

# Coast Guard

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## THE HEARTLAND

*Guardians*

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# Buoy Tender Lights Up Channel In A Whole New Way

Story and photos by PA3 Annie Berlin, PADET New York

**B**M2 Greg Shriver carefully steps up onto the chain, then onto the lower bars at the base of the buoy before hauling himself up to the top. Even though he is wearing a safety harness and has climbed buoys like this many times, he is still cautious when he climbs up to change out a lamp or repair a solar panel.

Shriver, who is an aids to navigation technician, is installing one of the first of many light emitting diode units that the Coast Guard is beginning to implement throughout the nation. Program managers at Coast Guard Headquarters say that by 2008, 50 percent of incandescent lights on buoys will be replaced with self-contained LED lanterns.

The LEDs have many benefits both to the mariner and the crew responsible for maintaining the navigational aids.

The new LED lanterns are compact units installed on the tops of buoys

strategically placed to create a safe channel for mariners. They are a much more efficient alternative to their aged counterpart, which has a solar panel on top and a large battery in a compartment at the base of the buoy.

"One of the main advantages of the LED is that it is totally self contained," said Lt. Cmdr. Rick Wester, commanding officer of the CGC Juniper, a 225-foot buoy tender homeported in Newport, R.I. Wester and the Juniper crew visited New York Harbor recently and replaced the old buoy setup with LEDs. "This will allow us to weld shut battery pockets on buoys," continued Wester. "With the current configuration, battery pockets can flood, extinguishing the light and requiring maintenance."

Although the price of an LED is comparable to traditional incandescent lights, program managers believe that the reduction in required maintenance will save the Coast Guard money in the long run.

The old incandescent panel installation process

was much more technical and complicated, not an easy task when balancing close to 30 feet in the air atop a buoy.

"It's an awkward place to work because you don't have much room," said Shriver. "You find yourself getting into all these little awkward positions. Most of the time you have to get two people up there, which can get tricky."

Although climbing to the top of a buoy will still provide its own obstacles, the new LED will be easier to install and will require less time and equipment.

"With the LED, you take it out of the box, grab a remote and you program it. It's just this little unique package that has everything right there in this little box," Shriver added.

Working on a buoy deck is hard work. During a typical day, the deck crew musters at 7 a.m. to hear a safety brief and then go to work. The crew uses a large crane

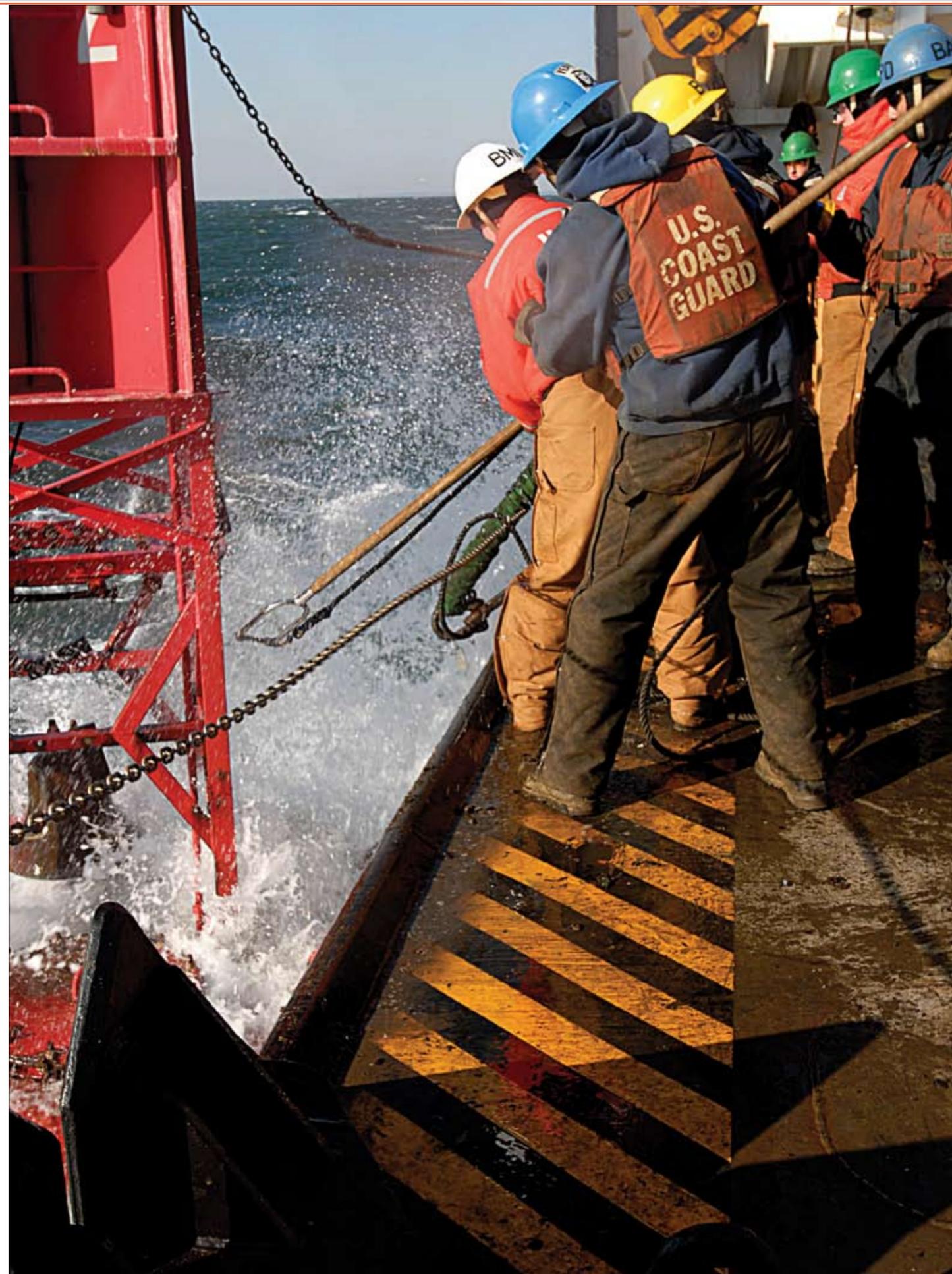
to hoist the heavy buoy onto the deck. They secure it down tight to the deck, scrape a year's worth of barnacles off the sides and then do maintenance. Except for meal breaks and the short transit time between buoys, the crew works non-stop until sunset hauling in buoys from their watching spots along the channel. Thanks to the new LEDs, the crews with one of the hardest, most physically demanding jobs in the Coast Guard now have it a little easier.

