


AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB

For Boaters, By Boaters®




THE DRUM

A Publication of the Finger Lakes Chapter

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editor@abc-flx.org

From the Commander

By Kris West, S SV Zephyr

On a Slow Boat to Geneva...

After crewing aboard *Brewster* for the 2026 Commodore's Cup Race to Geneva last weekend, I've come to the opinion that 'sailboat race' is an oxymoron. I think this particular pursuit would be more appropriately called a 'wind worship service' because, at least last weekend, every racer out there was praying for steady wind and more of it. As the wind rose, fell, and swirled in every direction we did our best to make headway toward Geneva. At least once that day, each boat ended up floating listlessly until the temperamental wind gods deemed us worthy of a slight lift before leaving us wanting - again adrift.

Aboard *Brewster*, we endured strange wind shifts that left us struggling to get past Peach Orchard Point before we caught a small breeze in the middle of the lake and scooted past two of our competitors. The fleet's progress was so slow that we had to abandon our hope of sailing to



Geneva by dinner and the race committee called it when most of us were still south of Lodi Point. With the 'iron genny' humming along, we motored north and had time to chat and enjoy the scenery.

While not as exciting as racing in steady, fresh air, sailing in calm to light air poses its own challenges and rewards. As frustrating as it can be, it also forced us to be more attentive to our sail trim and boat handling; strategic and patient in our tactical decision making; appreciative of the smallest changes in wind dynamics and more communicative with each other. Light air racing is also easier on the boat and sailor - both body



Figure 1: Protected shoreline at the Kriss Family Nature Preserve. Photo by Bill Hecht provided by FLLT.

and mind. Since lower forces and speed are involved, there's more time for conversation and appreciating the beauty of our surroundings which Seneca Lake offers in spades.

From the middle of Seneca Lake, we enjoyed the stunning views of cliffs and hillsides scattered with forests, farm fields, and

vineyards, and cut by gorges with tumbling streams and waterfalls. Mixed among the cottages and lakeside mansions, there are some stretches of apparently undeveloped and wild shoreline – one of the rarest resources in our region measured in feet rather than miles.

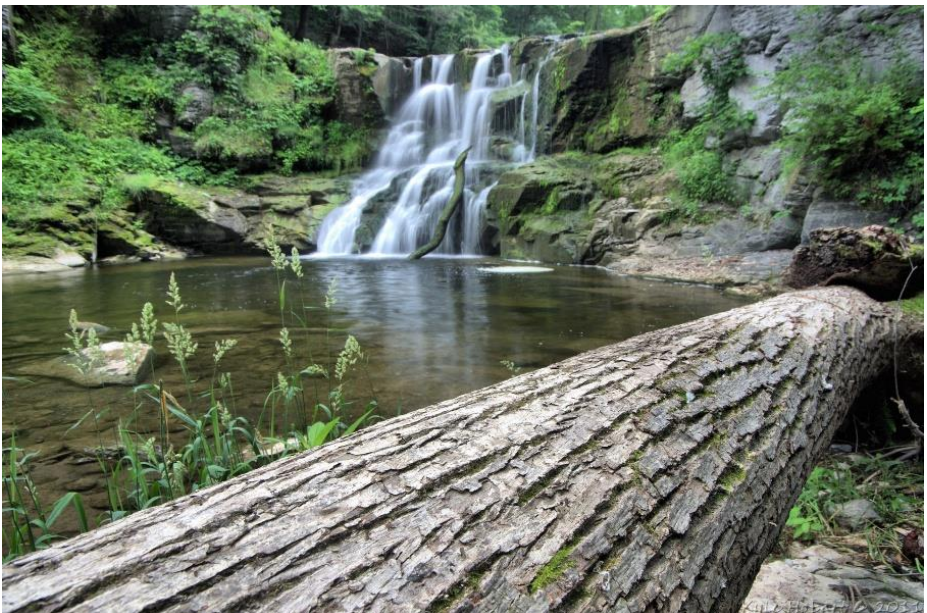


Figure 2: Kashong Glen photo by Kyle Hobart provided by FLLT.

