

THE JETTIES



U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

Vol. 24 Issue 1, A publication of Flotilla 38, 1NR, Newburyport, Mass.

February 2005

FLOTILLA 38 MEMBERS BUSY THIS WINTER Especially the Flotilla Commander



Besides underway time at sea and public education activities, many Flotilla 38 members were busy at the District 1NR Conference and Change of Watch. *(Photo above, left to right)* Rear Admiral David Pekoske, USCG, Commander of the 1st Coast Guard District took time out from change of watch ceremonies to congratulate Charlie Grossimon, Flotilla Commander of 38, on his receipt of the Cutterman's Pin aboard UCCGC RELIANCE. *(More photos inside)*

UPCOMING FLOTILLA MEETINGS

Thursday 3 February 05 at 1830
dinner meeting, Starboard Galley

Thursday 3 March & 7 April
Time 1930 at
the Plum Island Boathouse



United States Coast Guard Auxiliary
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Regularly Scheduled Meetings

Unless noted otherwise below

3rd Friday of the month - District 1NR Board & Staff Meetings.

Last Thursday of the month - DIV 3 Board & Staff Meetings.

FEB

21 Feb President's Day Holiday

MAR

17 Mar St. Patrick's Day

27 Mar Easter

APR

3 Apr Watchstanders Set Your Chronometers
Daylight Savings Time Begins

15 Apr District Board & Staff Meeting
(date changed to coincide w/ conference)

16-17 Apr District Awards & Training Conference
Sheraton Colonial Hotel, Wakefield, Mass.

24 Apr Passover

30 Apr OPS & VE workshops (time & location TBA)

MEMBER TRAINING

As we go to press, the flotilla commanders from the five Division 3 flotillas and the division training officer are developing the 2005 training agenda, it should be finalized at the February division meeting. Some tentative hints:

Boatcrew & Coxswain Training - Shoreside tasks will likely resume in March at CGSTA Merrimack River, on-the-water training will resume in late May.

AUXOP Courses; It appears likely that the AUXOP specialty course on Navigation will be offered by the division this spring, probably a 10-week course.

OPS workshop; the annual operations workshop, which is mandatory for boat crew and coxswain personnel, is being planned for 30 April at the Plum Island Boathouse (final details pending).

VE workshop; is tentatively planned to immediately follow the OPS workshop on the same day and location.

Instructor Workshop; also mandatory for all instructors this year. The course outline will be officially released by national in February, the division public education officer will be coordinating this workshop offering.

NOTE: all workshops will be offered locally by our division but will also be offered at the district conference in April.

UP IN FLAMES

Mat McDonald, FSO-PB 3

While at the January 2005 District 1NR Conference, I had the opportunity to attend a lecture by Michael Higgins, a prominent fire investigator and author of many books on the subject. I have always been aware that fire spreads very rapidly on a vessel; however, I had no idea just how rapid the conflagration could be. Mr. Higgins showed a videotape of a demonstration burn that he had done on a vessel that was damaged in transit and donated by the manufacturer for the demonstration. The vessel was about 30 feet long and when the fire first started, it appeared that you could still escape or control the fire. This proved to be a misconception; it was obvious that in a real emergency there would have been bodily injury or death.

Within fifteen seconds of the fire starting, escape would have been difficult and within forty-five seconds escape would be just about impossible. I now have a new appreciation for why the active-duty Coast Guard practices fire fighting for so many hours and why fire prevention is extremely important. Mr. Higgins said, that if you cannot get a vessel fire under control in a very early stage, your best bet is to abandon ship. This is because of the intense heat coupled with toxic fumes from the burning of certain substances within the vessel. Therefore, the primary focus for small vessels must be prevention and we were given several suggestions in that area.

We all know the dangers and proper procedures when fueling our vessel and perhaps this is the only source of fire

danger that comes immediately to mind. However, Mr. Higgins opened our eyes to some of the electrical problems that also cause serious fires. For many smaller vessels, he stated that the shore power cord is the culprit that causes fires. Usage in the marine environment causes the prongs of the cord and the receiving end to build up dirt and salt, which act as a path for electricity to flow and may cause a short circuit resulting in a fire. It is good preventive maintenance to check your shore power cord for wear and to make sure there is no evidence of singe marks or signs of burning on either end.

Routinely clean the ends of your power cord with soapy water, dry completely and ensure that they are making good contact. It is also important to remember to tighten down your power cord when you plug it in, this helps prevent water from getting onto the connections and causing corrosion. It also insures that critical, good solid contact. In addition, if you don't need shore power when you're not aboard your boat, shut it off and remove the power cord.

Mr. Higgins also spoke about the importance of using an appropriate gauge wire (marine grade-corrosion resistant) on the inside of our boats to handle the heavy load of some of today's electronics and lighting products. One more piece of the puzzle that we always emphasize to the public is to have your personal flotation devices readily accessible. Remember, that in the event of fire, it is only a matter of seconds between getting off the vessel or not. The workshop really brought home many common sense concepts that we have heard before but it is always worth reminding ourselves about safety in general and fire safety in particular.

