



The Nine - Niner

AN IMPORTANT LOOK BACK

As the adage goes: *"It's hard to know where you're going until you know where you've been"*

A Brief History of Flotilla 99 (Presented at the June 20th flotilla meeting)

By Lillian GaNun

In 2003 Coast Guard governance was transferred from the Department of Transportation to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) when DHS was established by an act of Congress. Today, Commandant Linda L. Fagan and Vice Commandant Kevin E. Lunday oversee nine Coast Guard districts east and west (organized under Atlantic Area Command—including Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands; and Pacific Area Command—including Alaska, Hawaii, and Guam).

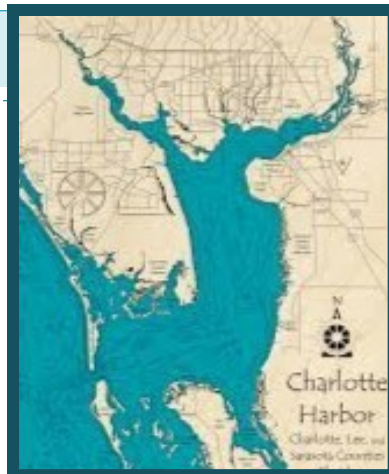
As the uniformed volunteer component of the Coast Guard, the Coast Guard Auxiliary is organized in line with the nine Coast Guard districts. Under these districts there are divisions and under those divisions there are flotillas. This ensures a well organized structure which allows for efficient communication at all levels.

Flotillas are the fundamental organizational units of the Auxiliary. Existing at the local level, these groups are well integrated into their communities assisting the Coast Guard in its various missions in every area except law enforcement. Flotilla members, come from diverse backgrounds of experience and skill. They train together to support their primary focus: Recreational Boating Safety. The number of regional divisions and local flotillas fluctuate as membership numbers and populations change.

Our Flotilla 99, Cape Haze, is currently in the 7th District, Division 9, supporting Coast Guard Station Fort Myers Beach. It was first established with roughly the same area of responsibility (AOR) on August 20, 1973 (51 years ago) as Flotilla 89, Rotonda West. As such, the flotilla was part of Division 8, supporting Coast Guard Station Cortez in Cortez, Florida. Division 8 meetings were held at Mote Marine Laboratory in Sarasota, Florida.

Kenneth C. Donovan was commander of Flotilla 89 for its first few years (see complete list of commanders on the right). Flotilla meetings were held at the Rotonda West Community Center, a former bowling alley which flotilla members helped to refurbish. This location had the advantage of having a full kitchen and dedicated communications room. Some meetings were preceded by dinners cooked by members and fellowship. One popular menu

(Continued on page 5)



Flotilla 99, Cape Haze AOR:

Supporting the U. S. Coast Guard in Charlotte Harbor and from Gasparilla Pass to "R50" of the inland waterway, to three miles offshore.

COMMANDERS FLOTILLA 89, 99

Kenneth C. Donovan	1973-74
Clifton McCauley	1975
Kenneth C. Donovan	1976
Eldon D. Corbin	1977
Genevieve C. Donovan	1978-79
William J. Page	1980
Genevieve C. Donovan	1981
Alden A. Proctor	1982
Karen A. Montgomery	1983-84
Russell C. Bonnel	1985-86
Virginia H. Schwartz	1987
J. H. "Jack" Clark	1988
V. Charles Enochs	1989-90
Wisheart F. Hudson	1991- 92
Stuart M. Hadden	1993-94
Howard J. Jones	1995
Wisheart F. Hudson	1996
James E. Kelly	1997-98
Phyllis J. Reiner	1999
Gerald S. Faust	2000
Andrew R. Safigan	2001
Donald E. Hall	2002-03
Hazen C. Bradshaw	2004
Ronald Mines	2005
Paul Memmer	2006-07
John S. Sleichert	2008
Maurice N. Sabourin	2009-10
Ronald G. Willis	2011-12
Richard A. Robert	2013
Lloyd Abbot	2014
Hugh Kelly Jr.	2025-26
Donald Smith	2017
Robert Curto	2018-19
Ronald Jelliff	2020-21
Kevin Baron	2022
Charles Truthan	2023
Wendy Breidel	2024

JUNE, DIVERSITY MOMENT: T.W.O. IS ONE

By Michael Brown, BC-DUP Outreach (Diversity & Inclusion Directorate)

“**Total Workforce Optimization**” is a natural outgrowth of diversity as it has been characterized in recent years. Let’s briefly explore how diversity is different than total workforce optimization, the new focus and terminology of our Coast Guard commandant and this directorate.

