

*Patrol boat  
serves as  
reminder to  
Wear It!*

Smart...



...Wear  
your

*Partnership  
succeeds in  
promoting  
safety AND  
fun*



**NASBLA  
unveils  
seated  
SFSTs**



# SCA

small craft advisory

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

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## About the Cover

Partnerships are beneficial to marketing endeavors. Take, for example, the Tri-State Boating Safety Fair featured on the cover. Each year, state, local and federal boating agencies in Arizona, California and Nevada team up to educate boaters about boating safety. Taking place at Lake Havasu, the event features a life jacket trade-in, free boating safety information, and opportunities to get boating questions answered. *NDOW photo*

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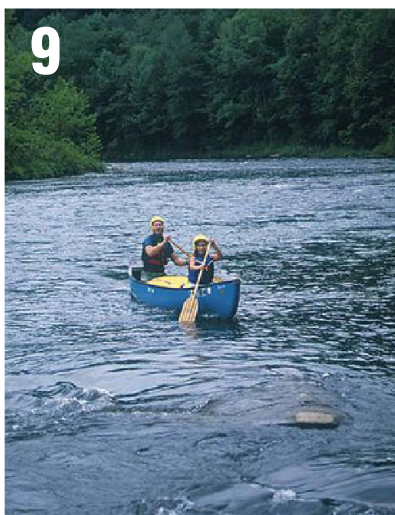
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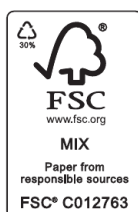
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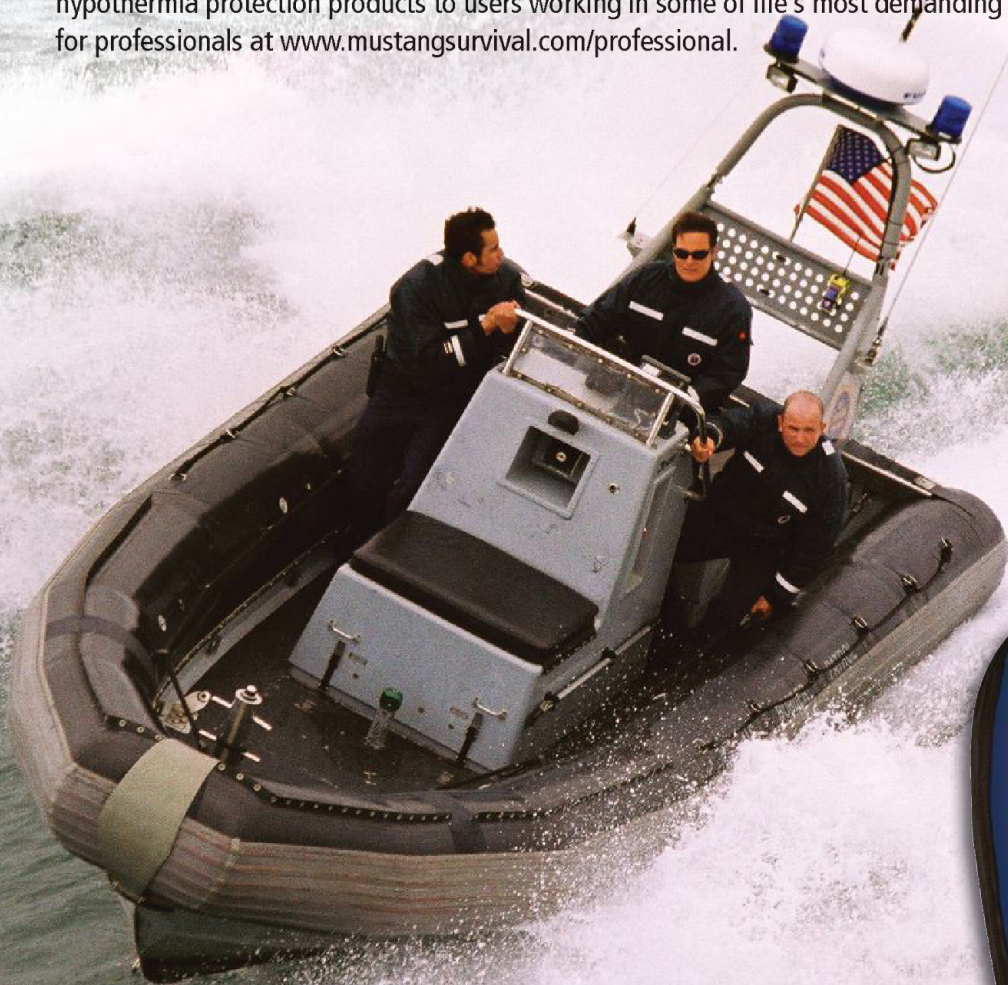
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# Helm from the



*Jim Graybeal*  
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*John Johnson*  
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## Staying connected

Despite the difficult times for agency budgets, state boating programs are still finding innovative ways to reach out to the public with targeted boating and water safety messages. A number of those state approaches are featured in this edition of *Small Craft Advisory* including Arizona and Nevada.

