

# SLATER SIGNALS

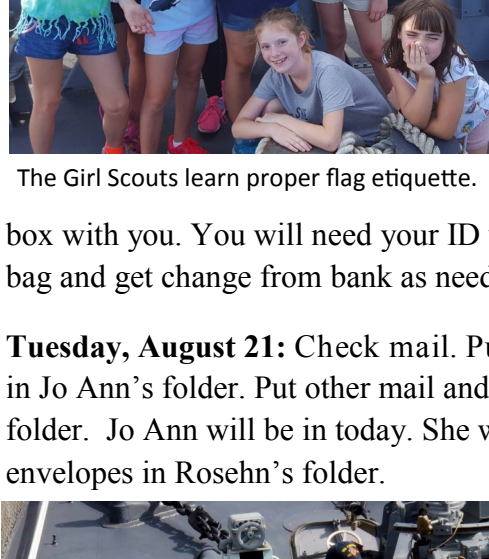
The Newsletter of the USS SLATER's Volunteers  
By Timothy C. Rizzuto, Executive Director

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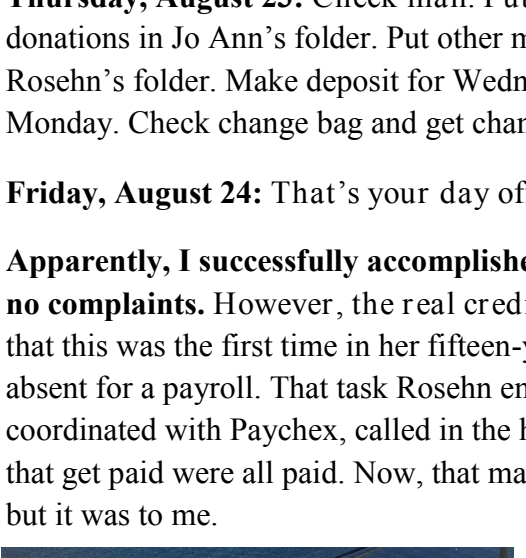
**August is the month when I am forced out of my comfort zone, and have to handle the banking while Rosehn is away.** Prior to her departure, I found the following memo on my desk. This would be the equivalent of the Captain's night orders.



The Girl Scouts learn proper flag etiquette.

**Monday, August 20:** Check mail. Put memberships and general donations in Jo Ann's folder. Put other mail and Friends of Slater donations in Rosehn's folder. Make deposits for weekend receipts. Keep days separate, with a deposit for each day. Ask bank for separate receipts. Keep receipts in each day's envelope with credit card slips and daily report. Make a separate deposit for donation box. You could do that on Tuesday, if you want to wait for Shanna to count the box with you. You will need your ID when you go to the bank. Check change bag and get change from bank as needed.

**Tuesday, August 21:** Check mail. Put memberships and general donations in Jo Ann's folder. Put other mail and Friends of Slater donations in Rosehn's folder. Jo Ann will be in today. She will give you deposits. Put those in envelopes in Rosehn's folder.

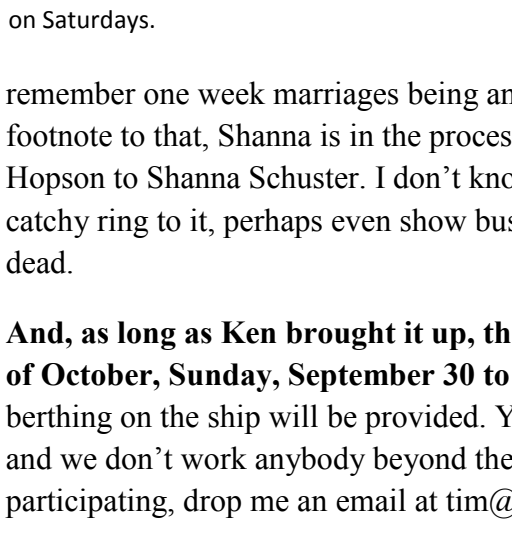


Tour guide and Navy Vet Dan Healey explains the operation of the three-inch gun.

**Thursday, August 23:** Check mail. Put memberships and general donations in Jo Ann's folder. Put other mail and Friends of Slater donations in Rosehn's folder. Make deposit for Wednesday's receipts. Same procedure as Monday. Check change bag and get change from bank as needed.

