

# SCA

small craft advisory

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National Association of State Boating Law Administrators

A photograph of two men on a boat. The man on the left, wearing a dark blue jacket with 'MOUNTAIN' and 'CE' visible on the back, is holding a tablet and looking at the screen. The man on the right, wearing a white hoodie and a blue and yellow life vest, is looking towards the first man. They are on a boat with a white hull, and the background shows a body of water and a distant shoreline.

*E-TICKET  
technology*

**3-D animation**

***Finding the value  
in social media  
engagement***

# SCA

small craft advisory

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

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Editor **KIMBERLY JENKINS**

Art Director **CARLOS BARBÓN**  
**ANGSTROM GRAPHICS**

Circulation Director **SAM LYNCH**

## EDITORIAL OFFICES

1500 Leestown Road, Suite 330

Lexington, KY 40511

**PHONE:** 859.225.9487

**FAX:** 859.231.6403

**E-MAIL:** editor@nasbla.org

## About the Cover

Advances in technology continue to streamline our lives, both at home and on the job. One example of this streamlining in law enforcement is the development of e-ticket technology. Now officers can use a handheld device to access various databases, take photos, enter data and even print out warnings and citations. D.C. Metro Police photo

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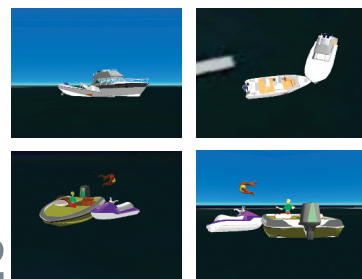
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Mike Fields  
NASBLA  
President



John Johnson  
NASBLA  
Executive Director

## Technology plays integral role in recreational boating safety

**M**ost of us are old enough to remember a time when email was considered cutting-edge technology. What a splendid day it was when we no longer had to stand over fax machines for hours on end to communicate in unison with 50 or so of our closest colleagues. But even that beat stuffing envelopes every time we needed to get the word out to the troops.

Technology has certainly changed the way many of us “do work” over the last couple of decades – both in the office and in the field – and it has clearly accelerated the pace of communication and collaboration. Although we wouldn’t characterize NASBLA as an early adopter of new technologies, we like to think we utilize and encourage an appropriate level in the use of technology among our members and partners.

In just the last few years, NASBLA has come to make great use of project management and communications platforms that allow our staff and volunteers from across the country to effectively collaborate on hundreds of different projects. For example, we use Basecamp to organize our work, share product development tasks with our peers, and archive reference documents and other materials for our future research needs. In combination with other technologies, like teleconferences and Skype video conferences, the online accessibility of products like Basecamp helps us communicate better and hold down costs associated with meeting face to face.

NASBLA’s new Connected Community provides a whole new level of online networking capabilities among our members and the broader recreational boating safety and maritime security communities. This platform allows our members to organize and develop their own communities of interest around topics and issues that are important to them. Anyone within the NASBLA network has the ability to create his or her own discussion boards, directories, blogs and libraries for sharing documents to advance key issues about which he or she is

passionate. These virtual communities provide rich opportunities for thought leaders involved in every aspect of the association’s mission to coalesce other like-minded individuals around shared priorities.

In 2012, the association will roll out the first two in a series of e-learning products and programs that allow participants to acquire knowledge and training from NASBLA at a time and place of their choosing. Products including an online navigation rules violation training course for marine law enforcement officers and a series of technical modules for boat accident investigation training are forthcoming this spring. The online courses are designed with the officer in mind and are intended to provide asynchronous training so that the marine patrol officer will be able to spend more time in the field and less time in the classroom.

Technology is not only advancing productivity, collaboration and communication in the association world of project management and communities of practice, but we are also seeing member agencies move quickly to adopt new technologies to advance productivity in the field as well as to improve officer safety. Just last year, for example, NASBLA received anecdotal evidence that simple technologies like cutoff switches and lanyards have saved the life of more than one marine patrol officer.

Use of technologies including side scan sonars, smartphone applications, mobile data terminals and GPS (Global Positioning Systems) forensics is changing the way our agencies arm and equip their officers in the 21st century. Many of these technologies are benefiting our recreational boating safety programs courtesy of homeland security expenditures. Port Security grant dollars are helping to augment many state agencies’ technological capacity and capabilities on the water – which makes good sense, given the multi-mission nature of most of our member agencies.

We think this is just the tip of the technology iceberg, and NASBLA is working hard to foster the appropriate uses of technology, particularly as it relates to the law enforcement officer in the field. In fact, NASBLA is so committed to technology that we created a standing subcommittee not only to vet the prospects among the burgeoning technology field but also to test and recommend platforms that we believe can have a significant impact on operations, efficiency and effectiveness. The association’s Technology and Techniques Subcommittee (of the Enforcement & Training Committee) has adopted a slate of charges for 2012 that will continue to showcase critical marine enforcement technologies. (You might want to follow their progress on Basecamp, unless we can convince Chairman Joel Wilkinson to begin tweeting the committee deliberations to you in real time!)

On January 1, 2012, NASBLA also demonstrated its commitment to technology in the (virtual) classroom when its new National Education Standards for time-managed courses became effective. Although the association has maintained standards for online delivery of boater education courses for many years, NASBLA set the bar a lot higher with this new online standard for presentation and delivery. As of Jan. 1, all online providers are required to present their courses in a format that requires the students to spend a specified amount of time on each module, encouraging them to sufficiently review and retain course material. We believe this format will result in improved learning outcomes and further technological innovations to spur the growth in online education.

Whether in the aid of law enforcement, education or myriad other potential applications, technology has become an integral component of recreational boating safety and marine security. As we look toward the future, you can expect NASBLA to continue scanning the horizon for more promising uses of technology to make our jobs easier, but more importantly, to make our efforts more effective. ✱

# Gaining a new perspective

## What if people drove their cars the way they drive boats?

By Tom Guess  
Boating Law Administrator  
Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries

I never knew that when I was a Boy Scout and signed up to take my canoeing merit badge at Camp Chanco near Bracey, Va., 29 years ago, it would lead me to a lifetime of public safety and boating safety work. Taking that class sparked an interest in the water for me that never subsided. When I was in my mid teens, I became a lifeguard, followed by two years as an emergency medical technician with a volunteer rescue squad. This no doubt fueled my desire to pursue a career in the U.S. Coast Guard, which finally landed me here with my Department of Game & Inland Fisheries family.

With all of my experiences working accidents and tragedies, I could never firmly grasp how just one or two simple poor decisions could lead to a person being severely injured or even killed. Now that I am heavily involved in boating safety, boating accidents and boating education, it puzzles me even more.

Decisions that boaters make either help them have a safe day on the water or contribute to having a dangerous day on the water. If you put some common

boating scenarios in the same context as driving a vehicle on the road, it's easy to see how glaring those poor decisions are and, also, how difficult it is to understand why people operate vessels the way they do on the water. Here are some questions to show you what I mean:

- If you were driving a car, would you ever imagine allowing a family member or child to go out onto the hood or the trunk and hang their feet over the side while you motored along at 15 or 20 miles per hour?
- If you were on a motorcycle, would you leave your driveway at a very high rate of speed, drive toward your neighbor's property line and, just before getting to the edge of their yard, jerk the handlebars, cut a donut, burn your tires, and then run at a high rate of speed in the opposite direction?
- Imagine getting into your convertible at 10 a.m. with a couple of friends. Before you leave, you put a cooler full of beer in the back seat. You hand everyone a beer and they start drinking; then you tear out of your

driveway and run through your neighborhood yelling and hollering with your cans in the air.

- Would you tie someone 30 to 50 feet behind your car on a wagon or some other object and pull that person at a high rate of speed through traffic, around other vehicles, or through a narrow opening on a wooded lot or under a bridge?

Of course, there are other factors at play while on land. But really, when making choices on the water while combining speed and alcoholic beverages and adding one or more sharp propellers to the mix, you are facing just as much – if not more – danger if you don't make the right choices to keep everyone aboard safe.

Until next time: Be Responsible, Be Safe, and Have Fun! ✱

From *Virginia Wildlife* magazine [August 2011]. Reprinted by permission of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

*The same precautions and safe driving techniques used when driving a car should also be taken when operating a boat. Otherwise, boaters could find themselves in a situation similar to the one featured at right. NJ State Police photo*

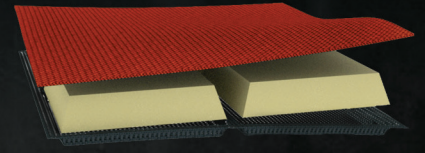


# THE CATALYST

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Field tested by professionals including Coast Guard training crews, our new revolutionary Catalyst Jacket and Coat will not only float you and keep you warm, but they are also waterproof, breathable and the most comfortable pieces of flotation clothing you'll ever wear.



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**WE SAVE LIVES FOR A LIVING**

# NASBLA News

## **NASBLA appoints new education director**

NASBLA has appointed former Ohio Boating Law Administrator Pam Dillon as its new education director. In this position Dillon provides support to the NASBLA Education Committee, manages and maintains the National Education Standards as the primary staff for the Education Standards Panel, and oversees and develops NASBLA's education grant program. Her other duties include managing and overseeing the NASBLA education course approval process and representing NASBLA's education interest.

"Pam shares NASBLA's enthusiasm and commitment for keeping our members' needs first and foremost," said NASBLA CEO John Johnson. "The Association as a whole is thrilled to have her on board as a part of the NASBLA staff, and we will



all undoubtedly benefit from her vast experience and love for the boating community." Pam can be reached at [pam@nasbla.org](mailto:pam@nasbla.org).

## **New Education Standards Panel chair selected**

NASBLA appointed Jeffrey Johnson, Alaska's boating law administrator, as the new chair of the Education Standards Panel. Johnson fills a vacancy created by former Panel chair Pam Dillon, who stepped down to become NASBLA's education director. The objective of the Education Standards Panel is to review, develop and revise the National Boating Education Standards using open, consensus-based procedures that conform to the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) essential requirements for due process. The seated Panel will review the National Boating Education Standards on a five-year basis.



"As chair of this Panel, Jeff Johnson's vast experience with boating education standards as well as boating safety will be a valuable asset to achieving its ongoing objective," said NASBLA CEO John Johnson.



## **Magazine and editor win three MarCom Awards**

*Small Craft Advisory* and NASBLA Editor Kimberly Jenkins have won three MarCom Awards, given annually by the Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals:

- "Taking a Different Tack on Learning"  
– Feature Writing – **Platinum**
- *Small Craft Advisory* –  
Magazine/Nonprofit – **Gold**
- "Navigating the Ins and Outs of  
Volunteerism" – News Writing –  
**Honorable Mention**

This was the first year NASBLA entered this international awards competition. The MarCom Awards recognize outstanding creative achievement by marketing and communication professionals. There were over 6,000 entries from throughout the United States, Canada and several other countries in the 2011 competition.

### **NASBLA to offer airboat operator training**

NASBLA has partnered with Applied Marine Technologies to develop a national standard of training for the airboat operator in meeting the "all hazards" mission. This training translates to all operational environments and will



challenge even the seasoned airboat operator in perfecting operational and maintenance ability in the field – when it counts. To guarantee delivery of this training, students must register early to assure a minimum class size of 10 students (maximum class size is limited to 20 students). For more information about the Airboat Training, contact John Fetterman, director of law enforcement, at [john.fetterman@nasbla.org](mailto:john.fetterman@nasbla.org).

