April 2013 Commander Report

March was another busy month for Flotilla 13-03. Boat Crew and Coxswain training has continued with a QE (Qualifying Examiner) session scheduled for April 17 and APRIL 18, 2013.

Eight of our members completed the AUXCHEF training at Sector Key West. Congratulations to them.

Our beach cleaning team continued work on our local beaches, making the beaches and waterways free of trash and debris. This is a continual operation and Donna Moore is to be congratulated for her tireless work at organizing this important effort.

The highlight of the month, for me, was the tour of Station Marathon with 8 of our members. The tour included a ride on the new 45 Ft. RBS patrol boat they got in 2013. This is a jet drive vessel with maneuverability that is unbelievable. All of us that wanted to drive the boat were able to take a turn. It is a fly-by-wire control system that you drive with 2 joy sticks. It was quite a thrill to drive it.

I will be going north around May 1st, for most of the summer. I expect to be in the keys in August, and then return some time in October for the winter. I will still be only a phone call or email away. I'm sure that you all will give Virgil the same support over the summer that you have given me.

Photos above left to right: Diane Adam and Dick McCausland each receive an award for outstanding contributions to VSC/RBS Program.
Photo Above far right: Some of our Flotilla members wait for their ride on the 45 Ft. Coast Guard Vessel at Station Marathon.
April 2013 Report

I’m excited to tell you about a leadership seminar put on by our District Leaders which I attended on April 6, 2013. I learned new approaches to problem solving, retention and mentoring. I now know that I should have encouraged all the FSO’s to attend the meeting with me. I had no idea this class was going to be so good, nor did I realize that this was for the Flotilla Staff Officers as well. I think I can pass along some of the tips that I learned, so watch for those opportunities coming later in April or early May.

In HR (Human Resources) we enrolled four new members. During that process, Jim Adam was trained for fingerprinting and we appreciate him agreeing to take over that responsibility, while he is on the “Rock” with us. My wife, Jo’s input skills were put to the test as some of these four applications were 11 pages long. I don’t think we’ll do that many at one time again.

BS&S (Boating Skills & Seamanship) Bob Eichholtz is already working on our next round of classes, roughly scheduled for late November. During his research, he has discovered that the text book for this course is being reprinted (going from the 13th to the 14th edition). At this printing, he does not know how much of the Instructor segments will have to be rewritten. Bob is going to have a busy summer and early fall. Stay tuned for this developing story.

Vice Commander Report continues on next page.
Vice Commander report continued from Page Two

We've had four sessions on the water for crew/coxswain training. Our QE session has been preliminarily set for 17 April. Dick McCausland, Luke Moore, Tom Anderson, John Rhode and Bob McNamee have devoted a lot of hours and effort trying to get the five trainees ready. Keep your finger crossed for us, please.

There are a lot of other activities going on around the Flotilla, but I have been asked not to steal the thunder, by reporting them. We are all growing and I promise you I am learning at every turn and am discovering over and over, that I get satisfaction out of my efforts, at about the same rate that I contribute.

If you want something to be a part of, send me an email or call me. We have jobs that are not getting done and I can give you a choice.

In the event any of you were wondering how the reflector strips on Our PFD's work at night. Below left is an example as the “Harings” are well seen on their night patrol.

Photo above shows Lynda and Neil Haring, in training on a night patrol. Note that the reflectors on the Life Vests do actually work at night as designed. Who knew? Photos below show Virgil Allmond and Bob McNamee (left to right) on night patrol with crew.
Galley Assistance Program (GAP) AUXCHEF

The March, 2013 dates of cooking at Station Marathon (STAMAR) were covered in the March report. We also reported the AUXCHEF training which was held at Sector Key West.

Since that time, we have been establishing communication with candidates for the AUXCHEF program from other Flotillas in the keys. We will have each other's email addresses and telephone numbers so we can call upon each other in times of need.

The members of the AUXCHEF group came together for an 8 hour TCT on March 26, 2013. This experience helped us realize that there may be times when we WILL work together to promote this rewarding program and the “team” experience is very evident in this endeavor.

I would like to recognize our first “officially qualified” AUXCHEFS, Don and Jan Kittsmiller, who are now listed with this certification. Dorothy and Tom Anderson also have their paperwork in order and on its way to be entered into auxdata.

