Flotilla 13-3 had another busier than usual summer. The highlights for July were our activities during Lobster Mini Season. We set up our Vessel Safety Check Stations at Venture Out, Big Pine Fishing Lodge and at Bahia Honda where it was a combined Public Affairs and VE Station. There was no official count, but we did approximately 75 to 100 vessel exams that week and had contact with at least 100 members of the public, sharing with them information about boating safety. I think this was a success and we give a big “Tip of the Hat” to those who showed up to help out with our “Team effort”.

In addition, we had three boats on the water for the two day mini lobster season, my boat, Luke Moore’s and Don Kittsmiller’s. On the first day, July 30, Jo and I counted 500 boats from Big Spanish Harbor Channel Marker 57 to the southwest end of Sawyer Key. There were lots of folks enjoying our waters for those two days.

Our work with the “two boat training” with USCG Station Marathon continues. The Coxswains truly enjoy working with the Coast Guard facilities. Last week, while station Marathon’s 45’ had the “Doll’s Dusky” in a stern tow, the Coxswain of the Coast Guard Vessel, had me launch a “Man Overboard” drill. It was a blast to watch everyone react during this drill. I wish I could have filmed it, as the recovery was flawless.

We have passed on the August meeting. The summer meetings are usually combined with our monthly Rendezvous. We will continue our regular meeting at the AARP in September.

Commander report continued on page “two”.
Commander’s Report July-August 2014, continued from page One

The Selection Committee for 2015 is working and has a candidate for Flotilla Commander, as well as Vice Flotilla Commander. Thanks to those who stepped up. It takes ALL of us sharing the responsibility to make this organization as good as it can be.

Our “snowbirds” begin to return in September and even more in October and our activity level will intensify. We’re going to finish out the year charging full steam ahead.

July 26, Venture Out welcomes our Vessel Examiners and other members of Flotilla 13-3. This was prior to the opening of the Mini Lobster Season, which is one of our usual times to hand out boating safety tips and do Vessel Safety Exams for residents of Venture Out.

Photo above left shows Phil (Doc) Stern assisting Sue Harfield in doing a vessel exam for a boat-owner at Venture Out Resort. Photo right shows Commander Virgil Allmond giving paperwork for vessel exam to another boat-owner at Venture Out. Photos by Don Kittsmiller FSO-PA
Above Left: Virgil Allmond, Flotilla Commander hosts the July 6, Meeting and Rendezvous, at his home on Big Pine Key. Photo above right shows Diane Adam, discussing with FC Allmond, the upcoming Vessel Exam booths prior to the Mini Lobster Season, July 30th and 31st.

Photo above Left: Don Kittsmiller receives his Certification for PA1 Public Affairs Specialist. This required a lot of Courses as well as passing a review Board.

Photos by Don Kittsmiller, FSO-PA
Coast Guard and USCG Auxiliary Appreciation Day.

The Marathon Turtle Hospital founder, Richie Moretti has a yearly celebration of the team work between the hospital, the USCG and the USCG Auxiliary. The Coast Guard has a strong history with the Marathon Turtle Hospital in regard to its “Environmental/Endangered Species” act with the Green Sea Turtle.

The Coast Guard has participated in turtle releases, turtle rescues and also moving turtles within the hospital for medical treatments or X-Rays. Station Marathon and the Turtle Hospital were featured on the weather channel’s “Coast Guard Florida”. On the Appreciation day, August 8, the Coast Guard and Auxiliary personnel were given the grand tour of the hospital facilities, followed by a picnic as a thank you for our contributions.

Two boat training continues with Station Marathon each Thursday. Flotilla 13-3 is also working with 13-2 continuing two boat training on Tuesdays.

Prior to the Lobster Mini Season, Flotilla 13-3 had an all out effort to educate the public on safe boating and by conducting Vessel Examinations. We set up our recreational Boating Safety and Communications trailer at various strategic locations including Venture Out Resort, Bahia Honda Campground and Big Pine Fishing Lodge. Many vessel examinations were conducted and we greeted many members of the public with great success.