The Drum

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Before retiring a few years ago, I worked to help conserve lands important to protecting the region's beauty, water quality, farmland, habitat, and recreational opportunities, so I'm going to indulge in sharing some good news about conservation efforts around Seneca Lake. Just last weekend, our governor announced that the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation purchased the 284-acre former [Babcock Hovey Scout Camp](#) leading to the permanent protection of this property and its 2,800 feet of Seneca Lake shoreline. Further north, in the town of Fayette, the Finger Lakes Land Trust (FLLT) accepted the donation of a 30-acre property with over 1,000 feet of undeveloped shoreline to establish the [Kriss Family Nature Preserve](#) in 2022. More recently, FLLT worked in partnership with the town of Geneva to purchase 74 acres protecting the heart of [Kashong Glen](#) and more than 5,500 feet of frontage on Kashong Creek. Partnerships between the state, local farmers, and FLLT developed over years have resulted in permanent protection for some of the most important farmland in the region including some of the iconic wineries and farms visible from the lake. And, thanks to local leadership, those efforts continue.



Figure 3: Forever farmland above Watkins Glen and Seneca Lake. Photo by Chris Ray provided by FLLT.

Ultimately, navigating light, unpredictable winds during a sailboat race and executing long-term land conservation require the similar virtues: patience, strategic vision, and a deep appreciation for the environment. Just as a sailing crew must read the subtle shifts in the breeze to make headway, organizations like the [Finger Lakes Land Trust](#) and local communities must carefully piece together partnerships to protect the region's most important resources. Whether floating listlessly waiting for a lift or motoring past newly protected shorelines like the Babcock-Hovey Scout Camp and the Kriss

Family Nature Preserve, we are reminded that both pursuits demand teamwork and a long-game mindset. In the end, preserving the stunning vistas of Seneca Lake ensures that future generations of sailors will always have a beautiful backdrop to enjoy — no matter which way the wind blows.

Now, get outside and have fun!

- Kris
co@abc-flx.org

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From the Executive Officer

By Jim McGinnis, SN-CN

SV Brews

Mark Your Calendars!



Please mark your calendar for the ABC-FLX Finger Lakes Summer Boat Trip to be held July 31st to August 2nd.

We expect to have a great weekend with an anchorage at Lodi State Park, brunch at Sapalta on the west side, an Anchoring Seminar on the dock at Sapalta, and wine tasting at Miles Winery just north of Sapalta. We have the Pavilion at Lodi State Park reserved for Friday, July 31.

[Lodi Point State Park](#)

General Information

[\(315\) 585-6392](tel:3155856392)

Lower Lake Road
Lodi, NY 14860

At Lodi, boats can raft up in the north side anchorage area as they arrive for the afternoon and then go ashore for a pitch-in dinner at the Pavilion at 6PM. There are transient slips available near the boat ramp on the south side for



Figure 6: Lodi Point Pavilion.

shallow draft boats. Those arriving by land yachts between 8 AM and 6 PM pay just \$7. The park is open from dawn to dusk.

Saturday morning, we will head across the lake to Sapalta Restaurant at Plum Point for brunch at 11AM. They are open 10AM to noon. Land yachts can join us there also. We'll have an Anchoring / Mooring / Rafting Seminar as the ABC-FLX educational event at 1PM Saturday afternoon on the dock at Sapalta. After that, we'll set sail or motor to Miles Winery for a wine tasting on the dock. Depending on weather, boats could anchor there, at Long Point or back at Lodi on Saturday night and head home on Sunday morning.



Figure 7: Lodi beach overlooking anchorage.



Figure 4: North side anchorage at Lodi.



Figure 5: Miles Winery and Sapalta Restaurant are on west side.

If you are considering attending, Please RSVP to Jim McGinnis with boat name and the number in your party for Friday and Saturday by 7/15/26. I have a reservation at Sapalta for Saturday at 11AM and it will be first come first served.

Fair winds,

- Jim

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From the Administrative Officer

By Shane Alsworth, S

MV The Office

Social Events



We had an excellent pasta dinner social event overlooking

the west side of Seneca Lake at The Hotel Laurel on June 3rd. Mark Wittig gave a presentation about boat repair projects he has worked on over the years, and he presented the group in attendance

with some boating safety tools and gadgets.

Our next social event is scheduled for July 9th at the Grist Iron Brewing Company, on the east side of Seneca Lake. We will meet at 6 pm. There will be no presentation at this event. This is purely a social gathering to get together and share early boating season stories. Food and drinks are available for purchase. The special for the evening is ribs! Seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis. This event is open to all members and guests. Please bring along anyone

that may be interested in joining our club or who would enjoy the event.

