

---

---

# EIGHT



# BELLS

---

---

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

Volume XXXVI No. 3

March 2010

---

FLOTILLA COMMANDER  
FLOTILLA VICE COMMANDER  
PUBLICATIONS OFFICER

jblomgren1408@bellsouth.net  
nthaggard@newdimension.net  
cgstrong@comcast.net

Jeffrey A. Blomgren  
Neill A. Thaggard, IV  
Carolyn G. Strong

---

## Whit Vick's Facility *CARLIE*



*Whit Vick, Coxswain along with his crew Neill Thaggard and Cris Vonderheide checked Private Aids to Navigation (PATONS) on a training patrol 17 January 2010 (Neill on board in photo) Photo by Whit Vick, FSO-OP*



United States Coast Guard Auxiliary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

**America's  
Volunteer  
Guardians**  
Since 1939

---

---

## FROM YOUR FLOTILLA COMMANDER



### Change and Challenge

Anyone who has attended a boat show recently or talked to anyone connected with boating will tell you that we are in a challenging environment. As volunteers we have been given a mission that is increasingly more demanding in terms of training and in providing a quality on the water presence as well as the Public Education (PE), Vessel Examinations (VE) and follow-up that significantly relieve our Gold Side to permit them to fill their mission requirements. In the face of declining boat ownership and economic and budgetary restrictions we have a significant challenge before us, but there is a bright side.

More people today are interested in becoming involved in the Auxiliary. There is a spirit of patriotism that we have not seen for some time. People want to help their country and they are seeking us out to see what it is they can offer. This spirit is a definite advantage to us. Our part in this enthusiasm is to keep people interested and involved until the economy is such that we can once again put boats in the water in the numbers needed to fulfill the mission.

The next challenge is to fast track those interested in becoming crew. If our economy takes two years to recover then we should have our crew members qualified and ready and our coxswain list expanded enough to handle the requirements. There are efforts now being made to provide regular crew training to members. Let's focus on those opportunities and get people qualified. In the meantime let's get them into Bob Strong's Public Education process and the Vessel Examination and Program Visitation areas where the new members have an opportunity to see immediate results for their efforts.

I deeply appreciate the efforts that Whit Vick, Cris Vonderheide and Bob Funk have made to provide 14-8 with an on the water presence but they need help. Neill Thaggard is committed to the process of crew and coxswain in 2010 and Charles Smith has accepted the challenge of **Ten in Ten**.

We will accomplish this goal, with your help.

Jeff Blomgren, FC 14-8

---

---

## STAFF REPORTS

### OPERATIONS – WHIT VICK, FSO-OP



Operations continues what could be called a winter hibernation. Our scheduled patrol on 6 February ---which was to be a towing exercise at Mayport---was cancelled due to high winds and small craft advisory. Also, water temps have been hovering around 50 degrees F, below which we cannot patrol without a waiver from station. I measured a water temp in the Mackay River at St. Simons GA of 46 degrees on Valentine's Day.

Weather and water temps should be improving as we approach spring. I look forward to more operations activity then.

Whit Vick, FSO-OP

### MEMBER TRAINING – JEFF BLOMGREN, FSO-MT



Our February meeting was an opportunity to accomplish some required training for our membership. The annual Sexual Harassment Prevention (SHP) program was presented to our members and guests that included a member from another division vacationing in our area. We will be scheduling another session in an upcoming Saturday where we will invite other flotillas to bring members who may need this training. We may try for a morning session of SHP and follow that with a Team Coordination Training (TCT) refresher. Jack Holler and Jeff Blomgren will be discussing this.

At our March meeting Neill Thaggard will present a training program on the new 7029 procedures. In April we will have a presentation by Chuck Farmer on ATON recognition and reporting.

Jeff Blomgren, FSO-MT

**PUBLIC EDUCATION – BOB STRONG, FSO-PE**



Our Monday evening Boating Safely program got off to a good start on 15 February with ten participants. We had 17 pre-registered but only 10 shows. Four left messages on my home phone that they would join us in the weeks to come. I'm still trying to contact the other four who didn't show or call.

All current and would be Instructors need to contact me if you are interested in helping teach this program. There is no reason why Paul Burns and I should have all the fun.

I will host a Boating Safety seminar in the West Marine store at the St. Johns Town Center, beginning at 1900 on 11 March. I plan to talk about our Monday evening program, show Rusty's Life Jacket and Digital Selective Calling (DSC) radio videos and talk about our Vessel Safety Check program. Please call me for uniform information if you would like to help.

