



THE HELM

United States Coast Guard Auxiliary - District 7 - Division 6

NEWSLETTER, Volume 1

December 2024

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A Message from Ronald Kaplan, Division Commander

As we bring this year to a close, I want to take a moment to extend my deepest gratitude to all U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary members for their unwavering service and dedication. Your hard work and commitment to the Auxiliary's mission have been nothing short of extraordinary.

A special thanks goes to all the members of Division 6. Your support, enthusiasm, and willingness to serve have been the driving force behind our success this year. Whether through organizing events, logging countless hours, motivating others, or championing our various programs, each of you has played a vital role in making 2024 an exceptional year.



Ronald Kaplan, Division Commander.
Photo by Gustavo Montano

To those stepping into new roles or ventures in 2025, I (not we) wish you the very best. May the new year bring opportunities to grow, serve, and achieve even greater accomplishments. Together, we've built a strong foundation, and look forward to continuing this legacy of excellence in the year ahead.

I would also like to express my heartfelt appreciation to our Division Vice Commander, all Flotilla Commanders, and the entire Division Staff. Your leadership and collaboration have been instrumental in guiding Division 6 through another successful year. Your efforts in supporting our members, fostering teamwork, and enhancing our programs have truly made a difference.

Thank you for your dedication to the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and to Division 6. Let's continue this spirit of fellowship and service as we move into the new year.

Wishing you and your families a joyous holiday season and a wonderful New Year in 2025!

2024 Staff

DCDR	Ronald J. Kaplan
VCDR	David Y. Patlak
IPDCDR	Michael D. Okeeffe
FC 61	Luis A. Perez-Codina
FC 63	Henry Kaufman
FC 65	Carlol L. Moppert
FC 67	Alejandro Tellechea
FC 69	Jorge A. Ramirez
FC 6-10	Patrick O. Danciu
FC 6-11	Thierry P. de Villejust
FC 6-14	Bee S. Kirk
SO-NS	Mark Chiappone
SO-CA	Carlol L. Moppert
SO-CM	Teodore J. Tundidor
SO-CS	Gustavo Montano
SO-AS	Alba R. Ramirez
SO-DV	Richard W. Flores
SO-FN	Edward R. Kirsh
SO-HR	Fred Ross
SO-IS	Anthony M. Lapicola
SO-MA	Angel L. Aulet Jr.
SO-MS	Jorge A. Ramirez
SO-MT	David Y. Patlak
SO-OP	Marcelo C. Freire
SO-PA	Nichole R. Betterson
SO-PB	Gustavo Montano
SO-PE	Henry Cespedes
SO-PV	Felix A. Montes
SO-SR	Richard A. Griff
SO-VE	David J. Adams



SEA SCOUTS



Photo by scouting.webdamdb.com

High Adventure In, On, Around, and Under the Water

Sea Scouting is an inclusive program through the Boy Scouts of America for all youth aged 14-21 (or 13 and completed the 8th grade). It's operated through Sea Scout Ships, units of youth and advisors just like you!

Find a ship near you and join the fun!



Photo by scouting.webdamdb.com

To Join or more information
email to danielmuelhaupt@aol.com

From the Editor's Desk

By Gustavo Montano

The Importance of Engagement in the Auxiliary

Engagement is the lifeblood of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary. It transforms a group of volunteers into a cohesive team, united by a shared commitment to serve our communities and support the missions of the Coast Guard. The success of the Auxiliary depends on the active participation of its members, whose skills, dedication, and enthusiasm drive every program forward.

When members are fully engaged, the Auxiliary thrives. Programs like Vessel Examination, Public Education, Operations, and Telecommunications become more effective, delivering greater impact. Community outreach events, safety education initiatives, and training sessions not only increase public awareness but also enhance the Auxiliary's reputation as a trusted partner in promoting maritime safety.

Engagement also fosters a strong sense of fellowship within our units. Building connections among members through shared activities, meetings, and events creates an environment where everyone feels valued and inspired. A welcoming and supportive atmosphere encourages new members to get involved and motivates seasoned members to continue contributing.

