

As many of you know, the Commodore and I have been going around to all our Change-of-Watches and talking about (among many other things) the Auxiliary Chef program, or "Aux Chef." Well, we are both happy to announce that this has become a reality. Recently, both Coast Guard Headquarters and National Auxiliary have approved the Aux Chef program. Message traffic announcing this should be out soon, but emails of this approval are already circulating. However, it is incumbent upon me to state that two things were taking place concurrently: one, we were working on an Aux Chef hands-on program while two, we were waiting on the Coast Guard and national Auxiliary to approve of the Aux Chef course.

As you may also know, Commodore Maul has been working with the Coast Guard Cutter OAUCHITA in Chattanooga and has gotten their approval to use both the vessel and the shoreside facilities to conduct a classroom-based Aux Chef class, to include time onboard the cutter's galley. We are in the process of having our first class the first weekend in March. The purpose of this class is to train-the-trainer, validate course curriculum, and validate the appropriate class-to-cutter time. As part of the "hot wash" process the Commodore, the instructors and I will all discuss three major issues:

- (1) a student vetting and prerequisite process;
- (2) a student maturation process (the building up of skills prior to serving onboard a vessel)
- (3) classroom instruction; complementing national course with classroom instruction, classroom thru-put, frequency, and budget.

During our talk, many of you have asked how you can participate. I want to clearly articulate that anyone from D8 Eastern Region may apply and participate. Our immediate goal is to have a handful of trained Aux Chefs near each of the 6 Coast Guard Inland River Tenders. However please be aware that the Inland River Tenders do not have female accommodations so only males may serve as chefs while these vessels are underway. Remember the operative word is "underway" so our Aux Chef must also meet the physical requirements to be a crewmember. Though we're a long way from having our first chef serve onboard a tender, I believe there will be even more "open-to-all" opportunities to serve while these tenders are moored.

Lastly, I don't know the full details, I suspect the National Aux Chef program will be an on-line course and as soon as we determine what we've learned from our first Aux Chef class, we'll get the information out.

Semper Paratus!

LCDR William Butler
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