

# THE LIFE LINE

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U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY  
5<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT SR  
FLOTILLA 23-7 HERRING BAY, MD

LYNN FOUNTAIN, FLOTILLA COMMANDER  
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## Inside This Issue

- 1 Shipwrecks and Oil Waste
- 2 Auxiliary Volunteers Needed
- 2 Flotilla Awards
- 3 New Flotilla Commander Takes the Helm
- 3 Keeping Maryland Boaters Safe
- 4 Upcoming Events
- 4 July 4<sup>th</sup> Parade
- 4 Digital Selective Calling



Tanker *Dixie Arrow*, torpedoed by U-71

Photograph by USN

## SHIPWRECKS AND OIL WASTE

An environmental problem can sometimes remain buried for many decades before finally rearing its ugly head.

With the entry of the U.S. into World War II, the German Navy expanded its submarine operations across the Atlantic to within site of the American coastline. Under the code name *Operation Drumbeat*, Admiral Karl Donitz of the *Kriegsmarine* directed German submarines to conduct patrols directly off of the U.S. eastern seaboard. This was often within relatively shallow water. Prior to blackout conditions being strictly enforced, the *Unterseeboots* took advantage of the background illumination from city lights, sinking over 397 ships in U.S. coastal waters. Quite a few of those vessels were well stocked oil tankers as well as freighters with large diesel fuel tanks.

*Operation Drumbeat* only lasted from January to August of 1942 but was considered a great success by the Germans who lost only 7 out of 40 U boats in the campaign. Unfortunately for the Allies, 5000 sailors died and 2,000,000 tons of war materials were lost.

Fast forward to the twenty-first century and many of those ships that have been lying dormant at the bottom of Davey Jones' locker are now undergoing significant corrosion. Their oil bunkers are beginning to leach fuel into the ocean and ultimately on to our shorelines.

For anyone who has been personally involved in a fuel spill clean-up, you know full well the extent of the effort that can be required. Imagine the mission of cleaning up an entire ship's hold of fuel that leeches onto the shore and then multiple it by approximately 397. It can well become a Herculean task.

Fortunately last year, Maryland politicians were able to secure a \$1 million appropriation from NOAA to begin inventorying these wrecks and identifying any threats to the environment. Cleanup will eventually take place through the Oil Spill Liberty Trust Fund, supported by the oil industry.

*Frank Voltaggio, Editor*

## AUXILIARY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

WASHINGTON —The U.S. Coast Guard’s commercial fishing vessel examination program has helped save lives since 1991, but a new federal requirement means civilian volunteers of the Coast Guard Auxiliary will soon have a bigger role in checking boats and equipment headed out to sea.

Ken Lawrenson coordinates the work of civilian, active duty Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary vessel examiners throughout Alaska. He said harvesting crab, cod and halibut from the rich fishing grounds of the North Pacific and Bering Sea is “one of the most dangerous jobs a person can have.”

Alaska has fewer than 30 qualified examiners to check about 3,800 vessels that will fall under the new requirement, and other regions face similar potential work overloads.

“I wish I had four times as many,” Lawrenson said. “We’re looking to the Auxiliary to augment the workforce.”

Vessel safety examinations have been voluntary so far, but a provision in the federal Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010 makes them mandatory for all fishing vessels operating in U.S. waters. The provision is expected to go into effect in late 2012.

“We’re looking at an increase in workload without the proportionate increase in resources,” Lawrenson said.

American citizens over 17 years old with experience or interest in the fishing industry can join the Coast Guard Auxiliary and help this effective program improve safety in America’s commercial fishing fleet.

Nationwide, the Auxiliary currently has 216 volunteers qualified to perform commercial fishing vessel exams, but many more are needed.

Al Morris, an Auxiliary member and former commercial fisherman in Kodiak, Alaska, recently underwent a week of intense vessel exam training in Yorktown, Va., working alongside active duty trainees. He has seen firsthand the improved safety record of fishing boats that participate in the vessel examination program.

“I felt that I could help fishermen follow the rules,” Morris said.

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## FLOTILLA AWARDS

Bronze Operational Award – John Fountain, Woody Shaw, Phil Wentz

Annual Service Performance Award – George Pacharis for 60 vessel examinations – 2010 & 2011

Sustained Auxiliary Service Award – Edith Brown for 750 hours, Frank Voltaggio for 3000 hours

## NEW FLOTILLA COMMANDER TAKES THE HELM

Change eventually comes to all organizations. Due to a very timely but not unexpected turn of events, Dawn Miller was unable to continue on as Flotilla Commander of 23-7 and complete the remainder of her term. Her husband Paul, was offered an opportunity to relocate to Wales in regards to an especially unique job position.

