



THE BUZZARD



U.S. Coast & Geodetic Survey Heritage Society Newsletter

July 2011

Society Cruise for 2012

Some of those who enjoyed the C&GS Heritage Society Cruise in October 2008 (Baltimore to New England and Canada) and our November 2010 cruise (Baltimore to the Caribbean) suggest we should plan a Society cruise for 2012 !!

To help get us started, we'd like reactions to preliminary options so that we can work again with Dick Knorpp of Cruise Vacations Intl. to put together a great cruise package. We have lots of time to refine options -- but preliminary feedback would be appreciated (with no commitment).

-- Destination? Is it time to plan an Alaskan cruise leaving from a Northwest port? e.g. 7-night cruise from Seattle or Vancouver, BC? Or should we plan a 6-day cruise from Baltimore to Bermuda (with 2 nights docked in Kings Wharf)?

-- Other preferences? (Got suggestions for a river cruise in Europe and for a return to New England)

-- Time Period? For Alaska, our members with sea experience report there's a better chance for clear weather in July or August. For Bermuda, the summer is more likely to have a hurricane; departures range from May through October.

-- Thanks for any feedback!

Coast Survey Updates Hydro Data

Protecting coral reefs is one of NOAA's highest priorities, and making science-based management decisions for that protection requires accurate and up-to-date hydrographic information. NOAA recently surveyed U.S. Virgin Island areas that had not been surveyed since 1924, and acquired data that will be used to manage some of region's most important marine protected areas. The Coast Survey managed a recent hydrographic survey that used bathymetric Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) to measure ocean depths. The multi-use data acquisition project augments traditional vessel-borne data collection methods, and will be used to update NOAA charts of the area.

President's Message

I hope you're all enjoying some summer fun! The Society's Board has helped gather updates from NOAA offices while exploring ideas for future Society activities and recruiting candidates for the Board vacancy after the untimely passing of our friend and colleague, Roger Parsons. We really miss Roger from our team.

I have an alert on a critical issue for some of our members: **The LightSquared Threat to GPS.** LightSquared proposes a 4G cellular broadband service using a network of 40,000 base stations along with some satellite coverage. But LightSquared's proposed operations BLOCK use of GPS! Tests have just verified LightSquared's interference with use of GPS by surveyors and emergency responders, and John Deere & Co. reported loss of service up to 22 miles away from LightSquared's cell tower. Several federal agencies have asked the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to hold off on allowing LightSquared to begin commercial operations, pending additional evaluation of the interference to GPS. LightSquared reportedly has deals underway with Best Buy, Cricket, and Sprint. And the Wall Street Journal reported Harbinger Capital Partners and its affiliates have put \$2.9 billion of assets into LightSquared. Maybe these corporate partners are not yet aware of this threat to national security, economic security, and public safety. I appreciate updates on this situation in newsletters from the National Geodetic Survey and from Marc Cheves, Editor of The American Surveyor (www.amerisurv.com). Marc provides an excellent summary of the recent Survey Summit at the ESRI User Conference where this threat was the major agenda item and there was a panel discussion with LightSquared and GPS reps. To learn more, I viewed Javad Ashjaee's presentation from the Summit posted as a video on www.javad.com (then click on JAVAD GNSS). We may have to contact Congressional representatives to stop LightSquared and protect GPS. This is a critical issue – stay tuned!
Charlie C.

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Society Merchandise



- Caps with Bench Mark \$ 14.00
 - Bench Mark Patches (3 5/8") \$ 4.00
- (plus shipping)

To order, please contact George Leigh at:
gleigh@gmail.com Thanks for your support!

