

USCGC MORGENTHAU (WHEC 722)

Deployment News, 22 August 2006



FROM THE BRIDGE:

A Hearty Hello Again from the Bering Sea,

Just a quick note from the bridge and pass on my thanks once again for all your love, support and sacrifices. The crew had a much deserved and refreshing 3-day patrol break in Dutch Harbor and then we resumed our primary mission back in the Bearing Sea to execute domestic fishery law enforcement. I know there were lots of hikes and runs taken and horseshoes thrown in Dutch Harbor and a few (hundred) pink salmon caught by the crew – all very much needed and enjoyed as it gave everyone a chance to wind down a bit from a near 30-day straight period of patrolling and operations. By the time you all read this, we should be making our way back to Kodiak and home. I hope to write one more note to thank the crew again for their outstanding performance on this patrol. If not, let me just say once again that they did an outstanding job and represented you, themselves, MORGENTHAU and the Coast Guard extremely well. I'd also like to add special note and thank-you to the "man behind the curtain", MORGENTHAU's Executive Officer, Commander Jay Hawthorne and our newly appointed Command Senior Chief, MKCS Eric Engle. Well done XO and MKCS, and thank you both for all your hard work in running the ship's schedule, looking out for the crew and everything else you do each and every day aboard MORGENTHAU.



We look forward to seeing you all very soon.

Best Regards – Captain Kevin M. O'Day

"Semper Paratus" – Always Ready "Decus Pacifici" - Pride of the Pacific

FROM THE NEWSLETTER TEAM ENS SAPONARA

Third newsletter is a charm! Not that the first one was bad, but we are definitely getting more efficient here. We lost a member, ENS Chris Morris left to attend Public Affairs school, however we are still chugging along. Thanks to all of you readers that have given us positive feedback, it definitely lets us know that our work is appreciated. Stay tuned for the final newsletter of the deployment, followed closely by our arrival back in Alameda, and we are all excited about that!

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT LCDR BRIAN HIGGINS

Here we are, with another week passed, where did the time go? Much of it was spent either preparing for, enjoying, or recovering from a well-received break in Dutch Harbor. Amazing how such a desolate place can be so much fun... read



on for some good stories. Of course, we had to do the usual Engineering things associated with a port call. The fueling team coordinated the onload of more than 35,000 gallons of American-made Diesel Fuel #2, making it look as easy as filling up your car. A-gang also received and installed hangar



Left: FN Knepp (top) & FN Maher (bottom) tag-team sounding tubes, while FN Gregg pulls off a one-handed sounding, they hide their excitement well...



FN Siekmann and MK1 Meachum work on the CPP pump

drive parts, so we can retract and extent the hangar again without relying on chain falls and brute physical strength. Excellent! Although A-gang will now have to develop a new workout routine.

Once the engines were shut down, Main Prop exploited an opportunity and worked on the engines while they were cold, performing hours of needed maintenance well after most everyone else had left the ship. But their work was important, and I appreciate the sacrifice of their personal time to knock out some important troubleshooting & repair. I do not forget these things.

The DCs completed an inventory of equipment in their storeroom, and also created an import worklist, very important

in these final weeks of the patrol. And they continue to troubleshoot our pesky vacuum-flush toilets, important for morale, among other things! The Electricians, on top of their game, discovered some problems with the Emergency Gas Turbine Generator during routine tests, proving why routine tests are so important. They are now busy working on a solution, a few hours ago I saw every EM in aft steering with their thinking caps on, beware the power of the EM team!

Unfortunately, we had to say goodbye to 2 hard workers while in Dutch: MK2 Prince left to begin preparing for a tour in Bahrain, and FN Gorton left for IT "A" school. Good luck to you both, I was impressed with your efforts here on MORGENTHAU. Both were able to enjoy the crazy flight from Dutch to the mainland, with some exciting mountain avoidance immediately after take-off, free of charge. Now the remaining Engineers set our sights on a few more weeks of operations, and an inport with some definite challenges.

OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT NEWS

LT MICHAEL FISHER

Greetings again from the Bering Sea! Despite the interesting work with the Cougar Ace it is nice to wake-up, go outside and see something other than a 654 foot cargo ship, even if that something is fog. Earlier this week we were able to safely escort the Cougar Ace into the port of Unalaska (Dutch Harbor). There was great concern in the community due to a ship that went aground in a storm several years ago spilling a large quantity of fuel onto beaches and into the waters of a prime fishing ground. Fortunately the Coast Guard and salvage company were able to explain the great precautions being taken and resources available to prevent such a tragedy from occurring with the Cougar Ace. After being relieved of the Cougar Ace the members of OPS Department enjoyed a well-deserved break in Dutch Harbor.



