Force 12

AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB®

For Boaters, By Boaters™

St. Petersburg

Safe, Fun, Boating Starts Here!

November/December 2025 *Volume 81* *Issue 5*

Thanksgiving Food Drive

November Dinner Meeting

Wednesday November 12

St Pete Yacht Club

Requested Food Items:

- **Peanut Butter (smooth)**
- **Pasta Sauce (red or alfredo)**
- **Mayonnaise**
- **Canned Tuna**
- **Rice**
- **Fruit Cups**
- **Canned Chicken**
- **Canned Vegetables**
- **Bottled Water (~12 oz each)**
- **Penne Pasta**
- **Grape Jelly**
- **Napkins**

Please, no fresh food items

All Donations will go to St. Pete Vineyard

Social at 5:30, Dinner 6:00, Meeting/Speaker 7:00

Speaker Jeff Brown will give a talk about the variety and activities of sharks in waters of the Tampa Bay area

Squadron Information

Commander:
Cdr Louis E. McBride, P
Commander@boating-stpete.org

Executive Officer: Open
Administrative Officer: Open

Education Officer:
Lt/C Robbie Paul, AP
SEO@boating-stpete.org

Treasurer:
Lt/C Kathryn A. Considine, JN
Treasurer@boating-stpete.org

Secretary:
Lt/C W. Douglas Townes, SN
Secretary@boating-stpete.org

Past Commander: *
P/C Fred Hauck, JN

Members at Large: *
Lt Glenn T. Dobos, AP
Lt Sue Paul, S
Lt Jeff Eckhart, AP

Please see the Roster for
contact information or
email: force12@boating-stpete.org

Chaplain's Corner

* *Let there be peace in your heart.*
* *Be satisfied that you are exactly where you are meant to be.*
* *Pass on the love in your heart to someone in need.*
* *It's great to know that you have the freedom to sing, dance, play, love and can enjoy a beautiful sunrise and a glorious sunset.*
* *This season of Thanksgiving, take time to count your blessing and thank the brave heroes who sacrificed so much keep our land free.*

May you enjoy a Happy Hanukkah
a very Merry Christmas and
Healthy, Happy 2026!

Believe It or Not

◊ Americans eat more than 46 million turkeys on Thanksgiving Day each year

◊ Nobody cares if you can't dance well, just get up and dance - be free for a short time.

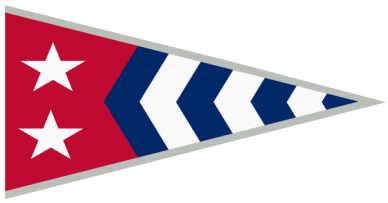
◊ It's estimated that 50 million pumpkin pies are consumed on Thanksgiving Day alone

◊ Eggnog - sugar, milk, eggs and 10,000 calories.

◊ 1902 Christmas ornament—animal cracker box with a string to hang on the tree.

Show that you are a proud member of the Squadron

Check out the ship's store for items with the squadron logo:
license plates (for the front of your vehicle), burgees to fly on your boat , a variety of hats or visors, messenger bags, large bags (for transporting your supplies to or from your boat), and shirts.
We can even have the squadron logo added to your favorite shirt.



The items in the Ship's Store are displayed at each General Meeting.

We're also looking for a volunteer to take over the Ship Store.

It's a great way to get to know fellow members and collect a merit mark.

Contact Casey Considine to discuss

'Distinctive Communicator' is an award for publications that meet or exceed USPS defined criteria.

Our Force 12 has been recognized for this award.

Help Wanted/Needed

Would you like to review, catch and correct grammar, punctuation, mistakes, take pictures at meetings, write articles?

Contact Sandy Krupa at tskru@outlook.com

Commander
Cdr Louis McBride, P

The past few months have been remarkable, brimming with numerous activities that kept everyone engaged. I would like to extend my gratitude to the delegates who participated in the 2025 National Governing Board and District 22 Fall Conference, which was their inaugural one-day conference!

To those who contributed to the local troop that participated in the recent squadron General Meeting held in October, the troop expressed their sincere gratitude for the support we provided to them.

It's time for Squadron nominations! This is a great opportunity to get involved by sharing your skills, and help shape the future of our squadron. If you're interested in any of the open positions, please reach out to P/C Al Lima or P/C Fred Hauck. Not ready to take on a larger role? No problem, your time and talents are still greatly valued, and there are many ways you can contribute. Every bit of participation makes a difference by stepping up, getting involved, and being a part of what makes our squadron strong.

