

THE SIGNAL BRIDGE



Newsletter for Flotilla 14-2, Arlington

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July 2024

FROM THE PILOT HOUSE

The following is copied, in part, from the January 2024 Signal Bridge

To begin this new year of the Signal Bridge I wanted to include some items from earlier editions to give us a sense of our history- where we came from to help us set a direction for 2024. To do that I thought it would be interesting to see what I wrote as FC to lead off the January 2010 edition of the Signal Bridge. The similarities in that message (copied immediately below) and this one are striking.

As I envision the life of our flotilla playing out in 2010 I see our future shaped by three groups of people: Experienced/qualified members, current members who are anxious to do more (if they were only asked) and new members. Is any one of those categories more important than the others? Some might say yes, I say it depends on the perspective from which one sees the subject. My perspective from the Elected Bridge is to view the responsibilities, capabilities, and energies of the membership to determine the best way to grow the flotilla. A very important part of this year's plan is to increase the number of people on our membership roles. Stating the obvious, the key is to go where those folks are. In other words, we need to promote the Auxiliary mission whenever we are in the eye of the public as we participate in RBS activities: public affairs events, partner visitations, vessel safety checks and public education.

Another important aspect of strengthening our flotilla is – having a sense of family. Recently I had the opportunity to spend the night at Baptist South hospital for tests. While there I couldn't notice how friendly the staff was, not only patients but to each other. And they worked extremely well together. They knew each other's family members, what their kids were doing at school and where folks were going on vacation and wanted to know how that vacation went.

It occurred to me that they really care about each other. And then it hit me; that when you care about the other person, then add in the passion one has related to their training and focused on the mission- everyone benefits. In the case of hospital staff it's the patient and the staff, in our case it's the public, and us.

Because of our recent growth in new and prospective members at our monthly flotilla dinners, I've noticed how much our newer members and their families have added to the "personality" of our flotilla. It's exciting to see the abilities these new members bring to the pool of current talented members and that adds to the mosaic that is our flotilla. I can sense great things are happening in our flotilla as we grow and that will cause us to become an even closer family than we already are.

The Auxiliary mission offers a lot of opportunity to serve, but it has to be fun and rewarding for it to be sustainable. Growing as a family = Mission Accomplished.

AUXSCOUT

Our July meeting included guests who are members of a Sea Scout Ship in the Arlington area. Those members are looking to form a new ship' our flotilla is studying the possibility of becoming a chartering organization. There are great opportunities in doing this and in fact, Sea Scouts is a much touted endeavour of the USCG Auxiliary.

The presentation by or guests was quite interesting; it seems like this is an activity that would be rewarding and exciting. In fact, District 7 AUX has already encouraged us to proceed. We'll look at this deliberately and slowly to assess our talent, the amount of continuous effort it demands and our willingness to commit to the hours needed to ensure success.

Materials

The U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Association

cgauxa.org - under Benefits - Vehicle and Hotel discounts

Also - auxiliary logo items

shopauxiliary.com Another website for various purposes

Postage Stamps went up July 14th to 73 cents. Each additional ounce will rise to 28 cents.

Marine Safety

Proposed Events-

Aug 3rd JSO Safety Fair Avenues Mall. 1000-14-- hours

Oct 10th Florida DEP Safety Fair

Oct 18-20th NAS Jax Air Show (there will No air show in Jax in 2025)

1. July 1st New Florida Laws Take Effect

These apply to boats or the marine environment:

HB487- You must notify Law Enforcement ASAP of your derelict or nuisance vessel.

HB1565- deals with the Red Tide

SB 1350- deals with boat salvage

HB 321- Release of balloons (causes animals deaths or injuries when they try to eat them or have lines wrapped around there necks)

SB 7040- Removal of nutrients to protect waterways

2. Strange Ships

A. The CONNECTOR was built in London in 1863. The ship could separate into 3 parts. Each part had a mast and a sail. The idea was to drop off one part at a port and take on or drop off cargo in 1 section

leaving the remaining ship to sail to another port and do the same. In case of a fire or grounding, you would detach that section and sail away. The ship did not operate very long.

B. The PROBLEM was another ship from London launched in 1844. Her sail arrangement was like none ever seen. She was deep keeled and with the sails equal, she could be made to sail backwards. This was good for preventing collisions and possible groundings.

3. Humpback Whale Saves Diver

In the Cook Islands, which are in the Pacific Ocean, a Humpback Whale protected a diver from a Tiger Shark by keeping the diver under its flipper until the diver was safe.

