

# AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB

## Golden Isles



### The port hole

For Boaters, By Boaters™

A quarterly publication of America's Boating Club Golden Isles

#### Upcoming Events

##### February

- 6 - Radar class
- 7 - ABC class
- 10 - EXCOM
- 10-15 USPS National Meeting
- 17 - Social
- 21-22 - Fernandina cruise

##### March

- 3 - Litter pickup
- 7 - Mudcat Charlie's cruise
- 10 - EXCOM
- 14 - Women in Boating
- 19 & 26 - Boating Apps
- 20 - Social
- 21 - CoastFest
- 27-28 D26 Spring Conference & COW

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## Commander's Message



CDR Mark Crawford, AP

### Small Squadron, Big Impact

Golden Isles Sail and Power Squadron (GISPS) is part of District 26 which is comprised of 9 other squadrons. These squadrons have a variety of locations including lakes and all coastal areas of South Carolina and Georgia. By far the largest club is Hilton Head with over 300 members. There are around 1,000 members in the entire district. Our club, depending on when you count, has around 50 members, so we are one of the smaller clubs in the district.

While GISPS may be modest in size, our level of involvement is anything but. One clear indicator of member engagement is our Merit Mark participation. In 2025, twelve members earned Merit Marks—representing 24% of our membership. That level of participation reflects the energy, commitment, and willingness of our members to actively support squadron activities.

That same enthusiasm also shows up at higher levels of the organization. In the latest issue of *The Ensign*, the national United States Power Squadrons (USPS) magazine, articles from two of our members were featured—an exciting distinction for our club. Rick Hindrey shared a captivating article on his travels to Egypt, while Charles Wilsdorf contributed a story about discovering sailing and developing a lifelong love of boating. Together, these articles bring our squadron's total to four published pieces in *The Ensign* in just the past few years—a remarkable achievement for a club of our size. Adding to that distinction, Charles Wilsdorf also had an article published in **BOATING** magazine.

Our very own Cynthia Lamb has been notified that she will receive the USPS's Charles F. Chapman National award for excellence in teaching at this month's Annual Meeting in Myrtle Beach. This is the highest honor given for education in the USPS. This is a very selective award with many people nominated. Prior winners from our club include Charles Wilsdorf and Mike Moye. Winning this award really highlights the level of commitment our membership has to the major tenet of USPS – education.

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## Commander's Message (continued)

Other National and District level activities include Cynthia as the District newsletter editor and serves on the District Nominating Committee. Charles Wilsdorf is on the National Education Department's Navigation committee. Jerry Lamb is on the District Audit Committee. Vicky Jefferis is the District Merit Mark Chairman and evaluates several club newsletters to identify winners of the annual USPS Distinctive Communicator Award.

This October, we will host the District 26 Cruise and Rendezvous event. This is quite an undertaking and will require, as they say, all hands-on-deck. Already a great deal of work has been done with hotel selection and planning committee formation. It will be a fantastic event with people from the entire district coming to St. Simons Island for a long weekend of fun.

Let's keep up the great work and participation. Don't forget, invite your friends and family to join in the fun.

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**America's Boating Club of South Carolina and Coastal Georgia**



### ***Reserve Your Hotel Room and Register for Events!***

## **Spring Conference/Change of Watch**

**March 27-29, 2026**

Lake Murray Power Squadron is pleased to host the District 26 Spring Conference and Change of Watch at the DoubleTree by Hilton, 2100 Bush River Road, Columbia, SC.

This event offers a wonderful opportunity to reconnect and socialize with fellow squadron members, take part in the District Business Meeting, celebrate individual and squadron achievements, recognize the service of the outgoing Bridge, and welcome the incoming Bridge.

**Editor's note:** As I wrote in our last newsletter, these district events are a lot of fun. What a great way to experience such a beautiful place. BTW, TripAdvisor gives Lake Murray 4.5 out of 5 stars and calls it a "boating paradise."