FLAGS & CEREMONIES: Don’s Award Corner was submitted for USCG Unit Commendation (see article in this newsletter).

COMMUNITY SUPPORT: The Kayak and Canoes sticker project has been submitted to the local press and our AD has been run for several weeks in the Key West Citizen. See photos following (Don Kittsmiller FSO-PA)
On August 8, 2014, the Marathon turtle Hospital sponsored the Annual Appreciation Day Picnic for the USCG and USCG Auxiliary Personnel

Photo above left: Personnel from USCG Station Marathon enjoy the picnic given by the Turtle Hospital. In the foreground is Donna Ferenci, Flotilla Commander of Flotilla 13-2.

Photo Above Right: Sheila Weston of Flotilla 13-2 sits with some of the personnel from Station Marathon.

Photo Above Left: Megan Mertsock from the turtle Hospital in Marathon cooks hotdogs and hamburgers for the USCG personnel at Station Marathon & some of the members from USCG Auxiliary 13-2 and 13-3.

Photo Above Middle: Richie Moretti, Founder of the Turtle Hospital in Marathon joins Dr. Geraldine Diethelm, who is a Doctor of Veterinary medicine at Marathon Veterinary Hospital, 5001 Overseas Hwy, Marathon, Florida.

Photo Above right: Sheila and Don Weston, longtime members of USCG Auxiliary Flotilla 13-2, speak with Megan Mertsock who was hosting the tour of the Turtle Hospital.

Photos by Don Kittsмiller, FSO-PA
DID YOU KNOW??

In preparation for this year’s Lobster Mini-Season, I could not start my boat engine. I had what they call a “chattering relay” from my engine. After ensuring that the batteries were charged, with no joy, I called my boat mechanic. He discovered my cable from the battery and cable from the engine had been bolted TOGETHER in the rear live well compartment.

The above picture is what was left of my battery cable. My mechanic tells me that this is a common practice at the manufacturer as a short cut to rig the boat. Also this connection is usually well hidden and can only be found by following the cable by hand to feel if there is a bolted connection. It might pay you to check this out on your boat.

Don Kittsmiller (Coxswain)
DON’S AWARD CORNER

This month I will describe how you receive the:

COAST GUARD UNIT COMMENDATION

See the following remarks from Admiral Paul F. Zukunft, Commandant:

Congratulations to the Coast Guard Auxiliary for 75 years of outstanding service in recognition for the profound devotion, sacrifice and achievement of the Coast Guard Auxiliary, I will award them with the Coast Guard Unit Commendation at Coast Guard Headquarters on June 23. Please join me in honoring their long and distinguished history of service by congratulating Auxiliarists throughout your regions and by proudly hoisting the Auxiliary Colors.
75 YEARS AND COUNTING

Have you checked out the latest edition of the District 7 Breeze? If not, you are missing some wonderful articles on who we are, how we got here and what we are doing now, as members of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary. If you are not getting this publication, just Google D7 Breeze and sign up to be on their mailing list.

In one article I found a very interesting bit of information I would like to pass on to everyone.

In 1976, the Coast Guard commissioned a study of the Auxiliary by a private research firm. After all the questionnaires were in, their report summarized the Auxiliary as “the greatest economical resource readily available to the Coast Guard. It performs in an outstanding manner and its personnel are among the most professional group of volunteers in the nation.”

Don Kittsmiller FSO-PA
TWO BOAT TRAINING WITH STATION MARATHON

The crew from the USCG 45 Ft. Response Boat 45 from Station Marathon, throw the working line for the crew on the USCG Aux Vessel AUX 549. Don Kittsmiller is owner & Coxswain of AUX549 (13-3) Crewmembers are Phil (Doc) Stern & Martin Mara.

The crewman on the USCG Response Boat Is set to give instructions To Phil (Doc) Stern to Commence with a side by side tow for USCG Auxiliary Vessel 549.

Photos by Don Kittsmiller, FSO-PA
I have been asked by Donna Moore, (Beach Cleanup Committee) to let everyone know about the “International Coastal Shoreline Cleanup” on September 20, 2014.

