



The Commanding Officer  
 U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City  
 requests the honor of your presence  
 at the Change of Command at which  
**COMMANDER ERIC N. FAGERHOLM, U.S. Coast Guard**  
 will be relieved by  
**COMMANDER BARRY A. HARNER, U.S. Coast Guard**  
 on Friday, the twentieth of June at one o'clock  
 at United States Coast Guard Air Station  
 Traverse City, Michigan

Reception following ceremony  
 R.S.V.P. by 1 June, 1997  
 POC: LT Sanchez  
 (616) 922-8218

Military Guests: Tropical Blue Long  
 Civilian: Informal  
 Participants: Full Dress White

### HISTORY

#### UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AIR STATION TRAVERSE CITY, MICHIGAN

Originally established as a one plane detachment to provide Search and Rescue service for the Great Lakes, Air Station Traverse City was formally commissioned in 1946. Over the years, the station has grown to its present complement of 29 officers, 116 enlisted personnel and 5 aircraft.

Beginning with the Buffalo Light Tower built in 1818, the Coast Guard on the Great Lakes has built from infancy a vast life saving network that today encompasses 44 boat stations and 2 air stations. From its original complement of Grumman V-11B seaplanes and H-19 Sikorsky helicopters, Air Station Traverse City has grown to become a five helicopter unit responsible for over 7,700 miles of shoreline. From the arrival of the HH-52A and HU-25A Guardian, to the departure of the HH-3F Pelican and HH-60 Jayhawk helicopters, Air Station Traverse City currently operates (5) HH-65A "Dolphin" helicopters and will continue to respond from the shores of Minnesota to the lakes of Ontario, Canada.

Although organizational changes have occurred throughout the years, Air Station Traverse City continues to provide critical assistance to Federal & State agencies from Law Enforcement & Drug eradication to Environmental patrols/responses and Aids to Navigation. Although tasked with various other missions, our primary mission remains Search & Rescue and the protection of life and property on the Great Lakes.

Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City's annual operating budget of 1.8 million dollars coupled with annual personnel salaries exceeding 3.2 million dollars provides a significant impact for the Grand Traverse Area. We continually pride ourselves on community involvement; for the past several years the air station has supported the Special Olympics, Easter Seals, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, Toys For Tots, and has worked directly with the Match of Dimes, Red Cross, and Dept of Social Services along with 10 additional organizations helping the local citizens of Traverse City.

As people continue to take the simple pleasures in life for granted, rest assured, the ever vigilant eye of Air Station Traverse City is watching and willing to prove themselves once again to be the true "Guardians of the Great Lakes," willing to make the ultimate sacrifice in the performance of duty.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
 UNITED STATES COAST GUARD



### CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONY

June 20, 1997

United States Coast Guard Air Station  
 Traverse City, Michigan

# RESCUE DEMO

df 6-24-97



A U.S. Coast Guard crew from Traverse City demonstrates a rescue procedure on West Bay Monday afternoon. Lt. Ted Sanchez said it was part of a program conducted for the Kiwanis Club. The pilots were Lt. Joel Rebholz and Lt. Don Marinello.

2B TRAVERSE CITY RECORD-EAGLE  
TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 1997

# GRAND TRAVERSE HERALD

## Changing of the Guard

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 1997



The Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City held a change of command ceremony on Friday, complete with a color guard and troop inspections. Outgoing Cmdr. Eric Fagerholm (left) salutes incoming Cmdr. Barry Harner, while Capt. Kurt Carlson, representing 9th District Commander Rear Adm. John McGowan, oversees. Fagerholm, who received the Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal during the ceremony for his work in the community, is moving to Virginia with his family and will attend the National War College in Washington, D.C. Harner comes from an air station in Clearwater, Fla., where he served as the engineering officer. Harner comes to Traverse City with his wife, Rosanne, and five children.

Herald photo by Eric Dick

### IN BRIEF

#### FROM STAFF REPORTS

## 2 Manistee River canoeists missing

CADILLAC — Divers, aircraft and ground search teams were combing an area along the Manistee River near Manton Friday night, searching for a pair of canoeists who were reported missing late in the afternoon.

Details of the incident were still sketchy as of press time, but a dispatcher from the Wexford County Sheriff's department said the missing boaters were reported to police around 8 p.m. Apparently the group had stopped to go swimming at a landing just east of the U.S. 131 bridge when one of its members disappeared in the water and another took off into the woods.

"It's a confused mess down there, and the whole story has yet to be told on this one," said a Michigan State Police sergeant. The Cadillac state police post was coordinating the search, which included a dive team from Wexford County and a helicopter crew from the Coast Guard station in Traverse City.

### The Muskegon Chronicle

6B TUESDAY, JULY 8, 1997

#### DIGEST

### Searchers look for man in U.P. lake

ST. IGNACE — Police searched again Monday for a man who fell into South Manistique Lake from a fishing boat.

The 31-year-old, whose name and hometown have not been released, tumbled into the water Friday night.

Mackinac County sheriff's deputies and divers sought the victim through the weekend and Monday. A Coast Guard helicopter crew assisted Friday night through Sunday.

"We covered all of the lake. It's not a very big lake for a helicopter," said Lt. Douglas Nash of the Coast Guard station in Traverse City. "We looked in every nook and cranny, every swamp."

2B WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 1997

# GRAND TRAVERSE HERALD

## Commander brings rare expertise

By Richard Wehn  
Herald staff writer

Cmdr. Barry Harner could be the most uniquely qualified officer in the Coast Guard to run the Traverse City air station.

In 1989, Harner was assigned as the HH-65 Dolphin helicopter system manager at Coast Guard headquarters in Washington, D.C. He worked closely with the manufacturers of the aircraft on the engines and related systems to increase the aircraft's dependability. Air Station Traverse City uses the HH-65 exclusively.

Prior to commanding the Traverse City unit, Harner was assigned to Clearwater, Fla., where he helped adapt night-vision technology to the cockpits of Coast Guard aircraft. Of the five helicopters assigned to Traverse City, one is configured to make full use of night-vision technology. The others will be completed soon.

The technology has proven very helpful in search and rescue missions. "In a recent search for a missing hiker, the light from a small cigarette lighter was spotted by a crewman using night-vision goggles," Harner said. "Without this technology, that hiker might have frozen to death."

Harner knows the aircraft and the technology used at the Traverse City air station as well as anyone in the service. Whether by chance or design, Traverse City got the right man for the job.

Before deciding on Traverse



Cmdr. Barry Harner, commanding officer of the U. S. Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City, discusses aircraft maintenance with Aviation Machinist Mate Second Class Russ Morris following a routine engine check. Harner took command June 27, relieving Cmdr. Eric Fagerholm as the unit's senior officer.

City, from among those assignments available this summer, Harner checked with plenty of folks who had spent time at each of his potential choices. He also talked with several people who chose to retire in the area, a good indicator that they enjoyed their tours of duty here.

"I couldn't find anyone who'd say anything bad about being assigned to Traverse

City," Harner said. So he and his wife, Rosanne, packed up the five kids and headed north. Rosanne is from Milmont Park, Pa. The Harner children are Sean, 13, Colleen, 11, Patrick, 8, Bridget, 6 and Kelly, 2.

In addition to Clearwater and Washington, D.C., Cmdr. Harner has been assigned to Barbers

Point, Hawaii; Brooklyn, N.Y.; and Cape May, N.J.

A committed sports fan, Harner enjoys all athletic endeavors. While a cadet at the Coast Guard Academy in New London, Conn., he played quarterback and was captain of the football team. His coach was Otto Graham, pro football hall-of-fame quarterback for the Cleveland Browns.

# 2-year-old girl found safe after night in cornfield

By Andy Nelesen  
 Press-Gazette

**GREENLEAF** — It was a parents' nightmare. A nightmare that ended with a huge sigh of relief.

In the darkness of rural Greenleaf, 2-year-old Rebecca Bartelme was lost in a cornfield with stalks towering 2 feet taller than she was.

They had a five-minute head start on her aunt and baby sitter, Joyce Wiese, 6909 Bunker Hill Road. Wiese began a frantic search when she noticed Rebecca was gone from the family bonfire just before sunset Saturday. She called 911 after her searches

came up empty.

Rebecca's parents, John and Carol Bartelme of Manitowoc, were at Carol's class reunion when they got a phone call saying their daughter was missing.

An 11-hour, 300-volunteer, two-helicopter search ensued. The beams from hundreds of flashlights bobbed and bounced across the horizon, as volunteers combed nearby farmlands.

Calls of "Becca" filtered back. The volunteers were neighbors, friends and strangers.

"There are 14 of us; where do you want us?" asked Patti Weronka.

Bob and Mary Wisniewski were at a wedding when they heard about the

search on a volunteer firefighter's pager.

"We're parents, too," Bob Wisniewski said. "If your kid disappears, you would want people to help you."

Carol Bartelme, Rebecca's mom, wandered barefoot through the crowd of volunteers.

"I'm sorry, I can't talk right now... I just ran it," she said, laying a hand softly on the reporter's arm.

It was a wakeup call from a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter about 7 a.m. Sunday that finally brought Rebecca to safety.

The aircraft slowly hovered over the fields, pushing enough rotor wash to

break tree limbs.

Rebecca heard the chopper, stood and waved. A searcher on an all-terrain vehicle spotted the girl in a field across the road and reunited her with her parents.

"It was an unbelievable relief," said John Bartelme. "The worst fear was that she was swept away in the creek," a tributary of the East River.

As for the tot?

"She was happy to see everyone," John said. "She's doing good. She's covered in calamine lotion right now. She was pretty hit up. She'll be fine."

► Two helicopters, 300 volunteers joined search/B-1



**Safe:** Rebecca Bartelme, 2, was found Sunday morning after searchers spent the night looking for her near Greenleaf.

Special to the Press-Gazette

Monday, July 14, 1997

# Rescuers throw 'everything at it'

2 copters, 300 volunteers turn out



**Giving support:** Carol Bartelme, left, gets a hug from a friend early Sunday while searchers look for Rebecca Bartelme, Carol's 2-year-old daughter. Rebecca was missing in a rural Greenleaf cornfield for about 11 hours before being rescued.

Press-Gazette photos by Andy Nelesen



**Directing:** Brown County Sheriff's Department Sgt. Tim Maloney, at left, talks about the search for a missing girl with deputy Eric Frost.

By Andy Nelesen  
 Press-Gazette

**GREENLEAF** — In less than three hours, Brown County sheriff's Sgt. Tim Maloney had two helicopters, 300 volunteers, three fire departments and a handful of K-9 officers at his disposal. His mission: find a missing 2-year-old girl as quickly as possible.

Maloney took the call for a missing child at 6909 Bunker Hill Road about 8:30 p.m. It was a call that would keep him busy for the next 12 hours.

Rebecca Bartelme of Manitowoc disappeared into a cornfield next to her aunt's Bunker Hill Road home. She had been with her aunt's family during an evening bonfire in the yard.

When a search of the immediate area came up empty, Maloney knew he would need more help.

Almost on cue, volunteers arrived. Neighbors and strangers teamed up to search the fields surrounding the rural Greenleaf home.

County Rescue Services' specialized trauma and rescue team began a search of a swift-moving creek at the rear of the property. Dispatchers called ThedaStar helicopter from Neenah for help to light the area for the 300 volunteer searchers.

Three volunteer fire departments joined in, providing support equipment and manpower to the effort, which was coordinated from Maloney's squad car.

Halfway through the night, the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army pulled in with food and beverages for the volunteers and rescue workers.

After about an hour on the scene, ThedaStar returned to Neenah and Maloney called for the U.S. Coast Guard from Traverse City, Mich.

"There is nothing I've ever done — a gun call, a domestic — nothing compares to a lost child call," Maloney said Sunday after only 2 1/2 hours sleep. "This department does everything it can. They throw everything at it."

The Coast Guard's HH65 Dolphin helicopter spent most of the early morning shining light onto the ground.

At a cost of about \$1,000 an hour, the chopper made a valuable contribution to the search effort. Coast Guard Lt. Doug Nash and his co-pilot, Lt. Todd Coggeshall, refueled their aircraft and returned throughout the night to help with the search.



Press-Gazette graphic by Bob Yancy

It was the noise and clatter of the helicopter that prompted the lost girl to stand up and wave about 7 a.m. Sunday, allowing searchers on the ground to find her. She was across the road from the home, in a spot that was searched once during the night and was slated to be searched again in less than an hour.

When Bartelme was found, Maloney was one of the last people to see her.

"I was the only one that didn't go over to see her," he said with a chuckle. "I was exhausted, completely burned out. I have never been that burned out before."

"I had the radio in one hand and was on the phone with the other. Someone said they found her. All I could think of was that I had to start canceling all the assets that were on the way."

Maloney called off the airplane that was en route with heat-detection equipment and the 20 National Guard troops that were on the way.

More volunteers were on the way, after local preachers announced the situation at churches.

"I wouldn't have been surprised to see another 500 or 1,000 people show up out there," Maloney said. "It was an amazing night."



**The Cover**

The cover of the 1997 Muskegon Air Fair souvenir program features the U.S. Coast Guard HH-65A Dauphin Helicopter of the Southern Lake Michigan Air Facility at Muskegon County Airport. The Muskegon Air Fair salutes the Coast Guard. Their motto 'Semper Paratus' stands for Always Prepared.



*Thank You...*

The citizens of Muskegon County gratefully acknowledge the efforts of Senator Carl Levin, Senator Spencer Abraham, and Congressman Peter Hoekstra in bringing the U.S. Coast Guard Southern Lake Michigan Air Facility to Muskegon County Airport and their continued support of the Muskegon Air Fair.



**Carl Levin**



**Spencer Abraham**



**Peter Hoekstra**



United States Coast Guard Southern Lake Michigan Air Facility, Muskegon.



Saturday

July 19, 1997

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## Coast Guard prepares for action

### Local station undergoes search-and-rescue training with helicopter

By JAMES LAKE

Gazette Writer

HANCOCK — Coast Guard Station Portage guardsmen will be a little more prepared the next time a watercraft is in distress.

A Coast Guard helicopter from Air Station Traverse City was on hand Thursday so guardsmen could practice helicopter-assisted search-and-rescue operations.

Chief Brian Williams said even though the helicopter only comes for these exercises twice a year, Station Portage guardsmen train year round for many different kinds of search-and-rescue operations.

Thursday's exercise consisted of the helicopter lowering a basket — both with and without a guide rope — to the back of Station Portage's 44-foot surf boat. Guardsmen were able to practice securing the rescue basket, piloting the boat and coordinating efforts with the helicopter crew.

"You do the job the way you practice. Practice will make their work second nature," Williams said. "It makes it safer for us and the person we're going to rescue."

Williams estimates search and rescue training and execution represent about one-fourth of the Station Portage's work — the rest of the time the guardsmen are maintaining 50 aids to navigation and 15 lighthouses, as well as performing their law-enforcement function.

So far this year, Station Portage has responded to 40 water search-and-rescue cases. In the winter, the station turns its attention to ice rescues, using several pieces of equipment specifically for that purpose. Still, Williams said the water rescues keep the guardsmen the busiest.

Williams said Coast Guardsmen are constantly training.

Please see page 8



Karin Emond/Daily Mining Gazette

Coast Guardsmen from Station Portage practice guiding a rescue basket to their 44-foot surf boat. The helicopter from Air Station Traverse City services the entire Upper Peninsula in search-and-rescue operations.

## Coast Guard Portage Station prepares for action

Continued from Page 1

For example, although he has been in the Coast Guard for six years now, Petty Officer Leigh Johannsen is in the middle of training to be a certified surfboat pilot.

Johannsen said he has completed his training as a boat crewman, but is only one-third of the way through coxswain training. He said one of the obstacles to his advancement is the requirement that he must train when Lake Superior has 6- to 8-foot waves, a condition that happens infrequently.

Though he is anxious to complete the training, Johannsen said he understands why the requirements are so rigid.

"You have your crew's life in your hands, and they won't sign anything until you're ready," Johannsen said.

Even after certification is complete, Williams said training never ends, not even for him. Each member must stay proficient in their training and is tested every six months.

June 26 and 27, Station Portage was checked by a Ready-for-Operations inspection team, and Williams said they stood up to the intense scrutiny.

The team inspected every one of the station's boats from bow to stern, and they were deemed to be in perfect working order. Every member of the station was

tested and put through underway drills. Williams said he is proud of the team's performance.

"This crew did an outstanding job," Williams said. "We were found to be ready for sea."

Williams has a theory as to why his station consistently performs above Coast Guard standards.

"All the missions in the Coast

Guard are important, but all of the guys here joined for one reason: to help save lives," Williams said.

Station Portage expects to move from Hancock to its new Dollar Bay facility on Aug. 15. A ribbon-cutting ceremony for the almost 30,000-square-foot facility will be Sept. 5.

**HITTING ROCK  
BOTTOM**



Record-Eagle/John L. Russell  
Above: "I saw four feet on my depth gauge," Lynn Trenthem said, explaining the final moments before his sailboat hit the rocks along Peninsula Drive Monday. "My boat needs six feet." The boat drifted into the rocks after the halyard dropped overboard and fouled the propeller. Right: The U.S. Coast Guard helps out after the accident, in which no one was injured. The boat eventually was towed by the marine patrol.



**PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT**



Record-Eagle photo/John L. Russell  
Air Force personnel from Scott Air Force Base in Illinois are lifted into a U.S. Coast Guard Pelican helicopter during a mock rescue on Grand Traverse Bay Wednesday (above). A simulated airplane crash left 20 Air Force personnel in the water (right), and they practiced setting off flares and being lifted and lowered into the aircraft during the midday rehearsal.



**Airline Safety**

Herold photo by Richard Wenn  
Captain Al Haynes, retired United Airlines pilot, emphasizes the importance of clear communications among emergency responders at a safety presentation Wednesday at the Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City. Haynes was at the controls when United Flight 232 suffered an engine explosion and complete loss of hydraulic pressure on July 19, 1989, near Sioux City, Iowa. Haynes believes that without the preparation and communication skills demonstrated by everyone who responded to the crash, many of the 184 survivors would have died.



**Injured crewman  
airlifted to hospital**

MANISTEE — A crewman on the freighter Arthur M. Anderson fell into a lifeboat, fractured an ankle Thursday and had to be airlifted from the boat, according to the U.S. Coast Guard.  
The sailor, whose name was not released, was plucked from the boat by a Coast Guard helicopter based in Traverse City and flown to Munson Medical Center, according to Lt. Todd Cogshall.  
The injured man also suffered bruises.  
The helicopter crew had been on its way from Muskegon to Traverse City when it was diverted a



Photo by Harold Schattenberg

Standing next to the Coast Guard helicopter, now based in Muskegon, are from left to right, ASM3 pilot: Lt. Tom Kaye, pilot; and HM2 Russell Morris, flight mechanic, Lt. Doug Nash, and Dan Bertraud, rescue swimmer.

## Chopper based in Muskegon This is your new Coast Guard

BY FRAN SCHATTENBERG  
*Beacon special writer*

If you are anywhere near the Lake Michigan shoreline in the White Lake area this summer you will hear the thrumming of helicopter blades once a day.

And when you look up, you will see the new United States Coast Guard Dolphin helicopter, no longer white with the orange/red stripe in the front, but painted in its new overall orange for higher visibility.

The reason you are seeing this coast guard helicopter is because of a new location for operations.

Until this year the search and rescue operation was based in Glenview, Illinois. This is the first year the full-time summer operation has been opened in Muskegon, based at the Muskegon Airport.

From April 1 to November 15, there is a Coast Guard helicopter on 24-hour duty at the Muskegon Airport. Rotating from its home base at the Traverse City Coast Guard Air Station, the Muskegon duty is 24 hours at which time the crew is replaced by another helicopter and crew from Traverse City. In the winter the helicopters are based solely at Traverse City.

According to Lt. Doug Nash, a

Coast Guard helicopter pilot, this is the dedicated Coast Guard search and rescue helicopter for lower Lake Michigan, the designated area being from Little Point Sable in Oceana County, across the lake to Sheboygan, Wisconsin, and south to the end of the lake.

Other helicopters are available in Traverse City for larger or extended searches.

"We are responsible for search and rescue, marine environmental protection, and any type of law enforcement needed on the water, including drug patrol," Nash says. "In addition, we patrol for large amounts of debris, oil spills, individual pollution problems, and we monitor lake erosion which is quite evident with the current high water. We can see differences from one week to another."

"In essence what this duty is, in many ways, is like the police officer on a street beat" Lt. Nash says. "We can see a lot from this bird. We get to know each area quite well. I can see if someone's deck or staircase is endangered, if their boats are about to float out in the lake, and if conditions on shore are problematic for marine safety."

Lt. Tom Kaye, a Coast Guard pilot, notes that while their mission is pri-

marily over water, they now go inland, particularly in the winter, if requested and have the equipment and expertise.

Regardless of the duty, over water or inland, the reason the helicopter crew can devote so much time to observing conditions is the superb aircraft they fly.

This "bird" is the latest in a Coast Guard tradition of flying helicopters. They started in 1943 with a Sikorsky

designed Hoverfly whose blades were made out of spruce, and the frames were covered with canvas. The newest Dolphin is 38 feet overall and constructed of corrosion-resistant, composite materials. It is powered by two Lycoming turbine jet engines, and has a 300 mile range at a cruising speed of 130 mph.

The inside area accommodates four crew members. The helicopter is outfitted with a rescue basket, search and rescue board, all the necessary lines, the swimmer's own extensive gear, and a life raft for the helicopter crew if they have to ditch the "bird."

## Coast Guard pilots plunge into East Bay training

By Richard Wehn  
*Herald staff writer*

You're the co-pilot of a search and rescue helicopter on a routine, nighttime training flight over the West Arm of Grand Traverse Bay. Suddenly, you feel the plane shudder and you realize you're quickly losing altitude. Less than a minute later, you're 20 feet below the surface of the bay, as the fuselage rolls over and sinks to the bottom, upside down. What do you do next?

Thanks to annual refresher training, such as the session that took place Aug. 27 at East Bay Park, pilots, aircrews and rescue swimmers assigned to Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City know exactly what to do.

"Holding onto the seat bottom as a structural reference point, you release the five-point safety harness," said Petty Officer First Class Mark Berg. "Once clear of the seat, you locate something to grip with your free hand and pull yourself, hand-over-hand, out of the aircraft."

**"It beats a typical day in the office."  
Cmdr. Mike Skirchak**

Of course, things don't always go as planned, but these aviation professionals are *semper paratus* (always prepared), the service motto. Getting caught on a piece of hardware as you're trying to rapidly exit a plane-turned-submarine can be really stressful, especially when you're doing it on a single breath of air.

Aircrews carry a small bottle of compressed air in their flight vests for just that reason. The miniature scuba tank, called a helicopter emergency egress device (HEED), is attached to the vest. Part of the annual training involves dropping and relocating the device while suspended upside down underwater.

"It holds one to four minutes

of air," Berg said, "depending on how rapidly and deeply the person breathes." The more calm the person is, the longer the air lasts.

During their annual re-certification, everyone takes several turns escaping from a training device that flips them upside down, underwater, while harnessed to a makeshift seat.

In addition to being repeatedly dunked upside down and escaping from a submerged maze, these soggy aviators swim 150 yards, while wearing a flight suit, boots, dry suit, safety vest and flight helmet (optional).

At the midpoint of the swim, each crew member clambers into a survival raft and verifies that the raft and his safety vest contain all the required equipment. Then it's back into the water for the last leg of the swim.

"It beats a typical day in the office," said Cmdr. Mike Skirchak, a native of Miami and second-in-command of the air station.



Herald photos by Richard Wehn

Above: Lt. Tom MacDonald of Tallahassee, Fla., takes one of his four turns in the shallow water egress trainer (SWET). While upside down and underwater, he must release the seat harness and make his way out of the submerged "aircraft." Left: Petty Officer Third Class Bob Auer of Mishawaka, Ind., demonstrates the proper method of activating a hand-held smoke flares.



# Always ready: Rescuers practice on Lake Mac

Coast Guard assists local dive team in practicing rescue skills

By JENNIFER JACOBS  
Staff writer

Chad Horn's first time flying was hardly a flight of luxury.

First he stepped into a two-foot by four-foot metal basket that was later pushed out the door of a helicopter and lowered 25 feet to the chilly waters of Lake Macatawa, where he fell out of the basket and waited to be rescued.

And he did it for the team. The Park Township firefighter was participating in dive team rescue operations for the Southwest Ottawa Dive Team Thursday at Kollen Park along with the United States Coast Guard.

Six members of the team, who answer eight to nine water-rescue calls a year, practiced being lowered to the water from a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter and being hoisted back up — just as it should happen if a true rescue situation occurred.

"I was impressed because it was really smooth," Horn said. "The door is open and they push you out ... it's good training for the sake of rescuing."

The Coast Guard took groups of two over the water, much to the delight of boaters and observers at Kollen Park who crowded along the shore to watch the action. Horn and Dan Streur volunteered to be the first to try the fall.

Streur describes it as like a smooth elevator ride.

Please see RESCUE, A5



GETTING A LIFT: A U.S. Coast Guard helicopter lifts American Medical Response EMT Rob Martin out of Lake Macatawa Thursday evening during a training exercise for area emergency workers.

## RESCUE: Team keeps skills sharp

Continued from A1

"I had a few butterflies at the beginning because we were sitting so long, but it was smooth. I expected it to be bumpier," Streur said.

Lt. Kim Pacsai, a Coast Guard pilot, said the basket can be lowered from 0-200 feet per minute and is designed to hold up to 600 pounds. He estimates the crew has been on 75-100 hoists in the last six months with West Michigan dive teams.

"It's fairly exciting for those guys underneath," Pacsai said. "The biggest thing is to get these guys familiar with our operation form, how we work and the way we do things to see how it is."

Most hoists are done 15-70 feet above the water but can go as high as 150 feet if trees and ravines are in the way, Pacsai added. The chopper can hold a maximum of nine people in rescue operations.

Pacsai was involved in a real rescue situation when he was based in Alaska, he had to pick a swimmer off a crab boat in trouble in the Bering Sea.

"It's a lot harder when you have to do it off a boat instead of the water," Pacsai said. It can also be done through ice.

Park Township Fire, Holland Township Fire, Holland City Fire, Zeeland City Rescue participated with the Coast Guard in



GETTING READY TO GO: Lt. Commander Greg Omernik, left, co-pilot, Petty Officer Bob Auer, Flight Mechanic, and Petty Officer Brad Smardo, Rescue Swimmer discuss the training procedure during a preflight session Thursday.

the maneuvers with the Sea Doo from Holland, Coast Guard and sheriff's boats, and Coast Guard Auxiliary volunteers.

"We wanted to get a lot more practice and use emergency techniques," said Park Township Fire Department Lt. Kurt Briggs, co-captain of the dive team. "We want to get them training so when the situation comes up they feel comfortable."

The worst moment of the fall

comes when the basket hits the water, said Rob Martin, who did the procedure previously with the sheriff's marine patrols in Allegan and Ottawa Counties.

"It was a smooth helicopter ride, you went off the ground better than an airplane," Martin said. "But when the splash came, it was powerful. You're going down not able to see where you're going, and the next thing you know you're in the water."

## HELICOPTER HONEYMOON



Newlyweds Alicia and Raul Landin of Saginaw watch a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter perform wet drills on West Grand Traverse Bay Friday afternoon. Temperatures soared into the low 80s during the afternoon, creating perfect conditions to enjoy a fall day.





### Beaver Island Fly-In, September 14: A Success Despite Losing on the Weather Gamble

A few day-early aircraft arrivals and some instrument-rated pilots on Sunday made for a short flight line. The big story became the beauty of our Beaver Island community in operation.

The Coast Guard helicopter (pictured below) and ready-crew of 4 made their appearance at 10:10 a.m. ... a real highlight. Lt. Commander Imle represented his crew over our sound system, set up in the hanger area. They also made us welcome at their craft. It was nice to have an up-close-and-personal encounter with some of those we count on being there for us every day.

\* The Taste of Beaver Island was a hit! Gross sales of \$1,885 netted the Beaver Island Fire Department and the Chamber of Commerce \$493.

\* Local Crafts and merchandise vendors set up in a nearby hangar. They also had good success.

\* Not all of the 250# of smoked whitefish was sold that day, but individuals pulled even that to a respectable finish.

\* The Aviation Quilt Raffle was for the benefit of the Community House and brought in \$879 in profit from a gross of \$965. Larry McDonough's winning ticket #0002 was one of four he purchased when the quilt first went on display ... a story all its own.

The spirit that made this Fly-In work so well is best represented by this example: After the Fire Department volunteers did their efficient set-up on Saturday afternoon, Tim McDonough returned alone and without request to clean the two portable commodes. This type of accommodating attitude and effort shone brightly on Sunday, even though the sun didn't. The community at large turned out in force. What a great day!



### Coast Guard Wraps Up its Inaugural Season in Muskegon

On November 15, 1997, the U.S. Coast Guard Station in Muskegon will pack up for winter duty in northern Michigan. Their first season in Muskegon was a success providing air rescue coverage for Muskegon County and the southern Lake Michigan region. During the 1997 season which began April 1, the Coast Guard flew 73 search and rescue missions and 81 training missions. Coast Guard crews also participated in 18 missions in cooperation with other federal and local agencies.

During the winter months Coast Guard

crews fly search and rescue missions in northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula. The most common types of operations in the winter months are search and rescue of hunters, ice fishermen, snowmobilers and skiers. The Coast Guard also spends a good deal of time assisting ice breakers clearing channels in the Great Lakes from a base in the eastern U.P. Winter duty in the Coast Guard is not without its benefits. On December 5, the first of three crews from the Traverse City Station will spend six weeks on a Caribbean tour receiving training in warm weather operations.

The County of Muskegon is proud to have the Coast Guard as a tenant and looks forward to welcoming back Cmdr. Barry Harner and his crews for the 1998 season in April.

### SHERIFF SENDS SIX MORE INMATES HOME EARLY DUE TO CROWDING. B3



SCHOOLS LIST  
ACTIVITIES  
THIS WEEK.  
B2

# Metro

MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1997

### THE SAGINAW NEWS

<b>B</b> AREA BRIEFS	B2
METRO LOG	B2
CLASSIFIED	B3-7

Removing passengers from crashed cars served as the basis for a weekend course the Tri-Township Fire Department hosted. Students from fire departments in western Saginaw County cut apart seven new Chrysler and Jeep vehicles during training.



### MOCK RESCUE

Thomas Township Fire Department Lt. Matt Benkert, above, attempts to rescue a mock crash victim, while George Lutz, an assistant instructor on loan from the Coast Guard in Traverse City, left, reviews the safety features on new cars.



THOMAS  
TWP

AMY NEWMAN/THE SAGINAW NEWS



### SHEAR CROPPING

Thomas Township Firefighter Brian Premeo cuts through the frame of a Jeep Cherokee during Sunday training exercises to teach emergency service personnel how to remove crash victims. The Tri-Township Fire Department hosted a training session for fire department personnel across western Saginaw County. They cut apart seven new Chrysler and Jeep vehicles during training. More photos, B3.

AMY NEWMAN/THE SAGINAW NEWS

**IN BRIEF**  
FROM STAFF REPORTS

**Hunter found safe on Garden Island**

CHARLEVOIX — A 71-year-old Ohio man who had been missing on Garden Island since Thursday was found doing fine except for the possibility of frostbitten toes at 5 p.m. Friday.

John Homoki left on a hunting trip about 11:30 a.m. Thursday on Garden Island, which is located about two miles north of Beaver Island in Lake Michigan. He hadn't been seen or heard from since.

The Charlevoix County sheriff's office was informed the man was missing late Thursday evening.

A search was started that night, which included the Charlevoix County Sheriff's Department, the U.S. Coast Guard Station, Michigan State Police Post in Traverse City and volunteers from the island, including other area hunters. A volunteer located him.

Homoki said he heard the airplanes and helicopters overhead, as well as some voices Thursday night, but he didn't realize anyone was looking for him. He spent the night in the woods.

Wednesday  
December 24, 1997

**Hang glider pilot ends up in a tree**

TRAVERSE CITY — A helicopter from the U.S. Coast Guard air station in Traverse City flew to Holland Tuesday afternoon to try and pluck a hang glider pilot out of a tree.

Lt. Doug Nash said the unidentified man was apparently blown into the tree after sailing off a cliff along the Lake Michigan shoreline.

Crew members lowered a Coast Guard rescue swimmer down a 245-foot cable but had to back off because of the wind from the helicopter's rotors.

"We were blowing the individual further into the trees," Nash said.

A local fire department ended up using a crane to lift the man from the tree, Nash said.

**Missing Alzheimer's patient found safe**

KINGSLEY — An 83-year-old Alzheimer's patient was found Sunday tangled in barbed wire and sitting on a stump after he apparently walked away from a nursing home Saturday.

A U.S. Coast Guard helicopter crew equipped with night vision goggles joined Grand Traverse County Sheriff's Department deputies, firefighters and volunteers looking for the man late Saturday.

Between 16 to 20 people looked for Louis Workman for about four hours Saturday before the search was suspended for the night, said Ron Hollister, assistant chief for Battalion Two of the Grand Traverse Rural Fire Department.

The search resumed early Sunday and the man was found near Fenton and Blackman roads at about 9:40 a.m., Hollister said.

Workman was cold and had a few bruises and cuts, but was otherwise fine despite the freezing temperatures, Hollister said.

"It surprised all of us," Hollister said. "He's pretty tough."

Workman was taken to Munson Medical Center in Traverse City where he was listed in fair condition Sunday afternoon. The name of the nursing home was not immediately available Sunday.

**Conference features helicopter 'rescue'**

Sault Star Staff

Hundreds lined the Sault Ste. Marie boardwalk Saturday afternoon to watch simulated marine rescues in the St. Mary's River.

The event was the culmination of Canada's five-day search and rescue conference that attracted search and rescue organizations from across the country, the United States and Taiwan.

A number of agencies and their heavy equipment were involved in the display including a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter, the Canadian Coast Guard icebreaker Samuel L. Risley, zodiacs and other vessels.

The helicopter and its rescue swimmers hoisted "victims" out of the water and off a zodiac using a basket attached to the helicopter's hoist line.

The demonstration was so close that the spray off the river propelled by the aircraft's rotors dampened the frontline spectators.

That spray "is the hardest rain you could ever imagine, going sideways and it's ice cold," said Sgt. Al Banky of the Rescue Co-ordination Centre in Victoria.

During marine rescues, victims tend to turn away from the spray, which exposes their backs so they tend to blow away.



MARGARET CAMERON-MCQUEEN - SAULT STAR  
A RESCUE BASKET is lowered on to the Samuel Risley during the Sault waterfront demonstration Saturday.

Rescues of this nature almost invariably mean that the rescuer has to swim after them and then hook them to the hoist.

The rescue swimmer wore a dive mask during Saturday's demonstration, but often they wear a full helmet with a visor to protect them from the stinging spray.

The volunteer victims were search and rescue workers from a number of agencies. All of them were wearing immersion suits that kept them dry

and floating on the water. Clearly, there were no panicky victims Saturday.

In actual marine rescues, "you tend to be very forceful" when rescuing people who are feeling panicky, Banky said.

The centre in Victoria co-ordinates coast guard and air force resources. There have been about 2,100 rescues in the Victoria region so far this year; 73 per cent of those have been marine rescues, Banky said.

Between 500 and 600 people were pulled out of the water by rescue boat or helicopter.

In marine rescue situations, the people who are lost and in difficulty often don't have a map or compass, fail to pack survival gear and don't file float plans with another person.

Whether your boat is motorized or not, people heading out on the water should tell someone the route they plan to take and when they plan to return, he added.

**VISIT FROM AN ANGEL**



Record-Eagle photo/Kath Vandervort  
The Blue Angels arrived in Traverse City Wednesday afternoon. Navy Lt. Scott Ind and Kevin Lacasse flew a two-seat FA-18 Hornet 250 miles from Eau Claire, Wis., and will have a briefing with officials from the National Cherry Festival today before heading to Niagara Falls, N.Y. The routine briefing will cover logistics and operations for the Traverse City air shows, scheduled for July 4-5. The Blue Angels begin their season March 14 in California and will perform 70 shows at 35 sites, ending on Nov. 7. Above, Traverse City Coast Guard aviation mechanic Steve Kexel wheels the Navy FA-18 Hornet into the hangar for the night.



**Muskegon  
County Airport  
NEWS**

A Newsletter for the Muskegon County Airport Travel Community  
Volume 2, Number 1  
January/February 1998

**1997 -  
The Year in Review**



- The Muskegon County Airport produced a Regional Airline Informational Program including a series of TV commercials, printed materials and informational seminars.
- First of America bank installed a convenient drive-up ATM in front of the terminal building.
- Dianne Balgooyen began work as Air Travel Marketing Consultant as part of the airport's new direct sales approach to marketing.
- The airport took delivery of an original set of sculptures by nationally known sculptor Kirk Newman, titled "Boarding, Takeoff and Landing".
- The Muskegon Air Fair sets an attendance record for the second consecutive year at over 60,000 spectators. Air show performers included the B-1, B-2 and F-117 stealth aircraft, the Canadian CF-18, German Tornado bombers, Shockwave and more.
- On April 1 the U.S. Coast Guard began operations at it's new Southern Lake Michigan Air Facility in Muskegon.
- In April the Muskegon County Airport hosted a MEGA business after hours in the terminal building. The event drew one of the largest crowds MEGA has seen recently for its popular Business After Hours program.
- The Airport announced a 37% increase in passenger traffic in July. Muskegon's airlines carried 7,087 passengers during that month.
- The airport completed a \$1 million project to construct a new southwest aircraft parking apron and access road. The project also included a reconstruction and upgrade of the northeast parking apron, taxiway D-2 and runway 6/24 blast pads.
- In conjunction with Knoll/Interior Partnership the airport established a business center in the terminal building for use by airport patrons. The center features workstations with telephone and data capability.
  - Conceptual design was completed on Phase II of the Airport Business Park.
  - Travel Fest 1997 took place in the terminal building in October. The party had a Halloween theme and one of the largest turnouts ever.
  - The airport announced a new charter program with non-stop jet charters to Las Vegas, Nassau and Cancun in February and March 1998.
  - Timberlore, Inc. commenced construction of a new production facility on lot #8 of the Airport Business Park.
  - The airport took delivery of an original sculpture by artist Harold Linton of Detroit, entitled Arcs of the Concord. The piece hangs in the terminal building departure lounge.

# Rescue By Air Twentieth-Century Miracle Workers

by Jack Edwards

The vessel is within sight and the helicopter pilot "shoots his approach"—he simultaneously drops to an altitude of about fifty feet above the churning lake surface as he approaches the stern of the boat. The hoist operator is out of his five-point harness and fastens the gunner's belt around his waist to keep him securely fastened to the helo during the moments ahead. A few seconds later he is standing half-in and half-out of the open doorway. The rotor blades whirl a mere foot or so above his head.

The crew's mission is to hoist a victim with life-threatening injuries from a sailboat below. A Coast Guard flight surgeon has been consulted and authorized a MEDEVAC (medical evacuation). Given the sea state, it could take a rescue boat hours to reach the scene. With the wind driven six-footers, a boat-to-boat transfer would be extremely difficult at the very best. Then it would take hours more to return the victim to shore. The difference between life and death could be measured in minutes rather than hours.

The crew members have years of training; they have thousands of hours of flying time. Between practice missions and actual rescues they have executed hundreds of hoists. Their flying partner—a Dolphin helo—represents the latest and the greatest in twentieth-century rescue technology. Not only can its flight controller maintain a steady "hands-off" hover, it allows the pilot to move up or down by increments of three feet. Even the trail line that is lowered is the product of careful engineering. It has a "weak link" located so that, if it is subjected to too much tension, it will break at a predetermined point. The broken line will then drop harmlessly to the lake below rather than flying back up into the rotor. Getting the trail line entangled in the rotor would be truly spectacular—bits of rotor and rope flying everywhere as the fuselage executed a belly whopper into the lake! These are but a few examples of the extensive training and attention to technical detail that are blended together to ensure perfect functioning of the crew and its machine.

Training, experience and technology aside, no hoist is routine. In this case the weather is rotten and, while the crew has performed hundreds of hoists, this is the first time for the sailboat's crew. Given the inexperience of the boat's crew, the plan is to lower a rescue swimmer

\* Helicopters are variously referred to as "choppers" or "copters" or "helos." The term "helo" is used here because it is the term used by the U.S. Coast Guard helicopter crew that I flew with.

6 Great Lakes Cruiser

who will climb aboard the boat and direct the rescue from below. Once the swimmer is aboard the boat, the Dolphin will move overhead and drop a trail line. Then it will back away from the boat before the basket is lowered. The rescue swimmer and crew will use the trail line to pull the basket aboard. After securing the victim in the basket, the helo will move back overhead to perform the hoist. Hoisting from directly overhead will minimize the possibility that the basket and victim will be dunked in the water or swing like a pendulum, possibly slamming into the rigging.

This will be a "lost target hoist," meaning that once the helo moves overhead the pilot will no longer be able to see the boat. The hoist operator will do double duty. Only he will be able to see the trail line and basket that will be lowered. He will direct the pilot to hover at a precise location so the trail line will reach its intended target. Then he will guide the Dolphin into the correct position to hoist the injured victim.

The sailboat pitches and rolls as waves slam into her hull. The tip of her mast, rising sixty feet above her deck, whips around unpredictably. The visibility isn't great; it's dark,

and there is a moderate wind-driven rain falling. Powerful spotlights on the Dolphin's underside light the lake and the boat below. After lowering the swimmer, but before moving overhead, the pilot must climb to a safe altitude so there is no chance of the rotors or the fuselage being struck by the grating mast. The rotor wash of the hovering craft is powerful enough to turn the boat around. The more the boat rotates, the more likely one of the rescue lines could become fouled in its rigging. Besides dealing with the injured person, the rescue swimmer must anticipate problems like this and instruct the boat's captain to maintain his heading throughout the lowering and recovery of the trail line and basket.

Overhead the hoist operator is the only member of the crew who can see the boat. For a few critical moments he will be the "eyes" of the pilot, using his voice commands (comms) to guide the helo into position. Let's listen in on the intercom as the hoist operator guides the pilot into position and drops the line and basket.

"Going hot mike. Move right ten feet. Forward ten feet. Perfect, hold your position. Trail line is going down. Trail line is on deck and being tended. Move back twenty feet."

While directly over the boat during the process of delivering the trail line, the pilot's view of the sail boat has been completely blocked. Once the hoist operator comms the helo back twenty feet, the pilot can see what is going on. The trail line will be used to pull the basket to the



A modern day rescue by air is a far cry from the traditional surf boat rescues that, for centuries, have been the only means of rescuing mariners. Helicopters like this HH-65 Dolphin are used for rescue missions throughout the Great Lakes. Many mariners, fishermen and others owe their lives to the Coast Guard crews who man these helicopters.

# Great Lakes Cruiser

The Boater's Travel Guide



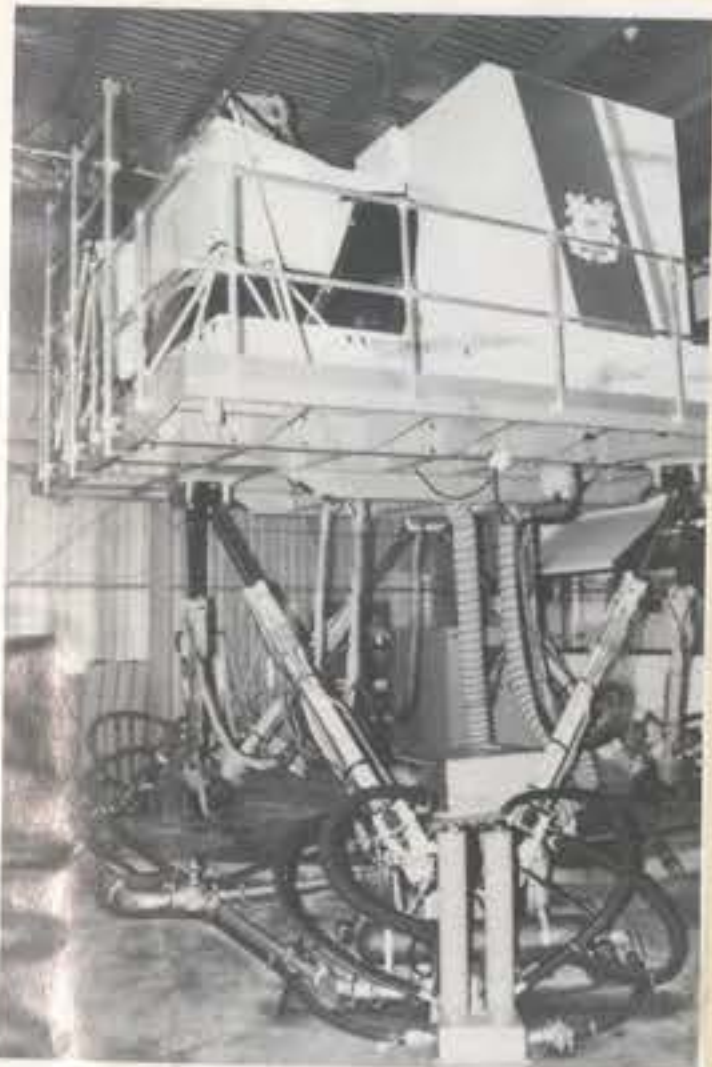
Have You Tried  
Winter Cruising?

Holland  
Gore's Landing  
Honey Harbour  
Search & Rescue, Part II  
The M.T.O.A. Rendezvous  
The Last Passenger's Log, Part I



Thomas J. Atherton '98

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...ing simulator at the Coast Guard Aviation Training Center, Mobile, Alabama. All helicopter pilots undergo annual exercises in this full-motion simulator with audio and visual cues to provide a realistic training environment. The large hydraulic rams beneath the platform make it possible to simulate events that one would never intentionally attempt in flight. Courtesy Coast Guard Aviation Training Center.

boat, helping control and stabilize it, while at the same time allowing the pilot to maintain visual reference with the boat.

"Attaching the weak link. Basket going out the door. Basket going down. Basket ten feet from the boat. Basket going over the rail. Basket on deck. Paying out slack."

Down on the boat's deck, the rescue swimmer secures the victim in the basket. It's time to hoist him. Once again the hoist operator directs the pilot.

"It looks like they are ready; here we go. Move forward forty feet. Move twenty feet to the right. Move another ten feet. Now move left easy. Hold your position. Taking up the slack. Standby to take the load. Taking the load. The basket is off the deck. Clear of all rigging. Move back ten feet. Hold. Basket's coming up. Bringing the basket inside. Retrieving the trail line. The swimmer is back in the water. Move back fifty feet. Hoist line is going down. Swimmer has it. Hoisting the swimmer. Swimmer is inside. The door is closed."

Mission accomplished; a victim with life threatening injuries has been transferred from the deck of the sailboat to the cabin of the Dolphin and is on his way to a medical center. Time and time again Coast Guard rescue teams are called upon to accomplish transfers like the one just described or other similarly complex missions. Instead of hoisting the



The interior of the simulator duplicates the instruments and controls of a Dolphin helicopter. Pilots from different air stations throughout the nation are paired up to fly simulated missions. Because all procedures are standardized throughout the Coast Guard, they can function as a team even though they may have never met before. Courtesy Coast Guard Aviation Training Center.

victim from a boat, they may have to retrieve an exhausted person (or persons) in the water or from the hull of an overturned boat. They may have to hoist people stranded on an ice floe.

Potential dangers stalk the crew. Besides the dangers already mentioned, such as the rotor striking a boat's mast, panicky victims may try to climb on top of a rescue swimmer, threatening both with death by drowning. Also a panicky victim may try to climb on the hoist operator as he approaches the door. To quote hoist operator Auer, "There is nothing like having an adrenaline-pumped victim trying to pull you out the door as you are trying to help him inside."

There is little room for mistakes when it comes to air rescues. Perhaps when you were in school a score of 99% correct sounded excellent; it was probably worth an A, maybe even an A+. Ninety-nine percent would be a miserable score in the hoisting business.

Forget air rescues and hoisting for the moment. Think about a delivery room in a hospital. How many times is it acceptable for attendants to drop an infant on the floor? Is only one out of a hundred okay? That means 99% of the infants were carried without dropping them. Obviously dropping a newborn infant on the floor—even once in ten-thousand carries—is absolutely unacceptable.

Similarly, when it comes to air rescues, clipping the mast with the rotor and dropping the helo and its crew onto the boat and the victims below is also absolutely unacceptable—even once—no matter how many missions are flown, a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand. Sure, unanticipated problems will develop; things will go wrong. Not every hoist will be picture perfect. The crew must anticipate, think, react and work together as a team to avoid disaster and accomplish their mission no matter what. Training and practice are the keys to achieving flawless execution.

## Training Never Ends

Coast Guard pilots are selected from officers who apply for flight school. They must pass a rigorous aptitude test and a physical examination. They begin by learning to fly fixed-wing aircraft at Pensacola, Florida. Helicopter pilots receive additional training at Mobile, Alabama. All told, it takes about a year and a half of training before a pilot gets his first assignment to an air station. During the next four years he accumulates thousands of hours of flight time—in training and actual missions—before he is eligible to command his own aircraft.

Each year the Coast Guard's Aviation Training Center at Mobile, Alabama, sends a team of inspectors to every Coast Guard air base. The team accompanies air crews on training missions and evaluates their



A rescue swimmer may be lowered to retrieve persons in the water. A swimmer may also be lowered when the helicopter crew cannot establish two-way comms with a vessel or when medical attention/stabilization is needed prior to a MEDEVAC hoist. Courtesy Ninth Coast Guard District.

performance. The team administers written tests to ensure that pilots remain up-to-date on their aircraft and the technical aspects of flying. Pilots return annually to Mobile where they undergo simulator training and renew their instrument rating. Much of this training is emergency procedure oriented; pilots are subjected to situations that no one would dare to undertake in a real aircraft.

The support personnel—electronic technicians, aircraft engine and structural mechanics—receive extensive training at the Coast Guard's Aviation Technical Training Center, Elizabeth City, North Carolina. One of the things that is unique to the persons in the Coast Guard is that the aircraft technicians and mechanics are also the people who fly in them as hoist operators. It's a great system—like packing your own parachute—everyone has a personal stake in ensuring safety.

Rescue swimmers—those individuals who jump or are lowered from helicopters—also undergo rigorous training. A swimmer spends a lot of time in pool training. However, nothing in a pool can even come close to what the swimmer will experience struggling with a panicky victim amid ten-foot waves. To keep in top physical condition, a swimmer may run marathons, swim long distances daily and lift weights. One might think that a person struggling in the water would be grateful. Anyone who has ever taken a Red Cross or Boy Scout lifesaving course knows that a panicky victim may try to climb on top of their rescuer. Then two lives are at stake. Though rescue swimming may sound like a particularly dangerous job, it is probably a lot less risky than some sports such as helicopter skiing, hang gliding and bungee jumping.

Many Coast Guard airmen have prior experience on cutters and at shore-based stations. They have been there and done that when it comes to working with the people who operate the 41-footers and other vessels they must work with to accomplish rescue missions. While the air crews perform rescues that would be considered a miracle less than fifty years ago, success often depends on their ability to work as a team with their counterparts on surface vessels. Their training on the water, as well as in the air, enhances their ability to function as a successful team.

## Practice Makes Perfect

Recall Part I of this SAR series (A Race Against Time—To be rescued, you must first be found alive) in last month's issue. We examined a rescue mission in which two hypothermic boaters were found and hoisted into a helicopter from a Coast Guard 41-foot utility boat. Air Station crews regularly practice hoist rescues with crews from boat stations. These practice hoists aren't just for the benefit of the air crew, they also provide training for the boat crews.

My first exposure to Coast Guard rescue by air was at the Traverse City Cherry Festival. Three helos hovered in formation offshore. They "walked" first to the left and then to the right. Three mannequins were



Coast Guard helicopter and boat crews regularly practice hoists to enhance their ability to function as a successful team. Courtesy Ninth Coast Guard District.

simultaneously dropped into the water. Next three wet-suited rescue swimmers were deployed and the mannequins, along with the swimmers, were hoisted back into the helos.

I sensed a topic that Great Lakes Cruisers need to understand better. Someday your life or the lives of loved ones or friends may depend on a successful hoist from the deck of your boat, a life raft or even directly from the water. Miracle rescues can and do happen; understanding what is happening, who is doing what and why, could help ensure success. One thing led to another and in mid-October, I received a telephone call. Could I be at Air Station Traverse City later that month to observe a



Air Station Traverse City is located on 11-acres at Cherry Capitol Airport. The large hangar building in the foreground houses up to five helicopters. Normally, Air Station Traverse City covers Lake Michigan, Lake Superior and Northern Lake Huron (about 45° parallel). Air Station Detroit covers the balance of Lake Huron and Lakes Erie and Ontario. When needed, helos from these two air stations assist each other. Courtesy Ninth Coast Guard District.



Yours truly in an insulated flight suit before the training mission. This Dolphin helo is designed for day-night, all-weather operation. Dolphins have flown in hurricane force winds, though they must work their way around lightning and icing conditions. Naturally I was thankful for no hurricanes, lightning, or icing conditions.

routine training mission? Could I be there? I'd be delighted! No problem, I would drive up the night before and be ready to go first thing in the morning.

Actually, come morning there was one minor problem that I hadn't anticipated. All personnel are required to wear insulated flight suits when the air temperature is below 65°F. I soon discovered that my mass must be distributed a bit differently than most Coast Guard airman. It took several frantic moments of rummaging through lockers in the hangar to find a flight suit that came even remotely close to fitting. However, by quickly sucking in my mid section, holding my breath and quickly zipping the flight suit up, I finally passed my first pre-flight hurdle. I might add that I also learned what it must be like to wear a girdle.

By then, the flight crew had the helo out of the hangar and were readying it for launch. I had a chance to ask some questions. The Coast Guard helicopters stationed on the Great Lakes (Air Station Traverse City and Air Station Detroit) are HH-65 Dolphins. These sleek, twin-engine craft are constructed of space-age materials. The fiberglass-Kevlar-graphite honeycomb structure and aluminum skin results in a lightweight (6,500 pound) helo that can carry over 2,800 pounds of people and equipment. Powered by twin Avco Lycoming gas turbine engines it easily cruises at 125 knots and has a "never exceed" speed of 165 knots. It can climb at 1,500 feet per minute. Fuel consumption is 100 gallons per hour and its normal endurance is about three hours.

These Dolphin helos are not amphibious. If the tail rotor strikes the water—at 3,600 rpm—parts will fly. Since the helo is not designed to land on the water, it has a hoist system capable of raising almost 600 pounds at a time. It is also equipped with an advanced navigation system that can fly a search pattern automatically or perform a "hands-off" hover, freeing all members of the crew to focus on accomplishing the mission.

Petty Officer Robert Auer familiarized me with the safety equipment. I learned where the life raft and other safety equipment were stowed. I learned how to

put on the five-point safety belt harness. I found myself sitting with my legs almost straight out in front of me, wearing a flight girdle and stuck to the seat by a five-point harness. I felt like a cross between the little kid in *Christmas Story* who couldn't get up after falling over in his winter clothes and a deep-sea diver caught in the tenacious grip of an octopus.

Next, Petty Officer Auer in his best airlines-host-fashion pointed out that the emergency exit was right next to me. He continued, "In the unlikely event of a water ditching, I will open the door and all you have to do is follow me." Follow him? I'd be riding piggyback!

While I am on the subject of ditching in the lake, I asked why the flight suits were dark blue. Wouldn't a person in a dark blue suit be difficult to spot in the water? As it turns out, before the crews were equipped with night-vision goggles for nighttime searches, they wore bright orange flight suits. The dark blue flight suits minimize the



Ready for Take-Off. Co-pilot Carulo (left) and aircraft commander McEwen (right) prepare for takeoff. Contrary to traditional cockpit seating positions, the aircraft commander is seated on the right so that he can assist with the hoist operation.

reflection of light in the cockpit that will interfere with the goggles. As for rescuing crew members in the water, in addition to the flight suits, they also wear inflatable life vests whenever flying over the water. These vests contain mini-EPIRBs, flares, strobes, signal mirrors and other emergency equipment. Best of all, when the life vest is inflated out pops a bright orange lining with reflective tape. This is the best of both worlds. The crew is dressed in dark non-reflective clothing when searching with night-vision goggles. If they have to ditch and become victims themselves, their chameleon life vests turn bright orange and contain several pieces of equipment to signal their rescuers.

I learned how to operate the intercom system to talk with the crew members while we were aloft. Was there anything I should or should not do? Petty Officer Auer told me to keep my eyes open and let him know if I saw anything unusual, like black smoke coming from the electrical panel box directly to my left. Fat chance, but at least now I too had a job and was, to a certain extent, part of the crew!

When he is not flying, Petty Officer Auer is a helicopter engine specialist. He is responsible for maintaining and servicing the two jet engines that power the HH-65 helicopters at Air Station Traverse City. During this training flight he would operate the hoist. It was nice to know that the helicopter had two engines rather than one; after all these things glide more like a rock than a fixed-wing airplane. It was even nicer to know that the gentleman who kept the engines in tip-top shape was



Hoist operator Auer is seated behind the pilot. The "gunners belt" located behind him does not imply armament, rather it is used to allow personnel to move around when the helo is being operated with the door open—such as while hoisting.

also flying with me.

At this point I was stuck fast to the helo and about all I could do was continue to ask questions while co-pilot Lt. Charles Carulo and the helicopter commander, Commander James McEwen, completed their pre-flight checks. I learned that the location of all removable equipment, such as flashlights and knives, is standardized throughout the Coast Guard. Crew members can move from one helicopter to another—and even from one air station to another, from Alaska to the Caribbean—knowing that everything will be in the same place. The same is true for flying procedures: start procedures, emergency procedures, hoisting phraseology.

It was time to start the engines and for me to stop asking questions and allow the crew to concentrate on their jobs until we were at cruising altitude. The engines came to life. The Dolphin vibrated a bit as the rpm of the rotor was increased. I was monitoring the conversation between the pilots and ground control. We taxied out to the runway, increased power and were airborne with very little forward roll. As we climbed, Commander McEwen pointed out the various buildings and structures that make up Air Station Traverse City. Upon reaching an altitude of about 800 feet above the ground, we headed north toward Charlevoix.



Once underway, yours truly switched seats with hoist operator Auer. Note his inflatable flotation vest containing emergency signaling equipment. The large pack directly in front of him contains the crew's inflatable life suits and survival equipment.

I switched seats with Petty Officer Auer to gain a better view of the instruments. Commander McEwen and Lt. Carulo explained the function of the numerous instruments: radar, altimeter, artificial horizon, navigation controller, engine temperatures, fuel gauges and scores of other gauges. They explained that they were using two of their four radios to maintain communications with Traverse City and Charlevoix airports. In addition they were monitoring marine VHF Channel 16. With our antenna essentially 800 feet above the lake we could hear a lot of what was going on below. During an actual search, they would monitor 121.5 MHz, seeking a signal from an EPIRB that they could home on.

After becoming familiar with the Dolphin's operation, we headed to the Charlevoix airport where I was transferred to Station Charlevoix to observe the rescue training exercise from the deck of a 41-foot utility boat. I popped (literally) out of my flight suit and donned a bright orange "Mustang" suit. From there it was out into Lake Charlevoix. Soon, the helo appeared in the distance and made a quick flyby. Commander McEwen circled back and shot his approach, ending in a hover about fifty feet overhead. Petty Officer Auer dropped the trail line and the helo backed off as the basket was dropped.

At this point, I discovered another unanticipated problem. The "rotorwash" (created by the rapidly turning rotor blades) stirred up the lake something fierce. I quickly learned what it must be like to take photos from the inside of a washing machine looking out. I was shooting



View from over Commander McEwen's shoulder. The chop-chop of the rotors and whine of the turbines make the cockpit a noisy place, particularly when the door is open. To facilitate communications, crew members wear helmets equipped with head sets and microphones.

with two cameras, my trusty old Nikon F3 and a brand new Canon EOS-1N. The Canon was equipped with an automatic focusing system that is almost as complex as the Dolphin's flight controller and could keep the helo in perfect focus as it moved toward or away from the camera. I wondered if Canon had tested this electro-optical marvel in a washing machine. I also wondered if this would be the Canon's maiden and final voyage. All I could do was keep shooting and hope for the best. As it



Crew members of Station Charlevoix's 41-footer use a trail line to bring the basket aboard. Meanwhile the helo has backed off so it is not directly overhead. When the helo is directly overhead, churning of the air column and water directly beneath it can create forces strong enough to turn a moderate-sized boat around unless the captain takes countermeasures to maintain his heading.

turned out, some of the photos were fine, some were blurred by droplets on the lens and a few contained beautiful rainbows that escaped my eye during the shoot.

After the training exercise, I returned to Station Charlevoix and was ferried back to the airport for the return trip to Air Station Traverse City. Lunch was with the crew and Commander Eric Fagerholm who at the time was Commander of Traverse City Air Station (he's presently in Washington DC, attending the National War College). This was an opportunity to clarify what I had observed during the training exercise and to explore some of the other ways that helicopters are used by the Coast Guard.

### A Versatile Platform

MEDEVAC missions attract a lot of media attention, however, they account for only about 3% of Air Station Traverse City's missions. Many much more mundane missions are flown in response to flare sightings and EPIRB signals received by satellites. Well-meaning people mistake all sorts of things for flares, everything from shooting stars to reflections from automobile windshields. EPIRBs may be activated if they are accidentally dropped or kicked. Even though, in many cases, Coast Guard personnel are searching for something that isn't out there, they are obligated to search whenever there is a possibility that there may be a person in the water and the search can be conducted without undue risk to the searchers.

Besides searches and rescues, helicopters can provide an ideal platform for reconnaissance missions. Traverse City Air Station helos have been used to track the movement of logs that fell off a barge and were hazards to navigation in northern Lake Michigan. They have been used in law enforcement such as spotting illegal fishing activities. They provide excellent platforms for observing oil and other chemical spills. They assist icebreakers and commercial shipping by providing ice surveillance patrols.

During the winter when the water on the Great Lakes is too hard for boating, the frequency of SAR missions decrease and some of the helicopters and their crews are reassigned to the Caribbean. There they participate in law enforcement missions to prevent illegal immigration and intercept drugs headed for our country. Unlike operations on the Great Lakes, helos flying far offshore in the Caribbean cannot re-



Friction between the rotating blades and the air create a static charge with an electric potential up to 20,000 volts. SN Craig Dusek, Coast Guard Station Charlevoix, used the grounding wand shown here to discharge the basket before it was brought aboard the boat. The distortion in the lower part of the photograph was caused by droplets of water that landed on the lens while the helo hovered nearby.



Close-up of the hoist mechanism. This 600-pound capacity hoist allows two people to be hoisted at a time. There is a guarded switch that the hoist operator can use in an emergency to fire an explosive charge severing the hoist cable. This might be needed if entanglement of the hoist lines with the vessel's rigging endangers the helo.

turn to land for refueling. They are launched from the decks of Coast Guard cutters. Takeoff and landing from a shipboard pad that rolls and pitches require additional skills beyond what is needed for operation from an air station. All Coast Guard helo crews are trained to operate from the decks of cutters. Down in the Caribbean, the Dolphin's hoist is sometimes used for law enforcement recovery of bales of marijuana or other illegal contraband when vessels being pursued dump the evidence onboard.

### Next Month

Next month, in Part 3 of our Search and Rescue series, we will take a look at hard water—more commonly known as ice. There is no end to the fun when our Great Lakes become too hard for soft-water cruising. Fishermen trade their bass boats and prams for shanties. Outboard motors give way to pickup trucks and utility vehicles that are driven right out onto the ice. Daredevils exchange their jet skis for snowmobiles and jump windrowed ice. The go-fast crowd includes motorcyclists and stock-car racers who equip their machines with studded tires and de-light in performing spectacular spin-outs on ice. Soft-water sailors who aren't into snow-birding, use ice boats to zoom around at breath-taking

speeds. Children and teenagers horse around, slip-sliding on the ice as children and teenagers have done for time immemorial. Liquor, drugs, weapons and illegal immigrants slip across the international border over the narrow, frozen channels that separate Canada and the United States. Romantic skaters with long scarves waltz merrily around, enjoying this magnificent winter wonderland. All of this hard water activity provides ample opportunity for Coast Guard, State Police, Sheriffs, and DNR personnel to keep their SAR skills sharp between soft-water boating seasons. Next month we will visit an ice rescue competition where agencies compete to prove their ice rescuers are the best, and participants can use any techniques they choose other than explosives. I kid you not; at one year's competition, rather than carry an auger to judge the ice thickness, the personnel from one agency whipped out their side arms and plugged it full of holes!



### Make It A Perfect Hoist

Now that you have a "helo's eye view" of an air rescue, you may be wondering, "In the event that someone needs to be hoisted from my boat, how can I help?" Here are some basic instructions.

- Provide a clear area, preferably on the stern of your vessel.
- Remove all items that might fly around from the strong down draft of the rotor (rotorwash).
- Whenever possible, lower masts, booms, flags, antennas, etc.
- Keep all unnecessary people out of the way.
- When the helicopter arrives on scene, change course so as to place the wind thirty degrees off the port bow of your vessel and continue at a moderate speed. In a situation where a small vessel or raft is dead in the water, the rotorwash may cause the vessel to rotate clockwise (as viewed from overhead). This may make the hoist much more difficult, particularly where there is a possibility that lines from the helicopter may become fouled in a vessel's rigging.



The helicopter has backed off and is no longer directly overhead. The hoist operator crouching in the doorway helps position the hoist line so the basket clears the fuselage. Note the trail line that is connected to the basket. It's used by persons on the vessel below to haul the basket over and onto the deck—pull, pull, pull!

- If you have a marine VHF radio aboard, keep it tuned to the distress frequency (Channel 16) for instructions from the helicopter crew. They will attempt to explain the procedure over the radio. If you do not have a radio for two-way comms or the hoist is a MEDEVAC requiring medical attention/stabilization prior to the hoist, they will lower a swimmer.
- The helicopter crew will provide all the necessary equipment. They will probably begin by lowering a weighted trail line to your vessel. In rough conditions or when your boat is rotating, there is a greater possibility that the trail line may become fouled in your rigging. If this occurs, the trail line is expendable. It can be severed and another line used for a second attempt.
- If a stretcher is required, the helicopter will lower one specially rigged for hoisting.
- Allow the basket or stretcher to touch your vessel prior to handling it to avoid static shock.
- Do not hook, attach or tie any lines from the helicopter to your vessel.
- If the stretcher is used, strap the patient in face-up. In addition, if his condition permits, the patient should be wearing a life jacket. If a basket is used, place the patient in the basket with his hands clear of the sides.
- When the basket or stretcher is ready for hoisting, signal the hoist operator by giving the "thumbs up" signal.
- If the hoist is not done from directly overhead, you may be able to use the trail line to stabilize the basket or stretcher and prevent it from swinging. Again, exercise extreme caution so the trail line does not become fouled in your rigging.

# Three drown in Lake Michigan

## Snowmobilers fall through thin ice in U.P.; two survive

GLADSTONE (AP) — Searchers on Saturday pulled the bodies of three snowmobilers from Lake Michigan on Saturday about 17 hours after they broke through the ice and drowned.

Delta County authorities identified the bodies recovered about 3:20 p.m. Saturday from Little Bay de Noc as Tony Englund and Michael Gieryk Jr., both 24, and Shawn Chroge, 23. All three were from Gladstone.

A fourth snowmobiler, Brian Deiter, 26, Escanaba, was rescued from the water about 30 minutes after the accident shortly before 10 p.m. Friday.

He was hospitalized for hypothermia and released Saturday afternoon.

Authorities said those men and 28-year-old Michael Lenca, 28, of Rapid River, were snowmobiling about 450 feet from the shore on a lake area known for strong currents and dangerously patchy ice.

Lenca spotted open water and managed to clear it, then looked back and couldn't see his companions.

Lenca went to a gas station and summoned emergency workers.

About 20 minutes later, Delta

County, state and Traverse City Coast Guard station authorities heard Deiter screaming for help, floating face up and clinging to ice in the frigid water.

Rescuers tossed him a tire tied to a rope and pulled him to safety.

Two Gladstone police officers who ended up in the icy water during the rescue were treated and released.

Searchers who failed to find the missing men late Friday resumed the effort Saturday, then suspended it for several hours for safety reasons before ultimately finding the bodies.

The bodies were about 250 yards off of Saunder's Point, near the spot where a Canadian musher fell through and died during the U.P. 200 sled dog race in February 1994.

William Orazetti, 50, of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, and seven of his nine dogs drowned when he lost his way in dense fog and inadvertently wandered into the Saunder's Point area.

The area becomes treacherous in the winter because a strong current keeps the ice dangerously thin, while ice surrounding it is often thick enough to travel on.

# Anglers plucked off Manistee Lake

KALKASKA — Two fishermen were rescued from frigid Manistee Lake after they fell through the ice Monday.

Virgil L. Edwards, 58, broke through thin ice as he attempted to help Alvan Woodcock, 65, who had fallen into the lake, according to the Kalkaska County Sheriff's Department.

Woodcock was able to get out of the water quickly, but Edwards was not, deputies said. A U.S. Coast Guard helicopter from Traverse City was able to pull Edwards from the lake. He had apparently been in the water for about 30 minutes, according to authorities.

After the rescue, the helicopter crew lowered the victim and a rescue swimmer 125 feet through trees to emergency medical personnel, the Coast Guard said.

Edwards and Woodcock, both of St. Louis, Mich., were taken to Kalkaska Memorial Health Center. They were treated for hypothermia and released, a hospital official said.

No lake ice is safe to walk on in the county, authorities said. **LET'S WASH - 1-877-LS MC**  
VIA CAT 1st time

# Manistee boy and his sister drown in lake

### Third sibling also fell through ice, but was able to get out and run for help

By WILL SCOTT  
Record-Eagle staff writer

MANISTEE — A 21-year-old woman and her 9-year-old brother drowned Monday night when they fell through the ice on a tiny Manistee County lake, prompting the sheriff's department to issue a warning to stay off all county lakes.

Divers pulled Stephen James Cooper, 9, of Manistee, from the water about two hours after he fell through. He was pronounced dead at West Shore Hospital, deputies said.

Marie Cooper, 21, also of Manistee, was pulled out 25 minutes later. She also was pronounced dead at West Shore.

Another brother, 7 years old, also fell through, but managed to get out and run for help, deputies said. His first name was withheld by police.

The youngster ran to a house on the lake and called for help, and the resident called 911, deputies said.



Volunteers from fire and ambulance crews in six townships and villages, plus the American Red Cross, the Coast Guard and sheriff's department divers gathered to search for the victims.

Detective Lt. Douglas Cermak said the three apparently had spent the day fishing on the ice, and were walking back to shore when they fell through.

They were about 75 yards off shore in 15 feet of water, Cermak said.

The tragedy has prompted the sheriff's department to warn everyone to stay off all county lakes, Cermak said.

"Unless something changes drastically, we don't feel conditions are safe at this point and we certainly don't want to go through again what we went through last night," he said.

The Coast Guard, sheriff's departments and other officials have warned people throughout the winter that fluctuating and above-normal temperatures have made for unsafe ice throughout northwest Michigan.

Don Ackman, counter manager at Fisherman's Headquarters tackle shop in Wellston, said he reminds customers of what the Department of Natural Resources has said all winter.

"There's no safe ice anywhere in the county," Ackman said. "It's been that way all winter."

He said people venture onto the ice anyway, so he tells them to wear a life jacket and carry a strong wooden dowel with a nail driven into one end. He said the dowel can be used as an ice pick to help pull yourself out of the water.

But Ackman said even those precautions are no guarantee of safety.



WISCONSIN DUCKS UNLIMITED MAGAZINE  
FALL ISSUE - 1997

■ Lt. Cmdr. Robert Burris, Lt. Kent Everingham, and Petty Officers Daniel Bertrand and Richard Fisher of the U.S. Coast Guard. During an electrical storm, the foursome conducted a helicopter rescue of four people stranded in an overturned vehicle in the swollen Black River near Grand Haven.

