



WET GAZETTE

USCG AUXILARY FLOTILLA 11-10

Dunedin, Florida
Seventh Coast Guard District



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Commander's Corner

August 2018

By Sam Walker, FSO-FC

Shipmates, the summer is in full swing. Many of our members will be traveling on vacation. Please be mindful that safety is the cornerstone of training and instruction to the public. So bring your safety with you as you travel on vacation. Do your own pre-mission checklist. Check your vehicle or boat before leaving. Make sure you have all your important documents and emergency needs such as a small first aid kit. Hide a spare key under your vehicle bumper in case a key is lost. Also, it's good to have emergency locations such as hospitals identified along your route. Stop your newspaper and mail so thieves don't have an open invitation into your home. You get the idea. Be safe and have a wonderful summer.



Coming Events

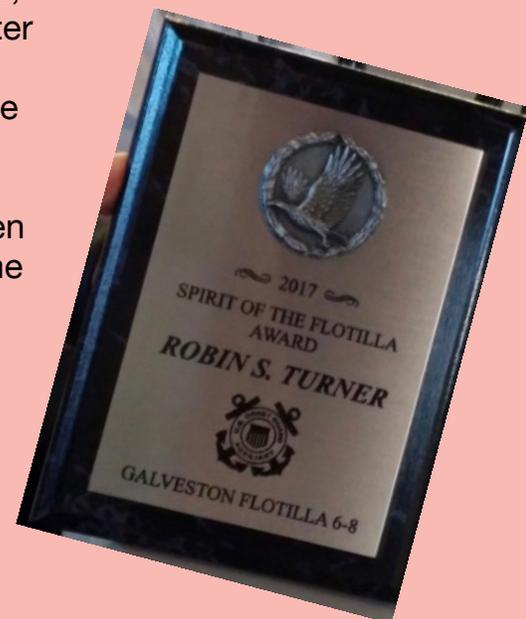
August 2	Flotilla Staff Meeting
August 4-5	Boating Safety Class Dunedin Marina
August 7	Purple Heart Day
August 9	Flotilla Meeting
August 14	Division Night Underway Mission
August 16	AUXAIR Staff Meeting
August 16-19	NACON National Auxiliary Conference Orlando
August 19	Vessel Exam Blitz Home Port Marina
August 25	Auxiliary Leadership Course

Welcome and Congratulations



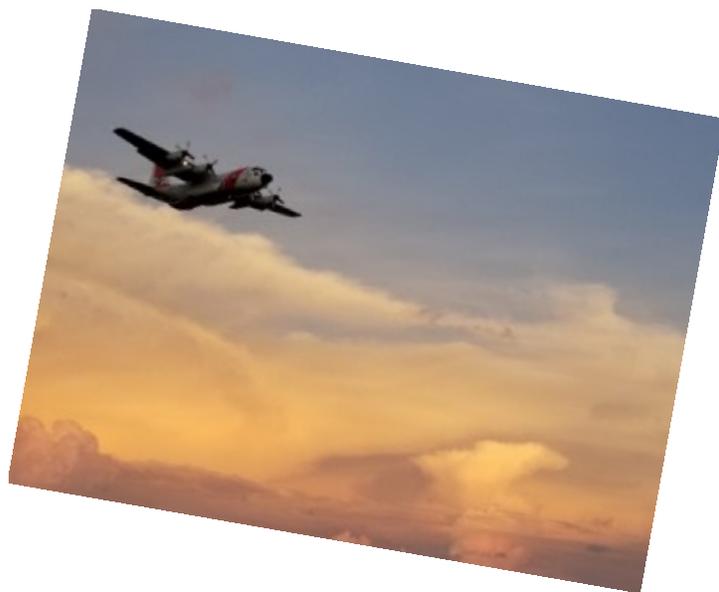
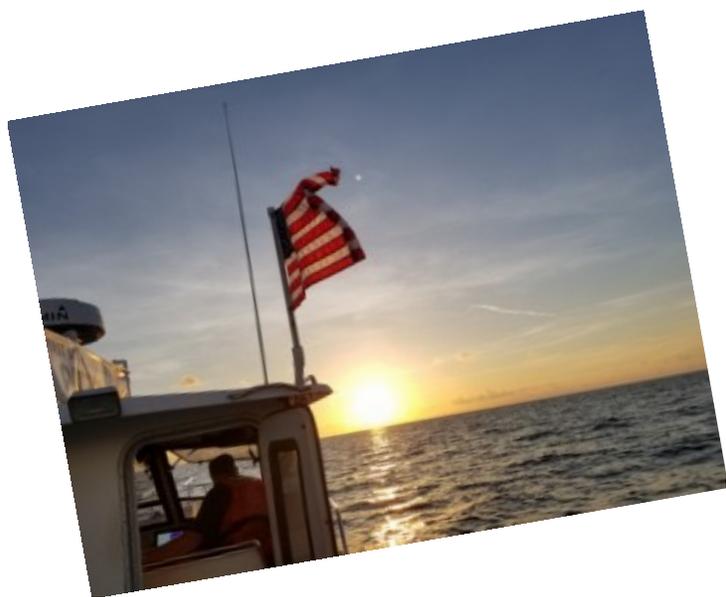
Robin Turner recently transferred from a flotilla in Galveston, Texas, to join us in Flotilla 11-10. Sam Walker, Flotilla Commander, received a letter from James Umberger, Human Resources Officer, from her former flotilla in Galveston. Mr. Umberger said in his letter “The flotilla members think so highly of her that they created this special award to recognize her contributions.” He asked that it be presented to her at our flotilla meeting.

