



# PTEROGRAM



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

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

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**SAVE THE DATE**  
**"THE ROOST"**

Annual CGAA Conference,  
CG Aviation Awards Banquet,  
& Celebration of over 60 years of  
ALPAT and our host- HITRON

**OCTOBER 15-18, 2024**  
**HYATT REGENCY JACKSONVILLE RIVERFRONT**  
**JACKSONVILLE, FL**

Our Hyatt Group Rate room reservations can be made here.

Email [Tony.Hahn@aoptero.org](mailto:Tony.Hahn@aoptero.org) for any questions

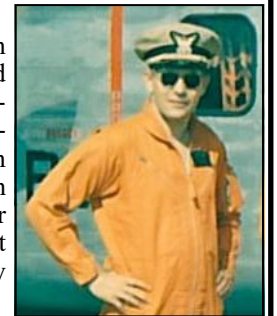
### 48th CGAA Roost Coming to Jacksonville

Our 48th Ptero Roost honoring the CO, Ptero CAPT Dan Broadhurst, Aviator 3799, and the men and women of HITRON, and celebrating 60+ years of ALPAT, will be held in Jacksonville from 15-18 October. Once again, our intrepid Roost Coordinator, Ptero Tony Hahn, Aviator 3158, and his enthusiastic helpers (Pteros Kevin Gavin, Aviator 3296, & Tom Cooper, Aviator 3360) are planning what will be an outstanding event at the Hyatt Regency (the same venue as for our 2010 Roost). More program news will be coming later this spring via AIPtero email. We'll be using that Whova app again for event coordination like we did in San Diego.



### REST IN PEACE Ptero CAPT (Ret.) Raymond J. Copin, Aviator 744, CGA '54 (8/4/32—3/13/24)

Mere words can't fully express how much Ray meant to and did for the Coast Guard and the Coast Guard Aviation Association. He was a 13-year editor of the Pterogram, one of four since its founding in 1977. When announcing his illness in January, Ray wrote: '...do not weep for me or feel sorry for me -- I've had a great life, I know where I am, and I'll be ready to go when God calls me.' Godspeed!



## DUES CURRENT ? — Please CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL

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Check out page 23 or the website <http://www.aoptero.org/htm/newmbr.html> for the renewal application and current dues. MOVING??? Please let us know. Send email to: [Zach.Wiest@aoptero.org](mailto:Zach.Wiest@aoptero.org) & [communications@cgaviationassn.org](mailto:communications@cgaviationassn.org).

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**A Message from 2551 (CGAA/AOP President):**

Fellow Pteros!! I hope 2024 is off to a great start for you. By now you've seen the announcement of the date and the venue for the 2024 Roost in Jacksonville, FL. Ptero Tony Hahn, VP for Development and Roosts, along with a team of planners, have been hard at work trying to top the high bar set at the 2023 Roost. This year we'll gather at the Hyatt Regency in Jacksonville, with our host HITRON. We'll be celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of another CG ship-helo team: ALPAT. On a more general Roost note, as we try to continuously improve upon our annual gatherings, I hope you've taken the time to fill out the survey recently distributed by Tony, "What Makes a Good Roost?" We want your input!

Consistent with our new by-laws, we have a new board in place, working on our many initiatives. Remaining board members include Ron Tremain as Executive VP, Mike Emerson as Executive Secretary, Mike Brandhuber as Treasurer, Tony Hahn as VP, Development and Roosts, Jack McGrath as VP for Membership, and Sean Cross as VP for History.

We've been joined by  
 Marc Aparicio, VP, Awards  
 Scott Schleiffer, VP, Communications  
 Broderick Johnson, VP, Chapters and Aviation Unit Liaison  
 Kurt Richter, VP at large, and  
 CDR Kelly Higgins as VP, at large (Active duty). Kelly is currently serving as XO at CGAS San Francisco, and will soon PCS to become CO, Air Station Port Angeles!  
 We are very fortunate to have her voice on the board representing our active duty members.

We still have room for two more "at large" board members, and one of these positions is set aside for another active duty aviator. If you're interested in serving, please give me or any of our board members a call or email.

Speaking of our active duty members, we're working with CG-711 to provide funding for professional development and mentorship opportunities for all aircrew personnel. Last year we provided over eight scholarships to active duty members to offset travel costs for attending the Roost Professional day. In 2024, we're actively looking to do the same and extend cost offset scholarships for the WAI (Women in Aviation International) conference and the Organization of Black Aerospace Professionals. These conferences provide outstanding mentoring and professional development opportunities for officer and enlisted aircrew.

We've received seven impressive nominations for the Hall of Honor, and the committee is at work evaluating the three final submissions.

Finally, I'd like to acknowledge Mark Benjamin and Gary Gamble, both of whom have served the CGAA for many years. Mark has stepped down from his duties as Chapters and Aviation Unit Liaison, after getting Broderick Johnson up to speed. Similarly, Gary has trained Scott Schleiffer as VP for Communications. The work of both of these Pterodactyls has been vital to our successes and is greatly appreciated! If you get a chance, please join me in thanking and congratulating them!  
 Fly Coast Guard!

Peter Troedsson [PTroedsson@gmail.com](mailto:PTroedsson@gmail.com) 503.468.9898

**Taps**

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

- Lois B. Wallace (spouse of Ptero Brian Wallace, 1259), 7/5/23
- Thomas Schafer, 893, 7/22/23
- William Russell, 712, 10/15/23
- Richard L. Murphy, 1318, 11/23/23
- Dennis W. Del Grosso, 1933, 12/1/23
- Raymond J. Copin, 744, 3/13/24

**New CGAA Members Since 11/1/23. Welcome Aboard!**

Brent Alexander	Active	P-6284	Maggie Champlin	Active	4542A
Chuck Clark	Life-Regular	P-6292	Bryan Conrad	Life-Regular	4351
April Cook	Life-Regular	P-6296	James Duhamel	Life-Regular	5050
Ronald Green	Life in 5	3893A	Jonathan Harper	Active	P-6274
Keith Hines	Regular	RS-129	Jeff Jacobs	Life-Regular	3846
Mace Metcalf	Active	P-6294	Eric Mobiglia	Active	P-6270
David Pritchett	Regular	P-6281	David Saunders	Life in 5	3254
Kurt T. Shoecraft	Life in 5	P-2701	Matthew Swann	Life-Regular	4590
Evan Swinghamer	Life in 5	4691	Kayden Tandy	Active	P-6272
Arnold D. Wallace	Life-Regular	4340	Harris Williams	Active	P-6290
Sarah Wright	Active	5143	Rob Young	Life in 5	2811

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## National Naval Aviation Museum Update

By Ptero RADM Jack Vogt, Av. 2884

I currently have the honor of serving on the National Naval Aviation Museum Foundation Board of Directors and wanted to update you on the Museum and associated programs given our longstanding Ptero relationship and our very own CG aviation exhibit in Hangar Bay One.

Many of you might recall the terrorist shooting involving Navy Pensacola in December 2019. That tragic incident combined with COVID have essentially kept the Museum shuttered from the public due to base access restrictions. Just prior to this situation, the National Naval Aviation Museum was continuing an upward trajectory by hosting almost 900,000 visitors in a single year. After much engagement with Navy leadership and elected officials to renew base access for the public, the Museum fully reopened in May 2023 and welcomed over 500,000 visitors even in an abbreviated year. Without question, the visitation numbers should quickly move back toward the almost 1 million visitors per year soon. (By comparison, the National Coast Guard Museum expects to host 300,000 visitors per year.)

I encourage you to visit the Museum website <https://navalaviationmuseum.org>

to get the latest information on exhibits and programs but do want to point out some of the more exciting news. In 2024, the Museum will initiate smartphone tours to complement the long-serving volunteer docent program and will include a highly informative Top Ten exhibits specialty tour. An exciting fundraising effort in 2024 will be the Rolling Thunder Hog Rally where literally hundreds, or even a few thousand motorcycle enthusiasts will depart the Museum for Washington, DC to support veterans and naval aviation programs. This is especially significant when you consider that the Rolling Thunder non-profit organization is over one million members strong. A few months ago, your VP, Ron Tremain, RS-191, and I submitted a nomination package to the Museum requesting the induction of VADM John Currier into the National Naval Aviation Museum Hall of Fame. I would like to offer my deepest appreciation to Pteros Ben Stoppe, Aviator 1646, and Mont Smith, Aviator 1520, for their assistance in putting together the required documentation for John's submission. The review is ongoing, but all indicators are positive.

An exciting and growing program associated with the Museum is the National Flight Academy. Through their own team-oriented STEM offerings simulating naval aviation operations in a lifelike carrier setting and Museum affiliated programs like Starbase and Flight Adventure Deck, 5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders from around the country are gaining a passion for naval aviation. You can get more details on their outstanding offerings at [https://](https://nationalflightacademy.com)

[nationalflightacademy.com](https://nationalflightacademy.com). Of note is that we have connected the Coast Guard's growing JROTC programs with the National Flight Academy. On November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, the newest unit was established at Saraland High School in Mobile, Alabama. What an opportunity for these young men and women to connect with aviation through the Museum, the National Flight Academy, and our amazing aircrews serving honorably at ATC Mobile.

Finally, one of the future Top Ten exhibits will undoubtedly be the POW Return with Honor exhibit opening in April 2024. Located in the opposite corner from our CG display in Hangar Bay One, this fully interactive experience will enthrall visitors with the latest in AI technology. If interested in a current rendering of the exhibit, Google "Return with Honor Vietnam POW Exhibit" to view a September 2023 YouTube video. This exhibit alone will drastically increase the foot traffic in Hangar Bay One, thereby allowing hundreds of thousands of visitors to also learn about our cherished Coast Guard aviation history. While I am certainly pleased that the Pteros are supporting the Coast Guard Museum through their commemorative paver fundraiser, I look forward to sharing the Coast Guard aviation story by strengthening the Ptero relationship with the National Naval Aviation Museum and improving our already outstanding Coast Guard aviation exhibit. Thanks, and fly safe!



## AirSta Humboldt Bay Rescue Swimmer Receives DFC



On 12 December, AST2 Spencer T. Manson received the Distinguished Flying Cross Award at Sector Humboldt Bay for his heroic efforts during a rescue operation on June 19, 2021, which occurred 70 miles offshore from the California-Oregon border, resulting in all six persons aboard a disabled 79-foot schooner being saved. The prestigious Distinguished Flying Cross Award is the

highest honor that can be achieved in aviation and is awarded to any Navy, Marine Corps, or CG personnel who distinguish themselves for heroism or outstanding achievement while participating in aerial flight.

Coast Guard crews from McKinleyville and North Bend, OR, rescued six people from their 79-foot sailboat June 19, 2021, approximately 80 miles west of Crescent City.

Sector Humboldt Bay watchstanders received a VHF distress call at 3:45 p.m. from the crew of the sailboat Barlovento reporting she was disabled, taking on water and had a person aboard with a head and arm injury in approximately 60 knot winds and 20-foot seas.

Watchstanders directed the launch of an Air Station Sacramento C-27J Spartan fixed-wing to provide air support and Sector Humboldt Bay's MH-65 CGNR 6565 Dolphin helicopter. The Dolphin crew arrived on scene and hoisted the injured person from the Barlovento and transported the person to local emergency medical services personnel at Sector Humboldt Bay.

With the Barlovento expected to lose power,

Sector Humboldt Bay watchstanders requested additional air support from an Air Station North Bend MH-65.

The Sector Humboldt Bay Dolphin returned to the scene and hoisted three people from the Barlovento and the Air Station North Bend Dolphin arrived on scene and hoisted the remaining two people.

All survivors were transported to Sector Humboldt Bay.

"This case was a great example of a successful, multi-unit effort and highlights the importance of standardized procedures," said LT Ryan O'Neill, Aviator 4650, a Dolphin aircraft commander at Sector Humboldt Bay. "The careful coordination between the two helicopters with support from the C-27 allowed us to save all six sailors." CG D11 Press Release.



## Elmer Stone's Birthday Celebrated at ATC Mobile



On 22 January, ATC Mobile celebrated the 135th birthday of CDR Elmer 'Archie' Stone, CG Aviator #1. Among many of his

achievements, he was the pilot of the Curtiss NC-4 that performed the first transatlantic flight on 27 May 1919. He landed the plane in Portugal after successfully recovering from the mid-flight loss of a wing! He also invented the 'gunpowder catapult' for efficient and consistent shipboard launching of aircraft. To honor him, ATC's most senior and junior aviators (CO Ptero CAPT Scott Lugo, Aviator

3605, and AET3 Efrain Beltran) cut his birthday cake. Happy Birthday Elmer Stone—Tail winds and clear skies!



## 45th Anniversary of Loss of HH-3F CGNR 1432 Commemorated at Air Station Cape Cod By LT Anita Atkinson, Aviator 5150

On 16 February, to honor the manners of our profession, friends, family and members of Air Station Cape Cod, Base Cape Cod, Army and Space Force Commands joined together to remember those we lost 45 years ago during the tragic mishap of the CG-1432. Mark Torr, Yvonne Kaehler (Bruce Kaehler's Wife), and Beth Bursey (Brad Tait's Sister) were among the 45+ guests in attendance for this sober occasion. We recognized the heroism and sacrifice of the entire aircrew. It is their legacy we continue to honor by improving the operational procedures we follow, the way we train, and the proficiency we maintain as we watch over the Coast Guard's First District. Remarks were made by Pteros RADM Rudy Peschel, Aviator 1146, the CO, CAPT Rob Potter, Aviator 3602, and Mark Torr, the sole survivor. In a letter written for a previous 1432 anniversary ceremony, Pteros CAPT Bob Whitley, Aviator 848 and CAPT Art Wagner, Aviator 769, wrote, 'John 15:13 states "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends". During the Coast Guard's first 75 years of helicopter operations, 26 aircraft have crashed and 79 aircrew have laid down their lives in the prosecution of their missions. Their sacrifices have not been in vain, and the crew of HH-3F CGNR 1432: LCDR Jim Stiles, Aviator 1384, Canadian Forces CAPT Rick Burge, AT2 John Tait and HM2 Bruce Kaehler, can stand tall in the pantheon of those sacrificing heroes knowing that they gave their last full measure for their fellow man. Survivor Petty Officer Mark Torr has been an example of the stoic strength exhibited by our aircrew in the face of

extreme physical and mental pressure.

Today, the men and women of the CG continue their heroic deeds on a daily basis, flying into harm's way to assist those in need and it is indeed a higher calling. Bless you all for what you do.'

On 18 February, the official 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary, an intimate gathering was held at ASCC to allow friends and family members to come together to further commemorate our fallen heroes. At the gathering, personal notes were collected to drop alongside the memorial wreath. The HC-144 ramped and departed to conduct an aerial deployment of the wreath in the vicinity of the crash site to continue to express "WE WILL NEVER FORGET." On departure, a letter from Gerri Burge was read over the radio.



Jim Stiles' and Rick Burge's Beer Mugs encased with U.S.C.G. and Canadian Forces wings on top.

Pteros Brian Wallace (L), Aviator 1259, Chris Dewhurst, Rudy Peschel, and I (2nd L), Aviator 1873, gathered to honor the memory of our fallen comrades. Brian, my boss at the time, Rudy, OPS, and Chris, another junior officer. Brian was the first to fly an H-3 over the crash site, the day after the crash.

Reflecting on that fateful day, as the fixed wing OD, I was stunned to witness a live news report on the Boston TV channel with glaring inaccuracies, despite being reported from CGAS Cape Cod. It was a sobering realization for my 25-year-old self that newspeople could make mistakes.

During those days, I recall fond memories of lunchtime runs with Jim Stiles and Rick Burgee. With 1 1/2 hours allotted for lunch, we would often jog through the woods. These moments of camaraderie provided a respite from the rigors of duty.

Despite the profound loss, the tragedy of USCG 1432 catalyzed critical safety reforms. The introduction of portable oxygen bottles for the crew, mandatory wearing of survival suits during winter, and the implementation of the helo Dilbert Dunker undoubtedly saved countless lives, leaving an enduring legacy of vigilance and preparedness. Larry Post



Ptero Chris Dewhurst, Aviator 1854, photo.



