

VENEZEULAN PATROL

By Ens. G. Sulmasy,

GALLATIN Public Affairs Officer

The fifth of May we set sail from Governors Island and headed south for a patrol which would consist of two weeks of Navy operations, to be followed by six weeks of drug interdiction in the Caribbean. Nine weeks ago? Actually, it feels as if it were nine months!

From the outset we knew this patrol would be a special one for the entire crew. This would be the last patrol for **GALLATIN** before it would transit to Bath Iron Works in Maine to be put out of commission for two years of refitting with new equipment during FRAM period. However, we did not know what an exciting and unique patrol it would turn out to be!

The Navy operations, known as **SOLID SHIELD '89**, went very well for **GALLATIN**. We worked with several different Navy surface combatants and other Coast Guard assets. The Army and the Marines staged battles ashore. It was extremely exciting and different for the entire crew when F-14's were doing "attacks" across our bridge wings and destroyers simulated launching missiles at our ship! We even scored some "kills!"

The aircraft carrier **USS EISENHOWER** also took part in the exercise. The drills we conducted in air, surface, subsurface, and electronic warfare went extremely well and at the conclusion of **SOLID SHIELD**, **GALLATIN** received congratulations from Admiral Rickman, who was in charge of the entire exercise. But, by the end of the operations with the Navy, **GALLATIN** was ready to move on to its more familiar peacetime mission, Maritime Law Enforcement. With that in mind, we headed south to where we would conduct our drug patrol.

After numerous boardings and ten days on patrol, **GALLATIN** rendezvoused with a Venezuelan Coast Guard cutter on June 5, near the island of Trinidad, and began two weeks of combined operations. We met with the vessel General Moran and exchanged liaison officers via small boat.

The General Moran (GC-12), a 325 foot vessel, was originally built for the United States in 1935 and later given to the Venezuelan Coast Guard.

