

The Water Log



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Flotilla 9-10
Fort Myers-Cape Coral

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Vessel Tracking System to Increase Patrol Safety - Fernando Licopoli - FSO-PB

Last month Chalmers Sechrist wrote about the development of the Vessel Tracking System or VTS. Through the simple connection between a Coxswain's GPS and Radio, it enables a watch stand to monitor the real time location of both the latitude and longitude of an Auxiliary vessel as well as view a GPS readout depicting the vessel's exact location.

In order for the system to work, the Coxswain simply had to acknowledge a "call in" ring by a simple push of a button on his radio. Simple enough I thought as I observed FC Dan Godfrey acknowledge the "polling" while on a training patrol on the "Carol D". However, what was it like for the Watch Stand? How complicated a process

would it be for the Watch Stand to execute the VTS?

To find the answer, I spent a morning at our Ops Center observing Anne Roethke using the VTS system during her radio watch. Chalmers Sechrist was there as well, coaching Anne on the VTS operation protocol.

At that point Anne, with a simple push of a button, "polled" the "Carol D". As soon as the "Carol D" acknowledged, up on the computer screen popped a position icon on the computer monitor showing the "Carol D" under the Cape Coral Bridge. When I looked at the radio display, I saw the exact longitude and

latitude. The simplicity and accuracy of the system was amazing. Here is a system that offers real time information regarding the location of our patrol vessels.

It was obvious that the system added tremendously to the safety of our patrols as well as shortening the time between an emergency such as a medical problem on board and response.

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Looking for News

The Water Log wants to hear from you. Without your input, the newsletter would not exist.

If you have any updates, news, or boating adventures that would be of interest to our Flotilla, do not hesitate to contact me by e-mail at (fernando49@optonline.net) or cell 816 305 5378.

Vessel Tracking System, cont.

**Anne Roethke
polling the "Carol D"**



Flotilla Coxswain's are excited about this new addition and as of this date, FC Dan Godfrey, Frank Lann, Pete Bardis, Bob Zarranz, Rich Geib, Connie Irvin, Bob Ackert, Archie Schmidt, Donna Stull, Frank Messina and Jack Salis have or will soon have the VTS system as part of their on board equipment.

As the system develops, additional refinements will increase the Auxiliary's ability to respond quickly and safely. Pete Bardis recently commented, "I'm very glad we're doing this. In the near future, when we'll have VTS up and running, it will be a great tool to have"

Pete is looking forward to the expanded capabilities and refinements.

The system will eventually remove the need for the Coxswain to hear and acknowledge the "ringing" when the Ops Center polls the vessel. As a result, the Ops Center can track the vessel at anytime without distracting the Coxswain.

**Long and Lat
readings**



An additional benefit is that when under an emergency or when aiding another vessel, The Ops Center and USCG Fort Myers Beach Station can locate the exact position of the Auxiliary vessel without the need for radio confirmation. If more than one Auxiliary vessel is involved, the Ops Center can monitor the position of each vessel without interfering with either vessel. In addition, both vessels will be able to monitor each other's position, a helpful plus in limited visibility.

According to FC Dan Godfrey, "This system puts FLT 9-10 into the "21st Century as far as radio communications go".

It certainly is an exciting development. If you want to hear more, attend our Flotilla Business meeting 17 February where Chalmers is planning a presentation on the VTS.

**Position Indicator
"Carol D"**



**Ops Center
Radio and Computer Set-up**



The U.S. Coast Guard — More than Chasing Smugglers -

Cherie Rohn - Flotilla 9-10

**CWO 3 Benjamin Townley
alongside Defender
Class Boat**



“Buckle up and hang on,” shouts CWO 3 Coast Guard Benjamin Townley. We hit 40 mph in nothing flat. Throttling down only a little, Townley spins the wheel sharply to the right. We seem to turn on a dime. Then he makes a sharp left. Nearly on my ear, I watch our wake, marveling at the boat’s tight turning radius. The dual engine 25-foot rescue boat is equipped with stabilizers that allow such maneuvers without the boat swamping or capsizing. Townley points out that maneuverability is even more important than speed when chasing smugglers. It means they can stay with a boat once they catch up to it. I get his point

Heading out into the Gulf of Mexico from Coast Guard Station Fort Myers Beach, Fla., are myself, a member of the Coast Guard Auxiliary, Coast Guard Fireman Sullivan, and Ben Townley, a 13-year armed-forces veteran including seven years with the Marine Corps.

