

USCGC VENTUROUS

SHORE TIES



VOLUME VIII

JUNE - AUGUST 2010



DEEP WATER HORIZON RESPONSE

A different patrol to say the least, this time 49 days away from friends, family, and loved ones.

Originally planned to be a drug interdiction patrol in the south Caribbean, plans changed for us to support the Deep Water Horizon oil response in the Gulf of Mexico.

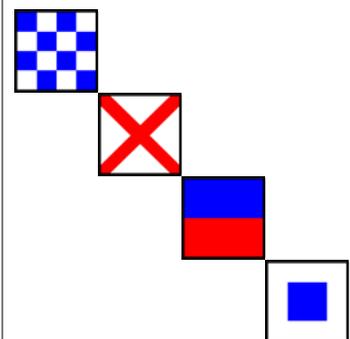
Once we got out here we took over as Command Tasking Unit, while our sister ship RESOLUTE conducted media operations out by the drill head.

Being the Cutter Tasking Unit for such a huge operation meant no sleep for much of the operations department, especially the Operations Officer!



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We arrived here at an interesting time, 72 days since the source started to pump oil into the Gulf. VENTUROUS' first steps were setting up some type of organization for all the different units.

At any given time in the first couple of weeks in the Gulf you could expect to see over 20 Coast Guard cutters in the Gulf, ranging from 87' patrol boats to 225' buoy tenders that were converted into oil skimmers.

What was even more amazing to see was the level of response. Units from all over the country arrived to assist with clean-up efforts. For example, the CGC WALNUT took 30 days just to get to the Gulf from Hawaii!

Once the organization was in place, it was just a matter of time until we started to see positive results.



VENTUROUS' role out in the Gulf sounds easy; schedule and organize movements for all the cutters in the Gulf. To put in perspective how daunting a task that really is, imagine that normal land based sectors have a maximum of 10 units they are responsible for at any given time. VENTUROUS at its peak had 23 units just on the surface, not including the aircraft we were working with everyday! Consequently, I don't think LT Gunagan, our Operations Officer, slept very much during the first few weeks in the Gulf.

As tragic as the Deepwater Horizon incident is, VENTUROUS and her crew found this patrol to be a rewarding one. Constantly demonstrating team work and dedication, and working around the clock.



Various crewmembers of VENTUROUS pose for a picture on the foc'sle while near the Deepwater Horizon Drill head: (From left to right) EM2 Miller, DC1 Law, OS1 Mims, MK3 Collins (back), EM2 Pena, SN Clingersmith, SN Lopez, SN Larson, FN Morvant (kneeling), SN Perez, MKC Dowd (back), CWO Terry, Cadet Carter (poking his head out), SN Lee, BM3 Restrepo, ENS Bredariol, and SN DeJesus



VENTUROUS spent 38 days in the Gulf. During that time, we witnessed the development and progression of the response efforts. Once the well was capped the change of pace slowed a little, but the mission and priorities remained the same.

Just when we got a handle on the situation in the Gulf, a new situation developed in the Windward Passage. So VENTUROUS went through a good cleaning (both inside and out!), and decontamination before heading down to Key West, FL for fuel, then down to the WWP to assist the HARRIET LANE and the LEGARE.

After spending a few days down in the Windward Pass, and transiting the beautiful Canal de La Tortue again, and again, and again VENTUROUS and all the crew are ready to return home to our family and friends!



BMC Troy L. Toungate



As some of you know, Chief Toungate will be retiring after this patrol. As a matter of fact, I believe he already has his departing checkout sheet done.... I would like to take this opportunity to thank BMC for everything he has done since he arrived onboard.

From everyone onboard VENTUROUS; congratulations on your retirement and Thank You for everything! Now maybe the coffee machine will get a little break! But we will miss all your snickers from the bridge as you watch the newbies run around like chickens with their heads cut off. Who will we go to for our daily dose of saltiness?

