



THE AUXILIARIST

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Commissioner's Commendation

During the Swissair Flight 111 tragedy, there were a few Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (CCGA) personnel who went beyond their call of duty in the recovery operations. On January 6, 1999, Harris and Audrey Backman, their son Stephen Backman, and Gary Masson received the Commissioner's Com-

mendation. John Adams, Commissioner of the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) personally presented the awards on board the Louis St. Laurent for their professionalism and dedication following the Swissair disaster off of the Blandford Peninsula, in Nova Scotia.

As the search for debris commenced, the CCGA took over the home and property of Harris and Audrey Backman for more than a month, to use it as a Command Post. The Command Post was manned 18 hours daily - from 6:00 a.m. until midnight. Although the Command Post was in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Backman,



Pictured left to right on board the Louis St. Laurent: Frank McLaughlin, accepting an award on behalf of the CCGA Maritime Region, Steven Backman, Harris Backman, Audrey Backman, and Gary Masson.



Canadian Coast
Guard Auxiliary

Garde côtière
auxiliaire canadienne

(Commissioner's Commendation, *cont'd*)

Gary Masson was almost always there, and the three of them watched over the Command Post for the majority of those 18 hours.

Stephen Backman's extensive knowledge of the area, from years as a commercial fisherman, made it easy for him to be tasked with the On Scene Commander (OSC)

duties for the CCGA units. He received the Commissioner's Commendation for working as OSC almost every day, and for doing an exceptional job.

As well, all CCGA members involved either directly or indirectly with the Swiss Air disaster were presented with the Commission-

er's Commendation. Frank McLaughlin, President CCGA (Maritimes), accepted the Commissioner's Commendation for the members of CCGA Maritimes who were not present.

*Alison Kopelman, SAR Intern,
CCG Headquarters*



International Search & Rescue Society

The International Search and Rescue Society (ISARS) is an emerging non-profit organization that will promote the exchange of information among international Search and Rescue (SAR) specialists (aeronautical, maritime, and ground), thereby

improving SAR operation and management, increasing efficiency and effectiveness of SAR resources, and most importantly saving lives.

ISARS will aim to recruit worldwide membership of individuals

rather than groups or corporations. Specifically, membership will consist of persons who have a vested interest in SAR. ISARS is presently in its final steps of becoming a legally incorporated non-profit organization, and therefore is not yet accepting members.

The Auxiliarist

is published for members of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary by the Search and Rescue branch of the Canadian Coast Guard.

News items and photographs should be sent to:

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Opinions expressed are those of the author and may not always represent official DFO/CCG policy.

Initial funding for the society was provided through a "New Search and Rescue Initiatives Fund" grant from the Canadian National SAR Secretariat. ISARS will consist of a Board of Directors, an Advisory Board that will provide advice to the Board of Directors, an Honourary Head of the society, and its international membership.

One of the main activities of ISARS will be to publish a journal of professional papers focusing on SAR related topics. The International SAR Journal will al-

(International SAR Society, cont'd)

low for an open forum of discussion between SAR professionals, and individuals will be able to submit articles to the journal on any topic of their choice.

Make sure you frequently visit the ISARS web site: <http://www.isars.org>, which will continually be up-dated to include ISARS activities, SAR

related news, and information regarding international seminars, meetings, and events.

*Alison Kopelman,
SAR Intern, CCG Headquarters*

It Just Doesn't Get Any Better Than This...

A bizarre incident from July of last year

It began with a report of two men in their early thirties who had gone out to play in the Qualicum area on their bright yellow SeaDoos. It was dark when the call came in that the two had not yet returned and the incident started to unfold as a typical 'overdue' case. With the help of Comox Marine Communications and Traffic Services, Chrome Island Light Keeper and the Kestrel, it was determined that the two were last seen in the Tribune Bay area at about 1900 hrs. A subsequent call to Rescue Co-ordination Centre (RCC) Victoria from one of the wives revealed that there was a message from her husband on her answering machine. The men were at the Lasqueti Island Hotel Pub and would be coming home soon on the SeaDoos (without the aid of lights or flares, of course).

