



USCGC TAMPA (WMEC-902) End of Patrol Newsletter SEP 2011



By ENS Johanson

Hurricane Irene seemed determined to impose havoc on the cutter, tailing the ship with more vehemence than fishermen to a gun shoot¹. It seemed as if every avoidance course we planned, she followed! TAMPA eventually managed to avoid the rough seas generated by Irene, darting about 500 nautical miles off shore to the waters north of

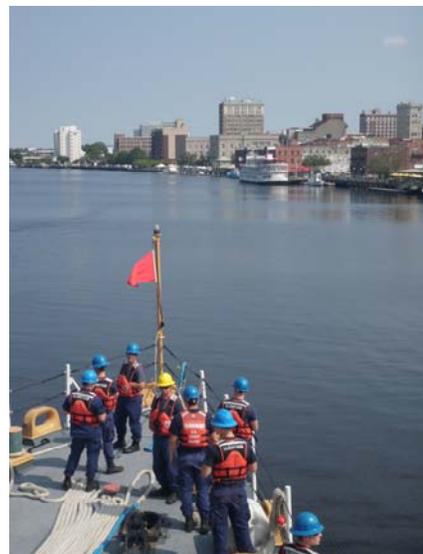


Bermuda. Thankfully, TAMPA only experienced seas reaching 12-15 feet and the crew toughed it out admirably. The only casualty was the wardroom fridge, which freed itself from its foundation and toppled over twice after heavy rolls. Irene forced TAMPA to remain at sea for 18 days with only a short, 6-hour stop in Newport, RI for a quick sip of diesel and a chance to stock up on food.

From there, TAMPA resumed her diligent watch over the Mid-Atlantic fishing fleet on her way to a long overdue portcall in Wilmington, NC. Along the way the Gunners conducted pyrotechnics training. This was a welcome diversion for the crew during our longest leg at sea. The Gunner's Mates did an outstanding job training the crew on the proper use of survival pyrotechnics, mixing safety with a bit of fun. The miniature fireworks

show certainly boosted everyone's morale.

The portcall in Wilmington was said to be the best in the last three patrols. That was the opinion of the crew undoubtedly because many family members made the trip from Portsmouth to greet their loved ones upon arrival. In addition, the City of Wilmington is a very Coast Guard friendly and the historic downtown area offers much to explore. TAMPA could not have been moored in a better location. Everything you wanted to do was only a block or two away. Being right on the boardwalk also provided an opportunity to show off the cutter to scores of people seeking tours. The duty sections willingly obliged, providing hundreds of impromptu tours to the public, giving Wilmington a taste of TAMPA pride. Kudos to the duty sections for all their hard work!





TAMPA carried out a touching remembrance ceremony on the 10th anniversary of September 11th, 2001 while underway conducting fisheries law enforcement in the Mid-Atlantic. The cutter's First Class Petty Officers, comprised of EM1 Butler, ET1 Peveto, ET1 Tanner, BM1 Wood, BM1 Smith, MK1 Lowther, MK1 Crawford, OS1

Merkel, FS1 DeVenuto, HS1 Gorman, DC1 Thorpe, ME1 Smithers, YN1 Wrench and ET1 Williams, planned the day's events. At 0846, the exact time American Airlines Flight 11 struck the World Trade Center, the ceremony began with the playing of Taps and a twenty-one gun salute carried out by TAMPA's honor guard. The honor guard consisted of ME2 Alexander, IT2 Hull and SN Goode. Following the playing of TAPS, ET1 Peveto spoke of the events of September 11th. SN Brown, TAMPA's most junior member, laid a wreath to rest in the waters of the Mid-Atlantic as a tribute to those who tragically lost their lives that day. ET1 Peveto reminded us that, although the horrific acts of a few remain foremost in our minds, there were far more heroic acts that occurred that fateful morning. From the men and women on each flight who fought for their lives, to the firefighters who ran back into burning buildings and the Coast Guard men and women who joined other first-responders in evacuating half a million people from lower Manhattan, their acts of heroism and the memory of 2,997 lost souls forever strengthened America's resolve.

I am sure you are all on the edges of your seats waiting for an update on the fish call competition! Despite Chief Kuvaja's short absence this patrol, he was the overwhelming winner. With his usual modesty, Chief reports "If fishing were a rate, then I'd be an Admiral."

TAMPA has had a great patrol and is very excited to return home to our families and friends. With any luck, you'll be hearing these stories from your loved ones soon after receiving this newsletter. It will be a short and very busy inport - enjoy the days you have with your loved ones before TAMPA hits the high seas once again.



¹ See last newsletter!