

RBS

Job One



**New Collaboration Established with
Auxiliary and Elite Anglers**

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RBS *Job One*

December 2020

Publication of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary
Recreational Boating Safety Directorates

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Professional Angler Brandon Card gives an enthusiastic thumbs up to the “Wear It” Campaign.

(Photo by Charles Truthan)

RBS *Job One* is the flagship publication for the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) Directorates; RBS Outreach (B), Public Education (E) and Vessel Examination and Partner Visitation (V). Its purpose is to inform all members of the Auxiliary of current developments affecting their job performance in conducting the core mission assigned by the Coast Guard and to share best practices. RBS *Job One* is published several times a year. Send submissions to sydneyhay@mindspring.com.

Distribution: All Coast Guard Auxiliarists with email addresses in AUXDATA, COMDT (CG-BSX) staff, CGAuxA executive director, and U.S. Power Squadrons, via direct email.

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Memorandum of Agreement Signed with Bass Anglers Sportsman Society (BASS)

What it Means for the Deckplate

By Charles E. Truthan, D.O. BC-BLW

On 6 March 2011, while on Public Affairs (PA) duty with Flotilla 15-3 at the annual Miller Boat Show in Ocala, Florida, I happened to see two of the Bassmaster Elite Series Anglers talking just a few feet away from me. Totally ignorant on the subject of professional angling, I asked about their use of PFDs in their tournaments and about Vessel Safety Checks (VSC). They replied that they are required to wear their PFD any time their main engine is running, but not while using their trolling motor. Although they had never heard about the VSC program, when I mentioned that it might reduce their number of boardings by local law enforcement (LEO), they said “We want in!” It turns out they are frequently stopped by the local LEOs just because of who they are.

A frenzied 12 days followed, starting with a presentation at their annual business meeting on 9 March where a near-unanimous hand vote supported wanting to participate in the VSC program. On 14 March we had 5 days performing the first VSC Blitz for the Bassmaster Elite Series Anglers. Of the 100 Anglers, 83 VSCs were begun and 55 Decals were awarded. No one “failed” the VSC. They simply did not receive a decal. Semantics, perhaps, but they are required to be in compliance with all USCG regulations in order to compete. None of the officials at B.A.S.S., (Bass Anglers Sportsman Society) the parent organization, are ever given information as to who participates. They know only who has been awarded a decal by the presence of one on the boat.

After a few days of recovery from all the activities, I had a chance to research exactly who these Anglers



Vessel Safety Examiners Ken Weeks and Joe Giangrosso of the Eighth Coastal District prepare to offer VSCs to professional anglers at a Bassmaster Elite Series event in Bainbridge, GA.

(Photo by Charles Truthan)

were and what this “Bassmaster Elite Series Tournament” was all about. These are the “Super Bowl Players” of the Bass fishing world. Each of their tournaments has a \$1 Million dollar prize purse, split up among the top 50% of the anglers. Many of the anglers have their own television shows and all have multiple sponsorships (as seen on their colorful boat wraps). I quickly envisioned a long-term plan, that one day all their tournaments would not just offer, but even require a current VSC decal to participate. I also

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saw the PA opportunities to outreach to this exclusively “high profile” boating community with RBS information at ALL of their National tournaments and Public Service Announcement (PSA) opportunities from national figures. Several video and audio PSAs have already been done.

Over the intervening years, with lots of give and take from both parties and having a wonderful time working with these ambassadors for fishing and boating safety, we’ve formed an excellent working relationship. This was developed by the efforts of more than 200 Auxiliarists, as well as the anglers themselves. In 2014, I approached one of the three principals with B.A.S.S. about the idea of a MOA for RBS/PA space at their events. In 2018, I met with the CEO of B.A.S.S. and we both saw the value in pursuing an MOA, and to start it that year (at the next event) with all of the Bassmaster Elite Series being opened for CGAUX participation. We were offered free space in the vendor area, dependent upon the staffing capabilities of the local flotilla with support from the division

if needed. In 2019, this same offer was expanded to all of the B.A.S.S. National tournaments: Classic, Elite, Nations, College, High School, Opens, and their newest, Kayak Series.

