
EIGHT



BELLS

Monthly Voice of USCG Auxiliary Flotilla 14-8 Jacksonville, Florida Seventh Coast Guard District

Volume XXXIV No. 3

March 2008



Jesse Stevens, VCP Division 14 with prospective member Chuck Powell and Charles Smith, FSO-PS at the 5 February meeting of Flotilla 14-8. Chuck has submitted his papers for membership.

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UPCOMING MEETINGS & OTHER ACTIVITIES

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| MAR | 01 | About Boating Safely (ABS) Program at Stellar Headquarters - 0730 |
| | 04 | Flotilla Meeting – 1930 – Florida Tackle & Gun Club |
| | 11 | Flotilla Staff Meeting - 1900 |
| | 15 | Vessel Safety Check Blitz – West Marine, Orange Park 0900 - 1500 |
| | 16 | Annual Blessing of the Fleet – Northbank Riverfront - 1400 |
| | 20 | Eight Bells Deadline – Reports due to VFC & FSO-PB |
| APR | 01 | Flotilla Meeting – 1930 – Florida Tackle & Gun Club |
| | 08 | Flotilla Staff Meeting - 1900 |
| | 12 | Vessel Safety Check Blitz – Goodby’s Creek & FT&GC 0900 - 1500 |
| | 19 | About Boating Safely (ABS) Program at Stellar Headquarters - 0730 |
| | 18-20 | Jacksonville International Boat Show – Metropolitan Park |
| | 26 | Division Board Meeting - 0900 & General Meeting – 1030 – Stellar Bldg |
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FROM THE FLOTILLA COMMANDER



With surface water temperatures hovering at a level requiring the use of a Mustang Survival Suit, February provided opportunities to complete the required indoor activities to ensure smooth sailing throughout the year. Flotilla 14-8 was well represented at the Prime Osborne Center “Boat-a-Rama” show. Thanks to all the members who gave their time and expertise to share the duties at the Auxiliary booth.

The Recreational Boating Committee collaborated with that creative couple, Chrystal Wickline and Rusty Gardner, to produce a Boating Events Brochure listing a schedule of 14-8’s Vessel Safety Check blitzes and “About Boating Safely” (ABS) programs. It is a double-sided, tri-fold, full-color brochure that also features public boating events throughout Jacksonville. Staff officers supported the effort by folding over 500 copies of the brochure at the February 19th Staff Officers meeting. The staff officers were also able to formulate a “Telephone Tree” for the flotilla so that membership can be informed in the event of emergencies.

The financial records have been transferred and new accounts have been created under the scrutiny of Bob Strong, FSO-FN. As this report is filed, Bob is working with the budget committee to project this year’s receipts and expenditures. A formal report to the membership will be the focus of the March flotilla meeting.

The Flotilla Commander and Ralph Little, Vice-Commander, visited the HITRON Communication Center at Cecil Field with Steve Bernstein and his wife Katey who were visiting Jacksonville from Davenport, Iowa. Ralph is a watchstander at HITRON and was able to give a comprehensive tour of the facilities.

Congratulations are in order to the 8 members who completed the Vessel Examiner Training Class. They will have an opportunity to utilize their skills and obtain the required supervised Vessel Safety Checks when 14-8 has its first VSC Blitz on Saturday, March 15th.

Jack Holler, Flotilla Commander

A MESSAGE FROM THE VFC



I'm encouraged by efforts in Public Affairs, Program Visitor/Vessel Examiner, Finance, Member Training, Public Education, Personnel Services and the Secretary this past month. These and other officers also toil in our behalf. To reinforce the message sent to all non-FSOs this past month, we remain interested and hopeful that many members can hook up with one or more FSOs to provide them assistance on either a steady or as-needed basis. Ideally, we'd like all FSOs to have someone to assist them. While all our tasks aren't likable, they aren't onerous, and hopefully you'll find a function you want to do. If you just know you want to do something, but don't know what, email or call me and we'll work something out.

I had the good fortune of entertaining Steve and Katey Bernstein, visiting Auxiliarists from Iowa, whom I featured in an article in the Winter 2007 Navigator. Along with your FC and our wives, we were able to show them the USCG Helicopter Interdiction Squadron (HITRON) at Cecil Field and stroll along the South Riverwalk during their brief visit to Jacksonville. You can read more about their visit on page 5.

Ralph Little, Flotilla Vice Commander

STAFF REPORTS

INFORMATION SERVICES:

All members should have received the Annual Member Report via email back in January. I need you to respond to it, if you have not already done so. This is to verify that you are still at the email address of record and all personal information is correct. This task is completed at the beginning of the year to have a baseline of how to get in contact with you in case the Auxiliary needs to; especially during our Hurricane test of the phone tree which occurs on the first of June. You may have not received it if you changed email addresses during the year and did not notify anyone of the change.

