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ALASKA BEAR

BUILDING SWEET STRUCTURES

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

ZOMBIES

EYES PIN'D ON SUCCESS

THE SURFMEN OF NOME

Golden
Seas
Response



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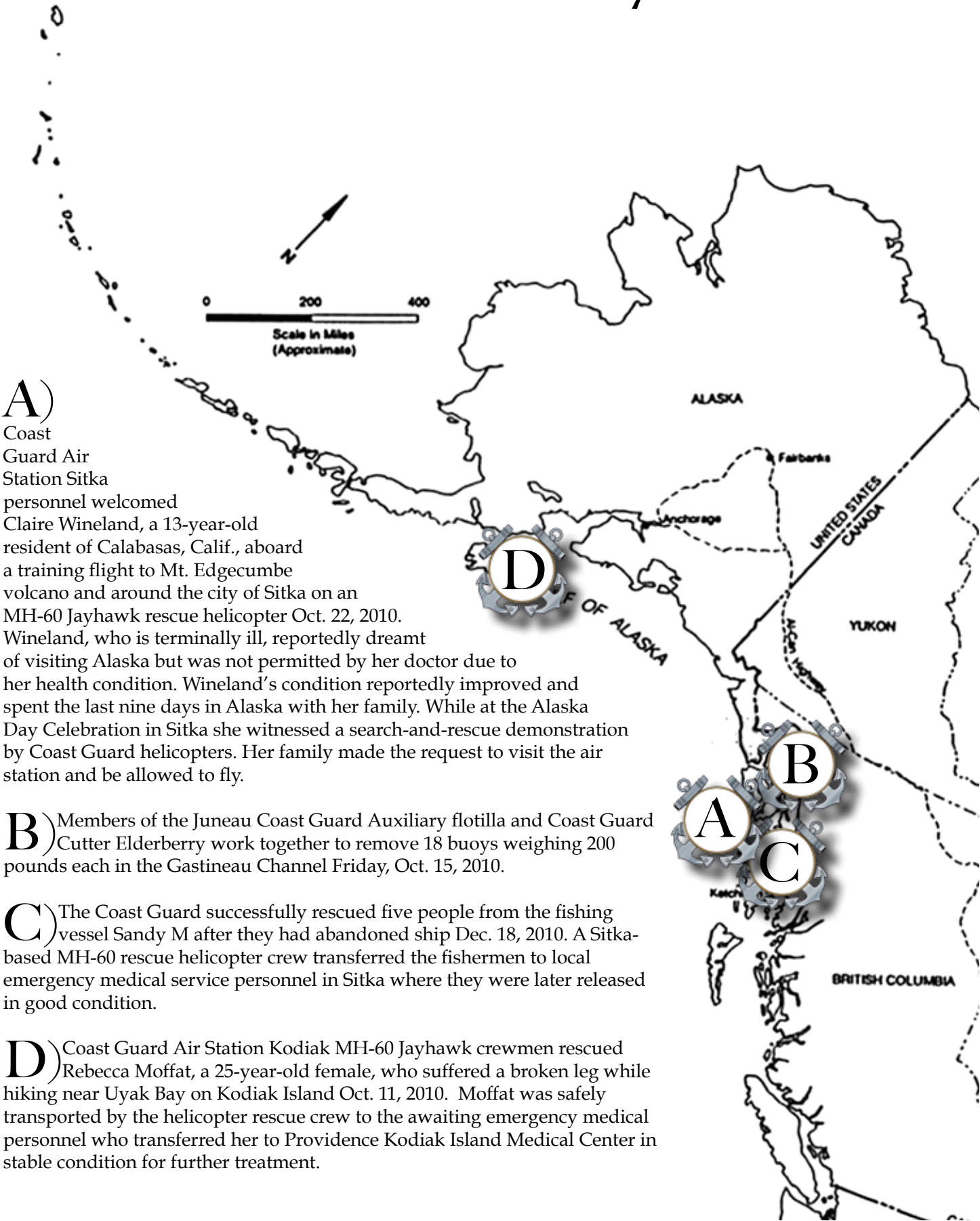
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On The Cover

ANCHORAGE, Alaska - The bulk carrier Golden Seas is towed through rough seas in the Bering Sea by the Tor Viking II Dec. 6, 2010. The vessels were en route to Dutch Harbor transiting at about 8 mph arriving safely on Dec. 7, 2010. U.S. Coast Guard photo courtesy of Air Station Kodiak.

Around the 17th District



A) Coast Guard Air Station Sitka personnel welcomed Claire Wineland, a 13-year-old resident of Calabasas, Calif., aboard a training flight to Mt. Edgecumbe volcano and around the city of Sitka on an MH-60 Jayhawk rescue helicopter Oct. 22, 2010. Wineland, who is terminally ill, reportedly dreamt of visiting Alaska but was not permitted by her doctor due to her health condition. Wineland's condition reportedly improved and spent the last nine days in Alaska with her family. While at the Alaska Day Celebration in Sitka she witnessed a search-and-rescue demonstration by Coast Guard helicopters. Her family made the request to visit the air station and be allowed to fly.

B) Members of the Juneau Coast Guard Auxiliary flotilla and Coast Guard Cutter Elderberry work together to remove 18 buoys weighing 200 pounds each in the Gastineau Channel Friday, Oct. 15, 2010.

C) The Coast Guard successfully rescued five people from the fishing vessel Sandy M after they had abandoned ship Dec. 18, 2010. A Sitka-based MH-60 rescue helicopter crew transferred the fishermen to local emergency medical service personnel in Sitka where they were later released in good condition.

D) Coast Guard Air Station Kodiak MH-60 Jayhawk crewmen rescued Rebecca Moffat, a 25-year-old female, who suffered a broken leg while hiking near Uyak Bay on Kodiak Island Oct. 11, 2010. Moffat was safely transported by the helicopter rescue crew to the awaiting emergency medical personnel who transferred her to Providence Kodiak Island Medical Center in stable condition for further treatment.



FUNDamental Reading

KODIAK, Alaska - Coast Guard Petty Officer 3rd Class Brandon Robinson, an information technologist aboard the Coast Guard Cutter SPAR, reads to Simon Corrie and Savana Long at North Star Elementary Nov. 3, 2010, as part of the Partners in Education outreach program. Approximately 10 SPAR crewmembers volunteer time monthly with North Star Elementary in an effort to assist teachers with class assignments. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Charly Hengen.



Chief's Call

JUNEAU, Alaska - Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard Michael P. Leavitt addresses Coast Guardsmen stationed in the Juneau area Tuesday, Dec. 14, 2010. The Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard was established by legislative action on August 27, 1969 to provide the Commandant with a personal advisor and assistant in matters affecting the enlisted members of the Coast Guard, both active and reserve and their families. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Walter Shinn.

Paying tribute

Professional team honors Alaska's military members

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

For years the Alaska Aces, Alaska's only professional hockey team, has been showing support for the men and women in the military who are stationed in the Nation's largest state.

Spanning two nights in early November, the tradition continued as two home games were dedicated to these men and women through military themed activities and events.

"The Alaska Aces have been honored to host Military Night for the last several years," said Devon Hewlett, Alaska Aces Promotions Director. "Anchorage is a military town and we all are connected to someone who is serving or has served in the past. Our goal as an organization is honor the sacrifice made each day by these soldiers, from all branches of the military."

The first of the two game dedications was for the first time ever hosted by the only admiral in Alaska, Coast Guard Rear Adm. Christopher Colvin, District 17 commander.

Colvin started the Friday night game with a few words of thanks to the fans and the team for their support of the military. He then ceremonially started the game with the puck drop.

"Every year a special puck drop guest is

chosen," said Hewlett. "The Aces were honored to have Rear Adm. Christopher Colvin as a guest November 11, 2010. His appearance was the first for the Coast Guard."

Brent Thompson, Alaska Aces head coach, thanked Colvin for his participation by presenting a team signed military themed jersey that was designed and worn just for the military nights.

Events across the two nights included a joint military service flag presentation, a joint military color guard, active duty and dependent obstacle course competitions on ice and a fallen warrior ceremony conducted by the Alaska chapter of the Vietnam Veterans Motorcycle Club.

"I was extremely honored to participate in the Aces' salute to the military," said Colvin. "The men and women of the armed services have dedicated their lives to protecting and serving our great country. It was great that they could be recognized and honored by the Alaska Aces hockey team and their fans."

While the Alaska Aces lost both home games to the Ontario Reign, however, the event was anything but a loss to the men and women who were honored for their service to the people of Alaska and the United States. 🐾



Thank You

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – Brent Thompson, Alaska Aces head coach, presents Rear Adm. Christopher Colvin, District 17 commander, with the unique Alaska Aces military appreciation night jersey Nov. 12, 2010. The Alaska Aces honor the military each year at two back-to-back home games by inviting military members to participate in events and watch the hockey game.

Story by Petty Officer 3rd Class Walter Shinn, Dr7

Responding over a vast, empty and stormy sea

Fierce Arctic winds and towering 30-foot seas assaulted a 738-foot freighter with 20 crewmembers aboard finding themselves helplessly adrift with limited engine power in the midst of an ice-cold storm 70 miles north of Adak.

Trouble loomed on the horizon as they were drifting toward land carrying more than 132,277 pounds of rape seed used to make canola oil, 450,000 gallons of fuel oil and 11,700 gallons of diesel fuel with the only help more than 400 miles away.

In the midst of the Golden Seas' voyage to the United Arab Emirates the crew experienced a turbo-charger failure Dec. 3 2010. The power failure disabled the vessel's propulsion setting

the ship adrift in heavy seas heading toward the Aleutian Island of Atka.

As soon as the Coast Guard received the report of the vessel's problem the life-saving service immediately began mobilizing personnel in preparation for a major incident.

