



# *The Pelorus\**

Flotilla 053-08-01

December 2022

\*Pelorus, n., A sighting device on a ship for taking the relative bearing of a distant object. (Oxford Dictionary)

## **Some Notes on the Past Three Years**

This has been a difficult time, to say the least. We had to hold virtual meetings for several months. Many of us had to fight off Covid, the flu and other medical issues. We lost several members of the flotilla who passed over the bar during this time.

On the positive side, we were already experimenting with Zoom when the virus hit. That made it a little easier to adjust. During this time, we added several new members thanks in large part to Warren Iredell who could single handedly solve the enlistment problems for all five branches of the military. Most important of all, the virus seems to be somewhat under control or at least not as dangerous.

This past year, members of our flotilla were out on the water at the Paddle for a Cause, Night in Venice and the Atlantic City Air Show. We conducted vessel exams and handed out literature to some shops and marinas in the area. It is safe to say our Boating Safely Course is now the platinum standard. So, while it has been difficult, we can be proud of the way we came through it. Bill Roadarmel has done an outstanding job as our VFC. He is taking over as

our Flotilla Commander, and we wish him all the best. With Nick Russo as his vice-commander, the 2023 program is in great shape.

At the height of Covid, we had to stand down in many areas. While we were able to meet virtually with Zoom, in-person meetings were out. Surface operations were suspended for a time and only recently are back to normal. But we were to get back out on the water.

Most crew and coxswain members needed additional hours to complete their ratings and some needed qualification exams. While we received a break for 2020, many still needed time on the water. Practice sessions paid off. Bill Fithian was able to schedule QEs with BM1 Jason Levin and COMO Joe Giannattasio. Joe did his usually great job. BM1 Levin not only did the QEs on his own time but helped with training as well. It was a great opportunity to learn

from someone with his depth of knowledge.  
Thanks to the hard work by Bill Fithian, most members are back to where they should be.  
It is safe to say we are all looking forward to a great year on the water in 2023.

## Vessel Exams – Bill Roadarmel

Although our flotilla had a somewhat shortened vessel exam season over the last two years due to COVID restrictions, we were still able to provide 138 vessel exams in 2021 and 144 vessel exams in 2022. During both years, the flotilla scheduled five vessel exam events at the larger marinas in our area of operation, complemented by individual vessel exams performed at smaller marinas, private docks, and at individuals' homes.

In 2022, the flotilla was able to re-establish our relationship with the Ocean City Yacht Club and provided a



separate vessel exam event at the club for their members. In 2021, our flotilla was offered a unique opportunity to provide a more non-traditional vessel exam event. The Flotilla was able to partner with

an avid boating enthusiast who

Happy holidays to Everyone and Stay Safe!  
Frank

happens to manage a neighborhood Facebook page. This neighborhood happens to be on a lagoon in Ocean City. Using this Facebook page, the owner was able to advertise that our flotilla vessel examiners would be in the area and was also able to schedule a list of boat owners who were interested in having a vessel exam. Our flotilla was provided with a list of 22 vessel exam opportunities, which rapidly turned into 40 when the boaters on the lagoon realized we were in the area. The flotilla was able to perform 40 vessel exams during the three-hour event. Due to circumstances outside our control, we were not able to perform this event in 2022. However, our flotilla already has tentative plans to schedule this event for the upcoming year, will make this a yearly scheduled event, and hope to expand this event to other lagoons in the area.

## Public Visitation

Due to Covid restrictions, both from the Auxiliary and from our business and local government partners, the flotilla's ability to perform PVs was significantly reduced. Our flotilla was able to perform 25 PVs during both 2021 and 2022. The flotilla was also able to increase our partner count to in our area of operation to 35 during the 2022



season. The flotilla was also able to provide boating safety information at three local events in Atlantic city and Somers Point, NJ

challenges make each new day more interesting than the last.

It is great to know of the continued well wishes of our Flotilla. Please reach out if you are interested in learning more about volunteering at U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Atlantic City.

