



Mike Shea Receives Coveted TRIDENT Award

In addition to the swearing in of the newly elected officers, this year's Change of Watch Ceremony on December 3rd saw one more honor bestowed. Mike Shea received the coveted TRIDENT Award, a distinction held by few Auxiliarists nationwide, and the first awarded within our District. Mike received this honor for his contributions to the Coast Guard's Marine Safety and Prevention Department where he assists in investigating, and in litigating claims and suits for the United States Coast Guard. In addition to his work for this department, Mike completed numerous courses and earned several qualifications in order to be eligible for the Award. Some of these courses include Marine Safety and Environmental Protection, Good Mate, several levels of ICS training, and Hazardous Materials Transportation. Some of his qualifications include Uninspected Passenger Vessel Examiner, Marine Safety Watch-



Mike Shea, FC FL 79, displays the TRIDENT pin on his lapel. Photo courtesy of Jerry Routt, FL 75.



stander, and Marine Safety Administration and Management.

Flotilla's Auxiliarist of the Year



Dottie Riley and Tom Elarbee receive Auxiliarist of the Year Award from Mike Shea, FC, during the Christmas Party, also the last meeting of the year. Photo by Jerry Routt, FL 75.

Several years ago, Amos Johnson started the tradition of Auxiliarist of the Year Award at Flotilla level to honor members chosen by the Commander whose contributions to the flo-

tilla truly went 'above and beyond' expectations. While the award was meant to honor a single Auxiliarist, Mike Shea struggled with many names. After whittling the list down to two members, he finally chose to confer the honor to both members of the flotilla, Thomas Elarbee and Dottie Riley. Their names shall appear on a plaque along with the names of all those who both proceeded, and will follow them in the years to come. In his final message as Flotilla Commander, Mike explains his rationale for his selections. (See, "From the Helm", p.2) While it is difficult for this writer, one of the honored recipients of the award, to offer an unbiased comment on my receipt, Tom Elarbee unquestionably deserves it! Tom surely must have nerves of steel to naysay innumerable great proposals for which the funds are simply not available— our voice of sanity.



Flotilla Officers

Commander:

J. Michael Shea

Vice Commander:

Newton Anderson

Finance Officer:

Thomas Elarbee

Secretary & Publications:

Dorothy Joan Riley

Communications & Operations:

David Rusinko

Information Services:

Frank Ansel

Aids to Navigation:

Betty Hagan

Communications Services:

Kathi Kruczek

Career Counselor:

Robert Bonanno

Marine Safety:

Lawrence Leduc

Materials:

Richard Rioles

Member Training:

Cliff Martin

Public Affairs & Program Visitor:

Bradley Ware

Public Education:

Theresa (Bunny) Johnson

Personnel Services:

Burnie Wilhelm

Vessel Examinations:

Patrick Baldwin

From the Helm



Well, the time has come for me to pass the command of this Flotilla on to the next person. You all know it takes a lot of work to have the "Best Flotilla on Tampa Bay", and it is only with the help of each of you that it has been such a good year. It was understandably, a very difficult job to

choose a person to receive the Commander's Award, the *Auxiliarist of the Year 2005*.

Amos and Bunny lead the public boating education program. They received a great deal of support from Frank Ansel, Ben Drenth and Steve Plass. Betty Hagan moved us toward improving our building. Dave Rusinko and Tim Manning took on painting the interior of the building. Kathi Kruczek improved our already great web page, and many others made outstanding contributions.

When, however, I sat down to pick *one* person who had gone 'beyond the call of duty'; someone who assumed a responsibility they certainly did not need, and yet did an outstanding job, I got down to two people: Tom Elarbee and Dottie Riley.

Tom took on the unpleasant task of getting our finances in order. With my support, Tom asked the Division to help us with building expenses; especially those expenses that our Flotilla incurred as a result of supporting Division activities. Tom succeeded in this over some very strong objects from various parties. Because he was persistent, logical and very polite, Tom was able to present our position persuasively and succeeded in gaining the financial support that we needed. We presently have a much more workable arrangement with the Division, which has an office here in our building. Tom also keeps us on the straight and narrow when it comes to our expenditures, to the point that at least once he was described as, "down-right irritating"- as only a good treasurer

can be described! Despite this, he did the job and then some- he was not satisfied to simply do his job. He went beyond the call of duty, and we are all better for it. Thanks Tom!

As for Dottie Riley, most of you know that she came to us from another flotilla. She was the Secretary of that flotilla as well, and was in the middle of a painful personality conflict. While out on a safety patrol last year, Dottie confided in me that she was considering resigning from the Auxiliary, I suggested to her that she transfer to our Flotilla. Little did I know then what a great person we were getting! She agreed to take on the duties of our flotilla's secretary, and what a great job she has done. Later in the year, when it became clear that Tim Teahan would not be able to devote his time to the newsletter because of his new duties with the Red Cross, Dottie stepped forward and agreed to be our publications staff officer as well. She edits one of the best newsletters in the District. Dottie has also been a great help to me in the many reports, correspondences, and other things I have to write as Commander. In short, like Tom, she accepted great responsibilities, and then went "above and beyond".

You can see why I was having a great deal of trouble deciding which one of these members should receive the Outstanding Auxiliarist of the Year Award. As this award is the Commander's choice, I decided that this year we would have not one outstanding Auxiliarist, but two. Congratulations to Tom Elarbee and Dottie Riley, our Outstanding Auxiliarist of the Year 2005.

