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iCommandant

Web Journal of Admiral Thad Allen

Showing newest 37 of 39 posts from August 2009. [Show older posts](#)

Sunday, August 30, 2009

Coast Guard Auxiliary National Conference

Shipmates,

This year's National Auxiliary Conference (NACON) at Oak Brook, Illinois concluded with the National Commodore's Banquet last night.

Prior to the dinner I met with senior Auxiliary leaders and we discussed Auxiliary Modernization. Under the leadership of National Commodore Nick Kerigan the Auxiliary has modernized their structure to align with the new Coast Guard command and control and mission support structure. There are now four new Deputy National Commodores which will be the Auxiliary liaison and principal counterparts to our Deputy Commandant for Mission Support, Deputy Commandant for Operations, Force Readiness Command, and Operations Command. There is also a new Assistant National Commodore for Strategic Analysis. I congratulate Commodore Kerigan and his team for their commitment to our collective future.



Coast Guard Auxiliary National Conference
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Another highlight of the evening included recognition of the Auxiliarist of the Year, Marilynn Leonard who has been a veritable whirlwind of activity in D13, most notably the Puget Sound Citizens Action Network which uses local residents to report events and increase maritime domain awareness.

I was extremely gratified with the large number of foreign volunteer SAR organizations that attended the conference. Shown in the picture here is Bruce Reid who heads the Royal New Zealand Coast Guard, a all volunteer organization.

I was particularly pleased to recognize the terrific support that our Directors of Auxiliary provide to our Auxillarists.

To everyone who planned and executed the details of the conference, well done.

ADM A

Posted at [8/30/2009 11:05:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#)



Friday, August 28, 2009

Overflight of Lake Michigan with Air Station Traverse City Air Crew

Shipmates,.

Many thanks to the folks at Sector Lake Michigan (CAPT Luann Barndt) and Air Station Traverse City (CDR Jon Spaner) for hosting us today. We landed at our Air Facility in Waukegan, IL. We received a briefing on the operations of the AIRFAC and then held an all hands meeting with Station Kenosha, WI and the AIRFAC. We then had a tour of the Navy's Recruit Training Center and then flew the Lake Michigan Coastline down to Chicago and then to Calumet Harbor. We followed the inland waterways toward the Illinois River and overflowed the Army Corps of Engineers Fish Barrier that is intended to prevent invasive species from

entering Lake Michigan. A busy day and we look forward to meeting with our Auxiliary partners at their National Conference tomorrow. More to follow
ADM A

Posted at [8/28/2009 11:56:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Tuesday, August 25, 2009



Overflight of Lake Michigan with Air Station Traverse City Air Crew

Update -- Video Available -- The Honorable Elijah Cummings, Keynote Speaker, Blacks In Government (BIG) National Conference, Baltimore, MD

Chairman Cummings remarks can be [viewed here](#) and you are strongly encouraged to do so.

Shipmates,

As the son of a Chief Petty Officer who was serving as a seaman at sea on a high endurance cutter when I was born I have always felt a mixture of pride at my heritage combined with a sense that I was an "enlisted brat." I went to school with children of officers and wondered how their life was different from ours. It wasn't that our life was bad, in fact it was just the opposite. My parents filled our days with activities, a sense of purpose, and hope for the future. My parents created the art of the possible for us. My father's service had purpose and our family had purpose. Every Guardian who serves honors our Nation. After that, it was up to us/me to take our dream where it would lead us.



[The Honorable Elijah Cummings, Keynote Speaker, Blacks In Government \(BIG\) National Conference, Baltimore, MD](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Today in Baltimore at the Blacks in Government National Conference I had a chance to recall how I felt as a child as I listened to Representative Elijah Cummings describe his personal journey. His parents moved from South Carolina to Baltimore after they married with the express purpose of providing an environment and education for their children ... who had not yet been born.

In a stunning outpouring of personal emotion and passion, Chairman Cummings led us through his journey of self discovery and understanding of what his parents had done for their children. He reminded us all that it is our children that see us and gauge the art of the possible through us.

There has rarely been a more powerful and impacting message delivered in a public forum. I thank him for his honesty, passion, conviction, and steadfast devotion to our children. In his own words, "our children are a message to a future we will never see."

We will try to make the video of his inspiring message available to you all, and you should watch and listen closely.

In the meantime, I thank the Chairman for his inspirational words and his recognition of the work and integrity of Terri Dickerson, our Assistant Commandant for Civil Rights.

It was a moving experience for everyone in the room.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

ADM A

Posted at [8/25/2009 09:54:00 PM](#) [3 comments](#) 



Monday, August 24, 2009

Arctic Awareness Observations -- Mr. Jay Reich, Department of Commerce

Guest post by Mr. Jay Reich (pictured in blue hat), Deputy Chief of Staff for the Department of Commerce.

Much has been written about the stresses of Arctic life based on climatic and weather extremes and physical isolation. We also know of the inherent tensions between the exploitation of the rich mineral and oil/gas deposits in the Arctic and the natural ecosystems and indigenous populations of this region who have relied on wildlife for subsistence. These stresses and tensions are exacerbated by climate change.

Our Coast Guard sponsored trip to Alaska to observe this phenomenon and to

listen to those affected brought this home. It also raised significant policy questions about how we can as a nation respond to these challenges.

There is enormous uncertainty as to the scope and speed with which the climate is changing, what the affects of such change will be on the ecosystems of the Arctic and what strategies will be the most successful to adapt to the changes. The melting of polar ice increases ocean swells and the erosion of the seabed. The expansion of the sea ice likely to increase shipping, access to mineral and oil reserves and competition with other nations. The patterns if not the survivability of some species. The cost of protecting the environment and sustaining it is enormous if not prohibitive. The responsibility for dealing with these complex and overlapping issues involves the state and federal government and particularly affects native peoples and a wide range of industries and interest groups. This is a complex problem and the need for better understanding, a coherent approach, a coordinated response and the development of strategies.



Meeting with Shismaref leaders

Surrounding the extraordinary beauty and vastness of the Arctic, are a host of issues that require immediate attention. They also require the patience to make informed decisions of lasting importance based on science, cultural sensitivity and national policy.

Posted at [8/24/2009 08:05:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#)

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Sunday, August 23, 2009

Arctic Awareness Trip Synopsis

Saturday, the Interagency Arctic Awareness Trip and Ocean Policy Task Force members returned to Washington D.C. It was a very busy and informative week of travel in the U.S. Arctic region and State of Alaska. In the near future we will share some of our perspectives and vision going forward. In the meantime, below is a synopsis of our activities via blog, photos, videos and tweets, as well as some news clips.

Joint Op-Ed: [As an Arctic nation, U.S. must embrace smart, science-based stewardship](#)

Blogs (Newest to oldest):

- [First public meeting of the Ocean Policy Task Force](#)
- [Working lunch with Eskimo Elders and Leaders](#)
- [Commerce Secretary Approves Arctic Fisheries Plan](#)
- [Arctic Presence Senate Field Hearing](#)
- [NOAA WOCE Buoy Deployment](#)
- [Native Appreciation in Nome](#) ([Here](#) and [Here](#)).
- [Arctic Domain Awareness Flight](#)
- [Shismaref Seawall Construction](#)
- [Travel Party Enroute Nome](#)
- [Arctic Weblinks](#)
- [Follow the Interagency Arctic Awareness Trip](#)

Photo Sets:

- [Nome and Shismaref](#)
- [Arctic Domain Awareness Flight](#)
- [Barrow](#)
- [Deadhorse and Prudhoe Bay](#)
- [OPTF Public Meeting](#)

Twitter Tweets:

[OPTF Arctic](#)
[iCommandantUSCG](#)

Trip Participant Observations:

[Deputy Secretary Hayes](#)
[Mr. Jay Reich](#)

News Clips:

- [Obama's Task Force Comes to Alaska](#) (Anchorage Daily News)
- [Alaska Weighs in on New Federal Oceans Policy](#) (LA Times)
- [Federal Task Force Wraps up Weeklong Tour of Alaska](#) (KTUU)
- [Obama's Task Force on Ocean Policy Comes to Alaska](#) (Newsday)
- [U.S. Closes parts of Arctic to Commercial Fishing](#) (CS Monitor)
- [Coast Guard assists international science community to study Arctic ice, ocean behavior in Alaska](#) (AlaskaReport)
- [Sen. Murkowski Collects Testimony on Arctic](#) (AP)
- [Crossroads Operation Highlights Challenges of Northwest Alaska](#) (Kodiak Daily Mirror)
- [Arctic Holds both Promise and Challenges](#) (Alaska Dispatch)
- [Coast Guard Training on Bearing Sea Coast](#) (Alaska Superstation ABC)
- [Research for Arctic development called out of date](#) (Arctic Sounder)
- [White House hears Alaska on oceans policy](#) (The Tundra Drums)
- [Melting Arctic North Up For Grabs](#) (The Takeaway)

[Friendlier Arctic Seas bring Opportunity -- and Risk](#) (Anchorage Daily News)
[As an Arctic nation, U.S. must embrace smart, science-based stewardship](#) Joint Op-Ed to the Seattle Times
[Scientists Make Discoveries as they Map the Continental Shelf](#) (The Washington Post)

Related News
[Coast Guard/NOAA Buoy Deployment](#)
[NOAA, Coast Guard Hunt for Alaska Methane, Carbon Dioxide Sources](#)
[NOAA Scientist on Coast Guard Cutter Healy Discoverer Underwater Mountain in Arctic](#)
[Coast Guard coordinates rescue of cruise ship crewmember in Arctic](#)
[USCGC Healy Blog](#)
[Admiral Allen Discusses Arctic Awareness Trip](#) (DOD Bloggers Roundtable)

Video Posts:
Nome Arctic Awareness Press Conference

Arctic Awareness Observations, Dep. Sec. David Hayes, DOI

NOAA Buoy Deployment


OPTF Public Meeting Press Conference (Part 1)

OPTF Public Meeting Press Conference (Part 2)

Posted at [8/23/2009 01:00:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Ocean Policy Task Force Anchorage Public Meeting Press Event

Posted at [8/23/2009 10:29:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Marine Spatial Planning

Shipmates,

If you followed our posts this last week you will have seen a focus on Arctic issues. However, the larger context of the trip and our meetings was the President's Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force. As the Department of Homeland Security's representative on this Task Force I have attended several meetings in Washington chaired by Ms. Nancy Sutley who also chairs the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ).

The Task Force has three near term deliverables for the President: (1) a National Oceans Policy, (2) a governance structure for ocean issues, and (3) an implementation plan to implement the policy.



The purpose of this post is to begin to acquaint you with a longer term deliverable under the President's tasking: that is 'Marine Spatial Planning.' MSP is a concept that has been developing in the last decade and focus on an integrated approach to how we use our oceans.

There are several definitions of MSP and an Internet query will yield numerous sites where the term is defined and discussed.

I pulled this definition from Wikipedia:

'Marine Spatial Planning is a planning tool that enables integrated, forward-looking and consistent decision-making on the use of the sea. The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in the United Kingdom have developed a commonly used definition:

'Strategic, forward-looking planning for regulating, managing and protecting the marine environment, including through allocation of space, that

addresses the multiple, cumulative, and potentially conflicting uses of the sea'

The main elements of marine spatial planning include an interlinked system of plans, policies and regulations; the components of environmental management systems (e.g. setting objectives, initial assessment, implementation, monitoring, audit and review); and some of the many tools that are already used for land use planning. Whatever the building blocks, the essential consideration is that they need to work across sectors and give a geographic context in which to make decisions about the use of resources, development, conservation and the management of activities in the marine environment.'

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) has a shorter version:

"Marine spatial planning is a public process of analyzing and allocating the spatial and temporal distribution of human activities in marine areas to achieve ecological, economic and social objectives that have been specified through a political process."

On the plane ride back to Washington I was surveying the broad spectrum of activities that the Coast Guard carries out in the marine environment. All of them relate to the concept of marine spatial planning including waterways management, aids to navigation, living marine resources enforcement activities, offshore oil and gas exploration and production, and renewable energy.

As the Nation considers this concept and its application to our oceans the Coast Guard will be part of the conversation and the evolution of its application. One of our strong partners in the past has been the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Throughout the last week NOAA Administrator Dr. Jane Lubchenco and I had the opportunity to talk about the many missions we execute jointly ... and with others. We have made a commitment to continue our close coordination and collaboration as the Task Force moves forward. The photo of the two of us attached to this post was taken at Shismareff, a coastal town subject to erosion.

I invite you to learn more about Marine Spatial Planning.

ADM A

Posted at [8/23/2009 09:18:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Saturday, August 22, 2009

Updated: Members of the OPTF at the first public meeting in Anchorage Alaska

UPDATE: You can read the [Anchorage Daily News' coverage](#).

Shipmates

We had a large turn out at today's Interagency Task Force on Ocean Policy public meeting in Anchorage. I would estimate between 300 and 350 people attended.

We heard from several panels and took questions from the floor. Over 60 people spoke at the meeting which lasted over 3 1/2 hours.

There were diverse opinions from various stakeholders, citizens, corporations, non governmental organizations, tribal leaders, academicians, and local government representatives.

The results of the meeting will be made available to the public once it is collated. We will be posting more on the issues raised at the meeting,



[Members of the OPTF at the first public meeting in Anchorage Alaska](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

ADM A

Posted at [8/22/2009 02:52:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Friday, August 21, 2009

Working lunch with Eskimo elders and leaders: Mayor Edward Itta (and whaling captain)

Shipmates,

During our stay at Barrow, we participated in a working lunch hosted by the Eskimo Elders and local leaders of the North Slope Borough, Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission, and others.

The facilitator was our old friend Mayor Edward Itta. Mayor Itta is a former Navy "Tin Can" sailor and a Whaling Captain.

We have learned much from our friends who engage in subsistence hunting north of the Bering Strait. As a result, we have been able to deploy in the summer without disrupting their traditional activities. Point Barrow is unique in that it is the dividing point between the Chukchi Sea and the Beaufort Sea.



[Working lunch with Eskimo elders and leaders: Mayor Edward Itta \(and whaling captain\)](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

The main resource that is hunted here is the Bowhead whale. The spring hunt, which is from the ice, takes place in the Chukchi Sea when the whales are migrating east and north along the Alaska/Canadian coastlines. The fall hunt takes place from land launched small boats in the Beaufort Sea while the whales are migrating west and south.


The intersection of these subsistence hunting activities and other uses of the continental shelf (i.e. oil exploration and production) were the subject of many discussions during our trip.

Later in the day, Dr. Lubchenco and I held a separate meeting with the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission regarding these intersecting activities.

The meetings were indicative of the entire trip as we are learning more at each stop.

These discussions were followed by a trip to the Prudhoe Bay production site that is managed by BP for BP, Conoco-Phillips, and Exxon Mobile. This is the site where the Trans-Alaska Pipeline begins (the southern terminal is Valdez).

ADM A

Posted at 8/21/2009 02:41:00 PM 0 comments 



Commerce Secretary Approves Arctic Fisheries Management Plan

[This is a wise proactive measure](#) to ensure that we find the right balance between the environment and economics for a healthy and sustainable Arctic region.

This has been a regular topic of discussion between Dr. Lubchenco (NOAA), Admiral Allen, and Jay Reich (Commerce Deputy Chief of Staff) throughout the Arctic Awareness trip

From the Coast Guard perspective, this policy requires enforcement, which will be better informed by our ongoing seasonal operations and requirements studies.

Posted at 8/21/2009 01:21:00 PM 0 comments 



Commandant's Eye View of NOAA Buoy Drop

Shipmates,

Here's the view I had of the NOAA buoy drop from the C130. I was attached on the ramp to a gunner's belt as was Dr. Lubchenco ... a great view. If you wait until the end of the clip you will see the smoke flares that were dropped on the first run to mark the drop site

ADM A

Posted at 8/21/2009 10:37:00 AM 0 comments 



Update: Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security -- Arctic Presence Field Hearing

Updated: You can read some coverage of the hearing [here](#).

Written testimony for today's Senate Appropriation's Subcommittee on Homeland Security on the Coast Guard's Arctic presence available here:

[/ArcticPresenceTestimony.doc](#)

Tweets from the hearing (newest to oldest):

Sen. Murkowski: Most in the U.S. do not think of our nation as an Arctic nation.