Since it's almost the end of the year, merit mark submissions are currently taking place. If you believe you have contributed service to the squadron, or if you are part of a committee, please ensure that you inform Sue Tokarz so that she can record your hours in order to receive your well earned merit mark!

With so much still ahead, I encourage you to stay engaged, keep an eye on upcoming events and attend, or lend a hand with ongoing activities. We can accomplish a lot together and it's important to recognize that many of you have already contributed so much this year.

I look forward to celebrating all that we've achieved at our Annual Meeting on December 11 at Boca Ciega Yacht Club. This is a very important meeting that all members should attend. We will recap the 2025 year, discuss and vote on our 2026 budget and elect our 2026 officers. We'll also start talks on our 2026 squadron events and we do need your input and involvement. Remember, this is your club! We will have an ugly Christmas sweater competition too! Please bring a heavy hors d'oeuvre to share. As is custom, the Commander will be providing the libations!

Before I close this report, I'd like to leave you with a story that was shared with me:

"A young child walks along a beach where hundreds of starfish wash on shore doomed to dry out and die. This child walks along and every time he sees one, he picks one up and throws it back into the ocean giving it another chance at life. He could not get to all of them, but every morning this child, on his way to wherever he's going, picks up another starfish and tosses it back in the ocean. He does this every day. Day by day, walking along the beach tossing another starfish back. One day an old man, who's been seeing him do this comes up to the child and asks "why are you doing this?" Hundreds and hundreds of starfish wash up on the shore every day and you can never save all of them, why even bother, you're not making a difference?"
The child looked at the man, looked down at a starfish at his feet, picked up that starfish and tossed it back in the ocean and said "it mattered to that starfish.""

Wishing you a wonderful Thanksgiving filled with love and happiness

May your Christmas be filled with warmth, love, and cherished moments with those who matter most to you.

America's Boating Club
St Petersburg

2025 Annual Meeting & Holiday Party

Thursday December 11, 2025

Boca Ciega Yacht Club
4600 Tifton Drive S, Gulfport

Calling ***all*** *members to attend!*

Sweater Contest !

Social Hour - 6:00pm

Share your favorite heavy hors d'oeuvre while enjoying

the 'libations' provided by the Commander

Annual Meeting - 7:00pm

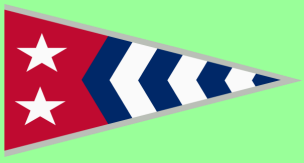
Hear a recap of the 2025 Watch Year Officer Reports

Discuss and vote on the 2026 Budget

Election of the 2026 Squadron Officers

Discuss 2026 Boating Events

Remember, this is your club - your participation and support is important



Executive Department

Conducting **Vessel Safety Checks** assists in ensuring safety while on the water.
Would you be interested in volunteering for our vessel safety check program?
Reach out to Jeff Eckhart as we need more vessel inspectors for the VSC program!

We will be doing the **Beach Clean-up** November 15. Location-Castle Hotel, 401 Gulf Way, St Pete Beach. Possible breakfast at Skyway Jacks — watch for an email to confirm where we will meet for breakfast.

The youth sailing Regatta, **Cats Point Regatta** will be held November 8 at Boca Ciega Yacht Club.

"Cat's Point" is annually commissioned as a national event for Venture and Sea Scouts. The two groups are scored separately and awarded separately. SS Ship #912 and Boca Ciega SS Ship 915 jointly hold and staff the event. The competition is broken into Land events and Water events.

Your help would be appreciated as a 'day of service' from 8am to 4pm, lunch included.

It is an rewarding opportunity to see the Scouts compete while helping with the events that are ongoing for the youth in attendance.

'There are 10 to 15 land games to fill time between time on the water. Each land game tests the nautical knowledge of the scouts. The events are new each year and demand that the teams compete demonstrating skills from the rank requirements of the scout manual on a round robin basis. they are scored by time used to complete the task and the equal participation if each crew member.'

Expired flares and fire extinguishers are needed for some events!

Please contact Louis McBride to donate your expired devices safely or if you are interested in volunteering.

