



Scuttlebutt



Monthly Newsletter

Volume LV, No. 1, January 2022

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

31 JAN	EXCOM - 1600 - via ZOOM
14 JAN	General Membership Meeting, Election of Officers and Change of Watch - 1330-1600 - Lake Guntersville Yacht Club
18-20 FEB	Huntsville Boat Show. - Von Braun Center
28 FEB	EXCOM - 1600 - via ZOOM
28 MAR	EXCOM - 1600 - via ZOOM

THE BRIDGE

COMMANDER	Cdr Richard W. Walter, AP Res: (256) 230-5047
EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Vacant
EDUCATIONAL OFFICER	P/C Chris M. Whitacre, AP Res: (256) 882-6909
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER	Lt/C Chuck Wills P Res: (256) 505-7773
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The latest Scuttlebutt can ALWAYS be found on our Squadron Website for your information.

VISIT US ON THE WEB AT:

<https://www.abcnorthalabama.org/>
Or. <https://www.facebook.com/abcofnorthalabama>

View our Calendar of Events at:

<https://www.abcnorthalabama.org/>
Or <https://americasboatingclub.org/>
Or <https://americasboatingchannel.com/>

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COMMANDER'S LOG

Cdr Rich Walter, AP

rww2488@earthlink.net

I hope everyone had a great holiday and I would like to wish you all a Happy New Year for 2022. If you missed the great Christmas Party hosted by Vern and Barb in December, there is another opportunity to see everyone in January. A general membership meeting and Change of Watch is scheduled for Sunday, January 30 at the Guntersville Yacht Club. Check the events / admin section of the newsletter for details as it is a great opportunity to visit with fellow members and enjoy the views at the Yacht Club.

The Huntsville Boat show has been moved to February 18-20 this year and will be held in conjunction with the Alabama Super RV show at the Von Braun Center. We will ask members to sign up in two hour shifts to cover our information booth, so look for an opportunity to help-out! And come out and see the latest boats offered by many of the local boat dealerships.

"I wanted freedom, open air, adventure. I found it on the sea." - Alain Gerbault

Take care and stay safe.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Lt/C Chuck Wills, P

willscharles@gmail.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

ABC North Alabama Annual General Meeting and Change of Watch

Sunday, January 30 from 1330 – 1600

Location:

Lake Guntersville Yacht Club, 498 Yacht Club Road, Guntersville AL

Chuck Wills coordinating host (256) 506 7773

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend this important annual event when the proposed new slate of officers for 2022 will be offered and election will be held. We will follow the election with a Change of Watch ceremony when the new officers will be sworn in.

The event will be at the Lake Guntersville Yacht Club. The club is gated so just push the button at the gate and tell our caretaker you are meeting Chuck Wills or attending the ABC meeting.

The gathering will start at 1:30 at the bar for socializing before the meeting. Please bring your own beverage.

The business meeting will start at 2:00.

Immediately following the business meeting, we will continue our social gathering. Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share.

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Nominating Committee Report

Chris Whitacre, as the nominating committee, is proposing the following officers for 2022:

Commander – Rich Walter
Executive Officer – Vacant
Administrative Officer – Chuck Wills
Secretary – Vern Gehm
Treasurer – Tina Walley
Educational Officer – Lisa Shier

Assistant Admin Officer – Page Kennedy
Assistant Treasurer – John Kennedy
Assistant Education Officer – Chris Whitacre

Committees to stay the same as 2021:

Members at Large:
Jim Pruett
Melissa Tatum
John Pierson

Rules Committee:
Chris Whitacre
Lisa Shier

Nominating Committee:
Chris Whitacre

Auditing Committee:
Dick Raymont

LAST MONTHS EVENTS

Christmas Event – December 4, 2021

Vern and Barbara Gehm graciously offered to host this year's Christmas season gathering at their home. The hosts provided Mimosas, Hot Spiced Cider, Coffee, and Water. Everyone brought a dish or dessert to share and both the food and the conversations were great at this year's event. 20 members attended.

Thanks' again Vern and Barbara for the great hospitality and apologies from the club for staying beyond the scheduled time we just had too much fun to leave!!!





