

# THE SIGNAL BRIDGE



Newsletter for Flotilla 14-2, Arlington

**Vol. L - No. 4 July 2025**  
**Bill Sekeres, FSO-PB**

## **FROM THE PILOT HOUSE**

A few days ago I sent an email to the staff officers that the agenda for this Tuesday's meeting would be consist of only updates to FSO reports and the balance of the time we would have training for entering activity logs in AUXDATA II. Since that email many items have surfaced that we need to talk about during the meeting. AUXDATA II entry is still extremely important so I'm suggesting a training session using Zoom. We'll select a date for the session at our July meeting.

The flotilla has been asked to conduct a Boat America class for the North Florida Scout Council. The council expects 40-45 students comprised of scouts ages 14-17 and council adults. This is a first for not just our flotilla but also Division 14 and maybe even beyond. The class is scheduled for July 26<sup>th</sup>. This special opportunity is understandably going to take some planning in it's execution as well as adjustments to how we as individuals and as a team accomplish the events for that day. I hope everyone sees this as an opportunity for us to reach "high ground" in accomplishing something special because it's rare- but maybe not for long.

Bill Sekeres, FC

## **Staff Officer Reports**

### **Communication Services**

Our Flotilla website and calendar are up to date and in compliance. If you would like something added to the calendar, feel free to contact me. After approval from the FC, we will add the information. There are several items that have been added to the website; Signal Bridge and the Monthly Meeting Minutes (will be added after approved). Please review our site, any comments are welcome. Flotilla Website URL: [Welcome to the Flotilla 14-2, District 7 Web Site](#)

Tom Anderson, FSO-CS

## **Finance**

We now have a Venmo account for accepting payments for our Public Education classes. It was created to allow prospective students an easier route (and more acceptable to our younger audience) to sign up for the instruction.

Transaction for May and June:

\$25.00 - deposit for safe boating classes

\$6.89 - debit for postage related to New Member application for Jack Kukis.

\$448.14- debit sixty Boat America booklets and three Auxiliary retirement pins to be presented to three of our members.

Bill Sekeres, FSO-FN

## **Materials**

You do not have to just order items from ANSC. Many other places can be ordered or downloaded from. Here are just 3 locations, there are others:1.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission has many publications.

There is a Manatee Coloring book and 14 other items for kids.

Pamphlets include The Florida Boat and Angling Guide, and also by Different Counties:

Duval- Publications as well.

[myfwc.com/research/publications/brochuresvideos](http://myfwc.com/research/publications/brochuresvideos)

[floridadep.gov/rcp/cva/content/clean-boater-program](http://floridadep.gov/rcp/cva/content/clean-boater-program) webinars etc.

[usace.army.mil/missions/civil-works/recreation/national-water-safety\\_program](http://usace.army.mil/missions/civil-works/recreation/national-water-safety_program)

PFD's, Float Plan etc.

Years ago each District had its own store to buy Aux Uniforms, Patrol Items etc. District 7's was in Southwest Florida, then it moved to Palm Coast.

I used District 5's South store when Palm Coast ended. Rather than look for volunteers to run each District Store, the Aux started to provide 1 central location for everybody.

It is in Granite City IL. where the Aux National Supply Center for materials is.

At these websites are Also Aux. Members Benefits and Discounts (that a lot of aux members know Nothing about) from Office Depot, Hertz and Avis Rent a Car, Hotels, Insurance, Medical etc etc. This is the place to get Uniform items, Non uniform Aux imprinted clothing and other items etc etc also. The AWU Uniform ordering info is here as well.

Websites- [cgauxa.org/shop/html](http://cgauxa.org/shop/html) or [auxcen.com](http://auxcen.com)

Marc Lang, FSO-MA.

## **Marine Safety**

With the Wind in our Sails and a Solid Crew, We can Navigate the Course Ahead.

Flotilla Missions and Events have no Finish Line

Kayak Paddling is also called Life in the Slow Lane

Proposed Events

Oct 09 FL. DEP Safety Fair

Oct 24-26 Jax Beaches Air Show

## Completed Events:

May 23 Station Mayport Rec Boat Equipment Display Media Event

June 13 Lakeshore Marina, Marina Day

1. Informed the SO-PE and the U.S. Power Squadron, also the Public thru the 2 boat shows and the PE classes of the New PFD regulations from the Federal Register.

2. I was wearing my USCG T Shirt when a person said to me Always Prepared- The USCG Motto. He was incorrect, it is Semper Paratus, Latin for Always Ready.

3. Cape Pigeons, a type of Petrel are true seabirds. Petrels and Albatrosses have special glands and tube noses (like straws) to excrete Salt Water from their system, enabling them to hydrate with Salt Water.

### 4. Sailing a Submarine

In 1921 the U.S. Navy submarine R-14 had a disabled engine. They returned to there home port of Hawaii in 64 days. They rigged a sail by tying bunk head frames together and secured them to the foredeck. They used 8 hammocks for a sail. Tied to the radio mast was 2 blankets and with these 3 sails they made there home port before the food ran out. The CO received a Navy Commendation for the ships resourcefulness.

