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## MAY 2020 NEWSLETTER

The tail end of May is traditionally regarded as the start of the summer season. It's also a time of reflection and there is much to ponder as we head march toward a post-pandemic society. Although many challenges lie ahead, the crisis has also given all Americans an opportunity to guide our nation to a path that is reflective of our values and traditions.

**COAST GUARD AUXILIARY**  
**FLOTILLA 1-1 | DISTRICT 11SR**





## MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDER

ROBERT YSLAS, FLOTILLA COMMANDER

Shipmates,

As we enter into our third month of staying at home, I understand the physical and psychological impact this has had on all of us individually and to our extended families. While I am grateful to have my wife and son with me, others are not so fortunate and are facing these lonely months in isolation. I encourage you to reach out to each other and to those in need. Even if it is a call for just a few seconds, those seconds are precious to those who need to hear a caring voice. This is a time to also work on ourselves. I was used to going to the gym (to maintain my rock-hard abs...don't laugh!) at least three to four times a week, but with all the closures, maintaining my workout regime has been a little difficult. Instead, I encourage you to talk a walk. Take a half hour and walk your neighborhoods, get some sun, drink a lot of water, and enjoy the beauty around you. This will not only benefit you physically, but will do wonders for you mentally.

Things are changing and soon we will be back in action. The Director of Auxiliary's (DIRAUX) Office is starting to slowly push out applications again and, hopefully, we'll start to see ID cards being generated. Additionally, AUXDATA II has now come online and I would encourage all of you to review the emails sent out by National on this topic and try to familiarize yourself with this new and improved program. It will take some time, but we're all working on making necessary adjustments to improve our record keeping. Keep up the great work on your training! Finally, as we honor our fallen on this Memorial Day, we thank those men and women who continue to hold the line, keeping us Semper Paratus.

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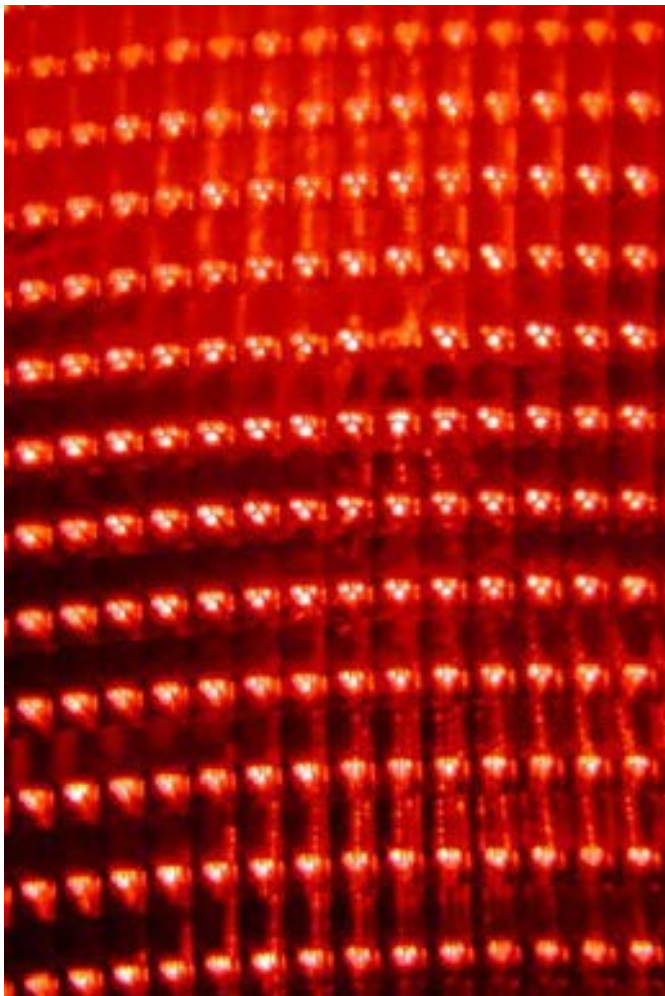
## STAND DOWN REMINDER

LIMITED ACCESS POSTURE DUE TO COVID-19

As you know, the Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted virtually every facet of our lives, including the ability to participate in face-to-face Auxiliary operations. Unfortunately, this has meant being unable to access Sector San Diego; hence, our virtual Flotilla meetings.

