

Eight Bells

NEWS FROM BELOW DECKS

Le Pêcheur D'Étoiles

Troop 868

JUNE 16, 2006

Winner of the Pirate Competition

Matt Desanto
"Mr. Pickles"

Winner of the Bowline Competition

Glenn Snow

Bugler
Chad Dugas

Engineer
Paul Sitzman

Editor
Matt Hough

Captains
Glenn Snow
Paul Sitzman

**A word from the
Skipper**
*Great crew, Great
trip, Remember
your happy
thought and take it
with you wherever
you go.*

**And from Em's,
Happy, Happy
trip, many laughs,
thanks guys**

We arrived Saturday morning, June 17, at a tiny airport in Marsh Harbor in Abacos, Bahamas. Since we got here in two trips, though, the first group had to wait for around almost two and a half hours to leave, but still got the advantage of looking around Marsh Harbor and shopping for souvenirs. When the other group finally arrived, we were able to go to the boat and get on our way. We left from the dock around late afternoon, and we learned all the rules of the boat before we left. After we had found our anchor spot for the night, we had most of our troop complete their swim tests. That night, we anxiously awaited the first heat of the bowline competition, only to find that some of us didn't know how to tie the knot. In the end, though, it was Doug Sitzmann who knew the knot best and won the competition. This was the start of "Bowline Fever," which swept the whole boat. That night, we went through our first night of anchor watches, which went smoothly, despite the wind. The next morning, we were awakened by a two-note reveille by bugler Chad Dugas. After chores and breakfast, we went snorkeling at Mermaid Reef, a gorgeous reef. We were excited as the fish swarmed us when we brought rice in from the boat to feed them. When we were all done giving the fish rice, we snorkeled around for a while, and then headed back to the boat. We set sail when we arrived back at the ship, and moved on toward Great Guana. We were successful in getting sailing and preparing, even though it was a first time experience for most of us. As we sailed, we learned the parts of the boats and what their uses are. We also learned the reasons for our team names, and what the responsibilities of each team are. We arrived at Great Guana that afternoon, but we couldn't go on the island yet. We decided to make the most of our free time by jumping off the mizzen and other various places of the boat. We all had a good time having fun around the boat. After that, we just turned in for the night, but we happened to be awakened by the rain that night, so we all took shelter in the hold or the galley. It was not fun. On Monday, we finally got our chance to go onto Great Guana, so we jumped at it. We explored the island, went swimming in the Atlantic, and even got ice cream. A few of us got lost on the way to the ice cream shop, though, but we finally found it, and we made our way back, which made us all very happy. Nonetheless, it

was an interesting experience. Almost right after we got back, we set sail for our next destination, Puffer Fish Bay. Once we arrived, we agreed to go ashore, and ate dinner there. We explored the island, looking for conch shells and coconuts, and even found some. We made a shelter, and got some too! Once we arrived back at the beach, we cooked hot dogs and marshmallows over a nice fire. The only problem with the night was the annoying bug problem. Everyone was getting bitten by horseflies and mosquitoes, and it was quite annoying. We did "Thorns and Roses" that night, and had a great time. On Tuesday, we went snorkeling at Puffer Fish Bay again, this time on the other part of it though. We found conch, and we cleaned them out after that. Admiral Del cleaned them and cooked the conch, and we got to eat them. It was good. Once we were done with that, we set sail for Bakers Bay, a nice reef that used to be a Disney Cruise resort. A few of us went snorkeling, and got to see a stingray in the artificial reef there. That night, we had the second heat of the bowline competition, which Taylor Munroe won, though after the tie in the finals, he had to do it blindfolded, and he was very good and took the second Pepsi. After that, we played music and did a musical version of "Thorns and Roses" and had a lot of fun. On Wednesday, we awoke to a fairly good reveille by Chad, and then got to work on the daily chores. The exciting part came after that. A large group of us went to the barrier reef out in the Atlantic Ocean, but we learned that we had to walk a long way to get there. None of us expected the walk that it did take to get there, but the reef was worth it. We saw a barracuda, sea turtles, and hundreds of cool looking fish. It was an amazing sight. The only problem with the adventure was the walk on the way back. It was a long walk that seemed even longer than the walk there, mostly because of the sweltering hot sun. The walk was probably almost 3 miles, and very hot. We were all very lucky that most of it was along the beach, and we could walk along the ocean while we were on our way there, which made it nicer. The torturous walk consisted of going along a first section of beach, through a wooded area where beach houses were being built, and along the longest stretch of beach. And in the heat we had, it was not a good walk, but we still had fun once we arrived, no doubt about it. We left around an hour after we arrived back at the ship for Puffer Fish Bay, where we

anchored that night and stayed for the next day, so we could avoid the wind that was supposed to come right past us. That didn't happen and it hit us head on. It rained that night, and we again had to get out of the rain. We also had to elect a new captain that day, because we all decided to mutiny Glenn, for reasons still unknown to me. Paul was voted in. Thursday was probably our busiest day of the week, but sadly it was also our last one. It started out with a hearty breakfast from one of our teams with "Raisin Pancakes." We then enjoyed a lesson on navigation from Admiral Del, but we may not have learned much. After we were through with the lesson, we set sail to Man-O-War Cay, our final destination before we headed back to Marsh Harbor. On the way there, we saw another group of dolphins, this time 3. After this, as many people took a nap, we kept on sailing until we had a "man over board" practice. We didn't get close enough the first time around, so we came back around and missed again, then on the third try we finally managed to pick up the fender that Em's had thrown into the water. When we had finally gotten the fender from out of the water, we had a smooth trip to the cay, until we had to get the sails down and motor into the cay because the wind was coming right at us. We went into town once we arrived, and many of us went souvenir shopping for themselves and their families. On the way back to the ship, 4 scouts got hitchhiked and got a ride from a local. By the time the whole group was back, the group that arrived first had been made a swinging rope out of one of the booms by Admiral Del. It was so much fun until Mr. Higgins jumped off with it at the same time that Jared pulled the rope and Mr. Higgins broke the boom somehow and ruined our fun. He did go flying into the boat and could have hurt himself, but he didn't. We all had fun though! After that, we had the third and final heat of the bowline competition. It was a great competition, everyone knew the knot this time, but in the end, it was Ex-Captain vs. New Captain, Glenn vs. Paul, and Glenn pulled off the victory. After that, we had Captain Ron and Lady Cynthia come from another ship to eat and help judge the pirate competition. In the end, it was Matt Desanto with "Mr. Pickles" who won. This trip was so much fun for us all. It can only be described as "awesome."

-Matt Hough

