



To those joining us for the first time, we welcome you to the second edition of the SPENCERIAN, and to our families, thank you for your continued support of SPENCER and our crew.

The latter half of 2012 was challenging for the crew of SPENCER as we proved our battle readiness through Tailored Ship's Training Availability (TSTA), trained with foreign and U.S. Navy ships in the War of 1812 Commemorative Fleet Exercise (FLEETEX), conducted two New England fisheries patrols, were the first cutter on-scene after Hurricane Sandy devastated the east coast, responded to three Search and Rescue cases, charged through two nor'easters, and even managed to find time

crewmembers to take college courses while on patrol.

From the CO

Happy New Year! To the families and friends of SPENCER, thank you very much for your support in 2012. It really makes a difference and provides a positive impact on our execution of the Coast Guard's missions.

2013 will prove to be one of the most interesting years in recent memory for SPENCER's crew. In January, we delivered SPENCER to the Coast Guard Yard in Baltimore for a seven-month planned maintenance period. While at the Yard, major system repairs and upgrades will be

completed to extend the cutter's service life. Most of the crew will return to Boston and spend the next few months working at other Coast Guard units, taking college classes, and attending various professional development schools. Then in April, we travel to Portsmouth, VA to assume responsibility for USCGC TAMPA, another 270-foot cutter, and go on patrol for about 40 days. Once we return TAMPA to Portsmouth, we start preparing to take back SPENCER from the Yard and restoring her material and operational readiness.

Once SPENCER returns to Boston in September, the maintenance demands and training requirements really accelerate. It takes a lot of work to restore a cutter that has been dockside for seven months. In addition, the crew will conduct various inspections and recertifications to restore our proficiency and ensure SPENCER is ready to return to sea. Thank you in advance for your support and patience as our crew carries out that very important work.

Please let me know if you have any questions about SPENCER or the Coast Guard. If you are a spouse or dependent of a SPENCER crewmember and you need any assistance while we are away from homeport, please don't hesitate to contact me, our Executive Officer LCDR Carmen DeGeorge, or our Command Chief FSC Jimmy Acord.

Best wishes to you and your families for a safe and happy 2013.

Very respectfully,
CDR Geoff Gagnier

Patrol Happenings

This year we conducted two First District fisheries patrols in the waters off New England, one in the spring and the other during the frigid winter months. SPENCER provided a much-needed Coast Guard presence in the North Atlantic, as our boarding teams ensured compliance with commercial fishing vessel safety regulations and federal fisheries laws. We conducted over 40 law enforcement boardings between our spring and winter patrols in support of the Coast Guard's living marine resources mission. The effort put forth by our crew was outstanding as they continued to act as the first line of defense in the regulation of the fishing industry and protection of multiple marine species.



Hurricane Sandy



SPENCER was scheduled to depart on patrol from our homeport in Boston on October 29th. That was put on hold as Hurricane Sandy impacted the Boston area, battering SPENCER at the pier with 60+ knot winds. When we were finally able to safely take in lines and get underway, we were directed to make best speed for New York City to aid in recovery operations a day after Sandy made landfall.

As we approached New York Harbor, there was an eerie silence. With no other vessel traffic, it appeared to be a ghost town. Power was still out in Manhattan, Staten Island, Brooklyn, Coney Island, New Jersey, and half of the Verrazano Bridge. All that could be seen were the lights of emergency response vehicles and outlines of buildings in the surrounding cities. The harbor was filled with debris, but we safely navigated through the darkness, dropping anchor a few hundred yards from the Statue of Liberty. SPENCER had just become the first large ship to traverse New York Harbor in the wake of the storm.

The following days consisted of multiple patrols in the harbor by our small boat, inspecting piers and waterside infrastructure for damage. We were host to the First

District Commander, Rear Admiral Abel, when he arrived in New York to manage the Coast Guard's response to the storm. After an eventful week in the harbor, we weighed anchor and continued our patrol.

Semester at Sea

Professor Scott Frahlich from Endicott College joined us for our recent North Atlantic winter patrol to teach college courses. Called the "Semester at Sea" program, Professor Frahlich taught classes selected by student interest. Class was held in crewmembers' free time during the busy patrol in a variety of fields, including Criminal Justice, General Humanities, Psychology, English, and Math. Student projects included writing an essay and giving a speech on a controversial topic, and a group presentation on an entrepreneurial proposal. By the conclusion of the patrol, 26 students earned a total of 162 credit hours.



Search and Rescue

We were challenged by several search and rescue cases during our winter patrol. We responded to the fishing vessel RAIDERS; disabled, drifting towards shoal, and in need of a helping hand. Our Gunners Mates demonstrated their accuracy as they fired a heaving line to the disabled vessel, allowing us to tow them away from Nantucket Shoals. We transferred the tow over to a commercial tugboat after bringing the vessel as far as Vineyard Sound.

We searched for the missing captain of the scallop boat TWIN LIGHTS, which tragically capsized off Provincetown, Massachusetts. We searched through the night, but only one of the two-person crew was found alive.

During the last week of our patrol, we coordinated the search of an overdue fishing vessel, the FOXY LADY II. The search lasted for four days, with four Coast Guard cutters, multiple 47' motor life boats, two MH-60 helicopters, and a HU-25 "Falcon" jet assisting. Unfortunately, the vessel wasn't found, and the search was suspended.



