

Fall / Winter Courses Starting

The Fall/Winter training season is fast approaching us and we will be offering a small variety of the courses available. Firstly, the Boating course will start Monday October 18, 2004 at Chippewa High School. Registration takes place on the first night, but call the Squadron phone number to let us know you are interested. All members are encouraged to pass the word along to any friends and family who may be interested in the courses we offer. Cost of the boating course is \$125.00 for

the first member and \$75.00 for each additional family member who attends and shares some supplies. Secondly, this fall, we will be offering the seamanship sail course. This course will likely not start until November, so call the number below to inquire about times. Cost is \$50.00 for CPS members and \$60.00 for non members. Our phone number is 499-2599 and leave a message or call Carol at 752-2223. Look for a Piloting and Fundamentals of Weather course soon as well.

Issue 2004 Volume 3

October, 2004

CROSSCHOP

The Official Newsletter of the



NORTH BAY ^{Power Sail} SQUADRON



Published Quarterly

Cruise Attendance up Over 33%!

Caven Ford P



Attendance at your squadron sponsored dinner cruise on the Chief Commanda was up over 33% this year with the additional attendance of the author and his wife putting total attendance at 8! We had a wonderful meal and the conversation was super as well, with all of us getting caught up on each other's summer activities. The folks on the ship had reserved us a table and even made an announcement to our presence, much to our mild embarrassment. The cruise to Callander Bay was complete with a bit of history of the area and great service during the meal. I would highly recommend the evening to anyone and hope to see more attend next year.

In This Issue:

Geocaching for CPS	2
Overheard in Passing	3
CHS Looking for Input	3
Flotsam and Jetsam	3
Boat Winterizing	4
Voyageur District AGM.....	5
Mandatory Life Jackets ..	5
Sturgeon River Lights.....	5
Bye Bye Boats and Places	6
National Conference	6
Cruise Information	6
Cool Gear and Stuff	7
Overheard in Passing	7
2004 Membership List	8
2004/2005 Bridge.....	8



Geocaching for CPS

Terry Lang AP

There's a cool new global high tech game happening all around you and it's free. Hundreds of thousands of people are "treasure hunting"

or geocaching using their hand held GPS (global positioning systems). Experience the thrill of the hunt (and find). Learn to use your GPS, get some exercise, and have some fun. When I told my wife Wendy that I'd like a new GPS for my birthday this past June, little did I know that it would enter us into the new and exciting world of geocaching. What is geocaching? Well, simply put, it is electronic treasure hunting using a GPS. Welcome to the coolest game to come along in a long time.

I'm throwing a little twist into the game. Combining a regular cache with a North Bay Power and Sail Squadron Pin Exchange/Burgee Exchange. Of course you will need a boat to get to our cache. Read on for more details.

Geocaching uses expensive high-tech gadgets, to help locate dollar store swag. Why you might ask do people do this and why is it becoming so popular? First off, lets face it...guys like their toys. I'm always after the latest gadget to play with and being able to actually use it to play a game is 'way cool'. Secondly, the chance of finding that perfect piece of treasure in a cache, the one that no one else wants, but is perfect for you. Now throw in the exhilaration of the hunt, and all the fresh air and exercise, the learning a new area or parts of your area that you didn't even know existed, and I think you'll start to see why this game is catching on so rapidly. This gives the trip a purpose as well. There is a goal to find something as part of the outing and we find it gets us out more often.

We have found that geocaching has taken us into areas that we did not even know existed. Often caches are hidden near trail systems or point of interest. Even in local lakes requiring a boat to access. This is where I got my idea for our Squadron Cache.

We got hooked this summer on vacation in Manitoulin Island. We borrowed our friend's 6-year-old boy, Colton, and asked him if he'd like to go treasure hunting. A short walk up the beach and a little searching, and we're hooked. He wanted the baseball cards that were in the cache and all we had to trade was a golf ball. We are a bit better prepared these days. He came back to camp and told all of our friends children about the treasure hunt. So, now of course we had to take each of them in succession out on the next hunts and find them their treasures. The most exciting one was little Sydney (6) who found a whoopee cushion. Another one hooked and a new little prankster to boot. Camp became a bit noisier after that find.

