

# *Northwind*

*U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary District 11 North*

*Vol. 24, Issue 2, 2017*

*Editor: Andrea Cuppoletti*



Northwind , Vol 24, Issue 2, 2017

Dear fellow auxiliarians.

I hope you will enjoy this issue of the Northwind. I want to thank all of the contributors for providing articles with a wonderful insight in the many activities which are planned, organized and executed by the best volunteer organization in the country.

This issue is focusing on Prevention. At this regard you will find several great articles. Such as the one on National Safe Boating Week, which is really inspiring. The amount of work needed to coordinate so many different agencies, activities, facilities and volunteers is simply staggering. Bravo Zulu to Division 3.

My favorite picture was the one I received from Maria Goodavage of 01-02 and Rick Saber, DSO-VE. It exemplifies the tremendous value of the auxiliary in being uniquely equipped for reaching out to the large public and promote safe boating.

Please, send me articles and photos for the upcoming issue due on October. As always, any comment on how to improve the format of your Newsletter is very much appreciated.



Andrea Cuppoletti , DSO-PB  
cuppoletti@gmail.com

Contents

Notes from the Editor .....page 2  
Commodore's Corner by COMO Wally Smith .....page 3  
Vessel Exam Encounters- By Andrea Cuppoletti.....page 4  
The Honor of Being Present- By Jim Losi.....page 5  
National Safe Boating Week- By Robert Schabert.....page 7  
Division 12 OPTREX - by Ron Darcey.....page 11  
From Sea to Heaven - by Keith Simmons.....page 14  
Honoring Veterans - by LT Mark Magrino and Keith Simmons .....page 15

We are just past halfway in the year and our summer boating season is in full swing ... and our lakes are full!

Our primary mission, as set by the Commandant, Admiral Zukunft, is ... and will continue to be ... RECREATIONAL BOATING SAFETY .... or RBS!

Back in January, we set some priorities for 2017 for our District as follows:

A. Mission Success

1. Increase productivity in core RBS programs (VE, PV, PE) by 15%.
2. Develop and deploy a cadre of outreach speakers who will speak to every marina / yacht club in the AOR.
3. Increase proficiency and readiness in our surface operations (Operational Excellence Award)
4. Increase the number of qualified and participating ATON verifiers in the District by 20%
5. Continue development of the PacConComm i.e. radio communications capabilities and integrate into Sector Contingency Plans.
6. Safety, Safety, Safety

B. Successful People

1. Develop improved methods and emphasis on recruiting and increase District membership by 100.
2. Develop leaders and promote leadership opportunities as a noble goal.
3. Live and emphasize our core values: Honor, Respect, Devotion to Duty.
4. Increase Fellowship events and HAVE FUN!!!

Some of the priorities ... in other words "goals", are qualitative while some are quantitative.

Quantitative

A. Mission Success

1. *Increase productivity in core RBS programs (VE, PV, PE) by 15%.*  
Our goal in 2017 is 165,000 hours. In the first six months, our members have volunteered nearly 71,000 hours or 43% of our goal ... but this is the beginning of our peak season so the numbers should increase dramatically over the next few months.

B. Successful People

1. *Develop improved methods and emphasis on recruiting and increase District membership by 100.*  
At January 1, our membership stood at 1,355. At July 1, we total 1,366 ... a net increase of 11. While we aren't exactly heading for our goal at light speed, at least we are increasing, and again, we're coming into the busy season so recruiting opportunities abound.

Qualitative

A. Mission Success

1. *Develop and deploy a cadre of outreach speakers who will speak to every marina / yacht club in the AOR.*  
I understand that several of our Divisions are working with local marinas and yacht clubs as noted in monthly Division Commander reports. There have been a good number of Public Affairs events, Vessel Safety Check days, and Public Education presentations. Good stuff! These activities align directly with our primary mission of RBS.

2. *Increase proficiency and readiness in our surface*



*operations (Operational Excellence Award)*

Coming into our busy season, it is noteworthy that already this year, marine patrols (including stand by hours) total over 9,000 hours. I haven't heard of any attempts at the Operational Excellence Award but I understand that at least one Division will have a couple of boats attempting to earn it. It is certainly worth noting the great success of the Antlers OPTREX in late April at Lake Shasta where 25 members either initially qualified or re-qualified as boat crew or coxswain .... Well Done!

3. *Continue development of the PacConComm i.e. radio communications capabilities and integrate into Sector Contingency Plans.*

Our DSO-CM Robert Vanderhyde continues to work closely with his counterpart in D11S to develop a communications net that will ultimately provide high frequency network capability up and down the West Coast. Good work Robert ... and to

- your staff!
4. *Safety, Safety, Safety*  
So far so good ... and let's keep it that way! We are viewed as "professional mariners" ... we should always act that way whether meeting the public on or off the water.

B. Successful People

1. *Develop leaders and promote leadership opportunities as a noble goal.*  
We are very fortunate in our District to have a strong team of District Captains and Division Commanders! Our future for good leadership is very promising. To continue that stream of talent, the

Flotilla Leadership Course will again be offered at the September PCA. This is an excellent preparatory class for those in leadership and/or those aspiring towards a leadership role. The experience garnered in a classroom / group setting far exceeds leadership courses taken online. In conjunction with the November District Board Meeting, the Elected Officer Training will be presented. The EOT is designed for all newly elected Flotilla Commanders to provide a basis to "hit the ground running". All great training!

2. *Live and emphasize our core values: Honor, Respect,*

*Devotion to Duty.*

We have a great cadre of dedicated individuals who continue to reflect the best in volunteerism! The Auxiliary has been tagged as the "best volunteer maritime service organization in the world". I'm proud to say ... No argument there!  
3. *Increase Fellowship events and HAVE FUN!!!*  
Get It ... Got It ... Good!

NOBODY SAID IT COULDN'T BE FUN!  
Enjoy your Coast Guard Auxiliary and Never lose sight of why you joined in the first place!

## Vessel Exam Encounters- by Andrea Cuppoletti

As auxiliaries, Recreational Boat Safety is our primary mission. One of the activities at the heart of RBS is reaching out to the boat user to provide vessel examination and an opportunity to educate on boating safely.

What a treat when the boat users are a group of enthusiastic children who have the chance to learn good habits at a very young age and become safe boaters and positive models as they will become young adults. Unfortunately, a simply remediable act as not wearing a life jacket is still a major factor in accounting for boat accident fatalities.

With the focus of this issue being prevention, I was thrilled to receive this picture from Maria Goodavage, FSO-PB of flotilla 01-02.