Reaching more than 10,000 recreational boating safety (RBS) professionals and policymakers across the nation, SCA is a great forum for showcasing the marketing and outreach efforts of our member states and boating safety partners. Recent upgrades both to the printed and online versions of our award-winning magazine make it even more attractive to our readers and more accessible and searchable as a resource to our members.

Over the last several months many of you have joined NASBLA's Connected Community through one of the numerous social media tools already available. Some of you have also begun experimenting with the enhanced, new capabilities of our suite of social networking and collaboration tools built exclusively to meet the unique needs of our members, marine law enforcement officers and the RBS community.

This summer NASBLA officially launches Higher Logic, the brains behind an ambitious online, community-building initiative to create more communication, connection and collaboration among and between the far-flung participants of the recreational boating safety and security community. By engaging with each other through NASBLA's new Connected Community, members will enjoy all the social networking capabilities already available, plus the ability to:

- ◆ Share ideas among colleagues in an open discussion forum that will generate helpful feedback;
- ◆ Build specific communities of interest to join in by uploading documents & starting conversations;
- ◆ Reference organized libraries with documents uploaded by members from a variety of organizations;
- ◆ Read blogs by other members or write your own;
- ◆ Subscribe to e-mail newsfeeds about topics that are relevant to you; and
- ◆ Search the directory for a specific member as well as connect to and directly message that member.

Later this month a Quick Start Guide to our Connected Community will be available on the NASBLA website. Plus, a special presentation during our annual conference in September will provide more information about our social networking capabilities and how to leverage these tools in your outreach efforts.

NASBLA's Connected Community will provide a hub for communicating and working together more effectively. It will also help our members, partners and the broader RBS community self-organize and manage information and knowledge of interest to the entire community. Some of this knowledge is explicit, meaning that it's documented, unambiguous and maintained for reference – but that's the tip of the iceberg in terms of actionable information.

Our Connected Community will also help us get at what's beneath – the tacit knowledge that is available and used on a daily basis within segments of our community, but not preserved or organized in a fashion that makes it very accessible or practical to others. This knowledge resides within us, individually

and collectively, and this new online system – part social networking engine and part knowledge management platform – will help us capture and better utilize the knowledge and information (content) we already possess...and connect the dots to solutions we have not yet discovered.

Here's the catch, NASBLA can't make this happen on its own – we need your participation. The community is yours to develop and define from the bottom up. NASBLA doesn't select the topics or control the content. That will be up to the leaders of the self-defined communities of interest. We believe the broader recreational boating safety and maritime security community is comprised of lots of smaller communities of interest that we can help organize and coalesce under our Connected Community umbrella. We hope you will take advantage of the new capabilities technology is providing to pool our resources and enhance communications, and to create communities around issues about which you care deeply.

We see incredible potential in our member agencies use of social media to find cost-effective ways to reach larger and better targeted audiences with important safety messages, and we believe NASBLA's Connected Community will provide a significant and mutually beneficial resource to bridge state and local social media networks with our national efforts. That's the role NASBLA has always played in serving the collective needs of our members, sharing resources among the broader community and connecting people with ideas and solutions to challenges.

Be watching for information in our monthly newsletter and on our website, [www.nasbla.org](http://www.nasbla.org), about the official launch of our Connected Community. ✨



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- › Each state has the opportunity to nominate one individual who demonstrates an outstanding commitment to boating safety education.
- › Nominations closed on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011. For a list of nominees visit [www.BOATERexam.com/award](http://www.BOATERexam.com/award).
- › Three regional finalists will win an all-expense paid trip to the Annual NASBLA Conference\*.
- › The Award will be presented at the NASBLA Conference on September 12, 2011.

