



**US Coast Guard Auxiliary  
East Bays Flotilla 7-11  
Aids to Navigation Team, Bristol, Rhode Island  
February 2022**

I hope you find this newsletter useful, informative, and maybe even amusing. Suggestions and comments are always welcome.

Very respectfully,

Don Fennessey

Your humble FSO-PB editor

**Coronavirus is affecting all of us in the Auxiliary, but things seem to be improving. Please be patient as new information comes to us.**

## Flotilla Meeting Notes

COVID policy once again forbids us from getting together in person, but we had another good Zoom meeting with 11 in attendance.



Here's a recap of the meeting:

- **Welcome, Initial Remarks, Call to Order**
- **Pledge of Allegiance**
- **Introduction of Guests:** David Harris is our newest prospective member (2<sup>nd</sup> row on right in photo).
- **Adoption of agenda:** Approved.
- **Approval of prior meeting minutes:** Approved.

- **FC's Report (Former FC Brian Welsh sitting in for Morgan Beltre)**
  - **D-Train (Division Training)** will take place virtually starting 26 February and going until 6 March. You all should have gotten reminders to sign up. It is very easy to do, and the variety of classes is impressive. Something for everyone, especially those core courses for new members or old members who need refreshers.
  - **March Meeting is planned to be in person!**
  - **Division's strategy** is to work as a kind of super flotilla, combining the resources of flotillas for all the AUX programs. Each flotilla has different strengths and assets that can be used by other flotillas, especially for training, Vessel Examination, Public Education and Boat Crew Quals.
  
- **VFC's Report (Mark Marosits):**
  - Mark thinks we might be operational this year, perhaps with a facility and certainly with more crew-qualified personnel.
  - Newport Yacht Club would like to be a home base for Vessel Examinations.
  - FSOs should enroll in google groups. This could be a good way to connect with others in the same position.
  
- **Staff Reports:** In order to help new prospective member David Harris, staff officers explained their functions.
  - **FSO-NS/CS (Kevin Ratcliffe)** FSO-NS (Navigation systems) helps to chart and verify the location of private aids to navigation (PATONs) and report any hazards to navigation or ice that may be blocking waterways. AS **FSO-CS**, he maintains the flotilla website. He has recently opened a section on the website for member training and added a link to connect with the upcoming D-Train schedule.
  - **FSO-MA (Raven James)** The Materials Officer is responsible for ordering any materials for the flotilla.
  - **FSO-DV (Marcus Mitchell)** The Diversity Officer is responsible for seeking out things that can be done to encourage membership by anyone, regardless of race, gender or disability among other criteria. Our division and flotilla have an excellent record in this respect, and we have earned the NACO 3-Star Award for Diversity for the last several years. Marcus wants more flotillas in the division to participate in this program – it was 80% last year, but there is always room for improvement.

- **FSO-OP (Brian Welsh)** He, as Operations Officer, brought up the point that the Coast Guard Finance Center is back up and running, and that anyone whose operational reimbursements had been withheld will now be paid. Division is encouraging anyone who wants training to let our flotilla staff know, and they will try to get you connected. Brian cited a recent tasking for an Auxiliary Air mission to check for ice in the Penobscot River to see if the Coast Guard needed to send an icebreaker. This was a very rewarding way to fulfill a real-time need.
  - **FSO-PA (Brian Welsh)** If and when there are any public events or training, Brian will be the point of contact. There aren't any on the near horizon.
  - **FSO-PB (Don Fennessey)** In charge producing and distributing the monthly newsletter.
  - **FSO-PV (Don Fennessey)** Distributes boating safety brochures and other materials to commercial entities and marinas/yacht clubs for display and free pickup by anyone. Mark says we will be able to set up some kind of "info station" at the Newport Yacht Club, paired with the various CGAUX activities we will be offering.
  - **FSO-MT (Mark Marosits)** All flotilla members are encouraged to sign up for D-Train to get back in currency that may have lapsed. It is a painless way to get qualified in many areas. If you have trouble registering, Mark can help. The AUX on-line training classroom has changed. Reset your password now before you really need to use it. A number of us took the AUXDATA II classes. They were very helpful.
- **General Business**
    - **Awards:** We expect there are some on the way but haven't seen them yet.
    - **New AUX Applicant:** David Harris started work as a programmer at NUWC in Newport in September. He moved here from Virginia and wanted to find a good way to get out on the water. The AUX is the perfect solution.
    - We are approved to do **hybrid meetings** starting in March. This is great news.
    - Again, the division emphasizes working with other flotillas to provide training and services. We in 07-11 don't have to provide all services but can combine with other flotillas. A good teamwork initiative. Mark will ask everyone what their capacity will be for the rest of the year.
    - Update on Lynette: She is doing well, but has to remain isolated because of COVID.

- **Featured Training: Marcus Mitchell and Black History Month:** Marcus gave a very informative presentation. Black History Month was originally Black History Week, established in 1926, which took place between 12 February, President Abraham Lincoln's birthday, and 20 February, the birthday of the abolitionist Frederick Douglass. It was expanded to become Black History Month in 1976. Marcus also spoke about the AKA sorority, the oldest Black sorority, which was established in 1906. It was founded by his great, great (maybe one more great) aunt. His family is documented in the Smithsonian to have arrived from Ghana in 1683 – it is the oldest African-American family in the US and they have had the longest continuous string of family reunions with over 200 in attendance. The food must be awesome!  
Thanks, Marcus!

**Motion to Adjourn:** Approved heartily and quickly!

**Next Flotilla Meeting – Wednesday, 9 March at 7:30 PM, probably in person with Zoom backup.** Please join us for fellowship, fun and service.

**Semper Paratus!**