FROM THE EDITOR

From 3,000 feet up the southwestern Louisiana bayou looks like a patchwork quilt of dense green vegetation crisscrossed by blue and brown tributaries and man-made canals. This delicate eco-system is home to an enormous range of wildlife, and its bountiful waterways fuel a thriving fishing industry that employs tens of thousands of people in the region.

I recently flew over a portion of these precious wetlands near the coastal fishing village of Cocodrie, La., with Coast Guard reservist MST1 Rob Rawson who was looking for signs of oil leaked from the Deepwater Horizon drilling site. Riding high above the massive expanse of wilderness in a helicopter, it was difficult to image how oil clean-up crews would even start to combat that invasive chemical stew if it were to make its way into these precious marshlands. Unfortunately, many clean-up workers are already facing this daunting challenge in many operations areas where currents have pushed spilled oil onto Gulf Coast shores.

In the midst of this unprecedented environmental disaster there are signs of hope. Coast Guard Reserve members have stood up in record numbers to help clean up and restore the Gulf Coast. In fact, due to the largest recall since 9/11, more reservists are filling roles in areas along the southern coast than their active-duty counterparts, and their efforts are paying off. I had a chance to meet with dozens of the more than 2,000 Reserve men and women who are working to reclaim the Gulf during a recent trip to operations areas throughout the South, and I was moved by their stories.

Reservists were key players in every operations area I visited, from as far West as Houma, La. to the shores of Pensacola, Fla. Separated from their friends and loved ones, and working grueling six-days shifts, I expected to hear the usual moans and groans, but was instead blown away by the overwhelmingly upbeat attitudes our folks projected. I was also aided in my efforts by several reservists who deserve some extra recognition.

Coasties like PA2 John Miller, who offered to let me sleep on a spare bunk at his team’s house so I wouldn’t have to drive 120 miles back to New Orleans after an 18-hour work day covering reservists in Cocodrie. There were BM1 April Rex, BM3 Gary Guido and MK2 John Palmer, who went out of their way to get me aboard their boat so I could cover a skating exercise off the coast of Bayou la Batre, Ala. Another reservist, BMC Darrin Cliffe, helped organize a trip for me from ICP Mobile to Pensacola, and then personally went underway with me to two different decontamination sites in order to make sure reservists under his charge were recognized.

Whether fielding challenging media inquiries and escorting news crews to spill sites, training commercial fishing crews to operate skimming equipment, searching for oil-affected wildlife, or decontaminating vessels that return from the Gulf, I found reservists making an enormously positive impact. This issue is dedicated to recognizing their efforts and, I hope, validating their tireless service. Be sure to check out the full list of reservists whose photos grace the cover of this issue on page 13.

Semper Fi and Semper Par,
Isaac D. Pacheco

Letter of the Month

I would like to offer the attached poem as my final communication with the members of the Coast Guard Reserve who I have had the privileged to represent these past six and one half years. Along with this simple note, it is my heart-felt tribute to them for all they have done and continue to do in the service of our nation.

Citizen Guardians
“We are proud members of the United States Coast Guard Reserve.
As Citizen Guardians we have sworn to protect, to defend and to serve.
We come when our country and our Coast Guard need us most.
From places near and far, our heartlands, our highlands, small towns up and down the coast.
We stay as long as needed, then return to our daily tasks.
We are Citizen Guardians, future, present and past.”

— MCPO Jeffery D. Smith, USCGR (Ret.)

Semantics or Symbolism?

I wonder how much better the Commandant’s recent recall announcement would have sounded if he had instead said: “We are sending the three CG Strike Teams and activating the CGR Strike Units with their ready equipment. These organized, trained and ready units will form the nucleus for an additional number of reservists being called to assist the Coast Guard’s Regional Response Center that was previously established in New Orleans more than a month ago.”

Wouldn’t that statement of readiness have been so much more responsive, organized and focused than the message that 1500 Reservists with sea bags over their shoulders and oil scoopers to be issued were on their way. We apparently have not learned enough from Hurricane Katrina to understand the definition of readiness.

— Capt. Joe Manfreda, USCGR (Ret.)

Evaluation Addendum

I would like to add the following additions to the common evaluation errors and pitfalls list that appeared in the previous Reservist (Volume LVI, Issue 3 of 2010, pg. 28).

• Safety in Numbers Effect – As long as one gives the same ratings previous evaluators gave, if the rating and/or the evaluation in general is challenged, one only has to point to past ratings.

• Tracking Effect – Once a member is rated, and evaluators look at past evaluations and are influenced by past ratings, it is more and more difficult for the member to show improvement and/or poorer performance.

• Pitchfork Effect (Repraisal) – a member files a discrimination complaint and the evaluation process is the supervisor’s opportunity to get even.

• Pay Grade Effect – The higher the pay grade the more likely one will get higher marks and vice versa.

• Politically Correct Effect – One ignores or avoids evaluating certain behaviors or actions in order to be politically correct.
and/or to avoid being accused of not being politically correct (E.g., Major Nidal Malik Hasan, Fort Hood).

- **Friend Effect** – The better one socially knows somebody the more likely one is going to give him/her better marks.

- **Different Standards Effect** – Within the same rating category different standards are being used to evaluate different members. For example, two people are doing the same amount of work and the quality is the same, but one person’s rating is based on speed and the other person’s rating is based on always doing his/her work with a smile.

- **Ethnic/Gender Effect** – Depending on one’s ethnicity or gender the assigned ratings might go up or down.

Considering all of the errors listed in the *Reservist*, and all the above listed errors, and keeping in mind that there are even more errors and pitfalls in the evaluation process that have not been listed, why would the Coast Guard allow this procedure to be used when at least twelve or more things can go wrong with it at any given time and in any combination? I know of no other device or procedure in the Coast Guard where this level of error has been allowed. Career safety is as important as bodily safety.

The Evaluation and Rating Forms have far more to do with tradition than any proof that they are promoting the best qualified enlisted members. It is my personal opinion that the Evaluation and Rating Forms are the last major area where prejudice and discrimination can be practiced with impunity in the Coast Guard. Evaluators only have to avoid being obvious and if they are challenged they only need to come up with one reason, whether true or not, to beat the discrimination charge.

The Evaluation and Rating Forms need to be studied quantifiably to prove that they are promoting the most qualified people, and that discrimination is not being practiced. Quantifiable studies need to prove if rating practices are fair, if they are accurate, and if they have any integrity. Using the numerical ratings given within one year, or one rating period, the Coast Guard could do comparison studies of various groups to see if there is a statistically significant difference as to how some groups are rated compared to other groups. For example, women versus men or one ethnic group compared to another ethnic group. Do ethnic groups give better ratings to members of their own group? Do gender groups favor their own gender or not? Another issue that could be studied is if the Evaluation and Rating Forms portion of the promotional process was dropped would there be a major difference as to which members did get promoted? Are certain personality types being discriminated against? The CPO Academy instructors teach classes regarding the different personality types and could help in this type of study. Are certain body types being discriminated against? The Coast Guard has everything it needs to do these simple studies.

— YNC Doris P. Telles, USCGR

**Not Tapped Out Yet**

I’ve been reading *Reservist* for over 24 years now and the first place I always went was the back of the magazine to see who retired, who advanced, who received an award, and sadly, who passed on. This was a great way to keep up with shipmates I had lost touch with over the years. If you received an award or advancement you got to say “I made it into Reservist.” I was disappointed to see this section removed. After retiring with 30 years of service, I guess my next opportunity to be recognized is “Taps”.

— EM1 Lou Konesny, USCGR (Ret.)

**NOTE:** Mr. Konesny, we are still making every effort to recognize those reservists who receive awards and/or retire in our “Bulletin Board” section. However, in order to improve the quality of Reservist’s layout, we have adjusted our submission policy such that those with supporting photography receive first consideration. We also ran a text list of awards as readers submit them. I encourage you to send a photo of your retirement ceremony with a caption for inclusion in our next issue.

— IDP

**Still Ruffled by Ranks**

There were two letters in the current issue regarding the use of rank abbreviations in print. You say the guidance is “use Coast Guard style for ... internal documents. Use Associated Press style ... on external releases.” This begs the question, who do you think your audience is? As far as I always understood it, *Reservist* magazine is a publication for current and retired reservists. If others read it, fine, but external audiences are not the intended audience. Those odd looking civilianized titles make the stories seem dumbed down.

Please re-think this one because your interpretation of who the audience is does not mesh with mine. I always thought this magazine was for me and the other reservists, just like the title says. I consider that an internal audience.

— Capt. Jack Lauffer, USCGR (Ret.)

Regarding the use of rank abbreviations. It’s interesting that the AP Style Guide now establishes the proper format for denoting Coast Guard officer ranks in press releases. At the Coast Guard Academy the course on official service correspondence given in Swab year used to specify officer rank abbreviations, wherever needed, were all caps: i.e. ENS, LTJG, LCDR, CDR, CAPT, etc... Has CG Headquarters changed the correspondence and salutation format to conform with media dictates? If so, do we now address mail to “Dear Cmdr. Doofus...” or such?

— Capt. A. David Young, Jr., USCGR (Ret.)

**NOTE:** Gentlemen, I understand and respect your aversion to seeing traditional rank abbreviations adjusted to conform to a civilian publication standard. I have personally discussed this issue with the folks at Coast Guard Headquarters Public Affairs office, and have been informed that AP Style is the accepted standard for all uniformed service publications. They even teach it to Coast Guard public affairs specialists at the Defense Information School.

I also understand the argument that Coast Guard reservists are the intended audience for our magazine. However, just because they are the intended audience does not mean they are the only ones who see it. Thousands of people who have no affiliation with the Coast Guard, including every member of Congress, actually get their hands on this magazine. Not all of these people are familiar with the Coast Guard’s proprietary nomenclature, thus standardization of ranks helps to alleviate some confusion. This fact may irk the old salts, but it is the current Coast Guard policy and looks to remain so for the foreseeable future.

