



# District 13 News



Website: [www.usps-district13.org](http://www.usps-district13.org)

November 2004

## Membership Corner

P/C Jim Baldwin, P D/13 Membership Chair

### Thanksgiving - No Turkeys

It is November already and nearly time to give thanks and celebrate a good harvest--a harvest of new members, that is.

Fall Boating Courses have been running for several weeks now. Your officers, proctors, and instructors have been working their magic with a great bunch of eager new students, turning them into safer boaters. And, hopefully a few new members will be added to your squadrons. Select carefully. No turkeys!

### Things That Work

Representatives from many districts made comments at the Governing Board meetings in May at New Orleans and September in Reno, 2003. Here are several good ideas shared regarding new members:

D/24 - Have an informal get-together with a few "seasoned" members. Introduce them to USPS and make them feel welcome.

D/9 - Mentoring is important - get new members involved and having fun.

D/3 - Have Commander send a personal note to all new members welcoming them aboard and letting them know about upcoming events, meetings, classes, etc.

D/4 - Invite new members on your boat for an introduction to Seamanship.

D/4 - Take photos of new members from the Boating course. Mount for display with their names at next meeting. Encourage members to find and greet them.

D/17 - Strong social programs (people are social animals)

### Special Presentation

At the November meeting of our District Council (17 November), there will be a presentation made by one of our squadrons that has had great success at recruiting new membership in recent years.

The Ventura Squadron grew to over 200 members. Their promising practices will be shared in a power point presentation prepared by ASEO and Squadron Membership Chair Eric Reinhart and Executive Officer Oscar Swinton.

How about membership chairs from all our squadrons attending the meeting with their commanders on that evening?

### D/13 and D/28 Fall Conference

Please send articles and pictures relating to our Fall Conference held on 22 and 23 October to the editor at [kenboyd@impulse.net](mailto:kenboyd@impulse.net) or to 806 E. Foster Road, Santa Maria, CA 93455. We will cover the conference in next month's issue.

## ATTENTION SEOs

We need your inputs to plan our next version of public boating -- The Combined Squadron Boating Course. This new course, to be available early in 2006, will provide common materials for what is now known as Boat Smart®, The Squadron Boating Course, and Chart Smart.

All you need to do is download this Survey Form from the Eddept Web Site [www.usps.org/national/eddept](http://www.usps.org/national/eddept). Click the "Attention SEOs" button and then on the "Survey Form" link. Fill out the form online. Click to check the boxes. There are some places for text answers; just click and type away. You can have a direct influence on the next version of the course and provide information to help us improve our courseware.

When you have completed the survey you have two ways to submit it. By email: Save the file with a name corresponding with your squadron number and attach it to an email to D/Lt/C Gene Molteni. By mail: print the form and mail it to Gene. His addresses are provided at the end of the form.

**Please respond by 15 November** so we can compile the results.

Thank you for your responses and time,

Basic Public Education Committee  
(BPECom)

### How to Stay Informed

- Read *The Ensign* every month
- Read your district and squadron newsletters every month
- Attend meetings
- Go to the USPS website. There are tons of information there!

## OPERATIONS TRAINING

- Who:** All District 13 members
- What:** Information on the workings of USPS
- Where:** Security Officers Training Academy, 620 W. Mill St., San Bernardino, northeast corner of Mill and G Street.
- When:** 29 and 30 January 2005  
0900 to 1600 each day
- Why:** The Operations Training Program offers a unique opportunity for all members to understand how the organization is structured, how it operates, its goals and objectives, and the relationship between squadron, district, and national levels.
- Contact:** Mike Mann, 951-689-2105 or email [mikeronie@earthlink.net](mailto:mikeronie@earthlink.net)

**Class Materials:** Each member attending must have a copy of Operations Training Program manual and **pre-read prior to class.**

I also suggest each member have a copy of Squadron Job Descriptions, District Job Descriptions, and Operations Manual CD.

