

# RAG-POT

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

**FEBRUARY 2013**

## COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

One of the great things about our dinner meetings is the diversity of boating experiences that we can share in. A number of our members no longer have boats but that doesn't mean that they no longer go boating. So what do you do when the cruising bug bites? You can crew for friends, as I do, during our annual Downeast Cruise. Or you can charter a boat locally or in a far off destination. Some of our members have bare boat chartered here in Maine, others in the Carribean and Mediterranean.

Last month at our dinner meeting we were treated to a virtual cruise on the Marne Canal in France. Bob Withrow and Jerry Cohen gave a great presentation on the mechanicals of canal cruising with many locks. They encountered 43 locks including a 146 foot vertical rail lock. At the Arzviller lift they basically entered a lock that was 446 feet long that took the boat, water and lock, all 55 tons of it, up to continue along in the Marne canal. That lock replaced 17 other locks over 4 km that were needed to get to the same location. Their wives and fellow cruisers talked about the local sights and delicacies, making us feel as though we had been there ourselves. The pictures were great and showed a lot of the beautiful countryside as well as the towns. They had a great time and we were able to be transported there and relive the cruise with them. I could see from various members, that this was something that they were interested in doing.

What if the bluewater bug is biting you? Our February 8th dinner meeting speaker is Max Fletcher. Max will present a slide show of his sail around "the Horn", the southern tip of South America. He left Orr's Island Maine in his Westsail 32 bound for New Zealand. On his return to Maine he had covered 5600 NM in 52 days experiencing classic Southern Ocean gales and a sever knockdown. Come for the food and fellowship and stay for the adventure it should be an exciting presentation. Social time is 1800 and dinner is at 1900.

I would like to welcome E. Penn and Barbara Estabrook of Gardiner to the squadron. They are presently doing a self study of the piloting course. Most all of our courses are set up to do self study. So if a course that you are interested in doesn't have enough students to warrant a class, consider taking self study. Instructors are available to answer any questions you may have and to give the exam.

Our March dinner meeting in Auburn will welcome our change of watch. This is a time of saying thanks to those members who have served and welcome aboard those who will be assuming positions on the bridge for the upcoming year. Our April dinner meeting will be at Gardiner and we'll be putting together this years Downeast Cruise. We'll also have some boating-related items set out, yard sale fashion, for sale and Larry Irwin with guitar in hand will be entertaining us. It should be another great time.

Bert Glines AP

## KRSPS CALENDAR

### **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  
Max Fletcher, Circumnavigator

### **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

### **Monday, April 1, 2013**

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

### **Friday, April 12, 2013**

6 p.m. Social, 7 p.m. Dinner  
Gardiner Lion's Club  
Gardiner, Maine  
Larry Irwin, Downeast Cruise, Swap

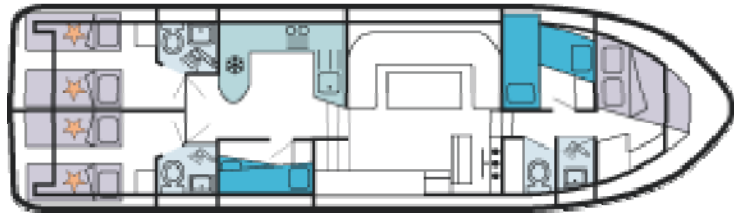
## CHARTERING IN ALSACE-LORRAINE

Last September, Ursula & Bob Withrow, Jennifer and Jerry Cohen and three other couples chartered a canal boat for a week cruise in the Alsace-Lorraine region of France (bordering Germany). Bob and Jerry shared their trip memories and photos (with plenty of help from their spouses and friends) at our January meeting.



After flying to France and taking the high speed train, they boarded in Boofzheim. Traveling the Canal du Rhône au Rhin to Strasbourg and the Canal de la Marne au Rhin to Hesse, they spent a slow week enjoying late summer conditions in eastern France. They traveled 106 km over six days, encountering 43 locks and two tunnels (so narrow that they are one-way, controlled by lights).

