



THE

BILGEWATER

UTICA SAIL & POWER SQUADRON, INC

Sail and Power Boating - America's Boating Club®

A Unit of United States Power Squadrons

Utica, New York

<http://www.uticainfo.org>

February, 2009

District 6

BOB SKALWOLD MY OLDEST FRIEND

By P/C David Kobernuss, SN

P/C Bob Skalwold, SN was my oldest friend. I mean that in both the contexts: He was older than anyone else that I know and he was my good friend longer than anyone except my wife Betty. And yes, I did pronounce his name correctly. Too many people in the Rome area have called him Skawald. This is a Norwegian name. There is an "l" in the first syllable and the "w" is pronounced like a "v". I'm sorry to be a nag but it has rankled me for years to hear my good friend's name pronounced incorrectly.

I don't remember when or how I first met Bob. I do know that it was soon after I moved to Rome. We were both what I call "between wives" during those times. I think that it was at some sort of affair that the One Parent Family Council had.

By "Affair" I mean a party, a dance, or some other non-clandestine event! We quickly discovered that we each had a deep love of sailing. He had "Nordskip", his 26 foot Pearson Aerial that would sleep four, and I had my 14' Ray Green Rascal, a small open day-sailor.

Bob introduced me to the Power Squadron, and ever the good guy that he was, he sucked me into doing the dinner arrangements for a district rendezvous at Bonnie Castle on the St. Lawrence River. That was in 1972, I believe. There I was with my trailerable tiny boat alongside all the "big" boats. Bob was a mentor and a buffer for me to withstand the jibes of the older and wiser members of the group.

One year Betty and I chartered a 35' sloop "Seascope" to make a sailing trip along the New England coast. We were supposed to make a "shake-down" sail from Marblehead Massachusetts through the Cape Cod Canal. We asked Bob and Phyllis to come along as crew since they were more experienced sailors than we then were. That first night at the dock of the Corinthian Yacht Club was a night to remember. The waves were coming in from the bay and the boat was slamming back and forth from the bow to the stern, being held by the mooring lines. Betty and I were in the V-berth, and Bob and Phyllis were in the main cabin. Betty still remarks that no one got much sleep since Bob would pop out of the companionway to check the lines, and about 5 minutes later I would do the same out of the forward hatch. This lasted most of the night!! When we went to hoist the sails the next morning I had never seen such a tall mast nor such a big sail, and was Cape Cod bay a big body of water for the relative novice that I was. Bob again was the mentor in that he guided me through the hoisting and tending of this, to me, monstrous sail.



Continued - Bob Skalwold page 3

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COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

by Cdr George Peckingham, AP



Hi, Folks:

Sad to say P/Cdr. Robert N. Skawold, SN passed over the bar this month. Our heartfelt condolences are extended to his wonderful wife Phyllis and his extended family. Bob had been an active member since 29 May 1967 that's 43 years. He earned 30 merit marks during that time and was elected Squadron Commander in 1974 and served again in 1986. P/Cdr. David N. Koberness, SN wrote the heartwarming tribute to their long friendship, presented it at the memorial service for Bob and has kindly allowed us to print it in this **BILGEWATER**. Thank you Dave.

The Founders day Party at the Verona VFW Post 6811 was held on Friday 13 February at 1730. We had great fun.

We are still planning to hold our Change of Watch on March 22 although the venue will be changed to Dubbles Inn in Vernon. Check next month's **BILGEWATER** for verification.

The District 6 Council is this month at the Geneva Ramada Inn Lakefront on 27 and 28 February 2009. I expect to attend, as Boat Operator Certification and Seminar on Instructor Recertification will be presented. If there is any interest in attending please contact me so I can make arrangements.

On a personal note my neighbor and I have started a small canoe for his son. If you would like to see how it's done give me a call.

Pray for an early Spring; Winter has already gone on too long.

Bob Skalwold from page 1

In another year, 1976, Bob, Phyllis and Elise joined me and my sons David Jr., and Richard, for a sailing trip on Tyhee, a 1929 wooden schooner, on Penobscot Bay in Maine. Betty couldn't join us, because she had used up all of her vacation time, and was preparing for our Fall wedding. That was a beautiful boat. She was 54' long from the tip of the bowsprit to the end of the main boom overhang. She was so heavy that she would coast for a couple hundred feet after the engine was turned off. She had very little head room below decks, but the sails were amazing: a main, a foresail, a flying jib, a "club-footed" jib, a staysail, a topsail, and a fisherman. Wow, what a picture!