While the Kestrel, Auxiliary 58 French Creek and Auxiliary 59 Deep Bay were searching, one of the overdue men made it in to shore and phoned the RCC. Apparently the two of them had found themselves separated from each other almost immediately after departing Lasqueti Island, but since his fuel was low the man decided to keep going. He ran out of fuel before getting across and paddled the rest of the way using his bare hands.

Then, just as the Labrador helicopter was getting airborne for an incident off Victoria, the cruise ship Mercury reported a man overboard about 2.5 miles off Ballenas Island. The Lab was the first on scene and us-

ing his night vision goggles he spotted a person in the water (PIW) beside some strange looking object. The PIW was recovered and it turned out to be the second missing person, dressed only in wet suit pants and a life vest. He was slightly hypothermic and very, very lucky to be alive.

His story was that after leaving Lasqueti Island with his buddy and then getting separated, he returned to False Bay to try and find his friend. Not seeing him, he then tried to make it across by himself but ran out of gas off Ballenas Island. The SeaDoo began taking on water, the battery died, the pump quit and the machine began to sink. By the time the Lab arrived on scene, the SeaDoo had capsized and our fellow found himself in the water. He had been there beside the overturned SeaDoo for almost 2 hours when the cruise ship Mercury, running at about 5 kts, virtually ran him over. The SeaDoo spun down the side of the cruise ship and luckily one of the passengers walking on deck saw him and called man overboard. The SeaDoo was actually damaged by the propeller from the cruise ship! The skipper from the cruise ship summed it up nicely, saying, "...this man should buy a lottery ticket. For anyone with this much luck, winning a million dollars should be a piece of cake!"

Steve Church, Marine Controller

Reprinted from The SAR Side, RCC Victoria Bulletin, 4th Edition, June 1999

Turner and Sidock Presented with Honorary Memberships to the CCGA

On January 13, 1999, Mike Turner, Deputy Commissioner Canadian Coast Guard, was made an honorary member of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (CCGA). Mr. Harry Strong, CEO CCGA, was in attendance to present the honorary membership personally to Mr. Turner for his continued support of the Auxiliary over the years.

On Saturday, February 6, 1999, Mr. Gary Sidock, Director, Operational Services, Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) Central and Arctic, was also presented with an honorary membership to the CCGA by Mr. Harry Strong. Mr. Sidock received the honorary membership at the CCGA Central and Arctic Annual General Meeting, as a token of the CCGA's appreciation for his strong support of the CCGA over the years, and especially for his assistance while he was Director of Search and Rescue.

Harry Strong, CEO CCGA National Council, presenting an honorary membership to the CCGA to Gary Sidock, Director, Operational Services.



Harry Strong, CEO CCGA, is seen here presenting Mike Turner with his honorary membership to the CCGA.



SAR Equipment Initiative

The volunteer members of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (CCGA) provide highly cost effective marine Search and Rescue (SAR) services, responding to over 25% of all marine SAR incidents. CCGA volunteers are first on the scene in many instances and in some areas are the only resource available. Although often operating in the same weather and sea conditions as Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) personnel and usually in vessels not designed for SAR operations, CCGA volunteers are not provided with, and cannot afford the cost of expensive Search and Rescue equipment. This sometimes puts CCGA volunteers at risk and inhibits their optimal effectiveness in SAR incidents.

As part of an initiative to enhance CCGA capability, safety and effectiveness, CCG proposes to provide as many as possible CCGA vessels with the necessary Search and Rescue equipment. The key reason for this is to provide national standardization in training, SAR operations and SAR equipment. Standardizing equipment will allow

CCGA members to successfully assist one another. CCGA members will also become more familiar with each other's vessel equipment and therefore be able to act as a crewmember for another Auxiliary vessel or CCG vessel if required.

Over a two-year period, CCG was able to raise \$848,000. CCG has proposed to purchase and standardize personal protective exposure suits and rescue equipment for CCGA volunteers. The first priority was to purchase 1175 personal floatation exposure suits with attached strobe lights and 42 night vision goggles. These have all been delivered. Other priority items, including Fast Rescue Craft (FRC) cruise suits, cold weather gloves, line-throwing devices, high powered hand-held searchlights, and rescue helmets, have also been ordered and are expected to be delivered by December 1999.

