

USCGC MELLON Commanding Officer's
Out-of-Hemisphere Newsletter
June 2010

Greetings MELLON friends and family! In my second edition of the Out-of-Hemisphere Deployment Newsletter I will tell you about the exciting places we've been and the good work being done by your Coast Guardsmen and women. Also in this edition are links to sites that show Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) 2010 in much more detail. There is a section on MELLON sailors who received special recognition in May. I then share detailed information about the August Tiger Cruise, where a close family member can join us on the last leg of our deployment. Finally, I am pleased to extend an invite to a special June event for our Seattle area families.

MELLON completed 3 CARAT engagements in May: Brunei, Thailand and Indonesia. CARAT engagements follow a general pattern: They are 6 – 8 days long, with a 3 - 4 day inport phase and a 1 - 3 day underway phase. On the day we arrive, the U.S. Task Force Commander (Rear Admiral Tyson), Task Group Commander (Commodore Clemmons) and the Commanding Officers from the 3 - 4 ships pay official calls (visits) on our host nation counterparts. An opening ceremony follows. MELLON subject matter experts in law enforcement, boat operations and search and rescue meet with host nation participants. Training typically begins within hours of our arrival. We participate in community relations (COMREL) projects and Sports Day. The final day has a closing ceremony. Those who are not participating in engagement activities stand duty and this involves many people to meet our force protection requirements. In between there are opportunities for guided tours and liberty in nearby cities.

CARAT Brunei was May 3-10. MELLON, USS VANDEGRIFT (FFG-48) and USS TORTUGA (LSD-46) were moored at the Maura commercial port. Brunei is a 'dry' country and liberty was largely restricted to downtown Bandar Seri Begawan. We saw beautiful gold-domed mosques and neighborhoods built on the river where people live their lives on the water. Many visited the Empire, a palatial hotel with spectacular views of the South China Sea. Others took ½-day tours to see monkeys on the Brunei River and an all-day trip into Tutong National Park, where a strenuous hike into the rainforest ended in a rainforest canopy walk over the tops of 200 foot trees.

Mesjid Sultan Omar
Mosque.
Photo: OSC Gambol.



Rafting the Tutong River in
Brunei. Rafters in foreground:
ET1 Joe Bryan, FS1 Ivy
Zitting, ENS Sharon Mezulis,
OS2 Ramona Mason, IT1 Kris
Chirico, LTJG Tom Kai. SN
Shea Kvintus left. The author's
good side shown.
Photo IT1 Chirico

CARAT Thailand went from May 14 to 21. The 3 ships moored at the Sattahip commercial port, about 90 miles southeast of Bangkok. A fourth ship, USS LASSEN (DDG-82), joined the CARAT task group, but moored away from us in a deeper part of the port. Liberty in Thailand was restricted to the Pattaya resort area, a 40 minute bus/van ride from the ships. Bangkok was a 3 hour ride, but it was strictly off limits because of political unrest going on there. Pattaya was described as the anti-Brunei, with no drinking age and an 'anything goes' atmosphere. Fortunately we had other options, such as shopping and outstanding receptions for the crew put on by the Navy League of the United States, Eastern Thailand Council. Many also enjoyed tours to the Bridge over the River Kwai (of WWII and movie fame) and elephant rides through the forest.



The gang on liberty in Thailand: SN Stuart Balaban, SN Michael Luna, SN Aaron Colvin, FN Rick Aguayo, SN Brian Schmidt, and BM3 Neil Stallings.

CARAT Indonesia happened May 26 - Jun 2. We moored in Surabaya, Indonesia's 2nd largest city, at the commercial port, Tanjung Perak. Surabaya is located on the east end of Java. Liberty was confined to trips to the hotel area and to the 'Supermall' a huge, high-end western style mall. Traveling from the ship to the Supermall gave a glimpse of opposite ends of Indonesian life. We saw throngs eking out a living on \$6 a day one minute, and hundreds of highly affluent mall shoppers the next. Surabaya is socially conservative by our standards in dress and attitude toward drinking. Alcohol was available but it was heavily taxed and quite expensive. CARAT Indonesia was the busiest engagement to date, with events all day, every day that left us tired and ready to depart by the last day with our Batik shirts and souvenirs.



Underway with the Indonesian Navy (TNI-AL). GMC Dave Neal and mount captain SN Anthony Longo in disguise.

You can follow CARAT 2010 events on the web:

- ✓ There is a huge photo gallery at

<http://www.clwp.navy.mil/CARAT2010/carat.html>.

- ✓ CARAT also has an excellent presence on Facebook. To navigate to the CARAT 2010 Facebook page, go to the "search" window at the top of your own Facebook page. Once there, type "Cooperation Afloat." When you see the CARAT page at the top, click "Like" to the right of the page to get connected.
- ✓ There is a mostly accurate article with good pictures of MELLON in Thailand at

<http://www.pattayadailynews.com/en/2010/05/28/us-thai-coast-guard-complete-carrat-2010-training>

*****BRAVO ZULU!*****

These crewmembers received special recognition in May:

Temporary Cutterman pins went to **LTJG Brad Peifer**, **LTJG Thomas Kai**, **ENS Ian Williams**, **SK1 Michael Finley** and **SN Aaron Colvin**.