Some Facts about BMC Toungate:

- Active duty date October 7th 1987
- Has 12 years 2 months and 21 days of sea time
- Been on VENTUROUS since Jun 10th 2008

Previous units include: CGC MUNRO 12/1990, CG Base Miami Beach 02/1992, STA Harbor Beach 06/1996, CGC MUNRO 09/1999, CGC CHASE 08/2005

NOW GO ENJOY YOUR OCS (Official Civilian Status)

TIME

By: Anonymous

Time, the unstoppable and sometimes unnoticed measure of the patrol. It keeps marching along to its own tune despite all efforts by crewmembers to affect it. During the late watches members long for it to rapidly pass by and reliefs to show up on every click of a door and sound of footsteps on a ladderwell. While curled up in our racks time never goes slow enough. Exercise, movies, cribbage, books, and studying are all attempts made onboard to spend the time. Some minutes of time are spent frugally; making every second worthwhile while others are spent flippantly in efforts to relax. Sometimes as we hope each watch to end; it is hard to remember that as we long for time to pass so does our own age. As we leave on patrol we are prepared and excited and then, towards the end, we wish to return to our loved ones. Before we know it a month and a half has flashed by leaving us with fresh memories and knowledge gained from time well-spent and joyfully returning to those we left behind.

A quote the crew seems to take to heart is, "In everything one must consider the end." Never before becoming part of this cutter have I ever seen such an effort put forth. Nearing the end of a patrol every event and discrepancy that may affect the return to homeport is catalogued. Excel spreadsheets count down the seconds with graphs and pie charts depicting the time spent and the time yet to come. Conversations between Combat, Main Control, and the Bridge all become as cohesive as ever possible as members compare activities going on and how it affects our arrival time. Not to say we detest what we do (quite the opposite actually), but in the end we all have something we left behind and waiting for us. Whether it is a wife, a child, or just a comfy bed, we long for that nearness and familiarity which we feel at our homes and with those we love. So to all those on the shore, you are certainly never forgotten while we are away. Even as time goes by and we grow older one stroke of the clock at a time, we look forward to the inport when we will be able to be together. The photographs, letters, and children's handwriting that can be found in every rack attest to this truth. We all look forward to seeing you soon! (Especially the comfy beds)

VENTUROUS Shipmate Breaks World Record!!!

Here is what I remember about that miraculous day...

It was a pleasant evening, hot and muggy. VENTUROUS was DIW off the coast of Pensacola, FL, both engines secured, calm seas, very little wind. I was standing there, watching the deckies conduct training, enjoying the late evening fall of the sun. SN Meltz had just returned from his 500 yard rescue swimmer training, toting along a huge orange behemoth of a fake floating person (a.k.a. OSCAR). SN Darling was up on the list to make the next swim. He heaved forward on the gunwale, flopped in to the ocean, and took off gliding gracefully along. His head bobbed making little ripples as he made his way pushing toward 250 yards before needing to return. The deck force chatted and watched, while the 1LT supervised with a keen eye. I leaned against the bulwark chatting with BMC Toungate about the day as he smiled knowingly; he had just over two weeks left before retirement. All was quiet about the ship. That was when it happened.

I wasn't certain what I saw. I could only make out a blur, like a flying bowling ball headed for a strike. Immediately, I knew the moment was special and may never again be repeated in the history of mankind. As fast as possible, I snatched my left wrist, clicked the mode button three times, and started my timex chronograph. This was something special and there was no way I was going to let it slip by. The feet... they were on fire; I swear it on King Triton's crown. It was surreal; a round glistening bald beacon of sweaty brow was parting the air as it moved. All around was silent. Then, in the midst of my mesmerized state, I could just make a cry from this speeding demon, "ss s s sSS HH AAAA A A RR K!!!!" I knew for certain this foaming, flying, fistful of badass, was going to go out saving his crew. He was 100% committed to take on any Great White necessary to save SN Darling's life... and just like that, it was over. The second report came in from the bridge, dolphin.

Some will say it never happened. Some will say it is simply a myth, but I was there. I timed it. 3.2 seconds. I can attest to the facts of that fateful evening. He broke the world record in the 14 yard main deck dash aboard CGC VENTUROUS on his way to save his fellow deckie. I only served with him for a short time, but that is how I will always remember Chief Boatswain Mate Troy L. Toungate; a man ready to give it all up for his crew, a shipmate.

Blake Novak, LCDR
XO, CGC VENTUROUS

Meet a Shipmate

MK3 Johnson



So MK3 Where are you originally from?

I am from Detroit Michigan. I have lived there for the first 17 1/2 years of my life. Then Uncle Sam invited me into his family.

