

The 'HAWK

JIATF-South Patrol (Who has two thumbs and just made history? MOHICANS DO!)

After two months at sea, MOHAWK returned to homeport in Key West, FL having gained international attention for its crew's performance and professionalism on their most recent patrol. MOHAWK was underway working for the Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-S) patrolling the southern Caribbean to execute counter-illicit trafficking. The premise behind these patrols is to identify and interdict vessels which do not operate in accordance with the international laws of the sea.

On this most recent patrol, MOHAWK deployed with an Aviation Detachment (AVDET) from HITRON Jacksonville, FL. Coast Guard helicopter 6594 (aka "Rum Runner") consisted of pilots LT John McWilliams and LT Matt VanGinkel, and crewmembers AMT1 Ben Bradley, AMT2 Mark Ahmann, AMT2 David Van Parys, and AET3 Jakob Braklow. Despite a few

setbacks, those guys kept the helo in the air in support of MOHAWK's mission.

Onto the important stuff, through the expert seamanship and prowess that defines MOHAWK sailors (Mohicans), the cutter captured not one, but two Self Propelled Semi-Submersibles (SPSS) carrying narcotics across the Caribbean Sea. These were only the second and third ever caught in the Caribbean. SPSS's were historically a more popular smuggling tactic in the Pacific, while Go-Fasts usually dominate the Caribbean, but MOHAWK's captures suggest that the traditional drug-smuggling tactics are changing.

The first SPSS was estimated to have 6 to 8 metric tons of cocaine onboard. The volume of cocaine recovered from the second scuttled SPSS was estimated to be 9 metric tons, with an estimated street



The first SPSS during our small-boat approach; Boarding Officer with a bale of cocaine.

value of \$270 million.

MOHAWK Sub-Hunters.

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Welcome to all New Crewmembers and their families...we are proud to have you as members of the MOHAWK family!
- Congratulations to everyone who earned a new qualification this underway period
- Be safe and enjoy the Holidays this month and next
- If you have a story or pictures that you would like to include in the 'HAWK Newsletters, please email John.W.Beal@uscg.mil for submission



Change of Command: A Transfer of Total Responsibility, Authority, and Accountability from One Individual to Another

During our last inport, MOHAWK hosted its Change of Command pier-side in Key West. On 11 August MOHAWK bid farewell to CDR Robert T. Hendrickson and his wife Katie, and welcomed CDR Mark J. Fedor and his wife Amy and children Tyler, Will, Megan,

and Drew to sunny Key West. CDR Fedor is a 1991 graduate of the United States Coast Guard Academy. Prior to reporting to Command, CDR Fedor attended the National War College in Washington, D.C. where he earned a Masters Degree in National Security

Strategy. CDR Hendrickson reported for duty in Honolulu, HI as the Chief of Law Enforcement. Vice Admiral Robert C. Parker, Commander Coast Guard Atlantic Area and Coast Guard Defense Force East, was in attendance.

TSTA - Tailored Ship's Training Assessment



After a very successful JIATF-South patrol MOHAWK headed up to Naval Station Mayport, Florida for our Tailored Ship's Training Assessment (TSTA). TSTA is a three week long training program designed to evaluate

each cutter's readiness to combat casualties like fire, flooding, collisions, and enemy attack. Emergency procedures for vessels at sea are unique because of the limited resources available, and the crew must be properly trained and outfitted to deal with casualties and ensure the safe navigation and operation of the ship.

Everyday for those three weeks we were running through training and evaluation scenarios where the crew had to work together to save the ship from simulated flooding, fires, and machinery or personnel casualties. The Afloat Training Group (ATG) members and our Training Teams graded us on each drill until we passed them all. The culminating event was a mass conflagration scenario where the crew

was stretched thin due to simulated casualties and people in junior positions had to step up into leadership roles in order to keep the good ship MOHAWK afloat and out of danger.

During one of our Saint John's River Transits, we welcomed aboard Rear Admiral Stephen E. Mehling, Commander, Coast Guard Force Readiness Command. Admiral Mehling interacted with the crew and got to see first hand how ATG and the cutters function together during TSTA.

MOHAWK performed exceptionally at TSTA and we earned the coveted "Excellence" award in Seamanship, Operations, and Engineering. We left Mayport proud of our successes and ready to get home.

