



# Association for Rescue at Sea, Inc. (AFRAS)

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## AFRAS Amver Award 2012

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For heroic actions and service as specified in the following citation where the M/V Oleander, an Amver participating container ship, saved the lives of four sailors after their sailboat lost steering 160 miles northwest of Bermuda on Sunday November 6, 2011. The S/V Elle, a 46 foot sailing yacht, was participating in the North American Rally to the Caribbean, from Newport to Bermuda, when they encountered gale force winds greater than 40 knots and 30 foot seas. Rescue authorities in Bermuda received the initial distress call and U.S. Coast Guard rescue personnel agreed to assist in the search and rescue case. U.S. Coast Guard rescue personnel launched a Coast Guard rescue aircraft from Air Station Elizabeth City and diverted the 387 foot M/V Oleander to assist. The Marshall Island flagged ship, on a voyage to Bermuda, was near the distress and Captain Jurszo agreed to divert and assist the sailboat. The S/V Elle had lost her steering and helplessly adrift in the gale. In 30 to 40 knot winds and 30 foot seas Captain Jurszo expertly maneuvered the M/V Oleander next to the S/V Elle gently touching her side. Further complicating matters was the fact that the vessel's mast was swinging wildly near the M/V Oleander's outside steering station, almost hitting Captain Jurszo in the head. Rescue operations became further complicated when one of the survivors plunged into the ocean, with the crew reacting as a team to recover him, throwing him a line to tie off to his safety harness and then hauling him safely over the side. In order, all other survivors were successfully transferred from the S/V Elle to the M/V Oleander. The Oleander, managed by Bermuda Container Lines of Hamilton, Bermuda, enrolled in the Amver system in 1990 and has earned 12 awards for participation. The professional actions of the master and crew of M/V Oleander reflect great credit upon themselves as they were instrumental in saving four lives. The Automated Mutual Assistance Vessel Rescue System (Amver), sponsored by the United States Coast Guard, is a unique, computer-based, and voluntary global ship reporting system used worldwide by search and rescue authorities to arrange for assistance to persons in distress at sea.

**AFRAS is a 501(c)3 charity and is registered in the State of New York**