



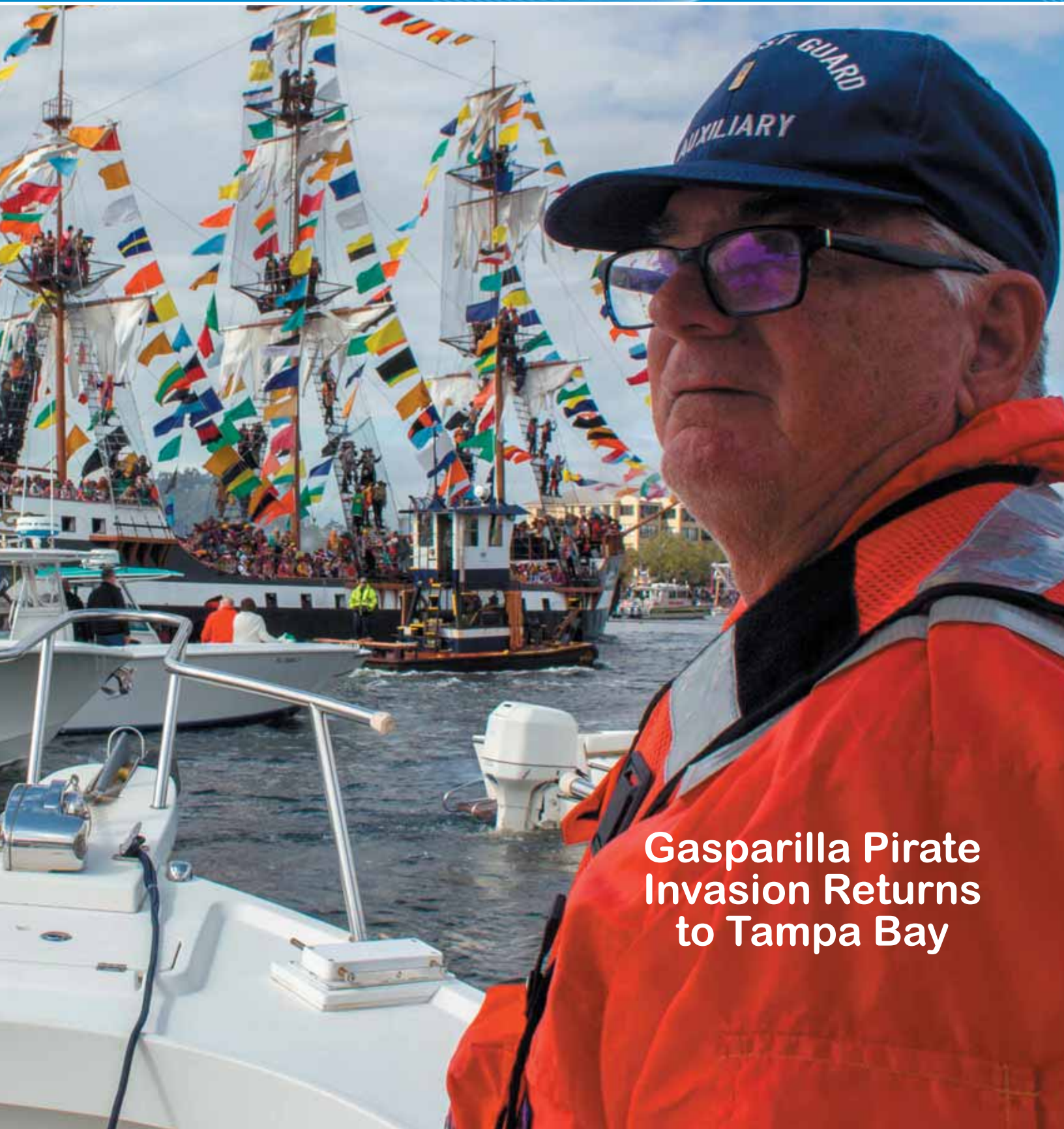
FLOT Lines

Flotilla 74, Brandon

District 7

USCG Auxiliary

Issue 1 2023



**Gasparilla Pirate
Invasion Returns
to Tampa Bay**



FLOT Lines

Newsletter Flotilla 74, Brandon

Dorothy Riley, Flotilla Commander

William Sage, Flotilla Vice Commander

Meeting: Second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

3006 South Kings Ave., Brandon, Florida

Flotilla Staff Officers

August Miller
Navigation Systems
Materials

George Papabeis
Public Affairs
Operations

Dorothy Riley
Publications

William Sage
Human Resources
Program Visits

Clark Pittman
Member Training
Secretary of Records
Vessel Examinations

Tanner Piliego
Information Systems
Communication Services
Finance



We're on the web!

www.cgaux74.org



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

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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Background photo: Hilario Benitez Rivera and Clark Pittman conduct a vessel safety check at Williams Park boat ramp during National Safe Boating Week, May 2022. USCG Auxiliary photo by Dorothy Riley.

From the Helm

Dorothy Riley Flotilla Commander

I'm flotilla commander? Twenty years in the Auxiliary, and I never thought I would hold this office! If Flotilla 74, Brandon, has a successful year, it is because we have a phenomenal and energetic core team.

So much needs work, from our damaged building to our exhausted finances, but our core team is delivering. Bravo Zulu! New members are earning the required qualifications to resume boating safety activities like Vessel Safety Checks, Recreational Boating Safety Partner Visitations, and Public Education classes. We thank the members from other flotillas who are helping us achieve this goal- Jim Fogle, Flotilla 72, St. Petersburg; Dennis Smith, Flotilla 77, Plant City.

