



UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS®



SKOKIE VALLEY SAIL AND POWER SQUADRON

DISTRICT 20

Membership Newsletter - Volume 26 Issue 3

Running Lights

March 2026



District 20 Spring Conference and Change of Watch

20-21 March 2026

Holiday Inn & Suites Elgin



A MESSAGE FROM OUR COMMANDER

I can almost feel the Spring weather. We received a few warm days but were quickly reminded that we live in Chicago. Soon we will be changing our clocks, looking at more evening light and starting to get the boats ready for their in-water dates. March is going to be a busy month.

First, let me recap on what has passed in February. Karen and I attended the Annual Meeting in Myrtle Beach, SC. I had the unique opportunity to be asked to be the District Commander's Representative to the Board of Directors. I was able to reach out to all District Commanders and get their thoughts, suggestions and opinions on issues they are having. We talked about the struggles we are still having with insurance, declining membership and the general state of our organization. I'll be talking more about this at the Spring Conference.

Our Election General Meeting at Tuscana in Arlington Heights was well attended. This was a new venue for us, and I think it is safe to say we'll be back. Thank you to Lenore and LeRoy Stevens for the recommendation. The meeting was brief, but we did have a quorum so that the election for the 2026-2027 Slate of Officers and Committees was conducted. A motion was made, discussed and approved to cast one unanimous vote for the slate. Congratulations to the Bridge and Committees. We have some new Executive Committee members this year; welcome to the head table. We are looking forward to serving Skokie Valley Sail & Power Squadron for another year. Remember to save the date for our Change of Watch on Sunday April 19th.

Our current and incoming Squadron Education Officers, Chuck Burger and Gary Raphael, have scheduled America's Boating Classes in Wilmette Harbor starting on April 7th and REI in Vernon Hills starting May 12th. They will be needing volunteers for teaching sessions. Our current SEO will be taking on a bigger National role as Chair, Navigation Committee. He is now a Rear Commander. Congratulations Chuck!

Skokie Valley also has a new Staff Cdr for 2026. Congratulations to Sf/C Karen D'Amico on being elected to National Communications Committee. Just goes to show that we as members can be involved at all levels of this organization. All it takes is not saying no when asked. Some of us can't say no.

The details of the D20 Spring Conference have been published again in the Trident and this issue of the "Running Lights". The dates are Friday March 20th (Friday night activities) and Saturday March 21st. Mark your calendars and save those dates. Ellen Ludtke from Waukegan is collecting the meal reservations, so please print out the form and mail it today so we can get a count for the event. Come and enjoy the activities and celebrate the Change of Watch for the D20 Bridge members.

Lastly, thanks to our Rules Committee who has been busy this year updating the bylaws to align to the national model bylaws. The next set of amendments have been published in this issue, and will be voted on at our May membership meeting.



America's Boating Club North Shore 2025-2026 Bridge

- COMMANDER**
Cdr Frank D'Amico, AP 224-238-7372
- EXECUTIVE OFFICER**
P/C Tony Palazzo, AP 630-347-6586
AXO 1st Lt Dan Luczak, S 708-795-0367
- ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**
P/C Ron Zingler, AP-IN 847-634-3806
- SECRETARY**
S/C Karen D'Amico, AP 224-238-7372
- TREASURER**
Lt/C Sue Anthony, P 224-402-3107
- EDUCATION OFFICER**
R/C Chuck Burger, SN 847-322-0828
AEO 1st Lt Stuart Zwang, SN-CN 847-255-9158
- IMMEDIATE PAST COMMANDER**
P/C Tony Palazzo, AP 630-347-6586
- ELECTED MEMBERS AT LARGE**
Lt Ray Adam, S 630-347-3495
Lt Dave Anthony, P 224-402-3107
Lt Gail Sidman, AP 847-726-7309

America's Boating Club® and logo are trademarks of the United States Power Squadrons®



—Cdr. Frank D'Amico, AP





Mark Your Calendar



March 2026

4	Wed	Executive Board/Bridge Meeting, 1900	Zoom meeting - page 9
15	Sun	Publication Deadline—Running Lights	Karen D'Amico (224-238-7372)
20-21	Fri/Sat	D20 Spring Conference & Change of Watch	Holiday Inn, Elgin—page 5
21	Sat	General Member Meeting, after the Conference	Holiday Inn, Elgin—page 9