Six years ago nearly to the exact day a similar incident occurred.

The Malaysian freighter, Selendang Ayu, went aground and broke in half at Skan Bay off Unalaska Island in the Aleutian chain December 8, 2004. The accident sent 336,000 gallons of oil and 66,000 tons of soybeans into the water and onto the shores of the island. Six crew members died during a rescue attempt.

The familiarity of the Golden Seas to the

Selendang Ayu was in the minds of personnel from federal and state agencies who formed a unified command to prevent a bad situation turning into a major incident.

The unified command was faced with a difficult situation. There was a gap with hundreds of miles of empty ocean and no rescue responders close by to come to the aid of the Golden Seas.

However, there was a 251-foot, 18,300 horsepower towing vessel moored in Dutch Harbor. The crew of Tor Viking II was just a day away from being able to rescue the Golden Seas. The Tor Viking II vessel and crew was contracted by O'Brien's, who was part of the unified command, to respond from Dutch Harbor to tow



the Golden Seas to safety.

In addition to the Tor Viking II Two Air Station Kodiak Coast Guard MH-60 Jayhawk helicopters and crews were deployed to Adak to provide rescue capabilities if needed. A Coast Guard HC-130 Hercules aircrew was also deployed to communicate with the vessel and to collect set, drift, current and temperature information from a data marker buoy dropped by the aircrew.

Battling through nearly overwhelming conditions in the Bering Sea, the Coast Guard Cutter Alex Haley was also diverted to respond to the Golden Seas but was three days away. The Cutter SPAR was also deployed from Kodiak to help with any needed environment response.

Waves ranged from 10 to 30-foot living up to the reputation of harsh weather conditions in the Bering Sea. Rescue aircraft and vessels fought through the weather conditions to swiftly aid the troubled Golden Seas.

Ferocious seas were no match for the Tor Viking II vessel and crew as they were able to reach the Golden Seas after a day's travel of plowing through the weather.

By the time the towing vessel crew arrived, the weather became calmer for a short period long enough for the Golden Seas to utilize limited engine capability and maneuver northeast away from land giving rescue vessels the time needed to get to the stricken vessel. The Tor Viking II reached the bulk carrier at 5:30 p.m. and was able to successfully attach towlines and began the tow at 8:30 p.m. Dec. 4, 2010.

A rescue operation of this size demonstrates the immense area of responsibility for the Coast Guard.

The 17th Coast Guard District operates in Alaska covering a vast amount of ocean encompassing 3,853,500 square miles and more

The Response (top to bottom)

The 738-foot tanker Golden Seas makes 3.5 mph through 20-foot seas 50 miles north of Adak Island Dec. 3, 2010. -- The crew of the tug Tor Viking II is making 12 mph through 20 foot waves and 46 mph winds 48 miles from the 738-foot cargo vessel Golden Seas in the Bering Sea Dec. 4, 2010. -- A crewmember aboard the tow vessel Tor Viking II maneuvers the vessel upon arrival with the bulk carrier Golden Seas 40 miles north of Atka Island Dec. 4, 2010. -- The bulk carrier Golden Seas is towed through rough seas in the Bering Sea by the Tor Viking II Dec. 5, 2010.



than 33,000 miles of coastline, an area larger than the land mass of the continental U.S.

Large bulk carriers navigate through this area because it is part of the great circle route, decreasing vessels traveling time and fuel while crossing the Pacific Ocean.

"This case demonstrates the extreme distances involved in conducting operations in Alaska and the challenges ahead for the Arctic regions," said Capt. Jason Fosdick, federal on-scene coordinator. "Multiple Coast Guard crews responded requiring a coordinated airplane, helicopter and ocean-going cutter response. Fortunately the Alex Haley was able to respond, demonstrating the need for Coast Guard cutters that can handle heavy seas in the Bering."


Crews from the Coast Guard and Tor Viking II valiantly braved through stormy seas to aid the stricken motor vessel Golden Seas. The Tor Viking II towed the vessel near the port of Dutch Harbor for the crew to make repairs. Six days later the motor vessel departed Dutch Harbor en route to the United Arab Emirates after successful engine tests were conducted.

Safe Harbor

The bulk carrier Golden Seas is towed into anchoring position in Broad Bay near Dutch Harbor by the tug Tor Viking II Dec. 7, 2010. The Tor Viking II rendezvoused with the Golden Seas and was able tow the ship more than 500 miles along the Aleutian Islands to safe harbor near Dutch Harbor.

"This is a very different outcome than what occurred six years ago when the Selendang Ayu grounded on Unalaska Island," said Gary Folley, state on-scene coordinator. "The State of Alaska is grateful for the efforts of all involved in the response, in particular the crew of the Tor Viking II who demonstrated tremendous skill in taking the Golden Seas in tow at night in heavy seas."

The Tor Viking II and the Alex Haley traveled more than 400 miles one way while Coast Guard helicopters traveled more than 600 miles to be in position to rescue the 20 vessel crewmembers if needed.

A major crisis was averted and lives were saved when the Coast Guard sprang into action and did what the service does best; maintain safety at sea. 

Building sweet structures

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

Imagine building a house using merely your imagination... shingles replaced by twizzlers, brick substituted by peanuts and frosting being the mortar that keeps it all intact.

Alice Kaker, General Services Administration employee and wife to the Navy Liaison for the Coast Guard in Juneau, doesn't only envision these masterful designs made of delicious condiments but translates those ideas into sweet creations.

Born and raised in San Diego, Calif., Kaker always had a love for baking. That love stemmed from her father whose deep Italian roots tailored him to be an excellent baker.

"I remember my father making enormous batches of Italian dough that we could make about 20 different types of cookies with," said Kaker. "Being one of 10 siblings, we would all decorate the cookies differently and try to come up with different ideas to really make them unique to ourselves."

Influenced by her father's passion to bake, Kaker became more and more interested in expanding and executing her ideas. However, her ideas only became grander as she started to make gingerbread houses.

"When my children were going to catholic school I started to bake gingerbread houses for school functions and activities," said Kaker. "Once the word got out that I could make these, people started contacting me offering to pay if I would make them a house."

Most of Kaker's creations have been donations but upon moving to Virginia she started selling her houses to a local shop and to people who requested her talents.



Photo courtesy of Alice Kaker

Kaker can make anything, in fact, you name it and she's probably already made it. She's made such creations as a plantation home based off a photograph, the White House, a Harry Potter scene, an aquarium, a winery and a synagogue amongst other beautiful gingerbread structures.

Kaker has been making gingerbread houses for so long that it has become second nature for her.

During the winter season to get in the holiday mood she turns on her favorite Christmas music and pulls out her ingredients of: flour, shortening, baking soda, brown sugar, molasses, sugar, cinnamon, ginger, salt, water and cloves. Sometimes she'll even sprinkle in nutmeg.


Kaker's works of art have also been seen around town at various Coast Guard functions most recently the Chief Petty Officer's Association's Senior Dinner where she created a masterful house bathed in frosting and glistening

of gumdrops.

This house took about a week to create and was given as a gift and raffled off during the dinner.

"The houses I make are never duplicated and range from small as an ornament to about 75 pounds," said Kaker.

Kaker puts her time, heart and imagination into each of these houses which is why they can go for up to \$500 though she rarely likes to charge for Coast Guard functions.

With a little imagination and a boatload of sweets, Kaker continues to donate her amazing creations and her bountiful imagination to the Coast Guard. 



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

Santa brings cheer to remote villages



Santa's Helpers ▲

KODIAK, Alaska - Tracy Wise, left, and Christa Marquardt, stuff Santa's bags at Air Station Kodiak Dec. 9, 2010, with gifts for children living in the remote villages of Karluk and Larsen Bay on Kodiak Island as part of the Santa to the Villages outreach. The Spouse's Association of Kodiak collects donations and raises funds year-round for this annual community relations outreach. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Charly Hengen.

► Filling the Sleigh

KODIAK, Alaska - Santa and his elves load a Kodiak-based Coast Guard Air Station MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter, Dec. 8, 2010 in preparation for Santa to the Villages outreach around Kodiak Island. The Spouse's Association of Kodiak has teamed up with Kodiak-based Coast Guard Air Station helicopter crews for Santa to the Villages outreach spreading Christmas cheer to the remote villages of Kodiak Island since 1973. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Jonathan Lally.



Big red bags overflowing with brightly wrapped presents lined the floors of Coast Guard helicopters as Air Station Kodiak crews, Santa and several elves took flight to visit Kodiak Island's remote villages to spread the Christmas spirit.

The 37th Annual Santa to the Villages outreach in Kodiak was held from Dec. 6 - Dec 10 and Santa and his elves visited eight villages greeting more than 259 children.

The cheery entourage visited Ouzinkie, Danger Bay, Larsen Bay, Karluk, Ahokiok, Port Lions and Chiniak while Coast Guardsmen with the Cutter SPAR visited Old Harbor.

Santa to the Villages began with the late Coast Guard pilot Jim Stiles in 1973, when he noticed the children in the remote villages of Kodiak

didn't receive a lot of Christmas presents. He and his wife, Lynn along with Jane Clark, president of the Officers' Spouses' Association at the time, created Santa to the Villages. Since the first flight, it has grown to become an annual tradition.

"On the original Santa flight, the children received hand-knit items and fruit," said Tracy Wise, Spouse's Association of Kodiak volunteer and co-chairperson for Santa to the Villages. "This year, the children received handmade scarves, hats and mittens along with a stocking bag filled with crayons, coloring books, an age appropriate toy, an apple and an orange."

In order to have enough gifts for the children each year, the Spouse's Association of Kodiak gathers donations and raises funds throughout the year.