Our member count is low; several members live out of state or out of the country. That leaves even fewer members to do all the work. Then there is that group of members that do not attend meetings or participate in activities. *What can we do to entice or motivate you? What can we do to engage you?* We need every member on board. The greatest thing that the new members brought into our flotilla is fellowship. They are a team who work and have fun together.

Bill Sage is stepping down as Flotilla Vice Commander, and we will hold elections in March to replace him. Bill stepping down comes as no surprise. It was planned. We are deeply indebted to Bill for all of his contributions as commander. He single-handedly kept the flotilla afloat this past year and recruited some wonderful new members. Sage will stay on as Human Resources and Immediate Past Flotilla Commander.

There are upcoming events in which I hope many of our members participate. The Tampa Bay Boat Show is Mar. 3-5 in the Expo Hall of the Florida State Fairgrounds. The end of March is 'SUN and FUN' in Lakeland, March 28-Apr 2. Both are wonderful annual events, and admission is free for vendors. More information TBA as we near these dates.

Thank you to everyone who is working hard to revive

our floundering flotilla. You can see how far your efforts have brought us in this newsletter. We have much to be proud of!

Dorothy Riley,
Flotilla Commander 74



Heading out for the Frogman Swim Jan 14, George Papabeis caught these two spreading the word about our great start this year!



From the Helm



William Sage Flotilla Vice Commander

I submitted my letter of resignation as Flotilla Vice Commander. I did this after holding an elected position for the past three years. Going into 2023, I thought I

would like a break and be a 'regular' member for a bit. I intend to serve the flotilla in several areas other than in an elected position. The Flotilla Vice Commander vacancy has been announced, and the criteria for the position have also been sent out. We will hold the election for Flotilla Vice Commander at our March 14 business meeting at the flotilla building.

We are getting off to an excellent start this year, and I have never been more pleased. This past year we

have had five new members, and they have generated enthusiasm within our flotilla. Three of these members have become basically qualified within a month of getting their member number, and two of them assumed flotilla staff officer positions after becoming basically qualified.

The staff has been working together better than ever these past months. Some of them felt a change of pace would generate more creativity and enthusiasm and they were right. We have had our past two staff meetings at a local restaurant, and they were positive and generated ideas for the upcoming year. Dottie and I are pleased with the spirit and positivity of the meetings!

Recently, Dottie sent out an email asking members to review what they liked to do and perhaps volunteer for a flotilla staff officer position. If you have an interest, please let her know.

Remember, the first criterion for becoming a staff officer is having your Auxiliary core training (AUXCT). (Core courses must be redone every five years and basic qualifying courses (BQC) II require an online test.) We have continually asked all of our members to complete these. It is not hard to do. All core courses are self-paced and found in the Auxiliary Classroom (Moodle). Upon completion, complete a self-attestation form saying that you have reviewed and understand the material presented. Not a hard thing to do. If you have problems with either, please let Clark, Dottie or Bill know, and we will help you work your way through the basic training.

We look forward to working with all of you to ensure that 2023 is an outstanding year for our members and the flotilla.

Bill Sage,

Flotilla Vice Commander



Our new floor. Photo by William Sage.



Jose Gaspar and His Fleet of Pirates Invade Tampa Bay

Flotilla 74 MISS DAISY provides noteworthy support.

By Dorothy Riley

Gasparilla is an annual event in Tampa Bay. The public festivities last for over two weeks and center in and around Ybor City at the end of January and early February. The private events- the formal balls held by the various Krewes (an obvious play on the word 'crew') begin at least a week earlier.

Before this year's Gasparilla Pirate Invasion held on January 28, Flotilla 74, Brandon's facility MISS DAISY had the distinction of transporting VIPs. Before the start of the parade, MISS DAISY, under the command of Coxswain Dean Bell, provided transport to RADM Brendan McPherson, Commander, Coast Guard District 7; CAPT Michael Kahle, Sector St Petersburg Commanding Officer and Captain of the Port, and CDR Shawn Lansing, Deputy Commander, Sector St Petersburg, from the Coast Guard

facility on Davis Island to the Incident Command Post near Hooker's Point. RADM McPherson wanted to meet with the Coast Guard team supporting the event. Coxswain Bell returned these dignitaries to Davis Islands before the parade began so they could join in the Coast Guard morale event. Each year Sector arranges a party for Coast Guard members and their families so they can safely view the water parade.

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(Continued from page 6)



MISS DAISY'S crew was Dean Bell, Flotilla 79, Tampa, coxswain; George Papabeis, Flotilla 74, Brandon, crew; Dennis Smith, Flotilla 77, Polk County, crew; Steve Williams, Flotilla 74, Brandon, trainee; and Miguel Marquez, Flotilla 79 Tampa, trainees.

The Gasparilla Children's Parade marks the public opening of these celebrations. A fly-over from MacDill Air Force Base often opens the Gasparilla Children's Parade, and fireworks mark the parade's conclusion.

A week after the Children's Parade is the Gasparilla Boat Parade and the Invasion of the Pirates, an all-day event. The boat parade simulates Jose Gaspar and his pirates invading and conquering the city of Tampa. Law enforcement from throughout Florida and even neighboring states assist in peacekeeping.

We are proud of MISS DAISY and her crew! Ω



TOP: RADM Brendan McPherson, Commander, Coast Guard District 7; CDR Shawn Lansing, Deputy Commander, Sector St Petersburg; Dean Bell, Flotilla 79, Tampa, Auxiliary coxswain, and CAPT Michael Kahle, Sector St Petersburg Commanding Officer and Captain of the Port aboard MISS DAISY January 28 before the Gasparilla pirate invasion.



