



Association for Rescue at Sea • Inc.

Association for Rescue at Sea
C-PORT Lifesaving Award to Captain George Farrell & Captain Dan Higgins

For heroism as set forth in the following citation: On January 27, 2013, Captain Farrell of Towboat U.S. Yonkers was at the marina when he heard about an airplane crash via the local police who had called to inquire if he had a boat in the water. Stating that he had hauled his boat two weeks earlier due to marina icing, Captain Farrell advised the Dispatch Sergeant that he had access to the Hudson's River Pilot Boat as he also served as a fill-in captain. While Captain Farrell was receiving this call, his part-time Captain, Dan Higgins and two off duty police officers were at the marina unpacking their cars from an ice fishing trip. Captain Farrell explained what happened and all made their way to the Pilot Boat station several miles away. Captain Farrell had Captain Higgins pilot the boat while he supervised the deck and crew and assigned lookout positions. Captain Farrell knew the general location of the plane crash and knew they had a full ebb tide going so the victims should be heading toward them if they were able to egress from the plane. After several minutes of searching they heard a shout for help. They shined their spotlight toward the cries and observed two people completely immersed in the freezing river wearing life jackets. Captain Higgins piloted the boat toward them and life rings were thrown to a male passenger who was semi-conscious. Despite his stricken state, he was able to grab the ring, allowing him to be pulled into the boat. Concurrently, another life ring was thrown to a female survivor, the plane's pilot, who was non-responsive. After several unsuccessful efforts, Captain Farrell threw a rope bag which struck her, thereby gaining her attention as she was then able to grab the rope and bag. First aid was administered after both survivors were retrieved to the safety of the Pilot boat, and they were transported to the Pilot Station dock where Emergency Medical Services was waiting. The actions and coordination by Captain's Farrell and Higgins to save two victims who would have otherwise succumbed to the effects of hypothermia are heartily commended by the Association for Rescue at Sea, and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the maritime community to render aid to those in distress.

Steve M. Sawyer
President, Association for Rescue at Sea



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**Association for Rescue at Sea
C-PORT Lifesaving Award to Captain Les Trafford**

For heroism as set forth in the following citation; at approximately 1400 on May 12, 2013, Sea Tow Shinnecock/Moriches Captain Les Trafford was notified by Hampton Bay's Fire Department about a mishap in treacherous Shinnecock Inlet; that the 45' trawler Pauline IV had capsized on the bar. Within ten minutes, Captain Trafford was single-handedly underway onboard his 24' craft. The day was bright and sunny, winds were from the SW and steady at 20 knots, with gusts to 25 – 30 knots which created a 6 – 12' surf on the Shinnecock Inlet bar. Outside the bar, sea conditions were 6 – 8.' In the meantime, the bay constable who also responded turned back due to the rough surf. As Captain Trafford approached the bar, he expertly read the conditions, determined that he could make it through the surf zone, and circled ocean-side and east of the bar to where the F/V Pauline IV capsized and was bottom side up and leaving a debris field. Remaining in deep water, Captain Trafford searched the east side of the bar and patiently scanned the debris field for survivors. Finding none, he was directed to search the west of the east-drifting debris field by shore-side observers. Again, no survivors were found, but during that period a Suffolk County Police helicopter arrived on scene and commenced their search. When near the debris field, the helo crew located a survivor from the Pauline IV clinging to a lobster buoy one mile offshore to the east of the bar and vectored Captain Trafford to the location. Demonstrating expert boat handling skills, determination and focus, Captain Trafford clipped a life ring to his towline and maneuvered his boat closely to the survivor thereby allowing for a quick recovery. In debriefing the survivor, the Pauline IV's deckhand, Captain Trafford verified that only two people were onboard the stricken vessel and that the vessel's captain never came out of the cabin when Pauline IV immediately capsized after being caught by a large following sea. Captain Trafford continued his search for the missing captain until relieved by a Coast Guard motor lifeboat. The actions and coordination by Captain Trafford in marginal conditions to save a survivor adrift from a capsized vessel are heartily commended by the Association for Rescue at Sea, and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the maritime community to render aid to those in distress.

Steve M. Sawyer

President, Association for Rescue at Sea