

Good News on the Horizon

Many of you may have noticed that the National Dues portion of your annual membership increased this year—\$20 for family memberships and \$10 for individual memberships. As I mentioned in the last Ocean Breeze, the Hilton Head Executive Committee opposed this increase and sent a letter to the Chief Commander expressing our concerns.

I was pleased that our letter received a thoughtful response. The Chief Commander explained that the dues increase was driven by rising operating costs and the need to maintain national programs, technology systems, educational materials, member services, insurance protections, and other support provided to local squadrons.

He also clarified that the increase was not imposed by national leadership alone. The original proposal was for a modest phased increase, but during debate at the Annual Meeting, delegates approved a larger one-time increase through the organization's normal democratic process.

The Chief Commander emphasized that national leadership continues to pursue cost-saving measures while also investing in modernization efforts designed to keep America's Boating Club relevant and attractive to future generations of boaters. He noted that membership growth depends not only on national initiatives but also on local squadrons providing engaging programs and activities that demonstrate value to members.

While Hilton Head's concerns regarding the dues increase remain unchanged, I appreciated the fact that our concerns were heard and addressed in a detailed and respectful manner. Whether we agree with the outcome or not, it is encouraging to know that member feedback continues to be considered by national leadership.

I believe our Executive Committee continues to deliver strong value to our membership through an active boating program, educational opportunities, meaningful community service activities such as Vessel Safety Checks and Cooperative Charting, and our popular dinner meetings featuring outstanding speakers.

As many of you know, finding affordable venues for our dinner meetings has become increasingly challenging. Earlier this year, we experimented with holding dinners at the Spring Lake Pavilion. While that helped reduce costs, the facility was only available on Saturdays, which proved inconvenient for many members.

I am pleased to announce that beginning this fall, our dinner meetings will be held at the Yacht Club of Hilton Head. Located on the waterfront adjacent to Palmetto Bay Marina, the Yacht Club offers convenient mid-week availability, ample parking, a comfortable setting for our speakers, a cash bar, and an affordable buffet dinner for our members and guests.

We believe this new venue will provide an excellent experience while helping us manage costs, and we are optimistic that it will become a long-term home for our dinner meetings.