Weekly picture of the COUGAR ACE

Dutch Harbor veterans such as OSC Brian Dorsey and OSC Ken Torquato are hoping they were able to write the final chapter in their guidebook to Dutch Harbor after many stops on the island throughout their career. The newest members of the department such as ETC David Percell, BM1 Juan Plata, and SNET Paul Krug can expect many more opportunities to add to their wealth of Dutch Harbor knowledge. Remember, Wednesday nights and Sunday mornings for the seafood buffet at the Grand Aleutian, Amelia's for the best milkshakes in the Aleutian Islands and horseshoes and a cold beer in the midnight sun or mid-day darkness (depending on season) at "The Sports Bar." Don't confuse that with "The Other Sports Bar." Those tips, great halibut fishing and a bunch of eagles is MORG's Guidebook to Dutch Harbor. Upon departing Dutch Harbor OPS Department treated the crew to a pizza night that set the standard for the preparation of this shipboard favorite.

As a leader you must know when to stand back and let the experts do their job while you provide "oversight and direction" or otherwise sneak chicken wings and slices of pepperoni while saying "nice job guys." Fortunately the our expert baker OS2 Brandon Debetham maintain the correct cooking temperature, while ET3 Dan Nelson wielded a knife like a trained samurai in the preparation of all the toppings and ENS Kyra Van Echo wielded a sharpened spoon making sure everyone remained on task. ENS Chad Conrad enthusiastically took the lead in cleaning-up the mess that was made. Fortunately for him it is less than a year until the new ensigns arrive.

Until the next week, the next newsletter, or our return home (whichever comes first) the men and women of the Operations Department wish our family and friends back on the beach all the best.

Very Respectfully,
LT Michael Fisher

WEAPONS DEPARTMENT NEWS

LTJG RYAN WATERS

Another week down and another week closer to home port. We spent a majority of the week in Dutch Harbor, which is just charming, especially the third time around. After departing Dutch we celebrated our nearing patrol closure gun shoot style. ENS Saponara, ENS Pronovost, and the Little Gunners Mates That Could put on a nice 25 mm and M240 exercise. A shout out to GM2 Kinker is in order for clearing a 25 mm jam at near Warp Speed, allowing the shoot to continue until all rounds were expended. Now friends, believe me when I tell you that 330 rounds expended from a 25 is no small task. I



Above: smoke float target gets peppered. Below: 25mm chain gun crew hammers away.

think GMC Jacobs explained it best: "This is the largest 25 mm shoot I've heard of in my career...except the one we're going to do next week that will be about 370 rounds." Not to be outdone, GM2 Leon and GM3 Baenziger proved that they are go to guys on an M240, as the target cherry fenders

recovered after the exercise were riddled with holes 7.62 mm in diameter.



Left: 7.62mm gun crew. Right: tracer round zips towards the target, 2 belligerent red floats

Gunners Mates - it is because of you that I can brag of having fun and getting paid for it. Keep up the good work, and thank you from the Weapons Officer.

Friends, until next time,
Underway Making Way
Warship 722 Weapons Department



YN3 Smith (right), w/YNC James (middle) & YN3 Garay, in the galley for a Morale night. . The whole YN crew!

The last few weeks have been extremely busy for the Food Service department. At the end of a patrol its important that the on-hand inventory be drawn down to a very low level, while still maintaining enough food to feed the crew if an emergency extends our time away from home port. To do this the FSs must get very creative in both menu building & meal prep. Often we won't have every ingredient for a recipe and need to creatively substitute specific items. In spite of all the extra time & work required during the last few weeks, the food service department continues to improve the dining experience aboard CGC MORGENTHAU. In Kodiak the FS department will be getting a new cook, SNFS Whitney White, she is reporting aboard from FS "A" school.

The Health Services Department is ready for a little down time after this unusually busy ALPAT. This patrol has been a great way for HSC Stanley to get his feet wet. The 3 SAR cases were at times very stressful, however they showcased the dedication to duty that HSC Stanley and HS3 Marshall exhibit. The HSs are getting ready for the upcoming inport by scheduling appointments and placing orders. The goal is to keep MORGENTHAU one of the top ships for Medical & Dental readiness.

In the spotlight this week we have HSC William Stanley. He enlisted in 1991, and this is his first West Coast duty station. He was born and raised in middle Georgia. His wife, Denise and their two children, Madison and Alex are still living in North Carolina. HSC Stanley has been an HS for 11 years and first became interested in becoming an HS by volunteering as an EMT in North Carolina.

SUPPLY DEPARTMENT NEWS

CWO2 TONY PARKER

These past two weeks have been interesting for the supply department. The corpsmen started preparing for the busy inport by making medical and dental appointments for over 100 crew members, ensuring that we are prepared medically for our next patrol. Preparing and scheduling so many appointments is extremely challenging to say the least. The storekeepers are currently preparing for our year-end closeout, the finalizing of our entire fiscal year budget for the MORGENTHAU, along with the accountability of all of our property & parts. The SKs purchased over \$783,992.96 worth of fuel thus far, pretty amazing!



Unfortunately, we had to say goodbye for a little while in Dutch Harbor to one of our most popular members, SK2 Michael Simonetti. Although he had the uncanny ability to win all morale events, he will still be missed. We will see him back in the states, after he returns from class.



SK2 Simonetti hauls his morale prizes to the airport as he departs.

YN3 Smith has gone the extra mile to get the job done. As the senior YN3, she ensured that the plan of the day was distributed daily, made travel

arrangements for incoming and departing personnel, prepared travel orders, maintained the unit roster, and checked Direct access daily for PCS, TAD, and discharge orders. YN3 Smith accomplished all this while maintaining her collateral duties as well.