— IDP

**Corrections:**

- A photo caption in our article “Erasing the Gulf’s Dark Stain” (Vol. LVII, Issue 3 of 2010, pg. 18) incorrectly listed Mr. David T. Matsuda (2nd L), as the service chief of the Merchant Marine (sic). Matsuda is the Administrator of the Maritime Administration. Also, members of the Merchant Marine are referred to as merchant mariners.
An aerial shot of the tidal flats and marshlands in Terrebonne Parish, La., taken June 25, provides an idea of just how difficult oil clean-up operations would be in such a shallow and densely vegetated environ. Coast Guard members and civilian boat crews are working to boom off inlets to these areas in order to prevent contamination of one of the Gulf Coast's most sensitive ecosystems.

Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco
I have not left the Coast Guard in retirement, nor has it left me; I just changed status. Much like moving from Cadet to Commissioned Officer to the Selected Reserve, this is just another status change in my 36 year journey with the Coast Guard. I have surrendered my electronic leashes, packed my uniforms away in a trunk, and assumed my duties in RET-2 status. On 26 June, I watched Rear Adm. John Welch promoted, participated in a very professional Change of Watch Ceremony conducted by Vice Adm. Brown, and then I was retired by our 24th Commandant, Adm. Papp. I am now standing on the pier watching my relief Rear Adm. John Welch sail off on his four year cruise.

Wow! What a change in pace. I’m only working one job, the almond farm—a fulltime job in itself and harvest is just a month away. I only check my email once a day, have no conference call at 0-dark-thirty and I haven’t been to the barber in a month. Morning runs are getting more frequent and longer, and another half marathon looms on the horizon in November. I frequently converse with my shipmates on the phone or email and always scan the news for word on the Coast Guard. I can’t miss watching the Deepwater Horizon crisis play out and I’m always looking for a familiar face in a newscast.

I’m shredding old files, regaining hard drive space and writing thank you notes for some wonderful and memorable retirement gifts. The National and Coast Guard ensigns flown around the world on Port Security Unit boats from all eight PSUs are proudly displayed and the annual enlisted dependent scholarship started by PSU 311 in my name is truly one of the greatest treasures of my Coast Guard career.

So if all I’ve done is change status within the Coast Guard, what are my new duties to our service? I have a passion to see our Reserve program flourish and remain relevant in times of unprecedented utilization of our reservists at home and abroad. I am certain that Adm. Waesche would be proud to see that what he created on his watch during World War II is still performing magnificently in armed conflict in addition to humanitarian and law enforcement roles.

To maintain this level of commitment and achievement, our reserve force needs to grow. There have been more studies conducted on the role and size of the Coast Guard Reserve than on the origin of life in the universe. And all studies speak to a utilization of the Reserve force for mobilization and augmentation in both short and long term roles. These items need action.

You’ve been dedicated. You’ve answered the call(s). I’ve watched you balance your Coast Guard duties with family and civilian employment. That balancing act has asked you to exercise your core values of honor, respect and devotion to duty at work and home, not just while performing Coast Guard duties. You’ve kept the faith on all three fronts and our service needs to support you in this quest for balance as a patriot, an employee and a family member.

One of the greatest freedoms I have now in retirement, is the privilege to take up pen and paper and engage directly with Congress. As a retired member of the Coast Guard Reserve I plan to support you with communication to support the Coast Guard Reserve wherever and whenever I can. If you are a retiree I encourage you to do the same. Balance is the key, and Congress needs to be cognizant of your commitments, dedication and devotion to America. Our Reserve force deserves a “Best Buy” rating during these tough economic times for America and any growth in our force is money not just well spent, but best spent.

For those reservists on active duty or in the Selected Reserve, I ask you to remember your oath you took when joining the Armed Services. Answer all involuntary calls to duty, and maintain a balance to the triad of family, civilian employment and Coast Guard. Stay engaged, educated, healthy and relevant. Remember service over self. A shipmate rarely fails alone unless left alone, and leadership requires decisive action. I am honored to be your shipmate and will continue to sing the praises of our Reserve Force. Standing on the retirement pier isn’t the end of a career; it’s just a change of duty station.

Michael R. Seward

“Answer all involuntary calls to duty, and maintain a balance to the triad of family, civilian employment and Coast Guard. Stay engaged, educated, healthy and relevant.”

Rear Admiral
Michael Seward
USCGR, (Ret.)
Deputy Commander
for Mobilization and Reserve Affairs
Pacific Area

VIEW
FROM THE BRIDGE

Michael R. Seward
Here couldn’t be a better place to put this article than right here on the On Deck page of The Reservist. On Deck has several connotations. It often means to gather around and pay attention or in the case of Reservist it means “read the message”. In baseball the term refers to being the next batter. You stand in a designated circular area and warm-up before taking your turn at the plate. In an operational sense, On Deck is the command for everyone to assemble and be ready for action. Today, it means all of the above. If you haven’t already been re-called to duty for Deepwater Horizon (DWH) then listen up, start warming-up, and get ready for action.

ALCOAST 353/10 outlines some of the things required to be Semper Paratus. The ALCOAST includes making preparations for your family, making sure all your dependents are enrolled in Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS), reviewing the Reserve Mobilization and Demobilization online training course and keeping your employer informed of your reserve status. You should not deploy without having your medical, dental and other personal readiness factors completed. Make sure you have an activated government charge card with an appropriate spending limit. Also, don’t leave home without a hard copy of Direct Access orders. The part about orders is a cultural change for many of us. In the past you may have been told that verbal orders were enough to report for duty, but that is not the case today. Don’t travel without an approved set of hard copy orders in-hand. They don’t have to be the originals, but they need to be from Direct Access.

Take some time to review more information about the DWH response on the Coast Guard Reserve WEB site http://www.uscg.mil/reserve/deepwaterhorizon.asp. Share this information with your family and employer because you are On Deck!

As I write this article the first wave of 60-day deployments is coming to a close. We owe this group of Reserve responders a great deal of gratitude for what they have accomplished alongside their active, Auxiliary, and civilian shipmates since the recall began. An operation as significant as DWH requires a tremendous effort to be successful. There were many challenges in the first month but after many, long, work-filled days and multiple examples of leadership and ingenuity, one obstacle after another has fallen. MCPONG-RF Mark Allen has said, “Seek possibilities not obstacles.” I am proud to report that the men and women of the Eight District and the many other Guardians that have deployed to the Gulf region have done just that—sought possibilities.

I am also proud of the Chief’s Mess. I have heard it said many times during my career that the Chiefs are the backbone of our service. Chiefs convert strategy into action. From what I have seen, that is the case in Deepwater Horizon. As each of you fulfills your reserve commitment, keep up the strong leadership and work ethic demonstrated by those who have gone before you. There are still more obstacles to conquer and as DWH evolves there will be many more opportunities to seek possibilities.

On June 27th, 2010 during a change of watch ceremony in Alameda, I relieved MCPON Neil Holmdahl as the Pacific Area Reserve Command Master Chief. After thanking Master Chief Holmdahl for his 34 years of dedicated service, I told the audience that our Commandant has written, “He will not ask us to do more than our resources allow, but we must do our absolute best with what we have.” Remember these words as you go about fulfilling our many Coast Guard missions. Whether you’re deployed to DWH or the Middle East, or are performing reserve duty in your homeport, we have an awesome responsibility to our nation and it deserves our very best effort.

The reserve force exists to enhance the Coast Guard’s ability to respond to all threats and all hazards. Our nation and particularly our fellow citizens along the Gulf Coast are depending on us. Admiral William (Bull) Halsey, Commander Third Fleet during WWII, said, “There are no great people in this world, only great challenges which ordinary people rise to meet.” As Coast Guard Reservists, as Guardians, as Citizen Sailors, as ordinary people, we are all On Deck to tackle the next great challenge.

Be Semper Paratus,

Thomas J. Cowan

“The Reserve force exists to enhance the Coast Guard’s ability to respond to all threats and all hazards. Our nation, and particularly our fellow citizens along the Gulf Coast are depending on us.”
Guardian to the End

Can you imagine what it would be like to be told that your father, a lifelong sailor, was killed during a rescue attempt? That is what Casey and Cristin Culbertson learned forty three years ago when their father, BM1 Edgar Culbertson, was taken from them without warning during a heroic act. Edgar had been stationed at Lifeboat Station Duluth, just a few blocks from where he gave his life while trying to save three young men.

The call came into the Lifeboat Station from the Duluth Police who were seeking help from the Coast Guard, as they had many times before. Three teenage brothers; Eric, Arthur and Nathan Halverson, had been seen by a citizen at the end of the Duluth Entry pier when the witness saw one of the boys get knocked into the water by a huge wave. Meteorologists and Minnesota residents often refer to that day in 1967 as "Black Sunday" because of the fierce tornado outbreak that occurred throughout the state. The waves on Lake Superior in Duluth were reportedly over 20 feet high at times that night, and the lake had 36 degree water with gale force winds gusting up to 45 miles per hour. Culbertson along with two shipmates; BM2 Richard Callahan and Fireman Ronald Prei ventured out onto the pier, tethered together with a rope to search for the boys by lantern light. Unfortunately, they were unable to find the boys, and instead found themselves in a fight for their own lives. While attempting to return to the safety of the shore, BM1 Culbertson was swept off his feet by a rogue wave and thrown over the side of the pier, killing him.

Recently uncovered documents from the National Archives indicate that BM1 Culbertson was eligible to be added to the National Law Enforcement Memorial in Washington, D.C. There are only a handful of military law enforcement officers on this memorial that meet the strict criteria. An officer must have formal law enforcement training, be serving in a law enforcement role at the time of death, and not have been working in a combat zone. Since BM1 Culbertson met these criteria, he was selected by the National Law Enforcement Committee to be added to this elite group of guardians, dating back to 1792. He is only the thirteenth member of the Coast Guard enshrined upon the granite walls. The most recent Guardian before him was PS3 Ronald Gill, Jr. in 2007.