Mid page: From left: Dennis Smith, Flotilla 77, Polk County, Auxiliary; CAPT Michael Kahle, Sector St Petersburg Commanding Officer and Captain of the Port; CDR Shawn Lansing, Deputy Commander, Sector St Petersburg; to RADM Brendan McPherson, Commander, Coast Guard District 7; Dean Bell, Flotilla 79, Tampa, Auxiliary, coxswain; Steve Williams, Flotilla 74, Brandon, Auxiliary, trainee; Miguel Marquez, Flotilla 79, Tampa, trainee aboard MISS DAISY.

Dean Bell, coxswain, and Steve Smith, trainee (forward) have a great view of the JOSE GASPAS as the vessel enters the Tampa basin. All photographs by George Papabeis, Flotilla 74, Brandon. Papabeis served as crew.



Articles of Interest

History of Gasparilla Pirate Invasion

By Dorothy Riley

The Gasparilla Boat Parade has a long history in Tampa, Florida. It is one of the oldest and most well-known events in the Tampa Bay area and has been held annually since the early 1900s.

The parade is named after the legendary pirate José Gaspar, also known as Gasparilla, and is inspired by the pirate's legendary raids on the west coast of Florida. The parade is traditionally led by the José Gasparilla, a pirate ship that is the festival's centerpiece. The boat parade is held on the last Saturday in January and is followed by a series of other events, including a pirate invasion and a music festival. The Gasparilla events attract thousands of visitors each year.

The Gasparilla festival was created by the society editor of the "Tampa Tribune" in partnership with civic and social leaders in the Bay area. The first mock pirate invasion by the "Ye Mystic Krewe of Gasparilla" was in May 1904, when the pirates arrived on horseback. The event was so popular that the Tampa leaders agreed to organize the parade annually. The mock invasions continued on horseback and by automobile until 1911, the first year that the pirate krewes invaded by boat.

Until 1988, the Gasparilla Pirate Festival was celebrated on the first Monday in February. 1988 was the year it was moved to Saturday. In 2002, it was moved to the last Saturday in January.

A family-friendly children's parade and fireworks are



1904



1936



1966

Historical photos courtesy
FloridaMemory.com

ship "SS American Victory" standing in for the US Navy. Ω

typically held a week before the boat parade. Also on the annual calendar is the Gasparilla Festival of the Arts, which showcases more than 233 of the world's most talented artists who "turn Julian B. Lane Riverfront Park into a museum. Sporting events, music festivals, and formal krewe balls occur before and after the main event, while the Knights of Sant'Yago Illuminated night parade serves as the outgoing event for the pirate krewes.

Until after the September 11 attacks, a US Navy ship volunteered to be "attacked" by small boats of the "Ybor City Navy," who attacked the defender by throwing stale Cuban bread and shooting water hoses. This occurred about two weeks before the Parade of Pirates. The US Navy "returned fire" with their water hoses. Eventually, the Navy surrendered to the Alcalde of Ybor City, who, as the story goes, was hired by Jose Gaspar to clear resistance to his impending pirate attack.

After the "battle," the navy sailors were treated to an evening on the town. This event began in 1956 and was held about two weeks before the Parade of Pirates. While it was temporarily discontinued after the September 11 attacks, it has been held most years since, with the museum





Florida Manatees

By Dorothy Riley

Manatees are large mammals of the order Sirenia, named after the Greek mythological sirens thought to lure sailors to their graves. There is, however, nothing sinister about these slow-moving, gentle giants more closely related to elephants than to any other Mammalian order. They are very tactile creatures, are known to touch swimmers deliberately, and inanimate objects in the water and are never aggressive.

The West Indian (Florida) manatee was once abundant throughout the tropic and subtropical western North and South Atlantic and Caribbean waters. Today, the West Indian manatee is listed as an endangered species throughout its range. The range of the Florida manatee is primarily peninsular Florida but extends as far north as Rhode Island. Manatees have been rescued near Houston, Texas, and Mississippi.

Adult West Indian manatees average about 10 feet in length, but large individuals may reach lengths of up to 13 feet. Average adult weights are approximately 800 to 1,200 pounds. One particularly large Florida manatee weighed 3,650 pounds. Females are generally larger than males.

Despite their large size, when a boater spots a manatee, it is often no more than its snout breaking the water's surface for air. A manatee's body is streamlined but thick in the middle and ends in a paddle-like tail. They are gray, and their bodies often are scarred from brushes with propellers, sharp protrusions on boat docks and piers, or fishing hooks and lines.

All manatees live in warm, tropic, or sub-tropic waters in temperatures above 64 degrees. They prefer shallow waters near shores, inlets, and mangroves where vegetation is plentiful. Manatees feed on more than 60 species of plants, including turtle grass, manatee grass, shoal grass, mangrove leaves, various algae, water hyacinth, acorns, and Hydrilla. The shallow

Every year as the Gasparilla Boat Parade makes its way toward the Tampa Convention Center, Auxiliarists are assigned duties that often position them far from the madness and the fray. This year was an exception.

In past years, many Auxiliarists escorted members of Tampa Bay's Manatee Watch. This organization helps to protect the manatees from accidental injuries by recreational boaters and conducts an annual count to track the animal's dwindling numbers. This year, the Auxiliary did not provide this service, but TampaBay's Manatee Watch monitored at least eight manatees.

While keeping a watchful eye over Florida's manatees may not offer the same thrill and excitement as being amid the boat parade, it is not a less valuable service.

