



Shore Ties



VOL V

**August – October 2009
Mona Pass Patrol
“The Potluck Patrol”**



VENTUROUS Transiting through Canal de Tortue north of Haiti

~~54~~ **56** days we have been away from St. Petersburg and we return from a very successful patrol! This patrol the VENTUROUS was tasked with patrolling the Mona Passage, the body of water that separates the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. During our patrol VENTUROUS managed to





handle nearly every type of operation the Coast Guard performs: Search and Rescue, Rescue and Assistance, Drug Interdiction, Migrant Interdiction, and even Aids to Navigation



VENTUROUS started out early in the patrol by towing an Aids to Navigation boat, CG55105, from Sector Key West FL, to Sector San Juan, PR. This would be VENTUROUS' contribution to the Coast



Guard's aids to navigation mission. It was a long, and very slow transit due to the fact that we took the long route and had a brief stop for fuel in Guantanamo Bay Cuba for storm avoidance.



While in transit to GITMO almost 30% of the crew had severe flu-like symptoms, resulting in a shipboard quarantine while there.

"There will be no liberty in this here port!"



Once VENTUROUS delivered CG55105 to Sector San Juan the crew enjoyed their first 2 day port call.



VENTUROUS then headed to the Dominican Republic to participate in Operation Halcon. This operation was a joint venture with the DR Navy, US Customs, and the US Coast Guard. The Coast Guard provided air support and the cutters VENTUROUS and KODIAK ISLAND. DR Navy officers rode along to allow for enforcement of laws within their territorial seas.





At the conclusion of Operation Halcon both VENTUROUS and KODIAK ISLAND enjoyed a port call in Santo Domingo, DR. The crew enjoyed all-inclusive resorts and 3 days of well-earned liberty.



After Santo Domingo, VENTUROUS proceeded to the Mona Pass to resume patrol.



Within 2 days of patrolling, a US Border Patrol plane spotted a yola moving fast away from DR toward Puerto Rico in the dead of a very dark night. VENTUROUS was 10 nm away and launched its OTH small boat in response. As the OTH approached, the yola tossed a pair of 10 gallon barrels overboard. Once it finally stopped, the boarding team secured the yola and its crew. A painstaking night-time search discovered the 2 barrels and the cutter recovered 40 kilos of cocaine.



As soon as the case was over and passed to the DR Navy, VENTUROUS was tasked with heading to the Windward Pass to relieve another cutter that had to manage an L/E case in GITMO.



Here VENTUROUS spent a week patrolling. One late afternoon, a Coast Guard Falcon aircraft spotted a 50-foot Haitian vessel with about 150 people onboard. VENTUROUS responded and escorted them safely back to Haiti – again in the dead dark of night – and turned them over the Haitian Coast Guard who safely saw them ashore.



As soon as we were relieved from the Windward, VENTUROUS headed back to the Mona Passage. On the way, an American vessel was having engine trouble and taking on water. VENTUROUS' boarding team took initial action by temporarily plugging a ½ inch hole while the rescue and assistance team prepared to deploy. When the R&A team arrived, a more permanent patch was placed and the vessel headed toward the nearest safe port.



Upon arriving back in the Mona Passage, VENTUROUS enjoyed calm seas and headed in for a 3 day port call in San Juan again. The crew enjoyed Old San Juan and the historical sites.





Once back in the Mona Passage yet again, the VENTUROUS proceeded to patrol for drugs and migrants, but took some time to have fish call.



Toward to end of the patrol, a biologist on Mona Island cut his hand open and required the assistance of our Corpsman. HS2 Bryce and SN Larsen (one of our EMTs) headed out on the OTH, closed the wound with stitches, and added SAR to the cutter's list of accomplishments for this patrol.





After a very successful patrol, VENTUROUS and her crew are glad to be back home safely with friends and family. True to its motto, NEMO SUPRA meaning “None Better”, VENTUROUS proved that she is one of the best cutters and has one of the best crews in the fleet.