\*For full details visit [www.BOATERexam.com/award](http://www.BOATERexam.com/award)



# NASBLA News



*NASBLA President Jim Graybeal reads the names of six fallen officers from Oklahoma during the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund's candlelight vigil.*

## **NASBLA president participates in Roll Call of Fallen Heroes**

Each May 13, the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund holds a candlelight vigil in honor of the law enforcement community to commemorate National Police Week. At this ceremony special tribute is paid to officers from across the nation who have given their lives in performance of their duty.

On May 13, 2011, the names of 316 law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty – 152 of them in 2010 – were formally dedicated on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, D.C.

U.S. Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. led the lighting of candles and reading of the fallen officers' names during the 23rd annual Candlelight Vigil. Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano and Linda Moon-Gregory, national president of the Concerns of Police Survivors (C.O.P.S.), also participated in the annual tribute.

President Jim Graybeal represented NASBLA and read the name of Capt. George Green with the Oklahoma Highway Patrol along with the names of five other fallen officers from Oklahoma. Capt. Green, a former NASBLA member, died on Oct. 26, 2010, from injuries sustained during an on-duty vehicle collision with a dump truck the previous day.

The 152 officers who died in 2010 represent an increase of almost 25 percent over the number of officers

who died in the line of duty in 2009. In addition, 164 officers who died in previous years, but whose deaths had been lost to history, were added to the Memorial this year. The monument in Judiciary Square now contains the names of 19,298 fallen law enforcement officers – from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, U.S. territories, and federal law enforcement and military police agencies – who have died in the performance of duty throughout U.S. history.

## **NASBLA unveils its newest training: Pursuit and Stop**

NASBLA's latest training offering is the Pursuit and Stop (PAS) course. This three-day/24-hour course will focus on the skills and knowledge necessary to operate a law enforcement vessel at high speeds day or night, and in various sea conditions, in order to pursue, stop and board non-compliant vessels on the shorelines and waterways of the United States. The training will be conducted in accordance with the U.S. Coast Guard's





Boat Operations and Training Manual (Volume II and Volume III) and meet the national standards of training, qualification, credentialing and typing established in the NASBLA Boat Operations and Training (BOAT) Manual (Volume II and Volume III). For more information, visit <http://www.nasbla.org/boat>.

## Welcome aboard



*Rodger Norcross*

Following the retirement of Pam Dillon, the state of Ohio has a new boating law administrator (BLA): Rodger Norcross.

Officially named Ohio's BLA on June 13, 2011, Rodger is a lifelong boater and angler. "When I was growing up, my family had a cottage in Huron, Ohio, right on the lake. So I grew up boating on Lake Erie," said Norcross.

He feels very fortunate to be living in a location that is convenient to a variety of boating and fishing opportunities. "We have access to six different lakes and some great paddling streams all within 45 minutes of our home. We also enjoy fishing and boating on Lake Erie in the islands area," he added.

"I feel very fortunate here in Ohio to have followed in Pam Dillon's footsteps. Pam left the boating safety program in Ohio in great shape with a good sense of direction," said Rodger. "ODNR's Division of Watercraft has always been a leader when it comes to boating safety in Ohio and in the nation, so I plan to stay on that course."

On a national level, Rodger sees the importance of keeping boating safety programs in the forefront in light of agencies' shrinking budgets and challenging economic times. "We will

need to be creative in budgeting and rely on our long-standing partnerships even more to promote our boating safety message," he said.

Prior to becoming the BLA he served as deputy chief of field operations for the Division of Watercraft. He began his career in boating safety with the U.S. Coast Guard and served from 1983 to 1988. In 1988 he was hired by ODNR Division of Watercraft as a watercraft officer. After graduating from the Ohio State Highway Patrol academy, Rodger worked out of the division's Sandusky field office on Lake Erie. In 1994 he was promoted to a watercraft area supervisor. In 1998 he was transferred to Columbus to headquarters and promoted to law enforcement administrator. From 2000 until 2009 he worked in the director's office, in the Office of Law Enforcement, before returning to the Division of Watercraft.

Rodger and his wife have been married for 28 years. They have five children and two grandchildren. He and his family have been involved with their local beekeepers and conservation clubs. Rodger has been involved with the fire service for about 22 years. He is very involved with his community's volunteer fire department, currently serving as the assistant fire chief, and works part-time for his county's EMS service.

