

# United States Power Squadrons®



November 2018

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## Commander's Message Cdr Laurie Reilly, S



Dear members of Great Blue Hill:

By now most of us have hauled and covered our boats for the season.

The fall District Conference is this weekend in Hyannis. I encourage you to attend as there are some wonderful speakers and a chance to meet up with other squadrons.

Our Education Committee has been in full operation for the fall and planning a lot for the winter. Everyone should be able to find a class, seminar and/or workshop that may be of interest. We would like to expand into other towns, so if you know of any in the area that may be interested in holding some of our programs, let Joe Kelleher or Peter Griswold know!

Also, please check out our website. Gordon Talley has done a wonderful job putting it together and keeping it current. As always, please let me know what your thoughts and ideas are regarding all the activities we offer and other things we should look into offering our membership.

We have a great program in November so bring friends and family to a fun evening learning about early steam engine vessels and the difficulties they learned to overcome.

Thank you for being a part of our Squadron!!

*Cdr Laurie Reilly, S*



**Executive Officer's Message**  
**Lt/C Joseph F. Frawley, Jr., AP**



Dear Fellow Members,

Alas, another boating season has come to a close. The "Mary T" has been winterized, shrink wrapped and is now on the "hard". I hope that everyone had a great summer and were able to spend more time on the water with their families and friends..

At our upcoming Squadron Dinner Meeting on November 7th, we have an outstanding speaker. John Laurence Busch will give a Multi-Media Presentation titled: Building the First "Steamship" in History. It's the true story of creating a new kind of vessel capable of overcoming the dangers of the sea and of making the first crossing of the Atlantic Ocean on a "Steamship". I likened it to Lindbergh's historic flight across the Atlantic. John spoke at the District 12 Conference last March and was a hit and is also scheduled to speak to our Sister Squadron Beverly - Marblehead.

I'm looking forward to seeing many of you at the upcoming 3 District Conference in Hyannis. It looks to be a fun weekend.

Respectfully submitted.

*Joseph F Frawley Jr*

**Administrative Officer's Message**  
**Lt/C Bette O'Connor, S**



Dear Members of Great Blue Hill:

Hoping that you all had a wonderful boating season.

I am looking forward to seeing you at the November Dinner Meeting.

Best regards,

*Bette*



## United States Power Squadrons

*Come for the boating education...stay for the friends*

Great Blue Hills Sail and Power Squadron Dinner Meeting

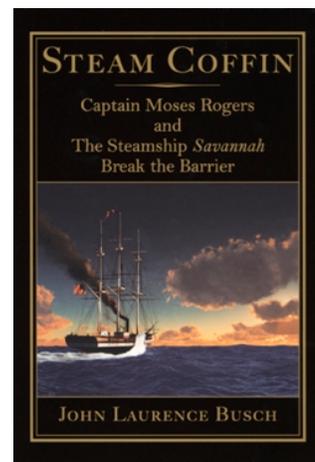
### Building the First “Steamship” in History



by John Laurence Busch

based upon his book

### **STEAM COFFIN** Captain Moses Rogers and The Steamship *Savannah* Break the Barrier



*Historian and author John Laurence Busch will attempt to re-calibrate your mind before showing why the proposition of making the first crossing of the Atlantic Ocean on a "steamship" was met with a mixture of skepticism and fear. Then he will describe how Moses Rogers overcame that fear, by creating a new kind of vessel capable of overcoming the dangers of the sea.*

The *Savannah* is more than a “steamship.” She is the first example of globalized high technology in history.

**General meeting Thursday November 8, 2018**

American Legion Hall

155 Eastern Avenue, Dedham

1830 Social hour 1900 dinner 2000 business meeting

2030 presentation by John Laurence Busch

The cost for dinner is only \$20 when you register by November 4. After that the cost is \$25. We really don't want the money. We want you to register on time!! Register and pay on line at

[REGISTER HERE](#)

or notify our new A/O Bette O'Connor by 11/04 and bring a check. Call 781-475-2002 or email [ao@abc-gbh.org](mailto:ao@abc-gbh.org).

**When on Ticket Tailor: On the first page we need your name and email, but you may enter an X in the other boxes. Then go to page 2 to make payment.**

**You do NOT need to print a ticket. We know who you are!!!**



Don't release the balloons!  
by P/C Joe Kelliher, AP

We've all seen them while boating- latex and Mylar balloons drifting on the waves. They pose a danger of entanglement to birds, fish, turtles, and all aquatic mammals. Many universities, which used to release thousands at home football games, have now banned them. You can help end this pollution. When you attend a social event, and see helium balloons, seek out the host. Ask what will happen to the balloons and ask them not to let them be released. Most of us have never given a thought to the idea that a balloon released will eventually fall to earth, usually in the ocean.