Addendum dated 02Oct09

While heading home and crossing the Windward Pass, VENTUROUS started to watch a small vessel that fit the profile for a smuggling go-fast and launched the OTH in response. Once on scene with their blue light flashing, the startled vessel asked “Are you Americans?” When we responded, “We are US Coast Guard,” the vessel took off toward Cuban waters. Failing to obey all lawful commands to stop, the OTH finally had to employ



warning shots and disabling fire to stop the vessel just a few hundred yards from Cuban waters. After making the scene safe and gaining control of the situation, the boarding officer reported, “There’s so much contraband onboard I can hardly move.” The vessel was loaded with 107 bales of marijuana, weighing in at 2,500lbs, making it the second drug bust of the patrol.



From the Desk of CDR E.M. St. Pierre
Commanding Officer, CGC VENTUROUS

Many times following a deployment my friends and family have asked the question, “What did you do while you were on patrol?” Rather than put them through the pain of reading the formal patrol summary our bosses require us to submit – it is a really boring document – I usually offer a quick one or two sentence answer that doesn’t really ‘say’ much. In an effort to adhere to my wife Jenise’s advice and “be a better communicator” I’ve created a list of interesting facts from our patrol. (Editor’s note: She may or may not have said that. I’m not sure since I was watching football at the time and pretty much had her tuned out.)

- * 13,383 - individual meals prepared by the cooks and consumed by the crew
- * 1,296 - hours of electricity supplied to the cutter by the engineers
- * 142 - migrants onboard an overloaded vessel we escorted back to Haiti
- * 40 - kilograms of cocaine seized
- * 2,600 – pounds of marijuana seized
- * 7 – End of Course tests passed
- * 110 - formal Coast Guard messages sent by the OS crew
- * 8,086 - miles steamed
- * 162 - lbs lost by the crew in VENTUROUS’ “Patrol Weight Loss Competition”
- * 57 – hours spent quarantined in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba due to a flu outbreak on the cutter.
- * 30 – hours during our time in Guantanamo Bay that we were not allowed to leave the ship. (Armed military police enforced this – literally.)
- * 1 - “Former Fish Master” onboard (MK1 Hoffer) now that ET2 Maharaj has asserted his fishing prowess and assumed the title “Fish Master” – (Sorry MK1, I couldn’t resist.)
- * 28 – shipboard helicopter operations.
- * 58,353 - gallons of diesel fuel consumed
- * 1 - excellent cookout for the crew hosted by the Chief’s Mess during a port call in San Juan



* 1,985 - miles VENTUROUS steamed while towing a vessel (Aids to Navigation boat, a 110', the yola, an 87', seized go fast)

* 65 – hours of small boat evolutions performed by Deck department

* 9 - hours that SN Vick and SN Larsen were in command of their own vessel (the yola they piloted across the Mona Pass)

* 90 – qualifications attained

* 3rd of October - date everyone onboard and everyone reading this newsletter eagerly awaited for the last 8 weeks

* 5th of October – date everyone onboard and everyone reading this newsletter settled for after we were delayed due to our 2nd drug bust of the patrol.

I hope these numbers provided you some idea about what we do when we're gone or at least will lead to stories you and your friends/loved ones can talk about more in depth. Thanks for the sacrifices you have made while we were away and please make sure you enjoy our in-port period!





The VENTUROUS received many new additions to the crew this in-port including a new Captain.

Welcome Aboard!

