



AFRAS Newsletter

Association for Rescue at Sea, Inc.

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Autumn 2007

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2 October 2007

AFRAS Award Ceremony and Reception

The annual AFRAS award ceremony and reception was held on 2 October 2007 on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. The event was once again co-hosted by the Honorable Howard Coble, co-chairman, U.S. Congressional Coast Guard Caucus.

ADM Allen, Commandant, and VADM Crea, Vice Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard, both attended the ceremony and AFRAS was also honored to have several Congressmen and members of the sub-committee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation including Chairman Elijah Cummings, Walter Jones and Don Young, as well as Congressman Coble. AFRAS also welcomed friends from Iceland Search and Rescue (ICE-SAR) Kristinn Olafsson, Chief Executive ICE-SAR and Sigurgeir Gudmundsson, president of ICE-SAR.



BMI David Ramsey

AFRAS Chairman VADM Terry Cross, USCG (Ret.) did a wonderful first time job as master of ceremonies and enjoyed enlightening the crowd with the thrilling rescues that were conducted by this year's heroic award winners. ADM Cross presented two Gold medals, one Silver medal and the AMVER plaque for outstanding rescues made in 2006. See inside for exciting details on all award-winning rescues.

AFRAS is grateful for the support for this year's ceremony from General Dynamics, Lockheed Martin, and the Manitowoc Marine Group.

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AST2 Joshua Mitcheltree and VADM Cross



Harold Robinson, USCG Aux. (2nd from right) with his crew and the Commandant and Vice Commandant of the United States Coast Guard.

Gold Medal Awards

Aviation Survival Technician Second Class

Joshua H. Mitcheltree

United States Coast Guard

On the night of 29 April, 2006, Coast Guard helicopter CG6041 departed Air Station Elizabeth City to rescue 2 people from the 60 foot sailing vessel OUR LUCK beset by weather and total darkness 25 nautical miles east of Kitty Hawk North Carolina. Using radar and call outs on channel 16 the helo crew was able to quickly locate the vessel which had been experiencing deteriorating weather conditions for days and was dangerously close to nearby shoals.

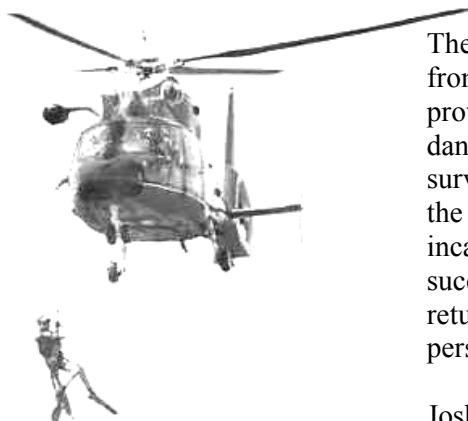


AFRAS President John Chomeau congratulates AST2 Mitcheltree

Due to the sailing vessel's erratically swinging 75 foot mast, the crew had the survivors douse the sails to slow the speed of the vessel and deploy and enter the life raft for the rescue. As a result of the 25 foot violently pitching seas, this process took over an hour. During that time, petty officer Mitcheltree, serving as rescue swimmer aboard the helo kept a thermal and visual imaging system (FLIR) focused and trained on the vessel so the helo crew could monitor the master's actions on deck which was awash with the thrashing seas.

Once deployed, the raft immediately went astern of the sailing vessel. Fighting to hold a 65-85 foot hover over the turbulent seas and the vigorously swinging mast, the aircraft commander deployed Mitcheltree and began the hoisting process. Petty Officer Mitcheltree struggled mightily during his time in the churning ocean to reach the raft for each of the hoists. While preparing for the first hoist, both he and the survivor were thrown from the raft by a crashing wave. The survivor was panicking and thrashing about wildly making the swim to the hoisting area an added challenge.

The second hoist also proved to be fraught with danger as the survivor was knocked from the basket after a wave dropped out from under it causing it to swing rapidly into an oncoming wave. But Mitcheltree quickly repositioned the man into the basket in the tossing seas and he was hoisted to safety. Despite his extreme fatigue, petty officer Mitcheltree remembered his responsibilities and swam to the life raft one last time to cut and sink it.