4. Force Majeure

Force Majeure or Superior Force is noted when a Foreign Flagged Vessel enters U.S. waters for emergency purposes without a prior notice of arrival because it did Not intend to enter that port. A 96 hour prior notice of arrival is required before entering port. If a vessel is transiting past a U.S. port (innocent passage) with no intention of entering and an emergency happens where it needs to enter the port then Force Majeure applies.

5. Federal Register

A. June 26th Wednesday The USCG requests comments on their members wearing Body worn cameras during certain operations.

B. June 28th Friday The U.S. Congress raised the federal fines based on the inflation rate. The USCG was included under 33CFR27.3.

Recreational boat- missing safety equipment, incorrect number placement etc. the fine is now \$3047 for Each violation. If a Rec boat had everything possible wrong with it, the maximum fine is \$402,920.

Other offenses:

Emergency Engine Cut Off Switch- 1st offense now \$103. Not using it when required. 2nd offense now \$258. 3rd offense now \$516.

Failure to stop vessel when directed \$5,000.

MSD (Marine sanitation device) \$9,704

Inland Rules violation \$18,139

Negligent operations \$8,485

Alcohol/Drugs \$9,380

6. S.S. United States

The Liner SS United States in 1952 became the worlds fastest liner setting a transatlantic speed record of 35 knots. For the last 28 years, the liner has been docked in Philadelphia, PA. The pier company where it is docked wants to raise the docking fee From \$850. a day. The owners of the ship want to move the liner to New York, but a pier for the 990' ship with a draft of 31 feet is not available. They want to refurbish the ship as a 1000 room hotel with restaurants, bars, a museum and acres of public green space. Time will only tell what happens to this magnificent ship.

7. Hydrofoils (E Foils) and Jet Boards (Motorized Surfboards)

USCG Letter Oct 2022- these are considered vessels and must have a HIN number and state registration numbers. They also need the operator to Wear a PFD, have a ECOS device and a sound producing device. The USCG states if they Wear the PFD, then No fire ext. is required.

8. OUPV Endorsement

USCG Letter 24 MAY 2023: On a USCG Operator Uninspected Passenger Vessel license, there needs to be an endorsement on their license stating they can train boaters underway on recreational boats.

9. Unexploded Munitions

Safety Alert 2024: Several Commercial Fisherman have caught unexploded munitions in their nets. The F/V Snoopy pulled one up and it caused an explosion on the vessel killing 8 of its crew. Notify the USCG and slowly lower the net back down and wait for assistance.

10. Lake Colors

How many lakes are Blue instead of green, brown or some other color. Of the worlds 117 million lakes, only 30% are blue. Blue lakes are found in the colder, high altitude areas and those that ice over. Local factors like land use, soil type, vegetation and human habitation affect the color. Blue water tends to be cleaner and clearer.

The countries of the world are monitoring lake colors as a way to tell climate variables as if global warming is happening. Remote sensing is a tool that allows to see what is happening without going out in a boat and sampling each lake. Water color affects water quality. Summer warming could lead to lakes shifting color away from blue.

On the lighter side- While serving on the USCGC Spike a 75' tug, we had a new recruit come aboard as crew. A new recruit needs to learn a whole lot about the CG and his command. He was given tide watch. The cutters small boat was tied alongside and he had to keep an eye out as the tide changed. If the tide went down he had to slack the mooring lines and as the tide came in, he had to take in the mooring lines. It took awhile for this new recruit but he finally realized that both boats went up and down with the tide together.

Another time he was wakened at 0200 hours and told it was his turn to go on watch and steer the boat, as he took the wheel and his eyes adjusted to the dark, he realized they were still tied to the dock.

Boaters Laws: Left to themselves, things always go from bad to worse.

If everything seems to be going well, you have overlooked something.

Difficulties exist to be overcome.

Finance-

1. Under the heading of Public Education, we had a deposit of \$75 and an expense of \$262.28 for a 55" HD TV and stand for PE classes and flotilla activities.

2. August brings us to the season of collecting dues. We will discuss dues at the 06 August meeting.

Public Education-Accomplishments- Trials of sample project screen material in various lighting conditions resulted in the conclusion that the projector-screen method remains a challenge and is impractical for our teaching setting. It was concluded that a more current video monitor (TV) would be the best solution.

Plans for next month- The flotilla is considering sponsoring a Sea Scout Ship. This activity presents an opportunity to expand our value to the community and teaching youth and as a byproduct, attract future Auxiliarists.

For the Good of the Order

A member or two of our flotilla are experiencing medical issues that prevent them from participating in activities and even causing them to not be able to contribute to this publication. I know we all wish them well and are able to join us soon.

Social-

August 20th. Location to be determined. Lately, we've needed a place that can seat 20-24 folks at a long table(s).