



Sea Scouts Train at Group Hampton Roads

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The thrill of going to sea is no mystery to the young men and women of the Boy Scouts of America's Sea Scout adventure. The Sea Scouts is a co-ed program for youth 14 to 20, with the nautical ranks of Seaman Recruit, Apprentice, Ordinary, Able and Quartermaster. The coveted Quartermaster rank can be earned by both young women as well as young men, and is Sea Scouting's equivalent to the Boy Scout Eagle rank.

Sea Scouting had its beginning when Lord Baden-Powell in England voiced his thoughts on the need for older scouts to learn about boat management and seamanship. Sea Scouting came to the United States in 1912.

Over the last nearly one hundred years, it has undergone many changes and challenges. At the United States Coast Guard base of Group Hampton Roads at Portsmouth, Virginia. Sea Scouts are formed into units that are called ships. Ships from several states con-

verged for a joint training exercise with Coast Guard sailors, Coast Guard Reserve officers, the Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 51 of Portsmouth, and the Coast Guard cutter Legare.

Coast Guard Auxiliary members Dick Jones, Ray Durham, and Jack Nourie of Flotilla 51 of Portsmouth, Virginia taught a 8 hour block of instruction on Safe Boat handling skills to the Sea Scouts and their adult leaders. The course touched on boat trailer skills, boat handling, rules of the road, navigation, marlinspike seamanship. Dick Jones is a retired Coastguardsman , while Jack Nourie is a retired Navy captain. Ray Durham is the FSO- for Training for Flotilla 5 1.

The Sea Scouts learned the art of splicing from Navy sailors, and knots for shipboard use from Coast Guard sailors. Small boats are used to teach confidence build-

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ing skills for learning about shipboard responsibility and teamwork as well as mastering the maritime arts. In Sea Scouting, called the "Best kept secret of Scouting" by Charles Holmes the appointed head of the Venturing Division of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA). Holmes says that parents, adult leaders, volunteers and community sponsors realize the value of structured extracurricular programs for teens. And that boats and water are natural magnets for youth of all ages.

Holmes also said, "Sea Scouting uses an attractive venue which safe boating provides, coupled with compelling activities (nautical skills) that teaches Sea Scouts to build confidence, to develop leadership, and in still character.

Sea Scouts hold ranks in a chain of command that manages the ship and its activities. They work their way individually through various advancement awards, that focus on maritime skills.

According to Jimmie Members, the first female national commodore of the Sea Scout National Committee, it's a sense of responsibility and accountability that parents and the adult leaders of the ships seem to want for their kids today, more so than at any time since the peak prior to World War II. When that war broke out, the U.S Navy and the United States Coast Guard actively recruited Sea Scouts because of their maritime skills. Adm. Chester Nimitz reportedly credited Sea Scouting as a key factor in the Navy's ability to mount the war effort so quickly following the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Sea Scouting went into a slump during the years of the Vietnam era, but quickly changed when it went co-ed in 1970. Today, parents want their teenagers involved in programs like the uniformed Sea Scouting movement. Local Sea Scout units or ships in the United States are involved in fundraising, for their operational requirements and for travel to local and national Sea Scouting regattas.

The Sea Scouts highlights of the week-end at Group Hampton Roads was the individual fire fighting class given by the sailors on board the Coast Guard Cutter, Legare. The alert students were given first hand use in modern equipment and participated in fire hose management on the pier adjacent to the Legare. All Sea Scout ship members stayed in billets provided by the Coast Guard and dined in the modern mess.

A special award, the newly formed, Domain of the Sea Dragon ceremony, given by Joe Haase, Skipper of Sea Scout Ship Sea Dragon of Danville, Virginia. This award was presented to the Sea Scouts and their leaders.

By visiting with a working Coast Guard base, the Sea Scouts got a first hand look at America's defenders of the coasts and seaports. They toured cutters, motor life boats all armed since the terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and New York City. The Sea Scouts got a unique insight to how much goes into port security and the protection of the combined ports of Hampton Roads. As a recruiting investment, two Sea Scouts have applied to the Coast Guard Academy and one Sea Scout from Sea Scout Ship 711 of Virginia Beach, has volunteered to enlist in the Coast Guard following graduation from High School this year. **N**

Operation Guardian Angel

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Auxiliary aircraft are an important force multiplier for the regular Coast Guard. The relatively low operating cost of Auxiliary aircraft allows extensive safety patrol coverage both in terms of the time airborne, and the geography covered. This kind of coverage would be cost prohibitive in the larger regular Coast Guard aircraft. Auxiliary pilots and crew are all experienced aviators who often train alongside their regular Coast Guard counterparts. They are also specially trained in search procedures as well as air/surface communications and

operations coordination.

The need for safety assurance on our waterways is significant. Air Station San Francisco responds to about 300 search and rescue call-outs each year. The USCG Air Stations at Sacramento, and Humbolt Bay also have a significant mission load. Operation Guardian Angel will provide an added measure of safety for the boating public that will ultimately save lives.

The Aviation Mentors program provides the capability, while Guardian Angel provides a significant framework for operational execution. Together these programs are helping to greatly increase Auxiliary aviation activity in District 11NR. **N**