## NASBLA staffers participate in "Wear Your Life Jacket to Work" Day

On Friday, May 20, the National Safe Boating Council organized "Wear Your Life Jacket to Work" Day in order to promote the Ready, Set, Inflate! inflatable life jacket world record events happening nationwide on May 21 and National Safe Boating Week occurring May 21-27. The goal of National Safe Boating Week is to educate and inform the boating public about boating safety, specifically life jackets. NASBLA staffers both in the office and on the road wore their life jackets that day to help the National Safe Boating Council promote this



*NASBLA staffers (l-r) Kimberly Jenkins, Marlene Mason, Kristy Moore and Andrea Stauter wear their life jackets at the office.*

message. Pictures of NASBLA employees, as well as employees from other organizations that participated in this effort, can be seen in the "Wear Your Life Jacket to Work" Day photo album on the "Ready, Set, Inflate!" Facebook page.\*

## We give credit

A few photo credits were inadvertently omitted in the May-June issue:

*P. 12, left-hand column*

Minnesota DNR photo/Tim Smalley

*P. 12, right-hand column*

Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission photo

*P. 18*

Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries photo

*P. 25*

Ohio Department of Natural Resources photo

We appreciate the generosity of our members and readers in supplying the visual components of our publication. If you have photos to share, please contact [editor@nasbla.org](mailto:editor@nasbla.org).



# NASBLA

## validates field sobriety tests for marine environment

**Sobriety testing has come a long way over the last half century.**

By Tim Baumgarten  
OUI/Watercraft Program Manager  
Arizona Game and Fish Department

**W**e've probably all seen it at some point, when our attention is drawn to the red and blue flashing lights at the shoulder of a highway. As we slow and gain interest, we see a driver, stopped by an officer, standing with his head leaning back and his arms stretched straight in a "T" position or attempting to "walk the line" while being closely scrutinized. As we continue on our way, we all know what it's about and think, "Oh, oh, that guy's in trouble," but what purpose do field sobriety tests serve and how do they relate to the marine environment?

### History of field sobriety testing

Field sobriety tests have been used by law enforcement beginning as early as the late 1960s. They were initially used by officers to help describe the level of intoxication they observed when they contacted a driver suspected of driving under the influence of alcohol.

Observations were simply "layman's" subjective descriptions of the driver's performance of simple tasks that any sober person would be able to successfully complete and the resulting missteps were presented to help convince the judge or jury of the driver's intoxication. These early "tests" had something in common with modern-day field sobriety tests – they were simple tasks that anyone should be able to perform sober.

As acceptance of this type of evidence became increasingly more questionable and court decisions more clearly defined the requirement of officers to establish factual evidence of driving under the influence, law enforcement was compelled to pursue the development of objective tests that were more sensitive to alcohol impairment at lower consumption levels as a tool to develop convincing evidence of impairment.

### Scientific development of field sobriety tests

The science of determining impairment by evaluating a person's ability to perform multiple tasks simultaneously or in succession is largely due to studies conducted by behavioral researchers. Almost all field sobriety tests have a multi-tasking component that divides a subject's attention between short-term memory and simple, physical tasks. As the brain becomes dysfunctional due to alcohol impairment, the brain begins limiting the amount of information it processes. The resultant "prioritization" depends on the amount of impairment and is manifested by the inability to competently process or perform all the complex tasks required to drive a motor vehicle or operate a motorized watercraft. Demonstrating impairment through simple, divided attention tasks is the foundation of field sobriety testing.

An effort to establish credibility to sobriety testing began in 1975 and led to the development of a standardized battery of tests for officers to administer and assess driver



*As our nation's waterways became more congested and the margin for error diminished, increased numbers of boat accidents and alcohol-related fatalities forced boating safety agencies to address alcohol abuse and impairment detection for marine officers.*  
N.C. WRC photo

impairment. Then in 1981, the standardized field sobriety tests (SFSTs) were statistically validated by sound scientific principles to become nationally accepted for developing probable cause and a factual basis for arrest (Tharp, Burns & Moskowitz). Although this battery of tests was developed specifically for use in the roadside environment for the traffic officer, it was used in the marine environment as well. For lack of a validated battery of SFSTs specifically tested in the marine environment under recreational boating conditions, the roadside test battery has served as a measure of alcohol impairment in recreational boating for most of the last 20 years.

### Field sobriety tests in the marine environment

As our nation's waterways became more congested and the margin for error diminished, increased numbers of boat accidents and alcohol-related fatalities forced boating safety agencies to address alcohol abuse and impairment detection for marine officers. In 1987, the U.S. Coast Guard

conducted an extensive study evaluating a two-stage battery of on-boat and on-land field sobriety tests.

