



Welcome to the latest edition of the SPENCERIAN. We are excited to share with you some highlights from our latest adventures. We have enjoyed much success and truly could not do what we do without the love and support from our friends and families back home!

#### **From the Commanding Officer**

Want to ask the CO a question or provide a comment? Email CDR Williams: [anthony.w.williams@uscg.mil](mailto:anthony.w.williams@uscg.mil)

#### **Update**

The SPENCER recently returned from a very busy and productive patrol of the Coast Guard's 1<sup>st</sup> District. Our patrol took us from Boston to Brooklyn, back to Boston twice, and then to Halifax, Nova Scotia. During the patrol SPENCER maintained a high tempo conducting; operations, maintenance, and training day-in and day-out. By the end of the patrol, we had conducted 45 law enforcement boardings of fishing vessels, completed countless hours of systems maintenance, and conducted more than 20

combat and damage control drills. Additionally, we conducted helicopter operations with Air Station Cape Cod, where we landed an MH-60 helicopter on our flight deck 57 times. Furthermore, SPENCER conducted three gunnery exercises, two for the .50 caliber machine guns and one for the 76 mm cannon. We finished the patrol by participating in the operational exercise portion of the North Atlantic Coast Guard Forum Summit – GUARDEX 14. Your loved ones in SPENCER performed admirably in every task; operations, training, maintenance, logistics, and as emissaries of the United States.

#### **The Importance of D-1 Patrols**

District 1 patrols require cutters to sail throughout the North Atlantic Ocean, boarding fishing vessels and providing Search and Rescue (SAR) readiness. While boarding fishing vessels in the North Atlantic, our boarding teams ensure that vessels are in compliance with fishing laws and safety regulations. Our boarding teams ensure that fishermen are using the proper

safety and fishing gear and are following all applicable regulations. Although most fisherman are following all the rules, some have been known to break a rule or two either by accident or in order to increase profits. The Coast Guard, in partnership with state and local agencies, enforce the laws to ensure the fisherman are safe and that fish are caught at sustainable levels so that species are not overfished.



One of the many fishing vessels boarded by SPENCER this patrol.

### **Nova Scotia, That Sea Bound Coast**

The American and Canadian naval services have a long history of cooperation. The SPENCER and her crew have honored and continued that storied tradition.

During the patrol, SPENCER had the privilege of participating in GUARDEX '14, which was the operational portion of the North Atlantic Coast Guard Forum Summit, hosted by Canada this year. GUARDEX '14 included anti-terrorism, search and rescue (SAR), and pollution response. SPENCER was able to participate in both the Anti-terrorism and SAR portions of the exercise with two Canadian cutters, a French navy ship, the maritime branch of the Royal

Canadian Mounted Police, and various U.S. and Canadian aircraft.

The night before the exercise commenced, SPENCER anchored in Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia. Mahone Bay is a place of great beauty, ringed by small islands filled with pine trees. Nova Scotia is itself rich with maritime history and tradition. SPENCER anchored east of Oak Island, home of one the world's most famous buried treasure mysteries. Oak Island provided countless hours of BM1 Anderson's storytelling on the mid-watch as we looked out on the ocean and thought back on the explorers and mariners who came before us.



At the beginning of the exercise, SPENCER completed two sets of helicopter operations, one day set and one night set, with a Canadian Cormorant class helicopter, which included multiple hoists of rescue swimmers. The Cormorant is a much bigger bird than the U.S. aircraft which we are accustomed to working with. Seeing the Cormorants approach the flight deck and feeling the spray from their prop wash was impressive. We were happy to work with them, as we do not frequently have the opportunity to engage with aircraft from other countries. It was a great opportunity to

build proficiency with each other. After we completed our exercises with the helicopter, we got into the meat and potatoes of the exercise. We conducted multiple search patterns with our small boats and SPENCER served as a first aid staging platform for rescued 'victims'. We were surprised when we started to receive live "survivors" who were role playing....talk about adding realism to the exercise. Our Battle Dressing Station personnel, led by HS1 English, took care of all of the survivors who were rescued by many different units, seemed everyone wanted to bring their survivors to us. Our small boat crews performed flawlessly, finding more victims than any other unit. SN Chronister earned the nickname "Eagle Eye" after he spotted a life raft more than 3 nautical miles away in limited visibility and was then able to vector in our small boat. After the first rescue, the two small boats ran continuously for the rest of the day through whipping winds that pushed the wind chill to near freezing. Those boats were crewed by BM1 Anderson, MK2 Bobak, and BM3 Spencer (yes that is right we have a Spencer on SPENCER) and BM2 Brenan and MK2 Jarden. Their commitment and resilience showed the best of what SPENCER and the United States Coast Guard have to offer. At one point we actually had to return some of the role players back to the water so that other units could have someone to rescue☺.



