



# Easel

Supporting and Informing Coast Guard Artists

Summer 2020

## COAST GUARD ACCEPTS 31 NEW WORKS 2020 ART COLLECTION NOW ON VIEW THRU AUGUST 7 IN NEW YORK CITY

Thirty-one works by 22 artists were accepted into the Coast Guard Art Program's (COGAP) permanent collection by Admiral Karl L. Schultz, Coast Guard Commandant, during his remarks of July 8, 2020 at Coast Guard Headquarters. The works were offered to the Service by Salmagundi Club President Elizabeth Spencer. They will be on view at the Salmagundi Club in New York City through August 7, 2020.

In expressing gratitude for the new works, Admiral Schultz noted that the Coast Guard Art Program had overcome the unprecedented concerns of the COVID virus to perform outstandingly, making this year's collection one of the Coast Guard's strongest. "Since its inception 39 years ago, our member artists have volunteered their time and talent," he said. "Today, thanks to them, the Coast Guard has one of the best and most remarkable collections of fine art of any military service."

The Admiral thanked the Salmagundi Club, which has been the program's co-sponsor since 1981. He pointed to the contributions of Salmagundi Club President Elizabeth Spencer; Karen Loew, the Club's COGAP Chair; Club COGAP Membership Chair

Tom Hedderich, and Club Director of Operations Chris Nunnally.

He also thanked the New York Council of the Navy League for its abiding support of COGAP and the Coast Guard, citing Council President Capt. Frank Russo (USN, ret.); Executive Vice President Greg Keshishian and Executive Director Jessica Hitchen

Adm. Schultz announced that John Ward won the George Gray Award for Artistic Excellence. His acrylic painting "Rescue near Galveston" shows a Coast Guard helicopter crew rescuing a victim off the Texas coast. This work demonstrates Ward's talent and long career as an artist and teacher. He is the recipient of two previous George Gray awards.

Jurors for this year's award were Sector New York Commanding Officer Capt. Jason Tama, Salmagundi Club President Elizabeth Spencer and art expert and editor-in-chief of *Fine Arts Connoisseur* magazine Peter Trippi.

In his remarks, Adm. Schultz also recognized the loss of COGAP artist Robert Semler, who passed away in January 2020. A four-time winner of the



Poster outside Salmagundi Club announces COGAP show and dates. Photo by Club Director of Operations Chris Nunnally.

George Gray award, the artist contributed 16 works to the program. The Admiral described Semler as a remarkable artist "who captured and preserved Coast Guard history through his paintings." Four of the artist's work are now on view at the Club.

The 2020 collection vividly portrays the service in action. (Continued page two., col. one)

**Coast Guard Auxiliarist  
Chaplain Donna Cole's Blessings**

Chaplain Cole has written this blessing as we confront the difficulties imposed by the COVID virus. Her prayer is a beacon of hope.

*Holy and ever-present God,  
you grant us hope and courage  
even when darkness surrounds  
us.*

*When these days of violence,  
uncertainty and sickness cause us  
to wonder at the sense of life it-  
self, you are near, offering us a  
promise of meaning beyond our  
understanding.*

*You gift us with the sound of  
passionate new voices, and with  
talented artists whose vision and  
craft help us to see with new  
eyes.*

*Their work here reflects the  
selflessness of the United States  
Coast Guard, whose every mem-  
ber stands always ready to serve  
the "high purpose" of the Coast  
Guard mission.*

*"Through surf and storm and  
howling gale" is not just a march-  
ing song. Semper Paratus is not  
a mere motto; these words de-  
scribe a way of life.*

*And so we ask you to send  
your blessing on this Coast Guard  
family and on the artists whose  
work brings forth the images of  
their labor and sacrifice with oth-  
ers. Inspire and encourage them  
in every moment of challenge or  
distress.*

*For all those who are now  
gone from our sight but remain  
always in our hearts, especially  
for Robert Semler, whose life and  
work contributed so much to the  
COGAP program, may they know  
peace in the promise that we who  
remain now hold the watch.*

*We ask all of this in the name  
of the God whose voice calms the  
storm of every fear.*

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John Ward's acrylic painting, "Rescue near Galveston," won the 2020 George Gray Award for Artistic Excellence. This marks the third time the artist has won this award, the art program's equivalent of "best in show" award.

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Missions depicted include the Coast Guard conducting illegal drug interdictions, protecting the maritime environment, and responding to emergencies and executing often daunting patrols.

The 31 works in this year's collection were chosen from 43 submissions by 26 artists. All 2020 collection artists receive a Public Service Commendation Award which is given in thanks for personal and beneficial contributions to the Service. The award to artists is signed by Rear Adm. Jon Hickey, newly appointed Director of Coast Guard Governmental and Public Affairs.

The 2020 collection works are based on varied sources including artists' photos taken during their visits or deployments to units and photos from Coast Guard sources.

