

Working alone, VSC inspector finds way to interact with boaters

By FC DAVID WEISS

Question: When is a vessel safety check not about safety? Answer: When the VSC turns into another opportunity!

I had a unique and new experience recently. I found myself the sole member at a VSC event. In the eight years I've been affiliated with the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, this was a first. I found myself sitting under a shade tree on a beautiful Saturday. My materials and clip board at the ready to do battle to make the boating world safer!

A few minutes later a victim; I mean; customer drove up carrying a beautiful 26 footer. The family got out and began to make preparations. The husband came over and asked if I was checking. I said I was and with his blessing, proceeded to check out the vessel. As I was working through the VSC, I learned the mother was a teacher at Florence High School and we began discussing education. The two children attend elementary school at Forest Hills.

I related my education at both schools only a few years earlier. As we worked through the inspection, questions were raised and answered and the happy, smiling family went on their merry way for the day's outing on the river. I had one VSC under my belt for the day and felt more confident.

I looked for other flotilla members to show up but as the minutes ticked away; I began to believe I was on my own for this mission. After sitting listening to music and leaving my post unattended twice to drive to the head, I decided that my sitting alone at this location was not looking productive. I realized that if the customers were not coming to me; I needed to go to the customers.

I packed up my gear and drove around and found that more boating action was at another part of the harbor. I parked and just started walking around the docks. People noticed that the uniformed guy was there. The guy in

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Photo brings home concept of CG family

It's not often enough that we get to see a photo of a family member that reminds us of how many of our children, grandchildren, nieces or nephews serve in dutiful and distant military locations.

Here is one that came the way of the editor that truly brings home to us the concept of the true "Coast Guard Family."

Note in the caption below the photo that the distinguished USCG captain is Mark A. Jackson, son of our own Jim and Betty Jackson (FSO-MA/MT and FSO-CS/IS respectively). The photo was taken while hosting Dr. Biden (wife of the vice-president) at Coast Guard Base Miami Beach, Fla.



U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd class Sabrina Elgammal
 MIAMI - Rear Admiral William D. Baumgartner, Seventh Coast Guard district commander, Capt. Mark A. Jackson, commanding officer of Coast Guard Base Miami Beach, Fla., and Lt. Cmdr. Herb Eggert, commanding officer of the Coast Guard Cutter *Bernard C. Webber* pose with Dr. Jill Biden on the Cutter *Webber* at Coast Guard Base Miami Beach, Fla., May 3, 2012. Dr. Biden came to visit with 25 Coast Guard spouses from around the Seventh District.

VSC event turns into new opportunity

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dark blue with bloused boots and hat was coming. People noticed the presence.

I came across a family who was struggling to get a pontoon boat started after just walking up and asking a simple question they shared that they realized that their used "new" pontoon boat had a dead battery. The men of the family were trouble-shooting while the women were sitting around waiting for the journey on the new acquisition.

I saw a window of opportunity; the question was posed: "Since you have a new vessel, would you like me to check it out to make sure you meet all federal requirements?" The hook was set. The men left to get a new battery and terminal covers (which I recommended) leaving me to wait and strike up the conversations with the patient women.

As we waited, the boat owner was one of the women so we checked everything we could which did not involve battery power. While waiting, the regular questions came up; Women's questions to me: "How long have you been in the Coast Guard?" "Where do you work?" "Do you enjoy teaching?" How do you like teaching 7th graders?" "Have you been in the military?" My questions to the women: "Where are ya'll from?" "Where do you go to school?" "Who is your favorite teacher?" "Have ya'll had a boat before?"

One of the women expressed an interest in the next ABS class the next weekend. I gave her the contact information. It seems that our waiting for the men opened doors to topics other than just boating safety. Perhaps it was developing trust and respect between the auxiliaryist and the

customer? I walked to other boats and just spoke to people; I waved at passing boats and received a friendly wave in return.

