

## Rescue proves Sea Cadets' worth

### Teens commended for role in saving mom and her sons from drowning



SA Cory Bausman  
Pimiteoui Division



SN Alexander Wagrowski  
Ghostriders Squadron

Thursday, October 26, 2006  
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OF THE JOURNAL STAR

**CHILLICOTHE** - Sunday was a memorable day for Mark Bausman. It marked the formal end to his 24-year Navy career, and during the same ceremony, his son was commended for saving a woman and her two sons from drowning in Lake Michigan.

And for the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corp in general and its Pimiteoui Division in particular, the day proved how invaluable the skills the Sea Cadets teach really are.

This summer, 16-year-old Cory Bausman and fellow cadet Alexander Wagrowski of Joliet were at a Lake Michigan beach during a break in Sea Cadet training.

"I was swimming with another student, Wagrowski. I don't know his first name," Cory Bausman said. "We got pulled into a rip current, which is like an undertow, and we felt ourselves being pulled further and further away from shore."

Bausman said his initial reaction was panic, but then he heard a woman calling for help.

"I didn't want her to drown, and the only thing to do was go and help her," he said.

It so happened the cadets had been practicing reaching and towing rescues as part of their advanced training.

"An advanced training with the Sea Cadet program means the cadets have attended boot camp and they choose something that interests them," said Lisa Strickland, Bausman's commanding officer. "This training normally lasts seven to 21 days."

At this particular training, the cadets were to spend 13 days aboard a former Navy yard patrol boat.

"And the cadets do everything - navigation, firefighting, watches, line handling, etc," she said.

Bausman and Wagrowski had made it to a sandbar when they heard the woman calling for help. They jumped back into the water and swam for shore to get help.

Bausman ran to the lifeguard station for assistance while Wagrowski grabbed a cell phone from an adult and called 911. Both cadets then returned to the shore. With the help of another swimmer who had a small raft, they and a lifeguard pulled the woman and her two teenage sons from the water.

"At first they refused medical help, but they took the advice of the paramedic," Bausman said.

Though he may not have considered himself a good swimmer prior to the rescue, he does now.

"After that experience, I'd have to say that I am," he said, smiling.

Although the incident occurred on Aug. 1, Bausman is just being officially recognized because neither Strickland nor any training officers were present when it occurred. They had to corroborate the story and then seek authorization to present the award through the chain of command from the regional director all the way up to the national headquarters in Arlington, Va.

While Cory Bausman plans to work his way through college via the Navy, his goal is to become a chef.

"I can cook anything I can get my hands on," he said. "I learned to cook from my mom, Leigh Lookhoof. She lives in Louisiana. Maybe I can go to a Cordon Bleu school through the Navy."

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