



Before Throwing In the (Electrical) Towels, Give It A Go (part 2)

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Back in early 2009, we wrote about various techniques you could try before throwing the towel and calling for help, whether that be the towing services or your brother-in-law. (See SSP, "Before You Throw In The Towel, Give It a Go!" 2/18/09.) Mechanical issues are one thing. Electrical are another. This column is about that.

For 1,000 years, Safety at Sea Starts at the Dock

So said Admiral Halsey a half century+ ago. It was true then, true before and true forever. And a key to safety of life at sea is a reliable boat under you. And, with the ever increasing reliance on electronics and computers aboard, we need to be sure that our electrical system is ready to go. This starts with preventative maintenance (PM.) I'll admit that I hate PM; as I'm working on something, I'm saying to myself, "the odds on this being a problem are million-to-one!" But I keep working on it because a little voice in my head keeps saying, "wanna be that millionth guy...?"

I start PM where the boat starts - with the ignition system. For most boats, it is simply a key and a safety-lanyard cut-off key. That is the lanyard that you are supposed to attach to yourself so, if you fall overboard, the boat doesn't keep going down the bay or, worse, spin around until it runs you over. Most boaters don't attach that lanyard to themselves for reasons that become self-evident if you've ever put



it on. You reach over to help somebody with something 2' away and the boat stops. (There are electronic ones now that are wireless and let you walk around the boat to your heart's content.)

But what about the guy with an enclosed engine space. Quite likely, there is a solenoid switch down there which is an integral part of the starter system. It is mounted low on the engine, not too far from the bilge. Take a good look at it. If you see any salt on it, it is likely from evaporated seawater that has splashed on it. Think about putting a splash plate under it, to keep the bilge water from giving it a bath in

heavy seas. Also, check to see that the terminal nuts are properly tightened. You don't want them working loose. My mechanics will tell you that faulty wiring connections are the most common reason for failure. Take a look at every wiring connection. Nothing wrong with removing them, checking them, then cleaning and refastening. Visually check the cable looms and look for signs of chafe or damage.

Next, take a look at the battery or batteries. Are the cables clean and securely fastened to the battery terminals? They shouldn't have any "white powder" on them (leaking solution from the battery itself is likely the prob-

lem and that means it may be time for a new battery.) The cables shouldn't move at all when prodded, even with a good rap with a hammer. If they do move, this can set up a condition of poor connectivity, high resistance and poor starting power.

Any good mechanic will check the battery for voltage. But, even if it reads 12 volts, it may not be giving out the proper voltage under starting load, which is the greatest time of energy drain on the batteries. Under start-up, a battery should never drop below 9.5 to 10 volts. If it does, go back and check those terminal connections noted above. And don't forget the negative post too. It is just as important as the positive connection. A bad or loose negative connection can stop an engine as surely as no power at all.

If the engine doesn't get enough starting power to reach starting RPM, it just won't start. Most of us think, "Ugh! The battery is dead" and move to get a new battery. There are over a dozen places where connections can work loose, almost imperceptively to the human eye - but not to the electronic components.

BTW, if you are interested in being part of USCG Forces, email me at JoinUSCGAux@aol.com or go direct to the DISR Human Resources department, who are in charge of new members matters, at DSO-HR and we will help you "get in this thing..."

Joan's View

story and photos by Joan Travan

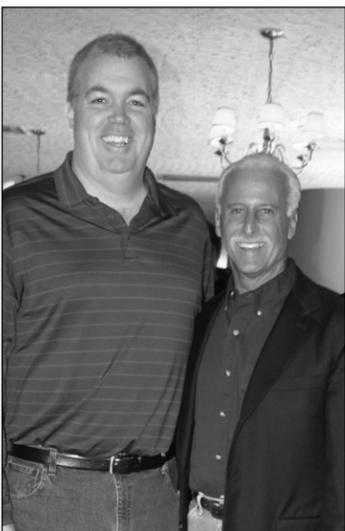
A SINCERE THANK YOU

On a recent Sunday morning, the ballroom at the Sunset Harbour Club in East Patchogue was jam packed for an appreciation brunch given by Senator Lee Zeldin for his many volunteers.

Over two hundred attendees had a wonderful time meeting and speaking with the man they worked so hard for. And "how sweet the victory" was for all.

At this festive happening, Brookhaven's party leader spoke what everyone felt in their heart. "This is truly a wonderful event and effort to thank each and every one of the committee members and friends of the Republican Party who committed so much of their own time away from their families to support Senator Lee Zeldin and bring real, true change to Albany," said Brookhaven Town Republican Chairman Jesse Garcia. "The people of Brookhaven now have a true fighter for the taxpayers in Albany with Lee Zeldin. And all of you share and own a piece of this historic event - this Republican Revolution for the Taxpayer!"

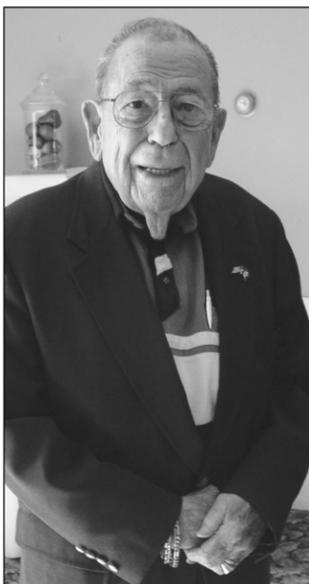
The man they came for and worked so hard for, and who is so humble in victory...Senator Lee Zeldin vowed to work hard for the people of New York State and bring, along with the other 31 Republican Senators, real change to Albany.



Suffolk County Conservative Committee Chairman Edward Walsh and Brookhaven Town Councilman Tim Mazzei



Suffolk County Clerk Judy Pascale



Retired New York State Senator Caesar Trunzo



Nick Caracappa



One of the many volunteers with Senator Lee Zeldin