A Bravo Zulu to Rick Saber DSO-VE. Not only for educating this Cub Scout Pack on how to safely approach the great fun that sailing, and boating in general, is. But also for the heroic

efforts in obtaining all the necessary authorizations to publish such a terrific photo.



**Rick Saber DSO-VE wishes this Cub Scout Pack safe sailing as they shove off on their first sailing adventure. Note that all of them are wearing their mandatory PFD's.(Photo courtesy of Rick Saber)**



**USCG Eagle under full sails.**

The first time I ever saw the WIX EAGLE was on 4 July 1976. My wife and I were perched atop the 33rd floor of the Merrill Lynch building in lower Manhattan. With our noses pressed firmly against the windows, we were readying for the Parade of Ships commemorating the 200th birthday of our great nation. From our vantage point, we had a 270-degree panoramic view of the New York harbor resplendent with the Verrazano Narrows bridge, the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, Governor's Island and the greater harbor. It was beautiful as well as exciting.

I vividly remember the EAGLE, the lead ship in the parade of ships, entering New York harbor. She was under full sail and was escorted by several NYFD fire boats with their shipboard fire hoses shooting streams of water in an arch forward of the EAGLE. It was magnificent. I couldn't help but feel proud and patriotic of the spectacle and seeing the EAGLE. I remember remarking to my wife, "She is a wonderful symbol of America! I wish we could visit her when she docked." Unfortunately for us, several thousand

people had the same idea and we didn't get to board her that day.

The second time I saw the EAGLE was on 15 July 2012 again in Manhattan. This time, she was sailing down the Hudson river under full sail, beautiful as ever. I wanted to meet her in person so I immediately called my childhood friend Vin Pica who was the then Commodore of District 1S for the USCG Auxiliary. If anybody could have organized a visit, Vin could. However, it was not to be. EAGLE was there for just a short period of time and she was not taking any visitors.

Someday, I thought. Some day...

I arrived in New London, CT on Friday evening 5 May 2017 near 2030 amidst cold temperatures and a driving rain. As the AMTRAK train had arrived on the left hand side of the station it initially blocked the EAGLE from my vision. As the train left the station and passed me by, it immediately revealed the EAGLE which was a short 100 yards in front of me. My displeasure and annoyance with the rain and cold was immediately replaced with excitement

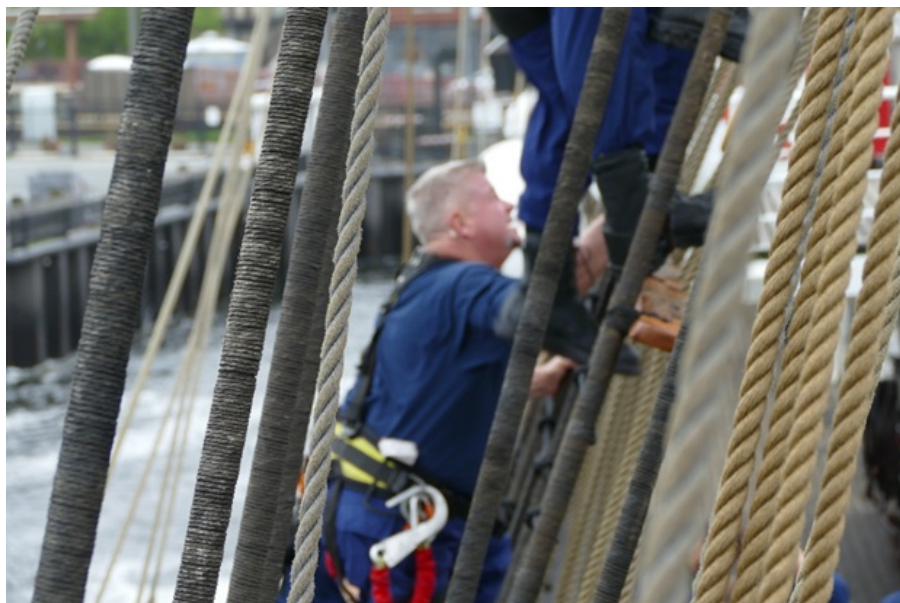
and wonder. I had never seen the EAGLE up close and personal. The rain soaked night simply added a new and different facet of the ship.

I choked up a bit when she came into full view. She was beautiful. She was everything I had read about and more. As I made my way up the brow and met the in-port watch stander MK 1 Weseman, he greeted me with a smile and welcomed me aboard. Unceremoniously, MK1 instructed me to follow him as we made our way below deck to my stateroom. I found myself wanting to see more of the ship, but MK1 was not to be a tour guide that night and I would need to get to sleep and rest up for my first full day aboard.

I would be a member of the ship's crew for the next two weeks. What a unique and rare opportunity I had. The ship's compliment consisted of approximately 160 4th class cadets and near 60 permanent crew including the CO and his leadership team.

Saturday morning came around pretty quickly especially when reveille was at 0600, which was really 0300 for me as I was still on California time. After getting dressed, I made my way to the ward room and was introduced around to the officers present and was directed to the waist deck where I would go through my initial safety training and then prepare for the "up and over." Not wanting to appear stupid, I acted like I knew what the "up and over" was. In actuality, I had no idea what it was, nor what it meant. All I knew was that I was expected to participate in it.

The cadets had arrived at 0730 which was the start of the first set of classes regarding the rigging and safety practices aloft. I paid modest attention as I felt it didn't pertain to me. I could see the interest and anxiety in the faces of the cadets. They started to mumble amongst themselves regarding going aloft. Finally, 4th class cadet Jones came over to me and



**Author Jim Losi starting is climb up the ratlines (Photo courtesy of Jim Losi)**

introduced herself and asked me if I was going aloft. "Absolutely not!" I shot back. "No way." Cadet Jones, in a very respectful manner then said to me, "Mr. Losi, you are expected to do the up and over with all of the cadets. It is a rite of passage and quite frankly, it is not optional." Given my great mental prowess, I immediately pieced together the meaning of the "up and over." I just looked at Ms. Jones with this incredulous look and said to myself in less than poetic terms, "No %^\$@##\* way am I going to do that."

The "Up and over" meant climbing to the top of the main mast traveling over the platform and then descending the other side of the main mast. That's 147.3 feet up and another 147.3 feet down.

As I was being fitted for my safety harness, I started to sweat and fidget. Being nervous and anxious was ruling my body and soul. As I was directed to the starboard rigging, BOSN came over to me to ask me if I was OK. "Absolutely not" I immediately and sharply responded. "I am deathly afraid of heights, I am sixty plus years old and I am fat and out of shape. Why should I worry!" I responded sarcastically. BOSN then went over to CAPT Meilstrup to have some sort of conversation about me. I could tell because the BOSN kept pointing at me.

