

Navigator

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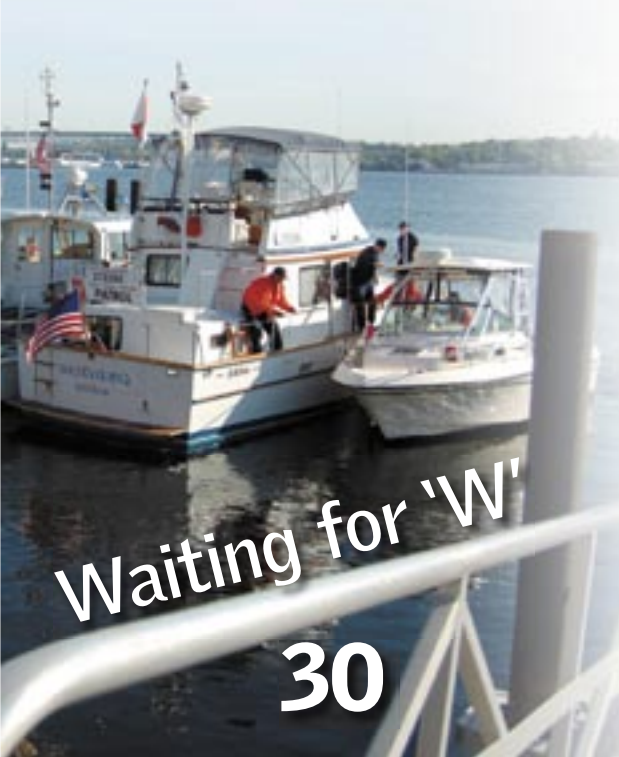


UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY
America's Volunteer Lifesavers®



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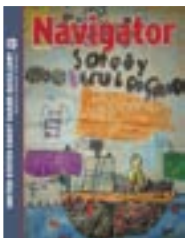
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ON THE COVER: Dubbed by the photographer *Safety Message from a Child's Heart*, this creative original poster promoting National Safe Boating Week in Louisiana was conceived and executed by a third-grade student at R.W. Vincent Elementary School in Sulphur, La. The text reads: 'Boat Safety Rules...I wear a lifejacket/I carry a flashlight/I carry a flag/I carry a life preserver/I carry a bucket/I carry a whistle.' Below the text is the eight-year-old's conception of a Coast Guard asset. The artwork was drawn on a grocery store brown-paper shopping bag. **See story, page 36.**

Photo: Ward A. Stover, ADSO-NSBW 8CR

DEADLINES

SPRING: FEBRUARY 15
SUMMER: MAY 15

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Routine? Not!

FLORIDA OPFAC CREW IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME

**Story & Photos by
JUDI BIDWICK**
FC-86 D7

You could call it luck. Or, you could call it a perfect-storm scenario. But, irregardless of what you might call it, the fact is that two Auxiliary Operational Facilities (OPFAC) in Florida were at the right place, at the right time – just when they were really needed.

A helicopter filming a new high-speed boat with a photographic-model on board had crashed into the very boat that was being filmed in the Gulf of Mexico, some six miles off Venice, Fla.

A videographer and a still-photographer in the helicopter were killed in the mishap, but quick action by local Auxiliarists contributed to saving the life of the helo pilot.

Like many “routine” days when unexpected things suddenly happen, September 11, 2007 began as a normal training day for the Flotilla 86 D7 (Venice) crews of OPFACs *Partner-Ship* and *Double Deuce II*. It was supposed to be a typical

Tuesday training mission.

On board *Double Deuce II* were coxswain Garland Russ, FSO-CM; crew members Bill Cabana; John Kandes, FSO-PV; and Monique Ring, FSO-PB; and, trainee Ralph Bascom. On *Partner-Ship* were coxswain Jim Sleichert, FSO-OP; and, crew members Judi Bidwick, FC, and John Harrison, FSO-MT.

The two OPFACs were on the Florida Intracoastal Waterway, in the vicinity of Nokomis Moorings, at about 1010 when local law enforcement got word of the helo crash. A sheriff’s deputy asked to come aboard *Double Deuce II* and, with the Auxiliarists, begin a search for the crash site.

The OPFAC headed due west, into the Gulf of Mexico, while *Partner-Ship* was sent north in the Gulf.

Partner-Ship arrived on the crash scene several minutes later, and found that there were several persons in the water among floating debris. The Auxiliary vessel immediately head-

A skid from the helicopter that crashed during a magazine photo-shoot of a new high-speed boat hugs the vessel’s port side after the mishap. The unidentified driver is still on board. Just off the stern is a Florida Fish & Wildlife vessel carrying the photographic model who was also on board the ‘go-fast’ boat. A Venice (Fla.) Fire Department boat is at the far left.



Debris from the crash is temporarily stored in front of the Flotilla 86 D7 Member Training Center in Nokomis, Fla. Accident investigators from the National Transportation Safety Board and the Federal Aviation Administration arrived later to collect the material for post-casualty analyses.

ed toward one male victim who appeared unconscious. Barely floating, he was being held by a woman wearing a Personal Flotation Device.

It turned out that the PFD-clad survivor was the photographic-model from the stricken boat. Fortunately, she also was a Registered Nurse who worked at a local hospital.

Partner-Ship then maneuvered to a point where the crew could pick up the victims. The Auxiliarists were able to pull the unconscious victim held by the RN onto the OPFAC's swim platform. They turned him on his side to clear his airway.

The victim was foaming at the mouth and nose and his face and body had an ominous gray hue. The other person in the water, a woman, said she was okay. She asked the Auxiliary crew to try to bring the other victims on board.

Partner-Ship immediately called Venice Auxiliary Radio, requesting watchstander Paul Corcoran, FSO-PS, to notify USCG Station Cortez and to phone 911.

Around that time, other boats appeared on scene from the Venice Fire Department (VFD), Sheriff's Office, Venice Police, and Florida Environmental Police. A helicopter hovered overhead.

The *Partner-Ship* crew prepared to roll the male victim onto a



Auxiliary Operational Facility *Double Deuce II* on-scene off the port bow of OPFAC *Partner-Ship*, in the Gulf of Mexico.

litter that was handed to them by the VFD. The Auxiliarists assisted in transferring the man to the Fire Department boat, which then left with the victim.

By this time, *Double Deuce II* had arrived on-scene and was bringing the helo pilot on board. The Deputy on the OPFAC and a crew member with First Aid training applied bandages to the pilot's open wounds to stop the bleeding.

Another, non-Auxiliary, vessel brought aboard the third victim.

By that time, the USCGC *Vise* had arrived on-scene and began

directing Coast Guard assets. *Partner-Ship* and *Double Deuce II*, which had returned to the scene after taking the injured helo pilot to shore, were directed to perform search patterns for debris from the crash.

Both OPFACs found parts of the helicopter floating in the water, retrieved them, and transferred the debris to the Cutter.

During the crew debriefing, the FC commented, "This was the kind of day we prepare for in our training. However, little did we expect our vessels and crew to become 'first responders.' Our crews worked diligently and efficiently to rescue the victims. Adrenaline flowed furiously, and we drew on our training to make proper choices." 🌹

The Auxiliary truly cares

A retired admiral recently asked me why the workload of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary keeps increasing. Why don't Auxiliarists just do those things they can easily do and stop right there?

Indeed, many have espoused the idea of "just say no" to that additional mission. However, the reality is that too many of us care just a little too much to leave something undone; to ignore someone in need, or refuse to lend a hand to a fellow boater.

The powerful spirit of our Auxiliarists is a continued source of amazement and motivation to me.

For years, we have been talking about the importance of *mission balance*, of working to keep our involvement in operations, recreational boating safety and maritime domain awareness spread across the programs in which we participate, and evenly among all our members so as not to overburden those who are already busy.

Achieving mission balance will continue to be a goal to work toward. Everything we are asked to do by the Coast Guard is important, and it is up to *you* to determine how to keep it all in balance and to know when it's too much.

It is up to *me* to ensure that you have the resources and leadership to do the job safely, and allow you to find your level of personal satisfaction in a job well done.

Admiral Thad Allen, Commandant of the Coast Guard, related a statement by President John F. Kennedy as an example of why the Coast Guard will be successful in its present day challenges.

The late President said, "We choose to go to the moon. We choose to go to the moon in this decade – *not because it is easy, but because it is hard* – because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills; because that challenge is one that we are willing

to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win."

I believe that same reasoning is a large part of why Auxiliary members continue to show up every time they are called on to carry out another mission. We do it not because it is easy, but because it is hard, because it needs to be done, and we are the very best at getting it done.

I was concerned, last year, about the Auxiliary's ability to maintain mission execution with a loss of so many members due to the Personal Security Investigation requirements. Over a three-year span, we saw our membership drop from over 34,000 volunteers to about 26,000.

Amazingly, we did not suffer any appreciable loss in the number of missions we performed, which meant that you already-busy people picked up the slack and did a little bit more. It was hard, but it needed to be done – and you did it. This was a fantastic testament to your dedication to duty and to your fellow boaters...but it also is a condition that cannot be sustained.

We cannot afford to burn out our best people.

Your hard work and concentration on recruiting is paying off. Nationally, we have seen an increase of over 10 percent in our membership, and we are steadily rebuilding our ranks – despite the generational, economic and resource challenges we face.

By the end of 2007, I had expected that we would have over 30,000 members. And, with the volume and variety of work not going away, there is more than enough for everyone to do.

I thank you for your continued efforts and dedication to our service.

We don't need to "just say no" to the new missions. We can't. However, we *can* work with – and in pursuit of – *mission balance*, allowing ourselves to perform those missions that are important to us while recruiting new members to take on the others. 🌟



COMMODORE
**STEVEN
BUDAR**
NATIONAL
COMMODORE



ON THE WEB

You can go to the National Commodore's page at www.auxnaco.org for more information on the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

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MONUMENTAL DEDICATION



Photo: Doug Kroll / FSO-PE 11-11 D11SR

World II Coast Guard Women's Reserve (SPARS) veterans – one of them also an Auxiliarist – join an active-duty Chief Petty Officer-cum-Auxiliarist at dedication of the 14-foot tall replica of Fenwick Island Lighthouse. From the left are: Eleanor Ray (age 84); Dorothy Grower (88); Mary Ellen Petersen (84), Flotilla 11-11 D11SR; and, YNC Doris Telles, USCG / FSO-SR 11-11. SPARS was established on Nov. 23, 1942.

It *finally* has happened – in San Jacinto – to the U.S. Coast Guard....

Over the last eight years, the California city has honored most of the other branches of the armed forces by creating and dedicating a memorial to them in Druding Park. There also are mementos honoring military actions, such as the Vietnam War and Operation Desert Storm.

Thus, visitors can see and enjoy such artifacts as a U.S. Army M-60 tank, an 11-ton anchor from the U.S. Navy's USS *Cleveland*, and a refurbished propeller from a U.S. Army Air Corps B-17 bomber flown in World War II.

Now, finally, the Coast Guard has joined the Druding Park collection – memorialized with a 14-foot replica of the Fenwick Island Lighthouse at Cape Henlopen, Del. A solar-powered light sits atop the lighthouse memorial.

