



the QUARTERDECK LOG

Membership publication of the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association. Publishes quarterly—Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. Not sold on a subscription basis. The Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association is a Non-Profit Association of Active Duty, Retired, Reserve and Honorably Discharged Former Members of the United States Coast Guard who served in, or provided direct support to, combat situations recognized by an appropriate military award while serving as a member of the United States Coast Guard.

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2nd Quarter 2025



The Story of the *LCI (L)-92* in the Invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944, Part Two

Cover—D-Day by H.W. Vestal, 1944, From the Coast Guard Combat Art Heritage Asset Collection, 1992-322

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Increase in VA Disability Rates

**New Bill giving USCG Parity with
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**CGCVA Member Inducted into the
NFL's Salute to Service Hall of Heroes**

FROM THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT

COAST GUARD COMBAT VETERANS ASSOCIATION

ELECTED OFFICERS

National President—Bruce Bruni, LM
bbruni@cgcvva.org
National Vice President—Tim Mowbray, LM
tmowbray@cgcvva.org
National Secretary—Mark Planitz
National Treasurer—Gary Sherman, LM
info@cgcvva.org

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chairman—PNP Terry O'Connell, LM
2nd Term—Michael Johnson, LM, Larry Jones, LM,
1st term Dave Hennessey, PNP Joe Prince, LM

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE*

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*Use the Administrative Office for contact with the
CGCVA on all matters

THE QUARTERDECK LOG

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AUXILIARY COMMITTEE

Coordinators—Barbara Weeks, Linda Kay,
and Javaughn Miller

APPOINTED OFFICERS

ByLaws—Gary Sherman, LM

Reunion Planners—PNP Michael Placencia, LM
Michael Johnson, LM, Bruce Bruni, LM, Mike Seward, LM

Membership—PNP Michael Placencia, LM

Ship's Store Manager—Russell Allyson, LM

Historian—PNP/Founder Paul C. Scotti, LM

Service Officers—Thomas Huckelberry, LM

Richard Hogan, Jr., LM, and Larry Jones, LM

MAA—Russ Weeks

Chaplain—Vince Patton, LM

Parliamentarian—PNP Michael Placencia, LM

Nominating Committee—Bill Femia, LM

Cape May Liaison—Thomas Dougherty, LM

COAST GUARD HISTORY CONTRIBUTOR

Dr. William Theisen, Ph.D., CG Historian

The Daytona Beach Shores Resort and Spa was an excellent choice for our CGCVA 40th reunion. Amazing Florida weather provided opportunities for attendees to visit the local area, enjoy time on the beach, at the pool, or at the TIKI bar. At the reception following the opening ceremony on the Ocean Terrace, members enjoyed socializing and connecting with old and new friends, while servers carried trays of assorted appetizers among the guests. The food served in the Atlantic Ballroom for the Members and Auxiliary joint breakfast, and the awards banquet, was well prepared and delicious.



The only major issue that had to be addressed was the need for a sound system. A local vendor quoted us a price of \$2,300! Instead, we opted to purchase a 1000-watt portable system to be used at the opening ceremony, business meeting, and banquet. The system was then raffled off at the end of the reunion to recover the purchase cost. The raffle winner Terry O'Connell, who then donated the system to the Southwest Florida Military Museum and Library. I have been attending reunions for the past 10 years and believe that this was the best one that I have experienced. I look forward to what the reunion committee will recommend for 2027!

Elections were held, and I thank those in attendance for their trust in selecting me as National President. I promise to continue my dedication to the Association to ensure its viability and relevance to the Coast Guard for the foreseeable future. In addition to electing a new President, Tim Mowbray was elected as Vice President. Gary Sherman has for many years performed his duties well in the role of Secretary /Treasurer. Going forward, this role will be divided into two. Gary was reelected as Treasurer, and Mark Planitz as Secretary. Dave Hennessey was elected as first term Trustee as was Terry O'Connell, who has been serving as the Chairman of the Trustees. As the most recent Past National President, Joe Prince, was to assume the role as Chairman, but has requested to exchange that role as Trustee with Terry, who will remain as Chairman of the Trustees. I have approved this request in accordance with Article IV.1.f of the Bylaws.

I would like to thank Barb Weeks and the Auxiliary members for their support in making the reunion a success. For many years we have enjoyed their contributions to the CGCVA and appreciate their dedicated efforts. ~ Bruce Bruni

FROM THE NATIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT

Greetings to all members of the CGCVA! Thank you for trusting me to be the new Vice President of this great organization. I have been a member since July of 2010. Thanks to Gary Sherman for nominating me! I will work to complete my duties as effectively and expeditiously as possible.

As I get older, I look back on my days in the Coast Guard (1968 – 1972) with fond memories. I keep in contact with the many friends I made, by email and visits, when possible.

I joined the Coast Guard in August of 1968 and went to boot camp in Cape May, NJ, Delta Company 34. This experience was something I didn't expect, but it made me a better person and helped determine how I would handle my life in the future. As I look back, my experience was something I never would have thought possible for me.

My first duty station was Coast Guard Group Southwest Harbor, ME; a search and rescue base located on Mt. Desert Island and Acadia National Park. It was almost like home in Duluth, MN, with the Atlantic Ocean instead of Lake Superior. I decided here that Boatswain's Mate was the best opportunity as I was an experienced boat coxswain. I spent about two and a half years there; I also did interim lighthouse duty and supervised boat maintenance and station upkeep.

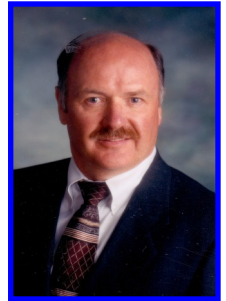
In 1970, I requested a transfer to the Ninth Coast Guard District, Coast Guard Group Duluth, MN. When my orders came a few days later, I was transferred to the Coast Guard Cutter *Castle Rock* WHEC-383, soon destined for Vietnam. After serving on a couple of ocean stations and towing a Navy tug to Newfoundland, we started training for our duty assignment in Vietnam. We had a great crew, fine officers, and a fantastic Captain, the experience of which helped shape my future and was another opportunity of a lifetime.

After my discharge, I used my GI Bill benefits to complete a bachelor's degree and a

master's degree. I worked in many different administrative and management roles before becoming a CEO of a small nonprofit organization, providing specialty care for spinal cord and traumatic brain injury patients. From there, I went into hospital administration, clinic management for inpatient and outpatient care. My employer provided me with time and support to complete a Doctor of Management Degree in Organizational Leadership with a focus on healthcare. I finished my career as the CEO of a medical research organization, focusing on testing orthopedic and spine products and training surgeons on new hardware for implants.

Enough about me, the challenges of the coming years will be to keep this organization strong and viable in the future. I will work with President Bruni and the board to do all we can to support our members. Hope to see you all at the next CGCVA reunion. Thanks for your support, I look forward to serving you!

Tim S. Mowbray ~ Vice President



FROM THE NATIONAL SECRETARY

Greetings!

The newly established ship's office, located in Paducah, Kentucky, is now open for business! YNCM Mark Planitz (Ret.) reporting for duty!

My duties as your National Secretary include processing new member applications, membership renewals and inquiries, maintaining records, acting as mail clerk, and assisting with various initiatives that may arise.



My first order of business as mail clerk was to set up a new Association PO Box mailing address near me. Please take note of our new Association address (which bears the CGC *SHERMAN* hull number):

**Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association
PO Box 720
West Paducah, KY 42086-0720**

A little about me... I first learned about the CGCVA from Joe Prince and Ed Semler while at our 2022 *SHERMAN* reunion. It was the first time much of our crew got together since deploying to the Persian Gulf in 2001. It was great seeing all the familiar personalities, just like experiencing a port call again, albeit more seasoned (with age) and in Reno! Not long afterwards, I signed up as a member (January 2023), with the prospect of having more opportunities to visit shipmates and fellow Coasties.

I was married in 1988 to Renee' while stationed at Marine Safety Office Paducah. During my 26 years in the CG, our adventures took us to Guam; St. Louis; San Diego; Topeka; Alameda; Bloomington, IN; and DC. Before we met, I served on the *CHEROKEE* at NAB Little Creek.

In 2016, Renee' and I moved back to Paducah, and had our KY dream home built on property her grandparents gave her to "have a place to park her car." We have two grown-up kids and four grandkids. My daughter is married to a Marine Corps officer and lives in NC. My son is an electrician, living in TX.

Before I wrap up, I want to thank Gary Sherman for all his efforts and support getting me ready for prime time. He did a lot of prep work and logistics for a smooth transition. I was amazed to learn all he does behind the scenes for the Association.

I look forward to being at your service for the next two years. Semper Paratus! ~ Mark Planitz

20 YEARS ANNIVERSARY OF PSU RESPONSE TO HURRICANE KATRINA

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina, a CAT 3 hurricane at the time of landfall, slammed into the Gulf Coast at Bura-Triumph, LA, causing 1,392 fatalities and \$125 billion in damages. 25 Coast Guard reservists from PSU-308, located in severely damaged Gulfport, MS, immediately responded, volunteering to provide assistance to local law enforcement in patrolling the waterways and shoreside residences to prevent looting. They also assisted many local fishermen that were stranded in the Back Bay area of

Gulfport, ensuring that they had food and water and provided medical assistance to those in need.

PSU 309 was mobilized in early September and responded with 50 tons of gear and 100 personnel from Camp Perry, OH, and were performing similar duties to that of PSU-308. With the total loss of Station Gulfport, PSU-309 assumed SAR responsibilities for the Station, allowing the station's crew to take care of their own families.