After a five-minute conversation, BOSN returned all smiles and said, "I have great news for you. You only have to go half way!" "Are you serious? Have you gone completely mad?" I said. "How about not doing it all!" I responded.

BOSN reassured me that I could do it and that I would be safe. He also mentioned to me that everyone would be watching because I was a VIP guest and that the Commandant would be climbing with me. Now I became really snarky and responded, "What next BOSN, the Pope will be joining us for the up and over as well."

With that last comment, the BOSN escorted me over to the rail or the beginning of the climb. BM1 Aaron and Auxiliarist Langone would be my climbing buddies and get me through this ordeal. As I was making my way up the rigging, sheer panic set in. I stopped about a third of the way up to catch my breath and curse out everyone on the ship. I wanted to go home and I made that sentiment known to everyone around me. Aaron and Langone then started asking me all sorts of questions as I restarted my climb. They asked me about my marriage, my interests, my Board of Trustees activities, everything they could think of, they asked me. With every question, I got a little closer to

the half point.

This is what I looked like at the halfway point or atop the platform. I was not happy and my calm and usual respectful manner was left on the waist deck. As I had the death grip on some type of railing on the platform, I launched into a tirade directed at BM1 and Joe Langone. BM1 approached me, placing her hand on my shoulder and said, "Be nice Mr. Losi, you need us to help you get down the other side." "But I don't want to go down the other side" I responded painfully. "You are wasting time Mr. Losi, let's go!" BM1 uttered in a rather strong manner. So, I started my way down. Going down was every bit as challenging as going up. BM1 and Auxiliarist Langone stayed with me every step of the way comforting me, coaching me and keeping me safe. It took me about two hours to do the "up and over." Most people did it in thirty minutes or less.

In closing, the "up and over" is now one for the Losi history books. I did it, got some recognition for doing it and I will never have to do it again. However, it was a truly amazing experience and between you and me, I am proud of myself for having done it and perhaps conquering a fear, at least temporally. This experience goes into that broad category of I hated doing it, but loved having done it.

I finished my ordeal and it was 1030. It felt like I had been aboard for six months in rough seas. In reality, it wasn't even lunch time of the very first day and we were still at the dock.

Next month, I will share with you more of my experience aboard the EAGLE and what it was like to be a part of the ship's compliment in the foreign port of Bermuda.

## National Safe Boating Week - by Robert Schabert

I have been in the Auxiliary for almost 20 year. Each year NSBW seems to be the same event, almost like setting up a 'Cool Aid Stand' (No disrespect meant).

Each year, we go to a launch ramp, set up the 'Pop Up', do a few VE's, pass out some literature, take a 'Group Photo' with our life jackets on and say, 'Wow... look at what we did'.

Last year, wanted to do something major. I met with a few other members and was told, "Oh, you can't do that" or "Oh, that will never work." For those of you who know me, I don't usually take 'no' for an answer. It is just not my style.

So, now we have a new year, and I have a new Vice Commander who shares my attitude. Kind of like Nike, 'Just do it!' So, in November, Mike Barosso and I set out with a NSBW plan. The first obstacle was the fact that we are an 'Aviation' Flotilla. But then Mike, my Vice reminded me that I received the Division Award for performing the most VE's last year, so maybe be do have something to do with the folks who drive those things that float. For the record, I have a 31' sailboat.

Back to 11N'S 'Premier Flotilla 3-1', we don't even have a boat in our Flotilla (yet). But as a Flotilla of SAR Pilots, we also know the importance of getting the word out about Life Jackets and Safe Boating.

I was discussing our NSBW concept with Captain List, Commanding Officer at Air Station Sacramento. Captain List looked at me, smiled and said, "How about a Rescue Swimmer demonstration?" Captain List said, "If you want to do that, just let me know." That took me about three, maybe four seconds to say, "Yes".

Next question, where do we do this? My original event plan will no longer work because now we need water. So of course... we have the Sacramento River. I made contact my friend, Sacramento County Supervisor Phil

Serna and ran the idea by him. I contacted Phil for two reasons.

**Reason Number One**, Phil is a huge advocate of Life Jackets and water safety.

Four years ago, the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors decided to start a Life Jacket Loaner Program on the Sacramento and American Rivers, after numerous drownings. The Board of Supervisors invested \$25,000.00 into the program. Phil matched the \$25,000.00 out of his discretionary fund. As a result, last year, between Memorial Day and Labor Day, there

public until 4th of July Weekend. Side Note: Jeff did open the Launch Ramp for our Auxiliary Members to launch their vessels on May 20th, as it was the only launch ramp in the Sacramento area that would facilitate launching larger boats.

For those not familiar with the Sacramento Area, the Sacramento River divides Sacramento County and Yolo County, with the City of Sacramento on the East Side and the City of West Sacramento on the West Side of the River. [Photos Below]

Well, Phil has a band called the



**Supervisor Phil Serna presenting a Proclamation for NSBW. Left to right , Phil Serna, Bob Schabert, CDR Roethler (Air Sta Sacramento). (Photo Courtesy of Tom Lee)**

was not a single drowning on the American River.

**Reason number Two**, Air Station Sacramento is in Phil's Supervisor District and Phil is a huge supporter of the United States Coast Guard and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Now it was time to start hitting a few more challenges. Phil and I met with the Sacramento County Director of Parks, Jeff Leatherman, with regard to using Discovery Park for our event. Because of the recent flooding, Discovery Park will not be open to the

'Unsupervised'. In his band, Phil has a vocalist, Cindy Tuttle. Cindy happens to also be the Director of West Sacramento Parks and Recreation. Phil suggested that we contact Cindy. To put in a little extra nudge, I called another friend of mine, Mark Johannessen, Mayor Pro Tem of West Sacramento.

Mark also made a few phone calls for me and we set up a meeting with Cindy from Parks and Rec, our Fire Chief and our Chief of Police. At the meeting, I explained what I had in mind for National Safe Boating Week, but I also

explained that the Coast Guard Auxiliary did not have \$5,000.00 to rent the 'River Walk' for the NSBW event.

So, I suggested that the City of West Sacramento should 'Partner' with the Coast Guard for the event. Everyone thought it was a great idea. The Police Chief asked about the Yolo County Sheriff as they also have a boat and SAR team. I informed Chief McDonald that I had contacted Undersheriff Tom Lopez (who I worked with many years ago when we were both Deputy Sheriff's), and had a commitment from the Sheriff's Department for their Marine Division and SAR Team.

