

Inside USCGC Eagle A Below Decks Look Through The Eyes of an Auxiliarist On Board

Article by H William Smith,
Assistant Editor, Navigator Express

NORFOLK, Va. — Ask about anyone what ship most represents the United States Coast Guard and they will say the USCGC Eagle, America's Tall Ship. Thousands of visitors walk her decks each year and marvel at the rigging and a technology that is more akin to the past than present or future. But, few visitors have ever seen what the ship is like on the inside. Recently the Navigator Express was given that privilege. Coast Guard Auxiliary District 8 ER Commodore Rick Schal serves each summer sailing season as a Quartermaster of the Watch on Eagle. Schal took time out of his busy schedule to give a guided tour below decks during the Eagle's visit to Norfolk, Virginia, during Harbor Days.

A Crew-Only Look at Eagle.

Above decks and in the rigging the Eagle is all about the business of moving the 295-foot ship across the world's oceans under sail. The three masts and their rigging dominate the top decks. One of the first places Schal stopped on the tour of the ship was the pilothouse, which serves as a nerve center for the

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All photos provided by USCG Aux H William Smith



The Eagle rests in her birth at Norfolk, Virginia, during the Harbor Days festivities earlier this summer. About 21,000 visitors walked her decks during the three day visit.



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ship while underway. Situated just aft of midships, and just forward of the ship's three main wheels and binnacle, the rather small enclosed area serves as the navigation and communications hub while underway.

Moving down a set of steps and going below decks, the world changes from a very public one to the world of a working sailing ship. Immediately the tight quarters constrained by the ship's 39-foot beam become apparent. This is the world that the crew inhabits when not attending to duties on deck or in the rigging.



Fire aboard ship is any crew's great fear. Damage and fire control stations like this one are placed throughout Eagle to ensure any problem stays small.

Throughout the ship there are reminders that Eagle is a working ship at sea. Damage control stations, storage areas for all the equipment needed to maintain a three-masted barque under either sail or its engine crowd every available space. More than 23,400 gallons of fuel oil are stored in tanks that feed a 1,000 horsepower diesel main engine and two 320 KW generators that supply the ship's electrical power. There is about 6 miles of standing and running rigging connected to the masts and with the foremast at 147.3 feet, the main also at 147.3 feet and the mizzen at 132 feet in height, the term "America's Tall Ship" certainly applies. All of that rigging must be operated and maintained while at sea. With 22,300 square feet of sail when fully rigged, few ships are as complicated to operate as is a square-rigger when underway. In short, Eagle is a small American town with a peak population of 239 that carries the Coast Guard message across the world's oceans.

The entire ship's compliment is housed below the main deck in quarters that are very typical of any Coast Guard cutter. For the most part, enlisted personnel and cadets are housed in a living area that consists of crew cabins, each with 12 bunks, that house the majority of the crew. There are more individualized cabins with two bunks for the upper enlisted ranks and officers, a captain's cabin and a cabin for visiting officers and dignitaries.



Some officers may warrant a private berth, but most cabins are very small aboard the Eagle.



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Captain Matthew Meilstrup also has a suite with a beautifully appointed cabin which serves as a dining and lounge area that serves a number of uses, particularly when there are visiting dignitaries aboard. When underway, the captain invites four other members of the crew to dine with him in a tradition that is ages old aboard ships at sea. The décor, furniture and wood paneling on the walls harken back to the ship's youth and are beautifully preserved. The officers' wardroom and galley accommodate the other commissioned and warrant officers who serve on board.

The enlisted mess, like most ships, is not large enough to accommodate the entire crew. Crewmembers eat on a schedule that is dictated by their watch duties. The enlisted mess also serves as an area where shipmates can gather, study or socialize. A glassed in case at one end contains information that the crew needs for each day's activities. The enlisted galley adjoins the mess area, again in an economy of space typical of crowded quarters.

Throughout the below decks area of the ship there are mementos of the ship's past cruises and history that serve to remind all on board of Eagle's long, and distinguished, service as both a school for seamanship and a public representation of the Coast Guard. Cruise plaques denote each cruise and different wall exhibits and artworks serve as reminders of the mission of Eagle, her history and those who have served aboard her. The pride in the ship, and their service on her, is evident in every crewmember encountered.



(Above) The beautiful wood-paneled furnishings of the captain's suite take the visitor back to the earlier days of sea travel. (Below) The lounge in the captain's suite is impressive and can serve as a meeting place for dignitaries on the Eagle.



The modern but small galley requires the crew to eat in shifts.