FLOTILLA COMMANDER'S REPORT

Charlie Grossimon, FC 38

It's amazing how fast the holidays come and go. Before we know it, December is a memory and next thing we know we're into January and February. So, here we are.

As the year opened, I was fortunate enough to be on board the USCGC RELIANCE for another training opportunity at sea. This time we took a short jaunt to Little Creek, Virginia. I managed to get some training time in as helmsman/lookout. I am always pleasantly reminded of what a super group of people crew RELIANCE. Throughout my trip, they were always very accommodating, very welcoming, and always ready to help me in my training. Many, many times over, I was reminded by them of how much they appreciate the efforts of Flotilla 38 in our "Adopt-a-Cutter" mission.

When I returned home, it was time for the January District Conference. As always, I found it to be a very useful time. My wife, Deb and I spent our time helping Wayne Cedres, DSO-MA 1NR and one of our flotilla members, with the district store. Its always fun working there because you have the opportunity to meet people from all over the district. They say many hands make light work, and this was the case as we broke down the store at the conclusion of the conference. Other Flotilla 38 members assisting Wayne were Frank Keslof, DCP-3, and Fran Hunt.

Public Education is off to a running start this January, we have 20 students enrolled for the winter class. Dolly Thomas, FSO-PE, can always use help from members of the flotilla in all areas involved in running the class. I know she, and I, would very much appreciate your help on Tuesday evenings.

Jim and Patty Critchlow have decided to step down from their roles as FSO-CC and FSO-MV. Jim and Patty have done a tremendous job in their respective responsibilities and we are thankful for their efforts over the years. Jim experienced some medical problems last year, but we're happy to report he is doing very well and I'm sure we'll be seeing him and Patty at flotilla events.

Flotilla 38 member Jason Esposito, currently on active duty with the US Air Force, has been given a special honor. At the Presidential Inaugural on 20 January, Jason was one of a small group selected to represent the Air Force at one of the Presidential Inaugural Balls. Although he, and his girlfriend, were wearing Air Force uniforms, we know that Jason represented us well. He never fails to mention that he's also a member of Flotilla 38 of the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Congratulations go to Scotty Crocker for passing his AUXCOM qualification. The speed at which Scotty is going, it won't be long before they are pinning an AUXOP device on his shirt.

The Coast Guard Uniform Distribution Center is now processing orders for the Operational Dress Uniform (ODU) for Auxiliarists. Before you rush out and order one for yourself, be aware that as always, your coxswain sets the uniform for the boat. It may be a while before enough people have this uniform to make it a standard uniform for boat crew. My advice is to check with the coxswains you usually go with to determine the practicality of purchasing this uniform.

Although it's the dead of winter, it certainly doesn't mean we have nothing to do. Winter is a good time to prepare for the boating season by taking classes when offered and attending conferences to brush up your skills and helping with Public Education classes. It's a great re-education when you are exposed to the material, even as a classroom aid. It would certainly help us and it would help you to lend us a hand.

In the mean time, drive safely, enjoy the winter. Before we know it, we'll be waiving at each other across the gunnels.



Charlie Grossimon, Flotilla Commander somewhere in the Atlantic aboard the US Coast Guard Cutter RELIANCE. Our FC crewed aboard the cutter for the first leg of its current deployment, from Portsmouth Navy Ship Yard in New Hampshire to Little Creek, Virginia.

FLOTILLA 38 “PHOTO - OPS”



(Top-left) Charlie Grossimon, FC 38 at the Division 3 Change of Watch with his parents, Herb and Nancy Grossimon.

(Above) Entertaining at the DIV 3 Change of Watch was Flotilla 38 member Jim Cate (unofficial staff officer-music/entertainer).



(Photo left) Flotilla 38 members are sworn-in as Division 3 elected officers, *(L to R)* Ron Booth, Vice Captain; Frank Keslof, Division Captain; oath administered by COMO Robert Johnson, District Commodore 1NR.



Flotilla 38 members at the District Conference: Charlie Grossimon, FC; Deb Wilkinson; Wayne Cedres, DSO-MA; Scotty Crocker, SO-PS 3; Ron Booth, VCP 3; Frank Keslof, DCP 3; John McDonald, DSO-SR; Mike Keslof, DSO-PB.

FLOTILLA 38 “PHOTO - OPS”



Flotilla 38 member Fran Hunt floating around in his “Mustang” survival suit at the district conference during boat crew swim qualifications.



(Photo above) Fran Hunt, Scott Crocker, SO-PS 3 and Charlie Pencinger, VFC 38 meet up to compare notes at the conference. Actually Scott was quite busy all weekend doing fingerprints for Auxiliary security clearances. (Do YOU need to see Scott for fingerprinting?)



(Photo at left) Taken by Charlie Grossimon, FC, during his recent deployment on the CG Cutter RELIANCE; passing a Navy warship in Cheapeake Bay.

