

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

Flotilla 81

Ocean City, N.J.

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April, 2009 Number 8, Volume 1
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Flotilla website: uscgaux-ocnj.org

Commanders on the Road



F.C. Alan Wood and V.F.C. Ken Wilde at the Spring Conference

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 8: Division 8 Meeting
FL84, Ventnor VFW Post, Ventnor
April 9: Flotilla 81 Meeting
Stainton Senior Center, Ocean City
May 13: Division 8 Meeting
FL85, Civics Center, Brigantine
May 14: Flotilla 81 Meeting
Stainton Senior Center, Ocean City
June 10: Division 8 Meeting
FL86, Cold Spring Church, Cape
May
June 11: Flotilla 81 Meeting
Stainton Senior Center, Ocean City

FROM THE BRIDGE

Commander's Report

Spring arrives with daylight savings time, and the Flotilla must regenerate from the winter doldrums along with Mother Nature. With spring outfitting of boats at marinas and in driveways, we see summer activities moving quickly. It is time to have Auxiliary Facilities readied for operations and to brush up on operational skills. Inspect your gear, tow lines, and anchor lines, and underway check list in preparation for launch. FSO OPs will be checking qualifications for each member of the operations team. We will make every effort to meet the re-qualifications required.

Member Training has six members in crew class this spring and two members from the fall, with one new coxswain, to qualify when boats hit the water and orders are available. Our operations team will be greatly enhanced this summer. Helo OPs training will begin soon at Station Atlantic City. FSO OPs Walter Alsegg will be away all summer, from early June to late September. His duties and responsibilities will be carried out by AST. FSO OPs Harry Norcross. Harry will serve as Liaison to Station Atlantic City for the Auxiliary during Walters's absence.

Public Education got off to an excellent start, with 33 students in the March ABS class. Thanks to the PE staff, led by Marilyn Hughes, our instructors and support staff never missed a beat from last fall. All 33 students passed and received New Jersey Boating Certificates. The student survey expressed satisfaction with the instructors, course, presentation and value of information. The only complaint was the length of the 8 hour class. The next class is April 18th, and the third class will be May 9th.

FSO VE Charles Wilkinson is distributing or has distributed VE stickers and inspection forms to all those qualified on January 1st 2009. When boats hit the water, we will be ready and waiting to schedule inspections.

FSO PA Terry Pierce is already preparing for a booth on the Bay Ave

Somers Point at Bay Fest. This event kicks off the summer and is always well attended. Terry and her staff do an excellent job representing the Auxiliary at Public Affairs booths during the year. She can always use help at these events, meeting people and giving information about the Auxiliary, Public Education, Vessel Exams, and the U.S. Coast Guard.

Many activities and opportunities to participate this year already exist. Get involved, get qualified, or join in where ever you think you can help, but keep those 7029s and 7030s filled out and turned in. Nothing into AUXDATA means anything out: no credit, zero for you, the Flotilla, Division, District, National and U.S. Coast Guard funding.

Henry A. Wood FC 81

A View From The Blue

While I normally cover several stories in this part of the *Pelorus*, an incident this past winter is so striking, that I will concentrate on it exclusively. It is the boating accident that occurred on February 28, 2009. The high-profile accident, involving two NFL players and their friends, is a powerful case study for boating safety courses.

After an exhaustive investigation, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission determined that there were three primary causes of the accident:

1. Improper anchoring
2. operator carelessness
3. operator inexperience

The Facts

The four men involved in the accident left Clearwater in a 21-foot boat, dressed in warm clothes, carrying two large coolers and fishing equipment. They traveled fifty miles into the Gulf of Mexico to fish for Amberjack. At about 1730 hours, they decided to head back to port. A storm was approaching, and the water was getting rough. When they tried to pull the anchor, it was stuck fast.

The fatal mistake occurred when the men tied the anchor line to the stern of the vessel, and throttled the engine forward to break it free. At that point, the boat filled with water and capsized, throwing the men into the chilly water. According to the lone survivor, they did everything in their power to rescue themselves, including standing on one side of the boat, trying to right it,

One of the men dove beneath the boat and retrieved flares, cell phones (in watertight bags), three life jackets and one seat cushion flotation device. Unfortunately, the flares were wet, and the cell phones had no signals.

Over the next 30 hours, one man died and the others removed his lifejacket to use it for flotation. Two of the remaining men showed signs of extreme hypothermia and removed their lifejackets. The fourth man climbed up on the boat, and was rescued.

