



January 2024

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THE ALAMO CITY GUARDIAN



Welcome 2024! The Alamo City Guardian is Flotilla 081-07-04's Quarterly Newsletter. My goal is to build awareness of the Flotilla's activities - past, present and future. We all need to encourage, motivate and educate another regarding Coast Guard Auxiliary activities and trainings as well as how we can best assist our Active Duty Coast Guard!

The Flotilla wishes to thank our Auxiliarists for all their hard work and congratulate them on all their achievements throughout the year!

Auxiliarist Congratulations

Congratulations to the newly elected Flotilla Commander and Vice
Flotilla Commander for 2024!

Congratulations to the Flotilla Staff Officers for 2024!

In the Spotlight:

Our new Flotilla Commander, Joe Littlefield, was born in Katy, TX, is married, has a 3 yr old son and is expecting a baby boy this spring! He's an outdoor man – as he enjoys motorcycles, hiking, camping, and hunting. Joe comes to us with vast experience. He was a Sr. Military ER Mgmt Specialist with the Texas State Guard and chaplain at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. Currently, Joe is a contracting officer with the US Air Force. Our FC joined the Auxiliary in 2013, took a break in 2016 and rejoined us last year! Joe has a heart for service and mission. His favorite Auxiliary duty is working alongside the active-duty Coast Guard. He enjoys boat patrols and serving on cutters. Joe desires to climb into the District or National ranks. In summary, Joe's own words – "I am mission focused but also want to empower...members to achieve their goals, ...but I also want us to have fun and fellowship with one another." We are fortunate to have this man as our FC leading us into a new year! (Photo and article by Auxiliarist Karen Duryea, PA)





Flotilla 7-4 San Antonio:

Coast Guard Auxiliary

Cornerstones: Recreational
Boating Safety, Member Services
Operations and Marine Safety,

Fellowship

What we do! "America's Volunteer Lifesavers".

Our primary mission is promoting and supporting recreational boating safety and that includes involvement in Search and Rescue efforts, Maritime Domain Awareness, Underway Operations, Marine Safety, Public Education, and Vessel Safety Examinations, both recreation and commercial. In addition to that, we have members with special skills like radio operators, webmasters, computer specialists, pilots, public affairs specialists, and language interpreters. <http://wow.uscgaux.info>

The purpose of the Uniformed Auxiliary:

Our purpose is to assist the Coast Guard. To promote safety and to effect search and rescues on and over the high seas and on navigable waters. To promote efficiency in the operation of motorboats and yachts. To foster a wider knowledge of, and better compliance with, the laws, rules, and regulations governing the operation of motorboats and yachts through safe boating classes. To facilitate other operations of the Coast Guard.

Why Join? <http://join.cgaux.org/> When you join the Coast Guard Auxiliary, you could find yourself on patrol saving lives and property, assisting in marine safety and environmental protection, radio watch-standing, educating the public in boating safety and much more. That's what our members do. We don't just train. We train and perform. Since 1939 the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary has safeguarded our Nation's maritime interests in the heartland, in the ports, at sea, and around the globe. Members from all walks of life bring their training and experience as a member of the uniformed volunteer component of the United States Coast Guard. <http://wow.uscgaux>.

Flotilla Member Activity:

New Members: Vladimir Viktorovich
Gerasimenko, December
Welcome Vladimir!

2024 Scheduled Events:

January 13, Division Meeting, Sector Corpus Christi
January 20, 10:30 am, Flotilla Meeting, Schertz
Public Library, 798 Schertz Parkway, Schertz
78154
February 10, 10:30 am, Flotilla Meeting, Blue Skies,
5100 John D Ryan Blvd, San Antonio, 78245
February/March – Vessel Exams at Marinas – TBD
March 9, 10:30 am, Flotilla Meeting, Blue Skies,
5100 John D Ryan Blvd, San Antonio, 78245
April 20, 10:30 am, Flotilla Meeting, Schertz Public
Library, 798 Schertz Parkway, Schertz 78154

Public Education:

Boat Crew Academy – January 13, Corpus Christi
(See Alex Shapovalov for BC training)
Vessel Exam training - January 20 at Flotilla Mtg
Culinary Asst. Online Training - January 18 & 25, 6-9
pm (See Tom Duryea for CA Training)
Boating Safety Course – TBD (watch for emails)

Vessel Examinations:

Visits to the Marinas will be conducted in January
with VE's to be scheduled in Feb & March.