Florida's manatees are an endangered species protected by both state and federal laws. The sheer number of boaters during the Gasparilla Boat Parade, combined with the high rate of alcohol consumption during these festivities, increases the threat to these gentle creatures tenfold. To all of our members who participated in the annual manatee watch—thank you! If you were fortunate enough to catch one of their snouts breaching the water's surface, it is a thrill you will never forget!

Here is some general information about our manatees, one of Florida's greatest treasures:

(Continued on page 10)

Articles of Interest

Florida Manatees *(Continued from page 9)*

shorelines preferred by manatees are also filled with docks and boat ramps. The preference for shallow waters places manatees in grave danger from recreational boaters and accounts for many of their injuries and accidental deaths.

Florida's manatees breed year-round. Their gestational period is 12 months, and they live to be 50 to 60 years old. They communicate with chirps, trills, and other sounds, keep their young calves close, and are semi-social creatures.

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Florida manatee has grown to a minimum of 7,520 animals. As a result, the species was reclassified from an endangered to a threatened species under the federal Endangered Species Act in May 2017. Still, it remains one of the most endangered marine mammals in the United States. Federal and state laws have been passed that protect Florida manatees. Federal laws prohibit hunting, capturing, killing or harassing these animals. These laws include the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 and the Endangered Species Act of 2017. Penalties can include a year in prison and a fine of up to \$50,000.

By the end of 2021, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission recorded 1,100 manatee deaths. This number trumps death tolls recorded by the FWC in the previous five years, nearly doubling 2020's total of 617 deaths. The data shows that 101 deaths were due to watercraft collisions, 180 were natural causes, and 25 were undetermined.

In 2022, the total statewide manatee mortality number (800) was above the 5-year average (741) of the most recent years but was lower than that of last year (1,100). Mortality was high due to the ongoing Unusual Mortality Event (UME) from starvation and malnutrition on the Atlantic coast.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission reported that one in eight manatee fatalities were caused by humans (allisions with vessels, etc.)



Florida manatees congregating in the warm waters next to the Tampa Electric power plant in Apollo Beach, Florida (seen at top). Tampa Electric built a viewing platform where visitors can see manatees during the cold winter months. Photos by Dorothy Riley

Injured manatees should be reported to Florida Fish and Wildlife or the Coast Guard as soon as possible.
Ω



Articles of Interest

Flotilla 74, Brandon, Facility MISS DAISY Assists With 2023 Frogman Swim.

By George Papabeis

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary facility MISS DAISY and its crew assisted in the 2023 Frogman Swim. The crew of the MISS DAISY consisted of coxswain Dean Bell and boat crew members Joe Silva, Miguel Anibal Marquez-Reines, Charles Lambeth, Joe Pri-mosch, George Papabeis, and trainee Steve Williams.

MS. DAISY's mission started with a 5:30 AM dockside muster at Salty Sol Park (aka Gandy boat ramp). Because of the low air and water temps, Mustang survival suits were issued to the crew and coxswain. The air temperatures saw frost in certain areas of Tampa Bay overnight, but by start time, the air temperature reached a balmy 48 F, with water temperatures at 62° F.

The crew of MISS DAISY picked up a swimmer in distress who had become seperated from his kyak escort.

Bravo Zulu!

Note: Read the article in its entirety in "Intercom," issue 1 2023.



Articles of Interest

VOLUNTEER

By Dorothy Riley



There are many reasons why people choose to volunteer their time and energy to help others:

- To make a positive difference in the world: Volunteering allows you to contribute to a cause or community that you care about and can be a fulfilling way to make a positive impact.
- To gain new skills and experiences: Volunteering can provide opportunities to learn new skills and gain valuable experience in a particular field or area of interest.
- To meet new people and build connections: Volunteering can be a great way to meet new people, connect with your community, and develop relationships with like-minded individuals.
- To give back to the community: Many people volunteer as a way to give back to their community and help those in need.
- To improve mental and physical health: Volunteering has been linked to numerous benefits for mental and physical health, including reduced stress, improved mood, and increased life satisfaction.
- To have fun and feel good: Volunteering can be a fun and enjoyable way to spend your time and provide a sense of purpose and fulfillment.

Top Volunteering Statistics: (Editor's Choice <https://teamstage.io/volunteering-statistics/>)