On May 13, 2010, Casey Culbertson and Cristin Culbertson Alpert, along with the rest of their family, traveled to our nation’s capital as their father was honored at a Candlelight Vigil service at the National Law Enforcement Memorial. Surviving family members of the fallen heroes from around the country were brought into the memorial grounds on coach buses under a tight police motorcycle escort. There, over 20,000 law enforcement officers were formed to pay their respects and to honor these families. Upon stepping off the bus, each family member was escorted to their seat by uniformed officers from the Police Unity Tour—bicyclers who tirelessly raised money all year long for this memorial. The anxiety was running high for the officers and survivors. The Culbertson family sat with other survivors as nearly a dozen Coast Guard members stood at attention behind their seats. Coasties came from around the country to pay respects.

The Coast Guard Ceremonial Honor Guard stood in formation near the stage as speakers such as DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano and Attorney General Eric Holder addressed the gathered survivors and officers. The names of more than 300 officers were read aloud, including that of BM1 Culbertson. The Coast Guard members rendered a hand salute as their shipmate was recognized. The Culbertson family had adorned a wreath, including handwritten messages from grandchildren and family pictures, which was placed in the foreground of the memorial wall near Culbertson’s name on panel 38-W: 27, amongst wreaths and memorabilia from survivors and officers around the world.

The fallen officers were again honored, May 15, at the National Memorial Service, sponsored by the Fraternal Order of Police. This service was held on the West lawn of the U.S. Capitol, with President Barack Obama providing the keynote speech. The Culbertson family, surrounded by members of the Coast Guard, including the Honor Guard, listened as the President spoke about the sacrifices these law enforcement officers made for our nation. After the formal service, Congressman Dave Reichert (R-Wash.), a career lawman himself,
approached and introduced himself to the Culbertson family. Reichert had, coincidentally, been seated near the Culbertson’s during the service and inquired about their story. The congressman was told about Edgar’s sacrifice forty three years earlier. Intrigued, the congressman invited the Culbertson family, along with other survivors and officers he met throughout the day, back to his office to spend some time visiting. The Culbertson’s accepted the invitation and were humbled by the hospitality of the statesman. Reichert also brought them to the House chambers where he talked about his career in law enforcement in the Seattle area.

The Culbertson family also spent the week meeting Coast Guard members and touring facilities such as Coast Guard Station Washington and the Pentagon. Several Coast Guard members rode in honor of BM1 Culbertson in both the Police Unity Tour and Law Enforcement United bike tours. The Coast Guard and Culbertson family are very proud of BM1 Edgar Culbertson. His legacy will live on for future generations to admire.

— ME1 Kevin Rofidal

**Command and Control in the Gulf of Mexico**

The Deepwater Horizon Response has led concerned citizens, local, national and international press, business concerns large and small, and government and military officials to ask many questions about the efforts to cap the oil well and clean up the resulting oil in the Gulf of Mexico. The Unified Area Command (UAC) has strived to answer all of these.

Located on Poydras St. in the heart of downtown New Orleans, La., the UAC is a busy command located in a skyscraper. Relocated in June from a smaller facility an hour’s drive east
of New Orleans in Robert, La., the UAC does not have ‘operators,’ people, for example, who clean up oil on land and sea. Instead, it functions to assess the overall logistic and support needs for the three regional Incident Command Posts (ICP), that direct the response in their geographic areas.

A fourth facility, Source Control Houston, is where engineers, Coast Guard personnel, academics, and oil industry experts from all walks of life are dedicated to capping the well.

Farther west is ICP Houma, La., the closest command post to the source of the spill. Huge vessels, among them the Enterprise and the Q-4000, are capturing oil and natural gas via pipes that reach all the way down to the site of the blown well head. In addition, Houma contends with surface clean up and blocking sensitive marine areas with boom. Some of the oil is stored, and later refined and sold. The money from these sales is put into a wildlife fund to help rehabilitate sea birds, turtles, and other animals affected by the spill.

ICP Mobile was stood up on April 28, and has an Area of Responsibility (AOR) that includes the coastlines of Alabama, Mississippi, and the Florida panhandle. Mobile has to be ready at any time to react to a change in the weather and has over 20,000 people constantly planning ahead.

A fourth ICP was established in Miami to handle respond on the Florida peninsula. Much of this large, complex system is located in the heart of the Southeastern football conference.

“Alabama football coach Nick Saban said it best,” said Coast Guard Lt Laseanta Stafford, assistant public information officer for Incident Command Post Mobile, which stood up in early May.

“A ‘Good enough is enough attitude is not what we’re looking for; we have got to use every opportunity to improve individually so we can improve collectively,’” she said.

“We want the American people to know some of the over 40,000 individuals who are all working together collectively and writing history before our eyes,” Stafford said, a member of the Coast Guard for nine years. Like Stafford, many of the people who live and work in the Gulf region are part of the response, like MECS Kenneth M. Saunders, a reservist and retired 30-year veteran of the Pensacola Fire Dept.

“We work in the Escambia County Emergency Operations Center here, which began responding April 28,” Saunders said. “We are the ones who are in direct contact with the operators in the field, and the great thing about it is most of us have known each other for years. And like everywhere throughout this response, we also work with folks from all over the place, and that has been fun too.”

Fun may not be the exact word OSC Donald Ross from Woodland, Wash., would use to describe his experience, but he said it has been fascinating. Born in Vancouver, Wash., Ross is a member of the Coast Guard Reserve and his home unit at Sector Portland, Ore. is 2,555 miles away from New Orleans.

Ross, who was promoted to CPO July 1, said the transition from civilian life as a commercial vehicle enforcement officer in the Washington State Patrol, the Evergreen state’s police force, has been a challenge.

“I guess the short term notice has been difficult because of family issues and work issues that all need to be worked out in a matter of hours,” said Ross. “It’s nice to know, however, that I am able to help out and that I am needed for this response.”

Ross also said he was thrilled to be promoted to Chief, a milestone for many enlisted people in the Coast Guard. Officers, like Stafford, help manage the enlisted work force. She said the coordination and team spirit between the two has to be good.

— Story and photos by PA1 Zach Zubricki

Coast Guard Lt. Laseanta Stafford, assistant public information officer in the Mobile Joint Information Center, takes calls there July 7. Stafford works on a team of media professionals that are dedicated to getting out accurate and timely information to the press and public.
The Reservist Who Wouldn’t Quit

As the sun gleamed brightly on a perfect Hawaii day, Capt. John T. Laufer stood at the podium at Diamond Head Light house with friends and family eagerly waiting what he had to say. Laufer, a lean, towering gentleman, stood in a perfectly pressed white uniform with the dozens of medals and ribbons glowing in the sunlight. This was his time. He was in the spotlight. It was his day to retire.

In his early days, Laufer knew he wanted to do something different. What he didn’t know was that “something different” would span more than 38 years.

“I remember going into the Navy recruiting office in 1971,” he recalled while standing tranquilly at the podium. “I was looking for something exciting to do, like the Navy Seals or something like that.”

While pondering his options, he stumbled upon a Coast Guard recruiting office just down the road from the Navy office and decided to take a peek at what this service had to offer.

“I asked the recruiter if they could give me any assured positions or locations,” said Laufer. “He frankly said ‘no’, and I liked his honesty.”

Laufer took the plunge and enlisted in the U.S. Coast Guard in 1971 for a four-year active duty term. After going to boot camp to learn the basics, he attended Radarman ‘A’ School on Governors Island, N.Y., from February to July 1971.

“I remember learning things like how to write backwards with a grease pencil on a Plexiglas wall, a skill technology has made obsolete,” Laufer said with a laugh.

Later, he arrived at his first unit, the Coast Guard Cutter Midgett, homeported in Alameda, Calif. Laufer, dressed in his World War II era “Donald Duck” uniform, stood on the pier looking at the 378-foot high endurance cutter not knowing what was in store.

“I served aboard Midgett for two years, and it was an honor to be the first crew placing Midgett into her long service,” said Laufer.

He became used to the shipboard life and served two years as the cutter’s combat information center supervisor where he was in charge of the radar systems and became the ship’s “invisible eyes.” Laufer ventured on many different patrols around central California, where the crew conducted fast-paced search and rescue missions, and in the frigid waters of Alaska, where they enforced fishing regulations.

Four years came and went and his enlisted tour was complete. He decided to attend college again and finish his degree at California State University, Sacramento. Laufer decided to stay in the Active Reserve and continue his service because he wasn’t finished with the Coast Guard just yet.

“I was a poor college student and, at first, I just needed the money. But then I started liking it,” joked Laufer.

He drilled on various cutters near Alameda including the Rush, Jarvis, Blackhaw and Midgett, all while attending college. Laufer finished his degree in 1978 and was hired by Matson Shipping Company for a finance and administrative position. He married, had two children and started a daily routine like most blue-collar businessmen. However, he craved being on the sea and doing something different. He had to get out of the daily grind, and he did it with the required 48-drills per year.

As an enlisted man, Laufer began climbing the advancement ladder. After advancing to senior chief petty officer, he looked into several programs to become a commissioned officer.

“I was just as smart as a [junior officer], so I decided to go into the Selective Reserve Direct Commission program and become an officer. I had my degree and the experience.”

Ascending to a senior enlisted leader only to go to the very bottom of the commissioned officer chain wasn’t a hard transition. Laufer had more experience being a reservist than...
most active duty counterparts at his paygrade.

"My best billet was as section leader of the WBP (patrol boat) augmentation section at Coast Guard Reserve Unit Yerba Buena Island from 1992 to 1995. As section leader, I assembled a crew of reservists that fully augmented the 82-foot Coast Guard Cutter Point Brower. I was qualified as underway OOD (Officer of the Day) and also served as acting commanding officer on the weekends. There's nothing like having your own command," said Laufer.

Laufer is one of two Reserve officers to ever take full command of a commissioned cutter with a Reserve crew. Expanding on both his personal and professional careers, he transferred in 1996 to the Hawaii division of Matson and worked at the Coast Guard Joint Rescue Coordination Center (JRCC) in Honolulu.

"The six years I served as a command duty officer in the District 14 JRCC were good fun. Something is always happening in the north central Pacific Ocean and the JRCC gets all the calls," said Laufer.

Along the way Laufer met and became friends with many people. Active duty members came and went, but Laufer stayed in the Pacific region. Many members remember Laufer for his compelling leadership.