Despite its importance, maintaining high levels of engagement can sometimes be a challenge. Competing priorities and life commitments can pull members away from Auxiliary activities. That's why it's essential for leaders at all levels to listen, adapt, and innovate whether by tailoring training opportunities, introducing new ways to connect, or addressing barriers that may hinder participation.

Ultimately, engagement is about more than simply showing up; it's about taking ownership of our roles, supporting one another, and working together toward common goals. When members actively participate, they not only help their local units succeed but also strengthen the Auxiliary as a whole. This collective effort is what enables the Auxiliary to continue being a vital resource for the Coast Guard and a trusted presence in our communities.

As we look to the future, let's make engagement a priority. By fostering a culture of participation, inclusivity, and teamwork, we ensure the Auxiliary remains resilient, effective, and impactful for generations to come.

Semper Paratus!



Gustavo Montano, SO-PB 070-06,
Photo by Gustavo Montano

2024 Events

Division 6 Vessel Safety Check Blitzes – 2024

Throughout 2024, Division 6 successfully conducted multiple blitzes organized by David Adams, Staff Officer - Vessel Examinations (SO-VE). These events, held at various locations, resulted in numerous vessel safety examinations, with members from different flotillas coming together to promote safe boating and educate the public.



From left to right: David Patlak and Jorge Ramirez. Division 6 Blitz at Pelican Harbor Marina, October 26, 2024. Photo by Gustavo Montano.



From Left to right: Jorge Ramirez, David Patlak, Patrick Danciu, Gustavo Montano and Guillermo Deza at Pelican Harbour Marina. Photo by Gustavo Montano



From Left to right: Gustavo Montano, North Bay Village Police Officer and Patrick Danciu. Pelican Harbour Marina. Photo by Jorge Ramirez



Guillermo Daza and Jorge Ramirez conducting a vessel Examination. Pelican Harbour Marine. Photo by Gustavo Montano

2024 Events, (continue)

Miami International Boat Show

By Nichole Betterson

Members throughout Division 6 manned the Coast Guard Auxiliary's booth at the Miami International Boat Show from February 14-18, 2024. Auxiliarists, alongside our local marine partners (Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission and Customs & Border Protection), provided show attendees with information about upcoming public education courses, vessel safety checks, and recreational boating safety tips.

Special thanks to each member who took the time to help man the booth. Your participation ensured South Florida's boating public received valuable information throughout the show.



Auxiliarists center from left to right: Nichole Betterson of Flotilla 6-11, Miami, David Patlak of Flotilla 69, Opa-Locka, and Julie Bouchard of Flotilla 67, Coral Gables.



From left to right: David Patlak, Felix Montes, and Matthew Roach of Flotilla 69, Opa-Locka and Flotilla 6-11, Miami.



From left to right: Christopher Castro, Anthony Lopicola, and Ingrid Onate of Flotilla 61, Homestead and Flotilla 65, Miami South.



From left to right: Gustavo Montano and Sadri Medina of Flotilla 69, Opa-Locka.



Patrick Danciu of Flotilla 6-10, North Bay.

National Safe Boating Week 2024

May 18-24, Division 6 participated in National Safe Boating Week with Vessel Examination Blitzes, RBS visits, recruiting events, and Public Education classes at multiple locations. Ronald Kaplan, Division Commander and David Patlak, Division Vice Commander thank all members who volunteered to make these events a success.

SoFlo Boat Show, Marine Stadium.



