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

THE LUBBER'S LINE

VOLUME 88, ISSUE 2 **March - April 2026**

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Commander's Message	2
Administrative Dept.	3
District & National News	4
Secretary's Dept.	5
ABCW Annual Cruise	6
Education Dept.	7
In Memoriam-Geraldine Walker	8
Member Benefits	9
Electric Shock Drowning	10
ABCW Birthdays	10
Calendar	11

2025 Change of Watch

In This Issue

See pages 3 and 5 for information on ABCW's 88th Change of Watch.

Changes to where to find information on Member Benefits are on page 9.

Information of the passing of long term, beloved member Geri Walker can be found on page 8.

Detailed information on plans for our annual June Cruise can be found on page 6.

ABCW Members Enjoying February in St Thomas, USVI

2024 DISTINCTIVE COMMUNICATOR AWARD WEBSITE

2024 DISTINCTIVE COMMUNICATOR AWARD NEWSLETTER

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.

America's Boating Club® is a registered trademark of the United States Power Squadrons®

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Cdr John H. Bailey, AP

As we move into the promise of spring, I want to take a moment to reflect on our journey through winter. While the colder months kept many of us off the water, our continued virtual gatherings made sure we stayed connected and engaged. I appreciate everyone who logged in, shared stories, and kept our boating community vibrant despite the chill outside.
One of our many highlights this season was our Founders Day event, where we welcomed Cris Hopkinson as our guest speaker. Cris's insights and experiences were truly inspiring and reminded us all why our club is so special. Thank you to everyone who participated and made the day memorable.

With warmer days ahead, anticipation is building for the upcoming boating season. Now is the perfect time to brush up on your boating skills. I encourage you to check out our classes and educational opportunities—whether you're a seasoned captain or just starting out, there's always something new to learn.

Safety is at the heart of everything we do. Don't forget to schedule a Vessel Safety Check before you launch. These checks are simple, non-punitive, and designed to help you ensure your boat is ready and safe. Remember, a safety check is not an inspection from law enforcement—it's a helpful review by fellow boaters who care about your well-being.

As I am preparing to step down as your commander, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for your support, enthusiasm, and friendship over the past year. It's been an honor to lead such a dedicated team. Please join me in welcoming our incoming commander Lt/C Justin Doheny, who I know will continue to guide us with passion and commitment.

Wishing you all fair winds and safe boating. See you on the water!

Cdr. John Bailey AP

Administrative Department

P/C Carol J. Hanson, AP

Wonderful Winter Socials!

In January, on Zoom, over twenty-five members of our boating club enjoyed The History of Log Canoes, presented by Executive Director of America's Boating Channel, Commander John O'Reilly. He discussed his captivating experience while 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. For the past few years, he has raced on the log canoe Mystery. John's presentation was fascinating, as he explained the interesting people he has met, what he has learned about the construction and history of log canoes, and the innumerable challenges one deals with while racing on a log canoe!

Our February ABCW Annual Meeting & Founder's Zoom Social featured speaker Chris Hopkinson, founder of Bay Paddle, who shared insights on his amazing experience paddling the length of the Chesapeake Bay on a paddle board.

Additionally, members unanimously approved the 2026 – 2027 nominations of Bridge Officers and the Executive, Auditing and Nominating Committees. Deep appreciation for and thanks to the members who have agreed to serve! Additional thanks to the Nominating Committee members, Chairperson Betty Ingram, Carol Hanson and Bart Wilson, for their good work on this important committee.

Upcoming Events Planned

Upcoming March Change of Watch – Sunday, March 15, 2026, 11:00 am – to be held at the Performing Arts Center at Country House. The Brunch Buffet will be served at 11:15 so please be on time! The Change of Watch Ceremony will begin at 12:15. Send your payment of $29/person to Bill Barber. **Please see your Punchbowl invite** for more information and respond by March 9, 2026. Please bring a new nautical or appropriate item to add to our Flea Market basket. It has proven to be a very popular fund raiser for our Education Department.

Many thanks to Susan Williamson for an outstanding job in coordinating our Change of Watch!

Attendees of 2024 Change of Watch

2025 Cdr Swearing in

New Bridge Swearing in - 2025

A Wine and Cheese Social is tentatively scheduled for **Saturday, April 11**, to include New Castle Sailing Club members. Thanks to Kathy Hauty who has assisted Joan Barber and others with planning and coordination. Stay Tuned!

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.

District & National News

District 5's Fall and Spring Conferences and Change of Watch

D5 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 Power Squadron.**

NEW SNs - With the revised qualifications for SN, 22 additional District 5 members were awarded that grade recently.

Including:

David L. Benfer	Wilmington
Richard Alan Butler	Wilmington
David I. Netting	Wilmington

D5 Spring 2026 Conference and Change of Watch

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.