1-Year Sea Service Ribbons to **ET3 Louis Menard** and **SN Samuel Manka**.

Good Conduct Awards went to **SKC Jim Pawlowski** (seventh!) and **SN Sara Coates**.

Promotions. Our Weapons Officer, **Dave Smith** was promoted to Lieutenant. **Morgan Custer** advanced to Operations Specialist 2nd Class.

LTJG Joellen Arons received the Commandant's Letter of Commendation. **BM1 Ian Thompson** and **CDR Matt Walker** received the CG Commendation Medal for sustained, superior performance and contributions to MELLON during their tours.

Welcome Aboard to new MELLON crewmembers: **CDR Jadon Klopson** reported in as Executive Officer. We also have USCG Academy cadets aboard for their 3rd class summer cruise: **Ellen Kintz, Clare Dorsey, Jacob Naum** and **Justin Maio**. And shame on me for not mentioning **BM2 Erin Regan** in the last Newsletter, she has been TAD with us from POLAR STAR from the beginning.

Finally, farewell to our shipmates who departed MELLON this month for new assignments: CDR Matt Walker, LTJG Joellen Arons, BM1 Ian Thompson, **FN Orenthal Floyd** and **FN Michael Innis**.

*******TIGER CRUISE!*******

In the last newsletter I mentioned that MELLON is planning a unique opportunity to have a close family member of a crewmember sail with MELLON from Hawaii to Seattle. For those interested in participating in MELLON's Tiger Cruise, here is what you need to know:

What: USCGC MELLON Tiger Cruise

Who: Parents, Siblings and Children of MELLON crewmembers.

When: Depart Honolulu August 15, arrive Seattle August 23.

Where: Tigers meet the ship in Honolulu, HI by August 14, 2010.

How: Email your MELLON sailor and let him or her know you are interested by June 16.

The Fine Print: Tigers must be at least 12 years old. There is no upper age limit, but all Tigers must be in good health and able to move about a mildly pitching and rolling ship without assistance. Because of berthing constraints, a Tiger must be the same gender as their MELLON sponsor.

Tiger Cruise FAQ:

Q1: My daughter is 11. Can she be a Tiger?

A1: The minimum age is 12. A Tiger must have reached at least their 12th birthday by Aug 22, 2010.

Q2: I'm Petty Officer Smith's uncle. Can I be a Tiger?

A2: Maybe. We expect there to be more people who want to be Tigers than available berthing. Our priority is Parents, Siblings and Children (for blended families, insert 'step' as appropriate) and they will be accommodated first. However, if there is space available, we will accept grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins as Tigers.

Q3: I am Seaman Sara Jones' husband. Can I go?

A3: No, spouses are ineligible for Tiger Cruise.

Q4: Chief Anderson is my best friend. What about me?

A4: Sorry, this program is reserved for families.

Q5: I am ENS Jane Doe's father and want to be a Tiger. Will I be approved despite the gender rule?

A5: Maybe. As previously mentioned, we are constrained by berthing accommodations. For safety and convenience, a Tiger will sleep in the same compartment as their MELLON sponsor. Opposite gender Tigers greatly complicate berthing arrangements for 1st class petty officers and more junior sponsors. There is flexibility with senior sponsors (i.e., officers and chief petty officers) because of their stateroom accommodations. My advice is to have your MELLON sailor request their top choice for a Tiger. We can waive some restrictions if the berthing situation allows. However, we are advising sponsors to have a backup choice for a Tiger who conforms to the rules to have the best chance of being approved.

Q6: I am eligible and want to go, but I'm worried about being seasick.

A6: Seasickness is common, even among sailors. There are effective over-the-counter medicines that will prevent seasickness if taken properly. Also, most people feel better after 2-3 days at sea (known as 'getting your sea legs'). If you are still concerned, I recommend that you consult your physician before committing to go.

*******FAMILY FUN DAY IN TUKWILA!*******

Families of MELLON crew are invited to enjoy a complimentary lunch and entertainment at the Family Fun Center in Tukwila on Sunday, June 20. Included are a Pizza lunch and a fun game package. Here is what you get at no charge, completely complimentary:

- lunch starts at 11:30am in the Bullwinkle Restaurant and includes: pizza, veggie platter and drink

- Fun time in the park begins after lunch and includes: 3 hours of unlimited Bumper Boats, Miniature Golf, & Laser Tag, Plus - 1 "Your Pick"

- Attraction (one time use) and 10 Arcade Tokens (Kidopolis included if children are under 58") are included.

Please RSVP by June 5th, with names and number of guests by emailing: dklipp@comast.net or call Kelly at: (609) 602-1657

Families and friends of MELLON also please look for the next Luncheon Social invite, date to be determined, in July'.

That's it for this Newsletter. Please know that your sailors are safe and well as we approach the deployment halfway point. We look forward to the day when we see you again.

Sincerely,

Dave Klipp, Captain
Commanding Officer

ps: Questions or suggestions about items in this newsletter? Please write me at David.S.Klipp@uscg.mil