### **NASBLA releases new BOAT Program video online**

To learn more about the Boat Operations and Training (BOAT) program, check out the new video, *Are you Ready!*



Providing an informative visual of what the BOAT program is and who it represents, this video is a comprehensive overview of the mission of the BOAT program as a whole, as well as individual class offerings. This video can also help agencies identify which classes are right for them. The video is available at [www.nasbla.org](http://www.nasbla.org) and <http://goo.gl/zgEJs>. ✱

**Ask yourself if you, your agency and your partners on the water are ready to respond as one force. Do you train to a common standard? Do you utilize the same standard of response to the "all hazard" mission on the water?**

**If not, NASBLA's BOAT Program is built upon an exportable training delivery model. Today you can train to a national standard in your own boats, in your area of responsibility, with your area partners.**

**Call today and learn how you can become a force multiplier on the water in the safety and security of our nation's waterways.**

**Mark DuPont  
National BOAT Program Director  
[mark.dupont@nasbla.org](mailto:mark.dupont@nasbla.org)  
859.225.9487**

# ARE YOU READY?

### **CURRENT OFFERINGS:**

*Basic Crew Member  
Navigation Rules for Law Enforcement  
Boat Operations for Search and Rescue  
Accident Investigation  
Motorboat Muffler Enforcement  
Boating Under the Influence  
Officer Survival  
Methods of Instruction  
Airboat Operator  
Tactical Operator  
Pursuit and Stop*

**John C. Fetterman**

**Director of Law Enforcement  
National Association of  
State Boating Law Administrators**

**1500 Leestown Rd, Suite 330  
Lexington, KY 40511**

**[www.nasbla.org/boat](http://www.nasbla.org/boat)  
859.225.9487**

# New act **establishes** certificate of title **system for boats**

**A** new act approved last summer by a national law group establishes a certificate of title system for boats and other watercraft. The Uniform Certificate of Title Act for Vessels was approved July 12, 2011, by the Uniform Law Commission (ULC) at its 120th Annual Meeting in Vail, Colorado.

In the United States, record ownership of vessels is governed by a composite of state and federal law. Some large commercial vessels must be documented with the U.S. Coast Guard National Vessel Documentation Center. Other vessels – those used mainly for recreational purposes – may be, but need not be, documented with the U.S. Coast Guard.

Less than one percent of vessels in the United States are documented; most of the remainder are pleasure boats operated as undocumented vessels. Federal law requires that most undocumented vessels equipped with an engine be issued a number by the state in which the vessel is used.

Congress enacted the Vessel Identification System (VIS) in 1988 to create a central database of information, maintained by the Coast Guard, about vessels and their owners. States are not required to make

their boat numbering and titling information available to VIS, but they are encouraged to do so.

Although all 50 states and the territories have boat numbering systems that comply with the federal regulations, there is far less uniformity with respect to state certificate of title laws for undocumented vessels. Though the majority of states require certain undocumented vessels to be covered by a certificate of title, many states have no certificate of title law for vessels. Even among the states that require certificates of title for undocumented vessels, the variation in those laws is substantial.

However, no state's certificate of title law for undocumented vessels has received the requisite Coast Guard approval. One of the main purposes of this act is to provide states with a model that the Coast Guard will approve.

The major objectives of the Uniform Certificate of Title Act for Vessels are to:

- qualify as a state titling law that the Coast Guard will approve;
- facilitate transfers of ownership of a vessel;
- deter and impede the theft of vessels by making information about the

ownership of vessels available to both government officials and those interested in acquiring an interest in a vessel;

- accommodate existing financing arrangements for vessels; and
- provide certain consumer protections when purchasing a vessel through the act's branding initiative.

The act's branding rules may be its greatest innovation. No state currently brands the title of vessels through its statutory language, with the result that vessels with hidden hull damage can be resold after cosmetic repairs without disclosure of the damage. By establishing a model vessel brand "hull-damaged," this act provides a mechanism for consumers, insurers, and lenders to receive valuable information, which in turn can prompt further investigation, help ensure that necessary repairs are made, and aid in boating safety. The act encourages compliance with its branding rules by imposing an administrative penalty on owners and insurers who fail to comply.

Further information on the Uniform Certificate of Title Act for Vessels can be found at the ULC's website [www.uniformlaws.org](http://www.uniformlaws.org). ✱



# Curious **cubes** complement communication

By Kimberly Jenkins

**H**ave you seen funny-looking boxes like the one above? They're becoming more common, popping up on shampoo bottles, cereal boxes, TV ads and restaurant fliers, in magazines and e-mails, on billboards, business cards and even T-shirts.

These boxes are called QR codes, short for Quick Response codes. They come to us from Japan, where they were first created in the 1990s by the automotive industry to track vehicles during the manufacturing process. The box is similar to a barcode in that it stores information that can be quickly decoded. However, a QR code can hold a much larger amount of information than the traditional barcode.

These codes are making print more interactive. They provide quick and easy access coupons, videos, maps and other information. Some businesses even make it possible for customers to pay for their purchases, enter a contest or earn loyalty points by scanning QR codes.

Anyone with a smartphone can scan and read QR codes with the click of a camera. All that's needed is a barcode scanning app, such as QR Reader, Barcode Scanner or RedLaser. QR codes can also be read with a computer that's equipped with a webcam and QR code-reading software. Additionally, anyone with access to a computer can generate his or her own QR codes for free and link them to anything – from URLs to contact information to a GPS location.

## Using technology to reach boaters

With more and more people having access to the Internet through their cell phones, QR codes are becoming increasingly practical for state agencies to provide information to their constituents.

The Arkansas Department of Parks & Tourism touts Arkansas as the first state to use QR codes to place tourism and travel information into the public's hands. The website adds that the department, working with two ad agencies, introduced the codes into their advertising campaign in October 2009.

The Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) began using QR codes last year in order to get more information out to recreational boaters.



"We've used QR codes in print where space allocation was at a minimum to link boaters to online messaging such as [www.fishandboat.com/wear-it-message.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/wear-it-message.htm)," said Ted Walke, PFBC graphic artist. "We've used them in our magazine and our fishing summary book, linking to safe boating messages and resources. In order to cross-link waterfowl hunters to the Fish & Boat Commission's life jacket web page, we were able to convince our sister agency, the Game

Commission, to include a QR code in its annual hunting digest."

Another organization that has been using QR codes is the National Safe Boating Council. The nonprofit boating safety organization recently produced the Wear It! QR code poster – a downloadable resource for your outreach efforts available at [www.SafeBoatingCampaign.com](http://www.SafeBoatingCampaign.com). Use a QR app on your smartphone to scan the codes on the poster for direct links to the web pages labeled. This poster identifies the key resources available through the Wear It! campaign through this simple layout, rather than having too much information on the poster.

## Create your own QR codes

With numerous websites available that can help generate QR codes, it's easy to create your own.

First, you need to determine the purpose of your QR code. Do you want users to see a simple message, watch a video, enter a contest, learn more about your agency or answer a survey?

Next, find a QR code generator online. Mashable.com recommends Kaywa ([qrcode.kaywa.com](http://qrcode.kaywa.com)) as one of the simplest and most popular non-commercial services. Other sites include Zxing Project, delivr, QR Stuff, Qurify or Maestro for some different approaches and specific feature-sets.

After selecting the code-generator that will work best for your needs, add your content. Then download your code.

It's very important to make sure the code works. The final step is to share the code. Embed it in your website, and add it to brochures, guides, signs, handouts, etc. ✴

# new BLAs

## Lt. Colonel Jeff Weaver

### Georgia



With Blue Ridge, Georgia, as his home, Jeff Weaver spent countless hours boating, fishing and skiing on Lake Blue Ridge (an impoundment managed by the Tennessee Valley Authority) and trout fishing and canoeing on the Toccoa River.

"Growing up in Southern Appalachia hunting, fishing and boating no doubt had a tremendous impact on my life and

led me to a career in conservation law enforcement," said Weaver.

Weaver continues to participate in outdoor pursuits, including boating on his pontoon and two personal watercraft.

Weaver earned his associate's degree from Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College and his bachelor of science degree in criminal justice from Columbus State University. He went on to attend Georgia Law Enforcement Command College, a Georgia Law Enforcement Executive Development seminar, the FBI-National Academy, and the 19th Delegation Georgia International Law Enforcement Exchange.

Weaver became Georgia's BLA on December 1, 2011, succeeding longtime BLA and NASBLA past president Terry West. February 2012 marks 23 years for Weaver with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement. He served as a field officer and supervisor in Northwest Georgia where he gained

invaluable experience in the boating enforcement arena while patrolling Lake Allatoona (one of the most heavily visited Corps of Engineers lakes in the Southeast). He served as a region supervisor for east-central Georgia, and he spent the last eight years as assistant chief of the Law Enforcement Section.

When discussing improving boating safety, Weaver said, "By and large on the national level, excessive alcohol and excessive speed coupled with inattentiveness continue to cause boating accidents and deaths. Georgia has a very solid and progressive boating under the influence enforcement program.

We will continue to educate the boating public of the dangers of BUI, and the benefits of boater education and life jacket wear."

He said Georgia will monitor trends and statistics to tailor patrol and education efforts and seek out cutting-edge training for officers so as to provide the best customer service to the state's boaters.

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## Wade Alonzo

### Washington



Originally from Orofino, Idaho, home of the Orofino Maniacs and some of the biggest steelhead in the world, Wade Alonzo has lived in Washington since 1995. An avid boater, he owns a 15-foot

aluminum drift boat with a little 4 hp motor that he uses for fishing and crabbing. He loves getting out on the water with his family. "We are very blessed to be so close to the Puget Sound – a boater's paradise in my opinion," added Alonzo.

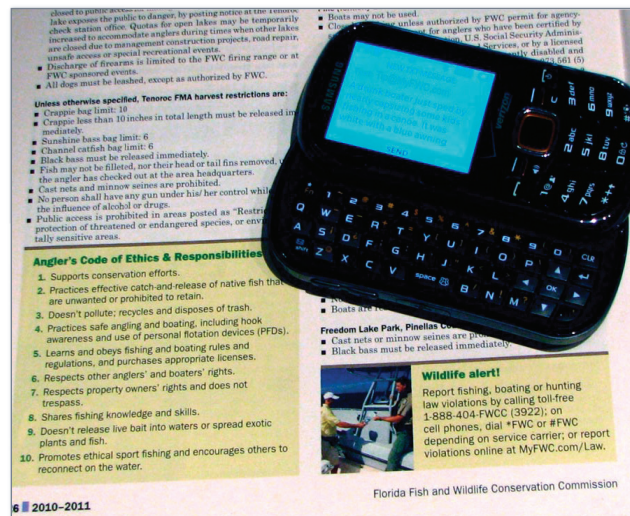
Alonzo became Washington's BLA following a reorganization of duties among staff within Washington State Parks. As Washington's boating law administrator, Alonzo is involved with the Washington Boating Alliance, the Agency Boating Committee (comprised of the Department of Natural Resources, Washington Fish and Wildlife, Recreation and Conservation Office, State Parks and Department of Licensing). In his spare time, he is a scoutmaster of Troop 9002 of Olympia, Washington.

Alonzo came from the Washington Department of Natural Resources where he spent the bulk of his career in a number of capacities; he acted as a legislative liaison, facilitated policy work groups, and conducted social marketing in the fire prevention program. Most recently, Alonzo was in the Aquatic Resources Program where he was involved with outreach planning and policy development.

"I think there are opportunities to explore marketing and outreach to the boating community through social media. I am very eager to start to reach out to my fellow BLAs – particularly in the western states – and start collaborating with them. I have a passion for social marketing that I hope will be useful to our program," said Alonzo. ✱

# FWC launches *new Technology* for Wildlife Alert

By Katie Purcell and Bob Wattendorf  
Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission



**T**he Wildlife Alert Reward Program has helped the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) catch thousands of violators through phone calls and online submissions from the public. Now, it is employing an additional method: text messaging.

The nonprofit, reward-based program was created 30 years ago to encourage citizens to report fish and wildlife law violations, for example, damaging habitat, polluting the water, using illegal gear, taking more than the bag limit or keeping undersized fish.

