Bilgewater Bash is coming!

Have you got your tickets?

Upcoming Events

**Monday, March 17 - Green Boating with Michelle Young**
- Ms. Young is Georgia Strait Alliance’s Clean Marine BC green boating and marine eco-certification program coordinator. She has lived in the Broughton Archipelago and the Discovery Islands in spots accessible only by boat or floatplane, and currently resides on Vancouver Island.

**Saturday, April 5 - Bilgewater Bash!**
- The VPSS Commander’s Bilgewater Bash Dinner Dance will be held at the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club, 3811 Point Grey Road, Vancouver.
  - **Tickets:** $75.00 per person (Ticket price includes the ‘famous’ Bilgewater punch). Door prize draws and dancing to the DJ will follow the delicious RVYC buffet dinner.
  - To reserve your tickets please call Ruth Cuddeford at 604-294-5310 (Monday to Friday 08:30hrs to 17:00hrs) Only 120 tickets are available, so call Ruth ASAP so as not to be disappointed!

**Weekend of May 3 to 5 - Cruise to Snug Cove**
- See inside for more details.

Past, current and incoming Power Squadron members are all welcome at Squadron Nights, held on the third Monday of each month. We meet at the False Creek Yacht Club on the north shore of False Creek under the Granville Street Bridge. The doors open at 7:00 pm, the event begins at 7:30 pm, and the cost is $5.00 per person. We look forward to seeing you there!
Our Boating Basics (BB) course commences April 8 and runs for four weeks. The cost is $80.00, which includes the exam required to obtain your Pleasure Craft Operators Certificate (PCOC). While you can get your PCOC online, you can't replace being in a class with qualified instructors who lead great discussion on what they have learned, often from years of experience. Classes are at Prince of Wales Highschool - check our website: Vpsboat.com. Training has gone well under the direction of our very experienced Training Officer Peter Girling, with his assistants, instructors and proctors. There’s always a good buzz at the Prince of Wales classes; call around and observe.

The Nomination Committee with Bill Stewart, Don Mercer, and myself are busy turning over roster pages and student graduate lists as we attempt to present to our members the new Bridge of Officers to be elected, as well as some appointed officers. All this happens at our AGM/COW on Monday, May 12. We hope to offer some long-serving Bridge members a break (including myself) by having some new recruits join together to “run the ship” for the 2014/2015 season. There are still openings, so please let us know if you can make a contribution, large or small.

The BILGEWATER BASH is happening Saturday April 5, and you can read all about it in this edition. It’s a wonderful, semiformal evening with a long tradition going back to the 1970’s. We’d love to see you there!

Boating season is just around the corner and I can’t wait to get the boat all ready to skim out over the waves. We hope to see you out there….maybe catch a fish, or have a happy hour or two.

Eardley Beaton
Commander, VPSS

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**JOIN US FOR SQUADRON NIGHTS!**

This month’s meeting night falls on St Patrick’s Day! While we listen to Michelle Young talk about green boating, consider getting in touch with your inner Irish and wear green to the evening!
2014 COMMANDER’S BILGEWATER BASH DINNER DANCE

Royal Vancouver Yacht Club
6pm - 12am

All Squadrons welcome! The Vancouver Power and Sail Squadron’s 2014 Commander’s Bilgewater Bash Dinner Dance will be held on Saturday, April 5th at the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club, 3811 Point Grey Road, Vancouver, BC.

Doors open: 17:45, Bilgewater at: 18:00, Dinner at: 19:00, Doors close at: 12:00

Tickets: $75.00 per person (including the ‘famous’ Bilgewater punch). Door prize draws and dancing to the DJ will follow the delicious RVYC buffet dinner. To reserve your tickets please call Ruth Cuddeford at 604-294-5310 (Mon-Fri 08:30hrs to 17:00hrs). Only 120 tickets are available, so call Ruth ASAP so as not to be disappointed!
**Training News**

**Boating Essentials** is in progress and will be followed by **Boating Basics**, starting on April 8. This may be the last opportunity to get a PCOC before the summer.

