

# Officer Reports – Bridge Meeting: Mar. 1, 2021

## Commander:

### AT THE SQUADRON LEVEL

The main activity that has continued since our last Bridge Meeting of January 25, 2021 has been the delivering of Blended Boating Courses. Blended Boating Course 2+3 by our XO and SAEO Nigel and Blended Boating Course 4 by our SEO. These courses have now come to an end, including the exams. Agathe is still finalizing some loose ends and administrative work. I wish to thank Agathe and Nigel again for their non-stop efforts in delivering these courses to some 19 students in total. Also again thank you to other Bridge Members and Squadron members who have been helping with these courses.

The Educational Department is still accepting registrations for the PCOC and ROC(M) (radio) courses; these studies are self study and online. Students can register at any time.

I will be recommending that the Squadron participate in a Beach Clean-up activity in cooperation with the Gabriola Lions. This will be discussed at our Bridge Meeting of March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. It will be a spring activity. All COVID 19 safety recommendations will be followed.

### AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL and DISTRICT LEVEL

On February 7, a virtual VIND meeting took place. The most interesting part of the meeting was, prior to the actual District meeting starting, a lengthy presentation by CPS National. Four Gabriola Bridge members participated, by far the largest representation of any district Squadron, and included Don Butt, Agathe, Nigel and undersigned. (Don of course is also on the District's Bridge.)

Very briefly, this is what I gathered from two CPS National presentations; it is of the greatest interest to all Squadrons.

#### **The new proposed CPS business model**

- CPS is working on this. All that follows is not final and nothing is decided yet. The new CPS business model will include a new name and logo.
- CPS have a major financial problem and possibly might ask money from the squadrons. Any squadron having less than \$ 3000 in the bank, would not be affected.
- Squadrons we were told should have about 1.5 to 2 years' operating costs in the bank.
- CPS today is a **very minor player** in boating courses delivery. The major players are companies called "Boat smart" and "Boatsmartexam" (and others) The objective in the new business plan is to capture at least 5% of the boating classes market (PCOC and ROC(M), and

maybe 10 %. Today, CPS' share of the boating courses market is way below 5%. Capturing that 5% or 10 % would make a huge difference, financially, for CPS.

- CPS will focus on getting more students and making members of these students.
- The above goes for PCOC and for ROC(M). ROC(M) is normally CPS' cash cow. But CPS did not have many ROC (M) students in 2020.
- CPS will be asking each Squadron should do a ROC(M) course.

### **CPS COVID Operation Plan – Looking at Education, Marketing and membership**

•The second presentation was somewhat less enlightening. But it is clear that the total focus on everything now is: **ONLINE and SELF STUDY!**

•CPS are planning on doing and encourage us Squadrons to do " **E-BLASTS**" whereby we shout out loud online what **benefits membership** brings, what courses we give, what virtual seminars we give etc.

### **RVCCs**

About Gabriola's question (Bob Wood) about **RVCC's** this year, National answered:

- don't put yourself at risk by going in somebody's boat.
- Head Office has no news about decals, maybe there will not be any this year.
- CPS will contact Barry Ensign in March about any news with regard to RVCCs

### **Boating Passports**

Some of us have a CPS Boating Passport, others do not. Agathe had been thinking that maybe getting a Boating Passport might be a way to attract students to become members. We asked whether passports can still be bought or not? Can the seals for the Passports still be bought? Do they still exist? If the passports still exist, have they been " updated", since the boating courses names have been changed over the years.

We did not get good responses from National. CPS is supposed to look at it. I am not sure when that will happen as CPS National does have so many problems now!!

### **District Membership**

Wayne, the VIND Commander, said that it has been quiet for the District since October and the membership is down, down and down.

Respectfully submitted,

**Jean Van Praet, Cdr.**

## Communications, Privacy, Scuttlebutt Editor:

**Scuttlebutt:** was published and circulated Jan 24 and thanks to Andy for getting it on the website so quickly. I also send the email notice to VIND people and Peter Bolton each time.