From left to right: Yvette Perez, Carol Moppert, Gustavo Montano, Coast Guard Guardsmen from Sector Miami and Felix Montes, USCG Aux Booth at SoFlo Boat Show, Marine Stadium.
Photo by Gustavo Montano



Victor Garcia, USCG Aux Booth at SoFlo Boat Show, Marine Stadium.
Photo by Gustavo Montano

Food Truck Wednesdays



From Left to right: Amaury Genao, David Adams, Gustavo Montano, Cody Buchanan, David Patlak and Jorge Ramirez. Pelican Harbour Marina.
Photo by Gustavo Montano

2024 Events (continued)

Fleet Week

May 5-12, 2024, we celebrated Norwegian Cruise Line® Fleet Week Miami with visits from Navy, Marine, and Coast Guard ships at Port Miami. Events included ship tours, free concerts by Navy and Marine Corps bands, and opportunities to learn about the Sea Services.



From left to right: Jorge Ramirez, Gustavo Montano, David Patlak, Patrick Danciu, Sadri Medina and Omar Paez. USCGC Seneca. Photo by Gustavo Montano



From left to right: Omar Paez, Patrick Danciu, Gustavo Montano, Sadri Medina and David Patlak. USCG Seneca, Port Miami. Photo by Jorge Ramirez



An active duty chief explaining to visitors how the galley operates. Auxiliarist Patrick Danciu, David Patlak and Gustavo Montano conducting tours aboard the cutter. USCGC Seneca. Photo by Jorge Ramirez



From left to right: Omar Paez and Sadri Medina. USCG Seneca, Port Miami, FL. Photo by Gustavo Montano

Award Highlights for Flotilla 6-10, North Bay

Patrick Danciu, Flotilla Commander, Flotilla 6-10, North Bay, presents Susan Sloves with her new Member Procedure certificate, and Bernard Brier with his new member certificate for joining the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and achieving BQ status.



From left to right: Susan Sloves and Patrick Danciu.
Photo by Patrick Danciu



From left to right: Bernard Brier and Patrick Danciu.
Photo by Patrick Danciu

Safe Boating Campaign... Take the pledge



FREE
Vessel Safety Check
& Decal

cgaux.org/boatinged



cgaux.org/vsc



Photo highlights Flotilla 65, Miami South

These photos showcase the dedication and involvement of Flotilla 65, Miami South, members in various activities, highlighting their commitment to serving the community and supporting the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary's mission.



From left to right: Carol Moppert and Tony Lapicola. Mass Casualty training, Air Station Miami. Photo by Carol Moppert.



From left to right: Jim Schultz, Scott Blumenthal, Tom Walker, David Neal and Michael Gibbons. 58th Anniversary of Flotilla 65. Photo by Carol Moppert.



From left to right: Scott Blumenthal, Scott Szczepaniak, and Sonia Blumenthal. 58th Anniversary of Flotilla 65. Photo by Carol Moppert.



From left to right: Scott Blumenthal, Tony Lapicola and Jean-Jacque Borie. National Safe Boating Week at West Marine. Photo by Carol Moppert.



From left to right: Carol Moppert, David Mitchell and student. Boating Safety Class at the Bay Yacht Club. Photo by Carol Moppert.



From left to right: Carol Moppert and David Mitchell and student. Boating Safety Class at the Bay Yacht Club. Photo by Carol Moppert.

Air Station Miami Holiday Party

Air Station Miami hosted its annual children's holiday party, with Auxiliary members joining the festivities. Gustavo Montano, who played Santa Claus, arrived at the base in a MH-65 Dolphin helicopter! The event was a joyful celebration of the holiday season and community spirit.



