



Supporting and Informing Coast Guard Artists

Summer 2024

COAST GUARD ACCEPTS 2024 ART COLLECTION; RADM PLATT AND CAPT ANDRECHIK PRESIDE



U.S. Coast Guard and Salmagundi Club officials and Coast Guard Art Program (COGAP) artists gather for a photo at the 2024 COGAP acceptance ceremony on July 11th at the Salmagundi Club in New York City. First row, from left to right are: COGAP artists Amy Digi, Ken Stetz, Diane Larson, Maria Bennett Hock, Debra Keirce, Kirk Larsen, Leendert van der Pool and Karen Loew. Back row, from left to right are: COGAP artists Stephen Roberson, Lt. Cmdr. Don Sturdivant, USCG (ret.), Leon Wescoat, III, George Cavallo, Ensign Thomas Unger, David Ray, and Tom Hedderich, First Coast Guard District Commander Rear Adm. Michael Platt, Salmagundi Club Chairman of the Board Ray Cisneros, Coast Guard Sector New York Commanding Officer Capt. Jon Andrechik and COGAP artist Mark Oldland.

Thirty-six works by 31 artists were accepted into the Coast Guard Art Program's (COGAP) permanent collection during the annual acceptance ceremony July 11, 2024 at the Salmagundi Club in New York City. First Coast Guard District Commander Rear Adm. Michael Platt accepted the new works on behalf of the service. Capt. Jon Andrechik, Commanding Officer of Sector New York, served as the

evening's master of ceremonies. Ken Stetz of Collegeville, Pa., was the recipient of the George Gray Award for Artistic Excellence. His oil painting *"Absorbing the roll"* shows Coast Guard crew members aboard a cutter as they train to rescue a disabled vessel in waters off the East Coast.

This best-in-show work was lauded by Rear Adm. Platt for capturing the mission's complex-

ity and highlighting the resolve of Coast Guard service members.

The 2024 collection vividly portrays the many missions of the Coast Guard. Among these are the training exercises that make the Coast Guard *Semper Paratus*—always ready—homeland security, protection of the marine environment and living marine rescues, aids to navigation, working dogs of the
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Ken Stetz holds the George Gary Award plaque presented to him by First Coast Guard District Commander Rear Adm. Michael Platt. The COGAP artist won the award for his best in show oil painting "*Absorbing the Roll*," displayed on the wall behind. Rear Adm. Platt noted that this work highlights the complexity of the Coast Guard's many missions and commitment to these by its service members.

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service as well as search and rescue cases and rescue missions such as depicted in Mr. Stetz's painting.

Rear Adm. Platt, in accepting the new works on behalf of the Coast Guard, expressed profound thanks to COGAP artists and the program's many supporters including the Navy League and the Salmagundi Club. He noted that 2024 marked the 43rd anniversary of COGAP. "Since the program's inception," he said, "artists in their stunning works of art have volunteered their time and talent to capture the vital contributions the U.S. Coast Guard makes to our nation." He also said that as a child, his dream was to become an artist but that a career with the Coast Guard prevailed.

Rear Adm. Platt paid homage to the invaluable contributions of deceased COGAP artists C.R. "Bob" Bryant and Dick Kramer, who passed away earlier. Several works by these two artists were on view.

Newly elected Salmagundi Club Chairman of the Board Ray Cisneros and Capt. Andrechik joined in praise of the service's art program artists. They both lauded the 31 new works in the 2024 collection and remarked that these added significantly to the visual narration of the Coast Guard's story.

Recently elected President of the New York Council of the Navy League James Spear added his thanks to the artists. Mr. Spear noted French artist Edgar Degas who said "Art is not what you see, but what you make others see," in speaking about works in this year's collection. He emphasized Navy

League support of the art program and the Coast Guard. The council hosted this year's reception, an event it has repeatedly sponsored.

Karen Loew, Salmagundi Club COGAP Committee Chair and COGAP artist, in her remarks noted: "It's a common phrase – a picture is worth a 1000 words...with enough images here to make a book. The "authors" of this book are the COGAP artists and our "characters" are the men and women of our Coast Guard."