The tour came to a close with a return to the upper decks for a walk from bow to fantail. The unique status of Eagle was driven home by the looks on the faces of the people visiting the ship. At each turn, individuals were seen asking questions, gazing up at her rigging and talking about how special Eagle is. The thousands of visitors who visit Eagle and take in her majestic presence are left with the most positive of impressions of the big sailing ship and her crew.



During each summer District 8ER Commodore, Rick Schal, serves as a Quartermaster of the Watch.

That a member of that crew is also a member of the Auxiliary, is a point of great pride, Schal, said, adding that in a small way he represents the entire Auxiliary when underway on Eagle. America's Tall Ship is very special and the chance to see her from the inside out was a rare opportunity for the Navigator Express, an opportunity that was much appreciated.

All Hands On Deck!

The Auxiliary Lends A Hand During A Historic California Fire

Article by H William Smith, BA-AMEA, Assistant Editor, Navigator Express
Compiled From After Action Reports and Other Information



Photo courtesy Reddit.com

The 'Valley Fire' started on 12 September and burnt through more than 76,000 acres of land in Lake, Napa and Sonoma counties in central California. More than 1,900 structures were destroyed in blaze, including 1,280 homes.

The call of "All Hands On Deck" is usually reserved for emergencies that take place at sea. Recently, however, that call went out during the catastrophic forest fires in California as resources stretched to the limit. The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary is an organization that is normally more at home on the water but when the need arose during a catastrophic fire on land, stepped up to lend assistance. The Auxiliary mobilized members from California and Nevada to lend the hard-pressed firefighters a helping hand as it took on the mission of assisting evacuees from the historic Valley Fire in Lake, Napa and Sonoma counties.

A Historic Fire Event

Thousands of people were displaced by the fire and herculean efforts to fight it. Those affected by the conflagration often were evacuated with little more than the clothes on their backs as the fire raced through the countryside. The Valley Fire was an

unprecedented event that demanded unprecedented and rapid responses. The wildfire was extremely destructive and unusually fast moving. About 3,000 people were immediately evacuated as more than 64 square miles of land were burned within the first twelve hours of the inferno. With over 1,950 structures and 77,000 acres of forest burned over, the Valley Fire ranks as the third worst fire in California history. Sadly, at least four people lost their lives and several others were injured. The cause of the fire is under investigation.

An Auxiliarist Goes to Work

The entire Auxiliary response began with one Auxiliarist offering to help.

On 14 September Jerry Gillgren, VFC for Flotilla 5-2 in Napa, California arrived at 0700 acting as a civilian dropping off a donation of tents, chairs, and personal items when he decided to stay and volunteer. Mr.



USCG Aux photo

Auxiliarists assisted thousands of residents who were forced from their homes by the fast moving fire.

Gillgren informed the Red Cross that he was with the USCG Auxiliary and was put to work immediately standing watch over the doors and inventory as looting had been occurring in the Tubbs Building, where evacuees had cots and personal belongings.

A few hours later an email was sent out requesting volunteers to assist at the evacuation center and at other centers in the affected area. Mr. Gillgren, having never been involved in working a disaster or incident command, communicated the situation at hand to Commodore Richard Thomas of District 11NR. COMO Thomas, a resident of Lake County and an evacuee of the Valley Fire, immediately saw the resource available in the Auxiliary and proceeded to contact the Coast Guard order issuing authority to obtain orders to implement a task force to assist with the evacuee operation in the counties affected by the fire. Rear Adm. Joseph Servidio and his staff

expedited the order process and the Auxiliary began to mobilize its forces to assist in any way it was needed.

Auxiliary Forms A Team

The Valley Fire Evacuation Center event brought together Auxiliarists from all over Northern California and Nevada. The unique ability of the team to work together, most having never met each other previously, proved that the first-class training and qualifications that the Coast Guard and Auxiliary offers its members is highly effective and worthy of the effort put into creating the training programs.

Bruce Martin, DSO-IM, who was working from a remote location, became the Auxiliary call center for this event and directed the responding members to contact Mr. Gillgren. Mr. Gillgren became the Auxiliary Unit Leader in charge of the USCG Auxiliary Calistoga Evacuation Emergency Response Team and became the point of contact (POC) and liaison for the Napa County emergency operations center (EOC).

The Auxiliary was called upon to assist in a wide variety of missions as evacuees gathered at The Calistoga Fairgrounds in Napa County. The fairgrounds was the site of the evacuation center for displaced Napa and Lake County residents, which opened shortly after the fire began. Many challenges faced the more than



USCG Aux photo

Handling communications was a key element in organizing the Auxiliary's mobilization and assistance efforts at the evacuation centers.