Administrative Department

8 November – Day of Service Cats Point Regatta - 8:00am - 4:00pm
Boca Ciega Yacht Club - free lunch included

11 November - Lunch Bunch -11:30am
Thai-Am Restaurant, 6040 4th Street N, St Pete

12 November – General Meeting at SPYC - Social 5:30pm, Dinner 6:00pm, Meeting/Program 7:00pm
Speaker will be Jeff Brown on sharks in the Bay area

15 November - Beach Cleanup - Breakfast 8:00am - Cleanup 9:00am
Meetup next to Castle Hotel, 401 Gulf Way, Pass-a-Grille Beach - Breakfast location TBD

11 December – Annual Meeting at Boca Ciega Yacht Club - Social 6:00pm, Meeting 7:00pm
Yacht Club, 4600 Tifton Drive S, Gulfport

18 December - Lunch Bunch - 11:30am
Paisano's Pizza n' Pasta, 6000 4th Street N, St Pete, serving pizzas in the bay area since 1974.

Education Officer
Lt/C Robbie Paul, AP

We achieved mixed results with our Facebook advertising campaign. We were extremely successful with the September Boating Safety Course. We had 19 students register, with 13 attending and passing the exam! We are "boosting" the Facebook post for future courses. This simply means we are paying Facebook to promote the course to others on the platform that have an interest in boating and sailing. This goes well beyond our squadron and beyond America's Boating Club. As of this writing, we have 10 students registered for the October class.

With other courses and seminars we have not been as successful in attracting new students. We even reduced the price of seminars. Yes, this is disappointing. I believe the key is promoting the benefit to the student versus the topics of the course. For example, we pushed the benefit of receiving the FL Boating Safety ID card and possible insurance discounts by taking the boating safety course. We need to do a better job of promoting the benefits of the other courses and seminars.

Another benefit of taking an in-person course with our squadron is having awesome instructors guide them. We need to make our instructor a cornerstone of our promotions. One suggestion I received was to create short videos of each of our instructors focusing on their skill and experience in boating and/or sailing. Their personal anecdotes from decades of boating and sailing is what brings the classroom experience to life. These short videos could be posted on Facebook along with the courses. More to come as we figure out the best way to promote our courses and seminars on Facebook and other platforms.

Below find the upcoming courses for the rest of this year:

Start	Day		# Weeks	End	Instructor	Cost w/ Book	Sharing
Boating Safety Course							
Boating Safety Course – 4	25-Oct	SAT	1 Day	25-Oct	Bob Cox	$70.00	$35.00
Advanced Courses							
Boat Handling (S)	6 Nov	THUR	5	11 Dec	Bob Zewski	$75.00	$35.00

The following Advanced Courses will be scheduled as requested by students:

Marine Navigation (P) - Advance Marine Navigation (P) - Offshore Navigation (JN) - Celestial Navigation (N)

If you don't see either a course or seminar that you are interested in, please send me an email at robbie.paul@me.com.

I'm also very interested in hearing suggestions for better ways to promote our classes.

As a reminder, Americas Boating Channel (https://americasboatingchannel.com) hosts a broad selection of videos on boating. The America's Boating Club app is also an excellent resource for all things boating. Best of all, it's free to download from the App Store! This phone app contains several educational and safety resources that can be at your fingertips for easy reference and enhance your boating experience.

Remember safe boating and education are the hallmarks of having fun on the water; we are here to serve you and the local boating community.

Safety Article

By Lt Joe Muczynski, Safety Officer

Boaters Freedom Decal

The Boater Freedom Act (Senate Bill 1388, effective July 1, 2025) is a law that shifts Florida's approach toward boating regulation by placing more constraints on when law enforcement can stop vessels and by protecting certain freedoms for boaters, especially regarding safety inspections and fuel type.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation (FWC) Commission has been directed to create a safety inspection decal program to be effective for one to five years in all Florida counties. The FWC decision is currently pending (expected 2025) and currently referred to as a five year decal.

The Boaters Freedom Decal serves as proof that safety compliance has been declared by the owner — it **modifies** safety inspection stops for many enforcement purposes to now require probable cause, similar to fourth amendment rights. Violations that are clear to an officer will not prevent a vessel from being stopped and can result in further investigation.

Many more details are available at the FWC website:

https://myfwc.com/boating/regulations/freedom-boater-faqs

Per FWC, the free decal is to be placed within 6 inches of the registration decal, replacing the FWC vessel safety inspection decal. It is provided by mail after owner signature (during vessel registration/ renewal) attesting to two statements:

"I, the undersigned, hereby affirm and attest that the vessel described above is equipped with all safety equipment required by the United States Coast Guard and applicable federal regulations for legal operation on state and federal waters."

"I understand that it is my legal responsibility as the owner and/or operator of this vessel to ensure compliance with all applicable maritime safety laws and regulations."

