

THE LIFE LINE

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

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ELECTION RESULTS

On November 14, Flotilla 23-07 held their annual elections for Flotilla Commander and Vice Commander. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic still affecting some people, the meeting was once again held as a virtual event with members connecting in on a video conferencing call hosted by Brian Shrift.

Margret Butler, the Division 23 Commander, conducted the elections per the Auxiliary rules. The Elections Committee reported that one notice of intent to run for FC was filed by Virginia Shrift and one notice of intent to run for VFC was filed by Brian Shrift. Virginia was then unanimously elected by motion for FC and Brian was unanimously elected by motion for VFC.

Congratulations to Gini and Brian and best of luck in the coming year!

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RECRUITING - EVERYONE'S JOB

In the USCG Auxiliary, recruiting new members has always been an ongoing effort. The organization always seems to be in a state of flux as new people join while some others decide to leave for various personal reasons. Yet some flotillas don't seem to have any problem in recruiting members while others just struggle to get along.

In the past, many of our members came to the Auxiliary through the boating safety courses that we typically run during the year. Covid-19 took its toll on that activity but we are now back to in-person classes once again. The classroom can be a great recruiting platform in that we have a captive audience to which to make our pitch. Potential recruits also get to talk to someone in person and get answers to many of their questions right there and then.

Another useful device is placing recruiting posters in store windows in our community with info on attending meetings. Many people in our area of Shady Side/Deale, Maryland own boats yet they may not be aware of Flotilla 23-07 and the work we do right in their neighborhoods. To put it another way, the public cannot get to know us if they never get to see us. Let's help spread the word that we are open for business and welcome their company!



RIDE INSIDE

Bow riding, or sitting on the edge of a moving boat, is illegal. A fall can put you in the path of the propeller, causing serious injury or death.



BOATING SAFETY CLASSES - BACK AGAIN

After a three year hiatus due to COVID-19 and the resulting pandemic, members of Flotilla 23-07 were finally able to begin holding in-person boating safety classes this year. With the assistance of the personnel from the Anne Arundel County Edgewater Library located on Stepneys Lane in Edgewater, Maryland, interested boaters attended a two day class at that site to earn their Maryland State boating registration card. Auxiliarists Joe DiStefano (FSO-PE), Ray Walsh, Chris Jensen, Paul Manicone, and Frank Voltaggio were on hand to teach the basic boating topics.

The first class took place on October 8 at which time the students were introduced to Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4 covering such topics as Know Your Boat, Before You Get Underway, Operating Your Boat Safely, and Legal Requirements. Instructors went through a review of each chapter highlighting the most important questions as well as those that would potentially show up on the test.

Students were then given a two week break in which to digest all the previously presented information as well as to read up on the remaining chapters in preparation for the final exam.

On October 22 the class reconvened and went through Chapter 5 on Boating Emergencies and Chapter 6 on Enjoying Water Sports. Another review of all the chapters was conducted and the students then tackled the final exam to which all ten students passed.

Following the presentation of the Maryland State registration cards, the students stayed to participate in additional training sessions in marlinespike, chart reading and how to operate a VHF radio.

Joe DiStefano personally thanked Elaine Saba of the Edgewater library facility and her staff for their exceptional support in promoting and advertising the class to the public. Plans are already in place to conduct another boating safety class at the library in April.



Joe DiStefano addressing the importance of Risk Management.

SUDDENLY IN COMMAND (SIC)

You find yourself out on a friend's boat cruising along the Chesapeake Bay and suddenly they collapse and fall to the deck. What do you do now? Fortunately, it is not a common occurrence but it has been known to happen to some people, especially those that sail with older boaters.

Members of Flotilla 23-07 had the opportunity to present such a situation to a small audience at the Harbor Cove Marina in Deale, Maryland on October 15. In the comfort of a class room setting, Auxiliarists Joe DiStefano, Chris Jensen and Frank Voltaggio presented a number of possible scenarios that could occur while boating involving a passenger suddenly being placed in command. They raised such questions as: What if the Captain becomes ill? What if someone falls overboard? What if there's a fire on board? How can you call for help? Where are the life jackets? Where's the boat's ignition? Where's the boat's throttle?