The Happy Dollars fund  
by P/C Joe Kelliher, AP  
Asst. Treasurer

At GBH dinners we often take up a Happy Dollar collection. As we almost always have one or more "first time" members, and because we sometimes forget to explain the reason for the collection, I thought a quick review was in order for all. Those who have some good news get the opportunity to stand and make a "happy" announcement while dropping a dollar or two in the basket. The news may be about new grandchildren, graduations, weddings, retirements, recovery from illness, a purchase of a boat, etc.

The money goes into a bank account, maintained "off the books", for any social activity approved by the Executive Board. Most often it has been tapped to provide bus transport for the Commander's sojourn. But it can be used for any GBH event, and any member may propose a use of the money to the Board. As of October 1 the fund has \$603.

Great Blue Hill Sail & Power Squadron  
WINTER 2018-2019 CALENDAR

GBH Dinner Meeting, Dedham	8	November
GBH Executive Board Meeting	6	December
GBH Dinner Meeting, Dedham	10	January '19
GBH Executive Board Meeting	7	February '19
USPS Annual Meeting, Orlando, FL	17-23	February '19
GBH Dinner Meeting, Dedham	14	March '19

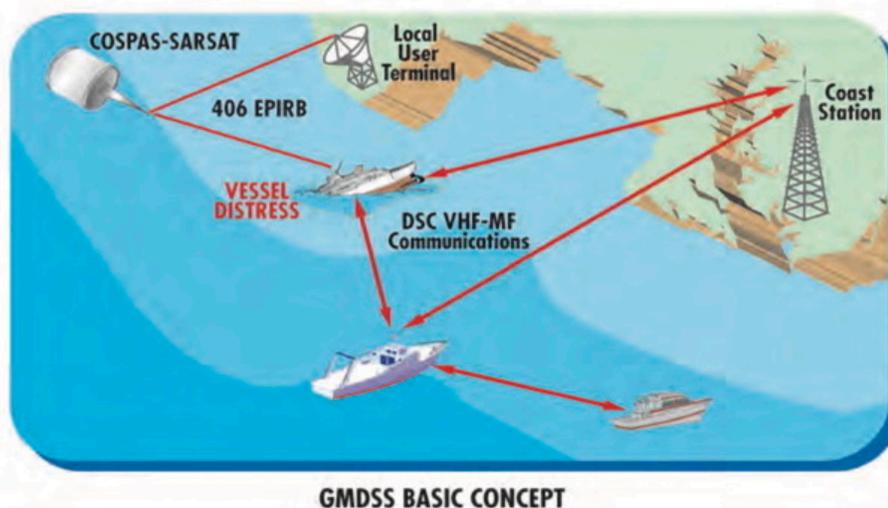


# Your VHF-DSC Marine Radio

## Reprinted from the United Safe Boating Institute

### OVERVIEW

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has developed an international maritime safety system called the GLOBAL MARITIME DISTRESS AND SAFETY SYSTEM, usually referred to simply as GMDSS.



One of the **primary** components of this system and one of the most important to the recreational boater is the **VHF-DSC** (*Very High Frequency Digital Selective Calling*) **marine radio** which can be very useful for recreational boaters in routine communication between boats, and between boats and the Coast Guard. In addition to routine communications capability, the **VHF – DSC radio includes greatly improved distress alerting features.**

To further enhance the GMDSS system, the U.S. Coast Guard has updated their communication equipment under a program known as *Rescue 21*. This updated equipment now offers not only improved voice communications, but a direction finding function and a greatly improved rescue capability for vessels equipped with a valid MMSI (Maritime Mobile Service Identity) number installed VHF-DSC marine radio, particularly if also connected to a Global Positioning System (GPS) or a GPS/chartplotter.

While cellular telephones are very useful on land, they should not be considered an adequate substitute for a VHF-DSC marine radio. Because the VHF-DSC radio enables contact with other vessels in the vicinity as well as the Coast Guard, it is extremely effective in an emergency. It provides much better offshore coverage.



## VHF-DSC RADIO

If you have purchased or are considering purchasing a new marine radio, you will notice that the new radios have a distinctive red flap over one of the switches, labeled **DISTRESS**.

