



FLOT Lines

Flotilla 74, Brandon

District 7

USCG Auxiliary

Issue 1 2024



**Flotilla 74, Brandon Elects
Flotilla Vice Commander
Welcome, Matt Stephen, VFC!**



FLOT Lines

Newsletter Flotilla 74, Brandon
Dorothy Riley, Flotilla Commander
Matthew Stephen, Flotilla Vice Commander
Meeting: Second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.
3006 South Kings Ave., Brandon, Florida

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Member Training

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Finance

Earl Abbott

Diversity

Background photo: Steve Williams, Dean Bell, coxswain, and August Miller aboard "Ms. Daisy," Flotilla 74, Brandon Auxiliary facility. USCG Auxiliary photo by George Papabeis



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We're on the web!



www.cgaux74.org



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Flotilla74/>

A dolphin surfaces near a channel marker in Tampa Bay. USCG Auxiliary photo by George Papabelis



From the Helm



Dorothy Riley, Flotilla Commander

I am pleased that we finally have a Flotilla Vice Commander, and I'll lay odds that Bill Sage is relieved, too! Bill has been filling in as Flotilla Vice Commander and picking up all the tasks that otherwise would have gone undone or unfinished. Bless you, Bill- and Matt; you will find yourself challenged to follow Bill just as Bill tests me as Flotilla Commander.

What a great group of members we have, and what a broad range of talents they bring to the Auxiliary! We are starting the year running and are planning to engage in several events. Coming up is Sector St. Petersburg S-Train on March 23 at Air Station Clearwater, watchstanding at the Tampa Bay Boat show Mar. 1-3 at the Florida State Fairgrounds, MacDill AirFest Mar. 29-30, and the 50th Anniversary of Sun n' Fun Aerospace Expo Apr. 9-14 in Lakeland. (See pages 20-21 for more information.) In addition to our staff meetings, vessel examinations, and the March flotilla business meeting, the next few weeks will be busy! Not to add to your stress, I also remind you to schedule and attend committee meetings to plan the Brandon Independence Day Parade and National Safe Boating Week.

The flotilla building is coming along. I plan to paint the walls and replace the bathroom floors, and a volunteer is lined up to assist me. This work needed to be done for years, but I did not think to do it until I was Flotilla Commander. Looking back, this was ridiculous! The experience taught me that a member need not hold an elected office to organize the storage room, clean the galley and office, or paint a messy bathroom. All one needs is the motivation to do it. I challenge every member, new or seasoned: if you see something that needs to be done, speak up or volunteer to do it! Be brighter and bolder than I was! Many of you already are. I am proud to serve as your Flotilla Commander.

Dorothy Riley

Dorothy Riley,
Flotilla Commander

P.S. Be sure to check out *Petty Officer First Class Ethan McKenzie: One of our "Missing Members."*

PO1 McKenzie, an Aviation Survival Technician (rescue swimmer), is not just an outstanding member of the Coast Guard, but is also a member of our flotilla. He is one more reason for us to feel immense pride in our members and their contributions.



From the Helm

My plans for Flotilla 74, Brandon in 2024.

As your new Flotilla Vice Commander, I have several goals for our flotilla this year.

First of all, I would like to beef up our Recreational Boating Safety Program Visitors and Vessel Examiner programs. Currently, there is one active Program Visitor and three active Vessel Examiners. I encourage anyone interested in either of these qualifications to ask questions.

In addition to these specialties, I would like to have at least two qualified Telecommunications Operators and Instructors. Currently, there are two members who are working on these qualifications, and I am also hopeful that those members who are presently in required yearly, not met (REYR) status will be re-qualified shortly.

Some upcoming events that I hope all members attend are S-Train on Mar 23 at Air Station Clearwater. More details will be forthcoming. We are also planning ahead for National Safe Boating Week. We will conduct a vessel safety check blitz at the William's Park boat ramp. This is an excellent opportunity for those in REYR status or new Vessel Examiners to get their Vessel Safety Check personal qualification standards done.



Matt Stephen,
Flotilla Vice Commander

Matt Stephen

Matt Stephen,
Flotilla Vice Commander

To become a qualified Vessel Examiner or Recreational Boating Safety Partner Visitor, go to <https://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=v-dept>.

Vessel Examinations & Partner Visitation



VESSEL
EXAMS

PROGRAM
VISITS

AUXLWO
STUDY

MEMBER
TRAINING

SERVICE
AWARDS

OUR
LEADERS

▼ GET YOUR VESSEL CHECK

▶ LOANER LIFE JACKETS

▲ SAFETY ALERTS



VESSEL SAFETY CHECKS



Vessel Examiners review a boat or paddlecraft to help its users enjoy a fun, safe day on the water.

PROGRAM VISITS



Program Visitors are ambassadors who share the Auxiliary's message of recreational boating safety.

LIFE JACKET OBSERVATION



Since 2014, AUXLWO Observers have provided critical data for the annual Life Jacket Wear Rate Study.