## Executive Officer's Report



XO Cynthia Lamb, JN

### Our Women in Boating Program

According to data collected by the market research firm Info-Link, men outnumber women when it comes to registered boat owners by 7 to 1. What about boats that are co-owned by a husband and wife? Who's in command? It's much harder to find data for this, but according to the article, Women at the Helm, in Pontoon and Deck Boat magazine, "only 23 percent of women ever put themselves in the captain position on their own boat." This is actually a well-documented pattern in recreational boating. Anecdotally, I hear husbands bemoan the fact their wives aren't

willing to learn more about operating the boat. I also had a neighbor tell me that he'd like to get a boat, but who's going to help him with the boat as he only has daughters. Yikes!

Not only are women missing out on a wonderful, healthy and rewarding activity, but it's a whole lot safer if more than one person knows how to drive, dock the boat, use the radio and GPS, as well as how to navigate back home.

So why aren't more women taking the helm? The reasons have far less to do with ability or interest than with how boating roles are established and reinforced over time.

In many couples, the first few boating trips set the pattern:

- One partner (often the husband) already has experience.
- He naturally takes the helm "to get everyone out safely."
- The other partner takes on supportive roles (lines, fenders, lookout).
- Once those roles are established, they tend to persist indefinitely.

Competence as a "first mate" is reinforced and praised, while helm skills remain undeveloped. Over time, switching roles feels awkward rather than natural. The result is that women often step back from the helm not because they can't operate the boat—but because the conditions for learning never truly existed.

### Why Women-Only Programs Work

America's Boating Club Golden Isles developed its Women In Boating program to remove these barriers. Our students range from brand-new boaters to women who have spent years aboard family boats but rarely had the chance to operate them. Some are partners of longtime boat owners; others are solo boaters, or women preparing to boat independently for the first time.

It provides a low-pressure learning environment, hands-on helm time, permission to make mistakes and recover, and instruction from trained educators, not spouses. Women do not want their learning to happen publicly and under pressure, where mistakes feel amplified and corrections feel personal. Just to be clear, our women-only program means that we only take women as students. It does not mean that we only rely on female instructors.

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## Executive Officer's Report (cont'd)

Many thanks to Vicky Jefferis, Terry Osman, Cathy Stortz, Dave & Alice Vaughan, Rick Ellis, Mike Moye, and Jerry Lamb for their help in executing the two programs we've run so far. All of our instructors supporting this program understand that the goal is confidence and independence, that students are there to run the boat themselves, and that taking the helm away undermines the program. Our participants respond well to instructors who coach rather than direct. This mindset matters more than gender.

We use the seminar portion of the program to talk through scenarios in advance:

- Docking attempts
- Missed approaches
- Wind or current impacts
- Slow, awkward maneuvers

We also use the time to encourage peer support, create camaraderie, and reduce intimidation. By the time participants step aboard, they already feel like a team and are motivated to take the helm.

### Marketing Women-Only Programs

Programs like Women in Boating are significantly easier to market and generate interest for than generic boating classes. For one thing, the name alone identifies a clear and understandable value proposition. "Women in Boating" communicates:

- Who it's for (women)
- What they'll gain (confidence, skills, command)
- Why it's different (supportive, hands-on, empowering)

Our club placed a colorful eye-catching print ad in the Darien News to promote the program. We also took advantage of National's cooperative advertising program to recoup half of the ad's cost. As a result of placing the ad, the newspaper's editor was intrigued by the program and decided to write an article about the program that appeared in the paper a week later.

We are still fine-tuning the program and our approach to marketing it. The program is exactly aligned with our club's mission and is making a difference. We expect to run this program twice a year in two different locations across our geographic region, with plans to expand into advanced courses and specialty clinics in the future.

Our goal is simple. We want women to be more confident at the helm. When that happens, boating becomes safer, more enjoyable, and more empowering for everyone aboard.

**Editor's notes:** Our next program will take place on Saturday, March 14 on St. Simons Island. Please help us promote this program.