Santa's Sleigh ▼

KODIAK, Alaska - An MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter from Air Station Kodiak transports Santa and his elves to the remote villages of Kodiak Dec. 13, 2010. The Santa to the Villages program has been in action for more than 30 years and through the generous support of the Coast Guard Spouse's Association of Kodiak, Air Station Kodiak and the Coast Guard Cutter SPAR brings holiday cheer, books and warm garments to the children of Ahkiok, Larsen Bay, Karluk, Ouzinkie, Port Lions and Old Harbor. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Jonathan Lally.



"The Stiles-Clark auction is held annually in September on the Coast Guard base to raise funds for Santa to the Villages," said Wise. "Plus, we have volunteers from across the United States knitting the items and donating them."

Over 125 contributors provided for Santa to the Villages this year. The knitting network across the United States sends the handmade items to Clark in Washington.

"Jane has been gathering all of the items in Washington and once she has them, Horizon Lines provides us shipping from Seattle, free of charge," said Wise. "It's saves us a lot of money in shipping."

Once the items reach Kodiak, the wrapping begins. For Wise, Christmas seems to be year-round.

"It really starts in September with the auction," said Wise. "And then I start wrapping the gifts in October and continue collecting...even the day after Christmas."

Each gift is hand wrapped and the tags are all handmade as well. The presents are selected specifically for the children and the Santa to the

► Holiday Hug

LARSEN BAY, Alaska - Santa receives a hug from a young boy after he opened his present from Santa in the Larsen Bay School gym Dec. 13, 2010. Santa teams up with the Spouse's Association of Kodiak, Kodiak-based Coast Guard Air Station helicopter crews and the cutter SPAR to visit the remote villages of Kodiak Island during the annual Santa to the Villages outreach. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Jonathan Lally.

Villages chairperson keeps a database of what each child received in previous years. This prevents the child from receiving a duplicated gift. Santa can talk to each child about what he or she received last year.

"It's wonderful for the kids," said Arnold Kewan, board president of the Native Village of Port Lions Tribal Council. "They've come out here since I was in school and I'm 45 years old. It gives the kids a chance to believe in Santa. It makes them think about what they want to do in their lives when they see the helicopters fly over the villages."

The Christmas spirit is alive in Kodiak as the Spouse's Association, Air Station Kodiak and Cutter SPAR provide the wonderment of Santa and his elves to the children of the remote villages on Kodiak Island every year.

"It's a wonderful program and such a giving one too," said Wise. "The children are so appreciative and so excited to see us. They ask many questions about the North Pole. The Christmas spirit is alive and well in this program from the beginning to the end." 🐾





Swimmer Recovery

KODIAK, Alaska - The crew of a Kodiak-based MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter recovers the rescue swimmer after successfully rescuing four Northern Belle crewmen from a liferaft dropped by the crew of an HC-130 Hercules aircraft from Air Station Kodiak, 50 miles south of Monatgue Island in the Gulf of Alaska April 20, 2010. The Northern Belle crew issued a mayday call and abandoned the 75-foot Seattle-based vessel into the chilly waters of the Gulf of Alaska shortly after 5:30 p.m.

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

Who rescues the rescuers?

The swimmer shop at Air Station Kodiak hums along without much notice from the rest of the crew. A typical day is maintenance, physical training followed by more maintenance. Out of sight on the second deck of hangar three you'd never know swimmers were busily testing life rafts, examining equipment, packing parachutes, testing the dewatering pumps that are dropped to mariners in distress and sewing.

The Kodiak swimmer shop is on the large end with 19 people, but they manage the equipment and gear for five HC-130 Hercules aircraft, four MH-60 Jayhawks and four HH-65 Dolphin helicopters. Additionally they manage gear and teach survival skills to about 250 aircrew personnel.

Coast Guard rescue swimmers are best known for pulling people from the water or performing medical transports from vessels in the most turbulent of seas but that's only a small part of their job.

"We're aviation survival technicians," said Petty Officer 1st Class Claude Morrissey, an aviation survival technician with Air Station Kodiak. "Our main job is anything life supporting. We inspect and maintain all life support gear throughout the air station. Our collateral, what we get the most glory for, is being a rescue swimmer, but that's maybe 10 percent of our job."

All the gear is inspected on a predetermined cycle. Life rafts and vests are every six months, EMT kits are monthly and the dewatering pumps are run every other month. The swimmers are conscious of space available in the aircraft so everything is packed as tightly as possible.

It's like playing Tetris to make it all fit."

Petty Officer 1st Class
Rachid Arnick

"You'll hear guys say if I just had another couple of inches to get this life raft into its crate it'd be easier, but you don't, everything is designed to be as small as possible," said Petty Officer 1st Class Rachid Arnick, an Air Station Kodiak-based aviation survival technician. "We have to pack the helicopter and we've got a big square pump, a rescue litter, bags and a rescue basket. It's like playing Tetris to make it all fit."

"People walk into school thinking I'm going to be a big bad rescue swimmer and then they're shown their sewing machine and they get a reality check," said Arnick.

Completing school doesn't qualify you as a swimmer. It merely gives you the tools.

"Once you get to your shop from 'A' school you begin the qualification process with the tools you learned in school," said Arnick. "We are qualified

as swimmers and basic air crewmen. We run the radios and know the basic operations of the aircraft. You have up to a year to get fully qualified."

The black and gold name patches you see on aircrew uniforms are produced by the swimmers. Last year the Kodiak crew made 200 name patches alone.

"John Niel is probably our best sewer," said Morrissey. "We all have our strengths. Mine is EMT skills, as I was a paramedic before I came in. We all work together in the shop to make the best of everyone's skills and constantly work to improve where we can."

It's not only equipment the swimmers provide. They also train the air crews in survival. There are two types of training the swimmers provide - wet drills and cold school.



Wet drills are an annual requirement for all aircrew personnel. The swimmers provide an overview of survival skills and what is in their aircrew vest. If they're on fixed wing aircraft they don a survival suit, swim to a raft in the bay, then proceed to the pool to swim 75 yards in all their gear, tread water for two minutes and manually inflate their life vest.

If they're on rotary wing aircraft these steps are similar but they'll also leak test their drysuit in the bay and the pool portion is followed by the SWET chair.

SWET stands for shallow water egress training. You sit in a cage with a seat and strap into the five-point harness. Two rescue swimmers rotate the cage and you must complete a series of tests to get out of the chair and cage using your reserve air bottle and simulate various problems you may encounter. This training prepares you to egress a helicopter that has gone in the water and flipped over due to the weight of the rotor.

Lt. Doug Watson, a helicopter pilot that crashed off Unalaska in 2004 trying to rescue the crew of the Selendang Ayu said that when they went in the water the training took over. He found his reference point, released his safety belts, found his exit and swam to the surface. A surface that was cold and dark covered in oil and pounded by 20-foot waves and snow squalls.

So who keeps safe those who go into harm's way? That would be the roughly 250 aviation survival technicians of the U.S. Coast Guard. They truly live by the motto: So others may live. Just don't challenge them to a sewing contest. 🐾

Steps to Survival

KODIAK, Alaska - Petty Officer 1st Class James Bogert, an aviation survival technician with Air Station Kodiak gives instruction on the seven steps to survival during the classroom portion of wet drills at the air station Dec. 2, 2010. Rescue swimmers at the air station provide several iterations of wet drills, required annually for air crews to practice their survival skills.

Survival of the Fittest

Kodiak Guardians receive training to fight Alaska's harsh elements

Story and photos by Petty Officer 3rd Class Jon Lally, PADET Kodiak

Have you ever been in a survival situation and had to face cold nights in the wilderness? Are you prepared for an unexpected stay in harsh Alaskan environments?

For these reasons most of the aviators with Air Station Kodiak receive survival training shortly after reporting to the unit.

Recently several members at Air Station Kodiak went through a course known as Cold School. During this weeklong class, 15 students had two days in the classroom where they received instructions on how to deal with survival situations, animals, environmental hazards and a variety of terrains followed by two days in the wilderness.

Petty Officer 1st Class Scott Gordon, an aviation survival technician with the air station and the senior instructor, called the class to order.

Introducing themselves, each student talked about the experiences they had hunting, camping or even previous survival situations. Once introduced, Gordon and the other instructors rolled straight into the classroom lectures.

The critical information Gordon emphasized to take from the training were the seven steps to survival to include proper clothing, shelter building and being mentally prepared.

Gordon asked what the first step was and a handful of students spoke up responding by saying, "Recognition."

Gordon agreed and referenced his favorite story on the topic: the sinking of the H.M.S. Titanic.

There were 2,229 people on the vessel and only a few recognized the ship was going to sink. There were not enough lifeboat seats for all the passengers and crew but what was most tragic is that lifeboats were lowered half full and 472 seats went empty because no one recognized the gravity of the situation early enough.

Gordon stated that recognizing you are in a survival situation is a very

important mental step because understanding the situation allows you to proceed in the right direction for survival.

He emphasized that when building a shelter the students should remember a level location for the build is ideal and if the area has

natural shelter even better. In the coming days they would spend two nights in the Kodiak

wilderness in early December.

Gordon got the class more involved in the discussion on the types of shelters by asking what primary shelter for people in a survival situation is. Most of the students responded with clothing. This would be one of the most critical points for the students to remember, as it was one of the only things they could control and prepare for during the outdoor portion.

