

THE PORTHOLE

APRIL 2023

IN THIS ISSUE

WINDSHIFTS	34
CALL FOR BOARD NOMINATIONS	35

MEMBER ADVENTURES

**THE WORLD
BENEATH MY
KEEL**

36-37

SAFE BOATING AWARENESS WEEK 38
JUST ASK JOHN 42

The pages of Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons | Escadrilles canadiennes de plaisance
Send your photos to: theporthole@cps-ecp.ca
Cover image by Dylannother on Wikimedia





Paul M. Rellinger, Editor-in-chief, The Port Hole

There's something inherently frustrating about armchair quarterbacks.

This I hold to be true; a personal conviction based mostly on my 40-plus years of sitting down for media interviews of the disenchanted. While many I've talked to offered solutions, demonstrating a sincere desire to right a perceived wrong or injustice, or make something better to the benefit of all, far too many stopped frustratingly short. It was someone else's problem to fix. They raised an issue but then they wiped their hands of assuming any responsibility in the formation and implementation of a solution.

CPS-ECP, like any organization of its size and scope, has in its midst its fair share of armchair quarterbacks. That's to be expected and should be embraced. Divergent and thought-provoking opinions are healthy, forcing us to look inward at ourselves as an organization and ensure we're checking all the boxes to the benefits of all members. We should, and must, encourage such feedback on what we do, why we do it and how we do it. We otherwise risk standing still and that should never be where we want to be.

But equally key to CPS-ECP's health and growth is providing the opportunity for those with progressive ideas to sit at the table where strategies are developed and decisions related to those strategies are made. Each year, such an opportunity is presented in the form of the call for nominations to the CPS-ECP board of directors; a bid to get those armchair quarterbacks onto the playing field where their enthusiasm and passion can do the most good.

As detailed in this edition, there's a long list of what qualities are sought of board director nominees. On first look, it's ad-

mittedly a little overwhelming. There's a lot there to digest. But really it comes down to one criterion trumping all the others – commitment to CPS-ECP and passion for its mission. I'm not involved in the shortlisting of candidates but, for my money, that requirement must be fully evident. All the rest is a bonus.

Nominations for board directorship close May 31st. It's a big commitment, no question, with its associated three-year term. As such, putting your own name forward, or that of a CPS-ECP colleague, is a decision that shouldn't be taken lightly. But there is a sizable reward waiting – the opportunity to see your ideas and associated direction put into actionable steps to the benefit of the organization you're passionate about. That's a pretty good payoff.

There's a reason CPS-ECP has fulfilled its mandate since 1938 and continues to remain relevant in a world where associations have come and gone with regularity. At varying points along the way, many took the next step and chose to be part of the solution as opposed to being on the outside looking in.

If you really believe what you express about any perceived CPS-ECP shortcomings, roll up your sleeves and take action to make things better, whether that's at the national, district or squadron level. Short of that, if you're not lighting any candles, don't complain about being in the dark.

As always, your contributions to The Port Hole are always welcome. Email your articles and/or photos to paulrellinger@hotmail.com ■





SECURING THE PRESENT, SHAPING THE FUTURE: NOMINATIONS OPEN FOR BOARD DIRECTORSHIP

CPS-ECP gets its legal right to exist from Canada's Not-For-Profit Act.

As a corporation, CPS-ECP is governed by directors. The Act states that the directors can elect a management committee of directors to take on most of the governance work, subject to board review and oversight. CPS-ECP has done that by electing directors to the Executive Committee (ExCom).

The following is a list of some of the experiences, skills and attributes that contribute to the selection of the best possible CPS-ECP director candidates.

