

// INTERCOM

Division 7 Tampa Bay, District 7
United States Coast Guard Auxiliary
Volume XXXVIII Issue 3 Fall/Winter 2016



INTERCOM

Newsletter for Division 7 Tampa Bay, District 7, USCG Auxiliary
Volume XXXVIII Issue 3 Fall/Winter 2016

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INTERCOM

Newsletter for Division 7 Tampa Bay, District 7, USCG Auxiliary
Volume XXXVIII Issue 3 Fall/Winter 2016

Division 7 Elected Officers 2016

Div 7	Division Commander	Gene Keller, DCDR
Div 7	Division Vice Commander	D. Terry Hershman, VCDR
Div 7	Immed. Past Division Commander	Jeffrey Gines, IPDCDR
FL-72	Flotilla Commander	David Rockwell, FC
	Flotilla Vice Commander	Tony Hooper, VFC
FL-74	Flotilla Commander	Carlos Velez, FC
	Flotilla Vice Commander	Mark Jaqua, VFC
FL-75	Flotilla Commander	Gary Mull, FC
	Flotilla Vice Commander	Pat Costello, VFC
FL-77	Flotilla Commander	Gilbert Thomas, FC
	Flotilla Vice Commander	Steven Hunnicutt, VFC
FL-78	Flotilla Commander	Tony Novellino, FC
	Flotilla Vice Commander	Roger Gilmore, VFC
FL-79	Flotilla Commander	Darren Hart, FC
	Flotilla Vice Commander	Emily Schmidt, VFC
FL-7-16	Flotilla Commander	Tom Bodi, FC
	Flotilla Vice Commander	Bill Zinner, VFC



We're on the web!
<http://A07007.wow.uscgaux.info>

You can contact any of our
officers on the Division 7 web
page!

Division 7 Appointed Staff 2016

Communications	David Rockwell, SO-CM
Communication Services	Bryan Cook, SO-CS
Diversity	Stanley Clark, SO-DV
Finance	Linda Brandt, SO-FN
Information Services	John Robbins, SO-IS
Human Resources	Judith Clapp, SO-HR
Materials	Anthony Hooper SO-MA
Marine Safety	Monica Cook, SO-MS
Member Training	Dean I. Bell, SO-MT
Navigation Systems	David Perillo, SO-NS
Operations	Linda Churchill, SO-OP
Public Affairs	Patricia Prado, SO-PA
Publications	Dorothy J. Riley, SO-PB
Public Education	Michael Massimini, SO-PE
Program Visitor	Darren Hart, SO-PV
Secretary	Zelda Troiano, SO-SR
Vessel Examinations	Donald Rimel, SO-VE
Auxiliary Unit Coordinator	John Simone

The Intercom is a publication of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, Division Seven, District Seven. The cost of publication is provided by dues-paying members of the Auxiliary, an organization of unpaid, civilian volunteers whose mission is to assist the U.S. Coast Guard in promoting boating safety. Articles may be reprinted only 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 Joan Riley, SO-PB, Email address:

dottierley1@verizon.net

Cover photo: Just about anyone who has crewed for Gene Keller will recognize this dock behind his house in St. Petersburg. Returning at sunse after an annual currency maintenance mission Nov. 26, 2016, one crewmember caught this sunset. Photo by George Papabeis



From the Helm **Gene Keller, Division Commander**

As we pass from 2016 to 2017, let us take a moment to reflect on the past year, as well as gaze upon the opportunities and challenges that we will face in the coming years.

2016 was a year of dramatic change. As a division, we had to face certain truths about what and who we are as well as what we want to become. Simply put, this year was all about the melding of the Auxiliary into an organization more closely aligned with the standards and best practices of the Coast Guard that we so proudly serve.

The number-one achievement for the year was the development of our Rescue Systems and Survival program. I am proud to say that we are in complete compliance with the Commandant of the Coast Guard's requirements for on the water safety equipment. The last vestiges of difference between our operational requirements versus the active duty sides are disappearing. The search and rescue (SAR) vests that we now wear on the water are an affirmation of our integration into the Coast Guard at large.

As professionals, we must be dedicated to our avocations. All professionals are continuously training.

Mandatory training became a reality in 2016. It created challenges that in my opinion, will forever change the makeup of our division. Yes, we might be volunteers, but gone are the days that we can be "just casual members." Once we take the oath, we obligate ourselves to serve in a professional manner. The institutionalization of our training programs will change the nature of what it means and what it takes to serve in the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

In the upcoming year, we will be exploring new ways to deliver training requirements to our new members. Mentoring, as well as formal classes, will be necessary as we embrace processes that are more demanding for on-boarding new members.