Our training room is large but short of chairs. **Please bring a chair.**

**PLEASE ADVISE ME OF YOUR ATTENDANCE BY 22 JANUARY, 2005.**

### Roster Updates & Corrections

New website for Tres Rios P.S.:

<<http://www.tresrios-usps.org/>>

**TECHSOUP STOCK**  
**Mac Editions of Microsoft Products:**  
**Compute Different**

Do you think different? Maybe you dye your hair a wacky color or drive a psychedelic vehicle. Or maybe you use a Mac. If so, we have great news for you. New Macintosh editions of four popular Microsoft products are now available through TechSoup Stock: Microsoft Excel 2004, PowerPoint 2004, Word 2004, and Office 2004 Standard Edition (which includes these three applications plus Microsoft Entourage 2004, a mail and personal information manager).

Among the new and enhanced features offered in these editions are new layout views in Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel, a set of tools for presenters' eyes only in Microsoft PowerPoint, and a "Project Center" that allows users to access email, text, and multimedia files all in one central location.

These products are available for administrative fees of \$16 to \$20, thanks to a donation from Microsoft. Retail prices for these products typically range between \$230 and \$400.

View complete product descriptions: <http://ga0.org/ct/B71G0491XQCr/>

Check out this thread on our favorite Mac resources:  
<http://ga0.org/ct/a71GO491XQVr/>

View the complete TechSoup Stock catalog:

<http://ga0.org/ct/zp1GO491XQVg/>

*This information was received by email from TechSoup.*

**MEMBER INVOLVEMENT**  
D/Lt/C Marla Brown, JN

I am still trying to find something that will interest those who do not participate much. Maybe they need a ride to the function or would be happy to proctor a class. Just ask them. There are so many things to do.

There is always the District Council Meetings. They are not just for commanders or committee chairs. If you are a member you must be interested in what is going on. National has a lot of new benefits and increasing partnerships with other organizations, and this information is passed on to those who attend the meetings. This information should be given to the squadron members, but I am finding out that there is a lack of communication in some squadrons. If the members come to the Council meetings, they can help pass on the new things that National is doing. District is also changing and has a lot of good things happening.

The November Council meeting will have a special presentation by Ventura Squadron on membership. This will be beneficial to all of us because of their success in getting new members. Come and see what they are doing.

Again on the involvement subject, I will be turning in our entry for the USPS District Civic Service Award. We have done a number of activities that will give us a lot of points toward this competition. Maybe we will win again.

I do have good news on the involvement subject. Participation in the Sail Races has increased. Those who are new to the district races are enjoying it and coming back for all of them. If you cannot participate, read the articles that Steffen Meland writes [see pg. 4]. Reading his articles is like being there. How

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he remembers all of the detail amazes me. Also, Gail Nachman has done a great job in arranging for our district to be involved with the PBS stations; and we recently worked on a pledge drive for Classical KUSC. This is fun and you get treated very well: food, gifts, and a great deal of appreciation from the stations. Our benefit is lots of publicity for USPS.

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**USPS D/13 RACE #5**  
**25 September 2004**  
By Steffen Meland, S

To you who organized the race, I say thank you;  
To you who participated in the race, I say well done;  
To you who missed the race, I say repent.

The conditions were near perfect for an afternoon sail race when 6 USPS boats gathered just east of Island Freeman for the first race after a long summer of cruising and racing. The southern California sun was shining bright in the clear blue sky. The Pacific Ocean was warm and inviting, and the 6 sailboats and crews were ready and eager to go.

*Calary*, a beautifully restored Cal 34 with the Bjorks aboard, made a first and welcomed appearance in the races. *Gemini*, Lew Lyons' spotless and ageless Alberg 35, was there as usual. *Volaré*, a well-named and new-looking Catalina 42 with Larry Rizzo at the helm, mingled with the clean and fast-looking Catalina 28 of Ben Smith from Cabrillo. Roger Dickey came out with his rapid Santana 30/30, acting as the race committee boat while *Steffani*, our old Catalina 36, rounded out the participant list.