**Friday, August 24:** That's your day off.

**Apparently, I successfully accomplished all of the above tasks, as I received no complaints.** However, the real credit goes to Shanna Hopson. I believe that this was the first time in her fifteen-year SLATER career that Rosehn was absent for a payroll. That task Rosehn entrusted to Shanna. Shanna in turn coordinated with Paychex, called in the hours, and the few of us around here that get paid were all paid. Now, that may not be a big deal to the volunteers, but it was to me.



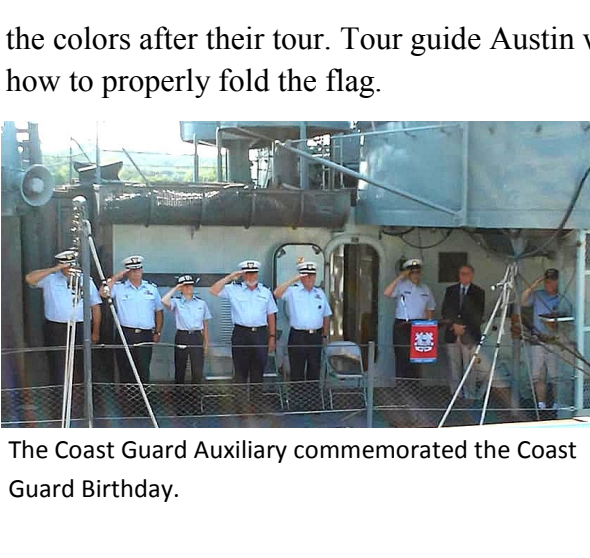
Volunteer Carl Camurati does double duty, as a tour guide on Thursdays and maintenance on Saturdays.

remember one week marriages being an option. See you in October. Ken." As a footnote to that, Shanna is in the process of changing her identity from Shanna Hopson to Shanna Schuster. I don't know about you, but I think that has a catchy ring to it, perhaps even show business potential. Too bad vaudeville is dead.

**And, as long as Ken brought it up, the fall workweek will be the first week of October, Sunday, September 30 to Friday, October 5.** Messing and berthing on the ship will be provided. You just have to cover the cost of food, and we don't work anybody beyond their ability. If you're interested in participating, drop me an email at [tim@usslater.org](mailto:tim@usslater.org).

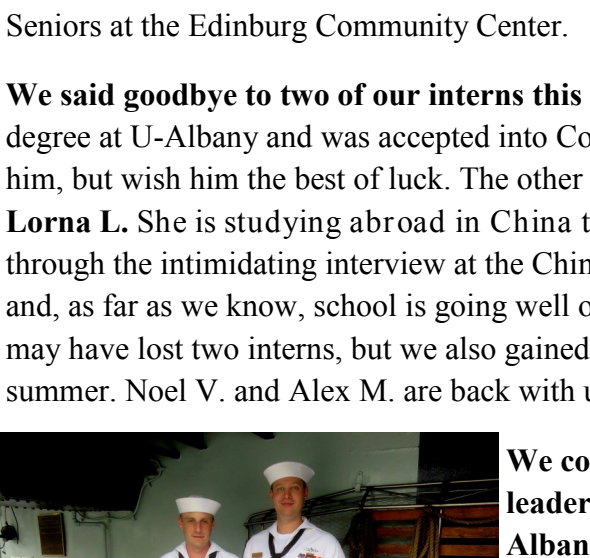
**The month was filled with summer camp tours.** We had campers from Cobleskill, Summer Academy at St. Rose, Pai's Tae Kwon Do in Clifton Park, and Serendipity in Voorheesville. We had a couple of travel groups of seniors visit, too. They included "Best of Times Travel" from Laconia, New Hampshire, and "Adventures for Rascals" from Poughkeepsie, New York.

**Thirteen members of the Martin Fagan family were in the area for a wedding, and took a tour of the ship that their patriarch served aboard.** Martin was a Quartermaster second class, aboard SLATER during WWII, and in charge of navigating the ship in 1945 and '46. Sue Fagan left a review for us on our Facebook page, and wrote "Amazing experience! Ask for Tom (Cline) as your tour guide, he was awesome!"



Trail to Eagle Scouts visit each August.