? from Senator Murkowski about Healy's support to Extended Continental Shelf Project <http://ow.ly/kMyU>

Several Arctic Awareness blogs this week at <http://ow.ly/kMye>

View pictures from the interagency Arctic Awareness trip from this week <http://ow.ly/kMxI>

Extraordinary work being done in Nome by Mayor Michels.

Sen. Murkowski: Existing operational infrastructure in Arctic region is limited at best, and non-existent in some areas.

What we need to do is build a balanced set of requirements based on our greater awareness of what is going on in the Arctic.

Hope to start putting our resource requirements document for Arctic operations in about the next 6 months.

Our small boats don't operate well off the North Slope, we have things to learn from the traditional Eskimos there and are doing that.


Provided overview of Operation Arctic Crossroads. <http://ow.ly/kMvo>

Sen. Murkowski appreciates Gov. Parnell pointing out need for Senate to ratify the Law of the Sea Treaty.

Gov. Parnell supports ratification of the Law of the Sea Treaty.

Gov. Parnell: "The Arctic literally needs to be put on the map." We need updated and accurate maps, both land and sea.

Alaska's Governor Parnell says, "Alaska is America's Arctic Guardian...and requires additional Coast Guard presence."

Posted at [8/21/2009 06:34:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 

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NOAA WOCE Buoy Deployed in the Arctic Ocean

Shipmates

Dr. Jane Lubchenco (NOAA Administrator) and I participated in the deployment of a NOAA World ocean Circulation Experiment (WOCE) buoy from a Coast Guard C-130 Wednesday during an Arctic Domain Awareness flight. This is the first buoy of this kind deployed north of the Bering Sea. Below is a video of the buoy's actual deployment north of Point Barrow which is the dividing point between the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas. You can read more about its significance [here](#).

ADM A



Posted at [8/21/2009 02:29:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 

 Share |    

Thursday, August 20, 2009

One more thought about our pot luck dinner in Nome, 17 August 2009

Shipmates,

This post follows an early one on the remarkable pot luck dinner that was given in Nome for the Team that traveled to Alaska this week. Cussy Kauer, the Chief Financial Officer of Nome, made introductory remarks. It was clear immediately that she was speaking from the heart and a hush fell on the crowd. I ask her if she would share her words and she said, "yes." This post provides a short clip of the King Island Eskimo Dancers and the text of her comments. You cannot read this and not be overwhelmed by the joint history of Alaska and the Coast Guard. Thank you Cussy and thank you Mayor Denise Michels.

Cussy Kauer's remarks:

We go back a long way, you and me, you, being the United States Coast Guard, and me, being Nome. Let me share with you some stories of our time spent together.

The history of Nome is a short 111 years, set within the framework of 10,000 years of Eskimo history, art, music and dance.

"With the roll of drums" writes Petroff, "and the discharge of musketry, the Imperial eagle of Russia descended, and the Stars & Stripes rose into the murky atmosphere of an Alaskan autumn day". October 1867 – Sitka

Please rise as we present the colors of our Nation and our State.

(Brownie Scout girls approach with US & Alaskan flags

Joy Baker sings National Anthem

Jackie Reader sings Alaska's Flag Song

Brownies walk back to their Mom's)

Please be seated

This vast land became a Territory of some United States, and Alaska's First People of the Seward Peninsula watched, as barkentine and whaling fleets plied our waters, not knowing forever after, allegiance would be pledged.

Thirty years passed. 1896 found merchants, missionaries and miners pushing northward through the new territory into nameless valleys and along endless rivers. Spilling out of the Klondike and down the Yukon River, prospectors and pioneers struggled up the west coastline of Alaska.

Go north, young man, Go North. North, to Alaska, Go north, the rush is on. The way was north, and the name was Nome. Our gold discovery at Anvil Creek in 1898 brought the hopeful, the dreamer, the destitute and the damned. 40,000 men, women and children would land on this very beach, ever searching for good luck, big fortunes, a new life, a good life.

History tells us of the many struggles in this new land. As man searched for fame, knowledge, and wealth, the Cheechakos learned how to survive, from those who knew. Ours is still an existence truly governed by the elements and Mother Nature, and many of those types of events are marked in Nome's history forever. Along the coastline of the Bering Sea, we have been battered, but never beaten. Many of our successes, along with our hard times, have been played out in the newspapers and magazines of the Lower United States. In 1906, after surviving three years in the Arctic, Roald Amundsen sailed his boat Gjoa into Nome, becoming the first vessel to transit the Northwest Passage. Our population was decimated in the 1918 flu, an impending diphtheria epidemic captured world wide attention in 1925, and is commemorated today by the running of the Last Great Race, the Iditarod. Our major business district burned to the ground in September 1934. The old Victorian Gold rush Nome would become but a memory in the minds of those who were here, and in the imagination of the world.

Ah, but we are a breed apart, and boom or bust, have persevered. We are the ingenious, the creative, the energetic. We are the hub of our heartland, the Seward Peninsula. We are the center of 15 surrounding communities, a gathering place. Our names are Bahnke, Nagozruk, Dexter, Ivanoff, and McLain. We are descended from the Inupiaq, Upik, Siberian Upik, and a melting pot of emigrant Norwegian, Swede, Lapland reindeer herders, and Czechoslovakian prospectors. Our corporations proudly proclaim and herald historic landmark places: Norton Sound, Sitnasuak, Kawerak, Bering Strait. Our business names depict and represent hope, luck, our feelings, our surroundings, our way of life:

Aurora, Anvil, Bering Sea, Bonanza, Discovery, Gold Coast, Gold Run, Mukluk, Prospector, Wilderness, Inuit, Stampede.

But then, you have known this, because you have always been by our side. You were here, charting our coastline, carrying scientific men on exploring expeditions, furnishing valuable data to the government with regard to the natural history of this country before the turn of the century. This research continues, as we and the world witness and become sometimes painfully aware of profound and significant changes in our back yard, our arctic domain. Yes, the US Revenue Cutter Bear's presence in Bering Strait waters is legendary, as well as her captain, and other captains like Tuttle, Hooper, and Lieutenant Jarvis. She was the law, in a lawless land, attempting to regulate the fur trade and whaling industry and interaction with Native Alaskans. She carried mail and government supplies, missionaries' northbound, prisoners and undesirables' southbound, and transported reindeer from Siberia as part of Sheldon Jackson's support of a starving people and newly established missions. Her surgeon furnished medical and dental attention to those in need, delivered babies on board, and cared for the sick or injured up and down the west coast of Alaska. Today, your Operation Arctic Crossroads 2009 carries on a tradition set in motion over 100 years ago.

How well I recall as a child the excitement in Nome at the jovial and sometimes boisterous arrivals of the cutters Northwind and Westwind and Storis. It marked the passing of long winter months, the opening of the sea ice. In my high school years, with a cutter in the Nome roadstead, I was never out of a dancing partner on a Friday night.

And so, we continue to welcome the men and women who proudly serve our nation aboard your ships passing through Nome: the Acushnet, Alex Haley, Spar, Hickory, Polar Sea, and the one named in honor of the caption, so important to the development and protection of Nome and the Seward Peninsula in those early days of Alaska, the Cutter Healy.

Thank you for being here with us tonight. Help us, and prepare us for the impending opening of the Northwest Passage, as we bear witness in our lifetime to ongoing dramatic changes in our environment, our life style, and our daily routines. You have been a part of our community and our region for generations, and we wish you good luck and god speed, as you expand your role and presence into the Arctic and the far northern reaches of this great territory, the State of Alaska.

My name is Cussy Kauer, and we welcome you to Nome.

With that, I would like to introduce to you our Mayor, Denise Michels.