Crock Pot Pot-luck – November 14, 2021

Say that quickly five times. It may be a tongue twister, but it describes a great time. ABCNA met at the Lake Guntersville Yacht Club on 14 November for a Crock Pot Pot-luck meal and social. It was hosted by the Wills, Walleys, Tatums, and Kennedys. Arrangements were made by Chuck Wills and Tina Walley was our special hostess. Sorry if you weren't there because you missed some great food, adult libations (if desired), and conversation. Please plan on joining in and become part of our great fellowship.



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Still Boating on the Tennessee River

We have been blessed with some exceptionally warm weather and several have continued to boat into late fall.

Lisa Shier has still been seen rowing her new kayak and Paul Tatum took advantage of the great weather to drop his Portland Pudgy dingy into the water.



See the calendar of events with latest updates here:

Web Site: <https://www.abcnorthalabama.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/abcofnorthalabama>

America's Boating Club: <https://americasboatingclub.org/>

America's Boating Channel: <https://americasboatingchannel.com/>



ABC ORGANIZATIONAL RESTRUCTURING

The following article is provided from National to acquaint you with on-going efforts to modernize the organization.

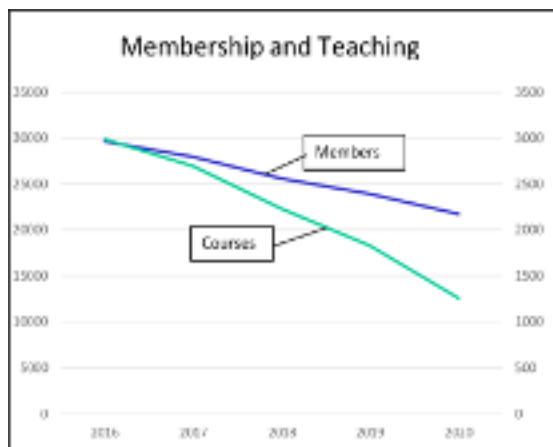
“The national Board of Directors has formed an ad hoc committee to examine our organizational structure and operations to better serve our members and local Squadrons/Clubs. We are considering options that may include restructuring districts, forming regions, and/or improving services directly to Members from the national level.”

Our current organizational structure of Squadrons, Districts, and national leadership was created decades ago when we were a much larger organization and we needed a hierarchical configuration for communication and coordination. Today however, total membership is much smaller, there are fewer Squadrons/Clubs and Districts, and telecommunications is far more advanced. Some Districts are no larger than Squadrons, Districts are consolidating, and too many Squadrons/Clubs dissolve each year. Commensurately, the number of educational courses completed continues to erode. A contributing factor is that our *modus operandi* has not kept pace with how today’s boater learns, interacts with others, and depends on technology. As a result, we are challenged to recruit and retain members.

The Board of Directors has created a geographically diverse *ad hoc* group under the leadership of NXO Craig Fraser including David Allen, Allan Bombard, John Crawford, Bob David, Myles Gee, Paul Mermelstein, and Ralph Ziegler. This committee presented ideas for restructuring America’s Boating Club at the Virtual Annual Meeting in February, the Governing Board meeting in September, the DEO online meeting in October, and at various District conferences this Fall. As a work in progress, feedback was solicited and continues to roll in.

Predictably, there is some concern from members who enjoy participating in District and/or national activities and worry that we will lose that social interaction. Committee members understand; we have the same experiences and have made friends in our own Districts and at national events. It pains us to contemplate major organizational change, but we also recognize the following facts:

- Over 90% of our members have no relationship with, or interest in, District or national activities. They are served by their Squadrons/Clubs and want localized education, boating activities, and social interaction.
- It is from this 90%+ that we continue to lose most members. In fact, over half of all new Squadron/Club members leave within two years of joining.
- Every District has seen significant declines in both membership and courses taught.
- Very few Districts have the resources to help squadrons/clubs stem the losses.
- Over 25% of squadrons/clubs have less than 25 members and do not have robust programs.



