

THE PORTHOLE

December 2020

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The pages of Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons | Escadrilles canadiennes de plaisance
Send your photos to: theporthole@cps-ecp.ca
Cover image: "Bert's Return" by Don Butt





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Paul M. Rellinger, Editor-in-chief, The Port Hole

As we reflect on the first-ever virtual CPS-ECP conference and AGM, we'd be wise to keep in mind the words of American track and field athlete Allyson Felix who told us "Everyone sees the glory moments but they don't see what happens behind the scenes."

While Vision 2020 was, by most accounts, an unqualified success, what our membership should take away is a fuller appreciation of the supreme dedication of those "behind the scenes" who made it all come together so well. Countless virtual meetings and emails and phone conversations, involving national office staff and dedicated volunteers, dominated the CPS-ECP landscape upon the realization that COVID-19 would prevent our gathering in person in Windsor. Yes, there were some minor bumps in the final presentation but, overall, squadron members were very well served.

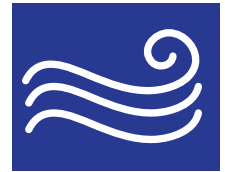
In thanking those who registered, we can point to the numbers as evidence of success: 345 took in the AGM while 128 joined in the fun of the Hospitality Room and the award presentations. The session on membership drew 101. Other session numbers were as follows: education 136, IT 126, marketing and communications 107, and environment 82. And the keynote address by around-the-world navigator Bert terHart captured the attention and admiration of 132, one writing "What an accomplishment! I had tears in my eyes by the time you finished"

While we all hope that COVID's shadow will be well lifted come next fall and we can gather in person in Trois-Rivières, we can rest assured in the comfort of knowing we are members of an organization that faced a huge challenge, rolled up its collective sleeves and got it done. Period.

...

When I was gifted editorship of The Port Hole in fall 2019, my immediate aim was to continue the publication's broad and consistent communica-

wind
Shifts



tion of squadron activities as well as its promotion of boating safety initiatives. After all, if it ain't broke, who am I to fix it?

But knowing that amongst the thousands of CPS-ECP members there are an equal number of compelling stories, I also targeted, as a secondary objective, making myself aware of those stories and giving them their fair share of Port Hole page space. So it is that each issue has included a call for those stories; a petition for your help anchored by my full conviction that best-kept secrets have no place in any organization that strives to not only increase membership but also keep current members engaged.

An excellent case in point is Gina Lee whose volunteer work as chair of the Peterborough Dragon Boat Festival is profiled in this edition. With her festival-organizing colleagues, the past commander of the Peterborough squadron and breast cancer survivor has played, and continues to play, a major role in the raising of close to \$4 million to date for the purchase of cutting-edge breast cancer screening, diagnostic and treatment equipment for the Peterborough Regional Health Centre.

I wholly believe that the sharing of stories such as Gina's is key to our feeling good – very good – about our collective CPS-ECP membership. There's something very comforting in knowing that those who share our passion for educating others on boating safety aren't simply one trick ponies. Rather, they are out there, touching the lives of others in any one of a number of ways, boosting the entrenched good reputation of CPS-ECP in the process.

So, again, I ask for your stories, be they about yourself or a squadron colleague. Email me directly at communication-chair@cps-ecp.org or send to theporthole@cps-ecp.ca Let's fully celebrate who we are, both on and off the water. ■

Shop at our ship store for some boating lessons and offer them as Christmas presents for your loved ones this festive season. Courses are being offered online, so it is safe and fun!
www.cps-ecp.ca/ecommerce/shop/

FASTEN YOUR SEATBELTS

Following is the address made by CPS-ECP Chief Commander Peter Bolton at Vision 2020.

Last year - it seems like a lifetime ago - I predicted a bumpy ride ahead and hoped to be wrong. At that point, the new IT System had not gone live at the conference as we had hoped. It did so a little over a month later.

When we threw the switch, we knew there would be problems and there were. All new software applications have teething troubles and, in spite of extensive testing, ours was no different. Our team of volunteers and Innovexa tested the system and made many recommendations for improvement but, as we all know, we didn't catch everything. We weren't able to make all the improvements needed. That took some time.

We had many reports from members, both to point out errors and to make positive suggestions for improvements. Most comments were helpful and respectful but, as is the case with humanity in general, and the internet in particular, there was a tiny percentage of rude or abusive comments. This was very disheartening.

