Editor, Sam Snyder Presents...

SCUTTLEBUTT

The Volunteer Newsletter of the

WILLIS B. BOYER

VOL.1, NO.3 MARCH 2008

CHIEF'S LOCKER

Winter lay up is almost over - soon the trade winds will be blowing - we will be having our first volunteer flapjack breakfast the end of April and we'll be open again for the season May 1st.

This year with the continued guidance of the single-minded (Boyer minded) Skipper-Director Paul should be even more successful than the last because we are starting earlier. .

Volunteers are the heart and soul of the Boyer and each and every one is valued for his or her contribution to the total experience but I would be very remiss if I neglected to render special recognition to three special volunteers who genuinely deserve it.

"Turning to" through a very cold and long winter, working faithfully with no heat, having only water that was carried on for coffee, Sam Snyder, Stan Kerbel and Luke Archer kept the ship alive. At least once a week after a good breakfast of hot fresh homemade bread and jelly, Sam, Stan and I turned to on the many jobs that had to be done. Luke came up from the Findlay area one day a week after teaching school and put in several hours before going home to his wife, Bethany, who is no doubt quietly entertaining serious doubts about the sanity of the man she married. We understand, Luke.

Much was accomplished - engine room painting, inventory of all ships tools, Stan's miracle of the paint locker, "who says you can't turn a sow's ear into a silk purse" and preparation of the new tool room. All the deck planking in the volunteer's room and the new tool room has been taken up - two layers of carpeting, one layer of tile, a layer of tongue and groove planking, a layer of inch and a half cork and two by two stringers were removed. Much of this was rotten from pools of rain water soaking into it for years. Drain holes were drilled through the one inch steel deck channeling water into the boiler room bilge. The intent is to wire brush the steel decks in these cabins, seal and paint then lay stringers to support new deck planking.

In addition to all the grunge work Sam is doing, he also takes time to exercise his journalistic talents by putting out this great monthly volunteer newsletter. Oh by the way, if you detect any errors in it, please be kind to Sam. After all he's only a PHD. Thank you Sam.

I am sad to inform you that recently Paul's stepfather passed away, Luke who teaches art created a beautiful sympathy card with a picture of the Boyer and five military jets flying the missing man formation. Included also was a very moving poem and the names of all of the volunteers. Thank you so much Luke.

Mark it on your calendar folks - **Saturday, April 26th, 9:00 A.M**. flapjack breakfast followed by a good day of work. See you then.

Al Slater

K-9 Training

The Willis B. Boyer not only serves humanity but dogdom as well. Recently we were proud and privileged to have two K-9 teams use our ship as a training facility. Team 1 did a drug search and Team 2 did a person search: find the bad guy! Unfortunately the person dog, Rocky, got so excited going down the ladder to the engine room operating deck he lost his self control and went after the first person he saw, who happened to be Paul. Our intrepid leader promptly ran into the electrical area and slammed the door shut. The dog stood there barking and wouldn't let him out. I've always heard that dogs were a good detector of character.

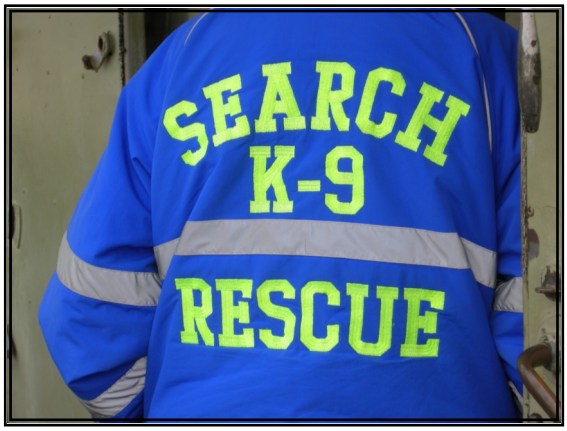
The animals were amazing to watch when they were tracking. The drug dog, Bea, with handler started her search at the sink in the galley, lower cupboards were opened for her, then she leaped on to the sink, over the dishwasher, at the port holes, sniffing every inch of the galley with incredible speed and focus totally oblivious of the men around her. Then a gust of east wind came from the steward's room open door. She sniffed that wind and shot in to the room where she went wild finding her target, a small plastic container with holes in it and simulated drugs with a real order inside it. She was rewarded with her favorite chew toy and luxuriated on a forbidden bed - see photo. What more could a dog want?

