



The Shako

The Official Newsletter of 'The Cleveland Grays'

The Cleveland Grays Armory Museum
 1234 Bolivar Road ~ Cleveland, Ohio 44115
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William Roediger, President | Katrina Hutcherson, Executive Director | Editor, Scott Hutcherson New Years Edition 2009

January Membership Meeting



Monday Jan. 26, 2009
 Social Hour starts at 6:00
 Business Meeting at 6:45
Our Guest Speaker at 7:00

ALL MEMBERS & GUESTS Please R.S.V.P !

Safety and Security in the Port of Cleveland

Local Coast Guard Officer describes port security measures in 'Post -911' America

The Coast Guard established "Captain of the Port" activities as a result of one of the greatest disasters ever to befall a U.S. armament facility. On October 4, 1918, as World War One drew to a close, the T.A. Gillespie Shell Loading Plant in Morgan, New Jersey was rocked by explosions and three days of subsequent blasts. Coastguardsmen from nearby Perth Amboy responded to the catastrophe and risked their lives to remove the deadly munitions from the scene. Two gave their lives in these efforts and twelve were later awarded The Navy Cross for Heroism. Damage was estimated at \$18 million dollars. To this day the cause remains unclear, but initial reports attributed the explosion to reasons ranging from an accidental spark, company negligence, or German sabotage. Sixty-four local residents and employees died from the explosions and resulting fires.

Coast Guard Marine Safety activities in Cleveland began during World War II when the *Captain of the Port Detail* occupied quarters near the East Ninth Street Moorings. Throughout the 1950's, Coast Guard offices of Marine Inspection and Seaman's Documentation moved from their downtown suites to the same consolidated waterfront location. Today, Cleveland's Marine Safety Unit is one of many providing both watchful security over the nation's waterways and safety oversight of the maritime industry.



The geographic responsibility for Marine Safety Unit Cleveland extends from the Pennsylvania border to Vermilion, Ohio and from the International border with Canada in mid Lake Erie to an east-west boundary line just south of Akron, Ohio.

The Cleveland Grays' guest speaker, Lieutenant Commander Linda Sturgis, has had a long and distinguished military career in the maritime safety and security field. LCDR Sturgis started out not as a sailor, but a soldier~! In 1988, while attending Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia, Ms. Sturgis enlisted in the Army Reserve and served with the 88th Military Police Company at Fort Eustis.

During "Operation Desert Shield" her Army unit deployed to the Port of Rotterdam with a United Nations Port Security detail. This experience seemed to lead her irresistibly toward the Coast Guard, and she completed a lateral transfer in 1992 after graduating college. She later received her commission from Officer Candidate School in 1993.



Junior officer assignments included tours at various Headquarters offices followed by an afloat assignment as a Deck Watch Officer on board the **Coast Guard Cutter Mellon** carrying out drug interdiction, fishery enforcement, and military defense missions throughout Alaskan, Caribbean and South Pacific waters.

In 1996, Sturgis entered the Marine Safety field. Among her many achievements include qualifications as Senior Marine Inspector (both in hull and machinery/steam designations) as well as

her efforts to initiate a precedence-setting bi-lateral agreement between the U.S. Coast Guard Captain of the Port Puget Sound and Transport Canada Marine Safety (Vancouver) which unified enforcement actions on disabled commercial vessels transiting the shared U.S./Canadian shipping channels.

In 2002, LCDR Sturgis attended the University of Washington and earned a Master of Marine Affairs with a concentration in Marine Transportation Management as well as a graduate certificate in Global Trade, Transportation, and Logistics. Since being assigned to Marine Safety Unit Cleveland, Ohio, Ms. Sturgis has been selected for future promotion to Commander.

Lieutenant Commander Sturgis' military awards include two Meritorious Service Medals, two Coast Guard Achievement Medals, two Letters of Commendation, the Army Reserve Good Conduct Medal, Special Operations Service Medal, and several personal and Coast Guard unit awards.

Please join us on Monday January 26 as we hear about our nation's homeland security at sea from a well-seasoned sailor-! As always, please voicemail or email the Adjutant's office to R.S.V.P for the supper fare ☆

Nominating Committee is now forming and will be seeking Grays Trustee candidates ~

Attention All Grays interested in recruiting for or serving on the Grays Board of Trustees

The members of the 2009 Nominating Committee will be formally announced during the January Meeting, but a core working group (consisting of Scott Hutcherson, Paul Konys, and Tom Rasch) has already begun. The committee's purpose is to seek out and identify Grays members willing to serve a three-year term (2009-2012) as a trustee. *What's the obligation-?* Grays Trustees commit themselves to providing good ideas, creativity and attending four annual meetings of the full board.

In accordance with current bylaws, the official slate for new trustee candidates will be announced during March; however, additional nominations will be taken from the floor at the April general membership meeting.

Those interested in joining the search committee's efforts ~or~ wishing to suggest a nomination (or self-nomination) should contact the Adjutant. ☆

Remembering Bill Smrekar

William H. ('Bill') Smrekar, Age 65.
July 27, 1943 - December 15, 2008

The Cleveland Grays will long look back on the year just past as a challenging time for our organization and its community of friends. It was during the Christmas holidays when we lost one of our foremost members and dearest friends.



Known by many, William ("Bill") Smrekar was a President Emeritus of The Cleveland Grays (serving eight years) as well a longtime trustee and active member for over three decades. In accordance with Bill's wishes, a memorial service was held at Grays Armory on December 18, 2008 and was attended by many family members, Cleveland Grays, friends, and colleagues from his years in county government and service to the local community.

It was apparent to all that Bill Smrekar left behind a large and loving family and large community of devoted friends and acquaintances. Bill was a loving husband to Dolores "Dorie" and the proud father of Grant (Kristen Tobias), Carla, Alex and Margot. Bill was also a grandfather to Poppy, and the brother of Edward (deceased) (Rose) Smrekar, Sr. Veronica Smrekar, O.S.U., Barbara (Ronald) Sichner and Theresa (John) Jenkins; Bill was also an uncle to many nephews and nieces.

Bill was a proud United States Army Veteran of the Vietnam War, serving with the 82nd Airborne and earning the Combat Infantry Badge. Contingents from ***The 82nd Airborne Association***, and ***The Catholic War Veterans*** paid their respects during the memorial services at Grays Armory.

In lieu of flowers, the family has suggested that memorial donations may be made to either to ***The Grays Armory***, 1234 Bolivar Rd., Cleveland 44115 or to ***The Hospice of the Western Reserve***, 300 E. 185 St., Cleveland 44119.



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