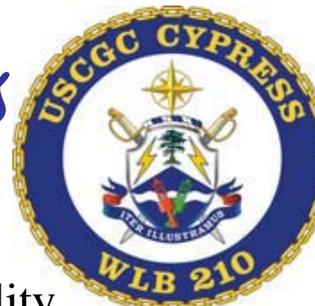




Cypress Times

Quarterly Newsletter



Tailored Ships Training Availability

By: ENS Kurt Walker

Interesting Facts

-ET1 Emrich was a company commander (aka drill instructor) at the training center in Cape May, NJ.

-Both BM1 Clement and EM1 Ruona are plank owners of CYPRESS meaning that they served on board when it was first commissioned.

-LTJG Mandour-Brackin went to graduate school in Australia prior to arriving onboard CYPRESS.

-CWO3 Bigbie has over 20 years of sea time in his career giving him the extremely rare distinction of being a master cutterman.

On Wednesday the 19th of January CYPRESS departed Pensacola enroute to Naval Station Mayport, FL to take part in Tailored Ship's Training Availability, affectionately known as TSTA. TSTA occurs for all larger Coast Guard vessels and it is a lengthy and extensive process. It consists of two weeks of drills in a variety of areas such as damage control, emergency response, medical response, inport emergencies, and seamanship. All of the drills were graded by members from the Afloat Training Group based out of Jacksonville, FL. These are Coast Guard and Navy personnel who come onboard the ship and grade all of the drills that are run.

I will discuss just a snapshot of some of the drills that we ran while at TSTA. CYPRESS had to run two man overboard drills, one was a shipboard recovery indicating that the ship had to be maneuvered to pick up the dummy with a life jacket on which enables it to float. The other type of recovery involved picking up a man overboard in a narrow channel where due to the circumstances the cutter cannot safely maneuver to pick up the man overboard. In this case one of the cutter's small boats is launched and they go and pick up the man in the water. On the engineering side of the house one of the most important drills we had to run is called a Main Space Fire. This means that one of our main machinery spaces such as the Main Machinery Room (engine room), the bow and stern thruster machinery spaces, or the Auxiliary Machinery Room has or is at risk to have a fire. This is an all hands drill because so many people are needed to ensure that it is run correctly. Furthermore, the drill is so important because a fire at sea can quickly turn into a catastrophic casualty if not handled properly. For each drill that we perform crewmembers have a certain billet or position that they fill. Some of these billets are investigators, boundaryman, repair locker leader (RLL), on scene leader (OSL), and attack team members. Each drill has a set of objectives and depending on the number of the objectives that are met determines the score that we receive. One last example of a drill that we conducted was mode three navigation which means that we have lost the ability to utilize our electronic means of navigation, ECDIS (this is the name of the computer navigation system that we use to navigate). It becomes necessary to use paper chart and plotting methods to safely navigate the ship. The plotter must be able to quickly plot our position and determine things like how far off course we are, our set and drift, and nearest hazard to navigation. Likewise, the recorder must

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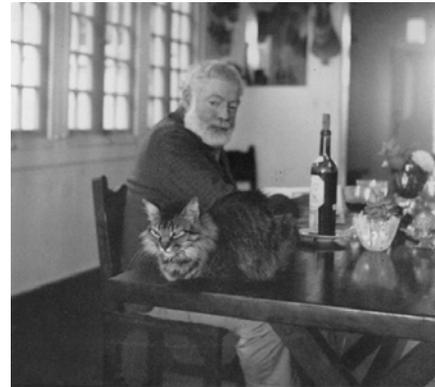


relay all of this information every three minutes to the conning officer who is driving the ship. The conning officer is dependent on this information to know where the ship is. Another critical component in this particular drill are the bearing takers and radar operator. These crewmembers use a tool called an alidade which allows them to take bearings to objects such as towers or fixed lights and then via a sound powered phone they relay them to the bearing recorder who then relays them to the plotter so he can obtain our position.

CYPRESS Port call in Key West, FL

By: ENS Kurt Walker

On the 5th of February CYPRESS moored at Sector Key West, FL for some much needed relaxation. After liberty was granted crew members dispersed to see all that Key West had to offer. Duval street was a popular stop thanks to all of the restaurants and tourist attractions that it had to offer. A few crewmembers including myself stopped in and visited the Mel Fisher museum which is primarily devoted to showcasing treasure and artifacts from the Spanish Galleon Nuestra Senora de Atocha. I also saw the Ernest Hemingway House which is famous both for the author that lived there along with the over 40 cats, half of which have six toes. I thought both were very interesting and enjoyable attractions. One crewmember went scuba diving and others sampled the fares that local bars had to offer. The weather could not have been nicer. Both days were in the high seventies to low eighties and the water looked like it was straight out of a postcard. Furthermore, the crew was able to enjoy watching the Green Bay Packers beat the Pittsburgh Steelers in this year's Super Bowl. The port call was a great success and a big morale booster.