Though most states have now begun relaxing their restrictions, according to our Director of Auxiliary, only personnel who work on Coast Guard installations are allowed inside. Currently, there are no approved waivers for Auxiliarists which would require them access to such facilities.

If at some point access is granted, this will be communicated from the chain of leadership.





# THE TRUE SPIRIT OF MEMORIAL DAY

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## HONORING THE SACRIFICES THAT CONTINUE TO MAKE THIS COUNTRY GREAT

As you know, Memorial Day is one of our most solemn and revered holidays. It is a day that we set aside the trivialness of daily existence and reflect upon the highest sacrifices that our men and women have made while serving in the United States Armed Forces.

Fundamentally, Memorial Day is a byproduct of America's Judeo-Christian heritage. As John 15:13 teaches us, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." That so many of us across all generations are willing to demonstrate this love – for people whom they have never met, no less – is truly emblematic of why the United States is the greatest country on the face of this planet.

At the same time, Americans have never been a people to dwell in the past. In Luke 24:5, it is written in part, "...Why seek ye the living among the dead?" The context here is that many of the women disciples of Jesus -- most notably Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James – had visited his tomb, only to be met with angels. Thus, the following verse is the most pivotal: He is not here, but is risen.

Similarly, the last Monday of May is not just of remembrance but of celebration. Hence, this is a time when we honor those past and present sacrifices by engaging in the activities that give our lives meaning. For most, that means spending quality time with family and friends. For others, it's taking that vacation that is long overdue.

This time also unofficially marks the beginning of the summer season. Typically, you would see gasoline prices bump up as families gear up to hit the road. And speaking of gasoline, this past weekend was scheduled to host the most iconic American sporting event: the Indianapolis 500.

Of course, this is unlike any other Memorial Day. With social distancing guidelines and largely restricted state reopening protocols, the mood is conspicuously somber. If you turned on the television to watch the race, you would have noticed a sound that has never been heard at Indianapolis Motor Speedway for [75 years](#): dead silence.



Even I must shamefully admit that I had completely forgotten about the great American weekend. Living in isolation, working remotely from home, I had lost all semblance of my prior daily routine. If it were not for our ever-dutiful Flotilla Commander, Robert Yslas, I may have celebrated only in retrospect.

But I also think that is the point of this "new normal" Memorial Day. While I'm sitting here going through my stash of quarantine crackers, it's all too easy to dwell on what we have lost. But serving alongside you in the Coast Guard Auxiliary reminded me that what is truly important remains alive and viable as ever.

This Memorial Day has also been a powerful reminder that you don't necessarily have to wear a uniform to make sacrifices for the betterment of this nation. One of the stark sights of the novel coronavirus pandemic is the exponential demand for food banks. Despite the soaring valuations on Wall Street, it's painfully clear that Main Street has borne the brunt of the damage.

Yet amid this turmoil, I have witnessed so many folks of every color and creed step up to help their neighbors in need. That's the real spirit of Memorial Day, that while we have the great privilege of living in a free country, that freedom was bought at a price.



Additionally, I cannot help but sing the praises of all the frontline workers who put their health and lives at risk to aid those who have been stricken with Covid-19. Remarkably, some of our best and brightest – the doctors and nurses who are literally in the trenches – face a two-front battle of Covid-19 and [racial discrimination](#).

As a Japanese-American, such stories strike a nerve because once again, certain demographics are asked to prove their Americanness—as if putting their lives in grave danger isn't enough proof, and in my cases, helping those who racially abuse them.