“Diversity” has typically emphasized the variety of identities and backgrounds represented within a group or organization, often focusing on things such as race, gender, age, disability, etc. It emphasizes the importance of inclusivity and representation. These are worthy goals, however, “total workforce

optimization” encompasses an extended broader perspective that includes diversity and inclusivity but goes further. It involves maximizing the effectiveness, productivity, and potential of the entire team, which includes individuals’ talents, experiences, and perspectives.

When all involved are aware of these important qualities and incorporate them into a team’s overall strategy, the end results are going to be more productive and satisfactory. Leadership should promote this approach and adapt the process to best fit their unit and the goal or goals desired. In this way, we maximize the effectiveness and poten-

tial of our entire workforce by enhancing the performance and capabilities of every individual within the Auxiliary.

We must always look to what unites us (aside from our membership in the Auxiliary) and then leverage that diversity of thought and perspective to move our collective work forward. “Total Workforce Optimization” is not just another mission statement or slogan. It is a real and meaningful change to enhance and progress our missions. This self-investment will make the Auxiliary more effective and innovative – in addition to improving the morale of our membership.

“Unity is our strength, unity of purpose, that is. Diversity comes into play through our abilities and perspectives.”

-Nick Frietas



Photo by Laura Gasset—Shoemaker
John Breidel at a Vessel Safety Check

DIVERSITY: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

By John Breidel, FSO-DV

Throughout its history, the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary has actively sought to create an inclusive environment that welcomes individuals from all backgrounds, cultures, and walks of life. The Auxiliary has made significant strides in promoting diversity and ensuring equal opportunities for all its members. It has actively worked to break down barriers and eliminate discrimination, recognizing that a diverse and inclusive organization is not only morally right but also essential for its effectiveness and success.

In the present, the Coast Guard Auxiliary continues to prioritize diversity and inclusion as core values. It actively encourages individuals from diverse backgrounds to join its ranks, understanding that a diverse membership brings a wide range of perspectives, experiences, and skills that enhance its ability to fulfill its mission effectively. The Auxiliary strives to create an environment where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their unique talents and perspectives.

Looking towards the future, the Coast Guard Auxiliary remains committed to fostering an even more inclusive organization. It recognizes that diversity is not a static goal but an ongoing journey that requires continuous effort and improvement. The Auxiliary is dedicated to implementing policies, programs, and initiatives that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion at all levels. It seeks to attract, retain, and promote individuals from underrepresented groups, ensuring that all members have equal opportunities for growth, leadership, and advancement.

Throughout its history, the Coast Guard Auxiliary has experienced key moments that have promoted diversity and shaped its commitment to inclusivity. These moments include the integration of the Auxiliary in the mid-1940s, allowing individuals from all backgrounds to join and serve alongside their fellow members, regardless of race or ethnicity. In the 1970s, the Auxiliary actively worked towards gender equality by opening its doors to women, breaking down gender barriers and promoting diversity within its ranks. In recent years, the Coast Guard Auxiliary has made strides in promoting LGBTQ+ inclusion, implementing policies and initiatives to ensure that LGBTQ+

(Continued on page 3)



Flotilla Commander Wendy Breidel (center) demonstrates entering hours in Aux Data to Lori Quirk (seated, left), Paul Leight (standing, left) and Judith Leight (standing, right) after a recent flotilla meeting.

(Photo by John Breidel)

DIVERSITY ... *(Continued from page 2)*

Individuals are welcomed and supported within the organization. The Auxiliary has also recognized the importance of cultural awareness and sensitivity, implementing training programs to educate its members about different cultures, traditions, and perspectives. Additionally, the Coast Guard Auxiliary has engaged in outreach and recruitment efforts to attract individuals from diverse backgrounds, working to increase diversity within its membership and ensure equal opportunities for all.

These pivotal moments in history have played a crucial role in fostering a more diverse and inclusive organization. They have shaped the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary's commitment to promoting diversity and inclusivity as it continues to promote safe boating in our nation's waters. It is important to recognize that the actions we take today and in the future have a lasting impact, not only within the Auxiliary but also in shaping future generations and the world at large. By prioritizing diversity and inclusivity, the Coast Guard Auxiliary sets an example for other organizations and contributes to a more equitable and harmonious society.



Photo by Peggy Atcher



A New Tradition-
Wendy Breidel, (FC) and Anne Brengle (VFC) present a Division Challenge coin to John Breidel assistant to FSO-MA and Laura Gassett-Shoemaker FSO-MA for their exemplary work in preparing materials in advance of Boating Safety Week.

NOTES FROM OUR FLOTILLA COMMANDER:

What a whirlwind first half of the year we've had!