Even though Robin has just recently arrived, she has already taken on the responsibility of Flotilla Diversity Officer, FSO-DV. Welcome Robin. We are very lucky to have you.



C-130 Night Practice

Larry Gilbert took these beautiful photos during a recent night practice mission aboard B4IV with coxswain Harvey Prior. You too can enjoy a scenic sunset on the gulf. Talk to Harvey, our Member Training Officer, about becoming a boat crewmember.



Mass Disaster in Florida????

Nope. Just pictures taken by Karen Miller of the mustang and PFD swim for boat crew trainees at Station Sand Key.



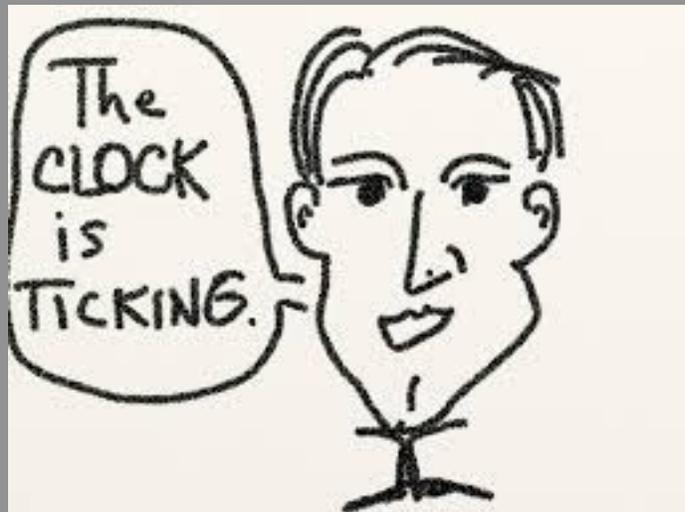
HALFTIME REPORT

By Harvey Prior, FSO-MT

The middle of the calendar year is here. Does the Coast Guard Auxiliary know all that you have done? Have you put all of your Auxiliary hours on the appropriate forms and submitted them? The 7029 form works for most hours but have you filed your forms for all the vessel exams and partner visits you have done?

Now is a good time to review what you have done so far this year and what you need to complete to maintain or increase your certifications. Several members will soon pass the two year mark on CPR and First Aid. One member is going REWK for a workshop that has not been completed. Some members have zero hours or exams completed. We need to get started so we don't end the year a little short and become REYR (failure to meet yearly requirements).

Contact me or the appropriate flotilla staff officer if you need help completing forms or volunteering some hours. If you read your e-mails, you should be filing a 7029 form.