By the time of our meeting, Jo Allmond, Ken Nelson, Jim and Diane Adam will have the PQS done and paperwork in order for certification. Donna Moore is also one of our dedicated helpers as well as Martin Mara and others, who have also helped with the cooking project.

Volunteers for work in Station Marathon do not have to be certified as AUXCHEF, to help out our crew as well as the Food Service employees of our Beloved “Coasties”.
April Marine Safety report

Donna Moore and members of her beach cleanup team, completed beach cleanup missions as of this date, which totals 129 bags of trash being removed from our beaches. Assisting Donna were Ken Nelson, Gerry Coady, Dorothy Anderson, Diane Adam and Jo Allmond. There are others who have helped over time, but for the sake of this report, the above persons are included here. Thanks to Donna and the entire team for doing our “dirty” work and helping to keep our shores clean.

Jeff Lewis (now retired) and working in a Civilian capacity for Sector Key west will be conducting classes for Commercial Vessel exams and will be working with any examiners we already have, who would like to get this certification. Anyone who needs assistance in this area, please call Don at 744-0043.

Anyone who would like to help Donna with the beach cleaning, call her at 561-302-6026.

Photo right:
Beach Cleaning crew from back Ken Nelson, Dottie Anderson, Donna Moore and Diane Adam.
Vessel Exam Report - April 2013

Vessel exams given in 2013  227
Vessel exams passed  212

Flotilla 13-03 welcomes two new vessel examiners, Tom Anderson and Robert (Bob) Morrow. We appreciate the efforts of Don Kittsmiller and Dick McCausland for the time spent mentoring these two with hands-on training. We now have 16 vessel exams for this month.

On April 20, 2013, Earth day at Bahia Honda State Park. Vessel Examiners will be present at our booth, offering vessel exams for those with boats in the marina or on boat trailers in the camping area. In addition, participants visiting our festival booth, may sign up for future vessel exams at their docks or on trailers at their homes. This is a good opportunity to reach out to our community.

The USCG Auxiliary has provided an update of best practices on paddle-craft for our Vessel Examiners. Since our workshop has already been done, the power point refresher has been e-mailed to our VE’s. The information will serve as talking points at future meetings.

The Coast Guard has recently become aware of counterfeit Fire extinguishers manufactured by Amerex and Buckeye Fire Prevention. These fire extinguishers represent a significant safety hazard, as they may be charged with a powdery substance which does not extinguish a fire and the pressure cylinder is not DOT approved.

When a paddle-craft, canoe or kayak is found adrift, the first question is to whom does it belong. If it is found adrift, it has to be assumed that whoever was onboard is now missing and this causes the Coast guard to have to do a search and rescue (SAR). If it is affixed with one of our orange stickers, showing the name of owner, address and contact information this may eliminate a costly search. We can be proud of our Flotilla who voted to have these stickers printed using our own funding, as budget cuts have caused these stickers to be not readily available.
Members of Flotilla 13-03: You should know that your fellow member, Jan Kittsmiller, was one of only 14 people, Coast guard wide (Auxiliary, Reserve, Civilian or Active Duty) who was recommended for the prestigious, Alex Haley Public Affairs Award for her work on the BIG PINE KEY CHANNEL MARKER.

The Memorandum, which is signed by Captain Alwynn Young, Commander of USCG Sector Key West is reproduced on the following page. While not chosen as winner, this recommendation alone is something of which Jan and the entire flotilla can be proud. In fact, the Chief of CG Public Affairs described Jan's work as “Absolutely Outstanding”. The Alex Haley Award recognizes the achievement of individuals whose efforts and published work raise the visibility of the Coast Guard. The Alex Haley Award is named in honor of the Coast Guard's First Chief Journalist and renowned Author, Alex Haley, best known for the best-selling book and TV series “Roots”.

Please join me in recognizing Jan on this remarkable achievement.

Dan Slyker, Lead Command Center Controller, USCG Sector Key West.

Note from FSO-PB Jan Kittsmiller:
I was encouraged by several members, including my husband Don, to print the following memo and I was reluctant to do so, but here is the recommendation on the following page. Many thanks to Captain Young, Dan Slyker, my loving husband Don and flotilla members for believing in me.
MEMORANDUM

From: T.W. Young, CDR, CAPT
Commander
United States Coast Guard
Sector Key West Fl.