April 2026

1	Wed	Executive Board/Bridge Meeting, 1900	Zoom meeting - page 9
15	Wed	Publication Deadline—Running Lights	Karen D'Amico (224-238-7372)
19	Sun	Change of Watch Dinner Meeting	Dover Straits, Mundelein—below

America's Boating Club North Shore Change of Watch Sunday April 19th



Dover Straits
890 E. US Highway 45
Mundelein, IL 60060
www.doverstraits.com

Celebrate the 2026 Change of Watch as we honor the events of the past year and swear in our Bridge Officers for the coming year

Cocktails at 1PM; Dinner at 2 PM

[We will order from the menu, separate checks](#)



RSVP to Frank D'Amico
by Sunday April 12th
damico@ameritech.net
or call 224-238-7372

February Dinner Meeting



Joe Paldo & Natalie Witty



Susan & Tony Palazzo



Gary Vinzant & Ron Dziagwa



Sue & Dave Anthony



Joanne Zingler, Dan & Chris Luczak



Ray Adam & Jim Soyka



Guests: Frank's Dad & Sister



Lenore & LeRoy Stevens



Rich Davidson, Gail & Don Sidman



LeRoy Stevens, Nancy Sibrava-Koenen, Karen D'Amico





DISTRICT 20 Spring CONFERENCE
20 - 21 March 2026
HOLIDAY INN & SUITES CHICAGO NORTHWEST -
ELGIN

Room Rates: Taxes are not included in pricing: King Standard \$119 per night, Double Queen Standard \$125 per night, Junior King Suite \$143 per Night, and King Executive Suite \$145 per night. Room block is limited. [Click here for the hotel reservation link](#)

Rank	Name	Grade	Squadron	Email	Telephone
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Lunch: Price \$33.00 per person. All lunches include Bennigan’s potato soup, coffee and soda station.

- #1 _____ Very Berry Salad
- #2 _____ Turkey O’Toole
- #3 _____ Grilled Chicken Ceasar Wrap

Dinner: Includes; soup or salad, rolls, seasonal vegetables, potatoes, and dessert. Coffee and soft drinks.

- #1 _____ \$51.00 Chicken Marsala
- #2 _____ \$55.00 Grilled Salmon
- #3 _____ \$58.00 Grilled Ribeye Steak

No. Attending	Total
_____ x \$33.00 Lunch	\$ _____
_____ Dinner Cost	\$ _____
TOTAL \$ _____	

Schedule of Events

Friday 20 March

- 1500 — 1800 Registration (Conference Center)
- 1830 — 2100 Cocktails / Cash Bar
- 1900 — 2100 Friday night activities
- 2100 — 2300 Hospitality Suites

Saturday 21 March

- 0700 — 1100 Friendship
- 0800 — 1100 Registration (Conference Center)
- 0900 — 0950 Educational Officer Meeting
- 1000 — 1040 CC Message & National Meeting Highlights
- 1050 — 1150 Guest Speaker
- 1200 — 1300 Lunch and Raffle Prizes
- 1315 — 1330 Verification of Delegates
- 1330 — 1530 Spring Conference
- 1700 — 1800 Cocktail Hour/ Cash Bar
- 1800 — 2030 Banquet and Change of Watch
- 2030 — 2230 Hospitality Suites

Dress Code:

- Friday night Tropical or casual
- Saturday: Uniform G (short sleeve shirt, no tie) or Suitable business casual attire
- Banquet USPS dress uniform or suitable attire

Make checks payable to: WSPS Power Squadron

Registration and check should be sent by Thursday, March 5, 2026 to:

Ellen Ludtke
 11419 Zarnstorff Road
 Richmond, IL 60071



SVPS 2026 Event & Cruising Schedule



When	Event	Location	Host
Friday-Saturday March 20-21	District 20 Spring Conference & Change of Watch	Holiday Inn, Elgin	District 20
Sunday April 19th	SVPS Change of Watch	Dover Straits, Mundelein	Frank D'Amico
Sunday May 17th	Dinner Meeting	Wadsworth Inn, Wadsworth	Ron & Joanne Zingler
Saturday June 6th (tentative)	Lake Michigan Fishing Derby & North Point Sundowner	North Point Marina	Dave & Sue Anthony
June 18-20 June 25-27 July 2-4	Summerfest Milwaukee Cruise	McKinley Harbor, Milwaukee WI	McKinley Harbor Reserve Early January 414/273-5224
July 3-18	Lake Michigan Summer Cruise	Sheboygan, Sturgeon Bay, Leland, Charlevoix, Frankfort, Pentwater, Port Washington	Dan & Chris Luczak
July 25-26	Milwaukee Air and Water	McKinley Harbor	Info Only
TBD	D20 Cruise & Rendezvous	TBA	District 20
August (TBD)	Chicago Architecture Tour	Chicago	
August 28-30	Chicago Air & Water Show (featuring Thunderbirds)	Navy Pier Marina or Burnham Harbor	Info Only
September 19th	Dinner Meeting	Southport Marina Boaters Lounge, Kenosha, WI	Ron Zingler
September 23-27	America's Boating Club Fall Governing Board Meeting	Cary NC	National Meeting
October (TBD)	District 20 Fall Conference	TBD	District 20
Sunday, October 25	Dinner Meeting	Beelow's, Lake Zurich	Ron Zingler
Sunday November 8th	Anniversary Dinner	Dover Straits	Ron Zingler
Sunday December 6th	Commanders Holiday Party	Hoffman Estates	Frank D'Amico



Richard J. Calfa

(847) 658-5700
 Fax: (847) 658-5705
 E-Mail: richard@calfaforins.com

1134 N. Main Street
 Algonquin, IL 60102

6619

Promotional Products, Embroidery, Screenprint and more!

- ★ Corporate Events, Golf Tournaments
- ★ Personalized apparel, bags, and more
- ★ For all your promotional needs!
- ★ Fresh Ideas to Promote Your event or Company
- ★ Mention this ad for 10% off first order

kanizzle.com christine@kanizzle.com
 Tell Your Story

Skokie Valley Rules Committee—Proposed Bylaws Amendments—05 December 2025

The following bylaws amendments are being proposed by our Rules Committee to align to the National model bylaws for squadrons, which were updated due to changes approved by the Governing Board in 2025. In addition to minor clean up, the changes allow associate members to hold officer or committee positions in a squadron. They also allow for members to join online directly to a squadron without approval of a separate membership committee. The underlined entries in blue font below are new changes to the bylaws.

ARTICLE 3—Membership

Section 3.2 There shall be ~~four~~ the following classes of membership in this squadron: active members, apprentice members, associate members, and honorary members.

Section 3.3 Active members of this squadron shall consist of ~~persons~~ individuals who are able and willing to promote and advance the objectives of USPS or this squadron, meet the qualifications for active membership set by USPS Policy and who are admitted to membership as herein provided.

Section 3.4 Service Recognition

3.4.1 Any member who has been awarded twenty-five merit marks shall become a life member. Life members shall be exempt from further payment of squadron dues and shall receive such other exemptions in this squadron as are appropriate to match those granted by USPS.

3.4.2 An individual who has been awarded at least five merit marks shall be deemed a senior member.

Section 3.5 Individuals who reside with an active member (considered a *primary active member* for billing purposes) may be admitted as members in the same manner as any other such member. They shall have all the rights and privileges of their class of membership class except they shall not be entitled to receive separate copies of ~~The Ensign printed~~ or other publications, and their dues shall be billed to the primary active member.

Section 3.6 Apprentice members of this squadron shall be ~~persons~~ individuals who have reached the age of twelve. Apprentice members shall have the same privileges as are available to active members except they may not serve in an elected position, chair a committee or vote.

Section 3.7 Associate members of this squadron shall consist of members in good standing of other squadrons of USPS or of the ~~Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons~~ CanBoat/NautiSavoir, who have been granted associate membership by the Executive Committee. ~~Associate members shall have all of the privileges of active members except that they may not hold elective office in this squadron, have representation by delegates of this squadron, be entitled to represent this squadron at any USPS or district meeting, or be entitled to vote at any meeting of this squadron.~~ Associate member dues and fees, if any, shall be billed by and paid directly to the squadron offering associate membership. Associate members shall have all the rights and privileges of active members, including election to office.

ARTICLE 5—Officers and Committees Generally

5.1.1 All elected officers and elected committee members shall be active or associate members of this squadron, at least 18 years of age.

5.1.4 No active or associate member shall be nominated for or hold more than one elective flag office, as defined by USPS bylaws Section 4.3, in this squadron simultaneously, except as provided in 5.2 herein or for a short period due to overlapping terms of office. More than one elective position other than flag office may be held if there does not appear to be a conflict of interest

5.1.11 All appointed officers of this squadron shall be active, associate or apprentice members, at least 18 years of age, and in good standing. Every appointed officer and committee member shall hold office at the pleasure of the appointing authority but not beyond the term of office of that person or body except to complete an assignment with the approval of the Executive Committee.

