

USS BILLINGS: READY. RESILIENT. RELENTLESS.**A MESSAGE FROM THE CO**

To our BILLINGS families and friends, our deployment story continues to write its chapters.

Some months of deployment are measured in miles sailed. This month was measured in our ability to answer the call.

July began off the coast of Venezuela, where our Sailors and embarked aviation team supported humanitarian assistance following devastating earthquakes through reconnaissance, transportation, and coordination efforts while BILLINGS prepared to support the delivery of 77,000 lbs of humanitarian water – a reminder that a warship's strength lies not only in its ability to fight, but also to help when humanity calls.

From there, we transitioned to Ponce, Puerto Rico, for our Mid-Deployment Voyage Repair period. Our Sailors and supporting teams tackled an aggressive maintenance package, restoring critical capability and returning BILLINGS back to sea ready for the second half of deployment.

In the final days of July, our aviation team helped locate and maintain contact on a vessel of interest, supporting U.S. Coast Guard and partner-nation forces as they closed the contact – another example that when called, BILLINGS is ready.

July was also about our people. We celebrated qualifications, recognized outstanding performance, strengthened our watch teams, and made time to enjoy liberty, competition, camaraderie, and a swim call at sea. As we cross the halfway point of deployment, I am extremely proud of what this crew has accomplished and who they continue to become.

Be All In, Go All Out! ATTACK!!

Very respectfully,
CDR Frank Lemene
Commanding Officer
USS Billings (LCS-15)

OPERATIONS: **The ship's compass**

- Flight deck nets lowered and raised: 2,220
- Bells struck over the 1MC: 1,344
- Plans of the day promulgated: 126
- Small boat launch & recovery: 24
- Sea & Anchor evolutions: 6



SUPPLY: **The fuel for the fight**

- Coordinated \$500k in contracted services for successful port visits to Willemstad, Curacao and Ponce, Puerto Rico
- 3 special meal events hosted
- 1 July Birthday cake baked



COMBAT SYSTEMS: **The eyes on the horizon**

- Maintained communications through humanitarian and counter-drug operations
- 4 readiness drills completed
- 1 shark deterred!!!



MISSION READINESS IN EVERY RATE



HSM 48.3 VIPERS: **The eyes in the sky**

- 30.7 hours flown in support of Venezuela humanitarian operations
- Successful joint operations with U.S. Coast Guard
- Two air dept birthdays at sea!
- Zero meals missed due to flying (thanks to our awesome Culinary Specialist team)



ENGINEERING: **The heartbeat below decks**

- 4/4 Main Propulsion Engines operational
- 4/4 SSDGs operational
- LRHS fully operational
- 7 major equipment casualties corrected
- 4-section underway watch bill achieved!



MONTY & IGGY MONDAY!

No matter where the mission takes us, a small piece of BILLINGS, Montana, always comes along for the ride.

This month Monty and his loyal sidekick Iggy traveled from disaster relief in Venezuela to Curacao, Puerto Rico, and back to sea - visiting every corner of the ship, recognizing the dedication of our Sailors and bringing a little hometown spirit to life underway.

While on board this month they...

- Cheered on our Grizzlies of the Week.
- Assisted on the grill for the 4th of July festivities.
- Supervised maintenance in Ponce
- Celebrated BILLINGS crossing the halfway point

Monty and Iggy's "Rumor Control"

- Iggy remains convinced the Chiefs are hoarding the good cereal.
- Monty is hot on the trail on the case of the Missing Honey Buns.
- Engineering insists "Hollywood showers" stay unauthorized.
- Neither mascot has been added to the watch bill despite repeated requests.
- Both deny prior knowledge of the shark.

GRIZ IN THE SPOTLIGHT

LTJG Elijah Korenberg is our new Weapons Officer who has joined the Navy four years ago. He enjoys spending his free time reading, playing golf, and watching sports. When it comes to meals on board, breakfast is always his favorite, and if he's unwinding you'll likely find him watching Ted Lasso or listening to music by The Walters. A fun fact: Elijah played collegiate NCAA Division III soccer during his freshman year. If he could have any superpower, it would be to always know what to do or how to tackle any challenge. The first thing he's looking forward to after deployment is spending quality time with friends and family.

Rapid Fire Favorites:

- Coffee, Tea or Energy Drinks
- Beach or Mountains
- Sweet or Salty snacks
- Sports or Video Games
- Sunrise or Sunset
- Cats or Dogs
- Early bird or Night owl
- Books or Movies

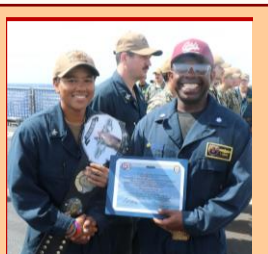
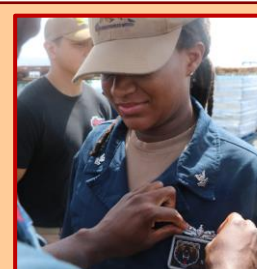


Earning the Pin

Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist pin represents months of study, hands-on demonstrations, oral boards and understanding of how every part of the ship contributes to the mission. This month, BILLINGS continued building a more capable crew, reaching an important milestone with more than 80% of eligible Sailors warfare qualified.

As one milestone is achieved, another is already underway, with Sailors continuing their pursuit of excellence by working toward earning their "wings" - Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialist pin.

Congratulations to 11 newest ESWS Warriors!



Raising the Bar

July brought several major professional milestones and advanced qualifications across the crew reflecting continued growth as well as adding depth and strength to our watch teams.