The 'Partnership' that we have developed between the City of West Sacramento and the United States Coast Guard went even a step further at our meeting. In light of the new Boating License requirement starting in 2018, Cindy Tuttle asked if the City Parks and Recreation could sponsor Safe Boating classes and Paddle Board classes. Cindy suggested the City would provide the marketing and location if the Coast Guard would provide the instructors. Again, it took me 3, maybe 4 seconds to say 'Yes'!

Now we had secured a location, 'The River Walk', and partnered with the City of West Sacramento, so it is time to focus on:

- *Coordinating the Helicopter Rescue Swimmer from Air Station San Francisco;*
- *A C-27 Fly By from Air Station San Francisco;*
- *Enough Auxiliary Vessels to be on the water (Vessels from Divisions 3 and 5);*
- *A Coast Guard Vessel from Station Rio Vista;*
- *Getting More Participants completely fill the entire River Walk (which we accomplished);*
- *ICS Plan (made by Randy McCormick, Division 5 Commander)*
- *Obtain a Communications Base (Aux Comm Trailer from the Sellstroms of 113-03-10)*
- *Obtain Proclamations and Resolutions from City, County, State and Federal representatives;*
- *Line up T.V. Media and Print Media coverage*

The event grew from a 03-01 Event, to a Division 3 Event. But, we did not have enough assets or Auxiliarists to make the event go smoothly. So we reached out to Divisions 5 and 10, and decided to make this a 'Tri-Division' NSBW Event.

Besides the 'Bridge to Bridge' event, we also wanted to maintain 3 VE Station. We wanted one a Discovery Park, Broderick Ramp and Miller Park. Due to high water it was questionable. At the last minute, the City of Sacramento opened Miller Park which is about 2 miles downstream from our event.

The word starting getting out to other agencies in the area, who all wanted to participate, making our job a little easier, even though we were constantly on the phone coordinating everyone and answering question, and updating the Event Plan. Since November, my 450 hours of planning this event went quickly.

#### TV Media

In addition to the 83 PSA's that were sent out to various News Media sources in the Sacramento Region, the following television stations made fantastic contributions to our National Safe Boating Week, the 'Wear Your Life Jacket to Work Event', and our 'Bridge to Bridge Event'.

#### CHANNEL 10

Media coverage was our next big issue. We started Media Coverage on Wednesday, May 17th on Channel 10. The Coast Guard Auxiliary and D.A.R.T. [Drowning Accident Rescue Team] were on the water with T.V. Personality Mark S Allen doing a live broadcast marketing the Bridge to Bridge NSBW Event.

Live, on the air, Mark engaged in a Paddle Board Race on the Sacramento River, with some great camera shots wearing an Auxiliary Life Jacket, promoting National Safe Boating Week. After falling in the river, on camera (yes it was staged), Mark S Allen then did a live broadcast from



Display with educational material was well attended.

(Photo courtesy of Tom Lee, Release for photo with minors was obtained)



our Auxiliary vessel, promoting our NSBW event.

On the morning of our event, Mark was in Los Angeles, but during his remote broadcast, Mark did several spots promoting NSBW. Channel 10 continued to do several PAS's Saturday morning after Mark's segment was over.

I had about a half hour meeting with Mark on Wednesday afternoon, after our filming, with regard to future PSA for Coast Guard. Mark is also a huge supporter of water safety and is an 'Unofficial' member of D.A.R.T.

#### CHANNEL 31

Good Morning Sacramento. On Friday Morning, I was on the 'Good Morning Sacramento' Show promoting our Saturday Event. The Good Morning Sacramento also wore Live Jackets promoting the 'Wear it to Work' program. Ch. 31 also had camera crew at our event and on the water. The station aired film segments during their broadcast day all day Saturday.

#### CHANNEL 3

Channel 3 did several PSA' promoting our Saturday Event, showing Coast Guard Helicopter Rescue Swimmer Photo's along with our schedule. Ch. 3 also had camera crew at our event and showed film segments during their broadcast day all day Saturday.

#### FOX 40 KTXL

Fox 40 News borrowed 2 of our Live Jackets for their News Casters to wear during their Friday Morning Broadcast. They were promoting the 'Wear it to Work' program and were also promoting our Saturday Event. On Saturday, Fox 40 News sent Reporter Doug Johnson, who not only covered the event from the River Walk, but was also on board one of our Auxiliary Vessels to cover the event from the water. Channel 10 continued to air our event all day and did some great coverage of our event promoting NSBW.



**CG Vessels (Auxiliary and Gold Side) docked at Old Sacramento preparing for the "On Water Demonstration". (Photo courtesy of Tom Lee)**

When Sector called our Helicopter to dispatch them on an actual SAR, Doug was on an Auxiliary Vessel and heard the SAR call. Doug did a follow up story about the Air Crew that 'Volunteered' for our event and then went out on an 'Actual SAR', showing the true professionalism of the Coast Guard.

#### **Proclamations and Resolutions, and Recognitions for National Safe Boating Week**

Another way of promoting National Safe Boating Week is to obtain Proclamations and Resolutions.

*Sacramento County Supervisor* presented to Auxiliary Member Robert Schabert and CDR Roethler from Air Station Sacramento, a Proclamation for National Safe Boating Week, at a televised Sacramento County Board of Supervisor Meeting.

*The City of West Sacramento* Recognized the Bridge to Bridge Event at a City Council Meeting. Bob Schabert, who was accompanied by 1113-03-01 Vice Commander spoke to the City Council about National Safe Boating Week, at a televised Council Meeting.

Chuck Dalldorf from 113-03-05 arranged for a 'California State Legislator Resolution' from The Honorable Richard Pan, Sixth

Senatorial District, and a 'Resolution' from United States Congress' from *Congress Woman Doris Matsui*, recognizing National Safe Boating Week.

#### **National Safe Boating Week 'Bridge to Bridge' Participants**

##### **The 'River Walk'**

Our 'River Walk' was completely occupied by many Public Agencies, including, West Sacramento Fire, Sacramento Fire, Governor's Office of Emergency Services, West Sacramento Police, Yolo County Sheriff Marin Division, Yolo County SAR Team (who brought in their mounted team), Lake Washington Sailing Club, West Sacramento Stand Up Paddle Boards, USCG Auxiliary Safety Booth from Division 1, USCG Communications Trailer from Division 3, USCG Auxiliary Land Mobile Unit, USCG Active Duty / Reserve Recruiter, and everyone's favorite... a Food Truck!

