

August 2022 Co-op Charting Newsletter

This month's email blast will highlight some of the amazing, funny, different, scary and enlightening experiences our members have had while participating in cooperative charting.

Fred Eichenlaub, Mosquito Lake Power Squadron/D11, describes an experience while recovering a geodetic mark. It was a blistering hot day in August and my wife and I and our pet sheltie, Flame, were looking to recover a geodetic mark that was monumented along an abandoned rail road section passing thru Andover, Ohio. The mark we were searching for was said to be imbedded in one of the foundation footers of a no longer existing water tower that served the old steam locomotives.

It didn't take us long to locate the mark. We noted that all that was left of the water tower were the foundation pillars. Having successfully completed our retrieval, we started to make our way back to our car, but noticed that Flame wasn't with us. In fact, she was still back at the mark and when we called her, we could see that she seemed to be stuck. I went back to see what the problem was, only to learn that she was mired in a tar pit! And so was I!

Apparently, these old wooden water towers were coated with tar to water proof them and once they were abandoned and left to dry out, the sun melted the tar into the tar pit that trapped us!

What a mess!

Tom and Joanne Hancock, Stark County Power Squadron/D7, Craig Fraser, Akron Sail and Power Squadron/D7, Liana Mihalca, Akron Sail and Power Squadron/D7 and Dave Bialorucki, Vermilion Sail and Power Squadron/D7, recount times when recovering geodetic markers and being supervised by cows, ducks, horses, goats, dogs and kids. All of the supervisors found no problems with the members' work. An added bonus for the horse supervisors was that the horses' owners provided carrots to the members to feed the horses so the horses got a treat after the group finished the recovery.

Steve Bryant, Oklahoma City Sail and Power Squadron/D21, describes an unusual experience while recovering a geodetic mark in the British Virgin Islands. He had

anchored his boat in the lagoon and dinghied to shore. Armed with a hatchet, gps and cell phone, he made his way up the hill covered with dense vegetation. He recovered the mark and posted its recovery to his Facebook page. He started his way back down the hill to his dinghy. Somehow, in his dinghy journey back to his boat, his cell phone fell overboard. He was lucky; the national cooperative charting committee awarded him his credits based on his Facebook posting despite not having all the location data required for marker submission.

Greg Shay, America's Boating Club of Raleigh/D27 recalls a memorable geodetic recovery of a special granite capstone marker (BODIE_ISLAND_NORTH_BASE) on the Outer Banks of NC that was monumented by the U.S. Coast Survey in 1848. The most recent recovery was 2006, and the NGS datasheet description for finding the mark was to travel west from the highway with a 4WD through a swamp that also included a creek crossing. As everything was now overgrown with no passage for a vehicle, I left the car by the side of the road and set out on foot for what I knew would be a real challenge. The swamp (now marsh) had been mostly drained, but after about a half hour of trekking through heavy brush with lots of stickers and getting my feet wet in the creek, I finally honed in on the mark's coordinates location. I arrived with scrapes and scratches and several mosquito bites, but there it was and a truly great find. Then, I noticed a memorial plaque nearby and what appeared to be a groomed path running north from the mark. I decided to take the path and after an easy half mile walk, I came out into a clearing somewhat chagrined. I had arrived at the Whalebone Junction Visitors Center. The ranger there told me that a few years back, the path to the monument and the memorial had been installed. I told the ranger where I had gone to get to the mark and he was somewhat amused, but did get serious when he said "those woods where you traveled – they are full of snakes!"

Craig Fraser - The final experience comes from our National Commander, Craig Fraser. He advises the membership NOT to walk too close to a cemetery while carrying a large shovel. Craig was with a group of other squadron members. They had just uncovered another mark that was underground with the shovel he was carrying and were making their way to their next mark, located at the edge of a cemetery. The cemetery manager rushed quickly out of his office, not even taking time to put on a coat for the cold weather, and approached the group. Craig

explained what the group was doing and his explanation calmed the manager down. The manager was very relieved to know that Craig was not heading into the cemetery for any digging!

We invite you to share any unusual experiences you have had while participating in cooperative charting so we can share them with our membership.