



Richard Michael Gaudiosi

JUL 31, 1952 - AUG 4, 2025



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Richard M. Gaudiosi, DBRC President & USCG Commander

Richard "Rich" Michael Gaudiosi, 73, passed away peacefully in his home surrounded by his loving family on August 4, 2025.

Rich served as President of the Delaware Bay and River Cooperative from 2009 to 2022. He retired a U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Commander having served from 1977 to 2000. Rich was a nationally recognized consultant from 2000 to 2009.

In 1979, Ensign Gaudiosi successfully completed the prescribed course for Ship Salvage Diving Officer at the Naval School, Diving and Salvage, which noted he "is therefore qualified to disport himself among the denizens of the deep, mermaids, and other inhabitants of the realm of Neptune."

Rich served at sea aboard the USCG Cutter Northwind (WAG/WAGB-282), a Wind-class icebreaker, from May 1978 to September 1981. On that storied ship he first crossed the Arctic Circle on August 14, 1978; the equator on November 24, 1979; and the Antarctic Circle on December 27, 1979.

Rich served as a recovery diver in January 1982 for Air Florida Flight 90, which crashed shortly after takeoff from Washington National Airport. The airplane struck the heavily occupied 14th Street Bridge connecting Arlington, Virginia with the District of Columbia, and then crashed into the ice-covered Potomac River. Seventy of the 74 passengers and four of the five crew members were killed along with four occupants of vehicles on the bridge.

The search and salvage of the space shuttle Challenger from February through August 1986 was the largest such operation ever conducted by the U.S. Navy. Several thousand people, numerous



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surface vessels, a nuclear-powered research submarine and several unmanned and manned submersibles played major roles in the successful underwater search and object recovery operation. Divers conducted 3,077 dives with 1,549 hours bottom time.

Rich's work as a recovery diver was recognized with NASA's Manned Flight Awareness Certificate "In appreciation of your dedication to the critical tasks you performed in support of the Presidential Commission investigating the Space Shuttle Challenger accident. Your valuable contributions assisted in identifying the actions required to return the National Space Transportation System to flight status."

Rich served as On-Scene Commander for the cleanup of the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska's Prince William Sound.

The Coast Guard sent Rich to George Mason University, where he earned a Master of Science degree in 1992.

In 1993, National Performance Review Silver Hammer was presented "With Appreciation To Richard Gaudiosi, U.S. Coast Guard Marine Pollution Notice of Violation "Ticket" Team, for your contribution to building a government that works better and costs less."

Gaudiosi was then appointed chief of the Plans and Preparedness Division of the Office of Response at the U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington, D.C., where in 1994 he authored the National Preparedness for Response Exercise Program (PREP) Guidelines.

Commander Gaudiosi was a recipient of the G-M Parthenon Award. The citation read "Your commitment to the Parthenon of Principles has led to superior performance. In particular, you have been the key conduit and trusted representative of the three strike teams during critical collaborations between the National Strike Force, the marine safety schools and the directorate. Under the guidance and support of you and the team of professionals you lead, we are defining our focus and our challenges. Your "championing" of these principles to improve marine safety and protect the environment are in keeping with the high standards of the Coast Guard. Congratulations on a job "Well Done!"

From 1997 until his retirement in 2000, Rich served as Commander of the U.S. Coast Guard's Atlantic Strike Team based in Fort Dix, New Jersey. He had earlier served as an officer on the strike team based in Elizabeth City, North Carolina. Rich also served on the National Strike Force.



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The Atlantic Strike Team responds to oil spills and hazardous materials incidents, trains Coast Guard units in environmental emergency response, and tests and develops specialized pollution response equipment.

In awarding him the Coast Guard Meritorious Service Medal, the accompanying citation read: Commander GAUDIOSI is cited for meritorious service in the performance of duty as Commanding Officer of the Atlantic Strike Team from June 1997 to June 2000. He demonstrated exceptional technical expertise, leadership, and resource management while directing 69 members in highly successful responses to more than 80 oil and hazardous materials incidents.