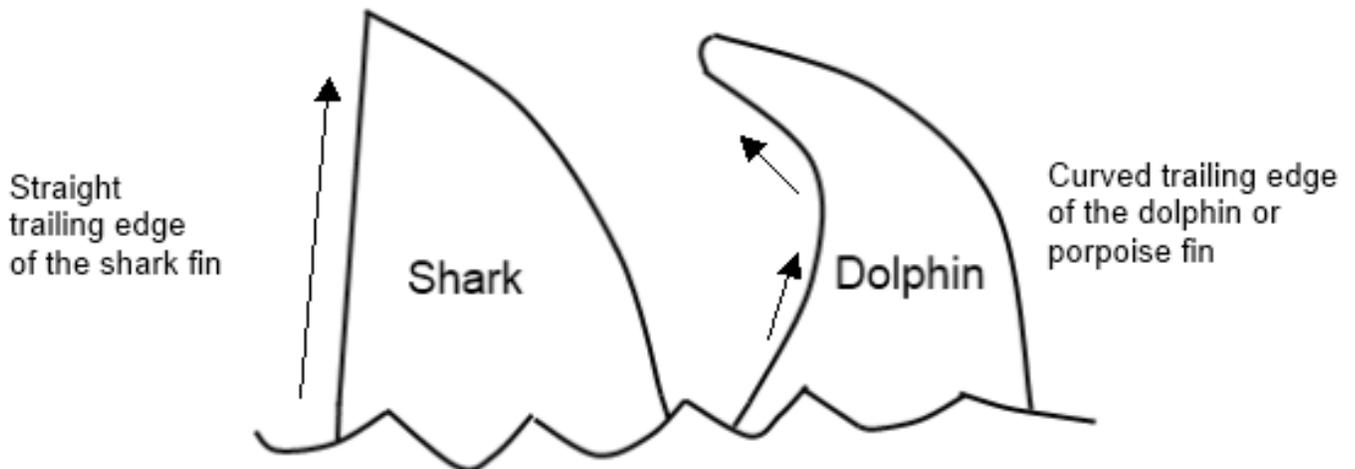
Shark or Dolphin?



Larry Gilbert took this photo while out on the C130 night patrol. He would like to know if this was a dolphin or a shark.

What do you think? If you would like to vote, send your choice to me at jg346811@msn.com and we will announce the results in the next Wet Gazette.

How to tell if a dorsal fin breaking the surface of the water belongs to a shark or a dolphin



Purple Heart Day in Dunedin

Dunedin was designated as our nation's first Purple Heart City on August 3, 2006.



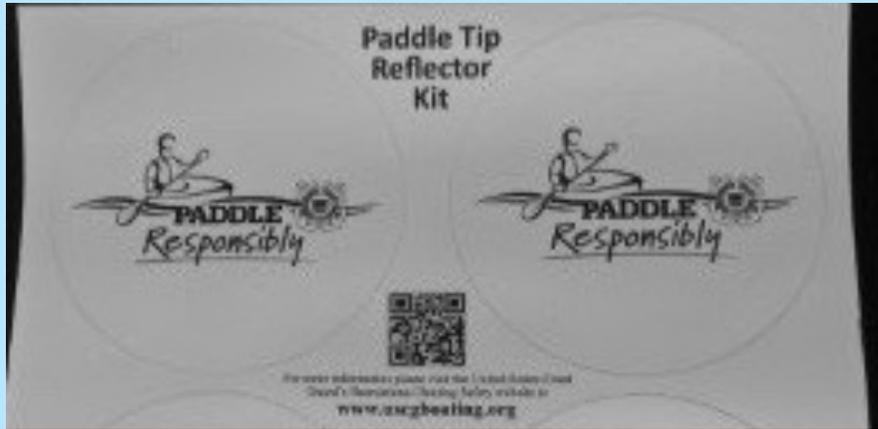
Each year on August 7th, the City of Dunedin presents "Purple Heart Recognition Day" and invites everyone to join in as they honor and pay tribute to all Veterans with special focus on Purple Heart recipients. The event is free to attend and is held at Purple Heart Park, 300 Main Street, Dunedin, Florida.

A monument sits in the center of the park to recognize and pay tribute to those who have earned the military tribute by virtue of their bravery and sacrifice. Commemorative bricks are available for purchase to honor and remember a Purple Heart recipient. Each brick is engraved and becomes part of the Walk of Honor located at the park.

Flotilla 11-10 members who would like to participate are asked to meet at the Dunedin classroom at 1800 in tropical blues and will walk over together at 1830.



New Decal for Paddle Boaters



Vessel Examiners are now using the new Paddle Tip Reflector Kits for paddle boaters. The decals are to be applied to the tips of the paddle blades to create a reflective glint from sunlight increasing visibility to other boaters and search and rescue spotters in an emergency. The checklist is to be applied directly to the vessel and visible to the paddler. The name and phone number will help locate the owner if the vessel is found adrift.

INSTRUCTIONS

Apply circle decals to tips of paddle blades, on both sides, to create reflective glint from sunlight, increasing visibility of vessel to other boaters and search-and-rescue spotters. Apply Safety Checklist directly to vessel, visible to paddler. Allow 48 hours for adhesive to cure. Print name and phone number with permanent marker.

*Created by the Coast Guard Auxiliary Association, Inc.
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Produced under a grant from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.

