



Fred Schwartz, commander of the Lake Murray Power Squadron and guest speaker at Monday night's meeting of the Lake Murray Coast Guard Auxiliary, and Auxiliary Commander Joe Richbourg talk about the Vessel Safety Check program on Lake Murray which the two will jointly conduct this spring for the first time.

Coast Guard Auxiliary learns first hand about Power Squadron

By Ollie T. Moyer

Editor in Chief

The Lake Murray Power Squadron is a dedicated organization that believes safe boating comes about simply through knowledge, its present commander, Fred Schwartz, told the Lake Murray Coast Guard Auxiliary at its February meeting held Monday evening of this week at Flotilla Island on Lake Murray.

Schwartz' appearance as guest speaker at the Coast Guard Auxiliary meeting represents a continuation of a commitment from both organizations to work closely together in the interest of boating safety on Lake Murray.

In March, the Coast Guard Auxiliary's commander, Joe Richbourg, and vice commander, Bill Turner, have been extended an invitation to speak at the monthly meeting of the Power Squadron.

According to Schwartz, the Lake Murray Power Squadron has 130 members and is one of nine squadrons that comprise District 26 which covers South Car-

olina and parts of Georgia. The United States Power Squadron last year celebrated its Eighty-Fifth Anniversary. The Lake Murray Power Squadron has existed since 1963.

The Power Squadron, Schwartz said, is all about self-education, civic service and fraternal boating.

To obtain the knowledge essential to safe boating, the Power Squadron promotes boating safety education classes to the public, as does the Lake Murray Power Squadron.

"But once you become a member of the Power Squadron, you can take advance courses, taught by fellow members who already have taken the courses."

He said both he and his wife have taken the courses.

"There's a difference between taking you wife on a boat ride and going boating with your wife," said the commander. "Carolyn and I have felt that from the beginning. So every course I have taken,

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she also has taken. She's a partner in boating and not along just for the ride."

A variety of courses are available, including seamanship, piloting, advanced piloting, junior navigation, navigation, engine maintenance, marine electronics, cruise planning, weather and sailing.

Although not a sailor, Schwartz said he has taken the sailing course, pointing out that the main benefit is learning more about all types of boating.

In the area of civic service, Schwartz said the Power Squadron believes it has a responsibility to spread the word about safe boating.

"The Lake Murray Squadron believes we have a responsibility to do whatever we can do to help make our water safer," he said. "In light of that, we do public service courses just like your organization

does."

Also under the category of civic service, Schwartz said that once a year the organization investigates the shoal markers on Lake Murray, reporting their conditions to DNR.

The organization also checks reference lights once a month. He credited the biggest part of this service to two of the Power Squad's members, George Hoxie and George Frederick.

"Every month, including winter, these two go out on a full moon night and check to see if everything is working properly. If it isn't, they go back the next day and fix it," he said.

The Squadron also participates each year in the Adopt an Island program.

He referenced a recent decision of the Power Squadron to become involved with the Coast Guard Auxiliary in the Vessel Safety Check program on Lake Murray.

"A lot of our members are really excited about this,"

he said. "We've known this for only two months and already a lot of our people are talking about it. We can't wait until we can have the instruction and be able to offer this service."

Commenting on the fraternal boating club reference in the USPS triad, Schwartz told the Coast Guard Auxiliary that the Power Squadron believes cruises are a key to membership.

"Cruises coincide exactly with our education," he said. "If you don't take the information you are taught and apply it on the water, what's the point."

He said the Power Squadron does two salt water cruises a year.

"We can see after a couple of cruises confidence developing in our new members," he informed. "With the Squadron, Carolyn and I have cruised from the Outer banks all the way down the east coast and down the St. John's River all the way to Tampa, Fla. I've got to tell

you that when we got our first boat, we never thought about doing that by ourselves. But today we can set out by ourselves and go to places we've never been on the inner coastal waterways and feel confident. That's because of the experience and education we have received in the Power Squadron."

Schwartz said the Power Squadron is excited about the joint efforts with the Coast Guard Auxiliary and is looking forward to participating in the Boat Safety Fair (see separate story on this in today's issue).

He asked the Coast Guard Auxiliary when it does its next search and rescue exercise on the lake, especially at night, to contact the Power Squadron. "WE want to be the boats that are lost and let you come and find us," he said. "That will be a fun thing. We like excuses to be on Lake Murray and that will provide us something to do. We're looking forward to it."