

# The Porthole

December 2020



**United States Power Squadrons**  
*Come for the Boating Education...Stay for the friends*

Ann Arbor Sail and Power Squadron  
A unit of United States Power Squadrons in District 9

<http://www.aaspsq.org/>

# Ann Arbor Sail and Power Squadron

General Meetings are usually held each month, Sept. thru June  
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Boating Education since 1965

Sail and Power Boating Education

55 YEARS  
THE BOATING PUBLIC



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<https://www.aasps.org>

## CONTACTS

Commander: Ron Schwartz, SN, Life	734-769-3476	<a href="mailto:schwartzr348@aol.com">schwartzr348@aol.com</a>
Executive Officer: Peggy Moller	517-937-9817	<a href="mailto:mmoller@umich.edu">mmoller@umich.edu</a>
Secretary: Lt/C John Barr Jr.	734-483-0839	<a href="mailto:jmbarrjr@gmail.com">jmbarrjr@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer: Lt/C Marlene Barr	734-483-0839	<a href="mailto:mjb_120022535@hotmail.com">mjb_120022535@hotmail.com</a>
Assist. Treasurer: P/C John Barr, AP, Life	734-483-0839	<a href="mailto:JMBarr@BarrLawFirm.com">JMBarr@BarrLawFirm.com</a>
Education Officer Ron Schwartz, SN	734-769-3476	<a href="mailto:schwartzr348@aol.com">schwartzr348@aol.com</a>
Public Relations Officer: P/C John Barr, AP, Life	734-483-0839	<a href="mailto:JMBarr@BarrLawFirm.com">JMBarr@BarrLawFirm.com</a>
Chaplain: P/C John Barr, AP, Life	734-483-0839	<a href="mailto:JMBarr@BarrLawFirm.com">JMBarr@BarrLawFirm.com</a>
Membership Chair: D/Lt/C Carolyn Knaggs, P	734-645-3503	<a href="mailto:carolynknaggs@me.com">carolynknaggs@me.com</a>
Web Designer: Lt. Peggy Moller	517-937-9817	<a href="mailto:mmoller@umich.edu">mmoller@umich.edu</a>
Webmaster: Evrard (Freddy) Ohou		<a href="mailto:oevfred@umich.edu">oevfred@umich.edu</a>
Porthole Proofreader: Lt. Peggy Moller	517-937-9817	<a href="mailto:mmoller@umich.edu">mmoller@umich.edu</a>
Porthole Publisher/Distribution: Cdr. Ron Schwartz, SN, Life	734-769-3476	<a href="mailto:schwartzr348@aol.com">schwartzr348@aol.com</a>

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America's Boating Club is unable to provide DAN Boater travel safety benefits to members without their email address listed in the USPS database. Members can update their email address in one of two ways:

1. Go to the Information Center, [www.usps.org/info](http://www.usps.org/info) and update your record.
2. Contact HQ Membership Staff by phone or email:  
Deliah Holloway, [hollowayd@hq.usps.org](mailto:hollowayd@hq.usps.org) Phone 1-888- 367-8777 ext. 229 or  
Lynda Stevens, [stevensl@hq.usps.org](mailto:stevensl@hq.usps.org) Phone 1-888-367-8777 ext. 219.

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United States Power Squadrons

<https://www.usps.org>







## Commander's Message

Cdr. Ron Schwartz, SN

ASI and the Peche Island Beacon



Thank you to all members who stayed with us this year and helped to keep us active. Our Merit Mark report was submitted several weeks ago. -- the response has not yet been recieved. I wish all a merry Christmas and healthy New Year. We will plan a January meeting in early January depending on if we have covid vaccinations by then.