Fatal Mistakes

There is no solid evidence that the men were intoxicated, and I will draw none here. However, there are several points to consider when looking at the decisions leading up to the accident. First, a 21-foot boat may be too small a vessel for a 50 mile trip into the Gulf. Second, the men had not filed a float plan. Third, tying an anchor line to the stern of a small boat in rough seas creates a dangerous situation, especially in rough water and a full throttle. Fourth, the men should have been wearing life jackets while undertaking a maneuver of that sort, or in any case, while more than 50 miles from shore in rough weather.

An EPIRB could have saved the men by immediately emitting an emergency beacon. A satellite phone would also deliver rescue requests to the Coast Guard. This boat had none of those things.

Boating Safety Courses

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission investigator Jim Manson advises boaters to take a boating safety course and leave a detailed float plan with friends or family. Would this have saved the NFL boaters? We will never know, but in our Boating Safety Course, we teach participants many techniques that prevent accidents. For example, in Chapter 2, we discuss the importance of filing a Float Plan. Chapter 6 specifically explains how to survive longer in cold water, avoiding hypothermia with special, self-rescue techniques. We also

cover anchoring techniques, EPERB's, and life jacket safety.

Most importantly, our courses alert boaters to many of the factors that contributed to this tragic accident. However, nothing we do will keep people safe if they do not use common sense. This, in the final analysis, is the most important ingredient in boating safety.

Editor's Note: For a full description of the accident, and the results of the investigation, please visit:

<http://www.wtopnews.com/?sid=1613695&nid=104>

The Auxiliary is a Bargain!

At the April Meeting of the Flotilla, FSO-OPS Walt Alsegg, and Flotilla Commander H. A. Woods discussed the cost of an Auxiliary operation, versus the cost of a Coast Guard Operation. We are a bargain! FSO-OPS Alsegg stated that the cost of one hour of patrol by the Auxiliary is now about \$107. Below are some costs for the Gold Side:

C-130 aircraft - \$4,244 /hour to operate
Helicopters - \$4,400 /hour,
Cutters - \$1,550 /hour
Coast Guard small boats cost between \$300 to \$400/hour

BoatUS Spring Commissioning Safety Checklist (VFC Wilde contributor)

Scott Croft, Boat Owners Association of the United States

1. Before You Launch:

- Inspect and lubricate seacocks. Hoses and hose clamps should be inspected and replaced as necessary.

- Replace deteriorated anodes.
- Inspect prop(s) for dings, pitting and distortion. Make sure cotter pins are secure. Grip the prop and try moving the shaft – if it's loose, the cutlass bearing may need to be replaced.
- Check to make sure the rudderstock hasn't been bent.
- Inspect the hull for blisters, distortions and stress cracks.
- Make sure your engine intake sea strainer is free of corrosion, clean and properly secured.
- Check the engine shaft and rudder stuffing boxes for looseness. After the boat is launched, be sure to check all through-hulls for leaks.
- Use a hose to check for deck leaks at ports and hatches. Renew caulk or gaskets as necessary.
- If equipped, ensure that the stern drain plug is installed.

2. Outdrives and Outboards:

- Inspect rubber outdrive bellows for cracked, dried and/or deteriorated spots (look especially in the folds), and replace if suspect.
- Check power steering and power trim oil levels.
- Replace zinc anodes that are more than half worn away.
- Inspect outer jacket of control cables. Cracks or swelling indicate corrosion and mean that the cable must be replaced.

3. Trailers:

- Inspect tire treads and sidewalls for cracks or lack of tread and replace as necessary. Check air pressure. Don't forget the spare!
- Inspect wheel bearings and repack as necessary.

- Test tail and back-up lights and winch to make sure they're working properly. Inspect hitch chains.
- Inspect trailer frame for rust.
- Sand and paint to prevent further deterioration.
- Inspect brakes and brake fluid reservoir

My Experience in Texas after Hurricane Ike

By Joe Skutlin

In 2008, during months of September thru November I was in Houston, TX with FEMA involved in the recovery effort from hurricane "IKE".

I received a call from FEMA at 4 PM on Wednesday afternoon (Sept.10) to be in Atlanta, GA headquarters for a 1 PM meeting on Thursday (IKE made land fall Friday) The flight confirmation and ticket, car rental and lodging was sent to me by e-mail that evening and at 6 AM I departed from Atlantic City and made the noon meeting. We covered training, procedures, and had briefings on IKE, etc.

We then took a flight to Austin JFO (joint field office) for more training and finally arrived at the Secure Reliant Center headquarters (football stadium) in Houston for our temporary field office four days after landfall. The first few days we used the parking lot for our briefings and team assignments.

Traffic lights were out for two weeks because there was no electricity as well as no replacement parts for traffic lights. Drivers were courteous for the first few weeks but after that.... it was Full Speed Ahead or All Stop. The highway driving (6 lanes-one way- and overhead bridges at cloverleaf intersections) was absolutely

horrendous.