It was a job well done and a rewarding moment for the PSU crews to assist those in desperate need.

FROM THE NATIONAL TREASURER

Personnel Changes

Since 2009, it has been an honor to hold the CGCVA National Secretary/Treasurer officer position, which was handed to me by founder Baker Herbert. And thanks to then National President and founder Paul Scotti, who took a big risk trusting that I could fulfill the role. I had some seriously large shoes to fill. Baker had held the Secretary and/or Treasurer job, or both, for 28 straight years; I was only able to make it for 16 years. I hope Baker is satisfied with what I've brought to the role.



But as I hit three-quarters of a century later in November, it's time for some new blood. We have been able to elect YNCM Mark Planitz, USCG (Ret.), to take on that job, so that I can focus on managing the Vanguard accounts, keeping the books balanced, helping our Ship's Store manager make some money for the Association, and keeping our website up to date.

Hopefully, you are reassured by the fact that you now have a Yeoman as National Secretary and a Storekeeper as Treasurer. It's kind of a "natural order of things!"

I hope you'll wish Mark all the best as he starts approving new member applications, handling membership renewal Permanent Membership Cards, and fulfilling other related duties. Mark is an expert in Microsoft Office, Outlook, and getting the best out of our licenses for those products. Mark has forgotten more than what I know about these systems, so you can expect communications to get even better as we go forward.

40th Anniversary Reunion – Daytona Beach Shores, FL.

The Daytona Beach Shores reunion was a blast! It was one of those hotels where you open your windows at night to hear the ocean breaking across the beach. Everyone had a great time as we celebrated the 40th anniversary of the CGCVA's founding. We created a venue that appealed especially to our Florida members, and we even made a little money, though not a lot.

At the Business meeting, we discussed whether the Association should consider some new ways to recruit more members, since our total membership keeps falling, as our WWII and Vietnam members leave us. There were 8,000 Coast Guardsmen deployed to Vietnam, but not nearly that many were deployed for Desert Storm/Shield or for the Global War on Terror. With a smaller eligibility pool, we need to find the secret formula to entice those PSUs, PATFORSWA, and other eligible members to join us and eventually "carry on!" There are discussions in the works to make that happen, and we hope you will support whatever it takes to get these younger Coasties to consider becoming members of this terrific association.

Best wishes to all!

Gary Sherman

NT

BOOSTER CLUB

THE QDL BOOSTER CLUB

The QDL Booster Club provides a tax-exempt opportunity to donate funds to offset the cost of printing and mailing the Quarterdeck Log. Donations should be sent to the Administrative Office with the memo section of the check marked "QDL Booster Club." Contributor's names will be published with dollar amounts remaining confidential. We greatly appreciate the following members who have made contributions to the Booster Club since the last edition of the QDL was published.

CURRENT QDL BOOSTER DONATIONS

Dennis Davi Richard Barren Carmond Fitzgerald

IN MEMORY OF DONATIONS

Terry O'Connell IMO Taylor Lapham, Charles Bevel IMO Joyce Bevel

CROSSED THE BAR

**It is with sadness that we take note of the following
Vietnam Veteran members that have crossed the bar.**

A. Taylor Lapham, John R. Cromwell, LM, Frederick J. Dailey, Larry B. Demalignon, LM, Kenneth R. Dossett, LM, Otis L. Dunlap, LM, Howard O. Edmonds, LM, Dennis L. Rix, LM, Raymond P. Jensen, LM, Karl E. Kenyon, LM, Joseph M. Lango, LM, John A. MacDonald, Richard W. Minor, LM, David E. Peverly, Ronald D. Ricker, LM, Robert S. Samuelson, LM, John E. Williams, LM, Bruce J. Sheils, David H. Spencer, LM, Harold W. Swiekatowski, LM,

NEW MEMBERS

NEW MEMBER	SHIP/UNIT IN COMBAT ZONE	CONFLICT	SPONSOR
Thomas E. Duffy	USCGC Castle Rock	RVN	Gary Sherman
Jeremy A. Gandy	PSU308	GWOT	Bruce Bruni
Michael J. Lunetta	PSU301	DST	Larry Jones
Keith J. Johnson	PSU305	GWOT	
Francis M. Pepin	PSU301	DST	Eric Johnson, MCPO
Jon R. Ostrowski	PSU311, 305	GWOT	Michael Seward, RADM
Rene N. Roussel	USCGC Point Clear	RVN	Ted Thompson, CAPT

AUXILIARY NEWS



REUNION HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE NEWS

Happy Summer to all!

The 12 members who attended the 4/15/25 Auxiliary meeting unanimously voted to disband and created the Reunion Hospitality Committee to take its place. Thus membership fees will no longer be required.

This decision was made as the current/previous Auxiliary board members respectfully declined to continue in these positions, and there was no interest within the current membership to fill these roles.

This newly formed committee will be co-chaired by Javaughn Miller and myself to assist and support the CGCVA in forthcoming reunion/conventions. Those support roles will include, but not be limited to, the Silent Auction and hospitality room functions. Multiple members stated that they would assist in researching

additional activities both on and off site.

The silent auction proceeds totaled \$1,612.25, less than previous years but successful none-the-less. Many thanks to Linda Kay who successfully structured and organized the silent auction, as well as other members who lent helping hands.

Also a sincere thank you to Jeannie Bruni for the wonderful presentation regarding her experience as a writer and author. The proceeds realized from her book sales were donated back to the CGCVA.

Lastly, for easy access to sharing and planning, communication with the current reunion committee members will be via e-mail only.

Barbara Weeks: weeksbarbaral@gmail.com

Javaughn Miller: jallsmiller0@gmail.com

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Weeks

THE VA DISABILITY PAY RATES FOR 2025 ARE NOW IN EFFECT

On December 1, 2024, the VA disability pay rates for 2025 with a 2.5% COLA were announced by the Social Security Administration. Veterans receiving a disability rating of 10% or higher from the VA can receive payments due to their sickness or injuries related to military service. This includes both physical and mental conditions. The 2025 VA disability pay rates are tax-free and increase according to the increase Social Security receives, based on the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) determined by the government.

The VA disability pay rates for 2025 vary depending on personal factors, such as your VA disability rating and whether or not you have dependents. Veterans with a 10% to 20% rating will

not receive extra compensation for dependents.

If you have a rating of 30% or higher with qualifying dependent children under 18, children over 18 enrolled in a qualifying school program, spouse, spouse with special needs, or dependent parents, additional benefits may be available.

Your marriage status and the type of dependents you provide for will affect how much compensation you receive; however, the good news is that VA disability rates in 2025 are going up. See www.veteranlife.com for more info and rates.

COVER STORY

A U.S. COAST GUARD HISTORICAL DOCUMENT INVASION

The Story of the *LCI(L)-92* in the Invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944.

PART TWO

Now the dawn of that momentous day began breaking. The blackness changed into a shadowy gray and then into a more distinct but still dull gray until the rays of the sun - - still below the horizon - - began streaking the heavy clouds with traces of pale pink. This suddenly burst forth into brilliant red for a few minutes and then as suddenly disappeared into the bluish gray morning skies.

We knew a tremendous air attack was to begin at 5:45 A.M. on the German-held coast and we could see the flights of huge bombers far overhead as they roared through the clouds, on their way. When Paul E. Lambert, signalman second class, USCGR, of (7600 Washington Street) Marquette, Michigan, at his station in the conn, said the planes were "a good sight to see," he echoed all of our thoughts. We were later to be very grateful to the Allied air forces who kept the German planes away. Most of the crew had vivid memories of the German air raids in Italy and especially one night at Bizerte. Another good sight were the destroyers which risked a great deal in covering us so near the German land batteries.

At 5:50 A.M. the LCIs of our flotilla formed into two columns and swung in toward land, now hazy as



Rhino Barge.

an early morning mist blew in off the channel. There were ships in all directions as far as the eye could see. We could not help gasping with amazement at the complete coordination of this vast array of shipping despite the

confusing picture it presented on the surface. At 6:45 A.M. we sped past columns of LSTs unloading trucks, tanks, jeeps, and equipment through their huge bow doors onto the long flat Rhino barges. We could see the waves slapping over the barges and men and equipment.

And on we went through the gray seas while the oncoming fog closed in astern of us. By 7 A.M. we knew that the first waves of small landing boats had already hit the beaches and we wondered how they were making out. All we could see ahead was a smoky haze over the approaching land, which we now could see was not as flat as we first thought. All the crew were at their beaching stations and the ramps were in readiness for lowering. The spray over the bow kept the men forward wiping their streaming faces. At 7:30 A.M. we passed the attack transports, recognizing some of our Coast Guard ships. We were all tense now, saying little and watching with eagle eyes.

General quarters was sounded at 7:45 A.M. and soon we were approaching the cruisers and destroyers shelling the coast, half hidden by smoke screens, which mixed in with the haze and grayness.

At 8 A.M. we were less than three miles from land and amidst the firing warships throwing up a



Naval gunfire supporting landings at Omaha Beach, 6
June 1944.

COVER STORY

continuous bombardment. The wind continued brisk and I could see the forward gun crew bracing themselves against the waves which shot over the bow. Ahead of us everywhere were small landing craft and now the beach itself was plainly visible, even with the smoke. Suddenly, I realized that we were in for a tough time as I made out shattered Higgins boats on the beach and men running to take cover. I could see a few houses in the lee of the hill, wrecked and on fire.

My heart beat multiplied when I looked over the starboard bow, near the beach, and saw the Coast Guard manned *LCI-91* enveloped in flames and smoke. She was the first LCI to hit that sector of the beach and we were scheduled as the second.

