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

THE LUBBER'S LINE

VOLUME 88, ISSUE 5 **November-December 2026**

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On Page 4 Education Officer John Bailey describes a recently approved policy that can increase the value of your ABCW membership.

On page 5 Treasurer Bill Barber describes recent decisions of the Executive Committee for financing the Club's increasing costs.

Photo by Leslie Broward

Meet 2 of our newest members *on page 6.*

An important reminder of the proper maintenance for your most important safety device can be seen *on page 9*.

Photo by Leslie Broward

Photo by Leslie Broward

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Volunteer Needed.

2025 DISTINCTIVE COMMUNICATOR AWARD NEWSLETTER

2025 DISTINCTIVE COMMUNICATOR AWARD WEBSITE

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Cdr Justin E. Doheny, S

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

The remnants of Hurricane Isaias have just exited the region and left us with a bright blue sky marked by some lovely, puffy white clouds. Looks like a great day to be out on the Bay, a little chilly perhaps, but where else would you rather be?

It is however, time to begin preparations for the upcoming colder months. I know some of our members are hurriedly making preparations to head south, just waiting for the Insurance costs to drop on November 1. Others of us are wrapping up our sails for the winter, or breaking out the anti-freeze. Whichever your means of propulsion, it is time to begin early preparation for the winter ahead, or at least thinking about making preparations, which is more my style.

September saw about 25 members gather at the Stevenson's for a lovely afternoon, overlooking the Elk River. The weather cooperated, with sun and just enough breeze to keep the flies and mosquitoes busy elsewhere. Invitations are out for the November 14 Social; please keep an eye on your email for your invitation. More on this, and our December gathering can be found elsewhere in this issue of the Lubber's Line.

While we have a small group of dedicated members who make things happen in ABCW, we are always looking for more folks to step forward and lend a hand. Just like on your boat, a good crew, working together, can make almost anything happen and enjoy doing it at the same time. So, if you have some available time, bring your skills, and sense of community, and help make your ABCW the place to be. Please contact any of our Bridge members or Committee Chairs so we can discuss how you might contribute to the continued excellence of ABCW.

Justin Doheny: *Commander*

Administrative Department

P/C Carol J. Hanson, AP

Fall Fun Activities Proceed with Purpose

Our goal as members of ABCW is to improve boating skills not only through education and promotion of safe boating practices, but also through like-minded mariner strengths of camaraderie, teamwork and togetherness. We accomplish all of that and more!

Teamwork, social activities, picnics, with warm sun on cool days sum up our Club's fall events. In September, thirteen members, boaters and non-boaters, gathered for a lovely BYO Everything picnic overlooking the Elk River. We enjoyed sandwiches, drinks, and dessert while overlooking a scenic river view while appreciating a break in the afternoon showers. Many thanks to our gracious hosts Beth and John Stevenson. In October members with slips at North Point marina demonstrated unbridled teamwork with their annual "SAILS OFF" day where they helped each other remove, fold and bag Genoa and main sails. Many hands made light work!

Saturday, November 14, 2026, at 4:00 pm features the supper social at Country House in Wilmington. Please join us for a presentation by a member of the Elk Landing Foundation about Elk River Landing's role in the American Revolution. Elk Landing is an important Historic Site for Cecil County located in the northeast corner of Maryland. The site was a key transportation hub for those traveling between major mid-Atlantic cities and key in transporting goods and services to support settlers from the 1600's through to the early 1900's. Check your Punchbowl Invite for details and please send your checks in early for the meal count!

Holiday Social, December 6, 2026, at 3:00 pm. – Terry and P/C Richard Butler have generously agreed to hold the Holiday Social at their lovely home in Newark, Delaware. Please bring some light appetizers or sweets to share. Members will enjoy some additional appetizers, as well as the hilarious Gift Exchange!

Friday, January 8, 2027 & February 5, 2027, 6:00 pm – Zoom Socials. Please let a Social Committee member know if you have any suggestions for interesting speakers.

The Social committee has been hard at work. Many thanks to the good work of Committee members Joan Barber, Lynn Mahaffy, Betty Ingram, Beth Stevenson, Susan Williamson and Carol Hanson. You don't want to miss the ABCW Socials!

Education Department

Lt/C John H. Bailey, AP

Education Department News

Following the success of this year's ABC3 class, we plan to offer an advanced or elective course this winter. I will schedule the most-requested course for January or February. To view the courses we offer, visit https://abc-wilmington.com/education/boating-course/. We are also changing how we charge for advanced and elective courses to encourage more members to participate. The Executive Committee has approved the following new policy.