The Auxiliary handled a wide variety of tasks in support of evacuees, many of whom were sheltered in a tent city that sprang up around the evacuation centers.

1,000 evacuees and their supporting staff as efforts were undertaken to secure their safety and wellbeing. Calistoga Fairgrounds officials had limited resources to assist the sudden influx of evacuees. Napa County immediately enacted its emergency operations plan, and was able to quickly reach out to other agencies and services for assistance and accommodated responding agencies and volunteers. Of the more than 30 agencies that responded to the Calistoga Emergency Evacuation center, the USCG Auxiliary demonstrated excellence and professionalism in its assistance efforts. The professionalism of the responding members made all tasks easy to assign and Auxiliary Incident Commander Gillgren was confident that the missions would be carried out completely and without delay.

Hands-On Help

The purpose of the Auxiliary's involvement in the Calistoga Evacuation Center was to help the various on-site agencies tasked with meeting the needs of the evacuees. The Auxiliary's direct, hands-on, approach allowed it to offer compassion and tangible assistance to the victims of the fire, many of whom were under extreme stress given the extreme nature

of the situation. The Auxiliary team provided physical assistance, boosted morale, gave vital information and imparted a sense of calm reassurance for the displaced population. From the onset of the Auxiliary's arrival, the Office of Emergency Services (OES) and managing agencies saw the high value of the Auxiliary's presence and quickly assigned specific duties to its personnel. The event showcased the Auxiliary's ability to recognize a task that needed to be done and complete it. It allowed the organization's ongoing Coast Guard training and experience to be prominently displayed and utilized by participating agencies in many capacities. The experience gave the participating Auxiliarists the opportunity to sharpen existing skills and develop new ones to further benefit the Auxiliary in the future under any circumstances.

Getting the Job Done

Communication among the team members throughout the event flowed freely and allowed quick resolution to issues. Overall personalities and egos did not interfere with any successful mission undertaken by the crew. All members felt comfortable to discuss issues and problems with each other or with the unit commander. Auxiliarists were able to coordinate and work seamlessly with all agencies, evacuees, and volunteers to affect the best solution to any immediate problem we faced. When there was confusion in the field it was diffused in many cases by a team member by simply taking on the task and getting it done. No team members ever complained about any task or station they were assigned to. Every assignment was met with enthusiasm and immediate attention.

The Auxiliary Emergency Response Unit at the Valley Fire Evacuation Center greatly enhanced the effectiveness of a number of agencies and eliminated many gaps in service. Overall, the mission was a huge success with countless positive responses to the Auxiliary team from evacuees, service personnel, law enforcement, and persons in charge (PICs). Their immediate use of Auxiliary services proved the worthiness of the unit. The Auxiliary's presence comforted people simply because of its professionalism, demeanor, and integrity.

2014 Auxiliarist of the YEAR

Thayer Honored at NACON Commodore's Banquet



USCG Aux photo

2014 Auxiliarist of the Year, Jacob Thayer, stands proudly next to Admiral Paul F. Zukunft after being presented with his certificate. Thayer has not only been instrumental in invigorating his local Austin, Texas, flotilla but has also served at Coast Guard Headquarters.

The pinnacle of Jacob E. Thayer's young U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary career was reached Saturday, 29 August when Admiral Paul F. Zukunft presented him with the 2014 Auxiliarist of the Year award. The presentation was made at the Commodore's Banquet, the high point of the Auxiliary's national convention in San Antonio, Texas. National Commodore Mark Simoni and members of the Auxiliary's top leadership team joined in applauding Thayer as Commandant Zukunft made the presentation.

"To me it's a huge honor," Thayer, who has been serving as the Auxiliary University Programs' National Branch Chief, said. "The Auxiliary is a great organization and great people to work with over the past almost five years now. I'm just thrilled that so many people see

the value in what I do and I am humbled and honored because I think there are so many people out there that do much more than I do."

Thayer, who has also served as flotilla commander of Flotilla 75 in Austin, Texas, was commended for his "exemplary performance and spirit of service," said RDML Paul F. Thomas, Assistant Commandant for Prevention Policy, in a news release announcing his award on 17 July.