- Ability to get along with others, leadership qualities, experience, and initiative
- Ability to think independently and not "follow the crowd"
- Breadth of CPS-ECP experience
- Interest in boating education – grade achieved, taught one or more classes
- Evidence of administrative ability (within CPS-ECP or outside)
- Enthusiasm, time available, merit mark record, attendance at National or District meetings, National Committee experience
- Commitment to CPS-ECP and passion for the CPS-ECP mission
- Leadership record at the Squadron and District levels
- Formal education
- Geographic location
- A thorough understanding of Squadron and District operations
- Completion of CPS-ECP 'Officer Training' seminar

All candidates applying for nomination as a director are requested to complete and submit the following items of documentation:

- Director's Application Form
- A current resumé or Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- Skills self-assessment questionnaire
- A Statement of Vision outlining your personal views of the short- and long-term future of CPS-ECP

The above documents can be found on the CPS-ECP website at www.cps-ecp.ca and are available in hard copy from our national office.

If you have some ideas about what CPS-ECP should be doing now, or where it should be going in the future, consider applying to become a director. The term is for three years and you can apply for a second three-year term.

The application form can be found on the website at:

<https://www.cps-ecp.ca/about/call-for-applications-for-nominations>

All applications must be submitted to the chair of the Nominating Committee by **May 31, 2023**.

Applications can be submitted online to nomcom@cps-ecp.ca or as a hard copy marked 'Confidential' to:
Chair of the Nominating Committee,
Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons,
26 Golden Gate Court, Toronto, Ontario M1P 3A5.



Photos by Louise White, SN

THE WORLD BENEATH MY KEEL

– by Louise White, SN, Halifax Power and Sail Squadron

I am fortunate to have grown up around boats.

A rowboat, canoe and sailboat formed a big part of my childhood summers at a lake in Quebec. I was happy boating and swimming but leery of what lurked beneath the surface. It was cold and dark. The fish my father caught were brown. I wasn't really interested in exploring "the depths". As an adult, I moved to Nova Scotia and, for many years since, have enjoyed sailing my boat around the east coasts of Canada and the United States. I started taking trips to warmer climes, some of which involved sailing charters, and welcomed the variety of colour I saw when I went snorkelling. However, I was only comfortable looking at things from a distance while staying on the surface.

That changed when I was snorkelling in the Bahamas and saw my first parrotfish. Wow...shades of pink, blue, purple

and yellow, all on one fish! I wanted to follow it but couldn't as I was snorkelling and the fish swam deeper. But suddenly I was aware of all I was potentially missing by relegating myself to staying on the surface. I decided to take the plunge (pardon the pun) while on a Caribbean cruise in 2014 where PADI's Discover Scuba was offered as an excursion.

My partner, who had been diving for decades, accompanied me for moral support, and off we went to Don Foster's Dive Shop on Grand Cayman Island. A short classroom session to learn hand signals and the very basic dos and don'ts of diving, followed by donning the gear in the shallow end of the pool and then sitting on the bottom of the deep end to get used to breathing through a regulator from a tank, and we were ready to explore a reef.

The reef was only 15 feet deep and we swam from shore.





I had trouble equalizing the pressure in my ears and my weights weren't right but I didn't get claustrophobic. I decided I could do this.

Upon returning home, I took the PADI Open Water theory course online, then did the practical in-water portion at Sun Odyssey Divers in Freeport, Bahamas. Upon completion, I was now a certified diver! However, like any new sport, boating included, once you know a little you realize how much you have yet to learn, so on a subsequent trip to Hawaii I took the Advanced Open Water scuba course, followed by specialties in Deep, Drift and Enriched Air diving. So what have I discovered? A whole new world to explore. I like to hike, and for me, diving is like hiking underwater, but with a lot less effort. I have swum through tunnels in cenotes in Mexico, under natural arches, along colourful rock walls where the ocean is thousands of feet deep below me, and over sand that, to my northern self, looks like a snow field. On one of my first ocean dives in the British Virgin Islands, the wall was so colourful with coral it looked as if someone had thrown cans of paint against it.