We left Camden, where we picked her up and sailed out. No sooner did we get in the open water than I jibed the boat. The foresail boom swung around and caught Bob across his nose, right at eye level. There he was flat on the deck, bleeding from the blow. Phyllis quickly fashioned a "butterfly" bandage to stem the flow of blood, and Bob, ever the intrepid sailor, said, "Sail on!" We did just that. We had fresh mussels that we harvested from the shore for one lunch and two lobster meals from the lobsters that a lobsterman gave us after we had turned this massive schooner around to ask to buy some (he was so amazed at our sailing prowess that he would not accept any money from us). Actually Bob was the master-mind of that maneuver. Two of the other highlights of the trip were a "dinghy overboard" drill when the trailing dinghy got loose, and a few days later swimming in the 60 degree waters of Penobscot Bay. Phyllis led the swimming and my son David chimed in noisily with shouts of "Kowabunga" as he jumped from the ratlines.

One year Bob and Phyllis went west for the summer, and Bob asked if I would "baby-sit" Nordskip while they were gone. Boy, would I ever! I think it took me all of two seconds to accept his offer. Betty and I had a ball sailing the St. Lawrence for the summer, and did we ever learn how to sail. Nordskip is just the right size to learn on. It is big enough to feel safe and comfortable, yet small enough so that one person can handle her easily. Needless to say, we had a terrific summer of sailing, especially since all of the home dockage fees had already been paid.

I was Bob's crew for Niddly races until 1977 when I bought Bellatrix, my 30' ketch. In those trips I learned more about sailing from this old Viking than one could ever learn from study. For instance he was absolute about the "right" way to coil a halyard and hang it so that when you went to use it next time all you had to do was lift it up and drop it on the deck. If you did it his way it never tangled. And you better do it "his way" on his boat.

After one Niddly on my boat we decided to sail from Clayton to Kingston on Sunday. Here again Bob displayed the accuracy and diligence that made him what he was. He insisted on plotting the course through "40 acres" all the way, even though we could see where we were all the time. He always felt that a good charting exercise was necessary to keep one in the habit of due diligence so that every trip could be made safely.

In 2003 I had a knee replacement. One Sunday soon after, while I was still on crutches, Bob called and took me out for a breakfast trip to a small hide-away snowmobilers breakfast joint up route 26 just South of Constableville. He was a caring and thoughtful guy.

Bob never tired of talking about his days in the roundhouse working on the large steam locomotives. He learned the trade of mechanical engineer truly from the ground up in his co-op studies at Georgia Tech. He liked to call it "Georgia Tech of Schoonology". He also was proud of his work at RADC. He did the mechanical design for the very tall radio tower north of the Buffalo Head restaurant in Forestport. He had calculated that it was tall enough that if you were at its top you would be able to see the top of the Empire State Building over the intervening curvature of the earth. Leave it to Bob to calculate something like that!!

I would be remiss if I didn't mention his design of the air-conditioning system at the NORAD installation out west. Also, if you are flying and land in an airport that has a white upside-down ice cream cone shaped installation, that is a radar enclosure that Bob designed. They are designed to protect the radar from all weather-related problems, and they are located all over the world.

I could go on about more, but that is enough. I felt that I needed to impart a bit to you all on how much one man can affect another. I will miss him.

SEO REPORT

By Lt/C Gerry Fry, JN



Even though we are experiencing a few warm days this second week of February, we are still a long way from getting out on the water in our boats. Now is the time to spend a few hours on your computer looking up interesting tidbits about boating or boater education. The Feb. issue of The Erie Wanderer contains an article by Commander David Ashley, AP of the Syracuse Sail and Power Squadron. I am using excerpts from David's article here because it is so informative for looking up educational information on our national website, www.usps.org.

David leads off with a description of the USPS Educational Department newsletter, Currents. This newsletter is published twice yearly and based on news released at national meetings. You can download a PDF file of current and past issues of Currents from the Educational Department web page at <http://www.usps.org/national/eddept/misc/currents.htm>. Although this newsletter is intended primarily for district and squadron education officers, all members can enjoy and learn valuable information from the articles. The last issue of Currents is Sept. 2008. It contains an article highlighting the 3rd. edition of America's Boating Course that will be our basic public boating course. While studying the list of topics in this new course, you may want to take a basic course again as a refresher. Perhaps you may want to help teach the course as a way to upgrade your own knowledge. Our national organization, the US Coast Guard and the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators have worked together to bring the latest thinking and policies and laws into this course.

Currents also contains articles about the new Weather course, the latest seminars available, and the new mini-courses that have been developed for members of USPS. One of the mini-courses may be especially important for you and your spouse. It is called "Partner in Command" to stress its' importance for someone who is regularly aboard but is not the primary boat operator and yet may be called upon to take over for the skipper in an emergency. Please let me know if you are interested in this mini-course or any of the new seminars.

You can also go to the Educational Department Home Page at <http://www.usps.org/national/eddept> to see the latest information on course offerings, updates, links, and news regarding USPS and our educational mission. Several companies discount their products to USPS members including McGraw Hill publishing. They have some very interesting nautical titles at a 30% discount. Free nautical charts can also be found through this web page.

When you finish gleaning the goodies from the national webpage, be sure to look at our Utica web page located at <http://www.usps.org/localusps/utica>. Captain Rick has done a great job in upgrading and maintaining our web page to provide you with a quick lookup of important dates and other data.