Articles of Interest



The Blackthorn Remembrance Ceremony

By Dorothy Riley

The Sinking of the USCGC Blackthorn was one of the greatest tragedies in Coast Guard history. Twenty-three Coastguardsmen lost their lives on Jan. 28, 1980. Few Coast Guard or Coast Guard Auxiliary members who served during the Blackthorn tragedy continue to serve today. The average age of today's members of the Coast Guard is thirty years old, which means most were not born when this tragedy occurred. Given that the average age of Auxiliarists is considerably higher, even fewer Auxiliarists survive who remember first-hand the events of that day. It is an event that should be remembered. Not only did it constitute the greatest loss of life through a single event by the Coast Guard in peacetime, but it also changed how it trained its command-level officers and senior enlisted members for duty afloat.

The Blackthorn tragedy sent shockwaves throughout the Coast Guard. It was unthinkable that a sturdy buoy tender would sink within minutes and even more disturbing that nearly half of its crew drowned. Subsequent investigations by the United States Coast Guard Marine Board of Investigation concluded that while both the captains of the Blackthorn and the

Capricorn were at fault, primary responsibility rested with the captain of the Blackthorn.

"The board determined that the cause of the casualty was the failure of both vessels to keep well to that side of the channel which lay on their starboard (right) side. Concurring with the marine board's determination of the cause, the Commandant emphasized in his "Action" that the failure of the persons in charge of both vessels to ascertain the intentions of the other through the exchange of appropriate whistle signals was the primary contributing cause. Additionally, Admiral Hayes pointed out that attempts to establish a passing agreement by using only radiotelephone communications failed to be an adequate substitute for exchanging proper whistle signals.

"The collision occurred on the evening of January 28, 1980, near the junction of Mullet Key and Cut "A" Channels approximately three-quarters of a mile from the Sunshine Skyway Bridge in Tampa Bay. The vessels collided nearly head-on, and as a result, the port anchor of Capricorn became embedded in the port

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Articles of Interest

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side of the *Blackthorn*.

*The momentum of the two vessels caused the Capricorn's anchor chain to become taut, resulting in the Blackthorn's capsizing. The Capricorn ran aground north of the channel, and the Blackthorn sank in the channel. Twenty-seven of the 50 Blackthorn crew members were rescued."*¹



The sinking of the *Blackthorn* and the subsequent investigative report provided the impetus for establishing the Command and Operations School at the Coast Guard Academy in New London, Conn. Commanding officers are now required to assess risks such as transiting an unfamiliar port at night and are encouraged to say no if they feel the risks involved are unnecessary. Additionally, the Coast Guard developed new training requirements, spent more money on safety equipment, and changed navigational aids in and around Tampa Bay.

Auxiliary boat crews assisted in maintaining safety zones after the collision. Since then, crews from U.S. Coast Guard Sector St Petersburg, U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater, and Coast Guard Auxiliary

have participated in the ceremony and memorial observance every year. Daniel Helou, District Captain-West, Dean Hoskin, Division Commander 7, Anthony Hooper, Division 7 Vice Commander, and David Rockwell, Auxiliary Sector Coordinator Sector St. Petersburg attended the ceremony in 2024. For the first time this year, the Auxiliary had the honor of placing a wreath at the memorial. Daniel Helou and Dean Hoskin placed the wreath representing the Auxiliary.

As tragic and unnecessary as were the lives lost in the 1980 *Blackthorn* and the *Capricorn* collision, crews aboard Coast Guard cutters and Auxiliary operational facilities today know that safety comes first, and our training reflects this all-important worth.

**1 Marine Casualty Report, USCGC Blackthorn - SS Capricorn, Collision in Tampa Bay with Loss of Life on 28 January 1980, U.S. Coast Guard Marine Board of Investigation Report and Commandant's Action. Ω*



Opposite Page: Crewmembers from Coast Guard Sector St. Petersburg and tenant units hold roses at the remembrance ceremony. Each rose represents an individual Guardian that lost their life after the *Blackthorn* sank near the Sunshine Skyway Bridge in St. Petersburg, Jan. 28, 1980. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Tara Molle)

This page, left: David Rockwell, Auxiliary Sector Coordinator Sector St. Petersburg, Anthony Hooper, Division 7 Vice Commander, and Dean Hoskin, Division 7 Commander stand beside the wreath presented by the Auxiliary.

Above: Daniel Helou, District Captain-West, and Dean Hoskin, Division Commander 7 at the *Blackthorn* Memorial Ceremony Jan. 28, 2024. (USCG Auxiliary photographs by Lisa Repetto, Flotilla 11-1, Clearwater)



Articles of Interest

Mastering the Operational Dress (ODU) and Alternative Work (AWU) Uniforms

By Christopher Hunt

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary plays a crucial role in maritime safety and security. Members are often tasked with surface operations, requiring them to adhere to specific uniform regulations for professionalism and safety. Understanding how to properly wear the Operational Dress or Alternative Work uniforms is paramount. Let's delve into the intricacies of these uniforms and the appropriate footwear choices.

