

Winter Issue — January 2018

Volume 59, Issue No. 1

# Peralta Helmsman



**Peralta members serving on California Coastal Cleanup Day  
at the San Leandro Marina on September 16th**

Quarterly publication of Peralta Sail and Power Squadron, San Leandro, California



# Alan's Vietnam— Thailand Adventures

P/C ALAN SMITH, P

I have not done any boating since summer. So there is not much to write about. Since the 2017 year came to a close I thought I should recap about my boating adventures I did last spring in Vietnam and Thailand.

Most of my trip to Vietnam and Thailand was generally along the coast or inland water ways. My father spent two tours in Vietnam. While in Vietnam he spent his time on boats and always talked how beautiful the countryside and waterways were. A few times his boat was shot at. Of course the country is more scenic if no one is shooting at you.

In the photo below we rode our scooters inland to explore the scenery along a river.



Along the river I spotted a woman doing the laundry.



The coastal towns generally were very scenic. Many towns still remained undeveloped. I think the places that were developed lost its charm.



In the photo below I'm looking back at the Saigon River. I wondered if my father cruised in these waters many years ago. On this day we hired a speed boat to take us on a private tour to visit the Cu Chi tunnels along the Saigon River.



Alan's Vietnam-Thailand Adventures, continued.

In the photo below: Looking forward our



speed boat is returning to the city of Saigon. Saigon is a large city.

Closer to home for those adventurous types you can now drive to the Beaufort Sea. The Canadian's finally built an all-weather road from Invik to Tuktoyaktuk. Anyone interested?

Editor's Note: Alan did a fantastic presentation on his Vietnam-Thailand adventure at a Peralta Meeting last year. His presentation goes for about 45-minutes and has over 50 slides in his show.

## **VESSEL SAFETY CHECKS —ARE YOU READY?**

**By Lt/C RICK ERICKSON, AP**

The Vessel Safety Check program is an initiative conducted jointly by the US Power Squadrons and the US Coast Guard Auxiliary. The program is intended to assist in the voluntary compliance with federal and state recreational boating safety laws, and is specifically oriented to

the carrying of required safety equipment. It is intended to be a face-to-face interaction between examiners and boat owners to share boating safety information.

Items checked include, but are not limited to, current vessel registration/documentation, personal flotation devices, visual distress signals, fire extinguishers, functional navigational lights, and appropriate postings for trash and waste oil discharge. Vessel Safety Examiners are trained and approved by USPS and USCG, and are up to date on current interpretations of requirements.

For example, one item that continues to plague many boat owners is the requirement for visual distress signals. Commonly use flares to meet the requirement, but they have expiration dates. There is now a battery operated signaling light that has been approved for used in lieu of flares, and it does not have an expiration date. Another item that causes some concern with boaters is the fire extinguisher requirement. How many? How often do they require recharging?

The answers to these and many other questions regarding boating safety can be found with our own Squadron Vessel Safety Check Examiners. Please feel free to contact Norm Pennington

or Rick Erickson to ask questions or schedule a Vessel Safety Check. Remember, VSEs are free and are not reported to any agency, and even a failed examination can be the basis for an excellent information exchange.





## Squadron Educational Officer's Report

D/Lt/C NORM PENNINGTON, SN



### For boaters, By boaters

As I reported in the last Helmsman we had several students complete our Piloting course. I am happy to report that Jack Kern and Nicholas Pack completed Piloting. Additionally, non-members; Dan Bush, Eliot Gorson and Georgiy Patrikeyev also took and passed Piloting. Moving on to Advanced Piloting were Vickie Erickson and Nicholas Pack as well as non-members Dan Bush and Georgiy Patrikeyev. Peralta member Julie Fouquet took Advanced Piloting from the Santa Clara Squadron and received a 100% grade on her final exam. Let me extend my congratulations to all who completed Piloting and/or Advanced Piloting on a job well done.

Our next course in San Leandro at the San Leandro Yacht Club will be Engine Maintenance starting on Thursday, 8 February running through to 5 April. That will be followed by the America's Boating Course starting on 31 May running through 27 June. I hope to be able to offer Junior Navigation over the summer with Seamanship, as a new course called Boat Handling starting near the end of August, rounding out the year with another America's Boating Course.

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary

Is 'Knots an Hour' Wrong? Some say knots can only be a measure of speed. Are they right?