ABC Wilmington Course Registration Fee Reimbursement Policy

How Would "Free" USPS/ABC Courses work
for ABC Wilmington Members and Non-Members?

- The following references to USPS/ABC courses include ABC3 (Basic Boating Safety), Advanced, and Elective courses.
- ABCW Members taking Classroom or Zoom USPS/ABC Courses taught by an ABCW member would pay the fee upon registration and receive either printed or electronic student materials (whichever is available for that course). The ABCW members would be reimbursed by ABCW upon successful completion of the course examination.
- Online USPS/ABC course – ABCW Member would register and pay National for the registration fee. Online courses typically provide electronic access to student materials. Members would be reimbursed by ABCW upon successful completion of the course examination.
- USPS/ABC courses taught by another squadron (either in-person or via Zoom) – ABCW Member would pay the other squadron their registration fee and the ABCW member would be reimbursed by ABCW upon successful completion of the course examination.
- Any Non-Member, who successfully completes an USPS/ABC course (including the final examination), and who submits an application for ABCW membership along with all new USPS/ABC member dues within 60 days of course completion will be reimbursed for that course just like members are reimbursed as described above.
- USPS/ABC Seminars (Members) – These can be taken online from the National website but would NOT be reimbursable by ABCW to an individual member who pays the National online fee and attends the online seminar. Rather, ABCW members shall submit seminar suggestions to the Education Officer, who shall then decide which ones to purchase for ABCW. The purchased seminars would then be scheduled to be presented to ABCW members for free as an in-person classroom or Zoom presentation.
- USPS/ABC Seminars (Non-Members) – The general public would be invited (via our website) and have the opportunity to attend seminar presentations for a registration fee. If the non-member, who attends one of our seminar presentations, applies for ABCW membership and pays all new USPS/ABC member fees within 60 days, the seminar registration fee would be reimbursed.
- USPS/ABC Members from other squadrons/clubs are welcome to take any course or seminar presented by ABCW but are not eligible for course fee reimbursement. Seminar fees would be nominal for an USPS/ABC member from another squadron/club.
- ABCW Members completing any USPS/ABC Course or attendance at a seminar presentation are only eligible for reimbursement once for each course or seminar.

We hope this new policy demonstrates the value members receive from their dues. I welcome your feedback, positive or negative, on the policy and the courses you would like us to offer.

Thank You, John Bailey SEO,

education@abc-wilmington.com

Treasurer's Department

Lt/C Bill Barber, AP

New Squadron Dues Structure (5-Year Plan) Proposed for a Membership Vote at the February 2027 Founders Day Business Meeting.

This is the first notice of a membership vote at the February 2027 Founders Day meeting to approve a 5-year plan to slowly increase the Wilmington Sail & Power Squadron/ABC Wilmington (WSPS/ABCW) annual dues. This plan and dues structure is needed to cover our organization's fixed costs. An Executive Summary of the plan and reasoning behind it is given below. A much more detailed explanation and spreadsheet showing the proposed dues structure is easily accessible in the members-only section of the WSPS/ABCW website which can be accessed by clicking on the following link:

https://abc-wilmington.com/members/

Login credentials that are required to enter this members-only portion of our website will be emailed separately to all members of the WSPS/ABCW.

Executive Summary:

- Our squadron has ~$2,400 in fixed costs every year but only covers half that with income from dues and a few events. We are running a ~$1,600 deficit this year and ~$1,100 on average each year into the future.
- Education course fees no longer support the squadron due to a mature membership that has taken almost every course of interest to them and the public has many options besides our Basic Boating Safety Course (ABC3).
- Although National and District 5 dues have increased every 2-3 years, ABCW squadron dues (only $20 for a single Active Member) have not increased in several decades. In addition, the ABCW dues structure does not mirror National and District for Active and Life plus Active Family memberships. We need to change this to more equitably match the dues burden with member participation. We will also introduce a small (25% of a Single Active Membership) annual dues for Life members to help cover fixed squadron costs.
- Our reserve is higher than needed (~2X our annual budget). The proposed dues structure over the next five years would use the reserve to pay the difference between dues income and the dues actually needed to eliminate the deficit, thereby balancing the operating budget while reducing the reserve by ~$2,300.
- Dues would be increased incrementally each year until 2031 when an individual Active Member dues would be $40 and total dues income should cover our fixed costs, thereby eliminating the annual deficit.

