

Spring 2010 • uscgalaska.com

Alaska Bear

FINAL BROADCAST

PERSISTENCE OVER PERIL

ACROSS THE PACIFIC

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY REWARDED

SERVICE WITH A SMILE



USCG Iditarod

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Editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the staff of the 17th Coast Guard District external affairs office.

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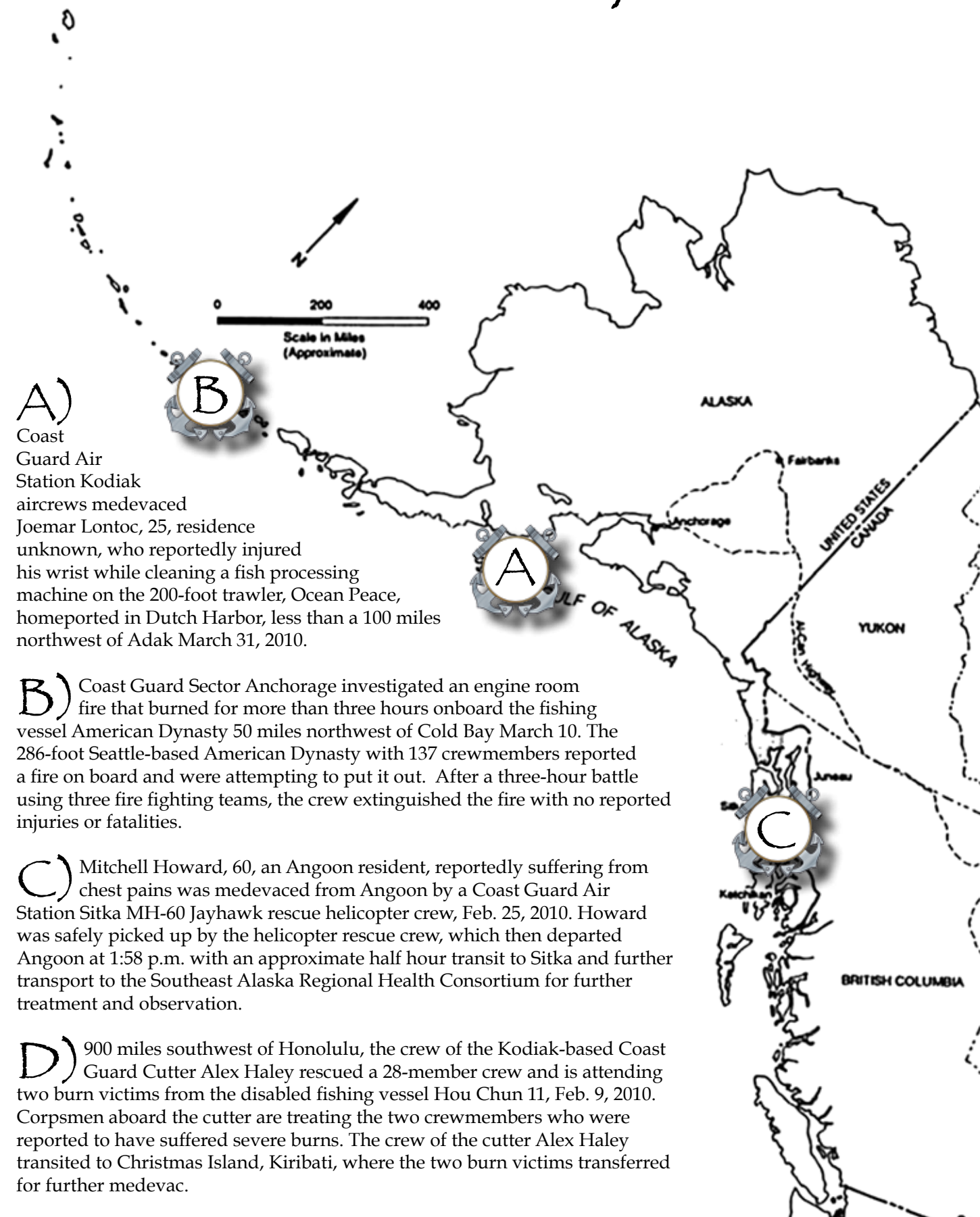
Is there an event you want covered for the Alaska Bear? Do you have an opinion to be heard? Does your unit have anything newsworthy to report? If so, we want to hear from you, call 907-463-2065.

Coast Guard external affairs
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On The Cover

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – Coast Guard sponsored Iditarod racerunner Ken Anderson departs on the first leg of the 38th edition of the Iditarod, March 6, 2010. The Coast Guard is sponsoring Anderson in his 10th running of the Iditarod, which is known as "The last great race on Earth." U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 1st Class David Mosley

Around the 17th District



A) Coast Guard Air Station Kodiak aircrews medevaced Joemar Lontoc, 25, residence unknown, who reportedly injured his wrist while cleaning a fish processing machine on the 200-foot trawler, Ocean Peace, homeported in Dutch Harbor, less than a 100 miles northwest of Adak March 31, 2010.

B) Coast Guard Sector Anchorage investigated an engine room fire that burned for more than three hours onboard the fishing vessel American Dynasty 50 miles northwest of Cold Bay March 10. The 286-foot Seattle-based American Dynasty with 137 crewmembers reported a fire on board and were attempting to put it out. After a three-hour battle using three fire fighting teams, the crew extinguished the fire with no reported injuries or fatalities.

C) Mitchell Howard, 60, an Angoon resident, reportedly suffering from chest pains was medevaced from Angoon by a Coast Guard Air Station Sitka MH-60 Jayhawk rescue helicopter crew, Feb. 25, 2010. Howard was safely picked up by the helicopter rescue crew, which then departed Angoon at 1:58 p.m. with an approximate half hour transit to Sitka and further transport to the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium for further treatment and observation.

D) 900 miles southwest of Honolulu, the crew of the Kodiak-based Coast Guard Cutter Alex Haley rescued a 28-member crew and is attending two burn victims from the disabled fishing vessel Hou Chun 11, Feb. 9, 2010. Corpsmen aboard the cutter are treating the two crewmembers who were reported to have suffered severe burns. The crew of the cutter Alex Haley transited to Christmas Island, Kiribati, where the two burn victims transferred for further medevac.



Arctic Meeting

BARROW, Alaska - Coast Guard Academy 1st Class Cadet Rachel Douglas discusses ongoing changes in the Arctic region and the Coast Guards role there with Richard Camilleri, North Slope Borough law office manager, during a working lunch meeting March 17, 2010. The Academy Cadets accompanied a scheduled Arctic Domain Awareness flight to Barrow as part of a week-long visit to Alaska to gather research for their advanced research project that they are conducting in conjunction with their Government major. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 1st Class David Mosley.



Polar North

KODIAK, Alaska - The Seattle-based Coast Guard Cutter Polar Sea anchors in Chiniak Bay immediately adjacent to Kodiak City March 3, 2010, before pulling into Kodiak. The 399-foot Polar Class Icebreaker conducted a two-month deployment as part of a six-year Bering Sea Ecosystem Study. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Jonathan Lally.



Coast Guard Mutual Assistance

How can I help CGMA's efforts?

*Contributions are always
welcome...your generous support
is greatly appreciated.*

Coast Guard Mutual Assistance accepts donations from individuals and organizations. Active Duty, Retired Military Members and Civilian Employees can conveniently spread contributions over time through an allotment or payroll deduction.

Contributions are tax deductible.
Donation forms are available online.

Send financial support to:

Coast Guard Mutual Assistance
US Coast Guard Mailstop 7180
1200 Wilson Blvd., Suite 610
Arlington, VA 20598-7180



Contact your CGMA Representative
for assistance or more information

www.CGMAHQ.org
1.800.881.2462

Looking After Our Own...
Since 1924



Coast Guard Mutual Assistance

provides essential financial aid to the entire Coast Guard family, chiefly through interest-free loans, grants, and financial counseling. As an independent non-profit organization, Coast Guard Mutual Assistance (CGMA) depends on the generosity of individual supporters to sustain its vital services to the men and women of the Coast Guard.