Joanna Ng
SAR Intern, CCG Headquarters

Hetheringtons Receive Commissioner's Commendation for Exemplary Service

After twenty-five years in the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (CCGA), Ian and Sheila Hetherington retired on February 21, 1999. John Palliser, Superintendent, Rescue, Safety and Environmental Response (Pacific Region), was on hand to thank them personally for their many years of service and commitment to the maritime community. On behalf of the Commissioner, Mr. Palliser pre-

sented each of them with a Commissioner's Commendation certificate and a pin for their active involvement in search and rescue in the Nanaimo area. Craig Dunn, President CCGA Pacific presented a framed Certificate of Appreciation to them, on behalf of everyone from CCGA Pacific. As well, the Hetheringtons were given a framed nautical picture on behalf of everyone from

(Hetheringtons, *cont'd*)

Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) Victoria, a Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) pen and pencil set, and several RCC pins.

Mr. Hetherington was one of the four founding members of the Canadian Marine Rescue Auxiliary, now the CCGA, and has been the Nanaimo area Unit Leader ever since. The recipient of numerous certificates of commendation, Mr. Hetherington is also the Search and Rescue (SAR) Coordinator for the City of Nanaimo. "The Hetherington's vast knowledge, commitment and experience are undoubtedly responsible for the present high calibre of SAR service



Mr. and Mrs. Hetherington received a framed Commissioner's Commendation certificate from John Palliser, Superintendent RSER Pacific, on behalf of the Commissioner.



Mr. Palliser banding Mr. and Mrs. Hetherington a gift from RCC Victoria.

(Hetheringtons, *cont'd*)



On behalf of CCGA Pacific, Craig Dunn, President CCGA Pacific, presents the Hetheringtons with a framed certificate of appreciation.

on the West Coast," noted Mr. Palliser. "The Hetheringtons have effectively been on call twenty-four hours a day, three hundred and sixty five days a year, often sacrificing holidays and changing their life style in order to ensure their availability to respond to distress situations immediately."

At the dinner held to recognise their exemplary commitment to safety of life at sea, Mr. and Mrs. Hetherington thanked everyone for their assistance over the years, especially the RCC controllers for their "professionalism, respect, and recognition." Then they handed over the reins to Kevin Perkins, who has replaced Mr. Hetherington as the new Unit Leader for Nanaimo. Mr. Palliser commented that "it is with extreme gratitude and some sadness that we say farewell to these devoted volunteers."

*Alison Kopelman, SAR Intern
CCG Headquarters*

Remember When...

Recently a reporter asked me a question that most of us in the SAR community have been asked many times before. "What was the most significant, or dramatic, search and rescue you've ever been involved in?" Fully expecting to be regaled by a SAR Prinsedam or a Boxtop 22 story, they invariably pull up a comfortable chair, don their flak jacket and tighten their helmet - they're ready to hear a really good war story. Not wanting to disappoint, you furtively wish you had a Medal of Bravery or Commendation to conveniently point to. You may even have been tempted to embellish one of your routine

missions, or to borrow a buddy's harrowing tale to quench the reporter's thirst. Boy wouldn't it be handy if you had a copy of Reader's Digest lying around that had a good rescue story in it. I know a SAR Technician that had a story written about a mission he was on - he carried the book with him and was always ready in case someone asked "the question."

As usual I didn't have a pat answer for the reporter, and even though Rescue Co-ordination Centre (RCC) Victoria has handled over 1000 cases since I arrived, I found

(Hetheringtons, *cont'd*)

myself caught flat-footed. I tried talking in generalities, and even told a few anecdotal and humorous SAR stories that had happened recently. Subtly I manoeuvred the conversation to CANAM SAREX 2000. An explosion occurs on a ferry with 400 passengers onboard and a mayday is declared - 100 people down the emergency chute, two fifty-man life-rafts deployed, 5 helicopters doing hoists, lots of SAR vessels, 17 agencies involved and over 1000 participants. The reporter's eyes light up and she furiously scribbles away, until "you mean it was only an exercise?" Thank goodness the 6 February 1999 event was only an exercise. If it had been real - now that would have been a story.

