

# GRIZZLY OF THE GULF

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER, 2013

DESIGN AND PHOTOS BY SN FRANK J. IANNAZZO-SIMMONS

## INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES, AT SEA!

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HOLLOWEEN AT SEA

ADAK spent most of the months of September and October roaming the Arabian Gulf making friends with regional neighbors and coalition partners from around the globe. On more than one occasion ADAK was called to cover an emergent event that brought a better understanding among militaries in the region and increased goodwill between nations. Some of the more memorable at sea moments included having an opportunity to drive one another's ship's, joint training events, and conducting profes-



sional exchanges. One of the most touching human moments was when ADAK's grizzled boatswain mate Chief Robert Thomas helped a young ensign from a Gulf country understand how to drive ADAK. By the end of the day, BMC Thomas had him "driving like a coastie". Additionally, ADAK continued her other missions in the region, notably visiting local fishermen from various Gulf countries to build positive relationships and to ensure a safe maritime environment.

## THE CAPTAIN'S CORNER



Friends, family and shipmates,

Over the past two months, ADAK continued her exceptional operational record with 25 days at sea and 37 days away from homeport. During September we unexpectedly spent the majority of our time in the northern Arabian Gulf. I say “unexpectedly” because ADAK was underway on a coalition mission when one of the navy ships in our destroyer squadron had mechanical problems and had to return to homeport.

As a result, ADAK was shifted from a 4-day patrol to a 21-day patrol. The adaptability and professionalism displayed by ADAK’s crew was nothing short of exceptional.

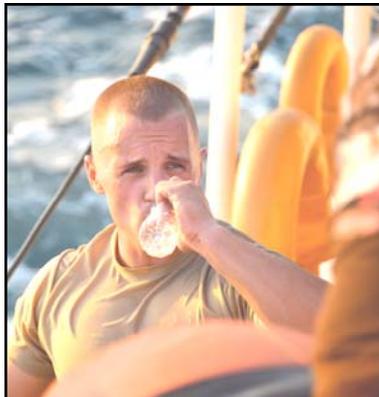
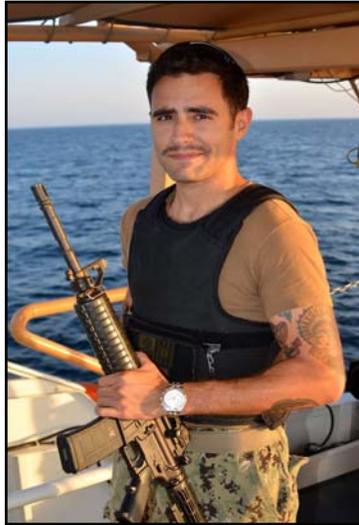
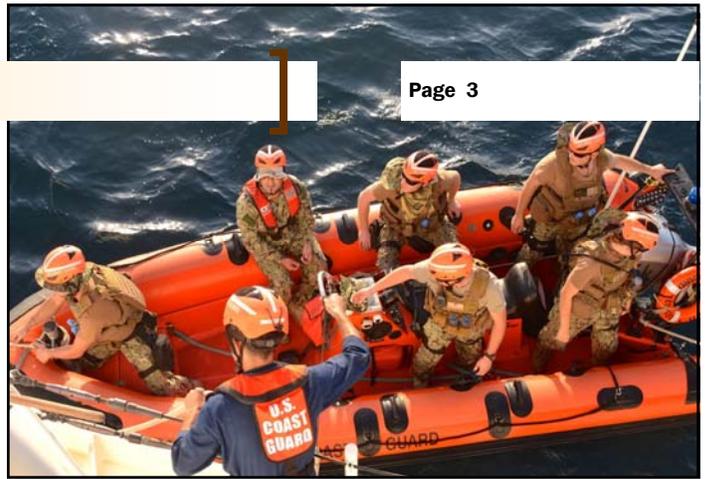
During this time we have seen a marked change in the weather. Temperatures have “plummeted” to the 80s making for a more pleasant environment on land and at sea. While it might sound crazy, many ADAK crewmembers can be seen wearing fleece jackets and watch caps to stay warm. The 80s don’t sound like jacket weather, but we have all acclimatized to this desert region.

