

# SCA

small craft advisory

- **Oregon Launches Navigation Safety Campaign**
- **NASBLA Works to Improve Adherence to the Nav Rules**
- **Boating Officers Often Risk Injury or Death**



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## ABOUT THE COVER

With an increasing number of boats on the nation's waterways, safety needs to be boat operators' top priority. The Navigation Rules were established in 1972 to help boaters to avoid collisions. All boaters are obliged to follow these rules. *Staff photo*



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

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## Navigating the Way for Safe Boating



John Fetterman  
NASBLA President

This issue of *Small Craft Advisory* marks the midpoint in our editorial year and provides a good opportunity to take stock of our Association's progress thus far as we also begin ramping up for the NASBLA annual conference season later this summer. Throughout this year's series of *From the Helm* columns, it has been our goal to highlight the power of partnerships as a major building block of our strategic agenda. Last issue's focus on the National Safe Boating Council was a good example.

SCA's focus on Navigation Rules in this issue provides a great analogy for our continuing dialogue on NASBLA's blueprint for success – our strategic plan. It re-emphasizes how the collaboration of the RBS community within NASBLA committees leverages a greater outcome than the sum of the parts could achieve working individually. Through these very practical partnerships at the committee level we believe we gain a tremendous advantage in accomplishing not only NASBLA strategic objectives but also those of the National RBS Strategic Plan.



John Johnson  
NASBLA Executive Director

Like many recreational boating experiences, a large part of the Association's annual cycle of activities is familiar territory. There's the annual conference, which simultaneously serves both as the wrap-up of the old year and the beginning of a new year. Then there's the late-fall grant development season, which occurs as predictably as the holiday season that follows. With the new year comes a new iteration of the NASBLA committee roundup and a product development timeline, which concludes with the board's final review of policy positions, model acts and other related committee deliverables in late spring and early summer.

These deliverables represent the tangible, public policy outcomes and recommendations that are the collective voice of NASBLA's members, and with their consideration and adoption at the annual conference, the cycle starts all over again. It doesn't take a lot of charts and maps to keep the cycle moving forward – after all, we've been doing that for about 50 years. Where the

strategic plan really becomes important is in making sure that we continue spiraling upward without spinning our wheels over the same old ground, or worse yet, running aground.

Not unlike the Navigation Rules themselves, which are indeed epic in length and complex in detail, strategic plans can become so expansive and detached from reality that they have little bearing on the important things that actually drive the voyage itself. Without periodic upkeep and maintenance, eventually, the strategic plan winds up back on the shelf as just another historical reference and a reminder of important things from a bygone era.

This is not the case with NASBLA's strategic plan or with the ongoing strategic planning process we use. The strategic plan is continually reviewed in the context of the contemporary setting, as well as the context of the membership's current perspectives. We pride ourselves on being a member-driven organization and remaining responsive to the changing needs of our base (a good campaign-year term.) And our "base" is not only the boating law administrators and the state boating programs but also the broad and diverse group of associate members that represent all aspects of the recreational boating community – the boating industry, national nonprofits, educators and education providers, advocacy groups, and other related federal and state agencies.

When NASBLA overhauled its governance structure a few years ago, the association shaped and established the key building blocks it is now using to turn its blueprint into something concrete. A significant new part of the evolution in our governance model came into existence this spring as NASBLA launched a dynamic new committee structure to reflect the priorities and purposes articulated in our strategic plan. Although, as with any new undertaking, the new committee model has experienced a few hiccups along the way, we believe it has more than fulfilled the expectations we had for it at the outset.

continued on page 2

## **NASBLA Updates Committee Structure**

NASBLA has implemented a new model for organizing and managing its committees. Primary committees are organized into five key areas, and each committee has a series of more targeted subcommittees to accomplish its charges.

### **Enforcement & Training Subcommittees**

- Training & Certification
- Enforcement Techniques & Technology
- Uniform Boating Laws

### **Engineering, Reporting & Analysis**

- Subcommittees**
- Accident Reporting & Analysis
- Boats & Associated Equipment
- Special Risks

### **Governmental Affairs & Administration**

- Subcommittees**
- Homeland Security & Emergency Response
- Waterways Management
- RBS Grants Administration & Program Performance

### **Education & Awareness**

- Subcommittees**
- Marketing & Outreach
- Education Standards & Best Practices
- Boating Course Administration

### **Vessel Identification, Registration & Titling**

- Subcommittees**
- Numbering & Titling
- Vessel Identification System Coordination & Implementation
- Uniform Certificate of Title

For more information about NASBLA and its committees, visit [www.nasbla.org](http://www.nasbla.org).

from the HELM continued from page 1

For one thing, the redesigned subcommittee structure has resulted in even greater participation by both state and associate members alike. Having participated in virtually all of the committee meetings this year, we have seen firsthand the significant level of engagement that committee members have brought to the table both in terms of products and dialogue. These elements have given rise to the second important outcome of the new committee model, which has been the accelerated pace and greater depth of committee deliverables. Although much work remains as we pass the midpoint of the project year, we cannot recall ever being this far along in the development of committee products. This will contribute substantially to the added review time members will enjoy prior to the decision and debate opportunities they will have at the annual conference and business meeting later this year.

Some refinements are likely to be made to the committee model as we apply course corrections this summer based on invaluable input from our committee leadership and staff. We are not so wed to one model that we are constrained in trying new alternatives that could make the committees even more effective in achieving their respective roles in our mission. Course corrections are indeed key to keeping our strategic plan relevant through time, just as important as the Navigation Rules are in avoiding collisions on the water.

As we leave this topic behind, it is important to clarify that in no way are we suggesting that the Navigation Rules are somehow irrelevant or immaterial to recreational boating safety. Shifting from the figurative to the literal, a clear and concise understanding of the Navigation Rules has never been more critical to safety on our waterways as increasing numbers of people utilize our great maritime resources both for commercial and recreational purposes.

This year, NASBLA is engaged in two significant grant projects whose purpose is to bring even more relevance and understanding to the often misunderstood Navigation Rules. The “Nav Rules” go by many names and it has taken some of us many years to understand that some of these terms actually mean the same thing, at least from the average boater’s point of view. For example, generically, when you hear the terms Inland Navigation Rules, COLEGS, Nav Rules, Western River Rules, Great Lakes Rules or the more expansive title, International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea and the Inland Rules, we are largely talking about the same things.

We know the purists among you will argue this point, and we’re not looking for a deluge of corrections to flood our inbox. (Just Google “navigation rules” and you can learn all you want about how these terms and the contents of the rules came into existence.) From a practical point of view, and even in a side-by-side comparison, the “International Rules” and the “Inland Rules” are, for all intent and purposes, the same. Many on our staff were not aware of that until last fall when we got a primer on the topic from BMI Kevin Dutrieux, former coordinator of the Marine Patrol Officer Course with the U.S. Coast Guard.

Kevin did a great job of making this very complex and lengthy set of rules meaningful to those of us who spend about as much time on the water as the average boater. We believe his training efforts will yield huge dividends as we work to bridge the gap in knowledge both for state and local officers on the water, as well as educators in the classroom. Kevin has since moved on from his highly successful role at the Maritime Law Enforcement Academy in Charleston, S.C., and we want to take this opportunity to thank him publicly and wish him the very best in his latest duty assignment. His training contributions to the men and women of the U.S. Coast Guard, as well as the state and local marine patrol officers we serve, will long outlive his tenure at the Academy. Thanks Kevin! ■

## Third BLA Workshop Held in March

Representatives from 40 states and territories, along with members of the U.S. Coast Guard, BoatU.S., National Safe Boating Council and other boating safety-minded organizations, met March 12-13, 2008, for the third annual Boating Law Administrator Workshop. The two-day symposium was hosted by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators in Lexington, Ky.

Among the meeting's highlights was a report from Coast Guard Headquarters, which summarized the National Recreational Boating Safety Strategic Plan, legislative changes the Coast Guard is working on regarding mandatory boater education, and the upcoming reauthorization of the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund. Coast Guard representatives also discussed the Recreational Boating Safety Grant Program, Performance Report Part II and Marine Patrol Officer Course, Vessel Identification System, and life jacket wear observation studies.

Other topics discussed during the workshop included working effectively with state legislatures, the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, the North American Safe Boating Campaign, boating education standards, NASBLA's Strategic Plan and reports from NASBLA staff. Additionally, representatives from BoaterExam.com, NASBLA's Strategic Partner, and Boat Ed, NASBLA's Innovations Partner, discussed online boating safety courses and recent technological advances during the lunch breaks on Wednesday and Thursday, respectively.