### **VETERANS DAY CELEBRATION - LONGPORT**

On November 11, 2022, Veterans Day, American Legion Post 469 honored veterans at their annual ceremony in Longport, NJ. Thanks to the efforts of AUX Nick Russo, this year had special significance to the Coast Guard as five members who gave their lives off Atlantic City in 1932 were remembered. Nick approached the flotilla about a year ago with the idea to honor these brave men. These Coast Guardsmen responded to a MAYDAY call from a fishing vessel that was just off the Atlantic City Inlet during a severe

storm. The names of each of the deceased rescuers were inscribed on separate pavers and placed along side of other veterans who have passed over the bar.



Four member of the Coast Guard, BM1 Jason Levin, MK3 Timothy Beck, SN Ashworth Reed-Kraus and SN Reynaldo Martin from U.S. Coast Guard Station Atlantic City along with 15 members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary were in attendance. The AUX members in uniform were in formation with the Coast Guard members during the ceremony. Present from the Coast Guard Auxiliary were Nick Russo, Joan



Richio, Peg Byrne, Ron Librizzi, Charles Wilkins, Bill Roadarmel, Bill Quain, John Austin, Tom Cavalaro, Bob Ward, Sandy Dalton, Mike Hamel, Joe Camarota and Frank Bigley. John Stroebele was also present and was one of the presenters for the American Legion.

For more information and pictures off the event, please see the following story that was published in DOWNBEACH.

[Longport honors U.S. Coast Guard members who perished in sea rescue - DOWNBEACH](#)



### **U.S. Coast Guard Station Atlantic City Auxiliary Watch Standing Support - Nick Russo**

What is Coast Guard Watch-Standing? I must admit that I did not fully

understand what Watch Standing entailed the first time I ever heard the term. I only knew that the Coast Guard needed Auxiliarists to volunteer to fulfill that job at certain Coast Guard stations or facilities. So, I approached my fellow Flotilla Shipmate, Tom Cavallaro, to see if he was also interested in learning

more about the duties and responsibilities of that assignment; and he was. At some point we also trained along with another Flotilla Shipmate, John Austin.



Eventually we all started to go to Station Atlantic City and spent many hours and days watching in the COMMS Center or Communications Room. We quickly learned that Watch Standing was much more than answering a phone or communicating with recreational boaters using Marine Channel 16. Watch Standing was a job with a lot of responsibility. It entailed monitoring the main locked access gate to STA AC, and monitoring 9 additional security cameras.

Further it meant answering all external and internal phone calls, making announcements over the PA System, monitoring additional Marine radio channels, conducting Radio Guard when CG or AUX vessels are underway, taking and forwarding messages and keeping a daily typed log of everything that occurs on a shift.

The uniform of the day at the station is always the Coast Guard Aux ODUs. Before you begin the training process, you will be assigned a COMMS

mentor and he or she will review all aspects of the required competencies.

We were fortunate to also have Auxiliarist Bob Ward as a mentor as well.



Getting qualified to be a Watch Stander consists of three (3) main steps.

Step one is completion of the information in the Communications Watch Stander Qualification Guide or COMDTINST MI6120.7A. All the required skills are memorialized in this large binder and as you orally complete the competencies correctly, the mentor or designee will sign off on each one. Step two is successfully passing an AOR (Area of Responsibility) Test. This is a test where the trainee is given a map of the AOR but all geographical and political bodies, as well as landmarks, are blacked out and the student must memorize approximately 100-120 locations including marinas, bodies of water, hotels, casinos, roads and bridges.

Step three is facing a 3-member competency board who will determine if you satisfactorily can answer all the questions asked without assistance or notes. Successful completion of that will earn you the signature of the BM1 assigned to education.

Watch standing is a rewarding task performed by Auxiliarists because we are actually making a specific, needed contribution and possibly freeing up a member of the Gold Side to address other much needed duties. If any flotilla member would like to learn more, or consider the Watch Standing Qualification process, please contact me

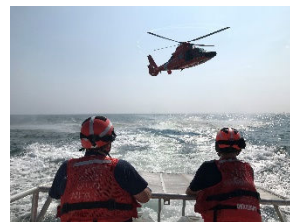
and I would gladly take you with me on one of my 4 hour shifts as an observer. I guarantee you will absolutely learn something about the Gold Side that you didn't know before!

