



Press Release

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For more information, please contact:

Ed Sweeney

Chief – Department of Public Affairs

United States Coast Guard Auxiliary

Cell 916-284-8507

DC-A@auxpa.org

Coast Guard Auxiliary crew assists woman struck by boat propeller

SACRAMENTO - Coast Guard Auxiliary crews were extremely busy assisting boaters over the 4th of July holiday. In addition to battling temperatures in excess of 105 degrees, the Auxiliary played a key role in one case, where they provided first aid and a medical evacuation to an 18 year old woman who was struck by a boat propeller while she was swimming in the American River.

At approximately 1835 hours, the Auxiliary vessel answered a request for assistance on Channel 16 on the marine radio by a boat on the American River about an unknown problem. Upon arriving on scene, the crew of Auxiliary vessel 201127, a 20' Seaswirl, observed several hundred boats all rafted up, with the majority of the people on board drinking and partying. They were ultimately waived down by a patio boat, that was in the middle of about 10 boats all tied together and anchored. All the occupants of that vessel, and the surrounding vessels, appeared to be in various stages of intoxication.

"The scene was pure chaos," said Steve Allen, owner of the Auxiliary vessel **THIS SIDE UP**, and a crewmember on board. "People were screaming, and it was difficult to ascertain what was going on or what the real problem was."

After a few minutes on scene, the Auxiliary crew learned that an 18 year old woman was recently struck by the propeller of a boat passing by.

The Auxiliary crew, which included coxswain Ed Sweeney, and crewmembers Leanne Sweeney and Steve Allen, immediately assessed the situation, and administered basic first aid to the victim.

"The young woman was conscious, but panicked and appeared to be going into shock," said Leanne Sweeney, who serves as Division Captain for the greater Sacramento area. "I just wanted to reassure her and keep her calm."

After obtaining permission from Coast Guard Station Rio Vista, the Auxiliary crew transported the woman approximately 1 mile to Discovery Park. They were escorted there by the Sacramento Police Boat, and met at the ramp by the Sacramento Fire Department, who then transported the victim to Kaiser Permanente Hospital in Sacramento.

No further information was available on the vessel who struck the woman.

The Coast Guard Auxiliary wants to warn boaters and swimmers about the danger of "prop strikes" and the need to be extremely vigilant whenever swimmers are observed in the water near a vessel. For more information on propeller strikes and how to prevent them, visit https://www.uscgboating.org/safety/USCG_prop_bro.pdf.

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July 4, 2007: This photo shows the area of the American River where the prop strike and medivac occurred.

A high resolution photo is available - contact Ed Sweeney DC-A at DC-A@auxpa.org .

Remember - to be a survivor - WEAR YOUR LIFE JACKET!!!

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary is composed of uniformed volunteers who assist the Coast Guard in all of its varied missions, except for military and direct law enforcement. These men and women can be found performing a variety of missions - on the nation's waterways, in the air, in classrooms and on the dock, performing Maritime Domain Awareness patrols, safety patrols, vessel safety checks and public education.

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary was founded in 1939 by an Act of Congress as the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve and re-designated as the Auxiliary in 1941. Over 27,000 members donate millions of hours annually in support of Coast Guard missions.

For more information on the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, visit us at www.cgaux.org or www.axupa.org .