The Operational Dress (ODU) and Alternative Work (AWU) uniforms are donned primarily for surface operations, though specifics may vary by district. Members are also permitted to wear these uniforms during their commute, ensuring readiness at all times. The Operational Dress Uniform (ODU) comprises the ODU blouse, ODU trousers, blue crewneck t-shirts, ODU ball caps, boots, and a black riggers belt. The Alternative Work Uniform comprises the AWU polo, ODU ball cap, black riggers belt, 5.11 ripstop long tactical pants (dark navy blue), and boots or boat shoes. Here's a breakdown of eight key elements and guidelines for wearing these uniforms:

1. Sleeve Wear:

- Sleeves can be worn up or down, offering versatility based on individual preference and environmental conditions. However, in a group setting, everyone must wear their sleeves similarly.

2. Auxiliary Ball Cap (ODU ball cap)

- The Auxiliary ODU ball cap is authorized for both



uniforms. Only the official ball caps obtained from the USCG Exchange or AUXCEN are authorized. A small metal office of insignia or member device must be worn in the center of the cap.

3. Footwear Options:

- Operational Dress Uniform (ODU): High-top lace-up boots are the standard footwear choice for the ODU, ensuring protection and stability during operations. Boots should be clean and polished to avoid visible scuff marks. The ODU footwear must be worn with black socks.

- Alternative Work Uniform (AWU): The AWU offers a broader range of footwear options, including boat shoes, ODU boots, and even postal walking shoes in black (no sneakers or tennis shoes). As with the ODU boots, they must be clean and free of scuff marks, but they are worn with black socks.

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Articles of Interest

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4. Trouser Blousing:

- ODU trousers are typically bloused with boots for a polished appearance. However, they may remain unbloused when paired with boat shoes under specific circumstances, such as conducting vessel safety checks or commuting to patrol activities. However, the authorized use of unbloused trousers with boat shoes

ence to uniform regulations.

- Belts are essential accessories, with the ODU requiring a black web belt with a subdued open-faced buckle or basic riggers belt, while the AWU mandates a black web belt with a non-decorative buckle.

- Headgear options include the USCG Auxiliary ball cap (ODU & AWU), boonie hat (AWU only), or Tilley hat (ODU & AWU), offering protection and identity display as per regulations.



7. Tucked Version of ODU:

- It's essential to note that the tucked version of the ODU is no longer authorized, ensuring uniformity and adherence to current regulations.

8. Purchasing and Access:

- The Operational Dress Uniform (ODU) can be procured online through the USCG Exchange (<https://shopc-gx.com/>) or in person at designated exchange locations.

- For the Alternative Work Uniform (AWU), members can purchase through the Auxiliary Association Member Store (<https://auxcen.com/>), ensuring access to authorized components.

is subject to the discretion of district leadership.

5. Nametapes and Insignia Placement:

- Sew-on cloth nametapes and insignia must be positioned directly above the pocket for visibility and identification purposes on ODUs. For AWUs, the last name is embroidered in upper case sans-serif type on the right side of the polo shirt, aligned with the Auxiliary logo on the left side.

- Collar devices on the ODU, whether sew-on or Velcro, should match the cap devices for uniformity—no collar devices on the AWU.

6. Additional Components:

- A dark blue crew neck tee-shirt is required as the base layer for the ODU, providing comfort and adher-

Upholding uniform standards is paramount for United States Coast Guard Auxiliary members, reflecting their dedication to professionalism and readiness. By adhering to the guidelines outlined above and selecting appropriate footwear options, Auxiliary members can confidently fulfill their operational duties while maintaining a cohesive and professional appearance. Whether donning the traditional Operational Dress Uniform or opting for the versatile Alternative Work Uniform, each element contributes to the overall readiness and effectiveness of the Auxiliary's mission. More information can be found under the New Member Info tab on the USCG Auxiliary Human Resources Directorate's website: <https://wow.usc-gaux.info/content.php?unit=H-DEPT>. Ω



Articles of Interest

Brief History of the Gasparilla Festival.

By Dorothy Riley

The Gasparilla Pirate Festival is an annual celebration held in Tampa from late January through February. It is named after the legendary José Gaspar (Gasparilla), a Spanish pirate captain who operated in Southwest Florida.

The most celebrated event during the festival is the “invasion” of the city by Gasparilla and his “Krewe,” who arrive on a 165’ long pirate ship that travels up Tampa Bay and lands at the Tampa Convention Center. The mayor of Tampa then handed the key to the city to the pirate captain, signaling the city’s surrender, and a parade ensued down Bayshore Boulevard, ending in Ybor City. The Krewes and other parade participants throw beads, coins, and other items while shooting blank pistols from floats during both the invading boats and the victory parade through the city. This event is held on the last Saturday in January.