## Flotilla 08-01 (F81) – Surface Operations - Bill Fithian

As many of you know, F81 is one of the more active Flotillas in our District (D5NR). Our



Division (Division 8) is also unique in that we split responsibilities between two Coast Guard Stations. Therefore, we have Division 8-North that provides assistance to Station Atlantic City, and Division 8-South that provides assistance to Training Center (TRACEN) Cape May. Our D8-North group consists of Flotillas 81 (Ocean City), 84 (Absecon), 85 (Brigantine) and 87 (Cumberland County/Vineland). Surface



Operations that we conduct include Maritime Operations Missions (MOM) Patrols, safety/security

support for various on-water public events such as the Atlantic City Air Show and Night in Venice, training support for Coast Guard activities, some Search and Rescue (SAR) missions, joint training events with other Flotillas and regional first responder training events.

In addition to the traditional surface operations activities noted above, several Flotilla 81 members also

participate in the Helo Operations Program. The Auxiliary owns a specially designed boat (operational facility or



OPFAC) at Station Atlantic City that is set up to assist with training Coast Guard Helicopter

pilots to drop a rescue basket onto a moving boat. This is a very difficult maneuver that requires significant practice for both the CG pilots and our Helo group to conduct this training in a safe and efficient manner. Training missions are conducted from May through November several times a week, including night operations. Before considering this surface operations activity, Crew qualification is required along with additional training specific to the Helo Operations. Please contact any member of this group to learn more about the program and prerequisites.

Surface Operations activities were moving along extremely well and then COVID hit. To remain Semper Paratus, we responded to the pandemic and adapted as we made several major changes to keep operations safe, while maintaining the currency requirements necessary for all Coxswains, Crew, and new Crew trainees. Although we were physically in “stand down” mode for over a year, we managed to provide on-line training activities that included the annual Operations Workshop and Risk Management (RM) Training. Currency requirements such as the five-year Coxswain Navigation testing remained viable through approved on-line platforms that provided a mechanism to maintain currency while underway activities were suspended. While many

Flotillas and Divisions across the country suffered losses in currency and facility



operational status after the pandemic was over, our group remained active and current, which allowed us to start normal underway activities immediately after the “stand-down” status was removed.

Although 2021 was a challenging post-pandemic year, we managed to maintain the pre-pandemic number of operational facilities (three active) and coordinated a massive requalification and initial qualification event towards the end of the 2021 patrol season. This event included three boats (OPFACS), participation by two qualification examiners (QE's), and requalification of four coxswains and one crew along with the successful completion of five new/initial crew qualifications. The five new crew members were also the last participants in the 2019 crew school that almost finished before covid. There were another two members of this class that completed initial crew qualification in 2022.

Our flotilla now has five qualified coxswains, six qualified crew and four active facilities that support coast guard surface operations for both station Atlantic City and Small Boat Station Great Egg (Ocean City), which is operational during months of May through September only. In addition, we have two coxswains, five crew and two facilities within our division 8-north that work with station Atlantic City. Congratulations to all who finished their initial qualifications!

As noted earlier, we support the coast guard by helping them maintain a safe area or safety perimeter during many different events, which include the following main events in 2022:

- Ocean City Night in Venice
- Atlantic City Air Show
- Ocean City Air Show
- Paddle for a Cause (Absecon)
- Mid Atlantic Open Water Swim (Beesley's Point)
- Atlantic City Triathlon
- Atlantic City beach concerts (several in 2022)
- Brigantine Night in Venice

Plans are underway to coordinate several new initiatives in 2023 along with the annual currency training that is necessary for all coxswains and crew. Currently, all personal protective equipment (PPE) required for various activities is supplied to the auxiliary by the coast guard. PPE is inspected twice per year and logged manually by a rescue & survival systems (RS&S) officer assigned by each flotilla. Additionally, each coxswain/crew member is provided with a personal locator beacon (PLB or EPIRB), which is also registered with NOAA and tested monthly. The new database (AUXDATA ii) that manages many functions within the auxiliary

including items such as logging hours and underway time, facility registration, currency training, and mission coordination. Training is underway as a new module within AUXDATA II is launched that will now track and monitor all PPE issued to each auxiliarist, including the maintenance of each PLB. This is a massive undertaking but will improve the management of our PPE and ensure the equipment is being maintained properly.