Below us, in the pilot house, Edward E. Pryzbos, Quartermaster First Class, USCG, (record of address lost) at the steering controls, gave one look at the "91," and yelled to our two waiting pharmacist's mates:

"Looks as if we're going to have a rough landing." Raymond A. Maleska, pharmacist's mate second class, USCGR, of (4 Stone Street) Yonkers, N.Y., known to all as "Doc," and Rudolph J. Hursey, pharmacist's mate second class, USNR, of Chesterfield, South Carolina, known as "Pop," hurried aft to be ready with their first aid kits.

On we went. The beach was a few hundred yards off now and we could see the wooden and steel traps set by the Germans on which some of the Higgins boats had ripped out their bottoms.

Smoke was everywhere and we smelled the powder of battle. We felt nearby explosions from shells and could see funnels of water shoot up in the air. The Skipper was standing forward in the conn, gripping the handrail as he directed the ship by speaking through the tube to the pilot house. Lambert, the signalman, stood on the starboard side of the conn, with ear phones on. I was on the port side by the signal light with my camera, bracing

♦ **USS *LCI(L)-92*** was laid down at Orange, Tex. by the Consolidated Ship Building Co. 9 November 1942; launched 3 January 1943; and commissioned 13 February 1943; and reported for duty with LCI(L) Flotilla 4.

♦ **USS *LCI(L)-92*** was lost due to enemy action at Omaha Beach, Normandy, France, 6 June 1944. At 0810 on D-Day, an explosion occurred in Troop Compartment #1 causing the compartment to catch on fire. The ship was consequently stranded on Normandy beach, holed and burned out. Struck from the Naval Register, 13 November 1944.

♦ **USS *LCI(L)-92*** earned four battle stars for World War II service.

Specifications:

Displacement: 216 tons (light), 234 tons (landing), 389 tons (loaded)

Length: 158' 5½"

Beam: 23' 3"

Draft: Light, 3'1½" mean; Landing, 2' 8" forward; 4' 10" aft; Loaded, 5' 4" forward, 5' 11" aft

Speed: 16 kts (max.), 14 kts maximum continuous

Complement: 2 Officers, 21 Enlisted

Troop Capacity: 6 Officers, 182 Enlisted

Cargo Capacity: 75 tons

Armor: 2" plastic splinter protection on gun turrets, conning tower and pilot house

Endurance: 4,000 miles at 12 kts, loaded, 500 miles at 15 knots; and 110 tons of fuel

Armament: four single 20mm guns one forward, one amidship, two aft. Later added two .50 cal machine guns

Fuel Capacity: 130 tons, lube oil 200 gal.

Propulsion: two sets of 4 GM Diesels, 4 per shaft, BHP 1,600 twin variable pitch propellers

COVER STORY

myself to take a picture. Then it came!

A terrifying blast lifted the whole ship upward with a sudden lurch from the bow. A sheet of flame and steel shot out from the forward hold. The ship quivered as if it were pulling apart and the concussion threw the three of us in the conn backward and down hard. The heat was like the midst of a blast furnace. We were stunned for an instant and our ears were ringing with the deafening vibrations. Seconds later another shattering explosion shook the ship like a toy boat and a rain of shrapnel splattered the shivering LCI.

In that first blast from the mine, which set fire to the main fuel tanks and blew out a hole in the starboard side big enough to drive a Higgins boat through, 41 soldiers in the forward troop compartment were trapped in a fiery furnace, most of them being killed instantly. The first explosion blew two of the soldiers out the hatch and the sheet of flame shot aft through the pilothouse ports, singeing the eyebrows and hair of Morton A. Rabinowitz, radioman third class, USCGR of (796 Eastern Parkway) Brooklyn, N.Y., who was standing inside on the annunciators to the engine room.

But the worst concentration of explosive fire centered forward where many of our crew were working to lower the ramps and on the anti-aircraft gun. Snarski, who was inboard on the port winch on the well deck, was trapped where he stood, getting the full force of the blast in his face, setting his head on fire. He was badly burned in the face, head, hands, legs, and arms. Martin Masariu, fireman first class, USCGR, of (17 North Addison Street) Indianapolis, Indiana, outboard on the winch, was thrown backward almost to the number 1 hatch, or about 15 feet. His hair was blazing. Raymond Macht, seaman first class, USCGR, of (2863 North Oakland Avenue) Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on the starboard winch outboard, was also blasted backward, the flame burning his face. Macht saw

that Masariu's hair was on fire so he quickly slapped his hands over Masariu's head, putting out the fire but burning his own hands. Vincent DiFalco, motor-machinist's mate third class, USCGR, of (63 Terrace Avenue) Providence, R.I., on the winch with Macht, luckily escaped with just burned hands, although he was near the center of the explosion.

Arthur L. Lornson, Jr., seaman first class, USCGR, of (256 Kaukauna Street) Menasha, Wisconsin, standing on the port side just aft of the ramp and forward of the check line, was just about to swing the lead line when we struck the mine. He was hurled overboard in the cold water, coming up astern of the ship. He yelled but because of the noise and confusion no one heard him. The current carried him through some oil over near a piling which he grabbed and hung on 'til he gathered some strength to swim ashore. Just a few seconds after he left the piling an 88 shell hit it directly. Lornson eventually made the beach in a bitter struggle against swirling water.

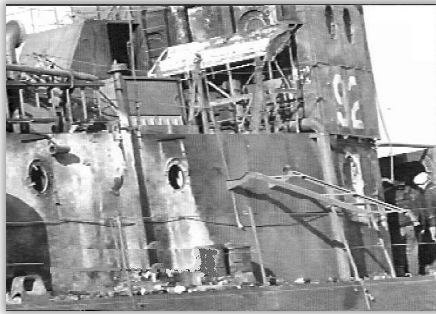
Raymond Norman Patterson, seaman first class, (931 Opelouses Avenue) Algiers, La., was burned on the back of the neck while he was at the port check line, aft of the ramp. On the other check line across the ship both Smith and Richard Paladino, ship's cook third class, of Elizabeth, NJ., were untouched and ran aft to help some of the soldiers who were hit near the stern when an 88 sprayed shrapnel there.

Up on the bow near the forward gun, in charge of men working on the ramps, was Gentry W. Warden, coxswain, USCGR, of (424 Mesquite Street) Ranger, Texas. He was thrown over the gun turret onto the port ramp. Then as an 88 shell hit the ramp a dangerous piece of shrapnel pierced his forearm lodging next to the bone. The port ramp was twisted somewhat away from the ship, making it impossible to lower.

On the forward gun Herbert Nolda, coxswain, USCGR, of Lincoln, Nebraska, went through the

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first blast, but on his way aft was knocked down when an 88 struck the ship close by the No. 2 troop hatch between the bulwarks. I remember Nolda was the first person I saw as I pulled myself up on the conn and looked down an instant. His face was bleeding badly from shrapnel wounds in his jaw.



**USS LCI(L)-92's
Superstructure
damaged.**

The scene was extreme confusion. The piles of K rations and gear for the soldiers were littered over the well deck. Flames and dense smoke were pouring from the hatch, the ramps were damaged making both impossible to lower. Everywhere were faces blackened from the smoke and fire.

Mr. Felder, also on the bow, was shaken up and slightly burned in the face. It was a miracle that Charles R. Higgins, seaman first class, USCGR, of Pottsboro, Texas, with the phones on the forward gun, escaped unharmed, as well as John F. Mateyack, seaman first class, USCGR of (5743 West 90th Place) Oaklawn, Illinois.



**Seaman John F.
Mateyack, USCGR,
crewmember aboard
LCI(L)-92.**

On the port ramp was Lawrence Davison, ship's cook third class, of Erie, Pennsylvania, ready to take in the anchor, but apparently the first blast threw him overboard and he was missing, to our knowledge, for 10 days after

the invasion. We understand now that he later turned up at a hospital in England, wounded. None of our crew has seen him, so his story will have to wait.

Meanwhile, in the engine room, heavy black smoke was forced back through the blower system from the explosion and fire forward. Chief Machinist's Mate Frederick Sutton, USCG, (Address lost) and Spring were on the throttle.

Pitzer was at his declutching station and Gaylord W. Jones, electrician's mate first class, USCGR, of (245 North Broadway) Glendale, California, had both generators running. Thrown off balance in the first shock, the "black gang" stayed at their posts despite the heavy smoke choking them. They had no real idea of what was happening because the phones went dead after an 88 struck the conn. They could feel the ship shaking from the explosions and grabbed their steel helmets. They knew that at any time the one hatch leading up to the deck could be hit and trap them below, but finally they were driven from the engine room in order to breathe.

It was just after they came up from the after hatch that we missed Lester P. Phillips, motor machinist's mate first class, USCGR, of (15161/2 Central Avenue) Charlotte, North Carolina. Stationed at the after winch, "Smilie," as we called him, was knocked overboard and carried out by the currents. He couldn't holler because of the combination of oil and salt water that clogged his mouth. His life jacket saved him for he was in the water about an hour. Exhausted and partially paralyzed from the underwater concussion from shells and mines exploding, Phillips was finally seen by a LCT, which actually scooped him out of the sea with the bow ramp. We thought Phillips was missing until he showed up at the survivor's camp 10 days later.

Meanwhile, I had gathered up some of the precious film in the conn. The Skipper and Lambert

COVER STORY

had of course already left to help below and I knew, with those shells bursting around us, that I was just inviting trouble by staying up there exposed to direct hits and flying shrapnel. It was shortly after I climbed down the ladder to the signal deck that an 88 shell pierced the conn in a blinding flash and explosion, sending a huge piece of shrapnel hurtling through a ready box forward, but fortunately did not set off the ammunition.