Items that may be found in a cache include, toys, cards, tools, software, CD's, tackle, camping and hiking accessories, maps, puzzles, and many other items. Typically, you want to leave something that someone else may be able to use. Often children join their parents or grandparents in caching, so toys are often included in a cache.

What shouldn't be in a cache? Use your common sense in most cases. Explosives, ammo, knives, drugs, and alcohol shouldn't be placed in a cache. Respect the local laws. All ages of people hide and seek caches, so use some thought before placing an item into a cache. Food items are ALWAYS a BAD IDEA. Animals have better noses than humans, and in some cases caches have been chewed through and destroyed because of food items in a cache.

After visiting a cache your job still isn't done, you must then officially log your visit there as well.

Geocaching has many different "types" of caches. There are micro caches, Virtual caches, traditional cache, multi-caches, puzzle cache, locationless caches and others.

How does it work? It's actually very simple but can be challenging at the same time. A traditional cache is hidden by another geocacher. We have hidden 4 so far and there are over 10,000 caches hidden worldwide. The coordinates of the cache are entered on the website (www.geocaching.com) along with a description and usually a clue that you can decrypt if you would like to see the hint. You type the coordinates into a hand held GPS unit (ok, you can use a boat mounted GPS as well, but you will look a bit silly walking through the woods with a 16 foot Starcraft on your shoulder), which is saved as a 'waypoint'. When you save a set of coordinates in a GPS, it is known as a waypoint. You then navigate to that waypoint and find the cache. Sounds easy doesn't it? Sometimes it is, sometimes it's hidden very, very, very well making it quite difficult to find. Clues in the write up and comments that others leave help solve the mystery and disclose the hiding spot, some caches you might not ever be able to find. Without getting too technical, even the best GPS's on the market today will only get you down to 3 meter accuracy (that's 9 feet). So...the person that hid the cache has a real good GPS...3 meter accuracy, you have a good GPS...3 meter accuracy.... that's a $(3 \times 3 = 9)$ meters or a 27 foot circle to search. Now, throw in some leaves overhead and drop the accuracy a bit: say 6 meters each, now you are talking about a 36-meter (108 foot circle where the cache could be hidden). Now, don't get scared...hidiers usually use averaging to get good coordinates, and using simple triangulations you can get fairly close to them even in bad navigation conditions.

Caches are placed by other geocachers and can be anywhere. There are rules for getting a location approved, like not trespassing on private land, etc but you can read about that on the site. One of the principals of geocaching is "cache in, trash out". Caring for the environment is part of the mandate.

Once you have entered the waypoint in the GPS and have navigated to that waypoint, start looking for the cache. It's the most amazing feeling when one of us yells, "found it" after a great hunt. When you find the cache open it up. Hopefully the container is well sealed and there is no water inside. We have come across a few that were water damaged and we tried to dry it out the best we can. If is in real bad shape you may want to e-mail the owner so they can fix it up. All caches contain a logbook. You are required (rules of the game) to sign the logbook. People will often have user names that they go by. So use your imagination and come up with your own name. When we locate the cache Wendy's job is to sign the logbook while I open the rest of the cache and pick a treasure to take and leave. In bug season you will want to be quick. We have made a sticker that we now put in the logbook. Time is an important factor when black flies are in your ears and up your nose!!!

How much does this cost? The game itself is free. You will need a hand held GPS which range in cost from under \$100 to well over \$1000 depending on what features you would like. You will need to sign up for an account (which is free) on geocaching.com where you will pick your username and agree to the rules. Your visits are tracked by your username. This of course requires a computer.

Geocaching cont'd

If there is something in the cache that you like, you can take it providing that you put something else back in its place. The general rule is to trade up, trade even, or don't trade at all. So if you take something out, you should replace it with something of equal or greater value.

Creating and maintaining a cache is exciting to do as well. We have one just south of North Bay. After we placed it, we anxiously waited for someone to find it. Finally, after about a week, a cacher found it when, just meters from our cache, he ran into a moose and lost his lab for over 20 minutes.

