

In Memoriam
JOHN "JACK" CROWLEY
SENIOR CHIEF BOATSWAIN'S MATE
1940-2017

John "Jack" Crowley Jr. passed away on May 17, 2017, at the age of 76. Born in Boston, Massachusetts, he graduated from Boston Trade High School and joined the United States Coast Guard in 1957, marking the start of his remarkable career.

During his 30 years of active duty service, Jack was deployed twice to Vietnam on the CGC Bearing Straits and on the Explosive Loading Detail. He loved being under way and spent over 20 years at sea. He wrote of his tours, "I was on the only CG Large Cargo Ship out of Honolulu (on the CGC KUKUI) and it was a Boatswain's Mate's dream - LCM'S and lots of cargo booms. We supplied all the CG LORAN stations in the Pacific. I've been to the Arctic and Antarctica on board the CGC EASTWIND, just one of the 8 ships (378's, 311's, 180's, 95's) that I sailed on while in the Coast Guard."

Even after retiring in 1988, his love of the Coast Guard stayed with him. Jack was a member of the CPOA for 40 years, having joined shortly after he made Chief in 1977 while serving as XPO of Station America Samoa. A proud member of the Mobile Chapter, Jack served as Chapter Secretary and Chairman of the Membership Committee. On the National level, Jack served as the Membership Chairman for five years and received the Membership Award for recruitment in 1987 and 1988. In 1998, Jack was awarded the CPOA's highest honor when he was made the 16th Gold Lifetime Member. He continued to serve the CPOA and its members as the Special Projects Standing Committee Chair and on the CPOA National Board of Directors as the Region 3 Advisor from 2006-2012, and again from 2015 until his passing. Jack's service also extended to the Retiree community, where he served as Co-Chair for the Coast Guard National Retiree Council (Central Gulf Coast). All told, Jack's love affair with the Coast Guard and his fellow Coasties spanned 60 years!

Jack was a longtime friend and mentor to CMC Kevin Isherwood who noted in his eulogy of the Chief he first met 35 years ago as a young Seaman, "Chief Crowley was gruff and raspy voiced from filterless cigarettes and we were all scared of him. But that's what made him fun and a challenge, kind of like poking a bear or touching an electric fence. While Chief Crowley had a hard outer shell, Jack was really soft on the inside and cared deeply about his family, his friends, his shipmates, his Coast Guard, and his countless military support organizations. How many of you are on his multitude of emails lists? How about the XMAS card list? The countless snail mailed envelopes packed with developed pictures of the last event you were at? The annual CG Chief Birthday reminder? You all knew that because of Jack Crowley!! And there was no one more committed to national military pride and support of military organizations than Jack. Who else do you know that is a life member of more than 15 military support organizations? I know of NONE other than Jack. And he did not just throw money at these organizations. He invested his heart and soul shouldering significant responsibilities in leadership roles as well as being directly involved in many of their day to day operations."

GLM Bruce Garrison wrote: "I first met Jack Crowley in 1986 at ATC Mobile and he was a hard drinking, hard smoking Chief Boatswain Mate at that time. But when Jack made his rounds around ATC, he'd stop in every shop and office asking everyone if they needed anything. A true Coastie, Jack was always the first to help, never asking for anything in return. He was always in the know about everything that was going on in the Military community and was the first to keep everyone informed. Jack had a bang list on his computer that was about four pages long. When he first got his computer, he was sending out all his messages in capital letters and everyone kept asking him, 'Why are you yelling at me?' Jack had no idea what they were talking about!"

GLM Alex Chapman noted: "I reported to ATC Mobile in Oct 1977 and Jack reported in not long after. Practically the first words he spoke were, "Is the Mobile Chapter still active? I made Chief a few months ago and have not been initiated yet. I want to be initiated!" That was the fuel that fostered his tenacity for the CPOA. Jack was totally about the Coast Guard, CPOA, the Chapter's "Old Timers Picnic" and all the other veteran organizations. He was all that wrapped into one package. Jack and I "ran aground" with each other throughout our nearly 40 years of shipmating. But, that's what Chiefs do. We NEVER lost respect for each other and I will miss him and his commitment to his country, his Coast Guard and most importantly, his family."

Jack is survived by his beloved traveling/gambling companion and wife of 42 years, Cathy, as well as his son John, daughter-in-law, Brandi and his two grandchildren, Maddi and JC. He was so very proud of his family ~ always quick to share pictures and brag about their most recent achievements.

Jack's passing is a great loss to our Association and the entire Coast Guard. Though his legacy will live on in the lives he touched, we know we will never see his like again. Fair Winds and Following Seas, Senior Chief Crowley ~