



Whittier Soundings

August 2003 Mark Poe FC, Tony Hillegeist VFC, Cathey Sterling FSO-PB Volume XIII Issue 5

PACAREA Training Team Seward Alaska, June 16-20, 2003

The PACAREA Response Boat Training Team Composing of BMC James Madsen, BM1 Tom Lefko, BM1 Brian Hughes, and BM2 Amy Sinclair put on a great five-day training class for large group of D17 Auxiliarists. This group travels around mainly to Coast Guard small boat stations to help keep the edge on training on the non standard boats now in the active duty. This was the first group of Auxiliarists that this particular training team was scheduled to train, with another later this summer. We made sure to keep them on their toes with questions and new ideas (and old ways) and they kept us busy going over a lot of new material and presenting some old material in a new way for a different perspective. A lot of subjects were covered in the classroom, but to summarize we covered the following

- Operational Risk Management (using the GAR model)
- Dress for Success (PPE)
- Boat characteristics, vessel systems, restrictive and disabling casualties
- Trailoring and hitch safety
- Morning briefings
- Boat checks and light offs
- Boat crew safety briefings
- Trim and Throttle control
- Personnel recovery techniques
- Personnel recovery practice (dockside)
- Towing (alongside and stern)
- Pacing and personnel transfers

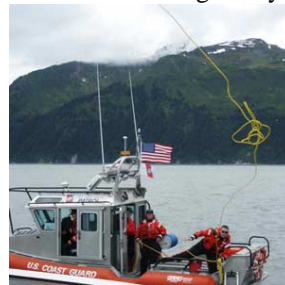
Homework was also handed out with a big list of questions to answer using the Non Standard Boat handbook to look them up in.

On Tuesday afternoon both 256610 and 256611 along with 200(Summer Madness) and 248 (Carpenter) were underway and the live personnel recovery was practiced until everyone was run through the paces. Wednesday afternoon towing was done with the same vessels again. Alongside and stern tows became second nature! Thursday underway was pacing. This was exciting for all as it involved matching speeds with another vessel and then moving in towards them



at the proper angle until two boats became one and you could transfer people and equipment.

Friday was used as a review and Jeopardy was the theme. It sounded kind of corny at first but as it progressed it was competitive to keep up and a fun way to review all the material that was given to us in the last four days. Was the class good? I thought it was very good, as there were mostly practical and usable items covered and a lot of good on the water time making sure you got it right.



Photos by Stewart Sterling

Once over we all said our goodbyes and loaded up to go home...except for a few that had UTM Coxswain check rides to complete! But that's a different story.





Environmental Concerns

PWS Second Annual Clean-up:

By John Whitney

On May 31 for the second year in a row, folks concerned about the health and welfare of the Sound joined together in a mass shoreline clean-up effort. Over sixty volunteers and a dozen boats departed Whittier for pre-assigned beaches around the entire perimeter of Port Wells, including the north shore of Culross Island, mouth of Cochran Bay, Applegate Island, Coghill Point, and Point Meares on Perry Island. Supporting organizations included Prince William Sound Keepers, Alaska Sea Kayakers, Chugach National Forest Glacier Ranger District, Honey Charters, Lazy Otter Charters, and Sound Echo Adventures, as well as a Whittier Flotilla contingent. Providing boats were Dave Goldstein, Jim Chase, Van Waggoner, Craig and Lisa Woolard, Chris Pallister, and John Whitney. Rae DeLey came aboard the DocWallop as a volunteer.

The day started early at Pete Denmark's Alaska Sea Kayaker shop in the Triangle, with Pete hosting breakfast goodies and coffee to kill, while boat assignments were distributed. Weather was overcast with calm seas, so decision was to proceed. Dave Goldstein warned everyone that a nasty front was arriving around 3:00 pm, which then became our endpoint and suggested time to head back to harbor. Jim Chase and Woolards teamed up and headed for Bettles Bay, before completing their day's work at Pigot Bay. Meanwhile, Van Waggoner started in Harrison Lagoon and proceeded on to Pirate Cove. Dave Goldstein did the southern shore of Culross Island, and Chris Pallister did Coghill Point and the shoreline down to Golden. The Forest Service was the major trash hauler, providing their large Williwaw and Eaglet boats. By day's end, Williwaw was packed to its gills.