Section 5.2 ~~The elected Bridge officers of the squadron shall be comprised of the commander, who shall be the ranking officer, and the lieutenant commanders. There shall be an educational officer supervising the education department, a secretary supervising the communications and records of the squadron, and a treasurer supervising the finances of the squadron. The offices of secretary and treasurer may be held by the same person, if so authorized by the Executive Committee. [NOTE: The squadron bylaws may provide for election of an executive officer, an administrative officer, or other supervising officers for other departments defined in the bylaws. The squadron bylaws may also reserve to the squadron annual meeting the right to elect no one as executive officer, administrative officer, or as optional supervising officer.]~~

The elected bridge of the squadron shall be comprised of the commander, who shall be the ranking officer, and the lieutenant commanders. The lieutenant commanders shall be an executive officer, an educational officer, an administrative officer, other supervising officers for other departments as defined in the squadron bylaws, a secretary, and a treasurer. The offices of secretary and treasurer may be held by the same member if authorized by the Executive Committee.

5.2.1 The squadron annual meeting has the right to elect no one as executive officer, administrative officer, or as other supervising officers.

Section 5.4 There shall be an Executive Committee, also known as Board of Directors, consisting of the elected Bridge officers, the most recent past commander willing and able to serve and three members qualified to vote from the general membership of this squadron. Members-at-large and the past commander shall be elected to this committee in accordance with the provisions of Article 11. Meetings of the Executive Committee, ~~except when processing membership applications~~, are open to any squadron member who wishes to attend, and who, when recognized by the presiding officer, may address the committee, but may not vote.

Section 5.5 ~~There shall be a Nominating Committee, consisting of a chairman and five other members, each of whom shall be a past commander, a previous Executive Committee member for at least two years or a senior member. At least two of these individuals shall be elected by the members, qualified to vote, and present at the annual meeting each year for a term of three years.~~

There shall be a Nominating Committee, consisting of a chair and two other members, one of whom shall be elected by the members, qualified to vote and present at the annual meeting, each year for a term of three years.

5.9.1 The **Membership Committee** shall be composed of up to three members appointed annually by the commander. It shall be familiar with the policies and procedures outlined in the current edition of the USPS Membership Manual. ~~It shall process all new membership applications.~~

ARTICLE 6—Duties and Powers of Officers and Committees

6.3.5 ~~In the absence of the executive officer and in the temporary absence or incapacity of the commander, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the commander~~ Be a member of the National Educational Department.

6.3.6 In the absence of the executive officer and in the temporary absence or incapacity of the commander, perform the duties and exercise the power of the commander.

6.6.3 Reports: Prepare all financial reports as required:

6.6.12 ~~The office of secretary and treasurer may be held by the same person.~~ The same person may hold the office of secretary and treasurer.

6.6.13 In the absence of a Budget and Finance Committee, the treasurer shall also:

(a) report on the current and projected future finances of this squadron, and

[\(b\) prepare and present to the Executive Committee an annual budget for approval prior to its being presented to the voting members for adoption.](#)

[6.6.14 Annually, no later than 90 days before the effective date of a new squadron dues schedule, each squadron treasurer shall report to the National Treasurer the new dues schedule to be used for billing members of that squadron](#)

6.7.6 All [Keep all](#) squadron operating funds shall be kept in depositories insured by an agency of the U.S. government. The depository institute(s) are to be chosen with the advice of the squadron's treasurer. For planning purposes, operating funds shall approximate 150% of the squadron's annual operating budget. For investment funds, the squadron may seek out higher yield investments which have been recommended by a qualified professional. Finally, the Executive Committee shall approve the budget, including any investment decisions, for submission to the members.

6.7.9 Invite the law ~~office~~ [officer](#) to its meetings when legal expertise is desirable. The law officer shall be entitled to speak at such meetings but shall not be entitled to vote.

ARTICLE 7—Dues and Entrance Fees

Section 7.6 Members of all classes of USPS membership otherwise eligible to receive instruction or examination in any course may not do so unless in good standing and not in arrears for dues or other indebtedness to this squadron or USPS [national](#).