## A Tragedy Remembered: SS Marine Electric, 12 February 1983

By Ptero Past Prez Mont Smith, Aviator 1520

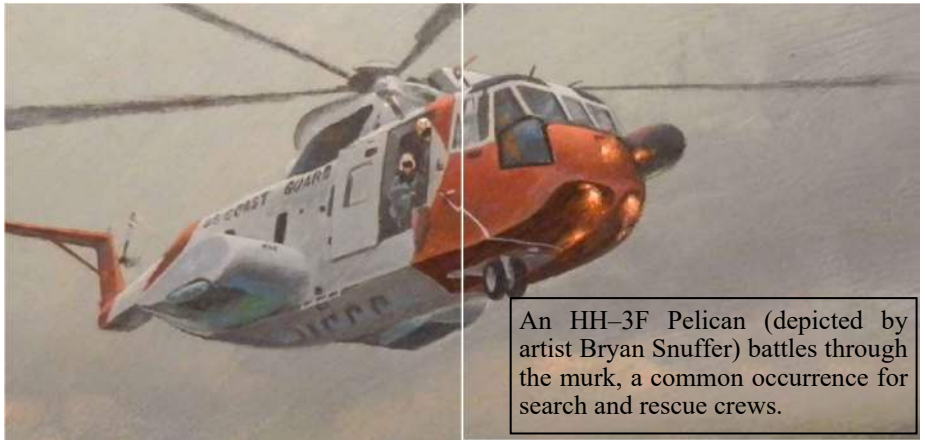
The shipwreck that prompted the creation of the Coast Guard Rescue Swimmer Program is recalled by the pilot of one of the helicopters sent to rescue survivors on that fateful night.

I remember that terrible night as well as 41 years will permit. It was the last time I flew a helicopter as pilot in command during my Coast Guard Aviation career. I was the Operations Officer at Air Station Elizabeth City. I was awakened by the ECity operations duty officer (ODO) around 0330 or 0400 on 12 February 1983. The ODO told me a large collier—a coal ship—was foundering off Chincoteague, Maryland. The ship had radioed in about an hour-and-a-half earlier to D5 Rescue Coordination Center (RCC) in Portsmouth, VA, indicating she was taking on water in a heavy storm about 15 miles offshore. Suddenly, the motor vessel (M/V) Marine Electric broadcast that the crew was abandoning ship. There were 34 men aboard the Marine Electric. The enormity of finding them all on a black, furious sea in bad weather became apparent to everyone involved.

### First Responders Deployed

The HH-3F ready SAR crew, which slept aboard, had already rolled out of bed, run from the barracks to the hangar, donned wetsuits, checked weather and departed. The ODO suggested we field another helicopter crew via random recall and launch a second HH-3F and the ready C-130 to assist. I concurred.

The weather was a typical Atlantic seaboard Nor'easter. It was variously raining, sleet and snowing moderately, with wind blowing from the north-northeast at 50 knots. Seas in the relatively shallow water offshore from Chincoteague were out of the east, averaging 12 to 15 feet



An HH-3F Pelican (depicted by artist Bryan Snuffer) battles through the murk, a common occurrence for search and rescue crews.

with a short period chop. Unfortunately, ECity was about 100 miles directly downwind from the scene, requiring about an hour's flight into the teeth of the turbulent headwinds.

The Duty Officer in the District RCC had wisely alerted a closer rescue resource, a Navy SH-3G helicopter that could join the effort from nearby Naval Air Station Oceana. This helicopter was used as a "local base rescue" resource during scheduled flight training operations for the Master Jet Base. Since there was no flight activity underway, the crew was home in bed when RCC called. Nonetheless, they responded quickly and were airborne in under an hour.

LT Scott Olin, the aircraft commander of our ready HH-3F, was already communicating with the Navy helicopter as he neared the scene. The Navy crew had located the main debris field and had lowered their rescue swimmer into the water to try to lift possible survivors from the raging and tossing sea. The victims, who were middle aged and older men, were unable to swim or assist the swimmer. Many were clothed only in their pajamas, indicating the ship had sunk so suddenly they only had time to rush from their bunks topside, grab a lifejacket and jump into the frigid water. This made it impossible to use a "horse collar" rescue sling, which was designed to clip onto the survival vest of a Naval Aviator.

The Navy crew resorted to using the "Billy Pugh" net, a collapsible rescue device that was originally designed to lift the Mercury and Apollo astronauts from the Pacific upon the

return of their space capsules to earth. The device was not rigid enough to remain stable in the pitching seas. Upon arrival of Olin's helicopter, the two crews mutually agreed that the rescue swimmer should work with the CG helo, whose crew deployed a rigid SAR basket with flotation. The Navy would con-

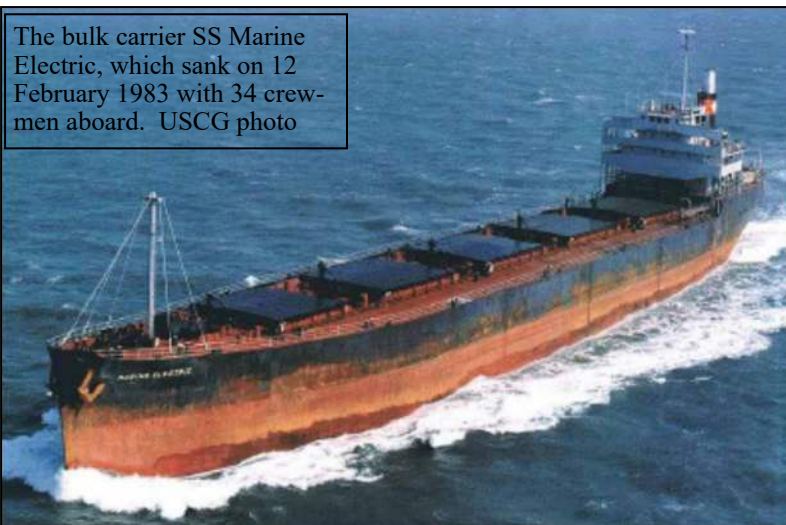
tinue to search for survivors. Two were located; one occupied a lifeboat and the other a large life raft. They decided to delay recovery of those two individuals to concentrate on the men in the water, whose lives were quickly ebbing away due to the freezing temperature.

### Smith & Crew Head Out

I got up, dressed and drove to the air station across town. LT Pete Spence checked the weather as I got a briefing on the current situation. We both donned our one-piece wetsuits and life vests, and joined the crew at the aircraft, which was being towed out of the hangar. The Sikorsky HH-3F was a heavy helicopter weighing about 11 tons fully loaded. Powered by twin General Electric T58 turboshaft engines developing a total of around 5,000 horsepower, the big bird cruised comfortably at 135 knots. Our avionicsman, AE2 Greg Pesch, told me the Coast Guard Support Center's Flight Surgeon suggested we take along a Hospital Corpsman who was trained to administer a new re-warming technique for hypothermia victims. It was called warm vapor-saturated oxygen. I readily agreed.

We ran through our checklists, started engines and engaged the main rotor. Many complex avionics systems needed for navigation (an electro-mechanical navigation computer, LORAN receiver, radar and Doppler hover coupler system) needed to be warmed up, programmed and verified. A simple programming error could take us far off course and unnecessarily delay our arrival.

We taxied quickly to the runway, lifted into a hover and checked power available on the huge, roaring, rumbling and shuddering helicopter. I nosed her over and we climbed out over the Pasquotank river, headed northeast at 135 knots. We could feel the turbulence as we bucked the steady headwind. Clear of town, the unlit farmland below disappeared into the black of night. The cockpit became our only reference, bathed in the soft glow of yellowish flight instruments, and multicolored indicators reflecting off the curved plexiglas windshields. Pete busied himself with tuning the NAS Oceana



The bulk carrier SS Marine Electric, which sank on 12 February 1983 with 34 crewmen aboard. USCG photo

TACAN and checking groundspeed on our flight computer. We had a “mini navigator” computer that received and integrated LORAN C signals. I remember clearly seeing Chesapeake Bay Bridge and Cape Henry on the radar at about 40 miles ahead. Eventually, we were talking with Norfolk Approach as “Coast Guard Rescue 1434,” receiving traffic advisories.

The snow began to increase and visibility decreased. Over water and clear of obstructions, we descended to 500 feet above sea level on the radar altimeter. We called Scotty in the other HH-3F, set up an air-to-air TACAN lock so we could fix our distance from his helicopter, and had him give us “short counts” on VHF-FM for direction finding. We got a line of bearing on him about 20 miles out. The outside air temperature was hovering around -2 degrees Celsius. We had the engine inlet anti-ice on and the cabin heater going on high. The radar was not painting any substantial targets. It showed mostly sea return, even on the lowest five-mile scale. Pete tuned and re-tuned the tilt and gain, but we could neither paint the ship nor the helicopters. As we closed within about three miles, we squinted hard, looking for the rotating beacons or flood and hover lights of the other two helicopters. We confirmed with them the ship was presumed sunk and watched their bearing slowly swing about 45 degrees off to our right, while we maintained a constant heading into the apparent wind and slowed to 80 knots indicated airspeed.

I gradually descended to 200 feet AGL and called for the Precision Approach to a Coupled Hover (PATCH) checklist. It was snowing harder and harder. I briefed the PATCH:

“In the event we are not visual with the surface at 50 feet with hover power established, Doppler hover indicator centered, and flood/hover lights on, engage the hover coupler on my command, and scan outside for a visual reference. If you are visual and ascertain that you can maintain a safe hover, take the controls, call out ‘my aircraft’ and I will shift from instrument scan to outside reference and back you up. If you are not visual, so state, and I will direct you to ‘crank me down’ to 40 feet on the altitude potentiometer. We will go no lower than 30 feet without visual reference to the water. In the event we cannot get visual, or cannot establish a safe hover, I will execute an instrument go-around by picking off the altitude hold, setting the nose attitude on the artificial horizon, pulling in 95% dual engine torque. Call a positive rate of climb and back me up on the power settings. Passing 100 feet I will lower the nose 1-2 degrees to gain forward airspeed. Monitor and call out my altitude and airspeed. At 50 knots, I will transition to a steady-state climb attitude, reduce power to 86% continuous, and climb at 80 knots.”

We started a straight-in PATCH into the

wind. At 50 feet, Pete coupled the hover and called visual. I shifted my scan from the instruments to outside. We had a comfortable visibility of maybe two miles in scattered snow showers. I looked to my right and saw that we were maybe a half mile away from the other two helicopters, forming an eerie scouting line in the darkness. Bathed in reflection from flood/hover lights, rotating red anti-collision beacons and white strobes, their helicopter main rotors were kicking up sea spray that blew away behind them in a fine sparkling mist. I decided to try to maintain a safe altitude of 30 feet or so to stay above my rotor wash, yet be close enough to the water to observe the debris field and search for survivors.

#### **Could He Be Alive?**

We air-taxed forward and side to side, the big cockpit side windows fully open so we could see clearly out as debris rose and fell on each wave crest. I was cold, even with the heavy wet suits we wore. Ice was forming around the windshield wipers on the forward cockpit windscreen. Pete in the left seat, and the hoist operator behind me in the big cabin door, were watching for any signs of survivors. We began to see lifeless bodies floating erect in old WWII-style kapok life jackets. Incredibly, many appeared to be dressed in nothing more than pajamas or work clothes. They were ghostly white and limp, bathed in the illumination of our lights. We scanned the first person we encountered very intently. His eyes were wide open. He looked to be in his 50s, with grey hair. His right arm was raised, and as he rose and fell on each wave it seemed to beckon us. I was reminded of Ahab in the novel *Moby Dick*. We all began to chatter on the Intercom System (ICS).

Pilot: “What do you think, could he be alive?”  
Flight Mechanic: “Yeah, maybe he’s so hypothermic it’s all he can do to move his arm!”

***‘We scanned the first person we encountered very intently. His eyes were wide open. He looked to be in his 50s, with grey hair. His right arm was raised, and as he rose and fell on each wave it seemed to beckon us. I was reminded of Ahab in the novel Moby Dick. Could he be alive?’***

Co-pilot: “Maybe he’s trying desperately to get our attention!”

Corpsman: “If you can get him into the helicopter, I can revive him with the oxygen!”

Avionicsman: “I’ll go down on the hoist, Commander!”

It happened like that, although I can’t recall anyone’s exact words. Pesch volunteered to ride the hoist, and we all mulled over the circumstances and the possible consequences, but in the end it was my decision as aircraft commander to accept or reject the risk. Only later did I contemplate the possible consequences of our actions. Was it really a reasonable thing to put a crewman in the water? We were trained in water survival, but it’s one thing to get in a pool once a year and practice putting on your wet suit, inflating your life

vest and climbing in and out of a raft. It’s another thing to be in the open ocean, untethered, dealing with slashing seas and a hurricane-force rotor wash... and that’s just considering your own survival. What about struggling to help another individual who may be incapacitated? Or the danger of getting entangled in debris? Or encountering “creatures of the deep?” There were literally dozens of considerations.

In retrospect, I realized this was very hasty and ill-advised. Yet here we were, pondering this potential life or death situation. We all felt helpless. The only way to describe our emotion was compelling. We were looking at another human in acute distress, and it was a universal feeling. There was no way to know if the man was dead or alive, but we had to try something. Pesch volunteered again without prompting. “I’ll go down on the hoist, Commander!”

I decided to send Pesch down in the rescue basket. There was a brief discussion about whether or not we should tether him to a trail line (a 200-foot length of polypropylene line). He decided it would be too easy to get tangled up with the rescue basket and hoist cable.

“Rescue checklist complete!” the flight mechanic reported.

“Go on hot mike and conn me in,” I responded. He was hands free and able to transmit continuous advisories over ICS. He activated the hoist and paid out slack, attaching the hook to the rescue basket on the cabin floor, in which Pesch was now sitting. Pesch was equipped with a standard aircrew flotation vest. It was a net mesh affair with two large compartments under each arm containing a CO2 cylinder and a folded air bladder. When activated, the bladders would inflate, creating a large kidney shaped float under each armpit. His vest also contained sea dye marker, shark repellent, a high-energy strobe light and a whistle. If separated from the victim, he could at least help himself a little by inflating the vest and signaling us for pick-up.

“On hot mike, how do you hear?” started the flight mechanic.

“Loud and clear,” I replied. “The survivor is at two o’clock. Conn me in.”

“Roger. Forward and right 20 feet... basket’s going out the door and down.”

I applied slight pressure to the cyclic control between my knees. I had to overcome the tendency of the force trim system designed to keep the flight controls centered for a stable hover.

After overcoming inertia, 10 tons of big helicopter began to respond ever so slowly. “Basket’s ten feet above the water. Forward and right fifteen...forward and right twelve.”

“Lost target!” The victim was now so close to the nose of the helicopter that I could no longer see him. I advised the flight mechanic I no longer had a visual reference and was depending solely on his advisories. The challenge now became resisting false sensations of movement created by the churning



seas outside my window. I was peering through a haze of sea spray, rotorwash and violently heaving seas. I couldn't trust myself to read the aircraft's relative motion by judging the visual clues, like the trail of foam on the back of receding waves. I had to trust the eyes of the flight mechanic. He had to move the aircraft by instructing me, always anticipating both the movement of the basket in gusting wind and rotor wash, and allowing for the time delay between his words and my reaction.

"Roger, lost target. Target is in sight at two o'clock. Basket's five feet above the water. Down five. Move right five...hold...forward five...hold. Up three! Forward and right three...forward easy...hold. Basket's in the water. Paying out slack. Clear to move left and aft. Up ten!"

### 12' to 15' Seas

Pesch was in the water alongside the victim. I struggled to maintain a smooth hoist, but I knew it was erratic. The whole world seemed to be churning. I tried hard to maintain a steady altitude of 20 feet above the wave crests.