Also during the Workshop, BLAs were interviewed as part of an assessment of state boating safety programs. Questions focused on boating safety and the different components of boating safety programs in the states. This process was part of a

grant that NASBLA is working on - the "Comprehensive Review of Boating Education Programs Nationwide with Recommendations for Improvement." The second step of the grant work will be more extensive surveys of the education coordinators and the registered boaters in each state. The data from the BLA survey is being used to build those two surveys.

Two NASBLA committees and a regional association met in conjunction with the BLA Workshop. The Law Enforcement & Training Committee met March 10-11, and the Engineering, Reporting and Analysis Committee met March 14-15, while the Northern Association of Boating Administrators met in the evenings on March 11 and 12 to discuss regional matters.

For a more detailed report about the workshop, visit NASBLA's blog. To access the blog, simply click on the NASBLOG link at [www.nasbla.org](http://www.nasbla.org).

## Updated Reference Guide Available Online

### Which states require a person to complete a boating education course to operate a boat?

### How many states accept out-of-state boating education certificates?

### In which states does a BUI conviction impact an offender's automobile driving privileges?

### How many states allow a boater to take a challenge exam to meet the state boating education requirements?

### Which states enforce a maximum noise level for motorboats?

The answers to these and many more questions are available in NASBLA's updated Reference Guide to State Boating Laws, available online at <http://www.nasbla.org>.

In developing new policies or instituting new programs, boating law administrators often examine what other states are doing. This reference guide helps provide those answers in a convenient online format. NASBLA's Reference Guide summarizes the states' boating laws and regulations and other areas of boating safety interest.

The latest version of this publication has been posted with updated information. Simply visit <http://www.nasbla.org> and click on Reference Guide under the "Publications & Resources" heading.

We'd like to thank the boating law administrators for their participation in our surveys to update this guide. We hope you find this latest version useful and informative. As always, if you have any questions, comments or suggestions, we would love to hear your input. Contact NASBLA at 859.225.9487 or [info@nasbla.org](mailto:info@nasbla.org).

## Keep an Eye on the Mailbox

NASBLA is implementing new software and updating its magazine mailing list. If you notice that you quit receiving *Small Craft Advisory* in the next few months, please contact our circulation director, Sam Lynch, at [info@nasbla.org](mailto:info@nasbla.org). ■



# REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN: THE STORY OF RONNIE GILL

Eshanthi Ranasinghe, Special Projects Associate, National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund

Ronald Gill was working as an executive chef at an upscale restaurant in Cranston, R.I., when two airliners slammed into the World Trade Center in lower Manhattan and brought the twin towers crumbling to the ground. It was a day that would change the course of history and, eventually, the course of Ronnie Gill's life.

Ready for a change and feeling a call to duty after 9/11, Ronnie traded in his safe job and comfortable life for a career filled with service, uncertainty and, yes, danger. The Johnson & Wales culinary arts graduate enlisted in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve in Cape Cod, Mass., and found his true calling as a guardsman. When he got a chance to go to Alaska as part of a homeland security unit, he took it immediately, leaving his close-knit family and the town he grew up in to serve his country.

Ronnie Gill worked hard as a port security specialist – a sworn law enforcement officer – in the Coast Guard in Anchorage, and he enjoyed every moment of it. For three years, he helped keep America's borders safe. He also met and married his wife, Ambur, and fell in love with Alaska's rugged landscape. If love alone could keep a man alive, Ronnie would have lived forever. But Ronnie Gill, despite what his father called his "heart of gold," despite his young, athletic build, and despite all the love that surrounded him, could not escape death.

Port Security Specialist Ronald Alan Gill Jr., was killed on March 25, 2007, when he was ejected from his patrol boat while running maritime security operations in the Puget Sound off the coast of Seattle.



His head struck the propeller of the boat, causing injuries that turned fatal as he was airlifted to a hospital.

Specialist Gill is the nineteenth U.S. law enforcement officer in history to die in a boating accident while on duty. He, along with 180 other law enforcement officers who died in the line of duty during 2007, will be honored during National Police Week in Washington, D.C., this May. His name will be engraved on the walls of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial, so that Specialist Gill and his service are marked forever in American history.

The risk of serious injury or death is a sacrifice all law enforcement officers must make. Yet, despite the magnitude of the risk, more than 900,000 federal, state and local law enforcement officers still answer the call to law enforcement service, just as Specialist Gill did. While most of us will never know what the risk is like and will never feel the pain of loss that Ronnie's family does, it is important that our nation remember these brave individuals and continue to do all that we can to ensure their safety.

The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, with its dedication to strengthening state and territorial boating authorities, and to reducing boating death and injury, is an important part of this worthy mission.

Specialist Gill's was the first line-of-duty law enforcement death caused by a boating accident in six years. Before him, Officers Christopher Ferreby and Scott Chism, also from the U.S. Coast Guard, died as result of a tragic boating accident while on a drug surveillance mission in March 2001.

According to research records of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, the earliest recorded boating accident deaths among U.S. law enforcement officers occurred in September 1919. Game Warden Harry Raymond and Captain Joe Williams of the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department were trying to anchor a department boat during an oncoming hurricane when a large wave swept them overboard. Just two months later, two members of the New York City Police Department were patrolling the Harlem River when their police patrol boat collided with another boat and capsized. In fact, five of the 23 line-of-duty boating deaths in U.S. history involved members of the NYPD.

The 1920s were a difficult time for law enforcement boating accidents, with seven deaths in that decade alone. America didn't see another death of that kind for 35 years.

No matter what the situation, whether on land or in the water, when an officer of the law faces a criminal, what may seem like a predictable situation can quickly turn fatal. Such was the case in August 1990, when Lieutenant Donald Bezenah, of the St Clair County (MI) Sheriff's Office, was attempting to stop a drunk boater. The man intentionally rammed Lieutenant Bezenah's boat; the impact killed him.

“Our thoughts are with all of these brave heroes, and with the families who lost loved ones this past year and throughout law enforcement history,” said Craig W. Floyd, CEO and chairman of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund. “As it was their duty to serve, it is our duty to tell their stories, to remember and honor them, so that we all may be inspired by their lives, their sacrifice, their bravery.”

Within three hours of Ronnie’s death, a Coast Guard officer and a Navy Chaplain were at the Gill family’s front door in



Ron and Rosemary Gill look at a photo memorial of their son, Coast Guard Petty Officer 3rd Class Ronald Gill, who was killed in the line of duty March 25, 2007. The memorial was added to the Coast Guard hall in the Rhode Island Veterans Home in Bristol Wednesday, August 15. U.S. Coast Guard photo/Petty Officer 2nd Class Lauren Downs

Cranston. Ron Gill Sr., his wife, Rosemary, and their younger son, Jon, found out that their 26-year-old practical joker, their master chef, their Ronnie was gone.

Thinking back to Ronnie’s recruiting officer, who came to the family after the accident with feelings of both grief and guilt, Ron Gill Sr. told The Providence Journal, “He has nothing to feel bad about...He helped my son become a better man.”

We know about Ronnie what we pray for all of America’s brave law

enforcement officers. That he was loved, and that he will never be forgotten.

For more information about the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund and National Police Week, visit [www.nleomf.org](http://www.nleomf.org). ■



Two Coast Guard officers lay roses on a memorial during the 16th Annual National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Wreathlaying Ceremony on Oct. 10 2007, in Washington, D.C. The officers were honoring Petty Officer 3rd Class Ronald Gill, who was killed during a maritime security exercise in Seattle.

U.S. Coast Guard photo/Petty Officer 1st Class Adam Eggers

## Officers Killed in Boating Accidents

(Name, Agency, End-of-Watch Date)

- **Game Warden Harry Raymond**, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 09/14/1919
- **Captain Joe Williams**, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 09/14/1919
- **Patrolman James Hughes**, New York (NY) Police Department, 11/19/1919
- **Patrolman John McIntyre**, New York (NY) Police Department, 11/19/1919
- **Sheriff William Monroe**, St. Lucie County (FL) Sheriff’s Department, 03/25/1921
- **Patrolman John McGlyn**, New York (NY) Police Department, 10/18/1924
- **Sergeant Neil Gibbons**, New York (NY) Police Department, 10/19/1924
- **Game Warden William Nattkemper**, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, 04/27/1926
- **Game Warden William Peare**, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, 04/27/1926
- **Ranger Fred Johnson**, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 02/20/1929
- **Ranger Glen Sturdevant**, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 02/20/1929
- **Auxiliary Officer Aldo Santini**, Westport (CT) Police Department, 08/01/1964
- **Game Warden Lloyd Gustin**, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 03/25/1968
- **Officer Maurice Erben**, New York (NY) Police Department, 10/13/1970
- **Sergeant Jim Cook**, Florida Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission, 12/08/1972
- **Game Warden Barry Decker**, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, 05/26/1990
- **Game Warden Bruce Hill**, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, 05/26/1990
- **Lieutenant Donald Bezenah**, St. Clair County (MI) Sheriff’s Office, 08/31/1990
- **Criminal Investigator Manuel Zurita**, U.S. Customs Service, 01/06/1998
- **Petty Officer Second Class Scott Chism**, U.S. Coast Guard, 03/24/2001
- **Seaman Christopher Ferreby**, U.S. Coast Guard, 03/24/2001
- **Port Security Specialist Ronald Gill Jr.**, U.S. Coast Guard, 03/25/2007
- **Game Warden Teyran “Ty” Patterson**, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, 05/30/2007

# Navigation **RULE 9** and Oregon's "Operation Make Way"

By Ashley Massey, Public Affairs Specialist, Oregon State Marine Board

The great Columbia River is a treasure to Washington and Oregon because of its tremendous beauty, outstanding angling and bounty of boating opportunities. But there's just one problem...it can get congested, and smaller boats don't easily give up their anchored "sweet spot" for larger commercial vessels. In Oregon, it's not illegal to anchor in the channel, but it is illegal to impede commercial vessel traffic.

