



Capital Area Coast Guard Retiree Council Newsletter

Council co-chairs: CAPT Bud Schneeweis and YNCS Mike White

Issue 13

June 30, 2008

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME HAPPY FOURTH OF JULY

Your Council continues to be active, meeting Friday 27 June 2008 at USCG HQ.

Key issues were:

- Update from Representative of the Headquarters Support Command
- Report on the 2008 National Retiree Council Meeting
- Recruiting and membership outreach
- Development of Caregivers Guide - Review of proposed contents
- Holiday Party Planning –Committee Appointment***
- Review of Capital Area Coast Guard Retiree Council Google Group List Mail
- Help Desk Update
- Capital Area Coast Guard Retiree Council WEB site update

*** Local Capital Area Coast Guard Retirees are welcome to serve on committee.

A copy of the Council meeting Agendas and minutes are posted on the Council web site, <http://www.uscg.mil/ccs/carc>, and can be downloaded, or may be requested from CAPT Chuck Glass, ph (301) 598-6590 or e-mail: cjglass@verizon.net.

Our objective is to publish a quarterly newsletter and provide you, the **Capital Area Coast Guard Retiree, military and civilian**, with information on Council activities and items of interest to Retirees in the Washington DC, Maryland and Northern Virginia Council area. In addition, we may send out items that are time-critical using our E-Mail list.

All are invited to contribute to the **Newsletter**, attend a Council meeting, and are welcome to communicate with us prior to the Council meetings, or to provide informational items of interest to retirees. Please send an e mail, call, or write to our Council Co-Chairs, CAPT Bud Schneeweis and YNCS Mike White, the Council Secretary, Chuck Glass, or to our **Newsletter** editor, (Norm Lemley) 703 528-1660; e-mail: nlemley2@comcast.net. Please "Pass on" this Newsletter to other, USCG military and civilian, retirees that may be interested. We welcome additional e-mail /or snail mail addresses and phone numbers for our mailing list.

All are urged to look at the Capital Area Coast Guard Retiree Council a WEB site, <http://www.uscg.mil/ccs/carc>. The Council believes that access to this WEB site will enable Retirees to become better informed on the current Coast Guard organization and operations. Suggestions for items to be posted are welcome!!!! Send them to the Retiree Council web master, CAPT Bob Warakomsky, at bpwarakom@cox.net

We look forward to serving all Coast Guard Retirees, military and civilian, and continue to extend an invitation to attend our meetings, to participate in Council projects and to keep us informed of your issues and concerns.

Council Meeting Schedule for 2008

Fri. 26 SEPT 2008

Fri. 5 DEC 2008

Fri 27 March 2009

Fri 26 June 2009

Meetings are normally held at USCG Headquarters in Conference Room B718 beginning at 0900.

Planning continues for the 2nd Annual Retiree Council Holiday Party.

Planning is underway for the 2nd Annual Retiree Council Holiday Party at Vinson Hall. The tentative date is 13 December. Additional details to follow later.

COAST GUARD BIRTHDAY PICNIC AT STATION A

All are urged to attend with the Coast Guard Birthday Picnic at Station A and have a fun day and meet old friends. It is scheduled on 2 August. Details with available later.

Commandant announced the death of CG Senior Executive Service Officer Gerard (Jerry) Yoest SES (RET)

Jerry) died of a heart attack 12 may 2008 in Alexandria, Va. He was 61 years old.

Jerry was the Coast Guard's Director of International Affairs and Foreign Policy Advisor to the Commandant prior to retiring in 2004. He led a life dedicated to public service, serving the Coast Guard and Nation in many capacities, including work at the Federal Aviation Administration, American Institute of Merchant Shipping, and as a captain in the Marine Corps. He served with distinction throughout his career and was known for his leadership in the international maritime community, the federal government, and in our civilian workforce

As director of international affairs, he was on the forefront of the model maritime code, which is the basis for much of our international training and engagement today. He authored and negotiated numerous bilateral and multilateral agreements, and has been recognized with awards for enhancing aviation safety and security worldwide, as well as for his work with minority programs.

The department of transportation awarded him a silver medal for his efforts following the Achille Lauro hijacking. His work garnered the respect and admiration of his peers in the Department of Defense, Department of State, and the International Maritime Organization. He was also a champion for civilian employees and advocated for appropriate benefits and recognition for civilian members of our workforce as well as retirees.

Throughout his life, he put service first, to his nation, and to his community. He leaves a tremendous legacy and will long be remembered for his exceptional service.

Commandant announced the death of Alicia Fisher, Wife of Thomas Fisher Senior Executive Service Officer SES (RET)

Mrs. Fisher was a strong advocate of helping those less fortunate. Upon her retirement from the US Senate staff, she dedicated her time and energy to family, parish, and community outreach programs providing hope and assistance to inner city families in need.

USCG Auxiliary Celebrates 69th Birthday of Service to the Nation

On June 23, the US Coast Guard Auxiliary marked its 69th anniversary of service to the U.S. Coast Guard and the nation.

Admiral Thad Allen, U.S. Coast Guard Commandant, stated "the overall contribution of the Auxiliary is impressive but the greatest measure of their impact is found in their spirit of patriotism and their steadfast commitment to the guardian ethos and the men and women of the Coast Guard with whom they serve."

Since 9/11, the Auxiliary has significantly increased its capacity to support active duty Coast Guard units in several missions such as America's Waterway Watch, Coast Guard's port, waterways and coastal security missions, administrative /logistical support, watch standing, foreign language interpreter services aboard deployed USCG cutters and boating classes for area communities.

Last year, the USCG Auxiliary provided over 50,000 hours of boating safety classes and 130,000 vessel safety checks. These classes have directly contributed to the prevention of countless search and rescue cases and saved countless lives.

Commandant and Vice Command Staff Symbols Changed

The Commandant is now abbreviated "CCG". The Vice Commandant is now abbreviated "VCG"

VCG is also the Chief Operating Officer of the Coast Guard and she has her own EA, Speech Writer/Press Secretary and Special Assistant.

The Executive Secretariat, now known as the "Executive Secretary", formerly headed by Rick Pultz and more recently YNC Dave Nauta, is now headed by a Captain.

