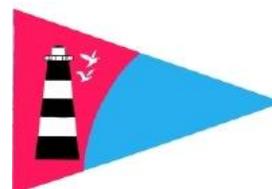




# SCUTTLEBUTT

MARCH 2026



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National: [www.americasboatingclub.org](http://www.americasboatingclub.org)  
District 26: [www.ABClubD26.org](http://www.ABClubD26.org)  
NSSPS: [www.abcnorthstrand.org](http://www.abcnorthstrand.org)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/abcnorthstrand](http://www.facebook.com/abcnorthstrand)

## FROM THE COMMANDER'S HELM



Cdr John Cattuna

Hello fellow North Strand Power Squadron Members

I was fortunate to be able to attend the National meeting of the United States Power Squadron which was held in Myrtle Beach February 10<sup>th</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup>. This was the first National Meeting that I have had the opportunity to attend. The National Business Meeting and Change of Watch, while quite long was certainly filled with some controversial decisions being made about dues and the incoming National Bridge Officers. However, there were several informative conferences presented on education changes, cop-op charting and marketing our organizations in this era of declining membership.

The District 26 Spring Conference and Change of Watch is being hosted by Lake Murray Power Squadron March 27<sup>th</sup> through the 29<sup>th</sup>. This gathering of fellow USPS members has some interesting activities planned, like a boat manufactures factory tour, evening cookouts and some on the water boating on beautiful Lake Murray as well as the District 26 Change of Watch, dinner and awards presentations. These district wide gatherings are a great opportunity to meet and get to know USPS members from other D26 Squadrons.

This month at our NSSPS monthly meeting we are expecting a presentation by the North Myrtle Beach Water Rescue Team which will be interesting for our boating members as well as our non-boating members. Thanks to the committee volunteers who work tirelessly behind the scenes to organize our dinner meetings, set up the locations and help with the food presentation to ensure everything we need is available.

Looking forward to seeing everyone at the NSSPS March Membership Meeting, I hope to see those of you that can attend at the D26 Meeting at Lake Murray and hope to see you out on the water soon.

John



**EXECUTIVE OFFICER**



**XO Rich Norris**

**EDUCATIONAL OFFICER**



**SEO Jamie Cross**



It's that time of year again, dust off the cobwebs, break out the polish, check all maintenance items, including those inflatable PFD canisters to ensure they haven't expired, and start getting your boat ready for the new season. Wait, am I forgetting something?!

How about contacting one of the VSC Examiners listed below to get your boat's 2026 VSC Sticker! It's GREAT insurance that your boat is READY for the new season. It certainly deters getting boarded by the Coast Guard or SC DNR, so be smart and get your vessel examined BEFORE you leave for the open water!

**VESSEL SAFETY EXAMINERS**

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The following are the latest 2026 USPS course dates and times:

**Marine Electrical Systems**

- Wednesday, March 11 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm.
- Wednesday, March 18 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm.
- Wednesday, March 25 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm.
- Wednesday, April 1 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm.
- Wednesday, April 8 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm.
- Wednesday, April 15 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm.
- Wednesday, April 22 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm.
- Wednesday, April 29 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm.

**ABC Boating** (large meeting room)  
Saturday, April 25 from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S REPORT



AO Doug Thomas

It's been a very busy month for your Admin department. I attended several meetings at the USPS National meeting held right here in Myrtle Beach. I heard several good speakers and picked up on several ideas to hopefully improve our squadron. Most of it had to do with community exposure and how to get our word out to the local boating public.

After the week of meetings, some of our squadron members, myself included, took advantage of the USPS cruise to the Caribbean to relax our minds after that intense week of meetings. Lucky me, I returned home sick. Probably had something to do with being on a ship with over 3,000 other individuals. I'm still recovering, but it has given me time to start putting to use what I learned at the National Meeting.

We are pleased to announce that at the next squadron General Membership Meeting, Tuesday, March 10, we will have a speaker from the NMB Rescue Service. My understanding is that he will be bringing their boat to our meeting. I encourage everyone to attend this interesting presentation. It will be held at the Sun Colony clubhouse at 100 Sun Colony Blvd., Longs, SC starting with our social hour at 5:00 PM. Watch your email for the Constant Contact announcement.

Last month, I stated that you all can refer to the online calendar for a list of events for the year. Unfortunately, that is not the case. We were in the process of converting our website over to National's web server, which does not have a calendar at this time. Sorry for that faux pas. We are working on an alternative, but until that becomes available, Constant Contact and the Scuttlebutt will be our main method of announcing events and classes as they become available.

I see plenty of good weather on the horizon - finally! Time to break out the boat, clean it up, check safety equipment and go boating! Also, don't forget to schedule your annual Vessel Safety Check. Contact P/D/C Rich Norris, at (610) 703-6650 or email at richrcna@ptd.net.

