

Coast Guard Cutter Valiant Returns Home after 53-Day Patrol



The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Valiant (WMEC 621) returned to Naval Station Mayport, July 20, after completing a 53-day patrol in the Caribbean Sea. The Coast Guard Cutter Valiant crew patrolled over 7,800 nautical miles in the Caribbean Sea, conducting a variety of operations in support of Coast Guard District 7. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Valiant (WMEC 621) returned to Naval Station Mayport, July 20, after completing a 53-day patrol in the Caribbean Sea, the Coast Guard 7th District said in an Aug. 11 release.

Coast Guard Cutter Valiant crew patrolled over 7,800 nautical miles in the Caribbean Sea, conducting a variety of operations in support of Coast Guard District 7.

The Valiant crew then executed five interdiction cases involving 70 migrants and supported the safe interdiction and repatriation of over 100 migrants. The Valiant crew rescued four Cuban migrants at night in heavy seas who were clinging to the side of a stopped merchant vessel that had spotted their sinking raft in a shipping lane northwest of Cay Sal Bank.

The Valiant crew partnered with the USS Wichita (LCS-13) and Coast Guard Cutter Harriet Lane (WMEC 903), to safely transfer three suspected narcotics traffickers and 1,900 kilograms of cocaine with an estimated street value of \$72.7 million for prosecution in the United States. The Valiant crew then conducted storm avoidance from Hurricane Elsa while maintaining offshore search and rescue and disaster response presence north of Hispaniola.

While refueling and resupplying in San Juan, Puerto Rico, Valiant's crew showed their adaptability by conducting an emergency sortie with just a few hours' notice to support international interests off the coast of Haiti following the assassination of Haitian President Jovenel Moïse. While conducting response operations off Haiti, Valiant also partnered with the Coast Guard Cutter Confidence (WMEC 619) to safely transfer an additional 370 kilograms of cocaine with a street value of over \$10.1 million for disposition in the United States.

"I could not be more proud of the women and men of the Valiant," said Cmdr. Jeff Payne, Valiant's commanding officer. "From protecting our nation's borders, executing counter-narcotics operations, search and rescue and finally responding to an international crisis, Valiant crew overcame every challenge and continuously flexed to meet the next mission. From the most junior Coast Guard Academy cadets experiencing their first time at sea to "Old Salts" finishing their last days underway, every single person stepped up and leaned in to achieve operational success and safeguard our nation. We pride ourselves on being a true multi-mission asset and the entire Valiant crew showcased that over the last 53 days."

The Valiant is a multi-mission 210-foot medium-endurance cutter. Missions include search and rescue, maritime law enforcement, marine environmental protection, homeland security and national defense operations.