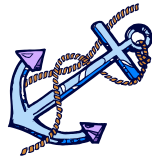


# ANCHOR LINE



**Flotilla 87**

**Englewood, Fla.**

7th Coast Guard District  
[www.CoastGuardEnglewood.com](http://www.CoastGuardEnglewood.com)

Volume XLVIII March, 2010 Number 3



J. Abbott presents A. Wilson, IPFC with a plaque for his service as Flotilla Commander for 2009

Photo by Max Muller

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**2010 FLOTILLA 87 OFFICERS  
DIVISION 8 DISTRICT 7**



**Flotilla Commander**  
**Flotilla Vice Cmdr.**  
Member Training  
Public Education  
Vessel Examination  
Operations  
Personnel Services  
Public Affairs  
Publications  
Secretary/Records  
Finance  
Communications  
Materials  
Information Svc  
Navigation System  
RBS Visitation  
Marine Safety  
Communication Svc  
Imm. Past Fl. Cmdr.  
Historian  
Lay Leader  
Proctor  
Flotilla Webmaster  
Social Chairperson

**FC**  
**VFC**  
FSO-MT  
FSO-PE  
FSO-VE  
FSO-OP  
FSO-PS  
FSO-PA  
FSO-PB  
FSO-SR  
FSO-FN  
FSO-CM  
FSO-MA  
FSO-IS  
FSO-AN  
FSO-PV  
FSO-MS  
FSO-CS  
IPFC

**Rodney D. Dimon**  
**Max P. Muller**

Nancy Lee G. Waters  
Gerald L. Meckenberg  
Wilbur R. Gray

David C. Nielsen  
Judith A. Abbott  
Judith A. Abbott  
Robert W. Schmidt  
Gerald L. Meckenberg  
Anton (Tony) Durner  
Robert M. Waters  
David P. Senkpiel  
Gregory J. Masonick

Graham Leadbetter, Ph. D  
Arthur J. "Skip" Wilson  
Charles E. Schoenfeld  
Judith A. Abbott  
Ruth A. White  
Graham Leadbetter, Ph. D  
Sandy Bilsky

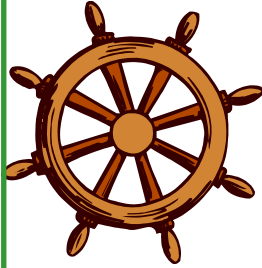
**MARCH EVENTS**

2.....Flotilla Staff Officers' Meeting, Lemon Bay Park 7 pm

9.....Flotilla Members' Meeting, Lemon Bay Park 7 pm



## **FROM THE HELM: Rodney D. Dimon, Commander**



In spite of the weather, it has been a busy month in the flotilla. For starters, the BS&S program ended on the eighteenth, graduating over twenty participants. What's more, a new program, the Weekend Navigator, is in the planning mode prior to being offered to the public. Flotilla members are invited to participate in the "pilot" program which might be 10 -14 hours in 2 hour installments. Talk to Lee Waters for more information.

Our vessel examination activity was off to a delayed start since we received our 2010 stickers on the ninth of this month. However, a Deer Creek blitz, coupled with other VE activity, has resulted in over thirty inspections as of the seventeenth of February

New Member packet for Dr. Peter Tuenes was sent forward the first of this month. This piece of good news leads me to ask the membership: "WHO IS INTERESTED IN BECOMING PERSONNEL SERVICES STAFF OFFICER? Jim Chandler needs a break. Please contact Max Muller, VFC.

Our Public Affairs Staff Officer, Dave Nielsen has again ensured that Flotilla 87 got its 'fair' share of visibility in his February 18<sup>th</sup> article in the Waterline! WOW! What an article!!!!

In the area of Operations, I am certain if you ask Gabby, he will tell you "WE'RE STILL AFLOAT!" That plus training for March QE is underway. This is just a summary of the flotilla's activity. To do more – we need you to consider becoming a member of the Staff. Please consider this, and contact either Max or me.

We need your participation and your personal touch.

Charlie Mike, Out.



