

ALBEMARLE SAIL and POWER SQUADRON

Commander's Corner March, 2009

The **AQUARIUM FIELD TRIP** has been postponed until October 15th, 2009. Apparently the extensive renovations to approximately ten exhibits have not yet been completed and the Executive Committee determined to hold off on our visit until October. Please put this event on your calendars; it should be rewarding if we ever get there.

Approximately sixty members, District Officers, and guests attended the **Change of Watch** dinner February 7th. Retiring District Commander Ann Bailey, an extremely gracious lady, presided with the able assistance of our own Ron McCall. Highlight of the evening was a presentation of the newly established *Order of the Shovel* award to Steve Kelly for his heroic efforts to dig a new tunnel to China by way of Norm and Annette's front yard following the Christmas party. On a serious note, we understand Steve underwent prostate surgery this past week and is doing fine; we wish him well.

A **GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING** will be held Wednesday, April 15th. Social hour, including "on the Squadron hors d'oeuvres", will commence at 18:00; the meeting to follow at 19:00. The featured speaker will be Mick McClung who will tell us about his twenty-four day trip across the Atlantic this past fall on a forty-five foot catamaran. It should be very interesting. Put this event on your calendars also.

Last year our spring social event was a formal cocktail party at the **Barker House**, complete with five piece combo. This year our social chair, Janet Benton, has scheduled an old fashioned North Carolina **'Pig Pickin' with all the fixin's** on Memorial Day, May 25th at Marina Park, Albemarle Plantation. This should be another in our series of *top of the line* affairs. It's scheduled for all afternoon; please, plan on being with us if at all possible.

Green lighted day marks 1 and 5 at the entrance to Albemarle Plantation marina have been extinguished for some time now. Since Hurricane Isabel there has also been considerable controversy whether red 6 was lighted prior to the storm. I say it was; our Dockmaster says it wasn't. In any event, it hasn't been since. At the OYC's annual meeting a year and one half ago, Commodore Haas appointed me as a committee of one to pursue the matter of getting a light on red 6. After dithering for six months or so I got smart and delegated the job to David Rigby. **RESULT: TOTAL SUCCESS.** After some arm twisting and sicking of the USCG onto our Dockmaster, David reports Green Day Marks 1 and 5 are about to be replaced and relighted with two mile lights; Red 6 will have a one mile light so no longer will we have to guess our way in after passing Green 5 after dark. Further, David, with able assistance from Lee Fortier and Bob Halter, was able to convince OYC to pay for the new light on Red 6. Great work Guys!

Plans are proceeding apace for District 5's and 27's **JOINT RENDEZVOUS** at Cape Charles on Virginia's eastern shore July 24th thru the 27th. Past Commander Jet Powers, our District liaison, has been working diligently on the event. Everyone should please plan on attending – with their boat – if at all possible. After the Rendezvous about five or six boats from the Richmond Virginia Squadron will be visiting western Albemarle Sound and using Albemarle Plantation Marina as their base of operations.

I'm thinking (yes, that is dangerous) that we should be planning some sort of **cruising event** for the month of August. Would someone please call me and volunteer to **CHAIR** such. If I don't hear from someone by April 15 I will appoint so, please, will some brave soul give me a call.

AROUND THE DISTRICT

From Kinston's Ram Neuse News comes an article on Ethanol (E10) which starts off by stating that the purpose of adding ethanol to gas is to boost the gas's octane rating and make fuel burn more cleanly. **WRONG, WRONG.** According to our local experts at Fathom This, ethanol actually lowers the octane rating of gasoline because

it has fewer BTU's per given volume than gasoline. Further, they report that ethanol blended gas (E10) can cause a host of mechanical problems to users, particularly boaters. E10 will dissolve and loosen the gums and varnishes present in many (especially older) boat's fuel lines, tanks and carburetors leading, in turn, to plugged fuel filters, clogged carburetor jets, etc. and mechanical failure – usually at the worst possible time. Even worse, E10, which contains 1000x more water than gasoline will soften, leach, and dissolve resins from the walls of the fiberglass tanks found mostly in older boats, eventually leading to leaky fuel tanks. And, when the dissolved material finds its way to the engine, it will be oxidized into carbonaceous residues in the cylinders leading to stuck valves, bent rods and other nasty engine problems. We're advised this problem applies mostly to older boats built prior to the mid-80's. Almost all boats built since mainly have either polyethylene or aluminum tanks. In addition, ethanol undergoes a process called phase separation after it has been in your boat's tank for about ninety days. In this process the ethanol (alcohol) separates from the gasoline and your fuel tank fluids divide into three layers: water (on bottom), alcohol (mid-level) and gasoline (on top), and leads to more problems.

What to do since the Albemarle Plantation Marina now sells only ethanol blended gasoline? 1. Don't fill your tank unless you plan to use it fairly quickly; use 10 micron or lower fuel filters and change them twice a year; use both *Ezorb*, a fuel tank ethanol water remover product, and *Stabil*, an ethanol additive which mitigates phase separation, on a regular basis.

I'll see everyone at our meeting on the 15th of April.

Jim