Since the seas were running 12 to 15 feet between crest and trough with occasional 20-footers, the bottom of the helicopter, as measured by the radar altimeter, would sometimes be 20...and scant seconds later...40 feet above the victim. As the seas fell away and then abruptly rose again, appearing likely to slam the bottom of the helicopter, I succumbed to the urge to pull a huge armful of collective pitch with my left hand. The engines spooled up in response, generating full power to maintain the rotor rpm at its increased pitch. Then, just as suddenly, the sea would fall away and I would lower the collective to stay at a reasonable hover altitude. It was a sucker play. I had to avoid "pumping" the collective. I had to fight the urge to rise and fall, and try to maintain a steady hover at a safe altitude. I can't say I was very smooth.

### "Target!"

I had Pesch and the survivor in sight again. It was easier to hover by keeping him at the 1:30 position from my cockpit window and watching him rise and fall as each wave crested. Pesch was out of the basket and struggling to move the inert survivor into the opening between the arch of the basket's rigid tubing, which rose from each corner into a welded reinforced plate that was centered roughly three feet above the basket's flooring. He was trying to keep the man's head above water with one arm, while steering the feet and body into the basket. All the while, with his other arm, he steadied the basket from the strong forces of wind and wave that tended to twist and wrench it from his grasp.

Within seconds that seemed more like minutes, Pesch was in the basket beside the victim and signaled a thumbs up. I told the hoist operator to go on hot mic and conn me in. "Up. Up ten...up five. For-

ward and right ten..." "Lost target." "Roger, lost target. Forward and right five...forward easy...right easy. Taking in slack...stand by to take the load. Basket off the water. Basket coming up...basket 10 feet below cabin door. Basket at cabin door. Basket in the cabin. Going off hot mic.

Pesch leaped out of the basket. The corpsman and hoist operator extricated the victim, stretched him out on the cabin floor and wrapped him in GI blankets.

The corpsman checked for vital signs and commenced cardio-pulmonary massage, alternating with infusion of the warm, vapor-saturated oxygen. There was no initial response from the victim.

### Final Toll of the Bell

We continued to air-taxi through the debris field, scanning. Out my side window, I could see Scotty Olin's HH-3F in a high hover, a black silhouette against the flood and hover lights of the Navy SH-3G to his right. The Navy rescue swimmer had managed to partially leverage a body, stiff now from rigor mortis, into the basket. As this spread-eagled form rose 25 feet off the water and halfway up to the helicopter, it suddenly lurched and fell in a giant cartwheel back into the raging sea. My heart sank with it. It became a symbol of the long night's frustration and helplessness. We could not do any good for these people. How could this be?

We suddenly encountered another of the victims who again seemed to harbor a remote possibility of life within him and beckoned with undulating hands for us to retrieve him. Pesch yelled, "I can go down again, sir." More cautious this time, I hesitated. The hoist operator prompted me. "Basket's in the door, sir. Ready to go on hot mic and conn you in!" My mind numbed to the scene. We were rescuers, damn it! "Go on hot mic and conn me in."

***My mind numbed to the scene. We were rescuers, damn it! "Go on hot mic and conn me in."***

Roger. On hot mic, how do you read? Loud and clear. Roger, Pesch is in the basket. Basket's out the door and going down...uh-oh!" "What is it? Talk to me!" "The hoist is birdcaged, sir. Aborting hoist. Pesch is back aboard!"

The worst had nearly happened. Probably due to my horsing the controls in the previous hoist, the hoist cable had spooled back on itself on the drum. Anybody who has tried to cast with a drum-type fishing reel has experienced this. It's an order of magnitude worse with a stainless steel braided hoist cable. Fortunately, the hoist operator discovered the prob-

lem before Pesch was in the water. If the hoist had failed at that point, we could not have retrieved him.

It was getting light. The pre-dawn visibility improved to five miles and the ceiling was around 1,200 feet. The snow had stopped. The debris field had expanded to perhaps a mile or more. Since our hoist was inoperative, we could serve no useful purpose on scene. We departed for Salisbury airport.

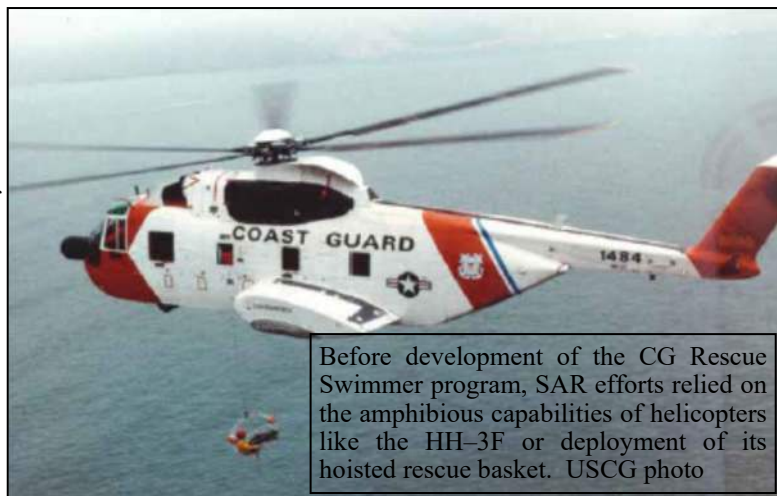
It was time for Scotty Olin's crew to retrieve the men in the lifeboat and liferaft. When we arrived at the airport, our Marine Electric crewmember was pronounced dead on arrival by the ambulance paramedic. It was the final toll of the bell for a tragic evening.

I always ask myself what could have been done to save more lives. Marine Electric was indeed the genesis of the Coast Guard Rescue Swimmer program, but would more swimmers have made the difference in this case? Probably not, because distance to scene, headwind and rough seas would still have robbed many men of their chance for survival. The other Congressional mandate, that merchant seamen be equipped with cold water survival suits for long or short journeys in frigid waters, was the immediate best solution.

As I write this, I see once again the vision, etched forever in my mind, of that terrible night of the Marine Electric. I struggle with the idea that it was my last Coast Guard helicopter mission.

Every athlete, scholar, statesman and military leader wants to finish with a "win." I went on to serve eight more years as an active CG Aviator. My experience with the Marine Electric helped me become a seasoned risk manager. During my final aviation tour as CO of Air Sta Kodiak, Alaska, I experienced the gratification of overseeing implementation of the station's rescue swimmer program.

Excerpt adapted from the book *Going Out When Everyone Else is Coming Back* © 2011 by CAPT Mont J. Smith, USCG (Ret.).



Before development of the CG Rescue Swimmer program, SAR efforts relied on the amphibious capabilities of helicopters like the HH-3F or deployment of its hoisted rescue basket. USCG photo

## Ancient Al #27 Letter to Pteros



Greetings from DHS Headquarters! Since my last update, I have transitioned out of the Coast Guard's Chief Information Officer role and am detailed to DHS as the Department's Deputy Chief Information

Officer. Over the past few months, I have had the pleasure of visiting aircrews from several aviation units, including a visit to March Air Reserve Base in Riverside, CA where I joined our Deputy Commandant for Operations, VADM Peter Gautier, in touring the Customs and Border Protection's Air and Marine Operations Center, where we discussed the CG and CBP's aviation initiatives and missions. While



there, we also met with a California National Guard unit flying MQ-9 Unmanned Aircraft. Additional travels

included visits with members of AirSta Washington and AirSta Barbers Point alongside CG Vice Commandant, ADM Steve Poulin. While in Hawaii, CG crews provided an overview of operations, which included the Coast Guard's response to the devastating fires in Lahaina on Maui's northwest coast.

On February 18, I celebrated my own personal milestone: 30 years since my winging ceremony. The National Capital Region's Air Defense Facility graciously



Fellow Pteros: First and foremost, I hope this finds you and yours doing well/healthy. As I often say, 'Days are long, and years are short'. And proving that point, it's a New

Year since my last input. I couldn't begin to express it enough; the best part of this job is recognizing the men and women on our hangar deck. Whether it's meeting a group of Prospective Chief Petty Officer's going through Chief's Call to Initiation,

hosted CDR Polly Bartz, USCG ret and I for a special visit over a holiday weekend. We were able to visit with the duty crew and reflect on our own experiences and adventures as CG aviators. Given Polly's CG Aviation Designator #3166 (and notably one above me in the same winging class), I'll leave it to you to draw conclusions about who the "top aviator" in the family might be!



In greater Coast Guard aerospace news, CG Commandant, ADM Linda Fagan, and acting DHS Deputy Secretary, Kristie Canegallo, held a historic ceremony at CGHQ on 19 March where they commissioned **CDR Andrew Douglas** into the CG Reserves. CDR Douglas, a CG Academy Class of 2008 graduate, completed Astronaut training on 5 March, and now holds the unique designation of **Coast Guard Astronaut #3**. When he isn't engaged in NASA duties, he will be drilling



To those who are preparing for PCS season - whether prospective command cadre, duty crew, or aeronautical engineers and maintenance staff who keep our crews and airframes safe - I wish you all speedy, safe, and smooth transitions into positions of greater responsibility and new challenges.

If you are entering the summer period and are wrapping up your CG career - whether through retirement or decisions to pursue other opportunities in life - I wish you the best and thank you for your dedication and service to the U.S. Coast Guard.

Godspeed and Semper Paratus!  
 RADM Chris Bartz,  
 Aviator 3167,  
 AA #27



## Enlisted Ancient Al #15 Report to Pteros

giving someone a shout out over a Microsoft Teams video conference, or sending someone a thank you card in the mail with a coin.

This job is humbling. I like keeping things to twos, and with that I'd like to mention two opportunities I had and was able to recognize some folks. I got the honor of being invited to AirSta Humboldt Bay, for the presentation of the Distinguished Flying Cross to AST 2 Spencer Manson for his heroic actions on June



19<sup>th</sup>, 2021. I'm very cautious when it comes to the word hero. AST2 Manson, is an absolute. Although the video that was put together was good, hearing his summary of actions was unbelievable. As I told Petty Officer Spencer, I couldn't believe that I was on the same stage as him when he received his due recognition. Bravo Zulu!!!

Next, I was invited by the CCGD11 Commander, RADM Sugimoto, to accompany him on a site visit to Air Station Sacramento. I can't go without saying how much respect I have for RADM Sugimoto. He is one of the absolute finest Officers I have encountered in my 30-year career, and absolutely cares about our best asset, people. Crossing paths with RADM Sugimoto is a life blessing. AirSta Sacramento received the CG Unit Commendation for their hard work. I was able to rec-



ognize AET3 Vasko and meet with the Chiefs. I stayed late to recognize AMT2 Spoon and talk to Night Shift. Shout out to Command Master Chief Jones for welcoming me and for all he is doing for the unit. If I can be of any assistance, please feel free to reach out. My work email is



[Mark.S.Leichenauer@uscg.mil](mailto:Mark.S.Leichenauer@uscg.mil)

Ptero AMTCM Mark Leichenauer, P-6107



## Ditching and Crashing/ Rescue and Sacrifice—PBM- G5 #84738's Korean War Rescue 70 Years Ago

By Ptero Sean Cross, Aviator 3321

*'John later told me when he was swimming around in the cold dark Chinese waters and trying to signal the rescue destroyer, that he could hear the other PBM grinding around above the overcast and dropping the parachute flares that lit up the area like daylight. I wonder what the local Chinese thought was going on that night.'*  
CDR Mitchell A. Perry, USCG (ret)

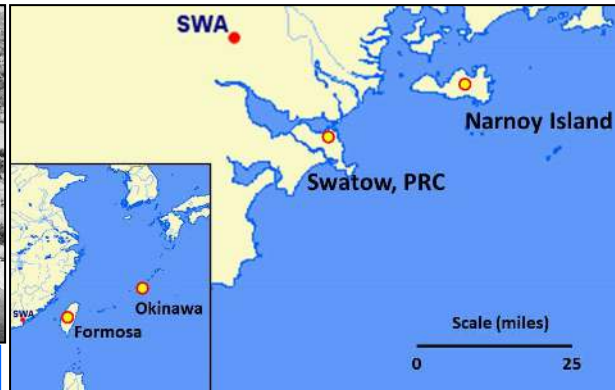
The Korean War had been underway for two and a half years and the Chinese People's Liberation Army was fully supporting the enemy North Korea. U.S. Navy Patrol Squadron VP-22, (a.k.a. the "Blue Geese") began its third tour of operations in the Korean theater conducting shipping surveillance of the China Sea on November 29, 1952. On January 18, 1953, a VP-22's P2V-5 Neptune #127744 was assigned to Naval Air Station Atsugi, Japan (but, forward deployed to Naha Air Base, Okinawa), and flown by "Crew Seven":

LT Clement R. Prouhet - Pilot  
LT Vearl V. Varney - Copilot  
AO3 Cecil Brown - 1<sup>st</sup> Ordnanceman  
AL1 Robert L. French - 1<sup>st</sup> Radioman  
AD1 Daniel J. Ballenger - Plane Captain  
AOAN Roy Ludena - 2<sup>nd</sup> Ordnanceman  
AFC Wallace L. MacDonald - 1<sup>st</sup> Photographer  
ENS Dwight C Angell - Navigator  
AT3 Paul A. Morley - 1<sup>st</sup> Radar Technician  
AD2 Lloyd Smith Jr. - 2<sup>nd</sup> Mechanic  
AL3 Ronald A. Beahm - 2<sup>nd</sup> Radioman  
PH1 William F. McClure - 2<sup>nd</sup> Photographer

AT3 Clifford Byars - 2<sup>nd</sup> Radar Technician #127744 launched on a reconnaissance mission to photograph communist anti-aircraft artillery on China's southeast coast. As the plane turned back toward Okinawa, ground fire from Chinese anti-aircraft positions near Swatow (now Shantou), China, struck the Neptune behind the cockpit on the left side. A battle damage assessment revealed that the radar operator, Byars, was hit with minor shrapnel wounds, the radar was inoperative, the fuel gauges were inter-



A Navy P2V-5 "Neptune" maritime patrol aircraft similar to the one shot down near Swatow (today known as Shantou), China. (Naval History & Heritage Command)



mittent and there were two holes in the vertical stabilizer. However, the pilots noticed no issues with engine output or maneuverability. Hence, the crew sought a friendly field on Formosa (now Taiwan) for a precautionary landing to inspect the aircraft.

Suddenly, the number one engine and left wing caught fire and the vertical and horizontal stabilizers sustained further damage. The crew lost the number one engine and emergency procedures failed to extinguish the fires, which by this time had migrated to the after station. At 1230, the crew issued an SOS and broadcast its intention to ditch the P2V-5.

The aircrew next reported that the left wing was almost burned through and nearing structural failure. - AL1 French reported *"the port wing was burning rapidly and in short order the flap was nearly gone [...] our gas tank was not far away."* LT Prouhet prepared to ditch the P2V-5 in a perilous sea state with 15-foot swells, 30-knot winds and wave crests running every 200 feet. In describing the landing, French said *"the impact was slight [...] considering the sea state; we had made a very smooth landing."* Fifteen minutes after it was hit by ground fire, the aircraft was in the water, but all 13 crewmembers managed to get out of the sinking plane.

Only a burned and partially inflatable eight-foot seven-man life raft was launched. Wounded by the enemy fire and shrapnel from his radar console, AT3 Byars, and the navigator, ENS Angell, were placed in the raft. PH1 McClure and AD2 Smith were separated from the main group and last seen drifting toward shore. The remaining crewmembers clung to the raft, trying to keep afloat. A

P2V-5 patrolling a different sector diverted to the reported ditching position. The aircraft sighting the survivors, radioed for help, and dropped a raft but it could not be retrieved in the rough seas.

The Coast Guard Air Detachment at Naval Station Sangley Point, Philippines, received word that a Navy aircraft had gone down and were scrambled for the rescue mission. Within minutes of receiving the distress signal, Martin PBM-5G Mariner #84738, launched in response to the downed P2V-5. It was crewed by:

LT John Vukic, Pilot  
LTJG Gerald W. Stuart, Copilot  
ADC Joseph M. Miller, Jr  
AM3 Robert F. Hewitt  
ALC Winfield J. Hammond  
AL1 Carl R. Tornell  
AO1 Joseph R. Bridge  
AD3 Tracy W. Miller

While en route, LT Vukic intercepted a radio message stating that survivors had been sighted in the water. However, the downed crew were unable to retrieve rafts or survival equipment that had been dropped from planes circling overhead.

