

SCA

small craft advisory

- Safety Paramount for Officers
- Boat Handling Course
- Magazine Wins Awards

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ABOUT THE COVER

Law enforcement agencies equip their officers with a variety of gear. From uniforms, shoes and duty belts to handcuffs, body armor and firearms, this equipment is provided for the officers' safety. But the safety items do not stop there. Agencies also supply sunscreen, ear plugs, back support braces and other items to improve the safety of their officers.

North Carolina Wildlife Resources photo/Geoff Cantrell



The official publication of the National Association of
State Boating Law Administrators

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Marine Patrol Officers Encounter Various Hazards in Course of “Normal” Duty



Richard Moore
NASBLA President

“From the Helm” has largely been a collaborative effort between NASBLA’s executive director and the president for the last couple of years, and, in many ways, that process has worked extremely well. Collaboration, on the other hand, creates an interesting challenge when one wants to speak from personal experience and perspective. John Johnson has graciously yielded this issue’s “From the Helm” to me so I can relay some personal thoughts on this issue’s theme, officer safety. Here goes...

I finally took the time recently to watch an HBO movie titled “Taking Chance,” starring Kevin Bacon. I became intrigued by the movie when I read an article about Kevin Bacon in Northwest Airline’s flight magazine several months ago. The movie is based on the real-life story of U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Colonel Michael Strobl who, while feeling compelled to do something more to support his fellow Marines than his daily administrative work in a cubicle, volunteered to escort the body of a fallen Marine PFC back to his hometown for burial. The movie didn’t contain high drama or blood-and-guts action, but the greatest stories don’t need that anyhow. Having served as a Marine, I found the story compelling on a deeply personal level.

When the movie ended, my wife, Connie, and I talked about how the real-life experience must have affected the real Lt. Colonel Strobl and how watching it had impacted us. We had become even more aware of the great personal sacrifices made by our fellow Americans every day. Mostly, we were left with a sick feeling about how easy it is to live our daily lives without giving the least bit of thought to the risks taken and the sacrifices made by others on our behalf. It seems that we are good at disconnecting ourselves from the realities of war and the challenges faced by others, especially when our lives seem to just plod along seemingly untouched.

By now you may be wondering how this story relates to the topic of officer safety. Well, consider this: In many ways, the job that our nation’s law enforcement officers perform is similar to that which our military men and women perform while in combat. Most days, no one fires a shot at us or tries to do us harm, but those days in which we encounter such hazards do occur more frequently than many may think.

As I was preparing this article, I received word that one of my fellow officers was in serious condition after being shot several times while conducting what otherwise may have been considered a “routine” stop. Fortunately, Officer Vann Streety is recovering well from the incident and the shooter has been apprehended. What we will probably never understand is what would drive the shooter to attempt to take an officer’s life when merely in trouble over minor traffic violations.

We simply never know when an otherwise “normal” situation will turn into one which is potentially deadly. “Normal” for our officers is responding to help people in need during the absolute worst of conditions. It involves working many weekends, spending long hours working alone at all hours of the day and night, and working during both the hottest and coldest temperature extremes. It may be getting called upon in the aftermath of natural disasters to search for survivors through dangerous debris fields or flooded areas and to deliver aid. These days, staying prepared for involvement in any all-hazards incident is pretty much “normal.” Perhaps the most challenging “normal” activity is initiating contacts with people who are recreating or engaged in commercial fishing/boating activity without knowing whether a person respects who we are and the job we do or has a troubled past and is intent on doing literally anything to avoid being apprehended.

The officers working for the law enforcement agencies represented within NASBLA face great risks every day. Imagine making over 1.7 million vessel stops and inspections in a year’s time. That’s what the combined effort of the states, territories and U.S. Coast Guard resulted in last year. Add to that the non-boating safety work performed by these officers, and it becomes easier to recognize that the likelihood of encountering an especially dangerous situation is quite high. Fortunately, we have tools and techniques to help minimize risks.

One of the tools especially suited to marine law enforcement officers is the inflatable life jacket. With the comfort and reliability of modern inflatables, there is simply no valid

continued on page 7



John Johnson
NASBLA Executive Director

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Heavy Traffic 5.4.6
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Magazine Lands Two APEX Awards

Small Craft Advisory, the official publication of the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, and its editor, Kimberly Jenkins, have been recognized with two awards from the Annual Awards for Publication Excellence Competition (APEX).



Created in 1988, APEX is an international competition for writers, editors, publications staff and communicators in corporate, nonprofit and independent settings. The annual competition is sponsored by Communications Concepts Inc., publisher of business communication reports, including *Writing That Works*, a bimonthly subscription for professional communicators, and special reports on topics such as writing feature articles and Web publishing.

Small Craft Advisory received the 2009 APEX Award of Excellence in the Most Improved Magazines and Journals category. The judges compared three 2006 issues of the magazine with issues from 2007, the first year of the publication's latest redesign.

With the January-February 2007 issue, *Small Craft Advisory* began sporting a new look, inside and out. The magazine's logo was updated to be cleaner and more modern. The art director implemented new graphic techniques and selected an easy-to-read sans serif font to add visual appeal to the articles. A table of contents was also added.

Jenkins, editor of *Small Craft Advisory*, garnered an Award of Excellence in News

Writing for her article "To Swim or Not to Swim" (Jan-Feb 2008). This article was part of an issue focusing on cold-water immersion.

Traditionally in the event of a boating accident in cold water, boaters have been told to stay with the boat, climb onto the boat to get out of the water and wait for help to arrive. However, what if the boat is sinking? What if the likelihood of being rescued is low? This article discusses why a boater – IF wearing a life jacket – may be better off to swim for shore.

APEX is an international competition that recognizes outstanding publications from newsletters and magazines to annual reports, brochures and websites. APEX 2009 awards were based on excellence in graphic design, editorial content, and the ability to achieve overall communications effectiveness and excellence. Judges evaluated 3,785 entries. Of those, 100 Grand Awards were presented to honor outstanding work in 11 major categories, with 1,158 Awards of Excellence recognizing exceptional entries in 122 categories.

Regional Boating Officers Selected

NASBLA and ACR Electronics Inc. are pleased to announce the regional boating officers of the year:

- Northern –
State Watercraft Officer Specialist David Goodwin, Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- Southern –
Game Warden Chris Green, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Western –
Marine Enforcement Officer Christopher Bolen, New Mexico State Parks

Sponsored by ACR Electronics Inc., the Boating Officer of the Year Award is presented to deserving recipients at three levels—state, regional and national. Open to all commissioned, certified or sworn peace officers authorized by the state to enforce the recreational boating safety laws of that state, the Boating Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award program was created in 2000 to recognize and honor outstanding service to recreational boating.

The national boating officer of the year will be announced during NASBLA's annual conference, being held Sept. 26-30, 2009, in Corpus Christi, Texas.

The award is named after Marvin "Butch" Potts, deceased Arkansas Boating Law Administrator. Potts was a longtime member of the Law Enforcement Committee and was instrumental in establishing NASBLA's Boating Officer of the Year award as recognition for outstanding members of this profession.

The Nov-Dec 2009 issue of *Small Craft Advisory* will feature a special section about all the boating officers that were nominated in this year's competition.



Watercraft Officer Specialist
David Goodwin
Ohio Department of
Natural Resources



Game Warden
Chris Green
Texas Parks and Wildlife
Department



Marine Enforcement Officer
Christopher Bolen
New Mexico State Parks



About ACR Electronics Inc.

ACR Electronics Inc. (<http://www.acrelectronics.com>), a Cobham plc Company, designs and manufactures a complete line of safety and survival products including EPIRBs, PLBs, SSAS, AIS, SARTs and safety accessories. The quality systems of this facility have been registered by Underwriters Laboratories to the ISO 9001:2000 Series Standards. Recognized as the world leader in safety and survival technologies, ACR has provided safety equipment to the aviation and marine industries as well as to the military since 1956.

50th Annual Conference Shapes Up

The NASBLA staff is working on finalizing the program for the organization's 50th Annual Conference. A number of events are taking place before the conference begins, including a three-day Instructor Training Course offered by the National Safe Boating Council on September 22-24, a Texas Boating Outreach and Education Partners Workshop on September 25, a Trends & Issues in Waterways Management Workshop on September 26, and the FY09 NASBLA Committee Meetings and Organizational Planning for FY10 on September 27.

The conference's opening ceremonies during the evening of September 27 will officially kick off NASBLA's 50th Anniversary with some great surprises, and the awards banquet will be held on September 28 following the NASBLA Business Meeting.

The program kicks off with Terrie Glass on the morning of September 29. Terri, president of Leadership Solutions, will speak about "Leading in Lean Times."

She will be followed by a number of other speakers before the program moves outside for on-water demonstrations at the marina in the afternoon. The morning of September 30 begins with breakout sessions covering topics such as law enforcement, education, outreach and accident analysis. Also during the morning, Susan Gorcowski with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration will give a presentation about implementing a strategic communications plan. The conference ends that evening with the historic passing of the fid as the current NASBLA president, Richard Moore, transfers his responsibilities to the new president.