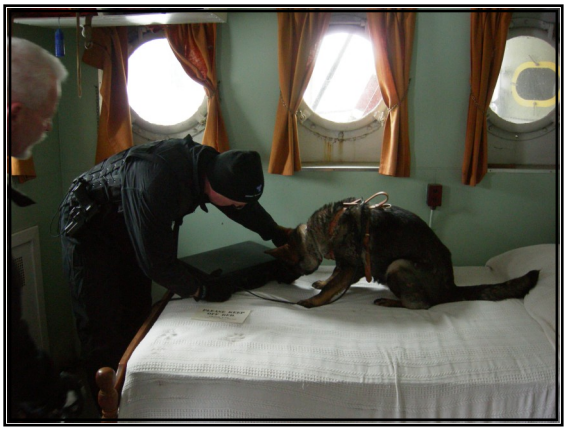
The person dog, Rocky, ultimately redeemed himself from chasing Paul by finding his real "person" hiding in the linen closet in the crew's mess.

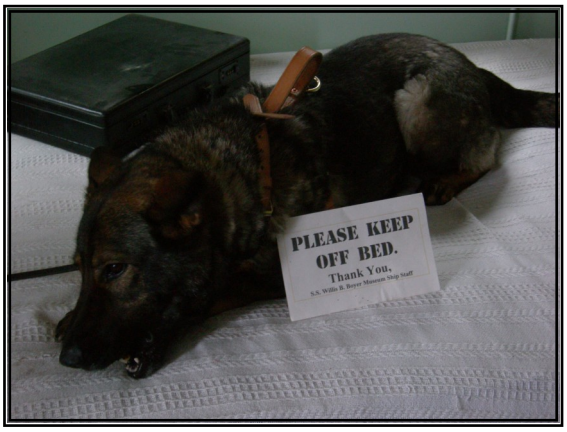
This kind of work is very intense, very demanding and mentally and physically draining on a dog. They can only work about 15 or 20 minutes. Then they require water and about a 40 minute rest before continuing on. Both dogs came from Northern Europe and responded to commands in German. This area has bred a pure strain of superior police/military dogs for centuries and is the major supplier of the U.S. law enforcement K-9 dogs.

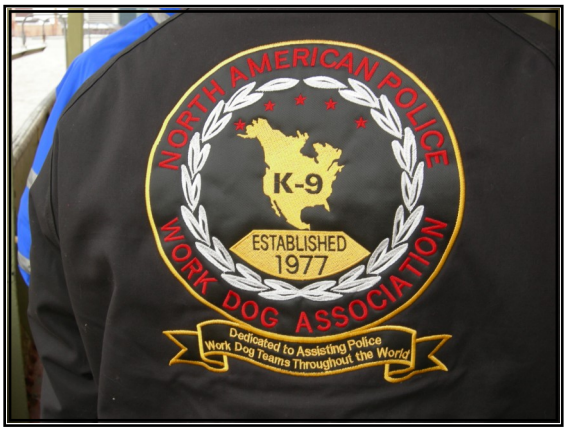
A great time was had by all and the teams expressed their thanks to us and a genuine desire to do it again.

I never told anyone this but while working with the Humane Society dogs and my own I learned to speak a little "dog" and Rocky the person dog quietly told me before he left that the next time he comes Paul won't get away that easily.









Where Have All the Freighters Gone?

When I was growing up in Sandusky in the 1940's there was a steady stream of lake freighters entering and leaving Sandusky Bay, going to or coming from the three coal docks. Coal, iron, and limestone were essential for making steel, and beginning in 1900 the United States was the world's largest steel producer.

The central figure in American steelmaking was Andrew Carnegie. By the late 1880's Carnegie Steel was the world's largest manufacturer of pig iron, steel rails, and coke. Carnegie's great innovation was the cheap and efficient mass production of railroad steel rails. In 1901 Charles M. Schwab of Carnegie Steel, along with J.P. Morgan and Elbert Gary created United States Steel, the largest non-railroad corporation in the world. U.S. Steel included 213 manufacturing mills, one thousand miles of railroad, and 41 mines. In 1901 it accounted for 66% of America's steel output and nearly 30% of the world's steel production.

Iron ore mined in Minnesota, limestone quarried in Ohio and Michigan, and Appalachian coal shipped by rail to Lake Erie ports were brought together through the creation of a giant fleet of bulk carriers, the Great Lakes freighter popularly known as the ore boat. In 1919 Charles M. Schwab, Director General of the Government's shipbuilding program, was promised by shipyards to build 130 ships on the Great Lakes.

The American Ship Building Company was the dominant shipbuilder on the Great Lakes before the Second World War. It started as Cleveland Shipbuilding in Cleveland in 1888 and opened the yard in Lorain in 1898. It changed its name to the American Ship Building Company in 1900, when it acquired Superior Shipbuilding in Superior, Wisconsin; Toledo Shipbuilding in Toledo; and West Bay Shipbuilding in West Bay City, Michigan. With the coming of World War I the company also acquired Buffalo Dry Dock, in Buffalo, New York; Chicago Shipbuilding in Chicago; and Detroit Shipbuilding in Wyandot, Michigan.

