AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB
VALLEY FORGE

The Pilot

November 2026

Another Successful Boating Season!

Merit Mark Recommendations Due Now

Upcoming Events

November
D-5 Education Conference
Thanksgiving Break

December
Veterans' Dinner Party
ABC-VF Holiday Party

January
Philadelphia Fishing Show
Monthly Dinner Meeting

Newsletter Contents

Commander's Message	2
ExCom Meeting information	2
Upcoming Events	3
Educational Officer Report	4
Crabbing the Chesapeake	4
Key Bridge Project Update	5
ABC Chief Commander's Message	8
2026-2027 Bridge	10
Log Ahead	11
Publications and Articles of Interest	13

Commander's Message

First, I would like to thank everyone in the squadron for welcoming me as your new commander and for providing me with invaluable guidance and mentoring on a host of topics. Your support is foremost in keeping our club running smoothly and successfully.

Vehicle safety remains one of the cornerstones of our squadron. Thanks to our Safety Officers for their continued dedication to this very important mission of our club. Our Safety Officers had a busy season ensuring our fleet and local boating community remain compliant and safe. Our five certified examiners completed 63 free inspections this season across local marinas and launch sites, ensuring safety gear, flares, and fire extinguishers meet strict USCG standards.

Education remains another cornerstone of our squadron. Thanks to our educational department and dedicated instructors. We proudly graduated four new students from the spring America's Boating Course session. The new graduates all earned PA state boating safety certificates. A *Knots & Lines* Seminar was held on September 28. In addition, an upcoming Docking Seminar is planned.

Ed White, JJ, Rich McLaughlin, and Joe Pezely supported a full weekend Scouting jamboree in Berks County and proudly displayed our educational trailer and the newly purchased Boating Simulator. The interactive setup was a smashing success; so much so that the organizers have already asked us to return next year.

We had a great 9-day Chesapeake Bay cruise again this year. Highlights included shark-tooth hunting at a Maryland state park, a visit to a wonderful maritime museum, a Cambridge scavenger hunt, and many nights enjoying the region's great restaurants. The weather was outstanding this year, with very few rainouts and good wind for sailing. We would like to encourage everyone to plan to attend the cruise in the 3rd or 4th week in June 2027; it will be a blast as always!

All members should be on the distribution list for

Continued on next page

Volunteers needed to work the exhibit at the March boat show, contact juzbasich@abcvalleyforge.org

ExCom Meeting information

Our policy is to hold our Executive Committee meetings in person and online via Zoom, thus more people can attend. Non-ExCom members may participate in the meeting discussions, however, as per our bylaws, they cannot vote.

In person meetings are held at: Paoli Presbyterian Church, 225 S Valley Rd, Paoli, PA 19301. The Zoom link can be found in the Monthly ExCom Agenda. If you need the agenda contact Barb Jones at bjonesann@verizon.net. The Zoom session begins at 6:30 (because it always takes some time to actually set up that connection). Social time begins at 6:45, and the meeting at 7:00.

Please keep phones and microphoness on mute when not presenting.

Continued from previous page

the monthly ExCom agenda package, and you are encouraged and welcome to dial into the meeting to listen and contribute to the various discussions. Our next meeting will be on November 4th, 2026.

Our squadron runs entirely on volunteer energy. Please consider stepping into a committee role, helping with web services, or assisting with classroom instruction for the upcoming 2027 season. No need to be an expert; just reach out to me, and I will help you get more involved and have more fun. Every hour you contribute strengthens our boating community.

As we approach the cold months ahead, good luck battening down the hatches on your craft for the coming winter so we will be ready to hit the water in spring.

Respectfully submitted,

Dana C. Hummel
Commander, America's Boating Club Valley Forge
Main Line Sail & Power Squadron





Upcoming Events

Philadelphia Fishing Show Oaks, PA. January 8-10, 2027
Hours: Friday 12pm – 7pm, Saturday 10am – 6pm, Sunday 10am – 5pm.