"Capt. Laufer is the epitome of cool, calm and collected professionalism," said Cmdr. Mark M. Murakami, who worked with Laufer. "Whether dealing with an intense search and rescue case in the JRCC or a thorny Reserve policy issue, he never lost his balance or his focus on doing the right thing."

Laufer was selected to become the officer-in-charge of Port Security Unit Detachment Guantanamo Bay (PSUGTMO) in 2004.

"I worked directly for an active duty Army brigadier general as part of the Joint Task Force GTMO," said Laufer. "It was very rewarding bringing a new unit together, deploying with them, and doing a great job in a faraway place."

He returned to Hawaii as a captain and became the senior Reserve officer (SRO) in the 14th District. There he looked out for his fellow reservists by becoming the liaison between the 14th District and U.S. Pacific Command. It would be his last tour in the Coast Guard.

He was on active duty. He was a reservist. He climbed the enlisted ranks. He climbed the commissioned ranks. There wasn't much that he hadn't done. But the time had come. This was a special moment. Laufer snapped to attention and rendered a hand salute to Rear Adm. Michael Seward, a long-time friend and the senior reservist in the Coast Guard.

"I have the watch," stated Seward, relieving Laufer from his active Coast Guard post.

Laufer slowly dropped his last salute with a smile cresting from the corner of his mouth. After 38 years of dedicated service, he still had not quit.

— Story by PA3 Luke Clayton
1: Lt. Ann-Marie Reigrut
Current Duty: Branch Chief, Cocodrie, La.
Home Unit: MSU Galveston
Civilian Job: Auditor, ABS
Hometown: Galveston, Texas

2: OSC5 James Coffey
Current Duty: CSC, UAC New Orleans
Home Unit: Sector Boston
Civilian Job: Software Engineer
Hometown: North Smithfield, R.I.

3: YN3 Eddie Smith
Home Unit: Sector Mobile
Civilian Career: 3rd Grade Teacher
Hometown: Atlanta, Ga.

4: YN3 Jessica Wilborn
Current Duty: Staff Mgmt., UAC New Orleans
Home Unit: Sector Corpus Christi
Civilian Job: Student, Del Mar College
Hometown: Corpus Christi, Texas

5: BM3 Gary Guido
Current Duty: VOSS Ops, Bayou la Batre, Ala.
Home Unit: Station Port Macon
Civilian Job: Bank Teller
Hometown: Wilmington, N.C.

6: MK3 Michael Kelleher
Current Duty: Cost Analysis, Cocodrie, La.
Home Unit: MSD St. Paul
Civilian Job: Student, University of Minn.
Hometown: Minneapolis, Minn.

7: MKC James Eulenberg
Current Duty: Ops Chief, Cocodrie, La.
Home Unit: Station Sabine Pass
Civilian Job: Surveyor, ABS Consulting
Hometown: Santa Fe, Texas

8: SK2 Anthony Taveras
Home Unit: Sector New York
Civilian Job: Executive Protection
Hometown: Galveston, Texas

9: Lt. Brian Danzinger
Current Duty: Situation Burn Unit, Venice, La.
Home Unit: Sector Lake Michigan
Civilian Job: Professor, University of Wisc.-GB
Hometown: Green Bay, Wis.

10: SK1 Duran McLean
Current Duty: Purchasing, Cocodrie, La.
Home Unit: Sector New York
Civilian Job: Police Officer, N.Y.P.D.
Hometown: Brooklyn, N.Y.

11: IT2 John C. Jones
Current Duty: IT Support, ICP Houma, La.
Home Unit: ESD Boston
Civilian Job: Sales Support Specialist, HP
Hometown: Boston, Mass.

12: PA2 Amir Lawal
Current Duty: External Affairs, UAC New Orleans
Home Unit: Sector Miami
Civilian Job: Wildlife Inspector, Fish & Wildlife
Hometown: Memphis, Tenn.

Current Duty: Admin Officer, ICP Mobile, Ala.
Home Unit: Sector Seattle
Civilian Job: Early Childhood Development
Hometown: Oak Harbor, Wash.

14: MST1 Ben Kastline
Current Duty: Decon Supervisor, Pensacola, Fla.
Home Unit: Sector Portland
Civilian Job: Employee, Costco
Hometown: Vancouver, Wash.

15: Capt. Bob Carmack
Current Duty: Chief of Staff, ICP Mobile, Ala.
Home Unit: FORCENET (FC-5)
Civilian Job: IT Consultant
Hometown: Sterling, Va.

16: BM1 April Rex
Current Duty: VOSS Ops, Bayou la Batre, Ala.
Home Unit: Station Port Allerton
Civilian Job: Student, American International
Hometown: Holyoke, Mass.

17: Lt. Carlito Vicencio
Current Duty: Deputy Air Boss, ICP Houma, La.
Home Unit: Sector Houston
Civilian Job: Program Analyst, NASA
Hometown: Houston, Texas

18: IT1 Adam Rangel
Home Unit: ESD San Pedro
Civilian Job: Low Voltage Contractor
Hometown: Gallup, N.M.

19: PACS Barbara Voulgaris
Current Duty: Media Chief, UAC New Orleans
Home Unit: USCG Headquarters
Civilian Job: Historian, Maritime Administration
Hometown: Washington, D.C.

20: Lt. Cmdr. Jeff Wasserman
Current Duty: Section Plans Chief, Cocodrie, La.
Home Unit: Pacific Strike Team
Civilian Job: Police Captain, U.S. Park Police
Hometown: Alameda, Calif.

21: Lt. j.g. John Budnik
Current Duty: Special Projects, UAC New Orleans
Home Unit: Group/Air Station Astoria
Civilian Job: Telecom Technician, NW Natural
Hometown: Wilsonville, Ore.

22: BM1 Glenn White
Current Duty: Decon Supervisor, Pensacola, Fla.
Home Unit: Sector Honolulu
Civilian Job: Grad Student, University of Hawaii
Hometown: Coco Beach, Fla.

23: PA2 Gary Rives
Current Duty: Imagination Desk, UAC New Orleans
Home Unit: PADET New York
Civilian Job: Attorney, NYC Comptroller Office
Hometown: Brooklyn, N.Y.

24: PA2 Gina Ruoti
Current Duty: News Desk, UAC New Orleans
Home Unit: PADET New York
Civilian Job: Video Production
Hometown: Long Island, N.Y.

25: MST3 Rob Hardin
Current Duty: IT Support, ICP Mobile, Ala.
Home Unit: Sector Mobile
Civilian Job: Restaurant Industry
Hometown: Birmingham, Ala.

26: Lt. j.g. Ronald MacDonald
Home Unit: Sector Boston
Civilian Job: Corporate Trainer, Reveal Imaging
Hometown: Boston, Mass.

27: BMC Darrin Cliffe
Current Duty: Decon Chief, ICP Mobile, Ala.
Home Unit: MSD Cincinnati
Civilian Job: Firefighter, Cincinnati F.D.
Hometown: Harrison, Ohio

28: PA3 Ayla Kelley
Current Duty: Media, UAC New Orleans
Home Unit: Sector Boston
Civilian Job: Student, University of So. Maine
Hometown: Portland, Maine

29: YN1 Bill Bauer
Current Duty: SPO, ICP Mobile, Ala.
Home Unit: Coast Guard Academy
Civilian Job: Asst. Mkt. Director, CG Academy
Hometown: Atlanta, Ga.

30: MLES2 James Warner
Home Unit: Sector Houston-Galveston
Civilian Job: Police Sergeant, San Antonio P.D.
Hometown: San Antonio, Texas
Lt. Matthew Nakagawa briefs Adm. Robert J. Papp Jr., Coast Guard commandant, on buoy tender skimming operations at the Naval Air Station Pensacola pier, June 23. The buoy tenders are using a Vessel of Opportunity Skimming System to remove oil from the surface of the water and then pumping the product into a barge that holds 28,000 gallons.

Photo by PA3 Walter Shinn
Adm. Robert J. Papp, Jr., a former Director of the Coast Guard Reserve, becomes Commandant at a time when the need for the reservists has never been greater.

Reservist recently had an opportunity to ask the commandant for his take on the Coast Guard Reserve’s response to oil spill operations in the Gulf of Mexico. The following are his responses:

Q: How is the Reserve component important to the overall Coast Guard mission?

A: “The Coast Guard could not have responded as aggressively or effectively to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill without the vital support of the Coast Guard Reserve force. They have ensured our success through their mobilization for nine named operations since 9/11/01 and support on an untold number of smaller efforts. Our reserves are the epitome of agility, professionalism, and service; qualities that our Nation has come to expect from us.”

Q: Having been able to travel throughout the areas of operation in the Gulf of Mexico, I had an opportunity to meet and follow reservists from throughout the country as they supported oil clean-up operations. Along the way, I heard many inspiring stories of personal sacrifice and leadership. What is the most poignant reservist story you have encountered?

A: “One of the most inspiring moments of my travels to the Gulf Coast to observe Deepwater Horizon oil spill response operations was on May 29, 2010, at the Unified Area Command in Robert, La., when I was conducting an all-hands meeting. After talking for a few minutes, I paused and asked the assembled group how many of them were reservists. Well, more than half of the group raised their hand. I stood there speechless for about 15 seconds while I took it all in. The true value and importance of the Coast Guard Reserve force was personified in that moment.”

Q: I was present when you addressed the Chief’s Mess in the UAC and I remember that one of the pressing concerns on their minds was how the Coast Guard would be able to sustain an inflow of qualified reservists as DWH response wears on and the first wave of recalled service members demobilize. What is your response to that question a month later?

A: “The Coast Guard reserve force provided the surge of people we needed to meet the response requirements for the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. We are now on our second 60-day deployment of about 1,500 Reserve personnel and have been successful throughout in matching people with complementary duties or having them grow quickly into their assigned position. My desire is to leverage more National Guard forces as we move forward so that we can preserve Coast Guard reserve forces for hurricane response and other contingencies.”
An Overwhelming Response

Reservists from around the country have descended on the Gulf Coast to assist with clean-up efforts during one of the largest environmental disasters in the nation’s history.