During the Saturday evening banquet, the new bridge is sworn in. The outgoing and incoming district commanders are provided the opportunity to make remarks and any presentations. The event concludes on Sunday morning with the new D5 Commander's reception giving all attendees the opportunity to meet the new district bridge and wishing everyone a safe trip home.

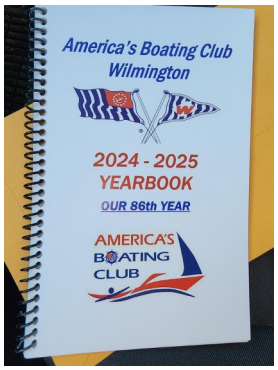
Any Club member is welcome to attend this conference. If interested please contact Richard Butler for more information (secretary@abc-wilmington.com)

Secretary's Department

Lt/C Richard Butler, SN

It's almost time to get your 2025-2026 yearbook! I hope many of you can attend the Change of Watch. Besides great food and camaraderie, you will be able to pick up your yearbook, buy a club burgee or order a name tag and some excellent apparel from Lynn Mahaffy. Extra yearbooks (you get one free per household) will also be available for purchase ($10 each). Bring your check book or cash!

For those at the Change of Watch, your Yearbook will be delivered to you there. For those that can't make ABCW's premier event, yearbooks can be brought to the Wednesday luncheons if you give me a heads-up. For some folks, I know you can't do either, so they will be mailed to you after March 15.



2024 photo provided by Chris Atkinson

ABC Wilmington Change of Watch

Please join America's Boating Club - Wilmington's Change of Watch Brunch on Sunday, March 15, 2026

Our event will be held in the Performing Arts Center at Country House, 4830 Kennett Pike, Wilmington, DE.
Doors open at 11:00 am to socialize with friends

BUFFET – 11:15 AM
CHANGE OF WATCH CEREMONY – 12:15 PM
PAYMENT OF $29 PER PERSON IS DUE BY MONDAY, MARCH 9, 2026

Please make your reservation on Punch Bowl and send your check payable to **WSPS** with names of attendees to:
William Barber
11 Hill Crest Drive
Landenberg, PA 19350-9505

If you would like to use a credit card for your payment, please send an email to treasurer@abc-wilmington.com

Brunch Buffet Menu

- Scrambled Eggs
- Cheese Blintzes
- Sausage, Bacon
- Breakfast Potatoes, Cinnamon Rolls
- Fresh Fruit
- Beverages Included in Brunch: Coffee, Hot Tea, Iced Tea & Soda

2024 Change of Watch

We can bring our own alcoholic beverages. All other food and drink will be provided.

Our Nautical Flea Market raffle basket has proven to be a very popular fund-raiser. Please bring a new nautical or Beachy or related item to add to our basket for this summer's raffle. A bottle of spirits is also welcome!

There is a guard house that we will need to stop at on the way in. We are coming for the **"ABC Wilmington Boat Club event"**. The main drive leads to a circular driveway. The main building with the Performing Arts Center is prominently placed on the circular drive. There are parking lots on either side before you reach the circular drive.
There is a reception desk just inside the main entrance that will assist in directing visitors to the Performing Arts Center.

The ABC Wilmington Annual Cruise is Scheduled For May 31–June 5, 2026

Join Us for a Relaxed Boating Adventure to Solomons, MD – May 31–June 5, 2026

Boating season is just around the corner, and we are excited to announce the start of planning for ABC Wilmington's 2026 Annual Summer Cruise! This year, we're introducing a new twist by organizing a "free form" cruise, which is a bit of a departure from our previous structured itineraries.

Destination and Itinerary

Our journey this year will take us to beautiful Solomons, Maryland. Unlike past cruises, this year's trip will feature more flexibility in our schedule and destinations. Rather than being locked into specific anchorages each day, we'll allow for adjustments based on the weather, timing, and the group's preferences. The cruise committee is currently working on planning anchorages and raft-ups both on the way down to Solomons and on the return trip.

What Does "Free Form" Mean?

With this relaxed approach, we aim to create a more enjoyable and stress-free experience for everyone. You'll have the opportunity to take your time, make decisions as a group, and adapt the route to best suit the conditions and our collective interests.

Group Activities

The cruise committee is also hard at work organizing group activities to enhance the journey. As we finalize more details, you can expect regular email updates with information on planned events, anchorages, and more.

Cruise Dates

Mark your calendars! The cruise is scheduled for May 31 through June 5, 2026. Please note that we are ending the cruise a day earlier this year to give everyone a more relaxed return to their home ports, with no need to rush back at the end of the trip.