One of SPENCER's small boats (forefront) with Canadian CG small boats during GUARDEX '14 in Mahone Bay, NS.

### **Liberty**

SPENCER's first port call of the patrol was in Brooklyn, New York. The crew greatly enjoyed exploring a city much bigger than Boston. For some, it was their first time in The Big Apple! The CO, other members of the Wardroom, and crew visited the National September 11<sup>th</sup> Memorial and Museum. Others spent their time scaling the length of the Empire State Building or walking around Time Square. It wouldn't have been a true visit to New York City without sampling some of the best pizza in the country, along with other renowned treats.

SPENCER had the unique opportunity to make a couple port-calls in Boston, it was great to take a break in homeport.

SPENCER's also crew also enjoyed some rest and relaxation in Halifax. Crew members entertained themselves by visiting

several museums, the Citadel, historic pubs and landmarks, as well as playing golf, watching Halifax's junior hockey team (the Mooseheads), and even learning the sport of curling. CWO2 Palmeira enjoyed curling so much that he decided he would seek to continue or establish curling in Boston. The wardroom was invited to a promotion ceremony aboard the HMCS PRESERVER and the CO attended the Change of Command for the HMCS IROQUOIS where he got an opportunity to chat with Commodore C.A. Baines, Commander of the Canadian Fleet Atlantic. SPENCER's crew was invited to special tours of one of the last WWII corvettes, the HMCS SACKVILLE. She participated in numerous convoy escorts during WWII, protecting Allied ships from Nazi U-boats. The tour guide showed SPENCER crewmembers parts of the ship not available to the general public. Our Engineering Officer, LT Brietzke, was in his element, and explained the steam plant in detail. It was an honor for us to receive such an extensive tour of this historic ship. HMCS SACKVILLE serves as the Canadian Naval memorial. The tour was given by a Canadian Navy veteran and one could not help but notice the same verve and pride in him that is seen in our veterans. There is a special rapport between those who have served and gone to sea, especially between two naval services as close as those of the United States and Canada. The SPENCER's trip to Nova Scotia was very rewarding, not only operationally, but also in reinforcing the camaraderie with our allies. There was a renewed sense of pride and patriotism as we sailed out of Halifax Harbor and on towards Boston.



EM1 Osborne, LT Brietzke, MK3 Rivera-Soto, MK1 McManus, EM3 Demery, ENG2 Palmeira, and IT1 Koenig give curling a try in Halifax!

### **Breaking-in**

*This section features SN Douglas Levering's account of the break-in process to become a qualified Helm and Lookout watchstander while underway. SN Levering is an experienced member of the Deck Department.*

Underway there is a process called breaking-in. The purpose of this process is to train new members of the crew in the basic qualifications of their jobs on board, whatever those happen to be. For the Deck Department, we mind our helm, and stand as lookouts gazing out at the vast ocean. This may seem like an easy job, but is often more complicated than it sounds. The helm, the device that controls the rudder of the ship, keeps us moving in the right direction, give or take five degrees. Surprisingly enough, the vast ocean sometimes *does* contain things that must be avoided (eg. crab pots,

whales, ships). The job, as simple as it may seem, also isn't easy to do *well*. Simple, sure, but definitely not easy. The difficulties lie not in the task itself, as the rudder isn't particularly heavy or difficult to turn. Nor do the difficulties lie in the reading of compasses and repeating of commands, as the numbers involved never go higher than three digits and the commands can always be repeated, loudly. The difficulties in standing the Helm and Lookout watch are mostly mental. The fact that it's happening between the hours of midnight and four in the morning, or that you are standing in heavy weather or fog or intense heat. The fact you haven't seen another vessel on any of your watches for two days, but you keep looking, because you never know when something might emerge. You learn how to do the job, and do it well, despite fatigue and the weather. After all, these are elements that will be present whether you are breaking-in or qualified.

Before I was qualified, I was uptight, terrified, while on watch, of missing something, or misspeaking. I was uncomfortable, and annoyed with my own relative inexperience. Finally, my break-in process ended once I passed the oral review board, where qualified members of the crew checked my knowledge. I got qualified in Helm and Lookout after a week of being underway the first time. After that, everything seemed to shift. It all became routine. Never easy, just routine. I relaxed, just a little. I became more confident in my knowledge and experience, and before I knew it, I was teaching the next round of break-ins.

