



# PTEROGRAM

The Official Publication of the Coast Guard Aviation Association  
*The Ancient Order of the Pterodactyl*

Sitrep 2-12 Summer 2012

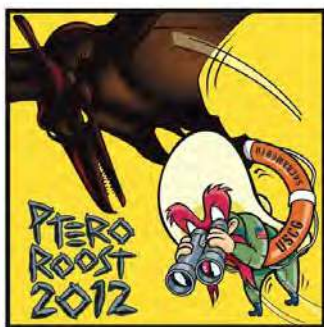
AOP is a non-profit association of active & retired USCG aviation personnel & associates

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Westward Ho!  
Hitch up the Wagons for our next 'Roost!'  
Sacramento, California  
October 11-14, 2012



Our Pthirty-sixth annual Ptero Roost will salute the men and women of Coast Guard Air Station Sacramento in California's capital city at the former McClellan AFB.

Our 'nest' will be at the Lions Gate Hotel and Conference Center, 3410 Westover Street, North Highlands, CA 95652, (916) 643-6222 or 1/866-258-5651. The Room rate is \$92 plus 12% sales and occupancy tax and \$1.25 tourism assessment. Hot breakfasts, high-speed internet, shuttle service to/from Sacramento Intl. A/P, and parking are included in the price. Reservations can be made, modified, or canceled by 20 September by phone or at <http://booking.ihotelier.com/istay/istay.jsp?groupID=735085&hotelID=10307>. Refer to and use group name "Coast Guard Aviation Association" to obtain the group rate. The hotel will honor the \$92 dollar group rate for up to three days before the 11<sup>th</sup> and three days after the 14<sup>th</sup> --- on a space available basis. Call the Lions-

Gate hotel for overflow hotel info once the 'nest' fills up. Please see Page 11 for Roost activities and registration details.



## DUES CURRENT ? — *Please CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL*

**Your mailing label** includes the DATE to which **YOUR TAX DEDUCTIBLE** AOP DUES ACCOUNT is AOK.  
IF THE DATE READS June 2012, **PLEASE PAY AGAIN NOW TO REMAIN IN GOOD STANDING.**

**NOTE:** Changes in dues were approved at the 2007 business meeting and became effective in 2008.

Check Page 23 or the website <http://www.aoptero.org/htm/newmbr.html> for the renewal application and current dues.

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## A Message from Aviator 2863 (CGAA/AOP President)

My Fellow Pterodactyls: This issue of the Pterogram ushers in the arrival of summer and signals the beginning of the Coast Guard change of command season. Many of the commanding officers we routinely work with will be moving on to new leadership positions and new energetic and excited commanders and captains will be taking their places. While the CO's stay is short, the Ptero's in the local area can be an enduring presence that helps anchor the air station in history and culture. For the retirees, I encourage you to attend the change of command and drop in and say hello to the new commanding officer in your area. To the new Commanding Officer's, I encourage you to reach out to your local Ptero Chapter and keep the ties strong. Our retired Pteros are a fantastic resource and can assist with a variety of tasks for you and your crew. As an example, Sector St. Petersburg, FL, under the leadership of CAPT Sherri Dickinson held a dedication and renaming ceremony for their barracks. The barracks were originally constructed as part of Air Station St Petersburg in 1935. CAPT Dickinson dedicated the barracks to the flight crew of CGNR-1240 who lost their lives on the evening of March 5, 1967. While on a search and rescue case, Coast Guard Albatross CGNR-1240 crashed in the Gulf of Mexico 22 miles east of Apalachicola, Florida, six crewmen aboard the aircraft were killed. Nearly forty years later after the tragic loss of CGNR-1240, the wreckage was located in July 2006 offshore Carrabelle, Florida. The wreck site of CGNR-1240 is the official U.S. Coast Guard gravesite and is marked by an 8,000 pound memorial underwater. Vice Admiral Herr (CG Aviator # 1257) officiated at the ceremony and the Pteros provided funding for the reception following the event. This is just one example of how we can work to highlight the legacy of Coast Guard aviation.

There are still a few vacant spots on the Ptero Board that I would love to fill with some new (or old) blood. It's a rewarding experience and I encourage you to consider donating your time. We're looking forward to seeing you all in Sacto this fall!

Steve R.



**PTEROGRAM** is published three times annually as the official publication of The Ancient Order of the Pterodactyl which perpetuates recognition of USCG aviation history and its personnel. Reproduction of Pterogram for further distribution is authorized and encouraged.

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## Taps

We regret to report that the following members  
have recently logged their last flight:

Charles Kimes, P-3099 2/\_\_\_/11

Thomas Cameron, 4377 2/28/12

Richard W. Long, 956 3/7/12

RADM Frederick P. Schubert, 682 3/13/12

Warren E. Atchison, 460 3/14/12

Elmer Lipsey, 554, 4/\_\_\_/12

John J. (Jim) Harris, P-3010 5/14/12

Ethelann "Eph" Shaw (widow of Ptero Wilfred H. Shaw, 662) 6/20/12

Benjamin K. Schaeffer, 803 6/20/12





## MH-65C CGNR 6535 Crew Honored by Ptero Steve Goldhammer, Aviator 1207

LCDR Dale Taylor was the aircraft commander of CG helicopter 6535.



they did serve – they served all of us.”



CG Commandant Adm. Bob Papp addresses those gathered to pay their respects to the crew of CG 6535.



PO3 Andrew Knight served as the flight mechanic for Coast Guard helicopter 6535.

*[Memorial Patch by Bryan Snuffer, CG Artist. Used with permission...Ed.]*

On the evening of 28 February, 2011, MH-65C CGNR 6535 crashed in 13 feet of water near Point Clear on the Eastern side of Mobile Bay during a training flight out of Aviation Training Center Mobile. All four of the crewmen perished: LCDR Dale Taylor, LTJG Thomas Cameron, ASTC Fernando Jorge, and AET3 Andrew Knight. The CGAA Executive Board made a \$5,000.00 donation to the Coast Guard Foundation's fund for the CG-6535, designated for the immediate needs of the families afflicted by this tragedy. A memorial service was held at ATC Mobile on 8 March.



Chief Petty Officer Fernando Jorge was the rescue swimmer assigned to CG helo 6535.



A member of the USCG Band plays "Taps" outside of Hangar 2 at CG Aviation Training Center Mobile during the memorial service for the crew of CG 6535.



CG Aviation Training Center Mobile personnel and family members pay their respects during a ceremony honoring the service and memories of CG helo 6535. USCG photos by PO2 Patrick Kelley.

“Dale, Tom, Nando and Drew answered the call,” said [CG Commandant Adm. Bob Papp](#). “They stepped forward and dedicated their lives to helping others – the only thing stronger than their desire to fly, was their desire to serve. And,



LTJG Thomas Cameron was the pilot assigned to CG helicopter 6535.



“This has been a long, tasking week for all involved as we pushed forward and put in countless hours to find our fallen Guardians and bring them back home,” said CAPT Kenneth Ivery, deputy commander of CG Sector Mobile. “The CG thanks all the responders including local, state and federal agencies, Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Navy Supervisor of Salvage and volunteers. We are also very appreciative of the great city of Mobile and state of Alabama for the support demonstrated during this tragedy.”

**CG Selects Community of  
Mobile, AL as  
‘Shipmate of the Week’**

Time and again we have seen tragedy bring communities together as families. Earlier this week, tragedy struck our service when CG helicopter 6535 went down in Mobile Bay. In keeping with what makes America the greatest country in the world and Mobile, Ala., a CG City, the community came together to

support the Coast Guard during search and rescue operations for LCDR Dale Taylor (Aviator 3483), LTJG Thomas Cameron, (Aviator 4377, assigned to AirSta Borinquen), Chief Petty Officer Fernando Jorge and Petty Officer 3rd Class Andrew Knight.

"From the first responders and volunteers who took part in the search, and expressions of condolence and prayer vigils in the community to the ongoing assistance to families and crews, the people of Mobile proved themselves worthy of the moniker Shipmate," said Capt. Kenneth Ivey, Sector Mobile deputy commander. "As Coast Guardsmen we live, train and work in this community and are proud to call it home, even if only for the few years we are assigned here. Today, as every day, we are humbled and honored by the welcoming openness of this community."

As these days of tragedy give way to a lasting legacy honored by the service and sacrifice of Coast Guard men and women – present and future – the support of the community of Mobile will not be forgotten.

**A Letter from LTJG Andrew  
Kauffman, CGA '09,  
Classmate of  
LTJG Thomas Cameron**

Today, (my wife) Jodi and I were able to attend the Memorial service held for the fallen crew of CG 6535 at Air Station Mobile. I wanted to take this opportunity to share with you just what makes the United States Coast Guard an incredible service and a wonderful family and how proud I am to serve in it. The memorial was held in the hangar bay at Aviation Training Center and included members the CG, Navy, Marines, Army, local Law Enforcement agencies, local rescue groups, and the community. I would estimate the number of people to be somewhere around a thousand, if not more. Looking at the pictures posted after the event, which I highly encourage you to look at, you will notice that there is a "Sea of Blue" paying respect to our fallen brothers. In attendance was also over half the CGA Class of 2009, which says a lot about how much Thomas meant to all of us. The remarks of the Official Party, including the Commandant of the CG, Commanding Officers from both ATC Mobile and Air Station

Borinquen, and the Chaplains were all spoken from the heart and with the utmost respect and sympathy for the crew and their families. Despite how much or little was known about each member of CG 6535, the impact that the four crew members had on everyone in attendance could be felt during the speeches and silence that followed. Despite having years of service under their belt, or being on the final flight to being a fully qualified rescue pilot, these men are true heroes who have given the ultimate sacrifice, their life, for our country. While nobody could feel the pain and sorrows that the families of these men are feeling, I believe that everyone is feeling the loss of four of our brothers. The memorial closed with an extremely emotional flyover including two HH65's and an HH60 followed by a Rifle Salute. As I said earlier, I am truly honored to be a member of the CG. In my opinion, there is no better service...correction, family in the world. It didn't matter if you knew these men before the crash or not, we were all in attendance today because they are family. Our job is one that many people do not understand. They do not understand how someone could risk their life every day for the lives of people who they do not know, never met or seen, and may never see again. Whether we are at a station, on a boat, or part of the aviation community, we live a selfless life in order to keep our country safe. In our eyes, the risks we take are not risks...rather an opportunity to save a life or make a difference. Just four little words, "So others may live," describe the reasons behind our actions. We do it for our families, we do it for our friends, and we do it for our country...

I want to thank each and every one of you who have kept our CG family in their thoughts and prayers. The amount of support that I have seen given to the families of the crew of CG 6535 is unbelievable. I ask that you will continue to keep them in your prayers and thoughts as they go through this extremely difficult time. I also ask that you always keep in your prayers the men and women who serve our country every day, regardless of their service. Thank you and God Bless.



**Military Wings  
Author Unknown**

Once the wings go on, they never come off whether they can be seen or not. It fuses to the soul through adversity, fear and adrenaline, and no one who has ever worn them with pride, integrity and guts can ever sleep through the 'call of the wild' that wafts through bedroom windows in the deep of the night.

When a good pilot leaves the 'job' and retires, many are jealous, some are pleased and yet others, who may have already retired, wonder. We wonder if he knows what he is leaving behind, because we already know.

We know, for example, that after a lifetime of camaraderie that few experience, it will remain as a longing for those past times. We know in the world of flying, there is a fellowship which lasts long after the flight suits are hung up in the back of the closet. We know even if he throws them away, they will be on him with every step and breath that remains in his life. We also know how the very bearing of the man speaks of what he was and in his heart still is.