ADAK also celebrated a memorable Halloween at sea and at a port call somewhere in the Arabian Gulf. The holiday was celebrated with zeal onboard with lots of costumes including four Ghostbusters, associated ghosts, the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man and XO’s creative tongue-in-check underway schedule costume. The mess deck was

decorated with ghouls, goblins and Halloween-themed lights. Perhaps my fondest memory is the Halloween cake baked by MK1 Baskins, our unofficial night baker, which featured orange cake with green icing.

Congratulations to BM2 Parker Hofmann for earning his underway officer of the deck qualification, a major career milestone. As an underway officer of the deck, BM2 Hofmann is my representative on the bridge and is in charge of operating and navigating ADAK at sea, which is an awesome responsibility. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate MKC James Weaver for his well-deserved nomination for Coast Guard Engineer of the Year. Lastly, please take a moment to view ADAK’s 2013 crew video on YouTube: <http://youtu.be/8rcuXYRv2FY>. A lot of hard work and vision by LTJG Katie Spira and SN Iannazzo-Simmons went into this video that will certainly be cherished by their shipmates for years to come.





## USCGC MAUI TO THE RESCUE

*Written by Seaman Frank Iannazzo-Simmons and Petty Officer 2nd Class Walter Shinn.*



*While operating in the remote northern waters of the Arabian Gulf, a small vessel capsized leaving five Iranian mariners stranded with no one to rescue them. This was the scenario these men faced prior to their chance discovery by the crew of U.S. Coast Guard Cutter MAUI. Rescue did not come to their aid until this 110-foot cutter happened to come across the mariners, whose lives were saved by the quick-thinking Coast Guard crew. The crew, who had trained intensely for such a situation, swiftly moved into action in the early morning hours of October 11, 2013, while assigned to Combined Task Force 152.*

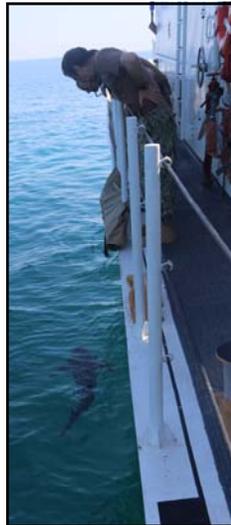
As the sun rose over the horizon, Petty Officer 1st Class Kevin Sweetman spotted a faint orange object floating in the distance. Once Sweetman reported the object, MAUI's crew altered course to investigate. As MAUI approached the object, Sweetman was able to identify a man waving an orange flag. "I waited a few seconds after realizing it was a man waving a flag," said Sweetman. "I had to be positive on what I was seeing before passing the information to the bridge." Shortly after the bridge team was notified of the sighting, an announcement was heard around the ship. The crew of MAUI stepped into action relying on everything they had learned to this point in their careers. "It seemed like a blur, we knew what we had to do and without hesitation our training kicked in as if it was instinct," said Seaman CJ Garza. As MAUI navigated closer to the person in the water, Sweetman was able to identify four more mariners lying in the raft. The crew rescued the five Iranian mariners from the life raft within minutes after arriving on scene.

One of the survivors informed the MAUI on-scene leader that their Iranian dhow had capsized and that they had been adrift. With the five Iranian mariners safely aboard, the crew's focus shifted to providing medical treatment. Once all the survivors were provided initial first aid they were given food, water, blankets and clothing. "I am very proud of my crew for the judgment they used and actions they took throughout the situation," said Lt. Earl Potter, commanding officer of MAUI. "I think we were extremely fortunate to find these five men. They were all visibly weakened and suffering from extreme exposure when we got them aboard. I don't know how much longer they would have lasted."

