



THE AUXILIARIST

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July 2000

Harry Strong Receives Honorary Membership

On Saturday, January 29, 2000, Mr. Harry Strong became an honorary member of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary (USCGA) in recognition of his continued support and exemplary service to the USCGA and its programs of boating safety. As the Chief Executive Officer of the CCGA, Mr. Strong has worked closely

with the USCGA to encourage the exchange of information, technologies and materials between both organisations. In 1999, Mr. Strong signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOU) that will permit the CCGA and USCGA to carry out joint training in search and rescue (SAR), disaster relief, environmental response,

courtesy vessel checks, public education, and other activities. Mr. Strong is the first person from outside of the United States to receive an honorary membership from the USCGA.

*Zoë Macdonald
SAR Intern, CCG Headquarters*



Harry Strong receives his USCGA honorary membership from Everett Tucker, National Commodore of the USCGA.



Canadian Coast
Guard Auxiliary

Garde côtière
auxiliaire canadienne

Operator Competency & the CCGA

March 8, 2000

To: Course Providers

I am writing to address a number of concerns which have been raised with the Canadian Coast Guard about the role of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary in relation to Operator Competency courses.

Let me say at the outset that the Coast Guard is pleased that you have developed an Operator Competency course and are involved in promoting and teaching boating safety to Canadians.

The Auxiliarist

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

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

As you know, each year on average 200 people in Canada lose their lives in boating accidents. Operator competency courses are an important part of the Coast Guard's efforts to fulfill our commitment to reducing this number through regulatory, enforcement, education and prevention measures.

Coast Guard is also committed to working in partnership and in cooperation with the marine community and others. Indeed, that is the philosophy and approach behind the Operator Competency program. Without your participation, and the participation of many others, including the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary, our boating safety objectives will not be met.

The Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary was formed in 1978 to provide coordination and support for volunteers involved in maritime Search and Rescue (SAR). Prior to that time, untrained volunteers participated in Search and Rescue operations completely at their own expense and without insurance for themselves, their crew and their vessels.

The six Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliaries are federally incorporated non-profit associations. Each of the associations is a legal entity separate from that of the Government of Canada and of the Coast Guard. The Auxiliary has a unique partnership with the Coast Guard, having shared responsibility in saving lives and promoting boating safety for over 20 years. The Auxiliary has been tasked over 34,000 times to provide assistance to mariners in trouble, often in very demanding conditions and at great risk to themselves. On average the Auxiliary saves in excess of 200 lives per year. In addition, the Auxiliary has spread the boating safety message to tens of thousands of Canadians.

(Operator Competency cont'd)

In addition to insurance and payment of out-of-pocket expenses for individual Auxiliary members tasked to a SAR incident, Coast Guard provides for training of Auxiliary members. With the introduction of the Operator Competency requirements, it was decided that all Auxiliary members would be required to hold operator competency certificates. Accordingly, Coast Guard agreed to contribute to the costs associated with the training required to meet this requirement.

It was determined that it would be most cost-effective for the Auxiliary to develop an Operator Competency Course for delivery to its own membership. The Canadian Coast Guard's contribution covered only a portion of the costs incurred by the Auxiliary towards training their own members, including the costs of translating, printing and mailing training manuals to each member of the Auxiliary.

The Auxiliary, as an incorporated association separate from the Coast Guard, is of course entitled to submit a course for accreditation and provide training for remuneration, the same as anyone else. They are also subject to the same accreditation standards and controls as everyone else.

Correction Notice

In *Auxiliarist* #17, the article entitled "Coast Guard Auxiliary Works Hard To Have Fun" was written by Joe Murphy, Coast Guard, Maritimes Region, not by Scott Verret. We apologize for the error.

We understand that in some areas, the Auxiliary has completed training of most of its members and is now in a position to begin to offer courses to the public. Both the Coast Guard and the Auxiliary are sensitive to the concerns that have been raised about the special relationship that exists between the Auxiliary and the Coast Guard and the need to ensure that unfair advantage is not taken of that relationship.

Guidelines have therefore been proposed as follows:

- While participating at boat shows and expositions in conjunction with the Canadian Coast Guard, Coast Guard personnel, Auxiliary members or others should provide information on all organizations that have accredited courses and tests and should not put any emphasis on a specific course provider. Any Operator Competency material distributed should identify all organizations that have accredited boating safety courses and tests.
- Any operator competency program offered to non-auxiliary members will not be supported by funds contributed by the Canadian Coast Guard.

In our view these guidelines should minimize concerns about the Auxiliary's activities without putting unreasonable constraints on their ability to contribute to our shared goal of ensuring the safety of the boating public.

