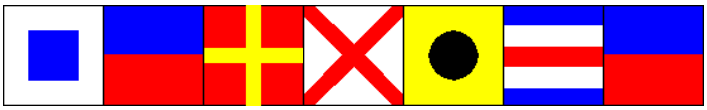
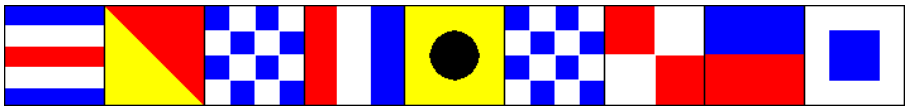
Capital Area Coast Guard Retiree Council Newsletter
SERVICE CONTINUES





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

Issue 21 **29 June 2010**

SUMMERS HERE!!!

Your Council continues to be active, meeting Friday – June 25, 2010 at USCG HQ.

Key issues were

Dec 2010 Holiday Party Planning
Status of New Council E mail List.
Council Outreach to the Capital Area Coast Guard Retiree Community
Help Desk Utilization
National Retiree Council April Annual Meeting Update

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

A copy of the Council Newsletters, Agendas and Meeting Minutes are posted on the Council web site, http://www.uscg.mil/ccs/carc , and can be downloaded, or may be requested from Council Secretary, Lula Carpenter, ph (703 913 7390) or e-mail: leecarp@verizon.net.

The Council's objective is to publish a quarterly newsletter and provide the **Capital Area Coast Guard Retiree Community**, **military and civilian,** with information on Council activities and items of interest to USCG Retirees in the Washington DC, Maryland and Northern Virginia Council area. In addition, items that are time-critical will be sent using the Council E-Mail list.

All Capitol Area Retirees are invited to contribute to the **Newsletter**, attend a Council meeting, and are welcome to communicate with Council members prior to the Council meetings, or to provide informational items of interest to retirees. Please send an e mail, call, or write to the Council Co-Chairs, CAPT Bud Schneeweis and YNCS Mike White, the Council Secretary, Lula Carpenter or to the **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. Additional e-mail / snail mail addresses and phone numbers for the Council mailing list are very welcome.

All are urged to look at the Capital Area Coast Guard Retiree Council 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 webmaster, CAPT Bob

Warakomsky, at bpwarakom@cox.net

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

Council Meeting Schedule for 2010-2011
Friday – Sep 24, 2010
Friday - Dec 03, 2010
Friday - Mar 25, 2011
Friday - Jun 24, 2011
Friday - Sep 30, 2011
Friday - Dec 02, 2011

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

Capital Area Coast Guard Retiree Council Seeking Input on what the Council Might do to Better Serve the DC Area Retirees, military and civilian
Your Council looks forward to continuing to serve all Coast Guard Retirees, military and civilian, and extends an invitation to attend Council meetings

Improving the Email of DC Area Retirees
Work continues on increasing the number of addresses in the Council's e-mail Distribution Listing for the DC Area Retirees, military and civilian in the Capitol area. New and revised contact info for DC Area Retirees should be sent to David Bernstein at dberns01@gmail.com.
Please provide:
Name/Rank
Addresses
Ph no
Current e mail
Spouse

4th Annual Capitol Area Retiree Council Holiday Party Scheduled
We had attendance good turnout for the 3rd Annual Capitol Area Retiree Council Holiday Party in 2009. It was great to see old friends and to make new ones. It is always good to see Commandant in informal surroundings and to get an update on the Coast Guard straight from the "Top". Plans are underway for the 4th Annual Holiday Party, 5 December 2010, 4-6PM. **Mark your calendar.**

The Capital Area Coast Guard Retiree Council Extends its Congratulations to ADM PAPP and VADM Brice-O'Hara and Extends a "WELL DONE" to ADM Allen and VADM Pekoske.

ADM Papp Assumed Command as Commandant 25 May

ADM Robert J. Papp, Jr., assumed command as the 24th commandant of the Coast Guard 25 May, relieving ADM Thad W. Allen during a military ceremony at Fort McNair.

During the ceremony, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates awarded Allen the Defense Distinguished Service Medal. Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano presided over the change of command and awarded Allen the Homeland Security Distinguished Service Medal.

ADM Allen continues to serve as the National Incident Commander for the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, managing an unprecedented response effort. He commands as a civilian following his retirement from active duty.

Vice Admiral Sally Brice-O'Hara Relieved VADM David P. Pekoske as Vice Commandant

VADM Sally Brice-O'Hara relieved VADM David P. Pekoske as Vice Commandant at a Change of Watch ceremony the twenty-fourth of May Fort McNair.

The Coast Guard Retiree Council Welcomes VADM Pekoske to the DC Area Retiree Community

The Coast Guard Retiree Council Welcomes VADM Pekoske to the DC Area Retiree Community. ADM Pekoske is remaining the DC area and is executive vice president A-T Solutions Inc. of Fredericksburg, Va.

