

USCGC MIDGETT

Mid-Patrol Newsletter

SOUTH PAT 2013

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WORDS FROM THE GO AND XO

"From Aztec Shores to Arctic Zone, to Europe and Far East, the flag is carried by our ships in time of war and peace..." - "Semper Paratus", the Coast Guard's song

Dear MIDGETT Family & Friends,

In just a few months, MIDGETT has proven the opening stanza of "Semper Paratus" to be correct, having sailed from the Arctic Zone to Aztec Shores and points further south. After an all-too-short inport period, we set sail on January 5th for a long patrol. First stop was San Diego, where the cutter & crew performed exceptionally well at Tailored Ships Training Availability (TSTA), which is an intense training period designed to exercise the crew in all of the ship's functions and systems. Once done, we got underway to start our counter-drug patrol, making a quick stop in Puerto Quezatal, Guatemala for fuel, then operated on high alert for searching for "go-fasts" and other signs of smuggling activity. A key feature of operations down here is ensuring we work well with our partner nations, those countries that are along the drug smuggling transit zone. A stop at the Colombia Naval Base in Bahia Malaga enabled us to host our Colombian Navy partners and learn about the challenges they face on the front lines of the narco-trafficking war. It was a great opportunity for both Services to learn about each other. Our days & nights can be unpredictable as we patrol the typical trafficking lanes looking for smugglers. In between boat and helo ops, the crew stays busy with watchstanding, maintenance, training, administration and a myriad of other tasks to keep the ship running. When there is down time, we've enjoyed a swim call (the water was 3,000 ft deep and a lot warmer than the Arctic!), some morale games, and 20 shipmates are taking college level math classes with the civilian instructor who is sailing with us. Cutter life keeps us busy. As always, we think of you and appreciate your support!

Best regards,
CAPT Laura Dickey
COMMANDING OFFICER



Friends, Families, and Shipmates,

As always, time flies and you never seem to have the time to get to all those projects and tasks you wanted to, whether at home or at work. Along with what will be about a third of the crew, I recently received orders for a new duty station this summer; it's hard to believe the tour is almost over. For those who will be rotating this summer, don't wait until the ship gets back to start making plans! The ship's administrative division is working hard to process orders and get all the paperwork in order so folks can execute the orders. Remember, however, that in addition to the 50 or so folks we have leaving we're getting 50 or so to replace them! So, there's lots of work to be done all around.

Our current mission is definitely different than an Alaska fisheries patrol, and requires us to be a bit more quiet about our movements and port visits. Rest assured if we have a stop other than a brief stop for logistics (which are usually only a few hours), I'll get that word to the ombudsman when I can, so she can give folks back home a head's up that the ship is in port. We will not have ship's phone numbers in these ports, so continued communications via e-mail is the best.

As always, thank you for your continued support and encouragement back home!

CDR Jeff Neumann
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ENGINEERING

After a short inport over the holiday season, patrol began with a boom boom boom (we literally participated in drills where XO pretended to be the voice of striking missiles) as MIDGETT engineers spent a month in San Diego. Both in and out of port, we passed drill after drill with flying colors, keeping the ship from sinking and propulsion running, and ending out the month with Engineering and Damage Control Battle E's for our final scores of 98.1% and 96% in drill completions.

We have said farewell to FN Bueno, FN Hernandez, and FN Sanders and welcomed in three new FN – FN Blecman, Davis, and Dufner, and our new permanent Auxiliary Chief – MKC Price. MK1 Leonard and MK1 Lowther also came aboard, volunteering to be part of Main Prop Division for this patrol. Since departing San Diego at the beginning of February, we have been busy attaining qualifications of all shapes and varieties inside and outside of the engine room. When we set flight quarters (to launch and land our helo) throughout the day and into the night, many of our members are up on the flight deck for fire team and fueling. For an engineer it can be kind of scary to see the water and the sky, but somehow we manage.

Thank you to the engineers for their continual long days and hard work to keep MIDGETT's propellers spinning, equipment running, and for keeping fresh water in everyone's drinking glass.

The Engineers of MIDGETT thank you for your Valentine's Day wishes and wish all the MIDGETT Coast Guard families out there the best.

ENS Katie Schumacher
Assistant Auxiliary Division Officer

Also, you all should be extra proud of your engineers...they had the highest maintenance completion rate in the entire 378' fleet (by over 6%)...A true illustration of their professionalism and dedication.