We are sad the 2022 patrol season is finished, but it will not be long before we are underway again in 2023. Please do not hesitate to reach out to any current active member to learn more about the Surface Operations program and we will be more than eager to get you started on whatever training you need to begin the qualification process.

"Thank you" to all who continue to work very hard and volunteer many hours to maintain the very high level of support to make our Surface Operations program a huge success!!

## **New Members**

Six members joined our flotilla in the past three years. Please welcome all who have volunteered to serve the U.S. Coast Guard along with us.

Frank Golden  
Ron Librizzi  
John Stroebele

Mathew Purdue  
Michael Kedziora  
Mike DiPasquale

## Chart Practice

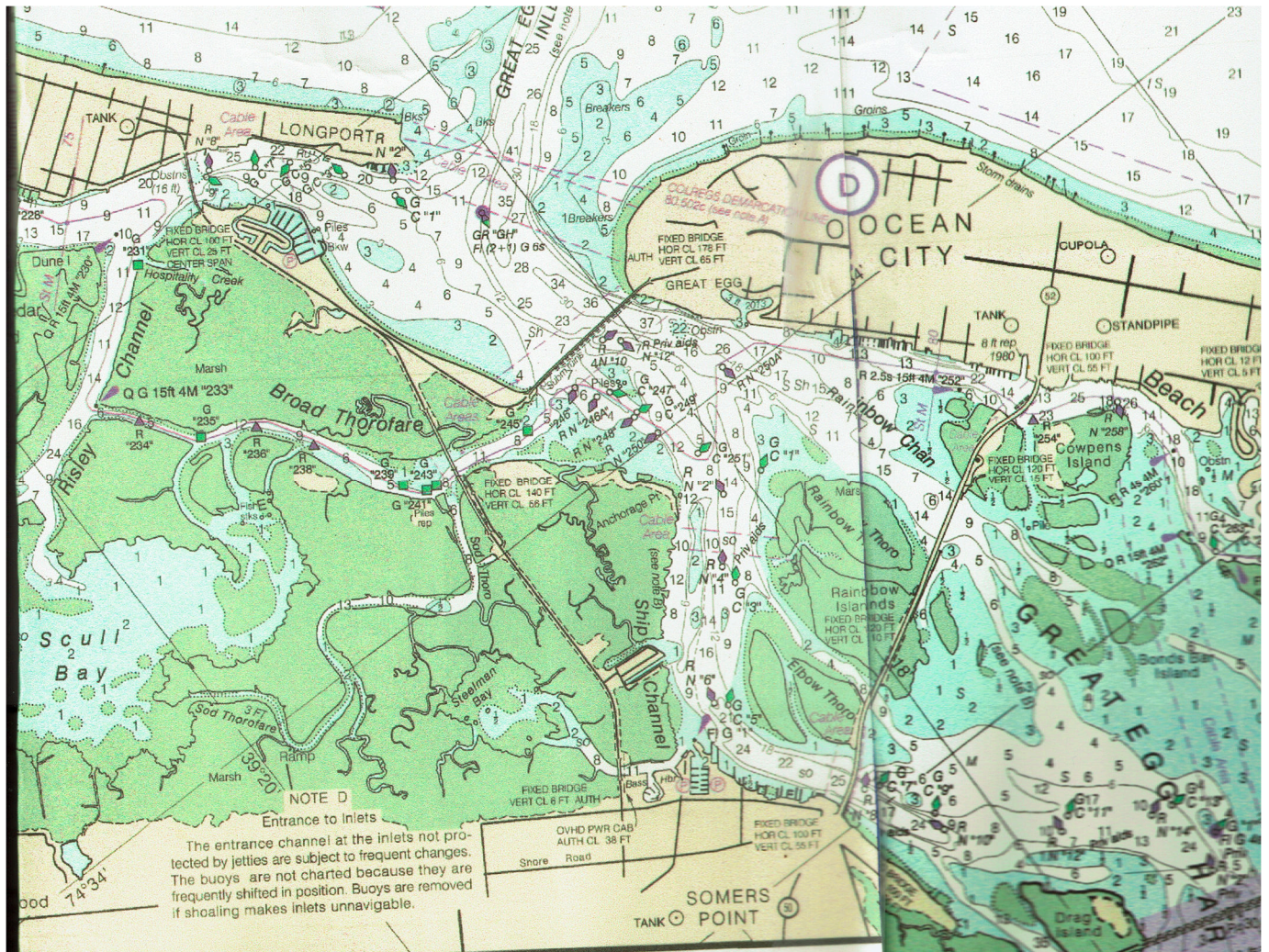
On the following page, you will find a copy of a small portion of the nautical chart for our northern AOR. We used this during several meetings before Covid hit. You can find the meaning of the symbols on nautical chart No. 1 at <https://www.seasources.net/PDF/ChartNo1.pdf>