2.1 million people were without electric on September 13. Four weeks later the electric power was back to normal. Our first reconnaissance was with a fire chief (there are 62 fire stations in Houston) in an affluent area west of center city and which didn't appear too bad except for extensive tree damage and debris and power lines down. The homes (mansions) were well constructed and in this area there was little damage except for downed power lines caused by the fallen trees. Some down-town high rise buildings (75 floors) had extensive window damage to the 25th floor due to wind-driven debris (stones from the tarred roofs of smaller 10-20 story buildings.) Standard houses in the high wind zone had significant roof damage from wind and fallen trees. Many were beyond repair and lodging had to be obtained for the occupants.

There were Blue roofs everywhere (free blue tarpaulins furnished by FEMA) in an attempt to keep the homes dry. Still there was a lot of damage to the top floors and in some cases the contents of the whole house was affected. Mold was a big problem. Insurance adjusters were everywhere assessing damage.

Food in the refrigerators and freezers had to be removed, and there was a lot of barbecuing and dinner by candle light. Some of the homes were in deplorable condition and there were families living there.

In September (80 degrees) ice and water had to be distributed in a lot of areas.

There were many food distribution points at Community Centers throughout the city. Food banks continued until the middle of December.

The SE section was primarily Spanish and I had an interpreter to assist me. (Preguntas para FEMA = Have any questions for FEMA? If they answered "SI" I would get my interpreter. Fajitas, tortillas, enchiladas ... I even learned to like refried beans and rice!!!

The NE section was primarily African-American. Many churches in this area are run down and some deserted. Some areas we were told to avoid. One SW area was primarily Vietnamese. Some areas were a mix of Spanish and African-American. The city is diversified in all aspects.

There is no building code to conform to, so you will see a well designed new house with run-down houses on both sides. There were some areas with unoccupied new apartment complexes next to run-down dwellings. You cannot get around in Houston unless you have a GPS and a map for the sector you are assigned.

Surveyed the town of Baytown where there was extensive damage. Visited Galveston USCG Station that had numerous temporary units setup but all vessels were OK. EPIRB activation was a problem for the CG.

The seawall on the gulf side was impressive but the bay area and business district was devastated. The yearly Christmas "Dickens on the Strand" event

was held even though few stores were open.

My assignment, CR (Community Relations) with FEMA was similar to the procedures and techniques we use in our contacts with the general boating public and boating dealers and marinas. We first visited the force multipliers, Churches, schools, businesses, strip malls, community centers, and organizations. We talked to the pastors, superintendents, teachers, owners and they, in turn, distributed the information using flyers that we issued and in some cases sent information over the internet.

In some cases one on one contact was the only way to reach some of the residents. The first step that had to be done was to register with FEMA /Texas and be entered in the data base to be eligible for assistance. The un-insured, the under-insured and applicants that lacked essential needs were of primary concern, as were people with special needs.

Insurance considerations and information were referred to the DRC (Disaster Recovery Center) that had other services available. Such services were - Housing (HUD), mitigation, Individual Assistance, crisis counseling, social services and SBA (Small Business Administration) information, Red Cross and Texas Work force/unemployment. One assignment was to contact motels and apartment complexes in an effort to use their facilities to house the displaced residents. In some cases they did not want to participate

as they still had tenants that were there from Katrina. This deployment was interesting and challenging and the training, knowledge and experience acquired with the USCGAUX was extremely beneficial.

Flotilla 8-1 Initiates Life Jacket Safety Signs for Children

Flotilla member Amanda Quain knows the value of wearing a life jacket – especially for children. A long-time boater, the 18 year old spent many hours in blue water, fishing in tournaments. She also serves as the “first mate” on many fishing expeditions involving young passengers. She often heard kids ask the question “Do I have to wear my life jacket the whole time?” The children’s parents rarely knew the answer.