Then & Now

A Quick Sketch of CGMA History

1924

The League of Coast Guard Women is founded with a mission to "minister to the general welfare of the commissioned officers, warrant officers, enlisted men and civilian employees of the Coast Guard and their immediate families"

Admiral F. C. Billard is Commandant; Mrs. Billard becomes the first "Honorary President"

1941

As the U.S. enters World War II, Coast Guard Welfare is formally established and assumes the League's mission

1979

The organization's name changes to Coast Guard Mutual Assistance

1998

CGMA centralizes operations and is incorporated in the Commonwealth of Virginia

2005

CGMA distributes 3 million dollars in direct aid to families affected by Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma

2009

CGMA celebrates 85 years of service to the men and women of the Coast Guard

Today

CGMA delivers 5 million in direct financial assistance through loans and grants each year. In the spirit of promoting financial stability, CGMA also offers a variety of education and family support programs that boost morale and enhance Coast Guard readiness

With over 135 locations throughout the Coast Guard, CGMA ensures emergency assistance is readily available whenever needed



Who does CGMA help?

Dedicated to making assistance available to the entire Coast Guard family, CGMA is Coast Guard people helping Coast Guard people. Anyone associated with the U.S. Coast Guard is eligible to receive some form of help either for themselves or on behalf of their immediate family members.

Active Duty

Retired Military

Coast Guard Civilian Employees

Coast Guard Reserve (Selected Reserve)

Coast Guard Auxiliary

*Public Health Service Officers
serving with the Coast Guard*

Surviving Family Members

How does CGMA help?

Most assistance is provided through interest-free loans and personal grants. Education assistance supports members and dependents with the cost of books and loan origination fees as they pursue their academic goals. Additionally, by sponsoring confidential financial counseling and referral services, CGMA champions the financial health of its clients.



What assistance is available to me?

CGMA can help with such needs as:

Emergency travel

Temporary living expenses

Funeral expenses

Emergency home repair

Loss of funds or property

Disaster relief

Vehicle repair

Moving expenses

Housing rental/closing costs

Medical and dental expenses

Past due bills and expenses

Debt management

Layette

A Welcome Gift for Babies

CGMA sends a package of baby supplies to young CG families to help them welcome their newest member.

CGMA may not be used for:

Long-term or frequent assistance

Standard of living beyond one's means

Elective medical procedures

Gambling debts

Legal expenses

Paying personal income or property tax

Costs resulting from disciplinary or court action



What if my spouse needs emergency assistance while I'm deployed or underway?

When a spouse applies for assistance while you are away, the CGMA Representative will attempt to contact you for approval of the amount requested for assistance.

If your spouse has a power of attorney or a CGMA Pre-authorization Form (Form 16), assistance may be provided up to the limits specified in the power of attorney or pre-authorization. The form is available online.

If there is no power of attorney and you cannot be contacted, CGMA can provide a one-time emergency loan of up to \$200 to your spouse.

Where do CGMA funds come from?

You, your shipmates and co-workers. As a tax-exempt organization, CGMA is financed through the generosity of individual contributions and by the return on investments. This means that available assistance and programs are donor-sustained. CGMA does not receive any federal funds.

How do I get help?

Contact a CGMA Representative. To find your local representative:

Ask your Coast Guard supervisor
Visit www.cgmaHQ.org
Call 800.881.2462

Mythbuster: *You don't have to contribute to receive assistance.*

Time critical emergency assistance is also available through the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, Air Force Aid Society, Army Emergency Relief or the American Red Cross.



Coast Guard People Helping Coast Guard People

Since its inception in 1924, CGMA has provided over \$150 million in assistance.



Coast Guard aids those in need during tough times

Story Petty Officer 3rd Class Charly Hengen, PADET Kodiak and photo illustrations by Petty Officer 1st Class David Mosley, PADET Anchorage



I recently attended a memorial service for a Coast Guardsman. As I watched Coast Guardsmen enter into the base chapel, I could see looks of grief and emotion in their eyes. Not many words were spoken to each other. Only standing room was available. I knew then this service would be emotional.

Many members spoke at the service: some laughed, some cried. A song was even performed. This person obviously played an important role in these Coast Guardsmen lives. Yet this person wouldn't be there anymore to lend a helping hand, to assist in a project or to offer advice. Tears welled up as I imagined if my husband wasn't there to give me a hug when I came home from work or, if he wasn't there to

say good night to or if he wasn't there for our anniversary.

Those tears fell onto my cheeks as I thought of how I would be notified if his plane went down or how I would tell my children of their father's passing.

As difficult as it is to deal with those thoughts, it's comforting to know the Coast Guard has a plan in place if a spouse or a friend passes on at an unexpected time. The Coast Guard is here to care for the family, friends and the unit during the loss of a loved one.

Master Chief Petty Officer Lloyd Tuchman is the personnel casualty affairs officer at Base Support Unit Ketchikan. He has unfortunately dealt with numerous casualty and decedent

affairs cases and has the tools necessary to assist a unit and family members during such cases.

"I have created starter kits to assist a unit," said Tuchman. "It contains drafts for notification letters and casualty messages among other items to help. And I'm more than happy to train a unit."

Tuchman's starter kits and training will aid a Coast Guardsman to become a casualty affairs call officer. A CACO provides information to the family and unit with information about the cause of death as it becomes available. He will also do his best to answer any questions the family may have and ensure a family's immediate needs are being met during this difficult time. The CACO will

immediately arrange for any available Coast Guard assistance to help make funeral or memorial arrangements as well as help prepare and submit forms as needed.

During this difficult time, the CACO will continue to assist the family member until claims are filed and settled or until any issues regarding those benefits are resolved to the family's satisfaction.

When a casualty case does occur at a unit, protocol should be adhered to since the unit will be dealing with grieving family members.

"Protocol is prescribed per the personnel manual but roughly speaking, there are two things that need to happen before notification of next of kin occur," said Tuchman. "First, the

deceased or injured person must be identified and second, the casualty report must be sent.”

Even though each case is different, a checklist can be created to serve as a guideline during the casualty case. A thoughtful and commonsense approach is best as this will ensure a smooth notification and handling of affairs for the family. Alaska has three decedent affairs officers ready to assist a family in their time of need. Senior Chief Petty Officer John Zobrak with Personnel Services and Support unit Ketchikan handles Juneau casualty affairs cases and Chief Warrant Officer Murray McMahon with Personnel Services and Support unit Kodiak takes care of the Kodiak cases. Tuchman also works with the other Western Alaska Coast Guard units.

“Most CACO’s do not have a lot of experience,” said Zobrak. “I take care of the paperwork while the CACO takes care of the family. Typically if the casualty is a lieutenant, then we try to have the CACO be a lieutenant as well, if not of higher rank.”

“It has been my experience that regardless of who actually has the CACO task, the actual selection is going to depend on who can be released from all duties and responsibilities,” said McMahon. “It all depends on the case.”

Even though casualty and decedent affairs could be heavy on a person’s heart, it is good to know the Coast Guard has taken steps to be prepared when that time comes so the family has assistance when needed. Another step in preparation a family can take to ensure legal affairs are in order is to have estate planning or a will drawn up.

Alaska has three full-time Coast Guard attorneys in Juneau and one full-time legal assistant civilian attorney in Kodiak. These attorneys are available to prepare a will and other estate-planning documents for any Coast Guardsman as well as other military service members and retirees.

A civilian legal assistance attorney represents Kodiak units while the legal office in Juneau works with the Southeast Coast Guard units, such as Juneau, Sitka and Ketchikan, as well as units in Anchorage, Prince William Sound and the Kenai Peninsula.