CDR St. Pierre

ENS Bruns	ENS Bredariol
ENS Garcia	CWO Terry
MKC Dowd	MKC Vaupel
OS1 Burgos	GM1 Franklin
YN1 Anderson	BM1 Cramer
MK1 Green	IT2 Pfalzer
BM2 Bure	ET2 Orr
BM2 Sorrentini	IT2 Pfalzer
FS3 Bouchet	MK2 Marowitz
FN Blue	SN Arabadji
SN Lopez	SN Clingersmith
SN Perez	FN Morvant



Observations on a GANTSEC Patrol
(That's what the old-timers call Sector San Juan.)
by LCDR Curtiss C. Potter

1. Towing a 55-foot aids to navigation boat at 5.5 knots makes for a very long 13-day trip over 1,400 miles – especially when there are three tropical storms in the way.
2. An influenza outbreak the very first day underway for a 54-day patrol is no fun – especially when you have to quarantine 20 people and don't have anywhere to put them.
3. Having the XO of the Gitmo Navy base come to the ship and personally chew you out for letting the crew use the pay phones on the pier is an excellent reminder that joining the Coast Guard was a much better idea than joining the Navy.
4. Santo Domingo can be your absolute best foreign port call ever – if it's your very first foreign port call ever.
5. Apparently, going to an all-inclusive resort in the Dominican Republic (DR) means you have to come home with art.
6. Spanish learned while living in Puerto Rico doesn't help very much in the DR.
7. Instructions from a Sector Command Center that doesn't normally control a big cutter apparently change every time the watch section changes their underwear.
8. If you are in a Service without enough operational ships, you apparently stand a lot of useless watches and pick up every leaf that falls out of the trees while wearing fancy uniforms. If you don't know what I mean, then you didn't see the DR Navy watch standers in action.
9. An armed and intoxicated DR Navy officer in your libo van is not a good thing.
10. I'm not sure at what point the physics works out, but it's fascinating how all Jell-O and cakes made on a ship always have a list.
11. Even sand peeps in windowless rooms understand that non-emergency flight ops at 0300 after 24 hours of L/E and towing ops are not such a good idea.
12. Dark nights at sea + the Milky Way + NVGs = Whoa!
13. Lightening storms at night at sea are the best fireworks ever! The really big ones can make you believe in God.
14. Watching a bright orange, slowly moving, breaking-up shooting star cross the entire night sky makes you hold your breath while waiting for the nuclear explosion on the horizon.
15. It's amazing how much money, manpower, and paperwork the U.S. government will expend to take 100 pounds of cocaine off the street.
16. Trinis sure know how to catch fish.
17. It's always good when care packages from home show up after semi-annual weigh-ins.
18. I still haven't figured out why everyone looks more tired after a 3-day port call than before it.



Official Press Release

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security
United States
Coast Guard



COAST GUARD CUTTER VENTUROUS RETURNS FROM A 54 DAY PATROL

ST. PETERSBURG - Coast Guard Cutter *Venturous* (WMEC-625) returned home today following a successful 54 day deployment that included counter-narcotics and migrant interdiction operations in the Caribbean. The patrol began in the Mona Passage where the ship worked closely with other Coast Guard cutters and the Dominican Republic Navy. *Venturous* had the opportunity to embark a D.R. Navy officer who assisted in the coordination efforts between countries and shared knowledge of the local area.

One evening *Venturous* worked with several agencies including the National Drug Control Division (NCD), Joint Interagency Task Force-DEPROSER (Defend, Protect, and Serve), and U.S. Customs and Border Protection, to disrupt a narcotics airdrop off the south coast of Isla Saona, D.R. Due to the law enforcement presence of the combined assets, the airplane returned to South America with its original cargo.

Next, *Venturous* steamed off the coast of Haiti and was diverted to a suspect vessel with 142 Haitian migrants onboard. A Coast Guard aircraft originally spotted the vessel, which was filled well beyond its maximum capacity, on a course towards the Turks and Caicos Islands. *Venturous* ensured the safety of the vessel by transferring it to the Haitian Coast Guard and all migrants returned safely to shore.

Upon *Venturous*' return to the Mona Passage, boarding teams worked hard conducting six law enforcement boardings to ensure adherence to federal regulations and safety at sea. Additionally, *Venturous* had the opportunity to provide medical care to a biologist on Mona Island suffering from a deep wound to his hand. The ship's corpsman was brought on scene and provided care, including the application of several stitches to close the laceration.

