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MARCH 2020 NEWSLETTER

To kickstart Flotilla 1-1's newsletter, we have a word from our Flotilla Commander Robert Yslas, an interview with VFC Marlene Williams, an urgent message from BOSN2 Justin Plummer and some insights regarding the coronavirus.

COAST GUARD AUXILIARY
FLOTILLA 1-1 | DISTRICT 11SR





MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDER

ROBERT YSLAS, FLOTILLA COMMANDER

Welcome to Flotilla 114-01-01, San Diego Harbor! We are grateful for the men and women who have chosen Flotilla 1-1 to call their home. Over the years, we have established ourselves as one of the biggest units in the San Diego area and we are dedicated to supporting the Coast Guard in their mission of providing public education and support, either through Vessel Safety Checks (VSC), Program Visits (PV) where we meet with various aquatic/boating related business throughout the county, or through our recreational boating safety programs where our members are out in the public to support our basic mission. Over the past three months, we have been busy with public relations activities, such as the Sunroad Boat Show, Vessel Safety Blitzes at Silver Gate, San Diego, and Mission Bay Yacht Clubs. In the coming months, we have a calendar full of activities and we look forward to having all of our members join us for these events.

Our missions are currently on hold as we respond to the current global pandemic. The COVID-19, or coronavirus, is sweeping throughout the nation, and especially throughout California. We pray for the health and well-being of our members and their families, but we also pray that our nation will recover quickly so that we can return to business as normal. During this down time, it is important for our members to complete their CORE and BQCII training, take their boating safety course, and tackle the Introduction to Risk Management Course. Together, these courses help to prepare our member to engage in the various program areas that the Auxiliary has to offer. We are here to help you conquer these tasks and we look forward to having a great year with the greatest volunteers in the county!



FRIENDLY REMINDER

CHAIN OF LEADERSHIP PROTOCOL

As you know, our Flotilla leadership has frequently reminded us about the chain of leadership protocol. Essentially, this means that you should direct questions and concerns only to individuals appointed/elected to supervisory roles within your purview; for most of us, this individual is Robert.

With the coronavirus pandemic, I believe it is prudent to be even more vigilant regarding the chain of leadership. Our officers in the upper echelons of the Auxiliary – and most certainly the Auxiliary's active duty liaisons – are in the front lines of addressing the outbreak. Thus, we do not want to encumber them with protocol violations.

Further, it's just common sense at this moment to keep any communication with any level of leadership to critical matters. This has not been an easy time for any of us. However, we can help ease the burden by not clogging channels with secondary or tertiary issues.



REPORT SUSPICIOUS MARITIME ACTIVITY

BEING THE EYES AND EARS

Should you see the following...

- abandoned boats
- life vests
- gasoline cans

...please report it by calling **1-800-854-9834 *1**.

This is not an all-inclusive list, but these are the telltale red flags of human trafficking incidents.

If you notice these or other suspicious activity, again please call **1-800-854-9834 *1**.

AMERICA'S WATERWAY WATCH

A MESSAGE FROM CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 JUSTIN PLUMMER

Also in our last meeting, we were fortunate to have Chief Warrant Officer 2 (BOSN2) Justin Plummer join us to discuss the America's Waterway Watch program and how we as Auxiliarists play an important role as additional eyes and ears for both local law enforcement teams and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). As our Flotilla Commander Robert Yslas relayed to us, the Auxiliary will further assist the Coast Guard in this initiative during its regular duties.

To recap, Chief Plummer informed us that human trafficking has surged in recent years. Clearly, international trafficking data supports this claim. According to [statistics from the U.S. Department of State](#), the number of identified victims averaged 42,239 annually between 2010 through 2014. But from 2015 through 2018, this figure spiked to a disheartening 82,212.

In San Diego, the use of maritime platforms to transport victims along with physical contraband has become a pernicious dilemma. As a result, the CBP, Coast Guard and local law enforcement initiated the joint America's Waterway Watch Program. To Chief Plummer's point, what this looks like from the Auxiliarist's angle is to report any suspicious maritime activity 24/7 at **1-800-854-9834 *1**.

Your report reaches the Joint Harbor Operations Center, where the appropriate team will be dispatched to investigate. As well, **in an emergency**, you are encouraged to call **911**. Please note that we are in a very sensitive time with the coronavirus pandemic; therefore, only dial 911 in cases of genuine emergencies.



AN EXCEPTIONAL OPPORTUNITY

AN INTERVIEW WITH MARLENE WILLIAMS, VICE FLOTILLA COMMANDER

Following the last Flotilla meeting in February, I had the distinct honor to sit down with Marlene Williams, our Vice Flotilla Commander. As you know, Marlene has been extraordinarily busy the last few months, first in serving aboard the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Healy, as well as helping spearhead a new initiative with the Sea Scouts, a program of the Boy Scouts which features a nautical focus.