Law amended to address Saluting of the FLAG by veterans who are present but not in uniform

The president signed the Amendment to Section 9 of Title 4 of the U.S. Code which was attached with the H.R. 4986 Bill under the National Defense Authorization Act of 2008.

The amendment reads:

SEC. 594. CONDUCT BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND VETERANS OUT OF UNIFORM DURING HOISTING, LOWERING, OR PASSING OF UNITED STATES FLAG.

Section 9 of title 4, United States Code, is amended by striking `all persons present' and all that follows through the end of the section and inserting the following: `all persons present in uniform should render the military salute. Members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may render the military salute. All other persons present should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart, or if applicable, remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Citizens of other

countries present should stand at attention. All such conduct toward the flag in a moving column should be rendered at the moment the flag passes.

Local Retiree Needed to Serve on Coast Guard Mutual Assistance Board of Control

Washington, DC local retiree needed to serve on Coast Guard Mutual Assistance Board of Control area needed to serve on Coast Guard Mutual Assistance Board of Control.

The term is for three years, and the retiree representative can be officer or enlisted. Meetings are once a month, usually lasting on an average of 90 minutes, and held at CG Headquarters or the adjacent Jemal Building. Board of Control members do serve on various committees, which many of their meetings are held in a virtual sense, either through email and/or phone.

This is indeed a great opportunity to serve the Coast Guard community in one of the most important programs that supports the entire Coast Guard family.

If you are interested - please send an email to:

Barry Boisvere, Executive Director - Barry.M.Boisvere@uscg.mil, or phone (800) 881-2462. For additional information on the Coast Guard Mutual Assistance Program see website: <http://www.cgmahq.org/index.htm>

Coast Guard National USCG Retiree Council (CCGNRC) Annual Meeting

The Coast Guard National Retiree Council (CCGNRC) held its seventh annual meeting 29 April through 1 May 2008 at Coast Guard Headquarters. In addition to the Co Chairs, eleven (11) of the twelve (12) chartered regional Coast Guard Retiree Councils attended plus Civilian Annuitant and Retiree Council-at-Large representatives. A copy of the Annual Report is on the DC Area Council web site, <http://www.uscg.mil/ccs/carc>.

CAPT Bud Schneeweis, CAPT Bob Warakomsky, Ms. Susan Baicar, CIV(Ret), CDR Bruce Russell, SCPO Mike White represented the DC Area Council

The Council had an ambitious agenda of briefings and discussions from staffs and organizations both within and external to the Coast Guard. In lieu of recounting the wide range of superb information passed on to the Council report focuses on those issues of potential importance to the Commandant and the Assistant Commandant for Human Resources.

The Council was again distinctly honored to be personally briefed by the Commandant on his modernization strategy and initiatives to provide enhanced mission performance. Admiral Allen discussed his new relationship with the Administration now that the Service is in the Department of Homeland Security, as well as frank insights on issues with the current House Authorization Bill.

In March, the Secretary of the Navy sponsored a joint service retiree council meeting to share agendas, procedures and topics. **CCGNRC** was represented by Mr. Kolen Jarvis, CG-1222 and CDR Bruce Russell who reported as to the comparisons of recommendations between **CCGNRC**, Navy/Marine Corps and Air Force. In general, the other Departments get into specific legislative initiatives, while **CCGNRC** focus on communication, connection and assistance to our retiree community and how retirees can bring value to the active/reserve/civilian force.

The Council noted the continued exceptional support provided by the Military Coalition/National Military and Veterans Alliance, and especially the Military Officer

Association of America (MOAA) and the Fleet Reserve Association (FRA) for this year's meeting.

CGHQ's National Retiree Help Desk (NRHD). CCGNRC noted that this is a real win for our retirees and their dependents world-wide and is truly an exceptional example of Coasties helping their own. CAPT Bob Warakomsky provided a detailed brief as a follow-up from last year, including inquiry and response statistics. More than 600 inquiries have been handled since standup in July 2006 with an average response time of about 30 hours (down from 48 hours reported last year). NRHD is receiving an average of 8 inquires per week and as high as 20+ in a week. Five members of the Capital Area Council have taken on this mission and perform most of the "watchstander" duties, the NRHD has been set up to do this remotely and there are three members outside of the Capital Area that do so very effectively. In fact, all watchstanders do so remotely from their home or office. There are four "pushers" employed at CGHQ's with CG email accounts who daily forward the incoming emails to the remote watchstanders. Watchstanders call into the voice hotline and access voice inquiries during their duty.

Members of the Council were again tasked with soliciting volunteers to stand the watch from wherever they may live. The Council expressed appreciation for the continued support provided by the Headquarters Support Command to maintain this capability—their support has played a major role in the success of the program.

Continuing Service – Coast Guard For'er. CAPT Bob Skewes, USCG (Ret.), Chief, Office of Work-Life discussed his program's shortfall in billets and dollars and the role retiree volunteers can play in filling that gap. In particular, they could use assistance in supporting Work-Life field offices for outreach/awareness/marketing, ombudsman, training (subject matter experts), transition/relocation program, health promotion, decedent affairs, financial counseling, elder care, and administrative support. **CCGNRC** again recommended that regional retiree councils work with the Work-Life Program supervisors in the field to understand local needs and match qualified/interested volunteers. Retirees participating in TAPS workshops, to serve on panels or to talk about life after the Coast Guard, are important roles in helping members transition. The Council continues to recommend that particular attention be paid to the Work-Life Program during the mission support modernization to ensure that it retains the necessary capacity to fulfill its mission.

Civilian Retiree Identification Card. CWO Shirley Tennyson, CG-1222, briefed on the status of the civilian retiree ID card that will enable access to Coast Guard MWR facilities. This project is moving ahead within the Department of Defense (DoD). Now that DoD is driving this initiative, the new card will be produced by ID card software upgrade (expect summer to November rollout to Coast Guard sites). However, for individuals to be eligible for the ID card, the Defense Data Manpower Center (DMDC) must have a record that they are a civilian Coast Guard retiree. Discussion with the Chief, Office of Civilian Personnel for the Coast Guard indicates there are a number of complex issues that now must be addressed. These are not only Coast Guard issues, but DoD-wide too.

