Virgil Allmond  Flotilla Commander  
Big Pine Key 13-03,  February Report

We are rocking right along. All of our positions are filled and most of you are working on at least one project and some are working on 2 or 3. This past month was very active, so much so that I had trouble keeping track and had to improve my electronic calendar usage to try and keep up. I am going to try and share a few things here that maybe otherwise you would not hear about.

McNamee and I met with Master Chief Jensen at Station Marathon and the Coasties and auxiliarists immediately went to work. We have two auxiliarists now working on being watch-standers at the station. We had two patrols, with our facilities playing “dead boat” for the Coast Guard training. This is the first time in a while for us to work directly with the Coast Guard. One of these patrols was at night, which is a little different for us.

We have a construction project going on in Station Marathon galley. First part is re-shelving the storage closet and the second is to remove an existing toilet and lavatory and create an office for FS-1 (Food Service). In combination with Flotilla 13-02, we cooked 9 times in January and early February. We have two volunteers for a SECOND construction project, but we need a supervisor. Both of our present Volunteers say that they are just labor.

The recent BS&S class at Venture Out, included five young men under age 18, and one of those was 10 years of age. We provided free tuition for these young people and the lowest score among the five was 82%. We are really, really proud of our efforts in this area. Teaching seamanship to kids is a passion of mine. I thoroughly enjoyed the one class that I taught. I plan to talk to the group at our upcoming meeting about providing a nice life jacket for those scholarship students who complete the course next year. The next class starts at Sugarloaf Fire Station on 24 February. Please, if you have not attended any of our classes, give it a chance. I think you will enjoy the refresher on the material, and we could use your help to set and tear down tables and chairs.

Commander report continues on page two.
February Commander Report continued from page One.

Lois Gerig will probably have a couple of pages about the February 17, Flea Market in this publication or next month, so I won’t comment on that but I would like to point out that we have had good use of the funds earned at the Flea Market, to pay for scholarships, life jackets and to upgrade some equipment for use in our various projects. If we have money in our account, it can always be used as leverage. If you need any further information about this, just ask me in person for details.

Take a minute to thank Don Kittsmiller, FSO-PA (Public Affairs) officer as he is getting good coverage in the local press. He tells me that the PA course and testing has been brutal and he now has someone at Sector working with him on his PQS (Personal Qualifications Standards) which has to be signed off by a panel of Coast Guard Personnel. Some of us would not submit to this type of torture, but he has had good results. “Kudos” to Don for his hard work.

If I don’t wrap this report up soon, I will go over a page and Jan will have to edit me, so let me just say what a great success we had at Sunshine Key on February 6. Master Chief Jensen sent over a 33’ Coast Guard Facility and we did a good number of vessel Exams and spoke with the public about various boating safety issues.

There are several things I could mention, but hopefully the Flotilla Staff Officers will cover their individual reports. I am so proud of our TEAM! We are looking good, doing good and making stuff happen.

Boating Skills and Seamanship Class at Venture Out resort  
25 graduates with 4 under the age of 17. Thanks to our own Bob Eichholtz for all his hard work as Public Education Officer  
(Photo– Don Kittsmiller USCGAUX)

(Note from editor Jan to Virgil) You went over one page, but I did not edit.
Photos from two boat training and Night Patrol with personnel of USCG Station Marathon and USCG Auxiliary Crew from Flotilla 13-03.

Photos above left and right shows USCG Personnel of Station Marathon lining up their facility for a side by side tow and a long tow of the “Frail Whale”. (Coxswain, Richard McCausland, with Tom and Dottie Anderson as crew Flotilla 13-03). Photos by Dottie Anderson USCGAUX on February 01, 2014.

February 4, 2014 in the P.M. Another crew of Flotilla 13-03 consisting of Coxswain Don Kittsmiller, with Martin Mara and Bob McNamee as Crew, did night training with the Facility Jan’s Choice acting as the “dead boat”. (Photos were taken with Don’s I-Phone by Martin Mara. Thanks Marty)

Thanks to all who enabled Jan Kittsmiller, as Publication Officer to obtain all the good shots that allow us to tell an entire story of our training and how we all work seamlessly as a “TEAM”. (Grab your I-phones or cameras and join us in telling our pictorial stories)
The Officer’s meeting for Flotilla 13-03, held February 13th, started at 1810 with a request from the Commander to discuss any items that would not be covered in the regular meeting. This would eliminate having to duplicate the Officer reports. No discussion nor action was taken and Tami Fletcher, with the help of Lynda Haring demonstrated how to access the training site on AUXLM (Auxiliary Learning Management System).