Photos by Isaac D. Pacheco
Running on Reserves

By PA3 Pamela Manns

Cocodrie is the heated oven of southeastern Louisiana. Located two hours south of New Orleans, in Terrebonne Parish, Cocodrie is a small fishing community, thick with humidity and rich with oil spill responders. More than 900 responders have surged to the shores of Cocodrie to help mop up the oil in marshes, shovel tar balls off barrier islands beaches, and conduct booming and skimming operations.

The air is thick here. Breathing is like taking big gulps of water into your lungs. The steamy heat causes responders, mostly hired contractors and federal, state and local officials, to wipe beads of sweat from their foreheads. There are 40 or so blue-suited Coast Guardsmen providing oversight and guidance for the contractors, most of them reservists. They are working professionals who have been uprooted from their lives and placed in the middle of the bayou.

The Cocodrie forward operating staging area covers all of Terrebonne Parish, and is divided into four divisions controlled from the Cocodrie Marina. Best known for its charter fishing, the marina was initially chosen for staging because of its vessel-slip space and water depth.

Every morning, just as the sun is making its first appearance, workers don lifejackets and hardhats and load fresh boom onto the more than 80 boats that are lined bow to stern along the length of the marina. Nearly a dozen portable trailers have taken over the unpaved marina parking lot, each buzzing with blessed air conditioning. The trailers house the planning, operations, administration, and safety sections of the response. Giant white coolers filled with ice and bottles of water are everywhere to help workers stave off dehydration.

“When I got here, there were only two trailers and three port-a-potties,” said Chief Petty Officer James Elsenburg, a reserve machinist technician from Coast Guard Station Sabine Pass and a Santa Fe, Texas native.

Elsenburg arrived on site May 8, three days after the Cocodrie Marina was transformed from a boat launch area for charter fishermen to an operating station capable of deploying and tracking hundreds of responders. He was moved from the Incident Command Post at Huoma, La., and was put in charge of all Coast Guard operations here.

Leaders selected him for the Cocodrie assignment because he earned his Federal On-scene Coordinator Representative qualification while on active duty and retained the ability to open the superfund to pay for clean-up operations. Elsenburg watched operations in Cocodrie grow as the scope of the spill expanded.

“Around week three, we went from 141 people to 400 in one day,” said Elsenburg, who thinks of the operations in terms of weeks instead of days. He often searches the calendar to gain the context of time. “All of the days blend together.”

Elsenburg is the go-to guy for all operations, including boat and aircraft operations. Barrel chested and tall, Elsenburg has an easy way about him and often jokes with his coworkers.

“I am living the Coco dream,” he said behind a soft smile and short chuckle.

He has volunteered to extend his Reserve tour of duty until January. He said his civilian job, working in commercial shipping, was not pleased when he told them he was deploying to the spill, but that they were supportive.

However, Elsenburg is only one of many reservists serving here. Reservists make up the majority of the Cocodrie command structure. Most of the branch chiefs are reservists, and so is branch director Lt. Bryan Miller.

Miller is a reservist from Charleston, South Carolina and a state trooper. Miller’s employer, like Elsenburg’s, is supportive of his service in the Coast Guard and understands his need to deploy. This is Miller’s first deployment in his seven years in the Coast Guard. He had no idea that he would be called up to respond to the spill, and was initially apprehensive about being placed in charge of the Terrebonne Parish response.

“My background was in marine safety. I worked with inspections, not pollution,” said Miller.

Although he was initially nervous about the new responsibilities, Miller has grown into the role after two weeks in Cocodrie. As a law enforcement officer, Miller seems comfortable with the authority and responsibility to ensure that all critical needs and issues are effectively addressed. He said he is happy to be a part of the effort to help save the Gulf, and added that if he were to ever go on a fishing vacation, this would be the place.

As an operating station, Cocodrie is an overwhelming success, so much so that it has served as a model for the other stations throughout the Gulf Coast states.

Guardians receive an early morning safety brief and daily work assignments at Operations Center Cocodrie, La., before heading out into the Gulf of Mexico with commercial boat crews participating in the Vessels of Opportunity program, June 23. Nearly 85 percent of the Coast Guard members working in Cocodrie are reservists.
YELLOW BOOM SURROUNDS A TINY SPIT OF LAND IN THE COASTAL WATERS OFF OF TERREBONNE PARISH, LA., WHERE HUNDREDS OF SEABIRDS, INCLUDING GULLS, TERNs AND PELICANS, MATE AND NEST. COAST GUARD RESERVISTS ARE WORKING WITH COMMERCIAL BOAT CREWS TO PLACE AND MAINTAIN A SYSTEM OF BOOMS ALONG THE LOUISIANA COAST IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE FRAGILE ECOSYSTEM FROM OIL CONTAMINATION.
BM3 Gary Guido (2nd L), BM1 April Rex (2nd R), and MK2 John Palmer (far right) work with a civilian boat crew to deploy an oil skimmer during a training exercise aboard a converted commercial shrimping vessel off the coast of Bayou La Batre, La., June 27. Guido and Rex, both reservists, work with active members like Palmer to train civilian boat crews to set up and deploy Coast Guard skimming equipment on Vessels of Opportunity. They run daily exercises to keep boat crews up to speed on the process.
“We fight the oil wherever it is: on the water, on the beaches and in the marshes,” said Elsenburg.

Cocodrie deploys a fleet of skimming vessels armed with hard and soft boom and drum and belt skimmers to grab the pollutant off the top of the water. Additionally, hard boom has been strategically placed around Terrebonne Parish to prevent oil from contaminating certain marshes. However, boom has limitations, and oil has been able to seep into some of these sensitive wetlands. It was pushed into the bayou from the southeast storms, and Cocodrie-based contractors are working to get it out.

Recovery efforts around the marshes has proven a particular difficulty because workers are not allowed to walk around inside the marsh for fear of pushing the oil into soil and causing more harm then good. Workers have learned to improvise cleanup technique by using a boat hooks and absorbent boom. They throw rings of boom into the marsh grass and drag it across the oil, swabbing up the pollutant.

When the workers are finished, they stuff the soiled boom in double-lined bags and lay fresh absorbent boom, anchored in place by bamboo poles, to catch the oil that high tide pulls out of the marsh. At the end of the day, when the workers return, they bring the soiled boom to the decontamination area in Cocodrie for disposal.

The workers at Cocodrie have laid a total of 7,792 feet of soft boom, 123,150 feet of snare boom, and 280,999 feet of hard-barrier boom meant to act as a physical barrier between the oil and marsh.

However, despite operational success the initial efforts have not been met with local support. Community outreach was not a part of the Cocodrie area first response plan. Local leaders were concerned about resources and the possible lack of understanding of the responders, said Elsenburg.

“It was like someone was building a tree house in their backyard and didn’t tell them,” said Elsenburg. “It wasn’t until week three that we were able to get the parish president down here. Once parish representatives visited here they could instantly see what we were doing was a good thing.”

Elsenburg added that parish representatives now come to Cocodrie every week, and seem pleased with the work going on here.

The flow of the oil has recently been stemmed, but the mood in Cocodrie is not one of jubilation. The need to address oil that has already infiltrated the marshes remains. Contractors will continue to board boats with fresh boom every morning, skimmers will still scan the horizon looking for oil on the water, and responders will go about their business until the threat of this unprecedented environmental disaster no longer looms over the Louisiana bayou. 

Note: Pamela Mann is a Public Affairs Specialist at D11 temporarily assigned to Operations Area Cocadrie, La.
Cincinnati-based Reservist Fights Oil in Grand Isle, La.

By Steve Kemme, The Cincinnati Enquirer

Adam Wong is spending most of his summer on Grand Isle, La., a Gulf Coast community known as a vacation Mecca offering beaches, fishing, kayaking and other water-related recreational activities.

But Wong, a 28-year-old North College Hill resident and a Sharonville police officer, isn’t living the easy life on Grand Isle.

As a member of the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve, he’s one of about 1,500 people who came to the Grand Isle area to help protect it from further damage from the BP oil spill in the Gulf. They’re also engaged in a massive cleanup effort involving the beaches, wildlife and shrimping grounds.

“Everybody is pulling 12- to 15-hour work days down here to get it done,” Wong said in a telephone interview during his lunch break. “We’re making progress slowly but surely.”

Wong, a petty officer 2nd class, monitors the contractors who are laying down rubber guards in the water to keep the oil from washing ashore, and he oversees those cleaning the birds and other wildlife coated in the oil. He also serves as deputy director of security for the facilities on Grand Isle.

Wong is one of 12 reservists under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Detachment in Cincinnati to be dispatched to the Gulf to battle the oil spill.

“That’s half of my reservists,” said Lt. Rob Reinhart, supervisor of the Cincinnati detachment. “They’re scattered all over the Gulf.”

The oppressive heat has made the work more difficult. Temperatures rise each day to about 90 degrees, but it feels like it’s more than 100 degrees.

Wong arrived at Grand Isle on June 4 after spending several days of preparation in New Orleans.

He had been planning to leave Saturday for a family vacation in Hilton Head, S.C. But those plans evaporated when he learned May 29 that he would be deployed to Grand Isle.

Although disappointed about missing the family vacation, Wong said he derives a great deal of satisfaction from the work he’s doing in the Grand Isle area.

“I’ve been in the Coast Guard for nine years, four years on active duty, and I love it,” he said. “I’m just happy to be in a position to help.”

He and his wife, Nikki, have two boys, 6-year-old Alex and 4-year-old Cameron.

“It’s hard being away from my kids,” Wong said. “But they’re old enough to realize I’m doing something good. It’s not like I’m out on a vacation.”

Nikki Wong said Cameron keeps asking her if his father is washing penguins.

“I tell him, ‘I don’t think he’s washing penguins. It’s a little too hot for them,’” she said, laughing. Adam Wong’s workday in Grand Isle starts at 5:30 a.m. and usually doesn’t end until 8 p.m. He spends part of his day out in the Gulf, surveying areas for the presence of oil.

This past week, he spent a few hours in an iceboat in the bayous. The iceboat, which has a flat bottom, can go into shallow water without disturbing the wildlife.