Fred Cooke, FSO-IS

MEMBER TRAINING:

During January, eight members of our flotilla completed the Vessel Examiners training given by Instructor, Bob Strong. Rusty Gardner challenged and passed this examination while still attending the training – good job, Rusty. He also received his Program Visitor certification at the February meeting.

For those of you who are interested in the Coxswain/Boat Crew program, you are probably already aware that the Seamanship Manual, at over 800 pages, is available online and on disc. However, printing the manual can be a challenge and the cost can be substantial. Good news - the publisher, McGraw Hill, has teamed with the USCG and published a 480 page paperback version of our seamanship manual that is nearly a duplicate of the USCG COMDTINST M16114.5.B. Flotilla 14-8 will obtain a copy of this paperback, review its contents, and if acceptable, obtain several copies to have on hand for our membership – let me know if you are interested in a copy of this paperback so that we have a good count if and when we order additional copies.

The Auxiliary Procedures Manual is a wealth of information on the details of the administrative processes of the Auxiliary and covers topics such as Training, Reimbursement, Uniforms, Recognition, Protocol, and many other useful topics. Members can glean important and useful information that can be used daily as an Auxiliarist by becoming familiar with the contents of this manual. Flotilla 14-8 is planning an Administrative Procedures Course (APC) for all members on this manual – it is not solely for the purpose of seeking elected office – it will greatly help our flotilla if we have a good turnout for this training. Details are not finalized as yet, but preliminary plans are that the course training would be held at the centrally located Stellar Building, and on weekday evenings. Please support this endeavor and watch for further details.

Remember we all “learn” when we attend our flotilla meetings, division meetings, boat shows, and other community events. Try sitting in at one of the public boating classes – or go along on vessel examination outings - perhaps, you’d like to become part of the core purpose of the Auxiliary by being an instructor or examiner in boating safety.

Claire Bailey, FSO-MT

PERSONNEL SERVICES:

The following are published recruiting guidelines for the coming year.

1. Boaters, (preferably with potential surface/air patrol facilities) who want to be qualified as crew/coxswain or air crew.
2. Those interested in radio communications and watch standing.
3. Those interested in web page construction and operation, or interested in data base input and management.
4. Those interested in writing, photography, editing and publishing a newsletter, locally or divisionally.
5. Those interested in recruiting and organizing for new member orientation.

Remember, these are our top 5 priorities but not to the exclusion of promising applicants who wish to participate in other programs. I promise to follow up on all leads in a timely manner.

Charles Smith, FSO-PS, 541-1660

PUBLICATIONS:

It is a pleasure working with such dedicated and enthusiastic Officers and Staff. Thanks to all for your contributions to this newsletter.

Carolyn Strong, FSO-PB

MATERIALS:

The District store is scheduled to move from its present location to the Clearwater Coast Guard Air Station. The Coast Guard Auxiliary has been provided rent and insurance free for over 2,000 square feet of space in a building outside of the air station's main gate. No move date has been determined as yet, therefore anyone desiring to make a purchase should do so immediately. Hopefully we will get a 2-3 week notice before the closure which will be for a period of approximately 2 weeks.

Bob Flaige, FSO-MA

MARINE SAFETY:

The mission of the Marine Safety Program is to support the marine safety and environmental protection programs of the United States Coast Guard and to train and support members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary who join us in this effort.

These are some of the things that we can do. What we actually do depends on the priorities of our local USCG:

- ▶ Conduct Maritime Observation Missions (MOMs) to protect the recreational boating public and the waterways environment.
- ▶ Educate boaters and the general public on clean boating practices, responsible environmental practices in marinas, and protection of coastal and marine ecosystems.
- ▶ Conduct voluntary dockside examinations of commercial fishing vessels to insure that boats are properly equipped and crews properly prepared to venture out in this most dangerous of occupations.
- ▶ Prepare emergency response plans and train Auxiliary members to effectively support emergency mobilization of the Coast Guard.
- ▶ Augment the staffing of Coast Guard Regional Examination Centers and conduct remote testing of applicants for merchant mariner licenses.
- ▶ Conduct field sampling, prevention and public education programs designed to mitigate the spread of aquatic nuisance species.
- ▶ Conduct abandoned vessel surveys and bridge inspections and promote public education and awareness of waterways conservation and management.
- ▶ Educate and communicate with Coast Guard Auxiliary members about opportunities for service in marine safety and environmental protection missions of the Coast Guard.

More on the specific efforts of other flotillas in Division 14 will appear in next month's newsletter.

Merrill Varn, FSO-MS

PUBLIC AFFAIRS:

We have publicized in The Mandarin Newsline our up-coming USCG Auxiliary events. We also have available an informational/advertisement flyer for some of the events throughout the year which does include exciting learning opportunities for the public.