Because we flew, we envy no man on earth.



**CG Academy Cadet  
Receives Aviation Award**

Tyler Dewechter, a first class cadet from Mount Laurel, N.J., received a Tomorrow's Leader Award at 'Aviation Week's' Laureate Awards ceremony March 7 in Washington, D.C. The ceremony recognizes the exploration, innovation and heroism of current and future leaders.

Dewechter, a mechanical engineering major, is a member of the men's Rugby Club and Officer Christian Fellowship. He spent summers aboard CG Cutters Acushnet, Eagle and Shrike and he interned at the Johnson Space Center in Houston. Dewechter is currently serving as the academy's regimental commander. He hopes to serve as a CG engineering officer and eventually have a career with NASA. He was one of four military academy cadets who were honored.





## AirSta Salem Reunion Held

By Justin A. Rice, Boston Globe *[Re-printed with permission...Ed.]*



Bob "Ace" Adams of Sebago Maine (left) and Edwin Merta of Bellingham, Wash.  
Photo by Justin A. Rice for Boston.com

After being part of a 20 to 30 man crew that closed the Salem Air Station in 1970, Edwin Merta never returned to the defunct USCG base on Winter Island. Until March 26th that is, when 15 retired U.S.C.G. members who were stationed at the Salem Air Station gathered at the old dilapidated hangar for an unofficial reunion and photo shoot.

"I just about cried when I saw the condition of the facility," said Merta, 76, who flew in from Bellingham, Wash. after only learning about the event about two weeks ago. "We knew the city was going to get [the hangar]. I did not expect them to let it go like it has."

The hangar and barracks were turned over to the city in 1972 and have more than deteriorated over the years. Inside the boarded up hangar, the Harbormaster's boats are stored along with several green barrels and other items. One wall is covered with spray-painted messages such as "Brownie Magie Loves Knick" and PJ'S Place 79 + 78."

The city, however, is currently trying to redevelop the old hangar and its former barracks as part of the \$10 million Winter Island Master Plan, which estimates the capital coast of redeveloping the hangar at about \$4.5 million and the barracks at \$3 million.

An identical former CG hangar in Florida has been successfully converted into a function hall.

"It would be [troubling] to me if some of my old duty stations, if they just went to pot," said Robert Nersasian, a retired Army Colonel who currently sits on the Board of Directors of the Friends of

Winter Island, which is advocating the redevelopment of the 32-acre harbor-front park. "But it's tough economic times. If grant money is there the city will find it. But the clock is ticking. We're close to the point of no return."

CG Petty Officer, Connie L. Terrell, who is based in Boston, began organizing the event a few weeks ago. "It actually has kind of taken on a life of its own," Terrell said during a telephone interview on Friday afternoon. "I intended it to be a photo shoot for a history project we're working on; when old retired Coasties hear 'Reunion' they get excited.

"It's kind of like a reunion for them even though it's not an official reunion," Terrell said. "It's a lot of guys who served at the air station from 1935 to 1970 when they closed it. So we'll have a lot of history there." Terrell, who advertised the event on an e-mail listserv for former CG aviators called the Pterodactyls, said after she got some responses she reminded the retired servicemen that it was not a formal reunion. "I'm not planning anything, there will not be a lunch or dinner," she said. "They are still planning on coming." Terrell said the photos will be used for an internal history project.

In 1935 the CG established a seaplane facility at Salem because there was no longer space to expand the Ten Pound Island Gloucester air station, according to the CG's website, which also says that the facility consisted of a single hangar, a paved 250 foot parking apron and two seaplane ramps leading down into the waters of Salem Harbor.

In 1941 air crews from Salem began to fly neutrality patrols along the coast and in 1944 the facility was officially designated as the first Air Sea Rescue station on the eastern seaboard. At the time, it also had state of the art communications and modern repair facilities. Barracks, administrative and dining facilities and motor pool buildings were also part of the complex.

After the war, the base primarily launched search and rescue missions while also hunting for derelicts and conducting medical evacuations. After Salem Air Station closed in 1970, the facilities operations moved to Otis Air

Force base where CG Air Station Cape Cod was established.

CDR Stewart R. Graham, the second helicopter pilot ever in the CG, was also at the photo shoot on Monday. The 94-year-old who lives in Naples, Maine was stationed in Salem from 1957 to 1960. "It brings back good memories," said Graham, who will have a CG hangar on Cape Cod dedicated in his name in July. "I'm kind of looking forward to it; and I'm still on this earth, not beneath it."

Don Calderwood, who served in Salem from 1968-70, asked Graham to autograph a picture of a CG helicopter. "It's pretty neat," Calderwood said as Graham signed the old photo. "I just loved the helicopter."

An actual, helicopter, however, did not land at the old hangar located at 50 Winter Island Road, despite Terrell's best efforts. "There hasn't been a documented landing there since they closed the air station in 1970," Terrell said. "Our aircraft are very different than what was flown in in the 1960s and 1970s so [Coast Guard officials] weren't sure [about landing there]. With boats being there, they didn't feel comfortable landing there just for a photo op. "We decided to err on side of caution, not to damage anyone's sailboats on blocks there."

During the reunion, the former Coasties swapped stories, caught up and flipped through binders of old photographs and newspaper clippings furnished by a local historian, including a 1952 Associated Press photo featuring a CG photographer stationed in Salem who allegedly took a picture of an Unidentified Flying Object flying above Winter Island.

Wearing his old brown flight jacket, Brian Wallace of East Sandwich recalled how the base offered all-you-can-eat lobsters for \$3 on Friday and how the bomb shelter was converted into a haunted house for children each Halloween. "We had a lot of good rescues, just a lot of fond memories," said Wallace, who served in Salem from 1967 to 1970. "I can still picture the choppers inside the building. It is rough to kind of see nostalgia go by the wayside."





Salem Reunion Attendees: (L to R) \*Jack McGrath AT, \*Ed Merta AT, \*Charlie Allard AE, \*Bob Houle AE, \*Ace Adams AD, \*John 'Stick' Calderwood AD, \*Everett Blake AD, \*Bill Hawkins AD, \*Ptero Buzz Kutcher, P-2856 AE, \*Miles N. Barter AT, \*Ptero J. Brian Wallace, LCDR, Aviator 1259, \*Rex Barton AM, Bill Roberts AO, J.F. Parks AD, Ptero Stewart Graham, Aviator 114 & CG Helo Pilot #2, CDR (\*1968-70 crewmembers)

Photo by PA3 Connie Terrell, USCG

## Aviation Maintenance Technicians Keep the Coast Guard Airborne

In today's world it has become quite normal to view jobs that require using your hands or getting them dirty as undesirable. There seems to be a collective dismissing of the importance and merit of manual labor. Skilled tradesmen not only afford us basic comforts, their talents can save lives. In the world of maritime rescue and security, there are few people more valuable to have around than a CG flight mechanic. Officially called aviation maintenance technicians, or AMTs, CG aviation mechanics keep a nation-wide fleet of airplanes and helicopters ready to execute a variety of demanding and sometimes dangerous missions. "Without AMTs we wouldn't be able to keep these planes up and flying," said PO2 Miguel Arellano, an aviation maintenance technician at AirSta

Los Angeles. "We make them able to go out and do those rescues." CG flight mechanics are charged with a wide array of responsibilities that can be grouped into two main categories. "You have two main duties as an AMT," explained Arellano. "You have your mechanical duties and you have your flying duties."

When the helicopters or airplanes are not up in the sky, AMTs are working hard in the hangars, performing a multitude of tasks from metalsmithing, to conducting inspections, to changing tires, to servicing gearboxes, fuselages, wings and rotor blades. AMTs are also responsible for painting the aircraft those instantly recognizable colors. When the alarm sounds and CG aircraft take to the skies, AMTs become an integral part of the flight crew, serving as

flight engineers. AMTs are responsible for safely lowering and retrieving CG rescue swimmers and survivors during training and actual rescue operations. "When you're not hoisting," said Arellano, "you're backing up the pilots as an extra pair of eyes, observing air traffic and making sure they're taking the right steps."

These duties are not taken lightly and acquiring the skill and qualifications to perform them is no easy task. Hopeful AMTs must first meet the required score on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test which is taken upon military enlistment. "Next, they'll go through the Airman Program for four months before A-school," explained Arellano. "They'll go to an air station and learn about the aircraft, how to tow the aircraft in and out and how to fuel. Then it's off to A-school for five months."

AMT A-School is held at the Aviation Technical Training Center in Elizabeth City, N.C. The curriculum is intense. Students are taught about every CG aircraft platform. "You have a test every day for five months," remembered Arellano. "It's tough, but not impossible." Coast Guardsmen endure the training and become AMTs for many different reasons. Arellano originally wanted to pursue the path of a rescue swimmer. "I was pretty athletic, but I had no idea what the whole rate entailed," said Arellano. "I was mechanically inclined already and thought AMT sounded more like something I would want to do."

It takes a lot of effort and training to become an AMT, even for those who possess a mechanical aptitude. For Arellano, however, the rewards are well worth the hard work. "A lot of the time, it's just work, work, work," said Arellano, "but when you get that plane up just as the SAR alarm is going off and rescue three people off a sinking ship; that's the true reward. We made it possible to save those lives."

AMTs often stand humbly behind the scenes of glamorous rescues and don't often receive the recognition their invaluable work deserves. So next time you hear the distinct sound overhead of a CG helicopter or airplane on its way to a rescue or patrolling coastal areas, think of the many skilled and distinguished men and women who keep the CG in the sky.





## **CG Wins AMT Society's Annual Aircraft Maintenance Skills Challenge**

**By AMTCM Gerald Leach**

The AMT Society's Aircraft Maintenance Skills Challenge is an event held each year and is sponsored by Cygnus Aviation. The event is an aviation maintenance competition where teams, (five individuals each), of aircraft mechanics from commercial, military, and aviation colleges compete against each other in various aircraft maintenance evolutions. For the last three years, CG-41 has sponsored a five-person CG team consisting of the AMT RFMC, Chief Oliver Berry Award winner, and the 3 runners up for Chief Oliver Berry award. This year, 30 teams competed including eight from USAF and one USN. The event was held at the Las Vegas Convention Center beginning on Tuesday 5 March and ending on 9 March. The event had separate "winner" categories for military, commercial, and college teams. Each individual team consisted of five members who competed in 16 different events.

I'm extremely proud to pass that not only did we place 1st in the military category but we also earned the recognition of having the best time, "score", of all the teams who competed. We beat out commercial mechanics along with military and colleges. Our next closest competitor was almost 14 minutes behind us. I was extremely impressed in the great pride, professionalism, and dedication that each of our CG mechanics demonstrated during the competition. I've always been convinced we have the best aircraft mechanics available and now it's been proven!

Our CG team consisted of:

AMTCM Gerald Leach, AMT RFMC

AMT1 Jacob Linder, AirSta Humboldt Bay, Chief Oliver Berry Award Recipient

AMT1 James Fielder, AirSta Clearwater

AMT2 Chris Novak, AirSta Port Angeles

AET2 Josh Barrio, AirSta San Diego

Not only was I awed at their performance during the competition but also very impressed with their behavior and the conversations we had outside the event. They are truly dedicated to the CG and love what they do. Once again I

couldn't be more impressed and proud of these 4 CG aircraft maintenance professionals and I know for a fact the CG is lucky to have individuals of this caliber maintaining and flying in our aircraft. They, and others like them, are the reason we continue to accomplish the varied missions that we do each day. Please recognize these individuals if/when able and also take time to show your appreciation to all those dedicated professionals at your unit who work each day to "keep them flying".