We are working on putting together an event for August. Please be on the lookout for details. If you have ideas or suggestions on venues you would like to experience or speakers you would like to hear from, please email me at ao@abc-flx.org or call me at (607) 973- 2665. I look forward to hearing from you!

- Shane
ao@abc-flx.org



From the Education Director

By Katie Alley, JN

SV Champagne Problems

Putzing Into Summer



So far, the early part of my boating season has consisted of painting, polishing,

provisioning, and pursuing stubborn topside leaks. My only sailing so far has been aboard *S/V True Love*, but it has certainly scratched the itch. All the putzing around and neverending projects are the joys of personal boat ownership, aren't they?

In terms of education, ASEO Scott Williams, alongside instructor Dennis Daniels, ran our first ABC offering of the year at Lyons National Bank in Waterloo. They had seven students successfully complete the course and earn their NYS Boater's Safety Card!

The *Sail* class, led by Jim McGinnis and Tom Alley, will be wrapping up in July with six students. Students have had the opportunity to experience their lessons on-the-water aboard *S/V Brewster* and *S/V Tomfoolery*.

This year, our annual Summer Rendezvous will take place between Lodi Point State Park, Plum Point, and Miles Winery on July 31st-August 2nd. As many of our members recall, the Finger



Figure 8: *S/V True Love* spotted from Hotel Laurel, during the June 3rd ABC-FLX event.

Lakes Yacht Club used to visit Lodi Point as part of their Commodore's Cup, but it has been probably 15+ years since we last did that. I think both ABC-FLX and FLYC are ready for a change from Sampson State Park (where we previously held our Boater's Weekend Summer Rendezvous) and we're excited to visit Lodi again!

As part of the Summer Rendezvous, we will be offering the Anchoring seminar on Saturday, August 1st. Attendees may meet by boat or car at Sapalta Restaurant on Plum Point at **1 PM**. (Please note that this is a different time from what was originally shared in the May issue of *The Drum*.)

Looking ahead to August and September, we will be teaching the Engine Maintenance class. I've had a good deal of interest for this one and we're excited to make it as hands-on as possible. The class will be led by instructors Jim McGinnis and Walter Vancise. Please stay tuned for an email with details, including dates, times, and price. Feel free to let me know ahead of time if you are interested!

Good luck with all your nautical putzing around! Do your best to learn something new along the way in your projects.

- Katie

seo@abc-flx.org

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Secretary's Sidenotes

By Glenda Gephart

Other People's Boats!

Community Partnerships



Organizations such ABC-FLX often seek out and develop partnerships in our communities to enhance our missions, our activities, and our impact. Partnerships are as simple or complex as needed. Unexpected or obvious.

Getting out the word – advertising, marketing, publicity, news – however it's labeled – is a partnership of sorts. Outside of

The Drum and our email blasts, ABC-FLX uses Facebook, flyers, area news media (traditional and online), and other groups' communications tools. And, of course, the ever-reliable "tell a friend, bring a friend."

Our Facebook page, "America's Boating Club – Finger Lakes Chapter," is a public page. Our reach and content have expanded thanks to sharing. During National Safe Boating Week in May we re-posted some great information from the page Safe Boating Campaign.

Seneca Lake Pure Waters Association is another excellent source of information for our page. And we really enjoy sharing lake shots from some of our favorite photographers.

They're all our partners, even if they didn't know it!

Flyers about public ABC-FLX events and services are posted in area marinas. See something that might interest a friend? Take a photo of the flyer and send it along.

We appreciate the traditional and online media in our region who use our news releases. People have joined ABC-FLX classes because they read the information on an online news site or in their newspaper, print or digital editions.

And last, but not least, we're especially grateful to the organizations and businesses that take our notices and send them to their own members or clients.

More partners in communications!

- Glenda
secretary@abc-flx.org



ABC-FLX News

Happy Birthday!

Happy birthday to our members!

July

Kris West

August

Sherry Stoudt
Bob MacBlane
Tom Alley

West Marine Closures

By now most of you have probably heard that the nearest West Marine outlet to our area, Rochester/Irondequois, would be closing due to West Marine's bankruptcy filing. The news was tempered somewhat by the fact that the Buffalo store would remain open. A bit longer of a

drive, but we would still have in-person access.

This week RCR Yachts reported that in addition to the Irondequoit location, the stores in Cleveland, Watertown, Sandusky, North Olmstead, and St. Clair Shores would also be closing, making it more difficult to find a chandlery where you can get in-person advice and have a hands-on look at merchandise when trying to select what will be best for your situation.