About 25 years ago I was a member of ASI (American Sailing Institute). They own two 33' sail boats and several 25' sail boats at Jefferson Beach Marina in St. Clair Shores, and many 19' sloops at Kensington and Stoney Creek Metro Parks. In October, they needed a few sailors to take one 33' boat from Jefferson Beach Marina to Tricentennial State Park and Harbor in Detroit. Another crew would take the boat to Luna Pier, near Toledo. I and the club president and another sailor volunteered for the trip to Detroit. We started about 9 A.M. in mild fog, no wind so we motored south toward Belle Isle. As we neared Belle Isle, the president and I were at the helm, and the other person was in the cabin with the chart. None of us had been to that part of the lake before. They thought the large beacon -- in the photo below -- was the marker at the head of Belle Isle, and we should go east of it. I had my doubts since it did have a patch of red. But they had seniority. So I headed south east of the beacon. We got 30 feet past the beacon and quickly came to soft stop -- our 6 foot keel was stuck in the Peche Island mud. We tried to rock the boat by running from one side of the deck to the other, but it wouldn't budge. A small motor boat buzzed by on our port side, then another small motor boat, chasing the first one. It was a DNR officer chasing the first boat. He stopped and took our bow line and towed us back into the channel. On the chart the beacon is at 42° 29' N, 82° 56.5' W. It is marked Peche I. Lt FL R 4s 44' 6 St. M. After getting back into the channel, we had no problems and met the second crew at the Detroit Harbor. Why was the beacon painted white? Perhaps to make it easier to see. In October of this year my sons George and Steve and I took a ride on George's 50' power boat from Jefferson Beach marina 8.8 nautical miles to photograph the Peche Island beacon. A 15 knot south wind created 2' waves and a bumpy ride.