While the pirate invasion is the festival’s most celebrated affair, the Gasparilla Pirate Festival does not begin or end with this event. The festival includes several private and public events. The private events include social events and parties throughout the year for members, philanthropic events for favored causes, formal balls, brunches, and an annual beauty pageant. The public events include no less than three parades. A week before the “invasion” and the main parade, Ye Mystic Krewe of Gasparilla sponsors a family-oriented children’s parade and “Pyrotechnic Extravaganza” with fireworks over Tampa Bay.

Until the attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, the U.S. Navy participated in the pirate invasion. Small boats throwing Cuban bread and black bean soup would attack the Navy vessel, and the Navy would respond with fire hoses but would succumb to the Ybor City Navy and then surrender to the Alcalde of Ybor City. Afterward, the sailors would be treated to an evening on the town. After 2011, the Tampa Marine Fire Department took over the role of “defender of the city,” as did the USS VICTORY in more recent years, but the traditional defense of the city has largely been abandoned.

Beginning in January 2008, an old tradition that ended in 1964 was revived. “The Gasparilla March Triumphant: The Return to the Sea” gives the event a sense

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The José Gaspar approaches the Tampa Convention Center on Jan. 27, 2024. USCG Auxiliary photo by Dorothy Riley.



Articles of Interest

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of closure. During this ceremony, usually held a few weeks after the invasion, the Krewe's pirates return the key to the mayor and board the Jose Gasparilla to return to sea. This tradition was revived as a way to officially end the Gasparilla season and is called the Sant'Yago Illuminated Knight Parade.

Gasparilla Facts and Figures:

- Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the average attendance for the event was over 400,000 people.
- According to Coast Guard estimates, in past years, as many as 3,500 boats participated in the Gasparilla Boat Parade, making it the largest boat parade in the nation.
- The Gasparilla parade has an economic impact of \$20 to \$25 million on Tampa annually.
- Gasparilla was first held in May 1904 in Tampa Bay. The first invasions were on horseback instead of by boat. In 2004 the event celebrated its 100th anniversary.
- Historically, Gasparilla was held on the second Monday of February until 1988, when it was moved to a Saturday festival in February. This change allowed more local communities to take part in the celebration. In 2001, the event was moved to the last Saturday of January to coincide with Super Bowl XXXV weekend because Tampa's Raymond James Stadium was hosting the game that year. It has been held on this day ever since.

During the Gasparilla Pirate Invasion, the Auxiliary assists the Coast Guard in maintaining safety zones and providing radio coverage for the Coast Guard, Auxiliary, and law enforcement vessels on the water. A great number of law enforcement is present as many festival goers, both landside and on the water, tend to consume a great deal of alcohol or ignore safe speed limits in crowded waterways. Pirates are, after all, known to be a rambunctious lot! Ω

Flotilla 74, Brandon Members Participate in Gasparilla 2024



Looks like the telecommunications operator crew on Davis Island is beguiled by two lovely pirate maidens! From left are Murray Price from Flotilla 84, Sarasota; Matt Stephen from Flotilla 74, Brandon; Jonathan Laronge, also from Flotilla 84, Sarasota, and Howard Bush from Flotilla 7-16, Gulfport. USCG Auxiliary photo provided by Howard Bush

Right: Steve Williams was on the water with "Miss Daisy," but he has no photos of himself or his vessel. We can, however, thank him for this shot of the José Gaspar approaching the Tampa Convention Center. USCG Auxiliary photo by Steve Williams



Articles of Interest

Flotilla 74, Brandon Meeting January 16, 2024



At the January 16 meeting, the members elected a Flotilla Vice Commander, Matthew Stephen, and discussed our flotilla's goals for 2024. Most staff officers also presented goals using the SMART format (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound). We want 2024 to be a great year for our flotilla! We started the year thanking our members for all of their efforts in 2023. Dorothy Riley, Flotilla Commander, presented Certificates of Appreciation to Steve Williams (top left), Kelly McMahon (bottom Left), Christopher Hunt (top right), and August Miller (bottom right). Members in the background include Earl Abbott (sitting beneath the window), and George Humphrey (orange shirt). Left: Matthew Stephen giving the Oath of Office. The members also created a July 4th Parade committee to plan our participation in this year's Independence Day Parade. Want to get involved? Contact William Sage or Earl Abbott to help plan the event. USCG Auxiliary photos by Matthew Stephen



Articles of Interest

Flotilla 74, Brandon Meeting February 17, 2024



Dorothy Riley, Flotilla Commander, presented several awards and certificates of completion. Photos on the left are of Christopher Hunt (top), Earl Abbott (mid-page), and Kelly McMahon (below left). Chris and Earl received certificates for completing their CORE courses, although Chris's certificate was a few months later! (United States Coast Guard Auxiliary photos by Matt Stephen.)



We are planning participation in many upcoming events and setting our flotilla goals in motion. Upcoming events include asking members to stand watches at Sun 'n Fun in Lakeland and the Tampa Bay Boat Show (see information on page 18 of this issue).

