

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2023



WET GAZETTE

Department of Homeland Security

US Coast Guard Auxiliary

Flotilla 11-10

Dunedin, Florida

Gordon Thomas, Commander

Eddie Townsend, Vice Commander

Rob Bonnem, Immediate Past Commander

Gary Walkup, Publications Officer



(Photo credit USCG)

COMMANDER'S CORNER



Shipmates, with the new year comes a change in our auxiliary. You now have a new bridge and a few new staff officers. Eddie Townsend as Flotilla Vice Commander and myself as Flotilla Commander are expecting to keep our flotilla rolling along in the same manner that our previous commanders Rob Bonnem and Kristi Mackey have done for us. We are in the process of helping the new staff officers become familiar with their new positions so we should have everything running smoothly at full speed.

We want to do more social activities together this year if possible now that COVID has dropped to a more negotiable level across the country. According to our

National Auxiliary officers we are able to have nonvaccinated members attend live activities with us again. In the past we have had island cleanup, baseball night out, holiday party and auction, game night, Umberto's restaurant lunch with Buddy, Touch a Truck, Purple Heart Ceremony, Mardi Gras and Christmas parades, and maybe this year we can look into a group to go out kayaking when it gets a little warmer. Please submit suggestions!

Kristi and Harvey Prior are working on putting together a Division Awards banquet live at the Tarpon Springs Yacht club now that the vaccination requirement has been lifted. Our flotilla meetings have been improved with the approval to meet in the Red Tail Lounge at the C.G. Air Station as we did prior to COVID where the WI-FI is more stable where we can still continue with the hybrid meeting. We will attempt to have some kind of educational program or at least a program of interest to everyone at each of our meetings. Please feel free to offer suggestions or consider doing a program yourself.

We have four new members who have recently joined our flotilla and I have placed three of them in positions of duties immediately. It is important that we get new members busy with responsibilities if we hope to retain or increase the membership. I am pleased that our present staff officers who are willing to work one on one with the new members and get them trained. They no longer need to be a member one year before assigning such duties as long as they have

BQ status. We also have another member who is transferring from Maine and I have heard that one of our new members has a couple more friends interested in joining. I am thrilled with the prospect of our membership increasing so much. Bravo Zulu to you new brave souls who were willing to step up and get their hands dirty right away.

I am going to harp again about still looking for a member who would be willing to take on duties as an assistant for Buddy Casale with Public Education with courses that we offer in boat safety and navigation. This is an important position that only serious members need to apply. At some point down the road, Buddy would like that person to eventually take over and he would assist. It's recommended that you also become an instructor to handle the duties required. This position brings in an income that helps to keep our dues down and is the life blood of running the flotilla as is getting new members so that we can handle our duties properly. We also need more ideas on how to reach more potential students to fill our classroom.

Gordon Thomas, FC (photo provided by author)

Enchanted, I'm sure!

Good morning! My name is Gary Walkup, and I'm the new FSO-PB. For those who haven't acclimated to Coast Guard "jargon", that's short for "Flotilla Staff Officer-Publications", and what I do is take care of our Flotilla Facebook Page, and edit the flotilla newsletter.





I was born in Chicago, studied at Southern Illinois University, and lived in Carbondale, Illinois until moving to Florida about 10 years ago. In addition to the Coast Guard, I'm also a volunteer County Park Ranger,

On weekends you'll often find me distributing samples at the local Publix. Passersby will ask "How are you?", and the typical reply is "GREAT! I'm paid \$30 per hour to distribute free booze and talk to cool people. How awesome is that?"



Since moving to a "bike-friendly" area, I've rediscovered how much fun bicycling is, and typically ride about 15 miles per day. I've also traded my canoe (appropriate for small Midwest lakes) for a kayak, much more appropriate for the Gulf of Mexico. I've been paddling for about 60 years, so it's fun to expand my horizons, both literally and figuratively. I'm a former Scout and Scout leader, and an amateur actor, often appearing on local stages including the Francis Wilson Playhouse, the Central Park Performing Arts Center, and the Straz Center. My favorite shows are classic musicals like "The Music Man", "The Sound of Music", "Guys and Dolls", "Anything Goes" and similar productions. WARNING! I tend to break into a show tune at inopportune times!



(All photos by author)

As the Flotilla Publications Officer, my goal is to keep the flotilla and other interested people engaged on a regular basis using both Facebook and this newsletter. Facebook is appropriate for time-sensitive stories of interest, both local and nation-wide, and this newsletter which will be more of a recap of news that readers may have missed, or those who don't "do" Facebook.