The original structure, built in 1858, rose 89 feet and now stands

(refurbished) at the southern entrance to Delaware Bay.

Why a lighthouse? It seems the city wished to memorialize the Coast Guard, but was unable to secure appropriate, weather-resistant USCG memorabilia for the park. One day, Mayor Jim Ayres, while surfing online, came across a beautiful replica of a lighthouse – and a light bulb went off.

He and his fellow officials quickly decided that a lighthouse-replica would be the ideal monument for the USCG because it would represent the strength and commitment that symbolizes what the Coast Guard is all about.

The Fenwick Island Lighthouse, specifically, was selected because of its simplicity and traditional-lighthouse

appearance.

The dedication was to have been on Veteran's Day 2007, but a severe windstorm that devastated much of the city last October forced postponement. Finally, on December 8th, San Jacinto municipal officials, local veterans and interested citizens gathered in the park to honor the men and women of the Coast Guard and formally dedicate the monument.

A number of Coast Guard veterans attended, including four women who had served in the Coast Guard SPARS during World War II.

Among speakers at the event were Bill Densmore, Riverside County Director of Veterans Affairs, and Doug Kroll, Ph.D., a Coast Guard Academy graduate (class of '71), former USCG officer, current FSO-PE 11-11 D11SR, and a history professor at College of the Desert. Presentation of the Colors was handled by the Coast Guard Auxiliary Division 11 Color Guard – Russell E. Davis, FC 11-11; Eugene H. Dow, SO-PV 11; James R. Butterworth, FSO-MS 11-2; and, David J. White, DCP-11, all D11SR.

The San Jacinto memorial joins a small, but growing, number of monuments and memorials, at home and abroad, that honor the men and women of the Coast Guard.

The more than 50 such testimonials include the Rescue Flotilla 1 Memorial (Poole, England, from where sixty 83-foot wooden USCG Cutters departed for the Normandy Invasion); the USCG Bicentennial Monument (Newburyport, Mass.); and the USCG World War II Monument (Battery Park, New York City).

Also, the Coast Guard and USS *Serpens* Monuments (Arlington National Cemetery); CGC *Cuyahoga* Memorial (Yorktown, Va.); Columbia River Bar Memorial (Astoria, Ore.); World War II Patrol Frigate Monument (Alameda, Calif.); and four monuments at the Coast Guard Academy (New London, Conn.).



Coast Guard Auxiliary Color Guard members are (from the left): Russell E. Davis, FC 11-11; Eugene H. Dow, SO-PV 11; James R. Butterworth, FSO-MS 11-2; and, David J. White, DCP-11, all D11SR.

YNC Doris Telles, USCG / FSO-SR 11-11 D11SR



Compiled by
JOEL A. GLASS BC-ANN
Editor, Navigator

A boating-safety buff, Claude awards an Auxiliary decal to a recreational boater whose boat passed one of the myriad Vessel Safety Checks conducted by the Auxiliarist during his many years in Flotilla 12-1 D8ER (Knoxville, Tenn.).

Auxiliary Trailblazer



W. Claude Fox – the distinguished, trail-blazing Tennessee Auxiliarist often referred to as “Dean of the Waterways” – passed away on Dec. 1, 2007 at the age of 99.

Fox, who had been the oldest still-active Auxiliarist in America, was widely known and celebrated for his many years as a boater, marine race driver and boat-racing official, and a leading advocate of safe-boating.

He also was a founder of Knoxville Flotilla 12-1 D8ER, one of the nation’s oldest flotillas – quite possibly, *the* oldest. The flotilla’s roots date back to 1939, when it began as a U.S. Coast Guard Reserve unit, prior to that organization’s Feb. 19, 1941 re-designation as the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Fox remained an active member of

Flotilla 12-1 until his passing.

Paying tribute to the late Auxiliarist, Commodore Thomas C. Mallison, DCO 8ER, said, “In his 68 years of service to the Auxiliary, [Fox] made many friends throughout the organization.” Tim Froehlich, DCP-12 D8ER, praised Fox as “Knoxville’s pioneer boatman, Knoxville’s first marine dealer, [and] a charter member of the Knoxville Boat Club.”

A week after Fox’s demise, Sam Venable observed in his *Knoxville News Sentinel* column that, “[Although] Claude was a pioneer in boat racing and boat sales, [he] made the biggest name for himself as a proponent of boat safety.”

Fox’s life in, and deep involvement with, boating began in 1927, when he moved to Knoxville. But, the beloved Andersonville,



Claude proudly displays a few of the many awards he had accrued during a lifetime of involvement in the worlds of boating safety and boat racing.

Tenn. native's Auxiliary affiliation can be traced back to a 1939 meeting of the Knoxville Racing Club (now the Knoxville Boat Club). Fox was the founder and charter member of what is the state's oldest boat club.

At that meeting, Fox – then serving one of his multiple terms as the club's Commodore – heard from a member that the Coast Guard was interested in launching an adjunct organization to promote boating-safety.

Intrigued by the concept, Fox had it looked into and, at the club's next meeting, USCGR Flotilla 12-1 was born. Its mission – educate the boating public, provide cost-free safety examinations, and conduct marine search and rescue patrols.

The son of a farmer in rural Andersonville – far removed from any navigable waterways – Fox and boating discovered one another shortly after he arrived in Knoxville and acquired his first boat for \$150.

The seller had sworn-off boating when he nearly drowned after falling into the raging Tennessee River while fighting its strong current in hopes of reaching a Knoxville dock. For Fox, that near-catastrophe launched what would be a life-long interest in boating-safety.

Meanwhile, he and a few boat-owning friends – undeterred by the challenging river currents and shoals – continued to race on the dangerous waterway.

When the Fort Loudoun Dam was built, the river became a lot tamer and interest in recreational boating blossomed. But most people hitting the water in their small wooden boats knew little, if anything, about boating. Predictably, many had problems with their boats, but Fox seemed to be omnipresent, always ready to help out the novices.

The recreational boating explosion led Fox, in 1938, to open Knoxville's first dealership, the Marine Sales Company, from

which the first Mercury boat motors were sold. His marine dealership thrived, thanks to Fox's love of boat-racing and his penchant for publicizing such events, which revved up interest in boating.

Meanwhile, his interest in the media led Fox to become a founder of two outdoor writer's publications and one of boat-racing's most popular magazines, *Rooster Tail*, which became the official publication of the National Outboard Association (NOA).

Fox served as its editor and photographer, launching what eventually was to become one of the nation's largest collections of boat-racing photographs, totaling 7,000-10,000 images, by his estimate.

When Congress created the Tennessee Valley Authority, Fox became one of the TVA's leading marine suppliers. When a dam built by TVA created Norris Lake, Fox's boat was the first to be lowered over the high-rising concrete structure and slipped into the lake's docile waters.



Fox soon became a charter member of the Dixie Motor Boat Association, which he served as Commodore until 1943, and he also assisted in founding the Knoxville Yacht Club (now the Fort Loudoun Y.C.).

Despite his many business and community activities, Fox raced boats any opportunity he could get. Eventually, the Tennessean became a NOA official. It didn't take long in that position for him to gain a reputation as one of the sport's most-respected officials.

NOA came to an end when World War II broke out. So did Fox's recreational boating and marine sales activities. He accepted an offer for a commission as Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, where he helped form the corps' first Amphibious Command.

Fox participated in more than 25 landings in the Pacific Theater, especially in the New Guinea area, before winding up in the Philippines. There, on his birthday – Oct. 20, 1944 – he landed on the beach with General Douglas McArthur. When he received his discharge from the Army, he left with Captain's bars on his collar and a Purple Heart and Bronze Star on his chest.

Back in Knoxville in 1946, he launched another marine business, Bowfox, which later became Fox and Company. When the American Power Boat Association took over after the war as the sport's controlling body, Fox signed on, serving subsequently as chairman, treasurer and racing official.

After helping to revive NOA in 1951, he spent the next 19 years as its executive director. During that period, he also

organized his city's first boat show – the Tennessee Valley Sport Show (now the Greater Knoxville Sportsman Show – and the Knoxville Boat Show.

After his retirement as a race official in 1952, Fox received a gubernatorial appointment as a Tennessee marine surveyor, leading him to form the Seafox & Associates survey firm, which he sold in 1965 in order to retire.

Unable to stay away from association activities, however, in the late 1980s he founded The Pioneer Outboard Drivers Association. Its members was composed of boat race driver "old-timers" who had kept the sport going during its early years by serving as backyard mechanics when few existed.

"Boating was, and is, my favorite sport," Fox stated in a 1995 article. "I will continue my love for the sport and live hoping that it will reach the pinnacle of my dreams."

For many years, until his passing, Fox owned a "fleet" of three recreational boats. But, he reckoned that during his many years of marine involvement, he had owned a total of no fewer than 27 racing and recreational boats.

Among the many luminaries with whom Fox crossed paths during his years as a boat race official and community activities leader were President Franklin Delano Roosevelt; country music singers Eddie Arnold, Glen Campbell and "Little" Jimmy Dickens; actors Gary Cooper, Clark Gable and Clint Eastwood; crooner Bing Crosby; comedian Bob Hope; boxer Jack Dempsey; auto tycoon Edsel Ford; Federal Bureau of Investigation director J. Edgar Hoover; and, the evangelist Rev. Dr. Billy Graham.

In his tribute to Fox, the *Knoxville News Sentinel* columnist Sam Venable paid homage to him as "the legendary boater who did more than any individual to introduce East Tennesseans to marine recreation, [and who] was piloting primitive outboards up and down the rocky shoals of the Tennessee River long before the TVA and Congress invented the 'Great Lakes of the South.'"

W. Claude Fox is survived by his wife of 37 years, Julie Anne Boykin Fox, and a brother, Glenn.

This talented, motivated, highly unusual individual surely will be missed. 🌹




D8ER Auxiliary and Coast Guard officers paying their respects to W. Claude Fox include, from the left: COMO Thomas C. Mallison, DCO; Wanda Mallison, SO-AN 63; Rick Washburn, RCO; Carolyn McDermott, FSO-PE 12-2; Mac McDermott, FSO-OP 12-2; Tom Walsh, SO-PE 12; Don Edmands, IPFC 12-2; CDR James Michalowski, USCG DIRAUX; Bob Nelson, FSO-FN 12-1; and, Tim Froehlich, DCP-12.



Lenny Douthet takes in the big picture from above as crewmembers below prepare for required drills during an inspection on board the cruise ship C/V *Golden Princess* at the Port of Los Angeles/Long Beach.

Len/JD IN LA/LB



JD Counts, ADSO-MA 11SR, goes to 'work,' boarding an unidentified vessel at the Port of Los Angeles/Long Beach, Calif.

Most mornings, as the sun rises over the Los Angeles area, marine inspectors Lynwood Douthett and John Doyle Counts report for duty on the 3rd Deck at Coast Guard Sector Los Angeles/Long Beach. There, they link up with the marine inspectors assigned to Sector LA/LB's Inspections Division.

But there's one notable difference – Douthett (known as Lenny) and Counts (known as JD) are Auxiliarists, while all the other qualified inspectors with whom they work are Coasties.

