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Newsletter of Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 4, Des Moines, Iowa

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FLOTILLA 4
PO BOX 93621
DES MOINES, IA
50393
WWW.FLOTILLA4.ORG

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Flotilla Nets New Boat Crew



Norma Newton (left) and Wendy Faganel (right) Deploy the Lady Grace Tow Bridal for a Stern Tow Evolution

(U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Photo / photo by John Halbrook)



The Lady Grace on Patrol During the Boat Crew Qualification Exam Session

(U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Photo / photo by John Halbrook)

After months of intensive training, Flotilla 4 now has a new boat crew ready and qualified to go. With spring weather in April, the trainees went on the water for a weekend of on-the-water training to take the skills learned in the classroom and dry dock and put them to action on the lake.

For the past few months, students have learned about towing other boats, rescuing people from the water, navigating, and other basic seamanship skills. Trainees have performed training during the day and at night. They trained in dry dock and on the water. They performed a boat crew swim in a pool to prove that they could stay afloat for 15 minutes.

This month Division Qualification Examiner, Pauline Longnecker, came to the area and was able to put almost half of our trainees through their paces. Travis Daniels was tested and qualified as a coxswain on the Lady Grace. Chuck Brudtkuhl, John Halbrook, Doug Jansen, Paul Faganel, Wendy Faganel and Norma Newton tested for and became qualified as boat crew members.

The qualification exam consisted of a dockside oral exam of each trainee to ensure that they had a basic understanding of the boat crew skills. Then it was time to go on the water and do skills demonstrations. Trainees participated in stern tow, side tow, and man overboard evolutions to demonstrate their understanding of many different skills.

After several different sorties, the trainees were able to go out and prove their worth. There are still several flotilla members who are preparing for the next round of qualification exams so that they too will be qualified. By the end of the season, the flotilla should have a large pool of crew members and more coxswains to draw from.

Iowa's Volunteer Lifesavers!



Admiral Thad Allen
USCG Commandant
Official CG Photo

Being Semper Paratus Takes Practice

“Guest Post by Captain Mike Mohn, Chief, Office of Contingency Exercises (CG-535)

With hurricane season right around the corner, Coast Guard commands across the nation will soon be reviewing and readying their response plans. Part of that cycle will be a series of exercises that will ensure the Coast Guard is in fighting trim. In support of our overall preparedness goals, the Coast Guard has undertaken an effort to improve its corps of exercise professionals. The Coast Guard recently graduated its 115th federally-certified Master Exercise Practitioner as a result of a growing partnership with FEMA's Emergency Management Institute in Emmitsburg, Maryland. The Coast Guard is now the 2nd leading federal agency in number of graduates (Customs & Border Protection is 1st).

For the past two years the Office of Contingency Exercises (CG-535) has sponsored special convenings of the Master Exercise Practitioner Program (MEPP) course to raise the proficiency of Coast Guard Preparedness Staff nationwide. The MEPP program is the senior-most course offered by the federal government for the design and conduct of exercises. The Coast Guard and the network of port communities we serve benefit from having this expert cadre distributed throughout the operational Coast Guard. MEPP skills complement the various Coast Guard and DoD preparedness courses taken by our planning and exercise staffs. The combined competencies guide our unit commands to more meaningful exercises that improve preparedness for All Threats - All Hazards.

So, what does a MEPP course entail? Through a comprehensive series of three one-week sessions (that include professional demonstrations in between), the MEPP students develop hands-on expertise in multiyear exercise program management, design and conduct of tabletop, functional, and full scale exercises. The MEPP course is based on the DHS Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP), which provides a common approach for all levels of government. Students receive a healthy understanding of the many emergency management disciplines of federal, state, and local agencies that have key roles during incident responses. The MEPP course is taught by FEMA at either the Emergency Management Institute or the Center for Domestic Preparedness (Anniston, AL). As Coast Guard graduate numbers increased, subsequent courses included Coast Guard MEPP graduates as instructors, working in tandem with FEMA instructors, to tailor the curriculum to CG-specific examples and topics.

The Coast Guard exercise program plans to continue this beneficial partnership with FEMA, with the goal of providing each of our major field commands (Sectors, Districts and Areas) with a certified Practitioner. Additionally, all Exercise Support Team professionals will be sent to this course of instruction. To date, we are 95% complete in fulfilling that goal. Additionally, we will continue to pursue opportunities for our field commands to assist local agency partners obtain seats in MEPP to increase our interoperability, interagency coordination, and collective contingency preparedness.”

Coast Guard Commandant Thad Allen

[iCommandant Blog](#)

The Bridge

A busy month has went by and the official “boating season” has not even begun yet. This month our major accomplishment was the qualification of new boat crew. These new boat crew members: Chuck Brudtkuhl, John Halbrook, Doug Jansen, Paul Faganel, Wendy Faganel, and Norma Newton did us proud. They studied hard, prepared hard, and worked hard to show Pauline that they knew their jobs. Great job! Now Mr. Jansen will work to get the remaining coxswain and boat crew trainees ready for their QE session in June.

After that hard work, we are not able to celebrate long. With National Boating Safety Week just complete, we had many prevention oriented activities to attend and an operational season to now begin on the water.

With the new operational season, we will have a more qualified and better prepared Flotilla 4 to put forth to the boating public and show them that we are here for their benefit.