Anyone who is interested in details about this important event, please contact Donna at 305-515-2866. We welcome the help!

So far this year, our Coastal Cleaning Crew has picked up 122 bags of trash and clocked in 68 hours mission time of Coastal cleanup.

Photo right shows Ken Nelson, Dottie Anderson, Donna Moore and Diane Adam on a prior garbage cleanup day. Donna Moore organizes and manages these pickups regularly & deserves a big “Pat on the Back”. Thanks also to all who help Donna!

The next issue of our Big Pine Channel Marker newsletter will be the October issue, so please send in any information for that issue prior to or at the October meeting. Thanks for your help.

I will be at my yearly “Sister Retreat” from September 22nd until September 30th, and will work on the October newsletter after I return. I will be resting and relaxing in Williamsburg, VA for a few days. (See Photo following)

For those of you who always hear about the “Strada Sisters”, here we are from a few visits ago. Starting with bottom, Joanne Stephens, Pat Bennett, Teresa Sims, Maria Koeppen & Jan Kittsmiller. (Strong Women)!
Cooking at Station Marathon August 26, 2014

Above Left: Ken Nelson, VFC 13-3 tending to the planned Pork Loin. Our crew tells us that the lunch was delicious and we fed about 17.
Above right: Ken serving lunch to some of the Coast Guard Personnel.

Above middle: We can see how well the equipment was rearranged while Ken checks on his biscuits.

Photos above left and right: Don Kittsmiller shows off his first ever attempt at making a Chocolate Cake. Everyone says it was really good! Maybe not as pretty as Dottie's but still edible.

Photos by Don Kittsmiller, FSO-PA

Above: Don Weston, Coxswain in 13-2 taking part in two boat Training, is towed by USCG Crew from Station Marathon 8/26/14.

Photos by Don Kittsmiller, FSO-PA
The appointed Selection Committee for (2015, Elected Officers) consists of Janice Kittsmiller, Donna Moore, Don Kittsmiller & myself, Martin Mara. At our initial meeting, I was selected to chair the committee.

1. As we understand the process:
   Within 15 days of completing our work, we must report our findings to the Flotilla Commander. That is the purpose of this report.

   The committee must then report those findings to the membership at the next regularly scheduled meeting (September 11). I will be prepared to do that, using this document.

   Elections are normally held in November, but no later than November 30. (There is some confusion in the Standing Rules, but this is the earliest of the 2 dates). The Flotilla Commander will declare the date of the election, following the committee’s report to membership on 9/11/14. The committee will also notify the entire membership by e-mail and newsletter prior to the elections.

2. Selection Committee Activity and Results:
   We contacted the entire membership by E-mail and in many cases, by telephone. Three members expressed interest in running for the positions of Flotilla Commander and Vice Flotilla Commander. Upon careful and considerable deliberations, one member decided the timing was not right in his personal life, and withdrew his name with the proviso, he would like to be considered for the next election cycle. The two candidates that sent in their “letter of intent” were then determined to be qualified to hold office, per USCG Auxiliary rules. The candidates that will be presented to the membership are as follows:

   For Office of Flotilla Commander: Phil (Doc) Stern.
   For Office of Vice Flotilla Commander: Ken Nelson

   Nominations from the floor (election night) are both Allowed & Encouraged.

   Martin Mara, Chair
Lois Gerig  
Fundraising Committee  
Garage Sale 2015 Notice

To all Flotilla 13-3 members who are returning to the Keys this fall, Please consider bringing down some of your better items for donation to our annual Flea Market. For those who remained here in the Keys, please go through your closets and storing spots and weed out what you can share with us for our important fundraiser.

We are going to need all the gently used items we can muster to help us make this our biggest sale ever. All of the old furniture, toys, games and small appliances that are taking up space in your house, can be used.

Part of our proceeds from this sale will be used to fund two scholarships for each of our three Boating Skills and Seamanship Classes.

