



Whittier Soundings



Whittier Flotilla 02-04, District 17, Alaska

January 2006 Sig Murphy FC, Russ Lyday VFC, Cathey Sterling FSO-PB Volume XVI Issue 1

2006 District Conference

The annual training conference and awards banquet is in Valdez, Alaska, February 16 through 20. The conference is offering four training tracks this year. Tract A offers classes in operations. Tract B offers classes in Member Training. Track C and D offer classes in Marine Safety.

The conference offers many opportunities to meet other auxiliary members in our district, members of DIRAUX staff and the dignitaries and guests invited to this year's conference.

During the conference several activities in addition to the training are scheduled. Friday is opening ceremonies, the awards luncheon and a reception. Saturday starts the training offerings. You may choose to follow one tract or visit various specific classes to fulfill your learning goals in the Auxiliary.

Saturday night is the traditional "fun night". This year the theme is "Alan's Island". Suggested attire for the night is your best "shipwreck" attire. Fun night traditionally includes dinner, fun activities and contests.

Sunday morning continues with the training. The Valdez Unit tours, hazard awareness training and the premier of the new Hypothermia Video are offered Sunday afternoon. Sunday night is the Annual Awards Banquet.

Transportation will be provided from Anchorage to Valdez and back. Requests for transportation must be in by

January 31. Be sure to get your conference registration sent in right away and make your lodging arrangements before February 10. The Coast Guard Galley will open its doors to us for several meals. Sign up for the Friday morning breakfast when requesting transportation. You may sign up for Saturday and Sunday brunch/lunch when checking in for the conference in Valdez. The meals served at the Galley are reasonably priced and the food is good.

The conference is open to all auxiliary members and an excellent source of training and fellowship.

Whittier NWR Frequency Change

At 12:00 P.M. (Noon) A.S.T. on March 1, 2006, the frequency of the Whittier NWR transmitter will change from 162.400 MHz to 162.475 MHz, because of signal interference. Channel numbering schemes vary by equipment manufacturer. **The two most popular schemes will require receiver channel changes from WX2 to WX3, or from A to D.** Listeners are advised to review the operating manual for their receiver to find the channel on their equipment corresponding to the new frequency of 162.475 MHz for the Whittier NWR transmitter. (01/12/06)

*From the National Weather Service
Alaska Region Headquarters Website*



Navigation Rules

Dennis Thaute of Homer taught Navigation Rules of the Road Friday evening, January 13, through Sunday, January 15. Seven members attended, five for their first attempt and two renewing.



Ten members of the active duty Coast Guard attended the class also. Dennis takes students through all the Rules of the Road breaking it down into manageable segments.



During the course several practice tests are given allowing the student to get familiar with the testing format.



After each test the information is reviewed and explained in more detail. Thank you to Dennis for instructing the class. Thanks to Gary Taylor for administering the test and thanks to Rae De Ley for scheduling the class and providing refreshments.

Photos by Stewart Sterling

Public Affairs

Boat shows are one venue for us to promote the Auxiliary to the public. Taking a turn at the Auxiliary Booth gives you the opportunity to meet members of the public and inform them about what we do.

We encourage safe boating by our knowledge and sharing information about the Auxiliary's boating safety classes and vessel exams. It is a great way to remind folks in the market for a boat that safety is their most important concern.

This month you have two opportunities to volunteer at the Auxiliary booth.

The Dewey's Boat Show is currently at Northway Mall.

The Anchors Aweigh Boat Show also at the Northway Mall will be held February 2 through 12.

Be sure to contact Kathy Lyday to sign up for time at the booth.

Member Training

The Auxiliary Communication class will be offered Saturday February 11. Anyone interested in taking the class should contact FSO-MT Rae De Ley.

For anyone working on Crew or Coxswain, the Land Based Training will be held Saturday, March 18, at Mark Poe's office. Contact Rae De Ley or show up for the chance to work through some of the crew qualifications.

Be sure to bring your book for any sign offs. We will have stations to work with marlinspike, navigation and other qualifications that don't require being underway to be completed.

It is a great way to get some of the qualifications completed before the boating season and allows more time to devote to the on water qualifications.



Historical Notes

Remote USCG Auxiliary Station

The United States Coast Guard has lifted a page from the book of our friends in the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary to set up an independent station manned by members of the USCG Auxiliary at Whittier on Prince William Sound in Alaska. This is a remote area not easily covered by the US Coast Guard and the new small boat station there, manned exclusively by members of the Auxiliary, provides 24/7 coverage.

Prince William Sound encompasses approximately 35,000 square miles and has nearly 7,000 miles of shoreline. Whittier, with a population of 200, is the only settlement in the Western half of the sound. Prior to the establishment of the Auxiliary small boat station, the nearest Coast Guard assets were a Marine Safety Office in Valdez and a cutter with a seasonal helicopter in Cordova-about 95 miles from Whittier. The opening of a new road and tunnel in 2000 provided access to this area by thousands of recreational boaters. The Auxiliary small boat station was set up using a retired Alaska railroad caboose to serve as a station and a USCG 25' UTL "SAFEBOAT".



Photo by Stewart Sterling

The Auxiliary coxswains and crew underwent additional training in Juneau to qualify for the operation of this high performance craft and then they were off to conduct operations on Prince William Sound. The establishment of the Auxiliary small boat station represented a vote of confidence on the part of the Coast Guard and a readiness to undertake greater responsibilities on the part of the local flotilla. It has been a success for all.

Article from the fall 2001 newsletter of the Association for Rescue at Sea (AFRAS)

COAST GUARD AUXILIARY



17th District

<http://a1700204.uscgaux.info>

<http://a170.uscgaux.info>

Do you have an interesting story? Do you know any event or item that should be in the newsletter?

Be sure to give your articles, suggestions, photos or other newsworthy information to your publications officer for the flotilla newsletter.

If you have an outstanding article we will pass it along the chain of command for national publications.

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