Cypress Times

Quarterly Newsletter

Interesting Facts

-Two of our newest shipmates have just come off the recently decommissioned ACUSHNET which was the oldest vessel in the entire Coast Guard Fleet.

-ENS Reese went through both enlisted boot camp in Cape May, NJ and Officer Candidate School in New London, CT as part of the CSPI program.

-Our Captain, LCDR Morgan started his Coast Guard career as a seamen and progressed to Chief Boatswains Mate prior to becoming a Warrant Officer. He then become a Lieutenant and currently is a Lieutenant Commander.

Heave To! Prepare to be Boarded

By: LTJG Mandour-Brackin

The Coast Guard is responsible for "maritime safety, security, and stewardship" and so CYPRESS serves many missions in addition to its primary mission of AToN. It's true that our crew spends most of our time at sea working Aids to Navigation, whether we are cruising around big ports like Mobile and Gulfport to make sure that channels are clearly marked for ship traffic, or heading far out to sea to help the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) fix their weather buoys. But in addition, many of you will remember that during the Deepwater Horizon oil spill last year, we skimmed oil out of the ocean using our Spilled Oil Recovery System, fulfilling the Environmental Protection mission. Our other missions include Drug Interdiction, Alien/Migrant Interdiction, and Search and Rescue. This spring, we concentrated on Law Enforcement.

CYPRESS has a dedicated team of law enforcement personnel consisting of about ten crewmembers, some with many years of experience, all enthusiastic and dedicated to maritime security. In March and April we sent two of our junior officers, LTJG Mandour-Brackin and ENS Harms, to a five-week Boarding Officer School in Charleston, South Carolina. Throughout April and May, our smallboat full of "Law Dogs" conducted about a dozen fisheries boardings, ensuring that commercial fishermen were compliant with the fisheries laws of the United States.

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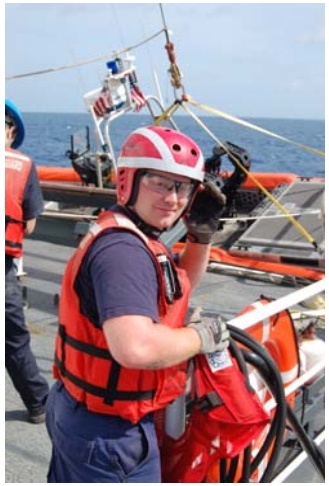
Heave To! Prepare to be Boarded

A safe and successful boarding evolution requires hard work from the entire crew. Down in the Engine Room, the engineering team constantly monitors the performance of the ship's systems. On the bridge, navigation team members maneuver to provide a safe platform to launch the smallboat, serve as extra safety observers for the boarding team, and hover close to the boarded vessel until ready to retrieve the smallboat. Launching and recovering the smallboat is one of the most dangerous evolutions we perform because of the many variables involved; many mishaps have occurred when smallboats were swamped under by big swells during a launch or recovery. Several members of Deck Force make up the Smallboat Detail. Perhaps the smallboat crew itself, consisting of one coxswain, one engineer, and one crewman, has the toughest job. Our coxswains, BM1 Hamontree and BM2 Newman, bravely brought the boat alongside the much bigger CYPRESS again and again, onloading and offloading boarding team members and other personnel, and made repeated controlled, careful approaches on small, wildly rocking fishing boats.

Once the Boarding Team is aboard, they have several jobs to do. First, they introduce themselves to the fishermen. They already know basic information about the crew and boat, which they learned from pre-boarding questions asked over the radio, and also from the Coast Guard's law enforcement database. Then, they conduct a Basic Initial Safety Inspection to ensure that the boat is safe for team members to be onboard—for example, they make sure the boat is not sinking, or packed with wild dogs, or presents any other immediate threat to the boarding team or the fishermen themselves. Next, they check the boat's safety gear, ensuring that items like lifejackets, flares, and lifeboats are in good working order. At the same time, they determine whether the vessel and the crew's registration and documentation is up to date. Finally, they open up the hold and inspect the catch of fish to ensure that the fishermen are compliant with all applicable federal laws.

Thanks to the good judgment and keen attention to detail of all of these teams, working together, CYPRESS had a successful spring of law enforcement.



Transiting the Mighty Mississippi River Enroute to the District Eight Change of Command Ceremony

By: ENS Kurt Walker

On the 29th of May CYPRESS began her journey towards the Coast Guard District Eight Change of Command ceremony held in New Orleans, LA. The following morning CYPRESS sat at the mouth of the Mississippi River ready to begin her 12 hour transit. When CYPRESS is within 1 nautical mile of shoal water meaning that the water is less than 18ft deep we set the Special Sea Detail, placing more people up on the bridge and on the foc'sle to help safely navigate the ship. Normally, we are only at Special Sea Detail for an hour or so, however for the trip up the river we were at Special Sea Detail for the full 12 hour transit. The reason that the transit took so long was because we were fighting a 4 knot down bound current most of the way up the river which essentially takes 4 knots off of any speed that we can muster. The crew had to be at the top of their game for the whole transit because there were numerous tugs, deep drafts, and various other craft up bound and down bound the river, as well as a wide assortment of twists and turns to safely navigate.