Bob Strong, FSO-PE

---

**COMMUNICATION SERVICES – PAUL BURNS, FSO-CS**



**Protecting Your Computer Against A New Wave Of Malicious Software Attacks**

Since the first of February, I have had a record number of computers come in my shop with the same virus infection. This particular infection looks like a computer security message and easily dupes the computer user into installing a phony anti-virus program which holds the computer hostage until the user pays to repair non-existent problems. I suspect that this computer infection is transmitted thru infected Adobe PDF files on Windows XP. Since the Auxiliary uses these files and the Adobe Reader program extensively, it is important that you know how to protect your computer from this infection.

1. Make sure that your Windows program is up to date. Windows XP has a security feature called "Automatic Updates" This should be turned on, and you should always allow Windows Updates to install when you receive requests that you install them.
2. You should have the latest version of Adobe Reader installed on your computer. The latest version is Adobe Reader 9.3. This is easily downloaded and installed from [www.Adobe.com](http://www.Adobe.com)
3. JAVA is a program widely used to deliver internet content to your computer this needs to be up to date as well. If your computer asks you to update JAVA allow it to do that update. You can manually update JAVA from the Windows XP "Control Panel" under the JAVA icon.
4. Make sure that you have a properly working Anti-Virus Program and that it updates itself automatically. Free Anti-Virus programs are available at [www.download.com](http://www.download.com). I recommend brands AVG, Avast, and Avira. All of these offer free virus protection without slowing down your computer's operation. (Make sure you install the "free" version when choosing one of these programs)

I have put together a page on the flotilla website for Computer and Internet Security Information, <http://a0701408.uscgaux.info/pages/14-8computersecurity.htm>. You will find more information to help you keep your computer running securely as well as more specific information about the virus threat mentioned in this article. You can find a link to it on the Flotilla Members' homepage.

Paul Burns, FSO-CS

---

**MATERIALS – BOB FLAIGE, FSO-MA**



There is a small supply of USCG Auxiliary items ( Blue ensigns, past elected officer, hat and collar devices, belt buckles, etc ) that will be available for sale at the next flotilla meeting.

Bob Flaige, FSO-MA

---



**HUMAN RESOURCES – CHARLES SMITH, FSO-HR**



Two initial interviews were conducted this month and one application for membership has been submitted.

The following is a repeat of my first input to Eight Bells as a Flotilla Staff Officer. I believe it is still pertinent today.

"To begin my tour in this position I'm going to ask for the assistance of all flotilla members in the area of recruitment. I'm sure each of us knows someone, friend, relative or neighbor who has an interest in boating or is looking for some way to "give back" to the community. As we know, you don't have to own a boat or be physically capable of serving as a crew member to contribute in, or to, our organization. Feel free to give my name, phone number, or e-mail address to potential members and I will arrange the interviews.

I would also suggest that each FSO recruit and mentor a present member to serve as their assistant for the coming year. This will not only provide members an insight into CGAUX activities but provide a contact when the FSO is out-of-pocket. Who knows, assistants may have so much fun they will want to relieve you of your position next year, allowing you to serve in another capacity."

Charles Smith, FSO-HR

**FLOTILLA 14-8 PHOTO ALBUM**



**Neill Thaggard and Cris Vonderheide aboard Whit Vick's vessel CARLEY on PATON patrol 17 January**  
Photo by Whit Vick, FSO-OP



**Charles Trippe received a Coast Guard Achievement Award for his Performance as Operations Duty Officer at CG HITRON in 2009**



**Jeff Blomgren gave an Appreciation Award from the flotilla to Charlie Smith at the February meeting, for outstanding performance as Flotilla Staff Officer – Personnel Services in 2009**



**Jack Holler received a Sustained Auxiliary Service Award from Jeff Blomgren, FC**

---

---

**FLOTILLA MEETING 2 FEBRUARY 2010**

---

---



**Jeff Blomgren, FC congratulated Bob Strong On 45 Years of Service to the USCG Auxiliary at the February Flotilla Meeting. Bob has been an active member of Flotilla 14-8 since 1978, after transferring his membership from Virginia.**



**Carolyn surprised Bob with a cake to commemorate his 45 years as a member**

*Pictures contributed by Carolyn Strong, FSO-PB*

---

---

THE 63RD ANNUAL  
**JACKSONVILLE  
BOAT MARINE SHOW**

PRIME OSBORN CONVENTION CENTER  
FEBRUARY 5 - 7



**Bill Sekeres, 14-2; Marc Lang, 14-4; Kathleen Fisk and Ron Sliter, 14-9 and Bob Strong, 14-8 at the Division 14 USCG Auxiliary booth at the boat show**



**Marc Lang helps a child find a life jacket that fits. Marc and other Auxiliary members were giving them free to children who visited our booth at the boat show.**

---

---



**Introducing  
Sector Jacksonville  
Commander  
Andy Blomme Captain  
U. S. COAST GUARD**

Captain Andy Blomme reports to Sector Jacksonville having recently completed a three-year assignment as Military Assistant to the Secretary of Homeland Security. In this position Captain Blomme was honored to serve both Secretary Michael Chertoff and Secretary Janet Napolitano and traveled throughout the United States and around the world in fulfilling his duties.