Additionally, you may have noticed that the new radio is likely no longer referred to as just a VHF radio; it is called a VHF-DSC radio. The DSC stands for *Digital Selective Calling*.

These new VHF-DSC radios incorporate many new useful features which you are encouraged to become familiar with and take advantage of.



**IMPORTANT** - *To utilize the capabilities of digital selective calling, and to get the optimum performance out of the VHF-DSC radio, it is **essential** that boaters obtain and install a unique "identity" number, known as the MMSI, in the radio. If your vessel is equipped with GPS, ensure that the DSC radio is properly connected to the GPS unit.*

The MMSI consists of nine digits, the first three identifying the country of origin – for example in the continental United States the numbers are 303, 338, 366, 367, 368 or 369, while Canadian vessels are assigned 316. The exceptions to this are "Fleet" or "Group" vessels which have 0, and coast stations which have 00 preceding the country identifier. MMSI numbers



are available free of charge for recreational boaters in the U.S. and can be obtained from BoatUS, Sea Tow, West Marine, United States Power Squadrons (USPS), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and from Industry Canada for boaters from Canada. If the vessel is to be operated outside U.S. waters, the MMSI must be obtained from the FCC or Industry Canada.

Because various VHF-DSC radio manufacturers use somewhat different procedures in the operation of their radios it is very *important* to read the instruction manual included with the radio if the many features are to be fully utilized. It would also be helpful to take a course offered by organizations such as United States Power Squadrons (USPS), USCG Auxiliary, or Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons (CPS).

Boaters are required to access a menu in the "DSC" mode of the radio and select the specific function they wish to use, such as, selecting the directory of other boats, making a routine call to another boat, making an All Ships call, etc.

Most radios have provision for a directory, much like a cell phone speed-dial directory that lists the MMSI numbers the boater most frequently uses. It is also possible to store the "Group" or "Fleet" MMSI numbers in your radio. As mentioned earlier, these numbers begin with the number 0 and provide a capability to call a number of vessels at one time.

Many DSC radios now have a "Test Call" feature that provides an automatic response confirming that the radio's DSC functions are operational.

With VHF-DSC radios there is no longer a need to establish routine contact with another vessel on the usually very busy calling /distress Channel 16. It can be done digitally using Channel 70.

Use of the DSC functions for routine communications, not only assures a degree of privacy, but assists greatly in reducing the present congestion on Channel 16. Boaters are encouraged to use the DSC function.

Typically, to make a "routine call" to another boat or coast station, simply select the channel you wish to use for your voice communications when you have established contact, and then enter the MMSI number of the station you wish to contact. Your DSC radio will discretely contact or "alert" the other station on Channel 70. When the other station acknowledges the call, *both radios are automatically switched over to the desired voice communication channel* originally specified, and voice communication may begin!



The use of the **“DISTRESS”** function will ensure the most expeditious response by rescue organizations as well as nearby boats, particularly if the VHF-DSC radio has been interfaced with a GPS or chartplotter, thereby transmitting an accurate position of the boat. The **“DISTRESS”** button should be held down for the time suggested in the instruction manual supplied with the radio.

Summarizing, the VHF-DSC radio enables vessels to quickly transmit a **DISTRESS** alert and message, digitally alerting other vessels that an **URGENCY** or **SAFETY** message is about to be sent, and establish contact with other vessels and coast stations discretely without having to use Channel 16. The VHF-DSC radio automatically, and silently, maintains a listening watch on Channel 70.

**REMEMBER, TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR DSC RADIO:**

- Obtain an MMSI number
- Enter the MMSI number into your radio
- Connect the radio to your GPS system

## GPS & CHARTPLOTTERS

As mentioned previously, to ensure accurate position information is available, particularly in distress situations, it is highly desirable to connect a GPS or chartplotter to the DSC radio. This is not difficult and instructions on how to do this are usually in the instruction manual included with the GPS, chartplotter and VHF-DSC radio. If you are unsure how to properly connect your GPS or chartplotter to your DSC radio, contact a marine electronics specialist for assistance.



Alternatively, if such positioning system is not available, some VHF-DSC radios may permit the input of the boat’s position (Latitude – Longitude) manually. If so, the vessel’s position should be entered frequently.



## 406 MHz EPIRBs

*Another very useful piece of GMDSS equipment, particularly for vessels operating some distance from shore, is the 406 MHz Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon, or EPIRB.*

The EPIRB is small, buoyant, and may be designed to float free from a sinking vessel. These beacons operate on the international distress frequency 406 MHz, and when activated automatically transmit a distress message digitally to orbiting satellites. Many also incorporate a GPS unit for more precise position information and are recommended.