Philadelphia Boat show, Oaks, PA. March 12-14, 2027
Hours: Friday 12pm – 7pm, Saturday 10am – 7pm, Sunday 11am – 5pm.

ABC - Valley Forge Change of Watch, March 21, 2027 at the Desmnond Hotel, Malvern, PA, 3:15-7:00.

D-5 Spring Conference: **Tentative New location: Hilton Hotel, Cristiana, DE**
Tentative:
Start Date & Time: 2026-03-25 16:00:00
End Date & Time: 2026-03-28 11:00:00

ABC - Valley Forge Chesapeake Cruise, June 18-27, 2027; tentative.

Educational Officer Report

As summer begins winding down, the Education Dept has been hard at work preparing for fall. Education for the boating public is a core tenant of the Power Squadrons, and Mainline/ ABC Valley Forge takes that assignment very seriously.

Our schedule includes presenting basic education, Americas Boating Course (ABC), and two advanced grade courses, Marine Electrical Systems and Marine Navigation. Additionally, four seminars will be taught by Zoom: Knots and Line handling (Sept 28), Weather for Boaters (Oct12), Docking and Boat Handling (Oct26) and Crew at the Helm (Nov 9). Our Advanced Grades team is Russ Jones and Nick Montalto, assisted by Rich Mclaughlin, Bill McManimen, Wayne Barrett, and Vanessa and Dana Hummel. ABC is led by Wayne Barrett, assisted by Meridith Barrett.

The department has been assisted by several others who should receive special recognition, Bill McManimen and Ginny Parry. In additional to his duties at D5 and National, Bill McManimen was instrumental in our squadron applying for and receiving a Henry Sweet Educational Grant from D5. This grant is an opportunity to receive educational materials for the ABC classes at no cost to District squadrons. This year we were able to acquire 12 ABC course books for our classes, allowing us to keep the cost to low for the public.

Ginny Parry developed a unique way to advertise our course offerings at a low price. She designed a business card with the class information on one side and a QR code on the reverse which lea ds to our website. These attractive and functional cards are being distributed to marinas.

Learn More and Register

Course and seminar descriptions are available at abcvalleyforge.org, and registration is handled through chestercountynightschool.org.

Have questions? Contact Larry Hartman at 717-860-8577 or lhartman1958@gmail.com for more information.

Please help us advertise them to your family and friends! For more information go to our website https://abcvalleyforge.org/.

Crabbing the Chesapeake



The August crabbing outing was very successful, we caught three bushels of crabs!! Captain Frank met us at the dock at exactly 6:00 am and we headed off toward Gibson Island. Earlier that morning he had set a 600 foot trot line, we connected it to the boat, and we began catching crabs.

After each pass we would go back to the start of the trot line, and on the way we measured the crabs we caught to make sure they exceeded the minimum size for Maryland. Then we did it again and again.

Captain Frank has a commercial crabbing license and he is allowed four bushels of crabs per day, however after the third bushel we called it quits, and headed back to the dock. It was exciting to catch them and they tasted really good, but picking the crabs was tedious work and well worth it!

Francis Scott Key Bridge Project Update

The new Key Bridge is now expected to open around late 2030 at a cost of roughly $4.3–5.2 billion. Maryland is currently picking a new main contractor after dropping Kiewit in the spring.

Cost and schedule

In late 2025, MDTA raised its forecast to $4.3–5.2 billion with opening in late 2030, up from the preliminary $1.7–1.9 billion and a 2028 opening. Officials blamed higher material costs and a robust pier protection system meant to reduce the chance of another ship strike.

The redesign also has a longer 1,665-foot main span and taller piers to handle larger ships and meet new AASHTO guidelines.

As of June, state officials were standing by the $5.2 billion figure despite reports of estimates nearly twice that. The state still expects the federal government to reimburse the full cost. In January, Gov. Moore and U.S. Transportation Secretary Duffy said they had made “significant progress on cost sharing”, so how the bill is split is still being worked out.

