

The Bilge®



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The Commander's Corner

Cdr. Gerry Sorrell, P

Happy New Year Shipmates

may your new year be filled with the joy of the season.

Our Christmas party was a warm and wonderful gathering of friends and those that could not attend we missed you dearly. We shared the love of the season, a wonderful meal, sprits and the laughs of the Dirty Santa. As I looked around the room and listened to the voices of our members I could hear the pride in our organization and the deep feelings for our brother and sister shipmates. Our comradeship has developed over many years of community service and an abiding love for and dedication to our younger generation and their safety. What you shipmates have done over the years is truly remarkable. I am not going to give you the statistics in hours of training or the number of classes taught, but what I will do is say THANK YOU for your dedicated service to our community. Sometimes the simplest thing as saying thank you is overlooked by people receiving a service and sometimes the littlest person can surprise you with those words at the conclusion of a training session or a senior citizen when a boat safety inspections sticker is put on. Nevertheless, the important thing to remember is your Commander and the officers of your Squadron are grateful for your support and attendance at our meetings. In the last *The Bilge*, I talked about visiting and out reach for new members. This is hard for some to do as it can feel a little risky to ring a bell and ask a stranger

to join. However, I found all they can say is no and it did not hurt to ask, and those yeses sure feel good and we just might find some yeses among the nos.

Our younger generation usually look for: WHATS IN IT FOR ME (WIIFM) and this is where it gets hard to not only introduce them to our organization but peak there interest enough to pay dues, pay for there training, and then volunteer their time to teach, inspect water craft and participate in various community services involving water safety. Now we are back to WIIFM, what's in it for me, the same thing that was in



it for you so many years ago when you joined. They are all noted above in various ways and with different weights for different people, but nevertheless, they are there to include: pride, love of community, and caring about boating safety on and around the water. The key is, when you knock or ring the bell relax and just be you.

Where is our next generation? They are out there and what are we doing to reach out to them using the skills we have as teachers? I ask you to put on your thinking caps and

I ASK you to provide the executive officers with your ideas on ways to reach out to our younger generation. Our organization will survive and prosper when we revive the true spirit that drove our organization at its inception so many years ago by our benefactors. Action is what I am asking for in the form of ideas now, then plans, and finally some form of recruitment activity that is aggressive in some form of activity on our part as an organization. The question is do we still want to give it our all one more time. We just need a few ideas and I am sure you have some that are good and no idea is a bad idea. ggsorrell@cableone.net Phone 471 4778.

In closing have a Happy New Year.

Gerry Sorrell



From Legislative Liaison
FJ Eicke

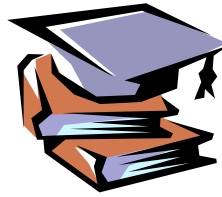
**Boating Liability Bill Filed
in 2009 Session of the
Mississippi House of Representatives**

Representative Rita Martinson (R - Madison) has filed a bill (HB0131) that would require proof of liability insurance for certain vessels operated on the waters of the State of Mississippi. The bill has been double referred to two committees (Insurance and Marine Resources). The bill as currently written would exempt propelled vessels with less than 15 horsepower motors. An insurance card on the vessel would be required with liability limits the same as that required by Section 63-15-3(j) for motor vehicles. The bill also requires provisions for uninsured vessel coverage.

Maritime law, which a number of USPS conferences have addressed and a number of members have particular expertise in as part or all of their legal practice, is quite complex. Maritime law, however, is a legal process based on claims of responsibility (e.g. damage to a moored vessel from a passing vessel). First blush indicates that this law may create more pitfalls than it resolves and the motivation to pass such legislation is not fully known. As SRSPS Liaison Officer, I would recommend that SRSPS be aware of this legislation but only follow it to see what the ramifications might be should it pass. A position paper might then be developed to make legislators aware of the SRSPS/USPS position. At this writing, the background to the bill - what groups or individuals requested it, if any - is not known.

F J Eicke

Editor's note: This is obviously an attempt to make the liability situation of operating a boat on state waters similar to operating an automobile on state highways, and it could be the forerunner of a popular movement reaction to horrendous accidents that do not seem to end with any kind of justice. I am not sure how the USPS, D15, or SRSPS rank and file would feel about this. I can see mixed emotions in that it would no doubt increase the cost of owning and operating a boat, but might reduce the danger from irresponsible boaters by either keeping them off the water or providing compensation for the accidents they cause. We have also said that boating safety is our primary concern. We would very much like to hear from The Bilge readers as to what their reactions might be to the prospect of such a bill becoming law.



From the Education Officer

P/S/C Stan Warner, N

With the holidays just behind us and everyone busy getting acquainted with their new toys (GPSs, chart plotters, etc.

that the manufacturers have made so user friendly) it's hard to imagine the need for classroom boating education anymore. But boating education is so much more than getting from point A to point B or how fast am I really going over the water.

Boating without basic boating education is down right dangerous. Like boating in the midst of winter without knowledge of hypothermia. How many boaters are you aware of know significant hypothermia starts on humans with the body temperature dropping below 90°F? And how many boaters think that today's water temperature is over ninety degrees? If there are any I've got a good used boat I'd like to sell them.

Knowing the dangers, symptoms and field treatment of hypothermia are very important and easily acquired in our public boating classes. Tell your friends we'll see them at our Spring Public Boating Class in April.

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Cruising Planning and Memories

Here we are in 2009. After some of the tremendous changes to our country's economy, this year may well be the time to seriously consider leasing out your house and getting away on your boat. Plan on spending most of your time on anchor or at moorings and avoiding marinas as much as possible as they get expensive in a hurry. Learn to do your own maintenance (and maybe some for others with the right incentives).