A gentle but steady 8-knot southwesterly breeze was filling our sails as we prepared

for the noon start. Ben Smith looked fast indeed as he repeatedly made simulated starting maneuvers, while the Bjorks in *Calary* cautiously stayed behind the start line. Lew Lyons' calm handling of *Gemini* prior to the start reflected years of successful racing in his beloved Alberg. *Volaré*, the fastest boat in the fleet, made a few magnificent runs toward the starting line, flexing her muscles just enough to show everyone who was the Queen of the fleet. Roger Dickey and crew lent professional flair to the starting sequence and exactly at noon the horn blew, indicating the race was on.

A 4.9-mile course around 3 markers was chosen, with the first mark being number 30, 1.1 miles straight upwind. Ben Smith in *White Eagle* miscalculated the start sequence and crossed the line one minute early. Realizing their mistake, they turned around; but the damage was one and they started last. First across the line, with her bright sails full and well trimmed were the Bjorks in *Calary*. The Cal 34 no longer staying back or looking shy, fairly jumped into the lead. *Gemini* and *Steffani* crossed, tied for second with *Gemini* choosing the best spot, just upwind of *Steffani* and closest to the committee boat. *Volaré*, accelerating a little slower than the smaller boats, was less than one boat length behind *Calary*. *Steffani* managed to get just in front of *Gemini*, then pinched up high enough to cause her to tack away. Only 40 yards below us, *Volaré*, now up to full speed, was slowly overtaking *Calary* to windward. *White Eagle* had restarted and was not far behind.

Approximately 100 yards from the breakwater, *Volaré* tacked. As *Steffani* was upwind of *Volaré* and on a starboard tack, we

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were able to squeeze in front, then tack on top of *Volaré*, hoping to feed her enough bad air to keep her behind us to the first mark. Despite my best efforts, *Volaré's* towering rig was no match for *Steffani* and she simply passed us to leeward, then tacked in front of us for the mark.

The upwind legs are usually the strong point of *Steffani*; and just when I thought I was in good shape, having disposed of *Gemini* early and on the heels of the faster rated *Volaré*, what do I see in the corner of my eye? *Gemini*, storming forward on a starboard tack heading straight for the mark with her well trained crew on deck, getting ready for a spinnaker set. As we rounded #30 and headed for marker #38, *Volaré* selected broad reach course along the breakwater while *Steffani* prepared to go straight toward the mark "wing on wing." Not more than 50 yards behind me I heard the excited voices on *Gemini*, preparing to heist their feared spinnaker. Meanwhile *White Eagle* had overtaken *Calary* and rounded the mark in fourth place. It was now blowing 12 knots and I fully expected *Gemini* to pass us on this 1.6-mile downwind leg, but it didn't happen. A rare sail handling error on *Gemini* was causing her to fall further behind as her chute wouldn't fill. *Volaré* abandoned the broad reach and joined *Steffani's* wake, also sailing wing on wing.

*White Eagle* also was having trouble filling her Gennaker while *Calary* was slowly catching up. Finally, both *Gemini* and *White Eagle's* downwind sails filled, but much time had been lost. *Steffani* rounded #38 first and continued toward the beach and marker #34, 1 mile ahead on a port tack beam reach. *Volaré* was less than 100 yards behind us and rapidly closing, as we reached the

leeward side of Chaffee Island. *Steffani* steered a course high enough to discourage a pass to windward by *Volaré*, which unfortunately meant passing too close to Island Chaffee and thereby robbing us of clear air. In addition, we were unable to adjust the genoa leads forward, resulting in a less than perfect sail shape for the headsail. Surely, I thought, *Volaré* couldn't pass us in our wind shadow? As if to prove me wrong, *Volaré* headed straight for the mark and with a mere shrug of her sails, again passed *Steffani* to leeward. What do I have to do to keep this greyhound of the seas behind me!

