

COAST GUARD NEWS

U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety
Office

600 Martin Luther King, Jr. Place
Room 360
Louisville, Kentucky 40202-2230

Contact: Lieutenant (JG) Steven M. Garcia
Public Affairs Officer
(502) 582-5194 ext. 38
(502) 582-6825 Fax

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Release: 5727/1 (01-02)

DATE: March 16, 2001

DISTINGUISHED LIFESAVING MEDAL AWARDED TO FORMER JEFFERSON COUNTY PARAMEDIC

U. S. Coast Guard Commandant, Admiral James M. Loy, has awarded former Jefferson County paramedic and volunteer firefighter James P. Duvall, Jr. the distinguished Silver Lifesaving Medal for his heroic off duty actions on the night of April 15, 2000.

Duvall risked his life by leaping into the frigid waters of the Ohio River to pull a drowning man to safety. While enjoying the festivities of the celebrated marine event "Thunder Over Louisville" from his recreational boat, Duvall received word that a pleasure craft had been flooded by a larger vessel's wake, sending several people into the fifty-eight degree river. Voluntarily joining the search, Duvall quickly located a man struggling in the water. Duvall tossed him a lifeline, but the advanced stages of hypothermia left the man too weak to take hold. A highly trained paramedic, Duvall recognized that the man's condition was rapidly deteriorating and time was running out. He then grabbed the lifeline, leaped into the water, and pulled the man to safety. The swift currents, darkness and the dangerously low water temperature made his actions exceptionally heroic.

The Silver Lifesaving Medal was created in 1874 and authorized by the United States Congress to be awarded to any persons who risk their own lives to rescue, or endeavor to rescue, any other person from drowning, shipwreck, or other perils of the water. The Secretary of Transportation has formal authority for issuing the Medal; the Coast Guard Commandant is responsible for the administrative details, including determining eligibility.

On behalf of Admiral Loy, Commander William R. Marhoffer, Commanding Officer of Marine Safety Office Louisville, will present Mr. Duvall with the Coast Guard's second highest civilian honor at a special ceremony during a meeting of the Propeller Club at 7:00 p.m. on March 19, 2001 at the Knights Of Columbus Hall on River Road.

-USCG-