



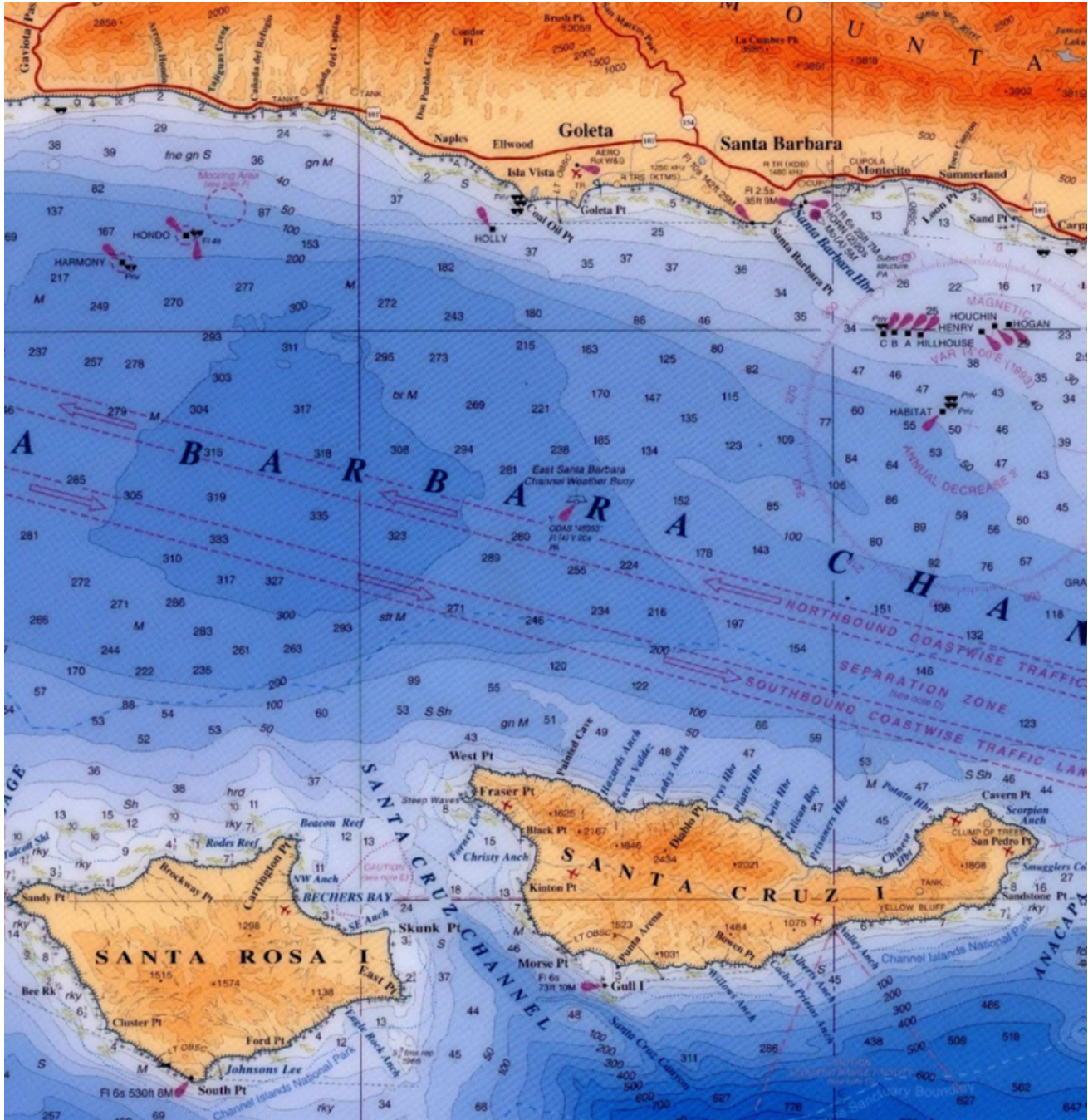
America's Boating Club® is a registered trademark of the United States Power Squadrons®

Signal Hoist



Santa Barbara Sail & Power Squadron

Monthly Newsletter October 2020





COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Cdr. Virginia Johns, P

Normally our national organization would hold a Fall Conference in Raleigh, North Carolina; 2020 was of course cancelled due to COVID. A virtual conference was designed where departments at National each set up a series of virtual meetings to replace the sessions they had planned for Raleigh. I attended a number of them and thought they were well done. Many of them were recorded and the recordings are available to us.