For over 100 years, the Sea Scouts has fostered the development of vital leadership skills, with boating acumen and maritime training as the underlying platform. It's a program open to young men and women ages 14 to 20 and which instills the four pillars of seamanship, scouting, service and social initiatives. Graduates may go on to serve with distinction in various government functions or have the inside track for advancement in the private sector.

Marlene assisted in teaching an advanced sailing class – which was led by her husband and fellow Flotilla 1-1 Auxiliarist Eric Williams – for the Sea Scouts in Florida, covering various boating skills, such as radio communications, navigation, and safety. Although a one-day class, it was jam-packed with valuable information. Another highlight is that our Flotilla 1-1 was the first to interact with the Coast Guard Auxiliary-Sea Scouts partnership.

Of course, Marlene's most prominent assignment was serving aboard the USCGC Healy as a culinary specialist. Starting off at Coast Guard Base Seattle and briefly stopping over at Kodiak, her two-month journey took her to the Arctic, supporting both the Coast Guard and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

A scientific agency under the U.S. Department of Commerce, NOAA conducts research and analyses on ocean dynamics, major waterways, and the atmosphere. In particular, NOAA is in the frontline in warning about dangerous weather conditions in addition to providing guidance over coastal resource usage and stewardship. It's a critical component not only for our own national interests but also for instilling international standards of environmental sustainability.

I asked Marlene what inspired her to sign up for this assignment. As an active duty Coast Guard service member, she had always wanted to serve on an Arctic mission. However, circumstances didn't quite align that way, making this a "bucket list" item when she eventually volunteered for the Auxiliary.

Understanding that the most viable opportunity to serve on such an assignment was through the Auxiliary Food Service program, she became PQS qualified. This involves a weekend-long training seminar that covers the essentials of food preparation and distribution.

I further inquired how an Auxiliarist can volunteer for this high-profile assignment. Marlene's advice is to work through the chain of leadership. Essentially, this involves letting your liaisons within the program know about your availability for service. Should an active duty culinary specialist be unable to fill the role, the Coast Guard may send out an "open call" for Auxiliary volunteers.

Though a competitive field, the Coast Guard has a fiscal incentive to utilize qualified members within the Auxiliary's vast numbers. Though perhaps not the most glamorous job, culinary specialists is what the maritime branch considers a "critical rate" – namely, missions don't go very far if your ranks don't have anything to eat.

However, taking a culinary specialist from the active duty side will necessarily result in expenditures for salary and associated benefits. Further, these specialists are in high demand for other missions; hence, the rate's critical nature. Fortunately, Auxiliarists like Marlene have stepped forward, filling a much-needed gap and saving the Coast Guard (and the American taxpayer) considerable expenses.

Naturally, Marlene's years of active duty service made the transition to serving aboard the Healy an intuitive one. But with the Auxiliary being comprised of diverse professional demographics – from the military services to civilians – I asked Marlene whether an Auxiliarist with a non-military background could effectively operate aboard a cutter.

She replied that it's an opportunity in which anyone can succeed if they have the right mindset. Specifically, she emphasized that all Auxiliarists must be 100% aware that they are on a military platform. As such, you must have your military courtesies squared away at all times.

Ultimately, those who have the passion and the capability to serve in this manner are encouraged to consider it. Inquiring Marlene as to what her most memorable moment was, she stated that serving with her daughter, who is an active duty culinary specialist, was the biggest highlight.

That and the 05:30 wake-up call to run laps on the helo deck – a time-honored initiation into the Order of the Blue Nose – are among the select experiences permanently forged in memory.



