

Navigator FALL 2008











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ON THE COVER: Dennis Szeba, SO-MS 20 D5SR, reaches out for a rescue collar being lowered from a US Marine Corps CH-46E 'Pedro' helicopter hovering above USCG Station Fort Macon (N.C.)-based Vessel 47211 as SSgt Tony Allen (right), USMC, offers some advice to the Auxiliarist. All were participating in joint USN/USMC/USCG search-and-rescue training evolutions in the Atlantic, some 10 miles off Morehead City, N.C.

Photo: SN Mallory Kelly, USCG

DEADLINES WINTER: Nov. 15 SPRING: Feb. 15

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Prior to getting underway for a USCG Station Great Egg safety patrol, BM1 Brian Milcetich, the Station Supervisor, accepts one of the packages containing a SOLAS whistle and accompanying card from Walt Alsegg, ASO-OP 8 D5NR, as SN Kyle Gorham observes.

Some in New Jersey

Story & Photo by WALTER ALSEGG ASO-OP 8 D5NR

Yo<mark>u could say that the Coasties in Great Egg are some really</mark> good eggs when it comes to working hand-in-hand with local Auxiliary units on recreational boating-safety issues.

Here's why: Last fall, BM1 Brian Milcetich, Supervisor, USCG Station Great Egg (Ocean City N.J.) and I, were discussing common violations that Coast Guard boarding teams had encountered on their safety patrols. BM1 wanted to ensure that those infractions were stressed at future Auxiliary boating-safety classes.

New Jersey has one of the nation's most stringent boating laws. They mandate that the state's power-boat operators attend an eight-hour safety course that is certified by the state.

BM1 revealed that one of the most-frequent on-water violations was the lack of a sound-producing device on recreational boats. Either they lacked such a device, or it was inoperative.

Other common violations found by the Coasties were the lack of a Type IV throwable device and fire extinguishers that were not readily accessible.

The discussion led to the idea that the vessel-boarding process should be a positive encounter with the Coast Guard, as well as an opportunity to promote the Auxiliary's Vessel Safety Check (VSC) program and its boating-safety classes.

And so, D5NR Flotillas 81 (Ocean City), 84 (Absecon) and 85 (Brigantine) agreed to finance the purchase of sound-producing SOLAS whistles, along with business cards, to hand out to recreational boaters.

The cards (see above) contain contact numbers and a website for VSCs and boating-safety classes. On the card's reverse side is the safety message – *Life Preservers Float. You Don't.* Always Wear Your Life Preserver.

Every USCG patrol boat out of Stations Atlantic City and Great Egg now carry on board a supply of these whistles and cards. They are given to boaters any time a safety violation is found during a routine boarding.

As this summer's boating season drew to a close, some 27 whistles and many more of the cards had been distributed, resulting in a safer and more knowledgeable boating public. The icing on the cake is that the Coast Guard is now being viewed positively and the Auxiliary is benefiting from promotion for its boating-safety activity.





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

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES ...

Two years ago, I was given an exciting and rewarding opportunity that only 28 people before me have experienced -leading the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary as National Commodore. Working together, we have achieved marvelous things and are on course for even more.

One of the first things I did two short. vears ago was to establish the National Commodore's watch words: Recruiting, Retention and Responsibility - the 3-Rs that served as my Compass Rose, as I set

The Auxiliary has done, and continues to do, an excellent job of recruiting new members. Our challenge is to retain those who join our ranks. Retention is a two-way street because, while we want members to contribute to the work we do as an Auxiliary, the Auxiliary has an obligation to provide the members with the things that led them to join.

Many members, including myself, joined to improve their boating knowledge and skills.

I have enjoyed and benefited from the training received as a coxswain, instructor and aircrew. I feel that my time given on the water, in a classroom, or at my desk is a fair return for the experience, knowledge, friendship and satisfaction I have derived from my Coast Guard Auxiliary involvement.

My concern is that not everyone gets the return they expected when they joined the Auxiliary, and that is why many leave us after only a year or two.

Your elected leaders have the Responsibility to plan our course and maintain our situational awareness. We must be responsive to the needs of the members and accountable for our performance. Ultimately, it is the *responsibility* of the individual member to make things happen; that you execute the mission and have fun doing it.

Back in 1997, as a new District Commodore, I wrote an article entitled, "Are You Having Fun Yet?" And, I feel it is as applicable today as it was 11 years ago, when I wrote, in part:

Are you having fun yet? If not, you had better look around and try to figure out what you are not doing that those of us who are having fun are doing. For most of us, fun = involvement.

I know many flotillas are so busy that the fun is getting out of hand. Member training is going hot and heavy in some flotillas. Safety patrols, regatta patrols, SAR exercises are happening every week, somewhere. We have vessels doing training with the Coast Guard during the week, practicing boardings, doing helicopter training.

If you find that you are still stuck in

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... AND A LIFETIME OF EXPERIENCES

the boring part of the Auxiliary, please, please make a phone call and get yourself involved. Don't wait for someone in your flotilla or division to walk up to you and beg you to have fun. If you want to get out on the water and aren't being called upon regularly, give your flotilla operations officer a call and get a list of vessels whose coxswain you can call and volunteer to crew with.

Are you interested in becoming a crew member, IT specialist or Auxiliary chef and aren't sure how to get started or where to get a training manual? Well, don't wait. Information is all around you. Pick up the phone and call your flotilla Member Training Officer, or go to www. cgaux.org or your district web site to discover a host of information, classes and skills you can take advantage of.

Organizationally, we accomplished a lot over the past two years. Most notable for me are our modernization efforts, which are well on the way to full implementation, and establishment of the Leadership Guidance Team.

The Coast Guard's world of business and structure is changing and the Coast Guard Auxiliary must change with them to remain aligned and relevant. Districts are now empowered to design the organizational structure that best suits their needs, no longer tied to a one-size-fits-all. inflexible model.

We now have a single point of contact at every Coast Guard Sector in the country - the Auxiliary Sector Coordinator - who will provide the longevity and corporate knowledge across Sector Commanders' and District Commodores' watches. (Visit the NACO website, www. auxnaco.org, for more information on the National modernization and transformation model.)

With establishment of the Leadership Guidance Team (LGT), the design and implementation of Auxiliary leadership training is again a priority and we must continue to make it better and more

accessible.

The changes are not done. They will never be done, but with all the changes occurring, the one thing that has not changed is the job of Auxiliarists. We will continue to do Vessel Safety Checks, teach boating-safety classes, and provide patrols and other missions, as needed by the Coast Guard.

To my successor, Commodore Nick Kerigan, and his bridge, I offer my congratulations and thanks. You have a wonderful opportunity ahead of you to guide and nurture our great organization.

I will miss the fast pace of this job, working with our board, staff and industry partners, and meeting all the incredible people that a National Commodore gets to meet.

I particularly enjoyed meeting and talking with Auxiliarists all across this country. Your views and concerns helped me shape our policy and direction. Your friendship made my job fun and rewarding. You have given me the gift of a lifetime of memories and experiences, for which I am deeply grateful.

My thanks to our Commandant, Admiral Thad Allen, for his leadership and guidance, to the National Bridge and Board for their support and commitment. to the National Staff whose members worked tirelessly to develop and execute the programs we asked for, and to the NACO Staff whose work and energy made it all possible.

My biggest thanks are to every Auxiliarist who did something, who got involved, who found the fun and contributed to making the Coast Guard Auxiliary and America better, stronger and safer.

As Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "Do not follow where the path may lead: go, instead, where there is no path and leave a trail."

It has been a pleasure and an honor to serve with you. We are America's Volunteer Lifesavers™. Let's blaze a trail for America. Sember Paratus.

Statistics Show a Mixed Bag For Boating-Safety in 2007

WE'VE STILL GOT A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF WORK TO DO'

The good news about recreational boating in America is that the total number of deaths last year dropped to 685 from the 710 reported for 2006.

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

The bad news about recreational boating is that other casualty statistics increased - nationwide accident totals rose to 4,967 from 5,191; there were 3,673 injuries reported, up from 3,474 a year earlier; and, damage totals hit a whopping \$53.10 million, up sharply from \$43.67 million a year earlier.

These and lots of other sobering statistics are included in a new 73-page report, Recreational Boating Statistics 2007, from the Coast Guard's Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety.

Compilers of the data found that more than two-thirds of all recreational boating accidents that involved a fatality were attributed to drowning. Sadly, there probably could have been significantly fewer if all boaters wore life jackets. An astounding 90 percent of those who drowned last year were not wearing a life jacket.

"We have got to broaden our outreach to adults to help get the life jacket wear-rate up," insisted COMO Ed Sweeney, National Directorate Commodore - Recreational Boating Safety.

"In many places, fewer than 10 percent of adults wear a life jacket while underway. Compare that to the wear-rate for automobile seat-belts, which averages somewhere around 85 percent. Life jackets are to a boat what a seat-belt is to a car: You simply need to wear it!"

If you have been wondering why the Coast Guard and the Auxiliary have been focusing so much on smaller boats lately, consider that three of every four recreational boaters who drowned last year had been on a vessel whose length was less than 21 feet.

So what caused all these unfortunate casualties? The report says the top primary contributing factor was "operator inattention," which led to 628 accidents, involving 47 deaths and 436 injuries in 2007.

The next four factors were:

Careless or reckless boat operation - the primary contributing factor behind 552 accidents, with 33 deaths and 445 injuries; behavior of a passenger or water-skier (492 accidents, 47 deaths, 458 injuries); excessive speed of the boat (473 accidents, 31 deaths, 425 injuries); and, the use of alcohol (391 accidents, 145 deaths, 341 injuries).

The next five primary contributing factors were: No proper lookout (375 accidents); operator inexperience (353); machinery failure (312); weather (148); and, failure of equipment (141).

COMO Sweeney decried the fact that accidents, injuries and

property damage had all increased. "The disturbing news is that seven of the top 10 factors causing the accidents are human error," he said. "These problems are easily

overcome with education - either in a classroom, or one-onone during a Vessel Safety Check.

"It looks like we've still got a tremendous amount of work to do when it comes to educating the boating public on what it takes to be safe on the water. They don't know what they don't know, but as the old saying goes, 'Ignorance is no excuse."

While alcohol use was, predictably, a major primary factor in boating casualties, drug use was a surprisingly minor factor, contributing to only five accidents, with four deaths and five injuries during 2007.

Even though the alcohol-use factor was up only slightly, the results "were disturbing, given the amount of effort our RBS partners have been exerting to educate the public about the dan-

> gers associated with boating-under-the-influence," COMO Sweeney said. Still more disturbing was that, "Alcohol was the leading contributing factor in fatal boating accidents, accounting for 21 percent of the deaths, and that is simply not acceptable!" he

> One bit of good news was that only 16 children age 12 and under lost their lives (half by drowning) while boating last year, down from 29 in 2006 and 21 in 2005. Nevertheless, "that is still 16 too many," COMO Sweeney said.

> The most-common type of boat involved in accidents reported for 2007 were open motorboats (44 percent of the total), followed by personal water craft (24 percent), and cabin motorboats (15 percent). The number of deaths associated with use of canoes and kayaks last year rose to 107, versus 99 the previous year.

COMO Sweeney observed that, "Boaters such as [small motorboat and PWC operators are often inexperienced and can benefit greatly by a boating-safety course." Thus, he called on Auxiliary Vessel Examiners to "increase [your] efforts to engage such operators as often as [you] possibly can, and do [your] best to convince [them] to take a boating-safety class."

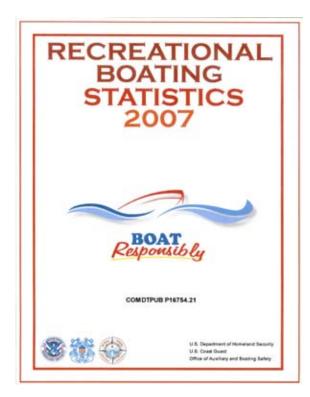
Turning to the canoe/kayak category, he warned that the rise in deaths associated with such craft last year could be repeated this year.

'Since the spike in fuel prices in 2008, paddle craft are the fastest-growing segment of the boating community," he said. "Many operators, such as hunters and anglers, do not consider themselves boaters and thus do not see the need for taking a boating-safety course.

"Unfortunately, many don't know about the rules of the road,



Commodore **Ed Sweeney** NADCO-RBS



what equipment is required, or what to do in an emergency. We need to make a special effort to increase our outreach to this growing community to prevent future tragedies."

Looking into the type of activity in which recreational boats were involved at the time of a 2007 accident, researchers found that the greatest number – by far – involved vessels at anchor, with 6,932 accidents, leading to 685 deaths and 3,673 injuries.

Next were boats that were cruising when they were involved in an accident, but the total – 3,248 – was less than half those at anchor. Accidents while cruising led to a reported 210 deaths and 2,048 injuries.

Other leading activities in which recreational boats were engaged at the time of an accident were: Changing direction (739 vessels, 58 deaths, 409 injuries); drifting (595 vessels, 129 deaths, 337 injuries); tied to a dock or moored (525 vessels, nine deaths, 79 injuries); and, changing speed (380 vessels, 18 deaths, 211 injuries).

The researchers then turned to what activity was occurring when an accident took place. Of the 6,932 vessels involved in accidents, the greatest number – 605 (with 19 deaths and 556 injuries) – were engaged in water-skiing, followed by fishing – 508 (172 deaths, 226 injuries).

If you want to know when it's the most-dangerous to be out on a recreational craft, here's what the report preparers uncovered in that regard:

The greatest number of last year's boating accidents – 1,122, with 119 deaths and 828 injuries – happened between 2:31 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. The diciest day of the week was Saturday (1,522 accidents, 184 deaths, 1,197 injuries), and the most-dangerous month was July (1,217 accidents, 93 deaths, 929 injuries)

On the other hand, the safest time, day and month were 4:31 a.m. to 6:30 a.m. (46 accidents), Tuesday (345), and February (62), respectively.

