



# the Quarterdeck Log

Membership publication of the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association. Publishes quarterly — Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. Not sold on a subscription basis. The Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association is a Non-Profit Corporation of Active-Duty, Retired, Reserve, and Honorably Discharged Former Members of the United States Coast Guard who served in or provided direct support to combat situations recognized by an appropriate military award while serving as a member of the United States Coast Guard.

**Volume 24, Number 2**

**Summer 2009**

## CGCVA Members Honored at CG Festival

*Association Treasurer represents CGCVA at 219th Service Anniversary in Grand Haven, Michigan*

We arrived in Grand Haven Thursday night and met up with Larry and Carolyn Villarreal and did some catching up. The city of Grand Haven, MI is so compact and intimate that it provides a very comfortable atmosphere and an enjoyable time for almost 200,000 people during the week-long festival. And for the boat watchers, the basin is busy non-stop with recreational boating.

Friday, was extremely busy. We parked our car at the American Legion Post which is located next to the Coast Guard Exchange. From there we walked



*CGCVA member Larry Villarreal waves to spectators while riding in the CG Day Parade.*



*The Coast Guard Pipe Band marches in the CG Festival Parade through downtown Grand Haven.*

around the waterfront park where we saw demonstrations of the Silent Drill Team, and the Coast Guard Ceremonial

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\*use the Administrative Office for contact with the CGCVA on all matters.

### THE QUARTERDECK LOG

Editor In Chief -- PNP Ed Swift, LM  
(Send submissions to [swiftie1@verizon.net](mailto:swiftie1@verizon.net))

### AUXILIARY OFFICERS

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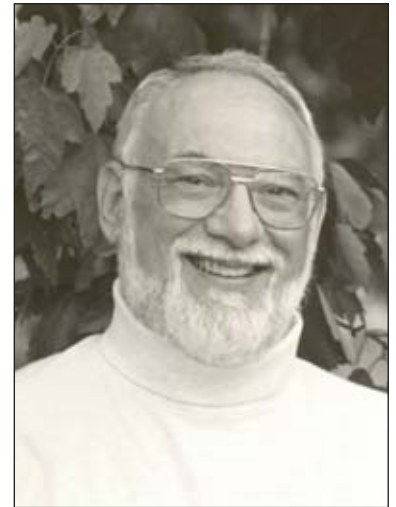
### APPOINTED OFFICERS

Thomas W. Hart, LM (By-Laws); Baker Herbert, LM (Convention Planner); Patrick E. Ramsey, LM and Floyd Hampton, LM (Membership); Mike Placentia, LM (Parliamentarian); Paul C. Scotti, LM (Historian); Josh Sparrow (Awards); Thomas Huckelberry, LM and Floyd Hampton, LM (Service Officers)

## From the President

### Governors Island

Recently, I was remembering my four years on Governors Island (1972-1976) in New York City and concluded that Governors Island with nearly five thousand active duty, dependents, and civilians living and working together, that no other place I had been stationed in the Air Force or Coast Guard could match the closeness of that



*Paul C. Scotti*

Coast Guard community. I know that many wives upon learning that their husbands had orders to a command on Governors Island screamed, "I won't go!" They were not alone. When the State Department wanted to put up Yassar Arafat and his Palestinian Organization during a visit to the United Nations on Governors Island he screamed, "I won't go!" And he didn't. Instead, he went to the Waldolf Astoria Hotel.

I found the term "Coast Guard Family" true. We lived on the sixth floor of a seven-floor building with six apartments on each level. On Friday's, after work it was not unusual to have everyone sitting in the hall on the floor outside each apartment visiting. During our four years on the sixth floor families came and went. We befriended them all. We celebrated with young couples who had their first baby.

Many friends from previous units ended up on Governors Island. Many others came to schools at the training center. We made new friends. Then, of course, were one's co-workers. Needless to say, Liz and I did a lot of entertaining.

My job, as well, was fulfilling. I reported to the Third District Public Affairs Office as a journalist first class. That is deceiving because two weeks earlier I was a gunner's mate first class. The chief in the Newsroom was not amused. I had to learn to become an advanced journalist — fast. And, I did. The chief retired and his replacement

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Next QD Log deadline is November 1, 2009. Please email articles and photos to the editor at: [swiftie1@verizon.net](mailto:swiftie1@verizon.net)

### *Swine Flu Hits Boot Camp*

CAPE MAY, N.J. — The U.S. Coast Guard Training Center here reports 24 confirmed cases of Swine Flu (H1N1 Virus) as of Aug. 16. According to spokesperson CWO Veronica Bandrowsky, a total of 96 Coast Guard personnel have been tested for Swine Flu with 89 test results received with seven test results pending and 24 confirmed H1N1 Virus results. Of those who tested positive, 20 were recruits and have returned to duty. Four active duty personnel have recovered and returned to duty, said Bandrowsky. Nine members are currently in the fever ward with four residing in the medical ward.

**Jack Fichter, The Cape May County Herald**

### *Swine Flu at the USCG Academy*

NEW LONDON, CT — By late July, more than 40 confirmed cases of swine flu had impacted the freshman class at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy and that number was expected to rise. The flu, also known as novel H1N1 influenza, has impacted more than 10 per cent of the “swabs,” the newest students at the school currently taking part in a mandatory summer session, plus four cadets who were training them and two clinic staff members.

“We’re expecting to see the number go up before it comes back down because we have a lot of tests out still,” Petty Officer Ryan Doss, an academy spokesman, said. “The flipside is that the number of people coming into the clinic feeling symptomatic has gone down. We hope it’s an indication that this is going to keep declining, but we’re going to stay prepared for anything.”

Typical symptoms include a cough and low-grade fever with an average temperature of about 100 to 101 degrees, Doss said. The first person to show these symptoms was isolated from the rest of the students and staff on July 9th. The Center For Disease Control (CDC) confirmed that it was a case of H1N1 four days later.

Doss said it would be hard to pinpoint how H1N1 was introduced at the academy, since hundreds of people visit the school grounds every week.

**Jennifer Grogan, New London Day**



### *Three Coast Guardsmen Left in SEAL Quest*

First there were 19 who were whittled down to 12. Then only five were left standing.

Now, after one of the world's most crushing selection programs, only two remain — well, three, if you count the one who was rolled back into the initial phase of the school. For the first time in its storied history, the Coast Guard is on track to have two of its own earn the coveted trident badge of a Navy SEAL. The two officers have reached the third phase of initial SEAL selection after joining Basic Underwater Demolition School class 276 in March, enduring the grueling mental and physical travails that weed out all but the hardest warriors.

Coast Guard officials say they hope the SEAL-trained Coasties will seed the rest of the force with valuable skills learned in special operations training and operations and bring back to their sea service a bit of the esprit de corps found in the commando ranks.

After reviewing 19 applications back in August 2008, evaluators tapped 12 Coastguardsmen to run through a week-long selection process in Panama City, Fla., that included physical tests, mental evaluations and exercises that gave the wannabe frogmen a taste of what the legendary Basic Underwater Demolition School, or BUDS, is all about. In the end, five made the cut, including four officers — a civil engineer, two cutter officers and one assigned to the district staff — and an enlisted man who serves as a boarding officer at a station in California.

By all accounts, the Navy and Coast Guard see this program as a worthwhile one that will continue for several more years.

**Christian Lowe, Military.com**

### *I Hate Computers!*

First, I am very happy to report that the Association computer system has joined the 21st century. We are operating on gigahertz and gigabytes, instead of kilobytes and megahertz. We no longer need that little mouse, on a treadmill, to run the Windows 98 operating system. We are now running Windows XP and Microsoft Office 2007. Baker Herbert has earned a medal for keeping our old system operating. The conversion of our original operating system was accomplished by our "volunteer" tech support person, who deserves special mention. When I met Bill Ross, in Reno, he told me that his lovely wife Rose knew about computer systems and she could help me. Truth is, I helped her. The conversion to MS-Access 2007 was not easy, but Rose Ross was a "God-send" and her guidance made the transfer of data possible. Then, like a magician pulling a rabbit out of a hat, she found this website that sold new software, at a 99% discount, for non-profit organizations. We were able to load up new software and we are now off and running. A big "Thank You" to Baker for keeping the system going and to Rose and Bill Ross for coming through and making the transition of the National Secretary look easy.

We did have one small glitch that could not be fixed in time for the Spring 2009 *Quarterdeck Log* mailing. The old software system was leaving out the expiration date on each label and simply placing an "EXP" on each label, causing some confusion for the members. Some have questioned their Expiration Date, some sent in checks, thinking their membership was expiring, and others called to verify that a renewal membership fee was required. In those cases where the member saw the "EXP" on the label and sent in a dues payment, I have extended their membership, accordingly, and sent them an

updated membership profile and renewal ID card. If anyone, who submitted dues based on this label error, would like a refund, please send an e-mail to [cgcva@comcast.net](mailto:cgcva@comcast.net) or a note to National Secretary, 3245 Ridge Pike, Eagleville, PA 19403, and we will refund their overpayment.

The good news is, however, that the problem has been remedied, and we have actually improved the labels, for the next *Quarterdeck Log* mailing.

Semper Paratus!

Gary Sherman

### *Scholarships Awarded*

President Paul C. Scotti recently awarded two \$2000.00 CGCVA -- Philips Van Campen Taylor scholarships on behalf of Dr. and Mrs. Kristin Taylor Chang, and Mrs. Chang's Company, QUALCOMM.

The recipients of the 2009 scholarships were Elaine Oestreich, (GPA 4.4), the granddaughter of LM W. E. "Ted" Fort and Jeffrey Duke Shahidulla, (GPA 3.9), grandson of LM Donald R. Clapp. Elaine will attend the College of William and Mary while Jeffrey will continue his education at Baylor University.

The Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association together with the Chang family congratulates these two outstanding students.

### *No COLA Next Year*

The Bureau of Labor Statistics recently announced the monthly consumer price index (CPI) for July. The CPI is the measure used to make adjustments to military retired pay, survivor benefits, Social Security and other federal pensions. The CPI-W July value of 210.526 is now down 2.3% from the 2008 COLA Base of 215.5. Since it is apparent that the CPI-W will be down from the 2008 COLA Base, it is expected that there will be no 2010 COLA.

### *Crossed The Bar*

**Norman E. Brown, LM**

Joined: 7-25-1992 CTB: 11-29-2002

**Milton F. Feakins, LM**

Joined: 3-22-2009 CTB: 7-2009

**Kenneth R. Hanson, LM**

Joined: 2-6-2000 CTB: 4-8-2009

**Stanley W. Haraburda, LM**

Joined: 7-10-1995 CTB: 5-10-2009

**James E. Hoff, LM**

Joined: 4-25-1990 CTB: Unknown

**John E. Milovancevic**

Joined: 5-6-1999 CTB: 7-16-2009

**CAPT John C. Spence**

Joined: 9-14-2002 CTB: 11-4-2008

**Marshall W. Smith, LM**

Joined: 10-8-1987 CTB: 7-4-2009

**William C. Smith, LM**

Joined: 5-24-2004 CTB: 6-27-2009

**Edward M. Synos**

Joined: 2-25-1991 CTB: 5-2009

### **USS Spencer (CGC-W36) Assn.**

A reunion of the USS Spencer (CGC-W36) Association will be held Sept. 24-27, 2009 in Dedham, MA. Contact: **J. Shampine** at 32 Carriage Lane, NW, in Cartersville, GA 30120. Email: [shampine32@comcast.net](mailto:shampine32@comcast.net). Phone/fax: (770) 336-2056.