The Canadian Coast Guard supports the efforts of all course providers in making our waterways safer. I would like to thank you for your cooperation and for your important contribution towards this goal.

*Steve Troy, A/Director General,
Rescue, Safety and Environmental Response
Canadian Coast Guard*

Update: National Uniform

The CCGA implemented a national uniform and guidelines in May of 1998 to improve "esprit de corps" and create a unified public identity. The CCGA National Council approved the following revisions in March 2000, as recommended by the CCGA uniform committee. Please note the following changes:

- The Officer in charge (CEO for national, President or his delegate for regional) of an activity will decide on the uniform of the day and notify attending members.
- Each CCGA region will have a Uniform Officer, whose duties include co-ordinating orders with suppliers.
- Past Chief Executive Officers, Presidents, Executives and Directors may continue to wear their rank and will wear a pin indicating that they held that past position.
- The Honour Guard will use the regular uniform with the addition of white gloves and a white belt.
- Officers do not wear Crew, Advance Crew or Coxswain badges. Officer stripes have a silver maple leaf above the top stripe.
- The Coxswain badge is worn centred between the shoulder and elbow on the left sleeve.
- The Crew and Advance Crew badges are worn centred between the shoulder and elbow on the right sleeve.
- Employee epaulettes are the same as member epaulettes but with one silver strip under the crest.
- The dress uniform (option #1) dress jacket is single breasted with one row of four buttons.
- The dress uniform (option #1) includes a band of silver maple leaves and a silver strap on the hard caps of Presidents and above.
- The dress uniform (option #3A and #3B) includes the choice of a dark navy blue Tilley Hat.
- The CCGA top coat is navy blue with a zipper liner.
- The work uniform now includes a wind breaker with a removable liner, as well as short pants, white or navy.
- The women's hat is the same style as the Coast Guard's women's hat.
- Shoes may not have tassels or fringes. Women's shoes must have a heel height of 1½" or less.
- Ladies' skirts may be straight or slightly flared. The appropriate length is just below the knee (24" long, average height).
- Guidelines have been established for the wearing of silver braid stripes.

In addition to these changes, all CCGA members are reminded that the CCGA uniform must be worn correctly. Although purchasing and wearing a CCGA uniform is entirely voluntary, members in uniform increase public visibility and improve

community relations. Therefore, disorderly or incomplete uniforms and neglect of grooming shall not be tolerated. Please note the following guidelines:

- A uniform must only be worn during CCGA approved activities or events.
- The dress and working dress uniforms must be neat, clean and in good condition. All insignia and ribbons must be firmly attached.
- No other insignia or lapel pin may be worn on the uniform or with the blazer, except for those recognized by Canada and lawfully awarded.
- If you are wearing long sleeves, the cuff should show just below the jacket sleeve. The jacket must also be fully buttoned.
- The service cap should be worn with the dress uniform for most public occasions. The cap may be removed when in private or while passing through living and messing accommodations.
- Items of the CCGA uniform **shall not** be worn with civilian clothes.
- Care must be given not to bring discredit to the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary, the Canadian Coast Guard or the Government of Canada while wearing the CCGA uniform.

For more information about uniforms, please refer to the CCGA Uniform Guideline Manual.

Zoë Macdonald
SAR Intern, CCG Headquarters

SARSCENE '99: Leading SAR into the Next Millennium

From October 13th to 17th, 1999, the Newfoundland and Labrador Search and Rescue Association, in co-operation with the National Search and Rescue Secretariat (NSS), hosted a record 702 participants at SARSCENE '99. The theme was "Leading SAR into the Next Millennium".

