

# ANCHOR LINE

Flotilla 87  
USCG Auxiliary  
Englewood, Fla.



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**2011 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  
Monofilament Recovery  
Imm. Past Fl. Cmdr.  
Lay Leader  
Fellowship  
Proctor  
Flotilla Webmaster

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

**Rodney D. Dimon  
N. Lee Waters**

Anton (Tony) Durner  
N. Lee Waters  
Gerald L. Meckenberg  
Wilbur R. Gray  
Sandy Bilsky  
David C. Nielsen  
Judith A. Abbott  
Judith A. Abbott  
Judith A. Abbott  
Gerald L. Meckenberg  
Joseph Scott Mayer  
Graham Leadbetter, Ph. D  
David P. Senkpiel  
Gregory J. Masonick  
Robert M. Waters  
Jack W. Rienks  
Arthur J. "Skip" Wilson  
Arthur J. "Skip" Wilson  
Judith A. Abbott  
George J. Bazinet  
Ruth A. White  
Jack W. Rienks

**DECEMBER EVENTS**

6.....Flotilla Change of Watch, Englewood Elks  
Appetizers and Cocktail Hour @ 5:30 pm  
Dinner @ 6 pm



## FROM THE HELM:

Rodney D. Dimon, Commander



Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and Happy Hanukkah fellow shipmates! This issue of the Anchor Line serves as a “write” of passage somewhat in that this is the last article this FC writes, while mentioning your new Command team.

The last two years for this Flotilla Commander have been interesting from the standpoint of working with an all volunteer organization, who wear uniforms, but neither march nor do anything they do not feel like doing, unless they want to do it!!! Is this some sort of indictment or complaint, you might ask?

No on the contrary – I am reminded of my Pathfinder team with the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division-Viet Nam, my Vulcan platoon and battalion motor pool detachment with the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, and my band of “drummers and plumbers” (slang for a sales and service team) with Oldsmobile. The word Commander was, at best, a cool title and at worst, an oxymoron. Yet, the missions were accomplished, the jobs got done. In 'good ole 87' people pulled together, watched out for each other, took a risk out of their comfort zone and got the job done in spite of adversity.

This Flotilla “takes care of its own.” I experienced this first hand this year as my Mom died in August, and my Dad this November plus the headache of probate, moving dad, and the headaches of family businesses. But guess what – your cards and words gave me strength to get through “it” with dignity and style. Had to tell you this because we seldom know what good we do for other people – so I had to tell you and give my sincere thanks.

We are a winning team who will share our successes during the upcoming Change of Watch.

Your new Commanders are already planning and organizing programs, actions and events.

I request you support your Commanders and further implement the watchwords of dependability, integrity and diversity in all your programs and actions.

Finally my last order – continue the mission!

Charlie Mike - out



# November Meeting Highlights



Left: Braxton Ezell, DCDR 8 affixes the 50th Anniversary Guidon Ribbon to the Flotilla Ensign.



Right: Lee Waters, VFC, Joe Mayer, FSO-MA and DCDR Ezell present the Certificate and 50 year guidon.

Right: Laddie Boy Bilsky is officially named as the Flotilla 87 Mascot. The presentation was made to Sandy Bilsky (Laddie Boy's owner) by Lee Waters, VFC



Left: Al Osiecki displays his 5th Auxiliary Sustained Service Award

# Awards Photo Gallery



Jack Rienks receives a Letter of Commendation for his service as SO-CS from VFC Waters and DCDR Ezell



Dave Nielsen receives his RBS Specialist Certificate from VFC Waters and DCDR Ezell



(Center left to right) R. Waters, W. Gray and D. Nielsen display their Commodore's Certificate of Excellence in Operations presented by VFC Waters and DCDR Ezell



Annual Auxiliary Service Performance Awards were presented by B. Ezell, DCDR (right) to L. Waters for PE, and A. Osiecki and W. Gray for Operations

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



I would like to thank every one for all their help and cooperation this past year. I hope everybody has a great time this Holiday Season.

I am now tracking patrols that are canceled throughout the Division which has over 22% of patrols canceled.

Again I would like to thank all coxswains, crew and radio watch standers for taking up the slack while some of our members have been on vacation and or up north during the summer. A few are starting to return; "Welcome back!"

Crew members don't forget if you have a free day and have not been called for a patrol lately get on the phone and call a coxswain to see if you can go along. Patrol time for December is 1300 to 1700 hrs.

Coxswains don't forget to go over your towing equipment and the location of all other equipment that you have on board.

Let's not forget our new members; give them a call and take them a long as a trainee.

Attention all members don't forget to use caution while using Stump Pass; it is still shallow in places at low tide outside of the channel. The outer sea buoy still has not been installed yet.

