



Darien Sail & Power Squadron

District 2, United States Power Squadrons®

DSPSCT.org

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September, 2026

Abysmal Bliss

I went to start the port engine, and it fired up on cue. The starboard engine barely turned over, and as it did the port engine quickly died. I tried both engines again, and neither would start. Then I open the engine hatch followed by the rear hatch, to confirm the horrifying sight of “there’s far too much water in the bilge!”

Today is Boat/Camp 2027. My boat and I are scheduled to participate in this, the annual “best day on the water!” that our Squadron has hosted (with Noroton Yacht Club) for 31 years. I have been a part of Boat/Camp since its inception and have been an active participant (on the water with my boat) for most of them. *I cannot miss today! I have to get the engines running. A battery Boost should do the trick.*

On shore, I found Gerry Raasch, our unparalleled leader and organizer of Boat/Camp and briefly told him “Hey, I’ve got engine problems. I think I can get them fixed by 10:00, when the campers arrive.” With my battery Boost in hand, I returned to the boat and spent some time pumping the boat out. While bailing, I thought about the very slow leak I was aware of, coupled with a few major rainstorms that we had over the previous four days. What I was pumping out was the result of the automatic bilge either being “on” too much or its float switch getting stuck in the “on” position, thus draining the battery. Starting an engine was beyond reach without at least a boost. After pumping some more and checking the time, I connected the Boost, took a deep breath, turned the key and.....silence from the starboard engine. I was furious! *Not today!* I got a ‘click’ when I tried the port engine. I can’t share my thoughts when that happened...

I made it back ashore for the Skipper’s Meeting, in time to hear First Selectman Jon Zagrodzky praise our organization for its volunteerism

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The Bridge

Commander

Cdr Fred Elliott

Executive Officer

open

Education Officer

D/Lt/C John Pedersen, SN

Treasurer

D/Lt/C John Pedersen, SN

Admin Officer

Lt/C Barbara Raasch

Secretary

Lt/C Marilyn Ramos

P/C Jeff Brown, S

P/C Geoff Axt, AP

Members At Large

Peter Adler

P.J. Adler

Lorraine George-Harik

Advisers

Jeff Gerwig

Neal Konstantin

Rob Steckel

Jim Travis

Marc Cohen

and commitment to these children. Gerry Raasch followed, citing the numerous groups who make this day special, such as Person-to-Person, Sheffield Island, Green's Ledge Lighthouse, the Darien Police Boat and the Noroton Fire Boat, the owners of Fish Island, the East Coast Contemporary Ballet Company (who morph into incredibly believable pirates in Ziegler's Cove), the Coast Guard Auxiliary, volunteers from Saint Luke's Parish who created and distributed the numerous drink, food and 'goodie bags' for all on the water, and both the on-land and on-site volunteers. Oh yes, and of course the Skippers, crews, and boats. *I am now a bona-fide spectator.*

Catching Gerry's eye, I shook my head "no." *I am so disappointed.* We spoke briefly later and concluded "It's a boat! Stuff happens." And it's Boat/Camp.

The yellow buses arrived at 10:00, and my disconsolate feelings were now being coaxed into happiness. Just seeing and hearing these youngsters as they were about to embark for a few hours on the Sound was refreshing. Rejuvenating. Resuscitating. Many have never been on a boat. Some will be assigned to a sailboat, truly a unique experience for them. The joy, the excitement, the anticipation of going through the water arc created by the Noroton Fire Boat was palpable.

I saw them off with a smile on my face, then returned to my powerless boat, to pump it dry, then to try and start it again. Ultimately, it got towed into the dock and the battery charger was hooked up.

Having witnessed so many Boat/Camp dates, I can always tell how successful the 'best day on the water' has been for the kids, just by seeing their expressions and listening to their conversations with each other. "My boat was so fast!" "We hit this wave and made a big splash!" "Our boat had a kitchen!" "It was so cool to see the sail go up!" True confession, I have yet to hear a negative comment from any of the campers or counselors.

While my Boat/Camp 2026 got off to an abysmal start, the bliss of the kids was infectious. While I couldn't participate, they enjoyed themselves immensely. My boat and I will be there in full force on July 30, 2027!!

PS: The starboard engine needed a new alternator. The port engine suffered from water in the gas, which new gas line filters remedied. The bilge pump float switch has been replaced.

– Cdr. Fred Elliott

We Are Seeking a Communications Director

We are looking for someone to fill the role of Communications Director, currently being handled by our Past Commander, Jeff Brown. Knowledge of utilizing Constant Contact is needed. Mailing lists need to be maintained and updated when necessary. Communications to be sent will be "ready to go" with some possible editing or enhancements done.

If interested, please contact Fred Elliott (elliottfc.07@gmail.com)

Education Moving to a New Venue!

In an effort to broaden our exposure, the Bridge has agreed to partner with the Town of Darien. Under the auspices of their Parks and Recreation Department, **we will teach the one-day version of the ABC Safe Boating Course on Saturday, September 26th, at The Paddle Hut, located within Weed Beach.** The class will begin at 8:30 AM and conclude around 5:00 PM. Successful completion of the course results in students obtaining their Connecticut Boating License.

We were able to secure this initial date plus a few dates in March 2027 to teach the “short version” of the ABC course. The Parks and Recreation Department has been gracious in offering The Paddle Hut as a classroom and is notifying all Darien residents on their mailing list of this course opportunity.

Presenting the ABC course is a proven method of adding members to our organization. Please encourage *anyone* that you know who should take this course to do so! If you would like to act as a table monitor for this course, please contact Peter Adler (padler@pipeline.com). Table monitors add a tremendous amount to the overall learning experience and act as ambassadors of the Darien chapter of America's Boating Club.

