



The Salty Barrister

John K. Fulweiler, Esq.



Happy Hour Ammo

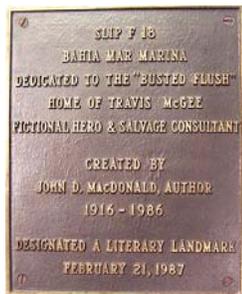
Next week at this time, I will drive up the coast and have the honor of speaking to a national organization of marine surveyors. It won't be an easy crowd because they'll be lots of tough questions, but it'll make for spirited discussion on the whips and whirls of the maritime law. Sometimes though, when you write about legal issues, you need to get down to brass tacks and hit points that keep folks interested. So here's what I like to call my "Happy Hour Ammo" that maybe will provide you with a little discussion as you slather on bottom paint in preparation for warm weather and bright days.

• For a vessel to be documented in the United States, all of the major components of the hull and superstructure must have been fabricated and assembled in the United States.

• If you strike a buoy or other navigational aid, you must immediately report the incident to the nearest Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection Office

• A United States documented vessel may (by custom) fly a yacht ensign (the flag depicting a fouled anchor with thirteen stars) in place of the national flag when sailing domestically, the rule of thumb on flag sizes for vessels is 1" for every foot of vessel length, fly the flag of the country you're visiting on the starboard halyard, and if your ensign isn't lit after sunset, you shouldn't be flying it.

• **Slip F-18 is where Travis McGee kept his 52' houseboat** (the "Busted Flush") at the Bahia Mar Marina in Fort Lauderdale. (You can



Plaque for Slip F-18 at Bahia Mar Marina

pull in there and they've got the plaque for that slip in the office.)

• Did you know that a published 1973 admiralty decision was written entirely in rhyme? The decision was titled Mackensworth v. American Trading Transp. Co., 367 F. Supp. 373 (E.D.P.A. 1973), and you can find it online.

• A vessel can be named and sued much like you'd sue a person.

• **A seaplane is not a vessel**, but when operating on the water must observe the rules of the road and display lighting in accord with vessels of its size.



• A vessel "collision" occurs when two vessels run into each other, while a vessel "allision" occurs when a vessel runs into a stationary object.

Use this maritime legal ammunition sparingly, drink and tan responsibly respectively, and soak up enough warm memories to last you through another winter.

Underway and making way.

John K. Fulweiler, Esq. is a Proctor-in-Admiralty representing individuals and small businesses in maritime matters throughout the East and Gulf Coasts. He can be reached at 1-800-383-MAYDAY (6293).

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