I encourage readers to contribute articles, stories and pictures that you think may be of interest. You can email them to me at gary.walkup@gmail.com. Please format material you send in MS Word or RTF. No PDFs please.



Artificial Intelligence by Ron Shebanek

I was experimenting with an artificial intelligence App and wondered if it could write an article for the newsletter. The app is ChatGPT by OpenAi. It is conversational app that has been very hard to access because it has been so popular that the Open Ai servers can't keep up with the volume. When I was finally able to access it after multiple tries, I asked the app "to write a one-page article about the history of Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater with references."

It wrote the following:

The United States Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater (ASCL) is located in Clearwater, Florida, and has a rich history dating back to the early 20th century. The station was established in 1920 as a small airfield for Coast Guard aircraft.

In the early years, the air station primarily served as a base for Coast Guard aircraft involved in law enforcement and search and rescue operations. The station's aircraft were also used for other missions, such as mapping and surveying, as well as training for naval aviators. During World War II, the air station played a critical role in the war effort, providing air support for the Coast Guard and other military branches.

In the post-war years, the air station continued to grow and evolve. In the 1950s, the station received its first helicopters, which greatly expanded its capabilities in search and rescue operations. In the 1960s and 1970s, the station continued to receive new aircraft and equipment, further enhancing its capabilities.

Throughout the latter half of the 20th century, Air Station Clearwater played a key role in a variety of operations, including drug interdiction, alien interdiction operations, and environmental protection. The station also played a vital role in response to major natural disasters, such as Hurricane Andrew in 1992, and more recently Hurricane Irma and Michael.

Today, Air Station Clearwater is one of the busiest and most capable Coast Guard air stations in the United States, with a fleet of MH-60T Jayhawk helicopters and HC-130 Hercules aircraft. The station is responsible for providing a wide range of services, including search and rescue, law enforcement, and environmental protection. The air station and its crew of active duty, reserve and civilian members stand ready to save lives and protect the environment 24/7.



Photo Credit USCG District 5

Communications Report by Scott Birdwell, FSO-CM

No radio watch for January, 2023

New marine radios installed in the Flotilla radio room, waiting on completion of AuxDATA form 7004 inspection report

No obstacles to report

Opportunities: Home study and refresh to remain current



Crossing the Bar by Alfred Tennyson



(Stock photo image from WordPress)

After the Pledge of Allegiance is recited at many Coast Guard Auxiliary meetings, a moment of silence is observed to honor those who have “crossed the bar”. Although Tennyson’s most well-known poem is “The Charge of the Light Brigade”, here’s where “crossing the bar” originated.

**Sunset and evening star, and one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar, when I put out to sea,
But such a tide as moving seems asleep, too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep turns again home.
Twilight and evening bell, and after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell, when I embark;
For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place the flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face when I have crost the bar.**



AUXAIR Report January 2023 by John C. Landon

Orders to fly to Key West / Florida Straits to search for Cuban Migrants on Jan 6th. Picked up crew at Sarasota-Bradenton Airport (KSRQ) and proceeded to the straits. However, as we reached the Everglades, Sector diverted us back to the Skyway Bridge area to search for a small sailboat that was disabled near the Skyway Bridge. The captain was a 93-year-old man who was reportedly having some issues communicating with sector. Searched the area for over an hour and guided a Coast Guard small boat to a suspected target which they boarded but found no issues. Returned to KSRQ to drop off crew and debrief. Issued new orders for 1-10-2023 to fly to the Florida Straits Picked up crew at SRW (Southwest Florida International Airport, Fort Myers) and proceeded to the Straits, refueled in Marathon and continued flight in the Straits to the Marquesas Keys then returned to KSRQ to drop off crew. Returned to KCLW (Clearwater Airpark) at sunset, logging almost 6.5 hrs. flight time.



