

Two Command Changes at Kodiak Coast Guard Base

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Diana Gish/KMXT

It was a day of leadership transition for the Coast Guard in Kodiak. Two Change of Command Ceremonies took place Thursday on the base. Speaking at the first ceremony, Rear Admiral Arthur Brooks, The Commander of the 17th Coast Guard District, stressed the urgency of good leadership.

Coast Guard Communications Station Kodiak held a change of command ceremony Thursday afternoon. Lieutenant Commander Peter Van Ness relieved Lieutenant Commander Michael Nasitka as commanding officer. Nasitka will now serve as executive officer aboard the Coast Guard Cutter Thetis in Key West, Florida.

-- (Brooks 1 :20 ..."at every level".)

Brooks comments were made at the formal ceremony for Coast Guard Air Station Kodiak's change of command. Captain William Deal is Air Station Kodiak's new commanding officer. He relieves Captain Andrew Berghorn who served in that capacity for three years.

During the ceremony Berghorn was awarded a meritorious service medal, gold star, for his leadership since July 2006. On his watch Alaskan aircrews have flown over 450 search and rescue missions, saved and assisted more than 320 lives and transported 28 million pounds of Coast Guard equipment. Under Berghorn's command, Air station Kodiak has become Alaska's first operational Airborne Use of Force unit. He also over saw the expansion of the Coast Guard's global presence with its Arctic Domain Awareness missions. The out-going commander said that one of the goals he had coming into Air Station Kodiak was to ensure that no Coastie lives were lost, a goal he is proud to have achieved. Berghorn's advice to his replacement was to the point:

-- (Berghorn 1 :43 "...This Proud Unit)

Berghorn's next assignment will be as Coast Guard liaison officer to the U.S. Navy Flight School in Pensacola, Florida.

Incoming Commanding officer Captain William Deal is not new to Kodiak. In 2001 he was assigned to Air Station Kodiak as the aviation engineering officer.

Deal arrives from Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington D.C. There he served as the operating funds manager for the Aeronautical Engineering Program and as the HC-130 Hercules system manager.

His prior career assignments include Air Stations Cape Cod, San Francisco, and Purdue University. In 2005 he was the commanding officer of Air Station Los Angeles. In 2007 Deal was assigned to the President's Office of National Drug Control Policy.

Deal is married to the former Kitty Lynn Hicks of Nashville, Tenn. They have a son, Matthew, and a daughter, Jacqueline.