This past year brought another major victory for our division. We have now received authorization for the use of personal watercraft (PWC) facilities on Tampa Bay

We worked diligently with station to rewrite our Navigation Standards to include the use of personal water-

craft as facilities. This will help us continue to grow our operational capability in a time of economic downsizing. I ask each one of our members to consider becoming part of this new adventure.

Next year, we will start the process of developing a paddle craft program. I believe that the Coast Guard has to go where the action is. Our vessel inspection and our public education folks have been leading the way. We must now get Auxiliarists trained and equipped to help educate and to save lives in the backwaters of the bay where so many paddle boarders and kayakers are transforming the sport of boating.

By developing the PWC and by starting to develop a paddle craft program, we have opened up the potential to recruit many new members. PWC and paddle craft not only bring more fun and lower costs, but also offer a completely new way to serve our community and our country. Please tell everyone you know about this opportunity. We will need each and everyone's help in getting new folks involved in the greatest volunteer lifesaving organization in the world.

Thank you all for your service, Terry and I look forward to working with you all in 2017. 🌟



From the Helm

Terry Hershman, Division Vice Commander

As 2016 comes to a close we look back at the positive Recreational Boating Safety events, operations and training missions and fellowship events and other milestones that Division 7 experienced this year:

- Flotilla fellowship is up four-fold.
- We teamed up with Division 11 to offer more member education opportunities.
- We certified more Telecommunications Operators, Recreational Boating Safety Partner Visitors, and Vessel Examiners.
- Flotilla's are conducting more outreach programs for the greater community.
- More Boating Safety students are graduating.
- We witnessed an increase in children's boating and water safety classes.
- Our members delivered more support to the Coast Guard through Auxiliary food service,

B0 missions, and have more new coxswains and boat crew graduates.

- We provided more mentoring to our new members allowing them to feel that they are part of the "team."
- We once again added personal water crafts to our list of facilities.
- We reviewed and revamped the division's Operations Standard Operating Procedures.
- We reviewed and revamped our Disaster Planning.

That is quite a bit! Many thanks to everyone who participated in making this year such a success. We look forward to seeing everyone next year!

Terry



Forty members and friends of Division 7 attended the "Feds Feed Families" kick-off event Oct. 16, 2016, at the Armed Forces History Museum in Largo, Florida. Members (from left) Orrie Baffi, Terry Hershman, Division Vice Commander; Gene Keller, Division Commander and Donald Rimel look at the military meals-ready-to-eat (MRE) in the M.A.S.H.-style canteen during the event. Photo by D. Riley





Flotilla 72 St. Petersburg

David Rockwell, Flotilla Commander



Over the past year, Coast Guard Sector St. Petersburg and Auxiliary Flotilla 72 have worked together to make improvements and update the look of the Auxiliary Building at USCG Sector St. Petersburg South Moorings. CWO Jason Briggs, Sector Facilities Manager and his team of Damage Control (DCs) and Electricians Mates (Ems) have made some critical repairs and upgrades to the building. The most significant was a contract to replace the roof, fascia, and soffits on the facility. Mr. Briggs and Dave Rockwell, Flotilla Commander, wrote a justification to keep the building which was targeted for demolition. As the only publicly accessible building at Sector, the Auxiliary building provides the perfect venue to host public education events and other public meetings. Coast Guard 7th District accepted the justification and acted to contract the roof work. At the same time, the local EM shop converted all the lighting inside and outside the building to light emitting diode (LED) units that are more energy efficient and much longer life than the original fluorescent fixtures.

In conjunction with the Coast Guard effort, Flotilla 72 ordered and installed new signs on the street side of the building. ENS Marcus Meyer-Miner, Sector Command Center; Hal

Chase, Flotilla 72 member and Dave Rockwell, Flotilla Commander, installed the new signs. They include telephone and internet contact information so that people seeing the building from the Coast Guard Exchange across the street can contact the flotilla to take the Boating Skills and Seamanship course.

Hal Chase, David Rockwell and his wife, Evelyn, cut and installed new landscape timbers, landscape fabric, and red mulch to complete the upgraded look of the building. All the work was complete in time for the Flotilla to host the Division 7 Board Meeting and election. Many of those attending the meeting complimented Flotilla 72 for the great new look for the building. As a capstone for the updates, Jack Lee, Immediate Past Flotilla Commander, ordered and installed street signs under the signs directing folks to the Coast Guard Exchange. The street signs show the direction to the Boating Skills and Seamanship class. 🌟

Hal Chase, a member of Flotilla 72 St. Petersburg, secures a landscaping timber in front of the flotilla as David Rockwell, Flotilla Commander looks on. Replacing the landscaping was part of the improvements made to the building and grounds in recent months. Photo by Evelyn Rockwell

More photos from Flotilla 72 appear throughout this issue.





