



## ACCENT ON ALGIERS

Michael Molaison

# Historic Coast Guard voyage inspires book

*Resident discusses trip through Arctic*

This summer marked the 50th anniversary of the of the Coast Guard cutter *Storis*' historic first circumnavigation of North America, including the first deep-water passage through the ice-laden waters of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago of the Arctic Ocean.

This golden anniversary served as the trigger for longtime Algiers businessman **Dick Juge** to write the book "The Historic Northwest Passage." Juge was a crew member on the voyage and through the book narrates his and his shipmates' recollections about the cruise.

Juge has been involved in many Algiers community service activities, including 21 years of membership and service in the Kiwanis Club of Algiers. Juge and former shipmate **James "Jonesy" Jones** recently spoke about the book at a Kiwanis Morning Edition meeting. It was one of the more packed meetings, as Juge's wife, **Nancy**, brought along a cheering section.

Juge said that in the past, he had built several Web sites for organizations in Algiers. As he thought about retelling the voyage for the 50th anniversary, he decided to collaborate with shipmates via the Internet. Juge said, "I thought, 'Why don't I just put this book on the Internet and invite those shipmates who want to participate.' This is how they were able to participate."

With the book, Juge reconstructs the voyage through his photos, letters that he wrote home to his mother, *Times-Picayune* articles from the time observing the historic event, as well as letters and photos from seven other shipmates. The book includes reprints of several letters that provide a glimpse of life aboard a Coast Guard cutter.

*Storis*, a Scandinavian name taken from the Eskimo word *sirorsuit*, means "great ice."

Today, members of the crew are working to convert the CGC *Storis* into a museum. In addition to its historic significance, *Storis* served as convoy support to ships in the Atlantic before and during World War II. As a museum, former crew members

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## Forum will feature House, Senate races

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said they would like to have the ship docked in Juneau, Alaska, and available for tours to passenger of cruise ships that visit the area. In commenting about Juneau, Juge said, "Honestly, if I wasn't such a homebody, I could have move to Alaska as it is just incredibly beautiful. They, too, enjoy great fishing."

The Northwest Passage across the archipelago has changed in the past 50 years. The Arctic pack ice prevents regular marine shipping throughout the year, but climate change due to global warming is reducing the pack ice and may eventually make the waterways more navigable. Since 2000, many ships have been able to take advantage of the thinning summer ice cover to make the crossing. Scientists say they believe that in 20 to 30 years it may



The U.S. Coast Guard cutter *Storis* is shown 50 years ago as it charted the first deep-channel navigation through the Arctic Ocean.

be possible that the Northwest Passage will become a viable alternative to the Panama Canal.

Juge thanked **Phyllis Robert**, faculty member of Our Lady of Holy Cross College, for her help editing the book. In closing, Juge said, "I had a good Coast Guard career. A good short one — four years. When you are 71 years old and you look back on it, it was terrific."

"The Historic Northwest Passage" is self-published and available through Juge, local bookstores or Amazon.com.

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