20 JAN 2023 FM: CHDIRAUX TO: ALAUX ALAUX 004/23

Subj: AUXILIARY COVID-19 GUIDANCE - VERSION 5

- 1. All Auxiliarists are highly encouraged to review the latest version of the Auxiliary COVID-19 Guide which has been posted in AUXDATA II and on the Chief Director of Auxiliary (CHDIRAUX) website at: Auxiliary COVID-19 Guidance. To review the guide in AUXDATA II, login to AUXDATA II; from the AUXDATA Navigation Bar select “More,” then “Files,” and then select “Libraries.” The guide and other relevant COVID-19 information are located in the folder, “CG Auxiliary COVID-19 Guidance.” Questions regarding the content of the guide should be directed to the appropriate Auxiliary Chain of Leadership and Management (COLM).**

- 2. The following are highlights within this revision (review the Guide for more details about each item):**
 - a. The temporary restriction that requires all Auxiliarists to be fully vaccinated prior to volunteering for an assignment to duty (ATD), has been suspended. All Auxiliarists may request ATD in any Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) COVID-19 Community Level without the need to provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test unless otherwise requested in accordance with the “Meetings and Conferences” section of the Guide.**
 - b. District Directors of Auxiliary (DIRAUXs) and Order Issuing Authorities (OIAs) should follow the CDC guidance and recommendations applicable to their AOR’s current CDC COVID-19 Community Level. Please review the following regarding CDC COVID-19 Community Levels: COVID-19 by County | CDC.**

c. All Auxiliarists are expected to view the CDC COVID-19 page at Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) | CDC for further information on transmission, prevention, symptoms and emergency warning signs, people at higher risk for severe illness, exposure risk, preventing infection, etc.

d. Community Level mask wear guidelines follow:

(1) CDC COVID-19 Community Level of High: All Auxiliarists shall wear a high-quality mask. (An example of a high-quality mask is a cloth mask that properly fits over the nose, mouth, and chin to prevent leaks; has multiple layers of tightly woven, breathable fabric; has a nose wire; and has fabric that blocks light when held up to a bright light source.

Another example of a high-quality mask is a procedure mask (aka surgical mask) with a proper fit over the nose, mouth, and chin to prevent leaks; has multiple layers of non-woven material; and a nose wire.) See CDC's page on types of masks and respirators for further information: Masks and Respirators (cdc.gov)

(2) CDC COVID-19 Community Levels of Medium and Low: Masks are optional for all Auxiliarists unless otherwise directed by DIRAUX or the cognizant Coast Guard OIA.

e. Auxiliarists, regardless of vaccination status, may apply for and attend mission-critical Auxiliary C-schools. Full COVID-19 vaccination is still required to apply for and attend non-mission-critical C-schools. Please review ALAUX 046/22, Resumption of In-Person Auxiliary C-schools, which identifies mission-critical Auxiliary C-schools and can be found at the following: 2022 ALAUX (uscgaux.info), for further information.

f. Currency Maintenance can be found in ALAUX 048/22, Calendar Year (CY) 2023 Annual Currency Maintenance Requirement Tracking for Crewmember, Coxswain, PWC Operator, and Nighttime Certification, at 2022 ALAUX (uscgaux.info). Any questions should be directed to the servicing DIRAUX and Operations Training Officer (OTO).

g. All official Auxiliary engagement activities that entail attending other-than-Coast Guard or other-than-Auxiliary conferences, conventions, or other large gatherings are authorized in accordance with CDC guidelines, Coast Guard policy, and Auxiliarists shall follow State and local policy if more restrictive.

h. All Auxiliary gatherings (meeting, conferences, training, etc.) are authorized to be planned and executed in any CDC COVID-19 Community Level without the need for further Coast Guard or Department of Homeland Security (DHS) clearance or waiver. This is regardless of vaccination status.

i. Official travel is authorized for all Auxiliarists regardless of vaccination status.

Auxiliarists must continually check the CDC COVID-19 Community Level for the areas

they will be traveling to and from. In addition, Auxiliarists must review CDC's travel notices at: [Travelers' Health | CDC](#) and [Domestic Travel During COVID-19 | CDC](#)

3. DIRAUX offices, Coast Guard units, and OIAs are continually assessing operational risks posed by COVID-19 and developing mitigation strategies in advance of mission performance. They remain the best sources for guidance regarding Auxiliary assignments to duty within their respective areas of responsibility. All Auxiliarists are expected to help them by exercising caution and adhering to Coast Guard guidance.

4. Internet release is authorized.





DIVISION 11

Awards Luncheon

03-18-2023, Saturday

CASH BAR

- 1100 – Attitude Adjustment Hour
- 1200 – Lunch is served
- 1300 – Awards Ceremony

LUNCH MENU

- Beef Stroganoff
- Chicken Cacciatore

Includes: House Salad & Dinner Roll
Chef's Dessert, Tea & Coffee

Tarpon Springs Yacht Club

350 N. Spring Blvd.
Tarpon Springs, FL 34689
727-934-2136

UNIFORM

Service Dress Blue
Tropical Blue
Appropriate Civilian Attire



Please use this form and submit it with a check to Kathy Casey.
Deadline to receive is Feb 28th.