Presented at the Nome Recreation Center, Nome Alaska

Monday, August 17, 2009 in honor of and welcoming to Nome the following:

Admiral Thad W. Allen, Commandant of the United States Coast Guard

Rear Admiral Christopher C. Colvin, Commander, Seventeenth Coast Guard District

David J. Hayes, Deputy Secretary of the Department of the Interior

Dr. Jane Lubchenco, Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and Administrator of the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration

Nancy H. Sutley, Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality

Heather Zichal, Deputy Assistant to the President for Energy and Climate Change

Cussy Kauer

August 17, 2009

Nome, Alaska



Posted at [8/20/2009 08:41:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#)

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Wednesday, August 19, 2009

Arctic Domain Awareness Flight

Shipmates

The Team departed Eilson AFB just outside Fairbanks this morning in a Coast Guard C-130. We followed the Yukon River east to the Trans-Alaska Pipeline and turned north. At the production facilities in Prudhoe Bay we turned west and followed the coastline. I took this photo from the ramp of the C-130 as we passed over North Star, a man made island and oil production facility. We then headed offshore and found the ice edge where the crew demonstrated the sensor capabilities of the CASPER system to our Team. Enroute Barrow we dropped to about 400 feet and deployed an air droppable NOAA buoy. The sortie ended at Barrow. Additional photos on Flickr. More to follow ...



[Ramp down with NOAA buoy drop package, passing over North Star oil production facility](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

ADM A

Posted at [8/19/2009 11:49:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#)

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Tuesday, August 18, 2009

Arctic Awareness Observations, Day One -- Dep. Secretary Hayes

Posted at [8/18/2009 03:49:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 



WAESCHE Completes Builder's Trials

Guest Posts by Capt Jim Knight (CO of the Project Resident Office Gulf Coast) and Capt Lance Bardo (Prospective CO of WAESCHE)

WAESCHE (WMSL-751), the second National Security Cutter, just returned from builder's sea trials. Her strong performance during these trials warranted sharing with as many Coast Guardsmen as possible. I have to take this opportunity to get true, first hand information to the most important customers of Project Resident Office (PRO) Gulf Coast - the deck plate sailors.

Having builder's trials experience with the 210 MMA, 378 FRAM, 225 WLBS, Great Lakes Icebreaker, and NSC 1, I can say with confidence that WAESCHE performed well on her builder's trials. The PRO Gulf Coast staff and the contractor have worked hard to incorporate the lessons learned from NSC 1 into the design of WAESCHE. The fruits of this investment were realized on this trial. The maturity of the systems and software exceeded my expectations and WAESCHE performed well in all mission areas including C4, Navigation, stern launch and recovery of the small boat and full power trials. The WAESCHE crew also conducted very well executed live fire tests of the Close-In Weapon System (CIWS) and 57mm gun system.



[WAESCHE Underway for Builder's Trials](#)

Originally uploaded by [icommandant](#)

It is important to keep in mind that the purpose of builder's trials is for the contractor to operate the ship for the very first time and identify items requiring additional work prior to presenting the ship to the Coast Guard for Acceptance Trials. Although builder's trials are a contractor's event, Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding makes space available for PRO Gulf Coast personnel to sail onboard and help them see the ship through their customer's eyes.

To make sure that we are thorough, PRO Gulf Coast utilizes subject area experts from our own staff, Surface Forces Logistics Center, WAESCHE crew, STRATTON (NSC 3) crew, USN Supervisor of Shipbuilding Gulf Coast, Naval Warfare Center and others. So yes, the nearly 200 government and contractor personnel on the ship generated a sizable work list during the week at sea. That was, after all, our job. There is nothing insurmountable on this list however. Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding is very motivated to complete all work prior to acceptance trials even though there are an additional five weeks between acceptance trials and actual cutter delivery.

The performance of WAESCHE on builder's trials bodes well for the ability to deliver a cutter with solid operational capability. We are now applying lessons learned from the actual construction of USCGC BERTHOLF and WAESCHE to the shipyard processes used to build STRATTON, which is now over 20% complete, in order to reduce the time it takes to get these ships to you. We will continue to look for new ways to provide the quality ships you deserve as quickly as we can. Until then, stay focused and keep your shipmates safe.

Capt Jim Knight
Commanding Officer
USCG PRO Gulf Coast
Pascagoula, MS

If this is what going to sea for the next generation is going to look like, I am envious of the future generation of cuttermen. WAESCHE's "not quite finished" propulsion, C4I, navigation, and deck systems are a quantum leap from the cutters I have been sailing for the last 15 years. The ship is smart, handles well, and has capabilities we have only just begun to understand.

The ship's performance during Builder's Trials was exceptional - beyond my expectations and by all accounts significantly better than NSC 1's

Builder's Trials experience. While problems do continue to exist with the machinery control system, the C4ISR systems, the boat launch and recovery system and other mechanical systems, they are "normal" for Builder's Trials and far improved from the same system problems encounters during NSC 1's Builder's Trials and Acceptance Trials. The Builder's Trials included a 48 hour brief stop for repairs to a critical medium pressure air compressor system - that is a known vulnerability caused by the demands of a dehydrator for the electronic warfare suite and the decision to return to port for repairs was a good risk management decision.

The goal to identify as many of the punch list type discrepancies as possible was also realized, placing us in a good position to resolve many of them before Acceptance Trials.

I was particularly pleased by the combined efforts of the Coast Guard Project Resident Office and Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding to work through a number of issues in an intense period of trials. All were clearly focused on getting us the best product possible.

There is a huge amount of work left to complete the ship before Acceptance Trials and I am confident that the continued teamwork of Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding, the PRO, CG-93 and my crew will be successful in getting us the best ship possible at the earliest opportunity. I am confident we will have a delivery ready cutter following Acceptance Trials the week of 28 Sept and the crew of WAESCHE is ready to put her to sea.

CAPT Lance Bardo
Prospective Commanding Officer
WAESCHE (WMSL-751)

Posted at [8/18/2009 03:12:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 

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Arctic Awareness Press Conference -- Nome, Alaska

The below video is the opening statements for yesterday's OPTF Arctic Awareness press conference in Nome, Alaska.

Posted at [8/18/2009 03:05:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 

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King Island Eskimo Dancers

Shipmates,

The events in Nome on Monday concluded with a potluck dinner at the local gymnasium. It was a wonderful evening, highlighted by the King Island Eskimo Dancers who performed several dances. The group includes all ages and performs a variety of dances to the accompaniment of native drummers and songs and chants. In the last dance everyone was invited to join and I am sure there is video somewhere of me out there on the dance floor coming soon.

We were overwhelmed with the attendance by the local community and the recognition of the importance of the Coast Guard to the history of Alaska. The gym is lined with pictures of the Revenue Cutters that served in Alaska after it became a U.S. possession. Each table contained place mats with pictures of the cutters and the cuttermen who first came to Alaska. There were also pictures of the Coast Guard Life Saving Station established in Nome after the Gold Rush. I have never been anywhere in my travels where the local community was able to speak in great detail of the life of Mike Healy



[King Island Eskimo Dancers](#)

Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

and his importance to Alaska and our Coast Guard ... they can in Nome! His name is honored here.

The meal was awesome with the local cooks preparing Silver Salmon, King Crab, Halibut, and BBQ Chicken.

We cannot thank Mayor Denise Michels and her staff enough for this evening and we pass on our gratitude to the citizens of Nome who made us feel so much at home.

ADM A

Posted at [8/18/2009 10:32:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 

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Arctic Awareness press conference

Shipmates

As we returned from our visit to Shismareff, an Arctic Domain Awareness flight (CG 130) was returning to Nome with media representatives. Our Team held a press conference with the Mayor of Nome, Denise Michels, to talk about the intent of our visit and to answer questions.

The questions included inquiries future Coast Guard intent in the Arctic, the potential for forward operating locations, the reduced salmon runs in Alaska and the potential impact of other fisheries, and the intersection of Arctic issues with the Ocean Policy Task Force that is preparing a new policy for consideration by the President.

Each member introduced themselves and gave a short statement.

ADM A

Posted at [8/18/2009 08:12:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 


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Shismaref seawall construction

Shipmates,

A picture is worth a thousand words. We took several aerial photos of the work being done at Shismareff, AK to repair the erosion that has taken place that threatens the community. Shismareff and other native villages along the Bering Strait and north are being subjected to more frequent storms which have eroded land to the point where critical infrastructure and buildings have been threatened.

ADM A

Posted at [8/18/2009 08:05:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 

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Travel party enroute Nome

Shipmates,

This is the first in a series of progress reports on our Arctic Trip. Our party departed Washington DC on Monday morning and flew 7 1/2 hours to Nome, AK. Enroute we had several discussions and briefings on the various aspects of the Arctic and related policy issues such as climate change, Implications of increased marine traffic, changes in the ecosystems of living marine resources, and threats to existing native communities that occupy narrow strands of land north of the Bering Straits.