We are also planning our participation in National Safe Boating Week and the Brandon Independence Day Parade. We established committees to plan these events, and the committees will undoubtedly welcome all the members' help. For information or to learn how you can assist for the Independence Day Parade, contact Bill Sage, Matt Stephen, or Earl Abbott. For National Safe Boating Week, contact Matt Stephen Tanner Piliego, Chris Hunt, or Earl Abbott. Ω



Articles of Interest

Petty Officer First Class Ethan McKenzie: One of our “Missing Members.”

When we look at our member roster, members of Flotilla 74, Brandon come across the name of a member whom we do not see at flotilla meetings: a member who does not participate in any flotilla events: Ethan McKenzie. Meet that “absent member,” who, in fact, is not missing at all!

Ethan McKenzie joined the Auxiliary in July of 2013 and has been counted as a member since. Ethan joined the Coast Guard a year later and has been on active duty for over nine years. A Petty Officer First Class (E-6), he is an Aviation Survival Technician currently serving at Air Station Kodiak in Alaska, and he has been deployed to Cold Bay, Cordova, Kotzebue, Shemya, Sitka, and the CGC Bertholf, all in Alaska.

Ethan's previous duty stations were not as frigid. They include Coast Guard Small Boat Station Chincoteague, Virginia; Coast Guard Small Boat Station Fort Macon, North Carolina; and Air Station New Orleans, Louisiana. When he leaves Alaska, he will

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Articles of Interest

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be assigned to Air Station Barbers Point in Hawaii where he can thaw again!

Ethan has enjoyed a varied and successful career. His prior qualifications and designations include watch stander, 24-foot special purpose craft-shallow water boat crewman, 29-foot response boat-small boat crewman, 47-foot motor lifeboat boat crewman, 47-foot motor lifeboat engineer, boarding team member, and MH-65 helicopter basic aircrewman. His current qualifications and designations include MH-60 helicopter basic aircrewman, MH-60 helicopter rescue swimmer, and MH-65 helicopter transition rescue swimmer.

Aviation Survival Technicians (AST) are the Coast Guard's specialized rescue swimmers, equipped with the survival training and experience necessary to keep themselves and others alive at sea or on land. ASTs fly on Coast Guard helicopters into various challenging situations, from emergencies at sea to floods on land to cliff-side rescues. AST tasks require the highest degree of physical fitness and are typically assigned to Coast Guard air stations.

Ethan has executed 143 search and rescue missions, saved 30 lives, and assisted another 25 lives to safety.



If you are impressed with his many skills and accomplishments, know that the Coast Guard is as impressed as we are! Ethan was named the Coast Guard's District 17 Enlisted Person of the Year!

Bravo Zulu, Petty Officer First Class Ethan McKenzie!

All photos provided by AST1 Ethan McKenzie. Photo bottom left is AST1 McKenzie (wearing life jacket) with the helicopter flight crew.



Articles of Interest

Egmont Key Lighthouse: Sentinel Guarding Tampa Bay

By Dorothy Riley

Since hanging a painting of the Egmont Key Lighthouse in our flotilla, it occurred to me that many members may not know where or what it is. The following serves as a brief history of this iconic landmark.

Egmont Key Lighthouse, a sentinel standing guard over the entrance to Tampa Bay, boasts a rich and storied history. Its journey began in the 1830s when increased shipping traffic led to frequent groundings on the treacherous sandbars surrounding Egmont Key. Recognizing the need for a beacon, Congress appropriated funds to construct a lighthouse in 1838.

Work commenced in 1847 but faced early setbacks. The ship transporting bricks from New York ran aground, forcing a delay and resupply. Despite the challenges, the 45-foot tower was completed in 1848 and lit for the first time on April 19, becoming the sole lighthouse between St. Marks and Key West.

However, the Great Hurricane of that same year battered the island, sending 15-foot waves crashing over the lighthouse and causing significant damage. Undeterred, the government authorized a sturdier brick tower, completed in 1858. This iteration, standing 87 feet tall, is the one that graces Egmont Key today.

Egmont Key's history extends far beyond its lighthouse. The island has served as a military outpost, a



Egmont Key Lighthouse, photo courtesy Egmont Key State Park

Seminole internment camp during the Third Seminole War, and a Union stronghold during the Civil War. The internment of Seminoles on Egmont Key during the Third Seminole War is a complex and sensitive topic.

The Seminoles were forcibly removed from their homes in Florida during the Third Seminole War (1855-1858). Some Seminoles were briefly interned on Egmont Key in 1858-1859, but the exact number is unknown. Estimates range from a few hundred to thousands. The conditions on the island were harsh. The Seminoles lacked adequate shelter, food, and sanitation, leading to high rates of disease and death.

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Articles of Interest

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The exact number of Seminoles who died on Egmont Key is not definitively documented. Estimates vary widely, with some sources suggesting hundreds and others suggesting thousands. This represents another regrettable blot against our sometimes less than glorious history.

