

I Came, ISAR, I Conquered

Story and Photo by PA3 Rob Simpson, PADET St. Petersburg, Fla.

Four Coast Guard Auxiliary Division 11 members received the 2007 International Search and Rescue (ISAR) Competition's first-place award Feb. 27, at Coast Guard Station Sand Key in Clearwater, Fla.

Don Hoge, Max Garrison and Jim Ryder, all from Flotilla 10 in Dunedin, Fla., and Kevin McConn, from Flotilla 9 in Tarpon Springs, Fla., were presented the award by Rear Adm. David A. Kunkel, the Seventh Coast Guard District Commander.

The ISAR Competition was created in 2000 and is an annual event in which Coast Guard auxiliary teams from the U.S. and Canada are challenged to demonstrate competence in the skills required to successfully accomplish a maritime search-and-rescue (SAR) mission. This is the first time the U.S. has won the competition.

The 2007 ISAR competition was held in Toronto, Canada, Sept. 27-29 2007, where 12 teams were tested in eight events; including towing, SAR planning, SAR communications, seamanship and de-watering.

“Over the past few years a dedicated group from the Seventh Coast Guard District Auxiliary Division 11 committed themselves to achieving a goal that had not been reached before --to win the ISAR--, and they did it marvelously,” said Don Frasch, Vice Commodore for the Seventh Coast Guard Auxiliary.

At the award ceremony, crewmembers from Station Sand Key recieved awards for their contributions in training the auxiliarists.

“The efforts of all involved in the preparation for the competition has a lasting effect on all Coast Guard members in the Seventh District because the skills involved in winning the ISAR Competition directly translate to our everyday missions of boating safety and environmental stewardship,” added Frasch.

Congressman C. W. Bill Young, representative for Florida's Tenth Congressional District, had flags flown over the U.S. Capital, in Washington, for each of the winning team members. He



District Seven Auxiliarists Kevin McConn, from Flotilla 9 in Tarpon Springs, Fla., Don Hoge, Jim Ryder and Max Garrison, all from Flotilla 10 in Dunedin, Fla., and Kunkel, display the first-place International Search and Rescue (ISAR) trophy they earned at the 2007 ISAR competition in Toronto, Sept. 29. The competition is an annual event in which Coast Guard Auxiliary teams from the U.S. and Canada test their abilities to complete specific tasks of maritime search and rescue.

also recognized the team while the U.S. House of Representatives was in session ensuring the recognition was officially placed into the Congressional Record Feb. 14.

The more than 28,000 auxiliarists nationwide use their own boats, aircraft and vehicles to teach boating safety courses and aid the Coast Guard in search-and-rescue missions. They also conduct safety examinations on recreational boats to help teach boaters the importance of having proper safety and emergency equipment onboard.

“The men and women of Auxiliary Division 11, and of the Coast Guard Auxiliary as a whole, sacrifice unbelievable amounts of time, effort and training to help the Coast Guard with its everyday missions,” said David Macon, a representative of Young, during the award ceremony. “The auxiliary is being commended here today, not only for winning this competition, but for their service to the Coast Guard and to the nation.”

USCG