"Our workload is definitely going to be lighter. The amount of buoys we'll have to work is the same, but the LED lanterns make the maintenance easier," added BMC Kat McSweeney, a supervisor on the buoy deck of the Juniper. 

► **BUOY BASH** The deck crew on the CGC Juniper prepare to bring a buoy onboard for maintenance in the Sandy Hook Channel in New Jersey on Dec. 7, 2006.

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**BM2 Greg Shriver,  
CGC Juniper**



## Master chiefs become first CG intelligence specialists

The Coast Guard launched the service's new intelligence specialist rate April 23 with a "plank owner" ceremony at Coast Guard Headquarters. Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Thad Allen and James Sloan, assistant commandant for Intelligence and Criminal Investigations, presided over the ceremony where IS rating force manager ISCM David Rochefort and fellow master chiefs Brian Lincoln and Mark Pearson became the first Coast Guard intelligence specialists.

Allen praised the men and women working in Coast Guard intelligence for their "willingness, capacity and competency," saying that the creation of this new rating will greatly benefit the service's intelligence work.

When staffed, the nearly 400 active duty and reserve enlisted and warrant officers will be tasked to collect, process, analyze and disseminate intelligence in support of Coast Guard operational missions.

Presently, applications to lateral to the IS rating and warrant officer specialty are being accepted by Coast Guard Personnel Command. Lateral panels will convene this summer and those chosen will formally transition to their new rate on Jan. 1, 2008.

The lateral application process is detailed in ALCOAST 078/07. Additional information can be found on Coast Guard Central. From the CGCentral home page, go to "Strategic Initiatives," then "Future Force," then "Intelligence Specialist Enlisted rating and CWO Intelligence Systems Specialist."

Story provided by Lt. j.g. Marie Barry, CG-2, Office of Intelligence and Criminal Investigations



Photo by PA1 Tasha Tully, PADET St. Petersburg

▲ **CENTCOM CONFAB** Navy Vice Adm. David Nichols, deputy commander of U.S. Central Command, provides Coast Guard Vice Adm. D. Brian Peterman, Atlantic Area commander, an operational update on the Coast Guard's involvement in maritime security operations in the Persian Gulf during Peterman's visit to CENTCOM Jan. 4. "The Coast Guard is heavily involved with maritime security operations in the Persian Gulf and we appreciate their support," said Nichols. Headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Fla., CENTCOM is comprised of members from all five branches of the U.S. Armed Forces and is responsible for operations in 27 nations including Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan. Currently, there are more than 300 Coast Guard members serving in-theater aboard seven Coast Guard cutters.