A quick glance astern revealed *Gemini*, still flying her spinnaker and heeling more than 30 degrees. She appeared to be exceeding her theoretical hull speed as she raced forward with vengeance. Not far behind was *White Eagle* who, after getting their Gennaker sorted out, was looking fast and again opening the gap on *Calary*. *Volaré* rounded Marker 34 first and hardened up on a port tack, heading west along the beach. To stay in clear air and away from the beach where smaller boats were racing, *Steffani* tacked for the breakwater. *Gemini*, who was rapidly catching up with us, followed *Steffani's* lead. *White Eagle*, when attempting to douse their Gennaker at the mark, lost control of the tack line and were slowed again as they attempted to restrain their out of control kite, allowing *Calary* to get within two boat lengths. *Volaré* wisely tacked to starboard to cover us and pulled out a healthy lead.

After tacking to starboard, *Steffani* caught up with a slower non-racing sloop that, much to our dismay, quite unknowingly placed herself between *Volaré* and *Steffani*, feeding us bad air. All the racers sensed that it was a very close race and did their utmost to gain speed and distance.

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*Volaré* crossed the finish line almost 3 minutes ahead of *Steffani*, who in turn was 5 minutes in front of *Gemini*. *White Eagle* followed valiantly 4 minutes after *Gemini* with *Calary* crossing the line less than 2 minutes later.

After the PHRF handicap was calculated, the first three boats finished within 41 seconds of each other, with *Gemini* finishing second, only 13 seconds ahead of *Volaré*! Not only were the leaders close, but all the boats finished within 10 minutes of each other! That's what I call close racing.

By racing our boats we are not only learning what to do, but, frustrating as it may be, even more so what NOT to do. This race reminded me of the American philosopher Henry David Thoreau's astute observation made over 150 years ago: "He is the best sailor who can steer within the fewest points of the wind, and exact a motive power out of the greatest obstacles."

Please come out and join us in this timeless royal adventure as we finish the 2004 season with 2 more races on 16 October and 13 November.

Fair wind,  
Steffen Meland  
Skipper of *Steffani*



Photo  
by

Book Review From the October Ensign

**The Lo-Tech Navigator**  
by Tony Crowley

In an age when Global Positioning Systems, fluxgate compasses, radar and sonar depth sounders can interface with laptop computers, Tony Crowley's *The Lo-Tech Navigator* is a refreshing return to the basics. Without oversimplifying, this book explains the principles behind how navigational instruments work.

Readers learn how to construct equipment as simple as a compass using a dish of water and a tin can lid, or as complex as a working octant. The book explains sun navigation and the tools used to practice it. Would you believe an empty audiocassette case can function as your sextant or that you can use your fingers to determine the exact points of a compass?

Also included are interesting stories and quizzes that test your knowledge of boating, sailing and navigation.

Filled with practical knowledge and ingenuity, *The Lo-Tech Navigator* is a great book to have in your ship's library.

*Review written by P/C David Osmolski, AP, Charlotte (NC) Squadron*

*The Lo-Tech Navigator* is published by Sheridan House, 2004. Softcover, 148 pages. \$17.95 (Available for \$12.57 on amazon.com - ed.)



## MEETING VS. CROSSING:

### Not Always What It Seems

By Jim Austin

Although the Rules for meeting and crossing situations are straightforward, collisions do not necessarily result from a misunderstanding of the individual Rules themselves, but often from the decision as to which applies in a given situation. Such a situation took place as one vessel made for a channel entrance from sea while another vessel, downbound with the channel, approached the sea buoy. Inland Rules applied.

Vessel A was proceeding downbound in midchannel on course 120 degrees T, speed 8.5 knots. Intending to cut the corner at the outer marker, the vessel later came slightly to port to 118 degrees T.

At about that time it became aware of vessel B some 35 degrees off the starboard bow at approximately 4 miles, showing mastheads and red sidelight. Vessel A assumed vessel B was making up to the channel and that upon entering a meeting situation would exist.

Having taken a pilot aboard, vessel B was increasing to full speed and making for the channel entrance on 320 degrees T with the eventual intention of coming left and squaring away on channel course 300 degrees T.