The hoist to free Mitcheltree from the rolling cauldron proved to be every bit as dangerous as his efforts with the survivors, as he was stunned by the jerk of the rescue cable as it pulled him through the waves. Once on board CG6041 though, he overcame his fatigue and temporary incapacity and rendered the necessary assistance to the survivors. With the rescue successfully accomplished, the crew flew through the foul weather and darkness to return the survivors to the safety of Air Station Elizabeth City and awaiting medical personnel.



Joshua Mitcheltree's heroic actions and courageous performance along with the rest of his crew on CG6041 directly resulted in the saving of two lives.



Boatswain's Mate First Class
David Ramsey
United States Coast Guard

On 15 January 2006, Station Cape Disappointment received a third party report on VHF-FM 16 that the 50-foot fishing vessel CATHRINE M was disabled with three people on board and drifting towards the breaking surf in Peacock Spit, Columbia River Bar. The unit immediately dispatched the Coast Guard motor lifeboat (MLB) 47248 and the MLB TRIUMPH to provide assistance.

Upon reaching the scene, boatswain's mate David Ramsey aboard CG 47248 recognized that the situation was much more critical than the initial report. On scene conditions were 25 to 35 foot seas with 25 foot breaking surf and the CATHRINE M had drifted into the treacherous Peacock Spit area. This area has earned the nickname "Graveyard of the Pacific" as it is the most dangerous area on the Columbia River Bar. Over recorded history an extremely high volume of vessels have been lost in this area, including the namesake, USS PEACOCK. As such, this area is normally only entered by seasoned Surfmens with years of experience on the Bar.



BMI Ramsey and LT Jamie Frederick, CG Congressional Liaison Officer.

LT Frederick was the officer who gave the go-ahead on the rescue from Cape Disappointment.



The crew of the motor lifeboat 47248 had arrived on scene well ahead of MLB TRIUMPH which carried the experienced Coast Guard Surfman. Ramsey was faced with a difficult decision, and after consulting with both his crew and the command cadre positioned in the Cape Disappointment tower, the decision to render assistance was made.

The crew of MLB 47248 briefed and prepared the deck for a dangerous "slip tow" evolution. Ramsey focused on navigating the tumultuous seas to reach the CATHRINE M to pass a towline to the stricken vessel. Under Ramsey's leadership the crew courageously accepted the risk of working the deck for the passing of the towline. During a slip tow this is extremely dangerous due to the possibility of towline paying out uncontrollably through the MLB's towing bitt upon attachment to the distressed vessel. Furthermore, the aft deck was being swept with large breaking seas making it incredibly hazardous.



ADM Allen congratulates Ramsey as Congressman Elijah Cummings looks on.

The CG crew flawlessly took the CATHRINE M in tow on the first approach. This is a remarkable accomplishment and display of seamanship and courage, particularly considering the extremely harsh sea conditions.

With the CATHRINE M in stern tow, BMI Ramsey then concentrated on exiting the surf zone as safely as possible utilizing the lifeboat to face the brunt of the 25-foot surf conditions and to shield the fishing vessel. Ramsey, working in perfect coordination with his crew, expertly maneuvered through the surf zone and transferred the tow to the MLB TRIUMPH when they reached calmer waters.

The crew of MLB 47248 demonstrated outstanding teamwork, expert seamanship and courage in the face of extremely challenging sea conditions. David Ramsey's decision to send the MLB into Peacock Spit was critical given the deteriorating conditions and little room for error. The courage and unparalleled skill of David Ramsey was undoubtedly the factor in avoiding imminent loss of life and is synonymous with the spirit of the crew serving at Station Cape Disappointment – *risking their lives so that others may live.*

Silver Medal Award

Harold T. Robinson

United States Coast Guard Auxiliary

On the afternoon of 26 August 2006, United States Coast Guard Auxiliarist Harold T. Robinson overheard an Urgent Marine Information Broadcast from Sector Delaware Bay and immediately gathered his crew and launched his vessel. An elderly father, his adult son, and three small children were swamped and capsized in their nineteen foot powered canoe by rough seas while crossing the main shipping channel of the Delaware River. All five were adrift in the turbulent waters with only enough life jackets for the youngest members of the crew.