ASI 19' sailboat



ASI 33' sailboat



## Pecche Island Beacon



Green/Red buoy marking channel split

Pecche Island beacon

Belle Isle beacon

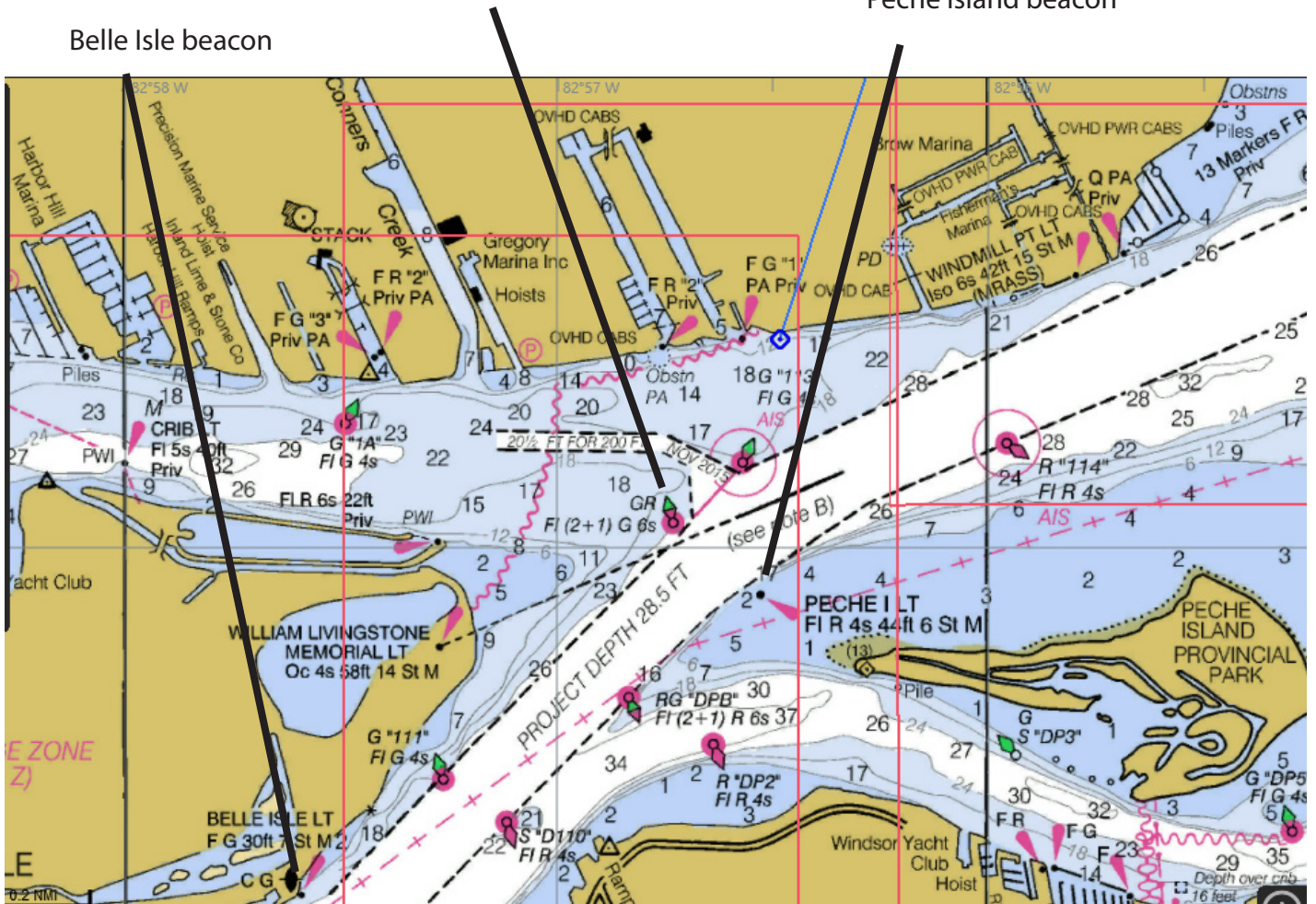


Chart of Belle Isle to Pecche Island

American Sailing Institute is a Michigan Sailing School that teaches the joy of sailing in a social environment to adult sailors of all ages and abilities. Please see our class Schedule Details and the Class Overview to see how the program works. Or contact American Sailing Institute's sail secretary, Traci, at 248-393-4280

[americansailinginstitute.org](http://americansailinginstitute.org)



## Wednesday Brunch

June 9, 1909 dawned as a lovely June morning in Sault Ste. Marie (the Soo). Canadian Pacific Railway's majestic passenger liner, the Assiniboia approached the Canadian Soo Lock following her downbound passage from Port Arthur the previous night. Assiniboia can be described as "The Greyhound of the Lakes"; white with green trim and a tall stack like her sister ship, the Keewatin. Her interior was trimmed in rich mahogany with hanging ferns in the grand salon. She usually made a noontime passenger stop at the Government Dock in the Canadian Soo, then continued passage onward to Port McNicoll in Georgian Bay where passengers could connect by Canadian Pacific train, the Steam Boat, to Toronto and Eastern Canada. Usually the upbound or opposing boat would meet the downbound boat at the Government Dock at the same time, making for a very busy hour or so.

Her captain gently guided the single-screw Assiniboia into the lock; thrusters had not yet been developed, the Assiniboia having entered service in 1907. Then her crew secured lines to the bollards to make her fast to the lock wall inside the lock. A second vessel carrying iron ore, the American flagged Crescent City was next cleared to enter the same lock behind the Assiniboia. Crescent City was riding low in the water due to her heavy ore load.

Meanwhile the captain of the upbound American flagged ore boat, the Perry G. Walker selected the Canadian Lock for what he thought would be a quicker upbound transit once the Assiniboia and Crescent City had cleared the lock down bound. The Walker received orders to tie off at a wharf and await clearance. But the captain ignored these instructions and attempted to move closer to the lower lock gates in order to be the first in line. But as the Walker moved closer to the lock gate, the captain realized that he was getting too close so threw the Chadburn, the ship's telegraph on the bridge, into full reverse. For reasons that can never be explained, the engineer thought the Chadburn repeater read full ahead so pushed the throttle full forward. The captain recognized the mistake from the bridge, rang the Chadburn again but it was too late!