Fort Dade's construction on Egmont Key was a two-phase process, unfolding in response to specific historical events:

Phase 1: 1898 - Temporary Fortifications.

The Spanish-American War erupted in 1898, raising concerns about a possible Spanish attack on Tampa Bay. To fortify the bay entrance, the U.S. military quickly erected temporary gun batteries, docks, and railroads on Egmont Key. A thousand-tent U.S. Marine Hospital was also established to serve wounded troops.

While the Spanish-American War ended quickly in August 1898, the

temporary fortifications laid the groundwork for a more permanent fort.

Phase 2: 1900 - 1906 - Permanent Fort Construction.

Recognizing the strategic importance of Egmont Key, the military decided to build a permanent fort. Construction began in 1900 and continued until 1906. Fort Dade became a bustling military installation with over 300 residents. The island boasted brick roads, electricity, telephones, a hospital, a jail, a movie theater, a bowling alley, and even tennis courts.

The fort featured concrete and brick structures, including gun batteries, barracks, mess halls, and officers' quarters. The fort was named in honor of Major Francis L. Dade, a U.S. Army officer killed in the Second Seminole War, along with most of his command.

After Fort Dade's decommissioning in 1923, Egmont



The ruins of Fort Dade on the island of Egmont Key State Park. Photos from Wikipedia Commons.

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Articles of Interest

Egmont Key (Continued from page 18)

Key transitioned to a quieter chapter. The Tampa Bay Pilots Association established operations there in 1926, utilizing the island's strategic location to guide ships safely through the bay's intricate channels.

The relationship between Egmont Key and the US Coast Guard has been multifaceted and evolved over time. After its construction in 1848, the Egmont Key Lighthouse was initially managed by the Lighthouse Service, which the U.S. Coast Guard absorbed in 1939. The lighthouse keepers played a vital role in its operation, often facing isolation and harsh weather conditions.

After the Coast Guard took over control and operation of the lighthouse, it modernized it with electricity and eventually automating it in 1990. Today, the Coast Guard maintains the lighthouse as a navigational aid for vessels entering Tampa Bay, ensuring their safety.

Egmont Key's strategic location near the entrance to Tampa Bay makes it a crucial point for Coast Guard operations, particularly search and rescue. The Coast Guard frequently uses the island as a staging area for search and rescue missions in the surrounding waters. The Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater in St. Petersburg plays a vital role in these missions, deploying helicopters and boats to respond to distress calls.

Since 2001, Egmont Key has been part of Egmont Key State Park, which the Florida Department of Environmental Protection manages. The Coast Guard col-

laborates with the park rangers to ensure the safety and security of visitors and preserve the island's ecological and historical resources. Joint efforts involve beach patrols, wildlife monitoring, and educational programs promoting responsible recreational activities on the island.

Overall, the relationship between Egmont Key and the Coast Guard is one of mutual codependence and collaboration. The island serves as a vital infrastructure piece for the Coast Guard's navigation and rescue operations, while the Coast Guard contributes to the safety and security of the island for both park visitors and the environment. The lighthouse, automated in 1990, continues to guide mariners, its white beam stretching across the water like a watchful eye.

Today, Egmont Key is a state park, welcoming visitors to explore its natural beauty and

rich historical tapestry. It was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1976, recognizing its cultural significance .Ω



Oil Painting of Egmont Key Lighthouse (16" x 20") by Dorothy Riley dated 2004. The original painting was presented to a friend, and a signed print hangs in Flotilla 74, Brandon.



Articles of Interest

District 7 Diversity and Inclusion

THE INSIDER

February 2024

Being included, and a sense of belonging, feels right!!

Black History Month is recognized every February and during this time, the nation celebrates the history, accomplishments, and contributions Black Americans have made in the U.S.

African American art is infused with African, Caribbean, and the Black American lived experiences. African American artists have used art to preserve history and community memory as well as for empowerment.

Enslaved Africans of the Lowcountry began their more than a 300-year tradition of making sweetgrass baskets, revealing their visual artistry via craft.

Black contributions to literature include works by poets like Phillis Wheatley, essays, autobiographies, and novels by writers such as David Walker and Maria Stewart. Black aesthetics have also been manifested through sculptors like Edmonia Lewis and painters like Henry O. Tanner.

Blues musicians such as Robert Johnson, McKinley 'Muddy Waters' and "BB" King created and nurtured a style of music that became the bedrock for gospel, soul, and other still popular (and evolving) forms of music.

In celebrating the entire history of African Americans and the arts, the national spotlight illuminates the richness of the past and present with an eye towards what the rest of the twenty-first century will bring.

See: <https://asalh.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/2024-Black-History-Theme-African-Americans-and-the-Arts.pdf>

THE INSIDER

March 2024

Being included, and a sense of belonging, feels right!!