Flotilla 74 Brandon Carlos Velez, Flotilla Commander



Flotilla 74 welcomes back Jim Mulligan, a former member who left in January when the Polk County detachment was chartered as a flotilla in its own right. With the loss of so many active members to the newly chartered flotilla, Flotilla 74 struggled this year. We trust, however, that with the election of Jim Mulligan as Flotilla Commander and Omayra Velez, Flotilla Vice Commander, we will rebound in 2017. Lesson learned: When you are committing all of your attention and resources to chartering a new flotilla, divert some of that energy into planning how to move forward after the new flotilla is off the ground!

Many thanks to the officers and members of Flotilla 74 who spent countless hours teaching Public Education classes, conducting Vessel Safety Checks, assisting at Public Affairs events and mentoring in the division's Boat Crew Member Training program. You are the heart and backbone of the flotilla. 🌟



Top left: Galen Johnston presents Chapter 4 of *Boating Skills and Seamanship* during a Public Education class Oct. 24, 2016 at Flotilla 74. Photo by Omayra Velez



Top right: Carlos Velez, Flotilla Commander 74 presents an Auxiliary Performance Award for Operations to George Papabeis at a meeting of Flotilla 74 Oct. 11, 2016. Photo by D. Riley

Right: Jim Mulligan, Flotilla Commander (e) 74 checks out his "Dirty Santa" gift at the flotilla's holiday gathering Dec. 4, 2016. Photo by D. Riley





Flotilla 75 Ruskin Gary Mull, Flotilla Commander



Gary Mull, Flotilla Commander 75 inducted Walt Wagner and Fred Kramer into the "Order of the Megalodon" for serving over 1000 hours on the water under US Coast Guard orders.

Just what is the "Order of the Megalodon?" Gary Mull tells this tale:

*In ancient times, there was a predator that showed no fear.
It roamed the earth's seas, both far and near.
It was the largest, most feared animal in the sea.
From it we get our ancestry.*

*Of all sea creatures both great and small,
the Megalodon was master of them all.
As did this great fish the seas did roam,
So our sailors now call the seas their home.*



*For the Coast Guard, our sailors showed their finesse and powers
While they amassed over 1,000 hours.
Now we will wave King Neptune's wand
And induct them into the
ORDER OF THE MEGALODON.*

What a fun way to honor the service of our fellow members!



Left: Gary Mull congratulates the 2017 elected leaders of Flotilla 75, Kevin Buckley, Flotilla Commander (e) and Steve Browning, Flotilla Vice Commander (e) at the flotilla's Change of Watch ceremony in early December.

Right: Flotilla 75 gets a visit from Santa (aka Steve Browning) at the annual Christmas party. Santa stayed to pose with some of the members. Pictured are Gary Mull and his wife, Janet. Photos provided by Gary Mull





Flotilla 78 Pass-a-Grille Tony Novellino, Flotilla Commander



Flotilla members completed two patrols in November on Tony Novellino's facility and on Dec. 2 assisted with the St. Pete Beach Lighted Boat Parade as a safety boat. To view a brief video and more photos of the boat parade visit: https://www.facebook.com/US-Coast-Guard-Auxiliary-Flotilla-78-St-Pete-Beach-100266443366667/?hc_ref=SEARCH&fref=nf.

In early December, members worked with a facility from Flotilla 72 so that Tony Novellino and Orrie Baffi could hone their coxswain skills before the QE (Qualification Examination) in January.

Congratulations to Dave Corner who earned his Operational Auxiliarist Specialty Program device! He is officially "AX2" status now. Getting those credentials is very time consuming and requires lots of hard work. Good job Dave!

Zelda Troiano advised that the 25 members of Flotilla 78 delivered 322 pounds to the food drive. They did better than some flotillas with a lot more members. Great job Flotilla 78! (And a special thanks to Zelda for organizing the flotilla's response to the food drive!)

Flotilla 78 members with Roger Gilmore, Flotilla Commander (e) and David Corner, Flotilla Vice Commander (e) calm seas and the wind at their back in leading our team to a great 2017. ❄️



Left: Coast Guard Station St. Petersburg Santa's prepare for the 2016 St. Petersburg Beach Holiday Boat Parade. Right: Auxiliary vessels from Flotilla 78 Pass-a-Grille and Flotilla 72 St. Petersburg practice side-by-side tows in early December. Photos by Valerie Fernandes.





Flotilla 77 Polk County

Gilbert Thomas, Flotilla Commander



Above: Members of Flotilla 77 Polk County make Sheriff Grady Judd an Honorary Member for his ongoing support of the Polk County flotilla Oct. 19m 2016. From left are officers and members James Mulligan, James Urbanawiz, Charles Mills, Gil Thomas, Sheriff Grady Judd, William Benoist, John Velebir, Dennis Smith and David Williams. Photo source: Gilbert Thomas.