RCC Victoria handled almost 2500 cases last year - surely one of them had enough drama to be worthy of a tale of daring-do. Having lived in the shadow of the September 1998 Swiss Air disaster, which was thankfully not in our backyard, it's hard to come up with a SAR story that measures up. I racked my brain going over the missions since September, and in desperation even asked some of the Controllers for input. What I received were mostly blank stares and shoulder shrugs. It seems as if they were also suffering storyteller's block. We had a number of cargo ships that went adrift off the West Coast with the potential to become disasters, but winds, currents, and rescue tugs ensured none evolved into a Coos Bay or Exxon Valdez incident. In the fall there was a rash of aircraft crashes, but the SAR crews seemed to handle them all routinely. The reporter departed happily enough, but I started to wonder "is it my imagination or is there a dearth of worthy SAR stories?"

I reflected on my own past experiences. I remember my first missions where the excitement of the unknown and challenging conditions made for memorable stuff. It seems the SAR stories were better years ago. Has the combination of preventive training, better equipment and quicker reporting truly caused SAR to become more routine? Weighty thoughts - or perhaps all the meaty SAR cases involve someone else. In our Search and Rescue Region (SRR), on any given day we can have members of the SAR Team pulling people out of the water,

fetching injured seamen off of heaving ships, parachuting into crash sites, homing emergency beacons, towing boats off the rocks or plucking casualties off mountain tops. Are these routine events?

It has been said that once you've been sailing in a gale long enough you become so accustomed to the howl and the spray that after a while you perceive it to be normal. Maybe it's not just me. Ask yourself - do you find yourself doing the routine? Is complacency setting in or are you simply very proficient? As all of us know SAR is inherently dangerous, and even when done by highly trained crews it can be risky. This might be a worthwhile time to remind yourself that it would be a tragedy to lose a search crew trying to do a dramatic rescue of an individual in distress. Maybe it's time to move the situational yardsticks, and start remembering how you felt during your first missions. Everyone involved in the SAR System is doing a very valuable job, and of our SRR's 280 distress cases last year there were 646 people saved. Surely there are a few good stories. . . oops, let's move those yardsticks. . . I bet if you asked each one of those 646 people they would all agree - they're all terrific SAR stories.

Major Colin Goodman, Officer in Charge

*Reprinted from The SAR Side, RCC Victoria Bulletin
4th Edition, June 1999*

Reminder to CCGA Vessel Owners

For your own protection please ensure that the Coast Guard is kept up to date of any additions/alterations to the vessel or new equipment purchases.

CCGA Video and Public Service Announcement:

More Public Visibility for Auxiliarists

In order to increase public visibility of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary and to promote the work of CCGA volunteers as a vital resource for Search and Rescue in Canada, the CCGA has developed two new communication tools. The first is a 20-minute video that describes the organisation, and the second is a 30-second television Public Service Announcement (PSA).

The video, which is entitled "Good Samaritans of the Sea" represents all five Coast Guard regions, including the national organisation, and is a tribute to the work of the volunteers in the Canadian SAR system. It describes the mandate of the Auxiliary, and outlines its organisational struc-

ture and its implication in SAR and Safe Boating activities.

The video has been distributed to each region and is now available for use at boat shows, various public events, and for fundraising purposes.

The television PSA has been distributed to 241 television stations across Canada and feedback has been extremely favourable. The PSA began airing in early June and has been very widely publicised. It is helping the CCGA to obtain visibility in the public's eye and since the CCGA is a non-profit organisation, the PSA is aired for free. This makes the PSA a low cost program for the CCGA.

The next tool the CCGA will prepare is a marketing brochure. The brochure will also be used to promote CCGA activities and to support the units and regions that wish to fundraise and to develop new sources of financing.

The National Office has also developed a **National Fundraising Policy** and a **Strategic Fundraising Plan**. With these tools in hand, the CCGA will be ready to take the promotion of SAR and Safe Boating activities even further, and to look for support from the private sector.