Arriving at the distress scene in less than 15 minutes, Auxiliarist Robinson quickly evaluated the severity of the circumstances and rapidly deteriorating weather conditions and took decisive action. Realizing that the family was in the path of an approaching merchant ship and that attempting the rescue in the rough conditions could jeopardize his vessel and crew, Robinson proceeded to swiftly execute a flawless recovery of the five victims.

Demonstrating exceptional boat handling skill, Harold Robinson maintained his vessel as a stable platform enabling his crew to quickly and safely recover all five nearly exhausted family members from the shipping channel. Seeing that the children exhibited symptoms of hypothermia, Robinson directed his crew to administer first aid while he rapidly transported them to shore for medical attention.



Robinson accepts the Silver Medal from AFRAS Chairman VADM Terry Cross, USCG (ret.)



The speedy response and expert rescue of this family reflect great credit on Auxiliarist Harold Robinson and are in keeping with the highest traditions of humanitarian service and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.



Rescue workers and Auxiliary crew helping the family.



Congressman Howard Coble

Amver Plaque

M/V Patagonia



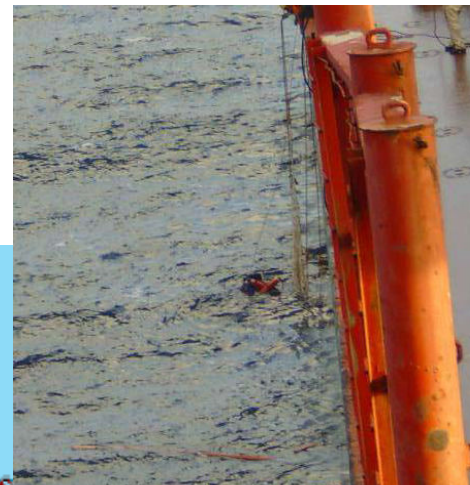
Benjamin Strong, Amver Maritime Relations accepts the Amver plaque from VADM Cross.

On 10 August, 2006 the M/V DAYANA, a 150-meter car carrying vessel, was steaming her last voyage to Panama for scrapping when she began taking on water and sinking approximately 115 nautical miles off the coast of Columbia. Her crew had abandoned ship into a life raft as the vessel went down.

The M/V PATAGONIA, a 177-meter log fitted bulk carrier enroute from New Orleans to Cristobal discovered the survivors in a raft 8 ½ hours later and immediately notified the Panamanian Operations Center who, in turn, notified the United States Coast Guard. After making notification to the appropriate search and rescue services, the master of PATAGONIA then transmitted an urgency message via VHF to all vessels in the area. PATAGONIA immediately initiated search and rescue operations and assumed search and rescue mission coordinator helping direct other Amver vessels to survivors. The master also communicated closely with the United States Coast Guard cutter GALLATIN which was enroute to the incident to assist.

The PATAGONIA was able to rescue five survivors including the DAYANA'S master; 2 were rescued by the STOLT CREATIVITY, and one survivor was rescue by the OSPREY I. According to the master of PATAGONIA, after several hours of rescue operations they spotted a sixth survivor in the water and had him hold onto the ship's net until the USCG small boat could embark him.

The Captain and crew of PATAGONIA'S excellent ship handling, attention to detail and willingness to take on rescue mission coordinator led to the successful conclusion of this search and rescue case.



A survivor next to PATAGONIA.



Letter from the President

I am happy to report that AFRAS this fall is in decent shape. Thanks mainly to some very generous contributions from Lockheed Martin, General Dynamics and the Manitowoc Corporation, plus the support of our members and those who make contributions to foreign lifeboat services through AFRAS. This does not mean of course that we are totally out of the woods as yet but it does open a few doors towards providing assistance to some of the newer lifeboat organizations such as those in the Caribbean. Just this past month, AFRAS provided travel funds to two members of the USCG Auxiliary to go to Jamaica to train their trainers. We would like to be able to take on other such small-scale projects.