## **The Bigger They Are, the Harder To Stop**

The Columbia River is long but not wide in some places. It's also not very deep, which is the root of why this is such a safety concern. Commercial vessels appear to move slowly, but in fact they move deceptively fast and each vessel is constrained by its draft to navigate only in the navigation channel. They must also maintain their speed in order to steer.

Like a freight train, it takes these ships quite a distance to stop –generally three-quarters to one and a half miles. For example, if a water skier falls a thousand feet in front of a moving tug or tow, the skier has less than one minute to get out of the way.

## **Status Quo**

So what's a vessel pilot to do? Five or more short horn blasts signal "danger" and pilots routinely lay on the horn. Oftentimes, there's not much of a response from the other boat. Because of a pilot's blind spot in front of the vessel, they don't know if they've collided until it's far too late. Luckily in Oregon, there are very few reported collisions, but far too many "near misses."

Captain Mark Paulson with Tidewater Barge Lines and volunteer boating safety instructor for the Marine Board recently shared with staff an interesting encounter near the Bonneville Dam in Hood River, Oregon.

Paulson said, "I gave my warning signal, and the boat didn't move. I nearly ran them over." As the vessel narrowly cleared the boat, Paulson got on his cell phone and called the boat operator. After explaining "right of way" and Rule 9 to the boat operator and attempting to get his point across, the boat operator

**Rule 9(b) of the International  
250-011-005(5)(b), states  
meters must not impede  
safely navigate only within**



*To help improve safety on the state's waterways, the Oregon State Marine Board has implemented a variety of education and outreach strategies targeted at recreational boaters to emphasize the importance of abiding by the Navigation Rules, especially when boating near commercial vessels.*

interrupted, "How did you get my number?" Paulson replied, "It's plastered all over your boat!"

As it turned out, the boat was a licensed fishing guide and should have known better. The recreational boat operator knew they probably should move but could see that the two vessels wouldn't collide. A recreational boat has better visibility whereas a pilot has a blind spot that can extend several hundred feet in front of them.

VHF radio communication is another way to find out what the intentions are of either boat operator and pilots routinely report their position using channels 13 and 16.

In 2003, a coalition of state, county and federal marine officials joined forces to step





nal Steering and Sailing Rules,  
that a vessel of less than 20  
passage of a vessel that can  
n a narrow channel.

*Recreational boaters often underestimate the speed of large commercial vessels on the water. Consequently, there are numerous near misses as well as actual collisions between recreational boats and commercial vessels. Oregon Marine Board photos*

up enforcement and ticket boaters who are caught blocking navigation on the Columbia and lower Willamette Rivers. *Operation Make Way* involves several jurisdictions with coordinated saturation patrols that target areas where heavy complaints are reported. Each summer when river congestion hits its peak, saturation patrols are organized. Person(s) found guilty of impeding navigation face up to a \$5,000 fine.

### Education and Outreach Solutions

With the implementation of Oregon's mandatory boating education program, Rule 9 and other navigation rules are included in the curriculum. The Marine Board added additional questions to the equivalency and classroom exams and

added eight slides to the classroom presentation that emphasize the importance of "Make Way" to recreational boat operators. In addition, the Marine Board has worked in partnership with the Columbia River Bar Pilots Association and the U. S. Coast Guard to help distribute brochures with safety tips and information about commercial vessel traffic. Articles and feature stories have also been published in the Marine Board's annual newsletter, *Underway*, and are included in other popular Marine Board publications.

In addition, the Marine Board broadcasts "Make Way" messaging on their low power radio station (1610 AM) near the Hammond boat basin at the Columbia River Bar entrance. Many boaters and anglers tune in to find out about local weather and bar conditions before launching.

Since boaters tend to be visual people by nature, the Marine Board is also working with Captain Paulson and the Columbia River Bar Pilots Association to create a segment for YouTube and the Marine Board's website, showing a video from the point of view of the pilot. "You'd be amazed at the number of boats, [personal watercraft] and skiers that like to play 'chicken' with us," Paulson told Marine Board staff. The Marine Board plans to launch the video before the 2008 boating season. ■

# NASBLA Works to Reduce Nav Rules

By Kimberly Jenkins

The overall number of recreational boating accidents and fatalities is down in the United States. However, careless/reckless operation, excessive speed, lack of or improper lights, no proper lookout and other types of Navigation Rules (commonly called the Nav Rules) violations continue to be the most reported causes of boating accidents and fatalities.

To help reduce the number of Navigation Rules violations, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) is working on two grant projects designed to teach the nation's boating safety education instructors and marine patrol officers more about the Nav Rules. In turn, the instructors and officers can better convey this information to recreational boaters. For example, boating safety education instructors could incorporate more Navigation Rules information into their education courses for boaters while marine patrol officers could use vessel safety checks as a way to pass on specific information to boaters about the importance of following the Nav Rules.

Both of these projects are being funded by grants, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard, from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund.

The first grant involves developing and implementing a training module for boating safety course instructors with an increased focus on Navigation Rules. This grant directly addresses U.S. Coast Guard Strategic Plan Objective 5.3, which is to increase the "focus, time and attention to navigation rules in boating safety classes and to increase navigation rules awareness through other means of boating public outreach."

"Boating education and boating safety instruction have matured into a specialized field of education. As more states move toward mandatory boating education, numerous private course providers are offering courses of instruction to complement those being offered by state boating organizations and volunteers from the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and United States Power Squadrons," said NASBLA Education Director Gail Kulp. "And, while the number of boaters required to take safety education courses is on the rise, the percentage of accidents and fatalities caused by Navigation Rules violations has stayed roughly the same since 2000."

While NASBLA approval assures certain standards for course content, no standardized national requirements currently exist for how a boating course is to be presented or delivered. Delivery and presentation issues are currently left to the discretion of the course provider. Even though the NASBLA Boating Education Standards dictate a course's content, they do not dictate the organization or outline of a course. Therefore, an instructor may spend a disproportionate amount of time on one topic over another.

In 1999, the National Safe Boating Council (NSBC) created an Instructor Certification Course. This two-day course certifies instructors in the area of boating safety education. In particular, the course focuses on the NASBLA Boating Education Standards and provides instructor candidates with the proper interpretation of each standard. In 2005, the NSBC and NASBLA formed a partnership to co-teach the Instructor Certification Courses.

Together, the NSBC and NASBLA have identified the expansion of boating instructor credentialing as a top priority for advancing and standardizing boating safety education in general and elevating the level of professionalism among boating educators and instructors in particular. In 2007, NASBLA applied for and was awarded a grant from the U.S. Coast Guard to effect this expansion of the course.

The Boating Safety Education Instructor Training Module grant identifies two ways to expand the Instruction Certification Course:

- Add a third day to the current instructor training course
- Increase the pool of trained instructors

According to Kulp, the grant is progressing as scheduled. A draft copy of the new three-day curriculum for the Instructor Training Course has been developed. The third day allows for more time



*Using the training module NASBLA is developing, boating safety course instructors will be able to focus the time and attention spent teaching the navigation rules in their classes.*

U.S. Coast Guard photo

# Incidents

and focus on how to teach the Navigation Rules, which is one of the most difficult topics to communicate to students. The additional day also provides instructor candidates with another day of instruction focused on how to plan and outline lessons to enhance the learning process before they teach their mini-lessons and take the final exam.