Finally, after 10 years of events and 2 years of work on the MOA itself through the Chain of Leadership and Management in CGAUX, we have a signed MOA! In it the BASS association agrees to “promote the RBS program through advertising, public relations efforts, editorials, internal logo branding, web site promotional and other forms of communications designed to reach the recreational boating public.”

They also commit to identifying BASS as a corporate supporter of the RBS program at Bassmaster Events on the Association website www.cgauxa.org, the Auxiliary website www.cgaux.org, as well as other mediums and to “support the Auxiliary in its efforts to implement the RBS program as instructed by the Commandant of the Coast Guard.”

The Auxiliary agrees to, at their discretion, provide annual Vessel Safety Checks (VSC) and PA booths



Even non-professional anglers can take a lesson on safety from B.A.S.S and have their vessel checked for safety by the Auxiliary

(Photo courtesy of US Coast Guard Boating Safety Division)

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Above: A professional angler takes to the water after inspection by the Auxiliary at a Bassmaster Elite Series event in Palatka, FL.

(Photo by Charles Truthan)

Below: Ralph Thomas Jr. examines Angler Skyler Hamilton's vessel at an event in Knoxville, TN.

(Photo by Bill Long)



for the Bassmaster Elite Series Anglers at their various events throughout the year.

To accomplish this, the Auxiliary must encourage Auxiliarists to become qualified Vessel Examiners, encourage Auxiliarists to perform VSCs, and staff RBS booths and other public affairs events as a critical component of the RBS mission.

The Auxiliary agrees to continue to maintain a website for public use to request a VSC and boater safety education and to publicize this on websites, social media, and in printed or other materials as part of RBS outreach initiatives.

Nothing in this MOA means you are “required” to participate in any or all of these activities at BASS events. All we are doing is informing you of the opportunity for a PA/RBS event in your AOR.

Your ability to participate by providing VSCs and a PA booth, with or without the assistance of division and other flotillas is your decision. But, it is a great opportunity to expand upon the Auxiliary mission of Recreational Boating Safety.

Semper Paratus

Ω

RBS Job One Introduces the New Assistant National Commodore for Recreational Boating Safety

Recreational Boating Safety Team: It is a great honor for me to relieve Commodore Robert Shafer as Assistant National Commodore, Recreational Boating Safety. Bob Shafer is an extremely hard act to follow. I would like to thank him for his outstanding support provided during the past six years. Bob's level of attention and devotion to the RBS cause were extraordinary. We owe much of the success of the three RBS Directorates to his efforts and guidance. Commodore Shafer is a leader who inspires confidence which motivates others to achieve great personal results. We thank Commodore Shafer for a job very well done and wish him smooth sailing in all his endeavors as he moves forward.

One of my mentors used a command phrase that said, "Each one, reach one, teach one." That was Commodore Nancy Rudiger, my predecessor as Commodore of 9ER who used that phrase to motivate the district members to improve their performance in each of the three areas. I would like to apply "each one, reach one, teach one" instruction to each of our three RBS Directorates. When enacted, all of us in these directorates will reach out to our districts, divisions, flotillas, and partner organizations to share the vision of safe boating via outreach, education, and vessel examinations. Our mutual goal: to improve our quality, performance, and follow-through resulting in a better and a more positive impact on both our members and our partners in the boating public.

We will put all our energy to saving lives through preventive SAR. We will focus on partnerships and opportunities that will accelerate efforts to improve market share that results in the boating public being safer as they navigate the waters of the United States.

I congratulate **Mr. David Fuller, Mr. Chris Wilson, and Mr. Jim Cortes** for their willingness to step up to move their respective directorates forward. We all have much to do, however, as the RBS Team we will head into the future knowing that we will be bringing new and innovative products, efficient and new processes, and many new partners to assist us in achieving our common goal – Recreational Boating Safety.

I thank you all for the work you have already accom-



plished and for all the effort you will put into our future; your work personifies the Auxiliary being SEMPER PARATUS.

The RBS Directorate(s) are a dedicated group of professionals who possess the skills to convert ideas into positive actions and face demanding challenges with ideal solutions. They provide unwavering support for the Auxiliary's objectives and unstinting commitment to job accomplishment. It is a special honor for me to be the leader of these Auxiliarists.