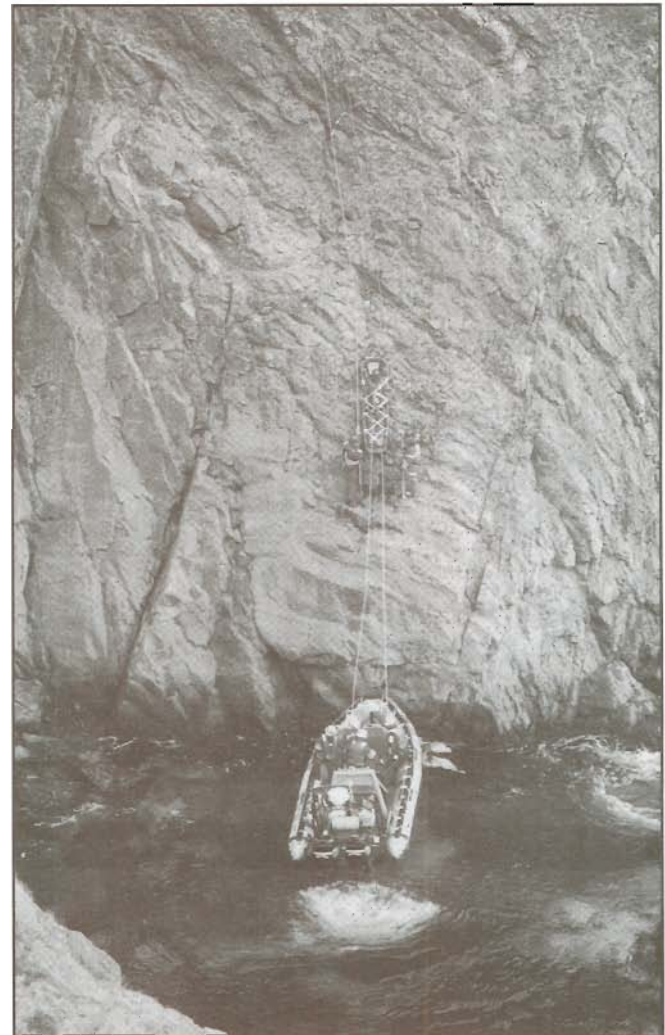
The week was eventful as many SAR organizations, including the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (CCGA) National Council, held meetings in conjunction with SARSCENE. Other activities included a trade show, a silent auction, and the 3rd Annual SARSCENE Games. Participants were officially welcomed to St. John's, Newfoundland with a Screech-In hosted by Harry Strong, CEO of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (CCGA).

On Saturday night, a formal banquet awarded winners of the SARSCENE Games and recognized SAR leaders with Certificates of Achievement. Lloyd Gallagher was awarded the 1999 Outstanding SAR Achievement Award, in recognition of his work in Kananaskis Country, mountain rescue and heli-sling rescue.

The week also featured SAR demonstrations. At Qidi Vidi Lake, three helicopters participated in mock marine rescues. A cliff rescue also took place at Cuckold's Cove, where a victim was transferred from a cliff to a fast rescue craft and then to a helicopter. In the city, a tactical team rappelled down the side of the Delta Hotel.

The CCGA had a significant presence at this year's SARSCENE. One of the most memorable workshop presentations was the "Swissair Flight 111 track", which featured RCC Halifax, Canadian Coast Guard and CCGA, RCMP and Nova Scotia Emergency Measures Organiza-

tion (EMO). Gary Masson presented, "CCGA Response to Swiss Air Flight 111", a poignant description of the CCGA's volunteer service during the tragedy.



"Rescuers" transfer a brave volunteer from a cliff to a fast rescue craft during a demonstration at Cuckold's Cove.

(SARSCENE '99 cont'd)

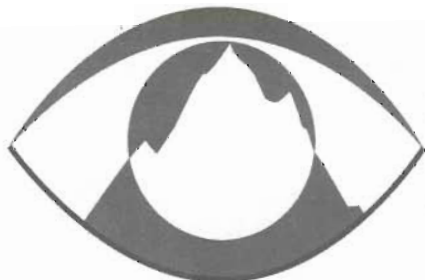
Harry Strong, CEO of the CCGA, presented a workshop outlining the future of the CCGA. Also of interest was a workshop by Everette Tucker, Commodore of the USCGA, on conducting preventative SAR.

SARSCENE '99 was considered a successful international event with many interesting workshops and activities. This year's SARSCENE 2000 will be held in Laval, Quebec and promises to be just as eventful for members of the SAR community.

Zoë Macdonald
SAR Intern
CCG Headquarters



Harry Strong, CEO of the CCGA, addresses participants at SARSCENE '99.



Graphic Design: Matilda Luk

SARSCENE 2000: Un pour tous, All for One

The National Search and Rescue Secretariat (NSS) and the Volunteer Group Sauvetage Canada Rescue (SCR) are working together to present SARSCENE 2000 from October 11th to 15th, 2000 in Laval, Quebec. Expected to attract more than 1,000 search and rescue (SAR) experts from around the world, it is the largest workshop and trade show of its kind in Canada. The CCGA is a member of this year's organizing committee.

This year's theme will be "Un pour tous, All for One", and promises to build on the success of past SARSCENE workshops. An added bonus to this year's workshop will be the presence of delegates from over 30 countries who will be attending the COSPAS-SARSAT seminar that is taking place in conjunction with SARSCENE 2000 (see www.cospas-sarsat.org for more information). Several CCGA members will also attend as the first annual National SAR Competition of the

Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary will be held during the week. In addition, the CCGA National Council will be meeting during the conference.