MORALE

ENS WADE

This week's crew morale was brought to you by Dutch Harbor & the number 4 - meaning 4 days inport! I know, what is there to do in Dutch Harbor, right? Well, there are plenty of things the crew can do in Dutch Harbor. For example, when we were in Kodiak we picked up a Morale Support Kit which has tents and propane stoves and sleeping bags so that we can go camping! Several people have taken advantage of these supplies to go camping either on the beach or on top of one of the many mountains nearby. Hiking is always an option, but we also brought mountain bikes with us this patrol so every day you see a few coasties pedaling off to new adventures. Dutch Harbor is a major port for the commercial fisherman, and therefore is a good place for our





local fisherman to drop a hook and line, so we have some fishing poles and bait and tackle to support this endeavor.

In last week's newsletter you may recall seeing a few people with facial hair growing... the night before we entered Dutch Harbor we had our beard growing contest! The winners of the beard growing contest were as follows:

Third place was a tie between OS3 Kelsey and BM1 McMullen, second place went to FN Knepp, and first place was MK1 Arwood, who plans on joining a biker gang after the patrol. Just kidding Mrs. Arwood, that's just a joke ☺ First prize was a nice electric shaver, and the other prizes were also shaving-related, of course.

Last night we had morale night starting off with pizza and wings served by our guest chefs – the Operations Department. Dinner was followed by a boarding and then Bingo on the messdeck – both are always a favorite with the crew. We play all sorts of silly bingo games, Big 'M' for MORGENTHAU, big square, small square, X, double on the same card. The real prize, the grand prize, is ALWAYS saved for the last round, BLACKOUT! Our grand prize winner was OS2 Kim Hawkins who walked away with a Digital Camera. During previous patrols OS2 Hawkins dominated most morale events, but she took a backseat last patrol to help the morale committee run things – looks like she's back!

We've got a busy week coming up and a few more morale events in the queue so stay tuned!

FEATURE: ANATOMY OF A PORT CALL

On 9 AUG 06, MORGENTHAU pulled into Dutch Harbor (the 4th consecutive stop here this patrol), and on 12 AUG we pulled away, sailing away from Dutch loaded with stories that will be told over and over again until our next port call, which is expected to be in the 'booming metropolis' of Kodiak (when compared to Dutch Harbor, anyway). What kind of stories, you ask? Well, just read on, MORG newsletter subscriber, and we shall share with you some of the things that were experienced during this "mid-patrol break".

First, we start with the actual arrival. A navigation brief was given to the Captain the night before, giving the specifics of our drive to the pier. Driving a 3,200 ton ship is much more challenging than driving your average car down a street. Thus, a lot of preparation is needed before the ship nears land, since that is where most of the dangers lie (big rocks, shallow

water, other ships entering/leaving the harbor, the list goes on).

Once MORGENTHAU pulled in, there were several things that had to be done. The fueling team immediately set up shop, and a fueling brief was given to the CO. Because MORGENTHAU had been circling a semi-capsized, drifting cargo ship for the better part of the last 1.5 weeks, we had not burned very much fuel. Only 35,000 gallons were needed, which is definitely below average. (Fun fuel fact: marine grade diesel is pretty cheap up here, only \$2.40 per gallon!). After briefing the CO, the fueling team went out for lunch, and made the transfer later in the afternoon.

Once the ship is tied to the pier, "shore ties" are established: the ship starts to use electricity, water, sewage systems from the pier via a really big plug and several hose connections. This makes life much easier on the engineers, as the generators can be turned off. The engine room becomes nice and quiet, and for the first time in several weeks, the engines become cool to the touch.

Meanwhile, the people driving the ship are out of a job, and leave the bridge. A table and desk are set up on the flight deck, and the QMOW maintains a constant watch over who is coming aboard / leaving the ship. This little station, monitored 24 hours a day, is called the Quarterdeck.



ENS Van Echo departs on liberty after checking out at the Quarterdeck.

The storekeepers and yeomen then swing into action. We were receiving mail this inport (thanks to the arrangements made by the Supply Officer, CWO Parker) that is always a crowd-pleaser. CWO Parker also arranged for us to have

vehicles, and they were waiting at the pier for us. Vehicles are always needed for ship's business, and recognizing that a short



Mobile MORGENTHAU crew transport unit, a.k.a. Alaskan liberty van.

cab ride in Dutch Harbor can cost \$8 per person, the ship always tries to arrange transportation for the crew to shuttle them between all of the different attractions that can be found in Dutch Harbor. In this case, the ship rented 3 large vans and a truck. 2 of the vans were used as "liberty vans", fabled vehicles driven by a shipmate on duty that arrive at stores, bars or perhaps just pick you up along the side of the road when you are least expecting it, helping you to get wherever you need to go.



Liberty van conducting late night crew retrieval operations.

