



The Amver Bulletin

Volume 3, Issue 1

Spring 2007

Special points of interest:

- Amver awards break 5,000
- Multiple Amver rescues

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M/V Cape Bilbao rescues 2

The Amver participating tanker Cape Bilbao rescued two American sailors 1,300 miles south east of Bermuda after their 41 foot sailboat was damaged by a drifting container.

The sailors, Eugene Meleski, age 74, and his wife Patsy, age 68, were aboard their sailboat, the Stella di Mare, when a large container struck and sheared off its rudder. Mr. Meleski attempted to repair the rudder unsuccessfully and activated his 406 EPRIB notifying the United States Coast Guard.

The Coast Guard diverted the tanker Cape Bilbao, which was 420 miles away, to rescue the



The Cape Bilbao continued on its voyage to Fos, France where the Meleski's were met by U.S. State Department officials who arranged for their return to the United States.

stranded sailors. On January 10, 2007 the Marshall Island flagged tanker, under the command of Captain Valerij Bulankovs, successfully rescued Mr. and Mrs. Meleski. "There were no injuries, but two of my crewmembers had to assist Mrs. Meleski up the 22 foot ladder from the sailboat to our ship" stated Captain Bulankovs.

Mr. Meleski described the rescue and ten day passage to France as a treasured experience after the unfortunate termination of their sailing adventure aboard the Stella di Mare.

Photo courtesy of the crew of the M/T Cape Bilbao

Amver awards top 5,000

For the first time in its 49 year history Amver awards have topped the 5,000 mark.

5,121 vessels achieved 128 days on plot in 2006 exceeding the previous year by 650 vessels.

There were also an additional 127 companies whose vessels received awards in 2006.

This increase in Amver participation is testimony to the shipping communities dedication to ensur-

ing no call for assistance goes unanswered.



Solo sailor rescued by Amver Tanker Tambourin



On March 15, 2007 the Amver participating tanker Tambourin rescued a lone sailor 330 miles north east of French Guyana. Jerry Lo-

max, aboard the 26 foot sailboat Nell Gwyn II, contacted an amateur radio operator to report he had lost all power aboard his vessel.

The rescue coordination center in Forte de France, working with the United States Coast Guard Atlantic Area Command Center and the rescue coordination center in Falmouth, UK, diverted the Amver participating Liberian flagged tanker to rescue Mr. Lomax.

According to rescue coordinators in

Falmouth, UK, Mr. Lomax had plenty of food and water on board while waiting for the Amver vessel to arrive on scene.

The master of the tanker Tambourin, Captain Per Tillaeus, arrived at the location of the disabled sailing vessel and ordered a rescue boat lowered. Within an hour of arriving on scene Captain Tillaeus and his crew successfully rescued Mr. Lomax and had him onboard the Tambourin.

The Tambourin brought Mr. Lomax to Barbados and continued on its voyage to Mexico.

Photo courtesy: Laurin Maritime

Amver vessel rescues Chinese crew of sunken ship



On March 20, 2007 the Amver par-

ticipating ship Prahuh Yuvika rescued 11 crew members of the bulk carrier Unicorn Ace which sank in the South China Sea. The Unicorn Ace was carrying lumber products from Malaysia to Taiwan when it encountered bad weather.

The Prahuh Yuvika, an Indian flagged bulk carrier, was diverted at the request of the Hong Kong mari-

time rescue coordination center. Upon arriving on the scene they discovered a life raft from the sunken vessel and immediately rescued the 11 crew members.

The Prahuh Yuvika, following instructions from rescue aircraft on scene, continued to carry out search and rescue operations until released **Continued below**

Chinese crew rescue continued

by the Hong Kong rescue coordination center, stated the Captain in a message to the United States Coast Guard Amver center.

The Prahuh Yuvika sailed to Manila where the Chinese survivors were met by Philippine Coast Guard authorities.

Photo above: Unicorn Ace survivors with master and crew of the M/V Prahuh Yuvika.

Photo right: Survivors depart M/V Prahuh Yuvika at Manila anchorage.