As the ninth annual SARSCENE unfolds, participants will enjoy some of the event's most popular aspects from past years:

SARSCENE Games
 Awards Ceremony and Meet and Greet
 Opening ceremonies

(SARSCENE cont'd)

Hands-on workshops
The SARSCENE trade show
On-site demonstrations
Silent auction
Outstanding SAR Achievement Awards Banquet

The SARSCENE workshops will showcase the latest in ground, aeronautical and maritime search and rescue. In addition, SARSCENE 2000 will feature pre-workshop training sessions, where participants may learn about topics such as incident management and night searching on an in-depth level.

Unique to SARSCENE 2000 will be a St. Lawrence River SAR Demo boat cruise on October 14. This promises to be a rewarding cruise with special SAR demonstrations featuring on-shore rappelling, a hovercraft demonstration, a helicopter rescue and a special demonstration of Bombardier's Canadair 415 amphibious aircraft.

On October 15, the first annual National SAR Competition of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary will take place, featuring teams from each region and from the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary. This will be an opportunity for participants to practice valuable skills and

develop the team spirit and collaboration that are essential elements in the field of search and rescue.

If you are interested in keeping abreast of the latest SAR techniques, technologies, and news, mark your calendars for SARSCENE 2000. For more information, including registration and accommodation details, visit www.nss.gc.ca or refer to the insert in this issue of the Auxiliarist.

COSPAS-SARSAT conference:

www.cospas-sarsat.org

NSS web page (SARSCENE information): www.nss.gc.ca

Zoë Macdonald
SAR Intern, CCG Headquarters

Fundraising for Success: CCGA Issues a National Strategy

On October 13, 1999, the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (CCGA) issued a Strategic Fundraising Plan. The Plan explores the possibilities for the CCGA to diversify its funding sources. Although the Plan will be developed and implemented at the national level, it will be a useful resource for developing regional strategies.

The Strategic Fundraising Plan begins by examining the positive and negative aspects of the CCGA's profile. On the upside, the CCGA offers a unique service to the community that is based on high quality programs. On the downside, however, the CCGA has a relatively low profile outside the marine community and has a somewhat narrow audience reach. In response, the Strategic

Fundraising Plan emphasizes that the CCGA should continue to market itself and increase its public visibility.

Also, the Strategic Fundraising Plan identifies eight prioritized fundraising vehicles. The first vehicle is special events, such as the annual Search and Rescue Competitions, held by the CCGA. Special events not only cultivate investor relations; they also result in increased media coverage and publicity. As another priority, the Strategic Fundraising Plan suggests that the National Office produce informational and promotional material about planned giving. This step will help establish a system whereby people may bequeath money to the CCGA.

(Fundraising cont'd)

Other forms of fundraising to be prioritized are corporate fundraising, small business solicitations, foundation solicitations, project funding, product sales, and workplace giving.

The Strategic Fundraising Plan defines the steps of the fundraising process from selecting a fundraising vehicle to creating a donor relations and recognition program. The Strategic Fundraising Plan also describes the

elements of a proposal, making the solicitation process easier and thorough. The Plan also emphasizes the value of cultivation and stewardship in maintaining good donor relations.

Lastly, the Strategic Fundraising Plan provides a focus and vision for the national fundraising effort. The National Council expects the Plan to be implemented this year, and as a result, the CCGA hopes to increase its visibility and its funding sources on a national level.

Zoë Macdonald, SAR Intern, CCG Headquarters

Maximizing our Efforts: The CCGA National Fundraising Policy

Donors and sponsors need to be reassured that their money will be used properly and that their donation makes a real difference. In response to this need, the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (CCGA) adopted a National Fundraising Policy (NFP) on October 13, 1999. The Policy aims to maximize financial support by establishing guidelines that benefit volunteers, staff, donors, sponsors, and the CCGA.

Why do we need a National Fundraising Policy?

Imagine yourself on a busy city street. All around you, people pass by with hardly a glance. You try to get into your car, but the lock is jammed. As you fumble with your car keys, a stranger offers you a hand. Do you trust this person? How do you know they won't take your car?

There are so many people on the street; you're not sure whom to trust. The person offering help may actually be honest, but it's dangerous to take the chance.

The same feelings of distrust may often be felt while considering a donation to charity. Is the organization honest? How do you know they'll use your money properly? There are so many non-profit organizations out there today; it's hard to know which ones are legitimate.

Even if an organization is honest, donors should be given enough assurance that their donations are for a worthy cause. The NFP establishes that the CCGA expects certain levels of employee, volunteer, and donor conduct during the fundraising process. As a result, the NFP clarifies the fundraising process for both the fundraisers and the donors.

What is the National Fundraising Policy?

