



# OSTS Notes



Newsletter of the United States Naval Academy  
Offshore Sail Training Squadron

## DIRECTOR'S CUT

by Renee Mehl



Bravo Zulu (aka congratulations) on a great Fall season! Thanks to all our D-qualified instructor-trainers and welcome to a great new class of volunteers. We had pretty much perfect Fall weather and were able to get one overnight mission completed. Our last week on the water was a little windy, but we came up with some alternate programming. Such is the nature of sailing, we often get too much or too little wind, but there is always a skill we can train on those days, so we're prepared to handle situations offshore when we must be self-reliant.

Winter classes start up the end of January with our leadership series taught by Naval Academy professors from the Leadership, Ethics and Law (LEL) Department. We'll get you all signed up for Blackboard® starting in November, which is where you'll take the online D-qual exams.

Spring training starts in April with a similar format to the Fall schedule. Weeknight and weekend training will be provided with additional overnights. There will be two DELMARVA circumnavigation sails in May during the midshipman zero block time frame. If you didn't finish Senior Crew this fall, you'll have an opportunity to make up some hours in the Spring, depending on your personal schedule. We also need extra instructors during the local week of summer training which is really helpful for the program and gets you some extra hours and the opportunity to work with the midshipmen.

Enjoy your holiday season and we'll see you in 2022!

## FLEET CAPTAIN'S NOTE

by John Formisano



*Skipper John Formisano*  
It was great to meet so many new volunteers on the Navy 44s this fall and for the most part we couldn't have asked for better weather to be out on the water in October. While the learning curve can be steep for someone new to the boat, it was encouraging to see so many of our existing volunteers step up to help with training while out as crew. Now that Fall training has ended and the boats are starting to migrate to the other side of the Severn

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River for winter storage and maintenance, I want to thank everyone for the time and energy that they put into making OSTS rewarding for both the midshipmen we train and for us as volunteer coaches.

See you in class (perhaps even in person) during our winter training sessions.

## MAINTENANCE DIRECTOR'S NOTE

by CAPT David Jackson, USN (ret)

Now that the Fall OSTS season has wound down, our sights are now set on offloading, cleaning, and inspecting the boats to identify repairs that need to be made this Winter. We have already generated a list of jobs that will be performed on the entire Navy 44 Fleet. Those jobs include:

- Replace manual bilge pumps;
- Enhance the reliability of the house alternators;
- Clean up engine starter wiring by adding a terminal strip;
- Replace cabin overhead lights with LEDs;
- Replace cartridges in all sink faucets so that they shut off with a quarter turn and operate like an at home faucet (i.e., left shuts off by going clockwise and right shuts off by going counterclockwise);



- Install more durable boat name lettering on the transom; and,
- Replace speedo flapper with a more durable unit.

I look forward to seeing you at class when we start the Winter training lectures in late January.

### LT'S CORNER



Hello everyone! I'm **LT Brienne Aiken** and I recently relieved **LT Christian Burton** as the OSTS Operations Officer. I wanted to introduce myself here for anyone I haven't met yet. So here is my background. As a midshipman, I spent a year on VOST, a year on the Judo team, and 2 years on the Karate Team. After graduating in 2015, I began my Nuclear Surface Warfare career onboard USS Michael Murphy (DDG-112) out of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. I deployed to the Western Pacific, earned my SWO pin, and then headed back to the mainland to complete my nuclear training. My most-recent tour was onboard USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN-78), out of Norfolk, Virginia. Fortunately, I was able to return here, to my alma mater, in September of 2020. I transitioned to OSTS after a year as the Intercollegiate Sailing Officer and the Cutter Shed Division Officer. I can't wait to learn together with all of you and engineer a fantastic summer of training and adventure!

### FOUL WEATHER GEAR

If you checked out foul weather gear from the Sailing Center for Fall training, please return by the Thanksgiving break.