The DMDC database drives the issuance of the cards. Because the Coast Guard has recently transitioned to the new Combined Access Card (CAC), DMDC will have them in their database and their information will be available upon retirement. For those retired before issuance of the new cards (everyone 1-2 years ago and earlier), the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) holds their information (not the Coast Guard). Appears some sort of request on a case-by-case basis might be necessary to initiate a transfer of information from OPM to DMDC. It is not clear that a batch dump would be either feasible

or warranted. Still pending is the definition of a CG civilian retiree. As civilian retirees get a “general” annuity from the federal government that is not agency related, but rather the total accumulation of federal service, it is not clear as to what defines a CG civilian retiree (i.e., any service with the CG? 5 years? 10 years? 20 years? Only those who were employed by the Coast Guard when they retired?). Any definition other than just those who retired as Coast Guard employees will add additional complexity. Coast Guard civilian personnel should confer with their DoD service counterparts and promulgate this definition; this action along with determining how information will get from OPM to DMDC needs to be done soonest so issuance can proceed when the software is in place. Also noted that DoD is still weighing expiration date options (it will not be indefinite).

Coast Guard Mutual Assistance. CWO Barry Boisvere, USCG (Ret.), Executive Director, briefed on CGMA operations and needs. CGMA continues to be the very best way retirees can support today’s Coasties and are encouraged to do so via allotments from their retired pay. In fact, the retiree community is the only group that gives more than it receives. From 2003 through 2007, retired members contributed more than \$1.64M and received \$1.17M in loans and grants.

Armed Forces Retirement Home. The Council received a detailed and most informative brief from Ms. Shelia Abarr, Public Affairs Officer. She described their heartwarming response to Hurricane Katrina to ensure the safety and well being of all residents of the Gulfport facility, and continued management of those displaced from the Gulf while that facility is being rebuilt. The Council noted the major improvements and forward-looking master plans for both the Washington and Gulfport facilities. The Coast Guard’s inclusion in the Armed Forces Retirement Home is in the House current authorization bill. If in the final House and Senate Bill passed, USCG enlisted men and women can be justly proud that they support such a noble institution, and hereby ensuring the availability for retired Coasties.

(DC Area Retirees should remember that their Council initiated the effort to get USCG retirees included as authorized to use these facilities.)

Benefits. The Council notes the continuing progress by the Military Coalition, working with the Administration and Congress, in obtaining important benefits for active duty and reserve members, the retiree community, and their families. The Council continues to support those legislative initiatives that honor the men and women who serve everyday in harms way. Especially with the recruiting and retention challenges across all active duty, Reserve and National Guard components, the Nation must keep faith with the relatively small numbers of service members who bear the majority of the responsibility for the protection of our liberties. Although our Nation is at war, only 1% of Americans are actually engaged. While recruiting is going well for the Coast Guard, the other Service’s have considerable challenges that are not likely to get better in the near future. Keeping faith with this critical population will be one of the important keys to maintaining the all-volunteer force.

The Council remained concerned with the message being sent by proposed increases in TRICARE enrollment fees and pharmacy co pays. While the Council recognized that changes may be necessary, given the

substantial rise in healthcare costs and that enrollment fees haven't changed since inception years ago, we recommend that any changes be carefully vetted with thoughtful consideration of the long-term effects on the force.

Healthcare.

The Council noted the tremendous strides made by TRICARE and associated enhanced benefits, such as TRICARE for Life (TFL) and the expanded pharmacy benefit.

The TRICARE website, www.tricare.osd.mil, is an exceptional healthcare information/access tool. Additionally, all Coast Guard members, especially retirees, should make note of the Coast Guard's toll-free health benefits advisor number, 1-800-9HBAHBA. All too often members are attempting to tackle complex issues on their own when expert help is readily available. As the Service goes through its realignment of support services delivery, the Council hopes that adequate provision is made to continue a robust health benefits advisor hotline.

Personnel Services Center (PSC). Ms. Debbie Farley, Chief, Retiree and Annuitant Services (RAS) Branch attended and briefed. The Council continued to note the superb support provided by her Branch to all retirees and the regional councils. With nearly half of the helpdesk inquiries requiring referral to RAS for answer/resolution, Ms Farley and her folks are a tremendous asset to that initiative.

Increasing the Number and Size of Regional Councils.

As noted last meeting, while there has been some growth in the number of regional councils with the latest start-up in Hawaii, there are numerous areas of the U.S. with a good retiree population and proximate Coast Guard units with no regional councils. **CCGNRC** discussed the need to reach out to retirees in those areas to encourage and help them establish or reestablish councils. A "one-pager" guide on how to establish and charter a council was developed last year and is posted on the Fred's Place area of the Commandant's National Retiree Council. It is linked from the Coast Guard website under "Our People," "Retiree Affairs."

The Council held follow up discussion from the last meeting on the question: "Now that I have the council chartered, how do you encourage participation?" The Council members understand that getting folks together to swap sea stories just won't cut it today. Rather, each council must develop a menu of meaningful activities for its members. Viable councils are those that are activity-based where the members can "make a difference." Volunteering to assist the Work-Life program, staffing a retiree's office at the local Coast Guard unit, assisting the local command with decedent affairs, and NRHD watchstanding are areas where Retiree Councils can make a difference and will attract member involvement. Council activities must be driven by the desires and talents, skills and abilities of its members.

New Initiatives. As noted in the background section, the Council is focused on communication, connection and assistance to our retiree community and how retirees can bring value to the active/reserve/civilian force. These two new initiatives reflect that commitment.

Decedent Affairs Officers

CAPT Dana Starkweather, Co-Chair of the Pacific Northwest Council, announced their initiative to provide decedent affairs officers for the 13th Coast Guard District. This is a much needed duty that requires time and expertise not normally readily available as a collateral duty. Dana will give us a “how goes it” next year.