With overnights starting up in September, we were happy to welcome two scout groups for tours this month. The "Trail to Eagle Scouts" tour the SLATER every year. On Friday the 24th, they brought 47 scouts and leaders. On the 30th, we welcomed Girl Scouts to retire the colors after their tour. Tour guide Austin was on hand to ensure they knew how to properly fold the flag.



The Coast Guard Auxiliary commemorated the Coast Guard Birthday.

**August 4 was the U.S. Coast Guard's 228th Birthday, and the 79th Anniversary of the Coast Guard Auxiliary.** Our ceremony on the 5th featured **Steve Long** as the emcee, **Richard Walker** giving a brief history of the Coast Guard, and **Charlie Poltenson** with a history of the Coast Guard Auxiliary. Cake and coffee was served on the Observation Deck.

**Our Speakers Bureau had two presentations this month. Will Trevor** presented on the "Battle of the Atlantic" at the Canajoharie Library, and **Charles Starks** presented "Heroes All Around Us," a presentation about 3 sailors who had Destroyer Escorts named in their honor, for the Sacandaga Seniors at the Edinburg Community Center.

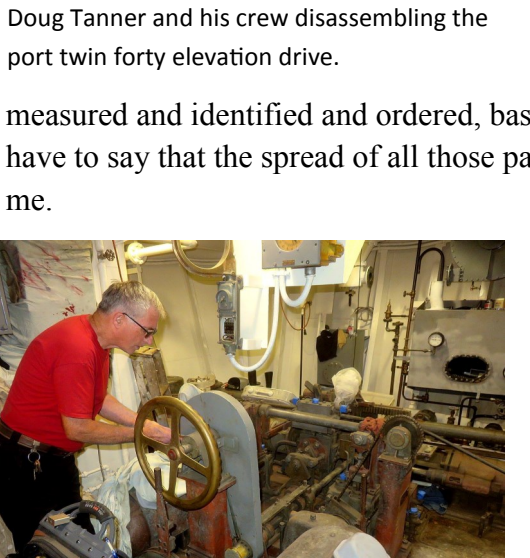
**We said goodbye to two of our interns this month. Paul C.** finished his degree at U-Albany and was accepted into Cornell Law School. We'll miss him, but wish him the best of luck. The other intern we lost this month was **Lorna L.** She is studying abroad in China this semester. She made it through the intimidating interview at the Chinese consulate in New York City and, as far as we know, school is going well over there. Good luck Lorna! We may have lost two interns, but we also gained two back that were away for the summer. Noel V. and Alex M. are back with us, and ready to get back to work.



The NPTU Chiefs stood a pretty sharp quarterdeck watch.

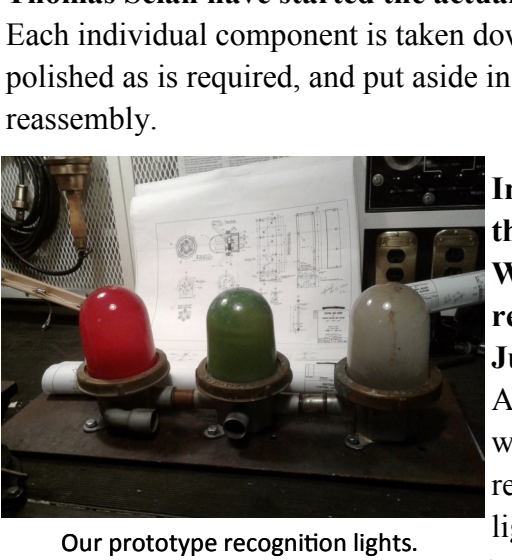
**We continue to stay atop the leaderboard of "Things to Do in Albany" on TripAdvisor, which makes us ecstatic.** It is credited to our amazing maintenance team keeping SLATER in ship shape, our great tour guides showing the ship off to the public, and educating them on WWII and Navy life. However, it's thanks to all of you who visit, tell your friends, review us online, send donations, and support us in any manner you can! **Emilu Luci** recently left us a review online, "Took a tour on our most recent visit to Albany. My husband is a Navy vet and thoroughly enjoyed walking the ship. Our guide, Paul was top notch! He was extremely knowledgeable. He engaged both the children and senior citizens, answered all of our questions and seemed to know every corner of the ship and its history. This type of tour really puts you in the shoes of those who lived and worked on a Navy ship. If you are in upstate NY, visit the USS SLATER. You won't regret it! 5 STARS!!"