The Lorain yard served as the main facility of the company after World War II and five of the 1000 -foot ore carriers on the Great Lakes were built in Lorain. The Lorain yard quickly grew in size and importance. The facilities eventually included two dry docks over 1000 feet long built to handle the largest of the Great Lakes ore carriers.

Among the thirteen ships built by the company between 1903 and 1953 was the USCG MACKINAW launched in Toledo in 1944.

The builder of the WILLIS B. BOYER, formerly the COL. JAMES M. SCHOONMAKER, was the Great Lakes Engineering Works. The company took over the Riverside Iron Works in 1902 and built a second shipyard in Ecorse, Michigan. GLEW acquired the Columbia Iron Works in St. Clair in 1905 and the Ashtabula, Ohio, shipyard in 1912.

GLEW won recognition as a leading innovator in shipbuilding technology. The 364-foor WYANDOTTE, launched at Ecorse in 1908, was the prototype for the modern day self-unloader. In 1925 the company launched the WILLIAM C. ATWATER, the first ship with full-size hatches that had single-piece steel hatch covers. In 1941 the Naval Appropriations Bill subjected Great Lakes shipyards to government contracts that expended almost ninety million dollars. GLEW was responsible for twenty-one new ore carriers commissioned by the Pittsburgh Steamship Company and the U.S. Maritime Commission.

The Great Lakes Engineering Works' fifty-eight year history of shipbuilding came to an end in 1961. Foreign ships started to handle much of the bulk oar and were producing cost-cheap ships. On April 30 the stockholders agreed to dissolve the company and the property was sold to the Great Lakes Steel Corp.

At its peak the Great Lakes fleet numbered over 500 vessels and transported over 500 million tons or ore per year in addition to coal, limestone, and grain cargoes. Today there are approximately 65 large self-propelled vessels and tug/barge units in the dry-and liquid-bulk trades. Another 20 small tug/barge units engage primarily in moving liquid-bulk products. In a typical shipping season the U.S. Flag Lakes fleet will haul upwards of 115 million tons, or almost half a

ton for every person living in the continental U.S.

The fortunes of the Great Lakes ore carriers were irrevocably tied to the U.S. steel industry. America's steel industry prospered well into the second half of the twentieth century, but by the late 1980's it faced numerous challenges as over-capacity, aging mills, declining demand, and aggressive foreign competitors sent the industry into a severe downturn.

However, the steel industry in the 21st. century is undergoing dramatic changes, both in technological development and in global markets. Steel is made from ores still found in abundance around the world. Technological developments have brought down the time for transformation from iron to steel to within a day. Even after decades of use, it can be sent back to the furnaces as scrap, melted and remade into new qualities of steel. It is the most recycled material in the world. In developed countries recycling accounts for almost half of the steel produced.

There are two ways to make steel. The traditional way is to make steel from iron ore and coke, a product that is essentially baked coal. The other way is to melt down used steel and recycle it. Making recycled steel in electric arc furnaces is cheaper, saves energy, and is easier on the environment. An electric arc furnace can produce as much steel in one hour as the open-hearth furnace can in eight hours.

Mini-mills in the greater Toledo area receive shiploads of scrap iron from Russia and Brazil. The material is shipped via the Panama Canal to Montreal, reloaded into ore carriers and then transported to Toledo via the St. Lawrence Seaway. Shipping bulk cargoes by water is far more cost efficient than shipping by truck or rail.

Asia now accounts for almost 40% of the world's steel production with Europe (including the former Soviet Union) producing 36% and North America 14.5%. Steel consumption increases when economies are growing, as governments invest in infrastructure and transport, and build new factories and houses. The fastest growing economies in the world market are in Asia, China and India. We are already shipping steel to China but we may have an even more lucrative product than finished steel.

Although the U.S. steel industry is not the world leader it once was, no one produces more junk than we do. Because of the rapid growth of China and India and other developing nations in Asia the demand for metals has been soaring. Last year the price of steel scrap reached almost three hundred dollars a ton. The scrap business requires relatively little investment and has relatively low labor costs.

Scrap is the major raw material for steel making and we have the richest scrap resource in the world. If we can transship scrap from Europe and South America via the Panama Canal and St. Lawrence Seaway we can transship it the other way to expanding new markets in Asia. The freighters will sail again, not only on the old routes from the iron mines around Lake Superior with iron ore for new steel production in the minimills in Ohio and Michigan but also with scrap from scrap yards of the Midwest destined for steel mills in Asia.

There will never be the great fleets of lake boats that there were sixty years ago because they are a thing of the past. The new fleets are larger, faster, and more efficient bringing economies of scale through larger carrying capacity, greater speed, and more advanced loading and unloading technologies.

It should be kept in mind that the majority of Ohio's exports are agricultural. Now, in addition to helping feed the world, we can provide the raw material for industrial development all over the globe.

A Look Into Ironhead Marine Inc.