Please join us in Corpus Christi, Texas, for a momentous week of learning and celebration. Additional conference information as well as online registration can be found at www.nasbla.org.

Operation Dry Water a Big Success

With agencies in 51 states and territories and all Coast Guard districts participating, Operation Dry Water was a truly national effort to raise awareness about the dangers of boating under the influence.

Operation Dry Water, which took place over the weekend of June 26-28, resulted in more than 15,000 boater contacts. To date, 26 states have reported over 220 BUI arrests or citations. Results will be updated as more information is received. To follow updates, visit the Operation Dry Water website at <http://operationdrywater.org> or the Operation Dry Water pages on Facebook and Twitter.



Grant Work

In late June, a group of 25 state and associate members met in Lexington, Ky., to work as part of two grant advisory committees for the FY09 NASBLA-Approved Boating Education Grants funded by the U.S. Coast Guard. On June 29, advisory group members met with the researchers working on a risk-based analysis of the National



Staff photo

Boating Education Standards. On June 30 the advisory group met with the researcher who is working on the creation of delivery and presentation standards for online boating safety courses. Preliminary results of both projects will be presented on September 30 at the NASBLA Annual Conference in Corpus Christi, Texas. ■

NASBLA Welcomes New Boating Law Administrators

As people pursue new opportunities, organizations reorganize and politics influence staff appointments, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators continues to see new faces among its members.

We welcome these new members aboard, and we encourage them to become involved in NASBLA and reap the benefits of their membership.



James Horan
Washington

Hailing from Olympia, Wash., James Horan is back for his third rotation as the state's BLA. Working for the Washington State Parks & Rec-

reation Commission, he served as BLA from December 1977 to December 1994, then again from July 1995 to July 2005. His latest turn as BLA began on July 1, 2008.

Horan, who holds a bachelor's degree in outdoor recreation, with a minor in botany, previously served as the boating safety program coordinator for the Iowa Conservation Commission from April 1973 to October 1977.

An avid boater, Horan said he used to water ski. Now his boating is mostly done when he goes fishing in Puget Sound and along the coast. On a recent outing, he took an eight-day boating trip in a 27-foot cabin cruiser from Olympia in South Puget Sound to Ketchikan, Alaska, and back. "The trip was wonderful with tides, currents and wind almost always in our favor," said Horan.

As Washington's BLA, Horan feels that a key to achieving a safer boating environment is the consistent application of mandatory boater education throughout the country coupled with sufficient marine law enforcement presence on the water.

To further improve boating safety in Washington, the State Parks & Recreation Commission is working to align its boating safety program with the National Recreation Boating Safety Strategic Plan as well as the Thirteenth Coast Guard District's RBS Strategic Plan.

Roberto Tapia
Virgin Islands

A boater practically his whole life, Roberto Tapia considers recreational boating his passion.

Tapia has been working in marine law enforcement for about 20 years. He joined the Department of Planning & Natural Resources in the late 1980s. He moved to the Virgin Islands Police Department in 1989. Then, in 2007, he returned to Planning & Natural Resources.

Hailing from St. Thomas, Tapia has been the boating law administrator for the U.S. Virgin Islands since Nov. 1, 2008. Before being named BLA, he served as assistant BLA for about a year.

Concerning boating safety, Tapia says, "The Virgin Islands stats are extremely good. There are very few accidents and fewer fatalities. Nevertheless," he added, "one fatality is too many."

To increase safety, Tapia's department pushes hard to increase life jacket wear. Officers enforce and promote the law mandating that anyone under age 16 must wear a life jacket.

Since the territory consists of four islands, most citizens boat daily – usually to travel back and forth to work. Therefore, they are very conscious of the need to be safe while boating.

In addition to working to increase life jacket wear, the Department of Planning & Natural Resources is involved in drug interdiction.

"Virgin Islands are the gateway to the U.S.," said Tapia. "There's us, then Cuba then the states. It's a never-ending battle. We're working closely with the Coast Guard to catch drug smugglers."



Captain Mike Mize
Oklahoma

Originally from Durant, Okla., Capt. Mike Mize spent much of his youth fishing, water skiing and hunting on Corps of Engineers public hunting land at nearby Lake Texoma.

"In the past, my family and I have owned boats which we used for the usual skiing and tubing," said Mize. "As many parents, as our two boys grew up and went off to college we used the boat less and less until we sold it several years back. But we have talked often of getting 'back on the water.'"

Capt. Mize became Oklahoma's BLA on June 1, 2009, only two months after taking over command of the Lake Patrol Division of the Oklahoma Highway Patrol. After 26 years of traffic assignments within the Highway Patrol, Capt. Mize said there has been a definite "learning curve" for the water division.

"I look forward to learning and gaining experience in all facets of the division, especially working with organizations such as NASBLA," added Capt. Mize.

"In my short time here, I have become painfully aware that public education and enforcement are critical areas of Oklahoma boating safety. As many agencies who are doing more with less I feel my mission is to equip and train our Oklahoma Highway

Patrol Troopers to the highest level we can achieve at the same time pass on as much training and education to the public as we can possible give,” said Capt. Mize.

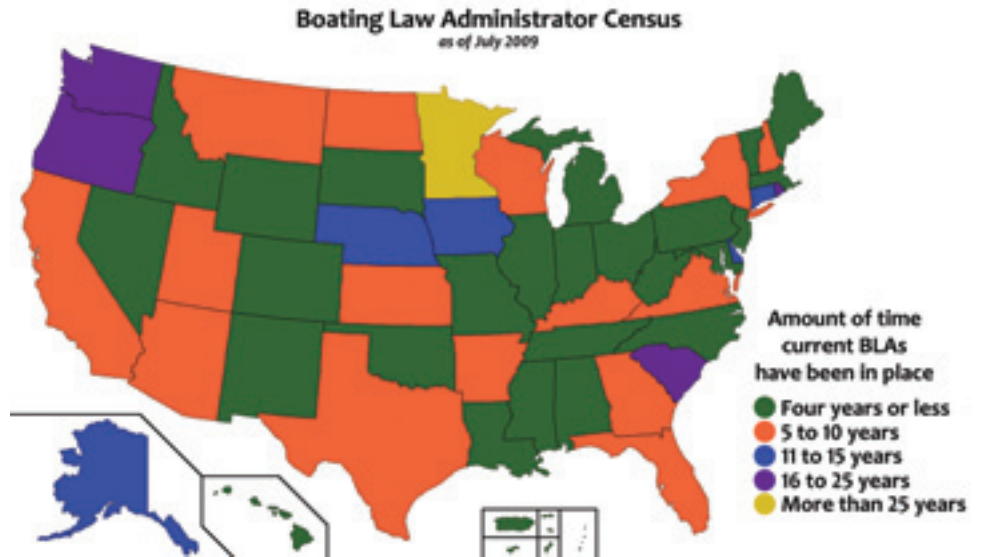


**Capt.
Saul Zapata**
Puerto Rico

Capt. Saul Zapata served on the Law Enforcement Corps of Puerto Rico’s Department of Natural and Environmental Resources for 30 years. His most recent position was as captain of the Law Enforcement Marine Unit in Cabo Rojo. On Jan. 7, 2009, he was named commissioner of Navigation. In this position, he also serves as the territory’s BLA.

A native of Cabo Rojo, located on the west coast of Puerto Rico, Capt. Zapata holds a bachelor’s degree in law, and in June, he achieved his juris doctorate. He is an active volunteer with Rotary International, the world’s first service club organization, with more than 1.2 million members in 33,000 clubs worldwide. Rotary club members work locally, regionally, and internationally to combat hunger, improve health and sanitation, provide education and job training, promote peace, and eradicate polio under the motto Service Above Self.

As the territory’s BLA he feels that more education is key to improving boating safety. Aside from expanding boating safety through education, one of his goals is to improve, in general, the registration process to make it more flexible and efficient for boaters. ■



from the HELM continued from page 2

reason not to wear one on the water. Risk of drowning...all but eliminated with this tool. Another tool is the engine cutoff switch device. While being tethered to the console may have some drawbacks, the advanced electronic tethers, like those marketed by Maritech Industries, are cost-effective ways to provide peace of mind in the event of an unexpected dunk in the water. Risk of getting struck by a circling patrol boat...no more.

We have safer patrol boats powered by reliable engines, better safety equipment, trustworthy tools on our belts, and the training required to put it all together into an insurance package designed to ensure that officers make it home safely at the end of each shift. But the key to making all this happen comes from deep within each officer. Nothing can replace individual planning and preparation. Staying both physically and mentally prepared for duty is imperative. Even if the latest and greatest safety gear is provided, training is conducted and policy is put in place mandating appropriate actions, individual officers must still make a conscious decision to practice safety in their job.