### **Why Fly?**

From the birth of aviation in the early 1900s, daring aviators have taken to the skies exhibiting courage and determination. Though a heavily male-dominated endeavor in its early years, pioneering women broke into the world of flying.

But despite trailblazers fighting a hard battle to take flight, aviation still remains a male-dominated industry. Of the nearly 600,000 pilots in the U.S., approximately 6 percent are women. Women also account for less than 4 percent of the more than 500,000 non-pilot, aviation related jobs. Reflecting the industry, of the approximately 4,500 CG members at air stations, less than 5 percent are women.

Despite the male-dominated field, there are still women who yearn for a career in the complex world of flying. Each woman who chose Coast Guard aviation was inspired in different ways as they set out for a tough, but incredibly rewarding career.

For many it was the eternal call of adventure. "I think initially is just sounded like something fun to do. I had joined the flying club at the CG Academy and I got a little taste of getting up in a Cessna and thought that was pretty cool and wanted to give it a try," recalled LT Maria Richardson, a pilot at Air Station San Francisco.

"I originally thought I wanted to fly because it was something that was exciting. It was exhilarating. It was interesting and it provided a lot of different opportunities," added LTJG Rachel Kuffel, a flight student at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla. Kuffel is aiming to get her wings in February 2013 but dreams of the day she will be able to fly missions for the Coast Guard. "The fact that you

could literally go from pulling somebody out of the water in the middle of a hurricane – being responsible for saving their life – that definitely affects me; just the human factor in it. That fact that you really can save lives," said Kuffel.

While adventure is alluring, the desire to fly can also be sparked by a single defining moment. Such was the case for Petty Officer 3rd Class Heather Valentino, an aviation maintenance technician at Air Station Cape Cod, Mass. Valentino was waiting to go to school to be a machinery technician when fate altered her course. "I was down in Rhode Island working at a small boat station one day and I saw a helicopter fly over the station. I asked to go up to the air station for a tour to see what was out there and I took a ride on a helicopter. We went around the Statue of Liberty. We had the door open and after that I was completely sold," said Valentino.

Petty Officer 3rd Class Ashlee Leppert, an avionics electrical technician at Air Station Detroit, initially joined the Coast Guard to serve her country. She was still deciding on what path her career would when there was a similar "fateful fly-by." "I just remember being a non-rate and seeing a helicopter fly over," said Leppert. That was kind of the day where I looked up and said, 'Yep, I'll do that one day.'"

Just as each service member is unique so too are their stories for how they found a career in aviation. But whether it was a call from adventure or fate in the form of a passing helicopter, aviators remain committed to their profession. A profession that for many is a dream.

"Once I got to flight school and was able to solo, that was just a chorus of angels," recalls Richardson. I fell in love with flying. I've been living a dream since then."



### **Navigation...It's Not Just in the Cockpit**

As a plane soars through the skies, it is a pilot's duty to know exactly where they are at any given time. They depend on a suite of tools from aeronautical charts and GPS systems to radar and air traffic control for help.

An aviator knows they can depend on an assortment of tools as they plan and

carry out their missions, but what about navigating their life and career? The answer to that question, for the CG aviator, is a mentor.

One of the service's newest aviators, Ptero LT Caroline Kearney, Aviator 4329, is stationed at Air Station North Bend, her first unit as a CG aviator. Kearney, a recent graduate of flight school, is becoming more proficient in her qualifications but also has questions about her career in flight. "At flight school, you learn how to fly but they don't teach you how to craft your career, to get to where you want to go," said Kearney.

Ptero CDR Laura Thompson, Aviator 3324, a career aviator, has experiences in the aviation community that have shaped who she is today. She knows that part of her role as a leader within her community is sharing those experiences with those rising through the ranks. "It's hard what we do, it's hard for aviation specifically. Flight school is hard. Your first unit is hard. Qualifying is hard. And sometimes it's just nice to know that it was hard for others too," said Thompson. "It helps people get through those challenges and helps them succeed."

"As a mentor, depending on what is going on with that person, I've most likely been there and can share how I dealt with it," added Thompson. "I can share about how I could have done it better or could have done it worse, giving them some tools to help them succeed."

With hundreds of women gathered together at International Women in Aviation in early March, it was a perfect opportunity for many young aviators to seek advice on their profession and careers from mentors, including those outside their unit.

"I feel like being here really helps out because you're getting mentorship from a level where it's not someone who's your supervisor," said Kearney. "So you feel more comfortable asking questions and going a little bit beyond what you would want to ask your supervisor."

The CG's various airplanes and helicopters are found at different air stations across the country and Kearney finds value in talking to those outside her air station. She says it opens up a different world of aviators that come from different communities, like fixed or rotary

wing, or different specialties, like engineering and operations. "Seeing those outside your air station really brings together different experiences that aren't necessarily at your unit. Especially since I'm so new to the aviation community," said Kearney.

"Mentoring junior folks that enter the organization, whether it be women or men, helps that person succeed," said Thompson. "For one, it offers a vision. It also may open their eyes to opportunities they aren't aware of."

Thompson mentors individuals in the aviation community but she knows it also strengthens the organization as a whole. "In the long term, mentoring ultimately helps the CG retain people and it also may help someone decide if this is what they really want," said Thompson. Because just like we choose people to be in the CG, people need to choose to be in the CG. So I see mentoring as an important piece of our organization."

Aircrews must know where they are and know where they are headed, following the best route. Today's aviators rely on advanced GPS and radar systems to let them know where they are at, but to pursue what path their careers will take, they rely on mentors to navigate life's challenges.



## Cockpit Communication

Coast Guard aircrews complete thousands of missions a year, often in extreme weather conditions, low visibility or in the darkness of night. But no matter how tough a mission can be, pilots, flight mechanics and rescue swimmers rely on one thing to succeed – communication.

Each aircrew member fulfills a different role while in flight, providing different perspectives throughout a mission. The pilots and flight crew must constantly communicate these unique perspectives, passing vital information that allows them to perform each of their missions.

"As a flight mechanic, we are the eyes and ears between the rescue swimmer and the pilots," said Petty Officer 3rd Class Ashlee Leppert, an avionics electrical technician at Air Station Detroit,

Mich. "There is constant communication and constant evaluation of the situation, updating the pilots on their position, their height, their speed."

"They can't always see what we're doing and we can't see what they're doing, so talking and communicating is pretty much our lifeline," added Petty Officer 3rd Class Heather Valentino, an aviation maintenance technician at Air Station Cape Cod, Mass. "There's not a lot of visual so you have to rely on verbal a lot of the time."

One person who definitely has a different view from those inside her helicopter is Petty Officer 2nd Class Jaime Vanacore, a rescue swimmer at Air Station Atlantic City, N.J. As the rescue swimmer, Vanacore is often outside the helicopter and may be lowered onto a boat or even directly into the water to save a life.

"I think everybody sees how the mission is going through different eyes. Having all those angles, one person can't see everything that's going on, so it's important that everybody's on the same page," said Vanacore.

Whenever a mission involves hoisting, it requires an even more concentrated focus on communicating. Lt. Maria Richardson, a pilot at Air Station San Francisco depends on her crew's unique perspective to keep everyone safe during more difficult parts of a mission.

"If you can't see the vessel or if you can't see the rescue swimmer, they're telling you all the things you need to know about what's going on," said Richardson. "If our crew is not efficiently communicating, the pilot doesn't know what's going on and you end up maybe jerking the swimmer out of the water or pulling the rescue basket off the boat, or hurting somebody on deck."

To succeed at each of their missions, whether it be a rescue of a mariner lost at sea or pursuing a drug runner, each member of the aircrew knows that it all comes back to being part of a team; a team that communicates.

"We succeed as a team, we fail as a team. There's no one person that can take accountability for the whole flight evolution. We're a team. One set of eyes can't do as good of a job as three to four sets of eyes," said Leppert.





## **“A Legacy Discovered On the Internet” Published in *Naval History*, August 2005**

**By Ptero Tom Beard, Aviator 1104 © 2005/2012**

*A single faint, “Mayday...Arab 514,” our squadron’s call sign, came over my radio just as I was lifting off a Miramar runway in a Skyraider (AD-6). Then nothing — nothing but the vision over my right shoulder thirty miles away of an ominous stain of death erupting, like a putrid black tower climbing into a cloudless, bright blue sky. I whipped my aircraft around, still at full power and sped toward the only evidence of distress.*

*Where was flight leader Arab 511? Was Arab 514 the pyre? A close flyby minutes later revealed to me a splash of char and aircraft fragments strewn among boulders in the mountains east of San Diego. The debris was a Skyraider’s remains. Only traces of green paint on wingtips confirmed it as our squadron’s aircraft but no numbers. Where was the wingman? Which one was it? No responses to my calls to either — silence. So alone, now over a half century ago, I began a search in the mountainous terrain for the second aircraft and pilot; one already accounted for in the dusky smudged aluminum shards scattered among the boulders.*

This event initiated my first awareness of and encounter with CG aviation.

After searching several minutes looking for more wreckage or parachutes, I got a call from “CG Rescue,” an Albatross (UF-1G) from CG AirSta San Diego I spotted flying toward me. The silver amphibian with the distinctive black-bordered, yellow band around the empennage was the first CG aircraft I had ever seen. I was leery about being relieved of my search—suspicious of their abilities—of what they could, or would do. It was my squadron mates lost and missing. Were these approaching, anonymous aviators capable? Reluctantly, at their insistence, I relinquished my vigil and allowed strangers to take charge.

The next CG aircraft I saw wasn’t until several years after this episode. This was when I was checking out as a copilot in the CG’s Albatross (now designated HU-16E) and Hercules (HC-130B). For the following ten years as a CG aviator, I was to learn very little more about this inconspicuous air force,

and virtually nothing of its history or legacy. I heard or read almost nothing about the people who made bold moves creating this unique service, accomplishing heroic missions, or creating significant advances to aviation technology. Little documentation or lore was available. Many years later, when writing aviation and maritime history, I discovered the public, including the other military services, knew as little about CG aviation as I did as a Naval and CG aviator during my more than two decades of active years with the services.

That enigma is finally being exposed. After being in existence for nearly 100 years and virtually unknown, CG aviation is now presenting its colors and recognizing its heroes and their feats publicly mostly through volunteer efforts by the non-profit fraternal organization, The Coast Guard Aviation Association (CGAA), also known as The Ancient Order of the Pterodactyl (AOP), <http://www.aoptero.org>. Today, anyone worldwide can view the exploits and review historic events through an Internet site, <http://uscgaviationhistory.aoptero.org>. These resolute crewpersons serving the nation and humanity along with their accomplishments are finally exposed because a few care to remember, and as it turns out, many care to know.

The “Pteros” (friendly term for AOP) began in 1977 when some former CG aviators joined “to actively contribute to the enlargement and perpetuation of the history of CG Aviation and the recognition thereof, both internally and in areas external to the service.”