V/R,

COMO Robert M. Laurer
Assistant National Commodore
Recreational Boating Safety

New Director of RBS Outreach Sets Ambitious Two-Year Agenda

I am very excited to take the helm of the Recreational Boating Safety Outreach Directorate. I have served the last four years in the Vessel Examination and Programs Visitation Directorate. I served as Director for two years and Deputy Director also for two years. The RBS team is made up of the following Directorates, Vessel Examination and Program Visitation, Recreational Boating Safety Outreach, and Public Education. These three groups work hand in hand to help push the RBS mission.

I serve in the 5NR and live in South Jersey with my wife Cathy. I am the proud father of Carin, Rebecca, and Connor, and grandfather of two grandsons Jackson and Jason. I currently serve as President of Fire Company #1 and Captain of the Fire Police Unit. Also have been an active firefighter for over 30 years.

I served as Councilman and Council President of my city as well as Director of Public Safety for 6 years. I also enjoyed coaching youth sports football, basketball, and baseball. You can say volunteering is in my blood.

The Coast Guard Auxiliary is a big part of my life. I am a Vessel Examiner and Program Visitor. I also work with the Coast Guard Academy Partners. I have held various positions with the Auxiliary and am finishing up my term as Flotilla Commander for 53-18-02. I serve as ADSO-PV for the district as well.

Over my time on National Staff, I have held positions in the Strategic Planning Directorate, Human Resources Directorate, Vessel Examination and Program Visitation Directorate, and now I start my journey in the Recreational Boating Safety Directorate.

Some of my goals for the two year term include the following:

- **Make our RBS Job One publication the premiere source for the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary Recreational Boating Safety groups. We will not only inform all members of new developments affecting boating safety. We will share best practices to our members and also our partners.**
- **Will look to update webpage. Also will increase our footprint in the social media world to promote Recreational Boating Safety.**



- **Paddle Sport Safety to reduce this tragic increase in boating fatalities, boating safety and educational organizations must determine effective methods to reach recreational kayakers. However, reaching these boaters may be difficult. They often buy their vessels from “big box” stores that do not employ staff who can provide expert guidance. This needs our immediate attention.**
- **Outreach Liaison will continue to work with partners and reach out to new partners. Proud to have signed a MOA with BASS, LLC for the Bassmaster Elite Series Events.**
- **Districts Liaison Division: Updates to SLO Guide and Exam completed.**

I look forward to working with my team for the next two years. We have a group of dedicated hard-working individuals that really make a difference. Please feel free to contact our team if you have any questions or suggestions.

V/R,

Christopher “Chris” Wilson DIR-B
Director of Recreational Boating Safety Outreach
US Coast Guard Auxiliary National Staff

Increased Boating Safety Education a Key Goal for Director

I joined the Auxiliary in 2002 after having been recruited to be a Watchstander due to my friendship with another ham radio operator who was an Auxiliarist. After joining, I realized there was more to do than sit at the radio console, so I enrolled in a number of member-training classes, earned multiple qualifications, and began to accept responsibility and learn as much about the organization as I could.



I accepted several flotilla and division staff positions, offered my services as an elected officer from Flotilla Vice Commander to Flotilla Commander and then Division Vice Commander and Division Commander. These were followed by election to District Captain and appointment as a District Directorate Chief. Many of the skills I learned and used in my career were easily adapted to the CG Auxiliary. I was fortunate to also serve in the District 7 Director of Auxiliary's (DIRAUX) office as a Deputy where I was responsible for almost 30 Auxiliarists who performed administrative duties for the Director.

I am currently qualified as an Instructor, Coxswain, Vessel Examiner, Program Visitor, Team Coordination Training Facilitator for both the Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary, Telecommunications Operator, and Watchstander. In addition, I completed all the courses to be designated an Operational Auxiliarist (AX2) and have earned the Recreational Boating Safety Device.

Seeking additional responsibility beyond District level, I knew I could make a difference using my skills and knowledge so I applied for national positions and found myself in the Public Education Directorate as a Branch Assistant. After a few years filling several different roles while being tutored by the best mentor in the Auxiliary (COMO Bob Laurer), I was appointed as Director of Education effective November 1, 2020.