### **CGC Courier & CGC Kukui Reunion**

A reunion for *CGC Courier (WAGR/WAT-410)* and *CGC Kukui (WAK-186)* will be held Oct. 18-23, 2009 in New London, CT. Contact: **D. Newell** at 6800 Golf Course Blvd., P70, Punta Gorda, FL 33982. Ph: (941) 505-0426.

### **North Coast NY CG Assn. Reunion**

A reunion is planned for Sept. 18-20, 2009 in Sackets Harbor, NY for crew members from myriad USCG units in the north coast area of New York. Contact: **Gordon Koscher** at 4712 Glenwood Drive in Mantua, OH 44255. Ph: (330) 274-2927.

This reunion is open to all regular, reserve, auxiliary and civilian personnel who served at northern NY or PA Coast

Guard units (cutters, stations, lighthouses, bases, port security units, LORSTA, AtoN units, etc.).

### **Coast Guard in Vietnam Video**

Any idea where I can get a DVD copy of the USCG in Nam. It last showed on the military channel. I can't find it on the internet anywhere. Thanks in advance. **Tom Hogan**

*(Editor's Note: Here is the link where the DVD can be purchased: <http://www.amazon.com/Coast-Guard-War-OConnor-Fraser/dp/B000LAZQH6>).*

### **Upcoming Visit to Vietnam**

The Vietnam Veterans, Sons and Daughters Association of the USA will visit Saigon, Hue, the Mekong Delta, Hoi An, Danang, the DMZ, Siem Reap, and many former combat areas during February 2010 for a memorable and nostalgic journey. The group will depart from New York City or Los Angeles.

For more information, members from the many Infantry, Cavalry, Airborne and Armored divisions, plus Brigades,

### **USS Bisbee Reunion Recap**

On behalf of the *Bisbee* crew, we thank the CGCVA (and especially the convention planners) for sharing your great reunion with us. Having done this ourselves since 1978, we know what it takes to hold a successful reunion. You are to be congratulated for a job well done, or as the Navy and Coast Guard awards say, "Bravo Zulu."

As you know, WWII veterans are fast diminishing. Of the 14 *Bisbee* people attending the Reno reunion, only five were actual *Bisbee* crew members, the rest were widows of *Bisbee* crew members. Our ages range from 87 to 90 and we are all CGCVA Life Members.

In appreciation for giving a few old salts a memorable time together, the USS *Bisbee* Association voted to make a contribution to the QD Log Boosters Club in memory of our departed *USS Bisbee (PF-46)* officers and crew.

Again, our thanks for a great time and hopefully some of us will still be "Semper Paratus" for Baltimore in 2011.  
**Thom Weber**



*The "surviving five" crew members from the USS Bisbee ((PF-46) who attended the CGCVA convention in Reno. (L to R) Ruby Abrams, John Badgley, Thom Weber, Cliff Lowe, and Ernie Newbrey.*

Regiments, Support Outfits, and Veterans Organizations are encouraged to contact **Sy Canton** at 14130-C Nesting Way in Delray, FL 33484. Phone: (561) 865-8495.

### **SS El Estero Incident**

I would like to thank the CGCVA for answering my letter regarding the Panamanian-registered frieghter *SS Estero* fire at Caven Point, NJ and its subsequent sinking, preventing a certain disaster had it exploded.

I came off watch at midnight with six other Coast Guardsmen from the Jersey City Munitions Detail and Coast Guard Barracks. I have a letter that I wrote to my mother and father that my sister saved regarding the incident. The call came for volunteers from the Jersey City

Barracks to help fight the fire and 75-80 men answered the call. All seven of us volunteered, however, having just come of watch and being scheduled for work the following day, we were told we were not needed. I know of two sailors from our barracks (Marino and Mulvaney) that did go and stayed onboard until an officer by the name of Stanley gave the order to abandon ship before it was sunk. I am now 87 years of age and like the story indicated, most of those involved have probably passed on.

I really enjoy reading the *QD Log* and the *SS El Estero* story not only answered my questions but brought back a lot of memories of several other incidents that occurred while I was on the Munitions Detail. I later served on the troop ship *USS General Gordon (AP-117)* from February 7, 1945 until the end of the war. **Roy W. Spencer**

### **QD Log Booster Club**

The printing and postage for the *QD Log* is by far the largest expense item we have and it was determined that if every member contibuted \$5.00 to the CGCVA each year it would pay for all the expenses that go into the magazine. The idea was hatched at our Tampa Convention and several members contibuted at that time, thereby creating the QD Log Boosters Club. Donations can be sent to the Administrative Office (marked as "QD Log Booster Club") and all those contributing will have their names listed in the subsequent magazine. Contribution amounts will not be published but all contributions are greatly appreciated. We have been told many times we have the best reunion magazine out there and we'd like to keep it that way.

Since publication of our last magazine, the following individuals have made donations and become members of the QD Log Boosters Club:

Christopher Wood	Anthony Dangelo	William Demarco	M. D. Hattaway
Tommy Spradlin	Burleigh B. Rowe	Anthony Hanustak	Joyce Siegla
Jack Read	Eugene O'Brien	Bernard Czymbor	Howard Palombi
John T. Wilson	John D. McCann	Nicholas Poliski	Harry Rymer
George Moberg	Adrian Ttees	D.A. Desiderio	David Wishemann
David L. Moyer	Don Zeller	W. Lindgren	Sam King
Rick Minor			

In Memory of Dale Eddington, PhD: Roger Williams

In Memory of USCGC Northland "The Ship That Had a Soul": Roger Swaney

In Memory of Departed USS Bisbee Officers and Crew: The USS Bisbee Association

Thanks to all to have become QD Log Booster Club members so far! All contributions are appreciated! And remember, these deductions are tax deductible as we are 501.c.

### *“The Coast Guard Lady”*

Many of you may know or heard of Mrs. Lois Bouton, affectionately known as “The Coast Guard Lady.” Lois is a former CG Spar, serving in WWII as a YN3. For the past 30 or so years, Lois has taken up an unusual hobby of sending post card greetings to a number of Coast Guard units on various holidays as well as “Coast Guard Day.” It has been estimated that she often sends well over 1000 post cards and letters per year... although she’s not sure what’s the close to accurate number.

Well, Lois turns the ripe young age of 90 in September. For her birthday wish, she’d like to receive birthday wishes from the Coast Guard community. She’s not providing us with her actual birthdate. In fact, she plans on celebrating her 90th birthday throughout the month of September. Not a bad idea!



*The Coast Guard Lady writes one of her many letters to a Coast Guard unit.*



*(Above) Lois Bouton’s official 1944 SPAR portrait.*

So, if you’re interested in sending her birthday greetings during September — by all means do. Send them to:

Mrs. Lois Bouton  
“The Coast Guard Lady”  
1616 S. 16th Street  
Rogers, AR 72758

*(Provided by CGCVA member Vince Patton)*

### *USS America Reunion*

The aircraft carrier *USS America (CVA/CV-66)* will hold its seventh bi-annual reunion to reunite her crew June 22-26, 2010 at the Holiday Inn - Cincinnati Airport Conference Center in Covington, KY. The reunion is sponsored by the USS America Carrier Veterans Association. For more information, call (610) 585-2155 or [www.ussamerica.org](http://www.ussamerica.org).

### *To Whom It May Concern*

My name is **Jerome Fischer** and I am hoping to contact the individual who provided the “From a Boosters Club Fan” article that ran on page 9 in the Spring 2009 (Vol. 24,

No. 1) issue of the *Quarterdeck Log*. I served in the Coast Guard around the same time as you did and I also went to Manhattan Beach and Boston. Who knows... perhaps we were stationed together. Whether we did or didn’t it would be good to recall the ‘old days’ so I hope you will contact me. I look forward to hearing from you. My address is 2038 Finch Drive in Bensalem, PA 19010. My phone number is (215) 639-5728.

### *Remembering Jack Campbell*

I was sorry to hear about the passing of CGCVA Past National President Jack Campbell. Jack was on the “49” boat and I was on the “59” during the Normandy Invasion.

We used to moor alongside now and then and kick things around a bit. Of course that was many years ago but I'm sure that England was never the same after we left for home.

Tony D'Angelo

### "Pogey Bait"

I very much enjoyed the "Memoirs: Reserve Officers Course at USCG Academy in July 1942" feature story in the Spring 2009 *QD Log* issue by Ed Bartley. Of particular interest to me was Ed's query of the term "pogey bait". I'm sure his request for information as to its derivation has prompted many answers from our "old salt" readers.

During my WWII days, "pogey bait" was used loosely without being connected to our liberty activities; it referred to the candy we purchased from the Ship's Store for self-consumption. It was a term filtered down through the military over many years. I hope the following contribution from my personal research helps to shed light on the subject for Ed.

The Marines in China before WWII were issued candy (Baby Ruths, Tootsie Rolls, etc.) as part of their ration supplies. At the time, sugar and other assorted sweets were rare commodities in China and much in demand by the Chinese, so the troops found the candy useful for bartering in town. The Chinese word for prostitution, roughly translated, is "pogey". Thus, Marines being Marines, candy became "pogey bait".

My thanks to Ed for his fine story and for educating us

### Welcome New Members

A hearty "Welcome Aboard!" to the following new CGCVA and Auxiliary members. New member names are **boldfaced**, followed by sponsors' names (in parentheses):

#### JUNE 2009

**William G. Gaskell** (The Association); **Peter J. Pappas** (Bill Wells); **Roland L. Schreiter** (Arthur L. Wells); and **Perry L. Compton** (The Association).

#### JULY 2009

**Liz Scotti** (The Association); **John B. Long** (The Association); **William B. Costello** (The Association); and **Thomas W. Sims** (The Association).

*Some people try to turn back their life's odometers. Not me, I want people to know "why" I look this way. I've traveled a long, long way and some of the roads weren't paved.*

enlisted guys as to how many of our leaders became commissioned officers.

Thom Weber, LM

### Book Review

**On The Edge Of War**  
by **George C. Larsen**  
C-2007, Author House  
ISBN 978-1-4343-0779

Association member George Larsen has done something all veterans should do — write a memoir. Even if you do not have it published as Larsen did there, it will be a record for your descendants to know you as a person not just as a name. You will also leave a record of a time in history long gone from memory.

