

RAG-POT

Kennebec River Sail and Power Squadron's monthly newsletter
Unit of the United States Power Squadron

JANUARY 2013

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

I hope you had a great time with friends and family at Christmas and your New Years celebration. The November dinner meeting had an excellent speaker, great food as always and was very well attended. Kudos to Steve Mclaughlin on putting all the pieces together. Our squadron's Christmas party at the Gardiner Lions Club was well attended and everyone seemed to leave with a smile on their face from the festivities.

As the New Year gets underway we'll be offering a number of classes at Cony High School in Augusta. On the schedule is our ABC 3 class, Seamanship, Piloting, Advance Piloting, Marine Electronics and an ABC 3 class for women only. I hope there is a class in your future; if not please pass on the class information to friends that you think might like or need a class. Classes start the end of January. Please contact Gini Fiedler at gfieler46@gmail.com to reserve a seat in a class.

Our own Gary Bain and Ed Jones are now certified to teach the new "on the water course". Some of the skills might be: use of spring lines to dock and leave a dock, anchoring, man overboard drill, plotting a course and piloting the boat on the course. You can use your boat or Ed's. There is an additional cost for the on the water training skills. Ed is also able to certify you to become a teacher for the course.

Our change of watch is approaching and we have a couple positions that could use your skills and abilities. The Executive officer is the number 2 position of the squadron and leads to being the commander. Running the squadron isn't hard and training is available; it also isn't a male only position. There are a number of squadrons in our district that have women commanders. All that's really needed is a willingness to help the squadron fulfill its mission and some time. The same applies to our administrative officer position. We could also use members for teaching our classes, again training is available.

Our January 11th dinner is at Rolandeaus' in Auburn and our speakers are Bob and Ursula Withrow and Jerry and Jenny Cohen. They went on a river barge trip in France this past fall and they'll be sharing their adventure with us in pictures. The food will be great and I hope to see you there.

Bert Glines AP

KRSPS CALENDAR

Monday, January 7, 2013

Exec. Board Meeting,
East Coast Mortgage,
316 Center St., Auburn

Friday, January 11, 2013

6 p.m. Social, 7 p.m. Dinner
Rolandau's Restaurant
Bob Withrow & Jerry Cohen
European Barge Trip

Monday, February 4, 2013

Exec. Board Meeting
Hayes Law Offices
One Weston Court, Augusta

Friday, February 15, 2013

6 p.m. Social, 7 p.m. Dinner
Gardiner Lion's Club
Gardiner, Maine

Monday, March 4, 2013

Exec. Board Meeting,
East Coast Mortgage,
316 Center St., Auburn

Friday, March 15, 2013

6 p.m. Social, 7 p.m. Dinner
Rolandau's Restaurant
Auburn, Maine
Change of Watch

CAPTAIN ED'S DOCKBOX

Capt. Edward Jones, AP

Do you have some problems with your holding tank?? I did!! I recommend mixing 50/50 bleach (regular bleach works better than scented) and water. Fill your tank. Let it set for whatever time you can and then pump it out at a shore station. **DO NOT** Flush back into any body of water.

After the tank is empty, add 2 cups of water softener (available in grocery stores in the laundry section). Dissolve the water softener in hot water. Pour into the holding tank. The water softener will prevent waste from sticking to the hoses and the tank.

If it continues to smell "funkie", change the hoses. It is recommended hoses get change every 3 years. Hoses hold the odor as they are permeable, and that is the root of most problems. When replacing the hoses, eliminate kinks, bends and low spots in the discharge.

For your protection, wear rubber gloves and goggles or a face mask. Most Boatyards **WILL NOT** do this type of work on waste material. Lay-Up is around the corner for Northern Region Boaters. Do you need to add this project to your "Boat Repair List"??

What about the Sea Cocks??? When storing your boat during lay-up, you should lubricate each seacock and then close them. Some of you open them and leave them.

If they are left open, they become a "Hy-Way" for moisture, insects, and varmints.

Water Fresh--have you tried it???? Pour it in as directed to your water tank. What a difference and it is a "green" product. This product is available at most dept. stores. It worked great for us!

If you have tips or have a boating problem, contact me at <goneboating09.yahoo.com>,

And I will see what I can research.