The National Fundraising Policy includes three statements:

- Statement of Ethical Principles
- Donor/Sponsor Bill of Rights
- Code of Professional Practice

The Statement of Ethical Principles is exactly what its name implies. It formalizes the CCGA's ethical structure into a list of values. These values, such as honesty, confidentiality, and accountability, serve as a general guideline of conduct.

The Donor/Sponsor Bill of Rights recognizes that donors and sponsors have the right to be informed of matters such as the CCGA's mission, activities, and financial matters. Also, the Bill assures donors and sponsors

(Maximizing cont'd)

that all information will be kept confidential and that all gifts will be used for their intended purposes. The Donor/Sponsor Bill of Rights ensures that questions are encouraged and are answered promptly, clearly, and truthfully.

The Code of Professional Practice establishes a standard of professionalism for all CCGA fundraisers. By doing so, it ensures that the donor-fundraiser relationship is not exploited or harmed. It requires that all fundraisers:

- disclose all conflicts of interest
- comply with local, provincial and federal civil and criminal law
- ensure that contributions are used in compliance with donor's wishes
- keep all donor information confidential
- use accurate materials when soliciting donations
- maintain accurate and consistent accounting practices
- ensure that at least 80% of donations received are spent on charitable activities

Who does what?

The CCGA NFP defines jurisdictions for fundraising to prevent duplication of effort. The National Council will be responsible for approaching Canada's largest companies, listed in the "Financial Post Top 500". Each CCGA region will be responsible for

approaching companies with a regional/provincial focus; and each unit will approach local companies that are community-based. Moneys raised at the national level will be distributed nationally; moneys raised by the region will be distributed among the region; and moneys

raised locally will remain at the local level.

By adopting a clear fundraising policy, the CCGA hopes to step up its fundraising potential.

Zoë Macdonald
SAR Intern, CCG Headquarters



International Year of Volunteers

The United Nations has declared 2001 the International Year of Volunteers (IYV). The objectives of the year are to

increase the recognition, facilitation, networking and promotion of volunteers and their efforts. In Canada, representatives of business, government and the voluntary sector held a forum to determine national objectives for Canada's role in the International Year of Volunteers. The forum participants identified some key strategic objectives, including the promotion and celebration of volunteerism in Canada. The Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary, as a non-profit organisation, is made up of over 5000 volunteers who are dedicated to saving and protecting lives in their communities. The IYV will highlight the importance of such dedication in Canadian society. Although some nation-wide initiatives are being planned, the forum concluded that "fundamental to the nature of volunteerism is that the activities and events for the year come about at a grassroots level, where the bulk of volunteer work takes place."

For more information on the International Year of Volunteers and how to get involved, visit the United Nations web site at www.iyv2001.org or visit Volunteer Canada's web site at www.volunteer.ca.

Zoë Macdonald
SAR Intern, CCG Headquarters

And this award goes to...

As volunteers, the members of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (CCGA) donate their time and energy to help prevent the loss of life and injury at sea. The National Council created a National Awards Program in 1999 in order to recognize those who have made a significant and positive impact on the CCGA. The nine awards are:

CCGA Certificate of Appreciation

This award is presented to members or non-members who have helped or co-operated with the CCGA in a noteworthy way. Recipients are applauded for their compassion and charity, and have usually been involved with the CCGA for many years.

National Council Honorary Membership

Awarded to members or non-members, this award recognizes a level of performance that is above expectations and significantly helps the CCGA attain its mission as a national organization.

CCGA Service Pins

This pin is awarded to members of the CCGA for their dedication and long-term service. No nomination is required for this award, as it is handed out annually by each regional president. One pin is awarded for every five, ten, fifteen, or twenty years of service in the CCGA.

CCGA Administrative Medal

The Medal of Administrative Merit is awarded to members or non-members whose administrative activities are worthy of special recognition. Recipients are applauded for outstanding administrative achievements or services that are above normal expectations.

CCGA Leadership Medal

This medal is awarded to members who have made major accomplishments in operations or administration.

Recipients demonstrate a high level of professionalism or leadership over a sustained amount of time.

CCGA Exemplary Service Medal

This award honours the lifetime achievements of CCGA members. Recipients display an exceptional level of performance that has been shown to benefit the entire organization.

CCGA Humanitarian Service Medal

This medal applauds members or non-members who have played a part in a major humanitarian act or operation. The level of service given must be above and beyond normal duties, provide immediate relief, affect the situational outcome, and have major significance.

CCGA Operational Merit Medal

The Medal of Operational Merit is awarded to members who have demonstrated outstanding skills during operational service. Recipients are recognized for their professionalism and uncommonly high standards, which have benefited the CCGA and its mission.