Seriously, if you have an economical vessel, it costs less to cruise for a month than it does to run out to the islands every weekend during the same time frame. You change your life style, learning to relax more and make new acquaintances, you lose that urge to be constantly "doing" and settle back



and "go with the flow".

Slowing down while travelling is a key to enjoyment. You watch the birds, the dolphins travel on you bow. When the day is done, you turn on soft music in an isolated cove after the anchor is set and wonder why it took you so long to make this move. The next day is a real challenge—do you really need to move on, or is this a place you would like to spend a little, or lot, of time. We found that sitting out a three-day storm at Great Sale Cay in a semi-protected area was not challenging, and met several good neighbors, including a Black Lab who could hardly wait to get ashore (well potty trained).

Yes, we had a great time during our 13 months of cruising the East Coast and Bahamas with the Vagabond Shoes. We found that life aboard really had all the above listed advantages. We made many new friends and visited with some old friends in the Bahamas from a previous trip out there. We rode out storms, but never felt we couldn't handle them, thanks to our training with the Power Squadron and Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Go back and read our columns over the past two years plus and heed the tips. If you can't find

them, drop us an email and we will send you that information. Copy this address and add it to your address book: josephharvey@att.net. We would be delighted to hear from you.

More next month, but in the meantime—Fair Winds & Following Seas,

Joe & Marilyn Harvey

REFLECTIONS OF 2008

By the 2008 Past Commander

As I reflect on 2008, I can say we had a great year:

Blacks are happy - Obama was elected.

Whites are happy - OJ is in jail.

Democrats are happy - George Bush is leaving office.

Republicans are happy - Democrats will finally quit saying George Bush stole the election.

And all of us are so happy - The election is finally over!

I think 2009 will be even better: Immediately after his inauguration, Obama will balance the budget, revive the economy, solve the real estate problem, pay off our mortgages, pay off our car loans, solve the auto industry problem, solve our gas/alternative energy problem, stop the fires and mudslides in California, ban hurricanes and tornadoes, stop identity theft, reverse global warming, find Osama, solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, get rid of corruption in government and achieve world peace. Then on the 7th day, He will rest.

My best wishes for 2009!

Craig Edwards

Editor's note: I heard through the grapevine that Craig had to seek medical attention right after composing these reflections. Apparently he needed stitches in his tongue after biting it while it was stuck so far into his cheek. Many thanks, Craig.



NEXT MEETING

January 15, 2008

GAUTIER VFW POST 2132

Old Spanish Trail

**(between Dolphin Dr. and
entrance to Shell Landing)**

Gautier, Mississippi

Social Hour 1800 Dinner 1900

Your 2008 Squadron Bridge

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Secretary Ann Fortenberry, S 497-2410
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John Wilkes, AP (2 yr.), Dorothy Warner, P (1 yr.)

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The Joke De Jour Corner



WOMAN AGAINST MAN

A man said to his wife one day, "I don't know how you can be so stupid and so beautiful all at the same time."

The wife responded, "Allow me to explain. God made me beautiful so you would be attracted to me; God made me stupid so I would be attracted to you!"

A man and his wife were having some problems at home and were giving each other the silent treatment. Suddenly, the man realized that the next day, he would need his wife to wake him at 5:00 AM for an early morning business flight. Not wanting to be the first to break the silence (and LOSE), he wrote on a piece of paper, "Please wake me at 5:00 AM." He left it where he knew she would find it. The next morning, the man woke up, only to discover it was 9:00 AM and he had missed his flight. Furious, he was about to go and see why his wife hadn't wakened him, when he noticed a piece of paper by the bed.

The paper said, "It is 5:00 AM. Wake up." Men are not equipped for these kinds of contests.

While attending a Marriage Seminar dealing with communication, Tom and his wife Grace listened to the instructor, "It is essential that husbands and wives know each other's likes and dislikes." He addressed the man, "Can you name your wife's favorite flower?"

Tom leaned over, touched his wife's arm gently and whispered, "It's Pillsbury, isn't it?"

"Cash, ~~check or charge?~~" the store clerk asked, after folding items the woman wished to purchase. As she fumbled for her wallet, he noticed a remote control for a television set in her purse. Curious, he asked her. "So, do you always carry your TV remote?"

"No," she replied, "but my husband refused to come shopping with me, and I figured this was the most evil thing I could do to him legally."

A ~~couple drove down a country road~~ for several miles, not saying a word. An earlier discussion about family members had led to an argument and neither of them wanted to concede their position. As they passed a barnyard of mules, goats, and pigs, the husband asked sarcastically, "Relatives of yours?"

"Yep," the wife replied, "in-laws."

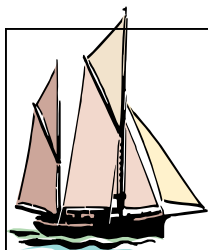
A ~~man and his wife were having~~ an argument about who should brew the coffee each morning. The wife said, "You should do it because you get up first, and then we don't have to wait as long to get our coffee."

The husband said, "You are in charge of cooking around here and you should do it, because that is your job, and I can just wait for my coffee."

Wife replies, "No, you should do it, and besides, it is in the Bible that the man should do the coffee."

Husband replies, "I can't believe that, show me."

So she fetched the Bible, and opened the New Testament and showed him at the top of several pages, that it indeed says "HEBREWS."



OVER THE HORIZON

January 15 Monthly business meeting, VFW, Gautier
January 16 Mobile Sail & Power Squadron COW
February 17-22 USPS National Meeting, Anahiem, California