And what of the scary creatures that lurk beneath the water? I love watching fish interact and enjoy seeing new species, sporting every colour under the rainbow. I can hear parrotfish munching on coral and watch green moray eels as they watch me from a crevice, their mouths constantly opening and closing; swim over a stingray hidden in the sand and jump as it swims off in a hurry; wonder if a rock



has eyes and then realize it is a scorpion fish; watch the underwater elegance of bull sharks swimming around us while on dives in Mexico; follow an eagle ray and suddenly realize I am deeper than I should be; and get excited every time I see a turtle.

I have seized the opportunity to dive in many corners of the globe: Indonesia, Australia, Hawaii, many islands in the Caribbean, Mexico, and yes, even Canada, though I still prefer tropical water.

The world beneath the surface is full of surprises. I experienced hot water emanating from a hole in the ocean floor in St. Kitts – an underwater hot tub! Fresh water meeting salt water in a cenote looks oily but isn't. Trunk fish are triangular, with flat bottoms. Christmas tree worms disappear instantly if you snap your fingers near them. Lionfish look like swimming feathers. Trigger fish have teeth like ours (discovered when one bit my fin in Australia). Brilliant blue starfish. Lavender, yellow, and orange coral. And my favourite experience? Waving to a wild bottlenose dolphin that swam with us for a bit in the British Virgin Islands and having it "wave" its fin back at me!

I was over 60 when I learned to scuba dive. I encourage anyone who likes the water to get scuba certified so you can explore what lies beneath the surface. Don't wait until it is too late. You will be amazed by what you discover beneath your keel. ■





WEAR IT

A program of the National Safe Boating Council

SAFE BOATING AWARENESS WEEK, MAY 15-22

Since 1995, Safe Boating Awareness Week has been the mainstay of boating safety for more than 16 million people who recreate on Canadian waters.

Boating is not quite into full gear yet, with some areas of the country open and some soon to open. Because many are getting onto the water in time for Safe Boating Awareness Week, we want to remind you of not just five key messages for boating safely - we will also want you to keep in mind recommendations related to physical distancing, and who should be and not be on your boat.

A key issue as the boating season begins is you can expect fewer boaters on the water, so there will be less chance of having help close at hand if you run into trouble. As well, if you do get into trouble, you will put extra stress onto rescue resources.

The Canadian Safe Boating Council (CSBC) Safe Boating Awareness Week messages for this season are as follows: **Wear Your Lifejacket:** More than 80 percent of Canadians who drowned while boating were not wearing their lifejacket or not wearing it properly. There are so many choices for lifejackets/personal floatation devices on the market now. It is easy to pick one that suits your 'boating style' and is one that you are comfortable wearing at all times you are on the water.

Boat Sober – Whether it's prescription drugs, alcohol or cannabis, the use of intoxicants is both irresponsible and illegal. In some provinces, being convicted of impaired operation will also affect your automobile licence.

Be Prepared – You and Your Boat: Make sure you and

your boat are up to your planned on-water activities. That means you are knowledgeable about your upcoming trip, your boat is properly equipped with the required equipment, the weather is suitable for your voyage, you have sufficient fuel, and you have filed a trip plan. Remember, this is not all about you. It's important to keep in mind that by staying out of trouble you will not be putting pressure on rescue resources.

Take A Boating Course – If you are operating a powered recreational vessel, you should have your Pleasure Craft Operator Card or some other proof of competency. But that is just as a start, so consider taking some advanced courses. If your boating preference tends towards paddle, this is the perfect time to enrol in some on-water training.

Be Aware Of Cold Water Risks – Cold water can severely impact your ability to swim or even just stay afloat. Even the best swimmers will feel the effects of a sudden cold water immersion. No matter your swimming ability, your best chance of surviving an accidental cold-water immersion is to wear your lifejacket

Boating is a favourite pastime for many Canadians. It can reduce the stress of social isolation and it's a great family activity. By its very nature, boating provides an ideal way to get out and enjoy the outdoors while still maintaining social distancing practices.

Be sure to participate in events taking place in your area during Safe Boating Awareness Week and, in turn, make your boating experience a better one.

