

# Navigator

SUMMER 2008 VOL. 35, NO. 2



# 'INSIDE' THE VETC

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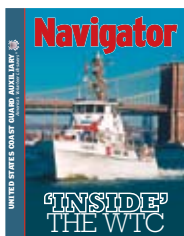
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**ON THE COVER:** Auxiliary Operational Facility *Lady B.* – the former Coast Guard Point Class Patrol boat CGC *Point Brown* – patrols New York's Lower East River. On deck is Steve Masterson, VFC 14-2 D1SR (Great Kills, Staten Island, N.Y.) Built in Tacoma, Wash. in 1967 and retired by the Coast Guard in 1991, *Lady B.* since 2002 has been a Flotilla 14-1 D1SR (Tottenville, Staten Island, N.Y.) OPFAC, following extensive repairs and restoration by her owner, retired Coast Guard officer Stewart C. Sutherland, FC 14-1. In the wake of 9/11, *Lady B.* was utilized extensively by USCG Activities New York in Operation Guarding Liberty.

Photo: Jay J. Brandinger, DCP-6 D5NR

## DEADLINES

FALL: AUGUST 15  
WINTER: NOVEMBER 15

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Photo: Heidi Derby, RCO D5SR

Steve McElroy, DCO 5SR, swears in Admiral James M. Loy, USCG (Ret.), as the first-ever former Coast Guard Commandant to join the Auxiliary.

# EMINENT NEW AUXILIARIST IS WELCOMED

Story by **JIM CLARK** FC-67 D5SR

In keeping with a commitment he made publicly at the Auxiliary National Training Conference (N-Train) in St. Louis early this year, Admiral James M. Loy, USCG (Ret.), has become the first former Coast Guard Commandant ever to join the Coast Guard Auxiliary.



Photo: U.S. Coast Guard

ADM James M. Loy salutes after being sworn-in as Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard in 1998.

A new resident of the Williamsburg, Va. area, ADM Loy – who served as USCG Commandant from 1998-2002 – has officially become a member of Flotilla 67 D5SR, which serves the historic Colonial community.

The Auxiliary's newest recruit, who was a speaker at N-Train, received not only his membership package there, but also a plaque attesting to the fact that he had been named an Auxiliary Honorary Commodore. The plaque was presented to him by the current USCG Commandant, ADM Thad W. Allen.

Receiving the honor, ADM Loy had insisted: "I don't know how you can be an Honorary Commodore of the Auxiliary without being a member of the Auxiliary, so I look forward to pushing my paperwork through."

True to his word, his papers went in, he was approved and then sworn in on May 30 by Commodore Steve McElroy, DCO 5SR, who observed that, "While many of the Districts have active and retired members from the Coast Guard, the Fifth District-Southern Region has the honor of having the only [former] Commandant as a member."

ADM Loy, who served as Deputy Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security and Administrator of its Transportation Security Administration following retirement from the Coast Guard, decided to join the Williamsburg flotilla after delivering a speech at the town library about his HLS/TSA experiences.

He was approached there by Heidi Derby, RCO-Sector Hampton Roads, who he already knew since it was she who had passed him the membership package in St. Louis. A few days later, he informed officials that once approved for membership, he would join Flotilla 67.

Despite limited available time due to his commitments as a consultant and speaker, ADM Loy said he would enjoy helping out in whatever area might be of importance to the Auxiliary.

He accepted an invitation to a meeting at a local coffee shop, at which he was briefed on plans by FL-67 to establish a detachment at the historic College of William and Mary. The admiral was quite interested in the philosophy behind that plan.



Photo: Heidi Derby, RCO D5SR

Jim Clark, FC-67 D5SR, reads the Prologue to incoming member Jim Loy.

The flotilla had established a "template" it believed could be used by other flotillas that are co-located with a college or university. ADM Loy provided some suggestions that would help FL-67 respond to local concerns at the college level. He felt that it had a viable program that could surely benefit the Coast Guard once the process had matured and all the kinks had been worked out.

There was no doubt in our mind that Jim Loy would be an excellent Auxiliary spokesperson at the College of William and Mary, as well as other colleges and universities around the country, should he decide to assume such a role.

ADM Loy had taken time out at N-Train to videotape some public service TV announcements designed to help stimulate Auxiliary recruitment. 🌹



Coast Guard Auxiliarist Jim Loy (center), of Flotilla 67 D5SR, gathers with his new shipmates after the swearing-in ceremony. From the left are: Dan Burns, VFC-67; Heidi Derby, RCO-Sector Hampton Roads; Scott Ripley; VCP-6; Jim Clark, FC-67; Commodore Steve McElroy, DCO 5SR; Al DeJean, VCO 5SR; and, USCG Commander Bob Engle, D5SR Director of Auxiliary.





COMMODORE  
**STEVEN  
BUDAR**  
NATIONAL  
COMMODORE



#### ON THE WEB

You can go to the  
National Commodore's page  
at [www.auxnaco.org](http://www.auxnaco.org)  
for more information on the  
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

# Getting out the vote

In August, we will be electing two people who will have a direct and significant impact on our organization's future.

Those we will elect as our new National Commodore (NACO) and National Vice Commodore (NAVCO) will continue the course of the Auxiliary for the next four years and lay the ground work for two to four years beyond that. Their vision, optimism and decisions, coupled with the new directions of the U.S. Coast Guard, will set the world of work and opportunity that we, as Auxiliarists, will experience.

Choosing our new NACO and NAVCO is important, but their election only signals the start of the process of electing new leaders in our Districts, Divisions and Flotillas. Those are the people who could be leading our Auxiliary for the next 20 years. As I step out of my role as National Commodore and into my new role as Steve Auxiliarist, member of Flotilla 13, I find myself caring very much about who will be the leaders at every level of the Auxiliary because it will impact my life and happiness as an Auxiliarist.



Now is the time that I hope each of you will consider whether a role as an elected leader in the Coast Guard Auxiliary is for you. As I have said many times, our organization model is an inverted pyramid, with our members at the broad top and NACO at the tip, on the very bottom. We are elected to a position of greater responsibility for service, not a higher position of authority or privilege.

As you consider your role in the Coast Guard Auxiliary – whether as a candidate for elected office or as a voter in your unit election – that you measure your candidate against the following important attributes:

**Visionary** – Is this candidate a visionary leader? A visionary leader sets goals, looks ahead and sees the challenges ahead of us. A visionary leader plans today for the challenges of tomorrow. Such leaders are proactive, rather than reactive. A visionary leader does not accept the *status quo* as unchangeable.

**Motivator/Achiever** – Is this candidate a motivator and achiever? Leaders who are high-energy and motivated to do more want to do better than what has taken place in the past. These leaders do

not rest on the laurels of their own, or their unit's, previous accomplishments. More importantly, they have the ability to motivate others to become like themselves. Successful motivators and achievers give 100 percent effort and are continually striving for excellence.

**Communicator** – Does this candidate communicate well? A leader must be able to effectively communicate ideas, values, visions, and goals. A successful leader's decisions are crisp and clear. Everyone knows where the unit is going, and how it will get there.

**Solutions-Oriented** – You have probably heard the saying, "If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem." Successful leaders do not accept any problem as unsolvable. They are always working to find solutions and have a "can-do" attitude. These leaders always maintain a situational awareness, and that enables them to think fast on their feet.

**Perpetually Optimistic** – Leaders who are optimistic have a dramatic ripple-effect on their organization. They always see the best in their members and their members' accomplishments. They look for what can be done, instead of focusing on the roadblocks to progress.

**Know How to Have Fun** – Successful leaders surround themselves with people who take their work – but not themselves – seriously. They know how to play as hard as they work, and they truly understand the value of our Auxiliary's fourth cornerstone.

**Leaders Are Willing to Make the Tough Decisions** – You have heard the saying, "The buck stops here." Successful leaders hold fast to this philosophy, even when it seems unpopular. A good leader's decisions are always tempered with empathy and consideration.

As volunteers, leadership is not so much about being "the boss." Leadership is more about perfecting your understanding of those who you ask to follow you.

Opportunity for service abounds in the Auxiliary. Please seek the service for which you feel best-suited – and have fun doing it!

I wish all the candidates who are stepping up for election this year the best of luck, and my sincere thanks for your commitment and for caring. 🌟

## Navigator

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# Teens Get Rude Awakening

Story by  
**BILL SZILASI**  
SO-PA 2 DISR

## *Rude awakening!*

That phrase could easily apply to the way a group of Division 2 (DISR) members felt when their alarms went off at about 0500 last April 30. But, in fact, it was not so much a description of their welcome-to-a-new-day as it was the name of a critically-important program for which the Auxiliarists had volunteered.

Rude Awakening - sponsored by a number of police, fire and emergency response organizations - educates teenagers about the dangers of drinking-and-driving.

The particular program targeted by the Auxiliarists was organized and designed by the Middletown Township (N.J.) Police Department, and had been operating for 14 years. The April event was being held, for the third year, at the Marine Academy of Science and Technology in Sandy Hook, N.J.

As in previous years, Coast Guard Station Sandy Hook, led by CW03 Fred Venchenko, was an active participant, which explains the 0500 reveille. The early wake-up was necessitated by the 0600 muster time at Station Sandy Hook.

The early rise was made significantly easier when CWO Venchenko's generous provision of breakfast on the mess deck was dished up for all volunteers. Needless to say, the Auxiliarists managed to be at the head of the mess line at 0600 - before most of the regulars living down the hall even showed up.

After being fortified as only a Coast Guard breakfast can do, all the volunteers made their way to the staging area, where the local police departments and other volunteers were preparing the events.

The program consisted of a number of hands-on events that require a high ratio of volunteers to participants. The participants were seniors and juniors from four local high schools. More than 1,100 students attended.

The events included participation drills as well as demonstrations.

The first drills consisted of dividing students into teams and having them experience the feeling of being impaired due to intoxication. This was accomplished by having the students don D.W.I. Fatal Vision Goggles, which impart a sense of

disorientation — a quite disturbing experience, actually.

The teams were distributed among eight training stations. Each station was manned by six to eight volunteers. First, the student is given a standard sobriety test while wearing the goggles, then taken directly to a golf cart and told to navigate a course marked by cones. The student, at all times, is under the direct physical control of a volunteer in order to insure that there are no accidents or injuries.

Prior to arrival of the first students, the volunteers went through the drills themselves so as to fully understand their impact.

After the golf cart exercise, the students went to a basketball throw and attempted to make a basket while wearing the goggles. The impact was dramatic.

While some teams were going through the drills, those waiting attended lectures by family members of children who had been killed when driving under the influence or by other drivers who were similarly impaired.

This was a very difficult and emotional program, to say the least.

At the end of the morning drills and lectures, the group moved to a scenic area among the sand dunes for a box lunch.

After lunch, the group witnessed a most dramatic demonstration: A display show-

ing two cars immediately after a horrific collision. Severely injured victims - actually, active-duty Coasties suitably made-up to get the audience's attention - could be seen in the cars.

A New Jersey State Police helicopter arrived on-scene, with active-duty and Auxiliary personnel providing a security cordon, along with police, fire and emergency vehicles from nearby towns.

The Jaws-of-Life was employed to remove a "victim" from one of the cars. The tableau left little to the imagination and no doubts at all that one never wanted to see something like this in real life.

The final event consisted of four vehicles being hoisted high into the air by a crane and then dropped, to replicate the impact of a car crash at various speeds. Again, this was a demonstration that left a lasting impression upon those who watched it.

All in all, it was a sobering and informative day. The reactions from, and impressions of the students indicated that most of them got the message. Hopefully, the payoff will be a reduction, if not elimination, of such truly terrible tragedies.

An added bonus was that the event received strong coverage by local TV and newspaper reporters.

I won't reveal who performed best with the goggles on. 🍷



Photo: Bob McNamara, SO-PB 2 DISR

Under the watchful eyes of DISR Auxiliarists, their peers and others, a New Jersey high school student tries to drive a golf cart through an array of traffic cones while wearing Fatal Vision Goggles that replicate the feeling of impairment resulting from intoxication. The event was part of the Rude Awakening program, which educates youngsters about the dangers of drinking-and-driving.





