



**PELORUS**

**U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary**

**Flotilla 81**

**Ocean City, N.J.**

**KENNETH WILDE, FC  
ROBERT BABEZKI, VFC**

**OCTOBER 2011**

**Editor: Art Zack FSO-PB**

**Flotilla website: [www.uscgaux-ocnj.org](http://www.uscgaux-ocnj.org)**

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**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

October 12th  
Division 8 meeting at FL 83  
Wildwood, NJ

October 13th  
Flotilla 81 Meeting  
St. Peters Methodist Church (1900-2100)

November 9th  
Division 8 Meeting  
FL84 - Absecon Island, NJ

November 10th  
Flotilla 81 Meeting (Elections)  
St. Peters Methodist Church (1900-2100)

December 3rd  
Division 8 Change of Watch  
Tuckahoe Inn (12:00 Noon)

December 8th  
Flotilla 81 Change of Watch  
Crab Trap, Somers Point, NJ

## FROM THE BRIDGE

### VICE COMMANDER'S COMMENTS



Its autumn and most of our on-the-water activities are winding down. Our summer missions have been completed. The numbers are in. It's now time to take stock on what we have accomplished this year in order to plan for next year. Our mission hours are up over last year. Our Program Visitation (PV) and Vessel Examination (VE) programs are running ahead of last year. We had a greater Public Affairs (PA) presence in our community this year than last year. All of this reflects well on our Flotilla and our membership. Where do we go to prepare for next year? As the mission of the Auxiliary continues to grow, each member has opportunities to expand their knowledge of the Auxiliary and the tasks it performs for the Coast Guard. Take a class. Explore the wealth of training courses that are offered to us as members of the Auxiliary to become better Auxiliarists and better citizens.

Bob Babezki, VFC Flotilla 81

## OPERATIONS

By Walt Alsegg, FSO-OPS

After the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks, this summer continued to be a busy time for our operations team with our participation in Ocean City's Night in Venice with 4 boats and crews to ensure a safe and successful event.

All of our crew trainees successfully completed their last step of qualification. **Greg Kelchner, Nick Sedberry, Mary Grant, Ray Mateer** and **Charley Wilkins** are now full fledged crew members. In addition John Bodin completed his qualification as a coxswain. Congratulations to everyone!

The Atlantic City Air show was held on August 17, with practice the day before. The two mile security zone was patrolled by 11 Auxiliary boats, 6 Coast Guard Boats, 5 State Police Boats and 2 fire boats. Our flotilla provided 4 of the boats and 17 crew members

for this large event. Although practice day was cancelled mid-afternoon, due to severe rain storms, the next day the seas were calm for the actual show. It was the largest attendance ever with over 800,000 spectators on land and over 1000 boats, so the Auxiliary was busy enforcing the zone and assisting boaters throughout the day.

During the summer months many of our boats and crews were also on the waterways doing training and safety patrols. During these patrols our members assisted several boaters in distress and reminded the boating public of the importance of being safe through their presence. We also helped out the Coast Guard at Station GE by providing two boat training for their crews. The GE crews also appreciated the food we provided them following meetings and our annual picnic!

The summer ended with the unwelcome arrival of Hurricane Irene which caused all our own boats, as well as the Coast Guard boats being removed to secure locations. Hopefully, some of us will be able to get back in the water and enjoy the fall before patrol season ends on October 15. Station GE plans to close on October 1<sup>st</sup>.



### **OPEN HOUSE 2011**

The U.S. Coast Guard Station Atlantic City sponsored an open house and picnic to kick-off the 2011 boating season. The public was invited and members of the Auxiliary and the Coast Guard took people on tour of the station. Tables were set up to display items for safe boating and interesting discussions stimulated interest in the protection of our waterways. The highlight for many of our guests was a demonstration by a rescue swimmer. Members of the Auxiliary manned our 27 foot facility to keep a safety zone open to protect the swimmer.





This is a perfect example of how the Auxiliary plays an important role in assisting the Coast Guard. Notice the Auxiliary vessel in the lower left corner clearing a safe zone to protect the rescue swimmer. This frees a Coast Guard boat and crew to perform other duties.