The regular meeting opened at 1850 with the Pledge to the flag led by Commander, Virgil Allmond. Guests attending were Division Commander, Elsie Metcalf, Eloy Gonzalez, Jeff Lewis and returning member, Marilyn Byrne.

Elsie spoke about the upcoming Division meeting on the 22nd of February at Marathon Government Center, beginning at 0900. Elsie further asks that the Coxswains take care in completing the entries into the AOM (Automatic Order Management) system. Chief Will Hillyer is sitting on about 12 reports that need to be corrected before they can be submitted for approval for payment and hours. Chief Hillyer will be leaving in about 6 months and his replacement may be more restrictive in his approach to what he can accept.

Minutes from the January meeting were read and a correction in the wording of previous report was made as follows. “One out of three had NOT paid their dues, rather than one out of three HAD paid their dues”. The remainder of last month’s financial report from Martin Mara is accurate. The financial report was given for this month and a motion to accept the report was made by Donna Moore and seconded by Doc Stern and accepted as read.

After determining the required quorum was present, a motion was made by Doc Stern that the following officers would be accepted signees on the Flotilla 13-03 bank accounts. Commander, Virgil Allmond, Vice Flotilla Commander Kenneth Nelson and Financial Officer, Martin Mara will be the signees, with a notation that two signatures will be required. This motion was seconded by Luke Moore and accepted with a unanimous vote.

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Minutes for February 2014, Flotilla 13-03

The following are announcements or items discussed at the 2/14/14 meeting:

1. There is an appointment set up at Sector Key West for the AUX Food Service to have our Health Form completed on February 26 at 1230.
2. There will be a Vessel Examiner Workshop at the home of Diane Adam, our FSO-VE (Vessel Examiner) on March 11, 2014 at 0945.
3. The next Beach Cleaning is scheduled for February 20th, weather permitting.
4. Earth Day at Bahia Honda on April 12th. We will have our trailer set up there.
5. Diane Adam submitted a motion to change the monthly meeting time. Article 4.1 of the Standing rules require a quorum for this action, so after determining that a quorum of 22 was present, the motion to “change the beginning time for the Officer’s meeting to 1815 and to 1900 for the regular meeting”. The motion was seconded by Doc Stern and carried by unanimous vote.
6. Possible rewards or special recognition for our (minor age) students for the Boating Skills and Seamanship class was brought up. A committee consisting of Phil (Doc) Stern and Dale Gittings were appointed to look into this and report back before the fall classes in 2014.
7. Flotilla Commander Allmond let the members know that he might have to use some of his monthly allotment for repairing the lock on our shed at the AARP building and to possibly make a new sign showing our trailer as a Mobile Radio center for the CGAUX.
8. Bob McNamee reminded everyone that he had received an e-mail about a class for AUXDATA input. This will be held at Boca Raton. Interested parties can see Virgil.
9. Commander Allmond complimented members on their sharp appearance in uniform and reminded them that anyone needing their ID renewed should see Doc Stern to have a photo made.
10. Members also received a reminder of the Division Meeting and “Road Show” being held on February 22, at the government Center in Marathon, at 0900.
11. Tammy Fletcher and Lynda Haring demonstrated access to the Auxiliary Learning Site as we all will need to complete the required courses to maintain our active member status.
12. Thank you to the “Anonymous Donor” for our new projector.
13. Reminder was given for the one hour TCT Class after the meeting.
14. Lynda and Neil Haring received their Certificates for Vessel examiners.
15. New members, Fran Frederic and Owen Smith were sworn in by Division Commander, Elsie Metcalf.
16. A motion was made by Bill Downes and seconded by Bob McNamee to adjourn and the meeting closed at 2100.
The first of January, a “News Release” was sent to all local media outlets, for our upcoming Boating Skills Course. I would like to thank my proof readers, Jan Kittsmiller, Bob Eichholtz and Virgil Allmond, as the news releases looked turned out to be very effective.

On January 9th, with the help of Martin Mara, we set up our unit trailer at Venture Out Resort for the yearly Vessel Exam and Public Affairs day. This turned out to be a very productive day. Our Flotilla Commander, Virgil Allmond reported that about 50 vessel exams were conducted. In addition, Bob Eichholtz reports that eight students were signed up from Venture Out and he ended up with 38 signups students for the Boating Courses. While at the Park, we met with the public and answered many varied questions on boating safety and regulations. Here is one question that stood out. Can we conduct a vessel examination on a boat registered in Canada? Answer: Yes we can, but we are not allowed to issue the Vessel Safety Decal.