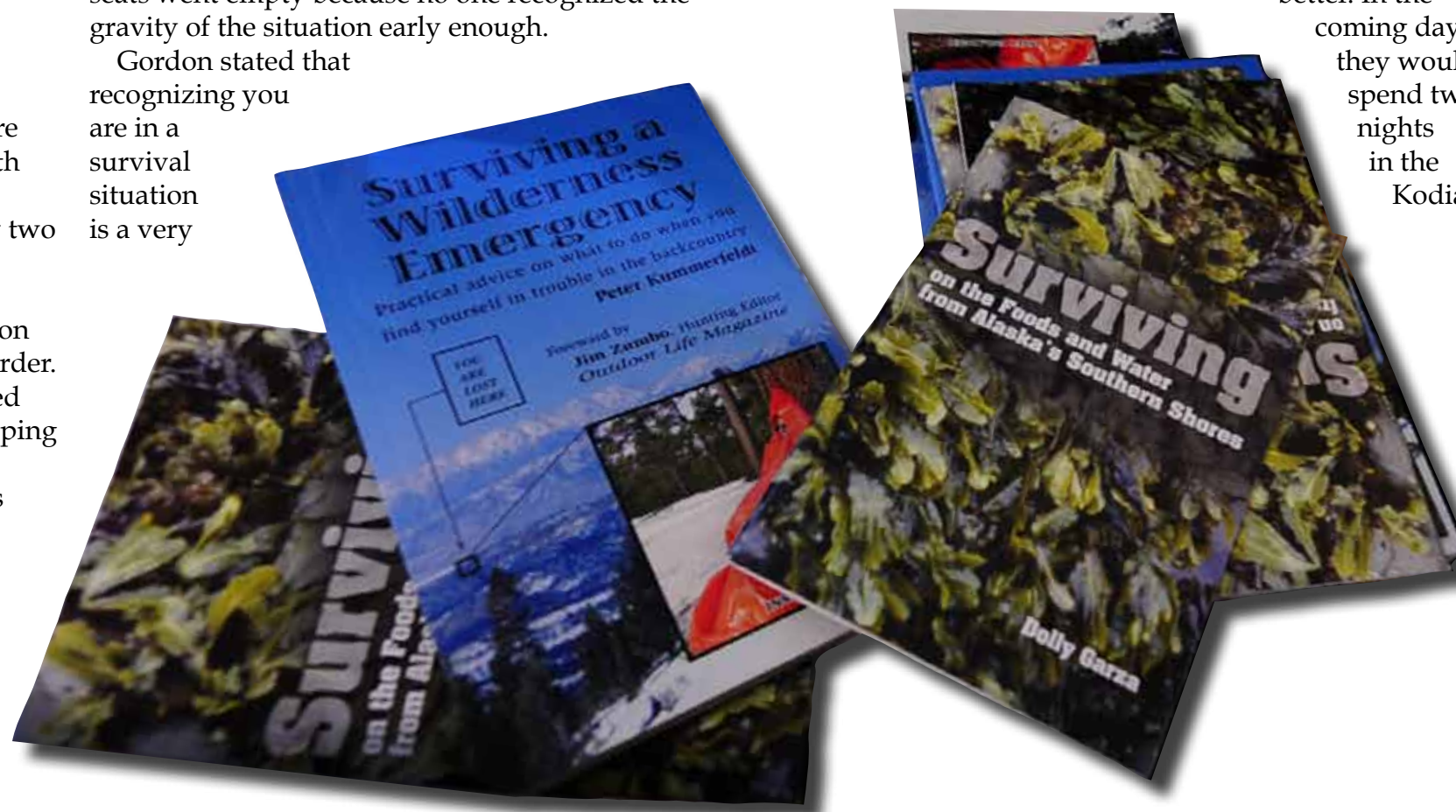
As day two of the classroom instruction occurred, the instructors talked about types of food that could be eaten and not eaten in the Alaska wilderness. They gave examples of sea life to eat and those in which you should avoid. Gordon showed the students a video on bear behavior and how to handle an encounter with one. Kodiak is home to over 3,000 Brown bears.

At the end of the video Gordon reviewed the seven steps to survival with the class and emphasized the importance of each step but also of mentally handling a survival situation.

"A positive mental attitude is key to surviving," stated Gordon. "It could mean the difference between surviving and not."

On the third day of the class the students went out into the Kodiak wilderness to put their knowledge from the classroom to the test. Each student was allowed to bring a quart size Ziploc bag of material, food and anything else they could fit into it. It was overcast and cold but they were spared any rain.

On the first night the students had the task



of building a shelter and were not allowed to build a fire even though the temperatures dipped below 30 degrees overnight.

Each group built their shelters to fit five people and in the spirit of the seventh step to survival, play, the groups named their shelters or areas.

One group named their shelter "Fort Epic." Another named their area the "Bone yard" because they found bones in the wilderness and hung them around their camp. Fort Epic was in the valley, which channeled the wind, and they were colder than the group at the Bone Yard up on the nearby hill. The students experienced first hand the consequences of their choices.

As evening fell the students felt the cold air settling in around them and wished they could have a fire to bring them a little warmth. As they waited out the night the instructors went around to each group to check on them and their shelters.

"The Kodiak Cold School is a good hands-on demonstration to members of how challenging an un-expected stay in the demanding Alaskan environment can be," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Brandyn Sampson, an avionics electrical technician with Air Station Kodiak. "It also

provides a taste of the misery involved with taking on such a task ill-prepared and un-equipped."

The next morning the instructors brought the groups good news during their check-ins. They were told they could build fires, which raised the morale of each group to a new high. The fifteen members had to hold out one more night before they could leave for home cooked meals and a warm bed.

"Everyone reacts differently," said Gordon, "I've had guys who finished the school and wanted to do it again and I've had other guys who hated every minute of it, they joined to fly not camp in the woods. They understand the value of the training they just hope they don't have to use it."

Sampson praised the instructors and their knowledge saying they provided a great learning environment and did an excellent job sharing information on the tools and skills necessary for survival.

"The goal of this training is the education of members and their families to better prepare them for a worst-case wilderness scenario,"

said Sampson. "I highly recommend this invaluable training to any who can attend."

Survival is a state of mind. If you are in a survival situation it's important to remember the seven steps to survival.

As the students learned, keeping a positive mental attitude can make all the difference in surviving in the harsh Alaskan environment or anywhere else in a challenging outdoor environment. The instructors at Cold School just like the professionals at National Outdoor Leadership School nationwide or the Army Cool School in Fairbanks, Alaska, teach that attitude can mean the difference between life and death. 🐾

► Kodiak Camp

KODIAK, Alaska - A shelter stands in the wilderness after Kodiak Cold School students made the shelter to sleep in Dec. 1, 2010. Coast Guard members from Air Station Kodiak participate in the survival school to learn how to better face the harsh Alaskan environment is a survival situation.

Survival School ◀

KODIAK, Alaska - Petty Officer 1st Class Scott Gordon, an aviation survival technician with Air Station Kodiak, stands in front of a Kodiak Cold School class giving instruction on survival situations Nov. 30, 2010. Gordon was reviewing with the class on topics that they covered the previous day.



Seven Steps to Survival:

- 1.) Recognize – to mentally understand that you are in a survival situation or potential survival situation.
- 2.) Inventory – involves accounting for people, equipment and supplies.
- 3.) Shelter – primary and secondary. Primary is clothing you are currently wearing (this includes dry suits). Secondary is anything that helps better keep you out of the elements.
- 4.) Signals – anything that gets you found!! (Flares, smoke, reflectors, etc.)
- 5.) Water – Hydration is a critical part of your survival. The body can go weeks without food but only five days without water.
- 6.) Food – nutrition for your body to help keep your strength.
- 7.) Play – anything that helps you keep a positive mental attitude and keeps your mind occupied so you don't give into despair. Keeping a positive attitude could mean the difference between life and death.

An aircraft of mythical proportions: the HC-130 Hercules

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



Of the three different airframes the Coast Guard employs in Alaska, the Hercules crews have the biggest lift by touching all of the Coast Guard's Alaska-based missions in some way while supporting their rotary-wing colleagues. What is most notable is the loyalty that Hercules crews have to this big awkward machine.

Air Station Kodiak is home to five HC-130s and a department of approximately 130 people who crew and maintain the planes.

"The C-130 Hercules has been the fixed-wing workhorse of the Last Frontier for several decades," said Cmdr. Joe Deer, operations officer for Coast Guard Air Station Kodiak. "We conduct flights for search and rescue, fisheries law enforcement, logistics, rotary-wing support and VIP transport throughout District Seventeen's vast area of responsibility on a daily basis."

The air station flew more than 106,000 hours supporting missions in 2010, which was accomplished with only four aircraft as one was out of service for significant electronics upgrades or deployed outside of Alaska for much of the year.

"The aircraft are getting old," said Petty Officer 1st Class Hayward Workman, an aviation maintenance technician with Air Station Kodiak. "Most have about 200,000 hours on them and were made in the mid 80s,"

"I did once have to perform maintenance in Cold Bay at 2 a.m. in the winter," said Workman. "Three other mechanics and I had to take turns because our hands were getting so sluggish in the cold."

"I would put our workforce against any other branch of service or maintenance group," said Chief Warrant Officer Randall Ching, the

C-130 maintenance chief at Air Station Kodiak. "Our folks are top notch!"

"We perform more scheduled inspections on our aircraft than I do on my own car," said Ching. "The Coast Guard has been approached by other services and organizations on how we keep our asset availability so high and I tell them it's because of our outstanding maintenance and corrosion prevention programs."

What the hours logged doesn't tell you are the attitudes of the crews who have spent hundreds of hours airborne away from family and friends.

On any number of Facebook pages belonging to Hercules crewmembers you'll see photos of them in the aircraft with amazing views behind them and the captions that read - my office, better than yours. Or photos from rescue cases where they feel really excited they made

Sunrise Delivery

KODIAK, Alaska - Personnel at Air Station Kodiak use a truck to unload a Trailerable Aids to Navigation Boat originally from Aids to Navigation Team Duluth in Minnesota from an HC-130 Hercules aircraft Nov. 30, 2010. The boat was brought from Seattle to Kodiak aboard the Hercules and will be used by the crew of the 225-foot Coast Guard Cutter SPAR.

a difference and saved lives despite being up at the crack of dawn, flying for many hours or losing their lunch due to turbulence.