On 2 October we had both a highly successful board meeting and then later that evening the best awards ceremony ever on Capitol Hill. First the board meeting: Virtually all of our board members were in attendance, many of them coming from long distances. We had lively discussions on topics such as how to increase the image of AFRAS amongst the general public, in particular the boating world, and how to make a more effective approach to potential corporate donors. We are also making plans and discussing measures we can implement to improve to an even greater extent, the cooperation between AFRAS and the USCG Auxiliary. One such project is an on-going feasibility study of sponsoring an effort to provide a standardized system of certification for lifeboat crews from volunteer services such as local fire departments and rescue squads. The

USCG Auxiliary has years of experience in this arena for their own volunteer boat crews; we want to see if their model can be used to set up a recommended set of qualifications for other volunteer rescue services.

The AFRAS annual awards ceremony is highlighted on the cover and following pages of this newsletter. I would like to thank the two AFRAS Anne's (Anne Kifer and Anne Skelton) for their effort in making all of the arrangements as well as personnel from CG Headquarters such as Ms. Willie Nelson and LT Jamie Frederick. Each year the preparation for this ceremony is a team effort. This year we were honored by the presence of both the CG Commandant and the Vice Commandant. Old hands tell me that they seldom ever go to the same reception. We were also honored by the presence of many Members of Congress - mainly from the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation.

Finally, we were also honored with a visit from two officers of the Iceland Search and Rescue (ICE-SAR). Kristinn Olafsson is their CEO and Siguirgeir Gudmundsson their president. I met with both to devise a plan to raise funds amongst persons of Icelandic descent now living in the U.S.A. We plan to approach them for donations that will be used to purchase two new diesel engines for one of the older Arun class lifeboats ICE-SAR recently purchased from the RNLI.

-John Chomeau

Thank you to our 2007 Corporate Sponsors

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AFRAS Participates in World Maritime Rescue Congress

By Captain Gabriel Kinney, Director, Association for Rescue at Sea (AFRAS)



AFRAS joined with other members of the International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF, formerly the International Lifeboat Federation – ILF) for The World Maritime Rescue Congress that was held in Gothenburg Sweden, between the 3rd and 8th of June 2007. The Congress incorporated the 20th International Lifeboat Conference, an International Search and Rescue Exhibition and the first General Assembly of the IMRF.

For the first time, the event incorporated a major international exhibition of world-leading maritime search and rescue technology. The two-day exhibition ran in parallel with a flexible program of elective conference sessions, workshops and demonstrations, allowing delegates to choose from a range of relevant

topics. The first General Assembly of Members, since the formal incorporation of the new International Maritime Rescue Federation, elected a new Board of Directors and Trustees, including Mr. Brook Archbold (New Zealand), Capt. Udo Fox (Germany), Mr. Hamish McDonald (United Kingdom), Capt. Song Jiahui (China), Mr. Michael Vlasto (United Kingdom), Capt. Rolf Westerstrom (Sweden), and Mr. Sip Wiebenga (The Netherlands). Michael Vlasto was subsequently elected as Chairman of the Board. (Note: Sip Wiebenga is a member of the AFRAS International Advisory Group).

The Congress coincided with the 100th anniversary of the host organization, the Swedish Sea Rescue Society. A number of member organizations sent their most up-to-date rescue craft to the event, where they were joined by a number of historic rescue boats, some of which took part in the

original International Lifeboat Conference, back in 1924. Over 70 visiting rescue craft participated.

In all, the event was a very significant gathering of key personnel from the international maritime rescue community, including the King and Queen of Sweden, and Admiral Efthimios E. Mitropoulos, Secretary General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO). During his remarks to open the Congress, Admiral Mitropoulos pledged his personal support and that of the IMO for the humanitarian work of members of the International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF) in saving lives at sea. He stated that the maritime rescue services were the "last hope" of many unfortunate mariners who find themselves in distress at sea. AFRAS is committed to working with the IMRF, and the two organizations enjoy a very close working relationship.

AFRAS was represented at the World Maritime Rescue Congress by John Chomeau, AFRAS President, and Gabe Kinney.