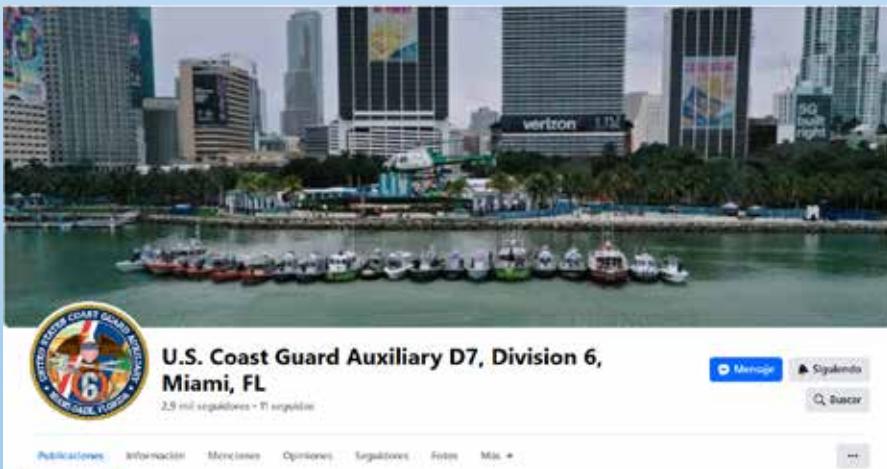
Gustavo Montano flying in the USCG Helicopter for the holiday Party at Air Station Miami. Photo by Alex Johnson, AET3.



Gustavo Montano playing Santa Claus during the holiday Party at Air Station Miami. Photo by Guillermo Deza.



Joins US at our Facebook page:
www.facebook.com/AUXDIV6SOUTHFLORIDA/



Upcoming Events

2025 USCG Auxiliary Division 6 Change of Watch and Awards Brunch

Dear Division 6 Members,

You are cordially invited to the 2025 USCG Auxiliary Division 6 Change of Watch and Awards Brunch, where we will celebrate the accomplishments of 2024 and swear-in our newly elected and appointed officers for 2025. Let's come together to show our support for the new leadership and enjoy a memorable event with fellowship and camaraderie. We look forward to seeing you there!

**Ronald J. Kaplan, Commander
United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, Division 6**

cordially invites you to the

**2025 Change of Watch for Division 6, and all the Flotillas FCs and VFCs
and Awards Brunch**

at which

**Ronald J. Kaplan, Division Commander (elect)
and
Henry Kaufman, Division Vice Commander (elect)**

will assume the watch of
Division 6, USCG Auxiliary District 7

Sunday, January 12, 2025
10:00am to 1:00pm
Miami Shores Country Club
10000 Biscayne Boulevard
Miami Shores, Florida 33138

Cost:

\$25 per person (via PayPal or check) by January 3
\$35 per person at the door
R.S.V.P. by 3 January 2025

Military: Tropical Blue
Civilian: Business Casual

**Please make checks payable and mail to: USCG Auxiliary D7/Division 6,
Attn: Edward Kirsh, SO-FN, 10023 Bay Harbor Terrace, Bay Harbor Island, FL 33154-1509**

Upcoming Events (continued)



U.S. COAST GUARD STATION MIAMI BEACH HOSTS COAST GUARD AUXILIARY DIVISION 6 APPRECIATION DAY

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2025 • 10AM - 2PM

AT BASE MIAMI BEACH

Come enjoy food, fellowship and an asset familiarization training aboard Station Miami Beach's 36-foot Special Purpose Craft - Law Enforcement (SPC-LE II)!



***** Civilian attire only. Family members are welcomed. *****

Contact Nichole R. Betterson at bpgraphic@bellsouth.net to RSVP. Please provide member name, ID number, mobile, and all guest names; as well as a primary and secondary desired time-slot for the RB-M ride (see RB-M Underway Time-slots on right-hand side). You and your guest's names will be added to a Gate Clearance list and a confirmation e-mail will be sent with your designated RB-M ride time-slot.

**RB-M RIDES BEGIN PROMPTLY AT 10AM.
COOKOUT STARTS AT 11AM AT THE TIKI HUT NEAR THE GATOR DEN.**

RB-M UNDERWAY TIME-SLOTS:

10:00AM - 10:30AM • 10:45AM - 11:15AM
11:30AM - 12:00PM • 1:30PM - 2:00PM

RB-M will depart promptly during posted times. Please be courteous to other Auxiliarists and honor your confirmed designated time-slot.

Photo opportunities aboard the SPC-LE will be strictly at the Coxswain's discretion and contingent upon weather conditions.



RSVP by January 24, 2025. Space limited to first 100 Auxiliarists to RSVP.