ALCOAST FROM ADM PAPP on: RESPECT OUR SHIPMATES - COMMAND CLIMATE

R 272015Z MAY 10
FM COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC
TO ALCOAST
BT
UNCLAS //N05350//
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ALCOAST 275/10
COMDTNOTE 5350
SUBJ: SHIPMATES 3: RESPECT OUR SHIPMATES - COMMAND CLIMATE A. COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC 261800Z MAY 10/ALCOAST 271/10

1. SHIPMATES, AS WE SET THE WATCH, WE ALSO SET THE TONE AND EXPECTATION FOR HOW WE WILL STAND OUR WATCH TOGETHER. AS I INDICATED TO YOU IN REF A, RESPECTING OUR SHIPMATES IS ONE OF MY FOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES. OVER THE COURSE OF MY CAREER, I HAVE LEARNED THAT WE MUST RESPECT ONE ANOTHER BEFORE WE CAN SUCCESSFULLY WORK TOGETHER AS A TEAM. MISSIONS ARE ACCOMPLISHED BY PEOPLE. BY LETTING OUR PEOPLE KNOW THEY WILL BE TREATED FAIRLY AND APPRECIATED, THAT THEIR LEADERS CARE ABOUT THEM PERSONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY, WE WILL PUT OURSELVES ON COURSE TO CREATE GREAT COMMAND CLIMATES AND WORK ENVIRONMENTS.

2. GREAT COMMAND CLIMATES ENABLE OUR PEOPLE TO THRIVE. THEY ALSO RESULT IN OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE, EFFICIENCY, MORALE AND RETENTION, INCLUDING RECRUITING AND RETAINING A DIVERSE WORKFORCE. IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT COMMANDS WITH POSITIVE ATTITUDES, PRIDE AND ENTHUSIASM ARE INVARIABLY THE TOP PERFORMERS. THE COHESION BEHIND TOP PERFORMING UNITS DOES NOT HAPPEN BY CHANCE. ITS A PRODUCT OF MUTUAL RESPECT, COMMUNICATION AND ATTENTION TO THE MANY SMALL, BUT DYNAMIC INTERACTIONS OF SHIPMATES.

3. MY DUTY AS COMMANDANT IS TO PROVIDE YOU WITH MY DIRECTION ON MAINTAINING POSITIVE COMMAND CLIMATES. IN ADDITION TO MY PHILOSOPHY CONTAINED IN THIS MESSAGE, I HAVE POSTED MY POLICY STATEMENTS ON ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND ANTI-HARASSMENT, EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, AND DIVERSITY. THEY ARE AVAILABLE AT WWW.USCG.MIL/SENIORLEADERSHIP.
THESE POLICY STATEMENTS SET FORTH IN FURTHER DETAIL MY EXPECTATIONS FOR HOW WE WILL RESPECT OUR SHIPMATES. LINK TO THEM. READ THEM.
POST THEM. LIVE THEM.

4. I WANT TO MAKE VERY CLEAR THAT I WILL NOT TOLERATE ANY BEHAVIOR INCONSISTENT WITH THESE EXPECTATIONS: NOR SHOULD YOU. I VALUE EVERY MEMBER OF THE COAST GUARD FAMILY. EACH OF US IS ENTITLED TO WORK IN A RESPECTFUL AND PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT. AFTER ALL, RESPECTING YOUR SHIPMATES IS NOT ONLY ONE OF MY CORE PRINCIPLES, ITS PART OF THE COAST GUARDS CORE VALUES OF HONOR, RESPECT AND DEVOTION TO DUTY.
5. EACH COMMANDING OFFICER AND OFFICER IN CHARGE SHALL READ THIS MESSAGE AT THE NEXT QUARTERS OR APPROPRIATE MUSTER AND SHALL POST THESE POLICY STATEMENTS IN PROMINENT LOCATIONS ABOARD THEIR COMMAND TO ENSURE THAT MY EXPECTATIONS ARE CLEAR.
6. RELEASED BY ADM BOB PAPP, COMMANDANT.
7. INTERNET RELEASE AUTHORIZED.
BT

Report from the CCGNRC Annual Meeting 2010 –

Bud Schneeweis, Mike White, John Milkiewicz & Susan Baicar attended the CCGNRC Annual Meeting 2010. The following was discussed:

1. The Organization of the Coast Guard
2. Delta Dental update – Still a good deal.
3. PSC – Medicare/Tricare current reimbursement schedule passed the Congress after a delay. Tricare fees may go up next year.
4. Budget briefing – The Coast Guard budget will likely be cut.
5. Debbie Farley Report on Retiree Section Support Command - Ret 2 Reserve Retiree issues were discussed & this is a problem in all the Services. Help Desk is advised to send issues to her.
6. Report by MOAA & Fleet Reserve – They are busy on Capitol Hill with the Budget & Debt Commission.
7. Vice Commandant presentation – Upbeat but cautionary@ the Budget.
8. HQ Move to St. Elizabeth's in 2013 – Discussion of commuting problems.
9. Vince Patton report on importance of Social Networking for jobs after retirement.
10. Civilian Exchange Use – Susan Baicar reported on limited Exchange Privileges for Retired CG & DHS Civilian Employees

A copy of the meeting minutes will be available via the Capital Area Coast Guard Retiree Council WEB site, http://www.uscg.mil/ccs/carc.

Happy Birthday, Chiefs!

The Navy rate of Chief Petty Officer was established on April 1, 1893, and the Coast Guard created the CPO grade on May 18, 1920. Happy Birthday Day Chiefs!!!!!!!!!!

MCPO Ib Andersen USCG (Ret) Steps Down as a NRC Help Desk Volunteer Watchstander

MCPO Ib Andersen USCG (Ret) has decided to steps down as a NRC Help Desk Volunteer

The Capital Area Coast Guard Retiree Council sent a letter thanking him his volunteer work as a watchstander for the National Retiree Council Help Desk.