"There are so many people around the Auxiliary doing so many great things, it's moving to realize what you do is making such a reverberating impact," Thayer said in an email after being notified of the award. "To work in an organization that has such a great mission, saving lives, and the leaders' willingness to

2014 Auxiliarist of the Year *Continued from page 7*

recognize such a young member shows the emphasis on people, and it's our people that make us strong, as a nation and as the Coast Guard."

From the flotilla level to the national, Thayer has been an inspired leader involved in many aspects of the Auxiliary, according to the Coast Guard news release. As flotilla commander "he established clear strategic and tactical plans that guided the unit to improved recruiting, retention and member services. Under his enthusiastic leadership, the flotilla's membership and qualifications increased 25 percent."



USCG Aux photo

Admiral Zukunft presents Thayer with the AOY award while National Commodore Mark Simoni looks on.

Thayer becomes passionate when he talks about the Auxiliary University Program. "Auxiliary University Programs, our college program, gives students the opportunity to interact with the Coast Guard in a way that most people don't," he said. "Many people don't even know what the Coast Guard does beside from a few things they have seen on TV. The Auxiliary University Program allows students to participate as volunteers while they are still in school and ultimately grooms them to be leaders."

His experience working at the national level doesn't just include the great work he does for the AUP. "From June to August 2014, Mr. Thayer worked full time at Coast Guard Headquarters in its Strategic Management Directorate as part of Project

Evergreen," the release states. "He participated in roundtable discussions with senior officers, and assisted with coordination of many interviews and meetings. He represented the Auxiliary in discussions with several research groups and foreign entities, including the First Sea Lord of the United Kingdom. He concurrently led a project to provide the 7th District with research regarding future Cuban socio-political scenarios, and how they could potentially affect Coast Guard missions."

"I've been fortunate because I've worked with great teams at all levels," Thayer said. "I've had fantastic mentors, such as (Director of Strategic Planning) Andrew Welch, who helped me understand how to think and act like a leader then motivate others to do the same. I've been able to work on long- and short term-projects, which provides the nearly instantaneous feedback and fulfillment, but also the greater satisfaction of seeing the results of conversations from years ago come to fruition."

So, what's next for Thayer?

"This is an exciting close to my chapter working with AUP and Flotilla Austin," Thayer said. In early August, he moved to Virginia to attend the Washington & Lee University School of Law. Once there, he will be looking to transfer to a local flotilla.

"I was also recently transferred to the new Program Management Division of the Strategic Planning Directorate. Once I get to my third year of law school, I intend to apply to the Direct Commission Lawyer program and serve in the Coast Guard full-time. I'm looking forward to many years ahead of working with the greatest federal agency and keep Americans safe on the waters."

This article was compiled using U.S. Coast Guard press releases and interviews conducted by BA-AMEA H William Smith while at NACON in San Antonio.

Deep in the Heart of TEXAS

Attending NACON For the First Time

Article by H William Smith, Assistant Editor, Navigator Express



USCG Aux photo

The first time for anything can be scary and that thought was front and center as the plane touched down in San Antonio recently. Attending the National Convention of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary for the first time and tasked with writing about it was both an opportunity and a challenge that ultimately proved much more interesting and rewarding than was anticipated.

Many members never get the chance to attend this annual gathering of the Auxiliary's top decision makers. The prospect of counting stars and stripes on shoulder boards is not why most members join the outfit. Most folks are typically concerned with their own flotilla and spend their Auxiliary careers in positions supporting missions that concern them and their home waters.

But, the Auxiliary, and its mission of supporting the Coast Guard, is national in scope and as such takes leadership that starts with the flotilla and extends all the way to National Commodore Mark Simoni. It was

how that leadership functions and sets the course for the Auxiliary that proved to be much more interesting than was anticipated. There are a whole lot of really talented people who have chosen to help guide the ship through occasionally rough waters.

On Wednesday, 26 August, the conference switched from primarily C-School training and preliminary meetings to a full slate of activities that occupied the entire day. The staff and Commodores began meetings at 0800 that extended to 1730. On Thursday, according to the schedule, meetings started at 0600 and went to 1730 as well. On Friday kickoff was at 0700 and on Saturday started at 0800 and ended at 1700.

There is not enough space here to detail all the topics that were addressed in the wide-ranging discussions, meetings with Coast Guard active duty personnel and training opportunities that were presented to the more than 300 individuals who attended the conference. There was a strong sense throughout the



USCG Aux photo

Commandant of the Coast Guard, Admiral Paul F. Zukunft, was the featured speaker at NACON. He praised the Auxiliary and the tremendous job it does. He made it clear that the Auxiliary is an important and valued member of Team Coast Guard.

conference that increased communication within the upper echelon of the Auxiliary is a driving force that is leading to positive outcomes.