We arrived in Nome and transferred to three H60 helos, one Coast Guard and the other two provided by the Air and Army National Guard. We flew to the small town of Shismareff which lies north of the Bering Strait near the Arctic Circle. There we met with local leaders, citizens, and deployed Coast Guard and other armed forces personnel who were providing health care, dental, care and veterinary



[Arctic Awareness press conference](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)



[Shismaref seawall construction](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)



[Travel party enroute Nome](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

services.

We were briefed on coastal erosion which is threatening the existence of the town and the steps being taken to mitigate the loss of land on the ocean and lagoon sides.


There were also Auxiliaries deployed to work with local subsistence hunters on ways to improve water safety.

We then returned to Nome which is being used as a forward operating location for Operation Arctic Crossroads our summer deployment operation.

We are posting pictures to Flickr and I invite you to follow us there.

More to follow

ADM A

Posted at [8/18/2009 07:15:00 AM](#) [1 comment](#) 

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Monday, August 17, 2009

Two Coast Guard Units Honored for Counter-Narcotics Efforts

Shipmates,

Even Commandants have collateral duties. One of mine is Chairman of The Interdiction Committee (TIC). As TIC Chairman, I report to the Director, [Office of National Drug Control Policy](#) (Gil Kerlikowske) via the U.S. Interdiction Coordinator (Patrick Ward). TIC advises the Director on issues related to drug interdiction in the Western Hemisphere, prepares Interdiction Planning Guidance, and maintains the National Interdiction Command and Control Plan. I am supported by Captain Bob Dean, USCG, who leads the TIC staff.

I was pleased to receive as Commandant and TIC Chair the following news that two Coast Guard units were honored by Mr. Patrick Ward (USIC) for outstanding counter-narcotics contributions. [Air Station Elizabeth City](#) and [TACLET South](#) were selected from units throughout the federal government as 2008 USIC Award recipients.

Counternarcotics smuggling represents a significant threat to the global community. In Mr. Ward's words: "I would like to congratulate these units for their significant contributions to counter the increasing international and asymmetric threat posed by the trafficking of narcotics and other illicit substances. The production, processing, transportation and use of these illicit drugs have a significant negative impact on individual users, their families, and even the environment. The proceeds of illicit trafficking are used to corrupt individuals and governments, destabilize governments and social systems, and provide the financial support which enables terrorist and criminal organizations."

AIRSTA E-City was honored in the Fixed Wing Aircraft category for their effective deployment of the C-130J aircraft to support JIATF-South. Over the course of three months (October to December 2008), E-City's C-130J aircrews utilized a new radar system, the Edo Elta 2022, to detect 16 smuggling vessels in the transit zones. This resulted in the seizure of three go-fasts, 14 tons of cocaine, a quarter ton of marijuana, and the detention of nine narco-terrorists. The aircrews integrated the new radar system, along with their other sensors, into a Common Operating Picture (COP) that fuses multi-source data and enables operational commanders to task assets towards the highest risk targets.

TACLET South was honored in the Maritime category. During 2008, their LEDETs interdicted over 42 thousand kilograms of cocaine with an estimated value of \$1.2 billion and the detention of 72 suspected narco-terrorists. TACLET South personnel also played a critical role in addressing the rising threat of Self-Propelled Semisubmersible (SPSS) vessels. These submarine-like vessels are barely visible from the surface and can carry tons of cocaine through the transit zone. They also represent a significant danger to boarding personnel because they are designed to be quickly scuttled by their crews after being detected. Using innovative boarding techniques, TACLET South's teams intercepted four of the seven SPSS vessels interdicted by the U.S. Government forces in 2008.

The cutter [MIDGETT](#) was also a nominee and recognized for their outstanding counternarcotics efforts during 2008.

I am extremely proud of all our men and women who execute and support our counter-narcotics mission. It is a true team effort with our interagency and international partners that has wide-ranging ramifications for our safety and security. Protecting the public from the scourge of illegal drugs is an essential part of being America's Maritime Guardian.

ADM A

Posted at [8/17/2009 03:59:00 PM](#) [0 comment](#) 

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Sunday, August 16, 2009

The Recruit Companies are present!



[Self-Propelled Semisubmersible \(SPSS\)](#)
Originally uploaded by [icommandant](#)

Shipmates,

If you had the opportunity to speak to a graduating recruit company, what would you say?

If you become a mentor you will have the opportunity.

CWO Amy Cerino made the commitment and last Friday this is what she told the graduating company ... Xray 181.

=====

Good Morning Admiral Allen, Captain Thomas, Master Chief Bowen, friends and families but of course Recruit Company X-Ray 181 I am extremely honored to be the Company Mentor for this outstanding group of men and women.

I have a few thoughts I would like to share with all of you in the audience today and our new Guardians.

First to the families: Thank you for all of your support and encouragement. I am sure this was probably one of the longest periods of time you have been away from your loved ones. I have a few words of advice for you. First: Learn the Coast Guard Acronyms. You will start hearing words like Leave, liberty, underway, mess-cook, duty, 1 and 4,

etc. They are the dialogue with which we speak. Before you know it you will understand exactly what they are talking about and be using the same words. Second. Encourage them to do and see things they never imagined would be afforded to them. It may be outside of their and your comfort zones but it will be worth the memories. Third. Understand that they are now part of a large family where we pride ourselves in taking care of each other. I promise you, they are well prepared: they will be looked out for and will be OK.

To my Company. I am so proud of you! When I first had the opportunity to meet you 6 weeks ago you felt unsure of your decision and what lay ahead. Remember when I told you to take charge of your career and you asked how you could do that here. Well you did it. You followed directions, you listened to your Company Commander's, and you successfully completed the myriad of challenges you were confronted with.

Now is the time to continue to take charge. Continue maintaining the simple things like taking pride in your uniform, keeping your hair cut, shining your boots, and working hard to maintain an optimistic attitude and set a positive example for those around you. A positive attitude and work ethic goes so far. When you get to your unit, seek out those who are successful. They will not be hard to find. They will be the ones who are excited about being part of this great service, they will be the ones who take the extra time talk to you about their career and where they came from. They will be more than happy to share their successes and failures with you. Watch how they act and try to emulate it. Also, take the time to figure out what rate you would like to pursue: aviation, support, operational. Don't be in a hurry to go to any A School because it is a quick path to petty officer. You have to be happy in the job you are doing in order to be successful. And once you are on your way never stop reaching for the next higher pay-grade. Take every end of course test and service wide exam as soon as you are eligible. Think about where you want to be in 4 years, 8 years, 20 years; it goes by so quickly. Always look ahead.

And if you ever get stuck in a rut, or feel as though you need some direction or help, do not be afraid to call me. Not only was I your mentor while you were in Boot Camp but I am your mentor for the rest of my and your career.

Remember to believe in yourself because you have unlimited potential. You are the Coast Guard's future, you are my replacement! And when it is time for me to retire I will go to home and know that my country is safe and secure because of you.

I wish you all the best, stay safe, and always remain Semper Paratus.

=====

I urge our officer and senior enlisted members to ask to become a mentor and find your voice.

ADM A

Posted at [8/16/2009 08:44:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Friday, August 14, 2009

Xray 181 in formation ready to graduate

Shipmates,

Master Chief Bowen and I (and our spouses) spent today at Training Center Cape May. It was a full and very productive day.

Prior to the graduation of Company Xray 181 we met with their families and friends along with the strong support team of Guardian Spouses, work life staff, and TRICARE representatives.



[Xray 181 in formation ready to graduate](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

The graduation was carried out flawlessly and included a great performance by the TRACEN Band, the Recruit Silent Drill Team, and the companies passing in review.

We did some "shout outs" with the graduates and their families and we will post them over the next week.

We had lunch with the Guardian Spouses who have started a unique program to provide information to the spouses and families of members graduating from boot camp. You will hear more in future posts on this valuable program.

Following lunch we toured TRACEN and received briefs on firefighting training, weapons qualifications, and seamanship.

