



Photos at left:

- 1.) Flotilla 78, St. Pete Beach, conducted Vessel Safety Checks.
- 2.) Flotilla 78, St. Pete Beach, collaborated with Pinellas County Sherrif to offer life jackets to recreational boaters.
- 3.) Earl Abbott, Matthew Stephen, and Tanner Piliego, members from Flotilla 74, Brandon conducted Vessel Safety Checks over the weekend at Williams Park, Lowry Park, and the University of South Florida Parks and Recreation.
- 4.) Bobby Deskins, chief meteorologist at WTSP Channel 10 News and Dorothy Pratt, a member of Flotilla 7-16, Gulfport.

(Photos in far end of filmstrip are too small to identify.).

Below: 1.) Flotilla 75, Apollo Beach, held several National Safe Boating Week events, including a kick-off event on May 18 at West Marine, Apollo Beach. Members Ariel Rodriguez, Elliott Seda, and Ray Langley Interacted with store clients, distributed boating safety literature, and signed customers up for Vessel Safety Checks.

2.) Flotilla 75 members conducted Vessel Safety Checks at E.G. Simmons Park in Ruskin and the Mirabay Club in Apollo Beach. Pictured is Ray Langley conducting a Vessel Safety Check. Auxiliary Members: Ray Langley, Elliott Seda, DeWitt Gorman, and Ariel Rodriguez conducted Vessel Safety Checks throughout the weekend.

3.) Flotilla 78, St. Pete Beach, conducted Vessel Safety Checks and a range of other activities to promote safe boating and the use of life jackets.

4.) Dave Brown and Dave Smart, members of Flotilla 78, St. Pete Beach, promote boating safety and life jacket wear. USCG Auxiliary photographs





Division 7 Participates in National Safe Boating Week



Flotilla 7-16, Gulfport National Safe Boating Week, and Hurricane Preparedness.

By Howard Bush

(Above) Martin Richardson, Flotilla Vice Commander, Howard Bush, Flotilla 7-16 Commander, Gulfport, and Dorothy Pratt supported National Safe Boating Week at the Gulfport Tuesday Market. Flotilla 7-16 was also set up on Saturday to promote vessel safety checks at the Gulfport Municipal Marina, and vessel inspection pamphlets were handed out at the boat ramp for inspection when they returned from their day of boating. Many boaters took advantage of this as they loaded their boats on their trailers and pulled over to the east side of the marina, where our inspector was waiting. The City of Gulfport was very kind in letting the Auxiliary set up to do these vessel inspections, and the flotilla will be doing this monthly and bi-monthly from now on. USCG Auxiliary photograph submitted by Howard Bush.

(Top right) From left, Chris Anderson, Wayne Hoover, and Dorothy Pratt, members Flotilla 7-16. Gulfport received an invitation from the City of Gulfport to attend the hurricane preparedness seminar at the Catherine Hickman Theater in Gulfport, Florida. The members set up an information table by Bobby Deskins, chief meteorologist at WTSP Channel 10 News, before the seminar. (Bottom right) Pratt was able to get an interview and a photo with the meteorologist. The seminar is essential as June 1 starts at the beginning of hurricane season. Coast Guard Auxiliary Everbridge drills have already begun. ΩWWUSCG Auxiliary photographs submitted by Howard Bush



Division 7 Participates in National Safe Boating Week



Flotilla 74, Brandon members Matthew Stephen, Tanner Piliego, and Earl Abbott conducted a Vessel Examination blitz at the Williams Park boat ramp on May 18. The following day, Matthew Stephen, Chris Hunt, Earl Abbott, and Vy Pham performed Vessel Safety Checks at the Lowry Park boat ramp. (Top left) Stephen continued to conduct paddlecraft checks at the University of South Florida Riverfront Park and Tampa Riverfront Rentals until he exhausted his supply of Vessel Safety Check decals.

Members Dorothy Riley and Chris Hunt participated in Wear Your Life Jacket at Work, (Top right) and Riley enlisted her dog, Daisy, to encourage boaters to keep their pets safe on the water. Gwen Myers, vice-chair of the Hillsborough County Commissioners, presented Dorothy Riley, Flotilla Commander, with a National Safe Boating Week Proclamation. (Bottom left)

USCG Auxiliary photographs this page submitted by Matthew Stephen, Chris Hunt and Dorothy Riley

Contributors on previous pages include Wally Behrendt, Howard Bush, Rollin Shouse and Elliott Seda. WThank you!



AV Assistant – Identify and Verify Aids to Navigation

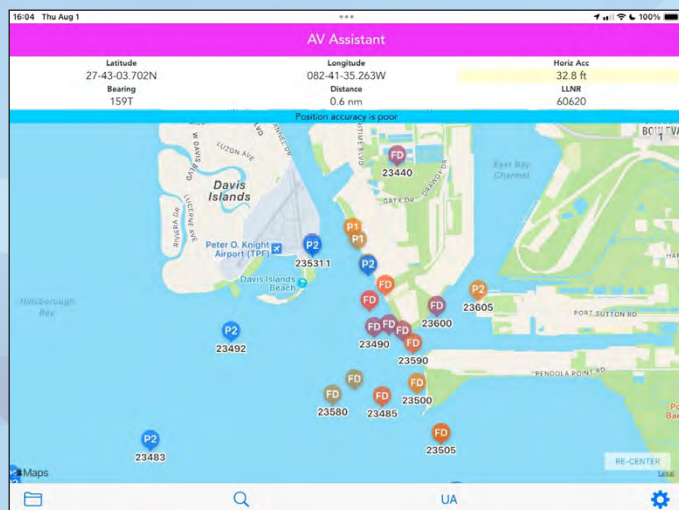
Yes, there's an app for that!

By Anthony Hooper, ADSO-NS, Sector St. Petersburg

The *AV Assistant* app for iPhone and iPad is a powerful tool for Auxiliarists to identify and report on aids to navigation. Created initially by Auxiliarist Clint O'Connor of Flotilla 9-10, Ft. Myers/Cape Coral, District 7, the app was developed to its present state and supported by Coast Guard research funding.