Lt/C Doug Thomas, SN





The March Membership Meeting will be held at the Sun Colony Clubhouse on **Tuesday, March 10 at 5:00 PM**. Please bring hot or cold **heavy** hors d'oeuvre. This is a BYOB event. Water will be available. A presentation will be made by the North Myrtle Beach Rescue Squad. The organization's background information is below. They will be bringing their boat. This will be a great, informative talk; one that boaters and non-boaters alike will enjoy. A Constant Comment blast will be sent out shortly. Show your support for this great organization by attending this meeting.

The [North Myrtle Beach Rescue Squad](#) began its water rescue program in 1958. Since that first watercraft, the water rescue program has evolved into one of the premier ocean and freshwater rescue services in South Carolina. The team is an active resource for use by the U.S. Coast Guard, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Horry County Fire Rescue, North Myrtle Beach and Myrtle Beach city governments.

The squad's water rescue team responds to:

- swimmers/boaters in-distress
- overturned boats
- jet ski crashes
- aquatic search and rescue
- vehicles in the water
- medical emergencies on boats
- aircraft emergencies involving the water
- post hurricane search and rescue
- 

This full spectrum response covers the Atlantic Ocean, Intracoastal Waterway (ICW) from the North Carolina line to Georgetown County, SC, Waccamaw River, and all static water sources within our primary response area.

New in 2022... the addition of what we believe to be the first amphibious ocean-worthy Search & Rescue boat in use by a Rescue Squad in the United States. *The Merlin Bellamy* was dedicated on August 8th and represents a huge newsworthy leap forward in our capabilities. *The Merlin Bellamy* was funded completely by donations from the public.



South Carolina lawmakers say boat owners in the state pay some of the highest property tax rates in the country, and a new bill moving through the legislature aims to change that.

South Carolina currently taxes boats at 10.5%. The proposed bill would drop that rate to 6%, phasing in the decrease over three years. Boat owners would also no longer pay a separate registration fee for outboard motors under the bill.

A \$50,000 boat registered in Richland County costs about \$2,800 a year in property taxes. By comparison, a similarly priced boat registered in Charlotte costs less than \$400 a year, and in Georgia, just over \$400 a year.

Lawmakers say many South Carolina boat owners register their boats in other states to avoid the higher tax rate. The bill passed the state House last year and unanimously cleared a Senate committee this week. The full Senate is expected to vote on the bill next week.

Brandon Crutchfield, owner of Marine 360 in Chapin, said property taxes come up with customers daily.

“It’s pretty obvious it comes up every day. People are constantly asking what the impact of property taxes are going to be. I was just talking to a customer five minutes ago and that’s the number one question I get — is how much are property taxes going to be,” Crutchfield said.

South Carolina resident Brandy Kersey said lowering the taxes would be beneficial.

“I have friends all near us that boats all around our place, and some of them are captains, some of them own their boats, and it gets tiring of always hearing the taxes and stuff being raised,” Kersey said. “Customers wonder when they go out on a charter with them, why these prices are going up, so it’d be nice to have them go down again.”

Karin Gateless, a visitor to the state, said the tax reduction could attract more people to South Carolina.

“Property taxes being lowered is always a good thing,” Gateless said. “I’m thinking of moving down here, and that’s definitely a good incentive that, as a retired person, I can do with lower taxes.”

If the bill reaches Gov. Henry McMaster’s desk, he has signaled support for it in the past.



Nicholas	Jebaily	06
Twila M.	Nahama	13
Melissa	Selph	15
Holly	Mora	27



## DISTRICT 26 NEWS

026 SPRING CONFERENCE

MARCH 27-29, 2026

HOSTED BY:

LAKE MURRAY SAIL & POWER  
SQUADRON

### Friday

**Afternoon** -Working on a tour of a local boat manufacturer (tbd)

**Evening**-Jimmy Buffet Party at Lake Murray's Flotilla Island (2390 Johnson Marina Rd, Chapin, SC)

Dinner

Speaker - WWII B-25C Bomber recovery and restoration

### Saturday

**Morning** – several activities to choose from

On-the-water activities  
(weather permitting)

Tour of B-25C bomber restoration

(Other activity tbd)

### Afternoon

Business Meeting

### Evening

Banquet Dinner and Change of Watch

### Sunday

Out-of-town attendees return to home port

## USPS NATIONAL NEWS

### 2026 FALL GOVERNING BOARD



**Cary, NC**  
**Sep 20-Sep 27 2026**

### North Strand March Calendar of Events

1	SCUTTLEBUTT- On The Stands		
4	Heritage Park Cleanup	3:30	4:30
6	2nd Membership Involvement Meeting	6:00	-
10	MEMBERSHIP MEETING	5:00	7:30
11	Marine Electrical Course	7:00	9:00
18	Marine Electrical Course	7:00	9:00
25	Marine Electrical Course	7:00	9:00
27-29	D/26 SPRING CONFERENCE		

**NOTE: The 2nd Member Involvement Meeting will be held at the Lip-pincott's home, 1505 Hillside Dr. N, North Myrtle Beach. Sandwiches, pizza and beverages will be provided.**