ARTICLE 8—Resignations, Transfers and Reinstatements

Section 8.1 Resignations, transfers and reinstatements shall be accomplished in accordance with USPS policy.

Section 8.2 Reinstatement requests from former members who have voluntarily terminated membership in this squadron shall be treated as follows:

8.2.1 Those who apply for reinstatement within two years of termination of membership shall be reinstated upon the payment of annual dues for the current year and squadron indebtedness (if any).

8.2.2 Reinstatement requests received two or more years after termination of membership shall be reviewed as follows:

(a) Upon receipt of a request for reinstatement, the Executive Committee shall, in closed session, determine whether any committee member is against reinstatement. If there are no such members, the applicant shall be reinstated as in 8.2.1 herein.

(b) If any Executive Committee member expresses intent to vote against reinstatement, the specific grounds for such vote shall be recorded in the minutes of the closed session (but not divulged to non-members of the Executive Committee). At its next meeting, the Executive Committee shall, in closed session, vote on the question, "Shall (name) be refused reinstatement?" A two-thirds vote shall be required to refuse reinstatement; otherwise, the applicant shall be reinstated as in 8.2.1 herein.

© If reinstatement is refused, the squadron secretary shall, within five days, notify the national secretary of such refusal and the specific grounds, therefore. In such case the former member shall be eligible for reinstatement in USPS as an unattached member.

Section 8.2 [Those who apply for reinstatement shall be reinstated upon the payment of annual dues for the current year and squadron indebtedness, if any.](#)

[Reinstatement requests from former members who have voluntarily terminated membership in this squadron shall be treated as follows:](#)

[8.2.1 Those who apply for reinstatement within two years of termination of membership shall be reinstated upon the payment of annual dues for the current year and squadron indebtedness, if any.](#)

ARTICLE 11—Nominations, Elections, and Voting

Section 11.1 Candidates for elective positions to be voted upon at the annual meeting may be nominated by:

(1) The process described in Section 6.8, or

(2) By petition in writing signed by at least five active members in good standing and filed with the secretary at least 15 days before the date of election.

[11.1.1 an appointed or elected committee as described herein, or](#)

[11.1.2 petition in writing signed by at least five active members in good standing and filed with the secretary at least 15 days before the date of election.](#)

Section 11.4 No active [or associate](#) member shall be eligible for nomination without first signifying willingness and ability to serve if elected.

ARTICLE 16—Distribution of Assets after Termination

Section 16.2 In the event of dissolution and voluntary surrender, or of revocation of this squadron's charter, all assets then belonging to this squadron shall be assigned to USPS or to another organization which qualifies for tax exemption (under Section 501(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as from time to time amended, and any rules and regulations promulgated thereunder, or such other section of the code (by which USPS is exempt) or of the State of Illinois, as selected by the Executive Committee and approved by a quorum of the membership of the squadron. If no selection is made, the assets of this squadron shall be assigned to USPS. If such assets include or have been bequests, gifts over \$10,000 or endowments, the distribution of these assets will be subject to the review of the District Law Officer and approved by the District Council.

[In the event of dissolution and voluntary surrender or of revocation of this squadron's charter, all assets then belonging to the squadron shall be assigned to USPS or to an institution which qualifies for tax exemption under Section 501\(c\)\(3\) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or such other section of the code by which USPS is exempt. The recipient of such assignment shall be selected by the squadron's Executive Committee or other comparable body of the squadron unless specified in these bylaws.](#)

[16.2.1 In the event of the dissolution and voluntary surrender or revocation of this squadron's charter, all assets then belonging to the squadron shall be assigned to a qualified entity or entities as determined under the provisions of Section 16.2.](#)

[16.2.2 If such assets include or have been bequests, gifts over \\$10,000 or endowments, distribution of these assets should be reviewed by legal counsel retained by the squadron.](#)

ARTICLE 17—Amendments

Section 17.1 These bylaws may be amended, subject to the approval of the USPS Committee on Rules, by a two-thirds vote of the voting members qualified and present at any regular or special squadron meeting, provided that:

(1) [17.1.1](#) a quorum is present at the time the vote is taken and

(2) [17.1.2](#) the proposed amendments are stated in full in the notice of the meeting at which action is to be taken thereon, or

(3) [17.1.3](#) an announcement of the proposed amendments was given to each member and multiple copies of the old and the proposed bylaws are made available to the members at two or more consecutive general membership meetings at least 20 days apart (the last such meeting may be the meeting at which the vote is taken).