Operator age and boating experience were other factors that were considered. It was found that the largest numbers of vessels involved in 2007 accidents were operated by 36- to 55-year-olds (2,006 boats, 223 deaths, 1,190 injuries). Statistically, at least, the safest operators were 12 and younger. Only 26 vessels

VESSEL OPERATION AT THE TIME OF ACCIDENT 2007

	VESSELS INVOLVED	DEATHS	INJURIES
Totals	6932	685	3673
At Anchor	245	36	65
Being Towed	48	1	22
Changing Direction	739	58	409
Changing Speed	380	18	211
Cruising	3248	210	2048
Docking/Undocking	321	16	105
Drifting	595	129	337
Launching	60	3	25
Rowing/Paddling	197	80	128
Sailing	94	13	39
Tied to Dock/Moored	525	9	79
Towing	32	0	8
Other	37	3	18
Unknown	411	109	179

VESSEL ACTIVITY AT THE TIME OF ACCIDENT 2007

	VESSELS INVOLVED	DEATHS	INJURIES
Totals	6932	685	3673
Fishing	508	172	226
Fueling	16	3	19
Hunting	27	7	23
Making Repairs	25	5	12
Racing	51	7	13
Starting Engine	38	2	28
Swimming/Snorkeling	45	13	23
Water Skiing	605	19	556
Whitewater Activity	52	16	36
Other	1723	138	893
Commercial Activity	23	0	0
Unknown	3819	303	1844

Source: USCG Office of Auxiliary & Boating Safety

operated by these youth were involved in an accident, leading to just one death and 21 injuries.

Boaters with 101 to 500 hours' operating experience racked up the greatest number of accidents – 1,975, involving 132 deaths and 1,075 injuries. Operators with more than 500 hours at the helm were involved in 704 accidents, with 46 deaths and 404 injuries.

The type of boating education that operators involved in accidents had undergone was also probed. Not surprisingly, it was found that those who had never taken a boating course were involved in the greatest number of accidents – 3,051, leading to 282 deaths and 1.918 injuries.

Boaters who had attended a Coast Guard Auxiliary class were involved in 333 accidents (12 deaths, 151 injuries); those who took a U.S. Power Squadron course were involved in 112 accidents (one death, 38 injuries); and, state boating course graduates were involved in 663 accidents (24 deaths, 342 injuries).

One thing the report shows clearly is that Auxiliary vessel examiners and public education instructors have their work cut out for them. There were 12,875,568 vessels registered in the 50 states last year – a one percent increase from the 12,746,126 in 2006.

Sailors Need to Know About Safe Boating, So Auxiliarists Teach Them

Story & Photos by **RON AIDIKONIS**

FSO-PA 35 D9WR

Last spring, Flotilla 35 D9WR (Waukegan, Ill.) was asked by the U.S. Navy to mount a boating-safety course for some 600 staff members at the Recruit Training Command in Great Lakes, Ill., as part of its 2008 Safety Stand Down.

Organizers for Safety Stand Downs annually select their safety topics based on accidents that occurred during the previous year. A boating accident had unfortunately claimed the life of a staff member in 2007, and this particular Safety Stand Down also carried added importance due to a surge in new naval recruits.

Of course, the flotilla accepted the invitation to help out our colleagues in the Navy.

The BS&S course was taught by Steve ("Smitty") Smith, ADSO-OP 9WR - himself an old Navy salt.

Boating-safety classes sometimes can seem a bit boring to those not engaged in the sport, but in this case it wasn't at all. At least not once Smitty had gotten the students' attention by stating, "It's nice to be back."

Smitty, you see, had left Kentucky

in 1955 to journey to Great Lakes as a recruit in the U.S. Navy. Years later, after seeing the world through "Naval glasses," he finished off his USN career in 1974 as a Chief Electrical Technician assigned to the Great Lakes Service School Command.

Once he had revealed those juicy facts, the students were all-ears. After all, they now knew that, despite his Coast Guard Auxiliary uniform, their instructor was "one of them."

Smitty kept the students' attention throughout the class by invoking his Kentucky Good Ole Boy story-telling method of teaching. It was clear that all attendees enjoyed the class. They even learned at least a thing or two about boating safely.

Following "graduation," MCPO April Beldo, Command Master Chief, USN Recruit Training Command Great Lakes, presented Smitty with a gold Commanding Officer Medallion (see inset) in appreciation for his having taught the course.

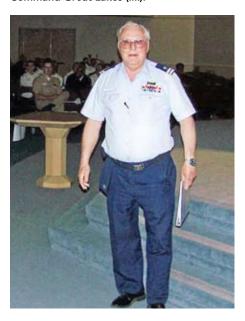
This example of inter-agency cooperation and support is sure to make the Navy crews and the cadets Semper Paratus for the coming year's boating activities.

And, who knows: Some day, we may even need to ask them for a tow.



Officer Medallion.

BELOW: Smitty walks away from the podium after teaching a boating-safety class for staffers at the U.S. Navy Recruit Training Command Great Lakes (III.).



The more things change the more they stay the same

The proof-of-the-pudding for that classic French saying is demonstrated by these photos matched up by Joe Giannattasio, FC-82 D5NR (Cape May, N.J.). 'I came across an old photograph in our flotilla's archives and was struck by its similarity to a recent photo taken at the same location - 59 years later!' he says. 'It seems that the Coast Guard's mission has remained the same over the years.' A notation on the old photo (left) states: 'Search and Rescue Demonstration, Cape May Harbor. 04 AUGUST 1949.' The other photo was taken by Walt Niwinski, VFC-82, during Cape May Harborfest, on 21 JUNE 2008.

THEY'RE LEARNING **IN STATEN ISLAND THAT KIDS REALLY CAN NOT FLOAT**

Story & Photo by **DEE THOMPSON**

DSO-PA 1SR

A lot of youngsters in Staten Island, N.Y., now know for sure that kids don't float.

That's because on July 23, Division 14 became the first unit in the First District's Southern Region to implement the Auxiliary's *Kids Don't Float* program.

Its all-out effort to help save the lives of kids and teens centered on the installation of a life jacket loaner program at the New York City borough's Tottenville Marina. In doing so, it also was launching one of the first such programs on the Atlantic coast.

Kids Don't Float is an innovative, grass-roots effort to help reduce drownings of children and teenagers by setting up a "loaner-board" on which life jackets in various sizes are displayed and available, at no cost, to youthful recreational boaters.

The program is based on an honor system. So, in addition to teaching children the importance of wearing a life jacket, the program also targets the importance of honesty by emphasizing the jackets' return.

The Kids Don't Float program originated in early 1996 in Homer, Alaska, amid concern over the fact that from 1980-94, a total of 100 children had drowned in the state – 2½ times the national average.

The program is ideal for recreational boaters who bring young guests aboard their boat, but do not have the right size life jacket for them. Ill-fitting life jackets can be dangerous; small children can easily slip out of them in the water.

Kids Don't Float benefits spontaneous boaters who forget their child's life jacket. It also provides a life-saving asset for paddlers and kayakers who suddenly realize they need a childsize life jacket, but don't have one handy. Under the program, they can borrow one at their marina or launch ramp.

However, the program is not designed to abrogate every boater's responsibility - young and old, alike - to secure and



Commander Elizabeth D. Young (right), D1SR DIRAUX, congratulates Steven Kisver, VCP-14 D1SR, at the opening of the Auxiliary District's first Kids Don't Float program, which was inaugurated at Tottenville Marina in Staten Island, N.Y.

wear their own life jacket. Kids Don't Float serves merely as a temporary, viable safeguard based on the concept that, since kids don't float, give them something that will.

In the event your flotilla or division might wish to launch a Kids Don't Float program, here's a peek at how Division 14 did

First, we selected for our loaner board site a walkway to the marina building's heads because it is a visible and readily accessible venue that is frequently traversed by boaters.

Since this was the first-ever Kids Don't Float in D1SR, Commander Elizabeth D. Young, DIRAUX, made a special donation of \$20 per life jacket to kick-start the program. (Note, however, that there may be grants available for your program.)

Division 14 members custom-built the life jacket rack out of two eight-foot pieces of 1 x 5 pressure-treated wood. Ten nonrusting coated bicycle hooks and a box of stainless steel screws were purchased for \$56.50. The rack was built at a 90° angle to protect the hanging life jackets from wind and weather.

Finally, a 15" x 36" sign was prepared by a professional firm for \$47, bringing our total program cost to \$103.50.

We informed boaters that this was strictly a no-fee loaner program, allowing the jackets to be taken and used at boaters' discretion. The life jackets are kept in full-view and are available on a 24/7 basis. It is advisable to inform boaters of the importance of selecting the correct size for each child.

Also, be sure to emphasize that the program's on-going success hinges on boaters' placing the life jackets back on the board when finished with them.







Scungio watches closely as Cadet Sweeney fires practice rounds at a target before attempting to qualify in the Academy's basic pistol marksman course. The Auxiliarist coached her during the morning practice session, and she qualified that same afternoon.

AUXILIARIST FIRES OFF SOME GREAT ADVICE AT USCG ACADEMY

"Is the line ready?" asked Petty Officer 1st Class Jennifer M. Machen, a gunner's mate at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy.

With the wave of his hand, stretched out behind him at a 45° angle, Auxiliarist Paul Scungio – an Academy firing-range coach - signaled that he was ready.

"Shooters, pick up your weapon... sight in on the target...place your finger on the trigger...do not apply pressure," GM1 Machen instructed the Coast Guard cadets standing on the firing line.

Moments later, the air was filled with the percussion ensemble heard only at a gun range. It would take mere minutes to finish the practice round, but for Scungio, a member of Flotilla 25-3 D1SR (Mystic, Conn.), it was something he has spent much of his life doing.

The Auxiliarist had spent his morning training, coaching and mentoring the young cadets to better prepare them for their future careers as commissioned officers in the Coast Guard. One of his students qualified as a Sharpshooter just 30 minutes after shaking her head vigorously, back and forth, when Scungio asked if she was a shooter.

So how does a range coach, who is also an Auxiliarist, deal with a group



Scungio adds up the score achieved by one of the cadet-students in a shooting class he coached at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy.

of complete strangers who have never fired a weapon and, for the first time, are about to face one of their greatest fears?

For Scungio, it has been a challenge to which he has devoted himself since serving as a U.S. Army small arms



instructor and competitive shooter. He spent many active-duty hours teaching his fellow soldiers the ins-and-outs of small arms shooting.

After his discharge, the Connecticut State Police hired Scungio – a 25-year National Rifle Association instructor to teach small arms use to its troopers.

After joining the Auxiliary, Scungio began his current pursuit at USCG Station New London, Conn., when Lieutenant John C. O'Connor, the Commanding Officer (now a Commander and Officer Candidate



School head), offered him the chance to help out a Petty Officer who was struggling to achieve his weapons qualification.

"[Mr. O'Connor] allowed me to work, one-on-one for about a half-hour, with [the] Petty Officer, who had never qualified during his Coast Guard career," Scungio recalled. "He then qualified as Expert. I don't know who was happier, [the Petty Officer] or myself! And that's how I got my start."

In 1999, the Petty Officer in charge of the Coast Guard Academy's gun range

observed the Auxiliarist working with Station personnel. Impressed by what he saw, the range boss extended to Scungio an offer to coach cadets at the Academy.

Scungio quickly accepted, becoming the first and only Auxiliarist serving in that position at the Academy and one of very few Auxiliarists authorized by the Coast Guard to serve as a range coach.

It was Scungio's background that helped him obtain the waiver needed for an Auxiliarist to serve as a range coach, according to Commander Valerian F.

Moments after qualifying as a Sharpshooter at the Coast Guard Academy's basic marksmanship course, Cadet 2nd Class Carin Sweeney beams with pride, as does her instructor, Paul Scungio, Flotilla 25-3 D1SR. Before she qualified, Scungio helped the young cadet overcome her nervousness and taught her how to focus and remain calm while handling a weapon.



Welicka, chief of the Auxiliary Division (CG-5421) at USCG Headquarters.

While not unique, it is unusual for an Auxiliarist to serve the Coast Guard in such a position. Many members believe they are strictly prohibited from having anything whatever to do with weapons while serving as Auxiliarists, but that is not totally correct. As CDR Welicka pointed out, COMDTINST M16709.1F actually allows Auxiliarists to do so -if a waiver is granted by CG-5421.

The Commandant Policy states:

"Auxiliarists shall not be vested with any titles or duties which imply or entail law-enforcement responsibilities, nor shall they carry, handle, repair or fire weapons of any sort while assigned to Coast Guard operational missions or Coast Guard Auxiliary activities. This includes civilian or governmentemployed law enforcement personnel, while acting as an Auxiliarist."

However, the policy adds, "A waiver to the policy may be obtained for the purpose of utilizing qualified Auxiliarists as range coaches. Waiver requests shall not be submitted by individual Auxiliarists, but rather by the operational commander who determines a bona fide need."

The fact that Scungio is one of the few Auxiliarists granted a waiver does not mean that those few are the only Auxiliarists qualified to serve as a range coach, CDR Welicka emphasized.

There are many Auxiliarists around the country who have offered their services as range coaches, he said. Most also have prior military or civilian qualifications, including some currently serving as small arms instructors for

police departments.

Commander Welicka and Chief Warrant Officer Chad Barber, head of the Academy's weapons program, both hope that more qualified Auxiliary members will apply properly and be granted waivers. "It's definitely a unique program that we know works," CWO Barber said. "We've seen its successes, [but] it needs to grow."

Also, there are "untapped resources" in the form of those Coast Guard small arms instructors who have joined the Auxiliary after retiring from active-duty, CWO Barber said, adding that, "Often, they offer more experience than a young gunner's mate has had time to acquire."

Scungio – who, despite spending much of his time at the Academy still devotes one day a week coaching weapons-trainees at STA New London - has this advice for Auxiliary range coach-hopefuls: "For the Auxiliarist to find his way into the program, he has to start with the C.O.

Commander Valerian F. Welicka CHIEF, USCG **AUXILIARY DIVISION**

hе works under and sav. 'This is my background. Can you assist me?',"

For Scungio, the many awards, accolades and qualifications that he earns for his efforts are not the meaningful part of serving as a range coach. "In my 'Mr. O'Connor allowed me to work, one-on-one for about a half-hour. with [the] Petty Officer, who had never qualified during his Coast Guard career. He then qualified as Expert. I don't know who was happier, [the Petty Officer] or myself! And that's how I got my start.'