Locate the aid to navigation (ATON) for the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW) that is

labeled FI R 4S 4M "260". (Hint, it is just south of Cowpens Island.)

1. What does each of these symbols mean?
2. What is the indicated depth on either side the ATON 260?
3. Heading towards Longport, what ATONS will you see and what side of the boat will they be on?
4. What bridge do you cross under going from ATON 254 to 252?
5. What markings beside the number are on the ATONS to indicate that you are in the ICW?
6. Traveling from ATON 254 past 252 on your way to Longport you cross the inlet. With Longport on your right side, what side will the green buoys be on as you head toward Margate?
7. Are you in the ICW the entire time?
8. Can you find the area of the chart that represents the picture shown on the left?



## AUXDATA II Tip - Joan Richio

How to log onto AUXDATA II and see your info:

1. Goto

<https://uscg.experience.crmforce.mil/auxcommunity/login>. You can either copy this and past it into your browser or retype it. Good luck with that.

2. Under Access AUXDATA II: - Your Identification is your member number @uscg.aux, So my identification code is [3002477@uscg.aux](mailto:3002477@uscg.aux)

3. You will need your password here. If you can't remember it or don't have one, just tap on "forgot password" and it will walk you through how to get a password (either new or replacement).

4. Go to the bottom of the next page and click on the box then hit continue.

5. A one time code will be sent to you at the email account you have on file. If this is not an active email account,

contact Joan. She will need to perform some magic to get this corrected.

6. Write down the one time code. Believe me, you do not want to enter this incorrectly.

7. Enter the one time code and hit next.

8. You should be at the AUXDATA II Homepage. If not, time to call Joan. If you are, great.

9. Tap on Member at the top of the page and select your name. This will show you your status and a lot of other information. If your name doesn't show, go up to the top right and search for your name (not in the 'search this list' box).

10. Tap on the 'related' tab and you will see all your certifications, courses, awards and activities. Each section has 'view more', click that and scroll the list to see everything

### Answers to Chart Practice

1. Flashing Red light. Light flashes at 4 second intervals, it is visible for 4 miles and is marked 260.
2. 18ft on north side and 10 ft on south.
3. All of the ATONs on this trip are red and all will be on the port side of your boat.
4. This is the 9<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge from Ocean City to Somers Point.
5. The red buoys will be on your starboard side since you are no in the ICW at that point.
6. The red buoys have a yellow triangle. The green buoys have a yellow square.
7. No, immediately before the bridge at the northern most end of Ocean City the ICW turns toward
8. Somers Point. When you continue under the bridge you follow the normal rules of "red right returning from the sea".
9. The picture is on the north side of the 9<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge looking north and shows the Elbow Thorofare during a blow-out tide.

## The PE Report: A New Course For New Times – Bill Quain

The last three years have seen more than one transition in the Boating Safely Courses. Long-time PE Officer Marilyn Hughes passed over the Bar *just before* the COVID Pandemic changed the way we deliver education to the public. The PE Team had to scramble to find new ways to deliver the Course, because all of a sudden, during the Pandemic, many more people were buying boats! In fact, the demand was so high, it was difficult to even find used and new boats for sale. This meant that hundreds of new boaters hit our AOR, and many of them did not have past experience, nor had they taken the Boating Safely Course!



But, it got even more hectic, because the USCG developed a brand-new, heavily updated set of course materials, and then, on top of all that, the State of New Jersey changed *their* training and testing requirements. The PE Team

was up to the job, however, and created a streamlined registration system, new strategies and tactics for delivering the course in a COVID-safe way, developed new partnerships, and overhauled the course itself, using analytical tools.