Stay safe. Stay separated. Have fun. ■

TWO SEPARATE COMMUNITIES, ONE COMMON PURPOSE

– by Jeff Evans, Sarnia Power and Sail Squadron

Sunday July 24, 2022 was like many other summer days in Grimsby, Ontario – hot and sunny with a stiff wind out of the southwest. As is the case with such days, many locals had flocked to the beach to cool off.

Elsewhere in town, four individuals went about their separate weekend activities. All had varying careers and social groups but they shared one thing in common, each being a volunteer member of South Shore Search and Rescue (GAMRU). On this particular weekend, they were the crew on call should a water emergency arise.

That afternoon, each received a message on their phones advising of a mayday call with a report of four persons floating on an inflatable pool toy west of Fifty Point Beach on western Lake Ontario. The strong southwest wind of 20 knots and seas of two feet meant that any floating object was at risk of being blown further out into the lake. The crew assembled at Fifty Point Marina and set out on GAMRU 240, their search and rescue (SAR) vessel.

Arriving at the last known position for the reported victims, no victims were found. The crew then spotted what appeared to be individuals one nautical mile east of their position and rushed to that location in the company of the Hamilton Police Marine Unit boat. What they discovered there shocked them. In total, seven people – four of them children – were hanging onto three paddleboards.

The crew of GAMRU 240 recovered all seven and began treatment for potential hypothermia from the 20C water. First aid-trained crew paid particular attention to the four crying children, reassuring them and warming them.

The crew discovered that originally five people (an adult and four children) were on one paddleboard that had been blown too far from shore to return. None were swimmers and only the adult had a PFD. They floated a short distance from shore where they discovered they could not touch bottom. Seeing the group in distress, two other paddle



boarders came to their aid only to discover that they, too, could not make any progress against the wind.

Once aboard the rescue boat, one of the additional paddle boarders informed the crew that he had left his five-year-old son on the beach alone. The GAMRU 240 crew contacted one of their crew ashore who acted as liaison between the rescue boat and Grimsby Fire Department to locate the child. A Grimsby firefighter stayed with the child until his father returned ashore.

As the rescue boat was returning to its base at Fifty Point, crew spotted yet another person alone in the water – a man wearing a black PFD waving his arms to draw the attention of the crew, who quickly went to the scene and recovered him. Once aboard, he declared he had not been injured, despite being thrown from his personal watercraft and knocked unconscious. He estimated he had been in the water for one hour while the PWC floated away. He was assessed for injuries and was warmed by the crew. He subsequently refused medical treatment for a potential concussion.

The rescue vessel returned to its course and arrived at the





base at Fifty Point Marina with the eight new passengers aboard. All were reassessed for injuries and transferred ashore. In total, the incident took 106 minutes from dispatch to stand down.

GAMRU has more than three decades of volunteer service to the local community, having been established in the late 1980s by a group of local boaters who were deeply concerned about safety after a local incident. The initial organization became part of what was the precursor of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary.

GAMRU was incorporated as an Ontario not-for-profit corporation in 1990. As per the organization's membership manual, "Today the unit is a vibrant, community-based, all-volunteer organization with simple goals: to save lives and promote safety on the water. It is a frontline emergency service with no paid employees and no clubhouse or permanent land facilities. It exists at the pleasure of the communities it serves."

Located along another shoreline, this time on Lake Huron, is Huron & Area Search & Rescue (HASAR). This organization, having formed in 2018, is much younger than GAMRU but you would not know it with their rapid expansion of SAR capabilities. Beyond their marine efforts, HASAR provides additional services in ground search, rope rescue, swift water search, ice rescue and disaster assistance.

Given that both GAMRU and HASAR are volunteer run and not-for-profit, three elements are required to provide their critical services in a timely manner: a well-trained group of SAR volunteers, tools and equipment to facilitate their efforts, and funds required to respond to emergency situations.