EOOW qualified:

LT Kluesner
LT Stansell

RCO & EDO qualified:

DC1 Byrd
MM1 Burns

Selected for advancement:

BM3 Mendia
AWR3 Weis

Reenlisted:

GM3 Long
FCC Harry

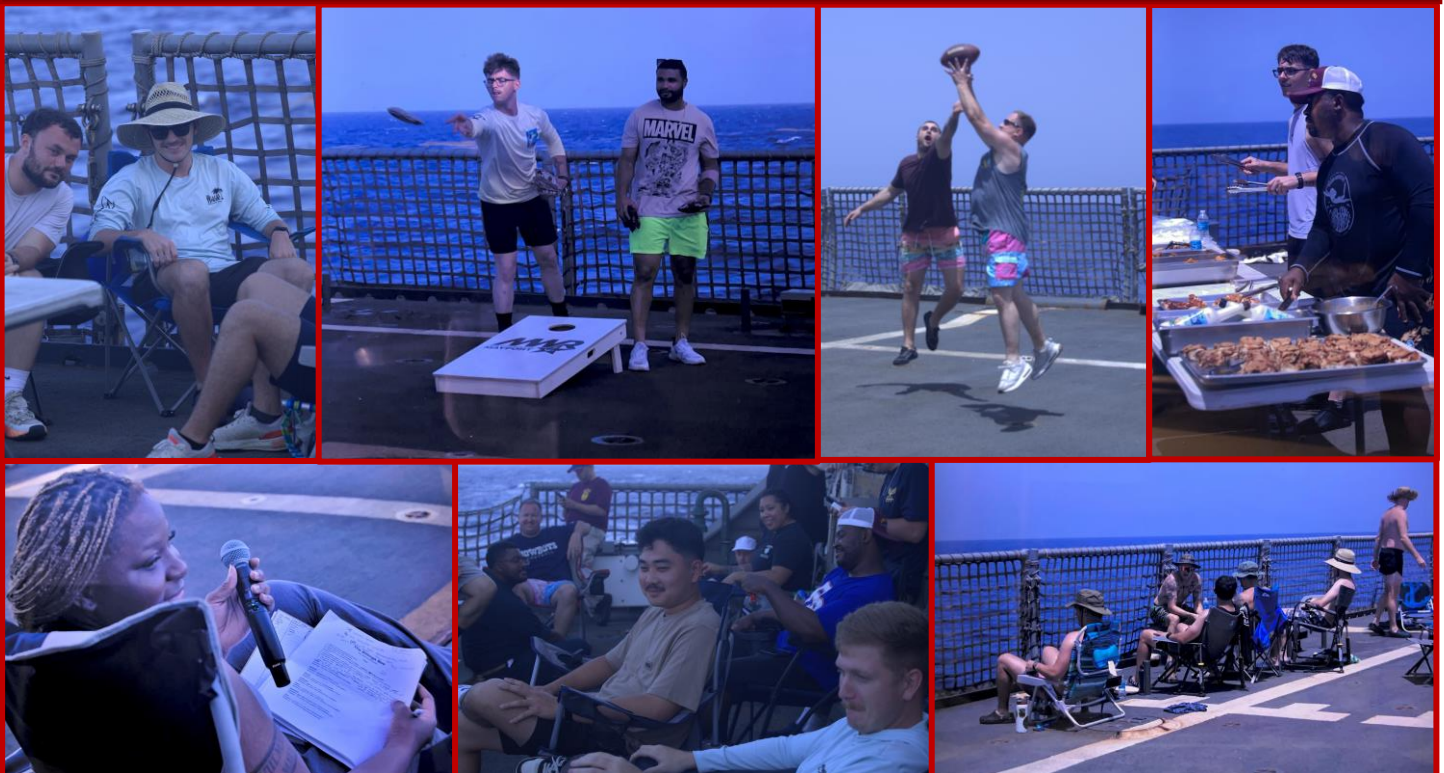
MAKING WAVES – A DAY TO RESET

Deployment isn't all work. Sometimes taking care of the mission means taking care of the people accomplishing it.

After a demanding month, the Grizzlies enjoyed a well-earned FRI-YAY at sea - cooled off during swim call, daring a 20ft jump from the flight deck, challenged one another in games, karaoke, and shared a meal topside. Festivities were interrupted by an unexpected shark visitor, however, the crew responded as trained and safely recovered everyone from the water, ending the evolution with another sea story nobody aboard will soon forget.



FIGHT TOGETHER. EAT TOGETHER. SIT TOGETHER.





TO OUR FAMILIES

To everyone waiting for us at home - thank you! Every mile we sail is made possible by the people who love us from afar. We carry you with us every day, and every success underway is shared with you. We are grateful for the sacrifices you make, the strength you show and the constant support you give without hesitation.



THINGS WE'VE LEARNED THIS MONTH

- When strawberry ice cream is served, we are running out of ice cream.
- A tea party on the flight deck while watching a sunset is therapeutic.
- Smoking meat is harder than it sounds, but so worth the work.
- Viper fit gets easier the more you do it.
- A Lord of the Rings marathon should only happen once a month.
- Holiday routine Wi-Fi instantly improves morale.
- The world is much bigger than what we see at home.



When Humanity Calls

Following the earthquakes in Venezuela, together with our partners in the Royal Netherlands Navy, USS BILLINGS and Vipers joined the international effort to bring relief and hope to affected communities through reconnaissance, humanitarian personnel movement, preparations to support the delivery of 77,000 pounds of drinking water. This mission reminded us that strength isn't measured only in combat power – but also in compassion where it's needed the most.



Reset. Repair. Ready.

Two weeks in Ponce, Puerto Rico, allowed our Sailors to complete critical maintenance and repairs during our Mid-Deployment Voyage Repair. Their hard work ensured BILLINGS returned to sea stronger, safer and prepared for any approaching mission.

BE ALL IN.
GO ALL OUT.

DAY IN.
DAY OUT.