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## iCommandant



*Web Journal of Admiral Thad Allen*

Friday, October 31, 2008

### Senior Leadership Succession

Shipmates,

Today the Secretary recommended to the President the following senior leadership nominations.

Vice Commandant, [VADM Dave Pekoske](#)  
Pacific Area Commander, [RADM Jody Breckenridge](#)  
Chief of Staff, [RADM John Currier](#)

VADM Papp continues to serve as Atlantic Area Commander and RADM Sally Brice-O'Hara continues as Deputy Commandant for Operations (DCO).

I congratulate these fine officers and look forward to working with them as we continue to modernize our Service. We will also continue to work with the Congress to authorize the establishment of new leadership positions and elevate the DCO billet to the grade of Vice Admiral.

It is a bittersweet announcement as well as we will celebrate the retirements of VADM Vivien Crea and VADM Cliff Pearson. VADM Pearson has been a tremendous force for change in our support community and his counsel has been critical in our modernization efforts. VADM Crea and I first served together in 1986 when she was the military aide to President Reagan and I was the liaison officer to the White House for the celebration of the relighting of the Statue of Liberty. She has been an extraordinary partner, providing wise counsel to me at critical times. It would be difficult to adequately describe the impact she has had on the Coast Guard as a leader, operator, senior manager, and above all, role model.

Posted at [10/31/2008 01:45:00 PM](#) [1 comments](#) 



### Navy Flag Executive Conference with Maritime Service Chiefs

The below photographs were taken at this weeks Navy Flags Execute Conference, courtesy of Navy Photographer James Sanderson





Posted at [10/31/2008 08:54:00 AM](#) @[comments](#)



Thursday, October 30, 2008

## MOVREP

Shipmates,  
I am posting from Tampa where I just finished a full day of meetings at the Special Operations Command (SOCOM). I also had dinner with the local COs and met with some very excited prospective chief petty officers.

It's been a busy week. On Monday we visited Kings Bay, Georgia. I held an All Hands with local units (MSST, Maritime Force Protection Unit, SEA DRAGON, and Station Brunswick). We also met with local Navy commanders. The local community leaders from Camden County hosted a brunch and I spoke about the Navy, Coast Guard, Marine Corps partnership. They were very gracious and declared the day Admiral Thad Allen Day. Later that day we visited our hard working Auxiliaries up at Lake Lanier north of Atlanta (see earlier post).

Tomorrow I will attend the U.S. Central Command Change of Command.

VADM Vivien Crea was on the road as well, standing up the Aviation Logistics Center in Elizabeth City due to my commitments in Tampa, the first step in our logistics transformation. Congratulations to the hard working men and women who run a first operation and keep our aircraft flying.

ADM A

Posted at [10/30/2008 08:54:00 PM](#) @[comments](#)



Tuesday, October 28, 2008

## CCG at the Bolger Center with Comdt USMC & CNO.

Shipmates,  
This morning Admiral Gary Roughhead, General James Conway, and I spoke to the new Navy flag officers and Senior Executives. we each spoke for 10-15 minutes and took questions for nearly two hours. A terrific demonstration of our shared commitment and partnership.

ADM A



[CCG at the Bolger Center with Comdt USMC & CNO.](#)  
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Posted at [10/28/2008 09:33:00 PM @comments](#) 



### CCG with Auxiliarist Larsen standing in the lake bed.

We rarely get to revisit the past and live in the present. Last night I spent some precious time with our Auxiliarists who selflessly serve the public on Lake Lanier north of Atlanta. I promised my Seventh District Aux Commodore Mary Larsen that I would come to Lake Lanier and speak to her Flotilla. That was 2000. In 2008 I kept my promise.

The lake levels are low due to lack of rain and the need for drinking water and power generation. Nonetheless, our Auxiliarists stand the watch and keep Lake Lanier safe.

Thank you Mary Larsen and your shipmates (Allen Brown included).



[CCG with Auxiliarist Larsen standing in the lake bed.](#)  
Originally uploaded by [uscqpress](#)

Posted at [10/28/2008 09:29:00 PM @comments](#) 



### Combined Federal Campaign ...Be a star in someone's life.

Shipmates:

Today we kicked off the Combined Federal Campaign at Coast Guard Headquarters.

I have been involved with CFC nearly continually since 2000 when I was the Chairman for the South Florida Campaign as the Seventh District Commander. I Chaired the first DHS Campaign in 2003 and have been a member of the Local Federal Coordinating Committee (LFCC) for the National Capitol Area since then. For the 3rd Year in a row I am the Honorary Chair of the CFC for the National Capital Area. In that capacity locally here in Washington, and as your Service Chief nationally, I encourage you all to participate in this year's CFC and be a star in someone's life. I recently discussed the CFC on [Federal News Radio Network](#).

ADM A

Posted at [10/28/2008 01:21:00 PM @comments](#) 



Monday, October 27, 2008

### FORCECOM videos

PACAREA (Future FORCECOM) is doing a great job leveraging social media to communicate with their workforce. You can see their six-part video series on [CGVI](#), search "FORCECOM". The videos are also available on YouTube at the "uscgimagery" channel.

Posted at [10/27/2008 09:00:00 AM](#) [2 comments](#) 



Saturday, October 25, 2008

## Did you know?

Shipmates

I just received this [video](#) that was presented at a SONY executive meeting from Rear Admiral Rob Parker who is the "ops boss" at U.S. Southern Command. Admiral Stavridis is moving SOUTHCOM into social media as well, including his own [blog](#).

This video is thought provoking and makes a great case for lifelong learning and understanding the current generational gap. We need to start thinking now about how we are going to both manage and leverage the exponentially increasing volume of information.

ADM A

Posted at [10/25/2008 09:32:00 AM](#) [8 comments](#) 



Friday, October 24, 2008

## Congratulations to Adolf Adrion

This is an addition to the previous post ...

Yesterday after receiving the Joe R. Gerson Humanitarian Award on behalf of the Coast Guard I had the privilege of sharing some quality time with Mr. Adolf Adrion, the CEO of Hapag-Lloyd and a career Seafarer, who started his career with Hapag-Lloyd as a Cadet at the age of 17. Mr. Adrion was recognized by NAMMA with this year's Seafarer Salute Award. His acceptance remarks reminded me once again of the critical role our seafarers play in the vitality and prosperity of the maritime transportation system. I too salute Mr. Lloyd and all the World's Seafarers for their vital, yet underappreciated contributions.



[Admiral Allen makes comments to the audience after accepting an Award from NAMMA.](#)  
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

In my remarks I reverted to being a child of the 1960's and evoked the lyrics of Leonard Cohen in his song "Susanne" ...