### PQS BOOKS

To wrap up the Fall season, there are a few administrative items to consider. If you are a new volunteer and got through your Senior Crew skills and hours in the PQS book, you'll need to get your book signed by the OSTS Director. You can drop it off any time in the OSTS office. All skills should be signed by an instructor, and all sailing days recorded and signed in the Sailing Log. Each day should be a separate line item and include all required information. Please record time to the nearest quarter hour and total up the times on the bottom line. It should meet or exceed the minimum required hours for a given qualification level.

Instructor-trainers should sign off on the last item in the skills portion of the qualification book, if you have observed and signed off on all the skills in a particular section (i.e., "*Recommended to Proceed to Watch Captain*"). That signals to the OSTS Director that the candidate is ready for the next phase of training. Please make sure each sailing day is recorded in the log individually, and not one line for a DELMARVA or offshore voyage, and then sign for hours logged.

### WINTER TRAINING AND BLACKBOARD®

**LT Bri Aiken** is adding new volunteers and midshipmen XO trainees to our OSTS Blackboard® page and will have everyone signed up by the end of November. You'll get an email with your username and password. This program hosts coursework and exams. We have lots of relevant information there. You can take your online exams, receive notices, review recorded training classes, access the BIB/SOP and other pertinent documents, and download write-able forms for fall/spring and summer training.

Most of the winter lectures are recorded on Tegrity® (voice and PowerPoint) and can be accessed within an hour or two of lecture completions. If you are changing your email for an existing account, please notify **LT Bri Aiken** so she can download any grades you have in the system first.

Once we start winter classes in late January, we'll provide a recommended timeline to start taking the exams. Information for exam questions comes from the classes, reference books and onboard experience. You can take the tests in any order and at any time if you have proficiency in the topics. The system is set up for two attempts per test, you need to pass each one with 70% except for Rules of the Road which is 90%. Questions come from a pool, so you will have different questions on your second try. You need to take the full Rules of the Road test annually, and a quarterly refresher after that. The navigation practical exam requires charting and will be set up by appointment in the Spring.

We'll publish the draft schedule for winter training in the next newsletter, but you can plan on it starting January 25<sup>th</sup>. We'll have classes on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons between 1600-1800 through the end of March. It is most likely we will be doing hybrid learning this winter using both in-person and online training venues.

### LESSONS LEARNED - DTS

One of the administrative lessons learned that we are working to improve upon for next year is the Defense Travel System (DTS) process. We had all new personnel this summer working on that, and the learning curve was steep. Anyone who sailed out of the area with us this summer has gotten multiple emails from DTS. We are almost done processing all the vouchers and final payments should be processed within the next week. We really appreciate your patience and apologize for the delay in reimbursements. For the uninitiated, DTS is the computer program and system used to process and pay reimbursements for Government obligated funds for pre-determined personnel travel, primarily food money and sometimes transportation. It is NOT an intuitive software program, based on attempts to DIY, so we have people working for us. The reason you keep getting emails is because anytime someone goes into the system to change something, it generates an email. So, you will continue to get a lot of emails from DTS, that we routinely tell you to ignore. If you forgot to sign your DTS voucher before leaving the Yard after travel, we will call you; otherwise, you're safe to ignore the messages. We continually track progress and will let you know if there's a problem.

**FAREWELLS**

Best of luck to the last of our TAD Ensigns from this summer!!! They are all leaving to attend their respective schools and continue education specific to their assigned communities. They all did an amazing job as leaders on the water this summer and helping in the office with logistics and sailing this Fall. We will really miss them and know that they will be valuable members of their next teams.

- **ENS Alejandro Carriazo** has sailed his cruising boat to Norfolk, which will be his home base while assigned to his first ship.
- **ENS Paul Johnson** and his family are also Norfolk based and will be living in their new home while assigned to his first ship.
- **ENS Michael Hamilton** is heading to Charleston for nuclear power and submarine schools.
- **ENS Kyndal Olander** is off to Norfolk for training, then to Florida for her first ship assignment.



A personal note from the Ensigns: *We have had a great time being a part of the OSTs team, and now it is time for our actual work to begin.* Michael is bound to Charleston to attend nuclear power school and eventually submarines. Alejandro, Paul, and Kyndal are off to Norfolk to learn how to drive ships without sails.

