



# CONFIDENCE NEWS

JANUARY 21 - MARCH 25 PATROL



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

CO's Cabin 2

CC's Corner 3

You Can't Run From Us 4-5

Flying Machine 6

Day as Messcook 7

HS2 Gillard, IDHS of the Year 8

Trip to DC 9-10

Enlisted Member of the Year 11

Welcome Babies 12

Welcome Aboard/ Info 13

Promotions/ Advancements 14

A look at this patrol 15-21



# Captain's Cabin



We are all very happy to return from our longest patrol to date - 64 days. The vast majority of our patrol time was pretty challenging; the sea was angry for most of the Caribbean winter, port call logistics were tough to coordinate and moving people to and from the ship required considerable advance arrangements. That being said, we persevered and executed our missions with the usual CONFIDENCE excellence. We tried to have a little fun along the way too - I think we accomplished that goal as well.

We interdicted a go-fast with six smugglers and 1,000 lbs of marijuana, disrupted another go-fast with 3 smugglers and an estimated 2,000 kg of cocaine and played a big role initiating the partner nation interoperability desired by JIATF-South, the interagency task force that coordinates counter-narcotic operations. Our operational flexibility and ability to accomplish the mission, even in suboptimal weather and seas, was greatly appreciated at JIATFS. Well done to all!

We rocked our Aviation Standardization inspection - one of the best performances in the fleet according to the inspectors. A lot of work was invested in these preparations; it paid off.

As always, we forged some great memories and concocted a few sea stories. "Ice"-capades, HS2 Gillard's selection as Independent Duty HS of the Year, green aircrews, finding GTMO yet again, ice cream devourers, the-marlin-that-got-away, serving as the Caribbean Sea taxi service, ever-elusive SPSSs (they do exist), and Guy Harvey are just a few. We look forward to sharing those stories and more once we're back.

A special thank you to OS2 Zack, ET3 Montgomery, YN3 Newsom, YN1 Southard and HS2 Tate for sailing with us - all of you would be welcome back anytime.

Have a safe and enjoyable inport. For those with kids, remember April is Military Child Month - do something special with yours!

Best wishes as always,

CDR Matt Meilstrup

# Command Chief's Corner

Good day from the Command Chiefs Corner. It was a very long exciting patrol for all. We were faced large seas and strong winds throughout the patrol. Many members acquired their sea legs. With two successful counter drug missions, the crew's morale was kept high. Each department did an exceptional job from start to finish. Our watch schedules are the best we have seen , thanks for all those who qualified.

As transfer season is upon us please be mind full of your travel days and the length of your driving hours. Plan ahead and avoid traveling on holidays. Use your sponsor to the fullest extent for a successfully transition. Ask your shipmates for information and experiences they have encountered, whether traveling to Hawaii or Maine many of us have traveled that road. The Chief's Mess will be losing three of its members this summer, it has been a great tour for us.

Please welcome the new Chiefs as they arrive this summer.

As the month of June approaches lets ensure that our tropical dress uniforms are ready for the Change of Command. Many of us have received additional awards and ribbons for your outstanding work wear them with pride and honor. Fair winds and following seas.

BMC Matthew Burt  
Command Chief  
USCGC Confidence.



# YOU CAN'T RUN FROM US



It was after lunch on the 9<sup>th</sup> of February, we all knew that we were close to setting Special Sea Detail for pulling in to GTMO. Everyone was trying to get ready for what they knew would be a “working port call”. The engineers were not going to be getting liberty due to the generators needing to be fixed, and most of the crew had offered to stay behind and help them out. After having training and drills the past few days no one was expecting it, especially for where we were, I mean, c’mon...off of GTMO!?! Really? But we all heard it. The first time it was piped throughout the ship “Set the Go Fast Bill, Set the Go Fast Bill; Go Fast is

IN SIGHT!” Immediately we all thought that this was another drill, so we all began to move, get our gear and get ready. Then there it was again, this time more enthusiastically “SET THE GO FAST BILL, SET THE GO FAST BILL; GO FAST IS IN SIGHT!” The entire team mustered on the Focsel looking for it while we were getting ready. No one could see it. I called up to the bridge that we were manned and ready as we all hurried to CON1. From the time the bill was set to the time that we were ready it was only 4 minutes. With the help of CIC and the bridge we were provided with a intercept course to steer. After what seemed to be forever, which was really only a few minutes, I saw something directly off of the bow. Could it be? Really? Did we really have our first go fast? I called out to the rest of the crew and said that I had a visual, and made sure that both of the gunners, ME1 Mailander and MK2 Deaton, in the back knew where the go fast was as well. As MK1 Reel and ME2 Steed were taking care of communications between us and the cutter, we began to get excited. We continued to close in on them and I watched as they began to make course changes. After a few turns, it appeared that they were heading directly at us! I called out to the rest of the crew for them to verify and they confirmed exactly what I thought I was seeing! The lookout on the Coni verified the same thing! What were they thinking!?! As we prepared for what could be a very dangerous situation, they turned back around and started heading away from us. As we continued our chase I saw something in the water off of our starboard bow. We looked and you could see that they were packages! Contraband? Drugs? What was it? We radioed back to the cutter, slowed, and retrieved one large package. Once the package was onboard and we continued pursuit and requested that CON2 be lowered to retrieve what appeared to be about 35 bales. We started closing in on them quickly, ME1, MK2, and I ready for anything, hoping they wouldn’t stop. Maybe we’d have the opportunity to shoot out their engines. I got the OTH into position, MK1 and ME2 began the radio call outs. The blue light