Why We Do What We Do:

KIDS DON'T FLOAT!

Texas law requires all children under 13 years must wear a life jacket (PFD) while a vessel is underway. The PFD must fit properly, be in good condition and USCG approved.

Where the cause of death was known, 75 percent of fatal boating incident victims drowned. Of those drowning victims, 85 percent were not wearing a life jacket.



From the USCG Auxiliary to the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve

An Auxiliarist from District 7 is commissioned Ensign in the Coast Guard Reserve. Master-at-Arms Second Class, MA2 Gary Rodriguez, U.S. Navy Reserve (USNR), was looking to engage in community service beyond his Navy Reserve billet. He was aware of the USCG Auxiliary and the closest flotilla to him, Flotilla 69, Opa-locka, hold their monthly meetings at CG Air Station Miami. "The Auxiliary has a diversity in ideas and a desire to help the Coast Guard in their mission sets," Rodriguez said. It seems a perfect fit, so he enrolled in the USCG Auxiliary in the summer of 2020. At the time the COVID-19 pandemic was raging, face-to-face meetings were on hold, and interaction with the public was restricted.

After Auxiliarist Rodriguez completed his FEMA courses and his Core Training was behind him, flotilla leadership directed his attention to the numerous mission area training programs. His goal was to gain more understanding of the organization while helping the local community. About two months into his Auxiliary service, his attention was drawn to the Operational Auxiliarist (AUXOP) program. The AUXOP training program gave him a well-rounded perspective about the Auxiliary and what the organization does. He began pouring over the books (so to speak) and completed all the courses necessary to become AUXOP qualified in a matter of weeks.

Gary's first exposure with active-duty Coast Guard was when the Sector Miami Commander, Captain Jo-Anne Burdian (now Rear Admiral) needed someone to assist at the front desk. Working in the office of then-Captain Burdian gave Auxiliarist Rodriguez a firsthand look at how Coast Guard officers work. His military bearing and professional demeanor were qualities that were noticed. Captain Burdian treated him as part of the team and encouraged him to be involved with leadership at Sector Miami.

He continues studying and taking classes, now focusing his attention on marine safety, a subject

he feels passionate about. Upon qualifying in Marine Safety, he was appointed Flotilla Staff Officer-Marine Safety (FSO-MS) where he engaged with the active-duty Marine Science Technicians (MST) at Sector Miami. He aspires to contribute significantly to environmental protection and play a vital role in advancing the Coast Guard's commitment to environmental stewardship. In short order, he assumed the position of Division Staff Officer-Marine Safety (SO-MS), thereby fostering a deeper and more impactful connection between active-duty MST personnel and the CG Auxiliary. He is driven and eager to contribute towards improvements. "I enjoyed my time assisting active duty. They were always welcoming of my input and considered me part of the family", he told me.

While he was working with Sector, Auxiliarist Gary Rodriguez submitted his paperwork to enlist in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve (USCGR). On Saturday, August 5, 2023, Ensign Gary Rodriguez was commissioned into the officer's corps of the USCGR.

Auxiliarists Answer "The Call to Mission"!

CHANGE OF WATCH: Our big event this quarter was our Change of Watch held on December 9. The Flotilla's newly elected Commander Joe Littlefield and Vice Commander Tom Duryea were sworn in by our VCDR Alex Shapovalov. (Photo by K. Duryea)



All of the new Flotilla Staff Officers were sworn in as well. (Photo by Auxiliarist)



Prior to the Change of Watch ceremony, several awards and certificates were handed out to various members of our Flotilla.



Outgoing Commander, Charles Manley awarding Certificates to VS Ansbergs, JeanneMarie McNamara and Alex Shapovalov.