Radio personnel immediately take a van to pick up the mail, and any spare parts that are waiting for us. They also sort the mail and hand it out to each division. Keep those letters and care packages coming, we love them! Few things in life can compare to receiving a care package after a long stint at sea. At the same time, the crew is cleaning the ship, disposing of onboard trash, broken televisions that were not secured for sea (right ENS Hall?) etc. Once the ship has been scrubbed and the command is satisfied that the ship is ready, liberty is granted. It is nice to get off the ship, a welcome change after a 264-hour long period around the same 140 people. Change can be good! Just don't do anything stupid.

While in Dutch, many people went fishing. Dolly Vardons and Salmon are usually the target species, and many people had been preparing for the moment when they could spend 48 hours focusing only on the simple pleasure of trying to catch these tasty fish. In fact some people were actually sleeping on the beach (by the way Alaska does not have the warmest climate) so that they could start fishing as early as possible. We have 2 food vacuum packers on board, so fish can be



Paparazzi catch CAPT O'Day as he heads to his secret fishing spot.



Junior Officers unlocking the container on the pier full of morale gear, looking for mountain bikes. That's how they roll.

sealed, frozen and brought home to be shared with others, along with a crazy fishing story. But no guarantees on the truthfulness of that story ☺

Evidently the CO, XO, MKCS, OSC and FN Siekmann all went fishing together and found the sweet spot for salmon. Despite catching more than one hundred fish, they were feeling merciful and releasing most of the salmon they caught, returning to the ship with only a few. Of course there is no photographic proof of anything, so that location remains a secret. Shortly thereafter, however, FN Riddle took a crew to try and find this legendary fishing place, and unfortunately for them they brought the wrong type of hooks. Hundreds of fish could be seen through the clear water, and fish after fish were being hooked by this (initially) happy group, however no fish were actually brought to shore. They had 100% hook failure, every fish that was hooked would eventually bend the hook straight and escape. Evidently these Alaskan fish are strong, there must be something in the water. Although initially disgusted by this tragic turn of fate, FN Riddle was later seen smiling and telling this story to others, so it was not a total loss.

Hiking is another great pastime for this particular port, Dutch Harbor has a lot of historical significance. In WW2 it was subjected to fierce bombing raids by the Japanese, who eventually occupied 2 nearby Aleutian Islands (Adak and



Gun emplacement w/a great view...COUGAR ACE is in the distance.

Attu). As a result, there are bunkers and fortifications strewn all over the Dutch Harbor, and many are within easy walking distance. All have long since been abandoned, and many are



ENS Hall searches for unexploded ordinance.

falling apart, marked by the occasional graffiti. Some of the bunkers are quite large, 2 and 3 stories of concrete structure with impressive layouts; great candidates for a future episode of MTV's "pimp my bunker" show, sure to be a hit. The view from these bunkers can be breathtaking, with huge cliffs dropping down to the ocean below. And the loose rocks make for impressive rock slides, which are not difficult to start (right, LTjg Jenkins?).

Back in town, the UniSea 'Sports Bar' (one of the 3 bars in the area, and by far the largest) was a very popular hangout with the crew. UniSea is a company that seemed to own almost everything in Dutch Harbor, that name was on everything. Behind the 'Sports Bar' is a nice view of some of the many fishing vessels that call Dutch Harbor home, along with an abundance of bald eagles perched on everything from boat pilothouses to light posts. In the back of the bar is also an ever-popular horseshoe pit, a very cool addition to any bar.



MK2 Malinski, OS3 Quinley, MK1 Arwood & ENS Colby play Horseshoes at the Sport Bar.

As long as the people who are throwing the heavy, odd shaped pieces of steel remain fairly accurate. Just ask all those crazy BM horseshoers like BM1 Plata, BM3 McCullough, BM1 McMullen and BM3 Sains.

At the Sports Bar, ENS Woessner had perhaps the greatest "what-did-I-just-do" moment of any crewmember this port call. Towards the end of a long day, he and several other



ENS Woessner holding his credit card up in good spirits after ringing "the bell"

crewmembers ended up there, where he watched a spirited argument between 2 other shipmates, FS2 Garcia and OS3 Kelsey, over why they should ring a bell that was mounted over the bar. After hearing something that he interpreted to mean free Budweiser, brave ENS Woessner decided to take matters (and fate) into his own hands and ring the bell himself. Turns out ringing the bell indicates you want to buy the entire bar a round, and that's exactly what he did. Damage came to exactly

\$400, fortunately many of our own shipmates benefited from his misfortune. And he took it well!



Top: YN3 Smith (left) and YN3 Garay (right) at the Sports Bar. Bottom: After coming in second place of the pool competition ET3 "Pool Shark" Dismuke, just could not stop! Corona, side pocket...

As all of this was going down, another crewmember was playing in the finals of a local pool tournament... ET3 Dismuke lost a close game to a local known as "fingers" (named this because he was missing several fingers, and no, it doesn't really make sense to us either), but he still managed to pick up \$80 for second place. ENS Colby also defeated ENS Cuevas in a furious game of air hockey, and that ended a relatively event-free evening at the Sports Bar.



MORGENTHAU crewmembers enjoy the UniSea Sports Bar.

Bonfires are always a good time in Dutch. There is a great fire ring on the beach in front of the US Coast Guard Marine Safety Detachment building, and every night an inferno was blazing away, surrounded by MORGENTHAU crewmembers like OS3 Lopez, SN Kirkpatrick, and MK1 Meachum. In great OS tradition, OS2 Flory, OS1 Guerrero, OS3 Waters and Lance Corporal Heimerdinger, our token Marine, started their own bonfire in a secret remote location, as everything is secret when the OSs are involved. And in Alaska, what better to do by a fire than cook fresh salmon, roast marshmallows, or just sample the local brews (Rainier Beer = “Vitamin R”? You decide!)? There is always a large supply of wood and salmon at the beach, and tons of stories to tell around the fire. And if the wind catches the smoke right, your lungs will suffer and you will never get the smell out of your clothes. But bonfires are a great Alaskan tradition, and should not be missed! (bonfire tip: do NOT let anyone put an old tire into your bonfire, or your salmon will smell and taste like the track after a NASCAR race).

And one should not forget the fabulous food that is available in the restaurants of Dutch Harbor. The always-high-quality Wednesday night seafood buffet at the Grand Aleutian Hotel was attended by a group that included GMC Jacobs and ENS Lappe. ENS Lappe set a goal of 6 plates, but was only able to finish 5. The bad news: Buffet and wine together was \$40 per person. The good news: the desire to eat anything was gone for at least 2 days. And it seemed like that was the trend...food was expensive but the portions were



MORGENTHAU crew members enjoy a Dutch Harbor bonfire.



While waiting for a liberty van, IT3 Popo and GM3 Baenziger practice the unusual “face-pushing” maneuver.

immense. Downstairs from the buffet was the hotel’s bar, with their signature drink, the “bucket of fun”. Which actually came in a bucket. Many people experienced the massive Mexican dishes at Amelias, where the salsa was a slow-burning variety that eventually rendered the mouth hypersensitive to everything. But the humungous Amelias milkshakes were a great antidote. Calzones at Angelo’s (CWO Barron & ENS Colby), Mexican pizza at Gabby’s, everything was gigantic.

Believe it or not, there was also shopping to be done in Dutch Harbor. Everyone seemed to be sporting new jackets after the first day or so (SA May! ET2 Guardiola! OS3



MORGNETHAU is beautiful when lit up at night. A majestic sight when returning from liberty.

Quinley! ENS Van Echo! ENS Wade! Great Scott!), and upon interrogation, everyone gave up the fashion source: the Ship Supply Store. Who knew!? With tons of inexpensive hi-tech clothing along with nice hoodies (look closely for the hoodie with the zippered inner pocket, that’s how good our MORG fashion experts became), that was the place for souvenir clothing. For food, the Eagle was the largest grocery store around. And with at least 15 Bald Eagles the size of small aircraft staring you down as you left the store with your food, the store was appropriately named. There were no documented Eagle attacks, which is good because a) their talons are pretty sharp, and b) it is against the law to hurt an Eagle, which makes any Eagle-Human fight pretty darn unfair. Anyway, prices were high, but that did not stop the occasional shipmate from hauling out a case of energy drinks costing the better part of \$100, to help them cope with the sometimes-extreme MORG underway lifestyle.

FEATURE: HELICOPTER OPERATIONS

Helicopter Operations on are always an exciting time. Not many people can say that they have a boat with a helicopter,



but we on MORGENTHAU are not like many people. And of course, this is no joy-riding helicopter, it is the Coast Guard HH-65A Dolphin, a high-performance aircraft build to operate in the unforgiving marine environment, and with a flashy

CG paintjob and some fearless pilots, we can look good as we perform helicopter operations in conditions that would make your average piece homo-sapien seasick. We currently have HH-65 #6525 on board

We on MORG train with our helicopter all the time to prepare for disaster, to keep our crew “Semper Paratus” (always ready) for that moment when our aircraft is needed. In fact, to stay operational, everyone (Pilots, Tiedown Crew, Landing Signal Officers, etc) need to perform a minimum number of flight ops each month, including night operations. Of course with less than 4 hours of “darkness” around Alaska in the summer, this makes for some really-late-night operations, but we have pulled through without a problem.

With all of these qualifications completed, we have been operating our “tupperwolf” (slang for the helicopter, because it has a lot of plastic components, like Tupperware, not like those heavy old metal helos, so we....oh, never mind) quite a bit this patrol. Earlier, it was 6525 flying around in support of our fisheries mission. Later, we had a Search-and-Rescue case which saw our helicopter picking up 3 survivors from a remote beach, and conducting a nearly 24 hour search for another person, who was never found. That case involved cooperation with an Air Force C-130, and our OSs had to assist.



Yes, Batman works with the OSs. No, they will not reveal his secret identity.

In a situation where multiple aircraft are assisting MORGENTHAU with search and rescue, these OSs act as air traffic controllers. In the Coast Guard, we call these people Air Directional Controllers, or ADCs. If there is a situation where extreme fog makes it impossible for the pilots to find MORGENTHAU, then the OSs will set the helicopter for an emergency low visibility approach, or ELVA . And up here in the Bering Sea there are definitely more foggy days than clear. In situations like this, I am sure the pilots are very grateful

for the OSs sitting in their bat cave with their all-seeing radars.

Next up was our biggest tasking to date, hanging out with the cargo ship COUGAR ACE. Nearly every day (except the port call thank goodness) we have been flying in support of the salvage effort... with our pilots doing everything from lowering stability experts to monitoring the surface of the ocean for pollution, we have been busy. And so this next



This is the phone shack, next to the ship. These two pictures were taken after midnight. We love our families more than we love our sleep. And that is saying a lot!

And what port call would be complete without the post-game drug urinalysis? Not this one, as Doc (HSC Stanley) tested more than 50 lucky shipmates for illegal substances. Keeping everyone honest is the name of the game.

Soon enough, the inport was over, and MORGENTHAU was back underway, keeping fisherman honest and making the Alaskan waters a safer place to be. Thank you Dutch Harbor, for all the good stories!



HSC Stanley and FN Maher are way too happy in this picture.



MORGENTHAU as seen from the HH-65 Dolphin helicopter.

section will give you a little information about what it is like to safely recover a helicopter on MORG's flight deck.

In this case, our trusty chopper has been flying around for a while, looking for any environmental pollution from COUGAR ACE, as the salvage people have boarded her and are crawling around identifying key systems, valves, pipes, etc that will be needed to fill the ballast tanks and get her back upright at least a little bit.

When MORG goes to flight quarters, nobody can wear a hat outside, lest it accidentally come off and get sucked into a helo engine. Not good! So hats off to the helicopter, only protective helmets can be worn, for the people on the flight deck. In preparation for landing the helo, there are positions being manned throughout MORG. Several of these jobs are Damage Control related...if there were to be an accident, the immediate ability to combat fire (especially one involving fuel) must be available. Thus, the Damage Control Assistant (our own ENS George Hall) sets up a command center in the



Flight deck team, showing some the different 'team' colors used.

fueling gear associated with helicopter refueling. The helicopter can also be refueled while still hovering, so that it never touches the deck. This would be a HIFR (Helicopter In-Flight Refueling). Not done too frequently, but we can do it! There are normally 2 refueling personnel.

Blue – The tie-down crew is a very important part of the flight ops team... we do not want that \$5 Million dollar aircraft going anywhere in an uncontrolled manner. And that is exactly what the tie down crews prevent. They are the first

MORG personnel to approach the helicopter once it lands, and the last to leave it before take-off. They get danger pay for their efforts, which can be up to \$150 extra dollars per month. There are 8 tie-down crew, 2 for



SN Helbert, SN Killacky and SN May standing by for Flight ops.

each tie-down point on the helicopter.

Green – Visitors wear green. If we have someone taking pictures, or observing flight operations from the bridge, they will wear green.

Red – Red gear indicates the person is a member of the fire team. Fire teams wait behind the hangar, so that if something goes wrong they will not be affected. They stand prepared with portable extinguishers and a hose that will spray AFFF, ready to respond to a fire or other casualty. There are enough red shirts for 2 hoses, 3 people for each hose and an attack team leader, for a total of 7.



Shiny metallic: Not sure if this is an actual color (perhaps a "crayola" color), but during flight operations, one lucky Damage Controlman (on this cruise either DC3 Serrano, DC2 Dodge or FN Williams) will be able to wear the proximity suit. This suit is an aluminum foil looking outfit that is extremely resistant to heat; this person is well-equipped to deal with fire or other such disaster, and has specific tasks during an emergency that require them to wear such a suit. We salute you, Mr. Flight-Ops-Proximity Suit wearer ...

So in a typical setup, the helo is making it's approach. On the bridge, the HCO is talking with the helo, and although they



ENS Hall (left) monitors flight operations while FS3 Roberts (right) puts in long hours at the AFFF station.

Log Office. FS3 Roberts takes a break from cooking and occupies the AFFF station as a potential operator. The AFFF (Aqueous Film Forming Foam) station is one of the most important pieces of equipment on the boat, it is the primary source of all firefighting "agent" that will be used on any fuel fire. And the helo can carry a lot of fuel.

The bridge personnel and engine room personnel also set up, with a dedicated crew for flight operations. On the bridge, the OOD will bring the ship onto a course that gives us the proper amount of wind over the flight deck, which makes the helicopter easier to land. The Helicopter Control Officer communicates with the helicopter as it approaches MORGENTHAU. Out on the flight deck, as you will see in the pictures, different people are wearing different colors. Have no fear, there is no crazy fashion designer on board, these colors serve a purpose: to identify which job each person is doing. The colored clothing makes it easy for the pilots and flight crew to see what is going on, and who is doing what. Let's break down the jobs by the colors:

Yellow – Landing Signal Officers wear yellow. Only one LSO is needed, if you see more than one person in a yellow shirt, that means someone is being trained. They wear headsets, and can hear the helicopter pilots and the Helicopter Control Officer (on the bridge).

Purple – The refueling team wears the always-popular purple color, they are responsible for running under the whirling propeller blades (not as dangerous as it may sound) to attach a hose and pump fuel into the helicopter. They also are responsible for the maintenance of the hose and any other

cannot directly see the flight deck, they have a camera that shows them everything. Back on the flight deck, the different colored groups are waiting.

Once people have manned up their positions, we wait. As



The waiting game.

we wait, several other things happen. The helicopter usually refuels immediately after landing, something we call a "hot refuel." This limits the time needed to launch it the next time around, giving us a better potential SAR response speed. When the helicopter is still a ways out, the refueling team (purple) brings a fuel sample up for inspection, so that we know good fuel is going into the fuel tank. This is extra



Fuel team & LSOs inspect a sample of the aviation fuel.



ENS Cuevas guides the helicopter in for a landing.

LSO, gives the helicopter hand signals to help them line up to land. Once the helo is above deck and straight, the pilots cut the power and drop to the deck. FWUMP! Immediately, the tie down crew runs out and secures the helicopter to the deck with 4 tie down straps, and then the helicopter is safely attached to the ship, and the helo can run down the engines.

important for the HH-65A, which has a hard time flying on one engine.

Eventually, the helicopter will close to within visual range, and then it's game-time. As the chopper comes in, the Landing Signal Officer, or

Usually, this is the time for the fuel team to do their thing.



Tie down team earning their danger pay, securing '6525' to the deck.

With the helicopter engines running, the fuel crew will run out and attach the fueling hose to the helicopter, for the aforementioned hot-refuel. The fuel capacity of the dolphin is approx 330 gallons, although the aviators refer to fuel by the pound for some reason. So they can carry 2164 pounds of



Fuel team does a hot-refuel on a thirsty helicopter.

fuel. There, now we sound like pilots ☺ Now if only they would let us borrow their helicopter...

Once the fueling is done, the engines are turned off, and the helo can be put away. Our hangar is extended, the rotor blades fold back, and the helicopter is pushed into the hangar,



Helo in the hangar, tied down and blades folded.

guided as it goes by safety straps and a group of dedicated people known as "helo-pushers." Helo ops are complete, and people can turn to the many other activities on board MORGENTHAU that are awaiting attention.

Now, a word from the embarked pilots:

"Flying Coast Guard HH-65 helicopters in the Bering Sea is a rewarding and challenging experience. At the same time, pilots and aircrews have the unique opportunity to get a "birds eye" view of the beautiful and majestic Alaskan wilderness. In addition to being a Search and Rescue response platform, our primary role on MORGENTHAU is to provide aerial reconnaissance for identifying various commercial fishing vessels as potential boarding targets. We also assist in enforcing any suspected incursions across our Maritime Boundary Line. Our recent work with the salvage operations on COUGAR ACE was a very unique experience and a welcomed change to the daily fisheries patrols of the pervious weeks. Early in the salvage process, the safest means to board COUGAR ACE was by helicopter. MORGENTHAU's AVDET made a total of 39 hoists of personnel and equipment to the precariously floating vessel.

The dynamic weather in the Bering Sea presents the biggest challenges for aviation crews. During the summer months, fog reduces visibility to less than 1/4 mile and limits our capability to provide effective patrols. The weather changes rapidly and, at times we must adjust our patrol efforts based on existing conditions. With our short range capability, it is not uncommon for MORGENTHAU to be the only available landing/refueling site. In the likely event that the weather rapidly deteriorates after we takeoff on a patrol, we must use precision RADAR mapping and navigation to "find" MORGENTHAU in the fog in order to land and refuel. Our approach is often at a very low altitude and slow in order to maintain visual contact with the water surface. We approach MORGENTHAU from the stern and the fog is often so thick, the ship's wake is the first thing we see before the Cutter comes into view. After that, the challenges are not over as we still must land on her pitching/rolling flight deck.

The success of our AVDET was the direct result of the outstanding support and professionalism demonstrated by all personnel that allowed us to integrate as an effective part of MORGENTHAU's crew.

CREW RECOGNITION:

- SN Dalton certified as Boat Crewman.
- MKCS Engle received his Fifth Good Conduct Award.
- OS3 Flory celebrated a Birthday on 5 Aug.
- SN Killacky Advanced to Seaman.
- MK2 Prince celebrated Birthday on 6 Aug.

No new crewmembers have reported aboard in the last 2 weeks

SHOUTS-OUT FROM OUR CREW:

- MK1 Mark Childers sends: "Hello all from the Bering Sea again. All is well up here. Mom, I was able to retrieve what you asked for. Thank you again Jamye for coming out for Sheri. Kids, thank you for helping around the house. Glad to hear all went well Sheri. I love you very much and pray for your good health. The time grows near for my return. Get the grill and drinks ready! Love you all."
- SN Joshua Dalton sends: "Well guys we are almost at the end here. Thanks for the care package. I've already torn into it. Tay, I hope everything works out and I love you. Mom, Dad, Brooke, and Jordan, hopefully I can come out there and see you guys in August. Love you all."
- ET2 Mark Edillon sends: "Happy Birthday Joyce!! We'll celebrate it again when I get back. I love you and I thank you so much for your love, prayers, patience and support. You are my bestest most favorite wife evAr (he he)!"
- MKCS Engle sends: "Happy 6th Birthday Baby cakes! I love you very much, Daddy."
- LT Michael Fisher sends: "Hello family and friends on the East Coast. Here in the Bering Sea we certainly haven't experienced the heat wave that swept the country. For friends in the Bay area, I will see you soon. I am looking forward to taking advantage of the great September and October weather. Dave and Janelle, I can't wait to see you for the first time as Ms. and Mr. Cameryn. - Take Care, Michael."
- EMC Alan Gieb sends: "To Mocha, Coconut, Hazel, and Filbert, be good for mommy and have her give you all kisses from daddy. MRG XXXOOOXXXOOOXXXOOOXXX L&M AKG. Patty, Go Texans!!! Donna, good talking to you, thanks for calling me in DH. Mom and Dad, Happy anniversary. How many is that?"
- ET1 Troy Gracie sends: "Mykaela and Cynthia, I think about you every day. We'll be home very soon."
- OS2 Kim Hawkins sends: "Hi everyone! I enjoy getting your e-mails; it's nice to know you think about me! I sure do miss my family a lot! Big hugs to all ~ Jennifer and JAG, Ma and Pop, Tami, Jill and Jared, Aunt Judy, Uncle Marty and Grams and everyone else!"
- LCDR Brian Higgins sends: "Alaska is sweet but the lower 48 rock too, can't wait to get back and enjoy the Bay Area! Viera, Family, Domi, see you all soon ~ prepare to do crazy things when I am not working... Errol, prep the sked, playa!"
- BM3 Matthew McCullough sends: "Briana, hey baby, I know that you got upset that you didn't receive a comment from me last week but oh well what I can say. I love you and I can't wait until we get back inport so that I can actually see and hear you more often. Mom and Dad, well it is getting to be the end of this patrol and soon I will be home to blast my music to all of your neighbors again. Oh and now that I am 21, I will probably be having some bar-b-ques there too so dad...get the propane tank filled alright. Grandma, hopefully you are still getting these and that you know I miss you too and will try to get up to see you ASAP. I love you and miss you all."
- MK1 Brian Meachum sends: "Brian Marcella, you already know I love you but I want to make public displays of affection because I hear it's in right now. "A triscuit a trascalat a flower making basket." I made that poem for you when I was alone in my rack."
- FSCS James O'Brien sends: "My love, I can't wait to hold you in my arms again. Miss you all. Give Kiera and Finn a hug from me. Thanks for the Peanut Brittle Mom."
- ETC Dave Percell sends: "To Mindi, Happy 21st Anniversary."



Top: LCDR Joe Carrol. Bottom: LT David Townsend.

- MK2 Mike Ryan sends: "Hi babe, I love and miss you so much. Just two more weeks. I can't wait to get home and just be with you. Hello to everyone else. I miss you all too."
- ENS Ernie Saponara sends: "Hey Stephany, I hope the wedding rolled along smoothly. I miss you like a heartbeat! Mom, I am happy to see the hounds are enjoying the trips to the mountains in your new car. Alexys, congratulations on earning the San Diego Attorney of The Year Award!!! That is awesome! Mark, how is it going? Stephany and I are looking forward to going out to dinner with you after your trip to Juneau. Thanks for all your support."
- YN3 Laura Smith Sends: "Mom I miss you very much I enjoyed talking to you this past inport. Don't worry though I will be home soon and we can talk everyday for a while anyway. Celina, tell everyone I miss them too. Dad, learn how to use the computer and write me Love Ya. My little critters, I miss you too. Rachael think about it."
- BM3 Richard Spicer sends: "To the West Coast Crew: I'll come visit soon! Say HI to the Shepherds for me! To my sis: We'll find the time to get you out here, stay safe and I'll call you soon! To Dad (Wherever you are right now): Hope all is going well. We have much to talk about; hopefully you'll be close to a good rally point and we can get a cup of coffee. To the Thin Blue Line: Cuff 'em, stuff 'em & stay safe bros; just a little while longer..."
- HSC William Stanley sends: "We are counting down the days! Denise I can not wait to get home to see you guys!! I have really missed you all. Keep praying and stay strong. Mama, Look forward to everyone coming to our house and drive carefully. Tell everyone I said Hey. Love you all!!"
- ENS Kyra Van Echo sends: "Hi everyone! I miss you all! Mom and Dad: I hope you have a fun trip! David, Gretchen, and Cheyenne: I want to see these puppies I keep hearing about! Matt, Jaime, and Ella: I hope you're all having a fun trip too, thanks again for the pictures! To the Herods: I can't wait to see

you! Ally, don't break anything else before I get there okay?
Tasha: are you alive?"

- OS3 Jordan Waters sends: "Hey there beautiful I just wanted to send a million hugs and kisses to you MUA MUA MUA MUA MUA MUA MUA. I love you baby and can't wait to see you and the girls. Tell Chris I said hi and let Kari and Bethany know I am going to get the wrestling belt back that they beat me for and I will become the new champion once again. I love all of you guys."

WE'LL SEE YOU ALL SOON...

We'll be safe out here on the high seas – you be safe too at home, and thank you for your support, e-mails and care packages! We're thinking of you all the time.

Best regards,

The Officers, Chiefs and Crew of
USCGC MORGENTHAU (WHEC 722)
"Decus Pacifici – Pride of the Pacific"

Visit us at: <http://www.uscg.mil/pacarea/MORGENTHAU>