It all kicked off with the Charlotte County Boat Show in January, which was a blast—even in the rain!

Right after that, we shifted gears to National Safe Boating Week (NSBW), where everyone came together to ensure its success. Whether it was labeling pamphlets, assembling packets, or distributing information during the week, there was a role for everyone to play.

It's important to acknowledge that the only members who couldn't participate were those who were out of the area. A big congratulations to everyone for a job well done!

We've also had the pleasure of welcoming four new members to our flotilla: Christine Linder, Vincent Langan, Elaine Surma, and Steve Pollard. We are thrilled to have you with us! There's a lot to learn, so please don't hesitate to reach out for any help you might need.

When I took on the role of Flotilla Commander in January, I wasn't sure what to expect or how rewarding the experience would be. It's been truly gratifying to see how everyone in the flotilla has united to achieve success.

Such unity and success doesn't just happen on its own; it is the result of everyone's hard work and dedication. This success is a testament to our effective communication, cooperation, and mutual respect.

Thank you all for your contributions and for making this journey so fulfilling. I'm truly excited for what the second half of the year has in store for us. Let's keep up our fantastic work and end the year on a high note!

WENDY BREIDEL

**BOATING SAFETY
WEEK 2024**

A Huge Success ...

- Over 250 hours were donated.
- 912 packets were distributed.
- A total of 6,850 Boating Safety information pieces were disseminated.
- 718 life jacket whistles were distributed.
- 26 individuals expressed interest in Vessel Safety Checks.
- 2/3 of the membership were involved in preparations for Boating Safety week.
- 20 members volunteered to man 7 sites during the week.

THANK YOU!

- Charles Atcher
- Peggy Atcher
- Kathy Barron
- Kevin Barron
- Jerry Berg
- John Breidel
- Wendy Breidel
- Anne Brengle
- Robert Curto
- Louise Damon
- Rick Damon
- Lillian GaNun
- Stephen GaNun
- Laura Gassett-Shomaker
- Ronald Jelliff
- Judith Leight
- Paul Leight
- Joseph Linder
- Scott Morris
- Charles Truthan

BOATING SAFETY WEEK MAY 18TH-24TH



Photo by John Breidel
Judy and Paul Leight, Gasparilla Marina



Photo by John Breidel
Laura Gassett-Shoemaker, Placida Boat Ramp



Photo by John Breidel
Charlie and Peggy Atcher, Gasparilla Marina



Photo by John Breidel
Jerry Berg and Ron Jelliff, Freedom Boat Club



Photo by South Gulf Cove Lock Keeper
Kevin and Kathy Barron - Wendy and John Breidel, South Gulf Cove Lock

LOOKING BACK ...

(continued from page 1)

consisted of creamed chicken, green bean casserole, and whipped potatoes followed by strawberry short cake. There was a signup sheet and the charge was \$5.00 per person. A stalwart group of Flotilla 99 Aux Chefs, including Stephen and Lillian GaNun, Sharon Willis, and Dominic and Marcella Stabile, catered not only meetings, fellowship, and Flotilla Changes of Watch (COWs), but also at least two Division (COWs). Flotilla events were held not only at the Rotonda West Community Center, but also Viscaya Lakes Community Center and the Cape Haze Community Center. In fact flotilla meetings and P.E. programs were held at the Cape Haze Community Center in 2011 and 2012 as well as 2016 and 2017 when the Rotonda West Community Center was under repair, and from 2018-2020 while a new Rotonda West Community Center was built, and then the flotilla returned.

After 2020 (the year of Covid) and “Go-to-Meeting” on line, flotilla meetings and programs moved to the South Gulf Cove H.O.A. building where they are today. COWs have moved to the Hills Restaurant at the Rotonda Golf and Country Club,

(Continued on page 6)

“Fighting Flotilla 99 ~ We get ‘er Done”

OPERATION DRY WATER 2024 JULY 4TH-6TH



Photo by Anne Brengle

Joe Linder and Re Fitzpatrick on duty for Operation Dry Water at the Placida Boat Ramp

EDITORIAL

When flotilla FSO-PA, Chuck Truthan got wind of “Operation Dry Water” it was late in the game. But, he jumped on it.

He announced this Auxiliary-wide initiative at our monthly flotilla meeting on the 20th of June. By July 4th he had arranged to have six volunteers (2-a-day) stationed at the Placida Boat Ramp from 0800-1100 . The team printed hand outs and PE bro-

chures. They had whistles and wristbands. The message: “Stay Dry—Boat Sober.”