Typically, the required paperwork is transmitted through e-mail and all a Coast Guardsman would need to do is fill out the documents and send them back to the appropriate legal office. A will can be executed in about a week. Once the documents are drawn up by an attorney, the member may bring in two witnesses of their own or the legal staff can serve as witnesses. The legal offices can also draw up a power of attorney as well as other end-of-life documents.

Even though the thought of losing a loved one can be emotionally stressful, the Coast Guard has plans in place and will offer assistance if needed. 🐾

Decedent Affairs Officers

- Juneau: Senior Chief Petty Officer John Zobrak,
(907) 463-2104
- Ketchikan: Master Chief Petty Officer Lloyd Tuchman,
(907) 228-0218
- Kodiak: Chief Warrant Officer Murray McMahon,
(907) 487-5170 ext. 353

Legal

- Juneau: 907-463-2051
- Kodiak: 907-487-5474



Across frozen Alaska

Coast Guard sponsors the Iditarod

Story and photos by Petty Officer 1st Class David Mosley, PADET Anchorage



Race Day

WILLOW, Alaska – Coast Guard sponsored Iditarod racer Ken Anderson departs on the race re-start point of the 38th edition of the Iditarod in Willow, March 7, 2010. The Coast Guard sponsored Anderson in his 10th running of the Iditarod, which is known as “The last great race on Earth.”

Late in the year of 1897, an urgent letter was dispatched to Capt. Francis Tuttle, commander of the Revenue Cutter Bear. Tuttle and his crew had just returned to Seattle following a long summer spent operating in Alaskan waters, when the letter was received informing Tuttle that eight whaling vessels and 265 crewmen were trapped in the ice of the Arctic Ocean near Point Barrow.

Tuttle along with an all volunteer crew turned the ship around as soon as it was resupplied and

headed for the ice bound north. Speed was a crucial factor; every day lost meant that the ice would be further south, adding days and miles to their efforts to reach the whalers.

When the cutter encountered heavy ice in the Bearing Sea, it was determined they could go no further north than the vicinity of Nome. It was here the desperate plan to use dogsleds on an overland rescue would be started, and it is here where the first ever Coast Guard sponsored musher, competing in the 2010 Iditarod, crossed

the finish line in 4th place.

The Iditarod, which follows another great historical story of delivering life saving diphtheria serum to Nome, challenges mushers and their teams against nature, against the wild and sometimes treacherous Alaska wilderness. The Iditarod race is a 1,049-mile race that extends from its ceremonial start in Anchorage across Western Alaska to the gold sands of Nome.

The 2010 Iditarod is the 38th running of the race, with 71 teams entering the field. The race places

men and women mushers on the same playing field, with 16 women running this year's race.

Teams have come from all over the world, from across the United States, Canada, Scotland, Belgium and even Jamaica, each braving the late winter Alaska weather and striving to cross beneath the burl arch finish line in Nome.

“This is the one event that galvanizes Alaskans,” said Stan Hooley, executive director, Iditarod Trail Committee, as he addressed a crowd at a pre-race meeting.



School Visit

EAGLE RIVER, Alaska – Coast Guard sponsored Iditarod musher Ken Anderson visit with the second grade girls from Fire Lake Elementary School, Eagle River, March 2, 2010. The school visit was part of a pre-race community outreach effort, bringing a real element to the children's participation in following the upcoming Iditarod race.

USCG Visit

VALDEZ, Alaska – Ken Anderson poses for a photo with crewmembers of Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Valdez, Jan. 13, 2010. The visit involved a full day of touring local Coast Guard units as part of his getting to know more about the Coast Guard who is helping sponsor his 2010 race.



Race Finish

NOME, Alaska - Rear Adm. Christopher Colvin, commander of the Seventh Coast Guard District, congratulates Coast Guard sponsored dog sled racer, Ken Anderson, at the finish line of the 38th Annual 2010 Iditarod race in Nome. Ken Anderson completed the race in 4th place finishing in nine days, six hours, 25 minutes and 23 seconds covering more than 1,049 miles through Alaska. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Lt. j.g. Kelly Hansen.



With the unifying strength of this race in mind, Cmdr. Darryl Verfaillie, commander of Marine Safety Unit Valdez, approached Coast Guard Recruiting Command about sponsoring a musher and his team in the race.

"The Coast Guard has a proud history here in Alaska," said Verfaillie. "In our early history here in Alaska, dog sleds were used to help perform pivotal rescues of trapped whaling ship crews. We are proud to pay respect to a rich Alaska Coast Guard history by participating in this great race."

Once having received the green light by Recruiting Command, Verfaillie approached the Education department of the Iditarod, asking

them for a recommendation of a musher to sponsor. The Education department helps school teachers use the race to teach and promote school studies to students across North America and around the world.

According to Iditarod.com, thousands and thousands of students, preschool – through university level complete Iditarod related school projects, practicing their skills in math, science, social studies, reading, writing, technology, and other curriculum areas.

Preschool teachers use the race to help develop beginning math and reading skills, university professors use the race to inspire students to use real time math data from real events to gain skills

in statistics class, and all curriculum areas in between, help students build basic skills through the Iditarod activities.

The education department responded to Verfaillie's request and suggested Ken Anderson, a nine-time veteran of the race.

"It is an honor for me to be able to team up with the Coast Guard and help support a great organization," said Anderson about his sponsorship.

Anderson, who owns Windy Creek Kennels just north of Fairbanks has finished the race as high as fourth and has had two top five finishes. The 2010 race will be his 10th time running the grueling marathon.

"It is exciting to be sponsored by the Coast Guard," said Anderson. "I think it is kind of a neat relationship, that we share some similarities. In the Iditarod (like in the Coast Guard), it doesn't matter the weather, it doesn't matter the conditions, when you are called out you go."

The Coast Guard has a long proud history of working in Alaska, and as the summer Arctic ice melts further and further north, the Coast Guard finds its self once more focused north.

"This is a great opportunity for the Coast Guard to partner with the Iditarod as the Coast Guard continues its outreach into the north," said Verfaillie. "What better way to get the word out than to join forces with the Iditarod."

Canada, U.S., stakeholders come together for Arctic response

Story by Petty Officer 1st Class Sara Francis, PADET Kodiak

News about the Arctic makes headlines nearly every week somewhere around the world. For the U.S. Coast Guard the emphasis is on protection of the environment and natural resources, national security, safety of life at sea, and ensuring the flow of commerce. The environmental protection mission brought together the Canadian and U.S. Coast Guards and other responders in Anchorage March 16 to 18 with a goal of fostering unity in the northern waters.

With more than 50 vessels being trapped by ice in the Baltic Sea recently and the 2007 sinking of the motor vessel Arctic Explorer in Antarctica have brought the need for coordinated joint response capabilities in the far reaches of the Arctic into sharp focus.

The U.S.-hosted exercise was held under the Joint U.S. Canada contingency plan for spills in contiguous waters between the two countries. This biennial exercise provides an opportunity for all responders to work together on local issues and improve communications and coordination for responses to pollution incidents in the shared waters of the Arctic Ocean and Beaufort Sea.

The overall objective of the exercise is to raise awareness of issues surrounding marine pollution in the Beaufort Sea to improve joint response operations between the United States, Canada and regional stakeholders.