### **Morale on board SPENCER**

Perhaps the biggest morale boost (that didn't cost the Morale Committee anything) was the amazing weather that SPENCER and her crew experienced throughout the patrol. Often the water resembled glass, and sunrises and sunsets were magnificent. Furthermore, after long days of operations, members of the crew, including the Captain himself, found some time to relax and fish off of the fantail. FS3 Timothy Hunter caught a tuna and was kind enough to cook it to share with the rest of the crew!

A typical night underway usually included trivia, board games, or Texas Hold 'Em on the mess deck, led by SPENCER's enthusiastic and devoted Morale President, IT1 Matt Koenig. Crewmembers received a raffle ticket each time they attended a morale event. At the conclusion of the patrol, raffle tickets were chosen, and the winning crewmembers received fun prizes that were voted on by the crew. Prizes included gift cards, a Go Pro camera, and most excitingly, two actual tomahawks.

SPENCER's crew eagerly anticipates its next Morale venture, the installation of a new soda machine! The machine will be stocked and ready for SPENCER's upcoming TSTA period.

### **From the Chief's Mess**

Greetings from the Chief's Mess! It's been a busy past few months on board SPENCER! Time has been flying by as we finished up

another successful patrol, and now the holidays are around the corner. We understand this is a very stressful time of year, but it also brings the most joy, as friends and families get together in celebration. For those who have a spouse who reported aboard this summer, welcome! I hope you have gotten the sense of a second family in the SPENCER crew. Also, if you haven't had the chance to take a tour, we invite you to do so!

The SPENCER crew is like a family; we share in both the good times and the bad, we support one another, and we look out for each other. The great thing about being part of the crew is witnessing some of the awesome things that happen both on and off SPENCER. During the patrol, we had the opportunity to visit some exciting port calls and participate in several morale events including a scavenger hunt, trivia nights, and game nights. We see shipmates hanging out together, working out together, and studying together. There is a unique opportunity on board SPENCER to foster a sense of deep community that you will not likely find anywhere else! We hope you take the time to participate in our morale events and find a way to get involved in the SPENCER community. For most of us, a three-year tour goes by in the blink of an eye, yet the memories and friends we make will stay with us for a life time.

### **A Note from the Ombudsman**

Dear SPENCER Families,

First and foremost, I want to thank you for your continued support. With the Holidays fast approaching please make sure that you are on my contact list. The contact list is the primary way that I pass along the great events and opportunities offered for you to take part in. Happy Holidays!! As always I am here to help you in any way that I can. Please feel free to reach out to me anytime.

Sending best wishes your way,

Amanda Gornik

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### **Hail and Farewell**

This summer marked a very busy transfer season for the SPENCER. While we said goodbye to several members of the crew, we welcomed many new shipmates.

A special welcome aboard to:

- SA Christine Conger
- FA Robert Bratcher
- SN Leroy Cherry III
- SN Christopher Hearn
- ET2 Kawayne Hanchard

- SA Frank Warner
- SN Jennifer Ezavin
- ET1 Michael Scholtz
- SA James Nadeau
- ME1 Thomas Mullen
- DC1 Roberto Paulino
- IT3 Joseph Davis
- BM2 Christopher Hovland
- FSC Timothy Wood
- DC3 Kenneth Bidlack
- MK2 Adam Bobak
- BM3 Kevin Lain
- EMC Carlos Orellana
- GM2 Andrew Chan
- ET2 Nathan Melnik
- ENS Sam Ruby
- ENS Ryan Montvydas
- ENS Lauren Young
- ENS Emily Marks
- HS1 Jason English
- MKC Andres Pomales
- YN1 Juan Calderon
- FN Nathan Booska
- IT1 Gabriel Courage
- FN Brennan Stockdale
- ET3 Edward Lovejoy
- FS3 Henri Brousseau
- SN Daniel Gilmore
- MK3 Travis Pisecco
- BM2 Chaya Brenan

### **Bravo Zulu**

Congratulations to MKC Carvalho, OS1 Gornik, SK3 Zeller, and BM3 Caban on their advancements! In addition, congratulations to FSC Wood, DC1 Paulino, and ME3 Cardenas for earning their Permanent Cutterman's pin.



MKC Carvalho receiving his anchors



CDR Williams congratulating newly promoted OS1 Gornik