Contractor shake-up

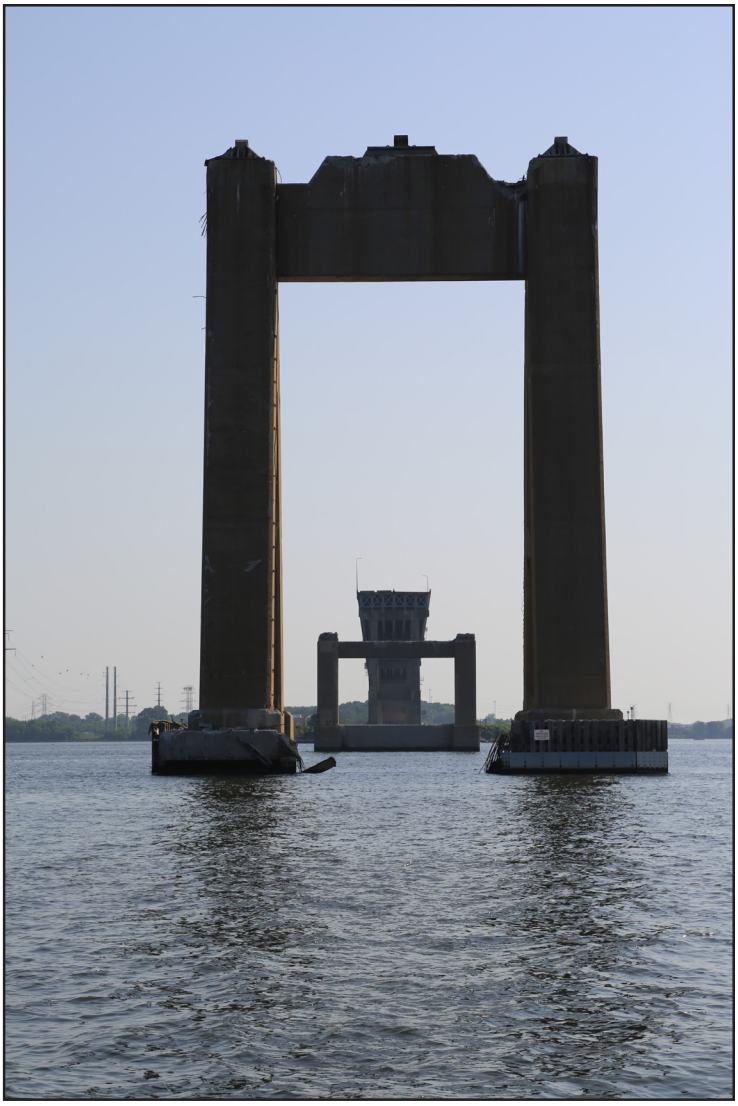
On April 28, 2026, MDTA told Kiewit it would not be kept on for Phase 2 because its construction proposal far exceeded the state’s independent cost estimates. CBS reported Kiewit’s price was about $9 billion, but Kiewit said a reported $9.1 billion figure was not a number it submitted.

Kiewit is still finishing Phase 1: driving foundation piles and building a temporary trestle, expected to last at least through the end of 2026.

The new four-contract plan

The remaining work has been split into four contracts:

- the main span and marine approaches
-demolition of the remaining old structures



- the north land approach
- the south land approach

Main span: An RFQ went out July 21. The contract covers a four-lane, 3,365-ft bridge with a 1,665-ft cable-stayed main span and at least 230 ft of clearance over the shipping channel. The agency expects it to cost up to $4 billion. MDTA planned to shortlist teams by mid-October, with final selection and notice to proceed in summer 2027. I couldn’t find a public announcement of that shortlist yet, so it’s either just out or slightly behind schedule.

Demolition: Bidding is open for the demolition contract. Bids are due this fall, with work expected to start in late 2026.

Continued on page 6

Key Bridge Project continued from page 5

Land approaches: The north and south land approach contracts will be bid as design-bid-build contracts.

