

# SCA

small craft advisory

MARCH-APRIL 2012 | VOL. 27 NO. 2  
National Association of State Boating Law Administrators

***Teamwork  
boosts  
rescue  
response***

***EPIRBs save  
lives and  
resources***

***Comprehensive  
campaign  
targets boaters***





# SCA

small craft advisory

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

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## About the Cover

Search and rescue (SAR) is a fundamental response component of most agencies' core RBS responsibilities. To enhance their skills, officers undergo rigorous training, such as the Water Rescue & Emergency Response and Advanced Line Systems Instructor Training offered by the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission. PFBC photo/Chris Calhoun

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*On the road, on the water  
Don't drink and drive.*



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on the water  
Don't drink  
and drive.*

A multi-agency initiative designed to combine law enforcement resources  
to ensure that everyone can safely travel on highways and waterways  
during the summer months.  
Be a Part of the Team. Be Responsible.



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Mike Fields  
NASBLA  
President



John Johnson  
NASBLA  
Executive Director

## BOAT program blends, enhances marine law enforcement resources

**T**his edition of *Small Craft Advisory* focuses on search and rescue (SAR) and the key role this function plays in our National Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) Program. Each year, the U.S. Coast Guard alone spends \$680 million on maritime search and rescue missions, representing roughly two-thirds of the more than 30,000 annual SAR cases nationwide.

While most aspects of the national RBS program are geared, appropriately, toward preventive efforts, SAR is a fundamental *response* component of most agencies' core RBS responsibilities. SAR operations command thousands of hours of manpower, from the ranks of state, local and federal law enforcement agencies, as well as a corps of volunteers from across the country.

SAR cases frequently involve responses from multiple maritime law enforcement agencies and, perhaps as much as any other aspect of recreational boating safety, truly exemplify the concept of *partners on the water* – a concept NASBLA fosters through its training and law enforcement outreach programs. Agency partnerships were essential to the development of NASBLA's Boat Operations and Training (BOAT) program and they are fundamental to its continued success.

BOAT is a comprehensive, marine law enforcement and emergency responder standard-setting and training program that provides targeted instruction to our local, state and federal agency partners on more than a dozen critical disciplines integral to maritime safety and security. One of the key relationships we established at the outset of the BOAT program was with the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

The partnership we forged with the Auxiliary became a significant factor in the development of our Basic Crew Member (BCM) and Boat Operator for Search and Rescue (BOSAR) courses. By utilizing their expertise in the area of boat operations training, and search and rescue specifically, we were able to embed existing doctrine and training material into the course and quickly answer the needs of our members and the maritime emergency response community. Tom Venezio, the Auxiliary's past Deputy National Commodore, and Dave Elliot, the Assistant National Commodore for Response and Prevention, assisted directly in the development of the two programs and the

delivery of each of the two pilots in Newport, Rhode Island, at Coast Guard Station Castle Hill, last summer.

The pilot BCM and BOSAR courses were delivered to a group of participants representing no less than 10 municipal and state rescue agencies in the Castle Hill area. Within less than a week, five of these agencies would find themselves called to work collaboratively to execute an actual SAR mission. According to Chief Warrant Officer Tom Guthlein, currently the U.S. Coast Guard's Ancient Keeper (the longest serving and most distinguished member of boat forces):

Last weekend we had a mayday call...when the Fire and Harbormasters arrived on scene they started with all the information they learned in the [BOSAR] course. It was something to see and hear over the radio. Five totally different departments working as one in doing search patterns. The only thing in common with all of these rescue craft was the BOSAR course, so it really works in real life.

Comments like these make us proud of the training work our BOAT program is accomplishing, and proud to have created an effective mechanism for bringing together and blending the resources of marine law enforcement agencies at all levels of government. Prior to the advent of the BOAT program, there were no national, comprehensive standards against which to build and measure our training efforts in either basic or specialized instruction for marine law enforcement officers. As a result, few of our member agencies have a training program that meets a national standard of knowledge, skills and professional qualification.

The BOAT program and these two courses in particular provide the foundational framework to take officers and emergency responders from the basics of being a crew member to the ability to integrate seamlessly with the Coast Guard and other agencies when conducting a search and rescue mission. Through training in the BCM and BOSAR courses, agency leadership, Coast Guard local station chiefs, Captains of the Port, and the boating public alike can be assured that their officers can truly work together as force multipliers when lives are at stake.

Across all agency types, first responders will be able to directly impact the "probability of detection" when a search for a boater in distress

occurs by utilizing standardized search pattern procedures, techniques and terminology. Now, rather than being just an observer to SAR cases, more officers and emergency responders will play critical roles that can dramatically impact the outcome. This year, NASBLA is already committed to delivering a combination of as many as eight BOSAR courses and 11 Basic Crew Member courses (the first step in training a boat crew to the national standard and to operate cooperatively and effectively in a search and rescue case).

In addition to those courses, NASBLA is working with clusters of agencies across the country, like Louisiana's Task Force 7, to bring BOAT program training to develop multi-agency operations. Task Force 7 is a group that represents all seven parishes in the Baton Rouge area and they are training 120 officers in multiple phases of the BOAT Program. The task force is formed and operating on the principle of interagency and multi-jurisdiction interoperability, an element that we consider essential to enhancing the safety and security of America's waterways.

Whether your agency and your partner agencies are working to establish a multi-agency preparedness and response regimen like Task Force 7, or just working to improve your own agency's search and rescue response capabilities, NASBLA's BOAT program is positioned to help you succeed. In addition to the unmatched quality of the marine law enforcement courses themselves, the BOAT program also creates and provides an entire training platform with an integrated system to help your agency standardize its internal training parameters and harmonize those standards with partner agencies.

Most of our members fully appreciate the fact that over the last few years state governments have shed hundreds of thousands of positions in an effort to offset budget shortfalls, but our life-saving missions have remained unchanged. *Doing more with less* is hardly a novel concept in this new world order, but we believe initiatives like the BOAT program really do have the potential to help our member agencies stretch their scarce resources as far as possible by effectively leveraging the cooperation and support of other force multipliers. Nationally standardized training that leads to real interoperability and collaboration is part of the solution. ✨

# NASBLA News

## Register now for the Airboat Operator Course



NASBLA is hosting a 40-hour comprehensive Airboat Operator Course April 16-20, 2012, on Delacroix Island in Louisiana. With a ratio of only two students to every instructor, you can be assured that you will get the training and individual attention you need to become proficient within a national standard of training.

The \$4800 tuition fee (per student) covers lots of hands-on operational training plus all ground transportation from Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport, meals and lodging. A minimum class size of 10 students must be met to guarantee delivery of this class – so if you're interested, please register now at [www.nasbla.org/BOAT](http://www.nasbla.org/BOAT). Please make no travel plans until the final announcement is made. For more information on the Airboat Operations course, contact John Fetterman at 859.225-9487, [john.fetterman@nasbla.org](mailto:john.fetterman@nasbla.org).

## NASBLA honors Salerno for longtime support

NASBLA recently presented Vice Admiral Brian Salerno with a unique piece of artwork – a customized rendering titled “Partners on the Water,” drawn by artist Jodi Mosher. Admiral Salerno served in Maine in the mid 1980s in the Marine Safety Office and built a strong relationship with Maine Marine Patrol. Currently the vice commandant of Operations at USCG Headquarters, Admiral Salerno has been a great supporter of NASBLA, the state partnerships and the Preparedness & Response (formerly Homeland Security) Committee’s buildout of the Boat Operations & Training (BOAT) program. Retiring this spring, Admiral Salerno will be greatly missed by the entire maritime community.



(l-r) NASBLA Immediate Past President Jim Graybeal (DE), NASBLA Preparedness & Response Committee Chair Spencer Cole (LA), VADM Brian Salerno, Mark Richerson (MO), Angel Rodriguez (PR), Tina Cardone (C-PORT), Jeff Parrish (TX), and Rodger Norcross (OH).

### About the artist

Artist Jodi Mosher volunteered her considerable talent and time to create the artwork for Vice Admiral Brian Salerno. An accomplished artist, Mosher has deep roots and connections to the sea, New England, and the U.S. Coast Guard. She grew up aboard a retired 83-ft. Coast Guard Cutter in Portsmouth Harbor, N.H. After a short career as a commercial lobsterman, Jodi served 22 years in the Coast Guard, 10 of which were active duty. Called back to active duty for six months after 9/11, she was assigned port security duty. She joined the Maine Marine Patrol in 1997.