Boating Safety

PWS Safe Operations of Sea Kayaks and Motor Vessels

By John Whitney

A brochure, specific to PWS for safe operations of sea kayaks and motor vessels is now available and being used this season. Alaska Sea Kayakers and the Forest Service have each donated funds for its publication and dispersal. They are available through the various outfitters and transporters, by the Alaska Department of Transportation at the Whittier tunnel, in the Harbor Master's office, from the new Forest Service kiosk in Whittier, and in the Whittier Flotilla Caboose. Several of the transporters and outfitters have also added its contents to their websites.

Continuing our Auxiliary emphasis on safety and accident prevention, we also have a newly installed 24-hour weather station attached beside the steps of the Caboose. With the push of a button, any boater, tourist, fisherman, or curious passerby can hear the updated weather forecast for any part of Prince William Sound. Stop by and listen!

Anchoring



Photo by Stewart Sterling

Be sure your anchor line is securely fastened. Watch the tides.



Member's Corner

"I WAS IN THE BOAT, AND A BREAKER CAME OUT OF NO WHERE..." by Linda Wells

Two men, with halibut on board, navigated to Little Smith Island late July 4th afternoon. The younger man had 12 years experience, nearly half his life, and took the 22-foot Thunder Jet vessel his father and fishing partner owned up to the rocky shore to care for their catch. As they worked, they noticed their dilemma. The tide was beginning to ebb and their boat was perched high and dry on some large rocks just off shore. Adding that fact to the exhaustion of a very long drive from Whittier in Prince William Sound's unusually hot sun, the pair opted to camp and wait for the high tide due early Saturday before dawn to attempt to refloat. With their alarm clock set, they napped while the weather closed in around them. They soon awoke with the wind and steady rain of a Gulf of Alaska low-pressure system sweeping in from the southeast. In the confusion and frustration, the boat refused to budge off the rocks. His father was burdened by his weight in the rising tide, and the breakers made any maneuver to dislodge the boat treacherous. Finally, a breaker flooded the boat destroying their boat's batteries and electronics. Unmercifully, the waves broke out the large windows and laid the boat too low in the water to bail. Wet and in concern for their lives, they began to pack much of their more useful gear into the dingy. The only thing they did not have that could have helped immensely was a working hand held radio. They had top of the line fishing rods, plastic bags with survival items, two large gasoline cans, the precious bag of guns and tools, and themselves to transport. The younger man was drawing on a Red Cross First Aid and CPR class and his years of experience to try and remove themselves from imminent danger. Would they find help on nearby Naked Island? The hours dragged by as they picked their way through the seas toward the barely visible cliff-like shoreline of Naked Island's Outer Cove, a six-mile trip. The wind had not let up and had tossed them viciously off course many times. Their overloaded dingy offered no shelter from the waves, and then just as they rounded a point they saw the massive floodlights spaced evenly along the

superstructure of the enormous tug "Endurance" skippered by Roger Melton. They were in awe. The hospitality was ever so needed as they were invited to stay overnight, eat with the crew, and stay until they could be transported to Whittier somehow. The past 36 hours began to wash as they realized they had been delivered from disaster. Meanwhile, another man had been busy. He had seen the dingy leave the island with what appeared to be a single person on board. As he approached the island he saw the Thunder Jet totally immersed, but still hanging on to its perch. It wasn't any of his desire to try to dislodge the boat, but he did spend some time investigating its condition and situation. As he left the scene, he called Coast Guard Valdez to see if they were aware of this story. They were not. It was nearly 1600 when his conversation with Valdez was picked up by Auxiliary Vessel 243 on Channel 16. While the man talked and 243 listened, the two men were being brought on board the tugboat Endurance, which was anchored, and currently assisting a large shipping vessel in Outer Cove. Whittier Flotilla coxswain Dave Brubaker, who owns Auxiliary Vessel 243, made the decision to contact Valdez with the intent to go to the site of the swamped boat as eyes and voice for Coast Guard Valdez's clearer understanding of this mysterious story of dingy and swamped boat. Estimated time enroute would be a little more than an hour with 243's twin 250 hp diesels and semi-planing 45-foot hull. The two Auxiliary crewmembers he had on board would more than round out his useful endeavor. Valdez responded positively and 243 sped toward Little Smith Island. Within a short time, Valdez contacted 243 with a task, which would be more useful than the boat situation. 243 accepted the request to transport two men to Whittier, who were on board Endurance. The pieces of the puzzle were getting more interesting. Roger Melton had contacted Valdez and was more than pleased with the timely arrival of help. Endurance used its crane to settle the dingy on 243's ample bow deck and assisted the transfer of gear and men onboard 243.