An ABC Vessel Safety Check is a means to get a hands-on review of the vessel from a trained power squadron volunteer. You can prepare for the inspection by reviewing the FWC equipment website:

https://myfwc.com/boating/safety-education/equipment/

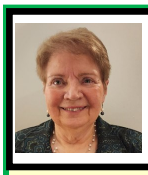
ABC Boaters Safety Courses are a means to better understand maritime safety laws/regulations and receive a Boater Safety Education ID Card.

Thomas E Dawson, a recognized maritime safety expert, has more to say about safety in his local water seminar, books and recent article:

https://issuu.com/theensign/docs/theensignfall2025/s/117259253

Calendar of Events

Time	Event	Location	Contact
November			
5	6:30pm	EXCOM Meeting	St. Pete Yacht Club	Cdr Louis McBride
6	7:00pm	Boat Handling (S)	St Pete Sail Center	P/Lt/C Bob Zewski
8	8:00am	Cats Point Regatta	Boca Ciega Yacht Club	Cdr Louis McBride
11	**Veteran's Day - *Thank You to all our Veterans!***		
11	11:30am	Lunch Bunch	Thai-Am Restaurant	Lt Becky McBride
12	5:30pm	General Meeting	St Pete Yacht Club	Cdr Louis McBride
15	9:00am	Beach Cleanup	Pass-a-Grille	Cdr Louis McBride
27	***May you have a Blessed Thanksgiving!***		
December			
3	6:30pm	EXCOM Meeting	St. Pete Yacht Club	Cdr Louis McBride
11	***6:00pm***	***Annual Meeting***	***Boca Ciega Yacht Club***	***Cdr Louis McBride***
18	11:30am	Lunch Bunch	Paisano's Pizza	Lt Becky McBride
25	***We wish you a Merry Christmas!***		



Treasurer
Lt/C Kathryn Considine, JN

Thank You!

2025 Donations through September: $826.01

Donations are from various sources, i.e.: memorials for members who have passed, from officers to offset expenses, 50/50 at Meetings, general donations, and Life Members in lieu of dues. The funds are used to help offset costs of the printing and distribution of the Force 12 and electronic communication fees.

Full Service Boatyard

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Tampa Bay's Finest Boatyard Since 1947
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HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!

November

Jesse Marsano - 1
Jeff Eckhart, Jim Greenhalgh and Len Stevens - 6
Magnolia Bates - 11 Zoran Stanisic and Donna Torche - 13
William Graveley - 15 Don Murray - 19 Margaret Baulig - 20
Sally Morse and Rosario Reyes - 30

December

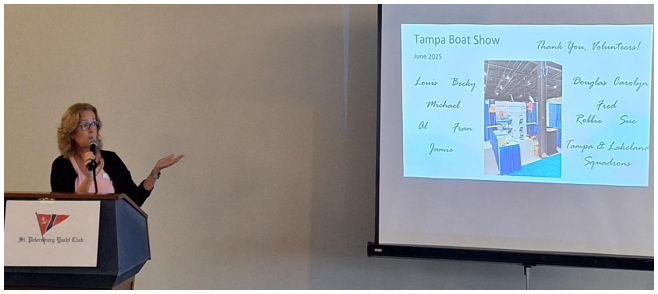
Kevin Hopper - 10 Ken St Jean - 13 Bruce Rodgers - 16
Lauren Epps and Gene Sicard - 19
Christine Karalexis - 22 Douglas Townes - 24
Fred Hauck - 28 Fred Neckers - 31

September Meeting

Lt/C Robbie Paul gave an informative Report on how FaceBook Advertising Is being used to promote our Education Courses

AND

Lt Sue Paul
Reported on our Booth at the Tampa Boat Show



October Meeting

Reverend William Graveley, accompanied by several of his scouts, provided an interesting presentation on growing up in the Historic Gas Plant District of St. Petersburg. He focused on his upbringing, challenges, the connectivity of community, the loss of the old district, and his hopes for the future of the new district. His mantra was *The Little Engine that Could*.

St Pete Power Squadron needs you and your help

It's time to prepare the slate of candidates for squadron positions for 2026. The slate will then be presented at the December annual meeting.

I encourage you to "step up" and volunteer for one of the unfilled Bridge Officer or committee positions. Our organization is strictly a volunteer organization.

The positions are:

Executive Officer (currently vacant), Administrative Officer (currently vacant),
Crucial - Squadron Education Officer, Assistant Education Officer (currently vacant),
Assistant Secretary (currently vacant), Member at Large, just to name a few.

