

Whittier Soundings



Newsletter of the Whittier Flotilla 170-02-04 District 17 Alaska

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Russ Lyday, FC **Bill Morris, VFC**
Cathey Sterling, FSO-PB

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Fall District Training

This fall we are offered a variety of training opportunities. The Flotilla Commander Academy will be held November 17 & 18 at the Fort Richardson Army Base Naval Reserve Training Center. This class is for incoming Flotilla Commanders. Please RSVP and direct any questions about the class to VCO Marie Scholle at ffmms@uaf.edu

November 17, an 8 hour TCT (team coordination training) class, IS 700 & IS 800, and Crew Training class is offered.

TCT will be held at the Fort Richardson Naval Reserve Training Center. Those working to become Crew, Coxswain or PWC Operator qualified that haven't taken the 8 hour TCT will need this course as part of the qualifications. Please RSVP and direct questions to Dean Terencio dterencio@gci.net

IS-700 & IS-800 will be held at the Highland Tech Center (old Boniface Mall) 5530 E. Northern Lights Boulevard. IS-100 & IS-700 are required for Crew, ATON Verifiers, and Watch Standers as well as FC and VFC. IS-200 & IS-800 are required for Coxswain & PWC Operators as well as VCP, DCP, RCO, VCO, and DCO. RSVP and direct questions to Nanci Terencio nterencio@gci.net

Crew Training will also be held at Highland Tech Center. This class is a shore based skills workshop with mentors available for sign offs of crew manual tasks that don't require on water demonstration. Your crew manual will be needed

for the mentors to sign. RSVP and direct any questions to Rae De Ley rae_deley@hotmail.com

Those working on operational qualifications are encouraged to attend one of these courses.

After the training Saturday November 17, the annual Holiday Get Together will be held 6:00 PM at the Otter Lake Lodge on Fort Richardson. The dinner is an impressive menu catered by our very own Marie Scholle and Richard Fairbanks. Cost for the meal is \$10.00 per person. There will be a "crazy gift exchange" (\$10.00 & up) and a raffle with some great prizes. You don't have to attend training to attend the holiday meal, all are welcome. RSVP and direct any questions about the get together to VCO Marie Scholle at ffmms@uaf.edu

The flyers for the training and the Holiday Get Together are available on the District 17 US Coast Guard Auxiliary web site.

Up Coming Training

By Rae De Ley, FSO-MT

If you look out the window you will see another great Alaskan summer has come to a close. Fishing, shrimping, and boating have been put on hold until next spring.

Since most of us are off the water until next spring, it is a great time to take some Auxiliary classes and to acquire some new boating skills. And it just so happens there are a few Auxiliary training opportunities coming up that you might be interested in!

On October 30 an Auxiliary Seamanship (AUX SEA) Class will be starting. This is one of the Auxiliary Operations Classes. You can study AUX SEA on line or from a paper manual. The class is only open to members of the USCG Auxiliary and there is no charge for the manual.

On November 17 as part of the Division Training there will be Land Based Sign Offs for Auxiliary Crew, Coxswain, and Personal Water Craft; an 8 hour Team Coordination Training (TCT) Session; and an Incident System (IS) 700/800 Class. All of these training sessions will take place in Anchorage.

In winter/spring 2008 the Whittier Flotilla proposes to have First Aid/CPR, another 8 hour TCT, and another session for Land Based Sign Offs.

If you have questions about any of these training opportunities, drop me a line at Rae_deley@hotmail.com.

Canal Barging in France

By Mark Parmelee

Following International Rules for "Region A" traveling on canals and rivers in France one does not follow "Red on the Right Returning." This fact and others were discovered by the Keiki crew on a June trip to Southwest France.

Anchoring is not allowed in the canals and rivers of France. Damage to canals is feared so one takes 3' stakes and drives them into the shore where one wants to overnight. Our barge came with three metal stakes and a heavy hammer to drive them in. One cannot tie to trees or to structures. We spent one night along the Garone Canal tied to shore in the middle of pastoral France. The rest of the trip we traversed the narrow Baise River and only overnights at wide spots improved at communities.

At every town is a fine French bakery. The French like their baguettes and pastries. Food was definitely a highlight of the trip although we ate most meals on board. Some boaters fished but the cleanliness of the water is questionable as there are limited pumping stations on the canals and rivers and most boats discharge straight

overboard. Swimming was not recommended in the cloudy water. (If you want to swim I recommend a bareboat charter in the British Virgin Islands.)

The best boats are surrounded with a heavy rubrail and fenders that circle the boat fenders are not removed while underway. Passing through locks one finds about an inch to spare between the fenders and the lock walls. Entering locks is mostly by feel. Boats for two couples are more maneuverable as they are narrower. The vessel the Keiki crew commanded for a week was 3.65 Meters wide. (The widest boat allowed on the river.) It was 12.6 Meters long and equipped with two heads, three staterooms and rated to sleep 10.



The Keiki crew of four was joined by an able bodied sister from California to make 5 of us on board. Powered by a 38 hp diesel the boat had over 10,000 hours on her. Driving was very easy. I think she knew the route better than we did.

Top speed on the canal is 7.5 knots and on the river 6 knots. These speed limits are enforced to keep down shore erosion from wakes. Trips through the farmlands were short as communities were no farther than 10 kilometers apart. We were looking to travel through the community Condom, the name sake for our boat, but we did not get that far up the river due to a broken lock. We traveled for three days reaching the town of Nerac and turned around when we learned a lock was broken just ahead of us. The trip back was familiar but still offered plenty to do.