Larsen served in the Coast Guard during the war years 1939 to 1945. He was in the first group of recruits to take boot camp at Port Townsend, Washington. His chapters are chronological vignettes running ten pages, more or less, taking the reader from his enlistment to discharge with a synopsis of his life after the Coast Guard. The viewpoint is his, what he saw, what he felt.

Of interest to many will be what it was like being at Pearl Harbor when the Japanese attacked. Larsen was assigned to the radio station at Diamond Head. Among the tasks given to him upon reporting aboard was to study the Japanese code system and become proficient in it.

He writes about his duty on two cutters from another era, even then. One was the 190-foot buoy tender *Kukui*, commissioned in 1908. The other, the 125-foot submarine chaser *Tiger*, built in 1927 to catch smugglers during Prohibition. He transferred from the radio station to *Tiger*. Fitted with a deck gun and depth charges, the cutter pulled anti-submarine patrols and escort duty out of Pearl Harbor.

Other assignments included *Ariadne*, *Taney*, a mobile radio unit in San Francisco, and the newly commissioned Coast Guard-manned troop transport *General A. W. Greely*.

His stories of life at sea and on shore are entertaining.



There was the time when rushing to battle stations one night he saw a seaman trying to put on a pillow thinking it was a lifejacket. Another time he was tasked with copying messages being sent to German submarine wolf packs. When nearing Melbourne, Australia, he spotted a girl semaphoreing the ship with hand signals trying to arrange a date with anyone. Someone on the bridge must have responded because he read her reply, "Okay, I'll meet you at the dock."

Although the book is not a page turner it is a highly readable look into the life of one Coast Guardsman in World War II. Good job, George.

*(Editor's Note: Review by Paul C. Scotti, author of Coast Guard Action in Vietnam)*

### Salute to Jack Campbell

Several CGCVA members with spouses and friends met at Training Center Cape May, NJ, to celebrate Coast Guard Day and recognize Past National President Jack Campbell's efforts to obtain a prominent role for the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association's participation in recruit graduation ceremonies.

The beautiful perfect weather day, began with a 1000 meeting with CWO Veronica Bandowski who had planned

***The real art of conversation is not only to say the right thing at the right time, but also to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment.***

the itinerary, stayed with the group throughout the day and provided the beautiful photograph of "Jack" for the occasion. She escorted the group to reserve seats at the Ida Lewis Auditorium to enjoy two films. One showing the Coast Guard "at work", and the other providing an in-depth look at day-to-day boot camp life.

The public affairs officer then walked the group over to the parade field to front row, reserved seats, to enjoy the graduation ceremonies. Also, before the recruit graduation ceremonies got underway, the presence of the group was recognized over the public address system to the cheers and applause of the three hundred plus people in attendance.

Shortly before 1100, a Coast Guard Jayhawk helicopter began its fly-over of the parade field. It appeared at the westerly far end of the field just above the newly reconditioned and recently installed mast of the Cutter *Spencer* resplendent with all of its "bunting".

Graduation began with an 8-member precision recruit drill team doing amazing things with rifles. The command, "Band, sound off!" began the entrance parade. The recruit band followed by the graduation company in their tropical blue long uniforms and a color guard detail carrying our nation's "colors" and the flags of all five services followed by five companies of recruits in their operational dress uniforms (ODU's) bringing the total number of young men and women on the parade field to somewhere around six hundred.

Gary Sherman, our new National Secretary, presented the graduating company physical fitness award winner with a wrist watch bearing the CGCV logo on its face.

After the impressive pass-in-review, the non-graduating recruits returned to their barracks, the



*To celebrate Coast Guard Day, the memory of PNP Jack Campbell was honored during recruit graduation at USCG Training Center Cape May and several CGCVA members, along with spouses and friends, attended.*

graduates were awarded their certificates and parents and friends rushed out to embrace them.

Our group headed back to the auditorium for a private meeting with the Training Center Commanding Officer, CAPT Cari Thomas and the Command Master Chief, Bruce Bradley. An informal and informative exchange took place between members and those two very “squared away” and congenial professional sailors. The session ended on an interesting note when CAPT Thomas reported that three Coastguardsmen, after months of training will soon become full-fledged members of Navy Seal teams.

“Chow down” was enjoyed by all at the Galley, followed by a visit to the Exchange for a little shopping, prearranged by CWO Bandowski just for our group.

The day ended with a guided tour of the base which included an in-depth tour of the 210-foot Cutter *Vigorous*, moored near three 87-foot patrol boats and two new 47-foot motor life boats.

A final photograph was taken of the group before everyone headed home.

After a day of observing the highly motivated, well disciplined, physically fit, and very courteous recruits in various phases of training, one cannot but conclude the future of our Coast Guard and our nation as well is passing into very capable hands.

**Bill Donohue**

### ***Coast Guard Museum Plans on Hold***

Plans for a Coast Guard museum, which New London, CT city officials had long hoped would be the impetus for economic development at Fort Trumbull, are now on hold.

Citing lackluster fundraising figures and a stagnant economy, the National Coast Guard Museum Association and the Coast Guard Foundation voted unanimously July 23rd to postpone the \$65 million project. Jerry Ostermiller will step down as president of the Museum Association, a job he had held since January.

“This doesn’t mean we’ve given up on the project, it means we’ll put it on the shelf until the economic climate improves,” said Anne Brengle, foundation president. “The idea that this can be accomplished purely on private

***When you are dissatisfied and would like to go back to your youth, just think of Algebra.***

individuals’ dollars is just not a viable reality.”

City Councilor Michael Buscetto III said he wasn’t surprised by the news. Some people had questioned from the beginning the idea of putting a tax-exempt museum on a portion of land that was cleared of nearly all buildings to make it attractive to developers.

New London City Manager Martin H. Berliner said he believes the project will pick up again when the economy improves.

“It’s possible in six months or a year from now, they will start up again,” Berliner said. “I’m hopeful. I take them at their word they will move forward as the economy gets better.”

Mayor Wade Hyslop and City Councilor Margaret Curtin also said they are confident the project is delayed and not dead.

“I’m optimistic enough to believe it’s going to happen eventually,” Hyslop said.

“This is just a blip in the plans, and I expect, once the economy gets better, the committee will be back on track and then we will have one of the best museums, showcasing the United States Coast Guard,” Curtin said.

The Coast Guard is the only branch of the military that does not have a national museum to recount its history, service and missions. A small museum at the Coast Guard Academy displays some artifacts but space limitations prevent larger exhibits.

In late 2008, the Coast Guard Foundation announced plans for a roughly 60,000-square-foot museum on a parcel of land in Fort Trumbull off Nameaug Street Extension. A portion of that site was originally slated to be the site of a hotel and conference center when the Fort Trumbull redevelopment project began 10 years ago. The museum had originally been proposed on a different part of the Fort Trumbull peninsula that was not on the waterfront. The Coast Guard had looked at several locations in the city for the museum, including three parcels in Fort Trumbull, one at Riverside Park adjacent to the Coast Guard Academy and at the existing museum site on the academy campus.

**Kathleen Edgecomb and Jennifer Grogan**  
New London Day

***Aging: Eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.***

### *Combat Operations of the Revenue Cutter Hudson in the Spanish-American War of 1898*

At a little over three months, the Spanish-American War of 1898 proved a brief engagement as most wars go. However, it served as a reminder of the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service's ability to support the country's military in time of war. A predecessor service to today's Coast Guard, the Revenue Cutter Service fought proudly in both Atlantic and Pacific theaters of this conflict, also known to as the War with Spain. While numerous revenue cutters served honorably throughout the hostilities, few distinguished themselves as much as *Revenue Cutter Hudson*.

In March of 1898, after the United States declared war with Spain, an executive order placed *Hudson* and all other revenue cutters under the direction of the U.S. Navy. Shortly thereafter this small cutter received an armament of two six-pound rapid-fire guns and a Colt automatic "machine" gun. Designed to serve harbor patrol duties on the East Coast, the new ninety-five foot *Hudson* proved technologically advanced for its day with all steel plating, a triple-expansion reciprocating steam engine and a tugboat shaped hull.

Despite its special features, *Hudson's* crew set the cutter apart from the rest of the fleet. The crew of twenty included



*The Revenue Cutter Hudson steams towards the stricken USS Winslow in Cardenas Harbor.*

executive officer, First Lieutenant J.H. Scott, Third Lieutenant Ernest E. Mead, First Assistant Engineer N.E. Cutchin, Second Assistant Engineer T.G. Lewton, Ship's Steward Henry Savage and Ship's Cook Moses Jones. *Hudson's* captain, Lieutenant Frank H. Newcomb, had been in the service since 1873 and, while still a teenager, served as a Navy officer in the Civil War. Newcomb was the only crewmember that had seen combat action, but he would later write in an after-action report that each of his crewmembers performed "in a cool and efficient manner" under fire.



*Revenue Cutter Hudson at the Norfolk, VA Navy Yard on April 21, 1890.*

By May of 1898, *Hudson* had been attached to the naval squadron blockading Spanish shipping between Matanzas and Cardenas, Cuba. During the early days of that month, three Spanish gunboats had sortied from Cardenas to harass the American squadron. Due to the threat posed by these enemy vessels, squadron leader and Navy commander, John Merry, decided to destroy them while they were moored in Cardenas Harbor. On May 11th the torpedo boat *USS Winslow* spearheaded the attack with the slower *Hudson* following behind. As soon as *Winslow* entered the harbor, Spanish shore batteries and the gunboats opened fire, disabling the *Winslow* boat and killing or wounding many on board the torpedo boat.

During the battle, crew members of the *Hudson* served with distinction as they manned guns and worked on deck without any protection from enemy fire. Commanded by lieutenants Scott and Mead, the gun crews kept up a steady covering fire at close range as *Hudson* moved in to rescue the crippled *Winslow* and its surviving crew members. At the height of the action *Hudson* kept up a hot covering fire



*Revenue Cutter Hudson's captain, Lieutenant Frank H. Newcomb*

of 135 rounds in the span of twenty minutes. According to Mead, each one of the rounds “shook *Hudson* from stem to stern.” As *Hudson* drew nearer to *Winslow*, enemy shells landed all around, and one of them cut down a group of *Winslow's* crewmembers trying to receive the towline. After half-an-hour under constant fire, the crew of the *Hudson* managed to secure a line to *Winslow* and tow the torpedo boat beyond the range of Spanish guns. The day's action had resulted in the destruction of two Spanish gunboats, but it cost the lives of several on board the *Winslow*, including the only naval officer lost during the War. *Hudson* had been spared serious damage and departed in the evening for Key West carrying dispatches and *Winslow's*

dead and wounded.

Many men had served with honor that day at Cardenas. Congress awarded three *Winslow* crewmembers the Medal of Honor. On special recommendation by President McKinley, Congress recognized *Hudson's* crew with specially minted medals for their valor. A joint resolution provided Lt. Newcomb with the War's only gold medal



***First you forget names, and then you forget faces. Then you forget to pull up your zipper. It's even worse when you forget to pull it down.***

awarded by Congress and his officers were awarded silver medals. Congress awarded bronze medals to the enlisted crewmembers, including Henry Savage and Moses Jones, who fed ammunition to their respective six-pound gun batteries. This proved the first time in Coast Guard history that African-Americans received medals for heroism in combat operations.

