



The Ocean Breeze

An official publication of America's Boating Club® Hilton Head
"For Boaters, By Boaters™"



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EVENTS CALENDAR

MARCH

- 2,5,9,12 Engine Maintenance
- 16,19,23,26 Cruise & Cruise Planning Course (Monday & Thursday)
- 21 America's Boating Course. Skull Creek Boathouse, 8 AM-4 PM
- 24 Port Royal (large boat capable w/3-5' draft) Rain date March 30
- 27-29 St. Simons Overnight Boat Cruise (large boat capable w/3-5' draft)
- 30 Marine Electrical Systems (March 30-April 23)

APRIL

- 2,6,9,13, Marine Electrical Systems
- 16,20,23 Marine Electrical Systems
- 7 Dinner Meeting, DOCKSIDE, Hilton Head, 6:30
- 21 New Member Cruise #1 (Rain date April 22)
- 27 How to Use A Chart seminar
- 27 Magellan Cruise 1 - Buck Island
- 29 Wexford Canals (Rain date Apr 30; large boat capable w/3-5' draft)

MAY

- 4 VHF/DSC Radio seminar
- 8 Mini Loop (Rain date May 9; large boat capable w/3-5' draft)
- 11 Using GPS seminar
- 12 Herb River (Rain date May 13)
- 16 Magellan Cruise 2 - Pinckney Island
- 18 Basic Weather Forecasting seminar
- 23 Inland Navigator - OTW Exam

JUNE

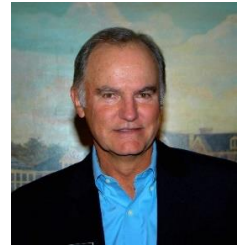
- 8 Ossabaw Island (Rain date June 9)
- 8 Partner in Command seminar
- 9 Dinner Meeting, POSEIDON, Hilton Head Island, 6:30 PM
- 15 Tides and Currents seminar
- 24 Magellan Cruise - Bull Island

"America's Boating Club® is a trademark of the United States Power Squadrons®"



FROM THE COMMANDER

Peter J. Dion, SN



This month's *Ocean Breeze* begins with a recap of our first boating event of the year...the Oystering Day Cruise event. We had eleven people boating over to an oyster bed and bringing back many oysters to enjoy eating at Skull Creek Marina. Some members couldn't even wait until we got back to the marina to enjoy the oysters!

Our first overnight cruise to St. Simons Island is fast approaching. On March 27, 28, and 29 we will be enjoying a cruise down the intracoastal waterway to tie up for two nights at Morningstar Marina at St. Simons Island. Don't have a boat? Call one of the captains to see if there is space available to ride along, then check in at the Best Western Plus hotel on the island. Watch for the next announcement coming out soon for more details.

Haven't taken our first education course America's Boating Course? Sign up on our website to join the class on March 21 from 8:00-4:00. The class is scheduled to be presented at the Boathouse on Squire Pope Road. Learn about all the different boating topics and become a better educated and safe boater on our waterways.

Did you know? America's Boating Club Hilton Head is one of 13 squadrons in District 26 of the United States Power Squadron. Our district ranges from northern Myrtle Beach, to Murray Lake in Columbia, to Tybee Island in Georgia. Each year our District holds a Fall Conference (this year to be held at the Dreher Shoals Squadron near Columbia) and a Cruise and Rendezvous (this year to be held by the North Strand Squadron north of Myrtle Beach). The Cruise and Rendezvous is scheduled for May 1, 2, and 3 at Lightkeepers Marina in North Strand, Myrtle Beach. Debbie and I will be taking the "Lady D II" up the coast to attend the C & R. Come along and enjoy the fun. If you would like to attend either of these events, do not hesitate to call me for more information.

Speaking of the Cruise and Rendezvous, we will be hosting the 2021 C & R with Beaufort. I'm looking for someone who would like to chair this event with the chairperson from Beaufort. If you would like to volunteer for this project, please give me a call. 843-521-7071. Thanks.

Recently, Georgia passed Bill 201 which established anchoring restrictions for boaters traveling on the ICW in Georgia. Former ABCHH member Ted Arisaka recently wrote a letter to Georgia Governor Brian Kemp detailing quite specifically the issues with Bill 201. Ted's letter is included in the recent issue of Waterway Guide's article entitled "Research Reveals Incongruity of Georgia Anchoring Laws". https://www.waterwayguide.com/latestnews/news/10316/research-reveals-incongruity-ofgeorgia-anchoring-laws?utm_source=iContact&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=navalerts_02-07-2020&utm_content=Nav+Alerts+02-07-2020. If you would like to weigh-in on this issue contact: America's Great Loop Cruisers' Association (AGLCA), Facebook Group: Save Georgia's Anchorages or the [Anchoring Advocacy Fund](#).

