



# TELL TALES

## *U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary East District - Southern Region Flotilla 26-2 Lake Wylie*

### 11 August Flotilla Meeting

#### **Flotilla Staff Officers**

Mark Briggs, FC

Beverly Butlin, VFC, CS,  
MT, PA, PV

David Ray, IPFC, HR

Patrick Hughes, CM

Steve Whittaker, FN, IS

Mike Silva, MA

Mark Wilson, MS

Ray Webber, NS

Tom Edwards, PB

Rick Croasdale, PE

Bob Starnes, SR

David Wascher, OP, RS

Adam DeLuca, VE

The monthly meeting was held at 1000 Cabela's Drive, with approximately 20 in attendance and online. The usual staff officer reports were made with several notable subjects.

### Reminders

Dave Wascher reminds us that PFDs must be checked twice a year and many of us will be due soon!

Beverly Butlin stated the best way to find out the flotilla's happenings is from the calendar. She has the link on every email she sends, our website, and on this newsletter. Additionally, there are only a few events left to get your five VEs to remain current.

David Ray asked us to mark our calendars for the Mid-Atlantic Boat Show, 5-8 February 2025. Please plan to volunteer and order handouts early. Coloring books bring the kids and kids bring their parents!

Steve Whitaker and Mark Briggs brought it to our attention that AUXDATA II is updated Sunday nights so you might not see your postings until Monday morning. Steve announced we are doing a great job posting our activities error free!

## Volunteers Needed

Beverly Butlin needs members to step up for open flotilla staff officers. There is plenty of help to help you succeed at a position. Volunteers are needed for the awards committee; meetings have already been planned.

## Camp Thunderbird

*David Ray reports that the Memorandum of Understanding between the Auxiliary and the Greater Charlotte YMCA is almost complete and should be by year's end. This means we can meet at "Camp Thunder," hold classes, operate a radio station, and use the docks for flotilla activities. We can use the classroom with televisions, desks and chairs, and lockable storage space.*

## Awards

Mark Briggs was thrilled to award Greyson Godwin's designation as an AUXOP member! To qualify, Greyson had to successfully complete a minimum of seven credits from three categories of courses.



## New Member Spotlight

Jim Francisco – U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

Jim Francisco, a proud resident of Lake Wylie, South Carolina, has always had a deep respect for safe and responsible recreational boating. As an avid boater and active member of a nationwide boat club, Jim spends a



significant amount of time on the water and is passionate about promoting safety in every aspect of boating.

Inspired by his father—a U.S. Marine who later found great fulfillment serving in the Coast Guard Auxiliary—Jim joined the Auxiliary to continue that legacy of service and education. He is currently a certified Vessel Examiner and takes great pride in helping fellow boaters and their families understand and practice water safety.

Jim especially enjoys engaging with young boaters, sharing knowledge, and fostering a culture of preparedness and responsibility on the water. His commitment to community, safety, and lifelong learning are at the heart of his Auxiliary

service.

Pictured with Jim is his lovely granddaughter, Emma!

**15 July 2025**

**Lake Wylie, North Carolina**

**Lake Wylie Marine Commission sponsored a seminar:**

**Enforcement of Illegal Charter Operations on International Waterways**

Reported by Jim Francisco

Summary of Training:

Jim Francisco, David Washer, and Ray Weber attended a highly informative training session hosted by the U.S. Coast Guard with instruction from Andy Schmidt and Bobby Joe Robinson from Sector Wilmington. The focus of the training was identifying and addressing illegal charter operations within international waterways under USCG jurisdiction.

Topics covered included:

- Overview of regulations and enforcement authority concerning illegal charters.
- Associated penalties for non-compliance with USCG regulations.
  - Evidence collection methods, including: Conducting interviews with vessel captains and passengers.
  - Monitoring and capturing social media advertisements used to promote illegal charter services.
- Command Center reporting procedures and accident reporting criteria, including mandatory conditions for reporting incidents to the USCG.
- Review and explanation of the compliance matrix used to assess violations and ensure consistent enforcement.
  - Distribution of practical tools for law enforcement use during boardings:  
Tip sheets.
  - Witness statement forms.
  - “Cheat sheets” and quick-reference guides.