Most importantly, this dynamic duo – who donate four to five days a week of their time to the Coast Guard – are the only Auxiliarists to have earned the Assistant Foreign Freight Vessel Inspector, Assistant Foreign Vessel Security Inspector, and Assistant Maritime Security Inspector/Facility qualifications. ➔



Auxiliarist Lenny Douthet, IPDCP-13 D11SR (standing), discusses inspection strategy with Coast Guard Sector LA/LB Investigations Division shipmates (from the left) MST3 Darryl Moore, MST1 Paul Jarrett, and MST1 Todd Wheeler.

In addition, Counts, ADSO-MA 11SR, has earned the Life Raft Inspector qual and Doucett, IPDCP-13 D11SR, has completed the Control Verification (Cruise Ship) Inspector PQS needed to assist on a USCG cruise ship inspection team.

The impressive achievements of these two members are directly attributable to ALCOAST 034-04, which encouraged Auxiliary support of the Maritime Security Transportation Act (MTSA).

Since the ALCOAST was issued, over

three years ago, Lenny and JD have been working diligently on various USCG Marine Safety Personal Qualification Standards (PQS), several of which are covered under MTSA.

Marine inspectors who are Auxiliarists are always accompanied by qualified active or reserve marine inspectors during these non-law enforcement “compliance inspections” (see ALCOAST 033-06), and can not serve as the Lead Inspector.

Now that Lenny and JD have earned



their PQS's, they are able to assist as contributing members of an inspection team. In fact, on any given day they can be found assisting in compliance inspections alongside qualified USCG marine inspectors, making them true force-multipliers.

As if all that were not enough, Lenny and JD also have been instrumental in the development and implementation of the Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) Inspector Program.

This program was created to increase

quality of the Common Operating Picture of vessel and facility operations for the Sector LA/LB Inspections Division, and to provide a platform for introducing Auxiliary members to the division.

The effort was inspired by the Commandant's Policy on the Auxiliary, which states: "Every commander, commanding officer, officer in charge and program manager shall work closely with their Auxiliary counterparts to fully leverage the resources, skills, qualification and

profound dedication that reside within the Coast Guard Auxiliary. Such focused collaboration is essential to our unwavering commitment to mission excellence in serving and protecting the public trust."

Specifically, the program has established in Sector LA/LB a cadre of over 30 highly-trained Auxiliarists armed with years of local area knowledge to increase Coast Guard presence at public access and designated waterfront facilities, marinas and boat launches.

Auxiliarists are trained in everything from the Passenger Vessel Safety Act (PVSA) to the MTSA, and the America's Waterway Watch (AWW) program.

These MDA inspectors utilize their "eyes-on-scene" to report shipyard activity, report PVSA and MTSA violators, and promote the AWW program for Sector LA/LB.

Between May and December of 2007 alone, they distributed over 5,000 brochures, pamphlets and wallet cards to promote AWW to the public during Auxiliary patrols, boat shows and other outreach events.

Sector LA/LB previously had concerns about Coast Guard presence outside the port complex, where its operations are usually conducted and wanted more. Sector wanted more awareness in places such as outlying-area boatyards, where unauthorized repairs to inspected vessels may be done, and remote locations where migrants might enter the U.S. by water.

Luckily, places such as those are where the majority of area Auxiliarists live, keep their boats (if they have one), or where their flotilla is located.

From May to December, last year, the Auxiliarists conducted more than 250 Maritime Observation Missions (MOM) in support of MDA, from Morro Bay to Dana Point, Calif. This resulted in increased vigilance of security personnel, reports of suspicious and illegal activity, and even the rescue of an injured seal.

All of the participating Auxiliarists – Lenny and JD included – have been aggressively recruited and trained as part of Sector's Auxiliary Human Capital Plan. As a result, the more than 30 participating Auxiliary members have become qualified under the Assistant Harbor Safety Officer PQS.

The program could not have been successful without clear direction, supervision and support from the Coast Guard, the dedication and special skills of the Auxiliarists, and the outstanding tenacity, patience and devotion to duty of Lynwood Douthett and JD Counts. 🌟

Bruce Shaw, Flotilla 19 D8CR, collects a sample of surface water at a designated location in the Gulf of Mexico. The water will be tested for red tide conditions.

Red Tide Round-Up

Story & Photos by
HARRY SWEEZEY
FSO-PB 19 D8CR



Bruce Shaw (left), Flotilla 19 D8CR, and Lieutenant Commander Burt Hill, U.S. Public Health Service, assist Harry Sweezey, FSO-PB 19 D8CR, rig the Florida State University Coastal Marine Laboratory's deep-water collection device offshore the northwestern Florida Panhandle.

Many Auxiliarists work with a variety of tides during underway patrols, but how many members do you know who get to work with *red* tides?

Among the chosen few who do – regularly – are the members of Flotillas 16 and 19 D8CR. These Auxiliarists are working with Florida State University (FSU) to collect water samples in the Gulf of Mexico, offshore Panama City and Panama City Beach – home-bases of the Florida flotillas.

The goal is to learn more about the natural occurrences of red tide, which produces toxins that poison fish and sea creatures and can adversely affect humans as well.

The FSU Coastal Marine Lab had been conducting red tide research at various sites up to some 16 miles offshore. However, much wider coverage was required to obtain the necessary data.

The lab did not have the equipment, assets or funding to accomplish an expanded effort. So, Dr. Allan J. Clark, Distinguished Research Professor of Oceanography at FSU, asked Rich Rasmussen, DCP-1 D8CR, whether the Auxiliary might be able to help.

What the professor hoped for was to have Auxiliary Operational Facility crews collect, during routine safety and training patrols, surface and bottom water samples

at specific coordinates. These would be taken from a point 10 miles off the Florida Panhandle inward to the state's northwestern shoreline.

The samples would have to be taken continually – at precisely the same coordinates – throughout the research period. Coxswains would have to hold station at each site while samples were taken – regardless of sea-state.

A drop line used for sample-taking would have to be retained as straight as possible while descending to the sea bed so that a sliding weight could drop down and trip-close the doors at each end of a sampling device to capture water for testing.

Rasmussen passed the word to his flotilla commanders, and ensuing response to the call for volunteers and OPFACs was strong.

Samples collected by the Auxiliarists are analyzed by researchers at the university lab to determine the presence of algae. Results are posted on the FSU Oceanography Department's web site, where red tide blooms are monitored.

Few realize that red tide has been recorded as far back as the mid-19th century. As recently as the summer of 2007, local Florida Panhandle counties experienced blooms that caused people to suffer

from stinging in their nasal passages and irritated or dry hacking coughs.

Thousands of dead fish washed up on the northwest Florida beaches, posing health hazards and economic losses for the area's tourism and seafood industries.

Florida Gulf Coast red tide is created when a single-celled, plantlike organism – *Karenina brevis* – releases harmful toxins as it breaks down in the environment. This so-called naked dinoflagellate has no outer covering to protect it from breaking apart. As the organism passes through fish gills, or is tossed about by wave-action, toxins are released as the cells break, freeing neurotoxins that can kill marine life.

It has also been postulated that normal wave-action can break down the cells, releasing airborne fumes that trigger dry cough, eye irritation, and nasal symptoms and wheezing in some humans, particularly asthmatics. Extreme cases may require hospitalization.

Researchers are measuring the concentration of algae, currents, salinity, temperature and other metrics in the Florida Gulf waters.

The cooperative efforts of FSU and the Coast Guard Auxiliary are part of wider efforts to solve the mystery of how, and when, red tide will strike. 🌊

'A NATION AT WAR'

Having left the warmth and safety of OPFAC *Fresh Aire*, exercise 'survivors' cool their heels in the waters of Prince William Sound while waiting for an Alaska Air National Guard HC-130 to find them.

AUXILIARY PITCHES IN TO ASSIST IN COMBAT EXERCISE

We are a nation at war, with the possibility of one or more of our military aircraft being downed in enemy waters.

Training for just such a possibility was the reason expressed by U.S. Army and Air Force components when they contacted me to ask for Auxiliary assistance in a planned combat search and rescue (CSAR) exercise scheduled for last June 14.

The exercise scenario unfolded with a U.S. cargo aircraft being forced to ditch in a large body of water behind enemy lines. Radio contact had been made with the survivors, but activity by "terrorists" also had been spotted in the area.

A search-and-rescue mission was planned to locate and retrieve all of the survivors.

The exercise called for the Alaska-based USAF 212th Rescue Squadron to conduct the SAR operation in an area of western Prince William Sound that falls within the Area of Operations of Flotilla 24 D17 (Whittier).

Players in this exercise included the Alaska Air National Guard (AKANG) and the U.S. Army, with crewed HC-130 aircraft and HH-60 helicopters, pararescue (PJ) personnel, an air-dropped Personal

Water Craft (PWC), seven-person life raft, and 10 personnel acting as "survivors" in the water.

Auxiliary Operational Facilities (OPFAC) 393266, operated by Roy and Terry Stoddard, RCO D17 and FSO-FN 24, respectively; 383285, operated by Bill Morris, VFC-25 and Linda Shogren, DSO-PA 17; and, 253300, operated by Sig Murphy, DCP-2 and Tom Kane, FSO-OP 24, were on-scene to secure the area from

unwanted vessel intrusions.

Beginning early last April, TSgt Jeremy Lilly of the 212th AKANG, assisted by Kane and myself, planned and coordinated the Auxiliary portion of the exercise.

Support personnel and "survivors" were staged at Surprise Cove, which is a few miles from the exercise area, on the evening before the exercise in order to ease any confusion on the morning of the actual CSAR.



Utilizing the air-dropped Personal Water Craft, pararescue personnel rapidly transport 'survivors' away from the simulated crash scene.



A survivor, embraced by a pararescue person, is plunked from the cold waters of Prince William Sound and hoisted by a hovering Alaska Air National Guard HH-60 helicopter.

The Stoddards, onboard their vessel *Fresh Aire* (aka OPFAC 393266), provided the platform to the staging area for the military ground personnel and their equipment, which included an inflatable raft to be used for area clean-up after the CSAR concluded.

The exercise began mid-morning when the designated survivors entered the water from OPFAC 393266 and awaited arrival of one of the AKANG HC-130s. Maintaining constant radio contact with the aircraft, TSgt Lilly used sea dye and smoke signals to indicate their location as well as to officially launch the exercise.

The HC-130 arrived and made two passes over the area. On its second pass, the PWC, life raft and four PJs were air-dropped. After a smooth and safe landing, the PJs quickly recovered the PWC and life raft and began the process of recovering the survivors from the simulated crash scene.

The PWC and PJs moved rapidly back and forth between the survivors, retrieving one or more at a time and transporting them to the seven-person life raft as the survivors held on to an attached SAR-retrieval system.

At the life raft, the rescued personnel received medical treatment for their simulated injuries while awaiting individual removal by helicopter. The HH-60 arrived on scene and began hoisting them to the helo from the raft and from nearby waters.

During the entire exercise, two other military helicopters used the shore terrain to screen for “enemy” activity by popping up-and-down and assessing the overall situation.