About an hour later, the men came rolling up with a new battery, battery box, terminal covers (which I had recommended) and tie-down strap. As they came back to the boat, the women began telling the men what they knew about me. I suddenly realized these men had left their female family members with a man they had not known 10 minutes before leaving them with me.

Was that trust in the uniform? As the men installed the battery, I started learning about the men. One was a paramedic; one had been a noncommissioned officer in the National Guard and served 21 years. We found that we knew some of the same people. Conversations were not just about the boat.

We finished the VSC. They passed and I donned the new sticker on the port side of the windshield. As I finished up, and as I shook all their hands, it seemed that a feeling of mutual knowledge and respect had come from this VSC. I had spent most of my day on only two VSC's.

It was time to go and commence with the day's other obligations. As I was leaving, it suddenly struck me that I was alone on this mission; but to all these people I had checked and spoken to, I alone, represented the entire U.S. Coast Guard and Auxiliary. What an awesome feeling. So, it wasn't just a VSC event, it was an opportunity to just interact with people and develop positive relationships with the very people we attempt to educate and assist. It was a unique and rewarding mission..... alone.

Semper Paratus!

New tool helping in flotilla recruiting efforts

Recruiting Efforts -FSO-HR Kay Klein has developed a spreadsheet for tracking prospective new members. The document is being updated monthly and used for closer monitoring of prospective members interested in joining the flotilla.

It is hoped that using the tool and continuing to follow up with contacts to each person on the list will provide a better recruiting effort. So far, sixteen (16) people are on the spreadsheet with two new applicants currently completing their enrollment package and one additional applicant file being processed .

IS/CS Efforts - FSO-IS/CS Betty Jackson has been hard at work rebuilding the flotilla website and bringing it back to its former high standards. She has improved the AUXDATA connection and recently reestablished a link enabling access to current and past editions of our newsletter, the Shoals Beacon.

Thank you Betty for your diligence and excellent work! Betty only asks that each member file mission, VSC, and activity reports on a timely basis. Let's all help the flotilla's standing by keeping the reporting effort complete and on track.

SUB Training - With the increased popularity of Sport Utility Boats (canoes, kayaks, paddle boats, etc) the emphasis on required knowledge about this type of recreational craft has become evident. FSO-MT Jim Jackson conducted a highly informative training session during our August meeting on the requirements and procedures for conducting a VSC on a SUB.

The special knowledge required for this effort became readily apparent during the training class discussions. Who will be the first VE to go SUBing?

VHF Marine Radio Training - VFC Cliff Klein (w/ FSO-MT Jim Jackson assisting) conducted a one-hour training session at the May flotilla meeting covering the topic of "How to Properly Use Your Marine Radio."

The content and demonstrations were intended to familiarize the members with basic VHF marine radio knowledge and procedures for using a radio on local waters. The need for more advanced training required for Auxiliary TCO or AUXCOM qualifications during operational missions was identified. Members were encouraged to seek additional training for that competency through Cliff or Jim, if they so desired.

Flotilla experience caps Brentnall's well-rounded career

Sam Brentnall
FSO-FN/MS

I grew up in Birmingham and lived on a dead end down the street from Paula (there was no way to escape). I graduated from the University of Alabama in 1959 and received a degree in commercial chemistry, a commission in the USAF, and a wife Paula.

I had always dreamed of flying jets, but a vision problem changed that. From Turner AFB I transferred to England with my wife and 1-month-old Laura as a Thor missile authentication officer.



The Cuban missile crisis led to the removal of nuclear weapons from England and I transferred into the Minuteman missile program as target and alignment officer, then later chief of maintenance training, (Minutemen), 90th Strategic Missile Wing.

Our second daughter, Melissa, was born in Cheyenne, WY where we spent three delightful years.

I (we) then moved to Vandenberg AFB where I was a launch control officer for the 4300th Support Squadron (Thor), (which was in fact a deliberate misnomer for the Burner II spy in the sky program). When the squadron was disbanded I was assigned to 1st STRATAD (Strategic Aerospace Division) as aide to Maj. Gen. William S. Martensen.