These are some of the items donated for our most recent sale. For more information call Lois Gerig 740-590-5811
First of all, I would like to announce that George Dunham and Bob Raczka have recently resigned as Instructors. We would like to thank them for their years of service to the Public Education program. They will be missed.

That being said, if you are interested in becoming an Instructor for the Boating Skills and Seamanship Program, now would be a good time to do that. We can finish all the academic and classroom stuff prior to the start of the BS&S season. Please contact me, if you want to become part of the Team.

I have spent a few weeks in August, updating slides, resources and supporting documents and have made them available to the Instructors for their review.

I will be setting up the class schedule in the beginning of October. Any questions, or if you can help, contact me at auxbob@bellsouth.net or call 305-872-7505.
Anyone who knows Donna, knows that she is a “cleaning demon” as far as trying to protect our environment. All of us who work with her in the USCG Auxiliary have to be in good shape and energetic to keep up with her in her quest. The following letter came to Donna from the Georgia Aquarium after she returned a tracking device to them. We thought this letter should have a place in our monthly Big Pine Key Channel Marker.

“Thank you so much for returning the satellite tag you found on Big Pine Key 8/13/14. It is rare that we are able to retrieve these tags once they are deployed and by having this one back, we hope to find some valuable data stored on it.

Please accept these small gifts as a thank you for your thoughtfulness and effort in returning this tag to us. There is also some information for you about what this tag is used for. Georgia Aquarium is the only aquarium, outside of Asia that houses the world’s largest fish, the Whale Shark (Rhincodon typus). Since 2004, we’ve been studying whale sarks off the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico. Very little is known about them except that they are aggregate in very large groups in warm waters across the globe for massive feeding sessions that last months at a time. Once they are done feeding, they disappear into the blue until they return again the next year. The tag that you returned to us was once attached to a whale shark found at this feeding site in Mexico. Our researchers will attach these tags to sharks in order to learn where they travel, how deep they dive and what the water temperature around them is. These tags will transmit information via satellite sporadically while attached but there is far more data stored that can only be downloaded from the tag itself. The tags trail the shark by a few feet, much like a fishing lure so from time to time, a smaller predator may bite the tag and detach it or wear away the line and the tag just falls off. In your case, we did find a small shark’s tooth embedded in the tag.

We hope you enjoy your Georgia Aquarium gear and please know that you have just played a vital role in solving the puzzle of these amazing “Gentle Giants.”

Signed: Kery Gladish
Research Administration Assistant
Georgia Aquarium

This letter was re-typed by: Jan Kittsmiller FSO-PB (Publications) USCG Auxiliary, 13-3
The September Officer's meeting of Flotilla 13-3, Big Pine Key, was called to order at 1830, by Flotilla Commander, Virgil Allmond.

Officer reports were held over for the regular membership meeting following. Virgil talked about the two boat training our personnel have been doing with Station Marathon. Commander Allmond also gave a little insight into the type of training our crews have been doing.

Commander Allmond then explained how his Facility is out of commission due to engine trouble. He further reiterated that both of his engines are rusted out and we are now down one facility for water operations. Officer's meeting was closed at 1850 and we took a break until the next meeting.

Regular meeting of the Flotilla was called to order by Commander Allmond at 1900. Martin Mara, (Selection Committee Head) gave a report on the progress of the selection Committee. The committee, consisting of Jan Kittsmiller, Don Kittsmiller, Marty and Donna Moore, elected Martin as head of the committee and after much deliberating, telephone calls and email communications, we have two candidates for the elected offices for 2015. Philip (Doc) Stern for Commander and Ken Nelson for Vice Flotilla Commander. (The entire committee report can be read on page thirteen of the newsletter). The commander thanked Martin and the committee for all the hard work for the Elected Offices for next year. The election for Offices of Commander and Vice Commander will take place at our November 13, meeting.

Commander Allmond called on Martin Mara for the finance report and Martin reported that, in accordance with our motion (made and passed in the May Flotilla meeting) we have transferred $5000.00 from our checking into the savings account. Motion was made by Doc and seconded by Don Kittsmiller, to accept finance report. All were in favor by “Aye” vote.