The commanding officer of *Venturous*, Commander Ted St. Pierre, stated – “It was my first patrol onboard *Venturous* and I am very proud of the crew and their ability to work together to master a multitude of missions. Additionally, it was exciting to work with the Dominican Republic Navy and our partner agencies in our efforts to curtail drug trafficking.”

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. Although the crew thoroughly enjoyed visits to San Juan and Santo Domingo, each member is glad to be home today.



“CrossFit” Underway

CrossFit is the principal strength and conditioning program for many police academies and tactical operations teams, military special operations units, champion martial artists, and hundreds of other elite and professional athletes worldwide.

CrossFit is generally a well-rounded, short workout that utilizes Olympic lifting, Olympic ring training, bodyweight exercises, and a variety of other exercises. The workouts are designed to tax your body and to utilize all your muscles to work together for “real world” applications. CrossFit is considered to be “functional training”

Weight loss and getting in shape became a goal for many of the people on board. A “biggest winner” competition was set up to see who could lose the most weight and for the first time a group CrossFit workout session began every day at 1600 on the flight deck lead by ENS Rhodes.

20 – 30 minute modified bodyweight workouts were done, many derived from CrossFit workouts. Core muscles were focused on, however, pushup varieties, lunges, and pull ups were used frequently as well.

The workouts left many people gasping for breath and quitting early; ever heard of a figure four crunch? It hurts, try it.

The workouts were a great success, with several people losing a good amount of weight, EM3 Justice lost 20lbs, OS2 DeVore lost 16lbs and ET2 Maharaj lost 5lbs just to name a few.

It was a great workout patrol along with the rest of the happenings and finding time to workout was difficult many days. All in all many people showed up various days to workout and hopefully next patrol more will come as well.



And now for various pictures taken from the crew throughout the patrol

A 45ft patrol boat from Sector Key West departs after dropping off CG55105



MMM Jell-O with a list!



After a 1250nm tow, getting rid of 55105 and handing it over to ANT San Juan was a burden lifted... did I mentioned how much of a pain this was to tow?



Stern Refuel of the USCGC Kodiak



FISH CALL!

After finding a bamboo tree floating in the waters near San Juan, Fish Call was piped and the fish definitely showed up. ET2 Maharaj lands this nice size Mahi Mahi



FS3 Zuniga's Mahi is not quite as big, but still a good catch



I don't even know what that is ENS Rhodes....

After more fishing than anyone else on the boat, MK1 Hoffer finally lands a fish.



