



SAF Station Meeting Minutes for 4 October 2023

By Chuck Hawley, Secretary

The 4 October meeting of the San Francisco Station of the Cruising Club of America was held at Cal Maritime Academy on the shores of the Carquinez Strait.

THOSE IN ATTENDANCE:

Diane Barker, Liz Baylis and Todd Hedlin, Don Bekins, Shawn Bennett, Michael Brown, Jim Coggin, Mary Crowley, Mark D'Arcy, Jerry Eaton, Peter English, Douglas Finley, William Foss, Neil Gibbs, Chuck and Susan Hawley and guest Bob Hinden (father of member Rebecca Hinden), Wyman Harris, Bob Hanelt, Bill and Lu Lee, Steve Mason and Ginger Soulders-Mason, William Mittendorf, Michael Moradzadeh, Bruce Munro, Alan and Angie Olson, Ashley Perrin, Synthia Petroka, Michael and Susan Proudfoot, Jim Quanci and Mary Lovely, Richard Schaper, Moe Roddy, Aaron Wagenheim.



Our guest speaker was Tony Mocium, and our Cadet Speaker was Kai Kraus who is studying for a degree in engineering and who enjoys basketball.

Note: The Secretary wants to thank those members who had the wherewithal to bring cameras and document this event, including Dick Enersen and Synthia Petroka.

REAR COMMODORE'S REPORT

R/C Schaper began the meeting by welcoming everyone to the California Maritime Academy in Vallejo. One of six merchant marine academies in the country, Cal Maritime is part of the California State College system, and prepares cadets for careers on commercial ships, tugs, and

possibly the military. Two of those present, Bob Hanelt and Doug Finley, graduated from Cal Maritime. Recently, US News and World Report ranked Cal Maritime as the #1 public college in the Western U.S., and it ranks in the Top 10 of US colleges and universities in terms of earnings of its graduates 10 years post graduation.



ENVIRONMENT OF THE SEA REPORT

Mary Crowley promoted a movie on Marine Debris to be shown the same night as the lunch in San Rafael on Commercial Shipping.

FUTURE PROGRAMS

Mary Crowley said that our next meeting will be held at the Marin Yacht Club in San Rafael on November 1. Our own Bob Hanelt will give a presentation on the “Treasures of the St. Francis Yacht Club”. Cost for lunch is \$40.00. Our Holiday dinner and awards will be held at the San Francisco Yacht Club in Belvedere on December 6.

HISTORIAN’S REPORT

Bob Hanelt reported that he had submitted the semi-annual Station Report for the Fall GAM magazine. He also mentioned that three of our members went through the Northwest Passage this summer: Nora Slayden and her husband Bruce in their 86’ high latitude motor yacht *Ugly Betty*, and Ashley Perrin as Expedition Leader aboard the cruise ship *MV Sylvia Earle*, named for the famous Sylvia Earle, a friend of Mary Crowley’s and one of the world’s most celebrated undersea explorers. In addition to cruising in the arctic, members of the station cruise the North Sea in Europe, the South Seas, and the Pacific Northwest.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Synthia reported that our lunches are running at an average deficit of \$281 per month, which is funded by our annual dues. Our current bank balance is \$5306.

Synthia mentioned that about 1/3 of our station members have not paid the very reasonable annual dues, and most of them who have been contacted have mentioned that they never received a notice that dues were due in May. So, members that don't recall paying their station dues this year may want to double check with Cynthia to see if they are in arrears. The amount you may owe depends on whether you are "local" (North of Monterey, West of Stockton, South of Geyserville) or outside of those counties. Either way, annual dues are cheap, cheap, cheap! Local members can pay at <https://cruisingclub.org/saf/dues/2023>, and non-local members can pay at <https://cruisingclub.org/saf/dues2023/non>.

SAFETY MOMENT

The Safety Officer gave a brief talk about the benefits of having a "clean" fire extinguisher onboard, especially in areas that may have electronics or the galley. By clean, he described chemicals (some of which have been removed from the market due to ozone depletion) that leave no powder or residue. Another handy fire extinguisher device is a "fire blanket", which is a piece of fire-resistant cloth which can smother galley fires. Please read the attached Safety Moment for more information.



GUEST SPEAKER: TONY MOCIUM, GRADUATE OF CAL MARITIME

Tony Mocium, Class of 1970, gave a wonderful presentation on his experiences as a merchant seaman (and elementary school teacher), leading to becoming a Captain on a Matson container ship.

TOURS OF CAL MARITIME

In addition to our speaker, the station members were treated to a tour of the Golden Bear, the Cal Maritime training ship, and the bridge simulator which is used for training cadets about being at the helm of a ship in harbors around the world.

