



3130
4 Apr 01

From: Commander, Ninth Coast Guard District
To: Commanding Officer, USCGC BISCAYNE (WTGB-104)
Via: Commander, Coast Guard Group Sault Ste. Marie

CS Gordon 4/23/01

Subj.: SEARCH AND RESCUE RESPONSE

1. On February 8, 2001, the U. S. Coast Guard Ninth District Command Center received a report of a downed charter aircraft in the vicinity of Beaver Island in northern Lake Michigan. At the time of the incident, severe weather dominated the region rendering search conditions extremely hazardous. Heavy snowfall, winds gusting to 40 knots, ice coverage on the water, and low visibility severely hampered search efforts. Further, since the precise location of the missing aircraft was unknown, the size of the search had to be enlarged. For this reason, it became necessary to request the assistance of CGC BISCAYNE BAY effectively cover the region.
2. Within thirty minutes of my request, you completed a personnel recall and were underway from your homeport. Upon arrival in the search area, you quickly assumed the duties of On Scene Commander and began a thorough assessment of the ice conditions in the region. Working closely with Group Sault Ste. Marie, CGC MACKINAW, CGC ACACIA, and helicopters from Air Station Traverse City, you methodically conducted a search and conducted Command and Control until relieved by CGC MACKINAW. Expertly navigating your ship through the ice, in the narrow channels on the eastern side of Beaver Island, you continuously kept the Ninth District Command Center apprised of current weather conditions and your overall search effort.
3. On the morning of 09 February, the missing plane was located. It was found on land a few miles southwest of the runway. Four of the passengers, who also were family members, survived the crash and spent the night huddled together. Regrettably, the pilot and one passenger were deceased.
4. Your responsiveness and ability to get underway with extremely short notice are commendable. Please accept this plaque, certificate and pins as a token of our appreciation for a job well done!


J. P. CURRIER
By direction

Encl: SAR Team 9 Plaque
SAR Team 9 Certificate and Pins