DC Council Caregivers Initiative

CDR Bruce Russell of the Capital Area Council is leading an effort of his council to develop a Caregivers' Guide. While PSC has a very useful Survivor Benefits Guide, there is no single source of critical entitlement information for caregivers of aging Coast Guard retirees, dependents, and annuitants. This will be more and more important as retirees are tending to live longer. The proposed Caregivers Guide would be limited to retiree entitlements and link to those services provided by veterans and mutual organizations. It is targeted to children, social workers and others who are supporting the retiree, annuitant, and/or dependent. The intention is to keep it simple and easily sustainable by linking to the information rather than reprinting, follow the format of the Survivors Benefits Guide and limiting it to eight pages. Once it is developed, the Council likely request that PSC post and maintain.

Summary.

The CCGNRC program continues to mature with a cadre of highly dedicated retirees. as Council Co-Chairs for the last number of years, the Council has progressed and grown in ways that are building nicely on the objectives set forth in the guiding Commandant Instruction. Members come ready to participate in ways to improve connections to the retiree community and “make a difference” for all of our Service’s men and women, active duty and retired, reserve, civilian and Auxiliary.

The Council noted significant value is being provided to those Coast Guard units and surrounding retiree communities where there is “enlightened leadership” at the commands. Retirees who are willing to volunteer their time, skills, knowledge and expertise to the Coast Guard community leverage the commands’ workforce. Those supportive commanders and commanding officers truly understand that for a minor investment in space, resources, and time, and a good dose of respect, pays substantial dividends. The Council salutes their insight and will continue to encourage others to step forward.

The Retiree Council’s Caregivers Guide

See National Retiree Council report summary above

Retiree Council’s Caregivers Guide Project is progressing. Project leaders are Bruce Russell and Bud Schneeweis. There is no single source of critical entitlement information for caregivers of aging Coast Guard retirees, dependents, and annuitants. The Caregivers Guide will be limited to retiree entitlements and those services provided by veterans and mutual organizations. This information will be helpful to children, social workers and others engaged who are supporting the retiree, annuitant, dependent. We intend to keep this simple and for the most part self-sustaining, that is refer/direct the user to other documents, websites and contacts. Comments and suggestions welcome.

Proposed topics include:

- Coast Guard pension (reading the Statement) (Deductions and allotments)
- RAS support (web site and Points of contact)
- Evening Colors

- Survivor benefit (annuitant pension),
- DEERS enrollment,
- ID cards (explain why this is important for both retiree benefits but also for personal finance—often aging parents lose their drivers license and this ID card becomes their only ID).
- TRICARE pre-65
- TRICARE for LIFE Post 65
- Medicare and TRICARE
- 1-800-HBAHBA (?)
- Military Treatment Facilities
- TRICARE Delta Dental
- Prescriptions
- VA benefits for retirees (Disability),
- VA hospital for financially strapped retirees
- Life insurance: SBP, VGLife, NMAA, others
- Long-term care options, OPM, NMAA life insurance policy conversions
- Veterans' organizations (e.g., MOAA, FRA, NMA)
- Continuity of benefits and entitlements for survivors
- Powers of Attorney and retiree benefits

Input welcome!!!!!!

Coast Guard Plates for VA Residents Are Available at DMV



The Coast Guard plate is now available for any current or retired Coast Guard members that have an automobile registered in the state of Virginia. All who requested them earlier and submitted payment and completed applications should receive them shortly. Some local VA retirees have gotten theirs. If not received soon, it is suggested that a check with a Virginia DMV office be made.

Ancient Keeper steps down after 42 years of rescues

Coast Guard Chief Warrant Officer Kevin Galvin was bestowed the honor of The Joshua James Ancient Keeper upon the retirement of Master Chief John Downey.



The first life that John E. Downey saved was a fisherman in distress near Narragansett, where he grew up next door to Coast Guard Station Point Judith, watching operations and playing in the boat-house

With the sea sparkling behind them, admirals and other officers honored him in a white tent filled with 360 fellow officers, current and former members of the service, Narragansett dignitaries, Downey's family and descendants of Joshua James, the celebrated lifesaver and keeper of four lifesaving stations in Hull, Mass., after whom Downey's watch is named.

Two years ago, Downey became the first recipient of the Joshua James Ancient Keeper Award, bestowed on an active duty Coast Guard member in recognition of longevity as commander of a boat force unit and outstanding performance in boat operations.

Retired Civilian ID Cards Update

HQ indicates USCG civilian retirees is progressing (but slowly).

Coast Guardsman awarded Air Medal for saving 20 fishermen from Alaska Ranger

Lt. Brian J. McLaughlin was the commander of a helicopter that rescued the crew of the Alaska Ranger.

The other medal recipients were Lt. Timothy Schmitz, Lt. Steven Bonn, Lt. Greg Gedemer, Petty Officer 2nd Class O'Brien Hollow, Petty Officer 2nd Class Robert DeBolt and Petty Officer 2nd Class Alfred V. Musgrave.

The Alaska Ranger's sister ship, Alaska Warrior, saved 22 men.

Five others died, including the captain, Weymouth native Eric Peter Jacobsen.

In presenting the medals Rear Adm. Gene Brooks said "If not for these brave actions in 30-knot winds, heavy snow squalls, 24-degree wind chill and turbulent seas, the Bering Sea could have taken them all

The Alaska Ranger sank approximately 125 miles west of Dutch Harbor on March 23

Coast Guard National Security Cutter Completes Acceptance Trials

The U.S. Coast Guard's first National Security Cutter, Bertholf, completed five days of acceptance trials in Pascagoula, Miss., April 11, 2008. Acceptance trials culminate many months of preliminary tests and evaluations before a new ship can be delivered to the government by its contractors. The U.S. Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV) said, "(Bertholf) was found to be a unique and very capable platform with great

acceptance, provided all (8) starred deficiencies are corrected or waived..." More than 80 representatives of INSURV tested shipboard equipment, assessed the quality of Bertholf's construction, and evaluated the cutter's compliance with contractual specifications and requirements established by the Coast Guard.

The Coast Guard selected INSURV to conduct acceptance trials of the NSC based on its 125 years of naval engineering experience and technical expertise. During the course of the acceptance process, INSURV conducts inspections and surveys of the ship and systems to determine whether they are ready for delivery. In addition, they observe and determine if the contractor's equipment is operating satisfactorily in accordance with the contract requirements. INSURV records discrepancies using trial cards.