## Mourning the loss of dedicated Boating Investigator



It is with great sadness that we share news of the passing of a valued and longtime committee member, accident investigation instructor and friend, Ken Ripley. We were stunned to learn of Ken's death on Jan. 9, 2012.

"Ken played a tremendous role not only in our Engineering, Reporting & Analysis Committee (ERAC) – and its predecessor committees – but also in the larger NASBLA community and partner organizations. His contributions to the advancement of recreational boating accident reporting and investigation were many, and the professional and personal voids left by his passing will be hard to fill," said NASBLA CEO and Executive Director John Johnson.

Kenneth L. Ripley, 59, served as a wildlife/boating officer with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) for 21 years before becoming one of the agency's two boating investigators in 2003. He attended the Marine Surveyors Guild Accident Investigation course and the Underwriters Laboratories and NASBLA Advanced Accident Investigation courses. He provided input in the development of the marine component of Visual Statement's Vista Fx accident reconstruction software. He also assisted with the development and implementation of the TWRA's Internet-based accident reporting system, which garnered the agency NASBLA's Innovations in Technology Award in 2008.

"Ken's service to NASBLA and the time he spent with boating safety education were the highlights of his career," according to Ken's older brother Bob Ripley, a retired TWRA wildlife officer. "Ken was happiest at his computer working to unravel boat accidents and make the water safer for boaters."

support to our Enforcement & Training and Preparedness & Response committees."

As the president and founder of Merrick Maritime Security Inc., the chief intelligence and domestic security officer with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and a retired chief warrant officer with the U.S. Coast Guard where he helped create numerous foundational policies, procedures and tactics for homeland security and emergency response in the maritime domain, Mark is a valuable asset to the BOAT program.

## Education director receives conservation award



On Jan. 14, 2012, NASBLA Education Director Pam Dillon was presented with the United States Canoe Association's 2012 Mike Fremont Conservation Award. Pam is only the fifth recipient of this prestigious award since it was established in 1992.

The Mike Fremont Conservation Award recognizes an organization or individual who has made an outstanding effort, nationally or internationally, toward river conservation. The award is named in honor of longtime canoe racer and river conservationist Leonard H. (Mike) Fremont from Cincinnati, Ohio, for his many years of dedication to the preservation of the nation's waterways. Fremont founded the Ohio-based Rivers Unlimited and was instrumental in the formation of American Rivers, a national conservation group.

Fremont, who serves on the USCA's awards committee, nominated Pam for the award in recognition of her many accomplishments and achievements in river conservation during her career.

## NASBLA hires full-time BOAT program director



In January 2012, Mark DuPont joined NASBLA full-time as director of the organization's Boat Operations and Training (BOAT) program. Mark had been serving in that capacity on a contract basis for the last two years, so he's no stranger to NASBLA.

As the program's director, Mark is responsible for management, oversight, coordination and continued

enhancement of all BOAT course curricula and course delivery; student certification and data collection; instructor selection and qualification; partner relationship development and collaboration; member agency training support and accreditation; and the associated staff functions necessary to execute all elements of the BOAT Program. He is also a direct liaison with the U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency and other federal entities to ensure alignment with training policies, procedures, tactics, and techniques.

"Mark brings a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to this key NASBLA position," said NASBLA CEO John Johnson. "Mark will continue in his role as director of the BOAT program where he will play the lead role in our national training initiatives. He will also provide

Pam has been an avid paddler since the early 1970s. A career-long boating professional, Pam recently joined NASBLA as the nonprofit organization's education director. Previously, she served as chief of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Watercraft. In this position, she served as Ohio's boating law administrator and was in charge of the state's waterways law enforcement activities and boating programs.

In 2009, Pam, in collaboration with (former) Ohio DNR Director Sean Logan, worked with the boating and conservation communities to establish support to save Ohio's Scenic Rivers program, which had been targeted for elimination from the state's budget. Since the Ohio Scenic Rivers program was one of Fremont's most noted achievements in conserving the free-flowing rivers in Ohio, he knew of no other way to pay

tribute to Pam than to nominate her for the Mike Fremont Conservation Award for 2012. The USCA Executive Committee unanimously agreed with this nomination.

### Editor receives writing awards



NASBLA's editor, Kimberly Jenkins, has received two awards from the Kentucky Government Communicators Association (KAGC), a nonprofit organization that brings together professionals whose primary jobs involve communicating

with media, the public, legislatures, stakeholders and other entities.

In mid-December, Jenkins received the Award of Excellence in the Feature Writing category for her article "Taking a different tack on learning," which appeared in the November-December 2010 Small Craft Advisory. The article profiles the Brendan Sail Training Program, created by longtime boating safety champion James Muldoon. Jenkins received an APEX Award of Excellence and the MarCom Platinum Award for this article earlier in the year.

Jenkins also received an Honorable Mention in News Writing from KAGC, for her article "States get social online." This article, which ran in the May-June 2010 issue, focuses on member agencies' efforts to use various forms of social media to reach their constituents. \*

## Ensure true interoperability on the water

*New for 2012*

*Boat Operator for Search and Rescue (BOSAR) course*

*An essential building block in your training matrix for any maritime law enforcement or emergency response agency*

*A national standard of training search and rescue procedures, protocols and skills building your capabilities to work seamlessly with your area partners.*

*Students leave with a higher level of competence and effectiveness, becoming true force-multipliers.*



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# On the Road, On the Water, Don't Drink and Drive

Multi-agency campaign brings straight-forward **safety message** in North Carolina

By Geoff Cantrell  
Public Information Officer  
N.C. Wildlife Resources  
Commission

**A**fter a successful inaugural summer, "On the Road, On the Water, Don't Drink and Drive," a multi-agency initiative in North Carolina, will resume in 2012.

The campaign combines law enforcement resources to ensure that everyone can safely travel on highways and waterways during the summer. It merges the "Don't Drink and Drive" and "Boat Safe, Boat Sober" messages. The campaign mirrors existing efforts in other states, which provided examples for North Carolina to follow and in some cases, gave strategic expertise.

The agencies involved are the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, responsible for boating safety; the State Highway Patrol, promoting highway accident reduction; Alcohol Law Enforcement Division, with a zero tolerance for underage drinking; and local police and sheriff's offices, who work for public safety in their communities. The Forensic Tests for Alcohol Division assists by providing personnel and mobile lab/processing units. Additional support comes from state and national chapters of Mothers Against Drunk Driving and the North Carolina Conference of District Attorneys.

As a result of the initial campaign effort, 1,141 impaired vessel and vehicle operators were removed from North Carolina's roads and waterways. A huge component of "On the Road, On the Water" was education.

"We would rather educate the public on the dangers of operating any vehicle while impaired and have them make a responsible decision not to drink and drive," said Lt. Todd Radabaugh, a wildlife officer in Pender County and the state's lead instructor for boating-under-the-influence detection training. "When people make the choice to operate a

vehicle while impaired, they place the lives of every other member of their community at risk. We tell them 'Have a plan. Designate a responsible operator, and make sure you return home safely. You owe it to yourself, your family and your community.' Then we back up the education component with enforcement."

The field action primarily consisted of officers working in tandem conducting sobriety checkpoints and special saturation patrols during the busy summer holidays of Memorial Day, July 4th and Labor Day,



## On the road, on the water Don't drink and drive.



**On the road,  
on the water  
Don't drink  
and drive.**

A multi-agency initiative designed to combine law enforcement resources to ensure that everyone can safely travel on highways and waterways during the summer months.

Be a Part of the Team. Be Responsible.



This is about your safety, your well-being."

Part of the deterrent, educational strategy is developing public information to advance the message, he explained. The basic message is reinforced with the explanation that alcohol affects the skills necessary to operate vehicles or

combined with special messaging strategies to increase awareness of the dangerous consequences of impaired operation. Each holiday patrol begins with a mission charge from campaign leadership to field staff via e-mail, with timeframes, checklists and reporting forms distributed. The delegation of responsibilities is set by individual agencies. Command hierarchy then takes over coordination at designated locations, so that all involved agencies have a shared local command center, typically at a high-visibility area for both waterway and highway traffic. Local law enforcement, magistrates and district attorney offices are included from the earliest stages and kept at the forefront.