LCDR Brook Sherman
Engineering Officer



From Top to Bottom: EMC Simmons observes the emergency gas turbine...LTJG Carter provides training during a drill...an investigator checks a space for damage

OPERATIONS

Hello to all of our family and friends back home. We love you and miss you all and appreciate the extreme sacrifices you make each day supporting us out here. The patrol has been great thus far. We had the opportunity to show off our teamwork and skills in San Diego for our bi-annual training review and the Operations department performed marvelously and are continuing our tradition of excellence in all we do. We have had the opportunity to visit Colombia so far and see what it is like to be on the front lines of the Counter-narcotics war. We had some professional exchanges with the Colombian Navy and were able to participate in a joint exercise with the Colombian Navy showing how our skill sets could intertwine to complete the mission down here in the Eastern Pacific. The Operations department onboard continues to shine each day out here and I know we all look forward to coming home soon. For now wish us the best of luck and know that we are out here for you and our country.

LT Gerrod Glauner
Operations Officer



Left: LTJG Fall tours the inside of a semi-submersible



Right: OS2 Taylor poses in front of a semi-submersible



ENS Chris Martin, with the help of LT Glauner and CAPT Dickey, navigates MIDGETT towards the fuel pier in Puerto Quetzal, Guatemala.

WEAPONS

MIDGETT's Weapons Department started off the year with a BANG! We conducted 7 gunnery exercises in just the first 45 days underway. We also have completed over 100 drills and fixed more than 30 pieces of equipment. We're out here doing our mission and the successes we've had so far, prove that we are Semper Paratus! Thank you for your continued support! Below is some news from the Division Officers:

GMs and MEs—LTjg Daniel Alley

The Gunnery Division performed exceptionally well during MIDGETT's TSTA inspection. The rigorous training of our gun crews paid off with impressive gunnery exercises where we shot at moving targets. The Gunners Mates continue to keep the guns cleaned and the crews trained, ensuring that MIDGETT is always battle ready. The Maritime Enforcement Division ensured the ship was properly trained for Anti-Terrorism Force Protection tactics for keeping the ship and crew safe and secure while away from home. The Law Enforcement Program has been underway, training both qualified and prospective Boarding Team members in the many aspects of Maritime Law Enforcement, even practicing with our foreign allies in the war against drugs, as well as hands on training for defensive tactics and boarding procedures. Needless to say, the Law Enforcement Teams have been chomping at the bit to get out there and chase some go-fasts!

Operations ETs—CWO Darren Davenport

The Operational ET's/IT's are at it again. The ITs have just finished installing a state of the art virtual server aboard MIDGETT, modernizing its computer infrastructure yet again. This was accomplished with over 175 trouble tickets totaling over 400 man hours to install, correct discrepancies, and maintain this vital system which allows us to do everything from mission tasking to talking to our loved ones. While the IT's were busy with the server, the ET's troubleshoot and fixed a multitude of electronics problems on MIDGETT's small boats enabling them to be used for important operations such as boardings and training. During TSTA, both of these groups came together as Repair 8, completing 5 integrated drill scenarios and two stand alone scenarios for a 97% success rate. Congratulations!

Weapons ETs—ENS Nick Martin

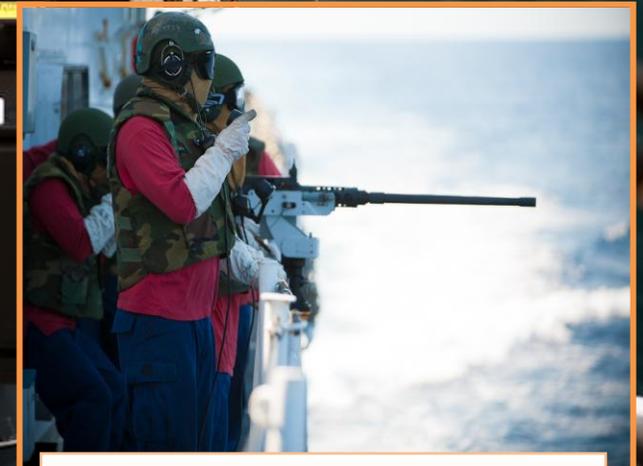
Months of hard work finally paid off for the Fire Control Division as they successfully fired all weapons under their purview in multiple gunnery exercises. The CIWS techs passed all aspects of their shop's inspection and have fired their system twice over the past 45 days. Also, in what was a very impressive display, the MK92 Fire Control techs fired their system with accuracy. Check out the 76mm shoot photos! The division has been steadied by the leadership of their Chief and looks forward to having more success over this patrol. Many of the Weapons ETs have also been busy as members of USCGC MIDGETT's LE team.