When did you join the Coast Guard?

I joined the Coast Guard for six years on August 5th 2007. So I have just recently crossed over into my three year mark.

Why did you decide to become an MK?

The decision to become an MK was made at the recruiter's office. I told him the career path that I originally had in mind (prior to the service) and he told me that MK was the way to go. However, a lot of what I was working towards in high school is more along the line of what DCs do... what's done is done.

If you could change your rate, would you? If so why?

If I could change my rate I could see being an SK. I enjoy doing the little admin that I have to do as an MK. Such as PRs and Surf Sheets. Also, I could get use to not standing watch underway. LOL! All jokes aside, I wouldn't change my rate for I do enjoy the work that I do. Also it gives me a chance to make it on the outside with the knowledge that I have gained if I decide to separate.

If you were not in the Coast Guard, what would your dream job be?

Once upon a time I wanted to be a dentist. The reason why is because I have an unhealthy obsession with white teeth. I figured if I was a dentist, I could learn all the secrets to keeping my own teeth white. LOL! As funny as that sounds that is my true reason behind it.

What are some of your hobbies outside of the Coast Guard?

Some hobbies of mine would be playing basketball. I don't like to work out at home (shocking huh) so that can't be one. I enjoy attending church on a regular base. I don't go often but I love to go skating at a skating ring. Other than that, enjoying good quality time with the lady in my life.

What is your favorite memory about being onboard VENTUROUS so far?

I have tons of favorite memories about being onboard. Mainly all of the foolishness that happens during port calls. LOL! If I had to choose one it would have to be when I passed my MK2 EOCT. I was in the engine room when they made the pipe. I then walked in to the Log Office and Petty Officer Gyomory and Petty Officer Hoffer were yelling "Congratulations man!" I then yelled back in confusion "What are you guys talking about?" LOL! Yeah, that's the best one.

Before getting underway for a patrol, what is a MUST HAVE meal?

Before getting underway a must have meal is one with loved ones. It is very necessary to spend that last bit of quality time with family and or friends. Now coming back home, you need that Qdoba Mexican grill. If you don't know about it, talk to Fireman Morvant. He will gladly fill you in.

Thank you for taking the time to get to know a shipmate. I have love for each and every one of you like a brother to a brother. If ever you might need me don't hesitate to ask. Enjoy your in port.

What did you learn this patrol?

**I learned there are many fish in the sea, but
there are more at “The House” - SN Lee**

**I learned that the EO’s birthday is everyday,
Happy Birthday EO! - FN Stankee**

**I learned that mustaches are optional, and re-
quest chits are lame - LT Gunagan**

Be flexible because change is guaranteed - OS1 Mims

**I learned that we have a new homeport outside
of GTMO; Pensacola - Anonymous**

**The whale book states: “The Right Whale is called the Right
Whale because it is the right whale to hunt” - ENS Bruns**

I learned that two plus two equals twenty-two - FN Stankee

From the Commanding Officer

I Hope this newsletter finds you well and enjoying the latter part of summer.

First of all, I would like to take the opportunity to welcome our new crewmembers and their families to the St. Petersburg area. While it does get quite warm in the summer, the year round activities and attractions are something I'm sure you will enjoy. In fact, as the rain and snow begins to fall up north I imagine your friends and family up there will look to visit you and experience what our area has to offer.

As VENTUROUS heads home from deployment we all eagerly anticipate reuniting with our families and friends. Spending the first part of our patrol working on the Deepwater Horizon oil spill clean-up afforded us the chance to call home fairly often. While our cell phones got a pretty good work-out I would like to propose some fun conversation starters relating to things we did for the last 7 weeks that you may not have talked about yet.

1. What was cooler, visiting the Deepwater Horizon well site or being in the flight path of the Blue Angels show?
2. Did you see a lot of oil?
3. What did the oil look like?
4. Was that a shark or dolphin in the water when you did rescue swimmer training?
5. Did you continue the VENTUROUS string of locating some type of vessel of interest on the day you were supposed to leave to come home?
6. How do you pronounce RADM Zukunft's name?
7. What is a VOO?
8. Does the migrant tent really keep migrants away?
9. Where in the world is Houma?
10. Was the blimp cool?
11. What did you do with all your trash when you were out for 9 straight days?
12. How was swim call?
13. What did the gator, rattlesnake, rabbit and shark taste like?