In closing let me thank each of you for your attention to duty, and to the membership of the "Best Flotilla on Tampa Bay." It is an honor to serve with you.

J. Michael Shea,
Flotilla Commander



The *Seven Niner* is a publication United States Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 79, located at 5108 Gandy Blvd., Tampa, Florida, 33611. The cost of publication is provided by dues-paying members of the Auxiliary, an organization of unpaid, civilian volunteers whose mission is to assist the U.S. Coast Guard in promoting boating safety. Articles may be reprinted only with the expressed consent of the author or photographer, with proper credit given to same. All photographs are by D Riley unless otherwise specified. For permissions or for more information, please contact Dorothy Joan Riley, FSO-PB, (813) 684-9996. DRiley1@Tampabay.RR.com

Introducing Our Staff, 2006



Newton T. Anderson
Flotilla Commander

“Nute” has been a member of the Auxiliary since 2000. In addition to serving as Vice Flotilla Commander, he has served as ADSO-VE, and SO-VE. He is qualified to inspect commercial vessels such as tug boats in addition to inspecting privately owned vessels.

Burnie L. Wilhelm
Vice Flotilla Commander

Burnie has been a member since 2000. He is VE qualified and previously served as FSO-CC, and FSO-PS. Burnie’s goals are to increase the flotilla’s activities in boating safety, including to conduct more vessel exams this year, and for the membership to have fun!



J. Michael Shea, **Immediate Past Flotilla Commander**

Mike’s photo and accomplishments appear on the front page of this publication. He served as VFC in 2004.

Brian Dobson, FSO-AN

Brian is both one of our newest Flotilla members and Qualified Crew. He joined the Auxiliary on 2005. Brian’s goals for this coming year are to ensure that all ATONS within our AOR are properly verified, and reported in a timely manner.

Kathi Kruczek, FSO-CS

Kathi has been a member since 2002, and served as FSO-CS since 2003. Her goals are to continue to update and improve the flotilla’s website with links of interest to our members. Kathi encourages all members to use e-mail and the E-Directory: <http://www.auxedirectory.org>

David Rusinko, FSO-CM, FSO-OP

David joined the Auxiliary in 1999. His former staff positions include FSO-MA. David has become a fixture at our building where he has painted and re-arranged the radio room and performed wonders on the back classroom. He works closely with the SO-MT to coordinate both the facilities and watchstanders needed for the many training missions.

Thomas Elarbee, FSO-FN

Tom’s performance as FS-FN was so outstanding in 2005 that Nute asked him to perform an encore. He just received his 40 year membership pin, and his past offices include VFC, SO-FN, and at flotilla level, FSO-FN, PB,OP, MT, PB, PE, and VE. Tom’s goals are to keep our flotilla in the black, for which we owe we all him dearly!

Raymond Bost, FSO-PV

H. Paul Schweikhart, FSO-VE

Kevin Williams, FSO-IS

Kevin joined the Auxiliary in 2004, and, as of November 2005 is one of our newest Crew Qualified members. His next Operational goal is to become Coxswain Qualified, but in his role as FSO-IS, he hopes to quickly become proficient in AUXDATA and AUXINFO.

Richard Riales, FSO-MA

Richard began his duties as FSO-MA mid-year, and will continue in this role through 2006.

Clifford Martin, FSO-MT

Cliff joined the Auxiliary eleven years ago and has served as FC, VFC, FSO-MT, FSO-OP, and as SO-OP for the past seven years. Cliff takes on the Operations related member training initiatives for the entire division, making him one of our most visible members.

Bradley A. Ware, FSO-PA

Dottie Riley, FSO-PB, FSO-SR

Joined the Auxiliary in 2002. Goals: To produce the best darn newsletter in the District! That means keeping it entertaining as well as informative.

Steven Plass, FSO-PE

Joined the Auxiliary in 1990. His quiet demeanor belies his many accomplishments. Steve has served as DCP, VCP, FC, VFC, SO-AN, SO-VE, SO-MA, and FSO-MA. Steve also answered last month’s “classified ad” and has agreed to proof future issues of the *Seven-Niner*.

Richard (Tim) Manning, FSO-PS

One of our new members, Tim joined the Auxiliary in 2005 and immediately went to work on painting our building. Tim’s

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Introducing Our Staff *(Continued from page 3)*

goals are to focus on recruitment and retention of new members, a rather big job as Burnie can attest to!

Robert Stribling, Fel-Ch

Bob's face is a familiar one around our building and in the galley. Think we can come up with an occasion to have him make us more of his delicious spaghetti sauce?

(Note: the photos of the FC and VFC shown on the previous page are staff photos taken by Jerry Routt, FL75. We thank Robert Wild, FSO-PB, FL73 for the great idea of introducing our new officers!

Mark Your Calendars...

January 16th, 7:30 PM: Flotilla Meeting

January 20th, 7:00PM: Family Night– Bring your favorite dish. Come for the fun or the food– we are not picky!

January 7th, 9:00AM: Flotilla Operations Officers training. (For all FSO-Ops)

January 26th, 7:30 PM: Coxswain's Briefing for Gasparilla

January 28th: Gasparilla Invasion



Above:
Santa's elves take a break to enjoy Christmas dinner.

Below:
The gift exchange elicited a few laughs as folks found ingenious ways to try and keep– or pass on their Christmas 'treasures'.



CHRISTMAS 2005