Thanks for keeping us safe and able to defend! We look forward to some great Law Enforcement operations!

LTjg Andrea Rice
Weapons Officer



BM3 Patino stands ATFP watch in Colombia



USCGC MIDGETT conducts a 25 mm GUNNEX

SUPPORT

Support Department is working hard again this patrol. So far the FS's have served about 23,000 meals, Senior Chief Monk and HS3 Watt have initiated the administration of 5000 doses of Malaria medication, the SK's have meticulously executed about \$100,000.00 in support of our mission, and the YN's have ensured that about \$67,000.00 of Family Separation Allowance was started on time and even worked in a couple days of Imminent Danger Pay which comes with a month of tax free pay! (retroactive of course) That's a lot of work!

During our recent stop in Colombia, the FS division put on an exceptional luncheon in the wardroom for our hosts in the Colombian Navy. Drawing on his significant experience as a Special Command Aide, FS1 van Kampen led the efforts of FS3 Chavez, FS3 Irish, SN Feurstein and SN Clary in putting on a spectacular event. Their efforts are much appreciated!

We'll be saying goodbye to some shipmates after this patrol and I want to wish them fair winds and following seas: HSCS Monk-Base Honolulu, HI; SKC McQuade-CG AIRSTA Sacramento, CA; FS1 van Kampen- USCGC CAMPBELL (WMEC 909) "Sinbad Lives!"; SK2 Hoy-CG Sector St. Petersburg, FL; and FS3 Rodriguez- Release from Active Duty to pursue his dreams.

I'm pretty sure I speak for everyone in the department when I say we can't wait to get back home to our family and friends. We'll be there before you know it!

**CWO3 Joel Moore
Supply Officer**



From Top to Bottom: FS2 Doty prepares a meal for the crew...FSCS Pace supervises the galley...FS3 Chavez slices through a piece of meat

San Diego, California

The crew's first stop this patrol was San Diego, California. Crew members participated in many activities, including visiting Sea World, the San Diego zoo (both free admission for military members) and beaches for surfing. MIDGETT moored a few miles from the historic Gas Lamp Quarter, a common hot spot for the crew.



Various sites in San Diego.



Navy seals in training at the San Diego Naval Base.



TSTA



Part of the MIDGETT's presence in San Diego was to conduct TSTA (Tailored Ship's Training Availability). In three weeks, all 170 crewmembers were evaluated and trained in over 300 evolutions, consisting of Weapons, Combat Systems, Engineering, Damage Control, Anti-Terrorism Force Protection, Navigation, and Medical drills. In the end, the Afloat Training Group deemed all training teams aboard USCGC MIDGETT satisfactory, certifying MIDGETT as battle ready. The crew demonstrated a high level of professionalism and exceptional motivation throughout their three week TSTA period.

USCGC MIDGETT conducts an Underway Fueling evolution with the oiler USNS Henry J. Kaiser.

USCGC MIDGETT performs a towing drill with USCG HADDOCK.



*"Bravo Zulu to the crew and the command for being actively engaged in the preparation and training throughout the CART /TSTA cycle. All the hard work and dedication by the crew was evident by the smooth transition and execution of their briefs, exercises and debriefs throughout TSTA. Congratulations."
-Afloat Training Group, San Diego*



MIDGETT crewmembers attended the firefighting and WET trainer schools at Naval Base San Diego to improve proficiency in damage control.



The Fire Control division in the WEAPONS department conducted a successful gunnery evolution by tracking and firing on a drone target (not seen).

Bahia Malaga, Colombia



The Colombian Navy band welcomed MIDGETT as the ship moored to the pier.

USCGC MIDGETT visited the Colombian Naval Base in Bahia Malaga, Colombia, in an effort to pursue strengthening relations between the two partner nations. Many locals and Colombian Navy personnel toured MIDGETT, and MIDGETT crewmembers visited various sights on base. The highlight of the visit included a tug of war competition between MIDGETT crew and the Colombian Navy; other events included a soccer match, volleyball match, and basketball game. The next day, MIDGETT and the Colombian Navy simulated chasing a go-fast, and MIDGETT's helicopter practiced locating the go-fast and transferring the chase to the Colombian aircraft.



