

Waypoints

DIVISION 15, 8TH WESTERN RIVERS REGION

July, 2022

From the Bridge

James Harrison, Division Commander

COVID has been a change for the Auxiliary. For several years we have been out the water, we can't do VEs, no hamburger cookouts, and no teaching boating education classes. Now, we can't seem to get our motors started again. We have lost the spark that kept us going.

I think to help start us up again, we need to remember why we offered our time to begin with. What was our motivation? What do we get out of the Auxiliary? We know about all those normal things that come with volunteering our time – we feel good about making a difference, personal satisfaction, and we help others.

But are there some other factors we have forgotten?

Being a member of the Auxiliary gives us the power to change lives. Whether you are teaching a boating education class, doing a VE, or working a boat show, you're making a positive change in a person's life. Even more importantly – you could be saving it. We need to remind boaters to wear their PFDs, we need to find problems with a vessel by doing VEs, and we need to teach the public the rules of the road.

By offering your time you have the ability to involve more people. Think of all the awesome things you do. By showing your passion and the enjoyment you have, you encourage more people to be involved. You recruit new members. You help remind others why they joined. You are a positive advertisement for who we are and what we do.

You offer a value to your employer, schools, and your neighborhood. By being an Auxiliary member, you are set apart from others. Your Auxiliary experience shows you are ambitious, care about your community, and willing to put in the work to bring on change. You are valuable! My personal favorite - being a member of the Coast Guard Auxiliary allows you to have new / strong friendships. If you are interested in helping the public then you are going to meet people who care about the same things you do. You give off positive vibes, these rub off and make friendships stronger. The friends I have found in the Auxiliary will be forever, even after I retire.

I challenge each of you to remember why you became a proud member.

Hot Spring UPV Examiner Orientation

Aux PA1 Todd Wilkinson (Photo and Text)

Seven auxiliarists and six active-duty personnel from Marine Safety Detachment - Ft. Smith and U.S. Coast Guard Sector Lower Mississippi River attended an Uninspected Passenger Vessel Academy at the Hot



Springs, Arkansas Auxiliary Station on Lake Hamilton on April 29th. Auxiliarists learned about UPVs as part of a pilot program to increase UPV outreach and examinations in Sector Lower's area of responsibility.

Boating Safety Week Proclamation

Auxiliarists from Division 15 along with representatives from multiple agencies met with Governor Hutchinson on April 20th for the signing of the proclamation of May 22-27 as the 2022 Arkansas Safe Boating Week. Debbie Blackburn, ADSO-SL-AR arranged for the proclamation. William Woodell and Ellen Sullivan of the Central Arkansas Flotilla and Wanda Thorp of the Hot Springs Flotilla also attended the signing.



Debbie Blackburn (left) and Governor Hutchinson show the 2022 Arkansas Safe Boating Week Proclamation. Photo courtesy of the Governor's office

Memorial Day Vessel Safety Checks

On Memorial Day weekend Division 15 and the Memphis Small Boat Station teamed up to keep boating safe on Lake Hamilton in Hot Springs.

While Coast Guard members patrolled the lake, Wanda Thorp, of the Hot Springs Flotilla, was joined by James Harrison, Jason Ortega, William Woodell, and Debbie Blackburn of the Central Arkansas Flotilla to conduct Vessel Safety Checks at one of the Lake's boat launch ramps.



Jason Ortega (left) and James Harrison in front of the VSC sign at Lake Hamilton on Memorial Day Weekend. Photo courtesy of James Harrison

Emergency Management Exercises

New opportunities for participation in Coast Guard emergency management activities continue to open up for Auxiliarists in the 8th Western Rivers. In March Auxiliary members from the entire region, including Blake Sasse of the Central Arkansas Flotilla, participated in a tabletop exercise with Reservists in Memphis. Sasse also participated in an online tabletop exercise in June and is well on his way to obtaining the Public Information Officer 3 qualification. If you are interested in participating in future events your flotilla leadership can help you get started.

VE Day at the Mud Island Marina

Zachary Steiner

On May 28-29, four Auxiliarists met at the Mud Island Marina in Memphis and set up a boating safety information table to educate boaters about safety issues and conducting vessel safety checks. Memphis Flotilla members David Bannon, Steve Chow, Jose Ramirez, and Zachary Steiner participated in the event and appreciated the assistance of marina employees in setting up the table. Over the course of two days a total of 25 vessel safety checks were performed.



Steve Chow, Zachary Steiner, and David Brannon at the boating safety booth at Mud Island. Photo courtesy of Zachary Steiner

Greenwood Air Show

David Brannon

On the morning of June 4, 2022, Auxiliarists Bill Flanigan and Dave Brannon staffed a boating safety information table at the Air Show in Greenwood, Mississippi at the Greenwood-Leflore Airport.

Over 5000 people were expected to attend the event. Sadly, possibly due to the current price of fuel, attendance was less than half of that.

We were also approached by two active duty Coast Guard petty officers, one off of the cutter in Greenville and one off the cutter in Vicksburg. They said that they had no idea that any Auxiliary members were in the area.

But the real thrill was the air show itself! I had never seen a P51 Mustang in action before.

It has a unique sound. The aerobatics were awesome!!

Waypoints is the official quarterly newsletter of Division 15, 8th Western Rivers Region of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

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