He deployed to the scene of several of the more complex, high profile, politically sensitive events. He spearheaded initial ground response operations to the devastation caused by Hurricane Floyd. As a result of the hurricane's torrential downpour, massive flooding plagued much of the eastern seaboard.

He was instrumental in the operations that rescued 25 people from these raging floodwaters. He expertly led Strike Team elements that augmented the local, state, and other federal Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) consequence management forces that pre-deployed to the 3-day, NATO 50* Anniversary celebration in Washington, DC. The presence of the heads of state of more than 40 countries dictated the designation of the event as a National Special Security Event and demanded round-the-clock, heightened readiness.

He was the dynamic motivating force behind many of the National Strike Force's noteworthy initiatives, such as developing WMD consequence management capability and enhancing the Coast Guard's international response preparedness.

He skillfully introduced the Coast Guard's WMD capability to members of the National Security Council and the FBI, demonstrating that huge benefits could be realized for minor incremental resource increases. As a leader on the WMD Interagency Board, he sparked the development of the first national, standardized inventory of WMD response equipment for all participating agencies.

He deftly engaged in detailed, emergency response discussions with representatives from Chile, Russia, Thailand, and Estonia. In doing so, he elevated their understanding of emergency



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preparedness and underscored the Coast Guard's international status as a leader in the pollution response arena. His aggressive outreach efforts greatly increased the visibility of the NSF.

Commander GAUDIOSI's dedication and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.

After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) adapted PREP to form I-STEP, the Intermodal Security for Transportation Exercise Program. TSA engaged Rich, now consulting in the private sector, to conduct a major Tabletop Exercise (TTX) involving a complex attack on Union Station, the most visited location in Washington D.C. More than 100 players from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors participated in that I-STEP exercise.

Rich's exercise design and facilitation skills impressed the staff at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, Transportation Research Board.

Rich served on an expert panel, resulting in the 2006 publication of Guidelines for Transportation Emergency Training Exercises, <https://doi.org/10.17226/13924>

Rich advised the Smithsonian Institution on Ocean Planet, an exhibition at the National Museum of Natural History designed to help all of us better understand what can be done to conserve the earth's oceans.

From 2009 to 2022, Rich served as President of the Delaware Bay and River Cooperative (DBRC). In 2025, Rich was consulting with DBRC as they modernize their fleet to better align with evolving environmental response challenges in the Delaware Bay and River.

Rich was an active member of the Lewes Chamber of Commerce. He was recognized by the Tri-State Bird Rescue & Research for his commitment to wildlife and decades of unwavering support.

Rich's Coast Guard involvement extended beyond his retirement from the service. He was awarded a Certificate of Merit in 2022, which read.

For meritorious service as a member of Sector Delaware Bay's Executive Steering Committee and Area Committee from April 2009 to October 2022. Over the last thirteen years, you provided exceptional expertise as the committee's Oil Spill Removal Organization (OSRO) technical



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representative. You diligently worked in tandem with federal, state, and local maritime stakeholders in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware and your dedicated service and valuable contributions directly enhanced the environmental protection and response capabilities for the nation's fifth largest port complex.

As the technical expert, you provided invaluable counsel, truth, and support to four full-scale government-led oil spill response exercises. These major exercises greatly enhanced the region's ability to cohesively respond to a major environmental disaster.

You also spearheaded the annual efforts to conduct on-water surveillance of the rivers, streams, inlets, and coastal areas within our area of responsibility (AOR). These surveys provided real-time validation of the Area Contingency Plan's environmental protection strategies while also affording responders the ability to document geographic changes. This work directly assisted in the Coast Guard's ability to protect the federally listed threatened and endangered species.

You showed tremendous foresight with the creation of the protection strategy deployment templates. These templates were converted to ICS-204s and loaded into NOAA's Environmental Response Management Application (ERMA), expediting the responders' ability to draft an Incident Action Plan for exercises and real-world events. This best practice was shared throughout the Coast Guard's Fifth District.