The sessions I attended included administrative topics, where I learned about the various computer systems I need to do my job as commander and picked up a lot of ideas for my monthly Jargon article!

The Education Department had quite a few sessions . My favorite from among those I attended was called Using Open CPN. This open source (free) electronic navigation software is used in some of the classes we teach, such as Piloting. Many of you might already be using it on your boats. Dennis and I use it. I learned that we are running a very old version for Libertad; using instructions from this session we now have the latest version installed! I know some of you are interested in this software - check out the recording: [Link for Using Open CPN](#) .

I think they did a very nice job and that the virtual mode made it more accessible and productive in a number of ways. There are advantages to in-person conferences. But for as long as we are in this protective mode, these virtual tools are certainly allowing us to be productive and stay connected.

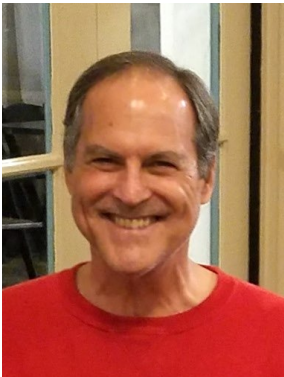
As for our squadron's virtual activities....This week John started our first virtual course, Boat Handling, using Zoom. There were 12 attendees, in addition to John and me. Other instructors have expressed their willingness to teach via zoom so you will hear more about this from John. In August we

had our first virtual squadron meeting with a speaker. More will be coming. In the meantime, I recommend that you check out the virtual speakers being offered by the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum. October 15, at 7:00pm Neal Graffy presents on *History of the Santa Barbara Waterfront*. Register on the Maritime Museum site; the lecture is FREE but you must register to receive the link.

I just got my fall 2020 Ensign via email and found an article originally published in the *Signal Hoist* by Steve Hodges, N, about installing a new head. You can check it out by clicking on the link:

<http://www.theensign.org/imag/fall2020/>

Stay safe and stay connected!



ADMIN OFFICER'S MESSAGE

Lt/C Dennis Johns, AP

Questioning what day of the week it is (which was happening more regularly than I care to admit and which I attribute completely to being retired than any effects of age) was annoying but in this COVID environment where one day follows another with few events of note to distinguish a point in time, I'm having trouble remembering what month it is. Contributing to the *Signal Hoist* is fortunately one of those time marks.

By the time this newsletter comes out, the Catalina Cruise is under way. We hope the boats participating have excellent weather. A little wind out of the NW would be nice rather than the dead calm we had last year and the 12 knots out of the SE we had the year before.

I suspect that Scott Burns will provide a report later in this edition on the cruise scheduled for the last week of September. San Miguel can be a challenge in any but the best conditions, so it should be no surprise if the destination was revised.

SB Public Health officials continue to insist that our city falls under the **Purple** category which is interpreted as widespread COVID infection and therefore prohibits group gatherings. The squadron is improving its competency with Zoom and there is discussion about having our Annual Meeting BBQ on Zoom with everyone cooking their own burgers, steak, or chicken, allowing an open forum to hear what everyone has been doing, conducting whatever business is required, and even having an online white elephant auction.

Given that group gatherings are prohibited, it's my unhappy responsibility to report that the Dockside Brunch scheduled for October 10 is cancelled. More bad news is that the Harbor & Seafood Festival scheduled for Oct 17 is also cancelled. Like I mentioned previously, without these noteworthy events, it's getting hard to know what month it is.

Some good news is that the first session of a Zoom form of the new Boat Handling course was conducted on Tuesday, September 22. I understand that John Profant had a sizable group of people participating, so we should get a good feel for how these new educational sessions may play out in the future.

