



# Coast Guard Retiree Council — Northwest



# RETIREE NEWSLETTER

*“They Also Serve”*

VOLUME X ISSUE 1

## COAST GUARD SELECTS D13 SAILOR TO BE NEW MCPO-CG

Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Thad Allen has selected the service’s top active duty Master Chief Petty Officer. District Thirteen’s own Master Chief Boatswain’s Mate Michael Leavitt will be the next master chief petty officer of the Coast Guard. He will relieve MCPOCG Charles “Skip” Bowen during a change-of-watch ceremony May 21 at Training Center Cape May, N.J.

“I’ve know him a while and I can tell you that he is a pretty humble person who has accomplished some awesome things during his Coast Guard career,” MCPO-CG Bowen recently wrote.

Leavitt, currently the senior enlisted adviser to the deputy commandant for operations, enlisted on 9 May 1982 and attended recruit training at Cape May, New Jersey. “Leavitt has demonstrated his commitment to our core values of honor, respect and devotion to duty by his outstanding performance during a 27-year Coast Guard career,” Allen wrote in an ALLCOAST message.

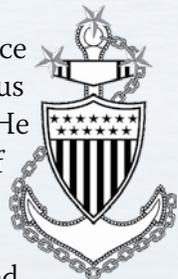
Leavitt’s assignments include: Officer in Charge at stations Maui; CGC Point Doran (WPB-82375); Hatteras Inlet, N.C.; Ocracoke, N.C.; Humboldt Bay, Calif.; Tillamook Bay, Ore.; and Cape Disappointment, Wash, CGC Naushon (WPB 1311). XPO on CGC Kanawha (WLR-75407), and crew on CGC Boutwell (WHEC 719), Station Coos Bay, OR and Station Umpqua River, Oregon. He earned a permanent cutterman insignia, surfman insignia, boat forces operations insignia and officer-in-charge afloat and ashore devices.

Leavitt has been awarded the Coast Guard Medal, a Meritorious Service Medal with an operational distinguishing device, five Coast Guard commendation medals with the operational distinguishing device, three Coast Guard achievement medals with the operational



*MCPO-CG seletee Michael Leavitt in a retouched photo showing him as he will look in the uniform of his new assignment.*

distinguishing device and numerous other awards. He is a graduate of the Chief Petty Officers Academy, class 34. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree and is pursuing a Master of Arts Training and Education degree.



## PAPP TO BE CG COMMANDANT

*By Susan Schept - Staff writer, NavyTimes*

The White House nominated Vice Adm. Robert J. Papp Jr. to succeed Adm. Thad Allen as commandant of the Coast Guard.

If confirmed by the Senate, Papp would relieve Allen on May 25. Allen plans to retire July 1 after 39 years in the Coast Guard.

Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano applauded President Barack Obama's nomination.

"The Coast Guard plays a vital role in protecting our nation — securing America's borders, protecting our ports, and providing critical aid during disasters," Napolitano said in a statement. "Vice Admiral Papp's extensive knowledge of the Coast Guard's operations and broad mission will strengthen our efforts to ensure the nation's maritime security."

The Senate likely will decide whether to approve the nomination in March, said CDR Mark Fedor, special assistant to the commandant. If approved, Papp would serve a four-year term.

Allen was unavailable for comment, but Fedor said that Allen has known Papp "for many years and he is confident in his leadership and his abilities to lead the Coast Guard."

As Coast Guard Commandant, Papp will lead one of the department's largest components, composed of about 42,000 active-duty men and women and more than 7,000 civilian employees.

Papp, 57, is Commander of the Coast Guard At-



VADM Robert Papp Jr., Commander LANTAREA

lantic Area and Defense Force East, functioning as the operational commander for all missions within the eastern half of the world. Prior to assuming command of the Atlantic area, he served as the chief of staff of the Coast Guard in Washington.

Papp served as 9th Coast Guard District commander from 2004 to 2006. His Coast Guard

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### E-MAIL NEWSLETTER

Electronic mail notification resumed with the November 2007 newsletter published by the CG Retiree Council—NW. If you have already signed up for this notification, it is not necessary to submit a change. To add your name, or change your prior e-mail address, use the Retiree Council—NW website: <http://www.cgretirenw.org>. To make the change "click" on **MAIL COORDINATOR**.