We will have flyers available this week-end at different locations/marina's to publicize the "About Boating Safely" (ABS) program coming up. The Fleming Island Messenger will also have ABS program details.

Debbie Inlow, FSO-PA

PUBLIC EDUCATION:

Flotilla 14-8 will be offering the first of five "About Boating Safely" programs to be offered this year on March 1st. We have a great cadre of instructors lined up and the class should be informative and fun. Come one come all. Currently we have a low enrollment so gather up all your unschooled friends and sign 'em up.

Neely Inlow, FSO-PE

PROGRAM VISITOR / VESSEL EXAMINER:

The upcoming event for Vessel Examiners (VEs) will take place on March 15th at the West Marine on Blanding Blvd. in Orange Park. Posters are already in place and the management is excited about our presence at the store. The event will be held from 9:00am to 3:00pm.

At our next meeting, I will have a sign up sheet for those interested in volunteering. Also, even if you are not a VE, please feel free to participate. We will have a table near the entrance in order to hand out material to customers. If weather is questionable, please call my cell phone (904-866-6389) for information.

Continued on page 5...

Other dates for Vessel Safety Checks have been confirmed for 2008. They are as follows:

March 15	West Marine in Orange Park
April 12	Goodby's Greek and the Florida Tackle and Gun Club
May 10	NAS Jacksonville
May 17	Doctors Lake Marina
May 17	Big Boy Toys
June 22	Ortega Farms Boat Ramp
July 13	Holiday Marina in Mandarin

The Boating Events brochure has been completed and is now ready to be distributed. I will bring copies to the next flotilla meeting. These brochures are great handouts at boating events, for RBS visitors, at vessel checks and even at boat ramps. Please let me know if you need an electronic copy and I will be glad to send one to you.

Rusty Gardner, FSO-PV/VE

FINANCE:

As the new Flotilla Staff Officer for Finance, I finally received the flotilla financial records in February 2008. It's disturbing to see we have several members who did not pay their dues for 2008. These dues were collected in 2007. As of 1 January 2008 the flotilla was obligated to pay dues to Division 14 for all members on the roster as of that date. I am contacting each member at this time and if the dues have not been received within the next thirty days the FC will begin disenrollment procedures. If you suddenly realized you are one of these members, please mail your check to me today made out to "U.S.COAST GUARD AUXILIARY 14-8". If you no longer wish to be a member, please contact Jack Holler, FC for instructions on how to disenroll. Thank you.

Bob Strong, FSO-FN

RIVERS OF FELLOWSHIP CONTINUE

Visit of Iowa Auxiliarists – by Ralph Little, VFC

On Saturday, February 9th we were fortunate to have Steve and Katey Bernstein stop by for a visit during their short break from Iowa's winter weather. They are the principal subjects introduced in my Winter 2007 Navigator article, originally called "Rivers of Fellowship", covering my own visit to their unit in Davenport, Iowa. They are now the DCP and VCP, respectively, of Division 9, District 8 Western Region and are both PWC qualified. Since their travel had been delayed by bad weather, we only had some hours to meet, but I think we made the best of it. Along with Jack Holler, FC and accompanied by our wives, Kathy and Jo Ann, the six of us took off for Cecil Field to visit the Helicopter Tactical Interdiction Squadron (HITRON). CMDR Dan Kenny, HITRON Operations Officer had previously provided permission and I proceeded to act as tour guide

around the unit's hangar, flightline and one of their training boats to show them where some of 14-8's members support the active component.

Following HITRON, we all took in a good lunch at River City Brewing Company, allowing our guests to eat outside for their first time in months. As it turns out, the Bernsteins originated from New York City, which presented considerable discussions with the Staten Island Hollers. Our guests then had to move on to a scheduled function in Boca Raton. Showing their great commitment to the Auxiliary, they even left Florida early to attend a rescheduled District 8WR meeting in St. Louis, Missouri.



Katie and Steve Bernstein - September 2006 at Davenport, Iowa



United States Coast Guard Auxiliary
America's Volunteer LifesaversSM

FLOTILLA 14-8
GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING
Tuesday 04 March 2008 beginning at 1930
FLORIDA TACKLE AND GUN CLUB
9010 San Jose Blvd

“ABOUT BOATING SAFELY” PROGRAM
Saturday 01 March 2008 at Stellar Building
0730 - 1700

VESSEL SAFETY CHECK BLITZ
Saturday 15 March 2008
0900 - 1500
West Marine on Blanding – Orange Park



8 IS GREAT !

EIGHT BELLS is published at no expense to the government. Cost of its publication is borne by the dues paying members of Flotilla 14-8 of the 7th District U.S. Coast Guard.

PRIVACY ACT: Telephone numbers and addresses of members are protected by the Privacy Act of 1974. As a matter of policy, rosters of names, addresses and telephone numbers shall not be made available to the general public or any outside organization.