Karen Loew, New York City resident, deployed to the Maritime Law Enforcement Academy in Charleston, S.C., and created three paintings showing Coast Guard service members and Canadian law enforcement officers.

Richard Johnson of Mt. Airy, Md., deployed to Coast Guard Air Station Washington (D.C.) and HITRON in Jacksonville, Fla. He sketched members

at both locations and five of his drawings were selected. New member John Deckert from Santa Rosa, Calif., created two works based on activities in Station Bodega Bay.

Active duty members also contributed. Port Angeles, Wash., resident Machinery Technician Second Class Jasen Newman's oil shows a surface swimmer aboard the Cutter Active. Marine Science Technician Third Class Thomas Unger of New Bern, N.C., based his work on an inspection call of a commercial freight vessel in North Carolina.

Other contributors are: Daven Anderson of St. Louis, Mo., who donated an oil painting of a New York Harbor patrol; Acacia Anglin of Port Angeles, Wash., whose watercolor highlights protection of living marine resources, and Dennis Boom of Hillsboro, Ore., whose two oils feature helicopters, one in Miami and the other in Los Angeles. Glen Head, N.Y., resident Susanne Corbellea donated an oil of an aircraft fire training in Alaska; Amy Digi of Yonkers, N.Y., gave an oil painting of the Maritime Security Response Team in Asia; and Chesapeake, Md., resident James Dyekman donated a drawing of a tuba player with the Coast Guard Band and a watercolor of a drug interdiction in the Pacific.

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## Honor, Respect, Devotion to Duty: John Ward Wins 2020 George Gray Award for “*Rescue near Galveston*”

Each year a panel of jurors selects a recipient for the George Gray Award for Artistic Excellence from the collection of artwork submitted annually to the U.S. Coast Guard Art Program. No stranger to the program or this award, John Ward is this year’s award winner for his painting “*Rescue near Galveston.*” His acrylic painting depicts a Coast Guard helicopter crew as it medevacs a man from an oil tanker off the coast of Texas. He has previously won the award—the art program’s best in show award—for his outstanding work in 2006 and earlier in 2000.

The artist, a New York native, received a bachelor of science degree from Niagara University and a master’s in art education from SUNY (Plattsburgh) and a master’s in illustration from Syracuse University. He received his New York State teacher certificate from St. Lawrence University Graduate Program. He retired from the Saranac Lake High School where he taught art for 30 years.

Mr. Ward has designed two Adirondack rustic homes in the village of Saranac Lake, where he has his home and studio. He was recently inducted into the Niagara University Athletic Hall of Fame for rugby. He is the official ice carver for the Saranac Lake Winter Carnival Ice Palace and creates sculptures out of enormous 600 pound blocks of ice.

His art has been used by more than 60 publishers and he has received numerous awards. His work was chosen by the U.S. State Department for its Art in Embassies Program and exhibited in Swaziland, Africa. Ward’s works have also been shown at the Norman Rockwell Museum in Stockbridge, Mass., and the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y., among many other locations. He is a former member of the Society of Illustrators and the Graphic Artists Guild. He now spends much of his time creating portraits.

Upon learning that he had won the prestigious George Gray Award, Mr. Ward declared: “As an artist I have received many honors and awards. The George Gray Award and the Coast Guard Art Program mean the world to me. Being the son of a wounded World War II veteran, I was taught to give back. What a wonderful way to do so as a member of the U.S. Coast Guard Art Program.”



Artist John Ward, paintbrush in hand, stands to the side of his George Gray Award winning painting “*Rescue near Galveston.*” This year marks the third time the artist has won the coveted award for his outstanding work. Photo courtesy of Jane Ward.

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New member Fred Feiler of Oneonta, N.Y., contributed an oil painting of an Air Station Cape Cod rescue. West Coast artist and Mount Terrace, Wash., resident Frank Gaffney depicted the service training a member of the Gambian Navy. Sandra Hart, Arlington Heights, Ill., resident offered an acrylic painting of the service delivering holiday trees in Chicago. Tom Hedderich of Westtown, N.Y., gave a watercolor work of drug interdiction in the Pacific. Philadelphia’s Anne Kullaf donated an oil showing the service’s response to Hurricane Dorian in the Bahamas; Hugh O’Connor of St. Clair Shores, Mich., offered a watercolor and pencil work depicting drug interdiction in the Pacific. New member Oscar Romero of Sacramento, Calif., provided an oil painting showing service members repairing an aircraft fuel line at a unit in Sacramento.

New member J.C. Jim Smith of McMinnville, Ore., gave a mixed medium work showing helicopter maintenance in Oregon. Brooklyn resident Leendert van der Pool’s oil painting depicts Coast Guard members in North Carolina in the wake of Hurricane Florence. Glen Head, N.Y., resident Chuck Van Horn’s watercolor shows a Bering Sea patrol and the Coast Guard aiding the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. John Ward’s award-winning painting rounds out the 31 works of the 2020 collection.