Yet here they are, honoring their duty to their profession and to their fellow man. I cannot think of anything more blatantly American than this.

In my opinion, the unsung heroes of this pandemic are the service workers. Across the entire supply chain, from the farmers and agricultural laborers who tirelessly plant our crops to the truck drivers who ship priceless cargo during quarantines to the guest service provider who completes your transaction, every single one of them has been vital to maintaining order and control.

Not only that, we're going to depend on the service worker even more as we march toward a post-coronavirus era. For instance, someone will have to educate our children. And with heightened social tensions that are probably going to worsen due to the terrible economic backdrop, [already stressed teachers](#) may suffer their own crisis.

Exacerbating this condition is the fact that many service workers earn only minimum wage or close to it. This Memorial Day, I hope the conditions that have made it unique will spark discussions about economic balance. Asking our most financially vulnerable communities to support the whims and desires of an elite few is not a circumstance that is sustainable.

In many ways, the coronavirus is a wake-up call, one that our nation desperately needed, whether it realized it or not. At the height of the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln [declared a national day of prayer and fasting](#). In the language of the proclamation, Lincoln wrote, "It behooves us then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness."

Only a few months after this urging of national repentance, the [tide of the Civil War had turned](#) in favor of the Union, according to U.S. Army historians.

Without any hyperbole, I believe our nation is at a similar crossroads. This time, it's a microbiological agent that is threatening to tear apart our institutions and our civility. On the ground floor, some communities are scapegoated daily for immutable characteristics for which they have no control. As well, the economic fallout has [disproportionately impacted service-oriented working families and communities of color](#).

Higher up the chain, we see nothing but finger pointing and vitriol in our political class. Worse, the mainstream media foments this tension, drawing sharp ideological divisions at a time when unity and leadership is paramount.

Yet the opportunity here is that we don't have to succumb to the narrative set before us. For instance, if we had never taken voting seriously, now is the time to have a fresh perspective, electing public servants – not public "servees" – who put country and community above their personal interests. Additionally, we can choose to empathize rather than stigmatize, helping those who are in need and standing up for the voiceless.

The most important lesson here is that while we cannot do anything to change the past, we can do something to change the future. Therefore, I consider Memorial Day 2020 pivotal as a time not only to reflect upon the ultimate sacrifices made by all Americans but to honor them by creating a society for which they would be proud.

# HONORING OUR PREDECESSORS

THE TRANSFORMATIVE HISTORY OF THE REVENUE CUTTER SERVICE



Even during one of the worst pandemics in modern world history, our active duty and reserves service members are constantly on high alert. This is especially the case with the U.S. Coast Guard, which has become increasingly visible during the national lockdown. A prominent example of this was maintaining order on our coastal waters as oil tankers – mired in the geopolitics of their underlying commodity – found themselves with nowhere to go.

Thankfully, that situation appears to have improved over the last few weeks. However, the Coast Guard still finds itself addressing maritime issues, most prominently the thousands of cruise ship crew members who are still [stuck at sea](#). A combination of coronavirus fears, an alarming lack of corporate oversight and care, and severe leadership gaps in world governments has contributed to this ongoing emergency, an area where the Coast Guard suddenly has the unenviable task of managing.

As I mentioned in my last newsletter, we salute those in the active duty and reservist ranks who daily respond to our country's needs. For the next newsletter, I intend to highlight some of the current events impacting the Coast Guard.

But for this edition, I thought it would be beneficial to reflect upon the history of this valuable but often overlooked maritime service. It's commonly observed that those in uniform often crack jokes at the expense of other branches. Safe to say, the Coast Guard takes more than its fair share of zingers as the red-haired stepchild of the military family.