Townley says if he gets a call, they must drop me back at the station as quickly as possible. Secretly, I wish I could remain aboard, but understand the need for safety. Law enforcement and military combat are the only areas closed to auxiliarists, dubbed “America’s Volunteer Lifesavers.”

I ask Townley about the media attention given the Cuban migrant landings on U.S. soil of late. He seems more than happy to set the record straight.

“People read about all the Cubans who make it to shore, but they don’t realize the great numbers of migrants we apprehend and repatriate to Cuba. More importantly, it’s about the smugglers we take into custody. These individuals have no respect for human life. They risk the lives of the migrants they’re carrying together with other bystanders that could be caught up in these events. The Coast Guard’s primary function is safety of life at sea. Every single action the smugglers take goes against that primary mission,” concluded Townley.

For the year 2008, U.S. Coast Guard statistics show that 2,199 Cuban migrants were interdicted. As recent as January 2009, 76 Cuban migrant interdictions occurred.

There’s a gleam of pride in Townley’s eyes when he talks about the Coast Guard mission: to protect U.S. coastal areas in four ways - Law Enforcement, Search and Rescue, Environmental Protection and Marine Safety.

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Nautical Terms and their History* – Inspired by Dave McDonough, FSO-PE

Down the hatch

Here's a drinking expression that seems to have its origins in sea freight, where cargoes are lowered into the hatch. First used by seamen, it has only been traced back to the turn of the century.

Duffle

A name given to a Sailor's personal effects. Also spelled duffel, it referred to his principal clothing as well as to the seabag in which he carried and stowed it. The term comes from the Flemish town of Duffel near Antwerp, and denotes a rough woolen cloth made there.

Dungarees

The modern Sailor's work clothes. The term is not modern, however, but dates to the 18th century and comes from the Hindi word dungri, for a type of Indian cotton cloth.

Fathom

Although a fathom is now a nautical unit of length equal to six feet, it was once defined by an act of Parliament as "the length of a man's arms around the object of his affections." The word derives from the Old English Faethm, which means "embracing arms." *From *The Navy Historical Center*

Flying Dutchman

One superstition has it that any mariner who sees the ghost ship called the *Flying Dutchman* will die within the day. The tale of the *Flying Dutchman* trying to round the Cape of Good Hope against strong winds and never succeeding, then trying to make Cape Horn and failing there too, has been the most famous of maritime ghost stories for more 300 years. The cursed spectral ship sailing back and forth on its endless voyage, its ancient white-hair crew crying for help while hauling at her sail, inspired Samuel Taylor Coleridge to write his classic "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," to name but one famous literary work. The real *Flying Dutchman* is supposed to have set sail in 1660.

This Day in Coast Guard History –

7 February 1980-

1980- The CGC *Cape Horn* saved all six crewmen of the F/V *Hattie Rose* in a dramatic nighttime rescue. The *Hattie Rose*, a Gloucester-based 75-foot stern trawler, began taking on water in 25-foot seas and 45-knot winds, 15 miles east of Provincetown. Sea and wind conditions prevented a rescue by air and so the *Cape Horn*, under the command of LTJG William L. Ross, and 11 crewmen, diverted from one SAR case to go to the *Hattie Rose's* assistance. The F/V *Paul and Dominic*, standing nearby the stricken vessel, helped direct the cutter to the area. The *Cape Horn's* crew got a line to the men, now standing on the bow, which was still afloat, and pulled four of the crew to safety aboard the cutter. The line parted, however, and the two remaining fishermen began drifting away, but two of the *Cape Horn's* crew, Duncan Grant and Thomas Jennings, leaped into the 35-degree water and secured a line around the two. They were all hauled safely aboard.