This statewide campaign captures considerable media attention, putting an emphasis on open communication and seamless execution of patrols within the ranks, along with a clear intent and a strong message from everyone repeated to the press and the public. A reiteration of goals and advisories of the overall campaign is given, in an advance email and verbally at patrol debriefs.

"The consistent message we deliver is, North Carolina sets the same limits for intoxication while operating a boat as for operating a motor vehicle," said Maj. Chris Huebner, the state boating safety coordinator with the Wildlife Commission. "You can be charged if your blood-alcohol concentration meets or exceeds .08 or if you are appreciably impaired by alcohol and/or drugs.

vessels, including:

- Peripheral vision and ability to focus
- Judgment and rational decision-making
- Balance and equilibrium
- Coordination and reaction time

"How do you convey this? We make it applicable to the local level, all across the state," Maj. Huebner said. "An officer makes it relevant by pointing out how a recent fatality in the community could have been avoided or cites statistics about the high number of DWI cases in a specific county, or anything to make the message more 'right here, right now.' All our talking points have the same basics; we just want to make it as personal a connection as we can."

Other key elements of public information included a 30-second TV commercial, distributed as a public service message to all network affiliated stations across the state. Two posters were mass produced, along with an informational "boat safe, boat sober/booze it & lose it" flier. News releases from each participating agency were coordinated for simultaneous issuance to media and reporters were given special ride-along interview opportunities. The campaign was able to document 100 print articles in newspapers and magazines, more than 50 TV reports and a similar number of radio broadcasts, and inclusion in social media. The Governor's Office issued a Proclamation of Safe Boating Week on May 21-27, which included text specific to the campaign's kick-off.



*The agency also incorporated Operation Dry Water into its On the Road, On the Water campaign, providing beneficial exposure to the public and coverage opportunities for the media.*

For the summer of 2012, weather resistant signs with the "On the Road, On the Water, Don't Drink and Drive" slogan will be placed at kiosks at public boat ramps. Coordination with media will continue on a local basis, with expanded opportunities for interviews and ride-alongs with officers in immediate news coverage areas. Billboards placed on thoroughfares to popular waterways are a possibility, dependent on funding constraints.

"The On the Road, On the Water agencies and organizations ask that drivers be responsible, no matter what they drive," said Col. Dale Caveny, chief of the Division of Law Enforcement of the Wildlife Commission. "I think all agencies involved found that we gained maximum exposure and effectiveness by working together, especially at a time of limited resources and available funding.

"The key element for effectiveness, I think, was what happened at the field level. Local officers from various agencies were able to communicate and coordinate. And that determined the overall success of the campaign." \*



# The BoatU.S. Foundation EPIRB Rental Program

## Saving Lives and resources

By Ted Sensenbrenner  
Assistant Director of Boating Safety  
BoatU.S. Foundation for  
Boating Safety & Clean Water

**S**ince 1997, the BoatU.S. Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water has been renting EPIRBs to boaters who venture far from shore and out of VHF and cell phone range. EPIRB stands for Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon, and these devices are used by stricken boaters in dire circumstances as a last resort to notify and request rescue services. To date, nearly 6,000 boaters have rented EPIRBs from the Foundation – these rental units have been activated a total of 27 times, saving 66 lives and several million dollars worth of boaters' property.

The BoatU.S. EPIRB rental program was created because the high cost of an EPIRB and related maintenance are potential barriers for the occasional offshore boater to purchase one. EPIRBs have also proven to be very reliable and extraordinarily accurate, slashing the Coast Guard's time to notification and narrowing search areas. With these reasons in mind, BoatU.S. has established an affordable weekly rental price of \$65 so that it is an easy decision on the part of the boater to rent versus going without. The thousands of boaters who have rented from BoatU.S. have never questioned the peace of mind that a rented electronic emergency beacon provides.



*BoatU.S. Foundation rents McMurdo GPS-enabled EPIRBs for \$65 a week, plus shipping. All units are registered with NOAA as required by law and are professionally maintained.*

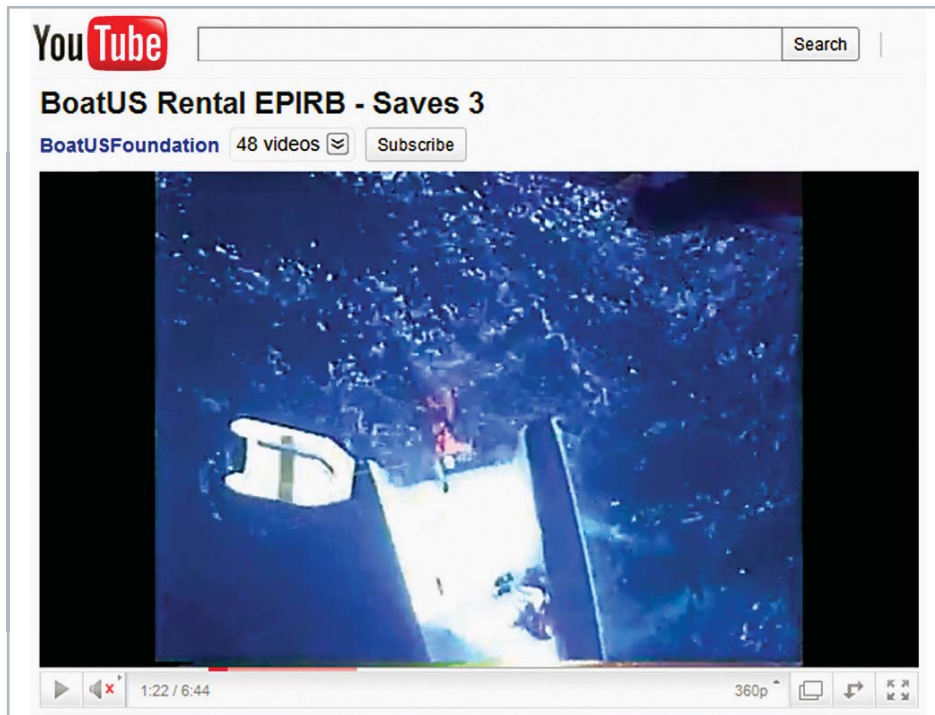
Here's how an EPIRB works. When activated, a 406 MHz EPIRB broadcasts a unique repeating SOS signal. Satellites operated and maintained by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) detect these signals from virtually any point on Earth and forward critical information to a rescue agency on the ground. Within minutes, a boater's position is known by the nearest rescue unit so that proper search and rescue resources can be mobilized.

The unique signal sent by an EPIRB contains information on the boat and vessel owner — if, and only if, the EPIRB has been properly registered with NOAA. Through a one-of-a-kind partnership with NOAA and the Coast Guard, the Foundation EPIRBs are all registered to the Foundation, not to an individual. The Foundation collects information from prospective renters, including boat information, people on the trip and a full float plan — much more information than is captured in a typical EPIRB registration. Should an EPIRB be activated, the Coast Guard response center calls BoatU.S., which has operators on duty 24/7.

Satellite coverage, monitoring the signals and dispatching assistance is a free service to all boaters. So is the rescue. However, an EPIRB is not an inexpensive piece of safety gear; modern units can cost as much as \$1,000. While an EPIRB is required equipment for most commercial and charter vessels, recreational boaters are not required to have one aboard their vessels.

BoatU.S. Foundation rents McMurdo 406 MHz G5 Category II GPS-enabled EPIRBs, sometimes referred to as GPIRBs. These EPIRBs can be activated manually with a simple red switch on the front of the unit, or will automatically signal for help if the unit becomes substantially wet. All EPIRBs are shipped in an airtight, high-visibility yellow case that floats, which serves the boater well in an abandon-ship situation.

Boaters have rented EPIRBs from the Foundation for many different purposes.



When surveyed, most boaters said they rented the emergency beacon to have on hand for a family cruising trip. Offshore racing, fishing excursions and delivering a new boat are among the other more common reasons given for renting. The majority (65%) of rented EPIRBs are carried aboard sailboats and the length of all vessels that rented BoatU.S. Foundation EPIRBs averaged 35 feet in length.