Bertrand also was a Community Heroes award recipient last year, when he assisted an elderly epilepsy patient.

**Kenosha**



GREAT!!!!!! ... was the response by all Greenwings and adults in attendance at the Kenosha chapter Greenwing day this past September. Participating in the program were the U.S. Coast Guard and our conservation officers (and valued DUFers) - Jeff Knorr and Mike Neal. All enjoyed the inspection of the helicopter and the "fly-bye" farewell. Our thanks to all committee people who assisted that day.



### HORSE ATTITUDES



Record-Eagle/John L. Russell

Grand Traverse Band Tribal Police Mounted Patrol members put their horses through training Saturday near Peshawbestown. Horses were ridden through a series of scenarios, such as crowd control, wailing sirens and hanging yellow ribbons. Above, a Coast Guard helicopter takes off near the animals. Story, Page 3A.

## Horses stand up to sirens, 'copters

By RICH WERTZ  
Record-Eagle staff writer

PESHAWBESTOWN — With only an occasional toss of the head and a few nervous sidesteps, Grand Traverse Band police horses learned Saturday not to shy away from a landing helicopter.

Or a police car with lights flashing. Or a fire engine with siren blaring. Or a crowd of people waving picket signs.

The Grand Traverse Band's Mounted Patrol trained Saturday to get both horses and riders used to unfamiliar sounds and sights.

Sgt. Chuck Yearn, commander of the 12-member mounted patrol, led the riders in a large circle around a whooping fire engine. The circle grew smaller each time around.

"Once they got used to it, they'll go right up there and stand next to



Record-Eagle/John L. Russell

A mounted patrol splits to disperse a "crowd."

it," said tribal police Cpl. Matt Morton.

Moments later, the riders urged the horses through strips of yellow plastic hanging from an overhead boom. Skipper, a 9-year-old horse with only a few weeks in the patrol, balked at the unknown danger.

"That's a lot to ask a horse to do," said Dave Beer, a casino shuttlebus driver and horse enthusiast who was among a small group of observers.

Horses evolved with a strong instinct to run from perceived danger and it takes a lot of training to

overcome that instinct, Beer said. At only a little more urging from Skipper's rider, though, the horse walked through the ribbon.

The horses remained calm even when a huge orange Coast Guard helicopter circled, landed with a roar of wind and rose again. And when the mounted patrol confronted a group of volunteer "rioters" gathered around a police car, it was the rioters who gave way.

The public is welcome to watch future training sessions held each Saturday afternoon behind the tribal police station on Stallman Road.

22 Ludington Daily News, Thursday, April 23, 1998

### Happy landings



One of the Traverse City Coast Guard Air Station's HH-65 Dolphin helicopters lands near the Ludington station Wednesday morning. The helicopter was in town for a group of O.J. DeJonge students to tour and for station training. At right, rescue swimmer John Hall explains his duties as part of the helicopter's flight crew to the group of students.

Daily News/ANDY KLEVORN



# Coast Guard 'copter and crew visit FP

**By Lynn Perry**  
CRYSTAL FALLS—A state-of-the-art U. S. Coast Guard helicopter and its four pilots hovered over the Forest Park football field to the ecstatic shouts and excitement of on-looking students, before demonstrating an air lift rescue and then landing to respond to a myriad of questions.

Cruising at an altitude of about 2,000 feet, at 130 knots, it took the team about 1-1/2 hours to arrive here from the USCG Air Base in Traverse City.

This is one of 96 Dolphin helicopters built for the USCG. It's frame is French-made, but the engine and components are U.S.-made. It's two engines generate about 1,500 horsepower and use jet fuel.

The Coast Guard, explained Tom McBeth, took delivery of its first Dolphin helicopter in 1984 at the training station on Mobile, Alabama. USCG began training in 1985.

**THE AIRCRAFT ARE** stationed at bases located up and down the U.S. coasts, with two bases in Michigan—in Detroit and Traverse City.

The helicopters are used primarily for search and rescue, but also for law enforcement support, maritime aides, to enforce laws and treaties, and to conduct pollution patrols.

Mark Driver explained the USCG stays busy year 'round, but more so in the summer. In the winter they conduct ice patrols, keeping shipping vessels aware of ice float locations.

Thomas Cooney explained teams run but 300 cases a year. The most common are boat sinkings and lost hunters. The helicopter is equipped



A bright orange U.S. Coast Guard helicopter and its four pilots visited Forest Park May 6, and then helped area Boy Scouts earn their aviation merit badges. The aircraft, based in Traverse City, is used for search and rescue missions, law enforcement assistance and pollution patrols. Their visit here was arranged by Rich Vandepels, USCG retired.

with night vision capabilities and "night sun" lights.

**ALL FOUR MEN WERE** wearing drysuits. Driver explained the undergarments pull sweat away from the body to keep the wearer dry. In 52 degree water, he explained, they could stay immersed 1-1/2 to 2 hours before hypothermia set in.

The aircraft is equipped with a system of flotation devices, similar to a pontoon, he continued. So if the helicopter went down in water, it would stay afloat for about five min-



The Coast Guard team demonstrated an air lift rescue before landing.

utes, allowing crew time to inflate lifeboats.

McBeth told those interested in a career as a USCG pilot, that the best route is getting a college degree first, or attending a Coast Guard Academy. Then, attend officers' candidate

school or flight school. Another option is a direct commission. For instance, McBeth was a Marine pilot. Driver was an Air Force pilot, before joining the Coast Guard.

"I love my job," smiled Driver. "We're never bored."



Mike Kellams talked to students about the helicopter, answering many questions from the hundred-plus who watched the demonstration.

**Uplifting experience**  
A member of the Coast Guard is lifted into a helicopter as part of a rescue demonstration on Sunday at Berrien Springs. It's all part of the annual Andrews University Air Expo, sponsored by the university's Air Club.  
SOUTH BEND TRIBUNE 27 APR 98

# 1,000+ people take part in Dawn Patrol at county airport

**By Charley Ash**  
Staff Writer

It was a chilly morning on Sunday, June 7, but that didn't seem to phase the 1,000 people who came out to welcome the Dawn Patrol at the Roscommon County Airport.

More than 100 pilots from across Michigan, and even out of state, descended on Houghton Lake for the annual pancake breakfast and air show sponsored by the Roscommon County Pilots Association and hosted by Blodgett Aviation.

There were lots of neat planes to see including two WWII SNJ Navy fighters & a T-28 Navy training plane. The U.S. Coast Guard brought a jet-powered helicopter that the kids swarmed over.

Jim Moore from Higgins Lake took some folks up for a chilly ride in his Starduster II experimental aerobatic bi-plane. There was also a million-dollar amphibious Caravan plane for the people to check out.

Jerry Werle from Kirtland Community College and his master skydiving troupe were on hand for the event. Werle gave a presentation on skydiving and



This Navy SNJ WWII fighter plane was among the many aircraft on display at the county airport.

then he and his buddies took to the sky to show the folks how it's done.

Everyone seemed to have a good time at the event which raises money for scholarships for Roscommon County High School students with an interest in pursuing an aviation-related career after graduation.



Amy Shingledecker gets her 15 minutes of fame on her 15th birthday as Master skydivers Rick DeShano (left), Brand Winchell (center) and Don Ittner display the correct skydiving form and chute release on her. Below, everyone got a chance to view the U.S. Coast Guard jet-powered helicopter.







# TRAVERSE CITY RECORD-EAGLE

JULY 5, 1998

NORTHERN MICHIGAN'S NEWSPAPER

50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.50 SUNDAY

## NMC flier may be aboard missing jet

Area being searched for missing aircraft



**■ The Coast Guard would not confirm Don Rodriguez's status on the flight**

By PATRICK SULLIVAN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — A Northwestern Michigan College flight instructor is believed to have been aboard a Czechoslovakian-made L-39 jet trainer that is missing over Lake Michigan.

A massive search is under way for the Aero L-39 Albatross, carrying a pilot from Illinois and Don Rodriguez, a Benzie County

native and a flight instructor at NMC since the 1970s, according to NMC board member Elaine Wood.

The plane was scheduled to fly in the National Cherry Festival air show Saturday and Sunday along with the U.S. Navy Blue Angels.

The show went on Saturday without the Albatross and a Russian MIG-21 that was also scheduled to fly.

"Don Rodriguez is a wonderful pilot and a wonderful man. He's a great instructor. I've flown with him many times," Wood said.

"This is something that would really be a thrill for him — to fly in one of these jets.

"I'm going to keep my hopes up

until I hear something definite. I'm not going to accept that they're gone yet," Wood said.

"He's a very wonderful and experienced instructor. He's a wonderful man," said NMC President Ilse Burke.

Coast Guard spokesmen would not confirm whether Rodriguez was on the flight. The Coast Guard will not release the name of the pilot until the plane is found or the search is concluded.

Rodriguez was on the flight as a guest, according to Bob Buttleman, also an NMC flight instructor. Buttleman was a guest on a companion flight aboard a MIG-21 jet fighter that returned safely from its Friday evening flight. Both the MIG-21 and the Albatross



This is an Aero L-39 Albatross, similar to the one that is missing over Lake Michigan.

are owned by AirUSA of Quincy, Ill.

The Albatross was used to train Russian military pilots. The miss-

ing jet was part of the so-called "Red Star Squadron," a group of

See NMC, Page 5A ▶

## NMC instructor missing

◀ Continued from Page 1A

private individuals who buy airplanes from the former Soviet bloc for display at air shows and other events.

A half hour after Rodriguez departed from Cherry Capital Airport at 4 p.m. Friday, Buttleman took off in the MIG-21. It was also scheduled to perform in the air shows. Buttleman said he had no idea what could have happened to the Albatross.

Buttleman, who described Rodriguez as a good pilot and a good friend, said flying in the companion plane was eerie in retrospect.

"Knowing that you could have been there yourself, that always enters your mind," he said. "But you always look back on the thrill that you had doing it."

Searchers are hampered because the area where they believe the jet could have crashed is enormous. Saturday afternoon, planes had flown more than 2,000 miles searching for the jet.

U.S. Coast Guard helicopters were dispatched at 9 p.m. Friday after the two-seat, single-engine Aero L-39 was reported overdue.

Since Friday evening, two Coast Guard helicopters equipped with night vision goggles, a Canadian C-130, and the Blue Angel's C-130 "Fat Albert" cargo plane have searched Lake Michigan between

North Manitou and South Fox islands.

A radar blip at 7 p.m. indicated a plane traveling at over 345 miles per hour and flying characteristically of a jet fighter 25 miles northwest of Traverse City over Lake Michigan, Coast Guard Admiral John F. McGowan told reporters Saturday.

Although officials aren't certain that was the L-39, that was the last sighting that could have been the plane, he said.

That radar blip, which searchers are using to direct their search, may not indicate where the jet was before it crashed, if it did crash. The plane could have descended to an altitude too low to be picked up on radar, McGowan said.

McGowan said there was no reports of radio transmissions from the plane.

A 41-foot Coast Guard utility boat was dispatched Saturday to investigate an unconfirmed report of oil and debris spotted in the water between North Manitou and South Fox islands.

It is believed the jet was equipped with parachutes and ejector seats but Coast Guard officials said those seats may not have been functioning. It is not known if the plane is equipped with a homing beacon.

McGowan said both passengers were trained in survival techniques.

TRAVERSE CITY RECORD-EAGLE  
MONDAY, JULY 6, 1998

## Search for flier continues

### Coast Guard looking to U.P.'s Brevort Lake for clues

By PATRICK SULLIVAN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — Officials are searching more than 1000 square miles for a plane reported missing Friday evening, but a flight instructor's family is not giving up hope two men on the plane will be found alive.

Searchers are now looking for an Aero L-39 jet trainer near Brevort Lake in the Upper Peninsula northeast of St. Ignace.

The plane carried Northwestern Michigan College flight instructor Don Rodriguez and pilot Don Schaller of Quincy, Ill.,

and was reported missing after failing to return from a routine flight Friday evening.

A U.S. Coast Guard search for the plane was called off Saturday at 10:30 p.m. after a massive search of Lake Michigan between North Manitou and South Fox islands yielded no sign of the plane.

Michigan State Police are continuing to search the Upper Peninsula near Brevort Lake northwest of St. Ignace where there may have been two sightings of the plane.

"There was a jet seen in that area. Whether it's that one or not we don't know yet," said Trooper

Riek Doehring.

The search has challenged officials because possible sightings of the plane span from over Lake Michigan near the Manitou islands to the Mackinaw Straits area. Searchers have traveled thousands of miles looking for the plane.

Bob Buttleman, also an NMC flight instructor who flew Friday evening in the L-39's companion MIG-21 jet, said if Rodriguez crashed somewhere and was alive, he was the kind of man who could survive. Rodriguez served in the Air Force and the National Guard, Buttleman said.

Buttleman, who has been in con-

tact with Rodriguez' family, said they are handling the crisis well.

"They're still holding out for that little bit of thread of hope that he is somewhere."

Buttleman describes Rodriguez as a good pilot and a good friend.

"He's touched the lives of a lot of students."

Others at NMC said they are waiting for answers and not giving up hope that Rodriguez and Schaller will be found alive.

"Speculation can be a little dangerous. We're just waiting until we get the facts. And we're doing lot of praying as well," said

See SEARCH, Page 2A ▶

## Search for flier continues

◀ Continued from Page 1A

Shirly Okerstrom, an NMC board member who has flown with Rodriguez many times.

If the plane crashed in Lake Michigan or Lake Brevort, it is possible the plane would leave no evidence of a crash on the surface.

"If it hit the water at the right angle it would be able to stay in one piece in such an impact," Doehring said.

Saturday Coast Guard officials said they believed the plane was downed somewhere in Lake Michigan between North Manitou and South Fox islands.

Witnesses reported the plane matched the description of the L-39 and appeared to have engine trouble, however later reports indicated the plane's engine sounded normal.

A report of oil and debris in Lake Michigan was determined to have been sea weed after a 41-

foot Coast Guard search and rescue boat out of Charlevoix was dispatched to the location Saturday.

Rodriguez, a native of Benzie County, has been a flight instructor at Northwestern Michigan College since 1979. He is married and has two grown daughters and one grown son.

Schaller is the corporate pilot for Kirlin's, Inc., a Quincy-based distributor of Hallmark Greeting Cards. Schaller was an organizer of the World Free Fall Convention, an organization that rebuilds military aircraft for display at a planned museum in Quincy.

The Czechoslovak-built Aero L-39 Albatross was scheduled to fly along with a MIG-21 in the National Cherry Festival's air show Saturday and Sunday with the Blue Angels.



## Lost pilot's kin cling to hope

■ NMC flight instructor Don Rodriguez always dreamed of flying in an Aero L-39 Albatross jet trainer

By MICHELLE KELLEY  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — Being passed over for an opportunity to fly in a jet during the Cherry festival frustrated Northwestern Michigan College flight instructor Don Rodriguez for years. So when he got his chance, he

jumped at it. Rodriguez, 57, of Benzonia, has been instructing young pilots at the school for more than two decades. One of his dreams came true when he was invited to fly in an Aero L-39 Albatross jet trainer Friday. The plane was scheduled to perform with the U.S. Navy's Blue Angels the next day. "I don't think there would have been anything to keep him from that ride," said Patricia Delonay, Rodriguez's wife. Rodriguez and the L-39 pilot, Don Schaller of Quincy, Ill., never

See LOST, Page 2A ▶

### Brevort Lake search for plane proves futile

By MICHELLE KELLEY  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — A plane spotted in the Brevort Lake Area has been determined not to be the same as the L-39 Albatross jet trainer in which Northwestern Michigan College flight instructor Don Rodriguez was a passenger. Rodriguez and pilot Don Schaller, a member of the Red

Star Squadron out of Quincy, Ill., left the Cherry Capital Airport at about 6:30 p.m. Friday without a flight plan, and was reported missing after failing to return from a routine flight. Michigan State Police Sgt. Bill Sholten reported the plane spotted in Mackinaw County has been identified as other than the L-39. The search continues in the

See SEARCH, Page 2A ▶



Don Schaller and Don Rodriguez stand in front of Aero L-39 Albatross jet trainer prior to taking the craft up Friday afternoon.

## Lost pilot's kin cling to hope

◀Continued from Page 1A

returned from their routine flight Friday evening, and authorities are still looking for the man and the plane. Rodriguez and his wife were planning to attend his 40-year high school class reunion that night.

Rodriguez is the college's chief pilot for its transportation department, which transports school officials to different locations. He also is coordinator of ground school classes, and a multi-engine aircraft trainer.

Never before in the history of the school has any instructor been invited to fly in one of the visiting air show jets, college Aviation Division Director Robert Buttleman said.

And no NMC instructor has been lost in an accident.

Family and friends say they haven't stopped hoping.

"We're clinging to a centimeter of hope," Delonay said.

Rodriguez is the father of three children, including two grown daughters and a grown son, and four step-children.

Family members are printing up posters with pictures of the pilots and listing phone numbers and a Web site at the college in hopes a camper may have heard or seen something in the Brevort Lake area of Mackinaw County where the

### Search for plane proves futile

◀Continued from Page 1A

South Fox Island area. The Civil Air Patrol also is in the process of screening radar records and computing possible course directions.

A U.S. Coast Guard search for the plane in Lake Michigan between North Manitow and South Fox islands was called off Saturday at 10:30 p.m. without results.

Included in the search were crews of two Coast Guard helicopters, a Canadian Forces C-130, the U.S. Navy Blue Angel's support C-130, and a 41-foot search and rescue boat.

The search is expected to continue today.

plane was last spotted by witnesses.

Although Rodriguez was excited about the flight, only Delonay and Buttleman knew he was going.

Since such flights often are canceled, his son Doug Rodriguez guesses his father didn't want to jeopardize his opportunity by talk-

ing about it. So Doug Rodriguez didn't learn of the flight until the plane was missing.

Flying and aviation have been a passion of Rodriguez's since he was a small child, Delonay said. He knew every plane by sight and was interested in all aspects of flying.

In a hanger near Lake Ann, Rodriguez has hoarded reams of aviation memorabilia, periodicals, and the 1946 J3 Cub plane in which he first soloed.

Along with his passion came an interest in young people who also were interested in aviation. One of those young people happened to be his son.

Rodriguez began recording his son's flight hours when he could reach the pedals and see over the dash board simultaneously. When he was 16, Doug Rodriguez soloed in the same J3 Cub plane as his dad had soloed in.

Doug Rodriguez says his father is one of the best pilots he has flown with, and safety was foremost on his mind during each flight.

"He always taught safety," Doug Rodriguez said, and continuously reviewed emergency procedures. He couldn't recall a family plane trip in which they felt rushed, and remembers flight plans being filed for each flight.

"When you flew with him you felt

very safe," Delonay said.

Since he was reported missing, many of Rodriguez's former students have called his home and the school to inquire about the incident.

While teaching hundreds of students over the years, Rodriguez managed to log about 10,000 flight hours, a number which would far surpass most commercial airline pilots upon retirement, Doug said.

But Rodriguez didn't enjoy every aspect of flying. He was unable to swim, and flying over water in a single-engine plane didn't appeal to him in the least, Doug Rodriguez said. That fact has Doug convinced the L-39 didn't go down in water.

The L-39, a Czechoslovakian make, is equipped with a single engine and seats two.

Schaller's wife told Doug Rodriguez that her husband would have certainly respected his father's fear of flying over water and would have stuck to land.

Rodriguez loved to fly, and before he got in the L-39 he was smiling from ear-to-ear, his son said.

Doug Rodriguez said he would have hated to see his father killed by a drunk driver or spend years fighting cancer, but dying in a plane, "that's a good way," Rodriguez said. "He was doing what he loved."

## Cherry Fest jet feared lost in lake

2 aboard; searchers spot slick north of Leelanau Peninsula.

By Kevin Lynch  
The Detroit News

TRAVERSE CITY — Helicopters, planes and rescue boats searched a section of Lake Michigan on Saturday for a small jet that vanished during a practice flight in preparation for a National Cherry Festival air show.

A visiting pilot scheduled to fly in the show Saturday took off aboard his Czech-built Aero L-39 with a Traverse City pilot around 6 p.m. Friday, according to Ted Sanchez of the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station. Neither missing man was identified. Sanchez said the local flier went along to help navigate through unfamiliar territory.

"They just took off to get to know the area," Sanchez said from Traverse City. "It was a routine thing."

No distress call had been broadcast. When the pair didn't return by 11 p.m., Coast Guard helicopters began hunting. Searchers found debris and an



The Detroit News oil slick Saturday afternoon near the single-engine plane's last known position, just south of the Fox Islands and north of the Leelanau Peninsula.

Investigators hadn't confirmed whether the wreckage came from the privately owned, two-seat military training jet.

A squad from the U.S. Navy's Blue Angels flight team, performing at the week-long Cherry Festival, offered to aid in the search.

# LOCAL

## State police suspend search for lost jet

■ Lack of debris near islands leads authorities to believe plane went down farther north

By MIKE NORTON  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — Discouraged by a fruitless air and ground search around the Fox Islands on Wednesday, Michigan State Police officials have called off their hunt for a missing jet and its two passengers. "We've exhausted every lead we have, every lead that's come

in," said Lt. Mark Stewart, commander of the state police post in Traverse City. "We don't have any debris. ... We don't have any oil slicks. We're not closing our investigation, and we will continue to accept calls and tips. But we're suspending our search effort until we receive new information."

The single-engine aircraft, a Czech L-39 Albatros, has been missing since Friday. Aboard were the pilot, 49-year-old Donald Schaller of Quincy, Ill., and Northwestern Michigan College flight instructor Donovan Rodriguez, 58, of Beulah. The plane, which was used as a

training jet for Eastern Bloc pilots, was supposed to have been featured in the air show at this year's National Cherry Festival.

Wednesday morning, searchers from the Michigan State Police and the state wing of the Civil Air Patrol conducted an intense ground and air search of North and South Fox Islands. Teams combed the shoreline, coastal waters and woods on both of the small islands looking for debris from the jet, but found only an empty smoke canister dropped by a Coast Guard helicopter during an earlier search of the

area on Saturday.

"The fact that the Coast Guard smoke canister has washed ashore on South Fox Island within the last two days would indicate that if the missing aircraft broke apart, either in flight or upon contact with the water surface, then pieces of the missing aircraft might start to show up on Lake Michigan shoreline beaches," said Stewart. "We now believe the aircraft is located in the waters of northern Lake Michigan."

The post has contacted law enforcement agencies along the coast, including the National Park Service, which patrols

the shoreline of the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, and asked them to be on the lookout for debris. Other agencies have been notified that the search is being suspended, said Stewart, as have the families of the missing flyers.

A spokesman for the Rodriguez family said he was not surprised by the announcement, since it had been expected for several days.

"But we're not giving up, either," he said. "There are several other things to be done, and we're going to follow them up."

**IN BRIEF**  
FROM STAFF REPORTS

**Alzheimer's patient is found safe**

BUCKLEY — A 68-year-old Cincinnati man with Alzheimer's disease who disappeared overnight in Wexford County was found hungry but safe Sunday morning. Last seen about 9:15 p.m. Saturday, Bill Hasty walked away from a residence in Buckley, on the east side of Lake Gichigumee. He resurfaced about 2 1/4 miles away, at a private residence about 7:30 a.m. Sunday. Several area police agencies, rescue teams, a K-9 unit and the U.S. Coast Guard assisted in the search, which went on throughout the night.



Record-Eagle/Meagan Reid  
Left, a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter flies past the Coast Guard Cutter Acacia, which served as the center point in West Bay for the Blue Angels show. Below, a Coast Guard crew member performs an emergency maneuver for the crowd.



**SOUTH HAVEN**

**Boat flips; man dies, woman missing**

By Mark Fisk  
CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

A 38-foot speedboat capsized on Lake Michigan, apparently while making a sharp turn, leaving one Indiana man dead, a Kalamazoo woman missing and three people scattered about the water.

The U.S. Coast Guard received a call of a capsized boat at 4:51 p.m. Sunday. A 1998 Skater boat was found upside down in the water 2 miles southwest of the South Haven pier, the Van Buren County Sheriff's Department said.

The Coast Guard helicopter rushed across the water to the scene.

Four of the five passengers on board had toppled into the water and had been picked up by other boats in the area. The Kalamazoo woman was not located.

Passenger Orville Yeaman, 59, of Zionsville, Ind., was pronounced dead at South Haven Community Hospital at approximately 5 p.m.

"Impact played a part in it," said Coast Guard Officer Brett Greenwood. "Water is dense, and at 45 mph, hitting water is like hitting ground."

Passenger Charlie Brown, 44, of Paw Paw was airlifted to Bronson Methodist Hospital, where he was listed in serious condition this morning, according to a hospital spokesperson.

Driver Dean Loucks, 33, of Elkhart, Ind., and passenger Craig Siemans, 41, of Stevensville were not injured.

Siemans and Loucks were unavailable for comment, though the men reportedly told officers that the boat flipped over on the driver's side during a turn taken while the boat was traveling at 45 mph. No other witnesses were available.

Loucks was not legally intoxicated, authorities said.

Area divers suited up this morning in an effort to locate the missing woman, whose identity police refused to release until they had notified her next of kin. She is believed to be drowned, and the thrust of the divers' mission has changed from rescue to recovery.

"We launched every resource we had," the Coast Guard's Greenwood said. "We just couldn't recover her."

Sunday's water conditions were described as fair for boating, with sunny skies, occasionally choppy waves and moderate winds.

**LOCAL**

Wednesday  
August 12, 1998

**A bit of a drill**



Record-Eagle photo/Meagan Reid  
Air crews from U.S. Coast Guard stations from around the country took part in an annual water survival training course Tuesday held off the Open Space in Traverse City. High winds canceled a helicopter hoist drill, but wet drills were held. Left, Lt. Mark Driver helps a crewmember unzip his dry suit after a drill.



Officers inflate their life preservers as they float in the high waves off the Open Space.



Tribune photo - Andy Loree

# Missing boy found



Tribune photo - Andy Loree

## Hundreds join in search for Grand Rapids boy



Tribune photo - Andy Loree

By Brian Tighe  
Tribune writer

Tanner Sheppard, a 5-year-old Grand Rapids boy, was described by his mother as being the least likely of her three children to wander away.

Just before 1 p.m. Monday, though, Tanner did do just that. And after a massive hour-long search that included a human chain, Tanner was found safe over a mile away.

Tanner, his mother, siblings, aunt and two other adults and a child were in town to spend the day at the beach.

WHILE chasing a toy boat back and forth from the edge of the water, Tanner stepped away and walked well over a mile south from the Grand Haven State Park where the group was located.

"For not being a wanderer I guess he wandered a long way," said his mother, Becky, while holding her son tightly against her chest after he was found. "Tanner went up to the shore to get a (toy) boat. I looked up and he was gone."

After frantically searching the immediate area in vain, the police were called and the search was under way.

"At first I just panicked," Becky said. "I started running around the beach myself looking."

VOLUNTEERS formed a human chain into the lake while a Coast Guard boat searched the deeper water.

The situation at the beach Monday became increasingly tense as minutes ticked by without any sign of Tanner. Becky was taken around the park in a golf cart looking for her son to no avail. Later, she sat on the sand, crying, while her sister and friend did their best to console her.

The Grand Haven Department of Public Safety sounded a fire truck horn to clear everybody out of the water as a Coast Guard helicopter searched the water.

The crowd stood along the shore, some talking quietly amongst themselves, but most just watched the water, and

helicopter above it, flying back and forth.

AN OFFICER on the scene, around 1:30, said the land and water search would go on for about half-an-hour with the helicopter. If the situation didn't change, the officer said, police would re-evaluate their position.

As two o'clock neared on the beach, police again sounded a horn, this time calling for volunteers to continue the search. People flocked forward. Young, old, male and female ran forward by the hundreds as police planned to coordinate the volunteers between a ground search and additional human chains in the water.

That's when Tanner was found over a mile away.

"I was sitting on the beach in front of our cottage," said Ilene Nash, who lives in Stickney Ridge, when she saw Tanner walking by. "He looked like he was crying."

ALTHOUGH when she asked him, Tanner said he was fine. Nash said she couldn't help but wonder about the little boy who was walking alone.

There was a man wading slightly offshore who Nash thought might have been the boy's father, but she saw something that began to put the pieces of the puzzle together.

"Then I saw the helicopter overhead," Nash said. After calling the Coast Guard and being transferred through to central dispatch, Nash learned there was a missing boy who fit the description of the child she just saw.

"Then I immediately got panic stricken," she said. "I started running down the beach."

Moments later she saw a man walking with the boy on his shoulders. Since Nash had notified the authorities of the location, police were on the way.

"ONE OF our (officers) guys plucked him up," said Sgt. Mark Reiss.

Reports identified the men who aided in bringing Tanner back as area residents Bill Ward

(See SEARCH on page 3)

(Upper left) A Coast Guard helicopter searches Lake Michigan. (Above) One of several human chains formed by volunteers Monday in Lake Michigan while Tanner Sheppard was missing. (Middle) Grand Haven Department of Public Safety officer Eric Rasch leads Becky Sheppard (center) along with her sister and friend towards the city beach after receiving the news Tanner had been safely located. Hundred of volunteers and well wishers followed along the shore, forming a huge line behind them. (Below) Becky and Tanner, reunited, in the front seat of a police car.



Tribune photo - Andy Loree

## Search

(Continued from page 1)

and Jim Howell who were out jet skiing when they learned of the missing boy.

As applause rose from the crowd, Becky, her sister and friend headed north on the beach toward where Tanner was found.

They weren't alone. The mass of people who came forward to volunteer fell into step behind them. Trailing hundreds of yards on the sand, police led the relieved mother, family members, volunteers and onlookers to the city beach parking lot where the reunion took place.

"THANK YOU so much," Becky said to the crowd when she was in the car with Tanner who looked scared and overwhelmed as well wishers surrounded the vehicle.

"Everybody was so wonderful," Becky said about 10 minutes later back at the State Park. "We just want to thank everybody."

Tanner, who stood with his head down as television cameras crowded around him, stayed close to his mother.

"He's a little uptight right now," Becky said, running a hand through her son's blond hair. "I don't think we'll be at the beach for a good long time."



Tribune photo - Andy Loree

Grand Haven Department of Public Safety Sgt. Mark Reiss, center, Lt. Tom Gerencer of Grand Haven Township Fire & Rescue, right, and Sgt. Al Brouwer of the Ottawa County Sheriff's Department watch as Coast Guard personnel conduct a search of the water off the Grand Haven State Park Monday afternoon for a missing boy. The child was located unharmed, a little over a mile south of the City Beach.

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## CHRONICLE SHOPPING GUIDE

### 'Awesome' fireworks show caps festival

By Roger Morgenstern  
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

The 1998 Grand Haven Coast Guard Festival capped a weather-perfect 10 days with a spectacular finale, packing an estimated 150,000 people in the downtown waterfront to see an "awesome" fireworks display.

Officials estimated more than 350,000 attended the 10-day festival.

Officials already are looking to next year's event, which will mark the festival's 75th anniversary of honoring the men and women of the U.S. Coast Guard.

Festival Executive Director Jerry Smith said it's too early to give out many details of the next celebration, but said it may include a large "big name" concert similar to the country music star Vince Gill's scheduled performance later this month for the Grand Haven offshore powerboat race weekend.

Meanwhile, organizers are basking in the glow of a 1998 event, which set several attendance records and was marked by the second-straight year of ideal weather.

The annual Grand Parade was seen by an estimated 100,000 people, Smith said. For the first time the festival sold out Waterfront Stadium for the grand finale, featuring a performance by Endless Summer, a family oriented singing group, which has played the festival before. Smith said 60 extra chairs were added for the final

event, bringing the attendance to 2,340.

And that was just inside the stadium. Smith said estimates of crowds along the waterfront, which filled Harbor Drive, were up to 150,000 people. Smith said he had no reports of major problems with Saturday's big crowds.

Smith said the more than 30-minute fireworks display over the Grand River was "Awesome. I think it was probably the best fireworks we've had in Grand Haven."

He said some of the national Coast Guard dignitaries who attended the fireworks said the display, sponsored by The VanKampen Group, were as good or better than an annual display in New York City.

Fireworks have become the things people talk about first when mentioning the festival's highlights, Smith said. The VanKampen Group, headed by Grand Haven businessman Robert VanKampen, has sponsored the fireworks for several years. This year marked the first of a 10-year agreement to continue the sponsorship, Smith said.

Smith said he's heard many compliments about the new carnival company hired for this year's festival, Playworld Unlimited of Alma. He said the carnival, located downtown on Washington Avenue, between Harbor Drive and Third Street, featured several new rides and a friendly, helpful staff.

"I think we'll break all records in rides this year," Smith said of



Chronicle - KEN STEVENS

U.S. Coast Guard pilot Lt. Mark A. Jones answers questions by Bradley Korn, 5, of Indianapolis, who was vacationing with his family in Grand Haven. Jones pilots the helicopter pictured in the background. Jones was participating in Kid's Day activities during the recent U.S. Coast Guard Festival.

the carnival, one of the festival's largest revenue sources.

Smith also thanked the downtown merchants for patting up

with the five-day carnival. He said the downtown location, used since the early 1990s, has proven far more successful than when it was

on Harbor Island.

"I'd like to thank the merchant

Please see FESTIVAL 2 ▶

### ▶ FESTIVAL from 1

because I know it's a hardship for some of them," Smith said.

Smith said he will meet with Downtown Grand Haven Inc. Executive Director Cherie Hall to discuss any concerns about this year's event. For the last several years, the festival has provided flowers for the downtown sidewalk boxes as a gesture of thanks to the merchants.

Smith said weather played a major role in the festival's success, much the way it did last year.

"When you have outstanding weather, you can't help but have things go well," he said.

One of this year's disappointments was decreased attendance at some of the festival's waterfront concerts. He said the festival board will look at this issue as planning continues for next year's event.

While the decision is up to the board, Smith said he will see how well organizers of the Aug. 21-23 Grand Haven Offshore Powerboat Challenge do with the Aug. 21 Vince Gill concert.

He said having a big-name concert, likely at an outdoor location, might be an option next year.

The Muskegon Chronicle

## LOCAL & STATE

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1998 Section B

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### Five on Duck Lake rescued

By Lisa Medendorp  
and Susan K. Treutler  
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITERS

A boat trip on Duck Lake nearly turned to tragedy Tuesday night for an area family when their 16-foot craft started leaking, then sank about 200 yards from shore.

But Anthony Merritt, 32, and Lisa Duram, 30, along with Dennielle Merritt, 8, Loren Merritt, 4, and Zachary Merritt, 10 months, all wore life jackets.

They were plucked safely from the water after about 30 minutes by firefighters from the White Lake Fire Authority who used a borrowed boat.

"The life jackets saved their lives," said Fire Chief Kevin Blanchard.

Merritt said today he always wears a life jacket when boating. "I wouldn't take (my family) out without them," he said.

The incident, about in the middle of the lake in front of 6000 Duck Lake Road, was reported at 6:52 p.m.

Hypothermia was a danger — especially for the baby — even

#### FRUITLAND TWP.

though the water temperature was estimated to be 70 degrees, the chief said. But everyone is fine today, Merritt said.

It was the first time Merritt, of 2363 Elm, Twin Lake, had launched the 1960 Sea King fiberglass boat, which he'd purchased about two months ago, Blanchard said.

Merritt said he'd been working on the boat for about three months.

Blanchard said Merritt told him the boat motor stalled and wouldn't restart. The boat started taking on water. Blanchard said the problem may have been an electrical short.

The boat's plug may not have been in tight enough, allowing water to pour into the boat, the chief said.

Merritt said the family was in the water five or 10 minutes before someone noticed them. He had planned on huddling them together and swimming ashore for help. He said today he was not

worried, "but Lisa was worried quite a bit."

Although he is a seasoned boater, it was the first such outing for his family, he said. He said he probably could not get his wife to go boating again right away.

Steve Spangler of 6000 Duck Lake said his wife, Deborah, heard yelling and saw the boaters. The Spanglers called 911, and then Steve Spangler got his 14-foot aluminum boat out. Meanwhile, his wife yelled to the victims that help was on the way.

In addition to firefighters, the U.S. Coast Guard helicopter based at the Muskegon County Airport was requested. "They were just lifting off from Muskegon on their way to Grand Haven for training," Blanchard said.

On the scene within minutes, the helicopter dropped a rescue swimmer into the lake. "If they had to, they would have picked them up," Blanchard said.

Before the helicopter arrived, Spangler, who had two firefighters with him, was having trouble getting his boat motor started. One firefighter began rowing the boat

They were plucked safely from the water after about 30 minutes by firefighters from the White Lake Fire Authority. "The life jackets saved their lives," said Fire Chief Kevin Blanchard.

to the victims while Spangler struggled with the motor.

"I was glad to see the helicopter. We were having a little trouble rowing against the wind," Spangler said.

Anthony Merritt was swimming toward shore for help while Duram hung on to the children, Spangler said. Merritt was about 50 yards from shore when firefighters helped him into the borrowed boat.

Shortly afterward, Spangler was able to get his boat's motor started. The Coast Guard rescue swimmer stayed with the woman and children, keeping them calm until the boat reached them.

Medical treatment was not needed, and White Lake Ambulance gave the family a ride back to where they'd launched the boat at Duck Lake State Park.

# Rescuers save two swimming for safety in Lake Michigan

By PATTI BOALS  
 News Editor

A 19-year-old Sheridan man was still hospitalized this morning after spending about an hour and a half in Lake Michigan Sunday, but he is expected to be released from Memorial Medical Center later today.

Jamie Tissue's body temperature was down to 84 degrees Fahrenheit when he was rescued. Tissue and another 19-year-old Sheridan man, Troy Alexander, were riding on the same personal watercraft Sunday afternoon when it started taking on water.

The two riders were about three miles off Little Point Sable at the time and started to swim for shore.

Alexander was picked up first by a passing boater, Cathy Welch, on her way from Pentwater to Whitehall, according to U.S. Coast Guard Station Ludington crew. Tissue was behind, however, because his legs began to cramp up.

Ludington Coast Guard crews were called at 3:11 p.m. and launched both their 44-foot motor life boat and their rigid-hull inflatable and asked for assistance from two helicopters. Oceana County marine deputies and Michigan Department of Natural Resources officers helped in the search as well.

Tissue was picked up by boaters Brian and Priscilla McClellan, also on their way from Pentwater to Whitehall. He was semiconscious, in shock and hypothermic, according to Alex Hiller, executive petty officer with the Coast Guard's Ludington station.

Coast Guard emergency medical technician

**"He was almost as purple as the life jacket."**

— Angel Boyle, who spotted one of the swimmers

Richard Singleton boarded the vessel and helped Tissue at the scene, and also helped put him in the basket of the helicopter that transported Tissue to Memorial Medical Center.

Had Tissue been transported by boat, then ambulance, he might not have survived, Hiller said.

Hiller said Singleton and the others did an outstanding job on the rescue.

"Everybody pulled together on this one and saved two people," he said.

Richard and Angel Boyle were on their boat with another couple, Mike and Donna Zandee, all of Grand Rapids, when they spotted Tissue.

Richard Boyle spotted what he thought was a stump about 75 feet off the boat's starboard bow. From radio traffic the Boyles knew there was a search for a swimmer in a purple life jacket.

When they got closer, they realized they had found the missing swimmer.

"He was almost as purple as the life jacket," Angel said.

The Boyles circled him and hailed a smaller boat, piloted by the McClellans, who came over and pulled him out of the water.

The water temperature was in the low 60s during the weekend.



**RUSH DELIVERY** — Memorial Medical Center staff and crew from U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City rush Jamie Tissue from the coast guard's Dolphin helicopter to the hospital emergency room after Tissue was recovered from Lake Michigan Sunday afternoon. The Coast Guard flew Tissue directly to the hospital.

# Asbestos closes fields

Contamination discovered again near Coast Guard

By MICHELLE KELLEY  
 Record-Eagle staff writer

TRVERSE CITY — Asbestos contamination has indefinitely shut down the Traverse City Area Public Schools' soccer fields near Cherry Capital Airport.

A rigid piece of building panel found in the ground on the soccer field tested positive for asbestos, said Brian White, commander of the nearby Coast Guard Air Station.

Traverse City Area Public School Maintenance Director Rob Lowes found the panel late this past summer while touring the facility with Coast Guard officials to discuss demolition of a building that is still on the site.

The Coast Guard agreed to conduct a study on the panel and has determined it contained asbestos. Transite, a flat gray asbestos material, was used for various building purposes, including siding and insulation, Lowes said.

The panel is possibly a piece of

siding from an old Coast Guard building on the site, White said.

The material isn't hazardous in its present form, and if it is taken care of properly it shouldn't present a hazard, White said. Asbestos is hazardous only when it becomes airborne.

In its study of the area, the Coast Guard dug three feet down in some places to try to find more of the material. White speculates that the material is from buildings demolished about 20 years ago. He believes the buildings

were torn down on site and simply covered with dirt.

"That was not an uncommon practice back then," White said.

The area around the north side of Cherry Capital Airport and what was once a U.S. Navy airfield has a history of contamination.

In the late 1980s, jet fuel was found to be contaminating the ground water and a massive cleanup of the site was



Asbestos contamination found at soccer complex

# Asbestos contamination closes soccer fields

Continued from Page 1A

conducted using a ground water remediation technique.

After the cleanup was complete the Coast Guard turned the property over to the school district, which subsequently converted the area to soccer fields.

Now, officials are aware of the asbestos contamination and an investigation is under way.

But according to Lowes, ground water contamination

isn't a concern in this case. Water taps at the site dispense water from the city's municipal system.

White said Coast Guard property adjacent to the fields contains the same type of asbestos and a remaining building has asbestos siding.

Cost of any cleanup effort will be determined by the size of contamination, White said.

"The Coast Guard has led me to believe they'd take full responsibility," said mainte-

nance director Rod Lowes. However, Lowes also said he has no commitment from the Coast Guard in writing.

"I'm confident they'll perform the cleanup," Lowes said.

Until a study is done to determine the level of contamination and the cleanup is complete, Traverse City schools' soccer games and practices will be held at the Traverse Bay Area Youth Soccer fields on Keystone Road.

Athletic Director John Son-

neman said an invitational tournament scheduled for today will be played at the TRAYS fields. The tournament begins with junior varsity games at 10 a.m. and varsity at 11:30 a.m.

Sonneman said the district's soccer teams will finish the season, which goes through next week, at the TBAYS fields.

School district director of operations Gary Derrigan said he expects further information sometime next week.

# No airborne asbestos found at soccer fields

Officials hope to reopen Coast Guard Soccer Fields in time for girls soccer in the spring

By MICHELLE KELLEY  
 Record-Eagle staff writer

TRVERSE CITY — A preliminary health risk assessment of the Coast Guard Soccer Fields turned up "no measurable asbestos" in the air, according to Coast Guard Civil Engineering Unit Cleveland

Cmdr. Brian White.

After the facility was closed in October when asbestos fibers were found in the fields' ground soil, the Coast Guard conducted a series of tests including boring 310 holes for soil testing and simulated soccer games on the field to test the air and surface soil.

"At this stage of the game we don't see any health risks," White said.

White confirmed earlier speculation that buildings demolished about 20 years ago were demol-

# No airborne asbestos found at Coast Guard Soccer Fields

Continued from Page 1B

ished on site and simply covered with dirt and over time the debris containing asbestos has been pushed to the surface.

The debris is thought to be transite panels used in construction. The same material is present on a Coast Guard building which remains on the property.

After wrapping up environmental and health risk assessments last week, the Coast Guard has a good handle on the extent of underground contamination.

The property was transferred from the Coast Guard to Traverse City Area Public Schools in 1996 and was the site of a "Between the Fences" fund-raiser which transformed it into a soccer facility.

Gary Derrigan, the district's

director of operations, said the district is hoping to reopen the fields by the time girls soccer begins next spring.

Asbestos is a natural mineral used in many industrial materials, which when inhaled for extended periods of time can cause lung disease.

There is a greater risk of inhalation when asbestos is present in an enclosed area, instead of outside where it is more likely to be carried with the wind.

Asbestos fibers must be released from the material to be inhaled.

White said further assessments are necessary to determine exactly how much debris is present and how it will be cleaned.

The Coast Guard is expected to meet with school officials in mid-December to discuss its findings.



The United States Coast Guard performed air and sea demonstrations during Pentwater's Homecoming celebration Aug. 15 on Pentwater Lake near the Municipal Marina.

FRIDAY

FOUR SECTIONS, 32 PAGES



# TRVERSE CITY RECORD-EAGLE

NOVEMBER 6, 1998

NORTHERN MICHIGAN'S NEWSPAPER

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## Helicopter rescues hunters low on food, without a deer

Strong winds prevent Macomb County men from returning to mainland from South Fox Island

By BILL O'BRIEN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRVERSE CITY — Three downstate hunters stranded on South Fox Island for five days were airlifted to safety Thursday by a Coast Guard rescue crew.

Running low on food and trapped on the island by several days of strong northerly winds, the trio of friends from Memphis, Mich., in northern Macomb County made a 911 call Wednesday night that was picked up by Charlevoix County.

On Thursday morning, a Coast Guard helicopter in Traverse City

flew to the island, picked up the men and returned them to the mainland just before 11 a.m.

The men — Steve Horton, Robert Bianco and Rick Jordan — arrived by boat on the island Oct. 25 and planned to stay until last Sunday to hunt deer on the public portion of South Fox. About two-thirds of the 3,330-acre island is privately owned by developer David Johnson of Southfield, who also owns North Fox Island.

After an enjoyable first week, high waves swamped their 21-foot boat along the island's shoreline last weekend. They used their cellular phone to call the mainland and arrange for another boat to come to the island to get them and tow the damaged boat back. But strong northerly winds continued through the week, keeping the rescue boat from getting to the island.



"We've been eating, but we've been eating real scarce," Jordan said. The friends are veteran hunters. See HELICOPTER, Page 2A ▶

## Helicopter rescues hunters from island

Continued from Page 1A

of both the Fox and nearby Manitowish islands, and they stayed warm and dry with their top-notch camping gear.

But food rations ran low this week and they hadn't bagged a deer, forcing them to eat just once a day and to beg food from the handful of other hunters on the public part of the island. "We could've made it another week with what we had, but not two," Jordan said.

Added Horton: "You can't be prepared for five extra days out there, you just can't do it."

About a dozen hunters

remained on the public part of the island. "Everybody over there seems to be all right now," he said. "But they were wondering if they were going to be able to get off."

The state sponsors early deer hunts every year on South Fox. The hunts start Oct. 1 for bow hunters and Oct. 30 for firearm hunters. Lt. Tim Burke of the state Department of Natural Resources said about 60 hunters a year have applied for licenses in the past, although interest dropped off this year because a Leland ferry no longer had boat rides to the island.

"The hunters are told it's a long

ride out there over a lot of open water, and there's no safe location to keep a boat," Burke said. "There's no place you can put a boat out there where it's not going to get banged around if the wind comes up. You're at the mercy of the elements."

Johnson has private deer hunts on the island, although those hunters can stay in a modern lodge and are flown in to his private airstrip.

Coast Guard Lt. Kevin Nelson said Thursday's rescue was not part of its standard procedures. "We chose to go get them based on the fact that this could've gotten worse," Nelson said. "It

could've become a situation where they could've endangered themselves worse and we could've been pulling them out of the water."

Federal law allows the Coast Guard to seek reimbursement for its expenses in "grossly negligent" circumstances.

But, "We're not going to do that in this case," Nelson said.

Besides their damaged boat, the friends said they left an estimated \$15,000 worth of hunting and camping equipment on the island. They were making plans Thursday to head back to the island — on a larger boat — to retrieve their belongings.

NOVEMBER 10, 1998

NORTHERN MICHIGAN'S NEWS

## 'Witch of November' returns

Forecasters predict raging winds similar to those that helped sink the Edmund Fitzgerald

By PATRICK SULLIVAN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRVERSE CITY — A low pressure system moving into the Midwest could bring winds up to 80 mph, thunderstorms and heavy waves to the Great Lakes region today.

The severe weather forecast is eerily similar to weather 24 years ago. Today is the anniversary of

the sinking of the Edmund Fitzgerald in huge waves in Lake Superior.

"This storm will rival the storm of the Edmund Fitzgerald," said Greg McMaster, chief meteorologist for television station 7&4 and staff meteorologist for WTCM radio.

"The more I look at this storm, the more I realize the danger involved," he said, predicting winds in excess of 50 mph in the Great Lakes region today.

Brian Hirsch, warning coordinator with the National Weather Service in Gaylord, confirmed McMaster's forecast, but said severe winds between 45 and 85

mph could only be possible if thunderstorms enter the region. A high wind watch has been posted for today and tonight.

Thunderstorms bring heavier winds because rain and cool air force air streams from thousands of feet above ground to the surface. Both McMaster and Hirsch likened today's conditions to a similar weather pattern that caused extensive damage to the Gaylord area in early September.

Hirsch said conditions Monday in the southern Lower Peninsula were unseasonably warm, and that cold air from Canada was expected to remain north of northern Lower Michigan, causing

the severe weather.

On Nov. 9, 1975, temperatures were unseasonably warm and a similar low pressure system developed near Iowa. By Nov. 10, cold air from Canada converged with the system and caused the storm that sank the Fitzgerald.

For mariners, who have dubbed storms like the one that sank the Fitzgerald "The Witch of November," this month is a somber one.

"Most of the casualties over the history of the Great Lakes have happened between Nov. 8 and approximately Nov. 26. That's when most of the major storms

See THE 'WITCH', Page 2A ▶

## The 'Witch of November' returns

Continued from Page 1A

have happened," said John Tanner, superintendent of the Great Lakes Maritime Academy.

Today's ominous forecast also reminds Tanner of the day the Fitzgerald sank. He was in his first year teaching at the academy, and lost a former student in the tragedy.

But advances in technology have made life on the Great Lakes safer since 29 men lost their lives on the Fitzgerald, Tanner said.

Weather information comes to ships faster

and with greater accuracy. Constant updates can be provided by fax. Safety equipment on ships, such as survival suits for the crew, inflatable life rafts, satellite positioning systems and on-board radar were not at hand when the Fitzgerald sank.

"There's been a world of change to that regard, in terms of the navigation and communications devices," Tanner said. "There's just no comparison from what we had 25 years ago."

At presstime Monday, the National Weather Service had posted storm warnings for lakes Michigan and Huron and for the east

two-thirds of Lake Superior, and a gale warning for the west third of Superior, through tonight.

Gale warnings are issued for winds between 32 and 63 mph and a storm advisory goes into effect when winds between 64 and 74 mph are expected.

Lt. Kevin Nash of the U.S. Coast Guard air station in Traverse City said the air station will secure doors and equipment at the base but will not be under any special alert.

"We maintain a ready aircraft to be launched within 30 minutes, 365 days a year," Nash said.

# NORTHERN LIVING

1E

Sunday  
October 25, 1998

## home SPOOKY home

Some go all out with  
Halloween decorating

Record-Eagle

story by Jane Louise  
Boursaw

photos by Dan Gorney



Joni, David and Ashley Chew are hoping the flowers in their garden are dead by Halloween. The Coast Guard family is spending their first Halloween in Traverse City, but have made a tradition of creating a scary Halloween setting for trick-or-treaters wherever they've lived.



**M**enacing ghouls, hair-raising carnage, creepy spiders, eerie coffins, ghostly figures. They're all ready for Halloween viewing at a neighborhood near you. While a carved pumpkin with a candle in it and a white sheet in a tree might be enough for some, others go all out when it comes to decorating their houses for the spookiest night of the year.

Take Joni and David Chew. They love to scary up their house in keeping with the season. In fact, Joni said, "Halloween's my favorite holiday." While the Chews are spending their first Halloween in Traverse City, the nomadic Coast Guard family has maintained a ghoulish tradition wherever they've lived. From North Carolina to Alaska, they've managed to create quite the dark Halloween mood with an extensive collection of homemade

and store-bought props. The theme of the display at their home in Old English Village in Traverse City this year centers around an English garden surrounded by a white picket fence. "Hopefully, most of the flowers will be dead by Halloween," Joni said. Wooden cut-out ghosts, slate headstones, a coffin, mannequins, black cats and garden signs like "Bat Alley," "Haunted House"

See SOME, Page 3E ▶

## FEATURES

# Some homeowners go all out with Halloween decorating

Continued from Page 1E

and "Beware" warn visitors to be afraid — very afraid as they enter the Chews' domain. But what about the more impressive trick-or-treating goblins? Don't they get frightened out of their wits? "Some of them are a little hesitant," Chew admitted. Joni's fascination with Halloween dates back to a childhood in Connecticut. Like many other children, she lived in the country. So parents routinely dropped kids off in the village, which had a Colonial commons and a graveyard dating back to the 1700s. "The big thing at the end of the night was to go sit in the graveyard next to the elementary school and see who ran out first," she said. Barbara Anderson of Suttons Bay is known as "The Halloween Lady." She got into the Halloween decorating act at her home on St. Joseph Street in 1891. Now it's her big event of the year. "You almost have to," she said. "The kids expect it." Anderson described her decorations as

"amateur." But she makes it all seem scary with the addition of strobe lights at night. One year a real live Dracula handed out candy from a coffin. Another year, a witch pulled snakes and severed limbs from her pot before finding the real treats. Last year, a cowboy skeleton hung from the gallows while the sheriff lay dead in a coffin. This year Anderson is drawing inspiration from the movie "Scream" and incorporating a bloody body hanging from a tree and real "gore" from the butcher. "Either my daughter or I will make the Scream costume come alive," she said. "She'll be posed by the scene and then come alive when people come up." But one of her prize Halloween props is a coffin she got from a funeral home where she cleans. A "travel coffin" used to ship bodies long distances, it has a flat lift-off lid, and even better for Anderson's purposes, wheels. "I saw that down in the basement where they keep all the caskets," she said. "This was up on the shelf. I said 'Ah hah! Maybe they'll let me borrow it.' But after I borrowed it about three different years, it's got a little rust on it, and last year I just put it in the garage and

never took it back. I wrote them a letter asking if I could buy it and they didn't answer. So they know I kind of have it in storage for them in my garage. The thing is, it's so old they wouldn't ever use it." The coffin was a big hit the year Anderson rode through Eddie's in Suttons Bay on Halloween night. Dressed as Dracula and lying in the coffin, Anderson had another person wheel her up the ramp and through the bar. "They ordered a Pepsi for me and I sat up in the coffin and had my Pepsi, then I laid down and they pushed me out," she said. "I always said I wanted to do that once in my life, and I've done it." Between 300 and 400 ghosts and goblins descend on Anderson's haunted home every Halloween, coming from all over Suttons Bay, Omens and Peshawbestown. The scene is so realistic that many trick-or-treaters think there's more inside and head for the house. "Last year, some of them boaded for the door, they were going to go traipsing through the house," Anderson said. "I said, 'Nope, we're not putting 400 kids through my house.'" In Cadillac, Scott & Kim Lepine have

always had a passion for Halloween. Their first date was at a costume party years ago in college. Eighteen years and three kids later, they still love the holiday, doing up their house in grand style. Scott's in charge of the outdoor decorations, which usually include hanging ghosts, lots of carved pumpkins, hay bales and cornstalks. Inside, pumpkins, scarecrows, skeletons and other hair-raising creatures occupy every available space. For Reggie Basilius, who lives near Jellystone Park in Traverse City, decorating for Halloween is a labor of love. Wife Brenda is a nurse who also gets into it the Halloween spirit. "She says out of all the holidays, Halloween is her day," Reggie said. The couple starts around mid-October with one or two characters and keep adding more as the days pass. By Halloween, 20 or more decorations adorn the yard, including mummies, Frankenstein, a wolfman, the Grim Reaper, a coffin, strobe lights, headstones and pumpkins. "This year we plan on adding a graveyard outlined with pumpkin lights, a galows, and the Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow," Basilius said. "Everyone who

comes to our house says we have a great setup. We feel that it gives the little kids something to enjoy and talk about." The Basilius' add to their montage every year with homemade plywood figures from the Winfield Collection, a company that sells patterns you can make for every holiday imaginable. "We have so much stuff that we could expand into our neighbor's yard, if we wanted to," Reggie said. But they stop short of making their house TOO scary. "They're more like cartoon caricatures of mummies and things like that," Reggie said. "Nothing really Hollywood scary." Still, some of the littlest trick-or-treaters are a bit unsure about the whole thing. "Sometimes the parents will come around in a van or a car," said Basilius, "and the little ones don't even want to come up the driveway." But Chew said that most people out for Halloween night fun get a little thrill out of being frightened. "It's like going to see a creepy movie," she said. "You know you're going to be scared, but you still go anyway, because there's that little bit of thrill that you like."

know more!





# TRAVERSE CITY RECORD-EAGLE

NOVEMBER 12, 1998

NORTHERN MICHIGAN'S NEWSPAPER

50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.50 SUNDAY

## Avid swimmer disappears in West Bay

By PATRICK SULLIVAN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — An avid swimmer known for taking dips in the bay, even in chilling water, disappeared Tuesday after jumping off a Clinch Park Marina break wall into West Bay.

Marine patrol divers from the Grand Traverse Sheriff's Department were expected to begin searching today for Daryl Thivierge, 46, of Traverse City. A U.S. Coast Guard air search of the bay Wednesday yielded no sign of the swimmer.

Thivierge was last seen on land by a sheriff's deputy at

See SWIMMER, Page 3A ▶

## Swimmer disappears in West Bay

◀ Continued from Page 1A

the Clinch Park parking lot about 4:15 p.m., city Police Chief Ralph Soffredine said.

Thivierge was wearing shorts and had no wet suit, but police were not alarmed by his plan to jump in the 51-degree water because he was well known for swimming in the bay, even late in the season and in cold and rough water.

Thivierge disappeared amid scores of reports that a wind surfer on the bay was in trouble. Soffredine said some confusion ensued and reports of a swimmer in trouble may have been discounted because police believed callers were reporting the wind surfer.

Police contacted the wind surfer Tuesday afternoon and signaled him to shore. The man told police he was used to rough water because he was from Oregon and that he would not stop wind surfing.

"You cannot make anybody leave the water if they don't want to leave the water," Soffredine said.

The unidentified man later landed safely at the Grand Traverse Yacht Club.

A witness said she saw Thivierge swimming about 4:30 p.m. "three or four football fields" offshore, but that he appeared to be enjoying himself.

Local resident Geraldine Greene said she was at the Clinch parking lot with her granddaughter to get a better look at the freighter Kay E. Barker anchored in the bay. The girl scanned the bay with a pair of binoculars.

"My granddaughter said, 'There's someone in the water swimming,'" Greene said.

"He was doing porpoise dives and he looked like he was just frolicking in the water," Greene said.

About a half hour later Greene returned and looked for the swimmer again, but did not see him.

Thivierge's car was later discovered at Clinch Park with keys in the ignition. Police described him a missing person who possibly drowned, after his son called police around 9 p.m. to report that his father had not returned from his swim.

The Coast Guard search was hampered Wednesday because murky water and the lack of direct sunlight made seeing beneath the surface difficult. Lt. David Edwards said.

## SALUTE TO VETERANS



Record-Eagle/Jim Bove

Coast Guard Petty Officers Michael Benson and Steve Wanlass salute the American flag Wednesday during a Grand Traverse Veterans and Auxiliary Association ceremony honoring area vets at Veterans Memorial Park in Traverse City.

## Asbestos-tainted soccer fields to reopen in the spring

By BILL O'BRIEN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — Soccer fields near the Cherry Capital Airport that were shut down this fall after some building material containing asbestos was discovered will reopen in the spring.

Traverse City Area Public Schools Superintendent Peter Wharton said the fields were cleared for use next year following a meet-

ing last week with officials from the Coast Guard, the Environmental Protection Agency and the state Department of Natural Resources.

The fields were closed by the school Oct. 8 after an old piece of building material found in the ground tested positive for asbestos. The material was a rigid transite board suspected to be left over from Coast Guard buildings demolished at the air station more than 40 years ago.

School officials said subsequent testing

done at the fields showed the material is not a threat to release asbestos into the air, and that the transite board contains a solid form of asbestos that is not considered a health hazard.

Wharton said school officials and the Coast Guard are working with the EPA to develop a cleanup plan that will allow the fields to open this spring and to minimize future risks from the transite material. Similar clean-up work will be done on the Coast Guard's recreation area adjacent to the soccer fields.

The soccer field property, part of which was once of a U.S. Navy airfield, was the site of a massive groundwater clean-up effort a decade ago that was caused by contamination from jet fuel.

After the groundwater clean-up was completed the Coast Guard turned the property over to the school district, which developed the site as a soccer complex.

The district completed last fall's soccer season at the Traverse Bay Area Youth Soccer fields on Keystone Road.

DEC 24, 1998 RECORD EAGLE

# LOCAL & STATE

**NORTH MUSKEGON**

## Possible drowning victim sought

By Lisa Medendorp  
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

Divers were hoping to resume their search of Bear Lake this afternoon after gale force winds and darkness ended the search Tuesday for a possible drowning victim.

A homeowner along Melody Lane in North Muskegon reported an overturned canoe and a person struggling in the water about 3:30 p.m. Tuesday.

When operations ended about 5 p.m., searchers were still unsure whether anyone was in the water. The search was expected to continue around noon today. Muskegon County Sheriff's Marine Deputy Gary Berdinski said this morning.

There were no reports of missing persons in the area overnight, said Berdinski.

If someone was in the water, it may have been in an attempt to rescue a canoe that had blown offshore during Tuesday's windstorm. Berdinski said the canoe had apparently blown into the water from the northwest shore.

"You can see where it was lifted up (by the wind) and thrown into the water," he said. The owners of the canoe were located.

Authorities remained unsure late Tuesday whether anyone decided to go into the water after the canoe.

But Jim Schaaf, of 466 Melody Lane, said he and his wife, Ardis, are sure they saw a person, assumed to be a man, dressed in dark clothing.

"He was trying to right the canoe. He tried to climb on it and it would tip over again," Jim Schaaf said. "He was wearing a hat."

"I thought, 'They'd better get here quick.' We didn't have our boat to go in after him. It was in storage for the winter."

Schaaf said the man went under before help could arrive.

North Muskegon firefighters launched Rescue Boat 7, docked at Bear Lake Channel, and were on the scene within about five minutes of the call.

Help from the sheriff's department's volunteer dive team and the Norton Shores Police and Fire Dive Team was immediately requested.

The U.S. Coast Guard helicopter, which has a heat-scanning device aboard, also was dispatched and flew over the scene.

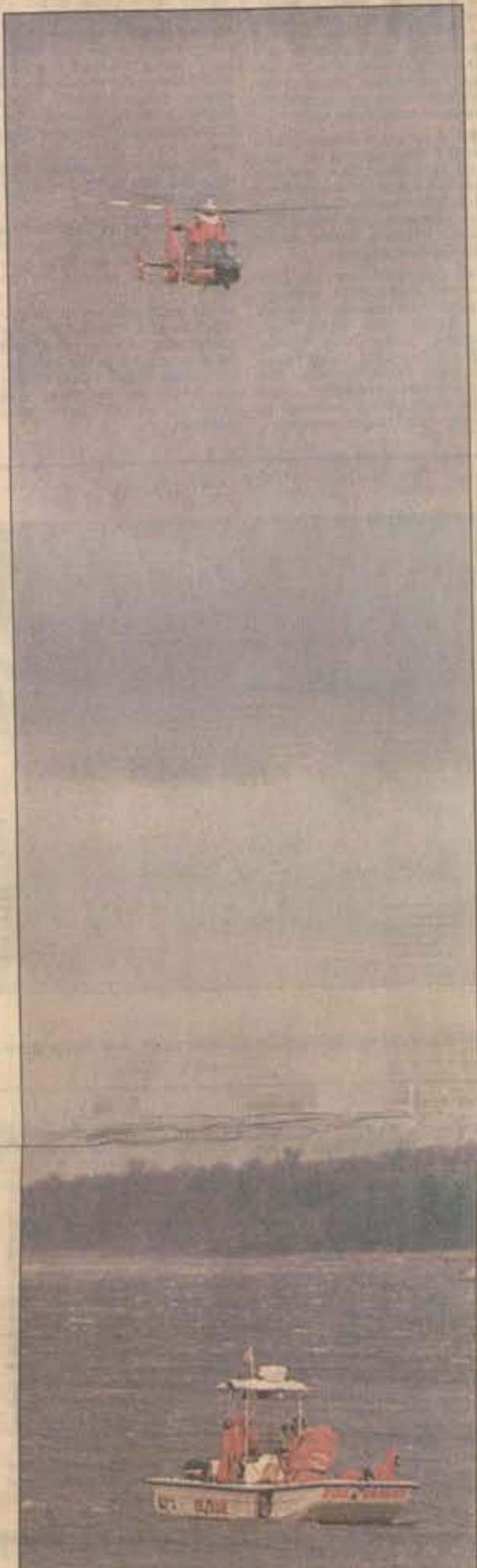
Divers entered the water and found nothing.

"It was miserable. Visibility at the surface was about a foot. On the bottom it was zero, all muck," said sheriff's diver Mike Hiles.

The divers were able to talk to those aboard the boat through communications equipment inside their masks as they held onto a tow bar the boat dragged through the water.

North Muskegon Fire Chief Jay Kersman and Capt. Steve Lague struggled to control their boat in the high wind.

"It almost flipped us over once," Kersman said. "There were 3-foot waves on Bear Lake. The current was real strong. It was risky for the divers."



Chronicle photo • Dave Carlson

Authorities search Bear Lake for a possible drowning victim Tuesday. A U.S. Coast Guard helicopter hovers overhead.

Berdinski estimated the water temperature at 35-38 degrees. The lake depth was variable due to the proximity of the channel, he said.

During the search Tuesday, people living along the west side of the lake and North Muskegon Police Officer Todd Friend went house-to-house to see if residents in the immediate area could be accounted for. No one was missing, Berdinski said.

James Parker, 514 Bear Lake,

said he looked out his window and saw a canoe on its side in the water, about 20 to 25 yards from shore. "I couldn't see anyone floundering," he said. "I thought someone must have lost a canoe. I assumed in this weather no one was in it. Who would be out on the lake in this?"

However, Parker said he was unable to see the side of the canoe where the seat would be. Rescuers used Parker's yard to stage their operations.

## On Dasher, on Prancer, on Comet, on ... the beach?

Flying Santa delivers goods and tradition to lighthouse

By MARJORY RAYMER  
Record-Eagle staff writer

NORTHPORT — It all began on a dark, blustery night a week before Christmas in 1929 off the coast of Maine.

The tradition continued Sunday, 89 years later, at the Grand Traverse Lighthouse on the tip of the Leelanau Peninsula on a day drenched in fog and mist.

A crowd of more than 100 parents, children and spectators watched in awe as the U.S. Coast Guard delivered, via helicopter, the East Coast "Flying Santa" tradition to the shores of northern Michigan.

With leaves blowing in the copter-created whirlwind, Lt. Commander Don Martinello and Lt. Kevin Nash from the Traverse City Coast Guard Station lowered a bag filled with Christmas treats onto the state park beach.

Santa nabbed the bag and hand delivered the candy to the waiting crowd watching from about 30 feet away.

"This is the most exciting thing that's happened at this lighthouse for 10 years," said Ann Martin, a spectator and lighthouse volunteer.

The children, many of whom waited outside for more than half an hour, seemed to agree.

Third-grader Tony Gaudette and his friend, Alex Gulow, both of Traverse City, stood open-mouthed as the helicopter swooped in and Santa braved the strong winds to fetch the candy.

"I think it is pretty neat the Coast Guard is even willing to do this," said Tony's mother, Cindy Gaudette.

Both Tony and Alex gave high approval to the lighthouse itself, too. Especially the tower and the bells inside.

Caroling, hot cider, snacks and tours of the lighthouse all were part of the annual open house, which included the Flying Santa tradition for the first time.

Stef Stanley of the Grand Traverse Lighthouse Foundation, which preserves the 140-year-old structure, said she asked the Coast Guard if it would be willing to help after hearing the tale behind the East Coast hallmark.

As the story goes, Capt. Bill Wincapaw, a float plane pilot, had spent the day delivering supplies and mail around the Penobscot Bay area on that day the week



Record-Eagle/Jan. Brown

Cindy Alpers of Traverse City, top, lets her four-year-old grandson Austin sit on her shoulders Sunday as they wait for the United States Coast Guard helicopter to deliver Santa's Christmas bag. Above, the helicopter lowers the goodies to the beach at the Grand Traverse Lighthouse while over a hundred spectators watch.

See FLYING, Page 2A ▶

TODAY

## Flying Santa delivers goods and tradition

◀ Continued from Page 1A

before Christmas in 1929. As he headed home, Wincapaw came face to face with winter's rage.

A strong squall created white-out conditions, causing Wincapaw to become disoriented. The plane was running low on fuel, and the storm blinded him.

Until, that is, looking through the murk below he spotted a beckoning blinking light.

As he dropped in to get a closer look, Wincapaw welcomed the sight of Dyer Head Lighthouse in Castine, Maine. With this landmark as his guide, Wincapaw set a course for home. Following the luminaries of six other lighthouses, Wincapaw followed the Eastern seaboard home

to Rockland airport and safety.

As Christmas approached, Wincapaw carefully wrapped gifts of thanks and retraced his route back to the Dyer Head Lighthouse and dropped the packages on the lawns of the lighthouse keepers, whom he credited with saving his life.

He was dubbed the "Flying Santa" and, thus, a tradition was born.

As the years passed, the tradition was handed down from Wincapaw to a local historian, Edward Rowe Snow.

In the 43 years Snow acted as Flying Santa it is said he even made trips to California and Great Lakes lighthouses.

Now a non-profit organization based in Massachusetts — Friends of Flying Santa Inc. —

heads up the holiday tradition and plans to deliver gifts to families at 29 lighthouses in six Eastern states.

The Grand Traverse lighthouse Flying Santa was done independently of the Massachusetts-based organization.

The U.S. Coast Guard, as in northern Michigan, gives flight to the tradition in New England.

Lt. Mark Driver of the Traverse City station said the flight is one of many community service missions the station does throughout the year.

"We incorporate it into a training flight to get the most bang for our buck and at the same time ... maybe make some kids happy," Driver said.



# GRAND TRAVERSE HERALD

75 CENTS

TRAVERSE CITY, MICH., WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1998

12 PAGES

## Coast Guard hunts for lost fishing boat

PORT WASHINGTON, Wis. — The disappearance of a 42-foot boat believed carrying three fishermen led to a Lake Michigan search Saturday by the Coast Guard.

Aircraft from the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City abandoned the hunt because of darkness but a 140-foot cutter was told to spend the night on the lake while authorities prepared search plans for Sunday, officials said.

Lt. Tom Gasser said the Coast Guard was in constant contact with relatives of the fishermen.

Roxanne Tamez, an assistant operations officer for the Coast Guard, said the fishing tug was supposed to have arrived late Friday at Port Washington about 25 miles north of Milwaukee.

Weather, which has been calm and unseasonably warm, seemed an unlikely explanation for a disappearance, officials said.

14 DEC 98 RECORD-EAGLE

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1998 5A



Herald photo by Garret Leiva

Traverse City Air Station Coast Guard Commander Barry Harner, far left, offers congratulations to Traverse City Coast Guard Auxiliary's new flotilla commander George Riddell, center, during a changing of the guard ceremony Tuesday evening at the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City. Also residing over the ceremony were left to right, John Weih, new vice flotilla commander and outgoing flotilla commander Ken Coffman who has been promoted to division vice captain. Founded in 1939, the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary is made up of 30,000 military and non-military members nation-wide who specialize in training, public education and recruitment for the Coast Guard Academy.



# GRAND TRAVERSE HERALD

75 CENTS

TRAVERSE CITY, MICH., WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 1999

13 PAGES

## It is in the joy of just being there

By Garret Leiva  
Herald staff writer

Competition is often defined in terms of winning and losing. Sometimes, however, a true competitor is one that reaches the starting line.

