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## News Release/Feature Story

### Auxiliary Aviation Coordinator Fischer awarded the USCG Commandant's Shipmate Coin

SAN JUAN, P.R. - Auxiliary Member Charles "Chuck" Fischer accepted the Coast Guard Shipmate Coin from Admiral Robert J. Papp, Jr., of the United States Coast Guard during an all hands assembly held at Coast Guard Air Station Borinquen (BQN) October 18, 2012.

Fischer, who is the Auxiliary Aviation Coordinator (ACC) for Sector San Juan serving the U.S. Virgin Islands and a member of the St. Croix, Christiansted USCG Auxiliary Flotilla 16-01 contributed 5000 volunteer hours working to arrange aviation operations, recruitment and nonprofit activities.

"I will be giving him a coin in a moment," Papp said. "And that like doubles the pay he gets. These volunteers help us out to get the Coast Guard missions done."



SAN JUAN, PR - Coast Guard Commandant Admiral Robert J. Papp, Jr. exhibits one of three Shipmate Coins that were awarded at the Air Station Borinquen all hands assemble October 18, 2012. U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary photo by Public Affairs Specialist III Robert A. Fabich, Sr.

The Commandant's Shipmate Coin is awarded individually by Admiral Papp to Active Duty, Reserve, Auxiliary, Civilian and Team Coast Guard partners who contributes above and beyond toward his four Coast Guard guiding principles. These principles set a course that: "Steadies the Service, Honors our Profession, Strengthens our Partnerships, and Respects our Shipmates."

From October 2010 to September 2011, under Mr. Fischer's command, the mission hours flown by Auxiliary Aircraft for the Air Station increased 56% from 391 to 612. The following year, October 2011 to September 2012, the mission hours increased again by 22% to 744. "What a great job you have been doing as the Auxiliary Aviation Coordinator," Papp acknowledged. "Yourself, you have flown as Pilot or Pilot In Command for 7000 hours. I want to thank you for being a good Shipmate. I am not saying just an Auxiliary Shipmate, I am saying a good Shipmate." Auxiliary Air pilots utilize their personal aircraft assisting Coast Guard missions.

Mr. Fischer was tasked with developing a format to standardize monthly mission reporting across District 7 Auxiliary Air locations. He also reviewed Auxiliary and USCG operational manuals and provided increased clarity surrounding criteria governing pilot requirements for Passenger Transport missions. He has been active in implementing new photography procedures to enhance Auxiliary patrol aircraft's capability of determining if an observed vessel should be classified as a Target of Interest and be worthy of further investigation by Coast Guard surface patrols.

In his role as Auxiliary Air Coordinator, he has been responsible for coordinating and presenting at meetings and training sessions, Auxiliary as well as Active Duty USCG, with many involving local, territorial and federal government agencies. As a Auxiliary Instructor Pilot/Flight Examiner, he has worked and trained with Auxiliary aviators operating from Air Station Borinquen.

The Auxiliary Aviation is not just for pilots! Auxiliary members and any US Citizen, after passing initial security screening, can participate in the program. While the USCG Auxiliary does not issue pilot licenses, it does train Pilots, Observers and Air Crew in the art of being part of the crew in an Auxiliary aircraft under USCG orders. Aviation crew must also undergo enhanced security checks in order to become qualified for Direct Operations (DO).



USCG Auxiliary aircrew are comprised of: Aircraft Commanders - Pilots with more than 1000 Pilot in Command (PIC) hours, an instrument rating, and training in SAR procedures. First Pilots - Pilots with more than 500 PIC hours and training in SAR procedures. Co-Pilots - Pilots with more than 200 PIC hours but with restrictions on flyable missions. Observers - Trained in observation, communications, and the aviation programs. There are minimum crew requirements on operational missions. Air Crew - An upgrade for Observers who successfully complete additional training. Training elements consist of communications, navigation, weather, and flight planning.

"My coordinator duties are just a part of the overall Coast Guard Auxiliary activities," explained Mr. Fischer. "Other members of our Flotilla provide an equally valuable service promoting Recreational Boating Safety, some utilizing their personal facilities and assisting the Coast Guard with surface operational missions. It's truly an honor and privilege to serve with and represent this fine group of volunteers that contribute so much to Team Coast Guard and to people of this great country."

