

National Auxiliary Conference, 2010. Sat. Aug. 28, 2010. Scottsdale, Arizona.

Shipmates,

It's truly an honor and a privilege to be amongst such a distinguished group of shipmates, and, on behalf of the men and women of the Coast Guard, it's a distinct honor to have the privilege to address you this evening.

I am especially grateful to have so many of our international Coast Guard commanders present...thank you for travelling so far to share your insights with us...we look forward to continuing to strengthen our partnerships in the days ahead...and we have greatly benefited from our mutual exchanges over the past week...thank you for coming, you honor us with your presence.

This is my first NACON – and my first time as Commandant in Arizona! It's also wonderful to have my wife Linda with me this evening – I have taken her from Alaska to now Arizona in my Coast Guard career. I am personally fortunate that she stuck with me, and our Service is fortunate, that

National Auxiliary Conference, 2010. Sat. Aug. 28, 2010. Scottsdale, Arizona.

Linda, who has retired from her teaching career, is able to volunteer her time, and devote herself to improving the quality of life for our Coast Guard families.

Linda and I were reflecting upon our trip, and how much she truly enjoys volunteering...however, in our discussions, we were struck time and again by one reoccurring fact – while Linda’s volunteer efforts are meaningful on a small scale, **no matter where we landed**, by boat or by plane, – even in the Arctic tundra – we were met by **YOU** – Auxiliary volunteers.

In Kotzebue, Alaska we encountered Auxiliarists who were travelling to remote Alaskan villages to teach boating safety – in Anchorage we met Seward Flotilla Commander Sue Lang, who serves as Ombudsman for the 110-ft patrol boat Cutter Mustang...and even on our way out to Alaska in Grand Haven, MI, at the Grand Haven Memorial Service, we encountered

National Auxiliary Conference, 2010. Sat. Aug. 28, 2010. Scottsdale, Arizona.

this year's Auxiliarist of the Year, Mr. Ryan Bank (whom you will hear more about later in tonight's program).

From the top of the world in the Arctic, to the Deepwater Horizon Command Posts along the Gulf Coast, and reaching down through the Caribbean to the island of Haiti – indeed, everywhere I have travelled in my first 100-days as Commandant, I have found **YOU**, the *dedicated men and women* of the Auxiliary, **VOLUNTEERING** – *assisting* and *supporting* Coast Guard men and women – teaching boating safety – and *always* proudly standing the watch.

YOUR *Volunteer spirit* is truly extraordinary.

To me, it's a story of **Silver and Gold**.

So, Let me explain.

National Auxiliary Conference, 2010. Sat. Aug. 28, 2010. Scottsdale, Arizona.

As you know, Auxiliarists are denoted by the Silver of your devices and stripes; while our Active Duty Officers wear Gold.

We wear these prized colors upon our shoulders, collars and sleeves as designators of our rank and position.

But if you think about it, they are really a metaphor for **OUR** complementary relationship.

Silver and Gold are two of the world's most prized elements – similar to **OUR** unique organizations,

Silver and Gold, just as we do, complement one another; they always highlight the other's best qualities,

National Auxiliary Conference, 2010. Sat. Aug. 28, 2010. Scottsdale, Arizona.

Silver and Gold are life-long partners, **WE** have been partners since **YOU** were formed on the brink of WWII, and assisted with many of our domestic responsibilities, freeing Coast Guardsmen to participate in the war effort...

YOUR unsurpassed patriotism and volunteerism continues to this day...

YOUR passion and commitment to civic duty stands as a *beacon for others to emulate...*

Silver and Gold are also always associated with **achievement** –
Championship Trophies, Olympic medals, Nobel prizes –

And, as we will see later tonight, while always striving to serve others, **YOU** have accomplished great deeds – **YOUR** achievements are

National Auxiliary Conference, 2010. Sat. Aug. 28, 2010. Scottsdale, Arizona.

truly remarkable; and we are doubly blessed that your volunteer efforts continue to make the Coast Guard more capable...

Silver and Gold are indicative of *Strength, Might* and *Stability*... for a long-time they were the coin of the realm. And there was a time they anchored our currency...

In many ways, **YOU** anchor our total workforce by lending **YOUR** unique talent, **YOUR** boats, airplanes and facilities and, most notably, by selflessly volunteering **YOUR time** ...

YOU *unfailingly* and **unhesitatingly**, time and time again, answer the call to duty – you personify our motto – Semper Paratus – Always Ready...

To name just a few examples this year:

National Auxiliary Conference, 2010. Sat. Aug. 28, 2010. Scottsdale, Arizona.