I held an All Hands and answered questions on Polar Icebreakers, ATON unit staffing, the status/future of the Maritime Enforcement rating, and our current and future funding levels,

In a very inspirational ceremony the incoming company met their Company Commanders following a strong leadership presentation by Captain


Carl Thomas and her staff.

The day ended with a short but moving ceremony that marked the graduation of three new Company Commanders. We will have some more on this process in future posts.

Kudos to TRACEN Cape May for bringing in our well intentioned volunteers and making them Guardians.

For anyone who hasn't sponsored a recruit company, get on the list and walk the talk with our junior people. It will change your view of who is coming into the Coast Guard and what we owe them as leaders.

ADM A

Posted at [8/14/2009 09:50:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Arctic Web Links

The below web links should provide some background on some of the topics related to next weeks Arctic trip. These are not intended to be all inclusive, and the list will likely continue to grow, and we welcome any recommended additions.

Policy:

- [Ocean Policy Task Force](#)
- [National Arctic Region Policy](#)
- Extended Continental Shelf: [Here](#) and [Here](#)
- [Ratification of UNCLOS](#)

Environment/Science:

- [NOAA's Arctic site](#)
- [National Snow and Ice Data Center](#)
- [DOI: Imagery Release to aid in Understanding Climate Change](#)
- [NMFS Arctic Fisheries management](#)

Maritime Operations/Emergency Preparedness and Response/Sovereign Responsibility:

- [Coast Guard Arctic Operational Overview](#)
- [Symposium on the Impacts of an Ice Diminishing Arctic](#)
- [Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment Report](#)
- [Arctic Council Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response working group](#)
- [NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration: Arctic Activities](#)

Community/Indigenous Engagement:

- [Operation Arctic Crossroads](#)
- [MMS Traditional Knowledge](#)

Blogs:

- [USGS Arctic Journal](#)
- [Coast Guard Alaska](#)

Posted at [8/14/2009 03:47:00 PM](#) [1 comments](#) 



Thursday, August 13, 2009

Follow the Interagency Arctic Awareness Trip via Social Media

Next week I depart on a [unique trip with several White House and federal agency officials](#) participating in the new [Ocean Policy Task Force](#). We will be traveling throughout Alaska and the Arctic from Aug. 17 to 21, to observe ongoing activities in the region and meet with local and indigenous community leaders and industry representatives.

Throughout the trip we will provide updates on our activities and observations, including photos, videos and blog posts. You can follow us and contribute to the dialogue via the following: [Blog](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Videos](#) and [Photos](#). Check back later for our first pre-trip post, which will be a broad collection of weblinks providing background on many of the key issues likely to be discussed during our trip.

The increasingly accessible and active Arctic region has significant environmental, scientific, economic and security impacts that have broad implications for all of the agencies participating and the public responsibilities they hold.

This high-level interagency visit will improve whole-of-government collaboration to address the challenges and seize the opportunities present in



[ArcticLandscape](#)

Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

the Arctic and contribute to the quality of national policy recommendations from the OPTF, as well as overall implementation of the national [Arctic Region Policy](#).

The OPTF, led by the White House Council on Environmental Quality, was established in July and is charged with developing a recommendation for a national policy that ensures protection, maintenance, and restoration of oceans, our coasts and the Great Lakes. It will also recommend a framework for improved stewardship, and effective coastal and marine spatial planning.

The travel itinerary will include Nome, Fairbanks, Barrow and Prudhoe Bay, Alaska areas. The trip will culminate with a public meeting by the OPTF to be held in Anchorage, Alaska Aug. 21.

The official party, in addition to myself, will include:
-- [David Hayes](#), Deputy Secretary of the Department of the Interior
-- [Dr. Jane Lubchenco](#), Under Secretary for Commerce of Oceans and Atmosphere and NOAA Administrator
-- [Nancy Sutley](#), Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality
-- [Heather Zichal](#), deputy Assistant to the President for Energy and Climate Change

Posted at [8/13/2009 04:16:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 

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Wednesday, August 12, 2009

Coast Guard Personal Property Inventory

Guest Blog by RDML Keith Taylor, Assistant Commandant for Resources (CG-8)

My discussion with you today is about personal property (in the federal government, personal property includes vessels, aircraft, small boats, electronics, vehicles and general purpose property such as fork-lifts, computers, cranes, etc.). As keepers of the Coast Guard's assets and the public trust, it is imperative from an accountability and financial statement audit compliance perspective that property custodians perform periodic physical inventories. This is one of the most basic requirements of asset management. As many of you have experienced, we conduct these inventories each and every year in September. Unfortunately, DHS CFO audits have highlighted deficiencies in our ability to perform these periodic inventories to the degree necessary to fully account for our assets and meet the federal accounting standards required under law. To give you a sense of the magnitude of this, at the end of fiscal year (FY) 2008, the Coast Guard's financial balance sheet line item for General Property, Plant, and Equipment (PP&E) totaled approximately \$8.5 billion. The personal property subset of PP&E represented approximately \$3.5 billion of this line item alone. By and large, the vast majority of the dollar value of the Coast Guard's personal property (about 95%) lies in vessels, boats and aircraft.

To improve our property accountability, a team from CG-8 has been working across the Coast Guard to gain an understanding of the issues related to the inventory of small boats, aircraft and cutters. Through this effort, we have produced new physical inventory procedures designed to ensure proper valuation, completeness and existence of our personal property in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards. What does this mean? Valuation simply means that we know what our property is worth. Completeness and existence means that every piece of capitalized personal property in your hangar, at your dock or in your office is accounted for in the property system. And, it also means that every piece of property the accounting system lists at your unit is actually there. To accomplish this, we have conducted site visits at multiple CG units, and are piloting a District-wide inventory this month to test these new procedures. I will release an ALCOAST prior to the September annual CG-wide capitalized personal property physical inventory that outlines these new procedures. Draft procedures are currently available through the CG portal which is discussed in more detail below.

What will be different with this year's inventory from years past is the level of monitoring and oversight to ensure 100% completion and correctness by all units. From 01-11 September, Coast Guard capitalized personal property will be inventoried using the new physical inventory procedures. The inventory effort will involve each unit's Accountable Property Officer, Property Custodians, and a dedicated Count Team. This inventory will be followed by additional inventories in December, 2009 and March, 2010 for verification and review purposes and to correct any errors identified in the previous inventories. I fully anticipate that each of these subsequent inventories will become much easier as we all gain a level of comfort with the new procedures and our property records are 'cleaned up.' CG-85 has established a user site on the CG Portal that will contain the inventory procedures, job aids, frequently asked questions (FAQs) and an e-mail link to help desk support for additional information. The site can be found by going to the "Search Places" section of the CG Portal and typing in "2009 Capitalized Property Physical Inventory".

While this is not a new requirement, we are definitely changing the way we do business - we are improving the way we conduct our annual property inventory and are implementing checks and balances to ensure we correct the errors you see in the field year after year. The upcoming ALCOAST will have a link to the physical inventory procedures and more information regarding the September inventory. Together, we can improve this process as a whole and provide better accountability for our capital assets.

Posted at [8/12/2009 11:06:00 AM](#) [4 comments](#) 

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Tuesday, August 11, 2009

VADM Currier Assumes Coast Guard Chief of Staff

The following are VADM Currier's remarks at the Change of Command for the Coast Guard Chief of Staff.

Admiral Allen, VADM Crea, VADM Pearson, and family, distinguished visitors, colleagues, Coast Guard men and women.

Welcome, I truly appreciate you taking time from your busy schedules to join us today, particularly those who have travelled from afar.

In today's ceremony, we have duly recognized the significant accomplishments of a great Coast Guardsman and my friend, VADM Cliff Pearson.

I had the privilege of working with Admiral Pearson during my previous tour at Headquarters serving as Assistant Commandant for Acquisition from 2005 through 2007. VADM Pearson's progress toward designing and maturing the Commandant's vision for the future of the Coast Guard has been nothing less than exceptional. One of the most significant accomplishments of his tenure has been his ability to address today's day imperatives. Nevertheless, having served in the field, away from the Washington area for the past 10 years, I can personally attest to the progress Admiral recognizes the structural and cultural changes now starting to produce momentum to meet the challenges of the future.



Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Admiral Allen had a vision for support, more of the effect than of the details required of process. We are now walking a path toward achieving that vision. A mass of work remains, not only in maintaining adequate levels of support to sustain today's operations, but to concurrently design an integrated system that will enable us to operate into the uncertain future.