"And Jesus was a Sailor  
When he walked upon the water,  
And he spent a long time watching  
from his lonely wooden tower.  
And when he knew for certain  
only drowning men could see him,  
he said "All men shall be sailors then  
until the sea shall free them" ..."

You may recall the last phrase as the title of a book written by Robert Frump that details the loss of the MARINE ELECTRIC. He has also just released a new book TWO TANKERS DOWN, the story of the amazing rescue operations when two tankers split in half off Cape Cod in 1952.

ADM A

Posted at [10/24/2008 07:31:00 PM](#) [1 @comments](#) 



## World Maritime Day Conference

Shipmates,

Yesterday I attended the World Maritime Day Conference. 2008 marks the 31st observance of World Maritime Day and the 60th anniversary of the founding of the [International Maritime Organization](#) (link). The IMO milestone is based on the adoption of the IMO Convention by the United Nations in Geneva in 1948. The celebration traditionally takes place in London where IMO is located and in one other parallel event. The parallel event this year was held in Greece. The United States Coast Guard will host the parallel event next year and you will hear more about that in future months.

The U.S. observance was held today in New York and was sponsored by the North American Marine Environmental Protection Association ([NAMEPA](#)) and the North American Maritime Ministry Association ([NAMMA](#)) which provides ministry to seafarers through port chaplains.

I participated in two events, an evening dinner, and conducted several media interviews. At the NAMMA luncheon I accepted on behalf of the U.S. Coast Guard the [Joe R. Gerson Humanitarian Award](#). We have worked very hard in the last several years to insure the equitable treatment of seafarers. This award acknowledges the hard work and dedication of our people at the port level who must manage the significant challenges related to the treatment of seafarers in an increasingly security conscious operating environment and limited access to and from waterfront facilities and vessels. It also recognizes our attempts to gain legislation to protect seafarers who are abandoned by less than honorable companies.

I also participated on a NAMEPA sponsored panel with Captain Andy Windbow from IMO and Adolf Adrion, CEO of Hapag-Lloyd one of the world's largest container shipping companies. The topic was the power of partnerships. Topics raised and discussed with the audience included our recent changes to the Marine Safety Program, TWIC implementation, amendments to MARPOL Annex VI (Regulations for the Prevention of Air Pollution from Ships), piracy in the Horn of Africa, and the general challenges associated with global shipping.

We had representatives at two other panels. RADM Brian Salerno participated in the panel; "Terminal Access – A Barrier to Seafarers." Just this week, RADM Salerno issued an [ALCOAST](#) on this topic that is a good reminder of the need to recognize the need for Seafarers to have shore leave opportunities and for Seafarer Welfare Organizations to have reasonable access to the facilities necessary to provide their valued services.

CDR Mike Roldan also participated in the panel; "Oil Reception Facilities – Tool for Facilitating Compliance"

Captain Bob O'Brien from Sector New York led a group of local Coast Guard participants as well.

Our ability to partner, not only with industry, but non-governmental organizations, associations, and international governing bodies is critical to achieving global solutions and aligning what we are required to do as regulators domestically. These relationships are particularly critical in complex issues such as air emissions from ships, ballast water management/invasive species, and seafarer access in U.S. ports.

We thank both NAMMA and NAMEPA for their support, partnership and leadership.

Posted at [10/24/2008 01:21:00 PM](#) [0 @comments](#) 



## UPDATED and Bumped: Guest post by Ms. Terri Dickerson, Director, Coast Guard Office of Civil Rights

UPDATE below in Italics

This post responds to a comment on Admiral Allen's Diversity Advisory Council post. The commenter requested (1) an update on the progress of a Functional Review that I requested, and (2) the status of Equal Opportunity (EO) Review

reports.

#### Functional Review

As stated in my [4 September message](#) to the workforce, the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) periodically conducts functional reviews of its sub-components' EEO offices. I requested DHS undertake such a review of the Coast Guard, and as of 25 September, it is underway. At its onset, I informed all in the Coast Guard leadership that the effort had begun, and asked them to encourage any personnel contacted to give reviewers their cooperation.

The review aligns with the Commandant's direction that offices be proactive and forward-leaning in maintaining and improving policy, operations, and workplace climate and environment. A number of personnel are being interviewed service-wide, and my office has responded to all requests made of us by the reviewers. I have been advised that the effort will conclude by the end of the calendar year. At its conclusion, results will be made available to all personnel.

#### EO Review Reports

The Coast Guard conducts various self-assessment activities as a means to monitor progress and identify areas where barriers may operate to exclude groups. Federal agencies employ various means to assess themselves, and Equal Opportunity Reviews are one of Coast Guard's means. The program consists primarily of a pre-visit survey of questions which help gauge unit effectiveness from an EO standpoint, followed by a site visit at which the team conducts interviews and focus groups. Since FY 2006, we have met our goals of completing as many as 22 reviews per year.

Before our team leaves the site, it provides the command an outbrief. The team subsequently produces a written report, directed to the commanding officer, that communicates findings, highlights best practices and areas of concern, and offers recommendations. Timely written reports to the unit are an important part of the review and my staff is working aggressively to reduce the delivery time.

The commenter asked if we have a new policy with regard to EO review reports, and we do not. However, we do have a new standard for the analysis in the reports. As one example, the team now offers data by which the CO may compare the unit to Coast Guard benchmarks. Additionally, the reports now culminate in recommendations based on a full analysis of data arising from the questionnaire and on-site activities. I am very proud of the analytical framework around which my staff is completing these activities. Feedback indicates that the care the team exercises is offering the units they inspect a solid basis from which to form action plans.

*(This post has been updated to address follow up questions raised in the comments section. At the time I joined Coast Guard (April 2006), 9 reports were pending. Further analysis identified report quality in addition to timeliness, as main factors. To eliminate the backlog, I approved some of the reports, but with the directive that future reports reflect new standards for analysis and preparation. Throughout the following year, the division (CG-00H2) continued to conduct reviews (22 total) but was unable to respond to the new report-writing standards. (See [Timeline](#) )*

*In March 2008, I provided more guidance which exemplified the benchmarks for sufficient reports. The division initially held a series of meetings, ultimately crafting a strategy for report production by field and headquarters civil rights personnel. In August 2008, the division abandoned the field re-write strategy, and developed a robust plan for reaching sufficiency. As of August and through today, with ardent and admirable focus and commitment, my staff has produced, and I have signed and forwarded to commands 20 reports. We could not achieve this without our remarkable division leadership and teamwork. By the end of November, they will have produced and I will have signed another 24. At the current pace, we will clear all reports by the end of the year, placing us back on track with the 45-day guidance expressed in our EO Manual.*

*Important Note: We are pleased about and welcome new interest in our EO Review program and can assure readers that throughout this process the Coast Guard has met its statutory obligations. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission directs agencies to self-monitor; each does so by its own means. Some that perform similar workforce audits do so remotely, that is, without visits. Our workforce is served by the Coast Guard's commitment to the substantially more resource intensive yet ever more effective on-site review. Moreover, we are better stewards when our after action reports offer service-wide benchmarks, cohesive analyses, and recommendations aligned specifically to findings at the location ... standards which our reports now achieve!*

Today we updated the "What's New" section of our website with the first in a series [summarizing the EO Review](#) completed over the last three years. Thank you for your interest in these programs. We encourage you to visit our [website](#). If you do, please visit our "What's New" section under the "News" button. You can also provide comments submit questions through the "Contact Us" link.