In the Thirteenth District, **YOU** made the Canadian Winter Olympic Games safer for the world's athletes to participate, and for the people of the world to attend and observe their amazing feats;

In the Seventh District, **YOU** immediately responded to the devastating Haitian Earthquake, providing communication, public affairs and logistical support to one of the *largest humanitarian efforts every undertaken* –

YOU supported the Coast Guard's ability to be first ashore—and provided the logistical support for us to remain on scene;

YOU brought your unique talents to bear, harnessing social media to locate Haitians trapped in the rubble, saving many more lives...

National Auxiliary Conference, 2010. Sat. Aug. 28, 2010. Scottsdale, Arizona.

In the Seventeenth District, **YOU** conducted Arctic outreach, operating out of Nome and travelling along 860 miles of the Yukon River to remote Alaskan villages, providing education on boating safety to residents of eight villages... with names like KOYUK, WALES, UNALAKLEET, TELLER, COUNCIL, TOK, TANACROSS and SHISHMAREF...**YOUR** pioneering Arctic outreach *will surely result in lives saved* ...

In the Eight District, More than 275 of **YOUR** members answered the call to assist with the Deepwater Horizon response...filling *every position* from vessel operator to air observer, and capably donning *every color vest* in the Incident Command System response structure!

Across the Coast Guard, **YOU** also backfilled many other positions in local commands whose staff were deployed to the response...**YOUR** support was, and remains, critical to protecting the Gulf, and sustaining our response...

National Auxiliary Conference, 2010. Sat. Aug. 28, 2010. Scottsdale, Arizona.

This year alone, **YOUR** 31,000 members collectively assisted in saving 250 lives, assisted almost 1400 others in distress, and saved more than \$9 million in property...

YOU continue to perform a broad range of services that provide for the security and safety of the American People...

AND YOUR **signature commitment to boating safety** continues to save countless lives...

Yet, Silver and Gold can also be **understated**. **Unsung** and **humble** – they are among the most malleable of all metals – like us, they are ***adaptable***, and ***flexible***...like good partners should be...AND, when woven together, as when we work together, **we form a stronger bond**...

National Auxiliary Conference, 2010. Sat. Aug. 28, 2010. Scottsdale, Arizona.

Indeed, the continued strength and security of the Coast Guard Auxiliary remains as important today as it was when **YOU** were formed just prior to our Nation's entry into WWII...

Our personnel and assets were being rapidly pulled into the pre-war effort. We were stretched too thin, and we were no longer able to keep up with our domestic responsibilities...

But THEN, as NOW, **YOU** the Auxiliary were there to step in...to *pull our oars*...and *assume our responsibilities* to ensure the safety and security of our Nation.

On August 4, 1941, then-Commandant Russell Waesche gave a radio broadcast to commemorate the Coast Guard's 151st birthday... – (*remember when we used to get our news from the radio?!*) –

National Auxiliary Conference, 2010. Sat. Aug. 28, 2010. Scottsdale, Arizona.

Admiral Waesche said.....QUOTE... Through public spirit the members of the Auxiliary give their time and their services – they receive no compensation ...The organization and efficiency of these Auxiliary patrols has won the admiration of our regular officers.... **I consider their work a splendid patriotic service.** UN-QUOTE.

Admiral Waesche's praise *rings as true today as it did then.*

Our Service continues to admire **YOUR** commitment to service...and **YOUR** patriotic spirit remains **splendid!**

YOU always exemplify your motto –

“A Proud Tradition, A Worthy Mission.”

So tonight, I am here with you to celebrate all that is Silver and Gold...

National Auxiliary Conference, 2010. Sat. Aug. 28, 2010. Scottsdale, Arizona.

Commodore **KER-I-GAN**, “**Nick**” I would like to personally congratulate you on a job well done, on a duty well performed. **YOUR** leadership as National Commodore over these past several years has been instrumental to the Auxiliary’s success, and thus has been crucial to the Coast Guard’s success as well – **Bravo Zulu**, and **Thank You...**

Prospective National Commodore Jim Vass we welcome you aboard, and I look forward to your Change of Watch in October, when YOU will place your steady hand on the helm...

To all Auxiliarists with us this evening, I want to say **Thank YOU!!**
Thank you for **YOUR Service. YOUR Patriotism. YOUR volunteer efforts.** They are greatly appreciated – and much needed – **YOUR** volunteer spirit is infectious...

National Auxiliary Conference, 2010. Sat. Aug. 28, 2010. Scottsdale, Arizona.

Congratulations on ALL your achievements this year, on holding this successful National Conference, and thank **YOU** for allowing me to join you on this most special of occasions.

I look forward to continuing to celebrating our Silver and Gold partnership tonight, and in the days, weeks and months ahead –

Semper Paratus