Public Outreach is one of the strengths of the flotilla. This information booth was set up at West Marine in Polk County July 2016. Photo source: Flotilla 77 Facebook page.



Jim Mulligan accepts an Auxiliary Achievement Award from Gil Thomas, Flotilla Commander at a meeting of Flotilla 77 Polk County Aug. 19, 2016. Photo source: Flotilla 77 Facebook page.





Flotilla 79 Tampa

Darren Hart, Flotilla Commander



Top: Kathleen Heide readies her Auxiliary vessel before a mission Oct. 22, 2016.



Below: Betty Hagan, one of the crew members in the October mission looks like she is trying to read a message scrawled in the pelican poo... or maybe figure out if it ended up on the bottom of her shoe! Photo source: Flotilla 79 Facebook page.





Flotilla 7-16 Gulfport

Tom Bodi, Flotilla Commander



While Flotilla 7-16 has historically excelled in Recreational Boating Safety activities like Vessel Examinations and

Program Visits, due in large part to the efforts of Flotilla 78 members like Orrie Baffi and Casey McCormick, the flotilla is gaining ground in operational activities as well. Orrie Baffi was instrumental in developing and maintaining the division's Rescue and Survival System program and received a certificate of appreciation for his efforts at the Division 7 Change of Watch. Other members routinely serve as radio Watchstanders for Division 7 on-the-water missions.

Where flotilla members seem to excel the most is in organizing division-wide fellowship and community events open to all members of the division. One such activity was the "Feds Feed Families" event held at the Armed Forces History Museum in Largo Oct. 16, 2016. Orrie Baffi and Terry Hershman collaborated with Zelda Troiano, Flotilla 78 and COMO Donald Lloyd, Flotilla 72 to organize the event. While our flotilla is small compared to some others, we have a great impact on the division.



Orrie Baffi, Flotilla 7-16 aboard Tony Novellino's facility SUE-SEA-Q, Flotilla 78, Aug. 25, 2016. This was a joint patrol between members of the two flotillas. Valerie Fernandes, Flotilla 78 served as coxswain with Keith Anderson and Amanda Davis, Flotilla 78; Orrie Baffi and Casey McCormick, Flotilla 7-16 as crew. Photo by Valerie Fernandes

Flotilla 7-16 Gulfport made the news when this photo by Debbie Wolfe was published in the local newspaper, "The Gabber." Flotilla 7-16 members find numerous opportunities to interact with their community. Submitted by Gerald Hayward

Boating Safety First

By Debbie Wolfe



Gerald Hayward, left, Gulfport Flotilla 7-16 staff officer of public affairs, conducts a free vessel inspection aboard the Moondance, a 46-foot sailboat docked at the Municipal Marina owned by Barbara and George Leonard of Gulfport. "I'm a card-carrying safety guy," said George Leonard referring to his lifetime Boating Safety Education wallet card. The Leonards retired May 15, 2015, bought their boat and moved to Gulfport to be nearer to family and friends who live on the east coast. They like following the rule book for boating safety and sailed through a formal and multi-point Vessel Safety Check for 2016, which resulted in them receiving a special display sticker from the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary. Members of the group were conducting free inspections on May 22 as part of national Safe Boating Week, which is May 21 through 27. "We also practice crew overboard with engine and while under sail," said George Leonard.



Articles of Interest

Auxiliary Vessels Escort Paddlers Participating in Terry Tomalin Memorial Paddle.

Submitted by Gene Keller, John Simone and George Papabeis. Text combined into a single article.



After high winds canceled the Terry Tomalin Memorial Paddle scheduled Dec. 4, 2016, nearly a dozen paddlers decided to cross the bay from Picnic Island to Northshore Beach in St. Petersburg anyway. Two Auxiliary vessels accompanied the small armada while a third stayed behind to provide a guard for the paddlers who chose to make only an inland run in Coffee Pot Bayou. Photo by George Papabeis

Three Auxiliary vessels and crews signed up to provide a safety zone for the Terry Tomalin Memorial Paddle, Dec. 4, 2016, in Tampa Bay.

The vessels and coxswains were *LADY E*, Gene Keller, Flotilla 72 St. Petersburg with crewmembers Kevin Yeaton and Oreste Baffi; *LIQUID ASSET*, Patricia Stone, Flotilla 75 Ruskin with crewmembers George Wightman, Steve Browning and Hector Romero and *CHASIN' TAIL*, John Simone, Flotilla 79 Tampa with crewmembers George Papabeis, Alan Bendis and Rebecca Crum.

The Terry Tomalin Memorial Paddle was planned to honor an extraordinary man: Terry Tomalin, Tampa Bay Times outdoor editor who died suddenly in May 2016. Tomalin was an avid outdoorsman and organizer of the Tampa Bay Frogman Swim, a 5k open water swim and fundraiser that benefits the Navy SEAL Foundation generally held in January each year. While the paddle was open to everyone, most of those participating proved to be experienced paddlers.

