



Press Release

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Auxiliarists serving in a benign medical detail responsible for enhanced capabilities of the USCG Cutter
Tahoma

One in a Series on America's Volunteer Guardians

Port-Au-Prince, Haiti – A group of Auxiliarists with medical backgrounds completed a recent scheduled overhaul of the medical department of the United States Coast Guard Cutter in New Hampshire. These six Auxiliarists comprised the team that assisted in the inventory, restocking, and re-organization of the medical department, along with additional projects that were not previously scheduled, to increase the efficiency of the department.

Jim Dickson, Kittery, ME, age 59, retired US Army and EMT; **Ernie Brown**, Rye, NH, age 85, retired Mechanical Engineer; **Marshall Hewitt**, Wolfeboro, NH, age 56, Cooperative Trainer; **Bob Prestridge**, York, ME, age 69, retired Shift Manager; **Chuck Black**, Freemont, NH, age 63, VP for Bank of New England; and **Bob Gaudet**, Newburyport, MA, age 71, Retired Quality Control Manager were the members of the Auxiliary team.

The Tahoma (WMEC 908) is home ported in Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. It is the eighth of thirteen 270 foot medium endurance cutters in the Coast Guard's fleet. She is part of the *Famous* Class of cutters and has a complement of 100.

According to the HS1 Larry J Berman, the Independent Health Services Technician "Ship's Doc," the ship had just come back from an 8-week mission to Haiti. This was in late 2009. After the six Auxiliarists left the ship, "that made the Tahoma's medical department safer, more convenient and more up-to-date for the staff," according to Berman, no one really knew outside those on the ship that the Auxiliarists had been there. It was a job well done, one of many that the members of the USCG Auxiliary perform on a daily basis.

But situations change and the USCGC Tahoma was one of the first platform assets to respond and engage the victims of the earthquake. HS1 Berman reported that both the his medical staff aboard the Tahoma along with the Tahoma's crew as well as the medical staff and crew aboard the USCGC Mohawk were manning a small clinic serving Port Au Prince. HS1 Berman said in a report that, "I was so proud of our people jumping in the mix of all the wounded and doing medical skills far beyond their experiences."

He was also surprised that their medical supplies were keeping up when other clinics were having inventory issues.

America's Volunteer Guardians, even while performing their standard volunteer jobs, without fanfare and without pay, have contributed and will continue to contribute to not only those victims of the Haitian earthquake, but to the safety and security of all Americans.

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary is the uniformed volunteer component of the United States Coast Guard created by an Act of Congress in 1939. The 30,000 volunteer members (men and women), America's Volunteer Guardians, support the Coast Guard in nearly all of the service's missions.

Auxiliarist Bob Gaudet, Public Affairs Officer of Flotilla 28 of the First Northern Region New Castle, NH, Division and Auxiliarist Judy Darby, the editor of *Navigator*, the USCG Auxiliary magazine contributed greatly to this release.

Photo:

800px-USCGC_Tahoma_WMEC-908.jpg : USCGC Tahoma - The Coast Guard Cutter Tahoma guards the Hudson River September 17 2001 as part of port security duties after [the] September 11 2001 terrorist attack on the World Trade Centers in New York.

http://www.auxguidanceskills.info/pr/800px-USCGC_Tahoma_WMEC-908.jpg

HS1-Berman1.jpg : HS1 Larry Berman reviews medical supplies for the make-shift Haitian Coast Guard Medical Clinic. (U.S. Coast Guard photo)

<http://www.auxguidanceskills.info/pr/HS1-Berman1.jpg>

Tahoma 01.jpg: Tahoma CDR James Spotts thanking AUX, l-r, Flotilla Staff Officer –Public Affairs Bob Gaudet, Flotilla Staff Officer –Public Education Bob Prestridge, and Jim Dickson.

<http://www.auxguidanceskills.info/pr/Tahoma%2001.jpg>

Tahoma 06.jpg: Inventory and restocking completed: l, r Bob Prestridge, Jim Dickson, HS1 Larry Berman, Bob Gaudet.

<http://www.auxguidanceskills.info/pr/Tahoma%2006.jpg>