The crew of the *Hudson* performed honorably in the face of intense enemy fire. In a letter written to the Treasury Department a month after the enemy action at Cardenas, Newcomb reported that "Each and every member of the crew... did his whole duty cheerfully and without the least hesitation." The honor and discipline demonstrated by *Hudson's* officers and enlisted men allowed the crew to work as a team to fulfill the vessel's mission in spite of the odds against their success.

**William H. Thiesen, Ph.D.**  
**USCG Atlantic Area Historian**

### **D-Day 65 Years Later**

As a D-Day veteran (I served as CMM of CG-43 of Rescue Flotilla 1), I attended a 3-day affair for the 65th Anniversary of the Normandy Invasion at the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, VA, June 4-6, 2009. Two days were held at Liberty University in Lynchburg, VA, during which a seminar on WWII Operation Overlord was an important historical part of the affair. Read was a guest speaker (as a WWII Coast Guard veteran) and took part in relaying information about the Coast Guard's activities at Normandy and around the world during WWII.

The final official portion of the ceremonies took place June 6th at the D-Day Memorial in Bedford with guest speakers, recognition of D-Day vets present, placing of wreaths to honor those no longer with us, along with an evening 'Illumination' of several thousand candles to honor the memory of those who gave their lives to take the war to Germany at the Normandy Invasion.

Bedford, VA was picked as the site of the National D-Day Memorial since it lost the most men at Omaha Beach on a per capita basis. More than 4,000 D-Day veterans attended this year's services but their numbers

have rapidly dwindled as the 65 years since 6/6/1944 take their toll.

**Jack Read (cmomm44@verizon.net)**

### **Greenland Patrol Honored**

On Feb. 3, 1943, a German U-boat torpedoed the U.S. Army transport ship *USS Dorchester* off the coast of Greenland, and the Coast Guard cutter *Comanche* was ordered to the scene.

Charles Walter David Jr. was one of the few *Comanche* crew members who volunteered to dive overboard to help rescue the nearly 100 survivors. In the process, he saved the cutter's executive officer, who also dived in but could not pull himself out.

David died a few days later from pneumonia he contracted that day. CDR Scott Rogerson, commanding officer of the International Ice Patrol, recounted David's heroic acts June 9th as the unit, the Coast Guard Academy and the Coast Guard Foundation paid tribute to all who served in the Greenland Patrol during World War II.

"This ceremony and wreath-laying is the least we can do to honor and respect those who were so devoted to keeping Greenland out of enemy hands during World War II," Rogerson said during the brief ceremony, held at the academy.

Greenland, then a Danish colony, took on significant strategic value after Nazi Germany began its occupation of Denmark in 1940. Greenland was a source of raw materials to make aluminum for airplanes, and it could be used as a fueling point for trans-Atlantic crossings.

The Ice Patrol, formed after the sinking of the *RMS Titanic*, at that time had almost three decades of experience operating in the North Atlantic, so the cutters and the Coast Guardsmen of the pre-war Ice Patrol, Rogerson said, "formed the nucleus of the forces that would later defend this largely ice-covered, isolated island in the North Atlantic."

RADM J. Scott Burhoe, academy superintendent, said ceremonies like these are an opportunity to connect cadets like Chamberlain with the "rich heritage that they'll have an opportunity to be a part of after they graduate."

**Jennifer Grogan, New London Day**

***Long ago when men cursed and beat the ground with sticks, it was called witchcraft. Today, it's called golf.***

### Manhattan Beach Boot Camp

An article in the previous issue of the *Quarterdeck Log* reminded me of my first weeks in the Coast Guard.

Recruit training at Manhattan Beach in Brooklyn was quite an experience. When a group of us left Chicago enroute to Brooklyn we were advised to take along only the clothes on our backs plus toilet articles and maybe an extra pair of socks. All else would be furnished — so we were told. When we arrived at Manhattan Beach, we were issued a pair of "putties", a *Blue Jackets Manual* and a watch cap. For most of the first week, we marched, paraded and lined up for chow (usually in the rain) in the same clothes we arrived in. It snowed the first night we were there and rained most of the first week. Ah yes, there was much more fun to be had before we were provided with a full sea bag..

CDR Ed Coleman, USCG (Ret.)

### CGC Rockaway and the Cuban Blocade

The crisis began in the early fall of 1962. The cutter *Rockaway* got orders to proceed south out of New York. We arrived on scene a few days later. The civilian world did not yet know.

On the evening of 22 October 1962, U.S. President John F. Kennedy went on the air to announce the discovery of missiles in Cuba. Additionally, loaded Russian ships were headed for Cuba. Hence, he announced a maritime blockade to prevent further shipments of missiles and military equipment from arriving in that country. Kennedy also demanded that Khrushchev dismantle and remove all missiles from Cuba.

The *Rockaway* was in place, in the blockade, along with numerous other ships. The American Navy, including the U.S. Coast Guard, in place across the Russians path creating the Cuban blockade the Cuban Missile Crisis. Days passed. The Russian ships came closer to the quarantine line. The ships stopped.

Would the Russian ships try to break the line or would they back off? For six terrifying days, the two superpowers

considered their options until on 28 October Khrushchev agreed to Kennedy's demands. The world had teetered on the brink of war, possibly nuclear war. The Russians had blinked while we stood firm.

That's the short story of the Cuban Missile Crisis but my story is more personal. I was an engineman stationed aboard the *Coast Guard Cutter Rockaway (WAVP 377)*. My billet included operating the ship's lifeboat at Special Sea Detail and other shipboard emergencies.

Officially, this was not a declared conflict/war but for me this came ultra close to a combat mission. Here's why:

Shortly after noon I got a call to meet on the mess deck. An ensign had assembled the group consisting of all the *Rockaway's* gunners mates, a boatswain's mate, the ensign and myself. He advised that we were the landing party should an invasion need to take place. There was silence from all assembled.



*USCGC Rockaway*

We knew some of what was happening — the blockade. I had gone up on deck, after a four hour watch as a throttleman in engineroom B. You could see the line of American ships spaced a few miles apart on either side of us, all the way to the horizon and beyond.

The ensign, after his silencing announcement, proceeded to provide details of what was expected of us — the landing

party — should we need to invade:

First, he told us, that the ship's five inch guns would soften up the beach. Next, we will launch the lifeboat — with us as the landing party — the ensign will lead us. We will have M-1 rifles and other small arms and plenty of ammunition. Other details were provided.

Lastly, he asked if there were any questions. I raised my hand. I looked around and said, "Sir, if all of the gunners mates are in the landing party, Who will operate the five inch gun? He paused and then said, "I'll have to get back to you." Now, nearly fifty years later, I'm still waiting for that answer! And luckily we never had to invade Cuba — maybe the failed Bay of Pigs fiasco a few months earlier was a lesson learned. For sure, the Russians backing off from our blockade ended the crisis.

My story is not a negative about the Coast Guard, a little funny, yes. It's more of a quirk in planning; a note of humor in an otherwise tense situation. I still laugh when I remember the look on that ensign's face as he tried to answer my question. Personally, I'm glad I never had to participate in any landing. The Guard has a long history of significant combat participation.

Coast Guardsmen and their forefathers have fought in every conflict since the Constitution became the law of the land. Coast Guardsmen operated the landing craft during invasions of WWII. On the morning of Sept. 27, 1942, Signalman First Class Douglas A. Munro organized a rescue mission that saved 500 Marines who were pinned down on the Guadalcanal beach to become the first and only member of the U.S. Coast Guard to receive the Medal of Honor. In his honor, the Coast Guard Cutter Munro was commissioned Sept., 7 1971. There is a statue of Munro at the Coast Guard Training Center in Cape May, NJ, as well. Coast Guard-manned ships sank at least 11 enemy submarines during WWII. During the Korean War (1950-53), the Coast Guard performed a variety of tasks. The Coast Guard was asked to participate in the Vietnam War by the Army, Navy, and Air Force and performed a variety of duties. At the outset of the military buildup in the mid-1960s, the Navy lacked shallow water craft needed for inshore operations. To help fill this need, the Coast Guard sent 26 82-foot cutters to Vietnam.

Coast Guardsmen have also participated in the country's most recent conflicts. Three were assigned to U.S. forces in Operation Just Cause, the liberation of Panama in 1989. With the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, the Coast Guard was again called to perform military duties on a large scale.

Currently, many are serving in Iraq patrolling the Straits of Hormuz. Last year, CWO Jack Brown received the Bronze Star Medal for his life-saving efforts, while wounded, during a rocket attack on the Iraqi embassy.

Our distinguished combat service has and will no doubt continue. I'm proud to be a Coastie.

Stephen Van Rensselaer

*(Editor's Note: Stephen Van Rensselaer served on active duty in the U.S. Coast Guard from September 1960 until September 1964. Initial duty was at Field Testing and Development, Curtis Bay, MD. He served aboard the cutter Rockaway from April 1962 until September 1963 as an EM3 and EM2. He transferred to Group New York aboard a 65 footer. In August of 1964 watched as the 82 footer and crew from Group New York steamed up the Hudson River and was lifted aboard a freighter to be carried to Vietnam.)*

### **CGC Bedloe Remembered**

I really enjoyed the article by Mr. Bartley and in particular of the *CGC Bedloe*.

I was in the Academy for the same program that he discussed except for a few differences. When I was there the time frame was from VE Day until VJ Day and I was a Radio Technician 1/c with more than a year and a half of sea duty under my belt. I spent almost a year at the Coast Guard School in Groton, CT, studying radio, sonar and radar engineering and maintenance. I then spent time on board the *USS Manhasset* on North Atlantic Weather Patrol and then more than a year and a half on the *CGC Legare* working out of Port Au Prince, Haiti.

Before enlisting in the Coast Guard I was a fireman on the railroad. The locomotives in those days were steam powered so I had some knowledge of steam propulsion and the Coast Guard had trained me well in electronics so they put me in Engineering School at the Academy. If the war had lasted a few more weeks I was to go to a Patrol Frigate in the Pacific as Assistant Engineering Officer.

One night several years ago Earl Winter who was a radioman on the *Legare* was visiting us here in St. Augustine and we were swapping sea stories and sipping a

***Did you ever notice: The Roman Numerals for forty are "XL."***

little Haitian rum. Earl asked me if I remembered the time that he and two other people got washed off the *Legare* by one wave and back on by the next one. He said that they were walking up the deck and somebody came off the bridge and laughed at them. He said that if he could figure out who that was he would look them up and kill them. I must have smiled because all at once he figured that I was the guilty party. They looked like drowned rats to me and I did not know that they had been overboard. Obviously he didn't kill me and we are still the best of friends.