As time has gone by, many improvements have been made and the system is slowly getting better. When we first contracted Innovexa to create our new IT System we decided to use a modular design. Instead of building a "custom to CPS-ECP system" we opted to use off the shelf software like Woocommerce and Quickbooks. However the software we employed to connect those two components did not work as we intended. It worked partially but was not able to help produce the financial detail that we needed to give to our squadrons and districts. So the

financial picture was sent in the form of spreadsheets to the squadrons but the level of detail was not enough.

In mid January we welcomed Mimma Spagnolo as our new National Executive Director.

Joining CPS-ECP from Accenture, Mimma quickly found her feet with the national office staff and has made a major impact on this organization as a whole in a very short time. She has been implementing fresh ideas and a dynamic approach to the problems we have been experiencing. Mimma does everything at warp speed, including walking her dog.

During the year, National Executive Officer Yves Dauphinais researched software and managed to strike a great deal with Microsoft to supply CPS-ECP with hundreds of licences of one of their most popular business software products, MS365 - a suite of business applications aimed at enabling communications, email, calendar and internet. This has been set up and is working for ExCom, the Board of Directors and District Commanders. We are in the process of implementing it at squadron level.

One of the fair criticisms levelled at this organization is we do not communicate well enough. When the MS365 rollout is complete, we will have a means of communicating much better more quickly and accurately - we just have to use it. One of the plug-ins that can be used with MS365 is an application that uses a spreadsheet style system that will allow us to automatically show the squadrons their financial data on a day-to-day basis. We have been waiting a long time for this.

One of the things that got unfortunately sidelined was our pay Merit Marks. The Merit Mark system that we had hoped to use was not suitable as it was better designed to operate with paid employment than for our needs. We have asked squadrons to keep spreadsheet copies of the hours volunteered by members so that when we do get the Merit Mark system operating it will, hopefully, be a straightforward copy-and-paste to input data.

In the summer, Director, District Commander and IT data guru Rob Anderson was able to strip out from the old WBAS database the names of our members who were due to achieve their Life Membership this year. I wrote to their squadron commanders to confirm that these members had 19 Merit Marks and volunteered twenty hours or more. As a result 25 members were awarded their Life Membership.

These members are the backbone of our organization. They keep the ship running at all levels - squadron, district and even ExCom, so it is great to be able to recognize the value that we place on them and their contribution. Life Member packages have been posted to our new Life Members.



CPS-ECP Chief Commander Peter Bolton

continued on page 36

Merit Mark software will be pursued as soon as we can after the conference.

I have managed to get this far without mentioning the COVID-19 pandemic.

When I imagined a few bumps in the road ahead at the Victoria conference, never in my wildest dreams did I think that we, as a human race (as opposed to just CPS-ECP), would be hit so drastically by a tiny virus. We all know how it has affected ourselves and our families, both locally and as a nation, and it has affected CPS-ECP. We have to take very seriously the warnings about self-isolation and physical distancing; we have to apply the common sense rules given to us by federal and provincial governments who are advised by our medical experts.

As you know, the board has recommended that we do not hold any face-to-face meetings or classes in the foreseeable future. We are not a military organization. We do not issue orders. We recommend. You know also that the board is examining reports from the provinces every month. Even with provincial guidelines for meetings being met, as an organization we are not insured against the costs, physical and legal, of the COVID-19 virus.

We have adapted. National office staff have been working from home using laptop computers and we have been scheduling meetings using TEAMS and Zoom and we are getting quite good at it. Over the last month our staff have been coming into the National Office up to three days a week with physical distancing measures in place to tackle things that can be achieved only in the office like clearing the paperwork backlog.

Over the last few years, our online presence has gone from strength to strength and we are now able to offer Boating 1, 2, 4 and Maritime Radio online. This is our mainstay until we can get back together so I urge you to use it.

We are lucky, and I mean lucky, to have our online presence available. We were pushing in that direction regardless but the fact that we have it means that although things are not normal we are able to continue teaching even if it is on a smaller scale. The timing could not have been better.

Many squadrons have been able to offer classes on Zoom or finish courses already running but also a number are refusing to adapt by waiting for a possible opening sometime in the future because they believe in classroom training only. They may have to wait a long time. If this organization does not adapt it has no future.

Every so often we get to meet a remarkable person - a person whose individual goals show to the rest of us just what can be achieved with planning, skill and sheer determination.