This spirit of determination was found on the faces of more

than 100 athletes who competed in the annual Special Olympics winter games held Thursday at the Grand Traverse County Civic Center.

Competing in this year's games were students from

See Joy, page 2A



Herald photo by Garret Leiva



Above: Participants in the winter games pass by a torch Thursday at the Grand Traverse County Civic Center. Right: A competitor in the 100 meter cross-country ski race nears the finish line.

## It is in the joy of just being there

continued from page 1A

Central Grade School, East Junior High and the Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District Adult Work Center. Athletes ages 8 to 30 took their mark in the 50 meter snowshoe race, 50 meter, 100 meter and 1K cross-country ski race.

Those competing in each 6 person heat were presented with a ribbon during a lunch time awards ceremony said Lorraine Laird, a special education teacher at East Junior High.

"Whether they get first or sixth, most of them are just pretty excited they finished," said Laird, who helped organize the games along with 25 other volunteers, including members from the United

States Coast Guard and the East Junior High National Honor Society.

Cheering from the sidelines, Ron Green of the state Special Olympics office said the games are meant to be more than a 30 second sprint. Athletes train for 8 weeks prior to competition, building life skills and self-esteem in the process.

"Everything our athletes learn from snowshoeing and cross-country skiing — they can take back to their homes and continue," said Green, who has been involved with Special Olympics for the past 23 years.

"Hopefully these are life skills that don't end with a 30 second race."

For some athletes, the games

don't end with one race either. Students nominated by their teacher or care provider will compete next month in the state Special Olympics games held at Sugar Loaf Resort in Cedar. A select few may even take part in the World Games in Raleigh, N.C.

While no local winter athlete has competed in world games, Area II director Shelia Blonshine has seen tremendous growth in the five-county Special Olympics program. In the past 20 years, it has gone from basic track and field events to a year-round sports program. The number of athletes on file has jumped from 10 to 360.

"It has been very exciting to see all the growth in the athletes and the athletics offered," said Blonshine, who has a son compet-

ing in the program and will herself coach aquatics at this year's World Games.

While the games award athletes, equally rewarded are those taking timings and snapping on snowshoes.

"The neatest part is seeing the faces of people that could use our smiles and our handshake," noted Lt. Kevin Nelson, public affairs officer with the Traverse City Coast Guard Air Station.

For many, it is these expressions that constitute the true spirit of competition.

"Just the sheer joy on the faces of these athletes, it doesn't matter if they're first or last, they're happy," said Green. "Sometimes the real accomplishment is just getting there."



# TRAVERSE CITY RECORD-EAGLE

JANUARY 23, 1999

NORTHERN MICHIGAN'S NEWSPAPER

50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.50 SUNDAY

## 3 found dead in plane crash

By SCOTT ANDERSON  
Record-Eagle staff writer

### Cause of accident still a mystery

PELLSTON — All three passengers were killed on board a small airplane that crashed 2 miles short of the runway late Thursday, police said following a 16-hour search for the aircraft. The plane was found about 4:30 p.m. Friday in Emmet County near the Cheboygan County line, in dense woods about a half-mile south of Riggsville Road between Pellston and Burt Lake, officials said.

It was seen by a crew on board a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter from the Traverse City air station. It was less than 2 miles from the runway, said Lt. Kevin Nelson. There were no signs the twin-engine, Beechcraft Baron was in distress as it began its final 3,500-foot descent into Pellston Regional Airport about 10 p.m. Thursday, just before it vanished from radar screens, authorities said. The pilot reported some icing on his last communication with

air traffic controllers before attempting to land the plane, Nelson said, adding he could not speculate on the cause of the crash. Sgt. Charles Beckwith of the Cheboygan County Sheriff's Department said the crashed plane was virtually hidden from searchers because of the heavy snow and dense hardwood trees. "It's so thick that you'd almost have to walk right up on it," Beckwith said.

Officials said the pilot was reported to be a Pellston man with one male and one female passenger. Two of the occupants were attorneys, although it could not be confirmed Friday which two. At press time, Beckwith said he didn't know the condition of the airplane and said officials from the Federal Aviation Administration would be on the scene as soon as possible to investigate. He did say the plane hit sever-

al trees before coming to rest about a third of the way down a steep hillside. The terrain leading up to the plane is rough, Beckwith said. It can only be reached by climbing through thick snow, he said.

The plane had been following a normal flight path into Pellston en route from Detroit City Airport.

"There's no indication of emergency at all," Beckwith said.

Wet, cumbersome snow fell throughout much of Thursday

See **THREE**, Page 2A ▶



## Three found dead in plane crash near Pellston

◀ Continued from Page 1A

night, and into the morning and early afternoon Friday, hampering the search that had grown to nearly 100 officials by day's end.

With the exception of a few volunteers from the Tuscaraons Township Fire Department, who used snowmobiles to look in the Burt Lake area, darkness and the weather limited searches immediately after the plane failed to come in for a landing.

A larger force involving Emmet, Cheboygan and

Charlevoix sheriff's officials was mobilized and had been looking for the airplane for much of Friday. Officials concentrated their search on the broad airport approach area that passes over Indian River and Burt Lake.

At least 20 crew members from the Coast Guard cutter Maccinaw, docked in Cheboygan, also were on foot and on snowmobiles, combing back roads and wooded areas.

Friday's weather kept visibility to a minimum, grounding hopes for a sky search. Condi-

tions cleared enough for the first of two U.S. Coast Guard helicopters to take off around 2 p.m. Friday.

Several volunteers from snowmobile clubs in Emmet and Cheboygan counties also were searching, along with officials from the U.S. Air Force's Civil Air Patrol.

Though planes reported some icing on their wings Thursday night, airport manager Kelley Atkins said conditions were not considered treacherous.

The pilot was in radar contact FAA air traffic controllers in

Minneapolis just before the plane disappeared, Atkins said. Once an airplane begins its descent, it is difficult to track and often slips off radar.

Typically, pilots radio Minneapolis after landing to assure air traffic controllers the plane landed safely.

No emergency locator transmitter signals were intercepted from the crashed plane. No one witnessed the airplane actually go down and no other airports within the plane's fuel range were contacted by the pilot, Beckwith said.

## Officials explore theories in crash

■ Taped-up vent may have led to carbon monoxide buildup, investigator says

By SCOTT ANDERSON  
Record-Eagle staff writer

PELLSTON — Early indications from an investigation into a plane crash that killed three people last week are that the aircraft had no mechanical problems when it came in for a landing.

Investigators did discover, however, that a ventilation system that helps circulate air throughout the cabin was duct-taped shut and an air safety investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board said it's possible deadly carbon monoxide built up in the cabin.

Investigator David Bowling said he'll have to wait for autopsy results to determine if the substance was discovered.

Bowling said the opening that lets air in near the tail of the airplane and one that releases air from the top of the airplane were taped closed.

Although pilots sometimes close those vents in the winter to prevent cold air from coming into the cabin, Bowling said it's still unusual.

"It's unusual and anything unusual catches our eye," he said.

Although it's still something that needs to be investigated, Bowling said he suspects the ultimate cause could prove to be the weather conditions.

Bowling said the plane had plenty of fuel and all systems appeared to be working at the time of the accident.

Pilot Alden Howard, 68, and two passengers, Linda Throne and W. Allen DeYoung, both 43, died in the crash. All of them were from Indian river.

The plane was on its final approach to Pellston Regional Airport when it disappeared from radar shortly after 10 p.m. Jan. 21.

Nearly 100 officials and volunteers from Emmet, Cheboygan and Charlevoix counties searched for the plane before it was

See **OFFICIALS**, Page 2A ▶

## Officials explore crash theories

◀ Continued from Page 1A

discovered by a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter crew about 4:15 p.m. Friday in dense woods.

The plane's last radio contact with Federal Aviation Administration officials in Minneapolis was at 10:03 p.m. The twin-engine aircraft crashed at 10:16 p.m., Bowling said.

"We've got about a 13-minute window to find out what happened to that airplane," Bowling said. Howard reporting icing on the

plane just before he began the 3,500-foot descent to Pellston. Investigators also are conducting several weather studies. Bowling said.

Howard was a veteran pilot with more than 45 years of flight experience. That experience and Howard's familiarity with the area makes investigators suspect the weather could have played a major role in the crash.

Bowling said the investigation probably would continue for the next six months to a year.

03

03

## TC swim team guns for third straight league title

■ First-year coach Matt High says his team's depth has been the key to success this season

By KEITH SMITH  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRaverse CITY — Armed with a "military style," Matt High began his first year as the Traverse City high school swim coach looking for a few good men.

He found 21 of them, to be exact. And today and Saturday at Muskegon, High and his swimmers will try to complete the mission they've been preparing for all season long — an unprecedented third straight West Michigan Coastal Conference championship.

The team is made up of athletes from both Central and West high schools.

"We have 21 kids on this team and without all of them we'd be nowhere this year," said High, who was an assistant coach for Traverse City last year. "Depth is the thing that has helped us the most."

"At the start of the season we wrote on the Civic Center chalkboard that winning the conference championship was our goal," he said. "And that's pretty much been our drive. All 21 of our kids have the desire to go for the three-peat. They've worked hard."

Not that they had a choice. High, a helicopter rescue swimmer with the Coast Guard, is demanding of his athletes.

"He's brought a new style of coaching, a new discipline," said team co-captain Scott Reichert. "It's more of a military, regimented style."

"We do push-ups at the end of practice and he does them with us. And we have to do them right. The philosophy is, if one person makes a mistake everyone makes a mistake. It helps make us closer as a team."

Said High: "After a few weeks you could see the team coming together, pulling together. We had guys who showed us nothing at the start of the season, who two weeks later became team leaders. When I saw that happening I knew we had a good group."

Traverse City heads into the conference championship with a perfect 8-0 dual-meet record, including a 5-0 mark against league opponents. It's just the second time in team history the squad has finished undefeated in

See SWIM, Page 2C ▶

## TC swimmers eye title

◀ Continued from Page 1C

dual-meet action. (The other was during the 1996-97 season.) In addition, Traverse City has placed first, third and second in invitational.

Junior Ben Collins leads Traverse City heading into this weekend's conference meet. He is seeded first in both the 200-meter individual medley and the 100 breaststroke. Reichert is seeded second in the same two events, while Jeff VanDaison is second in the 200 and 500 freestyle events. Pat McManus is seeded second in the 100 backstroke, while Chris Daniels is third in the 200 and 500 freestyle, and Dan Kennedy (individual medley) and Andy Magoun (50 and 100 backstroke) are in the top six in their events.

Traverse City has also been bolstered by the performances of divers Jared Powell and Nick Randall.

Powell, seeded second, and Randall, a top six seed, are the first Traverse City athletes in 14 years to qualify for regional diving competition.

"When I was in the eighth grade I remember there were two divers on the team and neither were very good," Powell said. "I don't think it was really what they wanted

to do. When I became part of the team I was pretty much alone (as a diver), until this year. Now we have a freshman (Dan Harris) on the team and Nick and I."

And they've been providing crucial points that Traverse City hasn't been able to rely on in the past.

"We beat Holland Christian by 10-11 points the last time we swam against them, so the points we get from diving are important to us," High said.

According to the seeds, Traverse City is the conference favorite, followed closely by Holland Christian. Ludington could also place among the top three teams.

The difference this weekend, High said, could be the performance of his team's younger swimmers.

"The thing that shows me the team is really working hard is that we have some freshmen who are seeded in the top 12 and some other freshmen who are right on the bubble," he said. "And to me when you have freshmen scoring points that's just as important as the juniors and seniors who have been there before."

"It tells me we've done a good job of becoming a well-rounded team."

Thursday  
March 18, 1999

### IN BRIEF

FROM STAFF REPORTS

#### Bomb scare closes Cheboygan school

CHEBOYGAN — A bomb scare Tuesday ended the day early for some Cheboygan elementary school students. The threat was a hoax.

Cheboygan Public Schools West Side elementary was evacuated at 2:20 p.m. when a bomb threat was called in to the Cheboygan Tribune. A newspaper employee said the caller sounded like a child.

A Michigan State Police bomb-sniffing dog from the Rockford Post near Grand Rapids was flown by the U.S. Coast Guard from Traverse City to Cheboygan. After an hour-long search, police concluded that there were no explosives in the building.

8A Thursday  
March 18, 1999

### OUR VIEW

## If you take the chance you should pay the price

Taxpayers should not subsidize thrill seekers ... or fools, either.

When the federal government spends more than \$383 million a year to rescue capsized boaters, stranded hikers, injured campers, daredevil mountain climbers and perilous-adventure seekers, the average wage earner scrambling to make that April 15 filing deadline can get mightily peeved.

Social Security is approaching a funding crisis and the Coast Guard and local agencies spend \$85,000 to rescue 18 fishermen from an ice floe in Lake St. Clair.

Gaps in health-care coverage leave some people struggling with various maladies and the Coast Guard spends \$130,275 to rescue three balloonists who failed to circle the world and ditched their craft off Hawaii. The balloonists included the British chairman of the Virgin records, soda and airline empire, and a U.S. millionaire.

Nothing in the Constitution guarantees a free rescue should your daredevil adventure fail. There is no inalienable right to a free helicopter ride should your fishing trip turn into Escape From the Ice Floe.

A wise man once said: Teach a man to fish and he can eat for a lifetime; teach a man to shoot movie footage from within the world's most active volcano and he can pay the \$75,000 lift-ticket out.

The thrill seekers and the fools should have to pay for their discretion. State lawmakers have introduced legislation requiring those who put themselves in dan-

ger by ignoring warnings to pay rescue costs or perform community service.

Our approach is a bit different. Two plans for the two types of tax-roll beneficiaries: a daredevil deposit would apply to thrill seekers such as round-the-world balloonists and high-mountain climbers, and a fool's fee would apply to those such as anglers who wander far out onto the ice despite the warnings.

The daredevil deposit would require thrill seekers to post a bond before they undertake their endeavor. Should they succeed or fail — rescue-free — they get their money back.

The fool's fee would, well, charge fools a fee for their rescue. Inexperienced hikers with the wrong equipment out on a ledge? Cha-ching! Ice fishermen caught out on an ice floe — for the second time? Cha-ching!

A pay-to-play plan has its detractors. Both the Coast Guard and the National Park Service say they oppose sending out rescue bills because it might discourage those in need from calling for help. The Coast Guard saves thousands of lives annually, many of whom become endangered by unforeseen circumstances, not daredevil behavior.

But a \$1,000 bill for being air-rescued from atop an Alaskan mountain is hardly a chilling effect compared to remaining. Nothing opens the wallet like having to pay a little now to live tomorrow.

Meanwhile, the rest of us would appreciate the smarter use of our tax dollars.



# TRaverse CITY RECORD-EAGLE

MARCH 13, 1999

NORTHERN MICHIGAN'S NEWSPAPER

50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.50 SUNDAY



Derek Sutherin helped end a police standoff.



Bazel Shaw, 5, rescued her father.



Baby-sitter Natalie Leugers saved a toddler.



Jason Shepard aided in a Wisconsin rescue.

## Heroes, one and all

### Red Cross honors 13 for brave deeds

By PATRICK SULLIVAN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — A baby sitter who put her first aid training to use and saved the life of a 2-year-old choking on a piece of plastic received one of seven "hero" awards handed out by the American Red Cross Friday.

Last March, Natalie Leugers was taking a message on the phone when she heard choking sounds coming from Tyler Wolf, who she was baby-sitting. She realized he needed immediate attention.

Fortunately for Tyler, Natalie had

taken a baby-sitting first-aid course from the Red Cross, and she performed the Heimlich maneuver to remove a "handy snack" spreader Tyler had swallowed.

"When I took the course I didn't think I would ever have to actually use it," Natalie said, but when faced with an emergency, she called 911 and put her training to work.

Natalie's story demonstrates why everyone should learn CPR, says Darryl Nelson, a Red Cross board member.

"You're most apt to need to do it on someone you know or someone you love," Nelson said. "You don't want to

See RED, Page 3A



Mark Cantrell revived a 3-year-old girl.



Bruce Carpenter called 911 to help a fisherman.



Tom McDevitt helped save two deputies.



Selena Somers pulled a student from a fire.



Ken Soper helped rescue a fisherman.



Jim Arnold rowed out to save a fisherman.

## REGION/NATION

### Red Cross recognizes 13 heroes

Continued from Page 1A

be standing there looking down not knowing what to do. It's a horrible feeling."

In its third year, the Red Cross awards program aims to recognize people from all walks of life, from police officers who risked their lives to help a fellow officer who was dying of gun shot wounds, to three construction workers who rushed to the aid of a man whose boat capsized while he was fishing.

"This is just the tip of the iceberg," said Susan Kinney of the Red Cross. "So often people overlook the positive and point out the negative. It's kind of nice to be able to recognize that we have heroes here in Traverse City."

Others who received awards Friday were:

■ Ken Soper, Jim Arnold and Bruce Carpenter were building a garage near Rennie Lake when they heard cries for help coming from the water and saw a man clinging to a capsized boat.

Lowell Burns, 61, was fishing in icy cold water when his boat tipped as he stood to change seats. Unable to hoist himself back into his small boat, he wisely decided not to attempt the swim back to shore.

Carpenter called 911 while Soper and Arnold rowed with a two-by-four and a plank of wood from a dock to get a boat they found on shore out to Burns.

Burns was treated for exposure and hypothermia at the scene, and Soper, Arnold and Carpenter were credited with saving his life.

■ Bazel Shaw, 5, kept her cool when her father fell over the side of his sail boat, leaving Bazel and her 3-year-old brother floating alone on Elk Lake. Under instructions from her father while he treaded water and watched his boat sail away from him, Bazel stopped the boat's outboard motor and unhooked a line that held the sail taut.

That slowed the boat, and her father was able to swim back to his children.

■ Selena Somers, a sophomore residence assistant at Northwestern Michigan College, heard a scream for help after she thought East Hall had been evacuated during a dormitory fire last year.



Jim Arnold, right, speaks Friday with Lowell Burns at a reception at the American Red Cross "Heroes" awards at the Park Place Hotel in Traverse City. Arnold and two others helped pull Burns from freezing water last year after Burns capsized in a boat while fishing.

#### Free CPR classes

Saturday, March 20, at the Garfield Fire Station 3000 Albany, Traverse City  
Five classes will take place throughout the day. Call 947-7286 for more information.

With windows exploding from the heat, and hindered by smoke filling the hallway, Somers made her way to the voice, believing it was the student's only chance for survival.

"All I could think of was I have to do this," Somers said. "I wasn't thinking about being a hero or anything."

Locating the burned and bloodied body of Matthew Wooten, Somers was able to pull him out of the building to safety. Wooten and Somers have since become friends, she said, and he is recovering well.

■ Grand Traverse Sheriff's Deputy Todd Heller pulled slain Sgt. Dennis Finch from a porch where a standoff was taking place last May. Traverse City Police Detective Derek Sutherin covered Heller from the side of the porch, ensuring that Heller could retrieve Finch's body without getting wounded himself.

"It happened so fast and you have so much adrenaline going you don't really think about it other than you have another fellow officer hurt, badly wounded, and you want to get him out of

there," Heller said. Finch did not survive, but his killer was sentenced to life in prison and the officer's name was immortalized by the naming of the Dennis Finch Law Enforcement Center in Traverse City.

■ Mark Cantrell helped save a girl just a few days shy of her third birthday by performing mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

The Munson X-ray technician happened to be at a beach when he joined a group of people carrying the child from the water. Her mother said the girl was swimming in waist-deep water with a life vest when she disappeared, turning up minutes later floating face down without a life vest.

Cantrell performed first aid and the girl began breathing again.

■ Coast Guard "heroes" Donald Marinello, Tom McDevitt, David Sheriff and Jason Shepard were called from the Traverse City air station to Black River Falls, Wis., where a person was trapped hanging from a tree over a swollen river.

En route, the crew learned that the man hanging from a tree had been rescued, but two sheriff's deputies were stranded on the river after a hovercraft they were driving became disabled.

Stuck in trees on an island covered by eight feet of rising water, one of the deputies was diabetic and his medical condition became serious in the cold weather. Marinello, McDevitt, Sheriff and Shepard arrived in a helicopter and lifted the deputies off the island to safety.

Saturday Mar 13 1999 LOM



Daily News/JEFF KIESSEL

#### Taking off

A U.S. Coast Guard helicopter out of Traverse City takes off from a small grassy area adjacent to Coast Guard Station Ludington. The visit Friday morning by the helicopter was for the Ludington crew to do its annual review of safety procedures when working with the aircraft.

"Local news you can't get anywhere else"

Sports: Wings, Devils skate to 2-2 tie; defenseman hurt

# PETOSKEY News-Review

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## Training for trouble

Charlevoix: In a practice ice rescue operation, a helicopter from the U.S. Coast Guard air station in Traverse City lifts a volunteer victim from the icy waters of Lake Charlevoix. In the training exercise Monday, the crews of two helicopters practiced retrieving members of the U.S. Coast Guard life station Charlevoix from the open water of Lake Charlevoix just east of the life station, located at the east entrance of Round Lake. (NEWS-REVIEW photo by G. Randall Goss)

May 1999  
Vol. 1, Issue 5



# Fire TIES

• Training • Investigation • Education • Statistics •

Joint Publication of the Michigan State Fire Marshal's Office and Fire Fighters Training Council

## Students learn about driving/flying careers at job expo

By **CHERI HARRIS**  
ADVOCATE STAFF REPORTER

An exposition that would appeal to anyone who has ever played with Hot Wheels—the Mattel company's miniature toy cars and trucks—was held at Sawyer Park last week.

A collection of 25 vehicles of every shape and size—from a semi-trailer truck to a Coast Guard helicopter—were part of the "Careers on Wheels" program Tuesday for Sturgeon Bay public school kids in second, third and fourth grades.

So, rather than just pretending to be a stock car driver or a firefighter, kids could actually climb into some occupational vehicles—like an Army Humvee or a sleek limousine—and talk to drivers who were happy to share their expertise and pride in the jobs that have put them behind the wheel.

Kids and their teachers jumped as engines raced and roared. They collected free brochures, pencils, soda and passes to the summer stock car races at Door County Fair Park in Sturgeon Bay.

They listened to drivers tell about what it takes to do their specific jobs, and they asked questions.

Is it fun? Is it safe?

Can girls drive this, too?

"Sure, girls drive race cars," said Aaron Thornton, standing beside his race car and first-place trophy from Thunderhill Speedway. "We have one who races with us every week."

"Is she any good?" a boy asked dubiously.

"She's definitely improved over the years," Thornton replied. "She drives with the guys."

Kids touched the driver's fire-proof suit and shoes—more like slippers, really—and wondered if the helmet was tight and how Thornton could see through the narrow eye opening.

Thornton demonstrated an attachment to the helmet that



Advocate photo by Heidi Hodges

U.S. Coast Guard rescue swimmer Matt High describes his job of saving people in distress to Sturgeon Bay students in grades 2-4 at the "Careers on Wheels" program at Sawyer Park April 20. High, who is stationed in Traverse City, Mich., demonstrated using rescue equipment on Sunrise Elementary School second-grader Harley Davis. The Coast Guard helicopter was one of 25 vehicles on display at the event.

resembles a cellophane tape dispenser. As the plastic strip that covers the eye opening becomes dirty, the driver simply pulls the strip off and a clean one from the tape dispenser replaces the dirty strip.

Nearby, Matt Young was showing off the motorcycle he uses for racing and which, he said, can get up to 137 mph on a quarter-mile track in only 9.6 seconds.

"I like to drive fast, and this keeps me out of trouble and challenges me mentally," he said.

He races at national events in St. Louis, Oklahoma City and Memphis, Tenn.

Young suggested that kids learn all they can in math, chemistry, physics and small engines if they want careers as motorcycle mechanics or machinists.

"Many occupations like these are not normally considered," said Karen Urban Dickson, coordinator of the Door-Kewaunee School to Work program, which helped organize the "Careers on Wheels" event.

"We wanted kids to see who these people are and let them explore what careers are out there," added Belinda Richard, Sawyer Elementary School's guidance counselor. "They're learning what skills are needed, and they're seeing people share the pride they have in their jobs."

An example of that pride came from city police officer Dan Treika and Robert Osborne.

"We're still kids at heart," we

don't want to grow up yet," Treika said with a smile, as he showed off the Police Department's new motorized bicycle, which can reach a speed of 25 mph.

Police officers plan to use the battery-powered bike in patrolling the city during warm-weather months, particularly the waterfront areas.

Ivy Barlament, a fourth-grader at Sawyer School, enjoyed the presentation.

"It was fun to see what some police do," she said. "And their bike is different from my bike."

"We really enjoy our jobs; we meet a lot of nice people," Osborne said.

People skills figured prominently in many drivers' jobs.

"I told the kids you have to know math and geography to do my job, and you have to be nice to people," said John Stockton, a Sturgeon Bay High School senior who drives a new, yellow Volkswagen bug as he delivers for Sonny's Pizzeria.

Nearby a big, red-and-white Coca-Cola truck was parked. Filled with forklifts at a warehouse, the delivery truck holds 1,200 cases of soda, all of which are unloaded by drivers who know the correct way to lift and carry their product.

John Gigot of Algoma, a salesman with Coca-Cola, said an average route would entail 22 stops and about 500 cases of soda in a day.

"You need to know how to read invoices, have good math skills to handle money, computer skills and good manners and communications," Gigot said. "Customer relations are important to us."

"I liked the Coke truck because we get free samples," said Spencer Jodanski, a Sawyer School fourth-grader.

Also distributing information was Don Behling of Abrams, a driver with Schneider Transport of Green Bay who gave each youngster a brochure about the company. The trademark, bright-orange Schneider semi-tractor was one of 15,000 the company operates in 28

countries.

Children had an opportunity to climb into the cab and see the view from six feet above ground.

"I liked the double bunks in back," said Chad Hoelzel. "It'd be neat to be a truck driver."

Only a two-week training period with one of the 75 Schneider instructors in Green Bay is needed before a would-be semi driver can take to the road with a 40-ton rig.

Becoming a firefighter also requires training, much of it ongoing, according to veteran firefighter Ron Vandertie, who has been with the Sturgeon Bay Fire Department for 25 years.

"It's a demanding job," he said. "It can be scary if you're not trained. But we are trained to work together. I can't say it's fun. Fires aren't fun for anyone; it's a challenge."

Another job that can be challenging is the one belonging to Stan Hein of Green Bay, who is an Army recruiter and a combat engineer. A 1983 graduate of Sturgeon Bay High School, Hein said he didn't want to work in the local shipyards, so he joined the Armed Forces.

Last week that job brought him back to Sturgeon Bay, where he let kids pile into the Army's Humvee transport vehicle and blow its horn.

"If you take the (canvas) top off, you change it to a cargo Humvee and it's a two-seater," Hein explained. "We use it to haul people or to take food to guys in the field. It's used in wartime and peacetime."

At the other end of the park, kids could visit the Coast Guard ice-breaker *Mobile Bay*—whose home port is Sturgeon Bay—and a USCG helicopter. Other city and county vehicles—a backhoe, water-weed cutter, grader and ambulance—were also part of the presentation as were privately operated vehicles like a tow truck, crane, taxi, garbage truck and a limousine.

"I liked the limo best," said Barlament. "Stars like Brett Favre and Reggie White sat in it."

## SPORTS

TRAVERSE CITY RECORD-EAGLE  
SUNDAY, JUNE 13, 1999 **7C**

# Change of marine radio channel is voluntary

The Coast Guard has asked pleasure boaters to switch channels to clear the airway for emergency calls.

Channel 16, on marine radios, has been used for years to establish contact between pleasure boats, contact marinas, and to call for help when it is needed. This channel has become congested with non-emergency radio traffic, and a change is needed for the safety of boaters.

Michigan leads the nation with over a million registered pleasure boats. In addition, out of state visitors will add another 250,000 boaters to Michigan waters.

"With the number of boats we have, channel 16 has become overcrowded with non-emergency radio traffic," says Todd Lleiblam, telecommunications specialist at Group Grand Haven.

Coast Guard radio operators listen to all calls on channel 16 waiting to hear a call for help from a boater. Channel 16 is so busy that emergency calls may go unanswered or even unheard among other radio traffic. Boaters have used channel 16 for contacting other boats and calling marinas. Now this is about to change.

Beginning May 1, 1999 the Federal Communications Commission authorized Channel 09 as an alternate calling channel for VHF Marine Radios. Although voluntary, boaters are requested to use channel 09 in stead of channel 16 to contact marinas and other boats and reserve channel 16 for emergencies only.



**JACK KLANG**  
LOCAL COLUMNIST

"It's like calling 911," explains Lt. Willis, of the Grand Haven Coast Guard Group.

In the Boston (MA) area, radio traffic on Channel 16 has been reduced by over 50 percent through this voluntary arrangement.

This has given the Coast Guard a much better chance to hear and respond when help is needed. In many areas around Michigan, radio traffic (calls) is so congested that an emergency call cannot even be heard.

Channel 09 should be used to call other boats or marinas keeping channel 16 reserved for emergencies only. Marinas will no longer be listening to channel 16, but can be reached on channel 09.

This change has been anticipated for some time. Coast Guard Groups Milwaukee and Grand Haven have completed the installation of electronic and have sent notices to marinas in their area of operation.

"Although the switch to channel



Record-Eagle/Jack Klange

A Coast Guard helicopter sends a swimmer into the water to rescue a boater.

09 is voluntary, boaters will quickly make the transition as soon as they learn of the change," said Lt. Willis.

Northern Lake Michigan and the tip of Lake Huron are served by Coast Guard Group Sault. Their area of operation also includes all of Lake Superior.

According to telecommunication specialist Bruce Johnston,

"Group Sault, with a much larger area of coverage needs more time to covert and update their radio equipment," said Johnston. "The Coast Guard will conduct an informational blitz to alert northern Michigan boaters of the

implementation date."

Boaters north of Frankfort on Lake Michigan and north of Hammond Bay on Lake Huron should continue using channel 16 for calling, followed by a switch to a working channel. Boaters in these areas should monitor (listen to) channel 16 to receive incoming

radio calls and to offer assistance in case of an emergency. Boaters in the other two Coast Guard territories should begin monitoring (listening to) channel 09 for incoming calls.

Change often comes at a price. All pleasure boaters will soon be monitoring only channel 09. Emergency calls for help on Channel 16 will be monitored by the Coast Guard. Few pleasure boaters and no marinas will be listening to channel 16 when emergency calls for help are broadcast. For hundreds of years mariners have come to the assistance of other boaters when help is needed. Now it is up to the Coast Guard alone.

This is an unfortunate loss to boaters as the response time by Coast Guard vessels takes a while. Even the arrival of the red Coast Guard helicopters will take longer than the help a near-by boater could render. Hopefully Good Samaritans will still be on hand if needed.

Coast Guard Group Grand Haven has stations along the coast of Lake Michigan at intervals of every 10 miles (or so). This reduces the response time for a surface vessel to reach a distressed boater. However, in northern Lake Michigan where Coast Guard stations are spread apart. Examples are: Frankfort to Charlevoix and Charlevoix to St. Ignace. Law enforcement agencies as well as the Coast Guard Auxiliary will also be able to assist.

### Tips on Marine radio use

1. Use channel 16 for emergencies and for contacting other boats or marinas.
2. After contact is made, switch to a working channel (09, 68, 69, 71, 78, 79 or 80).
3. Use low power (1 watt) when within a quarter-mile of each other.
4. Don't use profanity or obscene content. Don't play music or transmit general calls not addressed to a specific receiving station.
5. Keep conversations brief so others can use the frequency.



Record-Eagle/Jack Klange

A Coast Guard vessel leaves the dock to look for a boat.



## Rescue/Passengers on fishing boat were clinging to hull while waiting for Coast Guard

Continued from A1

neering in West Bend, was holding on to the hull and to his friend.

Kertscher's nephew, Justin Pesch, son of Gene and Debbie Pesch, of Kewaskum, also clung to the hull.

Kertscher kept everyone atop the hull. Each 6-foot wave was the coldest of showers, a threat to dislodge them.

The boy was the only one wearing a life preserver when a wave swamped the boat and

killed the engine. The men then put on theirs, and Kertscher had time to radio a "mayday" message before more waves capsized the boat.

The message was brief, but gave searchers something to go on. Kertscher radioed that the boat was sinking and in 150 feet of water, based on a fathometer reading.

The Coast Guard in Milwaukee and the harbor master in Port Washington were listening. The search mission coordinator suspected the boat was

somewhere between the two cities. He also passed along the depth information to Ozaukee County Water Rescue and to a helicopter crew in Muskegon, Mich.

It took the Coast Guard crew about a half-hour to travel to a 36-square-mile area where the water is about 150 feet deep.

Aircraft commander Peter Kilfoyle, 38, said they flew a grid pattern of 12 miles north and south with each pass a mile closer to shore than the last. They were low on fuel and on their last

pass in covering the selected search area, at 500 feet elevation, when they saw the boat.

Kertscher said the helicopter appeared at first to be passing by them, which alarmed him. He said it was a truly joyous experience seeing it turn toward them.

Lt. Neil Wilson, 32, flew the copter 15 feet above the water so rescue swimmer Brad Smardo, 32, could drop into the lake.

Then Wilson hovered 25 feet above the boat while John Foster, 32, lowered a tubular metal rescue basket to Smardo.

Smardo determined Cassidy was in the most trouble and told Kertscher to let go of him.

"You've got to come in the water," he shouted to Cassidy. "I won't let you drown."

Each of the victims was placed in the basket and hoisted to the copter and then the rescuer himself. The entire procedure took about 12 minutes.

The chopper was too crowded to allow first aid for hypothermia, but the flight to St. Nicholas Hospital took only nine minutes.

Upon arriving, a warning light in the 1980s Dolphin helicopter indicated trouble with engine oil pressure and there was smoke inside.

The Coast Guard had to send another helicopter with parts

and personnel for repair of a cracked engine exhaust stack.

Kilfoyle said the crew responds to 170 to 210 cases a year in the western Great Lakes area. This one was a close call, he said, because survival in low 60s water temperature is normally less than five hours.

Pesch and Kertscher were treated and released Thursday. Cassidy was hospitalized a second day for "above moderate hypothermia."

Cassidy's boat sank. His dog, an Akita named Cody, drowned and was still in the boat when it was recovered Thursday morning.



Coast Guard Third Class Petty Officer Eddie Huffman, above top, stands next to a helicopter rescue basket during Marine Days Saturday at Riverfront Park in Huntington, W.Va. The rescue basket is lowered into the water to allow victims to climb in and be pulled to safety from the water. State watercraft officer, Tony Delong, above, conducts a dockside annual inspection of the Bar Bill, owned by Mike Henestofel of Columbus. Delong was checking for fire hazards in the engine compartment, fuel tank and engine ventilation systems. Marine Patrol Officer Steve Cartmell, right, displays a United States Coast Guard-approved life jacket.

## Precautions/Respect dangers of lake

Continued from A1

but Mark Cassidy Jr., 26, of West Bend, was colder and required more care.

The average body temperature is 98.6 degrees and Cassidy's had fallen to 88 degrees. Of the three stages of hypothermia — mild, moderate and severe — a body temperature of 88 is in the high end of the moderate stage.

Cassidy had experienced a 25-percent decrease in oxygen consumption and was in a stupor. He was unable to move and was not communicative.

To restore Cassidy's body temperature and respiration, caretakers used warming techniques applied progressively as needed.

Initially, something called a bear hugger was used for external warming. A bear hugger is a layered blanket with tiny holes in it. Hot air is pumped into the blanket, which comes out the holes.

The second technique used was for internal warming. Salt fluids were added to his blood stream. They were administered intravenously.

Other internal warming tech-

niques that were not necessary included introduction of warm, humid oxygen and peritoneal dialysis. In peritoneal dialysis, a catheter is placed in the abdomen and warm fluids are injected through it. Esophageal rewarming tubes are widely used internationally and are expected to become available in the United States.

St. Nicholas Hospital has treated Sheboygan quarry swimmers for more serious hypothermia than experienced by Cassidy. Quarry water is dangerously cold this time of year.

# The Sheboygan Press

Friday, June 18, 1999

50 Cents

## 'It was terrible ...'



### Coast Guard rescues fishing party after 3-hour ordeal on Lake Michigan

By Tom Waller  
of The Press Staff

A fishing party of two men and a 9-year-old boy were themselves fished out of Lake Michigan near Port Washington Wednesday night by a rescue crew.

The 8 p.m. rescue came three hours after the fishing party's boat capsized in a fast-moving squall. The rescue also came just in time for the U.S. Coast Guard rescue crew, whose helicopter began smoking upon arrival at St. Nicholas Hospital in Sheboygan.

Mark Cassidy Jr. of West Bend could no longer cling to his 20-foot boat, which was slowly sinking about three miles east of Port Washington.

His core body temperature was 88 degrees. He was numb beyond feeling except for a throbbing chest, and he was in a stupor.

"I couldn't move," said Cassidy. "It was terrible."

David Kertscher, 27, of Random Lake, Cassidy's friend and co-worker at Weasler Engi-

Turn to RESCUE/A4

Above, David Kertscher, 27, of Random Lake, thanked the U.S. Coast Guard crew that rescued him and two companions from Lake Michigan Wednesday. Kertscher and his fiancée, Tricia Kaczmarek, of Random Lake, talked about the rescue with aircraft commander Peter Kilfoyle, 38, of Traverse City, Mich. Kertscher injured a leg while clinging to the hull of a boat and helping his companions stay on it. Below, the rescue squad's Dolphin helicopter landed on a hospital helipad in Sheboygan and remained there Thursday while repairs were made.



Mark Cassidy Jr., 26, of West Bend, right, was visited Thursday in the hospital by Kertscher. Cassidy was treated for hypothermia at St. Nicholas Hospital after spending three hours in Lake Michigan.

## Coast Guard urges precautions when out on Lake Michigan

By Tom Waller  
of The Press Staff

The U.S. Coast Guard Group in Milwaukee encourages people to wear proper protective and safety

equipment while boating and to be aware of the dangers of hypothermia.

Expected survival times depend on body size, health at the time of exposure and determination — the will to live.

The water temperature of Lake Michigan is in the lower 60s this time of year. Survival time at these temperatures normally is less than five hours.

Two men and a boy who were rescued Wednesday night near Port

Washington after three hours in the lake were admitted to St. Nicholas Hospital in Sheboygan for treatment of hypothermia.

Turn to PRECAUTIONS/A4



# Crowd savors final parade of Cherry East



An HH-65 helicopter from the U.S. Coast Guard air station in Traverse City is accompanied Saturday afternoon by air station officers and personnel during the National Cherry Festival's Cherry Royale Parade.



## CHANGE OF COMMAND



Record-Eagle/John L. Russell

Commander Thomas Ostebo, left, chats with outgoing Commander Barry Harner during change of command ceremonies Thursday at U.S. Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City. Harner's two-year hitch at the air station has ended and now he leaves for Washington, D.C. Ostebo, of Clearwater, Fla., takes over the command of 29 officers and 116 enlisted personnel.



**Commander  
Barry A. Harner**  
U.S. Coast Guard

CDR Harner is a Pennsylvania native and a 1975 graduate of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. After an initial tour of duty aboard the Coast Guard Cutter Dallas as the Combat Information Center and Operations Officer, he attended Navy Flight Training in Pensacola, Florida. He has served at Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point, Hawaii and as the assistant Engineering Officer at Brooklyn, New York. He was the Engineering Officer at Coast Guard Station Cape May, New Jersey during their transition to the HH-65. In 1989, he was assigned as the HH-65 System Manager in Aeronautical Engineering in Coast Guard Headquarters and attended Post Graduate School at the University of Maryland. Prior to reporting for duty in Traverse City, Michigan, he served as the Engineering Officer at Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater, Florida. During his career he has flown over 4400 accident-free flight hours in the HH-52, HH-65, and HH-60 helicopters. His military decorations include two Commendation Medals.

CDR Harner is married to the former Rosanne McCorville of Milmont Park, Pennsylvania. They have five children: Sean (15), Colleen (13), Patrick (10), Bridget (8), and Kelly (4).



**Commander  
Thomas P. Ostebo**  
U.S. Coast Guard

Commander Ostebo is a native of New York and a 1981 Coast Guard Academy graduate. After an initial tour of duty aboard the Coast Guard Cutter ACTIVE as First Lieutenant, he attended Navy Flight Training in Pensacola, Florida. Commander Ostebo has served as Aviation Materials Officer as Coast Guard Air Station Cape Cod and as Engineering Officer at Coast Guard Station Sitka. In 1992, Commander Ostebo attended postgraduate school at Purdue University and was subsequently assigned to the Aviation Repair and Supply Center in Elizabeth City, North Carolina. During this assignment he served as Chief of Inventory Management and Head of Aviation Logistics. Most recently, he served as the Engineering Officer at Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater, Florida. During his career, he has flown over 3,800 accident-free hours in the HH-3F, HH-60J, HH-65 and the HC-130 aircraft. His military decorations include the Distinguished Flying Cross, Meritorious Service Medal, the Coast Guard Commendation Medal, and the Coast Guard Achievement Medal.

Commander Ostebo is married to the former Renee Winer of Falmouth, Massachusetts. They have two children: Alexandra (9) and Denali (6).



### Sequence of Events

Arrival of Official Party  
Military Honors  
For

Commander, Ninth Coast Guard District

Posting of Colors, National Anthem

Invocation

Inspection

Remarks:

Commander, Ninth Coast Guard District

Commander Barry A. Harner  
Commanding Officer, Coast Guard Air Station  
Traverse City, Michigan

Change of Command:  
Commander Thomas P. Ostebo  
relieves  
Commander Barry A. Harner

Remarks:  
Commander Thomas P. Ostebo

Benediction

Retire the Colors

Official Party Departs

# U.S. Coast Guard plays big brother during festival

By **BRYCE HOFFMAN**  
Record-Eagle staff writer

Since World War II, when the National Cherry Festival was still an awkward teen-ager, there has always been a quiet friend hovering above in orange helicopters.

Each year the U.S. Coast Guard station in Traverse City contributes hundreds of volunteer hours to the

Cherry Festival and has become such a part of the festival that people barely notice it.

But without the Coast Guard's help, the festival would lose out on both services and events, said Tom Haase, festival vice president and former guardman.

"Things that happen very smoothly and very easily

would be much more difficult to coordinate," he said. "There would be some

things that would be pretty darn difficult to do...one of those things would be hosting the flight demonstration teams or any of the military parts of the air show."

As a military installation, the Coast Guard station plays host to any visiting military like the Blue Angels or the Thunderbirds. Having a secure place to refuel and a hangar to make repairs in are big conveniences, Haase said.

The Coast Guard also helps coordinate security for its military guests. That includes clearing a safe flight box over West Bay and providing security for the planes after the show, said Lt. Mark Jones, Coast Guard liaison to the festival.

Jones said security during Blue Angels years is particularly tight. Last year, eager spectators lined up at the gates to the base and one person

posed as a State Police officer to sneak in and get a closer look

“

*Things that happen very smoothly and very easily would be much more difficult to coordinate (without the Coast Guard).*

**Tom Haase,**  
festival vice president and former guardman



Record-Eagle file photo

The U.S. Coast Guard is offering public tours, based on docking access, Saturday, July 3, and Sunday, July 4, from 10 a.m. to noon and again from 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. during the National Cherry Festival.

The Coast Guard is not expecting quite so much fervor over the AV8 Harrier jet that is scheduled to perform this year, but Jones said people will still need a valid reason to enter the base.

Aside from the air show, the guardsmen have an entire laundry list of activities they have a hand in. This year they will give search and rescue demonstrations over West Bay, give tours of their base, flip flapjacks for a pancake breakfast and help maintain a safe area for the fireworks displays. Also, the Coast Guard Cutter Biscayne Bay will be anchored at the Open Space.

Earlier this year, the base hosted the sign-up dinner for festival ambassadors, about 15 of whom are

guardsmen.

"We've just become more and more involved," said Lt. Kevin Nelson. "The Coast Guard puts in hundreds and hundreds of volunteer hours to get involved and stay involved in the Cherry Festival."

And all of this involvement comes at the busiest time of year for the Coast Guard's search and rescue squads. The Traverse City base is responsible for water rescue on all of Lake Michigan, Lake Superior, the top third of Lake Huron and all inland lakes in that area.

"There are more people, therefore more potential for search and rescue," Nelson said.

As always, a full flight crew is ready to launch at

all times during the festival.

"We're still doing the same work that we're doing any other week of the year," Nelson said.

Established in 1941, the base now comprises two rescue helicopters and 131 guardsmen, 25 of whom are helicopter pilots while another 35 to 40 serve as crew.

Nelson and Jones said having the festival on top of a tough week of exhaustive searches is stressful, but it's usually the good kind of stress that breaks the routine of life on the base.

"Generally it means some extra duty days for some of the guys," said Haase, who was an executive officer at the Traverse City base before leaving the Coast Guard in 1996. "They seem to do that pretty willingly."

Because the Coast Guard bases are typically more integrated with their communities than bases of other armed forces, Jones said, it is natural for the Coast Guard to pitch in by volunteering.

"It's a good thing for the Coast Guard because we get community exposure," he said. "You get to meet a lot of the people who make the town run."

Nelson added that just being part of the Cherry Festival yields a great deal of satisfaction for the guardsmen who live here and are raising children here.

"Year-round, we are involved in the planning and preparation for the festival, and the grand finale week," he said. "It's one of the highlights of our year."

## Sara Lee

OUTLET STORE

# FREE

37 oz Cherry pie with \$15 or more purchase

One coupon per visit, offer valid from July 1<sup>st</sup> to July 10<sup>th</sup>  
offer valid at Traverse City store only (2418 Sybrandt)  
not valid with any other offer or discount



## The Petoskey SUMMER ANTIQUES FESTIVAL

Michigan's Favorite Antiques Market!

The Mid-West's most charming antiques market. Set in the old-time country atmosphere of Emmet County Fairgrounds, the Petoskey Antiques Festival features 130 national and regional antiques merchants, delightful lunches prepared by a local chef and live musical entertainment. Be sure to make this part of your Northern Michigan Experience!

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Emmet County Fairgrounds  
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Sat 10 - 5, Sun 10 - 4  
Admission \$5.00



www.petoskey.com/antiques



A U.S. Coast Guard rescue helicopter and crew was a hit with youngsters participating in Otsego County EMS's Camp 911 this week.

## Kids to the Rescue

By FRANK MICHELS  
Staff Writer

GAYLORD — Twenty-five Gaylord area children ages 10-13 are better prepared for emergencies after attending Camp 911.

The two-day camp, staged and sponsored by the Otsego County Emergency Medical Services (OCEMS), was conducted Tuesday and Wednesday at the OCEMS building at Old 27 North and McLouth

Road.

"The camp was very successful," said Doug Paulus, OCEMS training officer.

Excitement among the participants peaked Wednesday afternoon with the landing of the U.S. Coast Guard emergency rescue helicopter and its four-member crew on the lawn of the Alpine Center complex near the EMS building.

"I learned how to do CPR, how to

help people breathe and how to call 911," said Erica Gahm, one of the attendees.

**ANOTHER PARTICIPANT,**

Justin Hart, said, "We learned what to do in an emergency. The helicopter was really interesting and would be a fun job to do."

In addition to hearing a presentation by crew members about their res-

See Youths, p. A-13

## INSIDE NEWS

# Youths learn rescue, safety techniques

## OCEMS sponsor camp for 4th straight year

Cont'd from p. A-1  
cue techniques, each student was able to sit in the pilot's seat of the helicopter.

The pilot, Lt. Don Dyer, stressed with campers the need to wear life preservers whenever

venturing out onto a lake in a boat. Dyer said members of his crew all wear specially designed, fire-resistant blue jump suits along with leather gloves and boots which are also designed for safety.

Dyer also demonstrated the helicopter's rescue basket and other life-saving devices used by the crew during rescue missions over the Great Lakes.

The crew — consisting of a pilot and co-pilot, a rescue swimmer and navigation officer — is based in Traverse City.

In addition to the Coast Guard, special presentations were also made by the Michigan State Police, Otsego County 911 Central Dispatch, and the Otsego County Fire Dept., according to Paulus.

Participating from the state police were Lt. Russell Smith, Gaylord post commander, Trooper Tom Powers of the Gaylord post, Trooper Terry Fitzpatrick of the Cheboygan post, and Bill Estlack of the Alpena post.

Troopers Fitzpatrick and Estlack demonstrated special scuba equipment they use in underwater diving. Additionally, Fitzpatrick, who is also a forensic artist, showed some of the renderings of suspects he's drawn

from witness and victim descriptions.

During the camp the children learned CPR, bandaging and 911 phoning skills, Paulus said.

This was the fourth annual 911 camp sponsored by

OCEMS, with funding support from a state Highway Safety Grant, the McNamara-Yuill Agency, Gaylord Rotary and Nelson Funeral Home. Other local businesses also donated items to the camp.

Following the helicopter landing and presentation by the crew,

the children worked their way through an obstacle course set up in the EMS building to practice the emergency skills they had learned during the camp.



Photos by Frank Michels



**EAGER STUDENTS** take their turn checking out the Coast Guard helicopter (above) and then squeezing into a rescue basket (below). At left, MSP Trooper Terry Fitzpatrick (l), a forensic artist, shares details of his work with camp participants at Trooper Tom Powers of the Gaylord post observes.





## Community counts on Coast Guard

**'Coasties' volunteer time in the community**  
Carol South  
Herald contributing writer

If you want something done in this town, one organization you can count on for some help is the United States Coast Guard. Known locally not just for their cool helicopters and life-saving search and rescue missions, many of the 145 personnel stationed there give countless hours to the community as volunteers.

See Community, page 3A

## Ostebo new commander

In a solemn ceremony on July 15, Commander Tom Ostebo was sworn in as the 31st Commander of the Traverse City Air Station. The epitome of a Coast Guard Officer, Ostebo has risen through the ranks from First Lieutenant after graduating from the Coast Guard

See Ostebo, page 3A

## Community counts on Coast Guard volunteers

continued from page 1A

Even though they live in this community for three or four years before moving on, the list of contributions made by the 'Coasties' and their families is tremendous. Toys for Tots, Special Olympics, the Red Cross, Rotary Club, Make-A-Wish Foundation, Father Fred and Habitat for Humanity all benefit from their dedication. Then there are the coaches who lead the Trojan wrestling and swim teams as well as Little League and TBAYS soccer teams. Volunteer firefighters, Boy Scout and Cub Scout leaders, a local pastor and a youth advisor help round out the Air Station's resume.

"One of the Coast Guard's goals is community involvement and community partnership," said Commander Tom Ostebo, who assumed command of the Traverse City Air Station on July 15. "Literally not a day goes by when I don't get a call from somebody saying petty officer so-and-so did such a great job on this. We really have no base here, the base is the community around us."

The National Cherry Festival also benefits greatly from their presence. The Air Station hosts all military acts, including the much-loved Blue Angels. During the Festival, personnel also provide escorts for the Cherry Queen's coronation, put on the pancake breakfast, host the Queen's Luncheon and provide the color guard.

"Their contribution is very significant, they are an invaluable resource to us," said Tom Kern, executive director of the National Cherry Festival. "There is no way we could do the Blue Angels without them, their people put in hundreds of hours to assist them."

One of two Air Stations on the Great Lakes, the Traverse City Air Station is charged with search and rescue missions on all of Lake Michigan, Lake Superior and northern Lake Huron. Since it was commissioned in 1946, thousands of personnel have been stationed here and it is one of the top requested postings in the country. In addition, officers and enlisted personnel return after retirement to live in the region.

Unlike a military base in one of the other services, which tend to be large and nearly self-contained, Air Station personnel live, shop, go to school and play in the community just like any other resident. This makes them more a part of the community by default.

"Some 19-year-old kid gets off the airplane has to live in this community just like everyone else," Ostebo noted. "We rely heavily on the community and need the community for work and living. If one of our people get sick, we need doctors here like everyone else."

The tradition of involvement can start with one family, as it did in the 10-year history of volunteering with the Special Olympics. At least a dozen volunteers from the Air Station help with winter and summer

## Ostebo new T.C. commander

continued from page 1A

Academy to Commanding Officer of an Air Station during the past 18 years.

"Looking back, I wouldn't change anything in my career," said Ostebo, who has flown 3,800 accident-free hours in his career and received numerous military decorations. "I have done a tour as a ship driver and then switched careers to an aviator. The Coast Guard is smaller than other services so we leverage our people more."

His fifth move in 11 years, he brings along to Traverse City his wife, Renee, and two daughters, Alexandra, 9, and Denali, 6. Veteran movers, they have also lived in Florida, Alaska, Massachusetts and North Carolina. The whole family is ready to jump into the local life in Traverse City, eager to make new friends and welcome old ones here for a visit.

"Every place we've gone

we've made really strong friendships," Ostebo said. "It really makes it neat, we visit them and they visit us wherever we are. We have kind of a sense of having a whole lot of homes all over the place."

At his last posting as Engineering Officer at the Air Station in Clearwater, Fla., Ostebo was active in the YMCA and the Partnership in Education, where the Air Station adopted local schools for mentoring. Already he has become active in the Rotary Club, the Red Cross and Toys for Tots, looking forward to contributing what he can to the community during his two years here.

"This Air Station attracts people based solely on the community," said Ostebo, who began preparing for the change of command six months ago. "It is the most requested and everybody puts it on their dream sheet although the mission is not any different."

— Carol South

games each year and also serve as chaperones to the State games.

"They got started with us because one athlete's father was in the Coast Guard," said Sheila Blonstein of Elmwood Township, area director for the Special Olympics. "His father was here for two stays at the station and started their involvement with us. Now I contact them and tell them what we are doing and they get the volunteers."

For a Traverse City native like city resident Jason Allen, the Air Station and its personnel were part of

everyday life growing up. As a Cub Scout, he and his troop toured the Air Station in the early 1970s and he vividly remembers sitting in the old helicopters. Later in Boy Scouts, he was friends with two brothers whose father was in the Coast Guard.

"Their father taught us wilderness survival so we got our badge," Allen recalled. "Later both brothers went on to be Eagle Scouts and later to the Coast Guard Academy. In the community, the Coast Guard has always been good stewards."

# 'Always ready' isn't just a Coast Guard saying

It was a warm July evening, just before sunset, when we set out from the Coast Guard station in Charlevoix aboard a 41-foot utility boat.

Our destination was more than a mile offshore from the cement plant located on the shore of Lake Michigan.

On board were the regular crew of three "Coasties," two Naval Sea Cadets, an assistant engineer and myself. We scanned the sky for the approach of an H65 helicopter en route from the Traverse City station.

Just above the horizon we spotted the copter following the shoreline and approaching rapidly. The evening exercise was to practice air/sea rescues. Soon, radio contact was established and the plan was to practice five different exercises, all involving rescue techniques. The combination of surface (boat) and air (helicopter) rescues offers boaters greater safety when rescues are made.

The helicopter made two passes overhead to determine the exact wind and sea conditions before hovering overhead. Soon, the rescue basket was lowered into the cockpit of the boat. It took only a minute to realize that the 100-foot downdraft from the rotor blades would be a bath of lake water and spray.

Two crewmen were ready on the deck, but were careful to let the static line below the basket touch the deck before they touched it, knowing that it contained a charge of electricity. They were well prepared with rubber gloves, helmets and goggles.

The procedures were well known to both crews, as hand signals were the only means of communication. The 41-foot vessel was traveling slowly as the engine noise had ruled out other forms of communication. This drill continued until finally the helicopter hovered nearby to lower a rescue swimmer to the lake water. Again, with astounding precision, the rescue drills proceeded with the rescue of a life-size dummy from the water.

When the team seemed to have covered every rescue situation I could imagine, the helicopter hovered directly overhead. I sought protection from the downblast, noise and spray in the boat cabin. Lower and lower it hovered until all I could see from the cabin were the rivets on the bottom of the helicopter.

Like Santa Claus coming down the chimney, the rescue swimmer climbed down 20-feet from the helicopter and got into the cockpit of the boat. He came into the boat cabin and delivered a package.

We talked for awhile, trying to



**JACK KLANG**  
LOCAL COLUMNIST

communicate over the noise. Minutes later, the helicopter circled back and picked up the rescue swimmer before heading back toward the Traverse City air station.

Radio communication during the operation was difficult for me to understand. Maybe it's because I have two hearing aids. However, when the noise from above was gone, Bosun Scott Adler explained, "We have an overdue sailboat report."

A 22-foot long white sailboat left Elk Rapids harbor at 7:30 a.m. heading for South Manitou Island. It was now 8:30 p.m. and the location process was ready to begin.

The crew aboard the boat had just returned in the wee hours of the morning from assisting with a search of Lake Huron where a sailor was missing.

"This mission was out of our usual area of operation," said Adler, commander of the vessel. "However, we are like firemen, we work around the clock when necessary."

Most overdue boats are located by a series of telephone calls to local marinas. If that doesn't work, a marine broadcast is made over channel 16 on the marine radio. Hearing this, any vessel that has seen or know the location of the missing vessel contacts the Coast Guard. In this case, none of the area marinas had seen the vessel.

Since the helicopter had just left our location and would be heading south on Lake Michigan and into Grand Traverse Bay, Adler made another radio call, this time to the helicopter. They agreed to keep their eyes peeled for the sailboat. It was still daylight and they might spot a becalmed boat.

They did.

Soon they radioed back the location of the missing boat and the case was closed.

I asked Adler what the rest of the procedure would have been. He said if the boat couldn't be located early on, the Coast Guard would have launched a search by water.

"With an area as large as from Elk Rapids to South Manitou Island, we would probably have



Two seamen get ready as the helicopter approaches.

requested assistance from the air," he said.

This where the practice I had witnessed could have been needed.

The main mission of the Coast Guard is "search and rescue." However, they no longer tow boats that have run out of fuel or have damaged a propeller. They will refer these jobs to local marinas and towing companies.

If danger to life or property exists, they will handle the request themselves. Boats exactly like the 41-foot utility craft were used in the search for John F. Kennedy Jr. when his plane went down recently.

The 41-foot craft is a standard boat used by the Coast Guard in many areas. All 41-footers are identical. The standardization is a safety practice. When a rescue is in progress, Adler explained, it's no time to begin searching for a needed item.

Another job of the Coast Guard is law enforcement.

"We enforce all federal laws pertaining to boating," he said. "To do this, they are equipped

with the armament needed for the job. Anytime the boat is underway, each crewman wears a bulletproof vest and carries a pistol.

"In this part of the Great Lakes we don't have much alien traffic," said the nine-year Coast Guard veteran. "Drug enforcement is also lower here, but we are always prepared to handle the situation."

On our return to the Coast Guard station on Lake Charlevoix, the 41-footer stopped boaters in the channel between Round Lake and Lake Charlevoix. One boat was stopped for exceeding the no wake speed limit. A jet boat with three men aboard was traveling a little too fast. In both cases, a friendly reminder from the armed crewmen was all that was needed.

On the opposite side of the channel, a personal watercraft was proceeding slowly, but the driver was reminded it was almost dark.

"You need to be off the water in the next few minutes," announced the crewman.

The boater indicated he was heading back to dock.



Scott Adler is at the helm (above), while a crewman enforces the no wake zone.

Here's an overview of the boat and the crew's responsibilities.

#### COAST GUARD 41-FOOT BOAT

It includes the following:

- Twin 903 Cummins Diesel engines (318 HP each)
- 2 to 1 reduction gears give thrust enough to tow up to 100 ton vessels (about 70 feet)
- Rated for 8-foot high seas and 30 knot wind speeds
- Self bailing but not self righting

■ Top speed is 27 MPH

■ Cruising range of 300 miles or about 1012 hours of operation.

■ Electronics include depth sounder, 24-mile radar, compass, GPS, radio direction finder and two VHF marine radios.

■ The normal crew is coxswain (driver), engineer and seaman.

The crew of the Coast Guard station in Charlevoix is on duty 24 hours per day. Much like firemen, they are on duty for several days, then off duty for a few days. At all times during the season when the lakes are not frozen, the boat is ready. They can be underway, moving away from the dock and

ready for duty within two or three minutes in an emergency.

A large shore power cord and two dock lines need to be removed and they are away. The shore power supplies current to continuously charge all of the boat's batteries. It keeps the blocks warm so no warm up time is needed on the big diesel engines. When the alarm sounds, the crew hits the pavement running, with flak jackets, lifejackets and sidearms being fastened as they race to the dock, only a few feet from their station building.

They can proceed to Lake Michigan with haste, although they maintain no wake speed in Round Lake. Opening the U.S. 31 bridge is no problem. If necessary, they can drop their mast and pass under the bridge without needing it to be raised.

Once in the open water, they can rev up their diesels and head wherever they are needed.

Are they ready? Semper Paratus as their motto says. Always Ready.



# Downpour can't dampen spirits at festival parade

By Anne Marie Hamming  
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

GRAND HAVEN - It didn't just rain on Linda Mitchell's parade.

The heavens gushed nonstop.

Mitchell, the 1999 Coast Guard Festival parade director, could give beauty queens and Scottville clowns directions to their line-up positions. And she could answer the constant stream of questions that her golf-cart-driving volunteers brought to her.

But she couldn't postpone the rain.

She stood at the parade's starting point late Saturday morning as gray clouds accumulated as far as the eye could see. Just 10 minutes into the parade, even before the first marching band had started the route, rain began to fall.

"There's nothing I can do," Mitchell said. "The weather's the only thing that's out of my control."

Light showers, then a downpour turned the streets on the parade route into a kaleidoscope of brightly colored rain gear. Spectators huddled under my tree, umbrella, tarp or eave they could find. And memories of last year's sizzling hot parade dissolved as folks broke out jackets and sweatshirts. Those who had only shorts and T-shirts shivered from the combination of moisture, breeze and temperatures in the high 60s.

"I wish it was hot out," said Keith Abraham, 12, of Grand Haven. Abraham came to the parade with four coolers of cold lemonade and fruit punch to peddle to sweaty, thirsty spectators. But in the first hour, Abraham and his friend Avery Steinlage, 11, sold only 22 beverages.

"I should have brought hot chocolate," Abraham said.

Many residents along the parade route  
Please see PARADE 2A ▶



Above, U.S. Coast Guard officers and their families enjoy the Grand Parade as it winds through the streets of downtown Grand Haven during Saturday's rainstorm. A canopy protects the Coast Guard officials from the drenching rain, but two young girls couldn't help but get soaked. At left, seven U.S. Coast Guard ships and one from the Canadian Coast Guard line the Grand River channel in Grand Haven. The ships and flags added a splash of color on a gray day. The 75th Coast Guard Festival wraps up today. Please see related photo page, Page 1D.

Chronicle photos • Jason Redmond

## SERVICE NEWS

Sam Sams, Flotilla Staff Officer, Operations, was inducted into the US Coast Guard Reserve as Petty Officer 3rd at the monthly meeting of Flotilla 16-5, 9th Central District. The swearing in was done by the Commander of the Traverse Air Station, Thomas Ostebo.

Sams has been a member of the 16-05 Flotilla for the last two years. He had received his Coxswain Pin and was appointed officer in charge of operations. Because of this training he was able to receive the advanced rank of 3rd Class Petty Officer. Sams will attend the Reserve Enlisted Basic Indoctrination (REBE) at Cape May, New Jersey, in the fall.

At the completion of the two week REBE training period, he will be stationed at the US Coast Guard Station Frankfort, Michigan as a Boat's Mate.



Sam Sams



## TODAY'S TRIBUNE

### SPORTS



# Bodies of 2 missing boaters pulled from lake

By Evan Osnes and John Chase  
TRIBUNE STAFF WRITERS

Harry Bull, a 39-year-old Hinsdale business executive, had been sailing boats since he was 2, his family said.

And as soon as his two daughters had reached that age, they joined him on the water in frequent trips from Chicago's Monroe Harbor on the family's 26-foot sloop.

But on Wednesday, after searching for the three for more than a day and a half, rescuers made a grim discovery in the same waters that the family had so often made their playground—pulling first one body, then a second, from the water about 10 miles off the coast of Waukegan.

They had begun an overnight trip to the Lake County city's

harbor Sunday.

Relatives identified the bodies, which were found floating without life jackets, as those of Bull and his 7-year-old daughter Madeleine.

With 5-year-old Alexandra still unaccounted for, Coast Guard officials called off their search Wednesday night at dark.

They expected to resume early Thursday morning, Coast Guard

Lt. Chris Button said.

For family members gathered at the Bulls' two-story home in Hinsdale—including mother and wife Pam Bull, who had stayed home from the trip with infant son George—the discoveries of the bodies and the boat seemed to bring as many questions as answers.

"This is a family that knew what they were doing," said Tom

Kyros, Bull's brother-in-law. "And I don't know if we'll ever know what happened."

On Tuesday evening, the boat, the Semper Spero, was found without any people on board, drifting some 27 miles off Waukegan's coast. The throttle was engaged and the gas tank was empty. The main sail was stowed and the swimming ladder was

SEE SEARCH, BACK PAGE



Harry Bull's boat was found with the main sail stowed and ladder down.

## Search to continue for last missing boater

After pulling two bodies from the lake, the Coast Guard still is searching for girl.

Continued from Page 1

down, Coast Guard Chief Petty Officer Adam Wine said.

Just after noon Wednesday, searchers found Bull floating near the surface about 20 miles southwest of the boat. His oldest daughter, a skilled swimmer for her age, was found minutes later about 500 yards away.

"It's hard to reconstruct the scenario that would put them all in the water like that, but something happened," Button said. "I'd have to speculate, but it is likely that someone... fell overboard, and then they jumped in after."

The National Weather Service had reported no unusual weather along the planned route.

As friends and relatives groped for answers, they told the story of a bright, close-knit family who loved the water and cherished their time together.

Bull, a graduate of Northwestern University and the University of Chicago Law School, had been chairman and CEO of the family-owned Bradner Central Co., a paper firm in Chicago. Before joining the firm in 1988, he had risen to partner with the law firm of Winston & Strawn, posted in New York and Chicago.

Bull, along with his older brother Rick, 43, and their father, Richard, bought the Semper Spero—Latin for "Always Hope"—10 years ago, family members said.

While at Winston in New York, Bull often would take his family sailing in the Atlantic Ocean, Kyros said.

Pam Bull had worked as a graphic artist before putting her career aside to spend time with their children, said Kyros, who spent Tuesday and Wednesday with family members.

"They lived a model life, and had three model children," said Kyros, of Grand Rapids, Mich.

Pam Bull did not share equally her husband's and their daughters' love of boats, Kyros said, and "it was not uncommon at all for the girls to be out there alone with their dad."

"They loved to sail with him," Kyros said. "That was a big part of their lives."

Indeed, the girls often raved about their sailing trips to their teacher at Avery Coonley School in Downers Grove.

"They took it so casually," said Ginger Jurish, who taught both girls in recent years at the private school for gifted children. "For them, it was like going for a ride in a car."

At school, the girls were fondly remembered for their leadership as well as for the vitally close bond between them. On several occa-



Hinsdale paper executive Harry Bull with daughters Madeleine (right), 7, and Alexandra, 5.

## Boating mystery unfolds off Waukegan

The bodies of Hinsdale boater Harry Bull, 39, and one of his two daughters were found Wednesday in Lake Michigan following a search off the Waukegan shoreline. The three left Chicago in a sailboat Sunday for an overnight trip and were reported missing Monday.



Chicago Tribune



Lake County sheriff's officials tow Harry Bull's boat, found 27 miles off the Waukegan shore.

into the family's Lincoln that morning headed for Monroe Harbor.

The group was headed to Waukegan, family members said, and they planned to spend the night on the boat. They were to return Monday.

As dinner time on Monday approached, however, there had been no word from Bull. As Pam became increasingly concerned, she knocked on the door of neighbor Mary Meade to tell her about the situation, Meade recalled.

By 10:30 p.m., Pam had called family members and the Coast Guard, Meade said.

As the information came in that the boat was unaccounted for, Coast Guard officials mobilized a search team. By 1 a.m., a helicopter was scouring the waters, Button said.

By Tuesday afternoon, a massive search was under way, including helicopters, a C-130 airplane, a high-speed Falcon jet, civilian aircraft, Coast Guard cutters and other boats—all searching an area of southern Lake Michigan larger than 5,000 square miles.

At about 8 p.m. the boat was spotted—and allowed to drift. Rescuers hoped the boat's movement would help them find Bull and his daughters.

The boat itself provided only puzzling clues, suggesting to Bull's sister, Annie Swiatkowski, that perhaps the group had decided to take a swim.

Two towels were slung over the boat's railing, and two children's life jackets lay on the deck, Wine said. An additional children's life jacket, as well as two adult jackets, were found in the cabin.

Officials believe there were as many as nine life jackets on board when the boat departed. When Bull and his children stopped to swim in the lake, relatives said, he often would throw several extra life jackets into the water in case an emergency arose.

Swiatkowski said the Bulls nor-

mally wore life jackets while on the boat.

Officials also found a magazine and suntan lotion on the boat's deck and Bull's wallet and wrist-watch in the cabin. A chart book found in the cabin was open to a page showing the ports of Kenosha and Waukegan, Wine said.

Rescuers called off their search for the Bulls on Tuesday evening, shortly after the boat was located.

It resumed at daybreak Wednesday, as the Bulls' friends and family collected at the family's home in Hinsdale and at the home of Bull's father, Richard Bull, in Burr Ridge.

"My grandson and I just need to get a little walk," said Bull's father-in-law George Kyros, pushing a blue stroller carrying Bull's son around the wooded area near the Bull family home. "We're just hanging in there as best as we can."

Hope began to dissolve for the family just after noon, though, as Bull's body was spotted by a civilian volunteer boat. Minutes later, a Coast Guard helicopter spotted the girl's body.

Rev. Byron Papanikolaou, pastor at Sts. Constantine and Helen Church in Palos Hills, who had baptized both girls, consoled the family Wednesday afternoon.

"We prayed for the souls of Harry and the children," Papanikolaou said. "I told them that in instances like this, you cannot find an answer to these questions. You need faith to put you up beyond those clouds, to understand why things like this happened."

Illinois law requires children under 13 to wear life vests at all times, unless they are below deck on a cabin cruiser. Each boat must have at least one life jacket for every person on the boat. Violators can be slapped with \$75 tickets.

Tribune staff writers Julie Desjardis, Ellen Adler, Megan O'Matz and Meg O'Brien, and freelance writer John Flink, contributed to this report.



# Lost tourist survives a chilly night

## Belgian buries self in dunes to keep warm

By REBECCA W. KALAJIAN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

EMPIRE — A Belgian man who buried himself in sand to try to keep warm overnight in 50-degree weather was rescued off the dunes Sunday morning, Sleeping Bear National Lakeshore officials said.

Steven Moons and two friends were hiking the dune climb about 8:30 p.m. Saturday night when Moons struck off alone in search of Lake Michigan, about 1.5 miles away, park officials said.

Moons, who was wearing a cutoff sweatshirt and shorts with no socks, became disoriented after the sun set and got lost. To keep warm, he burrowed into the dunes and waited until the sun rose to begin walking again.

"It's hard to walk that distance," said Ivan D. Miller, superintendent for Sleeping Bear. "And it's extremely difficult to walk in that sand."

Throughout the night, searchers from several agencies, including park rangers, county sheriff deputies and township firefighters, searched for Moons.

A U.S. Coast Guard helicopter pilot said he and his partner wore night-vision goggles but could not spot the buried tourist.

"We searched for two hours with the goggles on," said Lt. Neil Wilson, who flew the helicopter that eventually spotted Moons Sunday morning around 8:50 a.m.

A cold night on the dunes is made even colder because of the lack of insulating vegetation, said Wilson, who added that the sand surrounding Moons probably made him "even colder."

"The ground at night is actually colder than vegetation and it's even colder than water," he said. "In survival situations, you'd want to put branches or something on the ground to retain heat."

Wilson said the Belgian looked "frozen" when they hovered 75 feet over him to see if he wanted a ride back to the parking lot.