The Naval Base proudly displayed the semi-submersibles apprehended in previous cases. The semi-submersible is the most recent technique to smuggle and transfer illegal narcotics.



MIDGETT crew participated in a variety of sports versus the Colombian Navy, including basketball, volleyball, and soccer.

AVDET: HELO 84

LT Adam Ziegler, LTJG Tim Mosher, and their crew, AET1 William Lorenzo, AMT2 Dylan Clark, AET3 Brett Jewell, and AMT3 Joshua Humrichouse join MIDGETT for the SOUTHPAT. They hail from USCG Air Station Los Angeles, responsible for protecting the coastal area of Southern California from Dana Point to Morro Bay. Air Station LA helicopters provide Homeland Security Patrols for the ports of Los Angeles, Long Beach, and Port Hueneme in Ventura County.



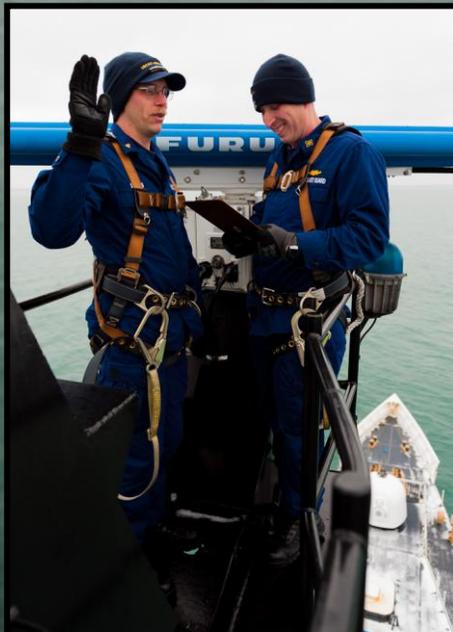
NOTABLE MENTIONS



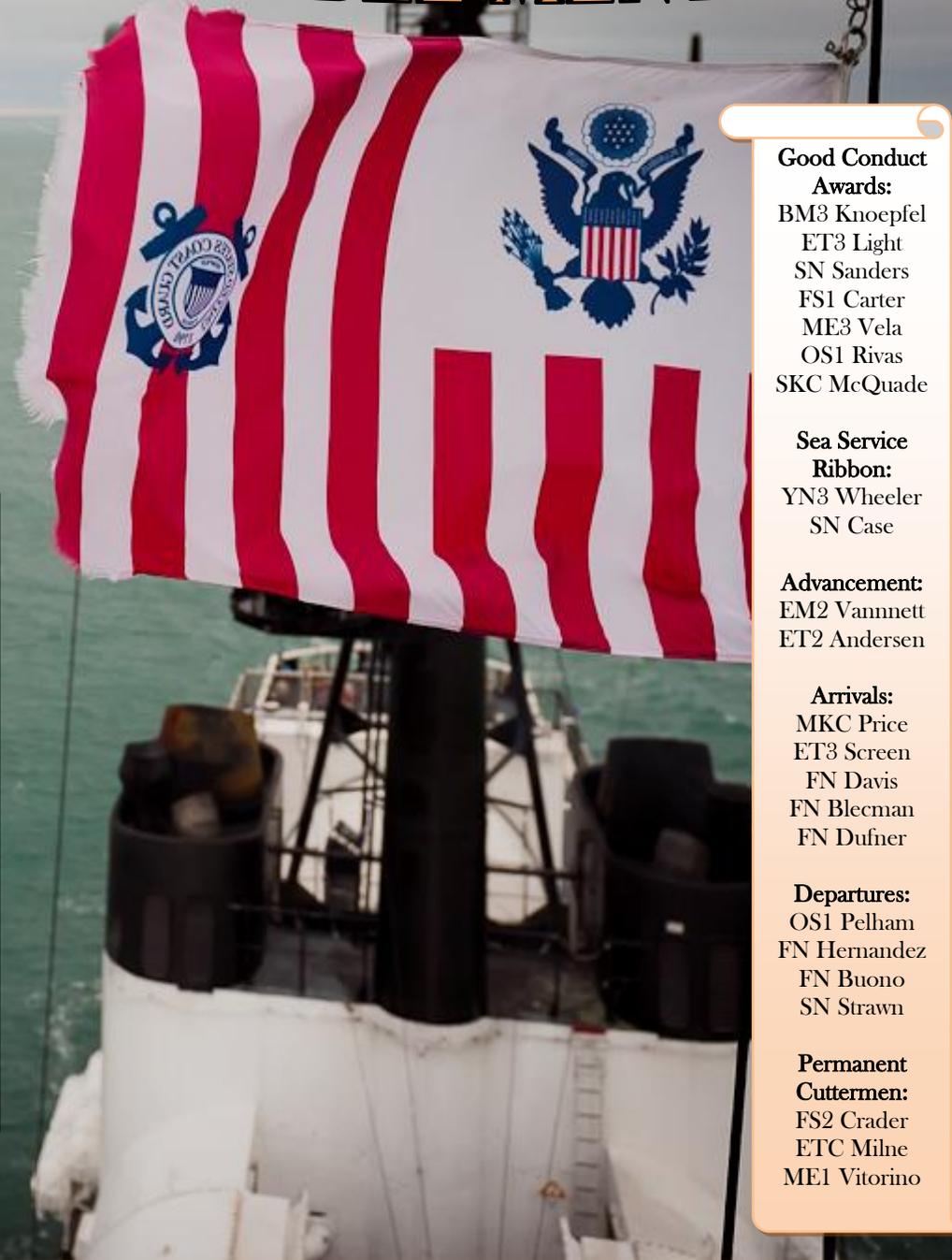
USCGC MIDGETT hosted LT Gordy Strang and 6 sea cadets from the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps. The cadets enjoyed working with the crew and experiencing the underway life from Seattle to San Diego.