Receiving information updates during Frontier Sentinel briefing for the Unified Command, are, from the left: Captain Jeff Carlson, Operations Officer, Naval Mine and Anti-Submarine Warfare Command, serving as FS 08-2 Incident Commander; Commander Mike Ryan, Deputy Commander, Sector Northern New England, serving as Deputy Incident Commander; and, Captain James B. McPherson, Commander, Sector Northern New England.



Commander Brian Downey, Prevention Department Head at Sector Northern New England and Frontier Sentinel Operations Section Chief, explains at a briefing for the Unified Command and key unit personnel, the various tactics and work assignments that had been entered on an enlarged Work Analysis Matrix (ICS-234).

# Plaudits for the Auxiliary

The Coast Guard Auxiliary was showered with compliments – both publicly and privately – for the important role it played and the competence participating members demonstrated during a major multi-national homeland security (HLS) exercise in mid-June,

Staged in North Atlantic waters off the northeastern U.S. and southeastern Nova Scotia coasts, as well as Maine and New Hampshire harbors, the full-scale Frontier Sentinel (FS 08-2 FSX) operation was “the largest and most complex HLS maritime security exercise ever conducted,” according to Captain James B. McPherson, Commander, USCG Sector Northern New England.

The core group of operational commanders and forces were drawn from USCG Atlantic Area, U.S. Navy Second Fleet, and Joint Task Force Atlantic (Canadian East Coast Forces).

FS 08-2 was designed to test coordinated planning and response to maritime threats targeting North America. The scenario focused initially on a notional terrorist attack involving underwater mine-detection and countermeasures in Portsmouth Harbor, close by the security-sensitive Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

The scenario, based on hostage-taking at sea, explosions, diving operations and mine warfare, called for coordinated detection, assessment and response by the multi-national forces.

The operation proved successful.

“The exercise really showed that we are, indeed, one team, one fight,” said CAPT McPherson. “All participating agencies – military and civilian alike, from the U.S. and Canada – came to [the] exercise with a shared mission focus to ensure [that] we can decisively and appropriately handle maritime security threats.”

Some 3,000 personnel from U.S. and Canadian military units and government agencies, including USCG Auxiliarists from Divisions 1 and 2 D1NR, participated. The exercise was directed from a Unified Command Post (UCP) set up at the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services’ Portsmouth office.

The operation also was a test of the Incident Command System, much of which has been studied and learned by Auxiliary personnel. The entire FS 08-2 organizational structure and activities closely followed ICS precepts.

Some of the on-water activity was conducted by a fleet of seven Auxiliary Operational Facilities crewed by 26 members from Maine and New Hampshire, in addition to Coast Guard, Navy and Canadian Forces assets.

Another 15 Auxiliarists worked part- or full-time at the UCP, carrying out duties in the Situation, Resource and Documentation Units of the FS 08-2 Planning Section. Some members also

**Story by**  
**JOEL A. GLASS**  
BC-ANN  
Editor, *Navigator*

**Photos by**  
**PA3 SETH JOHNSON**  
USCG Public Affairs, Boston

served in a quasi-logistics mode, obtaining and providing food and liquid refreshment for UCP personnel each day.

All of which led to widespread admiration for, and comments about, the

Auxiliary.

Some of the plaudits were expressed at the exercise’s final Unified Command briefing, where the Incident Commander, Captain Jeff Carlson, Operations Officer, Naval Mine and Anti-Submarine Warfare Command, stated, “What an awesome force that [Coast Guard Auxiliary] is. I wish the Navy had a similar arm.”

At the exercise hot-wash, Lieutenant Junior Grade John Bernhardt, USCGR, Sector Hampton Roads Incident Management Assistance Team, added, “The Auxiliary – as always – was outstanding [during the exercise]. There isn’t much you can ask the Auxiliary to do that they cannot do.”

Still later, more praise was extended privately to Auxiliarists at the UCP by the FS 08-2 Operations Section Chief, Commander Brian Downey, Head of the Sector Northern New England Prevention Department.

CDR Downey, who had worked with Auxiliarists at a number of previous homeland security exercises and planning meetings, told them: “You guys came through with flying colors – once again.” 🌀





Ground Zero, as seen from the 20<sup>th</sup> floor of 1 Liberty Plaza, is now the site of construction of the Freedom Tower, a memorial honoring those who died on 9/11 at the World Trade Center.

*An Auxiliarist's Very Personal Journey...*

# Inside 'Ground Zero'

Not even a cold, overcast day could dampen the spirits of a U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliarist and two active-duty Coasties who set out on an adventure in New York City that none of them would ever forget.

The trio consisted of PS3 Brian Shajari, a bagpiper from USCG Marine Safety Unit Port Arthur (Texas); SN Haley Shackelford, a bass drummer assigned to USCG Sector Philadelphia; and, me, Steve Mehal, a bass drummer and member of Flotilla 7-16 D9WR (Richfield, Ohio).

This trio, all members of the U.S. Coast Guard Pipe Band Inc., was in New York to march and play in this year's St. Patrick's Day Parade.

[Ed's Note: The 60-member, non-profit pipe band is not an official part of the Coast Guard, but is recognized by the USCG as an "affiliated" organization.]

The three of us got together the day

after the parade for such Big Apple tourist activities as riding the subway and visiting key sights, such as the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island.

What we did not know, as we set out that day, was that fate – or, perhaps, something grander – had something else in store for us.

It all began as we strolled up Lower Manhattan's Church Street, when we came upon a large but empty, fenced-in area. We suddenly realized that we were standing on the hallowed sidewalks of Ground Zero.

After touring the display honoring 9/11 survivors and families of those who died in the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center (WTC), we proceeded to a public observation area. We took some pictures and, as we were turning to leave, a con-

**Story & Photos by  
STEVEN S. MEHAL**

SO-PA 7 D9ER

struction worker asked whether we were connected with the military.

Learning that we were, the worker asked whether we were interested in going "inside" Ground Zero for a better look from an area restricted to family members of the fallen and service men and women in uniform. Not even police or fire personnel are permitted beyond the security gate to this area.

We walked out onto a platform housing six trailers. We could walk around the platform, but not enter the trailers. They are reserved for visiting members of families with a relative who died in the attack.

The person showing us around asked if we would pay tribute to those who died in the WTC on 9/11 by presenting arms to the National Ensign flying over the trailer area.





SN Haley Shackelford, Steve Mehal, SO-PA 7 D9ER; and, PS3 Brian Shajari share the moment inside The Family Room, home to over 3,000 mementos and memories devoted to those who perished at the World Trade Center on 9/11.



Diane Horning (kneeling, center), founder of World Trade Center Families for Proper Burial, gathers in The Family Trailer at Ground Zero with SN Haley Shackelford (kneeling, left), and Bill Healy (kneeling, right); and behind them, an unidentified family friend; Lillian Tetreault; and, Auxiliarist Steve Mehal.

### *How could we refuse?*

To have represented the Coast Guard by doing this on such hallowed ground was almost overwhelming. When we finished and started taking pictures of the site, our “guide” informed us that a family member had arrived and invited us to join her in one of the trailers. Doing so is permitted, provided the visitor is escorted by a family member.

### *Again, how could we say no?*

It turned out that our host was none other than Diane Horning, founder of World Trade Center Families for Proper Burial. Her 26-year-old son, Matt, who worked on the WTC North Tower’s 95<sup>th</sup> floor, died in the attack – one of 295 Marsh & McLennan Insurance Company employees who perished there on that day.

As she spoke to us, her eyes filled with tears. Seven years later, the pain was still as intense as the day it happened. She is a beautiful person, who spoke of her son as only a loving mother could. She asked us as many questions as we asked her.

She asked our Haley to describe her two children. I stood frozen as the mom-to-mom discussion unfolded.

Haley later told me: “I was showing Diane photos of my children when the pain from one mother to another became so real for me. We were staring at a picture of her son. Then, I looked into my kids’ eyes in the photo, having been away from them for five days while on-duty, and it hit me like a ton of bricks

“All at once, I became hungry to see, touch and feel [my children] as I felt this woman before me would give anything to see, touch, feel and share just one more precious moment with her son. For me,

mother-to-mother became hero-to-hero.”

There was a knock on the door and more survivor-family members entered, including Lillian Tetreault, who lost her daughter, Renée, on 9/11. Lillian was accompanied by her nephew, Bill Healy.

As we listened to the tales that made these people true American heroes, we truly felt like family.

Lillian then invited us to join them in visiting a memorial on the 20<sup>th</sup> floor of 1 Liberty Plaza, which overlooks Ground Zero. We followed intently as the din of the cranes, jackhammers and other construction equipment faded, replaced by the noise of a busy New York City street.



SN Haley Shackelford salutes the National Ensign during the pipe band trio’s visit to Ground Zero.

On the building’s 20<sup>th</sup> floor, we came upon a sign stating simply that we were at The Family Room. Opening the door, we saw a sight that made our hearts simply break – a large office suite packed with over 3,000 photos, flowers and letters to the 9/11-deceased.

Lillian and the others left us there to be alone with the tributes to the many loved ones. I cannot describe the feeling we got being there. There were others in that room, but we could see no one. We all felt it. It was life-changing.

We held on to each other, cried and wrote our own letters to the loved ones there. We left mementos at a photo of a Coast Guard Reservist who had died in the conflagration. It was very overwhelming, to say the least.

We made our way out to the busy street, heading back to our hotel on Staten Island. We hardly spoke a word the whole trip back. We were mesmerized by what had just happened to us. We had had the chance to go and do what few, if any, military representatives had ever have done before. It was an awesome privilege that we will never forget.

As important as they are to this country’s history and its future, the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island just didn’t seem all that intriguing to us at that point. They will have to wait for another visit. 🇺🇸

# Water Safety Summit Draws 350

## AUXILIARY RECOGNIZED FOR PE AT SAN DIEGO EVENT

**Story by**  
**HARRIET HOWARD**  
DVC-AS

One of recreational boating's stellar events – the Annual International Boating and Water Safety Summit – recently drew to San Diego more than 350 boating and water safety professionals from the U.S., Canada and the United Kingdom seeking to add to their already-vast knowledge of safety on the water.

This 18<sup>th</sup> Summit – a mid-April event sponsored jointly by the National Water Safety Congress (NWSC) and the National Safe Boating Council (NSBC) – also marked the Council's Golden Anniversary.

The opening-night receptions provided an opportunity for attendees to network and visit the many exhibits of various marine organizations and water-sport equipment manufacturers.

The Summit was officially opened the following morning by the Orange County (Calif.) Fleet Sea Scouts Honor Guard. Ed Carter, Past Chair, National Safe Boating Council, gave the invocation and introduced the speakers.

Attendees were welcomed by NWSC President Arlyn Hendricks and NSBC Chair Ruth Wood. Ray Tsuneyoshi, director of the California Department of Boating and Waterways (Cal-Boating), welcomed the attendees to his state. He noted that there were more than 900,000 recreational boats using California's waterways, of which some 7,000 were in San Diego, alone.

Speakers representing numerous boating and water-safety organizations – including the U.S. Coast Guard, National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), San Diego Life Guards, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – discussed their programs and ways to increase safety on the water. The importance of boating-safety education and use of life jackets was emphasized.

NTSB Vice Chairman Robert Sumwalt



Photo: COMO Ed Sweeney, NADCO-RBS

The Coast Guard Auxiliary was recognized for its 60 years of boating safety education during the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual International Boating and Water Safety Summit in San Diego. The proclamation, presented by National Safe Boating Council Chair Ruth Wood (second from left) and National Water Safety Congress President Arlyn Hendricks (right), is accepted, on behalf of the Auxiliary, by Commodore Warren E. McAdams (left), National Chief of Staff, and Robin Freeman, Chief, National Department of Education. The proclamation was also signed by John Fetterman, president of the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators.

urged all boaters to put on a life jacket every time they board. He said that some 700 boaters die each year because they failed to wear a life jacket and/or lacked boating education.

He called on boating organizations, boat manufacturers, and the Coast Guard to encourage people to wear their life jackets.