was flashing; hearts were racing, numerous things running through our minds of what could happen. They didn't listen to the first call out over the radio, and the reports of what was happening were streaming back to the cutter. I maneuvered alongside them. We were only about 7-10 feet away from each other. My eyes watching the operator very closely and maintaining the picture of our team. MK1, ME1, MK2, and ME2 all yelling at them "STOP YOUR VESSEL, U.S. COAST GUARD!" They didn't stop. Again, they yelled out to them. Nothing happened. We try yelling at them one more time....they stopped! The chase was over. We caught them. MK2 Deaton directed them to kill their engines. We stay alongside and begin our standard questions as our hearts slowed back to a normal heart rate. The entire team was thrilled; we finally got one! We waited for permission to board them. Minutes went by; they seemed like hours, and just drag on. The ship eventually called us and informed us that we would be getting relieved because of how long we were out there, about 7 hours in that boat. They got a relief crew together and sent them out so that we could go back and get some rest and some food. After we came back, the relief crew was given permission to board. Shortly thereafter, the relief crew brought over 06 detainees and checked their vessel for more contraband, nothing else was found. We stopped all of those drugs from reaching American shores to help keep our country that much safer. Job well done to everyone!

-BM2 Murray



## CONFIDENCE'S FLYING MACHINE

CONFIDENCE had the privilege to work with an aviation detachment, AVDET, from Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron, HITRON, Jacksonville, FL this patrol. We were one of the first cutters to work with the new and improved MH-65 Delta model. The helicopter flew down during the beginning of the patrol, making leaps from island to island before meeting up with CONFIDENCE. Once aboard, the AVDET was in for one crazy ride as Mother Nature stirred up the seas.

HITRON is a unit specializing in Airborne Use Of Force missions and drug interdiction. The pilots are able to perform high risk maneuvers and conduct operations in high risk areas. Each crew has a specialized gunner. When a vessel is spotted and permission is granted, the gunner deploys warning shots and disabling fire to shoot out the engines to stop the suspected vessel. Then, the helicopter vectors the cutter small boat with the boarding team to the suspect vessel.

The AVDET aboard consisted of 6 members; pilots LCDR Fouch and LT Swanner, crew: AET1 Sly, the gunner, AMT1 Scott, AET3 Fernandez and AMT3 Hall. They flew one or two missions a day, searching for suspicious vessels, go-fasts, the elusive self propelled semi-submersible. Besides fly missions, they worked with us to help qualify crew members in new flight operations billets. While working with CONFIDENCE, AET1 Sly's expert eye sight helped spot a go-fast and helped vector the cutter. When the go fast spotted the helicopter, they began dumping their contraband overboard. The three members aboard the go-fast were detained and CONFIDENCE disrupted the transportation of an estimated 2,000 kilograms of cocaine worth approximately \$54 million dollars.

It was a pleasure having all of the HITRON members aboard and being able to conduct so many operations. The crew of CONFIDENCE thanks the AVDET for helping complete training and making flight operations safe and a (relatively) fun experience. Our biggest lesson learned: next time an AVDET is aboard CONFIDENCE, make sure we double the number of ice cream sandwiches aboard.

-ENS Tatara



## Day in the Life as a Mess Cook

I wasn't too sure at first how I was going to describe a day in the life as a mess-cook, truth be told it is always changes from day to day. From scrubbing dirty dishes that the previous messcooks decide to hide, to FS1 Krusko coming in the scullery and singing Bon Jovi's "Living on a Prayer" with me while I scrub the dirty dishes. No one day is always the same. I'm not going to lie though, the days do go by pretty fast because of all the work; it really is a nice thing if you think about it. I mean, why drag out the day when you have 2 months out to sea? The real problem is that no one ever seems to think you do enough work, nor is it hard work your'e doing. Needless to say, I don't smell terrible, pass out from exhaustion at the end of the day, or watch the dead skin fall off my hands from doing nothing. There's a reason why us non rates dread messcooking. So if I had to describe the day in the life of a messcook, I would have to say that it's challenging, but rewarding; the reward being that the day goes by fast, and brings us 1 day closer to home.