Additionally, the Train-the-Trainer course – the second part of this grant – is taking shape. A draft curriculum has been developed and the dates and location for the first Train-the-Trainer course have been set. Applications have also been solicited for the training and the selected applicants notified in early June. The Train-the-Trainer course will be offered July 15-17 in Delaware, Ohio. With the successful completion of this inaugural course will come an increase in the number of boating safety course instructor trainers. This will increase the ability to offer more Instructor Training Courses in the future. Advertising through various media including the NASBLA and NSBC websites, e-mail notifications, and printed publications such as Small Craft Advisory will help advertise the availability of future Instructor Training Courses.

The second grant involves developing a training module geared toward officers tasked with enforcing recreational boating laws and regulations.

“Marine law enforcement officers have been given two separate but interrelated tasks: educating the public about the laws and regulations governing recreational boating and enforcing those laws and regulations on the nation’s waterways,” said Kulp.

Marine law enforcement officers patrol small creeks, rivers, lakes and even coastal waters. They perform vessel safety checks, sobriety checks, and registration and titling checks as a service to the public.



*The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators is developing a training module to help marine patrol officers better explain the Navigation Rules to boaters they interact with on the water.*  
Indiana Department of Natural Resources photo

In addition, while on patrol they routinely issue citations to operators who are not carrying the proper safety gear, are boating under the influence, or are boating with absent or expired registration documents.

Training for these officers varies from state to state. Although many states affirm that the Navigation Rules are covered in their training curriculum, they admit that the training is minimal and, in most cases, only a few hours are spent on the topic. In an informal survey of the boating law administrators conducted by NASBLA in January 2007, the consensus of the state members who responded was that more Navigation Rules training for their officers would be welcomed.

To assist the states with this training, NASBLA applied for and received a grant from the Coast Guard to develop a training module on the Nav Rules. This grant directly addresses U.S. Coast Guard Strategic Plan Objective 5.2, which is to “develop an officer training curriculum to improve officer knowledge and consistency of identifying/documenting navigation rules violations.”

The final product of the grant will be a training program for the states to implement. The program will consist of in-class lecture and PowerPoint presentations, video and an on-water training checklist.

A draft copy of the training curriculum and an accompanying PowerPoint presentation have been developed. The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency will help with filming some of the Navigation Rules violations on a busy waterway this summer. Additional film clips and animations depicting typical Navigation Rules violations have been provided by one of NASBLA’s strategic partners, Boat Ed.

The entire training program is on schedule to be completed this fall and will be distributed to the boating law administrators by the end of this year.

With these grant projects nearing completion, NASBLA is hopeful that the occurrence of Nav Rules-related boating accidents will soon decrease, as boating officers and educators become better equipped to teach boaters about the Rules of the Road on U.S. waterways. ■



# NAVIGATION RULES

## Key to On-Water Safety

By Kimberly Jenkins



A tug pushing a barge stacked two wide maneuvered around a bend in the Missouri River, just west of St. Louis, Mo. Two paddlers in a two-seater kayak rounded the same bend as the tug and barge. The kayakers were unable to maneuver out of the way before the barge struck their kayak, ejecting them from the boat. The barge could not come to a complete stop as the collision occurred and ran over the kayak. After being run over by the barge, the paddlers crawled out from underneath the barge sustaining no injuries.



very similar rules, one for international and the other for inland waters. These rules and regulations were created to help boaters avoid collisions. The 38 rules and five annexes in the U.S. Coast Guard's Navigation Rules (International-Inland) establish a consistent way to navigate safely and avoid collisions when two boats are crossing paths, are on course to meet head-on, or when one boat wishes to overtake another.

"All boaters are bound to the [Navigation] Rules," explained BMI Kevin Dutrieux, former coordinator of the Marine Patrol Officer Course with the U.S. Coast Guard.

While all mariners are required to know and responsibly apply these navigation rules when operating their vessels, it's estimated that less than 10 percent of boaters have even a

Fortunately, no one was injured in this accident, which occurred last July between St. Louis and Jefferson City, Mo. However, this is just one example of the hundreds and hundreds of accidents that happen when boaters fail to follow the Navigation Rules, which are the "Rules of the Road" on the water.

Eighty percent of all recreational boating accidents are due to human error. In fact, in its annual Boating Report, the U.S. Coast Guard has cited operator inattention, carelessness/reckless operation, excessive speed, and no proper lookout as the primary contributing factors in all reported accidents for the past several years. These types of accidents stem from a boater's failure to comply with one or more of the Navigation Rules.

The Navigation Rules (Nav Rules) were established by the implementation of the International Regulations for Prevention of Collisions at Sea (COLREGS). These rules of the road for boating were adopted in 1972. There are two sets of



*While the Navigation Rules were adopted nearly 40 years ago, less than 10 percent of boaters have basic knowledge of the rules and regulations.* Staff photo

basic familiarity with the Rules. Hence, accidents still happen.

For example, on April 26, 2008, a woman died, after an aluminum fishing boat collided with a fiberglass leisure boat on the St. Johns River, about 30 miles north of Orlando, Fla.

Officials said the two boats that crashed were traveling in opposite directions. Both tried to avoid colliding, but ultimately could not. The crash killed one of the women on the fishing boat. The victim was thrown from the boat and wasn't wearing a life jacket. Five other people were hurt in the collision.

Collisions between boats remain the most frequent type of boating accident on U.S. waterways. In 2006, 1360 collisions were reported, resulting in 75 fatalities and 1001 injuries. An additional 517 accidents involving collision with a fixed object also were reported that year, causing 47 deaths and 391 injuries.

Noticing the boaters' apparent lack of understanding of the rules and the tragic outcomes resulting from these violations, the U.S. Coast Guard, the states and the boating safety partners are taking steps to reduce Nav Rules violations. In the recently adopted Strategic Plan for the National Recreational Boating Safety Program, these partnering organizations have identified Operator Compliance with the Navigation Rules as a key objective and set a target to reduce the deaths caused by these violations from the baseline measurement of 24 percent of the deaths in 2005 to 19 percent in 2011.

To help the Coast Guard reach this target, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators is undertaking two projects focusing on the Navigation Rules. The projects are designed to help teach the nation's marine patrol officers and boating safety instructors more about the Navigation Rules so they can better communicate this information to recreational boaters. *(Editor's Note: For more information about these grant projects, see the article on pp. 8-9.)*



*Crowded waterways, whether resulting from pure popularity or special events such as the personal watercraft event shown above, demand that boaters follow the Navigation Rules. Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency photo/Betsy Woods*

In the meantime, here are suggestions based on the Navigation Rules to pass on to boaters now. These are tips for actively avoiding collisions with other vessels:

**Familiarize yourself – and those boating with you – with the Nav Rules** – they apply to all vessels, from canoes to powerboats, to ocean liners.

**Keep a proper lookout.** This means to use all methods available (eyes, ears, radio and radar, if installed) to avoid a collision.

**Maintain a proper speed.** Be sure to take into account visibility, traffic density, maneuverability of vessel, background lights (at night), wind and current, navigation hazards, depth of water, and limitations of radar.

**Use all available means to avoid collision.** This includes sounding a horn, altering your course or speed, or even deviating from the Navigation Rules.

**Do not impede traffic in a narrow channel.** This means that a boat should stay clear of vessels that are confined to a channel. Also, boats should not anchor in the channel nor cross the channel if it will interfere with a boat confined to a channel.

**Stay to the right.** When entering narrow waters, a sharp bend or a channel, boaters should keep their boats to the right-hand shore. This will help prevent unplanned meetings (such as the one summarized in the opening of this article.)

Boaters should be urged to familiarize themselves with the Navigation Rules. While the Rules themselves are not exactly a riveting read, all boaters are required to be familiar with them. Besides, the rules are very helpful and can save a boater's life and the lives of his or her loved ones.

A helpful resource is *The One-Minute Guide to the Nautical Rules of the Road* by Charlie Wing. This handy book provides clear and easy to follow explanations of the Nav Rules. ■

## ABYC Foundation Announces First Junior Bunzl Award Organizations Foster Positive Relationships Around a Common Goal

The American Boat & Yacht Council (ABYC) Foundation presented the first-ever "Junior" Bunzl Award to Miguel Cabarello-Perez during the Council's 2008 Annual Meeting and Awards Presentation on Feb. 13, 2008 in Miami, Fla.

Established by the ABYC Foundation, the Bunzl Boating Safety Award has traditionally been presented to an individual in recognition of singular acts of great personal sacrifice or heroism in the saving of life or vessel at sea or for extraordinary contributions to the safety of the boating public. However, the ABYC Foundation has recently formed positive connections with the Shake-a-Leg program in Miami, which helps children and adults with physical, developmental and economic challenges, liberating them from the realm of imagination into the realm of experience.