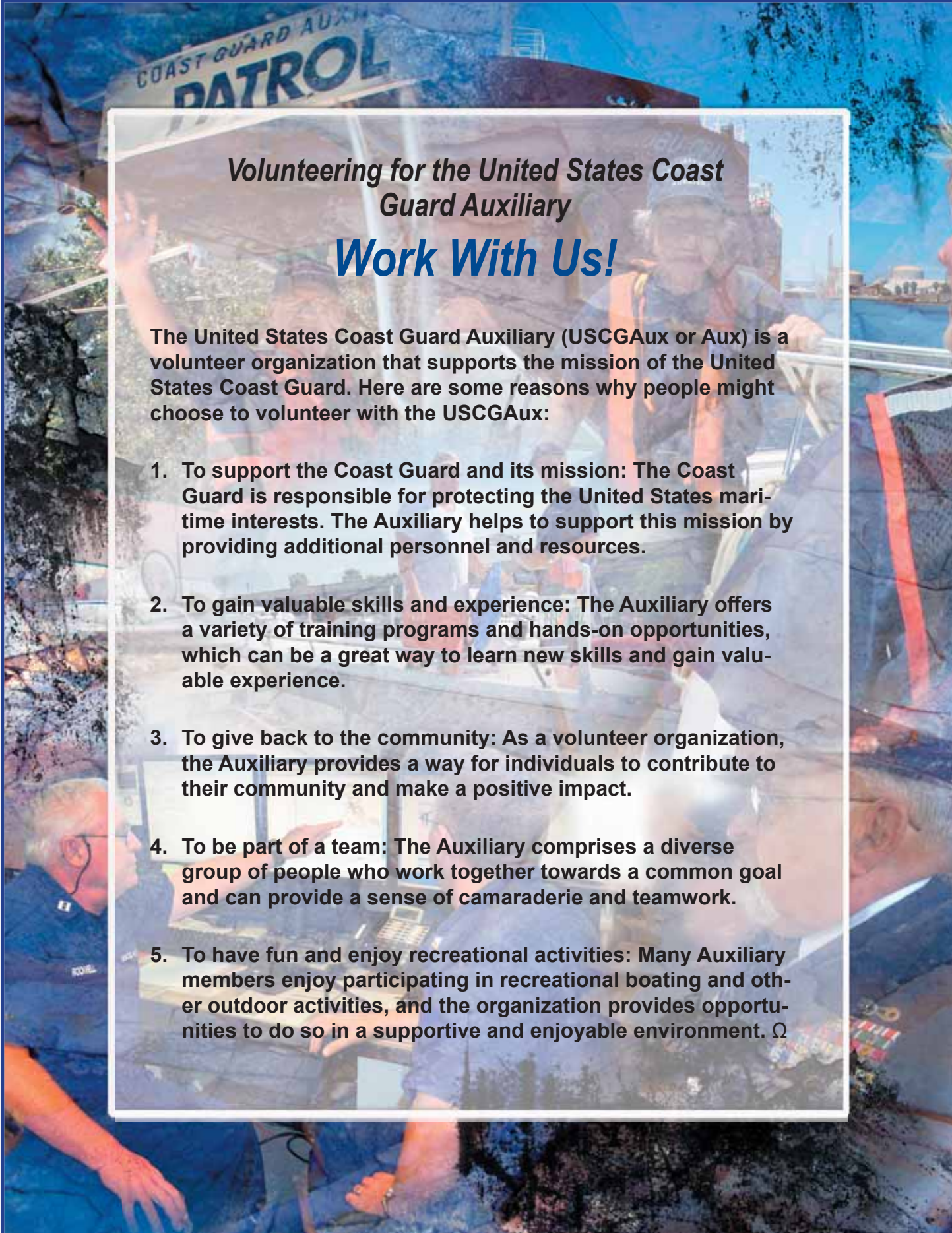
- One in four Americans volunteer.

- Women are more likely than men to volunteer, both formally and informally.
- Baby Boomers are more likely to be volunteers than any other generation.
- COVID caused 11% of volunteer organizations in the US to cease operations.
- Almost 75% of Americans think volunteering will be more important after the pandemic.

Other significant data about volunteers:

1. Over 1 billion people volunteer worldwide.
2. The number of volunteers exceeds the number of unemployed people in six out of ten of the world's largest countries. Moreover, it's three times the number of people employed in financial services or mining industries, according to statistics about volunteering. The effect of their labor is equal to over 109 million full-time workers.
3. Volunteer time in the States is currently valued at \$28.54 per hour. This calculation is based on hourly earnings released by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics and AmeriCorps data on volunteer hours. It's estimated that volunteers contribute nearly \$200 billion in value to US communities. The value of volunteer time in 2020 was up 4.9% from 2019.
4. Around 30.3% of Americans volunteer. Ω





Volunteering for the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary

Work With Us!

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary (USCGAux or Aux) is a volunteer organization that supports the mission of the United States Coast Guard. Here are some reasons why people might choose to volunteer with the USCGAux:

1. **To support the Coast Guard and its mission:** The Coast Guard is responsible for protecting the United States maritime interests. The Auxiliary helps to support this mission by providing additional personnel and resources.
2. **To gain valuable skills and experience:** The Auxiliary offers a variety of training programs and hands-on opportunities, which can be a great way to learn new skills and gain valuable experience.
3. **To give back to the community:** As a volunteer organization, the Auxiliary provides a way for individuals to contribute to their community and make a positive impact.
4. **To be part of a team:** The Auxiliary comprises a diverse group of people who work together towards a common goal and can provide a sense of camaraderie and teamwork.
5. **To have fun and enjoy recreational activities:** Many Auxiliary members enjoy participating in recreational boating and other outdoor activities, and the organization provides opportunities to do so in a supportive and enjoyable environment. Ω



Articles of Interest

District 7 Recruiting Incentive Plan For 2023

Background

A historical decline in membership continues to impact the Auxiliary and its duty to fulfill RBS missions and be the force multiplier it can and should be. The continued loss of seven to 10 percent of our membership annually must be reversed, and new methods need to be considered if we are to succeed.

Efforts to turn around this pattern require fresh methods that include a motivational marketing approach and monetary incentives that form a competitive mindset within our members and provide real value.

Our District Staff Officers in Public Affairs, Human Resources, and Diversity are developing motivational incentives. The concept will use social media campaigns, motivational messaging, and items on meeting agendas at all levels to focus on this issue.

Plan Resources

The budget being approved today includes a \$15K line item that will be a one-year monetary incentive amount to test the value and effectiveness of this approach. Compared to other districts, D7 can easily afford to try this idea without any material impact on the district's financial position. Financial data from 2017 to 2021 shows increased revenue of about 10 percent annually. This increase has been consistent and is not impacted by the cost of district conferences or other expenses, as these tend to be cost-neutral or minimal-profit events.