To the officers who read this publication – please stay vigilant in your preparation for duty each day. Don’t let “routine” take you off your guard – not even for a second. Practice techniques that allow you to be courteous and friendly without letting down your defenses. As for safety gear such as ballistic vests, inflatable life jackets and engine cutoff devices, use them habitually. Invest in your personal well-being, especially for the benefit of those who care about you.

I encourage our readers who serve in a wide variety of other roles within the boating safety community to better understand the work performed by marine law enforcement officers. They perform an important job in order to make sure that you and others who enjoy our waters and the great outdoors are safe. An occasional word of thanks goes a long way, and it’s easier to offer words of gratitude when one understands the great sacrifices and daily risk associated with the job.

Please keep the safety of our military men and women and our law enforcement officers in your thoughts and prayers each day. ■

OFFICERS INTRODUCED TO INFLATABLES

By Dave Dahms, Boating Program Manager/Boating Law Administrator, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation

Inspired by the officer safety messages of former NASBLA President John Feterman, the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation state boating program put a new twist on their annual marine law enforcement academy recently held in Boise.

To stress officer safety, each of the 21 students attending the training course received a complimentary Mustang inflatable life jacket, or personal flotation device (PFD). They could take the PFDs with them after completing academy to use during their marine patrols. There was, however, one catch. Not only were the students required to wear the PFDs while on the water in a patrol boat during the academy, but they were required to wear them during the classroom portions as well.

Many of these students had limited exposure to operating patrol boats and

marine law enforcement issues so this was an ideal time for a strong message on officer safety. To reinforce this concept, the academy instructors also wore PFDs at all times.

In Idaho, marine law enforcement is the responsibility of county sheriffs, rather than a state agency. Therefore, there is no opportunity to implement a statewide PFD wear policy for marine deputies.

"While we cannot and do not tell the counties how to run their marine law enforcement programs. We can educate individual officers and recommend that counties have a wear policy," said Randy Herman, boating law enforcement training coordinator and developer of this training technique.



nator and developer of this training technique.

Herman further stated that the idea of wearing a PFD throughout the training was well accepted by both students and instructors. In fact, students strongly supported the wearing of PFDs at all times during the academy as various comments received in the evaluations cited opportunities to educate, setting an example, and muscle memory development as reasons why they were supportive.

One of the students even relayed an interesting story. Apparently the student forgot he had the PFD on and drove home with it still on. He walked into the house and was greeted by his son who asked about the "funny-looking thing" that his daddy was wearing.

The wearing of PFDs and boating safety education reached beyond the marine deputies. The classroom portions of the academy were held in a hotel conference facility and while students were walking around on breaks, several were approached by hotel patrons inquiring what these strange-looking things around their neck were. This was a great opportunity to educate the public.

For more information on this program, contact Randy Herman at 208.799.5126 or rherman@idpr.idaho.gov. ■



During the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation's annual marine patrol academy, officers received inflatable life jackets to wear during the entire course, including the classroom portions of the training.

Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation photos

Idaho Develops River Navigation Training

By Kimberly Jenkins

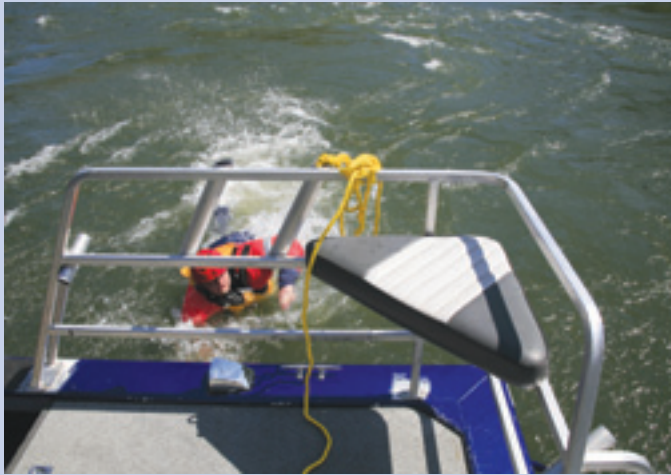
The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation recently developed a River Navigation Course for water patrol officers. The training was offered for the first time in May 2009 in Lewiston, Idaho.

Throughout the intense three-day course, the safety of the students and instructors was paramount. A safety plan was developed before the training dates and put into action throughout the course. This was especially important since most of the course involved on-the-water exercises.

The training began with half a day of classroom instruction. This portion identified river hazards, discussed land-based self-rescue techniques, and demonstrated various life jackets, throw bags and other safety equipment. Additionally, officers watched the Cold Water Boot Camp DVD and the Idaho Parks and Recreation Whitewater Boating Safety and Etiquette DVD.

"A number of officers expressed appreciation for the self-rescue demonstration and exercise," said Dave Dahms, boating program manager/boating law administrator with the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. "They had never thought about what they would do if they fell out of their boat into (cold) moving water. Several mentioned that they will equip their patrol boats with safety lines from now on."

Following the classroom instruction, the students moved to the water. The first afternoon was spent in slow-moving water to get students acquainted with boat operation and basic maneuvering in moving water. The next day the students continued the slow-moving water exercises then moved on to faster water, including class I and II rapids. Later the stu-



*While attending new river navigation course developed by the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, an officer practices self-rescue skills.
Elmore County Sheriff's Office photos/Sgt. Laytrede Schultz*

dents jumped into the river – wearing a drysuit and PFD – and attempted to self-rescue. The final day, the students drove boats in a new environment that featured more aggressive water.

Instructors for the River Navigation Course included veteran marine deputies. The instructors were brought in two days early to learn the water with local guides.

Class size was limited to provide the maximum amount of time for each student to learn the on-water skills and techniques. The class ratio for the inaugural training was three students per instructor. This may be limited to two students per instructor in the future to allow even

more time for students behind the wheel.

The course has received outstanding evaluations. Students were provided the necessary tools to take back to their home waters and continue to fine-tune their river navigation skills.

"We are still assessing the best time of the year for the training. Rivers vary in their character from week to week depending on snowpack, temperatures and precipitation," said Dahms. ■



Following classroom instruction, officers learn and practice river navigation techniques on the water.

Curriculum Offers Training for **LONG ISLAND OFFICERS**

By Police Officer Joel R. Fuoco, Nassau County Police Department

Long Island law enforcement agencies again conducted annual training for local agencies tasked with marine patrol duties in April 2009. Approved by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, the curriculum is a comprehensive marine law enforcement operations training program. It delivers 15 days of classroom and practical operations instruction and requires a minimum of 10 additional field training days to be conducted by the participating agencies.

Approximately 339 marine patrol officers have successfully completed this training since its inception in October 2000. Generally, the curriculum is offered twice annually during April and October at no cost to trainees. During



TOP:

Instructor Joel Fuoco (c.) provides direction to trainees who receive extensive instruction in marine towing and assistance operations.

LEFT:

During a recent training session, officers receive practical underway instruction, including a segment on high-speed tactical approach maneuvers.

Nassau County Police Dept. photos



Master Instructor Robert O'Brien conducts an E.M.S. victim stabilization exercise with a training team.

2008 and 2009, however, budgetary constraints limited curriculum scheduling to one annual session.

Participating agencies during the April 2009 session included the New York City Police Department, New York State Police, New York State Environmental Conservation Police, Nassau County Police, Suffolk County Police, D.H.S. – Plum Island Security Force, East Hampton Town Marine Patrol, Long Beach Police Department, Riverhead Town Police Department, Islip Town Harbor Police, and Oyster Bay Town Harbormaster.

The curriculum has been designed to foster agency interoperability in this post 9-11 world, and it continues to draw regular attendance from major agencies in New York State. Within the last three years, the curriculum has also seen attendance from both federal and Connecticut law enforcement agencies.

The classroom lesson plans deliver a high degree of informational detail intended to raise the field proficiency of participating trainees. Officials from U.S. Coast Guard First District continue to hail this curriculum as an exemplary training program. ■

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation conducts a number of annual training programs for marine law enforcement officers from state, county and local agencies. The Marine Law Enforcement School is a 40-hour course that focuses on teaching students the Navigation Law, water survival and proper vessel boarding procedures. The Marine Patrol Vessel Operators Course is primarily an on-the-water training program that usually runs concurrently with the basic program and focuses on teaching proper vessel handling techniques as well as seamanship, navigation, radar, and search and rescue.

State Parks also conducts an Impaired Boater Recognition Program for marine law enforcement officers, which is similar to the training received by highway patrols for recognizing intoxicated operators. Participants are taught the standard field sobriety tests – including the horizontal gaze nystagmus test – for determining if a subject is intoxicated, as well as tests that were specifically designed for use on boats.

Marine law enforcement officers charged with enforcing Section 44 of the Navigation Law – Noise Levels on Pleasure Vessels – must first be trained by State Parks. Since this law became effective in 1993, over 80 noise meters have been distributed by State Parks to law enforcement agencies, and more than 450 officers have been trained.