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COAST GUARD RETIREE COUNCIL NORTHWEST  
USCG Integrated Support Command  
Worklife (Retiree Council)  
1519 Alaskan Way South, Bldg. 1  
Seattle, Washington 98134

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career includes service on six Coast Guard cutters and posts such as chief of the capabilities branch in the defense operations division; chief of the fleet development team; and chief of the Coast Guard's Office of Congressional Affairs.

Papp graduated from the Coast Guard Academy and holds a master's in national security and strategic studies from the Naval War College and a master's in management from Salve Regina College.

## TRICARE: HELP IS READY WHEN YOU ARE

*By Brian P. Smith*

*TriWest Healthcare Alliance*

Stress is a natural part of life. Kids, spouses, parents: the combination of family, holidays, deployments and homecomings can add up and start to affect your everyday life and the lives of your loved ones. Fortunately, TRICARE counseling is ready when you are.



### TriWest Online Care: Assistance 24/7

The TRICARE Assistance Program (TRIAP) offers a 24/7 option for private, one-to-one online counseling (chat or videoconference) that can work around your busy schedule. TRIAP counseling is available in the U.S. and is a non-medical discussion of personal life issues, like relationships and stress management. This service is confidential and non-reportable. Eligible service members and their families can use TRIAP an unlimited number of times and won't need a referral or authorization.

In the TRICARE West Region, eligible TRICARE beneficiaries start at the TriWest Online Care Portal ("Click to Chat" at [www.triwest.com/onlinecare](http://www.triwest.com/onlinecare)) or call the TriWest Behavioral Health Contact Center (BHCC) at 1-888-TRIWEST (874-9378) to schedule a TRIAP appointment. The Skype® videoconferencing application (a free

download) is used to connect you with a licensed assistance counselor using a webcam over an Internet connection.

The counselors can help explain the program and help you access the care you need as part of your TRICARE entitlement.

### More Online Resources

To help you explore topics such as depression, parenting, relationships and stress on your own, an extensive Resource Library with both clinical and practical information is available online through TriWest's Behavioral Health Portal ([www.triwest.com/bh](http://www.triwest.com/bh)). You can also access the TriWest Online Care chat feature from this portal.

TriWest's trained professionals can help you today. Follow the "Click to Chat" link on [www.triwest.com/bh](http://www.triwest.com/bh) to chat live, 24/7, with a BHCC representative or call 1-888-TRIWEST (874-9378) to get started.

## ONE YEAR FILING DEADLINE FOR TRICARE CLAIMS

*By Tyler Patterson and Shari Lopatin*

*TriWest Healthcare Alliance*

When you visit the doctor, you probably pay your co-pay, then leave.

But what if you visit an out-of-network doctor or have other health insurance? You might need to file your own TRICARE claim, something your TRICARE network provider is required to do for you.

That's why you should know this important rule: You have one year, from the date of your medical visit or discharge for inpatient services, to file that claim. Once you do that, TRICARE will process your claim and send you any applicable reimbursement, depending on your plan.

To file your own TRICARE claim, follow these four steps:

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1. Ensure your information in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) is current. This can be done in several ways:

**In Person** at a military personnel office or uniformed services ID card-issuing facility

**Online** through the DEERS Web site by visiting [www.tricare.mil/deers](http://www.tricare.mil/deers)

**By Mail** by sending the required information to Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office, Attention: COA, 400 Gigling Road, Seaside, CA 93955-6771

**Via Fax**, 1-831-655-8317, or

**By Phone**, 1-800-538-9552.

2. Once you update DEERS, TriWest Healthcare Alliance, which administers TRICARE throughout the West Region, will be notified of any changes. Verify with TriWest the changes have been made before proceeding.