To: COMDT CG-09225

Subj: RECOMMENDATION FOR THE 2012 ALEX HALEY PUBLIC AFFAIRS AWARD

Ref: (a) ALCOAST 062/13, COMDTNOTE 3778

1. I am most pleased to recommend Mr. James A. Kittsmeier, FSO-NA/PB, USCG Auxiliary Flotilla 13-03, for the 2012 Alex Haley Public Affairs Award in Category B: Outstanding Individual Achievement in Coast Guard Public Affairs. This recommendation is formatted per reference (a), and is based on Mr. Kittsmeier’s outstanding performance as the editor of the BIG PINE KEY CHANNEL MARKER, the Flotilla 13-03 newsletter.

2. Mr. Kittsmeier has been the sole editor, proofreader, organizer and printer of this newsletter since 2011. The BIG PINE KEY CHANNEL MARKER is a monthly compilation of reports, letters and articles from Flotilla Officers and others, combined with many captioned photos. Not only does the newsletter provide a medium to distribute Flotilla business information, but more importantly, it informs the members of the valuable contributions that they are making to their community, including their efforts in support of Team Coast Guard. The BIG PINE KEY CHANNEL MARKER enjoys wide distribution throughout the Florida Keys, and is shared beyond the Keys by members who email it to family and friends “up north” (this Flotilla has many members who are “snowbirds”).

3. In addition to being the current Flotilla Staff Officer for Information Services and Publications, Mr. Kittsmeier has served in a variety of other positions including Vice Flotilla Commander and also Flotilla Commander. She is always willing to contribute where needed. The attached sample newsletters are two examples of her hard work and dedication.

4. I certify that all the editorial, proofreading, organizing and printing work covered by this recommendation was produced by Ms. Kittsmeier during the competition calendar year.

Enclosures: (1) Work Sample: BIG PINE KEY CHANNEL MARKER, April 2012
(2) Work Sample: BIG PINE KEY CHANNEL MARKER, June 2012
Member Training Report March, 2013

Members of Flotilla 13-03 completed training in March as follows:

8 hour TCT - Diane & Jim Adam, Dottie & Tom Anderson, Jo & Virgil Allmond, Susan Harfield, Lynda & Neil Haring

ISC 210 Jo Allmond and Ken Nelson
ISC 200 Dottie Anderson
AUXPAT Lynda & Neil Haring

In addition, there have been several on the water and shoreside Sessions aimed at getting several of our new and existing members ready for a QE session in April to either qualify or re-qualify for boat crew or coxswain.

Dick McCausland  FSO-CM

There were no radio checks this month as we are down to 4 radios and Bud Holloway is very ill and one of our radio operators is out of town. At this time, we have only Don Kittsmiller and myself with radios. We have removed the inoperable radio in the Flotilla Trailer and it has been replaced with a new one.
April 12, 2013

The photo above shows Captain Allwyn Young, Commander United States Coast Guard, Sector Key West presenting the Coast Guard Meritorius Team Commendation to Jerry Metcalf, Flotilla 13-01, Frank Fasano, Don Kittsmiller and Robert McNamee of flotilla 13-03. Also receiving this award is Nick McManus, who was not present to receive the award.

The following two pages show the Team Award, as well as the writeup which gives a little background of what the Hawkeye program was all about.

All the members who continued to do the watch-standing for the Hawkeye Program, were proud to do so, as they did feel they could contribute in some small way to the Port Security and hopefully, served as relief in some small way for the Coasties.
Hawkeye Team award

The Commandant of the United States Coast Guard takes pleasure in presenting the COAST GUARD MERITORIOUS TEAM COMMENDATION to:

COAST GUARD SECTOR KEY WEST
“HAWKEYE TEAM”

for services set forth in the following:

CITATION:

“For exceptionally meritorious service from July 2009 through January 2013 while serving as a HAWKEYE Sensor Watchstander in the Coast Guard Sector Key West Command Center, Key West, Florida. Members of the HAWKEYE TEAM each logged between 80 to 1,250 hours of watchstanding, for a total of 2,254 hours in the operation and monitoring of the HAWKEYE Sensor System. They functioned as an integral part of the Command Center watch in contributing to the prosecution of Coast Guard missions in the one of the Coast Guard’s busiest and most challenging operating areas. Watchstanders used the HAWKEYE radars and cameras, as well as numerous databases and reference systems including Marine Information for Safety and Law Enforcement, MarView and the Geographic Information System, to detect, sort, identify, report and record thousands of vessels transiting the Florida Straits. Members of the HAWKEYE TEAM made operational contributions in the mission areas of Search and Rescue, Ports, Waterways and Coastal Security, and Law Enforcement, substantially adding to Sector Key West’s maritime domain awareness. Specifically, watchstanders detected distressed mariners, vessels in peril, irregularly functioning navigational aids, and violations for a variety of highly consequential United States federal laws. The dedication, pride, and professionalism displayed by all members of the HAWKEYE TEAM are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.

For the Commandant,

[Signature]

AYLWIN S. YOUNG, SR.
Captain, U. S. Coast Guard
Commander, Coast Guard Sector Key West
Department of Homeland Security
United States Coast Guard

Award of Operational Merit

Donald E. Kittsmiller
Flotilla 13-03

In recognition of outstanding operational performance
in support of the
United States Coast Guard Auxiliary
and its purposes.

AYLWYN S. YOUNG, SR., Captain, USCG
Commander, USCG Sector Key West
28 March 2013
Don Kittsmiller 13-03 accepts the USCG Award of Operational Merit from Captain Allwynn Young, Commander USCG Sector Key West

CITATION

TO ACCOMPANY

THE COAST GUARD AUXILIARY MEDAL OF

OPERATIONAL MERIT

TO

DONALD E. KITTSMILLER

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

Mr. Donald E. KITTSMILLER is cited for outstanding operational performance while serving as Senior Watchstander and Trainer for the HAWKEYE Sensor System in the Coast Guard Sector Key West Command Center, Key West, Florida during the period of July 2009 through January 2013. After receiving HAWKEYE system instruction from the Coast Guard Command and Control Center, he immediately recruited and trained a team of Coast Guard Auxiliaries to operate the HAWKEYE Sensor Suite. He assembled a team of five dedicated volunteers that logged 2,254 hours operating and monitoring the HAWKEYE Sensor System. Of particular note, he served 1,250 hours, more than 50 percent of the hours volunteered. His accomplishments as a watchstander included using the HAWKEYE sensors to detect a swimmer in distress in Key West Harbor and discovering a vessel moored at Stock Island with munitions on board without proper authorization. In addition, he located and identified hundreds of vessels transiting the Florida Straits, and checked to ensure their Maritime Mobile Service Identity numbers, Automatic Identification System codes, vessel names, registrations and other identifying information were accurate. His meritorious actions resulted in at least one life saved, and the contributions of the team he built enhanced the Command Center’s maritime domain awareness in the Lower Keys and Florida Straits. Mr. KITTSMILLER’s diligence, performance and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.
The officer's meeting opened at 1810 with Vice Flotilla Commander reporting on the recent leadership presentation at the Marathon government center. He felt that the District did an outstanding job in presenting a motivational forum and Virgil assured us that he would definitely push the officers and other members to attend next year.

The flotilla was recognized at the Division meeting for our work in establishing the GAP (galley assistance program) several years ago and our current participation in the New AUXCHEF program. Our flotilla was also mentioned for the huge number of bags of trash removed from the local beaches. Nick McManus is still pursuing the purchase of the Kayak and Canoe stickers, even though he is way up north in Kentucky. we appreciate his continued help.

There will be a luncheon & dedication this Friday of the newly renovated Chief's Mess at Sector Key west, and they have several awards to present to our team members.

FSO/FN, Martin Mara clarified our status as a tax exempt association Under a 501C3.

Vice flotilla Commander, Allmond stated he has asked Diane Adam and Lois Gerig to assume responsibility of the nominating committee for this year's nominations for Vice Commander and Commander,

It was also mentioned that our Flotilla is being recognized as having more BS&S class students than the other Flotillas combined. Such a noteworthy tribute to our program is a direct reflection on our FSO-PE Officer, Robert Eichholtz and his hours of hard work.