At the bequest of the Commander, Jan Kittsmiller gave some numbers from our flotilla summary that show we did 895 vessel inspections, thus far this year. It was discussed that the increase in these exams was most probably helped along, by the Kayak and Canoe stickers that were given out. We also have 472 hours for PA purposes, supported by various members, 204 hours of operations, water time, 68 hours of trash picked up from the Coastal (Beach) and 68 bags of trash. (led by Donna). We had 378 hours of operations support (other than water time) & let us not forget our wonderful Boating Skills hours supported by Bob Eichholtz and his team of Instructors and helpers.

(minutes continued page Eighteen)
Minutes of September Meeting continued from page Seventeen:

Marty noted that he heard the radio report that Virgil did on “Pirate Radio” about what the Flotilla does. Marty said that he never heard so many words and that Virgil just seamlessly went from subject to the next in his presentation.

Don gave his PA report which covered the Picnic given for the USCG and USCG Auxiliary. (see this report on pages 4 & 5 of the newsletter) Don also told us that his “Kayak” AD has been carried in the “Key West Citizen” for 5 weeks, thus far and has brought in many phone and a few emails requesting the stickers.

A report was given by our FSO-PV (Partner Visitor) that our Flotilla PA/Mobile trailer has been stocked with pamphlets and booklets we need for giving to the public. She was assisted with this task by Donna Moore. Virgil then added some other information about a new program that Diane Adam and Gerry Coady will be working with called “Head Start”. This will entail giving out brochures and other information geared towards young children, promoting boating safety information. Also mentioned was the re-purposing of children's life vests. This program was started by our Flotilla at the bequest of Don Way and we feel this is an important project. It was also mentioned that we have given out more than 40 children’s re-purposed life vests.

Donna Moore gave a report about the International Coastal Cleanup that will be held on September 20 and asked for volunteers. It was brought up that Donna received a letter that Donna received from the Georgia Aquarium, thanking her for returning one of their tracking devices that was placed in one of the “Whale Sharks” This article with the entire letter is on page ten of the newsletter.

Lois Gerig talked about the upcoming Flea Market on President's day in February 2015. She needs help and donations. (see her report, page fourteen of newsletter)

Virgil asked for a Food Service report on the cooking at Station Marathon and Ken Nelson gave a full report about the last time He and Don Kittsmiller cooked. (See photos in the newsletter, page eleven) Ken also advised that the schedule for cooking now does not include, Soup, Breakfast and sometimes sandwiches for dinner) The Station now has a trained Culinary Expert, FS-1 Barry Wildman and the Station Personnel are very happy with his cooking.

Awards were given out as follows:
1. Don Kittsmiller - Auxiliary Performance Award for Operations
2. Sue Harfield - Five year membership
3. Lois Gerig - Auxiliarist of the Quarter (Custodian of the Helm)

Colt Fairchild, Auxiliary Liaison Officer from Station Marathon took time to thank all of us for our contributions to the station, cooking, and two boat training, among other things we do.

Motion to close meeting was made by Lois Gerig and seconded by Sue Harfield. Closed 1940. See Photos from meeting on following page.
Photos from September 11, 2014 Meeting BPK Flotilla 13-3

Photo above left: Sue Harfield receives her 5 year membership award from FC Allmond. Photo above right: Lois Gerig receives Auxiliarist of the quarter award which makes her Custodian of the helm until another person receives this award.

Photo Above: Flotilla Commander Virgil Allmond presents Don Kittsmiller for Operations Performance (earned based on information from 2013).

Note: Don’t forget the Rendezvous on Sunday, September 14, hosted by Sue and Gregg Harfield at 1525 Key Deer Blvd, Big pine Key at 4:00 P. M. This will be “Pot Luck” if you like you can bring something to cook on the grill. For information call Sue at 305-587-0900.

Photos by Don Kittsmiller, FSO-PA All Articles in this publication were typed or reworded and prepared by Jan Kittsmiller FSO-PB