

DILIGENCE SHORE TIES



Edition 07-03
August 2007

FLORIDA STRAITS PATROL

DILIGENCE PATROL JUNE 2007 – AUGUST 2007



On June 24th, 2007, we began a summer patrol in the Florida Straits. Just prior to getting underway, we had a Change of Command ceremony and welcomed aboard the new Commanding Officer, CDR Doug Fears. With a new CO at the helm, and several new Wardroom and crew members, we headed south for an interesting, and busy, two-month patrol.

The primary focus of this patrol was Alien Migrant Interdiction Operations (AMIO). Within days of leaving Wilmington, we intercepted a go-fast vessel attempting to smuggle a group of Cubans into Florida. After launching the Over The Horizon (OTH) small boat, our boarding team worked with a Coast Guard small boat from Sector Key West to stop the vessel and remove almost 40 migrants. Shortly after that operation was completed, and all migrants were transferred to DILIGENCE, our vigilant watchstanders spotted another vessel trying to smuggle migrants into the U.S. This time, there were no high speed motors or smugglers, just a tiny raft with a tarp cover. After launching our OTH small boat to investigate, our boarding team discovered four unresponsive Cuban migrants. After hoisting them onboard in a Stokes litter and providing immediate health care, we discovered that the migrants had intentionally injured themselves in an attempt to be flown to the U.S. for medical care. Thanks to the efforts of HS2 Small and our embarked Public Health Services Officer, they were successfully treated onboard DILIGENCE! Over the course of the patrol, we interdicted six smuggling go-fast boats, and four rafts. We successfully

prevented the illegal migration of 116 Cubans and detained ten suspected smugglers.

In addition to a hectic AMIO schedule, we also had to deal with a significant engineering casualty. Early on the morning of July 1st, we were woken by the General Quarters alarm. After setting the “Main Space Fire Doctrine,” we waited for word on the potential fire in the engine room. The report came: no fire, but oil was everywhere. One of the generators suffered a crankcase explosion, punching two holes in the generator’s engine block. We had to pull into Miami for repairs. Our engineers worked day and night to effect repairs. Thanks to their amazing efforts, we were able to replace the generator in record time, and resume patrol.

We also embarked a Coast Guard HH-65C Dolphin helicopter for much of the patrol. The helicopter and flight crew were vital assets that helped us conduct effective AMIO. During an early morning operation in July, we detected two go-fast smuggling boats trying to reach Florida. After determining their approximate position, we launched the helicopter to track down and monitor the go-fast vessels. Flying covertly, the helicopter



relayed information back to us regarding the position, approximate course and speed, and number of people onboard. We determined an intercept course, and launched our OTH boat, successfully stopping one of the migrant smuggling vessels. Over the course of the patrol, the helo proved to be an invaluable asset, assisting us in the interdiction of several go-fast vessels. Towards the end of our Florida Straits patrol, we conducted “Reverse Cycle Operations” with the helo and flight crew. We would conduct flight operations from (generally) midnight until three or four in the morning, and then allow ourselves to recover during the day. Basically flip-flopping our work schedules, this allowed us to respond to the Cuban migration threats round the clock.

In July, we hosted RADM Kunkel, Coast Guard District Seven Commander, for a tour of our migrant holding facilities and for a Use of Force brief. The Admiral was flown in on a Dolphin helicopter, and, after a short visit, we transported him over to the Coast Guard cutter EAGLE in our OTH boat. CGC EAGLE, a three-masted sailing barque, was a Nazi Germany training ship that was a war prize at the end of WWII. Now, it serves as a training platform for Coast Guard Academy cadets and Officer Candidates. Easily recognizable around the world, EAGLE bears the impressive title of “America’s Tall Ship.”

When we weren’t conducting migrant operations, launching our helicopters, or hosting dignitaries onboard, we did get to enjoy some downtime. We enjoyed golfing, fishing, boating, and relaxing during several mid-patrol breaks in Key West and Miami. Some of us even got the

chance to attend an American Idol concert in Fort Lauderdale, FL— courtesy of DILIGENCE’s morale program. On the Coast Guard’s 217th birthday, August 4th, we took a break from our hectic operational schedule to enjoy a “Steel Beach” picnic on the fantail. We also took some time to recognize our new “Sailor of the Quarter,” MK3 Ryan Scheid. MK3 Scheid was recognized for his significant efforts in various projects throughout the past quarter, and his consistent willingness to go above and beyond in his duties aboard DILIGENCE.

Despite all the exciting operations we have conducted, we look forward to returning home to Wilmington to see our families and friends, and we thank you all for your continued support. We could not do it without each and every one of you. See you in a couple days!