LT Vukic descended over the surface to survey the sea conditions, but it was 1630 by the time the CG aviators spotted the P2V-5's crew. On-scene conditions were challenging including winds of 25 to 30 knots, seas eight to 12 feet with steep crests approximately every 150 to 200 feet moving at speed of 15 knots. The water temperature was later determined to be 62°F and the survivors had been in the water for nearly five hours. Several passes were made over the survivors on a life raft, which was partially inflated with four survivors clinging to the side.



With night falling and waves rising, the AIRDET command at Sangley Point gave LT Vukic the decision of going ahead with the rescue. Considered one of the most experienced “open sea” seaplane pilots, Vukic was having extensive PBM-5G flight experience and flew PBM-5G open sea landing tests with famed CG aviator, CAPT Donald B. MacDiarmid. Lacking an arrival time for a rescue vessel and noting the perilous situation of the survivors, Vukic concluded that a landing was necessary despite the hazardous sea state and fast-approaching darkness.



Sangley Point Naval Air Station, home of CG AIRDET Sangley Point, in 1957. The base was located near Manila in the Philippines. (Wikipedia)

LT Vukic “made a beautiful landing [even] under such circumstances” and guided the big PBM-5G close enough for his crew to fish out the sailors. The “Crew Seven” survivors were hauled aboard and wrapped in blankets. Many of the Coast Guard crewmen removed their Mae Wests to provide medical and other assistance more effectively to the injured Navy personnel.

Vukic and Stuart taxied in the worsening sea state for 30 minutes but failed to locate Smith and McClure – the last two aircrew. The swells began to increase as night descended upon them and Vukic concluded it was time to depart.

The PBM-5G lifted off and the pilot actuated the amphibian’s powerful Jet Assisted Take Off (JATO) bottles to enhance climb-out. However, the number one engine suddenly failed. The dipping left wing was caught by a swell, which swept into the hull,



CG pilot LT John C. Vukic, also known as “Big John.” (check-six.com)

heaved the plane upwards and caused it to cartwheel. The PBM-5G cartwheeled to the left, crashed, and broke apart. Four of the rescued sailors

and five of their CG rescuers died in the crash.

Two aircraft arrived and dropped additional rafts to the survivors. Throughout the ordeal, rescue aircraft were fired upon by Chinese shore batteries. LT Vukic retrieved one raft and picked up AD1 Ballenger and AO3 Brown, while AM3 Hewitt retrieved the second raft and gathered Prouhet, Varney, Ludena, McDonald, and French. The USS *Halsey Powell* (DD-686) – a 376-foot *Fletcher*-class destroyer commanded by CDR Albert S. Freedman, Jr., USN – finally arrived on the scene after the downed flyers had been in the water for seven-and-a-half hours.



Aerial photo of USS *Halsey Powell* (DD-686) underway during the 1950s. (navsource.org)



A 1950s photo of a CG PBM-5G “Mariner” on the ramp and ready to fly at AIRDET Sangley Point. (CGAA)



A CG PBM-5G, sister aircraft to #84738 that flew the Swatow mission, jet assisted take-off using JATO rockets. (CGAA)

A second Coast Guard PBM-5G, #84722, from Sangley Point, piloted by LT Mitchell A. Perry with LT Frank Parker as co-pilot and LTJG Charles Fischer as third pilot and navigator, arrived after dark and dropped 34, one-million candlepower parachute flares to assist the destroyer navigating Chinese coastal waters. Squalls increased in intensity and visibility was now less than 700 feet. The seven survivors in the second raft had used all but one signal flare. The last flare successfully signaled their position to the destroyer. Eventually, as the ship approached, two swimmers deployed from *Halsey Powell*,

swam to the raft and secured a line, and the survivors were pulled aboard.

Meanwhile, the first raft containing LT Vukic had drifted to within 200 yards of Narnoy Island. USS *Halsey Powell* found itself in less than six fathoms of water, navigating over uncharted barrier reefs. Demonstrating outstanding seamanship, CDR Freedman maneuvered the destroyer around the reef, so the ship sailed parallel to the coastline with less than 200 yards of margin for error. LT Prouhet remarked, “this feat of seamanship was accomplished in poor visibility on a murky night using charts of doubtful accuracy [...] --it took courage.”

Vukic, Ballenger, and Brown were finally rescued just before midnight.

Of the 21 men from both aircrews, only ten survived, including seven Navy aircrew and three Coast Guard aircrew. The following perished in the crash:

- ENS Dwight C Angell, USN
- AT3 Paul A. Morley, USN
- AL3 Ronald A. Beahm, USN
- AT3 Clifford Byars, USN
- LTJG Gerald W. Stuart, USCG
- ALC Winfield J. Hammond, USCG
- AL1 Carl R. Tornell, USCG

AO1 Joseph R. Bridge, USCG

AD3 Tracy W. Miller, USCG

PH1 William F. McClure and AD2 Lloyd Smith, Jr., were lost after the initial crash and they remain unaccounted for.

Based on all information available, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) assessed

the individual’s case to be in the analytical category of “non-recoverable”

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:*

*Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.*

*At the going down of the sun and in the morning*

*We will remember them.*

“For the Fallen” by Laurence Binyon

The Coast Guard PBM-5G aircrew was awarded the Gold Lifesaving Medal for their heroic actions.

The armistice was signed six months later on July 27, 1953, and was designed to “ensure a complete cessation of hostilities and of all acts of armed force in Korea until a final peaceful settlement is achieved.” 2023 marked the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the events that transpired in the Formosa Straits – we remember the courageous Coast Guard and Navy men who perished and the families and comrades they left behind.





## Air Station San Francisco

By LT Jaelyn McElligott, Aviator 5049

Coast Guard Air Station San Francisco is located by the departure end of RWY 28 at San Francisco International Airport. It is a natural springboard for launching on various search and rescue, law enforcement, and marine protection missions. AirSta San Francisco provides SAR coverage from Point Conception to Fort Bragg and further inland into the Delta River system near Sacramento. The unit is also responsible for SAR coverage at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Mugu located onboard Naval Air Weapons Station (NAWS) Point Mugu, a part of Naval Base Ventura County (NBVC), extending the area of responsibility from Mendocino County further south to Dana Point. Undeniably beautiful, California is home to many challenges from a first responder's perspective due to dynamic and rapidly transforming Pacific weather systems, various microclimates, devastatingly cold-water temperatures, and numerous mountain ranges paralleling the rugged coastline.

Currently, there are seven MH-65E Dolphins stationed at AirSta San Francisco, two of which are on constant rotation to FOB Mugu to conduct missions in Los Angeles-Long Beach, the second-largest metro area in the United States. Last year, AirSta San Francisco and FOB Mugu flew 4,575 flight hours and conducted 334 SAR cases that saved or assisted 167 lives. One notable case transpired on 29 December 2023, when the crew of CGNR 6562 launched in the middle of the night to rescue nine people from an inland cliff near Lake Berryessa during IMC, convective activity, and severely low icing layers; a mission other local agencies turned down. In addition to AirSta San Francisco and FOB Mugu's excellence in SAR mission execution, the crew has been on the move, taking part in 87 Public Affairs events, four inter-agency training exercises with DoD and local government partners, five Presidential visits, two major international airshows, and three cutter deployments.

With the unit's transition to the H-65 Echo complete in October 2022, the crew continues to enjoy expanded capabilities for search and weather radar, flight planning tools, and performance calculations. The Aviation Logistics Center (ALC) in Elizabeth City, NC, used the full momentum of CG innovation to completely re-

constitute the avionics suite to an all-glass cockpit with state-of-the-art communications, instrumentation, and crew-alert systems to optimize aircrew safety when transiting through challenging environmental conditions such as Karl the Fog (a local celebrated weather phenomenon who hangs out by the Golden Gate Bridge relatively frequently). Such upgrades came just in time for 2023, as nine back-to-back atmospheric rivers pelted California in January alone, causing widespread flooding, displaced residents, mudslides, road closures, and historic rainfall throughout an otherwise drought-heavy region. Increased functionality with the Echo upgrade was paramount in keeping crews safe while executing an influx of SAR cases and post-storm flights during these unprecedented storms.

On a walk along the Administration Building hallways, one will find a cultivated treasure trove rich with decades of CG Aviation legacy. Being one of SFO's longest-tenured tenants since its inception on 15 February 1941, Air Station San Francisco is no stranger to transitions and change. On the cusp of FOB Mugu's closure and subsequent opening of Air Station Ventura, projected for June 2024, let's take a quick look at Air Station San Francisco's rich historical foundation in the Bay Area.

The first official patrol flight was conducted over San Francisco Bay by LT George H. Bowerman, Aviator 17, the unit's first CO, in a PB5-5 Catalina flying boat. Now, over 83 years later, our crews fly along the same path in the MH-65E Dolphin, patrolling the Bay Area daily under the Bay Bridge and Golden Gate Bridge on our low-visibility route, transiting through the peaks of the Sierras, and training with local CG small boat stations and other marine agencies inside the bay and along the California coastline.

AirSta San Francisco's ramp has seen a myriad of unique aircraft over time including the Douglas RD-4 Dolphin, Sikorsky HO3S-1 Dragonfly, Grumman HU-16E Albatross, Sikorsky HH-52A Seaguard, HH-3F Pelican (affectionately known as the "Jolly Green Giant"), Sikorsky HH-60 Jayhawk (for a brief stint from 1991-96) and Lockheed C-130. Upon the birth of AirSta Sacramento in 1978, AirSta San Francisco retired its fixed-wing aircraft after 37 years, remaining a rotary-wing base to this day.

FOB Mugu, established onboard Naval Base Ventura County at Point Mugu, continues to expand upon the wealth and history of Coast Guard aviation in Southern California following the closing of Air Station Los Angeles at LAX airport. Our partnerships built over decades of cooperation with local agencies such as Baywatch, LA County Fire Department, MDR Sheriff's Department, Ventura County Fire, and CGAUX Vessel Mar Teau have left a lasting impact on the community's perception of the CG. Flying by the Hollywood Sign, conducting a Port, Waterways, and Coastal Security patrol



along the Malibu beachline, and popping over to Catalina Island for an airport cookie are rewarding experiences during a crewmember's two-week deployment to FOB Mugu.

AirSta San Francisco truly is a spectacular place to hone skills for both pilot and aircrew, providing unique training opportunities in heavy surf, high-altitude mountainous terrain, around iconic landmarks, and through some of the busiest airspace the country has to offer. During liberty, there are endless possibilities for the crew to explore the Western Coast: a casual coastal drive along the 101, a sunny day spent at Santa Monica Pier, a weekend ski trip at Lake Tahoe, or a glass of wine at one of the many world-renowned wineries in the Napa or Sonoma Valleys.

Significant changes are coming this summer for AirSta San Francisco as the sun sets on FOB Mugu and rises upon AirSta Ventura as they welcome their first Sikorsky MH-60T Jayhawk in June 2024. Although this brings the 37-year legacy of the MH-65 in the Los Angeles-Long Beach area to a close, the increased on-scene capabilities, crew capacity, and onboard fuel of the MH-60 will strengthen the CG's position within the region to respond swiftly to our diverse set of missions. AirSta San Francisco and FOB Mugu crews will continue work around the clock to ensure continual operations during this transitional period. We are eager to witness the positive impact such changes will have on the future of the Coast Guard's presence along the California Coast and how we can best meet the needs of the public.

**See related story on P. 19.**



## Coast Guard Unit Patches: The History of What's on Your Shoulders

Article and photo by Ptero COMO Joseph Giannattasio, P-3021, CG Auxiliary

incorporated beloved characters from the Disney cartoon universe, with some of them

Nowadays, it's rare to encounter a Coast Guard aviator who isn't wearing a unit patch, be it one bearing an air station insignia or squadron motto.

Coast Guard unit patches carry a rich and storied history, symbolizing the proud heritage, camaraderie, and achievements of this esteemed service unit. These distinctive emblems, proudly worn on flight suits, visually represent the invaluable contributions made by the brave men and women of the Coast Guard and CG Auxiliary. To appreciate the significance of modern-era unit patches, it is essential to delve into their historical roots.

The use of military patches originated a little over 200 years ago. In 1810, the British Army became the first to employ badges as a means of distinguishing officer ranks. This development led to the creation of easily recognizable identifiers for various units and divisions. One of the earliest and most notable examples was the "Kearny Patch." This red piece of cloth was affixed to the caps of officers under the command of Brigadier General Phillip Kearny during the early years of the American Civil War (1861-65). The Kearny Patch aimed to enhance troop visibility during battles and proved to be such an ingenious idea that other units adopted it, giving rise to what we now know as "unit insignia patches."

Fast-forwarding a half-century, the desire to boost troop morale led to the creation of more personalized patches. The first of these was designed for the U.S. Army's 81st Division, known as the "Wildcats," during World War I.

Another significant milestone in the evolution of unit patches occurred during World War II. Walt Disney animation studios, according to company records, produced over 1,200 colorful and often comically wisecracking unit insignia patches for the military. These patches

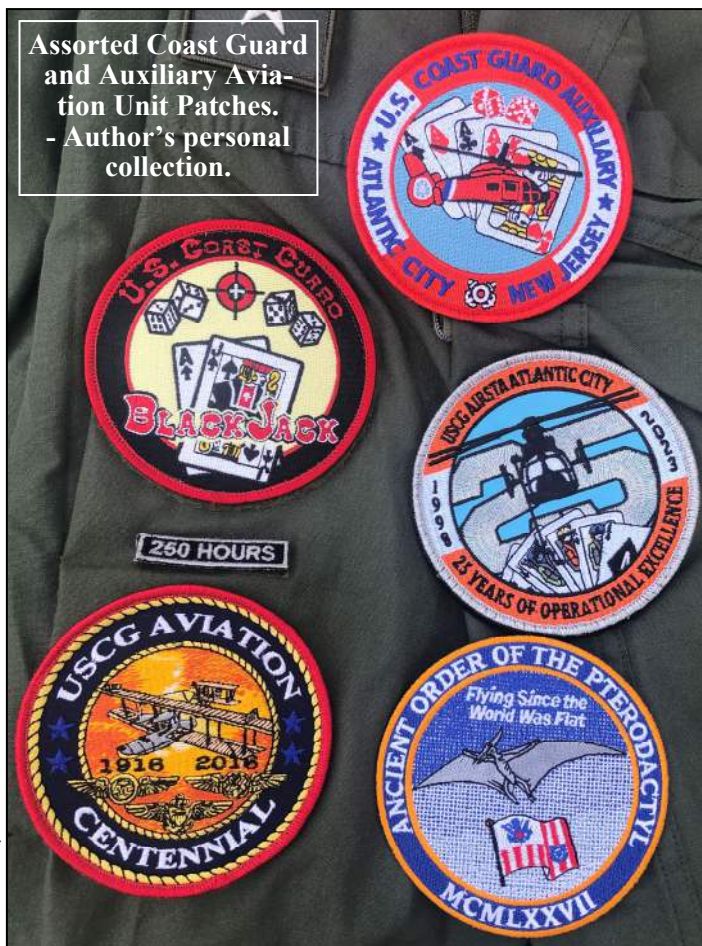
still in use today.

The roots of Coast Guard unit patches can be traced back to the early 20th century when aviation became an integral part of the CG's operations. Individual squadrons sought to establish their unique identities, and squadron patches often featured elements such as anchors, lighthouses, and life rings to symbolize the service's maritime heritage. These patches showcased the units' mission specialties, including search and rescue, law enforcement, and environmental protection.

Coast Guard aviation unit patches have evolved over the years in terms of design and symbolism. They frequently incorporate elements such as aircraft, helicopters, flags, and unit mottos. The intricate details and vibrant colors of these patches reflect the unit's mission, affiliations, and notable achievements. Many patches also incorporate regional or cultural symbols, paying homage to the squadron's home base or geographic area of operation. In some cases, individual Coast Guard detachments create their own unique "det patches."