Division 11 Awards Luncheon - March 18, 2023

\$30 per person

Name: _____ Total attending _____

Member # _____ Flotilla # _____

Please make check payable to USCG Auxiliary Division 11

Send to 1959 Rebecca Drive, Clearwater, FL 33764

U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY FSO-PV REPORT

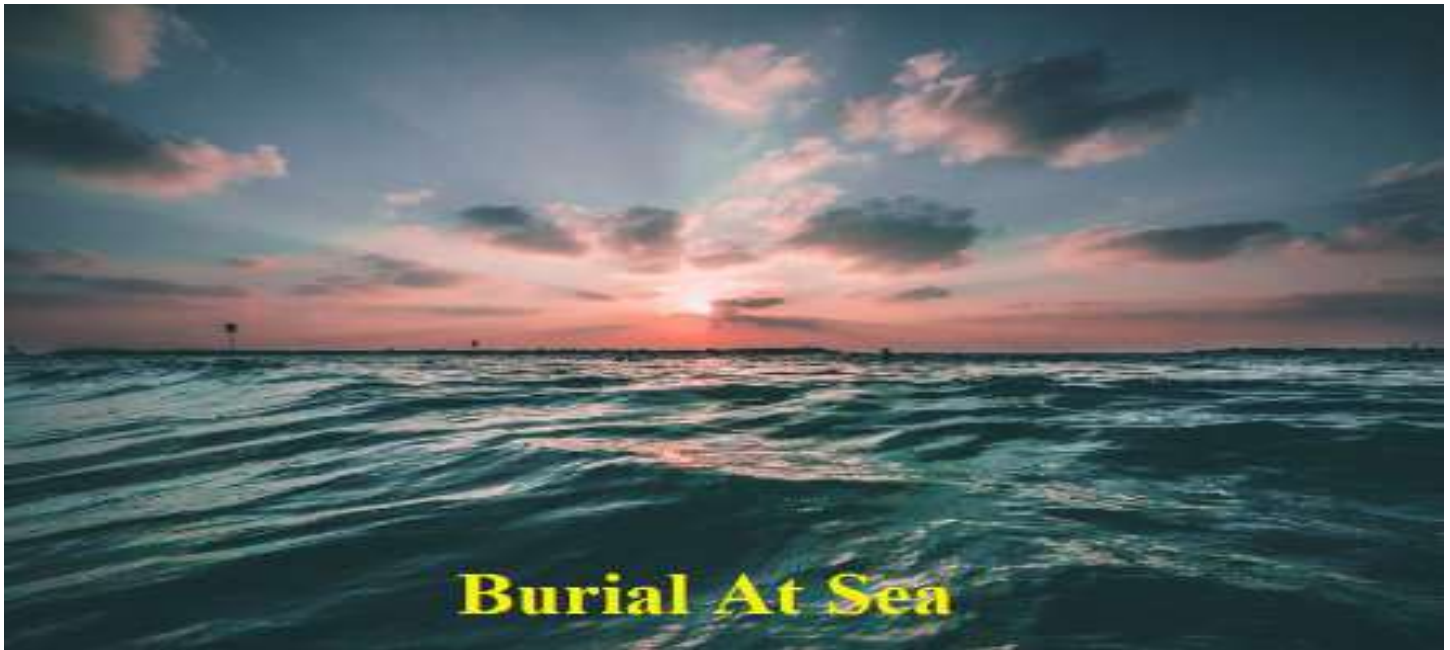
By Robert Bonnem

What's a "FSO-PV" (Program Visitation)?

Program Visitors are largely responsible for the first contact between recreational boaters, boating service providers, and the Coast Guard Auxiliaries. We visit businesses who provide necessary services to the boating public; boat sales, boat repairs, boat accessory sales, fishing information, and docking services, and provide them with materials to distribute to their customers. Being a PV offers not only the opportunity to be of service to connect the boating public to the Coast Guard Auxiliary, but also offers the experience of visiting many interesting businesses and meeting many interesting people.