This undertaking is as much art as it is science. It is imperative that we move toward our goal without hesitation; guided by our dedication to our mission and our heritage of excellence.

A statement by one of the less diminutive leaders from our American past comes to mind:

"A good solution applied with vigor is better than a perfect one applied ten minutes late." -- General George S. Patton

We will do just that and I'm confident that our people will respond to further mature mission support.

Our Commandant has stated with certainty that the Coast Guard has never been more relevant in the minds of the American people than we are today. The service's actions following the heinous attacks of September 11, 2001, and our response to natural disasters on the national scene including Hurricane Katrina have propelled the Coast Guard to the forefront as the nation's premiere agency for maritime first response across a broad and impressive mission portfolio. The bar has been set very high by the performance of our people, our assets, and our systems.

The levels of achievements that garner national relevance can only be attained through the readiness borne of effective and efficient mission support. Our challenge, our legacy, and the American public demand that we mature support systems and processes to enable our world class operators to meet national priorities across our mission set.

Admiral Allen, thank you for the opportunity to serve at this level. I pledge to continue to refine our basic strategies and continue to build this very impressive team with the aim of producing a model mission support structure, one that is both effective and efficient, one that is an equal partner in ownership of our operational mission, and one of which Coast Guard men and women can be proud.

Thank you all for coming today. May God bless our nation, her sons and daughters standing the watch across the world, and our United States Coast Guard. Semper Paratus.

Commander Dutton: All Standing Orders remain in effect.

Posted at [8/11/2009 09:16:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#)



Friday, August 7, 2009

Farewell Wingman -- Update with ALCOAST message

Change of Watch ALCOAST: [/ViceCommandantChangeofWatch.pdf](#)

Shipmates,

It was a bittersweet moment today as VADM Vivien Crea was relieved by VADM Dave Pekoske. We said goodbye to an iconic figure who through her personal and professional achievements led and inspired not only multiple generations of Coast Guard men and women, but the entire Nation.

It is difficult for me to adequately describe the value of her service. In addition to her expansive duties as Vice Commandant, she also served as our Agency Acquisition Executive and guided the restructuring and turnaround of our Acquisition Program.

As the first female vice service chief in the history of the Nation, she also represented me at high level meetings and was the first to woman to sit in a Service Chief's chair in the Tank (the room where the Joint Chiefs of Staff meet).

Despite the enormous contributions she made as the Vice Commandant, it has been her tireless day-to-day support for me, the Coast Guard, and the Department of Homeland Security that has been truly noteworthy.

She has been a confidante, counselor, collaborator, mentor, and, most of all, a friend. She taught us all how to achieve success through quiet competence, firm commitment, extraordinary patience, and by example.

We will miss her and we wish her and husband Ron all the best in the future.




[Vice Commandant Change of Watch](#)

Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Thanks Wingman, RTB.

ADM A

Posted at [8/07/2009 03:11:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 




Coast Guard History Series Update

We hope you have been following many of the interesting and inspirational opportunities to catch up on your Coast Guard history and heritage. Below are some additional reads you might be interested in.

The Compass has a wonderful [account of the SPARs](#), who were hosted here at Coast Guard Headquarters yesterday, joining us for lunch and conducting a panel discussion. Rave reviews from everyone who was able to participate (we might have the video, so check back later).

AllHands has been hosting a series on [Coast Guard Heritage -- Who influenced you?](#)

Eaglespeak has an interesting post on the Coast Guard and the [Rum War of the Prohibition Era](#).


Posted at [8/07/2009 08:11:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Thursday, August 6, 2009

Audio Available -- Pen & Pad Session with DHS Beat Reporters

I had an opportunity to sit down with several reporters at the monthly DHS Pen & Pad session. Topics included: Chief of Staff Change of Watch, SPAR panel, international engagement, fisheries enforcement, counter-drug operations on the southern border, small vessel security, olympic security, piracy, migrant interdiction ops and more. You can listen to our conversation (45 minutes) [here](#).

Posted at [8/06/2009 09:30:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 



New Dental Readiness Programs

Two new dental readiness programs have been introduced for our Active Duty (AD) and Selected Reserve (SELRES) members. The first program is for AD and eligible SELRES (on orders for 31 days or more) members - it's called the Active Duty Dental Program (ADDP). The ADDP is designed to provide comprehensive dental care for those remote to Coast Guard and DoD Dental Treatment Facilities (DTFs). Additionally, it will provide specialty care to members referred out from Coast Guard and DoD DTFs. The ADDP permits dental care to be provided only by civilian dentists who are in the United Concordia Companies, Inc. (UCCI) network. The second program is for SELRES members on orders for 30 days or less - it's called the Reserve Health Readiness Program (RHRP) Dental Screening Program. The following document provides the details on both of these new dental readiness programs: [/Dental%20Readiness.pdf](#)

You can also check out the powerpoint overviews: [ADDP](#) [RHRP](#)

Posted at [8/06/2009 08:36:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Wednesday, August 5, 2009

Coast Guard History Series Update -- Rescue Swimmer Systems

Moderators Note: In this year's [Coast Guard Day message](#) there was an error in the date of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill, that event occurred in 1989.

The [Coast Guard Compass](#) has a powerful historical vignette of the devotion to duty and innovative initiative of LT Robert Prause and his development of a rescue swimmer system during World War II. Unfortunately, LT Prause and 100 of his shipmates were killed in a [mysterious explosion](#) that resulted in the nearly immediate sinking of Escanaba in 39 degree water. Visit the Compass to [read more](#).

Posted at 8/05/2009 12:36:00 PM 0 comments



Tuesday, August 4, 2009

Coast Guard Day History Campaign



stem
by Icommandant

Shipmates

By now many of you have read my annual [Coast Guard Day Message](#). This Coast Guard Day provides a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the parallels between historical events and our current activities. Over the next couple weeks we will be commemorating our 219th Birthday by sharing stories and commentary on historic events in the Coast Guard's evolution since its birth in the Revolutionary period through the vision of our founding father, Alexander Hamilton. These will be shared via many of the new communication tools the Coast Guard has developed recently, including the [Coast Guard Compass](#), MCPOCG Bowen's [All Hands](#), [YouTube](#) and [CGVI](#).

This conversation is particularly relevant this year in light of our ongoing modernization. In reality, the Coast Guard has been modernizing throughout its history. From the Revenue Marine, to the Light House Service, from the Life-saving Service to the Bureau of Navigation and Steamboat Inspection Service to name just a few changes. We hope through this campaign to share with you the core elements of our success over the centuries: The enduring character of our men and women and their commitment to honor, respect and devotion to duty and their tireless pursuit of mission execution through our core principles of operations ([Pub 1](#), p. 73)

I would also like to mention the [Foundation for Coast Guard History](#) which celebrated its 10th Anniversary this Coast Guard Day. If you are interested in Coast Guard History this organization is an excellent way to become part of the effort. I am a life member.

ADM A

Posted at 8/04/2009 11:53:00 PM 1 comments



Celebrating Coast Guard Day with music

Shipmates,

Tonight we were entertained along with several hundred others by the Coast Guard Dixieland Jazz Band at the Navy Memorial in Washington, DC. Senior Chief and virtuoso clarinetist Andy Shenwood leads this talented group that also includes trombonist Ben Griffin, Ian Frankel on keyboard, bassist Mark McCormick, drummer Chris Smith, and Tom Brown on trumpet. Tonight Tom Brown took a break and we were surprised and honored to have CAPT Lew Buckley who retired 5 years ago as the band director fill in. Lew started this ensemble in the 1970's and tonight's reunion was exquisite. Picking up his trumpet, CAPT Buckley and Senior Chief led the group through all the traditional favorites eliciting cheers from the crowd and gaining fans from those passing by. Check them out at <http://www.uscg.mil/band/dixieland.asp>.

As we remember our heritage and reflect on this important day let us also remember that our lives are enriched by our music, art, literature, and culture. Two new books are out that cover very different parts of our history. Check out Dennis Noble's, "Captain "Hell Roaring" Mike Healy: From American Slave to Arctic Hero" (University Press of Florida) or David Helvarg's "Rescue Warriors: The U.S. Coast Guard, America's Forgotten Heroes" (Thomas Dunne Books). They are the latest additions on my bookshelf.

