

THE LUBBER'S LINE

VOLUME 88, ISSUE 1

January-February 2026

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In This Issue

See page 5 for the list of members who have agreed to be nominated for positions on the 2026-2027 Bridge and Elected Committees. These positions are critical to keeping us together as a branch of America's Boating Club/United States Power Squadrons and supporting our education programs and social activities.

More than 80 percent of boating fatalities occur in boats less than 26 feet. Although excessive speed, reckless operation, operator inattention or inexperience, and boating under the influence can be contributing factors, small boats have other hazards to consider. An informative discussion of these by the U. S. Coast Guard can be found on page 9.

Bridge Officers

Commander

Cdr John H. Bailey, AP

Commander@abc-wilmington.com

Executive Officer

Lt/C Justin E. Doheny, S

xo@abc-wilmington.com

Administrative Officer

P/C J. Carol Hanson, AP

admin@abc-wilmington.com

Education Officer

Lt/C John E. Schleicher, AP

education@abc-wilmington.com

Treasurer

Lt/C William E. Barber, AP

treasurer@abc-wilmington.com

Secretary

Lt/C Richard A. Butler, SN

secretary@abc-wilmington.com

Executive Committee

Lt Lynn A. Mahaffy, AP

P/C D. Jeffrey Russell, AP

Elizabeth Stevenson

Jeff Capaldi

Leslie A. Brower, AP

Webmaster

P/C D. Jeffrey Russell, AP

webmaster@abc-wilmington.com

Lubber's Line Editor

P/C Richard Butler, SN

newsletter@abc-wilmington.com

Volunteer Needed.





COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Cdr John H. Bailey, AP



Seasonal Greetings and Upcoming Events

As the chilly weather settles in, I hope everyone with boats has had the chance to complete their winter preparations. The forecast suggests we're in for a cold and snowy season, so stepping away from boating for a while is not only good for the mind, but also the wallet. Let's take this opportunity to relax, recharge, and enjoy the holidays with family and friends.

I hope you're all having a joyful and restful winter. Remember, these cold days won't last forever. With that in mind, I'd like to invite you to our January Zoom social, taking place on January 9. Our guest speaker will be John O'Reilly, who will share his exciting experiences racing on Mystery, a Chesapeake Bay Log Canoe. This promises to be an engaging event, and I encourage everyone to join in.

Looking ahead to warmer days, I encourage you to consider joining us for our summer cruise. If you've never participated before, this is a wonderful opportunity to meet fellow club members and learn more about the beauty of the bay. We're also looking for fresh ideas for interesting cruise destinations—suggestions are welcome!

Wishing you all a great winter season. If there's anything you'd like to do for the club or ideas you'd like to share, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Cdr. John Bailey



Installing a winter cover on Skylark



Taking down Star Reacher's sails for the winter



Administrative Department

P/C J. Carol Hanson, AP

A Most Festive Holiday Social

Sixteen ABCW members started their holidays with a warm and wonderful December Holiday Social. Hosted at the lovely Hockessin DE home of Ewa Papiez, we enjoyed an afternoon of socializing, libations, and the always entertaining Holiday Swap gift exchange. Thoughtful gift varieties led to some lively gift swapping – where some gifts were swapped several times and not without some pouts, smiles and laughter alike!

A most entertaining gift (not printable!) was selected by Betty Ingram, brought to last year's Holiday Social by District Education Officer John O'Reilly. J.T. Walton stole the standout nautical gift of a Tide and Time instrument, specifically set to Rock Hall tides, from Carol, brought by Jeff Capaldi. Joan Barber tried, to no avail, to hold on to two desirable books stolen by Ewa Papiez. John Schleicher brought a beautiful handmade cutting board that found a happy home!

We missed several members who were unable to attend due to travel and illness. Many thanks to the ABCW Social Committee for planning, and Ewa Papiez for hosting this annual, entertaining Social!

On November 8, 23 members of our club enjoyed the supper social at Country House in Wilmington followed by a fascinating presentation on the Revolutionary War hero Marquis de Lafayette by Guest speaker, Bruce Mowday.