The NRC Help Desk is running smoothly and his participation has been a major reason for its success. His hard work and support are appreciated.

Ib's participation proved the concept of how a CG retiree from outside of the Washington, DC area could perform successfully as a watchstander. Through his example, the NRC Help Desk now uses retirees from several Councils outside of the Capital area as watchstanders. It works!

His dedication and expertise will be missed by the NRC Help Desk Team.

GPS Blows Coast Guard LORAN Stations Out of the Desert

It's anchors aweigh for Coast Guard operations in Nevada's desert.

After 33 years of guiding ships and later planes with signals broadcast from towers south of Searchlight, the Coast Guard is pulling up stakes at its long-range navigation station.

The reason is because Global Positioning System satellites have made ground-based LORAN operations obsolete, and the 24-station network, which includes stations in Searchlight and Fallon, is being shut down to save $37 million per year in operation costs.

The five Coast Guardsmen who run the station will be reassigned to active units.

The Searchlight station stopped broadcasting navigation signals on Feb. 8 as did other network stations.

Last year, President Barack Obama said the LORAN-C network was not needed because GPS technology abounds for cars, aircraft and boats.

Whether or not the network should be preserved in mothballs to serve as a backup hinges on a study by the Coast Guard's mother agency, the Department of Homeland Security.

The Searchlight station started broadcasting signals in 1977 as part of the West Coast chain of stations used by ships and boats. A second dimension was added to the station in 1989 to support civilian aviators in the south-central United States.

The first LORAN-A operations began 67 years ago before the end of World War II.

Fire Scout Scores First-ever Drug Bust with McInerney

During a routine test flight, a MQ-8B Fire Scout Vertical Take-off and Landing Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (VTUAV) supported its first drug interdiction with USS McInerney (FFG 8) and a US Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (USCG LEDET) Apr. 3.

McInerney launched one of its two embarked Fire Scout's to test different functions and settings when it acquired a suspected narcotics "go-fast" on radar.

The Mission Payload Operator completed testing and received permission to pursue.

Over the course of three hours, Fire Scout monitored the go-fast with McInerney. With its state-of-the-art optics and extremely small profile, Fire Scout was able to maintain an unprecedented covert posture while feeding real-time video back to McInerney.

Fire Scout proceeded to capture video of the "go-fast" meeting with a fishing vessel for what appeared to be a refueling/logistics transfer. McInerney and its embarked USCG LEDET moved in and seized approximately 60 kilos of cocaine and caused the suspected traffickers to jettison another approximately 200 kilos of narcotics.

Fire Scout has been deployed onboard McInerney in the Eastern Pacific since October 2009. McInerney, with embarked Helicopter Antisubmarine Squadron (Light) 42 Detachment 7 (HSL Det 7), is deployed for US Naval Forces Southern Command (NAVSO)in the US Southern Command area of responsibility conducting counter illicit trafficking (CIT) operations in support of Joint Interagency Task Force-South. The embarked Fire Scout VTUAVs are operated and maintained by a team from HSL 42 Det 7, the Navy Fire Scout Program Office, and Northrop Grumman Corporation.

NAVSO is the naval component command for US Southern Command and is responsible for all Naval personnel and assets in the area of responsibility.

NAVSO conducts a variety of missions in support of the Maritime Strategy, including Theater Security Cooperation, relationship building, humanitarian assistance and disaster response, community relations, and CIT operations

Titanic Service at Halifax Cemetery to Mark 98 Years Since Tragedy

In April the U.S. Coast Guard's International Ice Patrol held a memorial ceremony in Halifax marking 98 years since the Titanic sank in the North Atlantic on its maiden voyage.

The service toke place at the Fairview Lawn Cemetery, where 121 victims who were aboard the ill-fated luxury liner are buried.

More than 1,500 crew and passengers died when the so-called unsinkable ship went down on April 15, 1912, after striking an iceberg southeast of Newfoundland.

Flowers were laid at the gravesite of an unknown child and three wreaths were later dropped into the ocean from a Coast Guard aircraft.

The ice patrol was created as a direct result of the Titanic tragedy, and that no vessel heeding its warnings has collided with an iceberg since it was established.

Construction Begins on New Sentinel Class Coast Guard Cutter

FRC Keel Laying - CGC Bernard C. Webber

A perfect Coast Guard day at Bollinger Shipyard in Lockport, LA on 9 April 2010 where the official keel laying ceremony for the first Fast Response Cutter of the Sentinel Class, CGC Bernard C. Webber, was conducted. All Sentinel Class cutters will be named after enlisted heroes of our Service. Sentinel class cutters will be 153 ft, capable of 28 plus knots, with a crew of 22.

Webber is named for Petty Officer First Class Bernie Webber who executed one of the most famous rescues in Coast Guard history. He piloted motor lifeboat CG-36500, from Station C Chatham, Massachusetts, to the stricken freighter Pendleton which split into two during a massive storm off of Cape Cod on February 18th 1952. Fighting 70kt winds, 50ft seas, driving snow, and despite losing their compass and windshield soon after getting underway, Webber and his three crewmembers reached the freighter and safely rescued 32 sailors. They received the gold lifesaving medal for their heroism. ADM Allan observed that “Petty Officer Webber’s selfless behavior and courageous actions define what it means to be a guardian. His legacy will continue to inspire the men and women who sail on the cutter that bears his name.”