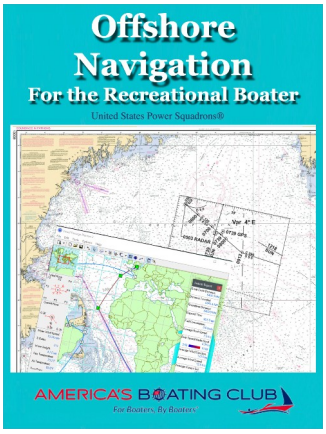
Interested in Joining?

Let us know by sending an email to John Bailey cruise@abc-wilmington.com

Education Department

Lt/C John Schleicher, AP

Education - Offshore Navigation Course



Four members of our club (Joan Barber, William Barber, Fran Geatens and John Schleicher) are currently enrolled in the USPS Offshore Navigation Course. This course is a step in achieving the grade of Offshore Mariner (OM) and can lead to Navigator (N) when combined with Celestial Navigation.

Offshore passages consist of three parts. "Taking Departure" resembles coastal navigation from the dock out to the last ATON (Aid to Navigation). The second, "Offshore," open water part begins where the mariner will find few or no land-based position clues (and fewer opportunities to encounter the bottom). The third part, "Landfall" is similar to "Taking Departure" in reverse when land-based position clues are again available.

The class introduces or reinforces the use of several software programs:

"OpenCPN" (Open Chart Plotter Navigator) is a free software maritime chart plotter and navigation software for use underway or as a planning tool. Developed by a team of active sailors and tested in real world conditions, it has multiple supported chart formats and a variety of data inputs.

"VPP2" (Visual Passage Planner 2) is a program that can present pilot chart data combined with a global map and port list to create routes from port to port and optimize them for wind and current conditions that are likely to be present in any given month. It contains more than one hundred years of world-wide weather observations at both 1-degree and 5-degree resolution. The data includes: Wind Roses, Current Roses, Mean Wind Speeds, % Gales, Wave Heights, Sea/Air Temperatures, Dew Points, Atmospheric Pressures, and Icing. Data for the entire world (75°N Lat. to 75°S Lat) for all 12 months is included. Routes may be imported and exported between the above programs to plan and execute offshore passages.

"The Sailings" is a USPS application that can be used to calculate your position (latitude and longitude) based on an initial position, course and distance traveled.

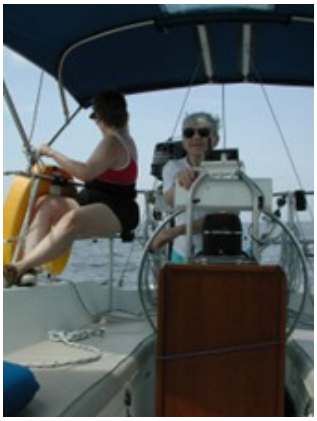
This particular version of the class is taking advantage of all of the available remote learning technology. The instructor is provided by a sister club in Ohio who uses Zoom for video conferencing and recording.

The students have just passed the half-way point of the class and are finding it challenging and interesting. Now all we have to do is finish the classwork and pass the open-book test.

Standby for information about our Basic Boater Certification Class (America's Boating Course) that will be available in the Spring

OpenCPN

VPP2



In Memoriam

Geraldine R. Walker, AP

Life Member and 42-year active member of Wilmington Sail and Power Squadron, Geraldine (Geri) R. Walker, AP, "Passed the Bar" on 1/13/2026 at the age of 93 years. Throughout her years of commitment to USPS, her enthusiasm never waned.

Her husband Bob (Senior) regrettably passed on in early 1983. Geri and son Bobby continued with the squadron and nautical training, becoming knowledgeable and proficient boat handlers.

Anyone who met Geri remembers her beautiful smile. It had a way of putting people at ease and making them feel welcome. But even more lasting than her smile was her spirit—warm, resilient, and encouraging.

Years in boating earned Geri respect from not only every WPS member but from the boating public as well. Many of these new acquaintances became WPS members, friends and fellow boaters.

The Chesapeake became comfortable familiar waters for Geri's "First Born" sloop and frequent sailing crew(s). Age and time eventually retired "First Born" and captain, but, every now and then she would become a recruiting crew member on a chartered squadron boat for the annual cruise. In later years, a cruise ship or a canal boat through France would have to suffice.