A version of this article is set to appear in the next issue of the USPS education department's newsletter *The Compass*.

## Squadron Education Officer's Report



SEO Mike Moye, SN

### What's Happening this Winter

Our first ABC course for the year is Saturday, February 7. Please let folks who might be interested in building boating skills know about the course. They can register for the course at [www.gisps.org](http://www.gisps.org).

Fifteen years ago, as Apple was launching their very popular Apple App Store, their commercials used the catch phrase “There’s an app for that!” If it worked for Apple, then surely it will work for the Golden Isles Sail and Power Squadron. Past Commander Jerry Lamb, who has provided his expertise to the Instructional Team for the last several years, has created a seminar he has named “Apps for Boaters.”

In this seminar, he covers nine major topics and gives many live examples of apps in action. To get more detailed information go to [https://gisps.org/Apps\\_For\\_Boaters-Registration.html](https://gisps.org/Apps_For_Boaters-Registration.html).



Fifteen years from now our catch phrase may not be quite as well known as Apple’s. However, we believe this seminar will help you achieve “Smarter boating, one App at a time.” This seminar will occur on March 19th and 26th at our usual classroom space at the University of Georgia Marine Extension at 715 Bay Street in Brunswick from 7:00 until 9:00 in the evenings.

Our popular Women in Boating course will be offered on March 14 up in the Hampton Point area on St. Simons. Get detailed information about the location and topics covered at [https://gisps.org/Women\\_in\\_Boating-Registration.html](https://gisps.org/Women_in_Boating-Registration.html).

Participants in this seminar will spend the morning in the classroom and the afternoon on the water practicing the important skills that will make them comfortable and competent boaters.

Boating is an activity where there is always something to learn. But, to really learn it well, we must practice the skills over and over. Ohio State Coach Woody Hayes said that “you cannot stay the same—you will either get better or worse”. He was talking about practice. His game was football. Ours is recreational boating. When we’re on the water we’re practicing. When we do things correctly, we can leave the boat at the end of the day feeling competent.

We must all remember that it takes practice, whether we’re tying a knot, backing into a boat slip, charting a course or anything else involving boating skills to become a competent skipper.

Not to worry—it will be warm again soon. See you on the water.

## 2025 Club Christmas Party at the home of John and Daria Lijoi



January's social was a BYOB pizza party dinner at the clubhouse at beautiful Cathead Creek Landing in Darien. Club member Domenick Mastroianni served as our host. Our guest speaker was a club favorite, Paul Medders. Paul and his wife Kim own and operate Georgia Tidewater Outfitters, a tour boat company out of Darien. Paul's "day job" is as a wildlife biologist with DNR.



## Confessions of a Lifelong Boater

**Submitted by:** Terri Taylor

I bet you'd be surprised to learn that having grown up on boats; both my father and grandfather had boats, and being married to a charter captain for 15 years, that I am really inept at docking a boat.

I recently joined the "America's Boating Club Golden Isles" and found myself in a women's boating class taught by Cynthia Lamb, Vicky Jefferis, and Terry Osman. We students all had one thing in common.... being on boats with men who never let us participate in the docking of the boat. However, to be fair we may also have been content to let them do all the work!

The class covered nautical terms necessary to avoid looking like an amateur. Terms that I was very familiar with as not to be an embarrassment to my father. Bow (the front), Stern (the rear), Port (left side), Starboard (right side), Deck (self-explanatory), and the "Head", the toilet, although the origin of that term escapes me! You never call the fenders bumpers, and the lines are never called ropes.

The class also covered safety tips, very important, and navigation. I thoroughly enjoyed it and learned a lot. The second half of the class, the art of "docking", was postponed due to weather and is a topic worth discussing in its own right.

### **Retro is in and "The Bump" is Back!**

Having grown up during the 70's and with a love of dancing, I enjoyed "The Bump." A dance with two partners who "bump" their hips, rear ends, knees or elbows to the rhythm of a song, namely KC and the Sunshine Band's *That's the way I like it*.