CORONAVIRUS REPORT

THE URGENT NEED FOR CONTAINMENT

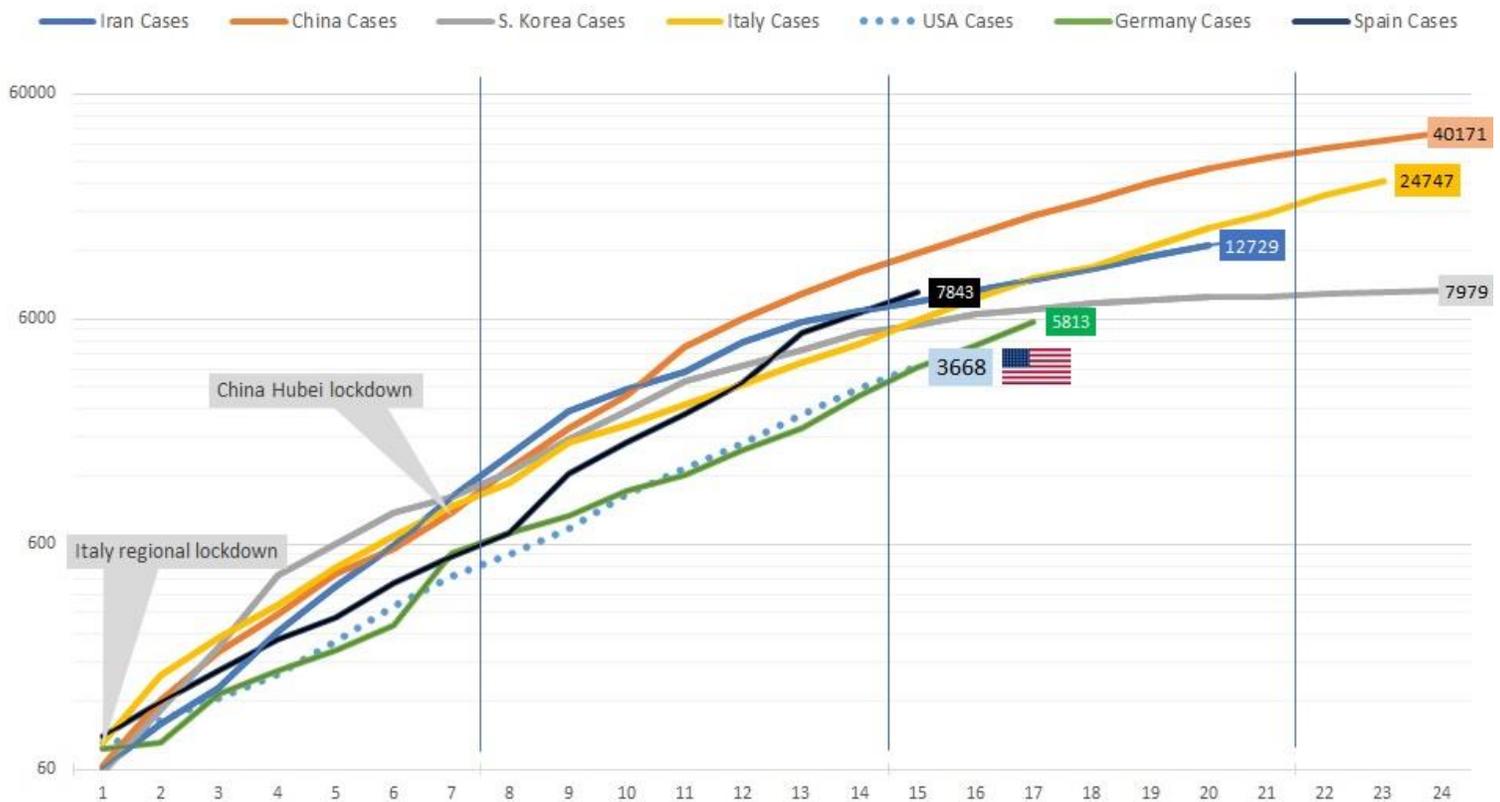
At time of writing, worldwide cumulative cases of the coronavirus have numbered 169,415 with 6,515 deaths. In the U.S., cases total 3,668 with 68 deaths. Recently, the Trump administration has declared a national emergency, as well as extending travel bans to various countries.

Furthermore, as you are well aware, the Coast Guard and its Auxiliary arm have limited activities to critical purposes. Certainly, disappointment abounds as this has translated to cancellations of many eagerly awaited events and will involve adjustments to standard functions, such as in-person Flotilla meetings.

However, I wanted to emphasize that the Coast Guard is making the right decisions to protect the active duty and reservist ranks, along with the Auxiliary. Forwarded by federal health agencies, it's vital that we collectively do our best to reduce the infection curve.

Over the last several days, I have carefully analyzed international infection rates, identifying opportunity gaps in hopefully mitigating this crisis. First, I noticed that several countries trend similarly once their total infection count reaches at least 50 cases. From this starting point ("SP") to the seventh day, the growth rate for the following countries – the U.S., China, Italy, Spain, Germany, Iran, and South Korea – averages 999%.

Acceleration of Coronavirus Cases After At Least 50 Cases (in days)

