

East Hampton • Southampton • Riverhead • Southold • Shelter Island

THE INDEPENDENT

Vincent Pica
Chief of Staff, First District, Southern Region (D1SR)
United States Coast Guard Auxiliary

Coast Guard Aux NEWS ▶

February 29, 2012

**Coast Guard
Auxiliary News**



By Vincent Pica
Chief of Staff, First District Southern Region, USCG Aux
US Coast Guard Licensed Master

Sponsorship of this column is available. All fees raised will be donated by The Independent to Division 18 of The USCG Auxiliary for use in boating safety.
For information call Jim Mackin @ 631.324.2500

I Want To Help But I Don't Know How



(click for larger version)

Hello! I am Vincent Pica. As you can tell from the title, I am responsible for running a component of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, the volunteer arm of United States Coast Guard Forces.

Many people have an urge or calling to serve. They think about ways that they can, on their own terms and on a time and schedule that works for them, contribute to their Country and to their

community, especially if they can have fun doing it and be recognized for whatever they do put in to it. The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary was created by act of Congress back in 1939 when threatening storm clouds of national concern were looming on the horizon. Today, more than 32,000 American patriots are volunteer members of the US Coast Guard Auxiliary performing virtually every mission of the regular Coast Guard except those dealing with law enforcement and military action. If it doesn't need a weapon, you'll find Auxiliarists volunteering to do it.

Currently, as in 1939, there are concerns for the future security of America, and as part of the Department of Homeland Security, Auxiliarists contribute to the protection of our waters and our way of life. In addition, Auxiliarists undertake a great many missions that fall under the domain of the US Coast Guard but which do not have such high-level national impact thereby freeing active-duty itself to concentrate on such matters. Auxiliary missions have historically included teaching Boating Safety to the Public, performing Vessel Examinations, and undertaking Operational Patrols of our waterways. Today there are a great many additional missions that are added to that list including Aviation, Cooking, Radio Watch Standing, Translation Services, and Public Affairs, just to name a few.

Membership is open to all individuals who:

Are American Citizens.

Are 17 Years of Age or Older (no upper limit)

Have no Felony Convictions.

Are Willing and Able to Volunteer to Serve their Community and Country.

You need not own or be a maven with a boat; in fact, you can be a great contributor without ever being on the water. The Auxiliary will provide free training in a great many subject matters. You are welcome to participate in any of the missions that interest you, to the levels and timings of participation that suit your personal schedule. Some worry about it being expensive. Annual dues are \$50. That's about \$4/month. Uniforms are available at low-cost and every penny you spend is tax-deductible. And, if you offer your boat for use by the USCGAux, your mission-related fuel use is reimbursed, 100%. Some worry that you will need a tremendous time commitment. You don't need gobs of time. Give us 12 hours a summer in crew time and you will be in continuous good standing. Only 2 hours if you want to teach seamanship, rather than practice it. I warn you though. There is so much enjoyment and satisfaction in this role that you will give well more than that.

This will only be the Land of the Free if it is also the Home of the Brave. Serve your Nation. Serve your Neighbors. On your terms. Be brave. Get in this thing.

BTW, if you are interested in being part of USCG Forces, email me at JoinUSCGAux@aol.com or go direct to the D1SR Human Resources department, who are in charge of new members matters, at [DSO-HR](#) and we will help you “get in this thing...”