

# THE LIFE LINE

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ISSUE 2

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary  
District 5 SR - Division 23  
Flotilla 23-07 Herring Bay, Maryland

Virginia Shrift, Flotilla Commander  
Brian Shrift, Vice Flotilla Commander  
<https://Flotilla2307.com>

Frank Voltaggio, Editor

## WINTER 2024



## FLOTILLA ELECTIONS

As in the past, November brings with it the opportunity for our flotilla to elect new officers to lead us in the new year. This year the slate consisted of Gini Shrift for Flotilla Commander and Brian Shrift for Vice Flotilla Commander.

At the November 13 flotilla meeting, Mark Campbell, the newly elected Division 23 Commander, conducted the elections via a Zoom connection. As there were no other candidates, both Gini and Brian were elected unanimously by the attending members.

Best of luck to Gini and Brian in the coming year!

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## FLOTILLA STATISTICS FOR 2023

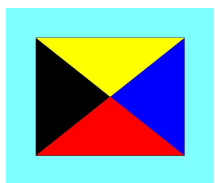
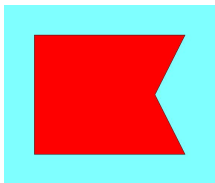
The following is a brief summary of the number of hours Flotilla 23-07 members have contributed for the CY 2023 as of December 31:

Maritime Observation	51.5
Operational Support	41.35
Marine Environmental Protection	44
Recreational Boating Safety	118.4
Marine Dealer Visits	80
Public Affairs	52
Public Education	65.5
Vessel Safety Checks	74.5
Administration	669.8
Other	692.93

**Total - All Missions 1889.98 hours**

Once again, a great effort by all the members in support of the US Coast Guard.  
Bravo Zulu!

*Brian Shrift, FSO-IS*



## COLD WATER IMMERSION

Many boaters are unaware of the sever dangers of falling into the water especially when temperatures begin to fall. In the interest of educating the public, Flotilla 23-07 held a special Cold Water Immersion and Hypothermia class at the Edgewater Public Library, in Edgewater, Md on November 4. Auxiliarists Dr. Paul Manicone, Joe DiStefano and Frank Voltaggio conducted the meeting.

Fortunately, Anne Arundel County had just recently provided a Smart board in each of their library meeting rooms. A Smart board is an interactive display used by presenters to whiteboard, project lesson materials, play videos, and give presentations. Rather than a simple digital whiteboard, a Smart board is more like a large tablet that instructors and students can interact with using a touch screen. It can also play videos, browse the internet, open files, and display virtually any type of content. It is an extremely useful tool that can adapt to different teaching styles and as we found out in giving this class, it provided a quick link to the Cold Water Boot Camp videos on the internet.

Paul began the first part of the training session with an in depth look at the effects of cold water on boaters. He spoke of the effects of mild, moderate and sever hypothermia on the human body while stressing the points of Flotation, Insulation and Communication as the best foundation for survivability. Paul gave an analysis of some case studies with conclusions to better emphasize proper survivability in cold water.

Discussions on cold water considerations, such as: boating accident statistics, first aid concerns, items to have onboard, and safe boating tips before you get underway were also presented. Joe DiStefano brought up the fact the state of New Jersey had recently enacted a new boating law which will now require anyone on board a craft less than 26 feet in length to wear a Personal Flotation Device while underway on their state waters from Nov. 1 to May 1.

The last portion of the class was a showing of the U.S. Coast Guard Cold Water Boot Camp video, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZkoO507-Tw&t=48s>. In this film, eight individuals from various water rescue organizations from around the country participated in a week-long training exercise in the challenge to learn cold water survivability techniques.

That class was held at Coast Guard Station Fairport Harbor, Ohio on Lake Erie and was presented by Dr. Gordon Giesbrecht, Professor of Thermophysiology at the University of Manitoba, Canada. Dr. Giesbrecht is a Canadian physiologist who operates the Laboratory for Exercise and Environmental Medicine at the University of Manitoba. He studies the effects of extreme environments, including cold, heat, hypoxia, and hypobaria on the human body. He has also conducted hundreds of cold water immersion studies that have provided valuable information about cold stress physiology and pre-hospital care for human hypothermia. Dr. Giesbrecht has studied drowning physiology and prevention as well as prevention of vehicle submersion deaths.

Flotilla 23-07 plans on presenting this Cold Water Immersion class at least one more time this winter.