Each year the Coast Guard forward deploys helicopter crews to the Alaska towns of Cordova, Cold Bay and St. Paul to safeguard the fishing fleets during known periods of increased activity. The extra crews and thousands of pounds of gear are transported by the Hercules crews.

"Give me 4,000 feet of dirt and a load - we deliver on target, on time," said Petty



Officer 1st Class Kenneth Norris, an aviation maintenance technician at Air Station Kodiak.

In 2010, helicopter crews deployed to Cordova saving 19 people and seven dogs in seven different cases. When the fishing vessel Northern Belle sank in April, a Hercules crew was first on scene, located the survivors, dropped life rafts and marked their location with smoke flares for the helicopter crew. The Hercules crew remained on scene providing cover for the helicopter crew and managing their communications so they could focus on hoisting survivors.

"As a navigator the work is more challenging here in Alaska than some other places due to the weather and terrain," said Petty Officer 1st Class Andrew Bonifant, an aviation electrical technician at Air Station Kodiak who transferred from Air Station Clearwater,

Fla., in 2010.

Each year the Coast Guard conducts Operation Arctic Crossroads conducting outreach and educational programs with the northern communities while testing boats and aircraft in the Arctic environment. All of this would have been impossible to accomplish without the logistical support of the Hercules crews.

"The C-130 is the most visible, regular representation of the U.S. Coast Guard on Alaska's most distant and remote shores," said Deer.

The Hercules crews also support on-going science missions. Crews completed 14 Arctic Domain Awareness flights between March and November. The crews assessed vessel activity in the region, surveyed the Alaskan coastline and supported other federal agencies projects.

On all the flights, a NOAA contractor was aboard collecting air samples with specialized equipment mounted in the plane to measure methane and carbon dioxide emissions for analysis and on-going research over the Brooks Range in Northern Alaska.

"We are relied upon to maintain Arctic domain awareness now that climate change is reshaping the architecture of Alaska's waters and shorelines," said Deer. "Our aircraft crews provide regular reports of the activity and changes up there."

The Coast Guard's 24 C-130 operate on an \$18.5 million budget, however, money and hours aside, it is the aircrews of the Hercules community who keep these planes flying and see to it Alaska operations are supported.


Workman joined the Coast Guard in 1997 and was assigned to Air Station Barbers Point,

Engine Maintenance

KODIAK, Alaska - Petty Officer 3rd Class Craig Miller and Petty Officer 3rd Class Cade Ekstrom, both aviation maintenance technicians at Air Station Kodiak, place nuts on new thermocouple fittings on the top of an HC-130 Hercules engine Jan. 21, 2011. The engine was recently replaced and new thermocouples had to be installed after the engine's break-in period.

Hawaii, out of "A" school. He was given the choice of the Hercules or the Dolphin helicopter and chose to go with the Hercules.

"I am happy with my choice and would do it again," said Workman.

The crew's hard work to keep one of the Coast Guard's main aircraft flying is an example of the dedication the Coast Guard is known for. They routinely stretch the limits of the aircraft to ensure Alaska's missions are conducted in a successful and timely manner. 

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

Fog doesn't delay determination

A nine-member team comprised of Coast Guardsmen, civilians and one Air Force member traveled to the remote island of Shemya, 1,200 miles southwest of Anchorage, to erect two 40-foot, high frequency automatic link establishment, HF/ALE, transceivers in July.

Since LORAN Station Attu was decommissioned in August 2010, Communications Station Kodiak personnel had to discover a new location to place the HF/ALE transceivers, a 4125 kHz HF receiver, all associated towers, antennas and support equipment and Shemya Island seemed the most logical place.

Shemya is approximately 40 miles east of Attu and by installing the towers it will provide similar HF coverage. Both commercial and military flights are routinely available on and off the island, plus Shemya has the infrastructure to support the network services.

Finding a new location for the HF network COMMSTA Kodiak operates began in April with surveying and determining logistics. Three trips were made to Shemya to assess the land and building available for the equipment.

"District 17 has the operational need for HF Automatic Link Establishment coverage to the community with aircraft patrolling the high seas drift net areas, the maritime boundary line and throughout the Bering Sea," said Rear Adm. Christopher Colvin, 17th Coast Guard District commander officer, in a memo to Coast Guard Pacific Area commander. "In addition to the 4125 kHz search and rescue radio guard in the western and middle Bering Sea, the Coast Guard requires 4125 kHz guard coverage for vessels in distress

in the extreme western portions of the Bering Sea and the waters of the North Pacific beyond the 180th meridian."

A relocation team consisting of Chief Warrant Officer Casey Jones, Chief Petty Officer Steph Wolf, Petty Officer 1st Class James Hopkins, Petty Officer 2nd Class Daniel Archer, Seaman Leah Killingsworth, Seaman Para Upchurch, Air Force Staff Sgt. Joshua Coulombe and civilians Jim Wells and Richard Belisle were needed to move the towers from Attu to Shemya.

"We departed for Eareckson Air Force Base, located on Shemya Island, July 25 from Kodiak," said Chief Warrant Officer Casey Jones, Communications Area Master Station-COMMSTA Product Line Branch project officer. "We installed the equipment, radios, antennas and poured concrete. It was quite a task put before us but the team came together and accomplished it smoothly."

For Upchurch and Killingsworth, COMMSTA Kodiak is their first unit out of boot camp and this was their first temporary duty assignment.

"I had practiced putting the tower sections together in Kodiak so I knew that would be my job when we got to Shemya," said Upchurch. "A lot of things needed to happen to build a new tower and make it work, so I did my best to follow directions and be available to help."

Once the tower parts were in Shemya and the crew arrived it was time to begin the construction.

"We began the project indoors by assembling the antenna and this was the primary responsibility of Upchurch and myself," said Seaman Leah Killingsworth. "We built wooden boxes outside then poured concrete into them to



Teamwork Tower

SHEMYA, Alaska – A nine-member team comprised of Coast Guardsmen, an Air Force member and civilians erect two 40-foot high frequency automatic link establishment transceiver towers in Shemya between July 25 – Aug. 1, 2010. Due to the LORAN Station Attu decommissioning, Communications Station Kodiak had to find a new location for these towers to continue HF coverage in the western and middle Bering Sea. U.S. Coast Guard photo.

anchor the guide wires down.”

The crew worked 12 hour days for 10 days and experienced several foggy days.

“Luckily the weather didn’t stall us too much,” said Killingsworth. “The fog in Shemya is like nothing I have ever seen before! Some days it was like sitting in a steam room minus the heat of course and you could barely see the person standing next to you.”

Once the project was complete, the difficult part was next...trying to depart Shemya and return to Kodiak.

“Air Station Kodiak flew three flights to Shemya to try to get the team off the island,” said Jones. “But unfortunately, the weather was too foggy for the C-130 to land.”

A contracted plane was able to get four of the team members off of Shemya. The other five had to remain an additional 10 days and due to the weather conditions.

On Aug. 10, a Coast Guard contracted aircraft working with a crew on neighboring Attu came and picked up the remaining five team members and flew them to Attu.

Once in Attu, the team spent an additional four days at the end of the Aleutian Island chain. While they were on the island, LORAN Station Attu’s signal was turned off. They made new friends and assisted the crew in packing up the last of their gear.

“We caught a flight on a contracted plane with only six seats available and it was

able to take us back to Anchorage,” said Jones. “It was a great trip and I can’t say enough about the crew and how well everyone worked together.”

Even though the crew worked diligently in erecting the towers, they are not permanent fixtures. In the summer of 2011, a team will return to Shemya to finalize the project.

“The current towers are 40-feet and are scheduled to be replaced by two permanent towers, a 120-foot TCI antenna and an 88-foot Voba antenna next summer,” said Jones. “The equipment hut was removed from Attu and was barged off that island. It will be flown into Shemya via Air Station Kodiak C-130 in the near future so the project can be finalized.”

A lot of teamwork went into this entire project to ensure that long range tactical communications in support of District Seventeen’s search and rescue and law enforcement missions will continue.

“This was my first experience in the Coast Guard going somewhere other than Kodiak and being a part of a remote project like this,” said Killingsworth. “The effort of every person was what made the trip such a great one. Plus working alongside a team of all different ranks and everyone having a hand in completing our mission made it successful. It certainly makes me proud to be a part of the Coast Guard.”