Finally, our squadron received the Distinctive Communicators Award in 2019 from USPS for our *Ocean Breeze* newsletter. Congratulations to Debbie Dion our editor...and thank you! And if that's not enough, our **website** also received the Distinctive Website Award in 2019 from USPS. Congratulations to our webmaster, Paul Hoyte! Thank you Paul for a great website.

Mark your calendar:

April 7 Dinner meeting at the Dockside Restaurant

May 9 Blessing of the Fleet at Skull Creek Marina

Information concerning both events will be coming soon.

As you can see, we have a lot of activities and opportunities for you to attend and to become involved.

Administrative Officer Mark Hente organized our first dinner meeting of the year at The Terrace Room in Rose Hill Plantation on February 11th. Our guest speaker was storyteller, **Captain Andrew "Boo" Harrell**. Boo Harrell was born in Savannah; his family has owned property on the Mary River since the early 40's. Boo has spent most of his life on the water exploring the creeks surrounding Bluffton. Boo shared stories about the Lowcountry waterways that you won't necessarily find in books from a local waterman. Boo was very entertaining with humorous anecdotes.



Captain Andrew "Boo" Harrell



Commander Dion presents PC Larry Tremitiere with the Educational Proficiency Award.



Commander Peter Dion explains that it's 'Lucky Tray Night' and someone will win 'The American Practical Navigator: Bowditch' book.



And the winner is ... New Member Jay Landerfeld. Commander Dion presents the book to Jay Landerfeld.

Partying Like They Did in The 3rd Millennium BC

By Bob Newbert



Our first official cruise of 2020 kicked off with a quaint 12,000-year old tradition (4,500 years if you want to nitpick).

We went oystering.

Archeologists have found evidence of early man harvesting oysters 12,000 years ago and documented nearby "shell rings" or middens consisting of discarded oyster shells arranged in a circle dating back 4,500 years to the 3rd Millennium BC. Early man formed these rings for ceremonial purposes.

On February 5, with little ceremony, apprentice oystermen and oysterwomen from America's Boating Club Hilton Head, departed G "27" to pick oysters at R-307 (that's South Carolina's name for a specific oyster bed). We would tell you where it is, but we can't give all our secrets away. It will remain the hidden stash of those hardy adventurers who participated in our first ever oyster harvest.

Upon arrival at R-307, Bob Newbert reviewed procedures for grounding and ungrounding boats on an oyster reef. He stressed the importance of putting your boat up onto the oysters, and shared true-life stories of the dire, and sometimes fatal, consequence of landing your boat on the mud.

Once safely ashore, Bob shared insight into *Crossotrea virginica*, our local bivalves. He began with a brief safety talk about the sharp, knife edge of growing oysters and showed the Emergency Room photo of his friend who nearly lost a foot stepping on a live oyster.

Highlights of "Oysters 101" included:

- The difference between subtidal oysters in Chesapeake Bay and intertidal oysters in the May River.
- How Oyster Catcher birds open oyster shells for an easy meal, and how oysters get their revenge drowning the birds.
- Why our local oysters are much saltier than others (i.e. Connecticut Blue Point Oysters), and the reason the May River is saltier than the Atlantic Ocean.
- How to farm oysters and why "single selects" are prettier and more expensive.
- The amount of seawater one oyster "cleans" every day (50 gal.)
- The fascinating and little-known fact that all oysters are male oysters until they are 1-year old whereupon their testes turn into ovaries and they become females. Thus, the oysters we eat (larger sized oysters) are all female.

Classwork over, we headed into the field for hands-on experience picking oysters the same way it is done by today's commercial oystermen who, in turn, pick oysters the way their forebearers did seven generations ago when the South Carolina oyster industry was at its peak: Put on your mud boots; slog through the mud and shells; bend over; pull a "cabbage head" (cluster of 25-30 oysters); knock keepers off into your basket; put the cabbage head back...all without cutting yourself or falling. It is heavy, back-bending work.

But, oh how sweet oysters taste when you pick them yourself! Nothing is fresher especially when, like many in our group, we shucked them and ate them raw out on the oyster reef immediately after picking.

A cooked oyster is different to the palate in taste and texture (plus it is much easier to open) so after filling our baskets we returned to Skull Creek Marina to wash and steam our harvest. Here, we enjoyed "docktails," good conversation, and, of course, our delicious bivalves both raw and steamed.

Responsible oystermen are stewards of the environment so as the day concluded we "re-seeded" the oyster beds to insure plenty of oysters for the future. In brief, oyster "spat" (larval oysters) need a hard substrate to attach to. That's why you see oysters clustered on pilings at low tide. Unlike northern latitudes, there are no rocks in our waterways so spat attach themselves to other oysters. It's why we have cabbage heads of 30 oysters stuck together. To re-seed the beds, we return our empty shells to the intertidal zone. Larry Toomer, owner of the Bluffton Oyster Company, once explained re-seeding this way: "If we don't put the shells back, it's like cutting all the trees down without planting new ones."