Let's keep having fun and keep up the good work.

"Gabby"

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## N. Lee Waters, VFC/FSO-PE

I hope everyone has marked their calendars with 2012's schedule of classes. If you have forgotten, I've included the dates:

**Boating Skills and Seamanship:** Jan. 9,12,16,19, 23, 26, 30, & Feb. 2  
@ 6:30-9:30 PM.

**Practical Matters:** Feb. 6, 9, 13 & 16 @ 6:30-9:30 PM.

**About Boating Safely:** April 21 & 28 @ 8:30 AM-1230 PM.

**About Boating Safely:** June 5, 6 & 7 @ 8:30 AM-1:30 PM.

**About Boating Safely:** Oct. 15, 18, 22 & 25 @ 6:30-9:30 PM.

I'm excited about the new schedule but know I will need ALL of the membership's help to fill these classes. In this tight economy, we all need to work harder to fill our classes.

Speaking of working harder, we need to also work on increasing our membership. Our numbers are falling as our membership retires or moves on to other activities. Invite a neighbor and/or a friend to our January meeting. Show them what a great bunch of people we are and the advances of becoming a member.

On another note, we still have several staff positions open for 2012. We are still looking for MS (mostly safety booths), NS (ATON verification) and Historian. There are several of our present officers who have taken the huge task of more than one office. If you would like to become the FN (it's all about money), SR (Secretary) or Lay Leader let us know. We all know that Judy is our go to person, but even an energizer bunny needs a little time to recharge. If you can help her out or are willing to take on one of the positions, contact Graham or me. Thanks in advance.

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

### **Rules of the Road**



### **The pros and cons of GOOD SAM tow**

Way back in May I became the proud owner of a used fishing boat. Not exactly what I really wanted but to me the price was right and being lift kept most of its life, it would do the job nicely getting me on the water without an invitation from my friends. The previous owner promised he had it well maintained. As hard as I tried I could not find any faults other than its age. Even on the test ride, putting it through its paces made me feel comfortable.

Labor Day weekend I found out the hard way that my baby did have some faults after all. We got stranded with a mechanical breakdown and needed help getting back to the boat ramp.

While I had the engine cover up and my head below deck another boater happened by and said he noticed the engine cover up after I came to an abrupt stop. He offered some advice on diagnosing the problem and, after a few attempts at adjusting a control cable, I realized we were not going anywhere soon.

After a brief conversation about my options, the Good Samaritan graciously offered a tow to the boat ramp as he was headed that way himself.

“Sam”, as I called him, had a small flats boat with his family on board. His boat had no cleats that I could see. I tied several of my dock lines together and hooked one end to the tow eye on my bow and Sam wrapped the other end around the poling platform. Not a great arrangement, so I offered to make a towing bridle. He refused the bridle and slid the gearshift forward.

Slowly we started to make way and I kept watch on the tow line. Sam did turn around frequently to see if everything was in order. We were headed to the boat ramp and that was fine with me.

As we approached an overpass near our destination I got Sam’s attention to slow down as I did not want to go under the bridge at more than idle speed. Just in case...

Safely past the bridge, he powered up again and the ramp was in sight.

As we slowly approached the dock at the boat ramp, I realized the wind was behind us and we were headed straight toward the dock. I think Sam realized also the predicament when he took his engine out of gear then, without warning, into reverse. Remember, boats generally have no brakes unless they have power to maneuver or reverse, and there was also that following wind. You guessed it; Sam almost got the tow line caught in his propeller. Fortunately, he got the line pulled up in time, but with his hands full of tow line it left me scrambling to the bow to prevent our boats from colliding.

I then instructed him to turn into the wind and tow my boat in front of the ramp. This worked perfectly as the wind pushed my boat to the dock when I told him to drop the towline. He stayed nearby until I was able to tie up to the dock.

I thanked Sam for the assist and for taking time out of his holiday afternoon to help a stranger. Sam acknowledged my appreciation and said maybe I can return the favor someday. Then he was gone.

My crew and I then wrestled the boat onto its trailer and our day was almost done except for the short drive home.

Continued .....

## .....Good Sam Tow

The moral of my story is if you accept assistance from a Good Samaritan, don't expect everything to go smoothly and be prepared for the unexpected. Fortunately, my adventure ended safely without incident. For this I say "thank you" to Sam and his family. By the way, I was really impressed his youngest was wearing a life jacket.

I hear boaters around the harbor frequently say they have a friend that will come get them if they suddenly need assistance. Just remember your friend may not be willing or able to help when you need him the most.

I highly recommend calling a professional towing service. It's worth the wait.

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 Water Line boating and fishing magazine promoting the USCG and CG AUXILIARY'S safe boating message.***

