



The Public Affairs

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UPDATE

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The Newsletter of The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary National Department of Public Affairs

Who Is A Public Affairs Officer? (An Ongoing Saga) A Celebrity Maybe?

Well, why not? A celebrity is someone known by a large segment of the public. When the public affairs officer is out there promoting the Auxiliary and its programs, they get to be known by a small segment of the public.

When the Public Affairs officer becomes known by a large segment of the public, they are reaching more people and getting the Auxiliary's message (assuming they do not dance or play golf well) out to a much larger audience.

How does the Public Affairs Officer make this happen? Easy—just buy a few million dollars in television time and saturate the air waves. We know—your Public Education classes are not quite as full as you would like them to be and the Flotilla's treasury is a little short of funds. This is the time to be creative.

Get the local television and radio stations to give the Flotilla free air time. This is easier than it sounds because you are not after advertising time. You are going to offer public service announcements in 15 or 30 second increments (or more as time permits) for use on news programs.

Radio Stations are the easiest to hook up with. You can call in the announcement (spot) and they will re-

cord it and then put it on the air when they can fit it in. Arrangements may be made for a "regular" spot if the content is good. A regular Friday U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary spot discussing local weekend boating activities, weather, aids to navigation, local advisories and ending with info about VSC locations and boating classes should go over well.

Television stations also take pre-arranged call in voice reports of this type. They may put it on the air during the weather report or local segment along with a slide of the Auxiliary emblem or vessel on patrol. When (notice no "if's" here) they see the Auxiliary spot is popular, they may even have the Public Affairs officer come in to record some spots themselves (major celebrity time).

So, then, what is the plan of attack? Easy, start small with small spots at a local radio station. But make the copy more interesting than "vessel examinations will be held at ..." and make the content relevant to the local area "the weather will be perfect for the parade of boats that will pass the main street docks at - - where vessel safety exams will be held for the boat owner's convenience". As word gets around, boaters will tune in for the information and the station will expand the time allotted for your report. You are on your way to getting the Auxiliaries message to the boating public while serving the boating public with local information (and becoming a CELEB).

Give broadcasting a try. You might find it fun and do an important job at the same time. E-mail us and let us know how it is working.

Operation Sail 2000 OPSAIL 2000

The largest peacetime maritime event in history will take place on the East Coast of the United States between May 25 and July 31.

San Juan PR	May 25 to 29
Miami Florida	June 7 to 10
Norfolk VA	June 16 to 20
Baltimore MD	June 23 to 27
Philadelphia PA	June 23 to 27
New York NY	July 3 to 9
New London CT	July 12 to 15
Portland ME	July 28 to 31

During the celebration in New York harbor, there will be an international naval review presided over by President Clinton.

Also taking part in the parade of ships will be the U.S. Coast Guard's tall ship "the Eagle" and a full size replica of the slave ship "Amistad" that was the subject of a recent Television Movie about it's 1839 voyage. The slaves rebelled and steered the ship north along the coast away from Cuba and ending up at Montauk, Long Island where their fate was finally decided by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Help get the word out to the public about the visit to your area and the activities that are scheduled. Also, help get the word out to your Flotilla members. A lot of help is needed in all areas both on the water and on land. Talk to the belly buttons in your area then let your people know what they can do to help the effort and have a lot of fun in the process.

The website address for OPSAIL information: <http://www.opsail.org/>

A SPECIAL THANKS

Wed, 29 Mar 2000 16:04:59 -0800

From: Strangfeld, Charles CDR D11/USCG
To: District 11 Coast Guard Staff

FYI . . . A great example of how the Activities construct, combined with attention to detail and the Team Coast Guard work of the Auxiliary can come together to produce an excellent risk management public affairs piece within FIVE DAYS of the CGC Long Island 'going the extra mile' identifying this significant hazard in their trip report.

Kudos to: Chuck Fosse for writing this up in their trip report (attached), Chris Thorpe for astutely passing the info to MSO PA, Ben Benson for astutely passing it further on to Martin Hill, and Martin Hill for writing an excellent summation of the issue.

While The Log is widely circulated among the San Diego boating public, there are MANY boaters out there who somehow need to be reached through other means . . . Our underway assets and those in the boater education world need to "carry the torch" on this issue in the hopes of reducing marine casualties resulting from reckless navigation in the fog. Again, a great job by all!

CDR Strangfeld

Smart Boating - By Martin Hill - U.S.C. G.A.

It's often said Southern California drivers don't know how to drive in the rain. Used to sun-filled days, they tear down the freeway nearly bumper to bumper forgetting that when it rains their tires don't hold the wet, slick asphalt as well as they do on dry days. The result is usually crumpled automobiles and bent bodies.