Commander, Task Force 55 made initial arrangements for the mariners to be transferred to the Iranian Coast Guard ship NAJI 7. That evening MAUI contacted the NAJI 7 to work out the details of the transfer of the mariners. "It was quite a day, including working with the Iranians to conduct a nighttime small-boat transfer," said Potter. "This case clearly demonstrates how flexible the Coast Guard is and another way we add value in this region."

"From the moment we arrived to the moment we transferred them to the Iranian Coast Guard vessel, the five mariners expressed their gratitude and relief that we were able to help them," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Mark Delacruz. "While I did spot the raft, it took each and every one of us working as a team to recover and provide treatment to ensure that the stranded mariners would survive the situation they were in," said Sweetman.

The Bahrain-based cutter MAUI and crew are currently assigned to Patrol Forces Southwest Asia and actively participate with CTF-152. CTF-152 is one of three task forces operating under Combined Maritime Forces. The partnership with the task force defines the service in being nationally deployed and globally connected bringing military expertise and response capability anywhere America's maritime interests extend. In the case of the rescue of these five Iranians, those maritime interests extended to saving lives at sea. **(REPRINT of U.S. Coast Guard/NAVCENT Press Release)**



Shipmates, friends and family, this is our fourth newsletter combining September and October into one issue. I received some great feedback and am pleased to hear that you enjoy seeing pictures of and reading about what we are doing out here in the Arabian Gulf. If there is anything you would like to learn more about please let me know. I am open to any and all ideas. Check out our new website at <http://www.uscg.mil/lantarea/cgcadak/>. Also check out the latest and greatest video showing what ADAK is doing out in the Gulf at <http://youtu.be/8rcuXYRv2FY> Again thank you all for your continued support...and enjoy!

Very Respectfully,  
SN Frank J. Iannazzo-Simmons

**FN JOSEPH MURPHY  
USCGC ADAK'S SAILOR OF THE QUARTER**



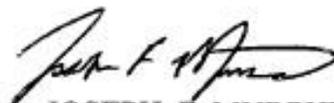
08OCT2013: Congratulations on being selected as USCGC ADAK's Sailor of the Quarter! This honor has been bestowed upon you by your command as well as your peers for being a critical member of ADAK's crew and for your tireless work ethic and specialty knowledge. You are commended for your superior performance and work ethic as ADAK's Auxiliary Equipment PMS Coordinator. Despite facing a demanding workload in the cutter's Engineering Department, you displayed commendable initiative by voluntarily assuming this collateral. Your initiative enabled you to quickly qualify as Boat Deck Crane Operator and Boarding Team Member. Additionally, due to your maturity and advanced knowledge and skills in Damage Control, you qualified as On Scene Leader, a position normally held by a senior Petty Officer.

Your dedication to safety inspired you to revamp ADAK's MSDS program to be more user friendly and fully in compliance with Coast Guard regulations. Furthermore, you committed to the well being of all crewmembers and shoreside members by installing hearing protection dispensers in easily-accessible locations. Your technical expertise directly contributed to the certification of two Engineers of the Watch, six Anti-Terrorism Force Protection Watch-Standers, and five Inport Officers of the Day, enabling ADAK to continue its dynamic mission in support of Naval Operations in the Arabian Gulf.

Your perpetually positive attitude and exceptional work ethic is contagious amongst your shipmates. By your constant willingness to help others, the cutter, and other units wherever needed, you set the example for all to follow. Additionally, your actions helped ensure ADAK was always ready to sail at a moments notice. Once again, congratulations on this honor, Shipmate. Bravo Zulu on a job well done!

  
 K. C. FISTICK, LT, USCG  
 Commanding Officer

08OCT2013: I acknowledge the above entry.

  
 JOSEPH F. MURPHY

**HALLOWEEN UNDERWAY? NO PROBLEM!**

Even while underway, members on board ADAK had no problem getting into the Halloween holiday spirit. LT Kirk C. Fistick (Commanding Officer) put out the challenge and members answered, dressing up as Ghostbusters and ghosts.

LTJG Katie L. Spira (Executive Officer, ADAK) also participated, creating her own original costume depicting ADAK's ever-changing underway schedule.