Both organizations have been very successful acquiring and training new volunteers. They also have dynamic teams of women and men of varying backgrounds and ages. Doug Mepham of GAMRU provides a sample list that includes "the cop, the university professor, the landscaper, the civil servant, the technician, the nurse, the retired person and the student." Even with their existing pool of volunteers, both organizations are constantly seeking new individuals to participate in their community services. As well, there are continual skills upgrading for all volunteers to improve their effectiveness.

To properly equip the volunteer effort is no minor effort. Given their lengthy existence, GAMRU has migrated through





a fleet of SAR vessels, the most recent being their 2021 commissioned GAMRU 240, a purpose-designed and built Stanley aluminum boat powered by twin Honda 225 hp outboards. Equipped with all the latest in electronic equipment to aid with search efforts, the vessel was the result of years of fundraising for the organization.

HASAR is in the early stages of their water rescue capabilities but have secured two vessels. In 2021, the John Millar, a 1973 21-foot Grew was acquired and modified to meet Coast Guard Auxiliary requirements. Given the large and often rough waters of Lake Huron, in 2022, HASAR added the Florence Graham, a 1959 40-foot Norwegian trawler with twin diesel engines, and a fully enclosed bridge and house. The vessel is currently going through an extensive refit in preparation for the 2023 season. Both boats augment various land-based vehicles that HASAR maintains for ground emergency services.

The search for funding for both organizations is a never-ending quest as they rely upon financial support from the community. Doug comments that, in the past, the organization relied heavily on what he describes as "retail" fundraising events – events where the public has been involved. Examples include selling SnoKones on Canada Day, an annual golf tournament and community spaghetti dinners. Reliance on that kind of fundraising is risky as any number of things can derail a public event. Moreover, the level of competition for donated dollars is fierce with more sophisticated fundraising campaigns emerging all the time. There are many worthy causes, and the level of their fundraising is increasingly sophisticated. As a small organization with no staff (and, arguably, little experience in the field) it gets very difficult to compete. In recent years, GAMRU have moved upstream, focusing on donations from institutions, corporations and business organizations.

Patrick Armstrong of HASAR has found that most potential benefactors are willing to fund capital purchases but not operational costs that require additional creative fundraising. Recently, they partnered with Alzheimer Society Huron Perth to stage the Huron Polar Plunge, generating much-needed funds for both organizations.

All of this brings me back to the volunteers, which is the engine for both groups. I had the chance to talk to two front line volunteers.

Marie Green of GAMRU recently retired from the automotive industry and was looking for new activities going forward. She enjoyed being on the water, helping people and was interested in developing new skills. Two seasons into her GAMRU adventure, Marie states, "What surprised me was the new social group and close relationships I developed with my GAMRU teammates. On my very first tasking, the search for an overboard individual did not turn out the way we hoped and that can take an emotional toll. Our close-knit group sought me out in the days following to provide support. I am thrilled to be part of my GAMRU family."

Courtney Courtnage of HASAR works in sales & marketing and relocated from Woodstock to the Huron area a few years back. With a goal to circumnavigate the globe, Courtney had been taking sailing lessons and was looking to further expand upon her boating skills. As well, she wanted to make new friends with her move. As such, she sought out to join the local Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary just when HASAR was being formed and has been involved since. Asked what she has drawn from her SAR experience, Courtney states, "I have developed skills and taken on new responsibilities that I would never have considered a few years ago. Since joining, I have been certified in rope rescue, ground search and am one of the inaugural members of the newly formed HASAR CCGA unit. I have also received emergency management training, all of which benefits my daily life beyond HASAR activities." Still in the midst of her career, that circumnavigation goal must wait. Meanwhile, Courtney enjoys rock climbing and sea kayaking on Ontario waterways.