Posted at 10/24/2008 01:14:00 PM [11 comments](#) 



Wednesday, October 22, 2008

## Social Networks

Shipmates,

I recently had a conversation on social media with my good friend Rear Admiral Rich Schneider (USCGR Retired) who is also the President of [Norwich University](#). Last year they published [this story](#) on their school website. I thought it was worth posting again for our community. The social media is a powerful tool, but as we noted in a [previous post](#) there are security issues and reasons to act with good judgement.

ADM A

Posted at [10/22/2008 04:29:00 PM](#) [@comments](#)



## Meeting with Prospective Chief Petty Officers

I was pleased to welcome five prospective Chief Petty Officers who will participate in the Chiefs Call To Initiation this Friday. Left to right:

Leeson, Seth SKC; (NAVGEN)  
 Long, Wayne ETC (CGPC)  
 Bates, Thomas OSC; (HQ - CC)  
 Me  
 Caler, Jeffrey ITC; (HSC)  
 Hernandez, Teresa OSC; (OSC- COOP)

ADM A



[CCTI photo](#)  
 Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Posted at [10/22/2008 01:09:00 PM](#) [@comments](#)



Tuesday, October 21, 2008

## Commandant's Diversity Advisory Council

Shipmates,

The [Diversity Advisory Council](#) is meeting at HQ this week and I spent an hour with the group this morning with RADM Breckenridge, RDML Neptun and Mr. Curt Odom. There were a number of issues raised at the last meeting and we discussed the current status and progress being made.

Remember, these are "works in progress" ... but here are some updates.

1. Reserve/Auxiliary "C" School Quotas: There are some business processes and policies that are impeding access for our Reservists and Auxiliarists to attend "C" School. For example, the current e-mail notification process excludes personnel who do not have access to the Coast Guard Data Network (CGDN). The [new internet access to Outlook](#) will address part of this problem, for members running Windows platforms, but we need to make sure all our personnel have access. We are also looking at how quotas are prioritized between Active, Reserve, Civilian and Auxiliary personnel.
2. To increase cultural awareness and promote language skills we are experimenting with an online "Technology Mediated Language Training" program through the [University of Maryland Center for Advanced Study of Language](#). The software program is "Tell Me More" by Auralog, Inc. We are conducting a one year test to see if this has servicewide potential.
3. The DAC believes and I concur that we need to include "generational" diversity training for our more "mature" members as we currently do at the CPO Academy.
4. We are reviewing procedures for using additional reservists to assist with recruiting in those geographical areas where reserve recruiting is most challenging/where we have the greatest needs.
5. An update on our Strategic Metropolitan Area Recruiting Territory (SMART) initiative has resulted in an increase in minority enlisted accessions from 17% to 35% since its implementation.
6. Master Chief Bowen and I concur with the DAC's conclusion that women and minorities are underrepresented in high visibility (i.e. Company Commander, CMC) and command cadre positions (OIC, XPO, EPO). We need a combination of better education on A school options, ASVAB preparation, involvement of mentors/CMCs, and use of role models.
7. The DAC proposes providing better resources for commands to accommodate the diversity of religious groups in the Coast Guard. There are two parts to this issue as we move forward, the first is greater visibility of religious pluralism and the second is the role of our Chaplain corps.
8. We discussed social networking tools and the creation of this Blog and the FACEBOOK page. I also previously tasked the DAC to provide feedback on transparency in the Service and that dialogue continues. With a direct line of communication available to members, there will always be a tension between the traditional chain of command and the need to be responsive to members. The DAC comments reflect that tension, but the comments also convey transparency should only be limited in cases where it will negatively affect the execution and support of our missions. We must work through that tension and understand that the convergence of information technology and social networks creates transparency and we don't control the environment. See my previous comments on social media, we

will continue the dialogue.

9. We are reviewing the temporary separation policy to see if we can provide greater flexibility to accommodate the needs of our workforce.

10. The DAC had a concern that there may be a nexus between performance evaluations and whether the member is pregnant. We are reviewing data and conducting surveys on performance evaluations of pregnant members and will report our findings once the review is complete.

As I noted above these are works in progress, but I wanted to let you know the topics we are discussing and the world of work that the DAC is creating.

I was also advised today by our human resources folks that we achieved 100% of our active duty recruiting mission (goal) and 94% of the Reserve mission for FY08. Our quality of recruits based on a combination of the Armed Forces Qualification Test composite scores and the percent of our recruits in the top 50% was the highest of all services and continues to rise for the second year in a row. So, we are recruiting a more diverse work force and improving the quality of enlisted people coming into the Coast Guard. As I noted in an interview with the New London Day earlier in the month, we need to improve minority accessions and retention in the officer corps and we are working on it.

ADM A

Posted at [10/21/2008 01:40:00 PM](#) [3 comments](#) 



Monday, October 20, 2008

## Meeting with the Director General, Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency

Shipmates,

Today I had a very interesting and productive meeting with Admiral Dato Mohd Amdan Bin Kurish, the Director General of the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA). This is a new agency in Malaysia that has been operating since 30 November 2005. We have been exchanging information with the MMEA since 2007, deploying Mobile Training Teams, and have provided training through our International Maritime Officers Course in Yorktown.

Malaysia lies in the strategic confluence of the Straits of Malacca, the South China Sea, the Sulawesi Sea, and the Sulu Sea which separates Malaysia from the Philippines. Malaysia works with its regional neighbors, Indonesia, The Philippines, Singapore and Thailand to reduce piracy, transnational crime, and illegal immigration.

The meeting was very cordial and Admiral Amdan and I have agreed to work closely to exchange best practices and further our cooperation in the region.

ADM A

Posted at [10/20/2008 05:23:00 PM](#) [3 comments](#) 



Sunday, October 19, 2008

## Continuing the Conversation on Social Media and the Coast Guard

Thanks to the feedback you have provided to us I have had a number of in depth conversations with the HQ staff regarding social media, web access, CGDN security, costs associated with bandwidth, policy issues related to content within the .mil domain, and access to internet sites. Following the recent Coast Guard Foundation Dinner in New York, Rear Admiral Dave Glenn (CG-6) and I had breakfast and discussed the current challenges we collectively face.

