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SUBJ: USCGC BOUTWELL (WHEC 719) 48 YEARS OF SERVICE

1. On 16 MAR 2016, after 48 years of faithful service to our nation, CGC BOUTWELL transitioned into commission special status. Throughout her service, CGC BOUTWELL embodied and defended her motto, the Best in the West.

2. Named in honor of Secretary George Sewall Boutwell, who served as Secretary of the Treasury under President Ulysses S. Grant, WHEC 719 was the fifth ship in the Hamilton Class cutter fleet and the third cutter to bear the name BOUTWELL. CGC BOUTWELL was launched from Avondale Shipyards in Louisiana on 17 JUN 1967, and was commissioned on 24 JUN 1968 at New Orleans, LA. CGC BOUTWELL arrived at her first homeport in Boston, MA in 1968 and would remain there until JUL 1973 when she shifted homeport to Seattle, WA. BOUTWELL changed homeport once again to Alameda, CA in OCT 1990. Finally in 2011, following the decommissioning of CGC HAMILTON, the HAMILTON crew relieved BOUTWELL's crew and changed homeport to San Diego, CA.

3. Throughout her distinguished career, BOUTWELL served in domestic and international theaters, flexing her might in dynamic and austere environments from the Caribbean, Mediterranean, and Persian Gulf, to the North Atlantic, Eastern Pacific, and Bering Sea. As her time in the Coast Guard fleet comes to a close, BOUTWELL will be remembered as an ambassador for global maritime cooperation, combatant of narco-terrorism, protector of living marine resources, and safe haven for those in distress.

4. CGC BOUTWELL leaves a long proud legacy of honorable service to her country. In the early 1980s, CGC BOUTWELL participated in one of the greatest search and rescue operations when a fire broke out in the engine room of the cruise ship PRINSENDAM. The efforts of BOUTWELL and other entities led to the rescue of over 500 survivors from frigid Alaskan waters. In the late 1980s, BOUTWELL interdicted 72 tons of marijuana on the M/V ENCOUNTER BAY, a record for a single interdiction on the West Coast at that time. In 1997, CGC BOUTWELL participated in Operation BORDER SHIELD. During this patrol, CGC BOUTWELL, with the assistance of U.S. and Mexican Naval forces, interdicted 2.7 tons of cocaine. In 2009, CGC BOUTWELL earned the Coast Guard Unit Commendation for her work as a component of the USS BOXER Expeditionary Strike Group. While patrolling the Gulf of Aden, BOUTWELL successfully demonstrated the Coast Guard's unique capabilities to combat full spectrum threats on the high seas. Furthermore, BOUTWELL made port in Libya, a first for a U.S. Naval warship in over 40 years.

5. During her last year of service, CGC BOUTWELL continued to support counter-narcotic operations in the Eastern Pacific Ocean and in 2014 was awarded the U.S. Interdiction Coordinator's Award for Maritime Interdiction and Apprehension.

6. To current and past CGC BOUTWELL crews, plank owners, shellbacks (Golden, Emerald, Horned, or otherwise), subjects of the Golden Dragon, Blue Noses, and even Pollywogs: well done. Throughout 48 years of service, CGC BOUTWELL and her crews admirably served the Coast Guard and the Nation. Congratulations and Bravo Zulu.

7. Admiral Paul F. Zukunft, Commandant, sends.

8. Internet release is authorized.