Additionally, you devoted yourself to the professional development of responders throughout the AOR, organizing and conducting training within all aspects of the response portfolio, including industrial fire-fighting and oil spill response. Your training provided Coast Guard responders with the ability to get hands-on experience with equipment and enhanced the qualifications of our Pollution Responders.

Rich had a fulfilling family life in Lewes with his beloved wife Marjory (nee Choupin); son Richard John Gaudiosi and his wife Dani; and daughter Corina.

Dani and RJ's sons Brodie and Indiana enjoyed fishing, swimming, soccer, and golfing with their grandfather they called "Papa."

A certified Master Gardener, Rich tended to his Lewes home, grounds, and fish pond with his wife, children, and grandchildren. He acquired a Volvo 1800ES in 1975 and finished its restoration in 2025 with the help of his son and grandsons, having moved it from station to station



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throughout his career. He enjoyed time with his sister Jacqueline Perry, who moved to Lewes in 2020; his sister-in-law Deborah Choupin of Kent Island, Maryland, and her husband, Stephan Parker.

A private service was held at Delaware Veterans Memorial Cemetery.



Tribute Wall

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Roy Glover posted:

Rich and I served on WAGB-282 Northwind together. I was a young Electrician and he a Junior Officer. I always thought well of Mr. G and respected him. My thoughts and prayers go out to family and friends. Roy Glover Senior Chief USCG-ret.

January 27 at 6:39 PM



Clemente Maglione posted:

I am Clemente Maglione. Richie was my first friend and my best friend from about 1958 until about 1976. Our careers took us in different directions I'm sorry I didn't take the initiative sooner. And to Marjory Morning Star I say I'm sorry. My phone is 917-301-0265. My email is cmaglione1@Comcast.net. My address is 424 sw horseshoe bay Port St Lucie Florida 34986.

September 3 at 4:25 PM



Doris Person lit a candle in honor of Richard.



August 14 at 9:02 PM



Bill McEnroe shared 2 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Rich will be sorely missed by his family, friends, and community. He had "all the right stuff" that you would want in a leader. He was courageous, forward looking, collaborative, results oriented, and took care of his team. We were all fortunate when Rich shared all his life learnings and "right stuff" as President of the Delaware Bay & River Cooperative (DBRC), an environmental protection organization that protects our waterways up and down the Delaware Bay & River and into the Atlantic. Rich led the organization through unprecedented evolution of industry on the Delaware Bay. He was always moving the DBRC Team forward working collaboratively with the Board. Rich addressed emerging needs in a proactive manner ensuring that DBRC was the premier response team on the East Coast in partnership with industry. His passion for DBRC ensured that the organization was prepared for the future both in ensuring the right leadership was in place to succeed him and the DBRC fleet continued to be updated. When faced with a challenging cancer diagnosis, Rich's courage showed through once again taking on a tough fight to buy more time to be with his family. On behalf of Monroe Energy and the DBRC Board, we share our deepest condolences with Rich's family. Rest well my friend with Fair Winds and Following Seas. I will miss you. Bill McEnroe



August 11 at 4:34 PM



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Marjory Gaudiosi lit a candle in honor of Richard.

The love of my life,aGreat husband father and Grandfather , friend.You are missed but we have many Beautiful memories till we meet again,you have my Heart ❤️🙏

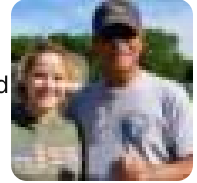
August 12 at 9:12 AM



Corina Gaudiosi shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

He was an absolute hero in all and every sense. A consistent leader in the Coast Guard which poured into his loving heart into his role as a father. Resilience and strength from beginning to last moments . Rest easy dad.

August 11 at 4:34 PM





Media

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Bill Mcenroe shared 2 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

August 14 at 11:24 AM



Corina Gaudiosi shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

August 11 at 4:34 PM





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Richard by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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