In addition to the usual administrative functions that demand national attention there were three topics that were focal points of discussion at numerous levels. Background checks and AP Status, uniform use and new technologies funded by the dues increase were all topics that were discussed in a variety of settings throughout the conference.

The backlog of new Auxiliary members in AP status was a challenge that about everyone was quick to say needed to be solved as soon as possible. It was reported that the root causes of the problem are being addressed with some success but that progress is slow. Several new Auxiliary members from around the country who are currently in AP status attended the conference and voiced their frustration with the problem.

The question of uniform use and its future was a frequent topic of discussion both internally and with active duty Coast Guard members who were present. Wearing the uniform properly and with pride was stressed by everyone as the best way to represent Team Coast Guard and preserve its use by the Auxiliary.

The development of training, public affairs, data transmission and social media platforms were all cited as costs that contributed to the first national Auxiliary dues increase in years. There was plenty of evidence presented to support the need for the increased funding and the positive impact the \$12.00 increase will have on the Auxiliary's ability to modernize its operation.

Finally, it would be less than truthful to say that the conference was all work and no play. San Antonio is a beautiful, and welcoming, city. The hotel staff made the stay pleasurable and the social functions were great opportunities for networking and discussion of what had transpired each day. As a newcomer to the process, each day ended in exhaustion with ideas for stories and things to take back to the flotilla swirling around. The capstone of the trip was the opportunity to listen to the Commandant of the Coast Guard, Admiral Paul F. Zukunft, praise the Auxiliary and define its mission in terms that let everyone in the room know that the Auxiliary IS an important, and valued, member of Team Coast Guard. To say that he was inspiring, in this writer's opinion, would be an understatement.



USCG Aux photo

National Commodore Mark Simoni, right, welcomes Admiral Paul F. Zukunft, commandant of the Coast Guard, to the National Commodore's Banquet at the U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary's national conference in San Antonio. Admiral Zukunft delivered an inspiring call to action during the banquet's keynote address.



U.S. Coast Guard photo

Story by Jonathan Lally, USCG

The University of Southern Mississippi joins colleges and universities across the nation in hosting a U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary University program. The program's Unit Officer, Petty Officer 2nd Class Paul Jacob, US Coast Guard, at left, is joined by Gen. Jeff Hammond, Director-Veterans & Military Affairs, Dr. Rodney Bennett, President - University of Southern Mississippi, Dr. Steve Miller, Vice President - University of Southern Mississippi, Gulf Coast Campus and Flotilla Commander Barry Cottrell, of the US Coast Guard Auxiliary Host Flotilla (081-03-07) at ceremonies kicking off the program.

University of Southern Mississippi starts Coast Guard Auxiliary University Program

GULFPORT, Miss. — Students in the Gulfport area now have the opportunity to learn seamanship skills and serve their country by becoming a member of the Coast Guard Auxiliary, the all-volunteer branch of the U.S. Coast Guard.

In order to make the program available, Coast Guard Station Gulfport joined the Coast Guard Auxiliary University Program and teamed up with the University of Southern Mississippi Gulf Park Campus in Gulfport, Mississippi to create the program.

Interested students can become a member of the program while studying for their degree. Students, upon acceptance into the program, will become a Coast Guard Auxiliarist and complete a program incorporating basic Coast Guard and nautical education, operational training, leadership development and maritime safety topics.

As an Auxiliarist, members will have the opportunity to work with their regionally designated Auxiliary unit on Coast Guard Auxiliary and active duty missions. Auxiliary members perform many of the missions their active duty counterparts do, such as search and rescue and boat inspections. The only two Coast Guard missions that Auxiliarists are prohibited from participation in are law enforcement and combat.

Leading the team from Coast Guard Station Gulfport

is Petty Officer 2nd Class Paul Jacob, a boatswain's mate and Unit Officer of the University of Southern Mississippi Gulf Coast Auxiliary program.

Jacob is the liaison between active duty, the auxiliary and the university. As Unit Officer of University of Southern Mississippi-Gulf Coast, he is in charge of recruiting and training the student Auxiliarists.

"The purpose of this program is to get a younger outlook on the Auxiliary," said Jacob. "This program hits close to home for me - I wasn't ready for college but I was ready for something else. I joined the military and I feel like I'm doing pretty well. My goal is to give these people the same opportunities that I had."

