

## **Eight groups honored by Coast Guard**

JUNEAU EMPIRE The need to know how to survive in Juneau's wondrous surroundings beyond a rain jacket and pair of XtraTufs was endorsed by numerous visitors and volunteers attending Sunday's 2nd Annual Southeast Outdoor Safety Expo at the Centennial Hall.

Aside from over 30 organizations promoting services and wares, eight groups were recognized by the Coast Guard with a USCG Partner In Search & Rescue plaque.

"The coast guard really can't do it alone," said Coast Guard Capt. Melissa Bert, who presented the awards. "The ability to have these great working relationships ... really saves lives."

The honorees were Capital City Fire And Rescue, **Marine Exchange Of Alaska**, SEADOGS, Alaska Marine Highway System, Juneau Mountain Rescue, Juneau Police Department, Alaska State Troopers and Civil Air Patrol.

"I really would like to thank the Juneau community on behalf of the coast guard," Bert said. "Our folks love it here and Juneau has made them a part of the community, in and out of the coast guard. That makes it even easier when we come to work. A lot of the people who get stationed here end up settling here. I think that is a comment on Juneau."

The Outdoor Safety Expo was originally conceived by the Rotary Club Service committee to replace "Heavy Equipment Day," an event that allowed children to experience construction machinery. Event coordinators Craig and Millie Duncan wanted to showcase Juneau's numerous outdoor activities.

The expo helps organizations volunteer their time and expertise to enhance public awareness about outdoor safety.

"There was a need in the community for folks to be smart on outdoor safety," Juneau Rotary Club president Warren Russell said. "This year, we have even more folks showing up and all the vendors want to come back next year. I think this is getting traction and will pick up speed. We really wanted to give something back to the community."



Groups honored by the Coast Guard pose with Captain of the Port Melissa Bert. Captain Ed Page of the Marine Exchange and Capt Bert are at far right.