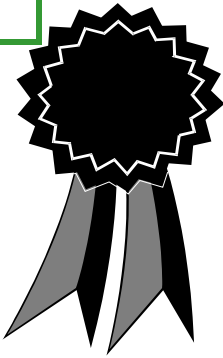
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## **Charles E Schoenfeld, Historian**



I am advising the staff and the members of Flotilla 87, very regretfully, that I am resigning from the Coast Guard Auxiliary. Thank you all for your support for the 5 years I was a member in the flotilla and for having me as your Historian. I will miss all of you but my heart will stay with you all.  
THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME BECOME A PART OF YOU.

# AWARDS & CERTIFICATES



R. Dimon, FC presents M. Muller, VFC with his 10 yr Membership Certificate.



R. Dimon, FC presents R. Waters and L. Waters with their 5 yr Membership Certificates



R. Schmidt is given the oath of office as FSO-FN for 2010

Photos by Judy Abbott

## Lee Waters, FSO-PE



Our latest program, BS&S ended on February 18<sup>th</sup> with 21 graduates. The instructors worked hard to present the materials, answered questions and prepared the attendees for their final exam. Many of the participants expressed their pleasure with the program and their wish for more such programs and interest in membership in the Flotilla.

On the horizon will be our next ABS program. The dates for this session have been changed from April to March 20<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010 from 8:30-12:30. If you know someone who wants to take a safe boating program but is unwilling or can't spare the time for the long commitment of the BS&S schedule, this program is the perfect fit! Pass on the word.

At our monthly meeting, I proposed the idea of presenting The Weekend Navigator program sometime in April. Since our meeting several items have changed. The WN instructors and I have determined that rather than presenting less than a well-thought out program to our participants in April, we would rather take our time and move our proposed program dates to September and remove the ABS program that was scheduled for September. Standards have been created for preparing PowerPoint slides for this program (thank you John Cummings!). Chapter content has been discussed by the instructors and chapters assigned. The WN instructors and I will be meeting over the next several months to finalize our presentations. We had five members who signed up for the program, but I'm hoping that five more members will add their names to the list of participants (ratio of 2 participants to each instructor) allowing us more one on one time.

This past month, Ruth White and I presented our Risk Watch Water Safety program to three of the four Charlotte County Middle Schools. Ruth and I both believe that if we can educate our children on safe boating practices we will create more safe boaters on the waters. We spoke to almost 1000 students and each program presentation was well received. It's nice to know that no matter how busy she may be, Ruth will take time out of her busy schedule to do what she does best and loves, teaching.

Don't forget to remind your friends and neighbors to wear their life jackets when they are boating because they only work if you wear them.



## W. R. "Gabby" Gray, FSO-OP



All patrols for the month of January were completed except those canceled because of weather.

Attention all, we are having a QE Mission on March 11 for 3 coxswains and 7 crew. The new members will restart their training shortly after that.

**All coxswain and crew members**, if you are due to have your 3 year equals and currency maintenance this year (2010), please contact MT / OPs so we can make arrangements and get it done **EARLY** this year.

Coxswains please do your 5132s and 7030s as soon as possible after your patrols and continue filling them out correctly, thanks. ( Don't forget to fill out a 4612 SAR report if you get an assist.)

Coxswains don't forget to invite a new trainee along on your patrols and get them familiar with your towing equipment and where it is kept.

All members, still use caution while transiting Stump Pass as the temporary markers continue to change a little.

Keep up the good work this year and thanks all for the excellent cooperation and help in the past years.  
"Gabby"

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## **Judy Abbott, FSO-PB/SR**

**HELP**..... It's such a small 4 letter word but sometimes so difficult to say. As a past flotilla commander I would like our newer members as well as some seasoned members to know that this little word has a very big meaning. We are all a part of this organization and to **help** one another only makes us grow stronger. Please don't hesitate to ask a question or have something explained. Look to your elected and appointed officers for **help**. I'm sure they would be more than happy to assist you; all you need to do is ask.