The 2024 theme recognizes women throughout the country who understand that, for a positive future, we need to eliminate bias and discrimination entirely from our lives and institutions

...Today, equity, diversity and inclusion are powerful driving forces that are having a wide-ranging impact on our country. As members of families, civic and community groups, businesses and legislative bodies, women are in the forefront of reevaluating the status quo. They are looking anew at what harmful social policies and behaviors exist and, often subtly, determine our future. In response, women in communities across the nation are helping to develop innovative programs and projects within corporations, the military, federal agencies and educational organizations to address these injustices....

How your members can honor the women in your community or organization.

- Be open-minded to ideas and suggestions.
- Look them in the eyes during conversation and show genuine interest.
- Show appreciation for their work.

<https://nationalwomenshistoryalliance.org/2024-whm-theme/>



Articles of Interest

Mark Your Calendars...

Join us for the 50th Anniversary of the 2024 Sun 'n-Fun Aerospace Expo

**April 9 to April 14, 2024,
Lakeland Linder Airport, Lakeland Florida.**

The Sun-N-Fun is the second-largest air show in the country with more than 150,000 to 200,000 visitors each year. The estimated attendance for the 2024 SUN-N-Fun is 300,000.

There will be two watches each day. The first watch will be from 0930 to 1430 and the second will be from 1430 to 1930. The Watch Standers can stand their watch in the morning or the afternoon or both watches. Watches are open to you for the full six days of the Sun-N-Fun. Division 7 and Flotilla 77 Polk County Florida request your help in filling these watches and completing our assigned mission. Once your member has completed his or her watch they will be free to attend the Sun-N-Fun Air Show.

The Uniform of the Day will be the Operational Duty Uniform and Auxiliary Work Uniform.

To volunteered to stand watch, contact Gilbert Thomas, Flotilla Commander, Flotilla 77, Polk County



Thunderbirds photo courtesy of U.S. Airforce

Watchstanders Needed for Tampa Bay Boat Show

**March 1-3, 2024 (Friday-Sunday)
County Florida State Fairgrounds,
SR 301 and Orient Roads, Hillsborough County**

Boat shows are an ideal venue for promoting the boating safely message. At boat shows we promote Vessel Safety Checks, Public Education programs, and of course, invitations to join the Auxiliary!

Volunteers should contact Elliott Seda, Flotilla Commander, Flotilla 75, Apollo Beach. See Auxiliary Member list (AUXOFFICER) for Elliot's contact info, or call Dorothy Riley



Flotilla 74, Brandon member George Papabeis talks to visitors to the Auxiliary boating safely display table at the 2023 Tampa Bay Boat Show. Wearing the tropical blue uniform is Gilbert Thomas, Flotilla 77, Polk County. USCG Auxiliary photo by Dorothy Riley



Articles of Interest

Mark Your Calendars...

Ready for S-Train?

This year, Sector St. Petersburg will run S-Train for District West. The committee is working on a program scheduled for March 23 at Air Station Clearwater. This is a fantastic training opportunity and is a bit like an Auxiliary boot camp. Members can get critical training in person at an all-day event. Additionally, there will be hands-on tours of a USCG aircraft and hangar; Auxiliarists will meet and speak with active-duty crew members who operate and maintain the fantastic equipment used in the USCG, and hear about the USCG mission set.

This will be Sector St. Petersburg's first S-Train and is modeled after S-Train offered in Miami. There, members toured a Coast Guard facility, attended classes and job fairs that introduced them to various qualifications, and were offered experts to answer questions one-on-one about multiple areas of interest.

Members from all divisions under Sector St. Petersburg will attend S-Train at Air Station Clearwater March 23 at Air Station Clearwater, 15100 Rescue Way, Clearwater, Florida 33762. Uniform: Operational

Dress Uniform or Alternative Work Uniform Registration is open now at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSerNwhcAmwkr3Qx23bX_aQFTawa0fvei2x-0vIKwbXm_PrLAXA/viewform



Members of the divisions under Sector Miami attend S-Train in 2023. USCG Auxiliary photo by R. Michael Stringer



MARCH 29 - 30, 2024

MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE

6801 S. Dale Mabry Highway, Tampa, FL 33621

OFFICIAL WEBSITE: www.tampabayairfest.com/

This is more than an airshow. It is a great Public Affairs Opportunity!



Articles of Interest

Member Training Updates

Daniel Helou, DCAPT-W

Training Updates

REYR is an acronym for 'required yearly, not met.' The designation is assigned to tasks that must be completed regularly to maintain qualifications. Some common causes for members going REYR include:

- Not completing the required number of hours/evolutions to remain proficient.
- Not completing a qualification-specific workshop or associated training.
- Expired other training like Core training.

Admittedly, staying current has gotten more complicated, but knowing the requirements for your area of specialization is part of holding that qualification. Some of the folks in the head shed have passed along some very helpful guidance (this is gold, so please pass it along via email and at your meetings to your team):

National Operations Workshops

Surface Workshop - mandatory for 2024 (Self-Attestation is not permitted)

Air Workshop - mandatory for 2024 (self-attestation is not permitted) – must be entered by D7 through the Air Training process and not by Information Services (IS) officers.