Are the Patriots really going to win the Super Bowl this year?

Thank you for sharing your family and friends with the crew of VENTUROUS. Enjoy this well deserved inport period!

Sincerely,

Ted

Official Press Release

ENS Nicole Bredariol
Public Affairs Officer



VENTUROUS RETURNS FROM DEEP WATER HORIZON OIL SPILL RESPONSE

ST. PETERSBURG – Coast Guard Cutter Venturous (WMEC-625) returned home today following a successful 49 day deployment where she served as the Command Task Unit for Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Response and conducted Alien Migrant Interdiction Operations in the Caribbean.

Only days prior to departing for a counter drug patrol, Venturous was diverted to the Gulf of Mexico to support oil spill cleanup. After arriving off the coast of Pensacola, Fl, Venturous assumed the responsibilities of on-scene command and control for 37 different Coast Guard cutters responding to the spill. The Venturous Operations Specialists developed a communications and operations framework which will sustain continued oil response efforts in the coming months. Crew efforts led to the successful skimming of 300,000 gallons of oil in just three days and over one million gallons during the 38 days in the Gulf of Mexico.

Despite the catastrophic events of Deepwater Horizon, the crew of Venturous was excited to take an active role in response efforts. Venturous Commanding Officer Ted St. Pierre, stated, “The crew has exceeded expectations this patrol and we’re pleased to have played an active role in preventing oil from reaching gulf coast beaches.”

After the well site was capped, Venturous received short notice tasking with 24-hours to re-supply and divert 1,200 nautical miles to provide law enforcement support off the coast of Haiti. Venturous crewmembers immediately began around-the-clock efforts to inventory supplies, stock the ship, and carefully plan for a new mission. Four days later, Venturous reported on scene to provide an overt Coast Guard presence and monitor the activity of local Haitian vessels to ensure their safety at sea

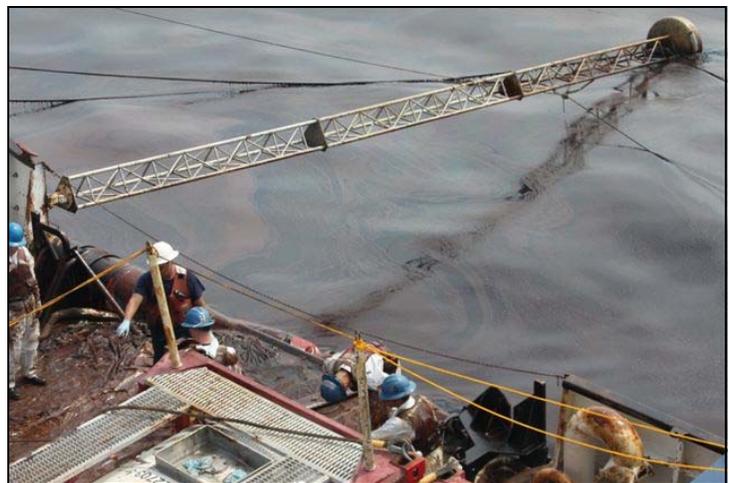
Coast Guard Cutter Venturous is a 210-foot Reliance class cutter, homeported in St. Petersburg, Florida. She has a crew of 85 officers and enlisted personnel. Typical missions include counter-drug operations, alien migrant interdiction, and fisheries enforcement.

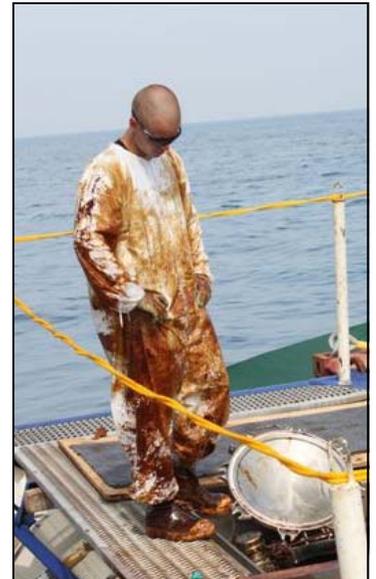
Pictures From The Patrol



Skimming Operations

Even though VENTUROUS did not skim any oil, the 225' and the 175' buoy tenders that worked under VENTUROUS did. Here are some pictures of some of the skimmers at work. Thank you to the CGC WALNUT for pictures.