ET2 Andersen received Enlisted Petty Officer of the Year, as he performed above and beyond expectations as a member of MIDGETT's ET Shop.



OSC Simmons signed re-enlistment papers on the foremast, with the help of CWO Davenport, to add to his 20+ years of Coast Guard service.



Good Conduct Awards:

BM3 Knoepfel
ET3 Light
SN Sanders
FS1 Carter
ME3 Vela
OS1 Rivas
SKC McQuade

Sea Service Ribbon:

YN3 Wheeler
SN Case

Advancement:
EM2 Vannett
ET2 Andersen

Arrivals:

MKC Price
ET3 Screen
FN Davis
FN Blecman
FN Dufner

Departures:
OS1 Pelham
FN Hernandez
FN Buono
SN Strawn

Permanent Cuttermen:
FS2 Crader
ETC Milne
ME1 Vitorino

AROUND THE SHIP..

A TDY PERSPECTIVE: HS3 CHRISTOPHER WATT

I have heard many shipmates speak of the rigors and intricacies of the underway life. It was not until after four years in the Coast Guard that I finally had the opportunity to experience it. Like any adventure I have partaken in, I am always surprised by the aspects that bring that understanding, that only the experience can convey.

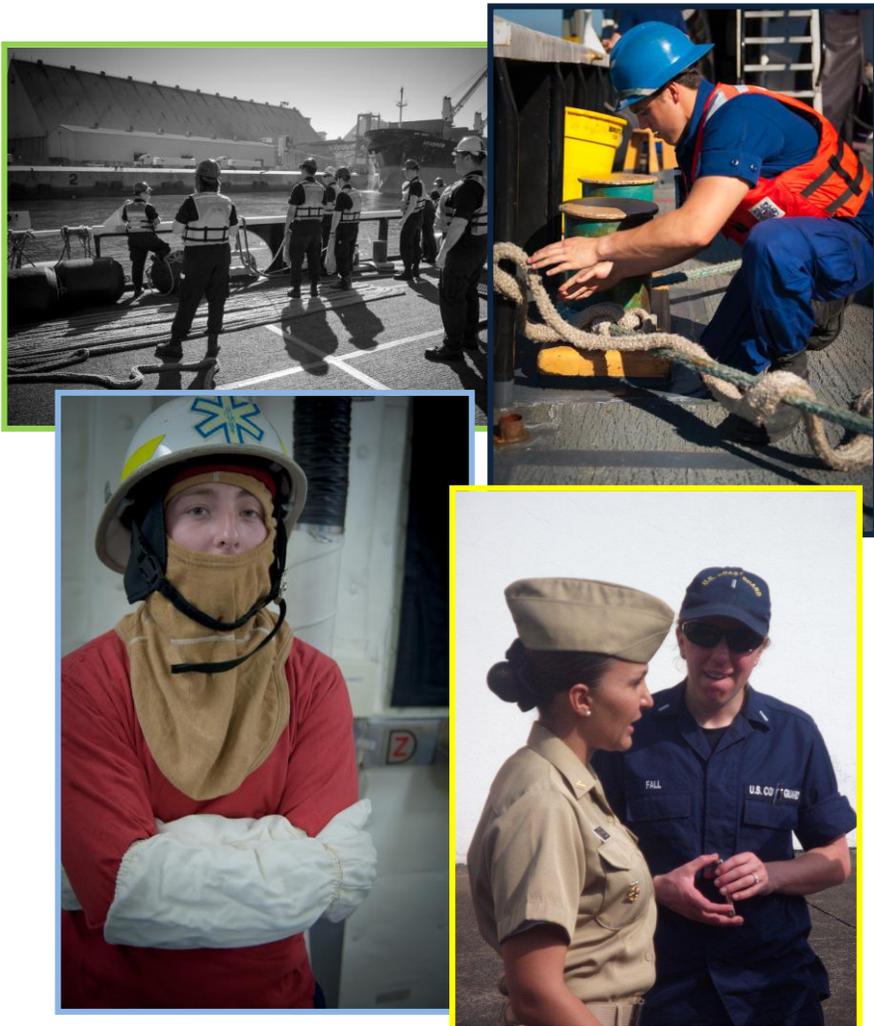
I am a Health Services Technician (HS) at Air Station Miami and received temporary orders to assist the Independent Duty Health Services Technician (IDHS) for the duration of the Southern Law Enforcement Patrol. I volunteered because I have always wanted to be stationed on a cutter, but there are few for HS billets compared to most other rates. After going through TSTA and being aboard for just over a month, life on a cutter is very different from the clinical perspective I have become accustomed to. There are a few aspects, the job I perform, the people I work with and the unique moments.

The job of an HS is essentially the same; I am here for the health and safety of the crew. It is like being on call 24/7; members seem to find either one of us anytime they need help with an issue. In our effort to support operations, I see members for anything from Over the Counter Medications, aches and pains or someone to vent to. Other tasks include water testing and sanitary inspections to prevent illness to the crew. At times they seem repetitive, but it is an essential role to maintain our 378 foot floating city. The primary difference is the resources available. While there is always the option to consult with Medical Officers and other medical support personnel on shore, there is no medical officer on board and no X-ray or a laboratory to assist with patient diagnosis. I have my references, the finding of my exams and what I am told by the member to come to a decision. Collaborating with Senior Chief Monk and shore-side Medical Officers when necessary, we determine the best course of action for the member. It truly makes me appreciate the resources normally available in a Coast Guard Clinic. Regardless, through the challenges, I have learned something new every day.