So now you know what geocaching is and you are asking yourself how does this apply to CPS? I'm getting there. I mentioned earlier that I got an idea for a Squadron cache. It was placed in Lake Nipissing (ok, not IN the lake, but you have to use your boat to get to it out on the lake) on September 10, 2004. Its name is the North Bay Power and Sail Squadron Cache. You can search for GCKH0K on geocaching.com for details about the cache.

The cache is located at N 46° 11.737 W 079° 40.423. This cache is a traditional cache (a large peanut butter jar registered on geocaching.com for all to find. The unique part is that it also contains several North Bay Power and Sail Squadron Burgee Crests and Pins. If you are a CPS member or USPS member, we encourage you to do a pin / burgee exchange with us. We would also like you to e-mail us that you visited the site and I'll post your comments pictures etc on our squadron website (www.nbpss.on.ca). If you are not a CPS member, please come find our cache and sign the log and make trades as usual, but please leave the pins and burgees for the squadron members.

So...we are issuing 2 challenges. The first to all squadron members: Come and find our Cache, send us some feedback, and do a pin/burgee exchange with us.

The second to all other squadrons: how about setting up your own geocache in your areas for others squadron members to find and do something similar with pins or burgees.

Please come and enjoy our lake, and Safe Boating to all.
Happy Caching!

Overheard in Passing

Doreen's husband Matt died suddenly one day. Doreen was taking care of the funeral arrangements with the undertaker when she was asked how she wanted Matt's obituary to read. Doreen asked the undertaker, "How much does an obituary cost?" The undertaker replied, "One dollar per word." Doreen then said, "I want the obituary to read - MATT IS DEAD." The undertaker was an old fishing buddy of Matt's and he was a little disturbed by such a curt obituary, so he offered, "I'll make you a special deal since I knew Matt so well. I'll pay for half of the obituary out of my own pocket." Doreen's face lit up and she replied, "Great. I want it to read - MATT IS DEAD, BOAT FOR SALE."

CHS is Looking for Input

Caven Ford P

The Canadian Hydrographic Service is looking for boater's input. From their site: "The Canadian Hydrographic Service (CHS) provides its customers with up-to-date and accurate nautical publications necessary for safe and efficient navigation in Canada's navigable waters. The CHS would like to consult its customers to identify the services that should be placed in priority. This will be done by respecting customer interests as well as considering CHS' limited resources. The results obtained from this consultation will assist in determining a new level of service standards."

If you receive the Notices to Mariners you will see the questionnaire in the October and November editions or you can log on to their web site at <http://www.charts.gc.ca/pub/en/los/questionnaire.asp> to fill out the online version. Here is an opportunity to have a say in future direction of the Hydrographic Service and charting.

Flotsam and Jetsam

Caven Ford P

Is it just me or were there a lot more spiders on board your boat this year. We seemed to be overrun with them. That reminds me of something I discovered while surfing the Internet a while back. The following applies to the USA and I haven't had time to research how it compares to Canada yet, but for general information:

How many insect parts are allowed to be in peanut butter before it's legally considered unsanitary? How much do you want to know? Unfortunately, growing and storing food is not a completely sterile industry; some impurities will sneak in on tiny feet and wings. Peanut butter, by federal safety standards, may have up to 210 or more insect fragments per 700 grams, an average-size jar of peanut butter. But wait, that's just the insect part. That same average jar of peanut butter may also contain up to seven whole rodent hairs at no extra charge before it's considered unsanitary. I think I'll be skipping the Peanut Butter the next time I am visiting the US.

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Unfortunately, the boating season is winding down in many parts of the country and it is time to start thinking about protecting your valuable recreational asset. Winterizing a boat reminds me of the old commercial that says "pay me now or pay me later." The time and effort you spend now will have a definite effect on your boat's performance, or lack of it, and certainly save you time, effort and money come spring. You should remember that your insurance policy may not cover damage done by lack of maintenance or neglect.