While the event was in planning stage, Randy McCormick, Division 5 Commander, suggested that we should offer Paddle Craft class available at the event as Paddle Craft have become a concern of the Coast Guard.

The City of West Sacramento has a Paddle Craft vendor at the Broderick Ramp, Sacramento 'Sups', owned by professional Paddle Boarder Maylanie Bevens. Maylanie agreed to assist with

the event and offered to set up a static display and assist Auxiliarist Greg Oshel (Division 3 Commander) with Paddle Board instruction at the 'Bridge to Bridge' NSBW Event.

As a Paddle Board business owner and professional Paddle Boarder, Maylanie understands the safety issues and dangers with paddle boards and the need for instruction.

After being introduced to the Coast Guard Auxiliary during NSBW, Maylanie has decided to join the Coast Guard Auxiliary and become an ABS and Paddle Board Instructor. Maylanie also wants to become active with the Auxiliary in the new Paddle Board Patrol Program and has submitted her application to Flotilla 3-1.

### In the Air

A special thank needs to be sent to Air Station San Francisco. About 2 weeks before the event, I was informed there was a high probability that AirSta San Francisco may not be participating as they did not have a crew available. Lt. Margaret Morgan said that she would do the best she could to get a 'volunteer' team for our event, and she did. Lt. Morgan found the following team for us:

1. Lt. Mike Dubinsky, AirSta San Francisco, Helo PIC
2. Lt. Sam Hafensteiner, AirSta San Francisco, Helo CP
3. AMT2 Nick Dunson, AirSta San Francisco, Helo FM
4. AST2 Corey Fix, AirSta San Francisco, Helo RS

After several low passes, the team was about to actually start their Rescue Swimmer Demonstration, Sector San Francisco called the team to an actual SAR. Channel 10 picked up on the fact that it was a volunteer team that was sent to an actual and did a great story about the volunteer Coast Guard Team!

### CHP Rescue Swimmer Demonstration



VE station (Photo courtesy of Tom Lee)

A week before our event, the CHP were also scheduled to perform a 'Rescue Swimmer Demonstration' with Sacramento Fire, but CHP were also dispatched to a call before they were even close to the event site. (Coast Guard saved the day!) A C-27 from Air Station Sacramento was the beginning of the on the Water Demonstrations, followed by a Rescue Swimmer Helicopter from Air Station San Francisco.

The 'Fly By' remind the public that The United States Coast Guard has long been involved with aviation and brings attention to the fact that today, aviation is one of the major components of Coast Guard Search and Rescue missions.

### Our VE Station

Our original plan was to have a VE Station at Discovery Park, Broderick Ramp and Miller Park. Do to the Flooding and continues high water, we were only able to have a VE Station at Miller Park. Even though Miller Park opened just a week before our event, the ramp still did not have any docks in the water.

The VE Station was extremely successful their Station accomplished:

- 39 total vessel exams were conducted (including supervised VE's)
- 2 members each completed their 5 supervised vessel exams toward earning their VE qualifications



Auxiliary Vessel conducting 'Traffic Brake' for D.A.R.T [Drowning Accident Rescue Team] while performing a Water Rescue. (Photo courtesy of Tom Lee)

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 PFD's were given to boat operators who were short the required number for their vessel/POB</li> <li>• 4 'T-Shirts' were given away to children under 13 years old "Caught" Wearing Their PFD's</li> <li>• 7 Dockwalker kits were awarded to persons completing the pollution survey</li> <li>• 7 America's Waterway Watch decals/pamphlets were given away</li> <li>• 50 California ABC's were given</li> </ul> | <p>away to boaters</p> <p>The Miller Park team, with members from Divisions 3 and 10, did an outstanding job!</p> <p>As a result of our event...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The USCG Auxiliary gained a New Member who is a Paddle Craft Professional</li> <li>• The USCG Auxiliary was introduced to all of the LE / Fire / Rescue local agencies allowing us to develop a future close working</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relationship</li> <li>• The Coast Guard developed some great new Media relationships</li> <li>• The Coast Guard developed a Partnership with the City of West Sacramento for ABS Classes and Paddle Craft Classes.</li> <li>• All of the participants are looking forward to next year!</li> </ul> <p>In closing...</p> <p>To everyone who participated, 'Thank You!' We could not have done this without all of you!</p> |
|--|---|--|

## Division 12 OPTREX - by Ron Darcey

Division 12's long awaited and carefully planned OPTREX held in June was greeted by clear blue skies and gentle breezes that quickly pushed away an early morning marine layer. The Oakland estuary where the training took place was a placid, deep blue and welcoming for the three training boats and participating crew members. Operating out of Coast Guard Island, Alameda the day for most began at the Island's galley for breakfast after which the boat crews filtered in singles and groups to gather at the small boat pier to settle in, get registered, await boat assignments and final training and operational briefings.

Spearheaded by Flotilla 12-91, planning for OPTREX 2017 began in the summer of 2016 under the Leadership of Jim Losi, Gregory Olsen and Division Commander Stan Douglas, the training event was based on maximizing productivity, concentrating training on the water with a primary goal of maximizing quality of training and team work over a two-day period. Not unusual for a standard OPTREX training the event focusing on Coxswain qualification, man overboard, disabled boat response and towing, anchor deployment, executing search patterns, radio communications and some time in basic knot tying.

Prior to start date, OPTREX coordinator Stan Douglas prepared



**Melody , (Bob Coackly, Coxswain) getting ready to leave the small boat pier at CGI. (Photo courtesy of Stan Douglas).**

crews with a detailed email preparatory briefing to assure all hands were to be well-prepped and prepared with dates, times and required equipment:

*Stan Douglas USCGAUX  
Greetings shipmates  
12 June 2017*

*Our Division 12 OPTREX is finally here. There is growing excitement about DIV12 OPTREX this year and I hope you will be able to join us. Everything we have put into our two days of training has been driven by the Division's values of pride, professionalism and fun.*

*Additionally, for all members who participate will receive our first ever official DIV12 t-shirt with the Division's new crest! If you haven't previously registered, there is still time to do so and take part in "on the water" training. Simply respond to this email and let us know you are joining us. The following are details for DIV12 OPTREX 2017, Coast Guard Island (CGI).*

**1. Entering CGI:** *Please present your USCG Auxiliary card at the gate upon entering the base. Additionally, have current automobile registration and insurance information ready in the event it is asked for. This is a rare*



**Aquamarine, (Virginia Luchetti, Coxswain) approaching the designated area for towing evolutions(Photo courtesy of Stan Douglas).**

occurrence but sometimes it is requested and it's better to be prepared.

