

AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB®

For Boaters, By Boaters™



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Celebrating 40 years of safer boating on Marco Island are past Commanders of the Marco Island Sail and Power Squadron, also known as America's Boating Club - Marco Island. From left to right are: past Commanders Gary Riss (2009-11), John Noffze (2006-07), Andrea Battaglia (2004-05), Lee Harness (2005-06), Patricia Cavanaugh (2008-09), Ted Reiss (2013-14), Steven Moore (2011-12), Peggy Reiss (2015-16), William Hughes (2016-17), Carl Thieme (2014-15) and current Commander Gene Burson (2018-19). America's Boating Club - Marco Island held a 40th Anniversary Dinner Dance at the Hideaway Beach Club on December 16, 2018 to celebrate its founding as a Squadron of the United States Power Squadrons in 1978.

MARCO ISLAND, FL – Pay it forward! That would have made a great motto for the founding members of the “Marco Island Power Squadron” forty years ago when starting what this year has become known as “America's Boating Club – *Marco Island*.”

The Club's current members celebrated the 40th Anniversary of the Marco Island Squadron's founding at a dinner dance at Hideaway Beach on December 16, 2018.

Why “Pay it forward?” Because forty-seven of the sixty-six Founding Members of the Squadron had achieved advanced education ‘grades’ in recognition of their training by the United States Power Squadrons (USPS) prior to the issuance of the Marco Squadron’s USPS Charter.

These avid mariners had come from USPS Squadrons from Long Island Sound, the Great Lakes, the Chesapeake Bay and other waters and were already accomplished boaters, yet they committed themselves to launching a Squadron here and gave their time and resources to start an organization whose mission was and is to teach boating knowledge and skills to make boating safe and fun on Marco Island’s waters.

The Marco Island organization:

- Teaches boating courses and seminars at its Learning Center to help boaters develop boating skills and knowledge;
- Conducts free Vessel Safety Checks to help boat owners keep their boats properly equipped and in good working condition;
- Surveys markers and aids to navigation and reports on their condition to the governments with responsibility for their installation and maintenance;
- Organizes cruises and boat outings to provide members with knowledge of the local waters and practical boating experience; and,
- Holds meetings and social events to educate members and create a social, collegial and engaged community of boaters on Marco Island.

The Marco group started as a ‘Division’ of the Naples Power Squadron, but as Marco Island developed and grew it became important to create a Squadron focused on this part of Southwest Florida. In 1978, its first courses were held at Tommy Barfield School and its first boat outing was a picnic to the channel behind Coconut Island.

Today the Club operates its own Learning Center at 1114 North Collier Boulevard, Marco Island, FL, and plans at least two boating events each month in addition to an active meeting and social calendar.

“The Celebration of this 40 year milestone is to recognize and thank all the people who created our Club and served the cause of safer boating on Marco Island,” said Gene Burson, Commander of the Marco Squadron. “Thousands of people have learned to be better, more skilled and more confident boaters thanks to our Founders and members over the last four decades,” he said.

“Each successive generation of Marco Island Squadron members have continued the work launched by the Club’s Founders for which we are grateful – thank you,” said Burson.

“Tonight we re-dedicate ourselves to ‘Paying it Forward’ for the benefit of future boaters in our part of paradise,” Burson stated.

MISPS is a 501(c) (3) non-profit, that is a unit of the United States Power Squadrons a 104 year old, 346 chapter national Boating organization that teaches boating skills and navigation, conducts vessel safety checks, assists Governments in identifying defective aids to navigation and promotes fun and camaraderie among Boaters of all kinds.

For information about Membership please contact Peggy Reiss at 239/213-8686. For a free Vessel Safety Check contact John Salotto at 703/864-5528. For information about skill development courses and registration contact Tom Ryan at 239/887-1556. Additional information is available at www.marcoboatingclub.org.