Several dramatic rescues have unfolded after a Foundation EPIRB rental unit was activated. For example, a 42' wooden sailboat quickly sank in Long Island Sound after planks in the bow separated during a storm (BoatU.S. EPIRB Case # 1537). All three persons aboard survived. There was also the case of a 39' offshore powerboat that struck a submerged object on a calm night on the way to the Bahamas (BoatU.S. EPIRB Case #1040). The only person

*The BoatU.S. Foundation is a national 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization that helps boaters be safer and better stewards of the environment.*

aboard was found in a life raft and was airlifted to a waiting ambulance. On the West Coast, three people were delivering their recently purchased sailing catamaran when a 15' wave capsized them off the California coast (BoatU.S. EPIRB Case #851). All three survived despite being hypothermic and near death.

There are many more survivors' tales from the BoatU.S. Foundation archives, and fortunately for the boaters and those who rescued them, the results point to the fact that EPIRBs and search and rescue crews homing in on them save lives. BoatU.S. Foundation is proud to complement the Coast Guard's mission to reduce boating accidents and fatalities and save significant resources by assisting in making rescue missions shorter, easier and more effective by renting EPIRBs to boaters. Each trip is unique. Each vessel and crew is different. The destinations vary and the route is never the same. Every life at sea is precious and multiple agencies spring into action to bring home those boaters in need, so that they may set sail again. ✱

#### **To rent an EPIRB, visit**

[www.BoatUS.com/Foundation/EPIRB](http://www.BoatUS.com/Foundation/EPIRB) or call 888.66.EPIRB (888.663.7472). BoatU.S. provides search and rescue officials our toll-free emergency hotline manned 24 hours/7 days by trained emergency response staff.

Nearly 50 pieces of critical information is collected when ordering. A complete description of the vessel is required including make, model, and special or obvious identifying features. Information about the trip and the intended route is also required, including the point of departure

and the anticipated destination. The purpose of the trip and the number of people aboard is also critical. Finally, the names and phone numbers of people who should be notified by the Coast Guard in the event of an activation is collected.

In the rare event of an activation, BoatU.S. emergency response staff will provide search and rescue officials with the provided information. The information is used by the Coast Guard to evaluate the situation and determine the type and quantity of resources needed for an effective and speedy rescue.

# **DID YOU KNOW?**

The average length of a BoatU.S. EPIRB rental is two weeks with an average of four people on board. Nearly 23,000 boaters have had the peace of mind of carrying a rented BoatU.S. EPIRB safely stowed – but readily available – aboard their vessel while making offshore trips.



# Partnerships and Preparation enhance an effective response

By Sgt. Eric Lundin  
Boating Accident  
Reconstruction Unit  
Supervisor  
Connecticut Environmental  
Conservation Police

**F**or many years, part of the public safety aspect of boating law enforcement has involved providing search and rescue (SAR) services to our boating residents. For decades the U.S. Coast Guard has been relied upon to do the bulk of this job, and their members receive specialized training in conducting searches by day and night, utilizing specialized vessels and aircraft, and employing varied equipment and technology, including computerized survival models to determine where a vessel or missing person would most likely be found.

With the advent of 9/11, the missions of the Coast Guard and all boating enforcement agencies have been re-prioritized, and, as we all work even harder to do more with less, the SAR function can sometimes get lost in the mix of responsibilities until the call for assistance goes out. In order to continue meeting these requests, agencies should persist in working with their partner agencies on the water, developing interagency coordination for more productive on-scene work along with sharing resources over larger response areas.

Connecticut's State Environmental Conservation Police – with 50 sworn personnel – is responsible for boating enforcement and boating accident (missing person) investigations throughout our state. With over 100 miles of saltwater shoreline on Long Island Sound and Fishers Island Sound, the Connecticut River and three other large navigable river systems, and hundreds of freshwater lakes, ponds and other bodies of water, the possibilities are endless as to where the next emergency

SAR call will be. Knowledge of local and regional resources and how to access them, plus prior training and working experiences, have helped bring about satisfactory completion of many searches in recent years.

Along the shores of Long Island and Fishers Island Sounds, the 15 En-Con Police officers and sergeants assigned to marine sector towns work closely with U.S. Coast Guard Sector Long Island Sound and on-water USCG personnel when responding to boating accidents and missing boater searches. Many shoreline towns also maintain various levels of police and fire rescue vessels, and these departments (especially those able to fiscally maintain dedicated personnel and resources) are great assets to the safety and security of all Long Island Sound boaters. A few police and fire departments also support their own or regional dive teams, and the Connecticut State Police Emergency Services Unit (CSP ESU) is often relied upon for their dive services throughout the state, as well as their towed side-scan sonar system.

On inland bodies of water and rivers, En-Con Police units are also assisted by the CSP ESU Dive Team as needed, as well as by local police and fire units with area-specific vessels and other rescue and command resources. During extreme weather and floods, En-Con Police officers have also had to search rivers flooded by heavy rains and turbulent streams swollen by heavy spring snowmelt for missing boaters who decided to challenge their skills in unusually wild waters, potentially threatening the life and limb of rescuers as well as themselves.

Most SAR cases often begin as the missing or overdue boater and progress from that point into as many different scenarios as incidents. As a boating law enforcement agency also involved in waterborne SAR, the challenge is always to respond as appropriately, efficiently and effectively as possible to the perceived incident, while continuing to develop further specific information on the missing person(s) and the circumstances surrounding the case.



*Two Connecticut En-Con Police officers (with a canine unit) assist in a recent search for a missing male from a capsized scull on Lake Housatonic.*

Above all, proper perspective and considerations need to be maintained throughout the overall process with a view toward any potential criminal proceedings (securing witnesses, property, chain of evidence, etc.)

Knowledge and training ahead of time with your local resources can greatly enhance your agency's response to a water SAR case. Being on a first-name basis with and having contact information for the local USCG station chief, local police or sheriff's marine patrol commander or fire-rescue coordinator can be a time-saver, perhaps saving many minutes in the initial response, influencing on-scene coordination and case progression, and ultimately saving lives.

Our Connecticut USCG station chiefs have at least one annual meeting of regional SAR providers, where municipal, state and federal law enforcement and fire agency heads (and often private industry towers and salvagers) make each other aware of their floating assets, capabilities, training levels, and response parameters. Prior knowledge of these assets is invaluable once involved in the SAR case, and for knowing limitations and requirements of providers prior to their direct involvement in cases.

In order to more effectively enhance response to waterborne SAR incidents, boating enforcement organizations should extend their partnership outreach to other regional agencies as well as to organizations they deal with less frequently that specialize primarily in search and rescue. As law enforcement agencies have become a force multiplier for the USCG in homeland security since 9/11, we can act as response multipliers for the Coast Guard, local fire-rescue marine units, and other area-specific SAR units. The following are considerations to enhance these partnerships:

- **Identify potential SAR resources and contacts.** Make use of current regional meetings (homeland security meetings, area port management groups, marine working groups for specific events such as boat parades, fireworks, etc.) to determine specific SAR capabilities of local police, fire, rescue units in your response area. Put together a contact list for each agency available along with the

agencies' vessels and other resources available (helicopters, dive team, support services, K-9 SAR team, etc.)

- **Train together.** Set up mutual training dates and times, practice search patterns, respond to scenarios, and determine how different agencies' operations, vessel types, etc. can be of best use in future SAR calls.

- **Utilize in-house resources.** Many officers have prior active USCG experience, are USCG Reserves, or have SAR experience from other sources (prior marine police, regional teams such as Eckerd College Search and Rescue, and other programs); states with civilian boating administrations may have personnel in their ranks with SAR experience. Prior training and knowledge of terminology, patterns, etc. can be shared with officers who will be immediately involved in SAR responses.

- **Debrief and review SAR cases.** When the case of the overdue solo sailboater turns into a three-day rescue-turned-recovery, many personnel in numerous agencies can be affected. After the incident, but before memories become foggy, agency leaders should review what went well this time, and what can be done better in the future.

- **Don't overlook the details.** Most SAR incidents involving boats are boating accidents, so proper documentation of witnesses, evidence, securing the vessel and any required consent or search warrants will need to be handled in a timely manner, sometimes concurrently with managing a rescue or recovery effort. Partnerships with other agencies to work the search are invaluable when your own division's resources and personnel are already stretched thin.

- **Be ready for the unexpected.** Case in point: A 35-foot powerboat is found capsized miles from the Connecticut shore with no one aboard. The U.S. Coast Guard initially launches two vessels and a helicopter for over four hours each (vessel cost: \$300-1500 per hour; helicopter: \$3700/hr.) while marine police and dive teams search the vessel and waters for missing boaters. When the "operator" of the vessel calls the Coast Guard out of the blue and reports the vessel stolen to a remote police department where the vessel was



*Many searches for missing boaters can involve multiple vessels, vehicles and air units from numerous agencies, adding to coordination challenges for search and rescue managers. CT En-Con Police photos*

supposedly docked the night before, bells and whistles should be loud and clear. Marine theft and insurance fraud often begin as a sinking vessel with a lone operator, rescued "just after the vessel sank beneath me," with no witnesses.

- **Seek further training.** Contact your local USCG station, sector, or other agencies serving inland lakes and rivers, and set up some in-house training in conducting search patterns, providing surface support for dive teams, river rapids rescue procedures, etc. Also look into further course training through NASBLA's recent BOAT course addition, Boat Operator for Search And Rescue (BOSAR); visit NASBLA's website, [www.nasbla.org](http://www.nasbla.org), for details. Or, learn marine theft and fraud indicators through training from the International Association of Marine Investigators (IAM) at [www.iamimarine.org](http://www.iamimarine.org).

Boating enforcement agencies have always answered the call for help from our boating public, at all times of the day and night, and in all types of weather. As we continue to answer that call, we should work with our partners on the water, locally and regionally, to become "response multipliers" to more effectively respond to that search and rescue call, and ultimately save more lives. \*

*Sgt. Eric Lundin, boating accident reconstruction unit supervisor with the Connecticut Environmental Conservation Police, is also an IAM instructor and a proud graduate of Eckerd College.*



# Water Rescue Program saves lives in Pennsylvania

By Ryan Walt  
Boating and Watercraft Safety Manager  
Fish & Boat Commission



**T**he city of Pittsburgh is creating one of the best water rescue response plans in the nation. The city is sending approximately 1,600 police officers, firefighters and paramedics to the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission's Water Rescue training. Through this training, Pittsburgh will create about ten new swiftwater rescue teams, including a pair of elite teams for the most difficult assignments.

The training began in November 2011 in response to four fatalities that occurred during a flash flood on Washington Boulevard. Public Safety Director Michael Huss said that during the flood about a dozen others were rescued by emergency management workers. Under Huss's plan, all police cars and fire trucks will be equipped with personal flotation devices and rescue "throw bags." The city will purchase 11 swiftwater boats and place them at flood-prone areas throughout the city.

Huss hopes to create one of the most robust water rescue programs in the nation. In a previous position as fire chief in Johnstown, Cambria County, Huss developed a swiftwater rescue team that has assisted during floods in Allegheny County. In Pittsburgh, he envisions a tiered level of capability that requires new cooperation among the police, fire and EMS bureaus.

In addition to the initiative the city of Pittsburgh is taking, the commonwealth of Pennsylvania is making moves to respond better to water-related emergencies.

During Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee, qualified first responders across Pennsylvania mobilized and deployed to affected areas. Numerous rescues were made during these two disasters without a single first responder from Pennsylvania being injured.

During Hurricane Irene, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) called for the Region 13 Task Force to mobilize and be deployed to aid the southeast part of the state. Twenty technician-level swiftwater rescue teams – equipped with trained personnel, boats, and communication and command centers – were mobilized and formed into northern and southern teams. The northern team went to Scranton and Luzerne Counties and surrounding areas in the Northeast and were eventually deployed into New York State. The southern team went to Montgomery County and conducted more than 200 reported rescues by the end of the disaster event.

The Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission's (PFBC) Water Rescue Program is what holds operations of this magnitude together with first responders being trained uniformly by the Commission's curriculum and having National Fire Protection Association Awareness, Operations, and Technician level training. In addition, a partnership with the Office of the State Fire Commissioner, the Pennsylvania Department of Health, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, the Rescue Task Force of the Pennsylvania

Emergency Health Services Council and the PFBC has created a Volunteer Rescue Service Recognition Program that utilizes the PFBC training and classifies teams according to their ability. This enables the state to deploy qualified teams to areas in need both within the state and nationally.

The Pennsylvania Water Rescue Program is designed to train fire, rescue, police, park and other emergency services personnel in the most current techniques of swiftwater rescue and safety. The program's purpose is to familiarize the rescuer with personal and team safety and the proper procedures used in water/ice safety and emergency boat operations. The objective for the rescuer is to develop and demonstrate proficiency in water rescue techniques relative to his or her individual capabilities. This results in a rescuer developing a greater sense of competency in dealing with on-the-water emergencies.

The PFBC initiated the Pennsylvania Water Rescue Program in 1983 to provide water and ice rescue training for fire and rescue department personnel. Since that time, more than 25,000 students have been trained in the most current water rescue techniques. It is now the largest nonprofit, public water and ice rescue training program known to exist in the United States.

For more information about the Pennsylvania Water Rescue Program, visit the Commission's Water Rescue webpage, <http://fishandboat.com/waterrescue.htm>. \*



# PARTNER PERSPECTIVES

*Robin Freeman  
Vice President – Education  
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Association*

**S**earch and rescue is one of the long-standing missions of the Coast Guard, and the Coast Guard Auxiliary has long been charged with providing education for preventing said search and rescue. That's not to say Auxiliary boats and crews don't respond to SAR. I've actually been called out or responded many times.

Sometimes the search part is easy, like the time during a drought year our local inland lake was barely puddle-deep in spots. Finding the boater who had run aground was relatively easy because there, in the middle of the lake, stood a guy ankle-deep next to his boat. Sometimes the search part isn't so easy; we launched our boat one night to assist in the search of an overdue sailboat coming around Point Conception from Santa Barbara. It sure is dark out there with no city lights on shore and nothing but black ocean openness. Sometimes there isn't a happy ending, and that's very hard.

The rescue part isn't always property or persons, although the Auxiliary has saved both many, many times over. One "rescue" mission we were asked to do one night was to rescue the stomachs of a very hungry Coast Guard crew who'd been on the water towing a boat for far longer than their SAR bag snacks could endure. Operation Chicken Wing was fun.

Preventing the search and rescue part is what boating education and awareness is all about. Such education takes many forms: it can be a full-on classroom course, a vessel safety check, a presentation to a service club, or talking with a neighbor. It can be an exhibit at a boat show or a safety fair, or talking to a grade-school class about water and

boating. It can be as planned and structured as a Safe Boating Week event, or as casual as wearing a life jacket while on a friend's boat. Giving people the awareness of risks and the tools for safety is what we know as preventive search and rescue, and I'm sure we're all looking for ways to impart that information any chance we get. It's daunting sometimes, especially because it's not very often we hear the positive results of our educational or awareness efforts.



However, I know collectively we're making a difference. Take for example the numerous organizations embracing the yearlong North American Safe Boating Campaign's "Wear It!" message, which is consolidating many voices into one loud one. Keeping up the hard work month in and month out in our communities through all avenues of education and awareness is paying off. Sometimes we get to hear how we saved a life or made a change....and isn't that the "gravy"?

Very early on in my Auxiliary career, about a year after one coastal navigation course my flotilla taught, a happy graduate called me and told me about his boating club's fishing derby down in Mexico. Apparently his GPS unit decided to fail, as electronics apparently love to do. He was 50 miles offshore and had only a photocopied "chart" of the waters. Because he'd taken a class and knew the risks, and had been given the tools for safety, he was cognizant of writing his latitude/longitude down every 15 minutes or so. When his GPS quit on him, he'd already marked his last coordinates on his chart-like piece of paper. He whipped out his day planner's ruler and drew some course lines, and eyeballed his course back to port, figured his ETA given his speed, and headed back. I ragged him mercilessly about not having proper charts or navigation tools, but he did get his boat and crew back within 15 minutes of his ETA and a couple of miles south of his intended destination – not bad for 50 miles offshore and no GPS. He was ecstatic and grateful, and I've been a believer ever since in the good work we all do in education and awareness or, "Preventive Search and Rescue."