“I wanted to see how much oil has washed up in the marshes and what kind of wildlife is migrating from the Gulf into the marshes because of the oil spill,” he said. “There is oil migrating into the marshes. But they’re doing a pretty good job of controlling what’s going on there.”

The cleanup effort is critical to the economic survival of Grand Isle, whose main source of revenue is tourism. The island has seven miles of beaches.

“The primary areas we’re trying to protect here are the beaches and the shrimping grounds further inland,” said U.S. Coast Guard Chief Dustin Widman, the beach operations supervisor for Grand Isle.

Besides the contractors and the Coast Guard, the U.S. Army National Guard and personnel from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are working in the Grand Isle area.

This is Wong’s second deployment for the Coast Guard Reserve in the past two months. In early May, he was sent to flood-besieged Nashville, where he helped rescue people from the Wyndham and Opryland hotels.

Wong’s Coast Guard orders say he’ll be in Grand Isle until July 29. But he knows there’s nothing firm about that date.

“If the job’s not done and they still need us, they can keep us longer,” he said. “Or if we’re needed somewhere else in the Gulf, they could send us there. I’m just glad to help.”

Lt. j.g. Michael H. Cole (far left) mans a Mobile Incident Command Post (eMICP) watch trailer (inset) at ICP Mobile, Ala., June 27. The transportable trailer houses a Coast Guard communications team, which serves as the eyes and ears for oil clean-up and observation crews on the water and in the air throughout the Mississippi, Alabama and Florida coastal areas.

Photos by Isaac D. Pacheco

Green Bay Reservist Serves with Burn Crews in Venice, La.

By Molly Hendrickson, WBAVTV

One of Green Bay’s newly-elected aldermen is facing new challenges as a deployed member of the United States Coast Guard.

Lt. Brian Danzinger was just elected to the Green Bay City Council in April, but now he’s off on a new mission in the Gulf of Mexico.

“We’re not exactly sure what our roles are going to be, but we’ve been working on a few elements already prior to the deployment,” Danzinger said.

Danzinger is working as a situation burn unit leader in Venice, La., and he hopes to be back by fall, but says he’s not sure yet how long he’ll be gone.

“Even though this deployment will take me out of the area for a period of time, I want to make sure that people know we will be doing our best to serve their needs,” he said.

Danzinger says while he’s gone he’ll be working closely with the mayor’s office to make sure constituents’ voices are heard and issues are addressed.

“With today’s technology he will absolutely be able to stay in touch and do all the duties that are called to him as alderman,” the mayor’s chief of staff, Sean Stephenson, said.

Danzinger will phone in to the next council meeting, at which point the council will vote on whether he can take part in the meeting.

City Clerk Chad Weininger explained, “They could suspend the rules and just let him listen in and take in on the conversation or they could say he has full rights to partake in the council and actually vote.”

Either way, Danzinger wants voters to know their voices will be heard.

“We will make sure that the residents needs are taken care of. We will make sure that people are obviously being satisfied,” he said.

Note: The article reprinted with permission of WBAVTV, Green Bay, Wis. www.wbay.com.
Rehabbed Birds Wing their Way to Freedom in Fla.

By PA1 Judy L. Silverstein,

Approaching Page Airfield in Fort Myers, the profile of a United States Coast Guard HC-130 Hercules looks like a bird. In fact, its cargo is also well-versed in the mechanics of flight. As the aircraft dips toward the tarmac at 80 miles per hour, its wingspan captures the imagination of volunteers from an array of state and federal agencies who drive up to the plane, ready to assist with the transfer of its winged cargo.

“The plane looks just like a bird coming in for a landing,” says a biological intern assigned to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service on Sanibel Island. She and some young colleagues giggle, but the irony is not lost on Jenny Powers, a National Park Service veterinarian who accompanies 32 crated birds from a rehabilitation facility in Fort Jackson, La. The birds—Brown Pelicans and Northern Gannets—had been flown to Florida for a second chance.

The flight is followed by a short drive to Gulfside City Park on Sanibel Island. Then, the crated birds are carried along the boardwalk and down the dunes to the shoreline, before release into their new habitat. That’s when they begin to flap and wing their way toward the inviting Gulf of Mexico—this time, under their own power.

“Habitat was our biggest concern,” says Powers. “We wanted a place that was appropriate for these species, out of the oil trajectory and in an area with good weather.”

Sanibel Island offered many options, according to Paul Tritaik, Manager at the J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge.

“This location was a good choice because it is within their range and closely resembles their native habitat in climate, food sources and water...” he said, eyeing the birds as they adjust to their new habitat. “It’s been gratifying to be part of this success story, and this is a great place for them.”

The Long Haul

Rescued from coastal areas in Mississippi and Louisiana, the birds were initially transferred to a makeshift wildlife rehabilitation center in Fort Jackson for examination, rehydration and some rest. An assembly line of sorts included scrubbing and rinsing. The birds were moved—sometimes as many as 10 times—to tubs with clean water, after the area around their eyes was scrubbed gently with a toothbrush, ensuring every trace of oil was removed. To prevent ingestion of more oil, the birds were often held to restrict preening, rinsed again and dried. Such intense cleansing can interfere with the birds’ natural thermal regulation, making observation critical. Once the arduous cleaning ritual was complete, they were transferred to sunny pens for drying, before making the assisted flight on a Coast Guard aircraft to Florida’s West coast.

Yet transfer to Sanibel was crucial to the success of the relocation project. Powers and Tritaik credit the collaboration between their agencies and the U.S. Coast Guard, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the city of Sanibel, International Bird Rescue Research Center in Hammond, La. and experts from the Tri-State Bird Rescue and Research Center, with helping make the relocation a smooth one.

Brown pelicans are released at Fort De Soto Park near St. Petersburg July 7, 2010. In total, 32 brown pelicans were rescued after being found oiled near Louisiana’s coast, and were then rehabilitated at Fort Jackson, La., before being released in Tampa Bay.

Photo by PA3 Nick Ameen
A Fresh Start

As the first familiar sounds of the ocean are recognized by the crated birds, a Northern Gannet, with its deep-set blue eyes encircled with the same color, can be seen peering through the thatching of the plastic crate’s window and cocking its sleek head. The crate is unlocked, its lid removed. With a flash of feathers, the banded bird expands her wings, makes its uniquely characteristic “kroking” sound, and takes flight above the Gulf of Mexico. She circles back, gliding onto the surface of the water. Given the high temperatures, humidity and schooling fish, the island’s newest residents seem slated for success.

As the lid is lifted on the next crate, two pelicans stretch their wings, let out a low growling sound and yawn widely, revealing large pouches. As the birds take flight, a crowd of beachgoers applauds. The birds alight on the water, joining a small group of gannets within yards of the shoreline.

After the last of the birds is released, Titaik tries to announce his appreciation for the collaboration on the rescue and release. “Many thanks to the Coast Guard, Park Service ...” he begins, but his words are drowned out by the sounds of birds flapping and waves breaking the shore. It’s the kind of interruption he says is welcome.

“Things are going as planned,” says a smiling Powers. The crowd seems spellbound.

“This is really something,” says Kate Croslin, a Connecticut resident vacationing on the Gulf of Mexico. “There’s been no shortage of heartbreaking stories, but this one really makes your heart melt.”

Note: PA1 Silverstein is a reservist recalled to the United States Coast Guard St. Petersburg Branch Joint Information Center, Fla.
As an anthropology professor at Penn State University in Abingdon, Pa., Peter Capelotti is used to fielding challenging questions from his students. However, the recalled United States Coast Guard Reserve master chief recently found himself fending off questions that he couldn’t answer from a more dogged group of interrogators while working as a media liaison along a sweltering stretch of the Alabama coastline. Capelotti, the Public Affairs Chief at Incident Command Post Mobile, is charged with arranging escorts for media representatives to and from the front lines of oil spill clean-up efforts in the Gulf of Mexico. During a recent media tour, Capelotti faced off with a particularly hostile news crew that was determined to capture devastating images of oil-covered wildlife, even if there were few such images to be had.

“They were really disappointed that there wasn’t more oil in the operations area I was responsible for showing them,” said Capelotti. “They wanted to see a catastrophe, and when there wasn’t one, they got really upset. I escorted that group a couple more times after that incident, but by the third time they saw me, they just turned and ran the other way because they thought I was intentionally killing the story.”
Since the sinking of British Petroleum’s offshore drilling platform, Deepwater Horizon, April 22, the Coast Guard has teamed with a number of federal agencies and BP to provide the public with up-to-the-minute information about the ongoing oil spill response. Recently, a rift has developed between a number of American media outlets and the Coast Guard, with the former crying foul about lack of access to oil-impacted areas in the Gulf. Some news outlets have even accused the Coast Guard of colluding with BP to hide the true extent of oil leakage and damage.

“At a master chief, I would have put my foot down on any nonsense like that. It’s one thing to push a story, and it’s another thing altogether to falsify one,” said Capelotti. “We have an obligation the American people to do what’s right. It would have been against everything the Coast Guard stands for to try and hamper the free press.”

John DeSantos, a reporter for the Houma Courier suspects that the conflict between the press and response agencies emerged as a result of something less nefarious, but equally troublesome—a breakdown in communication.

“In the beginning the Coast Guard did not have a dominant voice, and I think that affected public perception. If they had done local outreach earlier, that might have helped ease misunderstandings,” said DeSantos. “In their defense, they were trying to build the front desk of the house in the middle of a hurricane,” he added.

Capelotti believes that while he and his fellow Reserve public affairs specialists faced a steep learning curve in the early stages of the crisis, their more daunting challenge was overcoming uncharacteristically aggressive media scrutiny as a result of the Coast Guard’s necessary cooperation with BP.

“I’ve been mobilized six times since 9/11, and in all those operations the media praised the Coast Guard. We were the good guys,” said Capelotti. “That wasn’t the case in the eyes of the press this time around. The media wasn’t on our side because we were erroneously lumped together with BP. I don’t think any of us were prepared for a situation where the media was out for our scalps, and where the blue uniform no longer afforded us any type of protection.”