While the students in this class had some boating experience in their background, most were not familiar in using a VHF radio and calling for help. Chris Jensen gave a demonstration using actual radios, both hand held and fixed to show just how easy it was to accomplish. Chris described the Digital Selective Calling feature now found on many VHF radios which will automatically send a distress call to the Coast Guard. He also made the point that just using a cell phone for emergencies on the water did not necessarily give you the full benefit of reaching many more people like a radio would.

Joe DiStefano completed the class by taking the opportunity to demonstrate the proper procedure for setting an anchor.

With the success of this first SIC class, the flotilla is planning to present additional classes in the future to other yacht clubs and marinas in our area of responsibility.

FIRST AID KIT RECOMMENDATIONS

As the saying goes, accidents will happen. We may not be able to avoid them entirely but we can be prepared to deal with them when they occur. One of the best ways to do that on the water is to have a first aid kit on your boat. While no one would expect you to conduct any kind of surgery on the deck of a pleasure craft, we do need to be able to at least assess the situation, call for help and if necessary stop someone from bleeding to death.

A basic first aid kit should be waterproof and contain the following:

- ✓ An extra towel (preferably cotton)
- ✓ Antiseptic medications and lotions
- ✓ Aspirin or aspirin substitute
- ✓ Assorted gauze adhesive bandages and pads
- ✓ Cotton and cotton swabs
- ✓ Latex gloves
- ✓ Scissors and tweezers
- ✓ Tape
- ✓ Instruction booklet

Semper Paratus!

FAREWELL

Flotilla 23-07's own Mike Prokopchak recently announced his retirement from the Coast Guard Auxiliary after serving for over 24 years. Mike has held a variety of positions such as FC, VFC, boat crew, and boat coxswain to name just a few. He was instrumental in providing numerous boating safety classes over the years as a public education instructor in the Annapolis, Maryland area. Fair winds and following seas, Mike!

A TIME-HONORED CALLING

Sailor (sā'lar) *n.* 1. one who sails the seas, 2. one who understands the practical operation of a ship.

The term "sailor" no longer appears to have the common usage that it once had in popular culture with the possible exception in some navies. What a sad revelation for some old sea dogs to have to accept. How are they identified today? Seagoing workforce? Ship's personnel? Seafaring specialists?

Herman Melville must be turning over in his grave!

When I was in basic training many years ago, our instructor, a first-class boatswain's mate, taught us the meaning of a multitude of nautical words and phrases. One in particular stands out in my memory: He said that in his opinion, the highest compliment that a person could ever receive was to be called a "sailor". The significance being that you had spent considerable time at sea and developed the ability to weather any storm under the most adverse conditions. That is not a skill set the average person looks to acquire, even today.

The maritime trade has always been known to be an especially dangerous profession. Not all who go down to the sea in ships return safely to port. Such however, is the inherent risk sailors accept each time they prepare to get underway.

Nonetheless, those who are called to the sea should feel a certain pride whenever being referred to as a "sailor". They have rightfully earned that distinct honor.

Frank Voltaggio, FSO-PB

PASSING THOUGHT

Good judgement comes from experience and a lot of that comes from bad judgement.

Will Rogers

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 9 - Flotilla meeting, Cedarhurst Community Center, Shady Side, Maryland, 1900

January 21 - Division Change of Watch, Davidsonville, Maryland

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

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

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

April 22 & 29 - Boating Safety Class, Edgewater Library, Edgewater, Maryland, 1000

April 28-30 - Boat Show, Annapolis, Maryland, TBA

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

May 20 - Marina Safety and Fellowship, Herrington Harbor South, Friendship, Maryland, 0900 - 1500

Visit us at:

<http://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=054-23-07>

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Photos by F. Voltaggio