"Let's just say I didn't envy him sleeping in the ground, for sure," he said. "He was pretty miserable looking."

Moons declined the helicopter ride, but did accept an escort back down the dunes where his two friends were waiting.

"It was definitely a happy reunion," said Wilson.



This is only a test



TUESDAY

FOUR SECTIONS, 32 PAGES

# TRaverse CITY RECORD-EAGLE

SEPTEMBER 7, 1999 NORTHERN MICHIGAN'S NEWSPAPER 50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.50 SUNDAY

## Coast Guard rescues 2 canoeists



The U.S. Coast Guard rescue crew: Lt. Cmdr. Bill Imle, AS2 Pat Bodenshot, AMT2 Sam Losko, and Lt. Jg. Mark Driver, from left.

■ 3-to-5-foot waves overturn canoe during voyage from South Manitou to mainland

By PATRICK SULLIVAN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRaverse CITY — Two canoeists who floated in Lake Michigan for more than three hours Monday morning after their canoe capsized were rescued by a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter crew about eight miles east of the Manitou islands.

Scott Feenstra, 28, and Jim Ten-Brink, both of Wyoming, were treated and released from Munson Medical Center.

"I attribute the fact that they're still alive to their excellent physi-

cal condition and the fact that they were wearing life jackets," said Lt. Bill Imle, pilot on the rescue mission.

Feenstra and Ten-Brink were headed to Glen Arbor from South Manitou in a canoe with a third man traveling in a kayak.

When the canoe capsized, the kayaker decided he was closer to South Manitou Island, so he returned to call for help, which came several hours later.

Coast Guard rescuers were in the air within 17 minutes after receiving word of the missing canoeists about 12:10 p.m. and they reached the capsized canoe in about 20 minutes.

When they first arrived, there was no sign of the men.

"We located the canoe and their debris pretty much right away," Imle said. "We couldn't find any people ... that was a little disturb-

ing." Within about five minutes, the crew spotted the two men about a quarter-mile away.

They were hoisted out of the water, flown back to Traverse City, and taken to the hospital. Imle said the men had not been injured, but that one of them was "very cold."

Imle said the waves on Lake Michigan Sunday were about 3 to 5 feet.

"The sea state was probably a little excessive for canoeing," he said. "I think on a calm day — and there's a lot of calm days — (making the trip to the island) is something you could do, but I wouldn't recommend it."

Leelanau County Sheriff's Deputy Bill White said the men returned to Leland Sunday afternoon to pick up their camping gear that had been retrieved by marine patrol officers.

2 canoeists pulled from water about 8 miles east of S. Manitou Island. Includes a map of the area and the text 'Coast Guard rescue'.

# Sharpshooters disable drug smugglers at sea

■ Coast Guard practice not used since the Prohibition era

WASHINGTON (AP) — Coast Guard sharpshooters fire from helicopters to knock out the engines of cocaine-laden boats in the Caribbean in a tactic unused since the Prohibition era, officials disclosed Monday.

The previously secret assaults have been employed in recent weeks using an array of non-lethal force to stop smugglers who now use open-hull, low-profile boats called "Super Smugglers" or "Go-Fasts" that carry barrels of fuel and about a ton of cocaine each.

The sea encounters have led to capture of 13 crew members from

four boats and netted more than three tons of cocaine destined ultimately for the illicit U.S. market, said Barry McCaffrey, White House drug control director. He said those and other operations in the past year brought cocaine confiscation to a record 53 tons, with a street value of \$3.7 billion.

"We have made the drug smugglers afraid. We will now make them disappear," McCaffrey said at a news conference with other officials alongside one of the specially equipped MH90 Enforcer helicopters leased by the Coast Guard for the operation. The helicopter and a sleek Coast Guard chase craft were brought to the Transportation Department aboard flatbed trucks.

Three of the four "Super Smugglers" stopped so far were disabled in the last month. None of

the four crews fired back, Coast Guard officials said, but rules of engagement allow lethal return fire if they do.

Sharpshooter Charlie Hopkins, nicknamed "El Diablo" because his .50-caliber Robar rifle bears the packing number 999, fired three shots Aug. 16 that disabled a vessel. "Depending on which way you hold it, it carries the sign of the devil (666)," Hopkins, 32, of Winslow, Maine, said in an interview. But he said he aims his laser targeting sight only at the speeding craft's engines.

"We're still humanitarian. We just want to stop the flow," he said, noting that the each helicopter carries a life raft in case a boat is accidentally blown up or sunk.

Adm. James E. Loy, Coast Guard commandant, ruled out any

chance that commercial fishermen or pleasure boaters will be targeted by the sharpshooters. Rules require identification and extensive warnings before aggressive tactics are employed.

"This special show is not going to be coming to a theater near you," he said as an assurance to private boaters.

Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater, who oversees the Coast Guard, said the interdiction dubbed Operation New Frontier will lead to other high-tech operations to counter drug smuggling. The Clinton administration is asking for \$17.8 billion to fight illegal drugs next year.

The officials declined to detail the new tactics. But a Coast Guard background briefing provided descriptions of the dra-

matic encounters, and released videotape of two incidents showed helicopters as they stopped speeding vessels.

The Coast Guard is not believed to have authorized firing from the air to disable vessels since fixed-wing aircraft were used to chase down and stop shipments of illegal alcohol in the 1920s, according to the Coast Guard historian's office.

The latest use of non-lethal force included machine-gun fire across boats' bows, use of a "stingball" that exploded into a shower of rubber pellets and deployment of a special net to entangle a boat's engines. Use of the sharpshooter is a last resort to stop the boats.

Loy happily admitted that although the new tactics are not

intended to kill or injure, they put the smuggler at increased danger. "If there's a new risk on the part of the bad guys, that's terrific," he said.

The "Go-Fasts" represent a change in strategy for drug smugglers, who have seen a halt to big cargo flights out of Colombia, McCaffrey said. The Coast Guard's previous tactic, firing warning shots from the sea at the speedy boats, was ineffective, considering that smugglers average more than a trip a day between Colombia and Puerto Rico, Haiti or the Dominican Republic en route to the U.S. mainland.

Use of the small boats has doubled since 1996, officials say, and they now carry more than 85 percent of all maritime drug shipments.

# Hundreds rescued from Floyd's flood

## Local crews offer assistance

### Icing on the cake!

As an outsider looking in on the Northwestern Michigan College bond issue, I can only characterize it as "icing on the cake" of one of the finest communities I have ever lived in.

Having hung my hat in a dozen states in the past 20 years from Alaska to Florida, I can say that investment in a local

college or university pays huge dividends.

In the past, I have witnessed similar indecision on the part of a community regarding the important issue of raising a bond to support higher education. However, in every case the decision paid off in the overall social economic welfare of the community. Colleges and universities attract business and provide a positive trickle-down effect to the local public schools.

In addition, a college improves the quality of the labor force and always strengthens property values.

Why do I care? Why does the transient commander of the Coast Guard Air Station care about such local issues? Because it benefits my people.

Each year the Coast Guard brings in approximately 40 new families to Traverse City. Improving NMC will make this assignment more attractive to the Coast Guard. It will provide additional and better educational opportunities for all of my people and their families. I see the investment in NMC as an investment in the quality of life for my crew.

I would suggest that everyone look at the NMC bond issue not as a simple facelift of grounds and curriculums but as an investment they are making in themselves and their own families.

Thomas P. Ostebo  
Traverse City  
Thomas Ostebo is commanding officer of the US Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City

FROM LOCAL REPORTS

hit hardest by Hurricane Floyd.

Ten members of the U.S. Coast Guard search and rescue station in Muskegon traveled to North Carolina Friday to help residents there stranded by Hurricane Floyd's torrential rains.

They traveled south with one of two helicopters stationed at the Muskegon air base, located at the Muskegon County Airport, a Coast Guard spokesman said. The group was headed for Elizabeth City, N.C., one of the areas



## TC Coast Guard crew aids in recovery mission

By KEITH MATHENY  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — An HH-65A Dolphin helicopter from the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station here is assisting in the search and recovery mission for the crashed Egypt Air flight near Massachusetts.

The helicopter crew, including Lt. Cmdr. Peter Killfoyle, Lt. Kevin Nash and Petty Officers Tyler Bussard, Brian Wruck and Andy Pate, were already in the area of the crash, deployed aboard the Coast Guard Cutter Reliance on fisheries patrol off George's Bank in the Atlantic Ocean near Massachusetts, an air station spokesman said.

The Coast Guard regularly deploys some of its helicopters and crew based in Traverse City to other locations once summer is over because there

are fewer boats and people out on the Great Lakes, spokesman Lt. j.g. Dan Leary said.

Air crews from Traverse City typically head south to help with drug interdictions along the U.S.-Mexican border, but there was a need for help with fisheries patrols in the Atlantic this fall, he said.

"They've been out searching (Sunday and Monday)," Leary said. "They've found escape slides and a bunch of aircraft debris, all 2 by 2 feet or smaller, as well as personal items floating in the water."

Leary added the helicopter crew and others working in the apparent crash scene are also finding human remains.

The crew aboard the 45-foot, three-ton, twin-engine Dolphin helicopter marks the position of discovered debris and passes the position on to boats for recovery, Leary said.

# Helicopter lifts Alzheimer's patient from swampy woods

By Lisa Medendorp  
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

An 85-year-old man who wandered away from a North Muskegon nursing home Sunday morning was missing for 11 hours before police found him in a heavily wooded and swampy area.

Charles Shedd, a resident of Hillcrest Nursing Centre, 885 Mitzl, was kept overnight at Mercy General Health Partners for observation and was expected to be released today.

Shedd, who has Alzheimer's disease, walked away from the nursing home about 10:30 a.m., said North Muskegon Police Sgt. Bill Regan.

He was found about 9:30 p.m. in an area roughly bounded by VanAppel Drive, Russell, Giles and Whitehall roads — "just to the right of the old drive-in movie screen, but way back in the swamp," Regan said.

"It was a jungle," said North Muskegon Officer Terry Sabo.

Shedd was airlifted out of a small clearing by the U.S. Coast Guard helicopter, which joined the search just after dark.

**NORTH MUSKEGON**

Kimberly Biemaster, nursing home administrator, said the doors to the facility have alarms that sound if a resident leaves. She did not know how long Shedd had been gone before his absence was discovered. "An internal investigation is under way," she said.

"With Mr. Shedd, oftentimes he enjoys going outside. With the weather so nice, that's how we think it happened," Biemaster said.

She also said the Michigan Department of Consumer and Industry Services was notified as required.

When Shedd could not be located, the staff immediately began to search the area, checking obvious spots such as Mr. Quick's and McDonald's restaurants, and around the immediate neighborhood. Family members were contacted and they began to search.

Regan said police were called about 11:30 a.m. and throughout the day also

looked for Shedd. Although a police K-9 unit was contacted in the late afternoon, "they said it was a small chance) they would be able to get a scent," Regan said.

"It's upsetting," said Gary Shedd, the elderly man's son. But he added: "They keep pretty close tabs on him (at the nursing home) and they try to make it as homey as possible."

"We looked all over the city of North Muskegon and around Giles, Russell and the Causeway," Gary Shedd said. "He's a survivor. He overcame cancer in one of his legs."

Regan said the elderly man also was vision-impaired.

The U.S. Coast Guard was contacted about 7:45 p.m. and the helicopter flew over the area shining its search lights. No one believed Shedd could have gotten into the heavy underbrush and woods, which was estimated to be 40 to 50 acres in size.

Regan drove down to the end of VanAppel Drive, which is off Whitehall Road near Muskegon Lanes. There were three paths, one of which led to a gravel pit

Sabo went to the Russell Road side of the area. Police said a resident on VanAppel, Anthony Ostrowski, also assisted in the search.

"I took the first path down toward the swamp where there is a small creek," Regan said. "The Coast Guard was overhead and I told them (by radio) to move off so I could hear because it's pretty crisp out there that time of night."

Regan then heard a voice. Authorities speculated that the helicopter alerted Shedd to the fact someone was looking for him. Regan and Ostrowski followed the voice back into the wooded area. "We had to break trail to get in there," Regan said.

"I was calling to him, telling him we were the police and saying 'Where are you? Where are you?'" Regan said, and Shedd kept talking to them.

They found him crouched down in a thicket. "He was cold," Regan said. "His hands and arms were cold. He was shaking and pale."

The elderly man also had trouble walking and his rescuers knew he would be

unable to walk out of the area. They got him to a small, open area and asked the Coast Guard helicopter crew if they could lift him out.

"It was tough going. We had to break branches," said Regan.

A Coast Guard crewman was lowered; then a specially rigged seat followed. Shedd was placed into the seat and raised up to the helicopter.

He was flown to the helicopter base at the Muskegon County Airport, then taken by ambulance to Mercy General. "He was hypothermic and had a couple of small lacerations," Regan said.

Regan said without the Coast Guard helicopter, he would have had to call the North Muskegon Fire Department and chain saws would have been used to hack through the underbrush — leaving the victim out in the cold that much longer.

When police and Ostrowski turned to get back to VanAppel, "we were initially lost," Regan said. "We had two flashlights and we shut them off. We had to key in on the two radio towers."



# TRAVERSE CITY RECORD-EAGLE

OCTOBER 16, 1999

NORTHERN MICHIGAN'S NEWSPAPER

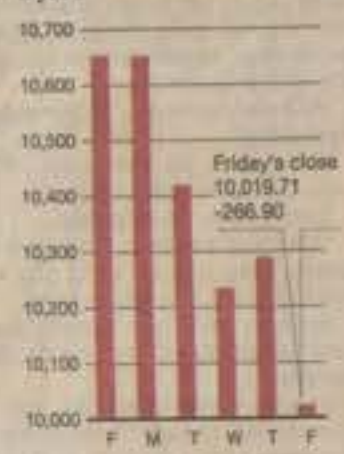
50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.50 SUNDAY

## A rough week on Wall Street

### Dow briefly dips below 10,000 mark

#### Dow woes

Fueled by inflation worries, the Dow ended the week with its biggest point drop in more than a year.



NEW YORK (AP) — The last thing Wall Street needed was one of Alan Greenspan's periodic warnings that the stock market's great rally might abruptly end. And it certainly didn't need news that inflation is gaining momentum.

But that double dose of unpleasantness was waiting for investors Friday when the stock market opened, and prices plunged in response, briefly sending the Dow Jones industrial average below 10,000 for the first time since April 7.

The Dow dropped 266.90 points to close at 10,019.71, having recovered slightly from its low for the session of 9,998.18. The Dow had

its worst weekly point drop in history, plummeting \$30.05, or 5.9 percent.

Friday's drop exacerbated weeks of declines that saw the Dow give up more than 1,300 points after reaching a closing high of 11,326.04 on Aug. 25. Fears of inflation and higher interest rates have undermined the market's optimism and prompted many investors to pull their money out.

"The bull market is based on the assumption that inflation is

declining, interest rates are declining, and earnings are rising," said Michael Metz, portfolio manager at CIBC Oppenheimer in New York. "This week, we got question marks on all three."

The market's focus of late has been on the Federal Reserve, and whether it will raise interest rates for a third time to forestall inflation.

Greenspan, the Fed's influential chairman, did his part to unsettle investors in a speech Thursday night. Greenspan, who

has often suggested stocks are overvalued, told a group of risk managers that investors may be underestimating the risks inherent in U.S. equities.

The chairman's concerns were a far cry from his notorious 1996 worries over the market's "irrational exuberance" and perhaps should not have rattled investors, analysts said.

"Greenspan gave a very balanced speech, but it came at a time when the market was nervous anyway," Metz said. "When

people are in the mood to sell, they'll sell."

Friday morning, the market got another reason to sell, when the Labor Department reported that the Producer Price Index surged 1.1 percent in September, the biggest increase in nine years.

The higher-than-expected reading convinced many investors that the Fed will raise rates when its policy-making Open Market Committee meets Nov. 16.

The market's decline surprised analysts who expected stocks to rise as corporate earnings season began in earnest. Most companies

— See **BAD**, Page 3A ▶

## Mancelona girl gets a unique lift

### Coast Guard awes cancer patient

By KEITH MATHENY  
Record-Eagle staff writer

MANCELONA — Melissa Robbins, 14, has endured much in the past 15 months.

There's the discovery that she has cancer, the amputation of her right leg above the knee last fall to remove a tumor, lost hair, needles, tests, pain and chemotherapy treatments that sicken and weaken as they help heal.

But Melissa has remained upbeat.

And Friday morning, she was sky-high — literally — thanks to the help of a local resident and the United States Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City.

Melissa, daughter of Mark and Christine Robbins and a freshman at Mancelona High School, got a unique lift to school Friday — a ride in a Coast Guard HH-65A Dolphin recovery helicopter.

Riding with her mother, she was met by her family and high school officials as the helicopter landed on the upper parking lot of the new high school.

The idea for the trip came from Dick Wehn, a local resi-

— See **MANCELONA**, Page 2A



Record-Eagle photo/Elizabeth Conroy  
Melissa Robbins, 13, laughs with friends after getting off a Coast Guard HH-65 Dolphin helicopter Friday at Mancelona High School.



## Casino bid in Mackinaw on hold

### Little Traverse Band of Odawa Indians not abandoning the plan

By BILL ECHLIN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — The Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians has put on hold plans to build a large casino complex in Mackinaw City until it gets its Petoskey casino open again and making money.

But the tribe has not abandoned the Mackinaw plan, officials said.

"Basically, chairman (Gerald V.) Chingwa has indicated we're not pursuing the Mackinaw project until all issues are resolved with Victorias," said James Rider, general manager of business operations at the band's Victorias Casino near Petoskey.

Rider stressed that the Mackinaw City project is still in the works.

The delay, he said, in no way should be seen as a victory for the rival Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, who have vigorously opposed the Little Traverse Band's casino development projects.

The Sault tribe has five very profitable casino operations in the Upper Peninsula and its spokesman John Hatch said recently the tribe would do what it had to protect its investments.

The battle between the two tribes has turned bitter, with the Odawa band accusing the Sault

— See **CASINO**, Page 2A ▶

◀ Continued from Page 1A

dent and reporter for the *Antrim County News*, a weekly newspaper based in Bellaire.

Wehn did a feature on Melissa. During the interviews, she revealed that she'd never flown in an airplane and had always wanted to.

A Coast Guard command master chief, Wehn knew the Guard occasionally granted such requests for individuals in special circumstances. He called the public affairs officer at the air station in Traverse City.

"This is a 14-year-old who, when she was 12, found out that she had cancer," Wehn said. "I think that's devastating enough to an adult, let alone a young teenager. There was an opportunity to provide something she was looking for. That's the right thing to do."

Such a request doesn't come without paper work. The request had to be forwarded through the air station's command, through District command in Cleveland, to Lamt Area Command (the Coast Guard's Atlantic region east of the Mississippi River), all the way to the Vice Commandant — the person second-highest in command of the entire U.S. Coast Guard.

Approval for the flight was granted three weeks ago.

"We've just been waiting for a good day to do it," said Lt. JG Dan Leary Jr., the air station



Melissa gets a hand from a Coast Guard officer.

public affairs officer.

Friday was the day.

With a piloting crew of Leary and Commander Jeff Ogden, and flight mechanic AMT2 Jeff Lyons, the 45-foot, three-ton, twin-engine helicopter arrived at the Robbins home near Mancelona Friday morning.

Melissa and her mother climbed aboard.

"We lifted off and I asked her, 'Where do you want to go?'" Leary said. "She was kind of dumbfounded that she was calling the shots. She said, 'I want to go to my Grandma's house.' We followed the roads to the west to

her house, and her grandma came out and waved."

The helicopter circled the area for about a half-hour, and Melissa and Christine got to enjoy the area's peak fall colors from an unusual perspective. The Coast Guard crew also put the helicopter through some rather white-knuckle maneuvering for their special guests, according to Leary.

"She and her mother must love roller-coasters, because we gave them some pretty steep banks and tight turns that would make some people sick, but they loved it," he said.

Once the helicopter landed at the school parking lot, crew members opened the side door where Melissa was strapped in, then lifted off again and circled the school with the side tipped so Melissa could wave to her family and friends.

Melissa's reaction to her school commute?

"That was so awesome. That was the best," she said.

Her mother elaborated.

"She was smiling, laughing the whole time. She loved it. She was having fun," Christine said.

Melissa and her family have had more uplifting news this month.

Melissa completed the last of her chemotherapy treatments at the start of the month, and later this month she will travel to Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak for some additional tests that could indicate her cancer is completely in remission, according to her mother.

"For the most part, she's kept her spirits up," Christine said. "I think she's a very strong little girl. This has matured her so much."

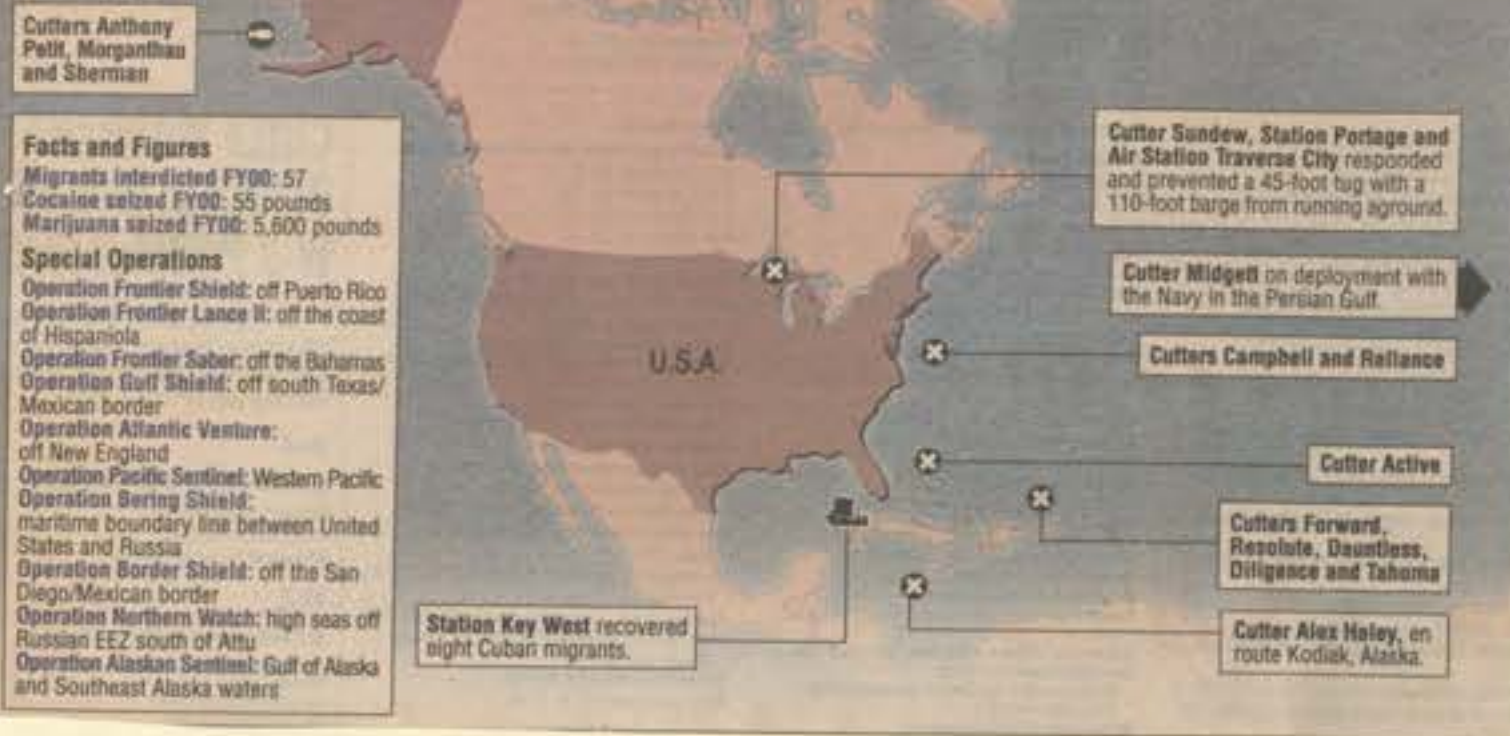
"She's kept her sense of humor. If it wasn't for her and her attitude about the whole thing, I don't think I could have gotten through this as well as I have."

Leary called Melissa's trip to school a highly successful mission.

"It was a real good day in the Coast Guard," he said.

## Along the coasts

A snapshot of the Coast Guard as of Oct. 25



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Volume 75, No. 87

October 22, 1999



### Coast Guard helo

A U.S. Coast Guard helicopter carrying Rear Adm. James D. Hull, commander, Ninth Coast Guard District, landed on Ross Field, Oct. 6. Hull paid a courtesy call to CNTC Rear Adm. Edward E. Hunter before attending the First Annual Naperville Council of the Navy League Ball. (Photo by ET3 Brian Rollins)

### MH-90 ENFORCERS TAKE THE LEAD IN ANTI-DRUG FIGHT

**A**mid more than the usual fanfare for the Department of Transportation, the U.S. Coast Guard unveiled its newest weapon against narcotics smugglers, the MH-90 Enforcer. The Enforcer is a militarized version of MD Helicopters' MD Explorer.

In addition to communications equipment, some of the modifications to the civilian helicopter include machine guns.

Transportation Secretary Rodney E. Slater, flanked by Coast Guard Commandant Adm. James M. Loy, and Barry R. McCaffrey, director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, revealed the existence of a previously classified anti-drug operation that included the use of helicopter-mounted weapons. This was the first use of aircraft-mounted weapons by the Coast Guard since Prohibition.

Operation New Frontier was a 10-month effort to interdict the flow of illegal drugs, primarily cocaine, heroin and marijuana, through a six-million-square-mile area known as the Southern Transit Zone. The zone comprises the coast of Columbia, the Caribbean basin, the Gulf of Mexico and the eastern Pacific. More than 80% of the cocaine (380 metric tons in 1998) and 50% of the heroin smuggled into the United States travels through the zone.

The operation, including the use of armed MH-90 helicopters, was mounted to address the increasing use by smugglers of so-called "go-fast" boats capable of exceeding 60 knots in open ocean. Go-fasts are able to outrun Coast Guard cutters and account for an ever-increasing volume of narcotics traffic. Intelligence analysts estimate these fast boats have a greater than 80% success rate, and the USCG puts the seizure rate at 10.5%.

Although the Coast Guard has used aircraft to track maritime drug shipments in the past, the service was not allowed to do more than videotape the boats and crews or fire warning shots across the bows of the fleeing vessels.

Under the new rules of engagement for Operation New Frontier, the Coast Guard can now fire disabling shots into the engines of go-fasts, board and seize their cargoes and arrest their crews. In the words of one Coast Guard officer, "Disabling fire is credibility."



To accomplish this new mission, two MH-90s (pictured) were leased by the service and stationed aboard a medium-endurance cutter located in the southern Caribbean. The Enforcers carry a variety of lethal and non-lethal weapons: in a departure from previous Coast Guard policies, crews are now authorized to use an escalating level of force to interdict suspected drug smuggling operations.

This "continuum of force" includes entangling nets, sting balls, stun grenades and other classified non-lethal devices. The MD Enforcers also carry an M-240G machine gun on a pintle mount on the port side and a handheld, Robar 50-caliber bolt-action sniper rifle equipped with a laser sight.

The machine gun is used to fire warning shots; the 50-caliber rifle is used to disable the go-fasts' engines. Once the smugglers have stopped, high-speed boats are launched from the cutter to complete the bust.

The Coast Guard describes the weaponry as "non-lethal" because the intent is to disable the boats rather than to kill smugglers. According to Coast Guard briefers, however, the helicopter crews have the discretion to return fire in self-defense.

The MH-90s are also equipped with extended-range fuel tanks, pop-out floats, an Infrared FLIR, RCA color weather radar and a Breese-Eastern hoist. The IFR-equipped Enforcers also have HF, UHF, VHF and FM communications radios and a GPS navigation system.

During the two-month interdiction period, the Enforcers completed four seizures amounting to several tons of drugs.

The first two MH-90s have returned to MD Helicopters' facility in Mesa, Arizona. In late September, the Coast Guard leased two additional and upgraded Enforcers. The new MD 902 helicopters have improved night vision capabilities and more powerful Pratt & Whitney PW207 turboshaft engines.

According to Coast Guard spokesman, the service is still evaluating the aircraft for a possible future procurement. Coast Guard pilots reportedly rate the Enforcers highly in performance and availability.

Under the leasing agreement, MD Helicopters provides logistics and maintenance support. Commandant Loy says the program received \$4.4 million for 1999 operations and has a \$10 million line item in the current transportation budget to extend the program.



Mourners look on as a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter carrying a basket of flowers departs Brenton Point State Park in Newport, R.I., Sunday following a memorial service held for the victims of EgyptAir Flight 990.

## Coast Guard rescues hunters stuck in mud

By John Agar  
CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE  
WITH LOCAL REPORTS

Tim Romberger has hunted the Grand River bayous for years, but until Saturday, his best stories were about the ducks he shot.

That's when he and his hunting buddy got stuck in the mud at the Grand Haven State Game Area near Dermo Island. They were plucked out of the muck by a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter crew, using a rope and harness.

"I've been duck hunting for 15 years," said Romberger, 41, of Coopersville. "You hear about this stuff all the time. Now, it's happened to me."

Romberger and his friend Glen Fay 38, of Muskegon, had shot five birds Saturday morning when they

tramped through shallow water, only 3 or 4 inches deep.

"All of a sudden, it was just like I stepped off a ladder," Romberger said. "It was a sinkhole I stepped in. Immediately, I went to my waist. I knew I was done walking."

Fay, meanwhile, started toward him with a big stick. When that didn't help, he got their boat and pushed it toward Romberger.

"He took a few steps in the wrong direction, and the same thing happened," Romberger said.

Now, both were trapped and helpless, and they didn't see anyone else around.

"That's when we started our cries for help," Romberger said, laughing.

Please see RESCUE 6A ▶

## 'Flying Santa' to visit lighthouse

NORTHPORT — The annual Christmas open house at the Grand Traverse Lighthouse will include a recreation of the "Flying Santa" tradition, where a Coast Guard helicopter will drop holiday treats for children.

The open house at the Grand Traverse Lighthouse will be held from noon to 4 p.m. on Sunday. The rooms of the keeper's home will be decorated with fresh evergreens and candles reflecting the flavor of an old-fashioned Christmas. They will be open to visitors.

The lighthouse tower also will be open and will reward climbers with a view of Lake Michigan.

There will be fog horn demon-

strations to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Fog Signal Building and music will be provided by folk singer Neil Woodward of Union Lake and by vocal and instrumental groups from Northport Public Schools.

Admission is free and refreshments will be available.

At about 2:30 p.m., a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter from the Traverse City air station will recreate the "Flying Santa" tradition by dropping a package of Christmas treats for children. The package will contain several kinds of Christmas candy wrapped in small paper bags. These treats will be handed out by Santa Claus, who

also will visit with the children.

The Grand Traverse Lighthouse is located at the tip of the Leelanau Peninsula, nine miles north of Northport. For more information, call the lighthouse office, 386-7195.

The "Flying Santa" tradition dates back to the week before Christmas in 1929, when aviator Bill Wincapaw became lost in a winter storm off the coast of Maine. While trying to find his way back to the Rockland Airport, Wincapaw spotted the light at the Dyer Head Lighthouse in Castine, Maine, and used it, and other lighthouses, as landmarks to find his way to safety.

In appreciation to the keepers who kept the lights burning, Wincapaw returned several days later to each light station and dropped wrapped packages for the lighthouse families.

He continued the tradition until 1936, when author Edward Rowe Snow took over. Snow and his wife kept the tradition alive for nearly 43 years, visiting many lighthouses along the East Coast, California and the Great Lakes.

The tradition is continued today by a group in Hull, Mass., called the Friends of Flying Santa. This year, they will deliver gifts to families at 29 lighthouses in six eastern states.

### ▶ RESCUE from 1A

"You feel so darn foolish, but what are you going to do? You're completely helpless."

Eventually, another duck hunter with a cellular telephone spotted them and called 911.

Bob Doorley, 84, who lives on Leonard Road, was sitting on his patio, and heard the commotion. He didn't know where it was coming from, but a friend who stopped by figured someone needed help. She called 911 after several minutes.

"I thought it was just kids yelling," Doorley said.

Coast Guard officials figured the men had been stuck nearly 30 minutes before the first 911 call at

about 9:50 a.m.

"The neighbors heard them calling for help, but they really couldn't see anything," Spring Lake Fire Chief Rick Nuville said. Firefighters couldn't get a boat in because of low water levels, he said.

The Coast Guard sent a helicopter from Muskegon to the scene.

A rescuer attached by a rope dropped down, connected a harness to the hunters and pulled them out.

"The pilot said if they moved or slipped at all, they started sinking," Petty Officer Pat Gerrits said. "It was probably a really scary feeling."

He said the warm weather kept the men from suffering physical problems. They were flown to Muskegon, where they were checked out by rescuers. Eventually, they returned to retrieve their boat.

Romberger, a father of two with another on the way, said he was a little concerned. He figured that his wife would worry because he was late.

He was amazed how easily he got trapped.

"It was just like stepping off a ledge, and nothing's there. Sort of like jumping into a big bowl of pudding."



FLYBY SANTA



Top left, Jill McFarlane, 7, of Bingham peeks Sunday out of the Grand Traverse Lighthouse at the tip of Leelanau Peninsula as she waits for a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter to drop candy. Above, Santa passes out the candy to children as part of the "flying Santa" tradition.

## STAYING SHARP



During a recent training session, Coast Guard Petty Officer Jeff Lyons operates a hoist from the HH-65A Dolphin helicopter as it lifts rescue swimmer Petty Officer John Donohue and Petty Officer Scott Moehl near Power Island in West Grand Traverse Bay. A photo story on the exercises is on Pages 4-5B.



# In the air and under the water

Training with the U.S. Coast Guard



## Dunking

Top, one of several types of training that personnel from the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City go through is the helo dunker, which simulates a helicopter submerged underwater upside down. Each person is strapped into a seat and flipped upside down and must escape before oxygen runs out of a Heeds bottle. Right, Aviation Maintenance Technician Patrick Barrett tries to free himself while instructor George Lutz watches in the Civic Center pool. Above, Aviation Maintenance Technician Jamie Hale takes a turn in the helo dunker.



## Prepping the helicopter

Above, the HH-65A Dolphin helicopter sits in a hanger at the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City while going through preventive maintenance. Above right, Avionics Technician Gary Siatkowski checks the helicopter's electronic equipment. Right, Sam Loska works on the aircraft's engine. Far right, the control panel of the craft keeps the crew plenty busy in flight.



Photos by Jim Bovin

Page design by Dan Nielsen



### Patrolling the lakes

Above, looking north over Northport Point. Right, Petty Officer Sam Sams radios to a passing Coast Guard helicopter in West Bay. Below, Lt. Mark M. Driver pilots the HH-65A helicopter over West Bay toward the Leelanau Peninsula (visible in the background), while Aviation Maintenance Technician Sam Loska monitors the aircraft's condition.



### Water rescue

Left, Al Scheck, Coast Guard Auxiliary Patrol, uses a grounding rod to snag a rescue basket lowered from a helicopter above West Bay during a rescue training mission as Petty Officer Sam Sams maneuvers a 24-foot aluminum boat they're riding in. Above left, Petty Officer John Donohue leaps from the helicopter during training. Above right, Petty Officer Jeff Lyons operates a hoist as it lifts rescue swimmer Donohue and Petty Officer Scott Moehl out of West Bay.

**ON PATROL:**

**Off New England:** CGC Spencer

**Southern Florida/Caribbean:** CGCs Campbell, Confidence, Gentian, Resolute, Tampa

**With 5th Naval Fleet in Mediterranean:** CGC Dallas

**Off California:** CGCs Melon, Active

**Off Alaska:** CGCs Morganthau, Sherman

**FY '00 FACTS & FIGURES**

**Migrants interdicted:** 48

**Contraband seized:** Marijuana: 5,800 pounds  
Cocaine: 55 pounds

Source: CG-99

**The CGC Sundew, Station Portage and Air Station Traverse City, Mich., prevented a tug and barge from running aground in Lake Superior.**

**An Air Station Detroit helicopter rescued both people on board a small plane that ditched three miles east of Ontario, Canada, in Lake Erie.**

**The CGC Mako seized 2,500 pounds of scallops, worth \$15,000, from a fishing boat that was fishing with prohibited gear 50 miles off Atlantic City, N.J.**

**An Air Station Kodiak, Alaska, helicopter medevaced a hunter suffering from severe abdominal pains from the Kuparuk River Peninsula.**

**An Air Station Barbers Point, Hawaii, helicopter hoisted a man, his wife and their dog from the water 10 miles east of Makapuu point.**

**The CGC Point Sai seized the catch and terminated the voyage of a fishing vessel operating illegally off Louisiana.**

**Station Islamorada took seven Cuban migrants aboard, after the migrants resisted attempts to bring them on the Coast Guard boat, a mile offshore off French Reef, Florida.**

**Air Station Miami medevaced a burn victim from a vessel near the Bahamas.**

Kingsley Project

## Kingsley family Should Be 'Home for the Holidays'

by Terri Hillier

At no other time of the year does "there's no place like home" mean so much as during the holiday season. Kim and Frank Hedges and their two sons, Anthony and Dakota, have been working on their new home for approximately six weeks and plan to move in soon. They applied for a Habitat home in July 1998 and found out two days before Christmas 1998 that they would be the proud owners of a new home—just in time for Christmas 1999.

Kim is a stay-at-home mom while Frank works full time. They have put in more than the mandatory hours on their house despite the several health problems their two boys have had, as well as all the hours Kim spends volunteering for the elementary school and Cub Scouts. She also finds time to help out with some office work for Habitat.

They appreciate the support they have received from the Kingsley



Volunteers under the leadership of Steve Eveleigh and Dan Leary work on the Kingsley home. Steve is chairman of the HFH-GTR Building Committee.

community, especially the neighbor who offered shelter in his garage from a cold and damp Saturday and the Methodist church that provided lunch one day. It seems wherever they turn, someone is ready to lend a helping hand.

Kim refers to her house as "the house that was built by hands from all over the USA" as several engineers who were in town for a seminar volunteered to work on their house. The Coast Guard has also spent many, many hours helping with the house and the Hedges don't quite know how to thank everyone. Kim is looking forward to helping on the

next Habitat House because she realizes what an opportunity it is for another hard-working family.

The Hedges say building this house has been a fulfilling experience and they feel very fortunate to have been given the opportunity to be involved every step of the way.

## Santa Spotting



Santa Claus gets a lift from a U.S. Coast Guard H-65 Dolphin Helicopter as he collects gifts for Toys for Tots Saturday at the Grand Traverse Mall.



Right: James Rossi, 4, of Grand Rapids checks out the cockpit of the U.S. Coast Guard helicopter and chats with Kris Kringle about what he would like for Christmas this year. For more information on this year's Toys for Tots campaign, see Page 5A

## Fly-in part of Toys for Tots drive

### Group plans variety of events for annual toy collection

Setting the sleigh aside and giving Rudolph the day off, Santa Claus hitched a ride aboard a United States Coast Guard helicopter Saturday as part of a Toys for Tots collection drive for needy children in the Grand Traverse area.

Santa, strapped into his seat in the H-65 Dolphin Helicopter, waved to those gathered outside the Grand Traverse Mall. The "jolly ol' elf" spent the rest of the morning visiting with children and collecting unwrapped gifts for Toys for Tots.

The helicopter fly-in is one of several events designed to collect toys for the group's annual toy drive. Other events include:

- Toys for Tots representatives, including recipient agencies, purchased toys last Friday through an \$8,000 donation from Meijer Corporation.
- Bob Evans Restaurant will give a free soft drink or hot drink to anyone who brings in a toy.
- Free spaghetti dinner at Fazoli's restaurant with a toy donation at Grand Traverse Crossings.
- Radio station WKLT will attempt to match a \$600 donation given by Tuffy Muffler during their morning show on Thursday.

The toys will be distributed through the Women's Resource Center, Father Fred Foundation, Salvation Army, Goodwill Inn and the Doula Teen Parent Program.

Cherry Capital Auto will donate \$100 for every used car sold during sales events December 11 and 18.

GKC Theatres held a final showing of Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace last Thursday, with Toys for Tots receiving all the proceeds from the showings.

Toys for Tots collects and distributes toys to needy children in the Grand Traverse area during the Christmas season. Toy drop off locations are located at: Kay Bee Toys, Toys R Us, Wal-Mart, Sam's Club, Art Van Furniture, Grand Traverse Mall, Munson Medical Center, Old Kent Bank downtown, WKLT, WKPK, B-94.3 studios, Bill Marsh Auto, Price

Point Used Car Super Center, Traverse Motors, Cherry Capital Auto, United Way of Northwest Michigan, Century Tel, Fazoli's and Preview Community Weekly.

The toys will be distributed through the Women's Resource Center, Father Fred Foundation, Salvation Army, Goodwill Inn and the Doula Teen Parent Program. Members of the U.S. Coast Guard and Marine Corps League are sorting the toys and organizing their distribution.

The local toy drive hopes to collect more than the 6,000 toys that were donated last year. Toys for Tots began 52 years ago and is coordinated by the United States Marine Corps. For more information about the campaign, call the United Way of Northwest Michigan office at 947-3200.

## Coasties rescue ill sailor off ship

By MIKE NORTON  
Record-Eagle staff writer

PETOSKEY — Rescuing a sick man from the deck of a wave-tossed ship isn't something Lt. Dan Unruh and his helicopter crew do every day.

But their Thursday morning evacuation of a 35-year-old sailor from a freighter in the middle of Lake Michigan went off without a hitch.

"It wasn't too bad, really," said Unruh, flight commander of the Dolphin 657T helicopter from the Coast Guard air station in Traverse City, which carried out the rescue in high winds, blowing snow and 3- to 4-foot seas off Beaver Island. "The visibility wasn't great down over the bay, but by the time we got out to the island, the sun was even shining."

The helicopter was sent out early in the morning to the Chicago-bound laker Philip R. Clark after the ship's master requested help for a crewman who was complaining of severe abdominal pains, nausea and vomiting. The crewman, George Ransford, had also had a fever of 101 for at least a day.

The rescue aircraft, which also included copilot Lt. Whit Irwin, flight mechanic Steve Dyke and rescue swimmer Matt Hix reached the ship around 10:30 a.m. After consulting with the ship over the radio, Hix was lowered to the deck in a rescue basket; he talked with the sick crewman, helped secure him into the device and followed him off the ship after he was hoisted into the helicopter.

Ransford was taken to the nearest mainland airport at Harbor Springs, where a waiting ambulance took him to Northern Michigan Hospital in Petoskey.

"We talked to the hospital later, and it ended up he had a kidney stone, and a rather large one," said Unruh.

## Scorecard SPORTS ILLUSTRATED 20 DEC, 1999



## Splash Guard

WHEN A 47-foot Coast Guard rescue boat skidded sideways during drills at the mouth of Coos Bay, Ore., last week, it seemed the coast boat was toast. Moments later, however, the self-righting vessel popped back up and motored on.

## Coast Guard makes air rescue

TRaverse City — A Coast Guard helicopter crew airlifted a diabetic sailor suffering a serious asthma attack from the deck of an ore carrier in Lake Superior Tuesday and ferried him to Houghton-Hancock, where he was hospitalized.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Jaime Hale, the flight mechanic on board, said the mission was made difficult because of low visibility—less than a quarter of a mile—and wind gusts.

The Traverse City Coast Guard station got the call at about 4:30 p.m. for an airlift from the American Mariner, a 700-foot taconite carrier bound for Duluth.

The 31-year-old sailor was hoisted aboard the hovering helicopter in a rescue basket. No information about the man's name or hometown was available.

## Toys for Tots hold successful gift drive campaign

Hundreds of children woke up to brightly colored presents under the tree this year, thanks to a successful Toys for Tots campaign. The program concluded Thursday, and organizers say they were able to meet the goal of assuring children around the Grand Traverse area had presents under the Christmas tree this Christmas.

Toys for Tots collected 6,500 toys that were distributed to about 1,500 children through six agencies in the region. The Father Fred Foundation, Salvation Army, Goodwill Inn, Women's Resource Center, Doula Teen Parent Program, and the Mancelona Family Resource Center distributed the toys.

"We saw a tremendous outpouring of support from individuals and businesses," said Rick Simons, Toys for Tots director. "Everyday of the Christmas season agencies saw the faces of families that had desperate needs during the holiday. We saw the contributions of toys and money to Toys for Tots turn that desperation into hope. The support we experienced from this community was remarkable," Simons added.

Corporate donations were critical to the success of the program. Toys for Tots received a huge boost from Meijer that donated \$10,000 worth of toys. Other key corporate donations included support from Century

Tel, GKC Theatres, Bill Marsh Auto, Cherry Capital Auto, radio stations WKLT, 106.7 The Peak, and B-94.3

Volunteers played an important role throughout the campaign. Members of the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station collected toys from numerous drop off locations, and the Marine Corps League did toy sorting. Volunteers from the Young Marines also supported numerous toy collection drives.

Organizers hope toy collections

can continue throughout the year. "We found the agencies need the toys earlier than when most are donated. Any group can have toy drive any time of year and then drop them off at our kickoff," Simons said.

Toys for Tots is a 52 year old organization coordinated by the United States Marine Corps.





## Always keeping on their guard

By JOHN RISTOW  
News Staff Writer

While many of the people at Traverse City's U.S. Coast Guard Air Station would rather not do their job, most love the challenge of search and rescue.

Public Affairs Officer Ensign Daniel Leary said while the station's mission includes winter and spring ice patrols and marine environmental response, the Coast Guard's best known for its search and rescue responsibilities.

"Air crews train constantly, day and night, in all phases of search and rescue... Our nickname is the Great Lakes guardians," Leary said.

In addition to the Coast Guard Auxiliary, he said the station works closely with the Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Interior, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, National Park Service, and U.S. Department of Agriculture to carry out its mission. The station also cooperates with local law enforcement agencies to search over land for missing persons.

Leary said the station is responsible for a large portion of the Great Lakes region including Lake Michigan, Lake Superior and upper Lake Huron. The station provides services to Alpena and Thunder Bay with Harrisville defining its southern border on Lake Huron.

He said when the station is operating or training in Thunder Bay and the surrounding area, Alpena's Coast Guard Auxiliary Station plays an important role by providing safety boats during their operations over water. The air station often trains with the auxiliary members.

In order to perform its services, he said in the spring of 1995, five Dolphin helicopters replaced the air station's three larger Jayhawk helicopters.

Aviation Maintenance Technician Jon Hersey of Charleston, S.C., is a flight mechanic at the air station. It is his job to know the Dolphin helicopter better than anyone else at the air station.

"Growing up on the waters of Charleston, I could always see the Coast Guard, and I respected what they did. Watching the Coast Guard 'helos' flying on search and rescue cases out my front window called out to me. So, when I graduated from college and started looking for a job, I turned to the Coast Guard," Hersey said.

He said the HH65A Dolphin helicopter is a very capable aircraft with a maximum speed of about 190 mph and flying range of three hours.

Hersey said although the helicopter is quite fast, its most important speed is zero to hover over victims and hoist them up.

The Dolphin can lift up to 600 pounds with the rescue hoist.

Hersey said flight mechanics operate the helicopter's rescue hoist, back up pilots during flight, handle everything in the back of the aircraft, and assist the rescue swimmers with any of the survivor's medical needs.

"We work very hard to always be ready to respond to someone in need. The people I work with are the best. Most of us are here for the same reason, to help others in need. What I don't like about my job is that people need us," Hersey said.

In addition to a flight mechanic, a Dolphin crew has two pilots and a rescue swimmer.

As a rescue swimmer, Jason Shepard of Panama City Beach, Fla., works closely with Hersey. In order to do his physically challenging job, Shepard must be able to perform 60 push-ups and sit-ups, eight chin-ups, run a mile and a half in under 11 minutes, swim 500 yards in under 12 minutes and 25 yards under water.

He said these requirements are monthly regardless of the seasons.

He works out two hours a day and in a pool once a week.

"We train the same all year. We have gear designed for each season. Winter is just a little colder. If people are going to be out in that weather, we train to rescue them in that weather," Shepard said.

He said he enjoys his work because he never knows what a



Rescue Diver Jason Shepard looks on from one of Traverse City U.S. Coast Guard Air Station's five Dolphin helicopters as members of Alpena's Coast Guard Auxiliary Station train in their rescue boat.



Rescue Swimmer Jason Shepard is hoisted back into the helicopter. The swimmers are hoisted only after all survivors have been lifted into the helicopter.



Flight Mechanic Jon Hersey scans the water off of Thunder Bay Island. In addition to assuring the helicopter's flight capability, flight mechanics are responsible for operating the Dolphin's hoist, and assisting pilots.



Lauri Keranen, Ed Estriplet and Barry Buchholz, members of the Alpena's U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Station, provide support for the air station's search and rescue training mission.



Vice Commander Barry Buchholz and FSO Lauri Keranen place the Alpena's Coast Guard rescue boat into position to meet with the air station's rescue helicopter.



Pilot Lt. Dyer puts on his helmet in preparation for flight. It takes the Dolphin's crew of four one hour to prepare for their two-and-a-half hour flights.

day may bring, but he hates the Great Lakes' cold water.

If he is required to go in the water, he stages the survivors by priority for hoisting. Only after all of the survivors are in the helicopter is he hoisted back into the helicopter.

Shepard is responsible for stabilizing survivors in need of medical attention until the helicopter can reach a hospital. The survivors are dropped off at either a hospital or an area designated by the station.

Lt. Cmdr. Chris Bruening of Long Island, N.Y., and Dayton, Ohio, is one of the station's pilots and responsible for flying the helicopters on their missions. After spending four years to become a commissioned Coast Guard officer, 13 months in Navy Flight School to get his Naval Aviator and helicopter pilot designations, and five weeks to become certified to fly the Dolphin, he accomplished his life-long goal of becoming a pilot.

Bruening said most of his flights are either routine trainers or patrols. He flies about 30 hours per month with each flight lasting about two and a half hours. Pilots spend an hour getting ready for flights and starting the helicopter. They spend a half hour after the flight doing paperwork.

He said landings should always equal take-offs. His goal is for the helicopter to return safely from each mission with no injuries to the aircrew and with survivors on board.

"Most flights turn out to be false alarms, so for the most part, our flying is very laid back, maybe even boring. But, when we get a big case and pull someone from a sinking boat or out of the water, there is no better feeling in the world," Bruening said.

He said he could not hazard a guess as to how many searches he has flown, but he has only had about 10 cases that resulted in an actual rescue. He dislikes going on searches with a very reliable distress signal or location and finding nothing.

"It is very frustrating knowing that if victims wear a personal flotation device, we would be able to find them and help them, but they don't. Instead, we come home empty-handed," Bruening said.

He said his most interesting search and rescue involved a person at the wheel of a fishing vessel who fell asleep and ran the boat onto the rocks. It was about 5:30 a.m. and still dark out. When he first flew over the boat, the three crew members were standing on the deck waving.

Bruening left the boat and spent about 15 minutes dumping fuel to get the helicopter's weight to where it could safely hoist up the men.

In the meantime, a wave washed all three into the water and surf.

After he burned off the fuel and approached the vessel a second time to start hoisting, he was surprised to find the three men in the water.

Two of the men were getting thrown against rocks by the surf so the flight mechanic hoisted them first.

"My next surprise was that all the victims were in survival suits, which normally do a very good job of keeping the water out. However, none of them knew how to put the suits on properly, so they were full of water. The weight of each hoist was quite a bit more than we anticipated," Bruening said about the successful rescue.

He said the Coast Guard is the best at rescuing people like these fishermen. The Coast Guard has the best trained and qualified people, superior equipment and outstanding maintenance, but even those don't matter if people don't take steps to protect their own lives.

Whenever people are on the water, they should wear a life jacket. Second, they should let someone competent know their plans.

"The more information we can get on your position, the chances of us finding you become higher. Treat the water with the respect it deserves. And, for heaven's sake, use some common sense when you're out there," Bruening said.

News Photos by John Ristow

## Coast Guard locates wreckage of plane

IRON MOUNTAIN — The body of an Upper Peninsula pilot was found in the wreckage of his plane Saturday, more than two days after it disappeared from radar, authorities said.

A U.S. Coast Guard aircraft from Traverse City spotted the twin-engine Beechcraft about noon EST in a heavily wooded area in

Marquette County, Wis. Trooper Walter Brey said from the Michigan State Police post in Iron Mountain.

The body of pilot Mike Wolfe, 45, of Quinnesec, was found inside the plane. "It appears as though he died on impact," Brey said.

The wreckage was found seven miles south of Wolfe's destination.

Ford Airport in Iron Mountain.

The flight originated in Huntsville, Ala. Wolfe was last heard from at 4:40 a.m. EST Thursday, when he alerted air traffic controllers in Minneapolis that ice was building up on the plane's wings as he was approaching Ford Airport, state police said earlier.

### The Virgin Islands Daily News

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## Coast Guard rescues cruise passenger

By CHRIS LARSON  
Daily News Staff

ST. THOMAS — A young man was plucked from the sea northwest of St. Thomas early Saturday morning after falling off a cruise ship and treading water for several hours.

Erick Angel, 20, of Phoenix, Ariz., fell from the Nordic Empress as it steamed from San Juan toward St. Thomas. Angel reportedly fell from the bow of the ship.

The Coast Guard was notified around 4:15 a.m. Saturday. Coast Guard cutter Forward, which was also on its way to St. Thomas, dispatched a helicopter at daybreak.

The chopper and four yachts combed the area until Angel was found around 7 a.m.

Dan Leary, the Coast Guard lieutenant who piloted the helicopter, said Angel was located west of Sail Rock, a few miles northwest of St. Thomas.

"It was like he was swimming for his life," said Lt. Johnny Gonzalez from a Coast Guard station in Puerto Rico.

The crew hoisted Angel to the helicopter and landed at the Cyril E. King airport on St. Thomas. He was then taken to Schneider Hospital. He was treated and released later in the day.



Stephen McCarty of St. Paul, Minn., checks out the H65 Dolphin helicopter on the Forward, which is tied up at Crown Bay on St. Thomas. The helicopter was used to rescue a cruise passenger who fell overboard Saturday.

The Nordic Empress arrived on St. Thomas on Saturday morning. It left that evening, bound for St. Maarten.

The Forward arrived at Crown Bay on Saturday morning and is set to depart Tuesday morning. The ship

is hosting an open house for the public today from 1 to 4 p.m. The bright orange helicopter used in the rescue is on the flight deck, toward the stern of the ship.

Another Coast Guard cutter, the

Spencer, is scheduled to arrive on Tuesday and stay until Friday.

— Daily News staff photographer Cristian Simescu and the Associated Press contributed to this report.

## Traverse City moves inland

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich., Jan. 10 — A helicopter from Air Station Traverse City discovered the wreckage of a Beech Travel Air twin-engine airplane near Iron Mountain, Mich., Jan. 8.

Although this incident did not take place on the Great Lakes, Air Station Traverse City jumped at the opportunity to help with this inland SAR case.

"We are the only active duty rescue unit in the area. We were happy to lend our [search and rescue] skills to the search," said Cmdr. Tom Ostebo, commanding officer.

The plane was last heard from Jan. 6. The pilot reported picking up ice and was at 3,200 feet and 25 miles from Iron Mountain Airport. The plane was apparently on final approach to the



The pilot of this twin-engine plane was killed when the plane crashed near Iron Mountain, Mich., Jan. 9. Air Station Traverse City reponed and guided ground teams to the site.

airport. The Coast Guard, local agencies and more than 50 snowmobilers searched for the plane. It was spotted by a helicopter from Air Station Traverse City.

The snow-covered wreckage was spotted by AST2 Brad Smardo, who noticed a muddy spot in the white-capped forest. It was apparent that no one had survived. The helicopter guided ground parties to the crash site, 8 miles from the airport. The pilot, the sole person on the plane, was deceased. The helo crews were bittersweet about the results of the searches.

"It's tough to discover the wreck and realize there was nothing you could do for the pilot," said pilot Lt. Neil Wilson.

Lt. J.G. Daniel F. Leary Jr., Air Station Traverse City

March 2000 • Coast Guard 5

## Red Cross celebrates 13 heroes

Evening is filled with emotional memories

By PATRICK SULLIVAN  
Record-Eagle staff writer



Imle



Bodenshot



Driver



Loska

For the second year in a row, members of the United States Coast Guard stationed in Traverse City were honored with an award, this year for saving two wayward canoeists who capsized on Lake Michigan in September.

Pilot Bill Imle, rescue swimmer Pat Bodenshot, copilot Mark Driver, and flight mechanic Sam Loska were in the air within 17 minutes of receiving an emergency call one Sunday afternoon and had reached their target in just another 20 minutes to save two very cold men.

Imle said he's been stationed at many bases, but that the level of recognition the Coast Guard receives in Traverse City stands out.

"It's real nice that the city is such an advocate for the work that we do here. I've served all over the country and I've never seen the level of community support and involvement and willingness to recognize what we do," Imle said.

He said that although he and the others on the mission may have been on more perilous flights, being honored for one life-saving mission recognizes all the work they do.

"I can in my mind apply it equally to any of the others in my past that may have been more deserving or scarier," Imle said.

Weeks after the canoeists from Wyoming, Mich., who had been rowing back to Leelanau County from the Manitou Islands were rescued, Imle and the others got letters from the men that made them realize how much they'd touched their lives.

"My wife is 24 months pregnant and I was wondering if I might never see my first child," one of

the men wrote. "Then over my left shoulder, I saw a light, oh thank God a light. We were praying pretty hard and the Lord answered with light and thunder from the sky!"

6A WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 2000



Photo courtesy of Traverse City Breakers

Traverse City Breakers Head Coach Kevin Ott, (left to right), Andrew Brunner and Eric Schultz at the state championship swimming meet in Rockford.

## Breakers swimmers shine at state meet

When a team posts a sixteenth-place finish (out of 45 competing squads) at the 12 & Under Michigan State Swimming Championships, it doesn't raise many eyebrows.

But when that team is the only one north of Midland and competing with only two swimmers, that's another story.

The Traverse City Breakers did finish 16th at last weekend's state championship meet, a noteworthy achievement, but the strong individual performance by team members Eric Schultz and Andrew Brunner was the real highlight for the Breakers.

Brunner, age 10, won the state championship in the 50-yard Butterfly in his division. He edged out Rockford's Brian Keeley by eighteen one-hundredths of a second, winning that race in 29.83 seconds on Sunday, March 5th. The previous day, Brunner was runner-up to Keeley in the 100 Butterfly with a time of 1:12.15.

Schultz, age 12, finished second in the state in the 50 Freestyle, his specialty. Schultz' time of 24.86 seconds in the preliminary round shattered Ben Collins' 1994 Breakers record, and he followed that time up with a 24.92 time in the finals. Schultz captured second place in the 50 Breaststroke (33.01), just short of Eaton Rapids' Jeff Porth's winning 32.91 time.

Schultz added two third-place and two fourth-place finishes during the meet. He set new Breakers age-group records in the 100 Individual Medley (1:02.70) and 100 Freestyle (54.74) while finishing third, and new records in the 50 Butterfly (27.74) and 100 Butterfly (1:03.44) while finishing fourth in those events.

Brunner placed third in the state in the 50 Freestyle. His time of 28.28 seconds in the final lowered his own Breakers standard in that event. He added a fourth-place finish in the 100

Freestyle (1:04.40), a fifth in the 100 Individual Medley (1:14.37) and a ninth in the 200 Freestyle (2:24.05), setting new Traverse City records in those events along the way.

In all, Schultz and Brunner set or lowered 11 Breakers marks over the weekend.

In the overall points standings, Brunner finished sixth in the state and Schultz seventh in their respective divisions despite not competing in Friday's 200 Individual Medley and 500 Freestyle events.

Kevin Ott coaches the Breakers, with assistance from Terry Hanson, Kate Ziegler and Nikki Hamlin. The complete results of Breakers swimmers at the state championship meet, with the race and finals time, follow:

## Don't fear the Reaper

**ST. THOMAS, U.S. Virgin Islands, Feb. 6** — In the early morning hours of Feb. 5, watchstanders aboard the CGC Forward heard a radio call from the cruise ship Nordic Empress saying they may have had someone fall overboard near St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands.

"We immediately contacted [Rescue Coordination Center] San Juan, Puerto Rico and were designated as on-scene commander and set up our game plan," operations officer, Lt. Sonia Valdez, said.

The cutter then set flight quarters and launched their H-65 Dolphin helicopter to the scene.

"We felt confident that we would find him due to the water temp and docile sea conditions," said aircraft commander Lt. Cmdr. Bill Imle. "What we worried about was what shape he would be in due to the 60-foot



ET2 Craig Molway of the CGC Forward painted this scene to commemorate the rescue of a cruise ship passenger off St. Thomas Feb. 5.

fall he encountered off the bow of the cruise ship," he said. Imle, along with copilot Lt. j.g. Dan Leary and AMT3 Jaime Hale, arrived on scene to find the Nordic Empress, the Dutch warship Van Speijk and

the yacht Tranquila all involved in the search. Lookouts on the Tranquila spotted the man, 20-year-old Eric Angel, in the water, and guided the Forward's helicopter to the man. He was hoisted to the helicopter after spending four hours in the water.

Angel was flown to St. Thomas Airport, then taken by ambulance to a local hospital. He was released later that day.

"This is a great way to go into a port of call. I am proud of all the crew," Cmdr. Dan MacLeod, commanding officer of the Forward, said. The Forward's officers and chiefs were the guests of honor at a St. Thomas Navy League function, where they were awarded the Hero's Cup award.

The Forward is based out of Portsmouth, Va., and their helicopter and aircrew from Air Station Traverse City, Mich. LT j.g. Dan Leary, Air Station Traverse City

April 2003 • Coast Guard 7



Mark Platt, left, a Green Bay firefighter, plays a victim being rescued by firefighter Todd Geurts during a cold-water and ice rescue training exercise Tuesday in the Fox River near the Green Bay Yachting Club.

## Rescue practice a cool warm-up

**TRaverse City, Mich.**  
Fire department crews also used the opportunity to train in cold water rescue techniques with their own equipment.

"We're coming up on our busy time of the year ... from Memorial Day to Labor Day," said Boatswain Mate 1st Class Dan Parsley of Coast Guard Station - Sturgeon Bay, which was also involved in the training.

Rescuers from the U.S. Coast Guard and the Green Bay Fire Department worked together Tuesday during a mock rescue in the Fox River near the Green Bay Yachting Club.

A firefighter, posing as a boating accident victim, was rescued from the frigid water by a Coast Guard helicopter rescue crew based in



Coast Guard members Tom Cooney and Brooks McKinley hang beneath a Coast Guard helicopter during a training exercise Tuesday on the Fox River. The Coast Guard unit is from Traverse City, Mich.



Coast Guard swimmer Matt High pulls Chad Foster from the frigid waters of Pere Marquette Lake in northern Michigan on Sunday. Foster, host of Fly Fishing America, and his crew agreed to be part of a rescue training exercise for the U.S. Coast Guard Station at Ludington and the Traverse City air station. Foster and his crew are in Ludington this week taping an episode for Fly Fishing America on the Pere Marquette River.

## FLAG FOLDING



Above, Commander Tom Ostebo of the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City shows Living God Christian School fifth-grader Al Lynch how to properly fold an American flag Thursday, as the school retired its worn-out flag and replaced it with a new one. Ostebo was dropped at the school by a Coast Guard helicopter on the athletic field.



Neil and Kim Wilson hold their daughters, Tori, 4, and Haily, 6. Kim often holds down the fort at home while Neil, a pilot with the Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City, is temporarily deployed elsewhere.

**T**Raverse City — For most of the year Kim Wilson is like any other happily married wife and mother. But every once in a while she gets a taste of single parenthood — and she doesn't like it very much.

Wilson, 32, is a military wife; her husband, Lt. Neil Wilson, is a pilot at the Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City. When he's temporarily deployed elsewhere — which happens several times a year — he can be gone for weeks at a time, leaving her alone to care for their two daughters, Haily, 6, and Tori, 4.

When he was gone last winter, she and the girls ate Thanksgiving dinner with friends, put up the Christmas tree, decorated the house and did the holiday shopping by themselves before he returned. That's not to mention the anniversaries, birthdays and recitals she handles on her own.

"It gets hard sometimes," she said. "Fortunately, I'm a pretty independent person and I've learned to do a lot of stuff myself. I've fixed the plumbing, painted the bedrooms, stuff like that. But if the kids get sick and somebody has to stay up all night, it's me."

In fact, that happened the last time Neil was deployed. When little Tori developed a viral infection and started having trouble breathing, Kim and both daughters ended up at the hospital together.

The Wilsons' situation isn't

## GONE, BUT NEVER FORGOTTEN

Record-Eagle

Mike Norton

How families deal with frequent absences of one parent

really all that rare, either. In many northern Michigan families, one spouse stays behind to "hold down the fort" while the other is away on military service, taking college classes, delivering a truckload of cargo, or any of the other jobs that separate workers from their families.

Julie Foster is another Coast

Guard wife — her husband, John, is a petty officer at the Traverse City air station who's currently on temporary assignment in the Caribbean. That leaves her to care for their 18-month-old son alone. John's duties generally take him away for four to six weeks every spring, and Julie has discovered some inner strengths in doing

things for herself.

"I was pretty self-sufficient before I married, and when he's gone I kind of rediscover that sense of independence," she said. "You really learn to skim over the stuff that isn't so important and concentrate on the stuff that is."

When she needs help or moral support, Julie leans on her church friends and the network of other mothers and Coast Guard spouses. This spring, she got some extra assistance from her mother, who's visiting from North Dakota and is glad to step in and take care of her grandson. That's even allowed Julie to take an occasional job as a substitute teacher, something she's always enjoyed.

Ann Sluiter is a home health nurse whose husband, Bill Sandell, is a chief engineer in the Great Lakes merchant fleet. When he's home with them at their rural Elmwood Township house, it's for 30 days at a time. But when he's on the boats, his wife and daughters don't see him for two — sometimes three — months. Still, Sluiter has been a sailor's wife for 25 years, and she's used to the routine.

"You have to be independent and free-spirited," she said. "I do all the finances, pay all the bills, and the rest of it. It is like being a single mom, except that I get William's emotional and financial support."

Staying in contact with distant spouses has gotten easier with

— See **HOW**, Page 2F ►

### How they handle being alone

"Fortunately, I'm a pretty independent person and I've learned to do a lot of stuff myself. I've fixed the plumbing, painted the bedrooms, stuff like that. But if the kids get sick and somebody has to stay up all night, it's me."

Kim Wilson, military wife

"I was pretty self-sufficient before I married, and when he's gone I kind of rediscover that sense of independence. You really learn to skim over the stuff that isn't so important and concentrate on the stuff that is."

Julie Foster, military wife

"You have to be independent and free-spirited. I do all the finances, pay all the bills, and the rest of it. It is like being a single mom, except that I get (her husband's) emotional and financial support."

Ann Sluiter, sailor's wife

"He tried to take a local job when we were first married, the kind where he could be home every night, but he was just a nightmare to be around. He really loves the country and being out on the road, and I couldn't keep him from that. And it keeps us from fighting ... Just about the time we start getting on each other's nerves, he has to leave."

Mandy Walter, trucker's wife



U.S. Coast Guard helicopter

Three helicopters, including a U.S. Coast Guard mission aircraft, were on display when the FDL chapter of EAA hosted a Young Eagles event at the FDL County Airport April 1. There were other aircraft displayed and programs were held to allow youngsters to learn about flying.

## Coast Guard must stretch to keep up with the patrols

According to the U.S. Coast Guard, less can be more when counting rescue boats. mph, run about \$1 million per copy, a far cry from the \$100,000 or \$150,000 the old ones cost new 30 years ago.

Under a plan to replace the aging fleet used to patrol much of the Lake Michigan shore, the Coast Guard says three new all-weather rescue boats will be better than the five now in use.

When talking about rescue stations, though, more can be less.

The service, which already has three rescue stations in the northern end of its Group Grand Haven coverage area, says building three new stations in the same places will save money and be more efficient in the long run.

If the math seems confusing, it is. But the Coast Guard asserts it will be better able to do its job 99 percent of the time. It's the other 1 percent of the time that has some observers worried, but the service says it has to fit limited resources to the job at hand.

What's driving the new deployment plan is the need to replace the fleet of all-weather rescue boats the Coast Guard uses to patrol the southern two-thirds of Lake Michigan shore. The boats are 30 years old, they're slow — about 14 mph at top speed — and they're getting harder and harder to maintain.

The same goes for the aging fleet of rescue stations, the service says. The buildings in Frankfort, Manistee and Ludington are getting old — 60 years in Frankfort and nearly 100 years in Manistee — and they're costly to heat, repair and maintain.

If there were no budget constraints, the old rescue boats, 44-foot all-weather motor lifeboats, would simply be replaced with new, modern, more efficient ones.

But the new 47-foot rescue boats, which can zip along at 30

So if you're the Coast Guard you make do. Buy three \$1 million boats that can go twice as fast as the old ones to replace five. Because the budget won't accommodate the other two large boats, they will buy few 30-footers at \$150,000 each that can go really fast, about 60 mph, to help fill the gaps. Then, cite statistics that the new small boats can cover 99 percent of the rescue runs and tow most anything out there and that the Traverse City helicopter squadron is always there to help.

In northern Michigan, that means two 44-foot boats based in Frankfort and Ludington will go and be replaced by one 47-footer in Manistee. Frankfort and Ludington will each get 30-footers. All three will have stations. And while staffing will drop in Frankfort and Ludington, the overall number of crew will remain the same.

This probably isn't the plan the Coast Guard would come up with if it could write its own budget. There would be new 47-foot all-weather speedsters at every station and the venerable old buildings would be revamped and updated.

With more private boats than any other state and northern Michigan's population and tourism booming, the Coast Guard has an obligation to provide the best possible lineup of equipment and crewpower possible.

The Coast Guard says the new alignment, based on statistics and history, meets that obligation and makes budget.

Only time and the absence of a calamity — that 1 percent chance when too many needs show the gaps in the safety net — will prove their case.

## Coast Guard swears in Academy cadets

Andy Nienhuis and Patrick Drayer newest prospective officers

In a ground breaking ceremony, The United States Coast Guard swore in their newest prospective officers from the Great Lakes Maritime Academy.

Cadets Andy Nienhuis, Class of 2002, and Patrick Drayer, Class of 2003, were given their oath of office at Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City by Executive Officer Commander Gregory Haack. Upon graduating from the Great Lakes Maritime Academy they will enter the Coast Guard under the Maritime Graduate Program.

The Academy, with its new four year curriculum, trains cadets to become officers on Great Lake freighters and now, as Coast Guard officers. The Coast Guard's Maritime Graduate Program allows these individuals to become officers in the Coast Guard and serve on one of many Coast Guard cutters without attending Officer



Photo courtesy of United States Coast Guard

Cadets Andy Nienhuis, left, Patrick Drayer were sworn in recently as the newest prospective officers from the Great Lakes Maritime Academy. The swearing in ceremony was held in Smith Hall, named for retired Coast Guard Commandant, Admiral Willard Smith, a staunch Great Lakes Maritime Academy supporter.

Candidate School.

Cadets Nienhuis and Drayer will undergo a four week Direct Commission

Officer Program at the Leadership Development Center at the Coast Guard Academy in New London, CT.

USA TODAY • TUESDAY, MAY 16, 2000 • 19A

### Washington

# Readiness problems plague Coast Guard, too

Its role has grown, but like other branches of military, the seafaring service is having trouble filling out its ranks

By Andrea Stone  
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — For 210 years, the Coast Guard has lived its motto, *Semper Paratus. Always ready.*

Yet there are mounting questions today about whether that still holds true.

When President Clinton speaks to Coast Guard Academy graduates in New London, Conn., Wednesday, he will face members of a military service whose national security role has expanded in the last three decades even as its ranks have shrunk to 1967 proportions. At a time when drugs, terrorism, pollution and illegal migration pose a bigger threat than foreign armies, the Coast Guard is the federal agency in charge of monitoring them all.