Contributors to this year's collection are Acacia Anglin, Silverdale, Wash.; Echo Baker, Tustin, Calif.; George Cavallo, Renton, Wash.; Susanne Corbelletta, Southport, N.C.; Amy DiGi, Yorktown Heights, N.Y.; Charles Fawcett, Bellevue, Wash.; Frank Gaffney, Mountlake Terrace, Wash.; Don Hatcher, Newport, Wash.; Tom Hedderich, Westtown, N.Y.; Maria Bennett Hock, Cary, N.C.; Kristin Hosbein, St. Joseph, Mich.; Daniel Coolbrith Jones, Arroyo Grande, Calif.; Debra Keirce, Broadlands, Va.; Anne Kullaf, San Diego, Calif.; Kirk Larsen, Hicksville, N.Y.; Diane Larson, Cocoa, Fla.; Karen Loew, New York, N.Y.; Priscilla Messner-Patterson, Post Falls, Idaho; MK1 Jasen Newman, Silverdale, Wash.; Mark Oldland, Hillsborough, N.J.; David Ray, Wilmette, Ill.; Stephen Roberson, Arlington, Va.; J. C. "Jim" Smith, McMinnville, Ore.; Ken Stetz, Collegeville, Pa.; Lt. Cmdr. Don Sturdivant, USCG (ret.), Hendersonville, N.C.; Odie Tucker, Jr., Dauphin Island, Ala.; Christopher Tupa, Edna, Texas; Ensign Thomas Unger, Houston, Texas; Leendert van der Pool, Brooklyn, N.Y.; John Ward, Saranac Lake, N.Y.; and Leon Wescoat, III, Absecon, N.J.

COGAP artists with works from previous collections on view at the Salmagundi Club are: James Consor, New York, N.Y.; Fred Feiler, Oneonta, N.Y.; Louis Stephen Gadai, Los Angeles, Calif.; Kevin McCaffrey, Weehawken, N.J.; Ken Smith, Pulaski, Va.; and from states as noted above, Acacia Anglin, Susanne Corbelletta, Amy DiGi, Frank Gaffney, Tom Hedderich, Kristin Hosbein, Debra Keirce, Kirk Larsen, Karen Loew, MK1 Jasen Newman, Ken Stetz, Ensign Thomas Unger, Leendert van der Pool, and John Ward.

Following the show at the Salmagundi Club, the 2024 collection be on display at Federal Hall National Memorial for a two-month exhibition starting July 31st. The memorial is located close to the New York Stock Exchange in Lower Manhattan.

Photos courtesy of:

PA3 Justin Remo, U.S. Coast Guard District 1, PADET New York
Paul Backalenick, New York, N.Y.
Philippe Debeusscher, Arlington, Va.

Honor, Respect, Devotion to Duty: Ken Stetz wins 2024 George Gray Award for his oil painting “*Absorbing the roll*”

Each year jurors select a recipient for the George Gray Award for Artistic Excellence from the collection of artwork submitted to the U.S. Coast Guard Art Program. Ken Stetz is this year’s award winner for his artwork “*Absorbing the roll*.” His oil painting shows Coast Guard crewmembers aboard a cutter as they train to rescue a disabled vessel in waters off the East Coast.

The award-winning work was chosen by a panel of judges comprised of Rear Adm. Michael Platt, First Coast Guard District Commander; Stephen Bluto, artist and the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s senior collections manager of Arms and Armor; and Richard Rosenblatt, artist and former Salmagundi Club Art Committee Chair.

In talking about Stetz’s award winning



Ken Stetz’s award winning oil painting
“*Absorbing the roll*”

work, Rear Adm. Platt said, “I am incredibly excited to be part of the jury for this year’s Coast Guard Art Program George Gray Award. A rescue—whether of persons or vessels— can be a complex and dangerous mission for our service. This work captures the action and the reality of a rescue and its artistic execution is both outstanding and compelling.”

The New Jersey born artist has had a lifelong interest in art. After graduating from the Harry Lundeberg School of Seamanship and working aboard a U.S. flag



The 2024 George Gray Award for Artistic Excellence recipient COGAP artist Ken Stetz is shown here at the Salmagundi Club July 11th just as he learns he has won the award this year. On the left is the artist’s wife, Diane Stetz.

container ship, he pursued a career in art. He studied pictorial illustration, receiving a degree at the Spectrum Institute for the Advertising Arts, and oil painting in the studio of noted American artist Frank E. Zuccarelli.