Now is the time to tell you about that time and connection with the *Bedloe*. The *Jackson* and the *Bedloe* were lost in a storm on 14 Sept. 1944 along with the Destroyer *Warrington* and a lightship. Between the *Jackson* and *Bedloe*, 44 men were lost and the destroyer lost 248 while the lightship lost all hands. Earl and I always figured that we were in the same storm.

My wife and I have been onboard today's *Legare* on three occasions. It was a real thrill to walk aboard that ship.

Semper Paratus!

**Herbert E. Conkey LM**

### **Congratulations Graduates**

Each week at graduation ceremonies at USCG Training Center Cape May, N.J., the CGCVA sponsors the Physical Fitness Award to a graduating recruit. A CGCVA watch and certificate are presented, often by an attending CGCVA member. No listing was included in the Spring 2009 *Quarterdeck Log* since that issue included a lengthy wrap-up of the Convention in Reno. As a result, the following listing of Physical Fitness Award recipients is more extensive than usual.

**Martin J. Jetchev** (V-180) of San Antonio, TX, reports to *CGC Razorbill*, Gulfport, MS.

**Aubree M. Merritt** (W-180) of Sacramento, CA, reports to USCG Station Rio Vista, CA.

**Karen E. Scott** (X-180) of Newark, NJ, reports to USCG Training Center Cape May, NJ.

**Joseph T. Winters** (Y-180) of Oxnard, CA, reports to *CGC Seneca*, Boston, MA.

**Erik J. Coleman** (Z-180) of Albuquerque, NM, reports to *CGC Kukui*, Honolulu, HI.

**Michael R. Vicchiariello** (A-181) of Brooklyn, NY, reports to USCG Station Stillpond, Baltimore, MD.

**Paul H. Phan** (B-181) of St. Petersburg, FL, reports to *CGC Munro*, Kodiak, AK.

**Landonywon K. Tuck** (D-181) of Montgomery, AL,

reports to *CGC Vigilant*, Patrick AFB, FL.

**Caitlin M. Penny** (E-181) of Jacksonville, FL, reports to USCG Air Station Atlantic City, NJ.

**Michael T. Thompson** (F-181) of San Diego, CA, reports to *CGC Polar Sea*, Seattle, WA.

**Anthony Aguilar** (G-181) of Sacramento, CA, reports to *CGC Midgett*, Seattle, WA.

**Sean Richmond** (H-181) of Oklahoma City, OK, reports to USCG Station Fort Lauderdale, FL.

**Eileen Gluch** (I-181) of Nashville, TN, reports to USCG Station Pensacola, FL.

**Gianfranco D. Palomba** (J-181) of Denver, CO, reports to Special Missions Training Center, Camp Lejeune, NC.

**Abel N. Enriquez** (K-181) of Lakewood, CA, reports to *CGC Henry Blake*, Everett, WA.

**Giacomo N. Terrizzi** (M-181) of Philadelphia, PA, reports to *CGC Diligence*, Wilmington, NC.

**Nick D. Nugent** (N-181) of Sacramento, CA, reports to SILC-BSB-BSU, Miami, FL.

**Justin T. Nicholson** (Q-181) of Miami, FL, reports to *CGC Chincoteague*, San Juan, PR.

**SA Michael A. Gattrell** (R-181) of San Diego, CA, reports to *CGC Aspen*, San Francisco, CA.

**SN Jeffrey Smith** (S-181) of Greensboro, NC, reports to *CGC Escanaba*, Boston, MA.

**SN Rachel A. Forest** (U-181) of Hollywood, FL, reports to TISCOM, Alexandria, VA.

**SN Leigh R. Vanlear** (V-181) of Miami, FL, reports to USCG Recruiting Office Miami, FL.

**SA Brian A. Merseal** (W-181) of Spokane, WA, reports to MK "A" School, Yorktown, VA.

**SA Jonathan L. Shetler** (X-181) of Vancouver, WA, reports to EM "A" School, Yorktown, VA.

**SA Ameer O. Lambert-Smith** (Y-181) of Charlotte, NC, reports to *CGC Polar Sea*, Seattle, WA.

*(Editor's Note: The CGCVA-sponsored Physical Fitness Award will soon be renamed to honor CGCVA Past National President Jack Campbell who started the watch & certificate program at Cape May several years ago.)*

***The older you get, the tougher it is to lose weight, because by then your body and your fat have gotten to be really good friends.***



# CGCVA Members Honored at CG Festival

continued from page 1

Honor Guard. We had opportunities to visit the *Mackinaw (WLBB-30)* and the buoy tender *Bristol Bay*. Bill and Larry got a chance to go aboard Port Security Unit 309's 25-foot Boston Whaler. It was good to see that .50 cal. and M60 are still the weapons of choice. We spoke with LTJG Holmes and CPO Leonard and learned that PSU 309 is about to be redeployed to Bahrain. They have been deployed there multiple times before. We tried hard to do some serious recruiting and hope to hear from those folks soon. I was surprised at how much more difficult getting over the gunwales has become. I wonder if it is deeper boats or tired bones.

We attended the memorial service that afternoon. As always, it made us proud, sad and humbled. The memorial service ended with two Coast Guard helicopters doing a fly-over.

We had a chance to learn about the Atlantic Strike Team and to again do some recruiting. We found a member who was behind in his dues and wanted to catch up. The early evening began with a USO show from New York. Special honors to the SPARS. We finished the evening at the home



*Bill Ross and Larry Villarreal mug it up while riding the Grand Haven trolley shuttle.*

of Bill and Ann Boonstra who were, as always, wonderful hosts and terrific supporters of the Coast Guard.

Saturday began with a breakfast for those participating in the parade. We found at least one more member who wanted to update his dues. The girls sat with the Boonstras at the parade. The parade had 160 units participating in the

festivities including the Coast Guard Fife and Drum Band and the SPARS. The SPARS had the option of riding or walking and most of them chose to walk. What an inspiring group of people they are.

Larry and I rode in convertibles and a young girl ran up to the car I was in and gave me a card that she had made in her Sunday school, thanking us and honoring the military effort of all the Services. Very touching as she must have been only 5- or 6-years old.

After the parade, and back at the waterfront, we saw the Silent

*A very proud Rose Ross shows off her six newly adopted sons. Just wait 'till she gets their weekly food bill... ouch!*



## Notices & Association News

Drill Team perform again and toured the area and its attractions; a carnival, midway and craft fair. There was a pre-fireworks opportunity to meet and greet. Coast Guard Commandant ADM Thad Allen and RADM Steven Day lent some weight to our attempts to recruit VADM Robert Papp to the CGCVA. I think it may have worked. The Marlins entertained us with music from the last four or five decades. The festival ended with a fireworks extravaganza that is worth the trip.

The official party and parade participants were invited to an afterglow party where we felt the Coast Guard family atmosphere at its best. Mike Smith did a wonderful job of getting us organized for the parade and festivities. His staff is a very

committed group of good people. Mary Eagin, Festival Hostess, has to be the eighth wonder of the world. Special thanks to her from all of us.

Since Grand Haven is a contender for the CGCVA 2013 reunion, it would be encouraging to see an increase of our membership represented there.

One of the days, we took the shuttle downtown. David Helvarg was also riding along. He had just finished writing the book “Rescue



*(Soon to be CGCVA Member) VADM Robert Papp and family in the Coast Guard Festival Parade.*



*Bill Ross and RDML Steven Day*

Warriors: The U.S. Coast Guard, America's Forgotten Heroes”. I bought a copy of the book and had to finish it once I started it. It is an excellent big picture view of what is going on in the Coast Guard now and perhaps a vision of the future. Running in to him several times at the festival provided us lots of opportunities to talk back and forth and understand the scope of his access to the service itself. He seems to be real sharp and is a quite good writer.

**LM Bill Ross**  
CGCVA Treasurer



*Bill Ross chats with SPAR Charlotte Bart (left) and her daughter prior to the parade.*



*Larry and Bill try to “blend in” with the youthful USCG Ceremonial Honor Guard. Nice try guys!*

## The Man Nobody Wanted... ...Well, It Seemed Like It!

Story and drawings by new CGCVA member James L. Brown

When I graduated from the radioman school in Atlantic City, NJ on May 6, 1944, I had no idea of the strange events awaiting me! I was granted leave and told to report back to the CGDO headquarters in the 4th Naval District, Philadelphia, PA. This was a sort of “make work until we decide what to do with you” assignment that did not last long. Too bad, it was good duty! One of my classmates was also there and we were on “rations and quarters” since

there was no place to locate the two of us who were there. They had arranged for living in a renovated mansion downtown that was a temporary home to personnel from all service branches. They gave us meal money and all we had to do was report every day to the radio rooms of the HQ. Since they were using teletype, not code, our duty was to rip off the encoded messages and pass

them to the code officer. I did this one day and she came out with an amused smile, “that was your orders”. So, in June we were “drafted” by the Navy. Since the Coast Guard was, at that time, a part of the Navy, this was their right. They sent us to the Anti-Submarine training station on an island located in Casco Bay, ME, just off shore from Portland. There were many types of anti-submarine warfare training conducted at this base, and I, along with 30 other Coast Guard personnel, also Radiomen, were to train in High Frequency Direction Finder (hereafter abbreviated as HF/DF, pronounced “Huff Duff”) procedures. The objective here was pretty clear — assist in locating German submarines in the Atlantic Ocean so that ships could drop depth charges on them and put them out of action. While German submarines, and ours also,

could receive radio messages underwater they had to surface in order to transmit. There were high-powered shore stations in Europe and once they had a convoy sighting report from a German U-boat, they would transmit this to others in the area so that the famed “wolf packs” could assemble and head for the target. These messages were contained in the usual continuous stream of transmissions very much like our shore stations. Groups of five

characters meaning nothing, but every now and then were interrupted by some pertinent information.

The German Morse Code has eight letters more than ours, to cover the umlaut letters in German, which we learned. Our job would be to monitor the frequencies used by the submarines and when a transmission was made,



*Leaving for Hawaii*

we would use the HF/DF equipment to take a bearing on the transmitter. The equipment we would use was to be located on Destroyer Escorts or Patrol Frigates, and hopefully there would be enough in the area to provide more than one bearing. These would intersect at a certain point, giving a pretty accurate position of the submarine, which could then be intercepted by our ships in the area and the transmissions ended forever. We trained on the operation of the equipment and on learning the German Morse Code, accomplished by hours of copying the shore station messages. Our intelligence had all of the German frequencies and was aware of when they shifted from one to another, so we were assured to have a lot practice.

When this school ended in July our group was sent to the infamous Norfolk, VA Naval Base. Here we waited for

assignment to various ships while aiding (not by choice) the citizens of Norfolk in their waste paper drive pickup and other "civic" duties.

While we were performing these highly useful tasks, some radio engineer at the FCC put the finishing touches on his new HF/DF equipment. Someone had come to the startling realization that if you took bearings on submarines,

you could also take bearings on aircraft. For this the engineer was given a commission in the Coast Guard and tasked with organizing a training program to provide this operation in the Pacific Ocean, where it was rather difficult for pilots to find the rather small atolls that were air bases.