After glancing through the forward ports of the pilot house I came back to the hatch and saw Lieutenant (j.g.) George A. Finn, our engineering officer, bravely attempting to cut away the ladder made fast along the upper deck life lines. He was out in the open exposed to the machine gun fire on the beach. He had to give up the attempt when shells began exploding closer. I glanced off the starboard beam and saw the "91" belching black smoke, but I had no time to pay attention in that direction, although I knew the other crew must have had as bad a time if not worse than we.

By now we were drifting in a little farther for the aft anchor cable had slackened. I went below to the main deck amidst the confusion and agony of burned and suffering soldiers. Some of the crew had managed to get one fire hose rigged up and were playing a stream of water through the forward escape hatch. I saw Army officers pleading with their men to get off as quickly as possible. Some soldiers were jumping overboard and others slid or let themselves down a chain up forward of the damaged ramp. The cries of some of the helpless soldiers in the deep water were pitiful. All the while the terrific explosions, fire and heavy smoke filled the air and the littered decks heaved under the impact of still other shells as they ripped through steel plates.

I went aft and saw "Doc" Maleska and "Pop" Hursey aiding the wounded amidst the chaos. Without their cool stand as they swabbed the burned faces, necks and hands of soldiers and our own

crew, there would have been many more bad cases of burns.

By now the order to abandon ship had been passed, but because of the thunderous noise and condition of the ship, not all the crew heard the order immediately. The Skipper had previously asked me to help fight the fire and I had gone forward, climbing over the crates of rations to relieve some of the others coughing from the heavy smoke. I lay low over the boxes playing the dwindling stream of water over the well deck and down the escape hatch of the troop compartment where the dead soldiers lay. I soon realized that it was hopeless to put out the fire with this little trickle of water. It seemed like every few seconds an 88 came whooshing over my head and as I ducked down the violent explosion would vibrate against my head, echoing in my helmet. I think it was then I felt more scared and lonely than at any time that day.

As the bulwarks on each side of me shut off the view I did not know the crew was abandoning ship until Mr. Finn yelled to me. I crawled back over the crates, stopping a couple of times to duck when I heard the whoosh sound of the 88s. Some of the crew and soldiers had gone in a rubber life raft but most of them had to swim for it. I decided to make one last attempt to salvage some of my film so I ran down the companion way, slid down the ladder and grabbed some stuff lying in my bunk. I heard the generators still running and the crew's quarters had not been touched by fire or shells as yet. Everything was as we left it. I even grabbed a hunk of bread on the mess table. I had forgotten to eat breakfast that morning.

**The stern of
LCI(L)-92 after
broaching on
Omaha Beach.**



When I rushed up on deck, keeping close to the side of the cabin, I saw the other raft already filled with the last men. Some others were letting themselves down the rope ladder over the side. I followed the last men over the starboard side as the ship was broaching to. The good old life jacket kept me up and I used my arms and legs like mad to get me ashore. The tide had already reached the high water mark and was flowing out now. My steel helmet kept my head too low and the heavy high shoes kept pulling me down, but I made it alright.

The boys on the raft had a tougher time because of the tide and mines around them. We saw bodies floating face down near us. One 88 hit directly ahead of the raft, spraying the men with water.

DiFalco, who had burned his hands, was struggling in the water, worn out. He saw a dark floating object and tried to grab onto it. But our first class gunner's mate, Michael Robert Zaley, USCG, of (825 North Pennsylvania Avenue) Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania, who had kept our guns in first class condition, was nearby and saw that the object was a mine. He yelled at DiFalco to steer clear. DiFalco did.

Once up on the beach we sank exhaustedly on the pebbles, reaching the lowest point of human existence. But the shock of the 88s around us and the sniper's fire soon brought us to our senses. We began to crawl forward up to a small retaining wall of pilings that held back the earth and grass above the beach. This was the only protection from German shells and the machine gun firing from the hills ahead of us. There we began to dig in. Further down the Navy Beach Battalion men were trying to set up a signal light on the beach for the incoming ships. Each time they started sending a few letters we would hear a "zing" and out of commission would go the light again. Those German snipers were accurate at times. The Army medics and Navy corpsmen ran back and forth aiding the wounded men. Some of the soldiers stretched out along the

beach were a horrible sight with parts of their body shot away. I was impressed time and again at the lack of moaning or cries from the wounded. They lay there still, waiting with haunted eyes, but not asking for help because they knew that every able soldier with a gun was needed forward in the lines.

Now as the tide went out, it left our burning ship high and dry on the beach. Some of us sneaked back aboard, dodging sniper's fire, and we tossed over some canned pea soup and Army blankets. Then we moved down the beach, away from the ship which was still a target and drawing fire. I was still shivering rather violently as I lay down on the beach with my wet clothes and the cold wind from the channel blowing across me. I never realized a human being could vibrate as much as I did then. But there were others too, shaking in the cold.

The only incident that made us smile a little during that grim siege was when portly Jones came marching down the beach with his fishing rod over his shoulder. He had managed to salvage this, which to him was more valuable than food then. Leonard W. Baker, officer's steward third class, USCG, of (26 Charles Street) Charleston, South Carolina, was one of those who went back to the ship. He had his sea bag in the stern steering engine room, which was farthest from the fire.

Baker went below to get some clothes, but suddenly a machine gun opened up, splattering a rat-a-tat on the hull. Baker flew up the ladder, let himself over the side as fast as possible and dug in on the beach. He decided that clothes were not so important when the enemy had the range.

Meanwhile, George William Oswald, seaman first class, USCGR, of (1215 Pine Hollow Road) McKees Rock, Pennsylvania, had dug in along the pilings behind a stalled tank. But soon the Germans began opening up on the tank and Oswald left in a hurry. "It was too hot for me," he said as he joined our main party farther up the beach.

COVER STORY



***LCI(L)-92
stranded on
Omaha Beach.***

The story of the beach has been already told and it is no use to go into it again. Needless to say, we had a grandstand seat the rest of the day to the proceedings, which at times was dismal when we had to watch our own ships, tanks, landing craft and equipment blown sky high when a German 88 scored a hit. But we cheered the tremendous blasting by our heavy Naval ships, whose shells flew over our head with terrifying speed and noise. We watched the first German prisoners, hands on head, come down the beach under guard of Army MPs. They certainly knew the danger of their own guns for they hit the beach stretched flat at the first whoosh sound of the 88s.

In the early evening the Germans began a new barrage and we realized that if we were going to survive that night we would have to dig fox holes along those pilings, which we did, scraping the skin off our hands as we dug through the rocks and rough dirt below. We learned two days later, after being picked up, to our horror, that the Germans had set booby traps just below our foxholes. If we hadn't been rescued that night we probably would have dug in deeper and perhaps blown ourselves up. At any rate, it was nearing midnight while three LCMs managed to get in to the beach about a quarter mile down from us. They were sent in to evacuate wounded and survivors. We were feeling pretty low by then for the tide was once more coming in. In fact it was beating against the mounds of stone and dirt in front of our foxholes and before long would have run us up above the pilings. The oncoming tide on the pebbles sounded just like

machine gun fire, adding to our nervousness.

So when the LCMs hit the beach we walked down the road above the pilings. The full moon rising back of us gave a hideous light to the dead bodies lying along the beach road. Then we saw bodies stacked up like a lumber pile down farther. But we made the boats without drawing any fire. Most of the snipers, however, had been driven out of the hill overlooking the beach, but there was still danger of 88s. We helped the wounded into the boats and then followed them on. Most of our crew stayed together, but Chief Campen, Lambert, Pryzbos and Hurzey were separated and helped to load the very badly wounded on another LCM. We were taken to an LST, waiting a few miles out to unload her cargo and Army troops. But just as we were climbing aboard we had our first German air raid of the night. A German raider swooped by the LST in a long arc, just missing the barrage balloon, to fly along the beach and strafe. We had gotten off that beach just in time.



**Photo SC 193919
Broached *LCI(L)-92* and other landing craft on Omaha
Beach during storm 21 June 1944.**

Completely worn out and hungry we groped along the dark deck and went below. Besides the Army troops and their equipment aboard and the regular Navy crew, there were over 100 badly wounded jammed in the crew's bunks and soldier's

COVER STORY

bunks. So we survivors had to flop down anywhere we could find on the deck. I lay down on the steel deck in a troop compartment where there were some badly wounded soldiers. I was so hungry I couldn't sleep much, but I finally fell off, only to wake almost every hour. During an air raid, when the shrapnel started falling like hail on the decks, we all jumped up mainly because of our nerves. The next morning more wounded were brought aboard, further jamming the ship. We sat out in the channel all day because the Germans were still shelling the beach-head and it was too risky for a big LST. But our heavy ships blasted the coastline and by Thursday we went into the beach and discharged the soldiers and their heavy equipment. Meanwhile, we survivors turned to and helped the medics with the wounded, which we did until Saturday night when we arrived back in England. I'll never forget those peaceful English hills and how good they looked to us after the French coast under fire. All the time that we aided the wounded by serving them their meals, feeding them and washing the canteens and dishes, we did not have any change in clothing until we reached the survivors' base, nor any showers until the

last night aboard the LST. Most of us hadn't brushed our teeth since the night before the invasion. So you can imagine what a motley crew we were that Saturday night after the invasion when we marched off at a Southern British port and were taken to a tent city for the night. The following day, Sunday, we were jammed into a Navy truck and driven over 100 miles across the South to the survivors' base, where we found thousands of other survivors packed in the camp. We were given a mattress and blankets, and for the first time in a week slept comfortably a full and quiet night. Not a man of our crew got up for breakfast that next morning and most of us slept right through to dinner time.