Trial cards document individual discrepancies or deficiencies that require corrective action. The Coast Guard has used this same trial card system during all previous trials to communicate discrepancies to the contractor.

For a first-in-class ship design, the U. S. Navy has traditionally seen between 6,000 and 16,000 trial cards written during sea trials. The National Security Cutter has generated approximately 2,800 trial cards. INSURV recognized that, of the total trial card amount, 1,360 were roll-over cards from previous trial events. Noting that fact in its message, the Board said it was a "testament to the superb quality assurance oversight provided during ship construction and testing by the USCG Project Manager's Representative Office (PMRO) and the Navy Supervisor of Shipbuilding (SOS) Gulf Coast. " Over the next several weeks, government representatives will work with industry to correct discrepancies and develop plans for resolving outstanding issues.

Throughout April, trial cards will be resolved as quickly as possible. On April 14, instrumented TEMPEST testing began. The next major step in Bertholf's transition to operational status is formal acceptance of the cutter as documented in the Material Inspection and Receiving Report, or DD250. The DD250 formally documents inspection, delivery by the contractor, and receipt by the government. Any outstanding discrepancies or work items requiring resolution will be annotated on the form. The signed DD250 represents conditional acceptance of the cutter by the Coast Guard from the contractor.

Before conditionally accepting Bertholf, the Coast Guard's agency acquisition executive, Vice Adm. Vivien Crea, will consider the recommendations of INSURV, Bertholf prospective Commanding Officer Capt. Patrick Stadt, and a Coast Guard executive board consisting of senior members representing the Coast Guard's acquisition directorate, operations directorate (program sponsor), and independent technical authorities, including the chief engineer and chief information officer. Conditional acceptance could occur as early as April 30, upon approval of the agency acquisition executive.

Once accepted, the cutter will be turned over to the Coast Guard permanent crew and enter "In Commission, Special" status prior to formal commissioning into service scheduled for August. "In Commission Special" status indicates that the cutter is not doing regular patrols but is instead training the crew and testing equipment prior to beginning normal operations. Formal acceptance of Bertholf will be a major milestone in a lengthy testing and evaluation period that will follow delivery over the next 22-24 months to ensure the ship meets all technical requirements and the crew is fully trained and certified before it becomes an operational cutter within the Coast Guard's fleet.

The 418-foot Bertholf is the lead ship in the new Legend-class of cutters designed to be the flagship of the U.S. Coast Guard's more modern fleet. Capable of executing the most

challenging maritime safety and security missions around the globe, Bertholf is the first of eight national security cutters planned to be built under the Coast Guard's Deepwater modernization program.

Bertholf was christened on Veteran's Day in 2006 and is named after Commodore Ellsworth P. Bertholf, the first commandant of the modern-day Coast Guard.

Coast Guard Debuted New Small Boat

The Coast Guard has a new tool at its disposal for search and rescue missions -- the 45-foot "Response Boat-Medium"

The Coast Guard describes the vessel as "multi-mission capable" and expects it to operate in coastal zones, including inshore and inland waterways, as well as open waters of the ocean out to about 50 nautical miles. It will most routinely operate in shallow waters, however.

It is intended to be able to respond rapidly to any Coast Guard mission on very short notice and will conduct patrols and training.

"The Response Boat-Medium will greatly improve Coast Guard readiness and responsiveness throughout the country," ADM Thad Allen noted. "With this faster and more capable platform, we are putting the right tool for the job in the hands of our people," he said, "as they conduct a broad range of vital Coast Guard missions, including homeland security, search and rescue, and law enforcement."

The boat will replace the Coast Guard's 41-foot utility boat which has been the workhorse of Coast Guard coastal stations for more than 25 years.

The new boats feature twin diesel engines with water jet propulsion providing increased maneuverability. They are capable of speeds in excess of 40 knots (46 miles per hour).

It is capable of handling missions in 30-knot winds, but is designed to weather even more punishing conditions, with gusts to 50 knots. Additionally, it should be able to navigate in rough seas with waves up to 12 feet, the Coast Guard said.

It also has the ability to "self-right" itself, as long as still intact.

Depending on its mission, the boat can be outfitted with mounted machine guns and it includes stowed armament.

For the typical five-member crew, there is a full cabin for protection from the elements that is equipped with "a robust navigation system," heating and air conditioning, shock mitigating seats and a communication system allowing contact

USCG – Marine Safety Performance Plan

The US Coast Guard issued its [Marine Safety Performance Plan](#). The goals of the plan are to: (1) reduce maritime casualties; (2) improve service to mariners, the industry, and the public; (3) improve program process and management; and (4) improve human resource capabilities. The Plan is intended to be a living document and public input is important. Comments should be submitted within the next 60 days to:

MSPerformancePlan@uscg.mil.

Cape Code Lighthouse Mystery Solved

Long thought gone forever, a Cape Cod lighthouse that once overlooked Wellfleet Harbor was recently rediscovered almost 3,000 miles away on a rocky Californian cliff.



The 30-foot-tall lighthouse stands at Mayo's Beach along Wellfleet Harbor in this 1915 photo. Historians originally thought the cast-iron tower was destroyed, but researchers recently discovered the lighthouse on Point Montara, on the southern end of San Francisco Bay. It was a genuine shock, said Wellfleet historian Helen Purcell. Courtesy of Lighthouse Digest.

"The story has always been that that little 30-foot lighthouse in Wellfleet was taken down and destroyed," said Jim Walker, chairman of the Cape Cod Chapter of the American Lighthouse Foundation. "Here we are 80 some odd years later and it's been discovered. I think it's fantastic that it's not lost and gone."

The fate of the 30-foot-tall, cast-iron tower that stood at Mayo's Beach until 1925 was uncovered late last year by lighthouse researchers digitally archiving historic photographs.

Colleen MacNeney, whose parents, Bob and Sandra Shanklin have photographed every lighthouse in the United States, reported the find in this month's edition of Lighthouse Digest.

"This is the most exciting thing that I've found," MacNeney said in a telephone interview from Florida yesterday.