THE PLAN

Division Awards

Each division that achieves a 15 percent increase in new, Basically Qualified (BQ) members during the calendar year 2023, in accordance with the Recruiting Incentive Qualification Criteria (below), will receive an incentive award in the amount of \$1,000, to be used as they see fit for any authorized program that furthers the general purpose of the Coast Guard Auxiliary and is consistent with the USCGAUX Auxiliary Financial Controls Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). When the funds are disbursed, the Staff Officer-Finance shall advise the DSO-FN of how the

monies were spent (email shall be sufficient). Each division achieving this goal will also receive a plaque recognizing its success.

Flotilla Award

The flotilla that achieves the highest number of new BQ members in the calendar year 2023, in accordance with the Recruiting Incentive Qualification Criteria, will also receive an incentive award in the amount of \$1,000, to be used as they see fit for any authorized program that furthers the general purpose of the Coast Guard Auxiliary and is consistent with the USCGAUX Auxiliary Financial Controls SOP. When the funds are disbursed, the Flotilla Staff Officer-Finance shall advise the District Staff Officer-Finance (DSO-FN) of how the monies were spent (email shall be sufficient). The Flotilla Commander of the flotilla that achieves the newest BQ members will be invited to our district conference as a presenter to share the methods used to achieve their success.

Recruiting Incentive Qualification Criteria

- Membership increases will be determined by comparing unit Auxiliary Data System (AUXDATA) membership records between 1/1/2023 and 12/31/2023.
- Only members newly enrolled in 2023 who achieve BQ status in 2023 will be counted toward the unit's membership increase.
- The DSO-FN and District Staff Officer-IS (DSO-IS) will work together to determine the divisions that qualify for this incentive payment jointly. They will inform the District Commodore, who will notify the recipients.

Plan Parameters

The program is a one-year plan. The concept includes a small built-in return on investment since new members will pay dues to the district. In addition to incentivizing the recruiting efforts of our Auxiliary units, it also rewards units that focus on advancing their new members to BQ status as expeditiously as possible.

The monetary incentive, combined with a comprehensive marketing approach using print media, social me-



Articles of Interest

dia and recruiting events, represents trailblazing but common activities for the Auxiliary. The recent ALAUX 047/22 provides for a similar program with significant monetary awards for Auxiliarists and the issuing of an Auxiliary Commandant Letter of Commendation award as well!

All U.S. military branches now provide significant bonuses to new enlistees. Based on this trend, we believe we need to market this to our members broadly, monitor it, measure its outcomes, and reverse this long-term pattern of decline. Ω

Below: William Sage, then serving as Commander of Flotilla 74, Brandon, swears in new members Clark Pittman and Tanner Piliego at the April 22 business meeting. (Sage is not in uniform due to back surgery.) Both have proven to be valuable to reinvigorating our flotilla and we look forward to recruiting and training more members like them. USCG Auxiliary photo by George Papabeis

Right: Money photo by Jin Yun on Unsplash.





January is Poverty Awareness Month

Commodore Tracy Schultz, ANACO

Did you know?

Poverty in the United States is increasing-nearly 12% of our population lives in poverty. (Statistics from census.gov) The poverty rate is defined as a family of four with an income of less than \$26,696 annually. In 2021, 11.5% of Americans lived in poverty. That's nearly 40 million people.

Working people are affected; it is not just the homeless.

- Who is impacted?

It might not be whom you think.

Non-Hispanic Whites (8.2% in 2020), Asian Americans (8.1% in 2020), Hispanics (17% in 2020), and Black Americans (19.5% in 2020).

- How about young people?

People under 18 living in poverty increased from 14.4% in 2019 to 16.1 % in 2020.

- Adults suffer from poverty, as well. Overall, the rate of poverty for adults 18-64 is 9.4%

For female heads of household families, the rate is over 23%.

- Where to learn more about poverty:

Census.gov has real-life stories on how poverty impacts people in the United States.

What does poverty look like in America?

It means empty refrigerators and hungry summers when there aren't school lunches to tide kids over.

- Living in poverty means hot summers and cold winters, as families can't afford the electricity to keep an air conditioner or heater running.

- Poverty means not having internet access to attend virtual school during the pandemic or not having a computer or phone to apply for jobs and respond to calls for interviews.

- Poverty creates a dependence on public transit regardless of whether the city has a reliable bus and train infrastructure or not. This can limit a family's ability to get groceries, attend doctor's appointments, or make it to work on time.

Fighting Poverty is a personal endeavor. What can our members do?

1. Volunteer for or donate to organizations that help feed the hungry.
2. Donate to your local food shelf.
3. Read to kids from poor homes.
4. Understand poverty; it is pervasive, and people you interact with may be dealing with it.
5. Challenge ideas and assumptions about poverty. Example below-

One common misconception, for example, is that people experiencing homelessness choose not to work. This misconception is incredibly harmful because it negates the many uncontrollable and systemic conditions that can cause housing instability or poverty. In reality, there are many factors people have to deal with that make it hard to find employment, including loss of affordable housing, inequitable access to training and tools, and mental illness.

CommonBond.org

(Background image by Jon Tyson onUnsplash)



Articles of Interest

Becoming qualified as an Auxiliary Telecommunications Operator (TCO)

Source: **National Response Directorate, Telecommunications Division**

<http://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=R-DEPT&category=telecommunication-division>

To become involved in the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Telecommunications program, applicants must become certified as Telecommunications Operators (TCO). All operators of fixed land and land mobile radios must be certified as TCO, except for those members who completed AUXCOM before 1 August 2008.

The first step a person interested in the Telecommunication Program should take is to contact a member of the Telecommunication Staff in their Flotilla or Division. The Telecommunication Staff member will ensure that the member has the correct information on proceeding through the qualification process.