As you can see, a good time was had by all in passing out the

certificates! We caught our new Commander, Joe, smiling!

Members in Action:

Tom Duryea supervised 2 new Culinary Assistants to wrap up their training— Dave Shelly & Andrew Villali from Austin Flotilla. (Photos by T. Duryea)



The Coast Guard were so appreciative of the help in the galley (& the desserts they bake!) that they invited the C.A.s to join them on their 47 ft Patrol Boats!



SEA SCOUTS QUARTERMASTER DUANE PFEIFFER.

Ceremony celebrating Duane Pfeiffer's achievement of Quartermaster was held on December 17 at the USS Lexington. What a tremendous honor for Duane as very few young men achieve this goal! Congratulations Duane!



We raffled off prizes donated by Chili's and members. Dave Shelly and his wife, Tricia are here helping with the raffle. (Photo by K. Duryea)

FOLLOWING THE COW CEREMONY, we feasted on lunch served by our Culinary Assistants, Dave Shelly, Tom Duryea and past Commander, Charles



Manley.



Dr. Ahia Shabaaz Crossed the Bar April 1950 – December 2023.

Ahia Shabaaz worked as a health administrator, nurse practitioner and associate professor. Her career, over the past 30 plus years, included the U.S. Army Nurse Corps (3 years), U.S. Public Health Service (4 years), Africare, University of Texas Medical Branch, Texas Department of Criminal Justice, University of Tennessee, Lamar University and Texas Women's University. She has worked as a volunteer for more than 45 years, including the USCG Auxiliary for 20 years. She was a member of Flotilla 81-6-9, Lake Conroe prior to becoming Vice Flotilla Commander of Flotilla 81-7-4, San Antonio.

As such, she oversaw staff programs, mentored new staff officers, was the editor of the flotilla newsletter and specialized in medical related training for the members. She previously held both Division and District staff officer positions including the State Liaison Officer – Texas. She held qualifications as Coxswain, Career Counselor, Ass't., Materials Officer, Vessel Examiner, and finally, Instructor and Telecommunications Operator. Dr. Shabaaz received multiple service awards including A Presidential Unit Citation, the Auxiliary Commandant Letter of Commendation, and finally

a Coast Guard Unit Commendation. She will be greatly missed by all. Article by Jeanne McNamara, PA1, 81-7-4 (edited by Karen Duryea, PAO, 81 7-4).

4th Annual Coast Guard Marathon & 5K Walk/Run

Coming up April 5-7, 2024! Join the Active Duty Coast Guard in this Marathon, Partial Marathon or 5K Walk/Run through Elizabeth City, NC! It's a virtual 5K yet we can all gather & walk together. A team has been created for anyone who would like to register for it. I hear the t-shirts are really nice! The team is Seasoned Soles, password is BSTW. Here is the link for registration:
<https://runsignup.com/Race/Register/RaceGroup-1388993?raceId=105215>

2024 EVENT CALENDAR

CG Marathon & 5K Walk/Run – April 5-7 (North Carolina or virtual)
Depending on water levels – Ramp Days & Booth Days at Marinas and/or Dealers - TBD
Wear Your Life Jacket at Work Day: May 17
National Safe Boating Week: May 18-24
CG Auxiliary Birthday – June 23 – 85 yrs!
Coast Guard Birthday – August 4 – 234 yrs!
Veterans Day – November 11

Noteworthy:

Program Visits: Bobby Gosschalk, Karen Duryea and Dave Shelly are visiting Marinas in January to distribute literature, develop interest in VE's and boating safety classes. Dave and Karen will be expanding our list of dealers to the New Braunfels area.

Culinary Assistants: In November, Tom Duryea trained two new Culinary Assistants in Port Aransas. He will be returning in February to train another candidate.

Uniforms: Our Flotilla has some new & used uniforms in our storage locker. Feel free to ask to check them out!

Trainings: Training sessions to meet PQS requirements will start being offered at our monthly meetings so members can start making their qualifications! Our 1st meeting of the year will include training for Vessel Examinations. We can all submit our paperwork together!

