

## Air Station Kodiak Honored for Busy Day of Rescues

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Jay Barrett/KMXT

Coast Guard Air Station Kodiak is receiving a heroism award Thursday at an event in New York City. Six current members and a former commander are scheduled to be in attendance at the 2012 Coast Guard Foundation's 32nd annual salute to the service.

Foundation president Anne Brengle says the Air Station is being honored for a very busy day on January 24th of this year, when crews were executing two rescues at the same time.

First, the fishing vessel Kimberly went aground in Portage Bay in hurricane force winds, 20-foot seas, snow and heavy icing. Conditions were so bad, the crew was forced to spend the night on the beach because the Coast Guard Jayhawk could not land.

When they tried again in the morning, the helicopter was diverted when word came in of a fishing boat sinking near Sitkinak Island. The seven members of the fishing vessel Heritage had abandoned ship and some were in the water. The Jayhawk hoisted two crewmen and transferred them back to Kodiak for medical help, while the other five were picked up by the Good Samaritan vessel Tuxendi. Meanwhile, the crewmen from the Kimberly were rescued and brought back to Kodiak.

Four Coast Guard helicopters, two airplanes, plus the good Samaritan completed the rescues.

The Coast Guard Foundation is awarding six members of the group at the New York City event on Thursday, as well as the former commanding officer of the air station, Captain Bill Deal. The crewmen are Josh Fitzgerald, Jason Evans, John Filipowicz, Rachid Arnick, Clark Patterson, and Joshua Shaffer.