PO Webber’s daughter Mrs. Pattie Hamilton was the sponsor. For more information on the Sentinel Class see, http://www.uscg.mil/acquisition/sentinel/ .

Coast Guard Lt. Herbert Collins, 88, Upheld Family Tradition at Pea Island

Growing up on North Carolina's Outer Banks, Herbert Collins dreamed of joining the U.S. Coast Guard and carrying on a family tradition that dated to the 19th century.

He was inspired by the men of Pea Island Station, not far from his home in Manteo, on Roanoke Island, where his great-uncle, grandfather and father had patrolled the beaches looking out for distressed ships in the feared "graveyard of the Atlantic."

"I would watch the surfmen come home and always admired their uniform," he told a Coast Guard newsletter in 2008. "I said to myself that I was going to get in the Coast Guard and Pea Island Station."

Herbert Malachi Collins, 88, who died of metastatic cancer March 14 at his home in Olney, often told stories of his family's close connection with the Coast Guard and Pea Island, the only facility ever to be entirely staffed by African Americans.

By the time Lt. Collins retired in 1973, his family held the record for longest continuous service in the Coast Guard, dating to 1880 with his grandfather Joseph Berry.

Lt. Collins's great-uncle, Dorman Pugh, served at Pea Island with the U.S. Life-Saving Service -- an early series of rescue outposts later added to the Coast Guard-- and was part of a seven-man crew that took part in one of the most historic rescues in the Coast Guard's history but whose bravery went unrecognized for a century.

On Oct. 11, 1896, CAPT Richard Etheridge, a former slave, and the first commanding officer of Pea Island, led six of his men, including Pugh, on a two-mile march through hurricane-force winds on a seemingly suicidal rescue on the Outer Banks.

A three-masted schooner, the E.S. Newman, had run aground in the middle of a torrential storm and was in danger of breaking up. After a six-hour effort, the rescue was a success and the all-black team saved nine of the Newman's crew, including the ship's white captain, his wife and their children.

But the seven men who risked their lives on the mission were never rewarded because of the color of their skin.

It was not until 1996, 100 years later, that each of the rescuers posthumously received the Coast Guard Gold Lifesaving Medal, the service's most prestigious honor for water rescues.

LT Collins enlisted in the Coast Guard in 1939, shortly after his 18th birthday. After boot camp in Florida, he was assigned to a cutter as a mess attendant. He was the only black man on the ship, and his duties included shining shoes, serving meals and scrubbing dishes.

He was transferred to Pea Island in late 1940 and served there for the remainder of World War II under the command of his uncle, Maxie Berry Sr. LT Collins spent his time on Pea Island going on patrols of the beaches and participating in rescue operations, rowing to sea in small lifeboats amid the heavy surf.

In 1947, the Coast Guard decided to close Pea Island Station. After everyone else had packed and left, Lt. Collins stayed behind and was put in charge of filing the necessary paperwork for its decommissioning.

His last task as keeper of Pea Island Station was to shutter its doors and turn the lock.

"I personally felt like we were making history," LT. Collins said in 1979. "The crews took pride in being the only all- black crew and in keeping up the station."

He climbed up the promotional ladder of enlisted men and was eventually offered an officer's commission. At his retirement in 1973, he was an assistant director of the Coast Guard Auxiliary stationed in Washington.

He then served for 15 years with the U.S. Customs Service before joining the National Transportation Safety Board for two years as a marine accident investigator. A pilot and certified flying instructor, in retirement Lt. Collins helped manage the Naval Academy Flying Club.

Survivors include his wife of 62 years, Gertrude Jones Collins of Olney; three children, Deborah Jefferson of Silver Spring, Marshall Collins of Gaithersburg and Joan Collins of Silver Spring; his twin brother, who also served in the Coast Guard, Hubert Collins of Norfolk; three grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

"Lieutenant Collins' service to the Coast Guard and our nation is significant, especially in light of the challenges that African Americans faced as the service was integrated," Adm. Thad Allen, the Coast Guard commandant, said in a statement.

Earlier in his career, LT Collins served aboard the U.S. Coast Guard cutter Mendota out of Norfolk, where he shared a bunk with another young man, Alex Haley.

Haley, too, harbored a fascination with family history, and decades after his Coast Guard service, he wrote "Roots," a Pulitzer Prize-winning book that traced generations of black history in Africa and America.

One of 1st Female CG Grads to Retire Member of First CG Academy Class to Include Women

The last female officer from the Coast Guard Academy's first class to include women is set to retire Wednesday in Portsmouth after 30 years of service.

CAPT Christine J. Quedens, a 1980 Coast Guard Academy graduate, will retire as the first branch chief of the Future Operations and Planning branch of the modernized Atlantic Area Command.

Prior to her last assignment Quedens served as the Coast Guard Atlantic Area's External Affairs Division Officer overseeing Public Affairs, Governmental Affairs and International Affairs.

Her at-sea assignments included serving onboard the Coast Guard Cutter Munro; and as commanding officer of the Coast Guard Cutter Cape Cross, the Coast Guard Cutter Eagle during various summer cadet training cruises, and as commanding officer of the Coast Guard Cutter Aquidneck.