The strained relationship between oil clean-up authorities and the press came to a head in late May when Coast Guard personnel in a civilian boat turned away a CBS news crew that was trying to film an oil-impacted area off the Louisiana coast. Coast Guard officials quickly issued a statement after the incident, suggesting that the involved members of the media may not have followed necessary safety precautions, which led to the confrontation.

DeSantos concedes that the news crew should have researched existent safety rules before venturing into an area where they were likely to encounter hazardous materials. While he adamantly defends the rights of press members to access spill sites, DeSantos sees the negative media fallout from this incident as the result of bruised egos on the part of a vocal minority.

“I very carefully studied the policy that came out on the distance that reporters had to stay from boom and understood what was behind it. While I respect my colleagues wanting to have as unfettered access as possible, I do think there was a bit of an overreaction on their part,” said DeSantos.

“I have not read about any incident that could not have been preempted by the media doing their homework first. The media has a responsibility to understand the structure of the system they are working in. A good reporter surveys the lay of the land before venturing out.”

Another reporter, Rob Zullo, actually wrote an article detailing the communication breakdown between the media and response officials for his hometown paper: Zullo, city editor of the Daily Comet in Houma, La., believes that some of the problems have arisen as a result of contractors being told, or assuming, that they could not speak to the media. Despite his criticism of how BP has handled communications, he argues that the Coast Guard has been one of the most effective agencies in coordinating with the public and media.

“l’m not aware of any specific problems with the Coast Guard,” said Zullo. “In fact, the Coast Guard has been very receptive to requests for access.”

As one of the frontline media liaisons for the Coast Guard, Public Affairs Specialist Third Class Pamela Mann gets to see both sides of the story every day. Her mandate is to get press corps members access to operations areas and information about her agency’s response. From her cramped trailer office in Cocodrie, La., a bayou-bound fishing village-turned oil spill response center, Mann arranges dozens of site visits and interviews each week.

“I’m not in charge of telling the media what they can and cannot see, I’m just responsible for getting them out to where they want to go,” said Mann. “We have had incidents where contractors told media to go away while I was with them, and I had to identify myself and say ‘Hey, we’re allowed to be here.’ You can’t really blame these civilians for being apprehensive because of all the bad press that’s out there, but that doesn’t give them the right to block media access.”
Washington Post reporter, David Fahrenthold, worked with Mann while trying to gain access to oiled marshes in southern Louisiana last month. Although none of Fahrenthold’s coverage involved him showing up without asking permission first, he says that he still felt like authorities were very transparent when asked about their operations and the extent of the oil spill.

“The folks I worked with were very helpful,” said Fahrenthold. “They arranged the trips and did all they could to help get me to where I needed to go.”

Fahrenthold says that while he believes media liaisons like Mann have been especially effective at tackling information and access issues, there remains room for improvement in the way the Coast Guard and other response agencies manage media expectations about the scope of the spill.

“One of the different things about covering this event is that people went in thinking it was going to be like the Exxon Valdez spill with thick black oil everywhere, and that’s just not the case,” said Fahrenthold. “This is different. The oil is everywhere, but it’s dispersed. Much of it is below the surface in the water column.”

Mann says she battles that particularly pervasive misconception on a daily basis.

“Typically, when we take members of the media out, they are surprised at how little oil has impacted the marshes. It is almost as though they are disappointed that there aren’t any oil-covered pelicans of which to take heart-wrenching photos,” said Mann.

“The reporter for the Los Angeles Times was especially disappointed by the lack of oil,” added Mann. “She asked, ‘Where’s the heavy oil?’ I pointed to a slick covered marsh and said ‘right here!’ But that’s not what they were looking for”

Not every interaction between the media and response officials has been strained. In recent weeks a number of positive stories have come out about cooperative ventures between the Coast Guard and reporters. John DeSantos, who also had an opportunity to work with Pamela Mann, says the experience positively affected his entire perception of the Coast Guard’s involvement in clean-up operations.

“We worked together in such a way that each entity was flexible. At one point I needed to get out to barrier islands for a story, and Pam (Mann) set it up so rapidly that it was almost too quick for me to use,” said DeSantos. My interaction with the Coast Guard public affairs folks was something that solved a multitude of problems. We were able to build trust with each other, which led to accessibility for us and aided them in getting out their message. We were working toward the same goals.”

Master Chief Capelotti says the door swings both ways where cooperation is concerned. He believes positive interactions greatly outnumbered negative ones, and feels like the two sparring partners, the press and Coast Guard public affairs representatives, have developed more than a grudging respect for one another.

“I went out of my way with all the news crews to make sure they got what they needed,” said Capelotti. One of the best experiences I had was when I worked with Mark Potter of NBC Nightly News. I got him on an over flight of the Gulf with the commandant and that got us a lot of great coverage.”

The Coast Guard’s senior leader, Commandant Adm. Robert Papp, was also quick to praise his public affairs teams for the work they have done to reshape public perception of oil clean-up efforts and to rebuild relationships with members of the national media.

“I believe our Coast Guard public affairs officers and specialists have done an exceptional job in the Deepwater Horizon oil spill response of answering media inquiries, conducting community open house events, posting information to the web, and collecting imagery,” said Papp. “They filled an important role in helping the public understand the magnitude and complexity of this response. I am very proud of their service.”

National Incident Commander Adm. Thad Allen, USCG (Ret.), fields questions from the media about oil clean-up operations in the Gulf of Mexico during a press conference at the Port of New Orleans, June 28. Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano joined Allen in addressing concerns about the effectiveness of containment and clean-up efforts.

Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Robert J. Papp answers questions about BP oil spill clean-up operations during an interview with a FOX News reporter at the Unified Area Command operations center in New Orleans, June 22.
By BOSN2 Fred Eshelman, USCGR
Office of Boat Forces

From the moment I took my ADOS-RC contract to work for The Office of Boat Forces (CG-731), it was apparent there was a gap in boat crew training for MK’s and ME’s at boat forces units. A boat crew course was needed to bridge the gap. BM “A” school students receive boat crew training when in “A” school because it is part of their rating. MK’s and ME’s should have similar training. After a very short time at headquarters, I discovered that things don’t move as fast as I’d like them to and thus the prototype boat crew course for MK’s and ME’s would be a heavy lift.

After numerous conversations and a couple doors slammed, I ended up speaking with Lt. Kris Tsarlis, Chief of Afloat Operations at Boat Forces and Cutter Operations in Yorktown, VA. As he and I talked, we tried to come up with a solution given that we have no money available for the training and that the budget for the next couple of years is declining. And then a light went on in both our heads: What about schools down there that have openings? We don’t need to complete something from scratch; we just need some capacity for the new students. Since there was room during the underway portion of BM “A” school, it seemed like a perfect fit. Capacity and availability equaled an opportunity for the Reserve students.

A solicitation message went out and within hours, my inbox was full. Obviously there was a need for training, but in what capacity? Our ideal vision is to have MK’s or ME’s get the boat crew training right after “A” school. This pipeline training would do two things: ease the training burden on the receiving unit since the Reserve MK’s and ME’s would have the training necessary to get qualified, and provide a solution that in the long run will eliminate the need for Boat Colleges in the field. The Boat Forces strategic plan features building a system for Reserve that is repeatable, supportable, and sustainable.

In the first class we had one ME and three MK’s. The second class was all MK’s with instructors, BM1 James Doxtater, BM1 Michael Cook, and Scott Wilder, a civilian boat crewman/instructor and former Master Chief MK. On short notice, these guys developed a plan and executed it. Each of them knew that it was important to get something going. Doxtater, a former XPO said, “It’s great that the program is working to get the Reserves training, it helps out the units.”

During underway drills, BM1 Cook said, “By these guys getting this training, they can go back and help out the unit. The hands-on training they receive here really helps towards integration.” A recent graduate of ME “A” school, ME3 Darnell Talbert of Sector Detroit was excited about what he learned in class. “I came here to get boat crew training so when I go back and conduct boardings, I can do my LE but also be a member of the boat crew,” said Talbert.

MK3 Caleb McPherson who graduated from MK “A” school and stayed the weekend said, “This training was great! I feel like I can go back to my station and get qualified faster than I would if I was drilling once a month.”

While the course may require some refinement, we were able to get training to eight people and lay the foundation for a future course. The students received nearly all of the “ANY” tasks needed for qualification and have come a long way.

“I didn’t think they would come as far as they did,” said Wilder. “They impressed me.”

Note: The Office of Boat Forces is dedicated to addressing Reserve issues in the Boat Forces Community. Creating a system that is repeatable, supportable, and sustainable is the way to effectively manage our resources. Please contact CW2 Fred Eshelman with any questions regarding this article or any other Reserve Boat Forces initiative, at (202) 372-2474 or Frederick.L.Eshelman@uscg.mil.
New Area Commander Briefed on Direct Support

By Capt. Frank Mullen, USCGR
RFRS Implementation Project Officer

The Office of Reserve Affairs recently briefed the new Atlantic Area Commander, Vice Adm. Rob Parker, on the rationale for the Reserve Force Readiness System (RFRS) and plans for its continuing implementation. With the ongoing oil spill response in the Gulf of Mexico, Parker’s area of responsibility, direct support to sustain the well-being and readiness of Reserve forces has never been more relevant.

A key point to the briefing was the intent of RFRS: Place resources for reserve readiness directly in the operational chain of command, and achieve a more equitable distribution of those resources as implementation continues.

One of the most significant changes being brought about by RFRS is in the distribution of Reserve-funded full-time support (FTS) billets. The overwhelming majority of reservists are assigned to units in the Atlantic and Pacific Area chains of command, and prior to the summer of 2009 these units had no full-time billets assigned to provide direct support to reservists. This has been a concern for both area commanders, since for most large mobilizations (i.e. 9/11, Deepwater Horizon oil spill response), the majority of recalled reservists come from units under their command.

The included graphs, which are taken from the briefing to Parker, show the distribution of direct-support and representational FTS billets both before and after RFRS implementation. They highlight the growth in direct-support FTS within the Area chains of command from zero beforehand to the largest single component afterward.