**Once again we hosted the Ballston Spa Chief Petty Officers and Chief Selects for their annual work day and overnight.** We assigned them in the aft machinery spaces, moving 40mm ammunition cans, mowing and keeping the grounds, and polishing the heads. After their work day, 30 of their spouses and kids showed up for tours. It's always a pleasure to participate in their event. Once again, we thank **Chief Smith** for feeding his brother Chiefs.



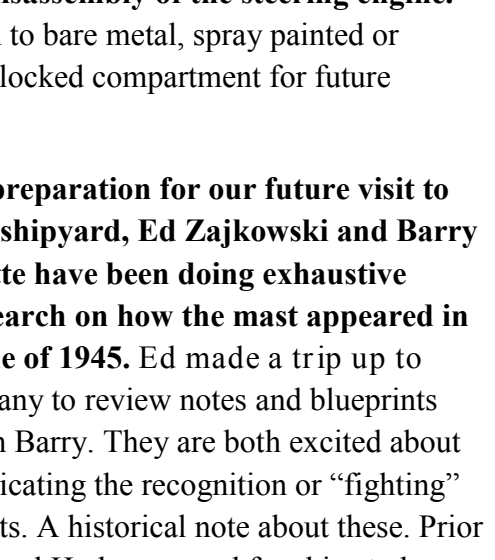
Doug Tanner and his crew disassembling the port twin forty elevation drive.

**Work disassembling the port 40mm was completed.** Doug and his team removed all the bearings and, based on the bearing numbers, ordered a whole new set. When they came in, they were all wrong. Surprise, they've changed the bearing numbers since 1945. Maybe they should have stuck with numbers that won the war. In any case, Doug finally had to cart all the bearings down to the bearing store, so they could be individually measured and identified and ordered. I have to say that the spread of all those parts under canvas is starting to worry me.



Gary Sheedy has started restoration of the steering gear machinery.

**Back in aft steering, Gary Sheedy and Thomas Scian have started the actual disassembly of the steering engine.** Each individual component is taken down to bare metal, spray painted or polished as is required, and put aside in a locked compartment for future reassembly.



Thomas Scian is working with Gary Sheedy, cleaning up the steering gear hydraulic expansion tank.

**In preparation for our future visit to the shipyard, Ed Zajkowski and Barry Witte have been doing exhaustive research on how the mast appeared in June of 1945.** Ed made a trip up to Albany to review notes and blueprints with Barry. They are both excited about replicating the recognition or "fighting" lights. A historical note about these. Prior to Pearl Harbor, a need for ships to be able to identify friendly ships at night was recognized. The solution was to create a metal box that housed three light fixtures with colored globes, red, white and green. Three of these were mounted at various heights on the mast, with three on each side, for a total of six fixtures. They were removed from ships right after the war, as they interfered with the signal halyard. Little is known about them historically. In our quest for authenticity, we are planning to reproduce them.

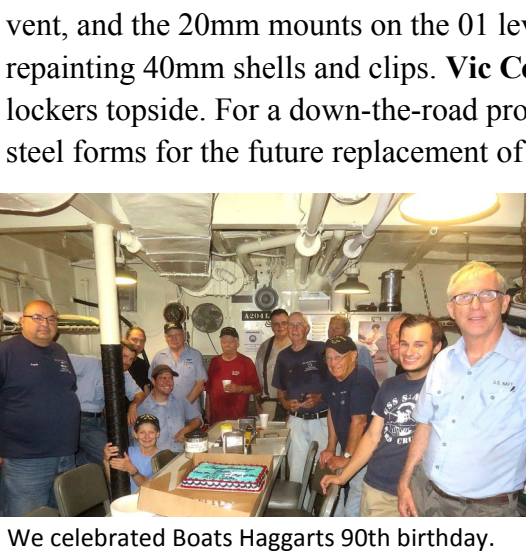
**The fact that so little is known about them triggered the interest of our Washington researcher and Warship International editor, Chris Wright.** Chris dug into the relevant files in the National Archives, and found a treasure trove of correspondence regarding the lights. However, the bigger find for us was that he located and copied over two hundred pages of documents. These documents described every change and modification that was made to USS SLATER during her time in Naval service. All the correspondence from every yard overhaul has been preserved. It is an incredible find, and an invaluable historic record. We find it unbelievable that these records still exist.