It's still deep-down satisfying to me every day that I work in this boating safety world. I so appreciate the like-minded efforts of all of our organizations and individuals. Let's not give up. We are effecting change and preventing search and rescue, one class or one encounter at a time, even if we don't always see it as obviously as an on-water rescue. In fact, let's not just "not give up;" let us challenge one another to increase our Preventive SAR efforts through our education and outreach! ✱



## BOATING

# Briefs

### **RADM James Watson becomes new director of Safety and Environmental Enforcement**



*Appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, Rear Admiral James Watson began serving as director of the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement on Dec. 1, 2011. USCG photo*

Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar named Rear Admiral James A. Watson IV as the director of the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) – one of the two agencies to succeed the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement. Admiral Watson began as BSEE Director on Dec. 1, 2011.

Admiral Watson was previously the U.S. Coast Guard's Director of Prevention Policy for Marine Safety, Security and Stewardship in Washington, D.C. He served as the Deputy Commander of the Coast Guard Atlantic Area Command in April 2010, and, on June 1, 2010, was designated as the Federal On-Scene Coordinator for the all-of-government response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

"Admiral Watson has the experience, leadership, and vision that BSEE needs to be successful in establishing and

enforcing safety and environmental protections for offshore oil and gas operations," said Secretary Salazar. "Admiral Watson will bring to the job a distinguished record, a commitment to tough and fair-minded enforcement, and the determination to advance our reform agenda for the benefit of the American people and industry."

BSEE is responsible for enforcing safety and environmental regulations for oil and gas operations on the Outer Continental Shelf. BSEE's functions include permitting and research, inspections, offshore regulatory programs, oil spill response, and newly formed training and environmental compliance functions.

### **Mission excellence in Long Island Sound**



*Coast Guard Station Jones Beach, N.Y., was recognized with the 2011 Chief Petty Officer Andy James Award for its excellence in operational initiatives and community outreach. USCG photo*

Coast Guard Station Jones Beach, N.Y., received the 2011 Chief Petty Officer Andy James Award on Dec. 19, 2011, in recognition of the station's excellence in operational initiatives and community outreach in the Coast Guard's First District.

Station Jones Beach crewmembers completed numerous challenging operational assignments and boating safety initiatives in the southern Long Island, N.Y., waterways. Additionally, the station crew was proactive in conducting public affairs and community service outreach.

Station crewmembers responded to 86 search and rescue calls that resulted in 25 lives saved and approximately \$800,000 dollars in property protected. They also conducted 318 law enforcement boardings, resulting in 167 notices of violations, 30 written warnings and 27 terminated vessel voyages due to unsafe and hazardous conditions.

The station's public affairs program reached millions of people, telling the Coast Guard's story at local and national levels. Of particular note was their contribution to this year's Operation Dry Water campaign, which included hosting the CBS Early Show for a feature on the dangers of boating under the influence.

"Boater safety and education is a top priority of our station," said Master Chief Petty Officer Terry Lathrop, Officer in Charge, Station Jones Beach. "As members of the Long Island community, we are responsible to be proactive on and off the water."

Lathrop leads his crew by the acronym, T.E.A.M. – Together Everyone Achieves More. Following this simple guiding principle, this crew set the standard for future station members to emulate.

"We all worked hard as a team to achieve this award," said Lathrop. "In order for us to save lives, enforce laws and protect our shores, we need to work as one."

## Gossard receives USCG Public Service Commendation

In January, Bill Gossard, senior program manager with the National Transportation Safety Board, was presented with the United States Coast Guard Public Service Commendation for his outstanding contributions to recreational boating safety.

The Coast Guard Public Service Commendation is intended primarily to recognize a recipient's courage or initiative in advancing one or more of the Coast Guard's missions.

The commendation states, "The United States Coast Guard and its National Recreational Boating Safety Program have tremendously benefited from Mr. Gossard's dedication and commitment to service, particularly through his dedicated long-term efforts to enhance public education, the wearing of life jackets, and efforts to decrease boating under the influence of alcohol and illegal drugs. The result of his hard work has been improved boating safety. Mr. Gossard's devotion to boating safety is to be commended and is in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard."

Bill Gossard serves as the National Transportation Safety Board's National Recreational Boating Program Manager. He is responsible for overseeing the Safety Board's promotion of its recommendations for improving recreational boating safety, including efforts to reduce boating while intoxicated, require personal flotation

devices for children, implement mandatory boating safety education, and encourage improvements to personal watercraft safety.

Gossard joined the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) in July 1977, from the Federal Railroad Administration. With a prior background in rail, mass transit and hazardous materials issues, Gossard drafted studies on a variety of safety issues prior to becoming involved in recreational boating.

During his 35 years with the Board, Gossard has spearheaded the agency's initiatives in recreational boating



*Bill Gossard with the National Transportation Safety Board received the United States Coast Guard Public Service Commendation for his outstanding contributions to recreational boating safety. NTSB photo*

safety. He drafted the NTSB's first safety study addressing recreational boating – "Recreational Boating Safety and Alcohol" – in 1983. Since then, Gossard has drafted each of the Board's studies and recommendations addressing boating. Throughout the years he has been the architect and strongest proponent of the NTSB's efforts to improve recreational boating safety, tenaciously keeping the topic on the Board's agenda, even when others wanted to drop it.

Known as "Mr. Recreational Boating Safety," Gossard has been a tireless advocate, traveling from state to state, testifying before legislatures, meeting with advocates, and participating in innumerable conferences, representing the NTSB before all segments of the boating industry. Because of his hard work and perseverance, many NTSB safety recommendations have been adopted, making recreational boating safer for everyone.

## Delaware Fish and Wildlife Enforcement officer graduates from FBI Program

Captain John Rutherford with the Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement was one of 266 law enforcement officers to graduate from the FBI National Academy Program at Quantico, Va., on Dec. 16, 2011.

The 247th session of the National Academy consisted of men and women from 49 states. Included in the class were members of law enforcement agencies from 25 countries, the District of Columbia, three military organizations and six federal civilian organizations.



*One of 266 law enforcement officers to graduate from the FBI National Academy on Dec. 16, 2011, Capt. John Rutherford with the Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement was the agency's first Fish and Wildlife officer to attend the National Academy. DE Fish and Wildlife Enforcement photo*

Internationally known for its academic excellence, the National Academy Program, held at the FBI Academy, offers 11 weeks of advanced investigative, management and fitness training for selected officers having proven records as professionals within their agencies. Participation is by invitation only, through a nomination process. Officers who take this special training have, on average, 19 years of experience and usually return to their agencies to serve in executive-level positions.

"In support of John's nomination to the Academy, I was well aware he would be the recipient of the most comprehensive law enforcement training offered in the



## BOATING

# Briefs

Academy will benefit the management and the officers of Division of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement for years to come,” said James H. Graybeal, Chief of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement.

“I was honored to be the first Fish and Wildlife officer from Delaware to be selected to attend the FBI National Academy. I look forward to applying my new knowledge and experiences to better the operations of the Division of Fish and Wildlife and its employees,” said Captain Rutherford.

A total of 45,297 graduates now represent the FBI National Academy since it began in July 1935. Of this number, approximately 27,785 are still active in law enforcement work.

Captain Rutherford is a 1988 graduate of the University of Delaware, earning a Parks and Recreation Administration Bachelor of Science degree. Hired as a Park Ranger in 1988 for the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC), Division of Parks and Recreation, he graduated from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in 1988, earning his law enforcement credentials.

Rutherford transferred to the Division of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement as a Fish and Wildlife patrol officer in 1990, protecting the State’s fish and wildlife resources and providing recreational boating safety education and patrols. He earned a promotion to lieutenant in 2002. In 2010, Rutherford was promoted to the rank of Captain and placed in charge of day-to-day operations and supervising the officers patrolling New Castle and Kent counties.

### **Cooperative effort between U.S. & Dominican auxiliary volunteers saves lives**

What began two years ago as an information exchange between members

of the International Affairs unit of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and a group of civilian volunteers and senior naval officials of the Dominican Republic has blossomed into a dynamic organization already credited with saving more than 30 lives of boaters at sea, including five Americans.