Web Site Progress

As you are aware, our local chapter is updating its web site. The site is currently "frozen" as the volunteer webmasters are moving it from one server to another. Once that task is

complete, the domain name will be transferred from the existing service provider to the new one and we will be well situated for the next step in this multi-month project.

In the coming weeks and months, the web site team will begin the work of updating and upgrading the web site with current-generation software and a number of new features.

Got News?

If you have news to share that you think would be of use to your fellow boaters, please submit it to your friendly newsletter editor so that it can be included!

editor@abc-flx.org

Upcoming Classes & Seminars

Where Do I Start?

To work through the progression of Boating Classes and the progression of Boating skills development we have organized the classes and skills on the Long-Term Schedule. If you have any questions or want a class offered sooner, let Katie, our Education Officer, know.

See also: <https://usps.org/sss-where-do-i-start>

Anchoring Seminar

Join us “on location” during the 2026 Summer Boating Weekend for a hands-on, on-the-water seminar on anchoring your boat.

Prerequisites: None

When: Aug 1st

Instructors: Jim McGinnis, Tom Alley

Cost: Free (no seminar credit awarded) or \$25 (for seminar credit from National)

Engine Maintenance

Another popular elective that demystifies the mechanical beast living in the bowels of your boat. Like many of our other courses, this one also has a hands-on component.

Prerequisites: None

When: Late-Summer/Early-Fall 2026 (Q3)

Instructor: Jim McGinnis

Cost: TBA

How to Register

If you have questions about any of these courses, or better yet, if you wish to sign up, please

contact: Finger Lakes Chapter Education Director, Katie Alley:

seo@abc-flx.org

Or you can go to the national web site (www.usps.org) and register under the “Find A Boating Class” tab on the member home page.

Looking for Something?

ABC-FLX would be happy to hear your requests and ideas. Feel free to contact me, Katie Alley, at

SEO@abc-flx.org.

Available subjects for instruction can be found on the chapter web site:

www.abc-flx.org

The Top 10 Most Common Small Passenger Vessel Deficiencies

By Katie Alley

SV Champagne Problems

The following list was compiled by the US Coast Guard using data recorded by their Marine Inspectors. These are the 10 most common deficiencies that inspectors identified while inspecting USCG Certificated Small Passenger Vessels.

A Small Passenger Vessel is a commercial boat less than 100 gross tons in size carrying more than six passengers (with at least one paying a fee). These vessels are required to have a valid US Coast Guard Certificate of Inspection (COI) and to be in full compliance with the COI while passengers are aboard.

I originally came across this list while reading a book about starting one's own charter boat business. While the vast majority reading this are strictly recreational boaters and do not face Coast Guard inspections, I think that this list gives even the most casual boaters a quick list to reference when going over their boat.

- 1) **Dead End Wires:** All cables and wires must connect to some piece of equipment. If you remove electricity-powered devices, you must remove the wiring too.
- 2) **Deteriorated Hull Material:** The hull must be structurally sound internally and externally.
 - a) Wood vessels are prone to wasted wood planking and deteriorated fasteners.
 - b) Steel and aluminum hulls are prone to cracked welds.
 - c) Steel is also prone to rusting.
 - d) Fiberglass hulls can weaken if delamination, blistering, or cracking in the gel coat occurs.
- 3) **Inoperable Bilge High Level Alarm:** All certificated Small Passenger Vessels 26 feet or greater in length must have visual and audible bilge high level alarms. With both an irritating blinking light and repetitive alarm, you surely won't miss the fact that you're taking on water.
- 4) **Portable Hand Bilge Pump Inoperable or Missing:** The secondary or emergency portable hand bilge pump must be present and functional! Additionally, the suction hose must be long enough to reach the deepest part of the vessel.
- 5) **FCC Station License Missing:** FCC-issued station licenses are required for marine radios, EPIRBs, and AIS equipment.
- 6) **Running Lights (Stern, Mast, Side) Inoperable:** Even if your boat only operates in daylight, you must have the correct navigation lights in accordance with the International and Inland Navigation Rules. (You never know when you'll be in restricted visibility, like rain or fog!) You also cannot have lights that conflict with the Rules. Sorry, the flashing rainbow party lights have to go.
- 7) **Light Guards Missing:** Light fixtures subject to damage must have a guard or be made of high strength material. This includes lights on deck and in the engine room. Lights in cabins usually are not subject to damage.
- 8) **Expired First Aid Kit Medication:** In addition to having all of the required items in the First Aid Kit, medication in the kit cannot be expired! Be sure to replace individual items in your First Aid Kit as needed.
- 9) **Navigational Charts Outdated or Missing:** All Small Passenger Vessels with USCG certificates must have the appropriate navigational charts that cover the area in which they operate. The charts must be current. Furthermore, there are other additional nautical publications required to be aboard, including the US Coast Pilot, Coast Guard Light List, Tide Tables, and Current Tables.
- 10) **Expired EPIRB Hydrostatic Release:** All Small Passenger Vessels certified to operate on the high seas or three miles beyond the coastline of the

