

## Commander Letter – November 2023

Greetings,

We held our last dinner meeting of the year on November 14 at the Club at Indigo Run. This meeting was the annual Installation of Officers and Volunteer Recognition Dinner. The District 26 Representative was our own Barb Sommers, the District Administrative Officer. Barb provided comments from the District 26 Commander Jim Wilkins.



Craig Loomis being sworn in by Barb Sommers.

At this meeting I reviewed the club activity for the year, acknowledged and thanked all club members who volunteered their time in various capacities over the last year, and recognized several volunteers who merited special recognition for their efforts. Please see the separate article for more details on these volunteer awards.

For those of you not able to attend the meeting I want to provide you the activity overview of the past year. As you know we focus our efforts on three principal categories each year: Education, Social Activities and Community Service.

Under the direction of Rick Sturges, our Education Officer, we held 26 different courses and seminars last year, many of which were comprised of multiple class sessions; 256 students attended these classes. We presented four sessions of America's Boating Course last year, reaching 86 people, most of which were not club members. We had a renewed emphasis for On-The-Water Training and Certification holding three different sessions with 20 participants. We finished the year with 20 Certified Instructors.

Our social activities are comprised of Dinner Meetings and On-The-Water Events. Under the direction of Glenn Crews, our Administrative Officer and Russ Collins, our Dinner Meeting Chair, we held six dinner meetings last year with a total attendance of 384 people, an average attendance of 64. We enjoyed hearing from

many very good speakers, enjoyed great food from The Club at Indigo Run, and got to know each other a little better.

Despite challenges provided by the weather this past year, we had an active cruising year. Under the leadership of Bob Newbert, our Boating Activities Chair, we held 14 Adventure Cruises to many varied destinations last year. The total number of miles cruised was 1,020. The shortest cruise covered 22 miles and the longest cruise covered 180 miles.

We had one overnight cruise to Bohicket Marina on Seabrook Island, and six of the 14 cruises were to first time destinations for our club. As always, the Adventure Cruisers had a great time on each of these cruises.

Our Magellan Cruise captains led seven Magellan Cruises over the past year including the circumnavigation of Hilton Head and Daufuskie, and trips to rarely visited locations like the Wild Side of Bull Island.

The activity in the Community Service area was also strong last year. Under the direction of Linda Larson, our Vessel Safety Check Coordinator, we completed over 190 Vessel Safety Checks for our members and for non-members of our club. Linda was assisted by our 13 certified vessel safety examiners.

We had a very active year for our Jump Start Program, a program offered free of charge to members and non-members, to provide boat owners on the water assistance in the operation of their boats and in safe navigation in our Lowcountry waters. Under the guidance of Phil Burke, our Jump Start Coordinator, we conducted 16 Jump Start sessions this past year, including three multiple sessions. These Jump Start sessions were made possible by our six Jump Start trainers.

We continued to perform and submit Cooperative Charting reports which detail the condition of Aids to Navigation in our local waters. Bob Newbert once again made the National Honor Roll for Coop Charting activity.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Day on the Water, an event done in cooperation with the Boys and Girls Club of Bluffton was held on July 11. This event is planned and led by Bob Newbert who started this very effective program. The event consists of two sessions: Sea School which is a classroom session where the boys and girls learn

about our local waters and the many creatures that inhabit them; and On the Water where the boys and girls are on the water with club members serving as captains and co-captains. This year the cruise started at Skull Creek Marina and progressed up the Chechessee River to Mackay Creek and south to Harbortown, where all enjoyed a nice lunch and a tour of the lighthouse. On the return to Skull Creek Marina, each of the kids had the opportunity to take the helm of their boats. Twenty-four boys and girls and five staff members of the Boys and Girls Club participated this year, and we had 10 boats with 10 captains and co-captains.

We also continued our efforts on the Daufuskie Island Project with Sallie Ann Robinson, to help her restore and maintain Gullah homesites and cemeteries on Daufuskie Island. We completed three workdays on Daufuskie this past year.

Under the direction of Lisa Ennis, our Parade chair, we presented the inaugural Deck the Hulls Christmas Boat Parade on Skull Creek on December 2, 2022. We had 14 Boats participate in the parade and the public turnout for the parade exceeded our expectations. Many club members volunteered their time and effort to make the parade a success.

We finished the year with 333 members and our club finances are in very good shape.

As you can tell, our club is very active, and we are able to do all this because of our volunteers! I want to again extend my thanks to all those who serve our club. We value your efforts. We can always use more volunteers. If you wish to serve, please contact me.

A reminder – our 2<sup>nd</sup> Deck the Hulls Christmas Boat Parade on Skull Creek will be held on the evening of December 9.

Happy Holidays to all and I hope to see you on the water soon!

Craig