Today I intend to begin a discussion which will include you as to how we should move forward. We are going to start with security and the posting below is from CG-6. One of our challenges is that no single program or office in CGHQ owns all of the pieces to problem or solution. CG-6 is responsible for the infrastructure within the .mil domain and the gateways to the internet through our points of presence. However, they are not free actors. There are federal, Department of Defense, Homeland Security, and Coast Guard laws, rules, and regulations that apply. That is not to say some shouldn't or couldn't be changed, but we need to know what it is we intend to do with the convergence of improved information technology and social networks. We need to start with the end in mind.

Beyond the CG-6 world of bits and bytes, lies the policy world of content. This is a combination of public affairs, strategic communications, external outreach, stakeholder relations, and, in many cases, mission execution itself.

Extending the discussion further, as some of you have already done in your comments and other blogs, we need to understand the potential for these technology and social networks to enhance our operations. We already coordinate tactical operations through chat rooms. We are offered the opportunity to rethink our command and control relationship and how information (in any format or medium) is transmitted from the location of operations to a command center.

The Coast Guard also enhances mission execution when we leverage our capabilities with other federal, state, local and private sector entities. Social networking offers this same opportunity to leverage communications and external relations across a much broader spectrum.

As you can see we have technical infrastructure and architecture issues, security and access issues, content issues, and internal governance issues related to how we should organize and execute our strategic intent across these programs area. This discussion is well underway at HQ.

So with those comments in mind let's hear what CG-6 has to say ...

ADM A

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It is a fact of Coast Guard life that our IT system is central to every function required by the Coast Guard to execute and support every mission. Accordingly, the security, capacity and availability of this system set the terms and conditions of use in terms of what capabilities we provide to users, particularly how much external interface we allow. One of our greatest management challenges is the balance between access and security. As an organization, we need to make deliberate business decisions, based on risk, benefit and mitigation factors, as to exactly when, how and from what sites and applications we expose the network. The threats are real with a current average of over 300,000 malware attacks against the Coast Guard's network every month.

This is not just a Coast Guard issue. In fact, this is a national and homeland security issue. Recently, Secretary Chertoff himself has been actively discussing this topic, both on the [DHS Leadership Journal](#) and at a recent [bloggers roundtable](#) discussion.

Some specific feedback you provided commented on the blocking of certain sites. It is currently against CG policy to use public social networking sites from the CGDN. It is the extreme popularity of social networking sites that make them a target rich environment for people intent to cause harm via web technology. The openness of the social networking sites allow scam artists and virus writers new ways to package and deliver their malicious payloads. Social networking sites are fast becoming the most fertile grounds for spreading malicious software and Internet scams, as reported by major internet security companies.

Currently, we use a commercial-off-the-shelf product to filter our internet traffic. The CG Internet Web Filtering Appliance blocks categories of sites that might compromise the CGDN or are inappropriate for official use. We choose the categories to block; the commercial provider is responsible for categorizing individual sites. This may result in some popular social media sites being blocked while others are not. For example Google is in the search engine category and is not blocked. Twitter and Facebook are in a social networking category that is blocked. In light of the dynamic information environment we will review this policy and how it is currently implemented.

For now, the authoritative sources for CG info for CG personnel will be on our network, not in the public domain. We will continue to cross post as much as we can to the official public domain sites to encourage other sources of feedback and provide access to the workforce when not at work. If you feel we should change our approach, let's hear your business argument.

Rear Admiral Dave Glenn, CG-6, CIO

(Note from Adm A--FYI, my Facebook page is managed through a stand alone computer that does not connect to the CGDN)

Posted at 10/19/2008 07:24:00 AM [2 comments](#) 



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Friday, October 17, 2008

## New York Coast Guard Foundation Dinner

As I noted earlier, I was honored to attend the annual New York Coast Foundation Dinner last night. I had the additional honor to meet the representatives of the units and their families. Below is a press release issued by the Foundation in advance of the dinner that provides the details (one correction: VADM Crea stood in for VADM Papp who is in Europe). It was an extraordinary event held on Ellis Island ... our thanks to the Foundation.

Immediately below are my closing remarks from last night ...

ADM A

Tonight, you have heard amazing stories of sacrifice, heroism and hope...and it is my great honor to help close the evening.

I face many challenges in my job, but whatever problems we face in the endless "tyranny of the present" in Washington are dwarfed and become inconsequential compared to these celebrations of who we are and what we do in the service of our country and humanity.

So tonight I stand before you  
as I have on other occasions  
with other heroes  
to marvel at the work of our Guardians.

And each time we have been breathless at what they did  
we wonder "is it possible for anyone to do more."

Yes, it is possible...and the tradition continues this evening.

Those we have honored here this evening gave 31 people back their lives.

31 people returned to families and loved ones,  
31 lives resumed that had been ransomed by nature and circumstance,  
31 reasons why the men and women of the United States Coast Guard get up every morning and go to work.

It is very fitting that these individuals are being recognized in this remarkable building on this island that gave more than 12 million people a new life.

From 1892 when Annie Moore, a 15-year-old girl from County Cork, Ireland became the first immigrant to land on Ellis Island to 1954 when Norwegian merchant seaman Arne Peterssen became the last,  
this island,  
the lady that stands watch in the harbor  
this building  
have represented the future,  
and more importantly the hope for generations that would build this Nation.

Their perseverance, courage and selfless actions mirror the heroism we recognize tonight.

America's voyage is still underway, sustained by the strength of our people who hail from all points on the globe

We should also remember that the origins of our Coast Guard lie in this harbor as well. We are distinctly American and a child of the Revolutionary War.

It was less than a mile from here that Alexander Hamilton and his classmates from Kings College (what would become Columbia University) dragged cannons away from Battery Park to avoid their capture by the invading British forces in 1775. He would later serve throughout the war as George Washington's aide de camp.

It was here following the Revolution that Hamilton wrote Federalist Paper Number 12, which stated "A few armed vessels, judiciously stationed at the entrances of our ports, might at a small expense be made useful sentinels of the laws."

It was a short distance up the Hudson River where Hamilton rowed a small boat across from Manhattan to Weehawken, New Jersey to meet Aaron Burr in a duel in 1804.

It is short walk from Battery Park where those cannons stood to Trinity Church where Hamilton lies at rest.

It was there following the attacks of 9/11 that Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers assembled and cleaned the ashes from his grave.

And to the east lies Governor's Island which holds a special place in many of our hearts ... I would note that the three Allen children attended P.S. 26 there!