Where would they base this school? In Atlantic City where they had radioman training of course. And where, in order to get it up and operational, would they find the students? How about among Coast Guard radiomen who had DF training and were just sitting around Norfolk. So

the Navy released us and back we went to Atlantic City. The equipment was certainly different and it supposedly did better on tracking aircraft signals. It was nice to be back in friendly Atlantic City, especially in the summer. The quarters were in a hotel, about one block from the boardwalk with the school in the former Elks Club. This was also true of the basic radio training which was very nicely set up. Unfortunately it did not take long to have us qualified and ready for assignment. We were to establish HF/DF stations on various Pacific islands, paving the way for others to follow. From Atlantic City we started a long train ride to San Francisco. The main shipping out point for most Pacific bound personnel was the Naval Base at Treasure Island, in San Francisco Bay. Our group consisted of thirty radiomen of various ratings, one Chief and one Warrant Officer to keep us



*Playing checkers on board the Robin Wently*

honest. The railroad system in those days, for troop transport, was far from luxury. Add to this that somewhere outside of Chicago the engine and a few cars managed to get off the tracks, including some cars that we were occupying. The railroad people did manage to get a new engine to the site and also uncoupled the most damaged cars, so our westward journey could carry on. We were given seats in the overcrowded club car and, with some clatter and swaying caused by the deformation of the wheels on most of the operational cars, made it into

Chicago. Rather than leave us to enjoy what everyone said was a real "serviceman's town", we were loaded onto another rolling stock relic and continued to San Francisco. There we were given the usual overseas procedures and assigned to "ready to go" barracks. One of the great sorrows of my young life at that time happened, when Bob Hope came to Treasure Island to do a show for the troops. We could not go. We were quarantined due to our status and confined behind barbed wire fences. We could stand outside and listen, but I am fairly certain than the show

looked much better than it sounded.

The day finally came when we were rounded up and marched to the boarding area for our trip to Hawaii! If I thought our train was old, I was soon relegating it to second place. This trip was to be on a Merchant Marine troop ship named the "Robin Wently" (I think it had already "went" too far). The best thing was that after we boarded, along with all the other Hawaii-bound personnel, Lionel Hampton came on board, set up on one of the decks and we were all treated to a fine concert. But, all too soon, he packed up, the ship groaned its way out of the island and we were on our way.



*Nist's Barber Shop at Hickam Field, Honolulu. RM2/c Donald Nist giving RM1/c Mike Kallo a haircut.*

But not to Hawaii, not yet. We sailed along the coast until we arrived at Port Hueneme. There a battalion of Sea Bees boarded to join in our search for the land of Aloha. This ship had a few Navy personnel. One was a signalman and I think there were armed guards to repel any boarders plus a few Marines to keep discipline and guard the captain. I do not know who was in charge of what on the ship but we were soon assigned to various tasks to keep us out of trouble. Someone saw me sketching in my note book and reported it to the Captain who quickly gave me the job of drawing everything they needed. Many involved the layout of the ship and who should go where under whatever circumstances were to prevail. Pretty neat duty.

It beat all the other jobs, which I have forgotten. Get a good assignment and forget about all the rest, I know, I know...

The weather was nice. We bounced and bucked our way through the waves. The food was really quite good and life aboard the "Robin Wently" was not too bad but you know that if I have told you all of this, there must be something about to happen. It did. About two days out, the ship's engines decided to take a well-earned vacation. So, there was the good ship "Robin Wently" floating aimlessly in the vast Pacific. Their crew did manage to get enough auxiliary power to start work on the engines while we all lounged around on the upper deck. The Pacific was not so vast after all because we were suddenly aware of two Navy destroyers on the horizon. They cautiously approached us, probably wondering if we might be a Japanese booby trap. Then we saw flashing lights in the pattern of dashes and dots — Morse Code. The Navy signalman on board was pretty confused by this and tried running up signal flags, which I doubt he understood either. The two ships came closer and closer in circular patterns, always keeping us in the middle, with their fire power trained on our ship. The frustrated Captain came up to our group and barked, "You guys are radiomen, right? They teach you that code don't they? Can



*Waking the Relief on Tarawa.*

anyone here read that?" or words to that effect. We had all gone through the light procedures, but I fear most of us had forgotten it as soon as we could. However, one Arthur Victor Hackett, an old timer, confessed he thought he could, and off he went to the bridge where the lights were kept. It seems to have worked. Our situation was explained and they asked if we needed help. The Captain declined (I do not know why) and the destroyers sailed away. The mechanics finally managed to get one engine operative and we proceeded toward Hawaii on that power. I suppose they continued to work on the other engine but it never did come back on line. We had no fans, no power for the galley, very little lighting — everything went to keep "Robin" moving. We took to sleeping on the decks and consuming cold food.

Finally we saw our destination, and were greeted by a flight of Army P-38s as we rounded Diamond Head. What a welcome sight. Now all would be according to plan! The problem was there was no plan. Our Warrant Officer reported to the CGDO. This is what I gathered from the trickle down of information: They had never heard of us, had no equipment for us to use, and no place to put us. I must assume there were messages back and forth between Honolulu and Washington, but no resolution. We were then turned over to the Office of Admiral Nimitz, CINCPAC.



*Watchstanders enjoy midnight chow at AT Command area (Air Transporta) at Tarawa.*

Someone in that office determined that all HF/DF in the Pacific was being done by the Army Airways Communications Service so the orders came down: “Place those men on detached service and turn them over to the Air Corps”. Puzzled, amazed, and a bit apprehensive, we proceeded to the Mokulea Air Base on the north shore of Oahu, issued Army uniforms and weapons, and were sent to DF school. It seems that all the work that FCC engineer did was in vain. The AACS was using the same DF equipment as the Navy, except the antenna system was spread out over a greater distance. So, our training period was not very long — we were split into groups and shipped out to the Army Air Corps facilities. Are you beginning to understand “The Nobody Wanted” title? We really felt that way! I never did hear what happened to the HF/DF school in Atlantic City or the actual demise of the program but I am sure happened and fast.

I, with three others, was assigned to the AACS station at Kapaa, Kauai. Actually it was in the middle of a cane field near Kapaa. There were already AACS personnel there, some of those we relieved. An Air Corps sergeant was in charge and the station was staffed by personnel from both services. Still, the station carried on well and there was no difficulty in the joint operation. There were not too many aircraft in distress trying to locate Hawaii so we were not terribly

busy.

We lived in a house near the DF “shack”. We did our own cooking, had a truck to go into town (such as it was), and all in all it was a pretty good deal. After three months, two of us received orders to report to Hickam Field for reassignment.

We arrived at Hickam and found that we were being sent to Kwajalein for orders. This trip was not by troop transport, but by a C-54 aircraft — a lot faster!

At Kwajalein we joined four others from the Coast Guard contingent, including the previously mentioned Arthur Victor Hackett. Although several months had passed since the invasion, the island was still pretty much of a mess and still classified as a combat area. The invasion had destroyed most of the Japanese buildings and many of the palm

trees. The SeaBees were faced with the task of renovating the island and were doing it quite well, but living conditions were still rather primitive. At one point some Japanese aircraft were reported inbound and we were hurried into what passed for bomb shelter areas. It seems that the Japanese were intercepted and never did get very close us.

Our assignment: Install and operate an HF/DF station just as we were trained to do, many months before. Only this time it was to be an AACS station and on Betio Island in the Tarawa atoll, part of the Gilbert Islands. The extremely bloody invasion had been in late November of



*Movie theater at Tarawa.*

## Feature Articles

1943 but the island was still in the recovery phase. Roads and buildings (mostly tents and thatched roof huts) were in place but on the shores were leftover wrecked and battered equipment from that invasion, rusting away in the surges of the Pacific tides.

Hackett was in his element. He was a long time service man, having been in the Army (where he did some boxing for an Army team), then joined the Coast Guard where he

had been up and down the promotion/busted scale. He knew what was needed and how to get it, with a minimum of protocol and paperwork. The AACS had provided a tent with one of those thatched roofs for our station, Hackett obtained some plywood for a floor (to be oiled by the mid watch each night with left over diesel fluid), a hot plate, extra chairs and other little refinements to make it one of the show places of the island. The AACS had a large communications center and from their officer pool they designated a young 2nd Lt. to be in charge of the DF station. I do believe he was one of those “thirty day wonder” officers and this was his first assignment. Hackett soon reached a working agreement with him, “You handle the paperwork and things like that. I’ll handle the operations and we’ll have one of the best stations in the Pacific”. He was right — we had a very smooth operation and unlike Hawaii, there were a lot of pilots who had trouble telling one island from another. There were few navigation aids and they were only turned on when the aircraft was close to the base and enroute communications were kept to an absolute minimum. Consequently, we took a lot of bearings. Tarawa operated as one station in a network that covered a lot of the Central Pacific, providing for several crossing bearings which in turn provided a pretty accurate location of the plane needing help (or “reassurance”). The net control was on Kwajalein and other stations were on Guadalcanal, Canton and one other that I seem to have forgotten. I was there for around five months in which time the island continued to improve.

There had been a great many Micronesian people on the

island working for the British. They departed prior to the Japanese occupation and now many of the men had come back and lived in a compound, working for the U. S. in various ways. For obvious reasons, the women continued living in one of the adjacent islands of the atoll.

One other interesting story about Tarawa. Not known to many people but there was an attempt by some Japanese troops to retake the island, or at least part of it. The U. S.



*Squadron barracks at Kwajalein in March 1945.*

policy was to seize the islands that could be used as air bases as they pushed westward toward Japan. They bypassed other islands that were occupied by the Japanese but were of no value in the main objective. The enemy forces on those islands were left to simply wither away. They could not be supplied or helped in any way by the Japanese navy and so they were left to live off the land — not too successful on these small chunks of coral. From time to time small boats would visit the islands with messages in Japanese that were broadcast over a bull horn inviting them to surrender and be fed and cared for. Of course, any soldier who would have tried to go out to surrender would not be allowed live very long by the others who had different ideas. After some time in those conditions the soldiers were not thinking too clearly and one night some of them had the bright idea of staging a raid on the nearest American base, which just happened to be Tarawa. I do not think they really believed they could conquer the Americans, but they could round up food and

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maybe some clothing, soap, or toilet paper — anything to improve life on their by-passed island. So, they built a raft from whatever wood they could find and under the cover of darkness set sail. I was on the evening watch in the DF station when Hackett drove up in a jeep with my helmet, a

carbine and some demolition charges in case we had to destroy the equipment. It seemed that somehow the island command had discovered the raft drifting along in the currents of the Pacific. None of the battle equipment was needed — the intrepid rafters were not familiar with navigation and had little control of their transportation. The currents carried them well off course and so they were allowed to proceed on their way to whatever fate awaited them. The next morning, just to give a warning to those on the by-passed islands, the Navy sent several planes to drop a few bombs on each of the islands, along with an invitation to join us in a less belligerent fashion. But “bushido,” the code of the warrior prevailed and no one volunteered for our hospitality.