The Centennial Bank works with us every year and we all appreciate the hot-dogs, hamburgers and trimmings they supply to us and the resort residents. A special thanks to Jo Allmond, Diane Adam and Bob Eichholtz for spearheading our efforts at the trailer/booth. Thanks to all Auxiliarists who helped out or conducted vessel exams, Virgil Allmond, Bob McNamee, Ron Jelliff, Neil Haring and Martin Mara.

The Key West Keynoter published our article with a color photo on our Vessel Safety Checks at Venture Out Resort. The Key West Citizen also published our article with the color photo of our Venture Out Day. I heard that the Barometer also published an article. If anyone has a copy of this, I would appreciate you saving it for my records. Our first Boating Skills and Seamanship (BS&S) class of 2014 got kicked off to a good start and Bob Eichholtz reports that we had 25 graduates, with 4 under the age 17. Another PA/VE booth was done on February 6 at Sunshine Key Park and our thanks go out to all the usual participants for doing vessel exams and PA work with the Public.

We fired off another Press release to local media on our upcoming class and we have 10 students so far for the Sugarloaf Fire Department class.

See Photos of Sunshine Key VE/PA Booth on following page. Photos by Don USCGAUX
Photo above left: USCG Station Marathon provides a 33’ Facility for tours. Photo above right: A resident of Sunshine Key Park getting information about the vessel from (left to right) BM3 Janesh, BM2 Fairchild and FN Colt Weise.

Above Left: Diane Adam, FSO-VE (Vessel Examiner Officer) answers safety questions during exam for residents of Sunshine Key, February 6, 2014. Above right: Don Kittsmiller is checking condition and date of the flares for one of the boat owners at Sunshine Key, during vessel exam.

January, 2014 was a busy month for AUX-FS. We were requested to cover 8 days of galley duty at Station Marathon, while Tameka Wright was on leave.

Don and Jan Kittsmiller, Alex Tannucilli, Lois and Joe Gerig, Ken Nelson, Donna Moore, Bill Downes, Dottie and Tom Anderson, Johnny Younge (13-01) Donna Ferenci and Joann Griffor (13-02) Diane and myself, covered all the dates. I cannot thank our volunteers enough for all their help! The spirit of cooperation among the Flotillas is very evident in our pursuit of providing outstanding meals for our Coast Guard men and women.

Alex has qualified as an AUX-FS and we are waiting for his certification to appear in AUXDATA. FS-3 Chris Beck, Ken, Diane and myself have certified the PQS for Johnnie Younge, Alex and Bill.

The first 2014 sanitation webinar is scheduled for 15 February at 1300. I am awaiting word from Paulette, ADSP-HR-O/AUXFS on the log in procedures. New requirements for AUXFS are detailed health forms and a physical by a doctor. I am working on a date that our group may travel to Sector Key West to fulfill this requirement.

The new requirements for the menus created by the FS staff at Station Marathon now include portion size, caloric count and fat content. The move to healthy diets is reflected in the meals that we cook, using the menu guidelines.
Our January statistics are certainly something for our Team Coast Guard Auxiliary (Vessel Examiners) to brag about! Our 13 qualified examiners are dedicated to Recreational Boating Safety. The following are statistics compiled from the vessel exams given during recent events.

Vessel Exams given: 51  
Vessels passing: 41  
Percentage of Vessels passing 80%

Our VE Team surpassed expectations at Venture Out Day. Don Kittsmiller has done a fine job in reporting the public affairs details. Thanks for the accolades. A special thank you from 13-03 Vessel examiners goes out to Jo Allmond, for helping sign up Boating Skills Class students. Also a special thank you to Marty Mara for helping set up the trailer and driving the golf cart to take the examiners to exam sites at Venture Out. Thanks to all who helped make us all look good!

IMPORTANT NEW REQUIREMENT:

This year the 2014 Vessel Examiner Workshop is a “required” workshop and it is available online in (AUXLMS) the same as other mandatory training. I will be conducting this classroom workshop at my home on Tuesday, March 11, 2014, beginning at 0945. The required proof of attendance will be submitted by me to the IS Officer for entry into the AUXDATA records.

Failure to complete the workshop by 30/June will result in the vessel examiner Going into REWK status and that would require the Flotilla Commander having to submit a Re-Certification of the Examiner to DIRAUX, after completion. In the event this is not completed by December 31, the Examiner will go into REYR until He or she is re-qualified by doing two more supervised Exams.

The March report will feature the results of the 06/February Sunshine Key Event.
Our Flotilla Commander, Virgil Allmond, has brought a unique spirit and enthusiasm to this new year of Auxiliary service. In keeping with that spirit, the goals for human resources will hopefully bring more energy to this area of Flotilla Life.