U.S. Center of Population

On May 9th, townspeople, elected representatives, government officials and hundreds of students celebrated the naming of Plato, Missouri, as the 2010 Census U.S. center of population. Amid music, speeches, banners and cheers, village chairman Bob Biram welcomed the crowd, saying, "We're proud of our village. As one of our students said, 'we're in the middle of nowhere; now we are in the middle of everywhere.'" At the event, Juliana Blackwell, director of NOAA's National Geodetic Survey, revealed a survey disc, commemorating the national center of population as calculated by the Census Bureau and measured by the National Geodetic Survey. The Census Bureau calculated the national center of population as the place where an imaginary, flat, weightless and rigid map of the United States would balance perfectly if all 308,745,538 residents counted in the 2010 Census were of identical weight. After the 2000 Census, the center of population was near Edgar Springs, which is about 23 miles northeast of Plato. Since 1790, the center of population has moved in a westerly direction, with a more pronounced southerly pattern the past few decades. The new center of population now stands 873 miles from the first center in 1790, which was located near Chestertown, Maryland. The National Geodetic Survey mark serves a commemorative purpose for the community as well as a functional reference point for the nation's mapping and charting infrastructure. NOAA Project Manager Dave Doyle noted that this decade's mark will be the first to be set in stone, represented by a block of Missouri red granite. This is the fourth decade in a row the national center of population has been located in Missouri. Following the 1950, 1960 and 1970 censuses, the center of population was in Illinois. Indiana had the distinction for the previous six decades, from 1890 to 1940. Covington, Ky., was the population center in 1880, and Ohio was the centerpiece in 1870 and 1860. West Virginia was home to the center of population from 1830 to 1850, though it was still part of Virginia at the time. During the previous two censuses in 1810 and 1820, Virginia held the spot. A location 18 miles west of Baltimore was determined to be the center of population in 1800 following the second decennial census.

NOAA Ship Fairweather in Alaska

NOAA Ship Fairweather, a 231-foot survey vessel, departed Kodiak, Alaska, on July 7, on a mission to conduct hydrographic surveys in remote areas of the Arctic where depths have not been measured since before the U.S. bought Alaska in 1867. NOAA will use the data to update nautical charts to help mariners safely navigate this important but sparsely charted region, which is now seeing increased vessel traffic because of the significant loss of Arctic sea ice. Over the next two months, Fairweather will conduct hydrographic surveys covering 402 square nautical miles of navigationally significant waters in Kotzebue Sound, a regional distribution hub in northwestern Alaska in the Arctic Circle.

Fairweather and her survey launches are equipped with state-of-the-art acoustic technology to measure ocean depths, collect 3-D imagery of the seafloor, and detect underwater hazards that could pose a danger to surface vessels. The ship itself will survey the deeper waters, while the launches work in shallow areas.

The city of Kotzebue, located on the shores of Kotzebue Sound at the tip of Baldwin Peninsula, serves as a supply hub for eleven Arctic villages and cannot currently accommodate deep draft vessels. Those vessels must now anchor 15 miles offshore, and cargo is brought to shore by shallow draft barges. This summer's survey will also address a request for bathymetry to support navigation and installation for an offshore lightering facility used for heating and fuel oil. An up-to-date NOAA chart, using data acquired from surveys with modern high-resolution sonar technology, can improve the efficiency – and safety – at this important location.

SEASTORIES 101-84 --Harley Nygren

Mariners have always been convinced of the necessity of having good communications, and many systems have been used over the centuries to provide intelligence to each other. One of the most primitive is still in use today, and that is the equipping of all vessels with sound signaling devices. Ships' whistles are always installed, even in the presence of modern electronic communicators. Several amusing anecdotes are suggested by this fact. In the early 1950's we were bringing a medium size vessel of the old Coast & Geodetic Survey into the base at Lake Union in Seattle. This required us to pass through