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**Communications Committee:** I've been co-hosting Bert's recent presentations to the Vancouver Boat Show and locally to the PHC. They are well received.

I see there is action on planning shore cleanup as a project with the Lions, something I suggested to the Lions we could do as a joint project.

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**Privacy:** Nothing to report.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Butt

## Membership:

As far as I can determine, there is no change between the total number of members of our Gabriola Squadron at the time of our previous bridge meeting and this meeting. That number is 61. There are 59 regular members and two life time members.

Elaine Pearce

## Education:

### Education Officer Report – February, 2021 - Gabriola Power & Sail Squadron

Through this ongoing pandemic, the Gabriola squadron Educational department continues to stay active. This month we've mainly seen to the hosting and correcting of Exams and entering marks on the CPS-ECP website. I also participated, as a Guest, in the National Education Committee webinar held on February 3<sup>rd</sup> and the VIND video conferenced meeting on February 7<sup>th</sup>. Finally, I checked out the CPS virtual booth at the virtual *Vancouver Boat Show* held February 25-27.

•**Maritime radio (Roc-M)**: I held one Exam session for 2 students (1 Gabriola & 1 Victoria) on February 8<sup>th</sup> and both passed with high marks.

•**Boating 2-3** course: Nigel Wells completed the facilitation of this combined course of online self-study. He reports that 8 of 13 students fully completed the course by writing the Exams, and all were successful, with an average mark of over 93%. Feedback was favourable as to the content and structure of this particular course, and we were able to provide course-completion certificates for the successful students. The five students who didn't write the exams had different motivations to take it, but also contributed to its overall success.

•**Boating 4** course: All 6 students wrote the Moodle based exam; 5 have completed the Cruise charting part of the Exam of which 4 passed with high marks and one will re-write (I have had to order a different exam and send it to him and continue to support him with the course material). Two Marlinespike certificates are still outstanding so I cannot finalize marks on the Website until all 3 sections of the course are completed. Feedback received indicates a high level of satisfaction with the course format and material on the *Moodle* platform and facilitation of the weekly Wednesday evening **Go-to-Meeting** review sessions.

As I mentioned in my Scuttlebutt article this month, nearly all *Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons* courses and seminars are now available as online, self-study courses, using the *Moodle* learning platform. Anyone can sign up for these courses at any time. The advantage of joining a "hosted" course is that we have weekly video-conferencing meetings in which the Instructor reviews the material covered online, answers questions, and encourages students to interact to learn from each other's experiences.

In closing, I suggest we have a conversation on hosting these same or other blended courses, possibly this Spring, definitely this Fall, as there seems to be continuing demand for these courses, from Gabriolans AND also from other Western regions of Canada. Offering such courses is a way of maintaining our income as a small squadron. We have the instructional and boating expertise on this Island so let's harness it and keep our Squadron "on the map" as an active Teaching Squadron.

Respectfully submitted

Agathe Gaulin  
Education Officer

# Financial:

<b><u>October 2020 Opening Balance</u></b>	<b><u>\$3687.32</u></b>
<b><u>Expenses: (-)</u></b>	
<b><u>Total Expenses:(-)</u></b>	<b><u>-\$0.00</u></b>
<b><u>Deposits: (+)</u></b>	
<b><u>Total Deposits:(+)</u></b>	<b><u>+\$0.00</u></b>
<b><u>February 2021 Opening Balance:</u></b>	<b><u>\$3687.32</u></b>

For the March 1, 2021 Executive Bridge Meeting --Respectfully submitted by Jude

## Member at Large: Ivan Bulic

### **Recreational Vessel Courtesy Check Program**

Since its inception, the Gabriola Squadron has participated in Transport Canada's annual Pleasure Craft Courtesy Check Program where trained Power Squadron volunteers offer free safety checks for pleasure craft. This is one of the most important services provided by the Power Squadron, and a great opportunity of expanding the reach and public presence of the Squadron.