The solitary nature of rescues and other CG aviation missions typically means little or no evidence exists afterwards except for terse, coded official reports in files relegated to archival obscurity and occasional local news items clipped and filed in un-read albums. However, this began to change in the mid-1980s when CG aircraft began carrying video cameras. Since then, news services have had opportunities to show some of the dynamics of rescues and other largely unnoticed missions. This exposure encouraged greater news reporting on contemporary activities. Pub-

lics’ interest is increasing on this coverage with questions leading to the past. But researchable records of activities, people, aircraft, and facilities, both written and visual, are virtually non-existent from the post WW-II period up to the turn of the century.

The Ptero’s task, to overcome this problem, was to seek and publish anything they could generate from any sources. This is an ongoing endeavor.

Nearly all information now gathered for the website is through the all-volunteer efforts of a few dedicated mostly former CG aviators and crewmembers initially spearheaded by retired CDR Gilbert “Gib” Brown, whose ideas and talents created the website.

Ten years ago, a handful of former CG aviators, following Brown’s lead, joined as an informal committee to create an effective method to retrieve data and to tell the stories from CG aviation. They soon experienced what earlier researchers learned and why so few publications exist on CG aviation. There was little information readily available.

Thus began a major sweep to locate and digitally record what could be discovered. This effort led to the idea of an Internet site to show results of captured materials. The CG historian’s office provided access to all their documents and photographs for digitizing. Committee members combed file cabinets in offices across the country and sought out individuals whose habit it was to keep copies of official paperwork, photos, and manuals. These efforts are continuing and expanding.

Nearly every day the CGAA history committee receives personal records from former CG members who learn of a need for their documents. Because of active brush beating, one example, the “Roll of Valor” on the website contains over 580 recipients’ names for medals and awards. Records of valiant achievements by CG crews from the past no longer will reside in obscurity. These names are real people who existed as a core of a grand legacy.

For example, to compile a list of medal winners where no official files existed, the group had to broadcast announcements and ask anyone who ever received medals or honors to forward copies of their awards. Word of mouth took over. The committee has not yet reached all the live recipients and then of course there are those who are no

longer alive to respond. Tough detective work and diligent digging by volunteers is uncovering many of these awards otherwise relegated to permanent obscurity. The overall list generated is still far from complete but represents a greater acknowledgement of those having served with honors, than no record at all. To see the "Role of Valor" go to <http://uscgaviationhistory.aoptero.org/coldfusion/medals00.cfm>. (If you are aware of known award recipients not reported on this list, send them to <http://uscgaviationhistory.aoptero.org/contact.html> or mail to AOP, P.O. Box 222905 Chantilly, VA 20153-2905.)

Obscurity is true with other records as well. For example, CG aviators have always and continue to participate in many special events (law enforcement, scientific research, humanitarian relief, etc.) outside typical air station activities. Some involve individuals singularly or solitary aircraft engaged in foreign hostilities, assignments with other military services, or unusual special missions. Rare are accounts of these activities in retrievable archival records. The Ptero group, in these instances, is forced to locate participants, when learning of such events and ask for possible saved record copies and personal accounts.

This effort, in one instance, led to a providential find of very rare film footage of some of the first ever helicopter tests. The committee acquired several cans of film from an individual who saved them from the time of WW II. They are now digitized, saving this priceless documentation from its eventual decay into oblivion.

Fortunately, for history, some early aviators are still alive and kept copies of documents and photographs. Other finds come from family members who did not throw away collected memoirs. One such personal archive (two cardboard boxes full of personal accounts, correspondence, and news clippings) was a record of the development of the naval helicopter. (See: *Wonderful Flying Machines*, Naval Institute Press.)

Until recently, the pilot of the Navy's famous NC-4 — the first aircraft to cross the Atlantic, in 1919 — was not acknowledged for his role. CDR Elmer Stone, USCG, was CG aviator #1. He spent nearly a decade from WW I through 1925 working for the Navy on aviation engineering projects. Stone was

the Navy's chief seaplane test pilot and later helped design aircraft carrier aircraft launching and recovery machinery. Many CG aviators that created new advances in aviation history followed Stone achievements. His story is finally being told in a recent book (*Float Planes, Flying Boats and The First Aircraft Carriers - The CG Contribution to Early Naval Aviation*) written by Ptero Robert Workman, Aviator 914. [See Letter Below...Ed]

The vision of an approaching CG aircraft is now a common site in the aviation community and public as well. Major national disasters such as Hurricane Katrina, for example, painted a huge picture of CG aviation in the national image. Deeds by crewmembers on missions are now daily-news fares. Furthermore, CG aviation in action is a part of public life routinely fictionalized in television dramas and motion pictures. After well-publicized events, few anywhere should doubt the credentials of CG aviation personnel, as I did on that disastrous day over a half-century ago.

*N.B. About that missing plane and pilot: Arab 511 crashed and the pilot was killed. Arab 514 went into shock seeing his flight leader, in formation just feet away, smack into the boulder-strewn mountainside at 250 knots while on a mock strafing run. Arab 514 made one partial radio call, turned off his radio, and returned to base. He sat in the ready room in numbed silence not speaking to anyone. As a result, no one became aware of his missing flight leader until later. Everyone at the squadron in those moments was reacting to another squadron pilot killed at the same time as Arab 511 in a similar crash 200 miles away. [Ed. Note: These were the actual official Navy squadron call signs used at the time.]*

### VADM Robert F. Dunn, USN (Ret.), President, Naval Historical Foundation Endorses Ptero Robert Workman's Book

In *Float Planes and Flying Boats*, Robert Workman goes far beyond the subjects implied by the title and covers in carefully presented detail not only the history of early Naval Aviation but the detailed history of Coast Guard aviation

and its continuing contributions to the defense of the United States and the safety of all its citizens. The story is well-presented backed by a collection of documentation, charts and photographs which alone will serve as a worthy reference for years to come.



### Ptero/Ancient Albatross VADM John. P. Currier, Aviator 1877, Becomes CG Vice-Commandant

On 18 May, VADM John Currier relieved VADM Sally Brice-OHara to become the 28th Vice Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard.

VADM Currier becomes the 28th Vice Commandant after serving as the Coast Guards first Deputy Commandant for Mission Support where he was responsible for oversight of resources, engineering, acquisition, telecommunications and information technology. VADM Currier is a veteran aviator with over 6000 flight hours in Coast Guard and Navy fixed and rotary wing aircraft. He is currently the Ancient Albatross: the longest serving Coast Guard Aviator on active duty. As a Flag officer, VADM Currier also served as Assistant Commandant for Acquisition, Commander of the Thirteenth District and Coast Guard Chief of Staff

Linda and I look forward to his continued leadership and commitment, along with his wife Mary Jane, to the men, women and families of the Coast Guard.

As a maritime service, we all know that relieving the watch is a normal part of our routine. This is true for senior leadership as well, where a relief also marks an opportunity to recommit ourselves to excellence in operations and mission support, while preparing for the future.

Semper Paratus. ADM Bob Papp, Commandant, sends.



*Congratulations!*



## **2012 Roost Plan of The Day**

### **Sacramento, CA October 11-14**

#### **Tours, Attractions, and Transportation**

Three group tours are scheduled, as well a golf outing. Self-directed local activities and tour information will be available when you check-in. Local self-directed tours and attractions require a rental car, carpooling, taxi/shuttle or bus transportation. The LionsGate will have shuttle transportation available on a limited basis, so carpooling is highly recommended. The commissary and exchange are within walking distance of the hotel. The Aerospace Museum of California and air station are both 1 mile from the hotel.

#### **Self-Directed Local Tours**

Local tours include visiting downtown Sacramento where visitors can explore Old Town Sacramento which is a shopping area with a flare of the Gold Rush Days, a Sacramento River walk area, the world renowned California State Railroad Museum, Crocker Art Museum, Discovery History Museum, and State Capital Building, Museum and Grounds. The Stanford Mansion, California History Museum, and several other interesting museums and attractions are located near the Capital Mall area. Other nearby gold-rush era communities with old towns, museums, and shops include Auburn and Folsom. Folsom Lake, the Auburn Ravine Recreation Area, North and South Forks of the American River, and the American River Bike Trail are available for the recreational enthusiasts. Coloma is a short drive away where a state park commemorates where gold was first discovered by John Marshall, sparking the gold rush in 1849. Apple Hill and Placerville are an hour drive away for those interested in fall activities in the foothills' apple country, and in shopping for arts and crafts. Thunder Valley Casino Resort is located in nearby Lincoln and Redhawk Casino is a short drive up Highway 50 for the gamblers who are on a lucky streak (or wish to be!).

#### **2012 SACRAMENTO ROOST TOURS**

##### **Friday, Oct. 12 0800-1630 TOUR A Lake Tahoe Splendors**

Lake Tahoe is one of our amazing national treasures! The Washoe Indians came here to gather and celebrate the splendor of this natural masterpiece, and now visitors from around the world still come to experience the enchantment of Lake Tahoe. At 22 miles long and 12 miles wide, it is the largest alpine lake in North America. With an average depth of 989 feet, and a deep point of 1,645 feet, the lake contains enough water to cover the entire state of California to a depth of 14.5 inches. Surrounded by the majestic peaks of the Sierra Nevada, it is indeed a sight to behold. Enjoy a cruise aboard the M.S. Dixie, an award winning paddle wheel passenger vessel. Take in dazzling vistas of the Sierra, the dramatic splendor of Emerald Bay, charming Fannette Island and see the unique Vikingsholm Castle. The cost is \$68 per person, and includes roundtrip deluxe motor coach, bus driver, tip and cruise. Light refreshments are available for purchase aboard the M.S. Dixie. ([www.zephyrcove.com/msdixie.aspx](http://www.zephyrcove.com/msdixie.aspx))



##### **Friday, Oct. 12 0900-1600 TOUR B Empire Mine and Naggiar Vineyards**

The Empire Mine is the site of the oldest, largest, and richest gold mine in California. From 1850 to its closing in 1956, it produced 5.8 million ounces of gold, which would fill a box 7 feet on each side. It is estimated that this represented only 20% of the available gold...80% remains. George Roberts, the original discoverer of the gold soon sold his interest and by 1869 William Bourn Sr. owned controlling interest. The Bourn family maintained control of the mine until 1929 when it was sold to Newmont Mining. It ceased operation in 1956. In 1975 the State purchased the surface property as the Empire Mine State Historic Park. The Park contains many of the original mine buildings, the owner's cottage and the restored gardens and grounds as well as the entrance to 367 miles of abandoned and flooded shafts and tunnels. The Park continues to draw thousands of worldwide visitors each year and is noted for its historical tours of the Bourn Cottage, the

mine yard and "living history" events. The Park museum has a scale model of the underground workings of the Empire/Star mine complex, a "gold room" which displays ore samples from local mines, an Assay Office, and an extensive mineral collection. A video entitled "Tears from the Sun" depicting various gold mining techniques is shown on a regular basis. ([www.empiremine.org](http://www.empiremine.org))

The Naggiar Vineyards and Winery is a family run operation established in the Sierra Foothills near Grass Valley in 1998. After retiring from Hewlett Packard, Mike Naggiar and his wife Diane decided to turn their small vineyard hobby into a full time business and become growers of top quality premium grapes. A three year search led them to their current 160 acre Sierra Foothill location in Grass Valley. Over the next six years, they sold each year's crop to discriminating wineries in Napa, Sonoma and nearby Sierra winemakers, establishing a reputation for being one of the top quality, premium wine grape growers in the region. Now the operation includes the production of high quality, boutique wines, emphasizing Rhone, Bordeaux and Italian varietals. Their wines have garnered numerous medals and recognition, and the winery was nominated as the Sacramento area's Best Winery in 2010. This tasting event will convince you that California has many great wineries outside of the Napa Valley complex.