Mr. Fischer, born in Cuero, Texas holds a Private Pilot license for 46 years. His father served in the U.S. Coast Guard flying Martin PBM Mariners overseas at the end of World War II. While working towards his Master of Science degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1973, Mr. Fischer conducted his field work in Alberta, Canada. Receiving his degree, he accepted a position with an Alberta-based environmental company, married a Canadian, created his own business and started a family.

"But you also got a family to take care of as well. Your wife Joyce, children Jennifer, Sarah, Douglas, Erin, Robert, David and Anita," Papp expressed. Family understandings of committing

SAN JUAN, PR - Auxiliary Aviation Coordinator Charles "Chuck" Fischer reacts as Admiral Papp presents him with the Shipmate Coin at Air Station Borinquen October 18, 2012. Fischer volunteered 5000 hours to the USCG Auxiliary aviation program. U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary photo by Public Affairs Specialist III Robert A. Fabich, Sr.

volunteer hours to Coast Guard missions sometime creates a strain on home life activities. Mr. Fischer continues to balance the needs of assisting the Coast Guard with enjoying his family's time together.



SAN JUAN, PR - Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 16-01 Member Joyce Fischer, wife of Charles Fischer, confers with USCG Active Duty personnel prior to Admiral Papp's address at Air Station Borinquen October 18, 2012. Mr. and Mrs. Fischer transported Auxiliary members from St. Croix to BQN in their private plan which they utilized assisting Coast Guard missions. . U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary photo by Public Affairs Specialist III Robert A. Fabich, Sr.

Upon residing in Canada for many years, his company purchased a business in the Turks and Caicos Islands and he moved there for three years with his wife and youngest daughter. Venturing on he resided in Oklahoma City serving as Chief Financial Officer for an oil and gas company that he still partners with. Retired from that company in 2007 he purchased The Palms at Pelican Cove making St. Croix his current home.

Mr. Fischer and his wife, own and operate The Palms at Pelican Cove, a Hotel/Resort on the north shore of St. Croix in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Since the Fischer's ownership, this resort has achieved the No. 1 rating in the U.S. Virgin Islands by guests of Trip Advisor and top Hotel/Resort on St. Croix in 2012 by readers of the VI Daily News.

The Fischer's contribute, and donate, function space for non-profit organizations on St. Croix, including the Women's Coalition, Holiday Hope, Animal Welfare Center, Boys and Girls Club, St. Croix Environmental Association, Navy League and local USCG Flotilla 16-01.

In December 2011, The Palms at Pelican Cove was recognized for its contributions to environmental protection by being presented with the prestigious international Blue Flag Beach award, the only award of its kind on St. Croix, and the first of four presented for beaches in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

While serving on the Board of Directors of the St. Croix Environmental Association from 2009 through 2011, Mr. Fischer was instrumental in setting policies for protection of the environment while still allowing for island development.

As a businessman, Mr. Fischer serves on the Board of Directors for private companies including Chaparral Energy Inc. (Oklahoma), C.A. Fischer Lumber Co. Ltd. (Alberta), CanAm Investments Ltd. (Alberta) and Pelican Cove Investments LLC (U.S. Virgin Islands). He provides membership expertise to the St. Croix Hotel and Tourism Association, Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, Canadian Owners and Pilots Association, and Quiet Birdmen.

Mr. Fischer's previous involvement with non-profits included the Habitat for Humanity in Oklahoma and Western Retail Lumberman's Association (WRLA) in Canada. He received the prestigious Lumberman of the Year Award serving eleven years on the Board of Directors of the WRLA, eight as President. He also served on the Board of Directors for the Edmonton Flying Club.

Mr. Fischer's Auxiliary Awards include the Commodore's Certificate of Appreciation AAAC, Sustained Auxiliary Service Awards, USCGA Certificate of Appreciation, Auxiliary Performance Award for Operations, USCG Meritorious Team Commendation, USCG Award of Operational

Merit, Auxiliary Performance Award for Operations, USCG Medal of Operational Merit, USCG Auxiliary Commendation Medal for Administration.

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary created by an Act of Congress in 1939 is the uniformed civilian component of the U.S. Coast Guard supporting the Coast Guard in nearly all its missions. Coast Guard Auxiliary men and women live and work in the communities they serve and understand the unique needs of their communities. For more information on the Coast Guard Auxiliary, please visit [www.cgaux.org](http://www.cgaux.org).

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