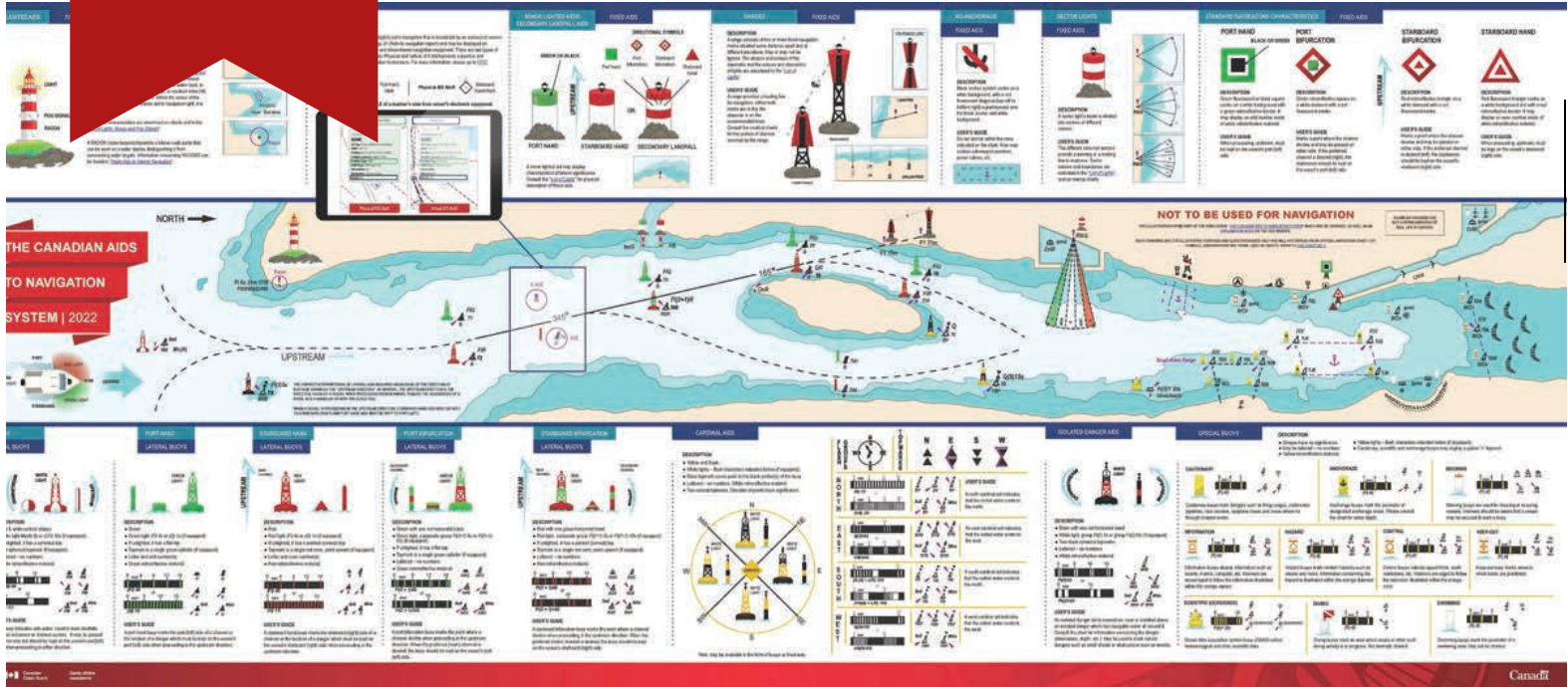
I hope you will take three things away from reading this article. First, take the opportunity to say thanks to your local SAR volunteers for their efforts to improve boating safety. These are exceptional members of our community. Second, should you be seeking a rewarding activity, consider volunteering with your search and rescue marine unit.

Finally, does your company support local volunteer organizations? Are you involved with foundations seeking worthwhile charities to support? If so, suggest they consider operations like HASAR and GAMRU.

I guarantee you those eight people rescued on July 24th remain very thankful for the volunteers and their financial supporters. ■



justask
John



NEW CANADIAN BUOYAGE SYSTEM GUIDE IS A MUST-HAVE

– by John Gullick, Manager of Government and Special Programs

I often get asked about our navigational aids buoyage system. In fact, it is probably one of the most common questions I receive. Many of the answers are part and parcel of any Pleasure Craft Operator Certificate course.

