



TELL TALES

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

Flotilla 26-02

Division 26 – 5th Southern Region

Lake Wylie

Flotilla Staff Officers

Mark Briggs, FC

Beverly Butlin, VFC,
CS, MT, PA

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

Mark Valdes, PV

Bob Starnes, SR

David Wascher OP

Adam DeLuca, VE

10 February Flotilla Meeting

Despite the flu keeping a few members down for maintenance, there was a good showing for the monthly meeting. Major points made were of the changes coming to the auxiliary. Presently Moodle is still available except for AUXCT classes, Civil Rights, and Sexual Assault. Suicide Prevention is required for all auxiliarists by year's end. All social media is suspended until further notice. Websites and newsletters are allowed.

Mark Briggs, FC, reported that the Lake Wylie Marine Commission (LWMC) has reported that Lyngbya wollei, an invasive species, has been discovered in the lake. Their website, <https://www.lakewyliemarinecommission.com/> offers information and treatment methods.



Greyson Godwin, 26-02, was presented his "BQ" certificate for passing all his basic tests.

Mark Wilson, accepted the Coast Guard Meritorious



Team Commendation for serving on the Auxiliary Upper-Level Officers Course (AULOC) Team. This team crafted an online course teaching the United States Coast Guard, United States Territories, and the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary Leadership Level 4 competencies.



Mark Briggs, FC, on the left, was awarded “USCG Sustained Auxiliary Award” for exceeding 750 cumulative hours of outstanding service and support to the United States Coast Guard each year since 23 June 2021. This was Mark’s third award!

Coastie Training

Saturday, 18 January, Scott Wigginton, SO-MT, offered a certification course for operation of Coastie, our robotic boat to use at PA events. Training was specifically offered to allow Coastie to attend the Mid-Atlantic Boat Show.

Coastie needs two trained members; control operator and crowd controller. The control operator moves Coastie and operates the lights, horn, siren, eyes, and gives Coastie it’s voice. The crowd control operator protects visitors from being hit from errant operators and assists children with Coastie interaction.



The attendees learned safe movement from a hand held remote control box and wore a wireless headset to activate Coastie’s microphone and speaker. We were allowed to practice operation and finished with a test around a figure eight course and talking at the same time. We really had tons of fun as there were plenty of bumps and toes run over as we practiced!



Coastie comes in it's own trailer and we were taught how to unload, assemble, troubleshoot, operate, and reload. She comes with rechargeable batteries and all included in a lockable trailer. The trailer pulls with a 2" ball and a small truck or larger SUV.

To schedule Coastie contact Dave Wascher, 26-02, FSO-OP, He stores Coastie and can provide a list of operators, and those with tow vehicles.

The following members were trained today: Dave Ray, VCDR, Mark Briggs, FC, Tom Edwards, FSO-PB, Adam Deluca, FSO-VE, Dave Wacher, 26-02, FSO-OP, Dave Ludlow, 26-02, and Beverly Butlin, VFC. Gary, and Sharon Eifried were previously approved on attendance and Rick Croasdale came to watch the fun!.

Division Boat Crew Training



Division boat crew training began in a crowded living room at instructor, Dave Wacher's, FSO-OP, house on Saturday, 22 January, in Rock Hill. Twenty-two students joined this required class. There was a strong showing by 26-02. The next class on navigation is 22 February. If interested in joining this class, contact David immediately!



Tega Cay Marina receives an award!

24 January 2025

It was an honor for Flotilla 26-02 to present a local marina with an award for their continued support of Public Education and Recreational Boating Safety for 2024. The Lake Wylie Flotilla was welcomed each month to talk to the boating public, perform free vessel safety checks and provide brochures and information on Boating Safety classes. State and Federal boating regulations and other safety information was available at the Tega Cay Marina display. In addition, all of the marina staff took the BoatAmerica Safe Boating courses taught by Flotilla 26-02 and Division Public Education officers and Instructors.

We look forward to working with this team again to promote safe boating for 2025!