not only a long narrow channel but to go through the Hiram Chittendon Locks and a number of railroad and automobile bridges. Our passage took place late at night. No bridge radio equipment was installed at that time. Our ship utilized an air horn driven by compressed air. We had no problems alerting the first railroad bridge or the locks themselves of our intentions. The second RR bridge was open. The third bridge spanned a particularly narrow part of the channel. When we blew the appropriate signal we received no notice from the bridge tender. Repeated efforts failed, even when we were almost under the bridge. Finally, we contacted the marine radio operator system, and called him on the telephone. He woke up, and we successfully passed that and the final bridge. The Captain never wanted that to happen again, and requested the Chief Engineer to raise the air pressure to the horn. On our next passage the sound was loud enough to practically blow the crew off of the foredeck. Fast forward a few years to a similar incident, with a much larger ship. Despite having tested the steam whistle while still at sea, it failed to sound when we approached the first RR bridge. The bridge tender should have been able to see such a large ship approaching, but did not respond when the whistle failed. It was necessary to swing the ship out of the channel and tie it up to a nearby pier while the engineers worked to get the whistle functioning. When all was operating correctly the various bridges and the locks responded correctly. The Captain did not want this to happen again, so for an ensuing trip he had a second whistle installed, which gave ample warning to all involved. Ten years later we were bringing an even larger ship through the channel, when its whistle also failed to arouse the RR bridge tender, and it was again necessary to tie the ship up to get things functioning again. All of this maneuvering in tight spaces is not conducive to good feelings on the part of the Captains. Thirty years later we were taking a 30-foot sloop through the Kent Island Narrows in Chesapeake Bay. Approaching the bridge over the Narrows we blew the appropriate signal on our small air horn, and received no response from the bridge tender. We tried to reach him on our VHF radio. Receiving nothing by that method we noted a small sign that contained a cell phone number for the bridge. By calling this number we managed to awaken the bridge tender who eventually stopped the traffic, raised the bridge, and let us pass. This was a modern solution to an old problem that apparently has not gone away in spite of the passage of time.

New NOAA Pacific Fleet Facility

NOAA and the Port of Newport will dedicate the new NOAA Marine Operations Center-Pacific facility in Newport, Oregon on Saturday, August 20, 2011. Formerly located in Seattle, the NOAA Marine Operations Center-Pacific serves as a homeport for four NOAA research and survey ships and provides administrative, engineering, maintenance and logistical support for NOAA's Pacific fleet. The facility, which NOAA leases from the Port of Newport, includes 40,852 square feet of office and warehouse space, a 1,300-foot-long pier, and a small boat dock. The main buildings are built to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design standards for environmentally sustainable construction. NOAA signed a 20-year lease with the Port of Newport in August 2009 following a competitive lease award process. The August 20 dedication will be free and open to the public. More information will be available soon on the website: www.moc.noaa.gov/mop-newport.html



From the Society Archives



COAST SURVEY RECRUITS
STENOGRAPHERS AND
TYPISTS IN WEST VIRGINIA

PERSONNEL PANORAMA

MAY-JUNE 1962

New West Virginia typists are shown with the Director and Asst. Director for Administration. Seated from l to r., Beverly Brewster, Joan Arbaugh, Betty Dowdy, Linda Freeman, Wanda Carr, and Audry Dosier. Standing, l to r., Frances Smithson, Judith Peters, Linda Moore, Marietta Underwood, Elizabeth Thompson, Admiral Karo, Charles Snyder, Mr. Thompson, Ina Hinkle, and Ronald Willard.

“The Coast and Geodetic Survey, for the first time, sent recruiters from the Washington Area to administer the clerk-typist and stenographer examination. O.C. Turner and Helen R. Stafford, both of Personnel and Safety Division, spent a week in West Virginia testing, scoring, interviewing and hiring qualified applicants. Setting up their headquarters in the General Lewis Hotel in Lewisburg, W.Va., they tested students at Richwood School in Pocahontas County, and Lewisburg and Alderson Schools in Greenbrier County... The recruiters spent an entire day at the West Virginia Department of Employment Security at Ronceverte testing all comers. Karl Massey had arranged for advanced publicity in local newspapers and the turnout was most commendable.”