**The Maritime Radio (VHF)** course starts on February 13 and there is still space available for anyone needing an ROC-M (Radio Operator Certificate).

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The student cruise took place on March 1, a cold and blustery day. Initially, 27 students signed up for the cruise, but late cancellations reduced that number to about 22. The cruise left from RVYC in Coal Harbour at about 0900; once at Brockton Point, a course is determined to reach Second Narrows and calculations are made to estimate the time of arrival. It was more complicated this year because the ebb current was running at nearly 4 knots. The plus side was that a student appreciation of the effects of tidal current, velocity and turbulence, was quite evident.

The next exercise was another “60D=St” calculation for the estimated travelling time between Berry Point and Roche Point. After rounding Roche Point, the boats stop and compass bearings are taken on the visible aids. A two or three bearing fix is plotted and the position is compared to the reading on the GPS. Afterward, the boats proceed to Bedwell Bay and raft up together for lunch. About that time, the outflow down Indian Arm freshened and white caps formed, giving the skippers more angst in forming the raft. After lunch and a lot of boat hopping, the raft broke up and we headed back to RVYC. By now, the current had reversed and we had to buck through Second Narrows once again, arriving back to dock at about 1500, greeted by the beginning flakes of snow.

We are grateful to those RVYC skippers who made their warm and comfortable vessels available on a cold, winter-like day. They are: Bill Botham (Deora), Bruce Buchanan (Blue Haven), Craig McKeen (Seakean), John Steede (Daruma) and Ron Jupp (Nimpkish II). Perhaps Ron deserves special thanks because he is not a member of CPS but is always ready to help us with this exercise, and besides, it’s his anchor that holds our raft in position!

Peter Girling  
Training Officer

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**Electronic Navigation** is a new CPS course. It combines the previous two courses, **Navigating with GPS** and **Electronic Charting**, into one more succinct manual. The course begins with an overview of the basic GPS system and moves on to a discussion of chartplotters and touches on the use of laptop computers for navigation. The two CD’s that come with the course include a Chartplotter Simulator and the somewhat dated Chart Navigator by Maptech. The appendices include some worthwhile references and a list of features to consider when purchasing a GPS or chartplotter.

Are you interested? The course is about six weeks long and could start on April 1 or 8. Send Peter Girling an email at prg@telus.net.
February’s Meeting: Milltown Marina

Milltown Marina Open House
March 15, 2014

Explore Vancouver’s Newest Marina
Volunteer for a shift at the VPSS Information Booth

On Saturday, March 15 from 1pm to 5pm, Milltown Marina is hosting an Open House event, with a live band, BBQ, face-painting for children, as well as ample opportunity to stroll around and explore Vancouver’s newest marina. Milltown Marina is located on Richmond Island in the Marpole neighbourhood, just south of Granville Street and SW Marine Drive.

VPSS will be on hand with an information booth to raise community awareness of our boating courses. If you have an hour or two to spare, we could use a few more volunteers to meet and greet the public.

Please contact Barbara Constantine at bconstantine@shaw.ca or call 604-876-0156.
Survey Says!

We’ve now measured Boating Essentials (26 students), Fundamentals of Weather (18 students), and Maritime Radio (20 students), and here are the results:

**Online: 50%**
Including: BoatingCourses.ca, FaceBook, Google Search, VPSBoat.com

**Word of Mouth: 43%**
Including: Friends and Family and prior CPS courses

**Traditional: 5%**
Including: Magazines, Signs, Radio, Boat Shows, Marinas

*Online and Word of Mouth were 93% of how students heard about these three Spring 2014 courses!*

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Cruisemaster’s Corner

*by Cruisemaster Lois MacDonald at cruisemaster@vpsboat.com*

**May 3-5, 2014 weekend at Snug Cove**

The first cruise for the 2014 weekend will be to Snug Cove on Bowen Island, from Friday May 2 to Sunday May 4. To ensure space at the dock, please reserve no later than April 18 by phoning the Marina at 604-947-0707 (You can book later, space permitting).