**ET2
Maharaj
lands
another fish**



**And another.
Maharaj is becoming
the ship's Angler**

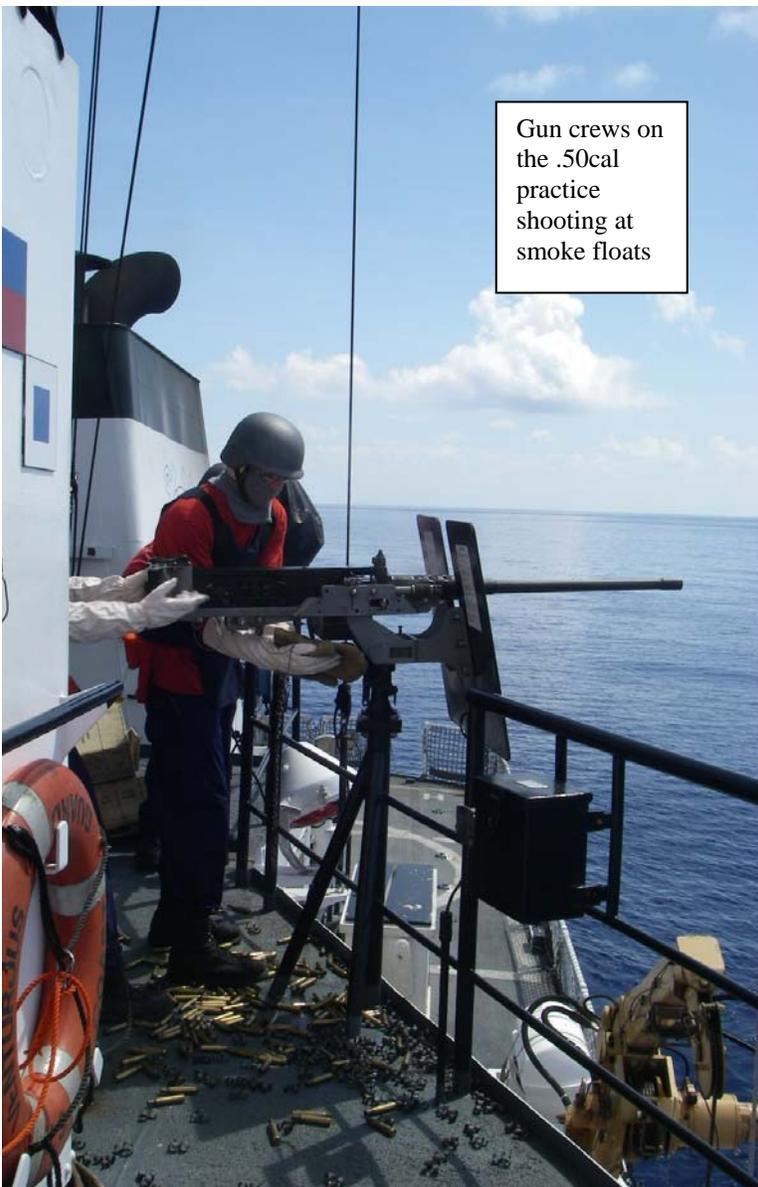


**Even FN
Blue catches
something**



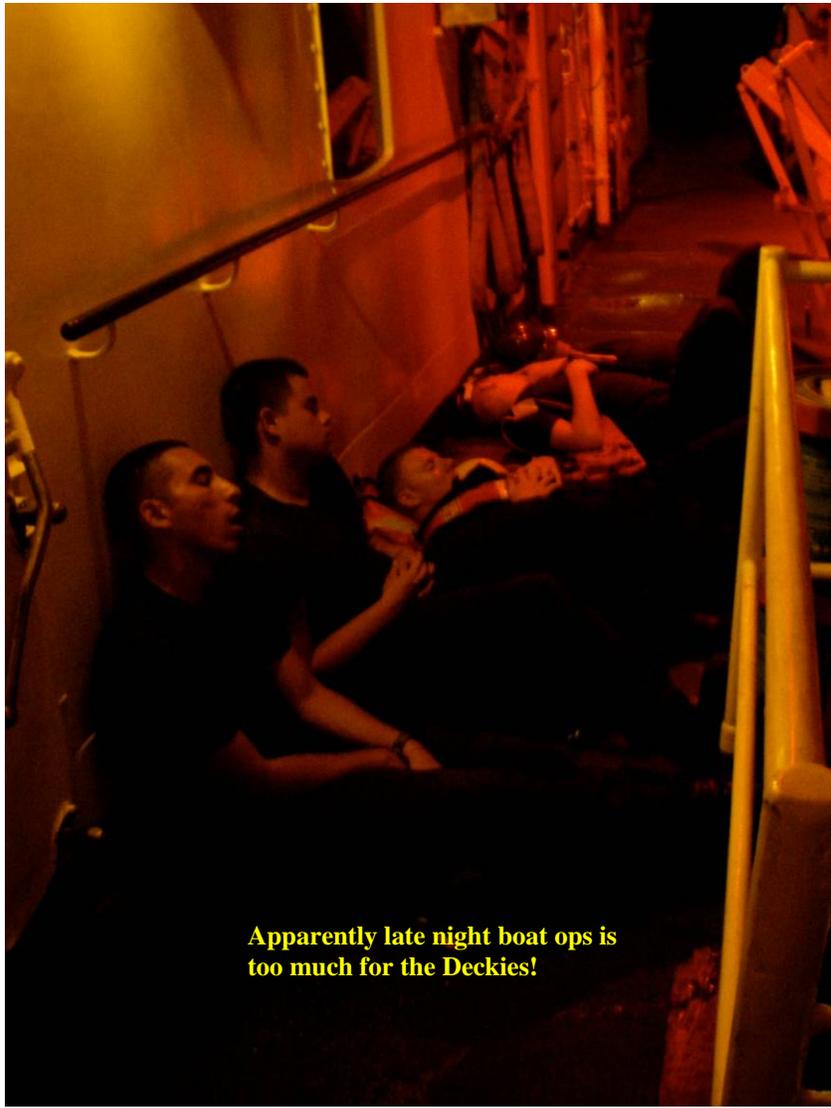


It looks like its time for us to set the go fast response bill!