Emails! Please watch your emails for further events including VEs. We need your help in furthering our mission of boating safety and coming alongside the active-duty Coast Guard!

(All narrative by K. Duryea unless specified; photos by J. McNamara or K. Duryea unless specified.)

Preparing College Students for Public Service in the U.S. Coast Guard Through the Auxiliary University Programs

The U.S. Coast Guard has an ever-increasing need for officer candidates in the twenty-first century. The Auxiliary University Program (AUP), a U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary lead leadership development program established in 2007, prepares college students for future success with a strong emphasis on service in the Coast Guard Auxiliary. Individuals participating in this program can develop into career officers in the U.S. Coast Guard or similar service agency, without the commitment of an ROTC program.

To participate in the AUP, a student must become a member of the Coast Guard Auxiliary and have support from their local flotilla and division. Currently, there are 11 schools across the country that participate in the AUP and more are looking to join. While most schools have ties to the maritime industry, some are public research universities and military colleges that did not have ties with the U.S. Coast Guard prior to the start of the AUP. There are also options for students who are not near a campus with an AUP to enroll in a remote learning program and participate virtually.

The AUP offers multiple levels of training with both Auxiliary and active-duty Coast Guard units as well as local community partners such fire departments and various maritime agencies. AUP programs are

structured around general courses as well as leadership and elective courses that allow for a specialty or concentration in certain fields. In addition to their normal studies, students must also participate in volunteer events with their flotilla and earn a minimum of one Auxiliary qualification and complete an internship either at Coast Guard Sectors, Air Stations, Small Boat Stations, Aids to Navigation units or at an operations or mission support unit.

At present the U.S. Coast Guard is looking to commission 500 new officers each year for the next five years, with less than half of that number coming from The Coast Guard Academy graduates. The Auxiliary University Program is striving to be the predominant source for the remaining 250 plus officer candidates needed annually and offers students the chance to be better prepared for OCS as well as other direct commission opportunities.

To learn more about the AUP and some highlights from the program in the past year, look for an expanded article in the upcoming Auxiliary publications and MyCG. You can also visit <http://www.cgau.edu.us/> for more information. By Auxiliarist Matthew Thompson, Branch Assistant – Publications Support (A-Directorate)

Auxiliary Chaplain Support proves vital for Operation Vigilant Sentry operational crews during mission and journey home

By John Saran, Auxiliary Public Affairs Specialist 1, Deputy Director

A station fast boat approaches a cutter at sea and is met with a Jacob's ladder — a chaplain climbs aboard. A cutter returns to port after a several-week deployment with exhausted crews who are greeted with open arms by a chaplain. These are the first steps of cutter ministry performed by Auxiliary Chaplain Support (ACS) chaplains supporting the Coast Guard during Operation Vigilant Sentry (OVS).

OVS was first approved in 2004, but the Coast Guard has amplified its focus on illegal maritime migration in the Caribbean Sea in the past few

years. At any given time, there are multiple cutters and air assets actively conducting operations to interdict migrants at sea and engage in lifesaving efforts.

The high operation tempo of missions and close contact with migrants can affect the spiritual and mental health of the operational crews and the supporting units ashore. The past year has been particularly dangerous for migrants, making counseling and pastoral support essential for the well-being of personnel experiencing migrant vessel rescues.

The ACS chaplains fill the ministry gap under a supervising active-duty chaplain. Key West, Florida, the southernmost point of the United States, is the home or visiting port for many cutters participating in OVS. When a tasked cutter requests ministry support, the Coast Guard Sector Key West chaplain requests additional chaplain support.

If no active duty or Reserve chaplain is available, an ACS chaplain will deploy. In the past two years, 10 ACS chaplains have answered that call.



Questions? Who Do I Contact?