The Dominican Republic Naval Auxiliary (Los Auxiliares Navales Dominicanos), officially established in December 2009 by decree of the president of the Dominican Republic, has grown to a unit of more than 200 members operating 135 boats and eight aircraft. They conduct search and rescue operations and recreational boating safety training in support of the Dominican Navy.

“Initially, the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary international affairs team provided a lot of information to the Dominicans on how our organization works,” said John Cooper, the Auxiliary’s Director of International Affairs. “We followed that up with visits by U.S. Coast Guard officers and Auxiliary subject matter experts to assist the Dominicans in development of their program.”

“Clearly, the Dominican Naval Auxiliary has done a superb job since its creation. They’ve set an impressive record by any standard...one of which they can be justifiably proud,” Cooper said.

At the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary’s 2011 national conference, Coast Guard Auxiliary Commodore James Vass and Dominican Naval Auxiliary Commodore Jose Antonio Najri signed a joint statement of intent recognizing the advantages to be obtained from continued bilateral cooperation in fostering on-water safety education for citizens of both nations.

The agreement calls for both organizations to continue working toward development of common training

and operations standards, achieving international best practices and delivering fully accredited computer-based training competencies to their respective members. It also calls for both organizations to be alert for opportunities to partner and share in the development and application of educational materials.

“The Dominican Republic and the U.S. traditionally have had very close cooperation,” said COMO Najri. “For our Auxiliary, the recently signed agreement is further proof of our two countries’ close ties that we must continually strengthen to not only save lives, but to protect our countries in these difficult times.”

### **Illinois man charged with three felonies following Kentucky boating incident**

A Wayne County (Kentucky) grand jury has indicted an Illinois man on three felony counts stemming from a boating incident that severely injured a swimmer in Lake Cumberland Aug. 12, 2011.

James Gibson, 26, of Chicago, is charged with second-degree assault and two counts of wanton endangerment. His indictment was returned Jan. 24.

Conservation officers with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources said Gibson was operating a houseboat while intoxicated when it struck Jordan McKelvey, 25, of Fennale, Michigan. McKelvey suffered severe injuries from the propeller.

Conservation officers Travis Neal and Jerrod Alley were nearby and rushed to the scene when another boater summoned their help. The officers loaded McKelvey in their boat and administered precautionary measures to stop his life-threatening bleeding. The officers transported the victim more than two miles to the nearest marina, where they were met by members of the

Wayne County Emergency Medical Service. McKelvey was moved to a landing site and then taken by helicopter to a hospital, where he remained for 18 days before eventually being transported to a Michigan facility for continued treatment and rehabilitation.

Officers say McKelvey and other passengers from Gibson's houseboat were swimming near the vessel's stern when Gibson decided to move the boat and throttled its engine in reverse. The suction pulled McKelvey into the propeller.

Officers say Gibson admitted to operating the vessel when it struck McKelvey. Witnesses supported that. Gibson agreed to give a voluntary blood sample at the time. Laboratory results indicated a blood-alcohol content (BAC) of 0.25, more than three times the legal limit of 0.08 for boat operators. He was charged at the time with alcohol intoxication in a public place and paid \$203 in fines and court costs. Neal said arrest warrants on the felony charges will be issued for Gibson, who has since returned to Illinois.

## RBFF hosts state marketing workshop

The Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF) hosted 45 state fish and wildlife agencies for its marketing workshop held Dec. 6-8, 2011, in Phoenix. The workshop focused on the importance of marketing and communicating with anglers, and implementing integrated marketing efforts to increase fishing license sales.

"Convening state agencies at the State Marketing Workshop

and getting them to engage in a dialogue about marketing efforts is critical," said RBFF President and CEO Frank Peterson. "We're working to advance these state agency partnerships in an effort to increase fishing license sales and boat registrations nationwide, which in turn generates funds needed for state conservation projects."



RECREATIONAL  
BOATING & FISHING  
FOUNDATION

Workshop participants discussed the 2011 program results and direction for 2012. Launched in March 2008, RBFF's State Fishing License Marketing Program was developed to increase participation in the sport and generate awareness of the connection between fishing license sales and conservation efforts. To date, 34 state partners have sold more than one million fishing licenses through the program.

Roundtable discussions also facilitated important dialogue about ways to better engage and retain anglers

using e-mail and social media. Participants heard from RBFF staff and industry experts about angler engagement and retention strategies, and activities that compete for anglers' time. Additionally, keynote speaker John Seabreeze, discussed the parallels between fishing/boating and golf, and shared results from successful consumer acquisition and retention programs in the golf industry that can be applied to fishing. \*

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



## The *response* side of the RBS coin

**J**ust a few years ago, the U.S. Coast Guard reorganized. Here at Headquarters, and also in the field, you'll now find components within our agency that are labeled as "Prevention" and "Response."

The prevention side of the recreational boating safety (RBS) coin is what most people think of when they ponder boating safety – implementing initiatives in an attempt to prevent people from ending up in a life-threatening situation or from needing to have someone come rescue them. The typical prevention initiatives that we think of are boating safety education courses for boat operators, public awareness campaigns to make the public aware of the risks, law enforcement patrols to educate the public and assure compliance with the laws and regulations, placing and maintaining aids to navigation, and more.

Should boaters choose to ignore these safety initiatives, then the odds increase that they'll go boating and end up in an accident or some other life-threatening

situation. That's when the need arises for the response side of the coin to take action. Response initiatives include such things as a rescuer searching for the victim (hopefully the victim has good communications equipment, including a locator beacon) and successfully pulling him or her out of the life-threatening situation. That effort may involve the use of rescue boats, aircraft, specially trained rescuers, and other specialized equipment.

The success of a rescue depends on a multitude of factors. For example, what is the victim's situation; what type of emergency is it; and what are the weather and water conditions. Also, the rescuer's training and the quality of the rescue equipment to fit the situation are essential components to this success. For less technical rescue situations, the ability of the victim to do a self-rescue and whether there are other boaters close by that may be able to effect a successful rescue play key roles as well.

When everything works, we have success. The boater either avoids the

risks or is rescued. Lives are saved, resulting in fewer casualties; and the goals of the RBS mission are achieved.

Truly, these are the two sides of the RBS coin dealing with emergency situations – prevention and response. Some prefer to call the prevention initiatives "Search and Rescue Prevention." Others like to think of the response initiatives as "Boating Safety Response." Either way, it's getting the job done – keeping the public alive to enjoy another day with their family, another day with their friends, and another day on the water.

America has some of the most incredible waterways in the world. It's a great place to enjoy all forms of boating. So, take the opportunity to enjoy another day on the water, but do it safely – responsibly.

And for those boaters who still choose not to prepare for the risks, bravo zulu to all of you who go the extra mile to rescue those in need. You are truly a great asset to this nation and to the National Recreational Boating Safety Program.

# Every day A HERO

By W. Vann Burgess  
Program Operations Branch  
Boating Safety Division  
Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety  
U.S. Coast Guard

*"These poor, plain men, dwellers upon the lonely sands of Hatteras, took their lives in their hands, and, at the most imminent risk, crossed the tumultuous sea ... and all for what? So that others might live to see home and friends."*

*Annual Report of the Operations of the United States Life-Saving Service, 1885*

In the United States in 2010, a call for help on the water came every 15 minutes, and someone responded.

Over the past several years, the states have reported responding to approximately 11,000 search and rescue (SAR) cases annually, and the U.S. Coast Guard has reported responding to over 20,000 annually. While 30,000-plus cases a year is an impressive number, more remarkable is the fact that those cases represent direct assistance to over 40,000 vessels and more than 85,000 persons. Coast Guard SAR statistics report that 12 lives are being saved each day. Considering that SAR is only one mission out of many for the agencies involved, this represents a substantial service to our boating public and our nation.