Vic Consiglio stenciling the 20mm ready service lockers.

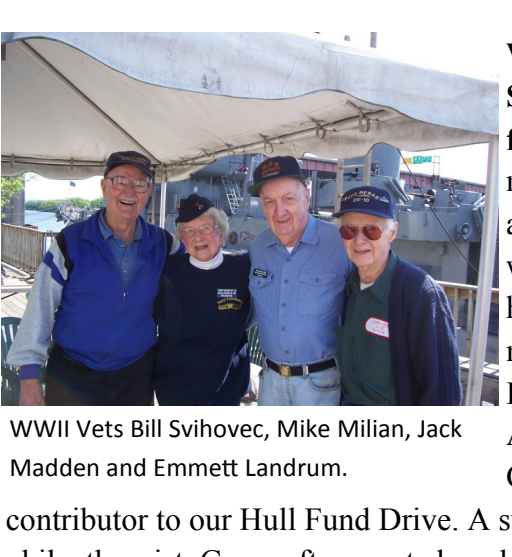
**Barry Witte has kept his crew busy over the summer.** Among them, **Vince Montouri, Devon Urbano, Ian Park, and Jack Carbone** have continued the fabrication of the smoke screen generator. They also secured a loose 20mm ammunition ready service locker that never got bolted back down, did a cosmetic rewiring of the hedgehog projector, fabricated our prototype set of fighting lights, and added a couple of battle lanterns to our emergency light system.

**Boats Haggart, Walt Stuart, and the deck gang completed restoration and repainting of the aft life rafts.** They are so caught up that they have taken to scrubbing firehose. Elsewhere around the ship, welder **Dave Wasson** has picked up on Ed Zajkowski's project, fabricating the 20mm pipe stands. We got a lot of painting done, including the forward three-inch gun mount, the starboard 24" searchlight, the aft supply vent, and the 20mm mounts on the 01 level forward. Bob Tomlinson has been repainting 40mm shells and clips. **Vic Consiglio** continues stenciling gear lockers topside. For a down-the-road project, **Hal Hatfield's** shop delivered the steel forms for the future replacement of the 40mm shell chutes.



We celebrated Boats Haggart's 90th birthday.

**We had a celebration and three notable passings to report this month.** August 15th was **Boats Haggart's** 90th birthday, and we celebrated with a cake. He still gets around here like a seventy-year old, and he's always thinking about his next project. On the down side, our sailmaker, **Angelo Bracco** is recovering from a bad car wreck. And, we lost two of our dedicated volunteers, both participants in the Michigan work weeks. Out in California, **Emmett Landrum** crossed the bar. Small and wiry we always used to talk about cramming him into tight places to work. Emmett has served in USS BEBAS DE-10 in World War II.



WWII Vets Bill Svihovec, Mike Milian, Jack Madden and Emmett Landrum.

**We lost one of the last of the original SLATER crewmembers, Bill Svihovec from Connecticut.** Bill was a motomac on GILMORE and SLATER, and was a regular at the Michigan work weeks. He had such a great sense of humor and the fact that he served aboard made him special to us. We also lost **H.F. "Gerry" Lenfest** this past August. Gerry was a former CO of USS COATES DE-685 and a major contributor to our Hull Fund Drive. A successful businessman and philanthropist, Gerry often wrote how his experiences aboard COATES played a major role in developing his character. All our shipmates will be missed.

**Finally, I received an invitation from the President of the Russian Polar Convoy Club, Captain 1st Rank Igor Kozyr, to attend their annual conference in Reykjavik, Iceland.** Of course, our travel budget did not permit me to attend, but Captain Kozyr was kind enough to permit us to send a video greeting from SLATER, introducing the group to our ship. New volunteer **Mauro Agnellini** produced the video on short notice. During the course of the conference, they renamed the group "The Brotherhood of the North Atlantic Convoys," to encompass all participants in the Battle of the Atlantic. It quickly becomes apparent that the Russians, and the British in particular, hold the sacrifices of those who served in this battle in special reverence. We can only hope that we can impart some of that reverence to our visitors who come to USS SLATER.

**Don't forget the donate button on our homepage [www.usslater.org](http://www.usslater.org) and to like us on Facebook for daily updates. See you next month!**