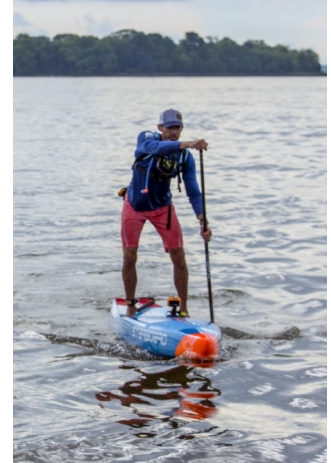


UPCOMING EVENTS:

Friday January 9, 2026, 6:30 pm – The History of Log Canoes. Executive Director of America's Boating Channel, P/C John O'Reilly, will discuss his experience racing on Mystery, a Chesapeake Bay log canoe, and how he became interested in their history. John is a lifelong sailor, starting with sunfishes in South Jersey, and progressing to larger boats after college. He has owned a 25 ft Catalina and most recently a 32 ft Freedom yacht but has always loved wooden boats. When he moved to Cambridge, MD 20 years ago, he volunteered on the Skipjack Nathan of Dorchester until he moved to Rock Hall in 2019. Sailing took a break during Covid, but soon he sought out a new wooden boat adventure, log canoe racing. For the past few years, he has raced on the log canoe Mystery. During that time, he has met many fascinating people and learned a lot about the construction and history of this fleet of boats. He will be presenting a brief overview of the history of log canoes. Please respond to the Punchbowl Invite. We look forward to seeing you then!

UPCOMING EVENTS (cont.):**Friday, February 6, 2025, 6:30 pm. On Zoom – ABCW Annual Meeting & Founder’s Day Social Program –**

Our speaker for the Founder’s Day social is Chris Hopkinson, founder of Bay Paddle, who will be speaking to us about his experiences paddling the length of the Chesapeake on a stand-up paddle board. As an introduction, please watch the short documentary (listed below) ahead of his presentation. He will expand upon the documentary and possibly some of his other experiences on the Bay. Sure to be a fascinating talk, you won’t want to miss this! Please join us on Zoom (link to come soon) at 1830 for socializing and his talk at 1900. We hope to see you there!



Power of the Paddle – documentary (about 25 minutes)

<https://vimeo.com/687176940>

Request for Members Approval: Nominations of Bridge Officers and Committees - ABCW members will be asked to vote on the nominations for the Bridge Officers and Executive, Auditing and Nominating Committees. Deep appreciation for and thanks to the members who have agreed to serve! Please see page 5 for the Slate of Officers recommended. Additional thanks to the Nominating Committee members, Chairperson Betty Ingram, Carol Hanson and Bart Wilson, for their good work on this important committee.

Sunday, March 15, 2026, 11:00 am - March Change of Watch – - Susan Williamson has been in touch with Country House and the Culinary Services Director to schedule a room and brunch at Country House for our Change of Watch. Formal planning will begin after the New Year’s Holiday.

Photos From ABC-Wilmington 2025 COW

CDR John Bailey is Sworn In



Attendees at the 2025 ABCW Change of Watch



Carol Hanson and John Schleicher Receive Education Proficiency Awards

Many thanks to the ABCW Social Committee members who continue to plan and provide enjoyable, entertaining and educational events for members during most months of the year. They include Co-Chairs Joan Barber and Lynn Mahaffy, Betty Ingram, Beth Stevenson, Susan Williamson and Carol Hanson.

AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB WILMINGTON 2025 - 2026 Nominations

The following is a list of fellow members and the respective responsibilities each has agreed to assume for Bridge Year 2026 – 2027, if elected.

Bridge Officers

Commander..... Lt/C Justin Doheny, S
Executive Officer..... Lt Leslie A. Brower, AP
Administrative Officer.....P/C J. Carol Hanson, AP
Education Officer.....Lt Lynn A. Mahaffy, AP
Secretary..... P/C Richard A. Butler, SN
Treasurer.....Lt/C William E. Barber, AP
Assistant Treasurer..... P/C Richard A. Butler, SN

Executive Committee

Members-At-Large

Cdr John H. Bailey, AP
 P/C D. Jeffrey Russell, AP
 Lt/C John E. Schleicher, AP
 Elizabeth Stevenson
 James T. Walton

Audit Committee

Chair: Lt William T. Zimmerman, N
Assistants: Lt W. Randy Williamson, SN; P/C John H. Bailey, AP

Nominating Committee

Chair: P/C J. Carol Hanson, AP
Assistant: Lt/C William E. Barber, AP

Rules Committee

Chair: P/C Richard A. Butler, SN
Assistant: P/C Donna F. Zimmerman, JN

Any member can nominate themselves or another member (who has agreed) to any of our elected positions. This will be welcomed as a positive act of volunteering to help the club. To nominate someone before the February social, please contact [Richard Butler](#).