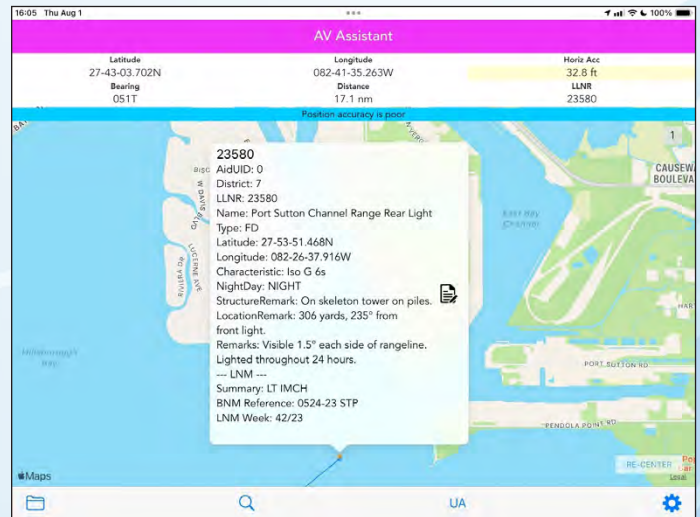
AV Assistant provides two data sets useful to anyone who wants to identify a navigation aid. The app automatically downloads the latest National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration electronic navigation charts (ENC) for the user's location. Each time the app is opened, it prompts users to download the latest information on federal and private aids to navigation in the vicinity of the user. This data comes from the USCG Navigation Center (NAVCEN), which maintains the Light List, the U.S. Aids to Navigation Information Management System (USAIMS), and the Integrated Aids to Navigation Information System (Legacy IATONIS).

The app graphically displays the location, classification (federal or private), and status (Watching properly or reporting discrepant).



Federal aids are labeled "FD" and are red if appropriately watched. A discrepant Federal aid is shown in brown. Private aids are labeled "P2" and are blue if watching properly and brown if discrepant. The Light List Number (LLNR) is displayed under each aid.

Tapping on any aid creates a pop-up box containing the information on the aid.



In this case, we can see that the Port Sutton Channel Range Rear Light, LLNR 23580, has been displaying improper characteristics (wrong light color and pattern) since week 42 of 2023. The full details of the aid, including its assigned position, are included.

With this app, there need be no doubt about the identity of an aid to navigation. Knowing which aid we are looking at is critical for navigation and verifying aids.

This functionality is available and valuable to any mariner, not just Auxiliarists. For Auxiliary members, especially Aid Verifiers, the app goes beyond providing information - it helps create a full report on an observed aid.

To access the report function, an Auxiliarist must first enter their Auxiliary information and select the area of responsibility. When done, clicking on any aid reveals the pop-up details and the option to start a report. The first entry is whether the aid is watching correctly (and is therefore verified) or has a discrepancy.

(Continued on page 27)



(Continued from page 26)

Because the Auxiliarist has already entered their information, that report portion is completed automatically. The aid information from the Light List is also entered automatically.

The member must undertake three steps to complete the report.

In this case, the aid is MISSING, which is entered in the DISCREPANCIES OBSERVED SECTION.

Next, the Auxiliarist takes one or more photographs of the aid. The app automatically places key information on the photo – including the report number and date, the aid name and number, and the photo's time, date, and location.

Finally, a position fix is taken, preferably with a GPS or antenna placed on the aid. The app records and analyzes this data to create a report, as shown above right.

Example of position fix report. The app calculates the GPS error from whatever data the GPS provides. It records the CA (closest approach to the aid) and the vessel speed (SE). Taking the fix with the GPS not on the aid (CA=0) or with the vessel moving (SE>0) greatly decreases the accuracy and utility of the fix, so it may not meet Coast Guard standards.



Example of photograph with automatically generated data. Images provided by Anthony Hooper.

Auxiliarists who have started using the AV Assistant app have found it a great asset to collect and record data during an aid check. Boaters whom we have shown the app find it extremely helpful in navigation – it provides quick and accurate identification of aids to navigation. It tells them if the aid is missing or has an error. Ω



☆ Diversity and Inclusion District 7 Program ☆

Reprinted from "THE INSIDER," August 2024

Being included and having a sense of belonging feels right!



From the first women lighthouse keepers in the 1830s, to the first the first 12 Coast Guard women assigned to sea duty. [190531-G-G0000-3001], and today, to Admiral Linda L. Fagan, Commandant of the Coast Guard, the service has come far! Photos: US Coast Guard Collection

On August 26, our nation celebrates Women's Equality Day to commemorate the passage of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which granted women the right to vote nationally. The observance provides an opportunity to reflect on the role of women in public life and continuing efforts towards full equality.

1848, the first women's rights conference, the Seneca Falls Convention, was held in New York. The meeting launched the women's suffrage movement and propelled peaceful civil rights movements throughout the nation, which ensured women had the right to vote more than 70 years later. In 1971, Representative Bella Abzug advocated for a bill to designate August 26 as "Women's Equality Day." In 1972, Richard Nixon issued a Presidential Proclamation designating August 26 as "Women's Rights Day," the following year, Congress formally adopted the date as "Women's Equality Day."

How can your unit actively support the women in our community and contribute to a more inclusive organization?

- Make history come alive with a special presentation or performance.

- Ensure all your libraries, schools, and communities have a copy of *Winning the Vote: The Triumph of the American Suffrage Movement*.

- Join the Women's History Alliance, which will work over the next two years to declare Women's Equality Day 2020 a federal holiday.

Learn more about women in the Coast Guard at:
<https://www.history.uscg.mil/Browse-by-Topic/No-table-People/Women/Women-in-Coast-Guard-Historical-Chronology/>



FLOTILLA NEWS



Flotilla 74, Brandon

Dorothy Riley, Flotilla Commander

Recruiting continues at a good pace. We added two members in June and two more in July. Our new members are dedicated and highly motivated. They have completed CORE courses and are working towards qualifications.

Matt Stephen qualified two more vessel examiners, conducted 37 paddlecraft vessel safety checks at Tampa Riverwalk Rentals, ran out of decals, and finished the remaining 18 paddlecraft at USF Riverfront Park the following weekend. Stephen earned a "District 7 Bravo Zulu Award" for completing 88 paddlecraft inspections from January to July 2024. He conducted a new visitation with Tampa Riverwalk Rentals, which rents kayaks and paddle boards, and re-supplied the USF boat house and got some new material for them.

We participated in the Brandon Independence Day Parade on July 4 with the assistance of members from Flotillas 72 and 75. These members are to be applauded because it was the hottest parade event in recent years- and they persisted! We are deeply grateful to them.

