



The Personal Locator Beacon - It Locates You!

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When the perfectly calm day sneaks up on you while you are day-dreaming and turns into a snarly, life-stealing beast, all your training rushes to the front of the "screen." But sometimes, all your skill isn't going to get you home. And sometimes the boat itself is what betrays you as she threatens to slip away beneath you. You are going to be hard to find - unless you are sending a personal signal to the satellite who will call the USCG for you. As a follow-up to last week's column, this column is about that.

Trained in Saving Yourself

Last week, we wrote about the various locator devices and how they were evolving. One of those devices, the "PPIRB" (pea-purr-b) is a Personal EPIRB. This is what we now call a "PLB" or Personal Locator Beacon. You wear it on your person. It also has the built-in GPS. When you attain a coxswain rating in the USCG Auxiliary (the person responsible for the boat, the crew and the mission), the USCG gives you a PLB. "Even if you go hiking, take this with you. If you get lost, we've got too much invested in you not to come get you!" Be aware that there are private companies now that offer devices that can locate you while you are underway and offer rescue notification services. I have no fully formed opinion of

them, pro or con, but if I am not registering myself and my device with NOAA (<http://www.beaconregistration.noaa.gov/>), then I have to figure that my call for help has to pass through at least one additional set of hands...

Back in the day...

The old model EPIRBs transmitted on dual frequencies of 121.5 and 243 megahertz (MHZ). This was hopefully picked up by passing planes and satellites. It could take 4-6 hours for someone or something to pass overhead before it reached the USCG. Also, the footprint that you were within could be as much as 12 square nautical miles. That is a square that is 12nm long and 12nm miles wide. That is a lot of water to cover. On the USCG website (www.navcen.uscg.gov/marcomms/gmdss), it says that the 121.5/243MHZ devices are "no longer recommended."

The State of the Art...

Interestingly, the 121.5MHZ frequency is favored for radio direction finding (RDF). So the newest EPIRBs now transmit simultaneously on 406MHZ and 121.5MHZ. The 406 reduces the footprint to 1 square nautical mile. And the 406MHZ is heard by satellites all over the world and, within an hour, the USCG RCC will have commenced coming to your aid. And the rescuers will also be looking

for your EPIRB's 121.5MHZ signal with their RDF gear. In heavy seas, that may very well be the difference between passing right by you while you are in the trough - or knowing that you are just over the next wave...

But My Boat Has An EPIRB

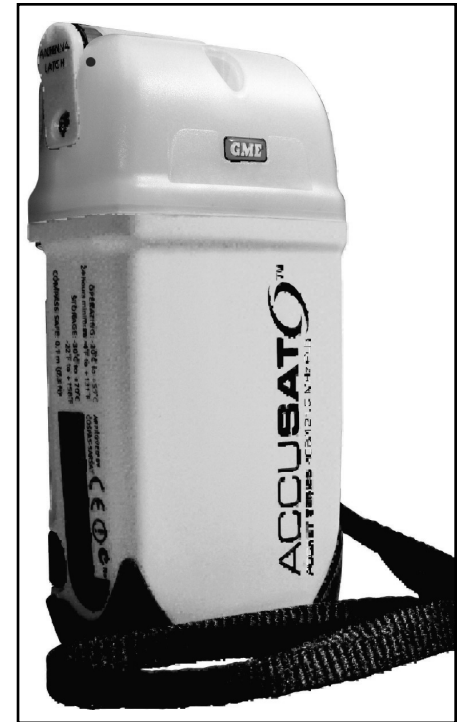
Good! I just hope you don't fall off the boat... Or, as the tale below details, your EPIRB battery, which you dutifully replaced (as I just did!) by shipping it to the lowest-cost provider of battery replacement services that could be found on the internet, doesn't fail at the time that it is most needed - as you grab it in an abandon ship scenario...

From Ocean Navigator, 3/16/2010

I read everything about the sea that I can get my hands on - hard copy, electronic, notes in bottles... Back in 2010, Ocean Navigator magazine published a story by Fredrick Gary Hareland about this same subject and I saved it as an object lesson. Mr Hareland recounted in his story the following about the crew of a 57' vessel making way from Hong Kong to Phuket when disaster struck:

"In closing, I must inform you that our crew and passengers on board that 57 footer were all rescued thanks to the master's back-up PLB. Turns out the EPIRB failed to deploy, but that little handheld PLB got the alert through and the victims are toasting it

and each other while retelling their recent adventure."



Redundancy will look very cheap and very smart, if/as/when... and they fit in your pocket.

BTW, if you are interested in being part of USCG Forces, email me at JoinUSCGAux@aol.com or go direct to the D1SR Human Resources department, who are in charge of new members matters, at DSO-HR and we will help you "get in this thing..."

Muratore Visits Second Grade Class at Hiawatha Elementary School



Legislator Muratore speaks to Mrs. Marshall's second grade class at Hiawatha Elementary School in Lake Ronkonkoma.

Suffolk County Legislator Tom Muratore (R- Ronkonkoma) recently visited Hiawatha Elementary School in Lake Ronkonkoma. He recited the Pledge of Allegiance with Mrs. Kim Marshall's second grade class, explained his role as Legislator, and then answered questions from students.

"By far, my favorite role as Legislator is speaking with children, our constituents and leaders of tomorrow," stated Muratore. "It is important to instill an interest in government at an early age. The students from Mrs. Marshall's class were inquisitive and bright, and visiting them was a great privilege."



Janice Harkins Dog Talk

Dear Dog Talk,

We have an 8 month old female Gsd (German Shepherd Dog). Do you have any tips on how to get her to stop nipping at us and jumping. I feel like I have tried everything. The nipping is when she is trying to get our attention. Any advice will be greatly appreciated.



Dear GSD Mommy,

Your little one is near and dear to my heart! I am a GSD lover especially a female. They are a breed like no other! With that said they are the smartest breed out there so she is definitely using your smarts, wits, and that female sass to her advantage. The nipping is easily compared to a child pulling on your shirt or arm. Also it is like when a child will smack you. Unfortunately your dog is trying to dictate your actions/ dominate you. Let's put you back in a position of control! A really big thing to remember when dealing with your dog is to out stubborn her. When she goes to nip say "no bite" you always want to use no and a command for a negative behavior and "good" and a command for a good behavior. The next step when she nips you move whatever she bites. For example if she bites your hand pull it away then wait a moment and offer your hand back our hope is she licks your hand (her showing you she wants to do right). If she starts getting more playful and tries turning this into a game then leave the room or put her away. After 10 minutes try this again. In regard to the jumping you are going to want to follow the same rules. It is important that you never praise her when she is jumping. Until she fully understands only praise her when she is sitting or lying down. If this does not make a difference after a week you will then want to go forward with training. Even when you feel like things might be hopeless let her see you are confident. Your little lady does not know you are trying to figure this out as you go. This will all work out try these tips and remember you are not failing by using a trainer you are just accepting that you and your dog need the proper education to communicate on the same level. We are just a phone call away if you need us. Good luck and try not to stress. Sometimes you have to go a little backwards to move forward. In the end the extra work you have to deal with will bring you closer because you had to work for it!

Send questions to: sspress2000@aol.com, Attention: Dog Talk.