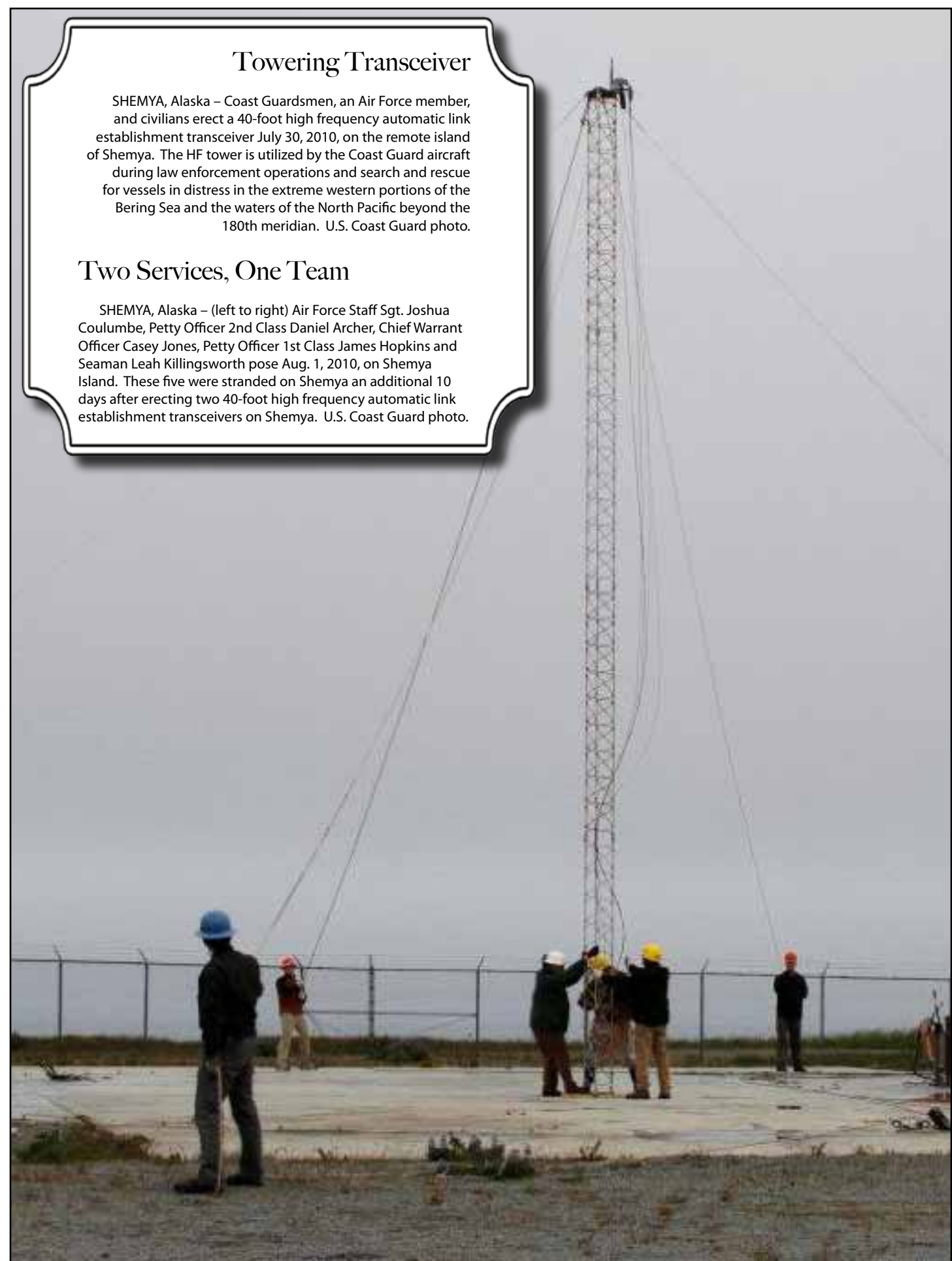


Towering Transceiver

SHEMYA, Alaska – Coast Guardsmen, an Air Force member, and civilians erect a 40-foot high frequency automatic link establishment transceiver July 30, 2010, on the remote island of Shemya. The HF tower is utilized by the Coast Guard aircraft during law enforcement operations and search and rescue for vessels in distress in the extreme western portions of the Bering Sea and the waters of the North Pacific beyond the 180th meridian. U.S. Coast Guard photo.

Two Services, One Team

SHEMYA, Alaska – (left to right) Air Force Staff Sgt. Joshua Coulumbe, Petty Officer 2nd Class Daniel Archer, Chief Warrant Officer Casey Jones, Petty Officer 1st Class James Hopkins and Seaman Leah Killingsworth pose Aug. 1, 2010, on Shemya Island. These five were stranded on Shemya an additional 10 days after erecting two 40-foot high frequency automatic link establishment transceivers on Shemya. U.S. Coast Guard photo.



ZOMBIES!

Coast Guard crew haunts community

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



Haunted Hickory

HOMER, Alaska – Crew and family members of the Coast Guard Cutter Hickory participate in the 2010 “Haunter Hickory” Oct. 29, 2010. The Coast Guard Cutter Hickory transforms into the Haunted Hickory for one night a year as part of a food drive and community outreach effort.

Screams ring out across the water emanating from the end of a dark pier in a small sleepy Alaska fishing town. Crewmembers of a Coast Guard buoy tender located in Homer have been infected by a viral outbreak where many die or are transformed into zombies.

This scenario, which seems torn right from a Hollywood B-movie script, is the theme of the 2010 Coast Guard Cutter Hickory’s community outreach effort the “Haunted Hickory.” This year’s production involved more than 50 people including most of the crew and supporting family members.

“Having conducted the same style haunted ship for many years, we decided to change the theme after many community members had stated they could almost predict what was going to happen,” said Lt. Jason Hopkins, executive officer aboard the Hickory. “Imagine a virus breaks out aboard the ship after a military experiment has gone wrong, This is the theme that we are focusing on this year.”

The crew looks forward to the event each year as a way to give back to the community that the crew calls home. The community is asked by the crew to bring two nonperishable food items as their admission to the Haunted Hickory with all of the collected food being donated to the Homer Food Pantry.

“This is my fourth year doing this and I love

it, it is a great time,” said Petty Officer 1st Class Matt Reines, medical corpsman aboard the Hickory. “This all goes to a real good cause in supporting the food pantry.

The annual event that dates back to when the Coast Guard Cutter Sedge was homeported in Homer has risen in size and popularity. In 2005 the cutter’s crew raised 500 pounds of food for the food drive. That amount has steadily risen with more than 2,000 people touring the ship in 2009 resulting in 3,000 pounds of food donated to the community.

“This is a special time of year for us,” said Diane Jeska, executive director of the Homer Food Pantry. “We look forward to the influx of food that is collected by the Hickory crew. We traditionally are low this time of year and their food donation will carry us through the holiday seasons and into next year.”

Building upon the success of the last few years, the crew anticipated a great turnout to the event. However, despite the line of waiting people that stretched down the pier, cold weather kept many at home resulting in 1,800 pounds of food gathered from the community for the food pantry.

“The Haunted Hickory is an event that the community has come to look forward to and rely upon,” said Hopkins. “Even more important to us, the Haunted Hickory is another chance for the crew to say thank you to the Homer community which they call home.”



Story and photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Walter Shinn, D17

Part Coast Guard, Part Fire Fighter

Hundreds of feet of fire hose were covered by ice that grasped and froze them into a thick layer while the fire garishly scorched a store as the air temperature hovered around minus 12. The building was smoldering with paints, oils, chemicals and other flammable materials being consumed by the flames for an hour prior to the firefighters responding.

In the middle of the fire that was burning like an out-of-control furnace despite ice-cold temperatures stood Ken Lawrenson, a volunteer firefighter with Capital City Fire and Rescue, and a civilian employee working for the Coast Guard in Juneau, Alaska.

As the fire continued to burn, Lawrenson and his fellow firefighters worked to extinguish the fire that just happened to be on the coldest night during the month of February in 2008. More than one million gallons of water were used which created a layer of ice a foot and a half thick on the street as firefighting crews worked exhaustively to extinguish the fire that consumed the unoccupied structure.

The fire was eventually extinguished on the same night but work continued through the day to get the gear and equipment free from the layers of ice that became more nuisance for the firefighters than anything else.

Graduating from the Coast Guard academy in 1984, Lawrenson served on active duty for six years until leaving to work in maritime safety. By day he works for his country as the 17th Coast Guard District fishing vessel safety coordinator but after hours he uses all of his military training by serving the community of Juneau as a volunteer firefighter.

Fires can happen at any time which is why firefighters continuously train to be prepared for any situation. However, it's one thing when a

firefighter receives a paycheck but another when someone selflessly serves the community on their own time. This is the case for Lawrenson who helped extinguish the fire that was his most memorable since becoming a volunteer in 2007.

The act of volunteering for him was driven by his observation that the Lynn Canal Fire Station was closed at the time due to a lack of volunteers. Lawrenson drove by the station every day until he finally came to the decision to volunteer and serve his community.

"I have always believed that volunteerism and community service is important, and I saw this as a good way to give back to Juneau and get involved with the community in a meaningful way," said Lawrenson. "Little did I appreciate then that the fire service is a tight brotherhood, and that the core values of firefighting are exactly the same as for the Coast Guard... service to the public, professionalism and readiness."

With the required forms completed and 200 hours of fire fighter level I training, Lawrenson was given the yellow helmet that signified he was a volunteer firefighter in January 2007. This

meant that he was able to respond fully as an entry-qualified responder for any type of emergency the station was called on for.

As time went on Lawrenson decided to apply for a lieutenant position and took the State of Alaska's written fire officer exam. This was no easy task as the exam requires more than 1,200 pages of reference material to be learned. He passed the exam and now leads a company of eight other volunteers.


"Serving in the fire fighting profession is as socially rewarding as serving in the military as we absolutely trust in the abilities of our teammates to watch our back," said Lawrenson. "I also am tasked with developing and delivering training, and I draw upon my Coast Guard experiences while training boarding officers and commercial fishermen in technical subjects from fisheries law enforcement to water survival to vessel stability."

Lawrenson's passion for volunteering extends from his education and career as he has an extensive background in vessel stability. He has

a master degree in naval architecture and has worked several positions such as a commercial safety examiner, fishing vessel regulations and human factor engineering at Sector Portland, Ore.

Lawrenson has been working as the fishing vessel safety coordinator for the Coast Guard in Alaska since 2006. His time on active duty and as a civilian spans more than two decades of service to the Coast Guard.

"My 24 years with the Coast Guard had been an excellent foundation for becoming a volunteer firefighter at the age of 44," said Lawrenson. "We often joke about life after the Coast Guard, and what we want to do when we grow up. I figured out that I could be a fireman while still serving the Coast Guard."

As time continues Lawrenson works hard to maintain his company of volunteer firefighters to be prepared for any emergency situation and provide technical expertise. Additionally, he is a maritime safety subject matter specialist for the fishing vessel industry and Coast Guard who ensures that everyone remains as safe as can be. 