NSBC Executive Director Virgil Chambers cited the successful impact on the Sacramento Delta of the *Wear It!* initiative, as an example of how the media, Coast Guard/Coast Guard Auxiliary, and Cal-Boating worked together to increase dramatically the wearing of life jackets along that California boating hot-spot.

USCG Lieutenant John Taylor, Program Manager, America's Waterway Watch, urged those in the maritime and boating industries, as well as the boating public, to report suspicious and unusual activities on the water, noting the details and then calling 911.

The NSBC hosted its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary reception at Coast Guard Sector San Diego. The Council's past chairs were recognized, recounting the organization's half-century history. Entertainment provided by a U.S. Navy Band brass quintet

and a surprise fireworks display added excitement to the celebration.

The next morning, concurrent breakout sessions were offered in education, outreach and communication, risk management, a hydro public safety program, law enforcement, and audience polling. That afternoon, Kawasaki sponsored a personal watercraft demonstration on Mission Bay, and then invited all to try out their PWCs.

At an NWSC luncheon, Dave Esparza, FC 10-11 D11SR (Desert Lakes, Ariz.), received a Letter of Commendation, recognizing him for significant contributions to the safety of his state's recreational boating public.

On Saturday, attendees participated in skill-based development classes, and hands-on and in-or-on-the-water breakout sessions. These

included demonstrations of water safety for kids, boat handling, boarding ladders, and paddle-sport safety.

A bayside picnic lunch was followed by a simulated open-water rescue by a team of San Diego lifeguards, a police boat and a Sheriff's helicopter.

At the Awards Banquet, two Auxiliarists were entered into the NSBC Hall of Fame for 2008 – Commodore Carolyn V. Belmore, PDCO 1NR, and William Griswold, a former USCG Chief Director of Auxiliary and NSBC Past Chair.

A joint proclamation by NWSC, NSBC, and the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators recognized the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Coast Guard Auxiliary's public education program. The proclamation was accepted by Robin Freeman, DC-E.

This year's International Boating and Water Safety Summit provided the participating boating-safety professionals and volunteers with many new ideas on water safety that they can share with the boating public.

The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Summit next year will be held in Panama City, Fla. 🌊



## THE EYESORE...



## THE THING OF BEAUTY...



# Talk about recycling...

Story by **RANDY D. PODOLSKY** RCO-S D9WR  
and **RON AIDIKONIS** FSO-PA 35 D9WR

Photos by **RANDY D. PODOLSKY**



## ... THE REAR VIEW

A trailer once used by the Auxiliary Ninth Western Region materials department was no longer needed, due to an online shopping change at the [shopauxiliary.com](http://shopauxiliary.com) web site. What to do with that clunky eyesore now?

And then, an idea struck me [Podolsky]: Why not recycle the thing and put it to good use as a Public Affairs Outreach Trailer? I asked for approval from my DCO and board and, as soon as permission was granted, the Auxiliary's resources kicked in.

First, a plan as to what was needed was developed – on a napkin. Next, a request was made for a little funding from the Region. Our Director of Auxiliary was asked to kick in some permanent markings for the trailer.

The best part of this entire recycling endeavor was to see who could do what for the project, and who could provide what we needed from our wish-list.

A couple of members cleaned up the trailer. Another member installed an internal system for securing and organizing

the equipment that would be placed inside the trailer. Yet another member replaced 200 rusty screws.

A member who runs an auto repair business made sure that everything was road-ready and safe – all the way down to a new spare tire, light bulbs all around, and replacement of the faulty wiring harness with a new one.

Finally, after all the elbow-grease was applied to prepare the trailer for its new life, the well-thought-out decal package was installed.

In addition to their many hours of physical labor on this project, flotilla members and FOFs ("friends of the flotilla") also donated additional financial resources to complete the project.

The staff at the Auxiliary National Public Affairs Graphics Division was Johnny-on-the-spot, assisting with the digital images needed to complete the design. And then, the lettering was applied.

In only about 40 days, this eyesore had been cleaned up and re-born as our spar-

ling "new" PA Outreach Trailer. And just in time to show it off at the Annual Fall Conference!

So, with some recycling – achieved with a "can-do" attitude and the resources of Auxiliary members – a nifty looking trailer is now on the road in D9WR, helping us with our various safe-boating promotions.

The trailer is now fully stocked with all the necessary public affairs displays and equipment for us to travel to boat shows and other public venues where recreational boating safety, member recruitment, America's Waterways Watch, public education, and other local Auxiliary programs are presented.

Finally, while it was I who conceived and administered this project, it could not have gone from idea to conception without these dedicated members of Flotilla 35 (Waukegan, Ill.): Ron Aidikonis, FSO-PA; Tim Cooper, VFC; Charlie Noll, FSO-AN; Scott Snetsinger, FSO-PA; and, Steve Smith, ADSO-OP 9WR.

Bravo Zulu to you, one and all! ☸

## A NEW MISSION FOR THE OMNIPRESENT OFFICER SNOOK

## 12 NAVIGATOR





Photo: Dick Bangs, FSO-PB 11-10 D7

Future Auxiliarists prepare to challenge Officer Snook at his own game during a public affairs event in Dunedin, Fla.

ing in water looks like a juicy jellyfish. One youth offered that his dad threw such material overboard all the time, but that he would tell Pop to cease doing so. With a sheepish grin, his dad, who was right beside the young boy, just nodded his head.

As you can see, *nobody* ever walks away bored!

So, how can you get in on the action?

For starters, the board is really easy to make. A piece of half-inch plywood, cut to 30½ x 12 inches, forms the base. There are 10 square trap doors, each measuring 2⅞ inches, attached to the board's long side with one-inch hinges. Then, brad or glue a one-inch square strip, just in front of the hinges. This prevents the real fun parts from crowding the hinge action.

Under each trap door is a 2 x 2 inch picture of Officer Snook with the item in question – a Styrofoam cup, a glass bottle,

and so on – and its biodegradability time. Our division has found that putting this time on the trap-door covers helps players understand and learn the game faster.

The fun parts?

Well, this is where the trash – preferably clean – comes in. Plastic bags, newspapers, paper towels, plastic bottles, and disposable diapers are some of the items to include because they are the sort of things that we see floating on the water almost every day.

There are a total of 10 boards, each 8 x 2¾ inches, that have a one-inch knob at the front to facilitate moving them to the (hopefully) correct position in front of the right trap door. The knob keeps the players from grabbing the trash item and tearing it loose. Use screws or hot glue to attach the garbage on a board.

My division paints its boards

and the movable boards a high-gloss gray, and the trap doors high-gloss red, white and blue. The time labels on the doors, the item label on the movable boards and the Officer Snook pictures under the trap doors should all be laminated to protect them from frequent use, rain, and spills.

There is also an 8½ x 11 inch placard that challenges players to "Talk Trash." It, too, should be laminated. All of the labels can easily be applied to the boards with spray adhesive.

Making one of these games is fun, but the real fun begins when you see the look on someone's face when their answer is off by a few hundred years. Entire families play the game, challenging one another in playful competition.

It is a good public relations move to award players who provide at least 50 percent correct answers with a small prize, or for just having the courage to try their hand at this innova-



tive game.

So, have fun with the Officer Snook Trash Pollution Game. We do! 🐟

A more-detailed guide to construction of the game and its parts can be downloaded at: [www.a07011.uscgaux.info/](http://www.a07011.uscgaux.info/)  
For more information about the program, contact: [officersnook@aol.com](mailto:officersnook@aol.com)

# TWO DISTRICTS HOST PROMOTION



Photo: Dave Griesbach, SO-VE 9 D8WR

John Guyer, VFC-95, and Becky Griesbach, FC-95 (Davenport, Iowa), both D8WR, man an Auxiliary booth at the Wal-Mart store in Muscatine, Iowa during a life jacket promotion in conjunction with the Kellogg Company.

## IOWANS FOCUS ON LIFE JACKETS ...

**Story by  
JOHN GUYER**  
VFC-95 D8WR

Two giants in the merchandising world can now claim fame as being huge – if not giant – supporters of a major Auxiliary promotion.

The Kellogg Co. and Wal-Mart banded together to promote the use of life jackets, including a plug for the Auxiliary, on cereal boxes sold in the Big Box chain's outlets.

Kellogg placed the colorful promotion on its three most-popular breakfast cereals, thereby positioning the life jacket message on the kitchen table of millions of potential boaters.

Wal-Mart was the original, exclusive outlet for the particular cereal boxes that displayed the promotional message.

Flotilla 95 D8WR capitalized on the national program to further spread the life jacket-use message.

The Davenport, Iowa flotilla visited Wal-Mart stores within its Area of Responsibility. The store managers turned out to be very receptive to having Auxiliarists set up and man an information booth at their outlets.

As a result, the FL-95 members were able to make many contacts with recreational boating families. Members promoted life jacket use, safe-boating practices, and upcoming public education classes, and they scheduled Vessel Safety Checks.

The Auxiliarists further distributed the latest state boating regulations and many of the Coast Guard's boating-related pamphlets.

The display of boating information and

safety equipment at the local Wal-Marts drew lots of interested parties and curious onlookers, including one celebrity visitor – the Easter Bunny himself.

The icing on the cake, for the participating Auxiliarists, was that FL-95 was able to make contact with some potential members who had stopped by the boating-safety booth while shopping at Wal-Mart.

Also, as a result of the flotilla's initiative, the Wal-Mart stores became new Recreational Boating Safety Program Partners. These retail outlets have since proven to be very good outlets for materials supplied by the RBSFPV program.

It is difficult to say how much cereal was sold as a result of the Wal-Mart promotion. But, it probably is safe to say that Flotilla 95 did, indeed, “sell” some safe-boating practices.





Photo: George Bingley, FSO-VE 98 D7

Ron Keebler (left), a Flotilla 98 VE trainee, and Liz Lambert, FSO-PS 98 D7, chat it up with visitors at the unit's booth set up in the parking lot of the Wal-Mart store in Punta Gorda, Fla.

## ... WHILE FLORIDIANS TARGET VSCs

**Story By  
GEORGE BINGLEY**  
FSO-VE 98 D7

What do you get when you combine an industry-leading producer of foods, the world's largest retailer, and the Coast Guard Auxiliary?

The answer: The Kelloggs/Wal-Mart/Auxiliary "On the Box Boating Safety Program" in March and June, last year.

What an opportunity for the Auxiliary to participate in an area-wide Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) program!

Four of Kellogg's most popular cereals – Rice Krispies, Raisin Bran Crunch, Mini-Wheaties, and Frosted Flakes – distributed through 3,800 Wal-Mart stores across the U.S., carried a panel targeting Auxiliary boating-safety classes and

Vessel Safety Checks.

The program was targeted at children to convince them to wear their life jackets when they are on the water.

Flotilla 98 D7 (Charlotte Harbor, Fla.) devised a plan to work with its local Wal-Mart on a Saturday and Sunday morning. Management was very receptive, providing space, loaner life jackets, and boxes of cereal for our in-store booths.

One booth was strategically set up in front of the store's main entrance. The second "booth" actually was the flotilla's communications van, set up in the store's parking lot. Both were manned by Auxiliarists wearing life jackets.

Members engaged children by giving them boating-safety stickers and *Inky the Whale* and *Captain Snook* coloring books. They were handed PFD Panda Certificates

and asked to sign a pledge that they would wear a life jacket whenever they were on the water.

As a child was engaged by one member, another would discuss with his or her parent the Auxiliary's role in promoting safe-boating and public education. As they departed, the families were given a Maritime Awareness packet with boating safety literature.

Having our Comms van alongside one of the booths was successful in attracting visitors. Several parents stopped by and asked to enroll their teenagers in the ABC program.

The FL-98 team concluded that public affairs events such as this are very productive and should be promoted more in the future. Requests for 15 VSCs and 15 seats in ABC classes were received. 🐼





The AuxAir team waits on the flight line for signal to begin the Flotilla 20-5 inspired, multi-agency search-and-rescue exercise over Lake Michigan. From the left are: Aircraft Commander Dave Pflum, FL 16-3 D9CR; Air Observers Leo Fix, Flotilla 20-1 D9WR, and Bill Baumgartner, FL 20-6 D9WR; Aircraft Commander Tim Power, FL 20-1 D9WR; Aircraft Commander Ben Lautner, FL 20-6 D9WR; and Air First Pilot Jim Johnson, ADSO-AV 9WR.