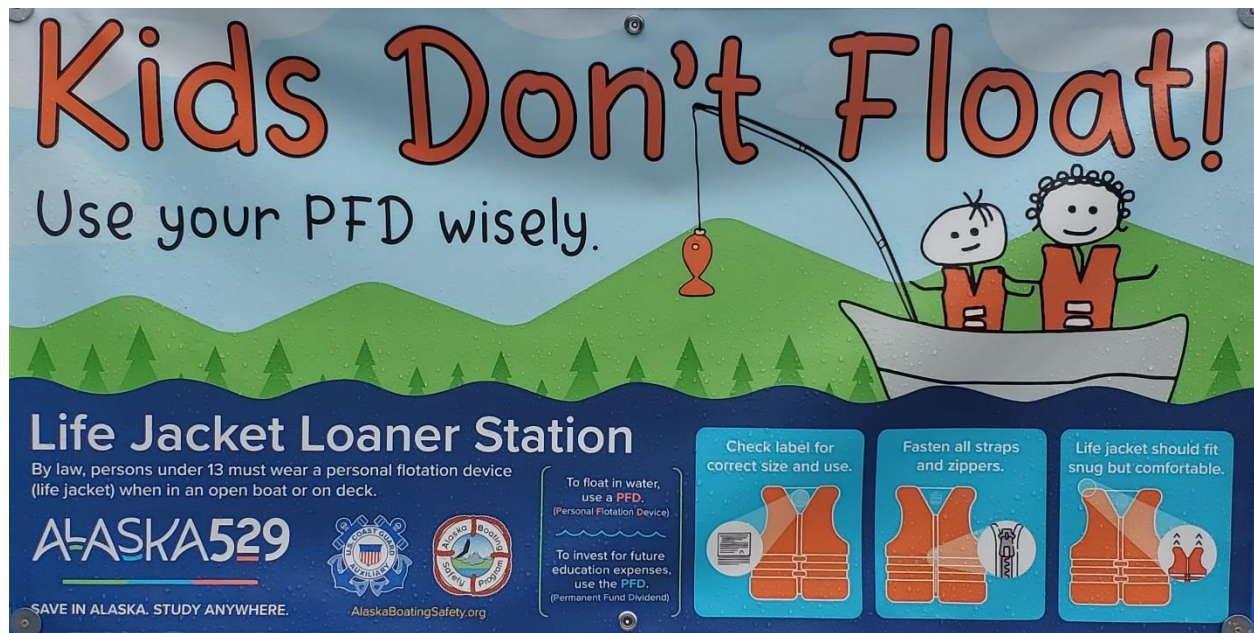
Flotilla Commander (FC), Joe Littlefield,
jmlittlefield13@gmail.com

Flotilla Vice Commander (VFC), Tom Duryea,
tfduryea@yahoo.com

Human Resources (FSO-HR), JeanneMarie C. Mc
Namara, mcnamara.uscgau.edu.us

Public Affairs (FSO-PA), Karen Duryea,
karenduryea14@gmail.com.

During their travels to Alaska, Tom & Karen noted this awesome sign posted by the water.



Boating Safety -The Latest Statistics: Where cause of death was known, 75% of fatal boating accident victims drowned. Of those drowning victims with reported life jacket usage, 85% were not wearing a life jacket. Where instruction was known, 74% of deaths occurred on boats where the operator did not receive boating safety instruction. Only 14% percent of deaths occurred on vessels where the operator had received a nationally-approved boating safety education certificate.

Semper Paratus

Staff Officer Reports Due: no later than the last day of the month!

Flotilla Meeting: 2nd Sat. of Month,
10:30 am, Location: Blue Skies, 5100 John D Ryan
Blvd, San Antonio, 78245

Virtual meetings are no longer available.

Division 7 Meeting: January 13, April 13, at Sector
HQ, Corpus Christi, TX or virtually.

8CR District Meeting: 2 times/year. Locations vary
within the District's 8 states.

District 8 Website:

<http://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=081>

**Follow us online for flotilla date additions, events
and changes.**

**Find us on Facebook, YouTube®
and on our Website:**

Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 7-4 San Antonio
<http://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=081-07-04>

Sea Scouts: <https://seascout.org/southern-region-news/texas-sea-scout-academy>

2024 Diversity Holidays:

<https://www.diversitybestpractices.com>

FEMA Training Online: <https://training.fema.gov>

CGAUX.ORG is the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary
official web portal.

All Photos are taken by members of
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