## NIGHT IN VENICE

By Joe Skutlin

Ocean City's "Night in Venice", started in 1954, continues to be one of the most delightful and well attended events of the year with 100,000+ crowding the island. The "Festival of Lights" was as usual, another justified reason to "pop a cork" or "tap a keg" in dry O.C. Spectator boats were minimal and the onshore parties and decorated homes outclassed the well decorated show boats. It was rumored that crabs and shellfish caught the following day had a distinct flavor that perhaps they have been marinated in "Yuengling Lager"!! " Another safe boating experience "on the water" and safe "on shore" activities will continue to make Ocean City an enjoyable destination.

**Mark Soifer** of the NIV committee reported 58 boats registered and 185 homes intending to decorate. Down from last years 80 boats and 200 homes decorated.



As the setting sun cast a golden hue over the back bay, our 27UTL crewed by our flotilla members, is out front leading the parade.



Any successful operation on the water requires planning. All Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary crew and their vessels met at the Coast Guard Station, Ocean City for a dinner and final briefing for the parade.

Pictured here from L. to R. **Ken Wilde FC**, **Joe Skutlin FSO-PV** and **Bob Babezki VFC**.



This is a picture of the 27UTL, the pride of the Auxiliary. The platform over the transom is used in helo training and members of flotilla 81 participate in the operations.



**BM 1 Peter Loreaux** and **Walt Alsagg FSO-OP** discuss the details of the Parade. The fact that the parade takes place after dark, only add to the responsibility of the Auxiliary.



## **Air Show Practice Day Wash Out**

**By Robert Babezki, VFC**

Each year, the Atlantic City Air Show presents the local Auxiliary with an opportunity to participate in a joint Coast Guard - NJ Marine Police maritime security event. The Auxiliary's Air Show activities include providing security to an "Exclusion Zone" in front of the Atlantic City beach. This Exclusion Zone is a patch of water approximately 2 miles long (north to south) and 1 mile wide (east to west). This area is to be kept free of spectator boat traffic during the two day event. The purpose of the Exclusion zone is to provide an area where show aircraft can safely fly low, close to the water and the beach, as part of their demonstration.

During the first day of activities, the pilots use the time to make practice runs of their individual aerial demonstrations, including Army parachutists and Coast Guard rescue swimmers. Typically, there are few spectator boats out on the ocean during the practice day. Consequently, the Auxiliary maritime security forces can anchor-up at their designated positions and observe both the air show practice runs as well as keeping an eye on any spectator boats that are in the vicinity of the Exclusion Zone. If a spectator boat is observed to approach the Exclusion Zone, our job as Auxiliarists is to contact the local Coast Guard Patrol Sector Commander on the radio and notify them of the vessel's approach to the boarder of the Exclusion Zone. The Coast Guard Sector Commander would then dispatch a Coast Guard boat or NJ Marine Police boat to direct the approaching spectator boat away from the Exclusion Zone.

This year's practice day started out in beautiful sunshine. However, as the day progressed, we observed the approach of a line of very dark clouds approaching from the west. Over the radio, it was announced that the line of approaching thunderstorms was expected to last only 30 minutes, and that it was supposed to clear out immediately afterward. As the storm approached, we lost sight of the tall buildings of the casinos only a mile away. Shortly thereafter, the rain began. The rain came down as a torrential rain driven by the wind. Luckily, we did not experience any of the lightning that is normally associated with such a storm. In our facility, the only cover we had was a bimini top. With the wind-driven rain, the bimini top only provided marginal amounts of cover from the weather. Our facility pulled its anchor just before the rain hit us, allowing us the freedom to maneuver against the wind.

After an hour, the rain began to clear. By that time, most of our crew were soaked to the skin. After 30 minutes of clear weather, we observed another band of rain approaching. At that point, Coast Guard Patrol Sector Command released the Auxiliary vessels from their patrol stations as the Air Show practice had been cancelled for the day.