The specific requirements surrounding the Telecommunications Program are detailed in Annex 4 of the Auxiliary Operations Policy Manual COMDTINST M16798.3E and the Auxiliary Telecommunications Qualification Standard (PQS). In general, the qualification process involves the study of the appropriate manuals, demonstrating an understanding of them, and demonstrating the ability to perform various tasks.

In general, then, here are the initial steps to be followed in becoming involved in the Auxiliary Telecommunications Program.

- **Join** USCG Auxiliary
 - Become Basically Qualified (BQ'ed)
 - Complete the Personnel Security Investigations (PSI)
 - Complete ICS 100 & 700 courses –
 - The courses can be found online at the following links:
 - **IS 100 course** - <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS100b.asp>
 - **IS 200 course** - <http://training.fema.gov/>



Terry Hershman, Flotilla 7-16, Gulfport, staffs the flotilla's radio for an Auxiliary patrol. Several flotillas have telecommunication centers, a valuable resource for the Coast Guard. USCG Auxiliary photo

EMIWeb/IS/IS200b.asp

- **Contact** your FC or a member of the Telecommunications Staff about your interest in the Auxiliary Telecommunications program. Seek guidance from the FSO-CM about the Telecommunications (TCO) program and selection of mentor.
- **Download** from the CHDIRAUX web site <http://www.uscg.mil/auxiliary/publications/default.asp> and from the National Response Department - Telecommunications Division web site <http://www.cgaux.org/response/Telecom/> the following material:
 - Auxiliary Manual - COMDTINST M16790.1
 - This is the manual that provides general guidance for all Auxiliarists.
 - Auxiliary Operations Policy Manual – COMDTINST M16798.3E

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Articles of Interest

(Continued from page 17)

- This provides operations policy guidance for all CG AUX operations including surface, air and communications.
- Auxiliary Telecommunications Qualification Standard TCO PQS (March 2009)

This training manual contains all the required training and Personal Qualification Standards (PQS) items which must be demonstrated in order to become qualified.

OR

Obtain from your Flotilla Staff Officer-Materials the TCO-PQS CD-ROM (ANSC 2015A). This disk contains the TCO PQS and other relevant reference material.

- Study the training materials.
- Begin Training activities as directed by the CM staff to learn skills necessary to demonstrate competency. Work with your TCO mentor to complete the tasks required for TCO certification

Once a member applicant completes the TCO PQS, it is reviewed and approved by a communications staff officer (CM) or a TCO certified member. The CM signed-off TCO PQS is submitted to DIRAUX for certification and entry into AUXDATA as a Telecommunications Operator (TCO).

If you, or anyone you know, would be interested in joining us in the Telecommunications Program, please

feel free to contact any member of the Telecommunications staff at any time. Ω



David Rockwell, a member of Flotilla 72, St. Petersburg and currently the Auxiliary Sector Coordinator, Sector St. Petersburg, staffs Flotilla 79, Tampa RADIO ONE during a boat crew training mission in 2013. USCG Auxiliary photo by Dorothy Riley



Under Construction

By Dorothy Riley

Building repairs are underway as Flotilla 74, Brandon, works at recovering after last year's flood. The water damage was caused not by storms, but by a cut water-pipe. The building, a mobile home on loan from Hillsborough County, required professional drying to prevent mold and rot.

Members Tanner Piliego, Nicole Sanberd, and Clark Pittman (not shown) work at laying down the new flooring while Bill Sage, Flotilla Vice Commander, looks on. USCG Auxiliary photo by Dorothy Riley



Articles of Interest

Why the Pacific Ocean turned pink off an area of the California coast.

Source: Amy Graff, SFGATE, Jan. 25, 2023



Pink-tinted waves rolled onto a San Diego beach in Southern California on Jan. 20, offering anyone walking along the beach an unlikely sight. The Pepto Bismol-colored waters were seen at Torrey Pines State Beach and Natural Reserve, where Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UC San Diego is conducting an experiment.

University researchers injected nontoxic pink dye into the water to observe how freshwater from inland areas such as rivers and estuaries interacts with the surf zone when it flows into the ocean. Scripps said in a statement posted online that it's partnering with the University of Washington for the experiment, which will continue into February. The first dye release, on Jan. 20, is slated to be followed by two more, in late January and early February.

When rivers and estuaries pour into the ocean, they carry sediments and contaminants, and "little is known about how these plumes of more buoyant,

freshwater interact with the denser, saltier and often colder nearshore ocean environment, particularly as the plumes encounter breaking waves," the institution said. Researchers are pouring the pink dye into the freshwater within the reserve's estuary, and it allows them to track and study the water as it flows into the ocean.

"I'm excited because this research hasn't been done before and it's a really unique experiment," Scripps coastal oceanographer Sarah Giddings, who is leading the study, said in a statement. "... We will combine results from this experiment with an older field study and computer models that will allow us to make progress on understanding how these plumes spread." Ω

SFGATE, *The Daily*, The Bay Area's best free local newsletter. (San Francisco Bay)



Articles of Interest



Blackthorn Remembrance Ceremony

By Dorothy Riley

broadcasted on WFLA Tampa Bay Channel 8 evening news.

Few members of the Coast Guard or Coast Guard Auxiliary remain who served at the time of the tragedy. 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 also it changed how the Coast Guard 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

Every year, Sector St. Petersburg holds a remembrance ceremony to honor the 23 Guardians who lost their lives on Jan. 28, 1980. The annual ceremony in St. Petersburg is held at the Blackthorn Memorial at the northern approach to the Skyway Bridge. Due to scheduling conflicts, the 43rd Remembrance Ceremony was held on January 27, 2023.