Bert terHart of the Gabriola Island Squadron completed a 265-day solo around-the-world voyage from Victoria, BC back to Victoria via the Five Great Capes on his 1987 OCY45 Seaburban. When he got home he was almost certainly the most isolated human being on the planet.

Bert achieved this with skill, determination and courage. He used navigation techniques of the 17th and 18th centuries: compass, sextant, watch, celestial tables, pen and paper (no calculator).

We presented Bert with a Chief Commander's Citation on his return as well as a Chief's Commendation for his amazing support team from Gabriola Island Squadron - his wife Nani, his sister Leah, John and Sally Bullas, and Don Butt.

I would also like to commend the great team that is your hard working National Executive Committee - NXO Yves Dauphinais, NEO Lise Blais Huot, NAO Don Macintosh, NFO Luc Lussier, NS Lynda Bennett-Retei, NLO Nicole Ladner, Past Chief Chuck Beall and NED Mimma Spagnolo.

The future, as I've noted, is not clear. We are in a brave new world with new rules. When we emerge from the pandemic, we must adapt to it.

We are faced with challenges that not one of us could have imagined this time last year but we have a good base to start from. We have a suite of online courses available for you to use both nationally and at the squadron level. Don't sit out the pandemic in the hope that it will end soon. Use the online courses, methods and material that our great educational team have provided for you.

We have started the process of defining a new business model and we will be rolling this out early in the new year. Although the new IT System is not perfect, it is improving and that is thanks to the long hours and hard work of a few volunteers, the national office staff and our IT provider, Innovexa. But there is still a lot of work to do and a long way to go and there may be more turbulence ahead, so keep those seat belts fastened.

SAVE THE DATE
Join Us in
Trois-Rivières
October 12-17, 2021





Here are your new Directors and Awards winners for 2020-2021!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR 2020-2021

Jack Adams; Robert Anderson, AP; Chuck Beall, AP; Lynda Bennet-Retei, S; Lise Blais-Huot, SN; Peter Bolton, SN; Paul Bourbeau, SN; Byron Buie; Brenda Cochrane; Guy Cooper, AP; Bertrand Daigle, S; Yves Dauphinais, P; Scott Homan, S; Nicole Ladner, S; Richard Lariviere, SN; Jean Robert Lavergne, AP; Luc Lussier, P; Don Macintosh, P; Robert Parke, AP; Brian Reis, JN; Nancy Richards, S; Shirley Shea Okamoto, AP; Marguerite Vogel, P; and Tanya Abolins, AP (recording secretary).

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Lynda Bennett-Retei, S
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Charles Beall, AP
Past Chief Commander
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CHIEF COMMANDER'S PRESENTATIONS

A Chief Commander's Citation is given for extreme, distinguished and noteworthy contributions to CPS-ECP by a member:

DAVE BIEMAN, AP

ROBERT PARKE, AP

BERT terHART, SN

The Chief Commander's Commendation is given for such exceptional service that it requires special recognition. The winners

DAVE CORKE

DONNA LANKIN, SN

GUY LADOUCEUR

**SV SEABURBAN
SUPPORT TEAM**

EDUCATION AWARDS

G. William Bowman Instructor of the Year Awards
Sponsored by Weems & Plath

James Cross, Port Credit Squadron

James Cross has taught several of Port Credit's maritime radio courses, bringing to the material a life of its own while engaging students more than in any other class I have seen.

Along with knowing the material backwards and forward, James has an easy grace and rapport with his students. He works the room by moving throughout it, asking students for answers, not by rote but by really digging for understanding, bringing out students' desire for knowledge.

In addition, James has generously supported our sister squadron in Oakville by teaching a weather course as well as a boat and engine maintenance course. Oakville SEO Mike Johnson has let us know that James does an excellent job engaging his students and teaches an outstanding course.

James has also presented seminars at the Port Credit Yacht Club that have been enthusiastically received.

James is a natural teacher and is passionate about teaching. We are very fortunate to have someone of James' calibre as a CPS instructor.



Howard G. Peck Volunteer of the Year Award Sponsored by Cowan Insurance Group

Rob Anderson, Frenchman's Bay Power and Sail Squadron

Rob Anderson is a champion volunteer at all three levels of CPS-ECP.

At the national level, Rob is working diligently to convert and update our CPS-ECP IT system from the previous WBAS system that we

had been using prior to the present Innovexa system.