The program offers rewards in exchange for information leading to arrests. Members of the public can call the Wildlife Alert Hotline or go to [www.MyFWC.com/WildlifeAlert](http://www.MyFWC.com/WildlifeAlert) to report known or suspected violations. The newest, most real-time option is to send a text message to [Tip@MyFWC.com](mailto:Tip@MyFWC.com) (standard usage fees may apply).

"The text-messaging option makes it more convenient for the public," said Col. Jim Brown, director of the FWC's Division of Law Enforcement. "We also hope it will make Wildlife Alert even

more effective in catching poachers and other violators."

When submitting information via text message, the FWC encourages including as much information as possible, such as the specific violation and the location. Once a report is initiated, FWC dispatch has the ability to respond via text message to the reporting party to gather additional details.

The FWC is committed to protecting Florida's fish, wildlife and people. However, FWC officers can't always do it alone.

"While we make every effort to be conscious of any threats to our valuable natural resources and people, we often rely upon support and tips from members of the public," Brown said.

The FWC encourages people to report any known or suspected illegal activity, such as illegal hunting, taking saltwater game fish out of season, taking protected wildlife species, boating under the influence and more.

Through the highly successful Wildlife Alert Reward Program, when people's

information results in an arrest, they may become eligible for a reward of up to \$1,000. Callers and online reporters may remain anonymous; they do not have to provide their names or email addresses, and they will not be required to testify in court. A confidential code number is provided, so you will be eligible for a reward.

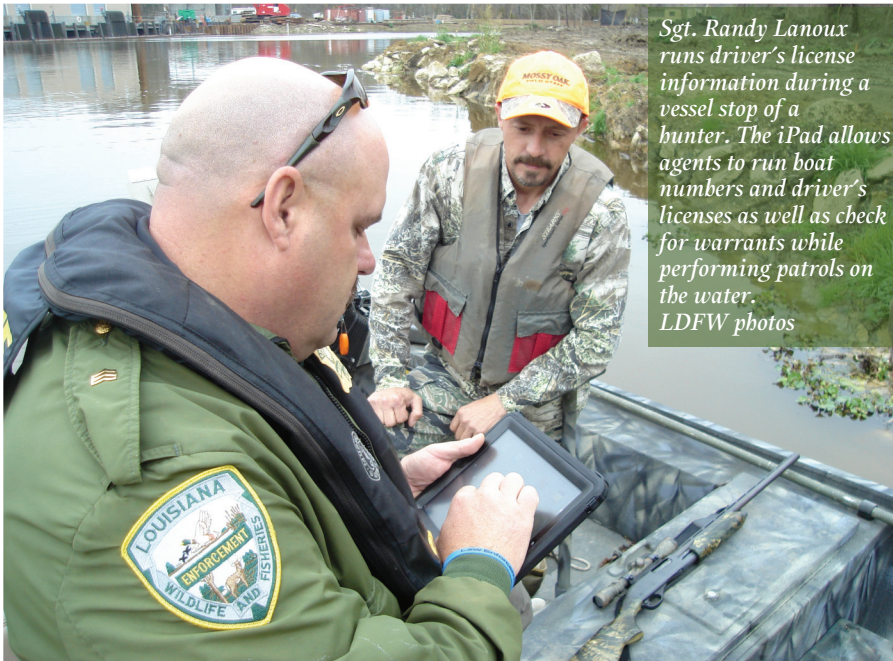
The real beauty of the program is that violators – through court fines – are the ones who pay the reward money. When a violator is found guilty, the judge can require a portion of the fine to be paid into the Wildlife Alert Reward Fund. So, in effect, violators are paying people to turn them in.

Many conservation-minded people don't even claim the reward because helping get the violators off the water or saving a life by reporting unsafe boaters, including boating under the influence, is reward enough.

For more information, visit [MyFWC.com/WildlifeAlert](http://MyFWC.com/WildlifeAlert). The Wildlife Alert Reward Program relies upon donations from the public and other nonprofit organizations. \*

# Agents of change

By Adam Einck  
Media Relations Officer  
Louisiana Department of  
Wildlife and Fisheries



*Sgt. Randy Lanoux runs driver's license information during a vessel stop of a hunter. The iPad allows agents to run boat numbers and driver's licenses as well as check for warrants while performing patrols on the water. LDFW photos*

**K**eeping up with technology can be a daunting task, but it's something every person, school and organization has to accomplish in order to conduct their lives and business in today's society. Law enforcement agencies are no different, including the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) Enforcement Division.

With ever-increasing duties and responsibilities in wildlife and fisheries enforcement, acquiring the technological advances helps increase the efficiency and effectiveness of limited staff and resources. The LDWF Enforcement Division has recently implemented multiple technology-driven tactics and

equipment to assist agents with boating safety, day-to-day duties, investigations, conservation cases, search and rescue missions, maritime security and public and agent safety.



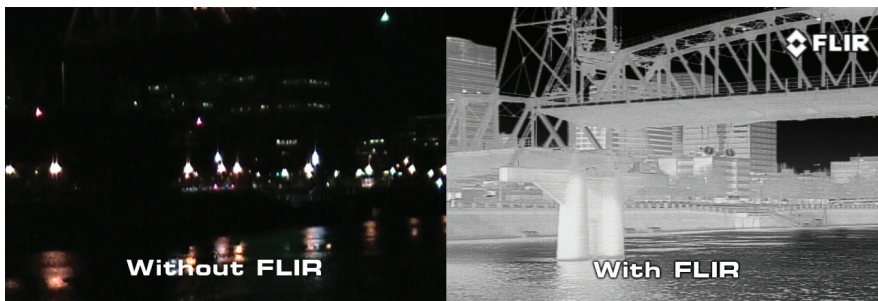
*This torpedo-shaped sonar is towed behind boats and can reach depths of 2,000 feet to give agents a visual of the water bottom when looking for evidence, sunken vessels or deceased bodies.*

During the past year, LDWF acquired sidescan sonars and thermal imaging systems to help with search and rescue, evidence recovery, port and maritime security, commercial and recreational fishing cases and night hunting cases.

LDWF currently has three sidescan sonars and 15 trained agents to use the sonars in the water, with plans to add two more sonars and 10 trained agents over the coming months. These sonars are strategically located throughout the state so that they can be deployed to areas of need quickly to help look for missing boaters, sunken vessels, and threats to port and maritime security as well as help secure case evidence in the water.

The sonars are torpedo-shaped and deployed into the water as they are towed by a vessel. The vessel's speed determines how deep the sonars will dive into the water; and a laptop screen in the vessel displays the images the sonars capture. The 50-pound sonars can be deployed at a maximum operating depth of 2,000 feet and can capture up to 80 meters in a half moon shape of imagery from the water.

LDWF acquired 100 portable handheld thermal imaging systems that can be used in trucks, on foot and in boats. LDWF also has 25 thermal imaging systems that are mounted in boats but are not portable and limited to the vessel. LDWF chose thermal imaging over traditional night vision because it is not limited by low light, restricted visibility and range.



*Using thermal imaging devices, agents on patrol at night are able to see much better, improving safety for themselves and the public. FLIR Systems Inc. photos*

Agents must patrol at night in vessels, trucks, all-terrain vehicles and on foot, which can endanger them and the public. The purchase of handheld thermal imaging cameras provides LDWF agents with technology that is portable and can be used for any night patrol situation.

“Providing agents with sonar and thermal imaging technology enhances their ability to provide resource protection, public safety and maritime security at night more safely, and collect more evidence for boating incident investigations including body recovery,” said Lt. Spencer Cole, who assisted in acquiring the sonars and thermal imaging equipment.

LDWF initiated its tip411 program in October 2011 as part of an enhancement to its existing Operation Game Thief program, which may offer a cash reward for information leading to arrests or convictions. To use the tip411 program, citizens can text “LADWF” and their tip to 847411 or download the “LADWF Tips” iPhone app from the Apple iTunes store free of charge. CitizenObserver, the tip411 provider, uses technology that removes all identifying information before LDWF receives the text so that LDWF cannot identify the sender.

Texting or downloading the app enables the public to send anonymous tips to LDWF and lets LDWF respond back, creating a two-way anonymous “chat.” Users of the app or texters can also send in photos to help support their claim and be used as evidence.

“We’re proud to make this technology available to our citizens free of charge. This tip411 program will help our citizens play an active role in helping us enforce current conservation rules and regulations,” said LDWF Col. Winton Vidrine, head of the Enforcement Division. “This program engages younger folks in the process and it will save our agency time and resources when actively responding to complaints.”

The tip411 program has already led to multiple cases ranging from overlimit of ducks to alligator violations. LDWF monitors the tip411 program and Operation Game Thief toll free hotline (1-800-442-2511) for incoming tips 24 hours a day.

Starting this past summer, every LDWF agent was issued an Apple iPad with Wi-Fi and 3G cellular connectivity for use in the field. The LDWF Enforcement Division was looking at getting each agent a ruggedized laptop, but found that the iPad would be thousands of dollars less expensive per unit and would offer more portability and connectivity.

The iPad allows agents to file offense, investigation and boating incident reports; receive and respond to emails while on patrol on the water or in the woods; run driver’s licenses, check for warrants and run boating numbers; and download fish identification, fishing and hunting regulations, and daylight calculator apps.

“We couldn’t have asked for a smoother transition, as the agents have taken to the



user friendliness, convenience factor and usefulness the iPads provide,” said Capt. Cliff Comeaux, who assisted in obtaining, issuing and configuring the iPads for field use. “Now we can contact each agent in the state by email while he or she is on duty and the agent can respond. Agents can also carry the iPad in their trucks, boats or while on foot easily, since the iPad is light and small, allowing them to easily access websites and apps to look up boating registration, license or regulation information.”

LDWF gave each agent a day of training with the device that included setting up a free iTunes account, installing his or her work email address and providing a policy of pre-approved apps and websites.

“With these technology improvements, agents can use their time more efficiently, cover more ground and focus their patrol efforts in a safer manner,” said Lt. Col. Jeff Mayne, the state’s boating law administrator. “The tip411 program has already paid dividends in helping us solve some high profile cases; sonar and thermal imaging has helped us search water bottoms and see at night; and the iPads have allowed agents to be mobile while remaining in constant contact.”

Col. Winton Vidrine added, “Without receiving federal grant dollars these technological advances would have not been possible. State budget cuts and work force reductions continue to hamper the operation of the department’s enforcement division. These equipment acquisitions and program advances have at least maintained the division’s technological improvements.” ✱

# 3-D animation in recreational boating accident investigation

By Matt Majors  
Investigator  
Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency

Every officer who works in the recreational boating safety field and is tasked with the investigation of boating accidents is equipped with unique training and a working knowledge of the marine environment. Many of these men and women have received extensive accident investigation training through the National Association of Boating Law Administrators' (NASBLA) Boat Operations and Training (BOAT) Program, which provides a great foundation for putting the puzzle pieces back together during a collision investigation and reconstruction.

One ongoing challenge for even the most seasoned investigator is not only to reconstruct the events leading up to, during and after the collision, but also to be able to explain what happened to a family, judge, jury or district attorney in a way that is easily understood. Routinely we may forget that these key players are not as familiar with boats and nautical terminology as we may be. A paper report with a narrative and a small crude diagram may not be enough



*Advances in technology are helping officers with their boat accident investigations. 3-D software allows an officer to produce a clear, detailed animated scene re-enacting the sequence of events in an incident. Here, the 3-D program shows the side view and the overhead view of an accident. TWRA images*

to effectively convey what happened in the crash. In many instances, it may leave more questions than answers.

We have all been there – the point in a boating accident investigation when the witness statements are finished, the boats are moved from the scene, all of your evidence is collected and processed, and the report is ready for its final touches. How we take what we know and successfully prepare an investigative file may vary from agency to agency. Each department may have different tools to produce a professional, stand-alone



report. More and more we are seeing investigators rely on advances in technology for assistance.

Tennessee has had its fair share of boating accidents throughout the years, and the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency's (TWRA) need to provide its officers with the necessary investigation tools has been a priority of law enforcement managers from the top down.