We are carefully considering a range of major organizational and functional changes to improve the delivery of services in order to attract and keep members. We recognize that changing the organizational structure alone will not suffice. We also need to increase the volume, efficiency, quality, and communication of educational, boating, and social programs that we provide to our members. Our goals are to:

- Increase the attraction of America’s Boating Club for both member recruitment and retention

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- . Meet the needs of members to keep them satisfied and engaged
- . Preserve and strengthen squadron/club capabilities to serve their members
- . Bolster the capabilities of local Squadrons/Clubs to market and teach boating education
- . Where necessary, directly provide education to individual members such as cyber-members and Squadron/Club members who do not get adequate education locally
- . Increase opportunities for members to participate in boating events and social activities
- . Reduce red-tape and bureaucracy to streamline services, administration, and coordination
- . Improve communication to Squadrons/Clubs and to all members

We recognize that, by definition, boating events and social activities must be localized. Active Squadrons/Clubs should be free to offer what they and their members want. However, many Squadrons/Clubs do not boat much anymore and social activities are often limited to dinners and other gatherings. From our market research, member exit surveys, and common sense, we know that we need to have a much higher level of boating events and social activities to attract and keep members satisfied. Consequently, any organizational change must supplement local Squadron/Club event planning and the conduct of boating and social activities in locales that conveniently interest participants.

There is a range of options for addressing reorganization potentials, each with their pros and cons, including:

- . Do nothing
- . Rely on Districts, but allow more freedom
- . Eliminate Districts and provide services directly from National to local Squadrons/Clubs and to individual members
- . Consolidate Districts into about a half dozen regions with new systems and procedures that will integrate and synergize both national resources and local Squadron/Club leadership
- . Some combination of the above

The Reorganization Committee continues to work on this challenge and evaluating options. We have prepared a needs assessment survey that will be sent to all members in order to obtain direct input and better evaluate where we need to improve and what we need to change. We will incorporate this data along with feedback and suggestions that continue to arrive. Additionally, we will examine how we do business, current processes and systems, resources, and organizational functionality. Subsequently, we will determine and recommend the most appropriate course of action for review by the BOD and appropriate committees, before presenting to the Governing Board for approval. The work continues; stay tuned.



SECRETARY

P/C Vern Gehm, AP

bvgehm@hiwaay.net

27 December 2021 EXCOM Meeting

The December 27, 2021 EXCOM was held at 1800 via zoom. In attendance were CDR Rich Walter, AP; Lt/C Tina Walley; Lt Mike Walley, P; Lt Lisa Shier, JN; Lt Melissa Tatum, Paul Tatum; and P/C Vern Gehm, AP. CDR Rich conducted the meeting. A booth has been requested for the Huntsville Boat Show (18-20 February). Minutes of the last meetings were approved as provided via email. The December 5th Christmas Brunch was held at the Gehm's in Huntsville with 20 in attendance. A combined Annual Meeting and Change of Watch will be held on 30 January at the Lake Guntersville Yacht Club. Six students have completed taking the Weather Course Exam. An ABC Course and Seamanship will be taught in March and April. Let Chris or Lisa know your education interests. Tina reported on the status of our finances and recent activities. The meeting adjourned at 1825.

22 November 2021 EXCOM Meeting

The November 22, 2021 EXCOM was held at 1800 via zoom. In attendance were CDR Rich Walter, AP; P/C Chris Whitacre, AP; Lt/C Tina Walley; Lt Mike Walley, P; Lt Melissa Tatum, and P/C Vern Gehm, AP. CDR Rich conducted the meeting. The Fall D17 Conference was held 12-14 November. Rich reported that membership is job one for everyone. A booth has been requested for the Huntsville Boat Show on 12 - 14 January. The membership received 13 Merit Marks. The minutes of the last meetings were approved as provided via email. A pot-luck crock-pot General Membership Meeting was held at the Guntersville Yacht Club on 14 November between 4:00 and 7:00 PM. The December 5th Christmas Brunch will be held at the Gehm's in Huntsville from 1:30 and 4:00. Lisa began is teaching Weather via zoom with seven students. An ABC Course and Seamanship will be taught after Christmas. Let Chris or Lisa know your education interests. Tina reported on the status of our finances and recent activities. A motion passed for Rich to purchase a \$50.00 door prize to be an incentive at the boat show. The meeting adjourned at 1825.

Meet Your Fellow Members

Norma Martin

This month we are featuring John and Page Kennedy as introduced by Page.

We really like all of the kind, welcoming members of ABC and are looking forward to making new friends. As new boaters, we value all of the knowledge amongst this group and appreciate the educational aspect of ABC. It's always a top-notch learning experience, not to mention all the fantastic shared meals and fun!

We are both from Illinois (Cary and Naperville). John moved from the Chicago area to Guntersville in 1999—he's in finance with Progress Rail; and Page lived in Wisconsin for many years. In 2011 after they married in Guntersville, John was needed back in Illinois for an acquisition, where they lived in Oak Park and Downers Grove, IL. When an opportunity presented to move back to Guntersville in early 2017, they jumped at it. The

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Kennedy's were back for under a year when John got a year-and-a-half assignment in Sydney, Australia—now that's one memorable, "Down Under" experience of a lifetime, mate!