In order to accomplish that, the records of past and current members - thousands of them - must be transferred and converted from WBAS to the new database. The professional technology company hired to make this transition met with great difficulty. The WBAS system was discovered to be structurally unique. They also discovered that CPS-ECP, over the years, has offered many courses, some bearing different names for the same courses. This created a massive hurdle to climb to bring members' records up to current day standards. Rob volunteered endlessly as our needed database specialist this past year to complete that goal.

In addition, Rob worked closely with the infrastructure committee of the education department to help develop online boating course learning programs.

In February, Rob discovered it would be necessary to reorganize the SQL files from WBAS to align the expiration date of membership renewals to be compatible with the new IT system. He worked laboriously to complete this in time to send out the spring renewal letter to all, prior to the massive March and April crunch.

Rob continues to volunteer his time and expertise with the financial department, working on the accounting and revenue generation system, as well as the integration of the standard software programs to be used by CPS-ECP.

Rob is a serving member of our board of directors, offering judicious insight.

At the district level, Rob serves as the York East District Commander.

There were many keen boaters in the Greater Toronto Area several decades ago. Interest in boating courses and club membership was high. Thirty-five squadrons were formed into the York East and York West districts to accommodate that interest. Classes and meetings were abundant. However, the demographics of Toronto have changed and so too must CPS-ECP delivery. As a result, Rob is working with the many Squadron Bridges to merge and amalgamate their resources to form a more vibrant GTA organization.

Rob has also been instrumental in designing and manning a new and more inviting CPS-ECP booth at the annual Toronto International Boat Show to attract interest to our courses and squadrons.

At the squadron level, Rob is the immediate past squadron commander of Frenchman's Bay Squadron. He continues to sit on the squadron's board in an advisory position, and serves as finance officer and webmaster for the squadron.

Rob is an enthusiastic instructor of the squadron and district ROC (M), Boating 1, 2 and 3, and Electronic Navigation courses. He participates in the National Online Seamanship Course (Boating 4) as both an instructor and a mentor, and leads the safety check team for the squadron.

Currently enrolled in online Junior Navigator (B6) training, Rob is working to improve his own knowledge of navigation and experience.



Officer of The Year Sponsored by Alex Milne & Associates Ltd.

Guy Ladouceur, Rideau District

Guy Ladouceur should be the CPS-ECP officer and volunteer poster boy.

Currently the Rideau District membership officer as well as the district's financial officer,

Guy is also the membership officer for the national squadron, and the Brockville and Kingston squadrons. In addition, at the national level, he's a member of the IT and membership committees. He has been, and continues to be, instrumental in

assisting members from across the country adapt to the new IT system.

Guy's passion is membership. He is very willing and able to handle any membership issue that comes his way from anywhere across the country, particularly now with the new IT system in effect.

Guy began volunteering with CPS-ECP at the squadron membership level and moved on to squadron commander, and district membership and district commander roles, and took on the financial officer position with Rideau District.

Always keeping himself busy, Guy represents the true spirit of a CPS-ECP volunteer and officer, making him an excellent candidate for Officer of the Year or Volunteer of the Year honours.



**Officer of the Year
Sponsored by Alex Milne &
Associates Ltd.**

***Elizabeth Zygmunt, Vancouver
Power and Sail Squadron***

Elizabeth Zygmunt has been a member of the Vancouver Power and Sail Squadron for a number of years.

With a very strong interest in education, she started proctoring for the Boating Essentials course, volunteering weekly some eight years ago for both the fall and spring sessions. Elizabeth showed an aptitude for teaching and an affinity for bonding with her students. She continued as a proctor for the combined Boating 2/3 courses, again volunteering for both fall and spring sessions.

Elizabeth was eventually asked to help as an assistant training officer to learn the ropes of the education system of CPS-ECP. She was happy in that role but, in 2018, the Vancouver squadron needed an executive officer and Elizabeth was asked to volunteer. Though reluctant at first, Elizabeth stepped up to the role. She conducted meetings when the commander was unavailable and took notes when the secretary was absent, all the while continuing as a proctor for the combined Boating 2/3 course.

During this same period, Elizabeth became a lecturer on the navigation chapters of the Boating 2/3 courses. Understanding tides and currents is crucial when boating on the West Coast. Elizabeth created a comprehensive teaching aid for the tides and currents volumes. That has led to a much better understanding of this topic by students.