We returned to Birmingham in 1968. I became an insurance general agent, a trust officer with Regions Bank, Compass Bank, and then The First National Bank of Florence in 1995. I retired as a certified trust and financial advisor with SunTrust Bank.

During the interim, I joined the 87th Maneuver Area Command, USAR, where I was a brigade exercise controller and employed directly by the G3, 3rd US Army as a controller for the 1990 Desert Shield/Desert Storm exercise.

We love the Shoals area, and boating, and when I heard about the auxiliary I decided that the flotilla water experience was a must to round out my air and ground military experience.

Klein keeps up flotilla work while on the move

Kay Klein
FSO-HR/SR

My earliest recollections of boating were as a child on the Ohio, Monongahela, and Allegheny rivers in Pittsburgh. My grandfather would go to the river where he had his 22' Christ-Craft moored and I'd go with him most of the time. We would sit on the boat and talk to all the other mariners that did the same thing. My original boating days ended when I was about 14.

Many years later, after Cliff and I had been married and were raising our family, we lived in Brockville, Ontario, Canada. One day Cliff came home from work and I told him I was preparing with a friend of ours to buy a boat in partnership. Cliff, being the most knowledgeable on boats, decided he better come along so we wouldn't buy a dry-rotted boat.

We got our first boat (wooden naturally) and spent many enjoyable hours on it while we lived in Canada cruising among the 1,000 Islands in the St. Lawrence River.

When we later moved to Cincinnati, we moored our boat on the Ohio River for a year, then moved it to Brookville Lake in Indiana. It was during this time that we both joined the Coast Guard Auxiliary in Ohio and purchased a new boat (our current one). I helped Cliff with the boating safety classes each week while we were there.

Moving to Tennessee, we had to dis-enroll from the Auxiliary because there was no unit close by and work requirements prevented us from joining the Florence or Memphis flotillas. After several other moves, we ended up retiring back in Tennessee and decided the time was right to join the Auxiliary again.

I wasn't in the flotilla a year when I was asked to become the human resources staff officer and secretary staff officer of the flotilla. I've taken the TCT classes, gotten CPR certified, and obtained my AUXCOM proficiency during the last three years. I look forward to being active for quite a while in the Florence Flotilla where we've made many good friends.



THE TRAINING CORNER

Proper anchoring: It's all in the scope

By VFC CLIFF KLEIN

Are you using the correct SCOPE aboard your boat? No, we're not talking about some sort of mouthwash but actually the amount of anchor line (or anchor rode, to be more correct) that you have provided. SCOPE is an all-important factor in successfully anchoring your vessel based on prevailing weather, sea conditions and length of stay at anchor.

SCOPE is defined as the ratio of the length of deployed anchor rode from the sea bottom to the bow chock or roller where the anchor rode comes aboard. Notice that it is NOT defined by using the water depth from the bottom to the surface of the water! For example, if you let out 30 feet of anchor rode in 6 feet of water, you may think you have an appropriate 5:1 scope, but if your bow chock is 4 feet above the waterline, your scope is actually only 3:1.

So why is SCOPE so important? The reason is that most modern anchors are designed to work at maximum efficiency when the pull on the anchor is horizontal; the more upward pull on the anchor, the more likely it is to breakout. This is true of practically all types of modern day anchors used on smaller craft (unless you're using that "ole' 350 block" from pop's pickup truck)!

This is also the reason why a section of properly sized chain is recommended to be placed before the anchor to weight the anchor rode. (Of course the chain also has a secondary purpose of helping to protect the anchor rode

from physical abrasion and possible severing by rocks, coral or other harmful bottom items – like that "ole 350 block" from someone else's anchoring misfortune).

SCOPE should be adjusted to meet the prevailing conditions as needed. A minimum scope of 5:1 is usually suggested for secure anchoring, but a 7:1 scope is even better. In a heavy weather situation, or when the vessel is being left unattended for a period of time, a scope of 10:1 is required. When using the "lunch hook," a minimal 3:1 scope might be workable for short periods. Scope requirements are also a function of what type anchor you are using and how well it "digs in" when deployed. Testing your anchoring gear under known, controlled surroundings will help you determine the appropriate numbers.