Life on Tarawa was not always that exciting. We stood our watch, ate in a community mess hall that occasionally ran out of powdered eggs, powdered milk and Spam so we were forced to live on “K rations” for a few days.

But I have one more story of interest (I think). There were quite a few dogs on the island, left over from the British days. I had mentioned a few times that I would like a dog. Someone came to me and told me of a puppy in the Micronesian compound that might be available. I went

down intending to buy but the natives that had the puppy would not consider money — they wanted to barter. What they really wanted was a trench knife. I happened to have one, issued by the Army when we were given combat gear in Hawaii. I finally decided to take my chances on that far

off day when I would have to settle up on return and gave them my knife. The pup was very round and fat from eating far too much rice. Yes, they were fattening him up to be the center selection at a dinner party. I know we have to consider different standards and all, but I had to save him from that fate and made the deal. I took him back, fed him nothing but milk (it was canned milk, confiscated from somewhere). He finally cleaned himself out and I certainly had a good deal. I named him Mickey and he grew into a wonderful pet, followed me everywhere, was well-trained and very intelligent. However, he did get me into one



sticky situation, also a break from the everyday life on the island.

Now comes the real reason for including the story of Mickey. Most USO entertainment shows bypassed us for other areas for one reason or another, but one big show was finally coming our way. The MC and star was Jack Carson, an actor featured in many movies, usually as the comic pal of the star. With him would be GIRLS headed by Chili Williams, a minor actress but a pin-up favorite. Dave Morris, in our group, was a great movie fan and he grew very excited as the big day drew near. I think I have mentioned that our wash bowl was a combat helmet in a



## Feature Articles

wood frame and Dave was set to wear his dress (Army) uniform and shave to be in the front row. For a nice close shave, he took a helmet, filled it with water, and put it out to warm in the sun. Unfortunately, Mickey, seeing the helmet, decided it was there for him to drink, and did so. Needless to say David Allan Morris was a little upset! I am glad to report that both man and dog emerged unscathed from his anger. He still had time to put out another helmet and Mickey was kept away from this one. After his big shave Dave went down early, got a good seat and in a magnificent gesture, saved seats for all of his tent mates. It was truly a great show, and I was still alive to see it.

After six months of duty on Tarawa, I was transferred to Majuro in the Marshall Islands.

The station was a joint operation and I found two other members of our "lost" band of Coast Guard DFers there. Majuro had been used as an R&R island for the Japanese troops in the Pacific and so it was not really fortified. I gathered that the invasion forces just came up in landing craft and walked ashore. In any event, the palm trees and other foliage were untouched and it was a typical Pacific island as I'd seen in movies and travel books. Great sunsets, good swimming and sun bathing, and a pretty easy life for all U.S. personnel there. After the invasion, the is-

land was converted into a prison camp for captured prisoners and there were quite a few. Not all Japanese troops had carried on the fight until dead as prescribed by the Emperor. They were held in separate camps, the Japanese officers slept (as we all did) in Quonset huts. Theirs, however, were guarded at each door by armed Marines. No such guards were needed in the enlisted Japanese area — those prisoners were actually pretty happy to be out of the fighting. Every morning someone from each of our housing areas would take a personnel carrier down to the enlisted camp and take a few of the prisoners back to the

area where they would make beds, sweep floors, clean latrines, and basically do all the chores that we did not want to perform! They worked very hard, because if they finished before it was time to return them to the prison compound, they could go in our rec room and play ping pong!

Because this was a prisoner holding area, we were frequently visited by the Red Cross and other organizations concerned with the welfare of the detainees (sound familiar?). That meant that our meals were as fine as possible — fried chicken, ham, fruit and vegetables that almost tasted fresh. It was also a stop for the USO and other troupes. Truly life was reasonably good on Majuro.

I had not been there long before we were joined by the aforementioned Arthur Victor Hackett. It seems that the AACS put in a new officer in charge for the HF/DF station on Tarawa and it seemed there were a few differences in the makeup and experience of this officer as well as a few differences between said officer and Hackett. He was just one of the operators here, but that did not seem to bother him — he had been up and down and in and out before.

The atomic bombs were dropped during our stay there followed by what we know by VJ day. We were still useful as there were still aircraft flying but it was time to down



*Coffee time at the D/F Station at Pauwela Point on Maui.*

size. The AACS would take over and we were all to be returned to Hawaii and released from detached service. This took place quickly and off we went to Kwajalein by way of Eniwetok. Kwaj was a sight to behold! The SeaBees had really been busy since we left! There were paved roads and big buildings all around — it was almost like a normal military base with all the amenities! We turned in our equipment without any inventory (so much for my worries about the trench knife!) I had been able to take Mickey to Majuro but they would not allow me to take him to Hawaii due to the long quarantine period there for all pets. I found a good home for him with one of the people remaining on Majuro and we sadly parted.

Upon arrival in Hawaii we were all assembled and taken from Hickam Field to the Coast Guard station for the 14ND. We were all immediately promoted one grade since there had been no promotions while we were on detached duty. We had various release dates and we were to serve until the date was reached. I was sent to a DF-equipped radio station at the Pauwela Point lighthouse on the island of Maui. It was DF for ships, not aircraft and I do not think I took an actual bearing in the four months I was there! We lived, with the light house staff (all two of them) in an actual house! We cooked our own meals, kept the house clean, and went into town in a Coast Guard truck. There was a Bosun's mate in charge of the operation and he was responsible for turning the light on and off — there was no automation in those days. In April my time was up and I was sent to Honolulu for release preparation and discharge. They promised me an immediate promotion to RM1/C if I would continue my Coast Guard career, but I respectfully declined.

That is it... the story of a small group of Coast Guard personnel who served in a very different operation during WWII. In spite of all the mix-ups, I think we served the country well. It also proves that being SEMPER PARATUS means being PARATUS for anything!

### [The Story of Charles Walter David, Jr.: African-American Hero in a Segregated Service](#)

For many individuals it takes a lifetime to learn the skills of leadership, while others come to it naturally. African-American Charles Walter David, Jr., knew instinctively how to lead others despite barriers imposed by the nation's

racially-segregated society of the mid-twentieth century. David served in the Coast Guard early in World War II, at a time when African-Americans were barred from the officer ranks and limited to such enlisted ratings as steward's mate.

Charles David was a unique Coast Guardsman in every way. Mess Attendant 1/c David reached the ripe old age of twenty-six during his time on board the cutter *Comanche* in the Coast Guard's Greenland Patrol, making him one of the ship's older enlisted crewmembers. He already had a family at home in New York City when many of his shipmates had just learned how to shave. At well over six feet tall and 220 pounds, David's stature could intimidate men; however, David counted many friends among the cutter's crew of sixty. He had a natural talent for music, playing the blues harmonica in jam sessions with his shipmate, friend and saxophone player Storekeeper 1/c Richard Swanson. The characteristic that really distinguished David was his loyalty to the crew and natural inclination to the service's core values of "honor, respect and devotion to duty." This last fact seems even more astonishing given the second-class status African-Americans held in the military at that time.

David demonstrated his devotion to duty and concern for fellow shipmates in February of 1943, while *Comanche* served as one of the Coast Guard escorts for the three-ship Convoy SG-19, bound from St. Johns, Newfoundland, to southwest Greenland. Weather conditions during the convoy's first few days proved horrendous as they usually did in the North Atlantic during the winter. The average temperature remained well below freezing, the seas were heavy and the wind-driven spray formed tons of ice on virtually every exposed surface of *Comanche's* decks and superstructure.

The Coast Guard not only fought the elements, it fought an ever-present enemy lurking in the frigid waters as German U-boats hunted the convoys bound for Greenland. At about one o'clock in the morning on 3 February 1943, German submarine U-223 torpedoed one of the convoy's vessels. It was the *U.S. Army Transport Dorchester*, which carried over 900 troops, civilian contractors and crew. Two hours later, the task force commander ordered *Comanche* to the scene of the disaster to screen rescue efforts by the other Coast Guard escorts. By this time, *Dorchester* had slipped beneath the waves and those passengers and crew that survived the sinking had taken to the water or lifeboats. On recording the situation for the survivors in the water

that night, the ship's log noted, "all men in lifejackets lifeless." However, when *Comanche's* lookouts spotted lifeboats full of freezing survivors a cargo net was thrown over the cutter's port side and Charles David, Dick Swanson and several shipmates clad only in ordinary un-insulated uniforms swung into action as the cutter pulled alongside.

In a race against time and with waves ten feet high, David climbed down the forty-foot cargo net and helped hoist *Dorchester's* living yet frozen survivors from the lifeboats to the *Comanche's* deck. Swanson worked alongside his musician friend as they saved nearly 100 survivors from the lifeboats. At one point in the operation, *Comanche* executive officer LT Langford Anderson fell into the frigid seas. Without hesitation, David plunged into water that could kill within minutes and helped Langford back on board the cutter. After hoisting the last survivors on board *Comanche*, David ascended the cargo net to the ship's deck. Despite being six years younger than David, Dick Swanson's limbs had succumbed to the cold and exhaustion and he made it only half way up. David encouraged his friend, yelling "C'mon Swanny. You can make it!" But Swanson was too tired and frozen to go any further. David descended the net and, with the aid of another crewmen, pulled Swanson back up to the *Comanche's* deck.

David had placed the needs of others above his own, risking his own life to save dozens of *Dorchester* survivors, *Comanche's* executive officer and his friend Swanson. Dick Swanson later described Charles David as a "tower of strength" on that tragic day, even though David performed these feats while fighting off his own serious illness. Days

before the rescue operation, he had had a raspy cough and, due to his exposure to the frigid water and sub-freezing air temperatures, he contracted hypothermia. Later, when *Comanche* delivered its *Dorchester* survivors to an army base hospital in Greenland, doctors ordered an ambulance to bring in David as well. It was the last time his shipmates would see him alive. He became bed-ridden as his hypothermia turned the cough into full-blown pneumonia and within a few weeks he succumbed to the illness. It was only a few weeks later when Dick Swanson and *Comanche's* crew learned that their friend and shipmate had died.



*Mess Attendant I/c Charles Walter David, Jr.*

Charles Walter David, Jr., exemplified the Coast Guard's core values of honor, respect and devotion to duty. Despite his secondary status in a segregated service, he placed the needs of others above his own and played a key role in the dramatic rescue of nearly 100 *Dorchester* survivors. For his heroic service, David received the Navy & Marine Corps Medal and, in 1999, he was posthumously awarded the Immortal Chaplains Prize for

Humanity in the same ceremony as famous South African archbishop, Desmond Tutu. In the final irony of David's story, his own family believed he had been buried at sea; when he had been temporarily buried in Greenland and, after the war, his remains re-interred in the Long Island National Cemetery at Farmdale, Long Island. For decades, his family had lived in New York City, within miles of Charles Walter David's final resting place without knowing it, but sixty years after his heroic end the service undertook a systematic search for his immediate family and notified his next of kin.