The lighthouse's existence was an equally pleasant surprise to local experts and people familiar with it.

"I thought that the government took it down," said Joni Malcynsky, whose family has owned the Mayo's Beach lighthouse keeper's house since 2004. "That is definitely news to us."

The keeper's house stands in its original location on Kendrick Avenue much as it did when the tower was removed more than 80 years ago. Out back, a building that once held kerosene for the lighthouse is a draw for artists, who paint it from the beach, Malcynsky said.

The lighthouse has at least one other distinction: It was the first to have a female lighthouse keeper, Malcynsky said. That was Sarah Atwood, who served from 1876 to 1891, following in the job of her late husband, William.

The Wellfleet light's discovery on Point Montara, on the southern end of San Francisco Bay, was a genuine shock, said Wellfleet historian Helen Purcell. "In a way, I don't know if I ever asked myself what did they do with it."

Some of the confusion surrounding its fate may come from the existence of several lighthouses at different times in the same area, Purcell said. The lighthouse now in

California was first erected in Wellfleet in 1881 and was the last one to be built in the harbor area.

It was believed to have been razed in 1939, according to MacNeney. There is no known documentation of any move across the country.

But during research work for a book about lighthouses, MacNeney and her parents found a photograph of a lighthouse tower in Yerba Buena, Calif., dated 1928 with the inscription: "This tower formerly used at Mayo Beach, 2d District."

The inconsistent dates and the mysterious reference to "Mayo Beach" led MacNeney to Washington, D.C., where, after an extensive search of the National Archives, she discovered correspondence that proved the lighthouse had been moved from Wellfleet to Yerba Buena and eventually to Point Montara in 1928, she said.

"It was transferred from excess stock from one Coast Guard district to another," she said.

The tower was first built in a foundry in Chelsea, north of Boston, said Walker, from the lighthouse foundation. It could easily have been taken apart bolt by bolt and moved by rail in pieces, he said.

But the reason the Coast Guard would undertake such a seemingly expensive action is unclear, Shanklin said. "This has to be furthest a lighthouse has been moved in the U.S."

The U.S. Coast Guard continues to operate the now-white tower as an aid to navigation, Coast Guard assistant historian Scott Price said.

It's also a 50-bed American youth hostel. "I've actually stayed in it," Shanklin said.

The management was unaware that the lighthouse came from Cape Cod and thought it had been built new in California, said Brian Wentzlaff, an assistant at the hostel. Now, the hostel staff will have to consider changes to their historical materials, Wentzlaff said.

The Coast Guard will also have to make some changes. An initial search of its summary of lighthouses showed that the Mayo's Beach lighthouse had been destroyed, Price said. "We have it down as being razed," he said. "We need to fix that, then."

For more information on the Point Montara Lighthouse youth hostel and other lighthouses visit:

- The Lighthouse People: www.thelighthousepeople.com
- Lighthouse Digest: www.lighthousedigest.net
- American Lighthouse Foundation: www.lighthousefoundation.org
- Race Point Lighthouse guest house: www.racepointlighthouse.net
- Point Montara Lighthouse Hostel: www.norcalhostels.org/montara

The Sole Remaining Lighthouse Keeper In The United States May Be The Last One

The sole remaining lighthouse keeper in the United States may be the last one but she isn't about to disappear.

Sally Snowman is part historian, part tour guide and part maintenance worker who tends Boston Light, a beacon that rises 89 feet (27 meter) on its own island and had guided sailors for almost three centuries.

Her charge, and specifically the 12-sided rotating lens that casts its beam 27 nautical miles out to sea, fills her with a great sense of security.

"When you're out at night on the island, you can actually see the 12 rays," said the ex-schoolteacher. "It actually looks like the rays are going out to the curvature of the earth and it feels so protected, like nothing's going to harm me. It's awesome."

The U.S. Coast Guard has automated the other 278 federally run lighthouses, finding this a more cost-effective way to manage navigational aids that have become less critical since the advent of global positioning systems that harness satellite technology.

Boston Light, which in 1716 became the first lighthouse in the former British colonies, keeps its keeper thanks to Massachusetts Sen. Edward Kennedy who two decades ago helped push through legislation requiring a full-time attendant.

Snowman got the job in 2003 when the Coast Guard decided it could be held by a civilian. Now she resides on the three-acre island for up to a week at a time.

She makes sure the lighthouse, keeper's cottage and other buildings are maintained, the 1,000-watt light is lit, and the grounds are in shape for the 4,000 tourists who travel the nine nautical miles from Boston Harbor each year.

Snowman dresses the part, wearing a bonnet and long dress to reflect how women dressed in 1783 when the Commonwealth of Massachusetts rebuilt the tower that was blown up by retreating British troops in 1776, as the Revolutionary War got underway.

Twice a day she walks the island's perimeter to inspect its buildings, making sure that the light is still drawing power from an undersea cable stretching from the mainland, and that the island's water and communications systems work properly.

In between, she oversees a crew of about 100 volunteers who help to take weather readings and fill the hundreds of tiny holes that pock the island, thanks to a population of muskrats.

Beyond its role in navigation, Boston Light is also a tourist draw. Snowman has a theory as to why.

"For many, it has a sense of hope and spirituality, not religion, but spirituality," she said in an interview atop the tower, looking out over Boston Harbor. "They look at it and see it as a coming home and safety."



The Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter Turns 100

Irene Dumican who turned in April has lived on Cape Cod since she was 4 years old.

That year, 1912, her father, Fred W. Tibbetts, became the chief keeper at the historic lighthouse perched above the Atlantic.

The Dumicans — father, mother Fanny, Irene and her brother and sister — lived in a house attached to the light.

It was an isolated existence, Dumican's daughter, Martha Dumican, said. But Irene Dumican made the most of it, waiting tables at nearby Highland House from the time she was 13, attending dances at the Village Hall in North Truro and listening to the family's Victrola at home.

"I read a great deal, and I wrote loads of letters," Dumican said.

She never did learn to swim — the riptides below the lighthouse didn't make sea bathing seem very appealing, especially after a summer co-worker at the Highland House was swept out and drowned. "It was very rough down there by the light," Dumican said.

