

TO ALL HANDS:

During the past 18 months as the Executive Officer of USCGC NORTHWIND I have had the honor and privilege of serving with the finest crew that I have yet to encounter in my 25 years of Coast Guard service.

This cruise book of the Arctic East Summer 88 (AES88) deployment, the final and longest voyage of NORTHWIND, is a fitting tribute to this magnificent ship and her splendid crew. These pages depict "The Grand Old Lady Of The North" in her final days as she not only accomplished every task assigned to her but far surpassed everyone's operational expectations. During the last mission of her last deployment this 43 year old icebreaker successfully accomplished the deepest penetration of the arctic ice pack, while escorting another surface vessel, in U. S. history. What a wonderful end to a long and distinguished career. During this final deployment the teamwork and dedication of this her last crew was nothing less than superb. It was their incredible hard work and tremendous self-sacrifice that assured NORTHWIND's success.

Therefore I say in all sincerity to this crew: " I salute you" and I am very proud to have been a member of your outstanding team. And, in closing I leave you with this thought: As we departed POLARBJORN, leaving her in the frozen Arctic, Captain Morris said to me: "We did it all" Yes! Captain we did it all and a whole lot more.

Thank you and God bless you all.

*Bernard P. O'Brien Jr.*  
BERNARD P. O'BRIEN JR.  
COMMANDER U. S. COAST GUARD  
EXECUTIVE OFFICER