**William H. Thiesen, Ph.D.**  
USCG Atlantic Area Historian

### *VA Claims Backlog*

A flood of veterans, young and old are seeking disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs for psychological and physical injuries connected to their military service. The backlog of unprocessed claims for those disabilities is now over 400,000, up from 253,000 six years ago, the agency said. The VA says its average time for processing those claims, 162 days, is better than it has been in at least eight years. But it does not deny that it has a major problem, with some claims languishing for many months in the department's overtaxed bureaucracy.

The vast majority of the 82,000 claims the department receives each month are not from veterans returning from the current wars — they're still getting a lot of Vietnam vets.

The VA recently finished hiring 4,200 claims processors, but many will not be fully trained for months. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) reported last year that the VA had about 13,000 people processing disability claims. The larger significance of the backlog, veterans groups and officials said, is that resources for veterans are being stretched perilously thin by a confluence of factors beyond the influx of veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan:

- *Aging Vietnam veterans with new or worsening ailments are requesting care;*
- *Layoffs are driving unemployed veterans into the VA's sprawling health system for the first time;*
- *Congress has expanded certain benefits; and*
- *Improved outreach efforts by the VA have encouraged more veterans to seek compensation or care.*

The House Veterans Affairs Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs subcommittee recently held a hearing focusing on a growing backlog of veterans' disability claims waiting processing by the Veterans Benefits Administration and on how that agency has implemented new laws intended to improve the processing system. At issue was how long it takes to process a claim under the current Claims Processing Improvement model (CPI). The VA has approximately 21% of its cases pending for more than 180 days. Prepared testimony for the hearing and a link to the Webcast from the hearing are available on the House Committee on Veterans Affairs Web site:

[veterans.house.gov/hearings/hearing.aspx?newsid=426](http://veterans.house.gov/hearings/hearing.aspx?newsid=426)

### *VA Handbook 2009*

The latest edition of the Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents Pamphlet (i.e., handbook) 80-09-01 can be obtained from the Department of Veterans Affairs online or by mail. It updates the rates for certain federal payments and outlines a variety of programs and benefits for American veterans. Most of the nation's 25 million veterans qualify for some VA benefits, which range from health care to burial in a national cemetery. In addition to health-care and burial benefits, veterans may be eligible for programs providing home loan guaranties, educational assistance, training and vocational rehabilitation, income assistance pensions, life insurance and compensation for service-connected illnesses or disabilities. In some cases, survivors of veterans may also be entitled to benefits.

The handbook describes programs for veterans with specific service experiences, such as prisoners of war or those concerned about environmental exposures in Vietnam or in the Gulf War, as well as special benefits for veterans with severe disabilities. In addition to describing benefits provided by VA, the 2007 edition of the 155-page booklet provides an overview of programs and services for veterans provided by other federal agencies. It also includes resources to help veterans access their benefits, with a listing of phone numbers, Internet addresses and a directory of VA facilities throughout the country.

Hard copies of the 2009 English version can be purchased from the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO). GPO accepts credit card orders for the publication at (866) 512-1800 or (202) 512-1800/2104F for a cost of \$5 each to U.S. addresses. If order is by mail make check out to Superintendent of Documents and mail to the GPO at Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954.

The 2009 publication in English can be downloaded at no cost from VA's Web sites:

<http://www1.va.gov/opa/vadocs/fedben.pdf> or [http://www1.va.gov/OPA/vadocs/current\\_benefits.asp](http://www1.va.gov/OPA/vadocs/current_benefits.asp)

## From the President

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stayed only a year. I got promoted and ended up the “Chief.”

Activities on the island were non-stop: bowling, softball, golf, swimming, crafts, and so on. Liz and I even took up ballroom dancing. New York City was a seven and a half minute ferry crossing away with its plays, concerts, professional sporting events and countless restaurants.

For me, in thirty years of military service, no place matched Governors Island for professional growth, family togetherness, and social life. Governors Island has faded into Coast Guard history, but for me, my wife, my children — and for some of you — it remains a special memory.

### 21-Veteran Salute

On Memorial Day at the Navy-Coast Guard Vietnam Unit Memorial Monument at the Naval Amphibious Base, Coronado, CA, a tribute is given to twenty-one fallen shipmates. This ceremony is known as the 21 Veteran Salute. A bell is rung once and the name of saluted individual is announced. This year, for the name of the Coast Guardsman killed-in-action, I had selected, on behalf of the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association, Chief Engineman Morris Beeson, was announced. Ideally, a

member of the Association would be present to read the name but other memorial commitments prevented that from taking place. Maybe, next year.

### Coast Guard Legacy: What Is It?

If you give someone your trust it is not often he will let you down. He will know what to do without being told. He will do what he should when no one is looking. He will get the mission done in spite of inept or indifferent leadership.

Coast Guard annals are filled with unbelievable rescues and accomplished missions achieved while overcoming incredible obstacles. Why? It is because of trust.

Trust tells the individual I believe in you. I know that you can do the job. The individual responds, with his life, if necessary, so as not to betray that trust.

Legacy is defined as something handed down from predecessors. Since the first ten cutters took to sea in the eighteenth century the Coast Guard is known for getting the job done. The U.S. Coast Guard's reputation for reliability is the result of its legacy — trust in the individual.

Enjoy life...it's an adventure!

Paul C. Scotti

## Auxiliary News

### Hello All:

I just finished a project that was work but also fun. I transferred to the computer the historical war-related parts of Paul's letters to me from Viet Nam over 40 years ago. We had not reread any of the letters in all that time; we just kept packing them around with every move and then had them in storage for many years. Upon rereading them I realized that we really did live history. He told of operations and events during that year. Frustrations at being apart were evident in both of our letters to each other. He even wrote separate letters to our children and we recently sent them copies of the letters. Our son commented about how much dad wanted to be home with us, but how he was doing something he believed in as well. I found references to letters from other Coast Guard wives with husbands also in Viet Nam that I had corresponded with. We wives were support for one another during those separate times.

I remember being at a luncheon for officer's wives from all branches of the armed forces while we lived in the Washington, D.C. area and having another service wife say with disdain, “Your husband didn't have to go to Viet Nam.” I responded with great pride, “No, he didn't have to go. He volunteered.”

In Reno, Paul saw two of the guys he had not seen since 1968. I recognized their names and knew about both men. We all picked up where we had left off all those years ago. I had forgotten that the wife of one of them had been on my correspondence list during that year.

We have remained in touch with many Coast Guard friends over the years and always think of them as “family”. With each CGCVA reunion we meet more people who become part of our Coast Guard family.

My e-mail address is: ELS699@AOL.COM If you have any questions or comments I would be happy to hear from you.

Liz Scotti (321) 474-0007

## CGCVA Small Stores

*The following CGCVA items are now available. Send orders to Baker Herbert at P.O. Box 544, Westfield Center, Oh., 44251-0544. Call Baker at (330) 887-5539 or e-mail at [USCGW64@neo.rr.com](mailto:USCGW64@neo.rr.com). Please make checks payable to CGCVA. Prices shown include first-class or "Book Rate" postage. **WE DO NOT ACCEPT CREDIT CARD ORDERS.***

### CGCVA BASEBALL CAP

Blue/black, gold lettered CGCVA with logo, full back. One size fits all. Plain visor **\$12.00** With senior officer scrambled eggs on visor. **\$16.00**. Add **\$3.00** and up to six gold letters will be sewn on the back of your cap. Example: "TOMMY". Regular CG Baseball Caps, blue or pink \$16. Add name \$3.00.

### CHRISTMAS TREE ORNAMENTS

255' Owasco Class; 378' Hamilton Class; 270'; and 210' Classes; and USCGC Mackinaw. Each ship of class imprinted on one side of ornament with commissioning & decommissioning dates; color drawing of ship on other side. **\$8.00** each (shipped in display box).

### BOOKS

"Coast Guard Navy of WWII" by William Knight. **\$21.00**. "Coast Guard Action in Vietnam" by CGCVA member Paul Scotti **\$21.00**. Coast Guard Combat Veterans, Turner Publishing **\$36.00**. "Always Ready - Today's U.S. Coast Guard" by Bonner and Bonner **\$16.00**. "A WWII Sailor's Journey" by T.J. Piemonte **\$12.00**. New Books: "Blood Stained Sea" by Michael Walling **\$21.00**. "Choke Point" by Michael Walling (Hero Coast Guard Centered) **\$20.00**. "Sinbad" by Michael Walling **\$21.00**. Toy Sinbad **\$16.00**. Walling books will be autographed to the individual, etc., if indicated in order.

### CAP, CGCVA GARRISON

Fore'n aft cap with embroidered CGCVA color logo and "Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association" in white lettering. Must state size. **\$25.00**.

### PATCHES (some shown here)

CGCVA (small) **\$4.00**. CGCVA (large) **\$5.00**. RONONE, CON-SON, ELD-Eagle, Market Time, and Squadron Three. **\$5.00** each. Tonkin Gulf Yacht Club **\$6.00**.

(Phone or email Baker about CGCVA embroidered white hooded shirts)





# Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(Please Print Clearly)

### Personal Data

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Init.

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street

City/State/Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you have two (2) residences?** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ (This is for Quarterdeck Log mailings)

**If Yes, please furnish the below information:**

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ When There? From: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsored By: \_\_\_\_\_

### Military Data

Branch of Service: \_\_\_\_\_ Service Number: \_\_\_\_\_ From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

**Important:** This Application MUST be accompanied by either a copy of your Discharge (both sides); or, a copy of a DD-214; or, a copy of a DD-215; or, a copy of NAV/CG-553; or, a copy of your letter of awards; or, a copy of some other "official" document that states your participation in or your direct support of a combat situation. You may further get a certified statement from a former shipmate who is a CGCVA member in "Good Standing," stating that you served with him on a particular ship/station during a particular period of time.

Rank/Rate: \_\_\_\_\_ Present \_\_\_\_\_ @Discharge \_\_\_\_\_ @Retirement \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Dues: \$30.00 for two (2) years.** Amount of Membership Dues Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Make checks or money orders payable to: CGCOMVETS** and mail to: Gary Sherman, LM, CGCVA National Secretary-Treasurer, 3245 Ridge Pike, Eagleville, PA 19403. Phone: (610) 476-8061. E-mail: [cgcva@comcast.net](mailto:cgcva@comcast.net)

**Please! Look at the Exp. Date on your label and renew if due.  
The Quarterdeck Log**

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*(Left to Right) Atlantic Area Commander VADM Robert Papp, CGCVA Treasurer Bill Ross, USCG Commandant ADM Thad Allen, CGCVA member Larry Villarreal, and Commander of Mobilization & Reserve Affairs, Atlantic Area, RDML Steven Day at the annual Coast Guard Day Festival.*