

"Newseyletter" Decatur Chapter No. 4, USCS

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Can you spell George Washington?

Well, it seems that I can't! Covers printed for the CONA postmark for *USS George Washington* contain a spelling error. The covers were all postmarked aboard the ship and were being prepared to be mailed when I discovered the error. It was not possible to make any correction. The first to discover the error was Greg Ciesielski. What an eagle eye!

CONA cancel for Key West

Centennial of Naval Aviation Post Office Station



Naval Air Station Key West
May 8, 2011 Key West FL 33040

Latest round with the Postmaster of Key West FL is the return of the chapter covers, which had been sitting in her office or on her desk for two and one half months. A red "hand" label reading "Postmark not available in Key West" was placed across her address on my priority mail package. I am upset about the unprofessional way this postmaster handled our request for the pictorial. I know she read the letter of request, which by postal regulations requires a response from the postmaster in one week after the request is received by the post office. This postmaster, as I mentioned before, simply taped my letter closed, placed a sticker across her address and sent the request, the camera ready artwork and a USPS submission form for the Postal Bulletin back to me. It took nearly 13 weeks for this to come back. I am still pursuing options to get the cancel approved, or at least let the USPS know that the Key West postmaster, mishandled the request completely. Stay tuned.

Three Coastal Patrol Boats to be returned on USN



USCGC Tomado WPC-14 - USCG Photo

Announced in Navy Times issue of 15 August, the U S Coast Guard will return three CPB's to the U S Navy. The *USCGC Zephyr WPC-8*, *USCGC Shamal WPC-13* and *USCGC Tomado WPC-14* have been on loan to the U S Coast Guard for the past seven years. The three cutters are currently waiting for the turnover in Little Creek VA, having left Pascagoula several weeks ago with skeleton crews aboard. They are waiting for the Navy "to get things in order" for the turnover. The patrol boats are not expected to immediately be commissioned in the Navy as all of them will undergo a yard period of two months each for upgrades of combat systems suites, habitation and mechanical systems. Latest information I have is that a "turnover" will occur on 30 September for perhaps *USCGC Tomado WPC-14* or perhaps turnover for all three on that date. I have been unable to confirm this for now. Interesting to note is that the Navy is pleased to have all 13 of the patrol boats back in the Navy. Do I recall a different Navy story, when congress approved funding for a 14th PC and the Navy said it didn't want it? So, I suspect to prove their point, the Navy Decommissioned the *USS Cyclone PC-1*, when *USS Tomado PC-14* was commissioned and transferred to the U S Coast Guard. The Coast Guard pre 9-11, didn't have a plan or money for ex-*USS Cyclone PC-1* (CGC *Cyclone WPC-1*), so it sat at the Coast Guard Yard from 2000 until 2004.



USS Cyclone PC-1 before decommissioning

It was then transferred to the Philippine Navy and is proudly serving as *BRP Gen. Mariano Alvarez PS-38*.



BRP Gen. Mariano Alvarez PS-38 in Manila

I wonder if the Navy "let one get away" at the time? Refitted by Bollinger Shipyard for the Philippine Navy in 2005 *PS-38* had its stern extended by nine feet to accommodate a deck ramp - which extends down to below the water line, for a 20 foot Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat (RHIB). So, the lead ship in the *Cyclone*-class is no longer in the USN.

News from San Diego



June 30, 2011 DECOMMISSIONING STATION
SAN DIEGO CA 92186

Call on September 30 from San Diego reporting the pictorial cancel for *USS Cleveland* (9-30-11) has been approved and in the Sept. 22 issue of the P.B. They are still looking into the missing request for the pictorial for LDC of *USS Dubuque* (6-30-11) and will get back to me on that one.



Sept. 30, 2011 DECOMMISSIONING STATION
SAN DIEGO CA 92186