As the exercise progressed, the three Auxiliary OPFACs were making contact with unauthorized vessels entering the exercise zone, requesting that the boaters stay clear of the area.

One intruding vessel could not be contacted via marine VHF radio, requiring that one of the OPFACs move into position to shield exercise participants in the water from any harm. At the same time, one of the security helicopters rose from behind a hill on shore and escorted the unauthorized vessel from the area.

Meanwhile, the AKANG HC-130 provided us with a front-row seat to an air-refueling evolution with one of the helos as the “survivors” were being flown to the Port of Whittier on board the other rescue helicopter.

Finally, OPFAC 393266 remained on-scene to recover parachutes and other equipment that had been left behind.

All-in-all, the CSAR was a great success, providing excellent training for all participating agencies—including the Coast Guard Auxiliary. 🇺🇸

Harry Sickels (left), Flotilla 11 D11SR (San Diego), chats with Captain Eric Brown, Commanding Officer, USCGC *Dallas*, on the Cutter's deck. The 58-year-old Auxiliarist joined the *Dallas* crew at Charleston, S.C., for her October 2007 fisheries law-enforcement and terrorism-awareness cruise to New England.



A Cruise to Final Frontier

USCGC *Dallas*, the 378-foot Cutter on which Harry Sickels, Flotilla 11 D11SR, spent 10 days, learning and practicing a variety of watchstander positions on the bridge. The Cutter's mission began last October in Charleston, S.C. Sickels departed at Boston.



Story & Photos by
ENS KEVIN L. ST. CIN
Public Affairs Officer, USCGC *Dallas*

CALIFORNIA AUXILIARIST JOINS CUTTER FOR A NEW ENGLAND MISSION

This is the tale of a California Auxiliarist who has gone where few – if any – of his fellow members have gone before, but where others may go in the future.

It is important to realize that the Coast Guard Auxiliary is an integral member of the Coast Guard family. There are only 45,000 Coasties and 27,000 Auxiliarists. Our successful partnership depends on how well we understand one another's mission.

So, when USCGC *Dallas*, a 378-foot High Endurance Cutter, had the opportunity to take an Auxiliarist along on a patrol through northeastern U.S. waters, Captain Eric Brown, the Commanding Officer, quickly accepted his new crew member – Henry Sickels, of Flotilla 11 D11SR (San Diego).

The skipper emphasized, "It is important to the Coast Guard that Auxiliarists experience life on board our Cutters. It will only strengthen the bond between service components that make us so effective."

The 58-year-old Auxiliarist joined the Auxiliary in November 2001, while employed by United Airlines in Indianapolis. "As a result of 9/11, my wife [Penny] and I joined together," Sickels said. "We wanted to serve our country and assist the United States Coast Guard. We felt that, as Auxiliarists, we could take some of the workload off the Coast Guard."

Sickels boarded CGC *Dallas* at her Charleston, S.C. homeport as the Cutter was ready to get underway for a New England tour on Oct. 1, 2007. He left the

vessel at Boston on October 11.

While on board *Dallas*, which was conducting fisheries law-enforcement and terrorism-awareness operations, the Auxiliarist had the opportunity to break in as a watchstander in many different positions on the bridge. He truly proved himself an able-bodied seaman.

Sickels learned and practiced the role of Quartermaster of the Watch, charting – by hand – the ship's speed and course over ground, and dead reckoning. He also spent time at the helm, responding quickly to the Conning Officer's commands, ensuring safe steering of the ship.

In addition to the many operating positions in which he participated, Sickels also took on the role of ship's photographer, creating an excellent and much-appreciated index of images that he and his active-duty shipmates had taken since the patrol began.

Asked if he had ever before been aboard a Cutter, Sickels revealed that, "This was my first time on *any* ship bigger than 50 feet and my first time in roughing seas greater than eight feet. It was definitely an adventure. The *Dallas* allowed me to see the multi-mission Coast Guard in action. This is a 'must' for any Auxiliarist."

As to how the cruise on board CGC *Dallas* benefited the Auxiliary, he said, "I will be able to apply some of the daily operations that the *Dallas* performs to my own vessel. Despite all of the technology aboard this Cutter, the Coast Guard maintains that a

seaman's-eye is a valuable asset."

Actually, the fact is that CGC *Dallas* was able to benefit just as much from the Auxiliary as vice-versa.

Most importantly, Sickels added to the ship his experiential knowledge.

He informally mentored many shipmates, providing an uncommon perspective for the Cutter's crew. He has "been there and done that," primarily in the civilian sector, and the crew took advantage of this bank of knowledge.

One crewmember, MK1 Aaron Mertz, observed, "My [USCG] enlistment is almost up. Given that Mr. Sickels transitioned from the Air Force to the private sector, I was able to learn about the process and the options that are available to me."

That sort of asset can not be obtained through military training, but rather only from life-experiences.

CAPT Brown emphasized the importance of having Auxiliary and active-duty personnel operate as a team.

"The Coast Guard Auxiliary is a giant – and necessary – arm of the Coast Guard," he said. "One way to ensure an effective collaboration is to have the Auxiliary on board with us. Mr. Sickels was an excellent representative of the Auxiliary, and he was thoroughly involved. Henry's wealth of experience and maturity helped bring a steadiness [to the Cutter] during a challenging deployment. He is a shipmate for life." 🌟

Applications Sought for Election of National Officers

In accordance with the provisions of the Standing Rules of the National Board of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, Article 2, Section 2.1:

- Each individual seeking election to a national office shall indicate, in writing, their intent to be a candidate to the National Commodore no later than 01 June (2008) prior to the election date. This includes the offices of the National Commodore, National Vice Commodore, National Area Commodores, Atlantic East, Atlantic West and Pacific.
- Further note that Article 1, Section 1.4 states: the National Area Commodore-Atlantic Area East [ARCO-AE], the National Area Commodore-Atlantic Area West [ARCO-AW], and the National Area Commodore-Pacific Area [ARCO-P] shall each reside in and be elected from their respective Auxiliary Areas, as defined in the Manual. There shall be no such restriction on the National Commodore [NACO] or National Vice Commodore. [NAVCO].
- The National Commodore shall refer the names of all candidates submitting letters of intent to the Chief Director for verification of eligibility to hold the office sought.
- Upon receipt of verification of eligibility from the Chief Director, the National Commodore will nominate each of these candidates. No later than 01 July, the National Commodore will notify the members of the national board in writing of the names of the candidates nominated for each office.
- National Chief of Staff (NACOS) and National Directorate Commodores (NADCO) for the offices of Chief, Directorate of Recreational Boating Safety, Chief, Directorate of Operations and Marine Safety and Chief, Directorate for Member Services – in accordance with the Standing Rules of the National Board of the United States Coast

Guard Auxiliary, Article 1, Section 1.3 (b), prior to 01 June in the year that a national election is conducted, the National Commodore will give notice through the Chain of Leadership and Management, posted on the Auxiliary website and printed in the summer issue of the Navigator seeking resumes and relevant information from all persons desiring appointment as NACOS and NADCO for the following two years. The resumes and any information the applicant desires to be considered shall be provided to the National Administrative Officer, David Thomas, N-A, no later than 01 August of the current year (2008). Should a person who is currently serving as the National Chief of Staff or as chief of one of the directorates (NADCO) and desires to seek reappointment, they shall provide their resumes and other information to the National Commodore-elect, no later than 10 September 2008.

National Commodore
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary



BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

IT'S A BOUNCING

By **BOB WILLIAMS**
FC 22-1 D1SR

Forgive Division 22 D1SR for blowing its own horn. After all, it recently gave birth to a new – and quite unique – flotilla.

The bouncing baby – Flotilla 22-7, born Nov. 27, 2007 at the Northport Veterans Administration Medical Center Auditorium, Fort Salonga, N.Y. – is unique because it is the Auxiliary's first, and only, unit composed entirely of marching-band members.

During the birthing ceremony, at which Anthony Wuestman, DCP-22, served as master of ceremonies, the FL 22-7 charter plaque was awarded to the infant unit by Commander Elizabeth Young, D1SR Director of Auxiliary.

She also presented each member of the fledgling flotilla with a personalized plankowner certificate and turned over to the musical members a flotilla start-up package of manuals, flags and flagpoles.

Most notably, CDR Young also turned over to FL 22-7 a bountiful birth-day present – four shiny brass instruments that were donated to the new unit by the U.S. Coast Guard Band, which has been based at New London, Conn., since 1925.

Robert Williams and Charles Caserta were elected as the first Flotilla Commander and Vice Flotilla Commander, respectively, at FL 22-7's celebratory post-Thanksgiving Day evening meeting.



Shortly before Flotilla 22-7 was launched, the band marched in the Huntington (Long Island), N.Y., Columbus Day Parade, led by banner-carriers Arthur Gorodess (left), PDCP-22, and Bruce Cohen, VFC 22-2 D1SR.

ING BABY BAND!

Prior to the formation of the new musical flotilla, the members had performed publicly three times as a detachment of Flotilla 22-2, in Northport, N.Y.

The new unit will continue to utilize its members' musical skills to promote the Auxiliary's four cornerstones – member services, recreational boating safety, Coast Guard support, and fellowship.

Brian Donnelly, the FL 22-7 bandleader, said, "I am looking forward to the posi-

tive impact [this flotilla] will have on the Auxiliary's four cornerstones. I have heard great things about the band, and I am looking forward to hearing them play."

Wuestman, now RCO(S) D1SR, said, "I certainly believe that FL 22-7 will be a definite asset to Div-22 by not only supplying [its members'] musical talents, but also by being ready, willing and able to perform all the necessary functions and missions of the Auxiliary. FL 22-7 will be a great representa-

tive of the Coast Guard."

Chief Warrant Officer Zach Cummings, Commanding Officer, USCG Station Eaton's Neck, said, "Just having marched in a parade with the [new flotilla] at Cow Harbor Day, last September, has boosted the awareness and image of [our] Station."

FL 22-7 has taken its place alongside the six other Division 22 flotillas, situated along the north shore of Long Island, from Oyster Bay to Point Jefferson, N.Y. 🌊

Ken Reynoldson, FSO-CM
87 D11NR, pulls fuel hose
prior to laying it out at the
helicopter pad.

'RECIRC' IN MOTION



Story & Photos by
BRUCE ROGERSON
SO-PB 8 D11NR



Doug Pohlson (left), FC-87, and Ken Reynoldson, FSO-CM 87 D11NR, identify the key valves in the fuel recirculation system.

AUXILIARISTS PUMPED UP HELPING AT HELO FUEL FACILITY

Some Californians, such as Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, may prefer pumping iron, but for members of Flotilla 87 D11NR's Point Arena Detachment, there's nothing more satisfying than pumping fuel.

The detachment has taken on the mission of providing weekly maintenance tasks at a Coast Guard aviation fuel supply facility near the historic Point Arena Lighthouse. The facility is critical for helicopters operating from USCG Air Stations Humboldt Bay and San Francisco.

