



THE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
WASHINGTON 20590

The Commandant of the Coast Guard takes pleasure in presenting the
COAST GUARD UNIT COMMENDATION to:

USCGC BOUTWELL (WHEC 719)
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

for service as set forth in the following

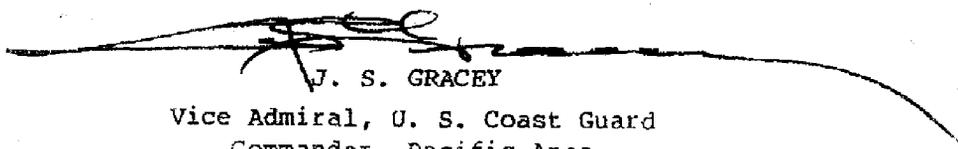
CITATION:

"For exceptionally meritorious service on 4 and 5 October 1980 while engaged in search and rescue operations in support of the M/V PRINSENDAM fire and subsequent abandoning ship by all personnel in the early morning hours of 4 October. The incident had the perfect setting for a major marine disaster when 519 persons, many elderly, were forced to seek shelter from the fire engulfed luxury vessel and took to lifeboats and liferafts in the frigid Gulf of Alaska. BOUTWELL was moored in Juneau, Alaska in a B-24 status when first notified of the shipboard disaster at 0123 Yukon Daylight Time. BOUTWELL immediately commenced recall procedures and was underway at 25 knots at 0238. BOUTWELL arrived on scene at 1345 and relieved Coast Guard HC-130 at 1500 as on scene commander. Already on scene were the T/V WILLIAMSBURGH, T/V SOHIO INTREPID and M/V PORTLAND. The on scene weather was: wind - 25 knots, visibility - 7 miles, seas - 6 feet and deteriorating rapidly. Even though some survivors had been removed from lifeboats and liferafts by the on scene vessels and helicopters, many PRINSENDAM passengers and crew still awaited rescue. Because of long hours in open boats in the frigid Alaskan waters and because of adverse sea conditions, M/V PRINSENDAM personnel had to be literally hoisted out of their survival craft. This feat required superb airmanship and seamanship. Precise timing was of utmost importance. Once on board BOUTWELL, the physical condition of survivors had to be determined. All personnel were retrieved without a single fatality or serious injury. At 2210 Operations Center Juneau determined that two pararescuemen were still unaccounted for; BOUTWELL returned to the area of lifeboat recoveries for a continued search. At 0101 on 5 October BOUTWELL located the lifeboat containing the two pararescuemen and 18 survivors. Their safe rescue was completed at 0200. The valiant persistence, professional skill and untiring efforts of BOUTWELL personnel throughout the ordeal averted a major marine disaster. Their devotion to duty and excellent performance are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard."

The Operational Distinguishing Device is authorized.

All personnel attached to and serving with USCGC BOUTWELL for at least 50% of the cited period are hereby authorized to wear the Coast Guard Unit Commendation Ribbon.

For the Commandant,



J. S. GRACEY

Vice Admiral, U. S. Coast Guard
Commander, Pacific Area