The best place for your boat to be during the winter is out of the water, under cover, in a climate-controlled boat storage area. This, however, can be expensive. If don't have this option perhaps you should consider shrink-wrapping your boat. This, too, is a little expensive but provides a very protective cover. Short of these two items, make sure that your boat is well covered with a tarp or some other sturdy cover.

Your first step in winterizing should be to make a checklist of all items that need to be accomplished. Check the owner's manual of your boat and motor(s) for manufacturer's recommendations on winterization. If you are a new boat owner, perhaps you should employ the assistance of a friend with experience in winterizing or hire a professional to do the job. The following is a generic outline of areas which should be of concern to you, however, there are many resources on the Internet with more detailed and specific information.

Inboard Engine(s) - You should run the engine(s) to warm it up and change the oil while it is warm. This tends to allow impurities to be drained away with the oil. You should also change the oil filter(s). Flush the engine(s) with fresh water. You should circulate antifreeze through the manifold by using a pickup hose from the waterpump to a bucket of antifreeze. Start the engine and allow the antifreeze to circulate until water starts to exit the exhaust. This process will vary slightly depending on whether you have a "Raw Water" cooling system or an "Enclosed Fresh Water" cooling system. While you're in the engine room you should also change the fluid in your transmission. Remove spark plugs and use "fogging oil" to spray into each cylinder. Wipe down the engine with a shop towel sprayed with a little fogging oil or WD-40.

Stern Drive(s) - You should thoroughly inspect the stern drive and remove any plant life or barnacles from the lower unit. Drain the gear case and check for excessive moisture in the oil. This could indicate leaking seals and should be repaired. Clean the lower unit with soap and water. If your stern drive has a rubber boot, check it for cracks or pinholes. Grease all fittings and check fluid levels in hydraulic steering or lift pumps. Check with your owner's manual for additional recommendations by the manufacturer.

Outboard Engine(s) - Flush engine with fresh water using flush muffs or similar device attached to the raw water pickup. Let all water drain from the engine. Wash engine down with soap and water and rinse thoroughly. Disconnect fuel hose and run engine until it stops. It is important to follow a step by step process to make sure that all fuel is drained from the carburetor to prevent build-up of deposits from evaporated

fuel. Use fogging oil in the cylinders to lubricate the cylinder walls and pistons. Apply water resistant grease to propeller shaft and threads. Change the gear oil in the lower unit. Lightly lubricate the exterior of the engine or polish with a good wax.

Fuel - Fill your fuel tank(s) to avoid a build up of condensation over the winter months. Add a fuel stabilizer by following the instructions on the product. Change the fuel filter(s) and water separator(s).

Bilges - Make sure the bilges are clean and dry. Use soap, hot water and a stiff brush to clean up any oil spills. Once the bilges are clean, spray with a moisture displacing lubricant and add a little antifreeze to prevent any water from freezing.

Fresh Water System - Completely drain the fresh water tank and hot water heater. Isolate the hot water heater by disconnecting the in and out lines and connect them together. Pump a non-toxic antifreeze into the system and turn on all the facets including the shower and any wash-down areas until you see the antifreeze coming out. Also put non-toxic antifreeze in the water heater.

Head - Pump out the holding tank at an approved facility. While pumping, add fresh water to the bowl and flush several times. Use Vanish crystals or whatever your owner's manual recommends that will not harm your system and let sit for a few minutes. Again add fresh water and pump out again. Add antifreeze and pump through hoses, holding tank, y-valve, macerator and discharge hose. Again, check your owners manual to make sure that an alcohol-based antifreeze won't damage your system.

Interior - Once you have taken care of the system you should remove any valuables, electronics, lines, PFD, fire extinguishers, flares, fenders, etc. Over the winter these items can be cleaned, checked and replaced as necessary. Open all drawers and lockers and clean thoroughly. Turn cushions up on edge so that air is able to circulate around them or, better yet, bring them home to a climate controlled area. Open and clean the refrigerator and freezer. To keep your boat dry and mildew-free you might want to install a dehumidifier or use some of the commercially available odor and moisture absorber products such as "No Damp," "Damp Away" or "Sportsman's Mate."