### 5. Bright Pink Sand?

At Fort Pierce Fl., beaches have Pink Sand. A macro-algae cell contains a pigment called phycoerythrin. It is Not a Red Tide and is not harmful. The area was 50 feet wide by 400 feet long. It is common from North Carolina to Florida, Bermuda and the Southern Caribbean.

### 6. Boat Glare

Most boats have a white dashboard unlike a vehicle with a dark colored dash.

This is so glare is not seen on the vehicles windshield. To stop the glare on Boats, use a colored towel or cloth to cover the dash to reduce the glare.

### 7. Inventions A+ to Z+

A. The first recreational boat show was in 1894 in England.

B. The Parallel Ruler was invented in 1771 by Anthony Eckhard. An improved version was devised by William Field.

C. Edward Massey invented the Speed Log to measure speed and distance traveled. Later a line with Knots was run out and this is where we get the term knots instead of miles per hour.

D. In 1872 William Thomson invented the Sounding Machine to measure water depth.

E. Carl Zeiss invented field glasses or binoculars in 1893.

F. The Grabbait boathook was invented in 1913.

G. Luke Howard invented the cloud classifier, Cumulus- latin for heap, Stratus- latin for layer, Cirrus- latin for curl, Nimbus- latin for rain.

H. In 1846 Thomas Robinson invented the windspeed anemometer, used to measure wind speed.

I. Lt. Edward Very USN invented a way to propel flares with his Very Pistol.

J. William Evans in 1836 invented colored navigation lights on ships.

K. In 1916 Arthur Aldis invented the Aldis Lamp, used for signalling ships at sea.

L. In 1858 Philip Columb invented the Morse Code Lamp. It was a signalling system used to send messages between ships.

M. Admiral Robert Fitzroy invented and produced Weather Forecasts and he used an invention of his

called the Barometer to forecast them. He also changed the nautical term Larboard which sounded to close to Starboard to Port.

N. Christopher Columbus invented the Hammock which came from the word hamaca that was used on ships before bunks came along.

O. The Sail on a sailboat is called the Spinnaker which came from the boat Sphinx or Spinxer which became Spin Maker and now Spinnaker.

P. Catamarans were first used in 1662 in Britain for there stability.

Q. In 1849 a Concrete Boat was built by plastering a sand and cement mortar mix over a frame of iron mesh.

R. Steering Wheels replaced tillers in 1704 in England.

S. The Screw Propeller was first used in 1837 in London.

T. Wire Rope was used for ships rigging starting in 1835.

U. The Drogue Sea Anchor was used starting in 1895.

V. The CQR (Can Be Quickly Released) Anchor was first used in 1934.

W. The Portable Fire Extinguisher was invented in 1813.

X. In 1839 Inflatable Rubber Boats were in use.

Y. The Self Draining Cockpit was invented in 1889.

Z. The Signalling Flare was invented by Martha Coston in 1859.

AA. Edward Berthon invented the clinometer in 1835 which was used to measure the angle of a vessels roll.

BB. John Ward in 1856 introduced the Cork Lifejacket. In 1906 the Kapok Jacket was introduced.

CC. The first Survival Suit was introduced in 1797.

DD. Sou'wester Hats went on sale in 1841.

EE. A sea captain named Helly Hansen (a name you still see today) in 1877 supplied waterproof raingear (called oilskins) for fisherman.

FF. Reflective Tape (called Scotchlite from 3M) was invented in 1938.

GG. In 1906 the distress call was changed from CQD to SOS.

HH. The Alfred Kynaston Life-Buoy was invented 2 centuries ago and was Horseshoe Shaped, it later was changed to Circular. the Original Type 4 Throwable. Sailboats still use the Horseshoe Shape today.

## 8. PEPIRB Hit!

I received a phone call from USCG Miami RCC that the Pepirb I had when my boat was a facility was sending out a distress signal. I went to the NOAA website on Dec. 2 2023 and placed it Out of Service. It will still send out a signal from the Last owner whether it was Out of Service or not. When the new owner registers it and reactivates it, then the signal will go to the new owner. Placing it out of service only means a New Owner can register it. Until that happens it is still in Your Name.

## 9. Vessel Classifications

Note: These websites provide general information. They are not the Only ones you need to refer to when doing exams etc.

Ex: Crew Licensing is a different location.

33CFR173-183 Recreational or Pleasure Boats- Random Factory Inspection, Self Inspected by Owner, USCG Aux VSC, State Requirements for Licensing.

46CFR24-28 Commercial Carrying 1-6 Paying Passengers - Random Factory Inspection, Self Inspected by Owner or USCG/USCG AUX Voluntary Exam. USCG Licensed Operator.

46CFR175-187 Commercial Carrying MORE Than 6 Paying Passengers or 7 Plus. Under 100 Gross Tons- Continuous Factory Inspection, USCG Annual Inspection Plus Drydocking, USCG Licensed Operator Plus Crew

46CFR24-28 Commercial Fishing Vessel- USCG Licensed Operator depends on size of vessel and area operating. USCG/USCG AUX VSC

46CFR136-144 Commercial Tugs/Towing Vessels- USCG Licensed Operator depends on size of vessel and area operating. Annual Vessel Inspected by USCG (depends on Size of Vessel)

46CFR70-89 Commercial Paying Passengers Vessels over 100 Gross Tons  
Continuous Factory Inspection, Vessel Inspected by USCG Annually Plus Drydocking. Licensed USCG operator Plus Crew.