Respectfully submitted,

Chuck Hawley



Clean Agents

“Safety Moments, presented at CCA Stations and Posts”

By Chuck Hawley, October 4, 2023, San Francisco Station

Safety at Sea courses are held across the country, generally at a host yacht club, and as a result the speakers and organizers try to reduce their impact on the regular members of the host club. However, many of the activities are inherently messy: debris ends up in the pool, used flares end up in the garbage, and fire extinguisher “agent” coats the parking lots.

CCA Member Bruce Brown, one of the SAS course moderators, recommended that I buy a CO₂ portable extinguisher for use in the hands-on courses primarily because it leaves no debris or dust behind after its use. Once the fire (generally gasoline, burning in a turkey roasting pan filled with gravel) is extinguished, there’s no sign that there was ever an extinguisher in use other than the absence of fire.

Another family of extinguishing agents that leaves nothing behind is one based on the halon family of chemicals, which generally consist of a carbon atom connected to chlorine, fluorine, iodine, and bromine atoms. Certain halon molecules are very effective in extinguishing fires that are found on recreational boats, and equally importantly, have varying effects on our environment, particularly the ozone layer. This is a complicated topic, and beyond the scope of this Safety Moment (as well as the chemistry knowledge of the author), but two of the very effective chemicals from 30 years ago turned out to be terrible for the deterioration of the ozone layer: Halon 1211 and Halon 1301. Production of these chemicals in much of the world was stopped in the mid 1990s, although the chemicals are still valuable in specific applications and are widely recycled.

Of the two “old” chemicals, Halon 1211 (a carbon atom with two fluorine, a chlorine, and a



The CO₂ extinguisher that I bought for demonstrations.

bromine atom) was used in portable extinguishers that look virtually identical to a common \$25 dry chemical extinguisher from Home Depot. In fact, they old halon portables look SO similar, that when I asked for donations of old fire extinguishers for demonstration purposes at Safety at Sea courses, someone donated two of the very rare Halon 1211 extinguishers which I mistook for dry chemical models until I noticed the label which said HALON 1211.

Fast forward to the Encinal Yacht Club in Alameda, CA which hosted the Pacific Cup Yacht Club International Offshore Safety at Sea course this past weekend. I ran the “flare and fire” station during the weekend, allowing sailors to practice with a variety of signal flares as well as allowing them to extinguish the gasoline fire in the roasting pan. Over the course of the weekend, we lit and extinguished about 40 fires, using the portable CO₂ extinguisher (\$130 second hand) which did an admirable job of extinguishing the fire over and over with no mess. A single 5# extinguisher lasted for the entire weekend, but I encouraged the students to use a well-aimed blast of gas which would extinguish the fire in a second or two. I say “well-aimed” because a gasoline fire that isn’t entirely smothered by the CO₂ will quickly re-establish itself and require a second blast.

Each group was also shown the effectiveness of the inexpensive ABC or BC dry chemical extinguishers, again using a short well-aimed blast at the fire. However, during one of my demonstrations, I accidentally grabbed the halon extinguisher that I had used in a discussion of different fire-fighting agents. I pulled the pin, aimed the nozzle and let forth a brief blast of banned, terrible-for-the-environment, not-Sierra Club approved halon.

Man, was it effective. From a distance of about eight feet, the gas enveloped the fire and immediately put it out. The fire was out before I could release the valve. But I realized that I had used the wrong extinguisher and I fessed up to the students about my mix-up. Instead of a cloud of messy particles, I had released a cloud of environmentally damaging gas.

So, what did I learn?

1. Many items with subtle but important differences may get mixed up, especially in the hurry to put out a fire or some other time-critical action. Make sure you know that you’ve got the correct signal flare, the correct fuel container, or the correct extinguisher.
2. Having a non-powder extinguisher onboard, especially for electrical and galley fires, is a



A modern halon extinguisher with a far more environmental agent.

good idea. Powdered extinguishing agents are extremely difficult to clean up, and they can cause corrosion if left in place. Fire blankets also work effectively on small galley fires, without creating a mess.

3. Technique is important. You have to get all the fire out with a CO₂ extinguisher or it will relight and you'll have to start over.

The Cruising Club of America is a collection of accomplished ocean sailors having extensive boat handling, seamanship, and command experience honed over many years. "Safety Moments" are written by the Club's Safety Officers from CCA Stations across North America and Bermuda, as well as CCA members at large. They are published by the CCA Safety and Seamanship Committee and are intended to advance seamanship and safety by highlighting new technologies, suggestions for safe operation and reports of maritime disasters around the world.