



The Public Affairs UPDATE

January 1999

Como.Ted Neale Jr., DC-A

VOL V No. 1

Otis W. Littleton, BC-ANN

214 Beaver Dr., Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-2501

Tel: (717)-761-7858 ;

FAX: (717)-761-2428 ;

E-mail: otismcnbg@worldnet.att.net

PHOTO CONTEST

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary National Photo Contest was launched **01 January 1999** and will remain open to **01 August 1999**. Every Auxiliarist and members of their families are eligible.

In August 1999 entries submitted will be reviewed by a panel of judges made up of personnel from the Auxiliary Department of Public Affairs, and from the Office of Auxiliary, Public Affairs and Audio Visual Staffs at Coast Guard Headquarters.

There will be **four award categories**:

- **Recreational Boating Safety.** Includes traditional Auxiliary Activities conducted on behalf of Federal, State and local governments to improve the knowledge, skills, and operating environment of the recreational boater.
- **Support to Coast Guard and States.** Includes many new as well as traditional roles in which Auxiliary members help the Coast Guard and States in a multitude of operational activities and in a wide variety of traditional/non-traditional CG administrative activities.
- **Member Services.** Includes Auxiliary personnel support and assistance provided in several personnel and recruiting missions which are essential to the health and vitality of the CG.
- **Fellowship.** Includes images that recognize the importance of this aspect of volunteer participation and encourage a close relationship between Auxiliary members and all parts of Team Coast Guard.

Entries must be **original work, not previously published**. They may be prints, slides or digital photography, black and white or color. The prints should not exceed 5" x 7". They need

not be mounted. **Each entry should include a caption describing the action, names of persons in the entry and the unit identification.**

Entries must be submitted to arrive on or before **01 August, 1999**. There is no limit on the number of entries that can be submitted. There will be three winning entries in each of the categories. The winning entries will be displayed at NACON 99 and be officially recognized by the Auxiliary National Vice Commodore for Coast Guard and State Support and the Assistant Commandant for Operations of the United States Coast Guard. All winning entries will be published in the **Navigator**.

Entries should be sent to :

COMDT (G-OCX)

2100 Second Street, S.W.

Washington, D.C. 20593-0001

The **Contest Theme** is **The Auxiliary Mission Today**. Images tell the story and the objective is to illustrate to the public the value of the Auxiliary and to make them aware of what we do. The photos will be used during speaking engagements throughout the Coast Guard, in educational presentations, news media and in official Coast Guard publications and presentations.

You don't have to be a professional photographer to win in this contest. You do need a camera and a photo opportunity. Any aim and shoot camera will do.

The secret is to have your camera with you at the ready at all times, especially while you are in and about the business of the Auxiliary. Take it on patrols, VE and MDV missions, PE classes, MS missions and fellowship.

It is your Auxiliary and you ought to know best how to tell your story best with pictures. Let's hear those shutters clicking out there. ☺

The New LLC

The initials "LLC" refer to the **Legislative Liaison Committee**. It is the official role of this committee to keep track of legislative initiatives that impact upon the many missions of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Under this program of the National Board, each District Commodore is in the process of appointing a Legislative Liaison for each state within the District.

Such a program also impacts upon the function and duties of the Department of Public Affairs and appointed Public Affairs Staff officers at each level of the Auxiliary. Both the National Commodore and the Commandant have expressed their interest in keeping the public informed about the contributions that we as volunteer members of the Auxiliary make to augment the missions of the Coast Guard.

Part of the "**Public**" is the members of the various state legislative bodies and the Representatives and Senators of the United States Congress. We have a duty to keep them informed too.

While we are informing them, we must also be mindful of our organizational responsibility as a part of "Team Coast Guard" that unless directed by the Commandant or the NACO, we are not to advocate the passage or defeat of specific legislation regardless of how favorable or unfavorable we may perceive it to be.

How do we keep our elected representatives informed and what do we inform them about?

Keeping our elected representative informed can be as easy as adding them to the mailing list of your unit publication. It may also, on occasion, involve specific communications to inform them of official policy

LLC Program from page 1

statements of the Auxiliary or the Coast Guard on legislative initiatives as directed. **Keeping our elected representatives informed of our activities and policies is an important Public Affairs responsibility.**

Also, keep in mind that our meetings are open to the public and that our elected representatives, Federal, State and Local, should be extended invitations to attend our meetings to learn first hand about our volunteer missions in support of the Coast Guard. While this is especially important in areas where the Coast Guard may have high visibility, it is equally as important in those areas of our great nation where the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary is the only *visible* presence manifested of the Coast Guard.