After a highly accomplished career in graphic design and illustration, the artist turned his attention to fine art, drawing and painting marine subjects from the New Jersey Shore and other coastal areas.

His paintings have won awards in juried shows including best painting in watercolor. His work was also chosen for publication in a noted book on art. The artist is a signature member of the American Society of Marine Artists and has exhibited his work in its national exhibitions. He is also an art instructor and conducts demonstrations and workshops. .

Upon learning that he had won the prestigious George Gray Award, Mr. Stetz remarked: “I am honored to receive such a distinguished award and am proud of my association with the U.S. Coast Guard through COGAP.”

More information available at:

www.kenstetz.com

The July 11th COGAP Acceptance Ceremony in Pictures



The jurors faced a formidable task in deciding which work from the 2024 collection would win the George Gray Award for Artistic Excellence. Shown here are the three award jurors. From left to right they are: Richard Rosenblatt, artist and former Salmagundi Club Art Committee Chair, Rear Admiral Michael Platt, First Coast Guard District Commander, and Stephen Bluto, artist and the Metropolitan Museum of Art's senior collections manager of Arms and Armor.

Members of the Coast Guard Sector New York Color Guard arrive for the opening of the 2024 COGAP acceptance ceremony.



Coast Guard Band Senior Chief Musician Megan Sesma (Harp) and Musician First Class Katherine Velasquez (flute) provided music during the reception. The duo also performed the National Anthem during the Presentation of Colors. On the wall behind the musicians hangs COGAP artist Debra Keirce's 2021 painting *"Always ready"* of Coast Guard musicians and a Navy flute player.



Guests are welcomed to the July 11th event. In the first section of the front row (left to right) are 2024 COGAP jurors Richard Rosenblatt and Stephen Bluto, Salmagundi Club Chairman Ray Cisneros, Dr. Drew Mendoza and New York Council of the Navy League President James Spear. In the second section of the front row are First Coast Guard District Commander Rear Adm. Michael Platt, First Coast Guard District Command Master Chief Robert Riemer, Sector New York Deputy Commanding Officer Capt. Doreen McCarthy, Commanding Officer of Coast Guard SouthCom Reserve Unit Capt. Michael McCarthy, Chaplain Joseph Roach and Ellen Greeley, an assistant commissioner, New York City Department of Veterans' Services.

Speakers at COGAP's Acceptance Ceremony



Master of Ceremonies
Sector N.Y. Commanding Officer
Capt. Jon Andrechik welcomes guests.



Sector N.Y. Chaplain Joseph Roach
delivers the invocation.



New York Council of the Navy League
President James Spear
offers remarks.



Karen Loew, Salmagundi Club
COGAP Committee Chair and COGAP
artist, addresses guests.



Salmagundi Club Chairman of the
Board Ray Cisneros presents the 2024
collection to the Coast Guard.



First Coast Guard District Commander
Rear Adm. Michael Platt accepts
the 2024 collection on behalf of the
Coast Guard.

COGAP Artists receive the Public Service Commendation Award July 11th

Coast Guard District One Commander Rear Adm. Michael Platt presented COGAP artists attending the July 11, 2024 ceremony with a Public Service Commendation Award. The award is given in recognition of contributions to the Coast Guard. It can be signed only by a Flag officer or the civilian equivalent. Ray Cisneros, Salmagundi Club Chairman of the Board, is also pictured with the COGAP artists. Sixteen of the 31 artists contributing to the 2024 collection were present at the ceremony taking place at the Salmagundi Club in New York City. Public service awards for artists not attending were sent to Acacia Anglin, Echo Baker, Susanne Corbelletta, Charles Fawcett, Frank Gaffney, Don Hatcher, Kristin Hosbein, Daniel Coolbrith Jones, Anne Kullaf, Priscilla Messner-Patterson, MK1 Jasen Newman, J.C. "Jim" Smith, Odie Tucker, Jr., Christopher Tupa and John Ward.