## RECREATIONAL BOATING SAFETY

**Norm Fehr** (District VE) has recently passed along the new Recreational Boating Safety Tactical Plan. As part of this plan, it is expected that the VE, PA, PE and PV departments will work in unified fashion toward a common goal – fewer boating accidents as a result of contact with and education of the boating public.

Mr Fehr estimates that less than 1% of vessels registered in the United States undergo a Vessel Safety Check. There are no statistics showing that satisfactory VSC exams result in fewer injuries and fatalities. There are statistics that show, however, that fewer deaths occur in situations where the operator has had boating safety instruction. According to the Boating Safety Resource Center, in 2010 there were 5.4 deaths per 100,000 registered vessels. Three-fourths of all fatalities were attributed to drowning and of these, 88% were found not to be wearing life jackets. Most important is the fact that only 9% of deaths occurred on vessels where the operator had received boating safety instruction.

This, therefore, is the basis for the recommendations put forth in the Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) plan.

Under the direction of **Bob Babezki**, our VFC and RBS chairman, the RBS plan was instituted by Flotilla 08-01. Two RBS events were held in the spring – one at Ocean Heights Marina in Egg Harbor Township and the other at All-Seasons Marina in Ocean City. Both events proved highly successful and involved many VSC's and considerable contact with the boating public. Terri Pierce, our FSO-PA, contributed much to the success of the events. In the weeks following these events, Flotilla 08-01's usual lineup of weekly scheduled VE events took place.

Other aspects of the RBS Tactical Plan are worth noting. The recruitment of new auxiliary members is essential to the success of the program because from this pool of new members additional vessel examiners and PV's will be added. Each vessel examination represents an opportunity for a one-on-one educational session with a boater. Already, Flotilla 08-01 has a high percentage of coxswain and crew members who are VE qualified. This is important, because coxswains and crew are highly visible to the boating public and are likely to be approached by boaters with questions or concerns.

In spite of a relatively small number of active vessel examiners overall, Flotilla 08-01 continues to put forth an enthusiastic program of scheduled VE events. It is hoped that additional recruits will be added from the existing Auxiliary membership as well as from its new recruit pool

As far as the previous statistics are concerned, there is a brighter side. In 2010, the fatality rate decreased 7% when compared to the 2009 rate. There remains much room for improvement.

Charles Wilkins, FSO-VE

## **One Exciting Patrol**

By Charlie Wilkins, FSO-VE

With **Bob Babezki** as coxswain, **Yuri Guziy** from Vineland (053-03-03) as crew and myself as trainee, our July 30<sup>th</sup> patrol went from Strathmere to Avalon and back. There was the usual array of bow riders, kids without PFD's, and boats lacking ski flags. We did encounter some unusual situations, however. The day was unusual because they all occurred on the same patrol on an apparently quiet Saturday.

We saw high diving kids jumping off balcony railings into the bay. When we informed the mother in attendance that it probably was not the safest thing for their kids to do especially when the water was so low, she responded "we've been doing it for years."

Our first encounter involved a boater who had just launched his boat and was on the water when he experienced sudden electrical failure. He and his passenger were trying to paddle an 18' fiberglass boat up the inland waterway, against a very strong tide. The boater was having a hard time crossing the mouth of a lagoon, which necessitated a tow back to his launch site about 50 yards away. This was one situation that could have been attributed to bad luck rather than poor judgment.

We next came across another situation, however, that had potential for serious injury. We noticed a PWC that was swamped in Townsend's Inlet with a man in the water. We immediately contacted the Coast Guard. No apparent injuries were noted and the PWC rider and his passengers were all wearing PFD's and safely made it to the nearby beach. We chased swimmers and other rubbernecking PWC's from the immediate area. The 25' RIB from Coast Guard Station Townsends Inlet was offshore at the time, but responded to our request for assistance in quick order. While awaiting the Coast Guard, our crew stabilized the PWC to prevent it from being swept seaward. An Avalon Police boat arrived to direct boat traffic away from us. The Coast Guard arrived and stood by while our facility towed the unmanned PWC safely to a nearby dock. There, the Coast Guard inspected the PWC and one young Coast Guardsman, using a hand pump, pumped the water out of the flooded engine compartment. Chalk this situation up to lack of experience and familiarity with the vessel. It had only been purchased a few days before.