The charter company, Le Boat, offers tours across Europe and elsewhere, and a plethora of boat options. Our friends chose their largest, the *Grand Classique*. It's dimensions are ideally suited to canal travel — an LOA of 48 feet, width of 13.5 feet and



draft of only 2.6 feet. There were five cozy cabins, so each couple had their separate space, with comfortable common spaces. There was interior steering, but visibility was better from the upper station so it became the helm of choice, particularly when entering the locks.

The charter company boasts that its boats are so easy to handle that no experience is necessary. Bow thrusters help. All crew manned the helm, but the water flow associated with the locks was tricky



enough they were left to Bob and Jerry. There were many other canal boats, captained by people from all over the world, most with little boating experience. Their trip, near the end of the season, cost \$1000 per couple plus air fare.

The boat came with a good reference guide, with maps, information on the locks and localities. There was no current in the canal and the diesel powered vessel travelled slowly enough (3 knots) that it was possible to put ashore and walk or bike along side.

The food was excellent, purchased daily at shops a short walk from the canal. There were farm stands along the canal with jars for payment. They often ate in excellent restaurants. Even the hospitals had wine cellars. You are not handicapped if you don't know French or German, as many friendly, helpful people speak English.

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The locks were many and small, generally accommodating no more than two boats, end to end. All of the locks were automatic, triggered by a cord hanging in the middle. You approach the lock, wait for it to open and give you the green light and enter the lock. It closes behind you, you climb the ladder on the side, pull the cord and the pumps start to run.



The canals are old (150+ years) and run through the country side. When you want to stop, you simply pull to one side, put out the gangplank and drive in stakes in the ground for your lines. They rented bikes to be able to tour and run errands. They travelled through fields of crops, villages and back yards. There were many farms with cows, corn, sugar beets, etc. In crowded areas where there was room, multiple boats were tethered side by side, aft-end to the shore.



Mid-way through the trip is Strasbourg, a UNESCO World Heritage city. Germany and France have claimed it during its history and it is now the home of the European Parliament. The canals split and surround the old city. Our friends managed to enjoy many of its fine restaurants and pubs.



They encountered little commercial traffic. In Strasbourg some barges pulled off the Rhine, but generally they had only other canal boats for company.

There were two tunnels on their trip. These were long, barely wide enough for the boat and dark. You longed for the light at the end of the tunnel.

They left Strasbourg via the Canal de la Marne au Rhin. At Arzwiller, you encounter one of the most unusual locks, incorporating a hydraulic lift for the boats in order to climb an elevation of 146 feet. Fortunately, this lock is manned full-time.

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You approach the lock and then enter a large narrow watered caisson. The dock is then lifted up the incline until you reach the top, when you motor out. It's a wonder of engineering and eliminated the need for a 17 locks over a 4 km distance.



Toward the end were a series of locks that were timed to allow you to get right through. If you chose to stop, you had to notify them so they would not wait for you to appear. Even with that requirement, our friends enjoyed a relaxing adventure.



## ANODES, PART I

Phyllis Jones, Safety Officer, AP

Anodes protect your underwater metals from corrosion. Luigi Galvani discovered the principles of battery operation in the late 18th Century (the word Galvanic, came to be). Later 1800's, Alessandro Volta, (as in 12 volt) made the 1st battery out of alternating plates of silver & zinc, separated by salt-water soaked paper. This created an electrical current.

Are you wondering what this "battery stuff" has to do with anodes and protecting metals on your boat?? Let me tell you, galvanic corrosion, (which can destroy underwater metal in your boat) is simply a giant battery cell that has set up somewhere on your boat's hull.

Volta discovered a battery is composed of two dissimilar metals that are electrically connected and is surrounded by electrolytes (salt water or acid).

