

# LGPS SOUNDINGS

March – April 2023



LAKE GEORGE POWER SQUADRON, INC.  
OF UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS  
PO BOX 411, BURNT HILLS, NY 12027

## *Commander Message*

*By George K. Williams, AP*

Good news... in the Northern Hemisphere, Spring begins on Monday, March 20th - Think Spring!

With spring comes preparation for the 2023 boating season. As you are preparing your boat for the upcoming season you will need to request your 2023 Vessel Safety Check inspection – let me explain.

A Vessel Safety Check is a courtesy examination of your boat (vessel) to verify the presence and condition of certain Safety Equipment required by State and the Federal regulations. Our Vessel Examiner, Armand Canestraro is a trained USPS specialist and has been a member of our Squadron for decades. He will make recommendations and discuss certain safety issues that will make you a safer boater during his visit to your dock or home.

Remember, this inspection is not a law enforcement issue. No citations will be given because of this encounter. Armand will supply you with a copy of the USPS/Coast Guard evaluation so that you may follow some of the suggestions provided. All vessels that pass will be able to display the distinctive 2023 VSC decal. Armand is a phone call away at (518) 372-7220 to schedule your spring VSC today!

Stay warm and have fun getting your boat ready for the season - stay well.

### **WANTED**

Quality - high resolution digital photographs for the Squadron Website Photo Gallery Page

All photo's should be submitted in landscape - digital jpeg format

Mail a CD or e-mail your photo's to Armand at [lgpsinfo@nycap.rr.com](mailto:lgpsinfo@nycap.rr.com)

### **Almost Boating Season!**





**Now Hear This...**

### **Squadron Nomination Committee Needs Your Help**

The Squadron Nomination Committee is presently seeking LGPS members interested in serving on the upcoming 2023-24 Bridge/Executive Committee. If interested, please call P/C Armand Canestraro at (518) 372-7220 or P/C George K. Williams at (518) 393-6414 to discuss your interest. Without you – there is **NO** Squadron!

### **The Great Northeast Boat Show – Queensbury Dome Is Back!!!**

The Great Northeast Boat show will again be at the Adirondack Sports Complex located at 326 Sherman Ave in Queensbury for the weekend of March 31st through April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023. For more details please visit <http://www.thegreatupstateboatshow.com/>

### **DEC: LG Day Use Passes Will Now Be Sold Online Only**

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation announced “the transition to automated, online sales for all day use permits at the Lake George Islands.” “Online day use sales are anticipated to begin May 12, seven days prior to the opening of the Lake George Islands campgrounds,” said the DEC press release. “Reservations can be booked as early as seven days prior to the day of arrival and as late as the same day. Visitors will be able to see real-time availability and even book a dock while on the water. The total fee for a day use permit is \$12. All patrons wishing to acquire a permit for Lake George Islands day use will need to do so either online through ReserveAmerica by downloading the ReserveAmerica app (search for RA Camping), or by calling the Call Center at 1-800-456-CAMP (2267). No in-person day use sales will be performed at our Lake George Islands campgrounds. “Online booking of day use will only apply to the Lake George Islands facilities. This new process will in no way change the booking of campsites at our Lake George Islands facilities, nor will it change day use sales at any other DEC campgrounds or day use areas. ”DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos was quoted, “Automating the sales of day use permits for the Lake George Islands is easier and faster for visitors. Instead of boating to an island headquarters to purchase a permit through a manual, labor intensive process, visitors can now quickly and easily book their day use permit online and spend more time enjoying the beauty of Lake George. The Lake George Islands Annual Day Use Passport will still be available the 2023 season for \$80 but also will be sold only online, at [www.newyorkstateparks.com](http://www.newyorkstateparks.com).

### **Bob Blais, 86, to end 52-year run as Lake George Mayor**

After 52 years as mayor, Bob Blais, 86, is not seeking re-election in the March 21 vote. After 52 years as Mayor of Lake George Village, Bob Blais is not seeking reelection in March month, but he aims to continue in a public role. He’s hoping the Village, Town of Lake George and Warren County will allow him to serve in the newly created role of Special Events Director, for the Festival Commons at Charles R. Wood Park, and possibly other events too.