3. Complete and sign the *Beneficiary Claim Form*, [DD Form 2642](#). If you were injured at work, home, or in an accident, you may need to complete the *Statement of Personal Injury—Possible Third Party Liability Form*, [DD Form 2527](#). Both forms are available by clicking on “Find a Form” at [www.triwest.com](http://www.triwest.com). Please note if you were injured and go to a hospital, hospitals file your claims for you. Yet some emergency room doctors, urgent care doctors, radiologists or ambulance companies may not file claims.

4. Attach a copy of the doctor’s bill to the claim form (DD Form 2642). Make sure the billing information includes the name and address of the person who treated you, the date and place of each service, a description of each service, the charge for each service, and the diagnosis. If the diagnosis is not on the bill, remember to complete “Block 8a” on *DD Form 2642*. After that, mail the information within the one-year deadline to:

West Region Claims

PO Box 77028  
Madison, WI 53707-1028

**Have Other Health Insurance?**

If you have primary health insurance, other than TRICARE or Medicare, your provider needs to submit your claim to that company first. After your primary insurance company pays its portion, some providers will then file the secondary claim with TRICARE. If they don’t, you will send in the claim. Make sure to attach your Explanation of Benefits showing the amount to be paid to the provider.

Registered users of [triwest.com](http://triwest.com) receive Quick-Alert notifications when their claims status changes. You can also learn how to Go Green with statements on [www.triwest.com/gogreen](http://www.triwest.com/gogreen). For more information and exceptions to the one-year filing deadline for claims, visit [www.triwest.com/beneficiary/claims.aspx](http://www.triwest.com/beneficiary/claims.aspx).



## NEW WEB TOOL MAKES FINDING NEW DOCTORS EASY

By Tyler Patterson

TriWest Healthcare Alliance

Just enrolled into TRICARE Prime and want to know your options for doctors? Moved to a new location and need to find a doctor? Not sure if the nearest military clinic is accepting new patients?

It used to take a phone call or car trip to answer these questions. Now you can save the trip and the call, and answer all these questions online using TriWest’s Prime Enrollment Eligibility tool at [www.triwest.com/eligibility](http://www.triwest.com/eligibility). All you need is your address and an Internet connection. Within seconds, you’ll have a color-coded map of the options in your area.

**TRICARE continued on page 4**

**TRICARE continued from page 4**

Not only will the Prime Enrollment Eligibility tool show your options, but it will walk you through your next steps. For example, if the nearest available clinic is more than a 30-minute drive, it will remind you to complete the Access to Care Waiver on your Prime application. If it's determined you're not eligible for TRICARE Prime, the Prime Enrollment Eligibility tool will inform you of other TRICARE plan options and direct you how to complete enrollment.

If the tool determines you are eligible for Prime and suggests you enroll at a particular clinic, it will present that clinic's contact information. Don't forget you can use the Beneficiary Web Enrollment (BWE) site to enroll in TRICARE Prime, make your initial payment and select a primary care manager (some exceptions apply). If you're already enrolled in TRICARE Prime, you can use BWE to manage your family members' enrollment and order new ID cards. Learn more about BWE at [www.triwest.com/bwe](http://www.triwest.com/bwe).

While you're online, you can also choose to "Go Green" and receive paperless Explanation of Benefits statements at [www.triwest.com/gogreen](http://www.triwest.com/gogreen).



## 2010 PACIFIC NORTHWEST COAST GUARD BALL

SEPTEMBER 25, 2010,  
BELLEVUE, WASHINGTON

Hosted by Navy League of the United States-  
Lake Washington Council

It's happening again!

Nearly 700 members of Team Coast Guard enjoyed a memorable evening in 2007 and 2008. Officers, enlisted, reserve, and auxiliary – plus people from other services -- had a great time at this event. Anyone who attended will tell you that it's formal, but by no means stuffy.

We'll enjoy a fine dinner, service toasting, appropriate ceremonies, a guest speaker, and dancing (the band is great and won't damage your hearing).

More details will be announced as they become available. In the meantime, please reserve the date.

Ticket prices don't cover costs. Anyone wishing to help sponsor the event is asked to contact Ball Chairman Roger Ponto: [Roger@ponto.com](mailto:Roger@ponto.com).