Here's a brief recap:

### Streamlined Registration System

One of our best innovations was to adopt Eventbrite registration and ticketing software. This gave us huge advantages, especially because we needed to meet new COVID safety standards. With Eventbrite, we created a flexible website, where potential students could get information, pay for registration, receive updates, etc. But, the BEST part of Eventbrite is that we were able to collect all sorts of data from our students, *in advance*. This made it much easier for us to maximize our registration levels, automatically send money to our bank account, and prepare Certification documentation for the State.

### Delivering the Course During COVID Restrictions

Wow, did we have to use our imagination here! Unfortunately, the restrictions meant that we were no longer able to deliver our famous Manco and Manco pizza for lunch. It also meant that we had to wear masks, provide hand sanitizer, limit the size of each class, and maintain social distancing. But, our students realized that they needed the course, so they were very cooperative, and our instructors did their best to keep spirits high during the class. Hopefully, we won't have these restrictions next year, but if we do, we'll be ready.

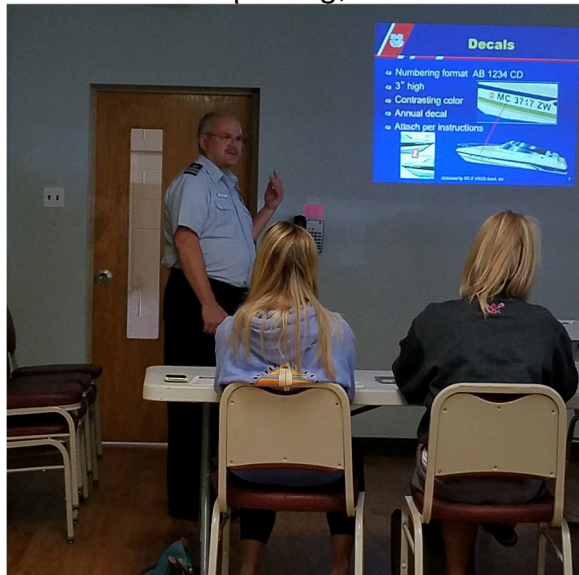
### New Partnerships

Flotilla 81 is all about generating partnerships with our local community. In the past two years, we've worked with

several Fire Departments, to train their First Responders on Boating Safety. (Many local Fire Companies have fire/rescue boats, PWC's and other watercraft, that all require the NJ Boating Safety Certificate to operate. In addition, we have a new partnership with the Ocean City Beach Patrol. Last season, we trained all of their new recruits, and in 2023, we are already scheduled to do the same thing for that incoming class of LifeGuards.

### **Analytical Tools**

When we initiated the revised Boating Safety Course this past season, we wanted to make sure that we were reaching the students. To help us determine what was going well, and what needed improving, we created a



spreadsheet, with all of the questions from the test. After each class, we carefully reviewed the number of correct/incorrect answers to each question. With this information in hand, we were able to quickly identify areas of concern, make the necessary adjustments, and improve both the

presentation and the retention of critical concepts.

### **Welcome Back, and Welcome Aboard**

During the COVID Pandemic, we were able to retain a core of experienced instructors and administrators, including: Bill Quain, Bill Fithian, Bob Babezcki, Ken Wilde, Joan Richio and Nick Russo.



Photo from Ocean City Sentinel 30 June 2022 by David Nahan

But we also welcomed some newbies to the team, namely Bill and MaryBeth Roadarmel. Bill and MaryBeth did an excellent job. They brought some new perspectives to the team and were instrumental in our high student success rate.

### **2023 – Our Next Best Year!**

We already have five dates scheduled for 2023, and we are ready to continue the great work begun by Marilyn Hughes and maintained by our present team. Stay tuned for the announcement of our dates and spread the word that Flotilla 8-1 is ready to make the waters of our AOR as safe as possible. See you on the water.



*In Memory Of...*

Since January of 2020, we lost four members who crossed over the bar. Please continue to keep them and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

Marilyn Hughes (1950 – 2020)  
Robin Scott-Bonar (1952 – 2021)  
Ed Henne (1943 – 2021)  
John Locasale (1931 – 2022)