Eyes pⁱⁿd on success

Story and photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Jon-Paul Rios, D17

Surrounded by dim lights and the clamoring of his team he ties his laces while 15 pounds of spherical resin pounds the oil laced wood resonating through the alley. He steps up on his turn, palms sweaty and eyes focused on his pin of choice, he makes his descent toward the foul line and bowls a strike.

For ten years now the same could be said about Petty Officer 2nd Class Chris Leftwich, a yeoman currently stationed in Juneau, Alaska, has been bowling just about as long as he's been in the Coast Guard.

"I've been in the Coast Guard for nine years now and have been bowling for just about 10 years," said Leftwich. "I started bowling when I was 16-years old and as I got better I used that skill to compete in tournaments to earn extra money."

The true competitiveness of the sport didn't flourish until the first standardized rules were established in New York City, Sept. 9, 1895.

Leftwich's competitive nature and desire to excel at the game got him an invitation on the Navy's bowling team during the 2010 Armed Forces Bowling Championship, hosted by Naval Base San Diego. Believed by military bowlers as the most prestigious competition to test their skill amongst other servicemen, it lasted a week beginning Dec. 6 and ended Dec. 10.

Prior to officially being part of the Navy team, as the Coast Guard wasn't represented in the tournament, Leftwich had to try out. He bowled multiple games a day against 22 of the Navy's elite bowlers to earn his spot on the four-man

roster. In the end his hard work paid off as he bowled well enough to make the team and from there went on to the championships.

The Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines each provided eight person teams comprised of four men and four women who competed in eight games a day on multiple different oil patterns.

Stemming as an application used as a barrier to protect the surface of the lanes from damage, the oil patterns have evolved into an integral part of the game as bowlers must read the patterns to determine how much hook and spin they must put in their ball.

The oil patterns played a huge part on Leftwich's performance as he had to constantly change his strategy and style in order to bowl to his optimum ability.

"The main thing to focus on is the oil patterns layed on the lanes," said Leftwich. "Every day after competition we would practice for two hours on the oil patterns that we were going to face the next day."

Of the 100 people that initially tried out, only 32 made it to the championships. Leftwich stood out like a soar thumb and everyone's eyes were on him and a female shipmate who were representing for not only themselves and the Navy but the entire 34,000 plus Coast Guardsmen.

The Armed Forces Bowling Championship consisted of 24 games played in seven categories during the course of four days. Playing so many games really adds to the fatigue which means that one must maintain mental and physical

toughness throughout the tournament.

"It was extremely exhausting and the competition was tough," said Leftwich. "Playing those 24 games definitely took a toll on me and my body as there were times I had to super glue the cuts on my fingers to help them heal in time for the next match."

Leftwich was relentless, bowling through pain and adversity. Though he wasn't a part of the Navy, he shared one common goal and that was to win the coveted titles in the team challenge, doubles, mixed doubles and singles events.

Leftwich and his teams perseverance won them the title of top honors in men's doubles and mixed doubles contests.

Not only was Leftwich one of the two Coast Guardsmen bowling in the event, but individually, amongst the 200 different armed forces personnel who tried out, he placed 7th overall.

"My greatest accomplishment was averaging

over 200 on the tough competitive oil patterns and maintaining that consistency during tryouts and through the tournament," said Leftwich. "I went out their just wanting to play the game I love and left knowing that I did well for not only myself but the Coast Guard."


With a high score of 264 in one of the most challenging and competitive tournaments of his life, Leftwich beat out the odds. His performance has secured him a try out spot for next years Navy team and further demonstrated the excellence found in Coast Guard personnel. 





Photo courtesy U.S. Coast Guard

By Linda Shogren, District 17 USCG Auxiliary, DSO-PA

The Surfmen we didn't hear about

Many of us know about the "surfmen" of the Atlantic seaboard launching from their life boat stations and braving horrific weather to rescue mariners in distress. Few know about the attempts by a sailor named Thomas Ross during the Nome Gold Rush that sparked a unified effort to save miners lives as they came ashore by the hordes. With assistance from the crew of the U.S. Revenue Cutter Bear, Ross started the Nome Life Saving Station that served citizens for almost 50 years.

During 1899, the shallow, treacherous waters off Nome were quite challenging. Captains had to anchor up to two miles offshore to unload their cargo of goods and passengers, mostly gold seekers to barges and small boats that took them to the beaches. Some never made it to shore and without assistance from the surfmen, many more would have drowned.

Editor's Note:

The Coast Guard has its roots in the history of the Life Saving Service. Many of our traditions and practices were proven by those who came before us.

AJS

The U.S. Life Saving Service

Before 1900, there were few recreational boaters and most assistance cases came from ships engaged in either cargo or passenger commerce. The first U.S. volunteer rescue stations were set up in New England similar to volunteer fire departments in an attempt to save lives and salvage property. Most sailing ships had limited maneuverability close to shore during storms and many went aground, losing lives and cargo - so any help along our coasts was welcomed, storm or not!

Soon, steamships would have an edge over sailing vessels, they could often use their engines to reach deeper waters safely but as maritime trade increased there were still too many lives being lost at sea. The public demanded something be done to help mariners in distress since there was no consistency with keeping volunteer stations manned, especially after the Civil War.

It took Congress time to secure funding to help save the lives of mariners in distress. The U.S. Life Saving Service began in 1848 and ultimately merged with the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service to form the United States Coast Guard in 1915.

By 1878, a network of Life Saving Stations were established throughout the country. At it's peak, there were 270 manned stations along the Atlantic, Great Lakes, Gulf and Pacific Coasts who had skilled, trained surfmen ready to risk their lives to save others. The Act of Congress forming the Coast Guard in 1915 enabled Congress to continue to pay the surfmen and they were at last entitled to pensions.

*"You have to go out,
you don't have to
come back!"*

— The Surfman Motto

Nearly all lifeboat stations were manned by a keeper and up to eight or more trained surfmen, each with specific tasks manning the surf boat during missions. The typical Station had housing for an office, boat house for two 26 ft. lifeboats and bunking area for the crew.

The summer of 1900 brought 150 steamers and 80 sailing vessels unloading 20,000 passengers to seek their fortunes in gold.



USGS photo by
W.C. Mendenhall

Wharf and fleet offshore, Nome quadrangle. Seward Peninsula circa 1900. Photo courtesy of U.S. Geological Survey.

Surfmen of Nome continued

Deep water ports, combined with piers and the inclined ramps of marine railways allowed launching heavy lifeboats directly into the water. Other areas used wagons pulled by horses, the boats were mounted on wagons ready be hauled to the shore.

Small boat handling experience at sea was shared by all - mostly former merchant seamen or mariners who became volun-

teers then paid surfmen. The surfmen's attention to safety drills made a tremendous difference in stations keeping crews during peak storm seasons and they had a much better chance of coming back alive after rescue missions.

It took a few more severe hurricanes before Congress recognized that critical maritime safety measures were needed along America's coasts. Funding was made available for paid surfmen to be on hand during seasonal bad weather or "active season". By 1900, the active season was year-round, and at stations that were isolated, the crewmen were required to launch their boats from the beach into the surf regardless the weather, waves or chances of returning safely.

The U.S. Revenue Cutter Service in Alaska

In 1790, Alexander Hamilton, United States Secretary of the Treasury, asked Congress to provide 10 boats for "securing the collection of the revenue" to enforce U.S. tariff and all other maritime laws. These were the first Revenue Cutters and the fleet continued to grow as settlers spread from East to the West coast as America grew.

Not long after Alaska was purchased by the United States from Russia in 1867, the US Revenue Cutter Service (USRCS) made its first appearance in the Bering Sea. They helped establish U.S. sovereignty in the area, offered assistance to the whaling fleet, patrolled for seal poachers and performed many acts of rescue and humanitarian aid. They were the first to realize the impact of the loss of food sources to Alaska natives who were in danger

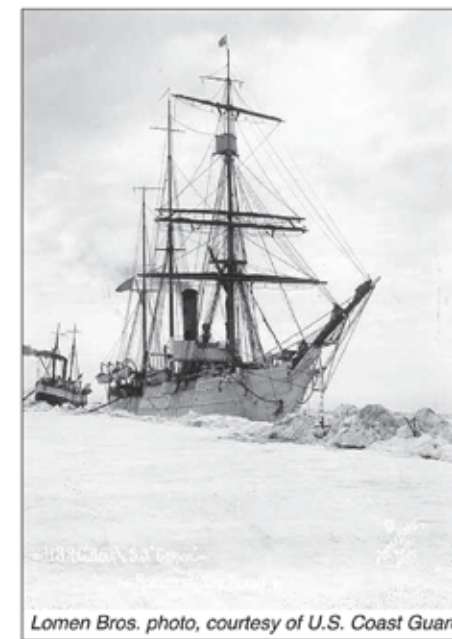
of being wiped out by starvation. By the mid-1870s the Revenue Cutters would go north each spring from California and patrol the Alaskan coast and Bering Sea from a base at Unalaska. They had jurisdiction to board any foreign or U.S. ship on the high seas or tied up peacefully in port. The Cutters were also floating "courtrooms" where onboard judges presided over trials. The ships transported prisoners to Lower '48 prisons when they left in the fall, along with gold nuggets that miners wanted sent south to be deposited to their banks.

Surf Boat Station Nome

In 1899, nine would be miners, drowned trying to get to the beaches off Nome. The following year fourteen died. The summer of 1900 brought 150 steamers and 80 sailing vessels unloading 20,000 passengers to seek their fortunes in gold. Nome became the next Klondike Gold Rush as the news of strikes spread far and fast.

