



ALERT 11

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SPRING FORWARD

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Cover Photograph: Bellingham, Wash – Flotilla crew members performing the annual PPE “swim” test. US Coast Guard photo by Steve Bell.

Commander's Comments



Ahoy Shipmates,

We are conducting hybrid Flotilla meetings every month. If you can attend in-person, please join us at Station Bellingham (28 Bellwether Way). But if you are unable, remember that you can also join us via the Zoom link that will be

emailed out.

Our Flotilla activities are picking up. Notable events coming soon include:

- ✳ May 3, Opening Day, Squalicum Harbor
- ✳ May 4, Fishermen's Memorial, Blaine
- ✳ May 5-8, 6:30-8:30PM: Boat America sessions via Zoom.
- ✳ May 15: F11 Meeting, CG Station/Zoom (Speaker: /Derelict Vessels)
- ✳ May 17: Sandy Point VSCs
- ✳ May 17-23: National Safe Boating week
- ✳ May 25: Ski2Sea Race Safety Patrol
- ✳ June 5: F11 Staff
- ✳ June 7: Birch Bay Village VSCs

On the membership front, most members have been taking their required annual trainings – we are mostly complete. However, many members are coming due for the Core Training 5-year refreshers. I will publicize a hybrid Core Training Blitz later this year. Stay tuned. If you have other questions about your required classes, be sure and contact me.

Member Training will be covered in more detail on page 11. Special notes include:

- ✳ Instructor, Vessel Examiner, and Program Visitor Workshops are available and can be completed online (but not required)
- ✳ The required Annual Telecommunications Workshop is available. (Note: TCO's is required for members having/operating Radio Facilities)
- ✳ As FC, I will conduct Uniform inspections for active members. Be sure to set it up with me (or show up at a Flotilla Meeting). If not active, I still need to hear from you to enter you as "Uniform Exempt", or in a couple years, your membership will be pulled.

Our last remotely taught 'Boat America' Public Education class is happening soon. Thank you to the instructors who have stepped-up (again) to provide this public service.

It will be a busy year for those in the boat crew program. They will continue with annual tasks as well as planned assignments. Several members need to get out of arrears (REYR) if they want to regain their qualification. For current and REYR Crew, be sure to use the most recent Handbooks (revised January 2023). FYI, I am entering the crew's PPE gear and inspection dates into AuxData2. If you still have gear and do not plan to participate in the program, please turn them in ASAP to me.

As recreational boaters, we need to be ready for transitioning to electronic navigation products this year. More details are in the Navigation Systems section (page 11). Be sure to check it out!

Be sure to check out the newsletter and website calendar to keep apprised of upcoming activities. Review those activities which best suit your reasons for joining the Auxiliary. I hope that you will continue to invest in our Flotilla. Volunteer to take a staff position, support an event or activity. Your participation is valued; your involvement ensures that our Flotilla programs are viable; and you never know when your efforts might save a life!

Semper Paratus ~ Semper Tutus
Always Ready – Always Safe
Pamela Chelgren-Koterba, Flotilla Commander

Flotilla Calendar

May

- 1 FL11 Staff
- 3 Opening Day, B'ham
- 4 Fisherman Memorial (Blaine)
- 5-8 Boat America via Zoom
- 15 FL11 Meeting
- 17 Sandy Pt VSCs
- 17-23 National Safe Boating week
- 25 Ski2Sea Race
- On-water Patrols

June

- 5 FL11 Staff
- 7 BBV VSCs: 7 or 8
- 19 FL11 Meeting
- 26 WA360 Race, Patrol
- 26 Div1 (Zoom)
- On-water Patrols

July

- 3 FL11 Staff
- 25 Joint Towing Practice
- On-water Patrols

August

- 1 Dues Collection commences
- 7 FL11 Staff

- 4 CG Day Picnic
- 16-17 Hydros for Heros
- 28 Div1 (Zoom)

September

- 4 FL11 Staff
- 18 FL11 Meeting
- 26-29 D13 DTRAIN, Clackamas
- 30 Dues Deadline
- On-water Patrols

October

- 2 FL11 Staff
- ? SeaFeast
- 16 FL11 Meeting
- 30 Div1 (Zoom)

November

- 6 FL11 Staff
- 20 FL11 Meeting
- 27 CG Sta. Thanksgiving

December

- 4 FL11 Planning
- 7 Div1 CoW

Please note that some dates are tentative. Please double check closer to the time of the event to confirm.