At about 1900 on the evening of the 30th we arrived in New Orleans and moored up right next to the building where the change of command ceremony would be held. Rear Admiral Mary Landry was being relieved by Rear Admiral Roy Nash who assumed command of District Eight which encompasses all Coast Guard units in the entire Gulf of Mexico. The crew worked hard to make sure the ship was full dressed meaning that we had all of our flags displayed, bunting (red, white, and blue banner) lining the ship's railings, and our brow displayed the CYPRESS name on it. After all of the hard work was done most of the crew enjoyed some well earned liberty in New Orleans. Coasties could be found eating and shopping at the famous Decatur and Bourbon Streets, Café Du Monde, Harrah's Casino, and other local favorites. A few select crew members represented CYPRESS at the change of command ceremony as ushers. On Thursday morning the CYPRESS departed New Orleans to go back to Pensacola. The transit down the river went just as smooth as the up bound one and it was a significantly quicker trip because the aforementioned 4 knot current was added to any speed we were making. The ship moored up early Friday afternoon after a successful trip from New Orleans.

http://photos.travelblog.org/Photos/30063/210485/f/1590168-Mississippi-River-0.jpg

Hurricane Preparedness

By: ENS Frankie Harms

Hurricane Season began on 1 June and goes until 30 November. Are you and your family prepared? Below is some information from NOAA's Tropical Cyclone Preparedness Guide 2011 about tropical cyclones as well as some resources to aid you in staying aware during Hurricane Season 2011.The greatest dangers from a tropical cyclone are destructive winds, tornadoes and flooding from the storms. How great is the danger? For 1970-2010, the average numbers per year for the Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico were 11 tropical storms, 6 of which became hurricanes.

Understanding the Terminology

A tropical cyclone is a rotating, organized system of clouds and thunderstorms that originates over tropical or subtropical waters and has a closed low-level circulation. Tropical cyclones rotate counterclockwise in the Northern Hemisphere. They are classified as follows:

Tropical Depression—A tropical cyclone with maximum sustained winds of 38 mph (33 knots) or less.

Tropical Storm— A tropical cyclone with maximum sustained winds of 39 to 73 mph (34 to 63 knots).

Hurricane—A tropical cyclone with maximum sustained winds of 74 mph (64 knots) or higher.

**FYI: In the western North Pacific, hurricanes are called typhoons; similar storms in the Indian Ocean and South Pacific Ocean are called cyclones.

Major Hurricane—A tropical cyclone with maximum sustained winds of 111 mph (96 knots) or higher, corresponding to a Category 3, 4 or 5von the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale.

Hurricane Hazards

STORM SURGE is an abnormal rise of water generated by a storm's winds. Storm surge can reach heights well over 20 feet and can span hundreds of miles of coastline. In the northern hemisphere, the highest surge values typically occur in the right front quadrant of a hurricane coincident with onshore flow.

STORM TIDE is the water level rise during a storm due to the combination of storm surge and the astronomical tide. For example, if a hurricane moves ashore at a high tide of 2 feet, a 15 foot surge would be added to the high tide, creating a storm tide of 17 feet.

HURRICANE-FORCE WINDS, 74 mph or more, can destroy buildings and mobile homes. Debris, such as signs, roofing material, siding and small items left outside become flying missiles during hurricanes.

Tropical cyclones often produce widespread, torrential RAINS in excess of 6 inches, which may result in deadly and destructive floods. Flash flooding, defined as a rapid rise in water levels, can occur quickly due to intense rainfall. Longer term flooding on rivers and streams can persist for several days after the storm.

http://www.hurricane-facts.com/Hurricane-Ivan.jpg

Hurricane Preparedness Cont'd

What to watch/listen for in weather reports during Hurricane Season:

HURRICANE/TROPICAL STORM WATCH: Hurricane/tropical storm conditions are possible in the specified area of the watch, usually within 48 hours of the onset of tropical storm force winds. During a Watch, prepare your home and review your plan for evacuation in case a Hurricane/Tropical Storm Warning is issued. Listen closely to instructions from local officials.

HURRICANE/TROPICAL STORM WARNING: Hurricane/tropical storm conditions are expected in the specified area of the Warning, usually within 36 hours of the onset of tropical storm force winds. Complete storm preparations and immediately leave the threatened area if directed by local officials.

EXTREME WIND WARNING: Extreme sustained winds of a major hurricane (115 mph or greater), usually associated with the eyewall, are expected to begin within an hour. Take immediate shelter in the interior portion of a well-built structure.