**Officer of the Year
Sponsored by Alex Milne & Associates Ltd.**

Adriana McCrea, Halifax Power and Sail Squadron

Adriana McCrea has been education officer for the Halifax Power and Sail Squadron for more than five years. As such, she has planned course offerings according to demand and facilities available. She has coordinated all classes and courses offered by the squadron, including interactions with instructors, room rental agencies, the squadron supplies officer and others.

She has kept the educational section of the Halifax Power and Sail Squadron web page up to date with clear descriptions of course details and scheduling so that all members and interested outsiders are able to participate fully in squadron courses.

Adriana has supported her instructors fully, listening carefully to all comments and suggestions. She ensured all instructors have up-to-date certification through CPS-ECP instructor development courses. That has involved meeting many challenges, among them the challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic during the final weeks of our 2019-20 year. Adriana has demonstrated efficiency and tact in dealing with such challenges.

Elizabeth always attempts to inject humour and real examples when teaching. Every lecture is refreshed for each session as she adds real life scenarios that help to explain concepts. She is also interested in online learning, having completed both the Weather Course and Boating 4 online. Because of that experience, she has also become a proctor for students enrolled in the online Boating 2/3 courses.

Two years ago, Elizabeth became an RE and began assisting and examining the Maritime Radio courses. In addition, she is an enthusiastic supporter of the student cruise offered with each boating session and has coached students during cruises since becoming involved.

When COVID-19 closed down schools, it looked like the classroom component of the combined B2/3 courses would not be offered. Elizabeth obtained a GoTo Meeting license for the squadron and got students enrolled in Moodle, setting up a revised schedule for them to complete the courses. She revised the slides normally used and made a video showing how errors are made in plotting. She has since coached other instructors on how to use Moodle and GoTo Meeting. Despite initial resistance, 19 of 20 students completed Boating 2 online and 18 of 20 students completed Boating 3 with some of the highest marks ever.

In addition to being executive officer of the Vancouver Power and Sail Squadron, Elizabeth has done many other things to support the squadron. She has a passion for boating and safe boating education. She spends hours, always seeking a way to improve the learning experience for students.

While performing the duties of the SEO, Adriana has demonstrated exceptional skill and dedication in carrying out those duties. Adriana is not a retired person with time to spare.

She is a fully employed professional involved with computers and programming. Her exceptional service to the squadron shows not only skill but also real dedication to CPS-ECP.

In addition, Adriana has been DEO for the Atlantic district. As such, showing herself to be an exemplary team player, able to work with everyone involved in any given project. Adriana attends virtual meetings and webinars with course development volunteers and national education committee members to keep up-to-date on the educational material needed by Atlantic District SEOs and communicates that information efficiently.

In the aid of both district and national, Adriana has been very involved with the new IT project, lending her considerable computing skills to the development of this project. District Commander Gary Steeves commented that Adriana has been "a super tester of the new IT system."

Adriana is not only a dedicated supporter of CPS-ECP but is a really great person to know and work with who demonstrates the skill and competence that command respect.

MORE HONOURS & AWARDS



The Joseph Gatfield Leadership Award - by Peter Bolton SN, Chief Commander

Nancy Richards has been a lifelong CPS-ECP member. Her father was Chief Commander in 1985, so growing up with CPS-ECP and in the boating education environment came naturally to her.

Nancy has been a director for five years and served on the National Executive Committee as national secretary. She is using that experience to assist our current national secretary.

As Chair of Rules, Nancy has provided timely advice and guidance on how to operate within the regulations and done a lot of hard work planning and directing, and correcting motions. This is a demanding and busy volunteer job which Nancy excels at.

Nancy is concurrently the CPS-ECP Chair of Information Technology Infrastructure. She has shepherded the ongoing work with the new IT system and kept the team focused on the overall direction.

There have been a number of problems that have been overcome by Nancy's vision and determination. One of the weaknesses in the way CPS-ECP operates is that with the biennial change of personnel, decisions that have been made at the beginning of the project and the reasons for them have, in some cases, been lost in the mists of time. Because of her involvement from the beginning, Nancy has been able to correct misinterpretations and explain the rationale behind why such decisions were made and, in a number of cases, prevented unnecessary U-turns. This is an ongoing heavy commitment.

Above all, Nancy has capably discharged two very demanding jobs simultaneously and given a huge commitment to CPS-ECP.

The National Executive Committee has no hesitation in awarding the Joe Gatfield Leadership Award to Nancy Richards.