Challenges

- We are not yet conducting Public Education courses.
- We need Public Education Instructors, Partner Visitors, and Vessel Examiners.
- Our longer-standing members (over half of our roster) do not participate in any activity or respond to calls or emails.
- The heat is a tremendous challenge.

General Summary

Activity and diversity are up. Most of our participating members were recruited in the past two years and are outstanding! Ω



Are we ready? Participants prepare for the 2024 Brandon Independence Day parade. Photo by Natalie Skaggs



For the second time in a year, Flotilla 74, Brandon is without electric (utility pole knocked out). Members conducted the August meeting at the Village Inn in Brandon where Matt Stephen accepted several awards including the District 7 'Bravo Zulu' Award for completing 88 paddlecraft Vessel Safety Checks. USCG Auxiliary photo



FLOTILLA NEWS



Flotilla 75, Apollo Beach

Elliott Seda, Flotilla Commander

Our Vessel Examiners (VE) continue to do Vessel Safety Checks (VSC) at Simmons Park under Ray Langley, Flotilla

Staff Officer -Vessel Examiner. VEs are at the park about every Saturday morning.

Ariel Rodriguez, our Flotilla Staff Officer-Partner Visitation, continues establishing new relationships with dealers in the area. He consistently visits them, interacts with the management, and ensures the Auxiliary display contains materials and brochures.

We had an exhibition and information table at the Tampa Bay Boat Show on June 21-23. Many approached the table, asking for information and filling out information cards. People filled out the cards as far north as Jacksonville and south to Naples. I sent these to the appropriate Flotilla Commanders in those areas so they could make the contacts.

We taught the Auxiliary Water N' Kids Program three classes of 144 kids and 10 adults.

Our flotilla became number one in the division for students receiving safety boating instruction from our instructors. Tom Perry, SO-PE, may provide more information on this.

We will be providing the Boat America course to members of the Tampa Sailing Squadron on September 14th with 20 students and a waiting list of a few more. Unfortunately, the room we are using for instruction has a capacity of only 20.

Two of our Instructors are being trained in Part 2 of the SaferBoating Course, a partnership between the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the SaferBoater Company. These two instructors will be qualified to teach this course as

instructors for the SaferBoater Company. Individuals who complete the Boating America and the Part 2 courses will be given a Gold Card to show their completion. We will be able to announce this in our Boat America course for interested individuals. This will provide our flotilla with an additional resource for recreational boaters.

Five members participated in the July 4th Parade in Brandon. It was hot and challenging, but we made it and represented the Auxiliary.



When Dean Hoskin, Division Commander, announced that Martin Jordan would be the new Staff Officer -Secretary of Records, Elliott Seda, Flotilla Commander, Flotilla 75, Apollo Beach, said Martin needed to bring cookies to the next division meeting to celebrate his swearing-in and that the cookies should be oatmeal. Martin obliged- sort of. At the May division meeting in Apollo Beach, Martin presented Elliot with a gigantic oatmeal cookie with a huge "E" in it. So, Elliott got his cookie- and a big chuckle. Photo submitted by Martin Jordan

We established the flotilla's Elections Committee, and the Flotilla members have been informed that potential candidates for the Flotilla Commander and Flotilla Vice Commander positions must submit Letters of Intent by the end of August. Our election date is October 24th.

The first notice of flotilla dues was sent to the flotilla members, indicating that the dues deadline for the following year is at the end of September. Inactive members and those in 'required yearly not met' status (REYR) for the 5-year core courses have been informed via phone calls and emails that failure to comply with these requirements may result in a disenrollment from the Auxiliary. Active members have been informed via email and at flotilla meetings.

Challenges:

Getting inactive and active members to become current on their Auxiliary Core 5-year training.

We will have an exhibition table at the Sept 27-29 Tampa Bay Boat Show at the Florida State Fairgrounds in Hillsborough County. Please volunteer as watchstander for a shift. ☺



FLOTILLA NEWS



Flotilla 77, Polk County

Gilbert Thomas, Flotilla Commander

- June 18, 2024, the Flotilla Commander met with the Manager of West Marine in Winter Haven, Florida, about doing boating events and Vessel Safety Check at his store in the future,
- June 22, 2024, Instructed Boat America Safe Boating Course.
- On June 18, 2024, The members selected the 2025 election committee for the election of Flotilla Commander, and Vice Flotilla Commander. William Benoist was elected chairperson, Miguel Dumas, Ronald Ramos, and David Harbison.
- Flotilla Seventy-Seven received one new member and has one new member application pending.
- We conducted uniform inspections during the meetings.
- Notification of payment for 2025 Membership Dues started on July 1, 2024.
- July 16, 2024, starts the 60 days for accepting Letters of Intent to run for Flotilla Commander and Flotilla Vice Commander. Elections will be on October 15, 2024.
- On August 1, 2024, we sent the members of Flotilla 77 an E-mail soliciting Letters of Intent to run for the office of Flotilla Commander and Vice Flotilla Commander.
- July 20, 2024, Vessel Safety inspections at Lake Shipp Winter Haven.
- July 27, 2024, Flotilla 77 will conduct a Boat America Safe Boating at the Polk County Sheriff's building in Winter Haven, Florida.
- August 17, 2024, Vessel Safety inspections at Lake Shipp Winter Haven. August 20, 2024, Flotilla 77 monthly Business Meeting.
- August 24, 2024, Flotilla 77 will conduct a Boat America Safe Boating at the Polk County Sheriff's building in Winter Haven, Florida.
- We sent the second letter requesting the pay-

ment for 2025 Membership Dues on August 1, 2024.

- August 20, 2024, Flotilla 77 invited Mr. Carl Templer from the St. Petersburg Coast Guard Exchange to speak to the flotilla about the benefits of shopping at the Coast Guard Exchange.
- Notification of payment for 2025 Membership Dues started on July 1, 2024. Ω



Gilbert Thomas at the Lakeland Sun n' Fun Airshow April 13, 2024. Photo by Dorothy Riley



FLOTILLA NEWS



Flotilla 78, St. Pete Beach

**Wally Behrendt,
Flotilla Commander**

Flotilla 78, St. Pete Beach, currently has 48 members and is processing two new members. We had 11 students in our Boating Skills and Seamanship classes in July. We held our first Spanish Boating Skills and Seamanship class on July 20 and will schedule more.