And it must do so without skimping on its No. 1 priority: saving lives. Last year, the Coast Guard answered 39,000 calls for help and saved 3,800 people.

Yet with an enlisted force that is younger and less experienced every year and a fleet that is older than 38 of 41 navies of similar size and mission, there is evidence that its core mission is being compromised.

► A shortage of serviceable HC-130 search planes may have contributed to the death last fall of a boater who called for help during a storm off the California coast.

► Four people drowned in 1997 near Charleston, S.C., during a storm after an inexperienced watchstander failed to pick up the word "Mayday" on a radio distress call. The National Transportation Safety Board later cited "substandard performance" by the service.

► That same year, three Coast Guard crewmembers died when their boat capsized during a rescue attempt off the coast of Washington. An internal report blamed a lack of training and experience, noting that many crews are "unqualified to fill the billets to which they have been assigned."

"They're reaching the edge of their capabilities," says Mortimer Downey, deputy secretary of Transportation, which oversees the Coast Guard. "We're seeing less than optimum performance."

In what was called a "cultural shift" signaling that crews would no longer try to do more with less, Coast Guard Commandant Adm. James Loy ordered in March an unprecedented 10% cut in non-emergency operations. "The strains caused by having tired people run old equipment beyond human and mechanical limits (degrades) our readiness," he said recently.



Rescue readiness: Coast Guard swimmer Matt High pulls Chad Foster from frigid waters April 9 in Michigan in a training exercise.



On Pacific waters: Coast Guard members check out the historic Star of India sailing museum during exercises last August off the coast of San Diego.

more illegal migrants will reach our shores, and more foreign fishing vessels will harvest our marine resources," retired vice admiral Howard Thorsen wrote in May's issue of *Proceedings*.

Since 1976, when Congress expanded the coastal limit from 12 miles to 200 miles, the Coast Guard has enforced the law in the United States' exclusive economic zone — at 3.4 million square miles the world's largest. During that same period, the service was given the jobs of protecting the marine environment, stopping illegal migrants and interdicting drug smugglers. The past two decades have also seen safety-related duties expand as the number of recreational boats and passenger cruise ships has skyrocketed.

Yet the Coast Guard, which has 35,000 active-duty service members, is the same size as in 1967. It joined the other military services in a post-Cold War downsizing that saw 5,000 people leave in the 1990s. And now, like those services, it is struggling to cope with high turnover and tough recruiting in a red-hot economy.

► Enlisted experience has declined from 8.8 years in 1995 to 7.9 years today and is expected to drop to 7.1 years in 2003.

► The percentage of experienced pilots who leave every year has doubled since 1995, soaring from 20% to 40%.

► More than a quarter of enlisted cruise-ship and charter-boat safety in-

spectors have not attended entry-level marine safety courses. A third of lieutenant commander safety billets are filled with junior lieutenants.

► The Coast Guard has half the certified surfmen it needs to operate rescue boats in the most dangerous conditions. Aging equipment adds to problems. On any given day, just 60% of the HC-130 fleet is fit for duty. Some have been turned into "hangar queens," cannibalized for spare parts to keep other aircraft flying.

The Coast Guard's major cutters are an average of more than 30 years old. Many smaller boats also date to the Vietnam War. Such a creaky fleet is no match for drug smugglers.

This year, at least 400 souped-up speedboats carrying tons of illegal drugs from Colombia will cut through the Caribbean at up to 50 knots per hour. The fastest cutters reach 30 knots. The result is that nine of 10 smugglers get away.

In December, a government task force recognized the problems and endorsed replacing the entire fleet with electronically linked high-tech cutters, small boats, fixed-wing aircraft, helicopters and satellites. The so-called Deepwater Project, which has bipartisan support, would cost at least \$500 million a year for the next 20 years.

By Pentagon standards, the project is modest. But then again, the Coast Guard's \$4.1 billion budget is tiny compared with the Pentagon's nearly \$300 billion budget.

Yet because the Coast Guard isn't in the Defense Department, it has long lacked a strong advocate in the federal bureaucracy.

The Coast Guard is "an orphan among too many parents," Sen. John Breaux, D-La., said at a recent Capitol Hill symposium. "When you're a little of a whole lot, it doesn't add up to a lot of anything."

Although it is a military service and one-third of its duties are related to national defense, the Coast Guard reports to the Pentagon only during wartime. Another third of its duties, mainly drug and illegal migrant interdiction, fall under the Justice Department. The remaining tasks are related to its parent department, Transportation. It also does jobs for the Commerce, Treasury and State departments.

As a result, the Coast Guard often falls through the cracks.

When Loy and other military chiefs made a pitch to Clinton for emergency supplemental funding last year, only the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines got it. The commandant later cajoled Congress into coughing up an extra \$160 million, but lawmakers didn't hand over the money until this year, a move that did little to address pressing readiness problems.

"We're almost ready to declare Chapter 11 bankruptcy," says Rear Adm. Patrick Stillman, the assistant commandant for government and public affairs. "We aren't treated the same as the other services."

## Habitat for Humanity holds annual meeting

Habitat for Humanity—Grand Traverse Region recently conducted its annual meeting that included installation of officers and several award presentations.

Officers installed during the meeting included: Mike DeAgostino, chairperson; Christine Kurtz, secretary; Keith Gillings, treasurer; Rev. Jay Koehler, chaplain. Board of Directors are: DeAgostino, Kurtz, Gillings, Sherry Schmalenberg, Jeff Frost, Tad Minor, Bob Webster, Brent Nichols, Laura Zientek, Sue Kiss, Terry Paquet, Koehler and Lloyd Phillips.

The following are awards presented by Habitat for Humanity—Grand Traverse Region:

■ Committed Group of the Year: U.S. Coast Guard

■ Dedicated Committee Members of the Year: Russ Clark, Linda Hutchinson, Alice and Cecil McNally, Alice Nichols, Linda Radtke

■ Construction Volunteers of the Year: Paul Anderson, Jessie Fuzi, Paul Henry, Carrol Nichols

■ Subcontractor of the Year: International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 498, Dave Smith Masonry

■ Supplier of the Year: Northern Exteriors, Renee Hoenscheid

■ Office Volunteer of the Year: Diane Gilbo

■ Good Samaritan Awards: Glenn Bader, Dave Bradshaw, Aileen Borganson, Cary Kiogima, Dan Leary

■ Special Award: Mole of the Year: Bonnie McCaslin

## Forest worker falls 55 feet, breaks arm

TRaverse CITY — A 53-year-old National Forest Service worker suffered a fractured forearm when he fell 55 feet from a tree-top while tagging baby eagles Thursday afternoon.

The man, identified as Teryl Grubb, was listed in fair condition at Munson Medical Center, where he was taken by a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter after his fall.

According to a Coast Guard release, Grubb was working in a tree around Indian Lake in East Bay Township when he slipped and fell.

Because of the rugged terrain and remoteness of the area, a helicopter from the Traverse City Air Station was called in to evacuate



him, but the three-member crew — flight mechanic James Zahn, pilot Blake Burris and copilot Steve Walsh — found the exercise a challenging one.

A rescue litter had to be lowered between 100-foot trees to the injured man and hoisted back to the aircraft in buffeting winds, while the crew maintained radio contact with ground personnel on three separate channels.

Chicago Sun-Times Home

Today's News

7-day Archive | Commentary | Lottery | Obituaries | Printable Version

## Rescue chopper stationed nearby

May 27, 2000

BY STEVE WARMBIR STAFF REPORTER

Boaters in trouble can expect help from the air much faster now that a Coast Guard rescue helicopter is stationed in the Chicago area for the first time since 1996.

"I'm thrilled to learn that there's a serious rescue station poised to snatch sailors in distress," said Brian Becharas, former president of the Evanston Windsurfing Association.

The Coast Guard helicopter rescue station opened Friday at Waukegan Airport. Its four-person crew will operate one helicopter 24 hours a day, seven days a week during summer.

For years, the Coast Guard had its helicopter service at Glenview Naval Air Station but moved it after Glenview shut down.

To save money, the service moved to Muskegon, Mich., about 120 miles northeast of Chicago. Boaters and public officials objected, saying Muskegon was too far.

From the Waukegan location, emergency response times should drop to about 10 minutes from an average of 35 minutes, Coast Guard Lt. Daniel Leary said. The Muskegon facility will stay open.

U.S. Rep. John Porter (R-Ill.) obtained \$13.5 million from Congress for the project. Porter long had criticized the move to Muskegon, especially in summer when boating is at a peak.

"That's simply too far," Porter said. "That gives nobody any assurance."

Although boaters still had Coast Guard rescue teams to assist them, helicopters can reach scenes faster and usually have better views.



## Day of flags

The Elks Lodge No. 323 in Traverse City held Flag Day ceremonies Wednesday afternoon. Right, Seaman Holly Schickner of the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City assists Coast Guard Petty Officer Russell Merrick in raising the flag. Above, Paul Schapleray of VFW Post 2780, who served in the Korean War from 1950 to 1952, salutes.

Record-Eagle photo: Jim Boyer



FRIDAY

FOUR SECTIONS, 36 PAGES

# TRaverse CITY RECORD-EAGLE

FRIDAY JUNE 16, 2000

NORTHERN MICHIGAN'S NEWSPAPER

50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.50 SUNDAY

## Boaters rescued by Coast Guard helicopter team

Two TC men got caught in a storm at midnight on West Bay

By PATRICK SULLIVAN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRaverse CITY — Two men stuck on a sinking boat were rescued by a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter team that happened to be headed back to Traverse City after a water rescue training session.

Sam McGowan and William Cady, both of Traverse City, were motoring home in a 17-foot Boston Whaler after having dinner in Omens when they got caught in a storm around midnight Wednesday on West Bay. The boat began taking on water and the bilge pump failed.

McGowan, 41, said the experience wasn't frightening because the Coast Guard helicopter arrived so quickly.

"It was very surreal and the Coast Guard was really professional," he said. "It was exactly like you see on TV."

Helicopter pilot Mark Driver said he was flying back from a Charlevoix training mission in which his crew had been practicing the precise drill they used

“It was very surreal and the Coast Guard was really professional. It was exactly like you see on TV.”

**Sam McGowan, rescued boater**

to save McGowan and Cady, 45. "The very procedures we were practicing were the same procedures we used last night," he said. McGowan called for help on his cell phone once he realized his boat would not make it to shore. Dispatchers radioed Driver's helicopter.

When the helicopter neared the boat, McGowan set off a flare, but Driver said he'd already spotted the boat using night vision goggles.

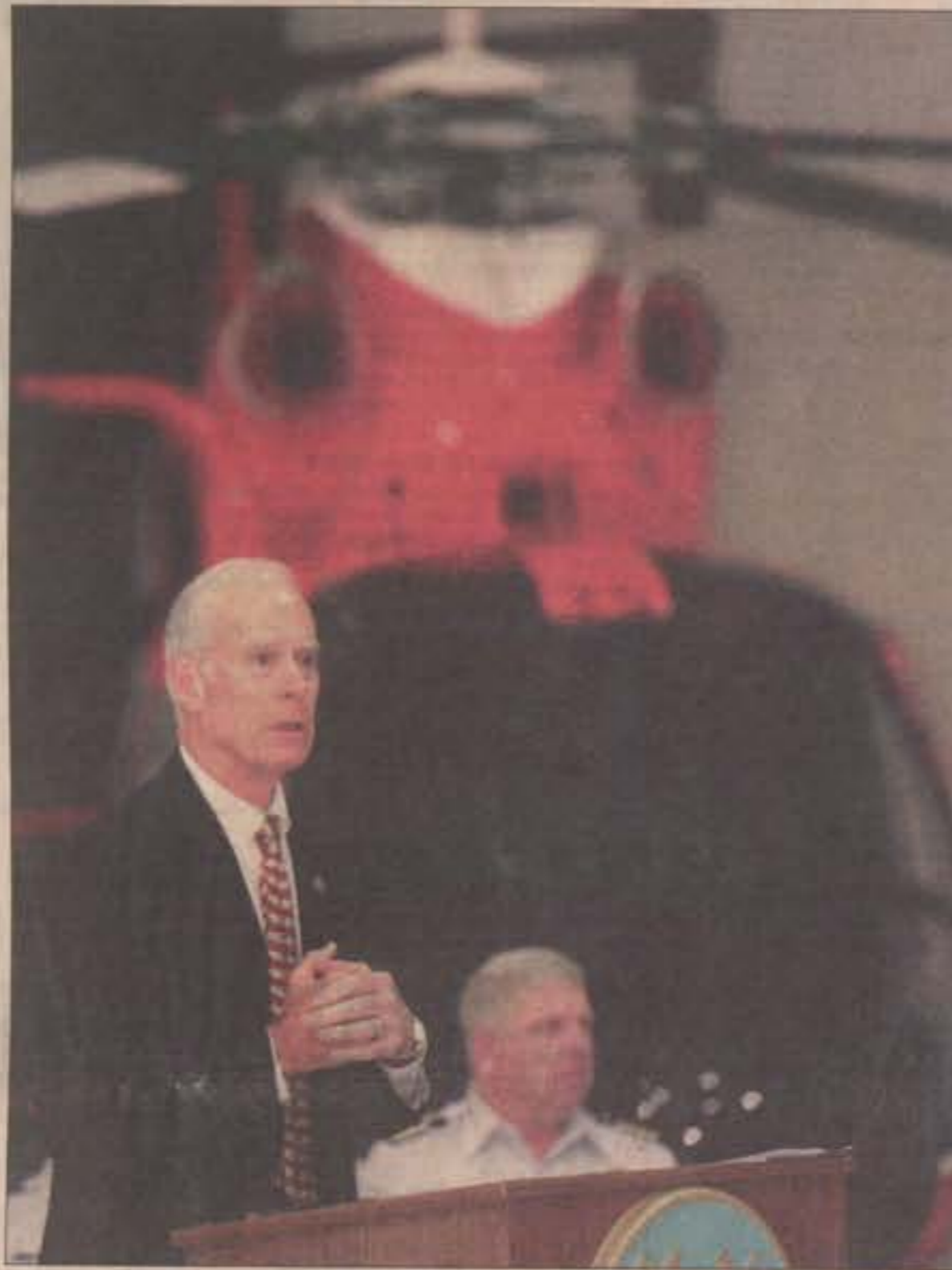
Rescue swimmer Tom Cooney was lowered to McGowan and Cady, who were then hoisted into the helicopter. They were given blankets to warm up and didn't need to go to the hospital.

The boat was towed to shore and on Thursday McGowan was having the bilge pump fixed.

"I'm delighted to have the Coast Guard here to give us the sense of security that we need in using Lake Michigan."

U.S. Rep. John Porter, welcoming rescue unit at Waukegan Regional Airport

## Crisis copters on call



THOMAS DELANY JR./STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

U.S. Rep. John Porter, R-Wilmette, addresses the crowd during Monday's opening ceremony for the new U.S. Coast Guard facility at Waukegan Regional Airport. An H65 Dolphin helicopter is in the background.

### Ceremony opens Coast Guard rescue station in Waukegan



Coast Guard Lt. Cmdr. Don Dyer of Michigan, wearing the arm patch of a previous assignment in Astoria, Ore., talks to Wayne Sobczak of Antioch.

By Jim Newton  
STAFF WRITER

WAUKEGAN — In front of two gleaming orange H65 Dolphin helicopters, a ceremony Monday morning marked the opening of the Coast Guard's new search and rescue station at Waukegan Regional Airport.

The ceremony included the presentation of colors, an invocation and remarks from U.S. Rep. John Porter, R-Wilmette, who helped secure federal funding to

put the unit in Waukegan. Flights from the new facility will be dispatched for rescue efforts on southern Lake Michigan and inland areas.

"I'm delighted to have the Coast Guard here to give us the sense of security that we need in using Lake Michigan," Porter said. "It gives everyone a sense of security that they are nearby."

At least one of the helicopters will be stationed at the airport from Memorial Day through Labor Day, according to Coast

Guard public affairs officer Dan Leary. During the off season, the helicopters are often used in drug interdiction efforts.

The new Waukegan station replaces an air rescue unit that was at Glenview Naval Air Station until that base was closed in 1996. Since then, the rescue unit has been in Muskegon, Mich. Officials have said the Waukegan station should reduce some southern Lake Michigan response times

◆ Turn to COPTERS, A4

## COPTERS

From page A1

from 35 minutes to about 15 minutes.

The Waukegan unit will also assist in inland rescue operations.

"We do a lot of inland search and rescue operations, like lost hunters and children," Leary said. "We've gone as far west as North Dakota."

Leary said one benefit of the Waukegan location is that it is close to Chicago, but crews will not become snarled in air traffic as they would at Midway or O'Hare airports.

State Sen. Adeline Geo-Karis, R-Zion, who joined members of the Lake County Board and other local officials in lobbying to have the station sited in Waukegan, said she thinks it will be a major benefit for the area.

"I'm so happy to see this happen," she said. "It's so very necessary. Lake Michigan can be a very treacherous lake."

Also on hand Monday morning was Mark Kirk, the Republican candidate for Porter's 10th

Congressional District seat. Kirk vowed that if elected, he will work for continued funding for the Waukegan Coast Guard facility, predicting that there will be drives to relocate it to the Coast Guard's Traverse City, Mich., station.

Kirk has personal experience with such units, having been saved from the cold waters of Lake Michigan by the Coast Guard following a sailing mishap more than a mile out from Winnetka when he was 16. Kirk said he nearly died.

Given that experience, Kirk said he wants to work as an advocate for the local station.

Dan Blitten of DB Aviation, who is renting the hangar facility to the Coast Guard, is a combat veteran of the Army's First Air Cavalry and said he was happy to see the helicopters on his property.

"I couldn't be happier. I want you here, and this has nothing to do with profit or loss," he said during the ceremony. "I met the flight crews, and they are very professional guys. I watched them fly here in adverse weather, practicing. I'm just so proud to have the Coast Guard here."

**'They'll be good tenants at the airport, and they'll save lives on the lake. It's very reassuring to have them around.'**  
 Walter Jones, executive director of the Waukegan Port District



The U.S. Coast Guard holds a ceremony at the Waukegan Regional Airport on Monday to open a base for its search-and-rescue operations on the Illinois side of Lake Michigan. The Coast Guard has patrolled the southern lake from Michigan only since 1996.

**WAUKEGAN**

# Helicopters on patrol again

## After 4 years, Coast Guard renews local lake coverage

The world's seventh-largest navy has established a base in Waukegan.

The United States Coast Guard on Monday formally christened its search-and-rescue station at Waukegan Regional Airport, marking the return of a Coast Guard helicopter presence to the western shores of Lake Michigan.

The Coast Guard had a helicopter stationed at Glenview Naval Air Station but pulled out when the base was closed in 1996. Since then, the southern portion of the lake has been covered by helicopters based in Muskegon, Mich., adding precious minutes to the response time for rescues on the lake's west side.

U.S. Rep. John Porter (R-Ill.), who is stepping down at the end of this term, sponsored the legislation that authorized the \$13 million expenditure to base helicopters and personnel in Waukegan. The Coast Guard moved into leased space at a hangar owned by DB Aviation last month.

"I hope this is the beginning of a long relationship," Porter said. "My successor will have to look out for this and keep it running. We need this helicopter service nearby."

In a typical year, the Coast Guard oversees about 1,500 search-and-rescue operations on southern Lake Michigan. The legislation provides \$8 million to outfit two helicopters for the Waukegan station and another \$5 million for personnel and other

expenses for the first year. The station is scheduled to be staffed from Memorial Day through Labor Day to provide extra coverage during the busiest boating season.

"We couldn't be happier to have them," said Walter Jones, executive director of the Waukegan Port District, which oversees Waukegan Regional Airport and Waukegan Harbor. "They'll be good tenants at the airport, and they'll save lives on the lake. It's very reassuring to have them around."

Two, four-person crews are assigned to the station at all times, with each crew standing at the ready for 24 hours, and then taking 24 hours off, said Lt. Cmdr. Blake Burris, commanding officer of the crew on duty Monday. Crews rotate out of their home base in Traverse City, Mich., every two weeks.

In season, the Waukegan station is responsible for responding to emergencies on the lake from Sheboygan, Wis., on the north to the southern tip. The Waukegan Coast Guard contingent will split the lake down the middle with its counterparts in Muskegon.

The piece of capital equipment at the heart of the operation is the Aerospatiale HH60 helicopter.

The French-built helicopter is the Coast Guard's airborne workhorse, used for search-and-rescue operations, surveillance and drug interdiction. The



U.S. Rep. John Porter (R-Ill.) welcomes the Coast Guard's return. Porter sponsored the legislation that authorized the \$13 million to base helicopters and personnel in Waukegan.

craft's engine and avionics are American-made, Burris said.

The station will also be available to local police and fire departments to assist in searches on the ground, he said.

"We can do a lot of things,"

Burris said. "We've searched for lost kids, Alzheimer's patients who've wandered off, all sorts of things. We can do anything where you need to put another set of eyeballs on the ground."

*John Flink*

JULY 4, 2000

# Boaters better stick to water

**■ Drunken boaters will be target of effort by Coast Guard, police and DNR this summer**

By STACEY SMITH  
 Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY—A 26-year-old California man was the first arrest in an initiative between law enforcement in two counties, the U.S. Coast Guard and the Department of Natural Resources to stop drunken boating.

The man, whose name is being withheld pending his arraignment, was riding a Jet Ski around 8:45 p.m. Friday when he was stopped by the Grand Traverse County Sheriff's department marine patrol, sheriff Harold Barr said. Personal watercraft must be off the water one hour before sunset, he said.

Deputies noticed the man was intoxicated and arrested him, Barr said. The man's blood alcohol content was 0.16.

He is being charged with first-offense boating while under the influence, Barr said, a misdemeanor punishable by up to 93 days in jail.

Officials from the sheriff's department, Traverse City Police, Leelanau County Sheriff's Department, Coast Guard and DNR have joined forces this summer to prevent boaters from operating boats and personal watercraft while

— See DRINKING, Page 2A ►

# Drinking, boating target

◀ Continued from Page 1A

intoxicated. "This is the first wave of a joint venture trying to make the waters more safe," Barr said.

The man's arrest was the only drunken boating arrest over the weekend, Barr said. Local law enforcement boarded 35 boats checking equipment and looking

for boaters who may be intoxicated.

"That means we had a safe boating weekend. We want that to continue," Barr said.

There were no boating while intoxicated arrests last month, Barr said.

In past years, the sheriff's department has received numerous complaints about intoxicated

boaters but have made few arrests, mostly due to a lack of manpower to make the arrests, he said.

"This is probably the first time we've targeted drunk boaters," Barr said.



# Caution: When mixing boating and beverages

By NANCY SUNDSTROM  
Special to the Record-Eagle

For a number of years, the National Cherry Festival has been actively involved in educating its attendees and the general public about responsible consumption of adult beverages while enjoying Festival activities.

This year, though, there's a concerted effort to address an area of growing concern - drivers of boats who are drinking while out on the water to enjoy events like the Blue Angels air show on July 1 and 2, and fireworks displays on July 4 and 8.

Festival Executive Director Tom Kern says that his organization will be teaming up with the United States Coast Guard (USCG), Grand Traverse County Sheriff's Department, Traverse City Police Department (TCPD), Leelanau County Sheriff's Department, and the Department of Natural Resources for a combined initiative to ensure that driving boaters aren't drinking boaters, especially on the opening Festival weekend, when thousands of boats will converge in the west end of Grand Traverse Bay for the air show.

"There's a strong emphasis this year on warning the public about the dangers of drinking and driving boats, all geared to preventing potential accidents or arrests," said Kern. "We've put a program of heightened awareness into effect, and we're hoping that boaters hear that our concern is for their safety."

Annually, the air show draws more than 75,000 spectators, and generally, anywhere between 2,000-3,000 boats will be out in the Grand Traverse Bay over the course of the two weekend shows. Anticipating a perhaps larger than usual crowd for the Blue Angels shows for 2000, the Traverse City arm of the USCG approached NCF with a coordinated marine law enforcement program aimed at toward violators of drinking and boating laws.

Lieutenant J.G. "Dan" Leary, the Public Affairs Officer for Traverse City's Coast Guard Air Station, says the effort is being approached from a prevention perspective, and that their singular message is that "It's Not Worth It" to drink while driving a boat.

"In a best case scenario, no one will be boating while con-



suming alcohol, which would make us very pleased," said Leary. "But we've made a coordinated effort to patrol the waters with much greater intensity this year, and if there are violators, they will be arrested, fined, and their boat will be docked and confiscated. That's why we're launching this campaign to educate people."

Leary describes the NCF program as "kicking off a summer of safe boating," and says that he is excited about the partnership being developed by all of the participating enforcement agencies. Chief Ralph Soffredine of TCPD credits the USCG for their leadership role in the effort, and says that the efficient use of all the resources uniting for the crackdown will help ensure that Grand Traverse Bay is a safe place from which to view special NCF activities.

"Our main goal is to get the word out that we want people to have a good time, but if they're driving a boat, they need to be sober," Soffredine stated.

To that end, USCG will be using its air patrols to survey boaters, particularly several boats grouped together with visible evidence of alcohol consumption, and marine patrols will be in close and constant scrutiny. Because the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) prohibits boaters from viewing in the area directly under the flight pattern, security will be in strict effect for the air shows, and accentuated by this year's additional support.

"We can't state up front enough that this is about prevention, safety, and common sense," concluded Leary.

## Coast Guard rescues boaters

GLEN ARBOR — A rescue call Thursday turned into two rescues after a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter searching for a teen adrift on a raft also found an overturned Catamaran.

The helicopter, from Air Station Traverse City, was called about 2:45 p.m. Thursday to find a 17-year-old boy adrift on a raft in Glen Arbor Bay south of Pyramid Point, said Ensign Chuck Webb, one of the helicopter pilots.

After finding the boy and calling a boat from the Frankfort station, Webb and Lt. Mark Driver noticed a man and woman standing on top of an overturned Catamaran not far from the raft, Webb said. They notified the boat from Frankfort and Coast Guard personnel helped the couple flip the Catamaran. The couple then sailed to shore.

No one was injured in either incident. A Coast Guard Auxiliary boat that was in the area also assisted in the rescues, Webb said.

# Rescuer survived 'perfect storm'

Continued from Page 1A  
five National Guardsmen out of the water.

As Donohue's chopper arrived, a Coast Guard cutter was already broadsiding 100-foot waves in an effort to pull the men out of the water.

Donohue said it was an amazing and frightening sight.

"Everybody who was involved in that storm was in extreme peril the whole time," he said. "Picture 10-story buildings breaking. We were basically going to be the last-ditch effort."

But the cutter was able to save four of the five men and Donohue's crew flew into the night looking for the fifth man, Rick Smith, who was never found.

Soon after the cutter rescued the men, a Coast Guard Falcon plane pilot thought he spotted Smith in the water and Donohue stood at the door of the helicopter waiting for the order to go into the treacherous seas for a rescue.

"That's when you start questioning yourself — Can I do it? Am I going to make it home to my wife?"

Dropping rescue swimmers into the water into 100-foot waves is something rescuers hope to avoid, he said. Donohue has jumped into 20- and 30-foot seas for rescues before.

"They were afraid that they weren't going to get us back and they didn't want to kill us," he said. "Nobody has done high seas rescues in those kind of seas before."

It turned out the pilot hadn't spotted Smith, and Donohue spent a good part of the next two-and-a-half days looking for him. He said the task was made more frustrating because he was working out of a Long Island air base where Smith had been stationed.

"Looking for a person in 100-foot seas at night was like looking for a needle in a haystack," he said.

Ray Dwyer, now also stationed in Traverse City, was a watch captain stationed in Cape Cod in 1991 and was also working the evening the storm hit. He was responsible for fixing helicopters and getting them into the air and assigning crews to aircraft.

"I remember that I didn't get any sleep that night — we were very busy," Dwyer said.

"I've had my fair share of nights like that. If I was to pick a few out I would probably remember that one."

He said the storm came up suddenly. A helicopter rotor standing outside the hangar was swaying in the wind up and down so much it nearly hit a utility vehicle and needed to be moved inside.

"You could tell something wasn't normal with it gusting up like that," Dwyer said.

Donohue is planning on seeing the film. Dwyer's already seen it and he said he liked it. Locally, the movie has been a hit.

"Attendance has been really good," said Jason Lytle, a manager at Grand Traverse Cinema at Grand Traverse Mall. "This week alone we've done about 6,000 people."

The movie is also playing at The Bay in Suttons Bay.

## Around the world, around the clock

COMPILED JUNE 6  
**ON PATROL:**

- En route Mazatlan: CGC Polar Star
- Central Pacific: CGCs Rush and Wainut
- Guam: CGC Rush
- Tonga: CGC Kukui
- New England: CGCs Reliance and Vigorous
- Florida and Caribbean: CGCs Courageous, Dauntless, Gentian, Galatin, Legare, Tampa, Venturous, Vigilant and Alert
- California: CGCs Munro and Sherman

**FY 00 BY THE NUMBERS**  
Contraband seized:

- Marijuana: 24,314 pounds
- Cocaine: 77,894 pounds
- Heroin: 23,387 pounds
- Heroin: 18.4 pounds
- Arrests: 113

Source: USCG

4 Coast Guard - July 2000

# SUNDAY TRVERSE CITY RECORD-EAGLE

JULY 9, 2000 NORTHERN MICHIGAN'S NEWSPAPER 50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.50 SUNDAY

## Local Coast Guardsman survived real 'perfect storm' as a rescuer

Now stationed in Traverse City, rescue swimmer baffled storm featured in movie

By PATRICK SULLIVAN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — When rescue swimmer John Donohue first saw the perfect storm, he was in a helicopter flying over the Atlantic.

Donohue, now stationed with the U.S. Coast Guard in Traverse City, was based in Cape Cod in

October 1991, when three weather systems collided to create what was touted as "The Perfect Storm" in a book and a movie, released last weekend.

At age 26 and with just nine months experience in the air, Donohue was on a helicopter that was dispatched to save the crew of a National Guard helicopter that went down in the storm, their plight later recounted by author Sebastian Junger.

Donohue realized right away he was in the middle of no ordinary storm that evening.

"We were heading offshore and flying into 80- to 100-knot winds, so we were only making 35 miles

an hour across the ground ... it can throw you around quite a bit.

"I've flown in nor'easters before — this was a couple steps above a nor'easter. The whole crew was scared, but that's our job."

They took off at the height of the storm to look for the lost helicopter. The chopper went down because its crew was unable to refuel in the air due to poor visibility.

Another Coast Guard helicopter arrived at the scene of the crash shortly before Donohue's crew, but the waves were too big and neither helicopter could pull the

— See RESCUER, Page 12A



Record-Eagle/  
Elizabeth Conley  
John Donohue  
and Ray  
Dwyer tangled  
with the real  
'perfect  
storm.'

## Charlevoix teens try their hands at feature movies

By JEREMY MCBAIN  
Editor

They may just be Charlevoix's answer to the independent movie phenomenon.

Several Charlevoix teenagers have recently finished a year-and-a-half worth of work on their own feature length movie, that was directed, produced, paid for and acted by them.

"This is kind of our prep course in movie making," said producer and actor for the movie, Nate Bartlett, 17.

According to director and actor C. J. Winnell, 19, the movie, called Die Soft, started out as a spoof of the Die Hard movies, but soon took on a life of its own. The movie follows the adventures of "Coast Guard Eel" Don McClean as he transports a precious jewel across the United States.

Winnell said it is full of the type of humor seen in the classic-comedy film "Airplane."

"Die Soft actually started out as a serious movie. But, we come up with something (funny) for every scene. It may be a very serious scene and we can still come up with something funny," Winnell said.

The movie will be showing to the public at 2 p.m. Sunday

at Cinema III in Charlevoix. To promote the movie, and to film a scene for their next project, the group will have a "float" in the Venetian Festival parade at 11 a.m. on Saturday.

Charlevoix teen Ben Macks plays the lead character, while fellow Charlevoix teens Nate Dean and Katie Romig are cast as McClean's boss Admiral Hopper and his wife, Sara.

"There are at least 25 other actors and people who have helped in the movie," Bartlett said.

Among these people included Charlevoix notables, such as Police Chief Dennis Halverson, the Charlevoix Dive Team, the Coast Guard helicopter out of Traverse City, the Coast Guard Cutter Acacia and a special appearance by a "real actor," Bartlett said.

While making and starring in the movie, Winnell said the teens also paid for much of the movie themselves.

"Donors paid for about a tenth and we all spent money out of our own pocket," Winnell said. "I haven't tallied it up, but it is a lot."

While this is their first experience in feature length movie making, these Charlevoix teens are already experienced with



Some of the cast members of Die Soft. They are: (Left) Bryan Burns, Nate Bartlett, Ben Macks, Keith Patrick, C. J. Winnell, Caleb Levensgood and Nate Dean. (Courtesy photo)

working with the camera. The close-knit group have teamed up together on several class projects to produce "short" movies.

"I started out when I was really young. I remember seeing a movie and saying, 'I want to make that.' From then on I was

doing that kind of stuff," Winnell said. "This is my life. I can't not do it."

Bartlett said he started making movies as a hobby with his friends and for class projects.

"I wouldn't mind pursuing (movie making as a career.) Right now, it is something on

the side," Bartlett said.

This isn't the last movie Charlevoix can expect to see from these young movie-makers.

They are already working on their next project, "12 Hours," a comedy about a hospital emergency room.

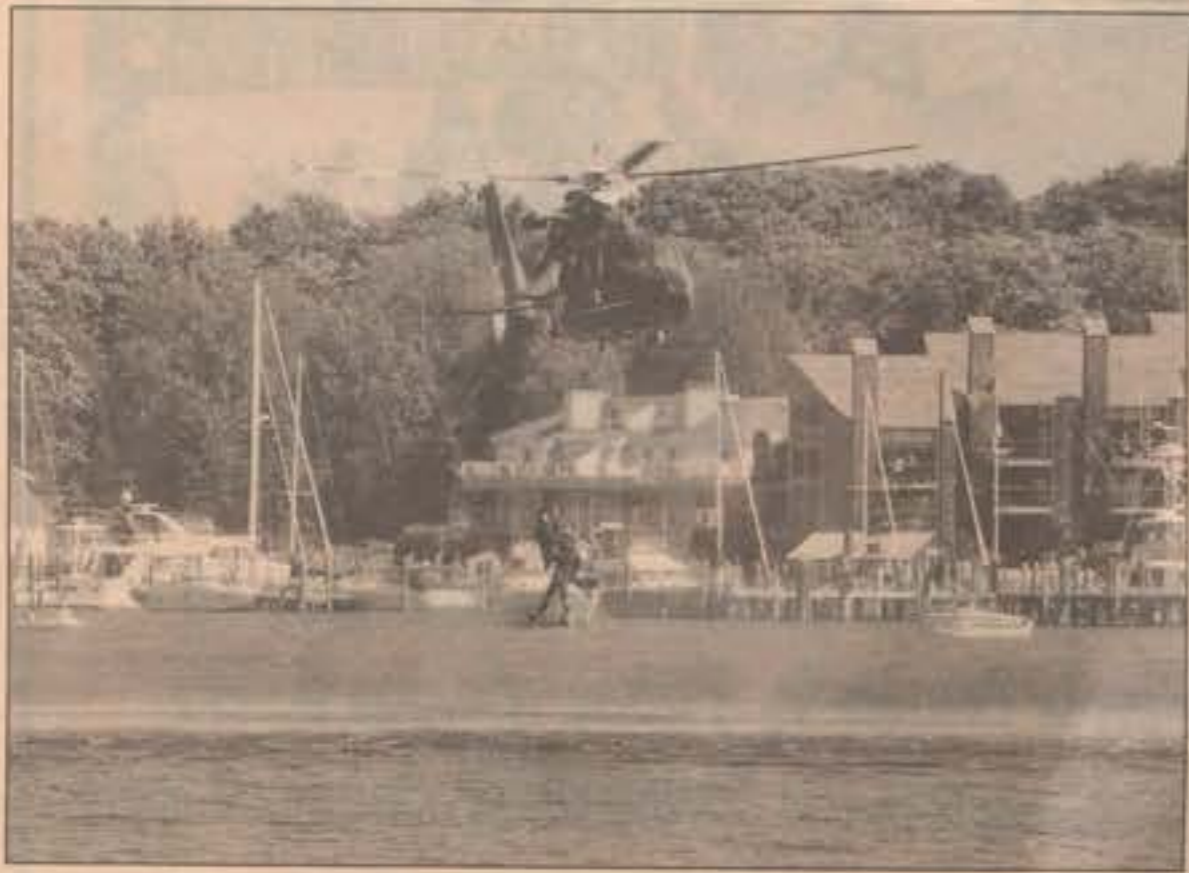
## Coast Guard believes man fell from freighter

SAULT STE. MARIE— U.S. Coast Guard search and rescue crews, including helicopters from Traverse City, spent Friday looking for a man believed to have fallen off a freighter somewhere in Lake Huron near the Soo Locks.

The 56-year-old man, a crew member on board the freighter, was last seen Thursday night when he went to bed, said Lt. Doug Nash of the Traverse City station. The freighter was in Lake Huron traveling toward the locks.

Friday morning, as the freighter reached the locks, crew members noticed the man was missing. The Coast Guard search began at 8 a.m., but found nothing and was called off at sunset Friday, Nash said. He was unsure whether the search would resume this morning.

The man's name and the name of the freighter were unavailable.



(Above) A Coast Guard helicopter crew demonstrates lifesaving techniques in Round Lake Sunday during the Venetian Festival. (Right) Eric Buday, 7, of Charlevoix, tries his hand at being a Coast Guardsman Sunday in East Park during the Venetian Festival. (Photos by Jeremy McBain)



## High-flying film artists

### Charlevoix teens' movie showing at local theater

By B. J. HETLER  
News-Review staff writer

CHARLEVOIX — Charlevoix High School has produced film makers bent on making a hit movie. The first film of the group known as Hawkeye Studios is titled "Die Soft," a parody. It will be shown at 2 p.m. Sunday, July 23, at Charlevoix Cinema III.

C. J. Winnell and Nathan Dean, who graduated in 1999, are two of the film makers, along with students Nate Bartlett, Bryan Burns, Caleb Levensgood, Keith Patrick and Ben Macks, who will be seniors this fall.

"Die Soft" is directed by Winnell who started several years ago working with videography.

"The movie started out as a parody of 'Die Hard,' but moved into its own story," Winnell said.

The film was shot in Charlevoix, Petoskey and Traverse City. The group managed to enlist Charlevoix Chief of Police Dennis Halverson to appear in the



Members of Hawkeye Studios who produced and acted in their first movie that was shot locally are (back, from left) Nate Bartlett, Bryan Burns, Nate Dean, Caleb Levensgood and C.J. Winnell, (front, from left) Keith Patrick and Ben Macks. The film shows at 2 p.m. on Sunday at Charlevoix Cinema III. (Courtesy photo)

movie.

The Charlevoix city dive team participated and the Coast Guard got into the act by loaning its helicopter and opening up the Acacia for movie scenes.

All members of Hawkeye Studios

were actors and crew. Everyone is happy the many challenges of making a movie are finished for now.

"The biggest challenge was getting everyone together at the same time to shoot something," Winnell said.

### IN BRIEF

FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

#### Helicopter search over lake called off

TRAVERSE CITY — The U.S. Coast Guard on Monday suspended its search for an experimental helicopter last seen flying over Lake Michigan.

The aircraft, known as a "gyroplane," was piloted by Stephen Peters of Aurora, Colo. He took off Saturday afternoon from Schoolcraft County Airport near Manistique en route to Gaylord, but did not arrive.

He was last seen Saturday evening by campers on Beaver Island, said Petty Officer Blair Stanifer of the Coast Guard's 9th District headquarters in Cleveland.

Coast Guard boats from Charlevoix and helicopters from Traverse City searched Lake Michigan between Beaver Island and the Mackinac Bridge on Saturday and Sunday. State police and the Civil Air Patrol searched on land.



STEVE LINDY/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Coast Guard frogman Rachid Arnick jumps from a helicopter during search and rescue training off shore from Kenosha. The helicopter is stationed for the summer at Waukegan Regional Airport.

# Roaring to the rescue

Coast Guard helicopter on call in Waukegan

By Jim Newton  
STAFF WRITER

The U.S. Coast Guard has begun flexing new muscles provided by its helicopter search and rescue station at Waukegan Regional Airport.

The new helicopter station, which opened with a formal ceremony in June, is the summer home to at least one H-65 Dolphin helicopter. Flight crews from the Waukegan station have begun weekly Lake Michigan exercises with boat patrol and rescue teams housed at the Coast Guard's Kenosha Harbor station.

On a recent morning, a three-man crew on a 41-foot utility boat waited off the

Kenosha shore as the distinctive orange helicopter from Waukegan roared in to engage in coordinated rescue simulations.

The helicopter hovered just feet over the boat, its rotors splashing lake water on deck like squalls, as crews practiced ferrying men and equipment from the helicopter to the boat and from the water to the helicopter in simulated rescue maneuvers.

When the time comes to respond to a real local emergency in Lake Michigan, officials believe having the helicopters in Waukegan

◆ Turn to RESCUE, A4



Coast Guard BM-3 Jim McDougall and MH-3 Mark Willoughby await the approaching H-65 Dolphin search and rescue helicopter during training on Lake Michigan.



STEVE LINDY/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Coast Guard AMT-1 John Bush greets News Sun reporter Jim Newton, hoisted in a rescue basket during training on Lake Michigan near Kenosha. The rescue helicopter is stationed at Waukegan Regional Airport.

## RESCUE

From page A1

will be a major asset.

The Waukegan station replaces an air rescue unit that was at Glenview Naval Air Station until that base was closed in 1996. Since then, the rescue unit has been in Muskegon, Mich. Officials have said the Waukegan station should reduce some southern Lake Michigan response times from 35 minutes to about 15 minutes.

"Instead of having to come from Traverse City (Mich.) or Muskegon, they are right there (in Waukegan)," said Mark Willoughby, a machinery technician stationed at the Kenosha base. "They are going to get there quicker and possibly get someone out of the water quicker."

Willoughby also said that during protracted search-and-rescue missions, being able to refuel at Waukegan will also save precious time.

"The big thing is the fuel. They

can go back and refuel more easily than when they were going across the lake," he said.

"It's going to help us a lot," said Boatswain's Mate 3rd Class Jim McDougall, also stationed in Kenosha, who also noted that distance translates to response time. "Life-and-death situations are when we call in the helicopter."

In addition to coordinating training exercises between the crews in Kenosha and Waukegan, McDougall said the Coast Guard has initiated simulated rescues with lakeshore fire departments from Racine to Great Lakes Naval Training Center. That included a recent exercise with the Winthrop Harbor Fire Department at North Point Marina.

McDougall said the Coast Guard also plans some inland boat-helicopter exercises on the Chain O'Lakes in the future.

At least one of the Dolphin helicopters is stationed at Waukegan Regional from Memorial Day through Labor Day, assisting when needed for both Lake Michigan and inland rescue efforts.

A Copying Newspaper

**The News Sun**  
The Voice of Truth

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AND SO WITH THE RELIGIOUS MUZZLED...

AND A PERVERSIVE ATMOSPHERE OF UNITY...

WE GO TO ON SBLI FOR CONVENTION PLEASE ATTENTION INTERVIEW TO GUY VIEW A SILLY MAN!

OUR VIEW

## Coast Guard turns 210

The 186th U.S. Coast Guard's Waukegan Air Facility.

**We say:**  
The helicopter unit is a lifesaver.

**O**n Aug. 4, 1790, Congress, guided by Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, created a fleet of 10 cutters to enforce tariff laws. It was the birth of the United States Coast Guard.

In May 1913, a bill was introduced in the Senate to create the Coast Guard by combining the Lighthouse Service and Revenue Cutter Service.

In 1909, the Coast Guard saved 2,000 lives, combined more than 14,000 recreational sailboats on pleasure craft, taught 211,000 persons examinations on the rules of the road and boating safety, and performed more than 50,000 inspections on motor vehicles.

On another front, Coast Guard units in 1999 prevented 111,690 pounds of cocaine, 28,977 pounds of marijuana and 400 pounds of hashish from entering the United States and were also instrumental in the seizure of 15,000 pounds of marijuana and 15,000 avoirdupois ounces of hashish in New York.

The Air Facility at Waukegan Regional Airport is the newest unit of the Coast Guard's 9th District. The district's headquarters are in Waukegan, Wis., with offices in the Great Lakes states of Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania and New York.

On the Great Lakes, search and rescue units — aided by both reservists and auxiliary members — handle close to 1,200 cases annually. The Coast Guard's five busiest and were credited with saving the Coast Guard's lives during the 1998-99 season among the Coast Guard's 9th District. A facility in the area of the Great Lakes, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York.

The Waukegan unit was transferred through Congress by the U.S. House of Representatives in 1998. A facility in the area of the Great Lakes, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York.

Time is of the essence in search-and-rescue operations in southern Lake Michigan. Having the H-65 Dolphin helicopter and its crew based in Waukegan is a lifesaver for area boaters on the busy waters of Lake Michigan. Welcome aboard.

# Pot growers could reap jail time

■ Operation HEMP aims to crack down on local marijuana-growing operations

By STACEY SMITH  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY— Northern Michigan, with its remote areas, has become a popular spot for pot growers, police said.

But, state and local police are working together to wipe out marijuana crops as Operation HEMP (Help Eliminate Marijuana Planting) 2000 kicks off.

Operation HEMP, funded by the Federal Drug Enforcement Administration, is a cooperative effort between the Traverse Narcotics Team, state police, local sheriff's deputies and city police attempting to locate marijuana plants and arrest the growers.

"Michigan has become an increasingly popular state for growing marijuana because of its fertile soil and remote hidden sites," said state police Lt. Harvie Jarriell, a detective and coordinator of Operation HEMP.

"The street value of marijuana results in a very profitable cash

crop and in drug dealers stealing the use of land from unsuspecting farmers and land owners, including state-owned land," Jarriell said.

Growers often will start their marijuana plants indoors then transplant the plants to a field. Cornfields are popular because the cornstalks hide the marijuana plants from view, he said.

Operation HEMP uses state police and U.S. Coast Guard helicopters, but Kip Belcher, a TNT officer, said tips from local citizens can be one of the helpful tools in locating growing operations.

"This is a continuing, growing problem and we need the participation of everyone in the community," Belcher said.

A phoned-in tip resulted in the arrest last year of a man running one of the largest pot growing operations in northern Michigan, Belcher said.

Bradley Shugart, 48, of Leelanau County's Bingham Township pleaded guilty in January to growing more than 10,000 marijuana plants among the corn and sorghum on his farm. He was sentenced to 10 years in prison.

Police are interested in any tips, Belcher said.

"I don't care if it's two plants, 200 plants, or 2,000. We take a look at



Harvie Jarriell, right, and Kip Belcher talk about Operation Hemp during a news conference Monday morning at the Michigan State Police Post in Traverse City.

each complaint aggressively," he said.

Citizens should never investigate a suspected marijuana growing operation on their own, Jarriell said, because growing areas could contain traps to keep people away from the plants.

"These growers take their business very seriously and they are aggressively defending their crops," Belcher said.

■ Unusual amounts of traffic on and off the property (usually at night).

■ Use of tents, campers or other recreational vehicles on wooded property with no evidence of recreational activities taking place.

■ Unusual purchase of fertilizer, hose, plastic PVC pipe, chick en wire, lumber, machetes, camouflage netting and clothing.

■ Large amount of PVC pipe or irrigation hose in heavily wooded area.

■ Heavily patrolled or guarded woods, swamps or other remote areas.

■ Signs of an indoor growing operation include:

■ Buildings or greenhouses where structures would not normally be.

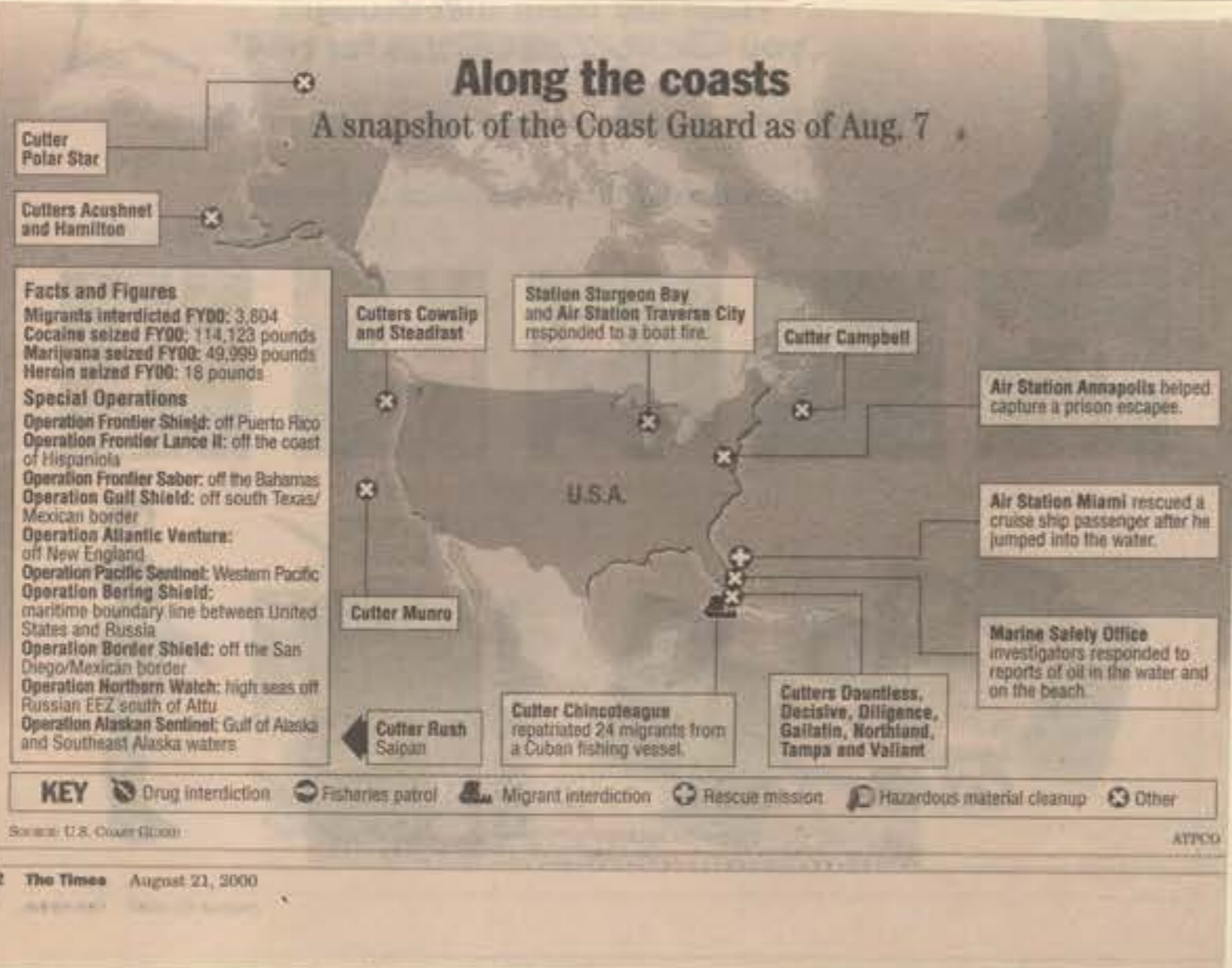
■ Unreasonable or fluctuating high utility bills.

■ Sealed or covered doors and windows.

■ Excessive use of ventilation and air conditioning systems.

■ Generators, large tanks or supplies of water, portable heaters, extension cords, heat lamps and fans, and heavily secured areas.

Those suspecting marijuana growing operations should call the Operation HEMP hotline at 1-800-235-HEMP or the TNT tipline at 1-800-338-0TNT.



# Montague teen feared drowned

By Lisa Medendorp and Rosemary Sullivan  
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITERS

A spur-of-the-moment decision to go swimming in storm-tossed Lake Michigan apparently cost a young Montague man his life Monday night.

The search for 19-year-old Christopher Jay Smith II was briefly resumed this morning near the White Lake Channel in Fruitland Township, but was halted by high winds. An approaching storm had forced rescuers to end their search late Monday.

Smith and Robert Strasser, 16, of Whitehall, decided to go swimming about 3 p.m. off the south side of the White Lake pier, witnesses said.

"We told them not to," said Jolie Kriesel, 14, of Whitehall, who had gone out onto the pier with Smith, Strasser and Veronica Morehouse, 15, also of Whitehall.

The young men got into trouble almost immediately.

Waves at the time, estimated at anywhere from 6 to 8 feet, were breaking over the pier and winds were gusting to nearly 40 mph. Lightning flickered on the horizon.

Strasser, who was treated at Hackley Hospital for hypothermia, told Muskegon County Sheriff's Deputy Edward Vanas that he and Smith first climbed down a ladder on the pier and found conditions "not that bad."

The police report said the two youths then jumped in off the pier, and "it was a lot worse than when they were by the ladder."

Strasser was swimming back toward the ladder when he heard Smith yelling for help. He turned around and grabbed his friend. Strasser was hur-



Dan Bowyer Jr. and his wife, Laura, of Whitehall, watch rescuers search for a possible drowning victim Monday night on the south side of the pier at the White Lake Channel. The U.S. Coast Guard helicopter, top of picture, aided in the search until weather conditions became too dangerous.

back to the pier "when a wave slammed him against the pier. That was the last time he saw Chris," Vanas wrote.

"They were screaming for help," Kriesel said. "I ran as fast as I could to find one of the life rings and I couldn't find one." Reports indicated that at least some of the life rings were missing from their stands. Authorities said the rings are a common target for

thieves.

Kriesel told the deputy that when she looked back, she saw Strasser pulling himself up the ladder. By the time she got back to him, he was lying on the pier. When she last saw Smith, "he was being pulled southwest from the pier," Vanas wrote.

Marjie Bronsink and her husband, Michael, of Whitehall, were walking from the pier to the light-

house when they looked back and "we saw the kids jump into the water."

She said that made her nervous, so she knocked on the door of the White River Light Station Museum and the lighthouse keeper called 911. She said she wanted the police to come and warn them it was dangerous to swim.

Please see DROWNING 2A ►

# Two survive plane crash

Two killed when twin-engine jet goes down north of Gogebic-Iron County Airport



By ANDY HILL  
Globe Associate Editor

Two persons were killed and two survived the late Monday crash of a twin-engine corporate jet which lost power after being struck by lightning.

The survivors were airlifted by U.S. Coast Guard rescue helicopter from the crash site, located off the Black River south of Copper Peak, shortly after 9 this morning. They were flown to the Gogebic-Iron County Airport and transported by ambulance to Grand View Hospital.

At least one of the victims was ambulatory, though their exact medical conditions are unknown.

Two passengers, a pilot and co-pilot were on board, said Flint businessman Don Williamson. Williamson said the plane is his and that those on board are his employees at Colonel's Brainerd International Raceway.

The company's attorney, George Peck, was among those on the plane, Williamson said. Peck called his wife this morning on his cell phone, and she in turn called Williamson.

Williamson said today, "He told her he was in good shape," Williamson said by phone from Brainerd, Minn. One other person was injured, but "the conversation ended before we knew about the conditions of the other two."

Wreckage was sighted by Life Flight Helicopter, out of Duluth, Minn., according to a Gogebic County Sheriff's Department press release.

A Life Flight crew member told *The Daily Globe* his aircraft was unable to find a landing site near the crash scene, and the helicopter is not equipped to lift people out of rugged country. The St. Mary's Duluth Hospital unit helped to direct the Coast Guard unit to the site.

The flight originated in Brainerd, Minn., said Scott Quick, a spokesman for Williamson. Williamson flew to Brainerd to assist in the search on Monday.

"The pilot had radioed loss of engines following the lightning strike, and was going to attempt to make an emergency landing at the Gogebic-Iron County Airport," said Gogebic County Sheriff Donald Pezzetti.

The Gogebic County Sheriff's Department said the Minneapolis Center contacted it shortly after 7 p.m., saying that the plane's pilot had reported the plane was hit by lightning, was experiencing a loss of power and was headed toward the Ironwood airport.

Emergency officials responded to the airport, but the plane did not land and the Minneapolis Center lost contact with the pilot, police said.

Gogebic-Iron County Airport Manager Joe Braspenick said the airplane was at about 19,000 feet when the last contact with the tower was made. He said it was surprising the plane made it so far north, given its anticipated rate of descent.

The Gogebic County medical examiner is on the scene, accord-

(See—CRASH, Page 4)

A survivor of Monday night's crash of a Sabreliner Twin Jet (shown at right) leans on the hood of a pickup truck at the Gogebic-Iron County Airport this morning after being recovered from the woods north of the airport by a Coast Guard rescue helicopter. An unidentified Coast Guard rescuer tries to console the man, one of two survivors of the crash. The survivors were transported to Grand View Hospital in Ironwood this morning. The map at lower right shows the approximate location of the crash. The pilot had radioed Minneapolis that the aircraft had been struck by lightning at approximately 6:20 p.m. Monday and attempted to make an emergency landing at Gogebic-Iron County Airport. Minneapolis Center lost contact with the plane and it never arrived at the airport, prompting the Gogebic County Sheriff's Department to initiate a search for the aircraft Monday night.



## Cellular phone provides lifeline to crash victims

By RALPH ANSAMI  
Globe News Editor

A cellular phone call from a survivor of Monday's night twin-engine plane crash in Gogebic County led authorities to find the downed aircraft.

The Gogebic County Sheriff's Department confirmed a cell phone call originated from the crash site.

An attorney, George Peck, was among those on the plane. The Associated Press said Peck called his wife this morning on his cell phone, and she in turn called the plane's owner, Don Williamson.

"He told her he was in good shape," Williamson said by phone from Brainerd, Minn. One other person was injured, but "the conversation ended before we knew about the conditions of the other two."

Iron County, Wis., Sheriff's Department dispatcher Tom Olszewski came into telephone

contact with a survivor of the crash this morning.

The caller described flowing water, downed trees, debris and a tower. It was then determined the site was about three miles north of the Gogebic-Iron County Airport.

Iron County Emergency Government Director Gary Gotta said the man dialed 911 and was connected with the Iron County Sheriff's Department.

The initial call was received at 6:10 a.m. and the sheriff's department was in contact with the man until about 9:05. Deputies, however, had no way of identifying which county the man was calling from.

"He saved his own life by talking us through it and describing details of where he was at," Gotta said.

The man apparently could

(See—PHONE, Page 4)

## Ohio men rescued on Lake Michigan

By BILL ECHLIN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

SOUTH MANITOU ISLAND — Two Ohio men who spent four hours in Lake Michigan and swam to South Manitou Island after their canoe capsized Friday afternoon were in good shape after being returned to the mainland by a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter.

The men, Jim Gillis, 44, and his son Dan Gillis, 19, of Westerville, were paddling out in the Manitou Passage between the Sleeping Bear Dunes and the islands when their 15-foot canoe was overturned by a large wave. The water was 62 degrees with up to four-foot waves at the time and winds were as much as 25 miles per hour.

— See CANOEISTS, Page 2C

## Men rescued on Lake Michigan

Continued from Page 1C

out of the east and southeast. A spokesman for the National Park Service said at first the pair, who were wearing life vests, tried to swim for the mainland. The offshore winds made that too difficult so they turned around and made for the island, passing their overturned canoe on the way. Once they made land near where the sunken freighter Morazan is, they hiked two miles to a ranger station. There they found a pay phone and made a 911 call to the Leelanau County Sheriff's dispatch center.

A National Park Service ranger on the mainland overheard a dispatcher talking about the call on a scanner and sent a radio message to the two rangers on the island, one of whom was able to meet up with the men 10 minutes after the call.

The pair, suffering hypothermia, were put into special "pumpkin" survivor suits to

warm them up. After a discussion with the Coast Guard about transporting them back to the mainland, it was decided to use a helicopter from Traverse City because the elder Gillis, who is legally blind, is a diabetic and did not have needed medication.

They were flown to Empire Airport where they were further stabilized and treated at which point a park service ranger drove them to their car in Glen Haven. They then returned to their campsite at the Platte River campground.

An NPS spokesman said the pair were experienced canoeists, having done trips totaling over 700 miles in the last three years together in both Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. Last summer, they had made the trip from Sleeping Bear Dunes to North Manitou Island, which is even further than the seven-mile trip between the dunes and South Manitou.

(Continued from Page 1)

hear noise from a Coast Guard helicopter and that helped find the plane.

A helicopter had also been dispatched from St. Luke's Hospital in Duluth, Minn., Gotta said.

Gotta said during the same approximate three-hour span, Olszewski was also in frequent communication with Federal Aviation Administration officials.

"He did a helluva job," Gotta said.

After ending his shift, Olszewski was relieved of his dispatching duties later in the morning.

"He was pretty beat," dispatcher Gerard Trcka said. Around the time the Iron County Sheriff's Department was notified the airplane had been hit by lightning Monday evening, several area residents reported they might have spotted the plane going down.

The accuracy of the reports could not be determined, especially since frequent bolts of lightning lit up the sky for a two-hour period around the time the plane went down.

At 8:14 p.m., Melvin Yeakle of Mercoer said he saw lightning flash and pieces of fire falling down east of U.S. 61 and north of the North Pole bar in Oma.

At 7:50 p.m., the Gogebic County Sheriff's Department received a report of a flash over the Pine Lake area in Iron County's Town of Oma area.

A report of a lightning flash and then a second bright flash was received on the north end of Stateline Road in the Town of Kimball from Joe Simonich around 5 p.m.

Gotta was notified of the situation at 8:31 p.m. Monday.

Since the initial report was that the plane was in trouble 15 miles southwest of the Gogebic-Iron Airport in a northeastern direction and the pilot reported a

loss of altitude around 6:20 p.m., a search began in the Saxon and Kimball areas just after 8 p.m. Monday. The plane had apparently advanced well beyond where it had last been tracked by the Minneapolis center.

Several Iron County squad cars were out this morning.

Coast Guard aircraft from both Duluth and Traverse City were also dispatched.

"We were very lucky," Iron County sheriff Robert Bruneau said. "Our dispatcher did a good job keeping the survivor on the phone and gathering information about their possible whereabouts."

(Continued from Page 1)

ing to the sheriff's department, and the bodies of two victims killed in the crash will be removed today.

Personnel from the Federal Aviation Administration and the National Transportation Safety Board were expected on the scene by about 2 this afternoon. The area has been secured and no access will be permitted until the investigation is complete, deputies said.

The sheriff's department would not comment on their condition and said it would release

information when it becomes available.

All terrain vehicles searched the heavily wooded area throughout the night.

The air search was hampered Monday night by the severe weather and was recommenced under better conditions this morning.

Many local volunteers assisted in the search, along with the Iron and Gogebic county sheriff's departments, Civil Air Patrol and Ironwood and Hurley police personnel.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.



Gogebic County Sheriff's Department deputies Larry Sanders, left, and Scott Voit scan a map this morning as they try to pinpoint the location of a small plane that reportedly was struck by lightning about 12 hours earlier. The sheriff's department said the Minneapolis Center contacted it shortly after 7 p.m. Monday, saying that the plane's pilot had reported a loss of power and was headed toward Ironwood Airport. The plane did not land and the Minneapolis Center lost contact with the pilot, police said. The plane was located about three miles north of the airport.



Daily News/ANDY KLEYVORN

**EMERGENCY** — Coast Guard airmen transport Michael Quaine to waiting Mason County Ambulance Service personnel Wednesday afternoon at Memorial Medical Center. Coast Guard Air Station Muskegon flew in with a helicopter to transport a crewman from the freighter Herbert T. Jackson to Memorial Medical Center Wednesday. The 600-foot freighter is shown here in a photo taken from the Coast Guard helicopter.



Submitted Photo

## USCG airlifts freighter hand to hospital

Coast Guard Station Ludington was called around 12:30 p.m. Wednesday to assist in a medical emergency on the waters of Lake Michigan.

According to Petty Officer Jason Hays at the Ludington station, a call came in from the 600-foot freighter Herbert T. Jackson that a crew member was having chest pains.

Coast Guard sent its 44-foot motor

lifeboat with an emergency medical technician who assessed the scene and administered first aid. A Coast Guard helicopter was called in to take Michael Quaine, 40, from the freighter to Memorial Medical Center.

According to Ensign Chuck Webb in Muskegon, the helicopter took about half an hour to reach Ludington.

The Muskegon crew lowered down another

EMT to the freighter, made sure the patient was stabilized, then transported him to the hospital.

Hays said the vessel was between eight and nine miles northwest of Ludington and that the Coast Guard crew was on the scene for over an hour.

Quaine was admitted to Memorial Medical Center and was listed in stable condition this morning.

## Rescue ends cold canoe trip

TRAVERSE CITY — Two lost canoeists suffering hypothermia in the Upper Peninsula were rescued late Saturday by a helicopter crew from the Traverse City Coast Guard station and ferried to Manistique Hospital.

The Coast Guard got a call that the pair were overdue from a canoe trip, which had started in the early afternoon of Saturday. The helicopter arrived on the

scene, on the Manistique River at Sturgeon Hole Creek north of Manistique, at about 11:30 p.m. Saturday. After a brief search the crew found the two, who had beached their 14-foot canoe and were waving for help when the helicopter came into view. A crew member was lowered and the two were then hoisted into the helicopter. The pair received first aid for hypothermia as they

were being taken to the hospital.

A Coast Guard spokesman said they had been out on the river for several hours, had no warm clothes, and temperatures were falling well below freezing.

Rescued were Jeffrey Perry, 19, and Joshua Bosanic, 12. The spokesman was unable to say where they lived.



# ThedaStar Dispatch

A publication of ThedaStar Air Medical Volume 5, Number 3 September 2000 1-800-236-2066

## THEDASTAR "ENLISTED" DURING DRILL WITH U.S. COAST GUARD

During the 2000 Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) convention in Oshkosh, the crew of ThedaStar had the opportunity to drill with the United States Coast Guard, as well as with members of the Winnebago County Sheriff's Department and EAA volunteers. The drill involved a simulated plane crash into Lake Winnebago. The "victim" was rescued from the water by the Coast Guard helicopter, who then flew the "patient" to a designated landing area, where the crew of ThedaStar continued "treatment" before transporting to Theda Clark Medical Center.

Tom Kaye, an instructor pilot for the Coast Guard, headed the four man crew. He reported that the Coast Guard operates 5 HH-65A Dauphin helicopters, the civilian equivalent airframe is the AS-365. They are based at Traverse City, Michigan. They are responsible for Lake Michigan, Lake Superior, and the northern portion of Lake Huron, serving as the primary search and rescue (SAR) for those waters, as well as inland lakes. While they will respond for searches over dry ground, that is primarily the responsibility of the Air Force.

From April to November, one aircraft is stationed at Muskegon, Michigan. This helps to decrease response time to the southern portion of Lake Michigan. From Memorial Day to Labor Day, an aircraft is also stationed at Waukegan, Illinois, to better cover the Chicago area.

Usual staffing consists of two pilots, one flight mechanic/hoist operator, and a rescue swimmer, who is trained at least to the EMT basic level. The aircraft does not routinely do "medical" transports.

The maximum gross weight of the aircraft is 9200 pounds. They usually cruise at 120 knots, with a fast cruise of 145 knots. Their hoist is rated at 600 pounds, with 245 feet of usable cable. They typically carry just over 2 hours worth of fuel, but can extend that to nearly 3 hours when required.



Record-Eagle/Am Bavin

Traverse City Central quarterback Seth Kovarik (holding football) leads the Trojans new high-powered passing attack. Also playing key roles will be, from left, Chris Ryan (9), Ross Williams (4), Micah Riecker (56), Ted Hall (50), Travis Beckeff (73), Jordan Fromholz (58), Travis Miller (45), Kevin Tarras (27), Willy Kurkewicz (1) and Andy Brumbaugh (78). Photo taken at U.S. Coast Guard Station in Traverse City.

## Air Attack

Trojans plan to open up the offense under Kelly Clark

### LUDINGTON

#### Coast Guard helicopter ferries man to hospital

The U.S. Coast Guard's helicopter rescue squad stationed at the Muskegon County Airport removed a crew member from a commercial ship on Lake Michigan Wednesday after the man started having chest pains.

The ship, the 600-foot Herbert J. Jackson, was about 8 miles from shore near Ludington when its crew sought help for a colleague with a history of heart problems, said Coast Guard Lt. Dan Leary.

A Coast Guard boat reached the ship first and helped stabilize the patient, then a helicopter from Muskegon lowered a stretcher, lifted the crew member on board and flew him to a hospital, Leary said.

The crew member, 40-year-old Michael Quaine, remained in Ludington Memorial Medical Center this morning. Hospital personnel would not comment on his condition. A Muskegon native, Chuck Webb, piloted the Coast Guard helicopter during the rescue.

# Hunter survives cold night lost in woods

■ Man lost in part of Sleeping Bear Dunes used pine boughs to keep warm

By STACEY SMITH  
Record-Eagle staff writer

GLEN ARBOR— A downstate hunter survived a night with temperatures below freezing when he got lost in part of the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Thursday.

William Waslar of New Baltimore, a 32-year-old with a prosthetic leg, kept warm overnight Thursday by piling pine boughs on himself, said Leelanau County

emergency services coordinator Dick Catton.

He found his way out of the woods around 8:30 a.m. Friday.

Waslar was hunting with a group of friends Thursday morning around 10 a.m., said Tom VanZoren of the National Park Service. The friends split up in the woods and agreed to meet at the road by 5:30 p.m. When Waslar did not meet his friends, they became worried and called police.

More than 70 searchers from various county departments covered a three-mile area south of Port Onoda, Catton said.

"Every department in the county sent somebody out."

In the dark, though, the searchers

— See MAN, Page 2A ▶

# Man lost in woods survives chilly night

◀ Continued from Page 1A  
had little luck.

"They covered a lot of terrain in the dark and did a good job, but they didn't find anyone," VanZoren said.

The Elmwood Township canine unit and a U.S. Coast Guard also joined the search to no avail.

On Friday, Waslar said he had seen the helicopter the night before, but the helicopter crew did

not see him. Waslar then decided to camp using the pine boughs as covering. He has mobility problems because of the prosthetic leg.

"I think he was wise in staying in one spot," Catton said.

Around 3 a.m. most of the searchers went home, but the Park Service kept searchers stationed along the perimeter of the search area.

By morning, units from Benzie and Grand Traverse counties, along

with more canine units from the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians and the Traverse City State Police, had joined the search.

Searching for lost hunters poses a special problem for rescuers, Catton said. There are other hunters in the woods and the potential for an accidental shooting.

"They were instructed to talk and make as much noise as they could,"

Catton said.

Searchers also wore bright orange jackets and the dogs wore orange vests, he said.

Eventually, Waslar made his way out of the woods unharmed. Although he had been out in the cold all night, he was not suffering from hypothermia, Catton said, and appeared to be in good health.

"The end result was perfect," Catton said.

# WHERE'S THE REINDEER?



Santa Claus arrived at a Toys for Tots kickoff campaign in Traverse City Saturday, arriving via a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter. Several vans were filled with Christmas toys, and more are needed for kids who may not receive any toys for Christmas.