(4) [17.1.4](#) Electronic meetings may be used for the purpose of bylaws amendments



Many Thanks!

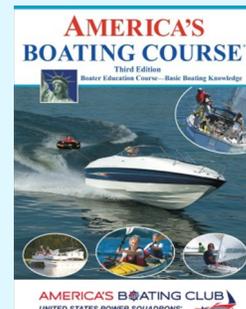
Ron Dziagwa sent this picture of our booth at the Northern IL Boat Show this weekend. Being at the entrance/exit of the show, it's a great location to talk to people and ensure they pick up one of our brochures on their way out!

Thanks again to members of Skokie Valley who volunteered to work the booth at both the Chicago and Northern IL Boat Shows: Dan & Chris Luczak, Ron Zingler, Ray & Deb Adam, Ron Dziagwa, Nancy Sibrava-Koenen, Rich Davidson, LeRoy & Lenore Stevens, Frank & Karen D'Amico, Tony & Sue Palazzo

We are offering two America's Boating Course (ABC) classes this Spring:

REI Vernon Hills
 901 N Milwaukee Ave,
 Vernon Hills IL
 Tues & Thurs 7:00-9:00 PM,
 May 12-28

Wilmette Harbor Clubhouse
 20 Harbor Drive, Wilmette, IL
 Tues & Thurs 7:00-9:00 PM,
 April 7-23



The most comprehensive, in person boating course. Taking the ABC class reduces the risk of accidents and injuries, saves money on boat insurance, and qualifies for state boat license or operator certificate.

If you know someone interested in the class, or want to volunteer to help, contact our incoming SEO Gary Raphael, SN.

Team North Shore

Executive Committee Meeting: **Wednesday, March 4 at 7:00 PM Central**

Zoom Meeting ID: **896 4506 7100**, Passcode: **606598**
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89645067100?pwd=nSjbaBor5OixpFWvaHTOtoBjyxpvA2.1>

One tap mobile: +13126266799,,89645067100#,,,,*606598# US (Chicago)

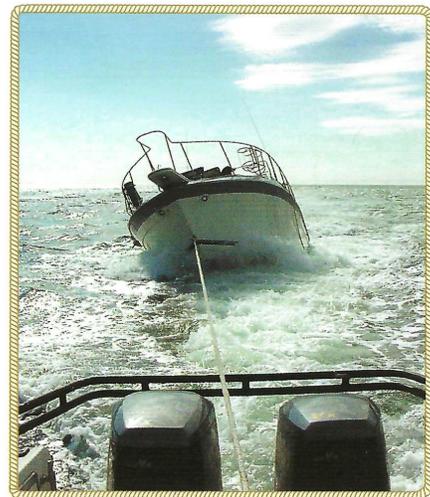
March General Member Meeting
Saturday, March 21, 2026
 Meeting will be held in our hospitality suite immediately following the Conference meeting on Saturday afternoon

March Anniversaries

Dan Luczak	2024	2 yrs
Kathy Parker	1997	29 yrs
Richard Elesh	1969	57 yrs

Congratulations on reaching another milestone with the squadron. We appreciate your support!
Cdr Frank D'Amico, AP

CAPTAIN AHAB'S QUIZ



If the towline is kept taut while towing in rough seas, undue stress will be put on both vessels' deck hardware. One method to reduce this stress is to maintain a "____", to keep the towline under water at all times.

(see answer on back page)

Tom Clark, AP, Contributing Editor
 Courtesy of Perchant Publishing

Running Lights

Skokie Valley Sail and Power Squadron

FROM:

S/C Karen D'Amico, AP
1240 Bison Lane
Hoffman Estates, IL 60192

TO:

FIRST CLASS MAIL



Be sure to visit our websites:

Skokie Valley Sail & Power Squadron:
www.skokievalleypowersquadron.org

District 20: www.uspsd20Boating.org

USPS: www.AmericasBoatingClub.org



Captain Ahab answer:

Catenary (curve the towline between the tug and tow)

Editor and Publisher

S/C Karen D'Amico, AP
RunningLightsEditor@gmail.com

Contributing Editors

P/C Ron Zingler, AP-IN
P/D/Lt/C Stuart Zwang, SN-CN

Photographers

P/C Ron Zingler, AP-IN

Production Staff

Cdr Frank D'Amico, AP



UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS®