

# CGC MARGARET NORVELL

Miami Beach, FL

WPB 1105

# THE RITA REPORT

EDITION 2: SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 2014

Welcome aboard CGC MARGARET NORVELL. During the months of September and October the cutter and her crew have been extremely busy. We hope that this issue of *The Rita Report* provides some insight as to what your loved ones have been accomplishing. Thank you for your continued support, and please enjoy!

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Photos taken by FS1 Strenkert and Crew members

## THE CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Friends, Family and Shipmates,

I hope this month's newsletter finds you well. Since our last installment, MARGARET NORVELL's crew has coalesced, with many of this summer's new crewmembers settling into their new positions, including myself. Led by our command chief, Chief Mullen, our remaining commissioning crew shipmates have expended considerable effort to seamlessly integrate their new shipmates. While it may seem like a long way off, in the next six months these commissioning crewmembers will begin to transition to new billets throughout the Coast Guard, the summer crewmembers will step into positions of increased responsibility, and the cycle of shipboard life will continue.

The past two months have been very busy for MARGARET NORVELL with two patrols and a busy three-week in-port period. During our September patrol, we interdicted four migrant chugs and rescued fifty Cuban migrants from the perils of the sea. During the three-week patrol, we had 147 migrants cross our decks, which at one time held over fifty migrants for three days. We also conducted five law enforcement boardings, sank or identified six hazards to navigation and conducted one SAR mission for a wayward dingy. Here are some other highlights of the patrol:

- MARGARET NORVELL hosted a CNN news crew for three days underway. The news crew witnessed our cutter handle more than eighty Cuban migrants in a four-day period. The CNN crew documented two at-sea interdictions, including a dramatic interdiction of a rustic vessel that was taking on water with twenty-nine migrants onboard. The CNN news team ran their story on *The Situation Room with Wolf Blitzer*.

- A gripping five-hour go-fast chase at 30 kts with an ultimate interdiction, which resulted in the apprehension of three suspected migrant smugglers. With only 15 miles left in the chase, MARGARET NORVELL's crew quickly launched our cutter's small boat and interdicted the go-fast.
- MARGARET NORVELL became the first Coast Guard Sentinel-class cutter to visit the Bahamian island of Bimini. We anchored off Bimini, known as the "Gateway to the Bahamas," and embarked local Bahamian officials as part of a two-day professional exchange with civil and military authorities to help build strategic relationships in the region.

There have been a number of personal accomplishments over the past two months as well. In a ship-sponsored event, eight crewmembers earned their open water dive certifications allowing them to enjoy the underwater majesty of South Florida and the Bahamas. FN Bauza-Poland crafted a public affairs release about our port visit to Bimini that was published on the U.S. Coast Guard Compass blog and FaceBook page. FN Bauza-Poland also became engaged to Ms. Johany Jimenez, his college sweetheart. We said goodbye to BM1 Slater as he heads to Patrol Forces Southwest Asia to join as part of the crew of USCGC Baranof. Before his departure, the crew had the honor of awarding BM1 Slater his permanent Cutterman's pin, a hallmark of a seagoing professional. Additionally, FS1 Strenkert reenlisted for another three years, GM1 Henninger's advancement, and BM1 Ives earned her underway officer of deck qualification. Lastly, MK1 White, working with Chaplain Walcott, has organized and led a sizable flock of crewmembers in divine services that have nourished the soul of our cutter

## The Ombudsman Corner



October Is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

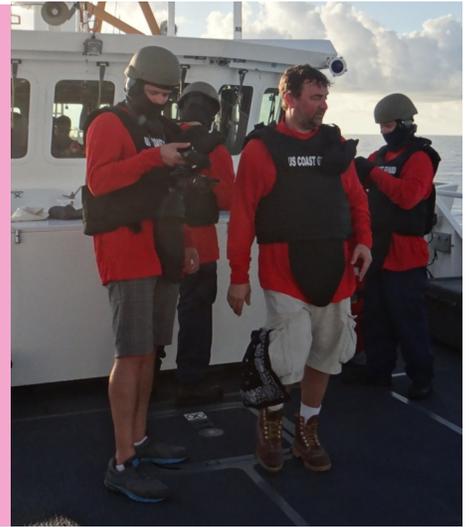
Domestic violence is a public health issue of significant importance as it affects millions of men, women and children in this country. Within the DoD and the Coast Guard, the reported incident rate was approximately 24 incidents per 1000 couples in FY 2013. The Coast Guard wants families to be aware of the help and support that is available, ensuring no one is suffering in silence. With that said, Family Advocacy Specialists with the Coast Guard's Work-Life Program are available to assist. For more information, please contact CG SUPRT Program at toll free number 855-CGSUPRT (247-8778). Accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week. DON'T LET FEAR BE AN OBSTACLE!

As the new Ombudsman, I would like to remind the CGC Margaret Norvell family that I am now available should you need assistance of any sort. Please be aware that all form of contact is 100% CONFIDENTIAL (except when you present a danger to yourself or anyone else)! While it is not in my scope of duty to personally counsel or remedy any situation you may have, it is my duty to point you in the right direction and refer you to the help you need. I can be reached at [omb-margnorvell@yahoo.com](mailto:omb-margnorvell@yahoo.com) and/or (321) 945-7790.

**Your Ombudsman,**  
**Yamil Cordero**

Please follow us on Facebook where you can find us at [USCGC MARGARET NORVELL WPC 1105](#)! Here we will post pictures and stories of the cutters adventures.

CGC MARGARET NORVELL was honored to have members of CNN and the District 7 Public Affairs Officer onboard for a few days in September. While onboard our guests were able to partake in a GUNNEX and the daily life underway.



## **FRC visits the Island in the Stream**

By FN Juan Bauza-Poland

### **Margaret Norvell becomes first Coast Guard cutter to visit Bimini, Bahamas**

Bimini, Bahamas – Coast Guard cutter Margaret Norvell, a Fast Response Cutter homeported in Miami, became the first Coast Guard cutter to visit the Bahamian Island of Bimini.

The Margaret Norvell anchored off Bimini, the Gateway to the Bahamas and embarked local Bahamian officials Saturday as part of a two-day two professional exchange with civil and military authorities.

The foreign guests included local Bimini administrators, the Royal Bahamian Police Force, the Bahamas Customs Commissioner and other dignitaries. Once onboard, Margaret Norvell's Commanding Officer, Lt. Kirk Fistick, gave his guests a tour of the cutter to showcase Coast Guard daily operations and highlight the technological upgrades and improved capabilities of the Coast Guard's FRC.

"This visit was a great opportunity to showcase the important roles and capabilities of the Coast Guard and foster great relations with our foreign partners." said Fistick.

"I'm always impressed with the high level of dedication and professionalism displayed by Coast Guard crews when visiting foreign ports. I hope we can return to Bimini harbor very soon."

The crew of the Margaret Norvell also hosted a luncheon and welcomed the Island's Royal Bahamian Defense Force detachment aboard for a familiarization of FRC. The crews discussed unique regional challenges to Bimini including narcotics trafficking and increased illegal maritime migration.

The Margaret Norvell is a 154-foot patrol boat homeported in Miami Beach, Florida and is the fifth cutter in the Sentinel Class.





# The Bimini Port Call





On 20 October 2014, BM1 Joseph Slater celebrated his last day underway with cutter. During the cutter's quarters BM1 Slater was pinned as a cutter man, having completed 5 years of underway time with the Coast Guard. CGC MARGARET NORVELL will greatly miss BM1 but we wish him the best as he departs to his new unit in Bahrain.

Pictured above is BM1 Slater on his last day with the cutter.



GM1 Henninger advanced to First Class Petty Officer, pictures on the upper left and right, and center bottom.



Also, FS1 Strenkert proudly reenlisted for three more years of service to this great nation.





MARGARET NORVELL was honored to host guests from over 15 different nations during a SOUTHCOM sponsored visit. While onboard the officials were informed of the cutter operations from various crew members.



While the cutter was back in Miami for some much needed time at home, the crew did Cutter Surface Swimmer Training. During this training a new swimmer and two tenders were qualified.

Left: BM3 Rose and MK3 Yarlett's practice Stokes liter techniques in the base pool.

Friends, Family, and Shipmates,

Thank you for reading the Rita Report we hope you it gave you a little insight as to what your loved one is accomplishing on a daily basis. Would like to take this time to thank all the crew members for their contributions to the newsletter and for their hard work while onboard. Now that you have enjoyed the first newsletter, if you would like to provide feedback or comments please feel free to contact me at [Jillian.E.Kelly@uscg.mil](mailto:Jillian.E.Kelly@uscg.mil). Thank you all for your support, enjoy!

Very respectfully, ENS Jillian Kelly