

CHIEF'S MESSAGE FALL 2011

Greetings D/C the district Bridge and fellow members.

I bring you greetings from our Chief Frank Dvorak.

1. Last fall we said that it was time to turn things around, that it was time to revitalize our squadrons with new members and to encourage our existing members to continue their membership. This year we have seen the first year over year increase in membership in about eight years. Things are improving. Congratulations to the membership that made this happen. Well Done! What we need now is the commitment from us all to accept the challenge and lead our squadrons onward as we strive to increase membership and broaden our reach. Our non-renewals are the best we have seen in some years, but there is room for improvement. We are building new partnerships that should result in member growth – Let's continue to remember that Membership is Job # 1. Again – Well Done.
2. Our Internet Membership process continues to be a great success. This has led to 2115 new members as of late August in our cyber squadron. If someone near you becomes a cyber member – recruit them to join your squadron.
3. The Internet course ABC3 has been very successful. Those who take the Internet course get six months of free membership in our cyber squadron. As of late August, over 1182 have become members since that was instituted. Squadrons need to visit <http://tiny.cc/CyberSearch> to see if there is a new member in their **locale**. If so, invite them to a squadron function and encourage them to transfer to the squadron.
4. USPS is now implementing the vision of being the foremost provider of advanced training in boat operation. That means both 'On the Water' and 'Classroom' training. Recently, Marine Max a large east coast Brunswick boat dealer (58 dealerships) has agreed to an arrangement whereby they will offer to the public on one Saturday of every month, beginning in September, our "On the Water" training program at their Clearwater FL establishment. Squadron members

- will provide the instructors and Marine Max will provide the classroom space and the boats. If this program is successful then they will expand it to their other dealerships. This is a great beginning and we hope that other dealers will follow suit.
5. We have recently leased under our Coast Guard grant for “On the Water” training a Ford pickup truck and a Boston Whaler 20’ Dauntless center console boat. The rig will be maintained at headquarters and is available for use on the eastern seaboard. Both the truck and the boat are nicely covered with power squadron advertising thus heightening the awareness of USPS and our program.
 6. We have expanded our outreach by partnering with Brunswick Corp., the largest boat manufacturer in the US. Now as a result, Brunswick is sponsoring a boating safety summit in Chicago in December. They are committed to a heightened awareness of safety amongst the boating public. USPS was amongst the first organizations invited to attend this summit.
 7. We began the new Leadership training program in February 2010 for Squadron and District Administrative Officers and for anyone else who would like to take it. A grant from the **Century Fund** pays for lunches and classroom materials for current and incoming AO’s. This past February we introduced an extension of the current training program to Executive Officers. To take this course you must have taken the Administrative Officer course. Over 150 students took the two leadership courses in Orlando giving us a total of 618 members that have so far taken this training. This fall the new Commanders training course will be beta tested. The plan is to introduce it to the membership in Jacksonville. AO and ExO training will be a pre-requisite for this new course. **Please support the Century Fund.**
 8. As part of our long range planning the BOD and the Planning Committee have revisited our Strategic Plan and are in the process of updating it. Please stay tuned as we will have more to say on this later.
 9. Your leadership met again with the Auxiliary senior leadership at the recent NACON (the auxiliary’s annual meeting) and discussed the use of our courses and seminars by them. We anticipate that they will

begin using some of our courses and seminars next year. Interestingly, the Australian Coast Guard Auxiliary also is looking at our materials for use in Australia. At the NACON Saturday evening banquet Vice Admiral and Deputy Commandant of the Coast Guard Sally Brice-O'Hara singled out the Power Squadron for our commitment to working with the Auxiliary and for our promotion of recreational boating safety. Please continue to invite your local auxiliaries to your events and conferences. We need to work more closely with them.

10. We have many very professionally done seminars. We encourage squadrons to make use of them. We expect squadrons to provide materials with the seminars and to charge an appropriate fee. We are a business and should act like one.
11. The Educational Fund has sponsored and paid for the development of USPS University, Boat Operator Certification, On the Water Training, Fire Extinguisher training and our outreach program. **Please support the Educational Fund.**
12. The results of the two questions we asked at the spring conferences are as follows: First to the question of mandatory life jacket wear in open boats under 18', 75.2% of the members who responded agreed with the concept. Second, to the question of federally mandated education in all fifty states, 87.4% of the members responded favorably.
13. Open up the meeting to any issues that the membership might have an interest in. Tell them that this is an opportunity for them to give us feedback on the actions that we have taken over the last couple of years.
14. You are invited to the annual meeting to be held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Jacksonville, FL 25-29 January 2012.

Thank you and God Bless you, this organization and these United States of America.