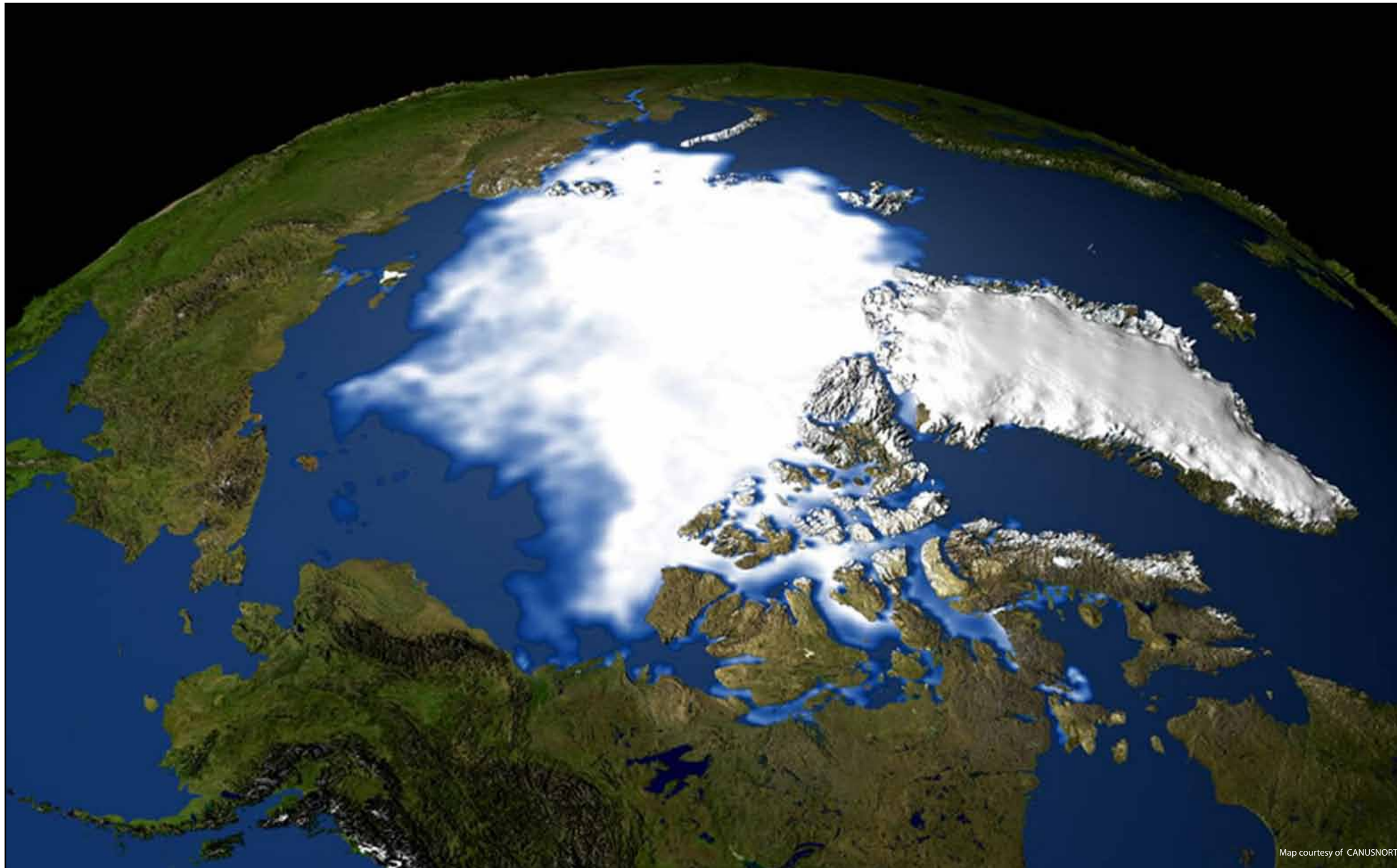
"The Canadian and U.S. Coast Guards have a long history of working closely together," said Rear Adm. Christopher Colvin, commander Seventeenth Coast Guard District. "Exercises such as these bring us even closer and help better prepare us should the unthinkable happen."

In this training environment an oil spill occurred as a natural occurrence following an earthquake.

The ability to respond in the Arctic, for rescue or pollution response, is not the Coast Guard's alone. Over 30 response organizations and regional stakeholders participated including the Environment Canada, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, State of Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Inuvialuit Regional Corp. and others.

Discussion topics included possible shoreline impacts, stakeholder response participation, volunteer management, cross border concerns and available recovery methods.

The Arctic environment is not always conducive to traditional recovery methods. Limited infrastructure and the time it may take for response equipment to reach a scene are also under discussion.



Map courtesy of CANUSNORTH



Final Broadcast

Coast Guard Loran

Story and photos by Petty Officer 1st Class David Mosley, PADET Anchorage

A one-man band is a musician who plays a number of musical instruments simultaneously using their hands, feet, limbs, and various mechanical contraptions to impart a total musical experience to an audience.

The Coast Guard's Long Range Radio Navigation or Loran could be described in a similar manner, but unlike a single man playing multiple instruments, Loran is much more like a symphony that has encompassed more than 30,000 musicians since 1942, all striving to play a perfect single note.

On Feb. 8, 2010, this symphony played its final show, where under the direction of the President of the United States, Loran, with little fanfare came to an end.

So what was Loran? Loran is a word that was coined by Coast Guard Lt. Cmdr. L.M. Harding in early 1942 from the letters of "LONG range RAdio Navigation."

Loran was originally developed to provide an accurate navigational tool for U.S. coastal waters and later covered the continental United States as well as most of Alaska. The system provided a better than .25 nautical mile absolute accuracy.

Loran has been a constant source of reliable navigation since its conception by the radiation laboratory of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1941. Specialists at MIT developed this new electronics technology as a method of navigation with a long effective range. Initial tests proved its reliability as far as 800 miles from a transmitting site during daytime tests and 1,400 miles at night.

The first demonstrated use of the new Loran technology took place on June 12, 1942, with an airship using the signal to navigate off shore from New Jersey and Delaware to Maryland. Subsequent tests conducted aboard the Coast Guard Cutter Manasquan off of Newfoundland during the summer of 1942 and aboard a B-24 Liberator on July 4, 1943, further proved the reliability and accuracy of the new navigation system.

Using the momentum from the initial successful tests, a September 1942 survey crew from the Army Air Force, the Coast Guard and MIT went to the Bering Sea and selected sites on St. Matthew, St. Paul and Umnak Islands as locations for Loran navigational signal locations. The Coast Guard was directed on Jan. 28, 1943, to

Out Cold

TOK, Alaska - The Long Range Aids to Navigation signal, which was broadcast from Coast Guard Loran Station Tok was secured at 11 a.m. Feb., 8, 2010. The securing of the signal in Tok was also accompanied with the shutdown of the signals from all other broadcast locations in Alaska, with the exception of stations Attu and Shoal Cove, which are bound by bi-lateral agreements with Russia and Canada.



establish these remote Alaska sites.

With the Jan. 28 directive, Loran was delivered to the remote regions of the Alaska frontier providing reliable navigation for Coast Guard and Naval ships in the region during and after World War II.

The development of the Loran stations in Alaska, started a domino effect across the Pacific, with new Loran sites being surveyed and constructed on the Hawaiian, Phoenix, Marshall and Micronesian Islands. The signal was eventually pushed into Guam, Saipan,

Philippines, Japan and the China Sea, covering most of the Pacific Ocean.

During the World War II rush to implement Loran across the Pacific, Loran was extended from the Bering Sea, almost on the Arctic Circle to points south of the Equator close to Australia. Few locations directly benefited from the new technology as the remote areas of Alaska, and when the 1950's saw the introduction of commercial fishing to the waters of Alaska, Loran was there.

"Loran provided reliable navigation information

critical for fishermen to drop and relocate their fishing gear throughout the Bering Sea and the Gulf of Alaska," said Rear Adm. Christopher Colvin, 17th Coast Guard District Commander at a ceremony ending the Loran signal at the Tok, Alaska Loran Station. "Today more fish are caught in the Gulf of Alaska than in all of New England; and more fish is caught in all of Alaska than in all of the other states combined. This fishery was built on Loran."