Ah, that salty breeze blowing over the water! Let's say we sail over to yonder Small Island and check it out. To know how long it'll take us to get there, we of course need to know how far away it is and how fast we'll be going. We'll measure distance in nautical

miles (each of which is equivalent to 1.15 statute miles or 1852 meters, and some portion of which is used in both sea and air navigation), and we'll measure speed using ... knots?

Yes, knots. A knot is one nautical mile per hour.

Here's the background on that: Originally ships used log lines with literal knots in them to measure speed. Just like the knots, the log lines were also literal, sort of. *Line* is the sailor's word for *rope* (*rope* can get you thrown overboard), and the log was actually a pie-shaped flat piece of wood (from a log) with a lead weight on the curved edge so that it would float upright. A line with knots about every 47 feet was attached to the "log." The log was tossed overboard and would stay more or less where it landed, while the attached log line would continue trailing out from the ship. After 28 seconds as measured by the sand-glass, the number of knots that had passed overboard was counted and the resulting number was the speed of the ship.

(An aside: the speed of the vessel was noted in the book about the goings-on of the log line, aka the "logbook." *Logbook* got shortened to *log*, and the log itself was used to record everything about a ship's voyage. *Log* later came to apply to the full record of a flight by an aircraft, and then to any of various kinds of records of performance, events, or day-to-day activities. When people started chronicling their lives and thoughts online, the word *weblog* referred to the sites they used and the content they wrote, and was later shortened to *blog*.)

But back to our journey: we're traveling nautical miles and we're measuring our speed in knots. Our island is fictional, and we don't actually own a boat, but knots are real. And possibly confusing. Our imagined vessel has an electronic device that gives us lots of information including our speed, so we don't need any knotted lines trailing behind us, but when the instrument reports "12" do you say "We're traveling 12 knots" or "We're traveling 12 knots an hour"?

Well, nautically (and strictly) speaking, a knot is a unit of speed equal to one nautical mile per hour, and a vessel is described as traveling at (or "making") a certain number of knots. But occasionally sentences like "We're traveling 12 knots an hour" are heard. In such cases, the word *knot* doesn't mean "nautical miles an hour." It means simply "nautical miles."

----- Continued on Page 6 -----



## Executive Officer's Report

By P/D/C Rick Erickson, AP

### Ahoy, Shipmates!

Another year has passed, and a new and exciting year is beginning. Peralta Squadron continues to be the best Squadron I have associated with. There are lots of activities planned for the year, so I encourage you to participate in the activities you are able to attend.

I note with great sadness the passing of Pat Folger on December 20<sup>th</sup>. She was a person of profound faith that positively touched the lives of so many people. I confess that I am a better person for knowing her, and I will miss her deeply. Her quick smile, ready wit and extraordinary musical talent will be missed throughout the Squadron. Our thoughts and prayers remain for Dick and their family.

Congratulations to most of the Bridge, who have committed to serving another year in their current assignments. There are still a few spots available, so please feel free to step up and lend a hand.

As a safety tip this edition, I encourage you to take a special look during the 'off' season at your fuel lines. Check for cracks and any evidence of leaks. Replace fuel and gas lines as soon as possible to avoid a potentially explosive situation. Nothing ruins a beautiful day on the water like a fire on board. Speaking of fire, be sure to check your fire extinguishers, flares and other emergency equipment before the start of the season.

I heard from Commander Barb last week that she has received the Squadron's allotment of Vessel Safety Check stickers. Due to cost saving measures, there is a very limited supply available. So, avoid the rush and schedule your VSE soon!

***See you all on the water!!***

## Administrative Officer's Report

By Lt/C Vickie Erickson, AP



### Happy New Year Matte's:

Going into the New Year is always a great adventure with everyone making their new years resolutions then trying not to break them before February rolls in.

We had a great Holiday Party at the San Leandro Yacht club. I would like to thank them for hosting our party we all had lots of fun. The mood was set by the yule log fire with happy the dog and cat on the television.

It was a sad time having to say goodbye to our friend and shipmate Patricia Folger. She is now on her own sailing adventure we will all see her again.

We are looking forward to the Crab Feed on the 27<sup>th</sup> of January. As it is every year it is a whole lot of fun with plenty of food for all. If you don't like crab, there is plenty of pasta to make up for it.