The Mary Pritchard Award for Excellence in Outreach Education

- by Doreen Hinksman, AP, Past Chief Commander

It is once again my distinct pleasure to honour the recipient of the Mary Pritchard Award for Excellence in Outreach Education.

It would have been hard to imagine back in 1997, when Mary first proposed her idea of an integrated Website for CPS-ECP, the heights to which her chosen field has risen. Knowing Mary, she would have been right there in the midst of all the new and fascinating developments that have ensued over the several years since.

Past award winners have, in different ways, embraced the field of distance education, bringing their many and varied talents to us through their exemplary volunteer dedication. Our members continue to benefit from the efforts of these fine people.

It is with great pride in his accomplishments that I announce this year's recipient of the Mary Pritchard Award –

Barry Smith of the Prince George Power and Sail Squadron.

Most of Barry's life has been involved in boating, starting as a teenager in his first home-built fibreglass boat, water skiing with friends and family. Progressing from one boat to another over the years, Barry saw the need for more education and

took his first CPS-ECP course in 1996. As many of us have, he progressed up the ladder in the squadron to become commander in 2000.

A highlight of Barry's boating career was helping to plan a squadron cruise to Alaska with nine boats and 34 people participating, covering some 1,500 miles. Another adventure followed with a cruise south from Kitimat to Vancouver that saw Barry navigate the entire way and help others.

Barry has taught classroom courses, year after year, even when wheelchair bound after an MS diagnosis. He has been a resource for many boaters, sharing his expertise in boat safety and navigation.

Online education is a natural outlet for Barry's talents. He spends many hours each day helping to develop, instruct and test these courses – all from his laptop in the comfort of his home. He is helped in this busy world by his wife Judy, who assists with editing and tech support.

Barry is currently a valued member of the outreach team and serves as an online instructor as well as Western Canada co-ordinator, trainer and mentor for the Moodle-based courses. His helpful attitude and willingness to devote many hours have had a significant impact on the growth of online course delivery both in Western Canada and in other regions, wherever help is needed.

WOMEN OF INFLUENCE HONOUR FOR PAST SQUADRON COMMANDER

– by Gina Lee, Past Squadron Commander, Peterborough Power and Sail Squadron



Women Of Influence is an annual distinction presented by Peterborough radio station Oldies 96.7, a community-focused station providing hit music from the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s as well as contests, news and local event sponsorship.

Nine outstanding women who are making a major impact in their community are featured annually, the yearly salute including online bios, podcast interviews and news stories featured on-air in daily newscasts. Oldies 96.7 clearly feels it's tremendously important to shine a light on those who make Peterborough such a great place to live.

You can't imagine my surprise when I was told I had been chosen one of 2020's Women Of Influence for my work with Peterborough's Dragon Boat Festival, which marks an unofficial start of summer in our city.

Each year since 2001, an average of 1,400 dragon boat paddlers, along with their family, friends and supporters, decked out in every possible coloured team T-shirt, spandex, and many strange accessories, race their hearts out for a common cause.

Dragon boating is fun, intense, joyful and addictive, making this one of the most successful community-based fundraising events in the area. The hundreds of teams that have thrashed their way to the finish line on Little Lake have raised more than \$3.6 million to help purchase some of medical science's best cancer screening, diagnostic and treatment equipment, with a focus on breast cancer, for the Peterborough Regional Health Centre.

My participation with the festival began, oddly enough, through CPS-ECP.

My husband, Jim and I attended a squadron Games Night at the home of one of our squadron members where I saw a paddle hanging on her wall. We chatted about her dragon





boat team. I was keenly interested but discovered the team was restricted to breast cancer survivors.

Just a few short years after that introduction, I received my own breast cancer diagnosis. After finishing my treatments, I joined the Survivors Abreast Dragon Boat Team, the host team for the festival, and was soon drawn into the organization of the festival itself.

It has been such an honour to work with all the dedicated people who make Peterborough's Dragon Boat Festival such a great success. The support from the entire community - volunteers, sponsors, donors, team captains and their paddlers, the City of Peterborough, nearby residents and those standing behind us (thanks Jim) - always amazes festival organizers.



I am also truly fortunate to have been an active member of the Peterborough Power and Sail Squadron for several years, first as secretary and eventually as commander, participating in RVCCs and Flare Disposal Days, and representing the squadron at various community events.