CCGA Heroism Medal

As the highest honour of the CCGA, the Heroism Medal recognizes extreme skill in performing an assist or rescue involving risk to the auxiliaryist's life. The skills demonstrated must be above and beyond all expectations, regardless of success.

Any CCGA member may make a nomination, which is reviewed by the regional board of directors. If the board of directors approves the nomination, the National Awards Advisory Committee may make a recommendation for an award to the CCGA National Council.

Zoë Macdonald
SAR Intern, CCG Headquarters

Daring Rescue by Auxiliary Members in Newfoundland Region

On the morning of March 18, 2000, MRSC St. John's was notified by Placentia MCTS that a fishing vessel was aground in Wreck Cove, Fortune Bay, Newfoundland. In addition to tasking primary resources and vessels of opportunity, the MRSC tasked three Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (CCGA) vessels. Despite severe weather conditions, all three vessels accepted the tasking and as a result saved a life.

It all began off the south coast of Newfoundland on the evening of March 17, 2000, after two fishing vessels carrying four crew members returned to Wreck Cove after a day of fishing. Later in the evening, the weather deteriorated into winds up to 45 knots, heavy seas, and reduced visibility in heavy snow and freezing spray. When both fishing vessels broke their moorings, the four individuals re-boarded the vessels and attempted to save them. However, the effort soon became one for survival.

In spite of their efforts, one vessel became swamped and was lost. All four persons were now aboard the second vessel when it failed and began to drive ashore. The vessel grounded in Wreck Cove and three of the men were able to climb up slippery rocks to a nearby cabin for shelter. However, during his efforts to save his own vessel, the owner of

the grounded vessel had sustained injuries that left him unable to climb to safety.

The CCGA vessels, *Jane & Brothers*, *Trina & Sons* and *Stephen & Jayde* accepted a tasking from MRSC St. John's and headed toward the scene. After approximately one hour, *Jane & Brothers* stood down due to the severe ice accumulation on the vessel. However, the other two CCGA vessels were able to press on through the storm tossed seas and arrived on scene.

Upon their arrival, it became apparent to the Masters of the CCGA vessels that the now holed and swamped vessel could not be towed from the rocks to safety. As well, due to the shallow water and heavy sea conditions, the CCGA vessels could not be used to rescue the injured and now severely hypothermic man still onboard his stricken vessel. It was decided that the lifeboat from the *Trina & Sons* CCGA vessel would be floated to the grounded vessel to evacuate the injured man.

The small lifeboat was launched from the *Trina & Sons*, carrying Mr. Art Pierce and Mr. Rod Pierce from the *Stephen & Jayde* vessel. While the Master of *Trina & Sons*, Mr. Wesley Snook Sr., held the stern of his vessel to the heavy wind and seas,

his crewmembers, Wesley Snook Jr., Gary Snook Sr. and Tim Stoodley, slacked the boat to the beach by way of a lifeline.

Due to his injuries and the effects of hypothermia, the owner of the fishing vessel was unable to walk or help himself. Mr. Pierce and Mr. Pierce successfully evacuated the injured man to an alternate location where all three men re-boarded the lifeboat and were hauled by the crew back to *Trina & Sons*.

Once onboard, the injured man was taken below deck and treated for hypothermia. The injured man had spent a total of five hours in the water and was near death. The crew treated the man until he was evacuated to hospital in Harbour Breton, where he later recovered.

Because of the professionalism and assistance of the Auxiliary members on March 18, tragedy was avoided. The willingness of the Masters and crew of the CCGA vessels to face extreme danger to save the life of another is a shining example of the dedication of the members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary and worthy of respect.

*Adapted from Briefing Note by
Anthony Patterson
Superintendent – Marine SAR
Newfoundland*

Critical Incident Stress Program

Working during extreme weather conditions, recovery of drowning victims, air crashes, and boating accidents, are just a few examples of the traumatic incidents that members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary might encounter in their day-to-day marine Search and Rescue activity. Any one of these can result in Critical Incident Stress (CIS).

CIS is a term that describes the physical or emotional responses typically experienced after a trauma. Symptoms include such things as trembling, stomach upsets, flashbacks of the incident, and nightmares. These are common reactions to an abnormal event or critical incident, and can interfere with a person's ability to function during or after the event.

Since 1991, a CIS Program has been in place in the Pacific Region to support Coast Guard employees, as well as CCGA members, who are involved in critical incidents. The CIS Program has three main components: pre-trauma training, a 25-member CIS Peer Team, and the support of qualified Mental Health Professionals.