In the modern era, Coast Guard unit patches hold immense significance, fostering unit pride, camaraderie, and esprit de corps. They serve as visual representations of service members' dedication to duty and the esteemed tradition of CG aviation. Worn with honor and distinction, these patches serve as reminders of shared experiences, sacrifices, and the unwavering commitment of those who serve in this

Assorted Coast Guard and Auxiliary Aviation Unit Patches. - Author's personal collection.



distinguished branch. Within the maritime military community, Coast Guard unit patches stand as powerful symbols, embodying heritage, unity, and excellence. As the Coast Guard and CG Auxiliary continue to protect and serve, these emblems will remain treasured artifacts, highlighting the remarkable bravery and unwavering dedication of the men and women who proudly wear them, ensuring that their legacy perseveres for future generations.

Sources:

DOD Article - Artful Patriotism: DOD and Disney - Shannon Collins  
Angelo State University Article - Aerospace Studies Patch History

## NEW USCG RETIREE MENTORING & TRANSITION ASSISTANCE NETWORK!

RADM Jeff Hathaway, USCG (Ret)  
CG National Retiree Council Co-Chair

Your USCG National Retiree Council is sponsoring this program to maintain a searchable database for our retiree community (and those soon to retire) to both request and offer personal mentoring and advice in a variety of areas. Thinking about relocating to a particular geographic area but would like insights from those that are living there? find some help here. Wondering how to start a small business? You can find a mentor here.

We are using a software service called Member Planet to host our registration process and database. It is both secure, easy to use

and offers great flexibility. Once submitted, your registration is automatically forwarded to Mr. Bob Hinds, USCG Retiree Services Program Manager. He validates your eligibility then grants access to the database.

We hope that the USCG retiree community finds this program useful. Prior pilot programs showed a demand for such a program but lacked an easily accessible database maintained in the public domain.

VISIT <http://www.uscgretireenetwork.org/> TO LEARN MORE AND ENROLL!!

A big thank you to our Capital Area Retiree Council for originally promoting a retiree mentoring program and sponsoring the first "proof of concept" pilot program!



## Crumley's Corner

By Ptero Beth L. Crumley, P-1916, Assistant Historian, U.S.C.G., Office of External Outreach and Heritage, CG-09231, CGHQ

### Flying above the Ice (Continued)

On New Year's Day, LT James VanEtten had the watch. He recorded in the logbook:

Under way as before  
Making slightly more than four  
Steering 190 p.g.c.  
This Antarctic is no place to be.  
Turning three six r.p.m.  
Ice is trying to hem us in.  
Using pilothouse control  
With Little America the ultimate goal.  
The good ship *Northwind* in the lead  
The others following at top speed  
At forty minutes past new year  
Other ships have stopped through fear  
Northward circling to clear a path  
But the mighty *Sennett* is in due wrath  
Claims she could pave the way  
But breaking ice takes more than say  
Channel cleared and vessels freed  
Proceeding now at lessened speed.  
At four bells-course is set  
One, three, five seems the best yet  
Zero three hundred finds new lead  
On 185 the ships proceed  
Twenty minutes has gone by  
When helicopter takes to the sky  
Admiral Cruzen is aboard  
And it ain't New York he's headed toward!  
And now with copter drawing near  
Here's to all a Happy New Year!

For several days *Northwind* roared through the ice. Said Thomas, "we found ice in abundance. There were no southward leads. However, helo observations showed some wide blue water leads which tended in a southeasterly direction. These were separated from the big ice lake by a series of pools. By smashing a track from pool to pool we could get into the lead. The admiral figured it was worth a gamble." Thomas noted the ice grew heavier as they followed the lead. When asked by Cruzen, Thomas stated, "I don't like it. Consolidated polar ice scares me." The ships turned in what Thomas described as a "rout." Aerial reconnaissance showed no leads. By January 11, they had been in ice for 12 days. On 12 January, another reconnaissance flight showed closed pack ice ahead. To the southeast, the leads were broad. Again, Thomas believed the ice to be increasingly heavy in that direction. They continued on course.

On 16 January, Thomas called for the helicopter to do another aerial reconnaissance. Gershowitz was the pilot. Thomas wrote, "we spotted the Ross ice shelf! This was El Dorado! We were

through the pack. Both Gershowitz and I were spellbound...the barrier was like a dazzling desert of white sand dunes which rolled inland from chalky cliffs." Gershowitz radioed Admiral Cruzen. "Open water ten miles ahead of you!" *Northwind*, with the help of the HNS-1, had led the ships through 700 miles of pack ice. Ice in the Bay of Whales proved particularly challenging—ten feet thick and covered with more than a foot of frozen snow. *Northwind* hammered at that ice for 63 hours.

In late January, after a trip to Scott Island and a transport of men and cargo, *Northwind* was in pack ice, headed south-southeast. Consolidated fields of ice were estimated to average 400 square miles in area. Thomas was concerned that a change in wind might jeopardize *Northwind*. Calculations at 1900 showed the icebreaker was halfway through the pack. Thomas ordered the helicopter aloft. Five miles east of *Northwind*, the HNS-1 began losing altitude rapidly. The blades were icing; Gershowitz sent out a distress call. *Northwind* moved in the direction of the helicopter, but met impenetrable ice. *Northwind* was stuck....ice was pushing against her sides. Immediate action was necessary. Thomas called for mines. And, during that process, the sounds of a helicopter were heard. It was flying. When it landed, the mine was detonated, and *Northwind* began to move. Interestingly, there is no mention in Gersh's logbook of anything more than a routine flight.

An examination of logbooks recording the flights of Olsen and Gershowitz show almost two dozen flights were made in this two-week period. Cornish's logbooks are unavailable, so a complete total of flights undertaken is not available.

At 1800, 8 February 1947, *Northwind* and the other ships of the central group let go moorings, maneuvered into a column and headed out of the Bay of Whales, bound for New Zealand. Admiral Byrd, the plane crews, scientists and supporting personnel were left at the base established and known as Little America.

Thomas later wrote, "The proven success of our helicopter impelled me to send the following message to the Commandant, USCG. "HELICOPTER BEST PIECE OF EQUIPMENT EVER CARRIED IN ICE VESSELS. I might add, parenthetically, that one of the motivating factors was headquarters' resistance to my efforts to obtain one for *Eastwind* more than a year earlier."

Headquarters did not respond to this message, probably due to budget constraints and the mostly unfavorable attitude toward the helicopter. When Thomas took *Northwind* to the Bering Sea the following year, he requested a helicopter. It was not provided, but the success of the helicopter in these early operations certainly opened the door to future use. In December 1947, helicopters returned to Antarctica as part of Operation WINDMILL.

The paper was well received by the audience, although one non-aviator jokingly called it a 'wonderful piece of aviation propaganda.'

I have long believed that the Historian's Office is ridiculously understaffed. The budget is almost non-existent. Despite these challenges, this Coast Guard team performed at the very highest levels during this symposium I was but a small part of the effort put forth to highlight USCG history. It is a testament to my colleagues' professionalism, and evidence of the commitment of the staff and those we work closely with to preserve, research and publicize the remarkable history of the US Coast Guard. To them I say, "A job well done!"

Semper Paratus!



Greetings from the Coast Guard Historian's Office! It's been an exciting few months here at CGHQ. We are restructuring! While we remain part of CG-092 (Governmental and Public Affairs), The Historian's Office and the National CG Museum are now a separate component. The new Office of Coast Guard Heritage-CG-0924 is under leadership of Elizabeth Varner, previously the director of the NCGM project. It's an exciting time.

The mission of this new Office of Coast Guard Heritage is to utilize heritage assets in support of the Commandant's Intent. Strategic planning sessions, which will be ongoing, have asked three basic questions: Why do we exist? How do we achieve mission success? What do we do to achieve that success? All interesting questions to ponder. In short? We exist to tell the CG story, to share this remarkable history with both internal audiences and the public. We've had discussions on the bigger picture of HOW to do this, and what each of us within this new Office of Coast Guard Heritage must do to make mission. Of course, there are, and will continue to be, challenges. This is an organization in its infancy. There are bound to be growing pains. I am, however, optimistic. I think you will see a greater effort to build relationships within the Coast Guard to expand outreach: writing projects, presentations, a greater social media presence. As I have said before, we may be small in number compared to the other service's history and museums programs, but we are mighty. We are fortunate to have a staff committed to telling the CG story. The creation of this new office certainly indicates that leadership recognizes and supports a strong heritage program. That is very encouraging!

Throughout this reorganization, however, we continue to conduct business. Day-to-day tasks have not ceased. Requests for information still arrive in our inboxes. Collections management tasks, under our

new collection manager, Stan Contrades, continue to be a priority. Researchers still visit Atkins Hall. Deadlines continue to loom. Donations must still be considered. What were some of the highlights of the past few months?

One of the most exciting recent acquisitions is a large collection of slides, donated by Mrs. Aida Wilks. Transfer of these materials to the Historian's Office was facilitated by Admiral Manson Brown. CAPT Larry Hall (Ret.) and I met the Admiral in the parking area by the Ceremonial Entrance on a cold and windy day.



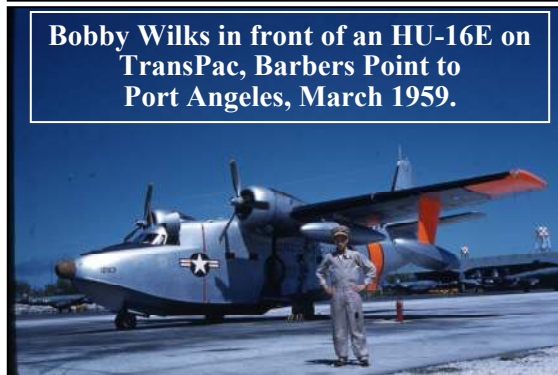
Admiral Brown & Ptero Larry Hall, Aviator 1923.

With the new donation loaded onto a hand truck, we walked up the hill to Atkins Hall anticipating the first glance at this new material. This collection is a treasure. Each slide is identified by date and location,

and captioned. These are images that have never been seen before, and are certainly a most welcome addition to the Bobby Wilks collection of artifacts and personal papers held



Bobby Wilks in front of a TH-13 at NAS Ellyson Field, August 1959.



Bobby Wilks in front of an HU-16E on TransPac, Barbers Point to Port Angeles, March 1959.

by the Historian's Office.

I was compelled to speak with a number of people who served with or knew Captain Wilks. The final result? Articles on Captain Bobby Wilks in both The Long Blue Line series and Reserve magazine: [Bobby Wilks — distinguished aviator, mentor, and minority trailblazer > United States Coast Guard > My Coast Guard News \(uscg.mil\)](#)

And, of course, January means Elmer Stone Day! On a cold, snowy 19 January, Stone's birthday was celebrated in the Ceremonial Entrance of CGHQ. The weather was terrible, which meant that instead of the usual 100-plus attendees, we had about 25 individuals who braved the snow. CDR David Middleton acted as master of ceremonies and I had the honor of speaking about Stone's remarkable career. It is ALWAYS one of the highlights of my year. Admiral Michael Platt was in attendance, as was RADM Joe Buzzella. The biggest surprise was learning that Admiral Fagan was attending. It was, I think, a good event! Any day one can talk about Coast Guard aviation history is a great day! Semper Paratus!

## 60th Anniversary of the CG Racing Stripe

By Ptero COMO Joseph Giannatasio, Asst. District Staff Officer-Aviation (ADSO-AV-ADM), District 5NR, CG Auxiliary

In the early 1960s, America's visual representation faced neglect both domestically and internationally. Following the significant role of image-building in President John F. Kennedy's recent election, the industrial design firm Raymond Loewy/William Snaith, Inc. was enlisted to revamp the exterior and interior of the presidential plane. Delighted with the outcome, Kennedy approved their proposal to enhance the global visual identity of the U.S. Government.

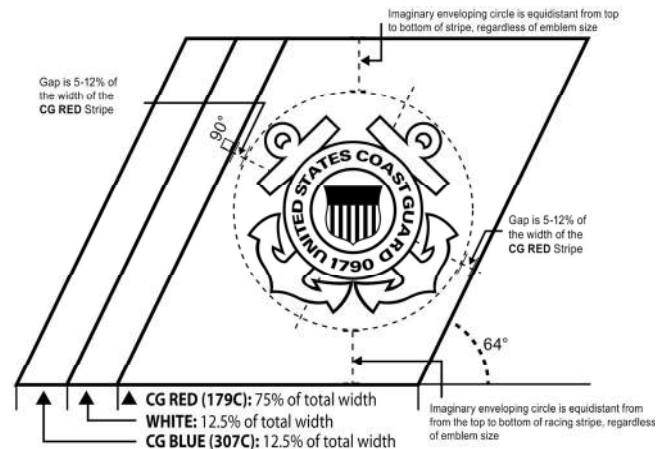
In 1964, the firm suggested that the Coast Guard adopt a distinctive symbol for easy recognition across various platforms.

Their design featured a wide red bar to the right of a narrow blue bar, both inclined at 64 degrees, paying homage to the year of its conception—1964. The CG emblem was centered on the red bar. Extensive studies were conducted on experimental markings to gauge their impact on the public and their alignment with the Coast Guard's mission and traditions. The blue represents the sea and the orange is internationally associated with search and rescue. The response was overwhelmingly positive, and on April 6, 1967, the iconic slash became synonymous with the CG.

Different versions of the racing stripe exist within the Coast Guard, depending on the color it is applied to. While the typical design features narrow blue and wide red stripes, helicopters like the orange MH-65 dolphin and red-hulled icebreakers display a white variation of the stripe.

In the same year, the Coast Guard Auxiliary envisioned designing a flag inspired by the CG's shape, incorporating a diagonal white stripe similar to the "slash" found on CG vessels and aircraft. Centered on a blue rectangular background, the stripe featured the new Auxiliary logo, resembling the one recently adopted by the Coast Guard. Approved by the Army's Institute of Heraldry and the Commandant, the new blue ensign was officially embraced in the summer of 1968 and remains unchanged to this day.

Since its adoption by the USCG, more than 50 other countries have created their own iter-



USCG Mark Specs. Source: Same

ations of the racing stripe. This distinctive mark has become an instantly recognizable symbol for coast guards worldwide, showcasing effective brand recognition on a global scale.



USCG Mark. Source: U.S. COAST GUARD HERALDRY/COMDTINST M5200.14A



Coast Guard Auxiliary Ensign. Source: USCG HERALDRY/COMDTINST M5200.14A





**Mail Call!** This issue's mail is brought to you by a Curtiss SO3C-1/2/3 "Seamew" (1944). The Curtiss SO3C Seamew was developed by the Curtiss-Wright Corporation as a replacement for the SOC Seagull as the United States Navy's standard floatplane scout. Curtiss named the SO3C the *Seamew*. From the time it entered service, the SO3C suffered two serious flaws: in-flight stability problems and problems with the unique Ranger air-cooled V-shaped inline engine. While the in-flight stability problem was eventually addressed (although not fully solved), the Ranger XV-770 engine proved a dismal failure even after many attempted modifications. Poor flight performance and a poor maintenance record led to the SO3C being withdrawn from US Navy first line units by 1944. The Navy assigned 27 SOC1/3 to the Coast Guard in 1943/44. All aircraft were returned to the Navy by June 1944.

### An Amazing Christmas Story

As I read Al's article on the C-130 mid-air, I got to thinking - always dangerous. As far as I can remember, we have had two C-130 mid-air; the one discussed in which all thankfully survived, and the fatal one off Catalina when a C-130 flew into a USMC formation of two AH-1Zs and an H-53 in 2009. Add to that the very near miss I had over LAX at 20,000 ft in the soup. My close call was on an 8.6 hr multi-leg flight out of SFO on 11-12 August 1963 - C-130B CGNR 1345. Searching 300 miles or so off SW tip of Baja, CA.