These commingled histories are important.  
this island,  
this harbor,  
our Coast Guard

I am reminded of Franklin Roosevelt's comment on America's lineage. "Remember always, that all of us are descended from immigrants and revolutionists".

And Jack Parr once said "immigration is the sincerest form of flattery."

The American dream has to be nurtured, protected and rescued by those willing to make the ultimate sacrifice. So as we honor our Guardians tonight let us also honor the crew of helicopter 6505.

Commander Tom Nelson, Lieutenant Commander Andrew Wischmeier, Petty Officer First Class David Skimin, and Petty Officer Second Class Joshua Nichols made the ultimate sacrifice while serving their country.

In that awful time of pain and loss  
as we grieved and came to together as a family for our shipmates,  
the Coast Guard Foundation was there with us.

Tending the families of the fallen,  
Tending to the Coast Guard family.

So, to the Coast Guard Foundation  
Once again, we are in your debt.  
Once again you have rescued the rescuers.

God Bless the Coast Guard Foundation.

#### FOUNDATION PRESS RELEASE

STONINGTON, Conn., Oct. 14 /PRNewswire/ -- The Coast Guard Foundation, a non-profit organization committed to the education, welfare and morale of all Coast Guard members and their families, announced today its 28th Annual Salute event recognizing the United States Coast Guard. Scheduled to take place on Thursday, October 16, 2008 at the Ellis Island Immigration Museum in New York Harbor, the Annual Salute will honor a select group of Coast Guard members with the Coast Guard Foundation Awards for Heroism. The gala will be emceed by Robert J. Flynn, a director of the Coast Guard Foundation and president of Mallory Jones Lynch Flynn & Assoc. Inc., and feature ceremonial music by the United States Coast Guard Band. Speakers will include Commandant Thad Allen who will

also present awards, and Atlantic Area Commander, Vice Admiral Robert J. Papp, who will present colors. In addition to celebrating exemplary service, the event will raise funds to support the Foundation's important projects and programs including the Evergreen Fund college scholarship for children, as well as grants for enlistees that improve the lives and performance of Coast Guard members, their families and United States Coast Guard Academy cadets. "Our Annual Salute event is a proud expression of our gratitude for the bravery and heroism our Coast Guard members demonstrate everyday to keep Americans safe," said Anne Brengle, president of the Coast Guard Foundation. "We are proud to welcome our partners and the community to join us in honoring our impressive Coast Guard men and women, and to support our important year-round efforts to help enhance service and opportunities for members and their families."

The Coast Guard Foundation Awards for Heroism will honor the heroic efforts demonstrated during the March 23, 2008 Alaska Ranger fishing vessel rescue by LT James K. Terrell, AMT2 Alfred L. Musgrave, MK2 Barry D. Lawson; AST2 Obrien Hollow; AMT2 Robert R. DeBolt and AST3 Abram A. Heller.

The rescue of eight Alaska Ranger mariners has been described as the most courageous and successful maritime search and rescue effort in modern history. In the early morning hours of March 23, 2008, the Alaska Ranger, a 192-foot trawler with 47 persons on board, sank in the frigid Bering Sea 120 miles west of Dutch Harbor, Alaska. Battling gale force 30-knot winds; rough 12-foot swells, near freezing seas and exposure, the honorees demonstrated incredible strength of character and resolve to successfully rescue eight mariners adrift in the sea without the benefit of lifeboats. While the efforts of all parties involved in the rescue were heroic, the actions of the honorees were truly remarkable.

In recognition of successful search and rescue cases (responding to 18 SAR cases and saving 11 lives) conducted during the extremely arduous 2007-2008 ice season, CG Station Saginaw River, represented by BM2 Anthony J. Vavrek and SN Matthew J. Bell, will also be presented with awards. While search and rescue is difficult under normal conditions, the ice rescues executed were compounded by snowstorms, extreme temperatures and ever-changing conditions on the ice.

The Coast Guard annual gala will be held on Thursday, October 16, 2008; beginning at 7:00 pm with a cocktail reception followed by a dinner reception beginning at 8:00 pm. Transport to the Ellis Island Immigration Museum will be available by ferry, with boarding at 6:30 pm departing from Battery Park. For more information on the Coast Guard Foundation's 28th Annual Salute to the United States Coast Guard, the Coast Guard Foundation or for interest in supporting its work, please visit the Coast Guard Foundation website [www.cgfdn.org](http://www.cgfdn.org).

#### About The Coast Guard Foundation

The Coast Guard Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 1969. It was initially created to provide funds for academic, athletic, and morale needs of the Coast Guard Academy and its cadets, which were not covered by federal operational funding. In 1986, the Foundation expanded its charter to support projects that enhance the education, welfare and morale of all Coast Guard members and their families. A Board of 100 Trustees from all parts of the country governs the Foundation. The Trustees elect from their members a 30 person Board of Directors to oversee the management of the Foundation. Located in Stonington, Connecticut, the Foundation employs a staff of ten civilians responsible for meeting the Foundation's objectives and working closely with the Coast Guard on all issues.

SOURCE The Coast Guard Foundation

Posted at [10/17/2008 12:53:00 PM](#) [@comments](#) 



Thursday, October 16, 2008

## Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

I had the pleasure to brief the [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe](#) (OSCE) at their offices in Vienna, Austria last week. With 56 States drawn from Europe, Central Asia and America, the OSCE is the world's largest regional security organization, bringing comprehensive and co-operative security to a region that stretches from Vancouver to Vladivostok. It offers a forum for political negotiations and decision-making in the fields of early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation, and puts the political will of the participating States into practice through its unique network of field missions. This is a very unique organization in that it is the only cooperative security body in the region that includes both NATO members and Russia.

A copy of my presentation is available here [/CCGOSCE.pps](#). It was well received with several follow-on questions from the Ambassadors from Austria, Ukraine, Spain, Luxembourg and Russia.

The Ambassador from Georgia publicly thanked us for the delivery of humanitarian aid by the Coast Guard Cutter Dallas.

Posted at [10/16/2008 03:11:00 PM](#) [@comments](#) 



## Lone Sailor Award to Arnold Palmer

Shipmates,

I posted a while back on the terrific dinner I attended that honored Arnold Palmer and his service in the Coast Guard. Thanks to Arnold's close friend Howdy Giles we have posted several photos of the event on Flickr and they can be accessed via Commandant Corner 2.0.

I will be attending the New York Coast Guard Foundation Dinner this evening and am looking forward to meeting the crewmembers from CGC MUNRO, CG 6566, CG 6007 (ALASKA RANGER rescue) and Station Saginaw River (multiple ice rescues). We will post photos as soon as possible.

ADM A

Posted at [10/16/2008 01:30:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 



## Amver goes social

[CG Blog](#) got the scoop on us with this one, but we also welcome [Amver](#) to the social media environment.