Think of your boat moored at sea, a stainless steel prop connected to a aluminum outdrive floats in the world's biggest electrolyte-----You now have a "Giant Battery". Can't we just use the electricity generated, to make coffee or breakfast or recharge our batteries? Problem is greater than that, besides the fact that the energy created is not sufficient enough to do anything useful, is that in the "Giant Battery" cell, one of those dissimilar metals; in this case the aluminum outdrive (the battery's anode), will have a negative charge compared to the SS prop (cathode). Like a household battery, the anodic metal will be used up (destroyed) in the process of generating electricity----This is called "Galvanic Corrosion". On your boat, the used up metal is likely to be a very expensive bronze propeller or your aluminum outdrive. Either way—Expensive!

How can you protect against or decrease galvanic corrosion??? To stop part of your underwater hardware from corrosion, when your boat attempts to make electricity, there are several ways. The most obvious is, NOT to use dissimilar metals. That is easier said than done, as manufacturers take advantage of them to create durable and affordable boats; mixing metals underwater is a fact of "Boating Life". Keep your boat in fresh water opposed to electrolyte (salt water). Fresh water causes much less galvanic

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corrosion though some minerals in the water can create a weak electrolyte. Another, but impractical way is to keep your boat in distilled water. The best prevention, but NOT what boaters would do, is to keep your boat in storage. (You can host a Cocktail Party on the deck of your boat while it sits on the “Hard”).

There is another way---you can actively or passively interfere with your “floating battery’s” Process of generating electricity use of anodes. You can do this by introducing a new metal into the “cell”, one that is an even better anode (less noble) than—a bronze propeller. Aluminum, Zinc and Magnesium are metals that are “willing to sacrifice” themselves for a more “noble cause”. When these metals, usually zinc, are electrically attached near a piece to be protected, they will become the anode and stop expensive underwater hardware from disintegrating. In effect they become the negative part of the battery cell. It can also be accomplished by “forcing” a current into the galvanic cell that will excess the negative charge coming from the item to be protected: the more noble metal can relax and stop trying to destroy. This is called “impresses current” and is used by Volvo and Mercury in their twin counter rotating prop outdrives. It’s used because the large amount of SS in the 2 props is far more-noble than the aluminum outdrives, and a sufficient passive zinc anode system would be difficult to fit.

Part 2 will be next month and will talk to you about; Which Type of Anode is Best and Anode Care.

## MID-WINTER MAINTENANCE

How’s your boat doing? Just because you have taken the precaution of putting your boat on the hard doesn’t mean that it’s not at risk. Get out and get aboard to assure that you won’t find a problem in the spring.

Are the jack stands properly positioned and the boat level? One winter I found that the frost had heaved the blocks under the keel and that some of my stands were loose. Others needed to have the support under the legs repositioned.

Examine your cover. Did someone mistakenly tie it to the boat stands? Look for tears, loose fittings, chafe and broken tie downs. Duct tape any small tears. Is there any collected snow or water? With the melting and freezing that is typical of our winters, leaks and refreezing can create bigger problems later. Make sure that air can circulate between the cover and boat to avoid blistering of the hull.

Get inside and check for leaks, water in the bilge etc. Are there unusual smells, such as gasoline, propane or vermin? Is the boat still well ventilated to prevent mildew and mold? Check your batteries. Are they still charged to prevent freezing? Check your seacocks, closing and opening them to keep them from seizing. Check over your plumbing to see if there are areas of freezing and cracking.

Time spent caring for your boat in the winter can make for a happier spring.

## ED’S DOCK BOX

Capt. Ed Jones, AP

Clear Your View: Do you have trouble seeing through the windshield because your wipers are smearing not clearing???? Usually your wipers are dirty. To restore to a “cleaner wipe” dampen a cloth with full strength white vinegar and run the wet cloth down the blade a few times. Now enjoy a Clear View. Works on cars too.

Lost Your Pennant??? Did someone shear off your pennant? Place foam pipe insulation over your mooring pennant line. If you lose your pick-up buoy, the line will stay afloat.