The job is only a small part of the experience. What makes it worthwhile are the shipmates that I interact with every day. The quarters are tight with very little storage space. The food is good, but it is like eating at the same restaurant every night. Last of all, the people are hard working and driven, but you can never get away. Regardless of these challenges, we are a Coast Guard family, even though we are away from home, family, friends and pets. If we are lucky, we may receive an email from our life outside the cutter. It takes a person with ample character to make these sacrifices, and yet these crews do it with pride.

Amidst the challenges are the things that inspire that sense of reverence, like the infinite view of the horizon, stunning unabated stars, and unexpected wildlife. In these moments, I forget the luxuries relinquished to partake in this adventure. The opportunity to experience different cultures is intriguing, a reminder of how fortunate I am. These people are content in the culture they know and understand, simple as it may be. They have what much of America has conveniently forgotten, the unfettered wilderness that spurs the imagination to what could be found in a day's time.

The adventure has been amazing so far. Regardless of my purpose onboard, it is paramount that we work as team. As a TDY member, I do what I can to assist. The shipboard life is different and I can see why some either love or hate it. I am humbled by the trust and respect rendered by the crew. I look forward to the upcoming weeks. I don't know what is to come, but I can confidently say there will be some lessons, incredible sights and memories of this crew I will never forget.



PICTURES

Picture credits go out to FS1 VanKampen (pictured right), LT Glauner, and LTJG Subramanian. FS1 VanKampen is a skilled photographer and makes time on several occasions to take pictures of various evolutions, port calls, and most importantly, crewmembers. The majority of the pictures in this newsletter have been taken by him. Please feel free to email Douglas.A.VanKampen@uscg.mil or Larry.V.Subramanian@uscg.mil if you request any specific pictures.