2. *Date(s) & Time:* 23 Friday & 24 Saturday June 2017, Breakfast 0700 in the CGI galley. Your check-in time 0815 and 0830 GCI small boat pier. Please make sure you check in with Jim Losi and provide the necessary information. Jim will have the appropriate forms to complete. Additionally, he will be at the picnic tables just in front of the entrance to the small boat ramp.

3. *Uniform of the day:* ODUs. **SPECIAL NOTE:** CGI is an active USCG base with many active duty personnel present. Please make absolutely sure that your uniform items are in order and you are wearing your uniform properly. If you plan wearing boat shoes while engaging "on the water" training please make absolutely certain that you wear regulation boots and black socks with your boot shoes. I have asked Jim Losi to do a quick uniform inspection during your check in process.

4. *Meals and Water:* You may take your meals either at the CGI galley or at the Subway restaurant in the Exchange building. Breakfast will cost

from \$2.55 to \$4.10 and lunch between \$4.65 and \$7.70 at the galley. As a reminder, you must be in uniform to receive the reduced rate at the galley. Make sure you have enough water to stay hydrated through the day. Extra water will be available at the registration table.

5. *Your PPE equipment:* Please bring your yellow bags with all appropriate equipment needed for "on the water" training. If you do not have the proper equipment, those items will be available on loan for the day.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** Please make absolutely certain that you are wearing your PPE while walking on the small boat pier and docks. This is very important to note.

*Additional information with boat assignments will take place at the small boat pier.*

Getting underway from the small boat pier, OPTREX 2017 entered the center of the estuary and quickly went to work. Of considerable significance with "on water" training is often, but should always be a part of any training exercise or operation is vesting in individual responsibility by all participants. That vesting in small units

demands the success that every member contribute; initiative, discipline, esprit de corps, and teamwork are indispensable. To accomplish and retain this indispensable demand, crew sustainability becomes the foundation. Auxiliary Division 12's OPTREX 2017 "on the water" two-day training exercise certainly confirmed for those participating, satisfied and accomplished personal goals and contributed mightily to the event's objective.

To the Division Stan summarized the OPTREX 12 with the following congratulatory on 7 July:

"Division 12 OPTREX 2017 is now one for the history book!"

"In earlier emails to Division 12 members, we stressed that the values of Pride, Participation, Professionalism and Fun are the drivers of everything we do in our Division and which drove our OPTREX design.

Division 12 held its OPTREX 2017 on Friday and Saturday, 23 & 24 June at Coast Guard Island. We are really proud of the more than 30 Auxiliarists who joined us over the two days and participated in a range of activities. We had six coxswains with their respective facilities assist in helping with the initial crew qualification of Steven Kakahara of Flotilla 12-91 and Howard Ratzlaff of Flotilla 10-05 [Fresno] and coxswain recertification of Jimmin Chang of Flotilla 04-08 [Los Angeles]. The facilities and their coxswains participating were:

Melody	Coxswain Bob
Coackely	
Sweetwater	Coxswain Marty
Crowningshield	
Papito	Coxswain Nancy
Schimmerlman	
Aquamarine	Coxswain Virginia Luchetti
Willy-Willy	Coxswain Bob
Brown, Jimmin Chang	
Farfumwerken	Coxswain Donald
Pierce	

Perhaps more importantly, BOSN Doug Leavell OTO, and Mr. Bob Peterson both Qualification Examiners for the check rides. Their patience, leadership

and mentoring style were greatly appreciated.

The level of professionalism exhibited by those in attendance was impressive and inspiring. We witnessed many members assisting and mentoring others during the [many] training evolutions on Friday and Saturday. Additionally, all coxswains, without, exception demonstrated the highest degree of professionalism operating their respective facilities and facilitating the crew certification process.

We all know and realize that wearing our uniforms carefully and with pride is paramount. We are pleased with the progress we have made and what we saw. While we still may have some room for improvement [the very essence of contestant concentration on training, OPTREX or during routine patrol], we are heading in the right direction.

Lastly, we unveiled our new Division 12 crest with a great deal of positive feedback. Each Auxiliarist who attended and participated received a white T-shirt: BOSN and Mr. Peterson, along with all coxswains received the navy-blue version of the Division T-shirt.

By all accounts, Division 12 OPTREX 2017 was a success. It was well attended, we were successful in certifying and qualifying to new crew members and recertifying a coxswain, handed out T-shirts emblazoned with the new Division crest and had some fun! For those that attended and didn't pick up your T-shirt let us know so we can arrange for you to receive yours. If you like the photos, you'll find many more on Division 12's Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/USCGAUXEastBayNeptune/>;

Share them with your friends.

We are looking forward to OPTREX 2018 and expect it will be even better with more opportunities to train and develop skills. There will also be new and exciting Division 12 logo wear for all who attend! Mark your calendars for 22 to 23 June 2018; we'll see you then.



**Post Side-Tow evolution de-briefing between the crews of Sweetwater (Marty Crowningshield, Coxswain) and Melody (Bob Coackley, Coxswain). (Photo courtesy of Stan Douglas).**

It was with pleasure that I was invited to join the Division's OPTREX 2017, witness the excitement and professionalism all crews exhibited in each and every task required. The Division went all the way on this one!

Training exercises such as OPTREX's are but a stepping stone for all Auxiliary operations, routine or otherwise and must be conducted during every routine patrol when not otherwise engaged in an organized mission. Conducting the same training exercises as those held on OPTREX and developing others such as intensifying crew boating, navigational and situational awareness skills along with readiness levels and mission versatility would considerably increase individual operational retention levels. Studies have uncontestedly proven that post training skill levels rapidly decline after two to three weeks, the most severe decrement in performance coming in two weeks and continue decline thereafter. Another implication of skill loss function is that different skills exhibit different rates of skill loss and levels of performance. An example, found that some pilot skills decayed more rapidly than others, perhaps due to becoming complacent when carrying out routine tasks. This suggests that perhaps the lesser training exercises give way to those of more critical

concern. The relevant point here is as often as possible, incorporate OPTREX base training exercises as a base training program for continuing training activity to strengthen all crew mechanics in every task to maintain overall skill level and proficiency. That also comes with maintaining crew sustainability with a regular schedule of operational and mission retention. The Division has already initiated planning for OPTREX 2018, looking forward to even more facilities getting in line to participate with perhaps even more training exercises to be incorporated. Division 12 and all participants are to be congratulated on a job well done!