François Vézina
Business Manager, CCGA
CCG Headquarters

Mock Maritime Disaster

A simulated maritime disaster called CANAM SAREX 2000 took place on February 6, 1999 off the West Coast of North America. The exercise involved over one thousand people, of which one hundred were members of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (CCGA). The Commander of Maritime Forces Pacific, as well as the Coast Guard Commissioner expressed their gratitude for the CCGA's participation.

"While many folks do this professionally as part of their job, many men and women of the CCGA, [the] Cana-

dian Air Search and Rescue Association (CASARA) and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary (USCGA) are also participating. And one of the things that makes the search and rescue region work so well here, are those volunteers - and we must not forget them," commented Rear-Admiral R.D. Buck, Commander, Maritime Forces Pacific.

John Adams, Commissioner of the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) also praised the CCGA members. "The response to a major marine disaster is a federal responsibility,

(Mock disaster, *cont'd*)

however... the actual response will frequently involve large numbers of people, just mariners that happen to be on the water. Whether they're recreational mariners, whether they're fishers - they'll be there and they'll often put their lives at risk in order to respond to a disaster such as this." Mr. Adams went on to point out the CCG's responsibility to provide marine resources for search and rescue operations. "The CCGA are our partners in this, and I can't say enough about those volunteers."

SAREX 2000 involved participants from the Department of National Defence, The Canadian and U.S. Coast Guards,

The Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (CCGA), the U.S. Navy, the USCGA, the Provincial Emergency Program, the Capital Health Region, the Canadian Red Cross Society, B.C. Ferries, and numerous municipal emergency services organisations. The aforementioned organisations formed an international team to practise their response to a staged maritime disaster. "This is a very realistic exercise and we are very pleased with the level of cooperation we have had from all services," remarked Rear-Admiral Buck.

Alison Kopelman

SAR Intern, CCG Headquarters



The SAREX 2000 team responding to the mock maritime disaster. Pictured here are U.S. Coast Guard, Canadian Coast Guard, and Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary vessels working together during the exercise.

A Clear Vision for the Future of The Auxiliary

An Interview with François Vézina, National Business Manager, Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary

How long have you been the business manager for the GGCA?

I joined the CCGA on June 1, 1998. During the first year, I was able to familiarise myself with the way the organization operates and get to know the people who make it work. With the support of Steve Daoust, Superintendent Coast Guard Auxiliary at Headquarters, we have set up an office in Ottawa and developed programs to support our CCGA priorities. These priorities are: raising the profile of the Auxiliary in the public eye, setting the basics to diversify our funding, and improving communication within the organisation and with our partners.

What is your background previously to becoming the Business Manager?

I have been involved in volunteer organizations since I started my university degree back in 1980. I was then a Board member and Secretary of the executive committee for a community radio station in Québec City. In 1987, I joined the Board of Directors of the local a.m. radio association as secretary of the Executive Committee. After completing my studies in the field of Communication, I started working as Communication Supervisor for the Iron Ore Company of Canada (IOC) in Sept-Îles, Québec. While at IOC, my job was to supervise a number of internal and external communication programs.

What made you decide to become involved with the Coast Guard Auxiliary?

The CCGA fulfils an essential role for Canadians. The organization directly contributes in a very significant way to the safety of the people.

The potential for the CCGA to take a hold of its own destiny is there and the momentum to transform a good organization into a great one is also there. In a word, for someone who wants to make things happen and achieve concrete results, the CCGA is the place to be.

The Coast Guard is supporting us in helping the CCGA to adapt to change, to fulfil new roles and to meet new challenges. It is up to us to make it happen at all levels of the organization. That is why I joined the CCGA.

What are your plans for the CCGA?

It is up to the National Council to decide what game plan we are going to follow. The Presidents have the experience and knowledge to lead the organization. Moreover, they are well aware of the concerns of the membership and the needs of the boating community in their respective regions. My position reports to the CEO of the CCGA, Harry Strong.

That being said, we see that many members of the Auxiliary are eager to do more. They are not the kind of

(Clear Vision, *cont'd*)

people to stand by the phone and just wait for a call out. They want to develop their skills, train and exercise themselves, and to contribute even more to the safety of fellow mariners. They want their unit to be ready to respond and they want their crewmembers to act as a team when the going gets tough.

