

“Day On the Water” Gets Bronze

By Bob Newbert

USCG Master Captain, AP-IN

“Day On the Water” won the Bronze Medal this year. Not because it’s an Olympic Year. And not because we placed 3rd. Indeed, ask any Boys & Girls Club participant –or participating ABCHH captains–and you will surely get a golden review.

So why the bronze?

Tradition.

This is our 8th year sponsoring “Day On the Water” with the Bluffton Boys & Girls Club; and Google, noted authority on the universe, states that “bronze,” a symbol of strength, is the traditional way to recognize an 8th anniversary because 8-years is an enduring relationship that has lasted nearly a decade.

So who are the partners in this storybook union? There are two: ABCHH and graduates of Bluffton Boys & Girls Club “Explorer’s L.E.A.D” (*Leadership, Excellence, Achievement, Determination*), a mentoring program building life skills, character and leadership for teens 12-18.

The L.E.A.D program includes a rigorous boot camp with daily physical training, discipline, community service and character-building activities. Only successful L.E.A.D. graduates participate in “Day On the Water.” It is a privilege earned by those who complete the program, and the kids look forward to it every year.

But perhaps not as eagerly as ABCCH captains –partners in this bronze-worthy relationship– who host the kids on their boats for Part 2 of the DOW experience – a day on a boat.

Part 1 of DOW is “Sea School,” a two-hour orientation where the kids learn about boats, navigation, our marine environment and things they will see on the water. Sea School, with experiments and demonstrations, covers such burning issues of our time as:

- How do dolphins sleep if they have to come up for air?
- Why do Pelicans turn to their left side when they dive in the water?
- How does a “lock” work?
- What’s a “cabbage head?”

DOW L.E.A.D. graduates can answer these seminal questions which have been known to stump luminaries like Google, Wikipedia and that brash upstart ChatGPT.

In less esoteric areas, they also learn to tell port from starboard; explain the difference between a rope and a line; define “marlinspike;” give a Seaman Recruit’s description of Latitude & Longitude; and explain the Lateral System of Navigation.

Not bad for two hours in class.

Meanwhile, our captains enjoy sharing their love of the water with the next generation as they led them into Port Royal Sound, Mackay Creek, Calibogue Sound and Harbour Town where we have lunch.

Particularly enjoyable for the Explorers (perhaps less so for nervous ABCHH captains) was the opportunity for each Explorer to take the helm on privately owned boats. It was all or nothing on the throttle as boats alternately “crept” and “catapulted” adding an amusement park thrill ride to the experience.

Nevertheless, seeing smiles as the kids bounced over the waves feeling the power of 150 horses, led our captains to describe “Day On the Water” this way:

- *“I had as much fun as the kids did, maybe more. I love sharing the boating life with kids and instilling in them an appreciation of what a beautiful and unique place they live.”*
- Craig Loomis
- *“It was a pleasure to see the smiles on the kids when they got on board! It was fun to tell them about landmarks on the way down and back from Harbour Town.”*
- Rick Sturges

- *“All of my kids were a joy to have. They did a great job trying turns and keeping the boat on course”*
- Frank Modrowsky
- *“It was an honor to spend time with our Boys & Girls Club crew. They got a real kick out of going fast and riding the bumps in Port Royal Sound. All of us were smiling the entire way while beating the heat!”*
- Russ Collins
- *“Thy kids we hosted were a joy to have. They were respectful and interested in the sights”*
- Kevin Thieneman

Yes, bronze may be the traditional symbol for an 8th Anniversary; but for the captains of ABCHH, “Day On the Water” is a Gold Medal winner!



“DAY ON The WATER” GRADUATES

DAY ON THE WATER



_____ has successfully completed
a Lowcountry **"Day On The Water"** with the America's Boating Club of Hilton Head
sailing from Skull Creek to Port Royal Sound, Mackay Creek, Calibogue Sound,
and Harbour Town Yacht Basin.

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS ALONG THE WAY INCLUDED:

- Aids to Navigation (ATONS)
- Battle of Port Royal
- Beaufort County Tidal Range
- Chartplotter Navigation
- Daufuskie Island Ferry
- Dolphins
- Intracoastal Waterway (ICW)
- Marlinspike Seamanship
- Oyster Beds
- Parasailors
- Pelicans
- Pinckney Island Wildlife Refuge
- Spanish Wells
- VHF Radio Communications
- Windmill Harbor Lock System

GREAT FUTURES START [HERE](#).



AWARD CERTIFICATE given to every DOW graduate



DOW CLASS OF 2024



"WHOOPEE! Let's go fast!"



"LOOK MA! I'm driving!"
(Russ Collins' boat)



SEA PINES gave us a special “friends & family” discount for lunch at Harbour Town Bakery & Café.



FREE ICE CREAM and a LIGHTHOUSE TOUR were other generous contributions by Sea Pines and Cinnamon Bear Country Store.



CAPTAINS COURAGEOUS who make DOW possible are (TOP L to R): Russ Collins, Kevin Thieneman, John Fitzgerald, and Frank Modrowsky. (BOTTOM L to R): Gene Chamberlain, Larry Tremitiere, Rick Sturges and Craig Loomis. Absent from photo is Mark Stone who was courageously sitting at another table with the kids.