The regularly scheduled monthly Vessel Safety Check and Recreational Boating Safety Partner Visitations events are doing well. We recorded 50 Vessel Examinations and 39 Partner Visitations in June.

Flotilla 78 boat crew participated in nine on-the-water training missions. Members crewed on two separate C-130 drops, and member Joe Primosch participated in three additional patrols in Sector Ohio Valley, Marine Safety Detachment, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Flotilla 78 participated in the 'Price of Peace Back to School Safety Fair' and helped distribute school supplies and safety information.

We incurred no damage to our flotilla after tropical storm Debby.

All workshops due in June have been completed, except for a few members who intend to drop their certifications.

Flotilla 78 celebrated the USCG Auxiliary Anniversary with a Fellowship Event on June 23 at the American Legion Post 273.

Our flotilla held a public Sober Boating Awareness event and Vessel Safety Check Blitz ahead of Operation Dry Water at the Veterans Administration's Bay Pines Memorial boat ramp on June 29.

Challenges

Summer weather and heat are becoming more of an obstacle for Vessel Examinations and Vessel Examiner blitzes. We have one more scheduled for the weekend before Labor Day, weather (and participation) permitting.

Two long-standing members (and significant participants), Don Rimel and Katherine Collier announced that they are leaving the state of Florida. Katherine

Collier will be resigning from the Auxiliary. Don Rimel will remain a member, but his participation moving forward has not been established. Ω



NSBW May 18, 2024 - National Safe Boating Week is underway! Your USCG Auxiliary Flotilla 78, Gulfport, was stationed at several locations throughout Pinellas County and beyond, helping promote safe boating practices and donating life jackets. Top: Members Raul Lopes, Jim Garrity, Ron Shouse, Brian Warner, and Brenda Burger at the Madeira Beach Marina. Below are the members Dave Brown and Dave Smart at West Marine. USCG Auxiliary photos provided by Walter Behrendt.



FLOTILLA NEWS



Flotilla 7-16, Gulfport

Howard Bush, Flotilla Commander

On June 28, Flotilla 7-16, Gulfport hosted an introduction to the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary to a local Gulfport organization. The introduction included the 85th Anniversary letter from President Joseph Biden. Attendees received the presentation well. Additional get-togethers are planned.

Partner Visitations: Dorothy Pratt, a new Partner Visitor, has taken over Gulfport with a number of new business partners. This should also bring more attention to the Auxiliary.

Marty Richardson, Flotilla Vice Commander, organized the 4th of July parade in Gulfport. Howard Bush lent his boat to be used as a float. Our participation created great community exposure.

Membership: One application was mailed and subsequently lost in the Director of Auxiliary mail room. After a Help Desk ticket and a call from the District, Captain Bush contacted LCDR Tuxhorn. LCDR Tuxhorn requested that we email the application which is now undergoing a background check.

We have two new members: Laurie Cooper and a transfer from Indiana, Tom Steiger, who is an IS officer that we greatly need. Both are eager to get started. Laurie has already begun on her basically qualified test with the assistance of Wayne Hoover, Flotilla Staff Officer-Member Training.

We are done with our renovations for this year. Dorothy Pratt, along with support from Bush and Walter Melnychenko's plumbing skills, completed renovations of the restrooms and kitchen. Pratt's perseverance and hard work are shown in the many hours recorded in Auxdata. BZ Dorothy.

Tom Thompson of the Power Squadron and Jim Wright from Gulfport's Community Emergency Response Team attended our July meeting and gave a short presentation on how we might be able to work together with the common goal of boating safety.

Bush re-opened Flotilla 7-16's Facebook account, which has been quite effective. Two members were trained to be instructors at our Recreational Boating Safety class on August 10.

On August 31, we will have a fire extinguisher demo at a local marina, as well as recreational boating safety partner visits and vessel safety checks.

Confirmation on our fall Gulfport Market booth will be the first Tuesday of each month from Sept-May 2025.



Howard Bush, Flotilla Commander, presents Wayne Hoover with a certificate of completion. Hoover is Flotilla 7-16's newest telecommunications operator (TCO). Hoover took the lead as TCO for the first time on June 27, while Gulfport provided a radio guard for a C-130 test drop. Flotilla 7-16 now has three seasoned, qualified telecommunications operators. USCG Auxiliary photo

Hurricane Debby Follow-up:

Petty Officer Barnett requested we give them a report on the grounded vessels in Gulfport and if any showed signs of pollution. We informed United States Coast Guard Pollution response that a vessel was hard aground against the seawall in front of O'Maddys and was leaking diesel. We took photos and sent to PO Barnett.

Attracting new members. Additional invitations to other organizations will hopefully bring more interested people to the Auxiliary. Ω



OTHER NEWS

Tropical Storm Debby Skirts the Tampa Bay Coast.

By Howard Bush



During tropical storm Debby, over a dozen vessels broke loose from their moorings in Boca Ciega Bay. The city is working feverishly to remove these vessels from the beach. The photos show the extensive equipment needed to remove these vessels.



A giant crane has been brought in to lift some of these vessels out of harm's way. Many vessels are derelict, anchored illegally, or improperly tied to mooring buoys. Many of the anchor lines on these vessels are damaged by marine growth since these vessels stay stationary and are not moved. They call them 'clams' for a reason. These indigenous creatures attach themselves to anything on the bay bottom, including the anchor lines, and over a period of time, they deteriorate the lines to the point that they are as fragile as a piece of spaghetti. There are currently no laws in effect to force these live-a-boards to change their anchor lines annually for safety reasons. Of course, some boats are anchored correctly, but the ferociousness of the storm rips them apart. [USCG Auxiliary photos by Walter Melnyczenko.](#)



News and Updates from our Division Staff Officers.

Howard Bush, Staff Officer Communications

Best News: We no longer have to activate/open patrol orders per BM1 Hudson. Once he approves our requests for crew and radio, we do it all on the Auxiliary Data System.

Flotilla 72, St. Petersburg: A temporary antenna was to be installed the first week of June, but we have no update on this yet.

Flotilla 74, Brandon has two operational radios. I advised them that a qualified Auxiliary Communications officer must inspect the facilities. Mobile facilities, however, require a separate 7004 form.