Under Jacob's supervision, members will meet twice a month to train. The students will learn boatcrew seamanship and become boatcrew qualified.

"We're relieving a lot of the pressures on a brand new person reporting who really doesn't know where to start," said PO2 Jacob. "These people are going to have a head start. It opens up so many doors for these individuals. Their education is important to us, and that laterals over to here. We want them to be trained as best as possible."

USM is the 13th college in the nation to have the program and the first in Mississippi.

Auxiliary Food Service Specialists Join Crew of Coast Guard Cutter TAMPA

USCG Aux story by Brian Garry



USCG Aux photo by Bruce Ristich

The compact galley had to prepare 3 meals a day for 115 crew members plus occasional guests, like 50 or more refugees. Rich Doerrman, is pictured in the galley of the USCGC Tampa while serving underway as an FS1 . He has subsequently been made FSC.

My name is Brian Garry. Bruce Ristich and I were honored to be selected as two Auxiliary Food Service Specialists to crew aboard the Coast Guard Cutter (CGC) Tampa on a two month routine Caribbean Patrol. The CGC Tampa departed Portsmouth, Virginia, on 2 May 2015.

Our tour met with some 'Rockin Roll' Seas during our weeks underway, but we finally got a Port Call, in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico. Fortunately for me, my bride of 49 years, Phyllis, flew down for an anniversary celebration.

In San Juan fantastic Old World history greets you

with the forts, Spanish music, artifacts and history. We visited two forts plus the Bacardi Rum Factory, cathedrals and churches. The cuisine of San Juan teases your appetite, especially while traversing the many up/down hill streets of the city with the mellowing sounds of the 12 string guitars in the background.

Our third and final night in port was a challenge. We attempted to re-enter Coast Guard Station San Juan. The guard at the gate asked me to take out my AUX-ID Card. He carefully examined it and found that it had expired. I was not allowed to enter the Station.

Aux Food Service at Sea

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Fortunately, the YN1 from CGC TAMPA was able to script a verification letter the next morning, which allowed me to enter Station San Juan.

The food-stores reefers/freezers aboard the Cutter Tampa were two decks below. For about the first 20 days the elevator/lift/dumb-waiter was inoperable, so going up and down the ladders, with full hands, was a challenging task for all food service personnel. Also, the Galley space was tight, but in heavy seas it was a blessing. In fact, we learned to Caribbean Mambo dance while heaving to and fro across the deep blue Caribbean. After two weeks underway, your sea legs develop and they get well under you. You become like a pendulum, slowly embracing the rolls/pitches, as the Cutter glides/rides/bucks/broncos through the water.

Our first 'Swim Call' was in 4,400 meters. Jumping off the Helo Deck with an armed Swim Safety gunner

using his 38-foot vantage point to ID any intimidating sharks that may pass too close for comfort was exciting. The captain also launched a Response Boat Small as a safety boat and had Coast Guard Swimmers standing by in case our crew daredevils got in trouble.

The hardest part of the experience was handling the Jacob's Ladder exercise; as in pulling your body up the side of the Cutter's hull to the Quarter Deck, but I made it. Of course, the young mates got a kick out of "Grandpa" doing his aerial entry from approximately 28' above the water in the first place.

Meals were delightfully prepped-cooked-served to our 115 member crew plus occasional guests; Cuban/Haitian migrants fleeing to freedom in the USA or Bahamas. At one juncture, we had as many as 57 aboard for about 13, days, while they were being processed and then transferred back to their native lands. We prepared three meals per/day for them: oatmeal breakfast, red beans/rice lunch mess and black beans/rice for supper. In addition, we provided unlimited amounts of drinkable water for those living on the Helo Deck. It was not cruise-line food or service, but it was wholesome. Most of the migrants were just discouraged and lonely. Awaiting transfer back to their home lands was disappointing. I often reflected upon how many must have perished in their zeal to reach and gain the freedom that some of us take for granted. We treated them with respect and ensured that no harm came to them from the USCG while they were under our custody/protection.

Food stores routinely became depleted the closer we came to the next port of call. Items such as fresh fruits and vegetables, milk and bread were the scarce commodities. It cost approximately \$100,000 for food to cover the 60 day tour and it took three weeks, at Portsmouth, to plan, purchase, stow the frozen/cold/fresh/dry food stores. Just imagine the logistics of such an operation!

The Cutter Tampa operated perfectly during all of the patrol, with only one electrical mishap that was quickly resolved by the Machinists Mates aboard. Otherwise it was a perfect cruise.