The ratifying vote by General Membership will take place at the
FOUNDERS' DAY SOCIAL ON FEBRUARY 6, 2026 1830 HRS ON ZOOM.

Respectfully submitted for membership consideration by the 2025-2026 Nominating Committee.

**Any member who would like to be considered for election to one of these offices is encouraged to contact a member of the Bridge.*



District & National News

D5 2026 Spring Conference

What can you expect to happen at the 2026-2027 Spring Conference and Change-of-Watch, and why is it normally held in Ocean City, Maryland? Beginning with Ocean City, it's all about geographic location and proximity for the member squadrons. In addition, the scenery of the Atlantic Ocean is one to behold, especially the sunrises.



Expect training opportunities, hospitality rooms including complimentary beverages and snacks, fun events such as some squadrons hosting programs they put together, ship's store, raffle table and a 50/50. Not unlike any other district or national event, there is an opportunity to meet other members from other squadrons. The business portion includes individual, district bridge in addition to committee chair reports, award presentations, nominations for the 2026-2027 bridge, elected committee chairs, and voting for the same.

Additional information is available on the District [website](#). Or by contacting [Richard Butler](#).

Fall Conference Wrap-up

One of the highlights of the conference was the presentation from the Portuguese representative. This wouldn't have been possible without the efforts of Karl Hellinger and his understudy Gene Danko, who coordinated the attendance with the embassy and arranged the representative's visit.

Thank you to Jim Zeigler and Mike Maszczenski for coordinating the schedule and having engaging topics for us to discuss. If you have any compliments or constructive feedback, please contact me.

Happy Holidays!

John O'Reilly Chair, D/5 M&R committee

2025 D/5 Fall Conference Awards

The District 5 Commander's Award for Elective Grades is presented to that Squadron showing the greatest percentage increase in completion of the Elective Courses taught during the previous year. Those courses include Weather, Sail, Engine Maintenance, Marine Electronics, Cruising and Cruise Planning, and Instructor Development.

First place for 2024-2025 was awarded to Delhigh Power Squadron. Runner-ups were Richmond Sail & Power Squadron and Wilmington Sail and Power Squadron.



WELCOME TO 2026 ANNUAL MEETING!



Annual Meeting
February 9-15, 2026
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina



Embassy Suites by Hilton Myrtle Beach Oceanfront Resort at Kingston Plantation.

9800 Queensway Blvd Myrtle Beach SC

Join Us in Myrtle Beach!

Members and Friends of United States Power Squadrons / America's Boating Club.



Chief Commander Ralph A. Bernard AP

As Chief Commander, it is my pleasure to invite and strongly encourage each of you to attend our 2026 Annual Meeting in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. This gathering is one of the most important opportunities we have each year to come together, strengthen our organization and celebrate the spirit of camaraderie that defines the United States Power Squadron / America's Boating Club.

Myrtle Beach will provide the perfect setting for our work and fellowship. The stunning coastline, welcoming community, and vibrant boating culture make it a natural home for our annual event. Your attendance welcomes the chance to reconnect with friends from across the country and participate in seminars to engage and share ideas and success stories.

The Annual Meeting is where we review our progress, set priorities and make decisions that influence the direction of America's Boating Club. Your voice matters and your presence helps ensure we stay aligned with the needs of our squadrons and districts.

Workshops, seminars and committee sessions offer valuable insights into everything from member engagement and boating education, to vessel safety and public outreach. The knowledge shared strengthens our local squadrons, districts and our national mission.

This is our time to recognize the exceptional service, dedication and innovations that have helped advance boating safety and education over the past year. Our Awards Dinner on Thursday allows us the opportunity to celebrate members who have given so much to our organization. It's inspiring and a reminder of the impact we make together to make our waterways safe.

There is no substitute for the friendships built at our national meetings. Whether it's casual conversations in the hallway or spirited discussions during our sessions, the fellowship we share fuels our passion and reinforces why we do what we do.

