

## OLD SALTS WELCOME NEWBIES Submitted by Bill Szilasi SO-PA

Sandy Hook Coast Guard Station was an exciting place to be on Saturday 24 Feb 2007 for 9 new members of the US Coast Guard Auxiliary. Against the backdrop of this active and historic Coast Guard facility, these new members were introduced to their new calling by senior officers of Division 2, First (SR) District of the USCGA. It was the fourth annual New Member training held by Division 2.

Attending new members were Bob Sanders 21, Jeff Sadler 21, Roger Imhoff 22, Ryan Taffet 22, Glen Mason 24, Ken Sherman 24, Ray Walinski 24, Bob McNamara 26, and Bill Szilasi 26.

Bill Anania, VCP who organized the event, acted as MC. The group was welcomed by Tom Evans DCP, who set forth an overview of the information to be covered. John Farrell SO-PS gave a fascinating presentation of the history and mission of the Auxiliary with facts that many people found amazing. Did you know that the Auxiliary has more operational aircraft than the Coast Guard, or that, nationwide, one life is saved each day on average by members of the Auxiliary? The new members quickly gained a serious respect for the organization they were becoming part of and a feeling of responsibility to live up to the standards of those Auxiliarists who have gone before.

The next speaker was Lee Ward COMO who explained the organization of the US Coast Guard and of the US Coast Guard Auxiliary. This was a much appreciated and enlightening presentation by a very senior officer who

has seen the relationship between the “Gold” and the “Silver” grow over the years into the Team Coast Guard of today. It was a sobering insight for the new members to understand just how much the Coast Guard relies on the Auxiliary in these troubled times.

Following were presentations by Brian Crean CH, U/F with examples of proper uniform presentation along with models of the various uniforms, and an overview of non-traditional training by Donna Cole SO-MS. It seems that in the Auxiliary non-traditional training is becoming traditional given the times we live in.

Steve Gillooly FC 22 explained the AUXDATA system and the paper trail which was critical information, and the source of much confusion for new hands, but Steve cut through the fog and made things clear.

Bill Anania and Paulette Nedrow SO-MT concluded the presentations with a review of opportunities in the Auxiliary and Boat Crew training respectively. Closing remarks were made by DCP Tom Evans.

Lunch in the Station Mess topped off a truly exceptional and outstanding experience for the new members. Each left with a new sense of purpose and a much clearer understanding of the adventures ahead of them.