Since the World War II Loran rush, the signal and technology has been increased and refined

in its reliability and accuracy. The advances in technology spurred the reduction of broadcast stations from those scattered across the Pacific to eventually just 24 U.S. stations being manned and operated in partnership with Canada and Russia.

Loran has as a result of further technological advancements in the last 20-years become an antiquated system. With the introduction of Global Positioning Satellite System or GPS, Loran is no longer required by the armed forces, or the transportation sector and has been relied upon less and less.

Following certifications by the Coast Guard and by the department of Homeland Security that Loran is not required for maritime navigation or as a back up to the Global Positioning System, Loran operations ceased on Feb. 8, 2010 in U.S. waters.

So like a symphony player lovingly putting away their instrument after a performance, Loran station crews across the Coast Guard are packing away the equipment that has reliably and continually played for over 67-years.

"This is the best job in the Coast Guard," said Senior Chief Petty Officer James Maciejewski, Officer in Charge of Coast Guard Loran Station Tok, at the station's signal termination ceremony. "This is a sad day, I am going to miss this place, the people of Tok, my crew and most of all the job."

"The history of Loran is the history of Guardians serving in some of the most remote locations and harshest environments on the Earth," said Adm. Thad Allen, Coast Guard commandant in his official blog, iCommandant. "We will always recognize those who have served at Loran Stations with admiration and gratitude." 🐾

Switching Off

TOK, Alaska – The junior member of Coast Guard Loran Station Tok, Petty Officer 3rd Class Armon Wilson, an electronics technician and Mobile, Ala., resident, secures the Long Range Aids to Navigation signal at 11 a.m. Monday. The securing of the signal in Tok was also accompanied with the shutdown of the signals from all other broadcast locations in Alaska, with the exception of stations Attu and Shoal Cove, which are bound by bi-lateral agreements with Russia and Canada.



Persistence over peril

Story by Petty Officer 3rd Class Jon-Paul Rios, DI7

Imagine being stranded while snow pours over your face and glacier fog settles around you blanketing everything for miles. Now sense the comfort that quickly disappears as you listen to the blades of rescue helicopters viciously chopping through fog and slowly the roaring blades become a diminishing whimper until once again you're surrounded with silence.

Kyle Dungan, a 28-year-old experienced hiker from Skagway, Alaska, lived this.

The Coast Guard received a call March 8, 2010, from the Alaska State Troopers requesting interagency assistance. The Coast Guard was briefed that Dungan was dropped off Feb. 20 by plane to begin a two-week hike on Meade Glacier in Tongass National Forrest east of Haines but when the plane returned to pick him up March 7, he was not at the extraction point.

The plane ended up finding Dungan seven miles from the extraction point and though unable to land because of heavy snowfall, the plane was able to drop a radio to his location.

After unsuccessful rescue attempts by Alaska Heli-Ski, Coast Guard Air Station Sitka was

notified to launch an MH-60 Jayhawk rescue helicopter crew to commence searching the next day.

The Jayhawk transited as far as weather permitted tearing through the fog while snow showers boasting winds approximately 50 mph. battered the helicopters bright orange frame.

The glacier fog further impaired the search efforts, not allowing the pilot and crew to get but within seven miles of Dungan's last known location, forcing the crew to head to Juneau where they refueled and strategized at the Army National Guard hangar.

"The Army National Guard personnel made our crew feel welcome, providing us

with briefing spaces, hangar space, tools and computer access," said Lt. Rick Hipes, pilot of Jayhawk. "They also stayed late every night to support our crew and mission."

For the next two days the Coast Guard coordinated with the Army National Guard and Juneau Mountain rescue devising a plan to rescue Dungan but each time the Coast Guard went up to rescue Dungan weather would disrupt all efforts.

On March 11, the Jayhawk crew and Army National Guard Blackhawk crew took to the skies once again in an effort to reach Dungan both taking different routes to gauge which was the best way of transit. The Coast Guard wasn't able to get very far because of the extremely dense fog however, the Army National Guard got to within two miles of Dungan. Both helicopters unable to get to Dungan's location thought it best to head back to Juneau and wait for the weather to clear.

Later that afternoon, the Jayhawk and Blackhawk crews took off again with Juneau Mountain Rescue teams onboard, this time both traveling the same route the Blackhawk had taken earlier that morning. Amazingly, there were fairly clear skies and for the first time since

beginning the search, they were able to see the snow on the ground. Both helicopter crews surveyed the area until the Jayhawk came across what looked to be a tent.

After maneuvering closer to the object, they were able to confirm that indeed that was a tent buried in the snow at an elevation of approximately 4,300 feet on the glacier.

The Jayhawk, unable to land, dropped die markers to distinguish the location and asked the Blackhawk that was equipped with skis to land by the markers.


The Blackhawk landed by the markers and Juneau Mountain Rescue team got off the helicopter and fell waist deep in snow. The Juneau Mountain Rescue team, like watching ants climb up a white wall, formed a line and plowed through the snow to Dungan's location.

The rescue team was able to safely bring Dungan back to the helicopter and though starving he was remarkably in good condition given he hadn't eaten in nearly a week.

"We had a window of opportunity in the weather pattern and everybody jumped on it to ensure that we got him out of there, however, if we would have hesitated we would have missed the window of opportunity and this rescue could have easily become a critical incident," said Chief Warrant Officer Nate Maplesden, Alaska Army National Guard pilot. "Crew coordination expanded beyond the cockpits as both Coast Guard and Army helicopters worked fluidly to ensure a safe and successful mission."

According to the rescue crews, Dungan utilizing his hiking expertise was able to wait patiently in his tent conserving water and heat.

"Overall we conducted six searches lasting over 13 hours in a three-day period and the Army National Guard conducted two searches for just over four hours," said Hipes.

The extraordinary efforts and persistence of the Coast Guard, Army National Guard and Juneau Mountain Rescue once again proved victorious over the perils in the Alaska wilderness. 

Across the Pacific

Kodiak-based aircrew conducts radio drop
1,250 miles south of Kodiak

Story by Petty Officer 3rd Class Johnathan Lally, PADET Kodiak

KODIAK, Alaska

Sailing Vessel California

MIDWAY Island

Coast Guard crews routinely cross geographical boundaries to aid sister units and ultimately mariners. A Kodiak-based aircrew recently flew more than 2,500 miles and left the boundaries of Alaska and 17th Coast Guard District to assist their sister unit the 14th Coast Guard District in Hawaii with a request for assistance from a sailboat crew 800 miles northeast of Midway Island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

The Clipper Round-the-World Yacht Race is the only sailing challenge open to all nationalities and professions from ages 18 to 62. The racers departed the United Kingdom in September stopping in ports like La Rochelle, France, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Cape Town, South Africa, and other ports around the world. They are scheduled to return to the U.K. in mid-July ending the race.

The 68-foot British-flagged sailing vessel California and its 19 person crew were in the lead of the race when they ran into foul weather March 21. As they were sailing from Qingdao, China, to San Francisco they were pummeled by strong winds gusting up to 92 mph and wild seas. The vessel sustained heavy damage to the mast after a 120 degree roll and the communication systems were taken out from an ingress of seawater. When the vessel rolled the crew was tossed around below decks and one crew member received a severe head injury.



The vessel's emergency position indicating radio beacon was activated and picked up by the Falmouth coast guard in the U.K.

"They alerted our race office," said Ian Dickens, marketing director of Clipper Ventures. "And when we could not raise the boat through the four different communication routes at our disposal, the incident was handed over to the U.S. Coast Guard."

The 14th Coast Guard District in Hawaii received the initial notification of distress from the race office. The district in Hawaii had no aircraft available to conduct the search and requested assistance from Alaska-based resources. A 17th Coast Guard District Kodiak-based HC-130 Hercules aircraft and crew were launched to respond.

The California was 1,250 miles south of Kodiak when the aircrew departed Kodiak which took them five hours to reach the search area. They battled significant high winds and had to locate the 68-foot sailing vessel in raging 20-foot seas.

