

THE JETTIES



 **U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY**

Vol. 21 Issue 5, A publication of Flotilla 38, 1-NR, Newburyport, Mass. Dec 02- Jan 03



Photo above: Flotilla 38 member Bill Graham takes the helm of the Cutter RELIANCE enroute from Portsmouth to Baltimore.

FLOTILLA 38 MEMBERS AT SEA ABOARD THE COAST GUARD CUTTER RELIANCE

As part of our CGC RELIANCE support mission, the most recent training cruise for a flotilla member took place in September. Bill Graham of Newburyport, sailed with the RELIANCE from Portsmouth, New Hampshire to the Coast Guard Maintenance Yards in Baltimore, Maryland.

Bill is a past flotilla commander of 38 and has been active in just about every Auxiliary mission over the years. However, Bill said that this was the most exciting and enjoyable of all his Auxiliary experiences. Check out the article on page 3 where Bill talks about his time at sea. Also, another Flotilla 38 member, who has just completed his "boards" to become fully qualified as a watchstander aboard RELIANCE, talks about his experiences on page 4 of this issue.

UPCOMING FLOTILLA MEETINGS

at the Plum Island Boathouse
SAT 14 December 02 at 1830
(holiday party)
THUR 2 January 03 at 1930

United States Coast Guard Auxiliary



**America's
Volunteer
LifesaversSM**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER

- ⚓ 7 Dec Division 3 Change-of-Watch
PITA Hall, Plum Island
- ⚓ 14 Dec Flotilla Meeting (Annual Holiday Party)
(Note time change: 1830)
- ⚓ 25 Dec Christmas Day

JANUARY

- ⚓ 1 Jan New Years Day
- ⚓ 2 Jan Flotilla Meeting
- ⚓ 3-5 Jan District Conference - Marriott Hotel
Burlington, Mass.
- ⚓ 14 Jan Public Education Classes begin
- ⚓ 20 Jan Martin Luther King Day (observed)

FEBRUARY

- ⚓ 6 Feb Flotilla Meeting
- ⚓ 17 Feb Presidents Day
- ⚓ 18 Feb NO PE class this week,
building closed for school vacation

MARCH

- ⚓ 6 Mar Flotilla Meeting
- ⚓ 11 Mar Final session of Winter Public Education
- ⚓ 17 Mar St. Patrick's Day

Regularly Scheduled Training Sessions & Division or District Meetings (Unless Otherwise Noted)

- ⚓ Saturdays; **coxswain & boatcrew training** 0900-1200 at USCGSTA Merrimack River
training will be ongoing during the winter months for shoreside tasks.
- ⚓ 3rd Friday of the month - District 1NR Board & Staff Meetings (January meeting will be 1st Friday).
- ⚓ Last Thursday of the month - DIV 3 Board & Staff Meetings (No meeting in December/change-of-watch).

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Dolly Thomas, FSO-PE 38

Winter public education programs begin on 14 January 2003 and help is needed from flotilla members. There will be two programs underway, an eight-week Boating Skills and Seamanship class plus a seven-week Basic Coastal Navigation class. Fran Hunt will be conducting the BCN course and a whole cadre of instructors will be teaching BS&S, please check the instructor schedule on our website: www.flotilla38.homestead.com

Last January we enrolled nearly 50 students in the BS&S class so we will need other flotilla members in addition to our regular instructors to function as teaching aides. On 14 January we need help in registration procedures. The piloting sessions on 11 and 25 February require aides to help coach students in piloting problems on the charts. On 4 March, we need additional help to provide some hands-on instruction with knot tying. To speed up test correcting, help is needed at the last session on 11 March.

Classes are at 1900 at the Pentucket Middle School, which is on Route 113 at the West Newbury - Groveland town line. Note that there is no class session on 18 February since that is a school vacation week and the building is closed. Please give Ron Booth, the flotilla commander or me a call if you can help out.

LATEST WEATHER TIP

From your PB officer & amateur weatherman
Matt McDonald, FSO-PB 38

The jet stream was first discovered by World War II B-29 aircraft pilots flying missions over the Pacific Ocean. As they came up to an altitude of approximately six miles something dramatically increased their air speed. It was of course the jet stream. Today, commercial airline flights take advantage of the jet stream to conserve on fuel and boost speeds. In addition to making your trip faster when traveling by air the jet stream also steers air masses.