AUXILIARIST PAUL SCUNGIO

Scungio inspects a practice target used by one of his students at the indoor shooting range in the basement of the Coast Guard Academy's Chase Hall.

eyes, I am an asset," he insisted. "There is not one certificate or plaque that I've received since 1990 that is displayed."

What he does find meaningful, not to mention rewarding, is how he can go out onto the range and usually get better results from a struggling shooter than his active-duty counterparts can.

"When they have someone they can't qualify, they send them down to The Old Man," Scungio said. "I think the reason I can get to them is that I am 'Gramps.' I'm not a threat. I'm not wearing bars. I'm not a Chief. I'm not a GM1."

The Gramps appellation dates back some years because, he explained, "In [writing] critiques, they didn't know my name," Scungio said. "They retained the important information, but they couldn't remember my name." So they simply called him Gramps.

Wrapping up, Scungio conceded that, "My background as a state law-enforcement instructor definitely opened the doors for me to have the opportunity to do what I am doing, [but] I would do it even if they weren't paying me. Of course, they aren't paying me and I don't get paid, so I just enjoy what I am doing.

"It's very rewarding to take someone who has never shot a gun, is afraid of guns, and has been [taught] that guns are evil, and - with a little a bit of coaching – see him, or her, qualify as a Sharpshooter."

The Auxiliarist said he finds comfort in knowing that his coaching could some day help the future Coast Guard officers, should they ever run into a dangerous situation requiring the use of deadly force to protect themselves and their crew.



Photo: McKibben Jackinsky, DSO-PB 17

AFRAS Silver Award winners for 'heroic actions' in a daring Alaska rescue are, from the left: Raymond F. Miller, VFC-31 D17; Shane A. Taylor, IPDCDR-3 D17; Michael Cupit, Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary, Vancouver; and, Richard H. Liebe, DVCDR-3 D17.

Four Auxiliarists Win AFRAS Silver Medals

Story by JOEL A. GLASS BC-ANN

Editor, Navigator

Three U.S. and one Canadian Auxiliarists have been awarded AFRAS Silver Medals and cash prizes for their daring rescue and "heroic actions" that were instrumental in saving the lives of 13 people from three-foot seas and 20-knot winds off Homer, Alaska, on April 25, 2007.

The Silver Medal from the Association for Rescue at Sea, Inc. was presented to D17 members Shane A. Taylor, IPDCDR-3: Richard H. Liebe, DVCDR-3: Raymond F. Miller, VFC-31, all D17; and, Canadian Auxiliarist Michael Cupit of Vancouver at AFRAS' annual award ceremony and reception on Washington's Capitol Hill in late September.

The four Auxiliarists, led by coxswain Taylor, were engaged in crew training aboard Coast Guard vessel 275594 when they overheard a distress call from the 39-foot vessel *Halibut Endeavor*. The charter boat was taking on water rapidly and attempting to make her way toward shore.

The Auxiliary crew immediately responded, arriving on-scene in 20 minutes. Noting that the *Halibut Endeavor* was listing to port, Taylor maneuvered the vessel alongside the distressed boat's port bow and his crew began transferring the 13 passengers.

Aside from the heavy seas and strong winds, the danger increased when the

charter vessel began rolling toward the rescue boat, just seconds after the 11th passenger had been transferred aboard.

Taylor subsequently edged the bow of his vessel to the now-partially overturned charter boat and held position as his crew pulled aboard the two remaining passengers. Minutes later, the charter boat rolled again and sank.

The Auxiliary coxswain and three crewmembers "exhibited extreme skill and superior decision-making that made the rescue successful," AFRAS stated. "The heroic and skillful actions of the crew...were instrumental in saving the lives of 13 people."

AFRAS also presented its Gold Medal to another Alaska-based individual -AST1 Willard Milam, a Coast Guard rescue swimmer – for his "valiant effort in saving four mariners with little regard for his personal safety" on the dark and drizzly morning of Feb. 10, 2007.

The Coastie jumped from a USCG Air Station Kodiak helicopter into the 15-foot swells and 40° waters of Makushin Bay, near Unalaska Island, to save four drenched survivors. The boaters were on a life raft, but not wearing survival suits. One of them was severely hypothermic.

AFRAS presented its AMVER Award to the master and crew of the 400-foot, Norwegian-flag M/V Nordnorge, for rescuing 154 passengers from the cruise ship Explorer on Nov. 23, 2007.

The vessel built specifically for cruising Antarctic waters reportedly struck an iceberg and sank some 500 nm south of Argentina. Passengers and crew safely abandoned ship and boarded lifeboats. They were rescued some five hours later by the Norwegian vessel, which ferried them to King George Island for flights to mainland South America.

The AFRAS Gold Medal, awarded since 1982, is given each year to an enlisted member of the U.S. Coast Guard who has performed "an act of extraordinary bravery during a rescue at sea."

The Silver Medal was established in 2000 specifically for an Auxiliarist or Auxiliary crewmember for performing a rescue under the same criteria as is required for the Gold Medal.

The AMVER Award, given since 1996. recognizes "the contribution of seamen in ships at sea to the safety of their fellow mariners."

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

The awards were to be presented in late September at a formal reception on Washington's Capitol Hill.

Each winner would be congratulated personally by Admiral Thad W. Allen, Commandant of the Coast Guard: Vice Admiral Terry M. Cross, USCG (Ret.), chairman of AFRAS; and, Rep. Howard Coble of North Carolina, a retired Coast Guard Reserve Captain and current cochairman of the Congressional Coast Guard Caucus. 🕸

Two Views of Recruiting for the Coast Guard



Editor's Note: Recruiting by Auxiliarists for the active-duty side of Team Coast Guard is not mentioned very often nowadays. Yet, the Recruiter Assistance Program (RAP) still exists. Additional recruiters are needed and being sought from within our ranks. The RAP function just recently was returned to the National Department of Personnel, making a review of this subject timely. Following are two views of recruiting, one from a seasoned Auxiliarist, USCG Academy graduate, and former Coast Guard and Navy officer; the other from a young college student and new member who has already found his niche in the Auxiliary.

This Auxiliarist Went to C-School ...

Story by DOUG KROLL, Ph.D.

Flotilla 11-11 D11SR

A year or so ago, the U.S. Coast Guard Recruiting Office in Riverside, Calif., contacted my flotilla to see if any members might be interested in helping them out. As I already was an Academy Admissions Partner, I thought this would be another way in which I could help support the Coast Guard - one of the main reasons I joined the Auxiliary.

I am a college history professor, so I could only volunteer on Fridays. However, I soon learned that the Coast Guard has to cover the entire country - including Alaska, Hawaii, Guam and Puerto Rico - with only 366 recruiters, assigned to 89 Recruiting Offices.

The Riverside office had only three recruiters to cover a geographically very large area. There was an obvious need for extra hands.

I was aware of the Auxiliary's Recruiting Assistance Program, launched in 1974, but I also was aware that RAP had become an "orphaned" program after the AUX Career Counselor designation was discontinued at the end of 2006.

Nevertheless, RAP is still listed as an Auxiliary National Department of Personnel responsibility. To my knowledge, however, there is no one in the Auxiliary who coordinates, supervises or reports on RAP.

The Auxiliary Manual states that any member may assist at a USCG Recruiting Office if they complete all Personnel Qualification Standards (PQS) tasks, meet the Commandant's weight, grooming and appearance standards, and receive a positive recommendation from the Recruiter-in-Charge.

The qualifying Auxiliarist then may be authorized to wear the USCG Recruiting Badge (above, left) as long as he or she continues working at a Recruiting Office. Auxiliarists also become eligible for the Recruiting Service Ribbon.

I started studying the Recruiting Manual (COMDTINST M1100.2E) to learn how to answer potential Coast Guard enlistees' basic questions, either on the telephone or in-person, whenever the USCG recruiters are unavailable.

Because I have the summer months off, I asked my Recruiter-in-Charge, YNC Alejandro Cardenas, if I could attend Recruiter School at USCG Training Center (TRACEN) Cape May, N.J., this summer. With his approval, I applied and soon received orders and travel funding to attend the C-school class from June 1-26.

I met the other students. They were all first- or second-class **KROLL: CONTINUED ON PAGE 16**





While This One Performed OJT

Story By **JOSEPH A. FELDMAN**

FSO-PV 51 D8CR

Ever wonder what it's like to serve as an Auxiliary recruiter for the Coast Guard?

As an assistant at the USCG Recruiting Center in Dallas, I can tell you it's been quite an experience for me.

I am a 20-year-old junior, majoring in business management at the University of Texas-Arlington, who plans to become a paramedic after graduation.

I joined Flotilla 51 D8CR (Grand Prairie, Texas) in March 2007 to gain some experience working with the Coast Guard because I hoped to enter Officer Candidate School and, subsequently, become a helicopter pilot.

However, those plans were dashed when I learned that I could not qualify for OCS for medical reasons. So, instead, I decided to seek some other way that I, as an Auxiliarist, could contribute more to the active-duty side of Team Coast Guard.

There is not much of a Coast Guard presence in North Texas, but I learned that the area's largest active-duty unit was the USCG Recruiting Center in Dallas. Helping out there struck my fancy, especially when I read in the Auxiliary Manual that I could qualify for such duty under RAP - the Recruiting Assistance Program.

I met with the Dallas Recruiter-in-Charge, BMC Brian Lee, and offered to help with administrative duties while working toward recruiter qualification. He almost jumped out of his seat!

I offered to come to the center after my classes to help out in any way I could. I began later the same week.

I am assigned as a recruiter-assistant under DC1 John T. Waters, supporting his recruiting efforts, taking care of paperwork, and referring prospects for him to enlist in the Coast Guard. I do some of the same things to assist the six other recruiters at the center.

I work there three afternoons a week, greeting prospects as they enter, answering the telephone, mailing letters, providing



Joseph A. Feldman, FSO-PV 51 D8CR (third from right), joins some of the Coasties with whom he works at the Recruiting Center in Dallas. From the left are: AMTC Ricardo Olivas, BMC Brian Lee, YN1 Charlene Tanner, AEM1 Brian Ellis, Feldman, FSC Kevin Roberts, and DC1 John T. Waters.

computer technical support, updating the applicant pool list, and many other tasks that need to be done.

I also distribute USCG recruitment information to my Auxiliary shipmates for them to disseminate at our flotilla events. Conversely, they give me their business cards and

FELDMAN: CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

petty officers with rates varying from AMT to MST, and most were young enough to be my kids. Fortunately, I look young for my age. I was pleased to hear from them about how much they appreciated the contributions that Auxiliarists make to the Coast Guard.

ITCM Steven Whitehead, the Recruiter School head, said I was only the second Auxiliarist to attend the facility during his four-year tour there.

I knew quite a bit about the Coast Guard because I am a graduate of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy (Class of '71), who served as a USCG Lieutenant and, later, a U.S. Navy Commander (Chaplain).

Also, I have a son – Lieutenant Junior Grade Matthew Kroll, USCG - who graduated from recruiter training some four years ago, attended Officer Candidate School, and is now undergoing flight-training at Pensacola, Fla.

One of the main lessons I learned during my stay at the four-week recruiter school was that people enlist in the

Coast Guard not for what it is to them, but for what it will do for them.

A recruiter's challenge is to interview prospects in such a way as to learn first what their needs and desires are, then to describe how the Coast Guard can meet these needs, wants, or desires.

This intensive course vastly increased my knowledge of Coast Guard recruiting policies and practices and enabled me to be a much more valuable asset to the Recruiting Office at which I am helping out.

The training included classes in effective communication, interviewing and telephone techniques, and requirements for various active-duty and reserve enlisted and commissioned officer programs.

We were required to deliver several oral presentations – both impromptu and formal – and engage in various role-playing scenarios, all which were videotaped for student, peer and instructor critiques.

Thanks to all of this training, I am now able to conduct preliminary screening of applicants to see if they meet the basic qualifications for enlisting in the Coast Guard.

What I found to be of special value was becoming familiar with USCG basic-recruit training so that I could answer prospective recruits' questions in a professional manner.

We observed the recruits' arrival and greeting at Cape May on a Tuesday evening, and we watched as they were formed into companies the following Friday. We shadowed the newbies as they met their company commanders, arrived at their assigned barracks and ate their evening meal.

Later, we watched them undergo their initial swim test, and observed them at the assignment data-card class, where they could state preferences for their first duty station. We also got to observe the impressive outdoor graduation ceremony.

Having never before attended recruit training, this first-hand knowledge will be invaluable to me in talking to prospective applicants and answering their questions about training.



The author, Doug Kroll, Flotilla 11-11 D11SR (Riverside, Calif.) receives a hardy handshake and his Coast Guard Recruiting Certificate of Training from Captain Cari Thomas, Commanding Officer, USCG Training Center Cape May.

By the end of my four-week training course, it became clear that Coast Guard recruiting takes skill, practice and imagination. It also takes enthusiasm.

Recruiters must stay informed about the many recruiting policy changes so that only factual information is given out about entitlements. We must also always remember that nothing is guaranteed; everything is subject to change.

This will be especially challenging for me as I am only a parttime, volunteer recruiter. And that is why I will defer to my Recruiter-in-Charge, or other Coast Guard recruiters, when any questionable situations come up.

The Auxiliary's Recruiting Assistance Program is now more important than ever because there are so few active-duty recruiters. RAP is an excellent example of how the Auxiliary supports the Coast Guard.

The Auxiliary also benefits from this program by increasing our visibility with active-duty Coasties. It also provides us with increased outreach to those outside the recreational boating community, further enhancing the Auxiliary's public image nationwide, rather than solely in coastal communities.

One of the reasons I joined the Auxiliary was to support the Coast Guard. As a graduate of USCG Recruiter School, I am able now to do that in a much greater way than before.

I'm now also authorized to wear the Coast Guard Recruiter Badge. Perhaps more significantly, I'm also eligible to earn the gold wreath around that badge, if I complete some additional PQS requirements and pass an Oral Board.

