



THE WEATHERVANE

NJ ferry captains recall plane crash scene

By VICTOR EPSTEIN | Associated Press Writer
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Michael Starr couldn't sleep Thursday night.

Instead, the 30-year-old Jersey City resident stared at his bedroom ceiling, which served as a screen for the images of the day he spent helping people who had been aboard a US Airways jetliner that ditched in the Hudson River earlier that day.



jetliner; passengers crowded and down in the Hudson River in orange life vests. "I just kept staring at the ceiling," he said. "I just kept playing it over in my head."

Starr and his friend, Vincent LuCante, pulled 24 survivors out of the 36-degree water including

He saw well-dressed people shivering in knee-deep water on the wings of a sinking

into inflatable rescue slides; an infant in its mother's arms; and three people bobbing up

some too frozen to grasp

[Crash Scene p. 2]

Kingsway Bridge

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Ψ Ψ Ψ Commander's Message

Who thinks about boating in February freezing cold weather? **WE DO!** How about these boat shows? It seems as though there are still a lot of people shopping and the dealers are still not giving boats away. (Ed. Note AC Boat Show is coming up 2/4—2/8) The Power Squadron has gone to great



lengths to create new seminar courses for their members and Kingsway has ordered a copy of each of those seminars. If you would like to review a copy or you would consider teaching a seminar yourself please contact Clarence Cramer for more information. We have already scheduled the GPS seminar for April but until then we have our Weather and Advanced Piloting courses starting soon.

We had a great turn out for our January bowling night and we had a few "instructors" like Al Stoughton, Hank Cutler and

Brad Humphrey who showed us how to knock down the pins

If you're looking for some more fun and a good "shore meal" join us at the Crab Trap for Founders Day on February 19th, 2009. Call Bill Nelson, 856-340-2412 to let him know you are coming

No matter whether you joined Kingsway for the education courses or the fellowship, I would encourage you to come out to our Executive

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Crash Scene

rescue ladders hanging over the side of the M.V. [Yogi Berra](#) ferry.

"We pulled three people out of the water first, then we got the kids off of the starboard slide," Starr said Friday. "There was one little girl that kind of knew what was going on. The infant was the best of them all _ she was just looking around. She never cried until we got her on board."

The day had begun like any other, except for the bitter cold. Temperatures had fallen to 20 degrees, but felt at least 10 degrees colder along the waterfront

Starr and LuCante were working in separate offices aboard the Port Imperial ferry terminal's repair barge, waiting for the afternoon commute. As port captains, they serve as supervisors for the NY Waterway facility in Weehawken.

After hearing initial reports of the crash, they independently reached the same decision and ran for the Yogi Berra motor vessel moored nearby.

The 86-foot-long ferry was gassed up and ready to go.

"I called for Vince, and he was already on this way," Starr said. "He had it untied before I even had the engines started."

Starr gunned the Yogi Berra, but didn't have time to reach the jet-propelled ferry's top speed before he was slowing down to avoid swamping the 150 passengers and five crew members of US Airways Flight 1549



The [Charlotte, N.C.](#)-bound plane had left LaGuardia Airport at 3:26 p.m. Thursday, but less than a minute later the pilot reported a double bird strike, meaning both engines had been hit.

Joe Hart, 50, said passengers felt a thud inside the plane, and the right-side engine stopped running almost immediately afterward

"The left-side engine kept running, but it sounded really bad," said Hart, a Massapequa, N.Y. resident. "That's when we started to descend toward the river. Then that engine went out, and that's when we started to glide."

Hart said the impact was reminiscent of a rear-end collision, throwing people into the seats ahead of them.

Susan Ascolese, a North Bergen resident who witnessed the crash from her waterfront apartment, said the plane appeared to land softly. She said the crowd of passengers who then

left the aircraft looked "like ants on bread."

M.V. Yogi Berra was the third vessel to reach the scene

"We were surprised to see anyone," Starr recalled.

Another NY Waterway ferry on the scene, the M.V. John Kean, was piloted by 20-year-old Brittany Catanzaro of Fairview. The Cliffside Park High School graduate recalled having to run the motor vessel's engines in reverse just to keep pace with the floating plane and passengers being carried by the tide.

Her vessel rescued 24 survivors

Catanzaro's actions earned her a bear hug from Gov. Jon S. Corzine after a news conference Friday at Port Imperial. Corzine and [U.S.](#) Sen. Frank Lautenberg hailed the NY Waterway .

employees as heroes of the "Miracle on the Hudson," saying they couldn't recall a happier ending to a more potentially tragic situation.

During the news conference, Starr and LuCante stood in the back of the crowd of elected officials and NY Waterway executives, and they never approached the cluster of microphones.

But neither one of them expect to ever forget what they saw and did Thursday. LuCante, 41, of Point Pleasant, recalled that survivors who had been calm in the water turned panicky once they got aboard the Yogi Berra. They were dripping wet and freezing cold, and there was nothing on board to wrap around them.

