

## SENECA eNewsletter – 1 – 24 December 09

Good day, shipmates.

I thank you for all of your hard work and devotion to duty as we have the watch during these holidays. You are learning how the pace of operations change with a helicopter ... they do travel at 140 knots vice our usual 12 knots. Please check out my commander's Holiday Message, VADM Robert Papp, attached. He got a nice Christmas present this year as it was announced that our President will nominate him to be our next Commandant.

Bravo Zulu ~ Well Done to our newly qualified shipmates who are now standing the watch.

**Tuesday to Wednesday, 1-2 December:** Port Call in Rodman, Panama which is across the entrance to the Panama Canal from Ciudad de Panama (Panama City).

About Rodman <http://www.ciponline.org/facts/rns.htm>

Quick geography lesson on Rodman

[http://www.traveljournals.net/explore/panama/map/m260630/rodman\\_united\\_states\\_naval\\_reservation.html](http://www.traveljournals.net/explore/panama/map/m260630/rodman_united_states_naval_reservation.html)

Good picture of Rodman [http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.travel-images.com/panama243.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.travel-images.com/photo-panama243.html&usq=q3eXxT\\_0t0zO8omq2IpUteNvGmA=&h=525&w=700&sz=150&hl=en&st art=9&um=1&tbnid=n2wZBqImIqQH6M:&tbnh=105&tbnw=140&prev=/images%3Fq%3Drodman%2Bpanama%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DX%26um%3D1](http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.travel-images.com/panama243.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.travel-images.com/photo-panama243.html&usq=q3eXxT_0t0zO8omq2IpUteNvGmA=&h=525&w=700&sz=150&hl=en&st art=9&um=1&tbnid=n2wZBqImIqQH6M:&tbnh=105&tbnw=140&prev=/images%3Fq%3Drodman%2Bpanama%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DX%26um%3D1)

**Thursday, 3 December:** Underway for a routine law enforcement patrol the Eastern Pacific (EPAC) off the coasts of Panama and Costa Rica.

**Friday to Sunday, 4-6 December:** Patrolling off the west coasts of Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Honduras.

**Monday, 7 December:** Patrolling off the coasts of Honduras and El Salvador. Conducted Basic Engineering Casualty Control Exercises (BECCes, pronounced "Becky's").

**Tuesday, 8 December:** Patrolling off the coast of El Salvador. Law enforcement day with our boarding team and OTH checking out some pangas --small open fishing boats (think big Lund or Bimini Center w/out the center console) ~ 25 feet, outboards, 20-40 nautical miles offshore fishing for Mahi Mahi, Daulphin (fish), Sailfish, etc. -- that turned out to be local fishermen.

**Wednesday, 9 December:** Hot day; becalmed. Swim call, which was attended by over half of us. Great day to be a cutterman to be able to swim in salt water with a depth of over 2 miles and jump off the flight deck ... lots of smiles & laughter. Good idea EM1.

**Thursday to Saturday, 10-12 December:** Brief Stop for Logistics (BSL) in Acajutla, El Salvador. We stayed two nights as there was a parts delay and the Main Propulsion Division, led by MKC, needed 2x days to repair our #1 Ship's Service Diesel Generator (SSDG). Though not a liberty port, we took advantage of the inport days to not only take on food, fuel and our Aviation Detachment (AVDET) with CG6564 but also get in some liberty at a local resort. The second night we had a cookout on the flight deck and were entertained by Firewatch with a new guitarist GM3 and their new vocalist followed by the Flight Deck Walk-In Movie "40 Year Old Virgin".

HITRON / CG6564: <http://www.uscg.mil/lantarea/HITRON/default.asp>

Las Veraneras: <http://www.veranerasresort.com/>

Port of Acajutla: <http://www.puertoacajutla.gob.sv/>

**Sunday, 13 December:** Patrolling EPAC off the Coast of El Salvador and Guatemala while having Holiday Routine that was interrupted with Flight Operations to certify our Ship/Helo Team for Air Use of Force (AUF) ... so we can shoot out the outboard engines of Go Fast smuggling boats with the .50 Caliber sniper rifle that the MH-65C carries.

**Monday, 14 December:** Patrolling EPAC. Suffered two significant equipment casualties: one to the CG6564 and one to SENECA's #2 Main Diesel Engine (MDE). Fortunately, we were able to get parts into the area and have them transport out to SENECA at sea by another cutter and its helicopter.

**Tuesday, 15 December:** Patrolling EPAC. Conducted a test flight on CG6564 -- test SAT. Conducted helicopter operations in the afternoon for targets of interest (TOIs).

**Wednesday to Friday, 16-18 December:** Patrolling EPAC off the coasts of Costa Rica and Panama while conducting 2x helicopter patrols a day using our embarked Aviation Detachment (AVDET).

**Saturday to Tuesday, 19-22 December:** Mid-Patrol Break Golfito, Costa Rica. WEPS did an excellent job mooring us to the Banana Pier. It was an adventure entering the Gulfo Deuce which is the large bay of water where Golfito is nestled into its northeast corner to make for an excellent port well protected from sea swells and winds by rainforest covered mountains all around. Most of us roughed it out at the pool at Casa Roland.

LTJG Wetting Down: SENECA's newly minted O2s hosted a BBQ/wetting down at "Samoa's" a waterfront bar and restaurant in Golfito. The event was attended by about half the cutter's crew who were treated to good food, a wide variety of beverages, and the superb dance moves of our Engineer Officer (EO/CHENG) and EMO.

Golfito <http://www.golfito-costarica.com/golfito/>

Casa Roland <http://www.casarolandgolfito.com/>

**Wednesday, 23 December:** Patrolling EPAC off the coasts of Costa Rica and Panama with 2x helicopter patrols a day using HITRON AVDET.

**Thursday, 24 December:** Happy Christmas Eve. Patrolling EPAC off the coasts of Costa Rica and Panama with 2x helicopter patrols a day using HITRON AVDET. The Wardroom will watch "It's A Wonderful Life" tonight and tomorrow will be a Christmas Movie Marathon on the Crew's Mess Deck with a Secret Santa Gift Exchange, a reading of the Night Before Christmas at Diner, a visit from Santa (hopefully for good girl and boy shipmates), and outstanding holiday cuisine prepared by our excellent Food Service Specialists ... Pumpkin Pie, Streusel Muffins and cookies ... oh my!

Christmas Eve Memories:

=> Ship/Helo Team doing a double header (2x sorties with a hot gas by the Grapes with the Hot Potato as safety) on Night Vision Goggles (NVGs) with 50% illumination.

Merry Christmas.

For new shipmates: If you would like your family and friends to receive this periodic eNewsletter, please send me their emails and I will add them to the distribution list.

For family and friends of SENECA: If you would like to know more about our fine cutter and myself, please visit these web sites.

Cutter SENECA <http://www.uscg.mil/lantarea/cgcSeneca/>

Be well, God bless, Semper Paratus ~ Always Ready,

Sincerely,

wjw

CAPT Wm. J. "Willy" Wolter

Cutter SENECA (WMEC 906)

~ underway patrolling the high seas ~