CHANGE OF COMMAND



DC2 Hunt enjoys some refreshments during the reception. →

← CDR Fears requests permission to relieve CDR Gentilella from Rear Admiral (Select) Ratti during the



Above: CDR and Mrs. Fears pose with their son, Joshua, in front of



Below: The ship's company comes to attention prior to the change of



Above: SN Custis and BM3 Anthony practice saluting on the quarterdeck



HELO OPS



← A Dolphin helicopter takes off from DILIGENCE while a Coast Guard 87' cutter lingers in the background.



YN1 Cuomo manning the sound-powered phones during flight

← ENS Starr, BM3 Holston, and SN Leon ensure the flight deck is ready prior to launching the helicopter



Above: SN Suggs tries life in the

HELO OPS (CONTINUED)

Ah, the rough life of our aviation detachment. →



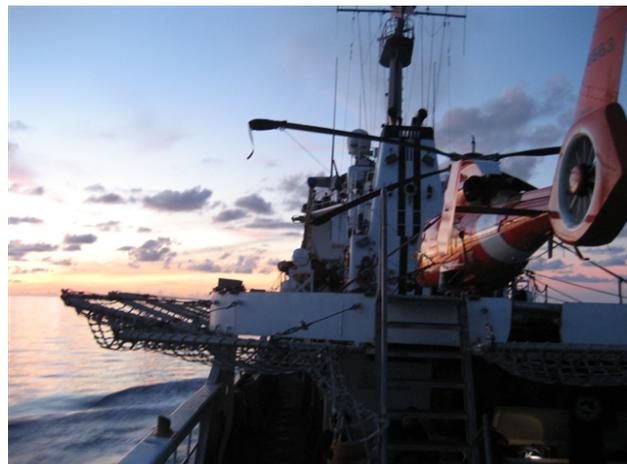
← A Dolphin helicopter lands on

BMC Murray, YN1 Cuomo, OS1 Clay, SN Bruno, and ET2 Torbett man the bridge during hole ops. →

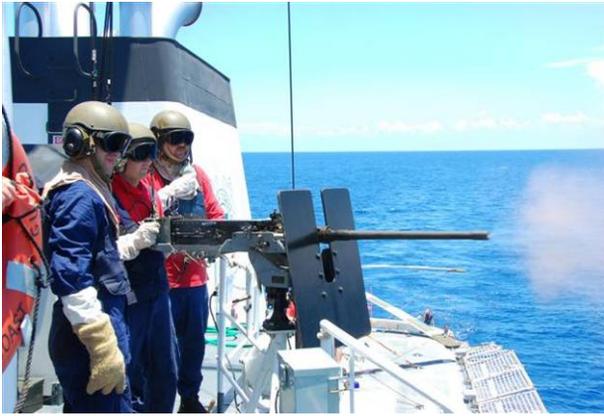


Above: A bird's eye view of the DILIGENCE flight deck as crewmembers prepare for a

After a long day of flight ops, DILIGENCE and HH-6579 settle in



GUNNERY EXERCISES



← BMC Brown, OS2 Saltz, and BM2 Pate fire off rounds on the .50 caliber machine gun during a

The Weapons Officer, ENS Bonner, gives commands during a gun shoot.



← GM1 Dendy and BM1 Holmes clean up the 25 mm machine gun.

Below: GM1 Dendy instructs gunner's mate apprentice SN Mace.



Above: After rescuing Cuban migrants off a raft, DILIGENCE uses the .50 caliber to sink the hazard to navigation.

SMALL BOAT OPS

DILIGENCE's OTH-RHIB returns from transferring migrants to another vessel. →



← DILIGENCE's OTH boat launches off



Above: The prize crew of a seized migrant smuggling go-fast boat maneuver



Above: DILIGENCE's OTH boat comes alongside as HH-6579 maneuvers in the background



Above: ENS Sauerbrunn, ENS Starr, MK1 Conley, BM1 Holmes, MK3 Scheid, BM3 Uscanga, and SN Russell return to DILIGENCE after removing



Above: DILIGENCE's OTH boat transfers migrants to CGC

MIGRANT OPERATIONS



← The go-fast response team intercepts a go-fast vessel with

ENS Kilcullen, BM1 Holmes, MK3 Scheid, BM3 Uscanga, and SN Russell get in position to recover



← BM1 Holmes, MK3 Scheid, SN Russell, and 1/c cadet McDonald



FN Deans, EM3 Frangullie, MK2 Ricciardi, FN Groome, and MK3 Jackman sort through and