## Special Thanks

- ☐ DNR State Parks & Rec. Division
- ☐ Leelanau State Park, Al Ammons
- ☐ U.S. Coast Guard Air Station, T.C.
- ☐ Manitou Trail Questers, Chapter #1204
- ☐ Northport Browns Troop
- ☐ Bells of Christmas, Northport
- ☐ Leelanau Memorial Care Center
- ☐ Village of Northport
- ☐ Sam's Club
- ☐ Michigan Council for Arts & Cultural Affairs - Michigan Humanities Council

### Volunteers

- Jane Antenucci
- Joey Bensley
- Ruth Brown
- Jean Buchman
- Peggy Bufe
- Don & Helen Bult
- Thea Connell
- Janet Dickerson
- Jack & Sally Frye
- Mary Ann Furness
- Cyndi Gaudette
- Dick & Bernadette Hufford
- Jim & Sue Landes
- Marilyn Leach
- Betty Livingston
- Doug McCormick
- Anita Myers
- Mary Russell
- Suzette Cooley-Sanborn
- Mary Scott
- Elizabeth Seager
- Janet Staley
- Stef Staley
- Virginia & Will Thomas

- ☐ Father Wayne, St. Michael's Church, Suttons Bay
- ☐ Neil Woodward
- ☐ Northport School Music Groups
- ☐ Bethany Lutheran Church Choir

Happy Holidays  
from all of us at the  
Grand Traverse Lighthouse  
Museum

Grand Traverse Lighthouse Museum  
P.O. Box 43, 15500 N. Lighthouse Pt. Rd., Northport, MI 49670  
(231) 386-7195 or email: [glhsc@gtrll.com](mailto:glhsc@gtrll.com)  
[www.grandtraverselighthouse.com](http://www.grandtraverselighthouse.com)

## Grand Traverse Lighthouse Museum Presents



## Christmas At The Lighthouse

Sunday, December 3rd, 2000  
12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m.



Sponsored by the Grand Traverse Lighthouse Museum,  
the Michigan Council for Arts & Cultural Affairs &  
the Michigan Humanities Council.

## Flying Santa Tradition

The "Flying Santa" tradition began the week before Christmas, 1929 when aviator, Capt. Bill Wincapaw, became lost in a winter storm off of the coast of Maine. While trying to find his way back to the Rockland airport, Capt. Wincapaw spotted the blinking light at the Dyce Head Lighthouse in Castine, Maine. Using this light as a landmark, as well as several other lights along the coast, he was able to find his way to safety.

In appreciation to the keepers who kept the lights burning that frightful night, Capt. Wincapaw returned several days later to each light station that helped to guide him home and dropped wrapped packages for the lighthouse families.

Capt. Wincapaw continued this tradition until 1936 when author Edward Rowe Snow took over. Together with his wife, Mr. Snow kept this tradition alive for nearly 43 years visiting many lighthouses along the east coast as well as California and the Great Lakes. Today, the tradition is still going strong by a group called the Friends of Flying Santa of Hull, Massachusetts. This year they will deliver gifts to families gathered at 29 lighthouses in six eastern states.

Thanks to the U.S.C.G. Air Station, Traverse City for helping us keep this tradition alive at the Grand Traverse Lighthouse.

For more information contact: Grand Traverse Lighthouse Museum at (231) 386-7195.

# Fitzgerald's last companion still serves Great Lakes



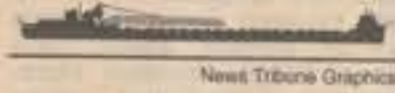
The Arthur M. Anderson, backing through ice under the Blatnik Bridge, was the last laker to have contact with the fated Edmund Fitzgerald. Twenty-five years later, the Anderson still plies the Great Lakes and still hauls taconite from Northeastern Minnesota. The Anderson remains valuable to the Great Lakes Fleet, said Fred Cummings, the fleet's marine superintendent. "It's here to stay," he said. "We're banking on another 25 years."

## Arthur M. Anderson survived Nov. 10 storm 25 years ago

News Tribune

### ARTHUR M. ANDERSON

**Length:** 767 feet  
**Beam:** 70 feet  
**Horsepower:** 7,000  
**Max. cargo capacity:** 25,300 tons  
**Type of vessel:** Self-unloader  
**Owner:** USS Great Lakes Fleet, Inc., Duluth.  
**Built:** 1952, American Shipbuilding Co., Lorain, Ohio.  
**Background:** The Anderson was following the Edmund Fitzgerald when it sank on Nov. 10, 1975. Her crew was sent to search for the Fitz.



News Tribune Graphics

A quarter-century after guiding the Edmund Fitzgerald during a monster storm and heroically turning back to search for the missing ship, the 48-year-old Arthur M. Anderson today sails in relative obscurity, quietly hauling taconite from northern Minnesota to lower Great Lakes steelmaking centers.

It was a different story on Nov. 10, 1975. As wind and waves grew by the hour, Capt. Ernest McSorley of the Fitzgerald and Capt. Bernie Cooper of the Anderson agreed to follow an alternate, hopefully calmer, route across Lake Superior. Fate had separate paths for the freighters.

Sailing eastward into 25-foot waves and 90-mph winds along the Canadian shore of Lake Superior, the Fitzgerald began to falter, losing its radar, taking on water and developing a list before sinking.

Meanwhile, the less-powerful Anderson remained strong, providing navigational assistance via radio, tracking the Fitz until she disappeared, then turning back into treacherous seas to conduct a search.

As daylight emerged Nov. 11, only an oil slick, life raft and several life jackets remained of the Fitzgerald. The Anderson, however, continues to sail.

Built in 1952 for the U.S. Steel Great Lakes Fleet, the steamship began its career as a 647-foot ore carrier. It gained an additional 120 feet during the winter of 1974-75 at Fraser Shipyards in Superior, eclipsing the Fitzgerald by 38 feet. Seven years later, the

Anderson gained self-unloading capabilities.

Today, it's one of 11 vessels operated by the Great Lakes Fleet. Offering seven compartments, it can carry 28,400 net tons, about the same as its three sister ships — the Cason J. Callaway, Philip R. Clark and John G. Munson.

That's just a fraction of the hauling capacity of newer lakers. The Edgar B. Speer, Edwin H. Gott and Presque Isle, also owned by the Great Lakes Fleet, each carries more than 73,000 tons. Still, the Anderson remains a valuable asset, said Fred Cummings, the fleet's marine superintendent.

"It gets along real good and continues to haul a lot of cargo," he said. "It's here to stay. We're banking on another 25 years."

## The sinking of the Edmund Fitzgerald

Twenty-five years have passed since the wreck of ore carrier Edmund Fitzgerald was discovered 330 feet below Lake Superior. Her crew of 29 was lost and explanations of her sinking are still disputed.



**Built:** 1958, cost \$8.4 million  
**Cargo:** 26,000 tons of taconite  
**Crew:** 29, led by Capt. Ernest McSorley

### FINAL VOYAGE:

#### Nov. 9

- 1 2:20 p.m. Departs Superior
- 2 4 p.m. Meets freighter Arthur M. Anderson
- 7 p.m. Gale warnings issued
- 3:40 p.m. All ships on lake directed by Coast Guard to find safe anchorage
- 4:10 p.m. McSorley reports both radars are out; requests navigational help

#### Nov. 10

- 3 a.m. Distress upgraded to storm warnings
- 1 p.m. Fitzgerald abandons normal shipping lanes, seeks shelter closer to Six Fathom Shoal area
- 2:45 p.m. Anderson alters course to clear shoals
- 3:30 p.m. Capt. McSorley reports ship has a fence rail down; two vents lost and a list; slows so Anderson can catch up
- 7:10 p.m. Last communique with Anderson before Fitzgerald sinks; McSorley reports, "We are holding our own."
- 7:15 p.m. Fitzgerald last seen on the Anderson's radar
- 7:25 p.m. No sign of the Fitzgerald



**PREVAILING THEORIES:**

- Grounding at Six Fathom Shoals: Fitzgeraldman atop shoals; low section of hull, trapped loading
- Loss of buoyancy, stability: Massive flooding of cargo holds due to obstructive hatch



Greg Kirby drove to Duluth from Winnipeg to learn more about shipwrecks and for a chance to meet Capt. Dudley Paquette, subject of "The Night the Fitz Went Down," a book on the sinking of the Edmund Fitzgerald, on Saturday at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center.

## Shipwreck buffs descend on conference

By Mary Thompson  
News Tribune staff writer

The Edmund Fitzgerald is Lake Superior's most famous shipwreck — but it is far from the only one.

The 530 vessels lying in Lake Superior's chilly waters have long fascinated divers and maritime history buffs, said maritime historian Frederick Stonehouse.

The two groups gathered this weekend to discuss diving techniques and shipwreck lore at the "Gales of November," Duluth's 13th annual shipwreck and diving program.

The conference drew 600 people to the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center on Friday evening and Saturday, nearly triple the number who attended last year.

Some speculated the increase was due in part to Friday being the 25th anniversary of the sinking of the Edmund Fitzgerald.

Others said the Fitzgerald is never far from the minds of people interested in Lake Superior shipwrecks. Stonehouse, a Michigan college professor who has written several books on Great Lakes shipwrecks, said conversation always turns to the Fitzgerald at conferences like Gales of November.

"Every time Great Lakes divers get together, the Fitzgerald is there," Stonehouse said. "It has become part of the legend of the Great Lakes."

The legend drew Tom and Marit Brock, a St. Paul couple who arrived at the conference in time to hear a retired captain discuss his theories on the sinking of the Edmund Fitzgerald.

"We're enthralled with Lake Superior shipwrecks and the history," said Tom Brock, who added that he and his wife were also in town to see Gordon Lightfoot tonight at the DECC.

The conference touched on a number of other issues, includ-

### "You can really reach out and touch history."

Frederick Stonehouse, maritime historian, on the appeal of Lake Superior's shipwrecks to divers

ing presentations on the latest underwater breathing technology and new sonar readings of Lake Superior's floor.

The annual shipwreck and diving program has become a lucrative fund-raiser for the Lake Superior Maritime Museum Association, the event's sponsor for the past three years.

"It's a good blend of history and diving," said Tom Kucinski, the Maritime Museum's program chairman.

The event started in 1988 as a way for divers to share their techniques for exploring Superior shipwrecks.

Of the 530 sunken ships in

Lake Superior, about 150 of them are within reach of recreational divers.

Stonehouse said Superior's cold, clear waters make the lake a perfect museum for shipwreck divers.

"You can really reach out and touch history," Stonehouse said.

But the sinking of the Fitzgerald, in deep waters inaccessible to most divers, remains a mystery that may never be solved.

"There were no survivors. No witnesses," Stonehouse said. "Twenty-five years later we still don't know how it sank. I don't think we ever will."

Mary Thompson writes about higher education. She can be reached by e-mail at [mthompson@duluthnews.com](mailto:mthompson@duluthnews.com) or by calling (218) 723-5340.

## Fitzgerald legacy lies in safer ships

By Ron Broderick  
News Tribune staff writer

Twenty-five years after the Edmund Fitzgerald sank in Lake Superior near Whitefish Point, much about the Port of Duluth-Superior inevitably remains unchanged.

Ships regularly come and go from early spring until early winter, hauling the vast majority of Minnesota's tonnage to eastern mills.

Mariners continue to sail during good weather and bad, performing difficult tasks that most people take for granted.

And Lake Superior still shows a split personality, beaming with charm during pleasant weather, then scaring as fall advances.

But numerous subtle changes have occurred that provide more safety for merchant mariners. Experts can only wonder whether each might have saved the Fitzgerald's crew of 29, but combined, they have contributed to a quarter-century of safer sailing for the Great Lakes merchant fleet.

Technology to make sailing safer was in an infant stage in 1975, said Lt. Martin Walker, chief of vessel inspection at the U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Office in Duluth.

For example, the 729-foot freighter had 17 years old when it sank; did not have an electronic depthfinder something now common even on small fishing boats. Instead, the Fitzgerald depended on "lead soundings" — throwing a cone-shaped steel sinker overboard and measuring water depth by looking at markings on a rope.

"You can really reach out and touch history," Stonehouse said.

But the sinking of the Fitzgerald, in deep waters inaccessible to most divers, remains a mystery that may never be solved.

"There were no survivors. No witnesses," Stonehouse said. "Twenty-five years later we still don't know how it sank. I don't think we ever will."

Twenty-five years ago Friday, the Edmund Fitzgerald sailed past the lighthouse at the Superior Entry and into history. When it sank, 29 lives were lost and many northern communities were shaken. The association with the ship and its tragic voyage has yet to diminish. To mark the occasion, the News Tribune spent last week revisiting the legend, the scoundrel, the families, the theories and the memorials.



Remembering the Fitzgerald





## Christmas at the Lighthouse

Record-Eagle/John L. Russell

Left, Hunter Kellogg, 2, of Northport, stores a bag of Santa after taking a bag of Christmas goodies from him at the Grand Traverse Lighthouse Sunday. The facility, built in 1858, features a museum that boasts a foghorn house, light tower tours, and refreshments each December. Below, a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter lifts a rescue basket as Santa Claus walks away with two bags of holiday treats for visitors to the Grand Traverse Lighthouse Sunday. The annual Christmas at the Lighthouse openhouse drew hundreds of visitors, who climbed the tower, ate cookies, and listened to holiday music at the light, located north of Northport at the tip of the Leelanau peninsula.



## Police capture fugitive facing rape charges

By PATRICK SULLIVAN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRaverse CITY — A man who disappeared two years ago while awaiting trial on charges of first-degree criminal sexual conduct was captured downstate Wednesday by the Michigan State Police.

Daniel Lee Downey, 28, was returned to Traverse City Thursday to face charges in connection with the alleged rape of a girl under 13 years old in 1998. At a circuit court arraignment Thursday afternoon, Downey was refused bail.

In the fall of 1998 Downey abandoned his pickup truck in woods near a lake near his Fife Lake home, apparently in an effort to lead authorities to believe he committed suicide.

Grand Traverse Sheriff's investigators searched for a body and found nothing and later treated Downey as a missing person. A fugitive warrant was issued for Downey, who was free on bond.

after he failed to appear for a circuit court hearing.

The charges carry a penalty of up to life in prison.

Downey was located at a relative's house in Bellville after a two-year search by the state police fugitive team, the FBI and police in northern Michigan.

State police credited the arrest to a new radio system that has only been in place in Traverse City for about one year. Using the radio, police in Traverse City can communicate instantly with police in the Detroit area to relay information from interviews about locations where Downey might have been hiding.

Downey's family is being investigated for whatever role they might have played in helping Downey avoid capture, said state police Sgt. Mark Harris.

He said Downey's father died several months ago, and Daniel Downey was listed in the obituary as having preceded his father in death.

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INSIDE

Weather  
Page 2B

Obituaries  
Page 3B

TRaverse CITY  
RECORD-EAGLE

# LOCAL

48

1B

Wednesday  
December 27, 2000

## Toys for Tots distributes more than 5,800 toys

Toy donations supplied more than 1,600 children with gifts for Christmas

By SHELLEY R. BURGESS  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRaverse CITY — More than 1,600 area children whose only hope for Christmas presents was the generosity of anonymous Santas found everything from construction toys to Barbie dolls under their trees Monday morning.

More than 5,800 toys were dis-

tributed to children in northwest Lower Michigan this Christmas through the Toys for Tots campaign.

The success of this year's campaign was not only the number of toys donated but the quality, organizers said.

"Anyone would have been proud to put these toys under the tree for their children," said Mike Kent, Toys for Tots promotions director. "The community really

had a tremendous outpouring of giving quality toys this year. There was a wide variety."

The most popular and plentiful include Beanie Babies, Barbie dolls, stuffed animals and construction toys.

Kent credited support from local businesses and organizations for the campaign's success. They started collecting toys early and it only escalated from there, he said.

Members of the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station collected toys from 30 locations while the Marine Corps League helped sort them.

Members of the Young Marines assisted with promotional events.

Toys were distributed through the Father Fred Foundation, Women's Resource Center, Salvation Army, Doula Teen Parent Program, Goodwill Inn, Mancelona Family Resource Cen-

ter, Child Guidance Center and the Grand Traverse County Health Department.

Kent said it's never too early to start collecting for next year's Toys for Tots campaign.

The toys can be collected and put away until the event kicks off again in November.

For more information about Toys for Tots, call United Way of Northwest Michigan at (231) 947-3200.

# United States Coast Guard Helicopter Returns



Scheeeeeeeeee! Not a particularly mellow sound, but the most comforting sound anyone in trouble on Lake Michigan can hear. It is the sound, the distinctive sound, of the United States Coast Guard HH-65A "Dolphin" rescue helicopter.



for the first time there was an Air Facility Deployment of one of these aircraft to Waukegan, Illinois. It was only operated during the summer, between Memorial Day and Labor Day with two crews of four deploy-

ing there together for two weeks at a time. Each crew consists of a pilot, co-pilot, flight mechanic, and rescuer swimmer. The two crews alternate working 24 hours on and 24 hours off to be "always ready". Their rigorous training and personal dedication allow these

crews the fortitude to brave bad weather and circumstances to assist people in trouble on Lake Michigan. Although only in the area for a few weeks, these resources are warmly welcomed and sorely needed in our heavily populated area with extensive marine interests and activity. The return of a permanent year round station would surely keep us all safer as we hope never to need to hear that sound. ■■■

Since the closing of Glenview Naval Air Station, there has not been a Coast Guard helicopter stationed in the Chicago area. There are five stationed at Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City, Michigan and this year

Yachting in Chicago 2000 27



STEVE ZUCKER/FNEWS-REVIEW



## Practice makes perfect

People in the area of the Petoskey city marina Thursday afternoon were treated to their own small air show as a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter from Traverse City conducted training exercises with members of the Petoskey and Emmet County dive teams. **ABOVE:** Dive team members watch as the H-65 Dolphin helicopter arrives from Traverse City and circles the bay before landing in the open space behind city hall. **BELOW:** U.S. Coast Guard rescue swimmer AST3 Matt High (right) gives instructions to dive team member James Sheffer prior to training exercises. **LEFT:** High and a dive team member appear to stand on top of the Bayfront Park clock tower as the helicopter hoists them from the 36 degree waters of Little Traverse Bay.



## INVESTIGATION OF THE INDEPENDENCE FIREWORKS COMPANY

For the second time in four months, an explosion rocked the Independence Fireworks Company located in Hillsdale County.

The explosion occurred in Building 15 at approximately 8:35 a.m. on Monday, March 29, and claimed the lives of the co-owners and three employees.

The Michigan State Police and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) assisted the Hillsdale County Sheriff's Department in the investigation into the deadly blast. The victims were identified as co-owner Robert Slayton, his wife Patricia, and employees Lea Jo Dunning, Scott Blurton, and Rick Wiggins.

While this explosion remains under investigation, results of a MIOSHA investigation into the



The re-  
Ind

December explosion that claimed seven lives revealed numerous worker safety violations. As a result, Independence Professional Fireworks was fined \$562,500. State inspectors said they did not close the factory while investigating the December incident because activity there failed to meet the "imminent danger" level required by law.



# THE BAY CITY TIMES

Sunday, February 4, 2001

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## ICE RESCUE HELICOPTER

With warm temperatures and lots of ice fishermen in town, the U.S. Coast Guard is keeping a close eye on conditions and has moved in a Traverse City-based helicopter so it is

# Ready for Action



▲ Lt. Neil Wilson, left, and co-pilot Ensign Rob McCaskey man the cockpit on the ground at James Clements Airport Friday.



▲ The French-built Dauphin helicopter lands at James Clements Airport Friday in readiness for the weekend.



Dick Van Nostrand ■ Times Photo

▲ Crew chief George Lutz, left, and rescue swimmer Matt High exit the helicopter after arriving at James Clements Airport Friday.

## Coast Guard equipment and personnel are in place if needed

By Patti Brandt  
TIMES WRITER

A four-member U.S. Coast Guard search-and-rescue helicopter crew landed at James Clements Airport Friday, ready for just about anything Mother Nature wanted to dish out this weekend.

The 6,700-pound, twin-engine, bright-orange Dauphin helicopter can be airborne and rescuing ice-bound fishermen on Saginaw Bay in less than 30 minutes.

Unstable ice conditions, caused by recent warm temperatures, prompted the U.S. Coast Guard to send the craft to Bay City from its Traverse City station to monitor the crowd expected on the ice for this weekend's annual Sliver on the River walleye-fishing tournament.

The aircraft is commanded by Neil Wilson, a lieutenant with nine years of flight experience in the Coast Guard. Wilson says each ice rescue is different.

"We don't really have any canned response, because it all depends on the situation," Wilson said.

For people stranded on ice, he said, a helicopter rescue can be the only way out.

The first thing done in an ice rescue, he said, is a quick assessment of the situation — the size of the ice floe, how many people are stranded, whether they are injured or can walk, and the speed and direction of the wind.

Those conditions deter-

mine how the crew can do a "light on wheels" landing, where the helicopter softly touches down on a large ice floe and hovers in place.

If the ice won't support a light-on-wheels landing, the craft hovers above. If winds are too strong, the crew has to do a "high hover."

The rotor wash, or wind generated by the spinning blades of the helicopter, can reach 60 mph, Wilson said.

"Unless we do a real high hover, we might actually make the situation worse — we could even blow them off the ice floe."

Whatever technique is used, the sliding door on the right side of the helicopter opens, the boom emerges

and a basket capable of lifting 600 pounds comes out on a quarter-inch-thick steel cable that can extend 245 feet.

The helicopter is co-piloted by Ensign Rob McCaskey, who has 14 years of experience in the U.S. Army and has been with the Coast Guard for six months.

"I'm pretty much there as an assistant to the aircraft commander," McCaskey said.

While the commander is busy operating the helicopter, McCaskey is navigating, monitoring fuel levels and talking on the radio to get coordinates for landings at hospitals or the nearest airport for a refueling stop.

George Lutz, with 20 years in the Coast Guard, is the crew's aviation

See HELICOPTER, 2A

**"We don't really have any canned response, because it all depends on the situation."**

— Lt. Neil Wilson



Dick Van Nostrand ■ Times Photo

▲ Crew members check out the helicopter after landing Friday at James Clements Airport.

## HELICOPTER in town in case ice rescue needed

From 1A

maintenance technician. His job is troubleshooting and doing repairs if something on the helicopter breaks while the crew is away from the Coast Guard station.

"Their job is to fly the aircraft. My job is to back up what they're doing," Lutz said. "All of our jobs work hand-in-hand."

Lutz also operates the boom during rescues.

Perhaps the riskiest job in the crew belongs to Aviation Survival Technician Matt High, or, as he puts it, "the guy in the back."

High, who is also a trained emergency medical technician, is the rescue swimmer who leaves the aircraft to get anyone who needs help into the helicopter.

His tools include a diver's dry

**"Sometimes, people underestimate the elements and get themselves in trouble."**

— Lt. Neil Wilson

suit, ice awls and picks, ice cleats that clamp onto the bottom of his boots, snow shoes, mask, snorkel and fins.

Standard equipment on the helicopter, which weighs 8,000 pounds when fully loaded and crewed, includes a thermo-recovery capsule for victims of hypothermia; a forward-looking infrared video camera, used to search for lost hunters; night

vision goggles and medical equipment — oxygen, an automated external defibrillator and a combi-tube, a plastic tube that is inserted in a person's trachea to assist breathing.

Search-and-rescue teams are considered the bread and butter of the Coast Guard, Wilson said.

Although they are busier in the summer months with boaters and other lake activity, this time of the year — when the ice might be thinning — can be dangerous.

"Sometimes, people underestimate the elements and get themselves in trouble," Wilson said.

The helicopter and its crew were not needed by nightfall Saturday, the Coast Guard reported.

—Patti Brandt is a Staff writer with The Times. She can be reached at 894-3673.



# TRaverse CITY RECORD-EAGLE

FEBRUARY 10, 2001

NORTHERN MICHIGAN'S NEWSPAPER

50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.50 SUNDAY

**"When I initially saw the wreckage, I didn't think there'd be anybody alive in it."**

**Rob McCaskey,  
U.S. Coast Guard co-pilot**

## Four survive plane crash

**Husband watches as plane disappears into night; pilot, co-pilot die in Beaver Island wreck**

By JOHN FLESHER  
Associated Press Writer

CHARLEVOIX — A charter plane with a woman, her three children and two crew members crash landed on mist-shrouded Beaver Island in northern Lake Michigan, killing the crew and injuring the passengers, authorities said Friday.

The suburban Chicago family was on the way to the island Thursday night, where the woman's husband was awaiting them, said Charlevoix County Sheriff George Lasater.

As the husband watched, the plane flew over the airport — and then disappeared. He then spent the night waiting for news, convinced his family was dead, Lasater said.

The plane crashed about a mile away and the woman and children spent the chilly night in the wrecked plane, with rain and sleet falling, the temperature hovering around 34 degrees. The next morning, a small plane spotted the wreckage on a heavily wooded bluff and a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter rescued them.

The mother and her children were flown to Charlevoix Area Hospital. Mirth Gault, 42, was in stable condition and her sons, Adam Gault, 13, and Alec Gault, 5, were in good condition, said hospital spokeswoman Tamara Stevens. Nine-year-old Emma Gault was in fair condition, she said. The family asked that details of their injuries not be released.

Because of the poor weather, Robert Gault was unable



to reach the mainland until late Friday afternoon. He caught a flight on Island Airways and went directly to the hospital, where he was reunited with his wife and children. He declined to comment. The family is from Orland Park, Ill.

The dead were identified as pilot Curtis Logan, 51, of Little Falls, Minn., and co-pilot Steve Erhart, 23, of Elgin, Ill. Authorities did not give a cause of the crash but said clouds were low and visibility limited at the time.

Though no rain was falling when the plane went down, flight conditions were less than ideal in the area, with heavy clouds at 900 feet and a temperature of 34 degrees,

according to National Weather Service meteorologist Brian Adam.

"The ceiling's our concern at that point," he said. "It would be considered IFR conditions — Instrument Flight Rules. The pilot would have to be certified to fly using instruments."

According to the Coast Guard, the Merlin IV C twin engine turboprop plane took off from Chicago Midway and last contacted air traffic controllers at 7:20 p.m. EST, when it was 10 to 15 miles from the island.

Authorities on the island said they heard a low-flying plane pass overhead about 10

— See BEAVER, Page 2A ▶



Wm. J. Costello/CFR



Record-Eagle/John L. Russell

Above, AST Kevin Ott, a U.S. Coast Guard rescue swimmer, talks to the media about rescuing four people from a downed aircraft on Beaver Island Friday morning. Below, the remains of a commuter airplane lie among trees on Beaver Island in a frame from a U.S. Coast Guard video.



## Practice was key to rescue of family

**U.S. Coast Guard crew was surprised, relieved to find family alive in wreck**

By PATRICK SULLIVAN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRaverse CITY — The crew aboard a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter didn't know what to expect Friday morning as the chopper flew toward the heavily wooded bluff where a twin-engine plane had crashed the night before.

"When I initially saw the wreckage, I didn't think there'd be anybody alive in it," co-pilot Rob McCaskey said.

But there was hope. Within minutes after the Coast Guard helicopter from Traverse City had reached the island and started its search, Paul Welke, a private pilot from Island Airways, spotted the wreckage from the air about two miles south of the Beaver Island Airport.

Welke had good news. Someone was waving a life jacket from an opening in the wreckage, and Cmdr. Tom Kaye, the helicopter pilot, knew there would be a rescue.

Within minutes, Coast Guard officer Kevin Ott, normally a rescue swimmer, was lowered to the ground in a basket to look for survivors. The crew could smell fuel from the crash as they hovered above the wreckage and Ott said the smell became more intense as he reached the ground.

Amid the debris and the sound of rain and sleet hammering on the metal of the aircraft, Ott discovered that three children and their mother, Mirth Gault, had survived the crash.

"I didn't know what I was going to find and I was pretty surprised to find four survivors," Ott said. "Thank God," Gault gasped as he approached the plane. When he asked whether the pilot and co-pilot were alive, she made it clear, without speaking, that they had not, Ott said.

But the horror of having spent the night with two dead men gave way to the realization that the family was going to be rescued. "There was a lot of joy," Ott said. "I was glad to be there."

Ott soon discovered that the four survivors were suffering badly from having spent the night in the cold.

— See WIFE, Page 2A ▶

## Wife, 3 children rescued after plane goes down

Continued from Page 1A

Of the three children, 9-year-old Emma Gault was showing the most serious signs of hypothermia. Ott quickly prepared to hoist her to the helicopter in the basket. Five-year-old Alec went next, followed by his 13-year-old brother Adam and finally their mother.

A second helicopter had arrived at the scene by then and was available to transport anybody who needed immediate medical attention. Because the family showed no signs of serious injury aside from hypothermia, Ott decided to keep them together.

He went to the aircraft one more time to confirm that the pilot and co-pilot were dead and then he returned to the helicopter.

Once all were aboard the heli-

copter, they headed to the Charlevoix Airport where two ambulances were waiting to take them to a hospital.

The rescue reminded Kaye, McCaskey, Ott, and flight mechanic Trent Ganz why they spend so many days in training despite being called on only a few times a year to perform their duties.

"We do a lot of training. Sometimes the training gets boring and monotonous, but the training is for a case like this," Kaye said.

Ganz made sure the children were wrapped in blankets on the flight to Charlevoix and held the mother's hand. Suddenly, he said, the importance of training for an emergency struck him.

"I looked back and all the kids were there. The kids were smiling, that's when it hit me," Ganz said.

Weather conditions in Traverse City Friday morning almost made the rescue impossible. Crews made several attempts to take off before Kaye and his crew made it out of the base on their second try.

Helicopters don't have de-icing equipment and in cold weather they can't fly into clouds. On Friday morning, the ceiling was about 100 feet, making it impossible to clear power lines en route to West Bay.

Crews attempted to take off about every 15 minutes, and on his second attempt Kaye was able to make it to East Bay where he could fly north to Beaver Island. By the time they reached the island, conditions improved and they had a 500-foot ceiling and visibility of 400 to 500 feet.

They were also hampered on their way into Charlevoix where fog in the area made visibility so

bad they couldn't find the airport. Kaye said he was considering landing at the Charlevoix High School football field or heading back out to Lake Michigan for a second approach when they located the airport.

## Beaver Island crash claims 2

Continued from Page 1A

minutes later. When the plane failed to land at the island airfield, the Coast Guard began a search. But rough conditions forced helicopters to suspend their search Thursday night and delayed the resumption until mid-morning.

Coast Guard surface ships searched for the plane through the night.

Beaver Island, a summer holiday destination, has a year-round population of 450 and a higher population dur-

ing the summer. It is 53 square miles, with seven inland lakes, hiking trails and campgrounds.

The island also features car, bike and boat rentals, a bank, medical center, library, taxi service, two airports, two marinas and two lighthouses.

"It's a quiet little place, unique people, some great characters out there," said Jeremy McBain, editor of the Charlevoix Courier. "The downtown is one of the few places with a paved road."

## 'FORTUNATE THING' Beaver Island rescuers expect none, find four alive

By Ken Kolker ■ The Grand Rapids Press

**BEAVER ISLAND** — As he hovered the rescue helicopter above the treetops on Friday, U.S. Coast Guard pilot Chuck Webb didn't expect to find survivors in the plane that crashed the night before in the thick forest.

The charter plane left a long trail through the hardwoods and pines and lay on the forest floor, the cockpit folded back, the tail snapped at a 90-degree angle from the fuselage.

Then he and other Coast Guard crew members saw the bright orange-yellow life preserver waving out a hole in the fuselage.

Minutes later, he watched in amazement as Coast Guard rescue swimmer Kevin Ott kept sending up the metal mesh basket with more survivors — a mother and all three of her children from suburban Chicago.

"I hear the swimmer's got one coming, and I thought, 'Wow this is great,'" said Webb, a Muskegon native. "Then, there's one more, one more, one more. I was surprised when we had one to start with, but then to get four. That was a fortunate thing."

Ott said he also couldn't believe it when he looked into the fuselage. The mother, Mirth Gault, 42, was still looking up at the helicopter above. She hadn't seen Ott coming.

"Thank God," she said when she finally saw Ott standing outside in more than 2 feet of snow.

The 12-seat charter plane, a Merlin IV C twin-engine, turbo-prop, crashed about 7:30 p.m. Thursday just west of the island's airport in freezing rain, snow and fog.

The crash killed the pilot, Curtis Logan, 51, of Little Falls, Minn., and co-pilot Steve Erhart, 23, of Elgin, Ill. Their bodies were found near the cockpit. Gault, her daughter and two sons survived almost unscathed.

"They're in good shape, except for some bruises, abrasions and exposure. They're very lucky to be alive," Charlevoix County Sheriff George Lasater said.

The plane was about 1½ hours out of Chicago's Midway Airport on Thursday evening when it swooped down to about 500 feet above Beaver Island's small airstrip. Robert Gault, whose family was on board, watched as it circled away over Lake Michigan, apparently preparing to land. It never came back.

Gault, a commodities trader on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, and his



Setting to safety: A Coast Guard helicopter hovers over the woods as Mirth Gault rises in a rescue basket Friday morning in this video frame.



Securing the survivors: This Coast Guard helicopter crew airlifted the mother and three children from the crash site. From left, they are: Lt. j.g. Chuck Webb and Ensign Rob McCaskey, co-pilots; Lt. Cmdr Tom Koye, pilot (at rear); and rescue swimmer ASTJ Kevin Ott.

family has a vacation home just east of the airport. They live in Orland Park, Ill.

Investigators from the National Transportation Safety Board were expected to arrive at the crash scene today, Charlevoix County Sheriff George Lasater said.

Lasater said snow and low visibility kept sheriff's staff from reaching the island Friday.

"We can't even get the deceased back to the mainland," he said. "They're in an ambulance waiting to be transported."

Because of the poor weather, Robert Gault was unable to reach the mainland until late Friday afternoon. He caught a flight on Island Airways and went directly to Charlevoix Area Hospital, where he was reunited with his wife and children. He declined comment.

Mirth Gault, 42, and her daughter, 9-year-old Emma, were in fair condition and her sons, Adam Gault, 13, and Alec

## Mom, kids feared for dad

By John Flesher  
The Associated Press

**CHARLEVOIX** — For 15 harrowing hours, Chicago trader Robert Gault waited while the Coast Guard and volunteers searched lake and woodland for the plane that disappeared carrying his family.

His wife and three children were safe — but worried. "They were more concerned about their father than they were themselves," he said after speaking with the family at Charlevoix Area Hospital late Friday. "They knew they would be rescued eventually. But they were very concerned that their father might think that they were not

going to return."

Their charter to Beaver Island crashed in a wooded bluff Thursday. The pilot and co-pilot died.

Surviving with what authorities described as only cuts and bruises, Mirth Gault, her daughter and two sons spent a chilly night in the wreckage, with rain and sleet falling.

"They huddled together, prayed and waited for light so they could hopefully be rescued," Lasater said.

The next morning, they heard a helicopter overhead and knew people were searching for them. When they saw a small plane, the mother waved a life vest to attract attention, and a Coast Guard helicopter rescued them.

## FORTUNATE

Rescuer on ground carried kids

CONTINUED FROM A1

Gault, 5, were in good condition at Charlevoix Area Hospital, a nursing supervisor said. The family asked that details of their injuries not be released.

For 15 hours, the Coast Guard searched the lake — first with helicopters and then with ice cutters — until a passing commuter plane spotted the wreckage on a heavily wooded bluff about 2½ miles from the airport.

Helicopter crews from the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City searched about 560 square miles before calling off the effort Thursday night.

Early Friday, volunteers on all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles started searching the island.

Finally, about mid-morning, a pilot from Island Airways charter service of Beaver Island spotted the wreckage. The Coast Guard immediately sent two orange-and-white Dauphin helicopters.

After spotting the orange life vest, Webb said he hovered in circles above the forest as the other helicopter crew dropped an empty basket on a cable to the ground, hoping the survivor would jump in. But she didn't.

Ott, who is trained to perform water rescues, hooked himself by



A grainy photo taken from U.S. Coast Guard video shows the plane wreckage.

a harness to the end of a cable and was lowered to a clearing about 100 yards away from the wreckage.

"You could tell the flight of the wreckage, the path it entered the woods," Ott said.

Ott, a California native now living in Traverse City, said he couldn't find the wreckage through the forest, so he radioed for one of the helicopters to hover above the plane.

The mother and children were wearing coats, but some appeared to have lost their shoes, Ott said. The temperature was in the mid-30s, and it had been raining, he said.

"They didn't talk much about what they did to survive," Ott said. "I just wanted to know if everybody was accounted for and who was the most injured."

The daughter, Emma, appeared to be suffering the most. "She shuffled over to me," he said.

Ott carried her through the woods to a clearing, "high-stepping" around the wreckage, where he loaded her into the basket. He returned to the plane, stomping a trail through the deep snow, he said. He then carried the youngest boy, Alec, as the mother and her oldest, Adam, followed.

"I just made the decision to hoist the kids first," Ott said. "They're more apt to be a little more hypothermic than a mom would be."

He said the entire rescue lasted no more than 25 minutes.

The mother and her daughter were in serious condition at Charlevoix Area Hospital, while the boys were in fair condition, hospital officials said.

No mech was used?

## Kidd receives flotilla award

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 16-05 of Traverse City has awarded Lawrence Kidd the Carl Luhrs Award for the year 2000.

The award is in memory of Traverse City native Carl Luhrs, a charter member of the USCG Auxiliary's Twin Bay Flotilla formed in 1959. Luhrs served as Flotilla Commander as well as Division 16 Captain.

Past recipients of the award include Mrs. Daniel (Donna) Daciuk and Jim Dow. This year's recipient, Larry Kidd, graduated from the USCG Academy in 1960. He served sea duty and entered Navy Flight Training, graduating from Pensacola with Wings of Gold in 1963. His first air unit was the Traverse City Air Station where he flew the HU 16 Albatross and the H 52 helicopter. He also served as the liaison officer to the Auxiliary.

After serving in many posts throughout the country, Kidd returned to the Traverse City Air Station in 1976 as Senior Lt. Commander. He retired from active duty in 1980. Kidd has served as Flotilla Commander. His active positions include safe boating classes, career counseling and unit watch standing. He and his wife, Prudy live in Traverse City.

## TC crew saves 7 in Illinois

**TRAVERSE CITY** — A Coast Guard rescue crew from Traverse City saved seven people in an airlift Tuesday in flood-ravaged northern Illinois. Lt. Dan Leary of the Coast Guard air station in Traverse City said the 4-person crew was dispatched to the Quad Cities area yesterday to assist in a flood relief mission. They used a helicopter to airlift seven adults and a dog to safety from the roof of a flooded home along the Rock River, he said. Officials said the local Coast Guard crew will remain on duty as long as needed in that area, which was hit with spring-like rains last weekend in a storm that brought everything from tornadoes to ice storms to the middle part of the country. "Basically we're going to keep them down there until the river subsides," Lt. Leary said.

### ALONG THE COASTS

A snapshot of the Coast Guard as of Feb. 9

**Coast Guard crews** monitored a logging ship that was listing in heavy seas.

**Cutters Alex Haley, Meilen and Storis** lowered a disabled fishing vessel with two aboard.

**Coast Guard helicopter crews** rescued a woman and three children from a crashed aircraft.

**Cutters Biscayne Bay, Bristol Bay, Katmai Bay, Mackinaw, Mobile Bay, Nnah Bay and Sundew** conducted icebreaking operations.

**Cutters Adak, Hawser, Linn, Penobscot Bay, Sturgeon Bay and Wire** conducted icebreaking operations.

**Cutters Reliance and Seneca**

**Cutters Campbell, Confidence, Dallas, Decisive, Dependable, Diligence, Gallatin, Gentian, Persistent, Tampa, Thetis and Valiant**

**Cutters Active, Edisto, Jarvis, Morgenthau and Steadfast**

**Coast Guard assets** assisted in the search for nine people missing after a fishing trawler sank off Oahu.

**Cutter Polar Sea Antarctica**

**Cutter Sherman** conducted operations with 5th Fleet in the Persian Gulf.

**Port Security Unit Persian Gulf**

**KEY** Drug interdiction, Fisheries patrol, Migrant interdiction, Rescue mission, Hazardous material cleanup, Other

**FACTS AND FIGURES**  
Migrants interdicted FY01: 1,085  
Marijuana seized FY01: 16,530 lbs.  
Cocaine seized FY01: 27,288 lbs.

**SPECIAL OPERATIONS**  
Operation Frontier Shield: off Puerto Rico  
Operation Frontier Lance II: off the coast of Hispaniola  
Operation Frontier Saber: off the Bahamas  
Operation Gulf Shield: off south Texas/Mexican border  
Operation Atlantic Venture: off New England  
Operation Pacific Sentinel: Western Pacific  
Operation Bering Shield: maritime boundary between United States and Russia  
Operation Border Shield: off the San Diego/Mexico border  
Operation Northern Watch: high seas off Russian Economic Embarkment Zone south of Adl.  
Operation Alaskan Sentinel: Gulf of Alaska and Southeast Alaska waters.

# Family survives night of agony

Man saw his wife, children vanish over Michigan island

By THOMAS BEVIER  
LEAD PRESS SPECIAL WRITER

TRaverse City — Robert Gault stood outside the office of the Beaver Island Airport on Thursday night, searching through the sleet for the charter flight carrying his family from Chicago to join him at their island vacation home.

It was a little after 7 p.m. Gault told sheriff's deputies, when he spotted the plane, a twin-engine 18-passenger turboprop. It came in low, under 1,000 feet, and circled to prepare for the landing.

And then it was gone. Gault waited and waited, alone in the dark, cold silence, but the plane didn't come back. He feared the worst for his wife, Mirth, and their three children.

At 10 the next morning, his family was found alive, although the pilot and copilot were dead in the wreckage of the plane, which went down on a bluff about two



B.J. HETLER/Pittsbury News-Tribune via Associated Press

Survivors from the plane crash on Beaver Island are lifted to an ambulance at the Charlevoix Municipal Airport on Friday.

miles southwest of the airport.

"I'd say Mr. Gault has died and been reborn," said John Works, a volunteer fire department member on Beaver Island. "He got his family back and that's a miracle. I know he feels terrible about the two pilots, though."

Through the night, two U.S. Coast Guard helicopters and two cutters searched but found no sign of the plane. Poor visibility, fog, freezing rain and snow

hindered the efforts.

"Mr. Gault was a basket case when I first saw him" early Friday morning at the airport, said Works, who helped form a search party of about 40 islanders on snowmobiles. "One minute you're standing there thinking you're going to have a nice family dinner, and then they're gone."

Please see PLANE, Page 9A

## COAST GUARD RESCUES

Coast Guard search and rescue units have been busy since last fall, doing what they do best.

After a search that covered approximately 51,000 square miles, two men and their dog were rescued on 4 October 2000, 50 nautical miles northwest of Oahu, Hawaii. The victims were stranded for four days after heading off course and running out of fuel in a 15-foot skiff. One victim's wife had contacted the Coast Guard after receiving a cellular phone call from her husband in which she could make out only one word, "gas." A Coast Guard HH-65 *Dolphin* searched into the night. The next day, two C-130s tracked various search areas and were joined by additional Coast Guard HH-65s, a Civil Air Patrol rescue plane and a Navy P-3 *Orion*. On the fourth day, the P-3 spotted the skiff and dropped a rescue pack while calling for assistance. A Navy H-60 *Seahawk* from HSL-37 arrived on scene and took the victims to MCB Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii.

Coast Guard Group Fort Macon, Atlantic Beach, N.C., received a distress call from the 55-foot motor yacht *Seas The Day* on 19 October 2000, and USCG cutter *Albacore* was dispatched to assist. A Marine Corps rescue helicopter flew to the scene and recovered the boaters, who were flown to Atlantic Beach. *Albacore* remained on scene to pick up debris.

On 21 October 2000, an HH-60 *Jayhawk* from CGAS Elizabeth City, N.C., medevaced a crew member from USCG cutter *Escanaba*, approximately 300 nautical miles from Virginia Beach, Va. The patient was suffering from appendicitis and was flown to Portsmouth Naval Hospital, Va., for treatment.

On 3 December 2000, an HH-65 *Dolphin* from CGAS Traverse City, Mich., while deployed on board USCG cutter *Northland*, rescued eight fishermen lost in the Caribbean Sea. The victims, located in 6 to 8 foot seas and 20 to 25 knot winds, were hoisted aboard the helicopter and flown to Cayman Brac, Cayman Islands.

On 17 December 2000, 34 crew members of *Seabreeze I* were rescued off the coast of Cape Charles, Va. The vessel was en route to Charleston, S.C., for repairs when the engine room began flooding. Rescue Coordination Center Norfolk, Va., directed three HH-60 *Jayhawks* and two C-130 *Hercules* from CGAS Elizabeth City, N.C., to rescue the crew. The C-130 first on scene coordinated the effort for the helicopters. The first *Jayhawk* brought 26 crewmen on board and the remaining eight crewmen, including the captain, were rescued by the second *Jayhawk*. The survivors were treated for mild hypothermia at NAS Oceana, Va. All were released but one victim, who was taken to a Virginia Beach hospital.

On 8 January, a Coast Guard HH-65 *Dolphin* from CGAS Atlantic City, N.J., responded to a distress call from a 500-foot tanker requesting a medevac for a possible heart attack victim. The helicopter located the tanker and the man was hoisted aboard for transfer to medical services.

## Letters to the editor

### LETTERS

Continued from page 4

#### Gault gives her thanks

Editor: I appreciate the opportunity you have given me to try to thank all the people that were touched by our ordeal. I did not know where to begin; I wish I could thank each and every one of you personally.

First of all, Paul Welke, who is our absolute hero. You can only imagine our feelings when off in the distance, we heard the sound of a plane, only to hear it become louder with each passing second. His bravery, experience, intuition and deep caring makes him a truly remarkable person. It may sound silly, but when we are ready, we plan to adopt a puppy and name him Welke. Thank you Mr. Welke.

To the people of Beaver Island, I knew, just knew, if we were on the island, you were out there looking for us. It gave such hope.

To Tim McDonough, Deputy Sheriff Mike Russell, Jim Wojan, Darrell Butler, Rich Gillespie and all the people involved in the rescue, so many thanks.

To our dear friend, Ron Wojan, for being with my husband, in his darkest times.

To Billy McDonough, who announced the wonderful news to my husband.

To Jeff Powers, the island vet, who so sympathetically took care of our dog, who made me feel some relief.

To all of you, that I have never met and don't even know your names, thank you.

To the Canadian Rescue team, that was out there looking for us.

To the men in the Coast Guard, who are trained for this, but probably never truly prepared for what they may find.

To the people in Charlevoix. To Sheriff George Lasater, who was a lifeline to my fami-

ly in Chicago, when they could not get answers from anyone else.

To all the doctors, nurses and staff at Charlevoix Area Hospital.

To Tamara Stevens, the public relations person at the hospital, who kept me shielded from the media, which was an experience that could have added so greatly to my stress.

To Bob, the ambulance driver, who brought my Emma to us when she was feeling better. I could see her perk up.

To the people I have never met, who offered me their homes, prayers and emotions.

I know I have probably left many people out, but please know that you all played a part in this. I never knew people could be so "good."

On behalf of my loving husband, my beautiful, spectacular children — I thank all of you.

Love,  
Mirth Gault  
Chicago



Wreckage of the Merlin IV C twin-engine turboprop is seen in a Coast Guard video from Beaver Island. The pilot and copilot died.

## PLANE | Family survives crash and night on island

From Page 1A

The first sighting of the wreckage Friday morning was by Paul Welke, owner of Island Airways, who saw the survivors near it.

He radioed for the Coast Guard helicopters, which lowered crewmen in rescue baskets. Mirth Gault, 43, and her children, Adam, 18, Emma, 9, and Alex, 5, who were the only passengers on the plane, were taken to the hospital in Charlevoix. The pilot was Curt Logan of Little Falls, Minn., and the copilot Steve Earhart of Elgin, Ill. The Gaults live in Orland Park, a Chicago suburb.

Early Friday evening, Mirth Gault was in serious condition; Emma was in fair condition, and the two boys were in good condition.

"The plane went down really hard," said Works. "The cabin

area looks like tinfol you wad up in your flat, but the fuselage is still pretty much intact."

The cause of the accident has not been determined, said Charlevoix County Sheriff George Lasater.

The Gault's dog was killed in the crash but a parrot survived.

"At first we thought there was a cat, because of screeching we heard, but it turned out to be a parrot," Works said. "It came through just fine."

Because of the poor weather, Robert Gault was unable to reach the mainland until late Friday afternoon. He caught an Island Airways flight and was reunited with his wife and children at the hospital. He declined to comment.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

## Ice sends Rock over banks

### River heads to possible record crest

By Pam Beranger  
Staff writer

Ice jams are pushing up the Rock River to what could be record crest levels.

An ice jam, which extends from the Barstow railroad bridge upstream about five miles, has caused major flooding in Cleveland and Barstow, resulting in an evacuation of residents Monday.

Flood waters breached the Zuma Creek levee south of Barstow, which slowed the rise of the river near Joslin where the level was holding steady near 18 feet Tuesday afternoon, just .77 inches from the record set in 1997, according to the National Weather Service.

The river is expected to crest at 18.5 feet in Joslin, six feet above flood stage.

Rick Arkell, meteorologist with the National Weather Service, said ice jams are formed when the temperature begins to warm, weakening the ice. As runoff from snow raises the level of the river, the ice breaks, begins to flow, the chunks sometimes jamming together. Saturday's heavy rain and Sunday's warmer temperatures helped break the ice.

Twists and turns in the narrow Rock River give the ice a chance to build up, causing flooding upstream, officials said. Problems often are compounded by fallen trees and low bridges.

There's little residents can do but wait it out or sandbag, according to Ron Fournier, public affairs officer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

"This is nothing new to those who live by the river," Mr. Fournier said. "At this time of year, homeowners know what's coming. They have the option of sandbagging, but that's usually done around the end of January, prior to any problem."

"Most of the time, people are not aware of how severe it is until it's on top of them. There's nothing you can do now but get out of the way, go to high ground and do some pumping."

Trying to break an ice jam is useless, Mr. Fournier said. Using dynamite to break it up has proven ineffective in the past, he said. "There are many reasons why you shouldn't do it, but mainly it's because it doesn't work. It blows a hole in the ice jam, but the hole closes right back up."

Using dynamite also can cause environmental damage, he said.

How long it will take ice jams to break loose depends on the weather, Mr. Fournier said. It could take anywhere from two days to two weeks for the entire mass to find its way to the Mississippi, he said.



Don Viterch / staff

Emergency personnel evacuate Cleveland Tuesday morning after the Rock River overflowed its banks. As Colona firefighter Chris Brooks, far right, carries Devon Radloff to dry land, his mother, Jenni Radloff, and two of their dogs wait to be taken from the rescue boat. Carrying the Radloffs' third dog is Barstow Metro Search and Rescue Chief Don Adams.

Ice jams on the Mississippi usually aren't a problem, Mr. Fournier said, because the Mississippi is wider and the Corps can help move ice by opening dam rollers and letting the ice flow downstream.

"There are no control structures on the Rock River that let us flush them through," he said.

There was minor flooding in Moline Tuesday afternoon, with the Rock level just 3 inches below the flood stage of 12 feet.

It was expected to crest around 13 feet this morning depending on when the ice jam upstream breaks up.

If the ice jam persists longer than expected, the river could rise to 15 feet in Moline. At 13 feet, water begins affecting homes on South Shore Drive and cuts off road access to homes east of the Interstate 74 bridge.

Water also often floods Vandrufts Island in Rock Island and part of 7th Street in Coal Valley.



Photos by Andy Woodell / staff

At right: A Coast Guard helicopter rescue unit airlifts one of three people who were stranded Tuesday afternoon in their home near the Interstate 80 bridge over the Rock River in Barstow. Ice jams on the river caused massive flooding around the home.

Above: A dog and an unidentified man were the last the Coast Guard team rescued from the flooded home in Barstow Tuesday afternoon. Traffic on Interstate 80 was stopped while the helicopter was unloaded.

FRIDAY, MARCH 2, 2001

## NATION

George Lutz, crew chief on a U.S. Coast Guard rescue helicopter, surveys flood conditions Thursday in Cleveland, Ill., where a 7-mile-long ice jam has caused the Rock River to overflow its banks.



Associated Press

### Ice jam recedes; Illinois residents return to homes

CLEVELAND, Ill. — With floodwaters receding on the Rock River a day after a 7-mile-long ice jam had plugged the waterway, some residents Thursday returned to their homes in three small towns along the river.

Warmer temperatures would melt the ice and restore normal river levels by Sunday, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

"It's only going to get better right now," spokesman Ron Fournier said. Cleveland, Barstow and Osborn were partly submerged within hours Tuesday, and 200 people were evacuated from their homes. Volunteers rescued about 80 residents by boat and seven more by helicopter.

About a dozen people refused to leave despite authorities' pleas.

By Thursday, the water had receded about a 1½ feet in Cleveland and 2½ feet farther upstream in Joslin, where the river still was 3½ feet above flood stage Thursday morning, Fournier said.

He said forecasts called for relatively dry weather. But nothing is certain when it comes to floods, according to Dave Pilger of the fire department's search and rescue team.

"It's real unpredictable," Pilger said. "It can come back up as fast as it went down: the ice jam could come loose and jam up again somewhere else."

The three towns are about 140 miles west of Chicago.

# Lost boys found in Benzonia State Park

Coast Guard helicopter locates boys who got lost while following deer tracks from grandparents' home

By HEATHER L. VANDYKE  
Record-Eagle staff writer

HONOR — Cousins Corey Rock, 6, and Josh Cooper, 8, walked a long way from grandma's house on Wednesday, following deer tracks with their dog "Po-Po" close behind.

But when the sun set and cold winds set in, the boys found themselves lost in Benzonia State Park "dressed to play, not camp out."

The boys were found almost 12 hours later, asleep and unharmed, by the crew of a helicopter from the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City. They were air-lifted to safety and suffered only mild hypothermia.

The ordeal began at the Indian Hill Road residence of Peggy and Lester Rock, the boys' grandparents, around 4 p.m. on Wednesday.

Benzie County Undersheriff Joseph Barone said Rock, who lives with his grandparents in Honor, and Cooper, of Grawn, were playing in the backyard with their dog.

When Lester Rock could not find them around 5 p.m., he went looking for them and followed their tracks in the snow.

"He followed their tracks to a point and then lost them," said Barone. "At about 7 p.m. he went back to the house and called the police."

Peggy Rock said the boys had on rubber boots and jackets but no hats or gloves.

"I was really worried," she said.

Once the Benzie County Sheriff's Department was notified by Lester Rock, Barone said, "we realized it would be a bigger deal" and immediately called for backup.

Tracking dogs from the Grand Traverse County Sheriff's Department, the Michigan State Police and Technical Services out of Traverse City joined up with members of Benzie County's search and rescue team. Meanwhile, a Coast Guard helicopter piloted by Lt. Whit Irwin and Lt. J.G. Chuck Webb flew overhead.

Barone said the boys had crossed M-22, come out on Trails End Road and ended up in Benzonia State Park.

Barone said the boys were only about four miles from home but "must have traveled a good nine miles."

"They were some tired little puppies," he said. "They laid down and went to sleep."

— See COAST, Page 2A

# Coast Guard helicopter spots missing boys

Continued from Page 1A

While the boys lay sleeping in the snow around 2:50 a.m. Thursday, Webb and Irwin — with night-vision goggles and infrared cameras — located the boys with Po-Po between them.

"We spotted two blips at the edge of a field. We got down low and we could see the dog sitting there, but there were a couple other objects."

Webb said those "other objects" were the legs of Corey Rock and Cooper. Though happy to have located the boys, Webb

said he was concerned because they were lying face-down in the snow and not moving though the helicopter was hovering just above them.

When one of the rescue workers propped one of the boys up on his knee, Webb said he was relieved.

"They were almost unconscious," he said. "They suffered from mild hypothermia because they were shivering and cold."

Webb said once they "came out of it" they boys tried to explain how they became lost.

"It was kind of funny," Webb said. "They started blaming each other."

Webb said he "could not believe how far they traveled in that terrain."

"That terrain out there is rough," he said.

The boys, or "Junior Woodsmen" as Webb called them, were immediately reunited with their grandparents and treated for mild hypothermia at the scene.

Peggy Rock said she isn't certain why the boys left her prop-

erty but "for some reason they just decided to follow deer tracks."

"They have never done that before," she said.

Corey Rock gave a simple summary of their adventure: "Me and Josh were following deer tracks and when we woke up there were helicopters," he said.

Corey Rock said there was only one thing on his 6-year-old mind when the sun set and the temperatures dropped.

"I was thinking about going home," he said.

## Helicopter crew, dog save boys from woods

The Coast Guard finds them huddled with their dog to stay warm.

By Ken Kolker and Carmela Thomas  
The Grand Rapids Press

HONOR — The Coast Guard helicopter crew's infrared sensor and night vision goggles showed two young boys, lying face-down in the snow, with a dog between them.

But the boys, who had been missing about 12 hours overnight in the cold woods, lay still, even as the helicopter hovered then landed nearby.

"That's when I became concerned," said pilot Chuck Webb of the Coast Guard's Traverse City Air Station.

The crew's rescue swimmer, Jason Shepard, and flight mechanic, Sam Loska, rushed to the boys and revived them before flying them back to their home.

Cory Rock, 6, and his cousin, Josh Cooper, 8, were reunited with their families about 3 a.m. Thursday, then treated by emergency medical technicians for hypothermia, Coast Guard officials said. The temperature dipped to 32 during the night.

They were hungry, wet, tired and dazed, and Cory's first words were: "Are we still going to Burger King?" his grandmother Peggy Rock said about the plans they had made earlier.

Cory, a curious kindergartner, lives with his mother and grandparents in a Benzie County home near Benzonia State Park, west of Traverse City.

He and his cousin, who lives nearby, were on spring break and planned to spend the week together. About 4 p.m. the boys went out to play with Cory's dog, Po Po.

"When we call them, they generally answer," his grandmother said. "If not, we foot the car horn. Then if they don't come we look for them and they know they're in trouble."

The family grew worried when the boys didn't respond by 5 p.m.

It's common for the boys to feed corn to deer on the family's 10 wooded acres, but they had never crossed the highway (M22) and entered into the thick pines of the state park, Peggy Rock said.

"It was frightening. There are bluffs that lead to Lake Michigan, coyotes and so many other dangers..." Peggy Rock said.

The boy's mission was tracking deer.

see RESCUE, C1

Cory Rock, 6, and his cousin, Josh Cooper, 8, spent nearly 12 hours lost in the cold woods near Cory's home before a U.S. Coastguard helicopter crew found them about 3 a.m. Thursday. The boys were treated for hypothermia.



## RESCUE

Family's dog credited for keeping boys warm

CONTINUED FROM C1

But they couldn't find their way out.

The family reported the boys missing around 7 p.m., launching a search by Benzie County sheriff's deputies, state police and others. Three tracking dogs led police through the woods, where volunteers also were searching.

Webb and the rest of his four-member crew were flying near Muskegon, searching Lake Michigan after flares were spotted over the water, when they got the call. After failing to find anything in the lake, they refueled in Muskegon and flew about an hour north to Honor.

They searched inland from Lake Michigan for more than an hour before flying back to Traverse City for fuel.

In the middle of the night, they could see nothing with the naked eye, but Webb and co-pilot Whit Irwin searched with night vision goggles mounted to their helmets.

Shepard, the rescue swimmer, scanned the thick woods with the infrared sensor, which looks like a video camera and detects body heat, while the flight mechanic aimed a spotlight through the trees.

Cory saw them. And to him it was something right out of the rescue shows he watches with his family on TV, his mother Lonna Rock said.

About 45 minutes into their second search, Shepard picked up "blips" just inside a line of trees, only a mile from where the boys live. Webb landed the helicopter in an adjacent field.

Cory's mom credits the family's dog for helping to save the boys. Cory and Po Po, a black and white "mutt," have been inseparable since the family got the dog seven months ago, she said.

"I believe he kept them alive until help could come," his mother said. "He definitely was the boys' guardian angel and protector that night."

## Helicopter crew rescues cousins lost in woods

By Ken Kolker and Carmela Thomas  
CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

The U.S. Coast Guard helicopter crew's infrared sensor and night vision goggles showed two young boys, lying face down in the snow, with a dog between them.

But the boys, who had been missing about 12 hours overnight in the cold woods, lay still, even as the helicopter hovered then landed nearby.

### HONOR

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Cory's mom credits the family's dog for helping to save the boys. Cory and Po Po, a black and white "mutt," have been inseparable since the family got the dog seven months ago, she said.

"When we got cold we hugged Po Po," the boy said.

Cory, an observant and curious kindergartner, lives with his mother and grandparents in a Benzie County home near Benzonia State Park, west of Traverse City.

He and his cousin, who lives nearby, were on spring break and planned to spend the week together. About 4 p.m. the boys went out to play with Cory's dog, Po Po.

The family grew worried when the boys didn't respond by 5 p.m. They reported the boys missing around 7 p.m., launching a search by Benzie County sheriff's deputies, state police and others. Three tracking dogs led police through the woods, where volunteers also were searching.

Webb and the rest of his four-member crew were flying near Muskegon, searching Lake Michigan after flares were spotted over the water, when they got the call. After failing to find anything in the lake, they refueled in Muskegon and flew about an hour north to Honor.

Then, about 45 minutes into their second search, Shepard picked up "blips" just inside a line of trees, only a mile from where the boys live. Webb landed the helicopter in an adjacent field. One of the tracking dogs was near by, leading police to the same spot where the boys were found.

### The Muskegon Chronicle

#### HONOR

## Lost boys located after night in snow

ASSOCIATED PRESS

A pair of boys who became lost while following deer tracks were located by the Coast Guard after spending the night in the snow.

When the sun set and cold winds set in Wednesday night, Corey Rock, 6, and Josh Cooper, 8, found themselves lost.

The boys were found almost 12 hours later, asleep and unharmed, by the crew of a helicopter from the Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City.

They were airlifted to safety and suffered only mild hypothermia.

Benzie County Undersheriff Joseph Barone said Rock, who lives with his grandparents in Honor, and Cooper, of Grawn, were playing in Rock's backyard with their dog.

When Rock's grandfather, Lester, could not find them around 5 p.m. Wednesday, he went looking for them and followed their tracks in the snow, then lost them and called police.

While the boys lay sleeping in the snow around 2:50 a.m. Thursday, Coast Guard rescuers — equipped with night-vision goggles and infrared cameras — located the boys with their dog.

# Coasties helping in flooded areas

By Patricia Kime  
Times Staff Writer

Homeowners along the Mississippi from Minnesota to Iowa spent the week of April 23 watching and worrying as the swollen river crested just short of 1993's disastrous flood levels.

Coast Guard personnel assigned to cover the area also had concerns — not only for the rising water, but for problems that can arise during a deluge, including runaway propane tanks and docks, pollution spills and boaters trespassing on the closed waterway.

"People are scared," said Public Affairs Specialist 1st Class Jeff Hall on April 20, discussing the residents who live along the Mississippi's banks. "They've been sandbagging day and night, and there's definitely no electricity."

Almost 100 Coasties, including 23 active-duty personnel, 70 reservists and 11 auxiliary members from detachments of Marine Safety Office St. Louis responded to a call for assistance from state officials. The Coast Guard closed 403

miles of the Mississippi, and several of the service's disaster response units deployed April 19-23 to flood sites at LaCrosse and Prairie Du Chien, Wis., Redwood County, Minn., and parts of Iowa for possible search-and-rescue operations and evacuations.

"We are out there checking on levee integrity, looking for any environmental impact and basically helping out in the areas, looking for people in distress," Hall said.

DRU members spent daylight hours patrolling the flooded areas in 14-foot flat-bottomed boats, examining levees and looking for hazards on the water. In Minnesota, unit members rescued two people and a dog from rising water. In Iowa, a unit retrieved a bait shop that was floating downriver while other unit members found several propane tanks that had broken away from their frames at riverfront mobile home parks.

"With the extreme current we have, any type of object is likely to break free, and these things [propane tanks] turn into floating



Coast Guard flight mechanic Trent Gaur views the flooded town of Davenport, Iowa, from a Coast Guard helicopter April 24.

bombs," explained Marine Safety Detachment supervisor Lt. Jg. Mark Gibbs in the Quad Cities area of Iowa.

According to the National Weather Service, the Mississippi River crested at 16.41 feet above flood stage in La Crosse on April 18 — a foot and a half below the record set there in April 1965.

In Davenport, Iowa, the NWS reported that the flood level had reached 22.25 feet April 24, the third highest on record for the city, the largest urban area on the upper Mississippi without a permanent levee. National Guard members and volunteers built a

12-foot sandbag wall along the water in Davenport while a Coast Guard HH-65A Dolphin helicopter from Air Station Traverse City, Mich., conducted overflights of the flooded areas.

Marine safety personnel normally spend workdays inspecting vessels, managing port safety and security and cleaning up environmental disasters. When the Mississippi floods, however, the Coasties also take on search-and-rescue, law enforcement and waterways management duties.

Reserve Lt. Carol McAllister, who spent her active-duty time as a finance officer, volunteered for

duty with a disaster response unit from Marine Safety Detachment Quad Cities near Davenport and Bettendorf, Iowa, and Rock Island and Moline, Ill.

"I love being in the field. The thing I think I like the most is seeing how the local community pulls together to help each other out," McAllister said.

While the 2001 floods have had a financial and emotional impact on area residents, they have yet to reach the levels — or the estimated \$5 billion in damages — of the 1993 floods. In Iowa, at least 1,115 homes were damaged, according to the state Emergency Management Division. In Minnesota, Holman Field Airport in St. Paul was under water, as were numerous railroad tracks and bridges; in Wisconsin, some small towns became lakes.

Gibbs said residents were extremely well-prepared for the flooding this time.

"I've worked many floods and they've done an incredible job. It has been a great effort, and so we have been rewarded because we don't have too many people terribly impacted," Gibbs said.

The Coast Guard expects its units to stay in the field until the threat is over — most likely while the river remains closed. □

Patricia Kime covers The Coast Guard. Her e-mail address is pkime@tsp.com.

# Families celebrate lighthouse Christmas

By MIKE NORTON  
Record-Eagle staff writer

NORTHPORT — The Lutheran choir was singing "White Christmas" in the fog signal building at the Grand Traverse Lighthouse on Saturday afternoon, but there wasn't a bit of white on the ground.

Come to think of it, there wasn't any fog, either. Which made it a perfect day for the Coast Guard to come swooping down off Lake Michigan in a festive red helicopter with two large bags of goodies for Santa. And although the blast of air from the aircraft's powerful rotor did blow St. Nick's hat across the beach, the children and adults who gathered to watch certainly enjoyed themselves.

It may not be your typical Yuletide celebration, but it's a tradition of sorts. For almost a decade now, the Grand Traverse Lighthouse Museum has held a winter open house called "Christmas at the Lighthouse," recreating the sights, sounds, smells and tastes of holiday celebrations at the once-isolated light station at the tip of the Leelanau Peninsula.

Hundreds of visitors from all over the area trooped up to the Leelanau State Park and onto the grounds of the historic 143-year-old lighthouse, which is open, free of charge this one day of the year. Once there, they could climb the tower (decorated with lights and fresh evergreen branches) to peer north over the water, tour the keeper's residence, which has been restored to its 1930s look and festooned with old-style holiday trimmings, listen to seasonal music and decorate their own ornaments for the big tree in the fog signal building.

"It's really our thank-you to the people of the community for the way they've supported us over the years," said Stephanie Staley, director of the Grand Traverse Lighthouse Museum. "We open our doors and invite everyone in to enjoy the lighthouse as it would have been at Christmastime in the 1920s and 1930s."

In those days, when snowplows were frail things and cars didn't travel well over winter roads, the lighthouse was a quiet place where the keepers and their families had to make most of their own entertainment. The Coast Guard helicopter visit has only been part of the celebration here for a few years, but it's part of an established "flying Santa" tradition that goes back almost as far.

Back in 1929, the story goes, a Maine float plane pilot named Bill Wincapaw got caught in a squall while delivering mail the week before Christmas and was lost in the storm until he spotted the steady signal of a lighthouse. Following a chain of seven lights, he was eventually able to reach home and safety. In gratitude, he wrapped several thank-you gifts and dropped them on the lawn of each lighthouse he had followed home.



Record-Eagle/ Jim Bowen  
Left, adults and kids watch the delivery of gifts of the Grand Traverse Lighthouse Museum. Below, Santa Claus picks up gifts lifted in from a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter.



Wincapaw's flights were taken over in 1936 by author Edward Rowe Snow and his wife, and now there are "flying Santas" who deliver gifts at 29 lighthouses in six eastern states. Here, the flight is done by a helicopter from the Coast Guard air station in Traverse City — and it's purely for

fun, since there hasn't been a keeper at the Grand Traverse Lighthouse since it was closed in 1972.

But for local residents this Christmas event may be the best time of all. And not all the friends of the lighthouse are Northporters, either — Nels and

Tabitha Nelson, for instance, brought their young children all the way from Gaylord for the festivities.

"All three of them climbed the tower, too," said Tabitha. "They're old hands at it. We visit lots of lighthouses. We're lighthouse fanatics."



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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2001

Sports Final

# MOM, 3 KIDS SURVIVE CRASH



Friends and neighbors tie yellow ribbons around trees at the Gault family's home in Orland Park on Friday after learning that Mirth Gault and her three children had survived the crash of a small plane on Beaver Island, Mich., Thursday night.

## PLANE'S PILOT, CO-PILOT DIE, BUT ORLAND PARK FAMILY IS FOUND ALIVE

BY ROBERT C. HERGUTH,  
ROSALIND ROSSI AND ART GOLAB  
STAFF WRITERS

The Gault children were excited about their trip to Michigan and had been talking about it all week with friends and teachers. But their mother wasn't particularly happy she and the kids were going to fly to their vacation home.

"She hated flying on those small planes," said Nora Connolly, a friend and neighbor in Orland Park. "Most of the time they would drive up, but it's such a long drive."

Mirth Gault and her three children somehow survived when their two-engine propeller airplane crashed Thursday night on Beaver Island, Mich., after a flight from Midway Airport.

After huddling together for warmth all night, they were rescued Friday morning, as the mother waved an orange life vest at a passing plane.

The crash killed the pilot, Curtis Logan, 52, of Little Falls, Minn., and co-pilot Stephen M. Ehrhart, 23, of Elgin, according to...

Turn to next page

2 Saturday, February 10, 2001

NEWS

Chicago Sun-Times

## Rescue

Continued from previous page

to Charlevoix County, Mich., Sheriff George T. Lasater.

Gault, 42, and her children—13-year-old Adam, 9-year-old Emma and 5-year-old Alec, all students in Orland Park public schools—suffered only scrapes, bruises and possibly hypothermia, officials said.

They weren't discovered until Friday morning, after a night of agony for friends and relatives.

About 6:20 p.m. Thursday, Bob Gault was at the tiny airport on Beaver Island, waiting with a video camera for the arrival of his wife and kids. The broker at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange had driven to northern Michigan earlier in the week and was planning to drive home with his family next Wednesday.

Gault, a licensed pilot, watched the plane pass by at about 500 feet heading west, and when it didn't return, he became concerned and contacted authorities, Lasater said.

A search of Lake Michigan and the island went through the night. Coast Guard boats and helicopters collaborated with dozens of snowmobilers organized by the sheriff, and even a C-130 plane from Canada.

At the time of the crash, visibility was less than two miles, winds were stiff, and there was some mist, officials said.

But rescue workers got a break early Friday when an Island Airways pilot spotted the wreckage and notified authorities. "The mother ... was waving an orange



Curtis Logan  
Pilot



Stephen Ehrhart  
Co-pilot

life vest," Lasater said.

The Gaults' plane, operated by Northern Illinois Flight Center Inc. of Lake in the Hills and owned by a Delaware company, was less than 2 1/2 miles from the airport, on a wooded bluff in an area one resident called "Cedar Swamp."

"It hit a tree and landed on the ground upside down," Lasater said.

All of the occupants had been wearing seat belts. "The older son had to cut his sister out of her seat belt with a knife he had," Lasater said.

The nine-seat Swearingen Merlin Metro Liner was nearly 20 years old and had no history of accidents.

The family spent the night together in the plane. Although there was rain and sleet overnight, luckily "they were dressed for northern Michigan," Lasater said.

In the morning, they were airlifted to the mainland and taken to Charlevoix Area Hospital, where they were all in relatively good condition and expected to spend the night. Later Friday, they were reunited with Bob Gault, with lots of hugs, Lasater said. "They were just thankful to be alive."

