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Future Coasties ...engineers



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Sea Scout "Safety At Sea" Weekend

story by PAO Yard
as told by
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Sea Scouts participate in pyrotechnics test.



Coast Guard Activities Baltimore organized the first U.S. Coast Guard/Sea Scout "Safety At Sea" Weekend held on the east coast on 10-12 September 2004. Hosted at the Coast Guard Yard in Baltimore, Maryland, the event involved 158 Sea Scouts ranging from ages 16 to 18 years old. The event

drew membership from three dozen Sea Scout ships in the Chesapeake Sea Scout Flotilla of the Boy Scouts of America's Northeast region. The area encompasses the northern and central Chesapeake Bay watershed, including Coast Guard Activities Baltimore Sea Scout Ship 600. The event involved several "safety at sea" activities as well as search and rescue demonstrations. The training activity replicated similar joint Coast Guard/Sea Scout "Safety At Sea" Weekends successfully held in the San Francisco Bay area for the past ten years.

George Hay Kain III, Skipper of Sea Scout Ship 25 in York, Pennsylvania and coordinator for the 2004 "Safety At Sea" Weekend, provided the following account of the successful joint Coast Guard/Sea Scout project.

"Over one hundred high-school age Sea Scouts and over fifty Sea Scout leaders from Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New Jersey descended on U.S. Coast Guard Yard during the weekend of 10-12 September 2004 for the first Joint East Coast U.S. Coast Guard/Sea Scout Safety at Sea Weekend (SASW). Modeled on the very successful West Coast version of the event held at U.S. Coast Guard Station Yuerba Buena in San Francisco Bay, this was the first attempt to replicate the event on a large scale in the East.

The Sea Scouts arrived at the Yard on Friday night and used the Yard's Columbus Recreation Center as their base of operations. Friday evening's activities included Words of Welcome by USCG Liaisons LT Andrew Ely and ENS Gerald Hewes of the USCG Activities Baltimore, a briefing by two Coast Guard Recruiters, and a screening of the movie Perfect Storm.

Saturday started off with a box breakfast and assembly on the Yard's Parade Field for morning colors. The youth from fourteen Sea Scout ships were divided into Companies ALFA through FOXTROX to allow passage in groups of about seventeen persons each through the various Saturday event stations. One highlight of the morning was a live sea to air rescue demonstration performed by a HH-60J Jayhawk helicopter which flew over from the USCG Air Station at Elizabeth City, North Carolina. Other Saturday stations included:

1. **Demonstration of the P-5 Pump:** Sea Scouts learned how to operate the type of pump the USCG is able to airdrop to vessels needing supplemental de-watering capability. Then the challenge was to see if the Scouts could de-water a 50-gallon drum faster than the pump could fill it.
2. **Damage Control Training Experience:** The teenagers had fun, got wet, and learned various techniques to stop water in-flow from broken pipes and holes in the hull using the portable USCG Damage Control Trainer brought up especially from Yorktown, Virginia for the occasion.
3. **Law Enforcement Seminar and Video:** Participants got to view a video showing USCG Law Enforcement Boarding Teams in action, as well as learn about the various equipment and techniques used by boarding parties. A highlight of this station was working in pairs to handcuff each other.
4. **Fire Hose Training:** At this station, each company was split into two teams and provided with a charged fire hose. A bucket was suspended on a trolley wire between the teams, and the challenge was to advance as a team on the bucket and by using the force of the water, drive the bucket past the other team.
5. **Hypothermia Simulation:** Here youth plunged their hands and arms into a bucket of ice-water for 90 seconds, then tried to pick up change from the bottom of the bucket and also tie a square knot underwater. This was followed by the opportunity to don a USCG Mustang Floatation Suit and jump into Curtis Creek to see how the suit performed in the water.
6. **Pyrotechnic Launch:** The skies over Curtis Creek were aglow with parachute flares, pencil flares, and orange smoke, all launched by the youth to see first hand the visibility of day and night USCG signaling devices.

The Sea Scout leaders attending SASW-2004 had the option of following the youth crews through the various stations, or going to sea on board Sea Scout Training Vessel *der PeLiKan*, a 46' Morgan auxiliary ketch. Once underway, Zack Smith and Justin Blakely from the Fiorentino Para-Anchor Company demonstrated how to rig and deploy sea anchors and drogues.

After box breakfasts and lunches, everyone was ready for some 'good old USCG Chow,' and the nice folks at the Yard Enlisted Dining Facility did not disappoint. It was a tough choice between hot turkey sandwiches with gravy and mashed potatoes on one-hand or chicken fingers and French fries on the other. Some Scouts solved the problem by going through the line twice.

Saturday evening provided a chance for everyone to catch their breath, or play volleyball and basketball at the Rec Center, or head back down to the waterfront for a demonstration of Small Boat Safety Equipment. By 2030, however, all hands were ready for the evening dance in the gym. Youth DJ's took turns playing tunes for the enjoyment of the youth and the consternation of the adults. Everyone also took time to consume 28 boxes of pizza and numerous cases of bottled water and soft drinks.

Sunday began with the opportunity to reflect on the Twelfth Point of the Scout Law (A Scout is Reverent) while awaiting morning colors. The Sea Scouts were flattered to be asked by the Yard OD to assist hoisting the colors. Then it was on to another great meal at the galley (bacon, eggs, sausage, potatoes, omelets, fruit, cereal, you-name-it) and then four more stations:

1. **Maryland State Police H-65 Helicopter:** This was a static display of the Maryland State Police's seven million dollar state-of-the-art search and rescue/law enforcement helo.
2. **Fire Extinguisher Training:** The U.S. Naval Academy brought up their \$10,000 propane fire pit, which when ignited, gave participants the chance to put out a real fire using CO2 fire extinguishers and practice PASS (Pull pin, Aim, Squeeze handle, and Sweep at the base of the flames).
3. **More time on the Damage Control Trainer:** Yet another chance to get wet on a gorgeous Indian summer day.
4. **Tour of the US Coast Guard Buoy Tender JAMES W. RANKIN:** Maintaining Aids to Navigation is one of the many functions of the USCG, and touring the RANKIN gave participants a chance to see just how buoys are placed, serviced, and maintained using GPS and bow thrusters to get the tender into exactly the right spot. The RANKIN maintains over 400 ATONs (Aids to Navigation) on the upper Chesapeake Bay. Many regular buoys have to be temporarily replaced with special ice buoys in the winter.

SASW-2004 ended promptly at noon on Sunday. Over 150 Sea Scouts and Leaders learned a great deal about the missions of the United States Coast Guard, acquired new skills, met new friends, and had a lot of fun in the process. And the USCG had an opportunity to show the public just what 'Semper Paratus' really means." 