The role of the CCGA national office is to support our members in any way we can. To do this we are going to do the telling (inform the public about us) and the selling (ask the public to support us). This is why we are developing new marketing tools for the organization, such as a video, a brochure, public service announcements (PSAs), a web site, and more. You may have already seen the CCGA's new PSA on television.

We have also developed a Fundraising Policy (Code of Ethics) and a Strategic Plan to fundraise at the national level. Our new marketing tools can be used on a voluntary basis at the local, regional or national level to tell the story of the auxiliary and to gain support for what we do.

Another project we are working on is our National Awards Program. A first draft of this program has been submitted to the members of the CCGA National Council for review. We feel it is very important for an organization such as ours to give proper recognition to our volunteers.

What would you consider to be your most important task/responsibility as the CCGA Business Manager?

Many stakeholders are part of this organization.

Internally, the CCGA is made of five regions whose profiles are very different from one another. The SAR cases are different, and the members who are responding have different needs. Externally, we also have various

stakeholders associated with the CCGA. In Ottawa, we deal with various people in the departments of Search and Rescue and the Office of Boating Safety. Finally, in each region, we have a number of Coast Guard resources which are key to the success of our mission. We also have to develop and maintain close working relationships between the CCGA business managers, which have been hired in the regions.

An important task is to work with Steve Daoust and ensure that every piece of the puzzle falls in place, that every stakeholder is consistent in following the direction and the national policies established in order for the organization to maintain the course and progress toward our goals.



François Vézina, National Business Manager of the CCGA, has big plans for the future of the Auxiliary. Pictured here in his Ottawa office, where he is working to develop national marketing tools to increase public awareness of the CCGA.

United Way and the CCGA

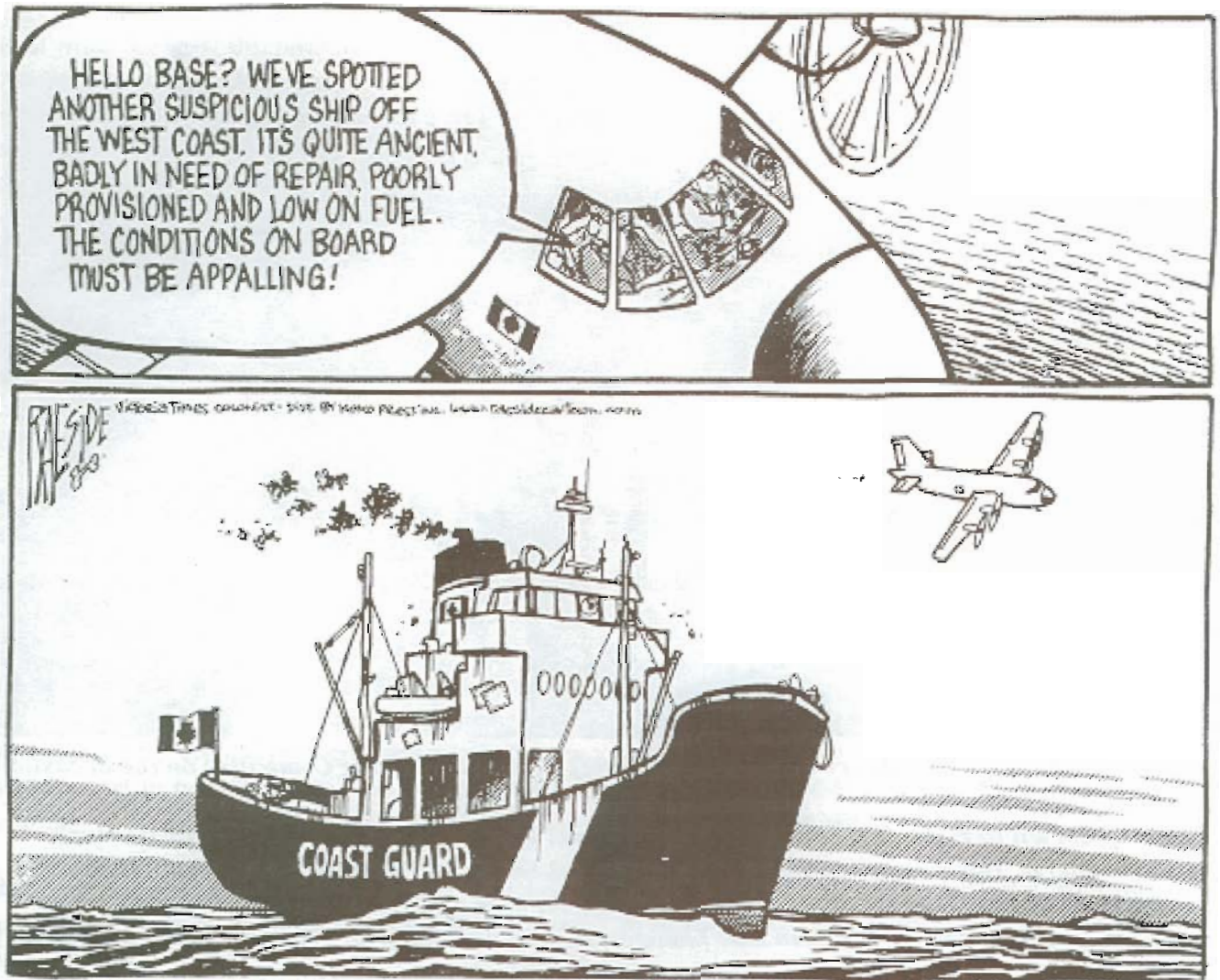
As members of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary you are probably already aware of the CCGA's status as a non-profit organization (NPO). But did you know that as an NPO the CCGA is eligible to be included in the upcoming United Way campaign in your community?