When Captain Steven Vanderplas, Commanding Officer, U.S. Coast Guard Recruiting Command, learned that I had attended Recruiter School, he said, "It's great to see Doug Kroll keeping alive the Auxiliary's proud history of giving Coast Guard Recruiting the same kind of vital mission support that other units receive. A lot of Auxiliarists have helped in a lot of ways, but it is a special accomplishment when one of them earns the recruiting wreath, which Doug is well on his way toward doing."

FELDMAN: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

Auxiliary recruiting material to pass out at my school and in public, when I am in uniform.

The Coast Guard recruiters are grateful for my help because they have a large area to cover and a lot of work to do. My efforts allow them to focus more on actually recruiting, rather than being burdened by administrative duties.

My involvement with the Recruiting Office also opens up many doors for my flotilla. Petty Officer Waters attends our meetings and provides information on how the Auxiliary can assist his office. During summer months, the recruiters help our members train for boat crew qualification.

My shipmates also plan to participate with the active-duty personnel at public affairs functions, such as parades and recruiting fairs.

My secondary task at the Recruitment Center is to spread knowledge of the Coast Guard Auxiliary. Since I work at a recruiting office, I am in the perfect environment to promote the Auxiliary, especially to parents and youth who may not qualify for active-duty because of medical or other issues.

When parents phone for information about their child joining the Coast Guard, I seize the opportunity to inquire as to whether they may also wish to have information about the Auxiliary for themselves. If they are, I put them in touch with their closest flotilla in District 5, which embraces the Dallas/ Fort Worth and Texas Panhandle areas.

When parents come into the Recruiting Office with one of their children, I give them my Auxiliary business card and some Auxiliary pamphlets once the recruiters finish speaking with them about active-duty opportunities.

I also have an agreement with the recruiters in my office under which they refer to me personnel who fail to qualify for active-duty, but could qualify for Auxiliary membership.

I am one of three people in the office with some aviation knowledge because I work closely with USCG Air Station Houston while on break from college. So, I speak with visitors to the office who are interested in becoming Coast Guard officers and aviators.

Assisting at the Recruiting Center allows me to help others attain their goals and aspirations in the Coast Guard and contribute to the Coast Guard as a whole.

One word to my fellow Auxiliarists everywhere: Do not be afraid to offer to help out at a USCG Recruiting Office. They really do appreciate the help we can provide, and our doing so allows the active-duty personnel to focus on their primary task.



Photo: FSC Kevin Roberts, USCG

If you are interested in becoming a USCG Recruiter, you must meet the same height, weight and appearance-in-uniform requirements as active-duty personnel. Also, you must be assigned to a Recruiting Office, with approval of your chain of leadership and management and the Coast Guard Recruiter-in-Charge of the office at which you will assist.

Once you begin there, you may ask the Recruiter-in-Charge to secure orders for you to attend the fourweek Recruiter C School, although attending this course is not required to assist at a Recruiting Office.



The author, Dennis Szeba, SO-MS 20 D5SR, turns away from helicopter rotor wash that is dishing up for him a mouthful of sea water during hoist operations from Coast Guard vessel 47211.



Members of Flotilla 20-2 D5SR (Morehead City, N.C.) mingle with U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Navy search-and-rescue crew members during a familiarization class at the USMC CH-46E 'Pedro' helicopter.

Helo-Hoisting: USCG, CGAUX, USN, USMC Team Up

Story by **DENNIS SZEBA**

SO-MS 20 D5SR

Flotilla 20-2 D5SR (Morehead City, N.C.), which is attached to nearby USCG Station Fort Macon, was offered the opportunity in Fall 2007 to select some members to begin helicopter training with the Coast Guard.

Selected were Jim Powell, FC; Vern Scott, VFC; Bob Leibert, FSO-PV; Jack Hughes, FSO-CM; Robert Wendel, FSO-CS, and myself, SO-MS 20. Each was crew-qualified and active in surface operations.

Late last October, we attended a Coast Guard meeting with local Marine Corps and Navy search-and-rescue (SAR) personnel, who arrived in a brightly-painted USMC CH-46E "Pedro" helicopter.

We were then taken to the helo for a stem-to-stern go-over. We looked at all the onboard equipment, and then walked through basket, voke and stretcher hoist operations.

We also learned emergency-exit activation and crew-extraction procedures, in the unlikely event that we might need to rescue crew members after making an unscheduled landing

The trainees then huddled for an informal SAR questionand-answer session during which we learned a lot about the helo, and the Marine Corps and how it conducted day-to-day operations.

One challenge is that the CH-46 is 20 feet longer than the Coast Guard HH-60 "Seahawk" and HH-65 "Dolphin." As a result, USMC pilots have a very restricted view of what is happening below them.

When working with surface craft of less than 40 feet, the helo pilot is actually out in front of the craft over which the helo is hovering. Thus, the crew usually will drop a swimmer into the water, rather than use a hoist.

For the next few weeks, we Auxiliarists took turns standing by when joint USCG-USN-USMC training ops were scheduled. Several were cancelled, for various reasons. In mid-December, however, I got to go along on a night mission as a trainee.

I boarded Coast Guard vessel 41481, which rendezvoused with "Pedro" offshore, after sunset and above four-foot seas. The plan was to lower a USMC rescue swimmer and a Navy corpsman to the deck of a boat.

During his descent, the corpsman brushed the superstructure of the lurching Coast Guard 47-foot vessel working with us. He succeeded in landing on the craft only after we were able to grab hold of his legs as he swung by. The rescue swimmer came aboard a bit more easily.

They briefed me on how to receive and hoist a Stokes stretcher. I was given one practice run, during which I swallowed gallons of rotor-whipped salt spray before a decision was made to abort.

Now approaching six feet, the waves were beyond the mission's operational safety limits. After seeing the corpsman go flying into the darkness on yet another wild ride back up to the chopper, the rescue swimmer opted to be hoisted from the water.

As he floated off our beam, wearing chemical lights, Pedro hovered over him for several minutes. It was becoming apparent that something was wrong. Sure enough, the pilot radioed that the hoist wire had jammed and they were unable to make a pick-up.

So, we got to do a person-in-the-water "save," and then ferried him back to the Station, where he could re-board Pedro on dry land.

Scott and I were on deck for the next operation, in mid-January, this year. We arrived at the Station and donned our Mustangs, inflatable lifejackets, crash helmets and goggles before boarding Coast Guard vessel 47211, again as trainees.

When we arrived on-station, Pedro was already approaching, in a cloudless sky. The Coast Guard vessel turned into the light chop at about 10 knots. The helo made a few passes before putting a Marine Corps rescue swimmer onto a cable and winched him toward our deck.

It took a few minutes – and some scary near-misses with the mast – but he arrived on board in one piece. Pedro then sent down a Navy SAR corpsman, followed by a corpsman-trainee.

Scott was first to receive a lowered Stokes stretcher; unhooking, re-hooking, and then sending it aloft. After we had all performed those procedures, we assisted in hooking up Pedro crewmembers and sending them back up to the helo.

The seas were less than three feet, so there was not as much rotor wash as we had experienced during our previous mission. But by no means did we stay dry!

As a result of these experiences, I gained a healthy respect for the swimmers, SAR corpsmen, crew chiefs, and pilots and what they all must do for a living.

As we made our way back to the Station to enjoy the noon galley meal, we were already looking forward to the next evolutions.

Author's Note: CGSTA Fort Macon, home to 300 Coasties, sits 70 miles southwest of Cape Hatteras, N.C. There are several nearby USMC Air Stations, including MCAS New River and Cherry Point, and Camp Lejeune, home to over 40,000 active-duty personnel. The nearest Coast Guard helicopters are at Elizabeth City, N.C., more than 100 air miles away. As a result, close ties are maintained with MCAS Cherry Point Air Rescue Unit – 15 miles from Fort Macon.



SN Mallory Kelly, USCG (left), braces SSgt Tony Allen, a USMC rescue swimmer, while giving a ready-to-hoist signal to the Marine helicopter hovering above the Coast Guard vessel. Watching the action from the bridge of CG 47211 (right) is Vern Scott, FC 20-2 D5SR.



Photo: Mel Borofsky BC-ANS

Admiral Thad W. Allen (fourth from left), Commandant of the Coast Guard, and Captain Mark D. Rizzo (left), USCG Chief Director of Auxiliary, join the newly-elected Auxiliary National Bridge at the NACON 2008 Commodore's Banquet in Orlando. From the left are: CAPT Rizzo; COMO Victor J. Connell, ARCO-Pacific(e), [Flotilla 51 D11NR]; COMO Steven M. Budar, NACO [FL 3-13 D14]; ADM Allen; COMO Nicholas Kerigan, NACO(e) [FL 12-3 D1SR]; COMO James E. Vass, NAVCO(e) [FL 7-10 D8CR]; COMO Thomas C. Mallison, ARCO-Atlantic West(e) [FL 63 D8ER]; and, COMO Thomas A. Venezio, ARCO-Atlantic East(e) [FL 15-9 D1SR].

THE INCOMING NAVCO, MEANWHILE, WANTS A LARGER ORGANIZATION

AUXILIARY WILL BE 'A MORE-READY FORCE' IN THE FUTURE, SAYS NEWLY-ELECTED NACO

Story by ROB WESTCOTT DVC-AN

Commodore Nicholas Kerigan, who was elected at NACON 2008 to serve as Auxiliary National Commodore (NACO) beginning November 1st, is looking ahead to his two-year term in office with both optimism and high expectation.

Having served for the last two years as the National Vice Commodore, COMO Kerigan succeeds COMO Steven M. Budar, who will continue to serve the Auxiliary as the National Immediate Past Commodore (NIPCO).

At the Auxiliary National Conference in August, Kerigan said he saw increased opportunities for added Auxiliary service as the Coast Guard changes and modernizes. This would be particularly true in the recreational boating safety (RBS) and operations areas, he said.

"We will be at the Coast Guard's side to help them in any way we can," COMO Kerigan pledged. But, for that to really come about, "We need to adjust our training and our qualifications to meet any new areas that they want us to work in," he emphasized.

Asked where he envisioned the Auxiliary being two years hence, the new NACO responded, "I think, in 2010, the phrase 'a more-ready force' will apply to the Auxiliary"

Comodore Jim Vass – who, as DCO 8CR, successfully led his district through Hurricanes Katrina and Rita – will serve as the National Vice Commodore under COMO Kerigan. COMO Vass has spent the last two years as National Area Commodore-Atlantic (West).

COMO Vass, a Professional Engineer in Texas, joined the Auxiliary in 1991 and has held numerous elected and appointed positions at flotilla, division, district and national levels. As DCO 8CR, he has overseen nine divisions, spread over seven states and three time zones from Tallahassee, Fla., to the Arizona border. He also sits on the Coast Guard Auxiliary Association's National Finance Committee.

His priorities for the Auxiliary over the next two years include recruitment, retention and training, "and we need to work at being more efficient so we spend less money," he said. "I'm looking forward to the next two years. Great people have been placed in leadership positions, and we are really excited.

"I hope we're bigger in two years. I hope our members are more satisfied. I hope the programs we put in place will make them better able to operate more efficiently. We look forward to the challenges that [all this] brings."

The Auxiliary's five East Coast districts will have a new, though familiar, hand at their helm for the next two years – Commodore Tom Venezio, who has been serving as DCO 1SR, and who takes over from Commodore Peter Fernandez as Area Regional Commodore (ARCO)-Atlantic (East).

COMO Venezio sees great opportunities for expanded

Auxiliary missions. "As we look ahead, the needs of the Coast Guard continue to increase," he said. "The opportunities related to augmentation and support are only going to grow, so there are great opportunities for our membership."

Both retention and resources will continue to be important issues for the Auxiliary, he said. "The Coast Guard has needs and we can step up to [meet them]. But, we need to make the case that to fulfill those needs, we need the resources to support our membership," he added.

"I see this organization only growing and becoming more vibrant. We have a National Board and a bridge coming online that will listen to the membership, identify those needs, and carefully and thoughtfully address those needs so that we strengthen the organization. I see a tremendously bright future."

Commodore Thomas Mallison, DCO 8ER, who succeeds COMO Vass as the new ARCO-Atlantic (West), believed that one of the Auxiliary's greatest challenges, going forward, was the state of the U.S. economy.

Issues such as high fuel costs are affecting membership and leading to the inability of some members to get out in public to perform their missions. The economy also is impacting recruiting and retention efforts. Thus, the Auxiliary must concentrate heavily

on both areas, "and we will," he said.

COMO Mallison's vision of the Auxiliary in 2010 is of a "vibrant" organization. "We have a lot of work that we will be doing in non-traditional boating areas, such as paddle craft, where we will be changing the focus of our customers," he said. "We see a lot of the public going into personal watercraft and smaller boats, so we will be going into those areas a lot more in the future."

Commodore Victor Connell, DCO 11NR, is stepping up to the post of ARCO-Pacific. He, too, sees many opportunities for Auxiliarists to serve, some traditional, but many new.

"We have the opportunity to serve in so many ways now," he said. "Our traditional RBS missions and a whole bunch of new missions will offer all kinds of opportunities, a diversity of selection and all kinds of new skill sets. The challenge actually is to not pick too many opportunities, but instead to focus on just a couple of things and get good at them, and serve in that way."

COMO Connell also cited the economy as a major challenge. "Our biggest challenge will be to retain our membership in an environment where the economy and other factors are making it harder to find the time to volunteer," he said.

He also targeted diversity as a key issue, stating, "I hope what we see in 2010 is a more-diverse Auxiliary, bringing in people will all kinds of new skill sets to help with our new missions, and bringing in more younger people. We have been told there is a surge in patriotism among our younger generation. I hope we are going to tap into that and bring more of them into the Auxiliary."





'You Are a Remarkable Organization,' USCG Commandant Tells Auxiliary

Story by JOEL A. GLASS BC-ANN

Editor, Navigator

The modernization of Team Coast Guard is one of the uppermost and most-difficult tasks on the mind of Admiral Thad W. Allen these days. And so, it was hardly a surprise that this was precisely what the Commandant selected as the principal basis of his keynote speech at the NACON Commodore's Banquet.