(l-r) Mr. Johan Franson, Chairman of Council, IMO; Admiral Efthimios E Mitropoulos, Secretary General IMO; and Mr. Huang Xianyao, Vice Minister of Communications, People's Republic of China

U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARISTS

TRAIN JAMAICAN VOLUNTEER SAR UNIT

John C. Cooper, US Coast Guard Auxiliary



The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary's International Affairs Directorate has, as one of its principal missions, the enhancement of the security, stability, and safety of life at sea in the Caribbean region. This mission is being accomplished through the strengthening and establishment of local Coast Guard and non-government volunteer Search and Rescue (SAR) organizations. These volunteers can provide their government SAR and other non-law enforcement support, thereby freeing their forces to better focus on law enforcement and security missions. The objective is to provide a greater capability within Caribbean countries to surge larger numbers of trained and properly equipped maritime assets to meet the requirements imposed by natural and/or man-made disasters.

As part of this mission, and at their request, the Directorate provided advice and assistance in the formation of JASAR, the Jamaica Search and Rescue Organization. JASAR is now up-and-running. As part of this assistance, the Auxiliary committed to travel to Jamaica and teach JASAR members some of the techniques used by the Auxiliary that JASAR felt were most critical to their growth and success in Jamaica. Consequently, John VanOsdol, Deputy Director, and John Cooper, Caribbean Division Chief, arranged with Robert Scott, JASAR's Chairman, to travel to Kingston, Jamaica and devote the weekend of 15 & 16 September 2007 to teaching 15 JASAR members. This training was partially funded by AFRAS.

Subjects were:

- ABC (America's Boating Course)
- how to organize a program to conduct Vessel Safety Checks
- how to become more effective instructors – all of which are embodied in Auxiliary Public Education courses.

LT Alistair Stewart of the JDF-CG(R), the Jamaica Defense Force - Coast Guard liaison Officer to JASAR, also participated throughout the entire weekend.



John Cooper, Robert Scott and John VanOsdol aboard HMJS Surrey.

Groundwork was laid for the development of a simple boating safety training program for Jamaica's subsistence fishermen – which might then be exported to other Caribbean nations. Preparing a business plan and marketing JASAR to the public was also covered in the 18-hour teaching weekend held in the facilities of the Royal Jamaica Yacht Club. Certificates of Completion were awarded to all participants at the conclusion of the program.

Highlights of the weekend for VanOsdol and Cooper, were after-class tours conducted by Chairman Scott. First, was a visit to the Rae Town Fishing Village. This provided the opportunity to get a better 'feel' for the needs of the subsistence fishermen. Secondly, Chairman Scott hosted a reception on a mountaintop, providing a splendid view of Kingston at night. The reception was preceded by a guided tour of downtown Kingston. Lt. Stewart led the group in a tour of "HMJS Surrey", one of JDF-CG's three new "County Class" 43 meter high speed patrol boats and "HMJS Cagway", the principal JDF-CG station. Transportation to the Coast Guard station was provided by a 600 HP 'Go-fast' boat confiscated in a drug bust.



The JASAR team who participated in the training weekend

New IMO Award Recognizes Exceptional Bravery at Sea

By Captain Gabriel Kinney, Director, Association for Rescue at Sea (AFRAS)

Two heroes from the crew of the Bahamian registered oil/bulk ore carrier M/V SEAROSE G have been recognized by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) for their selfless acts to save lives, and are the first recipients of IMO's new annual Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea.

The Award will be presented on 19 November 2007, in London, during a special ceremony in conjunction with the meeting of the IMO Assembly.



Captain Zvonimir Ostric and Second Officer Mustafa Topiwala were commended for putting their own lives in immediate peril by leaving the relative safety of their own ship to save others during the dramatic rescue of the crew of the M/V TEKLIVKA which sank during gale-force severe weather in the eastern Mediterranean in March, 2006. They both descended to a liferaft full of oil and water, and Topiwala then entered the water in raging sea conditions. 9 lives were saved in this case.