After high school, Dumican worked for two years to save enough money to attend teachers' college at Hyannis Normal School.

At the Ezra Baker School, Dumican taught several generations of the some families.

"One little girl came in and said, 'You taught my grandmother,'" Martha Dumican said.

These days Irene Dumican shares a home in Yarmouth with her daughter Martha and likes to go out every day, often to the Harwich recycling center, the Treasure Chest.

The folks there know of her father's nearly quarter century of service at Highland Light and try to save lighthouse memorabilia for her, Martha Dumican said. They presented her with a cake for her 100th birthday and a bouquet of carnations — Irene Dumican's favorite flowers.



Irene Dumican displays an old photo of Highland Light in Truro, where her father was lighthouse keeper and where she grew up. She turns 100 years old today.

Cape Cod Times/Merrily Lunsford

Department to Phase Out Full Social Security Numbers on IDs

As a means of combating identity theft, the Defense Department will issue identification cards without full Social Security numbers printed onto them, a senior official DOD official has announced .

Mary Dixon, director of the Defense Manpower Data Center based in Arlington, Va., told Pentagon Channel and American Forces Press Service reporters that Identity theft is a

very real problem today, Dixon explained. Criminals who pilfer SSN-bearing identity cards can virtually assume someone's identity through a few computer keystrokes and clicks of a mouse, she said.

TriCare, the military services' health maintenance organization, already has removed Social Security numbers from its members' identification cards, Dixon said.

Plans are to remove the Social Security numbers from identification cards issued to military family members by the end of this year, Dixon said, noting that those cards still would display the sponsors' SSN, for now. Between 2009 and 2010, all department-issued identification cards will feature only the last four digits of a holder's Social Security number, she said.

About 3.4 million people now have department-issued common access cards, Dixon said. Around two-thirds of those card holders are military members, and some civilians who deploy overseas, who have full Social Security numbers printed onto the back of their CACs.

"Today, all of our (computer) systems can 'talk' to each other, so we don't necessarily need to know all of that information printed on your card," she said. New identification cards will be issued as they reach their expiration dates, Dixon said.

Coast Guard Chief Petty Officer Returns from Iraq

Chief Petty Officer Chris Lipke is glad to be back home. He's been serving in Iraq for the last five months.

If you think it might be unusual for the Coast Guard to be in Iraq, Chris says it's not. "I was helping the Army deal with hazardous materials, " he explained.

Most importantly, he's glad to be back home with his wife, Lynda, and 2-year-old daughter, Maggie.

He's going to spend most of his time home reacquainting himself with his daughter.

"She was a little over a year when I left, and the two persons they are, they've grown and changed quite a bit," Chris observed.

He will be home for 50 days before shipping out to his next mission in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Boating Season Is Here

Check Your Safety Equipment and Boat Seaworthiness

All are reminded that to check their boating equipment, because after Feb. 1, 2009, only distress alerts from 406 MHz beacons will continue to be detected and processed by search and rescue satellites worldwide. Older model EPIRBs (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons) that transmit a distress alert on 121.5 MHz or 243 MHz will no longer be monitored by satellite, and is likely to go completely undetected in an emergency. Mariners disposing of their old EPIRB before Feb. 1, 2009 are urged to first remove the battery.

Although recreational boaters are not required to carry an EPIRB, they are strongly recommended for ALL boaters venturing outside the harbor, along with a VHF-FM marine band radio. The 406 MHz signal sent by the newer EPIRBs when a mariner encounters distress are picked up by the COSPAS/SARSAT satellite constellation, which determines the EPIRBs position through triangulation. EPIRBs with embedded GPS are even more helpful in quickly finding a distressed boater. With GPS coordinates, the position of distress is pinpointed almost immediately. Without GPS, it may take two or three satellite passes to come up with a good, triangulated position.



"As we say in the Coast Guard, 406 EPIRBs take the 'search' out of 'search and rescue,'" said Capt. Chip Strangfeld, Commander of Coast Guard Sector San Diego. "In some cases, the time saved by EPIRBs could mean the difference between life and death. For a one-time cost of under \$900, a GPS imbedded 406 EPIRB is 'cheap insurance' for those who put themselves at risk in the offshore environment."

As long as the new 406 MHz beacon has been registered (which is required by law), search and rescue authorities can quickly confirm that the distress is real, who they are looking for, and a description of the vessel or aircraft. This means an effective search can be initiated even before a final distress location has been determined for non-GPS EPIRBs. It also means that a false activation may be resolved with a phone call to the beacon owner, saving resources for actual distresses.

This registration is free and can be done on the internet at: www.beaconregistration.noaa.gov or it can be mailed/faxed to NOAA by calling 1-888-212-SAVE. Beacon registrations must be updated at least every two years or when information such as emergency contact phone numbers and other vital information changes. This registration information is only available to authorized search and rescue personnel. It saves lives.

More potentially life-saving information along with how to take a boating safety course or get a free vessel safety check from the Coast Guard Auxiliary can be found on the internet at: www.uscgboating.org.

CAPT Mike Pierson USCG RET still on Guard

Thinking safe: While violence in national and state forests is rare, being cautious is key

Violence near the Appalachian Trail has recently raised trail-safety issues, especially in light of warming weather that is again enthusing outdoors lovers.

On May 8, two fishermen were shot while camping a couple miles from a shelter where the suspected gunman killed two Appalachian Trail hikers in 1981.

On May 3, a female Appalachian Trail hiker told authorities she was abducted and sexually assaulted when a man offered her a ride to the post office in Troutville.

With 25 miles of the Appalachian Trail running through the George Washington National Forest in Amherst County, as well as areas like the Mount Pleasant National Scenic Area, there are plenty of opportunities for hiking and camping.

But the woods can seem intimidating, and the incidents in southwestern Virginia may have people wondering who's out there.

The U.S. Forest Service has 11 law enforcement officers for 1.8 million acres for the George Washington and Jefferson National forests. The Service also has a cooperative agreement with local sheriff's departments to patrol heavily populated areas.

Enter Mike Pierson, a retired United States Coast Guard officer with nearly 30 years of active duty. Pierson is the Tye River Ridgerunner, and works for the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. On a weekly basis, he covers the 70 miles of trail from Reed's Gap in Nelson County to roughly 10 miles south of the James River.