**Alejandro:** *There are few times before my time as an Ensign in the OSTs Office that have given me such a valuable experience. The biggest one would be my time as a midshipman experiencing OSTs. The Naval Academy was incredible, but it was all my time with OSTs that gave me the most valuable lesson and best memories, not to mention the incredible mentors I met along the way. Thank you to all the volunteers for your extreme dedication to the Mids, but also to us ensigns, we learned a lot thanks to each of you. For me, it's off to Norfolk, Virginia for Basic Division Officer Course (BDOC), and then to the USS MCFAUL (DDG-74). Fair Winds and Following Seas. "Sea" you on the water!*

**Paul:** *Thank you for all the experience and knowledge that hopefully will not be wasted on me. I will be moving down to Norfolk to work aboard USS MITSCHER (DDG-57).*

**Michael:** *This has been such a cruise. I have learned so much from all the volunteers that I will take with me into my years in the fleet. I will never forget the lessons taught to me from my Skipper, Kurt Preston, my XOs, Carl Staubach and Bill Krafft,*

*and my mids. I really appreciate y'all teaching me so much about the leader I am becoming. And a special farewell to Renee for the mentorship and for having the patience to put up with four energetic college grads. I will always be looking for ways to come back to get involved again. I'll leave the puns to Alejandro and simply say, "til we meet again".*

**Kyndal:** *It has been an incredible experience working with everyone. Many of you have imbued advice and knowledge that I will use throughout my naval career and to whatever life brings after. Fortunately, it's time to move on from the Academy. After attending five months of training in Norfolk, I will move down to Mayport, Florida, to work aboard the USS FARRAGUT (DDG-99). Thanks for the memories.*

**PHOTO GALLERY**

Greetings from OSTs volunteers **CDR Lawrie Heyworth**, **CDR Kevin Flood**, and **VOST LT Matt McClelland** who are standing a different watch these days. Thanks for keeping us safe!



(L to R) Lawrie is XO on *FORREST SHERMAN* (DDG-98) and Matt is the Gunnery Officer. Kevin is now attached to *INSURV*, or the "Board of Inspection and Survey" so they had a chance to catch up on deck. Kevin and Lawrie turned over as VOST Officer Reps in 2020 and sailed OSTs *DELMARVA* together as Skipper and XO. Matt was on the VOST team that traveled to



Charleston race week and Kevin accompanied that team. It's a small Navy. :)

Views from the recent overnight aboard *TENANCIOUS* NA-25. Great to have our Director of Naval Academy Sailing (DNAS), CDR Luke "Cosmo" Kremer in the training pipeline this year.



*NA-25 XO Thomas Brooks and DNAS enjoying the evening.*



*NA-25 late night watch turnover.*

Thanks to new volunteer **MajGen (ret) Paul Brier** for putting together some great videos from Fall training. A lot of Paul's videos have been posted on our Facebook page.

**OSTS FACEBOOK PAGE**

OSTS has its own Facebook Page! In addition to this newsletter, we will post important information about the program to this Facebook page. Please "Like" us so you have the program information as it is released. We have 1,009 "likes" to date and growing every month. Help us get to "2,000" likes in 2022. Please encourage your Midshipmen to send photos and video from their spring training sails and summer block sortie. Anyone can post to

our Facebook page. We are generating a good following of OSTS family and friends that are following your sailing experiences. Do not be shy and please post!

Please "Like" us at:

<http://www.facebook.com/USNAOffshoreSailTraining>.

**EMAIL OPT-OUT**

If you are on this email newsletter and would like to be taken off, please let us know. If you have any articles or information you would like to share through this newsletter, please email to [richard.robey@gmail.com](mailto:richard.robey@gmail.com). As always, thank you for your support of OSTS.

We keep about the past 12 months of OSTS newsletters posted on the Navy Sailing website for your reference at: <https://www.usna.edu/Sailing/osts/Newsletters.php>

**THANK YOU!**

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*Beautiful October moon over the Chesapeake Bay.*