The past few years have been led by a small cadre of people who have stepped forward. We need to improve on that. The amount of time required to carry out the duties of most of these positions is minimal and the new ideas and observations you bring will energize and incentivize our squadron. Current squadron officers will help you to get started and assist you when needed.

Please contact myself or Al Lima, to obtain information about a position in which you might be interested in. My email is: fred_hauck@yahoo.com 813-402-2219 and/or Al Lima 813-230-5751

P/C Fred Hauck, chair of Nominations Committee

Save the Date for the

2026 SPRING CONFERENCE

May 1 and 2, 2026 at Courtyard by Marriott Bradenton

100 Riverfront Drive, Bradenton, FL 34205

Friday May 1

ALL Member Workshop/Meetings Squadron Hospitality Room Visits

Saturday May 2

Meet & Greet with Coffee & Pastries Roundtables and Seminars

Lunch with speaker

District Conference and Election of Officers

50/50 Raffle

Change of Watch **- Dinner and Change of Watch Ceremony**

Hotel Info: - - - - **Courtyard by Marriott -*Must book for 2 nights for these rates***

Standard Room - $144.00 Suite - $154.00 per night (plus tax)

Link to make your reservation: Mariott link for Americas Boating Club reservations

AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB

FEBRUARY 2026 CARIBBEAN CRUISE

6 days: 16-22 Feb 2026

Roundtrip from Port Canaveral on the beautiful *SKY PRINCESS*

Itinerary: Nassau, Freeport, Grand Turk

GROUP PRICING FROM $789pp
Inside from $789pp
Balcony from $1139pp
Mini suites from $1409pp

Travel protection & transfers are additional.
OR-take advantage of current promotional pricing at time of booking

A hotel block is already arranged for Sunday night in Cape Canaveral including parking during the cruise

Email dawn@dawnstraveldeals.com or call

(727) 403-0406 to join our group on this beautiful ship!

PRINCESS®

D22 Eastern Caribbean Cruise

7 days: 23-30 May 2026

Roundtrip from Fort Lauderdale on the beautiful *REGAL PRINCESS*

Itinerary: Princess Cays, San Juan, St Thomas

GROUP PRICING FROM $1203pp
Inside from $1203pp
Balcony from $1603pp
Deluxe balcony from $1753pp
Mini suites from $2113pp

Travel protection & transfers are additional.
OR-take advantage of current promotional pricing at time of booking

Email dawn@dawnstraveldeals.com or call

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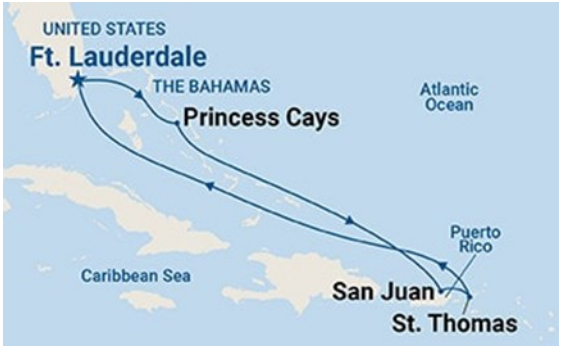

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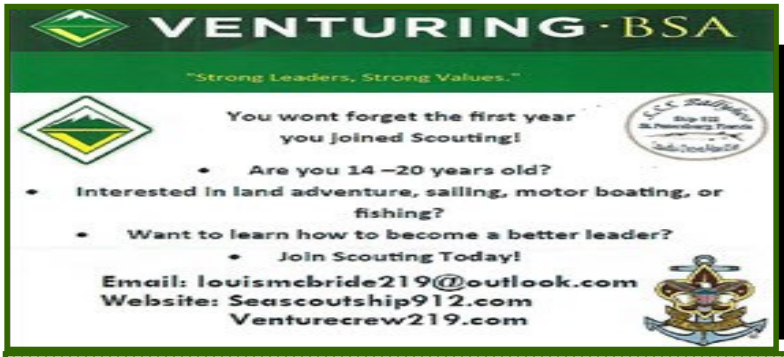

Please support the businesses that have their information in our newsletter
We hope you use the goods and/or services of the businesses listed above, let them know that you saw their card in the *Force 12*.

Copies and previous *Force 12* issues can be found on our website www.boating stpete.org — 'resources'
Distribution by email. A fee is required for a hard copy contact force12@boating stpete.org for details
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