Amver, sponsored by the United States 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. With Amver, rescue coordinators can identify participating ships in the area of distress and divert the best-suited ship or ships to respond.

Today they announced ([/October%2016%202008.pdf](#)) the activation of their new Facebook page to enhance their communication with the maritime public.

Amver is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year, and just in the past couple weeks was instrumental in two dramatic rescues that saved five lives, one case off the coast of [Portugal](#), and another 700 miles off [San Diego](#).

Posted at [10/16/2008 10:07:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Tuesday, October 14, 2008

## Hurricane Ike ATON Recovery Operations

GALVESTON, Texas - Petty Officer Ed Botting of Aids to Navigation Team, Galveston pilots a fork lift through the Buoy Yard here Sept. 17, 2008, carrying wood that will be used to rebuild one of about 20 ranges that were damaged by Hurricane Ike. (Photo by Petty Officer Patrick Kelly)



More than 90 percent of the buoys and ranges in the Houston Ship Channel were damaged or destroyed by the storm and Sector Field Office Galveston was turned into the largest buoy yard in the Coast Guard.

More than 10 Coast Guard Cutters were dispatched to Sector Field Office Galveston to repair the ship channel and re-open the port as quickly as possible.

Earlier this month I sent out an [ALCOAST](#) recognizing the efforts of Team Coast Guard in responding to Hurricane Ike and other storms. The ATON recovery mission was just one aspect, but I thought it would be good to shine a little spotlight on them here:

[Pentagon Channel](#)  
[KHOU.com](#)  
[NPR](#)

BZ

Posted at [10/14/2008 03:26:00 PM](#) [4 comments](#) 



Saturday, October 11, 2008

## Movement Report (MOVREP)

Shipmates,  
I have just returned from a week long trip in Europe. We have received some good feedback on our ongoing efforts on this Blog especially regarding access to the internet from the Coast Guard Data Network. There are some significant issues involved and as noted earlier I have asked CG-6 to provide a guest post on that topic shortly.

In Europe I met with a number of our partners, including the World Maritime University (we have a CG LCDR on the faculty), the Secretary General of the International Maritime Organization, the Chief of the Danish Navy/Coast Guard, BIMCO (see earlier post), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the U.S. European Command,

and the U.S. African Command. The general meeting themes were maritime security and expanding partnerships to deal with a broad spectrum of transnational challenges and threats from green house gas emissions from ships to piracy. On the way home yesterday we refueled in Iceland and I met with our counterparts there who will host the North Atlantic Coast Guard Forum next fall. There will be more posts in the future on specific themes from the trip.

Our folks in EUCOM and AFRICOM are doing great things as evidenced in the recent DALLAS deployment. There is a great demand for Coast Guard competencies and capabilities from the geographical combatant commanders.

Enjoy the holiday weekend and be safe. For those on watch, be vigilant ... be Guardians.

ADM A

Posted at [10/11/2008 06:18:00 AM](#) [2](#) comments 

 Share     

Wednesday, October 8, 2008

## BIMCO Meeting and Survey Results

I recently met with the senior leaders from [BIMCO](#) (The Baltic and International Maritime Council) in Copenhagen. We discussed a wide range of issues related to commercial shipping. They thanked me for [the guidance](#) I provided to field commanders earlier this year regarding our relationship with the maritime community. They also provided me the results of a survey that was taken from their members regarding port state control boardings (boardings we conduct on foreign flag vessels to insure compliance with international safety standards). The results were encouraging and I am providing them with this post ([click here](#)). That said we must continue strive to achieve 100 per cent satisfaction. My thanks to our Sectors for their hard work. Keep it up.

ADM A

Posted at [10/08/2008 01:06:00 PM](#) [6](#) comments 

 Share     

Tuesday, October 7, 2008

## Welcome Home USCGC DALLAS!

Posted at [10/07/2008 08:55:00 AM](#) [2](#) comments 

 Share     

Sunday, October 5, 2008

## Global Problems Require Global Solutions

(Cliff Notes version of my speech at the World Maritime University Graduation)

Our Oceans and ports are the arteries of today's global economy. Without a safe, secure and environmentally healthy maritime system, the World's economic lifeblood stops and everyone suffers. The 21st century is going to be rife with both changes and challenges, and these can only be managed for the benefit of us all through a cooperative and collaborative approach working through the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to strengthen global partnerships.

#### *Changes*

There is going to be more change in the next 20 years than we have seen in the last 100. The maritime domain will become increasingly complex, and the incidence of major events and industry advances will increase and accelerate. There will be greater use and competition for resources in the seas and miles below in the ocean floor.

Consider that cruise ships are now being used as floating condominiums, massive man-made islands have been created off of Dubai and the seafloor is now home to an increasing array of infrastructure. Even the world's biggest internet search engine, Google, is getting into the act. They are considering "water-based computer centers" – their massive servers would be placed on barges and anchored miles off the coast. They would harness the waves to cool these systems thereby saving millions in maintenance costs. By anchoring the barges offshore, they also would avoid paying property taxes. Would anyone have considered that a maritime issue 10 years ago?

The changing Arctic is another example of mankind's desire to push into the world's last global commons. At the top of the world, there are now hundreds of miles of open ocean where there was once impassable ice. We're seeing increased shipping, tourism and exploration – along with jurisdictional claims from several nations. Next summer, the German shipping company Beluga plans to send an unescorted freighter through the Northeast Passage along the Siberian coast. They estimate this route will cut 3,200 nautical miles off the transit from Bremen to Shanghai. The business incentives are astronomical.

#### *Challenges*

Piracy on the high seas or maritime crime along the coasts of underdeveloped nations is a very real threat to the maritime industry. The disruptions to shipping, either from attacks or having to reroute shipping around danger zones, cost owners millions of dollars. The coast of Somalia, especially the Gulf of Aden and the approaches to the Suez Canal, has been a haven for piracy. From April to June of 2008, six vessels were hijacked, eight ships were shot at, and four other ships reported attempted attacks.

Between 1990 and the present time, over 1,000 ships and crews are believed to have been abandoned. The abandonment of seafarers is truly a scourge – it's morally wrong and it's damaging to the maritime shipping industry.

Transnational criminals are continually seeking to exploit the vastness of the maritime domain. They are investing heavily in new technologies such as Self-Propelled Semi-Submersibles. These vessels resemble submarines operating just at the surface. In September, the U.S. Coast Guard, working with U.S. Navy assets, seized two of these vessels with over 14 tons of cocaine. These vessels are becoming more sophisticated with advanced steering, propulsion and exhaust systems enabling them to transit hundreds of miles. They are the conveyance of choice for narcotics smugglers but their usage has broader implications. To date, they have only been suspected of smuggling cocaine but could easily be converted to transport terrorists or weapons of mass destruction. We must understand these vessels are built solely for illicit purposes and can threaten any coastal nation.