Recently another king of "Bump" made an appearance as I was learning to dock an 18 ft. Grady White owned by my friend, Jill McGahan, at the Hampton River Marina. Cynthia Lamb, our instructor, taught us to "bump" the throttle forward and back to neutral or to reverse and then back to neutral to slowly approach the dock. It works pretty well, although I still need a lot of practice. As the saying goes, "Only approach the dock as fast and you want to hit it!" Since I am operating a boat that is not my own, I am very cautious and careful.



Cynthia, Jill and Terri after doing the bump

The "bump" has helped give me the confidence and the tools I need to succeed in learning the "art" of docking a boat. I will continue to practice the "bump" and hopefully master the art of "docking". I look forward to many more opportunities to increase my skills and enjoy the beautiful waters of the Golden Isles.

## To Go or Not to Go?

Submitted by: P/C Jerry Lamb

**That is (always) the question.** It seems like a lovely summer day, and you want to go boating on a little longer journey than your usual causal afternoon outing. You want to spend the weekend away from your home port, miles away. The local TV weather person says that there's a chance of bad weather, but only a 40 per-cent chance. Go or no go?

The first time I went and shouldn't have was driven by the real bug-a-boo for coastal voyagers. **Someone once said that the most dangerous thing on a boat is a schedule.** We were on a Labor Day weekend trip from Groton, CT to the "fishtail" of Long Island, the eastern end where it splits into the north and south forks with multiple islands and small harbors. It was a great cruising ground. It was a fun weekend but it was Labor Day and the kids, all 13 of them on our four-boat flotilla, had to be back in school the next day. It was before chart plotters, GPS, tablets, and 24-hour weather channels. Even though the NOAA weather radio forecast was questionable, we needed to get home so off we went.

Not a good idea. We had to go through the Race, a watery gap between the north fork of Long Island and Fishers Island where the current can run 6 knots as all the water rushes in and out of Long Island Sound. The wind came out of the north, which was, unfortunately, the direction that we wanted to go. It soon became clear that we would not make it back before dark, if at all. Discretion, or something, being the better part of valor, we headed for the shelter of Greenport Harbor on Orient Point, NY.

Off the wind, our 23-foot sailboat's 6 HP outboard could make headway and we relaxed. Unfortunately, we relaxed too soon. The outboard faltered and we could only keep it going by hand-pumping the bulb to feed it gas. That became the kiddos' job and we continued on. One of our friends passed us with the first mate crying and saying, "we're all going to die." We did tell the children that if we sank, they should get to the biggest house they could find and ask them to adopt you.

Of course, we survived, taking the ferry home to get the children to school. We went back for the boats the next weekend. Even seasoned cruisers are not immune to wondering whether to go or not. I read almost every day on my ICW blog about someone asking should I attempt such and such bay with winds from some direction.

How do you make a good decision today? First, you can be more confident in the short-range forecast. They are accurate for about three days, and the weather people almost always get big storms and weather fronts right, if not always the timing.