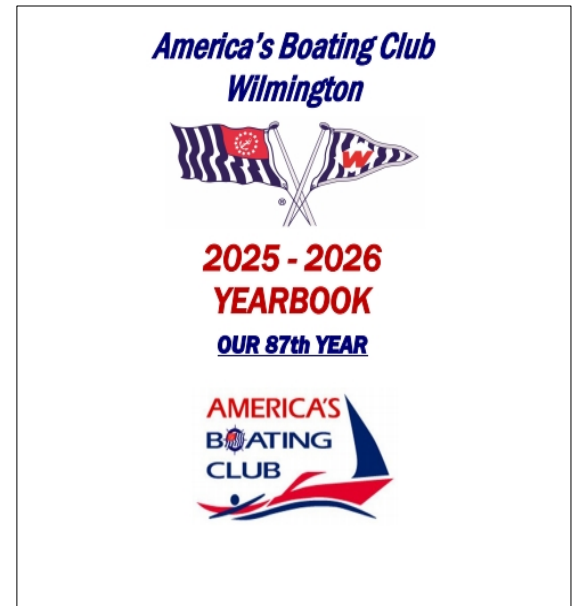
The National Meetings Committee has been hard at work ensuring that this year's event is well-organized, welcoming and engaging. I am grateful for their dedication and for the volunteers who make these gatherings possible each year.



Secretary's Department

P/C Richard Butler, SN

One of the Club Secretary's duties is producing a Year Book of ABC-Wilmington critical information, including the names and information for each of our members. Although the Year Book won't be published and issued until March, the work to produce our 2026-2027 Year Book is already in progress. In order to assure the accuracy of the information included, it is necessary for each member to send me any changes over the past year to their: Address, Phone number(s), email address, and vessel name, type (S or P), Length, and Home Port. Please look over this past year's book and send me any corrections to the information in it that you notice. This information should be sent to secretary@abc-wilmington.com. Your help with this effort is greatly appreciated.



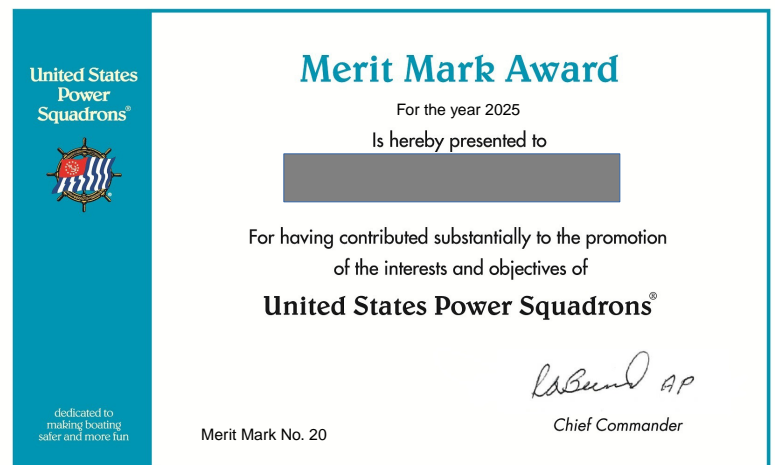
Merit Marks Submission for 2025

Thank you to everyone who submitted a record of their ABCW service activities for consideration to be awarded a 2025 Merit Mark. I was impressed to see the wide variety of activities and roles within our club. Your passion for boating and the organization is revealed by the incredible number of hours that are put in during the course of the year. Our club members devoted 632 hours of service collectively with an additional 24 completed VSC's. I am pleased to share that 18 of our members were awarded a Merit Mark by ABC National.

Congratulations to the following recipients:

Joan Barber	William Barber
Leslie Brower	Richard Butler
Jeff Capaldi	Dana Doheny
Justin Doheny	Carol Hanson
Betty Ingram	Lynn Mahaffy
Jeffrey Russell	Gail Russell
John Schleicher	Beth Stevenson
James T. Walton	Susan Williamson
Randy Williamson	Bruce Wyngaard

Submitted by
Lt. Beth Stevenson
Merit Mark Chair





Small boat safety



When enjoying the nation's lakes, rivers and coastal waterways, small boat operators need to be aware of their craft's limitations and act accordingly.

More than 80 percent of boating fatalities occur in boats less than 26 feet. Although excessive speed, reckless operation, operator inattention or inexperience, and boating under the influence can be contributing factors, small boats have other hazards to consider.

A wave can quickly fill a small boat with water. Small boats have open transoms and helm station as well as fewer and smaller bilge pumps—or none at all. Water can enter non-watertight decks and damage control cables, leaving the boat stranded.