*Rescued Tanker Crew Covered in Oil
(Photo Courtesy Searose G)*

The award winners were nominated by the government of the Bahamas and the International Federation of Shipmasters' Associations (IFSMA) in response to IMO Circular Letter 2731 of 17 July 2006, which described the Award and solicited nominations. They and the other 20 nominees were initially considered by an Assessment Panel of Experts from seven non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in consultative status with IMO, including the International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF). (NOTE: This writer had the honor of being nominated to serve on the Assessment Panel by IMRF). A Panel of Judges composed of the Chairmen of the IMO Committees then reviewed the recommendations of the Panel and selected the Award winners. The IMO Council endorsed their selection during its 98th session in London this past June.

It was the clear opinion of the Assessment Panel, the Judges, and the IMO Council that many of the nominees deserved special recognition. The following is an excerpt from the IMO news release concerning the Awards:

The IMO Council agreed with the recommendations of the assessment and judging panels that the following nominees, the first two of which were also shortlisted for the Award, should be recognized by receiving certificates citing their respective acts of bravery:

- **The Hong Kong Government Flying Service**, nominated by China, for courageous actions that went well above those expected of a professional rescue service. The assessment and judging panels considered that members of that organization clearly risked their own lives to rescue 91 persons in distress during aircraft/helicopter operations carried out in severe typhoon weather conditions;

- **Captain Xufeng Zu of the diving squad of Quinghuangdao Base of Beihai Rescue Bureau of China Rescue and Salvage (CRS).** Captain Xufeng Zu was nominated by the International Lifeboat Federation (ILF) for selflessly giving up his own breathing equipment so that two persons trapped in the capsized M/V Fu Hua 1 could escape safely;
- **Dr. Christine Jane Bradshaw** (a civilian nominated by the ILF), for hoisting down to the stricken tanker FR8 VENTURE and rescuing the last surviving crewmember;
- **The crew of the ocean-going rescue tug Nanhaijiu III, of Nanhai Rescue Bureau** (nominated by China), for a series of successful rescue missions including the location and rescue of 14 small Vietnamese fishing boats during typhoon Chanchu, in May 2006;
- **Mr. Brett Churcher**, skipper of the fishing boat Striker (nominated by ILF), for saving the lives of a man and his four-year old daughter off Cape Palliser, New Zealand, in April 2007;
- **The crews of the fast action lifeboats and vessels of the Spanish Maritime Safety Agency** (nominated by Spain), for a series of successful operations to locate and recover safely, thousands of migrants at sea;
- **Viktors Timoscenko, Master of the Latvian-registered tanker Ance** (nominated by IFSMA), for persisting in the successful rescue of two persons adrift on a catamaran, after other efforts had been called off due to darkness and adverse weather; and
- **Station Officer Kekoi Jaiteh, of the West Gambia Fire Department** (nominated by ILF), for actions which resulted in the saving of the captain and three crew members from a capsized cargo vessel in rough inshore waters, in January 2007.

The IMO Council endorsed the view of the judging panel that the 11 remaining individuals or services that had also been nominated for the 2007 Award should each receive a letter of commendation.

As noted in the above nominations, IMRF has very actively supported this IMO initiative to give international recognition to rescuers who have put their lives on the line to save others.

Though IMO has not yet formally solicited nominations for the 2008 Award (expected in January), AFRAS members are encouraged to keep the Award in mind as worthy rescues are accomplished throughout the year. Any nominations can be sent to AFRAS for forwarding to IMRF. IMRF will collect and submit the nominations to IMO.

* * *



IMO Headquarters
United Kingdom



ADM Owen W. Siler, USCG (ret.)

Former AFRAS Chairman Admiral Owen Siler passed away at the age of 85 on 13 July 2007. Admiral Siler served as Commandant of the Coast Guard from 1974 to 1978 and as Chairman of AFRAS from 1986 To 1997. During his tenure as Commandant, he instituted a minority recruiting program, was instrumental in having women admitted to the Coast Guard Academy, arranged for the first female officers to attend flight training, and oversaw the expansion of the Coast Guard's Marine Environmental Protection program.