"We wound giving them our coats and our hats," Lucante said. "We were down to our T-shirts by the time we got back."

NY Waterway's ferries were credited with pulling 142 of the 155 survivors out of the Hudson. There were no deaths, and injuries were confined mainly to hypothermia and twisted ankles, although one woman broke both legs, according to H. Mickey McCabe, director of the Hudson County Office of Emergency Management.

Ed Note: *Not exactly a boating story but who wasn't awed by the recent Miracle on the Hudson. An obviously competent airline pilot ditches where he knows his marine counterparts will be close by.*

Talk about a docking problem. How would you like to maneuver in a rushing tide faced with a life-and-death scenario? Too slow, you don't reach them; too fast, you knock survivors into the water — or worse. And don't forget the frigid conditions. And then there was the omnipresent Coast Guard + their 2 helicopters dispatched from Atlantic City.

Truly a life-saving air-sea & land effort!

AMS





Education Department News

A big congratulations to Brad and Megan Humphrey; Debra and Michael Scott Young on passing the Piloting course with flying colors. They will be taking the AP course along with as many of you who we can encourage to join them.

That **Advanced Piloting** course will start March 9, 2009 at the Stevens office building in Moorestown under the direction of Pat Cunningham.

The **Weather** course will begin soon and will also be taught at the Stevens' office in Moorestown. Tuesday or

Thursday evening are being considered as meeting nights depending on student preference. Contact Ken Stevens at kstevens49@comcast.net for further information.

On April 23, Kingsway will conduct a one evening **GPS Seminar**. The fee for members is \$25 and \$45 for non-members. Encourage your friends to join you for an evening to learn about that GPS they are trying to use properly. The session will be held at the Stevens office in Moorestown, NJ as is open to the first 25 who sign up.

The **Squadron Boating Course** began on 1/20 at the Burlington County Institute of Technology's Westampton campus. Classes start at 7:00 pm and will run on through 3/31. There's still time to join in. Contact Drew Stanwyck at stanwtck@comcast.net or 856-489-1653

For added information about all of Kingsway's educational opportunities, please contact our Squadron SEO, Clarence W. Cramer at: phone: 6092611755 or e-mail: him at cwcramer@comcast.net

IMPORTANT Notice for YOU!

The Executive Committee is considering going **GREEN** with *The Weathervane*. Beginning with the April issue we are thinking about **stopping U.S. Mail delivery** unless YOU expressly request it. Monthly editions would be delivered via e-mail and would always be available on our web site — www.usps.org/kingsway. **What do you think?** Let us know or attend the Exec committee's meeting on February 13th. alstoughton@comcast.net or 609.965.1663..

Message

Board meeting on February 12th to help us nominate a new bridge for the 2009-2010 year. Finally, I can tell you that the most fun I've ever had at District 5 events is the spring conference, to be held this year in Ocean City, MD on



March 27, 28 and 29th. Plan to be there Friday night for the hospitality room event and Saturday for the district Change of Watch. We'll look forward to seeing you there. If you're ready to have some fun and share a good time with others call me at 609-922-6090.



Safe & Fun Boating

Cdr. Jeff Stevens

Let's Go — Why not take the train to the **Atlantic City Boat Show?**

Atlantic City Convention Center Feb 4—8

Wednesday, February 4, 11:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
 Thursday, February 5, 11:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
 Friday, February 6, 11:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
 Saturday, February 7, 10:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
 Sunday, February 8, 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Adults: \$15
 Youth (ages 13-15): \$8
 Children (12 and younger): FREE when accompanied by an adult
 Special Two-Day Ticket: \$25

Take the NJ Transit Atlantic City train from Cherry Hill or Lindenwold right into the Convention Center & Show

Lv. Cherry Hill @ 0926, 1226, 1413, & 1714 every day. Also 1047 on Sat & Sun. Lv. Lindenwold 10 minutes later.

For more train schedule info: http://www.njtransit.com/sf/sf_servlet.srv?hdnPageAction=TrainSchedulesTo

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WE'RE ON THE WEB

<http://www.usps.org/kingsway>



Upcoming Events

Feb 4—8	Atlantic City Int'l Powerboat Show Atlantic City Convention Center [See p. 3 for schedule.]	Mar 15	Weathervane Deadline
Feb 15	Weathervane Deadline	Mar 19	General Meeting Location TBA
Feb 19	Founders Day Meeting The Lobster Trap Restaurant North Park Drive Pennsauken, NJ (on Cooper River) Great Food & Camaraderie Crab Cakes NY Strip Steak Stuffed Chicken Salmon Coffee / Tea/ Soft Drinks. Desert Contact Bill Nelson NOW while you're thinking about it. lighthouse6@comcast.net	Apr 15	Weathervane Deadline
		Apr 16	Change of Watch Meeting Ramblewood Country Club
		Jun 25 (Thu Eve.)	New Members Picnic Campbell's Field Camden NJ River Sharks Baseball