Defender Class Boat



“Things can change suddenly,” Townley says. “We’re forced to make a lot of snap decisions. For example, we might start out in law-enforcement mode, such as dealing with an assault or fight, and then we have to switch and take care of injuries. What amazes me is how young guys like Fireman Sullivan handle it. Somehow, they always come through and get the job done. This guy watches my back.”

I ponder his words for a minute, recalling the Coast Guard’s motto: *Semper Paratus, Always Ready.*

Townley seems to miss nothing. That is what he’s paid to do as a qualified coxswain at Station Fort Myers Beach. He emphasizes that if the Coast Guard didn’t have such a great relationship with the police and other local and federal agencies, they wouldn’t be nearly as successful at stopping the smuggling.

With the media focused on illegal smuggling, it’s easy to lose sight of the Coast Guard’s other duty - boating safety. Speeding back to the station, it’s clear that Townley enjoys the exhilaration he gets while on patrol, so I’m surprised when he says, “The thing I like best is educating folks about safe boating and interacting with the general public. Just about all of them have talked to a police officer or fireman, but we’re something a little different. Ninety percent of the time when I talk to somebody out on the water, it’s the first time they’ve seen a Coast Guardsman.

Personally, I’d rather educate boaters than write them a violation...it makes them more open to observe safe boating.”

The national boating statistics for 2007 say it all. There were 688 deaths from boating accidents. Of those, 478 were drownings, and 429 or 90% who drowned wore no life jacket. It doesn’t take a genius to realize that wearing a life jacket would save many lives. The Fort Myers Beach station is responsible for approximately 85,000 boats. That number is climbing rapidly as more boaters move to the area. It’s impossible to monitor every boat, so they rely heavily on the Coast Guard Auxiliary to help them out.

As if on cue, a boat carrying around 10 people passes our port side. Townley motors over to check out the boat. He sets the tone right away, commending them for having a life jacket on a young boy. Initial looks of “Uh oh. What did we do now?” melt into big smiles. Townley asks the captain if there’s a life jacket for every passenger. Receiving an affirmative, we exchange waves and go our separate ways.

I thank CWO 3 Ben Townley for taking his valuable time to give me a personal tour. But he acts as if it’s his privilege. Then it dawns on me that Townley just demonstrated how important education really is to him, and this time I reaped the benefits.

Newsletter Survey

At last month's business meeting, I distributed a newsletter questionnaire. I was curious about what our membership would like to see in future editions of "The Water Log".

Seventeen members responded with the following results:

- 15/17 read the January issue
- 17 wanted stories on new developments in technology
- Sixteen wanted stories about flotilla members. One was unsure.
- Fifteen wanted stories about other Flotilla activities. Two were unsure.
- Eleven wanted stories about USCG personnel. Five were unsure.

As far as comments people requested:

- biographies on Flotilla Staff members and the monthly activities they perform
- training class schedules
- recreational marine safety updates

If you would like to see other stories or add comments, e-mail at fernando49@optonline.net. Look forward to continuing profile stories about our members and additional features.

Flotilla 9-10

3414 NW 1st Street
Cape Coral, FL
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We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://www.a0700910.uscgaux.info/>

ATON Night Patrol, 8 January 2009

Pine Island Sound

FC Dan Godfrey ponders radioactive PFD's!

***About Our Organization...***

The US [Coast Guard Auxiliary](#) is a volunteer service organization, civilian in nature, whose purpose is to assist the [United States Coast Guard](#) in any of its missions except direct law enforcement and military actions. As the civilian volunteer arm of Coast

Guard Forces, we volunteer time, talent, boats, radios, and aircraft. We receive special training in order to work effectively with the Coast Guard, which is now an integral part of the Department of Homeland Security.

Our flotilla covers areas of South West Florida waters in support of **USCG Station Fort Myers Beach** and [USCG Air Station Clearwater](#)

FLOTILLA 9-10

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