As vessel A continued to proceed down channel, and in anticipation of its desire to bear northeast after exiting, it finally sounded two short whistle blasts, requesting a starboard-to-starboard passing. Coming left to square up in the channel, B replied with two short, and both vessels applied hard left rudder to effect the agreed-upon passing. It was too late. One minute later, B's starboard bow struck A's starboard quarter. At a subsequent hearing by the Coast Guard ex-

aminer, the pilot of vessel A was found guilty of the charge of misconduct, as supported by the following specifications to the charge (These are important in that they illuminate the thinking supporting the decision):

- A) Failure to take timely action to avoid vessel B
- B) Navigating the vessel across the head of B
- C) Failure to slacken speed, stop or reverse
- D) Failure to take compass bearing of B
- E) Navigating across the channel (right to left)

On appeal, the first point considered was that of "meeting" versus "crossing" and its interpretation in this particular situation. Vessel A argued that it should be considered the former, since B's "obviously intended course" would be up the channel, at which time they would pass on nearly parallel lines. The hearing officer agreed that this argument could apply to two vessels navigating within a channel that may have temporarily crossing directions due to bends, etc., but that it failed to apply in this case because vessel B was not yet in the channel. One citation was noted in which it was held that, should one approaching vessel be outside the channel and on a course that cuts across (its extension) and another within the channel, it's a crossing situation.

"It has been held that there is a risk of collision and the crossing rules do apply if the vessels are approaching in crossing positions even though one vessel may intend to swing into the same channel which the other is traversing so that their intended courses would not, in the end, actually intersect." (The Kingston [D.C.N.Y. 1909] 173 Fed.992).

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One additional point made during the appeal was that, as the approach continued, only B's red sidelight was observed, and it was only seconds before the collision that its green showed as it was coming hard to port.

With the question of meeting versus crossing resolved in favor of the latter, other aspects surfaced. As the burdened (give-way) vessel, A was obligated not only to keep out of the way of B but also to avoid passing ahead. In defense, A cited B's reply of two short, acknowledging and agreeing to the passing proposal. The appeal officer responded that "the two short were given so late in the approach that there was insufficient time for maneuver."

It might be wondered if B's assent to the proposal makes it vulnerable to criticism, but that was effectively answered by the appeal officer that "a reply in itself means nothing more than an assent to this course at the risk of the vessel proposing it. Such a reply does not, in and of itself, change or modify the statutory obligation of the former (A in this case) to keep out of the way as before, nor does it guarantee the success of the means she has adopted to do so." And finally, it was held that "the burdened vessel has no right to give the other a signal of two whistles unless she can cross the privileged vessel's bow without requiring the latter to change her course and speed."

So what comes of all this?

A) A vessel outside a channel on an otherwise crossing aspect to one within a channel is considered to be crossing - any assumption as to what it may or may not do once at the mouth is not a factor. In a sense, this should reduce confusion, since it re-

moves the need to predict another vessel's future maneuver and to act upon that guess.

B) An assent to a proposal to depart from the Rules does not relieve the burdened (give-way) vessel of the responsibility to avoid the privileged (stand-on) vessel; therefore, the initiation of such a passing does not imply an expectation that the privileged (stand-on) vessel will maneuver in order to complete the passing safely. Translation: Unless the proposing vessel can accomplish the passing safely by its own maneuver, don't propose it!

C) As for bearings, eyeballs are fine, but the compass is more accurate and holds up better in court.

- Jim Austin  
jaustin793@aol.com

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### District 13 Calendar

#### November

02 HQ800 to DEO/ED27 to HQ  
10 D/13 Bridge  
13 Sail Race #7 ARH  
15 Merit Marks to Area Monitor  
17 D/13 Council CBYC (WEDNESDAY)  
25 Thanksgiving

#### December

08 Hanukkah  
08 D/13 Bridge (no Dec. Council mtg.)  
18-19 Holiday Lights Cruise, Hunt. Harb.  
VHO  
25 Christmas

#### January 2005

05-09 Annual Meeting, Orlando  
12 D/13 Bridge  
22 Alamitos COW  
27 D/13 Council CBYC

#### February

05 CDO COW  
05 VEN COW  
09 D/13 Bridge  
14 D/13 Council, CBYC  
17 VHO COW