Because of Miguel's connection and involvement in boating through the Shake-A-Leg program, the Foundation Board

presented him with a Junior Bunzl Award for his courageous and swift action that resulted in the rescue of his cousin from a possible drowning accident in Miami, Fla. Without concern for his personal safety and using the safety skills that he was taught in the Shake-A-Leg swimming and sailing program, Miguel saved the life of the young boy. His rapid response and unselfish deeds helped save his family from a devastating tragedy.

In addition to receiving a crystal plaque from the ABYC Foundation, Nancy Botero, executive director of the Broward Community College Foundation presented Miguel with a \$1,000 scholarship to Broward Community College in recognition of his heroic actions. BCC, another partner of the ABYC Foundation, recently established a marine management program with the Marine Industries Association of South Florida and the ABYC.

"On behalf of the ABYC Foundation, I was thrilled to be able to recognize Miguel and the Shake-A-Leg program in this way," commented Joe Charles, chair of the ABYC Foundation and president of Charles Industries. "Everyone who attended the Annual Meeting was moved by Miguel's determination and optimism, and as a Foundation, we are proud to support the Shake-A-Leg mission of making dreams come true and enabling people to achieve their goals through boating."

Skip Burdon, president of ABYC and secretary of the ABYC Foundation, stated, "The ABYC Foundation supports not only ABYC but other organizations that better the industry through education, standards and safety – such as the Shake-A-Leg program and the BCC. Together, our organizations are leveraging their strengths and resources to address a need for qualified employees in the marine industry, while also empowering challenged individuals to develop the skills needed to reach their highest potential."

A restricted-use account has been set up by the ABYC Foundation in support of special programs, such as the Shake-A-Leg program and the BCC marine technology program. Funds raised will enable the ABYC Foundation to continue to fulfill its mission of bettering the industry through education, standards and safety. Tax-deductible donations to support the meaningful work of ABYC and these other important programs can be made directly to the ABYC Foundation and mailed to:

The ABYC Foundation  
(please note which program you would like to support)  
613 Third Street, Ste. 10  
Annapolis, MD 21403

For further information on Shake-A-Leg, visit [www.shakealegmiami.org](http://www.shakealegmiami.org). For additional information on the BCC marine program, visit [www.broward.edu](http://www.broward.edu). For more information on the ABYC Foundation or to make a donation, please visit [www.abycinc.org](http://www.abycinc.org). ■



ABYC Foundation Chair Joe Charles (left) and ABYC President Skip Burdon (right) present Miguel Cabarello-Perez with the first "Junior" Bunzl Boating Safety Award for his heroic action in rescuing his cousin. American Boat & Yacht Council photo



Greetings from...



## 49th ANNUAL CONFERENCE

September 6-10, 2008 – Clearwater Beach, Florida

Please join us for the 49th annual NASBLA conference September 6 – 10, 2008,  
at the Hilton Clearwater Beach Resort (400 Mandalay Ave) in Clearwater Beach, Florida!

### Thursday, Sept. 4

8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. USCG State Grant Administration Workshop

### Friday, Sept. 5

8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. USCG State Grant Administration Workshop

1:00 pm-5:00 pm NASBLA Executive Board

### Saturday, Sept. 6

8:00 am-Noon New Boating Law Administrator Orientation

1:00 pm-5:00 pm Registration Open

3:00 pm-5:00 pm First Time Attendee Orientation

### Sunday, Sept. 7

7:30 am-5 pm Registration Open

8 am-4:15 pm Committee Meetings & Briefings

12:15-1:30 pm Lunch (on your own)

1:00-5:00 pm Exhibit Set-up

2:00-4:00 pm Spouse/Guest Welcome

6:00-7:30 pm Opening Ceremonies

7:30-9:00 pm President's Reception

9:00 pm-Midnight Networking

### Monday, Sept. 8

7:30 am-5 pm Registration Open

7:30 am-9 pm Exhibits

8:00 am-Noon BLA Workshop

8:00 am-Noon Other Attendees Workshop:

Marketing Strategies for States to Implement

Chill Zone

Noon-1:30 pm Regional Lunches

1:30-4:00 pm NASBLA Business Meeting

5:00-6:00 pm Texas 2009 Reception in Exhibit Hall

6:00-9:00 pm Awards Banquet

9:00 pm-Midnight Networking

### Tuesday, Sept. 9

7:30-10:00 am Exhibits

7:30 am-5:00 pm Registration Open

7:30 am-5:00 pm Chill Zone

9:00 am-2:00 pm Spouse/Guest Activities

10:00-11:30 am Exhibits Dismantle

### Tuesday, Sept. 9 (continued)

8:30-9:30 am

9:45-10:45 am

11:00 am-Noon

Noon-1:45 pm

2:00-2:50 pm

3:00-3:50 pm

4:00-5:00 pm

4:00-5:00 pm

8:00 pm-Midnight

### Wednesday, Sept. 10

7:30 am-1:00 pm

7:30 am-5:00 pm

9:00 am-3:00 pm

8:30 am-9:30 am

9:45 am-10:45 am

11:00 am-Noon

Noon-1:15 pm

1:30 pm-2:30 pm

2:45 pm-3:45 pm

4:00 pm-5:00 pm

6:00 pm-9:00 pm

9:00 pm-Midnight

As of May 27, 2008 – Subject to change

"We're Here – Now What?"

Future of Recreational Boating

Climatology - How Water Level Predictions

Will Affect Boating in the U.S.

Lunch at Marina and On-Water Demonstrations

**Breakout Sessions** (run concurrently)

1. Eckerd College Search & Rescue Student-Run Program

2. Staged Collisions

3. Wear It Florida Campaign

4. Paddlesports Education Classroom Course (Part I)\*

**Breakout Sessions** (run concurrently)

1. Florida Homeland Security Training

2. Texas Marine Officer Death Investigation

3. Surviving Mandatory Education through a Phase-In Program

4. Paddlesports Education Classroom Course (Part II)\*

\* In order to receive a certificate of attendance, you must attend both parts of this breakout session.

Committee Organizational Meetings for FY09

Planning (meet concurrently)

NASBLA Executive Board Meeting

Networking

## NBSAC Appointments

Michael Chertoff, secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, has made the 2008 appointments to the National Boating Safety Advisory Council (NBSAC). This committee was established by the Federal Boat Safety Act of 1971 to advise the U.S. Coast Guard on matters related to recreational boating safety.

NBSAC consists of 21 members drawn equally from state officials responsible for boatingsafety programs; representatives of the boating industry; and representatives of national recreational boating organizations and the general public. Appointments to the council are made by the secretary of Homeland Security.

There were eight appointments this year, with four new members, one former member returning, and three reappointments:

### Manufacturers

Pete Chisholm, Mercury Marine  
Thom Dammrich, NMMA  
JJ Marie, Zodiac North America  
Marcia Kull, Volvo Penta

### Boating Organizations/Public

Margaret Podlich, BoatU.S.  
John Underwood, MRAA

### State

Alfonso Campos, Texas  
Ray Tsuneyoshi, California

The Coast Guard seeks applications for membership on NBSAC to fill seven positions that will expire or become vacant in December 2008: three representatives of state officials responsible for state boating safety programs, two representatives of recreational boat and associated equipment manufacturers, and two representatives of the general public or national recreational boating organizations.

To request an application form, write to Commandant, Boating Safety Division (CG-54221), U.S. Coast Guard, 2100 Second Street, SW., Washington,

DC 20593-0001, call 202.372.1062 or fax 202.372.1932. The application form and additional information are available online at <http://www.uscgboating.org/nbsac/nbsac.htm>. Send your application in written form to the above street address. The deadline to submit an application is June 27, 2008.

For more information about NBSAC, contact Jeff Ludwig, executive secretary of NBSAC, at [jeffrey.a.ludwig@uscg.mil](mailto:jeffrey.a.ludwig@uscg.mil) or 202.372.1061.

## BoatU.S. Foundation Offers Spanish 'Rules of the Road' Decal

The BoatU.S. Foundation for Boating Safety has made it a little easier for Spanish-speaking boaters to check the "rules of the road" with a new *Boat Handling Guide* decal in Spanish that can be affixed on the helm. The decal is free to boat clubs, marinas or other groups in quantities up to 200 and is available at <http://www.BoatUS.com/foundation/brochure>. The weatherproof decal gives examples of the most common types of navigational markers, rules of the road and right of way illustrations, and an explanation of horn signals.



"Our *Boat Handling Guide* decal is the most popular item that boaters request," said BoatU.S. Foundation Program Manager Amanda Suttles. "And no matter what language you speak, it's great having one on the helm for a quick reference," she added.