Out of Water Storage - pressure wash hull, clean barnacles off props and shafts, rudders, struts and trim tabs. Clean all thru-hulls and strainers. Open seacocks to allow any water to drain. Check the hull for blisters and if you find any that should be attended to you might want to open them to drain over the winter. While you're at it, why not give the hull a good wax job? It is probably best to take the batteries out of the boat and take them home and either put them on a trickle charger or charge them every 30-60 days.

In Water Storage - Close all seacocks and check rudder shafts and stuffing boxes for leaks, tighten or repack as necessary. Check your battery to make sure it is fully charged, clean terminals, add water if necessary and make sure your charging system is working. Check bilge pumps to

Voyageur District AGM

Terry Lang AP

The district AGM was held in Sault Ste Marie on May 28-30, 2004. For the first time in 6 years, we had a full conference. This event was held in conjunction with the Sault Squadron's 40th anniversary, graduation and change of watch.

Beginning the weekend with a wine and cheese and casino night, everyone kicked back and reminisced. Old stories were told, and new ones shared as old friends gathered with new friends. Many of the Sault Squadron members were in attendance adding to the list of new friends.

Highlights from Saturday's business meeting include district officer reports, Squadron Commanders reports, the swearing in of the new district bridge, and a question and answer period with Past Chief Commander Dave Durwood.

The 2004-2005 District Bridge as follows (for the complete list, please see the web site):

Dist Comander: Horst Matern (Pary Sound)
District Executive Officer: Jack McIrvine (Bracebridge)
Dist Training Officer: Francois Legault (Manitoulin)
Dist Admin Officer: Terry Lang (North Bay)
Dist Secretary: Caven Ford (North Bay)
Dist Treasurer: Ian Scott (Pary Sound)
Dist: PRO: Ermer Bowes (Bracebridge)

Following the business meeting, the Sault Squadron had their graduation and change of watch where the new members/bridge were sworn in by Past Chief Durwood. And immediately following that, a fantastic dinner/dance with over 150 people in attendance. An excellent weekend.

Not having all the details yet, it was announced that North Bay Squadron won one of the district trophy's....highest percentage of people writing the boating exam and passing the first time. It will be presented at the next district meeting. I've included some pictures of the weekend on the Voyageur Website: www.voyageur-cps-ecp.org

Finally, there will be a district rendezvous August 6-8 in the North Channel. For more details, please see the Voyageur Website for Details. It sounds like it will be a fun weekend as well.

Boat Winterizing cont'd

ensure they are working and that float switches properly activate the pumps and that they are not hindered by debris. Make sure either to check your boat periodically or have the marina check it and report to you. If in an area where the water you are docked or moored in actually freezes, you should have a de-icing device or bubbling system around your boat.

By following some of the above suggestions, and suggestions given from the links provided, you should be in good shape for the winter. Do not, however, neglect to consult your owner's manuals for manufacture's recommendations on winterizing your boat and other systems. If you have not done a winterization job before or don't have an experienced friend to rely on seek out a professional to do the job for you.

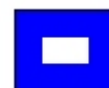
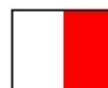
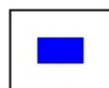
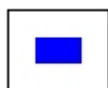
Mandatory Life Jackets

As you may recall from the last issue of Crosschop, we were looking for your opinions on mandatory Life Jacket Wearing as proposed by the Safe Boating Council. The article described how the Safe Boating Council was asking CPS for their opinion on whether they should propose that it be mandatory for operators and passengers in all open recreational vessels less than six meters to wear life jackets / PFD's, while underway. Since the response from the general membership was somewhat less than overwhelming, the squadron bridge tackled the question at our last meeting. The general consensus around the table was that this was not a good idea and we will communicate this to our National Bridge so our opinions are known.

