U.S. Department of Homeland Security
United States Coast Guard Auxiliary
Flotilla 91 - Fort Myers Beach, Fl
Southeast District

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The volunteers helping Fort Myers Beach boaters feel more prepared

A day on the water often begins with a few questions. Is the boat ready? Is the safety equipment in order? Would everyone aboard know what to do if the person at the helm needed help?

For boaters around Southwest Florida, a local group of volunteers helps answer those questions. Members of U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 91, Fort Myers Beach, teach boating safety, offer free vessel safety checks and share practical knowledge with people who enjoy the area's waterways.

The Auxiliary is the Coast Guard's uniformed volunteer component, with roots dating to 1939. Locally, Flotilla 91 was established in 2006 and has spent the past two decades supporting Coast Guard Station Fort Myers Beach and serving the surrounding community with passion.

Much of that work happens through everyday conversations with boaters. A boating class gives someone a chance to ask about an unfamiliar navigation rule and to obtain important risk mitigation skills. A vessel safety check helps an owner review the equipment aboard. A Coast Guard Auxiliary visit to a marina puts boating safety information within reach before someone leaves the dock.

The flotilla's "Suddenly in Command" seminars focus on a question passengers may not have considered: What happens if the skipper can no longer operate the boat? The sessions help people think through how they would respond and prepare for an unexpected responsibility.

Since its founding, the flotilla has contributed more than 125,300 volunteer hours, according to its service totals. More than 1,000 students have completed its safe boating courses, and members have performed over 2,400 free recreational vessel safety checks. The group has also partnered with Safe Kids Southwest Florida to establish life jacket loaner stations at local beaches and boat ramps.

Other assignments are less visible to the public. Members stand radio watches, assist with administrative work and support both air and surface operations. They also take part in training exercises, serving as role-players to help Coast Guard crews practice boarding procedures and assist with search-and-rescue and pollution responses.

Together, those efforts connect the flotilla members' work at the station with its work in the local boating community. Whether helping a new boater understand the basics or supporting a Coast Guard crew behind the scenes, members give their time to a shared concern: helping people return safely from the water.

Information about boating courses, free vessel safety checks and volunteer opportunities is available at www.Aux91FMB.org or call 239-690-6780.



Discover the Fort Myers Beach Coast Guard Auxiliary

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Flotilla 91 Online Newsroom