Her assignments ashore included serving as an instructor at the Coast Guard Academy; staff of Commander Maritime Defense Zone Sector Five, Norfolk Naval Base, where her duties included planning joint readiness exercises for United States Naval ships deploying to Desert Shield/Desert Storm; Assistant Chief of the Search and Rescue Branch Fourteenth Coast Guard District Staff; Commanding Officer of the Coast Guard's Training Quota Management Center; Director of Auxiliary for the Fifth District Southern Region, serving on the combined Atlantic Area and Fifth District staffs; Exercise and Budget Officer for Plans and Exercise Division of the Atlantic Area; and Senior Liaison Officer to Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command and Commander Joint Forces Command.

In addition to a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from the Coast Guard Academy, Quedens earned a Master's in Public Administration from Troy State University and a Master's in Strategic Studies and National Security from the Naval War College.

Her awards include three Meritorious Service Medals, Navy Commendation Medal, two Coast Guard Commendation Medals, Coast Guard Achievement Medal and the Commandant's Letter of Commendation Ribbon.

According to the Coast Guard, the first women joined the Academy's Corps of Cadets as members of the Class of 1980 on June 28, 1976. Since then, 744 women have graduated from the Coast Guard Academy.

First woman to Hold Sector New York Commander Post

CAPT Linda Fagan's Coast Guard career has taken her to all seven continents. For the next three years, Staten Island will be her home base as commander of Coast Guard Sector New York.

Stationed at Fort Wadsworth, she becomes the first woman to command Sector New York -- the largest operational field command in the Coast Guard.

As sector commander, CAPT Fagan oversees more than 1,000 active-duty personnel and 300 Reservists along a bustling waterway that stretches into northern New Jersey.

A Boston native, she graduated from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in 1985 and served for two years as a deck watch officer aboard the USCGC Polar Star. After trips to both the Arctic and Antarctic, she began her marine safety pollution prevention career as an inspector trainee at Marine Safety Office Puget Sound.

Among other positions she held was chief of port operations in Savannah, where she planned waterside security for the Olympic sailors at the 1996 Summer Games. She was also the division chief of the Foreign and Offshore Compliance Office at USCG Headquarters, and executive officer of Marine Inspection Office/ Activities Europe in the Netherlands.

She reports to Staten Island from Washington D.C., where she was the executive assistant to the commandant, ADM Allen.

CAPT Fagan holds a bachelor of science degree in marine science from the Coast Guard Academy, a master's in marine affairs from the University of Washington, and a master's in national security strategy from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces in Washington, D.C.

Ice Patrol hosts Girl Scouts

The U.S. Coast Guard International Ice Patrol hosted Girl Scout Troop 63101 from Harbor Elementary School in April at its offices at Fort Trumbull.

Nineteen Girl Scouts, ages 5 to 13, attended the presentation with their Troop leaders. A highlight of the visit for the Girl Scouts was the chance to "sink" a model Titanic ship in a fish tank after creating a collision with a Styrofoam iceberg.

The IIP regularly hosts groups who want to learn more about the unit, and its members go to local schools throughout the year, often emphasizing science, technology, engineering and math career options.

Oldest US Lightship Comes Home to Boston

The Nantucket Lightship LV-112, decommissioned in 1975

For nearly 40 years, the Nantucket Lightship LV-112 shone the way home, guiding countless ships past the treacherous Nantucket Shoals. After it was decommissioned in the 1970s, the vessel bounced from port to port like a vagabond, unable to find safe harbor.

The storied vessel, the oldest and largest lightship ever built in the United States, finally returned to its home port of Boston, for the first time since it was decommissioned in 1975.

Robert Mannino Jr. bought the aging ship in October for $1 after learning it was in danger of being sold for scrap. Mannino, a 58-year-old marketing consultant from New Hampshire who grew up sailing and became an avid shipwreck diver, said he couldn’t allow the floating beacon to be destroyed. He hopes to restore it and convert it to a permanent museum and educational center.

Built in 1936, the 150-foot Nantucket once sailed from the Coast Guard station in Boston Harbor to the rough waters off Nantucket, where it safeguarded the trans-Atlantic shipping lanes. Stationed more than 100 miles out to sea, the red-hulled ship was the most remote manned lighthouse on earth.

Its signal, as strong as 500,000 candles, could pierce the densest Nantucket fog, and in clear weather it could be seen 50 miles away. For approaching ships, the beacon was the first greeting from the Eastern Seaboard, a comforting sign that the long passage was nearly at an end.

After a celebrated career, the Nantucket seemed resigned to obscurity in its retirement, and slowly fell into disrepair. It was designated a national historic landmark in 1989, but for the past eight years wound up moored at the town pier in Oyster Bay, N.Y., as a would-be flagship for a stalled maritime museum.

Overall, 179 lightships were built between 1820 and 1952, according to the United States Lightship Museum, a nonprofit group. At one point, 56 lightships were stationed at various locations around the country. Today, 17 lightships exist, eight as museums.

Life on the Nantucket was not for the faint of heart. Indeed, it was built after its predecessor, the LV-117, was destroyed by the passenger liner Olympic, killing seven crew members. The Nantucket carries a plaque in their memory.

Coast Guardsman Honored for His Sacrifice 43 Years Ago in Duluth

The name of a Coast Guardsman who died 43 years ago during a rescue attempt in Duluth was added to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, D.C. 13 April 2010.

Boatswain Mate First Class Edgar A. Culbertson died on April 30, 1967, while searching for three brothers on the Duluth ship canal's north pier during a storm.