I received an exciting email the other day about an upcoming Zoom event (yes, I know, Oh God! not another Zoom meeting, but that's the world we are living in now). I've partially reproduced the email here:

Sat Oct 10 Jimmy Cornell – Crossing the Atlantic 1-2pm PDT

Internet ZOOM An RSVP is requested. [Click here to RSVP](#) (If you register you will receive the Zoom link in a separate email. If you don't register and want to participate, I can provide the link.) Jimmy Cornell has influenced the contemporary cruising scene more than any other sailor. An accomplished sailor, public speaker and author, he has sailed over 200,000 miles in all oceans of the world including three circumnavigations as well as voyages to Antarctica and the Northwest Passage.

Thousands of sailors have fulfilled their dream of blue water cruising with the help of Jimmy Cornell's books, among them the international bestseller [World Cruising Routes](#). Now in its 8th edition, and with over 200,000 copies sold to date, this is one of the best-selling nautical publications in the world.

As the founder of the highly successful *Atlantic Odyssey Rally*, Jimmy Cornell is credited with having devised the offshore cruising rally concept. In the last four decades, Jimmy Cornell has organized 38 transatlantic rallies, five round the world rallies, and one round the world race, with over 3,000 boats and 15,000 sailors having participated in his sailing events.

When Virginia and I landed in the Canary Islands we had already put over 25,000 NM under our hull over five years and had accumulated what we considered a respectable amount of sailing experience. It was our intention to take part in the 2016 Atlantic Odyssey Rally as we had crossed the Pacific with a group of five boats in daily communication (if not in view) and that feeling of connectedness was comforting. Participation in the rally included a variety of offshore cruising seminars. Assuming they would be mostly a review of what we already knew, we were astonished to learn how much more we could put to good use. We haven't seen this presentation but we're sure there will be something new to learn.

Upcoming Activities

Mon Sept 28	Catalina Cruise	Various departure times in the AM
Sat Oct 10, 1-2:00pm	Jimmy Cornell — Crossing the Atlantic	via Zoom
Sat Oct 10, 10:00am	Dockside Brunch	On dock by John's boat, Libertad

CANCELED



SEO's MESSAGE
Lt/C John Profant, SN

Well, we held our first virtual class seminar Tuesday, Sept 22nd. I think it actually went over pretty well. We had eleven participants. This first seminar was on boating rules. It is one of six seminars that make up the Boat Handling course. Three of the participants were from the Las Vegas Power Squadron, wondering how we are putting it on. It was pretty simple, when everyone tuned in I made a few announcements and then got into the PowerPoint presentation. I actually used two computers, one to handle the ZOOM and the other to bring up the speaker notes. I want to give a big thanks to Virginia Johns for hosting this event, it made it run much smoother.

I don't feel that ZOOM is as effective as an in-person classroom situation, but it is better than nothing. Although we had some interaction with the students, I miss not seeing them face to face. However, everyone was very appreciative of having us put this on.

We will be putting these seminars on once a week, on Tuesdays from 7 to 9 pm thru October. The next class on Sept 29th, will be on "Confidence in Docking and Undocking". Participation is free and if you are interested in tuning in to these seminars, let me know so I can send you the link.

Those interested can email me at johnprofant@cox.net.

Can You Prepare for the Worst Case Scenario?

P/C Dennis Johns, AP

Having spent several weeks in Panama, our next stop would be the Rio Chone, Ecuador which is a common jumping off point for the Galapagos. This passage would also mark our crossing of the Equator which necessitated a ritual honoring of Neptune/Poseidon and our graduation into the community of Shellbacks.

During the passage we had to dodge quite a few fishermen's arrays of longline buoys. The buoys would be connected to each other and laid out over several hundred yards of ocean and fortunately the fishermen were on constant watch for passing boats such as ours to provide the proper guidance to where the lines ended — they didn't want to have to repair their lines any more than we wanted to have to untangle them from our propeller or rudder.