While the refueling mission is rather unusual for Auxiliarists, it is not all that unusual for Flotilla 87 (Fort Bragg, Calif.), which has made a habit of taking on unusual missions. Most notable among these is its eight-year maintenance, in behalf of USCG Group Humboldt Bay, of the historic and priceless Third Order Fresnel Lens at Point Cabrillo Light Station.

Two years ago, the flotilla established a southern Mendocino County detachment to assist with stabilization and upkeep of

the First Order Fresnel Lens at the historic Point Arena Lighthouse. The unit has since grown to 13 members, who share work on the lantern room and lens.

For more than 15 years, the Coast Guard has maintained an aviation jet fuel supply facility near the Point Arena Lighthouse. The facility is critical for helicopters whose crews train for, and execute, search-and-rescue (SAR) missions along the southern Mendocino and northern Sonoma coasts, as well as offshore.

In December 2006, Captain Mark Butt, Commanding Officer, Group Humboldt Bay, requested Auxiliary assistance with the weekly Point Arena aviation fuel maintenance tasks. Group personnel soon began training Auxiliary detachment members.

Shaun Fyfe, a Coast Guard civilian employee, spent hours making sure that Flotilla 87 members Ken Reynoldson, FSO-CM; Chris Jewell, FSO-MS; Jan Jewell, and Ray Hurst had every procedure of their new tasking down pat. Bruce Rogerson,

FC, and Doug Pohlson, VFC, were also trained, to provide back-up.

Once a week, at least two Auxiliarists perform the required mission, known as "fuel recirc." This involves pumping 75 gallons of fuel from a hose back into the storage tank, taking fuel samples and testing them for water and sediment contamination, then recirculating the entire contents of the tank through filters to keep the fuel ready for use.

The Auxiliarists were also asked to be at the site to take delivery of fresh fuel and to prepare the supply when helos on SAR missions come in for refueling.

"Until recently, the McKinleyville and San Francisco Air Stations flew weekly missions to Point Arena to recirculate and test the fuel," CAPT Butt said in a recent newspaper interview. "Once asked, the Auxiliary unequivocally volunteered to take on that responsibility. Their efforts enable me to schedule nearly 75 hours of additional flight time (valued at approximately \$470,000) into furthering our SAR

and homeland security missions for the Lost Coast of Northern California.

“The fuel must be tested and recirculated on a weekly schedule. Our crews can do this upon arrival at the helo pad, but it is a time-consuming process. With the assistance of our wonderful Coast Guard Auxiliary, the fuel is recirculated and ready for immediate use. My deep appreciation goes out to those outstanding Americans and the rest of the Auxiliary.”

Last year, the facility’s fuel-readiness system played a role in enabling two USCG helos to successfully evacuate an injured seafarer from a large merchant ship off the Mendocino coast and transfer him to a hospital for urgent care.

Not long ago, the Auxiliary fuel team was again called to action to prepare the system for refueling helo SAR activity when a lone English rower disappeared more than 90 miles offshore Fort Bragg.

In addition to the fuel recirc activity, Auxiliarists also provide much-needed local weather information to flight crews, via VHF radio.

Auxiliarist Jan Jewell, the detachment Recirc Team Coordinator, said, “This worthwhile mission in support of Coast Guard air ops has given our detachment members a whole new focus. The pilots really appreciate the service. When we finished a recent fuel recirc for a helo, the pilot told us, ‘We appreciate your coming out. This is like visiting a full service gas

station!’ To which I replied, ‘Well, almost; we didn’t do the windshield.’”

After flying a recent SAR case, helo pilot Lieutenant Stephen Baxter told the Auxiliarists, “We cannot thank you enough. [Your assistance] will some day mean the difference between a life saved and a body recovered.”

His words were to prove prophetic. Just a few days later, the team was in action again, as Jan and Chris Jewell were called out by Group Humboldt Bay to recirculate helo fuel at Point Arena during a SAR case off the Mendocino coast.

Group had been notified of an EPIRB (Emergency Position-Indicating Radio Beacon) from the 38-foot sailing vessel *Passing Wind II* at approximately 1015. An HH-65C helo from CGAS Humboldt Bay and a C-130 fixed-wing aircraft from CGAS Sacramento went airborne to seek the EPIRB.

At about 1230, the helo located it and began a search pattern. At 1320, it found the vessel in distress. It had lost its mast and was foundering in seas estimated at 10-12 feet. Both crew members had jumped overboard. A Coast Guard rescue swimmer was deployed to recover the two sailors, both of whom were transported by the helo to Point Arena, where Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) met them.

Meanwhile, the Auxiliarists had driven to the fuel facility and performed the required operations, finishing just before

the helo’s arrival. Once the survivors had been taken over by the EMTs, the Auxiliarists informed the helo crew that fuel recirculation was complete. The aircraft was refueled, allowing it to return to CGAS Humboldt Bay without delay.

The Auxiliarists then released pressure in the hose and returned the unused fuel to the tank. They stood by until the helo departed. For the Auxiliarists, spending that afternoon assisting the Coast Guard was time well-spent.

The many hours of training, the weekly testing, the fuel recirculating, and the emergency call-outs of the Auxiliary team did not go unnoticed. Just before last year’s Thanksgiving, each team member received a note from Rear Admiral Craig E. Bone, Commander, Eleventh Coast Guard District, thanking them for all their efforts.

Meanwhile, the flotilla commander received a Thanksgiving card from one of the rescued sailboat crew members, who wrote:

“Last month, I was rescued, along with my shipmate Greg, after his boat was damaged in a rollover. It took the helicopter a while to find us, even with our best efforts to make the EPIRB transmit clearly. Thanks to the fuel depot your volunteers maintain, they had enough time to find us. For me and my family, this Thanksgiving will be very joyous, thanks to your efforts to keep mariners safe.”

Semper Paratus. 🌀

A Coast Guard HH-65C helicopter sits on the landing pad awaiting refueling. Historic Point Arena Lighthouse is visible in the distance.



'ROBBY' TAKES THE SILVER

AFRAS CITES PENNSYLVANIA RCO FOR 'OUTSTANDING RESCUE'

By **JOEL A. GLASS**

BC-ANN

Editor, *Navigator*

Harold T. Robinson, RCO D5NR, has been honored for "heroic action" during a 2006 rescue mission by the Association for Rescue at Sea (AFRAS), which presented him with its Silver Medal and a cash prize.

The AFRAS Silver Medal is exactly equivalent to the AFRAS Gold Medal. The sole difference between the two is that only Coast Guard members may receive the gold, and only Auxiliarists can qualify for the silver.

Robinson, known to his shipmates as "Robby," is a member of Flotilla 49 D5NR (Westchester, Penn.). He won the Silver Medal for an "outstanding rescue" while serving as coxswain of Auxiliary Operational Facility 279521 on Aug. 26, 2006.

That afternoon, "Robinson demonstrated superior boat-handling and team coordination skills during the rescue of an elderly father, his adult son, and three small children, who were in a 19-foot powered canoe swamped and capsized by rough seas while crossing the Delaware River," AFRAS said.

"The family was in the water; adults without life-jackets, and in the path of an approaching merchant ship. Auxiliarist Robinson and his crew were on-scene

in less than 15 minutes and proceeded to safely execute a flawless recovery of all five exhausted victims from the shipping channel. The speedy response and expert rescue of this family reflect great credit on Harold Robinson."

[Details of the rescue appeared on page 8 of the Winter 2006-07 issue of *Navigator*.]

AST2 Joshua H. Mitcheltree won a Gold



Harold T. Robinson (left), RCO D5NR, proudly displays his AFRAS Silver Medal after receiving it from the Coast Guard Commandant, Admiral Thad Allen, during special ceremonies on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Medal for his actions while serving as a rescue-swimmer aboard a USCG helicopter on April 29, 2006. Along with his helo crew, Mitcheltree "was instrumental in conducting a successful search and rescue operation of a 60-foot sailing vessel beset by severe weather and total darkness, in violently pitching 25-ft. seas, and drifting dangerously close to nearby shoals."

Coast Guard for "an act of extraordinary bravery" during a rescue at sea.

The Silver Medal, established in 2000, is presented when an Auxiliarist performs a rescue under the same criteria as for an enlisted Coastie.

Nominations for all of the awards are made by the Coast Guard Search and Rescue Division. 🌟

BM1 David Ramsey also won a Gold Medal for his "flawless performance" on board a USCG Motor Lifeboat "during the incredibly dangerous and operationally challenging rescue" of the 50-ft. F/V *Catherine M* on Jan. 15, 2006.

The fishing boat, with three on board, had become disabled and was drifting toward 25-ft. breaking surf on Oregon's Columbia River. The Coast Guardsman used a slip-tow evolution to rescue the vessel and thereby save three potential victims.

The medals, as well as an AMVER Award plaque for the captain and crew of the bulk carrier M/V *Patagonia*, were presented during ceremonies on Capitol Hill in Washington that were co-hosted by Rep. Howard Coble (R-N.C.).

A retired Captain in the Coast Guard Reserve and former commanding officer of the USCGR unit in Wilmington, N.C., Congressman Coble has served many years on the House of Representatives Coast Guard Subcommittee. He is also co-chairman of the Congressional Coast Guard Caucus.

AFRAS, a non-profit foundation with charitable status, supports services concerned with saving lives at sea. Its Gold Medal, established in 1982, is presented annually to an enlisted member of the

All you ever wanted to know about volunteering FEMA FERVOR

By **MAXINE CAVANAUGH**

DSO-PB 14

Auxiliary National Press Corps

(Editor's Note: Most Auxiliarists know at least one shipmate who has heeded the call for volunteers to help out the Federal Emergency Management Agency when disaster strikes. But what do these volunteers actually do on FEMA assignments when they are performing as paid agency employees, rather than in an Auxiliary capacity? One of the most-active, longest-serving, FEMA-assisting Auxiliarists provides a very personal look at what it has been like for her.)

Through the windows of the Emergency Operations Center in Jackson, Miss., I watched the wind and rain of Hurricane Katrina leaving a path of destruction across the states lining the Gulf of Mexico.

Now, I understood why I had been told to travel on Sunday. There was no way I could have flown in today – Monday, Aug. 29, 2005. I felt really lucky to have been able to get a hotel room what with all the people who were evacuating the coastal areas, fleeing north and filling practically all the hotel rooms.

In my nearly 15 years working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Katrina was probably the closest I had ever come to being part of a disaster-in-the-making.

Usually, I am deployed after a storm or floods have passed. Then, I go in and work in public affairs, writing news releases that provide people in the disaster areas with information about FEMA assistance programs.

My association with the federal agency began long before I joined the Auxiliary. But I am not the only Auxiliarist who has

worked for FEMA.

Just since Hurricane Charlie struck in August 2004, at least 200 Auxiliarists have been a part of the recovery efforts for victims of the hurricanes, floods and storms that have caused disasters across America. Since then, Auxiliarists from all districts have responded and made a real difference in the lives of the people they encountered.

When FEMA, in 2004, asked the Coast Guard Auxiliary for volunteers, it did not mean they would be working gratis. The Auxiliary was, and is, a source of dependable individuals who already provide valuable services within their own communities.

Most of the Auxiliarists had already taken some FEMA Incident Command System courses and passed background checks. There was an immediate need for workers and the Auxiliary was there.