AUTO INFLATABLE PFD'S (TYPE V)

Phyllis Jones, AP, Safety Officer

What do you really know about the inflatable PFD's? They are compact, making storage easier. They are more expensive than other types. They are light weight, so more comfortable to wear. Some types automatically deploy the inflation mechanism when you hit the water; others have to be done manually. They will help save your life, if you Wear It! On the market, there is a large range of costs, styles, and bells & whistles. Types range from vests, suspenders to belts. Choices are your to make.

There are two important facts you should know about the inflatable PFD. #1. They are

Designed for Adults Only. There are none on the market for children or teens.

#2. You are required to WEAR the PFD in its un-inflatable state, to have it count as a PFD on board. In other words, **DON'T JUST PACK IT!!! WEAR IT!!!**

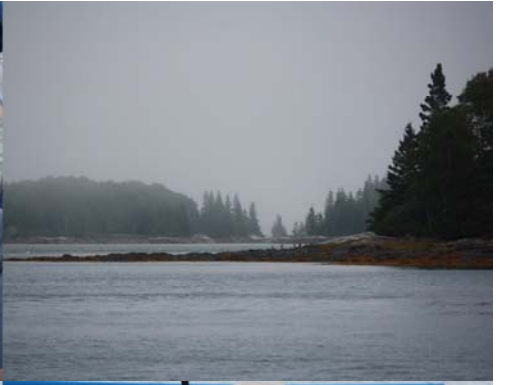
Actual Safety Tests have been conducted, that

show the Mustang Survival HTI and the Spinlock Hammar Deck Vest, had the quickest time deploying inflation, clocking in at 3.8 seconds. Other tested were upwards of 6.2 seconds before they would inflate.

Rearming the mechanisms, costs and times involved were tested. Cost ranged from \$22.00 to \$90.00 to get a Re-Arming Kit. Time to re-arm took 00.58 seconds to 04.34 seconds. Check the tags before you buy! I consider this hidden costs and values.

Costs for a new Inflatable, Type V PFD, ranged in price from \$80.00 to \$450.00 each. If you are planning to purchase a Type V, I recommend you do some research before you go shopping. There are so many types, styles and functions on the market today, know what you want. Then go try them on for comfort. The best prices are at the end of Boating Season and In-Store Manager Specials.

I have more information available of other testing on many brands, if anyone is interested. The tests were conducted by U.S. Boating Lab.





WHERE TO NOW?

Bert Glines, AP

Over the past year, the future of KRSPS has been a matter of continuing discussion by the eBoard. Our membership has been declining as the number of new members is far too few to offset those who we have lost to disinterest or death. While there are a number of strategies for growth, they all come down to current members inviting others to join, using as motivation the same reasons that attracted them to our Squadron.

Our problem is not unique among volunteer organizations. Many people we know decline to join pleading a lack of time. More and more of our time is being used at work, getting the house set for winter and school activities. All this busyness can take a toll on us and on organizations like the power squadron. As a volunteer organization we are in competition with everything else that needs our time and talents. So I would like you to think back to when you joined the power squadron.

Did you join because you saw the need to further your boating knowledge? We have the best courses in the industry. These courses are continually being updated and expanded from the basic boating course, now ABC 3, to Navigation. A new course that we'll be offering this spring is "on the water training". You do 8 hours of classroom instruction and then a day on the water practicing what you learned. We are also looking to add a day of on-the-water practical experience to the seamanship and piloting courses. You can use your boat or the instructor's.

Did you join because of the camaraderie you devel-

oped while in class? There is a very social side of the squadron. Our dinner meetings are a great place to continue those relationships and start new ones. Guest speakers relive their boating adventures or teach us skills to help us realize our own. The annual Downeast cruise is a moving party. We visit many beautiful harbors and increase our boating skills in what are the best cruising grounds on the east coast. Each night we all meet up and enjoy cocktails or a meal together and then play cards, board games or musical revelry if Larry Irwin has his guitar.

We also provide civic service to our community. That's usually in the form of teaching classes but also includes performing vessel safety checks and helping in the running of the squadron. There are training classes available to help you with these opportunities.

We have a couple of positions on the bridge that will be open at our change of watch. They are the administrative officer and the executive officer. Both of these positions are vital to the health and well being of the squadron. Admin sets up the monthly dinner meetings, books the speakers, coordinates the annual Downeast cruise, and updates our membership roster. After 2 years you would move up the chain of command into the executive officer position. The executive officer has a number of duties that are designed to transition into being the commander of the squadron. National has developed training programs for Admin, Executive and Commanders to help them manage and grow their squadrons.

