



Nautical Musings

by Captain Stan Glatzer

The Most Rewarding Gift

“Daddy, what did you bring me?” Since we were tiny tots we looked at a gift as a token of affection from the giver. The greater the quantity of gifts, the more we felt the giver liked us. Sometimes we even received a gift that had a really honest sense of value to us, things that we remembered and cherished for many years - our first doll, our first two-wheel bike, our first pet, and for some of us, our first pair of long pants or long dress. Looking back, though, we notice that almost all of the gifts were tangible possessions that eventually were broken or lost and are with us no more.

On a very rare occasion we were given a gift that we were able to carry with us for the rest of our life. These gifts had value above and beyond the monetary value of tangible possessions. Our remembrances of a special person that gave us his or her time and either helped us solve a situation or taught us a skill or fact that we kept with us for the rest of our life long out-live any tangible gift. These were gifts that we could use to enhance our lives and maybe pass on to others and, in doing so, enrich their lives, as well as ours, with the act of giving.

Religious leaders tell us that the act of giving gives us our greatest joy. To many, the way to immortality is to give of one's knowledge, to teach another so that our acts are continued. I have found that giving my services as a volunteer to the community for all the blessings I receive as a citizen of this country is a most rewarding venture.

For some, volunteering at hospitals and church charity functions or as environmental activist is their way of serving. Others who have a leaning toward a more physical activity become volunteer firemen, EMS rescue workers, or as I have chosen, a US Coast Guard Auxiliarist.

I discovered that the US Coast Guard Auxiliary offered me the opportunity to combine the two aspects of teaching and adventure and presented me with a sense of fulfillment in accomplishing the act of serving the community to which

I belong.

Owning a boat in and of itself is a rewarding experience. We boaters are well aware of the joys that come with being on the water and having the whole gamut of waterside activities available to us. The pleasure we receive by fishing, water-skiing, tubing, voyaging or just plain being on the water to watch a sunrise or sunset is enormous. There is a terrific satisfaction in learning new skills and applying them in assisting others who are in need of that assistance. Safety Patrols performed by volunteers on their own vessels while under specific US Coast Guard orders permit the Skipper to enjoy the time afloat and after having received proper training, add to the pleasure by enabling the Skipper to aid a less fortunate boater to extricate him/her from what might be a dangerous predicament. There is no greater pleasure than knowing you have had the chance to act as a “hero” and that you did so successfully.

Heroes are not only involved in a physically challenging effort. There are instances where mental and emotional coolness is the most important requirement. As a radio operator or watch stander, you can assist the Coast Guard by freeing up a “Coastie” to be available for sea duty and being the voice on the air that answers boaters' calls requesting information or guiding a skipper through an emergency with confident and knowledgeable instructions. The final “Thanks, Coast Guard” that you receive at the end of the episode is most rewarding.

The recognition attained through passing on one's wisdom is achieved when, as a Coast Guard Auxiliary instructor, you conduct Boater Safety classes in all nautical aspects from boat selection to boat handling, radio communication, coastal piloting, GPS and more.

For those individuals who prefer to operate in an investigative capacity, the Auxiliary offers the opportunity to cruise the inland waters, back-bays, creeks and inlets as

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