Gun crews on the .50cal practice shooting at smoke floats





Apparently late night boat ops is too much for the Deckies!



Stern Refuel of the CGC Reef Shark



Some engineers enjoying their liberty



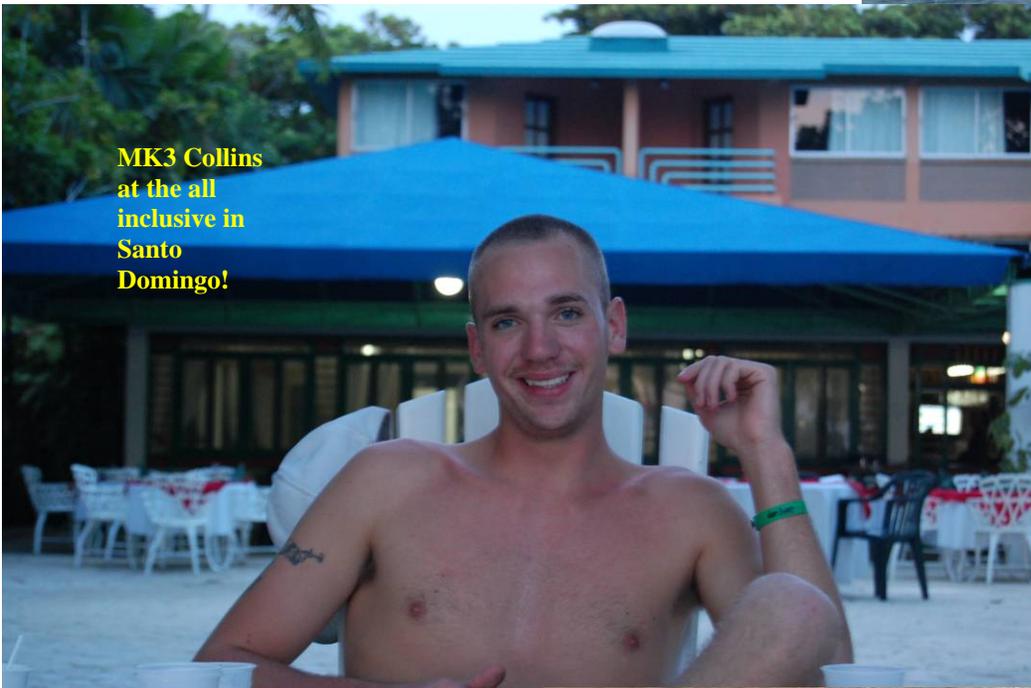
DC1 Prior is in battle dress all the time, even during swim call