In 2006, TWRA began using Reportbeam, computer-based accident reporting software. The software contains a 2-D

diagramming component to allow officers statewide to create and import a professional diagram into the final report. With this concept in place, TWRA also provided the full-time boating officers and accident investigators statewide with Visual Statement's FX3 Animation software ([www.visualstatement.com](http://www.visualstatement.com)).

Using such technology has enabled Tennessee officers to bridge the gap between the days of hand-drawing a crash on graph paper and producing an easily understandable 3-D animated boating collision based on an officer's investigation and evidence collection that is second to none. This point was highlighted when TWRA officers successfully prosecuted a boat operator in 2010 for vehicular homicide. The 3-D animation of the crash was shown at the trial and considered a key piece of evidence for the prosecution.

FX3 is a very robust program that had its original marketing directed toward



the highway traffic crash investigator. With almost everything the street cop would need to reconstruct an accident, it was a good fit for many departments. It also filled the needs of detectives who wanted a tool to document the evidence and events that occur at nearly any crime scene. It is clear to see why this program was a wise choice for many.

With the marine component of the software, TWRA officers are finding that a show quality 3-D animation is easier than they first thought. With a custom marine animation class in 2011 from the Visual Statement staff and a little time to practice and hone their newly learned skills, many officers are

looking forward to having this valuable tool at their fingertips.

The program itself can have a multitude of uses for marine accident investigators. From creating two-dimensional collision diagrams to producing a finished 3-D rendering of a crash, the uses can be as creative as the user. Testing theories, showing witness point of views, measuring impact angles, and showing seating diagrams are just a few of the possibilities. An officer can start the scene by selecting one of the many boat types available and importing one of several generic backgrounds in the program. If a more realistic touch is needed, importing Google Earth or Microsoft Maps images is just a few clicks away. Just as the backgrounds can be easily changed, having Visual Statement create a custom boat model for a more serious or high profile collision is an invaluable feature. With so many customizable features, it would be tough to



encounter a situation that could not be duplicated with precision.

After the vessels and scene have been selected, the user can begin to add pre-collision and post-collision paths to the vessels. Speed, roll, pitch, and yaw are all fully customizable for each vessel path created. Once each path is completed, the user can then transition to the full 3-D environment for viewing. Adding people, navigation aids, water hazards, and trees are just a few of the options.

Once the officer is satisfied with his or her work product, preparing it for its

intended viewers is simple. Recording the animation from 10 different user-selected camera angles at full speed or slow motion are options. Officers can also "attach" cameras to the boats, giving the camera the ability to follow the boat through the entire collision to provide viewers with a "bird's eye" view. Cameras can even be set below the waterline if needed. Different perspectives and viewpoints offer the potential to show what the crash may look like from the witnesses' point of view or show how navigation rule violations played into the collision.

Other tools available in the software include the ability to import total station measurements taken from the scene. When a vessel runs aground or collides with a dock, these measurements can be precisely recorded by use of a total station and data collector. This tool has been utilized in several recent crashes on Tennessee waterways. The software also allows an officer to print screen shots at different



stages in the collision, showing post collision damage to vessels, and adding/hiding layers in each animation. Each animation completed may have specific parts that are based on evidence and witness statements while other parts may only be speculation. Being able to remove the speculative areas through layering may be necessary before the animation can be viewed by a jury.

With the abilities and functions of this program, which are too numerous to mention, it is easy to see how this technology benefits law enforcement agencies tasked with investigating marine accidents and crime scenes. \*

# E-Ticket Technology:

## It's not just about the ticket

By Officer Michael Pratt  
D.C. Metropolitan Police

**W**hen we hear the word “e-ticket,” the first thing that comes to mind is some type of citation being issued. Whether it’s a warning or a citation, any violation of boating safety law is also an indicator of how effective we are in gaining voluntary compliance from the recreational boating community. The types of citations we issue help us to identify the areas on which to focus our enforcement and outreach efforts. E-ticket technology now allows us to do away with soggy paper, multiple pages in a summons or warning booklet blowing in the wind – and as we all know, once a citation is wet, neither the officer nor violator can really read it.

For these reasons and many more, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators’ (NASBLA) Enforcement and Training Committee and the subcommittee on Techniques and Technology selected e-ticket technology as the focus of one of their committee charges during the 2011 committee year.

In the not too distant future, maritime law enforcement officers will likely be handing out a computerized printout instead of a handwritten ticket for a boating law violation. State and local law enforcement have been switching from paper tickets to e-ticket technology on the road, and the technology is finding its way to the water.

The electronic ticket has a similar format to the old version, but the benefit of the new system for law enforcement and court staff is expected to be tremendous. The new technology reduces errors and eliminates countless hours spent manually entering ticket data.

Despite the obvious benefits of going electronic, some agency heads nix the idea, citing a bevy of obstacles. The survey identified the two most common hurdles as cost and lack of acceptance by the court system. Others may be

intimidated by the idea of change. For example, an officer might say, “I have been doing boating safety enforcement for 10 years and I have always hand-written tickets, so why change that now? My way works just fine.” Or a program manager or supervisor who has for years relied on his logbooks and file cabinets full of tickets and paperwork to complete the reports might not see the benefit of the new technology.

How do you address the resistance to change?

The first step is to illustrate how, when the e-ticket technology is being used, it becomes a win-win situation for both the officer and the agency.

### Pros of going electronic

The Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission is currently implementing e-ticket technology in their enforcement efforts. According to Capt. Richard Moore, boating law administrator and manager of Florida’s Boating Safety Program, the new technology provides numerous benefits. “Data collection is improved, data entry obligations are reduced, errors are minimized, statute/rule numbers for charges are more consistent (and correct), transfer to clerks is speedier. Plus, officers can complete a citation more quickly, and instant upload into our database provides real-time information.”

- Paperless system – No longer will wind and rain be a factor when you need to take paperwork out into the field.
- Equipment – Easy to use. If you can operate a smart phone, then you can use the hand-held e-ticket devices.
- Access to information – Hand-held devices can be programmed with many different databases, such as state boating education record, vessel registration, wanted/stolen vessels and

National Crime Information Center. It also creates hotlists for previous warnings and violations.

- All in one – Hand-held devices combine the capabilities of a cell phone with Internet access, camera, barcode scanner and GPS in one convenient piece of equipment.
- Paperwork – Reduces errors and hours spent entering data. At the end of the day, for your records, you can print one report that details all your stats. No need to keep copies of your tickets – they will remain in the system and be electronically transmitted to court, along with any images associated with the violation.
- Database – Once a ticket is issued, it is uploaded to the server and stored for later use. It is transmitted to court or shared with other agencies, along with other data such as payment information and ticket status. This is a great way to reduce paper cost and the need for the storage of handwritten documents.
- Stat tracking – Agencies may be required to track and report certain stats such as boat stops per month, how many tickets issued for PFD violations and the make of the vessels. This data will be readily available through e-ticket technology.

Given the long list of benefits, NASBLA’s Techniques and Technology Subcommittee surveyed the nonprofit organization’s 56 state and territorial members early last year to determine how prevalent the use of e-tickets is among maritime law enforcement agencies. The survey revealed that of the 38 responding states, e-ticket technology is being utilized in 16. However, within those 16 states, e-ticket capabilities have reached very few of the agencies tasked

with recreational boating safety and enforcement.

One of the few boating enforcement agencies that is using e-ticket technology is the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission. "It's slow to be embraced by many officers, but it will help in many ways when all are onboard," said Florida's boating law administrator, Capt. Richard Moore.

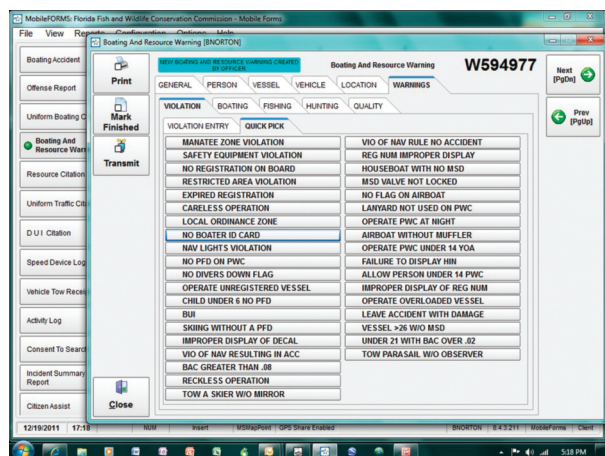
### Where to start

The survey also revealed an overwhelming desire by boating law administrators to develop e-ticket capabilities, with 72 percent of the survey respondents requesting information and guidance.

There are hundreds of equipment and software vendors on the market today. To make an educated decision, you have to do the research.

- Cost – The main factor behind an agency's decision on which vendors get the contract is usually cost. Budget shortfalls and lack of grant funding can make executing a project like this very difficult.

- Location – Some agencies may want to contract with vendors that are right in their backyard to cut cost on repairs and tech support.
- Compatibility – When making a decision on a piece of hardware you need to ensure its going to be compatible with your software vendor's applications.
- Package deal – Your agency might find a vendor that has a system, including equipment and software already set up to meet your current and future needs.
- System in place – There is a possibility other agencies within your state already have a system in place. Contact those agencies and ask about the pros and cons of their current system, and learn all you can about the equipment and software. This knowledge will simplify your decision making process. \*



FWC photo



## E-Ticket tips

As you consider the options, benefits and challenges of migrating to e-ticket technology we encourage you to utilize the powerful NASBLA community. We can help connect you to solutions and best practices through our network of marine law enforcement agencies. Here are some simple suggestions to help you get started:

### Reaching out

- Contact agency program manager currently running e-ticket program
- Get overview of current agency program and future direction
- Provide program manager with unit's stats and explain need for e-ticket development
- Both parties come to an agreement on cost and development

### Hardware vendor

- Contact your agency's IT department for equipment specifications
- Identify a vendor for equipment purchase
- Select equipment based on current and future needs
- Supplies and accessories
- Compatible Bluetooth printer

### Software vendor

- Identify a vendor for software development
- Supply the vendor with:
  - ◆ Samples of the agency's documents
  - ◆ Functional Specification Document
  - ◆ Historical database
  - ◆ Equipment selection
- Vendor processes and develops the e-ticket application

Michael Pratt is an officer with the District Of Columbia Metropolitan Police Marine Unit and the 2011 charge leader on e-tickets for the subcommittee on Techniques and Technology. If you are interested in other enforcement related technologies, take a look at the Committee Products page: <http://goo.gl/DPDkN>.

# Where does technology fit into your marketing plan?

By Ashley A. Massey  
Public Information Officer  
Oregon State Marine Board

**W**here does technology fit into your marketing plan? How can boating agencies leverage alternative media for marketing and information sharing? Why would someone want to visit your website? At the Oregon State Marine Board, we have been working over the last year to answer these questions. With budgets shrinking and more of the population getting their information from the Internet and, more recently, from smart phones, we have embarked on a new path to focus our marketing efforts in the technological arena.

**Step 1: To start this transition, we need to offer a product that boaters want. In this case, the information on our website must be relevant to boaters and must be available whenever and wherever they want it, in the format they choose.**

As we considered information that is both relevant and timely, it was not difficult to identify that boaters want information on launch locations,

weather, tide or water levels, water hazards, construction, marine events, locations of clean gasoline in the vicinity and a listing of other services available in the area. If we could bring important information to boaters in an easily accessible format (searchable, interactive, visually appealing), then we would have a marketable product.

The state of Oregon invested in a new platform that was made available through a state contract with Socrata (a Seattle-based company). Interactive content is accessed through [www.data.oregon.gov](http://www.data.oregon.gov). This groundbreaking online system enables interested constituents to seamlessly socialize, interact with other agencies and the public and create new ways of looking at content (data) that were never possible until now.