# A Brief History of the Erie Canal

By Nick Yetto – March 2023

The waterway opened up the heartland to trade, transforming small hamlets into industrial centers. Former President Thomas Jefferson considered the proposal “little short of madness.” The project became known as “Clinton’s Folly”—an embarrassment to the state of New York and its governor, DeWitt Clinton. Yet shortly after the locks opened in 1825, completing a man-made waterway that connected the Hudson River to the Great Lakes, the critics were silenced, and the Erie Canal, one of the greatest engineering marvels in history, charted America’s course from colonial start-up to global superpower. Around 1807, commercial interests in New York State started agitating for a canal to link the Midwest and the Eastern Seaboard. A transportation corridor to the Great Lakes would open the nation’s interior to global trade and promote the development of an American heartland. Raw materials would come east; people would move west. In Clinton’s hopeful words at the canal’s opening ceremony: “The most fertile and extensive regions of America will avail themselves of its facilities for a market ... [and New York City] will, in the course of time, become the granary of the world, the emporium of commerce, the seat of manufactures, the focus of great moneyed operations.” Easier said than done. America had few civil engineers. Equipment was crude. William Otis wouldn’t patent his industrial steam shovel until 1839, and Alfred Nobel’s dynamite wouldn’t appear until 1866. Muscle would build the canal. Construction began in 1817, and soon Benjamin Wright, a prominent surveyor, became chief engineer. Clinton’s doubters were correct that the engineering challenges were unprecedented. Wright’s roughly 9,000 laborers channeled nobly through impossible rock formations. Sometimes they’d crack the stone with gunpowder, a volatile and deadly option; other times, they would use a drill bit invented for the task. To dig the canal trench—4 feet deep, 40 feet wide, running 363 miles from Albany to Buffalo—the men used picks and shovels. There were intense risks: Malaria, mysterious illnesses and grisly construction accidents disabled hundreds of workers, killing many. Some workers found the territory irredeemably harsh: “The land is a desolate wilderness,” William Thomas, a Welshman who had come to work on the canal in 1818, wrote to his family back home. “I beg all of my old neighbors not to think of coming here.”

The greatest challenge was elevation: Lake Erie, the canal’s western terminus, is more than 570 feet above sea level. The Hudson River at Waterford, New York, the eastern terminus, is a mere 16.5 feet in elevation. Given rises and dips along the way, the engineers knew the canal couldn’t be a continuous river. It would have to be arranged in a series of waterways, each occupying its own elevation, with those strips connected by locks—great concrete bathtubs, designs for which Wright and other engineers copied from the finest English and French canal builders of the day: A boat floats in, the doors close, and piped water flows into or out of the sealed chamber, raising or lowering the water level so the vessel can float on to the next stretch. Once complete, it would be one of the longest canals in the world. After the canal opened, in October 1825, economic gains were swift and helped transform New York City (roughly 150 miles down the Hudson from Waterford) into the nation’s premier seaport, surpassing Philadelphia and Boston. The canal corridor also served as an important route on the Underground Railroad: Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass lived nearby, providing refuge to those in flight. The canal wasn’t just an engineering feat; it was a community linked by water, and by the belief in a better tomorrow. The 1912 song “[Low Bridge, Everybody Down](#),” perhaps better known as “Fifteen Miles on the Erie Canal,” offered the country a nostalgic vision of plucky life on

the barges and a celebration of the booming canal cities that helped turn New York into the Empire State.

But perhaps the greatest marvel today is that the canal is still in vibrant use, its machinery largely remaining in continuous operation. While freight rail and the St. Lawrence Seaway have made the canal's commercial traffic mostly obsolete, despite the occasional tugboat pulling a barge, it is frequently traversed by anglers or Great Loopers—recreational boaters who circumnavigate the Eastern Seaboard via the Erie Canal, the Great Lakes, the Mississippi River, the Gulf of Mexico and back up along the Atlantic. “A lot of people look at [the canal] as history,” says Paul Guarnieri, chief lock operator at Waterford E-2. “But we’re still here.” The canal remains a playground and a testament to American engineering—at once a call to adventure and a gentle edict to slow down and unplug: “Life in the slow lane” is the canaller’s motto today; along several stretches, the motorized speed limit is a mere five miles per hour.

