



**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF  
THE AIR MEDAL  
(GOLD STAR IN LIEU OF A SECOND)**

**TO**

**LIEUTENANT COMMANDER KENNETH M. BILDERBACK  
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

A gold star in lieu of a second Air Medal was awarded LCDR Kenneth M. Bilderback, USCG, by the President for services set forth in the following citation:

"For meritorious achievement while participating in serial flight on 11 April 1952, as pilot of a Coast Guard PB5YAG plane engaged in rescuing survivors of a Pan-American DC-4 plane which had ditched in the Atlantic Ocean, with 69 persons aboard, shortly after takeoff from San Juan, Puerto Rico. Displaying expert airmanship, LCDR Bilderback, upon reaching the scene, successfully landed his plane in 8 to 10-foot seas, as close to the survivors as possible. The engines were stopped and a liferaft with one crew member was launched. The plane drifted rapidly and, although some difficulty was experienced in starting up the plane's engines, the crew member and two survivors were taken aboard from the liferaft. Unable to take off because of the rough seas, LCDR Bilderback taxied his plane 7 miles to San Juan harbor where waiting attendants transported the survivors to a hospital. LCDR Bilderback's skill, sound judgement and unwavering devotion to duty reflect the highest credit upon himself and the U.S. Coast Guard."