Rear Adm. Brendan C. McPherson, commander of the Seventh Coast Guard District, delivered introductory remarks and words of remembrance for the lives lost in the tragedy before Vice Adm. Kevin Lunday, Commander of U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area, spoke as the presiding official. Crews from U.S. Coast Guard Sector St Petersburg, U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater, and Coast Guard Auxiliary participated in the ceremony and memorial observance. Daniel Helou, District Captain-West, Dean Hoskin, Division Commander 7, and Joe Rice-Johnson, Staff Officer-Public Affairs Division 7, attended the ceremony. Helou and Hoskin were interviewed by the press and



Articles of Interest



WFLA Channel 8 news televised the ceremony. Daniel Helou, District Captain-West, and Dean Hoskin, Division Commander 7 were interviewed before the camera. Submitted by Joe Rice Johnson, Division 7 Staff Officer-Public Affairs.

Click on the image or the link to watch the broadcast:

(Link: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OM-8FZDMIBLZqwyV8tq5beHhUb5elkkPm/view>)

Below: Daniel Helou, District Captain-West, and Dean Hoskin, Division Commander 7, represented the Auxiliary at the Blackthorn Remembrance Ceremony January 27 in St. Petersburg, Florida. USCG Auxiliary photo by Joe Rice Johnson, Division 7 Staff Officer-Public Affairs.



Photo 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)

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 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 estab-

lishing 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.

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. Q



Articles of Interest

Crew of MISS DAISY assist Coast Guard with C-130 Airdrop Training.

By George Papabeis

One of the more interesting operational activities for the Auxiliary is to assist the Coast Guard with the HC-130 Hercules aircraft drop mission. MISS DAISY and her crew enjoyed that exercise Monday, Feb. 6th, 2023.

Coxswain Dean Bell, Flotilla 79, Tampa; Tracy Adkins, Flotilla 72, St. Petersburg; George Papabeis and Steve Williams, a trainee from Flotilla 74, Brandon, were aboard MISS DAISY. DUTY CALLS with Dean Hoskins, Flotilla 72, St. Petersburg, coxswain; Paul Ruckert, Flotilla 75, Apollo Beach, and Charles Lambeth, Flotilla 78 St. Pete Beach, crew, served as a standby vessel.

MISS DAISY put in at Ft. DeSoto boat ramp at 3:30 p.m. and transited through Bunce's Pass to Tierra Verde Marina to pick up Coast Guard personnel, Airman Gabriel Sadell, AMTII Andrew Esker. They had empty spools to retrieve the lines that are part of the air-dropped packages.

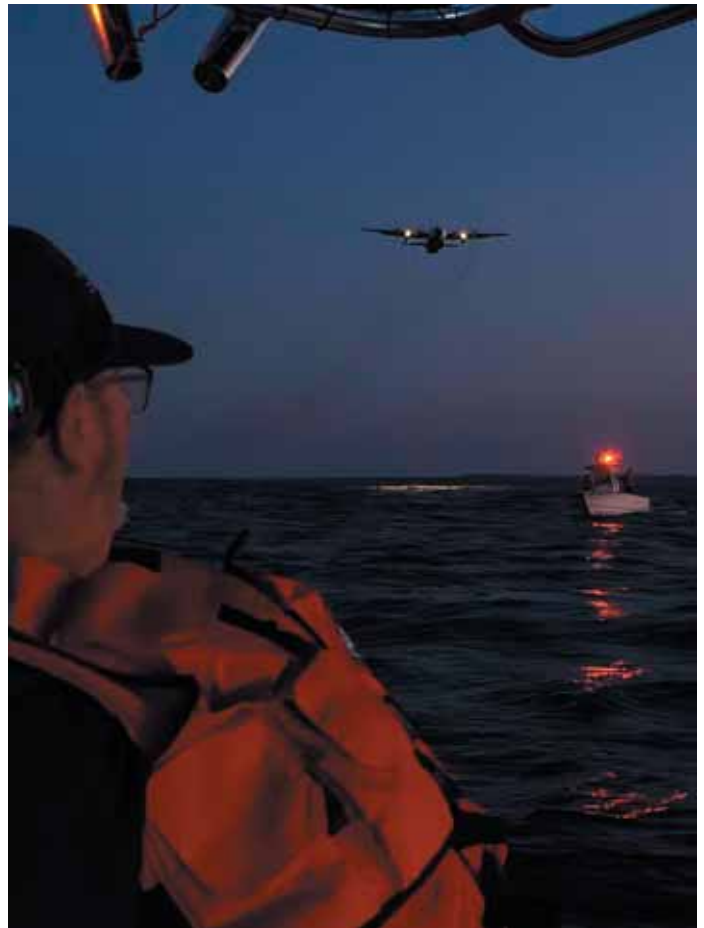
The packages included parachuted cans (two dropped) and a string of bags (two dropped). The cans contained radios, food, and emergency lights. The bags contained life rafts and other survival gear. HC-130s can also parachute drop water pumps. Ω



A can and a bag are seen on the starboard side of MISS DAISY. USCG photograph by George Papabeis



Articles of Interest



Top left: Tracy Adkins, Flotilla 72, St. Petersburg at the bow of MISS DAISY. Bags of equipment are behind her.

Top right: Dean Bell, Flotilla 79, Tampa, watches an HC-130 Hercules approach. DUTY CALLS can be seen in the distance.

Below: An HC-130 Hercules aircraft flies over MISS DAISY.

All photos by George Papabeis.



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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 is 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

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