Our Public Education Directorate plans for the next two years include:

- **Work on making virtual delivery of education a standard alongside traditional classrooms.**
- **Increased emphasis on youth education including tips for integration into the school curriculums.**
- **Providing additional marketing ideas flotillas can use to increase attendance in their classes.**
- **Work to update and refresh the Boating Skills and Seamanship course.**
- **Continuation of work started on Spanish language materials so we are able to achieve a greater reach in this market which is currently under-served.**

Just as in the past two-year term, we are prepared to deal with the unexpected by pivoting and engaging any challenge presented to us. We continue to seek solutions to the greatest challenge shared across the Auxiliary which is to improve our two-way communications to and from the deck-plate level.

The E Directorate has exceptionally talented and committed members who are experts in their fields. They are a diverse set of professionals with fabulous life and professional career experiences who are vital to creation and delivery of our educational products. We are committed to continuous improvement and the development of new resources. We offer our products not just to educate the public, but also to enable flotillas to sustain themselves financially with course and seminar fees.

The Public Education Directorate is here to serve and support you as you seek to make boaters safer and smarter. We are confident your work in delivering education will make a positive impact in Recreational Boating Safety.

V/R

Dave Fuller, DIR-E

Director of Public Education

US Coast Guard Auxiliary National Staff

Six W's Form the VE and PV Boating Safety Message



A graduate of Frostburg State University with a B.S. in Business Administration and with a Master of Science in Management from High Point University, I reside in North Carolina with my wife Patty and children: Kyndall, Connor, and Lydia. I attended Officer Candidate School for the U.S.M.C. and am a veteran of the United States Navy. I am an Academy Admissions Partner have been serving on the National Staff since 2014.

**Vessel Examination and
Partner Visitation Directorate**

Why:

The primary mission of vessel examination and partner visitation is to influence recreational boating safety. Starting with data to establish baseline behavior

through observation, our goal is to harness the power of Auxiliary resources to shape discussions for a safer, more enjoyable experience on America's waterways.

Where:

Prevention begins at the point of purchase, at the point of launch and recovery, at home, at the marina, at the dock and meeting the recreational boaters on social media as well.

Wear:

Constantly reminding recreational boaters that Life Jackets should be worn.

When:

Before getting underway. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!

What:

Making sure the recreational boater is properly and safely equipped and that information is made available to the Recreational Boating Public.

Who:

Ensuring the operator is informed and is aware of safe vessel resources, rules and equipment.

Welcome:

To all Vessel Examiners and Partners, New and Returning V-Directorate Members.

V/R,

Jim Cortes, DIR-V

**Director of Vessel Examination and
Partner Visitation**

US Coast Guard Auxiliary National Staff

Radio Information for Boaters from the Coast Guard

From US Coast Guard Navigation Center

A charter boat whose radio was not tuned to the proper channel missed a severe storm warning. By the time the captain learned of the storm, it was too late to return to shore. The ship sank and a couple of persons died. A yacht in trouble off the west coast of Mexico and far from help saw a passenger ship. What should have been a quick rescue could have turned to disaster when the passenger ship (improperly) had its radio off. The yacht was able to attract the ship's attention, however, and was rescued. Misunderstanding of passing intentions by approaching vessels and near collisions have repeatedly been averted by working radios tuned to the proper channel.

- Mariners need to be able to communicate with other ships of any size or nationality.
- Mariners need to be able to receive and send urgent maritime safety information.
- Mariners need to be able to send or receive distress alerts in an emergency to or from rescue coordination centers ashore and nearby ships anywhere in the world.

The Coast Guard does not advocate cellular telephones as substitute for the regular maritime radio distress and safety systems recognized by the Federal Communications Commission and the International Radio Regulations -- particularly VHF maritime radio. However, cellular phones can have a place on board as an added measure of safety.

CELLULAR PHONE LIMITATIONS IN AN EMERGENCY

Cell phones have several shortcomings in the maritime environment that can delay search and rescue authorities.

During a search and rescue (SAR) case, the Coast Guard attempts to broadcast as much information as possible about the case. These broadcasts provide information to mariners that may be in the vicinity of the SAR case so that they can respond appropriately. A cell phone limits communications between the Coast Guard and the mariner in distress, because other possible rescuers in the area are not immediately made aware of the SAR case. In contrast, a marine radio call allows all other mariners in the area to overhear the distress call and respond if possible.