The Marine Board dove in and started leveraging the capabilities of the new platform, which included mapping, and quickly found more opportunities to use visual formats appealing to boaters. The platform features empowered Marine Board staff to create and curate relevant content, measure its impact and connect

instantly with boaters, without using any IT resources or any other intermediary. Boating information imported into the platform can be seamlessly embedded into our website.

Boaters can view a variety of embedded maps, including boating access, where to find clean gasoline, registration agents, aquatic invasive species permit dealers, clean marinas and pumpout/dump stations, statewide. In addition, all embedded content can be shared. Since the Marine Board controls the source data, any embedded maps on other sites are automatically updated. This results in a huge time savings and creates a level of consistency between our partners that hasn't existed before.

From the boater's perspective, navigating the maps is easy. Once a location icon is clicked, a fly-out window opens with basic information. To get "additional local information," the boater simply clicks on the link in the fly-out, which takes him back to an updated, location-specific web page with content about construction, navigation hazards and links to road information, weather, tides, state parks and other relevant websites.

**Boater's Services Symbols**

- Gas on Water
- Diesel on Water
- Public Restroom
- Public Shower
- Boat Launch
- Boat Hoist
- Picnic Area
- Campground
- Fish Cleaning Station
- Store & Supplies
- Boat Repair Services
- Waste Oil Tanks
- Holding Tank Pumpout/Potty Dump
- Boat Rentals
- Dockside Electricity
- Dockside Water
- Construction or Closure
- Clean Marina
- Floating Restroom

**Boater's Services**

**M. James Gleason Ramp**

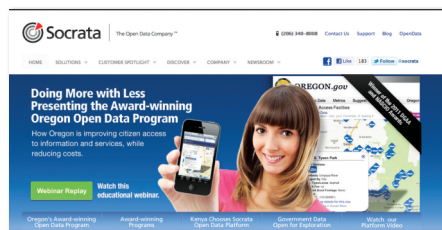
Waterbody: Columbia River  
Managed By: ParkRec  
Additional Local Information: [Additional Local Information](#)  
Ramp Type/ Number of Lanes: Concrete/5 Lanes  
Use Fee: yes  
Location: (45.60055°, -122.6186167°)  
[View details for this row](#)

Boating Facility Name	Location
M. James Gleason Ramp	(45.60055°, -122.6186167°)

Waterbody	Managed By
Columbia River	ParkRec

Moorage	Number of Trailer Spaces	Transient Dock Footage
yes	180	yes

Ramp Type/ Number of Lanes	Concrete/5 Lanes	Use Fee
yes	yes	



We're creating value for boaters to come to the website, and a reason to want to come back.

The most important ingredient, however, will be the ability to create a dialog between the agency and the boater and between boater and boater for specific waterbodies by integrating the right tools (blogs, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube). More work is needed to make this option a reality, which takes us to Step 2 (below).

### **Step 2: Put our marketing message alongside the relevant information boaters want.**

The Marine Board is transitioning in January 2012 to a new web provider for the state of Oregon. The new provider, NIC USA, develops, hosts and maintains web and portal services for 23 states with a combined total of 2,900 federal, state and local government agencies. NIC USA works with agencies individually to create a unique look and feel for our boating demographic, and has the technical expertise to integrate more options into web pages to make them more dynamic and interactive.

Marine Board staff will be able to design the website to include targeted messaging (flash PSA ads), social media widgets and blogging tools alongside the embedded maps, etc., created through the data.oregon.gov (Socrata) platform. Full integration-dynamic individual pages that allow for feedback specific to the content on the page can be shared by boaters through their individual social media accounts or directly with the Marine Board's social media options. The new web host also provides analytics for each page, including how the information is being shared, helping us fine-tune the content and messaging.

### **Step 3: Stay ahead, or at least abreast, of technological changes.**

It is important to know what technology has the best prospects for long-term success and to invest accordingly. We know from marketing publications that businesses are moving away from

websites and are using social media more. Facts:

- Many web pages are static and mobile technology is growing exponentially.
- Private industry is pushing consumers toward technology for services...a wave government agencies can ride and leverage to their advantage.
- Consumers are learning the power behind mobile applications and finding information faster than ever.

On almost any mailer these days, you'll find a QR code. The term may not be familiar, but people are learning to recognize what the "funny box" is and use their cell phone to learn more information about a product or service. By integrating a QR code into a ramp sign, website, blog, or mailer, you can direct the public to key information, faster. By the way, this technology is free.

**Picture this scenario:** A seasoned boater is heading out on the Columbia River to take advantage of winter steelhead and launches from a familiar boat ramp. At the ramp, there's a sign with a QR code. The boater, using a cell phone with a bar code scanner app, scans the code and the phone opens up a web page with local information.

The boater finds out that the river is just below flood stage, so extra caution is needed when launching. The boater also sees at the same time, a flash ad about wearing a life jacket. The view on the phone has social media widgets, so the boater clicks on the blog icon and writes, "The Gleason boat ramp is still in good shape despite high water. No debris on ramp. The fishing report says steelhead are biting and conditions are good."

What a tremendous opportunity for boater-to-boater communication that educates at the same time. The boater becomes the eyes and ears for other boaters, law enforcement and the Marine Board by helping spread the boating safety message, organically.

Private industry is helping educate consumers about technology; commercials and the news continually emphasize smartphone apps and social

media sites to create change. The Marine Board sees the true value of integrated marketing through maximizing technology such as social media, interactive tools on the web and a real-time platform to get targeted information out to where it's needed. Transitioning to new technology and developing a state-of-the-art marketing strategy is critical during this time of economic uncertainty and limited resources.

We believe that boaters will take advantage of these integrated technologies, which will empower them to share their own perspectives, stories and opinions. This opens a new door for a multi-faceted dialog, helps us truly assess what boaters need and enables us to effectively measure where we need to be focusing our resources.

This is the future of marketing communications and how people will want their government to work for them.

For more information about Socrata Open Data and NIC USA, visit [www.socrata.com/](http://www.socrata.com/) and [www.egov.com/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.egov.com/Pages/default.aspx). \*

## **Chinook Landing Boat Launch and Information to Know**



Smart phones allow users with a barcode scanner app (such as "QR Reader" for the iPhone or "Barcode Scanner" for the Android) to scan the image, which will take you to important waterway-specific information.

**TRY IT!!!**

[www.BoatOregon.com](http://www.BoatOregon.com)



# Steering a new course in boating safety partnerships

By Lynn Satre  
Boating Safety Outreach Coordinator  
Washington State Parks

**T**he Washington State Parks Recreational Boating Safety Program and the Northwest Marine Trade Association (NMTA), the trade association that represents the recreational boating businesses in the Northwest, successfully transformed a substantive disagreement into a budding and collaborative partnership centered on improving boating safety.

As part of their mission to increase or “grow boating,” NMTA produces the Seattle Boat Show. This is the highpoint for many of NMTA’s members (e.g., marinas, boatyards and boat dealers) as around 60,000+ boaters attend this annual 10-day event. NMTA devotes substantial resources to boost attendance for this large production. City transit buses are wrapped with their advertising, radio shows are peppered with their radio spots, and, by and large,



**It's a  
BIG DEAL**

**SEATTLE  
BOAT SHOW**  
INDOORS + AFLOAT

Presented by  
 Qwest  
ace recreational  
marine insurance

In partnership with the  
STATE PARKS BOATING SAFETY PROGRAM

 Get  
your  
card!

**QWEST FIELD EVENT CENTER & SOUTH LAKE UNION**

Browse and Shop the Biggest Display of Boats, Yachts, Electronics and Gear, and  
Participate in Over 200 Seminars at the West Coast's Largest Boat Show.



folks would have to cut off all contact with the outside world to avoid hearing about this show.

In 2010, NMTA developed an advertising concept for their smaller summer boat show. The ad featured three younger boaters sitting in the stern of a boat, sipping on drinks and without life jackets. This brought up some concerns among the boating safety community and caught State Parks Boating Programs’ attention.

“We know how important industry advertising is to the culture of boating,” said former Boating Law Administrator Susan Kavanaugh, “so we were disturbed that this ad seemed to send messages at odds with two of our key goals, which are to increase life jacket wear and reduce alcohol use among boaters.” Kavanaugh and Boating Safety Outreach Coordinator Lynn Satre approached NMTA with concerns about the advertising campaign. NMTA was receptive to their concerns, and both groups used this as an opportunity to

learn about each other's point of view and foster a renewed relationship with a common goal: boating safety.

As one of the advocates for mandatory boater education in the state of Washington, the trade association played a pivotal role in making this 2005 law a reality [see sidebar about Washington's mandatory boater education law]. At the highest level, they understand that the more you know about rules and safety, the more fun you will have on the water. Boating on Washington's waterways grows and boat operators are more relaxed when boaters understand how to be safe while enjoying this wonderful family activity.

In 2011, NMTA took a different approach with their Seattle Boat Show advertising – one that linked fun and safety on the water.

“What came out of these conversations was mutual understanding. We gained from a meaningful two-way conversation that would have been curtailed had we decided to work on parallel tracks,” said NMTA President/CEO George Harris.

The Washington State Parks Boating Programs recognized the need to reach boating leaders, as “influencers” to help get the safety messages out to the boating public: that boater education is required, easy to get and simply a smart thing to do. “These are the A++ boaters and boating industry leaders who attend and exhibit at the Seattle Boat Show,” said Peter Schrappen, NMTA's director of government affairs. “The thinking behind the A++ boater idea is similar to what Malcolm Gladwell discusses in his book *The Tipping Point*. These are the boating junkies who family and friends turn to for boating advice and information. Informing this credible audience (the influencers) will in turn transmit their opinions or attitudes to their peers; then we are that much closer to creating the tipping point needed for successful implementation of mandatory boater education, and for creating a safety culture in the boating world. Boating leaders are attracted to the Seattle Boat Show and these boating

leaders are better messengers than a state agency delivering the same safety message,” noted Schrappen.

“We realize that we can't do this alone. The best type of injury prevention program is one that works with lots of partners – traditional and non-traditional – and important influencers. For us this means working with NMTA as well as law enforcement, United State Coast Guard, Coast Guard Auxiliary, United States Power Squadrons and various boater user groups. We also work with a statewide drowning prevention coalition led by Children's Hospital which includes others from the public health field,” said Kavanaugh.

Fruits of the new partnership over a year and a half included State Parks advertising the Boater Card through the Seattle Boat Show marketing materials, the Seattle Boat Show staff modeling inflatable life jackets, and a joint springtime press release that included NMTA's Harris and several county sheriffs joining the State Parks Director Don Hoch in urging boaters to complete boater safety education and get their Boater Education Card in advance of the summer boating season. The 2011 results have been quite impressive. By July 2011, the number of Washington State Boater Education Cards issued had already surpassed the entire total from 2010. “There was a 30 percent increase in boater cards issued between 2010 (22,000) and 2011 (30,000). Our partnership with NMTA was an important part of that success,” said Satre.

NMTA was also a great partner this summer during the Wear It! Washington campaign, organizing outreach booths at four marina events. In addition, NMTA included messages such as taking a boating safety course, get your card and wear a life jacket, among others, as part of their communications with members and the public.

As in any relationship, the Washington State Parks Boating Programs and NMTA may not always see eye to eye on every issue. However, both know

much more is accomplished working together than separately. Specifically, expanding the circle of groups promoting boating safety brings more quality thinking to the table and makes it easier to reach key influencers. Partners learn from each other and become an instant focus group. Maybe most important, we avoid disagreements due to misunderstanding – and when we do disagree about policy or approach, we keep the conversation going. \*



The Washington Boater Education Card requirement is being phased in from 2008 to 2014. All operators of boats having motors of 15 horsepower or greater are required to have their Boater Safety Education Card with them when operating a boat as follows:

Year	Age Group
2008	12 years to 20 years old
2009	25 years and under
2010	30 years and under
2011	35 years and under
2012	40 years and under
2013	50 years and under
2014	59 years and under
All boaters born after 1955 must have obtained a Boater Education Card.	