I for one am looking forward to the first gathering of 2018 (the crab feed) and will be waiting anxiously to see all of you there.



## Peralta Helmsman

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D/Lt/C Norm Pennington, SN, Editor

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Quarterly publication

of Peralta Sail and Power Squadron

San Leandro, California



# 2017-18 Bridge

## Commander:

Cdr Barbara Waldstreicher, AP

## Executive Officer:

Lt/C Rick Erickson, AP

## Educational Officer:

D/Lt C Norm Pennington, SN

## Administrative Officer:

Lt/C Vickie Erickson, AP

## Secretary

Lt/C Josette Mares, P

## Treasurer:

D/ Lt C Judy Pennington, P

## General Committees

### Auditing

Lt. Fred Holmes, AP

P/C Janis K. Chapman, AP

Susan Ann Holmes, S

### Nominating

Vickie Erickson, P

P/C Melba J. K. Hale, P

Lt/C Josette Mares, S

### Rules

Larry Gertz

P/C Ricardo L. Mares, P

D/Lt/C Norman W. Pennington, SN

Squadron Educational Officer's Report (continued from Page 4).

Those in the know do not appreciate such uses, and you might want to avoid it with your sailor friends and frenemies. But if you do happen to say "knots an hour" or "knots per hour" and some seafaring (or word-watching) type implies that it's an offense worthy of plank-walking, you may feel free to point out that this meaning of *knot* was first entered in a dictionary in 1864, and that it was first recorded a century earlier in the writings of two people who knew their way around a gunwale:

... the ship went ten knots an hour with a prodigious sea...  
— Admiral George Anson, *Anson's Voyage Round the World*, 1748

... we were at that time running at the rate of six knots an hour....  
— Captain James Cook, *Voyages*, 1790



## WANTED/SECRETARY

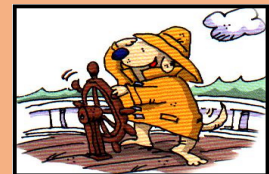
We need your participation: Peralta Nominating Committee seeks a candidate for Secretary of the Executive Committee for the 2018-2019 term. Taking minutes at the monthly meetings gives you an opportunity to learn how the Squadron operates. The Calendar Planning Meeting is held in January, and you will be part of planning the educational courses and activities for the coming year.

We need your fresh ideas and support as Peralta Sail and Power Squadron navigates into the future.

Contact:

**Josette Mares, P, Chairman,**  
Nominating Committee  
[rjmares@comcast.net](mailto:rjmares@comcast.net).

## What's ahead for Peralta Squadron?



### January

Sat, 27 Jan

Peralta Crab Feed, San Leandro Yacht Club

### February

Mon, 12 Feb

Executive Committee Meeting, San Leandro Yacht Club

Sat, 17 Feb

Peralta Change of Watch, San Leandro Yacht Club

Wed, 21-25 Feb

USPS Annual Meeting, Omni Rosen Centre—Orlando, Florida

### March

Sat, 3 Mar

D/25 Spring Council and Conference, Zio Fraedos, Pleasant Hill

Mon, 12 Mar

Executive Committee Meeting, Conference Call Meeting

*YOU'RE INVITED ...  
HOPE YOU CAN BE THERE*



*WHAT - Peralta Sail and Power Squadron  
Change of Watch*

*WHEN - Saturday, February 17, 2018*

*WHERE - San Leandro Yacht Club  
20 Mulford Point Drive  
San Leandro CA 94577*

*SCHEDULE - No Host cocktails at 1800  
Dinner at 1900  
Call to Order at 2000*

*ENTREE - Steak or Salmon prepared by Chef Tuti*

*COST - \$30.00 per person*

Please RSVP no later than Tuesday, February 13<sup>th</sup> with your meal choice:

-----  
 Steak       Salmon      TOTAL

Mail Check made out to Peralta Power Squadron to:

Judy Pennington  
16 Cobblestone Lane  
Belmont, CA 94002-2310  
Telephone 650-595-2169  
E-mail [judypenn@sbcglobal.net](mailto:judypenn@sbcglobal.net)





Over the past two months two of our most supportive members have crossed over the bar that will not go forgotten. The first was **Dorothy Pendleton, P** who passed in late October. Dorothy was the wife of P/C L. Conway Pendleton, JN, who has served the squadron in a number of capacities. Dorothy had been a member as a Lady Certificate Holder, a membership classification that was only available to women before the national organization opened membership to everyone. I probably met Dorothy at a squadron meeting or boating activity, however, I recall her actively participating in the Sand Castle Competition at the District Spring Conference in Monterey. Dorothy was actually an excellent navigator having guided me for my first time through False River.