Grand Cayman Snorkeling Trip

MOHAWK spent our Mid Patrol Break (MPB) on Grand Cayman Island. The Morale Committee spent countless hours planning and scheduling a ship-wide snorkel trip with a local company. We employed the services of Captain Marvin's Watersports for a half-day excursion which included three stops: Coral Garden, Barrier Reef, and Stingray City.

We had more than half of the crew attend the trip, which was majorly financed by the Morale Committee. The colorful fish and sponge, coral, and

shellfish were impressive and beautiful, but the real highlight of the trip was Stingray City. Crewmembers were afforded the opportunity to swim with live stingrays and hand feed them squid.

Overall, Grand Cayman was noted to be one of the best port calls the crew has experienced, and everyone who went on the snorkeling trip said that it was their favorite part of the trip. We even got to meet Captain Marvin himself!



Meet Our New Ombudsmen

In our last inport, MOHAWK had two new volunteers assume the duties and responsibilities of MOHAWK's Ombudsmen. The role of an Ombudsmen is to act as the communication link between MOHAWK's Commanding Officer and families at home. They fill an important role and are in a unique position because they have constant contact with the Command.

Our two new Ombudsmen are Mrs. Kristin Kane and Mrs. Aubrey Sigarst.

Their email address is mohawkombudsman@yahoo.com.



Catching Up - It's been a while since our last Newsletter..

It's been a while since our last newsletter, almost 8 months, and many things have changed. There are many new faces onboard and many new spouses, children, and significant others at the pier watching us get underway and return to home port. After an extended inport while the MOHAWK was being crewed by the THETIS, we got underway for a Windward Passage patrol on 02 July. While busy rescuing countless migrants from the unforgiving sea, we were also working diligently to prepare the cutter for CART and HELOSTAN. CART stands for Command Assessment of Readiness and Training, and it is a precursor to TSTA, the Tailored Ships Training Assessment which is a requirement of all cutters in order to determine their level of preparedness to deal with some of the challenges Coast Guard ships may face

while underway. HELOSTAN is the Shipboard Helicopter Operations Standardization program where cutters with flight deck capabilities are evaluated and gain certification to take on helicopters as additional assets for patrols. On our WWP patrol, we embarked an HH-65 and they flew missions for us searching for overloaded migrant vessels in danger.

We spent two port calls in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba where the crew got some liberty to relax and get some time off of the ship. Morale hosted a beach party cookout complete with food, beverages, and volleyball.

In addition to preparing for CART and HELOSTAN, the crew was working overtime to make preparations for our August Change of Command. Shortly after the Change of Command and a

few days with family and friends, MOHAWK went through CART and then HELOSTAN and passed with flying colors.



Costa Rica & Colombia

MOHAWK pulled into Puerto Limon, Costa Rica for a Brief Stop for Fuel (BSF). During the fueling, several crewmembers traveled with the Command to visit local Coast Guard units. We discussed tactics and our operations, and exchanged some cutter mementos for Costa Rican GuardiaCostas items. We toured one of their patrol boats and visited a small boat station near the port.



At the beginning of this patrol MOHAWK was diverted and recovered 20 Cuban migrants from their damaged vessel and the unforgiving sea. They were far off track and we rescued them before turning them over to the CGC VENTUROUS for processing and repatriation.



Cartagena, Colombia was another port call we had this patrol. The crew enjoyed the food and clubs, and got to tour the old Walled City and experience the culture. A handful of crewmembers traveled with the Command to visit the local Coast Guard base and got a first-hand look into two SPSS's that the Colombian GuardiaCosta had interdicted. It afforded us the unique opportunity to investigate the construction and propulsion systems of these smuggling vessels.

"This is the second self-propelled semi-submersibles case for this crew and I am extremely proud we were able to stop millions of dollars of cocaine from reaching the streets of America," said CDR Mark Fedor, Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk's commanding officer. "They are a significant threat to our nation and throughout Central and South America because they can smuggle massive amounts of narcotics as well as other illicit goods or people and we will continue to be out here and stand a vigilant watch."