Flotilla 75, Apollo Beach, conducted a radio guard on May 11. They were alerted to a vessel in distress at 22A. The Coast Guard monitored the call and contacted the Flotilla 75 Auxiliary facility to respond. Our new Telecommunications Operator, Ariel Miguel Rodriguez, played a key role in this search and rescue. Bravo Zulu flotillas 75 and 7-16.

Qualifying examinations were conducted on May 18 at Gulfport Marina during National Safe Boating Week. Another qualifying examination, which required radio guards, was conducted on June 1.

Angel Urbina, Flotilla 79, Tampa started his personal qualification standard for TCO July 20 and 27 at Gulfport Radio. Flotilla 79 needs telecommunications operators for their radio facility.

R21 Outage Microsoft Cloud Strike:

After receiving a notice from Tom Alvord, Assistant District Staff Officer-Communications, at approximately 5 PM one day in July, the Coast Guard Auxiliary radio was operational within 10 minutes. Bush then contacted Ron Shouse at Flotilla 78, St. Petersburg. They did not have the personnel to

operate his station. He then contacted Flotilla 7-16, Gulfport's Telecommunications Operators Kenneth Hoover and Chris Anderson. Hoover came to the Gulfport facility to assist while Anderson contacted Flotilla 78 and opened their radio room. Flotillas 78 and 7-16 monitored channel 16. Shortly after that, Bush learned that the area of responsibility was covered and no other stations needed to be activated. There were minimum calls, none of which were of any urgency. At approximately 9 PM, the Coast Guard notified us that the system was back up and to stand down. Bush contacted everyone to stand down and thanked the members of my flotilla for being available for this emergency. Two stations in Division

7, Gulfport and Madeira Beach, and three operators responded: Bush, Anderson, and Hoover.

(Note: It appears that on July 19, 2024, a software update from CrowdStrike, a cybersecurity company, caused an issue impacting Windows endpoints running the CrowdStrike Falcon agent. This resulted in global technology outages, as detailed by KrebsOnSecurity.)

☆**Note:** All call signs begin with "Coast Guard Auxiliary," then the location of the radio station, and end with "radio." For example, "Coast Guard Auxiliary Ruskin Radio." We hear some of the most messed-up call signs. Repeat the full name three times on the first contact. Once is sufficient thereafter. ☆

Joe Primosch, Staff Officer-Diversity

- Primosch will attend D-Train 2024. As a guest speaker,

he will present a Diversity and Inclusion topic during the Diversity and Inclusion workshop on Sat., Sep 21, 2024.

- The division achieved a 100 percent submission

(Continued on page 36)



News and Updates from our Division Staff Officers.

rate for the NACO Three Star Award.

- Primosch hosted a successful 'Embrace Diversity' virtual panel discussion on June 10 with 43 attendees.
- He is seeking a Staff Officer-Diversity successor for 2025.

Present goals:

- Continue training and hosting virtual guest speaker sessions.
- Continue posting monthly articles on Diversity topics.

Gil Thomas, Staff Officer-Human Resources

From June 1, 2024, to June 30, 2024, Division 7 received six E-responders from individuals requesting to join the USCG Auxiliary. As of June 25, 2024, one new member was processed and Division 7 has enrolled 25 new members. By July 4, 2024, the division had approximately 11 applications for E-responders waiting for approval. This does not include the new member applications sent by the flotilla commanders between July 1, 2024, to July 31, 2024.

Division 7 received six E-responders requesting to join the USCG Auxiliary. The SO-HR removed three E-responders from the list of applicants. Two applicants were removed because after four phone calls and one Email, they would not reply, and one was not a US. Citizen.

As of July 30, 2024, Gilbert F. Thomas is authorized to audit Division 7 new member applications before sending them to the Director of Auxiliary.

Brenda Burger, Staff Officer-Information Services

The Staff Officer-Information Services aimed to get as many Division 7 members as possible to complete their mandatory workshops before June 30. In Division 7, we only had

three members who did not complete the Vessel Examiner Workshop. One member was in Flotilla 78, St. Pete Beach, and was in the process of dis-enrolling. Two others were members of Flotilla 7-16, Gulfport. Great Job!

While the Instructor workshop is not required, it is highly recommended. As a division, we did pretty well.

We are 100 percent for the Sanitation Workshop. The Telecommunications Operator Workshop is optional.



I sent the Auxiliary Core Training / BQ II list to all divisions about three weeks ago, asking the Flotilla Staff Officers of Information Services (IS) to ensure these get done. Although it's not totally the IS's Job, IS seems to be making sure these reports are forwarded to the FSOs or the members.

We have a lot of opportunities when working on these reports. Each flotilla should have their FSOs in each competency, pulling and working these reports. My goal has been to get all FSOs trained since the first of the year so that they can have reports available to keep

on top of this.

Division 7 Statistics

(Brenda Burger, SO-IS)

Division Members 316.

Total Mission hours 21,897.

Total Program Visits 562.

Total Vessel Exams 2,348.

72 - 80 Members Total Mission hours 9,517, PVs 160, VSC 184

74 - 45 Members Total Mission hours 572, PVs 12, VSC 118

75 - 53 Members Total Mission hours 2,422, PV 56, VSC 1093

77 - 24 Members Total Mission hours 576, PV 15, VSC 38

78 - 49 Members Total Mission hours 4,925, PV 279, VSC 926

79 - 46 Members Total Mission hours 865, PV 0, VSC 17

7-16 - 19 Members Total Mission hours 2,968, PV 40, VSC 72

(Continued on page 33)



News and Updates from our Division Staff Officers.

Martin Jordan, Staff Officer-Materials

Materials has no significant issues or supply chain problems. We received many pamphlets from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission- except for the one needed the most! According to their representative, they are awaiting a new supply of those in about a month, so I will contact them then.

I never received my order at the beginning of the month, and my FC suggested I resubmit the order as they may be overwhelmed, so I am doing that.

I have my Program Visitor certificate now, so I have started those duties. It would be nice if we could order the pamphlet holders in larger quantities and styles, as I am customizing each to every location I am supplying.



Flotilla 78, St. Pete Beach, had 11 students in their Spanish Boating Skills and Seamanship class on July 20. will schedule more. USCG Auxiliary photo provided by Ron Shouse

When I ordered the Spanish version of 'Boat America' (BA) from the Auxiliary store, all I received was the Spanish book and photocopies of the Spanish test questions. There were no certificates, question entry sheets, or test answer templates. When I called the Auxiliary store to find out what was going on, they told me the book they sell is the old 'About Boating Safety' class which is no longer

NASBLA-approved. The new BA course does not have a Spanish translation from the publisher.