A Personal Watercraft Operators Course has been developed by State Parks for agencies that use these craft as part of their patrols. This three-day course stresses extensive on-the-water training in the handling and maneuvering characteristics of a PWC.

State Parks also sponsors office participation when possible at several national training programs, including the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators' Accident Investigation and the U.S. Coast Guard's National Boating Safety Course.

In all, State Parks has either taught, or sponsored the training of, more than 3,200 law enforcement students from across the state since the inception of these programs in 1985.

Setting the Standard of Excellence

By Kimberly Jenkins

Two conservation officers with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR) escaped serious injury on May 14, 2007, after their boat struck a submerged tree and overturned. Officials say the inflatable life jackets worn by the officers kept the accident from becoming a tragedy.

Conservation Officers Corey Ellis and William Earlywine were on the Licking River in northeastern Kentucky searching for illegal nets – among other fishing and boating violations – when their 14-foot johnboat struck a partially submerged tree and flipped in swift water.

While Officer Earlywine was not seriously injured, Officer Ellis was knocked unconscious after suffering a blow to the head. Earlywine spotted Ellis's bright yellow life preserver and rushed to catch him.

"My heart skipped a beat when I saw that Cory was floating face down in the water," said Earlywine. "I was very relieved when he began to regain consciousness, but he was bleeding profusely. I could see that he had a serious head laceration."

After pulling Ellis to shore, Earlywine transported the injured officer to the nearest hospital. Ellis was then transferred to the University of Kentucky Chandler Medical Center. He received treatment for multiple injuries including a concussion, a cracked vertebra in his neck and a large cut to his scalp before being released from the hospital. Ellis was off work for several weeks while he recovered.

"If the officers had not been wearing their inflatables, this most likely would've had a tragic ending," said Lt. Herb Booth, Eighth District supervisor for KDFWR.

"Both of these officers have trained extensively in boat operation and water survival," said Colonel Robert Milligan, KDFWR's director of law enforcement. "This demonstrates how quickly a dangerous accident on the water can happen even to those who are most prepared. Ellis's life preserver kept him on the surface, allowing Earlywine to retrieve him quickly. Another minute or two under the surface means everything in a situation like this.

"Conservation officers, as well as other department employees, are required to wear life preservers whenever they are on the water," he added.

Encouraging Officers to Wear Life Jackets

Law enforcement agencies equip their officers with a variety of gear. From uniforms, shoes and duty belts to handcuffs, body armor and firearms, this equipment is provided for the officers' safety.

"I think this event clearly shows that many of the jobs we do every day sometimes put us in harm's way – and not every danger we face comes from an armed or aggressive person," stated Lt. Booth in his accident report.

For the added hazards presented by patrolling on the water, the majority of the nation's marine patrol officers are also equipped with a life jacket – or even an assortment of life jackets to handle the various on-water conditions they routinely encounter in their jobs.

Currently, 45 states and territories require marine patrol officers (and usually other employees as well) to wear Coast Guard-approved life jackets when onboard a boat. In the remaining 11 states and territories that do not mandate life jacket wear, most agencies charged with water patrol do encourage their officers to wear life jackets.

One such agency is the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA). The state agency issues each of its officers an automatic over the collar inflatable life jacket. However, the decision to require officers to wear life jackets is left up to each district. Officers recently received some official encouragement to wear their department-issued life jackets. During the annual in-service training for all TWRA officers held this spring, the agency conducted a pool exercise to demonstrate the importance of wearing a life jacket.



Working on the water, marine patrol officers encounter a host of hazards. Agencies provide a variety of equipment, including life jackets, to help keep officers safe.

Arizona Game & Fish Department photo

The first phase of the demonstration involved having the officers, while wearing their life jackets, tread water while passing around a five-pound weight. Each officer was instructed to activate his or her over the collar inflatable life jacket when needed. After activating the life jackets, officers were encouraged to experiment with the manual inflation tube to release and add air. Following the exercise, the officers were instructed on how to properly re-arm their life jackets.

This provided an opportunity for the officers to experience the performance of their issued life jackets. It also worked to build their confidence in the safety of wearing a life jacket while on duty.

For the second phase of the demonstration, each officer donned 10 pounds of dive weights – to simulate the actual weight of the duty belt and gear carried – along with a set of body armor. Officers also had a plastic model of a handgun in a holster. Facing away from the pool, each officer was pushed in by his or her partner. After surfacing, the officer was told to hold the handgun on a subject and make verbal commands to the subject while treading water. Officers were asked to perform this for three minutes. The officers went through this exercise twice. Then, each officer put on a life jacket and was pushed back in the pool and requested to hold the handgun on a subject and perform verbal commands a third time.

The second phase demonstrated the impact that an officer's duty belt, combined with rushing adrenaline, has on the ability to tread water. It also highlighted the difference that a life jacket can make in such a situation.

"This portion of the demonstration hit home hard," said Darren Rider, the recently appointed boating law administrator for Tennessee.

Following the training, Rider polled the supervisor in each of the 12 districts, asking about their policy on life jacket wear. In all 12 areas, officers are encouraged to wear a life jacket. Additionally, the 12 supervisors agreed that, following



The majority of local, state and federal agencies tasked with water patrol officially mandate life jacket wear. It's important for officers to wear life jackets for their own safety. Plus, officers provide a good example for recreational boaters.
Cal Boating photo

the training demonstration, they were approaching 100 percent of their officers wearing life jackets while on duty.

A hands-on demonstration such as this effectively makes evident the benefits of wearing a life jacket while on duty on the water.

The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation recently conducted a different type of hands-on demonstration for officers during their annual marine law enforcement academy. Each student attending the training received an inflatable life jacket. The students could keep the life jackets – provided that they wear them throughout the training. This meant officers had to wear the life jackets during the on-water exercises as well as during the classroom instruction.

Editor's Note: For more information on Idaho's approach, read Officers Introduced to Inflatables on pp. 8-9.

Such proactive measures by the states make Major John Fetterman, immediate past president of the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA), glad. An outspoken proponent of life jacket wear for officers, Major Fetterman has mandated life jacket wear for his officers at the Maine Department of Marine Resources.

Coastal Maine is often a harsh environment for officers of the Maine Marine Patrol, but according to Major Fetterman it isn't just the cold water and rough seas that prompted him to mandate life jacket wear for his officers.

"None of us plans to fall overboard. When it happens, it is often sudden and violent," said Major Fetterman.

"As professionals we are obligated to set the standard of excellence and serve as a role model for the boating public. We give out free ice cream coupons to children who wear life jackets, but it's the middle-aged boater in a small open motorboat that is most at risk," he added.

"When my officers wear an inflatable and boaters ask about it and how it works, we have seen real evidence of increased wear rates. With so many options, there is no excuse to not 'WEAR IT,'" said Major Fetterman, alluding to the national Wear It! campaign spearheaded by the National Safe Boating Council.

"I believe that all maritime law enforcement agencies should adopt a mandatory wear policy for all personnel aboard their vessels," continued Major Fetterman. "Without such a policy, an agency does not have an adequate law enforcement element within its recreational boating safety program."

"With our mandatory wear policy in place, the bottom line is that I will never [have to] face the family of one of my officers who is lost at sea without a life jacket. People who drown are not wearing a life jacket," Major Fetterman said. "My officers all know my position and respect it."

Concurring with Major Fetterman's stance, in 2008 NASBLA officials charged the organization's Enforcement



Last fall, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators adopted a policy position encouraging all marine law enforcement officers to wear life jackets. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources photo/Tim Smalley

moment for us all," said NASBLA Executive Director John Johnson. "Our officers' safety and welfare are of paramount importance to each of us, and this policy will go a long way toward closing the gap and improving their survivability on the water."

"Not only do we care passionately about the lives of our marine patrol officers, but we also believe they are floating billboards for a boating public that looks to them as role models," Johnson added. "The positive example they set can make a real difference in our efforts to remind boaters that wearing a life jacket is not just for kids anymore. If we are to change the culture and mindset regarding life jackets, our officers are the first line of defense." ■

and Training Committee to develop a position paper to encourage enforcement and rescue agencies to wear life jackets while under way. On Sept. 10, 2008, the organization's membership adopted a policy position on Professional Safe Boating Practices. The policy position encourages all marine law enforcement officers to wear life jackets at all times when under way. In addition, the policy encourages officers to complete a NASBLA-approved boating safety course as well as conduct pre-departure checks and file a float plan.

"The membership's adoption of this significant policy position was a proud significant policy position was a proud

Agencies Provide Items to Reduce Risks to Officers

In addition to issuing standard equipment, including life jackets, a number of state agencies provide other safety measures for their officers.

For anyone who's in the sun on a regular basis, skin protection should be a top priority. According to the American Cancer Society, the majority of the more than 1 million cases of non-melanoma skin cancer diagnosed each year in the United States are considered to be sun-related. Melanoma, the most serious type of skin cancer, will account for about 68,720 cases of skin cancer in 2009 and most (about 8,650) of the 11,590 deaths due to skin cancer each year.

