

The Officers, Directors and Members of

US SAILING

are pleased to present the

ARTHUR B. HANSON RESCUE MEDAL

to

PENNY CLARK and CREW

FOR THE RESCUE AS FOLLOWS:

From "Compass Points", The Newsletter of the Arizona Yacht Club

RESCUER'S WORDS:

Saturday, March 9th was another eventful day on Lake Pleasant. Steve Witt, Bud and I had finished re-testing in the small boats with Jo and Dale Mogle around noon. After putting all the boats away we all went on our other planned activities for the rest of the day. Bud back to town, Steve was meeting his wife and I was meeting a gal to go sailing for the afternoon.

The afternoon on the lake was pleasant, winds were fair and as usual inconsistent but we finally hit some nice winds later in the afternoon. We were down at the north end of the lake when some mid-size puffs gave us nice sailing for a few moments. Out of the corner of my eye I saw a sail at the end of the south end of the lake hit the water. We were sailing in that general direction so I kept my eye on the area. Several sail and powerboats were in the vicinity and so I thought I'd just keep my eye on the situation. Well, several minutes later I see the sail go upright...thinking all was well I dismissed the incident. Then again, there was that same sail going down towards the water for a second time. By this time, my friend and I decided that the folks there were having difficulty and I thought we could be of assistance. It took several more minutes to get there under power but we finally did arrive. The scene upon our arrival was a strange one and not textbook I might add. The owner of the boat was standing in his boat that was 2 to 3 inches below the water, filled with water. He had been in the water for about 30 minutes and he was definitely a victim of hypothermia. All wet, standing in the water trying to save his boat he was dismayed to say the least giving an account of what had already happened. Two powerboaters, one a houseboat and the other a run-about were trying to help from their boats but this boat would not stay upright!

I told the gentleman that I would help, but that he needed to get out of the water and get into a warm area because he was suffering from hypothermia. He tied the bow of the boat to a line, the run-a-bout boater held the line and we transferred the man to *Andale* and got him out of his wet clothes and wrapped him into a blanket. We transferred the line that held the boat and I began to pull on it to secure it to my stern cleat when in the water I saw the end of the line just floating there...the knot was not secure. (I suspect that the gentleman who later admitted that he was not thinking clearly had tied the knot himself). So here we had this boat that would not right itself, even with help and was fast beginning to turtle and possible sink yet again. The gentleman, got excited and said, "Let me go in and right it again." No one else was eager to get into the water. I thought that with help we could both right it and then we'd be on our way. He jumped in, without a PFD, and proceeded to get with the boat. The run-a-bout boater threw one of their PFD's to the man and I went into the water that I knew would be at least 60-degrees. Yep! It was cold all right, but after the initial shock I was able to function, remembering Herb

Larrabee saying to me, "You can do this," was what kept my head about me. Thanks to the class I knew that I could put my own PFD on in the water and I did just that. This boat would not right. Even with two of us it would not right itself. The only thing we could do was to secure a line to keep it from sinking and that is what we did. My friend in the boat helped get the ladder out and we both climbed on board and secured the bow line to *Andale's* stern with help from the run-about boater who held the line until we got on board.

Again we had to get out of our wet clothes and try to warm up, I was fine once I got out of my wet things but the gentleman was still shivering and I was concerned about him. (It was about now I wished I'd gotten some of those emergency blankets at Popular Surplus). We covered him up with whatever we had, towels, blankets, sweatshirts, etc. He said eventually that he was getting warmer but he kept on shivering. This concerned me and I was thankful that the day was nice and warm with minimal wind. The houseboat folks called the marina and a few other numbers to get someone out to help with towing. (I had forgotten that the Park Rangers could be called also, according to Jo). I didn't think I could tow it in with the boat turtled. Anyway, we finally got the salvage folks to come out about 30 minutes later. We were content to just wait, happy that the boat was here and was not sinking and all hands were OK. The gentleman and I exchanged pleasantries and talked during this time of waiting for the salvage barge to arrive. He had taken a class on how to right capsized dinghies just last fall at Lake Pleasant. He was a new sailor. He was relatively unfamiliar with this boat. He was still shivering when the barge got there. They were concerned about Mr. Putman and called the Sheriff's boat to transport him to the marina while they worked on his boat. That was the last I saw of Mr. Putnam, we exchanged good-byes and thank you's and went on our way.

Looking back on it now there are several things I would do differently. One, is to get a radio on board. Two, have a list of emergency numbers/people to call at Lake Pleasant. Three, have those special thermal blankets on board. I talked to several people about this experience and had lots of questions; why didn't the boat right itself?; why was it 3" below the water when it was righted? I probably made the effort to get some sort of line from the rigging on the boat to use it as leverage to right the boat. But with the water as cold as it was I didn't want to be in there any longer than was necessary.

