

City of Eureka

Proclamation



In recognition of

Spencer T. Manson USCG Aviation Survival Technician Second Class

Whereas, Aviation Survival Technician Second Class Manson is cited for heroism while participating in aerial flights as the Rescue Swimmer aboard Coast Guard helicopter CG6565 on 19 June 2021. The crew launched from Sector Humboldt Bay in response to a distress signal from the sailing vessel BARLOVENTO 70 miles off-shore from the California-Oregon border. The disabled 79-foot schooner had six persons onboard, one with a broken arm and head injuries, and was taking on water in tropical storm force winds and 20-foot seas; *and*

Whereas, Fighting extreme headwinds to get to the scene, the air crew realized there was no way to deploy Aviation Survival Technician Second Class MANSON directly to the out-of-control vessel due to the powerful seas and winds; Aviation Survival Technician Second Class MANSON was instead hoisted 150 feet downwind of the BARLOVENTO. As winds and swells drove the vessel past him at over nine knots, he grabbed a line trailing from the stern and was immediately drug into the wake; *and*

Whereas, MANSON then had to pull himself towards the boat hand-over-hand through the rushing waves for eight minutes until his shredded gloves grasped the ships stern rail. As the vessel pitched fore and aft, he was lifted clear out of the water then slammed back into the sea multiple times before he was able to scramble aboard; *and*

Whereas, The aircraft was low on fuel, he quickly prepared the injured sailor to enter the water, jumped overboard with her, and was hoisted aboard CG6565. After transferring the patient aboard an ambulance ashore, Manson and the crew refueled and returned 100 miles to the now-sinking vessel. Manson then devised an innovative, sliding-deployment technique that allowed him to hang just alongside the vessel and rescued each crewmember moments after they jumped into the 49-degree water; *and*

Whereas, MANSON, powering through exhaustion, recovered three more survivors before helicopter CG6524 arrived and copied the same technique to recover the last two crewmembers; *and*

Now, therefore, I, Mayor Kim Bergel, on behalf of the Eureka City Council, do hereby recognize Aviation Survival Technician Second Class Spencer T. Manson's actions, skill and heroism were instrumental in saving six lives, earning him the award of **Distinguished Flying Cross Medal**. His courage, judgement and devotion to duty in the face of treacherous conditions are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.

Kim Bergel
Mayor
December 19, 2023