We have a great squadron and are the envy of many of our fellow squadrons in district 19. Our ranks include 7 past squadron commanders and 2 past district commanders that help to guide the bridge. As we look forward in continuing our mission of self education, civic service and being a fraternal boat club I hope that you will contact me about helping fulfill that mission.

USPS NATIONAL SURVEY RESULTS

Our national organization has also been endlessly studying the membership challenges, offering one program after another to improve our ability to compete against other volunteer organizations for loyalty and time.

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USPS described its challenges as follows:

Like many other non-profit service organizations, the USPS is confronting a number of significant challenges including:

- 1) Effectively representing the values and priorities of its members;*
- 2) Deciding what changes (e.g., in offerings, financing, organizational structure) should be implemented in face of a rapidly-changing external environment;*
- 3) Developing leadership that can adeptly align the organization's mission, financing, products and services, and marketing with likely future scenarios and not its past;*
- 4) Encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship in all aspects of organizational management (e.g., communication, technology);*
- 5) Nurturing strategic, mission-focused partnerships;*
- 6) Continuously measuring and communicating its performance to its members and external stakeholders;*
- 7) Retaining active members and strategically diversifying its membership pool;*
- 8) Actively engaging its members in mission-related activities;*
- 9) Connecting to its members through continuing dialogue to determine their needs, motivations, perceptions and concerns;*
- 10) Conveying an image that conforms to its mission.*

The USPS is confronting the additional challenge that boating, as a form of recreational activity, and boating participation are changing, and therefore are the size and nature of its pool of potential recruits.

To help USPS meet these challenges, its Strategic Marketing Team conducted an online survey of our members to help it acquire a better understanding of us, its brand, to help it craft more effective membership retention and recruitment tactics and to help local squadrons design and implement more effective internal and external marketing.

24,978 of the 40,000 USPS members were sent an e-mail link asking them to participate in the survey; 32% of them responded (7,876 members). **What follows is the summary of their findings:**

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

About a quarter of the members first joined the USPS in 1990 or earlier meaning that many of them have been members for 22 years or more. Contrariwise, another quarter of respondents have been

members for 5 years or less. A vast majority (93%) have been continuing members since the time they first joined, and the average duration is 14 years of uninterrupted membership.

All but 3% of the members are attached to a squadron. On average, members have been affiliated with their current squadron for almost 12 years, however half have been affiliated less than 8 years. Conversely, almost 20% have been members of their current squadron for 21 years or more. The vast majority of the members have been associated with just one squadron during the entirety of their UPSP membership. This obviously creates a high degree of local loyalty and concerns on the part of some that the national leadership does not pay enough attention or sufficiently address their local issues and interests.

About 41% of respondents indicated that their current squadron meets their expectations. About 17% believe their squadron would benefit significantly from improvements in several key areas, and 6% believe their squadron is failing and requires a major renovation. Many provided comments on this subject. A higher proportion of the long-time members, 21+ years, believe their squadron needs some or major improvements.

Members give high ratings to the overall squadron leadership and to their squadron's overall financial condition. Members are far less satisfied with efforts to recruit, retain and engage the members. They also have some concerns related to connections with their local communities.

On average, the three most important factors are: (a) to have access to USPS educational programs (1.82); (b) the opportunity to be around and interact with persons who know boating (2.01); and (c) to be part of efforts to advocate and enhance boating safety (2.15). Interestingly, these continue to be the most important reasons why members renew their membership. These three offerings are crucial to a higher percentage of members than any other program, offering or service. The relative importance members assign to different USPS programs and member benefits does not change much from the time they first joined. The driving force for being with USPS was at the beginning and remains service to boating and boaters.

While there is considerable membership agree-

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ment regarding the core mission and which USPS services and offerings are most important, there is disagreement concerning design, delivery and management of these programs including education. Over time, the members appear to become opinionated and vocal about how these offerings should be designed and marketed, with some advocating change and others arguing in support of the status quo. The open-ended comments also reveal divergence in opinions between different squadrons.



About 90% of the members have completed one or more USPS courses including Internet (Web) courses. On average, they have complete 8 courses while a member. The average member completed 3 courses, from August 2009 to July 2012. Many members (41%) have served as an instructor for one or more UPSP courses. On average, theses instructors have taught 11 courses covering three different boating subjects.