## From the Sea to Heaven - by Keith Simmons

Memorial Day 29 May 2017 in Monterey included a remembrance ceremony to honor recently deceased members of various organizations related the Armed Forces, primarily the sea services, and the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

The annual ceremony is a function of Fleet Reserve Association Monterey Peninsula Branch in cooperation with United States Navy League Monterey Council, Naval Order of the United States Monterey Bay Commandery, United States Naval Sea Cadets Corps Chesty Puller Battalion, City of Monterey Fire Department Fire Boat, a United States Army Major (Retired), Coast Guard Station Monterey, and Coast Guard Auxiliary Division 6, Gold Coast Division. The ceremony is truly exemplary of collaboration between various organizations and entities to honor fallen members and others who have served the nation.

The solemn ceremony took place on the Monterey Coast Guard Pier with approval of the Commanding Officer, Station Monterey. The location was opposite the secure side of the Pier where docked are two 47 foot MLBs, 29 foot RBS, Auxiliary facility, Monterey Fire Boat, and nearby USCG Cutter Hawksbill. Though set up began at 1000 hours, many participants arrived early, including the young Sea Cadets, nine in number with two officers. The program began sharply at 1030 hours and with efficiency concluded twenty minutes later.

The program commenced with a welcome and introduction followed by an invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, recognition of various participating organizations, call for each organization to read aloud names of their recently departed members, request to the public in attendance announce names they too wished to honor, appropriately timed ringing of a bell, benediction, each organization tossing a biodegradable wreath onto the sea, bugler playing taps, offshore Fire Boat water salute, acknowledgement by name of those



**Flotilla Commander Craig Johnson tosses a wreath onto the sea while Commodore Wally Smith and a Fleet Reserve Association official solemnly observe. (Photo by Michael Goldberg.)**

participating in aforementioned components, and thank you to the public purposely there and those there by chance out for a walk or a bicycle ride on the Pier. The ceremony was covered by a major area newspaper and television station with reporters and cameramen. Without doubt, all present were emotionally moved.

Active Duty Coast Guard personnel attended the ceremony, including Station Monterey Commanding Officer LT Mark Magrino and family, Executive Officer LT Cathleen Giguere, and other Coast Guard personnel, though standing near the gate to the 47s in case the Station received a distress call.

The Auxiliary's role in facilitating the ceremony was significant. District Commodore Wally Smith was the bell ringer. Division Commander Jerry Edelen led the Pledge of Allegiance, interacted with the Fire Boat crew in preparation for the water salute, and was interviewed by the television news which later was televised and posted on the station's website. Flotilla Staff Officer Michael Goldberg photographed the event. Auxiliarist Erik Abbott eloquently read the names of members who had crossed over the bar. Flotilla Commander Craig Johnson

had procured a beautiful flower adorned wreath and on que tossed the wreath onto the sea. Lieutenant Commander Anthony Saucedo of the Sea Cadets is also an Auxiliarist, and a striking large photograph of his saluting the American Flag appeared prominently next morning on the newspaper's front page with several additional photographs posted on the paper's website. The Fire Boat's presence was initiated by Fire Department Captain Barry Perkins, also an Auxiliarist. Much of the interaction between the various organizations and Auxiliary was coordinated by this humble writer. Additionally, other Auxiliarists attended the ceremony and some were accompanied by family members.

Fellowship, a cornerstone of the Auxiliary, was clearly evident this special day as Auxiliarists, some of whom traveled considerable distance to be there, engaged in conversation before and after the ceremony, followed by some having lunch together.

Division 6 Monterey Flotilla lost two fine members in recent months, one active and one retired, both previously having lengthy careers in the Navy. Remembered and honored were:

o Hank Smith, Commercial Fishing Vessel Examiner; Captain, US Navy (Retired), a pilot, once having survived his plane crashing into the sea immediately after launch off an aircraft carrier.

o William Von Christerson, Flotilla Staff Officer – Materials;

Lieutenant Commander, US Navy (Retired), a submariner based at Pearl Harbor with extensive duty in the Pacific Ocean.

These men of the sea services, Coast Guard Auxiliary and Navy, served on, above and below the sea. At the ceremony conclusion, the Fire Boat's

water salute of streaming water from the sea surface into the sky honored all being remembered, including these Auxiliaries, the skyward streaming water tribute seemingly symbolically representing their ascension from the sea to Heaven.

## Honoring Veterans - by LT Mark T. Magrino, USCG, Commanding Officer, Station Monterey and Keith Simmons



**Flanked by Coast Guard Color Guard, LT Magrino presents memorable speech honoring veterans on Veterans Day. (Photo by Michael Goldberg)**

Honoring veterans, the City of Pacific Grove proudly hosted a Veterans Day tribute event 11 November 2016 at Point Pinos Lighthouse. This small town event featured an invocation and benediction by Presidio of Monterey Chaplain 1ST LT Heather Mendoza, USAF, Pledge of Allegiance, angelic voices of local middle school children singing the National Anthem and God Bless America, and the mayor's warm welcoming speech expressing heartfelt gratitude to all veterans. US Coast Guard personnel from Station Monterey comprised the Color Guard, and the Station's Commanding Officer LT Mark Magrino was the keynote speaker.

Through collaborative planning with Auxiliary Division 6 Commander Jane Smith, Monterey Flotilla Auxiliaries in

tropical blue uniforms augmented the event in such ways as providing and setting up the sound system, distributing programs, and assisting as needed. Many Auxiliaries who helped out are themselves veterans.

Attendees included numerous veterans and current service members, family and friends, people from the neighborhood, city council members, city employees, and Lighthouse docents. Auxiliaries mingled and reminisced with old friends and congenially chatted with newly met acquaintances before and after the event.

Point Pinos Lighthouse since 1855 has lit the way for safe passage around the treacherous jagged, rocky and sea stack riddled southern point of

Monterey Bay, providing steady guidance day and night for recreational boaters, commercial fishermen, merchant and military vessels.

Lighthouse keepers have diligently maintained and kept the light shining out to sea for 161 years. Today, the Coast Guard is responsible for keeping the light operating, while the Lighthouse and grounds are owned by the City of Pacific Grove with maintenance and restoration facilitated by the Pacific Grove Historical Society, whose docents also lead tours. For information, see: [www.pointpinoslighthouse.org](http://www.pointpinoslighthouse.org).