Pamphlets describing the program have been distributed to each CCGA Unit Leader. Also, pre-trauma training sessions are being planned for CCGA members. The training helps individuals to recognize a critical incident, and to activate the CIS Program. The CIS Peer Team is made up of employee and spousal representatives who, through similar experience and training, understand the reactions of those involved in a critical incident. As soon after the trauma as possible, a Peer Mem-

ber makes contact providing CIS support and information.

The Peer Member also prevents secondary trauma: the re-actions of those involved to the inappropriate comments, humour or criticisms of fellow employees, the department, outside agencies or the media. Even good natured ribbing about a serious boating accident may cause further hurt to an individual, who just the day before, was involved in re-covering persons from the accident.

A team of professionally trained counsellors is available to conduct CIS debriefing sessions. These debriefings allow those involved to explore their individual reactions to the trauma, in a safe and confidential environment. RCC will normally activate the program on behalf of a CCGA Unit involved in a critical incident. However, should the RCC Controller not do so and the CCGA member believes there is a need, they should call RCC and ask them to initiate a response.

**Brian Steven, Peer Team Member,
Supervisor of Operations (OBS Pacific),
and Boating Safety liaison (Pacific).**

Editor's Note: The Critical Incident Stress Program is offered across Canada to all CCGA members. If you or someone you know may be affected by CIS, please contact your regional Coast Guard for assistance.

*Reprinted from Dolphin (CCGA Pacific Newsletter)
Autumn 1999, Volume 9, Number 3*

"SAR Wars" a Success

In late February 1999, CCGA Pacific held its annual Search and Rescue (SAR) Competition in Richmond, BC. The competition, wittily nicknamed "SAR Wars", took place in conjunction with CCGA Pacific's Annual General Meeting.

The competition consisted of six events:

- Courtesy Vessel Examinations
- First Aid
- On Water SAREX, a simulated SAR case where participants were judged by their chart and plan work, search patterns and execution.
- Radio

- Pump Operations
- Line Toss

The events allowed CCGA Pacific members to practice SAR skills and

teamwork, two vital elements in any search and rescue operation.

Zoë Macdonald
SAR Intern, CCG Headquarters



Congratulations to Unit 6, Richmond North, winners of SAR Wars. (pictured L to R): Pat Sears, Ryan Woodward (Unit Leader) and Greg Miller.

Friendly Competition in Newfoundland

The Second Annual CCGA Newfoundland Search and Rescue (SAR) Skills Competition took place on October 2, 1999 at the Royal Newfoundland Yacht Club in Conception Bay South, Newfoundland. Ten teams, representing each of the CCGA Newfoundland districts, competed in six events: first aid, line throwing, search

operations, chartwork, SAR pump operations and courtesy vessel examinations. For each event, teams received points based on their performance.

Following the competition, an Awards Banquet and dance was held at the Battery Hotel in St. John's. Ten-

(Competition cont'd)

year members of the CCGA were presented with certificates and the winning teams of each event received embroidered equipment bags and various prizes. Each participant in the competition also received a Swiss Army Knife engraved with the CCGA crest. The overall competition winners (District 4) were the proud recipients of the *Captain Peter Troake CM Memorial Trophy*.

The SAR Skills Competition provides participants with an opportunity to meet fellow members in a friendly but competitive environment. SAR skills competitions are held across the country as a way of practising valuable and crucial lifesaving skills.

Zoë Macdonald
SAR Intern, CCG Headquarters



"The Grand Champions": The winning team from District 4 (L to R: Randell Snook, Kerry Hatcher, Wesley Snook - District Director, Gerald Courtney).



Auxiliarists compete in the line throwing competition.

Controlled Drinking 'N Driving

Drink until you can't drive anymore – that was the aim of Canada's Safe Boating Councils (CSBC) on Water Challenge in Lake Ontario in Hamilton, Ont. This controlled event was held to challenge a group of eager CSBC conference delegates to drink their favourite drinks and operate a small, powered inflatable through a course, followed 20 minutes later by taking a breathalyzer test.

The Ontario Provincial Police only permitted delegates to negotiate the obstacle course with the 9.9-hp boat if they blew less than 0.5 on the breathalyzer each time. All but one volunteer's maneuvering skills decreased after each drink. This on-water session demonstrated that boat operator performance begins to slide downward just after the first alcoholic beverage. Observers said

the delegates became more daring and aggressive and less coordinated as they continued to drink. Even for the few who swung the other way and were extra careful, their judgement was still off. Everyone walked away knowing that alcohol is still reported as being a heavy factor in half of all boating deaths in Canada.

Reprinted from Canadian Yachting Fall 1999

Anatomy of a Disaster

When the engine stopped on a 27-foot sailboat motor-ing just off Victoria's shores near Trial Island, the owner didn't have an anchor on board to keep her from drifting inshore. Luckily, Coast Guard Auxiliary volunteers were able to reach the vessel in time and tow it to safety.

