

# USCG Auxiliary Diversity Moment

Diversity Officers, here's an opportunity to start a discussion with your unit at your next gathering, and doing so, fulfill Goal Category 1.3 in the NACO 3-Star application. Leadership at all levels: Please consider adapting the ideas expressed here in leading yourselves, leading others, leading performance and change, and leading the Auxiliary.

December 2024

## Honoring Each Other

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*"Be prepared to appreciate what you meet."*

— Frank Herbert

A heavily frequented site at Gettysburg National Park is Spangler's Spring, a natural spring on the former battlefield. It changed hands during the battle a few times, and for a while it was in between the lines. Legend has it that a truce was called during the night of July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1863, where both sides allowed the other to pass safely to the spring to fill their canteens. Despite the mythologized story of both sides peacefully sharing water from Spangler's Spring, there are documented instances of brutal fighting with high casualty counts adjacent to that spot. In 1895, the War Department built a permanent stone and concrete monument over the spring. Although the water there is no longer available, the structure is still in place. Three bronze plaques are affixed to it with the following:

### *Spangler's Spring.*

*One country and one flag. The strife of brothers is past.*

*This spring supplied Union and Confederate soldiers with water during the battle.*

This anecdote has become entrenched in the Gettysburg narrative, which promoted the broader movement for national reconciliation. Two bitterly opposed sides ended up bonding with each other. After a long and arduous struggle to reunify our nation, they were able to overcome the animosity that previously threatened to overwhelm our country. Whether some of the details of the legend were embellished, we can take the lesson and apply it today, especially in the light of recent political events: We must find what unites us and then leverage the best of our inherent diversity to make ways of promoting our goals.



Spangler's Spring monument. Photo credit: unknown

The Auxiliary is no different, as a microcosm of our society at large, everyone is represented. Our sometimes-difficult tasking is to find ways to manage all the various personalities in our organization and get all of us fully involved. There is no escaping the natural diversity that makes up our membership.

This Diversity Moment is a call to appreciate the many varied talents available to us. Appreciated and respected shipmates will want to do more and better.

Success cannot help but follow.