"It will come as no surprise to anyone in the room who's been reading the paper that there are some changes going on in the Coast Guard," he said. "What we are about today is creating an organization, moving forward, that is more capable of responding" not only to all threats, but also all hazards facing the USCG.

"We have never been more relevant or visible and, accordingly, the Coast Guard Auxiliary has never been more relevant or visible," he insisted. "We need you out there being a strong, vibrant Auxiliary, because if you are a strong, vibrant Auxiliary, we are a stronger and more-vibrant Coast Guard.

"You are uniquely American. You are uniquely democratic. You are uniquely inclusive. And, you represent what is absolutely best about our country. We need you."

Capacity and competency are needed but, ADM Allen added, "That is the Coast Guard's capacity and competency. It is not uniquely Auxiliary, Reserve, active-duty or civilian. We need you [Auxiliarists] to be part of the modernization effort, and we need you to build capacity with us because we will always always - do the best we can with what we've got. Nobody does it better."

His goal for modernization is to look at everything being done today, then figure out what must be done to reduce the burdens on Coasties so they no longer will have to sidestep problems.

"Whether it's in the active-duty Coast Guard, the Reserve, or the Auxiliary, we have our own systems where we smother trouble," he said. "We don't work around it. We don't fix it." Thus, the admiral carries with him what he labeled The Invisible Bag, which he explained this way:

"When you start out in the Coast Guard, or the Auxiliary, or whatever organization you deal with in your civilian lives, you watch your senior leaders and you pack The Invisible Bag.



It's a strong thumbs-up for the Auxiliary from Admiral Thad W. Allen as the Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard tells attendees at the NACON Commodore's Banquet that Auxiliarists are '...uniquely American...uniquely democratic... and uniquely inclusive, and...represent what is absolutely best about our country.'

That's when you get a memo or a directive from headquarters - whether it's the Coast Guard, or your company - that tells you to do something that doesn't make sense, and you go, 'What were they thinking? Did the Commandant really say that? What are they doing at Headquarters?' I've been collecting those in a bag, and I am unpacking it. That is what I am about as Commandant."

ADM Allen has invited the Auxiliary senior leadership to join him "on that journey [because] it's something we all need to do together [and] all need to think about, and how we re-position ourselves....How we bring in new people. How we keep the people we've got."

As modernization progresses. the Commandant will be working with senior Auxiliary leadership "to figure out how we can

align and integrate our governance structures, because that's very important."

However, he insisted, "It's got to make sense at the deck plate. It's got to make sense to the people you are trying to recruit. It's got to make sense to [those of] you who have to lead them. And what you need to tell them is that there's a place for everybody."

The operational implications of the member security check process had presented the Auxiliary with "an extraordinary challenge," yet it handled the situation "in an extraordinary manner, [and] with no diminution of the service you give to this country," he said.

What constitutes a good Auxiliarist? "There is no 'right way' to be an Auxiliarist. There is no mold," he said. "The best way to be an Auxiliarist is to take what you have got – the Godgiven talents you have, the things you like to do and have a passion for – and align them with our missions and the need to execute them."

He also asked members to mentor Coasties.

"You are around our young people, and you are not in their reporting chain," he said. "You don't do evaluations on them. You're not responsible for their performance. But, you have lifeexperiences. You have made decisions, both good and bad, and you know the implications of that. You can bring value to the lives of our people and protect them by being their guardians."

Report on the Coast Guard's new Guardian Ethos, page 38

A Rare Event Occurs at the Conference

Story by **JOEL A. GLASS BC-ANN**

Editor, Navigator

It wasn't a doppelgänger situation, but it was indeed a rare situation when both of the 2008 Auxiliary inductees to the National Safe Boating Council's Hall of Fame appeared at the same time, in the same place - at the Auxiliary 2008 National Conference, of course.

The honored members were USCG Captain William S. Griswold (Ret.), VFC-43 D7, who actually was feted in April at the International Boating and Water Safety Summit in San Diego (Navigator, Spring '08, pg. 10), and Commodore Carolyn V. Belmore, PDCO 1NR, who would be equally celebrated at NACON-Orlando.

In addition to being a past DCO, the constantly-in-motion COMO Belmore currently holds no less than seven Auxiliary positions - VFC, FSO-PE, SO-SR, ADSO-MT, D-AA, BA-TTA and SRPPCA. Griswold, a one-time USCG Chief Director of Auxiliary and former NSBC chair, is no slacker either, holding down positions as FSO-IS, FSO-PE, DSO-SL, BC-BLN and BC-BRG (in addition to VFC).

The NSBC Hall of Fame, into which no more than two individuals a year may be inducted, honors those who are "real heroes; real champions of boating safety," according to Council Chair Ruth Wood, who also sits on the Auxiliary Board.

COMO Belmore, president of the New England Safe Boating Council, currently is serving her third term as a member of the National Boating Safety Advisory Council and is an associate member of the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators.

It was COMO Belmore, an Auxiliarist for nearly four



Photo: Mel Borofsky, BC-ANS

COMO Carolyn V. Belmore (right), PDCO 1NR, proudly displays to NACON attendees in Orlando her award for being inducted into the National Safe Boating Council's Hall of Fame. The crystal Hall of Fame 'plaque' was presented to her by NSBC Chair Ruth Wood (center), an Auxiliary Board member, as William S. Griswold, VFC-43 D7, observed. Griswold received his own Hall of Fame award last April in San Diego.

decades, who first developed and implemented, in D1NR, the Auxiliary's now-national Boat Smart and Paddlesmart campaigns.

Switching hats to her other position, as chair of BoatU.S. Foundation, Wood presented the award for Best Auxiliary Flotilla in 2007 to FL-63 D5SR (Poquoson, Va.). It was accepted by Scott Ripley, FC-63, and Commodore Steve McElroy, DCO 5SR Wood, who has been attending Auxiliary National Conferences for the past 20 years, told delegates to this year's get-together, "I am very proud to be a part of the Coast Guard Auxiliary family, and it is an honor for me to be on your Board."



Taking it all in during the National Department Chiefs meeting at NACON are, from the left: Peter Urgola, DC-V (Vessel Examination); Robin Freeman, DC-E (Education); Brett Grooms, DC-I (Information Technology); John Liddell, DC-Id (Deputy Director, Information Technology); and, Ken Kendall, DC-Td (Deputy Director, Training).





COMO James E. Vass, Auxiliary National Vice Commodore-elect, addresses one of the Meltdown Workshop groups during NACON 2008 in Orlando. Seated are, from the left, Commodores Steven M. Budar, National Commodore; Warren E. McAdams, National Chief of Staff; and, Nicholas Kerigan, NACO-elect.

This Meltdown Was Anything but ...

Story by **TOM NUNES**

DC-Ad

Officially, it was called Meltdown Planning, but it was anything but a "meltdown" as members of the Auxiliary's leadership - the National Operating Committee (OPCOM) - met during NACON week to tackle the thoughtprovoking issue of how our organization might look five years from now.

Their forecasting tool for this jump into Future World is known as scenario planning - a technique that is used to develop and test strategies with a range of alternative-futures or scenarios.

Thus, a detailed scenario was developed, systematically describing potential Auxiliary environments.

This is a technique for managing uncertainty, risk, and opportunity, but it differs from traditional strategic planning by assuming a future. It yields strong core strategic concepts as a guide from which tactical actions are

developed. The process serves to cultivate strategic thinking and alignment across the Auxiliary.

While the process tends to place the planning horizon out in time (where uncertainty is greater), it asks what the future might hold. It also identifies actions that can be taken today that are likely to be valuable no matter what the future may hold.

The technique relies more on expert judgment and less on quantitative methodologies.

The Meltdown Planning Workshop, which was conducted behind closed doors to maintain confidentiality, consisted of five groups of Auxiliarists, each comprised of about 11 members. Each group focused on a specific area of interest, with Linda Merryman, a past DC-I, serving as lead facilitator.

The areas targeted and the facilitator for each group, were:

Recreational Boating Safety - Rod Halsted, DVC-PD

Recruiting & Retention - COMO Gene Seibert, IPNACO

Public Education - COMO Carol Urgola, PNACOS

Marine Safety & Operations – COMO Ed Sweeney, NADCO-RBS

The Auxiliary in 2013 – COMO Fred Gates, NADCO-MS

Their assignment: Come up with recommendations based on a scenario in which the boating public, recreational boating industry, Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary might find themselves in 2013.

Workshop participants - who represented a breadth of professional knowledge and perspectives - included the three Area Commodores, 16 District Commodores, 16 District Chiefs of Staff, 10 National Department Chiefs, and 10 Deputy National Department Chiefs.

Participants had to accept the scenario given to them and proceed to develop strategic concepts to meet the challenges it presented. The concepts they

developed had to be formed in a way that would allow the Auxiliary to begin planning now how to institute changes necessary in order for the organization to be a viable institution five years

The groups focused on public education, operations, recruiting and retention, recreational boating safety, and what the Auxiliary might look like in 2013 - all areas that have the greatest impact on our organization.

Action plans developed by the new Auxiliary bridge will provide a basis for future decision-making.

The meltdown workshop developed several strategic concepts to address the challenges that were presented.

Now that the strategic concepts have been devised, threads of commonality are being gathered and developed into a range of actions that will be submitted to the National Executive Committee (NEXCOM) for review and prioritization. NEXCOM will then decide on a path forward.



Stephen Minutolo, USCG Auxiliary Division Branch Chief-Administration, prepares to make a point, as CDR Valerian F. Welicka (center), Auxiliary Division Chief, and CAPT Mark Rizzo, Chief Director of Auxiliary, listen. In the background is Lisa McDaniel, Auxiliary Training Coordinator at USCG Headquarters.





USCG Admiral Praises the Auxiliary As 'Unique, Very Special, and Noble'

Story by JOEL A. GLASS BC-ANN

Editor, Navigator

The Auxiliary has performed exemplary service for the Coast Guard and the boating public in the past, but the organization's continued strong record of volunteerism is even more essential now and into the future, according to a key Coast Guard flag officer.

Rear Admiral Sally Brice-O'Hara, Deputy Commandant for Operations, has worked with the Auxiliary in every job she has held at the 18 different units in which she has served during her 33-year Coast Guard career, "and you have always been a vital part of making me and my units successful," she said.

In her address at NACON and in subsequent remarks to Navigator, the twostar officer stressed that this was a time for great optimism. The future loomed bright for the Auxiliary but, she said, "You must continue to do the job that you do so well again and again because we need vour services."

She said that Auxiliarists are "the professionals" who were on the front lines

educating novices, interacting with operators to catch unsafe practices and equipment gaps before the boat ever leaves the dock, conducting vigilant patrols, and providing a calming voice on the radio, or ready assistance to mariners in distress.

"Keep that up!" she urged. "Boaters will always need your reminders that safety comes first."

RADM Brice-O'Hara said today's Auxiliary had an important advantage - the versatility to pursue activities suited to individual interests while also meeting important Coast Guard needs. Options ranged from on-water operations to non-traditional areas, such as medical and legal services, public affairs, international engagement, marine safety duties, and commercial fishing vessel examinations.

A prime example of this "were the Auxiliarists who provided interpreter skills onboard USCGC Dallas during operations with Cape Verde Coast Guard forces off the coast of Africa, and most recently, when the Cutter Dallas delivered humanitarian aid to Georgia following its invasion by Russia in early August. "Every day, Auxiliarists have an incredible impact – at home and globally," she said.

RADM Brice-O'Hara praised the leadership and dedication of Commodore Steven M. Budar, the outgoing National Commodore, and pledged her support to Commodore Nicholas Kerigan as he prepared to succeed COMO Budar as



Photo: Mel Borofsky, BC-ANS

RADM Sally Brice-O'Hara **DEPUTY COMMANDANT, OPERATIONS**

NACO on November 1.

She congratulated the Auxiliary's recruitment achievements amid adversity. "We know what you went through with the security background checks and the downturn in membership, but I commend every one of you...who helped begin the rebound," she said.

Last year's nine percent rise in membership was "phenomenal," she said. Now it is up to "the wise and experienced" to step forward to mentor, train and guide newcomers so that they soon will become contributing members "in this unique, very special and noble service organization."

The Coast Guard also must play a role, she said. "Clearly, we have a responsibility to help [new Auxiliarists] get established, so that they understand how valued each and every one of you is to Team Coast Guard."

Modernization of both the Coast Guard and the Auxiliary has concerned at least some members. But, RADM Brice-O'Hara emphasized, the Auxiliary revamps are driven by the vision of COMO Budar and with the full confidence of Admiral Thad

W. Allen, the Coast Guard Commandant.

"This is being carried out very thoughtfully, not in haste," to ensure maximum readiness and standardization across the organization, she said. "Change can be difficult. Yet, the Auxiliary has a long and deep history of adapting to the needs of the nation. Your leaders have asked you to take a good look at your structure. They have asked you to fine-tune boundaries of flotillas and divisions to ensure that you are organized regionally to provide as seamless an interface with the Coast Guard as possible."

The Auxiliary also is re-titling certain positions to ensure uniformity. RADM Brice-O'Hara conveyed strong support for each of these initiatives. She stressed that the new Auxiliary Sector Coordinators had an important role in strengthening unity-ofcommand and regular interface with Coast Guard units.

All of these changes are designed to sustain excellence in mission execution, she said.

RADM Brice-O'Hara concluded with robust appreciation for the work of the Auxiliary. "We may not express our gratitude often enough, but I'm here to attest that you are indispensable!" she insisted. "Thank you!...Thank you!...Thank you!...for what you do as volunteers for the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, for the U.S. Coast Guard, and for our great nation, the United States of America."

NACOS and NADCOs

COMO Nick Kerigan, the new National Commodore, has appointed Commodores Steven H. McElroy as National Chief of Staff, Ed Sweeney as National Directorate Commodore for Member Services, Robin Freeman as National

Directorate Commodore for Recreational Boating Safety, and Marc Simoni as National Directorate Commodore for Operations.

COMO McElroy, DCO 5SR since 2007, joined Flotilla 9-10 (Raleigh, N.C.) in January 1993, and has filled a variety of staff positions, with an emphasis on operations.