The materials and insights provided were extremely helpful in understanding both the operational and legal landscape of illegal charter enforcement. The session was well-organized and clearly delivered. Attendees engaged in productive discussions, expressed appreciation for the invitation, and the opportunity to strengthen interagency knowledge and cooperation.

The training was geared more toward Law Enforcement as they have the enforcement authority to board, but was beneficial for improving awareness and readiness for supporting USCG operations against illegal charter activities.

## Member Spotlight

**Larry Hoover**

**USCG Auxiliary**

Good morning Shipmates. I have been a Coast Guard Auxiliarist at Lake Wylie since 2011. I grew up in Charlotte and attended University North Carolina, Charlotte (AA, Electrical Engineering), North Carolina State University (BS, Statistics), and American University in Washington, D.C. (MS, Management.)



Have always enjoyed a good challenge – from sky diving (7,000 feet) and SCUBA diving (90 feet)! Unfortunately, my vision was not good enough for the Air Force flight training program, so I got my FAA civilian private pilot's license and became the proud

owner of a Piper Cherokee 180 which I based at IAD (Dulles) airport. I also held a Technician Class ham radio license.

As for my career, several of my career assignments have also been interesting and challenging – from working at the Atomic Energy Commission where my office was 200 feet below ground, NASA Headquarters, the Kennedy Space Center, and the White House back when Reagan was President.



As for travel, have been to 41 states, Central and South America, and Europe. Next on my list is Japan and Australia. Hope the exchange rate is good when I get there!

**02 August 2025**

**Ebenezer Park**

**Rock Hill, South Carolina**

Submitted by Beverly Butlin

Today the Vessel Examiners from Lake Wylie Flotilla were pleased to return to Ebenezer Park in Rock Hill, South Carolina on Lake Wylie to perform free vessel safety examinations and speak with the visiting public regarding recreational boating safety.

Despite a bit of misty rain, the team completed five vessel safety checks during the event. Mark Briggs, Beverly Butlin, Adam DeLuca, and Jim Francisco were all in attendance. Mr. Briggs also took the opportunity to discuss safe boating and provide information to a new boater. The team distributed whistles, spoke with several kayakers, and was warmly welcomed by park management. Overall, it was a productive event, and the team looks forward to returning to this location. Mr. Briggs took the opportunity to educate a new boater as well, although a VSC was not performed on the boater's new boat. The team distributed whistles, spoke with several kayakers, and was warmly welcomed by park management. Overall, it was a productive event and the team looks forward to serving at this location.





**6 August 2025****Lake Norman YMCA**

Sharon Eifried, 26-4, and I have been working with Katie Yost, director of the YMCA to offer a few Auxiliary led classes on water and boating safety. Joined by Steve Riggan, 26-4 James Barton, 26-4 Jarrett Reeder, 26-4 and Mark Briggs, we presented 3 different classes taken from the USCG Auxiliary's Water 'N Kids and Boating 'N Kids programs. Two stations ran simultaneously, navigation and knot tying. James and Steve used Gary Eifried's lighted boat models to



teach right-of-way and a few rules to see and avoid. The second station with Jarrett, Mark, Sharon and myself taught the kids the cleat hitch, bowline and clove hitch. We even involved the lifeguards which had no idea of how to tie a bowline.

We finished up with Jarrett teaching water safety. He demonstrated the different types of life jackets, the importance of reaching a swimmer in distress by staying out of the water during a rescue.

**If it isn't in Aux Data II, it didn't happen!**

## **Calendar**

Make sure you check our website for an up-to-date look at all events. Beverly Butlin, VFC, and Mark Briggs, FC, work hard at keeping the calendar current. There are Boat America classes the fourth Saturday of every month and many Vessel Safety Checks and Public Affairs events listed. It is impossible for me to list all the dates together, so please check the public and members-only areas on our website for current information!

Look for the social dinner location in your Email! This month is one week earlier due to the Labor Day weekend, 24 August 2025!

## **Flotilla Calendar**

**Edited by Tom Edwards, FSO-PB**

**803-389-6580**