On-site progress

Permanent foundation piles are being installed, along with an over-water work platform called a trestle. In April, about 30 of the nearly 1,000 pilings needed had been placed.

Separately, Maryland is suing the Dali's owner and manager to recover the cost of damages and the new bridge.

- John Juzbasich

Vessel Safety Examinations

In 2026 we completed over 63 Vessel Safety Checks. We could use your help in 2027. To become a VSE you need to read a manual and take the online test. After performing five vessel safety exams with a certified examiner, you will become a Certified Vessel Safety Examiner! For more details contact Maryanne at mboettj@gmail.com. It is very gratifying, because the boat owners truly appreciate our efforts and are happy to display the decal, knowing their boat meets USCG requirements.

Many thanks to the ABC-Valley Forge VSE team:

Bill McManimen
Wayne Barrett
Nick Montalto
Chris Dome
Meridith Barrett
Russ Jones
Maryanne Boettjer
John Juzbasich

JOIN US, Become a VSE!



Veteran's Holiday Dinner

The event is scheduled for Wednesday December 9, 2026. We need volunteers to work the dinner, if you can help out, please contact Ed White at edwhite2004@gmail.com.



ABC-VF Holiday Party

Mark your calendars

The event is scheduled for 3-7 pm Saturday December 19, 2026, at the Phoenixville Country Club.

CHESAPEAKE BAY YACHT CLUBS ASSOCIATION



ABC Valley Forge, a.k.a. Mainline Sail & Power Squadron, is a member of the Chesapeake Bay Yacht Clubs Association and our members can visit many fellow clubs on the Chesapeake. Enjoy a meal at their restaurant or stay overnight for a reasonable slip fee.

America's Boating Club Chief Commander's Message

Thank you to all the members of America's Boating Club | United States Power Squadrons for supporting our mission of recreational boating safety. I am continually impressed by the time, strength, dedication, and fellowship our members give to this unique organization.

It's now a sad time for those of us in the North when we begin to think about the hard water season and dream of those warm summer days. We should not, however, think of October through April as the traditional off-season for America's Boating Club | United States Power Squadrons. It should be our opportunity season.

It's a time when boaters are thinking about the next season. They are looking at boats. They are planning trips. They are learning how to use their new electronics. They are wondering if they know enough about navigation. Families are looking for ways to make boating easier, less stressful and more enjoyable.

Today's boaters are increasingly finding information differently than they did one, five, or 10 years ago. Recent boating industry research tells us that newer boat buyers are younger, more digitally driven, and more likely to discover boating through experiences such as rentals and charters and fractional ownership. They also use YouTube, short-form videos, online reviews and social media to make their boating decisions. All these sources lack one thing that your squadron can provide—that personal, visible touch that links to your community. That interaction doesn't happen by itself; to be visible in your community, you must work at it.

So, what should your squadron do between October and April? Reach out, don't wait for people to find you. They're not looking. Participate in boat shows, sport shows and outdoor events. Visit marinas and boat dealers. Interact with yacht clubs, sailing clubs, fishing organizations and aligned community groups. Set up a table or a booth, or simply pass out information. Put a face on your chapter of America's Boating Club | United States Power Squadrons.

Then, don't lead with a membership application. Lead with a conversation. Ask, "What kind of boating do you enjoy?" Then, "What would you like to learn before next boating season?" That conversation can open the door to a class, a seminar, a vessel safety check, a social event—and, ultimately, membership.

Use education as a recruiting tool but don't simply advertise "Boating Course—Tuesday Night." No one is coming! Let me say that again: No one will come. You must tell people what information they will receive.

Change the narrative to "We can help you to navigate with confidence." "We can show you how to use your marine electronics." "We can give you what need to know before taking your family out on local waters." "We can provide ideas for your best boating season ever." We're not selling a class. We're selling confidence. And confidence is something every boater wants.