<http://www.petanim.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/hemingway.jpg>



http://www.insideflorida.com/images/cities/mel_fisher_museum_medium.jpg

Definition of Multi Mission Cutter: CYPRESS

By: ENS Kurt Walker

The 225 foot sea going buoy tender is an extremely versatile ship that can perform a wide array of missions. Equipped with a powerful 40,000 lb main hoist crane used for CYPRESS' main mission of servicing Aids to Navigation. However, as demonstrated by the cutter's involvement in a recent operation she can also hold her own performing Law Enforcement missions. Throughout the course of the operation 10 fishing vessels were boarded and inspected to ensure that they were in compliance with both safety and fisheries regulations. One of the vessels had severe enough infractions that we had to terminate their voyage and escort them back towards their homeport. In years past CYPRESS has gone on a month long AMIO patrol which is short for Alien Migrant Interdiction Operations. This entails finding migrants that are trying to illegally land into the United States and transporting them back to their home country. Another mission that CYPRESS is always able to perform is Search and Rescue. This normally would involve reporting to the last known position of the vsl/individual in need and if necessary performing a search pattern to find it/them.

This past summer was a fantastic demonstration of CYPRESS ability to respond to pollution emergencies. CYPRESS played an integral role for the Coast Guard in Operation Deep Water Horizon. From May through July CYPRESS skimmed oil using its Spilled Oil Recovery System known as SORS. Many lessons were learned along the way which will enable future similar missions to run more efficiently. Lastly, a role that people down south would not be very familiar with but one which the ship if needed could perform is icebreaking. CYPRESS is capable of breaking 14 inches of fresh water ice at 3 knots continuous speed or 36 inches of packed fresh water ice by ramming. Hence, it is easy to see why serving on a buoy tender is wonderful opportunity to learn about different missions and sets crewmembers up to serve in a wide variety of other coast guard platforms in the future.

<http://www.uscg.mil/d9/cgcAlder/>



CYPRESS in Action



Captain's Corner

Hello CYPRESS family! We've had a busy quarter since the last news letter came out. In January we departed for Mayport, FL for Tailored Ships Training Assessment. On the way there we performed our gunnery exercise since the range would be occupied by a carrier group during our time in Mayport. The crew performed well during TSTA and we expanded our comfort zones with lots of operations in fog and some night time river operations. The crew earned a battle "E" in all training areas with average scores of 95% and above. The trainers at Mayport gave CYPRESS high praise for positive attitudes and good condition of the ship and I'm sure many Navy sailors saw our almost daily transits in and out of port and wondered why they had not joined the Coast Guard. ☺

Part of my job is making sea duty appealing and trying to keep people coming back to jobs on cutters. With that in mind, I decided to stop in Key West on our way home, in order to reward the crew's hard work and allow them to see another port of call (even though we all wanted to get back to our loved ones as soon as possible). Key West was interesting and the crew had a good time experiencing the "Conch Republic." Another reason for this stop was to make sure we had access to the Super Bowl. I didn't want people to miss it and our underway TV reception is not always guaranteed.

The Planning Proposal addressing a home port change for CYPRESS to Pensacola is complete except for the environmental assessment (which was expected to be completed this month (March)). The Office of Cutter Forces at USCG Headquarters will draft a decision memo to the Commandant and then Congressional notifications will be made. So again, the process is still in motion but there is no determination yet as to what lies ahead for CYPRESS.

The crew performed an immense amount of work during our three weeks of maintenance time (21 Feb-13 Mar). To see the crew diligently and jovially go about their jobs is inspiring and always puts CYPRESS in the position of being able to respond to operations when needed. In addition a lot of hard work was put in preparing for our first Boat Standardization Team visit. It's a challenging task and we learned a lot from the assessment.

After the maintenance we dusted off our buoy working gear and went over to Horn Island Pass for ATON. That trip went well and we were back enjoying our Friday when I chose to recall everyone and get underway to retrieve a sinking buoy. Sorry about that, but that's part of the job and luckily has only been the first recall we've done since I've been on board.

CYPRESS is a go for being "show center" at the Blue Angels' July air show off Pensacola Beach and you're all invited to come along. More details will be provided as they get worked out.

My Halloween plan that I mentioned in the last newsletter is that of a haunted ship. We'll look to partner with the Navy, Station Pensacola and the ANT, and see just how big of an adventure this can become. Help from the CYPRESS family will be needed and appreciated. A planning committee will be formed and details will be worked out and publicized.

Thank you for supporting your sailor and the CYPRESS.

Semper Paratus!
-LCDR Paul Morgan