I was extremely proud of our squadron when it was honoured as the very first Squadron of the Year at the 2018 National Conference and AGM, just as I was turning over the reins to Commander Nick Cliteur, who led the squadron through our 60th anniversary celebrations the following year.

Being involved in the community creates a sense of fulfillment and joy, whether it's helping with a fundraiser, facilitating a fun event, educating people to enrich their lives or any other activity that allows you to assist in the community. ■

- 1 - The 2019 cheque presentation to the Peterborough Regional Health Centre Foundation. From left, Lesley Heighway, foundation president and CEO; Gina Lee, then festival vice chair; dragon mascot (Billy Thornton); Michelle Thornton, then festival chair; and Gord McFarland, Chair, PRHC Foundation board of directors.
- 2 - Gina Lee, chair of the Peterborough Dragon Boat Festival.
- 3 - Dragon boats race on Little Lake in Peterborough.
- 4 - The Survivors Abreast dragon boat team of which Gina Lee is a member.
- 5 - Peterborough Dragon Boat Festival logo



MANDATORY PFD REQUIREMENT FOR KIDS UNDER AGE 14 PROGRESSING

Transport Canada has tabled its response to the House of Commons petition to Minister Marc Garneau to amend the Small Vessel Regulations.

The changes proposed by the petition are to make it mandatory for children under the age of 14 to wear a Personal Flotation Device (PFD) or lifejacket in small vessels covered under the Regulations.

The response shows that progress is being made as result of the advocacy of Life Jackets For Life and other organizations including the Canadian Drowning Prevention Coalition as well as the many corporate support letters and petition signatures.

Although the amendments being requested are not being made this summer, groundwork is being laid to move this forward. However, specific research was scheduled to begin this summer.

Transport Canada writes “TC (Transport Canada) has tasked a behavioural scientist with conducting a research project on the issue of mandatory wear.”

“Overall, this project is intended to help fill gaps in existing research and data by providing insights on wear rates and justification for wearing or not wearing a PFD/lifejacket. In the future, the project will assess the effectiveness of various types of messaging to promote PFD/lifejacket use among different demographics.”

Transport Canada is considering Canada’s vast geography, available enforcement resources, demographics and age groups deemed most at risk, public perceptions towards PFD and life-jacket usage, and international examples “in developing options to require mandatory wear for specific age groups, such as children under a certain age, or during specific activities.”

The full Government response can be found at: petitions.ourcommons.ca

Transport Canada will begin consulting with Canadians on the options through its Let’s Talk Transportation website, which can be found at letstalktransport.ca. Input received on these options, and the issue of mandatory wear in general, will inform potential regulatory amendments. ■



BOATING SAFETY, COURTESY DECLINE PRESENTS AN OPPORTUNITY

– by Phil Wagner, Squadron Commander, Orillia Power and Sail Squadron

Marinas saw a slow start in the sales of new and used boats this year but, with COVID-19 regulations and restrictions, boat sales have increased dramatically. However, with the increasing number of new boaters and their new toys, boating etiquette has seemingly gone out the window.

Certain courtesies are absent on the water. In talking with several boaters, there's a consensus that more boaters than usual don't seem to care about other boaters.

For example, in wake zones where speed limits are usually in and around the 10 km/h mark, I've seen boaters slow down to have their boat fuelled but then markedly increase their speed, leaving a considerable wake.

In narrows, more boaters have a need to beat everyone else to the entrance of the channel markers. They enter the posted speed zone at a high rate of speed to be the first boat through.

In one incident, a new boater cut me off just to get ahead of me. This boater cut on the inside of a 30-plus footer and didn't see me entering ahead of him.

At the same time, there was a small fishing boat leaving the markers. The wake that was created by the intruding boat was extremely large, tossing my boat and the small fishing boat all over the place. He then proceeded into the channel at a rate of speed far beyond that posted.

I've since talked to other people about this and they have revealed running across similar situations.

Entering or merging into a channel when it's busy is like trying to change highway lanes on a Friday night during rush hour in Toronto. People just won't let you in.

Other things I have noticed include paddle boarders and jet skiers not wearing lifejackets. We are still losing people who are not wearing their lifejackets.

As discouraging as all this is, it presents CPS-ECP with a great opportunity to work with the public and marinas to help ensure boating safety is front of mind when new boaters take to the water. Yes, COVID-19 will be with us for quite some time yet but the opportunity to continue to provide online boating safety and courtesy training via platforms such as Zoom and Go To Meeting should not be passed up. ■