Most cellular phones are designed for a land-based service. Their offshore coverage is limited and may

change without notice.

Locating a cellular caller can be difficult. If you don't know your position precisely, the Coast Guard may have difficulty locating you.

RADIOS THAT YOU NEED

Before you purchase anything else, make sure you have a VHF marine radio. It is the single most important radio system you should buy. It is probably also the least expensive. If you plan to travel more than a few miles offshore, plan to purchase an MF/HF radiotelephone or mobile satellite telephone, an emer-

A vessel equipped with a marine radio must maintain a watch on channel 16.

gency position indicating radio beacon, or EPIRB, and a second VHF radio or cellular telephone as well. Mobile satellite telephones are becoming more common and more inexpensive. The mobile satellite will provide easier and clearer communications than the MF/HF radiotelephone, but the HF radiotelephone will receive high seas marine weather warnings.

RADIO WATCHKEEPING REGULATIONS

In general, any vessel equipped with a VHF marine radiotelephone (whether voluntarily or required to) must maintain a watch on channel 16 (156.800 MHz) whenever the radiotelephone is not being used to communicate.

Mayday! Mayday! Mayday!...Sending a distress call

You may only have seconds to send a distress call. Here's what you should do:

Procedure for VHF Channel 16 MAYDAY:

1. If you have a VHF marine radio, tune it to channel 16. Unless you know you are outside VHF range of

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Search and Rescue Operations are better enabled by mariners properly monitoring and using channel 16.

(Photo courtesy of US Coast Guard)

shore and ships, call on channel 16 first.

2. Distress signal "MAYDAY", spoken three times.
3. The words "THIS IS", spoken once.
4. Name of vessel in distress (spoken three times) and call sign or boat registration number, spoken once.
5. Repeat "MAYDAY" and name of vessel, spoken once.
6. Give position of vessel by latitude or longitude or by bearing (true or magnetic, state which) and distance to a well-known landmark such as a navigational aid or small island, or in any terms which will assist a responding station in locating the vessel in distress. Include any information on vessel movement such as course, speed and destination.
7. Nature of distress (sinking, fire etc.).
8. Kind of assistance desired.
9. Number of persons onboard.
10. Any other information which might facilitate rescue, such as length or tonnage of vessel, number of

persons needing medical attention, color hull, cabin, masks, etc.

The word "OVER"

Stay by the radio if possible. Even after the message has been received, the Coast Guard can find you more quickly if you can transmit a signal on which a rescue boat or aircraft can home.

For example:

MAYDAY-MAYDAY-MAYDAY
 THIS IS BLUE DUCK-BLUE DUCK-BLUE DUCK
 WA1234 MAYDAY THIS IS BLUE DUCK
 CAPE HENRY LIGHT BEARS 185 DEGREES
 MAGNETIC-DISTANCE 2 MILES
 STRUCK SUBMERGED OBJECT
 NEED PUMPS-MEDICAL ASSISTANCE AND
 TOW THREE ADULTS, TWO CHILDREN
 ONBOARD ONE PERSON COMPOUND FRACTURE
 OF ARM ESTIMATE CAN REMAIN
 AFLOAT TWO HOURS BLUE DUCK IS THIRTY

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

TWO FOOT CABIN CRUISER-WHITE HULL- BLUE DECK HOUSE OVER

Repeat at intervals until an answer is received.

If you hear a distress call...

If you hear a distress message from a vessel and it is not answered, then **you** must answer. If you are reasonably sure that the distressed vessel is not in your vicinity, you should wait a short time for others to acknowledge.

Boater Calling Channel (VHF Channel 9)

The Federal Communications Commission established VHF-FM channel 9 as a supplementary calling channel for noncommercial vessels (recreational boaters) at the request of the Coast Guard. A ship or shore unit wishing to call a boater would do so on channel 9, and anyone (boaters included) wishing to call a commercial ship or shore activity would continue to do so on channel 16. Recreational boaters would continue to call the Coast Guard and any commercial facility on channel 16.