As Public Affairs officers, we must keep ourselves informed of developments within the Auxiliary and the Coast Guard so that we can report on our activities accurately and with our best foot forward. It is no longer satisfactory to sit back and wait for the PE Staff officer to ask us to get out a release on upcoming PE classes. We owe it to the Auxiliary and ourselves to do more, **to become professionals** in our duties.

Our mission as a PA officer is to **promote the Auxiliary public image, our programs and our role as a part of Team Coast Guard**, utilizing all legitimate print, broadcast and electronic media available to us. We also have the responsibility to sharpen our communications skills to enhance our capability of performing our mission with great praise. After all, our successes will be the successes of the Auxiliary and all we represent and do. Let us succeed.



Distribution: All National EXCOM; Each District EXCOM; all DCPs, DSOs-PA, DSOs-PB, All SOs-PA and SOs, PB, FCs and FSOs-PA and FSOs-PB via District DIRAUX.

AIRS

“AIRS” is the acronym for the **Auxiliary Internet Resources Site**. This is a new program to facilitate the development and maintenance of a free, posted web site for Auxiliary units that do not now have a web-site or the technical skills to build one on their own.

The effective use of an Internet Web Site can serve the Division and Flotilla as a great Public Affairs and internal communications tool. Too often, individual web sites have been nothing more than a roster of elected and appointed staff officer. Such sites fail to contribute as a communications enhancer.

While such sites will be admittedly short on storage capacity, there will be sufficient space to allow them to be updated at least once monthly to provide effective communications to unit members regarding local news and issues. This may be another area in which the Public Affairs Officer may be able to contribute. It is certainly worth looking into.

The MS Staff Officer

Recently, letters of appointment and a Job description for Division and Flotilla Marine Safety and Environmental Protection Staff Officers were promulgated and published on the Auxiliary Web Site. The responsibilities and duties of this new Auxiliary Staff Officer position are indeed awesome.

This new staff position provides the Auxiliary the opportunity to fully implement the new, broader role for the Auxiliary as provided for in the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 1996.

Among other things, with the new law, the traditional Auxiliary missions have been expanded to include greater Auxiliary involvement in Emergency Response.

For the Auxiliarist this means:

- **An enhanced sense of value to the local community and to the Coast Guard;**
- **Challenging real world problems;**
- **New focus for training and recruiting;**
- **increased credibility for the entire service;**
- **Strengthened unit leadership and confidence.**

For Coast Guard Commanders:

- **Quick access to 130 additional aircraft their pilots and crews; 6,700 surface vessels and their trained crew members and 2,200 radio facilities with their trained watchstanders;**
- **Resources in remote areas;**
- **Staff and infrastructure augmentation; and**
- **Local knowledge.**

This is a true win-win situation! What has all this to do with Public Affairs? There are an estimated 35,000 dedicated Auxiliary members of Team Coast Guard. In addition to the Coxswains and crew members, pilots and observers, Vessel Examiners, Communications specialists, ATON verifies, there are a number of **Public Affairs Specialists**.

Under the ICS, Incident Command System, adopted by the Commandant with the promulgation of **COMDTINST 3120.14**, this plan is scheduled to be fully phased in for all USCG emergency response in 1999. The plan will be used to manage both emergency and non-emergency events, including search and rescue.

There is provision in each ICS Command Staff for **Information Officers, Safety Officers and Liaison officers**. Properly trained Auxiliary Public Affairs officers may be ideally suited to serve with the ICS Command Staff to handle public information responsibilities for the Coast Guard under a unified command situation, especially in smaller Coast Guard Units where the Coast Guard may not have a full time Public Affairs Specialist on scene.

The Auxiliarist Public Affairs Officer can fit into this program and will have opportunities as the plan matures to obtain training, both general and position specific, in order to fill positions on Incident Management teams.

This is indeed a new vista for the Auxiliary and we should organize and plan to meet the challenges and opportunities it provides to us. ☺