## CGC Juniper: ATON Excellence

Since its commissioning 11 years ago, the CGC Juniper has developed a truly multi-mission readiness across a wide spectrum of Coast Guard missions. From Aids-to-navigation and law enforcement to ice-breaking and search and rescue, the seven officer and 37 enlisted crew of the Newport, R.I.-based buoy tender execute their missions with efficiency and precision.

The 225-foot Juniper is responsible for more than 200 buoys from Sandy Hook, N.J., to Cape Cod, Mass., and many of the ATON trips take the Juniper to waterways such as the New York City approaches, Long Island Sound, Vineyard Sound, Buzzard's Bay and Nantucket. Every quarter, the Juniper's fully-capable boarding teams conduct law enforcement boardings during living marine resources patrols, which enforce fishing regulations in the economically and ecologically sensitive southern New England fishing grounds.

Successful operations are due in part to the ships advanced navigation, maneuvering and

sensory equipment. The machinery plan control and monitoring system collects data from hundreds of sensors throughout the ship to create an accurate overview of the status of all the ship's systems. The Juniper's bow and stern thrusters, engines and DGPS receivers are linked together through the dynamic positioning system, allowing the ship to automatically hold a particular heading, course, or even position, minimizing the risk posed to deck forces while they bring 18,000-pound buoys onto the deck.

When not on duty, crewmembers enjoy Juniper's homeport or one of a number of liberty ports including Boston, Manhattan, Nantucket, Martha's Vineyard or Washington, D.C. Newport itself is one of the liveliest and most beautiful communities in Rhode Island. Sailing and other watersports are popular in the summer, and Newport is close to many of the skiing and snowboarding resorts in New England.

For more, visit the Juniper's Web site at <http://www.uscg.mil/d1/units/cgcjuniper/index.html>.

**Housing:** Average rent in Newport for a two bedroom apartment is \$1,000. The communities of Middleton and Portsmouth offer more affordable alternatives, and government housing is available.

**Weather:** Summers see temperatures in the mid 70s, while Winter temperatures dip into the 30s.

**Facilities:** The Naval Education and Training Center Newport provides a host of services to Juniper crewmembers. The base has an exchange, commissary and a very active Morale Welfare and Recreation office.

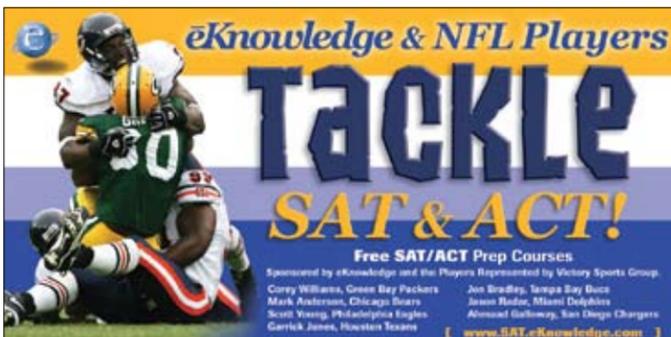
**Education:** Nearby colleges include the University of Rhode Island, Roger Williams University, Salve Regina and Community College of Rhode Island.

▼ **REFLECTIVE PRESENCE** The CGC Juniper transits the Potomac River near Alexandria, Va., at sunrise Feb. 21. The 225-foot buoy tender is homeported in Newport, R.I.

## Coast Guard SUDOKU

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Fill in the blank spaces in the grid so that every vertical column, every horizontal row and every 3 x 3 box contains the letters C-O-A-S-T-G-U-R-D, without repeating any. The solved puzzle can be found in the online version of Coast Guard Magazine at [www.uscg.mil/magazine](http://www.uscg.mil/magazine).



eKnowledge Corporation and a group of NFL football players extend multi-million dollar sponsorship of SAT/ACT test prep programs to all members of the military and their families.

To order the prep programs, visit <http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil> to verify your military status. The Web site will then forward you to the eKnowledge/NFL sponsorship page where you can request the programs.

Last year the program shipped more than 48,000 CDs and DVDs, totaling \$6.9 million, worldwide. eKnowledge has pledged to donate up to \$10 million in free SAT/ACT programs through the end of this year.

"We owe our military service members and their families a heartfelt 'thank you' for their sacrifice and honorable service to our country," said eKnowledge CEO Charlie Beall.