The hapless *Walker* surged forward so her bow struck the lower gate. The collision pushed and opened the lower gates and caused a pressure surge of water within the lock. The water pressure buckled and opened the upper gates so that Lake Superior waters were suddenly rushing freely down into the lower St. Mary's River, a 21 foot fall.

The Walker was forced backward by the on-rushing waters and swung to port. Meanwhile the Assiniboia was ripped free from her moorings, went boiling down with the surge of water to strike the Walker on her starboard side. Assiniboia's captain asked for full power in order to gain steerage but to no avail. The Crescent City's crew frantically tried to tie off her mooring lines but also were overwhelmed by the force of the current. Crescent City was also carried downward hitting the lock walls as had the Assiniboia. After striking the Walker, the Assiniboia dropped anchor in an attempt to slow her own downward rush. The Crescent City, now also free of the lock, turned so that it struck only a glancing blow to the Assiniboia's starboard side and fortunately missed hitting the Walker. All three headed for the American side for docking and damage inspection. The fully loaded and most heavily damaged Crescent City reached the dock but sunk.

The Canadian Lock was a mess. Water continued to gush through from the higher Lake Superior and eventually carried away the gates on both the upper and lower ends. After several hour an emergency swing dam successfully slowed the current so eventually the locks were sealed closed. Water was then pumped out to reveal massive damage to the gates, walls, grates, and intake valves.

Such an accident today due to the engineer misreading the Chadburn would be unlikely because today's lakers are diesel powered with the throttles operated from the bridge.

Finally, old Soo, Canada residents tell the tale about three lovely ladies returning to the Soo on the Assiniboia following a family reunion in Port Arthur. They would have enjoyed a nice brunch in the dining room, then walked out onto the open deck to observe the locking. What they witnessed is described above. The tale is that one said to the other, "Winifred, that was so exciting. Let's do this again next year."

# Boating Education

Four of our 6 ABC students graduated: Celeste and Thomas Martin, Leigh Luyet, and Robert Shiff.

**Our ABC (America's Boating Course) has been approved for on-line presentation.**

Please reply to [schwartzr348@aol.com](mailto:schwartzr348@aol.com) and list courses and seminars you would like to take.

Courses being offered by all local Squadrons are advertised, at <http://www.usps.org/cgi-bin/nat/eddept/800/cfindx.cgi?C>

Courses and seminars available from USPS are listed below. Courses take about 16 hours - 8 weeks .  
Seminars are about 2 hours long.

## Seminars

Advanced Powerboat Handling   AIS Electronics for Boaters   Anchoring   Boating on Rivers, Locks and Lakes   Crossing Border   Emergencies on Board   Fuel and Boating   Radar for Boaters (RA)   Hands-On Training   How to Use a Chart   Hurricane Preparation for Boaters   Introduction to Navigation   Knots, Bends, and Hitches   Man Overboard   Marine Radar   Mariner's Compass Seminar   Mastering the Rules of the Road   Paddle Smart   Propane Systems on Your Boat   Partner in Command   Sail Trim   Tides and Currents   Trailering Your Boat   Using GPS   Using VHF and VHF/DSC Marine Radio

## Advanced courses

Seamanship (S)   Piloting (P)   Instructor Development (ID)   Advanced Piloting (AP)   Cruising and Cruise Planning (C and CP)   Engine Maintenance (EM)   Electronic Navigation (ENCE)   Marine Communication Systems (MCS)   Marine Electrical Systems (MES)   Sail (Sa) 2009   Junior Navigation (JN)   Navigation (N)   Weather (Wx) 2012

## A Partial List of Events

DATE	SPONSOR	EVENT AND LOCATION
Jan. 18, 2021	AASPS	Change of Watch if we have covid vaccinations
April 9-11	D9	Spring Conference at Shanty Creek
Feb. 14-21	ABClub	Annual Meeting Ponte Vedra, FL