← HS2 Small provides medical treatment to a pregnant migrant while her



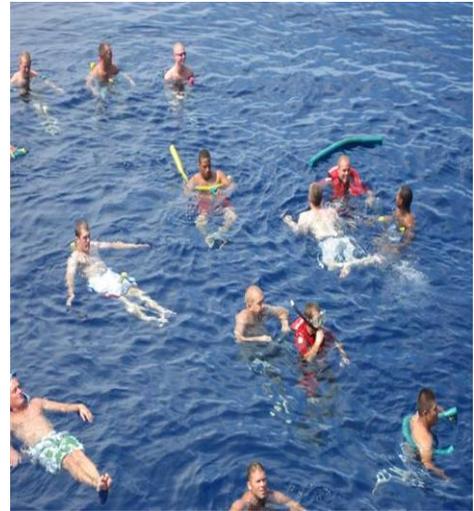
LIFE UNDERWAY



←YN1 Cuomo helps MK2 Ricciardi show off his freshly caught Mahi-

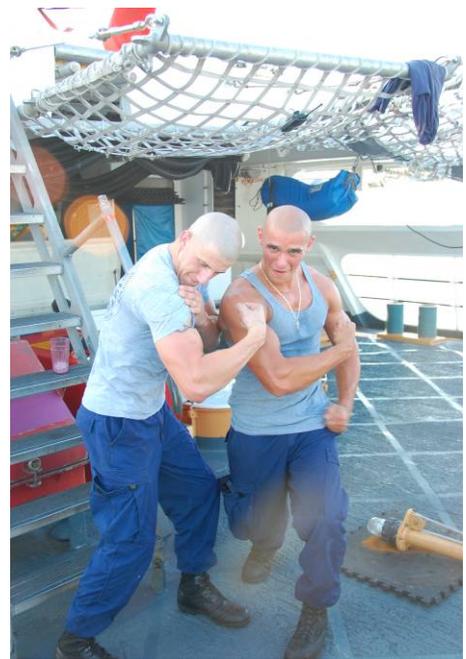
Diligence crew enjoys a well deserved swim call in the Florida Straits. →

Below:
Crewmembers
examine an expired



Welcome to the Gun Show: Starring FS3 Frazier

Below: LCDR Dettleff and BM1 Holmes hit the "Jailhouse Gym"



Above: Members of Deck Department fall out to discuss the



LIFE UNDERWAY (CONTINUED)



← A worn out SN Bruno steals a quick nap in Deck Berthing.

FS3 Mazzuca works the grill during a "Steel Beach Picnic." →



← ENS Gonzalez, ENS Starr, and 1/C cadets Jarman and Weber enjoy the 4th of July on DILIGENCE's "Steel Beach."

Below: Crewmembers try a watery version of "King of the Hill" during a



Above: MK3 Scheid receives his Sailor of the Quarter award from

LIFE UNDERWAY (CONTINUED)



← MK2 Timmerman receives his



Above: ET2 Torbett and BM3 Anthony take a moment to clown for the camera while an abandoned migrant raft burns in the

SK3 Hodges, ET2 Leonard, and OS2 Saltz pass some time in Operations



Below: CWO2 Russell and CDR Fears pin MK2 Graco's new crow's on during

Above: EM1 Luckey poses with CDR Fears after receiving his promotion to First Class



LIFE UNDERWAY (CONTINUED)

LT Blaszak enjoys one of his many cigars on the fantail. →



← SA Lagreca attempts a dive off the flight deck, but only makes it

Below: ENS Kilcullen, OS3 Mobley, FSC Burgener, and SN Bruno play cards on the messdeck during a



Above: ENS Laubenheimer brushing up on his celestial navigation skills.