The study evaluated arrest/release decisions using the alphabet recital, finger count, hand pat, and finger-to-nose tests as on-boat sobriety evaluations and compared them against the validated, on-shore battery of sobriety tests. Although the study provided confidence in the on-boat FST as an effective arrest/release decision maker, it fell short of validating a specific battery of tests for the boating safety officer.

The results of the study were incorporated into a boating under the influence (BUI) training manual for marine law enforcement officers that was developed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). This training manual later served as a basis for the development of a national BUI training curriculum that was initiated in 2004 by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA).

Developing a validated seated battery of waterborne SFSTs establishes the credibility of an officer's probable cause in prosecution of boating under the influence (BUI) cases (as well as operating other remote-based



*In April NASBLA worked with the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission to film new wet lab videos showing the newly validated battery of seated field sobriety tests for use in the marine environment. Staff photos*

recreation vehicles such as snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles). As an ancillary benefit, street officers gain the benefit of utilizing the seated SFST battery for older, overweight, injured or physically impaired drivers or in any situation where the test subject cannot balance or stand for testing.

#### **Developing the seated battery of SFSTs**

In an effort to further research and validate a seated battery of field sobriety tests, the U.S. Coast Guard funded a study sponsored by NASBLA. In 2007, Dary Fiorentino, Ph.D., at the Southern California Research Institute (SCRI) – the same scientific research firm that was involved in the original roadside field sobriety tests in 1975 through 1981 – began a three-year study to validate a seated battery suitable for use in the marine environment.

The objective of the research was to identify and develop a suitable battery of standardized field sobriety tests that could be administered in a seated position to assist officers in detecting impairment caused by blood alcohol concentrations (BACs) at or above 0.08, creating a nationally accepted standard. As in the roadside tests, the seated tests would have to be easy to administer to avoid placing unnecessary burden on law enforcement officers. This was critical due to the unique challenges in the marine environment, which require officers to continually monitor the environment for their own safety and the safety of the suspect and other boaters. Most importantly, the tests would have to be useful for an arrest/release decision. Unlike the

roadside tests however, the seated tests could not make use of any measure of equilibrium.

In the first year, over 1,100 BUI arrest reports from marine law enforcement agencies across the nation were reviewed to determine the current seated field sobriety tests in use. Six candidate tests were identified for further study: Hand Coordination, Finger to Nose, Finger Count (also called Finger Dexterity), Palm Pat, 30-Second Time Estimation and Horizontal Gaze Nystagmus.

During the second phase of the study, the objectives of the laboratory research were to further refine the development of the seated battery and identify the most alcohol sensitive tests. One hundred fifty-seven volunteer drinkers were "dosed" to pre-determined BACs and subjected to the six candidate tests. The dosing targeted the illegal BAC limit of 0.08.

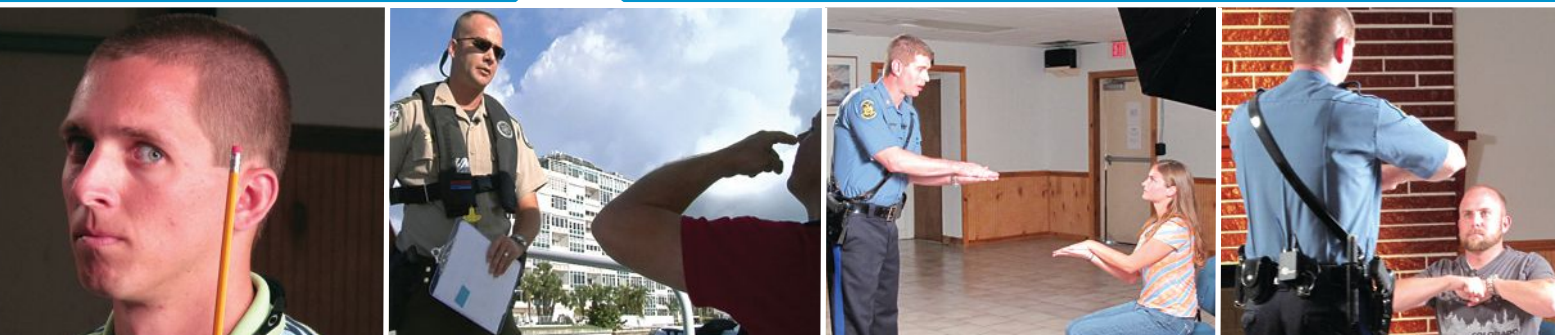
Volunteers were evaluated by twenty-four officers that averaged ten years of experience administering the SFST battery. None of the participants knew the volunteers' BAC levels. External variables were eliminated from the evaluations - officers only administered one of the seated tests and had no other interaction with the test subjects. The researchers found Horizontal Gaze Nystagmus (HGN), Finger to Nose (FTN), Palm Pat (PP) and Hand Coordination (HC) tests constituted a reliable seated battery of tests for distinguishing BACs at or above 0.08.

