

The Coast Guard Auxiliary

The Coast Guard Auxiliary and Lake Gaston:

The Coast Guard has a long tradition of Honor, Respect and Devotion to Duty. These commitments spread throughout the service and certainly include the Auxiliary, the all-volunteer arm of the Coast Guard.

So, what exactly does the Coast Guard Auxiliary mean to Lake Gaston? First, let's look at the Coast Guard goals for our area. They are rather basic and include both safety and security issues. At the start of the next boating season, the Lake Gaston Flotilla 93 will:

- Have as many patrol operations with two-person crews.
- Conduct safety and security patrols on as many weekends – and on special holidays and events as we have personnel.
- Conduct monthly boating safety classes for the boating public from March through September.
- Conduct as many Vessel Safety Checks as possible during 2017, as we have resources.
- Establish marine radio contact for all patrols.

While there are other minor programs, these objectives spell out the most important needs.

We are looking for volunteers who want to be a part of these patrols. If you have a boat, you may want it to be available for patrol work. If your boat is under orders and on patrol, you will be reimbursed for fuel and meals and you are covered for liability issues.

Or....you can be a part of the action by crewing on Flotilla 93's operational vessel. In any event, new crew members will be trained to Coast Guard standards. The first qualification is to become 'Crew Qualified'. This is accomplished by both classroom and on-water training. You will be assigned a mentor – a qualified Auxiliarist who will guide you through your training.

The second qualification is "Coxswain". He/She is the mission commander who plans and executes missions.

In order to participate, you must be at least 17 years old, a U.S. citizen and a member of the Auxiliary. Our dues are \$35. Per year, and you purchase your own uniform (less than \$100). The Flotilla meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 252 River Road, Henrico, NC. This is Flotilla 93's 'headquarter' building. The meeting starts at 7:00 (or 1900 for you military). We have various training sessions throughout the year – and if we do – the training session will be at 6:00 PM. (1800) followed by our monthly meeting.

If you are interested, please call 252-535-3335.

I am often asked: "How much of my time will membership require?" The answer is that we are all volunteers, so the amount of time spent is in your hands. Having said that, unless your lifestyle will permit a minimum of eight hours a month, you probably should not volunteer.

Don't forget the boating safety family course which we conduct on one Saturday of each month. Contact the Flotilla at 252-535-3335, or visit their website at www.flotilla93.com.

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