SN Brooks after a nasty belly flop off the Foscle



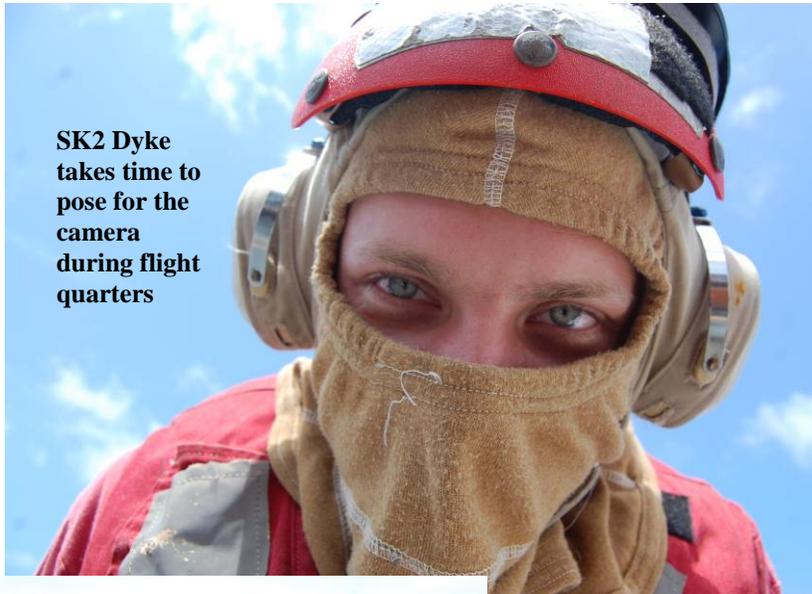
**MK3 Collins
at the all
inclusive in
Santo
Domingo!**