We identify businesses in our area frequented by boaters. Not just those who take care of their boats but those who serve the boaters themselves, such as restaurants, fishing supplies, libraries, chambers of commerce, and specialized clothing and supply stores. We educate them about the role the Auxiliary plays in recreational boating safety. We ask them if they would like to partner with us by providing information to boaters who frequent their business. We provide a literature rack and fill it with various Coast Guard publications. We also include information about our flotilla's specific activities including boating safety classes and vessel examinations. We ensure that the business has our contact information in case they run out of material before we return, or if they or a customer have questions about any aspect of recreational boating safety.

Here is the FSO-PV report for 11-10 for January 2023. A total of five partner visits were made, no new partners were added. Racks and supplies in place, restocked and on display in all clients visited. We have good stock levels of racks and supplies to fill them with in the flotilla classroom. Class schedule 2022 brochures are available. Coast Guard activity/coloring books are in stock. Flotilla 11-10 is constantly working on recruiting new Partners and more will be onboard in the near future. No new PVs have been qualified.



(Stock image from WordPress)

A family from Ohio requested a burial at sea from the Coast Guard. Robert Hillerich was a previous flotilla commander with Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 11-10 and a retired Navy captain. The family requested that his ashes be dispersed at sea as was his final wish. A number of obstacles occurred, but were resolved. The final plan involved Harvey Prior embarking the family on his facility from the Seminole Boat Ramp and transferring them to a Coast Guard boat. Both boats proceeded three miles offshore for the service. Upon returning to land, the Coast Guard boat transferred the family to Harvey's boat to dock at the Seminole Ramp. The transfer was necessary as the Coast Guard boat was too large to dock at the Seminole ramp and the road to the Sand Key Coast Guard station was blocked due to an event. The weather was overcast and wind was a bit brisk, but held up well enough. The proceedings were successful with the family pleased at all of our efforts.

(Photos by Rob Bonnem, Kristi Mackey, and Patricia Allison)











27 JAN 2023

FM: CHDIRAUX TO: ALAUX ALAUX 005/23

Subj: BOATING SAFETY APPLICATION FOR SMART PHONES

1. The Coast Guard Boating Safety application has allowed smart phone users on the Apple and Android mobile operating system platforms to input a profile, email a float plan, review safety equipment requirements, and obtain emergency assistance, as well as other features.

Unfortunately, the application is no longer available in the application stores since updates have not been possible.



2. The Coast Guard is exploring the future of the application and hopes to put out additional information in the next 90 days. In the meantime, Auxiliarists should advise anyone who is interested in the application that it is not available, and users who have the application on their smart phones should be advised to delete it until further notice.
3. Questions should be directed to the Boating Safety Division (CG-BSX-2) at (202) 372-1062 or at rbsinfo@uscg.mil.
4. Internet release is authorized.



Several members of Flotilla 11-10 attended the "Hope Spot" event in Dunedin, Florida.

The goal of the event was to encourage both visitors and vendors to practice sustainability, including less production of trash. The event included craft and food vendors, educational exhibits, and friendly Coast Guard Auxiliary members who spoke with visitors about vessel exams, boating safety courses, and joining U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 11-10. Pictured from left to right are Gordon Thomas, Flotilla Commander, Gary Walkup, and David McGee

(Photo by Gary Walkup)

Public Education (FSO-PE)

About

The Public Education Department is charged with training and certifying a cadre of experienced recreational boating safety instructors, in support of the Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary's mission to improve recreational boating safety through public education and outreach, and providing all necessary materials and support to that mission.



Programs

- Plan, organize and direct programs and activities to promote and publicize boating safety
- Training, qualification, and currency maintenance of instructors
- Maintain the master Online Public Education Calendar



Flotilla 11-10's award-winning Flotilla Staff Officer -Public Education is Buddy Casale

Christmas Parade, December 10, 2022

Flotilla 11-10 participated in the annual Christmas Parade in Dunedin, Florida



**Gordon Thomas, Flotilla Commander-
(elect) was surprised by Christmas
greetings from the local Grinch!**

(Photos by Gary Walkup)



Like to paddle? AUXPAD is the Coast Guard Auxiliary's program promoting paddlecraft safety ashore and afloat. Similar to the boat crew program, AUXPAD Operators are trained to handle their craft safely and undertake missions under orders. Their training prepares them as safety ambassadors to the paddling community, where they promote safety on the water, and also through Vessel Safety Checks, Public Education, and Program Visitation.

Here's a link to the NEW Paddlecraft handbook!

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VYgM9jV5EF2ng6Nbkh3c1IbiFPnuGVbA/view>