**Pat Folger, P** passed away on the 20<sup>th</sup> of December 45-days after being diagnosed with Pancreatic Cancer. Pat worked very closely with her husband, Dick who was our Helmsman Editor for many years. For each issue she would prepare the New Member's article for the newsletter. At many of our parties, Pat would play the piano while Dick would lead us in Christmas carols. I've got to know Pat, having sailed on several ocean voyages across both the Atlantic and the Pacific. Aboard ship, Pat had the table staff trained by the end of the first dinner to bring her specialty gluten free dishes, and not to mention at least two desserts.

## Meet Peralta's new member

BY NORM PENNINGTON, SN

### A Warm Welcome to our new member Jack Kern



Jack joined Peralta last year after completing the Electronic Navigations Course. He has since completed Piloting and is enrolled to take Engine Maintenance. Jack recently purchased "Jack's Ship" a 40' aft-cabin (or tri-cabin) Ocean Alexander, which he keeps at the Oakland Yacht Club in the Pacific Marina in Alameda. Jack is very eager to learn as much as he can about boating as this is a new venture for him. Jack will be participating in the USPS Jump Start Program that I will be working with him to learn more about his boat as well as get him started in boat handling, in especially close quarters. This being his first boat he is facing the realization of a boat responsibility that is new to him.

Jack originally came from Long Island, New York and has been in the bay area for a number of years. By profession, Jack is an Electrical Engineer, however he is working for a private firm that markets specialty software designed to track legal documents. Jack's other endeavor is that he is a volunteer in the Security Division of the USS Hornet Museum.



# Annual Wellness Review

BY D/LT/C NORM W. PENNINGTON, SN

Many of us, especially those of us in our advanced age have an annual wellness review to review our state of health. Occasionally issues are discovered that can be treated and we move on for another healthy year. Our boat does not usually receive a wellness review and thus problems creep in to cause systems to fail, and usually when we plan to use our boat. During your wellness review you (or your mechanic) need to check a number of areas on your boat to maintain the appearance, safety and reliability to ensure a safe and enjoyable journey.

Appearance-is the finish of your boat pristine as the day you purchased it, or is it beginning to turn chalky? A dirty boat with an oxidized finish allows more dirt to enter the pores of the gelcoat to increase the progression of oxidation. While you are looking at the finish, are the state registration stickers peeling away making it difficult to determine, for example if one were to see the letter P that is actually the letter R. If your boat is in the water, how are the dock lines and fender whips? Are they beginning to fray, or worst, laying in the water turning green? Do not forget to check on the condition of your canvas, and if you have a sailboat, the condition of your safety lines and your running and standing rigging.

When was the last time you checked your bilge? I know the bilge can be a very unpleasant place to inspect on a boat, and believe me, I have seen some pretty nasty looking bilges in my day as a vessel examiner. In the bilge there are a number of areas that need a regular visit, especially if there appears to be a lot of standing water suggesting an unwelcomed water leak. The first thing to check is the stuffing box if you have a boat with an inline or v-drive, or the bellows if your boat has an out-drive. Another source of water can come from leaks from around deck fittings, loose fitting screws or gaps around windows or ports. While you are checking the bilge, inspect all hoses to make sure that there are no cracks that can be most noticeable around a tight radius curve. Do not forget to check hose clamps. They need to be marine grade to ensure longevity against corrosion or breakage, and all below water line raw water connections need to be double clamped. While you are checking the hoses and hose clamps, exercise all seacocks to make sure they can be closed in an emergency, and clean all sea water strainers to remove sediment. Lastly, check the operation of all bilge pumps to make sure that the automatic float

switches are functioning, and if equipped the manual override switch. Before leaving the bilge, check the operation and water tightness of the shower sump and pump.