This tour will take you through the rolling foothills of the Sierra, along historic Highway 49 to the old mining town of Grass Valley. Disembarking from the bus, we will have a docent led tour of the Empire Mine State Historic Park and a fascinating look at a major hard rock gold mining operation. After the tour, back on the bus for a 45 minute ride to the Naggiar Vineyard, where we will be hosted by Mike Naggiar, the owner. He will brief us on the Vineyard history, grape growing and harvesting and wine making as we are seated in a beautifully furnished private tasting room. There we will enjoy a selection of savory appetizers, each accompanied by an appropriate Naggiar wine. The cost is \$65 per person, and includes round trip motor coach, driver and tip; entrance fee and tour of the Empire Mine, and the wine and food pairing at Naggiar Vineyards. Because of space limitations at the private tasting room, we must limit this tour to 30 people. <http://www.naggiarvineyards.com/>



### **Saturday, Oct. 13 0800-1700 TOUR D Alcatraz Island & San Francisco Pier 39 area**

The current TV production "Alcatraz" inspired us to offer this tour. Step back in time, and experience the legendary island that has been a civil war fort, a military prison and one of the most notorious federal penitentiaries in U.S. history. This memorable tour includes a 45 minute audio presentation featuring actual correctional officers and prisoners who lived and worked on the Island; an orientation video, ranger and docent tours, historic gardens and abundant wildlife. Upon returning to Pier 33, you will have an opportunity to explore the San Francisco waterfront, including Pier 39 which offers unparalleled Bay views, dining, entertainment and shopping attractions. (Note that some of the roads and walkways on Alcatraz are steep, although there are several rest stops where you can catch your breath and take in the great views. Athletic or walking shoes are recommended.) ([www.alcatrazcruises.com](http://www.alcatrazcruises.com))

The tour bus will take you to the Bay area via I-80 through Davis, Vacaville, Fairfield, Vallejo, Berkeley and across the Bay Bridge to the waterfront's Pier 33 where you will board the boat to Alcatraz. You can stay on Alcatraz as long as you like, but should allow 2 ½ hours for the entire trip. Departures from the Island are about every 30 minutes. Once back at Pier 33, you are free to explore on your own until the 1500 departure time back to Lionsgate. The cost is \$60 per person, and includes round trip motor coach, driver and tip, boat transportation to/from the Island, and the Alcatraz audio tour and video presentation.

### **Events and Activities THURSDAY 11 OCTOBER**

**Roost Registration and Hospitality Room:** The Hospitality House is the General's House. Check-in, relax, meet old friends, and enjoy the rooms and grounds. Cash bar. The House will be open 1400-2300. Visitor information will be provided in your packet. Evening meal will be on your own.

### **Events and Activities FRIDAY 12 OCTOBER**

**0730 – Hospitality House Opens:** Check-in continues throughout the day. The Hospitality House will close at 1700 and



reopen after the Roost Reception.

**0800 – 1630 TOUR A Lake Tahoe Splendors : \$68 / person**

**0900 - 1600 TOUR B Empire Mine and Naggiar Vineyards: \$65 / person**

**0800 - 1630 Self Directed Activities**

**1730 – 2000 Roost Reception at the Officers Club:** Heavy hors d'oeuvres in the ol' Officers Club. Get reacquainted with old friends and meet our sponsors. Cash Bar. Casual dress. **\$30 / person.**

**Events and Activities SATURDAY 13 OCTOBER**

**0730 – Hospitality House Opens:** The Hospitality House will be open throughout the day, but will close at 1700 and reopen after the banquet.

**0800 – 1700 TOUR D Alcatraz Island and San Francisco Pier 39 area: \$60 / person**

**0800 Golf – Morgan Creek Championship Golf Course:** Golf outing includes green fees, cart, and prizes. Lunch in NOT included, but a restaurant is available in the clubhouse. Hosted by Ptero CAPT Mike Eagle. Carpooling is required. <http://www.morgancreekclub.com/> **\$55 / person.**

**1200 - 1600 Salute to the Coast Guard at the Aerospace Museum of California and CGAS SACRAMENTO Open House:** Air Station and museum open to the public for special Coast Guard day activities. Tours of the air station, active CG Aircraft, and 1705 Memorial. Special admission price for the Aerospace Museum of California - lecture and book signing by CAPT (ret) Bob Workman – author of “Float Planes and Flying Boats”, USCG Exhibit, open cockpits, and lectures/videos.

**0800 - 1700 Self Directed Activities**

**1800 – 2200 Annual Awards Banquet at the Aerospace Museum of California:** Cocktail Hour (cash bar) 1800 - 1900. Featuring CG Awards sponsored by CGAA. Dinner options of: 1) Spice Glazed Pork Loin, 2) Seared Salmon, or 3) Garlic Ravioli (vegetarian selection). All served with spinach salad, German chocolate cake and coffee/tea. Cash Bar. **Coat and Tie or military Service Dress Blue. - \$50 / person.**

**Events and Activities SUNDAY 14 OCTOBER**

**0830 – 1200 Coast Guard Aviation Update followed by Business Meeting at the Officers Club:** Includes coffee and pastries. Coast Guard Aviation update followed by the annual Business Meeting. **- \$10/ person.**

**1230 – 1430 BAR-B-Que at CGAS SACRAMENTO:** Hosted by CGAS Sacramento, and cooked and served to perfection by the Gold Country Chapter of the CPOA. Please take the time to visit the CG1705 Memorial, which was funded in part by CGAA. Casual Dress. Bar-B-Que fixins. **- \$15 / person.**

**Notes:**

Regular registrations close by 10 September, **registration fee: \$20**

Late registrations accepted through 1 October, **late registration fee: \$30 after 10 September**

T-Shirt Orders must be received by 10 September

T-Shirt prices prior to 10 September (listed below), after 10 September prices go up by \$5; order early, shirts will be available at the roost but not all sizes may be available, shirt has Sacramento 2012 Roost logo and color is aircraft “yellow”, be sure to get your collector's item shirt.

T-Shirt: Small, medium, large, XL: \$20

T-Shirt: 2XL, 3XL: \$25

T-Shirt: 4XL, 5XL: \$30

Preferred registration online at <http://www.aoptero.org/>

Or – write your check to “Roost 2012” and return to: SACTO ROOST 2012, PO Box 242, Newcastle, CA 95658.

Contact for Questions: [roost12admin@cgaviationassn.org](mailto:roost12admin@cgaviationassn.org) or Steve Delikat: 916-783-2952 or Jerry Mohlenbrok: 916-663-4822

Refunds on case by case basis

# REGISTRATION SACRAMENTO ROOST - OCT. 11-14 2012

Preferred registration online at:

<http://www.aoptero.org/roost12sac/roost12online.php>

**REGULAR REGISTRATIONS CLOSE 10 SEP**



NAMES/Ptero Number:		
Guest Name(s):		
Names you wish to have on name tag.		
ADDRESS:		
CITY,STATE,ZIP		
PHONE		
EMAIL ADDRESS		
DATE ARRIVING		

**Roost T-Shirts:** T-Shirt prices prior to 10 September (listed below), after 10 September prices go up by \$5, order early, shirts will be available at the roost but not all sizes may be available. T-shirt has Sacramento 2012 Roost logo and color is aircraft "yellow", be sure to get your collector's item shirt.. Check roost web site for image of logo.

**Shirt Orders must be received by 10 September, 2012.**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Total per item</i>
Small	\$20		
Medium	\$20		
Large	\$20		
XL	\$20		
2XL	\$25		
3XL	\$25		
4XL	\$30		
5XL	\$30		

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Cost per Person</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Total per Item</i>
<b>FRIDAY, October 12</b>			
<b>Tour A - Lake Tahoe Splendors</b> (0800 -1630)	\$68		
<b>Tour B - Empire Mine and Naggia Vineyards</b> (limited to 30 people) (0900 -1600)	\$65		
<b>Self Directed:</b> Self directed activities. Information on local tours and sites will be in your registration packet or available at the hotel.	NA	NA	NA
<b>Event C – Roost Reception</b> Heavy hors d'oeuvres in the ol' Officers Club. Get reacquainted with old friends and meet our sponsors. Cash Bar.(1730 - 2000)	\$30		



<b>SATURDAY, October 13</b>			
<b>Tour D - Alcatraz Island and San Francisco Pier 39 area</b> (0800 – 1700)	<b>\$60</b>		
<b>Event E --- Golf</b> 0800 - Morgan Creek Championship Golf Course. Price includes green fees, cart and prizes. (Lunch NOT included). Hosted by Ptero CAPT Mike Eagle.	<b>\$55</b>		
<b>Self Directed:</b> Self directed activities. <u>Information on Air Station tours, Aerospace Museum of California” Salute to the Coast Guard” activities,</u> local tours, and sites will be in your registration packet or available at the hotel.	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>
<b>Event F - Awards Banquet ---</b> at the Aerospace Museum of California Cocktail Hour (cash bar) from 1800 to 1900. Banquet starts promptly at 1900.	<b>\$50</b> Spice Glazed Pork Loin  Seared Salmon  Garlic Ravioli (vegetarian selection)	—  —  —	
<b>SUNDAY, October 14</b>			
<b>Event G --- State of Coast Guard Aviation and Business Meeting.</b> (0830 - 1200) <i>Coffee and pastries provided.</i>	<b>\$10</b>		
<b>Event H - BAR-B-QUE at CGAS SACTO</b>  Hosted by CGAS Sacramento, and cooked and served to perfection by the Gold Country Chapter of the CPOA (1230 – 1430)	<b>\$15</b>		
<b>REGISTRATION FEE</b> (per registration – NOT- per person)	<b>\$20</b> <b>\$30 after September 10</b>	Active duty None	
<b>Total Cost</b>			<b>\$ _____</b>

Register on line at: <http://www.aoptero.org/roost12sac/roost12online.php>

**OR -Write your check to “ Roost 2012” and return this form and check to:**

**SACTO ROOST 2012**

**PO Box 242**

**Newcastle, CA 95658**

**Contact for Questions: Steve Delikat 916-783-2952**

**Jerry Mohlenbrok 916-663-4822**

**Roost12@cgaviationassn.org**



## CG Air Station Traverse City: The Snowiest Air Station in the Coast Guard

By LT Nathan Shakespeare, Aviator 4274

Each area of responsibility has a different set of challenges. One of District Nine's unique challenges is its "Hard Water" season: during the extended winter months, D9 units have to adapt to the limitations that come with freezing lakes and that ever present lake effect snow. To surface units on the lakes, this hard water season means putting the small boats in the garage to stand up ice rescue teams and airboat operations. For Traverse City's five MH-65C helos, this means low flying to avoid icing, limited hoist training opportunities, occasional whiteout conditions, and an overall reduction in flight hours.

*While not an account of any winter day in particular, the following narrative paints a picture of the challenges facing the CG's snowiest Air Station.*

The SAR alarm wakes you up what seems like moments after your head hits the pillow on a cold February night for a report of a person who has fallen through the ice near Duluth, MN. When you get to the OPCEN, your ODO has Sector Sault St. Marie on the phone and they want to know how long it will take for you and your crew to get to Duluth. While you are fielding the phone call from Sector, your dutiful co-pilot is already looking up the weather and has pulled up the location of the PIW from [findlatitudeandlongitude.com](http://findlatitudeandlongitude.com) and started to look at a flight path on [Skyvector.com](http://Skyvector.com).\*

As usual for this time of year, there are 600 foot ceilings with three miles of visibility from light snow throughout the entire AOR and your flight path has you navigating the 20 miles over land to Lake Michigan, across the lake, and then some additional 100 miles over rising terrain just to get you to your first fuel stop at Rheinlander, WI (KRHI) airport. You tell Sector Sault St. Marie you will be on-scene in about three and a half hours and that you will call them from the air to discuss coordination of your first fuel stop.