Once the aircrew spotted the vessel they prepared to drop a canister which included a radio and a first-aid kit to the crew of the sailing vessel to help establish communications and verify the condition of the crewman who suffered severe lacerations to his head.

"This was a difficult drop in high winds," said Lt. Cmdr. Michael Woodrum, Hercules aircraft commander. "We had to drop the pump [canister] precisely because the sailing vessel could not

maneuver much in high seas. The timing was critical and got pretty lucky because the drop was within 40 feet of the stern. The crew recovered it within a minute."

The aircrew also established communications with the other sailing vessels in the race to give an updated position of the California. The crew of the Nord Nightingale, a Danish-registered merchant ship en route from Yokohama, Japan, to Los Angeles was contacted by the aircrew requesting their assistance for the transfer of the injured man to get him to more advanced medical care as quickly as possible.

"There was a lot of pressure to get the drop right," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Kevin Fox, an aviation maintenance technician and dropmaster from Air Station Kodiak. "The pilots did the calculations and told us when to do the drop. To get as close as we did on the first try was really good. We train for this all the time and it really paid off."

After locating and establishing communications with the California, the aircrew was diverted to Midway Island to refuel. It was a long journey for the crew traveling about five hours from Kodiak to the search area and then on scene for approximately 30 minutes to an hour. After completing the search and the drop it took them about another four hours flight time to land in Midway Atoll. Normally the flight from Kodiak to Midway Atoll would take about seven hours which is about equal to a flight from Los Angeles

California Clipper

The Clipper California and its crew participate in the 2009-2010 Clipper Round-the-world race March 21, 2010. The California crew ran into some foul weather during the race from Qingdao, China to Santa Cruz, Calif. Photo courtesy of clipperroundtheworld.com/california/

to New York.

The aircrew spent a day on Midway Island for required rest due to their long mission. Midway Atoll is a National Wildlife Refuge and memorial. It is well known for the vast numbers of seabirds that call the island home and for the

famous World War II Battle of Midway. While on the island the crew conducted a thorough inspection of the aircraft to ensure no damage was sustained from birds during the landing

and enjoyed the sun. For the safety of the crew and the aircraft, the Hercules aircrew did not launch from Midway Island to head back home until the evening of March 22 when the birds were less abundant and the risk of a bird strike was reduced.

Thanks to the Kodiak-based aircrew, the 14th District controllers were able to answer the sailboat's call for help in a timely manner and coordinate with the other vessels in the area to assist the crew of the California and escort them the rest of the way to their namesake. Air Station Kodiak aviators go to great lengths to get the job done. 🐾

Radio Drop

A Kodiak-based HC-130 Hercules aircraft crew conducts a radio drop to the crew of the sailing vessel California March 21, 2010. The crew was more than 1,250 miles south of Kodiak to assist the crew of the sailing vessel California in distress in 50 mph winds and 20 foot seas during an around the world race. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Jonathan Lally.



Story by Petty Officer 1st Class Sara Francis and photos by Petty Officer 3rd Class Charly Hengen, PADET Kodiak

Fiscal responsibility rewarded on the Last Frontier

It seems lately a great deal of focus has been put on the Coast Guard and the budget necessary to conduct its missions. Three Alaska-based Coast Guardsmen have worked hard to prove the Coast Guard is a safe bet for funding and will be formally recognized later this year for their efforts in fiscal year 2009.

The Coast Guard announced March 2 the 2009 Coast Guard Chief Financial Officer Awards for Excellence recognizing a Coast Guard Air Station Kodiak storekeeper, a Coast Guard Air Station Sitka chief warrant officer and Base Support Unit Kodiak civilian employee.

For the enlisted personnel category, Coast Guard Petty Officer 1st Class Brooke Hall, storekeeper and resident of Sacramento, Calif., maintained a warehouse at Air Station Kodiak of more than 7,000 parts valued at over \$35 million. Hall's efforts consistently earned the unit audit scores of over 98 percent. As the lead procurement agent, Hall meticulously managed 21 service maintenance agreements worth more than \$155,000 and enabled the unit to close out the fiscal year with a 99.998 percent spend down rate on a \$12.5 million budget. Her efforts helped keep the aircraft mission capable and allowed maintenance to be done on time.

For the chief warrant officer category, Coast Guard Chief Warrant Officer Jackie Corbett, with Air Station Sitka, demonstrated financial stewardship and managerial skill in the execution of a \$2.8 million budget with a spend down rate of 99.9 percent of the budget allocation. Corbett

secured and executed \$455,000 in combined fall-out funds to support critical unit needs and initiatives. These funds see to it that Southeast Alaska has Coast Guard aviation support in the form of three MH-60 helicopters and multiple aircrews.

For the civilian employee up to GS-8 category, Nicole Chance, with Base Support Unit Kodiak and resident of West Corvina, Calif., mastered

The awards for excellence recognize those personnel who have made outstanding contributions in the field of financial management...

the duties of a budget technician and developed innovative solutions to financial, administrative and fiscal management issues. In support of modernization, Chance was directly responsible for preparing 33 program accounts with 59 project accounts for transformation of the unit ahead of schedule. The base has more than 10 tenant commands and hosts many visiting cutters each year.

The awards are scheduled to be presented during Coast Guard Service Day at the American Society of Military Comptroller Professional Development Institute Conference in Nashville, Tenn., June 2.

Other Alaska-based Coast Guardsmen nominated were Cmdr. Samuel Jordan, Lt. Amanda Henderson, Chief Warrant Officer Mark Moore, Petty Officer 1st Class Sean Hoffert and



Women of Excellence

Coast Guard Petty Officer 1st Class Brooke Hall, a storekeeper with Air Station Kodiak, Nicole Chance, a civilian GS-8 employee with Base Support Unit Kodiak and Chief Warrant Officer Jackie Corbett, with Air Station Sitka, were announced as winners of the 2009 Coast Guard Chief Financial Officers Awards for Excellence.

Mr. John Kimmel all with Base Support Unit Kodiak.

The awards for excellence recognize those personnel who have made outstanding contributions in the field of financial management and comptrollership while creating a culture of internal controls and demonstrating excellent stewardship in support of Coast Guard operations.

These individuals are key in any organization. They may work behind a desk, but they have made significant contributions to the Coast Guard that keep the wheels turning providing for rescues of injured mariners and outdoorsmen, patrols of our coastline, protection of our natural resources and training of our crews so that they can remain highly skilled and ready to serve the people of the Last Frontier. 🐾

Alaska's Volunteer Family of the Year!

Stepping off the futuristic-styled monorail at the Magic Kingdom and walking down the stairs entering through the gate only to look up at a majestic castle that seemingly touches the clouds is a magical feeling that captures the endless imagination of children and adults.

Walking in a dream-like theme park recently became a reality to a Juneau Coast Guardsman whose family was selected by the HandsOn Network as Alaska's Volunteer Family of the Year.

Chief Warrant Officer Mark Baker and his family of five were visiting Disneyland in California while on vacation in February when they learned they'd been selected for a three-day trip to Disney World in recognition for two years of dedicated family volunteer service.

The award came as a surprise to the Bakers. While they were strolling through Disneyland, Baker's wife Suzanne, received a text message and voicemail stating from the Association for the Education of Young Children they were selected as volunteer family of the year. In partnership with the HandsOn Network, Disney was providing an all-expense paid trip to Disney World.

"It was very humbling for us as it's not about the recognition, we all felt honored by the selection," said Mark. "We've never received an award of this level before."

"The Bakers have contributed nearly 500 hours toward improving the literacy and love of reading in the 1,200 young children enrolled in Southeast Alaska," said Joy Lyon, executive director of the Association for the Education of Young Children, Southeast Alaska. "Thanks to them, more than 21,000 books have been delivered to young children. When you think about how much 21,000 books is and that these guys enrolled all of those, it's amazing."

