Commander’s Newsletter

March 2015

Commander’s Message

The end of my current Watch will be drawing to a close in a few short weeks. It seems the years go by faster and faster and there is so much to do and so little time to get it all done.

March 29 will be our next “Change of Watch” and I will again be assuming the helm of the “Good Ship Watchung” for my 9th term as your Commander. I want to thank all of you who have worked so hard to make this a successful year for Watchung, and I want to thank all of you for having the confidence in me to elect me as your Commander for another year.

This past year although successful, was a hard year and each year seems to get harder due to shrinking membership due members “Crossing the Bar”, members moving out of state and members who have grown too old and infirmed to continue. We are doing more with less members and less money, but we are doing it.

I would like to thank all of the “Life Members”, who although they no longer have to pay dues, but yet continue to send in their squadron dues. You have worked so hard to attain 25 merit marks and yet you still try to do more. It does not go unnoticed and it definitely is appreciated.

This year, we have lost three members who have “Crossed the Bar” and they will be remembered at the District 4 Memorial Service to be held on March 15 at St Albans Church on Staten Island at 2 P.M. and I will rise to announce their names as the Memorial Bell is rung. All members are invited to attend this impressive service.

Our “Change of Watch” will take place on Sunday, March 29, 2015 at the Primavera Regency Restaurant 1080 Valley Road, Stirling, N.J. Cocktails are at noon and dinner, dancing and festivities at 1:00 P.M. The flyers will be out shortly and we would like a response as soon as possible.

Upcoming events

March 6, 2015 is the District 4 Spring Conference which will be held at the Park Ridge Marriott Hotel in Park Ridge. Flyers have been distributed and information is available on the District 4 Website. Admission to the conference is free. There is a charge for the members’ lunch and the “District Change of Watch” formal dinner dance to be held Saturday evening. All members are invited to attend. It is a fun filled evening.

March 15, 2015 is the District 4 Memorial Service which will be held at St. Alban’s Church 76 St. Alban’s Place on Staten Island, N.Y. at 2 P.M. with a reception to be held in the church hall immediately after the service.

March 29, 2015 is the Watchung Sail and Power Squadron “Change of Watch” which will be held at the Primavera Regency Restaurant 1080 Valley Road in Stirling, N.J.

Cocktails will be served starting at noon and the dinner and festivities will start at 1 P.M. I hope all members will sign up to attend. Your strong support is vital to our survival.

IN MEMORIAM

We recently lost a valued member, Lt. Rick Swackhamer, S after a long illness. Rick was the son of P/D/C Richard and P/Sf/C Karen Swackhamer. Rick served as the Squadron Mailing Committee Chairman as well as serving as my Personal Aide. During his brief life, Rick suffered many ills but never complained or asked “Why me” but rather “What can I do to help you”. Rick loved sports, boating and Corona beer. He loved spending time on his houseboat, “Boat Drinks”.

Rick has Crossed the Bar as will all of us one day, and I know he will be waiting to welcome us with his big smile and a “Corona”. He was my Personal Aide and he was my FRIEND and he was an inspiration. I will miss him.

On a Happier Note

In Ireland one evening, an Irishman left the local pub quite inebriated. As he staggered home along the river, he came upon a minister who was baptizing members of his congregation. As he passed by he slipped and fell into the river bumping into the minister. The minister asked him if he was prepared to find Jesus. The drunk replied that he was and the minister grabbed him and dunked him under the water. He pulled him up and asked if he had found Jesus to which the drunk replied that he did not. The minister dunked him once again and pulled him up and asked if he found Jesus. The drunk replied again that he did not. Frustrated the minister pushed him under the water and held him down while the drunk thrashed about and then he pulled him up and again asked him if he found Jesus. The drunk’s immediate reply was ……….No, are you sure that this is where he fell in.

I hope to see everyone at the Memorial Service and the Watchung Change of Watch.