Grease Stains: Do you have Grease Stains on your boat fabric?? Use a mild hair shampoo to break down the grease. If fresh grease or oil stains exist, sprinkle area with talcum powder or cornstarch. Rub in well, then let stand until stain is absorbed. Brush off, then wipe with damp cloth.

Solenoid Stuck?? If you find the switch on your engine starter is stuck from lay up, and it won’t turn over---I have a quick tip. Grab a heavy screwdriver (you know — the one used to stir paint!) To get going, short across the switch terminals with screwdriver. Caution: Make sure there are no fumes in engine compartment before proceeding. Make sure you hold the non-conductive handle of screwdriver. As soon as engine starts withdraw the screw driver. This will save the day until you can replace it.



## WHAT'S ON MY BOAT? APP

Boating inevitably requires preparing for DIY repairs, which means that we all have collected spares and other repair materials, stored in one of many little nooks on our boat. The challenge comes in remembering what you have and locating it. Winter is a great time to take inventory.

A new application for your iPhone or other Apple device was published recently that may help. It's called "What's on My Boat?", one of a series of inventory oriented applications (including attic, closet, garages etc.)

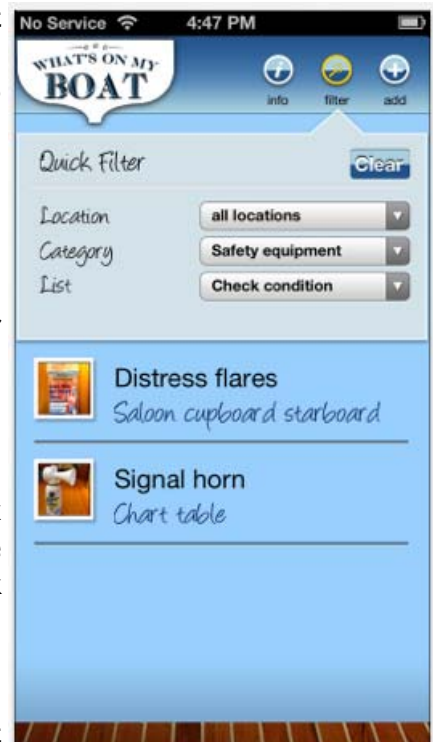
The process is a bit time consuming, but easier than the paper log that we make keep (or don't, because it's too hard to keep up to date). You enter each time with a description and optional photo. Each item has a location, category and condition (select one of the choices available or enter your own).

For example, if I wanted to add "raw water pump impeller" I would select "Add" from the initial page and type in its description. My phone can take a picture of it. I would then select a location from the drop down box (or add a location, such as Spares Box 1), and categorize it (Engine Spares). The "lists" entry can be "buy," "check condition," "lent to" (great for tools), "replace" or any other group you want. Each item has a notes section that can be used for additional specifics, such as part number, source, etc.

As you grow your lists (I can foresee lists for spares, tools, stock foods, charts, and any other group of items I want to track) you will want to use the filter option to ease finding it later. Again, any one or more of the three areas can be used for a filter to shorten your effort. When you use an item, simply tag it for the "buy" list. Then when you go to Hamilton Marine, the grocery store, etc. you simply filter for

the "buy" list and get what you want. As you can photograph the item needed and the description can include the details, shopping will be far easier.

The app only costs \$1.99 on the iTunes Store. It would be nice if it sync'd over more than one device but it doesn't. There will be an initial effort, but most of the items will be added over time. Items, categories etc. only need to be entered once and then are available for later use. It will be far easier than the log list and I see it getting good use.



## USPS MEMBER BENEFITS

The USPS has negotiated a number of benefits that are available for its members. To get the full list and details, go online to [www.usps.org](http://www.usps.org), select "Member Stuff" below the title, login with your name and membership number, and then select "Member Benefits" under the same "Member Stuff" link.

The full list of benefits is lengthy, so the following is just a short highlight of the benefits available to individual members (as opposed to Squadron benefits).