To remedy the situation, I will have to order a BA book for each student to get the required certificates, teach the class in Spanish with the available Spanish PowerPoint, translate the BA test ques-

tions for the students, and give out the Spanish books I have already ordered. Buyer beware.

Ron Shouse, Staff Officer-Member Training

Reminder for Member Training officers to work with their Information Services officer on members in required yearly, not met (REYR). Recertification deadlines are near. There are several opportunities for recertification classes available as deadlines approach.

I am receiving the list of new flotilla members' training activities, moving from applicant to basically qualified status.

Flotilla 75, Apollo Beach, ordered and received the following: 500 Saltwater Fishing Regulation circulars, 300 Florida Boaters Regulation Guides, 300 Tampa Bay Anglers Guide maps, and 150 Vessel Examiner Forms.

Flotilla 7-16, Gulfport has added additional resources for pamphlets that the Auxiliary does not have for specific situations.

Getting feedback from flotilla staff officers is still the biggest challenge.

Tony Hooper, Staff Officer-Navigation Systems

We completed the entry of Sector St. Petersburg (SSP) Auxiliary private aids to navigation (PATON) reports from 2020 -2024 into Integrated Aids to Navigation Information System (I-ATONIS). An additional Auxiliary member is now working on private aids to navigation files.

We are working to reconcile the Department of Public Works files and SSP data. The goal is to have all SSP private aids to navigation properly labeled in I-ATONIS so that the St. Petersburg aids to navigation team can access and manage the files.

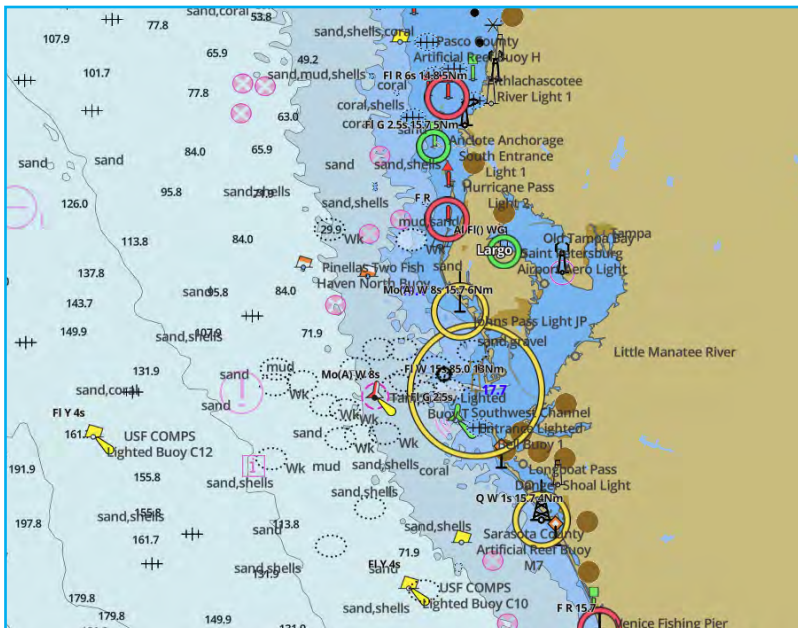
We are working to identify the county in which each SSP PATON is located. Since the majority of PATON are county-managed, this will facilitate finding the point of contact.

We have created lists of the year for the triennial inspection for all Sector St. Petersburg private aids to navigation. We are working on identifying local

(Continued on page 38)



News and Updates from our Division Staff Officers.



Team Commendation.

Dean Bell, Staff Officer-Operations

(Reported in July) During June, Division 7 participated in three C-127 drops. The Coast Guard canceled the fourth mission due to the weather. "Duty Calls" performed two boat training missions with Station Sand Key on June 6 and a C-127 drop on June 13.

"C Lover" performed two boat training drills with Station Sand Key on June 20.

"Ms. Daisy" participated in a C-127 airdrop and covered the Sky Way Bridge Security Zone check on June 27.

Division 7 is looking at the dates to start the yearly currency for crew and coxswain, for those that need hours, and to bring everyone in compliance with the new task drill

notices for mariners (LNM) PATON by area of responsibility so the Auxiliary can verify their status. There are 7,771 listed PATON in District 7. Of these, 1,116 (14%) are on the Local Notices to Mariners (LNM) list. Some have been on the LNM for 20 years.

We completed the first five-week Navigation Systems (NS) workshop session. 13 graduated, and we have two candidates with just one session to make up. The second round of workshops began on May 29. Thirty-three (33) members registered. In Addition, we are:

- Working on a training guide for the Auxiliary to manage PATON files in IATIONIS.
- Severe weather prevented Operations from conducting post-hurricane patrols to check Federal channels. All SSP divisions responded to requests to check the status of boat ramps.
- ANT St Petersburg and the Auxiliary agreed on a project to display PATON status and data graphically.

The Coast Guard awarded three Auxiliarists working on the PATON file project at ANT a Meritorious



A Coast Guard response boat from Station St. Key prepares to tow an Auxiliary vessel from Division 7 during a training exercise on May 16, 2024. USCG Auxiliary photo by Dean Hoskin

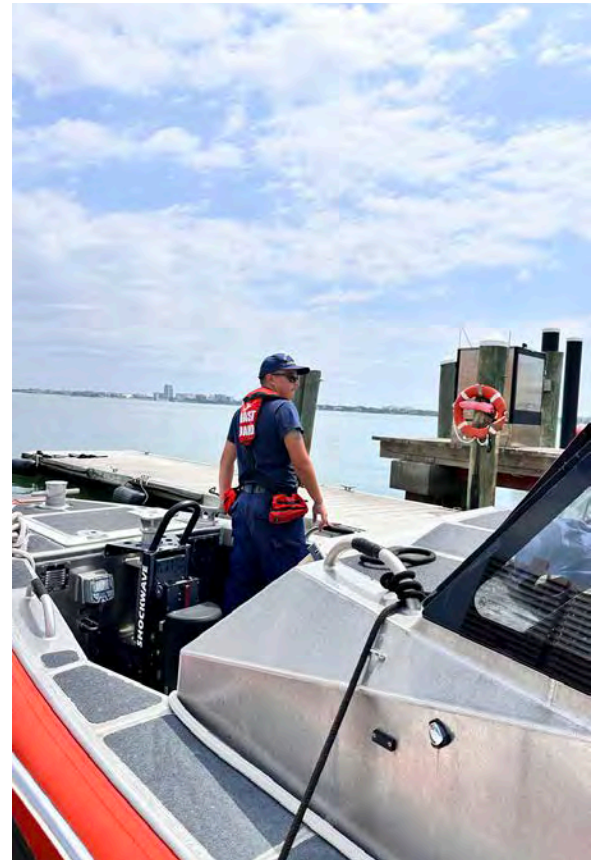
sheet. I sent the sheets to every qualified crew and coxswain earlier this year for your review. Boat crew must perform all tasks as indicated to keep their

(Continued on page 39)



News and Updates from our Division Staff Officers.

qualification. You are responsible for getting up to speed and getting on the water; we will not chase you down.