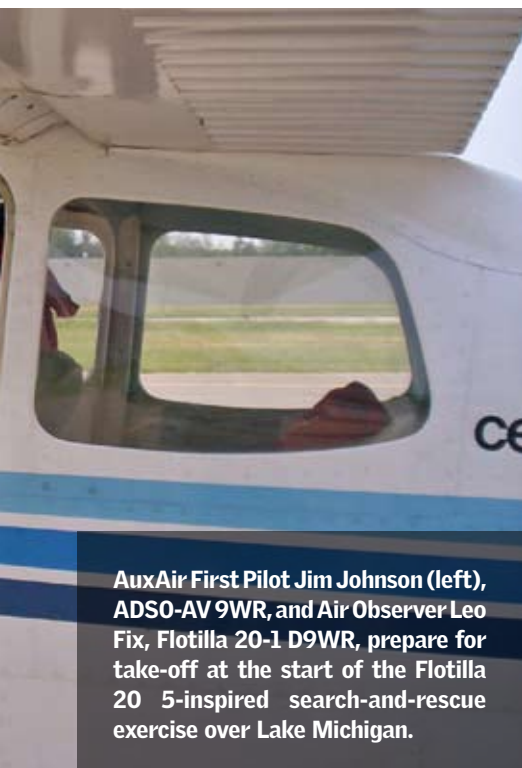
Aircraft commander Ben Lautner, FL 20-6 D9WR, serves as the communications link between air and surface craft and the Incident Commander during the Michigan SAREX.





# SAREX Sharing

## MICHIGAN AUXILIARISTS CONDUCT TEST OF MULTI-AGENCY AIR/SEA RESPONSES



AuxAir First Pilot Jim Johnson (left), ADSO-AV 9WR, and Air Observer Leo Fix, Flotilla 20-1 D9WR, prepare for take-off at the start of the Flotilla 20 5-inspired search-and-rescue exercise over Lake Michigan.

**Story and Photos by  
RALPH FAIRBANKS**  
VFC 20-5 D9WR

More and more often, now and in the future, the Auxiliary is being called upon to work side-by-side with other agencies during actual, or simulated, emergencies. Often, however, a lack of familiarity among response organizations as to how others operate can hamper, rather than help, the effort.

Having realized that, and having earlier successfully conducted search-and-rescue exercises on Lake Michigan to improve Auxiliary surface and air asset co-ordination, Flotilla 20-5 D9WR (Grand Haven, Mich.) sought a new and bigger challenge.

They found it. And the decision was made to launch a concerted effort to define – via a multi-agency SAR Exercise (SAREX) – how the Auxiliary could work with other organizations should a natural disaster strike the area.

The lead role in formulating the SAREX would be played by FL 20-5 members John Wetterholt, DSO-AN 9WR, and Tim O'Donnell, both of whom had spent several months assisting with the Hurricane Katrina clean-up.

The duo thus saw, first-hand, what could go right, and what could go wrong, when varied organizations have to work as a team.

To kick off our effort, I contacted Captain Chris Blank of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) Michigan Wing, and Bill Smith, Ottawa County Emergency Management Unit (EMU) director, to explore the possibility of staging a multi-agency, simulated natural disaster response. They agreed.

The adopted scenario would focus on a band of thunderstorms crossing over the western Michigan coast, leaving in its wake missing aircraft and disabled boats.

The exercise objectives were to practice emergency response under the Incident Command System (ICS), test communications, and expand participants' knowledge of how the Auxiliary, CAP and local EMUs operate.

Major Ed Verville, CAP, was designated as Incident Commander; Jim Johnson, ADSO-AV 9WR, and I took Unified

Command support positions. EMU chief Bill Smith provided a communications trailer to coordinate

traffic between the aircraft and surface craft.

Johnson oversaw the air activities with Western Michigan pilots, including Aircraft Commanders Dave Pflum, Flotilla 16-3 D9CR, and Tom Power, FL 20-1 D9WR. Tom Kartes, DCP-20 D9WR, served as observer/evaluator.

Auxiliary Operational Facilities, serving as “disabled vessels,” were provided by Randy Morrison, FC 20-4 D9WR, and me.

Several planning meetings were held to ascertain the best date for the SAREX and the availability of air and surface craft, and crews. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Auxiliary and CAP was reviewed for compliance. Approval for the CAP to operate on marine-VHF Channel 83 was secured, and approval for the joint SAREX was granted by Commodore Gordon Jaworski, then-DCO 9WR.

The scenario was further refined to show a missing aircraft with eight persons on board, departing Benton Harbor airport at about 0730 on a Friday, headed to Escanaba, with an intermediate stop at Traverse City.

A description of two pleasure boats, and their last-known position off Holland and Grand Haven, was circulated.

The exercise began after a pre-mission briefing by MAJ Verville at the Coast Guard Sector Grand Haven Field Office (SFO). Boat and air crews departed for their respective facilities and commenced sector- and parallel-searches.

Participants re-assembled at the SFO for the mission debrief.

It was readily apparent that all of our SAREX planning, which spanned several weeks, might need to take place in a few hours, or a day or two, in an actual SAR operation.

Each organization came away from the exercise with a better understanding of ICS and of the other organizations' capabilities. Everyone looked forward to repeating the exercise in the future. 🌀



In Kabul, Afghanistan, during Operation Enduring Freedom, Olsson prepares to board a helicopter assigned to the NATO International Security Assistance Force, to which he was assigned.



BELOW: Captain Ingemar Olsson, ship's master, at the helm of his DUKW *Peking Duck*, conducting a water-and-land tour of the San Francisco Bay area.



**Ingemar Olsson**  
IPFC-57 D11NR (Diablo, Calif.)





# OUTCOME IS JUST DUCKY

SWEDE-CUM-CALIFORNIAN SAVES 2 LIVES

Story by  
**INGEMAR OLSSON\***  
IPFC-57 D11NR

*Editor's Note: The author, who conducts San Francisco-area tours as master of an amphibious DUKW ('Duck'), performed many person-in-the-water evolutions as an Auxiliary coxswain. But he suddenly had to do the real thing – for the second time in his life – when two capsized canoeists found themselves thrashing about in the frigid waters of San Francisco Bay. This is his personal account of how it went.*

At 1500 hours on March 5th, there was a -0.2 foot low tide with four-knot ebb current in San Francisco Bay; water temperature was in the low 50's. There were only two vessels in the area – a sailing vessel and my DUKW, *Peking Duck*.

I was at the helm of San Francisco Bay Tours' 1400 excursion, with 12 passengers on board, when I spotted two struggling persons. They were dragging a canoe 400 yards north of the eastern end of Pier 50, in the bay's China Basin.

The outgoing current was very strong, so the duo made no headway as they tried to swim toward the shoreline. But, considering the water temperature, I firmly believed that they would not have made it.

When I first spotted them, my DUKW

was about 600 yards away from the canoeists. The sailing vessel passed about 250 yards east of them, but did not stop. It took me some six minutes to reach the men, both of whom were in their 30s and wearing flotation devices. They welcomed my offer to assist, stating that the cold water and strong current had exhausted them.

I lowered the aft ladder that we normally use to embark/disembark *Peking Duck* passengers and pulled the canoeists on board.

The entire rescue worked exactly as it did during one of the compulsory training drills that we had done with the Duck just the previous day.

Once onboard, I gave the men blankets and dragged their canoe onto my vessel. We then started moving to the Bay View

Yacht Club ramp, which is where we normally land the Duck on our tours.

As we were underway, a small Coast Guard patrol boat arrived, and it was agreed that I would continue to shore, with the USCG vessel following.

After driving my six-wheel amphibious Duck up the ramp, I helped the canoeists pull off their canoe. They headed for the Mariposa Hunters Point Yacht Club's ramp, where the Coast Guard awaited them because the water was too low at that time for the USCG vessel to approach the Duck's landing ramp.

As I departed to complete my tours, the Japanese and American passengers on board clearly were both excited and elated about the successful rescue.

Actually, that was the second time in my life that I had been involved in a real man-overboard rescue.

When I was serving on the Swedish East Asia Company cargo vessel S/S *Tamara* in 1959, we were just coming out of the English Channel and into the North Sea – in darkness and heavy seas – when a crew member fell overboard.

We turned the cargo ship around and were searching with floodlights for many hours. Finally, we had to give up, realizing that we had lost the sailor. I felt very bad about that event for a long, long time.

On the other hand, having now conducted a successful rescue makes me feel very good. I believe that all the training I have gotten in the Auxiliary helped me to make the right decisions, allowing this rescue to be successful. 🍀

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\* The author joined the Swedish Merchant Marine in 1959, at the tender age of 16. He later entered the Royal Swedish Navy and, after graduating from the Royal Naval Academy, served for 23 years as a reserve officer in the Swedish Amphibious Corps. Olsson moved to America in 1990 and subsequently became a U.S. citizen. In 2002, he served during Operation Enduring Freedom under contract with the Swedish Forces as an intelligence manager at NATO International Security Assistance Force headquarters in Kabul, Afghanistan. Olsson and his wife, University of California-Davis chemical ecologist and genetics researcher Deborah A. Kimbrell, Ph.D. (Flotilla 57 D11NR), joined the Auxiliary together soon after 9/11. A former harbor master and port captain at the Martinez (Calif.) Marina & Yacht Club, Olsson currently serves as Vice Chair of the City of Martinez Marina Commission. He has been a Captain with San Francisco Duck Tours since 2006.





Photo: Barbara Estes, FL-45 D7

Michael Estes (left), Flotilla 45 D7, and a class of Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps students at Walter A. Teague Middle School, Altamonte Springs, Fla., learn about a Seminole County Sheriff's Department airboat.

## YOUTH MARKET VIRTUALLY UNTAPPED BY THE AUXILIARY

# 'Sponges' Need a Challenge

**Story by  
MICHAEL and  
BARBARA ESTES**

Flotilla 45 D7

School-age students are young minds that act like sponges waiting to be challenged. *Our* challenge, as Auxiliarists, is keeping up with their need for boating- and water safety-related information that is understandable to them.

These kids comprise an audience that is virtually untapped by the Auxiliary, is transported daily into groups for the purpose of learning, and has a strong *potential* need for important information that we can provide.

This is a market that is virtually untouched, yet well worth pursuing. Take it from us. We know because we have been reaching out to this market for quite a while. And you, too, can tap into it.

There are some 1,750 students attend-

ing Walter A. Teague Middle School in Altamonte Springs, Fla. Of these, some 300 or more a year participate in a boating and/or marine-safety program taught by Flotilla 45 D7 (Sanford, Fla.).

Lawton Childs Middle School in Oviedo also invites the flotilla to its annual Earth Day Celebration, at which a slew of "green" organizations sets up displays and demonstrations for the more than 1,300 students and faculty to explore.

Adding in local Boy and Girl Scouts, Naval Sea Cadets, and others brings to over 3,000 the total number of students in all age groups who are exposed each year to Auxiliary offerings from just one flotilla.

It's not really difficult. In fact, tapping into this youthful audience may be easier than you think. Here are a few ideas to think over, if you want to get started:

- Most public schools have mission

statements that include such phraseology as this from the Seminole County (Fla.) Public Schools: "...encourage community involvement, public awareness, recruiting of human resources and positive support for teachers, staff and students."

The system developed such programs as Dividend School Volunteers (DSV), which encourages adults to donate time to the schools. Most DSVs help with tutoring, classroom assistance, chaperoning trips, and in clerical and clinic relief positions.

- Many counties have a speakers' bureau targeted specifically at their schools. This allows listing of available resources by topic, enabling teachers to select guest speakers.