For those unable to come over on Friday, please come over on Saturday. We are planning a BBQ/potluck on the Saturday afternoon, either at the dock or in the Tower at the Marina. More details to follow in the April Masthead.

This event is open to both boat owners and non-boat owners as you can get to Snug Cove easily by taking the Bowen Island Ferry from Horseshoe Bay.

Hope you can join us!!

If you have any questions, please contact Lois MacDonald at cruisemaster@vpsboat.com
Visiting the Island of Poop.

In late January, my wife Joanne and I hopped a bus in Lima and headed down the Pan American highway south to the coast of Peru. This is not the coastline we’re familiar with here in BC. It’s a desert with long, long stretches of sand dunes and nary a tree to be found.

But if you carry on you’ll eventually arrive in the small town of Paracas (L 13°50.3 S, Lo 76°15.10 W), a coastal village with a decent sized fishing fleet that harvests thousands of tonnes of anchovies.

Another big catch is tourists; warm temperatures and no rain (less than one centimeter per year!) all but guarantee the visitors will be happy.

One of the main draws is the Ballestras Islands National Park. It’s a marine sanctuary for fur seals, sea lions, the guano bird, the Humboldt penguin and the appropriately named Blue-footed Booby.

Getting there is easy; just a short ride in a panga. A panga is a shallow-hulled open-cockpit affair with great big honking outboards on the transom. Instrumentation is simple; ours had a compass. That’s it.

Pangas are perfect for loading fish or tourists. Within 20 minutes, we had arrived at the refuge and were instantly overwhelmed by the sights, sounds and smells. Where the rocks met the sea were hundreds of seals and sea lions. These were not shy critters. In fact, if they had digital cameras, and fingers instead of flippers, the number of selfies they’d snap would be intolerable!

There were also thousands and thousands of screeching birds; Inca terns, Peruvian Gulls, boobies, Red-legged Cormorants and Turkey Vultures in a constant take-off and landing pattern. This occasionally results in an aerial traffic jam so large that the birds become agitated. And an agitated bird is not the one you want flying overhead (Travel tip: wear a broad-brimmed hat).

Besides the birds and the seals, one lonely caretaker lives on the island. His nostrils must be burnt out. His job is to guard the guano, which is harvested only every six years. Did I say, “guard the guano”? Yes, guard the guano.

While you may think bird poop is just bird poop, this special blend is a prized super-fertilizer. The combination of a cold ocean current and warm air off the desert sand prevents rainfall. This dry, hot air bakes the guano, preserving the nitrates. How valuable is it? In the 1800’s, Peru paid its war reparations by selling its guano. Try cashing that at the bank!
After an hour of circling the islands, our noses needed a break, so we headed back to town only to notice an amazing sight on one of the hills. It’s called the Candelabra of Paracas and it’s a geoglyph nearly 200 metres in length, that can be seen for miles. The symbol is cut about 60 centimetres into the soil and because of the lack of rain, it’s remained intact. No one knows exactly how old it is, but scientists tested some nearby pottery using radio carbon dating and found the pots to be 2,200 years old.

So, what does it mean? Some believe that it represents a lightning rod of the god Viracocha. Others suggest it was an aid to navigation for sailors, or a Masonic symbol, or even a representation of the hallucinogenic plant known as Jimson Weed.

The last option sounds promising, but that would be another story.

~ Paul Heeney
NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN

Our VPSS Committee members Bill Stewart, Don Mercer and Eardley Beaton will be examining the Bridge structure to determine what positions will be needed to run our Squadron for the 2014/2015 term. Some Officers may wish to have a break so we will be open to any enquiries from members, new and old.

Please e-mail to: beatonsbeat@shaw.ca or telephone 604-734-4900