Telecommunications Workshop – strongly encouraged – not mandatory for 2024 (self-attestation is not permitted).

Instructors must submit form 7039 Workshop Mission Attendance Report to IS officers to enter into AUXDATA. Instructor time goes on 06A, and students go on 99D.

National Vessel Examiner (VE) Workshop – mandatory for 2024. – VE workshop presentations are located at the National V-Directorate in the 'Member Zone' at Member Training. After individually viewing the workshop, members must submit a 'Workshop Self-Attestation form' to their IS officer for entry into

AUXDATA. If an instructor gives the class, the instructor submits the 7039 Workshop Attendance form to the IS officer for input. The instructor uses 06B for instructor hours, and students use 99D.

National Instructor Workshop – strongly encouraged but not mandatory for 2024. IT workshop presentations are available on the National E-Directorate website. Instructions for entry are the same as for VE workshops with Self-Attestation or Instructor-submitted forms.



National Culinary Assistance Specialists

Sanitation Workshop – mandatory for all Auxiliary Culinary Assistance Specialists 1 and 2 and those training. Please follow the Auxiliary Culinary Assistance Specialists website instructions for completing this workshop. After completion, the National Test Center (NTC) will upload the results to AUXDATA. IS officers do not enter this workshop. If there are any problems or questions, submit a D7 Help Ticket.

Members must complete all required workshops no later than June 30, 2024, except for the Air Operations Workshop due by December 31, 2024. Suppose the workshops are not completed and entered by June 30. In that case, the member's competency will go into REWK (required workshops, not met) status, and they can only function at the trainee level until the workshop is taken, entered into AUXDATA, and a D7 Help Ticket is submitted to get member re-certified. If the workshop is not taken by December 31, 2024, the member will go into REYR status.

Member Training Reports – Several new reports are designed to help our members get a heads-up on what is expiring and when. Ask your IS officer about these reports. If they don't know about them, have them reach up the chain. Kevin Buckley, Martin Jordan, and Sue Hastings are good resources. I can also assist. Ω



**Spring Sale & Shopping
Event for local and active
U.S Coast Guard
Auxiliarists.**

**Location: Flotilla 72 and
Coast Guard Exchange
1301 Beach Dr. (St. Pete)**

- **Saturday April 27
2024**
- **1000-1500**
- **U.S Coast Guard
Exchange, 1301
Beach Dr SE, St.
Petersburg, FL**

As the closest Flotilla to our local U.S Coast Guard Exchange, we invite you to an Auxiliary Flotilla 72 Open House and Spring shopping event.

10% coupons will be available for Auxiliarists, door prizes and raffle drawings will be held. Other items will be part of the spring sale.

Come see all the latest offerings at your Exchange and the benefits that the Auxiliary can have for your boating safety activities and community service efforts.

For more information contact John Madril Flotilla 7-2 FSO Public Affairs, madril@msn.com.



Poster provided by Flotilla 72, St. Petersburg



WE WANT YOU TO BE A DEDICATED VOLUNTEER IN THE U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY



**Find out how you can be
a member by contacting
the number below.**

(813) 644-2894

USCGA-P

FLOT is a military acronym meaning "forward line of own troops." FLOT line or "forward edge of battle area" (FEBA) are technical terms used by all branches of the U.S. armed services to designate the forward most friendly maritime or land forces on the battlefield at a given point in time during an armed conflict.

We are not a military force engaged in armed conflict. We are, however, the front-line of the struggle to save the lives of recreational boaters, and we face this great endeavor armed with Vessel Safety Checks, Public Education classes and all the other Recreational Boating Safety programs in our arsenal. Our newsletter banner serves as a reminder of this mission.

FLOT Lines is a publication of Flotilla 74, Brandon, District 7 United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, located at 3006 S. Kings Ave., Brandon. The Auxiliary an organization of dues-paying unpaid, civilian volunteers whose mission is to assist the U.S. Coast Guard in promoting boating safety. Articles may be reprinted with the express consent of the author or photographer with proper credit given to same. For permissions or for more information, please contact the editor, Dorothy Riley, SO-PB, Email address: dottieriley@gmail.com

The Privacy Act of 1974 protects the names, addresses, telephone/fax numbers and email addresses of Flotilla 74 members which may appear in this or other Auxiliary publications. As a matter of policy, information described above is not made available to the general public or outside groups without that members expressed and or written consent. When such information appears, its privacy shall be safeguarded, and the information will be clearly labeled. Publication of this information by the general public and/or outside groups is prohibited by the Privacy Act.



Be sure to attend flotilla meetings

When: 2nd Tuesday, 7 p.m.

Where: Flotilla 74, Brandon

3006 S. KINGS AVE, Brandon, FL

***Why: Membership is more rewarding
when you participate-
and bring a friend!***