CCGA unit SAULT SAR in Sault Ste. Marie, ON, have obtained funds from the United Way, so what better NPO to include in your next United Way Campaign than your very own CCGA?

We highly encourage all CCGA members to apply to have the CCGA in-

cluded in this year's United Way campaign in your community. If you choose to do so, you will need to include the Auxiliary's national business number (87029 8494 RR 0001) on the election form.

Alison Kopelman
SAR Intern, CCG Headquarters



Central & Arctic Training Committee

Update on Current Projects

The Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (CCGA) Central and Arctic Training Committee was created in 1997 by Director of Training, Murray Miner. From the outset, the committee developed a very positive chemistry and the team goals directed our progress. At inception, it was an ad hoc committee to assist the Director of Training with developing and implementing Search and Rescue

(SAR) training in the Central and Arctic Region. The first project undertaken was to revise and re-write the SAR courses.

The SAR I project turned out to be a major revision of the student manual, the teaching aids (overheads), the student workbook, and, of course, the examination. In addition, the Training Committee organized and

presented an instructor's seminar. This seminar was very important as it induced the training of a sufficient number of instructors so that SAR courses would be able to be offered at sites closer to the units. Considerable money has already been saved in doing so and the SAR I course has been offered successfully on several occasions.



Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (Central and Arctic) Regional Training Committee on the occasion of Ted Cook's retirement.

Pictured from left to right: Mark Gagnon, CCG Regional Training Officer; Jim Gram, Instructor; Butch Dompierre, Instructor; Ted Cook (Ret.), Regional Evaluator; Murray Miner (Ret.), Regional Director of Training; Scott Miller, RCC Trenton; Peter Grabam, District 2 Training Officer; Gerry Reed, District 1 Training Officer; and Don Limoges, Regional Director of Training. These Auxiliary members represent close to 100 years of experience in SAR and/or SAR training.

(Central & Arctic, *cont'd*)

To enhance training at the unit level, Mr. Al Saunders was engaged to write an elementary navigation course, which teaches fundamental skills suitable for SAR crews. Mr. Saunders very kindly donated his work to the CCGA (C&A) and our grateful acknowledgment of his gift is hereby noted.