The 1967 rescue attempt began after witnesses reported seeing three boys knocked off their feet on the north pier. It wasn't clear whether the boys had been swept away or if they still were on the pier. Three guardsmen - Culbertson, Boatswain Mate Third Class Richard R. Callahan and Fireman Ronald C. Prel - roped themselves together and went on the pier to search for the boys. The men made it to the pier's lighthouse without finding any sign of the boys.

On their way back to shore, a large wave washed Culbertson into the lake and snapped his lifeline. Culbertson's body later was found along the beach.

The boys, Eric, 17, and twins Arthur and Nathan Halverson, 16, were never found.

For their bravery and heroism, Culbertson, Callahan and Prel each received the Coast Guard Medal. A plaque in Canal Park recounts Culbertson's sacrifice.

For military personnel to be added to the memorial, they need to have had law enforcement training and died while serving in a law enforcement role and not in a combat zone.

The National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial honors federal, state and local law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty. Dedicated in 1991, the memorial consists of two curving, 304-foot-long marble walls. Engraved in the walls are names of nearly 19,000 fallen officers dating to the first known death in 1792.

New names are added to the monument each spring in conjunction with National Police Week. Culbertson's name is among 324 that will be added to the memorial wall during the ceremony.

Coast Guard Directs Container Ship to Rescue Sailboat Crew

U.S. Coast Guard search and rescue coordinators in Honolulu teamed with a container ship crew Tuesday to rescue the crew of a sailboat about 2,240 nautical miles south of Hawai'i.

U.S. Coast Guard Joint Rescue Coordination Center watchstanders received an emergency radio signal about 4:30 a.m. The Coast Guard issued a broadcast asking for ships in the area to assist.

The crew of the container ship Mineral Noble immediately responded to the broadcast. It made communication with the sailing vessel, Stray Dog, and discovered it was taking on water. The crew of the Mineral Noble arrived on scene at 3:30 p.m. and transferred the two people aboard their ship.

The Mineral Noble responded to the request for help under the Automated Mutual Assistance Vessel Rescue (AMVER) system.

"In a situation like this, it really shows why the AMVER system can play an important part in our search and rescue operations," said Coast Guard Lt. Miles Jenkins, a search and rescue controller with the JRCC. "The boat was in immediate danger, and it would have taken more than seven hours for an HC-130 Hercules aircraft from Air Station Barbers Point to arrive on scene; we would not have been able to get there fast enough. We are thankful that mariners who are part of this system are always willing to go out of their way to help other mariners."

AMVER, sponsored by the Coast Guard, is a unique, computer-based, and voluntary global ship reporting system used worldwide by search and rescue authorities to arrange for assistance to persons in distress at sea.

New Coast Guard Academy Cadets Begin Training

The newest class of Coast Guard Academy cadets reported in to begin military training.

Nearly 300 "swabs" to reported in at the New London. Nearly 4,600 students applied to be in the academy's Class of 2014.

"Reporting-In Day" kicks off a seven-week training program. The cadets are expected on their first day to get haircuts and uniforms, practice drills and complete administrative processing. The day will end with a march onto Washington Parade Field and a swearing-in ceremony.

Academy officials say the new cadets come from 39 states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The Academy is also admitting six international students from Ecuador, Lithuania, Singapore and Tunisia.

This Day in Coast Guard History - April 12

1808- Subsistence for Army officers fixed at 20 cents per ration, later that year applied to all officers of the revenue cutters.1843- Captain Alexander V. Fraser, Revenue Cutter Service, appointed Chief of newly-created Revenue Marine Bureau of Treasury (he was, in effect, the service's first Commandant).

Traverse City Named a "Coast Guard City

After a long application process, Traverse City has been given special recognition by the U.S. Coast Guard. Traverse City has been named a "Coast Guard City", a title that required approval from Congress. This means the community has a long standing relationship with the Coast Guard making the city feel like a home away from home for service members.

The Origin of Memorial Day

For many Americans, *Memorial Day* weekend marks the unofficial start of the summer and an opportunity to gather with family and friends. For veterans and their families, it is a day of remembrance for those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service of their country. It was originally designated as Decoration Day.

Fort Logan National Cemetery in Denver, Colo. (Official Department of Veterans Affairs photograph)

Decoration Day commemorates U.S. men and women who have died while serving in the military. First enacted to honor Union soldiers of the American Civil War – celebrated near the day of reunification after the Civil War – it was expanded after World War I.

Following the end of the Civil War, many communities set aside a day to mark the end of the war or as a memorial to those who had died. Some of the places creating early Decoration Day observances include Sharpsburg, Maryland, located near Antietam Battlefield; Charleston, South Carolina; Boalsburg, Pennsylvania; Petersburg, Virginia; Carbondale, Illinois; Columbus, Mississippi; many communities in Vermont; and some two dozen other cities and towns across the United States. These observances coalesced around Decoration Day, honoring the Union dead, and the several Confederate Memorial Days.

There are many stories as to the actual origin of Decoration Day, with more than two dozen cities and towns laying claim to being the birthplace of Decoration Day, as it was originally called. There is evidence that organized women's groups in the South were decorating graves before the end of the Civil War: a hymn published in 1867, "Kneel Where Our Loves are Sleeping" by Nella L. Sweet carried the dedication "To The Ladies of the South who are Decorating the Graves of the Confederate Dead."

