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# Champion's Point of View



By RDML JAMES WATSON  
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Coast Guard missions include a broad portfolio of duties and responsibilities. These range from maritime safety and mobility to homeland security and national defense, from maritime law enforcement to environmental response. Coast Guard members and the units in which they serve are always ready to act across the entire range of Coast Guard missions.

However, as a practical matter, some responsibilities demand more time, effort, and resources than others. Success in many of these missions depends heavily upon approaching them jointly with other services, agencies, and private sector organizations. When grassroots efforts inspire or are applied to Coast Guard initiatives, it is all the more appreciated because it has not been orchestrated or mandated by traditional power structures.

Rather, the creation of the movement and the group supporting it is natural and spontaneous. With this buy-in from the grassroots contributors, there is more energy behind initiatives, even in the face of adversity. Experience has shown that the most consistent improvements occur only where there is a commitment to do so by those who own and operate ships, boats, and facilities, or who are involved in the community these related efforts support. Often, many volunteers in the involved community give their time to support them, and these efforts, when combined, can lead to changes on a grander scale.

This issue of *Proceedings* focuses on some of the Coast Guard's "grassroots efforts" in four major regions: East Coast, West Coast, Gulf Coast, and Great Lakes. Since the initiatives we highlight in this edition cover so many areas within overall Coast Guard mission functions, the submissions are grouped geographically rather than topically, although some areas may appear to be underrepresented when grouped this way.

Our focus in this edition is to highlight our positive working relationships with other agencies and with local mariners and maritime companies that make a difference every day through formal and informal efforts to improve safety, security, and environmental protection. We are happy to take this opportunity to showcase some examples where such efforts have made, and continue to make, a major difference.