With so many fishermen in the area, I thought the fishing must be good so I dropped in our lines. A couple of hours later, one of the fishing reels began its high-pitched singing indicating we had caught a big one. I picked up the rod and tightened the drag but it didn't feel like a fighting fish. I wondered if we'd snagged a log or if we just got hold of a fish that didn't fight. Seemed like forever to reel it in. When it got close enough to the boat to identify, we were shocked to see that I had snagged the flipper of a sea turtle measuring about 24 by 30 inches. The turtle and I were both exhausted when it was close enough to do something with it. Fortunately it was not going to resist me in any way, and the best solution I came up with was to cut the barb off the hook.

We arrived at Bahia de Caraquez which is at the mouth of Rio Chone and anchored in the "Waiting Room". The anchorage is up the river and to get to the river, you had to cross a sandbar at high tide and even then you needed a pilot to guide you as the sandbar was always shifting. High tide would be early the next morning, so we spent an uncomfortable evening rocking to the unrelenting swell. Even at high tide the next day as we passed over the bar, we observed that at times we only had about 1 foot of water under the keel.

The “marina” was named Puerto Amistad but it was a sort of a virtual marina. Having the river emptying into the ocean so close created an interesting dynamic. At low tide the river current flowed into the sea. As the tide changed, the flow direction reversed. The marina was set up for this as they had moorings for both bow and stern to prevent the boats from moving about which allowed them to pack us in quite tight. When the flow was toward the sea a lot of debris from upriver would accumulate on our mooring line (photo of a neighbor’s mooring line)..



Before we headed off for the Galapagos we had planned a land trip to Machu Picchu in Peru. We would be gone for about ten days and out on the mooring balls and no docks around we had no access to shore power. Concerned about the status of our batteries over that time (fridge and freezer would be running the whole time) we decided to hire a local, Raymundo, to come aboard and run the engine an hour each day to keep the batteries charged up. That's Raymundo in the red shirt.



We walked him through the process. We have a secondary, high output alternator that quickly recharges the house batteries. That alternator puts an extra burden on the engine, so we don't have it running constantly. A separate switch excites it when it's time to recharge. We also showed him how to check the oil in the engine and how to add some if it happened to get low ("diesels love their oil –no one knows why" –see *Captain Ron*). Comforted that we'd have fully charged batteries when we returned, we headed off to Machu Picchu and had a wonderful, if a bit wet, excursion (ok, so I got altitude sickness because I didn't take the medicine that Virginia had purchased specifically for that but it only lasted about 12 hours).

We returned to the boat quite exhausted from the airplane and four hour bus ride. As I descended the companionway stairs, I glanced at the Xantrex battery monitor and to my horror, saw that the battery level was at 33%. When the battery level got too low, the freezer would turn itself off. So Virginia spent the next couple of hours cleaning the spoiled food out and washing it down with soap and vinegar. We couldn't believe Raymundo hadn't done his job. I fired up the engine and quickly discovered that the alternator was not putting out a charge. While Virginia cleaned out the freezer, I replaced the alternator. With the replacement alternator installed I ran the engine wondering if the batteries would even come up. Fortunately they did but in the back of my mind, I knew that they had been damaged and would not last as long as they should. We'd had enough of that day and headed for the bar onshore to drown our sorrows.

The concern about the batteries was borne out when we discovered our batteries were dead and gone in Thailand, two years later (a previous *Signal Hoist* article). This was only the first time we had food in the freezer spoil because of a low battery level — neither instance due to any error on our part. Don't know if it would have done any good to have Raymundo review the battery monitor to confirm the batteries were recharging. He certainly wouldn't have been able to replace the alternator but perhaps he could have emptied the freezer and taken the food ashore to another freezer. Perhaps I could have shown him how to switch the battery switch to "Both" and the primary low output alternator would

have put some level of charge in both the engine and house batteries? Perhaps he could have brought a portable generator onboard to recharge the batteries. Perhaps, perhaps, perhaps. Can you fully prepare for the worst case scenario?

We had a watermaker on board for the passage across the Pacific but the learning curve of how to maintain it was long and it was not functioning due to mismanagement on my part. So we needed to fill up our fresh water tank for the four days to get to the Galapagos and you can imagine how long it took for us to take on 1000 liters (264 gallons) of water; transporting the water jugs over to the moored *Libertad* and then siphoning them into the water tank (holding and pouring into a funnel was too exhausting) — photo, right, of the first load of water jugs to be emptied. We would have a cruiser meet us in the Galapagos with a new membrane which would make the watermaker functional, theoretically. Ultimately, we did not have a watermaker for our Pacific passage to the Marquesas but that's a story for another time.