With little to no free board (the distance between the rail or top edge of the boat and the waterline) when empty, small boats have even less when fully loaded with occupants, food and gear. It's easy to unintentionally overload small boats, making them more likely to capsize, even in calm waters.

So keep your boat's maximum load capacity in mind. On most mono-hull boats up to 20 feet long, you can find the maximum horsepower rating and the maximum safe-operating load weight on the hull capacity plate. If a plate isn't present, you can calculate the maximum safe capacity for a mono-hull boat by multiplying the boat's length times its width and dividing by 15. As such, a 6-foot-wide, 18-foot-long boat can carry up to seven people safely.

Make capsizing less likely by evenly distributing your load. Standing, even to change seating positions, raises the boat's center of gravity, making it less stable. The same is true for sitting on gunwales, seat backs or a pedestal seat while under way. A raised center of gravity means that a wave, wake or sudden turn can cause a person to fall overboard.

Complete a pre-departure checklist before launch to make sure that your boat is in good working order and has all the necessary safety equipment. And be sure to check the weather report and waterway conditions, keeping in mind that conditions considered safe for a 40-footer might be unsafe for a boat half that size.

Small boats are a lot of fun, so take the time to inspect your boat before launching and watch your load to make all of your journeys safe ones. —U.S. Coast Guard

Let's Celebrate the January & February Birthdays

January

Jeanne Hertig	Jan 1
Kathy Mayhue	Jan 5
David Netting	Jan 21
Jeffrey Capaldi	Jan 31

February

Wayne Hepting	Feb 2
Francis Richardson	Feb 12
D. Jeffrey Russell	Feb 12
Paul Erlichman	Feb 13
Colleen Schleicher	Feb 17
James Walton	Feb 19
Laura Hepting	Feb 20

A comprehensive list with detailed descriptions of the benefits available to America's Boating Club members is available [here](#):



2026 AM Join About ▾ Events ▾

Member Benefits

A sub-committee of the Membership Committee
 Chair: Stf/C Jonathan Bensman, AP
jonbensman@gmail.com

Marine / Boating Benefits

- ARGO Navigation ▾
- Boatfix ▾
- BoatUS (Discontinued) ▾
- Captain's Nautical ▾
- Coastal Explorer from Rose Point ▾
- Ditch Navigation ▾
- GPS for Mariners ▾
- Ham Radio Prep ▾
- Hamilton Marine ▾

Travel

- Avis / Budget - Car Rentals ▾
- Cruises Only ▾
- DAN Boater ▾
- Endless Vacation Rentals ▾
- Motel 6 ▾
- On Call International Medical & Travel Assistance ▾
- Orlando Vacation.com ▾
- Red Roof Inn ▾

Education

- America's Boating Club Courses ▾
- Great Lakes Cruising Club School ▾
- Mariner's Learning Guide ▾

Insurance / Finance

- America's Boating Club Boat Insurance ▾
- Farmer's Insurance ▾
- Travelers Insurance ▾

Calendar of Events January/February 2026

<http://abc-wilmington.com/>

January					2026
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT/SUN
			1	2	3/4
5	6	7	8	9	10/11
12	13	14	15	16	17/18
19	20	21	22	23	24/25
26	27	28	29	30	31

January Events

9 JAN 1830

ABC Wilmington Social Via Zoom

20 JAN 1900

ABC Wilmington Executive Committee Meeting
Via Zoom

**All members are welcome to attend*

- Email admin@abc-wilmington.com to get a Zoom invite!

February					2026
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT/SUN
					/1
2	3	4	5	6	7/8
9	10	11	12	13	14/15
16	17	18	29	20	21/22
23	24	25	26	27	28/

February Events

6 Feb 1830

ABCW Annual Meeting & Founders' Day Social
Via Zoom

9-14 Feb

USPS Annual Meeting
Myrtle Beach, SC

15 Feb

Deadline for March/April Lubber's Line Material

17 Feb 1900

ABC Wilmington Executive Committee Meeting *
Via Zoom

**All members are welcome to attend*

- email admin@abc-wilmington.com to get a Zoom invite!



Join us for weekly luncheons

Each Wednesday @ 1200
Seasons Pizza 3901 Concord Pike
Wilmington, DE 19803



Visit us on the web at: <http://abc-wilmington.com/>

The Lubber's Line is a publication of America's Boating Club® Wilmington published the first week of January, March, May, August, and November.