Goals for 2014 include: 1. Enrollment of 10 new members to the Big Pine Flotilla. 2. Increased efforts in the area of recruitment and member retention.

Toward the accomplishment of these goals, I would encourage all of you to become recruiters, inviting good candidates to think about joining the Auxiliary and when an individual expresses interest in that area, let Doc Stern or myself know so that the appropriate follow-up can be made. At present we have five new people involved in the application process. If all of them complete the process, we are half-way to our goal.

New initiatives are also being made in the area of member retention. I hope to make a personal contact with each Flotilla member, simply to get better acquainted and learn of the vast pool of talents and abilities that our members possess. If a member has specific interests in any area of Auxiliary Service, we hope to match that interest with the appropriate area of available training. We hope to make sure that all members of the Flotilla feel valued and included.

If Human resources can be of help to you in any way, please let Doc Stern or myself know. I am grateful to Doc Stern, who serves as Associate for Human Resources during the months of snowbird migration. Thanks, Doc.
I set my goals in my January report. My goal is to recruit new radio watch standers, set up a network and find some use for our radios. One person who is interested in radio watch is John DiPietropaolo along with Virgil Allmond and Bob Morrow.

I will set a date and time for a radio net check, when we all agree on a date and time. I am still working on getting Mobile 1 radio into AUXDATA. This should be shortly. The radio in our trailer will be a radio facility, which means that you must be qualified to use the radio. Also the radio will be used as an emergency radio communication center for 13-03, when needed.

Anyone interested in joining our radio net and being a watch-stander, give me a call at 305-872-0067 or email dinimac1@bellsouth.net
Phil (Doc) Stern  FSO-PV
Marine Partner Visitation

The Program visitors have been busy in late January and early February, visiting a lot of our Marine Partners, as well as non Partners, to distribute flyers for the February 24 Boating Skills and Seamanship Class, also for the February 17, Flea Market at the Methodist Church on Big Pine Key.

Bob Eichholtz and I re-designed the BS&S flyers to eliminate a large amount of time, cutting and pasting the phone number tabs.

Additionally, Don and Jan Kittsmiller, Donna Moore and Gerry Coady did a number of Partner visits this month. Gerry Coady and I manned the booth at Sunshine Key Resort. Since we were beside the boat ramp, we offered all the boat owners, launching their boat, a free vessel exam, from one of our Vessel Examiners, directing them where to pull their boat in the marina area for the exam.

Marine related businesses come and go in the Keys. I would like to ask our Partner visitors to solicit new partner signups and also let me know if a Partner is no longer in business.

February has been a busy month already and we’ve only started.
My goal as I reported last month is to include in my publications, (primarily the Channel Marker-newsletter) as many tips, new ideas and new reports as possible. Information will be attained from our members and from our advisors and leaders. The reason for this, is to make this publication as interesting and helpful as possible, while maintaining the integrity of the USCG Auxiliary and Flotilla 13-03. We have always had the participation of the other officers, but, I would like to call on you ALL more and without all the help, this publication would not work. Thanks to all for your support and helpful hints.

As Information Services Officer, please accept my thanks to all who send their mission reports in so readily and correctly. The reports may not always seem important, but believe me, our numbers DO Matter. Speaking from experience of almost ten years, awards and recognition are a proven driving force for members to feel needed and valued.

Jan Kittsmiller (Well, what did you expect? This is just an easier way to lose weight)
Donna Moore
Member of Month

Ok, so Donna is my friend, as she is to a lot of us. I made an executive decision as Editor of this publication to include a little background on Donna, as she will not blow her own horn. In the future, if you have someone you would like to mention in this space, please send it to me with all pertinent data that would help with the article. (Now back to Donna)

Donna has been in several Officer positions since joining Flotilla 13-03. The most important and probably dearer to Donna's heart (in my opinion) is the Cleaning of the shorelines in the Keys, which we report under “Marine Safety-Sea-partners” (Operational support).

Every month, Donna organizes a “Team” of her peers to tackle picking up and cleaning the shoreline, attempting to remove debris and articles that are harmful to the environment. In 2012 she was instrumental in getting a “Team” award for her “student followers”.

If you see her around and you cannot miss her, please give her a thank you, a hug or pat on the back for her enthusiasm, energy and love of other people! (Of course, I may be a little Biased).

The Shoreline Clean Up crew has picked up 16 bags of trash and spent 10 hours cleaning up, so far this year, which has only begun. If you would like to help Donna with this on-going project, she is planning more days of cleanup on March 7 and 21, 2014.

Call Donna at 1-561-302-6026, if you want to help.