

# MV Green Wave crew recognized for heroism

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Military Sealift Command Press Release

For acts of heroism and bravery at sea, the master and crew of MV Green Wave were awarded the 1998 American Merchant Marine Seamanship Trophy on Nov. 13. Green Wave, a break bulk cargo ship under contract to the U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command, rescued three seafarers from their 40-foot sailboat that had foundered in rain, strong winds and heavy seas in August 1997.

Capt. James Staples accepted the trophy, which recognizes extraordinary seafaring skills by American mariners, from U.S. Maritime Administrator Clyde Hart during a ceremony held at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, N.Y. This marks the 27th presentation of the trophy since the award was established in 1962.

On Aug. 16, 1997, Green Wave was en route from Sunny Point, N.C., to Nordenham, Germany, with a cargo of military ammunition. The weather was foul as the cargo ship passed a 40-foot Bermuda-flagged sailboat, the Taxi. The crew aboard Green Wave hailed the boat by radio to make certain that it was fairing well, considering the weather. Taxi's crew radioed back, "All system's go."

Just an hour later, Green Wave received a distress call from the sailboat. The heavy seas overpowered Taxi, and it was sinking.

Green Wave's crew signaled the U.S. Coast Guard Station in Norfolk, Va., to relay the distress signal. Then, Staples turned his vessel around and headed back to the sailboat.

Arriving at the scene within the hour, Green Wave maneuvered to Taxi's windward side and had the pilot ladder rigged and ready to receive the sailors.

The situation nonetheless was dangerous, since the sailboat's mast was flipping from side to side and threatened to puncture Green Wave's ammunition-laden containers. Moreover, Staples did not want Taxi to fall too far behind his vessel, putting the sailors in danger of being sucked into the wheel wash.

With patience and professionalism, the officers and crew of Green Wave effected the rescue of the sailors, who hopped onto the pilot ladder, and the safety of the cargo vessel. The three shipwrecked sailors were treated for minor injuries.

Green Wave is owned by Central Gulf Lines and is under contract to Military Sealift Command.

Military Sealift Command provides efficient sea transportation, combat-ready logistics forces and reliable special mission ships for the Department of Defense in peace and war. MSC operates more than 100 ships worldwide and employees more than 7,500, the vast majority of whom are assigned to seagoing jobs. MSC's work force comprised mainly of civilians, but includes military and contractor personnel.

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