While you are below decks, check all of the fluid levels in your engine and transmission, or out-drive as equipped to make sure that these systems are properly lubricated and will not fail due to lack of oil. Also, is it time to have the lubricants changed, particularly to remove corrosive acids or condensation that build up in the engine over the summer months? Next on your list is to check when was the last time you had the seawater impeller checked or replaced. A failing impeller can break apart reducing the effectiveness of the sea water pump and clog the heat exchanger causing overheating. Another item to not overlook is the zincs in your cooling system, if equipped. If they are 50 percent depleted they need to be replaced. While you are checking the cooling system, do not overlook the condition of your coolant and belts. Like hoses, belts can develop cracks or glazing that can cause premature failure or slippage. Check the bilge for rust stains that may be an indication of a leak. Other items in the engine room to check are the air filters (if diesel) or flame arresters (if gasoline) to make sure that they are clean, primary and/or secondary fuel filters as to how many engine hours have passed since they were last changed. If you have a primary filter on your diesel engine, chances are you can make a visual check for sediment or water in the sediment bowl. Lastly, check the condition of your engine diaphragms. Replace them if they are dirty or oil soaked, and if there are oil drips; check the source of the oil drip.

Now that you have crawled out from below decks, it is time to check your electrical system. First on the list are the batteries. A word of caution, you should wear some form of eye protection if you have lead acid batteries. The battery electrolyte is highly corrosive, so be especially careful around batteries, and please, no smoking or lighted matches around batteries. First check the water level in the battery. If the water is below the split ring, then you will need to add distilled water to bring the water level to the bottom of the split ring. [Continued on the next page](#)

# Annual Wellness Review

continued from the previous page

Do not overfill as charging can cause the water to boil and overflow into the battery box. Next you should check the specific gravity to see the state of charge. A fully charged battery will have a voltage of 12.7 volts with a specific gravity of 1.265, whereas a fully discharged (as defined) will have a voltage of 11.9 volts and a specific gravity of 1.120. A simple voltmeter is used to check the voltage while the specific gravity is checked with a hydrometer. The battery electrolyte is made up of 35% sulfuric acid and 65% distilled water. To properly check the condition of the battery, check and add distilled water as needed and place on a charger for 12-hours, then let sit for about an hour before checking the voltage and specific gravity. The typical marine battery has a useful life of about 48-months; however I have had batteries last up to 18-years if they are properly maintained. Before you put the cover on the battery box, check the condition of the terminals to make sure they are free from corrosion, and that they are fastened with a stainless nylok nut and lock washer. Up until recent years, batteries usually came with stainless wing nuts that can loosen. For more information on batteries, check this website for an excellent article on marine batteries: <https://www.batterystuff.com/kb/articles/battery-articles/battery-basics.html>

We are almost finished with our wellness review with a few more areas to check. It is a good time to check your marine head to make sure it is functioning as it once did when you first purchased your boat. Marine heads can be very simple or very complex depending on what was installed in your boat. Some require minimal service such as replacing items in the pump assembly whereas others require more extensive service such as replacing bowl seals, duckbill valves and bellows assemblies. With the exception of marine grade toilet tissue, nothing should be placed in the marine head that has not been passed through the human body. Minute particles in sewage can cause valves to leak resulting in an unsatisfactory functioning toilet. Another component of your waste system to not overlook is the holding tank vent filter. Depending on use, it should periodically be replaced before it becomes clogged. While on your inspection start

the engines and bring them up to operating temperature and note the oil pressure. Activate your fresh water pump and check for leaks. Turn on your electrical system and check the operation of all the lamps, blowers, pumps and accessories for both the 12-volt and 120-volt systems. Replace any bulbs that may fail and make sure you keep a few extra bulbs on hand for when out on the water. Do not forget to check your running lights as well as your anchor lights.

Lastly, check all of your safety equipment including your marine radio, life jackets, throwable devices, horn, fire extinguishers (date), first aid kits with fresh materials, inland visual distress signals, non-expired visual distress signals (as required), anchor and rode, and have onboard, the original copy of your current state registration or federal documentation papers. Another item on your marine checklist is to check batteries in your flashlights and other equipment. As you complete your visual inspection make a list of those items that need attention and either correct them yourself, or have a reliable mechanic address them for you. Also, if it has been a long time since your boat has had a boat yard visit; it may be time to have a haul out with a bottom wash and new bottom paint and fresh zincs.