Since water patrol officers spend most of their time outdoors, several states and territories issue their officers sunscreen right along with their duty belts, life jackets and firearms.

For example, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission addresses sunscreen in its health and fitness policy. In addition to encouraging officers to use sunscreen and outlining steps to take to increase sun protection, the policy states that each Field Office shall purchase and make available to its members a sunscreen with a minimum SPF factor of 30.

The New Hampshire Marine Patrol also takes steps to safeguard officers against skin damage as well as hearing loss.

"We address sun exposure during the initial training and routinely throughout the summer months in the form of reminders," said David Barrett, director of Safety Services for the New Hampshire Department of Safety. In addition, all 105 of the division's patrol boats are equipped with either a cabin or a bimini top. The officers are encouraged, through their supervisors, to use those tops.



Working in the sun much of the time, it's vital that officers take precautions to reduce the risk of skin cancer. N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission photo/Geoff Cantrell

The New Hampshire agency has six boats in its fleet that have an unusually high decibel level at the helm when the top is up, according to Barrett, who serves as New Hampshire's boating law administrator. "Those vessels are marked with a warning at the helm and each of those vessels has ear protection on board."

Boat Course Offers Essential Firsthand Experience

By Rachel Burkholder, Outreach Manager, National Safe Boating Council

The National Safe Boating Council (NSBC) develops a variety of products and services through the request of its member organizations. Such a request is how the Close-Quarters Boat Control program evolved.

Over the past several years, the NSBC has received an increasing number of requests for boat handling instruction. The NSBC saw an opportunity to further their service to the membership through education and outreach by creating the Close-Quarters Boat Control Course. The NSBC, in conjunction with Boat Handler LLC, a member organization, began to research and develop the course. The blueprints and training concept had been designed by Captain James Battye of Boat Handler LLC, but the materials needed to be packaged so that the NSBC could offer the program on a much larger scale.

The Close-Quarters Boat Control Course is offered as a basic boat handling and close-quarter control course that focuses on maneuvers and techniques for marine patrol officers and agencies that need good skills in operating powerboats while performing their duties. The Close-Quarters Boat Control Course was designed as a training program that focuses on knowing what to do and when to do it. It is skills-based, requiring students to use the wind and current to assist them in putting the boat where they want it to be. Although practice is a critical part of being able to handle one's craft proficiently, proper practice is what this program is all about.



1: During the classroom portion of a new boating control course, Capt. Jim Battye of Boat Handler LLC discusses the basics of close-quarters boating.

2: Capt. Battye (left) and Ed Huntsman, manager of the Arizona Game and Fish Department's Conservation and Education Program, demonstrate close-quarters boat control techniques during a breakout session at the 2009 International Boating and Water Safety Summit.

3: Following the classroom portion of the course, students engage in hands-on practice of the maneuvers and techniques of close-quarters boat control. Keeping safety on their minds, the instructor and students are all wearing belt pack inflatable life jackets.

National Safe Boating Council photos

The NSBC's original program was designed as a training program for professionals, occupational marine patrol officers and safety personnel that operate a boat in the performance of their duties. It is structured to meet the needs of the boat-handling officers who, at times, place themselves and their craft in compromising positions when trying to control and communicate with recreational boaters.

This year, the course was enhanced through a grant from the U.S. Coast Guard to solidify the curriculum, putting it into an easy-to-follow format. This enables the student boat operator to understand how and why the various skills are performed in order to control the craft. This program meets the needs of the instructor and students alike.

To get the most out of this educational training program, it is designed as a one-day basic program and a two-day instructor program for those who qualify. Upon successful completion of the course, candidates will receive a boat handling proficiency certificate from the National Safe Boating Council. To ensure the most successful learning ratio, the class size is limited to no more than four student instructors per instructor trainer. This allows for greater one-on-one time to work on essential skills and focus on techniques in greater depth.

For more information about the Close-Quarters Boat Control Course, contact the National Safe Boating Council at 703.361.4294 or visit the NSBC website at <http://www.safeboatingcouncil.org>. ■

Colorado Toughens BUI Law

Changes to Colorado's law on boating under the influence went into effect last summer, decreasing the legal limit for blood alcohol content (BAC) and expanding the reach of the law to operators of any waterborne vessel.



Previously, Colorado's BUI law applied only to operators of motorboats or sailboats whose BAC was .10 or above. Senate Bill (SB) 08-159 reduced the BAC at which persons operating or in control of a waterborne vessel are considered under the influence to .08, making it consistent with the legal limit for motor vehicle operators on Colorado roadways.

The new BUI law applies to any water vessel powered by motor, paddle or oar, including jet skis, kayaks, canoes, sailboats and rafts.

Colorado State Parks launched an education campaign to alert boaters to the lower BAC limit, as well as to remind them to boat safely.

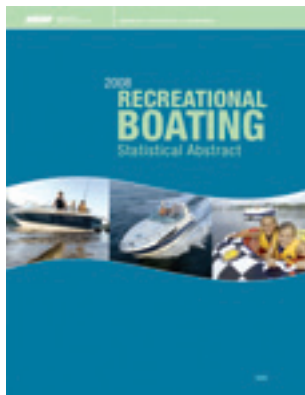
Economic Downturn Will Not Keep Boaters from Boating

Boat Owners Association of The United States (BoatU.S.) reported in a membership survey released on May 15, 2009, that 96 percent of respondents said the economic downturn would not lead them to "stop using their boat this summer." And while some boaters are seeing their boating activities curtailed, most remain positive about their boating plans for this summer.

"Last summer, high fuel prices kept some boaters off the water," said BoatU.S. President Nancy Michelman. "But this year, despite the economy, our members are largely optimistic and are determined to make good use of their boats."

The survey also found:

- 52% reported they are not changing the way they use their boat, compared to last summer.
- If this summer's gas prices are lower than last summer's, 39% said they expect to go boating more often.
- Only 1% of respondents say they would not boat this year.
- Some changes in the way respondents plan to use their boat this summer include: reducing cruising distances or selecting boating destinations closer to home, reducing the number of boating trips/days, spending more time anchored out, spending more time at their home marina, running the motor less, and sharing costs.
- The majority of respondents reported having total yearly estimated boating expenses of \$3,000-\$5,999, or about the price of a week's vacation with airfare at Disney World for a family of four. 68% reported having boating expenses less than \$5,999 annually.
- 26% would sacrifice dining out and 25% would give up, reduce or postpone taking a vacation to afford boating this summer.
- Over two-thirds of respondents said spending time boating brings the family together.
- 72%* said the boating lifestyle helps maintain or improve their health (*The FDA has not evaluated this claim).
- The Fourth of July is by far the most favorite summer boating holiday (49%).



Boating Industry Had \$33.6-billion Impact on U.S. Economy

from Boating Industry

The National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) reported in its 2008 Recreational Boating Statistical Abstract, released in late June, that there are more than 17 million recreational boats on the water, of which nearly 95 percent are less than 26 feet in length.

Other highlights from the association's data include:

- The U.S. recreational boating industry contributed \$33.6 billion to the U.S. economy in 2008.
- May, June and July were the most active months for boat sales in 2008.
- Adult participation in boating increased six percent to an estimated 70.1 million.
- There were 704,820 new boats sold in 2008 (including powerboats, sailboats, canoes, kayaks and personal watercraft).
- There were 203,000 new powerboats sold in 2008 for a dollar value of \$7.6 billion.

The abstract highlights boating sales and participation data compiled on behalf of the recreational boating industry throughout calendar year 2008. The data provide an in-depth look at the state of the recreational boating industry.

"The 2008 Recreational Boating Statistical Abstract is one of our industry's most comprehensive summaries of statistics and provides an in-depth look at boating trends, how the industry fared in 2008 as well as its impact on the national economy," said James Petru, NMMA director of industry statistics and research. "We expanded this year's Abstract to include the Boating Access Surveillance and Indexing System, which measures changes in boating access and will be crucial data for us to continue analyzing."

The 2008 Recreational Boating Statistical Abstract is being offered on DVD, in lieu of printed versions. NMMA members in good standing can purchase the DVD for \$225. Non-NMMA members can purchase the DVD for \$950.

Copies of the 2008 Abstract may be ordered by contacting NMMA fulfillment coordinator Chris Keil at 312.946.6209, orderdesk@nmma.org. To determine if your company's membership is in good standing, contact Bryan Welsh at 312.946.6276, bwelsh@nmma.org.

Connecticut Toughens Penalty for Drunken Boating

On June 29, 2009, Governor M. Jodi Rell signed a bill into law that imposes harsher penalties – including longer prison sentences – for boaters in Connecticut convicted of killing someone while operating a vessel while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

The law raises the offense of operating a powerboat while intoxicated and causing a death to manslaughter in the second degree with a vessel – a Class C felony. The crime is punishable by a fine of up to \$10,000 and a prison term of up to 10 years. Under the previous law, an intoxicated boater who caused a death would be charged with reckless operation of a vessel in the first degree and faced fines of between \$2,500 and \$5,000 and up to two years in jail.