While Waterloo, N.Y., was officially declared the birthplace of Decoration Day, by President Lyndon Johnson in May 1966, nearly one hundred years after its inception, it's difficult to prove conclusively the origins of the day. It is more likely that it had many separate beginnings; every planned or spontaneous gathering of people to honor the war dead in the 1860's tapped into the general human need to honor our dead. Each contributed honorably to the growing movement that culminated when Gen. John Logan, Grand Army of the Republic commander-in-chief, issued a proclamation that "Decoration Day" be observed nationwide. It was observed for the first time on May 30 of the same year; the date was chosen because it was not the anniversary of a battle. The tombs of fallen Union soldiers were decorated in remembrance.

According to Professor David Blight of the Yale University History Department, the first Memorial Day was observed by formerly enslaved black people at the Washington Race Course (today the location of Hampton Park) in Charleston, South Carolina. The race course had been used as a temporary Confederate prison camp in 1865 as well as a mass grave for Union soldiers who died there. Immediately after the cessation of hostilities, formerly enslaved people exhumed the bodies from the mass grave and reinterred them properly with individual graves. They built a fence around the graveyard with an entry arch and declared it a Union graveyard. The work was completed in only ten days. On May 1, 1865, the Charleston newspaper reported that a crowd of up to ten thousand, mainly black residents, including 2,800 children, proceeded to the location for a celebration which included sermons, singing, and a picnic on the grounds, thereby creating the first Decoration Day.

Memorial Day was officially proclaimed on May 5, 1868 by General Logan in his 11th General Order, and was first observed on May 30, 1868, when flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery.

The first state to officially recognize the holiday was New York in 1873. By 1890, it was recognized by all of the northern states. The South did not acknowledge the day, honoring their dead on separate days until after World War I (when the holiday changed from honoring just those who died fighting in the Civil War to honoring Americans who died fighting in any war). It is now celebrated in almost every state on the last Monday in May – passed by Congress with the National Holiday Act of 1971 to ensure a three-day weekend for Federal holidays – though several southern states have an additional separate day for honoring the Confederate war dead: January 19 in Texas, April 26 in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and Mississippi; May 10 in South Carolina; and June 3 (Jefferson Davis' birthday) in Louisiana and Tennessee.

Many of the states of the U.S. South refused to celebrate Decoration Day, due to lingering hostility towards the Union Army and also because there were relatively few veterans of the Union Army who were buried in the South. A notable exception was Columbus, Mississippi, which on April 25, 1866, at its Decoration Day commemorated both the Union and Confederate casualties buried in its cemetery.

The alternative name of "Memorial Day" was first used in 1882. It did not become more common until after World War II, and was not declared the official name by Federal law until 1967. On June 28, 1968, the United States Congress passed the Uniform Holidays Bill, which moved three holidays from their traditional dates to a specified Monday in order to create a convenient three-day weekend. The holidays included Washington's Birthday, now celebrated as Presidents' Day; Veterans Day and Memorial Day. The change moved Memorial Day from its traditional May 30 date to the last Monday in May. The law took effect at the federal level in 1971.

In 1915, inspired by the poem "In Flanders Fields," Moina Michael replied with her own poem:

We cherish too, the Poppy red that grows on fields where valor led.
It seems to signal to the skies that blood of heroes never dies.

She then conceived an idea to wear red poppies on Memorial Day in honor of those who died serving the nation during war. She was the first to wear one, and sold poppies to her friends and co-workers with the money going to benefit servicemen in need.

Later a Madam Guerin from France was visiting the United States and learned of this new custom started by Ms. Michael. When she returned to France, she made artificial red poppies to raise money for war orphaned children and widowed women. This tradition spread to other countries, and in 1921, the Franco-American Children's League sold poppies nationally to benefit war orphans of France and Belgium. The League disbanded a year later and Madam Guerin approached the Veterans of Foreign Wars for help.

Shortly before Memorial Day in 1922 the VFW became the first veterans' organization to nationally sell poppies. Two years later, their "Buddy" Poppy program was selling artificial poppies made by disabled veterans. In 1948 the U.S. Post Office honored Ms. Michael for her role in founding the National Poppy movement by issuing a red 3-cent postage stamp with her likeness on it.

Traditional observance of Memorial Day has diminished over the years. Many Americans nowadays have forgotten the meaning and traditions of Memorial Day. At many cemeteries, the graves of the fallen are increasingly ignored, neglected. Most people no longer remember the proper flag etiquette for the day. While there are towns and cities that still hold Memorial Day parades, many have not held a parade in decades. Some people think the day is for honoring any and all dead, and not just those fallen in service to our country.

There are a few notable exceptions. Since the late 1950's, on the Thursday before Memorial Day, the 1,200 soldiers of the 3d U.S. Infantry place small American flags at each of the more than 260,000 gravestones at Arlington National Cemetery. They then patrol 24-hours a day during the weekend to ensure that each flag remains standing.

In 1951, the Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts of St. Louis, Mo., began placing flags on the 150,000 graves at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery as an annual Good Turn, a practice that continues to this day. More recently, beginning in 1998, on the Saturday before the observed day for Memorial Day, the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts place a candle at each of approximately 15,300 grave sites of soldiers buried at Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park on Marye's Heights.

In 2004, Washington D.C., held its first Memorial Day parade in over 60 years.

To help re-educate and remind Americans of the true meaning of Memorial Day, the "National Moment of Remembrance" resolution was passed in December 2000 which asks that at 3 p.m., local time, for all Americans "To voluntarily and informally observe in their own way a moment of remembrance and respect, pausing from whatever they are doing for a moment of silence or listening to 'Taps."