During his Coast Guard career, he served in combat duty in the Pacific during World War II, afloat in deck positions, as an aviator performing aerial patrols and search and rescue missions, and ashore in the law enforcement, marine safety and environmental protection fields. Other assignments included Chief, Search and Rescue Branch in Juneau, Alaska; Deputy Chief in Washington; and Commanding Officer at Air Station Miami, where under his command the station received a Coast Guard Unit Commendation for the Cuban Exodus operation during October and November of 1965.

Admiral Siler altered the traditional view of the Coast Guard as simply the “humanitarian Service” of the federal government, to one that recognized the service as a leader in marine environmental protection, a law enforcement agency with which to be reckoned, a conservation-conscious protector of our marine resources and as a major force in service to the nation.

After retiring from the Coast Guard with 35 years of service, he moved with his wife to Savannah where he was an active member of St. John's Episcopal Church, the Rotary Club of Savannah South, the Propeller Club, the Navy League, the World Affairs Council and of course AFRAS.

Under Admiral Siler's leadership, AFRAS undertook many new initiatives with great success. Among those, in 1988, AFRAS contributed to the refitting of the *Oscar Tybring*, a lifeboat of historical importance that was built in 1895 for the Norwegian Society of Sea Rescue (NSSR); in 1993, AFRAS provided and delivered vital marine radio equipment to the Estonian Lifesaving Organization; and through the years, AFRAS helped fund three lifeboats to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) in Great Britain.

We, the board of AFRAS, salute Admiral Siler for all his professional accomplishments. Most of all, however, we value the wonderful friendship that “Si” and his wife Bette shared with us.



September 1994

Admiral Siler, center and Congressman Howard Coble congratulate AFRAS Gold Medal winner Scott Clendenin (now an AFRAS board member.)

Happy Holidays
from the Officers and Directors of AFRAS



Join AFRAS

Afras is here to provide you with a means of supporting worldwide voluntary lifeboat services and at the same time, providing you with a tax deduction here in the United States.

AFRAS offers two basic membership packages:

The first, a joint membership with the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) for dues of \$100 per year will provide you with a quarterly subscription to the RNLI's *Lifeboat* journal, their annual *Watermark* catalogue and other RNLI press releases and mailings throughout the year. We will also send you periodic AFRAS newsletters, press releases, and an invitation to our annual Gold Medal/Silver Medal/Amver award ceremony in Washington, D.C.

The second, a sole AFRAS membership for \$20 per year will entitle you to all Afras mailings including newsletters, press releases and miscellaneous information from our counterparts throughout the world.

All dues and donations given through AFRAS are tax deductible in the United States.

If you are interested in joining AFRAS please fill out the information below and send along with your dues/donation to
Association for Rescue at Sea, Inc., P. O. Box 565, Fish Creek, WI 54212-0565.

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ (day) _____ (evening) E-mail _____

Membership (check one) _____ AFRAS/RNLI (\$100 dues) _____ AFRAS (\$20 dues)

Dues enclosed _____ (amount) Donation enclosed _____ (amount)

I would like to find out more about AFRAS. Please send me more information.

***Have you considered AFRAS
in your estate planning?***



Gift IRA \$\$ Tax Free!

There is a special provision in Federal tax law thanks to the *Federal Pension Protection Act of 2006* that will permit a person who is over 70 ½ to make a gift from his/her IRA to a qualifying charity of up to \$100,000. The gift is given tax free in that it is not considered to be income and therefore not subject to tax. There is, however, one catch; this is a one-time opportunity and must be made before 31 December. It is well known that persons making withdrawals from an IRA have to pay taxes on these as if they were income and that there are even more taxes due if the IRA is inherited by someone in the next generation in most cases. Experts estimate that heirs will receive less than 25% of most IRA assets that pass through their estates to their heirs – unless of course the IRA owner takes steps to “stretch” the IRA. This non-taxed gift can be made even if the donor has already made his/her required minimum distribution (RMD) for this year.

To get things started the donor needs only to contact the financial institution that administers his/her IRA and tell them that he/she would like to make an IRA charitable donation by the December 31 deadline.

Take advantage of this special, one time opportunity to gift some IRA money to organizations such as AFRAS where it can be put to excellent use in helping some of the newer maritime rescue organizations.

-Based on an article by Angelica Light