SAFETY TIP

Marion Seaman, who joined our squadron this year, passed on this safety announcement she received from the US Coast Guard.

For the past several years, the U.S. Coast Guard has been moving away from the Type I – V life jacket labeling. The U.S. labeling system will now be consistent with the International labeling system. The new labels will show more icons and less words to make it easier to determine which life jacket is best.

CHOOSE THE DEVICE YOU WILL WANT TO WEAR

SIZE & FIT

- Check label for user weight and chest size.
- Different body types float differently.
- A good fit is secure, comfortable, and adjustable.

TRY IT ON

PERFORMANCE

- Lower number offers greater mobility, comfort, and style with good flotation for most people.
- Higher number offers greater flotation, turning, and stability in the water.

50

70

100

150

Near Shore

(Calm)

(Waves)

Offshore

Increasing time to rescue

No Turn

Turns Most

CONSIDER YOUR ACTIVITY & ENVIRONMENT

RISK MANAGEMENT *

- In over 80% of boating fatalities the person was not wearing flotation.
- Most of these are sudden falls overboard or capsizing of a small boat.
- The first moments in the water are critical, even for experienced swimmers.
- Cold water shock causes gasping, loss of muscle control and swim failure.
- Long term immersion in cold water requires thermal protection and flotation position to conserve energy.

FLOTATION DEVICES SAVE LIVES

su2085a

More details from the US Coast Guard can be found here:

<https://safeboatingcampaign.com/news/infographic-available-new-life-jacket-label/>

Maude Memories Cir 1997 The Baja

P/C Neil Ablitt, P

Sue and I were anchored in the Sea of Cortez and had decided to explore one of the lesser visited islands, Isla Monserrate. We had been cruising the winter seasons in Mexico since 1993 and this year, Past Commander John Profant, had flown down to join us for a week. We were in our dinghy motoring up the west side of the small island when we spotted smoke. Turned out to be a small fish camp of about 6 or 8 Mexican fishermen. As we came into view one of the fishermen in the group jumped up and started waving and shouting, "Hola Sue, Neil, hola, hola!" John, taken a bit back, looked at us and said, "You have been here too long!"

Once again John was wrong.
Will explain why next month.



Jargon : Understanding Merit Marks, Senior and Life Members

by Cdr Virginia Johns, P

Merit Marks are recognition members receive for the contributions they make to our organization. In the Fall our bridge officers identify active members who meet the merit mark criteria for substantial personal effort in furthering the interest, programs and objectives of our organization. The Commander passes the recommendations up the line for approval. A member would receive at most one merit mark per year, no matter how extensive the contribution.

A **Senior Member** is someone that has earned five merit marks; twenty five merit marks accord a member **Life Membership**, exempting them from national dues.

I attended the virtual training for the new merit mark system because the Santa Barbara squadron has always participated in this revered tradition given we are an active squadron with deserving members. This year is no exception; in spite of Covid, member creativity and dedication has kept us active and connected.

A few months ago I believe I announced in the Signal Hoist that we have a member who has earned 60 merit marks – Don Crowder!

Clarifications and corrections are welcome!



The Signal Hoist is the official publication of the Santa Barbara Sail & Power Squadron. Articles of interest to the membership should be forwarded in writing via email to the Editor by the 20th of the month in order to be included in the next issue. We solicit the submission of your articles on safety, boating, cruising, racing, and squadron activities. Accompanying relevant photos are appreciated. We encourage articles by our members. Send us your true or tall tales. Articles, opinions, and advertisements published herein do not necessarily reflect squadron policy or endorsement unless so designated.

Editor:	Peggy Ciolino, P
Proofreader:	Lt/C Richard Ciolino, JN
Squadron Photographer:	Janis Johnson, S
SBSPS Website Manager:	Lt/C Steve York, P
	Lt/C Eric Peterson, AP
Website address:	<u>www.sbsps.net</u>