COGAP artist George Cavallo receives his award for his acrylic painting *"Daring double aviator rescue."*



COGAP artist Amy DiGi receives her award for her oil painting *"Inspection in the Coral Sea."*



COGAP artist and Salma-
gundi Club COGAP Mem-
bership Chair Tom
Hedderich receives his
award for his watercolor
painting *"Building cooper-
ation."*

COGAP artist Maria Ben-
nett Hock receives her
award for her two oil
paintings, *"Helping
science"* and *"I've got
you."*





COGAP artist Debra Keirce receives her award for her three oil paintings based on her selection by COGAP for deployment to the Cutter STONE in Charleston, S.C. They are: *"Muster drill at midnight," "Night shift drills,"* and *"Start your engines."*

COGAP artist Kirk Larsen receives his award for his oil painting *"Working together, staying sharp."*



COGAP artist Diane Larson receives her award for her oil painting *"The rescue."*



COGAP artist and Salmagundi Club COGAP Committee Chair Karen Loew receives her award for her oil painting *"Rescuers on the Rio Grande."*



COGAP artist Mark Oldland receives his award for his two mixed media works *"Throwing a heaving line"* and *"Cutter RUSH lookout."*



COGAP artist David Ray receives his award for his oil painting *"Moment of rescue."*



COGAP artist Stephen Roberson receives his award for his oil painting *"Raising a buoy."*

COGAP artist Ken Stetz receives his PSA award for his oil painting *"Absorbing the roll."* The artist was also this year's recipient of the George Gray Award—COGAP's best in show award (see page three).





COGAP artist Lt. Cmdr. Don Sturdivant, USCG (ret.) receives his award for his oil painting *"Vigilant."*



COGAP artist active duty Ensign Thomas Unger receives his award for his painting in the unusual medium of coffee. The artwork is entitled *"Dangerous cargo."*



COGAP artist Leendert van der Pool receives his award for his oil painting *"Helicopter refuel."*



COGAP artist Leon Wescoat, III receives his award for his oil painting *"Surf training in New Jersey."*

Chaplain Joseph Roach's Invocation and Benediction Blessings

Invocation

Eternal Father, strong to save, whose arm has bound the restless wave,

Tonight, we seek your blessings upon this 43rd anniversary of the Coast Guard Art Program, and all who are here. We are grateful for the opportunity to memorialize the contributions so many talented artists have made to this exceptional program. We are so thankful for the over 2,000 works of art in this collection. And we appreciate all the new 36 pieces by 31 artists.

As we look upon each work of art, we reflect on the demanding environments our dedicated Coast Guard service members encounter as they carry out their daily duties at stations, cutters, and units that dot America's shores. Whether engaged in search and rescue, maritime security, natural resource protection, or national defense, we look to You for their safety and protection, and not only for them, but the civilians they serve. May divine providence watch over them ceaselessly.

In the vivid strokes of the paintings that depict their valor, we see the embodiment of the Coast Guard's core values: Honor, Respect, and Devotion to Duty. These qualities, intrinsic to our service members, stand as beacons throughout our nation.

At this hour, our prayers also extend to the families of two artists who were part of the Coast Guard Art Program. We remember C. R. "Bob" Bryant and Dick Kramer, and their families. We ask You to make your love and presence powerfully known to these special people even at this very moment and especially to their widows Deidre and Virginia.

Lastly Lord, we express our gratitude to the Salmagundi Club, where art and honor converge. This amazing club has sponsored the Coast Guard Art Program since its inception, and we are indebted. May the Salmagundi Club continue to be a place where new artists can share their beautiful works, and gain an even larger audience than ever before!

Be with us, now to guide our hearts and minds during this ceremony for it is in Thy Holy and Precious Name, we pray.

Amen.

Benediction

Eternal Father,

May these captivating works of art serve as a beacon, igniting the spirit of a new generation of Coast Guard members who aspire to serve their country and embrace the myriad of opportunities the Coast Guard offers.

From its historical roots as the U.S. Lifesaving Service and Revenue Cutter Service to today, we fervently pray that our Coast Guard members remain ever Semper Paratus—always ready—when called upon to rescue those in need. May their resolve be unwavering, and may those in distress place their faith in the young men and women of the Coast Guard, knowing they will be steadfastly dispatched to their aid.

Drawing from the timeless wisdom of the Bible, we recognize that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and a sound mind.

In each stroke of these artworks, we find the intangible, yet profound, qualities that define our service: courage, conviction, and an unwavering determination to assist others. May these virtues continue to sustain our members during long days and significant demands.

Finally, once again, we extend our blessings to the Salmagundi Club, a haven where art and honor converge. And we ask You Lord to go with each of us, as we prepare to depart from one another, but never from Your presence.

We pray these things in Your Holy Name.

Amen