Photos by Dave Brubaker



By 1800, 243 was enroute to Whittier with two extra passengers and an amazing amount of gear strapped down on board. While paperwork for an accident report for the two men began revealing the puzzle's particulars, a simultaneous story was unfolding...

"I'LL TOW IF I CAN BE COMPENSATED FOR THE GAS"

The call responded to a MARB (Marine Assistance Request Broadcast) at around 1:00 p.m. on July 5th. The Good Samaritan policy of the Coast Guard allows any vessel to assist another if they feel they are capable of the task and stay in contact with Coast Guard Valdez. It was an unusual response because of the gasoline compensation stipulation, but the distressed vessel requesting help accepted. Coast Guard Valdez asked for vessel particulars, size and estimated time of arrival in Whittier. The situation began near Eleanor Point on the north end of Knight Island. By the time 243 was underway from Naked Island, the tow was approaching Culross Passage. 243's Dave Brubaker had heard that earlier call and had let Valdez know that he was within an hour's passage to the location. Valdez did not respond to Dave's offer, but the lack of response seemed of little consequence since the other events of the afternoon had already provided a very welcomed reward for the seemingly endless hours of Auxiliary training and availability in Whittier Flotilla's area of responsibility. As 243 had plotted a route directly in line with the route of the tow, he informed Valdez that he was available to evaluate the progress of the tow, again as eyes and voice, painting a complete picture for Valdez. Valdez accepted Dave's offer. When 243 approached the southern entrance, to Culross Passage, Dave made radio contact with the tow and learned they were navigating the narrows near the north entrance to Culross Passage. The tow was a 26-foot Bayliner with three people and two dogs on board. The towing vessel was a slightly smaller aluminum vessel powered by a 150 horsepower outboard. At the north entrance, the tow and towed vessels were approaching an evening anchorage in the northern entrance to Culross Passage. An uncertainty was arising because the towing vessel was already low on fuel and was requesting gasoline from 243 to finish the tow. Dave contacted Valdez to help them understand the situation. Valdez responded with the go ahead for Dave should the towed vessel request a transfer to be towed by 243. Meanwhile the two from Naked Island

offered their five-gallons of gasoline to the towing vessel. Dave offered the Bayliner a quick tow to Whittier if they wished. It was up to them. "Now I won't get my steak dinner I was promised!" complained the aluminum boat. "We'll pay you right now, not to worry!" responded the Bayliner. The daughter on board the Bayliner requested to come on board the 243 for the ride to Whittier. Without hesitation, Dave said, "Come on board and what movie would you like to watch?" That made a lot of points with the towed vessel. Underway once again, with a long day's worth of interesting stories to record in the unfaltering paperwork, 243 discovered an unusual feature of its design. By towing a 26-foot vessel with 150 yards of towline, the effect is the same as a drogue steadying your heading when negotiating winds and following seas. The trip to Whittier was all the more pleasurable for coxswain, crew, passengers (including one teenager sporting a Coast Guard Auxiliary float coat, munching snacks and watching "The Kid") and two parents tagging along behind all to themselves and their two dogs. The hour was getting late, only a half hour until midnight, and the tide was extremely low making a side tow in the harbor difficult for 243. Showing the best Auxiliary traditions of readiness and willingness, Auxiliary Vessel 256611 came to meet the tow at the harbor entrance for the final alongside tow to the East Harbor ramp and dock. These events again demonstrated how very useful the training, readiness and willingness of Auxiliary members can be to ease the burdens laying at the feet of the men and women on duty in the Coast Guard here in the waters of Prince William Sound and the thousand of miles of coastline around the Gulf of Alaska.