Meet our New Members: The Geatens

Hi everyone! We're Fran and Marianne Geatens from Philadelphia. Bill and Joan Barber spoke so highly of the club, and we're happy to be joining you!

We took delivery of our sailboat, Mahooty, an Island Packet 459, in May. We loved our time in St. Petersburg, Florida, getting her ready for the trip up the East Coast to Kent Island, Maryland.

We've spent this summer getting to know her and look forward to many more trips. Our biggest bucket list adventure is to sail her to St. John in the U.S. Virgin Islands someday!

We started getting more serious about sailing about 10–15 years ago and mostly chartered. We have also owned a center console fishing boat for the past eight years and have always enjoyed being out on the water.

When we're not on the boat, we love trying new restaurants in Philly and beyond. We're foodies and are always happy to explore a new area and find a great place to eat! We have four adult children, two of whom are married. We're also new grandparents to a sweet six-month-old grandson and are excited to welcome a granddaughter in January.

We look forward to meeting everyone and getting to know you, both on and off the water!

Photos Courtesy of Jeff Capaldi

Boating on the Canals of France

On September 14th of this year (2026) ABCW members Donna and Bill Zimmerman, Kathy and Scott Mayhue and Terry and Richard Butler boarded a plane in Philadelphia and flew to Paris, France.

Once there they took a rented van to Migennes in central France. There, after provisioning in a well-stocked, local super market, they boarded a 44 foot, four cabin canal boat chartered by Le Boat France. Over the next 10 days they traveled south switching back and forth between the Yonne river and the Canal de Nivernaise, which follows the river and allows navigation in places where the river is not navigable.

Waiting for the lock to empty while Bill helps the lock keeper close the gates behind us

Our Horizon 4 canal boat from Le Boat

Along the way they stopped in 10 different towns, ate in 8 different restaurants, cooked a number of memorable meals on board, took a memorable side trip by taxi to another historic town and enjoyed almost perfect weather. Temperatures ranged from 80 degrees and warm in the sun to 40 degrees at night on board. Aside from a few sprinkles of rain on two days the weather was either sunny or overcast.

The trip covered 83 nm and involved traversing 65 locks, all attended by friendly, competent keepers and 2 automated lift bridges, easily operated by the crew.

Late afternoon drink at a local Epicerie

Bill opens an automated lift bridge blocking our way

The inrush of water when a lock starts to fill up can be quite strong.

Everyone found the trip enjoyable and relaxing and an excellent way to see a part of France not experienced by the average tourist. After returning the boat to the Le Boat base in Tannay, the group used the same van and driver from the start to take them back to Paris where they spent 4 more days before flying back to Philadelphia. A number of club members have enjoyed this activity in France and other countries. We highly recommend it for anyone with moderate boating experience and would be happy to talk with you about it.

Photos and text by Richard Butler

District

Mark your calendars and plan to join your fellow members for the District 5 Fall Conference Weekend! This year's agenda is designed with working members in mind, offering a flexible schedule that makes it easier to participate while enjoying time with friends, learning new skills, and celebrating another successful boating season. We've extended the conference room rate through November 12, giving you the opportunity to arrive Thursday and explore historic Lancaster, with its unique attractions, local sights, and shopping. Make a weekend of it!

Saturday is all about education, collaboration, and recognizing achievement. We'll begin with a morning workshop on educational techniques designed for members at all experience levels. Saturday evening, we'll gather for our Awards Banquet, celebrating the educational accomplishments of our members and squadrons. We'll also welcome a representative of the Portuguese Embassy, reaffirming our long-standing relationship in navigational training. It promises to be an enjoyable evening of recognition, fellowship, and celebration.

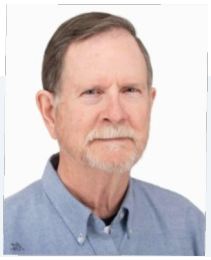
For additional information on this conference, which is open to all ABCW members, click ***HERE*** or contact D/LtC John Bailey at education@abc-wilmington.com.

& National News

This meeting is also an opportunity to explore new programs, initiatives, and resources designed to help our squadrons grow, thrive, and better fulfill our mission of promoting safe, and enjoyable recreational boating. Through presentations, workshops, and discussions, you will gain insights into emerging opportunities that can enhance member engagement, education, and public outreach.

Most importantly, the Governing Board Meeting is where members actively participate in the governance of our organization. Your voice, experience and perspective help shape the decisions that guide our future. By working together, we ensure that Americas Boating Club | United States Power Squadrons remains strong, relevant, and prepared to serve boaters for generations to come.

For more information on this meeting, which all ABC members are welcome to attend, click ***HERE.***



Secretary's Department

Lt/C Richard Butler, SN

2026 ABCW Photo Contest

Unfortunately, due to a number of unforeseen and unfortunate circumstances, submissions for this year's Photo Contest have been so limited that it isn't practical to judge them or to declare any winners. Two photographers entered a total of 16 photos for the four categories. A number of our usual participants have had personal difficulties which prevented them from participating at this time. One of the main uses that the contest has been put to in the past was to provide the Lubber's Line editor with photographs for Lubber's Line issues. If anyone has a chance over the next few months to look at their 2026 photos from Club activities and would like to see some of them in a future Lubber's Line, please forward them to me at newsletter@abc-wilmington.com. In the meantime here is a selection from the photos submitted this year.

Photo by Beth Stevenson

Photo by Leslie Broward

Photo by Beth Stevenson

Photo by Leslie Broward

Photo by Leslie Broward

Boating Safety

Inspect your inflatable PFD

Although lighter and less bulky than most standard life jackets, inflatable personal flotation devices need to be inspected regularly to ensure their reliability.

Read the manufacturer's safety and inspection recommendations that came with your inflatable PFDs, and keep them in a safe place.

Note that some manufacturers recommend their PFDs be returned for annual testing and inspection, which may be required to maintain their U.S. Coast Guard approval.

Routine inspection

Examine your inflatable PFDs at the time of purchase, the beginning and end of each season, before and after each use, and periodically during the season.

Make sure the inflatable is free of creases, tears, rips, puncture holes and frayed material. All seams should be sewn securely. Check the material for grease or oil spots, heavy soil or mildew, which could weaken the fabric.

Check all hardware and straps for damage and strength. Zippers, snaps, fasteners and buckles should work correctly and be in good condition. Apply candle wax, crayon or bar soap to zippers and snaps to help them glide smoothly. Remove debris from Velcro fasteners.

Check the inflator, and ensure that the CO2 cartridge is operational. Make sure there is no dirt or rust on the fittings and no damage to the threads on a screw-type cartridge. Damaged threads usually can be fixed with a small fine file.

Pressure and release testing

Periodically remove the inflation cartridge and inflate the PFD orally. Let it sit overnight to check for air leaks. If it loses firmness, replace it or return it to the manufacturer for repair. If there are no leaks, deflate the PFD and reattach the cartridge.

Store the dry PFD flat or rolled—never fold it. To be safe, store it with an extra cartridge or rearming kit. They are inexpensive and should be part of your boating equipment.

Some inflatables use a water-sensitive bobbin to trigger the automatic inflator. The bobbin can deteriorate when exposed to heat and humidity, which can cause the PFD to inflate unexpectedly—another good reason to keep an extra cartridge or rearming kit on hand. If the indicator tab that holds the manual inflation mechanism breaks, it usually can be repaired or replaced inexpensively. –Phyllis Jones

Photo courtesy of U.S. Coast Guard

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Let's Celebrate the October-November-December Birthdays

October

Phyllis Jean Kacher	Oct. 02
Gail C. Weintraub	Oct. 04
Dale M. Gorman	Oct. 08
Kenneth L. Ede	Oct.10
Dennis M. Wallace	Oct.11
Robert H. Ulrey	Oct.20
Nina Brower-Wyngaard	Oct.23
Walter R. Williamson	Oct.28
James A. Albert Smith	Oct.29
David E. Vaughn	Oct.30
James E. Malin	Oct.30

November

Dana Doheny	Nov. 27
Susan Williamson	Nov. 30

December

Donald Gorman	Dec. 02
John Koval	Dec. 13
Katherine Minshall	Dec. 16
David Sharpless	Dec. 16
Betty Ingram	Dec. 19
Justin Doheny	Dec. 29

Calendar of Events November/December 2026
http://abc-wilmington.com/

2026 NOVEMBER

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
26	27	28	29	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

November Events

10 NOV 1900 ABC Wilmington Executive Committee Meeting Via Zoom

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

13-15 Nov
Mid-Atlantic Region Fall Education Conference
Lancaster, PA

14 NOV 1830
ABC Wilmington Social at Country House. See details on page 3.

2026 DECEMBER

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
30	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

December Events

06 DEC 1500
ABC Wilmington Holiday Social
Terry Butler, Hostess. Details on page 3.

15 Dec
Deadline for January/February Lubber's Line Material

Join us for weekly luncheons

Each Wednesday at 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.