It was close to quitting time and we were coming into our Strathmere berth when we encountered an unpowered small sailboat that was in difficulty. The boater had just launched the sailboat a couple of blocks away. Although the winds were light, the current was strong. His sail was up and the vessel was uncontrollably shifting from one side of the small waterway to the other and had come to rest against a piling. There were no injuries. We directed the towing of the vessel back to its launch site where the boater decided to call it a day. This situation was precipitated by the boater's complete lack of familiarity with the area and poor judgment in attempting a sailing excursion, for which he was unprepared.

It was a successful day - no injuries or property damage. We also noted that on our way back home, we passed the previously swamped PWC at its dock. The owner shouted to us that it was

running again - I don't know whether or not that was a good thing. Our crew provided assistance to three boaters in difficulty and recorded three SAR cases on a single patrol. It was quite an exciting patrol.

### **PHOTO HINTS FROM THE EDITOR**

There are many reasons to take pictures. We use them to capture memories, events, beautiful scenes, or to help tell a story. Everytime you put a camera up to your eye, you should ask yourself, “why am I taking this picture” and then compose the picture accordingly. During the winter there is not so much physical activity on the part of auxiliary members, so we get a lot of pictures of people shaking hands and receiving awards. Boating season is a different story. This is when we have the opportunity to show the Auxiliary in action. Let’s say that while on patrol, you come across a boat in distress and it requires a tow. If a commercial towboat is not available, you get the job. While the boat is under tow, you can stand at the transom and take a picture of two strangers on a boat with a line coming off the bow, going to who knows where, or you can move to the bow of your boat and capture a photo of an Auxiliary member attaching the towrope with the towed boat in the background. This gives more detail to your story.

As a photographer, my interests are varied. I photograph wildlife, sports and travel, but as editor of THRU THE PELORUS my objective is to get sharp photos of auxiliary members in action. They help tell your story and make a more interesting newsletter. Keep sending me photos and I will use as many as I can.

### **MARINA FIRE**

By Art Zack

It was early October 1988 when I double lined my boat, winterized the engines, turned on the ice-eater, and bid farewell to my boat for the winter. Little did I know, that my neighbor at Bohemia Bay Yacht Harbor had an illegal heater on board because he was either too cheap or too lazy to winterize his boat. On January 2<sup>nd</sup> his boat caught fire and it quickly spread to 19 other boats. It was late at night and in the middle of a severe ice and snow storm. A dog across the river started to bark at the flames and smoke, and alerted its owner, who called the local fire department. The roads were so bad that the fire engines had trouble getting to the fire. And so, 19 boats, all between 38’ and 50’ burned to their waterlines and sank in their slips. I received a phone call the next morning with the unhappy news that my boat was a total loss. When they hauled it out, it looked like a giant surfboard with two engines.



This tragedy happened because someone tried to get away with something that was illegal, to save a few bucks. It could have been worse, but no one was injured. It also makes the point that boat fires can be very serious. There was a boat fire last year at Seaview Harbor Marina and as an outsider observer, it seemed that the fire fighters were hampered by the size of the marina. They had to carry hoses one quarter of a mile to the most distant dock in the marina. One problem was that all the hose was in one place on the fire engine and it had to be carried by teams of four men, who carried the hose on their shoulders.

One year later the fire company was back with all their men and equipment, but this time to practice putting out a mock fire. I was present again and it appeared that they worked out a lot of the kinks they ran into last year. I never thought much about the local fire company being a part of the boating safety team, but I was happy to see them practicing to protect my life and property.



## U.S. Coast Guard Station Great Egg Ocean City , NJ

Article and photos by Dick Keast

On 30 July I made a visit to U.S.Coast Guard Station Great Egg, in Ocean City. The Purpose was to write an article about the Station which has long been a part of Ocean City. It is only in recent years that the station has not been open all year round. At the present time, the station opens 1 May and closes, 17 October. The Station is located on North Point Lagoon, at North East end of Ocean City, on North Point Rd.