Sturgeon River Lights

The Coast Guard has announced their intention to remove the lights at the mouths of both the Little Sturgeon River and Laronde Creek. Opposition or support for the plan has been invited and hopefully interested parties have been in contact with the Coast Guard to express their opinions. The squadron bridge discussed the idea and the majority overwhelmingly agreed that removing any aid to navigation on that part of the lake is not a good idea. The lights in question are often the only source of land marks along there and are used even in the winter by snowmobilers. A letter is being drafted from the squadron to express our concerns. Any one wishing to do the same can send a letter outlining their concerns etc. to:

Supervisor, Marine Aids Program,
Canadian Coast Guard
28 Waubeek St.
Parry Sound, ON P2A 1B9



Bye Bye Boats and Places

Caven Ford P

For those of us who don't like the publication this may be good news and for the rest of us this is just news. The following is a press release issued by Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons announcing the change in venue for our own national newsletter:

Canadian Power & Sail Squadrons (CPS), Volunteers Teaching Safe Boating across Canada, has announced that commencing in the spring of 2005, its member magazine, Port Hole, will be inserted in Canadian Yachting magazine and its French member magazine, Le Hublot, will be inserted in L'Escale Nautique magazine. (This agreement shall continue until December 31st, 2009.)

The CPS Governing Board made the decision in June 2004 following presentation of proposals submitted during the past year. Official agreements with Canadian Yachting and L'Escale Nautique have been negotiated over the past few months and will be signed at the CPS Annual General Meeting to be held in Toronto on October 23, 2004.

CPS has held an agreement with Dual Media for insertion of Port Hole in its magazine, boats&places, and with Quebec Yachting for insertion of Le Hublot for the past 10 years. That agreement will continue through the 2004 fall issue and 2005 winter issue of the CPS member magazines. Both organizations agreed it is time to take different directions, however they will continue to share common interests in boating safety. John Kerr and Elizabeth Kerr, co-publishers of Canadian Yachting, owned by Kerrwil Publications in Toronto, will work with CPS toward an official launch of their partnership at the Toronto International Boat Show in January. Michel Sacco, editor of L'Escale Nautique will also work with CPS for a matched launch regarding their partnership at the Montreal Boat Show in February.

The CPS member magazines will be included in all distributed editions of both Canadian Yachting and L'Escale Nautique giving CPS a wider audience. The agreements with both magazines also give CPS members extended membership benefits.

CPS ' 56th Annual Conference

October 20-24, 2004

Aaaargh...Shiver me timbers, mateys! Toronto the Good is a fine place for plunder galore and pillage a'plenty. We'll hoist the Jolly Roger, set our sails and head the black ship to 'Ere Port Marriott where the brave souls who venture forth on Friday night will witness the "Pirates of the Caribbean" at their fearsome worst. There'll be unkempt, tattooed invaders fresh from marauding the Caribbean Sea and far-off exotic ports...perhaps a few hardy survivors from the recent invasion of the ancient town of Saint John. Squadrons of freebooters will be seeking recognition as Most Fearsome Pirate Crew. Disguise yourself as one of them and see if you can make the grade. We'll demand a ransom of the Chief and his Bridge of Brigands and see them walk the plank. We'll press-gang new recruits, but not before they pass our initiation rite the dreaded Pirate Card Of the Caribbean, otherwise known as the PCOC. And we'll make 'em pay up front, since we are respected RPs Registered Pirates open to bribery and corruption. Nobody fails our test. Anyone demonstrating proper pirate behaviour will gain the honorary grade of AP (Associate Pirate). Buckle on your broad belt, and don't forget the gold earring. Follow the steel band and the aroma of rum punches to Old Muddy York.

Care for a Cruise?

Join Us in February 2005 for the CPS-ECP Caribbean Cruise February is a cold and dreary month for most of us. Our boats are put away and spring still seems a long way off. Why not join your fellow CPS-ECP members on the CPS-ECP Cruise to the Caribbean, onboard Celebrity Cruise Lines' Millennium. Come make new friends and renew old acquaintances. Details can be found in the latest copy of Porthole or on Members Moorings on the CPS website. The link to the National website can be found from our own squadron website at www.nbpps.on.ca.