-SN King



# THE BEST HS IN THE FLEET!

During this patrol CONFIDENCE received outstanding news that HS2 Gillard was selected as the Coast Guard's Independent Duty Health Services Technician (IDHS) of the Year for 2011. This award is given to one independent duty corpsman each year who demonstrates exceptional dedication to their crew and the Coast Guard. The competition for the IDHS of the Year Award for 2011 was extremely competitive and he was selected out of a pool of hundreds of applicants. As the independent duty corpsman aboard CONFIDENCE, HS2 Gillard has had an extraordinary impact on CONFIDENCE's medical program and overall readiness. Over the past year, he earned this award by updating multiple medical bills and rewriting the ship's Standard Operating Procedures. Along with updating the ship's medical administration, HS2 Gillard's exceptional medical care for the crew also contributed to his receipt of this award. He coordinated one medical evacuation off the coast of Miami, provided stitches to six different members and cared for multiple wounds and lacerations. He also coordinated multiple air crew candidate physicals at Air Station Clearwater, was a strong advocate for the crew at Patrick Air Force Base and provided sick call 24 hours a day while underway. Along with providing outstanding medical care, HS2 Gillard also demonstrated dedication to both medical and shipboard training. During the ship's Tailored Ship's Training Availability he completed a total of 87 drills; far surpassing the required 22 and resulting in BDS receiving a 94% average on medical drills. He also demonstrated the qualities of the independent duty health services technician of the year through his outstanding performance on two major health service inspections. As part of the honor of IDHS of the year, HS2 Gillard traveled to Washington, DC to be presented the award by RADM Dollymore, Surgeon General of the Coast Guard. Our Doc is an outstanding corpsman who has shown tremendous dedication to the crew and the Coast Guard. HS2 Gillard deserved this award and everyone aboard CONFIDENCE is extremely proud of their shipmate.



## TRIP TO WASHINGTON D.C.

I was authorized to attend the 6th Annual Angels of the Battlefield Dinner in Washington, DC. I was also presented the Independent Duty Health Services Technician of 2011 at CG Headquarters Washington. My wife and daughter were unable to attend so my brother Brian (Jarhead) drove in 5 hours from Cleveland. I was given the opportunity to meet several people and sit down to dinner with them and accept the award. Some of the people I met included General Mills USMC, RADM Dollymore Surgeon General of the CG, the Surgeon General US Army, MCPOCG Leavitt, the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, the HS Rating Force Master Chief HSCM Royes, CMC of the Personnel Service Center USCG, Captain Salvon-Harman Chief Flight Surgeon of the CG, 5 of the 8 HS Master Chiefs in the CG, and a million other people that were shoving challenge coins down my pockets.



It was a great experience to be able to attend and will never be forgotten. Unfortunately our plans to tour the White House and Pentagon fell through. I would have to say the most memorable part of the trip was having Rear Admiral Upper Half Dollymore (CG Surgeon General)



General Mills and HS2 Gillard

know my first name without me ever meeting her before in front of my brother and fellow HS's.  
 I would like to thank the Crew, XO, CO, and especially LTJG Bradley for all of your help and the great opportunity to attend these events.  
 -Doc



CAPT Salvon-Harman and HS2 Gillard

## Enlisted Person of the Year



Second Class Petty Officer Brandon Edwards was selected as CONFIDENCE's Enlisted Person of the Year. He not only stood diligent watches, but also devoted countless hours each day as the Fuel, Oil, and Water King (FOWK), stabilizing the ship, transferring fuel to ensure there was enough fuel to keep the engines running and coordinating all fueling evolutions. Petty Officer Edwards displayed his determination and devotion to duty daily, setting the example for subordinates and crew members.

After completing his tiring daily tasks, Petty Officer Edwards worked with and trained his shipmate, completing preventative maintenance and teaching them how to fix casualties. Outside of work, he displayed his true colors as a person; his passion for life and helping those who are less fortunate. Petty Officer Edwards and his wife, Jenn, happily donated clothing, money, food and their personal time to aid countries such as Guatemala and Haiti, and organizations such as the Veterans of Foreign War, the Ruska Village Orphanage and Grace Equestrian. Petty Officer Edwards has proven himself to be a dedicated professional and overachieving model of excellence for all to emulate. Our heartiest congratulations to Petty Officer Edwards!!



# New Family Members



Brylin Elisabeth Rooke  
Born: 09 December 2011



Steven Douglas Kotter  
Born: 22 February 2012



# CONFIDENCE CREW AND FAMILIES

## WELCOME ABOARD

ENS Chong from OCS, Coast Guard Academy  
OS3 Guarino from Training Center Petaluma, CA  
FN York from Training Center Cape May, NJ  
FN Filgo from Training Center Cape May, NJ  
SN Mathews from Training Center Cape May, NJ  
SN Mendoza from Training Center Cape May, NJ  
FN Chokr from Training Center Cape May, NJ

Thank you for serving aboard CONFIDENCE  
during this patrol:

YN1 Southard  
HS2 Tate  
OS2 Zack  
YN3 Newson  
ET3 Montgomery

### Patrol Stats:

9,220 NM = 10,603 Miles Steamed  
133 Helicopter Evolutions  
02 Law Enforcement Cases  
2 Metric Tons of Cocaine  
1000lbs Marijuana  
Valued at \$140M

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# A Look At the Patrol