We were greeted warmly by the Station Supervisor, **BM 1 Peter Loreaux**. We sat in his office and chatted. I asked him about station activities and he gave me some details. The attached photo of his office shows a great chart of area painted on wall. This photo shows **Bos'n Loreaux** with **BM3 Robert Murray** and **SN Cole Marston**. I asked when the Station was built and he indicated that as far as he knew, it was built in late 20's. The boat is a 24 ft shallow water response boat (SPC-SW), powered by (2) 150 HP Honda outboards. They carry among other things, illuminating flares, and a gas dewatering pump and, at night use night vision goggles. Station activities include 650 Hrs underway each year and 800 boarding's each year. Boarded vessel crew report shows that many took boating classes, a lot have auxiliary sticker, and they reported enjoying BS and S classes.



## **THUNDER OVER THE BOARDWALK 2011**

By Art Zack

One of the major events at the shore each summer is the annual air show. This year it brought together 11 Auxiliary facilities and over 50 members to augment a large safety team. Flotilla 81 had four boats and 17 members. We worked with the U.S. Coast Guard, the state marine police, several fire companies, and tow boats. The show is centered on an area parallel with the beach, at boardwalk hall, one mile long and one half mile wide. Each boat was given a special call sign and an area of responsibility. The boats were anchored around the safety zone on three sides to prevent penetration by spectators and if there was a breach, the show would be stopped immediately. All communication went to a central command where all roving boats were dispatched, in the event of a problem. Some Coast Guard boats were anchored while others roved. There were two EMT boats to handle medical emergencies. It was estimated that there were over 800,000 people on the beaches and boardwalk and at least 1000 boats surrounding the safety zone. . There were over thirty units participating in the show. They included the Golden Knights parachute team, aerobatics demonstrations, Coast Guard SAR demonstrations, and flybys by Stratotankers, Globemasters, USAF A-10A Thunderbolts and P-51's. The sound level was raised with a demonstration by the F-22 raptor. The highlight, of course, were The Thunderbirds.



Two of our five boats roamed up and down the edge of the safety zone maintaining safety.



Just a few of the two hundred pictures Art Zack took.

## Awards



With a proud smile, **Bob Babezki** accepts an award as Auxiliarist of the Week. He has served with distinction and dedicated service. The award was presented by the USCG Fifth District Northern Auxiliary Region

It is tough to keep up with **Terri Pierce** . She has met all requirements in the Public Affairs Officers' Course. Ken Wilde FC presented her with a certificate.



The September 15<sup>th</sup> flotilla meeting was a busy one for awards. We now have four new boat crew members, and one new Marine Safety Training Specialist. One Vessel Safety Check Service Award was presented, and one member received a five years membership award.



**Mary Grant FSO-SR** successfully met all qualification requirements and is certified to be a boat crew member.





**Charlie Wilkins** FSO-VE lead a very successful VE program this season. He still found time to successfully meet all qualification requirements and is certified to be a boat crew member.



**Walt Alsegg** FSO-OP is probably running out of wall space with all the awards he has earned. His newest one is an Operations Service Award .



**Alan Wood** is still very active after his term as Flotilla Commander. He earned a Vessel Safety Check Service Award.



This is a really a big one. **Walt Alsegg** has satisfactorily completed all requirements and is designated a Marine Safety Training Specialist.



**Harry Norcross** received a Member Service Award for five years of dedicated service as a member of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.



**Gregory Kelcher** successfully met all qualification requirements and is certified to be a Boat Crew Member.



**Nick Sedberry** successfully met all qualification requirements and is certified to be a Boat Crew Member. Nick starts training in the U.S. Coast Guard at Station Cape May soon, and we wish him well.

**PHOTO GALLERY**



We are good because we practice.

**Fred Ruddick** is tossing a line to **Dick Sorokin**. **Alan Wood** and **Harry Norcross** are on the boat with Fred. **Walt Alsegg** and **Art Zack** were on the boat with Dick. After towing practice they ran search patterns.

**Ken Wilde** and **Ed Henne** cook the best burgers

Below: Aux members assist with Helo ops.

at the annual flotilla picnic



Ed Henne and Ken