NASBLA submitted committee testimony supporting the legislation and was invited to attend the signing ceremony with Gov. Rell.

"Drunken boating is illegal, irresponsible and can change lives forever," Governor Rell said. "These tougher penalties will give law enforcement another tool to make our waterways safe and prevent future tragedies."

The new law took effect July 1, 2009.



More than 130 attendees from 29 states and Canada attended the 2009 American Boating Congress in Washington, D.C. this spring. NMMA photo

American Boating Congress Brings Boating Industry Voices to D.C.

More than 130 attendees representing boat manufacturers, engine manufacturers, trailer manufacturers, marina owners and operators, local marine trade associations and related groups attended the 2009 American Boating Congress (ABC), the National Marine Manufacturers Association's annual legislative conference.

During the conference, held May 4-6, 2009, in Washington, D.C., attendees were able to network with fellow boating industry leaders, listen to remarks from

special guests and several Members of Congress, and honor a number of peers through the Marshall Funk Awards Presentation. Attendees also had the opportunity to bring their stories to life for lawmakers through more than 100 visits with Members of Congress and their staffs, where they discussed a number of issues, including the economy, credit crisis, Small Business Administration lending assistance, ethanol, NOL carryback, Business Activity Tax Simplification Act (BASTA), climate change, Wallop-Breaux reauthorization and the Employee Free Choice Act

The next ABC is scheduled for May 5-6, 2010, in Washington, D.C. Information about ABC is available at <http://www.nmma.org/abc>.



Tri-State Boating Safety Fair Promotes "Go Boating Safely!"

"Go Boating Safely!" was this year's theme for Colorado River's Annual Tri-State Boating Safety Fair. The event took place May 16 at Lake Havasu City's London Bridge Beach Park.

The sixth annual family affair kicked off National Safe Boating Week, May 16-22, 2009, by a group of state, local and federal boating agencies hoping to encourage boaters to hit the water this summer, but safely and responsibly.

Organizers talked about challenges that boaters face while boating on the Colorado River and about general boating safety. Families could bring in one outgrown or unsafe life jacket to trade in for a brand-new one (while supplies lasted). The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary also conducted free vessel safety checks. Families at the event and along the river received a "boating safety bag" filled with promotional items and information about boating laws in strategic areas of the Colorado River.

"The river has several massive lakes and runs through three states, so we will be there to clarify both the fun boating opportunities and safety challenges we see with a waterway this large and complex. We will also be manning 27 different boat launch ramps to make sure we reach the most boaters," said Raynor Tsuneyoshi, California's boating law administrator, in a press release before the event.

"This year, the lakes are full to the brim and we want people to go out on the water and enjoy the experience, but we also want them to be safe and make good decisions," added Kevin Bergersen, Arizona's boating law administrator. "Most of us know that life jackets and designating a sober captain saves lives, but expecting the unexpected and using good judgment are key factors in returning home safely. We

want this event to provoke that kind of awareness and thinking.”

Boating officials also informed boaters about “clean, drain and dry,” an effective procedure for combating and preventing the rapidly spreading nuisance of quagga mussels. This invasive species continues to pose a serious threat to fun, safe and environmentally friendly boating.

Boaters Help Fund Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention in Idaho

Legislation passed in April will assist in funding programs to prevent the introduction of invasive aquatic species in Idaho. The new law requires boaters – both motorized vessels and non – to contribute to the Idaho Invasive Species Fund (IISF).

“Aquatic invasive species like the quagga mussel are attaching themselves to [all types of] boats and hitchhiking from one body of water to the next, infecting waterways across the nation,” said Amy Ferriter, invasive species coordinator for the Idaho State Department of Agriculture. “We’re finding them on the props of motorized boats and along ropes and rigging on non-motorized boats, on trailers, too.”

Under the new law, any boat that is registered in Idaho or another state, or any non-motorized vessel, such as canoes and kayaks, must display IISF stickers in order to be launched and operated in Idaho. Inflatable non-motorized vessels less than 10 feet in length are exempt.

IISF sticker prices are \$10 for motorized boats registered in Idaho, \$20 for other motorized vessels, and \$5 per non-motorized vessel. Discounts for non-motorized commercial fleets are available. The sticker and fee are in addition to any annual boat registration fees already being paid.



The fees generated from the sale of IISF stickers will fund vessel inspections, washing stations, and informational materials that will assist Idaho with preventing introduction of aquatic invasive species such as quagga mussels.

Neighboring states like Wyoming and Montana have already found infestations and are now spending millions trying to combat the problem.

“Our best chance at prevention is to educate boaters on the threat invasive species pose to the state and also provide measures, like inspections and wash stations,” said Ferriter. “The state’s goal with the IISF program is to do just that.”

Dealers Learn Hands-On Boating Safety Education

Marine University kicked off National Safe Boating Week by training dealers to offer the Boater101 Hands-On Course. The development of the Hands-On Course and dealer training is funded through a U.S. Coast Guard grant. With development complete, the expanded Hands-On program is being rolled out in a pilot program at boat dealerships nationwide.

Dealers participating in the training sessions during National Safe Boating Week included MarineMax in Pompano Beach, Fla., Intermarine in Dania Beach, Fla., and Mt. Dora Boating Center in Mount Dora, Fla. Four additional dealers signed up for training in June, including Duchow’s Boat Center in Pewaukee, Wis., Gordy’s Lakefront Marina in Fox Lake, Ill., Hoffmaster’s Marina in Woodbridge, Va., and Trenton Marine Center in Trenton, N.J.



Russ Cohen, an instructor for Marine University, discusses boating safety with MarineMax dealers (l-r) Chris Fink, Tyler Hill, Kyle Roney and Brent Amberg. Marine University photo

“National Safe Boating Week was an ideal time to start rolling out Marine University’s hands-on program,” said Susan Engle, president of Marine University. “The U.S. Coast Guard has offered dealers an ideal opportunity to expand their suite of services to include standardized Hands-On education at minimal cost to the dealership. This opportunity is a win-win for all involved.”

Following the training session, dealers were trained to offer both the Boater101 classroom and hands-on courses.

For more information, visit <http://www.boater101.com> or <http://www.marineuniversity.org>.

RBFF Awards Five Education Grants Nationwide

The Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF) awarded five new education grants to youth-focused boating, fishing and conservation organizations across the country. Selected from a pool of 70 applicants, the grants were awarded to build on RBFF’s boating and fishing education outreach efforts.

“We were impressed with the high caliber of applicants we received this year,” said RBFF Education Task Force Chairman Charles Holmes. “The Education Task Force is excited about getting kids and their families out boating and fishing with these wonderful organizations.”

“We believe that the best way to get kids and their families hooked on boating and fishing is to get them out on the water doing just that,” said RBFF President and CEO Frank Peterson. “We’re thrilled about all the great hands-on activities that our 2009 grant recipients are offering and look forward to working with them to put more than



140,000 kids through our education programs this year.”

The 2009 National Youth Fishing & Boating Initiative grant recipients include:

- FishHer – Fishing Gear for Women – will expand its Go Fish Girls! Girl Scout Fishing Participation Patch Program.
- International Game Fish Association (IGFA) – will establish its Outreach Education Program in Florida with a goal of expanding to other states in the upcoming years.
- Let’s Go Fishing (LGF) – will introduce youth ages 5-18 to fishing through education programs and guided fishing tours with seniors as part of its Intergenerational Fishing program.
- National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA) – will expand its Take Me Fishing™ Initiative that builds and sustains fishing and boating programs with a focus on conservation.
- Trout Unlimited (TU) – will develop a pilot program that integrates a fishing curriculum, training workshops, fishing gear and field trips into its Trout in the Classroom program in the tri-state region of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.

For more information about RBFF’s education grant opportunities, visit <http://www.RBFF.org>.

28 States Receive Grants under Clean Vessel Act

This year \$14.6 million will be awarded to 28 states under the Clean Vessel Act grant program. The grants will be used to fund the construction and installation of sewage pumpout facilities and floating restrooms, to purchase pumpout boats and provide educational programs for recreational boaters.

“Clean Vessel Act funds support construction of facilities in communities that depend on recreational boating for their economy, and depend on clean water for their health,” said Salazar. “These grants

provide immediate funding for construction of infrastructure that will provide lasting value for recreational boaters, and everyone who relies on clean waters.”

Funding for the CVA program comes from the Sport Fishing and Boating Trust Fund, formerly known as the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund, which is supported by excise taxes levied on certain fishing and boating equipment and boat fuels.

Since the program’s inception in the early 1990s, the program – administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – has awarded more than \$163 million to states to install thousands of sewage pumpout stations. In addition, many states now rely upon mobile sewage pumpout boats to make the sewage collection process more efficient and convenient. A number of states also have begun installing floating restrooms and pumpout stations in high use areas of lakes and coastal waters.