Obviously, in order to properly anchor, you must know the depth of water where you plan to anchor and choose the appropriate location that allows for an adequate depth to prevent grounding but also minimizes the rode length required. Here is where an on-board depth sounder is quite valuable.

Be sure to also carry a sufficient amount of rode for the type of waters you plan to boat in. Water depths in many deep inland lakes or coastal areas may far exceed the requirements of our Western Rivers waters! Always check your position while anchored by taking sightings on a shore object(s) for possible dragging and be ready to release more rode as the situation dictates.

Future Meetings

**06SEP12 - Flotilla Meeting at Regions
Bank, Florence, AL 1900-2100 hrs**

**08SEP12 - Pickwick Detachment Meeting
at Central Bank, Counce, TN, 0900-1100**

**04OCT12 - Flotilla Meeting at Regions
Bank, Florence, AL 1900-2100 hrs**

**13OCT12 - Pickwick Detachment Meeting
at Central Bank, Counce, TN, 0900-1100**

**PLEASE PLAN ON ATTENDING OUR
NEXT FLOTILLA MEETING;**

**YOUR CONTRIBUTION WILL BE HIGHLY
VALUED!**

USCG getting new home in DHS complex

By VFC CLIFF KLEIN

The U. S. Coast Guard (USCG), like all of the current 22 component agencies that comprise the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has its headquarters in small, GSA properties scattered throughout Washington, D.C.

This is about to change as a result of a unique development project that is building a new DHS complex occupying 4.5 million gross square feet of building space and expected to house up to 14,000 DHS employees. The new campus will be the result of a transformation of the historic St. Elizabeths Hospital complex, originally built in 1852 which had 70 buildings, orchards, greenhouses and a working opera house on 173 acres in central Washington, D.C.

Here is an overview description of the program, taken from the GSA's web site for the development of the St. Elizabeths Campus: "The Department of Homeland Security is consolidating its headquarters in the National Capital Region (NCR) at St. Elizabeths campus in the Anacostia neighborhood of southeast Washington, DC.

The DHS's current facilities are spread among more than 40 buildings in the Washington area. In an effort to provide a more unified, secure campus that brings together its executive leadership and operational management, DHS's new headquarters will allow for more efficient incident management response and command-and-control operations.

The GSA proposes to develop a secure facility for DHS at St. Elizabeths, a National Historic Landmark (NHL) and former Government-run hospital for the insane. St. Elizabeths is divided into two campuses, the West Campus

and the East Campus. While DHS's headquarters will be housed on both, it will function as one unified campus."

Among the major agencies within DHS such as FEMA, TSA, and ICE, the USCG has been selected to be the first agency to relocate approximately 4,000 personnel into the new complex with a currently scheduled move completion of Q3, 2013. The good news is that the phase 1 construction completion and occupancy has been totally funded by Congress.

The bad news is that the subsequent phases of completion have become mired in Congress due to budget belt tightening and gridlock. Currently, only \$1.3 billion out of the original \$3.6 billion estimated total project costs have been funded. Budget allotment for subsequent phases was stricken from DHS's 2012 budget.

In August 2011, completion of phase 1 construction was at approximately 45% with much of the infrastructure requirements yet to be completed. Unknown, is whether the phase 1 schedule and budget limitation will be met in order to allow the USCG's full occupation of the facility as planned.

Retired USCG Admiral James Loy has said "The Coast Guard was sort of willing to be the lead player in the parade to the main campus at St. Elizabeth's, but I would suggest they always had a fear that one day they might look over their shoulder and see no one is following."

For a slide show of photos, an executive level schedule and additional information on background and intent of the total project, go to the GSA websites: <http://gsa.gov/portal/content/133423> and <http://www.stelizabethsdevelopment.com>.

