



## Welcome District 7 “First Timers”

Welcome to your first DISTRICT CONFERENCE.

Please take a few moments to read this information. It will help you get the most out of the Conference.

A District Conference is organized by “host” squadron, who plans the theme, arranges for the hotel, and is in charge of the registration and funds for the conference.

The OBJECTIVE of this sheet is to :

1. Help you, the “First Timer,” feel more comfortable and less intimidated by the scope of a District Conference
2. Allow the “First Timer” to learn what is available to you at these meetings and help you determine how to meet your expectations.

### WHO ATTENDS THE DISTRICT CONFERENCE?

- The District Commander and District Bridge. They will preside over most of the meetings.

It’s a chance for District Officers to get together with the Squadron Officers (for instance, the District Educational Officer meets Squadron Educational Officer) and discuss important aspects of their jobs. In the Educational instance, it may be a chance to discuss new courses, or compare notes with other Squadrons, etc.

- The Chief Commander or his Representative.

The National Chief Commander (C/C) or his Representative – usually a National Officer – can pass on the latest information about the National. Since the Chief Commander can’t attend all the district conferences, a member of the National Bridge or National Committee will attend in the C/C’s place. The C/C will prepare a letter for the Representative to read

at the meeting, so that every District in USPS gets a similar message about current issues and ideas at the National Level

- Boating Officials from the state or Coast Guard. Typically, the ODNR or Coast Guard Representative will have a brief message for squadron members.
- Squadron Commanders and the Squadron Bridge. They come to meet with their counterparts at the Squadron and District Level – and to meet the National Officer attending.
- Squadron members who are active in Squadron committees. There is often a meeting or seminar of interest to members on specific committees, like membership or Vessel Safety Check. These are open to all members. Members meet their counterparts from other squadrons, learn more about their Committee responsibilities, and get good ideas from other squadrons.
- Squadron Members who want to learn more about National, District, or local programs
- Squadron Members who enjoy a great social time and wish to meet other boaters with similar interests

### **What Happens at a District Conference:**

**Friday night is a “social” night.** Dress is casual. Many squadrons have hospitality suites and wear costumes that match their theme. So, you could wear your squadron’s costume, or something else casual, like a squadron-themed shirt, sweater, or other attire.

There are several types of social activities Friday night:

- There is District Commander’s cocktail party, generally early in the evening. This is an “invitation only” meeting for the District Bridge, Squadron commanders, and Chief Commander’s Representative. As a “First Timer”, you are invited to this meeting.
- There is an “Ice Breaker” party, organized by the host squadron. It is a chance for members of different squadrons to “mix”, see old friends and make new ones

- Sometimes, squadrons can put on “skits” at the Ice Breaker. These are planned in advance and squadrons are notified of the “skit” criteria.
- Following the Ice Breaker, usually around 2100 or 2130, Squadrons will open up their “Hospitality Suites”
- The highlight of the evening is the “Hospitality Suites”. Each squadron is encouraged to decorate a room based on the conference theme. Refreshments are available, often in keeping with the theme. Many members will also wear costumes based on their theme.

Conference attendees are encouraged to visit all the rooms. You’ll want to get a list of the hospitality rooms so you can visit each one.

- The host squadron, District Commander, and Chief Commander’s representative visits each of the hospitality suites, to meet the members, as well as judge the room. Rooms are judged for the decorations and participation by the squadron. The winning squadron is awarded a trophy, the coveted “Rocky River Tankard”, at the Saturday night dinner meeting

## **Saturday**

- In the morning, many of the District Officers have a breakfast with their Squadron counterparts. For instance the District Administrative Officer will meet with Squadron Administrative Officers, to discuss important issues in their area of responsibility.
- There are generally seminar sessions or Expositions of general interest to Squadron members at large.

These may be a presentation on techniques for Member Involvement, or new educational material, for instance. Sometimes there is an Exposition of Teaching Aids, so squadrons can get ideas they can use for their own courses.

- There is a luncheon Saturday. Often there is a short program. Sometimes awards are given, to reduce the length of the awards Ceremony Saturday night.
- Following the luncheon, there is usually a program for those attendees who are not planning to attend the District Meeting. It is arranged by the host squadron, and could be a tour of a local attraction, or a program of general interest.

- The District Conference Meeting is Saturday Afternoon. The meeting is conducted under standard parliamentary procedure. At this meeting, District officers give their reports. Any business to come before the district is addressed. Any voting issues, such as Amendments to the by-laws, are debated and decided at the meeting.
- Any squadron member can attend the Conference Meeting. However, only designated delegates can vote on issues. Squadron Commanders and SEO's can vote, and Squadron Commanders can appoint one delegate for each 25 members in their squadron.
- Following the District meeting, there is usually a break of 1-2 hours, where members can relax.
- Saturday night is the awards banquet. This is a "formal" event. Members who have uniforms usually wear them. Other members wear cocktail attire - jacket and tie, cocktail dresses or similar outfits.
- Key awards at the District and National level are presented following the dinner.
- At the Spring Conference, we hold our District "Change of Watch," when we install the new District Officers.
- After dinner, most hospitality suites are re-opened, and members are free to visit other rooms. Typically, the rooms are not decorated as much for Saturday night.

#### Sunday

- Often, the District Bridge or District committees will have a breakfast meeting on Sunday morning.

We hope that this information will help you enjoy the District Conference, and encourage you to return and become "2nd timers"!

If you have any questions, please contact:

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