However, in many ways, the Coast Guard is historically the most important branch. Certainly, it was one of the [most transformative in fostering the development of our country](#) into the lone superpower that it is today. According to Master Chief Thomas Howell, U.S. Navy:

After the Revolutionary War, the newly founded United States found itself with a vast national debt and was struggling to stay afloat financially. There was great debate among the nation's leaders about how to resolve this debt (Toll, 2006). National income was needed quickly, and it was apparent that a great deal of this income would come from import tariffs. There was little accountability in the comings and goings of imports, and so there was a need for a means to enforce the tariffs. On 4 August 1790, Congress, urged strongly by Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, created the Revenue-Marine Service, which later was renamed the Revenue Cutter Service—the beginning of the U.S. Coast Guard.

The Revenue Cutter Service originally consisted of the order and construction of ten cutters to be assigned strategically along the coast of the United States. Between 1790 and 1798, the Revenue Cutter Service was the only armed maritime service of the United States, as the Navy had been disbanded at the time. The captains of the cutters were given far-reaching authority that included seizure of vessels suspected of breaches of the revenue laws, inspection of vessels both underway and in port, and enforcement of embargo. Over the years, the Revenue Cutter Service played a major role in every maritime conflict, until finally, on 28 January 1915, President Woodrow Wilson signed into law the Coast Guard Act, which combined the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service with the U.S. Lifesaving Service to form the U.S. Coast Guard (Evans, 1949).

Therefore, without the Revenue Cutter Service, the predecessor to the U.S. Coast Guard, our Founding Fathers would not have been able to economically sustain themselves. While we must always support a strong military, a country cannot exist on military might alone – after all, somebody has to pay the bills.

Without a vibrant economy, everything else falls apart. Although it might sound callous to some, this is the primary reason why leading bipartisan voices in Washington are pushing for a responsible reopening of our society. If the U.S. and the world fail to rejuvenate their economies, we would all end up like North Korea—and that is no laughing matter.

Indeed, a strong argument can be made that without the Revenue Cutter Service, the “United States [likely would've gone bankrupt](#) before it even had its second president.” That's according to a post from *Task & Purpose*. Further, this argument is not without justification.

More than just enforcing the young nation's maritime and revenue laws, Alexander Hamilton was [concerned about the rise of smuggling and piracy](#). And by piracy, I'm talking about the “Aarrrr” type, not the illegal downloading variety. According to Dr. David Rosen, the Coast Guard historian for the Pacific Area:

Cutters of the [Revenue Service](#) helped suppress piracy in the Caribbean in the early 1800's. In Caribbean waters about 500 merchant vessels worth \$20 million were seized illegally, far more loot than pillaged by the [Barbary Coast buccaneers](#). One reason was the shelter the Caribbean pirates found in the newly independent Latin American nations. They first plundered wealthy Spanish traders, then American ships.

But this narrative changed when the United States made it abundantly clear that it will protect its economic interests, both at home and abroad. And this hammer was frequently and successfully dropped by the Revenue Cutter Service, an action that is still delivered today by the Coast Guard.

So yes, “Coasties” may be the black sheep in the broader defense equation. But without them, we may not have a country!



# PREPARING FOR THE NEW NORMAL —

## REBUILDING WILL BE A NECESSARY THOUGH INCREDIBLY CHALLENGING TASK

I love my country. But I don't think I would ever do well in the world of politics. Frankly, I'm too opinionated and too much of a straight shooter (sometimes to my own detriment) to deliberately tow a line of which I do not believe.

To that end, one of the aphorisms that has been grating on me is the phrase, "we're all in this together." Actually, I don't mind it when the phrase is uttered by a person whom I know or respect. But when big corporate interests and their marketing machinery inundate us with this message, it seems inauthentic and somewhat dystopian.

The ugly truth is, we're not *all* in this together. Yes, the [nearly 39 million Americans who filed jobless claims](#) over a nine-week period represents a disaster to this country, one that must be addressed sooner rather than later.

By the way, that's not my opinion. Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell has almost been begging for continued strong government action to fight the economic impact of the novel coronavirus. In his words, we're in a "[downturn without modern precedent](#)."

