



United States Coast Guard
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

05 NOV 2021
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TO: ALAUX
ALAUX 038/21

Subj: 2021 ASSOCIATION FOR RESCUE AT SEA (AFRAS) AWARD RECIPIENTS

1. Please read the following ALCOAST announcement of 2021 AFRAS award recipients. Congratulations to Ninth District Auxiliarists Gary Markle and Shelley Markle on their award of the Silver Medal for their outstanding efforts in responding to a drowning person and for their skills in managing the situation and providing CPR, resulting in the swimmer's life being saved. Their heroic actions brought great credit to the United States Coast Guard and United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Respectfully,
Captain Troy P. Glendye
Chief Director of Auxiliary (CG-BSX)

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SUBJ: 2021 ASSOCIATION FOR RESCUE AT SEA (AFRAS) AWARD RECIPIENTS

A. COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC 131719Z MAY 21/ALCOAST 183/21

1. Per REF (A), this ALCOAST announces the recipients of the 2021 AFRAS Gold and Silver Medals. The Gold and Silver Medals are awarded to a Coast Guard enlisted member and Auxiliarist, respectively, for an act of extraordinary bravery during a rescue at sea.

2. GOLD MEDAL.

a. The 2021 Gold Medal is awarded to Boatswain's Mate First Class (BM1) Wallace C. Qual, U.S. Coast Guard Station Yaquina Bay. BM1 Qual led a beach team in the rescue of the master of the 44 foot Fishing Vessel (FV) LEGEND.

b. At approximately 0130 local time on September 8th, 2020, FV LEGEND reported running aground in the vicinity of the Yaquina Bay channel entrance near Newport, Oregon. A rare wind

event coupled with local fires resulted in extremely challenging on scene conditions including 60-70 knot wind gusts, 6-8 feet of surf, and visibility less than 200 yards due to blowing sand, smoke, and ash. After determining the exact position of FV LEGEND, a 47 foot Motor Lifeboat (MLB), the 52 foot MLB VICTORY, and a Coast Guard MH-65 helicopter from Air Facility Newport were launched. While extreme winds and poor visibility forced the helicopter to return to Air Facility Newport immediately after take-off, shallow water rendered the two MLBs unable to directly assist in the rescue.

c. It was determined that a beach rescue team might reach the vessel and that BM1 Qual would lead the rescue. The beach party located FV LEGEND by spotting a faintly flickering navigation light in the low-visibility conditions. Dressed in full SAR ensemble and carrying an additional 20 pounds of rescue equipment, BM1 Qual led the beach rescue team in running approximately two miles down the beach to arrive on scene.

d. Realizing that no helicopters were able to fly in the on scene conditions and the two MLBs were unable to assist, BM1 Qual donned the swimmer's harness and mask and made preparations to enter the water. The low visibility and rapid drift prevented BM1 Qual from reaching the master on his first rescue attempt. He returned to shore and instructed the team to move further down the beach and once again, BM1 Qual entered the water. Battling the high surf, wind driven sand, ash and smoke, and hurricane force wind gusts, BM1 Qual finally succeeded in reaching the master. The beach rescue team was then able to pull BM1 Qual, with the master in tow, to shore using the swimmer tending line.

e. During the rescue, BM1 Qual placed his own life in grave danger on two occasions in the process of rescuing the master of FV LEGEND. His actions in the early morning hours of September 8th, 2020, were nothing short of heroic.