SAR cases quite literally run the gamut of severity. A large number of cases are what we in the business call "Triple A Tow Jobs" (in loose reference to the American Automobile Association – AAA). These are cases that are often happened upon during the course of a normal patrol, characterized by simply providing a tow home. In most cases these are the dead battery, out of gas, bad gas, or "...it just broke..." cases. From

here, incidents start to become a bit more challenging and can become a lot more dangerous for the boater and the responder. A fiberglass boat fully engulfed in flames with a 20-gallon gas tank on board makes it a little dicey when recovering nearby persons in the water. Going below deck on a 40-foot sport fisher to determine where the water is coming from is not in the best interest of individual survival. While boat fires and boats taking on water represent serious threats, the most dangerous to the rescuer are cases involving a vessel overcome by fast water or extreme weather. Fast water rescues pit responders against an incredible natural force over which they have no control. Add to that a person most certainly in "full on" panic, and the risks are high. Another limited control situation is working a case in an inlet or offshore in the middle of a significant storm. No one will argue the high risk associated with storm-tossed waves the height of a two-story home (about 24 feet) bearing down on a small boat. Now attempt to maneuver your boat close enough to another boat to assist an injured person or just take the disabled boat in tow in those conditions. Most would politely say, "No, thank you." The very next question is usually, "Who would be insane enough to want to do that for a living?"

Who are these men and women that stand ready to answer a call for help? They are neighbors and co-workers, friends and family, moms and dads, brothers and sisters. In short, they are everyday people. They are everyday

people who have taken on the mantle of responsibility for others' safety. They are everyday people who have placed the lives of others before their own. They are everyday people who have said, "I have the watch." They are **every day a hero**.

These everyday heroes are the men and women of the state and local marine patrols, fire and rescue departments, and the U.S. Coast Guard. None of them are born knowing what to do in these dangerous situations. They train hard for what they do. They are willing to take the necessary risk, but they train to mitigate and manage that risk. The training instills confidence and warns against cockiness. If they don't train and keep mentally and physically fit, they are very aware that it only takes one mistake to go from rescuer to victim. They know this because some of their number have gone out but not returned.

So why do they do it? They don't do it for riches earned. Most don't earn big salaries. They generally don't do it for praise and glory. Most are quite humble, in fact. If pushed to comment, most will say it is their job, or they were glad they were there and could help. A good portion of the time, those who were rescued never know their rescuers.

The quote from the U.S. Life Saving Service report tells the story true enough: *"These poor, plain men (and women) ... took their lives in their hands, and, at the most imminent risk, crossed the tumultuous sea ... and all for what? So that others might live to see home and friends."* \*





Matthew Long  
NASBLA  
Government Affairs Director

## Telling a story

I was early, so I decided to walk around the waterfront as dawn broke and the city came to life. As the first planes of the morning roared overhead leaving from Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, I realized that it had been a while since I last visited my colleagues at the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department, Harbor Patrol Section. Of course, I talk with the BLA at meetings and stay up on what's going on with him and his department, but it's not the same. I wasn't up to speed on the great accomplishments he and his staff had enjoyed recently, and I only live 15 miles away. I imagine this happens to a lot of us – we get caught up in the daily stressors of work and don't think about what's going on around us. The same phenomenon can happen even to Members of Congress, which is why it's our job to help them fill in the blanks.

**Have someone to talk to** – Before you can share your stories of success and accomplishment, you have to have someone to talk to. That's why a slow – but steady – process of building and maintaining relationships with your Members of Congress and, more importantly, their staff is crucial to any department's or agency's long-term success. It can begin slowly, with some emails between local and state staff that escalate to meetings until there comes a time when they start calling you for your thoughts and opinions. While having contact with the Member is important, maintaining a cordial and friendly relationship with staff is even more important. Not only are they

the gatekeepers, but many times their careers will outlive that of their boss.

**Be consistent but not rude** – How you communicate with your elected Members of Congress is just as important as having the relationship in the first place. A good way to create a continuous flow of information without being annoying is by making sure they receive any magazines, newsletters or updates you release, regardless of obvious interest. Even though they receive a lot of information, staff are always looking for information about happenings in the state and district, and who knows what kind of impact your newsletter will have on their policy decisions. Also, make it a point to visit with staff or the Member of Congress at least once or twice a year. Members of Congress spend more than half of their time back home, in the district, and this is the best time to reach them. Coordinate with their local offices first, but be sure to schedule an in-person meeting periodically to keep those lines of communication open. Don't waste their time, though; always be sure to have a question to pose. It can be simple, such as, "Please make sure you keep our agency in mind when..." or it can be very detailed, such as "Please support H.R. 7," and go on to explain why. Always have a reason to follow up with the office to keep those lines of communication open.

**Seeing is believing** – Newsletters and meetings are great, but nothing makes more of an impression than taking your Members

of Congress out to see the work you do in person. Ride-alongs, specifically, are fantastic ways to engage with your elected officials that will educate and entertain them at the same time. These experiences can take longer to arrange than a meeting and they won't happen very often, but the benefits are enormous. Begin the process by crafting a formal invitation detailing every aspect of the ride-along, but keeping the date open. Call the state or local office to ask who handles the Member's district schedule and make sure to get the invitation to the right person. Then follow up, but without becoming a pest. Answer any questions they may have and make sure they understand the importance of the ride-along visit. Once the event finally happens, make sure to work with the Member's press office to organize any press coverage and take the opportunity to show off your work in the best possible way, by living it. This is your time to be proud, to shine; and that confidence and pride will communicate as much to the Member of Congress as any leave-behind ever could.

The best way to communicate effectively with your elected representatives is through stories – more than facts and figures – because stories are the key to leaving a lasting impression. Doing this effectively can be challenging at times, but persistence and determination will always result in better lines of communication between you and your representatives. ✱



To provide Senator Mike Crapo with a firsthand view of their on-water work, Sgt. Ryan Higgins, Kootenai County Sheriff's Office (left), and Cpl. Mike Gladhart, Clearwater County Sheriff's Office (right), organized a ride-along on the Spokane River with the congressman. Idaho Department of Parks & Recreation photo

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# SCA

small craft advisory

March-April 2012 | Vol. 27 No. 2

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## 2012 Recreational Boating Safety Calendar

**2012  
March  
18-21**

**Southern States Boating Law  
Administrators Association  
Annual Conference**  
Charleston, South Carolina  
darren.rider@tn.gov

**April  
11**

**National Recreational Boating Safety  
Coalition Spring Meeting**  
Washington, D.C.  
nrbscoalition@aol.com  
202.257.2836

**13-15**

**National Boating Safety Advisory  
Council Spring Meeting**  
Arlington, Virginia  
http://homeport.uscg.mil/NBSAC  
Jeffrey.A.Ludwig@uscg.mil

**24-25**

**National Marine Manufacturers  
Association American Boating  
Congress**  
Washington, D.C.  
www.nmma.org/abc  
cpomorski@nmma.org  
202.737.9774

**28**

**National Boating Federation  
Annual Meeting**  
Oak Brook, Illinois  
www.n-b-f.org  
708.409.0280

**May  
15**

**National Safe Boating Week  
Congressional Reception**  
Washington, D.C.  
outreach@safeboatingcouncil.org

**18**

**Wear Your Life Jacket to Work Day**  
www.safeboatingcampaign.org  
outreach@safeboatingcouncil.org

**19**

**Ready! Set! Wear It!**  
www.safeboatingcampaign.org  
outreach@safeboatingcouncil.org

**19-25**

**National Safe Boating Week**  
www.safeboatingcampaign.org  
outreach@safeboatingcouncil.org

**June  
2-10**

**National Fishing & Boating Week**  
www.takemefishing.org  
rbff@rbff.org

**9**

**National Marina Day**  
www.nationalmarinaday.org

**10-13**

**Western States Boating  
Administrators Association  
Annual Conference**  
Breckenridge, Colorado  
pfiffner@ndow.gov

**13-15  
NASBLA**

**Executive Board Meeting**  
Breckenridge, Colorado  
www.nasbla.org  
ron@nasbla.org  
859.225.94

**22-24**

**Operation Dry Water**  
www.OperationDryWater.org  
ron@nasbla.org

**26-27**

**Sailing Industry Conference**  
Newport, Rhode Island  
www.sailamerica.com  
info@sailamerica.com  
401.289.2540

**July  
16-20**

**NASBLA  
BLA Academy**  
Lexington, Kentucky  
www.nasbla.org  
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  
info@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487

**November  
2-4**

**American Canoe Association  
National Paddlesports  
Conference**  
Charleston, South Carolina  
www.americancanoe.org  
cstec@americancanoe.org  
540.907.4460

# Mark Your Calendar!

**September 8-12, 2012  
NASBLA's 53rd Annual Conference**  
Mobile, Alabama  
www.nasbla.org