### USPS® & BoatU.S. - Boating Safety Partnership

Promoting boating safety is a shared mission of the United States Power Squadrons and BoatU.S. to recognize that partnership, as a USPS member you are entitled to a 50% discount on your BoatU.S. membership and a 10% discount on towing.

### Soundings Magazine Discount

[Soundings](#) offers all members of USPS® a 12 month subscription for \$17.97 (normally \$24.97). All they have to do is call our 800 number ( [800-244-8845](tel:800-244-8845)). Contact Gretchen Dare, Soundings Publications, for more information.

### USPS® On-Line Store - Discounted Books

**McGraw-Hill On-Line Store Offers Discounted Books.** McGraw-Hill has been working closely with USPS providing books for our courses and publishing USPS guides. Now a wide selection of their books are available at 35% off list prices through an on-line store.

Go to the [Educational Department Home](#) page. There you will find a button for the McGraw-Hill on-line store where you will see the current selections and discounted prices. Make your selections and check out. Your books will be shipped directly to you.

### Rose Point Navigation Systems, LLC

20% Discount on Coastal Explorer Computer Navigation Software Visit [www.rosepointnav.com](http://www.rosepointnav.com)

## Hamilton Marine

Hamilton Marine is the largest discount ship's chandlery north of Boston. Established in 1977 as a source for traditional marine hardware and supplies in Maine. They sell to boat-builders, sailors, pleasure boaters and commercial fishermen throughout the world. Inventory is extensive, representing top manufacturers in the business. Members receive a 10% discount (excluding electronics) when you set up an online account or otherwise prove your membership.

## Weems & Plath

The Weems and Plath web site will help USPS members to order online and get a special 25% discount on anything they order using the promotional code "USPS25" (without quotes). Give it a try by going to [www.weems-plath.com](http://www.weems-plath.com).

## USPS Avis/Budget



You can save up to 25% off your next car rental while experiencing the comfort and reliability that come with renting from Avis. With 4,800 locations in over 140 countries, there's always an Avis nearby to help you with your car rental needs. To rent a car, visit Avis or call toll free at [1-800-331-1212](tel:1-800-331-1212). And remember to use your Avis Discount number: **B291028** to enjoy these special savings!



Make your budget go further by getting a great deal on a great car from Budget. As a US Power Squadrons member, you'll get an amazing deal every time you rent – up to 20 percent off Budget's great rates. To book your car, visit [Budget Car Rental](#) or call toll free [1-800-527-0700](tel:1-800-527-0700) and mention the USPS BCD number: **R198128** to receive your discount. Make the smart choice, rent Budget and start saving today!

## Motel 6 offers all USPS members a 10% discount!

Call 1-800-4-Motel6 (1-800-466-8356) and use the USPS discount code: **CP567911**.



## Kennebec River Sail & Power Squadron

## TEST YOUR NAUTICAL KNOWLEDGE

Courtesy of BoatFix.com

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Treasurer - Lt/C Thomas Hoffman, P, TAHSAILN@aol.com  
Editor Emeritus of Rag-Pot - Robert Sawyer, SN, sailabob@aol.com

In fog, a vessel being towed, if  
manned, shall sound a fog signal of:

- ◇ Two short blasts
- ◇ Three short blasts
- ◇ One prolonged and two short  
blasts
- ◇ One prolonged and three short  
blasts

*Answer: one prolonged and three short blasts*

### **FEBRUARY DINNER MEETING**

**DATE: February 15, 2013**

**TIME: Social Hour 18:00 Meal 19:00**

**LOCATION: Gardiner Lions Club, Lions Road, Gardiner, Maine**

**SPEAKERS: Max Fletcher, circumnavigator. Be sure to invite your family and friends for a great dinner and speaker.**

**COST: \$15.00 PER MEAL**

***RESERVATIONS: Contact Harold Wood at 623-1926 on or before 7:00 P.M. on February 12th. 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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c/o Harold Wood  
17 Forest Circle  
Manchester, ME 04351