Pictures Near The Well Head

VENTUROUS did manage to wander close to the well head for a short time to check things out, here are some pictures taken onboard VENTUROUS .



Various Patrol Pictures



RADM Zukunft visited all the cutters of the CTU fleet in NAS PENSACOLA.









ME1 Anotavara may be a member of the foot clan, but it appears that OS3 Retamar got the drop on him this time.

On the way into Key West for fuel, VENTUROUS passed the CGC INGHAM. Now a museum in Key West, the INGHAM is the most decorated Coast Guard cutter in history. Including having the distinct honor of being the only cutter to receive 2 Presidential Unit Citations for extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy. The INGHAM was commissioned in 1936 and served in WWII, Korean, and Vietnam Wars.





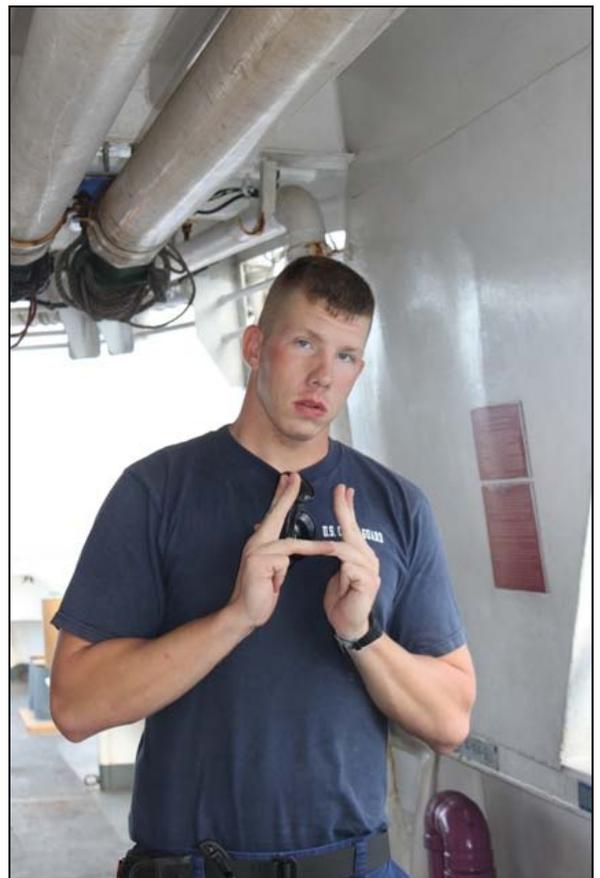
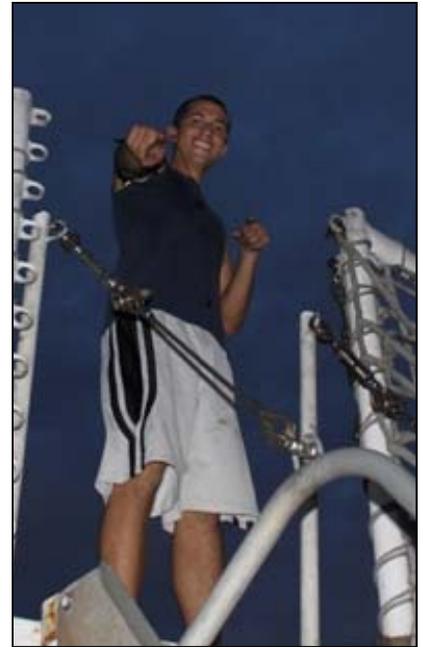
During the Deepwater Horizon response, VENTUROUS worked with many assets, including this airship from the US Navy.



VENTUROUS
conducts cutter
rescue swimmer
training.







CDR Potter receives a few gifts from the crew as he departs VENTUROUS. He is off to Germany! Good Luck!





From the editor:

I would like to thank all the family and friends of the VENTUROUS for sending me e-mails about the newsletter. It is for that reason that I do this. I would also like to thank the CGC WALNUT for sending us pictures of the skimming fleet! Also thanks to FS3 Zuniga as well as ENS Donato for again providing amazing pictures to share with everyone!

[- OS2 Brandon DeVore](#)