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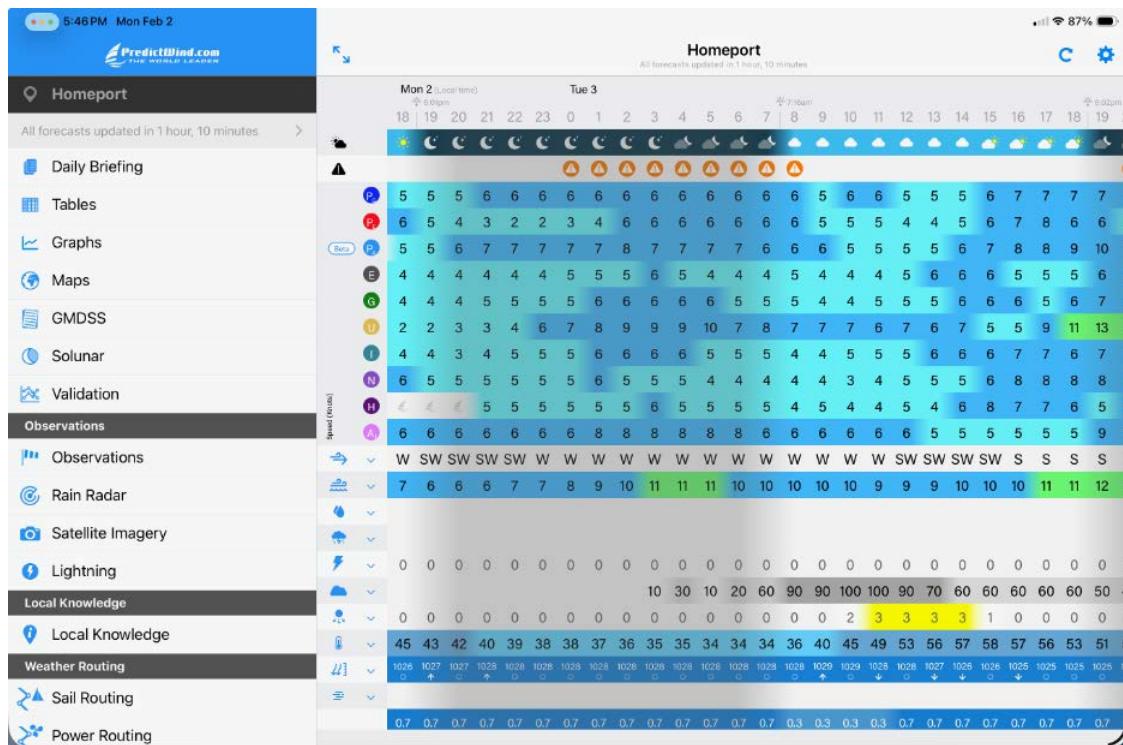
## To Go or Not to Go? (cont'd)

However, most televised forecasts are more concerned about landlubber viewers rather than the specific needs of boaters. NOAA radio and web pages are the first refuge of a cowardly heart (just saw The Wizard of Oz again), giving week-long forecasts and expected wind and sea conditions.

Today we have tablets and phones that have apps for navigation with weather information embedded. But we also have weather apps that give much more detail. Researching them for my planned boating apps seminar, I learned a “whole bunch.”

Some apps are for more general (non-boating) audiences. My favorite of these is MyRadar. Oriented toward airplane pilots, it gives a wind map around anyplace you move the map to and a detailed forecast for that place. The forecast includes the next two hours, hourly forecast for the next 24, a week forecast for temperatures, precipitation, wind and cloud cover. But . . .

It doesn't have the wind direction, speed and gusts using 10 different weather models, including an AI one, for every hour for up to 14 days. Or cloud cover, temperature, barometric pressure precipitation, moon phase, wave direction and height for those same 14 days. Those features are from the paid version of PredictWind. It's my new favorite weather app. And that's just the table page (see below). There is also a Daily Briefing page for the location, animated maps, graphs, global weather patterns, sun and lunar charts, and real time observations among other things. Not to mention sail and power passage routings that change depending on your appetite for waves and wind. It's amazing.



## To Go or Not to Go? (cont'd)

And PredictWind is only one of several multi-model weather apps. And weather apps are only one of the new sets of boating apps used for locating docks and other anchorages, warning you of hazards, and, most importantly, navigating safely.

Any boating app, no matter how good, will not make me or anyone a wiser boater, immune to pressures that might lead us astray. I said earlier that the most dangerous thing to a boater is a schedule. However, getting, learning, and using some of these apps might just help you make a better go-no go decision.



## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

### MARSH MADNESS, SALT MARSH CLEANUP

*Brought to you Sharon & Rick Hindery*

#### Opportunity #1:

Date: Tuesday, March 3 @ 3 PM / Brunswick – meet at Overlook Park on Hwy 17  
CLEANUP AREA: Hwy 17 from Sidney Lanier Bridge to FJ Torras Causeway.