SAFETY CHECKLIST

- WEAR A LIFE JACKET
- WEAR AN ACTIVITY APPROPRIATE LEASH ON STAND UP PADDLEBOARD
- PADDLE SOBER AND SMART
- STAY CLEAR OF ALL OTHER VESSELS
- DRESS FOR IMMERSION, NOT AIR TEMPERATURE
- CHECK THE WEATHER
- CARRY WHISTLE (AND A LIGHT FOR NIGHT USE)
- CARRY WATERPROOF VHF RADIO, CELL PHONE ONLY AS BACKUP
- KNOW THE LOCAL HAZARDS
- EDUCATION: GET SOME!

NAME

PHONE ()

Air Station Clearwater Receives Awards for Valor

U.S. Coast Guard 7th District PA Detachment

The Coast Guard recently presented more than 100 awards to Air Station Clearwater crew members for their efforts during the 2017 hurricane season. The crewmembers were awarded for saving lives and providing humanitarian aid through hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Maria and Nate.

Among the awards presented were two Air Medals, the Coast Guard's second highest award for aerial valor. Petty Officer 1st Class Matthew W. Silvius, an aviation survival technician, and Petty Officer 2nd Class Jean A. Medina, an aviation maintenance technician, were honored for rescuing two people from a sailboat during Hurricane Irma.



On September 9, 2017, Silvius and Medina flew 420 miles aboard an MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter into 60-70 mph winds, rain and near zero visibility at night. Due to the hurricane, there were no emergency landing or refueling options.

Medina operated the hoist and delivered Silvius to the water while fighting to keep the cable from entangling the sailboat or the people in the water. Silvius fought off winds, waves and the pull of the helicopter to reach the boaters in distress. Despite all obstacles, the crew rescued the two boaters.

The rescue was only one of the countless missions Air Station Clearwater crew members performed during the historic hurricane season. The air station's commanding officer, Captain Edward Sandlin, praised the crew's accomplishments and said, "From the bottom of my heart, I could not be prouder."

Air Station Clearwater crew members maintain and operate HC-130 Hercules airplanes and MH-60 Jayhawk helicopters for a multitude of missions under the direction of the Coast Guard's Atlantic Area. The air station's area of operations includes the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean basin and the Bahamas.



BAYWATCH JAYHAWKS

Patrolling the beautiful beaches of Florida's Gulf coastline is the daily business of the US Coast Guard at Clearwater. *Combat Aircraft* joins its MH-60T Jayhawks during training.

REPORT AND PHOTOS **Yissachar Ruas**

JUST NORTH OF St Petersburg, the area around US Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater is classic Florida — beautiful sun-kissed beaches and idyllic waterfronts. The

Tampa area features a large number of privately owned maritime vessels along with a significant volume of merchant shipping. Adding to a busy coastal picture are the various cruise ships

traveling around the Gulf of Mexico and into the Caribbean.

While some may visualize Florida as a 'vacation state,' this level of activity means the men and women of the coast guard's Seventh District rarely have a day off.

USCGS Clearwater is the largest air station in the coast guard. Its workload involves maintaining watch over some 156,000 square miles of ocean, which

Above: A pair of Jayhawks transits along the coastline near Clearwater.

Right top to bottom: The Clearwater Jayhawks deal with a vast range of marine vessels, from light private boats to huge cruise ships.

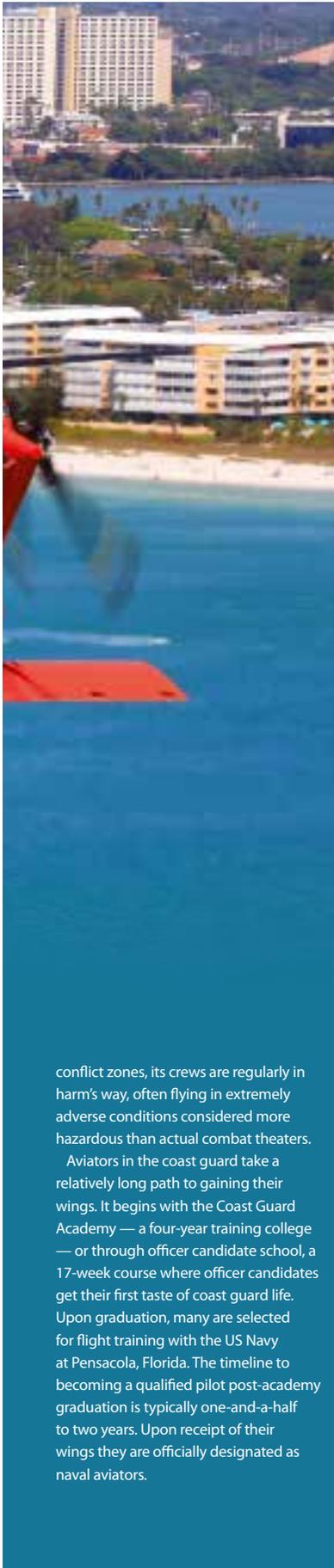
The MH-60T includes the airborne use of force (AUF) upgrade that added a 7.62mm machine gun and a .50-caliber long-range rifle.

equates to about 350 search and rescue incidents annually.