"Duty Calls," an Auxiliary facility from Division 7 train with a response boat from Station St. Key on June 6, 2024. Dean Hoskin served as coxswain, and Anthony Hooper and Paul Ruckert crewed.

Above: Dean Hoskin and Paul Ruckert.

Below: "Hold that pose!" A guardsman photographs a crew member handling the lines.

Bottom right: Dean Hoskin, Anthony Hooper and Paul Ruckert. USCG Auxiliary photos by Dean Hoskin



(Continued on page 36)



News and Updates from our Flotilla Staff Officers.

Dorothy Riley, Staff Officer-Publications

BREEZE accepted several Division 7 articles.

We challenged our flotillas and photography-inclined members: INTERCOM will publish the best National Safe Boating Week photo on our cover. I did not receive National Safe Boating Week activity reports or photographs for publication from all flotillas, and most of the photos obtained were too small to publish. Consequently, we used the small images received creatively by placing them in 'film strips' (see pages 18-19) and used a Division 7 Operations photo for our cover.

To submit photos to INTERCOM:

- A camera or a smart-phone may take photos for the cover, but they should be at least 1MB. Photos for use within articles may be significantly smaller.
- Identify the place/activity and the photographer and ID the members photographed.
- Do not crop! I will do that with placement on the cover in mind.

We need more members to contribute articles, photographs, program updates, and changes. This is a recurring need/theme.

We need to engage more Public Affairs Officers and Publications members to write articles and submit photographs.

We failed to publish by the end of June and changed our goal date to mid-July. We missed that date, too, but to publish quarterly, we will keep September 15 as the submission deadline for the next issue.

NEWSLETTERS ARE GREAT RECRUITMENT TOOLS!

Thomas Perry, Staff Officer-Public Education

Flotilla 75, Apollo Beach continues to do an outstanding job and has taught over one thousand students at schools in their area.

Congratulations to Flotilla 75 for being #1 in DISTRICT 7 for educating the most students for the first half 2024.

Flotilla 78, St. Pete Beach conducted its first Spanish Boat America class on July 20, 2024, and graduated eleven students graduating. Still, a few kinks to work out before the next class.

No new information is available on

Florida Law questions for the 'Boating Skills and Seamanship' and 'Boat America classes'. Continue teaching with the existing questions.

Pat Stone informed me that there is a new Florida Gold Card for boaters. It requires the completion of a NASBLA course and an on-the-water class with

(Continued on page 41)



Auxiliarists Maria-Elena Taylor, Gary Mull, and Dennis Smith present a Recreational Boating Safety course to Dorothy C. York Academy students on May 5, 2023. Flotilla 75, Apollo Beach continues to do an outstanding job and has taught over one thousand students at schools during the first half of 2024. USCG Auxiliary photo



News and Updates from our Flotilla Staff Officers.

the Safe Boaters group. District 7 is working on how we will partner with SafeBoaters. Will provide more information when I hear from District.

The link below gives more information from FWC.

<https://saferboater.org/florida-powerboat-gold-card/>

Donald 'Terry' Hershman, Staff Officer-Partner Visitations



Recreational Boating Safety pamphlets displayed at a partner's location. USCG Auxiliary photo provided by Elliott Seda

Flotilla 74, Brandon: The flotilla reports three new Partners and continues improving relations and increasing visits. They are recruiting members to become certified Partner Visitors.

Flotilla 78, St. Pete Beach: The flotilla completed 20 Partner Visitations in May.

Flotilla 7-16, Gulfport: The flotilla reports eleven new businesses recruited as Partners. A newly certified Partner Visitor, Dorothy Pratt, is contacting more businesses to become Partners.

Four Flotillas reported in

July: Flotilla 74, Brandon; Flotilla 75, Apollo Beach; Flotilla 78, St. Petersburg; and Flotilla 7-16, Gulfport.

Recreational Boating Safety Partner Visitations opportunities :

- Educating the Boating Public
- Recruiting opportunities for the Auxiliary
- Certified Partner Visitors can obtain the Lighthouse Award, Bravo Zulu Awards, National Century Club Award, and the Recreational Boating Safety Device.

Statistics January 1 through June 30, 2024:

- 23 members working on Program Visits
- 508 Visits Completed.
- 222 Hours Logged

Challenges:

- Extreme heat is still a big problem.
- Ensuring that the PVs are recorded in AUXDAT II. (Auxiliary Data System)
- Getting members in required yearly, not met re-certificated.

Ray Langley, Staff Officer-Vessel Examiner

Vessel Safety Check Totals to date = 2,383 (source Aux Data2)

I sent reminders to all Flotilla Staff Officer-Vessel Examiners to ensure all Vessel Safety Checks completed BEFORE JUNE 30 are entered into Auxiliary Data System, as they affect decal allocation in January 2025.