The purpose of the FCC regulation was to relieve congestion on VHF channel 16, the distress, safety and calling frequency. FCC regulations require boaters having VHF radios to maintain a watch on either VHF channel 9 or channel 16, whenever the radio is turned on and not communicating with another station.

Since the Coast Guard generally does not have the capability of announcing an urgent marine information broadcast or weather warning on channel 9, use of channel 9 is optional. We recommend boaters normally keep tuned to and use channel 16 in those waters unless otherwise notified by the Coast Guard.

Procedure for Calling A Ship by Radio

You may use channel 16 to call a ship or shore station, but if you do so, you **must, must be brief!** We recommend this same procedure be used over channel 9, if channel 9 is used as a calling channel.

For example:

Blue Duck: "Mary Jane, this is Blue Duck" (*the name of the vessel or MMSI being called may be said 2 or 3 times if conditions warrant*)

Mary Jane: "Blue Duck, this is Mary Jane. Reply 68" (*or some other proper working channel*)

Blue Duck: "68" or "Roger"

Global Maritime Distress & Safety System



A swift radio distress call enabled the Coast Guard to arrive within 11 minutes to extinguish this vessel fire in August near Key West.

(Photo courtesy of US Coast Guard)

VHF maritime channel 70 (156.525 MHz) is authorized exclusively for distress, safety and calling purposes using [digital selective calling \(DSC\)](#) techniques. No other uses are permitted.

Channel 70 is used to send distress alerts, safety announcements and for calling purposes under the [Global Maritime Distress and Safety System \(GMDSS\)](#). Many vessels are now equipped with DSC capability and are using channel 70 for this purpose. It is essential that this channel be protected.

Storm Warnings?

The Coast Guard announces storm warnings and other urgent marine information broadcasts on VHF channel 16 before making the broadcasts on VHF channel 22A and 2670 kHz respectively. Storm warnings and forecasts are also made by [NOAA Weather Radio](#).

MAYDAY Radio Checks and other Hoaxes

A growing number of boaters unsuccessful in getting a radio check on VHF channel 16 are calling MAYDAY to get a response. Every hoax, including MAYDAY radio checks, is subject to prosecution as a Class D felony under Title 14, Section 85 of the U.S. Code, liable for a \$5000 fine plus all costs the Coast Guard incurs as a result of the individual's action. Since hoaxes can lead to loss of life, the Coast Guard and Federal Communications Commission will work closely together, using when necessary FCC equipment capable of identifying the electronic signature of the offending radio. We ask your cooperation in helping The Coast Guard and the FCC remove hoaxes from the VHF radiotelephone distress, safety and calling channel 16. Ω

Performing a VHF Marine Radio Check

Sea Tow Automated Radio Check System No Longer Available

By CWO Kurt Frederickson

Reprinted from Coast Guard Maritime Commons

The Coast Guard Inspections and Compliance Directorate has issued MSIB 20-20 to inform mariners of the proper procedure for performing a VHF radio check.

Sea Tow Automated Radio Check System no longer available:

For several years, Sea Tow operated an Automated Radio Check System, which was available on VHF Channels 24 to 28 for the benefit of mariners in over 130 locations. However, on October 2nd, 2020 that service was discontinued.

How to test a VHF Radio using Rescue 21:

The U.S. Coast Guard continues to offer an automated Digital Selective Calling (DSC) Test Call capability from each of its Rescue 21 coastal stations. All fixed mount marine radios certified by the Federal Communications Commission since 1999 are required to have a DSC capability. All such radios sold since 2011 must also have a DSC test call capability. Marine radios transmitting and successfully receiving a response from a DSC test call can be expected to operate acceptably in the voice mode as well.

To perform a DSC Test Call, enter the U.S. Coast Guard's coast station group identity "003669999" into the radio's DSC memory. Once entered and stored, a DSC test call can be made by executing the following three steps:

Select "Test Call" from the radio's DSC menu,
Select the USCG number entered into memory, and
Transmit the call.



Radio Guard Jim Palermo communicates with an Auxiliary Patrol Vessel on Lake Pleasant in Arizona. (Photo by Sydney Hay)

The radio display should indicate when that test call is acknowledged and display the acknowledging station's nine-digit identity. That identity may be different than the group identity previously entered into memory.