There are over 150 coastal nations and each looks to the seas for protection, resources, and a continuation of their way of life. Mankind's innovative push into the world's oceans is sending a siren call – a warning - to the international maritime community. We must respond together.

Maritime Safety, security and environmental protection are intertwined – a decision in one area impacts the other two. The IMO is the right venue to capture these dynamics, develop consensus and implement solutions that are amenable to all. When the world needed maritime guidance in the past, the IMO has stepped forward to develop solutions. The maritime challenges of the 21st century are highly complex and beyond the ability of any one nation to resolve, thus, these global problems require global solutions.

You can read my remarks here [WMMU%20Speech-05%20Oct%2008.pdf](#)

The following audio file is a 5 minute collection of different soundbites from [WMMU-clips.mp3](#)

#### [Technorati Profile](#)

Posted at 10/05/2008 04:09:00 PM [0 comments](#) 



## Congratulations to the World Maritime University's Class of 2008

Congratulations to the World Maritime University's Class of 2008 on their graduation today. I was honored to be the Guest of Honor at their commencement ceremony in Malmo, Sweden. The ceremony was presided over by International Maritime Organization Secretary General Mitropoulos.

This is the [25th Anniversary](#) of WMU. Since its inception WMU has graduated more than 2600 students from 157 different countries. Today's graduating class included 207 students representing 45 countries.

[WMMU operates](#) under the auspices of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), a specialized agency of the United Nations. Its charter is to be THE international maritime training institution for the training of senior specialist maritime personnel in various aspects of shipping and related fields concerning the improvement of maritime safety, the protection of the marine environment and the efficiency of international shipping.

Stay tuned for a summary of my remarks to follow...

Posted at [10/05/2008 12:39:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 



[Share](#)



Friday, October 3, 2008

## Celebrating the US Coast Guard Academy Class of 1958

It was my extraordinary honor today to present medallions to the members of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy Class of 1958 who are celebrating their 50th Reunion this weekend in New London (including a number of my former bosses!).

The weather was great, the parade field magnificent, the cadets sharp, and the pride ... priceless.

Tomorrow Coast Guard faces Mass Maritime on the gridiron. Go Bears.

ADM A

Posted at [10/03/2008 10:51:00 PM](#) [2 comments](#) 



[Share](#)     

## iCommandant Week 1 -- For the Good of the Order

I have really enjoyed and been inspired by your response to the first week of iCommandant! You have provided some great comments that will help guide and energize this initiative. This post will address some of your questions/ comments as well as provide some feedback on how you can be a part of this dialogue.

iCommandant publishing team - I am personally cognizant of everything that happens on iCommandant, be it blog posts (many of which I do personally), or the comments received. Maintaining a near real-time channel of communication that provides relevant and interesting information is a significant effort. For this to be sustainable I do rely on my aide and communications staff (speech writer and press secretary) to assist me in developing content, but everything posted represents my personal thoughts and ideas unless clearly stated otherwise, as in the case of a "guest blog". When the blog is in the first person, I either wrote it myself or collaborated with my staff. The content can then be posted by my staff with administrator access. When I am on the road or late at night I will post from time to time directly myself to make the content available quickly. I will actually sign those posts as Adm A. For example, my staff provided content for this post but I reviewed it and edited prior to posting.

Comment Response -- I can't answer every question asked through the comments. In fact, I am counting on you to help with that by providing answers or opinions yourselves. Comments will be reviewed to identify those topics that are significant enough, or clearly a common question or concern that needs to be addressed specifically. Sometimes my response will come in the form of a new post and sometimes it will simply be a comment following a post.

Comment moderation -- The moderating policy is clearly published and visible on the post comment screen every time someone goes to make a comment. Our position as a public agency requires that I maintain a certain level of decorum on this public forum, thus some moderating is necessary. My goal is to keep this moderation transparent and as limited as possible to encourage dialogue and input. In fact, this week rather than rejecting some comments that did not conform to the policy, we instead edited them and posted. We will not continue to do that, so please make yourself familiar with the comment policy.

I received outstanding support from our C4&IT directorate (CG-6) in putting together the new Commandant's Corner and iCommandant. CG-6 has a solid [strategic vision](#) that I fully support. They are committed to providing the Coast Guard with the tools and resources it needs for mission execution and support. The cyber security challenges they have to manage are real and they have to protect our critical IT systems against those threats. To respond to your many comments CG-6 will publish a comprehensive post next week that addresses many of the questions/concerns you raised.

Related to the IT issues, I heard your comments regarding Facebook and the CGDN. The reasons for that will be addressed in CG-6's guest post. The fact is, anything available on my Facebook page, with the exception of Fan comments, is also available on Commandant's Corner 2.0 or at least somewhere on the uscg.mil domain. The issue of broader access to the web via CGDN is one I "roger." From bandwidth considerations to security we will closely review our options and I will advise you where we are going.

Posted at [10/03/2008 09:33:00 AM](#) [6 comments](#) 



[Share](#)     

## Selection of E-9 Program Reviewer

Congratulations to MCPO Stephen Dykema on his selection to serve as a Coast Guard program reviewer. This is the first time in recent history that an enlisted member has been selected to one of these critical, high-profile positions. YNCM Dykema has a stellar bio. He is currently a Battalion Commander at TRACEN Cape May and was the Coast Guard Enlisted Person of the Year in 1997.

As a program reviewer he will be responsible for budget development, advocacy and review before the Administration and Congress. He will provide counsel to the Commandant, Vice Commandant and CFO on policy, program and legislative matters, prepare Flag-level witnesses for Congressional hearings, and be directly involved in annual development of the Coast Guard Posture Statement.

These efforts directly impact the level of resources and types of benefits available to our workforce on the front lines. There are 12 program reviewers and they have traditionally been officers. The Coast Guard team will benefit tremendously by the addition of MCPO Dykema to CG-82. His perspectives and insight will be invaluable.

[Click here](#) to listen to the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard's perspective on this unique assignment.

Posted at 10/03/2008 07:34:00 AM [3 comments](#) 



Thursday, October 2, 2008

The following article is reproduced from the American Forces Press Services:

I was extremely honored to be with MK1 Phillip Waldron and his spouse at the 2008 USO World Gala last night. MK1 Waldron was the Coast Guard honoree for his service on USCGC WRANGELL in the Persian Gulf. I presented his award with former PGA golf pro and CBS analyst David Feherty. It was an extraordinary evening that included surprise visits by President Bush and comedian Robin Williams.



We salute Petty Officer Waldron.