*EPIRB's must be registered in a national database. In the U.S. contact the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)*

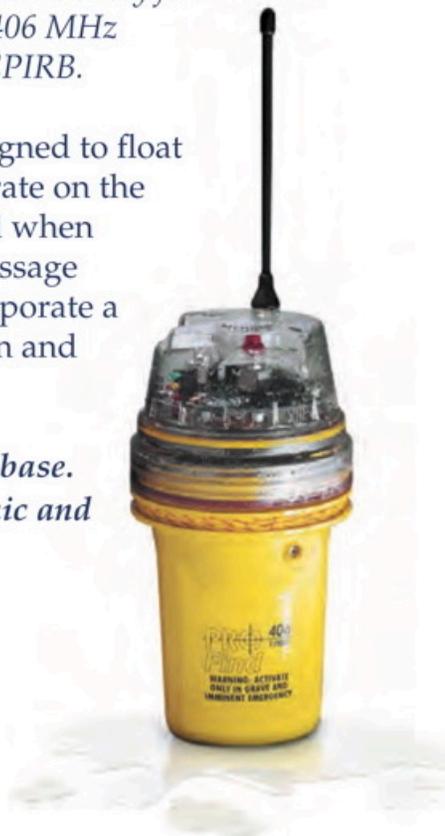
**TEL: 1-888-212-7283**

[www.sarsat.noaa.gov](http://www.sarsat.noaa.gov).

*In Canada, the Canadian Beacon Registry*

**TEL: 1-877-406-7671**

[www.canadianbeaconregistry.forces.gc.ca](http://www.canadianbeaconregistry.forces.gc.ca).



## EDUCATION

Recreational boaters are encouraged to learn more about GMDSS and particularly DSC before installing this equipment in their vessels.

A major concern is the high number of "false alerts" being experienced with this system. A large percentage is attributable to inadequate familiarity with the equipment and lack of operator proficiency.

GMDSS is a relatively new system and as such, all mariners including recreational boaters, should obtain some training in the proper use of this equipment, particularly the VHF-DSC radio. Boater education organizations such as U.S. Power Squadrons, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and others can assist with the required training.

**BoatUS offers an excellent on line tutorial "Can You Hear Me?".**

[www.boatus.com/foundation](http://www.boatus.com/foundation)

Regular use and practice using the digital selective functions of your VHF-DSC radio will assist you in becoming thoroughly familiar with the radio.



## GLOSSARY

Chartplotter	Combined GPS and ENC display
DSC	Digital Selective Calling
ENC	Electronic Navigational Chart
EPIRB	Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon
GMDSS	Global Maritime Distress and Safety System
GPS	Global Positioning System
KHz	Kilohertz (1000 Hertz)
MHz	Megahertz (1000 kHz)
MMSI	Maritime Mobile Service Identity
VHF	Very High Frequency (30-300 MHz)

## EMERGENCY DSC DISTRESS PROCEDURES

Always follow your radio manufacturer's recommendations

- HAVE ALL PERSONS PUT ON LIFE JACKETS
- IF YOU HAVE AN EPIRB TURN IT ON – MAKE SURE RADIO IS ON, LIFT PLASTIC COVER AND PRESS DISTRESS BUTTON FOR 5 SECONDS AND RELEASE
- ONCE CALL IS ANSWERED, VERIFY RADIO IS SET ON CHANNEL 16
- IF CALL IS NOT ANSWERED, CHANGE TO CHANNEL 16
- PRESS MICROPHONE TRANSMIT BUTTON AND CLEARLY SAY: "MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY"
- GIVE YOUR:
  - VESSEL NAME AND DESCRIPTION
  - POSITION AND/OR LOCATION
  - NATURE OF EMERGENCY
  - NUMBER OF PERSONS ON BOARD
  - **INCLUDING YOURSELF**
- RELEASE TRANSMIT BUTTON
- WAIT FOR 10 SECONDS – IF NO RESPONSE
- REPEAT "MAYDAY" CALL

ONCE CALL IS ANSWERED DO NOT CHANGE FROM CHANNEL 16 UNLESS INSTRUCTED TO DO SO. IF CONTACT IS LOST, CALL AGAIN ON CHANNEL 16



Thank You to our Generous Sponsors for 2018 - 2019!

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s/v Avanelle G.

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# View From The Blue

Great Blue Hill Sail & Power Squadron  
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