*Thought: Good thing we cancelled the earlier duty flight for this weather; otherwise we'd almost be bagged out just as we arrived on scene!*

After getting all three bulky layers on under your ADC (dry suit for those fixed

wingers) you meet the entire aircrew outside of maintenance control to do your preflight brief. Maintenance informs you that, though Sector requested an aircraft with FLIR installed, the only FLIR equipped aircraft in the hangar never came back up after its night flight from some discrepancies. Having just discussed how the FLIR excels at finding warm bodies when viewed against a frigid icy background at the weekly pilot meeting, this news is disappointing.

You complete the weather portion of the brief to the crew, including divert fields if the weather worsens and the plan to use the Low-Vis route to get from the Air Station out to Lake Michigan. No questions from the crew.

Aircrew helmets and flight gloves on, you climb into the MH-65C with max gas loaded for your crew composition. Despite the phenomenal communications capabilities that come from the new MH airframe, you have to trade 200 lbs of gas (about 20 minutes of flight time) to stay below max gross weight in a normal SAR configuration.

Strapped into the aircraft, the maintenance watch captain and his line crew open the hangar doors as you are towed out onto the icy ramp. The tug driver struggles to find traction, but is able to follow a path through the snow that was cleared just moments before by the junior watch stander with the base's Caterpillar snow plow.

Ice chocks set, chocks in, parking and rotor brakes set, tug disconnected, it's time for the "Before Starting Engines" checklist. Seven minutes later, CG Rescue 6598 is ready for takeoff making traffic calls on CTAF as it taxis out to the normal takeoff position. After a quick instrument takeoff brief, just in case you white-out in the snow cloud you will inevitably kick up, you pull pitch and, clearing the snow cloud, are on your way.

Conditions on the Leelanau Peninsula Low-Vis route are not bad; the weather is just good enough and your flight mechanic pipes up as you approach the portion of the route with higher power lines. Once you hit Lake Michigan, it's "On the Modes" as you ask your co-pilot to engage the Flight Director at 400

AGL and 130 KIAS. Glad to be over the relative safety of the open water, you have a chance to, as a reminder; direct everyone's attention to the points on the H-65 that are known to ice up first. Everyone reports back; so far, so good.

Unfortunately, with the low ceilings in the area, you'll have to avoid the higher inland terrain of Rheinlander (KRHI) airport (your preferred fuel stop on this flight path) and elect to land somewhere with lower terrain, and in this case, closer to Traverse City. It's a little frustrating stopping so soon, since the farther you can get on the first tank of gas, the more initial on-scene time you will have. With a conservative BINGO set for winter weather, you continue to Iron Mountain airport (KIMT) for your first fuel stop, advising Sector to call the emergency number at the airport so that someone's there to fuel the plane. While still 30 minutes out from your fuel stop, you calculate it will be another hour and 40 minutes from Iron Mountain to Duluth. It looks like you will be fueling to exactly the MH-65's Max Gross Weight for the second time tonight.

Other than the unlit towers that the crew spots on final (thank you, NVGs), it's an uneventful landing at Iron Mountain. While fueling the aircraft on the slippery ramp, it's time to give Sector a quick call. Lucky for the crew of the Rescue 6598, Sector Sault St. Marie informs that the ice rescue team out of Duluth has located and rescued the alive-but-very-cold 21 year old snowmobiler. Good to know that everyone is safe; hopefully he'll think twice before snowmobiling on the ice again. With the crew updated on the status of the case, and with OPS' permission, it's time to reverse course back to Traverse City.

### Traverse City Facts:

There are 135 members assigned to AirSta Traverse City. In addition to a B-0 and a standby crew at home during the winter, Traverse City supports D7 deployments to the Caribbean in support of AMIO. In D7, Air Station helos operate virtually independently from the home unit and frequently operate onboard and in support of LANT Area 210' Reliance Class and 270' Famous Class Cutters. Conversely, assets and personnel are stretched thin during the summer months supporting a B-0 and standby at home in addition to a B-0 crew and aircraft at Air Facility Waukegan, IL.

[See **Traverse City** on P. 22]

## Pteros Inducted into CG Academy "Wall of Heroes"

by Ray Zogran, 'Falcon's Landing' Newsletter Editor

CAPT Kwang-Ping Hsu (USCG ret.), Av. 1052, deceased husband of Rosemary Hsu-Brooks, was inducted to the USCG Academy Wall of Heroes on April 20, 2012 for "A Life of Gallantry".

Ping was born in China in 1936. He spent the first eleven years of his life fleeing with his family, first ahead of the Japanese invasion, and then the Communist Revolution. In 1947, they emigrated to Charlottesville, VA, where Ping entered public school with no knowledge of the English language. Yet, ten years later he was tendered an appointment to the CG Academy. Ping survived the rigors of the Academy both academically and socially, and in 1962, he was their first Asian-born graduate. Ping became a CG aviator and performed with distinction for 30 years. He earned two Air Medals for rescues of the family of a crashed plane and of crew from a ship at sea under extremely hazardous conditions. His last professional act of gallantry was accepting the request from the U.S. State Department to fly the first U.S. military plane to Communist China 40 years after his family had fled that country. That mission proved to be a huge success. Ping's last act of gallantry was battling brain cancer at the leading edge of medical technology. He lost that battle in 2007.



Attending the 4 May event were, Rosemary (L) and Don Brooks, son LtCol. David Hsu (USA ret.), daughter, Cindy Hsu and granddaughter Rosie Hsu.

*[One of the four Founding Pteros, LCDR George Thometz, Jr., Class of '45 & Av. 530, was also posthumously inducted to the "Wall of Heroes"...Ed.]*

## 2012 Association of Naval Aviation Awards Presented

On 10 May at its annual awards luncheon at the National Museum of Naval Aviation in Pensacola, FL the ANA presented its Enlisted Aviation Maintenance Award to AMT1 Jimmy Stewart from CG AirSta New Orleans.



AMT1 Stewart with his son, Cooper.

The ANA's Maritime Patrol Aviation Award was presented to the crew of HC-144A CGNR 2310 from CG AirSta Miami by Ptero CAPT Chris Martino, Aviator 2701, Chief, Office of Aviation Forces (CG-711).



CAPT Martino (L), Louis Stefanelli, AMT2 Daniel Stefanelli, AMT3 Jacob Eide, AET3 Jonathan Merchan, Shelley Saunders, CDR Dave Saunders, Aviator 3254, LT Taylor Eggleston, Aviator 4211, and Kenyon Eggleston.

*Congratulations!*



## Seeking Info About Project Tugbird

I'm a freelance aviation writer developing a story on Project Tugbird as developed for use with the Sikorsky HO4S. If you are a pilot or crewmember who may have participated in the training and/or actual use of the project, please email me at: AAviating@gmail.com

## Ptero Publishes Memoirs

### A Low Flying Pterodactyl



The Memoirs Of  
**John Powers**  
Lieutenant Commander  
United States Coast Guard  
Retired

Ptero John Powers, Aviator 1416, recently had a book published called "A Low Flying Pterodactyl." He calls it his memoirs because it is some short stories of his career in the CG and is mostly of his flying Helos and C-130s. And, the stories are how he remembered them happening (thirty or forty years ago so no telling how accurate they might still be). He had it self published through [Lulu.com](http://Lulu.com) and books may be bought from him (440-984-8898 (C), 440-967-1791 (H)) or directly through Lulu.com for \$ 12.95 plus shipping. Although he's not pushing it for sale, a few of his fellow Pterodactyls may be interested in reading it. An excerpt follows:

### The Day That The Volcano Came Alive

On April 1, 1974, we were flying an HH-3F on a search and rescue case from CG AirSta Annette, AK, to an area in the vicinity of Sitka, AK. While flying in Alaska, a pilot quickly learns to do things to make his flight as safe as possible that he wouldn't think of doing in the lower 48. We learned fairly quickly that Alaska Airlines had its own company radio and we found out what frequency they used. Whenever we were flying down among the mountains, outside of the normal area where we would be able to talk to either the CG or the FAA, we kept one radio tuned in to the Alaska Airlines company frequency and one of

[See **Memoirs** on P. 22]



## CG Sector St. Petersburg Barracks Re-named In Honor of HU-16E CGNR 1240 Crew By Ptero Steve Goldhammer, Aviator 1207



On Friday, 11 May, the barracks at CG Sector St. Petersburg was re-named to honor the memory of LT Clifford E. Hanna, Aviator 1061, and his crew of HU-16E CGNR 1240 that perished on the night of 5 March 1967. The barracks were originally constructed in 1935 as part of AirSta St. Petersburg, one of the ten original CG Air Stations. It recently underwent a \$1.2M restoration, while retaining its historical architectural appearance.



Ptero VADM Richard Herr, Aviator 1257, former Vice-Commandant and Ancient Albatross, was the keynote speaker for the ceremony. He applauded CAPT Sheryl Dickinson, Sector Commander, for pursuing the naming of the barracks after LT Clifford E. Hanna and the crew of the HU-16E 1240: LTJG Charles Shaw, AD1 Ralph Studstill, AT1 Eckley Powlus, AT2 James Thompson, and AE3 Arthur Wilson. He noted that it was from here, at what was previously CG AirSta St. Petersburg, that they launched to assist the Yacht Flying Fish which was disabled in heavy fog, and sinking in the Gulf off of Carra-

belle. "During their assignments here, they spent many hours in this building both on duty and otherwise." He went on to say that, unfortunately, we have many fallen heroes in our history. "When thinking of them: names such as Douglas Munro – the CG's lone recipient of the Medal of Honor, and the Cutters Tampa, Cuyahoga, and Blackthorn come to mind. Recently we have had a disturbing spate of aviation accidents that have cost us several lives. There is no question that the men and women of the CG operate in challenging environments as they faithfully and selflessly carry out their duties and responsibilities in their service to our Nation and humanity."

"The CG that LT Hanna and the crew of the 1240 served in was in many ways very different from our CG today – but in some fundamental ways, it is much the same. The CG then and today is unique among the five armed forces of the United States. It is only one fifth the size of the next smallest service – the Marines – and is about the same size as the New York City Police force – while our people serve throughout the nation and the world.

"The CG is the only one of our military services that has a law enforcement authority and mission. Unlike the other services, the CG has a 24 hour job every day of the year regardless of whether our Nation is at war or not. Every single day that you come to work at an operational CG unit – you have the very real possibility of making a difference. Saving a life, busting a druggie, intercepting illegal immigrants – you name it.

"We have an extremely high caliber of people in the CG, both officer and enlisted, who are given positions of significant responsibility early in their ca-

reers. I have always wondered how we get such outstanding people in our Service. After much consideration, I think it is a combination of getting good people to start with and then letting our culture mold them.

"We are a small service that in most cases serve in small units in remote locations and we live among the population we serve. We think of ourselves as family – The Coast Guard Family – and like most families we come to rely on, depend on and take care of each other.

"Our core values – Honor – Respect – and – Devotion to Duty are more than just so many words, they define what Coast Guard Men and Women are and how they conduct themselves and live their lives.

