

SENECA eNewsletter – 11 – 16 OCT 08

Good day, shipmates.

We are headed to a portcall for a well deserved break which I will tell you about after we complete it. Here's what SENECA's been up to since the last installment.

11 October, Saturday: Boardings, Boards, & Bingo. We put the Law Enforcement (LE) Team through their paces with 3 boardings of fishing vessels hailing from Hyannis, MA; Point Judith, RI; and New Bedford, MA. The XO took the bridge during a couple of boardings so I could sit in on DCA's (my roommate during my familiarization cruise) and DC1's Engineer of the Watch (EOW) qualification boards held in the Engineering Control Center (ECC). They both passed with flying colors, and I concur with my EO that they are worthy of the trust and confidence we have placed in them with an EOW qualification. I also got in on the blackout card last Bingo of the evening. I appreciated GM1 reminding me to get in on the fun. We had a good contingent of the crew on the mess deck earning prizes. I counted 24 shipmates enjoying the fine, festive Bingo calling of FS1. Shipmates that qualified today were AUXO and one of our SN as Cold Iron Security. MK3 got a two-fer in qualifying as both Boat Crew Member and Boat Engineer.

12 October, Sunday: Boarding. We rested and then boarded as vessel who was found to have 2 violations. BZ (Well Done) to our LE Team in being diligent in looking out for our fellow mariner's welfare. I was able to catch the second half of my Vikings game and watch them pull it out over New Orleans. I did see an interesting phenomenon when I heard a shipmate singing on the mess deck with two other members appreciating his skill. I was even more blown away when I continued to see the same group playing some 6 hours later. That is a lot of Guitar Hero's Rock Band; I don't care who you are.

13 October, Monday: Observed Columbus Day Holiday Routine. However, the weather was so nice that I asked the LE Team to conduct boardings. We also conducted more qualification boards with C3IO successfully becoming a Helicopter Control Officer (HCO) and SK1 being spot on at his Landing Signals Officer (LSO) qualification board.

14 October, Tuesday: Helo Ops. After transiting through Buzzards Bay and the Cape Cod Canal, SENECA set up to do Helo Ops in Cape Cod Bay in order to provide the calmest deck for night Helo Ops. It was refreshing on that sunny, crisp Fall day as we transited the Cape Cod Canal, there were many couples, families, and shore fishermen along the way enjoying the sights of the canal and the pathways maintained by the Army Corps of Engineers. It was beautiful especially with the leaves beginning to turn. It was challenging with a 4.5 knot current pushing into it. 12 day, night and night vision goggle and one hot deck refueling evolutions safely conducted with crew of 6025 on evening of 14 Oct. One of our SA's got to enjoy a good familiarization flight and as he expressed an interest in becoming an airman.

15 October, Wednesday: Helo Ops (4 hours). Observed a subdued, powerful sunset with the orange orb below the clouds and softened by the haze from the occluded front. Observed from the sea, it was one of the those cool sunsets over Massachusetts with a solid autumn orb between a blanket of dark clouds and the bluish horizon of the west coast of Cape Cod Bay. We also earned our pay with 35 day, night, night vision goggle and two hot deck refueling evolutions safely conducted with aircrew of 6025. One of our SA's was jazzed after his familiarization flight which included an over flight of Cape Cod, since the Cutter/Helicopter Team was proficiently moving through the day light training evolutions and needed to burn some aviation gas (AVGAS) as we waited for sunset to being the night evolutions. The crew of 6025 conducted initial shipboard qualifications with a new pilot. The culmination of training efforts resulted in MKC becoming In Port Generator qualified on his way to EOW, MK2 also qualifying as In Port Generator watchstander, one FN becoming a Flight Deck Fire Party Rescueman, and DCA qualifying as a Flight Deck On Scene Leader.

16 October, Thursday: Pyrotechnics exercise. I think any type of controlled explosive is wicked cool (bullets, flares, super rapid blooming chaff). Pyrotechnics exercises are a time when I get to assist my trained professionals (Gunnersmates/GMs) show other shipmates how cool it is to use pyrotechnics as

designed. These exercises are also a sort of mini-Fourth of July were you have fun learning how to use the brightly and many colored tools that may one day save your life. We added another twist to this event today by shifting SENECA's tactical control (TACON) to Station SENECA (I just made that up; we didn't really.) in order to provide some unique training to our small boat crews. Several shipmates put on their MSD 900s (dry suits), jumped off the fantail into the middle of the Gulf of Maine, and shot flares while in the water. They were given a full brief by GM1, and BMC was standing by in the small boat with a full crew and our qualified Cutter Rescue Swimmer. Training builds confidence, from my command philosophy (see link below), and it also looked like they were enjoying the adventure.

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

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

USCG District One (D1) <http://www.uscgnewengland.com/go/doc/778/228815/>

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

CDR Wm. J. "Willy" Wolter
Cutter SENECA (WMEC 906)
~ Underway; patrolling our East Coast ~

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