

**Sea Scout Ship 681**  
**Old Ironsides**  
**February 23, 2017**

This past month Ship 681 has participated in a couple of activities and begun much planning for later activities.

First off we participated in the annual BSA rally at the Capitol called "Report to State":

At Report to State, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, Venturers, Sea Scouts, Explorers, and STEM Scouts from all over Texas march up Congress Avenue to the Capitol. After a Scout Spirit Rally on the steps of the Capitol, Scout Delegates from each council in Texas are seated in the House of Representatives and report to a member of the state government about Scouting accomplishments in their council from the past year. Each council provides a youth delegation and a spokesperson who summarizes that council's Scouting accomplishments. Then a message about the state of Scouting overall in Texas is delivered (this year by our Regional Boatswain), followed by remarks from a representative of the Texas state government, Deputy Secretary of State Coby Shorter. This event is a great opportunity to be with Scouts from all over the state, and to visit the State Capitol. Sea Scouts from Ships 1492, 31 and 271 marched in the parade while Sea Scouts from ships 911 and 681 assisted with crowd control and logistics management. National Boatswain Rachel West also attended with her University of Texas Alpha Phi Omega colleagues.

Boatswain Shepherd spoke of the importance of Scouting's values, of their impact on the lives of Scouts and on his personal experiences as an Eagle Scout and a Sea Scout. He also spoke about the accomplishments of Scouting as a whole in Texas. Having a passionate and articulate Sea Scout speaking on our behalf to both the Scouting community and to the public of the State of Texas is a great opportunity to improve the visibility of Sea Scouts, and John Shepherd was more than up to the task. His speech was well received and this was a proud day for Sea Scouts in Texas.

Following our Report to State activity on the morning of February 4th, and after a quick lunch our Ship participated in that days Frostbite Series race, or more aptly put, Frostbite Series "Creep across the Lake". Regardless, a great time was had by all as we had enough Sea Scouts to spread across two boats. We're looking forward to better wind next time.

The next day we participated in the annual Scout Sunday by participating in worship services at Rolling Hills Community Church, our Charter Organization. As a result of this visit, we have made contact with a potential new Adult leader who had never heard of Sea Scouts, but has a long history in the Navy and Marines and comes with his 100 ton Coast Guard license. He informs me that the smallest boat he is used to being on is 45' ... yet he comes with plenty of enthusiasm!

Our future plans include:

- The annual AYC opening day Flag raising ceremony and Un-regatta Regatta.
- Finalizing plans for our late April Sometimes Island Sail Days.
- One of our Youth members has recently completed his US Sailing Level 1 Certification and is registered for the upcoming ASA201 training class. He has a strong interest in teaching sailing as a result of his participation in Sea Scouts.
- We have been approached by a gentleman with an offer to donate a 7.3 meter S-2 to our Ship that we are considering. It is currently wet slipped across the lake at Highland Lakes Marina in Volente. We are pursuing Charter Org Board approval as they would take title to the boat. We still plan to "retire" the Hunter 23.5 that has been our Ships Flagship since 2012 and are looking to donate that to another Sea Scout Ship that is forming. Between the S-2 and access to Harry Polly's C&C we look forward to becoming a competitive racing team participating in various AYC races.

- Chris Schuttger - Skipper - SSS 681 - Old Ironsides