

Cruising into the Season

Our boating season is in full swing! Both of our cruise programs have already set out on successful adventures to destinations like Fish Camp in Port Royal, Little Tybee Island, and Downtown Savannah. And there's plenty more ahead. These cruises offer a fantastic way to explore parts of the Lowcountry you might never experience otherwise. Along the way, you'll sharpen your boating skills and gain a deeper understanding of local history—insights you won't find anywhere else. Most cruises wrap up with a meal at a local restaurant or a relaxing raft-up lunch with fellow squadron members. Personally, I've thoroughly enjoyed every cruise I've joined.

This year, a significant change at the national level of the U.S. Power Squadrons has affected our operations. Our previous insurance carrier exited the marine insurance market, and the transition to a new carrier has been slow. As a result, some activities are currently limited while national leadership works to restore full coverage.

Our mission remains rooted in three core areas: **education and safety, community outreach, and camaraderie**. Our education and Vessel Safety Check programs are going strong. However, insurance coverage is still pending for on-the-water training like Boater Operation Certification and the Jump Start program. Unfortunately, charitable activities—such as cemetery cleanups on Daufuskie Island and the Day on the Water for the Boys and Girls Club—are currently not covered. Our beloved holiday boat parade, ***Deck the Hulls***, was canceled last year and likely won't return this year unless coverage is secured. That said, we remain committed to finding solutions that will allow us to continue these valuable efforts.

Even though our cruises are not covered under the national insurance policy, we are dedicated to keeping them active and enjoyable. All participating captains are expected to carry liability insurance—something many marinas already require. To protect all involved, we now require each cruise participant to sign a waiver of liability. After

you register for a cruise, you'll receive an email with a link to electronically sign the waiver. We hope this necessary step won't discourage your participation—it's simply part of navigating today's realities.

If you haven't yet had your boat inspected by one of our Vessel Safety Examiners, now is a great time to do so. These free inspections ensure your boat meets all safety requirements, and you'll receive a decal signaling your commitment to safe boating. It also lets law enforcement know your vessel has already passed a check, which may mean they'll wave you on by.

We're looking forward to a fantastic boating season ahead and hope to see you out on the water soon!