Shortly after FEMA's initial call for Auxiliary help went out via e-mail following Hurricane Charlie (2004), many Auxiliarists were on a flight to Atlanta to help out. With only minimal orientation and training, these Auxiliarists hit the ground running.

A year later, many of those same Auxiliarists again responded for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Their names were on the FEMA volunteers list. They were willing to leave home on less than 24 hours' notice and serve for at least 30 days, doing whatever needed doing to help those in need. Many stayed longer than the required 30 days.

Normally, FEMA workers are housed in hotels, but that didn't always happen, post-Katrina. Coastal evacuees were occupying hotel rooms that normally would have housed FEMA workers. Many agency personnel therefore ended up in a "tent city," where they slept 100 to a tent, used port-a-potties, and battled both insects



and the sweltering, muggy air of southern Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas.

Sure, they had lap-top computers and cell phones and they drove rental cars, but that didn't mean they were living luxurious lives. They were willing to give 30 days, or more, of their lives to help victims displaced by the hurricanes. Many of these Auxiliarists now have committed to future deployments, if they are needed.

That feeling of wanting to be able to make a difference is present in all of us. Otherwise, why would we be Coast Guard Auxiliarists?

It does not matter whether FEMA workers, during the first few weeks of a disaster, sleep in clean, air-conditioned hotels, work in air-conditioned temporary offices, or are out in the field looking for people who haven't gotten the word about the available help.

The long duty-time during the first few weeks usually spans 10 to 12 hours a day, seven days a week. Sometimes, it is two to three weeks before there is any relief in the form of a few hours – or even a day – off. We may be working the long hours,



Maxine Cavanaugh
DSO-PB 14



Photo: Diana Gee, FEMA

On-scene amid extensive rubble, the author, in FEMA 'uniform,' stands beside a makeshift sign pointing to the Agency's enrollment office in Greensburg, Kan. Some 90 percent of the small town had been wiped out by a Category 5 tornado.

but we all know that those who have been displaced by storms or floods or fire have it a lot worse than we do.

We are glad to put in the hours needed to help them.

After so many coastal residents were displaced by Katrina, FEMA set up the Hotel Populations Program (HPOP), in which I participated. Many Gulf Coast evacuees got 'lost' in the paperwork shuffle as they tried to relocate. Many had applied for assistance, but were not getting what they needed – for any number of reasons.

Those of us in HPOP went to hotels listed in a FEMA database, contacting as many evacuees as we could. Equipped with laptops and cell phones, we visited the hotels and worked with applicants staying in them.

If information was missing that prevented an applicant from getting assistance, we called the tele-registration number for them, giving the displaced individuals and

families the opportunity to get their record straightened out.

Evacuees were found in most of the southern states, but others were transported to many other locales. Displaced casino workers from the Gulf ended up in Las Vegas. Some evacuees were found as far away as Maine, New Hampshire or Massachusetts – not to mention Utah, Idaho, California, Tennessee, Georgia, Texas and Louisiana.

Not all of more than 200 Auxiliarists who responded to my call for information for this article were FEMA workers. State, county, and medical workers, Red Cross volunteers, military liaison officers, and just plain volunteers were among the Auxiliarists who had gone to help. Every Auxiliary district was represented.

The 2004 and 2005 hurricanes probably generated the most response. But, as Auxiliarists learned what working for FEMA was all about, many decided to con-

tinue making themselves available to the agency.

Many of these Auxiliarists are still responding to disasters in such venues as Pennsylvania, Maryland, New York, New Jersey, Kansas, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Arkansas, and Utah.

Some are still working in disaster areas or have returned to several of the more seriously damaged locales. The majority started out as community relations workers, canvassing communities to find people in need of help.

There were – and still are – many more positions to fill, including individual assistance specialist, liaison officers, logistics, planning, instructors, computer technician, security, safety, and public assistance workers. And even a writer or two!

Not every story was positive. Some responders had health problems and were unable to continue deploying if needed. A couple had problems with FEMA paperwork or credit cards.

One group in New Jersey had everything lined up to respond, including volunteer pilots and planes, but were told to stand down. They never got to go and were extremely disappointed.

However, the majority of Auxiliarists were, and are, really glad to have had the FEMA experience, and they hope to continue deploying. These members have seen ICS and the National Incident Management System (NIMS) implemented and are glad for their training

The Auxiliarists' activity has not gone unnoticed by FEMA.

Mark Calambro, deputy director, National Response Coordination Center, Operations Management Division, said:

"During my tenure as the FEMA Southwest Louisiana Area Field Office director, I had the opportunity to work with Auxiliarists. They quickly adapted to a very fluid and austere situation. I believe this can be attributed to their training with the Coast Guard, their professionalism, and a 'can-do' attitude. The Auxiliarists were a definite 'plus' to my operations and contributed immeasurably to the response and recovery in southwest Louisiana."

There are so many inspiring stories from Auxiliarists across the country. I only wish I could tell them all, but it would fill an entire book. Thanks to everyone who responded to my request for input. As we often say upon departing for yet another deployment, "I hope to see you somewhere, out there, in FEMA."

It is good to know that such good people are in the Auxiliary and that they stand ready to help. Keep up the good work. 🌟

WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A WINNER

(A PLAY IN ONE ACT)



Don Hoge, VFC 11-10 D7, gives heaving line a strong toss as Jim Ryder (left), FSO-FN 11-10 D7, and Kevin McConn, FC 11-9 D7, admire his top-notch technique.



Hardly breaking a sweat in the ISAR Mystery Event are, from the left: Jim Ryder, FSO-FN 11-10; Don Hoge, VFC 11-10; and, Kevin McConn, FC 11-9, all D7.

Story & Photos by
KAREN L. MILLER
DCP-11 D7

Scene: Toronto, Canada.
Grand Ballroom, Fairmont Royal York Hotel.
Sept. 29, 2007, about 2100 hours.

Action: Emcee is about to announce the winners of various competitions. Everybody is sitting with bated breath.

Players: Four members from the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, Division 11, District 7 (West Coast Florida) – Team captain Kevin McConn, FC 11-9 (Tarpon Springs), and Max Garrison, FSO-MS 11-10; Don Hoge, VFC 11-10; and, Jim Ryder, FSO-FN 11-10 (Dunedin). Plus, 44 other competitors and various supporters and top honchos from the Canadian and U.S. Coast Guard.

Event: International Search and Rescue (ISAR) competition, an annual event in

which U.S. and Canadian Auxiliary teams demonstrate various SAR skills. The 2007 event features activities designed to test contestants' ability to plan, communicate and prosecute a SAR mission.

They compete in boat-handling, navigation, emergency repairs, first aid, nautical knowledge, knot-tying and line splicing, and a host of other things that marine rescuers must know.

The first ISAR competition was held in 2000. The Canadian Auxiliary teams have won for seven straight years.

Background: There are eight events. Winners each receive 13 points; second

place earns 11, and so on. Each team has three members. All events are scored by one Canadian and one U.S. judge. The highest-scoring national team from each country earns a trophy.

There is also a competition for a fourth team member, chosen at random, in advance, by event organizers. Four three-member binational groups, known as CAN-AM teams, are thus created. All 16 teams compete in all events, but CAN-AM members return to their own teams for the mystery events.

Flashback #1: May 19, 2007 – The Division 11 team wins the D7 round of ISAR competition at Punta Gorda, Fla. Captain Susan Englebert, USCG Seventh District Chief of Prevention, announces individual winners. She notes that they had trailered their team captain's boat over 100 miles, arriving a day early to get a good understanding of local waters on an area familiar-



Canadian winners, respectively, of the other competitions:

- Search and Rescue Planning – D7/ Team Canada
- Seamanship – D7/Team Pacific
- Communications – Team Great Lakes/ Team Central Arctic
- Dewatering – Team Great Lakes/ Team Newfoundland
- Line Toss/Marlinspike – Team Mississippi River/Team Newfoundland
- Mystery Events – Team Great Lakes/ Team Central Arctic

Flashback #3: McConn finds, to his great surprise, that the D7 team spent over 4,500 hours studying and practicing for ISAR three to four days a week, sometimes as many as six days, both on the water and ashore.

Team members, who worked closely with Station Sand Key personnel, were always in uniform, even on the 90°-plus days. During training, they received enthusiastic support and assistance from several members of past Division 11 winning ISAR teams. The team has a motto – Whatever It Takes! Their preparation for ISAR certainly demonstrates that commitment.

Action: The emcee announces that the Best Overall national winners are D7 (U.S.) and Team Central Arctic (Can.).

Then, he drops the bombshell: D7 is Overall Winner of the 2007 ISAR Competition – the first time a U.S. team has ever won that title. 🍖

ization patrol, and that they had spent the night prior to the competition studying and practicing until after midnight, rather than partying or relaxing.

CAPT Englebert also notes that it was obvious the team had paid special attention to their uniforms (you could just see the spit-and-polish of their boots), and that having the support of local USCG Station Sand Key (Clearwater, Fla.) was very useful in their training.

Action: The emcee announces winners of the first competition (SAR Exercise, Burning Boat, and Person in the Water Rescue) – D7 (U.S.) and Team Pacific (Canada) – and the second competition (SAR Exercise, Towing) – Sector New York (U.S.) and Team Pacific.

Flashback #2: Cape May, N.J. July 21, 2007. U.S. Auxiliaries Garrison, Hoge, McConn and Ryder are competing against three other Atlantic East Region teams.

They win three of six events, tie for first in the fourth, tie for second in the fifth, and amass enough points in the final event to represent the region at ISAR-Toronto, at which the top two teams from each of the three U.S. regions compete against the top Canadians.

They looked very professional in Cape May, scoring 25 percent more heaving line competition points than the next-nearest team, and completing the marlinspike exercise 35 percent faster than the second-place team.

Then, they set up and emptied a water-filled 50 gallon drum, before disassembling the portable water pump in less than a minute. In the damage-control event, they had a mere six drops of water leak from their patch.

Action: The emcee, with lots of dramatic pauses and leaving plenty of time for applause, announces the U.S. and



Jim Ryder brings home the bacon from ISAR.

Story & Photos by
MATT DOOLEY
SO-CM 25 D1SR



Demonstrating *Semper Paratus* status at Auxiliary Operational Facility *Westviking*, moored at USCG Station New London, are, on dock from the left: Matt Dooley, SO-CM 25; Eileen Christensen, VFC 25-6; Tom Savoy, SO-MS 25; Kevin Shay, Flotilla 25-2; and, on deck, Bruce Tobiasson, DCP-25, and Rodney Short, Flotilla 25-5, all D1NR.

POTUS NON-INTERRUPTUS

Auxiliarists on Patrol at USCG Academy

When President George W. Bush – referred to by the U.S. Secret Service as POTUS (“President of the United States”) – spoke to the graduating class at the Coast Guard Academy last May, Connecticut Auxiliarists were on-scene to help ensure there would be no unwelcome surprises or interruptions.