"She said she had no idea why the engine had stopped," recalls Craig Dunn, president of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (Pacific). "I said maybe it's that really tight line hanging off your bow." The bowline had slipped off the foredeck, and the rope was long enough to foul the propeller.

Off Pedder Bay about a year ago, Coast Guard Auxiliary members came to the aid of power boaters whose planing hull began taking on water. As long as the boat had been going at high speed, the pump had been keeping up. At rest, it started to sink. The cause was a small round hole in the hull – the depth sounder had been knocked loose when the boat rolled off the trailer and later dropped right out of the boat.

Whether they go out for commercial or recreational reasons, most boaters have plenty of stories about hit-

ting "uncharted" rocks and encountering wild storms. Coast Guard volunteers can expect increased calls next month as the weather improves.

"That's when all the boaters come out of the boathouse," said Dunn. "They haven't done their maintenance, they don't have their new tide and current atlas, or they have water in the fuel from condensation." Auxiliary members – 1,400 of them in 49 units in BC (and Yukon) – handle a third of all marine incidents reported to Victoria's Rescue Co-ordination Centre.

These stories all have one thing in common. Seemingly minor decisions would have averted tragedy.

But what turns a minor mishap into a disaster?

The most critical decision is whether to go out at all, says Denman Island author Keith Keller, who compiled 21 true accounts of sea rescues in his 1997 book *Dangerous Waters*. From a seiner wrecked on rocky cliffs after losing its way in a snowstorm to a pair of kayakers caught in foul weather during an open crossing, these stories all have one thing in common. Seemingly minor

(Anatomy of a Disaster cont'd)

decisions such as waiting a few hours for weather to clear, fixing a battery connection or ensuring each passenger had a light would have averted tragedy.

While commercial boaters must weigh the risks against earning a living, says Keller, "Many pleasure boaters simply aren't aware that even boating in the Strait of Georgia could have significant danger."

Often "should have" preparations turn into "if only" regrets, says Keller. "While they're bobbing away watching the upturned hull of their boat float away from them, (the boaters) are thinking about everything they should have done," he said. "There's that grey zone when you're asking those 'what if' questions."

The tales not only terrify readers but have changed Keller's attitudes as well. An enthusiastic kayaker, he admits he likes to paddle at night, alone and in windy conditions. "After getting into researching the book and learning about some of the things that occurred to people in the same circumstances, I kept seeing the headlines 'Author plucked dead from sea' or 'Author rescued from ocean.'" Now he's more cautious when he plans to go paddling.

"A couple of times I've taken the kayak down to the beach, looked out and then put it back on the car rack," he said.

Don't blame the technical glitches for your boating mishap. It's humans who make the errors, says Major Colin Goodman, officer in charge at Victoria's Rescue Co-ordination Centre. The facility handles 3,000 calls a year, of which 2,200 are marine. "Why did that mechanical failure happen? Was it because the individual didn't do good maintenance or was he putting the boat or his equipment into situations it wasn't designed for? Did he not check the weather?"

Careful experience should accompany education, said Goodman. "If someone's got money they can buy a boat

and be on the water the next day. There's not that nautical seafaring tradition you learn from your father."

High tech gizmos that do your navigating for you can hinder rather than help. "It's a hazard to rely too much on navigational equipment. You still have to know where you are," said Dunn. "People are relying so much on technology they forget to look out the windows. They have their heads down looking at radar screens or playing with their chart plotters and they run up on the rocks."

Know your location and file a sail plan. "Take the search out of search and rescue," said Dunn. "We'll come out and rescue you if we know where you are." Also before you leave, let somebody know your destination and your timetable, says Dunn.

While boating safety has improved overall, rescuers are seeing more incidents on smaller boats, especially in inland waters.

"Very often people will put their smaller vessels into a waterway that they're totally unfamiliar with. Part of it is driven by the fact that the more popular waterways are becoming more and more over crowded," said John Churchill, regional superintendent of the Office of Boating Safety. "People want to get away. We have this adventuring spirit that can lead to something going wrong."

Educate yourself now. More than 200,000 boaters have qualified for operator proficiency cards since the rule was introduced last spring. The mandatory competency test for basic boating safety covers the youngest boaters and the smallest boats first. This year those born after April 1, 1983 must comply. By 2002 all operators of boats under four meters in length need a certificate. The rules will apply to all boaters by 2009.

"Sure there's an adrenaline rush getting out of bed at 3 a.m. on a call," said Dunn. "But I think I'd rather sleep and teach you (boating safety) on Tuesday night."

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