“These Clean Vessel Act grants will help the states maintain clean and healthy waters for people and wildlife,” said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Acting Director Rowan Gould. “Sewage pumpouts may not be the most glamorous conservation tool, but their presence can have an immediate and clear impact on the well-being of aquatic resources and recreational waterways that provide drinking water to millions of Americans.”

A listing of the grant awards can be found at <http://www.fws.gov/news>.

California Sea Scouts Earn BoatU.S. Award

BoatU.S. awarded its 2009 Sea Scout Flagship Award to the top performing Sea Scout unit in the nation, Ship 90, *Renegade*, of Newport Beach, Calif. The award recognized the unit for excellence in program quality, youth achievement and adult commitment during 2008.

“We are particularly proud of this year’s winner since Ship 90 is the third California Sea Scout unit to earn this recognition,” said BoatU.S. West Coast Representative Bryan Dove, who presented the award to Matthew Zimmermann, the ship’s boatswain or youth leader. Skipper Tim Martin, the adult leader and an alumnus of Sea Scout Ship 711, *Del Mar*, which won the Flagship Award in 2006, joined Zimmermann in accepting the trophy.

Like all Sea Scout units, Ship 90 uses boats, seamanship and nautical skills to develop character and leadership qualities in young people, both male and female. With over 20 youth active in the program, Ship 90 has enough crew to campaign a Beckman 60 sloop, *Dare*, in the Southern California sailboat racing circuit as well as the smaller boats it has available in its homeport at Boy Scouts of America’s Newport Sea Base in Orange County, CA.

To earn the Flagship recognition, the Ship and its crew of Sea Scouts compiled an impressive record of accomplishments last year, logging 32 days of on-water activities, including sailing in the famous Newport-Ensenada International Yacht Race that BoatU.S. helps to sponsor. The team placed 6th in class for 2008 but in this year’s race won the class and finished fourth overall. ■



Your Safety Is Our Concern



Jeff Hoedt
Chief, Boating Safety Division
Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety
U.S. Coast Guard

To those of you who are marine patrol officers, you may recall times when personal safety was not the first concern on your or your agency's mind. It might not have even been the second or third concern, but perhaps it should have been.

Over the years, we've learned a lot about how to be better prepared as officers. This includes enhancing our ability to serve and protect the boating community as well as enhancing our ability to better protect ourselves. Equipment is now better regarding boats, vehicles, communications, information, life jackets, enforcement gear, rescue gear, and more. Training has also evolved tremendously. Equally important is that our policies have gotten significantly more effective.

For you more seasoned officers, you may be able to relate to this experience. I recall the time when many marine patrol officers did not carry a weapon. "They carried smiles, not guns."

This became quite a concern for me one time as a rookie officer when my partner (you know who you are) and I were patrolling in the evening. We overheard a call on the radio that a person with a rifle was shooting at our radio dispatcher in the tower at the marina where we docked our patrol boat. We instantly hit the gas and arrived at the marina within minutes, intent upon restraining the shooter and rescuing the dispatcher.

Luckily for us and the dispatcher, by the time we arrived the shooter had fled the scene. I say "luckily for us" because I wasn't sure what we

would do once we located the shooter. Given that we didn't carry weapons at that time, what were we going to do, throw our flashlights at him? Get close enough to him to spray him with mace? Ask him to put the rifle down and expect him to give himself up to us? (Oh, and bulletproof vests were not even thought of at that time.) Still, that didn't stop us from speeding to the scene. Our motives were good; we just weren't as prepared as marine patrol officers are now.

Thank goodness for the evolution that has taken place. Officers are better equipped – from improved hulls and shock-absorbing seats in the patrol boats, to improved sun protection and inflatable life jackets, from advanced information/communication systems, improved law enforcement and rescue equipment, to enhanced training, policies to enhance officer safety, and so much more. You are truly a better-prepared force out there on the water now than we have ever witnessed, and we will continue improving all of these initiatives.

So, as you prepare for patrol each day, be sure to think of your own safety in addition to thinking about how you will enhance safety and enjoyment for the boating public. Make officer safety one of the first concerns in your routine and in your agency's procedures and policies. We need you to be successful on the water and to also come home safe.

To learn more about the Coast Guard's concerns and offerings regarding officer safety, read Mike Baron's article below. You'll appreciate what he has to share.

Tips for Officer Safety

On the popular television series *Hill Street Blues*, Sergeant Phil Esterhaus, portrayed by actor Michael Conrad, used to end each roll call with the phrase "Hey...Let's be careful out there!" Realizing that television shows don't always accurately reflect how it is in the real world, this simple piece of dialogue from a television drama speaks volumes about officer safety.

According to data released by the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund (NLEOMF) and Concerns of Police Survivors (C.O.P.S.), 2008 represented one of the safest years in regard to the number of law enforcement officers who were killed in the line of duty. This is something that those of us who work in, with, or on the periphery of law enforcement can truly appreciate.

Some of you have dealt with losing a partner, a friend or a member of your agency. For some of us, we hear about these tragic events and we can only pause and offer our condolences and perhaps learn a lesson from the tragedy. Historically, the incidents that have led to the highest number of deaths among law enforcement officers are shootings and vehicle accidents.

By Michael Baron
Boating Safety Division
Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety
U.S. Coast Guard

Marine patrol officers not only face the same degree of risk as the aforementioned typical police officer, but they also patrol in heavy vessel traffic areas and sometimes dangerous marine conditions that present a higher degree of risk.

Officer safety starts with you! Many variables can contribute to the risk marine patrol officers face each day. In some instances, simple pro-activity on an individual officer's part can lessen the degree of risk associated with working in the marine environment.

Your commitment to safety should start well in advance of stepping on board your patrol craft. Are you well rested, did you get enough sleep? Are you well hydrated? Are you mentally and physically ready to face your day? Have you conducted a pre-launch inspection of your boat? Is it fueled up? Do you have the necessary gear for carrying out your mission? Have you checked the weather? Whether this is a formal process that is dictated by your agency or something that you as an individual officer practice, you are conducting risk assessment.

At the U.S. Coast Guard Maritime Law Enforcement Academy (MLEA), instructors and boarding officer students are required to conduct and document an Operational Risk Management (ORM) assessment on every evolution. If the risk is scored as "high," the students are then facilitated through the process to mitigate the risk and bring it down to an acceptable level.

The Coast Guard uses a GAR (Green, Amber and Red) Model when determining degree of risk. The model directs the team to look at six specific areas: Supervision, Planning, Selection, Fitness, Environment and Complexity. The team will score each factor numerically from 0-10. After it is totaled, the score is compared to a scale: Green 0-23 risk is rated at low, Amber 24-44 adopt procedures to minimize risk, and Red 45-60 implement measures to reduce risk. The GAR model is good to assess an operation or mission in general terms. A Coast Guard boarding officer will conduct a GAR assessment prior to every law enforcement boarding. This assessment will assist in the decision



Officer safety begins with the officer. Taking proactive steps for safety helps reduce the risk associated with working in the marine environment. Iowa Department of Natural Resources photo

for the number of boarding personnel to take, conducting the boarding pierside, or calling for backup. A secondary assessment may be needed if the risk is unduly high in a specific factor.

The maritime environment is chock-full of factors that increase the risk marine patrol officers face. If you think about it, some are short-term risk factors. A short-term example is spending hours in the hot sun, which – if you don't keep yourself well hydrated – can cause fatigue and inattention as well as affect your hearing. Ensure that you drink plenty of water and find time to spend in a shaded spot. Spending time in the sun also presents a long-term risk that officers should take steps to reduce – that's the risk of skin cancer and melanomas. Regularly using sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or more and wearing protective clothing from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. when the sun's rays are most intense will offer a layer of protection.

So, what other actions can an officer take to reduce risk? What about life jackets? Whether your agency has a mandated wear policy or not, wear a life jacket, and encourage your fellow officers to do the same. It will save your life. Not wearing a life jacket while under way on patrol also sends a mixed message to the boating public. "Why should I wear a life jacket if the state agency regulating boating laws in my area doesn't bother to wear them?" Body armor is another piece of personal protective equipment that won't work if you don't wear it.

When speaking with law enforcement officers who have attended the Marine Patrol Officers Course (MPOC), they speak of the job satisfaction they have from working outdoors, particularly when operating a boat and dealing with the boating public. They don't do it for the financial gain. Some have mentioned leaving higher paying jobs to have a career in maritime law enforcement, and many do so fully aware of the risks they face. It is partly because of attitudes such as these that the states and territories have some of the finest, dedicated professionals working our nation's waterways.

Remembering to take care of oneself and practicing good risk assessment will help keep you safe and return home at the end of your watch. "Hey ... Let's be careful out there." ■

Personal Watercraft Priceless to Officers on the Water



Maureen Healey
Executive Director
Personal Watercraft Industry
Association

Over the course of the last 20 years, personal watercraft (PWC) have become an invaluable resource for law enforcement agencies. In fact, since 1989, the four manufacturer members of the Personal Watercraft Industry Association – Kawasaki, Honda, BRP and Yamaha – have loaned more than 15,000 vessels – an estimated retail value of \$138 million if calculated at today's costs – to thousands of law enforcement, rescue and boating education agencies.

