

CWO3 Joanne M. Lopez
President, Chief Warrant and
Warrant Officers' Association
U. S. Coast Guard
c/o James Creek Marina 200
V Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20024-3321

January 26, 2009

Dear Ms. President and Fellow Warrant and Chief Warrant Officers:

I hereby nominate CWO4 (BOSN) Robert J. Rhoads, USCG (Ret.) for selection as a distinguished member of the Chief Warrant and Warrant Officers' Association, United States Coast Guard. Mr. Rhoads' many years of faithful and dedicated service on behalf of our association and its membership is worthy of such honor and recognition.

As outlined in Article II, Section 2.b. of our Constitution and By-Laws, we commend to you that Mr. Rhoads has certainly distinguished himself through untiring effort and devotion to the precepts stated in the Preamble to the Constitution of this Association and thereby has made significant contributions to the goals of the Association. .

Robert J. Rhoads enlisted in the U. S. Coast Guard in March 1954, and was promoted to Chief Warrant Officer in July 1969. He immediately joined the National CW&WO Association, and has remained a member in good standing ever since.

CWO4 Rhoads has been an active member of the Pacific Northwest Chapter for well over 30 years, and I do stress the word *active*. He has held every office:

- 1976 - Vice President
- 1977 - President
- 1984 - Treasurer
- 1999 - 2003 Secretary
- 2003 - 2008 Treasurer

Bob easily holds the record for most elected terms in our Chapter. In years when he did not run for election, he usually ended up completing the term of another officer because of a mid-year vacancy. Every time our Chapter went through periods wherein nobody would step forward to fill a vacancy, Bob always accepted the nomination so the Chapter would not fold. While our Chapter has produced several distinguished members, including Vince Stauffer, John Crawford, and Wayne Zuehls, every one of them will tell you Bob's duration and quality of service to our Chapter is unparalleled. I would venture to say Bob Rhoads has carried our Chapter's torch as well any other person in its history. Active duty CWOs have again assumed leadership of the Pacific Northwest Chapter, which I attribute to CWO4 Wayne Zuehls' leadership. However, if Bob had not held the Chapter together in its struggling years until Wayne became president, there would not have been a Pacific Northwest Chapter remaining for Wayne to reinvigorate.

His continuous membership, regular attendance at Chapter activities, and strong support of the Pacific NW Chapter (including the CWOA Scholarship Fund and local USO) began in 1975, while still on active duty. Bob retired from active duty in June 1984, and has remained a faithful and loyal member of our Chapter. He has contributed much to our success and camaraderie over the years.

Over the years, Bob has regularly served on committees and work parties, and has a habit for pinch-hitting as the secretary-treasurer, newsletter editor, and even as the bartender. When something needs done, Bob is always the first person to step forward. Every Chapter should have a Mr. Reliable and Mr. Responsible like Mr. Rhoads. Examples include Bob's stepping forward to serve on the scholarship selection committee in 2003 and in the mid 1990's, in which years that responsibility was given to our Chapter. Bob can always be found manning a grill at our Chapter's summertime BBQ fundraisers, which benefit such causes as the Seatac USO and funding a USCG plaque at Tahoma National Cemetery. When the Seattle Chapter hosted the Annual Meeting in 2002, Bob again stepped forward to assist in coordinating the logistics of the meeting, including the welcome reception.

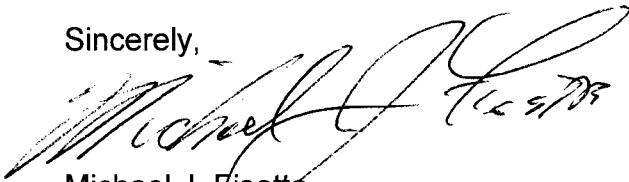
Always a good shipmate and loyal friend, Bob has regularly kept the membership posted about illnesses and funerals. Not only has he attended the funerals of shipmates and family members to offer condolences and represent the Chapter, but he has also offered his personal assistance to surviving family members.

For the last several years, Bob has taken on a role wherein he regularly forwards e-mails such as the weekly Military Officers of America Association (MOAA) update to all the Chapter members, which provide items of interest to active duty and retired members. Bob is the go-to guy if something needs to be disseminated quickly. Bob is always the person who notifies us of a member's death, and coordinates attendance at the funeral. Nobody has ever asked Bob to take on these responsibilities. That's another trait that *distinguishes* him; he sees a role that needs to be filled, and quietly goes about filling it.

This is Bob's third nomination for distinguished membership. As a former National President and Vice President, as well as President of the D.C. and Pacific Northwest Chapters, I have met many prominent and distinguished members of our Association; Bob ranks at the top. I have submitted two other nominations over the past 20 years, both of whom were elected as distinguished members: CWO4 Bob Lewis (Ret.) and CWO4 Wayne Zuehls.

I hope the additional detail provided regarding what offices Bob held, and when, provides the detail you need to elevate Bob to distinguished membership. Bob Rhoads represents the absolute best our Association has to offer. He has never sought any recognition for all the years he has held office, prepared the newsletters, tended bar, or organized meetings/dinners. He is the epitome of a humble, selfless leader. He has a true love for our Association. I know of no other person more deserving of distinguished membership. The honor of bestowing distinguished membership on Bob Rhoads is long overdue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Fiset". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Michael J. Fiset,
CWO4, USCG (Ret.)