The Foundation also offers Spanish language brochures including *Navegación en Aguas Frías*, which discusses hypothermia and safety tips for cold weather boating; a *Chalecos Salvavidas* brochure that explains the types and use of life jackets; an *El Alcohol y la Navegación* brochure that explains the dangers of drinking and boating; and a brochure on environmentally friendly boating, *La Rutina de Limpieza: 21 Ideas Para Navegar Mejor*.

## Lake Powell Levels Rising

Heavy snowfall in the West this winter is expected to have a positive impact on water levels at Lake Powell, according to the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Reclamation.

"According to the Coconino County Sheriff's Office deputies and National Park Service rangers, [Lake Powell] is coming up about one foot a week, and that amount is expected to increase," said Kevin Bergersen, boating law administrator for Arizona.

“This is very significant when you realize just how much water is needed to raise a lake that is over 185 miles long.”

Lake Powell, the second largest manmade lake in the U.S., is located on the border of Utah and Arizona in the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area.

“What many boaters are eagerly awaiting is a significant enough lake level rise that would return the inside passage around what is known as Castle Rock Cut or Antelope Island. Currently, the area is referred to as a ‘peninsula’ and requires a prolonged 12-mile traverse around to get from the main Wahweap launch ramp to uplake areas. Higher water levels would allow Antelope Island to reemerge and create a huge shortcut,” explained Bergersen.

By June or earlier, Castle Rock Cut should be open for the first time in more than five years. The effect of a nine-year drought in the Southwest has kept Castle Rock Cut impassable by boat since 2003. The shortcut requires a lake elevation of about 3,620 feet for boats to pass through. As of March 13, the estimated water surface level at Lake Powell was 3,588 feet above sea level. According to the bureau’s March projections, the lake should reach an elevation of 3,634 feet by the end of June, peaking in July at 3,640 feet.

“Ultimately the rise in lake level is very good news for recreational boaters in that many remote side canyons will once again be available to boaters,” added Bergersen. “Powell is known for its striking sandstone canyons and remote feeling that comes with not seeing a fellow boater for days on end.”

### **BoatU.S. Looks to Expand Loaner Program**

The BoatU.S. Foundation for Boating Safety & Clean Water is looking to expand its Life Jacket Loaner program. The program offers infant, toddler and children’s life jackets at over 350 nationwide locations, has launched a campaign to raise \$50,000 in additional funds to meet increasing



demand by establishing new loaner locations at marinas, boat ramps, waterside resorts, boat clubs, bait shops, towboats, fire houses and other public facilities. The life jackets are typically loaned out for a day or weekend.

Started in 1997, the program has loaned out life jackets on average more than 50,000 times a year – and saved three lives – as well as given thousands of parents peace of mind knowing that their children are wearing a correctly fitted life jacket.

A tax-deductible donation of only \$10 will buy one vest-style life jacket and \$250 will create a completely new, fully stocked loaner site. The \$50,000 fundraising drive will also help replenish life jackets at some existing locations. Funding for the program is also supported in part by the 650,000 members of BoatU.S.

“When boaters or anglers bring young guests aboard, they may not have the right-sized life jacket or a child may have outgrown their old jacket, so the youngster is sometimes put in one that is too big, or worse, goes without one,” said BoatU.S. Foundation Program Manager Ted Sensenbrenner.

Go to <http://www.BoatUS.com/Foundation> to make your donation online or mail your donation to: BoatU.S. Foundation, c/o Life Jacket Loaner Program, 880 South Pickett St., Alexandria, VA 22304. To find a loaner site in your area, visit <http://www.BoatUS.com/foundation/ljlp>.

### **“Clean Boating Act of 2008” Poses Promising Solution** *Bi-Partisan Legislation Would Permanently Restore Clean Water Act Exemption for Recreational Boats*

A newly introduced Senate bill, “The Clean Boating Act of 2008” (S. 2766) promises to be a practical solution to a looming permit deadline for recreational boaters, anglers and charter boats.

Because of a lawsuit targeting ocean-going commercial vessels carrying ballast water, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is required to implement an “operational discharge permit” for all vessels in the United States – including recreational boats – by September 30, 2008. Without a change in law, all boaters will need to obtain this permit, as early as this summer.

However, with a possible Senate vote in the next few months, recreational boaters are urged to contact their Senate and House legislators to support The Clean Boating Act of 2008.

S. 2766 was introduced on March 13 by Senate Environment and Public Works Chairwoman Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) and Sen. Bill Nelson (D-Fla.). It follows two bills originally introduced in the spring and fall of 2007 as “The Recreational Boating Act of 2007” (H.R. 2550/S. 2067) by Representatives Gene Taylor (D-Miss.) and Candice Miller (R-Mich.) and Senator Mel Martinez (R-Fla.).

“S. 2766 recognizes the fact that normal operational discharges from recreational boats, such as engine cooling water or deck runoff from rain, should not be viewed under the Clean Water Act as being similar to a commercial ship’s ballast water,” said BoatU.S. Vice President of Government Affairs Margaret Podlich. “This bill does not



weaken any existing environmental laws restricting the overboard discharge of oil, fuel, garbage, or sewage.”

S. 2766 also requires the EPA and U.S. Coast Guard to investigate the need for potential management practices for some recreational boat discharges over the next three years. Each step in this development process will include a public comment period and be subject to “reasonable and practical” criterion.

To help boaters contact their federal legislators or learn more about the issue, go to <http://www.BoatBlue.org>.

### **BoatU.S. Seeks Environmental Award Nominees**

Do you know someone who has helped boaters be more environmentally responsible and made their local waterways cleaner?

The BoatU.S. Foundation for Boating Safety & Clean Water plans to honor those who have made a significant contribution toward improving waterway ecology and educating boaters on how to minimize their environmental impact. Any group, organization, company, marina or individual who has worked hard to make a difference is eligible for the BoatU.S. Foundation Environmental Leadership Award. A \$1,000 prize is provided to help the winner continue their environmental efforts.

This is the second year the award is being given. The 2007 award was won by Sandy Purdon, founder of the Clean Marinas California program.

The deadline to apply for the award is June 30.

Applications and additional information are available at <http://www.BoatUS.com/Foundation>.

Any questions can be directed to Susan Shingledecker, director of environmental programs for the BoatU.S. Foundation, at [SShingledecker@BoatUS.com](mailto:SShingledecker@BoatUS.com).

### **Discover Boating Launches Updated Advertising Campaign**

The Discover Boating advertising campaign kicked into high gear this year with new components specifically designed to make it easier for interested boat owners to order the Discover Boating DVD and, ultimately, drive these potential buyers to manufacturers and dealers. These new campaign additions include mobile (cell phone)

advertising, special advertising messages inserted into TiVo programming and a toll-free number featured in television spots. The campaign started the last week of February and will run through the first week of June for a total of 15 weeks.



The campaign is again national in scope, reaching homes across the United States via cable television, magazines, the Internet and, now, mobile technology. A total of 8,000 spots will air from March through May on several major cable TV networks.

Discover Boating print advertising will run prominently in the spring editions of 14 national magazines. In addition, 19 million business reply cards will be inserted in the May editions of these publications, giving consumers even more ways to request information about how to get started in boating.

Internet advertising is ramping up again in 2008, with banner ad placements on more than 700 websites. And for the first time, mobile phone advertising will be included in the Discover Boating advertising mix.

In addition, a revamped DiscoverBoating.com website officially launched on April 8, featuring an updated look and several new, interactive features designed to show visitors how easy it is to become a boat owner.

For information about the campaign, visit [DiscoverBoating.com](http://DiscoverBoating.com) and [GrowBoating.org](http://GrowBoating.org).

### **Sea Tow Unveils New Corporate Brand Identity**

Sea Tow Services International recently unveiled a new brand initiative that represents a significant milestone in the company's 25-year history and reflects Sea Tow's evolution into a full-service organization dedicated to the savings, services and security of the recreational boating public.

Sea Tow has moved beyond Marine Towing & Salvage to the comprehensive core identity of Where Boaters Belong™.

“Our brand and our reputation have been based on providing the most professional marine assistance to recreational boaters in need,” explained Capt. Joe Frohnhoefer, Sea Tow's chairman and CEO. “Because of this, we've come to be known as the ones who will come get you if you're in trouble. However, we're there *all* the time, good and bad, whether you need navigational assistance or discounts at the dock.”

The company has been shifting its business approach for the past few years by expanding its suite of services to include Trailer Care™, Sea Smart™ VHF, Sea



Insure®, Sea Loans™, and the Boating Safety & Education Foundation, while also expanding its member-exclusive Advantage Network™ savings program and significantly growing its marine assistance network, both domestically and internationally.