Put another way, whatever worked for the Great Recession, you can throw that playbook out the window.

But not everyone is suffering from this disaster. If you think Jeff Bezos, CEO of Amazon or Mark Zuckerberg, CEO of Facebook, are pondering what they'll eat tomorrow, think again – these two and many of our aristocratic elites have seen their [net worth rise to the tune of hundreds of billions of dollars](#).



We're all in this together?

Furthermore, the initial big jumps in jobless claims were filed by service workers, specifically those who worked in disproportionately impacted industries, such as restaurants, hotels and movie theaters. While these industries will eventually return, many small businesses have already collapsed, meaning that millions of jobs lost are permanent.

And as we see new unemployment claims come in, we've got to realize that those jobs getting axed are increasingly higher-paying, white-collar occupations. Essentially, the middle class will start suffering a vacuum effect unless the federal government steps in, marshalling all resources available to counter this economic calamity.

I applaud Washington's decision to bolster the newly unemployed with an emergency stimulus good for [\\$600 per week](#), in addition to state unemployment benefits. But when that dries up on July 31, Americans will invariably find themselves behind the eight-ball.

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, the pandemic has [forced a rethink of the entire office culture paradigm](#). With many employees (apparently) successfully working remotely, the need for big corporate buildings declines dramatically. That's great news for a company's bottom line. But it's horrendous news for the commercial real estate industry, which handsomely employs countless thousands of people.

Therefore, until we find a viable solution – and this is one of the reasons why unity, not division is crucial right now – we must prepare for a second wave of layoffs, this time disproportionately impacting white-collar workers.

Though I like to see myself as an optimist, the pulse of the nation has turned decidedly negative. According to FBI firearms background checks, Americans [bought over 12.1 million firearms](#) from January through the month of April, a blistering all-time record. For perspective, in 2009, fears stemming from the Great Recession, as well as bigoted concerns about President Barack Obama's administration caused sales to jump to slightly over 14 million units.

A wild rise in gun sales due to pandemic fears



In our case, we've got eight more months to go. At this rate, we're probably on pace for 33 million guns sold, or about one firearm per every person living in Peru. If you want to know what Americans are really thinking, ignore what they say with their lips and instead focus on what they're buying with their wallets.

When you do, you'll notice that our consumer economy is mostly active with groceries, toilet paper and guns – not exactly what you would call a balanced situation.

Nevertheless, most people are clearly reading between the lines, anticipating social unrest based on the available evidence. Further, the end of July – where the federal government's coronavirus relief fund for the unemployed runs out – may coincide with several mortgage forbearance offers coming due.

According to experts in the field, too many homeowners are [confusing forbearance with forgiveness](#) – the latter involves paying back little to nothing of the obligation, while the former is merely a push back of them. Many forbearance programs are available for up to 180 days, meaning other programs could come due earlier.

Therefore, it wouldn't be completely shocking to see increased desperation in the late summer months. Unfortunately, such desperation often leads to criminal acts.

In the spirit of Semper Paratus, I urge my fellow Auxiliarists to be on alert in the days ahead, especially toward the end of July when the extra funding is scheduled to stop. Here are some basic recommendations:

- Take note of your surroundings, more so than any other time
- If you have a daily routine, consider changing it (for example, don't always take the same way home)
- Avoid displays of extravagant wealth whenever possible (now isn't the time to show off your Cosmograph Daytona 18ct Everose Gold Automatic by Rolex)
- Have a basic plan in mind if you find yourself being followed – it's happened to me so no, this isn't just something that occurs in the movies
- Keep personal travel limited to high-traffic public areas during "reasonable" hours until society normalizes

During this time, it's critical to acknowledge that crises bring out the best and the worst in people. In addition, the present troubles have been a goldmine for individuals with nefarious agendas. Therefore, keep your head straight, avoid tacking on unnecessary risks, and above all, be safe!

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

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