One Auxiliary Operational Facility (OPFAC) each from Flotillas 25-3 and 25-2 (Mystic and Old Saybrook, respectively) patrolled outside the Security Zone perimeter in the waters near the Academy. They informed boaters about the restrictions and notified the Coast Guard about incursions into the zone’s perimeter.

A third OPFAC, from Flotilla 25-3, stood by at Coast Guard Station New London, ready to respond to any search-and-rescue case that might arise.

Meanwhile, Geoff Conklin, FSO-PE 25-2, and Matt Dooley, SO-CM 25 D1SR, manned the event comms facility at STA New London. They were there to assist the patrol commander (PATCOM) in communicating with the variety of available assets, particularly those that PATCOM

could not see from his vantage point on the USCGC *Tiger Shark*, positioned in waters just off the Academy.

Events like this – especially when the Commander-in-Chief is on board – demand a lot of security and close coordination between the agencies and units that participate in making the event safe. Just being part of an operation like this is an eye-opener for any Auxiliarist who may wonder about the value of our Incident Command System (ICS) training.

When the President is involved, the Secret Service usually takes the lead, as it did for this event. Coast Guard operations were directed by Commander Bob McKenna, Sector Long Island Sound Chief of Response (Mission Commander), and Lieutenant Andrew Ely, Commanding Officer, STA New London (PATCOM).

A final briefing of all teams was conducted for this operation on the actual day of the event. Mission details were reviewed, stages discussed, and questions answered. The mission was managed in stages so that all participating units would understand their role.



The Auxiliary vessels that patrolled the Thames River, north and south of the Academy, were a visible indication of Coast Guard presence. Vessels approaching from the south would encounter OPFAC *Radiant*, with coxswain Peter Taylor, IPFC 25-3, and Bill Bowen, FSO-MT 25-3, as crew. Those approaching from the north would encounter OPFAC *Westviking*, with coxswain Bruce Tobiasson, DCP-25 D1SR, and crew members Tom Savoy, SO-MS 25, Rodney Short, Flotilla 25-5, Eileen Christensen, VFC 25-6; and, trainee Kevin Shay, Flotilla 25-2.

The Auxiliary vessels were tasked with providing an overt presence and con-



ducting a Maritime Observation Mission (MOM). As crew members observed vessels approaching the secured area, they would report to PATCOM so a law-enforcement response could be coordinated, if necessary.

Meanwhile, OPFAC *Seadog* was called to action at 0930, coxswain Tod Schaeffer, FSO-PE 25-3, and crew members Phil Lutzi; Eric Kanter; Rich Adamcik, all Flotilla 25-3; and, Don Greene, FSO-VE 25-3, on board.

A vessel reported hitting a submerged object and was taking on water in Long Island Sound, near Cornfield Point, west of the mouth of the Connecticut River. *Seadog* got underway and began its 18 nm

journey to the vessel in distress. While en route, they were advised that Sea-Tow had taken the vessel in tow, so they returned to the Station.

In our opinion, this event was well organized, thanks to advance planning and coordination. Fortunately, nothing went awry. The result was a robust safety posture, with a wide variety of assets prepared to spring into action, if needed.

CDR McKenna likened the outcome to “watching paint dry.” Participants were prepared for the worst, and wound up with the best.

Another successful mission for America’s Greatest Volunteers. 🌀

Vessels are prepped at Coast Guard Station New London (Conn.) for safety and security missions during President George W. Bush’s visit to the nearby U.S. Coast Guard Academy. On board Auxiliary Operational Facility *Westviking* are Bruce Tobiasson, DCP-25 DISR (at doorway to the bridge), and Rodney Short (in float coat), holding a line for OPFAC *Radiant*. A 41-foot Coast Guard UTB is tied up on the port side of *Westviking*, and three 25-foot assets from Marine Safety and Security Team New York are in the background.

PUMPKIN POWER

Story & Photos by
SHIRLEY J. BAKER
DSO-PS 9ER

Cheer up, Charlie Brown: The Great Pumpkin is alive...and well...and living in Salem, Ohio. What's more, he's engaged in recreational boating on Parker's Lake.

To set the scene, it should be noted that it was a beautiful autumn Sunday afternoon (86° F) in this southern Ohio town. The trees were just turning their fall colors. The bales of hay were rolled. The corn fields were brown, with scarecrows peeking over.

And on this particular October day in 2007, a few members of Flotilla 51 D9ER (Youngstown, Ohio) set out to conduct a patrol and some Vessel Safety Checks (VSC) on the lake. Or, were they actually in search of The Great Pumpkin? Or, perhaps, all the above?

It was shock-and-awe time when the surprised Auxiliarists arrived and found – to their great surprise – that what they were up against on the lake were hardly run-of-the-mill recreational vessels.

No, sir, *these* vessels were not power-boats at all. They were, shall we say, power-pumpkins. Quite logical, actually, since it was Halloween season.

And, in keeping with the season, The Ohio Valley Giant Pumpkin Growers was hosting its Pumpkin Regatta. While the race has been an annual event in Ohio for the previous five years, it had only been held once before in Salem.

The 95 huge pumpkins entered in the competition came from all over the U.S., and each of them weighed more than 1,000 pounds. The largest topped the scales at 1,557 pounds. Carve them out with a little imagination and a small motor, and – lo, and behold! – you have an entrant for the boat race.

A Flotilla 51 presence was there to make sure that all the pumpkins were properly inspected and that each received a VSC decal before entering the water.

As each examination was completed, a huge crane lifted the “vessel” – and into the water it went. Once deployed, the coxswain attached either a gasoline- or electric-motor to his, or her, vessel.

The Auxiliarists on hand made sure that all that all pumpkin coxswains and crew members were properly outfitted with a Personal Flotation Device. Then, it was off to the races.

There were three divisions in this regatta, based on pumpkin-propulsion by electric motor, gasoline motor, or human motor (which is to say, paddle-power).

The pumpkin “tanic” – a designation unexplainably related to the ill-fated passenger liner *Titanic* – had to race from one set of pumpkins to the other. The pumpkin-vessel with the best time in each division won a cash prize from the Giant Pumpkin Growers.

The largest pumpkin tanic in the race that day was trailered from Salinsville, Ohio. At The Great Weigh-In, this baby was recorded at an amazing 1,170½ pounds.



Sue and George Davis conduct a meticulous waterside Vessel Safety Check.

During the race, Auxiliarists George Davis, FSO-OP, and Sue Davis launched their Auxiliary Patrol Boat *S.S. Minnow* into the lake and began keeping a close eye on all the competing vessels.

The OPFAC was in B-0 status. A good thing, too, because the race got so intense that the crew had to perform a stern tow for a pumpkin beset with a seaweed issue. The Auxiliary vessel also had to handle a “SAR case” after a man fell overboard because of his pumpkin’s water-intake.

Back on dry land, meanwhile, Ray Calzo, FSO-PA, set up and manned a public affairs booth that was quite well attended.

Initial reaction to Auxiliary participation at the event came from Pumpkin Regatta first-timer Dennis Baker, VCP-5 D9ER. He allowed as to how he thought it was the neatest event he’d ever seen in this area. So now, he’s looking forward to returning to regatta duty this year.

According to pumpkin-patch sources, Baker won’t be the only Auxiliarist there. A number of members are now expected to enter the 2008 race as contestants.

Meanwhile, the laws of physics may have to be re-written because of this fun race. It seems that giant pumpkins, once their meat has been removed, do not sink – even with the added weight of a mini-motor and crew – provided, of course, that their “hull” is not breached.

The other big question on everybody’s mind that day was: What happens to the pumpkins after the race? The answer is simple: Goodbye, pumpkin; hello, compost pile.

What, no Pumpkin Pie? 🍂



Entrant cranks up to full pumpkin-power.



Man-overboard awaits rescue by the S.S. Minnow.



Clyde Davis, FC-51, gingerly affixes VSC decal as crane prepares for boat-launch.



Two people-powered entrants compete.



Preparing for a boarding?



Internet Recruiting

**MORIBUND FLOTILLA
GETS A NEW LEASE ON LIFE
THANKS TO THE WEB**

Not only the legendary Phoenix has the ability to rise again from the ashes. So, too, does Flotilla 6-11 D7.

The once-vibrant Miami, Fla. flotilla that was on the verge of extinction has been nursed back to life, thanks to the partnership of a veteran Auxiliary member-recruiter and a techno-savvy newbie.

And, the beauty of the process is that, in the process, a new method of recruiting members was also born, as a byproduct that can be replicated by other flotillas wishing to bolster their membership ranks.

Founded Aug. 1, 1941, Flotilla 6-11 was, for many decades, a perennial powerhouse. However, as can sometimes happen in the Auxiliary, complacency among its membership base eventually led the flotilla to halt its aggressive recruitment of new members.

The member-attrition rate escalated with implementation of more stringent post-9/11 security protocols, and the flotilla soon found itself in dire straits. By 2006, there was widespread speculation that it could soon cease to exist.

Fortunately, Flotilla 6-11 had within its ranks a veteran recruiter, Tom Janata, who had mastered the art of selling prospective members on the virtues and benefits of the Auxiliary.

In 2006, Janata was appointed FSO-PS 6-11. He quickly launched an effort to rebuild the membership base. Aggressively utilizing traditional recruiting methods, Janata was able to attract a handful of new members that year.

But, despite his bountiful expertise, the process was still projected to be slow and



arduous.

However, things began to look up in January 2007 when one of Janata's newly-recruited members, Christopher Todd, was appointed FSO-PA. With his expertise in Internet advertising and brand-marketing, Todd quickly began looking to the Net as a means of bolstering the flotilla's member-recruitment effort.

Todd saw a need to target a larger and younger audience than is typically reached via the Auxiliary's traditional recruiting channels. He also wanted to launch a cam-





Photo: George Zima, FSO-PE 6-11 D7

Tom Janata (left), FSO-PS 6-11, and Christopher Todd (right), FSO-PA 6-11, both D7, introduce new member James Carlin to the various training paths upon which he can embark as a fledgling member of the Auxiliary.

paign that potentially could attract new members 24/7, throughout the year.

Gone would be the days of waiting for the next boat show or boating safety class to garner new members.

Todd realized that while not a computer expert, Janata was able to use a basic e-mail program. So, the easiest thing to do would be to just transmit promising leads to Janata, who then could e-mail or telephone potential members. Thus, the expertise of both Auxiliarists would be optimized.

Todd developed a marketing plan utilizing volunteer websites to provide a targeted audience, combined with a reasonably low, preferably annual, flat-rate for advertising.

The first site selected was VolunteerMatch.org, which connects people wanting to volunteer their time with nonprofit organizations seeking volunteers. The rationale for this approach was that the Auxiliary is, basically, a nonprofit

volunteer organization.

The website would offer a new forum in which the flotilla could reach individuals with time available, but were not sure about which organization to join.

Todd knew, from his prior work-experience, that it was essential for FL 6-11 to stand out above the “clutter” in ad listings. So, he purchased a one-year nonprofit community leader subscription (\$75) that provided a wide range of added services. These included enhanced listing, re-posting capabilities, photo-upload, customization features, and Zip Code targeting.

Next, he created a variety of ads that tested various messages and photos. The over-arching message was always the same – the Auxiliary needed volunteers in Greater Miami who could offer at least eight hours a month of their time.