"We have extensively researched and tested this new brand identifier, Where Boaters Belong, and it clearly evokes a strong, emotional connection with the boating community," said Ann Medford, senior managing director. "We believe this will translate into a much stronger overall position within the traditional marine environment as well as the consumer marketplace."

The new branding extends to all of the company's internal and external communications, which includes Sea Tow's website, traditional and new media advertising initiatives, promotional items and all collateral materials used by the company's nationwide franchise network.

Sea Tow serves more than 170,000 members in more than 121 locations throughout the United States, Europe, Australia, Bahamas and Puerto Rico. For more information, visit [www.seatow.com](http://www.seatow.com).

### COMITT Draws More than 100 Participants

More than 100 marine industry educators, manufacturers, marine trade associations and workforce development professionals took part in the third Conference on Marine Industry Technical Training (COMITT) held Feb. 18-20, 2008, in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Produced by the Marine Industry Technical Education Council, and co-sponsored by the American Boat & Yacht Council (ABYC), the National

Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) and *Professional Boatbuilder* magazine, the conference concentrated on strategies to recruit and retain marine-industry employees, addressing a workforce shortage that has become a severe problem in the industry.

The conference kicked off with a three-hour open networking session designed to highlight the primary concerns and objectives of attendees. This activity helped attendees to make immediate connections and provided them with valuable insights into the top three problems attendees felt the industry faced: workforce availability, workforce competence and workforce retention.

Attendees then participated in targeted seminars and panel discussions, closing out the conference with a concluding networking session in which each attendee was asked to state one action item that he or she could put into play immediately.

For additional information on COMITT, visit [www.comitt.org](http://www.comitt.org).

### Storm Sinks "Pirate" Ship in Bahamas

#### BoatU.S. Rental Emergency Beacon and Good Samaritans Save Crew of Five

A rented emergency rescue beacon from the BoatU.S. Foundation for Boating Safety & Clean Water and good Samaritans aboard a local dive boat helped prevent the loss of five lives aboard a weather-beaten "pirate" ship that took on water and sank Feb. 27 near the Bahamas.



The *Treasure Seeker*, a 65-foot, diesel-powered pirate ship replica was being relocated from St. Petersburg, Fla., to St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, when it experienced stormy sea conditions on the evening of Feb. 26. A routine crew check early the next morning found water rising in the bilge. After it was determined it could not be fixed, the *Treasure Seeker's* captain activated their Emergency Position

Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB), which had been acquired through the BoatU.S. EPIRB Rental Program.

Unbeknownst to *Treasure Seeker's* crew, the U.S. Coast Guard in Miami, Fla. received the EPIRB's distress signal – which includes GPS location information – and immediately relayed the emergency call to local mariners in the Bahamas. The 104-foot dive boat SV *Juliet*, which was departing Turks and Caicos at the time, heard the USCG call and diverted 45 miles to the sinking boat's location and safely removed all five persons from *Treasure Seeker*. The SV *Juliet* then safely returned *Treasure Seeker's* crew to Turks and Caicos.

The captain of the "pirate" ship later commented that without the EPIRB from BoatU.S., the rescue most likely would not have been successful because the only other calls for help – Maydays sent over the vessel's VHF radio – never received a response.

The BoatU.S. Foundation EPIRB Rental Program is funded by the voluntary contributions of 650,000 BoatU.S. members. The \$750 EPIRBs can be rented from the Foundation for as little as \$40 a week and are intended to fill the short-term safety need for occasional offshore passages. For more information, call 888.663.7472 or visit <http://www.BoatUS.com/foundation/epirb>. ■

# The Challenge of Navigation Rules Compliance



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

How many boaters do you think are knowledgeable of the specific regulations concerning which vessel has the right of way on the water, or of the specific lighting or sound-producing requirements for different types of vessels? Further, how many on-the-water officers really know the specific rules?

It can be a daunting task to learn the Navigation Rules; and yet, it's one of the most important set of regulations on the waterways. It's vital that everyone operating a boat on the water be completely familiar with these rules, particularly the ones that apply on the waters on which they're operating.

In an annual review of the boating accident statistics, you will see that the majority of accidents involve collisions, groundings, strikes and other operator controllable incidents. These accidents result in a great deal of property damage, injuries and even deaths. In fact, in 2005, 24 percent of the recreational boating deaths were attributed to navigation rule violations, involving such things as reckless/negligent operation, excessive speed, improper lookout, operator inattention and failure to maneuver their vessel in an appropriate way to avoid a collision.

The lack of understanding of these rules and the serious results that have occurred due to these violations have caught the attention of the Coast Guard, the states and all of the boating safety partners. In the development of the Strategic Plan for the National Recreational Boating Safety Program, the many partnering organizations identified Operator Compliance with the Navigation Rules as a key objective, with an actual target to reduce the deaths caused by these violations from the baseline measurement of 24 percent of the deaths in 2005 to 19 percent in 2011.

This is an aggressive objective, but a very necessary one. It's vital to the boating community that all boaters understand how to properly operate their vessels. This enhances safety, and it enhances the enjoyment of the recreational boating experience. To help achieve this worthy task, we pose a challenge and a request to you: Help spread the word about the Navigation Rules to the boating community, and become an expert yourself.

To learn more about the Navigation Rules, read the article below by LTJG Cortese. Plus, if you're not already an expert, become more familiar with the Navigation Rules International-Inland publication (COMDTINST MI6672.2C) and take an advanced course. This information is vital to your capability as a safe boater and especially as a marine patrol officer.





# Navigation Rules of the Road

By LTJG Michael Cortese, USCG Marine Law Enforcement Academy

How many of us have been enjoying a leisurely cruise on the water with our families and had another boater cut across the bow at a dangerously close distance? Or perhaps you have seen the silhouette of a small sailboat just after sunset, only to get closer to find it is a large yacht without navigation lights. These deviations from the navigation rules of the road not only demonstrate poor seamanship, but they make the water less safe for all of us.

Many boaters may be asking the same question: What are the navigational rules of the road (commonly referred to as NAVRULs, COLREGS, or just The Rules)? How do these rules apply to the recreational boater? How do the rules apply to the maritime law enforcement officer? Here we will discuss this and leave you with a fundamental understanding of the applicability of the rules.

First, a definition. The *Navigation Rules of the Road* are a published set of regulations that discuss the conduct of vessels on all navigable international and inland waterways.

They provide a framework for the boater – recreational, commercial or otherwise – to safely operate a vessel. Copies of this publication may be purchased from the Government Printing Office, 202-512-1800, (NSN 7642-01-448-2151, 050-012-00407-2) or downloaded at <http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/mwv/navrules/navrules.htm>.

Next, it is important to point out the applicability to the common boater. Some rules, such as the required navigation light display for a submarine, have rare applicability for the weekend boating enthusiast. Some rules may seem

downright abstract, such as the navigation light requirement for seaplanes. Other rules, such as how to safely overtake another vessel, are important for anyone who casts off mooring lines.

In order to get a full grasp of the rules, a prudent mariner would take the time to fully review the *Navigation Rules of the Road*. Other sources for this information include boating supply companies, such as West Marine, Boaters World and BoatU.S., who also carry NAVRUL's pocket guides or Quick Reference tools. For the maritime patrol officer, many jurisdictions have "job-aids" that can assist officers as well as civilian boaters.

Finally, how does all this apply to the maritime law enforcement officer? At the heart of it, the navigation rules aim to make the waters safer for all boaters. In the Strategic Plan of the National Recreational Boating Safety Program, the Coast Guard published the objective to reduce deaths due to navigation rules violations from 24 percent of total maritime deaths in 2005 to 19 percent of total deaths in 2011. As a maritime law enforcement officer, our objective is to protect and serve and save lives. With a quarter of marine deaths due to NAVRUL infractions, a wise officer will take every opportunity to educate the boating public.

The second intersection of law enforcement officer and the navigation rules occurs at enforcement. Different jurisdictions have different enforcement options for violations of the rules, ranging from simple misdemeanors to violation of criminal law. Again, a dedicated officer will take the time to learn his respective area of responsibility as well as the NAVRULs that are specific rules that are punishable by law.

Recognizing all rules, annexes and situations can be a daunting task. Recognizing the ones applicable to your boating area, recreational habits or emergency situations is something that should be done as commonly as remembering to put the bilge-plug in prior to launching. While many of us have forgotten the plug (I would guess many readers are smiling at this point – you know who you are), recent trends show more of us have forgotten the rules.

How many recreational boaters can recognize a crossing situation? How many maritime law enforcement officers can tell us the navigation light requirement for a 38-foot cabin cruiser? We have all heard the old adage "Common sense is not so common." A thorough understanding of the navigation rules is our opportunity to ensure that we have the common sense we need to be safe on the water.

