

'FILES AND PROFILES' FROM THE DISTRICT

"The Dixie District" - District 17 2005 October

The Gulf Will Rise Again

By JOHN GRISHAM

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Biloxi, Mississippi

On Aug. 17, 1969, Hurricane Camille roared onto the Gulf Coast with winds of more than 200 miles an hour, only the second Category 5 storm to hit the mainland United States. It killed 143 people in Mississippi, and 201 more in flooding in central Virginia.

Over the years, Hurricane Camille's legend grew, and it was not uncommon when I was a child and student in Mississippi to hear horrific tales from coast residents who had survived it. I myself was sleeping in a Boy Scout pup tent 200 miles inland when the storm swept through. Our losses were minimal - the tents, sleeping bags, some food - but over time I managed to spice up the adventure and add a little danger to it.

For almost 40 years, it was a well-established belief that the Gulf Coast had taken nature's mightiest blow, picked itself up, learned some lessons and survived rather well. There could simply never be another storm like Hurricane Camille.

After walking the flattened streets of Biloxi, though, I suspect that Hurricane Camille will soon be downgraded to an April shower. The devastation from Hurricane Katrina, a storm surge 80 miles wide and close to 30 feet high, is incomprehensible. North from the beach for a half a mile, virtually every house has been reduced to kindling and debris. At least 100,000 people in Jackson County - poor, middle-class, wealthy - are homeless.

I search for a friend's home, a grand old place with a long wide porch where we'd sit and gaze at the ocean, and find nothing but rubble. Mary Mahoney's, the venerable French restaurant and my favorite place to eat on the coast, is standing, but gutted. It's built of stone and survived many storms but had seen nothing like Hurricane Katrina.

Even without Hurricane Rita chewing its way across the region, the notion of starting again is nearly impossible to grasp. Some areas will have no electricity for months. The schools, churches, libraries and offices lucky enough to be standing can't open for

weeks. Those not standing will be scooped up in the rubble, then rebuilt. But where, and at what cost? So much has disappeared - highways, streets, bridges, treatment plants, docks, ports. The next seafood harvest is years away, and the shrimpers have lost their boats. The bustling casino business - 14,000 jobs and \$500,000 a day in tax revenues - will be closed for months and may take years to recover. Lawyer friends of mine lost not only their homes and offices, but their records and their courthouses.

At least half of the homes and businesses destroyed were not insured against flood losses. For decades, developers, builders, real estate and insurance agents have been telling people: "Don't worry, Camille didn't touch this area. It'll never flood." This advice was not ill intentioned; it simply reflected what most people believed. Now, those who listened to it and built anyway are facing bankruptcy.

As dark as these days are, though, there is hope. It doesn't come from handouts or legislation, and it certainly doesn't come from speeches promising rosy days ahead. Folks dependent on donated groceries are completely unmoved by campaign-style predictions of a glorious future. It's much too early for such talk.

Hope here comes from the people and their remarkable belief that, if we all stick together, we'll survive. The residents of the Gulf Coast have an enormous pride in their ability to take a punch, even a knockout blow, and stagger gamely back into the center of the ring. Their parents survived Camille, and Betsy and Frederic, and they are determined to get the best of this latest legend.

Those who've lost everything have nothing to give but their courage and sweat, and there is an abundance of both along the coast these days. At a school in the small town of De Lisle, the superintendent, who's living in the parking lot, gives a quick tour of the gymnasium, which is now a makeshift food dispensary where everything is free and volunteers hurriedly unpack supplies. Two nearby schools have vanished, so in three weeks she plans to open doors to any student who can get to her school. Temporary trailers have been ordered and she hopes they're on the way. Ninety-five percent of her teachers are homeless but nonetheless eager to return to the classrooms.

Though she is uncertain where she'll find the money to pay the teachers, rent the trailers and buy gas for the buses, she and her staff are excited about reopening. It's important for her students to touch and feel something normal. She's lost her home, but her primary concern is for the children. "Could you send

us some books?" she asks me. Choking back tears, my wife and I say, "Yes, we certainly could."