And so ends our invasion week, an experience we will never forget. Will we meet next on some Pacific beach? We hope not, but we will be ready if we must. We know that until we have Berlin and Tokyo the war is not won. And we mean to win.



SALMON, ROBERT M.

Citation:

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the Silver Star Medal to Robert M. Salmon, Lieutenant, U.S. Coast Guard (Reserve), for gallantry as commanding officer of *U.S. LCI(L)-92* while landing assault troops in Normandy, France, on 6 June 1944. Lieutenant Salmon pressed the landing of troops despite the mining of his vessel, a serious fire forward and heavy enemy gunfire. He supervised the unloading of troops, directed the firefighting despite the loss of proper equipment and exhibiting courage of a high degree remained with the ship until it was impossible to control the progress of the fire, and it was necessary to abandon ship over the stern. After abandoning he directed a party searching for firefighting equipment and subsequently fought the fire on another LCI(L) and assisted her commanding officer until she was abandoned.

Authority: U.S. Coast Guard Book of Valor and Supplements

Home of Record: New Jersey



2025 REUNION ROUNDUP

REUNION 2025, IN DAYTONA BEACH WAS A SUCCESS.

The CGCVA Reunion Committee hit a homerun with the selection of the Shores Resort and Spa in Daytona Beach Shores, Florida. This beautiful location and facility offered 71 CGCVA members and 41 spouses and/or friends the opportunity to sit back, relax, and enjoy the perfect weather, sun, sand and beach.



The Shores Resort and Spa from the Atlantic Ocean.

When members were checking in on Sunday and Monday, hundreds of collegiate cheerleaders were checking out who had participated in the 2025 NCAA Cheer and Dance competition. This event brought thousands of competitive cheerleaders and



2025 NCA and NDA National Championships.

spectators to this area from across the country. Our resort had more than one hundred staying for the week prior to our event. The resort handled the transition from one group to the next nearly flawlessly. Following our week, the Resort hosted participants for Daytona's Jeep Week.

The reunion's location demanded a relaxed atmosphere with clothing appropriate for the Florida weather. The opening ceremony was held outdoors on the Resort's Ocean Terrace. Unfortunately, the Sector Commander and District Commander could not attend the opening ceremony nor the awards banquet, due to travel restrictions. However, we overcame the last minute challenge and invited Brenda Redmon from the Daytona Beach Area Convention and Visitors Bureau to welcome all to Daytona Beach and to give a



Opening ceremony on the Ocean Terrace.

short presentation about things to do while in Daytona. The local U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps unit, the Daytona Division from Smyrna Beach, did an excellent job providing the color guard for the opening ceremony and the awards banquet.



USNSCC
Daytona
Division
presenting the
colors at the
opening
ceremony.

2025 REUNION ROUNDUP

The CGCVA Auxiliary has served the CGCVA for many years, and has been a great asset with their silent auction and other activities they perform at each reunion. This reunion was no different. Members jumped in to lend a hand wherever they were needed, including the check-in table, setting up the tables for the business breakfast, awards dinner, and organizing the silent auction and sales. A sincere thanks for their selfless acts and for all they do.

In the past, the business meeting was held as a luncheon. For this reunion we opted for a breakfast meeting rather than the luncheon to give more uninterrupted free time to the attendee and to encourage participation in the meeting.



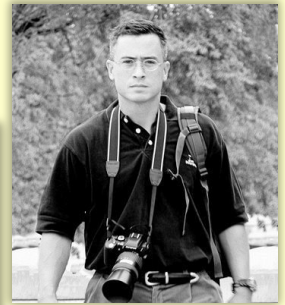
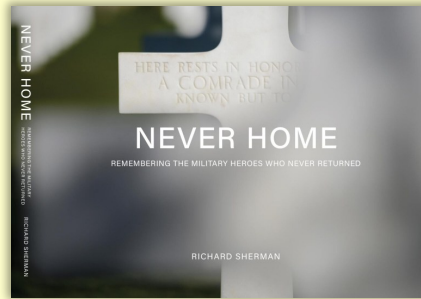
PNP Terry O'Connell and CAPT Wes Pulver, President of the Coast Guard Museum Association conferring at the Tuesday breakfast business meeting.

The guest speakers at the breakfast meeting were Capt. Wes Pulver, USCG (ret), President of the Coast Guard Museum Association; and MCPO Jeff Creighton, USCG (ret), Communication Assistant and Military Family Relations liaison. They presented an informational brief on the progress of the soon-to-be-built Coast Guard museum. They detailed some of the challenges that the project has encountered, but also indicated that the construction is on track for completion in 2026. They encouraged the CGCVA to consider hosting the next reunion in 2027 at the museum. Other locations under consideration include Branson, MO; Seattle, WA; Portland, OR; Portland, ME; and San Antonio, TX.

A major item for discussion was a proposal for an

amendment to the name of the CGCVA without changing the criteria for membership. This issue has been brought up at past reunions, but did not get the traction or advance notice required for a vote. The proposal for amending the name will be addressed later herein this QDL issue. (See the Bylaw amendment proposal in this issue for more information.)

The guest speaker for the Awards Banquet was Navy veteran, author and photographer, Richard Sherman, who provided the members with a photographic presentation of his



Author Richard Sherman.

book, *Never Home, Remembering the Military Heroes Who Never Returned*. Sherman had traveled to 23 American cemeteries in eight countries on three continents to document the life stories of fallen Americans from WWI and WWII.

Several people were recognized for their support of the CGCVA. Below, Barb Weeks receives a certificate of appreciation from NP Bruce Bruni for her steadfast efforts as President of the Auxiliary.



2025 REUNION ROUNDUP



Left: Founding and Life CGCVA member Paul Scotti with his wife, Liz.

Below: CGCVA Founding and Life member Noel Bell on the right is joined by Noel's friend Elfi on the left, and PNP Joe Prince, center.



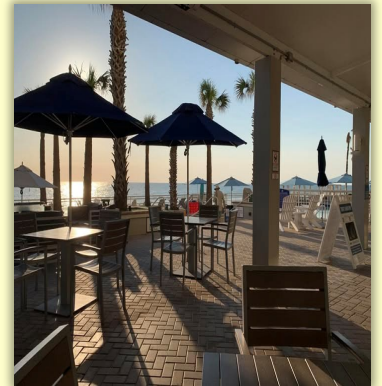
NP Bruce Bruni was surprised in also receiving the Don Kneip Award from PNP Terry O'Connell.

The reunion also hosted two founding members, Paul Scotti and Noel Bell, both of whom were very concerned in discussing the proposed effort to amend the Association's name to include "Expeditionary." while ensuring that the established membership criteria would not change. Their experienced commentary was appreciated by everyone.



both Mike and Sherry.

Several members enjoyed their morning coffee on the eastward facing pool deck while enjoying the 7:00am sunrise. It was the perfect opportunity to start a new day.



Silent and behind the scene supporters, Mike and Sherry Johnson have dedicated their time, efforts, and financial support to the CGCVA for many years. In the photo below, NP President Bruce Bruni is presenting the well-deserved Don Kneip Award to

Another favorite breakfast spot for many was The Cracked Egg Diner located down the street. The owner was hospitable in welcoming the Coasties and commented that the Coast Guard had saved his life twice but promised there would not be a third time.



2025 REUNION ROUNDUP

The reunion hosted several smaller reunions for former shipmates of years past. Squadron Three had attendees from *CGC Castle Rock*, *CGC Hamilton*, and two from *CGC Cook Inlet*. *CGC Sherman* had ten from both the Vietnam War and more recent crews from their 2001 world-wide deployment. There were nine members from Squadron One. The PSUs were strongly represented with a total of eighteen attendees with six from PSU-301 A and B, eight from PSU-308, four from PSU-11, and several others that were from PATFORSWA crews.



USCGC Sherman's 2001 crew L-R: Andy Panelli, PNP Joe Prince, Ed Semler and CGCVA Secretary Mark Planitz.



USCGC Castle Rock Vietnam crew L-R: Tim Green, Gary Sherman, John Liss and Lowell Gibbs.



USCG Hamilton crew from Vietnam tour L-R: Jim Jared, Frank Larder, Dennis Auger, and Bob Leclair.



L-R: James Altieri from PSU-308, John Rieman, PSU-301A, NP Bruce Bruni, PSU-301A & PSU-308, and newly elected Trustee, Dave Hennessey. PSU-301A. Present at the reunion but missing are Ronnie Schmitt from PSU-308, and Bob Ziehm and Tom O'Brien from PSU 301A.

2025 REUNION ROUNDUP



PSU-301B crew L-R: Buddy Pepin, Mark Sullivan, AJ Ford, Eric Bernstein, Alan Wentzell, Larry Jones, Paul Ledut, and Mike Lunetta. Missing from the photo is Tom O'Neil.



PSU-311 crew L-R: LCDR Brett Linden, BCMC Neil Holmdahl, CAPT Raafael Ortiz, CAPT Rob Hanley, Paul Smith, RADM Mike Seward, and BMCN Jon Ostrowski.

Each attendee was presented with a CGCVA goody bag, which was a blue string backpack with several items provided by the resort and the Virginia Beach Convention and Tourism Bureau. It was handy for shopping in town and/or carrying items to the beach. Among the items included in the bag was a revised CGCVA design window sticker, information about area attractions, and the reunion schedule. USAA was also on board to provide information about their company and to include some free items for those in attendance.