Jet streams form at the boundary between two air masses of different temperatures. The greater the temperature differences the stronger the air currents. There are four semi-permanent jet streams with two in each hemisphere. These streams of air are at their strongest in the winter and can cause storms to intensify or change their anticipated track. The next time your local meteorologist begins talking about the jet stream pay attention as you may find yourself affected by a change in a storm's intensity or direction.



CRUISING WITH THE CG CUTTER RELIANCE

by Bill Graham, FL 38

On 4 September at 1100 I began what turned out to be a wonderful experience aboard the USCGC RELIANCE. 1100 was the hour we got underway at Portsmouth, New Hampshire to begin our transit to the Coast Guard yard in Baltimore, Maryland. The RELIANCE had to be there by Friday 6 September so it could be put into dry dock to have some work done on the variable pitch propellers and would hopefully be back in the water on Monday the 9th to resume the scheduled 30 day patrol.

Back to the day of departure. Driving up to the ship that morning I was very nervous about the unknown I was facing. In fact, I had told my wife it would not take much to convince me that this was not a good idea. I think the thing that bothered me the most was a fear that I would be in the way of the crew and cause trouble with normal operations. With all my emotions going full force my wife dropped me off at the Navy Yard and told me to carry on.

On the ship I stowed my gear in my assigned locker in the deck department crew area and went back to the fantail where I found Chief Tim Ellis. The ships complement was about to muster for quarters on the flight deck and he suggested I fall in with the operations department and had me stay with QM3 Eric Dussalt. At this point I was not sure what function operations performed, but after quarters I stayed with QM3 Dussalt as directed and soon found out that these are the folks that control the ship from the bridge. Perfect, I thought, as this is where I wanted to spend time.

It was interesting to watch all the preparations for getting underway. Being on the bridge I had an ideal spot from which to watch all the activities. The moment finally came and all lines were hauled in and we were backing down out of our berth and on our way to Baltimore.

From my perspective the activity on the bridge was very intense, I assumed it had something to do with the pea soup thick fog we were leaving in. However, as I later found, this type of activity was normal when navigating in close areas near shore although it was made more intense by the lack of good visibility.

All day Wednesday and throughout most of the night we had to deal with the fog which mandated that we keep our speed down. Also, during the day we had to deal with transiting whale habitat area. This required extra vigilance, as the last thing one wants is to have a cutter hit a whale. On several occasions we

had to alter course to avoid a collision with one of the leviathans.

Thursday turned out to be an absolutely beautiful day with clear skies and calm seas. A part of the process to become qualified to stand a watch (DCQP) involves drawing a diagram of the ship's fire main system, which includes identifying all the various components of the system and the location of said components. I spent a great deal of the day on Thursday going through the ship from top to bottom and stem to stern generating this diagram.

I did spend some time at my favorite location on the bridge. During the afternoon ENS Marcus Handy, the watch officer, decided it was time I take over the helm. I must say I was more than a little anxious as I did so. I was particularly anxious since he instructed me to be very careful in making rudder movements as it only takes a little input to cause the ship to roll. After a few anxious moments I was able to get the feel of the ship and at least didn't roll everyone from one bulkhead to another.

On Friday at about 0700 we approached the entrance to the Chesapeake Bay and the beginning of a wonderful transit up the bay to the Coast Guard yard. On the way up the bay I saw from the water many of the areas that I had experienced from the land. For example, the bay tunnel and bridge, the Bay Bridge of Annapolis and the Kent Island area that my wife and I enjoy during the summer and finally the Baltimore area. It was very different seeing these familiar sights from the water and there is nothing like entering a major harbor aboard a ship.

There is a myriad of experiences, which I could share with you, but in closing I would like to express my gratitude to the officers and crew of the RELIANCE. CDR Stolz, commanding officer; LCDR Munro, Executive Officer; ENS Handy, Chief Ellis, QM3 Dussalt, the food service people that fed me too much and to all the rest of the crew – thank you so very much. They were all great and helped me in any way they could, without a doubt they are a wonderful group of men and women serving our country proudly. I look forward to going to sea with them again and would recommend that all Flotilla 38 members consider participating in this mission.