Reservation information and other details will be announced when available under 'EVENTS' at the Coast Guard Retiree Northwest Website: <http://cgretirenw.org>.

## COAST GUARD WOULD CUT 1,100 IN 2011 BUDGET

The Coast Guard has requested \$10.08 billion for fiscal 2011, down 3.3 percent from the \$10.42 billion appropriated for fiscal 2010. The budget also reflects a 2.6 percent cut in active-duty end strength.

**As part of the budget request, the Coast Guard would get money to replace aging aircraft and ships, but also to decommission some of its older assets including the high-endurance cutters Hamilton, Chase, Rush, Jarvis and Acushnet.**

Coast Guard officials believe they can get by without them, as two national security cutters should be operational by 2011: Bertholf already has been commissioned, and Waesche should be commissioned by May.

"Bringing on two national security cutters in

[Budget continued on page 6](#)

**Budget continued from page 5**

FY11 and expansion of the law enforcement detachment program will alleviate some of the lost patrol time," Capt. Ron LaBrec, chief of Coast Guard Public Affairs, wrote in an e-mail response.

Those actions will not, however, replace all the operating hours of the high endurance cutters that are being removed from service without fiscal 2011 replacements, he said.

"There will be a decrease in cutter operations, and we will manage our available vessels to the most vital activities as a result," LaBrec wrote. "This short term decrease in capacity is needed so that we can invest in continuing to replace aging cutters and aircraft with modern, more capable assets so that the Coast Guard can successfully accomplish our missions into the future."

The Coast Guard also plans to get by with 1,112 fewer active-duty billets from among the 41,000-plus active-duty force. The bulk of those billets will be eliminated with the decommissioning of the five cutters, five maritime safety and security teams and nine air craft. "The main thrust is to reduce recruitment and bring in fewer people," LaBrec said.

As part of the operations budget request, the Coast Guard plans to decommission maritime safety and security teams in San Francisco; New Orleans; New York; Anchorage, Alaska; and Kings Bay, Ga. Part of that \$18.2 million in savings — \$3.6 million — will be rolled into the Law Enforcement Detachment program to meet higher demand for those services in support of combatant commanders and counter-drug operations in the Caribbean and eastern Pacific, according to the budget request. The remainder of the savings will be put toward recapitalization of ships and aircraft, said Lt. Nadine Santiago, a spokeswoman for the Coast Guard.

The service also will retire four HU-25 Falcon aircraft; remove five HH-65s Dolphins from service; and close air facilities in Muskegon, Mich., and Waukegan, Ill.



*USCGC ACUSHNET (WMEC 167) is America's Oldest Commissioned Cutter*

## USCGC ACUSHNET HISTORY

The last of the Diver Class of Coast Guard Cutters, USGCC ACUSHNET (WMEC 167) was built by the Basalt Rock Co. of Napa, CA and originally commissioned as the USS SHACKLE (ARS 9) in 1944. SHACKLE served as a rescue and salvage ship for the US Navy through World War Two, conducting salvage work, minesweeping and other duties at Pearl Harbor, Midway, Guam, Iwo Jima, Okinawa among many other places. SHACKLE earned three battle stars during World War Two, from the assault on Iwo Jima, the assault on Okinawa, and the East China Sea minesweeping operations.

### Transfer to the U.S. Coast Guard

In 1946, ACUSHNET was commissioned as a Coast Guard Cutter. In her long and varied career, ACUSHNET has been designated as a tug (WAT), an oceanographic vessel (WAGO), and as a medium endurance cutter (WMEC). She is the second Coast Guard cutter to bear the name ACUSHNET.