This new distribution provides more direct support to commands having the most reservists assigned, and is essential to improving their mobilization readiness.

Over the past year and a half, commanders throughout the Coast Guard have expressed concern over the distribution of direct-support FTS billets, particularly at sectors. Due to a variety of constraints during the first year of RFRS implementation, and also due to the complexity of integrating RFRS billet moves with all of Coast Guard Modernization, the originally planned distribution of FTS at sectors was uneven, with some sectors receiving more than their “fair share” while others received much less. This distribution is shown in the graph below. It is apparent that there were large departures from the ideal “stair step” distribution of FTS billets, with some large sectors getting only a single FTS billet, and one medium-size sector actually getting none. One district commander put it bluntly: this distribution was “unfair, inequitable, and unworkable.”

Early Planned Distribution of Direct Support FTS at Sectors

The RFRS implementation team has made it a strategic priority over the last year to rectify this situation. With the cooperation of a number of individual commands, the team was able to move eleven additional full time billets from representational support to direct support at sectors. With these additional billets, plus the movement of three existing billets between sectors, the implementation team proposed a plan to achieve the distribution shown in the included graph.

Updated Planned Distribution of Direct Support FTS at Sectors

One of the principal purposes for briefing Parker on this topic was to gain his concurrence to proceed with RFRS implementation, which involves working with his staff and commanders of the units affected to develop the detailed billet-by-billet moves required to make this plan a reality by the end of 2012. Parker gave his concurrence at the end of the briefing, contingent on validating the plan within the sectors to ensure that there were no special circumstances or other compelling reasons to depart from the stair-step formula. This will be done in the coming months.

The Office of Reserve Affairs plans to provide the same update on RFRS implementation to the Pacific Area Commander as well. Distributing the full time support billets, which are funded through the Reserve Training appropriation, to positions where they are most effective in supporting a ready and agile Reserve Force, enables our Area Commanders to meet their number one responsibility: Mission Execution.
Cmdr. Gerald A. Nauert (left) officially assumed command of PSU 309 from Cmdr. Karl S. Leonard during a change of command ceremony June 26, in Port Clinton, Ohio.

Photograph by Lt. Sean Brady

THE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20593-0001

To all Coast Guard Reserve Forces:

I am pleased to see our Coast Guard Reservists recognized in this special edition of Reservist Magazine. While the issue focuses on the exceptional work being done by our Reservists in support of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill response, I would also like to acknowledge the efforts and sacrifice of Reservists serving in the Middle East, Guantanamo Bay and in various “normal” operations here at home.

I offer my heartfelt thanks to all of the Coast Guard Reserve forces serving in the Deepwater Horizon oil spill response. I know that you left behind family, jobs, and other responsibilities to put on a uniform and serve your country. You have worked long and hard hours in command posts and in the field. Your service has set the tone for helping restore Gulf Coast communities and waters. You exemplify the best traditions of the citizen-Coast Guardsmen.

My service as Chief of Reserve and Training from 2002 to 2004 gave me the highest appreciation for the value of our Reserve force and what that group is capable of accomplishing. I can say without a doubt that the Coast Guard could not meet its mission without its Reserve personnel. Thank you and Semper Paratus.

Sincerely,

R. Papp, Jr.
Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard

---

Reserve CMC Darrell Odom, DOG RCMC (far left), represents the MCP COG, MCP CGRF and the Coast Guard at the WWII Memorial’s Memorial Day Wreath-laying Ceremony, May 31.

Photo by John Milkiewicz

Reserve Service Wide Exam TODAY!!
Reservist Participates in Police Unity Tour

Lt. Brian Godkin, a reservist out of Sector San Francisco SBP, and a North Las Vegas Police Department officer, recently rode in the 2010 Police Unity Tour. Godkin was joined by 1,100 other Law Enforcement officers during the four-day bike ride.

The tour began in 1997 when 18 riders bicycled from East Hanover, N.J. to the National Police Officer’s Memorial in Washington D.C. Their ride was aimed at raising awareness of those officers who made the ultimate sacrifice, and to raise funds for the national memorial and police museum.

This year BM 1 Edgar Culbertson was added to the national memorial wall. Culbertson was killed in the line of duty in 1967 attempting to save the lives of three young boys in Minnesota. He was also the 13th Coast Guard member added to date.

“It was an honor to ride in his memory and to meet his grown children upon arrival in D.C., said Godkin. “I personally raised approximately $3,400, and the overall donation the entire 1100 riders raised was approximately $1.1 million.”

Story by Lt. Brian Godkin

RFRS Brings Everything Together

During an intense, informative and challenging week at Sector Hampton Roads, the Reserve Force Readiness System (RFRS) staff, led by Lt. Diana Guyton, brought it all together for Reserve and active-duty Coast guard members. The target audience for this workshop was a mix of active-duty and reservists, ranging from E-4’s to O-5s, which convened in the USCG Finance Center in Chesapeake, Virginia.

April 19-23, marked a milestone for a staff whose mission was training Reserve leaders to have all the tools necessary to ensure that their reservists can be mobilized and demobilized whenever they are called upon. Thanks to months of preparation and the contributions of subject matter experts who spoke on various topics, everything came together. It was a forum for open dialogue and frank discussion, from the deck plate to the command level. All have a vested interest in the mission of the USCG as well as their careers.

The topics included but were not limited to: Mobilization Readiness Tracking Tool (MRRT); Coast Guard Business Intelligence (CGBI); Employer Support of the Guard & Reserve (ESGR); Mutual Assistance; Worklife; Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Reasonable, Time phased (SMART) strategic goals and planning; promotions/advancements; competencies; and HOMEPORT. The outlined agenda was presented on the first day, however, topics were discussed until they were resolved. Questioned were always highly encouraged.

During the wrap-up phase, the Sector Deputy Capt. Little spoke of a command cadre course he attended where Adm. Robert Papp spoke to affirm our direction and his expectations of each Guardian. Little’s address was both motivating and clear. Certifications were issued at the conclusion of the event by the Senior Reserve Officer (SRO), Cmndr. Elizabeth Becker, thus illustrating the importance of this workshop. Closing surveys by each attendee were required to capture what improvements can be implemented for future forums.

Story by Lt. j.g. Byron Dixon, USCGR, Sector Hampton Roads

YNCM Gail Owens presents a Coast Guard Achievement award to HSS Mark Rowley, at Sector Jacksonville in June. Owens was joined by Sector Jacksonville CMC BMCM James Pancari (left) and Lt. William Lozano.

Photo by Lt. Corey Taylor
Bulletin Board cont.

Meritorious Service Medal
Cmdr. Paul Smith

Coast Guard Commendation Medal
Lt. William Ioven
BMCS Brian Fleming

Coast Guard Achievement Medal
MKC Kevin King
DCC Kurt Wahtera

Army Achievement Medal
Lt. J.g. Michael Doria

Commandant’s Letter of Commendation
YNCM Gail Owens

Reserve Good Conduct Medal
ME2 Kevin L. Colletti

![Image of Medals]

![Image of Medal Recipients]

![Image of Medal Recipients with Certificate]

![Image of Medal Recipients]

![Image of Medal Recipients]

![Image of Medal Recipients]

![Image of Group Photo]
Inaugural C4IT REPOY Named

IT2 Jacob Frey of ESU Miami was recently selected as the first ever C4IT Service Center Reserve Enlisted Person of the Year (REPOY). Frey has proven to be an exceptional reservist, while serving in the ESU Miami reserve program. Far surpassing Ready Reserve drill requirements, Frey took the lead on numerous projects and volunteered for TAD solicitations. In one such example, as the lead for the Main Distribution Frame (MDF) room project at ESD Miami Beach, Frey removed, re-cabled, and reinstalled two full network racks containing four network switches, 14 patch panels and associated cabling and cable management hardware. He completed the bulk of this project after normal working hours over a two week period to minimize disruption to local users. His efforts not only resulted in increased network speed and efficiency, but also created valuable space for future network expansion.

In another example of assisting operational partners, Frey enthusiastically volunteered to fill a critical solicitation onboard USCGC Dependable (WMEC-626) as the independent duty IT. While underway, he made an immediate impact by repairing, maintaining, and providing 24/7 support to the problematic NERA INMARSAT “B” communications system, which had often plagued operations in the past. He also made much needed improvements to Dependable’s deteriorating quarterdeck telephone shore tie by replacing several failing components as well as installing CAT-5 interface boxes to both port and starboard sides of the ship. These improvements drastically improved the reliability and functionality of the quarterdeck telephone system.

— Story by MCPO Ron Christie, CMC, ESU Miami

RFRS Implementation Leader Retires

Capt. Frank Mullen holds a gift from his staff, (l to r) Lt. Cmdr. Luke McCown, Capt. Peg Blomme and SK2 Dana Kee, at his retirement ceremony July, 29. Capt. Mullen has been the leader of RFRS since its inception.
Parting Shots

Right: Petty Officer 1st Class Matt Fisher, leaning, and Petty Officer 1st Class James Huddleston, marine science technicians at Coast Guard Sector Houston-Galveston, inspect a potential tarball on Stewart Beach as beachgoers look on, July 11. State, local and federal officials have increased patrols along the Texas coast in response to reports of tarballs washing ashore.

Photo by PA2 Prentice Danner
Above: FA Talon Meyer and MK2 Christopher Hoffert perform a routine preventative maintenance test run and cleaning on a P-6 de-watering pump aboard the USCGC Dorado, homeported in Crescent City, Calif., July 8.

Below: An HH-65 Dolphin helicopter crew from Coast Guard Air Station Atlantic City carrying Capt. Paul Ratte, commanding officer of the air station, returns from Ratte’s last flight, July 14. Ratte served as the commanding officer since 2007 and is retiring in the area.

Photo by PA3 Crystalynn A. Kneen

The San Francisco skyline rises behind FN Eric Snyder as he performs maintenance on one of two 47-foot motor life boats assigned to Station Golden Gate, July 9. The unit utilizes both search and rescue platforms to respond to more than 500 emergency calls a year.

Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco
WORKING WHERE THEY ARE NEEDED

U. S. COAST GUARD RESERVE

www.gocoastguard.com