



**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE COAST GUARD MEDAL
TO
RICHARD S. PETTEY
Aviation Machinist's Mate Second Class
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Petty Officer PETTEY is cited for extraordinary heroism on the evening of 23 February 1990 when he rescued the driver of a burning oil truck on interstate 10 in New Orleans, Louisiana. Petty Officer PETTEY acted quickly and unhesitatingly, bravely responding to the rescue of the driver who was trapped in an 18-wheel tractor trailer carrying 80,000 gallons of waste oil. Petty Officer PETTEY and his wife were traveling along Interstate 10 when he witnessed the accident involving the fuel truck and four crushed automobiles. Without hesitation, he stopped his vehicle and immediately ran to the scene of the accident where he found the fuel truck and the four other vehicles engulfed in smoke and flames. Upon hearing cries of help from the truck driver, Petty Officer PETTEY approached the truck and attempted to pull the driver, who was pinned in the interior of his vehicle, to safety. As Petty Officer PETTEY and a second truck driver worked unselfishly and without regard for their own personal safety, a small explosion temporarily forced them back. Then, with a renewed sense of urgency, Petty Officer PETTEY returned to free the driver. He was soon overcome by smoke and was forced to retreat momentarily. Meanwhile, the second driver managed to pull the victim halfway through a window of the twisted wreckage before he was overcome by smoke. Petty Officer PETTEY immediately continued the rescue effort, and had no sooner finished freeing and carrying the driver to safety when the cab of the truck became completely engulfed in flames. Petty Officer PETTEY administered first aid and treated the victim for shock until relieved by paramedics. Without Petty Officer PETTEY's decisive and immediate actions, the truck driver would have perished. Petty Officer PETTEY demonstrated remarkable initiative, exceptional fortitude, and daring in spite of imminent personal danger in this rescue. His courage and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.