#### Opportunity #2:

Date: Thursday, March 12th @ 5 PM / SSI – meet underneath the MacKay River Bridge, WEST side (located on FJ Torras Causeway)  
CLEANUP AREA: Access road, under bridge area, grassy area, fishing pier, marsh area.

SUPPLIES (safety vests, bags, gloves, litter grabbers, water) provided for each event.

- Boots, sunscreen & bug spray recommended.
- Please arrive a few minutes early to sign in and receive instructions/supplies.
- IF DESIRED, PREPARE TO GET MUDDY.

Join Sharon & Rick Hindery, KGIB & other volunteers.

Both events are \*\*RAIN OR SHINE!!!

# The Social Scene

On **February 17**, we will meet up at Three Oaks Steak & Seafood for some Southern coastal cuisine, including fresh seafood, steaks, and comfort foods at a new family-owned restaurant in Brunswick.

They get their shrimp directly from the Flying Cloud shrimp boat owned and operated by a family member.

## **February Social**

Date and Time: Tuesday, February 17, 6:00PM

Place: Three Oaks, 415 Palisade Drive

**RSVP** by February 13: cynthia.l.lamb48@gmail.com,  
860-908-5148

## **March Social**

We are working on getting a speaker for our March social. More than likely, we will move the March social from the 17th (that's St. Patrick's Day) to the 20th. Please stay tuned.

## **April Social**

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!** Our Change of Watch will be held on **Friday, April 10** this year! We'll return to the scenic River House at Sanctuary Cove to celebrate a successful 2025 and mark the installation of the 2026 Bridge. Catering will be provided by Sanctuary Cove Golf Club. This is our one "special" event each year - don't miss it!

Date and Time: Friday, April 10, 5:30 PM cocktails, 6:30 PM dinner

Place: River House, Sanctuary Cove

69 River Oaks Trail

Waverly, GA 31565

Be on the lookout for your email invitation as details come together. If you would like to help with decorating and/or cleanup, please let Mark know.

As always, suggestions for our monthly socials or educational programs are always welcome and appreciated!



## Upcoming Cruise Opportunities

**February:** Overnight cruise to Fernandina Harbor Marina

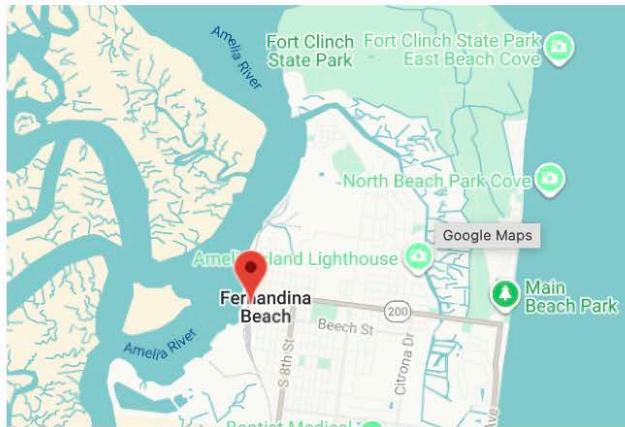
**Dates:** February 21-22

Overnight reservations for docking are made on the marina's website:

<https://www.fernandinaharbormarina.com/>

**Accommodations:** Hampton Inn & Suites Amelia Island-Historic Harbor Front

The Lambs plan to leave Hampton River Marina at 0900. It is approximately 50 miles to Fernandina from there. We will meet up with others as desired. The tides will be very favorable through St. Andrews Sound both coming and going at the times planned. An OpenCPN route has been built.



