

CAPE VERDE



Few of the USCGC Dallas crew will ever forget the barren hillsides and windswept plains of Cape Verde, a ten island chain off the coast of Africa. The ship moored in Mendalo to perform some "nation building" with the men of the Cape Verdean military. The Cape Verdean Army had received most of its support from the former Soviet Union, but was interested in anything American. Twenty-six of the Cape Verdean Army and Coast Guard were hosted for two days of training aboard Dallas. The training went smoothly with the assistance of LTJG Rego, a Cape Verdean born American citizen, who translated the various topics. Among the Boarding Team topics discussed were Use of Force, NIK (Narcotics Identification Kit) use, and various tactical maneuvers and personal defense moves taught by LTJG Cornwell, the Weapons Officer. Then HSC Grandorico, the ships "Doc", came in to do first aid training over the dreaded "GITMO 8", which are various types of common combat related wounds.

After the training was complete, LTJG Cornwell gave the "students" a tour of Dallas, including the ships' Armory. As a gesture of appreciation, LT Hercules Lobo, of the Cape Verdean Army, invited LTJG Cornwell and SN Dillard for a tour of their armory back at the Cape Verdean Army base. Among the weapons viewed were AK-47's, AK-74's and even an RPG (Rocket Propelled Grenade) launcher. After the tour was done, LT Lobo took LTJG Cornwell and SN Dillard over to the Officers' Club on base for a few drinks and some friendly conversation. The second day of training consisted of a simulated boarding on an abandoned fishing vessel at anchor in the harbor. The mock boarding was a complete success, with everyone learning something. The Cape Verdean Army were impressed by the size and complexity of Dallas and the professionalism and knowledge displayed by even the most junior of Dallas' sailors. With our "flag waving" complete, Dallas set sail for home, leaving behind many fond memories. Among them was a mural, painted by Coast Guard artist, Russell Buckingham. At the end of the pier was a blockhouse, upon which many ships had "autographed" over the years. Mr. Buckingham painted the Dallas with a background of an American flag waving in the breeze.