FIRST MEMBER OF FLOTILLA 38 QUALIFIES ON CGC RELIANCE

by *Charlie Grossimon, VFC (elect) 38*

Editor's Note: Congratulations to Charlie Grossimon, the first member of our flotilla to complete requirements and pass his "boards" to become qualified as a watchstander on the Coast Guard Cutter RELIANCE. We asked Charlie to sum up his experiences of the past year, which he has done very well in this article.



When I joined Flotilla 38, just over a year ago, I was told the flotilla had an affiliation with a particular Coast Guard Cutter, under the "Adopt a Cutter" Program. The Cutter RELIANCE (WMEC-615) is the name of the vessel supported by Flotilla 38.

The RELIANCE, a 210 foot, medium endurance cutter, was launched in 1964 and is now home ported in the Portsmouth Navy Yard. Its missions are varied from homeland security to law enforcement and fisheries patrol and the vessel has an impressive record of drug arrests and rescues at sea.

The mission for the flotilla was clearly defined by Frank Keslof, the liaison officer between RELIANCE and Flotilla 38 and Ron Booth, flotilla commander. It quickly became apparent that opportunities to participate and support the full time Coast Guard were going to present themselves for Auxiliarists who join the mission.

Among the various ways to contribute, was the opportunity to train to stand watch on board and actually fill in for one of the full time crew members of the ship. To do this, however, one must pass the Navy Damage Control Personnel Qualification Standard, or DCPQS as it is most commonly referred to.

On my first night of training, along with Steve Noyes and Frank and Roberta Shippee, I was presented with some materials to learn. Among them was the large scale manual for DCPQS. The sheer size of this manual was almost enough to send me running, but I was assured that the training would go quickly, and it did.

Almost immediately, we were wrestling with an oxygen breathing apparatus or OBA, pointing a thermal imager at some heat source, or squirming down a scuttle which initially got the best of me but I was determined to overcome.

The training wasn't as overwhelming as I originally thought, in fact, it was fun! I found myself learning things I never would have otherwise. I also learned that there are a lot of things to bump into in the engine room, and even a short guy like me has to duck in the space where they keep the JP5 fuel.

Along with the DCPQS manual, we were given the little red book "Know Your Ship." It's a small book which is ship specific to RELIANCE and contains, in a nut shell, the DCPQS, along with other very important things to learn.

Last April, I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to get underway with RELIANCE. This not only gave me a lot of training time, but it gave me the chance to meet more of the personnel on board, and see the operation of the ship at sea. John McDonald was my Flotilla shipmate on that trip and he and I accomplished a lot in the week we were underway. To learn more about our April cruise, see the Jun-Jul 2002 edition of this newsletter which is archived at the flotilla website: www.flotilla38.homestead.com.

After my cruise, I went up to RELIANCE every chance I got and they were glad to have me there. Their enthusiasm for training me was matched by my enthusiasm to learn. Other Auxiliarists went, as well. Ron Booth, Bill Graham, and Lew Burridge started making way on their training.

One day, I decided to see how I was doing and I discovered I was very close to the end of the training. I almost couldn't believe it. At the same time, QMC Tim Ellis was training me to man the "quarterdeck," the little shack at the end of the gangway, which controls access to the ship. Before I knew it, I was preparing for my boards.

The first board was for the quarterdeck watch. In the chiefs' mess, I sat before three of the chiefs who asked me questions on quarterdeck procedure, how to route calls, how many bells do you give the Captain, what do you check for on certain parts of the rounds you do before you go on watch. Although I was nervous, I got through it.

Next, I had to prepare for my DCPQS board. That took place in the wardroom in front of three of the ship's officers. They fired questions at me and I fired back answers. The trouble was, not all of my fired-back answers were correct. I got sweaty palms when I didn't feel positive of an answer, but I got through that one too.

QUALIFIED ON RELIANCE (Continued)

Then, it was all over, the training and the qualification boards were done. All I needed now was my letter from the commanding officer of the ship, CDR Sandra Stosz, USCG, and I was on my way. Chief Ellis drew up the letters and CDR Stosz met with me and signed them and my "qualification packet" was sent to the First District Director of Auxiliary in Boston.

For my first night as an official watchstander, I reported to HS2 Kevin "Doc" Cronin, who was serving as the Junior Officer of the Deck that evening. Doc is also the ship's Independent Duty Corpsman (or medic) and assistant liaison to Flotilla 38. He set me up with a bunk in deck berthing and was then able to send home one of the crew, since I was there to fill in for him. It was nice because this particular crew member's wife had recently delivered a baby, and he was able to be home with his wife and newborn child.