If you have reviews or comments on art, music, or literature related to the Coast Guard let us hear from you.

ADM A

Posted at 8/04/2009 09:50:00 PM 1 comments



Coast Guard Day Greetings from Partners

Shipmates,

The Birthday Wishes continue to come in from our interagency partners and Sister Services, I thought it would be nice to share them here and we will update as necessary.

ADM A

From the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael G. Mullen:

[/CJCS--USCG%20Birthday%202009.pdf](#)

From the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Gary Roughead

[/CNO--USCGBirthday.pdf](#)

From the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General James T. Conway:

1. ON BEHALF OF THE MARINE CORPS, I AM HONORED TO CONGRATULATE THE DEDICATED MEN AND WOMEN OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AS YOU CELEBRATE YOUR 219TH ANNIVERSARY.

2. SINCE 4 AUGUST 1790, THE COAST GUARD HAS ANSWERED OUR NATION'S EVERY CALL AND HELD FAST TO ITS CORE VALUES OF HONOR, RESPECT, AND DEVOTION TO DUTY. WHETHER ENGAGED IN MARITIME LAW ENFORCEMENT, MAINTAINING AIDS TO NAVIGATION AND MARINE SAFETY, OR PERFORMING MILITARY OR CIVILIAN SEARCH AND RESCUE, THE COAST GUARD HAS CONSISTENTLY EXEMPLIFIED THE SPIRIT OF ITS MOTTO - SEMPER PARATUS.

3. TODAY, AS OUR NATION IS THREATENED BY GLOBAL TERRORISM, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE DEPEND UPON THE COURAGE, PROFESSIONALISM, AND VIGILANCE OF THE COAST GUARD TO PROTECT OUR NATION'S COASTS, PORTS, AND INLAND WATERWAYS.

4. AS YOU CELEBRATE THE MANY GENERATIONS OF SELFLESS SERVICE TO OUR GREAT REPUBLIC, KNOW THAT YOU ENJOY THE FULL SUPPORT AND ADMIRATION OF THE MARINE CORPS.

5. SEMPER FIDELIS AND SEMPER PARATUS! JAMES T. CONWAY, GENERAL, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS, COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS.

From the Director of the Minerals Management Service, Liz Birnbaum

Dear Admiral Allen:

From everyone at the Minerals Management Service, congratulations to the United States Coast Guard for 219 years of selfless and dedicated service to our great nation.

The men and women of the Minerals Management Service operate offshore year-round, and we all rest a little easier knowing that the Coast Guard is working hard each and every day to ensure our safety.

I have the deepest respect for the men and women of the Coast Guard and look forward to building upon the great relationship our two agencies have developed over the years. Best wishes for many more years of success!

From President and CEO of the Military Officers Association of America, VADM Norbert R. Ryan, Jr., USN (Ret.)

[/MOAA--USCGBirthday.pdf](#)

From the Director of National Intelligence, Dennis C. Blair

Thad,

Many thanks for getting this out to your terrific Coast Guard intel community. Happy Coast Guard Day!

Denny


A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DENNIS C. BLAIR

On August 4th, 2009, as the U.S. Coast Guard continues to provide maritime security to the United States of America, it will celebrate its 219th birthday.

With the signing of the Intelligence Authorization Act of 2002, the Coast Guard joined the national Intelligence Community. As an armed force of the United States, and a federal law enforcement and regulatory agency, the Coast Guard brought to the Intelligence Community a unique mix of maritime access, expertise and emphasis. It also brought capabilities and authorities to actively collect, fuse, analyze, and share intelligence and information between law enforcement and intelligence community agencies. This imperative for information sharing was a lesson of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and the Coast Guard serves as a role model of the collaborative culture needed to protect our national and homeland security interests.

Since 2002, Coast Guard Intelligence and Criminal Investigations has grown significantly to meet emerging maritime security challenges as a component of the Department of Homeland Security and a rapidly evolving Intelligence Community member. Notable successes include the commissioning of a Coast Guard cryptological group, the establishment of an enlisted and warrant officer intelligence rating, and the stand-up of a Coast Guard counterintelligence service. Coast Guard intelligence professionals are serving in defense attaché positions and deployed with Department of Defense forces worldwide.

As the Coast Guard proudly celebrates another birthday, it continues to manifest the service motto of "Semper Paratus" -- Always Ready! On behalf of the entire Intelligence Community, thank you for your unfailing service and devotion to duty.
Dennis C. Blair

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Configuration Management = Good Stewardship

Guest post by RDML Tom Ostebo, Assistant Commandant for Engineering & Logistics (CG-4)

Recent incidents, including a [shipboard fire](#), clearly reveal why configuration management is one of the four cornerstones to logistics transformation in the modernized Coast Guard. The fire, which occurred several weeks ago, resulted from an unauthorized configuration change to equipment onboard the cutter. Fortunately, no injuries and only minor damage resulted from the mishap. However, the incident should have never occurred and the cost of response and repair never incurred, given that the fire was preventable with proper configuration management.

While configuration management is not a new concept, our crews have inherited cutters lacking in documented central configuration control for years. Our modernization initiative, specifically our transformation to a new logistics business model, is driving us all to reassert discipline in our configuration management program and change control processes. Under the new business model, surveys are planned that will establish cutter configuration baselines. The baseline will be managed by a Product Line Manager and configuration audit teams will routinely assess units for their compliance with the approved configuration baseline. Commands will be recognized for their adherence to the baseline and for demonstrated discipline to configuration management processes.

To assist in achieving universal configuration management control and enforcement, configuration management audit teams will be established and chartered to:

- a) Review processes and assets to validate compliance with requirements
- b) Verify that assets conform to the released asset documentation
- c) Direct commanding officers to correct audit non-conformances based on the results of a case-by-case analysis of cost and risk.

In the meantime, no new configuration changes shall be made to a Coast Guard asset that have not been approved by the cognizant configuration control board and documented in the configuration baseline.

Proper configuration management fosters asset sustainability through standard, repeatable and scalable processes. It enables informed decision-making for operations, effective budgeting and efficient change management. Furthermore, a commitment to configuration management benefits both the operational and support communities through reduced break-in time, training time, and maintenance time. I cannot overstress the importance of maintaining strict configuration management. It is absolutely critical to preserving the Coast Guard's mission readiness and ensuring good stewardship of the public's tax dollars.

Posted at [7/30/2009 01:34:00 PM](#) [4 comments](#) 



Wednesday, July 29, 2009

Twitter Updates

Shipmates,

Over the next several weeks I will using Twitter to provide updates on my activities. My staff has been providing content via Twitter as a feed from this Blog and from hearings and other public appearances for a while. We will try to expand our coverage. Let us know what you think, but give us a week or so.

ADM A

Posted at [7/29/2009 06:36:00 PM](#) [6 comments](#) 



Monday, July 27, 2009

Safety Stand Down

Shipmates,

Over the past few weeks an alarming number of shipboard fires have occurred aboard several of our cutters. Most of these fires were the result of performing maintenance and repairs; all were preventable. Although the crew's response in each case was excellent and injuries were limited to minor cases of heat stress, we cannot allow this trend to continue. Safety must remain a top priority for every Guardian.

In light of these events, the Office of Naval Engineering, the Office of Cutter Forces and the Office of Afloat Safety released a Surface Forces message directing an immediate safety stand down for all cutters. This time shall be used to review shipboard policies and local fire response memorandums, inspect fire detection and flooding alarm systems and conduct all-hands fire prevention training. In addition, Commanding Officers of cutters undergoing dockside or drydock repairs shall ensure all fire watch personnel qualifications are up-to-date and that an adequate number of properly-equipped watches are assigned to monitor hot work. A safety stand down message will follow.

Whether at sea, on shore, or at home, we must remain vigilant for our safety as well as that of our shipmates. I described in an [earlier post](#) how I nearly died in a shipyard fire when I was an Ensign. It was a preventable occurrence. Like the mishaps we have seen in recent weeks it involved hotwork (welding) conducted without the proper safety precautions. I was lucky. Luck is no substitute for adherence to universally accepted safety practices. Trust me on this one.

ADM A

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