The CGCVA offered a long sleeve, lightweight, and wicking beach T-shirt available in various bright colors for purchase when members registered for the reunion. Most attendees purchased one or more of the shirts.



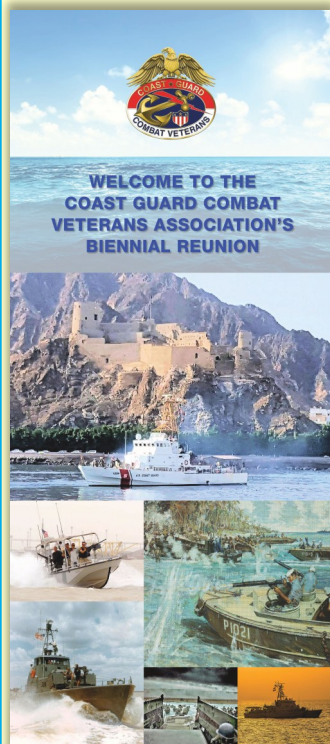
The Ship's Store was in full operation with former SK2 Gary Sherman manning the table of sales. New and older polo shirts sold out as did the new fleece 3/4 zip up sweatshirt. More will be ordered in the coming months, especially in the royal blue color which sold extremely well.



National Treasurer Gary Sherman peddling his Ship Store goods to Walt Viglienza and Rod Wilburn.

2025 REUNION ROUNDUP

Two new free-standing banners were designed for the reunion, one of the new banners was positioned in the resort's lobby and the other outside of the hospitality room. The banners caught the attention of our members, hotel staff and guests alike.

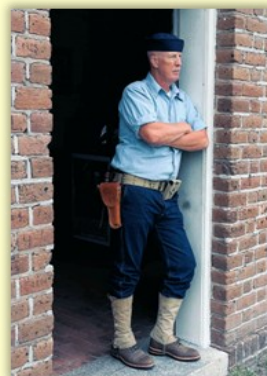


Banner on the left was for the lobby and the one on the right for outside the hospitality room.

The CGCVA mascot, Chieu Hoi, was MIA for the entire reunion. The U.S. Post Office shipped Chieu Hoi from New Orleans to Dave Hennessey's house in Deland, FL, at least two or more weeks prior to the reunion. Chieu Hoi didn't show up until the week after the reunion's completion. Unfortunately, the usual reunion profit from the auction of Chieu Hoi wasn't realized by the delay. Rest assured, Chieu Hoi is in the good hands of Hennessey for the next two years. Dave is a WWII reenactor, traveling around the country representing the Coast Guard and informing the public of its role in times of war, while wearing the uniform of the WWII era Coastie. He will take Chieu Hoi along with him on his travels which is sure

to gain attention everywhere he goes. And don't fret, Hennessey has the ability to spin a yarn about how Chieu Hoi was "captured" almost as well as Terry O'Connell.

There was so much to do in Daytona! A favorite for some was a visit to the Daytona International Speedway. The Motorsports Hall of Fame offered tours with the winning race cars on display from past years.



New CGCVA Trustee Dave Hennessey as a WWII Coastie.



Daytona International Speedway's tour entrance to the Motorsports Hall of Fame.

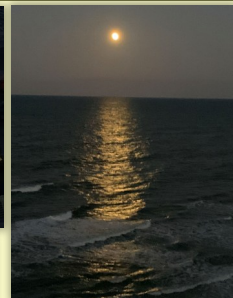
Bill Frost below wishing he could take this car for a spin.



2025 REUNION ROUNDUP

Everyone enjoyed the Daytona Beach Boardwalk and the relaxing environment of the beach. The reunion committee will continue to find places of interest for the future gatherings. We hope you will be encouraged to join us.

Resort's pool at night and moonrise over the beach.



PSU-308 Veteran Ron and Courtney Schmitt.



PSU-308 Veteran James "The Colonel" Altieri enjoying the resort's hot tub.



L-R: Liz Scotti, Betty and Jerry Schambeau, Barbara and Gary Croshaw



Jeannie Bruni detailing how she wrote and published her children's book, *Princess Moonlight and Her Magical Moonbeam*, at the Auxiliary breakfast meeting.



L-R: Jimmy and Linda Kay, Bill Frost, Carla and Carl Nagata



USCGC Sherman shipmates and wives, L-R: George and Marie Pasero, Phylis and Brian Kelly, Jeannie and Russ Allyson.

FEATURED ARTICLE

The Together We Served website is documenting the services of the veterans of America's Armed Forces. One such interviewee is with WWII veteran and CGCVA member, Sidney Weinstein.



SERVICE REFLECTIONS OF A COAST GUARD VETERAN DECEMBER 2024



Weinstein, Sidney RM3

STATUS
USCGR Veteran

SERVICE YEARS
1942 - 1946

RATE
RM-Radioman

PRIMARY UNIT
1944-1946, RM, USS Aquarius (AKA-16)

Shadow Box

Message



Unloading is a task.

but I said I wanted to fly. He said, "I will take care of you, and you will fly." We went for our physicals. I was accepted, but he was rejected for the athlete's foot, which could have contaminated the entire group. I met him in New Guinea and said, "Look what coast you gave me." We never went to flight training as I thought I would. Instead, I became a Radioman on a ship.

Whether you were in the service for several years or as a career, please describe the direction or path you took. Where did you go to boot camp, and what units, bases, ships, or squadrons were you assigned to? What was your reason for leaving?



RM3 Sidney Weinstein.

Please describe who or what influenced your decision to join the Coast Guard.

I was in high school at the time of Pearl Harbor. I had never heard of Pearl Harbor and didn't know where it was. That was true for many of my friends, but we sure found out quickly. We all became Gung Ho and were ready to enlist; however, we

had a couple of months left before graduation, so I opted to finish school. Many of my friends did enlist, going into the US Army Air Corps to become pilots. That was my desire also, but my father said "NO." He was in the First World War, captured by the Germans, and gassed. He was shot, and he lost three fingers on his left hand.

When I said "US Army," he said, "Not MY son." My friend said we could enlist in the US Coast Guard

My service path is as follows: Enlisted as an Apprentice Seaman; boot camp; assorted guard duty in North Philadelphia, and then Cape May, NJ; Radio School in Atlantic City, NJ; USCGDO New York for assignment; finally to the US Army FS-271 as a Radioman. We took the ship from Wheeler Shipyard in NY through the Panama Canal to the west coast for guns and then to Honolulu, HI, and the Pacific Ocean areas south of the equator to New Guinea and then shuttled in the area supplying the Army and Marine units fighting the Japs on this God-forsaken island. Assigned to the USS Aquarius (AKA-16) for further duty in the radio room of this Attack Cargo Ship.

It was an amphibious type with 8 LCMs and 16 LCVPs plus an array of anti-aircraft guns with a complement of plus or minus 500 men of assorted troops of the Marine Corps or the US Army. After the Japanese defeat, we were assigned to Admiral Kinkaid's 7th Fleet to transport Chiang Kai-shek's Chinese troops to North China to fight Mao Tse Tung's communist Chinese troops. We made numerous trips to deliver those troops and finally went back to Okinawa to pick up US Marines and

FEATURED ARTICLE

take them to Seattle, Washington. We finally left the west coast for New York, through the Panama Canal up the east coast to the good old USA, and finally discharged in very late April of 1946.

Of all your duty stations or assignments, which one do you have fondest memories of and why? Which was your least favorite?

To tell you the truth, I did enjoy my duty in the Coast Guard wherever I was stationed. I have no regrets, except that I wasn't allowed to go to pilot training as I had anticipated. I would say, however, that my greatest sea duty station was aboard the *USS Aquarius* (AKA-16) for the exceptional tours, the initial combat in areas unknown to me, and to the friendships that lingered far beyond the service. We had reunions for many years. Believe it or not, I told the people aboard this ship that she was built at Kearny Shipyards in New Jersey, just a few miles from my house. Some of them even thought I had helped build the ship. That's how gullible some of them were.



USS Aquarius (AKA-16).



From your entire military service, describe any memories you still reflect back on to this day.

I think my most memorable experience was being assigned to the US Coast Guard detachment in Camp Lejeune, NC. I was privileged to go to Elizabeth City, NC, to the Coast Guard air station there and allowed to take an anti-submarine warfare flight in a Martin PBM patrol plane over the Atlantic Ocean. That cemented my desire to become a pilot. (I was able to do that later in life, eventually flying for the Civil Air Patrol, an arm of the US Air Force, and becoming a Command Pilot with 15 years of service.)

Of all the medals, awards, formal presentations, qualification badges you received, or other memorabilia, which one is the most meaningful to you and why?

I was never awarded any medals of valor other than the Coast Guard Good Conduct Medal and the Distinguished Service Medal from the state of New Jersey. I would say the Good Conduct Medal and the NJ medal mean the most because, as I think back, if I were allowed to become a B-17, B-24, or a fighter pilot, I could have been awarded all types of medals, but I could have been shot down or killed, as so many of my high school friends were. Therefore, I am glad to have survived WWII and to have done the duty that



JATO—Jet Assist Take Off.

I was assigned to do without too many physical problems. The ones that I did incur are relatively minor compared to some who paid with their lives. They are the Heroes of this country of ours and should never be forgotten.

Which individual(s) from your time in the military stands out as having the most positive impact on you and why?