**Additional Watches and Warnings are issued to provide detailed information on specific threats such as floods and tornadoes. Local National Weather Service offices issue Flash Flood/Flood Watches and Warnings as well as Tornado Warnings.

RESOURCES!!!

Current Storm Information
National Weather Service:
www.weather.gov
National Hurricane Center:
www.nhc.noaa.gov
Central Pacific Hurricane Center:
www.prh.noaa.gov/cphc
Historical Storm Information
National Climatic Data Center:
www.ncdc.noaa.gov
NOAA Coastal Services Center:
www.csc.noaa.gov
Emergency/Preparedness Information
American Red Cross:
www.redcross.org
FEMA:
www.fema.gov

From:
A PREPAREDNESS GUIDE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Weather Service
Revised March 2011
http://www.weather.gov/os/hurricane/resources/TropicalCyclones11.pdf

Saying Goodbye to a Shipmate and Friend

By: ENS Kurt Walker

On a beautiful May morning MKC Bradley Ueberroth officially retired from the Coast Guard after 21 years of service. The ceremony was attended by members of the CYPRESS as well as family and friends. It is difficult for a lot of people to imagine that 20 years go by in the blink of an eye but that is what nearly every retiree claims. The relationships and friends that are acquired over a career in the Coast Guard are special and cherished. Chief Ueberroth made sure to include in his speech how instrumental his family was throughout the years in making his career a success. Captain Morgan mentioned that in some cases when service members retire a lot of people think that it is time or past the time when they already should have, however that was not the case with Chief Ueberroth. He was an integral part of the CYPRESS crew while on board, apart from the normal Inport/Underway Engineer of the Watch duties he also was the Command Chief. This is an extremely important job because the command chief is basically the link between the enlisted and the officers and is responsible for alerting the officers of potential problems that could arise from the enlisted standpoint. Furthermore, MKC Ueberroth trained countless CYPRESS crew members so that they too could become a part of the CYPRESS team. I know that I speak for the crew when I say Good Luck working for Lockheed Martin at Eglin Air Force Base and it was an honor serving with you Chief.

CYPRESS in Action

Captain's Corner

Hello CYPRESS family!

I hope you enjoyed a little extra time with your Coastie the last few weeks. Some plans changed and some other variables caused us to remain in port more than originally scheduled. Since I'm on the subject of underway time, I want everyone to know that Coast Guard sea-going buoy tenders (that's us) are expected to have 2100 operating hours annually. That's the goal, and that's what I try to do, no more, no less. We're behind the curve right now which is fine if we have tropical storm or hurricane operations, but not so fine if we don't make the hours up. It all comes down to appropriate use of resources. The Coast Guard has 16 sea-going buoy tenders and if each one is 125 hours short of the 2100 hour goal, then that is a whole year's worth of buoy tender hours that go wasted. That's something the bean counters in the Coast Guard and Congress look at, so we all try to do our part of meeting the goal. The expectation for us is that 60% of our hours go towards our primary mission of ATON and 40% towards other missions (e.g. LE). By operating that way we stay well trained and capable in other areas and maintain a true multi-mission capability (i.e. semper paratus-always ready!).

And since I mentioned hurricanes, it's that time of year: hurricane season is 1 June through 30 November. All crewmembers need to make sure their family has a plan BEFORE a storm comes. Members have to get underway, keep the ship out of harm's way, and then come in to the affected area after the storm in order to repair the aids to navigation and get the channels/ports open for business. That's why it's imperative to have a plan so that your Coastie knows that you're ok and is able to function properly at work. Helpful evacuation and hurricane resource info can be found on the ship's website: http://www.uscg.mil/d8/cgcCypress/hurricane.asp
Please call the ship if you have any questions about evacuations and hurricane plans.

Earlier in the quarter we conducted a law enforcement (LE) patrol and increased our LE knowledge and capabilities. In addition we placed (and later removed) four buoys for the Navy's centennial of aviation Blue Angels show right here at NAS, which they greatly appreciated. We had a productive maintenance period with a lot of painting, preservation, generator overhaul, and crews lounge rehab. Our presence in New Orleans for the District Eight commander's change of command was greatly appreciated. Admiral Landry, the outgoing commander, personally thanked me for bringing the ship and the Commandant, Admiral Papp, mentioned us during his remarks to the audience. The crew had the ship looking great and of course demonstrated superb professionalism in safely transiting the Mississippi River. I personally briefed the new District commander, Admiral Roy Nash, on various issues and capabilities of CYPRESS, so he is quite aware of our homeport situation and other issues, but I don't see us requiring any direct intervention from him at the "flag" level.

The Commandant has signed off on the "decision memo" to officially move CYPRESS' homeport from Mobile to Pensacola. That's kind of the final decision within the Coast Guard but we are still awaiting THE final decision after congressional notifications have been made.

Congratulations to Jamie Burke. I selected her as our unit Ombudsman. Thanks for volunteering, Jamie!
Semper Paratus!
-LCDR Paul Morgan