Suzanne was the only one to have been to Disney World before. For the rest of the Baker family it was their first time.

They enjoyed the different theme parks and the celebration that Disney put on for them and other volunteer families who were also selected.

All of the families that were there put together care packages for the Haitian earthquake victims and also planted trees.

"My kids especially liked planting the trees, as they did so alongside Disney stars from some of their favorite TV shows," said Mark.

Volunteering has always been a mainstay of the Baker family.

Suzanne, a stay-at-home mom, said she simply wanted to supplement her children's home-school curriculum with a community service project, but didn't expect their efforts would land them a trip to Disney World.

"I just wanted the kids, especially the older ones, to get involved in volunteering," she said.

Suzanne has been volunteering since high school and helped to make it a family tradition by including the Baker's two oldest children, Rush, 13, and Sierra, 12, on visits to nursing homes when they were just a few years old.

"My wife and I home school our kids and we've implemented community service and volunteerism as part of the curriculum," said Mark. "We're trying to instill a sense of service and giving of self in our kids and to teach them about contributing to the betterment of our community."

Suzanne takes the children to the AEYC office once a week during the school year while Mark is at work. Rush and Sierra, now in their third year of volunteering, enroll new children in the library database, change addresses when children move, and mail out additional materials and invitations to family literacy events. Montana, 7, and Keyrin, 5, the youngest of the Baker children, contribute their personal artwork to the envelopes.

All of the Baker children agreed that is the most enjoyable part.

"It's really fun to make the different patterns on the envelopes," Sierra said. "I've learned that it's

nice to help others. It feels good, feels exciting."

Mark, who as of April 2, will have 20 years in the Coast Guard, is presently on detached duty from Coast Guard Headquarters as the Nationwide Automatic Identification System Project Liaison. He doesn't have any specific memories of volunteering that stand out but the feelings of personal satisfaction that come from volunteering stay with him.

"You could say that my sense of service comes from my father, a 24-year veteran of the Air Force. That desire to serve extends to volunteering," said Mark, who has been giving freely of his time in different ways for most of his adult life, mainly through Knights of Columbus, the Coast Guard Chief Warrant Officers Association and Partnership in Education.

"It's rewarding to be part of serving something

larger than myself and I enjoy the camaraderie of working with others of the same mind," said Mark.

Mark has been stationed with 10 units during his time in the Coast Guard, ranging from Long Range Navigation Station Baudette in Minnesota to the Coast Guard Cutter Fir in Seattle. 🐾

Volunteering Family

The Baker Family standing in front of a Guinness record-setting sculpture made of 115,527 canned goods, which spell out the words "Celebrate Volunteers." The "reveal" was led by Ty Pennington of Extreme Makeover: Home Edition. These are the aforementioned canned goods which the families later packaged up for local food shelters. Photo courtesy from Baker Family



Story by Petty Officer 3rd Class Jon-Paul Ríos, D17

Raising *green* with Green *Saving Haiti one step at a time*

A catastrophic 7.0 magnitude earthquake centered 16 miles from Port-au-Prince, Haiti, struck the overpopulated capital at 4:53 p.m. local time Jan. 12, 2010 resulting in families, friends even strangers across the globe gathering around television sets, computers and radios listening attentively as the broadcasters stated what devastation was impacting Haiti.

One of those in front of the television affected by the gruesome images of pain, death and disaster was Petty Officer 1st Class Herman Green, an electricians mate stationed at Aids to Navigation Team Sitka.

"I was at home watching the footage on

earthquake relief efforts and talking to my friend over the phone who was also watching it," said Green. "That's when I decided I had to do something I just didn't know what."

One thing Green knew is that whatever he did, he wanted it to be a city effort. Green who has been a sprint and hurdles coach as well as an assistant coach for the cross-country team for two seasons at Sitka High School decided to translate his passion for running into a fundraiser.

Upon coming up with the idea of hosting the Coast Guard sponsored Sitka Helping Haiti Run and Walk, Green needed approval from Capt. David Walker, commanding officer of Coast

Guard Air Station Sitka.

"I explained to the Capt. Walker that my plan was to collect clothes, food and monetary donations, however, after talking with him and understanding the issues that came up after Hurricane Katrina with clothes and food donations, I decided in order to avoid the burden of goods having to be distributed by someone else it was best to just receive monetary donations," said Green.

Green then contacted the Red Cross and all media outlets in Sitka to get the word out. He printed roughly 30 flyers and posted them at every school, grocery store and place that had a

bulletin board.

"My goal was to have more people there for the fundraiser than any other event that I've seen the city have," said Green. "I felt that it was important to have the city come together because things could have easily been the other way around if we needed help."

Jan. 23, 2010 members of the community in Sitka started showing up shoes tightly laced and overflowing with charity. Normally before running stretching is a good idea. However, to spice things up Green had a different idea in mind, notably getting the approximate 300 in attendance including the city mayor to perform the hokie pokie. After the non-traditional stretching, the runners began their three-mile run and the walkers started their two-mile walk.

Runners and walkers had the choice of bringing their donations to the Coast Guard base or mailing the donations.

A couple days after the last drop of sweat dried on the final runners face and the last dollar bill was counted, Green had the privilege of giving the Red Cross a check for \$7,202.40 raised during the fundraiser to be used toward Haiti relief efforts.

"I generally wouldn't have stepped up to a project this big but hearing so many people talk about how terrible it was and that they wish it was something they could do, I stepped up to the plate," said Green. "If everyone just settled for the helpless feeling nothing would get done."

The Earthquake in Haiti has proven to be one of the most devastating natural disasters in not only recent years but also the last century with the death toll well over 250,000 people. Taking more victims than the 2004 Sumatran Tsunami and claiming 135 times more lives than Hurricane Katrina, fundraisers like the one hosted by Green is what keeps the people of Haiti going and inspires future people to "step to the plate."



Photo courtesy of James Poulson, Sitka Sentinel



Service with a smile

Serving up great food and service

Story and photos by Petty Officer 3rd Class Charly Hengen, PADET Kodiak

The smell of hamburgers, French fries and pizza lingers in the air outside the Pizza Parlor at Coast Guard base Kodiak. A long line of hungry people extends outside its front door.

The Pizza Parlor, officially the Food Activities Center and part of Kodiak's Morale, Welfare and Recreation Division, hosts a variety of food choices to fend off evil-hunger pains attacking your stomach, such as cheeseburgers, chicken tenders, chili-cheese fries, pizza, 6-inch sandwiches, ice cream and coffee.

"If I'm ever away from here for a long time, people are excited when I come back," said Carolina Cruz, an employee at the Pizza Parlor.

"They always say I make the best lattes and mochas."

Not only does the coffee and food bring hungry Coast Guardsmen and civilians into the Pizza Parlor, but customer service is why people keep returning. With more than 52 combined years of dedication to the Pizza Parlor, the employees keep the food hot, the sandwiches made to order and the coffee brewed.

Of those 52 years, Asuncion Miranda, a line cook, has been with the Pizza Parlor for 18 years and has seen many changes over time.

"I started out as a prep-cook in 1993 when this was a bar and we served alcohol" said Miranda. "It was known as the King's Inn

Food Friendly

Cosme Nido, a civilian employee at the Pizza Parlor, calls out orders to waiting customers at the Pizza Parlor on Coast Guard base Kodiak March 9, 2010. Nido has worked for the Pizza Parlor for eight years and has lived in Kodiak for 21 years.



Coffee?

Carolina Cruz, a civilian employee at the Pizza Parlor, pours coffee beans into a coffee grinder at the Pizza Parlor on Coast Guard base Kodiak March 9, 2010. Cruz has worked at the Pizza Parlor for four years.