Friends of Bud Holloway wish him strength as he battles serious health issues. We miss you Bud. Officers meeting closed at 1855.

(Minutes continue on next page)
Page Two Minutes for 13-03  April 11, 2013 meeting

The regular meeting was called to order at 1930 with the pledge of Allegiance. Commander Robert McNamee called the meeting to order and minutes from last meeting were read and accepted as read.

Officer's reports were heard and items of interest are as follows. Virgil reports that 4 members have been signed up and finger-printed. There are also 3 additional recruits in the works. Jan brought us up to date about the confusion of the D7 entry of our latest 8 hour TCT class. Don talked about the Commercial Exam program that will be taught by retired Chief Jeff Lewis.

The financial report was given and there appears to be no major changes in the numbers. Our CD has been renewed. Tom circulated an inventory report of the materials we have in stock. He will have them with him at the May meeting, then will be going north. Jim Adam brought everyone up to date on the AUXCHEF and the chief's mess, etc.

Lois Gerig gave everyone a heads up about saving items for next year's garage sale. Bob Morrow reported that they have installed a handle on the antenna on the Flotilla trailer, so that we will not have to use a ladder to put up the antenna. Diane reported year to date vessel exams are 226. Donna Moore reports that we had 12 marine visits since the March meeting. Two more beach cleanups are set for April 16 and April 30. Call Donna for the exact time and place, as in the hot months it goes much faster with many hands. The Sunday Rendezvous will be at Dottie and Tom Andersons, April 14.

Awards were given to Diane Adam and Dick McCausland for VSC/RBSVP. Meeting adjourned at 2034.
Jim Adam - Chef’s Mess Project - Sector Key West

This time consuming project was completed by our very dedicated group of volunteers. Starting with the design of the area was Nick McManus, Don Kittsmiller and Jim Adam. Jim and Don selected appliances and materials at Home Depot. Martin Mara and Don picked up and delivered the appliances from Marathon Home Depot who gave us a substantial discount on prices. (Thanks to the Manager, Scott Corbin). Bob McNamee, Neil Fox, Tom Anderson and other members, gutted the Chief's mess area.

A serving bar of 20 feet was constructed to offer a dining area next to the galley. The finishing was completed by our crew without their foreman, due to my illness. Once I was better, the crew covered Key West looking for the final trim to match the bronze bar front. We were successful at Anchor Aluminum on Stock Island. The owner special ordered our trim so that our completion date was done April 4, 2013. On April 12, 2013 a dedication (Thank You) program was set up by the Chiefs at Sector and photos follow showing The wonderful spaghetti lunch & an award ceremony.

Above left Chef Mess Team: Don Kittsmiller, Bob McNamee, Neil Fox, Tom Anderson, Jim Adam and Martin Mara. Above right is Chief Will Hillyer, AUXLO, Sector Key west, serving as Master of Ceremony.

See Next Page for more photos:
More Photos from the Chief’s Mess Dedication and luncheon April 12.

Above Photo shows Chief Duncan McAndrews, Sector Key West with a group of prospective new Chiefs, who did the cooking.

Above is a photo of Lt. Dietz, Chaplain, Sector Key West and Dan Slyker, who worked with Don Kittsmiller, Nick McManus and others at Hawkeye, Sector Key West.

Finished Chief’s Bar shows results of weeks of work.
FOR THE GOOD OF THE FLOTILLA:

Let us all give a message to our friend and fellow member, Bud Holloway, who is facing some very tough times with his health problems. Bud is a “tough character with a soft heart” that all of us have had a “Love - Hate” relationship with. (speaking for myself). Let us lift him up in prayer, thoughts and deeds so he will know that we are on his side and miss him out there barking “orders” We do love Ya, Bud!!

PHOTOS FROM OUR APRIL 14 RENDEZVOUS AT THE ANDERSONS
Delicious ham with all the side dishes we could hold, fun & friendship!

Above Left: Our motley crew enjoying good food an socializing.
Middle Above: Jo Allmond, John Rhode & Don Kittsmiller.

Below Left: forefront, Bob Holum, Joe Gerig, Jim and Diane Adam.
Below right: Diane Adam, Lois Gerig and Tom Anderson (host)