I thought I could be of some assistance ONLY because I had taken the Sailing Instructors class in January. I was grateful that the power boaters were as helpful as they were, but were only able to do the communicating for us since I had no VHF on board. They followed directions but were stymied when it came to actually doing anything productive. This I put to a lack of knowledge rather than lack of skills, for they were very willing to do as they were asked and directed. It was a great experience. I learned about my capabilities and skills. I also learned that someone somewhere along the line needs to take charge when necessary. If I had ...(illegible).....probably would have been one of the "(illegible)" rather than the director of the operation. I know that this was not done ...(illegible).....first and then save the boat was definitely accomplished. I am grateful for the experience of the class and the encouragement Jo and Dale to have been able to accomplish this adventure to a successful conclusion.

RESCUER'S CREWS WORDS:

My husband finally talked me into taking a lesson in sailing for "safety's sake" if he was to become incapacitated or fall overboard I would need to take charge of sailing the vessel and/or pick him up. So, "we" decided the best place to start would be with our brand-spanking newly certified instructor. I put in the call to Penny Clark and we arranged a get together at Pleasant on Saturday, March 9th. Penny said we could go out in *Andale*, her 22 foot Catalina – nice boat.

Well, Saturday came and it was time for my first lesson. I had been trailering our boat so launch and retrieval was covered. Penny was in the boat, so I took the walks up and down the "thigh-aching" hill. We got out on the water and the lesson began. Penny motored us to a wider area and proceeded to hand me the rudder and told me to sail "her" out of the marina and out into open waters. We caught

some light winds and sailed. Penny gave me instructions and information. From which tack to use in light winds to sailor jargon: e.g. stays, aft, port, stern, etc.

The whole time we sailed I had the rudder and Penny slowly built up my confidence till I could handle the boat without fear, and began to feel comfortable at the helm. At one point I told Penny that whatever course she set and the way she positioned the jib and main, it was if the boat sailed itself. During our day I told Penny that Curt wanted me to eventually take additional lessons on Man Overboard, Rescue and Retrieval drills. Well that day came pretty quickly....

Penny – "That looks like a sail's tip sticking out of the water, so you see it?"

Nancy – "I see something but I don't think it's a sail."

Penny – "Sure looks like a sail, is someone in the water?"

Nancy – "I see two jet-skis, maybe they just flipped or wiped out."

We tacked and continued our sail in some rather nice winds, I must say. Suddenly, Penny stopped.

Penny – "That definitely looks like a sail in the water. I think we should pull in the sails and offer our assistance. When you are on the water it is proper etiquette (so to speak) to assist anyone in distress."

Penny leaped into action. She started the motor and told me to steer toward the downed vessel. She trimmed the main and climbed to the aft to lower the jib. Once tied down we were close enough to see what had happened. By the time we arrived two speedboats had already offered to help. It turned out to be a small sailboat (about 14 feet) which appeared to be sinking. One of the speedboats was holding the tip of the mast and the man's boat was almost all the way under the speedboat with the sailor still in it. No one seemed to know what to do; that is, until...Penny to the Rescue! arrived on the scene. She immediately assessed the situation and went into rescue mode.

Her first and foremost priority was to get the man out of the water. He was shivering like crazy. When he got out of his boat, minus his weight, the boat didn't seem like it was sinking as fast as I originally thought. The man's only concerns were for his boat, not himself, but Penny said he was in the water at least 20 minutes and needed to be warmed up to prevent any further injury to himself. We got him on *Andale* and Penny said, "get down below and get undressed now!" And he did.

A speedboat had tied a bowline to the sailboat so we released one of the speedboats from rescue duty. As Penny started pulling the boat in, the line came untied, the boat started to sink. The "survivor" took off the sweatshirt and jumped back in the water to save his boat. He was shivering so much and didn't have a life jacket so my brave instructor, "Penny to the Rescue!" jumped in to save the cold sailor and his boat. (Donned with a PFD no less).

While Penny was rescuing, I had to do all the maneuvering on her boat (I even had to start the engine). I turned *Andale* around and picked up our "Man Overboard" and the answer to his prayers – Penny. Another speedboat came up and asked if he should use the VHF to call the Marina Salvage boat. Penny and the sailor (whose name I believe is Roger Putnam) put their weight together on the keel but the boat wouldn't right itself. Penny told the VHF holder to call the Marina Salvage and told Roger to get out of the water and back into her boat. She told him to get out of those wet clothes and instructed me to grab a blanket off the V-berth and wrap him up in it and to make sure he put on a sweatshirt that they had acquired on their jaunts out day sailing with friends. Penny secured the small boat to *Andale*. It wasn't long till the salvage boat appeared. The boat crew took over our passenger, his gear and his boat, thanked us and we were on our way.

In one day, I learned so much from my incredibly qualified instructor I would recommend to all the women of the club who, like me, are "sailors by marriage" to get a lesson from instructor Clark. It's

beneficial to you, your family, your future in sailing and "Doggone it" it was quite the adventure. Who knows, maybe you will even save a life. I feel great every time I think about it.

**The Arthur B. Hanson Rescue Award was awarded
to Penny Clark and Nancy**