Challenges:



Temp: 95F Heat Index: 109F Humidity 99%



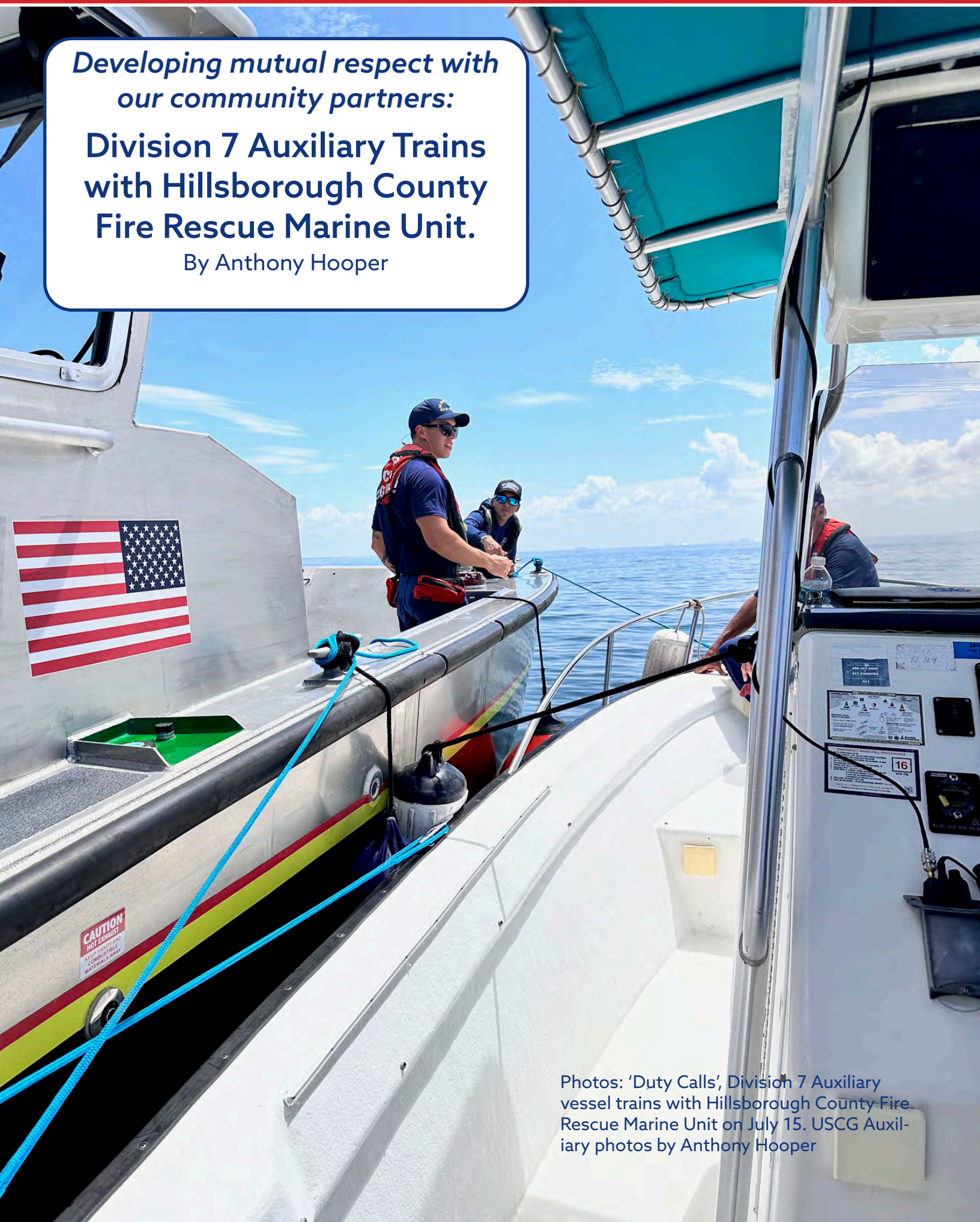
Walter Behrendt from Flotilla 78, St. Pete Beach, conducts a Vessel Examination during National Safe Boating Week. USCG Auxiliary photo



*Developing mutual respect with
our community partners:*

Division 7 Auxiliary Trains with Hillsborough County Fire Rescue Marine Unit.

By Anthony Hooper



Photos: 'Duty Calls', Division 7 Auxiliary vessel trains with Hillsborough County Fire Rescue Marine Unit on July 15. USCG Auxiliary photos by Anthony Hooper



U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Division 7 provides a vessel and crew to support Station St. Petersburg every Monday. The duties vary from inspecting and maintaining personal protective equipment (PPE) to participating in training, including on the water.

On Monday, July 15, 2024, the Hillsborough County Fire Rescue Marine Unit visited Station St Petersburg for training provided by the Coast Guard. The classroom session covered various aspects of search and rescue. The underway training focused on towing.

A BM3 from Station St Petersburg boarded the Hillsborough County Fire Rescue vessel for the underway portion. Auxiliary facility 'Duty Calls', from Division 7, played the role of disabled vessel.

Coxswain Dean Hoskin (Flotilla 72, St. Petersburg) commanded the Auxiliary vessel. Paul Ruckert (Flotilla 75, Apollo Beach) and Tony Hooper (Flotilla 72) were the crew.

The two-boat training exercise lasted almost three hours. In the photos, one can contrast the suitability of the Hillsborough County uniforms for operations in 95° weather compared to Coast Guard operational dress uniforms.

We conducted several long, short, and side tows, allowing the crew of the Fire Rescue vessel to rotate through the various tasks. The Auxiliary members were impressed by the professionalism of the Hillsborough Marine Unit but still provided coaching on the finer points of towing small boats.

After the training, the entire team dined at the Galley, which graciously extended their hours to accommodate us. The Auxiliary team thanked the Fire Rescue Team for the lunch.

These training events are productive in multiple ways. They improve our level of training. They increase our ability to work with the Coast Guard and other agencies. They promote mutual understanding and respect with our partners. They develop personal relationships and trust, which open opportunities. Ω



Before we go...



Left: During National Safe Boating Week, Caroline Kotras and Melissa Lawson of Flotilla 78, St. Pete Beach, traveled to Sebastian Inlet to promote Auxiliary Paddlecraft at a paddlecraft training course offered by the American Canoe Association (ACA). The ACA is an Auxiliary Paddlecraft partner. USCG Auxiliary photos provided by Caroline Kotras.

Right: Stephen Browning from Flotilla 75, Apollo Beach (center) with Terry Hershman, Flotilla 78, St. Pete Beach. Browning is a member of the Honor Flight Network, a national nonprof-



it organization comprised of independent hubs with the enormous privilege of showing our nation's veterans the appreciation and honor they deserve. 'Honor Flight' honored Hershman's service by flying him to Washington, D.C. in June 2024. Photo provided by Stephen Browning



US Coast Guard Auxiliary District 7 Board Meeting & Training

September 19- 22, 2024

Florida Hotel & Conference Center
Orlando, Florida

<https://uscga-district-7.org/dtrain.php>



An Exchange store will be open from the 18th to the 22nd!