Normalcy is the key, and the people cling to anything that's familiar – the school, a church, a routine, but especially to one another. Flying low in a Black Hawk over the devastated beach towns, the National Guard general who is our host says, "What this place needs is a good football game." And he's right. It's Friday, and a few lucky schools are gearing up for the big games, all of which have been rescheduled out of town. Signs of normal life are slowly emerging.

The task of rebuilding is monumental and disheartening to the outsider. But to the battle-scarred survivors of the Gulf Coast, today is better than yesterday, and tomorrow something good will happen.

When William Faulkner accepted the Nobel Prize in 1950, he said, in part: "I believe that man will not merely endure: he will prevail. He is immortal, not because he alone among creatures has an inexhaustible voice, but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion, sacrifice and endurance."

Today, Faulkner would find in his native state a resilient spirit that is amazing to behold. The people here will sacrifice and give and give until one day this storm will be behind them, and they will look back, like their parents and grandparents, and quietly say, "We prevailed."

(Ed. Note: The above article was sent to us from our friend in Mobile, Jim Baskin. Our thanks go not only to Jim for sending the article, but also to Mr. John Grisham for paying tribute to the Biloxi people.)

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COURAGE OF A SAILOR **The Story of Hilary Lister**

The following article shows us all the power of the sea in both its attraction and challenge. Throughout the decades the sea has been a magnet for men and women of all ages. From the first sailor that made some kind of floating device to take him across lakes and rivers to the mighty sailing ships that left their home to explore foreign lands to the round the world voyagers, the pull of the ocean has been there to provide challenge and personal satisfaction of going against the odds.

Thus it was for 33-year-old Hilary Lister. Not only did she challenge the ocean in August by sailing single handed from England to France in six hours, she did it through controls powered by her breath; Hilary is a quadriplegic.



Hillary took up sailing two years ago "to boost her self-confidence". She had been a quadriplegic for four years due to the progressive degenerative disease reflex sympathetic dystrophy, which has slowly robbed her of the use of her legs, then arms. Hillary can only use her head, eyes and mouth. She uses a sip-puff system to control her electric wheelchair, and parts have been taken from an old chair and put into a 27' long Soling boat.

Her breath will drive a set of four switches, which can provide four different electrical outputs. To steer to port, she will blow down the steering tube, and to steer to starboard, she will sip from this tube. To furl the sails, she will sip from the sail control tube, and to unfurl the sails she puffs down this tube. The jib and the mainsail are adjusted simultaneously, and if necessary, both tubes can be sipped or puffed at the same time.



By completing the Channel crossing Hillary set a record for the world's longest solo sail by a quadriplegic.

Speaking during a BBC program she said: "I want to show everyone that disabled and able-bodied people can live exciting, challenging lives."

"If you want to have your dream badly enough, you can do it!"

Congratulations, Hillary

Reprinted from *The Newsletter*,

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---Pauline Franko, Editor

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COAST GUARD, MARINE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES STRONGLY DISCOURAGE "TEAK SURFING"

(Eds. Note: We published an article about this latest dangerous fad a couple of months ago. However, information found this month in the Poverty Bay Power Squadron's *The Pirate's Log*", District 16, reminds us what the cost can be when engaging in Teak Surfing.)

SEATTLE – A 22-year old woman was killed Saturday while "teak surfing" or "platform dragging" on Lake Tapps, Washington. This accident has all indications of a carbon monoxide-related fatality. Teak surfing, also called platform dragging, occurs when a passenger hangs onto the rear of a boat to be pulled through the water until the boat's wake builds enough height to allow body surfing. This practice is extremely dangerous because surfers are within inches of the boat's propellers and the vessel's exhaust ports. Surfers typically do not wear lifejackets when engaged in the practice.

National studies have found carbon monoxide concentrations at a small vessel's stern swim steps to be as high as 40 to 80 thousand parts per million. Concentrations as low as 200 parts per million can be fatal. Anyone exposed to high concentrations of carbon monoxide will lose consciousness in a matter of minutes, if not seconds. If a teak surfer has become incapacitated they could slip below the water.