Now that your boat has had a wellness examination you can feel comfortable that your boat will be dependable for the upcoming boating season.

Shown below are properly secured battery cables.





# Peralta Sail and Power Squadron

## Nominating Committee Report

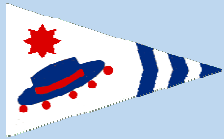
### 2018-19 Bridge and General Committees

Pursuant to Article 9, Section 9.3 of the Peralta Sail and Power Squadron Bylaws, the Nominating Committee submits this report of squadron officers willing to accept the nomination for respective office and committees. All nominees have indicated their wiliness to serve if elected.

|                               |                                   |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Commander</b>              | Cdr. Barbara A. Waldstreicher, AP |
| <b>Executive Officer</b>      | Lt/C Rick C. Erickson, AP         |
| <b>Educational Officer</b>    | D/Lt/C Norman W. Pennington, SN   |
| <b>Administrative Officer</b> | Lt/C Vickie R. Erickson, AP       |
| <b>Secretary</b>              | OPEN POSITION                     |
| <b>Treasurer</b>              | D/Lt/C Judith A. Pennington, P    |
| Executive Committee           | Cdr. Barbara A. Waldstreicher, AP |
|                               | Lt/C Rick C. Erickson, AP         |
|                               | D/Lt/C Norman W. Pennington, SN   |
|                               | Lt/C Vickie R. Erickson, AP       |
|                               | D/Lt/C Judith A. Pennington, P    |
|                               | P/C Alan Smith, P                 |
|                               | P/C Melba Jean Hale, P            |
| Audit Committee               | P/C Janis K. Chapman, AP          |
|                               | P/Lt/C Fred C. Holmes, AP         |
|                               | Susan A. Holmes, S                |
| Nominating Committee          | P/C Melba Jean Hale, P            |
|                               | Lt/C Josette V. Mares, P          |
| Rules Committee               | P/C Ricardo L. Mares, P           |
|                               | Laurence E. Gertz                 |
|                               | P/C Alan Smith, P                 |

## THE HELMSMAN

Peralta Sail and Power Squadron  
16 Cobblestone Lane  
Belmont, CA 94002-2310



# Commander's Comments

## Happy New Year,

I hope your holidays were filled with happy times, memories and good food with friends and family and the New Year brings more good times with family and friends and good health and happiness. The Erickson's spent New Year's Day circumnavigating Alameda in their sailboat, hooking up with the Chapman's at the Balena Bay Yacht Club for some good food and cheer.

Alan Smith, Rick and Vickie Erickson and I attended the California Coastal Clean Up at the San Leandro Marina and registered people, handed out bags and equipment and gave out information. The weather was beautiful and we felt good about doing our part for the environment. Our Halloween party was combined with the SLYC members for a potluck and we all had a good time with our costumes, food and conversations. The District 25 Holiday Party was at the SLYC which was followed about a week later by our Peralta Holiday Party combined with the members of the SLYC. Toys for Tots came out the winner from both parties as members brought toys and games which Rick and Vickie Erickson and I brought to the Marines. Everyone had a good time with food that was catered by Tuti at the D25 party and potluck at Peralta's party.

Our last couple of ExCom Meetings were on Free Conference Call on the computers and were able to stay in the warm confines of our houses and didn't have to drive and commute to the SLYC. It is very convenient that we have the option of using new technology for a few of our meetings and I thank Norm Pennington for setting them up and running them during the meetings.

Congratulations are in order for all the Merit Mark recipients and thank you all for your time and effort put forth for the squadron and District 25 events. Also, congratulations to instructor Norm for Peralta winning the



Bateson Birkett Award for having the greatest number of students passing the Electronic Navigation Systems course.

On a solemn note, we lost two of our long time active members, Dorothy Pendleton and Pat Folger. Both women were very active in our squadron and participated in many activities, parties, and events and will be dearly missed by many. My thoughts and prayers are with Conway and Dick and their families.

We are planning our new calendar of events for 2018, so keep an eye out for future events, parties, land and water excursions to meet new members and catch up with old ones, have some fun and get your new badge. Think about coming out to our annual Crab Feed at the end of January, which is always fun and our Change of Watch in February which will be catered by Tuti, where we know we will eat well. Come out and get involved.....you won't regret it. We are a fun group to hang out with.

Commander Barbara Waldstreicher