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Lake Murray's flotilla has change of watch

By Ollie Moyer

Editor in Chief

Staff officers of Lake Murray Flotilla 12-3 of the U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary officially were sworn in for 2001 during a brief and informal change of watch program at the organization's January meeting held at Flotilla Island on Lake Murray.

Commander William L. Turner's staff officers include: C. Dale Owen, aids to navigation; Carl Brown, career counselor; Boykin Rosenborough, communications; Bobby Buscher, finance; Donald Davis, information services; E. Albert McCallister, materials; Jerry Ruschkofski, marine safety; James Smith, member training; Albert Morgan, marine visitor; George Crouch, operations; Edward Jones, public affairs; Joe Richbourg, publications; E. Albert McCallister, public education; Michael Mikutaitis, personnel services; Jeanette Brown, secretary/records; James Fleming, vessel examination; and Joe Richbourg, immediate past commander.

Kent McCoin, flotilla vice commander, gave a brief report at the beginning of the regular monthly meeting of the Flotilla, on

District 12's change of guard program which he and several other members of Flotilla 12-3 attended.

McCoin said he had attended several district change of watch programs, and he described this one the best he's attended.

During this district meeting, Flotilla 12-3 was recognized for celebrating its 50th Anniversary, which was observed four years ago. Also during the meeting, Flotilla 12-3 members Bobby Buschner and James Smith were recognized as being District 12 auxiliarists of the quarter.

Flotilla Commander Bill Turner presided and in his opening remarks reiterated again that he had no major plans for 2001. "We will start the year basically the same as last year," Turner said.

He informed the Flotilla that he had learned over the internet that a Flotilla at Riveria Beach, Fla., had burned to the ground, and suggested that Flotilla 12-3 send them something "if it is only a few dollars."

He said the Flotilla was renting its meeting building from the county, and that all

•See Flotilla on Page 3

FEBRUARY 8, 2001

THE LAKE MURRAY NEWS

•Flotilla

Continued from Page 1

their equipment was destroyed in the fire.

After some discussion, a motion was made to contact the Flotilla and see what help the Florida flotilla needed, and then respond.

Turner commented on what he called "an excellent film about boating around big ships, put together by Duncan Roberts and suggested that he would arrange for a showing at one of Flotilla 12-3 meetings in the near future.

BM3 Jon Allen of Charleston's Coast Guard Station, who relieved Josh Blocker as the liaison officer assigned to the Lake Murray unit, presented another special recognition award to members of Flotilla 12-3 who participated in the recent recovery of the Hunley at Charleston. Recipients included Joe Richbourg, Adrian Thompson, Edward Jones, Donnie Hair, Michael Mikutaitis, Dale McCoin, Kent McCoin, Gerald Ruschkofski, James A. Smith and Bobby Buscher.

During a brief discussion of the second annual Lake Murray Boat Safety Week, Turner said the date of May 19, which is the Saturday during National Boat Safety Week, had been selected and that the Coast Guard Auxiliary and several other organizations already are holding planning sessions. He said some thought is being given to getting boat dealers involved.

Richbourg reported on a visit of the Coast Guard's helicopter to the Flotilla recently for a photo session.

He said the helicopter hovered about 30 feet over his boat during an assimilated rescue operation "but it sounded like it was only 20 feet above me."

Richbourg said that experience illustrated that the Flotilla needed to work out a better system of communications "because if you do find yourself in a situation where you are actually having a pick-up of a victim by helicopter, the noise grounds outwhen people called us on the radio, with the chopper right over us, we couldn't hear a thing but the chopper. If we ever get into that sit-

uation, we'll need to have ear phones or something."

He said on that particular day "we had a temperature of 40 degrees and 20 knot winds to start with but they came over with 75 more knots of wind."

In a brief report of the Flotilla's boat show booth, McCoin said he saw a lot of people who expressed an interest in joining the Coast Guard Auxiliary during his time at the booth. "I think our booth created a lot of interest," he said. "We gave out a lot of brochures, giving out the dates for our next boat training session, and hopefully we'll see a lot of those folk attending our educational sessions." The classes will be held each Tuesday night for six weeks at Seven Oakes in Irmo.

Vessel Examination officer James Fleming announced that vessel safety inspections will be held at Billy Dreher Island April 7-14 and at Yacht Cove May 27.

Ed Jones gave a brief report on a radio talk show he is putting together for the Flotilla. "There seems to be a lot of interest in this and we are making some kind of a headway," he said.