The Coast Guard and other marine law enforcement agencies would like to remind people of the dangers associated with teak surfing. For more information contact your local marine law enforcement agency, state boating authority, Coast Guard or U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Carbon monoxide information web link:

<http://www.uscgboating.org/command/co.htm>



BIG BOATS VS. SMALL BOATS; NOT A FAIR COMPARISON

The Coast Guard Auxiliary wants the boating public to understand the consequences of interfering with a large ship in many of our narrow channels, especially in our busy port cities, such as New York City, Boston, Houston, Los Angeles and Seattle.

Every day, hundreds to thousands of ships, vessels larger than 65' in length, enter and depart our busy ports. These vessels include tankers, cruise ships, container ships and tug-barge combinations. All these vessels are constrained by their draft and are unable to maneuver in the narrow range inside the narrow channels in and around our ports and harbors.



The "Rules of the Road", the federal navigation rules provide for this event by giving these ships priority, or right-of-way, over smaller vessels when navigating in these narrow channels.

Many recreational boaters fail to realize the physics involved in stopping or maneuvering a large ship. The average recreational boat stops within a couple of boat lengths, even if they are traveling at maximum speed. However, it can take a large ship thousands of yards to stop.

An example would be if a water skier stopped 1,000 feet in front of a tug and barge. The skier would have less than one minute to get out of the way of the tug and barge, otherwise the skier would be run over.

Because of recent increases in reports of commercial vessels having to take evasive actions to avoid small boats in the channels causing great concerns to the USCG. It is asked that all boaters be aware of their position and remain outside the main channels to ensure the continued safety of all waterway users.



The local boating public should be aware of the penalty provisions with U.S. Code, Title 33, Section 2072 that specify “Whoever operates a vessel in violation of the navigation rules is liable to a civil penalty of not more than \$5,000 for each violation, for which penalty the vessel may be seized and the case shall be brought before the district court of the United States of any district within which the vessel may be found.



SHORT AND EASY(?) QUIZ

1. Wind vanes are self-steering devices for sailboats that steer by:
 - a. apparent wind
 - b. prevailing winds
 - c. true wind
2. To determine the size of an alternator needed, you should:
 - a. ask the local marine mechanic
 - b. list all 12V equipment on board, with the current draw for each.
 - c. Look at another boat of the same size as yours.
3. A windlass should:
 - a. handle only rope
 - b. handle only chain
 - c. be capable of both manual and power operation
4. Anchor handling can be made easier by using:
 - a. a bow roller
 - b. a block and tackle
 - c. all chain rode
5. You should assign specific shipboard duties
 - a. after you are at sea
 - b. when the crew is eager but has little experience
 - c. whenever the need arises
6. An important accessory to bring on a cruise is:
 - a. sunglasses
 - b. water skis
 - c. costume jewelry
7. If unable to contact a commercial vessel on Channel 16, try:
 - a. Channel 6
 - b. Channel 13
 - c. Channel 14
8. Signals from a 406 EPIRB can be received by:
 - a. commercial and military aircraft
 - b. local Coast Guard Stations
 - c. orbiting satellites

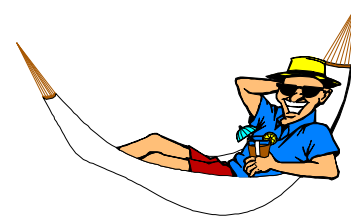
9. One advantage of electronic charts is they:
 - a. can give an instant location
 - b. are easily updated
 - c. are in three dimensions
10. The most common cause of navigation error is:
 - a. stupidity
 - b. fatigue
 - c. stress

The answers to this quiz can be found on page 5. If you did better than 80%, give your squadron education officer a call and volunteer to teach one of your squadron’s classes!

Reprinted from *The Newsletter*,
Coral Ridge Sail and Power Squadron, D8
SEO Roger L. Imhof, SN
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EVER LOOK AROUND YOUR BOAT AND WONDER. . . .?

Sleeping Hammocks may seem as if they have been aboard ships forever, but that’s not true. As with the case of his “discovery” of North America, Christopher Columbus was only the first European to spot something well known to other races of people. He noticed that Caribbean Indians slept in nets woven from hamack bark that were strung between trees. Realizing a good thing when he saw it, Columbus hung some of these aboard his ships for himself and his crew and the “hamaca” was born.