All in all, ABCHH's first oyster harvest was a delightful day of learning, eating and camaraderie. We celebrated "oystering," one of the Lowcountry's most beloved traditions, and we followed the footsteps of our ancestors by harvesting oysters the exact same way they did 200 years ago. Okay...if you want to go way back...we did not create shell ring middens, but we did re-seed the beds so future generations can enjoy *Crossotrea virginica* 4,500 years from now.



Bob Newbert, guest lecturer, for "Oysters 101."



The invitation said we would get muddy - and we did!



Bob Newbert explains how oysters open and close.

Celebrating a Lowcountry tradition are (standing L to R): Howie Kravitz, Al Pepe, Pete Dion, Craig Loomis, Brad Loescher, Deb Loomis, Susan Sutherland and Eric Sutherland; and (kneeling L to R): Barbara Chaloux and Mary Richardson.



Al Pepe, Eric Sutherland, Mary Richardson, Susan Sutherland and Brad Loescher party like the 3rd Millennium BC.



**Craig Loomis, Debbie Loomis,
and Brad Loescher.**



Craig Loomis finds a good one!



Al Pepe searching for oysters.



Barb Chaloux & Howard Kravitz



Barb's stylish oyster boots



**Brad Loescher checking out
the prospects.**



**And Bob said to stay
out of the Pluff Mud.
Who didn't listen?**



Craig Loomis thinks he has a dandy.



Dinner Time!



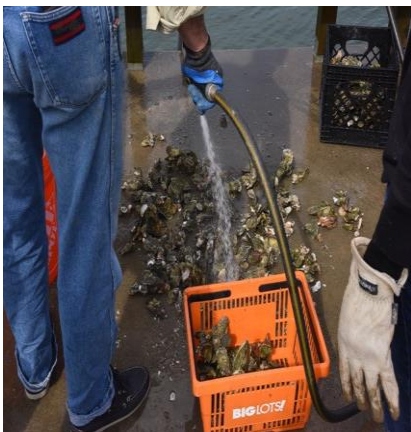
Debbie and Craig Loomis



Mary Richardson



Eric Sutherland



Spraying the oysters



Mary and Eric washing oysters.



Yummy! A fresh one!



New Members Eric and Susan Sutherland - "Can't do this in Chicago!"

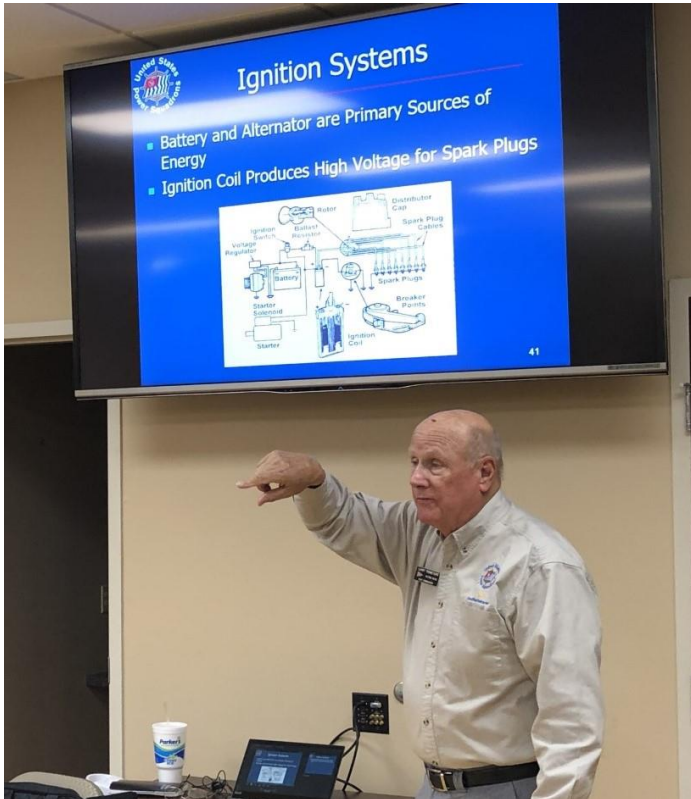


Craig Loomis, Howard Kravitz, Barb Chaloux

ALL OYSTERING PHOTOS PROVIDED BY BOB NEWBERT & PETER DION.

ENGINE MAINTENANCE

The engine maintenance course has twelve participants: Mark Hente, Elizabeth McIntyre, Larry Landis, Brad Loescher, Tom Philbrick, Mark Carroll, Michael Kozyr, Mike Gilroy, Mary Richardson, Chris Brigham, Dick Huesinkveld, Phillip (Jeff) North, and Tom Ryley. The course is being taught by Larry Tremitiere and Walter Kirk.



Instructor Larry Tremitiere

Photos provided by Tom Ryley, Education Officer



(L-R) Jeff North, Michael Kozyr, Mike Gilroy



Engine Maintenance Course Participants



(L-R) Chris Brigham and Dick Huesinkveld