CLASSES

September 16, Tuesday, from 6-9 PM at the BP Energy Center - 900 Benson Blvd.

Basic Coastal Navigation (8 consecutive Tuesdays)

February 4, (8 consecutive Tuesdays), 6-9 PM at the BP Energy Center
Advanced Coastal Navigation

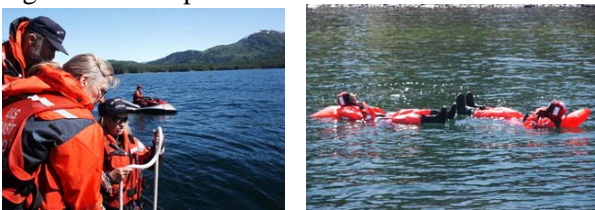
February 6, (8 consecutive Thursdays), 6-9 PM at the BP Energy Center
Boating Skills and Seamanship



TRAINING

After the academy---

Eager to run the boat in our official capacities as coxswain we find our selves sharing the time with trainees. What better way to use the resources of new coxswain - run safety patrols and share training. Several of the Whittier Flotilla members are working on their crew or coxswain requirements and have been able to get some of the tasks and skills completed. Mark Parmelee was able to get some PIW, Station Keeping, Steer a Compass course, and Search Pattern work completed. We didn't have a SAR case during our underway time but did keep an eye on one of the local tour boats that had an engine quit. John & Sue Whitney were able to work on Steer a Compass Course, put on the Ocean Commander and demonstrate the suit in the water. We did some Towing, how to rescue a Person in the Water. A person lying on the boat deck demonstrated the par buckling technique and the "rescuers" stood on the engine cover to practice.



Rae DeLay spent several hours getting some shore side signoffs to be completed while we waited for the weather conditions to subside. Once we were on patrol she Stood a Lookout Watch, Steered a Compass Course, Located Depth Contours using the Depth Finder.

Russ & Kathy Lyday went out to get more underway practice time. They worked on Towing Astern and Alongside; Stand a Lookout, Pre-Underway and Return to Base Checks, Steer a Compass Course, Throw a Heaving Line, Person in the Water Rescues and other skills.

Ron Cothren did Pre & Return Checks, Steer a Compass Course, Find Depth Contours using the depth sounder, Throw a Heaving Line, Person in the Water Rescues.

Since the completion of the academy and passing our check rides and oral exams it has been a busy and satisfying summer.

All Good Kids Love Milk

The Five Seeing Habits of a UPS driver
And how they can be used on the water

1. **Aim High In Steering:** Look as far down the road as possible to uncover important traffic information to make appropriate decisions.
2. **Get The Big Picture:** Maintain the proper following distance so you can comfortably determine the true hazards around your vehicle. Don't tailgate others.
3. **Keep Your Eyes Moving:** Scan - don't stare. Constantly shift you eyes while driving. Active eyes keep up with changing traffic conditions.
4. **Leave Yourself An Out:** Be prepared. Surround your vehicle with space in front and at least on one side to escape conflict.
5. **Make Sure They See You:** Communicate in traffic with your horn, lights and signals to establish eye contact with motorists and pedestrians. Be reasonably sure of people's intentions.

Translated for the water they would be something like this

Aim High In Steering: Look as far Ahead of your course as possible to uncover important traffic & hazard's information to make appropriate decisions.

Get The Big Picture: Maintain the proper safety distance around you so you can comfortably determine the true hazards around your vessel. Use all your resources to determine this (eyes, radar, chart plotter, lookouts, etc.) Don't just follow others or a course.

Keep Your Eyes Moving: Scan - don't stare. Constantly shift you eyes while at the helm. Active eyes keep up with changing conditions.

Leave Yourself An Out: Be prepared. Surround your vessel with space in front and at least on one side to escape conflict.

Make Sure They Hear & See You: Communicate effectively with everyone around you including your crew. Use the power of your voice. Use the radio, hailer, your horn or even lights for traffic around you. Alter your course to give the other vessel a warning. Be reasonably sure of people's intentions.



COAST GUARD AUXILIARY



17th District

Whittier Flotilla Web Site
<http://www.uscgaux.org/~1700204>