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The March cruise will be lunch at Mudcat Charlie's on the South Altamaha

## The Highs of Boating During the Lows of Winter

Submitted by: Cynthia Lamb

Record low temperatures do not entice many to go boating, but if you're really motivated and don't mind bundling up, there are many benefits to boating at this time of year. Low winter sun angles create dramatic light across the marsh, golden grasses replace summer greens, and sunsets are sharper. It's the Golden Isles at its most peaceful. You don't have to worry about the afternoon thunderstorms that become prevalent once the weather warms up and there are usually fewer boaters on the water, making for a very pleasant boating experience.

While there may be fewer boaters, what about the wildlife? Have they all split the scene as well? Contrary to popular belief, dolphins don't leave the Golden Isles in winter. They are year-round residents, but colder water changes their behavior. Instead of cruising shallow marsh edges, dolphins tend to spend more time in deeper creeks, rivers, and sounds, following fish that have moved off the flats.



Winter sunshine glitters on the Hampton River in February

Photo: C. Lamb

Winter is also a prime time to witness cooperative feeding, where dolphins work together to herd fish—sometimes stunning mullet or menhaden against a bank or mudflat. Boaters may actually see *fewer* dolphins overall, but when you do spot them, the behavior can be especially rewarding to watch.

You'll see far fewer alligators in winter, but they're still present. Alligators are generally lethargic and non-aggressive in cold weather. On warm winter afternoons, a few may surface briefly to bask in the sun. Adult alligators are remarkably cold-tolerant. Extended hard freezes can affect juveniles, but the population rebounds quickly. By retreating into deeper water, burrows, and sheltered areas, it's surprising the cold snaps they can survive.

Creek and river systems remain very much alive in winter. While fast-moving summer species are gone, several cold-tolerant fish thrive this time of year:

- **Redfish** often school tightly in creeks and bends
- **Black drum** are active and frequently found near deeper holes and structures
- **Sheepshead** linger around docks, pilings, and bridges
- **Speckled trout** remain present but are more sensitive to cold—handle gently and minimize air exposure

Winter boating in the Golden Isles rewards those willing to slow down, layer up, and pay attention. The waterways are quieter, the wildlife more deliberate, and the marsh reveals new details hidden during busier seasons. It's not boating as usual—but for many, it might be boating at its best.

## Golden Isles Welcomes its Newest Members



### Did you know?



The water temperature around St. Simons is currently 53 degrees. If you were to fall into 53-degree water, whether the outside temperature is 40 or 70, the air temperature will not meaningfully change how fast hypothermia sets in (which is 10-30 minutes). Your body is losing heat to the water, not the air. Air temperature becomes important after you're out of the water:

- Wet clothes + cold air = rapid cooling (wind chill)
- Warmer air improves re-warming success
- Shelter and dry layers become critical

Also, swimming does not help you stay warm in the water. In cold water, moving your body actually makes you lose heat faster than you generate it. If you are unfortunate enough to fall overboard with water temperatures where they are now, here's what you need to do:

- Wear a life jacket so you can float without effort
- Float, don't fight
- Use the H.E.L.P. position (knees to chest, arms in) if wearing a PFD
- Stay with the boat if possible

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## CONTRIBUTE TO OUR NEWSLETTER!

Please submit an article, picture, or even a link to a boating story or video that you feel other club members may enjoy. Please send all newsletter content to Cynthia Lamb.



The Porthole is the official publication of America's Boating Club® Golden Isles sponsored by the United States Power Squadrons®. The National website is [www.americasboatingclub.org](http://www.americasboatingclub.org). Our Club website is [www.gisps.org](http://www.gisps.org). You may also follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/GISPS/> and on Instagram



Our Club is part of the world's largest recreational boating organization with more than 17,000 members. We learn together, boat together, and help each other and other boaters on the water and on land.

Consider joining our Club to:

LEARN boating skills

ENGAGE with boating friends

CONNECT with the boating community

The only requirements for membership are a keen interest in boating-related activities and an eagerness to meet like-minded people whether power, or sail, or paddle boaters; however, **you don't need a boat to join**. Contact us through our website or Facebook page if you would like more information.