A copy of the flier with registration information is below.



SAFE BOATING & PERSONAL WATERCRAFT COURSE!

Successful completion of the Boating Course offered by Darien Sail and Power Squadron will qualify participants for the Connecticut Boating License. The course will cover "rules of the road," essentials of good seamanship, discussion of anchoring and docking, marine VHF radios, required safety equipment and "local knowledge" of destinations and anchorages.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26TH
8:30 AM - 5:00 PM
WEED BEACH PADDLE HUT
LUNCH BREAK IS FROM 1:00-1:30 PM

SIGN UP NOW



FEE: RESIDENT \$100
NON-RESIDENT \$120

DARIEN PARKS & REC

AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB

Darien Sail & Power Squadron

Do I? or Don't I?

We've all been there. You're on the Sound enjoying a day that was forecast to be clear, sunny with a slight breeze. Then suddenly, it becomes cloudy.....or the temperature drops and the wind not only increases speed but changes direction. Do I think the weather is going to get really bad, should I head into shore? Or do I think about the forecast of clear and sunny skies and remain where I am? Sometimes you're right, but other times maybe not so much.

Sudden weather change can result in dangerous pop-up squalls, heavy rain with thunder and lightning or a temperature drop that remains. By learning more about Marine Weather, you can improve your odds and be safer on the water.

Gunnar Edelstein, Noroton Yacht Club member and past Commander of the Darien Sail and Power Squadron (aka The Darien Chapter of America's boating Club) will present a Marine Weather seminar on Monday, September 21, beginning at 7:00 PM. Gunnar taught the in-depth weather course for the Power Squadron for over 10 years, drawing on his experience as a commercial jet pilot. This course will focus on convective weather plus the basics of barometric pressure, clouds and wind speed.

This two-hour seminar is open to members of either Noroton Yacht Club or the Darien Chapter of America's Boating Club (Darien Sail & Power Squadron). You must RSVP for this seminar, click the RSVP button below to do so and see the flier (next page) for more details.

RSVP

We hope to see you there!

Noroton Yacht Club

41°02.319' N 073°29.080' W

23 Baywater Drive, Darien, CT 06820

(203) 655-7686

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Backyard BBQ?

No.....

The Aft Deck BBQ!!!

Our (boating) season-ending gathering will take place at Darien's Pear Tree Point Beach on Saturday, September 26th, commencing at 4:00 PM. Hamburgers, cheeseburgers, hot dogs, sausage and all the fixings plus some great sides! Lest we forget, our traditional "Dark-n-Stormie's" and other adult and n/a beverages will be available as well!

To help defray the cost, suggested \$20 donations per person would be graciously appreciated.

We are looking for a few folks to help with set-up and grilling! Those interested, please contact Fred Elliott (elliottfc.07@gmail.com).

Come enjoy the beach, the water, the view and "just talkin' about boats!" While this may be the closing of the boating season, the BBQ also signifies the beginning of our Fall and Winter Speaker Series. We are in the process of scheduling and confirming some excellent, informative presentations for you to attend.

We look forward to gathering on the Beach on the 26th! Bring sunshine! And maybe a dessert to share!



**NOROTON
YACHT CLUB**

SPEAKER SERIES

Marine Weather

Be Prepared. Be Safer. Enjoy the Water.



We've all been there. You're on the Sound enjoying a day that was forecasted to be clear, sunny with a slight breeze. Then suddenly, it becomes cloudy...or the temperature drops and the wind not only increases speed but changes direction. Do I think the weather is going to get really bad, should I head into shore? Or do I think about the forecast of clear and sunny skies and remain where I am? Sometimes you're right, but other times maybe not so much.

Sudden weather change can result in dangerous pop-up squalls, heavy rain with thunder and lightening or a temperature drop that remains. By learning more about Marine Weather, you can improve your odds and be safer on the water.

PRESENTED BY
Gunnar Edlstein

Noroton Yacht Club member and past Commander of the Darien Sail and Power Squadron, Gunnar will share his insights on marine weather, drawing from his experience as a commercial jet pilot. This course will focus on convective weather, plus the basics of barometric pressure, clouds and wind speed.

-  CONVECTIVE WEATHER
-  BAROMETRIC PRESSURE
-  CLOUDS
-  WIND SPEED

 **Monday, September 21
7:00 PM**

 Lite Bites
& BYO

 **NOROTON
YACHT CLUB**

The Norwalk Boat Show is (almost)here!!

The annual Norwalk Boat Show is fast approaching! This boating extravaganza will be held on September 24-27 at the Norwalk Cove Marina. Boats of all shapes, sizes and specifically designed-for use will be on display both in the water and on land. In addition, boating accessories of all descriptions are also available for your perusal and possible purchase.

The Power Squadron has a booth in the main tent area, and members of Stamford, Greenwich, Norwalk, Penfield and Darien are asked to have representatives “work the booth.” Our assigned day and time is Friday, September 25th, 2:00-7:00 PM. By being in the booth, it’s an opportunity to meet people who may have an interest in what we do, and by answering their inquiries and explaining all that we are, they could become members! And, by “working the booth,” you get free admission! That’s an added bonus to helping promote the Darien Sail and Power Squadron (aka Darien Chapter of America’s Boating Club).

Please sign-up for a shift on any of the four days. You may be with a member from another Squadron, or one of us, but you will meet great people and talk with them about what we do.

Please contact Fred Elliott (elliottfc.07@gmail.com) to ask questions and/or sign-up for a shift.