First homeported in Portland, Maine as a Coast Guard Tug, ACUSHNET earned a valiant reputation as a dependable friend to fishermen and boaters in distress. From 1968 to 1978, she supported the National Data Buoy Project while designated as an oceanographic vessel, originally out of San Diego, California and then out of Gulfport, Mississippi. In 1978, ACUSHNET was reclassified as a medium endurance cutter and served until 1990 enforcing maritime laws in

**[Acushnet continued on page 7](#)**



*USCGC Rush (WHEC 723) is one of four 378' cutters to be decommissioned with 2011 budget cuts. Cuts will result in the loss of nearly one-third of all large cutters in the USCG inventories.*

### **Acushnet continued from page 6**

the Gulf of Mexico, Atlantic Ocean, and Caribbean Sea. ACUSHNET also executed other duties such as environmental protection, boating safety, search and rescue, and participated in Sealift 1980, the Cuban refugee crisis. In 1990, ACUSHNET changed homeport to Eureka, California and patrolled the West Coast from the southern waters of California to the northern waters of the Bering Sea.

### **ACUSHNET Today**

While both sister ships have been decommissioned, ACUSHNET continues to serve as a medium endurance cutter in the Pacific Ocean, Gulf of Alaska, Bering Sea, and Arctic Ocean. Previous plans would have brought all of the 213ft class cutters out of service by the mid-1990s, but Coast Guard policy reviews continue to extend the service-life of ACUSHNET as suitable replacements have not been identified to meet the demanding operating environment. ACUSHNET changed homeport to Ketchikan, Alaska in 1998 where she primarily patrols the Gulf of Alaska and the Bering Sea. Her primary missions include search and rescue, homeland security, maritime law enforcement, and environmental protection. The cutter's motto, "Juvate, Servate, Confirmate," means "Help, Save, Strengthen."

## **LORAN-C TERMINATION INFORMATION**

LORAN-C was originally developed to provide radio-navigation service for U.S. coastal waters & was later expanded to include complete coverage of the continental U.S. as well as most of Alaska. Twenty-four U.S. LORAN-C stations work in partnership with

Canadian and Russian stations to provide coverage in Canadian waters and in the Bering Sea. The system provides better than 0.25 nautical mile absolute accuracy for suitably equipped users within the published areas. and provides navigation, location, and timing services for both civil and military air, land and marine users. It is approved as an en route supplemental air navigation system for both Instrument Flight Rule (IFR) and Visual Flight Rule (VFR) operations. The LORAN-C system serves the 48 continental states, their coastal areas, and parts of Alaska. Dedicated Coast Guard men and women have done an excellent job running and maintaining the LORAN-C signal for 52 years. It is a service and mission of which the entire Coast Guard can be proud.

In accordance with the DHS Appropriations Act, the U.S. Coast Guard terminated the transmission of all U.S. LORAN-C signals effective 2000Z 08 Feb 2010. At that time, the U.S. LORAN-C signal will be unusable and permanently discontinued. This termination does not affect U.S. participation in the Russian American or Canadian LORAN-C chains. U.S. participation in these chains will continue in accordance with international agreements. The Canadian Coast Guard has also [issued a statement](#), which is shown on their website.

The Coast Guard strongly urges mariners currently using LORAN-C for navigation to shift to a GPS navigation system and become familiar with its operation as soon as possible. Mariners will not be able to rely upon LORAN-C for navigation as of Feb. 8, 2010.

LORAN-C has, as a result of technological advancements in the last 20 years, become an antiquated system no longer required by the armed forces, the transportation sector or the nation's security interests and is used only by a small percentage of the population. The Coast Guard understands that LORAN-C is still used by a small segment of the public and that those users will have to shift to GPS or other systems; however, continued use of limited resources to operate LORAN-C is no longer prudent use of taxpayer funds and is not allowed under the 2010 DHS Appropriation Act.

The Coast Guard has enjoyed a long and close relationship with the many communities located near LORAN-C facilities and we value those relationships. The Coast Guard will continue to honor those relationships by working to minimize any adverse impacts to communities caused by site closures.