We are new to boating (although Page grew up with a love for the water and boats). Her dad was a Merchant Marine—her first science project was actually on ship stability—so lots of small-boat sailing! Our first motor boat was a 19' Sea Ray which we enjoyed on Lake Guntersville. Page is an avid paddler (currently in a new, blue Swift 14.7 solo canoe) and is looking forward to paddling with you. We are happy to soak up the wealth of boating knowledge that's floating around at ABC & LGYC!

We are super happy in our 320 SunDancer, Friendly Confines, and boating on the Tennessee, and are forever grateful to Chuck Wills, for teaching Page just about everything about

hands-on piloting. Every adventure brings new experiences, and we both look forward to continued learning with all in the Boating club. We have our caps on and are ready!

We love to bike, camp and hike. We have done a 110-mile tour from The Bean in Chicago to New Buffalo along Lake Michigan and the Bo Bikes 'Bama ride in Auburn where Page got to meet her Packer QB, Brett Favre! As a CheeseHead, that was quite memorable for Page, but for John, not so much. (He's a Chicago Bear's fan!) John is a huge Notre Dame Fighting Irish fan and also a huge baseball guy—"Go, Cubs, Go!". Last year, John trained for his first half-marathon and is still at it! We love our two dogs, Cleo and Kona, chilling at home, making good food, listening to music, and golfing at Gunters Landing.

Page does Vibrational Sound Healing (with Tibetan Singing Bowls, Indigenous drums she's made, along with other percussion instruments), is a certified kundalini yoga teacher, and loves to create art with various mediums. If you're ever interested in learning about what she does, Page would like to offer you a solo or couples session. It's super relaxing! Page also offers a monthly Full Moon Vibrational Sound meditation thru The Well and the Sisters of St. Joseph. She would also like to offer a group sound bath, if that's of interest.

We would like to take a knot class, and organize a club outing to a Huntsville Trash Panda's game for the upcoming season!

We believe we have a unique zest for life and are excited to get to know all of you!

Shine on Page and John Kennedy.



EDUCATIONAL OFFICER

P/C Chris Whitacre, AP

hrsar2@att.net

Happy New Year! The Weather course is finished and the students have taken their tests. Please let Lisa Shier know what specialty course you would like the club to offer next.

We are planning to teach Boat Handling, which replaces the Seamanship Course, beginning in February. The presentation method for the course is under development, so please watch for updates in the Scuttlebutt. The class should last no more than 2 hours per session and should be done in 8 weeks or less depending on how fast we can cover the material. Cost for Boat Handling is \$65.00 per person. Please let me know if you are interested so we can get the materials ordered.

Please let Lisa Shier know what course you would like to see us offer next. As you know, things are beginning to return to normal very slowly. Therefore, we will continue to try to plan courses and seminars that can be done based on the restrictions existing at the time of planning.

SAFETY OFFICER

P/C Chris Whitacre, AP

hrsar2@att.net

Happy New Year! While the boat is resting, it might be a good time to check over some of the electronics. Two devices that need to be checked are our GPS and our EPIRB. Granted that with the GPS it's more checking that we still know how to use it rather than actually checking the unit, but there are things that need to be checked. Things like: if it uses replaceable batteries, what condition are they in, is the data set to the correct source, i.e., does it show you on the water when that's where you are. Is the antenna connection clean and working correctly, do you still know how to add a way point and can you take the information its giving you and find your location on the chart?

The EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon) and or PLB (Personal Locator Beacon) should be checked monthly to be sure the battery is still good. When doing any test on either device, be sure to follow the owners manually very carefully so as not to actually set the device off. Some units actually send a signal and test the whole unit while others only test the battery. Be sure to test yours as directed by the manual to be sure it will work when you need it. There may be other devices that should be checked regularly so get a Vessel Safety Check and talk to the Vessel Examiner who can help you figure out what your vessel needs.

Yours in Safe Boating!

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Tennessee River
MM 334

Dry and Wet Boat Storage Fuel Sales and Snacks
RV Park Greenways
293 Ditto Landing Road SE * Huntsville, Alabama
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www.dittolanding.org



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