About 61% of the members are likely to take a USPS course during the next two years. Of the 40% that are not likely to take a course in the near future, almost half (47%) indicate the reason for it is that they have already completed all the courses of interest to them, 26% no longer own a boat, and 20% just don't have the time. About a quarter of members did not participate in UPSP programs and services during the recent two years (between August 2011 and July 2012), and 23% were not actively engaged during the previous two years (August 2009 - July 2011). This partially explains the previously mentioned concern of many members that some of the squadrons need to do more to encourage active member involvement.

Like many service organizations, the USPS has a mix of very engaged and non-engaged members. Half of all USPS members volunteered for USPS (e.g., as a leader, an instructor, on committees, civic programs) between August 2011 and July 2012. On average, they volunteered 6 hours per week during this time span. Half contributed 3 hours or less, but 37% volunteered 5 hours or more. Almost the same proportion (47%) of the members volunteered an average of 7 hours per week from August 2009 to July 2011.

An essential feature of all effective marketing is a strategic “positioning or branding strategy” which defines how an organization needs to be perceived to accomplish its mission and primary objectives. Members were asked to rate the importance of each of eight potential elements for creating and communicating “the US Power Squadrons brand.” ...

The four elements that members feel should be most important in creating and communicating the USPS brand are: (a) Making boating safer – reducing accidents and fatalities (1.59); (b) Providing quality boater education to beginners and expert boaters alike (1.59); (c) Helping recruit and retain boaters (1.94); and (d) An organization where boaters can come together to have fun and make a difference (2.00). These are consistent with the organizational values and purposes that influence persons to join and remain USPS members.

[F]our factors that the members believe should serve as the cornerstones of the USPS' branding/positioning strategy. Marketing communications might focus on the theme and image of the USPS as a unique, gathering place for recreational boaters, focused on education and safety, as their way of giving back to and enhancing boating.

Member-Recommended Factors/ Dimensions for Positioning the USPS Relative to Other Boating and Service Organizations

A Place for Boaters

6-An organization where boaters can come together to have fun and make a difference

7-Friendship and camaraderie

Outreach

4-Partnerships with boating agencies and organizations

5-Giving back to the community through civic programs

Boating Education and Safety

1-Making boating safer – reducing accidents and fatalities

3-Providing quality boater education to begin-

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ners and expert boaters alike

Growing Boating

2-Helping recruit and retain boaters

Respondents were asked to rate (on a five-point scale from 1 being “crucial” and 5 being “not important”) the importance of ... ten possible strategies and actions to insure the future survival of the USPS.

Members rate three strategies as most important: (a) recruitment of new members (1.43); (b) encouragement of more member engagement in education, civic and social programs (2.18); and (c) better marketing of USPS contributions and benefits (2.33). Two-thirds of the respondents rated member recruitment as crucial, and about a quarter rated member engagement and marketing also as crucial. Clearly, the three strategies are related. It is easier to recruit members if there is an effective strategic marketing plan being implemented, and if more members are engaged, and therefore more knowledgeable and positive about the USPS. Creation of additional member benefits was rated the least important (2.81).

The importance ratings for ten actions were run through factor analysis. This resulted in four important survival dimensions shown in the table below. These four factors could serve as guides for deciding organizational priorities and prioritizing USPS' investments.

Factors Important to the Future Survival of the USPS

Outreach and Funding Diversification

6-More partnerships with other boating-related organizations

7-Cultivation of additional and different sources of revenues

8-Better marketing of USPS benefits and contributions

Expansion and Improvement of Educational Offerings

4-Improvement of current educational offerings

5-Expansion of current educational offerings

Squadron Involvement and Communications

9-Better communications between national, district and squadron leaderships

10-That squadrons have greater influence in determining USPS programs and policy

Member Recruitment and Retention

1- Recruitment of new members

3-More encouragement for members' involvement in USPS educational, social and civic programs

Almost all (95%) of the current USPS members are very likely (72%) or likely (23%) to remain in this organization within the next three years provided their health and personal finances allow them. Only 5% are not likely to, or definitely will not remain a member.

About 37% of USPS members belong to at least one other boating organization. Over two-thirds of these belong to Boat US and about 9% to the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

About 35% of respondents are members of civic, service or fraternal organizations not related to boating (e.g., Lions Club, Rotary Club). They belong to an average of two of these organizations. This may be part of the reason some members are not more active in the USPS.

About 80% of USPS members currently own a boat. On average, they own two boats. A vast majority (86%) of them are active boaters having taken their boat out on the water during 2012. About a third of non-owners are likely to buy a boat in the future.

Most of members (71%) live in two-person households, and 13% reside alone. The average household size of USPS members is 2 persons.

Over two-thirds (69%) of the respondents are 61 or older, and 56% are retired. Two-thirds of the members indicate that at least one person residing with them in the households participated in USPS member activities during the previous year (Aug 2011-July 2012).

CONCLUSIONS

The survey reveals that the USPS is both fortunate and at the same time challenged to have very altruistic, mission-loyal and knowledgeable, and involved members. Many in the USPS have been continuous members of the same local squadron ever since they joined this organization an average of 11.8 years ago. These squadrons have somewhat different cultures, styles and concerns. Sometimes, there appears to be considerable disagreement concerning organizational strategy and tactics. However, **this**

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research also reveals that there is significant agreement concerning the really important things, such as USPS' values, contributions and strategic priorities. While it is clear to most members that the USPS must continuously evolve to function effectively in a future environment, how and how fast to change is an issue of growing debate and some divergence. There may be disagreements on tactical issues related to marketing, communication, and member recruitment and retention, but there is sufficient accord to fashion a strategy to steer them into the future.

The members generally concur that the USPS should do more to both externally and internally market itself. While they agree that the USPS' educational offerings are very important, they see the overall mission as one of recruiting recreational boaters and enhancing boating safety. Some members perceive that the organization needs to do a more effective job communicating the diversity of benefits that the USPS offers to both boating public in general and uniquely to its members.

The USPS should fashion its own approach to marketing recognizing that it is both a membership-service organization and a seller of products. Adapting mixes of different marketing tactics from other organizations will not result in effective marketing. Internal marketing (e.g., member awareness, perceptions, and satisfaction) should be a focal point of its marketing efforts. **The USPS should also direct considerable attention toward positioning itself and the services it provides to distinguish it from other boating and service organizations.** Designing the "mix of services and benefits" it offers to its members will continue to remain the most crucial element of its overall marketing mix.

As is often the case in membership surveys, this one revealed a number of concerns relating to **organizational communication**, including: that not all members are kept adequately informed, they are not receiving consistent messages from the leadership, the right messages are not being sent, and, in many cases, not being received by the right persons.

Many respondents commented that **the national leadership does not adequately inform or engage the squadrons in dialogue.** The open-ended responses indicate that **most of what is perceived to come from the national leadership is monologue and little of listening to the squad-**

rons. While this may not be the case, a sufficiently large number of members have this perception to warrant a review of communication philosophy and methods.

Many of the members who responded to the survey expressed great concern about reduced member engagement (e.g., volunteering, participation in social activities). Whether correct or not, their perception is that the membership is less engaged now than it was in the past, and that this is negatively impacting member numbers, solidarity and comradeship. This is of special angst to the many members who contribute so much of their time (e.g., as leadership, volunteers, instructors) to the USPS. **They fear that the USPS is not recruiting or orienting the leadership and volunteers to successfully stay the course in the future.** Some blame this on the "cyber courses" and resultant lack of opportunity to recruit squadron members in person, but the reality is that many service and social organizations are confronted by reduced involvement caused by ever increasing constraints and demands on people's time. In addition, many USPS members are in the later stages of life, face more health problems and changes in family structure, all of which make it difficult for them to maintain their previous levels of engagement. The USPS should use the results of this survey to benchmark and monitor member engagement over time and respond, if necessary, to counter a measureable decline.

While most of the members that are affiliated with local squadrons are very positive about their management (e.g., in the area of financing), **there is a noteworthy level of concern about the (lack of) membership recruitment efforts on part of some of the squadrons.** Many of the respondents offered critical reviews and recommendations.

It is very important that the USPS continues to expand its repertoire of courses to appeal to existing long-term members, experienced non-members, and new recreational boaters. Where possible, it should target persons who not only enjoy acquiring boating skills, but who have propensity for service and engagement. Additional effort should be directed toward recruiting unaligned members to affiliate with local squadrons. Some unaligned members indicated in the survey that squadrons have been unresponsive to their requests

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for information. However, it should be recognized that many persons who take cyber courses do so for convenience and are not interested in social or service opportunities at their current stage of life. But, the USPS must maintain a high level of responsiveness to requests from these unaffiliated members.

The USPS should give substantial consideration to using the four factors/dimensions that resulted from the factor analysis of the importance of elements for creating and communicating the USPS brand as the basis for its future marketing communication strategy. The factors are: (1) A place for boaters; (2) Outreach — partnering and giving back; (3) Boating safety and education; and (4) Growing boating. Of course, the appeal of these dimensions to non-members should be evaluated first.

It is very common nowadays for membership and service organizations to offer ever increasing member services/benefits as both a means of recruiting and retaining members, and generating additional dues-unrelated revenues. **This survey reveals that the vast majority of USPS members remain members for three reasons: to have access to USPS educational programs, to be around and interact with persons who know boating, and to be part of efforts to advocate and enhance boating.** Many believe in and benefit both directly and indirectly from the pursuit and accomplishment of the USPS' mission, and they are concerned that adding member services will reduce resources available for mission accomplishment. The USPS should develop and apply very member-centric criteria when deciding and designing services. It is important that the member services/benefits that are added or continued “increase genuine member and mission value.”

The USPS should actively partner with agencies and organizations that share various elements of its mission. That should not be limited to boating education and safety programming, but it should also include recruitment of new recreational boaters and overall enhancement of recreational boating environment. There are many organizations (e.g., NMMA—National Marine Manufacturers Association) that are investing significant resources to both on water and off-water boater recruitment. **The USPS' emphasis should be directed toward opportunities that combine service and recruitment.** Given the average age of USPS members, programs such as “foster-

grandparents on water” could be a potential.

What was learned during the process of designing and conducting this study suggests that the USPS would benefit significantly from a strategic plan in addition to a marketing strategy. The four survival factors that were produced as part of the factor analysis could serve as some of the key elements for a future strategic plan. For example the USPS: (a) could conduct an audit of the effectiveness of its current recruitment efforts; (b) set new measurable recruitment objectives (e.g., increase new members X% in three years, increase by X % the number of nontraditional members); (c) design new tactics for accomplishing different objectives; and (d) measure and evaluate.

The USPS has a membership that corresponds with the age and racial composition of recreational boaters. Like recreational boating in general, the USPS is going to have to diversify its membership. This is not going to be quick or easy for many reasons, including its current demographic makeup and (lack of) general public awareness of the organization. However, it must be pursued and pursued as an active strategy.

During the course of this research, it became apparent that the USPS' technology infrastructure needs updating, including software and hardware. The office staff is relying on dated applications to develop and manage its databases and do its business. This limits its abilities to both effectively launch new efforts and make current business operations more efficient.

The USPS has very strong, focused, motivated and unselfish members. This comes through often and consistently in their responses to the survey. Some are undoubtedly nostalgic and trying to preserve elements of the organization's past that may no longer be feasible.

However, their great dedication to recreational boating and the USPS will encourage them to support the changes necessary to position this organization for future success. This will require a leadership able to chart and communicate a strategic plan that not only builds solidly on the organization's traditions and strategic successes, but empowers it to evolve as recreational boating, boaters and boating environment changes.



Kennebec River Sail & Power Squadron

TEST YOUR NAUTICAL KNOWLEDGE

Courtesy of BoatFix.com

You are steaming in a heavy gale and find it necessary to heave to. Under most circumstances, this is best done by _____.

- stopping the engines and drifting beam to the seas
- going slow astern and taking the seas on the quarter
- taking the sea fine on the bow and reducing the speed to the minimum to hold that position
- maintaining speed and taking the sea broad on the bow

Answer: taking the sea fine on the bow and reducing the speed to the minimum to hold that position

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JANUARY DINNER MEETINGS

DATE: January 11, 2013

TIME: Social Hour 18:00 Meal 19:00

LOCATION: Rolandau's Restaurant 775 Washington Street, Auburn.

SPEAKERS: Our own Bob Withrow and Jerry Cohen are speaking about a European Barge trip that they took last fall. This was a truly unique experience and there will be terrific slides. Be sure to invite your family and friends for a great dinner and speaker.

COST: \$20.00 PER MEAL

RESERVATIONS: *Contact Harold Wood at 623-1926 on or before 7:00 P.M. on January 8th. Sorry but it will not be possible to accept any reservations after this date. If you make a reservation and do not attend you will be charged for the meal as the Squadron is assessed the cost of the meal by the restaurants.*

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