He served as DSO-OP for six years in North Carolina's Piedmont region. He also held Public Education and Member Training staff officer positions, and has qualified in most Auxiliary programs.

COMO McElroy entered elected leadership as Flotilla Commander in Raleigh, and later served two terms as Division Captain. He was elected RCO-Sector North Carolina in 2004, with overall responsibility for 1,150 Auxiliarists. A year later, he rose to VCO, and subsequentlv to DCO.

He and his wife have operated McElroy & Associates Real Estate for 24 years.

COMO Sweeney, most recently NADCO-RBS, is an active member of Flotilla 35 D11NR (Sacramento, Calif.). A boating enthusiast since age 11, he has served as a Flotilla Commander, DSO-PA, and National Public Affairs Department Chief (DC-A), in addition to holding various other flotilla and division staff positions.

A Coxswain, he has been awarded the Trident (Marine Safety) and RBS Devices and is a Vessel Examiner. Instructor, Marine Visitor, Watchstander, and Ferry Inspector.

COMO Sweeney has received a National Water Safety Congress Letter of Commendation, California Department of Boating & Waterways Distinguished Public Service Award, USCG Office of Boating Safety Award of Excellence (Pacific Region), and multiple Auxiliary Meritorious Service, Commendation,

and Achievement Awards and Coast Guard Unit and Meritorious Unit Commendations.

COMO Freeman has spent six years in the National Education Department, most recently as its Chief (DC-E), and earlier as Division Chief-Special Projects and Deputy Chief-Education.

A California Central Coast native and member of D11NR, she also has served as her flotilla's Vice Commander and Commander, and held Public Education staff officer positions at the flotilla, division and district levels.

COMO Freeman is active in operations, communications, public affairs and USCG support. She has received the Meritorious Service Medal twice and the Auxiliary Commendation Medal four times, among other unit, team and individual awards.

She and her husband own and operate a small art bronze foundry.

COMO Simoni, an Auxiliarist since 1991, has held elective offices ranging from Flotilla Commander to DCO 9CR. He also served as Department Chief-Surface in the National Operations Department from 2000-2005.

An AUXOP member, COMO Simoni is a Coxswain. Qualification Examiner, and Private Aids Verifier, and has qualified on a USCG 49-foot Buov Utility Stern Loading

(BUSL) boat. He was Captain of the 2000 International Search and Rescue team. which captured the U.S. championship.

He is co-owner of an electro-acoustic design and audio/visual integration firm in Michigan.



COMO McElrov



COMO Sweeney



COMO Freeman



COMO Simoni



CAPT Mark D. Rizzo CHIEF DIRECTOR OF AUXILIARY

No Slackers Wanted

If Captain Mark D. Rizzo thought his new assignment as Chief Director of Auxiliary would be a retirement job, Rear Admiral Sally Brice-O'Hara has some news for him - expressed jokingly and with a smile, of course.

USCG Deputy The Commandant for Operations praised CAPT Rizzo, who moved into his new billet during August, noting that, "He has [had] great depth of contact with Auxiliarists in his career."

Nonetheless, she called on COMO Nicholas Kerigan, National Commodore-elect, to. "Work him hard [because] I will work him hard, and together, we will keep him out of trouble!"

RADM Brice-O'Hara went on to praise COMO Steven M. Budar, the outgoing National Commodore, for having led the Auxiliary "with vision." He had brought energy to the position, and motivated and moved a number of issues forward, she said. "That has been invaluable at this juncture...as the Coast Guard also thinks about how it moves forward into the future."

The new National Bridge, "will be a good, solid team that will move forward into the future, and I know we are going to continue to be able to work together and make a difference for the nation that we serve," she said. – **J.A.G.**

A Dolphin helicopter from Coast Guard Air Station Humboldt Bay begins lowering a rescue basket toward the stern deck of the Flotilla 8-11 D11NR Auxiliary Operational Facility F/V Two Sisters, during a night search-and-rescue evolution in Pacific Ocean waters off Crescent City, Calif. Poised on deck to receive the basket is OPFAC crew member Anthony Barron, VCP 8-11.

California Flotilla Assists USCG With Complex SAR Exercises

Story by **MICHELLE MA**

Staff Writer The Daily Triplicate

A brilliant orange sun hung just above the horizon as tall Pacific waves crashed against the 60-foot fishing vessel Two Sisters as she headed out to sea, with coxswain Garry Young, Flotilla 8-11 D11NR (Crescent City, Calif.), at the

As the faint drone of a helicopter from Coast Guard Air Station Humboldt Bay, McKinleyville, Calif., floated in toward F/V Two Sisters, an Auxiliary Operational Facility, her crew stood transfixed at the stern, awaiting the chopper's imminent arrival.

"Heads up!" called out one of the orange-clad Auxiliarists as the helo ambled closer, churning the waters below its shadow into a fierce spray.

Crew members on deck lowered protective goggles over their eyes and gazed up at the orange USCG 'Dolphin' helo that now hovered - with a screaming roar - above Two Sisters. A flight mechanic slowly lowered a large basket toward the OPFAC/fishing boat's deck. Finally, as it touched down, one of the Auxiliarists held the basket briefly in place before it was hoisted back up to the helo.

One more drill completed successfully.

"It's an excellent practice in team work," said Lieutenant Junior Grade Russ Merrick, the helo's co-pilot, as he participated in the drill off the Crescent City coast. "There's a lot that goes into it, so it's nice that we have the Auxiliary

Members of the Crescent City flotilla often help Coast Guard helicopter pilots and crews with search and rescue training and practice exercises, utilizing F/V Two Sisters as each evolution's "target." The helo that Monday evening was conducting night practice and maintaining proficiency, LTJG Merrick said.



During this exercise, the chopper's crew practiced lowering a rescue basket onto the OPFAC's deck. After a couple of successful drops, the crew switched to lowering a line, which the Auxiliarists utilized to guide the basket onto Two Sisters' deck.

LTJG Merrick said it was beneficial for himself and his aircrew to practice rescue scenarios with an actual fishing vessel because, "Nothing rides like a fishing boat but a fishing boat."

Young, who joined the Auxiliary in 2001, has made his OPFAC available to the Air Station for more than four years so that Coast Guard pilots and rescue crews can practice under realistic conditions. Many real-life Coast Guard SAR cases involve a fishing vessel.

Young, who has served as a Crescent City Harbor Commissioner for the last eight years, actually uses his smaller boat – F/V Skip – to catch Dungeness crab during the season, maintaining his F/V Two Sisters strictly for Auxiliary operations.

The Auxiliarist has owned Two Sisters for 29 years, having used it in the past for commercial shrimping and dragfishing. He decked the vessel out as an OPFAC some five years ago. It is now utilized to help tow vessels in distress when Coast Guard assets are unavailable. "I just do it to help [the USCG] out," Young said.

He said he tries to make himself available whenever the Coast Guard pilots need to practice SAR operations, which usually is about twice a month.

F/V Two Sisters, which is docked at Crescent City Harbor, is the only fishing boat available to CGAS Humboldt Bay, which responds to SAR calls in an AOR that extends from the Oregon-California border to the Mendocino-Sonoma, Calif. county line. A number of Coast Guard



Photo: Randy Smith, FL 8-11 D11NR

Crescent City (Calif.) Harbor Commissioner and commercial fisherman Garry Young, FL 8-11, D11NR, on the aft deck of his Auxiliary Operational Facility F/V Two Sisters, just prior to taking the F/V Mistasea under stern-tow. Loaded with 20,000 tons of crab, Mistasea was tanked down, but the Two Sisters crew was able to bring her perfectly back to her slip.

vessels also are used for the drills.

Practice exercises help to simulate real-time rescues, but actual situations can vary dramatically, LTJG Merrick said.

He explained that responders may arrive on-scene only to find that someone must be rescued immediately, or pulled to shore. Such "unknowns" require crews to be nimble, he said. "We try to maintain the thought that every case we go on is going to be the big one."

The Monday night drill with F/V Two Sisters (see photo on facing page) even provided an element of mystery for the chopper pilot, who recently transferred from Miami and was just beginning a tour of duty at CGAS Humboldt Bay. The experienced aviator told LTJG Merrick that he had never performed a night basket-hoist drill in rougher seas.

Auxiliarists down at sea level were impressed with the pilot's precision as he worked to maintain proximity to Two Sisters while 10-foot waves rocked the fishing vessel, making it a constantlymoving target.

"The pilot responded well with what he needed to do," said Alan Porteous, FSO-OP 8-11 D11NR. "He was a good, steady pilot."

This is an edited version of an article that originally appeared in The Daily Triplicate of Crescent City, Calif., on July 12, 2008. Reprinted with permission.

Modern-Day Bataan Death March

Is Not for the Faint-of-Heart, nor the Out-of-Shape



The USCG MSU Lake Charles team joins some of the 4,000 other participants heading down the trail as the 26.2-mile marathon memorializing the Bataan Death March in the Philippines during World War II gets under way.

Story and Photos by DONALD J. GARVEY

FC 11-8 D8WR

The desert of New Mexico is not a place where one would usually find the Auxiliary or the Coast Guard, yet both were there, at the White Sands Missile Range, for the 19th Annual Bataan Memorial Death March on March 30, this year.

The event, actually a full marathon, memorializes and commemorates the defenders of Bataan and Corregidor in the Philippines at the opening of World War II and the infamous Bataan Death March, which began at Mariveles, Luzon, on April 10, 1942.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Japan launched its invasion of the Philippines. Its plan anticipated capture of the islands within a matter of days. The defenders - U.S. military and Philippine forces – retreated to the Bataan Peninsula of Luzon and the island fortress of Corregidor.

That strategy limited attack routes and denied Japan the harbor at Manila Bay. The defenders of Bataan fought with outdated weapons, almost no air support and virtually no outside resupply chain because of the damage to the Pearl Harbor fleet.

Nevertheless, instead of days, the U.S. and Philippine forces held off their attackers for three months, disrupting Japan's war plans and giving the Allies both time and inspiration during the war's dark opening.

After the fall of Bataan, some 70,000 prisoners of war were force-marched 60 miles north to internment at Japanese prison camps. Troops who had been at war on half-rations and survived for months in tropical jungle had to march under the blazing sun with virtually no water or food.

The soldiers were subjected to abuse that ranged from having their heads clubbed with rifle butts to being beheaded or stabbed, should they fall out of line or collapse. Some prisoners managed to escape.

However, as Donald Knox noted in his book *Death March* - the Survivors of Bataan (Harcourt, Inc., 1981): "How many men died on the trip will never accurately be known. Only crude guesses can be made. Probably between 5,000 and 10,000 Filipinos lost their lives. American deaths might conservatively be put between 600 and 700.

"An estimated 54,000 prisoners survived. The end of the march, however, only meant the beginning of the suffering in the prison camps and later, for some, transport to Japan on the notorious 'Hell Ships' to work as slave labor."

The Bataan Memorial Death March is a time to remember and reflect on the battle these service members fought, their

perseverance and determination to survive, and to thank them for their sacrifice.

The latter-day march is a marathon that follows a 26.2-mile course through the missile range. Elevations range from 4,500-5,500 feet, and surfaces span everything from paved roads, to dirt trails, to a two-mile stretch known as The Sand Pit.

Marchers participate in civilian or military divisions, individually or as part of a five-person team in light- or heavy-weight classes. Light-weights (no disrespect intended) carry a CamelBak or similar hydration pack, while heavy-weights carry a back pack with at least a 35-pound load.

A record of more than 4,000 participated in this year's event, which bore the theme, *Remember Bataan*.

While the march is primarily a military event, it is open to all. Most participants are Army and National Guard members, but the Coast Guard was well represented this year. Six activeduty Coasties and I completed this year's march.

Five members of USCG Marine Safety Unit Lake Charles, La. – MST3 Matt Hutchins, MST2 James Hicks, MST1 Jon Henneke and MST3 Chris Moss, led by LT Ed Lacy – participated in the Military Team Light category. Lieutenant Commander Mike Lavrenchik, with the Ninth Coast Guard District Command Center in Cleveland, marched in the Military Individual Light division.

Demonstrating that the Coast Guard Auxiliary and D8WR take a back seat to no one, I also participated, joining the Civilian Heavy category.

The Coast Guard contingent was a center of attention before the event began because our dark-blue ODUs stood out well amid the sea of digital tan and green camouflage uniforms worn by other service members.

The opening ceremonies began at sunrise (0630) with Presentation of the Colors, followed by the Survivors Roll Call for Death March survivors present. Then, the names of survivors who crossed the bar during 2007 were called – with silence as the response.

The base commander, Brigadier General Richard McCabe, tasked each participant to remember Bataan during the day's march and to never accept defeat, never quit, and never leave a comrade behind. This year, an Air Force F-117 Stealth fighter flew overhead, signaling the end of opening ceremonies and the start of the marathon.

As marchers begin the course, there is an opportunity to shake hands with the Bataan survivors – a unique opportunity to meet, and salute, living history. One survivor was shaking hands and thanking each marcher "for being here." He had it backwards: We were there to thank *him*, for being there – in World War II.

The month of March at White Sands is one of the driest months, in an arid venue. Temperatures reached 82° F. Skies were clear. The combination of warm temperature, low humidity, and winds gusting to 30 mph made for a potentially dangerous combination.

Even though participants sweat profusely, it evaporates so quickly that one is unaware of it, making dehydration a constant threat. There are water stations every two miles, but most marchers carried an additional supply.

In true Team Coast Guard spirit, I joined up, unofficially, with the Lake Charles MSU team for the march's first half. There was plenty of inspiration along the way, ranging from mountains on the horizon, to military uniforms from myriad countries such as Canada, Germany and Italy, to the occasional tunes of a bagpiper.

Also inspiring was participation by the Wounded Warriors – troops who returned from war in Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq with limbs missing. These warriors' presence exemplified BGEN McCabe's admonition to "never quit."

The march finished back at the starting line, with crowds cheering the marathoners home. For the heavy-weights, there is the moment of truth at the backpack weigh-in. If a pack is 35 pounds or less, the marcher is disqualified.