Databases are compiled and maintained by the school system. Teachers need only pick a topic and the arrangements are made. Organizations, individuals, top-



*The school-age audience is eager and energetic  
– and most vulnerable to mishaps on the water.*

*Offers to volunteer in schools are eagerly welcomed and provide  
a variety of opportunities for us Auxiliarists to share our knowledge and  
programs in a positive way with a large, diverse population.*



Photo: Michael Estes, FL-45 D7

Barbara Estes, FL-45 D7, acquaints youngsters with the ins-and-outs of a sleek recreational boat during an emergency-equipment scavenger hunt that included the Auxiliary Operational Facility *Jersey Six*.

ics and presentations are all screened in advance.

■ High school students require a number of volunteer hours for scholarships with approved volunteer organizations. This requires going through the school board, answering some questions, and providing supervised volunteer projects for prospective members and possible program participants.

School target groups depend upon your interests, patience, stamina and creativity for reaching out. Latch-key programs after school may be one way to get started. These usually combine mixed grades in small groups.

Activity-related presentations usually work best. Special celebrations like Earth

Day give you an opportunity to use the public affairs presentation method for marine debris and water pollution, while handing out literature that travels with them back to the classroom and home.

Pre-Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC) programs have flexibility that allow for lengthier boating-safety programs, as well as marine and environmental presentations.

Arranging for local marine law enforcement agencies to participate and planning a post-program field trip to a local Coast Guard Station are good. They expose students to a unified, cooperative network, help reinforce the important concepts of the material, and encourage impressionable young citizens and future boaters to

learn and obey the law.

Auxiliary programs that involve marine debris and environmental protection topics present well. Presenters may wish to include goodies from recruiters and/or Sea Partners for students. Use as many hands-on props as possible. Doing so leaves great lasting impressions and reinforces important learning concepts for all types of learners.

Auxiliary Boating Safety programs cover all ages: *Boating Fun-Adventure of Water* (ANSC #3011) covers grades K-3; *Way Points-Boating Fundamentals* (ANSC #3010) is for grades 4-6; and, *America's Boating Course* covers everyone else.

Middle school presentations of the ABC program require presentation-modifications. The time frame is 45 minutes for 10 or more class periods over a multiple-week span.

We have developed word searches, crossword puzzles, labeling pictures, vocabulary lists, practical demonstrations with model boats, an emergency equipment scavenger hunt on a trailered facility, and a race to properly don a life jacket contest.

Team competition and cooperation dominate most of the activities. Reinforcement in various ways helps more learners. Even those with disadvantages participate actively.

The school-age audience is eager and energetic – and most vulnerable to mishaps on the water. Offers to volunteer in schools are eagerly welcomed and provide a variety of opportunities for we Auxiliarists to share our knowledge and programs in a positive way with a large, diverse population.

These are our future boaters and citizens. They are ready to be informed and protected. What better way to reach out to our communities than through our youth?

Good luck and have fun. *Semper Paratus.* 🚤

# What's Your Fave Color?

THIS WRITER IS GUESSING THAT IT'S GREEN, NOT RED

**Story by**  
**BOB BURRELL**  
FSO-PS 14-19 D9CR

When driving, which light – red, amber or green – is your preference?

I would venture to say that the green light is your favorite. That's because, when it is green, you have the right to continue without having to worry about slowing down. Right?

Well, what if the traffic light is malfunctioning and the light is green for all directions? What would happen at that intersection?

More than likely, there would be an accident; all vehicles would proceed slowly and back up traffic in all directions. When the lights are functioning properly, traffic flows as planned.

The USCG Auxiliary accomplishes much when it is functioning properly. At the flotilla level, we have many functions that need to be accomplished. Each area of responsibility is dependant upon the others.

Operations cannot operate without qualified members. You cannot become qualified without Member Training (MT). You can't be trained without qualified instructors. Qualified instructors start out as new members, which means that Personnel Services (PS) must have submitted their paperwork.

Without Public Affairs (PA), how does one find out about the Auxiliary? Many do so at our boating-safety classes, which could not happen if we did not have Public Education (PE) personnel.

We work to keep recreational boaters safe and help them properly supply their boats with the right equipment, which means we need Vessel Examiners (VE). Many of the Vessel Safety Checks are accomplished because a boater saw a flyer at a local marine store, marina, or gas station. That flyer would not have been there were it not for a Recreational



**Bob Burrell**

Boating Safety Program Visitor (PV) having dropped it off.

Nothing would happen if we didn't have Communications (CM). Of course, when we are out fulfilling our duties as Auxiliarists, we need to wear a uniform, which requires a Materials (MA) order.

When on the water, we need to feel safe. That is where Marine Safety (MS) comes in. Of course, while we are underway, we always need to know where to go and how to get there. We would have a hard time doing that without Aids to Navigation (AN) to help us.

Because we are a part of Homeland Security (HLS), we have to document what we do. This would not happen without Information Services (IS) logging all of the data.

We are out in the public eye and need to be visible, so our Communication Services (CS) people keep us on the Internet. We

need to keep each other informed, so we have Publication Services (PB), which gives us our newsletters and magazines.

Nothing happens without money, so we have Finance (FN) to handle our accounting. And, since we cannot possibly remember all that goes on at our flotilla meetings, we have a Secretary (SR) to record them.

To keep this all going properly, we need to have someone coordinating all the functions. That would be our Vice Flotilla Commander (VFC). The Flotilla Commander (FC) oversees it all and keeps us moving in the right direction.

So as you can see, each function in the flotilla is important. We should remember that.

We should remember, too, that each member of the flotilla has something to offer, that each is a vital part of our organization, and that each helps us accomplish our missions as planned. 🌟

*The USCG Auxiliary accomplishes much when it is functioning properly.*

*At the flotilla level, we have many functions that need to be accomplished.*

*Each area of responsibility is dependant upon the others.*





'Salty'

# PELICANS IN PARADISE

It's not only residents and tourists in Pensacola, Fla. who can now lay claim to lolling in "paradise." So, too, can a city-wide flock of pseudo-pelicans.

Several years ago, the Newspapers in Education Department of the *Pensacola News Journal* launched a Pelicans in Paradise program. As a result, five-foot-tall, painted wooden pelicans have become the symbol of this city in Florida's Panhandle.

Being a Navy-oriented town, Pensacola was able to secure its first military sponsorship of a pseudo-pelican from the U.S. Navy. Its bird, on display at the Palafox and Garden Street intersection in downtown Pensacola, is painted in traditional Blue Angel colors.

Lest the Navy take all the credit, the Marine Corps soon got into the act by inaugurating a bright-red pelican, placing it directly across the intersection from the Navy's bird.

So, the promotion-minded City of Pensacola decided last summer that the intersection should become the destination's "military corner." The idea, of course, was to convince the Coast Guard, Army and Air Force to each contribute a properly-painted pelican of their own.

It worked, at least with the Coast Guard. On May 7, this year, the official USCG

pelican was added to the increasingly bird-infested intersection. It was dedicated and accorded the stately name of *Semper S. Paratican*. Its nickname, of course, is "Salty."

The latest Pelican in Paradise was designed by Captain Jeffrey Pettitt, Coast Guard Liaison Officer Pensacola, and a former Coastie, SNBM Steven Hawke. Salty's perch was to be at a Palafox and Garden Street location facing southward – toward the Gulf of Mexico, with a fine view of Old Town Pensacola.

Salty is painted white, with Coast Guard racing stripes adorning each wing. The paint-scheme truly symbolizes Team Coast Guard: His left wing bears the USCG shield; the right wing sports the Auxiliary shield.

Although pelicans know how to swim, Salty wears a life jacket because he wants to set a good example for all boaters, fully supporting our boating-safety mission. His webbed feet and legs are painted with a mix of silver and gold, representing both the Auxiliary and active-duty elements of Team Coast Guard. And, like the Coast Guard itself, Salty relies on both sides for proper support.

**Story by**  
**DOUG KROLL, Ph.D.**  
FSO-PE 11-11 D11SR

Salty's actual dedication came at the southern end of Palafox Street Pier, to which he was deftly delivered by the Coast Guard

Cutter *Bonito*. Included in the ceremonies were a search-and-rescue demonstration, fly-bys of the Coast Guard's newest aircraft – the C-144 Ocean Sentry – and speeches by Rear Admiral Joel Whitehead, Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District, and CAPT Pettitt.

Don't think for a minute that these painted pelicans are inexpensive. In addition to the actual cost of building the bird, a \$5,500 deposit is required for each one that joins the program.

The largest single contributor to the Coastie pelican was Ted Ciano, owner of several local automobile dealerships, who denoted the entire \$2,500 down payment. Other substantial donations came from various Coast Guard units, such as Sector Corpus Christi and Air Stations Elizabeth City, New Orleans and Los Angeles.

Students in the USCG Naval Aviation Training program raised over \$2,000 by selling to the public Halloween Ghost Tours of the Coast Guard's Haunted Lighthouse, which is where the USCG Liaison Office is housed. 🦋

# Just Walking the Docks

NEWBIE LEARNS  
THE AUXILIARY  
DOES LOT MORE

Story by  
**KIRK SCARBOROUGH**  
FSO-PA 15-8 D11SR

During my 12 years as a recreational boater, I often noticed those men and women in Tropical blue walking the docks, carrying clipboards, and looking quite business-like.

Also, from time to time I would attend boat shows, where I would see the Coast Guard Auxiliary booths, manned by uniformed men and women, who were passing out pamphlets and demonstrating nautical knot-tying.

In my mind, therefore, was that what the Auxiliary was all about was “walking the docks, passing out pamphlets and tying knots.”

Then, last June, I actually received in the mail an official-looking envelope from the Auxiliary. I couldn't wait to open it to see its contents. Inside was an invitation to visit a new flotilla that was being formed in my home town, Yorba Linda, Calif.

Right off the bat, I realized that if ever I was going to investigate this organization, the time to do so was right then-and-there.

So, I attended the meeting and quickly learned that the Auxiliary was an outfit dedicated to promoting boating-safety, supporting the Coast Guard, and involvement in the local community. It took only a few hours for me to realize that this was an organization that I wanted to be a part of.

I was fortunate enough to find, at my new flotilla, officers who had the knowledge, information, desire and willingness to mentor me and my fellow shipmates. Within a few months, I was well on my way to becoming a full-fledged member of the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

I recall how proud I was when I received my CGAUX identification card. And, when I went to be fitted for a uniform, I remember how helpful the store staff was in educating me about correct attire.

When I got back home, I was excited and eager for my wife to see me in my new uniform. As I had never served in the military, this was the first time I'd ever had to wear a military-style uniform. My wife remarked how handsome I looked in it.

Needless to say, this was a very proud moment for me.

As 2007 was coming to an end, my flotilla commander appointed me as Flotilla Staff Officer for Public Affairs – an assignment that was right up my alley. I worked in sales and marketing in my professional life, and I had a strong background in public relations.

One of my first assignments was to develop a plan to recruit new members for the fledgling flotilla. It didn't take me long to see that I had my work cut out for me. But I decided on a plan of



Attending the crucial Yorba Linda City Council meeting last December are, from the left: Kirk Scarborough, FSO-PA 15-8; Don Napolitano, DCP-15; and Flotilla 15-8 officers Francisco Floriani, VFC; Roy Lay, FSO-CM; Gene Tavis, FSO-PE; and, Wally Wynn, FC, all D11SR. Present, but not pictured, was Alyce Wynn, FSO-SR.

action that wound up paying off handsomely.

I contacted the Yorba Linda City Council members. I wanted to make both the Council and the community aware of the new flotilla situated in The Land of Gracious Living, as Yorba Linda promotes itself.

After firing off a number of e-mails and phone calls, the body's administrator issued an invitation for Flotilla 15-8 members to attend a Council meeting scheduled for Dec. 4, 2007.

I was given 10 minutes to make a presentation to the City Council and the larger audience viewing the meeting on television. The Council chamber was filled to capacity. After my presentation, our

group of Auxiliarists departed to a standing ovation from the audience.

A reporter from the *Orange County Register*, who had attended the Council meeting that evening, contacted me later to inquire about doing an article on the Auxiliary, in general, and the new local flotilla, in particular, for both the *Register* and the *Yorba Linda Star*.