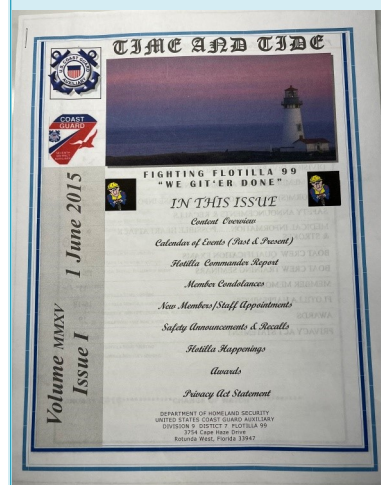
The Placida Boat Ramp is arguably the busiest concentration of boat launching activity on the Cape Haze peninsula over the 4th of July weekend. It was the perfect spot to emphasize the fact that “Alcohol is the leading contributing factor in fatal boating accidents.” The efforts were well worth it.

What a Team, Good For Us!

THEN AND NOW ...

The “Nine-Niner” is the Successor publication to the “Time and Tide.” Its June 2015 issue, pictured below proclaims:

“Fighting Flotilla 99 - We get ‘er Done.”



**VOLUNTEERS:
OPERATION DRY WATER**

THANK YOU!

- John Breidel
- Anne Brengle
- Ellen (Re) Fitzpatrick
- Lillian GaNun
- Joseph Linder
- Charles Truthan



FLOTILLA 99 MISSION STATEMENT

“Inspiring safer and smarter boating through education and public outreach as the face of the U. S. Coast Guard In Charlotte Harbor, while also enriching the lives of our members.”

The Nine-Niner

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Louise Damon, assistant to FSO-PB

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Lillian GaNun

Michael Brown

John and Wendy Breidel

Photographs: Peggy Archer,

John and Wendy Breidel

Anne Brengle, Jerry Berg,

Laura Gassett-Shoemaker

Coast Guard Meritorious Team Commendation



Steve and Lillian GaNun receive their well deserved COMMENDATION FOR THE SEVENTH DISTRICT AUXILIARY 2014 D-TRAIN SUPPORT TEAM. CONGRATULATIONS.

Photos by Jean-Louis Deshaman FSO-PB

The June 2015 issue of “Time and Tide” mentions the Coast Guard Meritorious Team Commendation awarded to Lillian and Stephen GaNun. This June we celebrated them again as both were awarded the Auxiliary Achievement Medal for 42 Years of Superior Service by the Commandant of the United States Coast Guard. Lillian and Stephen are pictured here with presenters Flotilla 99 Commander, Wendy Breidel and Division 9 Commander, Ron Jelliff.

LOOKING BACK ...

(Continued from Page 5)

and fellowship events are held at local restaurants like the Hills, the Rotonda Elks Club, the VFW, Visani’s. And, members host flotilla cookouts.

Beginning in its second decade the flotilla participated in district-wide Auxiliary Search and Rescue (ASAR) exercises in Punta Gorda. On the water training took place twice a week. Two times a year the flotilla participated in the Seafood Festival at the Gasparilla Fishery in Placida. There was the “Freedom Swim” in Charlotte Harbor and Safe Boating Week with Public Affairs (PA) booths at Gasparilla Marina. The flotilla was a presence at the “Red Neck Party” (now re-named) at Party Cove off Boca Grande and the annual Christmas Parade sponsored first by the VFW and then the Rotonda West Community Center.

Our flotilla participated in missions that included night patrols in Boca Grande Pass, when necessary, to watch for stolen vessels. We participated in Gasparilla Day in Tampa representing the Auxiliary. And, when “Rescue 21” (the Coast Guard’s advanced command, control, and direction finding system) was down for maintenance, our Telecommunications Certified members (TCOs) stepped up to monitor their VHF radios, covering the downed Channels. We received our first Charlotte County Marine Advisory Board Grant in 2009 and in 2011 we used it to acquire our “Comms. Trailer” with two VHF’s and a Ham radio.

Our Public Education programs were much the same as they are today with Boat America and GPS Navigation for Mariners being the two most popular courses. We even held some courses at Gasparilla Marina. We also hosted Auxiliary—Team Coordination Training (TCT) Courses when they were started.

In 2010 Flotilla 89 officially became Flotilla 99, due to a reorganization of divisions and flotillas. As part of our move to Division 9, we began meeting at St. Hilary’s Church in Ft. Myers until the Division 9 meeting location was changed to the Lee County Emergency Operations Center in Ft. Myers.

In 2019 when Robert Curto was commander, another change occurred. A motion by Kevin Baron, seconded by Ron Jelliff proposed that the flotilla’s official name change from Rotonda West to Cape Haze. This was more in line with our AOR and where we operate today.



Photos by Laura Gassett-Shoemaker