War of 1812 FLEETEX

This past spring, SPENCER had the opportunity to showcase our capabilities in a major defense readiness exercise. SPENCER was the only Coast Guard asset in this North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) exercise, which consisted of 19 ships, two submarines, and multiple aircraft from eight countries. It was the perfect opportunity to prove how versatile the Coast Guard could be and SPENCER did just that. We outscored all naval assets in our task group in breaking tactical signals, a task that the Coast Guard rarely performs. SPENCER competed against U.S. Navy ships in live-fire exercises, firing at a remote-controlled moving small boat. The rules stated we weren't allowed to hit the boat, but could get as close as possible. Our gunners proved their proficiency, leaving no space between our rounds and the target.

After a week of varying defense drills, each increasing in intensity, the final drill kicked-off. It was a day filled with high-speed maneuvers as each task group tried to defend their units from a simulated enemy attack. It was compared to a real-time game of Battleship, except this time there were more dangers involved than just losing because "you sank my battleship." It required excellent ship-handling, focus from all of our combat stations, and vigilance from the entire crew. SPENCER proved her merit, exceeding our Task Group Commander's expectations and operating seamlessly with our U.S. Navy colleagues. Our success was a testament to the hard work and commitment by the crew.

Hail and Farewell

Transfer season marks a bittersweet phase of Coast Guard life. Old friends and shipmates move on to new duty stations, while we welcome our new arrivals and look forward to serving with them.

A warm welcome to our newest arrivals:

- LCDR Carmen DeGeorge
- LT Carlon Brietzke
- ENS Evan Strathman
- ENS Brian McGuiness
- ENS Garrick Gillan
- ENG3 Scott Chagnon
- ET2 William Watkins
- ET1 Erwin Mora
- OS2 Tyler Miller
- OS2 Alden Gornik
- OS3 Alexander Lorenzo
- EMC Michael Kaplowitz
- SK2 Stacey Sherry
- MK3 Raymond Hayden
- OS2 Colin MacDonald
- MK1 Andrew Carvalho
- ME1 Nelson Duarte
- SK1 Ronald Mehlhouse
- IT1 Matthew Koenig
- ETC Daniel Piccola
- FA Benjamin Marx
- EM3 Christopher Demery
- BM1 Brett Anderson
- EM3 Matthew Hajec
- SN Leiza Caban
- SN Carla Evans
- SNBM John Spencer

Tailored Ship's Training Availability (TSTA)

This past May, SPENCER was visited by members of the Afloat Training Group (ATG), as they evaluated our material condition and readiness in preparation for three weeks of training and evaluation in Little Creek, Va. In late July, the time came for us to showcase our capabilities as a Coast Guard Cutter and warship. We were tested on our ability to fight shipboard casualties, navigate the cutter, respond to emergencies, and employ our weapons systems. After many long days performing drills underway and at anchor in Chesapeake Bay, SPENCER received excellence scores in all testable areas including navigation, seamanship, damage control, medical response, engineering, weapons, and command and control tactics. In commemoration of our performance, we flew a broom from our mast during our return transit through Boston Harbor, symbolizing our "sweep" of all the evaluations.



View from the Deckplates

This section features “Day in the Life” accounts of different crewmember’s experiences aboard SPENCER. This issue’s “View” comes from MK2 Doug Jarden, a member of the Engineering Department, and contributor to our ship’s repair efforts.

The alarm on my phone starts ringing at 0300. I hop out of my middle rack, go to the head to shave and brush my teeth, preparing for the long work day that I know is on its way. The ship is disabled in Portland, Maine with a broken after cooler on the ships service diesel generator (SSDG) and the part is due to arrive on the pier at 0330. Two other MK2’s, our MK1, MKC, MPA, EO, and I are all standing by on the flight deck for the part to arrive. The temperature outside is at least 30°, which makes waiting for a late van a lot of fun. About 15 minutes later we saw the head lights to a white van pulling up; it was our part, all the way from Baltimore, MD. The three of us MK2’s and MK1 walk out to the van and open the back doors and see a good sized wooden box. It took all of us to take it out of the van. One of us had the great idea to get rid of the box to lose that extra weight. When we opened the box the after cooler was in 100 pieces, of course. The smaller pieces made things lighter, but it added a few hours to the project. Surprisingly, everything went together nicely, a bit of a pain at some points but good otherwise. Noon rolls around as we button things up and start the SSDG without a hitch. We all go up, eat lunch, and soon thereafter we all hear the pipe for setting the special sea detail. We proceed to our assigned billets for another two to three hours of a restricted waters transit. After a special sea detail and long morning, some of

us still had watches to stand and some work projects to finish up. Dinner time rolls around at 1700, we all ate, and then everyone heads straight for their lounges to relax after such a highly productive day for the engineers.



Morale Events

Our most recent patrol wouldn't have been as enjoyable if it weren't for the hard work of our Morale Committee. They coordinated numerous events and activities for the crew to partake in; momentarily escaping the stress of conducting underway operations. Morale President, OS2 Daniel Zimmerman, was instrumental in planning the events including:

- Skeet Shoot
- Gingerbread Houses
- Trivia Questions
- Chess Tournament
- Texas Hold Em' Tournament
- Rock, Paper, Scissors Tournament
- Cornhole Tournament
- "Movember" Mustache Competition
- New York Picture Scavenger Hunt
- Weekly Morale Pizza Nights
- Hangar Karaoke