Needless to say, I quickly accepted his offer. Within a few weeks, we had completed an interview and photos had been taken. The article, which appeared early in January, explained what the Auxiliary was all about. It also noted that the Yorba Linda flotilla was seeking members.

It took only a few days until my phone began to ring off the hook, and my e-mail in-box was jammed with requests for information on joining Flotilla 15-8.

The *Orange County Register* reporter became a fan of our flotilla. During January, he continued running articles about us in the *Register* and the *Star*.

The continuing response was unbelievable!

No fewer than 51 men and women inquired about FL 15-08. We held our first new-member orientation meeting on January 17. Thirty-six people came to hear our story, of which 20 signed up to join.

So, what had started out as a simple presentation to the Yorba Linda City Council ended up as a major public relations campaign.

Some feel that the Coast Guard Auxiliary is “the best-kept secret in America,” and I truly believe that to be the case. I believe that there are, across America, many men and women who want to give of their time, knowledge and skills to a cause larger than themselves.

We need only to tap into that vast pool of talented individuals with the willingness and desire to serve our nation, our community and our fellow man. 🌟



# HOW TO SOLVE A SLUMP

FLOTILLA FINDS NEW WAYS TO BOOST ITS MEMBERSHIP

**Story and Photo by  
NICHOLAS MILISSIS**

ADSO-PA 9WR

**F**lotilla 79 D9WR had existed in Park Ridge, Ill., for more than 35 years and was lucky enough to still have on board a few of the founding members.

Unfortunately, however, it was going through a recruitment-of-new-members slump. The traditional recruitment methods – public education courses, vessel examinations, boat shows – while successful as events, were simply no longer generating new members.

Something had to be done.

So, I contacted a fellow Park Ridger – Alderman Richard DiPietro – and informed him of my status as a proud member of one of America's best volunteer organizations, the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Earlier, I had obtained from the Auxiliary National Public Affairs website some resources that allowed me to prepare a brief presentation for him. It outlined the Auxiliary's myriad and worthwhile missions and the hours its thousands of members volunteered to support the Coast Guard.

I showed this to the Alderman and asked whether it would be possible for the Park Ridge City Council to issue a proclamation recognizing our flotilla and, by extension, both the Auxiliary and the Coast Guard.

He was very enthusiastic about pursuing the matter. He revealed that he always fondly remembered the U.S. Coast Guard's August 4<sup>th</sup> birthday because it coincided with his wedding anniversary.

A few days later, a city staffer contacted me with the good news that the Council had voted in favor of issuing the proclamation at its next meeting. The entire FL-79 membership was invited to attend the formal presentation at City Hall.

Paula Wix, IPFC-79 (then-FC), suggested setting up a booth with brochures and posters outside the Council chamber so

attendees could get a better idea of what the Auxiliary does. However, the city volunteered to set up a table for us to use.

We agreed that everyone would show up in uniform in order to make a good impression for our organization.

Commodore Richard Runde, DCO (then-VCO), Randy Podolsky, VCO (then-RCO), and, Howard Leschke, DCP-7, came to support our flotilla on Proclamation Day. Luckily, the ceremony was scheduled on the same day that an important ordinance was to be discussed, so the room was filled with residents.

Park Ridge Mayor Howard Frimark read the proclamation, the wording of which included verbiage based on information from the PA web site. He asked the Auxiliarists to rise and be recognized by the Council and spectators, all of whom applauded and thanked us for our work.

The proclamation was presented to Wix, who said a few words about the Auxiliary and its mission. That led many people to

approach us after the meeting, asking about the Auxiliary and how to join.

A local reporter at the meeting published details about our monthly flotilla meetings. As a result, steady streams of prospective members have come and, subsequently, joined the Auxiliary.

Podolsky liked the idea and the results it produced so much that he decided to spread the strategy throughout D9WR. The goal is to have each flotilla recognized by the governing body of the community in which it meets. The first success of this strategy was achieved in Waukegan, Ill., which issued a proclamation in behalf of the city's local flotilla.

The primary motivation behind such efforts should be to increase public awareness of the Auxiliary, and to use public occasions – such as proclamation-promulgations – to promote recruitment, although frankly, the pat on the back that we receive at such events doesn't exactly hurt. ☼



Paula Wix, FC-79, and Richard Runde, VCO, both D9WR, proudly show off the proclamation issued in behalf of the Auxiliary by the Park Ridge (Ill.) City Council. Joining them at City Hall to bask in the glory of the occasion are, from the left: Howard Leschke, DCP-7; Nicholas Milissis; William Russell, SO-PS 7; Kirk Beck, VFC-79; and, Randy Podolsky, RCO, all D9WR.

# PROMOTING 'WEAR IT'

DISTRICTS HIT THE GROUND  
RUNNING WITH MANY ACTIVITIES  
IN SUPPORT OF SAFE-BOATING

Story by  
**HARRIET HOWARD**  
DVC-AS

The spotlight was on safe boating at the Auxiliary's biggest show of the year – National Safe Boating Week 2008 (NSBW).

The curtain rose on May 17 and the show had a good run, premiering in every one of our districts. Life jackets were the stars, featured nationwide in exchanges and giveaways for kids, as well as discounts for new vests at all Bass Pro Shops. The theme was *Wear It!*, emphasizing that the jackets save lives.

Here's the summary of activities:

**D1NR:** The *Wear It!* theme was heard at boat shows, marine dealerships, libraries and marinas. Auxiliarists held Vessel Safety Checks (VSCs), boating education classes and safety demonstrations. Paddle Smart kits were distributed and paddle craft seminars focused on kayakers. Division 11 teamed up with the Coast Guard for a Safety at Sea Day, featuring a safe-boating exhibit and VSCs, plus an air/sea rescue simulation. Boat Safety Day was promoted at USCG Station Portsmouth (N.H.) Harbor by four local radio stations and six newspapers. Auxiliary Night at the Pops in Boston drew 74 Auxiliarists and their guests, welcomed by conductor John Williams.

**D1SR:** The New York Yankees and Division 2 once again closed out NSBW at

Yankee Stadium with a Coast Guard Auxiliary Color Guard presentation. Information about the Auxiliary and VSCs was flashed across the large screen for fans to see.

**D5NR:** Division 5 conducted VSCs at the Bordentown (N.J.) Public Launch Ramp. Safe-boating coloring books and *Wear It!* stickers were handed out to children, while adults received safe-boating brochures. Vessel exams were also given at the Viking Marina at Lawrence Harbor. Flotilla 49 received a NSBW Proclamation at Woodbridge (N.J.) Town Hall.

**D5SR:** Maryland's Governor issued a NSBW Proclamation, while at Sandy Point State Park, Divisions 7, 11 and 15 kicked-off the week together. USCG and Auxiliary vessels



Photo: Manny Romero, BC-ANT

Flotilla 18-8 D11SR member Tom Nunes (center), DC-Ad, helps a boater inventory the vessel's onboard life jackets during the Arizona State Boating Celebration at Lake Pleasant, which is near Phoenix, his flotilla's home base. The May 17 event was part of the National Safe Boating Week kick-off in Arizona.

were on hand for public visits and towing demonstrations. A May 17 Open House at Station Chincoteague celebrated both NSBW and Armed Forces Day, and included towing demos for the public. In North Carolina, Flotilla 9-11 members provided support roles at Station Emerald Isle to kick off NSBW. Flotilla 16-7 mounted a Blessing of the Fleet at Cape Hatteras and a safe-boating exhibit that was visited by Coastie®.

**D7:** Florida Gov. Charlie Crist and Miami, Naples, Palm Bay and Pompano Beach mayors each issued NSBW Proclamations. Pompano Auxiliarists participated in a Blessing of the Fleet on the Intracoastal Waterway and took part in a Fishing Rodeo with safe-boating exhibits and VSCs. A life jacket exchange was held at the Bass Pro Shop in Dania. In Puerto Rico, life jackets were displayed at three Wal-Mart stores in San Juan, and a water rescue was enacted by Sector San Juan. Over 800 people on St. Croix, U.S.V.I., watched a helo rescue demo and toured USCGC *Chincoteague* at the Frederiksted Pier. Making his first-ever appearance on St. Thomas, Coastie® educated

kids about boating safety.

**D8ER:** In Tennessee, the Fit to Float life jacket promotion was held at the Bass Pro Outdoor World-Opry Mills. Auxiliarists demonstrated various life jackets and boaters received discounts to replace their worn jackets with new ones.

**D8CR:** Texas State Senator Van de Putte issued a NSBW Proclamation, urging all Texans to wear their life jackets whenever they're on the water. San Antonio's mayor proclaimed NSBW in Texas at City Hall. Meanwhile, San Antonio boaters were shown the proper fitting of life jackets at the Bass Pro Shop, while students at the Stephen F. Austin Academy learned about water-safety, tried on life jackets, and met Coastie®.

**D8WR:** In Colorado, the Pikes Peak Flotilla conducted vessel exams and distributed boating safety information to the public at the 11 Mile Reservoir.

**D9ER:** Simultaneous district press conferences for the first time were held in Watertown, Syracuse, Rochester and Buffalo, N.Y., and Cleveland,



Ohio. They focused on the message: "Wear a life jacket. It's cool!" At the Eastern Great Lakes Water Safety Expo on May 17, Coast Guard Stations in Rochester and Buffalo, and Fairport and Lorain, Ohio, invited the public to tour their facilities – something that had not been done since 9/11. WROC-TV covered the event in Rochester.

**D9CR:** Over 80 visitors in Michigan toured Station St. Joseph during a May 17 Open House. At the Auburn Hills Bass Pro Shop, 40 life jackets were traded for discounts on new jackets, and Auxiliarists answered questions about safe-boating classes and VSCs.

**D9WR:** Chopper, the black Labrador mascot of Station Kenosha (Wis.), visited the Bass Pro Shop in Gurnee, Ill. to be fitted with his very own Stearns life jacket. (The Station's AOR includes the northern Illinois shoreline of Lake Michigan.) Chopper's visit was designed to raise awareness – especially among children – of the importance of wearing a life jacket when on a boat. Boaters also toured Station Wilmette (Ill.), and obtained VSCs and received safe-boating information.



Photo: Bill Mason, ADSO-PA 8ER

Jim Williamson, DCP-11 (center), and Harry Stephenson, FSO-PA 11-4, both D8ER, promote National Safe Boating Week 2008 on WAMB-AM and FM, Nashville, during an interview appearance with station personality Dave Eastman. Williamson and Stephenson (the WAMB general manager) also talked up the *Fit to Float* Life Jacket Exchange held during NSBW in the Bass Pro Shop at Oprymills Mall in Music City, U.S.A.

**D11NR:** Safe-boating exhibits were mounted in San Francisco, Palo Alto, Redwood City, Monterey and Gilroy, Calif. Division 4 members handed out safe-boating brochures to nearly 200 visitors to the Palo Alto West Marine store. VSCs were provided throughout the district. A NSBW/Armed Forces Day celebration was held in Monterey, where the Coast Guard and Auxiliary were represented and honored. The U.S. Navy Choir sang the Coast Guard Hymn. The San Francisco Yacht Club

hosted a Safe-Boating Day, and Flotilla 14 distributed literature. Six children signed Panda Pledges to be safe boaters. Division 5 members visited Travis Air Force Base to serve up to more than 1,000 military personnel helpings of boating-safety information, lectures on life jackets, and the America's Waterways Watch program.

**D11SR:** The Arizona Safe Boating Celebration at Lake Pleasant Regional Park kicked off NSBW with many activities. Auxiliarists conducted VSCs, set up an America's Waterways Watch exhibit, and put on a life jacket fashion show, and the Governor issued a NSBW Proclamation. A Safe-Boating Expo was held at Station Channel Islands, Calif., where visitors were treated to a search and rescue demo. USCGC *Black Tip* and Coast Guard small boats were open for public tours, and VSCs were conducted at the boat ramp.

**D13:** Despite some area flooding, a safe-boating event was held at the Third Street Dock in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, with a boating-safety exhibit, VSCs, and – for the kids – a visit by the giant Safety Panda. Vessel exams also were con-

ducted at the Grant's Pass Shopping Center in Oregon.