Like drivers, boaters also need to be reminded to slow down in foul weather. The U.S. Coast Guard has become alarmed at the number of recreational boaters -- and professional sports fishermen - encountered speeding through areas where thick layer of marine fog have greatly reduced visibility. This practice, like tailgating on a rain-slick freeway, can lead to injury or worse

The nautical Rules of the Road require that you always travel at a speed that is safe for the prevailing conditions. In reduced visibility, the rule of thumb is you travel at a speed that allows your vessel to stop in half the visible distance. If you can't see beyond your bow, heave to and ride it out -- and don't forget to sound fog signals.

Don't let modern technology make you overconfident when navigating through fog. Even with radar and GPS, fog navigating is still a dangerous business.

Radar navigation in fog is a skill that must be honed by a great deal of practice. Your ability to navigate by radar depends entirely on your ability to interpret the ghostly images on the screen and identify them as landmarks, buoys or other vessels.

There are many fine ships rusting at the bottom of the sea because their trained and experienced bridge crews didn't interpret their radar image correctly. How do you think your skills compare with theirs?

GPS, too, is a great navigational aid, but that's all it is -- an aid. GPS does not give you your *exact* position, just an approximation. The U.S. government doesn't

Special Note: PWC Alert

Are you a fan of personal watercraft? Are your Flotilla members or the boating public you help enamored with PWCs?

There is a move afoot or awater as the case may be, to ban the use of these devices on large areas of water. We, as the Auxiliary, should not take a position in the politics of this issue. However, we should make the boating public aware of this possible ban so they can make their views known (either for or against the ban).

allow full access to the signals of its constellation of global positioning satellites for fear it could be used to target missiles against this country.

The position information you get with standard GPS, therefore, is purposely off by several feet and sometimes yards -- enough to run you up on the rocks in a fog or heavy down-pour. Even the more accurate differential GPS service provided by the Coast Guard must be used with great caution in poor visibility.

The Rules of the Road also require you to maintain a good lookout in poor visibility. When navigating in fog, a lookout's hearing becomes more important than sight. Sound travels better on a foggy day, allowing lookouts to hear breakers on shore, a bell or horn buoy, or other vessels farther off.

You can't expect your lookout to hear anything when your engines are screaming at high rpms and the wind is roaring past. So slow down and look, listen, even use your nose to smell for trouble ahead.

Finally, remember your sound signals. Fog signals not only announce your presence to other vessels, they let you know who's moving about around you. If you hear a signal in the distance, slow or stop until you're certain there is no risk of collision. Passing and meeting signals are never used in fog.

While underway in fog, the Rules call for a power boat to sound one prolonged (4-6 seconds) blast of a horn or whistle every two minutes. If hove to, the signal becomes two prolonged blasts every two minutes. A sailing vessel underway in fog sounds one prolonged and two short (1 second) blasts every two minutes.

But remember, speeding through fog cancels any element of safety provided to you and others by proper fog signals.

The best advice for navigating in fog still remains this: If at all possible, anchor and stay put. Sound your anchored signal -- one five second ringing of a bell every minute.

Reducing speed in a fog, or even anchoring, may get you home late, but it will get you home safe. So use your head, not your throttle, because smart boating is always safe boating.

Hill is the Auxiliary's branch chief for public information. For more safe boating information, visit the U.S. Coast Guard's boating safety web site at (www.USCGboating.org).

EAST SIDE WEST SIDE

And Everywhere In-Between

Things are busy all over the country with the coming change to the vessel examination program, the kickoff of safe boating week and the many training and teaching programs. Boat shows are in full swing all over.



The canopy and table cover were donated to Flotilla 11S-09-06 by the Coast Guard. The local recruiting office also supplied give-aways such as pencils, water bottles, literature and printed carry bags. All it took was to ask. Where do you get your supplies?

District 8WR has a robot boat named Coastie that can be used at events and shows to interest the Kids. Check out their web site - the boat is cute and a good eye catcher.

District 8CR Flotilla 0503 is celebrating 50 years of service to the boating public. Hope to hear more about them soon. While we are in the 8C area, they have formed a speaker's bureau. Hope to have more information on how it is set up and how it is working.

CONGRADS FROM ADM. LOY

Adm. Loy, commandant of the Coast Guard has written a letter of congratulations to the Auxiliary for outstanding support of Coast Guard Missions. The text can be read at www.cgau.org/cgauweb/hq/hq00-010.htm. Share it with the Flotilla.

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