"I am sure that most of you on active duty today, don't think much about these things, – it is just the way it is. Well – after you retire you have more time to reflect on what you have been a part of during your career – and you realize just how much you truly love and appreciate the people you served with and the missions you participated in.

"You also come to realize just how unique the trust, dependability and loyalty you enjoyed with the men and women you served with is. This is especially true when you look at the corporate world. The term "Corporate Loyalty" is an oxymoron in the business world; in the CG, it is a way of life. As I look back, I realize that if someone was in a CG uniform, I immediately trusted them and felt I could depend on them regardless of the circumstances. And – after a 38 year career – I can probably count on one hand the number of times when that trust and confidence were not justified – and probably still have a few fingers left over.

"On March 5<sup>th</sup>, 1967 I think we can be sure that the crew of the 1240 shared that trust and confidence in each other as they pursued a mission which their professional careers were all about – with the ultimate goal of helping others in distress and saving lives. No one will ever know what happened to cause the accident that night. The one thing that we do know, is that LT Hanna and the crew of the 1240 gave their last full measure carrying out a mission so others might live.

[See 'St. Pete Barracks' on P 23]

## CG Air Station Humboldt Bay, Then and Now

By LT Taylor Andrews, Aviator 4278

The current CG Air Station responsible for the northern coast of California was established in the 1970s, but the Airport's history dates back another 30 years to the early 1940s. In 1943, the Navy acquired land in the area known as Dow's Prairie (now referred to as McKinleyville), for an Auxiliary Air Station to supplement their forces in Alameda. South of Dow's Prairie, the town of Ferndale was home to the Navy's 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment, but they had no ties with aviation as they were focused on horseback shoreline patrols and intel collection on Japanese submarines.

Soon after opening the Naval Air Station, they determined the area to be one of the foggiest in the nation. Not to be discouraged, the Navy used the unique area to further develop landing aids and fog dispersal techniques invented during WWII. The Fog, Immediate Dispersal Of (FIDO) system, depicted below, ignited fuel lines running parallel to runways to truly "burn off the fog" and provide a clear pocket to land. This, combined with newly developed ground controlled approaches, high intensity approach lights, and an instrument landing system were used to complete the first consistent safe landings in thick fog. With the exception of the FIDO system, which at today's prices would cost nearly \$45 thousand in fuel alone for the standard 10 minute approach, much of the technology developed at the Landing Aids Experiment Station is still used today.



A picture from the Landing Aids Experimentation Station in the Navy Personnel Info Bulletin "All Hands" December 1947

The Navy has long since departed, and ownership of the airport has changed hands to Humboldt County, but the military presence and fog remain. Coast Guard Group/Air Station Humboldt Bay currently resides at the airport, having grown from a summertime air detachment of Air Station San Francisco to a fully fledged air station in 1977.

Storms like the Ferndale flood in 1964, in which the Eel River rose 29 feet above flood stage submerging the entire town, were no doubt a driving force in local citizens' demand for a permanent Search and Rescue (SAR) facility in northern California. The CG responded to this particular storm from AirSta San Francisco, over two hours away with the HH-52A helo CGNR 1363. The crew heroically saved 16 people in distress before getting lost in the fog while attempting to return for fuel, and sadly crashed six miles north of the Arcata Airport. The crew of three and four civilians were lost in the crash. Ultimately, the storm took 29 lives and caused \$100 million in damages.



Town of Ferndale from the local newspaper after the 1964 flood.

Tragic stories like this one are known to all the aircrews stationed in Humboldt who still deal with the fog on a daily basis. Southern currents along the Pacific's steep coastal shelf result in upwelling of cold water along the shoreline.

Maritime air masses passing over this band of water are cooled and release

their moisture as fog directly over the Air Station. Changes in weather occur rapidly and often without warning, making aviators in the area forever skeptical of even clear days.

AirSta Humboldt Bay is unique in more ways than just its persistent fog. It is part of one of the last remaining legacy "Groups" in the CG, which controls two 87' coastal patrol boats, two Small Boat Stations, and the AirSta, along 250 miles of sparsely populated coastline ranging from the California/Oregon border to the Mendocino/ Sonoma county line. The mission set is also somewhat of a throwback compared to other modern CG pursuits, focusing almost exclusively on SAR. The terrain offers unique training opportunities, such as cliff hoists and breaking shoreline surf rescues. The three MH-65C helicopters are the only helicopters in the immediate area with hoisting capability. As a result, the AirSta receives numerous requests to aide with inland SAR and medevacs from treacherous terrain.



Survivor is hoisted from the Smith River, 60 miles North of AirSta Humboldt Bay.

Although SAR missions are not frequent relative to other parts of the country, the cases that occur are generally significant and challenging. Aviators leaving Humboldt Bay feel confident in their abilities to handle a variety of conditions outside the Coast Guard's normal niche, including cliffs, surf zones, confined areas, and mountain flying.



## Mail Call!

This issue's mail is brought to you by the five OS2U-3s on the ramp at AirSta Salem circa 1942.



### Three Today in Tampa Bay

I greatly enjoyed 'Three Today in Tampa Bay.' What a story! However, I'd like to correct the part about the phrase 'One a Day in Tampa Bay' being coined due to B-47 crashes in the bay's water. The saying actually came into being early in WWII when Martin B-26 Marauder training took place at MacDill Field (June '42-October '43).

Ptero Tom Garcia, P-2963, Old AF Guy

### Ptero Craig Hoskins, Aviator 2725, Named JetBlue Executive

On 5 April, Captain Craig Hoskins was named JetBlue's VP of Safety. In his role as Chief Safety Officer, Capt. Hoskins will be responsible for maintaining JetBlue's culture of safety and mitigating risk in operations for the New York-based airline. Capt. Hoskins will report to the airline's Chief Administrative Officer James Hnat.

"Craig brings a lifetime of leadership and subject matter expertise to this role, from his early days in the CG to his expertise in Safety Management Systems," said Mr. Hnat. "I expect Craig will continue to provide leadership in education, auditing and continuous improvement in how we operate our airline."

Capt. Hoskins previously served as JetBlue's Director of Flight Safety, overseeing all Voluntary Flight Safety Programs including the Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP), Flight Operations Quality Assurance (FOQA) Program, Line Observation Safety Audit (LOSA) Program, the Inflight Safety Program and the Safety Investigations Team. He joined JetBlue in 2003 as a

First Officer on the Airbus 320, after two years as a pilot with Northwest Airlines. He held roles of increasing responsibility in the company's Safety and Flight Operations departments, including System Chief Pilot.

"Safety is the number one value at JetBlue, and I look forward to working with my colleagues throughout the airline to proactively identify and mitigate risk throughout our network," said Capt. Hoskins.

On a national level, Capt. Hoskins serves as the Airlines For America (A4A) Flight Safety Committee's Vice Chair and is a member of the Aviation Safety Information Analysis and Sharing (ASIAS) Issue Analysis Team. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army Aviation Safety Officer Course, Univ. of Southern California Aviation Safety Certificate Program, NASA-Ames Fatigue Countermeasures Course and holds an M.S. in Training and Leadership.

CGAA Past-President, Mont Smith, Aviator 1520, commented: "Craig volunteered to serve on a CGAA team of aviation industry professionals who developed a "benchmarking" report on aviation safety for the Commandant last year. He is a highly respected CG retiree who rose from the enlisted ranks to LCDR, and he has enjoyed a remarkable career in civilian life, attaining the position equivalent of admiral in his company. We are extremely proud to have him in our midst and congratulate him on his achievement!"

### "No Fly" Zones

Recently, I found an FAA site on the Internet that was an interesting review of the past. If you wade your way thru it, you will eventually get to March 1, 1962. And there you'll see an accident about an American Airlines Astrojet Flight 1 out of Idlewild (now JFK International Airport). A Press photo there shows the jet's wreckage strewn far and wide among the tall grasses in Jamaica Bay ... about 5 miles from Idlewild, and 3 from Floyd Bennett Field where I was stationed that day. In a helicopter, I was the first to arrive on scene --- only to find there was no one to be rescued! Thus, I became the on scene commander for a brief while until the NYC authorities arrived and took over. With 95 people killed, that was the largest loss of life

ever in US airliner accidents ... until years later, when the two jumbo jets collided on the runway at Tenerife!

But here is an interesting sidelight ... in 1961, the FAA had published a rule that restricted aircraft from approaching too closely to a disaster scene. Purpose was prevent midair collisions with each other or with rescue or other emergency a/c. As I recall, the protective box was a 3 or 5-mile radius and 1000 foot ceiling around the site. So, when NY Daily News and other press planes started making low passes to get their shots, and it started to get hairy with too many planes making low passes near me and the firemen who had arrived in the area, I (as OSC) called Idlewild tower, invoked the new rule, and asked FAA to close the airspace ... which they immediately did!

All hell must have broken loose in USCG District HQ near the Battery, and at CGAS Brooklyn (my airta) when the press started calling them wanting to know, by what authority, the pilot of the CG helicopter had prevented them from taking their photos! (Of course, FAA and Idlewild tower had passed the buck and put the blame on me!) Those in the senior USCG chain of command had been blindsided, being unaware of the FAA regulation (even though I had radioed the airta to keep them in the loop about what I had done. Apparently, the word hadn't been passed.)

Later, when running low on fuel, I landed at the airta to top off tanks, and found my CO waiting for me. Seeing his arms folded and his unhappy face when he demanded WHY I had made a request to close the airspace, I knew I was in deep kimshi. (He didn't know about the new FAA rule). After I explained what I had done, and especially the WHY .... he stomped off and I heard no more about it. Amazing what you get away with when you are in the right!

All that was just a drop in the bucket when compared to what the senior FAA controller on watch must have faced on 9/11 when he closed --- FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY!!! --- all the airspace in the entire country!!! Talk about responsibility! And think of the possible fallout! That controller remains one of my heroes to this day.

Ptero Carl Swickley, Aviator 725



## "No Fly" Zones, Continued

In the recent Ptero message, Carl Swickley talks about the temporary flight restrictions that can be initiated almost immediately. I do believe that I was the initiator of that.

Some might remember the pictures that were published showing a vessel on fire in Buzzards bay and a 52 over the vessel. this was just after we got the 52's at Salem. I was covering in an HU-16. There was a small Cessna that was circling, lower than I was, just about helo altitude, and going in and out of the smoke. He wouldn't leave. I was some ticked off.

Anyhow, I followed this aircraft back to his home base. He tried to lose me by slowing down. I had a bit of fun flying formation on him with gear and flaps down. I got his number and called the FAA after the flight. I had a discussion with the folks in Boston pointing out the danger of a mid air as well as the possibility of interfering with the operation. They pointed out that there was nothing at the time to stop camera and reporter aircraft but saw the light and said that they were going to work on it. As I recall there were follow up calls.

I was always amazed at how fast the ruling came. I believe that I was ops at the time.

Ptero Don Vaughn, Aviator 547

## Always Ask, Never Assume!

His request approved, the CNN News photographer quickly used a cell phone to call the local airport to charter a flight. He was told a twin-engine plane would be waiting for him at the airport.

Arriving at the airfield, he spotted a plane warming up outside a hangar. He jumped in with his bag, slammed the door shut, and shouted, 'Let's go'. The pilot taxied out, swung the plane into the wind and took off. Once in the air, the photographer instructed the pilot, 'Fly over the valley and make low passes so I can take pictures of the fires on the hill-sides.' 'Why?' asked the pilot. 'Because I'm a photographer for CNN', he responded, 'and I need to get some close up shots.' The pilot was strangely silent for a moment; finally he stammered, 'So, what you're telling me, is . . . You're NOT my flight instructor?'