While at Guantanamo Bay (GITMO), Bruce and I



USCG Aux photo by Bruce Ristich

Auxiliarist Brian Garry contemplating the vastness of the ocean. He is a licensed captain and sails all over when not working in the USCG Auxiliary. NOTE: members shown in these photos are wearing the auxiliary ODU T-Shirt as authorized by the Commanding Officer of the CGC Tampa.

Aux Food Service at Sea

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USCG Aux photo by Bruce Ristich

Auxiliarist Bruce Ristich imagines what it would be like to be at the helm of the CGC Tampa.

pulled galley duty. Bruce was on duty Friday for all three meals, and I had the duty on Sunday for the same drill. Sunday, after we returned from services at GITMO's U.S. Navy/U.S. Marine Corps Base Chapel, I noticed the menu called for tomato soup for the lunch Mess. After searching around the break-outs for lunch in our galley, I realized that someone had forgotten to unlock our freezer/reefer lockers located two decks below. That's where lunch items plus cans/dry stores were stored and we did not have keys to the locker. Apparently the FS1, FS2 and FS3, who were enjoying themselves at a public hotel, forgot to leave the necessary tomato soup items out for us. Then I got a bright idea. I told Bruce that we had 8 tomatoes, some red-hot sauce, salsa, red peppers, ketchup, seasoning's that were red, spices, and even French dressing. We also looked for anything else we could grind up that was RED. In addition, I opened a No. 10 can, of sliced black olives and, VIOLA! My new specialty; Tomato-Black Olive Bisque! [I even added a little beef base for added flavor YUM!] As we brewed the mixture in our big soup kettle, adding a little of this and a little of that, Bruce and I, using our taster/tester spoons, soon came to the conclusion

that this was a masterpiece of culinary imagination and invention!

We tested it out on the executive officer, the galley supervisor and some other crewmembers. We did not record any frowns and got only thumbs-ups from the crew! What a roar and last laugh both Bruce and I had. We chuckled all the way into Monday.

Another major activity underway is always the Saturday night dinner mess where individual departments take on the duty assignment of food preparation and serving. This gives the food service crew a break. Pizza and wings are the usual fare, but occasionally something else creeps into the mix. I mean that literally; like the GASTRIC BOMBASTIC BURGERS created by 'Doc', our USCG-CORPSMAN! Even an eating contest evolved. These burgers were designs of magnitude and volume, but little else. Details were hard to define and secretively never shared.

Your Auxiliary Food Service Specialists at Sea!

Semper Paratus!



USCGC TAMPA (WMEC 902)

Christened: 16 March 1984

Homeport: Portsmouth, Virginia

Displacement: 1,800 tons

Length: 270 ft (82 m)

Beam: 38 ft (12 m)

Speed: 19.5 knots

Range: 9,900 miles

2015 KODIAK WATER SAFETY POSTER CONTEST

USCG Aux story by Nicole Clark

KODIAK ISLAND, Alaska — The Coast Guard Auxiliary announced the winners of its annual “We Don’t Float” poster contest at the April 20, 2015, meeting of the Kodiak Island Borough School District Board of Education.

Grand prize winner Cliff Gertz, who entered in the adult division, won a bear viewing trip donated by Andrew Airways.

Joyce Blair, the contest’s organizer, said this year’s contest opened up the dialog between students and teachers about boating safety.

“Students are talking more about safety issues, about wearing a life vest,” Blair said. “There are details in the posters that we haven’t seen in previous years. It’s clear that teachers of all grades are incorporating boating safety into their lessons.”

This year the “We Don’t Float” poster contest expanded to include all age groups with 350 entries from seven area schools, homeschool students and adults.

Local businesses who donated prizes included Subway, McDonald’s, Mack’s Sport Shop, Sutliff True Value, Kodiak Marine Supply, Kodiak Island Borough School District, Grand Slam Toys and Books, Island Espresso, Fish N’ Chips Charters and Andrew Airways.

Check out a few of the winning posters!



Cliff Gertz earned the overall grand prize in the 2015 “We Don’t Float” poster contest sponsored by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Kodiak Flotilla.



Hallee Blair from Kodiak Middle School won first place in seventh grade age group, as well as overall 2nd runner-up.



Hunter Blair from Kodiak High School earned first place in ninth grade age group.

Public Affairs Development

A Message from Commodore Harry Jacobs

The Public Affairs Directorate presented three workshops at NACON 2015; Photography with Joe Giannatasio, BC-ASP, Social Media with Gaspare Marturano, BA-AKMS, and Round Robin Public Affairs Briefing with Rich Mihalcik, DIR-Ad and me.