This year, instead of using the usual weights, sand or equipment to fill their packs, the Bataan organizers challenged the heavy-weight marchers to load their packs with food to be donated to the local food bank. My own official weight was – 51 pounds of pinto beans, rice, flour and the backpack itself.

The Coast Guard and the Auxiliary participants stayed true to their pre-event pledge by completing the full march. LCDR Lavrenchik led the way, with a time of 7 hours, 45 minutes. I came in at 9 hours, 13 minutes, while LT Lacy brought his MSU team home in 11 hours, 4 minutes.

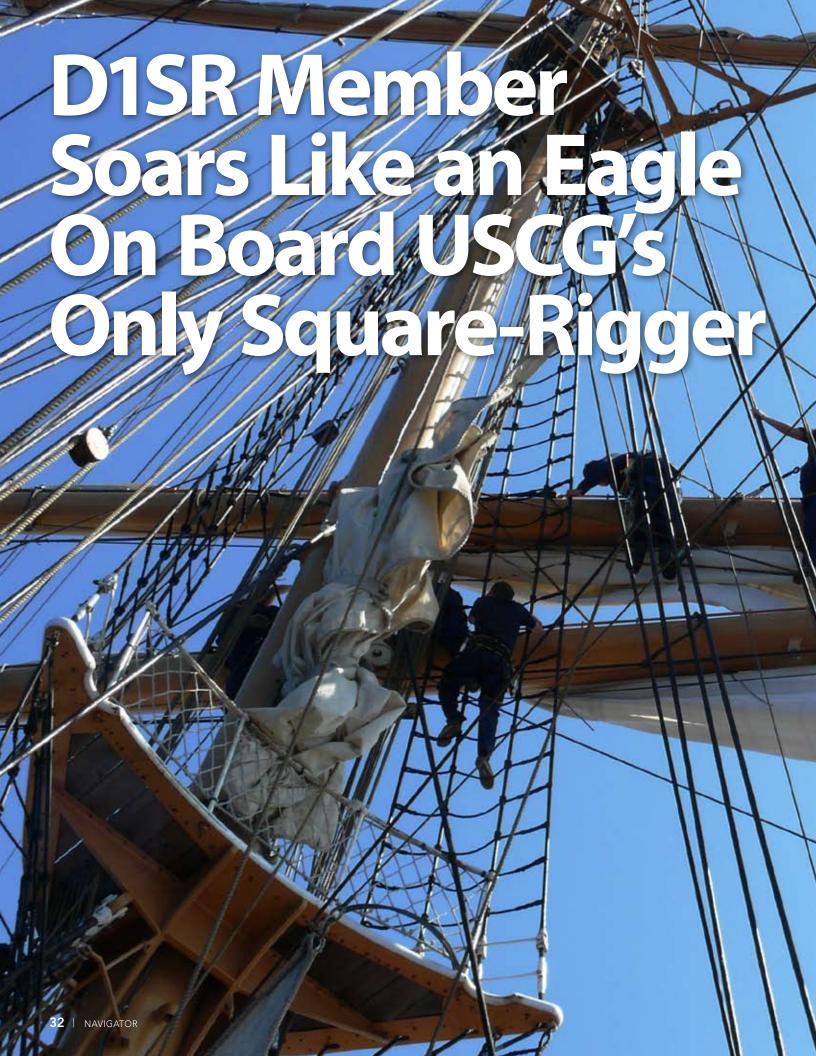
This march is not for the casual hiker. Historically, some 25 percent of the participants suffer casualties during the Bataan Memorial Death March, according to its sponsors. Over half the mishaps involve foot or ankle injuries.

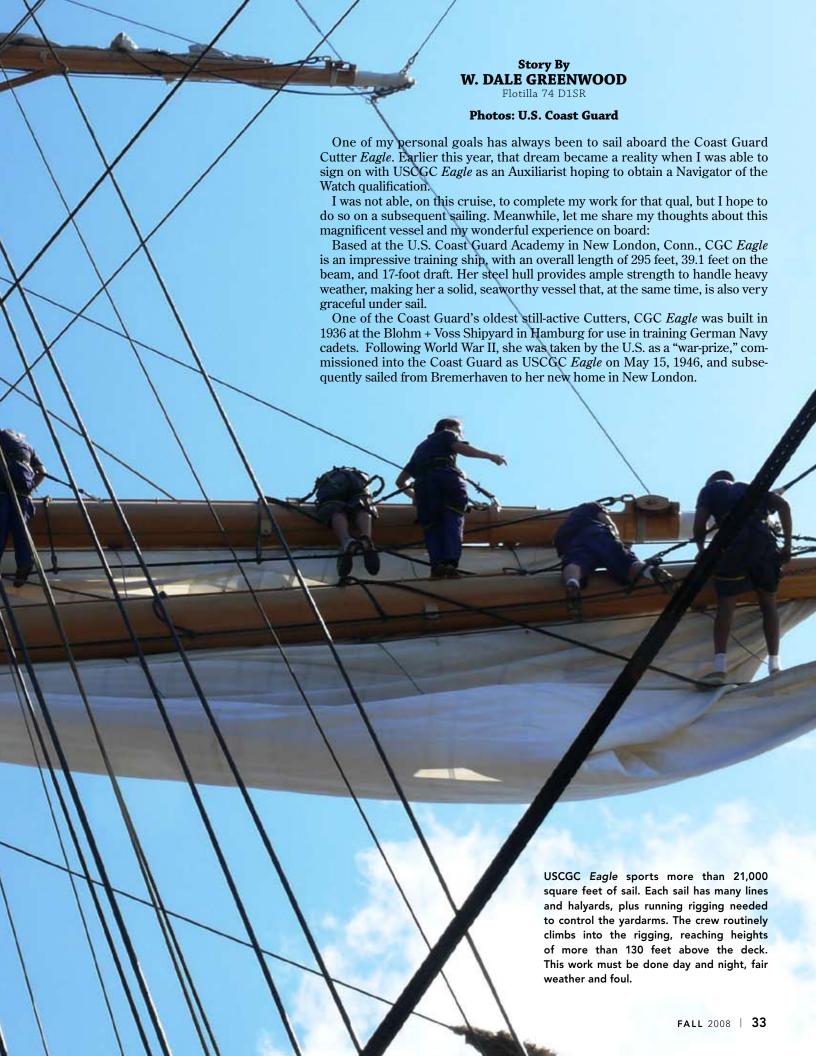
Nonetheless, if you are in good physical shape and are ready to pay the price, consider taking The Challenge to test your stamina and exercise your patriotism.

You can learn more about the Bataan Death March and the memorial marathon by visiting www.bataanmarch.com.



Looking somewhat less than excited, prior to sunrise in the New Mexico desert, are members of the Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Lake Charles (La.) marathon team. From the left are: MST1 John Henneke, MST3 Chris Moss, LT Ed Lacy, MST2 James Hicks, and MST3 Matt Hutchins. Kneeling in front is unofficial team member, Auxiliarist Don Garvey, FC 11-8 D8WR.







CGC Eagle encounters a gale off Cape Hatteras, which is known for such weather. Pushed ahead by winds over 40 knots, the Atlantic became confused; the ocean waters eventually rose to more than 25 feet. The sturdy Cutter was not the least bit frazzled; once some staysails were set, she motor-sailed smartly through the turbulent sea.

At first glance, she appears – in every sense of the word – to be a "perfect lady."

An even deeper perspective develops as one becomes familiar with all of the evolutions required to operate this vessel.

My first, and most-lasting, impression is of her totally dedicated, full-time crew of some 55 enlisted personnel and six commissioned officers. (When Academy cadets are on board for their annual summer training, the total complement can exceed 200.)

Her personnel are not your typical Coast Guard crew. Not only must they be able to perform all of the normal functions associated with operating an underway USCG vessel, but more importantly, they need to know and be able to execute all of the tasks required to operate a square-rigged sailing ship.

The amount of information and knowledge they must memorize is almost overwhelming. Every crew member must be able to explain everything in the 200-page manual, Eagle Seamanship, and "understand the traditions of mastering the sea under sail, learn the vessel, her rig, and the language of the sea.'

With three masts and 23 sails, *Eagle* sports more than 21,000 square feet of sail area. Each sail has numerous lines and halyards associated with it, plus all of the running rigging required to control the yardarms. The crew routinely climbs into the rigging – up to 130 feet, or more, above the deck.

While aloft, they must wear safety harnesses that "snap" them in at all times. They must be ready to perform their specific functions day or night, even during severe weather conditions. The crew work long duty days, with little rest, and are always on-call to handle any emergency or squall.

It definitely takes a special type of person to crew on *Eagle*.

A typical day begins with reveille at 0630, followed 15 minutes later by breakfast, and morning muster at 0755.

The official duty day begins at 0830 with department duties and routines. The mid-day meal is from 1100-1200 and officer's call is at 1240. Departmental work continues after lunch, and then there is a general area clean-up at day's end. Dinner is from 1700-1800, followed by evening reports at 1945 and taps at 2200.

While underway, Eagle operates 24/7. Watchstanders stand two four-hour watches during each 24-hour period. If the operating environment permits, Sundays are on holiday schedule. That means the crew can enjoy a well-deserved day of rest, although normal watchstanding continues – even on Sundays.

During our transcanal sailing from New London to Mazatlán, Mexico, we encountered a gale off Cape Hatteras. With the Gulf Stream heading north and 40+ knot northwest winds, the sea became confused and eventually rose to over 25 feet.

Eagle loved it and, once some staysails were set, she motorsailed smartly and with authority through the heavy seas. In gale conditions, one appreciates this vessel's steel hull and her 1,000 hp diesel engine.

The vessel performed a precision anchorage at Mayport, outside Jacksonville, Fla. Whenever *Eagle* arrives, departs, anchors or transits a restricted body of water, a special team is assembled for navigation. Another special team handles the huge 3,850 pound anchor with its 1,000 feet of chain.

During our transit, Eagle had on board a special team of Coast Guard evaluators to conduct a series of simulated damage-control, fire, explosion, collision and man-overboard (MOB) drills.

The drills were not announced and the crew was required to

respond within specified time-limits. They also had to follow a set of specific, pre-determined responses in a certain order.

At the fire-fighting drill, for example, crew members had to don all of their personal protective equipment, including clothing and boots, self-contained oxygen tanks and helmets with face guards, then enter the damaged area and extinguish the simulated fire – all within three minutes.

With the ship underway, the inspection team introduced, as the final examination, a series of events, each of which built on the preceding event. This included a MOB, a fire in the engine room, a major water leak in the sail locker, the Master suffering a heart attack, and the Executive Officer incurring a head wound.

Atop all that, it suddenly was announced that *Eagle* had struck a submerged object and was taking on water below her starboard waterline.

The crew's response to each event was measured and professional. After an hour or so, the inspection team determined that all the situations were contained and they declared the ship safe. *Eagle* received an overall rating of 94 out of a possible 100.

Transit of the Panama Canal brought us a series of interesting events, some of which were not planned in advance.

The U.S. Embassy in Panama City had invited some 100 guests along for the eight-hour transit, so *Eagle* was moored at a commercial pier in Colón, where they boarded at 0400 on April 26.

The canal pilot boarded two hours later and *Eagle* departed with tug assistance, heading down a narrow channel between marshes and rolling hills before finally entering the first of three locks. We exited the last lock eight hours later and headed to a weekend mooring at the former U.S. Naval Station in Rodman, Panama.

After taking on fresh water and provisions, *Eagle* departed Monday afternoon, but due to strong winds and current, she required two tugs to help move away from the pier.

Our next destination was Mazatlán, some 1,900 nm north. We had allowed two weeks for the transit, but as there was little wind, *Eagle* was able to motor at a steady 10 kts through the gentle swells of the Pacific Ocean.

Eagle was scheduled for The Tall Ships Challenge later in the summer, so the crew spent the better part of our two-week transit sanding and varnishing, priming and painting every inch of the ship.

Once again, the crew was amazing as they pulled out old fittings and made new ones while underway. *Eagle* has a machine-woodmetal shop on board and the crew can fabricate nearly any small item needed for an upgrade.

With the hot sun beating down, temperatures reached over 90°F. It was hard work, but no one ever complained. The crew took pride in their work; they wanted *Eagle* to look her best.

The only significant event during the passage to Mazatlán was a rendezvous with two other Coast Guard Cutters, one of which was 378 feet long and the other, 179 ft. All three vessels moved into formation, with *Eagle* taking the lead in the center; one Cutter off her port quarter, the other off her starboard quarter.

By this time, a helo from the larger Cutter was airborne, and aerial photographs were being taken from every possible angle. It was a very special moment, witnessing three Coast Guard Cutters steaming in tight formation on the vast Pacific Ocean.

Because the helo crew needed some training, it was decided that live ammunition would be fired from the aircraft across the 378-ft. Cutter's bow. Having done so, the helo still had some ammo left over, so a small burst was fired into the ocean, some 200 yards away from, and down *Eagle*'s port side.

Needless to say, it was an impressive display of firepower, a display that would cause any of the "bad guys" to think twice about trying to outrun the U.S. Coast Guard.

Eagle now was ahead of schedule.

The vessel could not moor at Mazatlán before her scheduled May 12 arrival, so her master, Captain Chris Sinnett, utilized the extra time to good advantage by arranging some extra training. He ordered the engine stopped and sails set. The light winds were ideal for learning the basic elements of sail-handing evolutions. And so they were practiced.

Eagle was a full-dress ship when we arrived at Mazatlán, signal flags hanging from three masts. She was opened to the public and for a private reception her second evening in port. I had to disembark then, but not before my entire family joined me for a personal tour of *Eagle*.

Also that day, 140 Coast Guard Academy cadets boarded for the next leg of *Eagle*'s journey – to San Diego, then Astoria, Ore. This is when *Eagle* is in her element, serving as a training platform for future Coast Guard officers.

Eagle was to spend the entire summer of 2008 training cadets while visiting ports along the U.S. west coast before returning to her New London home port in late September.