From the Commanding Officer's Desk

To the Friends and Family of the MOHAWK:

Thank you for welcoming my family and I to Key West. I am humbled to be in command of MOHAWK and have quickly realized that I inherited a terrific team. The MOHAWK has a proud history and an equally proud crew that is committed to professionalism, leadership, and being good shipmates. My wife Amy and I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible over the next two years so please don't hesitate to say "hi" if you're visiting the ship.

One of the reasons we publish this newsletter is to help our families and friends understand what the ship does while we're at sea. As you can read in these pages, we have been pretty busy. Your loved ones onboard MOHAWK engage in a variety of Coast Guard missions including counter-narcotics, search and rescue, illegal alien immigration, homeland security, and national defense. To accomplish these missions, we'll travel throughout the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean Sea, and the Atlantic Ocean. Regardless of their position onboard, every crewmember is vitally important to our operational success and I am confident each person will find their tour on MOHAWK to be one of the most challenging and satisfying of their careers.

In case you ever wondered, the MOHAWK was named after the Algonquin tribe of Iroquoian Indians who lived in the Mohawk valley of New York. This tribe became famous for their camaraderie, determination in battle, and ingenuity for overcoming obstacles. The current MOHAWK holds its place in history as the third United States vessel to bear this name and we continue to emulate the strength and skill of those early warriors. Each MOHAWK crewmember is a living link connecting the past to the present as we execute Coast Guard missions wherever the nation needs us. We will be at the forefront of America's effort to provide maritime safety, security, and stewardship.

I consider parents, spouses, and other loved ones to be a part of the broader MOHAWK family and their well-being is integral to our mission success. So if you have questions or concerns about the ship, please contact our two great Ombudsmen, Mrs. Aubrey Sigarst and Mrs. Kristin Kane, at MOHAWKOmbudsman@yahoo.com. The Ombudsmen serve as a direct link between me and family members back home. You can also become a friend of the MOHAWK and follow our activities on Facebook at [U.S. Coast Guard Cutter MOHAWK](#).

Your favorite crewmember is part of a long tradition of MOHAWK sailors who have lived up to the ship's motto: "Lifesaver – Enforcer – Defender". Be proud of your loved ones who are serving onboard MOHAWK for they represent the best that America has to offer. Thank you and I hope to meet you soon.

Commander Mark J. Fedor
Commanding Officer

Dive the old MOHAWK?

"The Mohawk may be transported to Southwest Florida soon, where it will be sunk as an artificial reef. The Mohawk, which serves as a tourist attraction and is rented for parties, has been docked at the East Quay Wall at the Truman Waterfront in Key West for the past seven years.

The 165-foot-long cutter would be sunk in 60 feet of water 13 miles off Sanibel Island, said Scott Boutelle, Lee County marine operations manager. The site is near an old radio tower that has become a popular dive and fishing spot, which would allow dive shops to hit both spots on one charter. The goal is to boost interest in diving and fishing in the area, Boutelle said.

The Mohawk was built in 1935 in Wilmington, Del., and is the last surviving vessel of the Greenland Patrol fleet, which served in World War II, Verge said. The ship broke ice in the Arctic Circle, launched 14 attacks against Nazi U-boats and rescued more than 300 sailors from the sea in two different operations."

For more information about this story, visit this link: <http://keysnews.com/node/35666>

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*Lifesaver ~ Enforcer ~
Defender*



Congratulations to Sailor of the Quarter MK2 Travis J. Tomlinson.

For more about the SPSS interdictions, go to these links:

<http://www.d7.uscgnews.com/go/doc/586/1201943/>

<http://coastguard.dodlive.mil/2011/10/second-caribbean-drug-sub-bust/>

More Patrol Pictures



Top Left: Alien Migrant Interdiction Operations

Upper Middle Left: Destroying a Navigation Hazard

Lower Middle Left: SPSS #2 on the sea floor

Bottom Left: Cocaine recovered from SPSS #2 by divers on the CGC CYPRESS, displayed on the buoy deck

Top Right: Forehandedness and
Eternal Vigilance on Patrol

Middle Right: AVDET taking off

Bottom Right: The old MOHAWK,
which is to be sunk as an
artificial reef

We're on the Web!

[http://www.uscg.mil/lantarea/
cgcMohawk/default.asp](http://www.uscg.mil/lantarea/cgcMohawk/default.asp)