Please use VHF Channel 09 and do not use VHF Channel 16:

VHF Channel 16 is not for the purpose of radio checks. Please use VHF Channel 09, which has been designated by the FCC as a boater's calling channel.

Ω

Commodore Daniel Maxim Award for Excellence in Education Announced

By Karen L. Miller, E Directorate Division Chief-Instructor Development



Judi Bidwick demonstrates the types of life jackets and their uses during one of her many boating safety classes.

(Photo by Al Bidwick)

The Public Education Directorate is pleased to announce the selection of Auxiliarist Julia “Judi” Bidwick of Seventh District (D7), Flotilla 86 in Venice, Florida as the 2019 Commodore Daniel Maxim Award for Excellence in Education awardee. Auxiliarist Gary E. Kocher of Ninth District-Eastern Region, Flotilla 16 in Alexandria Bay, New York and Auxiliarist Michael L. Chase of Seventeenth District, Flotilla 22 in Kenai, Alaska are also congratulated for being selected as the Regional winners from Atlantic West and Pacific Regions respectively. They demonstrate exemplary instructor performance and an outstanding

spirit of service to members of the public and to Coast Guard Auxiliary members.

The Commodore Daniel Maxim Award for Excellence in Education was established to motivate and inspire the entire Instructor cadre to reach beyond the comfortable or ordinary to achieve the extraordinary. Some of the goals of the Award are to increase the diversity of courses offered by flotillas and additional numbers of classes offered; to improve Public Education and Member Training Instructor effectiveness and performance; to improve mentorship of newer or less-

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Judi Bidwick makes her boating safety classes interesting by introducing fun props.

(Photo by Al Bidwick)

er experienced Instructors; to develop new and innovative teaching methods and techniques; and to develop new and innovative teaching aids.

Auxiliarist Bidwick enrolled in the Auxiliary in April 1998 and has consistently volunteered between 100 and 200 hours a year in Public Education and Member Training on top of thousands of additional hours in multiple mission areas. She is a masterful instructor who skillfully runs her classes with respect, tact and humor. Auxiliarist Bidwick brings to her classes a wealth of experience and in-depth knowledge of boating skills and safety.

She effectively shares true stories to underscore pertinent points in the sections she is teaching. She is well-known locally for the numerous visual aids and hands-on activities that she brings to the class to facilitate learning by both visual and tactile students. In addition, it is apparent that Auxiliarist Bidwick sincerely enjoys her interaction with the students and easily builds relationships by learning the student's names by the first day of class and then using their names throughout the class. She is equally effective teaching pre-teens, high school students, and adults and is frequently sought out in the community to offer age-appropriate classes. She displays a unique ability to

adapt her teaching style to the age, abilities and needs of her students. Endorsement after endorsement praise her style of instructing and her interaction with the students. Auxiliarist Bidwick's interest in the success of her students often translates into recruitment of new Auxiliary members who have become successful officers and long-term shipmates.

Auxiliarist Bidwick is a model educator as well as a Coast Guard Auxiliarist who constantly displays the abilities and devotion to the success of the mission, characteristics that are rare and extremely valuable. She embraces each teaching opportunity with pride, excellence, warmth, and professionalism.

Auxiliarist Bidwick's dedication to Public Education and Member Training missions personifies every one of those goals and is an inspiration for

all Coast Guard Auxiliary instructors to achieve an even higher level of educational skills. Her commitment to excellence in all she does is the bedrock of Auxiliary devotion to duty.

Flotillas should consider nominees for this award for next year by assembling a team now to begin accumulating supporting documentation for the numbers of courses taught, numbers of graduates, variety of courses taught, and all other data and testimonials deemed pertinent to preparing the nominee package. Flotilla nomination packages will be due on February 28 to their division, so now is the time to start in order to avoid the last-minute rush as that date will be here before we know it!

The Public Education Directorate recognizes that 2020 was an especially challenging year for most Auxiliarists because of COVID-19 precautions. However, many flotillas openly embraced the option of offering virtual online classes via videoconferencing and nomination packages should include how the nominee overcame the obstacles of using new technology for course presentation and what successes s/he experienced. Go to <http://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=E-DEPT&category=maxim-award> for more information on the Commodore Daniel Maxim Award for Excellence in Education. Ω