Great Lakes are required to carry an EPIRB with a hydrostatic release. The hydrostatic release automatically frees the EPIRB from its bracket if the vessel sinks. Be sure to inspect your EPIRBs monthly and check the expiration dates.

Obviously, many of these items are crucial for safe boating! Take notes from the Coast Guard on what you should regularly inspect and maintain on your boat.

Need help checking that you have all the essential safety gear on your boat? ABC-FLX has got you (and all of your recreational boater friends) covered! Schedule

a FREE Vessel Safety Check with one of our certified examiners.

Would you drive your car without a safety inspection? No! So don't forgo checking that your boat meets state and federal safety requirements.

- Katie

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Source: [TOP 10 SMALL PASSENGER VESSEL \(SUBCHAPTER T\) DEFICIENCIES, United States Coast Guard](#)

AMERICA'S BOATING CLUB
FINGER LAKES CHAPTER

FREE VESSEL SAFETY CHECKS

Unsure if you have the proper gear on your boat? We've got you covered! With a free vessel safety check, you can rest assured that your vessel meets state and federal requirements for documentation and safety equipment.

- No consequences if you do not pass, only recommendations to make your boat safer! ✓
- Receive a report from our certified examiner and a decal. ✓
- It's completely free and voluntary. ✓

Email VSC@abc-flx.org to learn more or set up a time!



The Last Word

By Tom Alley, SN-ON

SV Tomfoolery

Mid-Season Assessment



After months of planning, waiting for water levels to drop, and for the weather to warm up, we're finally

into the boating season of 2026. Technically speaking, the middle of our season is somewhere in early August, but mentally, I think most of us consider Independence Day to be an unofficial mid-marker to the summer, and therefore, to the boating season as well. With that in mind, it's probably a good idea to assess whether we're living up to all the plans and schemes we cooked up during the colder months.

Personally, I could be doing better. I don't feel as if my boat is even fully commissioned for her summer sojourns. A busy calendar, some defective hardware, and a poorly timed episode with a recurring back injury have all combined to keep me perpetually trying to catch up with my overly optimistic schedule.

Boat Projects

This year's main project was to replace *Tomfoolery's* 30-year-old autopilot with a more robust, below-deck unit. This turned into a protracted game of 3-D Tetris to fit the components into the space below the cockpit sole. After several extended sessions of rather intense "boat yoga," all the components finally fit and the system was powered on – only to discover that the rudder position sensor in the unit wasn't working.

A couple of phone calls with Garmin technical support, where they guided me through some troubleshooting steps, confirmed that the sensor was defective. Unfortunately, it was not a component that could be replaced, so they shipped me an external sensor to mount next to the steering quadrant. Before I could install it, however, I threw out my back and haven't recovered sufficiently to do the necessary boat yoga to play more boat-Tetris and install the new sensor. Stay tuned.

Web Site Updates

As I write this column, our chapter's web site is "frozen" in the sense that no changes are

being allowed as the team of volunteers move the site from its current home to a new home in a commercial data center.

The heavy lifting of copying all the data (well over 50 GB worth!) from one server to the other has been completed. Now the more tedious task of fixing all the little glitches resulting from the move need to be identified and corrected.

The final step will be to transfer the club's domain name from the old web host to the new and then switching on some new security measures not supported by our old server. The goal is to have this work completed before we're all watching Independence Day fireworks.

When these tasks are complete, the volunteers engaged in this project are going to take a short break to do some boating before tackling more the intricate task of upgrading the site with some upgraded software. Stay tuned! The best is yet to come!