The revision of the SAR II material turned out to be a more multi-faceted project than expected. In part, this was because of a general overhaul of content, but in addition, material from the now discontinued SAR III (Crew and Vessel Management) was incorporated into the new SAR II course. The sheer bulk of content being included required, for the first time, the use of a section entitled "Optional Topics". During production, we found it possible to increase the amount of col-

our used for the overheads and in the manual, compared to previous years. The resulting presentation has greater visual impact.

At the time of writing, the SAR II Student Manual, the Student Workbook, and the teaching aids (overheads), had been produced and the course had been field-tested. Students have given the Course a very high approval rating.

In the future, the SAR II materials require some minor corrections and revisions, and the instructor's manual for SAR II still has to be prepared. As well, an instructor course for SAR II, either as a separate course or joined with training for SAR I instruction, needs to be scheduled.

Other projects for the future include a training manual for "On-Water" SAR activities. This would provide assistance for owners/representatives

who wish to conduct training exercises and activities on their own sites. In addition, now that the scope of SAR training has been outlined in the present courses, it has been deemed necessary to revisit the SAR I course with enhancements and modifications.

Finally, the Committee wishes to acknowledge the strong support of the Coast Guard in making their Regional Training Officer available at all meetings. We also acknowledge the support of RCC in making a Controller available for Committee meetings. The work of the Committee has been strengthened immeasurably by the addition of these valuable resources.

*Co-authored by:
Don Limoges, Director of
Training (C & A) and
Jim Gram, Deputy Director,
District 2 (C & A)*

By the Light of the Moon

About two years ago, the Unit 1 Auxiliary vessel was conducting a training session on a beautiful fall evening. The conditions were perfect - calm seas, no rain, and a big harvest moon. As we re-entered Fisherman's Cove, a distress call went out to Vancouver Coast Guard Radio. We monitored intently, as the signal was strong; the vessel appeared to be in our area, and we anticipated a tasking.

With some difficulty, the Coast Guard operator determined the nature of the distress... the subject vessel was only lost, and was seeking guidance into familiar

waters. With time, it became apparent that the vessel's skipper was fairly intoxicated.

The Coast Guard operator did an admirable job of trying to locate the vessel, but the skipper was of little assistance. He could only offer these facts: port of departure was Boundary Bay, port of destination was Coal Harbour in Vancouver.

The following conversation took place on channel 22A, in an effort to pinpoint the position of the subject vessel:

(Light of the Moon, *cont'd*)

"Sir, can you please give me a more definite position."

"I don't know... I'm lost"

"I understand sir, but are you near any recognizable points of land?"

"I... I'm not sure... I don't know what direction I'm heading in"

(It seems the drinking had rendered the compass useless...)

"Sir, I can't be of much assistance in guiding you if you can't give me your approximate position."

"I... I know, I'm sorry, ... I'm somewhere between Vancouver and the United States."

"I understand sir. Can you see any navigational lights nearby?"

..... loooooong pause

"...I'm almost directly under the moon."

At this point, despite our sore sides, we checked out with Vancouver on 04A. When he could do so without bursting into laughter, the Vancouver operator acknowledged that he would pass that on to the Rescue Co-ordination Centre.

Jamie McJannet, Coxswain Unit 1, Howe Sound

Reprinted from The SAR Side, RCC Victoria Bulletin, 4th Edition, June 1999

CCGA Boating Safety Course Update

To date, CCGA Laurentian has devoted over 2,500 person-hours towards developing the new Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (CCGA) Boating Safety Course. Phase I included development of the course, which is now complete, and will also include training of CCGA members. Phase I is advancing ahead of schedule and planning for the next phase of the project has now begun. Phase II will focus on training CCGA members as course instructors and on

preparing the course to be offered to the public.

At a recent National Council Meeting held in August, project guidelines and resources were considered. Council also worked on developing a timeframe for the project's two phases and discussed which regions would participate in Phase II.

Following Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) approval of the course, 5 000 copies of the manual were printed

exclusively for CCGA members. As well, 10 000 additional manuals have been printed for Phase II using private funding separate from the Contribution Agreement. These will be distributed to the public once Phase II receives authorization from the National Council to proceed.

Alison Kopelman
SAR Intern
CCG Headquarters