Factor in the unpredictable hurricane season and these are among the busiest operators in their field. During Hurricane *Joaquin* in 2015, Clearwater's MH-60T Jayhawks rescued 12 people who abandoned the *Minouche*, a 212ft Bolivian-flagged cargo vessel that was sinking. *Joaquin* was also responsible for a massive effort by the Clearwater crews to locate the *SS El Faro*, which sank en route from Jacksonville to San Juan, Puerto Rico, claiming 33 lives.

Coast Guard life

The US Coast Guard is one of five branches of the country's armed forces. Although its mandate doesn't take it into



conflict zones, its crews are regularly in harm's way, often flying in extremely adverse conditions considered more hazardous than actual combat theaters.

Aviators in the coast guard take a relatively long path to gaining their wings. It begins with the Coast Guard Academy — a four-year training college — or through officer candidate school, a 17-week course where officer candidates get their first taste of coast guard life. Upon graduation, many are selected for flight training with the US Navy at Pensacola, Florida. The timeline to becoming a qualified pilot post-academy graduation is typically one-and-a-half to two years. Upon receipt of their wings they are officially designated as naval aviators.





Top: Two Clearwater MH-60Ts on patrol along the shoreline near Tampa.

Above: The MH-60T has a range of around 300 nautical miles with a standard crew of four.

Each new pilot then attends a final short training class for their coast guard-specific aircraft before joining the fleet as a fully qualified co-pilot at an air station. Those coming to Clearwater's MH-60T Jayhawks typically notch up three years as a co-pilot before making plane captain. It's a similar path to Clearwater's HC-130Js, which are used for long-range patrols.

The pilots are one element of the MH-60 team, with the rescue swimmers being the link between the aerial platform and the 'customer'. These enlisted members of the coast guard stem from three fields:

aviation maintenance technician (AMT), avionics electrical technician (AET radar operator), and aviation survival technician (AST diver). These enlisted members are sent to an air station to work in their specific trade. Personnel in all three 'rates' can qualify as a basic crewman, which allows them to fly as a flying crew member. AMTs and AETs can qualify as light mechanics, meaning they are trained to operate the rescue hoist. ASTs qualify in their specific aircraft as rescue swimmers and are trained to jump out of or be hoisted down from helicopters into the

ocean. They are also certified medics and are able to provide basic first aid during rescue ops.

Daily training

Three civilians are tasked with the daily training of Clearwater's MH-60 personnel in a wide range of scenarios. Army veteran Mike Zornes helps provide realistic scenarios for the helicopter crews. The Jayhawk crews must work with sea-going vessels with many variables in mind, from swaying masts to the perpetual danger for the rescue swimmer. This is all in a day's work for Zornes and his training team. As one Jayhawk works with Zornes' team on their training boat, another works an open ocean scenario, lowering the rescue swimmer into the ocean on the hoist or jumping in from a low hover. Zornes and his team train the Clearwater Jayhawk crews four days per week, day and night.

Constant mission

Clearwater has its hands full covering migrant and counter-drug missions in



Left: The MH-60T's hoist being used to lower a rescue swimmer to a training ship.

Below: A rescue swimmer plunges into the water during training.

this region on top of the typical maritime traffic. There has been a significant rise in narcotics seizures by the coast guard in recent years.

CAPT Edward Sandlin is the commander at Clearwater. 'As the coast guard's largest aviation unit,' he says, 'Clearwater is constantly busy with law enforcement and search and rescue missions. This last year alone we prosecuted 320 search and rescue cases that saved or assisted over 200 lives and responded to two major hurricanes within the Bahamas, northern Caribbean, and Florida.

'Clearwater's official area of responsibility covers the waters around the entire Florida peninsula and the whole of the Bahamas, but we also perform missions in the eastern Pacific, Gulf of Mexico, and hundreds of miles out into the Atlantic. Our ability to continually succeed despite the year-round high operational tempo is driven by our outstanding workforce. The unit's aviation cadre, consisting of pilots, flight crews and maintenance personnel, have a passion for the mission and strive for excellence in every aspect of their work. The men and women of the air station are incredibly dedicated and never cease to amaze me with their professionalism and flexibility in the execution of our coast guard missions. They fully embody our unit's motto of 'Anytime, Anywhere.' 