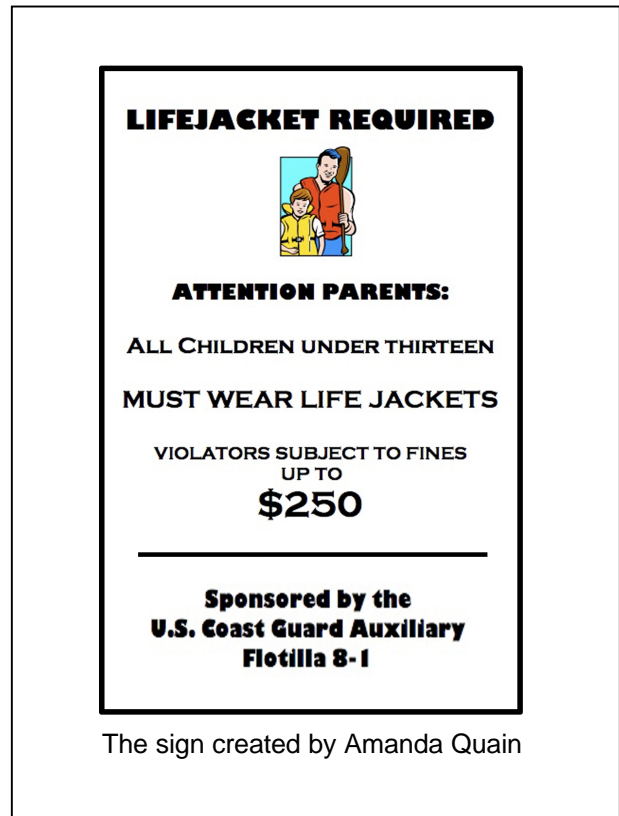
To help parents, and to keep kids safe, Amanda designed a sign to post at marinas and public boat ramps. “I just want people to know the rules” she said. “I wanted to give parents a sign they can point to and show to their children *before* they leave the dock.”

Amanda submitted the design in January, and the Flotilla approved it in the March meeting. In April, the Flotilla ordered the first 10 signs. Members have already been in contact with marinas to place the sign. D&B printing, of Ocean City, produced the signs at a special discount of only \$30 each.

For Your Information

Safety Facts to Know

- 70% of all boating accidents involve operator error



- Capsizing and Falling Overboard account for 50% of all boating fatalities
- More boating accidents happen between 1200 and 1400 than at any other time, although there is another, smaller spike in the evening hours
- The majority of boating accidents happen, not surprisingly, on weekends

Flotation by FSO Sorokin

Why and how do some things float and others do not?

Things float because they displace water. That is the simple answer.

Explanation: Gravity exerts a pull on pure water of 55 pounds per cubic foot. Water is heavy. When you get into the tub for your bath you notice that the water level rises against the pull of gravity. Your body volume that is in the water is the amount of water you made rise. You should also feel lighter in the tub. How much lighter? The weight of the water you displaced is pushing you up. From this, we can draw the conclusion that the floatation force equals the weight of the water displaced. The more water is displaced, the stronger is the floatation force (which is really gravity acting on the water)

What makes things float, in other words, is their density; their volume compared to their weight. Anything that weighs more than the volume of water it displaces will sink. Dense things like stone and metal sink. Things less dense like wood, cloth, sponge, and foam all will float.

Another factor to consider in floatation is the water itself. Some waters weigh more than others. Sea water with so many things dissolved in it weighs more. I can float in sea water. In pool water I sink. In the Dead Sea, where the dissolved mineral content is very high - making the water very heavy, you can actually sit up in the water.

For solid objects to float, two factors are important: the weight of the object and the weight of the water displaced. However, we can increase the flotation by making the object hollow, thus displacing more water. This is the theory behind boat hulls. Even very heavy boats, made of material like steel, will float if the weight of enough water is displaced, forcing the hull of the boat to the surface.

Dick Sorokin

Survey Results from ABC Class

"Excellent -should be given to everyone who lives near any water area."

"Well Presented."

"Could be quicker: about 4 hours max."

"It was nice that the instructors were different for each chapter. That helped break up the day, which was long."

"Outstanding course-thank you!"

We got 10 leads for VE inspections from this group, and no leads for members.

Most learned of the course by recommendation of a friend.

Photo Gallery



The Coast Guard Auxiliary Booth at the Boat Show



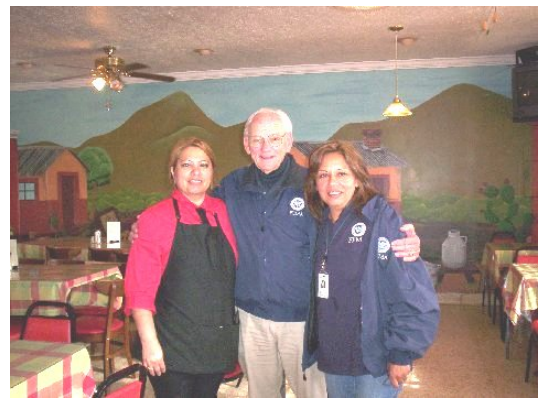
An officer explains procedure to onlookers



Joe Skutlin's trip to Houston, Texas, after Hurricane Ike



The March '09 CGA meeting



Joe's group with their Spanish interpreter



Dick Keast receives his 45-year service award



A shrimp boat wrecked in the storm