His duties include working with the local trail clubs to keep the trail in good condition, talking to hikers he meets and sharing news about the weather and hiking plans along with advice on hydration and nutrition. Pierson also responds to emergencies on the trail and is in contact with law enforcement and emergency service workers.

He said more than 1,000 hikers are on the Appalachian Trail right now, and that number doesn't include day hikers or section hikers. It's fortunate that a sense of community forms on the trail, he said.

"They look out for their neighbors, and a lot of close friendships are formed on the trail," Pierson said.

"There will always be a few bad eggs as the trail is a microcosm of society. Those that may cause problems are soon identified and you wouldn't believe how fast information travels up and down the trail."

Pierson suggests reporting any person or situation that doesn't feel right. But first, hike away or set up camp elsewhere.

Mosquito Spray...Worth a try A Tip from a Newsletter Reader

"I was at a deck party awhile back, and the bugs were having a ball biting everyone. A man at the party sprayed the lawn and deck floor with Listerine, and the little demons disappeared. The next year I filled a 4-ounce spray bottle and used it around my seat whenever I saw mosquitoes. And voila! That worked as well. It worked at a picnic where we sprayed the area around the food table, the children's swing area, and the standing water nearby. During the summer, I don't leave home without it".

Maritime Security Subject of Denmark Conference

Terrorism, piracy and other transnational threats were among topics military planners from around the world discussed at a recent conference in Copenhagen, Denmark.

ADM Allen a keynote speaker at the event.

The multilateral planning conference attracted 234 participants from 61 countries. Global maritime security cooperation was the over-arching theme. The nations also worked together in anticipation of a United Nations Security Council resolution on piracy that the world body is considering.

Four years ago, insurance companies raised the rates for ships transiting the Straits of Malacca, which the three countries share. Sixty cases of piracy were taking place per year

in and near the straits. The three countries began sharing maritime information and working together, and only one case of piracy has taken place in the region so far this year.

The conference looked at likely maritime threats and examined emerging challenges. Participants worked toward building future partnership initiatives and policy recommendations.

Retired Civilian ID Cards Update

See National Council Report Summary Above

USCGC BERTHOLF Commissioning on August 4, 2008

The USCGC BERTHOLF (WMSL 750) is the first of a new Legend class of National Security Cutters built under the Deepwater project approved by Congress. The cutters of this class will begin replacing the aging 378-foot 'WHECs' currently in service. The 418-foot state-of-the-art vessel with a crew of 113 personnel, will be homeported in Alameda, CA.

The new cutter is named for Commodore Ellsworth Price Bertholf, the Coast Guard's first Commandant, a recipient of the Congressional Gold Medal for being part of a three-man team which traveled 1,600 miles overland in 1897 herding reindeer to rescue 200 trapped whalers at Point Barrow who were starving. He was later named Commandant of the Coast Guard, retired in 1919 and passed away in 1921. He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

The commissioning event, scheduled on August 4, 2008 in Alameda, CA is being planned by the Pacific Central Region of the Navy League at the request of the Coast Guard. The Bertholf Commissioning Committee includes retired members of the Coast Guard, Navy and Merchant Marine, current Coast Guard Auxiliary members, Blue Star Moms and Pacific Central Region Navy League leaders. Among the number of Honorary Chairs include California U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein and actor Kevin Costner who starred in the movie "The Guardian," a story portraying the Coast Guard's rescue swimmer program.

The Committee is currently raising funds for the historic event so that traditional maritime commissioning activities may be held. Monies raised are for activities which the Coast Guard cannot provide, including events for the crew, funds for the crew's Morale, Well-being and Recreation fund, including educational opportunities and traditional receptions before and post-commissioning ceremony.

Tax deductible contributions (501 C 3, ID# 68-0114586) may be made payable to CCCNLUS and mailed to: Navy League, P.O. Box 2181, Alameda, CA 94501.

For additional information regarding support for the commissioning and the Bertholf, please visit the Commissioning Ceremony committee's website: www.bertholfcommissioning.com <<http://www.bertholfcommissioning.com/>> and the Coast Guard Pacific Area's website: www.uscg.mil/pacarea/bertholf/ <<http://www.uscg.mil/pacarea/bertholf/>>

A letter of acknowledgement and appreciation will be sent to each donor. Donors will be recognized in a Commissioning Ceremony publication.

Retirees are urged to visit their website (www.bertholfcommissioning.com) to see how to help and make a donation if so desired. Please spread the word to other retirees.

BERTHOLF Prints for Sale.with Monies Going to the MRW Fund on the Ship

BERTHOLF prints available. Cost of a print is \$20:00, with all monies going to the MRW fund on the ship. Those interested should contact:

Julio Blea

Command Master Chief, USN (RET)

Membership Representative

Sea West Coast Guard FCU

P.O. Box 4949

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New ABC Unscripted Series to Take a Look Fight Against Terrorism

A new ABC unscripted series, "Border Security USA", will take an unprecedented look behind the scenes at the government's fight against terrorism.

The network has ordered 11 hours of "Border Security USA" from executive Big Brother producer. Shot on location throughout the United States, the series will focus on the efforts of border protection agencies to halt illegal smuggling and immigration.

A typical episode might jump from a border patrol in Texas to security screeners at a New York airport to a Coast Guard boat off Puerto Rico.

Series was produced with the cooperation of the DHS (as well as the Transportation Security Administration, U.S. Coast Guard, United States Citizenship & Immigration Services, the Secret Service, Customs & Border Protection and Immigration & Customs Enforcement). The network plans to launch "Border" sometime next season.

Military Retiree Councils Reports Now Online

Military retiree councils' reports now online courtesy of Military.com. They have created a page where all of the services' retiree council reports can be found:

<http://www.military.com/benefits/retiree/military-retiree-councils>

New Coast Guard Videos On Youtube....

Interested? sign up on the Coast Guard Imagery YouTube page. This way, you'll automatically get videos that were created or provided by the Coast Guard Public Affairs team.

Website link: <http://www.youtube.com/user/USCGImagery>

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