ACRONYMS

B'ham	Bellingham
CoC	Change of command event
CoW	Change of watch
D13	District 13
DTRAIN	Districtwide training event
FL11	Flotilla 11
?	Placeholder when the exact date is not yet known
PPE	Personal protective equipment
QE	Qualification exam
RSSO	Rescue and survival systems officer
TBD	To be determined

USCG Band Performance

The US Coast Guard Band performed at Western Washington University's Performing Arts Center on Feb 22. The Coast Guard Band were on their centennial tour, and performed at numerous locations across the US.

Captain Adam R. Williamson directed the band, as they performed a mix of wind band favorites, virtuosic solo features, rousing marches, new music by American composers, and patriotic classics.





Bellingham, Wash – US Coast Guard Band performing at WWU. US Coast Guard photos by photo by Mike Hayner.

Flotilla member Ray White also manned a table with information about various programs that the Coast

Guard Auxiliary performs. The active duty side of the Coast Guard also manned a recruiting table next to him.



Bellingham, Wash – Auxiliary information table at USCG Band performance. US Coast Guard photos by photo by Ray White.

Annual PPE Swim

The Flotilla held its annual PPE (personal protective equipment) swim on April 26th. Part of the required activities for boat crew is to test the drysuit for leaks on an annual basis by submerging the suit in water. Despite being called a “swim”, the participants actually just float

in shallow water. The boat crew and coxswains who met at the Bloedel Donovan swimming beach were Leslie Parks, Manny Eusebio and Jeff Shaw. Flotilla Commander Pam C-K was the safety watch.



Bellingham, Wash – Flotilla crew members performing the annual PPE “swim” test. US Coast Guard photos by Steve Bell.

Auxiliary Chaplain Support – Navy Chaplain School

By Lyle Schrag

“It’s hard to imagine that only 45 active duty chaplains can minister to the spiritual needs of a workforce that’s well over 80,000. That’s where the Auxiliary Chaplain Support Program comes in—a group of over 100 dedicated volunteer chaplains who assist throughout the Coast Guard.

“The Auxiliary Chaplain Support (ACS) Program provides additional support to the chaplains when they are stretched thin,” explained ACS Division Chief Dr. Phil Poole. “Our goal with the program is to have zero requests for assistance from a chaplain go unanswered.

ACS chaplains stand in when the active duty chaplain is on leave, [on temporary duty], or just already busy with another duty.”

ACS chaplains perform nearly all chaplain duties, including but not limited to funerals, burials at sea, weddings, baptisms, christenings, change of command ceremonies, and retirement ceremonies.

Currently, there are over 100 auxiliarist chaplains in the ACS program whose combined ministerial experience is well over 1,600 years. The average ACS chaplain has 22 years of ministerial experience.”¹

While an ACS Chaplain’s ministerial experience provides a rich base of training, the responsibilities of an Active Duty US Coast Guard Chaplain are quite unique as a military service. Both the US Coast Guard and the US Marine Corps are served by active duty Navy Chaplains, all of whom undergo rigorous training at the Navy Chaplain School in Newport, Rhode Island. In an initiative to elevate the quality of ACS service, in 2025 four ACS Chaplains were invited to participate in the BLC (Basic Leadership Course) along with the incoming “class” of US Navy Chaplains. In February, one of Bellingham Flotilla’s members and one of the founders of the ACS, Dr. Lyle Schrag, joined the other three ACS Chaplains for the intensive introductory BLC course.

In addition to his local “deckplate” ACS duties supporting the District 13 Chaplain, Dr. Schrag has not only serve in Sector Puget Sound, but has been on three special assignment deployments. Given those experiences, in January 1, 2025, he was appointed to the USCG Auxiliary National Staff as the Branch

Assistant Administration-Deployment with the assigned purpose of developing procedures that would

enable ACS chaplains to respond and serve the increased demand by the US Coast Guard for Chaplain deployments.