The Moment of Remembrance is a step to return the meaning back to the day: set aside one day out of the year for the nation to get together to remember, reflect and honor those who have given their all in service to their country.

But what may be needed to return the solemn, and even sacred, spirit back to Memorial Day is for a return to its traditional day of observance. Many feel that when Congress made the day into a three-day weekend in with the National Holiday Act of 1971, it made it all the easier for people to be distracted from the spirit and meaning of the day. As the VFW stated in its 2002 Memorial Day address: "Changing the date, merely to create three-day weekends, has undermined the very meaning of the day. No doubt, this has contributed greatly to the general public's nonchalant observance of Memorial Day."

On January 19, 1999, Sen. Dan Inouye introduced Senate Bill 189 that proposed to restore the traditional day of observance of Memorial Day back to May 30 instead of "the last Monday in May." On April 19, 1999, Rep. Jaret Gibbons introduced House Resolution 1474. The bills were referred to the Judiciary Committee and the Committee on Government Reform.

Today, many Americans view Memorial Day as the unofficial beginning of summer and Labor Day as the unofficial end of the season.

Memorial Day is also used as a time for picnics, barbecues, family gatherings, and sporting events. One of the longest-standing traditions is the running of the Indianapolis 500, an auto race which has been held in conjunction with Memorial Day since 1911. The Coca-Cola 600 has been held later the same day, at Charlotte Motor Speedway, Charlotte, S.C., since 1961.

Bette White, Milton MA Resident, Reflects on Coast Guard Service

Bette White recently discussed her experiences in the early 1940s in the fledgling U.S. Coast Guard SPARS, which stands for "Semper Paratus Always Ready."

Bette was responsible for the care of her younger sister when their mother died at 36, which she says made her grow up very fast. After graduating high school in January 1941, she started work in Philadelphia in the private sector.

After December 1941, she joined the local Civil Air Patrol and studied and passed the tests for sending and receiving Morse code and drill procedures.

Several women she was working with in Philadelphia were talking of joining the service, and while at a medical appointment, Bette's own doctor suggested she consider the SPARs, a relatively new branch of the service.

Thinking that the SPARs would definitely want someone with her Civil Air Patrol background and skills, Bette said she wanted to enlist. At that time you had to be 20 to enter the service. Bette would require her father's permission and signature. He did not want to do this. So when she was 20, she started talking to him again, and he finally relented, saying "join."

Boot camp followed, and Bette was sent to Palm Beach, Fla., in January of 1944. Boot camp had been with the Navy WAVES in New York, until the facility could no longer house both branches of the service. They were now being housed in the Breakers Hotel, an oceanfront icon.

They were separated from the women who had completed their apprentice seaman training until they did their six weeks of boot training. They wore different uniforms for identification and were not allowed off the grounds. Their "sisters" had earned their new uniforms and were now seamen, and had a ticket to the outside world.

At the culmination of boot camp, Seaman White was sent to Brookline, Mass. After a few weeks she found out that they were no longer training SPARs for sending and receiving Morse code.

She was given orders to report to the Air Base in Salem, Mass. This base was strategically located between Quonset Point, R.I., and Brunswick, Maine. These three bases were patrolling the northeast coast for submarines.

However, they had no housing for women, only men. They ended up in a donated waterfront private home in Marblehead. Among her female housemates were other office and administrative personnel, (telephone operators) and even two parachute riggers.

With her previous skills, Bette not only manned the switchboard, but also started taking a written course to train for yeoman 3rd class, then on to 2nd, and finally 1st class.

She was, in other words, a secretary.

Like many other women at the time, Bette met and married her husband George while at Salem Air Base and they eloped to Seabrook one weekend. A minister married them.

While there were no restrictions on fraternizing with other service members, Bette recalled that should a woman become pregnant out of wedlock, she would receive an immediate dishonorable discharge.

Bette served as yeoman to the lieutenant commander on the base and as such knew the pilots' schedules and loads. She managed to grab a few rides for herself and even went up one Memorial Day for the annual Dropping of the Wreath in Gloucester Harbor.

She also had a ride in the first helicopter brought on to the station. Bette said she loves air flight to this day, even though she never had an interest in taking the yoke herself.

Bette's husband had joined the Coast Guard back in 1939, but when his four years were completed, he was held in the service until the war was over.

They were both honorably discharged in March of 1946.

Now they were ready to move on. George and three other servicemen from the Salem base formed and started a GI flight school in Owls Head, Maine. This only lasted a few years, but Bette said it was a great experience for all of them.

Bette has spent many years serving the town of Milton as a trustee and planning board member.

But she also was Elizabeth Jean (Yonker) White, yeoman 1st class, Office of the District Coast Guard Offices, First Naval District.

Traverse City designated as a Coast Guard City

Hundreds gathered July 10th to honor Traverse City for its nearly 70 years of support to Coast Guard members and their families.

"The community goes to great lengths to make our families feel welcome," said Jonathan Spaner, commanding officer at the Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City. "This is something I've never seen anywhere else, and I've been stationed at over a dozen locations. They know that we're going to come in for a few years and then leave. They keep an open mind, despite the fact that we're transitioning."

Traverse City is the 10th city to receive the designation and the second from Michigan. Grand Haven was honored in 1998 as the first Coast Guard city.