“ADMINISTRIVIA”

On-Line Testing

There are problems with the system that administers the on-line testing program for the various CG Auxiliary qualifications. You may take the on-line tests and receive a score. However, the results are not being forwarded back to our district to get into your records. Therefore, until the system is fixed, record keeping has to be done the “old fashioned” way. Print out a “HARD COPY” of the message you receive with your test results and get it to Ron Booth, our flotilla training officer. He will make sure it gets to the proper place and into your records.

Security Clearances

The flotillas in our division are due to submit the next batch of security packets in June. If you have not been fingerprinted, please plan on getting this done at any flotilla meeting or at division meetings at the CG Station. You may also call Scott Crocker, the personnel services officer at his office (Lawrence Police Dept.) and make an appointment to have it done: 978-794-5900 ext. 595. Every member (with the exception of those in “retired status”) are subject to the security clearance and fingerprint process.

TIDAL TALES

Frank Keslof, DCP 3

Did you happen to notice the really high tides and overflowing marshes just before Christmas? We did on Plum Island, in fact some people here and at Salisbury Beach had water in their basements. The condition that caused this is somewhat rare. Though it occurred again on January 10th, it won't happen again until March and April of 2007.

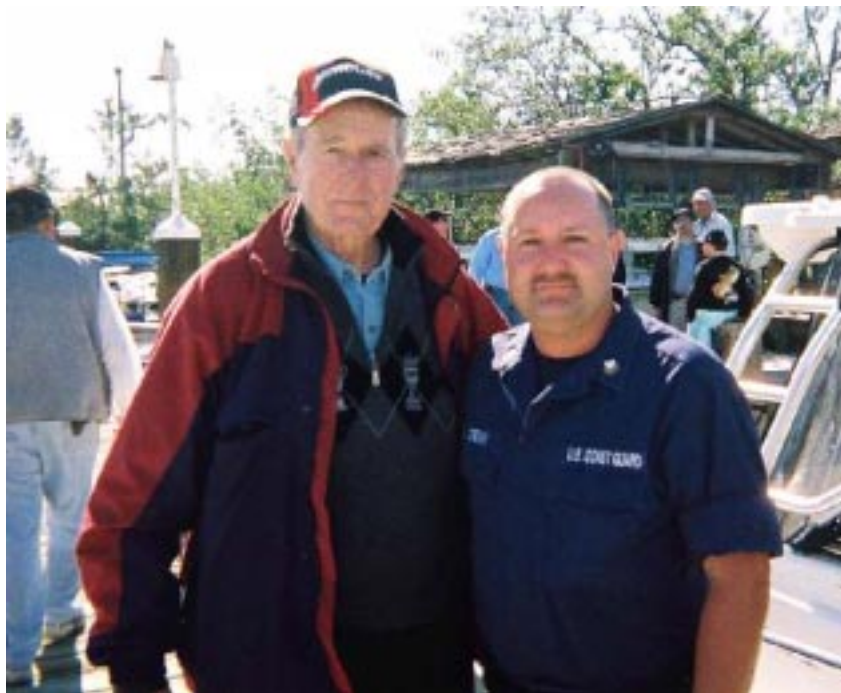
We did have a significant amount of rain in December, but the real reason for the tidal flooding was that the new moon coincided with the moon's perigee (the point when its closest to Earth for the month) causing an unusually strong pull on the planet's oceans.

The moon's gravitational pull is strongest during the new moon because that's when both the sun and the moon are pulling on the earth's oceans from the same direction. When the moon's perigee coincides, we're talking high water. Although the next exact coincidence of this planetary occurrence is two years away, expect some more extra high tides soon. The perigee and new moon will occur within a day or two of each other in February and March.

DOC & HIS FISHING BUDDY

*Photo by US Secret Service
Forwarded by Liza Cronin*

Doc Cronin pictured with President George Bush (that would be George Bush the 41st president as opposed to George Bush the 43rd). Many Flotilla 38 members will remember Kevin “Doc” Cronin who previously served as the ship’s corpsman aboard the US Coast Guard Cutter RELIANCE. Doc also served as the first liaison to our flotilla when we established our adopt-a-cutter relationship with RELIANCE. His current assignment is in Florida, as part of a Coast Guard response team that supports the Secret Service detail guarding the 41st president who is a very avid boater and fisherman.



The Jetties is the official publication of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, Flotilla 38, 1NR, Newburyport, Massachusetts

The Jetties is published by the Flotilla Staff Officer-Publications FL 38-1NR, 90 Kirk Meadow Rd., Chester, VT 01543.

Articles or letters to the editor may be submitted by mail or via e-mail: mcd@vermontel.net.

Members are protected from the dissemination of personal information by the Privacy Act of 1974.

Submission deadline for the next issue is 20 March 2005

Department of Homeland Security
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
US Coast Guard Auxiliary
Flotilla 38 - Division 3 - 1NR

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