- Your Editor, Tom

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As always, send your thoughts about this newsletter to:

editor@abc-flx.org

Long-Term Class Schedule

Seneca Education Department

BOC Level	Title	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	
Inland Navigator	Classes	ABC	X	X	X	X	X	
		Boat Handling		X		X		X
		Engine Maintenance	X		X			
		Marine Electrical Systems	C					
	Seminars	Using A Chart						
		VHF/DSC Radios						
		Using GPS			X			
		Basic Weather and Forecasting		X				
	Skills	Basic Powerboat Handling			X			
		Fire Extinguishers						

BOC Level	Title	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
Coastal Navigator	Classes	Marine Navigation	C				X
		Marine Communication Systems		X			
		Weather				X	
	Seminars	Tides & Currents					X
		Rules of the Road				X	
		Anchoring					
		Mariner's Compass	X		X		
	Skills	Coastal Nav			X		
		Pyrotechnics		X			

Table Key

X = Planned

U = Underway

C = Completed

BOC Level		Title	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
Advanced Coastal Navigator	Classes	Advanced Marine Navigation	X		X		X	
		Cruise Planning				X		
		Radar						
		Emergencies Onboard				X		
	Skills	Advanced Coastal Nav				X		
		First Aid	<i>Contact American Heart Assoc. or Red Cross</i>					

BOC Level		Title	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
Offshore Navigator	C	Offshore Navigation		X			X	
	Sem.	Computer Weather Forecasting	<i>Offered online.</i>					
		Thunderstorms / Severe Weather	<i>Offered online.</i>					
	Skills	Offshore Navigation				X		
CPR/AED		<i>Contact American Heart Assoc. or Red Cross.</i>						
Endorsements		Sail	U		X		X	
		Canadian Regulations						
		PaddleSmart	X		X			
Other		Instructor Development	C		X			
		Instructor Recertification	X			X		
		Operations Training	<i>Offered online.</i>					
		Celestial Navigation			X			X

Table Key

X = Planned

U = Underway

C = Completed

Calendar of Events

July 2026

- 01 Finger Lakes *Drum* July issue publication date.
- 09 ABC-FLX Social, *Grist Iron Brewing Company*,
4880 State Route 414, Burdett, NY (1800)
- 14 Bridge Meeting (1900).
- 17 Deadline for *The Deep 6* articles. (D/6)
- 31-8/2 ABC-FLX Boater's Weekend.

August 2026

- 01 *The Deep 6* summer issue publication date. (D/6)
- 7/31-8/2 ABC-FLX Boater's Weekend.
- 11 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 21 Deadline for *Drum* articles

September 2026

- 01 Finger Lakes *Drum* September issue publication date.
- 08 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 12 Seneca Lake Barge Race, *Seneca Yacht Club*,
Geneva, NY.
- 20-27 Fall Governing Board, *Cary, NC* (National)

October 2026

- 13 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 16 Deadline for *The Deep 6* articles (D/6)
- 23 Deadline for *Drum* articles
- TBA District 6 Fall Council & Conference (D/6)

November 2026

- 01 Finger Lakes *Drum* November issue publication date.
- 01 *The Deep 6* fall issue publication date. (D/6)
- 10 Bridge Meeting (1900)

December 2026

- 08 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 18 Deadline for *Drum* articles

January 2027

- 01 Finger Lakes *Drum* January issue publication date

- 12 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 15 Deadline for D/6 *The Deep 6* articles. (D/6)
- TBA Finger Lakes Change of Watch

February 2027

- 01 *The Deep 6* winter issue publication date. (D/6)
- 06-13 USPS Annual Meeting, *Tampa, FL* (National)
- 09 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 19 Deadline for *Drum* articles

March 2027

- 01 Finger Lakes *Drum* March issue publication date.
- 09 Bridge Meeting (1900)

April 2027

- 13 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 16 Deadline for *The Deep 6* articles (D/6)
- 23 Deadline for *Drum* articles
- TBA District 6 Spring Council & Conference (D/6)

May 2027

- 01 Finger Lakes *Drum* May issue publication date.
- 01 *The Deep 6* spring issue publication date. (D/6)
- 11 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- 22-28 Safe Boating Week (National)

June 2027

- 08 Bridge Meeting (1900)
- TBA FLYC Commodore's Cup Race/Cruise to Geneva
Weekend (FLYC)
- 25 Deadline for *Drum* articles

Calendars are "living documents." For the latest information on squadron activities, please check our web site or our Facebook page:

<https://www.abc-flx.org>
[Facebook - ABC-Finger Lakes](#)