CCGD12 received word of the yacht *Astrea* overdue on a sail plan from Tahiti to San Diego. Communications had ceased and although there were no automatic distress signals, the less-than-frequently travelled area coupled with weather analyses dictated that it would be prudent to try and locate the vessel.

Air Station San Francisco was the only west coast facility equipped with long range C-130 aircraft, and it was directed to launch an aircraft to check on some scattered islands southwest of La Paz, Mexico. It was thought that if this ocean capable sailing vessel had any problems, she would seek shelter at one of them.

The Air Station mounted up a C-130 for what would be a long day with a grizzled old WWII aircraft commander (AC) Pete Petterson, me as copilot, and a "nugget" third pilot as relief pilot and navigator. To help bring along our "nugget" on the qualification ladder, our AC Pete wanted us to rotate seats and duties; he would take left seat on the first leg, I on the second, etc.

It was a short hop down the coast to NAS North Island, San Diego for fueling, then I had the left seat as we flew south just off the coast of Mexico, staying outside of their Flight Information region (FIR). At La Paz on the tip of Baha California, we turned to the southwest toward the Isla de Rivigo, some 300 nautical miles away.

Within an hour of departure from Baha California, we were over the islands, and sure enough, there was the *Astrea*, anchored in a sheltered cove, apparently in no distress, and the news was relayed back to CCGD12. We headed back for North Island and another refueling. On the leg from North Island back home to San Francisco, our "nugget" Don was in the pilot's seat, Pete in the copilot's seat, and I on the bench.

Flying in Southern California is always a busy time, and if one is not quite familiar with all of the routes, it can be confusing. (They even have helicopter route with geographic waypoints.) We were

handed off from San Diego Departure Control to El Toro radar control (RAPCON) as we were climbing through 20,000 ft. to transit the USMC operating area before being handed off to Los Angeles Center. El Toro gave us a clearance to "Continue your climb to (cruising altitude), make a 360 degree left turn to 10 for separation and contact Los Angeles Center on (frequency)".

Normally, all LAX traffic flow is to the west; landing and taking off. The weather was in its once-per-year winter pattern, and in those rare days, landing traffic at Los Angeles (LAX) was to the east, requiring circling approaches to landing taking place over the ocean. The Western 720 from Las Vegas therefore had to cross over LAX out over water to come back in just as we were transiting over LAX.

We were in the clouds in this unusual weather and therefore Don was on the gages. Pete was handling communications from the right side and I was hanging over the Flight Engineer's (FE) seat, idly watching everything, when the clearance came in. Don was on a heading of 330 when it was received, and started his left turn, but when he reached 310, he rolled level and asked "Did he mean all the way around to 310, or stop here?"

At that instant, something flashed in the semi-darkness ahead, and I looked up just in time to see a Western Airlines Boeing 720 flash across the windshield! Had Don not rolled out momentarily, we both would have tried to occupy the same airspace, a physical impossibility. It happened so fast, all I could do was point and say "Holy Shit". Two of us saw it.

We reported the near-miss to Center (they probably could have heard us without benefit of a radio!) and when we shakily arrived at San Francisco, a contingent of FAA inspectors were there to meet us and take our statements. Much later we were to learn that the controller in RAPCON had a drinking problem and his judgment was impaired at the time. Small consolation to the crew of SC-130B CGNR 1345 and the 156 passengers in the 720 letting down for LAX had we collided.

At the very time of our near-miss, my wife, Lorna, was in the dining room ironing clothes. From that position, she was able to see the front sidewalk. In an eerie ESP type of coincidence, she saw the image of an official CG car pull up to the curb, and three CG Officers get out, and her heart sank. Then just as quickly, the image disappeared. Strange? You bet!

A changing point in my life? Certainly - a time of reflection and introspection, but one which demonstrated the thin thread our lives hang on. It gave me more than a nudge to prepare for my family's future without me.

I wondered why the C-130s? Certainly my case was a controller error; perhaps the fatal crash was as well. I wonder if we get so busy in the cockpit with getting ready to search (shut down two, ramp open, search windows installed, etc. that we miss the outside. Do we have Automatic Dependent Surveillance—Broadcast (ADS-B) in and out in the C-130s? If not, it would seem to be faulty reasoning as the FAA ATC phases out radar. Are they equipped with a full suite of redundant Nav gear to avoid single point failure in navigation?

Ptero Art Wagner, Aviator 769

Correction: the drawing of the mid-air was done by Ptero Dallas Schmidt, Aviator 1343, not Dale Schmidt (no relation). Ptero Kirk Colvin, Aviator 1432

### Flying Above the Ice

Beth Crumley's report of Operation High Jump and ADM Byrd's exploits was of particular interest here simply because Virginia's dad, Tony Morency, made three trips to Antarctica - two with Adm. Byrd in '39 and in the mid-40s on High Jump. His third foray was in the mid 50s under Dr. Seiple (sp?). Tony wintered over in '39 and '40s - no bowling alleys back then. There's even a picture of him at the helm of the former CGC Bear, which had been purchased and renamed the Bear of Oakland. Tony was one of two US Army guys on the expeditions.

He was a tank mechanic and was there to maintain the tracked vehicles. One of his explorations was a 600 mile traverse in a SnoCat.

For years we had a taxidermied penguin 'living' with us but he / she was donated to Ohio State's Byrd Polar Research facility along with other artifacts Tony brought back to CONUS at expeditions' ends.

I can't forget the great picture of two Pteros on the back cover. A really great trip to Scotland made better with meeting up with Alain and Gary Gamble. If you've not attended the Edinburgh Military Tattoo, put it on your bucket list. Either Gary or I can sell you on the idea. I'm sure we four would love to return someday; it was a very special evening.

Ptero Tom Rich, P-2596

### CGAA Appreciation

CAPT Tony Hahn, CG Aviator #3158  
Dear CAPT Hahn,

On behalf of Coast Guard Air Station Houston, I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for your, and the Coast Guard Aviation Association's invaluable support during our Safety Stand-Down on 11 January. Your provision of refreshments added a delightful touch to the occasion and contributed to the overall success of the gathering. We recognize the vital role that the Coast Guard Aviation Association plays in supporting our community, and we are truly grateful for your continued partnership. The dedication and commitment of the CGAA is integral to our shared goals and enhances the well-being of our members and the entire Coast Guard aviation community. Thank you once again for your unwavering support and for being an integral part of our event. Semper Paratus!

Ptero CDR William 'Jeff' Jacobs, CO, Aviator 3846

### An Ode for CG Pterodactyls By Ptero Ray Copin, Aviator 744

When in the day or dark of night  
Launch Ready Aircraft is the call,  
In flight gear to the ramp we dart.

We board and do an engine start,  
We know a little, not a lot  
About the mission we're to do.  
A rescue maybe we'll be told,  
Fly safely first and not too bold.  
With all controls we need at hand  
And takeoff clearance, off we fly.  
We head to somewhere off at sea  
To save someone or more than three.

It could be soon that we'll find out  
It's law enforcement we're about.  
To help enforce laws as we can  
Is something in our daily plan.  
We'll fly in weather foul or fair  
And trust our crew in getting there.

When mission's done, we'll fly to base  
For rest and with a smiling face.  
We love our job and do our best  
To do it well and safely, too.  
We're always ready for a call  
To fly to save or fight for all.

### Sweet Dreams



Can you top this?

Contributed by Ptero Marty Kaiser, Av. 753

### I Flew By Brad Baker Contributed by Ptero George Krietemeyer, Aviator 913

When the last checklist is run and the bag-  
drag is over

I will reminisce of the days I once  
knew,

I will not remember the 3 A.M. alerts  
But only that I flew!

I will not remember the crew rest in  
tents

Nor recall how cold arctic winds blew,  
And I'll try not to remember the times I  
got sick.

But only that I flew!

I will never forget when nature became  
angry

And challenged my intrepid crew,  
And I'll always remember the fear I felt  
And the pride in knowing I flew!

I will remember the sights my mortal eyes  
have seen

Colored by multitudes of hues,  
Those beautiful lights on cold winter  
nights

Seen only by those who flew.  
God was extremely good to me

And let me touch his face,

He saw my crew through war and peace  
And blessed us with his grace.

So when I stand at Saint Peter's Gate  
And tell him that I'm new

I know he'll smile and welcome me,  
Because he knows

I FLEW!



### Tomorrow Looks Different for Aviation Training By Ptero CAPT Chris Hulser, Aviator 3499, and LT Michelle Hernandez

than 50 years of aviation training partnership between the Navy and Coast Guard.

COPT-R is a new training paradigm for naval aviators. Previously, all Navy, CG, and Marine Corps pilots began training at Pensacola and flew fixed-wing aircraft for the primary and intermediate training phases. RW pilots then moved on to helicopters as a "bolted on" advanced phase at the end of the curriculum. Completion time for this traditional training pipeline recently swelled to nearly three years.

Under this new rotary-wing-only program, students complete several discrete phases of training at separate locations. They first report to Pensacola for medical screening and introductory flight training, which includes academics and 10 hours of "introduction to flight" in civil fixed-wing airplanes. Then it is on to a contractor-owned/-operated helicopter flight school in Fort Worth, Texas, for "basic" flight training (academics plus 50 hours of in-aircraft and simulator training). Finally, student aviators finish their rotary-wing instruction at the Navy's Whiting Field at Advanced Helicopter Training.

The first eight students, five Navy and three Coast Guard, have completed training under this program. If the program is successful, it will reduce time-to-train by more than half while producing the same high-quality aviators the nation and maritime services need.



The first graduates of the COPT-R program. 48 student aviators (33 Navy and 15 CG) have volunteered to participate in this rotary-only training pipeline.



## Demonstrating Courage in the Face of Danger

By David M. Santos, Coast Guard Academy External Affairs

Graduates of the Coast Guard Academy frequently find themselves in harm's way serving the public and saving lives. It's an accepted part of the job that comes with the service's humanitarian mission. The Academy community celebrates the accomplishments of past graduates who have distinguished themselves and their alma mater during its annual Hall of Heroes ceremony. The Hall of Heroes is a memorial that was established in April 2005 to honor Academy graduates who performed heroic service to the CG and the nation.

In the accounts of the heroic acts of this year's inductees, whether it's at the site of a plane ditching into the ocean at night, a devastating highway accident, or a massive hurricane response, you will find them demonstrating courage in the face of danger.

When Hurricane Harvey made landfall in late August 2017, it arrived as a devastating Category 4 hurricane that caused catastrophic flooding and more than 100 deaths. One of the costliest natural disasters in U.S. history, Harvey caused a staggering \$125 billion in damage throughout Southeast Texas and the Houston metro area. On August 26, as part of the initial CG response to the hurricane, LT **Gregory Bukata** '11, Aviator 4474, an MH-65D Aircraft Commander, and his crew conducted some of the first rescues that night, in 80-knot winds and torrential rain. As the response continued, during one notable mission Bukata worked to place a rescue swimmer between tall trees and high voltage power lines to reach a critically-ill pregnant woman who was trapped by rising waters in the attic of her home. An award citation describing the arduous mission reads, "Due to massive amounts of water intrusion, the crew endured multiple aircraft emergencies during the rescue of additional family members. The loss of critical avionics, internal communication, and aircraft stabilization systems coupled with the violent motion of the aircraft from 60-knot gusts made just hovering an arduous act and hoisting a true aeronautical feat. Following a hoist failure on the subsequent rescue, the crew was forced to leave the swimmer on scene. As the only available resource at this early stage of the response, the crew returned with a new aircraft to complete the rescue." During the seven days Bukata was part of the response, he and his crew were instrumental in the rescue of 108 people and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for extraordinary achievement in aerial flight.

As **Ryan Crose** '06 drove to work on Sept. 26, 2017, his routine morning commute in Northern Illinois quickly turned into a horrifying ordeal. Crose, a Reserve LCDR, was the first person on scene after a tractor trailer struck two other tractor trailers on the side of the road before catching on fire. Crose rushed to the driver who was writhing on the ground, engulfed in flames. Trying to extinguish the fire that surrounded the man with his shirt, Crose reached for another shirt from a passing motorist and fell into a pool of diesel fuel. Now soaked in diesel, Crose disregarded the danger to himself and continued to fight the fire that was tormenting the man. He finally succeeded in putting the fire out with a welding blanket provided by another bystander. Moments later, the truck's fuel tank exploded shooting a fireball overhead that knocked bystanders to the ground and sending a flaming tire airborne that landed just a few feet from Crose and the victim. After moving him further away to safety, Crose stayed with the severely injured driver until emergency responders arrived. In recognition of his selfless efforts, Crose was awarded the Coast Guard Medal, which is presented to members who distinguish themselves by voluntary acts of heroism in the face of great danger during non-combat situations.

LCDR **Mark Vislay** '94, Aviator 3372, an HH-60J Aircraft Commander, played a significant role in the massive CG response to the costliest hurricane in U.S. history, Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Vislay and his crew flew through high winds to deliver CG and Federal Emergency Management Agency leaders to ground zero to provide a real-time assessment of the unfolding disaster from the highest levels of the federal government. An award citation recounting the details of Vislay's actions reads, "While sustaining a motionless hover, LCDR Vislay directed a litter hoist to rescue a comatose, handicapped survivor in the attic; the hoist involved threading the litter through a four foot jagged hole and any movement would have caused certain injury to the swimmer and survivor." The citation goes on to say, "On 1 September 2005, LCDR Vislay displayed incredible physical endurance, saving 96 lives from a hotel roof, while operating his aircraft at its maximum performance capability. On 3 September 2005, he located a family of six trapped in their backyard. From 100 feet, he lowered the basket through an intricate web of wires hid-

den in the shadows of night, barely avoiding entanglement on each hoist."

As a result of his actions from August 29 to September 6, 2005, Vislay and his crew saved 167 storm victims and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for extraordinary achievement in aerial flight.

More than sixty years ago, LT **William Russell** '53, Aviator 712, distinguished himself during the rescue of survivors from a Northwest Airlines flight from Okinawa to Manila that ditched in the Philippine Sea on July 14, 1960.

Russell served as an UF-2G Albatross copilot assigned to the Coast Guard Air Attachment at Sangley Point in the Republic of the Philippines. The UF-2G was an amphibious aircraft developed for the military by the Grumman Corporation.

The Albatross was ideal for the CG since it could operate from both land and water. They were located at air stations throughout the U.S., as well as Bermuda, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines. The citation that accompanies Russell's award reads, "Assisting in the search for survivors from a ditched Northwest Airlines DC-7C plane, approximately seventy miles northeast of Sangley Point, LT Russell skillfully piloted the plane, and despite adverse weather and flying conditions, his vigilance resulted in spotting a flare which led to the rescue of the fifty-seven survivors, who were located in four life rafts."

Russell's skillful evaluation of the sea conditions and successful open sea landing enabled him to maneuver the aircraft and work with his crew to pick up 23 of the 57 passengers who survived the ordeal. The remaining survivors were later rescued by a U.S. Navy aircraft that had been directed to the scene.

LT Russell was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his efforts to save the passengers of the ill-fated flight.



The newest CG Academy Hall of Heroes inductees pose for a photograph October 27. CDR Ryan Crose, LCDR Gregory Bukata, & CAPT Mark Vislay, were awarded for their heroic actions in their CG careers. LT Travis Russell (R) accepted on behalf of his grandfather William Russell, class of 1953.

## CG Aviation Association Chapters

CGAA Chapters have been established in the general region of Coast Guard Aviation Units as well as other selected locations. The purpose is to raise the profile of the Association, interact with former and active duty aviation personnel, as well as the local Air Auxiliary, and to recruit new members. So, instead of Local Coordinators we now have Chapter Coordinators.

The Chapter Coordinator represents the CGAA to the following:

- The local Command. Sole point of contact for CGAA issues. Assist the Command as the CO may desire.
- All CG Aviation personnel in the area. Officer or Enlisted, Active or Retired as well as Air Auxiliary.
- The Local Community. As able, involve Chapter members in community activities and civic as well as other veterans organizations.