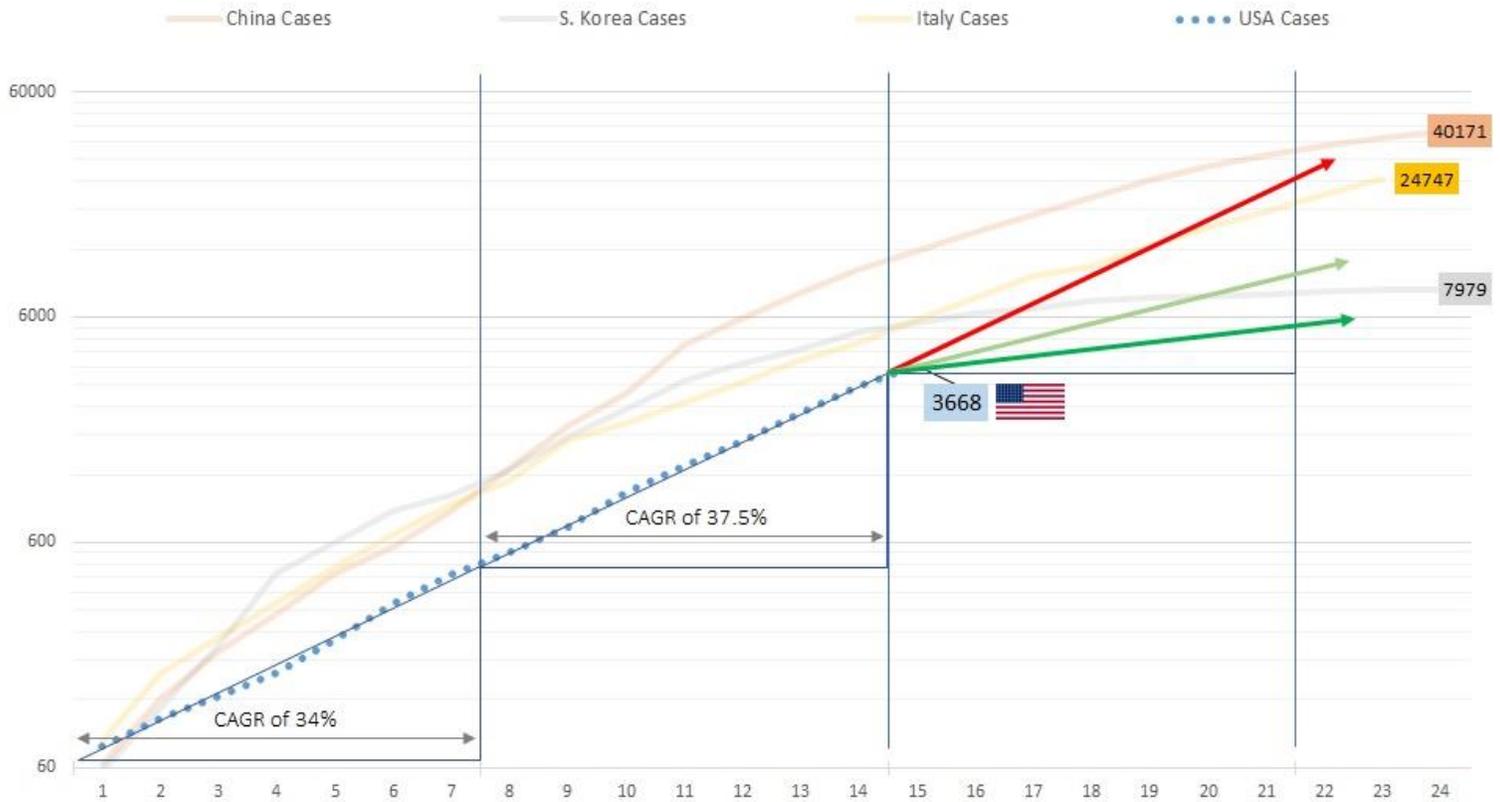


From day seven to day 14, the average growth rate is nearly 656%. This is an alarming rate optically as cases suddenly explode from three digits to four-digit figures. But from day 14 to day 21, this critical time frame will dictate how a nation mitigates their epidemic.

One of the reasons why Italy's coronavirus emergency has spiraled out of control is that its infection curve – or growth rate – continued to accelerate at unacceptable levels. Unfortunately, other countries in the region are following Italy's example, which implies a worsening crisis in Europe.

However, South Korea is on the other end of the pendulum. Their government quickly acted to test as many people as possible, resulting in identification of hot spots and aggressive containment and mitigation efforts. In this critical time frame between days 14 and 21, the Koreans have decisively flattened their infection curve.

How U.S. Cases May Look in the Near Future



And this is why we cannot afford to be lax in our efforts to contain the spread. From SP to day seven, coronavirus infections increased at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 34%. From day seven to day 14, the CAGR increased slightly to 37.5%. Obviously, that's not great news.

But thanks to the efforts of the federal government, we have an opportunity to control our destiny. If we do nothing and allow the virus to grow at its current CAGR, we will see a worse acceleration of cases than what Italy has suffered. But if we can halve the CAGR – or better yet, knock it down to a quarter of the current rate – we will achieve a flattening curve that is similar to or on par with the Koreans.

That's why all federal agencies are throwing everything they have against the coronavirus. And at this critical juncture, I encourage everyone to supplement their efforts by staying safe and healthy.

Please send any written experiences about your assignments (and of course any photos!) to me, Josh Enomoto FSO-PB at JYEfinancial@gmail.com.