For additional information on the *Navigation Rules of the Road*, as well as other information regarding recreational boating safety questions you may have, we recommend that you contact your local U.S. Coast Guard or Auxiliary Unit or check our website at [www.USCGboating.org](http://www.USCGboating.org). ■

## Rules for Safe Boating



Commodore Ed Sweeney  
National Directorate  
Commodore for Recreational  
Boating Safety  
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

Boating and summertime go hand in hand. And while the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary wants everyone to have fun out on the water, we also want everyone to come home safe. In the course of our patrols, we notice that not everyone is familiar with the navigation rules or prepared for emergencies. It also seems as though common sense is often left ashore. Take, for instance, the following incident that happened in Sacramento, Calif., last summer.

It was a warm summer day, and a family of four was celebrating their 13-year-old's birthday. They'd rented a boat and were taking him wakeboarding on the Sacramento River. Little did they know that this idyllic scene would almost lead to a double tragedy simply because they were unfamiliar with the navigation rules, were ill-prepared for emergencies, and left their common sense ashore.

As the family enjoyed their outing and the 13-year-old was wakeboarding, they inadvertently entered the no-wake zone in Old Sacramento. As the father slowed down and the boat came off plane, the 13-year-old (who had his right arm in a full cast!) fell back into the water. Although he was wearing a life jacket that kept him afloat, he was unable to swim or maneuver himself back to the towrope or the boat. He quickly began drifting downstream in the two-knot current. The boy began to panic and screamed for his dad to help him. Without thinking, the father dove overboard and began swimming toward the son, who was now approximately 25 yards downstream of the boat. The dad quickly became tired himself and called to his wife, who was still in the boat with their daughter. He cried out to her, "maneuver the boat to me – I don't think I can swim much further." She anxiously replied, "I don't know how to do that."

Fortunately, a Coast Guard Auxiliary patrol vessel had just entered the no-wake zone from the opposite direction. They picked up both the father and son, and then maneuvered alongside the drifting rental boat to reunite them with the rest of the family.

While this case had a happy ending, it easily could have ended tragically. Let's look at some of the "lessons learned" by our family in this case:

- **Use common sense and be familiar with the navigation rules:** While the family wanted to celebrate their son's birthday, allowing him to wakeboard with a full cast on his right arm didn't make sense. Granted, they did make sure his cast was protected from the water and that he had a properly fitting life jacket on (which probably saved his life in this case), but sometimes a life jacket isn't enough to help someone stay safe. You must use common sense and be familiar with the navigation rules to avoid tragedy.

- **Always wear a life jacket at all times when on a boat:** While not legally required to do so, the dad in this case should have been wearing a life jacket. It's a good idea to wear a life jacket at all times when on or around the water. Had he donned a life jacket before diving in to help his son, he would have prevented himself from a potential drowning risk. Boating disasters and accidents strike quickly, yet most people say they'll just put on a life jacket when they need to. That's like saying "I'll buckle my seat belt in my car right before I get in a crash." With today's lightweight life jackets, there is really no reason not to wear a life jacket while on the water.

- **Be prepared for emergencies and take a boating safety course:** In our case, the dad was the only person on board who knew how to operate the boat. Once he dove overboard and started to swim after the son who was drifting downstream, he automatically endangered both the wife and the daughter in the boat because they had no idea how to operate the boat. Boaters should prepare themselves for emergencies on the water. Also, a good skipper briefs everyone on board about emergency procedures, where the equipment is located, and how to operate the boat. Taking a few extra minutes to familiarize your passengers with these items before leaving the dock may save a life – most likely your own!

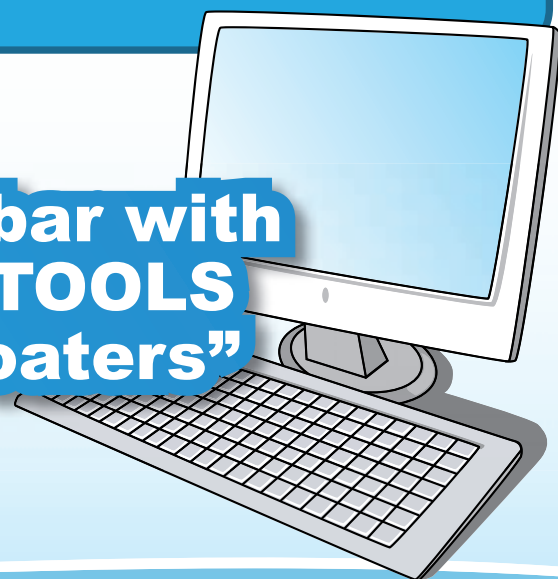
While hindsight is always 20/20, everyone can see that these well-meaning parents really dodged a double disaster. Hopefully the lessons learned on their son's 13th birthday will be a lesson for us all. ■

# CHAPTER 6: NAVIGATION

## Collision Avoidance Rules



**“Setting the bar with  
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for today’s boaters”**



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Lexington KY 40511

Change Service Requested



## JUNE 2008

17-19 **NASBLA**  
Boating Under the Influence Detection  
& Enforcement Training  
(Train-the-Trainer Course)  
Madison, Wisconsin  
859.225.9487  
chris@nasbla.org

26-27 **National Safe Boating Council**  
Executive Board Meeting  
Washington, D.C.  
703.361.4294

28-July 2 **National Sheriffs' Association**  
Annual Conference  
Indianapolis, Indiana

## JULY 2008

15-17 **NASBLA**  
Boating Under the Influence Detection  
& Enforcement Training  
Pearl City, Hawaii (on the island of Oahu)  
859.225.9487  
chris@nasbla.org

28-Aug 1 **NASBLA**  
Summer Executive Board Meeting  
Bangor, Maine  
859.225.9487  
info@nasbla.org

## AUGUST 2008

16-19 **American Society of Association Executives**  
Annual Meeting  
San Diego, California  
www.asaecenter.org

17-24 **U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary**  
National Conference (NACON)  
Orlando, Florida

## SEPTEMBER 2008

2-7 **United States Power Squadrons**  
Governing Board Meeting  
Detroit, Michigan  
888.367.8777  
www.usps.org

6-10 **NASBLA**  
Annual Conference  
Clearwater Beach, Florida  
859.225.9487  
info@nasbla.org

7-12 **Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies**  
Annual Conference  
Saratoga Springs, New York  
202.624.7890  
info@fishwildlife.org

24-27 **Canadian Safe Boating Council**  
Annual Symposium  
Stoney Lake, Ontario  
905.820.4817  
www.csbc.ca

28-Oct 1 **Marine Tactical**  
Maritime Law Enforcement &  
Security Conference  
Baltimore, Maryland  
www.marinetactical.com/subscription/  
mainad.aspx

## OCTOBER 2008

6-8 **International Boat Builders' Exhibition & Conference**  
Miami Beach, Florida  
www.ibexshow.com

11 **National Boating Federation**  
Fall Meeting  
Tri Cities, Washington  
707.644.9016  
www.n-b-f.org

16-19 **US Sailing**  
Fall Meeting  
St. Petersburg, Florida  
401.683.0800  
www.ussailing.org

20-24 **NASBLA**  
National Boating Accident Investigation  
& Analysis - Level 2 Training  
Ashburn, Virginia  
859.225.9487  
chris@nasbla.org

22-25 **Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons**  
Annual General Meeting and  
National Conference  
Windsor, Ontario  
888.277.2628 x.26  
www.cps-ecp.ca

30-Nov 3 **Ft. Lauderdale International Boat Show**  
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida  
www.showmanagement.com/  
fort\_lauderdale\_international\_boat\_show/  
event

## NOVEMBER 2008

17-19 **Marine Retailers Association of America**  
Annual Conference  
Las Vegas, Nevada  
http://mraa.com/

## JANUARY 2009

7-10 **US Sailing**  
National Programs Sailing Symposium  
San Diego, California  
401.683.0800  
www.ussailing.org

## FEBRUARY 2009

17-22 **United States Power Squadrons**  
Annual Meeting  
Anaheim, California  
888.367.8777  
www.usps.org

## MARCH 2009

15-18 **International Association of Marine Investigators**  
Annual Conference  
Portland, Oregon  
www.iami.org

## APRIL 2009

19-22 **National Safe Boating Council and National Water Safety Congress**  
International Boating & Water  
Safety Summit  
Panama City Beach, Florida  
www.safeboatingcouncil.org  
www.watersafetycongress.org

## SEPTEMBER 2009

26-30 **NASBLA**  
Annual Conference  
Corpus Christi, Texas  
859.225.9487  
info@nasbla.org