**D14:** Honolulu's mayor proclaimed NSBW at the Aloha Tower. The Auxiliary, the Honolulu Sail and Power Squadron and other agencies worked together at the Hawaii Kai Marina for the Hawaii Kai Boating Fest. There were life jacket demos, VSCs and paddle craft rides for the public. A helo from USCG Air Station Barbers Point, which simulated an at-sea rescue, was a crowd-pleaser. At Rainbow Bay Marina in Pearl Harbor, a Family Fun Day featured canoe and sailboat rides, safe-boating exhibits and VSCs.

**D17:** USCGC *Long Island* led a boat parade at the Seward (Alaska) Harbor Opening Weekend, which was the start of boating season on Resurrection Bay. Boaters received brochures and VSCs were conducted at the Seward Small Boat Harbor. The Kenai and Homer flotillas teamed up with the Coast Guard for VSCs at the Deep Creek State Recreation Area.

**CANADA:** The show also played north of the border, where it's known as Safe Boating Awareness Week – part of the North American Safe Boating Campaign. Its premier goal also was to promote life jacket wear. Major events held were held on May 17 in Toronto Harbour and May 18 at Montréal's Old Harbour. The events landed numerous media interviews and on-water demos by key marine law-enforcement and search-and-rescue organizations, and other recreational boating agencies.

NSBW 2008 received rave reviews across the U.S. and in Canada. The campaign will launch again in 2009, with recreational boaters being urged to attend a boating-safety class, obtain a Vessel Safety Check and – above all – to *Wear It!* 🦮



Photo: Judi Bidwick, FC-86 D7

Flotilla 86 D7 (Venice, Fla.) man a special National Safe Boating Week information table set up at the Venice Boat Ramp. From the left are: Harry Bruno, FSO-CS; Jim Sleichert, FSO-OP; Juan Hernandez, VFC; and, Al Bidwick, FSO-PA.

# Life Jacket Lesson-Learned In Arkansas

GETTING UP-CLOSE-AND-PERSONAL  
WITH UNPLEASANTNESS

**Story by**  
**STU SOFFER**  
N-MS

For several years, I have been promoting heavily the wearing of life jackets by recreational boaters. Until recently, however, the driving force behind this nationwide activity had been based on statistics that underscored the senselessness of drowning deaths.

Also, there had been several unfortunate occurrences, right in my own home-state of Arkansas, which resulted in multiple drownings. The victims – non-swimmers, who were not wearing life jackets – had been on the water aboard flat bottom boats that capsized.

Then, I had an opportunity to speak with the survivor of a fatal boating accident that occurred in my unit's area of operation just five hours earlier. We talked while the local Sheriff's Department was dragging the water for the subject's missing nephew.

I am sharing this account because, while many of us, for years, have been promoting the four key messages of boating safety – wear a life jacket, never boar under the influence, take a safe boating course, get a free Vessel Safety Check (VSC) – most of us, fortunately,

have never been up-close-and-personal with this sort of unpleasant situation.

For those who take the time to review the annual Coast Guard boating accident statistics, this was a classic scenario. While no fatality is to be taken lightly, this was “textbook,” statistics-wise. That is to say, it involved two adult males in a small, flat bottom, open, outboard-powered boat in early afternoon.

The weather was clear and sunny, with a light breeze, and temperature at about 80°. The incident that led to a fatal drowning occurred in a calm, slack water area, in 15 feet of water at the end of Pine Bluff Harbor, less than a quarter-mile from the boat ramp and only some 30 feet off shore. No other boats were involved.

Coast Guard-approved life jackets were in the boat. They were accessible, but neither of the two men on board was wearing them. Alcohol was not a factor. Neither boater had ever taken a boating-safety class.

The two men launched and traveled a short distance when their boat's propeller shear-pin sheared off. One of them fell into the water while leaning over the stern to evaluate the damage. He began to drift away. His companion jumped in



**Stu  
Soffer**







*All boating-safety partners are also speaking with one voice, broadcasting the Wear It! message and referring to life jackets, rather than continuing to use the “P” word. That’s because in 2007, there were 688 recreational boating fatalities. Of these, 478 were drownings. Ninety percent, or 429 drowning deaths, were of boaters who were not wearing a life jacket.*

to save him.

However, the breeze blew their now-empty boat away from the person in the water. The other man had difficulty holding onto the boat while trying to reach his buddy. Moreover, the rescuer was not a strong swimmer and he recently had lower abdominal-area surgery, so he was weaker still.

From what he later demonstrated to me, I could see that his swimming ability was limited to the “dog paddle.” When help arrived, he was hanging onto the boat. The other man had disappeared under the water.

I asked the survivor why the two boaters had not been wearing life jackets, especially since one of them could not swim. After pondering the question, he said that they had not yet thought about doing so because they had just launched.

I asked why he did not put on a life jacket before jumping into the water to rescue his nephew. He said he was in a hurry to help his companion and didn’t think about it. The survivor was still shook up about the calamity, so I did not ask about a Type IV, or if a throwable was even on their boat.

I did describe the National Safe Boating Council’s bright-yellow rectangular *Wear*

*It!* signs that were being offered at minimal cost as part of the 2008 National Safe Boating Campaign. Had they seen these signs at the ramp while launching, I asked, would they perhaps have put on their life jackets?

Without hesitation, he said they would have done so as the signs would have jogged their memory about the safety precaution.

Auxiliarists may recall that Operation Boat Smart initially had brought together all boating-safety partners. Then, the *You’re in Command* campaign provided these partners with a branded product to which boaters could relate, regardless of location.

More recently, *You’re in Command* gave way to *Boat Responsibly*, which is the Coast Guard’s public boating-safety outreach initiative, encouraging all recreational boaters to take responsibility for their actions on the water.

As a boat owner or operator, you are responsible for your safety and the safety of your passengers. That’s why we say: “Boat Responsibly!”

All boating-safety partners are also speaking with one voice, broadcasting the *Wear It!* message and referring to *life jackets*, rather than continuing to use the

“P” word. That’s because in 2007, there were 688 recreational boating fatalities. Of these, 478 were drownings. Ninety percent, or 429 drowning deaths, were of boaters who were not wearing a life jacket.

The good news is that last year, there were 22 fewer boating fatalities than in 2006. The bad news is that drownings rose by five. Of those who drowned, five more than in 2006 had not been wearing a life jacket.

We all know that there is a hard-core group of knuckleheads out there who will never wear a life jacket, despite what we know and try to tell them. But perhaps the poor guy described earlier in this article, whose body finally was recovered at about 2000 the same day, would have worn one had we somehow have gotten the *Wear It!* message to him in time. ☹

# Secret Santa Serves



Photo: Adolphus Romero, FC 8-11 D8ER

Elinor Stacy, SO-SR 8, and Nick Shull, Flotilla 8-11, both D8ER, with the Christmas stocking-stuffers bound for USCG Marine Safety Unit Paducah.



Photo: Gerlayn McKee, SO-PB 8 D8ER

Shull, Stacy and, Commander Christopher S. Myskowski, Commanding Officer, USCG Marine Safety Unit Paducah, exchange Christmas greetings.

## Sighs and Sobs at MSU As Surprise Gifts Come

**Story by  
GERALYN MCKEE**  
SO-PB 8 D8ER

Have you ever seen a Coast Guard officer, not to mention enlisted Coasties, shed a tear? Well, the members of Flotilla 8-11 D8ER sure did last December.

It happened when Commander Christopher S. Myskowski, Commanding Officer, USCG Marine Safety Unit (MSU) Paducah, and his team turned on the spigots because their Secret Santa arrived.

Old St. Nick was in a truck that was filled to the brim with gift-packed Christmas stockings for all the Coasties' kids.

This yuletide mission was headed up by Elinor Stacy, SO-SR 8 D8ER, who had made the Christmas stockings by hand for all the children of all the MSU officers and enlisted personnel.

It was the second year that the flotilla

members had given graciously and from their hearts.

The genesis of this tale actually goes back to summer 2006 when the Kuttawa, Ky. flotilla expressed its collective wish to give something back to the MSU's enlisted personnel. After all, those Coasties had taught the Auxiliarists so much while on joint patrols with them on the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers.

Jim Sutor, a flotilla member and owner of a marina, came up with the Christmas stocking concept last September. The idea grew like wildfire.

Knowing that the Coasties would appreciate some help at Christmastime, Elinor volunteered to bring to the table her talents as a seamstress. And so, for the next couple of months, this Auxiliarist worked hard to get it all together.

While Elinor sewed the nights away,

Peggy Smith, FC 8-11, contacted then-MSU head, CDR Dennis Matthews, with the news.

Wish-lists from the Coasties' kids were sent to their Secret Santa. Then, the sewing and Christmas shopping really began.

On a cold December afternoon, Elinor and her partner and flotilla shipmate Nick Shull, along with Alphonsus Romero, VCP-8, and his wife, Marlene, loaded the stuffed stockings and delivered them to the MSU. The four volunteers were met with tears 'n cheers by the grateful Coast Guard parents.

So, early this year, with the 2008 holiday season still far off, members of Flotilla 8-11 made the decision to once again share their Christmas cheer this year with the children of MSU Paducah personnel. 🎁



FEB. 1, 1929 — COMO JERRY LOU VAN HELTEBRAKE, 79 — JUNE 9, 2008

# Former NAVCO Loved the Water



COMO Jerry Lou Van Heltebrake

Commodore Jerry Lou Van Heltebrake, a former Auxiliary National Vice Commodore (NAVCO) and IPDCP-11 D8ER, passed away on June 9, in Nashville, Tenn.

The Highland Park, Ill. native joined the Wilmette (Ill.) Police Department in 1954, starting as a motorcycle patrolman, later moving up to Sergeant in the Juvenile Department, and, ultimately, he was promoted to Lieutenant and Shift Commander.

Van Heltebrake received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Triton Community College, River Grove, Ill., and completed two Masters Programs at Roosevelt University, Chicago.

He taught law enforcement classes for many years at Oakton Community College, Des Plaines, Ill., and participated in an L/E exchange with the British police.

He retired from the Wilmette Police Department in 1976. Two years later, he moved to Nashville to manage the family business.

Jerry took his love of training, management and the water and melded them together during his 24-year career in the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

He rose through the chain of leadership and management, holding such positions as Division Captain, District Commodore, and National Vice-Commodore. During his term as DCO of the former District Two Southern, he formed six new flotillas. He also coordinated three Auxiliary national conferences and served as National Director of Investigative Support (N-Q).

COMO Van Heltebrake, who received numerous awards, was AUXOP-qualified, and also held quals as coxswain, Qualified Examiner, vessel examiner, and RBS program visitor.

He is survived by his wife, Carol, three daughters – Kitsie Magro, MariJo Martinez, and Trisha Van Heltebrake – and four grandchildren – Nicole Magro, Nina Martinez, Anthony Magro, and Carl Martinez. ☙



In Savannah and ready to re-board their dual-engine Cessna 421B Auxiliary Operational Facility are, from the left: Joe Friend, ADSO-AV 7 and an AuxAir Aircraft Commander; RADM David W. Kunkel, former Commanding Officer, Seventh Coast Guard District, Miami; Mike Renuart, DSO-AV 7 and AuxAir Aircraft Commander; and, OPFAC owner Roy Savoca, Flotilla 44 D7 and an AuxAir First Pilot.







# FLYING HIGH WITH AUXAIR

When a Flag Officer Faced a Tight Schedule  
He Knew Where to Turn for a Solution

**Story by**  
**ROB WESTCOTT**  
DVC-AN

When Miami-based Rear Admiral David W. Kunkel, USCG, had to be at a noon-time awards ceremony in Savannah and then entertain Nicaraguan dignitaries back in Miami that same evening, he turned for help to a valuable Coast Guard force-multiplier – the Auxiliary Air arm.

RADM Kunkel, an aviator himself and, until recently, Commander, Seventh Coast Guard District, could not find any commercial air transportation that would allow him to meet his obligations that day.

But USCG Air Station Savannah had a solution to the flag officer's scheduling problem: The day before the admiral's scheduled meetings, CGAS Savannah contacted several key members of the Auxiliary.