I hope you are finding a lot of happy time to enjoy your favorite hobbies this winter and learning how to enjoy them more next boating season.

THE CHANGE OF WATCH

The Utica Sail and Power Squadron would like to invite you to the annual Change of Watch. In our ever changing times, it is once again time to transfer the leadership of this fine organization to the new Officers of the Bridge. This event is our most formal affair full of protocol tradition and fanfare. It is know as the Change Of Watch. Hereafter referred to as C.O.W.

The C.O.W. will take place in Vernon, NY on 22 March 2009 at Dibble's Inn located at 5311 E Seneca St. (Route 5). PH 829-3022. Time to be there is 1200 HR.

The cost will be \$ 20.00. You truly can have a C.O.W. this day but due to our current economic conditions, you must pay for the milk!

The installation of officers will take place immediately following the meal.

Hope to see you there.

UTICA SAIL AND POWER SQUADRON			
PLANNED ACTIVITIES LIST			
FOR 2009			
February			
4 February	Squadron Meeting	1930	Sears Oil Co. – Rome
5 February	JN Course Start	1900	Whitesboro High School
13 February	Founders Day	1730	Verona VFW
March			
4 March	Squadron Meeting	1930	Sears Oil Co. – Rome
22 March	COW	1200	The Beeches Rome
April			
1 April	Squadron Meeting	1930	Sears Oil Co. – Rome
May			
6 May	Squadron Meeting	1930	Sears Oil Co. – Rome
29 May	Launch Party	1700	Lock 20 - Marcy
30 May	Boating Course	1200	Lock 20 – Marcy
June			
3 June	Squadron Meeting	1930	Sears Oil Co. – Rome
September			
2 September	Squadron Meeting	1930	Sears Oil Co. – Rome
October			
7 October	Squadron Meeting	1930	Sears Oil Co. – Rome
November			
4 November	Squadron Meeting	1930	Sears Oil Co. – Rome
December			
2 December	Squadron Meeting	1930	Sears Oil Co. – Rome



CHECKING THE BILGE

by P/C Dean A. Woodard , P



Dan was a single guy living at home with his father and working in the family business. When he found out he was going to inherit a fortune when his sickly father died, he decided he needed a wife with which to share his good fortune.

One evening at an investment meeting, he spotted the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. Her natural beauty took his breath away.

"I might look like an ordinary man," he said to her, "but in just a few years, my father will die, and I'll inherit \$65 million."

Impressed, the woman obtained his business card, and three days later, she became his stepmother.

Women are much better at financial planning than men.



I HEARD IT THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE

I kid you not..
New Wine for Seniors

California vintners in the Napa Valley area, which primarily produce Pinot Blanc, Pinot Noir and Pinot Grigio wines, have developed a new hybrid grape that acts as an anti-diuretic.

It is expected to reduce the number of trips older people have to make to the bathroom during the night.

The new wine will be marketed as

PINO MORE



AIRLINE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Overheard on an American Airlines flight into Amarillo , Texas on a particularly windy and bumpy day: During the final approach, the Captain was really having to fight it. After an extremely hard landing, the Flight Attendant said, 'Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to Amarillo . Please remain in your seats with your seat belts fastened while the Captain taxis what's left of our airplane to the gate!'

After a real crusher of a landing in Phoenix , the attendant came on with, 'Ladies and Gentlemen, please remain in your seats until Capt. Crash and the crew have brought the aircraft to a screeching halt against the gate. And, once the tire smoke has cleared and the warning bells are silenced, we'll open the door and you can pick your way through the wreckage to the terminal.'

A plane was taking off from Kennedy Airport . After it reached a comfortable cruising altitude, the captain made an announcement over the intercom, 'Ladies and gentlemen, this is your captain speaking. Welcome to Flight Number 293, non-stop from New York to Los Angeles . The weather ahead is good and, therefore, we should have a smooth and uneventful flight. Now sit back and relax... OH, MY GOD!' Silence followed, and after a few minutes, the captain came back on the intercom and said, 'Ladies and Gentlemen, I am so sorry if I scared you earlier. While I was talking to you, the flight attendant accidentally spilled a cup of hot coffee in my lap. You should see the front of my pants!' A passenger in Coach yelled, 'That's nothing. You should see the back of mine!'

**Be Sure to read Change of Watch
on page 5**

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WHAT SHOULD WE KNOW?

Do you know of a member who is hospitalized, in need of a little cheering up from their friends, or celebrating a special occasion such as the birth of a child or grandchild, birthday, wedding, promotion, etc? Do you want to share an outstanding recipe with our members? Then fill in the information below and send to **George Silverman at 2010 Holly St., Rome, NY 13440 or e-mail to gsilverm@twcny.rr.com Tel 315-336-5557**

INFORMATION TO INCLUDE :

Submitted By: _____

Name for Submission: _____

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