## 2011 Naval Helicopter Association (NHA) National Award Winners Named

On 15 May at the Marriott Norfolk Waterside in Norfolk, VA, the following CG personnel were honored by the Naval Helicopter Association:

AIRCREW OF THE YEAR: CG RESCUE 6007 USCG, AIRSTA KODIAK (NON-DEPLOYED) PTERO LCDR CRAIG NEUBECKER, AVIATOR 3388A, LT MARK HEUSSNER, AVIATOR 3826, AST1 CLAUDE MORRISSEY, and AET3 MICHAEL WALLACE.

RESCUE SWIMMER OF THE YEAR: AST2 MIKE HEXIMER, USCG, AIR STATION CAPE COD.

MAINTENANCE CPO OR PO OF THE YEAR (E6 TO E9): AETC MIKE MAURO USCG, AIR STATION ATLANTIC CITY.



RADM (USN Ret.) Steven J. Tomaszewski--NHA Chairman of the Board (L), CAPT (USN Ret.) Mike Baxter--NHA Director, LCDR Craig Neubecker--AC/Pilot, LT Mark Heussner--CP, AST1 Claude Morrissey--Rescue Swimmer, AET3 Mike Wallace--Flight Mech, CAPT David Bouve, USN, NHA President.

6007 Summary of Action: At approximately 12:40 am on February 11, 2011, the CG received a report that the fishing vessel *Midnite Sun* was taking on water and sinking near Afognak Island, Alaska. Battling driving blizzard conditions, darkness, 60 knot winds, low ceilings, poor visibility, blowing snow, icing and severe turbulence, CG MH-60J Jayhawk helicopter CG6007 flown by LCDR Craig Neubecker, LT Mark Heussner, AET3 Mike Wallace and AST1 Claude Morrissey made the treacherous flight to the stricken vessel navigating in and around unforgiving mountainous terrain, relying on charts, GPS and radar as visual references came and went to reach the stricken vessel.

Arriving on scene, the crew conducted an instrument letdown to the wa-

ter over a narrow bay, and then used NVGs to locate the vessel. Having discussed several options to facilitate the safest recovery of the five crewmembers from the pitching and rolling vessel, the crew engaged in five challenging Dead in the Water hoists, encumbered by limited deck space, extensive rigging, high winds, heavy seas, and a cliff less than one rotor diameter behind the aircraft.

As 25 foot waves rocked the stricken vessel, it began rolling on its side, so the decision was made to not deploy the Rescue Swimmer, but rather to directly hoist each mariner in the rescue basket to minimize the aircraft and survivors' exposure to the breaking surf, jagged rocks and rigging. LCDR Neubecker then expertly maneuvered the helicopter

into position over the vessel as AET3 Wallace conned the aircraft to avoid the swinging masts and rigging and despite severe downdrafts, hoisted the entire crew from the vessel, AST1 Morrissey pulled each cold and waterlogged survivor from the basket, and LT Heussner performed crucial safety pilot duties. CG6007 worked flawlessly as a team to ensure the safe execution of this critical mission. Each crew-

member's airmanship and courage stood out as they rose to the challenge, allowing the lifesaving rescue of all five crewmembers from the stricken vessel and for them to safely return home.



AST2 Heximer Receives His Award from ASTCS (Ret.) Butch Flythe.

[See **NHA Awards** on P. 22]



## Aviation Technical Training Center Honor Graduates



The CG has three aviation ratings: Aviation Maintenance Technician (AMT), Avionics Electrical Technician (AET), and Aviation Survival Technician (AST). The AMT School is 20-weeks long and a typical class has 20 students. The AET School is 20 weeks long and typically has 20 students. The AST School is 18-weeks long and a typical class consists of 12 students. In recognition of active duty aircrews, the Executive Board approved special recognition for ATTC school honor graduates with a dues-free initial year of membership in the association. Here listed are early 2012 Honor "grads" which we are proud to salute. In honor of the dedication and skill of every CG aviation air crew member, we congratulate the honor graduates. We view each of them as representing all their respective classmates. We welcome them all to the exciting and rewarding world of CG aviation and extend our heartiest wishes for many satisfying years of performance in their vital roles in the rich and continuing CG aviation history ahead. We recommend and hope the graduates listed here will continue as members and will help grow the association with new members. **Congratulations and Welcome Aboard!!**

<u>Honor Graduate</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Honor Graduate</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
AST3 Douglas Niebaum	Borinquen	AMT3 McCracken	Clearwater
AET3 Kalugin	Sacramento		



## NEWLY DESIGNATED AVIATORS

The following pilots have been designated as Coast Guard Aviators and have been provided with a first year dues-free membership in the Association. Welcome aboard, Pterodactyls!! We salute you and wish you safe flight. We envy the thrills, opportunities and satisfaction which are on and beyond your individual horizons. As you settle in at your initial and subsequent assignments and carve out future CG aviation history, we hope you will maintain your membership and stay tuned to your rich heritage. As busy and focused as you are on many things, you are history-in-the-making, and you will want to preserve that history as well as that of those before and around you today. Your modest annual dues will help to keep you informed and make possible active duty awards, memorials and CG aviation history-preserving-projects. **Congratulations and Welcome Aboard!!!**

<u>CG Aviator Nr.</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>CG Aviator Nr.</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
4397 Chanel L. Lee	Clearwater	4407 Kyle C. Cuttie	Port Angeles
4398 Adriana J. Knies	Astoria	4408 Katherine M. Pelkey	Traverse City
4399 Eric G. Vryheid	Corpus Christi	4409 Caleb C. Robards	Savannah
4400 Not Assigned		4410 Gary R. Kuehn	Cape Cod
4401 Christopher J. Hooper	Atlantic City	4411 Matthew J. Meinhold	San Francisco
4402 Scott T. Verhage	San Diego	4412 Mark P. Aguilar	Miami
4403 Matthew R. Vanderslice	Cape Cod	4413 Min H. Kim	Borinquen
4404 Linh B. Vinh	New Orleans	4414 Kevin H. Murphy	Clearwater
4405 Beau C. Belanger	San Francisco	4415 Daniel P. Cloonan	Cape Cod
4406 Joseph S. White	North Bend	4416 Gregory R. Kotowitz	Cape Cod

### NHA Awards FROM 21



AETC Mauro Receives His Award from a BAE Systems Representative.

### Traverse City FROM 16

Traverse City was named the tenth Coast Guard City in the summer of 2010. Traverse City has been acclaimed by Good Morning America as containing the 2011 Most Beautiful Place in America, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. It was named one of the 25 Best Places to Retire by CNN Money. Also, Traverse City was more recently named one of the Best Adventure Towns by National Geographic.

#### SAR in FY 2011:

**Hours** 450+ hours  
**Cases** 168 cases  
**Saved** 13 Lives  
**Assisted** 19 Lives

### MEMOIRS FROM 17

their flights would probably hear us and forward our position and our problem to someone who could help us.

On this particular day, we heard some Alaska Airline flights talking. One of the flights was making an approach to the Sitka airport and had spotted some smoke rising out of Mount Edgecumbe, an old extinct (or so we thought) volcano that was located about fifteen miles from the city of Sitka.

The Alaska Airline pilots could not believe their eyes as we all knew that this particular volcano had been extinct for a very long time. Since it was such a clear day, they received permission from the FAA to circle the volcano several

[See MEMOIRS on P. 23]



# CG Aviation Association Multi-mission Form

## Apply for or Renew Membership / Update Data / Order Stuff

☐ New Member ☐ Renewal ☐ Update Information ☐ Ordering Items

**(Renewals need only enter corrections/additions — see mailing label)**

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### **Sign me up for:**

- ☐ Life Membership \$ 250 (includes a Ptero Pin)
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- ☐ CG Aviator/Aircrew/RS Pennants \$ 25ea. (includes postage)
- ☐ Chronological History of CG Aviation, 1915-2010 CD \$ 10

**Total Enclosed:**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

(Visit [www.AOPtero.org](http://www.AOPtero.org), click on "Store" for more)

**July 2012 Please make copies of this form and pass it on.**

**Please check all below that apply:**

- ☐ CG Active ☐ CG Retired
- ☐ CG Reserve ☐ Former CG(not ret)
- ☐ CG Auxiliary ☐ Other Supporter

☐ CG Aviator (Data if known:)  
Designation Nr: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Helo Nr: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ CG Aircrew ☐ CG Flight Surgeon
- ☐ Exchange Pilot  
Service \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_  
CG dates served: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Please send me how-to-help info!

### **MAIL TO:**

**The CG Aviation Association  
P.O. Box 222905,  
Chantilly, VA 20153-2905**

## St. Pete Barracks FROM 18

"As I said earlier – while the Coast Guard changes – in fundamental ways it thankfully stays the same.

"And that is why, when we lose people as we did in the case of the 1240 –it affects us so strongly. I remember when I heard on the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup>. of March that we had lost the 1240 and its crew – it was just as if I had taken a huge punch to the pit of my stomach. I didn't know any of them personally, but they were part of my greater family and losses like that don't go down easily. And, no matter how old I get or how many times it happens – the effect is the same.

"As a Family, it is important that we remember our roots and honor those that have gone on before us. Naming this barracks after LT Hanna and the crew of the 1240 helps ensure that all who come after us will remember them and the sacrifice they made in the name of humanity."

He thanked Captain Dickinson again for bringing this to fruition and said that, "as we honor LT Hanna and the crew of

the 1240 and look to our dedicated members on active duty today, perhaps it is well that we remember the words of our Coast Guard Hymn: Eternal father, lord of hosts, watch o'er the men and women who guard our coast, protect them from the raging seas and give them light and life and peace. And grant from thy great throne above, the shield and shelter of thy love."

He reminded us to, "from this day forward, never forget the sacrifices of the Crew of the 1240 and their families, as these heroes carried out their CG duties in service to our Country and mankind."



**AirSta Clearwater HC-130 Conducts Flyover of Dedication Ceremony.**

## Memoirs FROM 22

times so the passengers could see it.

We were now about fifteen minutes from the area and the search and rescue case that we had been sent on had been resolved without our help. We were going to land at Sitka to refuel, but, first, we were going to take a close look at the smoking Mount Edgecumbe.

About that time, an unknown voice came up on a common frequency and said, "April Fools!" Remember, this occurred on April 1<sup>st</sup>!

We later found out that some local helicopter pilot had been carrying old tires out from Sitka to Mount Edgecumbe for several weeks without anybody noticing what he was doing. Early on the morning of April 1<sup>st</sup>, just as the sun was beginning to rise and before most of the other pilots had taken off, he flew out to his stash of tires and lit them. It took about an hour for them to really start smoking but it was pretty good timing because it was just in time for the first Alaska Airline flight to arrive.

It was one of the best April Fools' jokes that I have seen!





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**MH-65C CGNR 6535 Aircrew  
Remembered Pg. 3**



**CG aviators share their experiences  
during the 23rd Annual Int'l  
Women in Aviation Conference.  
Pgs. 7-8  
USCG photo by PO2 Kelly Parker.**



**AirSta Humboldt Bay Pg. 19**



**AirSta Salem Reunion Pg. 5**

**MAIL Pg. 20**

**THAT'S NOT ALL !!**

**Book Review: "Float Planes  
& Flying Boats" Pg. 10**



**AirSta Traverse City Pg. 16**