The author, who holds a USCG Master/50-ton ('six-pack') license, is a former instructor at the U.S. Naval Academy Offshore Sail Training Squadron. He is a retired U.S. Air Force Lieutenant Colonel and Air Force Academy Liaison Officer. He joined the Coast Guard Auxiliary in January 2008.



The crew of CGC Eagle act smartly – and quickly – during one of many drills they were required to perform for Coast Guard evaluators who joined the cruise for her transit from Atlantic to Pacific, via the Panama Canal.

SAR in the **Old West:**

What's That All About?

Story by **TOM NUNES**

Nestled along a winding path in Montana, Helena - the state's capital is the town that gold built.

While other 19th Century gold camps in the Old West boomed, then dwindled into ghost towns, veins of the vellow metal were transforming the remote Last Chance Gulch into Montana's "golden capital."

Helena lives up to its nickname - The Queen City. The city's Victorian architecture dazzles, its Gold Rush history compels, and its arts and culture reflect a richly talented community. Helena's cosmopolitan lifestyle and recreational kaleidoscope speak to the spirit that is still the heart of the West.

And so it was, last summer, that 27 Auxiliarists from around the country and a Coast Guard civilian search- andrescue controller came together in Montana's capital to learn how to teach the new Auxiliary Search and Rescue-Search, Coordination and Execution (AUXSAR-SCE) course.

The course is designed to teach basic SAR knowledge to Coast Guard-certified communications watchstanders, cox-



Edward F. Sweeney, BC-TDT, and Alma Sola, SO-MT 1 D7, work together to solve a perplexing search-and-rescue problem as Mariano Velazquez, FC-13 D7, observes during the AUXSAR-SCE Course.

swains, boat crew, Quartermasters of the Watch, and AuxAir pilots and Air Crew how to properly coordinate and execute a SAR case, on-scene.

The curriculum is targeted at Auxiliarists who are assigned to operational units or conduct patrols under orders with a SAR responsibility, including coordination and execution of a Search Action Plan (SAP).

The course material was developed at the National SAR School, located at USCG Training Center Yorktown (Va.). The school has assumed responsibility for keeping the course current and will totally revise it at least every three

[Editor's Note: The Auxiliary National Training Department says the SAR-SCE course and study materials, which replace the old AUXSAR in the AUXOP program, is now available and ready to be taught to members.

Course instructors at Helena were led by Chief Avionics Electrical Technician

(AETC) Gene Turner, who is assigned to the SAR School.

The course is divided into ten segments - SAR System & Organization, Search & Rescue Unit Duties, On-Scene Commander Duties, General SAR Policies, Drift Theory, Search Planning Variables & Laboratory, Search Patterns & Lab, SAR Mission Communications, Surface & Aviation Resources, Rescue Planning, and Flare Incidents.

Course content is based on both the **Boat Operations and Training Manual** and the Coast Guard Air Operations Manual.

Students in this course must be prepared for lots of reading - which focuses on definitions, policy, and understanding how a SAR case is prosecuted – and lots of plotting work. Knowing when to use a square or sector search pattern, versus a creeping line or parallel pattern. makes one a better SAR contributor.

When Auxiliarists gather for a C-school such as this was, it is fascinating to observe the fruits of Auxiliary training.

Whether from New York or Arizona. each student had plotting skills (some more than others) and a good basic grounding in Coast Guard procedure.

The Montana class roster was rather

Included were a Merchant Marine Academy graduate with 40 years at sea, two retired Coast Guard Commanders, and a former USCG Boatswain's Mate serving as a SAR Controller at Sector Portland (Ore.).

And so, this turned out to be truly a team effort, with each class member contributing his or her strengths to the learning process.

AUXSAR-SCE is available only for inperson training.

WE ARE ONE; WE SET THE FUTURE



Editor's Note: The author is the 2008 winner of the COMO Charles S. Greanoff Inspirational Award, which each year recognizes the Auxiliary's 'most distinguished' Flotilla Commander.

Thank you, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and U.S. Coast Guard.

As you might imagine, it was an incredible honor to have been selected as the 2008 recipient of the Commodore Charles S. Greanoff Inspirational Award.

But - in all honesty - while the award is given to an individual, I could never have been that individual had I not been blessed with the joy of commanding the most terrific assemblage of men and women who ever wore an Auxiliary uniform.

If you were to pin me down as to how I earned this award, I would have to say that I was smart enough to stay out trouble while my people in Flotilla 12-4 D11SR (Los Angeles), and my Vice Flotilla Commander for two years, Robin Neuman (now Flotilla Commander), made me look like a hero. Clearly, they share in any honor I have earned.

D1SR Signs an Innovative MOU

Story by COMO TOM VENEZIO

DCO 1SR

The First Southern Region has been fortunate over the last two years in having built-out a very extensive system of AuxNet radio repeaters throughout its Area of Responsibility.

At the present time, there are 10 of these repeaters covering the District's entire AOR, including all of Connecticut, along with eastern New York State and northern New Jersey.

The repeaters are Auxiliaryowned and paid for with a combination of CGAUX and USCG funds. Auxiliarists and outside contractors (paid with Auxiliary funds) installed the equipment.

In addition, there now are more than 300 Auxiliary Operational Radio Facilities throughout the AOR that are owned, and offered for use, by D1SR members.

While still serving as Commander, First Coast Guard District, Rear Admiral Timothy Sullivan felt that this network could be a valuable resource – especially for enhancing interagency communications during major emergencies between the USCG and state and regional authorities.

The basic concept would be for members to provide, during emergencies, a link between the state Emergency Operations Centers (EOC) and appropriate Coast Guard Sectors and Auxiliary units.

Commander Elizabeth Young, DIRAUX 1SR, Gail Venezio, DDC-R, and I [COMO Tom Venezio, DCO 1SR] utilized the long-standing contacts of Jim Canavan, ADSO-CM 1SR, to develop an innovative Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the New York State Emergency Management



Photo: CDR Elizabeth Young, USCO

Rear Admiral Timothy Sullivan, acting during his next-to-last day as Commander, Coast Guard First District, signs the innovative radio interoperability Memorandum of Understanding with New York State under the watchful eye of Tom Venezio, DCO 1SR. Looking on are Captain Timothy Skuby, Chief of Staff, USCG First District, and Rear Admiral Dale G. Gabel, RADM Sullivan's replacement in Boston.

Office (EMO).

EMO Director John Gibb was very receptive and supportive of the idea of first-responder interoperability within the District. As a result of several months' work and with the assistance of the First District legal staff, the MOU was developed.

I am unaware of any other Auxiliary District having hammered out a comparable agreement.

The MOU's most important elements include the following:

- AuxNet frequencies are now in the New York State Emergency Management Agency's statewide radio system. This will facilitate interagency communications during major incidents.
- Auxiliarists will be trained to work in the state's EOC during major events to provide closer liai-

son and interagency communications. When doing this, they will be serving as Auxiliary members and will wear Auxiliary uniform. The Coast Guard will always have "first-access" to them, and the Auxiliarists will respond only after receiving appropriate approval from the order-issuing authority.

• New York State offered to the Auxiliary use of its emergency field units, as needed. These units, which are fully equipped trucks, have microwave communications capability, as well as secure Internet capability. All of that capability will be available for D1SR to communicate with its units in other areas of the AOR

The MOU was signed on July 1, this year. By coincidence, that was RADM Sullivan's next-to-last day as USCG First District Commander.

I truly am proud to be one of you and one among you in this incredible service organization. But, to tell you the truth, I came very close to not ever being a member of the Auxiliary.

I am a walking, breathing example of how the Auxiliary needs to reach more people. I say that because you almost missed *me*, and I almost missed being part of an organization and service that has become such a huge part of my life.

Except for my time in the U.S. Air Force, I have lived in, and around, boats and boating all my life. And, for 37 years as a boating enthusiast over age 17, I was never recruited by the Coast Guard Auxiliary. Despite my service in the Air Force and being incredibly open to quasi-military volunteer work, I never found the Auxiliary and – what is more important – it never found me.

What does that say? Well, it tells me that all of us are casting

a very small net to sustain and grow our numbers. It tells me that we need to get ourselves noticed. How?

Identify and support terrific leaders; have a membership that is so energized, so excited, so participative, so appreciated, and so loyal to the Auxiliary that they would no more leave our ranks than leave their families.

We are the ones who – at the behest and guidance of Admiral Thad Allen, our National Commodore, National Board and Staff, and District Commodores – can, and must, excite and motivate our newer members. And, we are the ones who will determine how successful the Auxiliary will be today and in the future.

It is an honor and privilege to serve with you. You are all great patriots.

- Alfred J. Verdi, DVCDR-12 D11SR

The USCG 'Essence'

ADM THAD W. ALLEN

Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard

Editor's Note: The following ALCOAST introduces and explains the Coast Guard's new 'Guardian Ethos.' While targeted at Coasties, it makes interesting reading for Auxiliarists as well, helping us to better understand the role of our active-duty partners in Team Coast Guard.

As the Coast Guard modernizes, the Guardian Ethos will assist the service in tying our military, maritime, multi-mission character to a more tangible service identity, an identity that will resonate with our people, our external partners, and customers alike.

We have an incredibly rich heritage and I believe it is time to officially define our 'ethos.'

About a year ago, Training Center Cape May was charged with refining their curriculum to support the development of a more physically-fit apprentice who had internalized the Coast Guard's culture, character and core values as depicted in Publication Number One. During this process, the Guardian Ethos was created.

The Guardian Ethos is not intended to replace the Coast Guard Creed. The Creed is a contract an individual makes with the Coast Guard: the Ethos is different. It defines the essence of the Coast Guard and could be viewed as the contract the Coast Guard and its members make with the nation and its citizens.

The Coast Guard has served the American public for over 200 years. The surge capabilities inherent in a military organization, combined with multiple authorities/competencies due to our multi-mission nature, make us unique in government and of great value to our nation. However, because we are so multi-faceted, from time to time we are not well understood.

The Guardian Ethos is the embodiment of the Coast Guard's Capstone Doctrine, Publication Number 1 (http://www.uscg. mil/top/about/pub1.asp). The Guardian Ethos is the essence of our service. It is who we are.

Dating back to the days of the Steamboat Inspection Service, the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service, the U.S. Life Saving Service, and the U.S. Lighthouse Service, we have a proud history of serving the citizens of the United States in the maritime domain, providing safety, security and stewardship.

As America's maritime guardians, we protect them, we defend them, and we save them. We are their shield, and we stand always ready for the call to duty. We live the Coast Guard core values. Individually, we are each guardians, who have sworn an oath to support and defend the Constitution and who adhere to the Coast Guardsman's Creed.

Together, we are the United States Coast Guard. The adoption of the Guardian Ethos provides us with a consistent service-wide term for our people. We also know guardians honor the past but must continually look to the future and adapt.

To protect, defend, and save - today and tomorrow - we must understand that change and modernization are consistent with our Guardian Ethos. As guardians, we will continually change and improve our Coast Guard.

We are guardians.



THE GUARDIAN ETHOS

I am America's Maritime Guardian. I serve the citizens of the United States.

I will protect them.

I will defend them.

I will save them.

I am their shield.

For them, I am Semper Paratus.

I live the Coast Guard core values.

I am a Guardian.

We are the United States Coast Guard.





Flotilla 15-8 D11SR claims to have set a new Auxiliary record by being the first unit to swear in 22 new members at one meeting. The first group of new members was administered the Oath of Allegiance by Commander Richard Symons (left), D11SR Director of Auxiliary, during a special session that superseded the Yorba Linda, Calif., flotilla's regular monthly meeting. The public was invited to witness the historic event at the Yorba Linda Community Center.



Photo: Kirk Scarborough, FSO-PA 15-8 D11SR



Photo: Kristoffer Diel, Flotilla 42 D8CR

Aladra C. Sullivan (left), FSO-PA 42, and Edward M. Digiovanni, VFC-42, both D8CR, show Woodlake School (Mandeville, La.) students how to wear life jackets properly, during the annual Health & Safety Fair. The kids were among 700 Woodlake students taught that lesson by flotilla members. Various-size and type life jackets were provided by BoatU.S., and West Marine awarded three kids new life jackets for the 'most-impressive' explanation of why they must be worn on a boat. All students received a Wear It! sticker and frozen coolpop from Captain James Montgomery, D8 Director of Auxiliary, as 'graduation' gifts.



San Diego Padres 'player' #36 - actually, a member of the team's Pad Squad Fan Club - provides a final mission briefing to the Division 1 D11SR Color Guard prior to its presentation of the Colors during the pre-game National Anthem. Watching closely over #36's shoulder is #37 - Padres starting pitcher Mike Adams. Auxiliarists are, from the left: Color Guard Commander Will Tisch, FC-15; Ticin Parker, FSO-CS 16-3; Anthony Steen, Flotilla 11; and, Franklyn Harris, Flotilla 15.

USCG Station Barnegat Light, N.J., and Flotilla 72 D5NR joined forces just prior to National Safe Boating Week to help inform Little Egg Harbor Township (N.J.), residents about available volunteer and government emergency agencies and services. The Station trailered over a 25-foot RBS manned by, from the left: SN Hannah McLaurin and MK3 Mark Burch, USCG, and Lee Frost, FSO-MT 72. Event visitors signed up for Vessel Safety Checks and America's Boating Course - and for the Auxiliary itself.





Staten Island Kids Don't Float

Division 7 D1SR this summer launched one of the first Auxiliary Kids Don't Float programs on the eastern seaboard. Celebrating the event at Tottenville Marina on Staten Island, N.Y., are, from the left: Frank Ferraiuolo, DDC-P; YN2 Edwin Matthews, D1SR DIRAUX Staff; Michael Garone, VFC 14-4; Ron Pratasiewicz, FC 14-4; Janet Ferraiuolo, FSO-PA 14-4; Steven Kisver, DCDR-14; Commander Elizabeth Young, D1SR DIRAUX; SK1 Kerwin Murrell, D1SR DIRAUX Staff; Sherry Kisver, DVCDR-14; Fred DeLisi, SO-IS 14; Salvatore Musmeci, Flotilla 14-4; Judith DiMaio, BC-MWO; CWO2 Emanuel Zambrana, D1SR OTO; and, Stephen Ackerman, DCOS 1SR.

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