We still need Chapter Coordinators in Astoria, Humboldt Bay, and San Francisco. If you are located in any of these areas, please give this a try.

Take a look at the latest list, contact your Chapter Coordinator and offer up some assistance. Or, just go ahead and be one. If you wish to become a unit CC, contact CGAA Chapter Liaison Mark Benjamin at 231 642 1201 or email [mecbmd11@gmail.com](mailto:mecbmd11@gmail.com)

### CGAA CHAPTER COORDINATORS

UNIT	COORDINATOR	E-MAIL	PHONE NUMBERS
Astoria	OPEN		
Atlantic City	Dale Goodreau	<a href="mailto:dgoodreau1@comcast.net">dgoodreau1@comcast.net</a>	609 390 4329
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Borinquen	Doug Armstrong	<a href="mailto:doug@ratio.com">doug@ratio.com</a>	340 643 2151
Cape Cod	Brian Wallace	<a href="mailto:ccjbwlbs@comcast.net">ccjbwlbs@comcast.net</a>	508 888 7384
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Corpus Christi	John Pasch	<a href="mailto:paschfam@gmail.com">paschfam@gmail.com</a>	504 236 6562
Denver/C Springs	Tim Tobiasz	<a href="mailto:tobiascg@mac.com">tobiascg@mac.com</a>	504 470 5040
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### POST COAST GUARD AVIATION EMPLOYMENT ADVISORY SERVICES

*by the Coast Guard Aviation Association / Ancient Order of the Pterodactyl*

The CGAA has established a mentoring program designed to assist all of our aviation personnel in securing post Coast Guard employment. The following Pterosaurs have volunteered to assist, in any way they can, people in the aviation rates with future employment advice and counsel. Feel free to contact these willing volunteers.

**JIM McMAHON, SHELL OIL COMPANY (Ret):** Jim served in the Coast Guard for 12 years and left as an AD1 to pursue other interests. He has been with Shell Oil Company for the last twenty years and is now an IT Solution Architect helping design Shell's new Asset Management business process using SAP (business software). Jim is also heavily involved in Shell Oil's MILNET or Military Network program. Shell wants to hire military veterans. He can be reached at: [jim.mcmahon44@yahoo.com](mailto:jim.mcmahon44@yahoo.com) or 281-753-5221.

**CHRIS LUTAT, B-777 CAPTAIN, FEDEX:** Chris Lutat is our Chapter Coordinator at the Coast Guard Academy. He has extensive instructor, as well as pilot hiring experience. He can be reached at: [clutat@aol.com](mailto:clutat@aol.com) or 901-830-0939.

**PAUL FRANCIS, CDR, USCG (Ret):** Paul is our Chapter Coordinator in Salem, MA and now works for TSA in Boston. He is responsible for the inspection and regulatory oversight of air carriers, 21 federalized airports, cargo facilities, indirect air carriers, certified cargo screening facilities, flight schools, flight instructors, and general aviation outreach throughout all six New England States. He can be reached at: [paul.francis@tsa.dhs.gov](mailto:paul.francis@tsa.dhs.gov) or 617-721-0639.

**STEVE RAUSCH, CDR USCG, (Ret):** Steve currently flies the Airbus 300 for FEDEX, and is our Memphis, TN Chapter Coordinator. He is available to discuss with both pilots and aircraft maintenance personnel potential airline hiring opportunities. FEDEX is now actively recruiting both pilots and maintenance personnel. Steve can be reached at: [rauschfamily@comcast.net](mailto:rauschfamily@comcast.net) or 901-871-4702.

**BILL PAPPAS, CWO4 USCG, (Ret):** Bill was an ADCS to CWO to LT. He transitioned to the private sector and held a position with a Government Contractor then spent a couple of years as a Director at an IT consulting company. He went on to a publicly traded company, where he was VP-IT and then Senior VP-Chief Information Officer. Bill has extensive experience hiring and mentoring personnel. He can be reached at: [wpappas@me.com](mailto:wpappas@me.com) or 919-889-7847.



**PETER TROEDSSON, CAPT USCG, (Ret):** Peter is the City Manager in Albany, Oregon. Albany is a full service city with 450 employees providing police, fire, library, parks and rec, public works, municipal court services, along with all support departments. Peter serves on the board of the International City Management Association and has counseled many transitioning veterans interested in local government service. He can be reached at: [ptroedsson@gmail.com](mailto:ptroedsson@gmail.com) or 503 468 9898.

**LARRY POST, AMERIPRISE FINANCIAL (Ret):** Larry was on active duty from 1976-1982 as an HU -16 pilot at Cape Cod. He spent 34 years with Ameriprise Financial Services, retiring as a senior executive. Larry lives in Boston and is currently CEO of Post Hospitality Group: <http://www.posthg.com/> He may be reached at [LPTHEJET@AOL.COM](mailto:LPTHEJET@AOL.COM) or 617 908 4001.

**HANK SCHAEFFER, CDR USCG, (Ret):** After retirement from the CG, Hank worked for FlightSafety International as an S76 Instructor. He then transferred to FlightSafety Boeing. With Boeing, he became the 737NG/Classic Maintenance Chief Instructor, and Manager, Regulatory Approvals and Standards. Hank is at [globalflyer7x7@gmail.com](mailto:globalflyer7x7@gmail.com) or 541 749 0774.

**LIAM WILLIAMS, AETCM USCG (Ret):** Liam retired in 2017 and went on to civil service with the State of California as Operations Manager of the Statewide Training Center. He is now a financial Advisor for First Command Financial Services. First Command is recognized as a Military Friendly Employer. He can be reached at [ldwilliams1975@yahoo.com](mailto:ldwilliams1975@yahoo.com) or 510 846 7001.

**JACK SANTUCCI, CAPT USCG (Ret):** Jack is Safety Officer and a Gulfstream Captain for Reyes Holdings Aviation in West Palm Beach, FL. Reyes operates Gulfstream V/450/550/650 aircraft and is frequently looking for both pilots and mechanics. Mechs must have an FAA A&P certificate, Gulfstream experience preferred. He can be reached at [JackSantucci84@gmail.com](mailto:JackSantucci84@gmail.com) or 561 267 2522.

**MARK CREASEY, CAPT USN (Ret):** Mark is a retired Navy P-3 pilot and proud CGAA member. He works at Lockheed Martin in Arlington, VA, as Director of Govt. Affairs for Naval and CG Aviation. He can offer insights on making the transition to the defense industry, going to the airlines, and/or building your professional network. Mark can be reached at [mcreasev90@gmail.com](mailto:mcreasev90@gmail.com) or 703 597 3661.

**DAN CRAMER, CDR USCG (Ret):** Dan is a former Air Medical Pilot and can discuss that area of the industry for both pilots and mechanics. He can be reached at: [daniel\\_s\\_cramer@yahoo.com](mailto:daniel_s_cramer@yahoo.com) or 510 229 0924.

**RICK KENIN, CAPT USCG (Ret):** Rick is Chief Operating Officer, Boston Medflight, Bedford, MA. This is a fixed and rotary-wing air ambulance provider servicing the New England region with a long history of employing former Coast Guard pilots and mechanics. Additionally, Rick is connected across the air ambulance industry and can provide career advice for CG aviation people transitioning to commercial aviation. He is at: [rick@keninfamily.com](mailto:rick@keninfamily.com) or 305 389 3667.

**SEAN CROSS, CAPT, USCG (Ret):** Sean is working for Tecolote Research as a Principle Analyst supporting the Space Enterprise Corps - Commander's Action Group, Space Systems Command, U. S. Space Force. His group supports acquisition and sustainment of command and control and data management systems supporting larger satellite portfolios and ensuring compatibility and interoperability at Space Systems Command. He can be reached at: [seanmccrossBI@gmail.com](mailto:seanmccrossBI@gmail.com) or 540 735 4921.

**TOM PALIGRAF, VICE PRESIDENT, SUN TRUST BANK, (Ret):** Tom served at AirSta Miami from 1968-1972, leaving as an AD2 to pursue a career in banking. After completing college (thanks to the GI bill), Tom served twenty-four years with Sun Trust Bank, retiring as Senior Vice President. He has extensive experience in commercial, consumer and residential lending. Tom lives in Fletcher, NC and can be reached at [paligraf@comcast.net](mailto:paligraf@comcast.net) or 305-962-5218.

**JAMIE WRIGHT, B-737 FIRST OFFICER, UNITED AIRLINES:** Jamie flew C-130s in the Coast Guard and then transitioned to commercial flying. She worked extensively as a Part-135 pilot for Cape Air and Express Jet and is available to provide career advice for CG Aviation personnel transitioning to civilian flying. She can also discuss hiring opportunities at United Airlines which is actively recruiting pilots. Jamie can be reached at [c130pilotgirl@gmail.com](mailto:c130pilotgirl@gmail.com) or 727-235-8360

**TONY HAHN, CAPT, USCG, (Ret):** Tony is Aviation Advisor for ConocoPhillips doing Quality and Safety Assurance for both internal and external operations. He is type rated in the Q400, DeHavilland DHC-8. VP, Development for CGAA, Houston Chapter coordinator, and Secretary of Houston Chapter of NOAA. Tony can be reached at [tony.hahn@aoptero.org](mailto:tony.hahn@aoptero.org) or 703 220 6582.

The only job requirement is to relate your experiences as you made the transition from Coast Guard Aviation to any kind of civilian employment. If you have any questions, call or email: **Mark Benjamin at: 231-642-1201, or email: [mcbmd11@gmail.com](mailto:mcbmd11@gmail.com)**

## LOCAL CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

### CG Air Station Ventura (CA) To Be Established Soon!

By Chapter Coordinator Ptero Pete Heins, Aviator 1504

As I write in mid-March, establishment plans for the first "ground-up" build of a new Coast Guard Air Station in 25 years, Air Station Ventura, (ASV), are being developed. The establishment date of Air Station Ventura has been finalized to 18 June 2024.

At the end of January 2024, the CG achieved "beneficial occupancy" of the Hangar (Building 190) and the Admin. Building (Building 191). The AirSta Ventura pre-establishment team, led by CWO2 (AVI) Justin Gozard, has been setting up the spaces for the pending arrival of the three MH-60Ts, offices, the complement of approximately 100 station personnel, and parts/tools.

Ptero CDR Amanda Sardone, Aviator 3930, will serve as the Commanding Officer. She has 16 years of MH-60 Flying Experience, including two tours at AirSta San Diego as a Watch Stander, Engineering Officer Trainee, EO, & XO in addition to other Aviation Assignments and studying to complete an MS in Systems Engineering at Johns Hopkins University.

CDR Min Kim, Aviator 4413, currently an MH-65 pilot, has been Deputy XO of Forward Operating Base Pt. Mugu for the past year and has just assumed his duties as Air Station Ventura XO.

Air Station Ventura will be established with a cadre of experienced MH-60 crew and newly trained crewmembers from Mobile's Aviation Training Center. To aid with medical missions & health of assigned personnel, ASV will have an Aviation Physician Assistant.

Over a period of several months, the FOB, which has been an Air Station San Francisco remote site for the past eight (2016 – 2024) years, will be drawn down and eventually be closed. This transition will permit a smooth change from the current MH-65 program to the new MH-60T program without any disruption to Search & Rescue, Drug & Migrant Interdiction, and Marine & Waterways Conservation and Protection





in addition to other Aviation missions. Area of Responsibility (AOR) will continue to be from Dana Point, Northward to Cambria. Cruise speed of the MH-60 is comparable to that of the MH-65, but range of the newly assigned MH-60 is considerably longer.

For those interested in possibly attending the Establishment Ceremony, please check future AIPtero emailings for detailed information on this important event in the life of Coast Guard Aviation.



The Admin. Building has a large training room for as many as 50 attendees. Pete Heins photos.



The Hangar Deck can easily accommodate four MH-60Ts and the tail rotor does not require folding. During Springtime 2024 "Beneficial Occupancy" time, CWO2 Gozzard's crew used the hangar spaces as a gigantic logistics and supply room to prepare and install equipment for all offices, shops, and other AirSta facilities. For safety, the hangar has an automatic Fire Suppressant Deluge System.

AirSta Ventura's large Admin Building (L) and corner of the Hangar (Building 190) as seen from the Parking Lot. The Admin Building contains the Command Cadre Offices, a Medical Clinic, Operations Bullpen, Admin Bullpen, Operations Center, the Training Room, Wardroom, Crew Lounge, Chiefs' Mess, Duty Rooms, and a Mothers' Room. In addition to the Hangar Deck, Building 190, has facilities for the AET, AMT, GSE, Metal, Spindle, Swimmer shops plus a large supply warehouse area.



### SCHEDULED CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

If traveling thru the area, be sure and join in on these regularly scheduled events. For details contact the Local Coordinator.

**CAPE COD:** Marshland Too has closed. Brian is organizing monthly luncheons at various locations on the Cape. Call Brian for more info.

Annual Cape Cod Mini Roost. Held at various locations over the last 23 years, normally late August or early September.

For more info contact Cape Cod Coordinator Brian Wallace at [ccjwblbs@comcast.net](mailto:ccjwblbs@comcast.net) or 508 888 7384.

**CORPUS CHRISTI:** Monthly luncheon. First Thursday of the month at 1500. IHOP on Padre Island Drive. For more info, contact luncheon coordinator John Mills at 361 215 6941 or Corpus Christi Chapter Coordinator John Pasch at [paschfam@gmail.com](mailto:paschfam@gmail.com) or 504 236 6562.

**KODIAK:** Annual Kodiak Chamber of Commerce Coast Guard Appreciation dinner. Held in February. For info contact Kodiak Chapter Coordinator John Whiddon at [jbwhiddon52@gmail.com](mailto:jbwhiddon52@gmail.com) or 907 942 4650.



### TRAVERSE CITY

Breakfast at 0900 on the 1st and 3rd Monday of

each month. Willie's Rear, Where the Elite Meet to Eat!, 1315 W. South Airport Road, Traverse City.

Monthly Ptero dinners. Scheduled each month September thru May. Generally, held on a Thursday evening at 1800 somewhere in the Traverse City area. For more info contact Traverse City Coordinator Curt Erickson at [curtis\\_erickson@hotmail.com](mailto:curtis_erickson@hotmail.com) or 228 235 9237.



### CG Academy Hosts Aviation Career Week

By Cadets 1/c Abby Duffy and 1/c Alex Smigal  
With contributions from Cadet 2/c Shannon Shaw

Each year, the CG Academy hosts an Aviation Career Week for the academy community. The purpose of Aviation Career

Week is to provide cadets with exposure to the aviation community and maybe spark the interest of a future CG Aviator.

This year, Homecoming Weekend kicked off Aviation Week and, even though a flyover for the medallion ceremony by AirSta Atlantic City and a static display and flyover by AirSta Cape Cod were cancelled due to inclement weather, that did not stop a successful Aviation Week.

On Monday at lunch, five Officer Candidate

flight training selectees, including several prior aircrew, shared their experiences in CG Aviation with members of the club. That evening, copilots LT Ross, Aviator 5077, and LT Roberts, Aviator 5130, visited the academy and had dinner with a group of cadets answering questions regarding the process of getting into flight school and life as a junior aviation officer. Following the dinner, LT Ross and LT Roberts hosted a Coast Guard Aviation Ops Spotlight that was open to the Corps of Cadets.

On Tuesday, the club hosted a lunch excusal featuring the Academy's very own Ptero LCDR Lauren Smith, Aviator 4489, the current Golf Company Officer. LCDR



OPS Spotlight with ATC Mobile Pilots on October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Photos by the authors.



Smith also spoke about her experience in flight school; however, most cadets in attendance were interested in the sea stories she shared from her time as a HITRON pilot, especially while deployed on board cutters. Cadets learned about the HITRON mission and the basics of how the pilots and crew go about disabling noncompliant vessels.

Wednesday featured a guest speaker, Ptero LCDR (ret.) Jeremy McKenzie, P-5660, a pilot for RTX's Corporate Aviation Division. LCDR (ret.) McKenzie offered the story of his career as he started flying in the Army, transitioned to the Coast Guard and now has a very successful career in the private sector being an airline transport pilot in both multi-engine aircraft as well as helicopters and having numerous type ratings in both categories. A few weeks later, the club visited LCDR (ret.) McKenzie at the RTX Corporate hangar to tour their fleet of aircraft.