Tony Esposito (left) accepting award from USCGAUX, Beverly Butlin, VFC (right).
Photo by Jack Howell of the marina



Division 26 Change of Watch

On 1 February, 2025 Division 054-26 held their Change of Watch Ceremony at a restaurant in Tega Cay, South Carolina. It was well attended with around 50 members, guests and dignitaries. Kudos go to planning by David Ray, VCDR, Tony Marciano, VFC 04, Lake Norman West, and Beverly Butlin, VFC 26-03, Lake Wylie! An honorable mention goes to David Wascher, 26-02, FSO-OP for providing setup of screen and projector.



Master of Ceremonies, Tony Marciano, VFC, Flotilla 26-04 introduced guests including Tega Cay Mayor Chris Gray, Tega Cay Fire Chief Glyn Hasty, Darryl and Melissa Lackey, Commander Otani, Diraux, and William Curry, DCAPT-SNC. The Missing Man Ceremony was presented, the Gastonia Civil Air Patrol presented colors escorted by the Loch Norman Pipe Band, band who played the "National Anthem." Rick Croasdale, SO-HR, SO-PE provided the invocation.

Ziad "Z" Nazif, DCDR, presented awards to Darryl and Melissa Lackey for their hard work and generous support to install the tower at the Joshua Murray Boating, Safety and Awareness Initiative at Blythe Landing. Darryl had a few words complimenting all the flotilla volunteers for their support to make his job easier.





The oath of office was given in a mass to all incoming Division 26 Staff Officers by William Curry, DCAPT-SNC supported by Commander Otani and DCO James Thomas. He traveled from Southport, South Carolina for the Division Change of Watch.



Z also awarded Mark Wilson, IPDCDR an award, belatedly, for Kayaking 101 and all the work he performed in 2023 for North Carolina Boating Safety. Beverly Butlin, VFC was awarded the 2024 Stewart Family Memorial Award for Exemplary Service to the USCG Auxiliary. And finally, Steve Riggin, FSO-FN 054-26-04, was awarded the Auxiliarist of the Year Award for Division 26!

David Ray, VCDR, awarded the Trident Award to

Ziad Nazif, DCDR, for such a successful year for moving District 26 along and promoting the Auxiliary! The Trident Award recognizes a member who demonstrates significant dedication and professionalism in supporting Coast Guard's Marine Safety and Environmental Protection Missions. Z exclaimed he was a



collector of medieval weaponry and this would be a great addition to his collection!

William Curry, DCAPT-SNC, commented on how stellar Division 26 is and how appreciative he is for all the work we do in the Lake Norman and Lake Wylie areas.

DCO James Thomas stated that starting 1 January, 2025 all elected officers must have pass APC and AFLC in order to fill those positions. D-Train will have 36 fully funded seats and anyone interested in a leadership position should attend. There are also 20 funded seats for ICS 300. He also presented District 26 fulfilled over 12,000 volunteer hours this year with observation hours, member training, VSCs, PVs and paddle craft inspections. Many members stood representing their participation in each of these categories.

“Semper Gumby” The USCG motto is “Semper Paratus” (always ready). CG members having to adapt continuously to constant change with few numbers jokingly came up with Semper Gumby (always flexible) years ago to reflect the unstable circumstances and ever changing demands on our service. Assuming you remember the 1960 kids TV show, Gumby should require no further explanation. The reason, CG sailors also remember this now obscure name/show is that there is also a survival, abandon ship suit by the same name in long standing service. We need to remember that our mission has not changed! Our mission is still safety on the water and supporting active duty USCG!



Mid Atlantic Boat Show

There were plenty of members to greet the public at this year's boat show! Many contacts were made for program visitations, VSCs, and

there was interest in our boating safety courses, especially for 'Suddenly in Command!' We also had our first showing of Coastie, entertaining children of all ages. Mark Briggs, FC, reminds us to log our time in AUXDATA II: 10J public affairs, 99B travel time and setup or tear down.

If it isn't in AuxData II it didn't happen!

Calendar

15 February - D-Train registration begins

22 February - Navigation/Boat Crew Class

23 February -Social dinner -5:30 Hickory Tavern 13454 Steelcroft Parkway!

26 February "Water N' Kids" at Larne Elementary, Clover SC

Written by Tom Edwards, FSO-PB