*Frank Voltaggio, FSO-PB*



## DISPOSAL OF OUTDATED FLARES

Currently there is no single agency or policy for dealing with the disposal or recycling of unwanted flare and pyrotechnics due to the variation in local, state and federal laws pertaining to the handling & transportation of these devices. Since flares are considered explosive hazardous waste, outdated or unwanted devices should never be thrown overboard, activated in the marine environment or placed in household trash.

In addition, flares contain perchlorate (a non-environmentally friendly pollutant & likely human carcinogen) so soaking them in water as a means of disposal is not a viable solution. Since the USCG, USCG Auxiliary & United States Power Squadrons are no longer permitted to accept out-dated marine flares / pyrotechnics (flares, meteors & orange smoke) due to safety concerns, local fire services or police agencies are the most likely sources for advice or assistance on proper disposal of such devices in your area (they may be able to dispose of them in their burn units). Other potential sources of assistance are local public works, sanitation or Hazmat units. Oftentimes, whatever agency handles ammunition & fireworks disposal may also handle unwanted flares.

### Partial Solution - Handheld Flares

Although no Federal or State Government entities currently accept aerial flares and they do not have any suggestions on what to do with them, if you live in Anne Arundel County, call 410-222-6108 for date & location of hazardous materials drop-offs related to handheld flares. In other counties of Maryland or areas outside the state, call your local waste management office, fire or police departments to request information on Flare / Pyrotechnic disposal in your area.

### Keeping Expired Flares on Your Vessel

Notwithstanding that there is no consensus position on this topic, retaining them on board a vessel as back-ups may not be a good idea since older flares may become unstable & their burn rates unpredictable. If you decide to do this, they should not be kept with current flares. Store only the most recently expired units in a separate waterproof container clearly marked as expired.

*Reprinted in part from USCG Auxiliary Flotilla 23-01 web site.*



*U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Carmen Cave*

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## BOATING SAFETY COURSE

In the fall of 2023, Flotilla 054-23-07 member, Helen Gemignani, participated in an intensive public education course called *Boating Skills and Seamanship* (BS&S) presented by USCG Auxiliary Flotilla 054-24-08 of Gaithersburg, Maryland.

This BS&S course was a comprehensive boater certificate course designed for both the experienced and novice boater. The course consisted of core required lessons plus lessons providing up-to-date knowledge for handling boats under all conditions. Topics included Weather, Lines and Knots, Your Boat's Radio, Introduction to Navigation, Powering/Handling Your Boat, Rules of the Road, Highway Signs, Trailering, Equipment, and Which boat is right for you.

Twelve of the classes were delivered via ZOOM over seven weeks, from September to October, and culminated in a final five hour in-person class. The in-person class was hands-on knot tying, chart plotting practices and a demo of a CGAUX member's portable radio facility. The flotilla delivered the same course last year and feel that the interest is great enough to continue offering it each year to the public.

There were ten students taught over 12 weeks by five different members of 054-24-08 who each taught their specialty chapters. The students ranged in age from 14 years old and up, who either already owned a boat or planned to buy one very soon. The youngest classmate was gifted his first Jon boat and wanted to earn his boating safety card so that he could start his boating life as a responsible and informed mariner.

Registration for the course was made through 054-24-08's CGAUX WOW page and the cost was \$75 for the public. Auxiliary members just paid for the cost of the book. At the end of the course, all students took the comprehensive closed book exam. Those who passed earned a course certificate and their BS&S boating safety card.

Special thanks to 054-24-08's FSO-PE, Dr. Grace Sagayadan, who organized and delivered most of the course. She was contagiously dynamic and the students all really enjoyed the class.

*Helen Gemignani, FSO-HR*

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## AWARDS

Helen Gemignani - Certification of Advancement to Vessel Examiner




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## TRANSFERS

Robin Ainsworth - to District 7, Flotilla 070-11-10  
Chris Jensen - to District 1, Flotilla 014-15-02

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## PASSING THOUGHT

Once, while crossing the Atlantic in bad weather, Mark Twain became severely seasick. When he described what the experience was like, he said there were two distinct phases of seasickness: "At first you are so sick you are afraid you will die, and then you are so sick you are afraid you won't die."

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

January 21 - Division 23 Change of Watch, Renditions Country Club, Davidsonville, Maryland, 1230

February 12 - Flotilla meeting, Cedarhurst Community Center, Shady Side, Maryland, 1900

March 11 - Flotilla meeting, Cedarhurst Community Center, Shady Side, Maryland, 1900

April 8 - Flotilla meeting, Cedarhurst Community Center, Shady Side, Maryland, 1900

May 13 - Flotilla meeting, Cedarhurst Community Center, Shady Side, Maryland, 1900

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Visit us at:

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