What do we do with glorious things that have outlived their original intent? When we’re wise, we preserve them. When we’re brilliant, we preserve and *repurpose* them. As you watch these spirited modern-day canallers making these waters their own, the venerable canal still seems to embody hope for the future.

### **How the Erie Canal transformed quiet rural villages into thriving commercial cities**

#### **BUFFALO**

The village had been burned to the ground by British troops in 1813, and when canal construction began four years later, Buffalo was still a remote outpost deep in the Niagara Frontier, home to no more than 2,000 people. By 1900, canal commerce had helped make it the ninth-largest city in America, the world’s largest grain port and a hub for American flour-milling.

#### **ROCHESTER**

Before the canal, Rochester had about 1,000 residents. Fifty years later, there were more than 80,000, thanks to increasing flour exports. Perched beside falls offering hydropower, Rochester soon became the nation’s largest flour producer until Minneapolis took the title in the 1880s. Home to one of the nation’s first commercial plant nurseries, the Flour City then became the Flower City—a leading exporter of flower seeds into the 20th century.

#### **SYRACUSE**

An unincorporated, swampy crossroads, Syracuse had 250 residents at most. Then the canal came through, and the town started massively increasing its salt exports by digging deeper into the surrounding briny wetlands. Within a decade, the city’s population was 10,000, and Syracuse would dominate the nation’s salt market until the 1870s. By the end of the 19th century, its population was up to 100,000.

#### **SCHENECTADY**

When Clinton’s inaugural flotilla reached Schenectady, population 4,068, the townspeople protested the canal, which they feared would diminish Schenectady’s role in overland trade. By 1880, the population had only grown to 13,655. But Thomas Edison, tired of labor strikes at his factory in Manhattan, was looking for new digs. Schenectady, right on the canal, was perfect, and Edison moved his operations there in 1886, helping raise the population to nearly 100,000 by 1929.

# Answers to January-February 2023 Soundings Compass Quiz - Test Your Navigation Skills

(all values in table are in degrees)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>True</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>095</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>007</b>
<b>Variation</b>	<b>16E</b>	<b>10E</b>	<b>17W</b>	<b>3W</b>	<b>6W</b>	<b>2W</b>	<b>5E</b>	<b>7E</b>	<b>9W</b>	<b>8E</b>
<b>Magnetic</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>097</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>001</b>	<b>359</b>
<b>Deviation</b>	<b>3W</b>	<b>2E</b>	<b>1E</b>	<b>2E</b>	<b>9E</b>	<b>3W</b>	<b>3E</b>	<b>2W</b>	<b>3E</b>	<b>3W</b>
<b>Compass</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>099</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>002</b>

Tips: Westerly Variation/Deviation – Add Down / Subtract Up  
Easterly Variation/Deviation – Subtract Down / Add Up

‘True Virtue Makes Dull Company – Add ‘W’hiskey”

## **Squadron Nomination Committee Needs Your Help**

The Squadron Nomination Committee is presently seeking LGPS members interested in serving on the upcoming 2023-24 Bridge/Executive Committee. If interested, please call P/C George Williams at (518) 393-6414 to discuss your interest. Without you – there is **NO** Squadron!

## **Change of Watch 2023**

The 2023 Change of Watch for command year 2023-24 has yet to be determined. The slate of officers/committees still has available positions available (see “Nomination Committee Needs Your Help”). We are hopeful to announce a COW date in the May-June 2023 newsletter.

## **The Great Northeast Boat Show – Queensbury Dome**

The Great Northeast Boat show will again be at the Adirondack Sports Complex located at 326 Sherman Ave in Queensbury for the weekend of March 31st through April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023. Show information is available at <http://www.thegreatupstateboatshow.com/>