The Canadian Coast Guard recently issued a new quick guide for the Canadian buoyage system. It's an upgrade from the previous version, and is much more visually appealing and easy to understand. It's in full colour and can be downloaded as an excellent reference to be kept on your boat or at the cottage.

Below are four links - two in horizontal format in English and French and two in vertical format, also in English and French. The links were provided by Graham Silcox, Training and Exercise Officer, Maritime Search and Rescue, Central Region, Canadian Coast Guard.

Type the underlined link in your browser to retrieve different PDF formats of the Map and other valuable documents here: http://www.cps-ecp.ca/resources/digital_government_publications_for_boaters/



Or scan the code above. ■



IN MEMORY OF JEAN-ROBERT LAVERGNE, AP (1946-2022) – by Serge St-Martin, JN

Born in Shawinigan Falls, Jean-Robert was always attracted to water, electricity and electronics.

With his technician's diploma in hand, he started his own business. In 1979, he joined Hydro-Québec International and helped power utilities in Guinea and Bangladesh. In 2000, he moved to Saguenay, Quebec. When he retired in 2004, he was Chief of Automation at the La Grande Power Station. In 1994, he passed the Boating Course exam and became a member of CPS-ECP's Trois-Rivières Power and Sail Squadron. He successfully completed eight CPS-ECP courses, and has taught Boating, Piloting, GPS, Radar For Boaters and Boating Electricals. Jean-Robert was the only Quebecer to be a member of the American Boat & Yacht Council.

For the Saguenay - Lac-Saint-Jean Squadron, Jean-Robert was Commander, Treasurer, Public Relations Officer and Training Officer. In the last position, he was responsible for the supervision of all instructors and courses that were given. In addition, he was present at almost every training session that the squadron offered. Jean-Robert also taught several advanced courses, in addition to offering a multitude of boating safety information sessions each year to other organizations such as the local fire department, the Sûreté du Québec and Parks Canada.

Jean-Robert was also very active with other local organizations that had projects related to boating safety. In collaboration with the *Association Maritime du Québec*, he played an active role in the establishment of boating stations in Roberval and the city of Saguenay. Each year, he conducted Pleasure Craft Courtesy Checks at boating events and exhibitions, and he constantly encouraged the efforts of his Squadron to promote boating safety.

Most recently, Jean-Robert served as the District Commander for the Estuaire Saint-Laurent District. He worked tirelessly to support the squadron officers in this district. One of his

major accomplishments was his success getting all the squadrons in the district to act cooperatively, a task that required a lot of hard work and determination. Because of his drive and outstanding leadership, the district has survived.

As director of the Electronics Course, Jean-Robert was also responsible for ensuring that this course was offered in French. He also served on the National Training Department's Editorial Review Committee of French Courses, spending countless hours translating various course manuals and boating safety texts.

With not enough on his plate yet, Jean-Robert agreed to become the chair of the organizing committee for the CPS-ECP Annual Conference and General Meeting in Quebec City in October 2014. Working with the local committee, he put in hundreds of hours to ensure that the 250 convention delegates benefited from the sessions they attended.

At the 2018 and 2019 AGMs, Jean-Robert was elected National Educational Officer and a member of the CPS-ECP Board of Directors. He served in that capacity prior to resigning due to health reasons. He was one merit mark short of a life membership.

Jean-Robert, also affectionately known as J-R, will be greatly missed by all his boating friends, especially by those boaters in the Saguenay region, as he was known for planning the installation and repairing the electrical appliances and electronics on board. In spite of his illness, Jean-Robert answered all requests. He really went to the end of his strength.

We offer our deepest condolences to his partner Gisèle Touzin, and his children Carolyn and Philip. ■



**Vision
2023**

**JOIN US
NEXT OCTOBER
IN WINDSOR,
ONTARIO**

Scan the code for more details