The three Auxiliary coxswains with their crew set out in time to meet the paddlers at Picnic Island. The planned route was Picnic Island to Northshore Beach in St. Petersburg, but just as they were leaving their docks, the Auxiliarists were advised that the cross bay portion of the event had been canceled due to 15-knot winds and 2 to 3-foot wells. Consequently, the memorial had been reduced to an inland paddle.

The Auxiliary vessels rode out to make sure that the paddlers knew that the event had been canceled. Some of the paddlers, however, thought otherwise and decided to make the crossing anyway. The paddlers looked to be very knowledgeable and proficient on the water and were determined to make the crossing. Before setting out, the Auxiliary took down the names and other identifying information of every paddle boater participating in the cross-bay event.

Simone requested that Stone meet them at the

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Articles of Interest

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K Cut crossing and the Auxiliary vessels stayed with the paddlers for their journey while Keller worked the Coffee Pot Bayou location.

Stone took up the rear while Simone remained in front as they escorted an armada of 11 mixed paddle craft that included sea kayaks, outrigger canoes and stand up paddle boards. The leader of the group occasionally paddled over to the Auxiliary vessels to let them know their strategy. Once they reached Northshore Beach, the paddlers found calmer inshore waters protected by shallow shoals. The Auxiliary vessels could not follow them all the way inshore, but were thanked by the paddlers. Once the cross bay paddlers were out of the water, Stone and Simone returned to base while Keller finished the event at Coffee Pot Bayou. 🌸

Top: Patricia Stone, Flotilla 75 Ruskin with crewmembers George Wightman, Steve Browning and Hector Romero served as one of two vessels that escorted the paddlers across the bay Dec. 4, 2016. About a dozen paddlers opted to make the crossing despite the cancellation of the Terry Tomalin Memorial Paddle.



Mid page: The LADY E, coxswain Gene Keller, Flotilla 72 St. Petersburg with crewmembers Kevin Yeaton and Oreste Baffi stayed in Coffee Pot Bayou with the paddlers who elected to complete the inland paddle run instead of crossing the bay.



Lower page: The heron wading behind the paddler at Northshore Beach illustrates the shallow depth which prevented the Auxiliary vessels from accompanying the paddlers all the way to the shore. All photos by George Papabeis



Articles of Interest

Division 7 Holds Annual Change of Watch

By Dottie Riley, SO-PB

Division 7 held the 2016 Change of Watch Dec. 3, 2016, at Columbia Restaurant, Centennial Museum Room in Tampa. The ceremony marks the end of a productive year and heralds the start of a new year with new leadership. At the annual ceremony, flotilla and division elected leaders and division appointed officers are sworn into office.

Attesting to the solemnity of the occasion was the distinguished list of guests representing both the Coast Guard and the Coast Guard Auxiliary. These included from the Coast Guard CDR Eric Allen, Chief, Prevention, Sector St. Petersburg; CWO Christopher Cone, Auxiliary Liaison Officer, Sector St. Petersburg; LT Larry J. Brant, Command Chaplain, Sector St. Petersburg and Air Station Clearwater, USN; and BMC Joseph Slater, Executive Petty Officer, Station St. Petersburg.

United States Coast Guard Auxiliary leaders in attendance included COMO Robert Weskerna, District 7 and spouse, Mrs. Jackie Weskerna (also a member); Paulette Parent, District Captain-West; and Ron Howington, Auxiliary Sector Coordinator, Sector St. Petersburg.

After breakfast, CDR Eric Allen and COMO Robert Weskerna swore in the division elected officers, Eugene Keller, Division Commander and D. Terry Hershman, Division Vice Commander.

Immediately after, CWO Christopher Cone and Paulette Parent, District Captain-West officiated in the Oath of Office for the 2017 flotilla elected officers.

Flotilla 74 member, Dottie Riley was presented several awards including the Auxiliary Achievement Medal and recognition for winning both the District 7 and national publication awards as editor of "Intercom."



Top: CDR Eric Allen, Chief, Prevention, Sector St. Petersburg, presents a Coast Guard Team Commendation Award to Darren Hart, Flotilla 79 Tampa at the Division 7 Change of Watch ceremony Dec. 3, 2016 in Tampa.

Below: Dick Risk, Director, Recreational Boating Safety Outreach accepts an Auxiliary Achievement Medal from CDR Eric Allen, Chief, Prevention, Sector St. Petersburg at the Change of Watch Dec. 3, 2016. Photos by George Papa-beis

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Articles of Interest

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Dick Risk, who currently serves as the National Recreational Boating Safety Outreach Directorate was also presented an Auxiliary Achievement Medal for his contributions to the "B" directorate. Darren Hart, Flotilla 79 was presented a Coast Guard Meritorious Team Commendation ribbon. Additionally, COMO Robert Weskerna presented Recreational Boating Safety awards to Judith Clapp, Flotilla 75; David Rockwell, Flotilla 72 and Galen Johnston, Flotilla 74.

