



AFRAS Newsletter

Association for Rescue at Sea, Inc.

PO Box 565 • Fish Creek, WI 54212-0565 • www.afras.org

Spring 2004

AFRAS Board of Directors

Chairman

VICE ADMIRAL ROGER T. RUFÉ, JR.,
USCG (Ret.)

Chairman Emeritus

ADMIRAL J. S. GRACEY,
USCG (Ret.)

Chairman Emeritus

VICE ADMIRAL T. R. SARGENT III,
USCG (Ret.)

Vice Chairman

VICE ADMIRAL J. G. FINNERAN,
USN (Ret.)

President

CAPTAIN J. CHOMEAU, USN (Ret.)

Secretary

ANNE KIFER

Treasurer

ANNE SKELTON

Directors

R. R. ANDERSON
H. CHOMEAU IV
CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER S. CLENDENIN,
USCG (Ret.)
SA J.A. CORRY, USSS (Ret.)
E.W. EDGERTON, JR.
National Commodore
USCG Auxiliary
CAPTAIN J. C. FUECHSEL,
USCG (Ret.)
CAPTAIN G. KINNEY,
USCG (Ret.)
N. L. LUDINGTON
E. O'BRIEN
Massachusetts Maritime Academy
R. SCHWARTZ
President, BOAT/US
ADMIRAL O. W. SILER,
USCG (Ret.)
CAPTAIN C. L. VON SCHRADER,
USN (Ret.)
W. D. WILKINSON
Director Emeritus
The Mariners' Museum
CAPTAIN R. W. WITTER,
USCG (Ret.)

International Advisory Group

ANDREW FREEMANTLE, MBE
Chief Executive
Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI)
ALEXANDRA HEWITT-JONES
Executive Administrator
Virgin Islands Search and Rescue (VISAR)
IAN VENTHAM
Head of Corporate Services
Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI)
SIP WIEBENGA
Director
Koninklijke Nederlandse Redding Maatschappij
(KNRM)

Letter from the President

This has been a very busy time for AFRAS and we frankly have not had the opportunity to put together our usual Newsletter. We have, however, some important news that we would like to share and will turn our attention to a newsletter after our Awards Ceremony.

We have heard from the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) and the naming of the new D-class inshore lifeboat "Semper Paratus" will be held in Cowes on 25 August. AFRAS and the RNLI would like to thank you sincerely for the generous donations that helped make this purchase of a new lifeboat possible.

AFRAS is pleased to announce this year's Gold Medal winner is Aviation Survival Technician Third Class Laurence D. Nettles, USCG. He is being recognized for a heroic rescue of four persons from the fishing vessel SAINT JOSEPH which was sinking in heavy surf off the Louisiana coast.

The AMVER award is going to the motor vessel STOLT CAPABILITY (US flag) which diverted from course to render assistance to the M/V HAONG DAT (Vietnamese) that was sinking off the coast of Vietnam. The STOLT CAPABILITY rescued 12 survivors and then acted as on-scene coordinator for the search and recovery of the remaining four crew members.

We will not have a Silver Medal honoree from the USCG Auxiliary this year. The AFRAS Awards ceremony will be held in the Gold Room of the Rayburn House Office Building on Capitol Hill on 15 September 2004. Invitations will be mailed as soon as we get them printed, but please put this date on your calendar.

AFRAS has broadened its program to provide proper recognition for heroic rescues and on 17 April I presented a special plaque to the members of the Naval Reserve Center in Baltimore, MD who made a heroic, and impromptu, rescue of passengers from a water taxi that capsized in a sudden storm in the Inner Harbor, Boston. This marks the first time AFRAS has recognized heroism on the part of the US Navy and also the first award made to a command vice an individual.

Our bid to obtain funds from the OMC Foundation was successful and we are happy to announce that we received \$25,000 to be used to train lifeboat coxswains. This gift will constitute seed money and we are in the midst of plans to establish, under International Lifeboat Federation (ILF) auspices, an advanced training course for coxswains from the volunteer rescue services of the Caribbean. Many details need yet to be worked out, but the program is well on track and we anticipate our first training session by this time next year. We will need training support from the larger ILF members and will need to solicit additional funding to keep the program running.

I attended a conference of Caribbean volunteer rescue services 13-15 May in Miami. The conference was organized by the USCG Auxiliary and funded by the US Southern Command. It drew nearly 90 participants from 26 nations. AFRAS played a major role in both a presentation on lessons learned in fundraising as well as coordinating a special workshop to identify common problems and solutions in search and rescue. All said, the conference was a huge success and I believe it brought to fruition the Caribbean initiative that we started three years ago.

An administrative note. Our wonderful director/secretary, Anne Kifer is moving to Door County, WI. We have decided that instead of trying to replace her, we will move our office to her new home once she gets located later this summer. Our new address will be PO Box 565 in Fish Creek, WI 54212-0565. Our new phone number will be provided later and the AFRAS website remains unchanged.

Sadly, I must announce that our valued Vice Chairman, VADM John Finneran, USN (ret.) has asked to resign from the board due to health reasons. We will miss him greatly and are most grateful for all he has done for AFRAS over the years.

John Chomeau, President

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?***