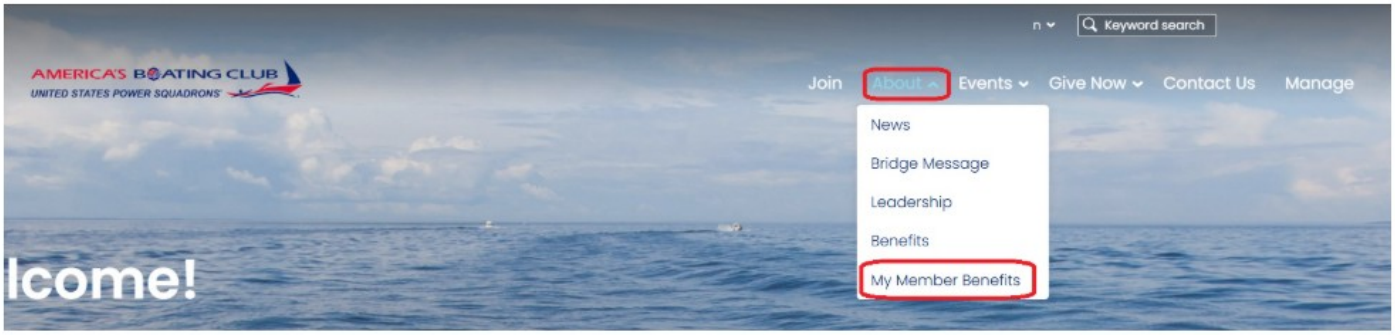
We will miss Geri and thank her for decades and decades of support to WPS/ABCW of every description.

Sincerest of condolences to Bob and Family.

As a America's Boating Club® member, you can save on many products and services. Due to our relationship with these terrific organizations, you can received huge discounts on boating products, insurance, travel and lodging, and many more items.

MEMBER BENEFITS HAS BEEN MOVED TO IMIS

Login at : https://portal.americasboatingclub.org/ Select "About" then "My Member Benefits"



Ditch Navigation

America's Boating Club | United States Power Squadrons has partnered with **Ditch Navigation** to give members one year of free access to its advanced AI-powered navigation app. The Ditch app includes unlimited route-planning and cutting-edge safety features designed to help boaters navigate with confidence. Members can activate their free year using promo code **BOAT2025** at https://ditchnavigation.com/americasboatingclub For help, email americasboatingclub@ditchnavigation.com

ELECTRIC SHOCK DROWNING

WHAT IS ELECTRIC SHOCK DROWNING?

Electric Shock Drowning (ESD) is the result of the passage of a typically low level AC current through the body with sufficient force to cause skeletal muscular paralysis, rendering the victim unable to help himself / herself, while immersed in fresh water, eventually resulting in drowning of the victim. Higher levels of AC current in the water will also result in electrocution. Electric Shock Drowning (ESD) has become the catch all phrase that encompasses all in-water shock casualties and fatalities.

Although Electric Shock Drowning can occur virtually in any location where electricity is provided near water, the majority of Electric Shock Drowning deaths have occurred in public and private marinas and docks. The typical victim of Electric Shock Drowning is a child swimming in or around a marina or dock where electricity is present. The electricity that enters the water and causes Electric Shock Drowning originates from the wiring of the dock or marina, or from boats that are connected to the marina's or dock's power supply.

Would you consider stepping into a bathtub or swimming pool with a hair dryer? Think of the boat as the hairdryer. If an electric fault occurs on a boat while it is connected to a marina's or dock's shore power and the boat or marina is not properly wired to meet current ABYC and NFPA standards, the water surrounding the boat will become electrified.

HOW FREQUENTLY DOES THIS OCCUR?

How many unexplained drownings of healthy vibrant people around boats and marinas have there been? The answer – many.

How many of these unexplainable drownings have likely been caused by Electric Shock Drowning instead of cramping, excessive alcohol use, or some other factor? The answer – many.

The number of verifiable in-water deaths due to Electric Shock Drowning is, in all likelihood, just the tip of the iceberg.

For much more detailed information on the causes and prevention of ESD click HERE.

Let's Celebrate the March & April Birthdays

March

William Barber	Mar 5
Peter Weintraub	Mar 11
Matt White	Mar 13
Jeanmarie Bailey	Mar 24
John Schleicher	Mar 24
Dorothy Brabson	Mar 26

April

Connie Mitchell	Apr 2
Alan Cropper	Apr 4
Perry Willis	Apr 7
John Bailey	Apr 10
Kim White	Apr 12
William Zimmerman	Apr 15
Daniel Gorman	Apr 25
Bob Borelli	Apr 26
Kathleen Cropper	Apr 30

Calendar of Events March/April 2025

http://abc-wilmington.com/

2026 MARCH

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
23	24	25	26	27	28	01
02	03	04	05	06	07	08
09	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	01	02	03	04	05

2026 APRIL

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
30	31	01	02	03	04	05
06	07	08	09	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	01	02	03
04	05	06	07	08	09	10

March Events

15 Mar 1100 DST
ABC Wilmington Change of Watch
Country House
4830 Kennett Pike, Wilmington, DE

10 Mar 1900
ABC Wilmington Executive Committee Meeting*
Via Zoom

*All members are welcome to attend
- email admin@abc-wilmington.com to get a Zoom invite!

26-29 Mar
Mid-Atlantic Region Change of Watch &
Spring Conference
Holiday Inn, Ocean City, MD

April Events

15 Apr
Deadline for May/June/July Lubber's Line Material

14 Apr 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.