After completing safety education, Washington boaters get this card, which is good for a lifetime.

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## **U.S. Coast Guard encourages public participation in recreational boating survey** **Questionnaire to help develop Coast Guard safety initiatives**

In late September, the U.S. Coast Guard launched its 2011 National Recreational Boating Survey, conducted by the market research firm ICF Macro. The survey questionnaire is being mailed to select owners of U.S. registered recreational boats. ICF Macro is also calling members of the general public across the United States and asking them to participate in the survey over the telephone.

The Coast Guard encourages those contacted to provide this valuable information. The survey is a key element in the Coast Guard's strategic plan to reduce fatalities, injuries and property damage from recreational boating accidents. Survey questions are designed to gather information on the extent of public participation in recreational boating and to identify trends, risks and causal factors related to boating accidents; for example, inclement weather, boat defects, on-the-water hazards and high risk boater behaviors.

The 2011 National Recreational Boating Survey will continue by mail and telephone until sufficient data is gathered for the Coast Guard's statistical reports. For more information on the survey, contact Philippe Gwet, mathematician-statistician with the U.S. Coast Guard's Program Management Branch, at 202.372.102 or at [Philippe.Gwet@uscg.mil](mailto:Philippe.Gwet@uscg.mil).

## **Award recognizes life-saving efforts**

On August 1, 2010, nine paddlers barely survived a boating accident on one of Alaska's most notorious waterways, Six

Mile Creek. They did survive, though, primarily because of quick-thinking guides.

Despite repeated warnings from Chugach Outdoor Center guides and a state trooper who saw an unprepared party getting ready to launch, nine boaters had what one member described as "a herd mentality" and ignored the warnings. According to witnesses, the group had the wrong gear, inadequate clothing and no helmets. "They were an accident waiting to happen," said Jay Doyle, owner of the Chugach Outdoor Center. The group did make a single good decision – everyone was wearing a life jacket.



Soon after the party launched, their raft hit a partially submerged rock, ruptured a tube and capsized, dumping all nine into Class V whitewater. Fortunately, because of the group's obvious lack of preparation, the party had drawn the continued attention of guides on the water that day. So when they did capsize, rescuers were at hand to quickly mobilize and respond, all of whom were employees of Chugach Outdoor Center.

Even with life jackets, it is unlikely that all of the party members would have survived without the guides' assistance.

One member of the party was held underwater even with her life jacket on. When she finally popped to the surface, she was unresponsive and appeared dead. She was rescued by the guides and hospitalized for near-drowning.

Stephan Beissmann, Cote Oliver, Jay Doyle, Michael Farber, Lauren Farrell, Michael Charles Howard, Katherine Krueger, James Lecroy and Sean Simmons of the Chugach Outdoor Center each received the NASBLA Award of Commendation for their life-saving efforts.

## **Nominate someone today**

NASBLA's Award of Commendation can be given to both sworn officers and civilians in cases where the person was considered instrumental in directly contributing to the saving of a human life or lives. The award consists of a certificate along with a letter of commendation from the current NASBLA president. For more information, visit [www.nasbla.org](http://www.nasbla.org).

## **Free introductory paddlesports training available for boating safety, enforcement professionals**

The American Canoe Association is pleased to announce that its Advanced Boating: On-Water Paddlesports Safety Training program is being continued into 2012. This program (made possible by a grant from the U.S. Coast Guard) was created to raise understanding and awareness of paddlesports among boating safety personnel, increase the level of instruction and information that agencies are able to provide, and make paddlesports safer and more enjoyable for the boating public.

To achieve these goals, ACA is offering Level 1: Introduction to Kayaking, Canoeing and Stand-Up Paddleboarding Instructor Certification Workshops free

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of charge to a variety of boating safety personnel, including state and national parks employees, marine law enforcement, the U.S. Coast Guard and the Coast Guard Auxiliary, among others, in 11 states:

- \* Alaska
- \* Arizona
- \* California
- \* Colorado
- \* Florida
- \* Idaho
- \* Massachusetts
- \* Michigan
- \* New York
- \* North Carolina
- \* Oregon

The ACA National Paddlesports Instruction Program has been acknowledged as the “gold standard” of paddlesports education throughout the United States. Through this program boating safety agencies can access a nationally recognized training and certification program for free.

Participants in the instructor course will receive top-notch instruction and four years of membership in both the ACA and its Safety Education and Instruction Department. They also will receive materials to help them interact with the

public as well as helpful educational resources. The ACA will provide equipment to individuals as needed (e.g., kayaks, paddles and life jackets).

“We think this is a great opportunity and are very excited at the chance to offer it free of charge in 11 states across the country,” said Eli Crispell, paddlesports training grant coordinator with the ACA.

If you are interested in the training, contact Eli Crispell at [ecrispell@americancanoe.org](mailto:ecrispell@americancanoe.org). Interested but your state is not on the list? Contact Crispell – more programming may be made available as funding allows. To learn more visit <http://www.americancanoe.org>.

### **Pennsylvania implements mandatory life jacket wear law**

At its quarterly business meeting held Sept. 27, 2011, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) amended various boating regulations. As part of the regulation changes approved, boaters will be required, beginning Nov. 1, 2012, to wear life jackets on boats less than 16 feet in length and on canoes and kayaks during the cold weather months from Nov. 1 through April 30. The change is intended to protect boaters from the dangers of cold water shock if they fall into the water.

“While boating accidents are more frequent during the traditional summer season, the risk of an accident being fatal is significantly higher when the air and water temperatures are colder in late fall through spring,” said Laurel Anders, director of the Pennsylvania Bureau of Boating and Access. “Over the last 15 years, cold water incidents represented only eight percent of boating related accidents, but resulted in 24 percent of the fatalities.”

“The disproportionate number of fatalities is primarily due to the effects of cold water immersion,” she added. “Victims who are wearing a life jacket when exposed to cold water have potentially life saving advantages.”

### **Direct mail marketing increases Ohio’s boat registrations**

The results are in for the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation’s (RBFF) Lapsed Boat Registration Pilot Program with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Watercraft. As a result of the direct mail effort, more than 750 boats were registered, generating nearly \$14,000 in net revenue. The new registrations also generated an estimated \$2,300 in additional revenue to the state of Ohio from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund allocations.

“These findings demonstrate the power of continuous communication with your customers, and help support critical boating safety programs and boating infrastructure efforts in Ohio,” said RBFF President and CEO Frank Peterson. “We’re pleased with the results of this and other pilot programs, and are working to develop a nationwide outreach effort next year.”

The Lapsed Boat Registration Pilot Program was developed by RBFF in 2009 in partnership with the Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB) and the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, and is an extension of RBFF’s ongoing direct mail efforts with state fish and wildlife agencies. Similar pilot programs are currently being implemented in Florida and Tennessee. RBFF plans to expand the program with up to 15 more states in 2012. To view the full evaluation report, visit [www.RBFF.org](http://www.RBFF.org).

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## **Arkansas officer named International Officer of the Year**

Wildlife Officer Michael K. Neal of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission was named 2011 International Officer of the Year by the International Association of Chiefs of Police. This is just the latest in a long list of awards Officer Neal has received for his heroic actions in a Walmart parking lot nearly two years ago.

In addition to being named International Officer of the Year, Officer Neal was named by the National Rifle Association as the 2010 NRA Law Enforcement Officer of the Year, and he was selected by the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund as Officer of the Month for October 2010. Neal is being considered for the Congressional Medal of Valor — commonly considered the highest award given to any law enforcer in the nation.

All these awards have been given in recognition of Officer Neal's assistance in stopping two cop killers. On May 20, 2010, Officer Neal received a call for assistance after West Memphis Police Department officers Brandon Paudert and Bill Evans were killed during a traffic stop on Interstate 40.

Armed with semi-automatic AK-47 rifles and handguns, the suspects — Jerry Kane and his 16-year-old son, Joe — had fled the scene of those slayings, prompting a widespread manhunt in and around West Memphis. The Kanes were ultimately spotted by Crittenden County Arkansas Sheriff Dick Busby

and Chief Deputy W.A. Wren, who were first on the scene at that shopping center parking lot. Seconds later, Officer Neal was on the scene. Seeing the firefight between the officers and the suspects, Officer Neal sprang to action, ramming the Kanes' minivan and engaging them with his patrol rifle. The suspects then directed fire toward Neal's truck and away from Busby and Wren, both of whom were wounded.

Officer Neal returned fire, disabling one and possibly both suspects before placing his truck in reverse and backing out of the line of fire. His actions saved the lives of Busby and Wren. Neal sustained shrapnel wounds during the incident.

## **Podlich named BoatUS president**



Former Vice President of Government Affairs

Margaret Bonds Podlich has been named president of Boat Owners Association of The United States (BoatUS). Her new role with the association broadens her responsibilities to include external communications encompassing government affairs and public relations as well as other association programs, benefits and services. This includes developing the association's official policy positions and leading the advocacy efforts on behalf of the nation's recreational boat owners.

Podlich's promotion comes after the half-million member boat owners group lost former president Nancy Michelman to cancer.

"Margaret's passion for boating and 'messing around in boats' shows in her results and commitment to BoatUS, our members, and the nation's boat owners," said BoatUS CEO Bill Oakerson. "She's a brilliant and effective public policy analyst who achieves results, making the boating lifestyle better for all of us by fighting unfair and onerous regulation, and giving boaters a voice in government. We look forward to this energy being tapped for a wide array of programs within BoatUS."

## **Siebert elected as Coast Guard Auxiliary Association president**

The board of the Coast Guard Auxiliary Association, the nonprofit organization providing financial and other support to the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and its volunteers, elected Gene Siebert of Virginia as its new president and chief operating officer.

In his new role, Siebert will oversee the day-to-day operations of the association, including fundraising, finance, product development and other functions.

Formerly the National Commodore of the Coast Guard Auxiliary, Siebert has served as the chairman and CEO of the Coast Guard Auxiliary Association Inc. and was a member of the board of directors of the Coast Guard Foundation and the Association for Rescue at Sea, BoatUS and the United Safe Boating Institute.

## **AMI releases Clean Marinas guidebook**

The Association of Marina Industries has released a guidebook titled *Best Management Practices for Clean Marinas*. This new publication is intended to help marinas in states that do not currently have state clean marina programs and in states looking to develop their own programs.

AMI does not intend for the book to replace state programs but instead hopes it will help marinas develop environmentally sound practices in states where the program doesn't exist. AMI continues to encourage marinas to contact state programs in places where they exist.

The guidebook can be downloaded in the members-only section at [www.marinaassociation.org](http://www.marinaassociation.org). It is free to AMI members. Non-members can receive a copy by contacting [info@marinaassociation.org](mailto:info@marinaassociation.org) or calling 866.367.6622. All electronic copies of the guidebook are free of charge; hard copies are available for a nominal fee to cover printing and shipping costs.

## Department of Energy: E15 causes "severe damage" to marine engines

Results from two studies conducted by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory on the effects of E15 on marine engines released in October show that the gasoline and ethanol blend can cause issues including drivability, materials compatibility, increased emissions and long-term durability in outboard, stern drive and inboard engines.

In addition to increased fuel consumption in two of the engines, the High Ethanol Fuel Endurance study showed that E15 caused damage to two out of three outboards and complete failure in another engine, as well as "degraded emissions performance outside of engine certification limits," according to the release.

The results of the study reinforced the industry's concerns about proper warning labeling at fueling stations. In September, the National Marine



Manufacturers Association (NMMA), along with the Engine Products Group, filed a suit challenging the rules regarding gas pump misuse controls for gas pumps containing up to 15 percent ethanol.

According to the NMMA, the new rules would not do enough to prevent possible damage to marine engines from possible misfueling with E15 fuel, and petitioned to require E10 fuel to also be sold at gas stations.

