

The Officers, Directors and Members of
US SAILING
are pleased to present the
ARTHUR B. HANSON RESCUE MEDAL
to the crew of

QUEST

for the rescue as follows:

On Sunday, June 2, 2002 off Fairfield, CT in Long Island Sound, Duane and Mary Minard were on the return leg of their cruise on their J/44 Quest in 30 knots of wind, 3' seas, and air temperature 70-degrees when they noticed smoke from a distant sailboat at 4PM. The sound was empty of boats otherwise.

The 41-year old man was making a solo delivery in his newly purchased, gasoline powered, Tanzer 28, when the engine exploded and the boat caught fire. First he called 911 on his cell phone and then abandoned the boat onto its dinghy, but could not keep the dinghy upright, which swamped, hanging onto it and was in the water with his PFD on, in the chilly 60-degree water.

The Minards headed towards the smoke, and found the victim about 300 feet away from the smoking boat. Unable to reach the Coast Guard on their handheld radio, not wanting to go below to use the ships radio and lose visual contact, they called 911 on a cell phone. They doused their sails and approached under power.

They deployed their Lifesling, but could not get it close enough to the dinghy, and the victim did not want to let go of the dinghy. The Minards held position upwind, and extended their own dinghy down to the victim. When he grabbed ahold, they pulled him in to their stern ladder, and hauled him aboard. Westport Marine Police arrived about this time. Police boarded the burning vessel, extinguished the fire, and piloted the boat when a commercial salvor arrived.

The Minards got the victim out of his wet clothes and warmed him as they returned to Cedar Point. He was suffering from mild hypothermia. Once there, while Duane put their boat away, Mary took the victim to her home for a hot shower, food, and to call for a ride.

Congratulations to Duane Minard and Mary Minard for rescuing a mariner in distress, backing up by calling in outside assistance and attending to the victims injuries. US SAILING is pleased to present the Arthur B. Hanson Rescue Medal in recognition of this event.

Ronald C. Trossbach
Chairman, Safety at Sea Committee
By Direction

The Arthur B. Hanson Rescue Medal was awarded by Safety at Sea Committee Member Rudi Millard to Duane and Mary Minard at the Cedar Point Yacht Club Annual Awards Banquet at Cobb's Mill Inn in Weston, CT at 7:00pm, November 9, 2002.

Left to right, Mary Minard,
US SAILING Safety at Sea Committee member Peter "Rudi" Millard,
and Duane Minard.
Photo by Chris Johannessen

DETAILS:

Duane and Mary Minard of Westport, CT were returning to Cedar Point Yacht Club aboard their J-44 "Quest" from a weekend cruise when they noticed smoke and a sailboat. Conditions were very breezy, a solid 25-30 knots with higher gusts, around 5pm.

The victim was delivering his newly purchased, gasoline powered Tanzer 28, when the engine exploded and the boat caught fire. He abandoned the boat on its dinghy, but could not keep the dinghy upright, and was in the water, hanging onto it.

The Minards headed towards the smoke, and found the victim about 300 feet away from the boat. Unable to reach the Coast Guard on their handheld radio, they called 911 on a cell phone. They doused their sails and approached under power.

They deployed their Lifesling, but could not get it close enough to the dinghy, and the victim did not want to let go of the dinghy. Then the Minards held position upwind, and extended their own dinghy down to the victim. When he grabbed ahold, they pulled him in to their stern ladder, and hauled him aboard. The Westport Marine Police arrived at about this time.

The Minards got him out of his wet clothes and warmed him as they returned to Cedar Point. He was suffering from mild hypothermia. Once there, while Duane put their boat away, Mary took the victim to her home for a hot shower, food, and to call for a ride.

The victim had been in danger for his life, as no other boats were in sight at the end of a blustery, cool day. The Minards used their training about hypothermia, Mary's training on man-overboard procedures, and Duane's experience as a Power Squadron instructor to save the victim.

(Note: I interviewed Duane Minard while he was putting his boat away. Other information was gathered from an article in the Westport Minuteman detailing the rescue, which I will be happy to send to you. The Westport police also called Cedar Point YC to congratulate the Minards on their rescue. Eric Robbins)

Nominators Name: Eric P. Robbins, Governor, Cedar Point Yacht Club

First Boat Name: Viking Star

First Boat Length: 28

First Boat Make Model: Tanzer 28

Rescuing Skipper: Duane and Mary Minard

Rescuing Boat Make Model: J-44

Rescuing Boat Name: Quest

Rescuing Boat Length: 44

What was the nature of this incident: rescue from burning boat

Did a Mayday call go out: Y

Who responded: Westport police

Was any injury sustained by the victim: Y

Can your story be published: Y

Can you provide articles about this event: Y

Was a PFD worn: Y

What type: not sure

What position was the victim working before they went in: helmsman, solo delivery

Was this day or night: day

Wind speed: 30

Wave height: 3

Water temperature: 60

Air temperature: 70

How much time did the victim spend in the water: not sure

What recovery method was used: Lifesling, plus dinghy

Was a rescue swimmer put in the water: N

Did the victim have a strobe light or whistle: N

Was the victim able to help in the recovery: Y

Was a Lifesling aboard: Y

Was it used: Y

Rescuing Crews Names: 3 golden retrievers

What happened: See narrative

What type of injury, hypothermia included: hypothermia

How did victim help himself back onboard: Grabbed rescuing boat's dinghy floated out to him

How did the victim get hoisted onto the deck: Stern ladder