3. SILVER MEDAL.

a. On August 8th, 2020, Auxiliarists Gary and Shelley Markle were returning to their slip on their Personal Water Crafts (PWC) at Burnham Harbor in Chicago, Illinois. During the transit, they were notified by a Good Samaritan of a possible drowning from the vessel ICEMAN II. While Auxiliarist Gary Markle notified Coast Guard Station Chicago, Auxiliarist Shelley Markle set up a safety perimeter to keep other boats clear of the incident location.

b. Swimmers in the vicinity spotted a man on the lake bottom in 12 feet of water. Auxiliarist Gary Markle notified Station Chicago where the survivor was located and requested medical assistance. As the swimmers struggled with retrieving the drowned swimmer, Auxiliarist Gary Markle dismounted his PWC to assist in bringing the survivor aboard ICEMAN II. Auxiliarist Shelley Markle notified Station Chicago that the swimmer was being brought to the surface, was unresponsive, and again requested medical personnel and immediate assistance.

c. While still in the water, Auxiliarist Gary Markle advised the other swimmers on how to push water from the lungs of the unresponsive drowned swimmer. Observing that the drowned swimmer was not breathing, and the other swimmers were panicked and improvising chest compressions, he requested the assistance of Auxiliarist Shelley Markle. Auxiliarist Shelley Markle dismounted her PWC, and swam and boarded ICEMAN II where she immediately took control of the situation. Auxiliarist Shelley Markle quickly cleared the area, directed another bystander to stabilize the survivors head and began CPR while instructing the other passengers to don life jackets. Realizing she would need assistance due to the anticipated duration of time for EMS to arrive, Auxiliarist Shelley Markle requested a volunteer and instructed him on how to perform chest compressions. While the two traded-off chest compressions, she repeatedly directed passengers, who appeared to be in shock, to don life jackets, and move ICEMAN II closer to shore.

- d. As Auxiliarist Shelley Markle initiated CPR and handled the management of panicked passengers, Auxiliarist Gary Markle boarded one of the PWCs and began transporting Chicago Fire Department personnel and paramedics from land to the ICEMAN II as it slowly transitioned towards shore. When these rescue personnel eventually relieved Auxiliarist Shelley Markle from CPR duties, she continued to assist with counseling and managing the passengers aboard ICEMAN II.
- e. A Chicago Fire Boat along with multiple Coast Guard and Chicago Police Marine unit vessels arrived, took over responsibility of the survivor and transported him to an ambulance at a nearby marina. Once on land, the survivor was confirmed to be revived before his transport to a local hospital. Through their outstanding and heroic efforts, Auxiliarists Gary and Shelley Markle saved an individual's life.
4. In addition to the Gold and Silver Medal recipients, all 2021 AFRAS award nominees demonstrated exceptional courage and have further enhanced the Coast Guard's reputation as the Lifesavers and Guardians of the Sea. These outstanding nominees include:
- a. AST2 Grant B. Roberts, USCG Air Station Sitka, Alaska.
 - b. AST2 Dakota J. Schick, USCG Air Station Houston, Texas.
 - c. AET1 Robert C. Cowan, USCG Air Station Elizabeth City, North Carolina.
5. This year's award ceremony, hosted by AFRAS on November 2, 2021, in the House Rayburn Congressional Office Building, Washington, DC, will recognize the 2020 Gold Medal Recipients, AST1 Eric Young and AST1 Nathan Newberg, 2020 Silver Medal Recipients, Auxiliarists Stephen Wyatt and Gloria Wyatt, and the 2021 Gold and Silver Medal Award recipients.
6. Congratulations to the AFRAS 2021 and 2020 Gold and Silver Medal recipients and all nominees on a job well done.
7. COMDT (CG-SAR) AFRAS awards POC: Mr. Michael Clarke (202) 372-2090, Michael.E.Clarke@uscg.mil.
8. RDML S. W. Clendenin, Assistant Commandant for Response Policy (CG-5R), sends.
9. Internet released is authorized.
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For many reasons including the value of keeping communication lines clear and open as well as facilitating access to training and educational tools, all Auxiliarists are urged to have their own email address and to keep it updated in AUXDATA.

*All ALAUX's are posted on the Chief Director of Auxiliary web site located at: [CHDIRAUX ALAUX](#)

If you have a question regarding this ALAUX, please seek resolution within your Chain of Leadership and Management (COLM) including up to your servicing District Director of Auxiliary (DIRAUX). If your question still cannot be resolved after that, then please email CGAUX@uscg.mil.