## BEAVER ISLAND PLANE CRASH



### Swearingen Merlin Metro Liner



Length: 59 ft., 4 1/4 in.  
Passenger capacity: 22\*  
Cruising speed: 279-294 mph  
Wingspan: 46 ft., 3 in. \*Only 9 seats in this plane  
Range: 100-500 miles

KIM SCHULZ/SUN-TIMES

Cheers greeted news of the rescue on two fronts.

"We were preparing to deal with a tragedy," said Pete Yaska, head of Orland Park School District 135, where the Gault kids attended Century Junior High, Meadow Ridge and Centennial schools. "The kids had talked about details of the trip in school and were very excited about it."

When the mother and children were reported safe, "cheers went up and the teachers were elated. People were talking about miracles and looked up and said, 'Thank you.'"

Meanwhile, at the Merc, where Bob Gault is a well-known and well-liked independent broker, business stopped briefly when he called the pit to relay the news that his family survived. A huge cheer erupted from the pit, something usually reserved for visiting actors.

In the four-home cul-de-sac where the Gaults have lived for eight years, neighbors and friends

knocked on doors and tied yellow ribbons to trees on the Gault property.

The families of the pilots—who Lasater believes were killed instantly—had to endure the same waiting game.

Logan had two children, Shawn, 24, and Brittany, 13, from separate marriages. His widow, Kathy Logan, said her husband "was very experienced [in flying in bad weather], and I know the airplane was very well-equipped."

Ehrhart, a Crystal Lake native, was single with no children and lived with his parents, Glenn and Deborah Ehrhart, in an Elgin town house.

The National Transportation Safety Board dispatched three investigators.

Beaver Island, on which is a community called St. James, is a popular vacation destination with a year-round population of about 450. It can be reached from the air and water.

Contributing: David Roeder

## Weather



Today: Sunny but quite cold. Highs in the upper teens, lows around 8 above zero.

Sunday: Increasing cloudiness but not as cold, with a chance for snow late. Highs in the lower 30s, lows in the upper 20s. Monday: Mostly cloudy. Highs in the mid-30s, lows in the lower 20s. Tuesday: Mostly cloudy. Highs in the lower 30s, lows around 20. Wednesday: Mostly cloudy with a chance for snow early and late. Highs in the lower 30s, lows around 20. Thursday: Mostly cloudy with a chance for snow. Details on Page 29.

## Lotteries

For tickets dated Friday, February 9, 2001

**Illinois**  
MIDDAY Pick 3—214  
MIDDAY Pick 4—8764  
EVENING Pick 3—738  
EVENING Pick 4—3527

**Little Lotto**  
03 12 21 23 25  
Lotto grand prize: \$24 million

**The Big Game**  
01 12 14 16 22  
Big Money Ball: 26  
Grand prize: \$10 million

**Indiana**  
Daily 3—462 Daily 4—6632  
Lucky 6—04 13 18 23 35  
Lotto grand prize: \$11 mil.

**Michigan**  
MIDDAY Daily 3—433  
MIDDAY Daily 4—7676  
EVENING Daily 3—581  
EVENING Daily 4—7651  
Rolldown—07 10 15 24 32  
Lotto grand prize: \$4.7 mil.

**Wisconsin**  
Pick 3—514 Pick 4—5975  
Money Roll—04 23 34 46 55

## Simpson

But at a late afternoon news conference, Simpson called the quarrel a "non-incident." "I don't think that whatever took place warrants this much attention," he said. Motorist Jeffrey Pattinson, 55, told police he

Simpson has denied wrongdoing. He said Pattinson shouted at him and he shouted back, then returned to his car and drove his two youngest children home. "Mr. Simpson was not the aggressor in that incident," Galanter said.



HT - Frank Michels

## Water rescue exercise

OTSEGO COUNTY Sheriff's Deputy Phil Vandyke and U.S. Coast Guard rescue swimmer Rachid Arnick are lifted by a Coast Guard helicopter from a mock boating accident on Otsego Lake during an emergency water rescue exercise Thursday. (More photos p. A8)

## Water rescue exercise over Otsego Lake



MEMBERS of the U.S. Coast Guard crew discuss their flight plans before the emergency water rescue. Left-to-right are Brian Buck, flight engineer, and pilots Chad Soldana and Steve Walsh. Also participating in the rescue training were divers from the Otsego, Antrim and Cheboygan sheriff's departments and members of the Odawa Tribal Police.



RACHID ARNICK, a U.S. Coast Guard rescue diver prepares to jump from the helicopter (above) while at right Arnick holds onto Otsego County deputy Phil Vandyke as they dangle at the bottom of a steel cable with shallow water and beach below them.



Photos by Frank Michels

## Pair rescued after capsizes

■ Thomas Roach, son Patrick floated in West Bay for hours before helicopter rescue

By PATRICK SULLIVAN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — Lost under a glaring sun and floating in waves of up to six feet, Thomas Roach Jr. believed the U.S. Coast Guard chopper flying a search pattern over West Grand Traverse Bay Tuesday would never spot him.

Roach, who along with his 11-

year-old son Patrick had been floating for almost two hours since their catamaran flipped in choppy water south of Power Island, rolled onto his back and began to kick water into the air.

"I gave up on them seeing us," Roach said.

The splashes — which he said looked like a rainbow — caught the attention of the helicopter's crew.

"All of a sudden it turned and it just zoomed," Roach said. "Patrick was ecstatic, he said, 'Geez, we're going to go, we're going for a ride!'"

From the crew's perspective, Patrick seemed more excited about getting a helicopter ride

than concerned about being rescued.

"He looked in good spirits. He was actually quite excited about the opportunity to be hoisted into the helicopter," said petty officer Doug Lathrop, the rescue swimmer who jumped into the bay to pull the Roaches out.

"It could have been quite an ordeal but it worked out well," Roach said. "We were real grateful for our Coast Guard buddies. We've seen them practice all of these years."

The Roaches' ordeal began after they launched an 18-foot Prindle catamaran at Bowers Harbor Tuesday afternoon and headed to Power Island.

They left the island to sail toward Traverse City at around 4:30 p.m. Shortly after they left the protection of the island, they hit big waves churned up by a northern wind. Coast Guard officers estimated the waves were three- to six-feet high.

"We took off like a rocket. I could tell that the wind had picked up," Roach said. "We ended up having to do some work on the boat and it flipped."

Patrick hurt his arm when the boat flipped, so Roach had to attend to him. While he did, the boat's canvas deck acted as a sail and the boat swept out of reach.

— See FATHER, Page 2A ▶



Record-Eagle/Don Rovin

Tom Roach and his son Patrick, 12, were pulled out of West Bay on Tuesday by the U.S. Coast Guard after their catamaran capsized.

### Coast Guard saves father, son

TRAVERSE CITY — A man and his 12-year-old son were rescued by members of the Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City on Tuesday evening.

The man and boy were sailing in Grand Traverse Bay about one mile south of Power Island when their sailboat flipped about 5:45 p.m. Tuesday. Strong winds carried the boat away, leaving the two wading in the water. Coast Guard Lt. 1g Shad Soldano said.

The boaters were in the water two hours before being rescued by the Coast Guard, which used a helicopter and hoists.

Both were wearing life jackets but suffered mild hypothermia.

### Father, son rescued after catamaran flips

◀ Continued from Page 1A

Had they not been wearing life jackets when the boat flipped, their chances of surviving would have been slim.

"If they had not been wearing their life jackets, the boy would have definitely been gone and the father would have been close to gone," said Lt. Chuck Webb, the chopper's co-pilot.

Webb and Lathrop said the Roaches also helped themselves by huddling together to keep warm and not exerting themselves by trying to swim to shore.

Roach said he was optimistic that he and Patrick would have drifted to shore within an hour if the chopper crew hadn't spotted them. But by the time they were rescued, Patrick was shivering and his lips were turning blue — symptoms of mild hypothermia that indicate danger, especially in a child.

Roach is grateful to have been rescued and he said he plans on writing members of Congress and the Senate to tout the importance of a well-funded Coast Guard.

"The word professional seems

to be an understatement, these guys are so locked right on their task," he said.

Lt. Cmdr. Kirk Pickering, the helicopter's pilot, said the capsized catamaran — which washed ashore on Old Mission Peninsula just north of McKinley Drive — was reported by a passing sailboat around 7 p.m. The crew was in the air and spotted the overturned craft within 15 minutes.

High waves and the glare of the sun made spotting Roach and his son difficult.

"Because of the sun, you had to

be right on top of them looking down to see them," Webb said.

Roach and Patrick spent a couple of hours at Munson Medical Center, where they were treated for mild hypothermia. Roach said Patrick's arm was OK by the time they were rescued.

Roach bought the boat in 1982 and he hasn't had it out since Patrick was born. Despite the ordeal, Roach said Patrick is enthusiastic about going for a sail on another day.

"I think we'll pick a calmer day," he said.

### Coast Guard airlifts sick man off ore carrier

TRAVERSE CITY — Members of the Coast Guard Airstation Traverse City airlifted a sick man from a ship in Lake Michigan Thursday.

Fred Jeffery, 47, was suffering from a serious illness Thursday for which he needed immediate medical attention, Coast Guard officials said.

The Coast Guard received a call around 6 p.m. from the Merchant Vessel Roger Blough asking for assistance, and a helicopter was deployed soon after. The 600-foot ore carrier was about 7 miles offshore from Frankfort.

Once on scene, the helicopter crew hoisted Jeffery on board and flew back to Airstation Traverse City to an awaiting ambulance.

Jeffery was then transported to Munson Medical Center where he was listed in stable condition.

# Warm weather welcome for deer hunters

## DNR says numbers are up

By BILL ECHLIN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — Hunters aren't having difficulty finding many big deer to bag this season despite the lack of tracking snow, state Department of Natural Resources check-in posts, and hunting supply stores all report a solid season.

At the Gaylord DNR station, traffic was up a little from last year, but wildlife habitat biologist Brian Mastenbrook wasn't sure if hunters were getting more deer or just bringing them in quicker.

"They are getting deer to processors lots quicker because of the heat," he said. "They don't want to take any chances of the meat spoiling."

Temperatures have been unusually warm in northern Lower Michigan, in some places going into the 60s.

"It's looking like a very good season," Mastenbrook said.

At the DNR's Traverse City check-in station the pace was close to last year's, maybe a bit busier, said Mike Kowalski, a wildlife assistant.

"At Platte River, they are way up over last year," he said. "They had 47 in the first three days, up from 24 last year. A couple of processors called to say they can't take any more."

Jerry Deering of Deering's Market in Traverse City said, "It's busy. I think a little busier than last year, because the weather is forcing the hunters to bring their deer in right away."



His family has been processing deer for three generations.

"We have noticed that tastes are changing," Deering said. "We're getting a lot more orders for jerky and sausage. I think wives are telling their husbands they don't want much of the roasts."

There are signs there are more hunters out in some areas. At the Clark Super 100 station in Grayling, which sells deer bait, sales are booming.

"We completely ran out of

apples yesterday and finally just got some more today," said clerk Briana Taylor. "Usually some of the bait rots before we run out, but this year they are buying up all the apples and also we sold more carrots and sugar beets, too."

Some 700,000 hunters are expected to take to the woods this year and DNR officials estimate a little less than half of them will be successful.

At first things looked a little

grim at Skip's Sport Shop in Grayling, but then picked up strongly by the second day of the season, which started Thursday.

"It was a little slow the first day when we only had 14 deer on our buck pole, but then Friday we filled it right up with 29, and most of them are very big, with very large racks," said Dan Catau, who helps out at Skip's during the season. "We had four beautiful eight pointers yesterday in the 170- to 180-pound range, field dressed.

The average has been 145 to 150 pounds and that's really nice, better than usual."

So far it's been a relatively safe hunting season with only one fatality reported. An Iron River man fell out of his blind that was in a tree 30 feet above ground Thursday. Two Grand Ledge hunters spent a chilly night in the woods in southeast Otsego County but were found early Saturday by a Coast Guard helicopter crew from the Traverse City station.



Record-Eagle/John L. Russell  
Below, Chrissy Beeman loads sugar beets into a pickup truck Friday, one of three different deer foods she sells at her market near Interlochen. Apples, carrots and sugar beets are all used to feed deer throughout the region. Left, a deer is dressed for the occasion at the Norman Brumm Showroom near Charlevoix.

# Evidence: Terrorist pocket is in Detroit

U.S. Justice Dept. indicated Michigan home to al-Qaida cell

DETROIT (AP) — In an apartment here where two men were arrested during the terrorism investigation, officials found scant furniture, no beds and clothing stored in duffel bags, suitcases and garbage bags.

Karim Koubriti and Ahmed Hannan lived transient lifestyles, residing in four states — New York, Virginia, Ohio and Michigan — in less than a year, keeping various jobs for short amounts of time. The government used that in arguing for their detention pending a trial over false documents.

Koubriti and Hannan are among five men with Michigan connections jailed following arrests made in the terrorism investigation. The others are Nabil al-Marabh, Youssef Hmimssa and Intiaz Ahmed Siddiqui.

Where the five men fit in the terrorism investigation is unclear. None is directly charged in the Sept. 11 attacks. It's not known how well they really knew one another, if some did at all.

But Detroit is among the areas where there is a pocket of terrorist support, said law enforcement officials speaking only on condition of anonymity.

Law enforcement officials say they believe suspected supporters of terrorism have stolen credit cards and used wire transfers to finance their activities, created false visas and identity documents, and moved frequently with like-minded Middle Easterners.

Koubriti, Hannan and Hmimssa have been indicted on charges of fraud and misuse of visas, permits and other documents, after authorities discovered a cache of

— See TERRORIST, Page 3A



Daily News/JEFF KIESEL

**QUITE A CROWD** — A large crowd waits in line for a better view of the U.S. Coast Guard Helicopter out of Traverse City during Children's Safety Day at the Loomis Street boat ramps Tuesday.



Daily News/ANDY KLEVORN

**THIS IS A TEST** — Linda Heams holds her son Dylan, 2, while he tries out a whistle, one of many free giveaways at the Safety Day.

# Children, families enjoy event targeted at keeping kids safe

By JENNIFER MILLER  
Daily News Staff Writer

A few hundred people turned out at the Loomis Street boat launch to learn about boating and water safety at a Safe Kids Day sponsored by the Mason County Sheriff's Office.

Children of all ages crawled in and out of police cars, pushing buttons and checking out the video equipment while others sat in a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter that visited from Traverse City.

The crew of the helicopter — two pilots, a mechanic and a swimmer — talked with visitors about their jobs and what it takes to be a U.S. Coast Guardsman.

"I brag about my job," said a grinning rescue swimmer, Shaun Legas.

Legas said the Coast Guard often participates in community events like Tuesday's. Not only is it a great learning experience for the public, but the Coast Guard can also use it as a recruiting tool.

"They're not intimidated when they realize that these people are here to help them."

— Candice Asplund  
mother, Linden, Mich.

Elsewhere at the event, Ludington's new rescue truck from the fire department was open and available for people to see. It was an opportunity for children to see how firefighters and first responders travel to a scene, as well as all the equipment that is available to them.

"I think it's great," said Candice Asplund of Linden, Mich., who is vacationing with her family here. "It's a great idea."

Her 5-year-old daughter Carlie was having a good time checking out the fire truck.

Asplund said Tuesday's event was a

nice way to help children understand the jobs of firefighters and police.

"They're not intimidated when they realize that these people are here to help them," she said.

The Asplunds are also boat owners. They took Tuesday as an opportunity for Carlie, who just learned how to swim, to learn some of the basics of boating safety.

"This is just perfect," Candice said.

The Safe Kids Day was made possible with a \$750 grant from the Mason/Oceana chapter of Safe Kids. It targeted children under 16 with drawings for life jackets, body boards, rafts and other water-related gear. Refreshments and various information packets were also available, as well as stickers, whistles, and other tokens for children to take home.

Marine officer Jason Van Anlel said he'd like to make Safe Kids Day an annual event, but he'll have to wait for next year to see if chapter will offer another grant.



Daily News/ANDY KLEVORN

**THE NEXT TIGER** — Dylan James Petersen, 3, taps a golf ball through targets at the Safe Kids Day at the Loomis Street boat ramps Tuesday morning. Parents and children learned about safety on the water with displays from local law enforcement agencies.

Proud to be an American!

Tammie Poteet  
St. Francis Church

Thank you for being there  
for us - you all are  
appreciated! God bless  
each & everyone, and  
God Bless America!  
Jeanie Kaudson

Thank you so  
much for all  
you do. (L)  
Kande

THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS FOR!  
Thank you for being  
willing to defend our  
Country. Be assured  
that you are in our  
prayers.

Thank you for your  
courage and hard work  
in your fellow Americans  
Paul Skiff

GOD BLESS YOU ALL!!

FR. BILL  
ST. FRANCIS CHURCH  
TRAVERSE CITY

Commander of the 1st Coast Guard Base  
Traverse City, Mich. 9-20-01  
My husband, Jack Leggat, and I would  
like to thank you & all the service men  
& women who are providing services to  
help our community and our nation!  
The coast guard holds a special place  
in my heart as my son served in the  
Coast Guard both in Kodiak, Alaska &  
Miami, Fl. He was manager of our business,  
"Ericsson's World of Craft" in Traverse City  
until his death, Apr. 13, 1981. He was in  
a car, driven by his friend, when the car  
left the road & rolled over several times down  
the hill. Although they both had seat belts on  
my son was killed immediately & his friend  
walked away with just a scratched. His name  
was Gordy Erickson, & he had many friends  
in your area.  
I thought up the idea of "the Cookie  
Brigade" & mentioned it to Mary Leggett,  
my former business manager, & when she heard  
about it, not only she, but many other women  
wanted to be included. The interest  
response was so great that we decided  
not to proceed the week day further, one  
lady, her husband who was also in the  
Coast Guard promptly made five different  
batches of cookies.  
My husband, Jack Leggat served in  
with & retired from the army after  
21 years as a major.  
Hope you enjoy the cookies!  
Thank you again -  
Jerry Erickson Leggat

All Coast Guard:

Many thanks for all your  
help here in Traverse City and  
the rest of the area -

Enjoy this small appreciation  
to all and your families

Sincerely,  
Barb Willaway

Dear Friends of the Military -  
a group of ladies from St. Francis Church  
ask us if we would like to go together  
and give something to this group. I  
think if you folks are called to help protect  
our Country. We would be glad to do  
something.

Hope you enjoy the cookies

Catherine & Christina Eggle  
133 E. 9th St. T.C. Mich.  
49684

Thanks for all  
you do. Your  
dedication and  
service to our  
Country is very  
much appreciated  
by all. You are in  
our prayers.  
Mary Mills  
St. Francis  
Church

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU  
DO FOR US. GOD BLESS AND  
KEEP YOU ALL SAFE!!

ANN HARRISON  
PARISH SECRETARY  
ST. FRANCIS PARISH  
TRAVERSE CITY

PEACE

We all want to thank you for the great visit on Friday. It was pleasant & informative. Everyone wants to come back again next year. I was particularly impressed by the emphasis on thinking skills and "the big picture"

Thank you again

Victoria Lewis

Mindy Mac Steind  
 Tracy & Arianna  
 Shauna  
 Holliman  
 Nikki Steindel  
 Ashley Stark  
 Thank you for a  
 Margot  
 McElholm  
 Shannon  
 McKisson  
 Thank you  
 Nick & Rob  
 You guys are  
 awesome  
 Stephanie Hunt  
 Thank  
 It was fun talking  
 to you guys!  
 Sarah Koeel  
 Thank  
 You made  
 the trip worth  
 while  
 Ashley Stark  
 Elena  
 Garcia  
 -Gracias-  
 Inye Bass  
 Thank  
 you  
 guys  
 were  
 nice  
 to  
 have  
 you  
 guys  
 know  
 fun  
 Mary  
 Rams  
 Adios  
 Mankya!  
 Jessica Rex

1701 East Front Street  
 Traverse City, Michigan 49685-3061  
 616-922-1135  
<http://www.nmc.edu>

Northwestern Michigan College

June 24, 1999

Cdr. Barry Harner  
 US Coast Guard Air Station  
 1175 Airport Access Rd  
 Traverse City, MI 49686

Dear Cdr. Harner:

The NMC Barbecue is a community tradition we can all be proud of. Despite the weather and because of your club's volunteer efforts, we were able to serve over 7,500 people and netted approximately \$40,000 which will provide funding for several special college projects.

Each year we try to improve the serving line process based on the feedback we receive from our volunteers. If your club members have any suggestions, please send them to Margaret Fox, NMC-College Relations, 1701 E. Front Street, Traverse City, MI 49686. Or, you may call Margaret at 922-1020 or Tom Haase at 946-1630.

On behalf of the Barbecue Board and the NMC students, faculty, staff and trustees, we thank you for your volunteer efforts and continued support of Northwestern Michigan College.

Sincerely,

Tom Haase  
 Tom Haase  
 NMC Barbecue Board

TH/CJ:mlf

Cher Janik  
 Director of College Outreach

On July 10, Thomas Roach Jr. and his 11-year-old son, Patrick, found themselves floating in waves of up to six feet for almost two hours after their catamaran, "The Wind Rocket," flipped in choppy water south of Power Island. The capsized vessel drifted ashore on Old Mission Peninsula and was reported by a passing sailboat. A U.S. Coast Guard helicopter from the Traverse City air station was in the air and spotted the overturned craft within 15 minutes; however high waves and the sun's glare made spotting Roach and his son difficult. The Roach family wrote recently to send their sincere thanks to all the people who helped the father and son return safely to shore. This includes the rescue caller, the "awesome" Coast Guard team, the Traverse City firefighters/EMS, the Munson Medical Center emergency room staff, the folks along the shore where the boat landed, and the inventor of life jackets, without which the pair might not have survived. "One of the greatest blessings in life is people lending each other a hand," the Roach family wrote. "We are so grateful to each of you! ... When we count our blessings, caring people top the list. And when we reflect on this rescue, we realize more fully how fortunate we all are in this area to have the well-trained U.S. Coast Guard "Guardians of the Great Lakes" stationed right here in TC."

# Air station command put into new hands

By Carol South  
Herald contributing writer

Calling Traverse City the finest place he ever lived, Coast Guard Commander Thomas Ostebo handed over the reins to the air station Friday morning to Commander Lance Benton, a South Dakota native.

Presided over by Rear Admiral James Hull, Commander of the ninth Coast Guard District, the ceremony continued the two-year change of command schedule for the base.

Ostebo departed with a meritorious service medal citing his exemplary service and leadership at the air station over the past two years, which included the crew's total of flying 6,200 hours without a mishap, flying 375 search and rescue missions and saving 105 lives and \$300,000 in property.

Hull also noted Ostebo's service to the community, devoting hundreds of hours of personal time to organizations including the Red Cross, Toys for Tots, Make-A-Wish Foundation and the National



Herald photo by Carol South

Commander Lance Benton assumes his duties Friday morning as commander of the Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City, replacing Commander Thomas Ostebo after his two-year assignment ended.

Cherry Festival.

"We recognize Commander Ostebo as an exceptional model of honor, respect and dignity," Hull said. "That is what I require of my people, to be good stewards of not only government assets but to be part of the community."

Ostebo's parting words of

advice to Benton were to enjoy his time in Traverse City, calling it the finest place he had ever lived. Second, he acknowledged the crew, whom he called the finest group of men and women he had ever worked with.

"This crew is the pride of the Great Lakes, without a doubt," said Ostebo, who is moving to

Boston to complete a national security fellowship at Harvard. "Every day I witnessed my crew upholding the core values of the Coast Guard: honor, respect and devotion to duty."

Benton, a native of South Dakota, has been in the Coast Guard 23 years and twice served with Ostebo. After assuming command, Benton

declared that his friend left him big shoes to fill. He then took a moment to acknowledge his father, who was in the National Parks Service and planted the seed of leadership and community service at a young age.

"My dad always told me that an effective leader at all times

See AIR, Page 2

2 WEDNESDAY, JULY 4, 2001

GRAND TRAVERSE HERALD

# Air station command is put into new hands

continued from Page 1

must be focused on the needs of the people," said Benton, whose last assignment was Deputy Group Commander of Coast Guard Group and Air Station Astoria, Oregon.

When he entered the Coast Guard Academy in 1978, just out of high school, he saw a chance to both serve his coun-

try and help people. After graduating with a degree in management, he has served over the years in Alaska, Washington, New York and Florida, in duties ranging search and rescue, flight training and counter narcotics missions.

Benton has more than 4,500 accident-free flying hours and, as commander, plans to con-

tinue taking his turn as captain of the air station's five helicopters, firmly believing in leading from the cockpit.

"The Coast Guard looked like for me an opportunity to have an operational career and have a chance to help people; it has been that and more," he said. "Staying in has been an easy decision."

Leading the air station and its 145 officers and enlisted personnel will be a challenge, but Benton sees the excellent staff, especially the chief petty officers, have the place running smoothly and efficiently.

"If I weren't here, this place would still run," he said. "I was very excited to be assigned here. It has a reputation as a premier operational

unit of the Coast Guard."

Benton and his wife, Theresa, have two children, Lucienne and Austin. Having moved for the ninth time in 19 years, they are looking forward to settling into the new community. As with his own family, he is aware of the sacrifices made by Coast Guard families and appreciates the close-knit community that

forms around the air station and that reaches into the community.

"The families make sacrifices every day which permit their spouses, moms and dads to serve," Benton said. "The Coast Guard also expects us to be good community members and that means more than just coming in and putting in the work here."

## Transitions

### ALONG THE COASTS

A snapshot of the Coast Guard as of March 5



**FACTS AND FIGURES**  
Lives saved FY01: 4,201; FY02: 799.  
Migrants interdicted FY01: 3,940; FY02: 1,556.  
Marijuana seized FY01: 94,520 lbs; FY02: 18,963.  
Cocaine seized FY01: 198,393 lbs; FY02: 71,759.  
Security zones-Atlantic: 103; Pacific: 34.  
Reservists recalled-Atlantic: 1,342; Pacific: 470.

**KEY** Drug interdiction, Fisheries patrol, Migrant interdiction, Rescue mission, Hazardous material cleanup, Other  
Source: U.S. Coast Guard



TRAVERSE CITY RECORD-EAGLE



Forecast, Page 4B

MARCH 19, 2002

NORTHERN MICHIGAN'S NEWSPAPER

50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.75 SUNDAY

'Heroes are all types of people'

American Red Cross honors 21 local heroes

By PATRICK SULLIVAN Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — Some pulled victims from cold lakes, others volunteered in New York City in the wake of disaster, and others risked their lives in the course of their duty as firefighters, police or U.S. Coast Guard members.

All 21 "community heroes" were honored at an American Red Cross presentation Friday at the Park Place Dome.

"Heroes are all types of people, they come from all walks of life," said Lisa Marks, director of the Red Cross in Traverse City. "I think it's important for the Red Cross to honor these people, because it's right in line with our mission."

Those awarded include the following:

■ Andrew Bell saved his younger sister from peril when he was only 11 years old.

While camping at Tehquanemom Falls, Bell saved his 7-year-old sister from a swarm of yellow jacket bees when he remembered from a science class that bees are repelled by water. He quickly pulled his sister into a river as she was attacked, proving that keeping calm and thinking quick can save a life.

■ Two Leelanau County Sheriff's deputies and one Michigan State Police trooper from Traverse City saved a man whose boat had capsized early in the morning of Sept. 30, 2001.

Sgt. Robert Mead, Deputy Mark Stevens and Trooper Chris Bush responded to reports of screams coming from Lake Leelanau. Despite adverse weather conditions, the officers commandeered a boat, located the victim, and pulled him aboard safely after he had been in the water for several hours.

■ On March 28, 2001, two boys, ages 6 and 8, wound up lost in the woods near Benzonia during a walk home from their grandparents' house.

The boys were eventually spotted by a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter team consisting of Lt. Whit Irwin, Lt. JG Chuck Webb, AST 2 Jason Shepard, and AMT 2 Sam Loska, and they were brought home safely.

■ On Dec. 7, 2001, the Cherry Grove Fire Department was called to a structure fire that involved a victim trapped in a house.

Firefighter Marty Chappo attempted to enter



LOCAL

1B

Monday July 8, 2002

IN BRIEF FROM STAFF REPORTS

Coast Guard stays busy over weekend

TRAVERSE CITY — The Traverse City U.S. Coast Guard Air Station was kept busy Sunday.

While personnel were helping refuel the U.S. Navy's Blue Angels for their departure after performing two airshows over the weekend, a Canadian Coast Guard tug near Grand Caribou Island in Lake Superior, about 150 miles from Traverse City, called for help.

A helicopter from the air station picked up an officer who had suffered a diabetic seizure and airlifted him to a hospital, Lt. Commander Jeff Travis said.

The helicopter was again called to Lake Superior, this time to help locate missing kayakers near Ontonagon, Travis said.

The kayakers had not been found as of Sunday night.

ALONG THE COASTS

A snapshot of the Coast Guard as of Feb. 26



KEY Drug interdiction Fisheries patrol Migrant interdiction Rescue mission Hazardous material cleanup Other Source: U.S. Coast Guard



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Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

Wednesday, June 19, 2002



A CLOSER LOOK — Camp 911 kicked off on Monday at the Big Bear Arena in Sault Ste Marie. Campers attending the four-day event work with law enforcement personnel attending various safety training courses. Above, three campers, ranging from ages 10-13 years old toured a helicopter on Tuesday that arrived from Traverse City for the Coast Guard's water safety training presentation, under the watchful gaze of USCG Sr. Chief Rick Bielewicz, left, and LTJG Murray Dunlap. Camp goals include building a bridge between children a law enforcement and providing an alternative summertime activity.

Editor: Andrea Novel Buck | 723-5341 | abuck@duluthnews.com

SECTION D

## Coast Guard exercise prepares Duluth rescuers for boating emergencies on Lake Superior

21 August 2002



A U.S. Coast Guard helicopter drops a rescue basket toward the Duluth-based 47-foot Coast Guard rescue boat during training exercises on Lake Superior on Tuesday afternoon. The helicopter, based in Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., can reach Duluth in an hour and a half.

## Training to save lives

BY EMILY JOHNS  
NEWS/TITLELINE STAFF WRITER

The U.S. Coast Guard of Duluth was on a mission Tuesday afternoon on Lake Superior.

"The wind is out of the south," said the crackling voice on the marine radio, coming from the helicopter flying above. "Go north so you can be in a position to go southwest." The helicopter rocketed past, heading toward the middle of Lake Superior.

The crews on board the boat and the helicopter were practicing procedure for a rescue from a boat on the lake. It would be used, for instance, if a boat was stuck on rocks or if it was sinking.

"It's to get people off a boat as quick as possible," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Erik Westman, 25.

Westman estimates that this type of rescue is done a couple of times a year. The Coast Guard practices it, on average, two times a year.

A team of 11 men on the 47-foot motor life boat and three others on the HH-65A "Dolphin" helicopter practiced lowering and raising a basket used to lift people from the boat



Members of the Coast Guard pull in the rescue basket from the helicopter hovering above them during training exercises on Lake Superior on Tuesday afternoon.

to the helicopter.

The helicopter, stationed in Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., serves the western half of Lake Superior. In an emergency, it can reach Duluth in an hour and a half.

See TRAINING, Page 2D

### TRAINING | Coast Guard practices on Lake Superior

From Page 1D

luth in an hour and a half.

"It sounds like a lot of time," Westman said, "but if a guy is 100 miles out, it would take a boat four hours to get to him."

In a rescue mission, the helicopter descends toward the boat to assess the wind and wave conditions. They tell the boat which direction to travel in, and how fast to go. Once they are traveling on the same path, they communicate with each other by radio about how the job will be done, although there is more communication during training

than in an actual rescue mission.

Seaman Alex Perry, 20, was working his first rescue mission practice. The hardest part, he imagines, won't be the actual lowering and raising of the basket.

"It'll be hard to see from all the water in your face," Perry said.

In an emergency, a boat in distress contacts the Coast Guard by marine radio. Channel 16 is the hailing-in-distress frequency.

"Sometimes people call 911 from their cell phones, too," Westman said.



## Rescue drill on the St. Mary's River



Photos by FRED NEWMAN  
The Evening News

**HELO DRILL** — Above left, a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter lowers a rescue basket to a USCG patrol boat on the lower St. Mary's River recently. Above right, Seaman Steve Clausen removes one of the many flags on a boat before running the rescue drill. If left attached, the helicopter's 120-mph "prop wash" would rip the flags off the boat during the drill. Left, members from the USCG assist officers from local U.S. and Canadian law enforcement agencies in preparation for the rescue drills. Below right, the USCG helicopter from the Traverse City Base flies over two patrol boats from the Sault Coast Guard Base.



**COMBINED DRILL** — Far left, P.O. 2nd Class Brian Wruck lowers the rescue basket from the helicopter to a waiting boat below during the first ever combined rescue drill that included so many U.S. and Canadian agencies. Left, Chippewa County Sheriff Department's patrol boat prepares for their turn with the helicopter. Below, boats from the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Border Patrol, Chippewa County Sheriff Dept., Michigan DNR, Ontario Provincial Police and Royal Canadian Mounted Police gather for last minutes instructions before the rescue practice on the river.







Rob Lewis received a Coast Guard Auxiliary award for his service in the Coast Guard.

16 October 2002

## Coast Guard honors local pilot

Rob Lewis volunteered to patrol state's western shoreline after 9/11

By PATRICK SULLIVAN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — The missions Rob Lewis flies since Sept. 11 may be lonely and unsung, but Lewis recently was recognized by the U.S. Coast Guard for serving his country and helping to save the government \$3.2 million. Lewis is a member of the Coast Guard Auxiliary, a volunteer force established to promote marine safety and to assist the Coast Guard with other tasks. Since the terrorist attacks last year, a major Coast Guard task has been homeland security. Lewis, a pilot of 28 years who joined the auxiliary two years ago, has volunteered his time and his Cessna 172 to the cause. Through February, the 47-year-old took his 46-year-old plane out for an average of two patrols per week over the western coast of

Michigan, looking for anything suspicious, taking notes on freighter traffic and checking nuclear power plants in southwest Michigan. Lewis usually departs from Cherry Capital Airport and flies along the shoreline from Manistee to Michigan City, Ind., at an altitude of 1,000 feet, a patrol that takes three to three and a half hours each way. "For most of the flight we're looking at the beach," he said. "From the informal side, you just enjoy the view." Earlier this month, Lewis and six other pilots from around Michigan received the Coast Guard's Meritorious Team Commendation for their patrols. Other pilots are based in Manistee, Houghton Lake, Bay City, Saginaw and Detroit. In the citation, Detroit-based Coast Guard Capt. David Spillman noted that if the Coast Guard would have under-

the missions it would have cost about \$3.2 million to complete the 570 flight hours and the 179 homeland security patrols. When Lewis joined the auxiliary — he learned of it from a Coast Guard rescue swimmer who attends his church — he didn't imagine he'd play a role in homeland security. He says he joined because it entitled him to ride along with Coast Guard pilots in their helicopters. With increased security concerns after Sept. 11, auxiliary pilots were asked to first photograph and document the state's shoreline and later to fly missions to watch for conspicuous changes. Last September, Lewis hadn't yet been certified by the Coast Guard to fly. "I was getting close to my Coast Guard wings and I was really anxious to get that done so I could get out there and participate," he said.

He started flying his first missions in late November. Lewis works as a technology specialist for AT&T and he said his company has been generous in offering him flexible hours so that he can volunteer his time. The Coast Guard budget didn't account for the need for patrols after Sept. 11, so money to reimburse for maintenance of the private planes ran out in February. Lewis said he began to fly fewer missions because he couldn't afford the maintenance cost. He estimates that if he would have continued flying two flights per week and paying for it out of his own pocket, it would have cost him \$500 per month. With five children, ranging in age from 9 to 19, he said he couldn't afford it. He scaled back the flights to about one a month. "Not only were we laying out our time but we were laying out funds out of our pockets," he said.

7 November 2002



Photo by Don Ingle

Three TU volunteers scurry to free the helicopter cables from a cedar placed in the river.

## Coast Guard aids in rescue

Rescues are their business and the crew members of the Traverse City Coast Guard Air Station are very, very good at it. They have rescued anglers from ice floes, found lost hunters, located air crash sites, spotted illegal pot patches in the midst of swamps, and pulled sailors from sinking boats. But on Monday, they chalked up a first — the rescue of a river. In partnership with the Adams Chapter of Trout Unlimited, they joined in a program called "Embrace a Stream," a national program that gives grants to local TU chapters for specific cold water conservation projects. Last year, the Adams Chapter received a grant to work on the area of the Boardman River upstream from the Brown Bridge Pond. The impoundment has stowed the velocity of the stream, drifting sands have filled the pond and backed up the sand drift farther upstream where sands are smothering spawning gravel used by trout and covering the woody debris habitat that small aquatic insects require for their nutrition. "We received \$2,000 for the placement of woody debris (whole trees) in this section of the river, but that wouldn't go far in covering the cost of getting the large material into the river," said Bill Fernandez, TU Adams Chapter president. But one member had an idea that they might enlist the help of the local Coast Guard Air Station and approached the commander.



DON INGLE  
OUTDOOR COLUMNIST

He seized on the idea as a perfect training exercise for their helicopter crew; he volunteered efforts to join with TU in getting whole tree placement to and into place in the Boardman. He approved using a rescue helicopter to lift large cedars from a landing site and place them into marked positions in the stream. "For some reason the commander picked me and said you're going to be the project officer and do it," said helicopter pilot Lt. (JG) Chuck Webb. "I think it was because of my previous experience flying for the army (eight years) and Coast Guard (3 1/2 years), as I had a whole lot of plane load experience. This was something we don't do every day. He wanted someone with more experience on it." Webb called it a good training exercise and a "real world" mission and a bit of evolution in their ability to handle situations. "We had nine people assigned — we had four ground crew, three air crew, and two that worked with the press." Instrumental in setting up this joint river restoration effort was Steve Largent, a TU

member who is also involved with the Boardman River Project. He noted that the national TU "Embrace a Stream" project is available to chapters nationwide, but is not awarded unless a chapter has submitted a project of proven need, and also has a record in successful efforts in cold water conservation. "You have to have a budget submitted, a good track record, a good project, and the ability to carry it out," said Largent. (Monday) we had about 20 people working on this project. Besides the Coast Guard crew we had a number of chapter members working on it, and we also had a small inmate work crew from Camp Pugsley. "The \$2,000 allowed us to cover the costs getting large cedars out of a swamp area and brought to a pasture across from Ranch Rudolf where the helicopter picked them up and carried them to placement in the river. We placed 15 to 17 large, whole cedars in pre-selected and flagged spots on the river. "It is thanks to the Coast Guard that we are able to do this project within the limits of the grant budget. Their help was invaluable." By day's end Monday, all of the trees had been delivered to the pre-planned sites and the Coast Guard could add another notch to its record of successful rescues. This time they helped start a barren stretch of river on the way back to health as part of a blue ribbon trout stream. "These people are fabulous," said Fernandez, summing up their appreciation for the helicopter crew's efforts.

10 Oct 2002

### The unsung heroes

The unsung heroes ... these men put their lives on the line daily, dedicated, unshakable in their efforts to save lives and property, protecting our shores from numerous adversaries. These men fly under circumstances others wouldn't even consider, their ships and boats actually going out in hurricanes to save lives. I've seen this with my own eyes, for I was married to one of these quiet heroes, his life dedicated to serve: Cmdr. Frank R. Peasley, deceased. They train to be the best, and that training is ongoing to keep them the best, and if two weeks of added noise makes some people uncomfortable, I say, shame on them. When I look up and see those orange helicopters, I feel safer and my chest swells a little with pride. Linda S. Peasley Hains  
Traverse City

### Pair rescued from sailboat

TRAVERSE CITY — Two men with a broken sailboat were rescued from Good Harbor Bay Saturday by a Coast Guard rescue team. A Coast Guard helicopter responded to a 2:30 p.m. call from the Leelanau County Sheriff's Department of a capsized sailboat off Pyramid Point in Lake Michigan. The boat was righted by the time the rescue team arrived, although the vessel had a broken mast. With a storm front approaching the two men, who were not identified by authorities, were hoisted by helicopter from the sailboat and taken to shore where they were assisted by county deputies. Neither was seriously injured. 13 Oct 2002



Herald photo by Carol South

In February, Petty Officer Brian Davies, an 18-year veteran of the United States Coast Guard, found a problem during a routine inspection of the HH-65A "Dolphin" helicopter that could have caused a crash of this model. For potentially saving lives around the world, Davies received a commendation medal two weeks ago from Rear Admiral James C. Olson, who came from Washington D.C. for the ceremony.

4 Sept 02

include the thousands of hours of

# Davies earns medal for averting air disaster

continued from page 1

rotor drive system was split in two. Davies found that a servomechanism, instead of being lightly torqued, could be rotated by hand. The three servos in the flight controls change the angle of the HH-65A "Dolphin" helicopter's blades, working together to maintain a stable flight. If one or more had failed, the craft could have crashed without warning.

"It was like stumbling on a crack in the sidewalk, really blatant but at first you can't believe it," Davies said. "All five aircraft that we had stationed here had the same failure. They were either improperly torqued or had loosened and it was probably a recent problem."

After Davies' discovery, the other four aircraft at the station were immediately grounded. The crew swung into action and their inspection showed that six of the ten other servos had the same problem. The aircraft maintenance technician team quickly repaired the mechanisms and got the helicopters flying again that same day.

This failure had worldwide implications. Word quickly went out to other Coast Guard facilities that use the HH-65A helicopter, as well as to users of the French-made helicopter in other countries.

Lanceo Benton, commander of the Traverse City Air Station, said that Davies' contribution exemplifies the Coast Guard spirit.

"It is very important that this individual was able to spot a problem that has been with the fleet a long time," Benton said. "It is certain that had this not been discovered, one of those servos would have failed, which would have resulted in loss of control and crash and possible loss of lives."

On July 21, Davies received a Coast Guard Commendation Medal from Rear Admiral James Olson. Admiral Olson is based in Washington, D.C., and is responsible for all operational assets in the Coast Guard.

In addition, the team facilitating the inspection and repair received a Meritorious Team Award from the Admiral. Team members included LCDR Christopher Day, CWO4 Andrew Lovlien, AMTC Brian Buck, AMTI Mark Frohnappel,

AMT2 Bryan Davies, AMT3 Tony Warnock and AMT3 Austin Griggs.

Benton is proud of how his personnel immediately assessed the situation and moved to correct it, protecting the lives of their fellow service members and potentially civilians on the ground.

"Once Davies figured out what was wrong, there was a team effort to fix it and make sure the word got out to the rest of the Coast Guard fleet," Benton noted.

Davies is a native of Bellaire and is currently serving his "Twilight Tour," his final tour before retirement, in Traverse City. Married, with two children ages 6 and 16, he has made a career out of what began as a quest for a job in the hard economic times of the early 1980s.

"I joined five years after high school," recalled Davies. "I was inspired by Reagan — I couldn't find a job."

He served eight years in Mobile, Ala., and four years in Miami. He was originally trained on the HU-25 Guardian, a fixed-wing jet. Besides being an aviation mechanic technician, Davies also operates the hoist for the rescue swimmers during flights.

While looking forward to retirement in two years, with plans to build a house in Bellaire and parlay his electronics and mechanical experience into another career, he knows there will be one major downside to leaving the Coast Guard.

"I'm going to miss everyone like hell," he said.

# Alert action averts air disaster

Petty Officer Brian Davies receives Coast Guard Commendation Medal

By Carol South  
Herald contributing writer

City Coast Guard Air Station suddenly had deadly implications.

18-year veteran of the service, noticed that a crucial flight control component had a discrepancy. He was part of a team that

day changing the main gear box, so Davies was inspecting the flight controls while the main

See Davies, page 2

In February, a routine maintenance operation at the Traverse

Petty Officer Brian Davies, an

4 Sept 02

# Memorials honor fallen area soldiers

Those of service said patriotism and respect for veterans has increased in the last year

By VANESSA McCRAY  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — The Veterans Day itineraries of Ken Thomas and Joe Greer were booked to the minute.

Like many others, the two veterans attended multiple memorial services Monday. Before breakfast, they had visited two cemeteries — participating in services at each — and stopped for a complimentary buffet for veterans at Rocco's Cafe in Grawn. By noon, they were back in Traverse City for a somber memorial service at the Veterans of

Foreign Wars post. For Thomas, the post's chaplain, the non-stop pace was well worth it. He was participating for all the fallen soldiers who could not.

"Today, we think about our comrades to whom God said, 'I am ready for you,' either as veterans in service or ones who died long after being out of service," Thomas said, in his prayer during the memorial service.

The veterans gathered around the flag pole outside the post responded with a simple "Amen."

During the service, Jack Pickard, state senior vice commander for the VFW, spoke about the values those who died in war hold dear — justice, fairness and the American way of life.

12 Nov 2002  
See AREA, Page 2A



Record-Eagle/2m Rayn

Al Ockert, left, and John Hanell, with the Korean War Veterans Association, observe Veterans Day during morning services at Maple Grove Cemetery in Blair Township.

TODAY

# Area services honor fallen soldiers

Continued from Page 1A

"This is an opportunity for Americans — a day we give thanks to those who have earned it. Your freedom is not free, value it and cherish it for the extraordinary thing that it is and thank a veteran for it," Pickard said.

The memorial service included a fly-over by a Coast Guard helicopter, a flag-raising ceremony, a salute and a wreath laying ceremony. More than 30 veterans and their relatives participated in the event.

Greer, who served in the military from 1942 to 1945, said he has seen memorial services become more meaningful for many since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

"I think it has even brought the younger generation in with our so-called great generation," Greer

said. Others at the service agreed, saying patriotism and respect for veterans has increased in the last year. Thomas said he believes the reason is because many believe the world isn't as safe a place as it once was and are depending on the military to protect them.

"I think since Sept. 11 everything's taken on a new sense of nationalism," he said.

Wenda Davis spent the day at the post, serving hot dogs and chili to those who came in cold and damp after participating in the rain-drenched ceremony. She said she volunteers with the post because it's something she likes to do.

"I've been with the vets all my life," she said. "I think more people are more appreciative and more willing to offer their support."



Record-Eagle/2m Rayn

Veterans from VFW post 2780, Ladies Auxiliary post 2780, American Legion Post 35 and Korean War Veterans Association of Traverse City observe Veterans Day as they salute the American flag at Monroe Cemetery.

# Beaver Island couple's plane missing

**Melvin, Judy Bellamy were on last leg of a trip from Missouri when their plane disappeared**

By STACEY SMITH  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRaverse City — The U.S. Coast Guard in Traverse City is helping search for a Beaver Island couple missing since their plane left

Fon du Lac, Wis., Sunday afternoon. Melvin and Judy Bellamy, both 55, of Beaver Island, were returning home from a U.S. Marine Corps celebration in Missouri around 4:45 p.m. Sunday when they stopped to refuel the small single-engine Cessna 175 Melvin Bellamy was flying. That was the last time the couple was seen. Dale Bellamy, Melvin Bellamy's brother, said he arrived at the couple's Beaver Island home for a visit about half an hour before the Bellamys left Fon du Lac.

Melvin Bellamy phoned his brother or to say they would be there in a couple of hours, Dale Bellamy said. "He called about half an hour after I got here and said he would be here in about two hours, but he never showed up," he said. Flight time in a small plane from Fon du Lac to Beaver Island is approximately two hours, according to the Coast Guard. The two brothers were planning to go hunting together, Dale Bellamy said. The Coast Guard was concentrat-

ing their search in an area known as Pt. Detour, a small point off Big Bay De Noe, where the Bellamy plane was last picked up on radar, Dale Bellamy said. "I hope they find something on land," he said. A Vietnam veteran and former Marine, Melvin Bellamy often flew to Missouri to counsel young Marines waiting for an assignment or new recruits, Dale Bellamy said. Melvin Bellamy took up flying shortly after he returned from Vietnam, his brother said.

He was an experienced pilot who had been one of Beaver Island's 300 to 400 year-round residents for several years, said Peatne Township supervisor John Works Jr. "They're really good people and we're really concerned about them," Works said. The Bellamys have three grown children. Coast Guard helicopters were searching alternate flight routes between Fon du Lac and Beaver Island Monday night, public affairs officer Lt. Greg Torgersen said.

## Coast Guard fliers introduce 'Bravo'

TRaverse City — Coast Guard fliers in Traverse City unveiled an upgraded helicopter this week. Although it looks very similar to the familiar model that has been in the skies since 1984, the new model, nicknamed "Bravo," is 120 pounds lighter and has increased fuel capacity and 10 percent more flight range than its predecessor, Coast Guard public affairs officer Lt. j.g. Greg Torgersen said. The first of five refurbished helicopters replacing the current model has already arrived at the Coast Guard base and new aircraft will arrive every two or three weeks until all five are at the station by February. The old model, the HH-65A, earned a reputation for reliability and outstanding search capability, Torgersen said. The upgraded version performs even better, he said, increasing search and rescue capabilities while decreasing pilot workload in the cockpit. The upgrade costs \$250,000 per aircraft, but the program will pay for itself in six to eight years when maintenance costs of the old systems are compared with the new, Torgersen said. Pilots are learning to fly the new helicopter this week, as well as working at a desktop computer flight simulator. 22 Nov 2002

# Coast Guard calls off search for couple's aircraft

**Melvin and Judy Bellamy's plane is officially classified as missing**

By MICHELLE BARBERCHECK  
Special to the Record-Eagle

BEAVER ISLAND — After two days of searching more than 1,400 nautical miles of Lake Michigan, the U.S. Coast Guard has called off its search for a couple whose single-engine airplane has been missing since Sunday.

The Civil Air Patrol is continuing to look for the airplane of Melvin and Judy Bellamy of Beaver Island, but U.S. Coast Guard officials say if their plane went down in the water, there is no chance now the two will be found alive. "Due to survival time in the water and the fact that this case was reported to us around 20 hours after they were overdue, the chance of survival

is nothing by now if they went down in the water. If they went down on land, though, it's a different story," said Petty Officer Second Class Paul Roszkowski, spokesman for the U.S. Coast Guard 9th District. Based on current air and water temperatures, wind velocity and whether a person is wearing survival gear, Coast Guard officials estimate a possible six hour survival time in

the waters of Lake Michigan. Roszkowski said as of 5 p.m. Tuesday, the Coast Guard has still not determined if the Bellamys' plane even crashed. At this point, he said, it's considered only a missing aircraft. "With this particular case, there's nothing that points to the fact that

— See COAST, Page 5A ▶

# Coast Guard calls off search for small plane

Continued from Page 1A

the aircraft went down near Beaver Island, and for that matter, there's nothing that points to the fact that it even crashed, because unless we find some wreckage, it's listed as a missing aircraft," he said.

The Bellamys, both 55, were making a return trip home Sunday from a U.S. Marine Corps ball in Missouri. According to a U.S. Coast Guard report, around 4:45 p.m. the couple stopped in Fon du Lac, Wis., to refuel their small Cessna 175, which Melvin Bellamy was piloting. The trip from Fon du Lac to Beaver Island is a two-hour-long flight, but the couple never made it to their destination.

Roszkowski said the U.S. Air Force reported its last radar contact with the Bellamy's aircraft was over Detour Point north of Green Bay at about 5:30 p.m., less than an hour after they were last spotted.

Roszkowski said by all accounts, Melvin Bellamy neglected to file a flight plan, which would have helped immensely in the search effort.

"Our search would've been more defined had he filed a flight plan," Roszkowski said. "Instead of searching the whole lake, we could be searching the specific area where we knew he'd planned to fly." 13 Nov 2002

Whether a pilot files a flight plan or not depends largely on if the pilot decides to fly according to visual flight regulations or instrument flight regulations, said Mark Zabawa, manager of the Harbor Springs airport.

Zabawa said few pilots of smaller aircraft like the Bellamys' Cessna would attempt to fly straight across Lake Michigan without relying on instrument flight regulations, meaning a flight plan would be required. Zabawa said in general, the Wisconsin-based smaller aircraft pilots who fly across the lake to Harbor Springs try to plan their trips according to visual flight regulations, depending on the shoreline and lay of the land to guide their trip.

Zabawa recalled there being foggy conditions at Harbor Springs airport the day the Bellamys took off, offering the possibility they may have encountered "white out" conditions and lost sight of their visual map.

"Most people who fly visual won't attempt to fly into weather, but from what I've heard, there's a good chance he was flying visual, and if he was flying visual, he probably knew he was taking a risk," Zabawa said.

If Bellamy hit a dense stretch of fog, he could have lost control in a matter of seconds, Zabawa

said. "If you've ever been in a white-out with the snow, you know how you can get completely and totally disoriented. Now imagine being in an airplane and feeling like that," Zabawa said.

Roszkowski said the U.S. Coast Guard will not likely take up the search for the Bellamys' plane again unless "major information" points to a definite location of the aircraft, or they are requested to do so. And those requests, he added, are not granted very often.

"The only time we continued searching is when Bill Clinton asked us to keep looking for John F. Kennedy Jr.'s plane," he said.

As for the Bellamy family, Melvin's brother, Dale, said he is still hopeful his brother and sister-in-law will be found.

"Hope is the only thing we have when something like this happens," he said. The brothers had planned to go hunting together this week.

Dale Bellamy said the couple's son, Mike, and their pilot friend Ron Evans from Emily City were up in the air Tuesday assisting the Civil Air Patrol and Coast Guard in their search. Daughters Missy and Jenny live in the Detroit area, he said, and the couple, married about 33 years, has two grandchildren.

Bellamy said his brother, who worked as a missionary and chaplain for AMVETS, took up flying shortly after serving two years as a Marine in Vietnam, where he "was right in the thick of the war." Bellamy said just this past summer Melvin received his Purple Heart for an injury he received when he was shot while on active duty there.

While the search for his family continues, Bellamy said he has been thankful for the support from the residents of Beaver Island.

"I'm finding out this is a very close community," he said.

## CHILLY DIP



Record-Eagle/Jim Rovin  
U.S. Coast Guard Air Station pilots and aircrew personnel in Traverse City conducted "wet drills" at the Clinch Park seawall in West Bay on Tuesday. Above, Coast Guard members jump into the frigid waters and swim out to a six-person life raft to practice survival techniques. Right, pilots and crew discuss first aid and survival kits before plunging in.



11 Dec 2002



**LANDING** — A U.S. Coast Guard Helicopter kicks up debris as it lands at the Loomis Street boat launch Wednesday. The U.S. Coast Guard along with members of the Mason County Sheriff's Office and Ludington Police Department were all part of the Kids Safety day.

## Safety first, children told

By JENNIFER MILLER  
Daily News Staff Writer

About 150 kids and their parents peered into a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter as Lt. Clint Schlegel described his job and the importance of wearing life preservers while enjoying activities in the water.

"If you see us flying over you that's probably not a good thing," he told a group of youngsters that had gathered to check out the helicopter.

Schlegel and a crew of three other Coast Guardsmen from Air Station Traverse City landed the helicopter at the Loomis Street boat launch. When the dust cleared visitors got to look inside and ask questions of the crew.

In addition to free hot dogs, chips and pop, there was a prize giveaway and the kids received materials about safe biking, boating and other summertime activities.

Eighth-grader Bo Buss stopped by to see the helicopter and to talk to Schlegel about what it takes to learn to fly with the Coast Guard.

"I came to see the helicopter and all the law enforcement stuff," Buss said. "I've just been interested in all that since I was little."

The Mason County Sheriff's Office, Ludington Police Department and U.S. Coast Guard hosted the day. Ludington High School loaned the grill for the hot dogs. Plans are to hold the event again next year.



**UP CLOSE** — Lt. Clint Schlegel talks with kids and their parents about the U.S. Coast Guard Helicopter just after it landed at the Loomis Street boat launch Wednesday.



**ROBERT STUETTGEN** (right), Stevens Point Municipal Airport employee, and Ryan Hickey, a crew member, pump fuel to a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter from Traverse City, Mich., used to search the area for Christine Erdman, missing since Thursday morning.

## Missing woman found in woods

By PAUL CHRONIS  
Journal staff

For the first time, Portage County Sheriff's Department officials used a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter in a search for a missing person.

The HH-65A Dolphin helicopter, equipped with infrared equipment for night searches, aided deputies as they looked for more than 30 hours Thursday and Friday before finding a town of Hull woman who had walked away from her house, Kristine Erdman, 39, left about 7:30 a.m. Thursday.

Erdman spent the night in a brush pile in the woods a quarter-mile northeast of her home. She was found by Deputy James Pozniak, who was searching the area on foot about 3:30 p.m. Friday, according to Sgt. Terry Groshek, a detective with the Sheriff's Department.

"She was in a pile of pine tree debris. She had taken some medication and fallen asleep," he said. "He noticed a hat and pulled some branches away and found her sleeping."

"When you think about how cold it was last night, you get worried about finding somebody healthy," he added. "It was really nice to find her, I'll tell you that."

Erdman was admitted to St. Michael's Hospital for a physi-

cal, but appeared to be uninjured, Groshek said.

Lt. Cmdr. Chris Day piloted the nearly \$4.9 million helicopter, which has been in service for about seven years at the Coast Guard station in Traverse City, Mich. That station has five helicopters and 23 pilots on duty. Day's crew averages 200 rescues per year.

It takes about 90 minutes to fly to Stevens Point from the base, Day said.

"Over-water search and rescue is our bread and butter," he said. "We have actually gone as far out as Buffalo, N.Y., but this is the farthest west I have personally gone for an overland search."

The air patrols were particularly helpful because of the terrain in which Erdman was believed to be located, Groshek said. "It would take dozens and dozens of people to cover that area effectively," he said. "It's a wilderness area with a lot of wetlands and the Little Plover riverbank to search. It's a really tough area to search."

It costs about \$1,000 per hour to operate the helicopter and its crew of four, which includes Day, his co-pilot, a flight mechanic and a rescue swimmer. No bill will come to Portage County, however; use of the helicopter is a public service of the federal government

and supported by the American taxpayers, Day said.

Portage County Chief Deputy John Graettinger said the idea of using the helicopter came from the national case manager for the Civil Air Patrol, which has a national database that keeps track of the assets available for searches nationwide. The Traverse City base had the closest available flight craft with infrared equipment, Graettinger said.

"Those guys from Civil Air Patrol are so nice," Graettinger said. "What a professional group. Those guys really are something. All cooperation, no red tape."

Graettinger said he wouldn't hesitate to call on the Coast Guard again if the need arose, now that he knows such equipment and manpower is available despite the distance.

The search for Erdman also included the Spirit of Marshfield air ambulance, Civil Air Patrol planes and two dogs supplied by Rib Mountain Bloodhounds, a company owned by Jody Disher. Deputies searched on the ground through the thick brush and forest lands near the Stevens Point Municipal Airport between Jordan and Iverson parks, along the Green Circle trail and along the Little Plover river south of Highway 66 and east of the airport.

# "Christmas at the Lighthouse"



Left, Santa Claus stands behind a cedar tree to protect himself from the cold wind. Below, Santa passes out gifts to children at the Grand Traverse Lighthouse Sunday afternoon.



Story by Mike Norton  
Photos by Jim Bovin

**N**ORTHPORT — This is the kind of weather that makes one appreciate the importance of lighthouses.

It was a cold winter day at the tip of the Leelanau Peninsula Sunday, with roaring gusts of wind ripping the clouds apart, driving brief stinging blasts of snow across the shoals and churning the water to foam.

But it didn't stop hundreds of area families from trooping out to the Leelanau State Park for the annual "Christmas at the Lighthouse" celebration at the Grand Traverse Lighthouse Museum. And it didn't stop an intrepid helicopter crew from the Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City from flying in a load of treats and toys and lowering them to a waiting Santa, who distributed them to the crowd of youngsters.

"The fly-in was just amazing," enthused Suttons Bay resident Sandy Anderson, who was volunteering at her first "Christmas at the Lighthouse." "I kept thinking, 'We're all going to get frostbite,' but this is so cool!"

For the past decade, the non-profit group that operates the

museum has been holding this annual winter open house that recreates the sights, sounds, smells and tastes of holiday celebrations at the once-isolated light station near Northport. On this one day of the year, the historic 143-year-old lighthouse and its grounds can be visited free of charge.

And while the weather outside was bitter, it was fragrant and warm inside the keeper's residence, which has been decorated and furnished as it would have been in the 1930s, and festooned with old-style holiday trimmings for Christmas.

In spite of the almost continuous line of visitors who moved slowly through the house — even climbing into the tower for a spectacular look at the storm-tossed water and sky — everything was calculated to give the impression that the keeper and his family were still on hand.

In the kitchen, a gingerbread lighthouse stood on the table — right beside a still-fresh batch of rolled-out gingerbread dough. And even if the strong scent of orange, cinnamon and cloves wafting through the house came from a sachet, it still smelled powerfully good.

"We're sorry," said greeter Terry Dahlberg, as visitors asked about the aroma. "It smells like there's something really delicious cooking, but there isn't."

On the other hand, the music in the parlor was quite real — courtesy of Father Wayne, the accordion-playing priest from nearby St. Michael's Catholic Church, and folk instrumentalist Neil Woodward on mandolin. Visitors who braved the icy sidewalk to peek into the newly restored fog-signal building got another musical treat: a concert of Christmas music from the Village Voices of Northport. The volunteers who put on

"Christmas at the Lighthouse" consider it their gift to the community's support for restoring and staffing the old facility after it was closed in 1972. But it's also an effort to recreate a time when snowplows were unreliable and cars didn't travel well over winter roads, when the lighthouse keepers and their families had to make most of their own holiday entertainment.

The Coast Guard helicopter visit is of more recent vintage — but it actually connects to a well-established "flying Santa" tradition that began in New England in 1929. That year, a Maine pilot delivering mail the week before Christmas got lost in a winter squall until he was able to follow the beacons of several lighthouses to home and safety. In gratitude, he wrapped several thank-you gifts and dropped them on the lawn of each lighthouse he had followed home.

Today there are "flying Santas" who deliver gifts at 29 lighthouses in six eastern states. Here, the flight is done purely for fun and as a reminder of Coast Guard history.



Right, Father Wayne, left, and Neil Woodward, entertain visitors at the Grand Traverse Lighthouse by playing Christmas songs. Below, a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter from Traverse City delivers gifts for Santa to hand out.



## Coast Guard offers help for being safe on the ice

Continued from Page 1A  
station Friday. The station's 23 personnel are trained in ice fall-through extrication and perform rescues on Lake Michigan and its tributaries in an area stretching from Leland to Cross Village. The crew also provides training to local fire and rescue crews who perform ice rescues.

"No ice is safe ice. If we had our way, we don't want anybody out on the ice to do anything," said Petty Officer Tim Rafter, the Coast Guard station's ice rescue team leader.

The three most important safety items a person can bring with them when venturing onto ice are a personal flotation vest, two ice picks and at least one other person, crew members said.

Many ice pick sets can be purchased for \$15 or less. Some feature spring-loaded picks or picks that sheath within one another and are attached by rope, which can be worn like a necklace. They can also be made from two screwdrivers, or with dowel rods and nails.

"I can't tell you how much easier it is to get out if you fall through the ice if you have these (picks)," Rafter said.

People walking out on lake ice also can carry a retractable steel

pole, or their ice-fishing auger, to test the ice as they walk. By keeping it in-hand, they can hold it horizontally and may be able to hold themselves up during a break-through. Anyone who falls through without a pole or auger handy can try to create the same effect by extending his or her arms out to the sides, station Chief John McLean said.

If someone does fall through, others shouldn't go to the hole to try to help. Instead, they should throw a rope to the person in the water, or lay flat on the ice and extend a pole to them, crew members said.

If you hear cracking when you're on ice, try to distribute your weight over as wide of an area as possible — crawling or even going spread-eagle and rolling away from the danger area, McLean said.

The Coast Guard also recommends people leave "ice plans" with someone on shore, who can contact a rescue organization if the party venturing out onto the

### Ice safety tips

- Always tell someone when, where and with whom you are going out on ice. Leave behind an "ice plan" with as much detailed information as possible, including names, addresses, telephone numbers, vehicle information and where you will be, when and for how long.
- Travel in pairs, staying several yards apart to ensure that if the ice opens, both people don't fall through.
- Each person should carry two ice picks that can be used to pull oneself out of the water and onto the ice after a fall-through. Picks can be purchased at most hardware or sporting goods stores, made out of nails and dowel rods, or using two screwdrivers.
- If you fall through, pull yourself out of the water immediately if at all possible. Once out, roll away from the danger area.
- Spread your weight over a large area. If you hear or see cracking, get low on the ice with your arms and legs spread to distribute your weight. Crawl or roll back to shore if necessary.
- Wear a personal flotation device, even on solid ice.
- Carry a short length of nylon rope with a weight on the end. This could be used to assist another person who has fallen through.
- When it comes to ice, follow the axiom, "When in doubt, don't go out."

Source: U.S. Coast Guard

## Coast Guard offers safety tips for ice

"No ice is safe ice," says team leader, but picks and flotation vest may help in an emergency situation

By KEITH MATHENY  
Record-Eagle staff writer

25 Jan 03

CHARLEVOIX — An ice angler gets a bite — fish-on. It's a big one. Gripping his pole tightly, he's lurched forward. He hears a cracking sound and, in an instant, is submerged in the frigid waters of the lake.

Whether the fisherman in the above scenario has taken a few simple precautions, brought along some inexpensive equipment and knows a few basic techniques could very well determine whether he lives or dies, according to officials at the U.S. Coast Guard station here.

Coast Guard personnel performed a special ice safety presentation on Lake Charlevoix near their

— See COAST, Page 2A —



U.S. Coast Guard members demonstrate freeing someone who has fallen through ice.

### Know your ice types

- New ice is stronger than old ice.
- Clear blue ice is stronger than ice that is white, layered and mixed with snow.
- A common guideline for ice recreation uses 15, clear blue ice over 3 inches thick can support one person, and 12 inches or more can support a vehicle. But the only sure way to tell ice thickness is by getting a sample or boring a hole.
- Pack ice, formed by ice floes, has many weak joints and is unsafe to be on.
- Border ice, found near the shoreline, forms first and will stay strong late into the season. Watch for weak boundaries between border ice and newer, thinner ice.
- Be wary of degradation. At the beginning and end of the season, ice will immediately begin to degrade when air temperatures are above 32 F.

Source: U.S. Coast Guard



# TRVERSE CITY RECORD-EAGLE

Forecast,  
Page 6D

JANUARY 11, 2003

NORTHERN MICHIGAN'S NEWSPAPER

50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.75 SUNDAY

## SCREAMS, THEN SILENCE

Two feared dead; snowmobiles may have plunged into Long Lake



A U.S. Coast Guard helicopter out of Traverse City flies over open water on Long Lake near Traverse City Friday, searching for two men who disappeared Thursday night. Below, family and friends look on as officials search the lake.

### THE LONG WAIT

## Rescuers find tracks heading into water

By PATRICK SULLIVAN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — Two men are feared dead after they failed to return home from a snowmobile outing Thursday evening around Long Lake.

deputies and a multi-agency dive team searched Friday for Traverse City residents David L. Swanson, 32, and Matthew R. Wyn, 36, in bitterly cold temperatures at the north end of Long Lake.

The investigation into their disappearance began when a Long Lake Township resident, Tony Grand Traverse County Sheriff

— See WITNESS, Page 3A ▶



### THE SEARCH

## Subzero winds, snowstorms hamper divers on a mission

By MIKE NORTON  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — It would be hard to imagine a more terrible day for such a terrible piece of work.

As police divers combed Long Lake on Friday for signs of two snowmobilers who were believed to have drowned Thursday night, subzero winds howled across the ice and raised waves on the open water. All day, brief flashes of cold sunlight were followed by thick snowstorms that obscured the surrounding islands and shorelines and made the tiny two-man dive boat buck against its anchor line like a panicky dog.

"This wind is terrible," complained one member of the interdepartmental dive team, standing on a bluff above the search area. "If it would

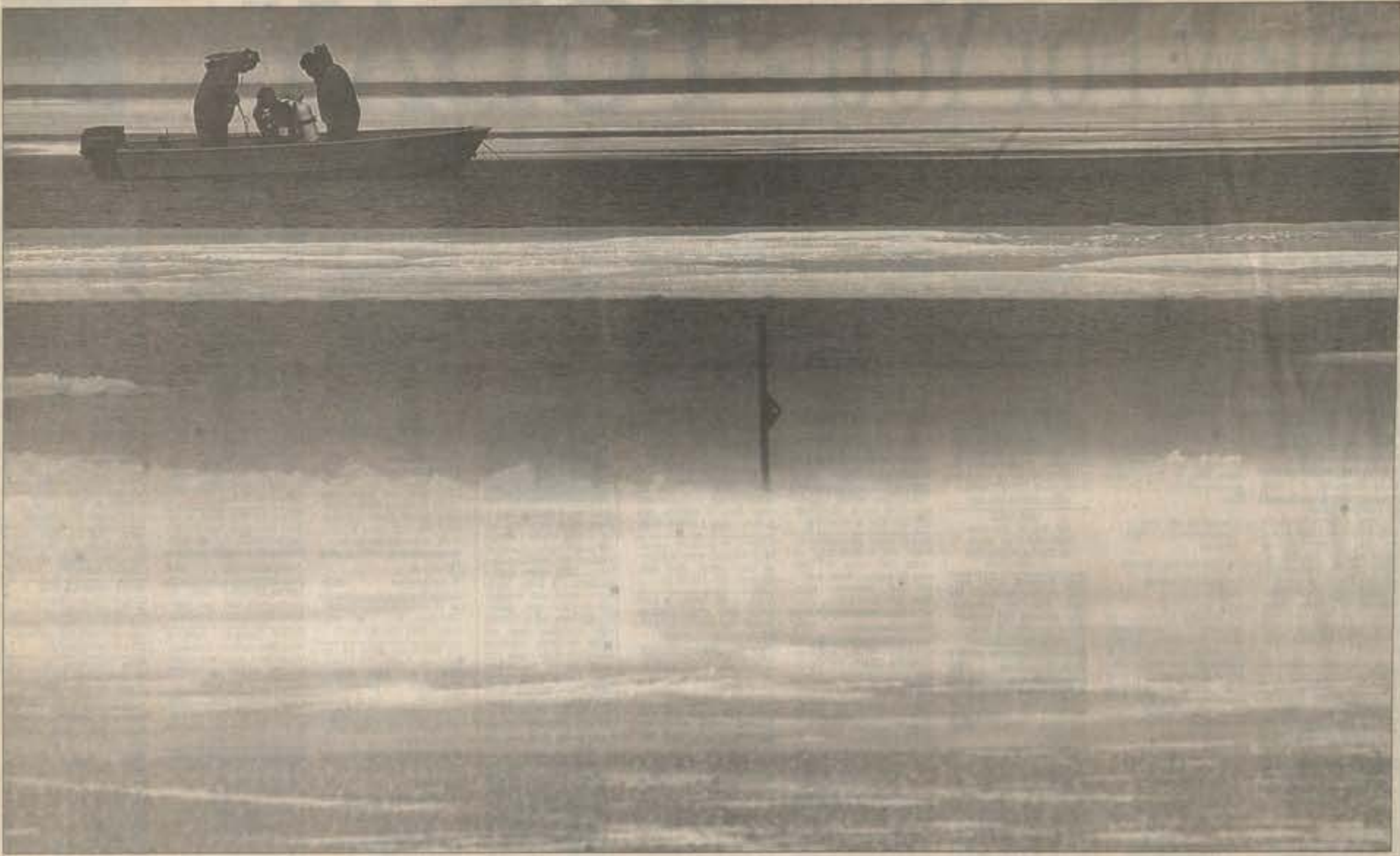
— See SNOW, Page 3A ▶



Divers search the icy waters of Long Lake.



Record-Eagle graphic



Members of a multi-agency dive team prepare to enter Long Lake on Thursday to search for the bodies of two missing men.

Record-Eagle/Elizabeth Conley

# Witness says he heard screaming, crying on lake

Continued from Page 1A  
 Buday, heard screams coming from the lake at around 9:30 p.m. Thursday.