"Current proposals by the ethanol industry to increase the amount of ethanol in gasoline should seriously concern all boaters and owners of other small engine equipment," said Thom Dammrich, NMMA president. "Although NMMA strongly supports renewable fuels as a means to reduce America's dependence on foreign sources of oil and improve the environment, there is growing evidence that ethanol is not the answer to America's energy challenge." Full versions of the studies can be downloaded online: Emissions and Durability Test (<http://goo.gl/c3uzb>); Fuel Endurance test (<http://goo.gl/G3LLK>).

## Coast Guard Auxiliary goes live

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary National Government and Public Affairs Directorate launched a new online communications vehicle designed to provide an in depth and behind the scenes look into one of America's leading volunteer organizations. Coast Guard Auxiliary Live (<http://live.cgaux.org>) will serve as the official blog for the Coast Guard Auxiliary and the sister site to the immensely popular Coast Guard

Compass – the official blog of the U.S. Coast Guard.

This mission of Coast Guard Auxiliary Live is to provide timely and accurate news and information of national interest from throughout the Coast Guard Auxiliary's various districts, divisions and flotilla operating units. News, photos and video content may be submitted directly to the editorial staff via e-mail at [live@auxpa.org](mailto:live@auxpa.org).

"Coast Guard Auxiliary Live promises to be a superb source for boating safety and maritime information as well as updates on the phenomenal volunteers of the Coast Guard Auxiliary," said Capt. Ron LaBrec, chief of the Coast Guard office of public affairs. "I am extremely proud to have Coast Guard Compass and Coast Guard Auxiliary Live bringing the public compelling stories of how our service provides the maritime safety, security and environmental sustainability that is so vital to the quality of life and prosperity of our nation."

## NMMA encourages industry to "welcome more to the water"

The National Marine Manufacturers Association is urging the industry to help sell the boating lifestyle by spreading Discover Boating's new "Welcome to the Water" message with free point-of-sale materials. Welcome to the Water materials – including window clings, bumper stickers and windshield stickers – are a simple way to welcome customers to a dealership and welcome them to the boating lifestyle. The point-of-sale materials can be found at [www.GrowBoating.org](http://www.GrowBoating.org) and are free of charge, including shipping, with more items being added regularly. \*



Matthew Long  
NASBLA  
Government Affairs Director



## *Finding the value* ***in social media engagement***

**T**witter, Facebook, Google+, Reddit, Stumble Upon, YouTube, Four Square – these are just some of the many social media platforms available today in what has become a somewhat confusing mass of information and opportunities to engage with people around the world. Although some politicians were slow to embrace the power of social media, most are now engaged. With their engagement come

great opportunities for you to work with these politicians on issues important to you and your department or agency. However, you first have to make a commitment to engagement at an organizational level.

Having worked in a professional setting for my entire career, I can easily imagine how most companies make social media decisions.

Communications Team Meeting

Big Boss: I read an article that social media is important, we should have a presence.

Manager: OK, but everyone is pretty busy with their current workload.

Big Boss: No problem, let the intern do it. He's young and understands it better anyway. Plus, who cares – we just need to be there.

Please queue the *Price is Right* loser horn music. \*wa waa waa wa waaaawawa\*

Let's first set the stage.

- \* The average Facebook user is 38 years old.
- \* The average Twitter user is 39 years old.
- \* The average age of any social network user is 37 years old.
- \* 47% of Internet users age 50-64 are now using social networking sites.
- \* Twitter rates for users 50-64 increased 88% in 2009-2010 and 100% for users 65+.

Pretty surprising, isn't it? The average social network user is mature, educated and informed. This is not exactly the prevailing image one would expect. So why, then, would you hire someone who can't relate to these individuals to lead your social marketing team?

After you have (hopefully) made a commitment to social media (it's not going away, folks) and given someone capable to manage the duties, it's time to engage. Most of what you share with fans and followers will be practical, useful information, but depending on how you manage your network it can also be a powerful political tool.

First, you have to identify and then track your politicians on social media. Luckily, most of them have made this exceedingly easy by listing all their connected networks on their main websites.

Second, it's important to engage with their feeds casually, while also providing useful information. Politicians are constantly being pulled in a million directions, and the more often you can put your information in front of them, the more likely they are to remember it.

Third, don't forget about the political power of your constituents. Promote your initiatives with your in-state followers and make sure they know the important work that you all are doing. This will be extremely important in case a political issue arises in which you need their help. Before you can be successful with the

political side of social media, though, you have to be successful in the more general world of interconnectivity.

1. **Create** strong, easily identifiable accounts on major social networks. You may have already done this, but it doesn't hurt to revisit the account. Is the image the one you want to associate with your agency? Does the one-line description adequately describe you? The splash page on Facebook is more important to customize than Twitter as "liking" a brand on Facebook is frankly a bigger commitment than following on Twitter. Make sure it is readily apparent that following you won't be a waste of the user's time.
2. **Personalize** your account. It's great you're a well-known agency or department that has name recognition within the state. However, social networks are about being social, and that means humanizing things. Some major brands indicate the name of the person communicating on their behalf, which is great. If that doesn't work for you, then share some personal things once in a while. It's OK to say that the snow made traffic in D.C. unbearable that morning. No one thinks Tweets are done by a computer. That, in turn, is a great way to ask your followers about the weather where they live and if they're planning to go boating, hunting, etc. In the same vein, one person really should always handle all social media updates whenever possible. Voice and tone are extremely important, especially when you have limited space. You want to build a following around not only your brand but also the personality of your brand.
3. **Promote** yourself and others. Social media is a great resource because people are constantly sharing information, both their own and of others. I absolutely expect major organizations to send out updates about their products, initiatives or whatever. But I also expect them to share information they think their followers may find valuable. Even though it doesn't relate to a particular natural resources department and wasn't written by

them, a retweet on an article about upcoming state events or travel conditions is great to see. It shows the user that the department cares about their customers and that they care about more than just their own programs. In all social media, but especially so on Twitter, entities that ONLY push press releases or updates without interacting in a positive way or retweeting anyone else are very quickly ignored. The accounts become virtual white noise.

4. **Engage**, don't just react. This relates to #3, but it is vital to engage with your fans and followers. You accomplished the hard part – you got them to follow you. Now you have to keep them. Follow what they're saying, interact, ask questions, be helpful – in other words, participate fully in the social network. I've seen a lot of entities act just like a complaints board. That will no doubt be a part of the work, but it shouldn't stop there. Social media is a two-way street and it's time to start thinking that way.

I didn't include the ability to relate, because I think it depends on the organization. In general, organizations need to avoid giving social media responsibilities to the lowest person on the totem pole. As I previously noted, the average users are in their late 30s, probably have families, likely are professionals and need others who can relate to all of those attributes. Like it or not, the information sent, and even the tone of the account, matters in this regard and staffing decisions should be made accordingly.

Today's work environment demands a quantifiable return on investment, which may not always be readily apparent from social media usage. Just as the effectiveness of some other forms of public relations and marketing are hard to ascertain, so is social media. While it may be difficult at times to easily quantify all of the benefits, it is very easy to see the negative effects of not engaging or engaging poorly. \*



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

## Great Expectations – the National Recreational Boating Survey

**O**ften, important projects take a long time to become a reality. If they're truly important, though, it's worth the effort and the wait.

That's the case for the new National Recreational Boating Survey. More than six years in the making, it has the potential to be one of the most important tools for the future success of the National Recreational Boating Safety Program. The survey will provide credible data regarding a multitude of vital topics, such as the size of the boating population in people, the number of boats (registered and unregistered), and the level of participation in boating activity (exposure hours). It will also provide state-specific data and give us the tools we need for performing cause and effect analyses.

The Coast Guard has performed national recreational boating surveys for nearly 40 years. Every five to 10 (or more) years, we would conduct a survey to learn more about the boating community and the opinions of that community. These surveys were of value at the time, but they lacked some key components that held them back from their true potential.

Following the November 2003 release of our 2002 survey, we started serious discussions on the way ahead for our next survey. We saw ways in which we could improve this process, but we needed to take the time to think it through properly and to get qualified outside involvement to help guide us.

In late 2005, we announced our desire for a potential grant recipient to

coordinate the design of the next survey and to develop the method in which the survey would be implemented. In 2006, a \$525,000 grant was awarded to the NMMA's Foundation for Recreational Boating Safety, Education, and Environmental Awareness.

Over the next couple of years, that Foundation did a tremendous job with this project. They created two key advisory groups: one consisting of a multitude of boating subject matter experts who determined the topics that the survey needed to cover, and one consisting of expert scientists on survey design and implementation methods. Under the guidance of Jim Petru (NMMA) and Dr. Ed Mahoney (Michigan State University/Recreational Marine Research Center), they constructed what is deemed an exceptional product – one that can consolidate other organizations' surveys as a cost-saving measure for them and overcome the often-conflicting data that result from lesser quality surveys.

This new survey includes multiple approaches to reaching the boating community, using both mail and phone surveys, reaching both registered boat owners and the general public – those who go boating but may not own a boat. In total, the survey will achieve up to 50,000 completed samples, providing enough data that state-specific analyses will be achievable.

The cost of this survey is significant, but the potential results make this a vital project. States will be able to use the data to evaluate their own programs, the industry will be able to gain much from the data, other federal agencies can use

the results for their planning efforts, and the Coast Guard and our many boating safety partners will benefit tremendously from our analyses of the data. Still, the biggest beneficiary from this survey will be the boating public, as this data is used to enhance the services that we provide to them.

This survey also resolves another major concern for the National Recreational Boating Safety Program. When our program was last evaluated by the Administration and Congress, a major qualified concern that they had was our limited measurements for determining our success and improving our program. This survey is the primary response to that concern.

We will gather vital data from this instrument every two years. This will provide insight into trends and allow for timely analysis. We are behind schedule in implementing the survey. The actual data gathering began in late summer 2011. Due to this delay, it is gathering just a portion of the key demographic data for 2011 to establish much-needed baselines. Beginning around February 2012, the next survey will begin; and it will include key participation data from the boaters, asking them on a monthly basis to recall their activity just over the prior month.

The 2011 data should be available for review by the early spring of 2012, with a possible release date around late spring/early summer. Stand by to see the results then and to see what the future holds in store for our continuously improving national program.

# Technology in **recreational** boating safety

By Joe Carro  
Program Operations Branch  
Boating Safety Division  
Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety  
U.S. Coast Guard

**W**hen I heard the topic for this issue was technology in recreational boating safety (RBS), I wasn't sure where to begin. I initially thought that covering the latest and greatest gadgets out there might be the way to go. After all, there are thousands of helpful tools – surely I could find one or two that I was familiar with. Then I considered mentioning technologies that help marine patrol officers do their jobs. I thought, sure, no problem, except that I haven't done a law enforcement boarding for...let's just say it's been a while. What would I possibly know about the latest law enforcement technology available to today's law enforcement officer? Finally, I thought about boating safety itself. What technologies have evolved to make boating and boats safer?

The latest and greatest gadgets vary so much and are so numerous that catalogs are filled with them. These include everything from handheld bearing compasses to GPS units that will do everything to keep you from getting lost and help you get back home, to some units that even contain radios. That's a long way from a needle and cork and bread crumbs. I mentioned catalogs earlier. That was not by accident. The only way to keep up with items that are currently leading the way in technological innovations is literally by checking the catalogs. You can also go to boat shows, conferences and showrooms, not to mention your desktop computer.

Your desktop computer...Is anyone besides me still only relying on a desktop? I didn't think so. Officers engaged in day-to-day law enforcement operations are now equipped with laptop

computers that are durable, bulletproof, portable and allow access to every law enforcement database out there. You can run the names and numbers of boats, vehicles and persons in a matter of seconds instead of calling in on a sometimes-secure radio and waiting for a watch stander to gather information fast enough to use during the boarding or the stop you are engaged in.