#### 10. New Product

The Leatherman was a multi purpose tool used for many functions.

Now there is 1 better and has More functions.

Victorinox Swiss Tool X Plus Ratchet. It has 38 functions and replaces an entire tool box, so they say.

Marc Lang, FSO-MS

## Public Education

Changes to our tri-fold brochure, which promotes taking a safe boating class through 14-2, include both invisible and invisible changes; it's current format was created using MS Word and included tables for text and graphics and was not user friendly. The new version still in development and when done will use a more user friendly standard table formatting. Additionally, there are content changes that will increase portability. The current version utilizing the FSO-PE name, phone and email is being replaced as follows: FSO- Public Education, Phone: 904-701-8499, email (new email undergoing testing). The phone number is from Google and is directed to the FSO-PE phone. There is no charge for this service.

Frank Samperisi, FSO-PE

## Vessel Examinations

Year to date, we have increased our vessel safety checks (VSC) over 2024 by over 337%. In January we anticipated our flotilla inspecting all boats (approx 40 vessels) located at the Moral Welfare and Recreation office at Mayport Navy Base but we lost that opportunity for this year. So my goal of 130 VSCs appears in jeopardy but – we're still going to try our best.

Bill Sekeres, FSO-VE

**German exchange student awarded 14-02 Honorary membership; completes Junior year at Neptune Beach, FL Duncan Fletcher HS while fulfilling a family legacy of cultural exchange.**



Story by Sally Washburn, Ed Washburn, Frank Samperisi/ Photo Frank Samperisi

Milena Michel hailing from Belm, Germany, is shown above with Flotilla Commander Bill Sekeres at her final 14-02 social dinner this past May, thus ending a year of scholarship, fellowship and cultural exchange. Milena follows the footsteps of her uncle, Ansgar Michel, who was also hosted by member Wirt “Ed” Washburn and his wife Sally, as an exchange student in 1997. Ed and Sally first met Milena when she was 4 years old during a 2012 trip to Germany to meet Angar’s family. They have since returned three times to spend time with Ansgar and his family. Ansgar and family have returned twice visiting the Washburns, who in turn, hope to return to Germany many more times to visit with their adopted families. Flotilla 14-02 is proud to have participated in this legacy of cultural exchange.

Milena talked about the cultural and educational similarities and differences observed. For instance, U.S. cars and stores are bigger but we do share some stores, such as Aldi; it’s interesting to note, says Milena, many supermarket prices are comparable. However, the infamous autobahn has no speed limits, compared to our speed limited interstate highways. In town, Germans obey the electronically enforced speed limits facing stiff penalties for violations.

German teens can drink at 16 and drive at 18. Florida’s summer weather is better than the weather currently in Milena’s region of Northwestern Germany that is due East of Amsterdam.

Educational systems are very different. American classes are easier and shorter. In Germany, most school days start at 8:00 a.m. and end at 4:00 p.m. with high school being considered 5<sup>th</sup> grade through 13<sup>th</sup> grade (more about 13<sup>th</sup> grade in a moment).

There are three levels in German schools. The first level (Hauptschule) is slower paced and more vocationally oriented. The second level (Realschule) is for the largest group of more academically oriented students. The third level (Gymnasium) is for the students who want to continue to university studies. School ends after 10<sup>th</sup> grade for level one and level two students. There is testing required to graduate from 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

If a level 1 or 2 student wants to continue to the 11<sup>th</sup> through 13<sup>th</sup> levels, they must have a good, passing score on the 10<sup>th</sup> grade test. Level 3 students have a six-hour test at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> year. To be a doctor or pilot for example, an A or B on this test is required. The 11<sup>th</sup> through 13<sup>th</sup> grades are similar to college or university level courses. German school testing has no multiple-choice exams after elementary school utilizing essay answers in the higher grades including university.

Sports such as football and baseball are a large part of American high schools; in Germany, sports are not school sponsored. German teens must join a separate club to participate in sports. German schools do offer a physical education class which covers many different sports such as volleyball, soccer, or basketball and usually meets once a week. There are few after school clubs or activities. Milena's school does offer band, but that was an exception in German education.

Milena plans to go through Grade 11 and then undergo training in the automotive industry; from mechanic to someday owning a business such as an automobile dealership.

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*And whether we shall meet again I know not.  
Therefore our everlasting farewell take:  
For ever, and for ever, farewell, [trustees]!  
If we do meet again, why, we shall smile;  
If not, why then, this parting was well made.  
William Shakespeare's Julius Caesar*

Milena, on behalf of the all members of flotilla 14-2, we will miss your sweet smile and your natural graciousness. We wish you the very best in all your dreams and efforts. And should our paths cross again we so look forward to the inevitable smiles and unavoidable hugs shared by all.