The U.S. Revenue Cutter Bear arrived in Nome to assist in bringing order to the chaos. Most all available transportation, supplies, and other resources were strained to their seams trying to deal with the barrage of miners offloading to the beaches of Nome. The Bear's captain and crew were there to protect lives and property in a territory gone wild with gold frenzy.

Thomas Ross was a former sailor who had tried mining in the Yukon, but had bad luck including frostbite. In 1899, he went back to his seafaring roots and started ferrying people safely to the beach in Nome. He also helped the crew of the Bear assist with the rescue of many passengers floundering in the surf.



Lomen Bros. photo, courtesy of U.S. Coast Guard.

The U.S. Revenue Cutter Bear, with the S.S. Corwin behind it breaking through the sea ice off Nome. The Bear was turned over to the Revenue Cutter Service in 1885. She served gallantly in Alaskan waters for 40 years under the command of many captains, including the most famous, Hell Raising "Cap'n" Mike Healy.



Life-Saving Station, Nome, Alaska, July, 1906



U.S. Coast Guard Station Nome was built in 1905, decommissioned in 1949.

Photos courtesy U.S. Coast Guard

Nome Surfmens continued

The City of Nome started paying him for his services in 1901. With assistance from the Bear's commanding officer, Harry G. Hamlet, a surfboat station was established with easy access to the beach.

When the Bear left in the fall of 1902, lifesaving equipment and gear was left with Ross at the Nome surfboat station. In 1900 Congress appropriated \$2,000 for critical needs of the station to keep it equipped. By 1902, Ross had two lifeboats and a line-throwing mortar when he finally received the funds. Then U.S. Customs requested a boathouse be built by the city of Nome. By 1904, Nome City Council appointed Ross custodian of the

new equipment and he could build a permanent residence behind the Customs house. Best, he was finally allowed to hire and train his much needed crewmen.

U.S. Life Saving Station Nome was officially established on August 4, 1905. Ross had eight crewmen, mostly Scandinavians that qualified to the high standards of surfman by 1906. In 1907 he was officially given the responsibility as Keeper of the Station by the Under Secretary of the Treasury.

These first responders served a very important part in the early history of Nome. The station saved many lives with the surfmen assisting in firefighting,

search and rescue, towing vessels that ran aground, even looking for missing aircraft in later years. They used dog sleds for transportation in the winter during search and rescue missions too.

Ross was eventually commissioned a Chief Warrant Officer Boatswain in 1915 when the U.S Revenue Cutter Service & the U.S. Life Saving Service helped form the U.S. Coast Guard.

After a storm wiped out the station in 1913, a new building was constructed to combine Nome Station 306 with a boat-house. A fire destroyed the station in 1934 and it was not rebuilt till World War II, despite many citizen petitions.

Thomas Ross lived beyond the get rich dreams of the gold rush and utilized what he did best. He knew how to help folks get ashore safely in varying degrees of danger and continued to serve as a surfman and Keeper most of his life. He was dedicated to the city of Nome and saving lives, especially off the beaches.

Mr. Ross retired in February of 1939, but returned after the station was rebuilt before World War II. The station was decommissioned in 1949 and officially closed by notification to the city of Nome in 1951. Ross passed away in 1952.

He was a hero few have ever heard of, yet he and the rest of the Nome surfmen set a high standard for on-the-water training and saving lives in Alaska's wild frontier of days past.

Today the Coast Guard, Coast Guard Auxiliary and other partners go through many of those same safety drills required a century ago to help our passengers, crew and families remain safe on our waterways. We'll see what the latest chapter for Nome will bring. More summer visitors are dropping by offshore - some seeking traces of gold; others, pieces of Nome's fascinating past.



Crew of Nome Station, U.S. Life Saving Service, Nome, Alaska, 1904

Photo courtesy of U.S. Coast Guard



Pay TRICARE Prime Enrollment Fees Online

By Tyler Patterson
TriWest Healthcare Alliance

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January is Cervical Cancer awareness month

Courtesy of Shari Lopatin, TriWest Healthcare Alliance

The Four Risks You Didn't Know About Cervical Cancer

You may have heard that a virus called HPV is a risk factor for cervical cancer, but did you know taking birth control pills can be one too?

While the best way to survive cervical cancer is to catch it early by screening regularly with a Pap test, here are four lesser-known risk factors for this disease:

1. Birth Control Pills:

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), using birth control pills for five years or more can increase one's risk for cervical cancer. However, the American Cancer Society stresses that the risk returns to normal about 10 years after the pills are stopped.

2. Giving Birth to Three or More Children:

Although no experts can pinpoint why this is a risk factor, the American Cancer Society's website explains a few theories:

A. Studies have indicated hormonal changes during pregnancies could make a woman more receptive to HPV or developing cancer.

B. Pregnancies might weaken a woman's immune system, also making her more susceptible to HPV infection or cancer development.

3. HIV:

According to the CDC, having HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, or another condition that makes it hard for the body to fight infection is a risk factor for developing cervical cancer. The American Cancer Society states that HIV also makes it more difficult for the body to fight off the HPV infection, which is a large risk factor for cervical cancer.

4. Smoking:

"Women who smoke are about twice as likely as non-smokers to get cervical cancer," the American Cancer Society website says. This is because smoking exposes the body to cancer-causing toxins and elements that affect other organs, besides the lungs.

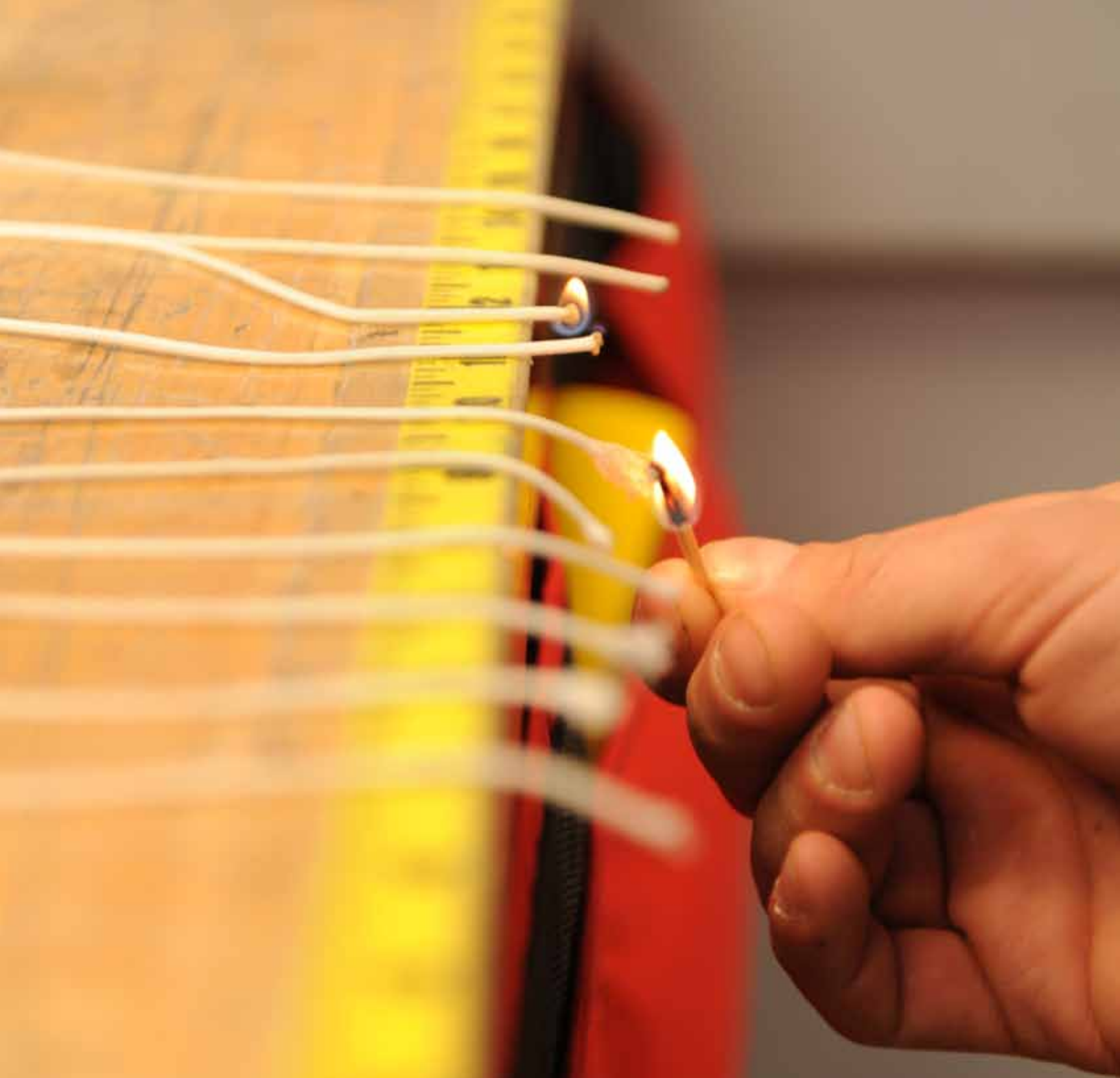
Above all else, remember to get regular Pap tests to screen for cervical cancer. They are a TRICARE-covered benefit, so take advantage of them.

For more healthy living tips and news articles, follow TriWest on Facebook and Twitter:

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Match Shot

KODIAK, Alaska - Coast Guard Petty Officer 3rd Class John Brennan, aviation survival technician with Air Station Kodiak, burns type 1 nylon cord in the air station rescue swimmer shop Dec. 9, 2010, for use in the Coast Guard aircrew survival vests. The cord is cut to different lengths and tied to every survival item in the vest to serve as a lanyard in case a Coast Guard aviator drops a survival item while in an emergency situation. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Charly Hengen.