The theme of the “Briefing” is that there is an immediate need for Auxiliary PA augmentation by the Coast Guard, but we do not have the personnel trained at the PAIII level to meet that need. Frankly, we have focused on the FSO-PA as the person who has chosen an Auxiliary career in Public Affairs. As a result, we have pushed them toward the AUX-12 “C” School as the most efficient and fastest way to “jump-start” them on their career in PA. Unfortunately, the assumption has not proven to be correct, as fewer than 1 percent of our members are qualified in PA. To change the metric, your help is required to fill the gap between “need” and “human resources.”

Spread the message that trained PA Specialists, who are not currently qualified, need to reconsider their commitment to support the Coast Guard in Public Affairs. They need to requalify for their rating level; I, II, or III. This is accomplished by completing 16-hours of 7030 “Code 10 – Public Affairs Activity,” as recorded in AUXDATA, and then requesting reinstatement as a qualified Public Affairs Specialist from their DIRAUX Office.

Further, those at level I and II should give serious consideration to focusing toward “augmenting” Coast Guard Public Affairs Offices and Public Affairs Detachments in their AREA or District by qualifying at the PA III level. Augmenting DOES NOT require that the member be physically present during the workday, though many PA Offices have asked for that assistance. Augmenting means that the member is fully-vetted by the Coast Guard to assist with CG PA tasks and will respond/deploy when requested, if at all possible.

What will the member be doing for the Coast Guard at the PA Specialist III? The tasking will vary from PA mission to mission, but the member should be fully prepared to work in a Joint Information Center [JIC]. Though not required at this time, I suggest that all PA personnel complete Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Course IS-29; an online course that describes the design and operation of a Joint Information Center. Twenty-five volunteers have taken the course and found it to be beneficial. Members should plan on a maximum of two hours for this evolution, though they may be able to complete it in less time.

Finally, I want to make it very clear that members certainly should continue to support RBS activity at the Flotilla level, which is the primary mission of the Auxiliary, however, the need for trained Auxiliary PA Specialists to augment the Coast Guard is growing in this post 9/11 environment and with the effects of Sequestration. At this time, the Coast Guard needs you! **It's your choice how you want to serve! Give it some thought!**

Harry

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AUXILIARY SCUTTLEBUTT

'scut-tle-butt: A drinking fountain in the Coast Guard is called scuttlebutt. A scuttlebutt in old days was a cask that had openings in the side, fitted with a spigot. Sailors used to congregate at the scuttlebutt or cask of water, to gossip or report on day's activities.*

On this page you will find all the important events and critical information to keep you up-to-date on the current happenings in the Auxiliary.

* from the USCG Glossary

MANDATED TRAINING DEADLINE EXTENDED

For more information contact your member training officer - additional information at:

http://tdept.cgaux.org/mt/Revised_Website_Mandated_Training_reh_10April2015.pdf

Prevention is the best medicine.
Get a flu shot!

Take the Influenza Training Course.

BE SURE TO CHECK OUT THE AUX TWITTER PAGE

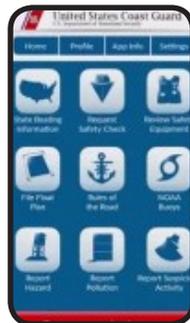
[@USCGAux on Twitter](https://twitter.com/USCGAux)

HELP WANTED

<http://cgaux.org/members/wantads/>

COAST GUARD RELEASES BOATING SAFETY APP

Features of the app include: state boating information, a safety equipment checklist, free boating safety check requests, navigation rules, float plans and calling features to report pollution or suspicious activity. When location services are enabled, users can receive the latest weather reports from the closest National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration weather buoys as well as report the location of a hazard on the water.



The app also features an Emergency Assistance button which, with locations services enabled, will call the closest Coast Guard command center.

The app will be available on the Apple and Google Play online stores. **For more information, please visit <http://www.uscg.mil/mobile>.**

Security is a continuous process.
It does not stop at the end of the work day.

Take the Security Fundamentals Course.

Develop a strong team environment of acceptance and trust.

Take the Civil Rights Awareness Course.

DISTRIBUTION FOR THE NAVIGATOR EXPRESS

- All members of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary
- Coast Guard Auxiliary Association Inc. members and staff

Note: please add uscgauxms@cgauxnet.us to your address book. Messages sent from that email address are official messages of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

FOLLOW THE AUXILIARY ON TWITTER, FB & BLOG



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