SN Gregory scans the horizon for contacts during his lookout watch. →

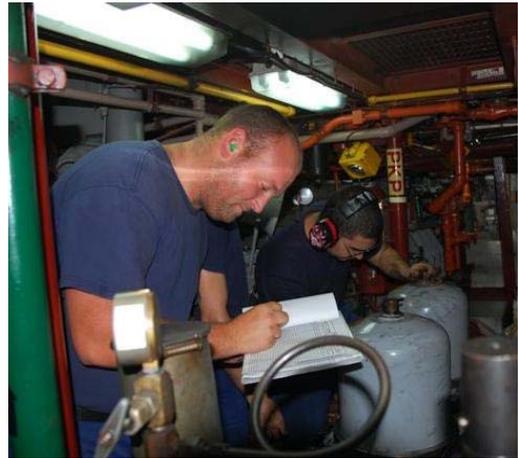




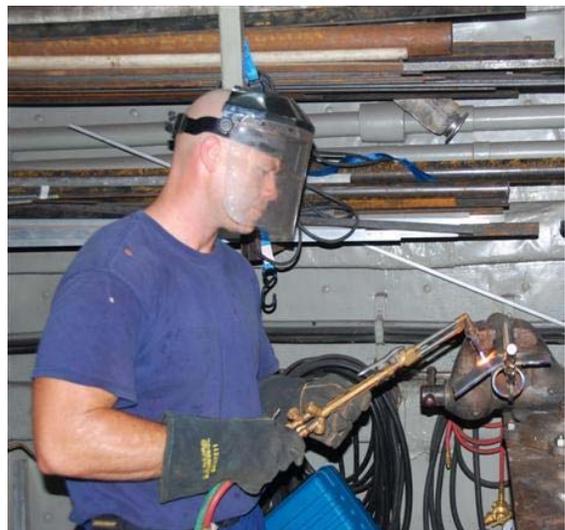
← MK2 Graco takes some time to dance for the camera

EM2 Braun
conducts a
throttleman round

Below: Early on the
morning of July 1st,
DILIGENCE
suffered a
catastrophic
crankcase explosion



MK2 Timmerman conducts hot work in



Below: MK1 Maples takes a break from the
heat of the Engine Room to enjoy a soda.



Above: This is what blows out
the side of a generator when a



RENDEZVOUS WITH CGC EAGLE



← CGC Eagle is a former Nazi Germany training vessel that was a war prize at the end of WWII and now serves as a

DILIGENCE's OTH boat and HH-6579 prepare for a Search and Rescue



← CDR Fears and LCDR Dettleff reminisce about their time on

Below: CWO2 Russell pauses for a picture with CGC EAGLE.



Above: HH-6579 hovers by EAGLE on its way to assist the DILIGENCE OTH boat in a Search and Rescue



PORT CALLS



← ENS Kilcullen, 1/c cadet Weber, SN Gregory, SN Custis and SN Russell kick back at the American

FSC Burgener and SN Rogers relax while fishing on the pier in Miami. →



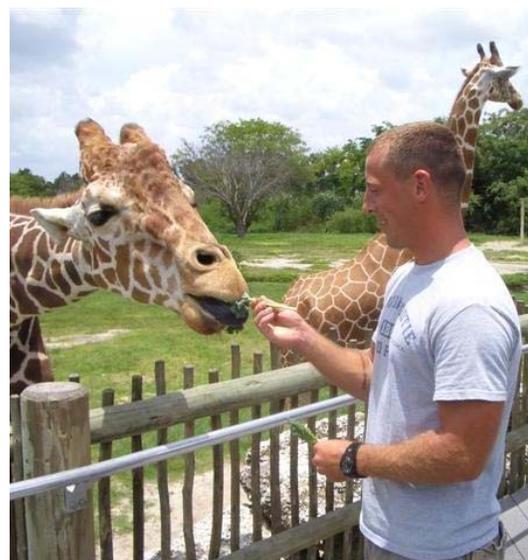
← DILIGENCE's LTJG's (select) enjoy a Key West port call in



Below: BM1 Holmes makes a new friend at the Miami Zoo.



Above: DILIGENCE crewmember's enjoy an American Idol concert in Fort



FROM THE BRIDGE WING



Dear Families and Friends of DILIGENCE,

This edition of Shore Ties marks the end of my first patrol in DILIGENCE and the continuation of this patrol newsletter. First of all, my wife Kate and I are delighted to be in Wilmington and look forward to making the acquaintance of each of you.

This has been a fun, action-packed, and many times exhausting, patrol in the Straits of Florida. As the newsletter details, we have effectively taken many positive law enforcement actions that are vital to our homeland security. Your loved ones, my new shipmates, performed superbly during this patrol and are very much looking forward to some well-deserved time at home.

Make no mistake about it; your continued support, thoughts and prayers from the home-front motivates us, many times provides the adrenaline to get through a long night of operations, and is also a warm blanket of comfort to us as we rest at the end of a long day. Special thanks to our Ombudsman, Mrs. Julie Brown, for her continued support and resolution of the many special crew needs that arose during the patrol!

We'll be home soon!

**Very respectfully yours,
Commander Doug Fears
Commanding Officer**



We'll be home soon!

Editors- ENS Ian Starr, ENS Josh Drysdale, 1/c Cadet Benjamin Weber, 1/c Cadet John McDonald, and 1/c Cadet Timothy Jarman

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**Questions or comments? Please
email Joshua.K.Drysdale@uscg.mil
with any suggestions!**