Marine Plywood. The earliest evidence of the use of plywood comes from ancient Egypt circa 3500 B.C., but “marine plywood” did not exist until nearly 5,500 years later. And although the rotary lathe, which peels veneers from timber for plywood, was invented in the 19th century, no adhesive could prevent plywood from delaminating when immersed in water. In 1934 Dr. James Nevins invented a plastic-based, waterproof glue, and a few years later, marine plywood was born. * *

What’s the biggest mystery in the history of naval inventions? The steering wheel. Yes, it first appeared on European vessels in the early 1700s, but no one knows who first successfully devised the mechanism that allowed a wheel to move a rudder. It is believed that the basic idea originated from a ship’s chain pump, invented by Admiral Sir John Hawkins in 1580

Quiz Answers (from page 4)

1a, 2b, 3c, 4a, 5c

6a, 7b, 8c, 9a, 10b

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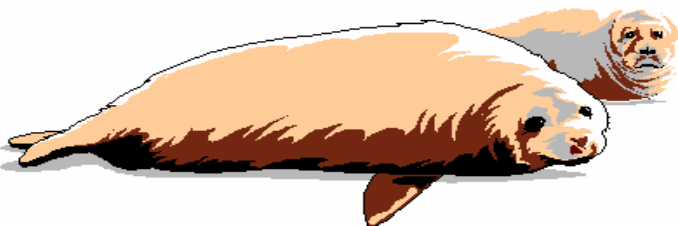
TOSSING TRASH OVERBOARD COULD LEAVE DEATH IN YOUR WAKE

Most man-made debris can create aesthetic or environmental problems. The qualities that have made plastics so successful – lightweight, strength and durability – make plastic debris a persistent threat in our oceans and waterways.

Since most plastic tends to float, currents transport it to shore. Even in remote areas like Antarctica researchers are now finding plastic bottles, bags and sheeting washed ashore. Plastic in our waterways is more than a litter problem – it kills!

Marine animals sometimes confuse plastic items for real food – a fatal mistake. Ingested plastics can cause internal injury, intestinal blockage or starvation. Seabirds are known to eat anything from small pieces to plastic lighters and bottle caps. Some birds even feed plastic debris to their young. Sea turtles often mistake bags and sheeting for jellyfish, a favorite prey item. Even the great whales are victims – several have been found dead with plastic bags and sheeting in their stomachs. Ingesting plastic is not the only problem.

Thousands of marine animals die every year from entanglement in plastic trash. Sometimes an animal accidentally swims into a piece of plastic and becomes ensnared, unable to escape. Curious seal pups are often attracted to floating debris and become entangled in plastic connector rings and fishing line.



Also, they sometimes use plastic as nesting materials which can create death traps for their young.

Plastic debris is not just a problem for wildlife. Plastics can also be a floating menace to navigation. Boaters report that plastic rope and line fouls propellers and that plastic bags and sheeting clog seawater intakes and evaporators causing engine failure, costly repairs and annoying delays. This type of vessel disablement can be life threatening.

The natural beauty of our waters attracts many people to boating. Yet some boaters still dump their garbage into the water.



Here's What You Can Do to Help:

- ✍ First, make it boat policy that NO trash is discarded overboard. Federal law prohibits the discharge of any plastic trash and restricts the overboard disposal of other shipboard trash.
- ✍ Encourage your dock or marina to provide adequate garbage can and recycling bins. All ports and marinas are required by law to provide trash containers for boaters.
- ✍ Install trash compactors on large vessels.
- ✍ Retrieve trash encountered in the water or on shore, where possible.



- ✍ Share your concern with others and encourage them to help.
- ✍ Participate in local beach and harbor cleanups and leave the beach clean after your visits.
- ✍ To report any illegal dumping that you witness or to report a lack of onshore trash containers, contact your local Coast Guard.

Ultimately, the solution to the plastic debris problem lies with those who care about the future of the aquatic environment and its living resources. Become part of the solution – keep plastics out of our oceans and waterways.

Submitted by Lt. Kathy Heydorn, P
Safety Officer

--Reprinted from *Periscope*
Patchogue Bay Power Squadron
District 3, New York

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Till next month, stay well and happy and enjoy the last few weeks of boating season.

- - - Janis Owen