It used to be that you only had a radio and megaphone in your communications inventory. Now we have cell phones and multifunction radios. And how about those cell phones? They are not even called cell phones anymore. These devices include every description of smart phone, PDA, iPhone and BlackBerry, not to mention that almost all of them have some kind of GPS technology. I was just getting used to the two cans and a string thing.

Another great tool being used by law enforcement agencies is language translation devices. These multilingual, handheld electronic translation devices allow instantaneous translation of a language into familiar phrases to allow for two-way communication between an officer and a subject. This is a great tool not only for law enforcement but also for search and rescue and emergency medical situations as well.

Training technologies have also come a long way. I am not just talking about the evolution from the chalkboard to the whiteboard to a PowerPoint presentation. These may have been great strides in training, but think about how far some of the simulators in use today have come. There have been shipboard simulators in use for many years. This technology is making its way down to

the recreational boating community, including actual hands-on training. The same is true with firearms training. Firearms training simulators now have realistic scenarios that are so interactive that your decisions affect the direction the scenarios go and the results. The weapons use everything from simulated ammunition to lasers and vibrating weapons that seem real enough for any training situation.

Even the boats and equipment we use have come a long way. Nearly all of the boats we use are virtually unsinkable. Fenders in many cases have been replaced by fendering systems that allow boat-to-boat contact with no damage. (This is also helpful for all docking situations, you know who you are.) Today's outboard engines have become more reliable, fuel-efficient and safer – few officers remember replacing a shear pin. With today's depth finders and side-scan sonar systems, even situations leading to "shearing a pin" have become a thing of the past.

I will leave you with one final thought about technology. It will fail. It will fail at the most inopportune time. As great as they are, collision-avoidance radar systems will cease to function just as you near fog, spotlights will burn out just as you are about to ID a contact, and navigation and communications systems won't work.

The one piece of technology that you can always count on and that is not prone to failure is the technology between your ears. Keep your batteries charged, keep your personal engine tuned up, stay knowledgeable and trained, and your personal technology will not let you down. \*

# Use *Event Manager* to offer convenience of online registration for classroom courses

By Tammy Sapp, Kalkomey Enterprises Inc.

**T**oday's college freshmen have never lived in a world without the Internet. To those of us who regard college as a distant memory, that's an astounding fact. It's also an important one. People born after 1993 have been surfing the Web since they were tots, and their expectations for service reflect that. Understanding that fact will help us be more successful at introducing safe boating to this generation and the ones that follow.

Today's young person performs a variety of everyday tasks online, everything from ordering pizza to applying for a job. Students seeking boater certification expect to be able to register for a classroom boating course online, too. Playing phone tag with the instructor to sign up for a course is the surest road to frustrationville for today's über-connected young people.

Wouldn't it be nice to remove barriers to boating safety education and streamline your agency's work while saving money?

You can with Event Manager. This web-based application will help you manage your agency's classroom courses online from start to finish, making life easier for administrators, instructors and students.

Event Manager – which is offered by Kalkomey, parent company of Boat Ed – allows administrators and instructors to schedule a variety of classroom and in-person training courses and gives students the convenience of online registration. Event Manager provides a wide range of services, including tools that allow:

- Communication about events between instructors and students

- Grading and recording of event results by instructors
- Online report and certificate generation
- Transfer of event data to the state agency
- Generating reports that help agencies comply with requests from the U.S. Coast Guard and others.

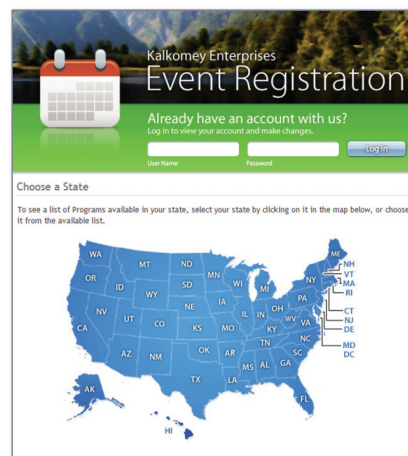
Event Manager is a flexible tool that allows agencies to configure the application's built-in features to meet their specific needs. Plus, a different set of permissions for each user – administrators, instructors and students – provides control over a wide range of factors such as the process for approving and posting courses and locations, what contact information instructors choose to offer, and what type of reports can be generated.

The contact information and demographic data captured via Event Manager also can help you market additional training opportunities, boating information and more to specific audiences.

In addition to Event Manager's dozens of useful features, you can count on Kalkomey to provide complete support from setting up the application to ongoing technical assistance for agency staff, instructors and students. The best part may be the cost savings you'll see from transferring a hands-on, paper-heavy process to the efficiencies of the Internet. Plus, because the application and data management costs are shared by multiple agencies, subscription fees are affordable. Some agencies are offsetting the cost of Event Manager by collecting a small convenience fee from students.

Coming soon is another exciting web-based application designed to reliably store and manage your agency's student certification data. Certification Manager will give agency staff the power to search, edit and report on certification data even when busy IT departments can't help. This immediate access to data can help your agency enhance boating safety programs as well as verify certifications and replace certification cards online. Certification Manager is in the prototype stage now so stay tuned for more information closer to launch.

If you're interested in receiving a demo of Event Manager or Certification Manager, please contact Tammy Sapp at [tsapp@kalkomey.com](mailto:tsapp@kalkomey.com).



## About Kalkomey

Kalkomey, parent company of boat-ed.com, is the official provider of recreational safety education materials for all 50 states. Our print and Internet courses have been providing official safety certification since 1995. We provide safety courses in boating, hunting, bowhunting and off-road vehicle (ORV) and snowmobile operation. For more information, visit [www.kalkomey.com](http://www.kalkomey.com). Find us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/Kalkomey](http://www.facebook.com/Kalkomey). \*

## Congratulations, Idaho!

Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation boating law administrator Dave Dahms received the state's 2011 Innovations in Technology Award, which is sponsored by Boat Ed®, from Cindy Kalkomey at the NASBLA conference in Milwaukee.

Consider the ways you innovate. Your state could win in 2012.



800-830-2268 | [kalkomey.com](http://kalkomey.com)



small craft advisory

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1500 Leestown Road, Suite 330

Lexington, KY 40511

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## 2012 Recreational Boating Safety Calendar

### 2012 January

**22-29**

**U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary**  
National Training Meeting  
St. Louis, Missouri  
<http://www.cgauxa.org>

**25-29**

**United States Power Squadrons**  
Annual Meeting  
Jacksonville, Florida  
[www.usps.org](http://www.usps.org)  
888.367.USPS

### February

**1-2**

**NASBLA**  
Preparedness & Response  
Committee Meeting  
Washington, D.C.  
[www.nasbla.org](http://www.nasbla.org)  
[john.fetterman@nasbla.org](mailto:john.fetterman@nasbla.org)  
859.225.9487

**19-22**

**International Association of  
Marine Investigators**  
Annual Training Seminar  
San Diego, California  
[www.iamimarine.org/iamimarine@aol.com](http://www.iamimarine.org/iamimarine@aol.com)  
866.844.4264

**27-28**

**NASBLA**  
Executive Board Meeting  
Lexington, Kentucky  
[www.nasbla.org](http://www.nasbla.org)  
[ron@nasbla.org](mailto:ron@nasbla.org)  
859.225.9487

**28**

**NASBLA**  
Enforcement & Training  
Committee Meeting  
Lexington, Kentucky  
[john.fetterman@nasbla.org](mailto:john.fetterman@nasbla.org)  
859.225.9487

### 29-March 1 NASBLA

Spring BLA Workshop  
Lexington, Kentucky  
[www.nasbla.org](http://www.nasbla.org)  
[ron@nasbla.org](mailto:ron@nasbla.org)  
859.225.9487

### 29-March 1

**Homeland Security Outlook**  
Small Vessel Security  
Threats Conference  
Charleston, South Carolina  
[www.svstconference.com](http://www.svstconference.com)  
203.644.6020

### March 2

**NASBLA**  
Engineering, Reporting &  
Analysis Committee Meeting  
Lexington, Kentucky  
[www.nasbla.org](http://www.nasbla.org)  
[deb@nasbla.org](mailto:deb@nasbla.org)  
859.225.9487

**3-4**

**NASBLA**  
Education & Awareness  
Committee Meeting  
San Diego, California  
[www.nasbla.org](http://www.nasbla.org)  
[pam@nasbla.org](mailto:pam@nasbla.org)  
859.225.9487

**4-7**

**National Water Safety Congress  
& National Safe Boating Council**  
International Boating & Water  
Safety Summit  
San Diego, California  
[www.watersafetycongress.org](http://www.watersafetycongress.org)  
[www.safeboatingcouncil.org](http://www.safeboatingcouncil.org)

**8-9**

**NASBLA**  
National Boating Education  
Standards Panel  
San Diego, California  
[www.nasbla.org](http://www.nasbla.org)  
[pam@nasbla.org](mailto:pam@nasbla.org)  
859.225.9487

**18-21**

**Southern States Boating Law  
Administrators Association**  
Annual Conference  
Charleston, South Carolina  
[darren.rider@tn.gov](mailto:darren.rider@tn.gov)

### April

**23-24**

**National Marine  
Manufacturers Association**  
American Boating Congress  
Washington, D.C.  
[www.nmma.org/abc](http://www.nmma.org/abc)  
[cpomorski@nmma.org](mailto:cpomorski@nmma.org)  
202.737.9774

**28**

**National Boating Federation**  
Annual Meeting  
Oak Brook, Illinois  
[www.n-b-f.org](http://www.n-b-f.org)  
708.409.0280

### May

**18**

**Wear Your Life Jacket to Work Day**  
[www.safeboatingcampaign.org](http://www.safeboatingcampaign.org)  
[outreach@safeboatingcouncil.org](mailto:outreach@safeboatingcouncil.org)

**19**

**Ready! Set! Wear It!**  
[www.safeboatingcampaign.org](http://www.safeboatingcampaign.org)  
[outreach@safeboatingcouncil.org](mailto:outreach@safeboatingcouncil.org)

**19-25**

**National Safe Boating Week**  
[www.safeboatingcampaign.org](http://www.safeboatingcampaign.org)  
[outreach@safeboatingcouncil.org](mailto:outreach@safeboatingcouncil.org)

### June

**2-10**

**National Fishing & Boating Week**  
[www.takemefishing.org](http://www.takemefishing.org)  
[rbff@rbff.org](mailto:rbff@rbff.org)

**9**

**National Marina Day**  
[www.nationalmarinaday.org](http://www.nationalmarinaday.org)

**10-13**

**Western States Boating  
Administrators Association**  
Annual Conference  
Breckenridge, Colorado  
[pfiffner@ndow.gov](mailto:pfiffner@ndow.gov)

**13-15**

**NASBLA**  
Executive Board Meeting  
Breckenridge, Colorado  
[www.nasbla.org](http://www.nasbla.org)  
[ron@nasbla.org](mailto:ron@nasbla.org)  
859.225.94

**22-24**

**Operation Dry Water**  
[www.OperationDryWater.org](http://www.OperationDryWater.org)  
[ron@nasbla.org](mailto:ron@nasbla.org)

### July

**16-20**

**NASBLA**  
BLA Academy  
Lexington, Kentucky  
[www.nasbla.org](http://www.nasbla.org)  
[ron@nasbla.org](mailto:ron@nasbla.org)  
859.225.9487

### August

**22-26**

**U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary**  
National Conference  
San Antonio, Texas  
<http://www.cgauxa.org>

### September

**8-12**

**NASBLA**  
Annual Conference  
Mobile, Alabama  
[www.nasbla.org](http://www.nasbla.org)  
[info@nasbla.org](mailto:info@nasbla.org)  
859.225.9487

### November

**2-4**

**American Canoe Association**  
National Paddlesports  
Conference  
Charleston, South Carolina  
[www.americancanoe.org](http://www.americancanoe.org)  
[cstec@americancanoe.org](mailto:cstec@americancanoe.org)  
540.907.4460