During the event, Keller and Hersman thanked the 2016 flotilla elected officers and division staff officers and the 2017 division staff officers took their oath of office. In this way, we mark the end of this year and hopefully, instill energy and motivation in next year's group of officers.

Accepting a position as a flotilla or division staff officer should not be taken lightly. It is not a 'promotion,' it is a commitment to serve. Our shoulder insignia does not indicate rank but rather a level of duty and responsibility. We hope everyone who accepts an appointed office at flotilla or division levels will resolve to do their utmost for the Auxiliary in 2017.✿



Above: In addition to the numerous awards presented, Gene Keller, Division Commander, took the opportunity to present certificates of appreciation to members who went above and beyond this year. Certificates of appreciation are presented to Galen Johnston, Flotilla 74, Tony Novellino, Flotilla 78 and Orrie Baffi, Flotilla 7-16 for developing and maintaining the division's Rescue and Survival System program.

Below: The Division 7 Change of Watch held Dec. 3, 2016 was well attended by members from all seven flotillas. Photos by George Papabeis



Articles of Interest

That little orange sticker saved the day!

Submitted by Jim Fogle

At least once a week the Station St Petersburg, Sector St. Petersburg Command Center has to respond to a report a kayak adrift. These have to be treated as unconfirmed 'person in the water' incident until there is clear evidence that there is no distress. Our "IF FOUND CONTACT" stickers only show up once in a while, but in the incident described, the sticker prevented an unnecessary search and rescue call-out.

At approximately 4:00 on July 21, Jim Fogle, the Flotilla Staff Officer-Public Education Flotilla 72 St. Petersburg, was notified by a concerned citizen of Coquina Key that a neon green kayak was floating free in a small canal/inlet South of Big Bayou. Mr. Fogle went to the seawall nearest the area and saw the kayak floating on the outside edge of the mangroves.

Mr. Fogle determined that a rescue could be achieved from the shore. After tying himself to a dock with a line, he waded around the mangroves

until he could hook and retrieve the kayak with a boat hook. After reaching shore, he saw the orange "IF FOUND CONTACT" sticker with the name and phone numbers of the owner.

Mr. Fogle called and learned that the owner was on vacation with his entire family and left a message for the owner to call him back. Most likely the kayaks were blown from their sea wall by the afternoon storm. Ironically, Mr. Fogle had supplied the owner of the kayak and his family with the stickers just a few months before. ☸



Auxiliary Participates in FWC MarineQuest

Source: Dean Hoskins and Gerald Hayward

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) hosted MarineQuest Oct. 22, 2016, at the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute in St. Petersburg, Florida. MarineQuest offered events

for all ages, including hands-on activities to help younger visitors learn about our marine environment. Children were had the opportunity to touch sharks and rays, horseshoe crabs, sea stars, spiny lobsters, and other marine critters commonly found in Florida's waters. The U.S. Coast Guard, one of the major partners in marine environmental protection participated. The Coast Guard also displayed one of their vessels.

The Auxiliary assisted by providing watchstanders who worked either of two shifts: 8 a.m.-12 p.m. or 12 p.m.-4 p.m. Dean Hoskins, Flotilla 72 St. Petersburg, organized the Auxiliary's participation in this event. In addition to watchstanders, Flotilla 7-16 Gulfport members Gerald Hayward and Shantell Sullivan-Hayward staffed an information booth. ☸



Left: Shantell Gerald-Hayward at MarineQuest Oct. 22, 2016. Photo by Gerald Hayward



Articles of Interest

There be pirates in them there waters! (Or maybe just opportunistic thieves!)

Submitted by John Simone

At 4:48 PM on July 23, the crew of CHASIN' TAIL received a call from Station St. Petersburg regarding a lost dinghy near Beer Can Island. The crew consisted of John Simone, coxswain, Rebecca Crum, Alan Bendis, all from Flotilla 79 and George Papabeis from Flotilla 74 as crew. They were instructed to divert and search for a little lost dinghy.

With safety lights on, they embarked on their second search and rescue of the day. Using radar and with binoculars out and ready, they were briefed and ready for the search.

The dinghy was lost from JACKPOT, a sail boat from Kingston Canal, Apollo Beach, while the sail boat was transiting from Beer Can Island to her home port. After an exhaustive search and adjusting for set and drift, they covered approximately six square miles but found no dinghy. They then decided to follow the path that the boat took

back to their home port, but still no dinghy.