Cool Gear and Stuff

DSC Radios and GPIRB's

Just in time for your Christmas Wish List, here are a couple of nifty gadgets no boat should be without:

Digital Selective Calling (DSC) radio is the latest in marine radio technology. Digital Selective Calling is part of a global upgrade in maritime distress communications. Satellite and digital technology used for several years on commercial ships is now available to the recreational boater. DSC radios allow boaters to make ship-to-ship private calls and the DSC distress channel is currently being monitored by commercial ships. Since 1996 recreational boaters were no longer required to have a ship's station license issued by the FCC in order to operate a VHF radio. The new DSC radios however have to be registered to work properly in emergency situations. They are also encoded with a unique nine digit FCC identification number that allows the ship-to-ship calling feature. This unique number called a Maritime Mobile Service Identity or MMSI, is much like your cell phone number. Once the radio is registered with the FCC, that information and your boat's information is entered in the US Coast Guard's national distress database. The major advantage of the DSC radio is its ability to send an automatic "mayday" that identifies the vessel and also, when connected to a LORAN or GPS, can send the vessels location. The DSC radio operates much like an EPIRB that sends encoded "maydays" directly to satellites. The DSC radio will also continue sending the emergency signal if the skipper is disabled. Another feature of the DSC radio is the ability to place private ship-to-ship calls to other vessels equipped with DSC radio. Basically if you know the MMSI number of the radio you are calling only that vessel will receive you message. Just like using your cell phone.

GPIRB - the smart EPIRB. This is the first of a new generation of emergency beacons. GPIRBs (Global Position Indicating Radio Beacon) combine the latest in GPS and 406MHz EPIRB (Electronic Position Indicating Radio Beacon) technology, and add extraordinary precision to your emergency distress signal. If you are a boater who operates offshore or in the Great Lakes, this could be the best "life insurance" policy you could own. The GPIRB, with its built in GPS, determines and broadcasts its own location. This shortens the time required to get an accurate fix on the beacon location and saving valuable time at the beginning of an SAR (Search And Rescue) operation. The unit comes with a float-free bracket that releases it if it is submersed as in a sinking. There is a manual mode to turn the unit on manually and a test mode which should be used on a frequent basis to test the operation. It has a minimum 48 hours operating life, 8-channel internal GPS and comes with a lithium battery.

Well, OK, maybe your boat can do without them, but you never know! Ask Santa for one anyway, maybe you'll be surprised.

Overheard in Passing

The captain of the whaler found himself in need of a lookout on short notice. The ship was scheduled to return to the hunt the next day and the owner of the whaler was very demanding and unpleasant when disappointed.

The captain put out the word that a sharp-eyed lookout was needed and any candidates should report to the ship that evening at 1700 hours sharp.

At the appointed time the captain arrived on deck finding only one candidate onboard; a very old looking man. "How old are you?", asked the captain.

"I'm eighty years old last November and I have the sharpest eyes in town." said the old man. "Is that so?", laughed the captain. Knowing he could not read it himself, he said, "Tell me old man what does that sign say on the dock across the bay?"

The old man said, "No fishing by order of the constable." The captain was shocked when he verified it using his telescope, that was exactly what the sign read!

"Well, that's all well and good", said the captain, "but you'll never be able to get to the crow's-nest being a man of advanced years." With that the old man took off and traversed up the mast, slapped the crow's-nest and returned to the deck in front of a totally shocked captain. "Your hired!" yelled the captain, "I have never been so impressed with a seaman than I you on this day. Report for duty, ready to ship out at dawn."

The next morning after the old man had reported for duty the ship's helmsman and harpooner visited the captain's cabin and expressed concern about the captain's new hire. "He's an old man", said the harpooner, "he'll never see the whales and I'll not know where to aim!" "Yes", said the helmsman, "and he must be too feeble to climb the mast to give me a heading to steer!" "Fear not", said the captain, "That old man is one of the best candidates for lookout I have ever seen. He'll do just fine."

The whaler was out on the very next day and ready for action when the shout came from the crow's-nest, "Whaaaaale Ho!". Excitedly the captain yelled, "Great job lookout, in what direction does the whale swim?" There was no answer. Again the captain yelled, "what direction should the helmsman steer?" After a pause the answer came back,..... "I forget."

HUNTERS BAY MARINE



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