ADM A

America Supports You: USO Gala Honors Exemplary Service  
By Samantha L. Quigley  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Oct. 2, 2008 – Comedian Robin Williams and President Bush may have competed for laughs during the 2008 USO World Gala here last night, but it was five servicemembers who got the audience's greatest applause.

"I had the honor of having my picture taken with the [United Service Organizations] award recipients and their families," Bush said. "I congratulate them on setting such a fine example."

Bush also extended highest respect to the wounded warriors who attended from Walter Reed Army Medical Center here.

USO recognized the servicemembers for their service above and beyond the call of duty. Though the award was an honor, the recipients held to the sentiment that it was all in a day's work.

"I'm humbled by it," said Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Joshua E. Simson, a hospital corpsman. "It feels a little weird to have all this attention just because I was just trying to do my job."

The job that earned Simson the title "USO Sailor of the Year," involved administering medical aid to 17 U.S. and Afghan National Army soldiers when their patrol was ambushed.

Coast Guard Petty Officer 1st Class Phillip N. Waldron, the "USO Coast Guardsman of the Year," said he, too, was overwhelmed by the honor.

"It was completely unexpected, and I feel humbled, more than anything else, that out of 40,000 Coast Guardsmen to be the one in here tonight," he said.

Waldron's commanding officer nominated him for the award for "demonstrating unmatched initiative and operational prowess overseas, qualifying as a boarding officer and leading coalition forces on 40 high-risk boardings in close proximity to Iranian waters." He's also a small boat coxswain, which is not a part of his primary job as a machinery technician.

"My father was also a coxswain, and I wanted to follow in his footsteps throughout my career," Waldron said.

That's a career that is undecided at the moment. He has nine years in the Coast Guard and is debating making it a 20- or 30-year career.

Also recognized were:

-- Army Spc. Monica L. Brown, USO Soldier of the Year, who is the second woman since World War II to earn the Silver Star. A combat medic, she was temporarily attached to the 4/73rd Cavalry in Afghanistan when her convoy was ambushed. She treated five injured soldiers and used her body to shield them against enemy fire for 45 minutes until they could be medically evacuated.

-- Marine Sgt. Richard E. Reyes, USO Marine of the Year, who was serving as team leader with Company C, 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, Regimental Combat Team 6 in Iraq in July 2007 when his platoon's base was ambushed. After several attempts, he and his men destroyed the enemy's position. Three days later, an engagement with an insurgent located on a rooftop ended in his team capturing three enemy fighters. In all, Reyes led 70 combat missions and was instrumental in the capture of 35 insurgents.

-- Air Force Staff Sgt. Shawn A. Ryan, USO Airman of the Year, who volunteered for a one-year deployment to Iraq during which he served with the 732nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron. He trained 700 Iraqi police officers, covered 4,200 miles of Baghdad streets during his patrols and participated in 167 combat missions. He came under attack multiple times, was wounded once and prevented a suicide car-bomber from completing his mission, thereby protecting the lives of 45 U.S. and Iraqi troops and more than 1,000 Iraqi civilians.

These five are representative of every servicemember, Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said.

"I believe, and I think they would agree with me, that in their service ... these awardees typify the quality and character of every one of their fellow soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen," he said. "All of them are heroes in their own right."

He went on to thank the USO and its volunteers for offering troops not only a taste of home, but a sense of appreciation.

"That's what tonight is all about -- people who just don't support the troops, but fight for the troops," Mullen said. "Thanks not just for serving us hot coffee and the warm beds. Thanks for serving alongside us."

For the USO, there's still more to be done, said Sloan D. Gibson, the organization's new president and chief executive officer.

"I've watched a soldier take the time to record a video for his children back home," he said. "Reading a book for a bedside story was his small effort to help dull the pain his loved ones felt during their long separation.

"This is the sacrifice that demands that we do more," he added.

And more, he vowed, USO would do.

"If doing more only represents half of our full potential, it's still not enough," Gibson said. "My pledge to you is that we will work to seize the full potential that stands before us. The sacrifice and the service of our troops and their families around the world deserve nothing less."

Gibson replaces former USO president and chief executive officer Edward A. Powell, who served the organization in that capacity for nearly seven years.

The USO also chose Virginia U.S. Sen. John Warner as its Spirit of the USO Award recipient for his "unwavering leadership and support for America's servicemen and women." Warner's wife accepted the award on his behalf. The senator was participating in a late-night vote on the proposed financial bailout package.

Posted at 10/02/2008 06:26:00 PM 0 comments



Folks,

Attempting my first photo upload into our Blog. The photo is from the far side of the floor in the Naval Academy's Alumni Hall where I gave what I believe to be the first address by a Coast Guard Commandant to the Navy All Flags/SES conference. I was the luncheon speaker and the topic was our modernization, you may be able to see the details on the power point on the screen. I received a lot of questions but most were about social media and this blog sight. A lot of interest in what is going on here.

ADM A

Posted at 10/02/2008 06:16:00 PM 0 comments



## Guest post: Evergreen follow-up

This is a guest post from Deputy Commandant of Operations, Rear Admiral Sally Brice-O'Hara following up on my Sept. 29 "Evergreen Stakeholder Workshop" post:

Attended the closing session of our scenario planning workshop for stakeholders -- something we call project "Evergreen". GREAT feedback and conversations about the challenges industry, non-profits and Coast Guard will face together, looking out 25 years.

(Our "alternative futures" workshop kicked off in the middle of the ongoing financial crisis - that drove home the uncertainty in our world. Evergreen is a great way to think through that kind of uncertainty...)

Quick take-aways: Partnerships will become only more important in future problem solving. Must continue to advance.

Rules and regulatory processes -- need for adaptability & balance of safety, security, efficiency. Good discussions. Our staffing increases for marine inspectors and regulatory processes haven't hit the field yet, but I think we are on the right course. Need to make sure we see results when these improvements come on line.

Arctic and environmental issues -- future demands on maritime will be ever more complex. The solutions come back to partnerships. We need to keep pushing ourselves to be in forefront of networked, collaborative government.

Terrific and beneficial conversations and participation. Look forward to doing more work with stakeholders in future. Appreciate the hard thinking that went into this inaugural event.

Rear Admiral Sally Brice-O'Hara, Deputy Commandant for Operations

Posted at [10/02/2008 05:49:00 PM](#) [1 comment](#) 



Wednesday, October 1, 2008

## State of the DOG

I received a briefing on "The State of the Dog" from RDML Atkin and his team yesterday. Thought I would share it with you [here](#). They have come a long way in the last year and are on target and tracking. Sorry for all the acronyms in the slide, maybe we can get an acronym converter for this thing.



Posted at [10/01/2008 03:09:00 PM](#) [4 comments](#) 



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