Room for Dining

Coast Guardsmen and civilians enjoy their meal at the Pizza Parlor on Coast Guard base Kodiak March 9, 2010. The Pizza Parlor serves a variety of food to include cheeseburgers, chili cheese fries, chicken tender, sandwiches, ice cream and coffee.



Order Up

Clinton Rosales, a civilian employee at the Pizza Parlor, hands a Coast Guardsman his freshly-made 6-inch sandwich at the Pizza Parlor on Coast Guard base Kodiak March 9, 2010. Rosales has worked for the Pizza Parlor for 13 years and enjoys serving the customers on a daily basis.

Coming Together

Carolina Cruz, left, Cosme Nido, Asuncion Miranda and Chief Petty Officer George Holloway pose in the Pizza Parlor March 31, 2010. With over 52 years of combined service at the Pizza Parlor, friendly service and its convenient location continue to keep the Pizza Parlor a popular place for Coast Guardsmen and civilians to grab a bite to eat.



back then. I've been through 12 chiefs, two renovations and have seen many people come and go."

The serving of alcohol was moved from the King's Inn to the Golden Anchor about 1995 and the first renovation of the Pizza Parlor took place in 1998. The second renovation came after the building was condemned due to asbestos in 2008. During these renovations, the Pizza Parlor was temporarily relocated into the base bowling alley. Even though these renovations saw the Pizza Parlor move from location to location, one thing has remained the same...the customer service.

"Customer service is always friendly," said Petty Officer 1st Class Bryan Stewart, Air Station Kodiak aviation maintenance technician. "They remember my order and the girls at the register are nice and always positive even during the lunch rush."

A bonus to the Pizza Parlor is its proximity on Coast Guard base Kodiak. Many Coast Guardsmen and civilians can be seen enjoying the special for the day or munching on a juicy cheeseburger.

"I go to the pizza parlor for convenience," said Stewart. "Aside from that, the food and service is good. The prices are fair and it's one

of only two places in town to buy a reasonably priced pizza."

The Pizza Parlor has offered a food special for about two years. Wednesday's special is reserved for pizza. Thursday's special rotates every week and the Friday special is fish and chips.

"It is a great place for the young Coast Guardsmen to get away from the daily stressors for an evening," said Chief Petty Officer Troy Somerlott, food service specialist and Pizza Parlor night shift manager. "Families and groups can rent out the upstairs for birthday parties or special occasions."


Sporting three high-definition televisions and with the Pizza Parlor being attached to the barracks, Coast Guardsmen can watch a variety of sporting events or television shows.

"I like the fact that you can get coffee and a bagel for breakfast if you want," said Stewart. "It's not something you would really expect from a pizza parlor!"

So if you are in the mood for a quick bite to eat and are on the Coast Guard base in Kodiak, the Pizza Parlor can serve you a variety of food choices to suit your hunger. This Kodiak food-joint will not only serve you up some food, but also provide you service with a smile. 🐻

Alaska Bear: The name behind the story

Story by Petty Officer 3rd Class Jon-Paul Ríos and Petty Officer 3rd Class Walter Shinn, D17

ften times people, places and things need a new start, a new beginning which allows them to commence on a fresh slate. Whether it's someone who cuts off their hair to stay in tune with the times or a restaurant that changes its name upon new ownership, change is not always a bad thing. The same goes for the Coast Guard Seventeenth District quarterly publication formerly known as "Thunderbird" that during the summer of 1974 changed its name to "Alaska Bear".

This Coast Guard publication specific to Alaska

was titled "Thunderbird", named after the seventeenth district image as the Thunderbird district and was established in 1968, to known record, as a medium for writers and photographers to provide information to military personnel in communities of Alaska and beyond.

In 1972, the Seventeenth Districts emblem became a rampant, white bear. The public affairs office decided it was time to change the name of the "Thunderbird" further encouraging people to present their thoughts by offering a \$25 savings bond to come up with a new name to match the new image.

The public affairs office was bombarded with ideas and names from military members across Alaska including Exhibit 17, Underway, Northern Light, The Bear and Ursa Major.

Ironically, the person who submitted the name chosen as the final decision not only wasn't a Coast Guardsman but he didn't even live in the same state let alone country.

Across the far stretched deep blue Pacific Ocean was Tech Sgt. Don Dimpsey who was stationed in Berlin, Germany, and received the publication via some unknown bootleg channel.


514 In Dimpsey's submission he stated this publication was the best he has seen from any

unit in his 16 years of service.

Dimpsey went on further to explain the name "Alaska Bear".

"The 'Alaska' is symbolic of your area of responsibility, the only Coast Guard district to encompass an area of such great size yet to be within on state, whose flag is found on your state emblem," said Dimpsey. "'Bear' not only for the bear on the emblem but for the U.S. Revenue Cutter Bear, which according to my research has served the interests of Alaska longer than any other vessel in the Revenue or Coast Guard service."

As the "Alaska Bear" continued to change overtime so has its form. Shifting from magazine to a newspaper style layout and finally ending up as is today an online publication accessible by anyone with internet connectivity throughout the world.

Though the appearance of the "Alaska Bear" has changed, the substance still remains the same after so many years. It continues to serve as a valid source of information and positive messenger spreading the latest Coast Guard happenings for the world to see. 

Alaska Bear

REPORTING ON THE LAST FRONTIER

Retired Banner

Retired Alaska Bear Banner that was retired in early 2009 when the publication modernized to its current design.

TRICARE Services Available for Special Needs Families

Story by Shari Lopatin TriWest Healthcare Alliance

TRICARE beneficiaries who have family members with special needs now have access to unique services within the TRICARE program.

The most important service is the TRICARE Extended Care Health Option, or ECHO. To be eligible for ECHO, a family must first enroll into its service branch's Exceptional Family Member Program. Each service branch has a point of contact to help families enroll.

After enrolling, the family needs a referral to register for ECHO. Families that live in

TRICARE's West Region may call the TriWest ECHO information and referral line at 1-866-212-0442.

Once registered, each beneficiary will be assigned an ECHO nurse who helps manage their

care and answer questions about claims and the benefit. Families may also ask their ECHO nurse about any co-pays or cost shares that may apply. Additional cost information is available at www.tricare.mil/costs.

The other service is TRICARE's Autism Services Demonstration, an enhanced benefit under the ECHO program. Through this service, autistic family members meeting certain criteria can access Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services from participating providers. According to the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, ABA may help reduce problem behaviors associated with autism and teach vital new skills.

Children eligible for the Autism Services Demonstration must have a diagnosis that falls along the autism spectrum. In addition, they must have an active duty sponsor, be living in the United States, be 18 months or older and be enrolled in the ECHO program through their TRICARE regional contractor. For the West Region, that contractor is TriWest Healthcare Alliance.

For more information on the ECHO program and the Autism Services Demonstration, visit www.triwest.com/ECHO or call TriWest at 1-888-TRIWEST (874-9378).



Show and Tell

JUNEAU, Alaska - Chief Petty Officer Ryan Omeara, officer in charge of Coast Guard Station Juneau, shows Gen. David Millar, Canadian Joint Task Force North Commander, all the equipment used when getting underway in Alaskan waters Jan. 14, 2010. Millar was visiting the station getting to know the command and later took a boat ride to become more familiar with the stations area of responsibility. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Jon-Paul Rios

Through the Morning Mist

JUNEAU, Alaska -- The Coast Guard Cutter Acushnet, the services oldest cutter in the fleet and its crew arrive in Juneau at 10 a.m.

Friday, Feb. 19, 2010, for a port visit before returning to their homeport of Ketchikan. Acushnet was originally commissioned as a Diver Class Fleet Rescue and Salvage Vessel, USS SHACKLE (ARS 9) for the U.S. Navy Feb. 5, 1944. On August 23, 1946, Acushnet was commissioned as an Auxiliary Tug (WAT) in the Coast Guard. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Walter Shinn