The crew of CHASIN' TAIL talked to numerous boaters as well as homeowners while motoring the canals and still, no dinghy was to be found. At 7:48 PM they regrettably notified the officer of the day (OOD) at Sector that they had failed at their mission and that they thought possibly pirates or thieves had made off with the prized dinghy. They were asked if they would resume their search mission, but after a lengthy "Team Coordination Training" conversation, they decided that in their opinion, and with the possibility of pirates and thieves involved, that this may in fact now be a law enforcement mission. The crew of CHASIN' TAIL were not properly trained to handle pirates and thieves, so they regrettably stood down. ❄



APOLLO BEACH, Fla.-- The JACKPOT moored at its homeport. The vessel's owners spent an afternoon at Beer Can Island and upon returning to port, lost its dinghy. After an exhaustive search that lasted nearly four hours, the crew of the Auxiliary vessel CHASIN' TAIL surmised that an opportunistic thief...or pirates (?)...made off with the dinghy.

USCGAUX photo by John Simone



Using social media to spread the Boating Safety message



1. **LIKE** the Division 7 Facebook page

2. Members who **LIKE** the page receive the Div 7 posts.

3. Your friends do not see these posts unless you **SHARE** them on your page.

4. Ask your friends- especially those who are boaters- to **SHARE** these posts to help spread the message further!

Seasons
Greetings
and
Happy
New Year!



Articles of Interest

USCG Auxiliary Joins in the Feds Feed Families Food Drive.

By Dottie Riley, SO-PB 7

Forty members and friends of Division 7 attended the "Feds Feed Families" kick-off event Oct. 16, 2016, at the Armed Forces History Museum in Largo, Florida.

Much of the credit for planning the event goes to Zelda Troiano and Terry Hershman, Division Vice Commander, members of Flotilla 7-16 Gulfport and COMO Donald Lloyd and Gene Keller, Division Commander, members of Flotilla 72 St. Petersburg.

Drinks and snacks were part of the admission and military meals-ready-to-eat (MRE) were made available for an additional price. Attendees toured the many displays of past wars and military engagement on their own and also followed group tours offered by the mu-

seum staff which offered more in-depth information about the thousands of items on display.

The entire group met briefly in the M.A.S.H. theme canteen where COMO Lloyd explained the origin and significance of the food drive. Keller explained how the drive would operate and distributed boxes to the flotillas.

According to Keller, the drive will operate through Dec. 15, at which time all of the food collected will be weighed to determine the winning flotilla. We hope every flotilla will participate in this most important venture. It is a small way to give back to our local community. ☸



Left: Terry Hershman, Division Vice Commander and guests, Gerald Hayward and Shantell Sullivan-Hayward (far left) members of Flotilla 7-16 Gulfport, peek out from behind a vintage WWII military jeep at the Armed Forces History Museum in Largo, Florida, Oct. 16, 2016.

Below left: Gene Keller, Division Commander, explains how the food drive will be conducted in the canteen, reminiscent of the ones found in Korea's M.A.S.H. units.

Below right: The museum staff takes the Auxiliary and guests attending on a tour of the museum. Photos by D. Riley



Articles of Interest

Lionfish Challenge comes to a close; 16,609 total removed

Source: FWC (Read full article at: <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/FLFFWCC/bulletins/1691762>)



Lionfish Image Source: University of Florida

Every year, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission sponsors an annual Lionfish Challenge to anglers. The challenge lasts from late May (first Saturday after Mother's Day) to September 30. Lionfish are an invasive species that do great harm to native Florida marine life.

"The invasive lionfish took a major hit this summer: a total of 16,609 lionfish were removed during the 4.5 month Lionfish Challenge.

"The success of this program really shows what Florida's residents and visitors can do when faced with a conservation challenge such as lionfish," said Brian Yablonski, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) chairman.

"Lionfish are a nonnative species that were first noted in Florida waters in the mid-80s and have since spread up the Atlantic coast and across the Gulf of Mexico. There is no mechanism for keeping lionfish populations under control except for human removal.

"The Lionfish Challenge rewarded participants who took 50 or more lionfish with a variety of incentives including a program T-shirt, a commemorative coin, the opportunity to take an additional spiny lobster per day during the two-day sport season and entry into raffle drawings for prizes such as Neritic polespears, \$100 dive tank refills and fishing licenses.

"The competition began on Lionfish Removal and Awareness Day, the first Saturday after Mother's Day (May 14, 2016).

"Volusia County resident David Garrett took the most lionfish with a total of 3,324. John Dickinson came in second with a total of 2,408 lionfish removed. "I want the reefs to benefit from this and to save our native fish," said David Garrett, who is a commercial fisherman.

"A total of 95 people participated in the challenge from across the state and the southeastern United States...."

What to do with lion fish after you have caught them? Why, eat them, of course! They require special handling during preparation until all of the spines are removed, but the fillets are tasty! Many restaurants in southern Florida devote entire sections of their menus to lionfish.