¹ As reported by CG writer, Shana Brouder in the July, 2021 issue of MyCG

Flotilla Meetings

The Flotilla held its monthly meetings in February, March, & April. The April meeting featured guest speaker Bridget Trosin from the Sea Grant organization who talked about the invasive species of European green crabs and efforts to contain them. The March meeting featured Pam and Manny talking about advancements in radios, emergency devices, and e-charts for boaters. February's meeting did not feature a guest speaker, but

the fatal sailing boat incident at Sucia Island was discussed. The Flotilla staff officers gave their reports about their programs, a member and staff officer were sworn in, and awards were presented to several members.

April



Bellingham, Wash – Auxiliary Flotilla meeting in April. US Coast Guard photo by Peter Border.

March



Bellingham, Wash – Auxiliary Flotilla meeting in March. US Coast Guard photos by Peter Border.

February



Bellingham, Wash – Auxiliary Flotilla meeting in February. US Coast Guard photos by Peter Border.

Member Training

We have two major training delivery types for members maintaining their qualifications:

Self-administered:

Core Training: You should perform these online on at Auxiliary Classroom (Moodle). Get access via: <https://classroom2.cgaux.org/moodle/>. You might need a new login if you have not visited the site in the last several years. For questions about access, you can contact Pam.

Note: If you have lapsed on any of these courses, you will not be able to participate in your program activities nor receive some Auxiliary awards, ID cards and other benefits. An email sent last Nov/Dec members recently over/due. Also, stated in Commander's Comments, I will be setting up a Core Training Blitz later this year for the members over/due for their 5 year refreshers.

Workshops (optional) – VE, PV, and IT (Instructor) are available on the national Auxiliary websites.

Instructor Led (TCT Refresher, Ops, and TCO Workshops):

Most members requiring these have completed them. If your qualifications require you to take them and you

have not, please contact Pam. You can also refer to the D13 Calendar for sessions, on the home page of the D13 Aux Website. It requires a Member Zone Login (lower left, then the calendar is in the left column, 5th item from the top):

<https://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=130&category=calendar>

Boat Crew Training and Qualification materials: Handbooks updated in January 2023 can be downloaded from the national website. Log in to: <https://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=R-DEPT&category=boat-crew-and-qe-resources>. Members wanting to pursue crew should contact Pam, who will then will work with the Flotilla coxswains to schedule sessions.

The Auxiliary Training Directorate hosts a variety of distance learning courses on the Auxiliary Online Classroom (Moodle). Visit the Training Directorate: <https://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=t-dept> to view and take other member training.

Navigation Systems

We have received our PATON and Bridge assignments for 2025. Planning should be happening now.

Pam is presently teaching a Zoomed AV Workshop (for a couple members from other Divisions pursuing the AV qual). The annual AV Refresher was conducted April 14-16, via Zoom. The recording can be electronically accessed – contact Pam.

USCG Museum

The Coast Guard Museum is located in New London, CT. It is currently undergoing a move from the original building in the Coast Guard Academy campus to a new purpose built facility nearby. The following images are from the current museum. While small in size, the current museum houses a lot of the rich history of the Coast Guard.

All boat crew should be utilizing electronic navigation systems for their charting needs. For any questions or help - contact Pam.

Thanks to all the AVs who are continuing to participate in this direct support mission! It has a direct impact on navigational safety.

It is well worth the effort to visit if you're in the area. You will need ID to enter the base, and a non-enhanced WA drivers license doesn't meet their criteria. Parking is limited, so expect to park on the nearby streets and walk in. Please call ahead to check on times and the construction schedule.





New London, Conn – US Coast Guard Museum. US Coast Guard photos by Mike Hayner



New London, Conn – Computer generated image of the new Coast Guard Museum. Photo by Coast Guard Museum Association.

Flotilla Staff Officers

The following members are your Flotilla Staff Officers.
Please contact them if you have any questions or ideas,
or wish to get involved in a particular type of activity.

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Parting Shot



Seattle, Wash – USCG Cutter Polar Star returning to Seattle after a 285 day deployment. US Coast Guard photo.