The Lighthouse in Pacific Grove has not only been critical for navigation for more than a century and a half, but was also a strategic artillery location during World War II as nine enemy submarines silently prowled the coastal waters off the West Coast beginning only a few days after seven participated in Pearl Harbor attack 7 December 1941 and another sank an American freighter en route to Honolulu that day. Then for a year, these stealthy and deadly submarines attacked and sunk numerous merchant marine vessels, including oil tankers and freighters, and shelled targets on land, including a lighthouse. In response to counter attacks in the Monterey Bay area, Point Pinos Lighthouse became the command post for the US Army's 54th Coast Artillery Regiment, and adjacent was built a small garrison to house the soldiers. Nearby, the 54th's four 155 mm field guns, "Long Toms," pointed seaward as

Civil Defense Ground Observer Corps volunteers scanned the sea to the horizon with binoculars and a telescope from atop a tower.

Hence, the beautiful ocean view grounds of this historic lighthouse fittingly served as the outdoor venue for a tribute to veterans, highlighted by LT Magrino's keynote speech honoring their service.

LT Magrino truly captivated all in attendance as he praised veterans' service to the Nation. Since in Auxiliary District 11NR there are so many proud veterans and sons, daughters, relatives and friends of veterans, this Auxiliarist was moved to inquire if he would share his tribute with the entire District membership, serendipitously preserving his speech in print for all time to inspire and thank those who follow. LT Magrino's patriotic, elegant keynote speech follows verbatim in its entirety.

"Good morning ladies and gentlemen.

I'm honored to stand before you today and celebrate our service members, those currently serving and those who have previously served, and those alive and those who have gone before us. It is my privilege to highlight the significance of this day and pay homage to those intrepid and selfless souls who have dedicated themselves to this great nation.

President Reagan asserted "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same." The American veteran is the means by which this responsibility is accomplished.

We're here today to honor these individuals, to rejoice in their victories, show deference for their defeats, and say thank you for their courage to serve. I'd like to ask any veterans who are here today to stand. [Guests], look around. We are amongst patriots,



**Middle school students, veterans, family, friends, and others attentively listened to LT Magrino's tribute to veterans at Point Pinos Lighthouse. (Photo by Michael Goldberg)**

those with us in person and those with us in spirit. Thank you for answering the call to duty.

The service members we honor each Veterans Day are individuals from vastly different backgrounds who join together under a framework of several mutual principles. They value and personify admirable qualities such as honor, loyalty, integrity, courage, respect and commitment to duty, which enable them to serve a cause that extends well beyond their own self-interest.

I would also like to recognize a beaming source of inspiration for our service members, those that loyally standby while those called to duty leave for extended periods of time, with no certainty of safe return. The family members, you bear the brunt of their absence and keep the home fires burning. Thank you for your support and your sacrifice.

From the first shots at the battles of Lexington and Concord in 1775, American men and women have answered a higher calling, a calling to duty born in the belief of a nation. Over one million Americans have died as casualties of war while answering

this call.

Veterans Day was originally designated as Armistice Day, a day to celebrate the conclusion of World War I. At the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918, "the Great War" ended. On that historic day, Germany, their forces and supplies depleted and facing imminent invasion, signed an armistice agreement with the Allies in a railroad car outside Compiègne, France. Armistice Day was recognized annually from then on and in 1954, the 83rd Congress and President Dwight D. Eisenhower officially renamed Armistice Day, Veteran's Day, to ensure veterans, veterans organizations, and the citizenry can come together to honor American veterans from every war and conflict the United States had ever been involved. It is my pleasure to help continue honoring our veterans here today in Pacific Grove.

Many veterans of wars past, some of whom are with us today, never asked to spill blood on distant battlefields. Some didn't even volunteer for service, but they were summoned to be part of something bigger than themselves. Many were simply ordinary people who responded in extraordinary ways under extreme circumstances. These



individuals rose to protect, to defend, to triumph on behalf of a nation and her people.

We have awarded medals to veterans, engraved their names on monuments and named buildings and roads after them, all in an effort to honor them and ensure their sacrifices were never forgotten. Alas, nothing can ever replace the fallen service member, the family member we lost, and while medals, pictures, and historical preservation of their legacy allows us to remember them, they provide little comfort for the loved ones left behind. Please join me in a brief moment of silence to honor those who have gone before us, those who are only here in spirit today. Thank you.

Today, our service members continue to make the ultimate sacrifice. Even as we lose them, more Americans proclaim their readiness to serve, following in the revered footsteps of generations past.

We live in a world too often plagued by tyranny and oppression, a geopolitical environment where instability and threats to safety and security necessitate a robust military. America has chosen to lead from the front seeking stabilization and peace in a world which is fragmented by striking differences in religious and political ideology, a world that is challenged by competing interests, economic turbulence, and finite resources. American service men and women will be summoned to free the oppressed, stabilize regions, safeguard our shores, and bring vengeance upon our enemies, all in an effort to live in a just and peaceful world.

After all, as Douglas MacArthur sensibly declared, "The soldier above all others prays for peace, for it is the soldier who must suffer and bear the deepest wounds and scars of war."

There is no way of repaying our debt to a service member except perhaps by investing in their future. Our nation is faced with several challenges,

including soaring national debt, economic uncertainty, social discord, and error threats. Our service members are keystone to our safety and security, and to U.S. initiatives that span the globe. We must take care of our veterans not only for their sake but to ensure our nation inspires future citizens to serve.

President George Washington, who like other Founding Fathers, possessed an instinctive ability to see well beyond his years. He stated "The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their nation."

I remain hopeful of our nation's commitment to veterans moving forward. Yet, my optimism is shielded by a bit of caution concerning restructured retirement plans, issues with access to medical care, and limited post service employment opportunity pose challenges for veterans and the armed services. The effect upon accession, retention, and the veterans' overall quality of life remains to be seen. Nonetheless, it is the powerful communal support, the support I see here today, which gives me peace of mind that our veterans and their families are in good hands.

All over the country, people are gathering to memorialize, honor, and thank veterans. This event is just one strand in an interwoven blanket of prideful support that quilts the nation today. It may not be extravagant, but it is beautiful, and it serves as a gesture of continued appreciation for those who sacrifice some of their liberty so that our citizens may enjoy all of theirs.

Your presence here today shows profound respect for and is a clear tribute to the men and women who have served, are serving, and will serve. This gesture says you remember, you care, and you support. It says we will not forget those we've lost, those who have endured as

prisoners of war, those missing in action and still unaccounted for. It shows that you care about their sacrifices and honor their service. It shows that you'll carry their legacy forward, continue to stand by them, and inspire future men and women to serve. Today we remember and honor them all.

God bless you and your families, God bless our veterans, and God bless America."