In 2020, there were an estimated 2.3 million pleasure craft in Canada ranging from canoes and kayaks to 60ft yachts. In the Vancouver area alone there are more than 50,000 boats that venture out each season, and many thousands more in ports, harbours, coves, bays and anchorages adjacent to the Gulf of Georgia and Juan de Fuca Strait.

Of these vessels, only a tiny number are inspected annually as part of the Courtesy Check program.

### **Sailors benefit from the courtesy check by:**

making sure his/her safety gear is up to date, is in good working order, and meets requirements for the size of the vessel;

- 1.potential problems are identified;
- 2.the sailor receives a Safety Inspection Sticker to post on the vessel;
- 3.sailors avoid a possible \$200 fine if boarded by police and found to not have required safety equipment on board.

## **The Power Squadron benefits by:**

1. providing an important public service educating and informing boaters about safety on the water;
2. helping to prevent injury and loss of life at sea;
3. introducing boaters to the Power Squadron and its courses, opportunities, and services;
4. reaching out to many boaters who otherwise have no contact with the Power Squadron.

With the advent of Covid19 restrictions, the Courtesy Check program was cancelled in 2020. And given uncertainties in current Covid19 plans by public health authorities, there is a high possibility that there will be no onboard Courtesy Check program in 2021.

This would negatively impact the Gabriola Squadron with a second year of no courtesy checks reducing Squadron contacts with the general boating community, decreasing the public presence and visibility of the Squadron, and potentially increasing the risk of otherwise preventable on the water accidents and mishaps.

## **A Proposal for a Virtual Courtesy Check Program for 2021:**

The Gabriola Squadron could provide a virtual courtesy check program by telephone. The way it would work is boaters would be invited to call one or more phone numbers over a particular stretch of time and on specific dates.

The boater would then speak with one of a number of Squadron volunteer safety checkers who would complete a safety inspection form based on information provided by the boater. This would of course assume good will on the part of the boater/caller. But even if a caller is less than candid, he/she would be made aware of the safety requirements.

Boater/callers would be directed to <https://tc.canada.ca/en/marine-transportation/marine-safety/mandatory-safety-equipment> for detailed online safety information that supports the inspection process.

The Squadron volunteer would then either mail the completed inspection form and a safety Sticker to the boater, or arrange for delivery to the boater or vessel if feasible. This is assuming that Safety Stickers will be printed and available for 2021.

This kind of “in person” phone inspection process would maintain a form of public presence in the boating community.

The virtual phone check program could be publicized by:

1. an article or paid ad in the *Sounder*;
2. designing a poster that could be distributed to marinas, docks, public notice boards and other locations;
3. posting the information on the Squadron's facebook and website;
4. notifying local Yacht Clubs (RVYC, SBYC) and service clubs.

Of course, another way of providing a virtual safety check program is online. This would involve creating a website questionnaire. The cost and effort involved in creating, hosting and moderating a website for a single timed event could be prohibitive.

It would also be less effective than a phone program in terms of personal contact between Squadron volunteers and boaters. It would also require a publicity campaign to make boaters aware of the service.

## Webmaster:

I am continuing to update the microsite, mainly using HTML, which I am definitely becoming more comfortable with. However, I have made a few updates using Visual as well, which is great for pages with just simple sentence and paragraph content.

So far, both methods have worked successfully, although Visual is definitely more problematic as you're never quite certain where a mistake has been made or how to correct something as simple as getting rid of an extra space that shouldn't be there.

When reports are submitted to me I usually transfer them from Word to Pages, then make up a PDF document to upload from there to the microsite. (The microsite requires PDF files). Most things transfer very well, but occasionally formatting changes suddenly appear. For example, Ian's article on Courtesy Checks suddenly had 11 numbered points appear out of the blue which neither he nor I had put there. Rather than fighting with these changes, which had no effect on the meaning of any of his points, I have simply left them.

I have recently updated Agathe's email contact information on the site for her, so that all of her squadron related business goes to the squadron site vs going to her private email. Should anyone else need similar changes, whether email contacts or phone numbers, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Respectfully submitted,

Andy Hunter