. As the boat glided through the waves, I barely noticed any litter. It was just untouched blue, stretching out to the horizon. While sailing across an ocean of such clean water without any plastic, I realized we have to protect it. We are so dependent upon the health of the sea. Protecting the ocean is about protecting our future.

And then there were moments like the night under the gleaming moon when all my discomfort dissolved, not because it wasn't there but because I was no longer separate from it. I was simply another element connected to the boat, the sea, and something much more significant than myself.

We crossed the finish line after three days and fifteen hours. The Newport Bermuda Race was not just a test of sailing skills but a journey of self-discovery. It forged resilience, ignited a passion for adventure, and reinforced deep respect for the power and beauty of the natural world. Most importantly, it showed me the possibility of peace in the heart of the struggle. And in that surrender, being connected with it all, I found a peace that resonated with me long after we were safely on shore.

## **Michael Tougias**

**October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

We are pleased to announce, in collaboration with the Darien Library, that Michael J Tougias will be our guest speaker on Sunday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, at 5:00 PM. Mr Tougias is a *New York Times* bestselling author of 30 books for adults and 9 for children. His book *The Finest Hours: The True Story of the U.S. Coast Guard's Most Daring Sea Rescue* (co-written with Casey Sherman) was made into a Disney movie, starring Chris Pine and Casey Affleck. His latest book is *Extreme Survival: Lessons Learned from Those who have Triumphed Against All Odds*.

Mr. Tougias will present *Overboard: A true survival-at-sea story of a sailboat that went from Connecticut to Bermuda in 2005*. Please register for the event through the Darien Library ([darienlibrary.org](http://darienlibrary.org)). Go to their Events calendar, October 26, and click on Register..

Please RSVP to Mark Bodian at [mmarkb1968@gmail.com](mailto:mmarkb1968@gmail.com).



## **PIRATES OF NEW ENGLAND**

**November 16, 2025**

AHOY - COME ONE COME ALL – for a delightful lecture by Davis Dunavin about the Pirates of New England. Mr. Dunavin will also entertain us with some authentic sea shanties.

This speaker event – open to all DSPS and Norwalk Yacht Club members -- will be held on November 16 from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. at the Norwalk Yacht Club, 10 Nathan Hale Dr., Norwalk.

Please RSVP to Mark Bodian at [mmarkb1968@gmail.com](mailto:mmarkb1968@gmail.com).

## **Boat/Camp 2025**



On a sunny, calm July 25<sup>th</sup>, 81 campers and counselors descended upon Noroton Yacht Club for the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Boat/Camp. Due to rain (twice) and Covid, 27 of these “Best day on the water!” events have taken place. Eighteen boats, representing Noroton and Stamford Yacht Clubs, the Darien Boat Club, Norwalk Sail and Power Squadron (Sea Scouts), and DSPS took the campers on an excursion which included stops at Green’s Ledge Lighthouse, Sheffield Island Lighthouse, Five Mile River and Ziegler’s Cove. One of these

boats was piloted by Darien First Selectman Jon Zagrodsky, who also addressed all of the volunteers prior to the campers’ arrival. Aboard the Coast Guard Auxiliary boat in Ziegler’s were pirates, who, when not making someone walk-the-plank, found time to toss treats to the campers! Thank you East Coast Contemporary Ballet Company for becoming shiver-me-timbers pirates!



Prior to heading out on the Sound, all had the chance to view the 45’ Coast Guard Response boat, courtesy of the New Haven Coast Guard station. The Darien Police boat also was highly visible, motoring alongside many of our boats throughout the day. As we entered the Sound at the mouth of Darien Harbor, we all passed under the high arch of water, generated by the Darien Fire Boat.

In addition to all of these volunteer organizations who help make this day a wonderful and educational experience for the kids, 94 volunteers helped with dockmaster/docking duties, on-shore radio and safety, lunch bagging and sorting, shopping and registration. Person-to-Person and Saint Luke’s Parish aided the effort, and once again, Noroton Yacht Club graciously hosted us. The day ended with an ice-cream social on the lawn at the Club.

Overheard were comments such as “Our boat has a kitchen!” “Our boat was so fast!” “The water tastes like salt!” “I can’t wait until next year!” Everyone comes away from Boat/Camp simply “feeling good,” and that doesn’t happen without the unparalleled energy and devotion of Gerry Raasch, who coordinates and choreographs the multitude of organizations and volunteers to create “the best day on the water!” Gerry and his team are remarkable.



While the campers’ comments were humorous and memorable, reflecting “the best day on the water!”, my memory will be of seeing Frank Kemp in his boat, escorting the volunteer boats with campers to the pirates. The concept of Boat/Camp was explained to him by two Squadron members 31 years ago, and Frank not only embraced it but made it happen. Thanks to his love of children and the Sound, Boat/Camp has lasted 30 years. May our next 30 Boat/Camps be as fun, educational and loving as Frank would want it to be.