Photo courtesy: Tolani Group



The Navy League of the United States presents Amver Award



The United States Navy League presented its annual Navy League Amver Award Medal to the Holland American Line Cruise Ship Noordam at its annual dinner on March 14, 2007.

On June 6, 2006 the crew of the Holland American Line Cruise Ship Noordam rescued 22 migrants from

their capsized boat in the Aegean Sea. The body of a young boy was later pulled from the water. Crew onboard the Noordam came to the aid of the group after spotting a person floating in the water off the coast of the island of Samos. A rescue boat and two tenders were lowered and rescue operations lasted more than two hours.

The survivors, believed to be Somali, were wearing lifejackets and said they set sail from Kusadasi, Turkey. The Noordam was on a ten day round trip from Italy and had left Santorini when it came across the group.

The award, inaugurated in 1997, was established to recognize an exceptional rescue at sea, involving a U.S.-owned, crewed, or operated commercial ship participating in the Amver system. The award is presented only in those years where a rescue of appropriate significance takes place.

Left to right: Dinner Chairman John Kelly (COO, Xerox Global Services); New York Council Navy League President Dr. Daniel M. Thys; Master, C/S NOORDAM, Captain Hans Mateboer, Holland America Line.

Photo courtesy: Navy League

LNG Carrier Norman Lady rescues sailor



On January 19, 2007 the Amver

participating natural gas tanker Norman Lady rescued a 38 year old sailor 1,300 miles south of Bermuda after he had been adrift for 10 days with no food or water.

Mr. Francesco Di Bendetto, a French citizen, was attempting a record breaking voyage from the Canary Islands to Guadalupe Island, in the French Indies, aboard

the Stella Bella, an 18 foot catamaran, when he lost most of his equipment overboard.

The Coast Guard contacted several Amver vessels, including the Norman Lady, a Norwegian flagged liquid natural gas tanker, which diverted 5 hours from its course to rescue Mr. Bendetto.

Continued below

Norman Lady rescue continued

According to the Captain of the Norman Lady, William Poppe, Mr. Bendetto's boat was not capsized; rather fatigue caused him to declare an emergency. "He says he had no food or water for almost 10 days, a tough guy but very happy right now". The crew of the Norman Lady also retrieved Mr. Bendetto's

catamaran and is transporting it to Barcelona, Spain where he and the vessel will be dropped off.

Photo courtesy: Hoegh shipping



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Saving Lives at Sea since 1958

Visit us on the web at
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Amver, sponsored by the United States Coast Guard, is a unique computer based, voluntary ship reporting system used worldwide by search and rescue authorities to arrange for assistance to persons in distress at sea. With Amver, rescue coordinators can identify participating ships in the area of distress and divert the best suited ship to respond.

Amver's mission is to quickly provide search and rescue authorities, on demand, accurate information on the positions and characteristics of vessels near a reported distress.

Notes from New York



2007 started as a busy year for the Amver system with over 100 lives saved in the first quarter of the calendar year.

From the sinking of the M/V Unicorn Ace in the South China Sea to the grounding and sinking of the C/S Sea Diamond the world is reminded just how dangerous shipping can be.

On that note I wanted to take a moment and remind all mariners of the recent change regarding EPRIBs.

Mariners are reminded that begin-

ning January 1, 2007, both 121.5 and 243 MHz Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRBs) are prohibited from use in both commercial and recreational watercraft. Boaters wishing to have an emergency rescue beacon aboard their vessel must have a digital 406 MHz model.

This does not affect 121.5/243 MHz man overboard devices which are designed to work directly with a base alerting unit only and not with satellite systems.

In the United States, users are required to register their 406 MHz beacons in the U.S. 406 MHz Beacon Registration Database at: <http://www.beaconregistration.noaa.gov/>. Other users can register their beacon in their country's national bea-

con registration database, or if no database is available, in the International Registration Database at: <http://www.406registration.com/>.

Many of the people saved by Amver each year are saved because of EPRIBs.

Please ensure your equipment is compliant with this new requirement and share this information within your company or colleagues in the maritime community.

Also, look for Amver as we travel to the upcoming SASMEX conference in Brighton, UK April 24-25 and NEVA September 24-27 in St. Petersburg, Russia.

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