Show people that membership in our organization is more than just education. We cannot allow the public to think of America's Boating Club | United States Power Squadrons as simply a boating-school organization. We need to show we are a boating community! We boat together, learn together, socialize together, and serve our communities together.

During the off season invite the public to experience your squadron by hosting a "Meet the Boaters" evening or host a navigation night. How about a marine electronics or battery seminar? Put on a winter social and invite prospective members to experience your squadron. Have a "Planning Your 2027 Boating Season" event. You need to give people a reason to walk through your door by inviting them to participate.

Make your districts and squadrons impossible to miss online. Every squadron and district should be asking itself: If someone in our community searches for boating clubs, boating classes or boating safety, will they find us? And if they find us, do our social media postings and website layout make them want to engage with us?

Post photographs of people—not just logos. Post short videos. Introduce your instructors. Show that your members enjoy boating. Celebrate your community service. Promote your upcoming classes and events. Tell stories. One photograph of six smiling members standing beside a boat can tell a better membership story than an entire page of text.

So, this winter season, don't hibernate, be visible. Don't wait for boaters to come to you, go where boaters are. Don't talk only about what we have done for the past 100 years, talk about what we can do for the next 100 years. Invite prospects to become part of your squadron's boating family.

Make sure that when someone in your community says, "I want to become a better boater," there is only one organization they think of: America's Boating Club | United States Power Squadrons.

Best wishes for a glorious fall season,

Michael Wiedel
Chief Commander



The Merion Musical Society
Proudly Presents:

MERION
CONCERT BAND



SCENIC ROUTES

Embrace nature's towering beauty that inspires adventure, gratitude, and meaningful moments with every song

Sunday November 15th
3:00PM

Welsh Valley Middle School
325 Tower Lane
Narberth, PA 19072

Free Entry

Free Parking

Scan QR Code to access our digital program, social media, and donation platforms



2026-2027 Bridge

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Log Ahead

November 2026	
4	Hybrid ExCom Meeting, 7 pm, Paoli Presbyterian Church, and via Zoom
13-15	District 5 Fall Educational Conference – Lancaster, PA
December 2026	
2	Hybrid ExCom Meeting, 7 pm, Paoli Presbyterian Church, and via Zoom
9	Veteran's Dinner Event
19	Holiday Party 3-7 pm, Phoenixville Country Club
January 2027	
6	Hybrid ExCom Meeting, 7 pm, Paoli Presbyterian Church, and via Zoom
February 2027	
3	Hybrid ExCom Meeting, 7 pm, Paoli Presbyterian Church, and via Zoom
7-14	National USPS Annual Meeting in Tampa, FL
18	Monthly Membership Meeting, 6:30 pm
March 2027	
3	Hybrid ExCom Meeting, 7 pm, Paoli Presbyterian Church, and via Zoom
12-14	(Oaks, PA) Philly Boat Show
21	COW 3:15 PM at the Desmond in Malvern.
TBD	District 5 Spring Conference, Holiday Inn Ocean City, MD



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America's Boating Club®-Valley Forge

Make yourself known!



Our readers own — and charter — yachts, power boats, sailboats, kayaks and canoes.
We boat in the Chesapeake, the Atlantic, the Intracoastal Waterway, the Caribbean and beyond.
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Write a check – payable to MLSPS for the ad size and number of issues you want to buy
Mail Your Check with this form to:

Treasurer Emily Singer, 95 Baker Road, Cochranville, PA 19330
Email Your Ad to Pilot Editor John Juzbasich at juzbasich@abcvalleyforge.org

Publications and Articles of Interest

Chesapeake Bay Magazine
https://chesapeakebaymagazine.com/

MD Department of Natural Resources
https://dnr.maryland.gov/Pages/default.aspx
has a wide variety of articles that may be of interest

2024 DISTINCTIVE COMMUNICATOR AWARD NEWSLETTER



MD State Police heading out on patrol

AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB VALLEY FORGE

The Pilot

Editor: John Juzbasich (juzbasich@abcvalleyforge.org)
Assistant Editor: Ginny Parry
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