In subsequent watches, I've relieved other crewmembers who could then head home for some time off with family or friends. I've moved up in the world as I have been able to bunk in the First Class Petty Officer berthing. Of course, that will end as soon as a new First Class comes aboard to occupy the vacant berth. But, as far as I am concerned, everyone there is First Class!

It has taken a bit of effort to go through the training. The experience has been extremely worthwhile. Every time I go up there, they seem glad to see me and I am greeted with a smile and a "Hi Charlie". In fact, several have gone out of their way to tell me how much they appreciate what I do. Many times, I don't even know their names, but they seem to know mine.

In a conversation one evening, with one of the petty officers regarding life on board ship, I started my comment with, "Well, looking at it from an outsider's point of view..." He stopped the conversation and said, "You're no longer an outsider here."

That's a nice feeling.

FLOTILLA COMMANDER'S REPORT *Ron Booth, FC 38*

Well the annual elections are over; my sincere thanks to all members for expressing your confidence in me as I begin my second term as your flotilla commander. Congratulations to Charlie Grossimon who was elected to serve as vice commander for the coming year.

On behalf of all members, thanks to Roberta Shippee who served as vice commander for the past year. Bert had opted not to continue in elected office for a second year since she and her husband Frank have extensive travel plans for next year following Frank's retirement. However, they will remain active, Bert has already taken the lead in organizing our holiday party, and Frank is very busy as our "flotilla carpenter." You will notice that his latest projects just completed are new storm doors, plus carpeting in the radio room. When you see Frank Shippee at the holiday party, join me in thanking him for all his hard work.

As noted, Bert Shippee along with Lil Booth, are finalizing details for our 14 December holiday party at the boathouse. Those who responded to the invite will have a great time, we are expecting over 50 members and guests. Don't forget whatever food you told our planners you'd bring (also BYOB) and bring a gift for the "Yankee Swap" (\$5-\$10 price range). No alcohol as gifts please.

Welcome aboard to the new members sworn in at the last meeting (see details and photo page 6). In addition, our 16th and 17th new members to join us in 2002 have completed basic qualification examinations and will be sworn in soon, welcome to Jason Esposito and Jennifer Dumas.

You will be getting a mailing soon from the district regarding the winter conference scheduled for 3-5 January at the Marriott Hotel in Burlington, Massachusetts. There will be a selection of classes and seminars, plus social events worth attending.

One very important thing you can do at the conference is to have your official Coast Guard photo ID made. Official identification cards are needed to enter the Portsmouth Navy Shipyard to participate in our support mission to the Cutter RELIANCE. With the heightened security since 9-11, these official IDs are needed for many other Coast Guard installations and missions as well. A team will be there all weekend to take your photo and laminate your ID.

For those of you not uniformed, the district materials staff will have a uniform and Auxiliary supply store set up at the hotel for the weekend. A common complaint is that woman's uniforms are hard to fit since military sizes don't always run true to civilian sizes. To alleviate this problem, Wayne Cedres, our district materials officer, has arranged a special woman's section at the store. Roberta Shippee and Debbie Wilkinson will be there with size charts and tape measures to help with uniform fittings.



FOUR NEW MEMBERS JOIN FLOTILLA 38

At the November flotilla meeting, Ron Booth, Flotilla Commander 38, prepares to administer the Auxiliary membership oath to four of the seventeen new members to join Flotilla 38 this year. From left to right: Ron Booth, Christina Cate, Tina Noyes, Kate Deveikis, Joseph Grande.

(Photo by Steve Noyes, FSO-OP)

The Jetties is the official publication of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary,
Flotilla 38, 1NR, Newburyport, Massachusetts.

The Jetties is published by Matthew McDonald, FSO-PB, 90 Kirk Meadow Rd., Chester, VT 01543.

Articles or letters to the editor may be submitted by mail or via e-mail: mcd@vermontel.net.

Members are protected from the dissemination of personal information by the Privacy Act of 1974.

Submission deadline for the next issue is 15 January 2003

NOTE: *The Jetties* will only be distributed electronically to those members with e-mail addresses, members with e-mail addresses requiring print copies must specifically request them from the editor. Members lacking e-mail capability will continue to receive print copies.