The ads were targeted at Internet users within a 25-mile radius of where most flo-

tilla activities were held. This ensured that time and effort would not be spent communicating with individuals who lived too far away to participate in flotilla meetings and training evolutions.

The online campaign’s goal was to keep the member-recruitment process short and simple. The only information requested from prospective members on an online form was their name, e-mail address, telephone contact, and Zip Code.

Each time an online form was completed, a response was automatically generated for the prospective member and the information went directly to Todd. He logged the data on a spreadsheet, and then forwarded the e-mail to Janata. Armed with this contact and location data, the FSO-PS was then able to establish contact with, and secure additional information from, the prospective member.

Next, Todd purchased the www.coastguardvolunteers.com address, allowing an interface to re-direct hits to the flotilla’s primary ad on VolunteerMatch.org. That allowed the Flotilla to publicize the domain as a single, easy-to-recall site for member-solicitations. Anybody typing coastguardvolunteers.com into their web browser would be immediately re-directed to the flotilla’s primary ad.

Within a day after the ads went “live,” FL 6-11 received its first e-mail lead. Within two weeks, nine leads had been received, one of which ultimately produced a new member – a conversion-rate of 11 percent, which Todd considered “astounding.”

By Nov. 15, 2007, a total of 75 leads had been generated by the website, of which seven had either joined the Auxiliary or had applications pending. At least three more had been expected to submit applications by the end of 2007.

That would bring to 10 the number of projected new members generated by the online campaign – a 13 percent conversion-rate, produced at a cost of \$7.50 per newbie, based on the “community leader” subscription price.

As with any recruiting program, it is hard to ascertain the true quality of a new member until he or she actually becomes involved in flotilla activities. The new FL 6-11 members acquired through online marketing generally appeared, as of late last year, to be very high quality. Two were already in training for staff officer positions in 2008.

The flotilla was forecasting 20 new members by year-end – about a 60 percent increase in total membership – making 2007 an outstanding recruiting year, by any measure. 🌀



Artistic Ardor

Photo: Ward A. Stover, ADSO-NSBW 8CR

During his presentation on Personal Flotation Devices to the large audience of rapt students, Jerome Bryson, FSO-MA 66 D8CR (Lake Charles, La.), shows the children what a PFD that was used in World War II looks like.

BROWN PAPER BAGS FIND NEW USE IN LOUISIANA PROMOTION

By **WARD A. STOVER**
ADSO-NSBW 8CR

When the call came, it took me by surprise.... I had gotten a message that Commodore William E. Crouch, DCO 8CR, had telephoned and would like me to return the call. My immediate thought was: I must be in some kind of trouble. As I dialed his number and waited for him to pick up the phone, I couldn't help but wonder what might be in store for me. Bill came to the phone and my worst fears were put at ease. COMO Crouch told me that he was looking for an able body to chair the National Safe Boating Week (NSBW) program for District 8CR. He wanted to know if I would be interested. I jumped at the chance, even though my enthusiasm far out-paced my experience. Having been involved with NSBW in the past, and realizing its importance to all Auxiliary missions, my commitment to the program runs deep. But doing it for an entire district? NSBW 2007 started off by going back to basics. With a little change of judging criteria, a greater level of singular focus was put on the program in order to help level the playing field. The emphasis for '07 was on the involvement of youth. Originality in presenting the elements of safe boating to children and the number of kids involved were to be priorities in planning the week's activities.

I would like to share with my fellow Auxiliarists around the



Photo: Carol Fontenot, Calcasieu Parish School System

Ward Stover, ADSO-NSBW 8CR, congratulates Ty O., the eight-year-old who took first-place in the boys' division of the competition.

Ty

Boating safety




use a fire hydrant to put out fires.

use this flag to warn people.


use a orange tip on the paddle.

use a boat tow to pull someone to you.

flare comes in handy.



use a reflector to signal someone.



Always wear a life jacket.



use a bucket to get water out a boat.



use a whistle to warn people your in trouble.

and never over fill a boat.



Photo: Ward A. Stover, ADSO-NSBW 8CR

First-place in the competition for boys was this National Safe Boating Week poster created by Ty O., a third-grader at Moss Bluff Elementary School, Lake Charles, La. All artwork was done on brown paper bags. Auxiliaries provided each student with a packet of safe-boating information. It was clear from their artwork that the children had studied the material.

country the story of the NSBW program put together by Southwest Louisiana's Flotilla 66 (Lake Charles) – my home-flotilla, which I am currently serving as Vice Commander.

We knew that we wanted to have something that was different from past NSBW endeavors. Children can very quickly be your greatest fans – or your worst enemies – during a presentation. But what would interest and stimulate a third-, fourth- or fifth-grader's interest?

We originally envisioned having Coastie® make appearances at area schools. After discussing the time-allotment, however, we realized that there simply was insufficient opportunity for the presentation to be effective. So, back to square one. And, again, back to simplicity.

In our search for a back-to-basics approach, we discovered that audience involvement is crucial. All it took for us to achieve that were six school-chairs, a stopwatch, and some good old-fashioned competition. Add to those a contest offering some excellent prizes and the children *really* get involved!

Our introductory letters to the schools had netted some encouraging results.

Four schools requested six separate presentations, netting an audience of 675 kids. Since we had the basic content of our message intact, the challenge then was to find a way to actively involve each and every one of the children.

To accomplish that, we turned to a local grocery chain – The Market Basket – whose stores are very much attuned to the importance of community involvement. The stores provide brown-paper grocery sacks to promote all sorts of community activities. So, we thought, why not get some for NSBW?

We decided to give the students the opportunity to produce their own boating safety messages, to be displayed on the grocery's contributed brown-paper sacks. Just as the Auxiliary is a force-multiplier for Team Coast Guard, our audience would become a force-multiplier for NSBW.

But what could we offer in return? Prizes – the universal payoff for a job well done. An incentive to put forth a supreme effort.

Time again to turn to the community. The result:

Putt-Putt Golf donated six game passes. Twelve bowling passes were secured. Six VIP dinners for four at Chuck E. Cheese were provided. McDonald's donated six \$20 gift certificates. Wal-Mart donated two \$75 certificates, each applicable to the purchase of a new bicycle.

Great, we thought. Everything is shap-



Photo: Carol Fontenot, Calcasieu Parish School System

Students are enjoying themselves while participating in timed trials that gauged how well they

had learned to don a Personal Flotation Device. ing up better than we had hoped for. Through some very kind donations, we had excellent prizes to award. But the best was yet to come – and it came from the U.S. Coast Guard. Commander Buddy Reams, Commanding Officer at MSU Lake Charles, offered an absolutely super First Prize that any kid would love to win – a ride on a real Coast Guard boat.

We were all set, but what happened next surprised even us. The response was overwhelming. The students were told that there were prizes involved, but not what they were. We wanted the kids to be motivated more by the message than the prize.

Not only did they listen to the safe boating presentation, they also retained an amazing amount of information. The students truly took the NSBW message to heart, exhibiting creativity and originality that was second-to-none. Deciding on a winner was going to be very difficult, indeed.

The First Prize winners were judged on the completeness of their message. It was interesting that the top winners, one boy and one girl, were both third-graders.

Before NSBW began, each student had been given a packet of material to reinforce the safe-boating message. It was obvious that the kids actually had studied those materials while creating their NSBW “messages.” The students’ interpretations brought smiles and chuckles to all who viewed them.

When the daunting task of judging was complete, it was time to deliver the prizes.

The look of pride on the children's faces when they received their awards let us know that our program was a success. Also, the participating schools quickly asked for a repeat in 2008, and additional schools have contacted us for presentations as well. Word obviously has gotten around.

Our entire program was put into perspective by one young lady, who, when receiving her award, asked if we could come back next year because she wanted her little sister “to be safe on the water, too.” That brought our role in the NSBW program into crystal-clear focus.

The bottom line is: National Safe Boating Week will be whatever you make of it. It will be as far-reaching as you permit it to be. For that one week in May, your flotilla can come together for a common purpose that is really one of the core missions of the Auxiliary. NSBW can be a great forum for recruiting, public education and public affairs activity. There is a wealth of resources to assist you.

If we are to foster the mission to which we have pledged ourselves – expand the Auxiliary by recruiting new members, and retain current members with a worthwhile, focused series of events – that week in late spring can be a gold mine of opportunities.

Don't let them pass *your* Flotilla by. 🌟



Photo: Caryl P. Weiss, FC 15-2 D5SR

A SWAT team keeps Auxiliarists at bay as active-duty Coast Guard and Auxiliary members, along with law-enforcement and first-responders from various agencies, played suspected terrorists when Operation Nautical Shield came to town, near USCG Station Curtis Bay, Md. As Operational Facilities kept onlookers away, 21 Auxiliarists acted in various roles on a cruise ship – actually the 174-foot U.S. Army Landing Craft Utility *Missionary Ridge* – that had been boarded.



Photo: U.S. Coast Guard

Gathered at a Coast Guard Evergreen Project Workshop last September are (standing, from left): COMO Victor J. Connell, DCO 11NR; RADM Jody A. Breckenridge, Director, USCG Strategic Transformation Team; L. Daniel Maxim, BC-BSB; Walter G. Sandell, DCP-13 D5NR; and (seated, from left), Commodores Stephen H. McElroy, DCO 5SR, Fred C. Gates, NADCO-MS, and Everette L. Tucker, PNACO. Sandell and Richard M. Parry, VCP-7 D5SR (not pictured), recently were appointed by USCG Commandant, ADM Thad Allen, as the first Auxiliarists on the Evergreen Project Core Team. Evergreen is tasked with examining scenarios that may affect the Coast Guard in 2030 and determining strategies to prepare for them.



Photo: PA2 Luke W. Pinneo, USCG

BMC Brent Zado (left), Officer in Charge, USCG Surf Station Merrimack River, in Newburyport, Mass., and Ron Doescher, DSO-MS INR, raise the Coast Guard ensign and the Auxiliary flag at a Newburyport Maritime Museum reception honoring the USCG on its 217th anniversary. Among spectators are Renelle LeBlanc (left), VCO 1NR, and Mark J. Guay, chairman, Newburyport Maritime Society Board of Directors. Other attendees (not pictured) included Mayor John F. Moak and CAPT James McDonald, Commander, Sector Boston. The museum hosted a major exhibition highlighting Newburyport's role in USCG history.

9/11 Ceremony in Georgia



Photo: Matt Cooper, SO-PS 2 D7

The Auxiliary plays a key role as Roswell, Ga., mounts its first-ever, city-sponsored Memorial Service honoring those who perished in the 9/11 attack on New York's World Trade Center. Roswell Mayor Jere Woods (left), who presented the wreath, was escorted by Ron Delaby (third from right), PFC-26 D7. The Joint Services Honor Guard, rendering a salute at the Roswell City Hall 'Faces of War' Veteran's Memorial ceremony, also includes Curtis Arthurton (right), Flotilla 29 D7. The 9/11 activity was so well received by the community that it will now be an annual event for the Atlanta suburb.

Coast Guard Auxiliary Association, Inc.

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