From the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and local sheriff's departments to dolphin and manatee rescue organizations, agencies all over the country have learned that PWC are reliable, nimble and very good at performing under less-than-desirable conditions.

Many law enforcement agencies and lifeguards use PWC for patrolling waterways, mostly because PWC are stable enough to allow officers to stand upright while observing the interior of a boat they are approaching and ideal for quick response in oceans or in rough water conditions. Also, PWC are safe for both the rescuer and the victim – the compact size and lack of exposed propeller allow rescuers to approach a victim safely and directly. Response and rescues have been significantly enhanced by rescue sleds that can be attached and towed to the vessel.

PWC have proved invaluable in all types of rescue situations. For instance, after Hurricane Katrina, PWC helped sheriff's deputies rescue at least 40 people. More recently, in Chambers Bay, Wash., 150 water rescuers from 17 local, state and federal agencies assembled to practice rescue missions and emergency response on the water.

Innovation has helped make PWC more useful in rescue and law enforcement operations. Over the last decade, manufacturers have completely overhauled the design of their fleets.

Today's PWC are among the most environmentally friendly motorized boats on the water. Technological advancements since 1998 have resulted in emissions reductions upwards of 90 percent and new hull designs and muffling technologies have reduced the sound to a purr. In fact, emissions compliance schedules set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency were

met years ahead of schedule. PWC sold today comply with applicable federal and state emissions and sound requirements including those set by the California Air Resource Board, which are the most stringent in the nation.

New Designs

New v-shaped hull designs offer a combination of high stability and responsive handling in both calm and rough-water conditions.

While some thought four-stroke engines would be too heavy for a PWC, these models have become the rock-solid foundation of the entire industry. Four-stroke models now account for four out of five PWC sold today.

Emergency Features

Manufacturers have made great strides to design PWC that are safer than ever and capable of handling all different types of situations. Engine cutoff lanyards that connect to the operator's wrist or life vest are already required in most states. And while PWC require throttle to steer, off-power assisted steering technology aids maneuverability in off-power situations. This added feature makes idling near shore, at the end of a dock, or next to another vessel a breeze.

User Friendly

Once you've operated a PWC with reverse, it's difficult to imagine riding one without it. As with any boat, the PWC reverse function makes approaching a jet dock or navigating around a busy boat launch virtually worry-free. The fold-down re-boarding step found on many models provides riders an easier and more comfortable re-boarding process in deep water. Other features such as rearview mirrors, comfortable cruiser seats, tilt-wheel adjustments, tow hooks, and ample storage space have become much appreciated by agencies that use PWC to enhance their work.

PWC manufacturers have been working for years to make PWC as easy to use as possible, primarily for the consumer market. But since launching the loaner program for first responders and law enforcement agencies years ago, these vessels have become a staple in the fleets of many departments. ■

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Calling Recreational Boaters to Assist with Security



Robin Freeman
National Directorate Commodore
for Recreational Boating Safety
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

The last time I traveled by air, a couple months ago, I was standing in the very long security line at a major airport when something happened that completely freaked me out.

I was just handing my boarding pass and identification to the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) agent when a guy who was outside of the security line sprung out from behind a huge pylon. He was wearing a black hooded sweatshirt (with the hood up) and dark sunglasses. He was carrying a huge telephoto camera and immediately started snapping photos.

I squeaked out something to the TSA agent like, "Er, there's a guy in a black hoodie taking photos right behind you." She shrugged and told me it was just a paparazzo taking pictures of a celebrity's girlfriend.

I thought about that the rest of my travel that day. I reflected on how safety and security are no longer things we just take at face value. As a people, we've become much more aware of potential threats to our safety and security, and our view of what's "normal" has most certainly changed.

The safety and security of our waterways is just as important. Small Vessel Security is a topic on the Department of Homeland Security's mind.

“We’ve become much more aware of potential threats to our safety and security, and our view of what’s “normal” has most certainly changed.”

In November 2006, Secretary Michael Chertoff directed that a dialogue be opened with the small vessel community. In response, a series of small-vessel security summits were held, attended by small vessel stakeholders representing government, private and public sectors. The 57-page Small Vessel Security Strategy (SVSS) developed after these summits.

The SVSS has four overreach goals. However, the one that really caught my eye was this:

A. Develop and leverage a strong partnership with the small vessel community and public and private sectors in order to enhance maritime domain awareness.

A key component of the SVSS, this goal in particular, is the approximately 80 million recreational boaters and thousands of professional mariners out on the water each year. Collectively, this small vessel community has a very large set of eyes and ears!

The Coast Guard Auxiliary, along with other partners, is committed to reaching as many of those millions of boaters as possible with the America's Waterway Watch (AWW) message and materials. The AWW message remains simple: the local boaters know what is and isn't normal activity in their marinas, harbors, lakes, and are the best resource for reporting unusual or suspicious activity. By getting the AWW materials into the hands of these boaters, along with some one-on-one educational training about the program, we're developing an ever-growing network of eyes and ears.

Through our public education classes, vessel safety checks, visits to marine dealers and other RBS partners, we're reaching boaters...but not nearly enough! We need to seek ways to better partner, more innovative ways to reach out to the small vessel community with the vital America's Waterway Watch message.

How can your agency or organization and the Auxiliary team up to better get a decal and 877-24WATCH on every boat in your area? It's a tremendous outreach opportunity that will continue to expand our safety and security on our nation's waterways.

To see the Small Vessel Security Strategy, visit this link: <http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/small-vessel-security-strategy.pdf>.

For more information about America's Waterway Watch, see the Coast Guard's site at <http://www.americaswaterwaywatch.org>.

To locate an Auxiliary flotilla in your area, use the Flotilla Finder, visit <http://www.cgaux.org/units.html>. ■

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AUGUST 2009

- 26-30 U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary
National Conference (NACON)
Oak Brook, Illinois
www.cgauxa.org/nacon

SEPTEMBER 2009

- 8-13 United States Power Squadrons
Governing Board Meeting
Kansas City, Missouri
www.usps.org
- 13-16 Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies
Annual Meeting
Austin, Texas
www.fishwildlife.org
cindy@delaneymeetingevent.com
802.865.5202
- 19-22 Canadian Safe Boating Council
Annual Symposium
Whistler, British Columbia
www.csbc.ca
- 26-30 NASBLA
Annual Conference
Corpus Christi, Texas
www.nasbla.org
ron@nasbla.org
859.225.9487
- 28-Oct. 1 States Organization for Boating Access
Annual Conference
www.soba.us.org
312.946.6283

OCTOBER 2009

- 9-10 National Boating Federation
Fall Executive Committee Meeting
Las Vegas, Nevada
www.n-b-f.org
DavidKutz@aol.com
- 12-14 International Boatbuilders' Exhibition
& Conference
Miami, Florida
www.ibexshow.com
- 21-25 US Sailing
Annual Meeting
League City, Texas
www.ussailing.org
KatieOuellette@ussailing.org
401.683.0800

- 23-25 American Canoe Association
National Paddlesports Conference
Fredericksburg, Virginia
www.americancanoe.org

- 27-29 NASBLA
Executive Board Meeting
Lexington, Kentucky
ron@nasbla.org
859.225.9487

NOVEMBER 2009

- 10-12 Paddlesports Industry Association
Annual Convention
Jamestown, Kentucky
www.paddlesportsindustry.org
502.395.1513

JANUARY 2010

- 10-13 International Association of
Marine Investigators
Galveston, Texas
www.iammarine.org/iam
iammarine@aol.com
541.776.8601

FEBRUARY 2010

- 1-6 United States Power Squadrons
Annual Meeting
Orlando, Florida
www.usps.org
888.367.8777

- 3-7 US Sailing
National Sailing Programs
Symposium
Portsmouth, Rhode Island
www.ussailing.org
KarenDavidson@ussailing.org
401.683.0800

MARCH 2010

- 18-20 US Sailing
Spring Meeting
Providence, Rhode Island
www.ussailing.org
KatieOuellette@ussailing.org
401.683.0800

- 27-31 National Safe Boating Council &
National Water Safety Congress
International Boating &
Water Safety Summit
Daytona Beach, Florida
www.safeboatingcouncil.org
www.watersafetycongress.org

APRIL 2010

- 13-14 NASBLA
Spring BLA Workshop
Arlington, Virginia
ron@nasbla.org
859.225.9487

AUGUST 2010

- 30-Sept. 4 United States Power Squadrons
Governing Board Meeting
Bellevue, Washington
888.367.8777
www.usps.org

SEPTEMBER 2010

- 11-15 NASBLA
Annual Conference
Honolulu, Hawai'i
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