When sheriff deputies and fire department rescuers arrived and a Coast Guard helicopter flew overhead, all the rescuers found were two snowmobile trucks beaded across the ice and into open water.

Sheriff Scott Fewins said he received a call at around 1 a.m. alerting him to the disappearance of Swanson and Wyn. Their families were worried because it was uncharacteristic of the men not to come home, and one of them had an appointment in Grand Rapids on Friday morning that he would not have missed.

"These men are responsible family people who, according to the family, would never be late," Fewins said.

Fewins said the men probably entered the lake at Gilbert Park — where it is frozen — and head-

ed south, later doubling back to the north end of the lake where the ice leads into open water.

Late Friday morning, with the men's family and friends looking on, a dive team searched for their bodies about 200 yards off shore. Fewins said that despite cold temperatures and a blistering breeze, the divers could safely dive, although each of the 10 divers could make at most two dives each.

The divers needed to be tethered to officers in a boat in case they floated under the ice, he said.

"It is going to be a very difficult recovery," Fewins said.

He also said the initial investigation was difficult. Both Swanson and Wyn were married and between them they had seven children who were younger than 7 years old.

Buday, who reported to police hearing cries of distress coming from the lake, said he had not heard such horrific screams since he served in the Korean

War.

"My heart really goes out to the wives and the children," Buday said.

Buday, who had gone outside to attend to a wood-burning furnace, said when he heard the screams he got his wife to come outside and listen to confirm what he was hearing. She did and he called police.

Buday said the screams eventually subsided.

"I listened to them scream from the top of their lungs to where they were crying," he said. "I was in the Korean War, and I haven't heard anything like that since then."

Buday said he hopes to begin a drive to purchase a hovercraft for Grand Traverse County to expedite rescues and to make searching for bodies in icy water safer.

The lake in front of Buday's house is all open water and he said he doesn't understand why someone would have chanced taking a snowmobile near it.



A U.S. Coast Guard crew looks down on Long Lake on Friday.

Record-Eagle/Jim Smith

"It surprised me," Buday said. "These people being local people, they should have known better. But we're all human."

Patrick Sullivan is the reporter for crime, courts and public safety. He can be reached at (231) 933-1478, or at psullivan@record-eagle.com.



Plenty of open water remains on Long Lake, where two men were reported missing.

Record-Eagle/Jim Smith

# Snow, freezing winds hinder searchers

Continued from Page 1A  
 stop, we might be able to get some work done."

Unpleasant as it was, however, the wind was at least keeping the lake from freezing over completely, said Grand Traverse County Sheriff Scott Fewins. If ice forms over the search area, said Fewins, "that would be really bad" because it would make it impossible to use boats but wouldn't be thick enough to support heavy vehicles.

Following the tracks left by the two missing snowmobiles — and a blue helmet found floating in the water — searchers concentrated their efforts on an area on the northeast side of the lake, near the Timbers Girl Scout Camp. Only about 100 feet from shore, the water was already 60 feet deep and at an average temperature of 38 degrees, far warmer than the wind-chilled air above the surface.

During the course of the day, seven divers clad in dry suits and heavy foam "gummy suits" went out into the water again and again, each diver connected to the boat by a long tether that prevented him or her from getting lost and allowed voice communication with the boat. As they spiraled out from their colleagues in the boat, they reported good visibility at the bottom but saw no sign of the missing men or their machines.

## Sheriff cautions about travel on frozen lakes

TRAVERSE CITY — The apparent loss of two men who appear to have driven their snowmobiles into the open waters of Long Lake demonstrates just how dangerous frozen lakes can be, officials said.

Grand Traverse County Sheriff Scott Fewins said Long Lake has frozen in an extremely unusual manner this year. While some of the lake is frozen solid, other parts of the lake remain pockets of open water.

That demonstrates why people who go out onto ice should use extreme caution, officials said.

"Individuals should cautiously assess the thickness and integrity of the ice plate before skating, ice fishing or operating any type of vehicle on the ice," said Lt. J.G. Greg Torgersen of the Coast Guard.

Torgersen said a plunge into 32 degree water without a dry suit can result in immediate cardiac arrest. Also, in freezing water individuals quickly will lose dexterity in their hands followed by a loss of useful consciousness in about 20 minutes. Death due to hypothermia may occur as quickly as 30 minutes.

Authorities say that at least 4 inches of new, clear ice is required for foot travel. Five inches is the minimum for snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles and 8 to 12 inches is necessary for cars or small trucks.

Only one diver could go down at a time, and because of the cold each foray could last only 15 to 20 minutes. By 5:30 p.m., faced with dying daylight and no prospect of success, the dive team suspended their search for the day. Fewins said the group will reconvene this morning — probably around 8 a.m. — and try another approach.

"We're going to find a way to launch a bigger boat and go to a secondary technique, which is to tow two divers at the same time on what we call a tow bar," Fewins said. "That will increase their ability to see around them

“  
 We're going to find a way to launch a bigger boat and go to a secondary technique, which is to tow two divers at the same time on what we call a tow bar.”  
 Scott Fewins, GT sheriff

to as much as 50 feet, and we'll tow them in a grid pattern. It's safer, and it's a lot less taxing on the divers."

Some members of the dive team, puzzled by their failure to find the missing snowmobiles in the place where their tracks led, wondered if the two men had not tried to veer off into other directions as they realized they were coming to open water — or even if they had tried to glide their machines on the surface of the water before they finally sank. In the end, they agreed there was only one way to answer any of those questions.

"We'll just have to keep looking until we find them," said a dive team member.



# TRaverse CITY RECORD-EAGLE

Forecast, Page 6B

JANUARY 12, 2003

NORTHERN MICHIGAN'S NEWSPAPER

50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.75 SUNDAY

## 2 DAYS, 2 TRAGEDIES

### Dangerous ice claims angler on Long Lake

By BILL O'BRIEN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRaverse CITY — For the second time in 36 hours, Long Lake has claimed the life of an outdoors enthusiast apparently unaware of dangerous ice conditions.

Martin R. Selby, 58, of Long Lake Township, drowned in the 2,800-acre lake Saturday morning when his snowmobile fell through thin ice.

Selby's apparently is the third such death in the partially frozen lake since Thursday night.

"It's about as tragic as it could be," Grand Traverse County Sheriff Scott Fewins said.

Selby's body was pulled from about 12 feet — See ANGLER, Page 4A ▶



Divers return from searching Long Lake Saturday afternoon, taking turns to rest and regroup as others prepare to go into the water.

### Divers recover one body; search to resume today

By BILL O'BRIEN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRaverse CITY — Divers late Saturday afternoon recovered the body of one of two men who went through the ice of Long Lake Thursday night.

The body of Matthew R. Wyn, 36, of Traverse City was brought up from the icy water just after 4 p.m. Saturday, about three hours after divers found one of the two snowmobiles that Wyn and a companion were riding Thursday night. They apparently drove their sleds off the ice into the open water.

The other man, 32-year-old David L. Swanson of Traverse City, is still missing. Sheriff's Department divers were to continue — See DIVERS, Page 4A ▶

4A TRaverse CITY RECORD-EAGLE  
SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, 2003

REGION

### Divers retrieve one from Long Lake

◀Continued from Page 1A  
searching for his body shortly after daybreak today.

Saturday's search for Wyn and Swanson was temporarily delayed after divers, getting ready to continue at around 9 a.m., were called to another accident scene at the south end of Long Lake where another man had gone through the ice on his snowmobile and drowned. Search crews returned at around 11 a.m. and continued diving in the icy water until dusk.

The search conditions improved marginally from Friday, when howling winds and blinding snow hampered rescue crews for much of the day. On Saturday the winds were subdued and breaks of sunshine created better searching conditions, although icing of the equipment remained a problem for rescue crews as temperatures stayed below 20 degrees.

In their first dive of the day deputies discovered one of the snowmobiles shortly after 1 p.m., although the sled was located east of where searchers were concentrating their efforts on Friday. The machine was found almost 200 feet from the edge of the ice in about 60 feet of water.

"They obviously went a little further out (into the open water) than we originally thought," Grand Traverse County Sheriff Scott Fewins said.

The divers marked the spot where the snowmobile was found and began working from there, using a two-boat "tow bar" search method where two divers are pulled under the water to increase the area they can search.

Authorities believe the two men went on the lake Thursday evening from Gilbert Park and traveled south, then turned back toward the north end of the lake when they hit some open water.

A Lakefront resident, former county commissioner Anthony



A marker buoy is tossed into Long Lake at the spot where a snowmobile was found Saturday afternoon on the lake's bottom.

Buday, heard screams for help coming from the lake around 9:30 p.m. Thursday and called police. When sheriff's deputies, the Coast Guard and other rescue personnel arrived on the scene, all they could find were the tracks of where the machines crossed the ice and plunged into the water.

After Wyn's body was found the sheriff said the divers had enough daylight to make one more dive with the tow bar and a extra diver, but couldn't find the other victim.

Fewins met briefly with members of Wyn's family late Saturday afternoon, who came to the search scene after learning that his body had been found.

"They were very thankful for our efforts," the sheriff said. "We're hoping we can (find) the other victim so we can bring some closure to this for his family as well."

### Authorities' plea: Stay off ice — it isn't safe

TRaverse CITY — The warnings from local authorities to stay off dangerous ice have turned to pleas after three deaths on Long Lake since Thursday night.

Authorities continue to urge area residents and outdoor enthusiasts to use extreme caution when going on frozen lakes, as even experienced outdoorsmen have been victimized by thin ice and open water created by the up-and-down winter weather this year.

"The lake just isn't safe enough to be on right now," Sheriff Scott Fewins said. "People have just got to be more careful."

Officials say the dangerous conditions likely exist on several inland lakes in the region because of the spotty winter weather.



Sheriff: "The lake just isn't safe enough to be on right now."

A couple of near-tragedies have happened already. Leelanau County emergency management coordinator Richard

Catton said two snowmobilers went through thin ice on the south end of Lake Leelanau last weekend, although they and their sleds were pulled from the water without incident. A young skater also went through the ice on Lake Leelanau but was also rescued.

"We were lucky that nobody was hurt there," said Catton, who was assisting Grand Traverse County officials this weekend at the accident scene on Long Lake.

Experts recommend at least four inches of new, clear ice when traveling by foot over frozen water. Five inches of solid ice is recommended for snowmobile or ATV travel, and 8 inches to a foot of ice is necessary to handle cars or light trucks.

### Angler plunges through ice, dies

◀Continued from Page 1A

of water late Saturday morning, after authorities said his snowmobile apparently broke through the ice while he was ice fishing near his home on the Long Lake peninsula.

According to Fewins, Selby had gone out ice fishing earlier in the morning and was later met by an acquaintance, who moved away from Selby to set up his own fishing spot. But when the man looked back in Selby's direction a few moments later, he saw only a partially-submerged snowmobile that had fallen through the ice.

"He looked back and couldn't see (Selby)," Fewins said.

The sheriff said the man, who also had a snowmobile on the ice, couldn't get the machine started and had to go back to shore on foot to call for help. The Sheriff's Department received the emergency call just before 9 a.m.

The department's dive team was already set up further north on the lake, preparing to resume its search for two men who went through the ice late Thursday night. Search crews quickly relocated to the second accident scene.

"We were literally getting ready to go into the water when the call came," the sheriff said. "So in the time that it normally takes to dispatch and mobilize (the dive team), we were already on the scene."

Because of the quick response, searchers were able to recover the body in less than an hour. "As soon as they got there, they were able to see part of his body in the water," Fewins said.

The sheriff estimated that the site was almost 1,000 feet from shore, but only about 150 yards from open water.





A pair of Grand Traverse County Sheriff Department dive team members head toward a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter on East Grand Traverse Bay Thursday afternoon. Police and other emergency workers spent over an hour searching an area about 300 yards from the north end of Four Mile Road after members of a construction crew reported that someone might have fallen into the water. The search turned up no evidence that anyone had fallen through the ice, and it was called off before dark.

# FROZEN

West GT Bay ices over

FROM PAGE 1A

bly happened sometime late last week, according to Coast Guard officials, based on their observations early Monday.

"I can't tell you the thickness of the ice, but it's definitely frozen over," said Lt. Richard Nameniuk, a Coast Guard helicopter pilot stationed in Traverse City.

It's the first time that the bay has frozen since 1996, easily the longest stretch of non-freezes since records started being kept back in 1851. The previous longest stretches have been three years each — from 1953 to 1955 and from 1990 to 1992.

Prior to the past dozen years or so, it was more of an event when the bay didn't freeze. West Bay was frozen for seven winters during the 1980s, for eight winters in the '70s and for nine winters back in the '60s. For the century-plus before that, the bay froze at least seven times each decade, and typically in eight or more seasons.

"It used to freeze pretty nearly every year," says local historian and author Larry Wakefield. "Back in the 1800s and the early part of the 1900s, there wasn't even two consecutive winters when the bay didn't freeze... three was unheard of until the 20th century."

Wakefield said the weather this season is what many longtime residents of the region remember as "normal" in winters past, when ice fishing, skating and other activities were a common sight on the frozen bay. "We don't have that type of winter anymore," he



The sun reflects brightly over a frozen West Bay looking south from the tip of Old Mission Peninsula.

Weather experts say more than a month of sub-freezing temperatures with plenty of snow, and the lack of any significant mid-winter thaw, have created the suddenly icy conditions.

"We've noticed the ice (formation) along Lake Michigan and Lake Superior has really picked up within the last week or so," said meteorologist Patrick Bak of the National Weather Service office in Gaylord.

Bak said one positive result from the iced-up bay, and the spreading ice cover over the Great Lakes, is that it will tend to slow down the lake-effect snow squalls that have dumped dozens of inches of snow in the past six weeks.

Authorities will vouch for the existence of the

### Frozen facts

- Earliest freeze: Jan. 10 (1856 and 1857)
- Longest freeze: 115 days, Jan. 13-May 8, 1874
- Years frozen: 1852-54; 1856-62; 1864-77; 1879; 1881; 1883-1902; 1904-10; 1913; 1915-17; 1922-30; 1933-39; 1941-52; 1956-63; 1965-74; 1977-1982; 1984-86; 1989; 1993-94; 1996.
- \*Data incomplete for 1859, 1912, 1914, 1918, 1920 and 1921

ice but not the safety of it. Coast Guard personnel said there are still a few patches of open water in the outer parts of the bay, and large cracks in some of the interior areas closer to shore. Authorities advise using caution when traveling on any frozen body of water.

## Ice, ice baby



An aerial view of a frozen West Bay facing north Monday afternoon from Traverse City. It's believed the bay froze over the weekend.

# West Bay freezes for first time since 1996

BY BILL O'BRIEN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

Authorities will not vouch for safety of ice

TRAVERSE CITY — Any doubts that it's been a hardy, old-fashioned winter can be put on ice — as in a

frozen Grand Traverse Bay. The U.S. Coast Guard has officially declared West Grand Traverse Bay as

frozen — for the first time in seven years — following another weekend cold snap during which temperatures

plunged below zero overnight under calm, moonlit skies.

The bay is officially con-

sidered frozen when West Bay is iced over from the Traverse City shore north for the 6½-mile stretch to Power Island. That proba-

PLEASE SEE PAGE 2A

# Oil tanker strands ice fishermen

21 Feb 2003

Five ice fishermen were escorted to shore by a neighborly canoeist Thursday afternoon, after a passing oil tanker separated the ice from shore and stranded them out in West Grand Traverse Bay.



Record-Eagle/John L. Russell

Fishermen haul their sleds toward M-22 in Leelanau County after being stranded.

open water to the east of the fishermen, which caused the ice to break away from shore. It left a channel of open water along the western shoreline along M-22, three miles north of Traverse City.

"When the tanker came through, everything went out," said angler Ed Wells. "It got a little exciting there for a while. One minute we were watching our lines, the next we were trolling. I bet we were doing 3 knots."

The passing oil tanker created a path of

Joe Neihardt said he saw what had happened and brought a canoe to the edge of the ice shelf, about the same time an Elmwood Township Fire Department truck and a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter arrived.

The men and their equipment were safely brought to shore, a bit wet but relieved.

"It's good to be on shore," Wells said. Authorities are asking anyone to use caution when on the ice, as warmer weather and sunshine can rapidly change the ice condition.

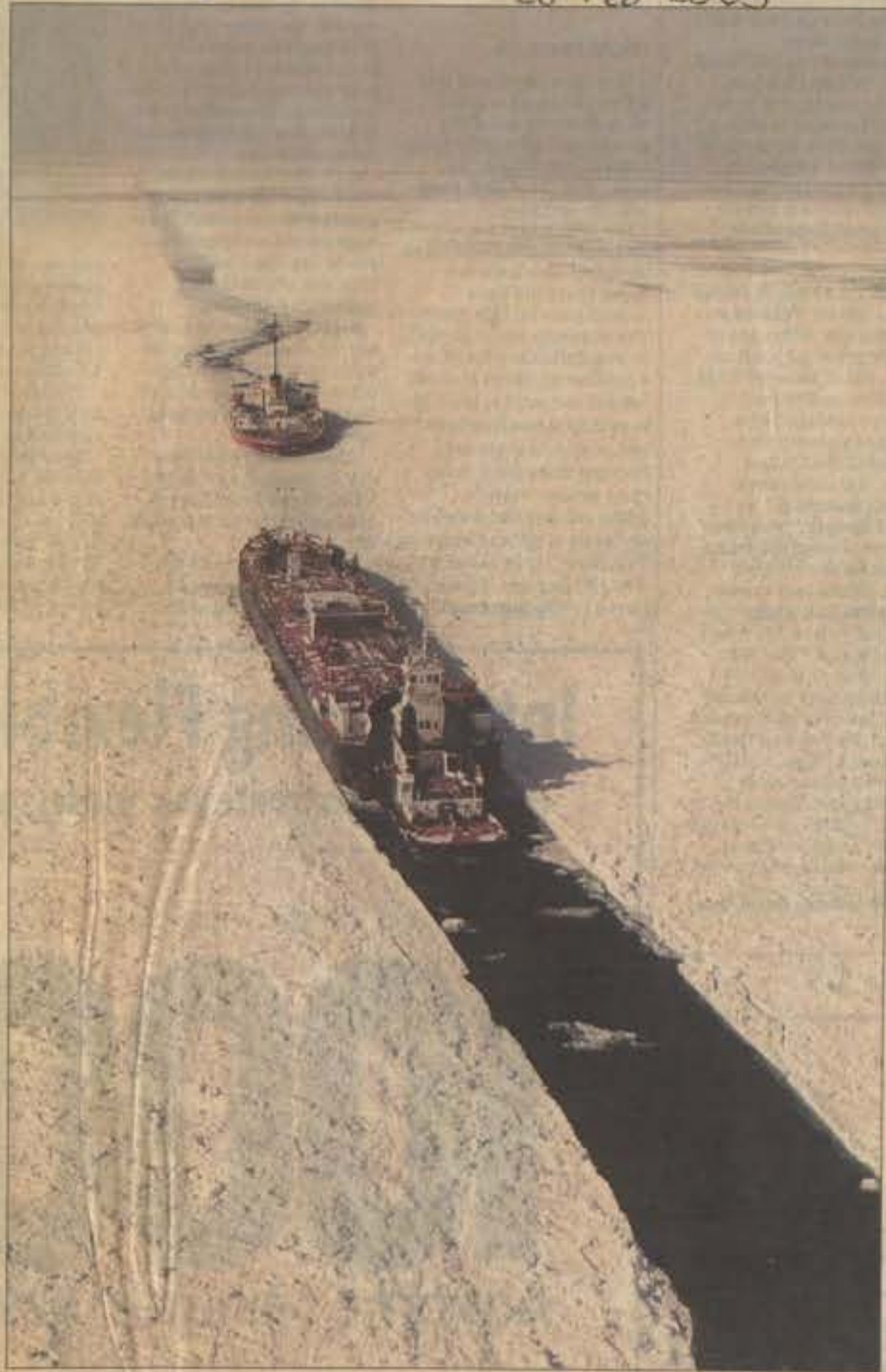


Record-Eagle photos/John L. Russell (above), Jim Boylin (left)

Above, ice fishermen and Elmwood Township Fire Department crew wait as Joe Neihardt and Ed Wells paddle fishing equipment in to shore. Left, the fuel oil and gas tanker breaks through the West Bay ice in Traverse City Thursday afternoon.

## Stuck ships

26 Feb 2003



Record-Eagle/Elizabeth Corley

The U.S. Coast Guard icebreaking cutter Mackinaw works its way toward a barge and the tug Michigan, which became stuck in the ice late Monday morning on Lake Michigan near Northport. The vessels were en route to Chicago, according to the Coast Guard.

## 'DON'T BE A CLOWN' Students create snowmobile safety message

Video production class warns viewers of tragic consequences

BY PATRICK SULLIVAN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — When Charles Rennie's video production class started work last fall on a snowmobile safety video, warning snowmobilers about the dangers of the popular sport didn't seem so urgent. Then, temperatures fell and the snow came, bringing with it a rash of snowmobile accidents.

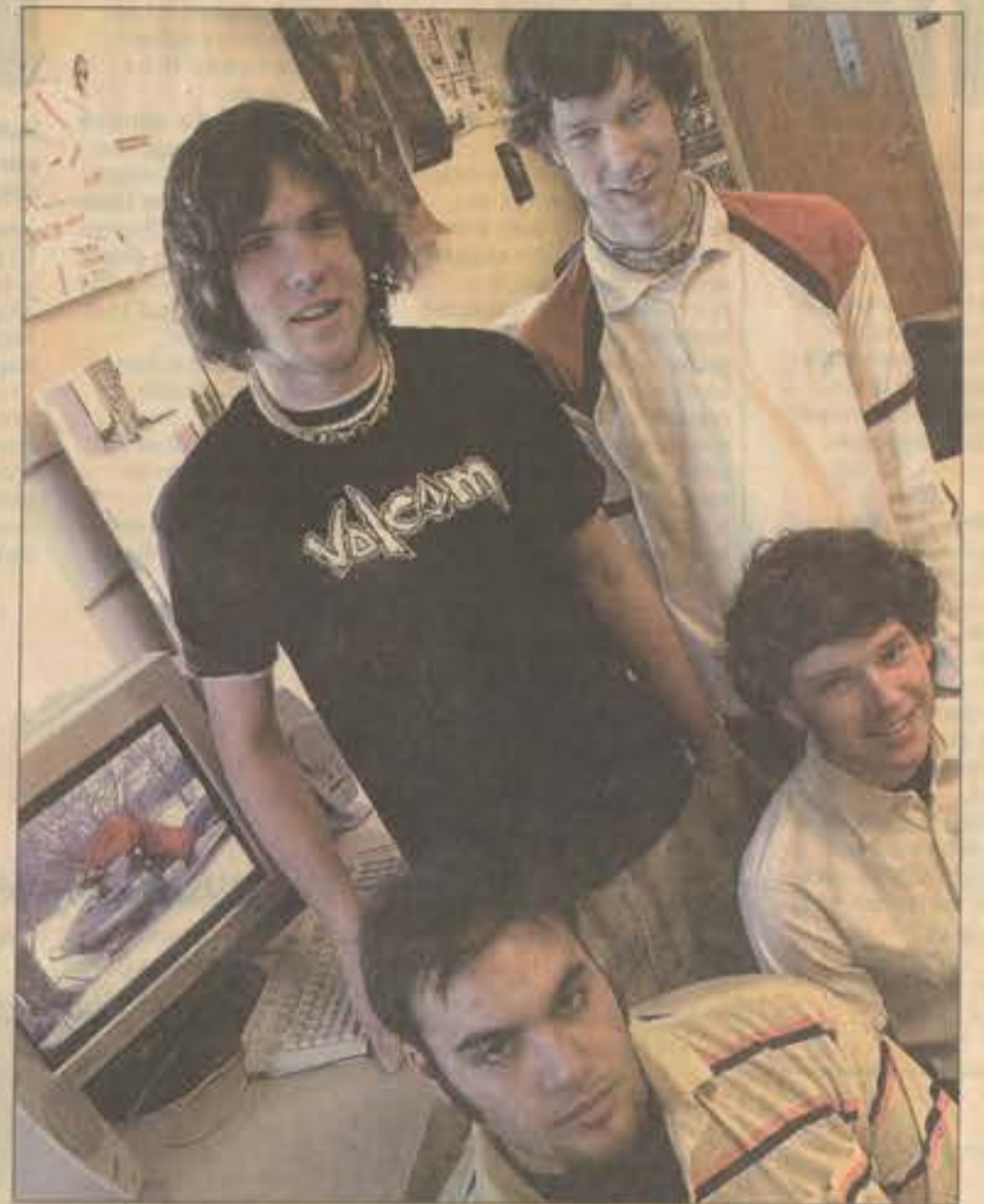
Statewide, the accidents have claimed the lives of at least 10 people this season, including three whose snowmobiles plunged into open water on Long Lake over one weekend in January.

Even before the season started, Coast Guard public information officer Greg Torgersen had said he wanted to produce a public service announcement about snowmobile safety. The need seemed only greater after the tragedies.

Rennie, who has taught video production for four years, was happy to enlist his advanced video production class at Traverse City West Senior High School.

The students decided to make a video with a theme they hope will get people's attention — "Don't be a clown."

The spots will feature a student dressed in a clown costume making bad decisions on a snowmobile. They hope to convince viewers that alcohol, speed or carelessness can lead to tragic consequences. Some are concerned the public service announcement could



Record-Eagle/Elizabeth Corley

Traverse City West seniors Art Guilmond, Marcus Brinson, Jacob Mann and Collin Lihou, clockwise from bottom left, pose in front of their public service announcement clip (on computer) during their video production class.

27 Feb 03

PLEASE SEE PAGE 8A

## 27 Feb 03 SAFETY

Students create snowmobile safety video

FROM PAGE 1A

also lead to some wincing. "I hope it doesn't seem like it's making light of the tragic situations we've had," said Sgt. Robert Brown, a Grand Traverse sheriff's officer. He thought the students had scrapped that idea after this year's tragedies.

The sheriff's department and the Coast Guard must sign off before the project is completed. The students wanted to craft a message that would jar people into thinking about safety.

"We decided to have a little light side to it, so we went with the clown idea," said Collin Lihou, a senior who is producing the video along with students Art Guilmond, Jacob Mann and Marcus Brinson.

Rennie said he wasn't worried about the video.

"We're going to make sure the humor is balanced with a very serious message," Rennie said. "Sometimes clowning around can lead to tragic situations."

So far, the group of four students have logged about 50 hours into what will become a 30- or 60-second spot.



The heavily-wooded plane crash site is outlined with police tape on Monday near Tower.

CHEBOYGAN COUNTY

# Two men die in plane crash

Poor weather may have been a factor

BY DAN SANDERSON  
Record-Eagle staff writer

CHEBOYGAN — The bodies of two Pontiac-area men

were found Monday amid the wreckage of a small plane that disappeared shortly after the pilot reported poor weather conditions.

Pilot William Bitzer, 60, of White Lake, and Ken Campbell, 53, of Wixom, were killed when their sin-

gle-engine plane crashed about 8:30 p.m. Sunday in a heavily wooded area near Tower, Cheboygan County Sheriff Dale Clarmont said.

Bitzer was flying from Pontiac to Cheboygan but about 10 miles south of Cheboygan requested to  
**PLEASE SEE PAGE 2A**

## CRASH

Two die as small plane goes down

FROM PAGE 1A  
climb higher to avoid poor weather conditions, Clarmont said. Air traffic control lost contact with the pilot shortly thereafter.

"He said he was in snow, didn't even want to approach and just wanted clearance to return to Pontiac," Cheboygan airport manager Al Hoffman said.

A Coast Guard helicopter started searching the area in the early morning with the use of night vision goggles but were unable to find the plane, said Steve Truhlar, operations officer in Traverse City. U.S. and Canadian air forces as well as the Civil Air Patrol, a



Rescue workers work at the crash site on Monday.

Michigan State Police helicopter and the Cheboygan and Emmet County sheriff's departments aided in the search.

The wreckage was found Monday about 15 miles southwest of Mullett Lake by Kyle Willey, who lives nearby with his parents, Dennis and Dawn.

Dawn Willey said her husband and son heard a plane fly over Sunday night and that Kyle thought he had heard a strange noise.

When Kyle heard about the plane crash on the news

the next day, he called 911, his mother said. He then set out on his snowmobile to find the wreckage.

The plane was found behind a stand of pine and hardwood trees. It was intact and had hit the ground nose first, authorities said.

Dawn Willey said that she wished they had went out and looked for the plane Sunday night.

"Never in a million years would you expect that it would be that close," she said.



Clarmont said Bitzer was traveling to Cheboygan to visit his son. The sheriff declined to identify the son.

A front-end loader from the Cheboygan County Road Commission was brought to the scene Monday to plow a road for rescue workers and Federal Aviation Administration investigators.

The Associated Press contributed to this report

# TRaverse CITY RECORD EAGLE

NORTHERN MICHIGAN'S NEWSPAPER

August 26, 2003

TUESDAY

50 CENTS

"She was very active. And she had a heart of gold."

Cheryl Krause, mother

## SOUTH MANITOU DROWNING First shipwreck dive becomes a tragedy



Laura Krause



Laura Krause had 11 years of experience

BY MARLA MCMACKIN  
Record-Eagle staff writer

MANISTEE — Jane Krause never liked to think about the time her son and granddaughter spent scuba diving in the Great Lakes. "I never wanted to know when they were out in the water because it bothered me so much," she said.

Her worst fears were realized Sunday when her 27-year-old granddaughter, Laura Krause, died of what experts call "dry water drowning" before she could make it to the *Three Brothers* shipwreck in rough waters off the southeast shore of South Manitou Island.

Eleven years of diving experience were not enough to prepare the Benzonia woman for a muscle spasm in her throat.

PLEASE SEE PAGE 2A



Courtesy of Marilyn Brown

Visitors to South Manitou Island watch as a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter takes off late Sunday afternoon to transport drowning victim Laura Krause, 27, of Benzonia, to Munson Medical Center, where she was pronounced dead.

# TRVERSE CITY RECORD EAGLE

NORTHERN MICHIGAN'S NEWSPAPER

September 26, 2003

FRIDAY

50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.75 SUNDAY

## Brilliant bow



*Record-Eagle/Jim Bohn*  
A bright rainbow arches over Cherry Capital Airport in Traverse City on Wednesday evening, while a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter flies overhead.

## Come on in — the water's chilly



*Record-Eagle/Lara Neff*

LT. Commander Kim Pacsal swims to a raft where Second Class Aviation Survival Technician Eric Biehn is waiting to train Pacsal and others in West Bay. The U.S. Coast Guard conducts the annual cold-water training for pilots and crew as well as auxiliary members who fly fixed-wing airplanes. "People come out to get familiar with their survival gear and make sure it works. We wear these suits all year-round, even in the summer, because of the cold water temperature," said LT. Greg Torgersen. The water temperature is currently about 40 to 45 degrees.

## Stabbing victim medevaced by Traverse City helicopter crew



A man suffering from apparently self-inflicted stab wounds to the neck and chest is transported by an Air Station Traverse City helicopter.

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich., June 16 — A helicopter crew from Air Station Traverse City medevaced a man suffering from severe trauma off the freighter M/V Southland Challenger in Lake Huron off Rogers City this afternoon.

The man, who had apparently attempted suicide, was stabilized by rescue swimmer AST2 Bob Lapolt. Lapolt, in what was his first rescue in the Coast Guard, placed the man in a rescue litter.

The patient, suffering from an apparently self-inflicted neck and chest stab wounds, was hoisted to an H-65 helicopter and rushed to Alpena Memorial Hospital, where he was in stable condition.

The rest of the crew consisted of aircraft commander, Lt. Cmdr. Kirk Pickering, copilot Lt. j.g. Dan Leary and flight mechanic/hoist operator AMT3 Eric Karn.

A second Coast Guard helicopter, piloted by Lt. Neil Wilson and flight mechanic AMT2 Tom Sinner, dropped off two civilian EMS personnel from Rogers City to assist. A 47-foot motor lifeboat from Station St. Ignace also assisted in the rescue.

Lt. j.g. Daniel Leary, Air Station Traverse City

# Rescue Ready

Horses are a secret ingredient in rural rescues.  
Gail Knudtson

ON A COLD, DARK NIGHT, it's not unusual to find Karen Greve tramping through the swamps and thickets of wooded areas in Benzie County.

She's not there as a nature fanatic or because it's Halloween; but as a reserve police officer for the sheriff's department, she's often called on to help search for missing people. However, after one of their seven-hour searches, Karen and another officer, Wendy Olson, began thinking, "Why are we doing this on foot? Why don't we use our horses?"

After hearing their idea, Benzie County Sheriff Robert Blank decided it would be even better if the department formed its own mounted search-and-rescue division. Blank assigned Undersheriff Joe Barone to

Officer Karen Greve, of Benzonia, and a good friend named Friday.

work on it with Greve and Olson. Their efforts, including placing newspaper ads and rounding up their horse-owner friends, produced what's now known as the Benzie County Civilian Mounted Search & Rescue Unit. It's 12 members provide additional manpower for the sheriff's deputies in protecting the community.

"They are a tremendous help to us and everybody in the county," Barone says. "Many times we're searching for young children or people with physical or mental problems," he explains. "Sometimes a lost child is reluctant to come forward, even if they hear their name called, but if they see a horse, they're not as afraid."

Officer Greve is the Search Unit's president and direct liaison with the sheriff's department. Olson is the group's secretary, and says, "These people are all volunteers who love horses and want to use them to help their community."

The volunteers cover a wide span in years of riding experience and come from all walks of local life, including a veterinarian, an equine sports massage therapist, computer business owner, property appraiser, and a nursing assistant.

"With these extra eyes and the training they receive, I can go and assign them an area and know it will be searched properly and thoroughly," Barone says. "It

gives me piece of mind because I know it will be done properly."

The most memorable search Barone was involved in was for two young boys, ages 7 and 9, who got lost while exploring with their dog. Fire department and other rescue volunteers searched on a cold night until almost 3 a.m., when a helicopter pilot spotted the kids lying in a field in Sleeping Bear Dunes State Park. About four miles from home, the boys and dog were found safely asleep, after they had stopped to rest.

"We've also had physically-challenged people lost in Sleeping Bear Dunes, or sometimes it's a young person who is mad at mom and dad and runs off into the woods; and then gets lost," Barone recalls.

"Finding lost people is a law enforcement function, and people have to be trained for this," he adds. "On horseback, searchers don't get as tired, and it's a whole different, higher view, and you can cover more area."

The Benzie Search Unit has been training together for two years, and many of the volunteers are trail riders or show people, Barone says, "...so we train them how to set up patterns and grids for searches." The volunteers get "heavy duty stress training," that gets new horses and riders oriented to each other and helps desensitize the animals to fireworks,

smoke, sirens and other distractions.

Dan Crouch, a retired Texas mounted trooper, is the unit's training officer. Initial training was four months long, but now they drill weekly, Crouch says. "The reward of this experience for me is working with horses and people who volunteer their time, and knowing that each one is well-trained and qualified to do it."

"I also train the horses to work together, as well as the volunteers," he explains. "For instance, one of our drills is that we'll have people go into the woods and hide, and unit members will try to find them."

Riders also learn formation drills, which are important in helping them to avoid searching the same area twice.

They train annually with regular mounted police units, Crouch adds, and could be called on to help with anything

from search-and-rescue for a fallen hunter or finding an Alzheimer's patient, to crowd control at large events.

To join the unit, riders have to complete an application and questionnaire, and background checks are required. They must be accomplished horse people who have their own horses, and wear heeled boots, helmets and spurs.

Volunteers pay for their own equipment and expenses, says unit treasurer Trina Stachnik (see cover photo). A local Eagles sponsor paid for their new jackets (photo, lower left), and the unit holds fund-raisers, such as spaghetti dinners,

pancake breakfasts, and horse shows.

"It's a unique opportunity for us to help and show our support for the community," says Stachnik, whose skills as an EMT and volunteer firefighter are an added advantage. "If a child, adult or hunter is lost and I can help find them, get them any necessary medical treatment, and return them to their families, that is my personal reward in this."

"My payment is returning someone safely to their family, and being able to do it with a trusted animal partner."



Opposite page: The U.S. Coast Guard does a "hover-over" to get horses and riders used to the sight and sound of a helicopter during the 2003 Great Lakes Mounted Law Enforcement Academy. Search-and-rescue volunteers hone their skills by training with regular mounted police teams.

Left: Benzie County Civilian Mounted Search and Rescue Unit volunteer, Wendy Olson, rides her horse, Cinder, through a fire drill. She's the second rider, behind a mounted officer from Leelanau.

## How to Volunteer

If you are a good rider and own a horse you want to use to serve your community, the Benzie County Mounted Civilian Search & Rescue Unit is looking for more volunteers.

Call Wendy Olson at 231-620-0333 for details or an application. You do not have to live in Benzie County, but most of the training is in and around that county.

Or, contact your own county sheriff's office to see if they offer this type of volunteer opportunity.



Training officer Dan Crouch guides a horse over some mattresses, which helps it learn to walk through soft or mucky ground and feel more comfortable stepping over obstacles and onto areas that feel less secure. Crouch and several other Benzie Civilian Search & Rescue volunteers are members of Cherryland Electric Cooperative.



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Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

Monday, July 19, 2004



**RESCUE PRACTICE** — The crew aboard a Royal Canadian Mounted Police vessel moving ahead at speed gather in an empty rescue basket from the hovering U.S. Coast Guard HH 65 "Dolphin" helicopter in an exercise Friday in Sault Harbor. Several U.S. and Canadian rescue agencies took turns working with the basket, used by air rescue units to hoist stranded mariners and boaters. The Coast Guard helicopter and air crew flew in from the Traverse City Coast Guard Air Station.

# Northport beach water OK

By Amy Hubbard  
Enterprise news editor

Northport officials learned last week that water samples taken this summer from the bathing beach and marina groundwater showed only trace amounts of E. coli bacteria.

"We're thrilled," village Clerk Laura Weiss said. "We're pleased to learn that last year's readings were just a one-time occurrence."

E. coli bacteria were detected last summer in samples taken at Northport's bathing beach and creek — but not at levels to cause great public concern. The samples were taken as part of a sewer needs assessment which determined a need for municipal sewage disposal in the village.

Village officials this spring authorized installation of monitor wells near the marina to determine whether the park sewer system was the source of contamination.

That source remains unknown. However, a leaking boat holding tank or out-and-out illegal dumping of human wastes within or near the harbor is suspected.

Village officials said the test results last year did not appear to affect the number of persons at the bathing beach.

"It's been too cold to swim much this year anyway," Weiss said.

The clean tests are not expected to change the recommendation of an ad hoc sewer committee which found that the Northport area is in need of municipal waste treatment.

"The two are unrelated," Weiss said. Committee members are working with engineers to research funding, possible assessment districts, treatment plant options and locations. One suggested treatment facility is the lagoons system currently operated by Leelanau Memorial Health Center.

In other business during a 90-minute meeting, the council:

- Heard a request from Fred Stiffens to remove a crack drain from his property on Fourth St.
- Agreed to transfer money market and certificate of deposit funds from Huntington to Northwestern Bank as they become available. Action was taken citing the availability of higher interest rates as well as interest-bearing checking.
- Accepted a \$34,000 proposal from Elmer's Crane & Dozer for work at Rose and Nagonaba streets. Engineer Steve Patmore will oversee the project.

**Dunes Council to meet**

The Citizens Council of the Sleeping Bear Dunes will hold its annual meeting on Sunday, Aug. 28, at 10 a.m. at the Glen Arbor Town Hall.

A representative of the National Park Service is slated to present a program on "wilderness" issue.

# Hang'n out at Fly-in



Survival technician Shawn Sullivan "hung around" from a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter (above) at the Northport Pilots Association Fly-in Drive-in Breakfast held Sunday at Woolsey Airport. Pictured below is the helicopter's crew: flight mechanic Brandon Wallace of Elmwood Township, Sullivan and pilot Chris Day. The event was held under perfect flying conditions—no wind and sunny skies—which helped to draw a large crowd to the northern portions of the Leelanau Peninsula.



## County applies for grant to collect 'electronic waste'

A grant application for a series of electronics collections in Leelanau County was approved last week by the county Board of Commissioners.

The board voted 6-0 to approve a request from the Planning and Community Development department for a \$25,000 grant from the state Department of Environmental Quality to fund recycling of items such as computers, televisions, cell phones and other electronic waste.

Technically, none of those items is supposed to enter state landfills.

The grant is designed to fund five collections over a 2-year period and require the county to provide a \$9,156 match. That would include \$5,083 in staff time and benefits, and another \$4,073 for disposal, site maintenance, advertising costs and travel.

A household fee of \$5 to \$10 would be collected from participants as part of the program and would be used to provide a portion of the match.

In other business during the 44-minute meeting on Aug. 17, the board:

- Appointed county administrator David W. Gill as officer delegate and

Michelle Crocker as alternate to attend the 58th annual Municipal Employment Retirement System conference next month in Grand Rapids.

• Acknowledged Cedar residents Glenn and Judy LaCross, who were honored as Cherry Industry People of the Year at last month's National Cherry Festival.

• Approved construction of a sidewalk linking Maple Valley Nursing Home with the 4-H parade grounds with money to come from the county Parks & Recreation budget.

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**Coast Guard crew helps find woman**

TRAVERSE CITY — A U.S. Coast Guard helicopter from Air Station Traverse City is being lauded for helping Newaygo County officials find a missing woman.

A Coast Guard HH-65 helicopter from Traverse City was diverted from a training mission just before 9 p.m. Tuesday to assist in a search of Fidelity Quintana, 69, of Lileytown, reported lost earlier in the afternoon.

After being missing for seven hours, the helicopter spotted Quintana, dressed in pajamas and slippers in the 40-degree weather, at 10:43 p.m. in a wooded area just a mile from her home.

Sheriff's deputies on the ground soon picked up the woman, who was medically evaluated by emergency workers and released at the scene.

**PETOSKEY**

Two of three rescue boats approach a 46-foot catamaran that capsized in Little Traverse Bay about four miles north of Bay Harbor. All three men aboard escaped harm, thanks to a mobile phone that allowed them to call 911 from the submerged, water-tight cabin.

Photo courtesy of U.S. Coast Guard

**Cell phone aids in rescue of three men**

Rescuers able to tell men what plan of action was

BY KEITH MATHENY  
Record-Eagle staff writer

PETOSKEY — A mobile phone that worked in the submerged cabin of a 46-foot catamaran may have saved the lives of three men after their sailboat flipped over on Little Traverse Bay.

The U.S. Coast Guard, Emmet County sheriff's dive team and members of the Harbor Springs Fire Department were able to quickly reach them after receiving a 911 call from the double-hulled boat late Tuesday morning.

A wind gust tossed the catamaran over about four miles north of Bay Harbor in up to six-foot seas, said BM1 Nicholas Gould, executive officer of the U.S. Coast Guard station in Charlevoix. The men stayed dry because the cabin was water-tight.

**PLEASE SEE PAGE 10A**

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**Missing hunters found**

Lynn Johnson  
ljohnson@lapeer.net

Two hunters spent the night in the woods this weekend after getting lost while hunting in separate areas of the Upper Peninsula. One was located by helicopter and air-lifted out of a wooded area near Marquette. A second hunter eventually found his way to a road and back to his sister-in-law's house in Perkins.

Thomas Morningstar, 27, of Westport, was tracking deer Friday when he became disoriented and was unable to find his way out of the woods in an area east of Federal Forest Highway 13 and south of County Road 442, according to state police at the Marquette post.

Members of the hunter's family contacted police when he did not return Friday night. Attempts were made throughout the night to locate the hunter, but weather conditions, especially a dense fog, prohibited a night aerial search of the area, according to police.

**See HUNTERS on page 5A**

**Hunters: Home again**

Continued from page 1A

Delta County Search and Rescue and a Coast Guard helicopter search team were assisted by troopers from the Marquette and Gladwin posts. The hunter was located around noon Saturday. He was air-lifted out by a Coast Guard helicopter. Police say he survived the night "very well" and was unharmed.

The second hunter, John Aschiro, 54, of Niles, Ill., was hunting Friday in Perkins near the home of his sister-in-law, Ann Aschiro. She called police at around 9:30 p.m. when he did not return from bird hunting behind her residence. She told police he had been hunting since 1 p.m. and had not returned.

Dense fog prohibited a night search and rescue effort and an aerial search. The hunter spent the night in a hunting camp and was located Saturday morning along 33rd Lane in Perkins.

**Coast Guard rescues hunters**

TRAVERSE CITY — The Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City hoisted a man with a broken leg out of a forest by helicopter and rescued a second hunter.

A 60-year-old man was hunting with friends in a heavily forested area 12 miles east of Charlevoix when he lost his footing and fell, breaking his leg, according to air station reports. A crew from the Traverse City air station responded Saturday afternoon.

The air station also rescued a 24-year-old hunter lost in the woods near Escanaba Saturday.

**RESCUE**

Cell phone helps team save three men

FROM PAGE 1A

The names of the men were not available Tuesday afternoon.

Gould said he also talked to the men aboard the boat by cell phone.

"We basically established a plan to get them off the boat, so they knew exactly what we were going to do," he said.

Water began filling the cabin quickly as one of the men was freed from an emergency side hatch, Gould said. Sheriff's dive team members and a rescue diver from the Coast Guard's Traverse City Air Station rescued the other two men from the cabin's submerged main hatch.

The men were taken to Bay Harbor in the Coast Guard Station Charlevoix's 41-foot rescue boat, Gould said.

Emmet Sheriff Peter Wallin said the rescue could have been dangerous. "Being a sailboat, I was worried about our divers going underneath, with all of the rigging," he said. "They could have gotten tangled and trapped easily."

The boat's owner was taking it to Mackinaw City, where it was going to be removed from the water for the season, Gould said. A salvage company was attempting to retrieve the nearly completely submerged boat Tuesday afternoon, he said.

Wallin praised the coordination and efforts of all of the responding agencies. "A possible tragic story ended up being a happy one," he said.

## Big chill



Record-Eagle/Lara Neal

Boatswain mate Brian Kirkendall pulls aviation maintenance technician Hannah Pecue during cold-water survival training in West Bay for pilots and air crews at the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City. The training sessions are conducted in April and November. Water reduces a person's body temperature 25 times faster than air, said Lt. j.g. Gabe Somma. If a person is in cold water, it is better to fold up into a ball to conserve heat. Attempting to "swim for it" reduces survival time by half.

## Rapid response



Record-Eagle/Douglas Jensen

Petty Officer third class Mike Bilek, an aviation survival technician with the U.S. Coast Guard, watches as a member of the Grand Traverse County sheriff's dive team is lowered from an Aerospatiale HH-65 Dolphin during training for rapid deployment from a rescue helicopter. Classroom instruction, demonstrations and actual helicopter deployments at the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City were designed to ensure a rapid response between multiple agencies during an emergency.

## Leelanau Enterprise

## Section 3

Thursday, July 22, 2004



**OMENA TRAVERSE**  
Yacht Club members and friends look on with rapt attention (right) as a Coast Guard rescuer lifts a "victim" to the safety of a helicopter (left). After the swimmer is hauled to safety, those in attendance wave goodbye (lower right).



## Coasties wow crowd at Omena yacht club

Members of the Omena community may feel safer in the water after witnessing a Coast Guard rescue demonstration last Thursday.

A helicopter zoomed in around 10:15 a.m. to give rescue personnel some practice while showing residents what a Coast Guardman's job is all about.

The rescuers were swift and efficient as they rescued a "victim" from the water.

The helicopter hovered over a swimmer as a diver was lowered into the water. The two were lifted safely out of the water into the crew compartment of the helicopter.

The water rescue demonstration was conducted at the request of Tom Buchler, a member of the Omena Traverse Yacht Club (OTYC), who thought it might be nice if the Coast Guard prac-

ticed near the club.

"I thought it was very interesting," said 5-year-old OTYC member John Melville.

"It's nice to see how competent these men are," said John's mom, Patsy Melville. His grandfather, Charlie "Paw" Melville, agreed.

The OTYC's Rear Commodore, Marsha Buchler, said she appreciated the Coast Guard's efforts.

"They've been really good about communication," she said.

Although disappointed more people didn't show up around the bay, she agreed it was a success as OTYC members from ages 3 to 99 turned out to watch.

Photos and text by Sarah Chapman, Enterprise Staff Reporter



## IN BRIEF

From staff reports

### Coast Guard crew headed south

**TRAVERSE CITY** — Members of the Coast Guard's Traverse City Air Station are headed south for the winter.

An aircrew and one HH-65B helicopter from Traverse City will leave Thursday for a two-month deployment to the Caribbean and South America, said LTjg Gabe Somma, public affairs officer.

The aircrew will conduct law enforcement, anti-drug, border patrol and search and rescue missions. The deployment does not reduce Traverse City search and rescue response capabilities, Somma said.

**Boxing day**



Shelby Cornell, 10, sorts through some of the more than 2,500 items donated by the general public to the Toys For Tots program in the Grand Traverse area. About 20 volunteers took part in the massive sorting Sunday at the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City. Jack Sir, director of Toys For Tots Northwest Michigan Grand Traverse Region, said the items were being sorted into age groups, then they will be repackaged and given to 13 different agencies throughout the region. Donations will continue to be accepted through Dec. 23.

# REGION

NEWS FROM NORTHWEST LOWER MICHIGAN

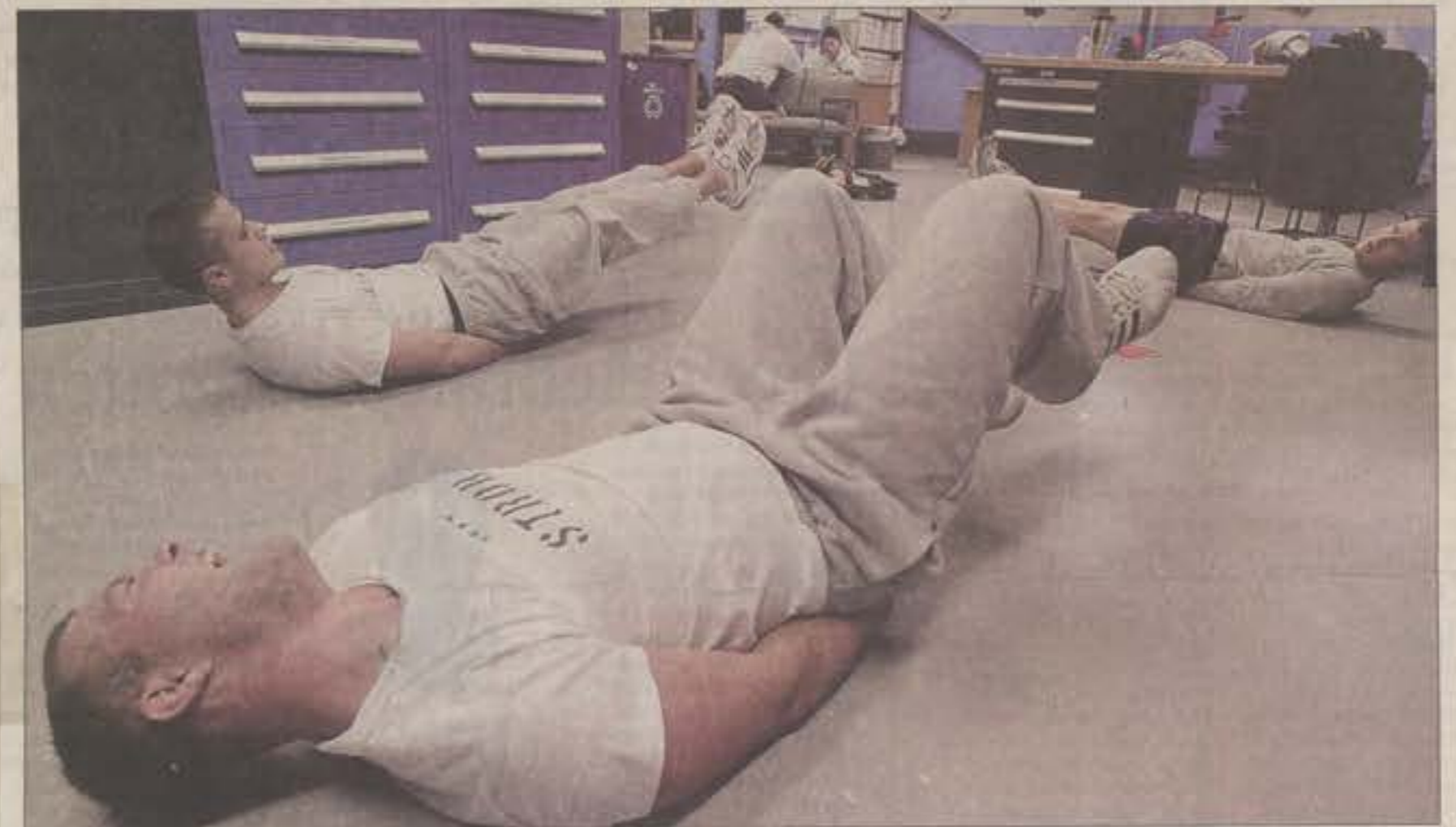
Monday, January 17, 2005

NEWS TIP LINE (231) 933-1472

## Guardians of the Great Lakes



Above left, Petty Officer 1st Class John Malmquist works on a data marker buoy. The buoy is thrown from the helicopter to mark a water location during a search. Electronic signals are transmitted back to the helicopter, providing a reference point. Above right, Lt. Cmdr. Brian Edmiston conducts the morning briefing, which covers what happened during the night, the plan for the day and other related items.



Airman Cory Strobel struggles to do leg lifts with Airman Joshua Maggie as Petty Officer 3rd Class Dace Coombes leads the exercise session. Strobel and Maggie are in training to attend the Coast Guard swimmer school, which will test both their mental and physical conditions. When they graduate, they will be aviation survival technicians. Coombes is already a qualified aviation survival technician.



Lt. j.g. Gabe Somma and Lt. j.g. Jerod Glover practice going over the flight checklist. Pilots drill constantly to master the many different settings of 300-plus switches and dials. The HH-65A "Dolphin" helicopter is almost 100 percent digital.

It takes a "small city" to raise the five HH-65A "Dolphin" helicopters at the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City.

Each flight hour requires more than 33 man hours of support, said Lt. j.g. Gabe Somma, public affairs officer.

"The people doing the support are the real heroes and stars," he said. "Without them we would not be able to accomplish our mission."

About 135 men and women are assigned to the Traverse City station — 28 are officers and 26 of them fly.

The air station and its choppers support nearly every modern Coast

Guard mission in northern Michigan and elsewhere around the Great Lakes region.

"We have our own public works and food services departments, our own wood, metal and electronic shops, a supply department,

exchange, and medical and dental clinics," Somma said.

The station's primary missions are winter and spring

domestic ice patrols, search and rescue, navigation aid, and marine environmental response. Training also consumes a large amount of time.

In 2004, the air station performed 217 search-and-rescues, saving 24 lives, and 32 medical evacuations.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY DOUGLAS TESNER



Left, Petty Officer 3rd Class Danny Perez assembles tie-down rings used on the helicopters. Preventive and regular maintenance is a key to safety. Above left, Petty Officer 3rd Class Keith Bastman, left, and Petty Officer 1st Class Bryan Davies check the jet engine of a helicopter. They are trying to locate a minor fuel leak after the engine was changed. Above right, Petty Officer 2nd Class Lee Pecue and Seaman Mike Bonifas serve lunch to shipmates in the enlisted dining hall.



GEORGIA 31064, THURSDAY, MAY 19, 2005



COAST GUARD HELICOPTER LANDS IN MILLEDGEVILLE

## Helicopter Refuels in Milledgeville

By TED DUNAGAN  
U.S. Coast Guard Lieutenant Junior Grade John McWilliams, a 1994 Jasper County High School graduate, managed a mini homecoming on Friday, May 13, via Baldwin County Airport in Milledgeville.

LTJG McWilliams and crew made a refueling stop there on board a HH-65B "Dolphin" Coast Guard helicopter on their way back from the Caribbean to their home base, U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City, in Traverse City, Mich.

LTJG McWilliams graduated from Georgia College and State University in Milledgeville in 2000. During college and after graduation he worked for the Ocmulgee Drug Task Force and the Baldwin County Sheriff's Department.

Then in May, 2002, he entered Officer Candidate School at The U.S. Coast Guard Academy and graduated with a commission as an Ensign. After graduation from OCS, he began Navy flight training in Pensacola, Fla., in October of 2002, and received his wings in January, 2004.

The "Dolphin" sat down at the Baldwin County Airport at approximately 12:45 p.m. with LTJG McWilliams at the controls as copilot, Lieutenant Marshall Branch as the pilot, and AMT3 Michael Borsuck as the flight mechanic. Two other crew members, AMT1 Chad Beaverson and AET2 Jeff Vanover, were traveling commercially.



MARY, JOHN &amp; NIXON McWILLIAMS (L-R)



LTJG McWILLIAMS LOOKS OUT WINDOW

The helicopter was a magnificent and extremely complicated machine, bright orange, with "U.S. Coast Guard" stenciled on the side. It was 13 feet high and 38 feet long, cruises at 125 knots with a maximum speed of 165 knots, and has a range of 350 nautical miles.

When it takes off it engages an amazing 680 horsepower, weighs 6,500 pounds empty and is capable of taking off weighing as much as 9,200 pounds.

It was in this fantastic machine that the crew was returning from the Caribbean. They had deployed

Continued on Page 3

# Boy missing off Wisconsin Point



TOP: Two boys leave the rock pier on Wisconsin Point where a 13-year-old boy is presumed drowned in Lake Superior Thursday evening. The unidentified boy was swimming with two brothers and a girl when the incident occurred near the lighthouse.

AT RIGHT: U.S. Coast Guard search and rescue boats scour the water around the Wisconsin Point lighthouse Thursday, looking for a 13-year-old boy who was missing in the water. Rescue crews from Douglas County, Superior police and fire and the St. Louis County Volunteer Rescue Squad also assisted in the search.



PHOTOS BY AMANDA DESSI / NEWS TRIBUNE

**SUPERIOR:** Search continues for 13-year-old boy, who is presumed drowned in Lake Superior.

BY CHRIS HAMILTON  
NEWS TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

Swimming at the Wisconsin Point breakwater, and jumping off it, has been a risky but popular activity for Superior teenagers for years. And a relatively uneventful one.

On Thursday, though, a 13-year-old boy who was swimming with two brothers and a girl in Lake Superior's choppy waves is missing and presumed drowned.

Search and rescue crews from Douglas County, Superior police and fire, the U.S. Coast Guard and the St. Louis County Volunteer Rescue Squad filled a half-dozen boats that scanned the water for hours looking for the youth.

Douglas County Sheriff's Department officials did not publicly identify the boy Thursday as they continued to contact relatives.

As the evening wore on, grieving friends and family of the boy huddled on the beach and embraced.

The boy was swimming on the lake side of the breakwater, which has a lighthouse on the end and creates the Wisconsin side of the Superior entry.

A stiff wind was coming off the lake Thursday, creating 3-foot waves. Detective Sgt. Ed Anderson of the Douglas County Sheriff's Department said the boy was caught away from the wall and couldn't swim back to the rocks or the shore — about 200 yards away.

A person on the beach called 911 about 4:25 p.m., he said. Anderson said the boy had been swimming with several friends and relatives, the oldest of which was 19.

Witnesses on the beach said they saw two boys and two girls in the group near the lighthouse.

"It's just something the big kids like

See MISSING, Page 4A

## LTJG McWilliams Visits in Milledgeville

Continued from Page 1

from their Michigan base on April 11, for a one-month deployment where they conducted law enforcement, anti-drug, border patrol, and search and rescue missions.

During the winter months the search and rescue workload on the Great Lakes is dramatically reduced allowing the Traverse City Station, known as "Guardian of the Great Lakes," to relocate its assets to support Coast Guard missions to other parts of the world, but most recently to the Caribbean.

Toward the end of the tour LTJG McWilliams was returning from, he participated in an operation which rescued 132 Haitian migrants from their dangerously overloaded 50-foot sail freighter, after they had been at sea for five days.

After the migrants were spotted, the Dependable, a 210-foot Coast Guard Cutter, and the "Dolphin" helicopter were on scene to assist with disembarking the migrants from the sail freighter, after which, their vessel was destroyed as a hazard to navigation.

Once on board the Coast Guard Cutter, all migrants received food, water, and any necessary medical attention. After their status was determined by U.S. government officials, all 132 migrants were returned to Port-au-Prince, Haiti on May 4.

After LTJG McWilliams and the crew arrive back at their home base in the Great Lakes, they will resume their duties, along with five other helicopter crews, of "search and rescue" in their area of operation, which stretches from Sault Saint Marie, Michigan, to Gary, Indiana, to Duluth, Minnesota.

During 2004, Air Station Traverse City flew 3,245 hours, conducted 217 search and rescue missions, saved 24 lives, and assisted 32 lives.

During the young officer's brief refueling stop in Baldwin County, besides his mother, Mary, and fa-

ther, Nixon McWilliams, Philip Jordan, his former Scoutmaster in Troop 312 was in attendance. Mr. Jordan reported the following:

"John achieved the rank of Eagle Scout when he had just turned 14 years old. Not only did he never miss a camping trip, but he actually had more merit badges than necessary and he kept earning them even after becoming an Eagle Scout."

It turned out that John used his experience as an Eagle Scout to complete one of his papers when applying for flight school.

The fact that a Boy Scout becomes an Eagle Scout has always carried with it a special significance, since only about four per-

cent of all Boy Scouts accomplish this. Several former Eagle Scouts include President Gerald R. Ford, J. Willard Marriott, Jr., and Senator Sam Nunn.

When asked if he would recommend his career path to young people, John replied, "I definitely would—the Coast Guard is a great place to serve and I would recommend it to anyone. I plan to make it my career."

After John and his fellow crew members had lunch with his parents and friends, he promised to fly over Monticello during his departure. And true to his word, about mid-afternoon, a beautiful bright orange craft was spotted from downtown and from the eastern edge of the lake.

## Crews search lake for man

**LAKE SUPERIOR:** Boaters say the man wasn't wearing a life jacket when he fell out of a sailboat three miles off Wisconsin Point.

BY KATY STECH  
NEWS TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

U.S. Coast Guard officials planned to search through the night for a man who fell off a sailboat into Lake Superior on Friday afternoon about three miles off Wisconsin Point.

At 3:47 p.m., the Coast Guard received a distress call that a man had fallen off a sailboat and did not resurface. Petty Officer Robert Walters said.

The three other people who were aboard the recreational boat, which was about 30 feet long, reported that they didn't see the man fall overboard, Walters said.

But, Walters said, they saw him in the water and he didn't return to the surface.

The man, whom officials would not identify Friday night, fell overboard about 3 miles directly east of Wisconsin Point into about 70 feet of water, Walters said.

The man was not wearing a life jacket, he added.

## Coast Guard airlifts marijuana

**TRAVERSE CITY** — A helicopter crew from the local Coast Guard station helped out in what authorities called the biggest marijuana seizure in Indiana's history.

The crew airlifted more than 12 loads of marijuana seized late last week from a vast outdoor growing operation discovered in LaPorte County in northern Indiana, Lt. Gabe Somma of the Traverse City air station reported.

The Coast Guard's HH-65B "Dolphin" was called in to airlift the marijuana because law enforcement officers were unable to remove the plants by land.

Local authorities there extracted more than 2,800 eight-foot plants with an estimated street value of more than \$3 million.

## Coasties rescue man from island

**MACKINAW CITY** — A Sturgeon Bay man was located on a remote island in Wilderness State Park after an all-night search effort by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Tom Butki, 56, went missing off the coast of Cross Village in Emmet County. He was last seen in a 13-foot boat and was reported missing before 8 p.m. Wednesday.

Butki and his vessel were found beached on Waughoshance Point early Thursday, when a Coast Guard rescue helicopter from Air Station Traverse City hoisted him to safety. He was taken to a local hospital and is reported in good condition.

## Man stays afloat for hours in GT Bay

**NORTHPORT** — A Michigan man is safe after spending nearly four hours afloat after being knocked off a personal watercraft in Grand Traverse Bay.

United States Coast Guard officials said Danny Simpson, 36, was reported missing Sunday evening when he didn't return to shore.

Search and rescue helicopters were launched from the Traverse City air station to look for Simpson, who later told officials he was knocked off his personal watercraft by a 5-foot wave that sank the machine.

Simpson, who was wearing a lifejacket, was afloat in the bay for three to four hours before he was able to swim to shore at a beach just south of Northport.

Simpson was evaluated by emergency medical personnel and released in good condition, Coast Guard officials reported.



### Sequence of Events

Arrival of Official Party

Military Honors For  
Commander, Ninth Coast Guard District

Presentation of Colors, National Anthem

Invocation

Inspection

Remarks:

Rear Admiral Robert J. Papp  
Commander, Ninth Coast Guard District

Commander Paul S. Ratté  
Commanding Officer, Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City

Change of Command:

Commander David G. Throop  
relieves  
Commander Paul S. Ratté

Remarks:

Commander David G. Throop

Benediction

Semper Paratus, Retire the Colors

Official Party Departs

Reception - Smith Hall

## HISTORY

### United States Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City, Michigan

Air Station Traverse City was originally established in 1946 as a one-plane detachment to provide search and rescue service to the Great Lakes. It has grown from its original small complement to its current size of 5 helicopters and approximately 130 Coast Guard men and women. A new hanger providing over 50,000 square feet of work space was completed in 1980.

Coast Guard aircraft types have changed throughout the station's history. Original HU-16 "Albatross" seaplanes gave way to HO4S Sikorsky helicopters, then to HH-52 helicopters and HU-25A "Falcon" jets. Since 1986, Air Station Traverse City has operated only helicopters: the HH-3F "Pelican," followed by the HH60J "Jayhawk" and currently the HH-65B "Dolphin."

In March of 2003, the Coast Guard became part of the newly formed Department of Homeland Security. This move has enhanced the Coast Guard's integration with other federal, state and local agencies. In addition to its continued role in search and rescue, and renewed homeland security focus, the Coast Guard continues to fulfill its duties in law enforcement, environmental protection, and maritime mobility.

Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City prides itself on being a good neighbor and staying involved in the community. Station personnel are active participants in community events and charitable organizations including the National Cherry Festival, Special Olympics, Big Brothers, Toys for Tots, March of Dimes, YMCA, Rotary, Kiwanis, Girl & Boy Scouts of America, American Red Cross, and Traverse City Area Public Schools.



# Change of Command Ceremony



## July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2005

### U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City, Michigan



U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security



### Commander Paul S. Ratté

United States Coast Guard

Commander Ratté hails from Springfield, Massachusetts and is a 1984 graduate of the Coast Guard Academy. Following a tour as a Deck Watch Officer aboard the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter ALERT (WMEC 630) he attended Naval Flight

Training and was designated a Coast Guard Aviator in 1987. He flew the HH-3F "Pelican" helicopter at Air Stations Cape Cod, Massachusetts and Kodiak, Alaska before transitioning to the HH-60J "Jayhawk." During a tour as an Instructor Pilot at Aviation Training Center, Mobile, Alabama, he played a key role in the implementation of the HH-60J flight simulator. He returned to Air Station Kodiak where he served with distinction and was twice awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for lifesaving rescues during the harsh winter of 1999. Commander Ratté then transferred to the Coast Guard's largest Air Station in Clearwater, Florida, where he served as Operations Officer. He directed the operations of eighteen aircraft and instituted new tactics to aerially deliver Coast Guard boarding teams to underway ships by helicopter.

Commander Ratté has served the past two years in command of Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City, where he qualified as an Aircraft Commander in the HH65B, his third CG helicopter type. During his tenure, the Air Station was the only unit to earn consecutive Aviation Standardization Excellence awards. Under his command Air Station personnel prosecuted 374 search and rescue cases, saving or assisting 150 lives.

Commander Ratté holds a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from the Coast Guard Academy and a Master of Business Administration from Spring Hill College. In addition to his Distinguished Flying Crosses, his military decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Medal, two Coast Guard Achievement Medals, and several other personal and unit awards. He is married to the former Barbara Jo Batman of Dublin, Pennsylvania and they are the proud parents of four children: Alimarie (14), Carolynn (12), Mitchell (10) and Stephen (10).

Commander Ratté is transferring to the Operations Management and Oversight branch of the Coast Guard's Pacific Area in Alameda, CA.

### Search continues for missing boater

**GLEN ARBOR**— Authorities continue to search for a man who apparently drowned in Glen Lake.

David Schmid, 49, of Ludington, was reported missing Sunday afternoon by his wife and two daughters, with whom he was on a pontoon boat on Big Glen Lake.

Leelanau County undersheriff Scott Wooters said Monday that divers from the Michigan State Police and U.S. Coast Guard were assisting the sheriff's department with the search.

Authorities searched for Schmid several hours Sunday night and all day Monday.

# MAYOR SOUNDS AN 'SOS'

Fights, gunfire and corpses overwhelm city

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Storm victims were raped and beaten, fights and fires broke out, corpses lay out in the open and rescue helicopters and law enforcement officers were shot at as flooded-out New Orleans descended into anarchy Thursday.

"This is a desperate SOS," Mayor Ray Nagin said.

Anger mounted across the ruined city, with thousands of storm victims increasingly hungry, desperate and tired of waiting for buses to take them out.

"We are out here like pure animals. We don't have help," the Rev. Isaac Clark, 68, said outside the New Orleans Convention Center, where corpses lay in the open.

Other evacuees complained they were dropped off at the center and given

PLEASE SEE PAGE 2A



The Record-Eagle/Greg Underen  
Keith Ashley readies a trailer he intends to use to haul emergency-relief supplies to victims of hurricane Katrina. Story, Page 11A.

## RELIEF

# Traverse City agencies are ready to help

180 Michigan Guardsmen leave today

BY IAN C. STOREY  
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — State and local agencies are cataloging what they have on hand if the call comes in for assistance in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

And some local agencies are being asked to stay away — at least for now.

Lt. Gabe Somma at the Traverse City Air Station said two rescue swimmers were dispatched

Wednesday for relief efforts in the Gulf Coast, joining 4,000 other active duty members assisting in the wake of Katrina.

"We also have a plan in place to send additional aircraft and air crews if necessary, but right now we are on standby," he said. "We are not sure if we are actually going down there."

PLEASE SEE PAGE 11A



The Associated Press  
A military helicopter makes a food and water drop to flood victims near the convention center in New Orleans on Thursday. For more coverage, see Pages 9-10A.

## LOCAL

Groups wait for the call to help

FROM PAGE 1A

In addition to personnel, Somma said the Coast Guard as a whole has 37 aircraft, 83 small boats and 15 cutters assisting in relief efforts.

Jamel Anderson, emergency management director for Grand Traverse County, said Michigan has not been asked to send any citizen emergency response teams. Instead, state police provided a list of agencies that are accepting volunteers, Anderson said.

"When Sept. 11 happened it was a challenge to coordinate all these people who just showed up to help," she said.

Lt. Mike Tilley, spokesman for the 7th District Michigan State Police Emergency Management Services, said the state has activated the emergency operational center in Lansing that will take calls about available resources that could be sent if needed.

"At the moment, we are urging first responders not to self-deploy," he said. "They are still in a rescue mode right now. When they get into recovery mode, we will be sending people."

Tom Ulrich, assistant superintendent at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, said the National Park Service hasn't yet enlisted the help of any local NPS staff but they are on notice that a request could come in the future. Michigan Department of Natural Resources spokeswoman Mary Dettloff said the DNR has yet to receive requests for assistance and is compiling its resources with the state.

"The administration as a whole is putting together a plan as to what could be offered," she said.

More than 180 military police with the Michigan National Guard will leave this morning for the Gulf Coast, but no one from Camp Grayling.

The troops are from Owosso, Pontiac and Taylor and will head for Camp Shelby in Mississippi, a staging location to get instructions for the enormous relief effort.

Record-Eagle staff writers Christine Finger, Brian McGilivray and Sheri McWhirter contributed to this story.