# BS&S in Session



L. Waters, FSO-PE addressing the attendees



Instructor G. Masonick presents his lesson



L. Waters, A. Durner and G. Leadbetter observe the session



Aides R. Waters, A. Osiecki and J. Cummings stand ready to assist the participants

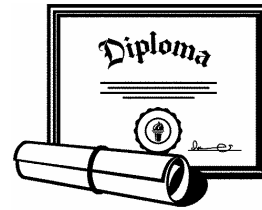


Participants are being tested on the first half of the program



Photos by Judy Abbott

# BS&S Graduation



All of the happy participants displaying their BS&S Certificates of Completion

Photos by Judy Abbott





## **Dave Nielsen, FSO-PA**



### **Rules of the Road**

#### **The VHF antenna**

When my wife and I purchased our 25 foot cruiser way back when, the dealer agreed to install the marine radio and antenna. I purchased a dash mounted 25 watt Very High Frequency (VHF) marine radio with the latest features and let the dealer use one of the stock antennas he had in his warehouse.

It soon became apparent that something was amiss as I found I could not communicate with anyone. This particular afternoon I could see the anchorage where our boating friends were but not one would reply to my hails on VHF Ch. 16, the hailing and distress frequency. Accordingly I complained to the dealer for what I thought was his shoddy installation. His reply was "I guess I should have put in a better quality antenna." The following week, after the original antenna was replaced, I was talking to everyone. I am sure there were several factors affecting my communications that day but replacing the antenna did make a difference.

There are three primary factors affecting VHF radio communications: watts of power, height of the antenna and gain.

Marine radios are limited in power to a maximum of 25 watts. Most radios (not including hand-held radios) can broadcast at either 25 watts or one watt. Use the lowest watt power setting necessary to conduct your radio communication. Broadcasting a stronger signal than necessary may override or suppress a more important (distress) signal from another vessel elsewhere in the area.

VHF radio communications is a "line of sight" system. A radio signal at 25 watts can reach the horizon but not much further. If your antenna is mounted high on your boat, combined with the height of the receiving vessel's antenna or the height of land based antennas such as the U.S. Coast Guard's, farther distance communications are possible. You can see an example of this in the Line of Sight graphic below.

In selecting the antenna, choose an antenna in the correct frequency band that is manufactured for VHF communications. For example, a Citizen's Band (CB) or Single Side Band (SSB) antenna should only be used with CB or SSB radios. If you use the wrong type of antenna, the communications will be greatly reduced or non-existent and may damage the transceiver. Make sure you mount the antenna as high as possible on your boat. Sail boaters usually mount theirs atop the mast head for greatest range. Power boaters may need to be a little creative to get the greatest height or install a longer – taller antenna.

Continued next page.....

## antenna.....Cont'd.

Certainly the electronics dealer can help in your selection of a good quality antenna matched to your boat and radio.

Antennas differ in gain which is measured in decibels abbreviated as db. The higher the gain the farther you can communicate. The gain on marine antennas is usually 3db, 6db or 9db and some are even higher.

The radiation (radio signal) pattern on a 3db antenna looks a bit like a double side-mounted balloon. The radiation pattern on a 9db antenna is much flatter and very narrow. The radiation pattern of a 6db gain antenna is somewhere in between 3db and 9db. To get a visual idea what this pattern looks like, refer to the radiation pattern graphic which is also below.

In rough, rolling and pitching seas the 9db radio signal would sometimes be pointed toward the sky or into the water. In either case, no one would be able to receive the signal.

With this information you can see that a 3db antenna is well suited for use on sailboats as when they are heeled over under sail, the 3db antenna would still be able to transmit a radio signal and not have the signal directed into the sky or into the water. Conversely, a 6db antenna may be better suited for most powerboats. Of course if you own a boat that is very stable in many kinds of sea conditions, a 9db antenna may be a good choice.

Combining the three variables of power, height and gain can greatly increase the distance of your communications.

Be safe out there and I'll see you on the water.

Dave Nielsen is a safe boating instructor and vessel examiner for the Coast Guard Auxiliary, Englewood Flotilla [www.coastguardenglewood.com](http://www.coastguardenglewood.com) and the Peace River Sail & Power Squadron, Punta Gorda [www.puntagorda-boating.org](http://www.puntagorda-boating.org) You may contact him at [dc.nielsen@hotmail.com](mailto:dc.nielsen@hotmail.com).

### Editor's Note:

***Dave is a regular contributor to the SUN newspaper's WaterLine boating and fishing magazine promoting the USCG and CG AUXILIARY'S safe boating message.***