Previous command tours have included the Coast Guard Cutter DILIGENCE, a 210' medium endurance cutter homeported in Wilmington, NC, Cutter NANTUCKET, a 110' patrol boat homeported in Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico and Key West, FL and Cutter POINT HURON, an 82' patrol boat homeported in Little Creek, VA. Captain Blomme rounded out his nearly twelve years of sea duty with tours aboard Cutter GALLATIN in Governors Island, NY and Cutter CHASE in San Diego, CA. Additional operational tours included three years as a controller in the Coast Guard's Fifth District Command Center in Portsmouth, VA and three years as the Operations Officer at Coast Guard Group Miami.

A 1985 graduate of the US Coast Guard Academy and a 2001 graduate of the U. S. Army Command and General Staff College, Captain Blomme holds Masters degrees from Central Michigan University and the Marine Corps War College. His military awards include the Meritorious Service Medal (3 awards), Coast Guard Commendation Medal (5 awards), the Coast Guard Achievement Medal and the Commandant's Letter of Commendation (2 awards).

Captain Blomme is married to Peg Blomme, a Captain in the Coast Guard Reserve, and they have two sons. Alex will be a freshman at the University of North Carolina this fall and Matthew will be entering seventh grade.

---

Sector Jacksonville was established on August 16, 2005 from the reorganization and consolidation of Group Mayport, Base Mayport. Sector Jacksonville is located on six acres of land adjacent Naval Station Mayport, along the St. Johns River in Mayport, FL. The mission of Sector Jacksonville is to provide unified command and control for accomplishing Coast Guard mission objectives. Sectors provide strategically guided, goal focused, and high performance service delivery across the full range of Coast Guard missions.

---



# NATIONAL SAFE BOATING WEEK MAY 22 - 28



## OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND

By Harriet Howard, Special Assistant for NSBW

Walmart, K-Mart, Ace Hardware, West Marine, Bass Pro Shops, are just some of the retail stores that have given our PA Officers space for their boating safety displays for National Safe Boating Week. With the 2010 campaign ahead of us, let's plan to use these stores as opportunities to meet the boating public and "sell" them on safe boating practices. Now is the time to contact the managers of these establishments and secure a spot during NSBW. Some of these stores may allow us to use a part of their parking lot to perform VSCs.

Other opportunities abound to reach the boating public, via the media. Download the statistics from the National Safe Boating Council's website, [www.safeboatingcampaign.com](http://www.safeboatingcampaign.com) to list boating accidents and fatalities for your press releases. Editors love statistics. Also, invite the TV and news media to attend your special NSBW events. Life jacket demonstrations and on-the-water rescues make great action footage for television broadcasts.

Look for the free and paid resources available from the campaign site in March. Such items as "Wear It!" stickers, decals and posters are especially favored by our younger boaters. For additional resources, download the Auxiliary Material Supply Center Catalog at <http://www.uscg.mil/auxiliary/publications/misc/DCAT.pdf>. Order through your Materials Officer.

Don't forget to post your planned PA exhibits and VSCs on the campaign website for NSBW and even before the big event. Share your great ideas.

[www.safeboatingcampaign.com](http://www.safeboatingcampaign.com)



**United States Coast Guard Auxiliary**  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

**America's  
Volunteer  
Guardians**  
Since 1939

## **FLOTILLA 14-8 REGULAR MEETING**

**Tuesday 2 March 2010**

**Training Topic: New Form 7029 Procedures**

**FLORIDA TACKLE & GUN CLUB**

**9010 San Jose Blvd, Jacksonville**

~~~ ~~~ ~~~

### **UPCOMING MEETINGS & OTHER ACTIVITIES**

- MAR 02** Flotilla 14-8 Meeting – Florida Tackle & Gun Club – 1930  
**20** ICS 210 Training – Stellar Building – 0800 to 1300  
**20** Eight Bells Deadline: Reports due to FC, FSO-PB and Division SO
- APR 06** Flotilla 14-8 Meeting – Florida Tackle & Gun Club – 1930  
**16–18** Jacksonville International Boat Show – Metro Park  
**20** Eight Bells Deadline: Reports due to FC, FSO-PB and Division SO

**Each Monday evening – *About Boating Safely* Program – 1830 – Stellar Building**



<http://www.jaxboatshow.com/>



## **8 IS GREAT !**

Visit our award winning website at <http://a0701408.uscgaux.info/>

**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.