<http://lionfish.co/eating-lionfish/>

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/FLFFWCC/bulletins/1691762> #fwclionfish

Facebook: [Facebook.com/LionfishReefRangers](https://www.facebook.com/LionfishReefRangers)



Articles of Interest

D-TRAIN Diary 2016

Mary Patton, DSO-PA

The 7th District Training conference, better known as D-TRAIN, was held Sept. 22-25 at the Florida Hotel and Convention Center in the Florida Mall, Orlando. It was jam-packed with training sessions, and there were many opportunities for fellowship with both existing and new Auxiliarist friends and colleagues.

Many aviation training topics were offered for members of Auxiliary Aviation (AUXAIR) program, as well as C-Schools: AUX-17, Crew Resource Management; AUX-02, Auxiliary Leadership and Management; and AUX-05A, Auxiliary Mid-Level Officers Course. Members could attend the Telecommunications (TCO) course and qualify for the Operations ribbon for completing the course and passing the final test. Other training sessions included an Information Systems workshop, *Quick Start to Auxiliary Newsletters* for members interested in getting into publications, *Getting to Know Your Dealers* for members interested in Marine Dealer Program Visits and many, many more.

At the District Board Business Meeting, elections were conducted for the District Bridge. Judith Hudson was elected District Commodore, and Gary Barth was elected District Chief of Staff, both for 2017-18. Patricia McMenamin was elected District Captain North and Frank Wondolkowski was elected District Captain West, both for one-year terms. R. Dewey Jackson was re-elected District Captain East.

In addition to our own District Commodore, Bob Weskerna, we had the pleasure of having our National Commodore-elect, Richard Washburn, in attendance for the entire conference.



Top: During the District 7 Board Business Meeting held Sept. 23, COMO Richard Washburn, Auxiliary National Commodore (e) and Robert Weskerna, District 7 Commodore present Dot-tie Riley the National Publications award for the INTERCOM, the winning division level newsletter.

CDR Xaimara Vicencio-Roldan, Director of Auxiliary District 7, congratulates Judith Hudson, District Chief of Staff upon her election as District 7 Commodore at the District 7 at the District 7 Board Business Meeting held Sept. 23 in Orlando. Photos by Robert Fabich

(Continued on page 23)



Articles of Interest

(Continued from page 22)

Commodores Washburn and Weskerna presented awards for District publications and photos at the business meeting. Robert Fabich, Sr., from Flotilla 15-1, was presented with the National Publications Contest first place award for *AUXAIR District 7*. Dorothy Riley received the District 7 Publications Contest first place award for the Division 7 publication, *Intercom*. Mary Patton received the second place award for Division 15's *Charlie Noble*. Connie Irvin won the Public Affairs Directorate's photography contest award for her photo in the Team Coast Guard category and Judi Bidwick won the photography award for her photo in the Member Services category.

Later that evening at the Commodore's Banquet, Rear Admiral Scott A. Buschman, Commander, Coast Guard 7th District, gave the keynote address. He thanked Auxiliarists for their thousands of volunteer hours and for the assistance that the Auxiliary provides to the Coast Guard. There were many Gold Side representatives present at the banquet. After the Admiral's address, the ceremony of incoming Auxiliary Bridge officers being "frocked," or fitted with their new insignia of office, was conducted.

More than deserving of special mention was the entertainment provided for Saturday evening's Fun Night Banquet and Dance by *The Orlando Big Band*, a full orchestra playing the Big Band songs most of us remember and love.

Truly, this annual event is the ideal opportunity for members to grow in the Auxiliary, network, and put a face to the names of the leaders in our district. ❄

(Editor's note: This article was intended for the D7 newsletter, "Breeze" but its hair-brained editor (me) inadvertantly omitted it. Mary Patton's efforts should not go to waste so we publish it here.)



Not everything at the District 7 Training Conference is serious. One night is appropriately labelled, "Fun Night" and follows a theme. This year's theme was "Country and Western," and Paulette Parent, District Captain-West arrived on her "pony" dressed for the occasion. Photo by D. Riley



SEA-LOVER works with a response boat-medium from Sector St. Petersburg June 14, 2016. Richard Rioles, Flotilla 79 served as coxswain with crew Orrie Baffi, Flotilla 7-16 shown facing the Coast Guard vessel and Betty Hagan, Flotilla 79. Photo by Betty Hagan





Photo by Michael Henry, Flotilla 7-16 Gulfport

**Another issue is ready for publication and like this heron, I'm off!
Happy New Year!
Dottie Riley, Editor**

Nautical terms to know...

Above board: On or above the deck, in plain view, not hiding anything. Pirates would secret their crews below decks, thereby creating the false impression that an encounter with another ship was a casual matter of chance.

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