Along both sides of the canal and river are former tow paths mules used to pull the barges. Now these tow paths have often been restored as bike trails. We had bikes on board for frequent side trips. The bikes were very handy for daily trips to the bakery.

In our travels locks were navigated about every hour and operated by the boat crew. One member of the crew, typically the teenager on board, departed on docks adjacent to lock. Elaine would then move a lever or insert a magnetic card to open the lock, close the doors behind the boat, fill the lock with water or drain, and lastly open a door at another level. The process was automated and only a few clicks of the lever were needed. Remaining on board were able bodied crew forward and stern to throw lines up the lock to be routed back to the boat. These lines kept the boat from moving forward or aft too much within the lock. Each lock has room for two boats. Typically we traveled the Baise River by ourselves and did not have to share locks. We saw no Americans the entire trip.

Although it was difficult to leave Alaska during the summer boating season, the Keiki crew enjoyed their French canal boat trip. We noted in our Locaboat brochure that boats are also available for weekend trips in locations including Holland, Italy, England, and Ireland. Another canal boat trip may be in our future.

Caboose Library

By John Whitney,
FSO -Marine Safety and Environmental Protection

Caboose Library has been transferred to dry storage for the winter; i.e., in Anchorage at the home of John and Sue Whitney. Again, we are a lending library through the winter months, accepting e-requests and then exchanging at regular monthly meetings.

Loan period is one month. Library resources are on our Whittier website; browse and make requests any time. Remember, being informed and stretching one's mind is another part of being prepared in our marine environment. Happy reading!

Coast Guard Rescue 21

By Sig Murphy

A rhythmic "TAP-TAP-TAP" intruded on my dream again and again until I awoke at 0545 with the realization that it was different than the whistling wind, clanging sailboat rigging and other sounds we had heard outside our boat during night. We had elected to spend the night in port because of the small craft warning with high wind and seas. Looking outside, I saw Roy Stoddard holding up a set of keys for SAFE Boat 611 as he yelled "We have a report of a vessel in trouble". Fifteen minutes later, Roy, Tom Kane and I were on our way for a long, wild ride. The distress vessel had called the Coast Guard and reported that they were in trouble and without power near the rocks on the north end of Perry Island. After arriving at the given location, we worked a search with a Coast Guard Cutter. As she investigated the east side of the Island, we began a search of the north and west side. We then picked-up a VHF radio report of a flare sighting in Main Bay, 11 miles to the south. Not knowing if we had two separate emergencies, both the Cutter and 611 proceeded at top speed to the scene only to find that the distress vessel that had called for help in the storm was the same one that was in Main Bay. We had a long tow back to port to contemplate what the outcome could have been if no one had seen the flare from the vessel that was about to go onto the rocks in the storm.

Cases like this one that we had last year have been repeated over and over again during the many years the Coast Guard Auxiliary has been conducting search and rescues when the boaters in distress either do not know where they are or report a mistaken position, often off by miles. Time is often of essence in many searches and failure to quickly find imperiled boaters can cost lives.

All of this may be a thing of the past because of a new era ushered in by the implementation of Rescue 21 by the Coast Guard. The current system, based on VHF-FM communications with a short range, was established more than 30 years ago and has many limitations including no directional finding capabilities and gaps in

coverage areas. Rescue 21 is the Coast Guard's critical command, control and communications system that will improve search and rescue capabilities by using 21st Century advanced technology to pin-point distress vessel call locations, reduce coverage gaps along the coast, and increase simultaneous channel monitoring capacity.

In August, the Rescue 21 Project Resident Office (PRO) for District 17 was officially commissioned in Juneau. The Commanding Officer, CDR Joe Calnan, recently met with District Auxiliary Board members and indicated that the Rescue 21 project in Alaska will be different than its counterpart in the lower 48 for a number of reasons including remoteness, limited power connectivity options and the vast area covered by the two District Sectors. The biggest difference we may see in Alaska is that outside coverage is set at percentages of the coast, whereas, in Alaska, current anticipated requirements are geared towards operational areas. The system in Alaska will be formulated over the next few years.

While we wait to see what the Alaska version of Rescue 21 ultimately becomes, because Coast Guard Auxiliary members in District 17 know our areas of operations best, we may be asked to assist with its development by mapping out present coverage gaps in the VHF-FM system. To learn more about Rescue 21, scroll through the information in www.uscg.mil/rescue21/home/.



Mark Parmelee - Good Mate Course



Bill Holzheimer – NSB Boat Crew



Lisa & Craig Woolard - 5 year service award

Member Recognition

October, 2007 Flotilla Meeting



Jules Telson - 15 year Service Award



Suanne Shogren, Kriss & Dan Wagner receiving new member oath from Russ Lyday.
Kriss & Dan Wagner - Vessel Examiners

Flotilla Fall Fellowship

Thank you to Bob and Nancy Harvey for hosting the fall fellowship this month. Several members attended filling the Harvey home with good food and company. We had a variety of great dishes, from baked goods to fresh fish. It was good to see and visit with everyone. It gave us a chance to hear what was happening on vacations, in daily lives and in various areas of auxiliary activities. Thank you, Deanna for organizing another wonderful fellowship.

Election Results

Our annual elections were held during the October Flotilla meeting. Bill Morris was elected Flotilla Commander and Tom Kane Flotilla Vice Commander. Congratulations to both.



<http://a1700204.uscgaux.info>

<http://a170.uscgaux.info>

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