*Travis Daniels, Flotilla Commander
(U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Photo /
photo by Suzanne Tomlinson)*

Vessel Safety Checks Off And Running

The flotilla received its first allotment of Vessel Safety Check decals and has been off to the lake to start doing inspections. This year John Hawkinson, Ralph Tomlinson, and Suzanne Tomlinson have all completed VSCs. To date the flotilla has conducted over 20 inspections and has 2 members who have met the requirements to become Vessel Examiners; Chuck Brudtkuhl and Doug Jansen.

This year we are trying to increase the number of VSCs conducted. In 2008 the flotilla is credited with 114 VSCs. This year we want to exceed 200 VSCs.

To do this we are scheduling more dates to conduct VSCs and will also try to do them on our operational weekends.

We will also need more qualified Vessel Examiners. If you are interested in becoming a Vessel Examiner, please contact Suzanne Tomlinson our FSO-VE. The primary requirement is to pass the written test with a score of 90% and conduct five VSCs with a qualified Vessel Examiner.



*Ralph Tomlinson conducts a Vessel Safety Check At Lake View Ramp
(U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Photo / photo by Suzanne Tomlinson)*

Life Jacket Zone Ramp Painting



“This will help to remind boaters to protect everyone aboard their boat by wearing life jackets.”
 - Wendy Faganel

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary have partnered in a program to increase public awareness of boating safety. This spring, signs are being painted on all DNR maintained boat ramps reminding boaters that life jackets need to be worn when boating.

The signs declare the ramp to be a "life jacket zone". The first set of Coast Guard Auxiliary volunteers, Flotilla 4 of Des Moines, joined Susan and Donise of the Iowa DNR at Big Creek State Park to begin the painting project. After dividing up the paint, templates, food and other essentials, two groups set out to various state parks. Susan pointed out which parks and where each boat ramp was located in the park.

When painting just the third sign of many, a boater and his son appeared at the ramp for a little fishing. They both donned their jackets, and Alex Whitney modeled his for the group. Remember that Iowa's new law is that any child 12 or younger is required to wear a life jacket.

“Painting a large 'Life Jacket Zone' sign directly on the ramps will help to remind boaters to protect everyone aboard their boat by wearing life jackets.” says Auxilarist Wendy Faganel, Auxiliary project coordinator.

The painting lasted until nightfall, with over 24 ramps being painted today with more to come at a later date.



Susan Stocker (standing) of the Iowa DNR supervises Auxilarists (left to right) Phil Patterson, Paul Faganel, and Chuck Brudtkuhl as they paint a "life jacket zone" sign at Big Creek State Park. (U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Photo / photo by Suzanne Tomlinson)



Auxilarists Wendy Faganel (above) and Phil Patterson (below) paint the yellow base for a "Life Jacket Zone" sign at Big Creek State Park. (U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Photo / photo by Suzanne Tomlinson)

Iowa House of Representatives Honors Flotilla 4

Many leaders from the Iowa National Guard first became aware of the existence of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary when we were providing protection for the public at the scene of the spillway to Saylorville Dam which they happened to pass on their way to the Joint Forces Headquarters. Later they saw us again when we helped staff the State Emergency Operations Center with LTJG Townsen from Sector Upper Mississippi. They were astonished to learn that we were volunteers who were donating our time and talent without expectation of compensation.

Representative Tymeson, who sponsored the resolution in the Iowa Legislature is also Brigadier General Jodi S. Tymeson of the Iowa National Guard. We appreciate the continued support of General Tymeson for our activities.

The certificate reads:

“It having been made known to the House of Representatives by its Honorable Representative Jodi S. Tymeson, that the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary 085-33-04 (Flotilla 4) deserves recognition for its voluntary service, staff, support and assistance to the United States Coast Guard, the Iowa National Guard and the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division at the State Emergency Operations Center during the Floods of 2008.

Now, therefore, in consideration of the foregoing, the House of Representatives does hereby extend its appreciation and thanks them for their professionalism, dedication, and outstanding performance of duty.”



House of Representatives Certificate of Recognition
(U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Photo / photo by Doug Jansen)



Nick Critelli presents the certificate of recognition to Travis Daniels from the Iowa House of Representatives
(U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Photo / photo by Doug Jansen)



Flotilla 4, Des Moines, Iowa

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Travis Daniels
 Flotilla Commander
 fc@flotilla4.org

MAY 2009						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

June 7 —Red Rock Day—Boating Class

Sunday: 1000—1800 hours

UOD: ODU

June 13-14 —Flotilla Training Weekend

Saturday: 0900—1800 hours—Operations

Sunday: 0800—1200 hours—Training

Sunday: 1400—1600 hours—Business Meeting

UOD: ODU

June 20—OPTEx / SAR Drill—Omaha

Saturday: 0830—1200 hours—OPTEx

Afternoon: SAR Exercise with Other Agencies

UOD: ODU

June 20 —Water Safety Night at the Iowa Cubs

Saturday: 1700– 2000 hours

Water Safety Activities

UOD: ODU

July 3-4 —July 4th Safety Events

Both Days: 1500—2300 hours—Operations

Both Days: 1200—1800 hours—Vessel Safety Checks

UOD: ODU

July Business Meeting—Webinar TBD

JUNE 2009						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

JULY 2009						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

July 25 —Oak Grove Beach Team Challenge with USACE

Saturday: 1200—1600

Water Safety Activities

UOD: ODU

September 25-26 —8WR FALCON

Branson, Missouri

<http://users.mo-net.com/district8wr/members/index.htm#Fall>

UOD: Tropical Blue Long

