

Newport's **2009 Blessing of the Fleet** saw great participation. The weather was surprisingly supportive and the attendance on Newport's bayfront was high.

Beginning with the competitive Survival Suit Races, 13 teams showed up with their game faces on. United States Coast Guard Station Yaquina Bay was determined to defend their 2008 title and entered 3 teams. However, the crew from the **F/V Excalibur**; Chris Retherford (23.95), Mike Retherford (30.34), and Luke Welch (31.27), were more than prepared and regained their title for **1st place team** with a time of 31.27 seconds. (That's getting in their suits, jumping into the cold bay and swimming out to a raft and climbing in; all three men in the raft in 31.27 seconds!) F/V Excalibur also captured the prize for the **fastest individual** time with **Chris Retherford's** blazing speed of 23.95 seconds!



Second place team was the crew from the **F/V Eddie & Rod**; **George "Pogy" Lapham** (25.48), Ryan Barette (31.00) and Justin Yeager (33.71). **Pogy** also took the prize for the **2nd fastest individual** with his time of 25.48 seconds.

The USCG team #3; Chajen Labourdette (30.89, JV Belstad (31.28), and Phyllip Martin (33.84), deserve a round of applause with a respectable team time of 33.84 seconds! **Jeremy Feely** who competed on USCG team #1 took the **3rd place fastest** prize for his time of 29.03 seconds as well.

Don't forget about the ladies! Team Kennedy Girls; Jordan Kennedy (36.58), Silken Kennedy (42.77) and Meghan Kennedy (48.75), took the prize for fastest women's team and Jordan also won fastest individual woman with her time of 36.58 seconds. Loyalty Days Court Princess **Emiko Koike** took **2nd place individual woman** with her time of 41.08 seconds followed by **Silken Kennedy** in **3rd** with a time of 42.77 seconds. The award for the slowest individual time went to Shahna Ashard with a still impressive time of 1:31.35.

