

**Summary of Action**  
**First District Northern Region Auxiliary**  
**AFRAS Silver Medal**

On Wednesday, August 26, 2009 CGAUS crew of AMYJULIE, Coxswain Paul Sadeck and crew members Leo Lake and Robert M. Joseph and trainee Rodney Thomas on board the AMYJULIE departed Flotilla 65's docks at 8:00 A.M. to head southwest down Buzzards Bay toward South Dartmouth.

The wind soon began gusting but seas were still around 2 feet with an occasional 3 footer as the patrol continued heading southwest toward their next destination, "The Sandspit". When they arrived the waves were rolling pretty well over "The Sandspit". The patrol continued toward Salter's Point to check that area and then made their way back to Dumpling Rocks and there tucked in behind the rocks to get in the lee and away from the rolling waves. They then proceeded northerly along the east shore of South Dartmouth toward Ricketson's Point and then into Clarks Cove in New Bedford. They proceeded to the northern end of the cove then circled back out along the New Bedford beaches. The wind by this time had strengthened to about 20 knots.

The patrol continued across Clark's Cove and around the Ricketson's Point breakwater into Padanaram Harbor where they patrolled the harbor as far north as the road bridge and headed back out. Clearing Ricketson's Point, the plan was to continue to Wilber's Point at the southern end of Fairhaven. The wind was now blowing around 25 knots but the wind and the four foot rolling beam-sea was readily handled by the boat.

Almost immediately crewmembers Leo Lake and Bob Joseph observed a small boat and people waving. Turning northeast the patrol pulled alongside a white 17 foot center console which was submerged to the gunnels. The two men aboard crouched in waist deep in water with life jackets around their necks which had not been properly tied. The captain's life jacket was actually on backwards. One boater spoke Spanish and the captain spoke broken English but Rodney Thomas, a trainee on our boat, spoke to them in Spanish. The time was 12:00 P.M.

The captain gestured to the south, saying another person was in the water. The crew Auxiliary immediately called Coast Guard Station Menemsha and advised the station of the situation and position and asked for assistance and to contact the New Bedford police boat and the Fairhaven Harbor Master. The station asked the Auxiliary patrol to attempt to locate the person in the water but after quick search of the immediate area they were unable to immediately locate the

missing boater. After the Auxiliarists advised the station of the failed search, they were directed to remove the boaters from the partially submerged boat and were informed that the Coast Guard Station's boat was enroute but due to sea conditions it would take about 45 minutes.

On the first attempt to remove the men from their vessel they appeared too afraid to leave but after talking them through the process of properly securing their lifejackets a second approach was attempted. Suddenly a large wave appeared behind the small boat, nearly rolling it over. Both men they decided they wanted to get off of the submerged boat as quickly as possible. On the second attempt the vessel owner caught a thrown life ring, jumped into the water and was pulled to the patrol vessel. As the Auxiliarists made a third approach the second man jumped into the water where a well thrown the thrown life ring landed next to him and he was pulled aboard. Neither man was injured.

The captain reported that a third man had jumped or fallen off the boat "near a red buoy" when they had been swamped nearly an hour before. The closest red buoy, Bents Ledge, was nearly 1.25 nautical miles southwest - directly into the oncoming waves. The AMYJULIE headed for the buoy with the four Auxiliarists hoping to see the orange life jacket the rescued men said that their friend had donned. The first orange object spotted turned out to be an orange lobster buoy but the patrol continued their southwest route for several more minutes where Bob Joseph and Leo Lake spotted orange dead ahead.

This time it was the third man. Appearing near exhaustion, he had his left arm around a child's orange life jacket with a white fish cooler cushion was tucked under his right arm. Another accurate toss of the life ring landed right over an upraised arm. The Auxiliary crew continued to encourage him to him to hold on they pulled him to safety on the boat. Conscious but lethargic and shivering, the rescued boater was holding his chest as if in pain. It was 12:21 P.M.

CG Station Menemsha was advised that the Auxiliary patrol had the third party and the complaints of chest pain and arranged to have the Fairhaven Fire Department Ambulance meet the Auxiliary boat at the ramp adjacent to Flotilla 65. He was tended by the crew as the patrol headed for New Bedford harbor.

Fairhaven ambulance and fire department and police department were waiting and the injured man was transported to St. Luke's Hospital in New Bedford for treatment. The two other men refused medical treatment but were brought to the Coast Guard Auxiliary's Fairhaven headquarters where they contacted their families.

# # #