I would say that, in looking back my two best buddies would be Charles Nickerson and Gus Reibe on my first ship (FS271). We were a very close crew since there were only 18 men assigned, including officers. Charley was a Quartermaster, Gus was a Machinist's Mate, and I was a Radioman, but we became like brothers while we were together on the ship. They were good shipmates, but they were also my friends. I have lost track of them over the years, but I still remember them.

FEATURED ARTICLE



**Coast Guard
Good Conduct
Medal.**

Can you recount a particular incident from your service which may or may not have been funny at the time but still makes you laugh?

One of the funniest incidents, I would say, was when we stopped the FS271 when we reached the equator, and we had a King Neptune ceremony (Shellback). We had a ceremony that included getting our heads shaved. I was the Royal Barber with a set of hand shears, and I shaved everyone

bald including the Skipper. Then we had a concoction of a drink made with everything we had in the galley, from ketchup to vinegar and everything in between. Then, of course, we had to crown a King Neptune for the ceremony, but I forgot who that was.



Crossing the line –King Neptune ceremony. (Photo from WW2 online.org)

What profession did you follow after your military service, and what are you doing now? If you are currently serving, what is your present occupational specialty?

Upon my discharge, I returned home to a waiting job with my father and uncle in a wholesale dry cleaning business that expanded after the war, with returning vets going into business. We did build a drive-thru retail dry cleaner later on, and it was pretty large, with about 15 full-time employees. That lasted for about 25 years, and then it was sold, and I went back to work for Uncle Sam again as a US Post office route carrier. I was a mailman. I then retired from that in 1992 and have been a man of leisure since, doing everything I wanted to do. My greatest joy was flying my airplane with my partner and wife and going wherever we desired, from Montreal to the Bahamas,

New Jersey to Chicago, and everything in between.

What military associations are you a member of, if any? What specific benefits do you derive from your memberships?



**CGCVA Member
Sidney Weinstein.**

I am a life member and past Commander for 25 years of my DAV chapter. I am a life member of and past Commander of my VFW post. Past Senior Vice Commander of the American Legion, a post my father was Commander of. I am a 50-plus member of the Elks Lodge number 200 in Springfield-Hillside, New Jersey. Now, for the most loyal association that I do belong to now, I will tell you that is the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association. I am a Past Trustee and a Life Member. This is my pet organization today.

In what ways has serving in the military influenced the way you have approached your life and your career? What do you miss most about your time in the service?

The military taught me many things, primarily how to grow up, think for myself, and be self-sufficient in my life. It also gave me a goal to learn how to fly, and I did that to my fullest. I have no regrets about being in the military and serving with the United States Coast Guard.

Sadly, Sidney Weinstein passed away in Lakewood, NJ, March 3, 2013.

NEWS AND NOTICES

NEW BILL AIMS FOR PARITY OF THE COAST GUARD WITH DOD SERVICES

The Coast Guard Separation Parity Act (H.R. 2200), sponsored by Navy veteran Rep Jen Kiggans (R-VA) and Rep Jill Tokuda (D-HI) prevents the Coast Guard from involuntarily separating enlisted personnel with more than 18, but less than 20 years of service in uniform. The language of the bill mirrors what is already in place for the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force and Space Force, ensuring that those whose terms of enlistment expires during that time frame, will reach the 20-year mark and receive their additional retirement benefits that they are eligible for when reaching that milestone.

This bill is endorsed by the Navy League, Concerned Veterans for America, Blue Star Families, Military Officers Association of America, Veterans for Mustangs, and With Honor.

“The Coast Guard Separation Parity Act ensures that the brave men and women who wear the uniform in our nation’s maritime force receive the same protections as their military counterparts in other branches. This is about fairness, recognizing the sacrifices of our Coast Guard, and ensuring these servicemembers are not forced out just before reaching retirement eligibility. As a Navy Veteran, I am proud to introduce this bipartisan bill to uphold our commitment to those who serve,” said Congresswoman Kiggans.

Keel laid for guided-missile destroyer *USS Quentin Walsh*

By Zita Ballinger Fletcher, Navy Times

Construction has officially begun on the new Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer *Quentin Walsh* (DDG 132), named after a World War II hero and Navy Cross recipient.

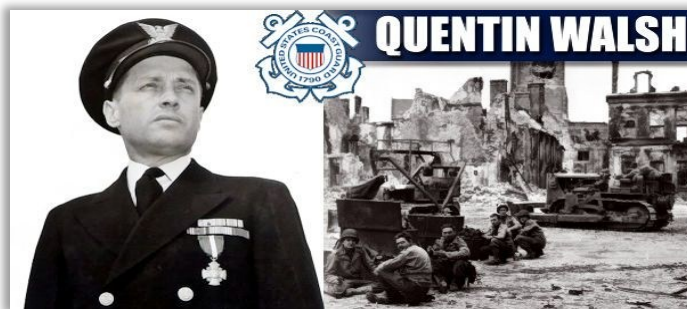
The vessel’s keel was laid May 20 during a ceremony at General Dynamics’ Bath Iron Works in Maine, during which Walsh’s great-granddaughter, Madison Ann Zolper, welded herb initials into the keel plate as is customary for a ship’s sponsor.



Walsh, a captain in the U.S. Coast Guard, helped plan the capture of Cherbourg in the days leading up to the invasion of

Normandy on D-Day on June 6, 1944. He earned his place in history when, in a series of daring enterprises, he captured about 750 German soldiers with a force of 53 men and liberated 52 U.S. paratroopers in the wake

of the D-Day landings. He continued to lead a life of military and community service after the war.



“We are honored to mark the beginning of the construction for the future *USS Quentin Walsh* and celebrate his legacy with his family. DDG 132 will provide our Navy with critical strategic capabilities to support Fleet readiness,” said Capt. Jay Young, Arleigh Burke-class destroyer program manager of Program Executive Office Ships, in a release.

The vessel will be equipped with AN/SPY-6(V)1 Air and Missile Defense Radar, a four-sided phased array radar that can defend against a wide variety of missiles, including hypersonic missiles, ballistic missiles and cruise missiles. Ships equipped with SPY-6 radar technology can also counter threats from surface vessels and the air, as well as electronic attacks.

NEWS AND NOTICES

DHS SECRETARY NOEM ANNOUNCES NEW CG LEADERSHIP AND FORCE DESIGN 2028

DHS Secretary Kristi Noem announced at the Coast Guard Academy's commencement ceremony Force Design (FD2028) a blueprint to transform the Coast Guard into a stronger, more ready and capable fighting force, and advocating for funding support. She said, "Now more than ever, the American people need a strong and capable Coast Guard. The Coast Guard must not simply evolve, it must revolutionize how it functions and operates to ensure decisive advantage over adversaries. This requires a

fundamental change. Force 2028 is the bold blueprint needed to drive urgent action and win."

Secretary Noem also announced President Trump's nomination of ADM Kevin E. Lunday to serve as the 28th Commandant of the Coast Guard.

FD2028 calls for the establishment of a secretary of the Coast Guard that will report directly to the secretary of DHS, and for many other initiatives that can be found at www.news.uscg.mil.

ADM Lunday stated, "Force Design 2028 is the Coast Guard's way forward. Under the leadership of Secretary Noem, we are moving out today to aggressively implement transformational change."

HAPPY 102nd BIRTHDAY TO THE CGCVA'S NEWEST MEMBER

We celebrate the 102nd birthday of Mr. Thomas Taylor, a WWII veteran and the newest member of the CGCVA.

Mr. Taylor of Harrisburg, PA, served in the Navy, receiving the European-African-Middle Eastern Area Campaign Medal, the WWII Victory Medal, and the American Area Campaign Medal.



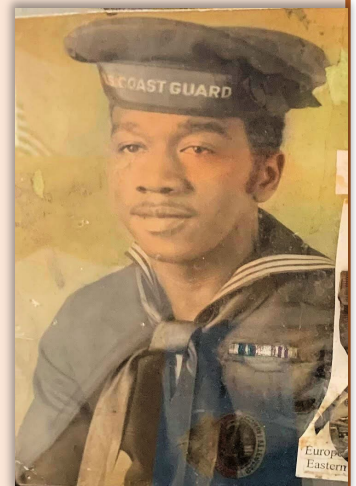
Mr. Thomas Taylor proudly displaying his CGCVA lifetime membership certificate.

Taylor was born in 1923 in Camden, SC, later moving to West Chester, PA., where he entered the USCG on June 3, 1943, in Philadelphia, PA, and was discharged on April 2, 1946, as a STM1/C. He served aboard *USS Mills* (DE383), and *USS Falgout* (DE/DE324), both being *Edsall* Class destroyer escorts.

Mr. Thomas went to work as a welder at Gieger Product at Todd Shipyard in Brooklyn, N. Y. Upon retirement, he joined the National Association of Active and Retired Federal Employees, where he was appointed Legislative Officer, Chapter 664, and Secretary of the Philadelphia Area Legislative Congress and Secretary to the Philadelphia Naval Yard Retirees Club.

Tom and his wife Dorothy lived for 50 years on Chew Ave. in Philadelphia and had one child, Thomas Taylor, Jr., who later served in Vietnam. His son died in 1983 and his wife died in 2008. In 2022, Taylor moved to the Butler Street Senior Living Facility where he resides today.

We welcome Mr. Taylor aboard to the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association and sincerely wish him a very happy 102nd birthday.



A very much younger Thomas Taylor in his WWII Coast Guard uniform.