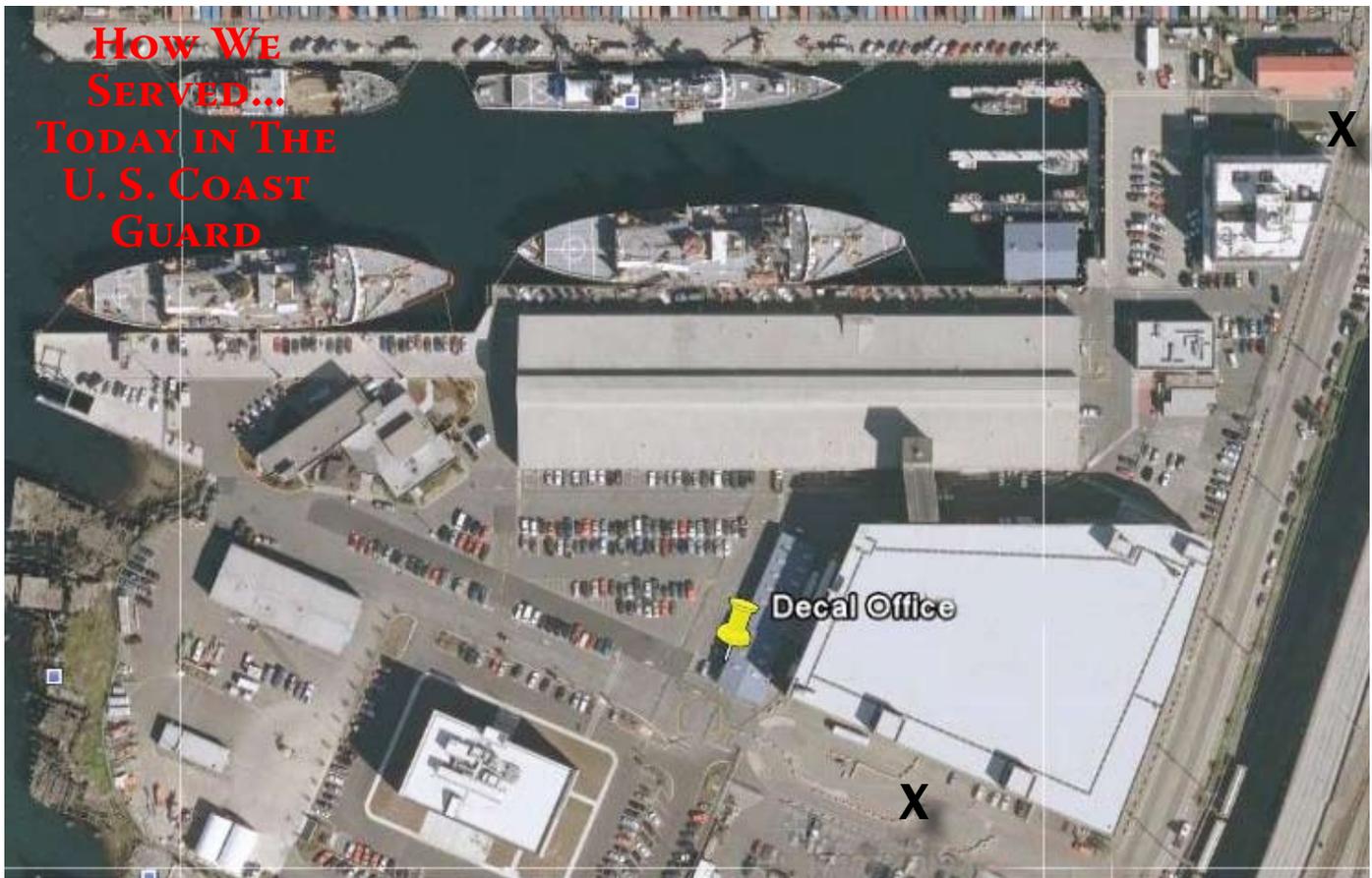
The decision to cease transmission of the LORAN-C signal reflects the president's pledge to eliminate unnecessary federal programs.

**Coast Guard Retiree Council Northwest Newsletter**

c/o COMMANDING OFFICER  
USCG Base Seattle  
Attn: Work Life (Retiree Council)  
1519 Alaskan Way South, Bldg. 1  
Seattle, Washington 98134



**PRSRT STD  
POSTAGE & FEES PAID  
U. S. COAST GUARD  
PERMIT NO. G-157**



*Aerial shot of USCG Base Seattle, located on Pier 36 with a push pin indicating the location of the Decal Office, the black X marks the location of the gates onto the base.*