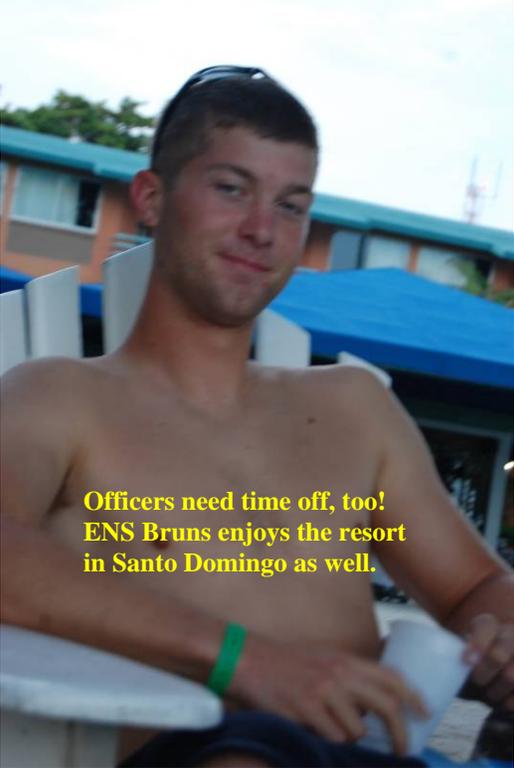
**Everyone
wave to
the
camera**



**OS1 Burgos
waits
patiently for
liberty to be
granted in
Santo
Domingo**



**SK2 Dyke
takes time to
pose for the
camera
during flight
quarters**



**Officers need time off, too!
ENS Brunns enjoys the resort
in Santo Domingo as well.**

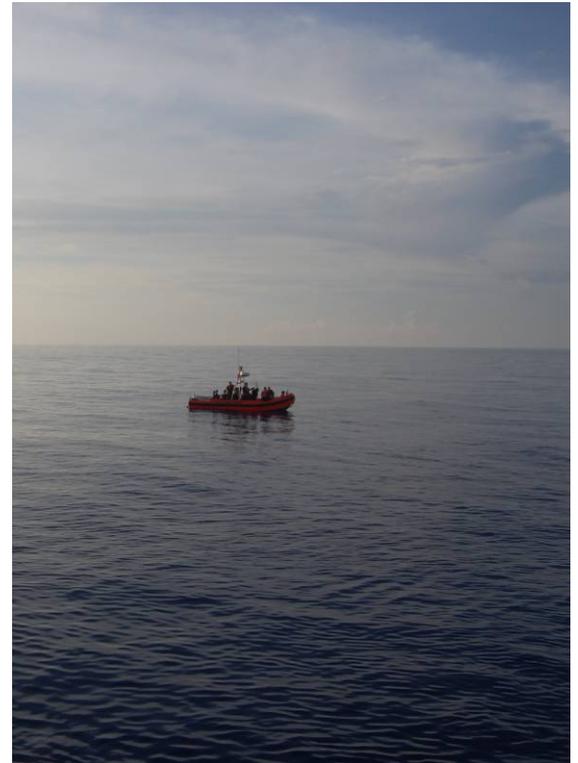


During the Engineering department's Pizza night, they turned the mess deck into a nightclub, strobe lights, fog machines and loud music for everyone!



ET2 Maharaj tries to defend himself after being sprayed with OC pepper spray during the San Juan port call

They even had bouncers, FNMK Hemmingway and DC2 Parham



What could this be FS3 Gilkerson is cooking...

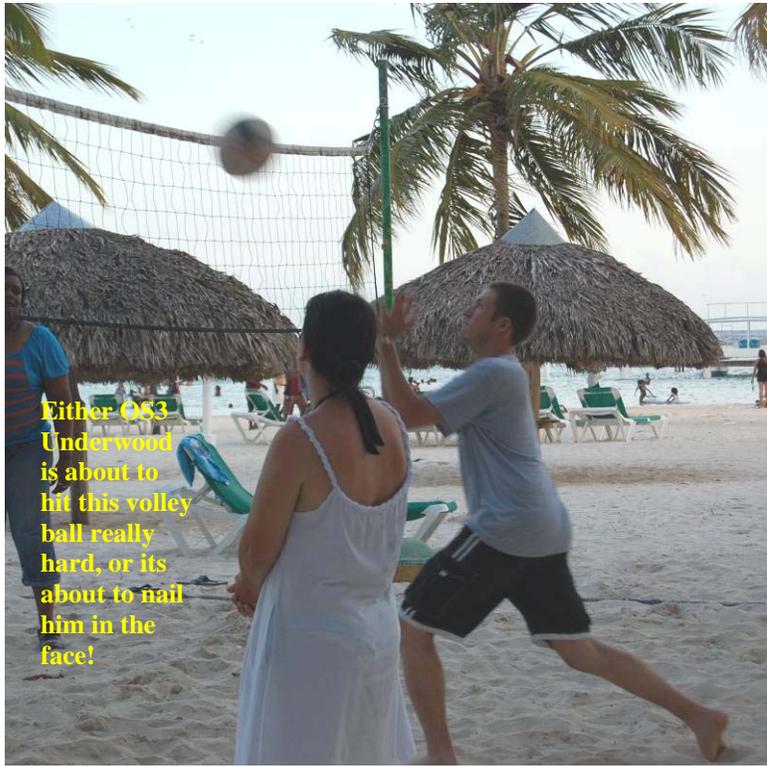




The VENTUROUS and her crew would like to wish ENS Hartman and her fiancé LTJG Hofius of Air Station Miami a long and happy marriage. Above are the clay figurines that will sit atop their wedding cake on October 17th, 2009. Congratulations!



Smoke flares were set off for demonstration as a part of this training exercise



Either OS3 Underwood is about to hit this volley ball really hard, or its about to nail him in the face!



VENTUROUS saw much of Mona Island this patrol



ENS Bruns gets stuck with OOD in Santo Domingo



ENS Bredariol enjoying her liberty in Santo Domingo with a game of Volleyball.

From the Editor:

I really want to thank everyone who contributed to this newsletter; I would especially like to thank the people who donated pictures so that they could be shared with everyone!

Thank you: XO, HS2 Bryce, ET2 Maharaj, and FS3 Zuniga for all the pictures!

-OS2 Devore