By Luke Archer

This past February, Paul, Al, Stan, Sam, and myself had the opportunity to get an inside look at Ironhead Marine Inc. This winter the banks of the Maumee are occupied by the usual winter visitors from the American Steamship Company. However, this winter Toledo was graced unexpectedly by a Canadian freighter, the Algosteel. While the Algosteel was in Milwaukee they encountered a rudder problem. The shaft was bent and the ball bearings needed replaced. This was not going to be a quick fix. Soon two tugs were called to tow the Algosteel to Toledo. The trip was slow and steady, but the lakeboat made her way into dry-dock at Ironhead Marine Inc.

We arrived to the shipyard and were welcomed into the facility. I was immediately in awe of the sheer size of the Algosteel. The freighter is 730' in length, 75' in beam, 39'08" in depth, and can carry 27,000 tons. Seeing a freighter out of the water gives one quite a perspective on size! Don Mutchler, of Ironhead, met up with us at the entrance and proceeded to take us to the end of the dry-dock to get a view of the work being done on the Algosteel. As we walked to the edge of the dock, there were torch lines, generators, and other lines present. The Algosteel was without her rudder. It had been sent up the street for some work. Don explained to us what all needed to be done to fix the rudder shaft and ball bearings. The propeller of the Algosteel was shiny silver, and like the rest of the boat, was quite large. We then made our way into the engine room of the boat. There was so much to look at. The steering gear of the Algosteel was taken apart. Pieces were spread out and two men from the shipyard were cutting pieces of steel to help bring this lake freighter back to health. The scene was that of an organized mess. I have no idea how anyone could know how all the parts go back together, but Don said if anything could be taken apart it was. It will all be back together within a few weeks, with the issues repaired. There was never any mention of doubt amongst the Ironhead staff. Don and his crew were very confident and sure in the work they were doing.

Since our visit to the shipyard, the Algosteel has been repaired and pulled out of dry-dock. Two G-tugs spent a full day getting the Algosteel through the ice and to her winter resting place where she will remain until the spring fit-out begins.

The shipyard facility also has a smaller dry-dock area. This dock was occupied by an Army Corps of Engineers tug and spud barge. Workers were repairing a section of the hull on the port side of the tug. As we watched, workers welded and discussed the next steps in getting the tug repaired. The barge needed some work done as well. The spuds were on land and needed to be straightened. There is plenty of work to be done at this berth. Don thought the tug and barge would be in Toledo for a while yet.

Through the course of our visit Don was very helpful in explaining the work that was being done. He also made mention of work that he wanted to do to the Boyer to make what we have better and more safe. There is a sense of pride and confidence in Don's voice. He wants to get things right, whether it is a working on a lake freighter, tug, or a museum ship. Ironhead Marine has a bright future ahead of itself. The facility has a new fabricating building that has brought new forms of technology and new opportunities to the shipyard. The long trip that the Algosteel made to Toledo from Milwaukee is a testament to the work and the people of Ironhead. The Boyer is fortunate to have a great relationship with the people of Ironhead Marine Inc.

Thank you to Paul LaMarre and to Don Mutchler.

Volunteer of the Month

Our Volunteer of the Month is John Lanz. John doesn't get much of a chance to volunteer as during the shipping season he is busy sailing. John graduated from the Maritime Academy in 1988 and has been gainfully employed in Great Lakes shipping for most of the past twenty years. He has worked for Oglebay-Norton, Interlake, American Steamship, and Hanna.

While working on the 1000-foot COLUMBIA STAR (now the AMERICAN CENTURY), fate intervened. John met friends of the Captain who were along on one of the trips. Later he met their daughter, Carrie, who subsequently became his wife. Carrie was originally from Sarnia, Ontario. They have lived in Toledo for the last couple of years.

Oglebay-Norton has now disbanded their fleet of fourteen ships but John served on most of them during his career, carrying cargoes of ore, coal, limestone, and occasionally grain. Three of the ships are now barges.

John first came aboard the BOYER last season when he heard that there was going to be pancake breakfast. After breakfast he found himself out on deck listening to Al giving assignments for chipping, painting, and cleaning the ship. Evidently nobody had told John the breakfast was also a work party.

Evidently such surprises are nothing new to crews. John thought he had an assignment but on his way to meeting me for lunch he received a phone call telling him to report to the CALUMET in Port Colborne in two days. Such is the life of a sailor.

John received his Master's license in 2006.

From the Wheelhouse

Well, it seems as if the crew has not left me much room to write this month but that is O.K. because you are what this newsletter is all about.

March, has proven to be another trying month but has brought me closer to digging out of planning/paperwork and getting back to the ship. I will be back aboard April 1st to start "fit-out."

I will look forward to seeing you all on April 26th, and will have much to tell you about our recent progress. All the best!

Paul C. LaMarre III