Wednesday evening was a flight simulator open house for the fourth class, with each cadet getting to try out our helicopter and fixed wing simulators for a short introductory run.

During lunch on Thursday, cadets were able to learn about the basics of flying from second class and first class cadets who currently have their private pilots licenses. Specifically, these cadets focused the discussion on how cadets interested in obtaining their private pilot license can begin the process. On Thursday evening, the Corps of Cadets had the opportunity to attend a second Ops Spotlight featuring two CG aviators who received the Distinguished Flying Cross. Both aviators were inducted into the Hall of Heroes prior to presenting the Ops Spotlight.

Friday featured a first and second class breakfast where 1/C cadets discussed the process of applying to flight school from the Academy. First class shared tips on how to best prepare for the ASTB exam, when to

begin the flight school physical examination process at the clinic, and how to demonstrate interest in the aviation field. At lunch, Ptero CAPT (ret.) Dan Burbank, Aviator 2672, spoke to cadets about his experiences in space. CAPT Burbank began his career as a CG Aviator but later served as an astronaut for NASA. Cadets intrigued by his experience asked questions about his career path and his desire to be an astronaut. On Friday night, fourth class cadets had the opportunity to participate in "4/C 'Flight Night'". This event was designed to help mentor 4/c cadets interested in aviation become more involved in the aviation community while at the Academy.

Last but certainly not least, the corps had the privilege of honoring LTJG Morgan Garrett in a Workout to Remember held on Cadet Memorial Field. LTJG Garrett was an Academy 2019 graduate who tragically lost her life in a flight training accident on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020. The workout is held each year to honor LTJG Garrett's legacy and the light she brought to her classmates and the Coast Guard Academy community.

The week was a large success for the Coast Guard Academy community and the Corps of Cadets. On behalf of the Cadet Aviation Club, thank you to all the Coast Guard members in the aviation community who helped make this week a success and continue to inspire cadets to pursue a career path in aviation!



Tour of RTX Hangar.

## AirSta Houston 'Homecoming' Friday, 2 May

collective spirit, resilience, and unity. It is a time to honor our past, celebrate our present, and envision our future. As we connect with old friends and welcome new faces, let us embrace the sense of belonging and camaraderie that defines our community.

Come on out and grab a burger, throw some cornhole, and check out the MH-65E. We will also have Air Station Houston merchandise available.

Please RSVP by **15 April 2024** to LTJG Max Dove at [maxwell.v.dove@uscg.mil](mailto:maxwell.v.dove@uscg.mil).

We look forward to seeing you there!  
Ptero CDR Jeff Jacobs, Aviator 3846, CO, CGAS Houston

Ptero Tony Hahn, Aviator 3158, CGAA CGAS Houston Liaison



Air Station Houston, in partnership with the CGAA, is excited to announce that it will be hosting a homecoming on May 2, 2024 from 1100-1400. All those that have previously served at the "Best Lil Air Station in Texas" are cordially invited to attend this event. Homecoming is more than just a tradition; it is a celebration of our



## CG Mess Dress Uniform Looking for a Good Home

Instead of donating it to Goodwill, a deceased Ptero's spouse has a complete CG Mess Dress Uniform to donate to a young male CG officer. The sizes of the items are:

**SHIRT:** ONE 16-16.5, 34/35; ONE 17/35  
**COAT:** SLEEVE LENGTH SHOULDER TO CUFF 26"

SLEEVE LENGTH CENTER BACK TO CUFF 36.5"

BACK LENGTH 31" measured below collar to bottom;

**PANTS:** ONE SIZE 34L ADJUSTABLE WAIST, INSEAM 31.5" WITH 4" HEM ONE WAIST 34" ROOM TO ADJUST INSEAM 31" WITH 2" HEM.

The first interested officer who contacts ye Ancient Scribe at [SEGGoldhamm@aol.com](mailto:SEGGoldhamm@aol.com) will be the recipient.





## Aviation Technical Training Center Graduates



The CG has three aviation ratings: Aviation Maintenance Technician (AMT), Avionics Electrical Technician (AET), and Aviation Survival Technician (AST). The AMT and AET 'A' School is a blended program with a 10 week distance learning apprentice program administered by ATTC while students are serving at their permanent home air station. Students then attend a 10-12 week resident program at ATTC with an emphasis on performance based learning on their assigned airframe where possible. ATTC maintains maintenance training units for the MH-65, MH-60, and C-130H. AST students complete their technical and skills training in the state of the art Rescue Swimmer Training Facility during a challenging 24-week program. All graduates appreciate the "dues-free" initial year of membership in the CG Aviation Association and are proud to carry on the legacy of those who have preceded them. We recommend and hope ALL the graduates will continue as members and will help grow the association with new members.

### **Congratulations and Welcome Aboard!!! [\*Honor Graduate]**

<u>Graduate</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Graduate</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
AMT3 Evan P. Arko	Atlantic City	AMT3 George W. Bilyeu	Clearwater
AMT3 Camden R. Garvey	Atlantic City	AMT3 Johnny D. Golden	Port Angeles
AMT3 Lewis R. Houston	Miami	AMT3 Nathan G. Kehoe	North Bend
AMT3 Napono I. Lecker-Tolentino	Mobile	AMT3 Aaron J. Ortiz	Clearwater
AMT3 Luis S. Portalatin Venrell	Miami	AMT3 Gabriel O. Rodriguez	Mobile
AMT3 Pedro M. Rodriguez Nazario	Cape Cod	AMT3 Michael M. Smouse	Barbers Point
AMT3 Isaiah S. Steward	Elizabeth City	AMT3 Logan H. Tippin	Atlantic City
*AMT3 Corbin A. Cummings	Kodiak	AMT3 Brandon A. Bihm	Mobile
AMT3 Richard K. Blanton	Borinquen	AMT3 Logan T. Burmeister	Miami
AMT3 Carlos D. Castro	HITRON	AMT3 Bryce C. Goszkowicz	Kodiak
AMT3 Owen D. Iverson	Atlantic City	AMT3 Gabriel R. Kendall	HITRON
AMT3 Tanner J. McDonald	Humboldt Bay	AMT3 Kevin T. Pollard	Savannah
AMT3 Kekoa L. Ramelb	Miami	AMT3 Jacob E. Rogers	Atlantic City
AMT3 Lucas A. Sanchez	New Orleans	AMT3 Mikal E. Stoughton	Elizabeth City
AMT3 Kayden D. Tandy	North Bend	AMT3 Aden M. Thompson	Atlantic City
*AMT3 John E. Ruiz Ocasio	Cape Cod	AMT3 Mitchell P. Balmut	Mobile
AMT3 Daniel Carrazedo	Miami	AMT3 Logan S. Cunningham	Kodiak
AMT3 Cooper B. Dupuy	New Orleans	AMT3 Jolie E. Henderson	Sacramento
AMT3 Oscar J. Iglesias	Clearwater	AMT3 Jesse P. Kellner	Astoria
AMT3 Mace D. Metcalf	Elizabeth City	AMT3 Sammy H. Mills	Houston
AMT3 Andre R. Ponton	Corpus Christi	AMT3 Adam P. Rowan	Cape Cod
AMT3 Stephen D. Sharp	HITRON	AMT3 Kyle Matthew G. Uytiepo	Barbers Point
AMT3 Nicholas A. Volpe	Detroit	AMT3 Liam E. Weatherford	Atlantic City
*AMT3 Grayson L. Ritchey	Savannah	AET3 Hunter J. Beyersdoerfer	New Orleans
AET3 Derek M. Bright	Kodiak	AET3 Morgan T. Collins	Mobile
AET3 Christopher L. Dillier	Atlantic City	AET3 Logan K. Garrett	Cape Cod
AET3 Thomas V. Hance	Port Angeles	AET3 Justin L. Miller	Mobile
AET3 Alexandre D. Kozlov	Port Angeles	AET3 Michael A. Kern	Clearwater
AET3 John S. Montalvo Valentin	Miami	AET3 Jeffrey L. Peacock, III	Atlantic City
AET3 Collin M. Quebedeaux	Kodiak	*AET3 Michael R. Connolly	Sacramento
*AST3 Garrett M. Nims	Barbers Point	AST3 Jayson A. Evans	Miami
AST3 Brayon R. Lleras	Savannah	AST3 Dennis J. Scanlon	Detroit
AST3 Jonah W. McCutcheon	Elizabeth City	AST3 Ciarnin K. McNeil-Kuebrich	Mobile
AST3 Paden N. Rude	Kodiak	AMT3 Alfonzo M. Bordas	HITRON
AMT3 John A. Chamorro	Elizabeth City	AMT3 Steven A. De La Mora	Barbers Point
AMT3 Jesse R. Evansizer	Kodiak	AMT3 Bradley J. Glass	Elizabeth City
AMT3 Johnathan J. Hutchinson	Kodiak	AMT3 Sean J. Jones	Mobile
AMT3 Amber D. Kelly	Mobile	AMT3 Jacob J. Luke	Kodiak
AMT3 Clancy J. McIntire	Borinquen	AMT3 Brock A. Richards	Corpus Christi
AMT3 Cristiano M. Sasso	Miami	AMT3 Luke A. Sharpe	Mobile
AMT3 Andrew P. Slobiski	Atlantic City	AMT3 Savannah Wimett	Port Angeles
*AMT3 Rachel M. Smith	Miami		



## 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>
5165 Ryan M. Ammons	Corpus Christi	5166 Maxwell L. Dierking	Barbers Point
5167 Walter P. Daniels	Clearwater	5168 Patrick J. Gravalec	Cape Cod
5169 Joshua A. Ordonez	Elizabeth City	5170 Alexander N. Bellan	Elizabeth City



# CG Aviation Association Multi-mission Form

## Apply for or Renew Membership / Update Data

New Member    Renewal    Update Information (MOVING?? Please let us know.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Rank/Rate \_\_\_\_\_

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

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE: Any spouse info and phone numbers you provide will be used in the CGAA Directory/Roster - please do not include if you do not want them to be published.**

Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_ TP Res. ( ) - \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email Pri. \_\_\_\_\_ TP Work ( ) - \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email Sec: \_\_\_\_\_ TP Cell ( ) - \_\_\_\_\_

**Sign me up for:**

- Life Membership      \$275 (includes a Ptero Pin)
- Annual Membership    \$40 (*Active Duty: Officers \$20, Enlisted \$20*)
- Life in 5                Life Membership after 5 \$60 annual payments

To activate your access to the members-only area on the web site, mail-in registrations to the Troy, VA P.O. Box must send an email to [member-services@aoptero.org](mailto:member-services@aoptero.org) and request access to the members-only area. Be sure to include your full name and email address.

Members who join/renew online automatically have access to the members-only area.

Lorie Stout and her husband Alex own and operate StoutGear in Annapolis, MD. They have run our Ptero Store since we opened in 2015. They are ready and eager to fill your orders for any of the many items in our catalog. We now have shirts with all the current aircraft the Coast Guard flies, except the executive aircraft in Washington, DC. If there are any items that you would like, that are not available, please let us know and we'll see if we can get them. I hope you can all attend the Jacksonville Roost.

Please email me at [jay.d.crouthers@aoptero.org](mailto:jay.d.crouthers@aoptero.org) with your comments and suggestions.

Please visit the "Store" tab at <https://aoptero.org/> or the online site directly at <https://stoutgearsailing.myshopify.com/collections/coast-guard-aviation-association> You can even pay by check if you don't like using credit cards on the internet.

Ptero Jay Crouthers, Aviator 1360/722, Store Manager.



March 2024 **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 10737,**  
**Alexandria, VA 22310**

**Total Enclosed: \$**

**CG Aviator #**

- 5171 Haley M. McCue
- 5172 Nathaniel J. Ralph
- 5173 Anna F. Niedermeyer
- 5174 Matthew Varney
- 5175 Jerry N. Brown
- 5176 James J. Hollingsworth
- 5177 Sigvard B. Johnson
- 5178 John T. McNiff
- 5179 Robert W. Mey
- 5180 Joshua C. Webster, Jr.
- 5181 Matyas P. Huck
- 5182 Ethan J. Trolinder
- 5183 Daniel J. Taglianetti
- 5184 Trenton M. King
- 5185 Rachel H. Carter
- 5186 Carl L. Weaver
- 5187 Sabrina K. Robertson
- 5188 Nicholas R. Rorsythe
- 5189 Sawyer P. Stanton
- 5190 Lauren A. Murrill
- 5191 Eric K. Bertulaitis
- 5192 Alvaro N. Velandia
- 5193 LT Hayden Atkins
- 5194 Jake Pritchett

**Assignment**

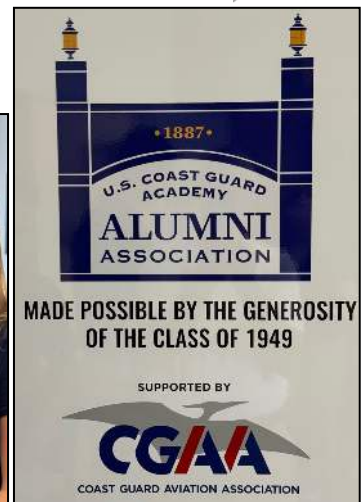
- Corpus Christi
- Savannah
- Clearwater
- Clearwater
- Atlantic City
- North Bend
- Houston
- Barbers Point
- Traverse City
- Mobile
- Miami
- Sacramento
- Traverse City
- Borinquen
- Miami
- Corpus Christi
- Atlantic City
- Borinquen
- Detroit
- New Orleans
- San Diego
- Houston
- Barbers Point
- Corpus Christi

### CGAA Affirms CGA Red-bird Simulator Support

During a recent CG Academy Cadet Flight Team simulator practice session, CGAA's Chapter Coordinator Ptero Chris Lutat, Aviator 2686, supervised fellow Pteros Dan Burbank, Aviator 2672 and Phil Volk, Aviator 1644, affixing the CGAA's Logo to CGA's Red-bird, CGNR 1949.



Flight Team Captain and recent flight training selectee, Cadet First Class Ryan Younes and Flight Team Head Coach and Ptero LCDR Lauren Smith, Aviator 4489, signal their approval and appreciation for the CGAA's ongoing Cadet Aviation Club and Flight Team support. FLY COAST GUARD!



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**CG Air Station San Francisco Highlighted. See Story on P. 11.**

**MAIL Pg. 15**



### Airsta Houston & Borinquen Aviators Honored

The RADM Thomas F. Brown, III Memorial

Award, in honor of the late Admiral Brown, honors the outstanding Naval Aviator graduate of the fixed-wing or rotary-wing training programs. This year's winner is USCG LTJG Sophia Quick, Aviator 5153, winged at HT-28 and currently assigned to Air Station Houston.

The Orville Wright Achievement Award, sponsored by the Daedalian Foundation, is dedicated to ensuring that the United States will always be preeminent in air and space. It is awarded to the student with the highest overall grades for the preceding six months. 1st Half (Jan-Jun) winner is LTJG Sophia Quick; 2nd Half (Jul-Dec) winner is USCG LTJG Trenton King, Aviator 5184, winged at HT-28, currently assigned to Air Station Borinquen.

*Congratulations!*

### CGAA Supports CG Academy Redbird Simulator.

The Redbird Simulator is an immersive flight simulator of a Cessna 172/Piper Cherokee available to cadets willing to learn from cadet instructors in their free time. Since the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year, there have been three new cadet instructors qualified, with experience ranging from private pilot to some who have never flown a real plane before. Thanks to new upgrades from the CGAA to the navigation software, cadets can now utilize the RealNav database to update the simulator's navigation suite with real-time changes that reflect the real world. These upgrades help cadet student pilots get an even more realistic experience of what flight is all about and will contribute to multiple future CG Aviators' knowledge for years to come.

(By Cadet 2/C Shannon Shaw) **See more on P. 23.**