Lynn Fountain in turn, agreed to run for the office and completed all the requirements in time. She was voted in at the June meeting by unanimous vote and sworn in by Division Vice Commander Majorie Voith. Congratulations, Lynn! Woody Shaw will remain as Vice Flotilla Commander.

To Dawn and Paul Miller; Thanks for all your great work with Flotilla 23-7 over the years and, *A allai fod gennyh gwyntoedd teg a moroedd canlynol* (May you have fair winds and following seas)!

*Frank Voltaggio*



Division Vice Commander Marjorie Voith swears in Lynn Fountain while VFC Woody Shaw looks on.

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## KEEPING MARYLAND BOATERS SAFE

Any opportunity to educate the boating public about safety is not one to pass up especially after the many accidents that occurred last year on the Chesapeake Bay.

On June 23rd, members of Flotilla 23-7 trekked over to Herrington Harbor North in Deale and set up their tent for the annual South County Festival. Chris Jensen along with Ray Walsh, Gerri Harlow, Edith Brown and Lynn Fountain commenced spending the day passing out Auxiliary brochures to any and all festival attendees who came by to get a quick “education” on boating safety. Along with this, Chris performed free vessel examinations for the local boat owners at the marina.

In addition, one of our members, Ray Walsh, had the opportunity to be interviewed by Station WNAV 1430 AM in Annapolis and talk about the Auxiliary to their listeners.

Nine people signed up for the Public Education Safe Boating Course that the flotilla latter conducted in July.

*Lynn Fountain*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept 10 – Flotilla 23-7 meeting, Cedarhurst Community Center, 1900

Oct 8–Flotilla Picnic, Cedarhurst Community Center, 1800

Nov 3&10–MD Safe Boating Course, TriState Marine, Deale, 0900

Nov 12 – Flotilla 23-7 meeting, Cedarhurst Community Center, 1900

Dec 10- Flotilla 23-7 meeting, Cedarhurst Community Center, 1900



## JULY 4<sup>TH</sup> PARADE



C. Jensen, E. Deer, R. Walsh, D. Deer, J. Fountain, L. Fountain, W. Shaw, and boat crew volunteers

Keeping with a tradition that began a number of years ago, the member of Flotilla 23-7 once again participated in the annual July 4<sup>th</sup> parade in Shady Side. This event always draws a major crowd encompassing not just the local townspeople but many others from the surrounding area. Flotilla members passed out wrapped candy and coloring books to the children as they travelled along the parade route.

*Frank Voltaggio*



## DIGITAL SELECTIVE CALLING (DSC) MARINE SAFETY ALERT

As the Coast Guard's new marine radio network Rescue 21 becomes operational throughout the U.S., rescue centers can now receive instant distress alerts from commonly used DSC-capable VHF marine radios. However, approximately 90% of VHF DSC distress alerts received by the Coast Guard do not contain position information and approximately 60% do not contain a registered identity. The Coast Guard cannot effectively respond to a DSC distress alert sent from such a radio.

This means that search and rescue efforts may normally be suspended when:

- No communications with the distressed vessel can be established,
- No further information or means of contacting the vessel can be obtained from other sources,
- No position information is known.

First, obtain a Maritime Mobile Installation Identity (MMSI) and enter it into your radio. MMSI numbers are issued by the Federal Communications Commission if your vessel otherwise requires a station license, or BOATUS (<http://www.boatus.com/mmsi>), Sea Tow (<http://www.seatow.com/mmsi>), or the Power Squadrons (<http://usps.org/php/mmsi>). Ensure any information originally provided is updated as changes occur. FCC regulations require that DSC-equipped radios “use MMSIs assigned by the Commission or its designees” (47 CFR 80.103(b)).

Then interconnect your radio to a GPS receiver using a two-wire NMEA 0183 interface on all DSC-equipped marine radios and on most GPS receivers. Instructions should be provided in the radio and GPS operators manual. Further information is provided and will be routinely updated in <http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/?pageName=mtDsc>.

*Developed by the Spectrum Management and Telecommunications Policy Division (CG-652), United States Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, DC.*