They were Roy Savoca of Flotilla 44 D7, an AuxAir First Pilot and owner of a twin-engine Cessna Golden Eagle Operational Facility (OPFAC); Joe Friend, ADSO-AV 7, an Aircraft Commander and AuxAir Coordinator for the Air Station; and, Mike Renuart, DSO-AV 7, who is also an Aircraft Commander.

The three aviators were more than happy to help out by providing the needed transportation.

Savoca, Friend and Renuart are all residents of the Spruce Creek Fly-In Community, a residential enclave near Daytona Beach, Fla. that includes a 4,000-foot lighted runway and 14 miles of paved taxiways.

Several hundred aviators who like having their aircraft close to, or hangared at their homes, live at Spruce Creek. The community also once was home to actor John Travolta, an avid pilot who flies his own jet-aircraft.

Configured to seat either six or eight

passengers, Savoca's fast, roomy and comfortable OPFAC is truly an aircraft fit for an admiral.

After prepping the Cessna the morning of the mission, the three AuxAir aviators flew from their backyards at Spruce Creek to CGAS Savannah, a 75-minute flight. By 1220, RADM Kunkel and his aide, Lieutenant Theresa Sandoval, were ready for their flight back to Miami.

RADM Kunkel is a veteran pilot, rated to fly Coast Guard HH-3F, HH-60J, and HH-65A helicopters and the HU-25 Falcon jet.

Using the Auxiliary aircraft for transport that day provided the flag officer with both time and opportunity to swap aviation stories with the AuxAir personnel and also gain a first-hand perspective on the air unit's capabilities.

By late afternoon, after a brief stop at Fort Lauderdale to refuel and allow a small storm front to pass by, it was time for a routine landing at USCG Air Station Miami so that RADM Kunkel could attend his planned meeting with the visiting Nicaraguan dignitaries.

Members of AuxAir have varied aviation backgrounds, and many have prior military flying experience. Aircraft owners offer their planes for use as OPFACs, just as surface craft owners offer their vessels for Auxiliary use.

AuxAir participates in many Coast Guard missions, including search and rescue; port, waterway and coastal security; marine safety; pollution response; aids to navigation; and, ice reconnaissance and logistic transport. 🌀

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**Editor's Note:** Since this article was written, Savoca also has had the opportunity to provide airborne transportation for RADM Robert Branham, RADM Kunkel's successor as Commander, Seventh Coast Guard District.

## Certain Auxiliarists Are Being Sought to Assist New USCG Command

**Story by**  
**ATUL UCHIL**  
DC-Bd

The DOG is looking for some new friends from the Auxiliary.

The Deployable Operations Group (DOG) is a new Coast Guard Command that brings together the service's specialized incident response and security teams into deployable-force packages.



The mission of the DOG is to provide properly equipped, trained and organized adaptive force packages to the Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security,

Department of Defense and interagency operational and tactical commanders, according to Rear Admiral Thomas F. Atkins, Commander of the DOG.

Over the next few months, the DOG will build out a strategy to compile a list of Auxiliarists interested in volunteering for the group's activities.

The preliminary concept is to identify members with specific skills, such as aviators, medical doctors and emergency medical technicians, so that in times of crisis, such as Hurricane Katrina, the DOG can request those skills from specific Auxiliary districts.

Deployable specialized forces are comprised of approximately 3,000 Coast Guard personnel from 12 Maritime Safety and Security Teams, the Maritime Security Response Team, two Tactical Law Enforcement Teams, eight Port Security Units, three National Strike Teams and the National Strike Force Coordination Center, RDML Atkins said.

He views the Auxiliary as a force-multiplier and an invaluable component of Team Coast Guard.

The DOG currently is headquartered in the Ballston section of Arlington, Va.

For more information on the Coast Guard Deployable Operations Group and how you, as an Auxiliarist, can get involved and contribute, contact me at either [DC-b@auxbdept.org](mailto:DC-b@auxbdept.org) or [Atul.A.Uchil@uscg.mil](mailto:Atul.A.Uchil@uscg.mil). 🌐

The author is Chief Auxiliary Liaison to the USCG Deployable Operations Group

# DOG is on the Prowl



**RDML Thomas F. Atkins**  
Commander, DOG





The U.S. Coast Guard Deployable Operations Group in action, somewhere on the high seas.

Photos: Courtesy LT James M. McLay, DOG







# D17 GETS NEW BOATS

## Coast Guard Providing Four RB-HS Vessels for Alaskans

Story by  
**COMO MICHAEL ROBINSON**  
DCO-17

The Coast Guard Office of Boat Forces at USCG Headquarters has delighted Alaskan Auxiliarists by deciding to replace all four of its current SAFEBoats with four newer and identical, 25-foot RB-HS vessels.

The new boats will all be funded annually by Headquarters to cover maintenance, repairs and engine/boat casualties.

Currently, we operate four different types of boats, one each at our Auxiliary Stations (AUXSTA) at Homer, Seward, Whittier and Petersburg.

Three of our current assets are funded by D17, and only one – the Whittier asset – is funded by the Coast Guard. Now, all four boats will be the same and all will be funded by Headquarters.

D17 also will see an increased level of boat maintenance support because these assets are Standard Boats. As such, they will come under the USCG Centralized Boat Maintenance Plan.

Therefore, our AUXSTA boats essentially will get the same centralized boat support that the AUXSTA vessels currently receive. Sectors will become more involved with assisting the Auxiliary Stations, with coordination for maintenance and repairs, and with more of a focus on AUXSTA operations.

The Coast Guard is providing these newer boats to the D17 Auxiliary in order to dispose of our non-standard older SAFEBoats and make it easier for them to support and maintain the Auxiliary Station assets.

The four new boats for our Auxiliarists are the same types as our D17 active-duty boat stations operate. This makes it easier for the Coast Guard to support our boats and easier for the Sectors to become involved.

The question, as this was written, was how soon our AUXSTAs would receive the four new boats. The approval process was moving very fast, and it was expected that the RB-HS boats could be available to D17 Auxiliarists as early as this fall.

Nevertheless, it makes the most sense for us to begin operating these assets at our four AUXSTAs during spring 2009. However, if they arrived early enough, some of our stations might begin using these assets for familiarization this fall, provided the weather cooperates. 🌀

Photo: U.S. Coast Guard



Ken Beck, VFC-85 D13 (left), and BMCS Jim Madsen, Officer in Charge, ANT Kennewick, check out the HF/NVIS base-station at ANT Kennewick on Clover Island, Wash.

# COMMS BREAKTHROUGH

**Story & Photo by  
JOHN UMBARGER**  
DSO-PA 13

A topography-related communications problem that had been plaguing Coast Guard Sector Portland (Ore.) and USCG Aids to Navigation Team (ANT) Kennebec appears to have been solved, thanks to some Auxiliary expertise.

Both Sector and the ANT have a primary mission of maintaining the navigable waterways in its eastern Washington State/western Idaho Area of Responsibility (AOR). Fulfilling this tasking depends on reliable patrol-level communications.

It seems, however, that the Columbia and Snake River systems in the AOR consist of hundreds of miles of gullies, ravines, gorges and steep cliffs — all of which are generally unsuitable for marine VHF radios, which depend on line-of-sight for successful contact.

That has led the Coast Guard patrol boats to rely more on cellular and satellite telephones to communicate along 130-mile segments of the Snake River and Lake Roosevelt/Spokane River.

However, there is a problem with those modes as well: Cell-phone coverage is spotty or non-existent in the upper-river

branches, while sheer cliff faces often limit the use of sat-phones.

A possible solution was formulated by Ken Beck, VFC-85 D13, and a senior research scientist at the Department of Energy's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory in Richland, Wash.

Beck believed that an existing method known as Near Vertical Incidence Skywave (NVIS) could solve the problem.

NVIS utilizes a very high radiation angle that is nearly straight up for its broadcast signals, on an appropriate HF frequency, usually in the 2-10 MHz range, instead of either line-of-sight or groundwave propagation. Therefore, NVIS can be used to establish reliable communications over a radius of 200 miles, or so, without worrying about topography.

Using NVIS, high-frequency (HF) radio transmissions are directed nearly straight upward into the ionosphere. From there, the transmissions can be instantly refracted and reflected nearly straight back down to earth.

Early last year, Beck demonstrated the HF-NVIS system he designed during a visit to ANT Kennewick by Commander Russell Proctor, Deputy Commander, Sector Portland. While there, he and Beck discussed how HF-NVIS might operate on

the AOR's inland waterways.

The ANT unit soon acquired and installed two state-of-the-art marine HF radios — one as a base-station; the other for onboard use during underway missions. BMCS Jim Madsen, officer in charge, ANT Kennewick, supervised installation of the radios and antennas, which then were tested on the Columbia River's Lake Roosevelt and Upper Snake River.

The result: Good signals that were established with the NVIS system only improved as both line-of-sight and cellular communications diminished. Thus, the long-standing comms problem was solved.

CDR Proctor said the HF-NVIS combination, "certainly appears to be a logical and viable solution to our chronic problem of limited communications capability in Sector Portland's eastern AOR. The program deserves sector/region/district [Auxiliary and active-duty] support for continued growth and operability to enhance our routine operations, planned surge events and contingency-preparedness."

Beck received a Commandant's Achievement Medal for his effort on the project. 🌟





# PANORAMA



Timothy Kroll (rear), FSO-SR 24 D11SR (Newport Beach, Calif.), joins Senegalese Navy sailors attending an Armed Sentry class at the African nation's naval base in Dakar. A member of the Auxiliary Interpreter Corps, Kroll served as a French- and Spanish-language translator for U.S. Navy personnel engaged in Africa Partnership Station, a multi-national effort to enhance regional and maritime safety and security in West and Central Africa. The men at each end of the group are U.S. Naval Expeditionary Training Command trainers. The beret-wearing Senegalese officer (third from left) is the base training commander and liaison to U.S. personnel.

Photo: U.S. Navy



Photo: BM2 Kenny Cook, USCG Station Channel Islands Harbor

Admiral Thad Allen (left), Coast Guard Commandant, and MCPOCG Charles Bowen (second from right), USCG's highest-ranking non-commissioned officer, traveled to Station Channel Islands, Oxnard, Calif., to visit with Coasties and Auxiliarists working at the Station. Getting together are, from the left: ADM Allen; Larry Owens, FC-72 D11SR; Mike Brodey, FC-74 D11SR; Greg Miller, FL-72; MCPO Bowen; and, LT Marcus Gherardi, Commanding Officer, CGSTA Channel Islands Harbor.

Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North, USMC (Ret.), author and Fox News Contributor, personally receives an 11" x 14" American Waterways Watch poster from Bill Mason, ADSO-PA 8ER and Auxiliary Photo Corps member.



Photo: Courtesy Richard Suter



Photo: Linda Vetter, ADSO-OP 11

Eight Auxiliary vessels, including *Willy Willy* (foreground) – manned by coxswain Jimmin Chang, RCO-MS 11NR, and Brian O'Mara, FSO-OP 48 D11NR – and *Melody*, participate in a multi-agency radiation-detection exercise in San Francisco Bay. Also seen are the Patrol Command vessel, an 85-foot Alameda County Sheriff's patrol boat with USCG Sector San Francisco personnel on board, and the Remote-Operated Sensor Vessel *Sea Fox*.

# Awesome Auxiliary Activity



Photo: PA3 Etta Smith, USCG

Crew members on Coast Guard Auxiliary Operational Facility *Adventure* prepare at the University of New Hampshire dock to tow a U.S. Navy remote environmental monitoring unit to a pre-assigned site, where it will conduct an underwater scan for mines, during the largest-ever maritime homeland security exercise. Standing, from the left, are: Sandra and Dane Hahn, SO PA-2 and ADSO-PA, respectively; Robert Loney, FC-25; and Mike Cunningham, Flotilla 25, all D1NR. Coxswain (inside cabin) is Joe Hogan, DCP-2 D1NR. Seated personnel are Navy underwater engineers monitoring the environmental unit. **On-scene report, page 7.**

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