NEWS AND NOTICES

CGCVA Life Member Rick DeChant Honored at NFL Draft for Salute to Service Hall of Heroes

At this year's NFL Draft, CGCVA Life Member Rick DeChant received a remarkable honor: he was selected as the Cleveland Browns' representative for induction into the inaugural *NFL Salute to Service Hall of Heroes*—a national recognition of individuals making a significant impact on the lives of military families. Out of 32 nominees, one from each NFL team, DeChant stood out not only as a long-time advocate for veterans but also as the sole U.S. Coast Guard nominee.



All inductees got a custom-made football with their name on it in addition to a gold inductee's medallion and a custom challenge coin. Pictured here is Rick standing with his football.

DeChant, Senior Advisor Emeritus of the Northeast Ohio Foundation For Patriotism (NEOPAT), was humbled by the experience and proud to represent the Northeast Ohio region. The moment was made even more meaningful by the Cleveland Browns' deep ties to the U.S. Coast Guard through legendary player and retired Captain Otto Graham. Wearing the team's colors, DeChant said he hoped he made the Captain proud.

The draft itself was a spectacle, with crowds in Green Bay estimated at over 280,000—more than doubling the city's population for the event. Each inductee received first-class treatment, but for DeChant, the highlight was standing on behalf of the

Coast Guard, those who continue to serve our nation, and local veterans that support them.

NEOPAT continues to partner with the Cleveland Browns and other organizations like CrossCountry Mortgage to serve military families throughout Northeast Ohio.

DeChant praised the Browns' community outreach team, especially Jenner Tekancic, for their unwavering support and collaboration in helping military families.



Rick and his wife, Sharon, standing outside Lambeau Field before the ceremony.

Below is a photo of Rick at the induction ceremony. On the left is

David Woodruff, of the Bob Woodruff Foundation, brother of ABC News war correspondent, Bob Woodruff, who was seriously wounded in Iraq by an IED. On the right is Demarus Ware, former Cowboys pro-bowl player and Football Hall of Fame inductee. Ware was raised in an Air Force Family and is involved with the NFL's salute to Service.

Bravo Zulu to Rick DeChant, for his selfless dedication to the veterans of Northeast Ohio, and for his award in representing the U.S. Coast Guard.

Rick had served with PSU 302 for Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm. He also served as the XO of PSU 308, deploying to Kuwait in 2003 / 2004 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Congratulations Rick, well deserved.



NEWS AND NOTICES

2025 INGHAM REUNION September 30, October 1, and October 2, 2025, in Key West, FL.

Great news, some of the costs for the *Ingham's* biennial reunion have been underwritten by several anonymous donors and the costs for the three-day event have been significantly reduced. The cost for participating in the events of all three days is \$125 per person, or \$120 per couple.

The nightly rate for staying at the Grand Key Double Tree by Hilton in Key West is \$179 per night for September 30 through October 2. There is also the mandatory city and state tax of 12.5% that cannot be waived. The hotel has waived the \$30 per night resort fee along with the nightly parking rate for a standard vehicle.

Hotel reservations may be made through the *USCGC Ingham* Association at: <https://www.inghamasso.org/> or can be made by calling the Double Tree Hotel Key West at 800-222-8733 or 888-310-1540.

Reservations for the Doubletree Hotel Key West must be completed by August 27, 2025.

Paragus Publishing Releases Coast Guard Veteran's Book, *The Beacon*

By Roger M. Schmidt

Goodyear, Arizona—Senior Chief Roger M. Schmidt, a Past Commander of VFW Post 6298, Pleasanton CA, and currently a member of Post 12098, Buckeye, AZ. has released his first book, *The Beacon*, through his Paragus Publishing

imprint.

Over 15 years in the research and writing, *The Beacon* is a dual-timeline adventure on the high seas of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans that covers World War 2 and the Viet Nam War. The story follows two U.S. Coast Guard members separated by a generation but with a common goal: to serve.

The Beacon is about the journey of two Coast Guardsmen, Lloyd Wagner and Bob Erickson, who joined the Coast Guard back in the days when the Coast Guard's motto was "You have to go out, but you don't have to come back."

The Beacon takes us from... a sleepy lighthouse on the shore of Green Bay to 40 foot waves and hurricane-force winds in the north Atlantic... from the humdrum routine aboard a Coast Guard Cutter on Ocean Station November in the Pacific to the zing and whine of a deadly firefight in the jungles of Vietnam... from a U-boat attack off Iceland... to a Pan Am passenger plane ditching in the Pacific... from lazy days on the beaches of Hawaii... to the chaos and mayhem of an ammunition ship explosion in Guadalcanal.

We follow the lives of Wagner and Erickson as they rise through the ranks of the Coast Guard from seaman recruit to Chief Petty Officer to Chief Warrant Officer, and, ultimately Commanding Officer. We watch them as they grow up, fall in love, have families, and become the kind of leaders that are the backbone of the United States Coast Guard. The book is available as a paperback, hardcase, and e-book on Amazon.

AUTHOR CONTACT:

ROGER M. SCHMIDT. PHONE: (925) 548-3256

EMAIL: rogngina@sbcglobal.net

SHIP'S STORE

SHIP'S STORE ORDERING
If you have questions, please email Russ
Allyson at:
rallyson@cgcvva.org

MAIL ORDERS TO:
Russ Allyson
193 Durham Point Road
Durham, NH 03824
PLEASE ADD \$6.75 S&H

ON-LINE ORDERING
Debit/Credit Card payments are made
via the CGCVA website:
www.coastguardcombatvets.org

CGCVA SHIP'S STORE



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Coast Guard
Squadron One
Patch \$8.25



Explosive
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Campaign
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\$6.00 each

Each
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Gulf of Tonkin
Yacht Club
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navy blue
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CGCVA Flex
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S/M, L/XL
CG blue
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CGCVA
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Velcro strap
ball cap
navy blue
\$27.50

Camo Arid
CGCVA Flex
Fit ball cap
sizes
S/M, L/XL
\$27.50



New CGCVA
Challenge Coin
\$12.00 each



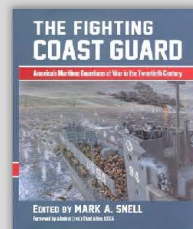
New CGCVA
Lapel Pin
\$7.75 each



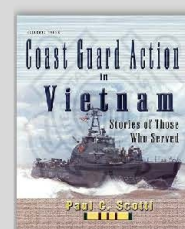
High-performance polo
shirt with embroidered
CGCVA logo
S, M, L, XL, - \$44.00
XXL - \$47.00



1/4 Zip, 9oz./yd, 60% cotton/40%
polyester fleece sweatshirt
with embroidered CGCVA logo
Navy Blue or Royal Blue
M, L, XL, XXL
\$58.00



The Fighting
Coast Guard
by Major Mark A.
Snell, USA (ret)
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Coast Guard Action
in Vietnam by
Paul Scotti, PNP
\$25.00



Large 4"
diameter CGCVA
logo patch \$7.50



Small 2-1/2"
CGCVA logo
patch \$5.50

INCLUDE **\$6.75** FOR SHIPPING AND HANDLING (S&H) FOR ALL MAIL-IN
ORDERS. S&H IS AUTOMATICALLY ADDED TO ORDERS MADE THROUGH THE
CGCVA WEBPAGE.

COAST GUARD COMBAT VETERANS ASSOCIATION



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(Please Print Legibly)

PERSONAL INFORMATION



Last Name	First Name	MI	Suffix	DOB
Street Address		City	State	Zip
Telephone:	Cell	Home	Other	Email

For those with a second address, please submit that address to cgcva@comcast.net. When switching between the primary and secondary addresses make sure that you notify the CGCVA of the address change so that you will continue to receive the Quarterdeck Log. To notify the CGCVA of a permanent address change, send an email with the new address to cgcva@comcast.net.

MILITARY SERVICE INFORMATION

Service Branch and Dates of Service	Grade, Rank, Rate at Time of Discharge or Retirement
(Indicate broken service or other service affiliation below: (continue on reverse, if necessary))	
Service Branch and Dates of Service	Grade, Rank, Rate at Time of Discharge or Retirement

Qualifying Service Medal Awarded (See Ribbons above)	Dates in Theatre of Operations and Name of Campaign / Operation	Ship(s) or Unit(s) Assigned at Time of Deployment

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

This application MUST be accompanied by a copy of one or more of the following documents indicating applicant's participation in, or in direct support of, combat contingency operations: DD-214 (all pages), DD-215, NAV/CG-523, letter(s) of awards or other "official" documentation stating participation WHILE A MEMBER OF THE U.S. COAST GUARD. If necessary, a certified statement from a former shipmate who is a member of CGCVA and in "good standing," stating that they served with applicant in a specific unit during a deployment location and timeframe that qualifies for membership.

NOTE: DUES INCREASED ON 01 JANUARY 2025

Dues: \$47.50 for two-year membership. For Active Duty, and Long Term ADOS, initial membership is 4 years.

Send application and payment to:
Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association
P.O. Box 720
Paducah, KY 42086-0720
Make checks payable to: CGCVA
Questions: 410-690-8000

Print Name of CGCVA Sponsor or Referral if Appropriate

Signature of Applicant

Date

Check appropriate box: Regular Membership ☐

Associate Membership ☐

Other ☐

Please! Look at the Exp. Date on your label
and renew if due. The Quarterdeck Log

Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association
P.O. Box 720

West Paducah, KY 42086-0720

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Coast Guard Port Security Unit **308**



The photo was taken of Port Security Unit 308 as they prepared for their 2003-04 deployment to the Port of Shuiaba, Kuwait, with some that are now members of the CGCVA. Several of them have suffered serious medical ailments that are associated with the heavily polluted environment present at Camp Spearhead that was located inside the industrial port.