The research indicated that the four tests, when administered in a



*Without a validated battery of SFSTs specifically tested in the marine environment under recreational boating conditions, marine law enforcement officers have relied on the roadside test battery as a measure of alcohol impairment in recreational boating for the last two decades. AGFD photo*





*The validated battery of seated field sobriety tests includes: Horizontal Gaze Nystagmus, Finger to Nose, Palm Pat and Hand Coordination. The researchers found that these tests constituted a reliable seated battery of tests for distinguishing BACs at or above 0.08.*

standardized fashion, provided reliable indicators of alcohol-related impairment, yet the research was not conclusive at this point. The seated tests showed enough promise to warrant a field study and in addition, the research also identified objective clues for evaluation and quantified the number of clues that indicated impairment at or above a BAC of 0.08.

#### **Field testing the seated SFSTs**

To complete the development of the seated SFST battery, the research had to be validated by field-testing its effectiveness at identifying operators with a BAC at or above 0.08 in the marine environment. The objectives of this phase of the field validation study were to: develop standardized, practical and effective procedures for officers to use in reaching arrest/no arrest decisions; test the feasibility of the procedures in the marine environment; and secure data to determine if the tests will discriminate in the field, as well as in the laboratory.

For this third and final phase of the study, the research team from SCRI traveled to Lake of the Ozarks in central Missouri and provided four days of training in the administration and evaluation of the new field sobriety tests to four marine officers of the Water Patrol Division of the Missouri State Highway Patrol. Demonstrating their commitment and leadership during a time of nationwide economic crisis when state budgets facing furlough days and layoffs, the state of Missouri and its Water Patrol Division recognized the tremendous importance of this research by dedicating officers to the validation study for a four-month period from June through September, in support of NASBLA and SCRI.

This study followed the same approach as previous validation studies for roadside testing. Marine officers stopped boaters suspected of BUI, asked them to come aboard the patrol vessel, and administered the seated battery of SFSTs. The four sobriety tests were Horizontal Gaze Nystagmus (HGN), Finger to Nose (FTN), Palm Pat (PP), and Hand Coordination (HC). A preliminary breath-testing instrument (PBT) was used to obtain breath sample to verify the accuracy of the tests. The SCRI researchers acted as civilian observers to ensure the sobriety tests were administered properly and the clues were evaluated in a standardized fashion. During the testing period, 331 probable cause and checkpoint stops were made to establish the validation data set. Fifty-eight percent of the subjects stopped as the result of probable cause had a BAC at or above 0.08.

#### **Field study demonstrates accuracy**

During the boating stops, when four clues of Horizontal Gaze Nystagmus (HGN) were observed, the subject had a BAC of 0.08 or above 80 percent of the time. When nine clues were observed during the administration of the Finger-to-Nose test (FTN), the subject had a BAC of 0.08 or higher, 65 percent of the time. When two clues were exhibited during the performance of the Palm Pat (PP) test, 57 percent of the time the subject had a BAC of 0.08 or higher. When three clues were observed during the Hand Coordination (HC) test, the subject had a BAC of 0.08 or above 52 percent of the time.

When the required number of clues were observed for all four tests, the combined results indicated the tests accurately predicted the subject's BAC

was 0.08 or higher 91 percent of the time. When the seated tests were evaluated in various combinations, researchers found that positive results using HGN and any one other test indicated a BAC at or above 0.08 correctly 82 percent of the time. Without HGN, a combination of the remaining three tests was 76 percent accurate when the required number of clues was observed.

These percentages represent the accuracy of the arrest decision for each individual test when the required number of clues was observed. The correct decision to "release" a subject is not represented but is a critical factor in the overall evaluation of validity. The strength of these standardized tests, evaluated as a battery, was found to be highly reliable in identifying subjects with a BAC at or above 0.08.

In completing this landmark research effort, NASBLA and its membership continue to advocate national standards for officer training courses for the marine law enforcement professional, in cooperation with the U.S. Coast Guard through the Recreational Boating Safety grant funding. The results of the study unmistakably validated the SFSTs, establishing the first significant assessment of the overall effectiveness of the seated battery of SFSTs under actual enforcement conditions. ✨

*Author's note: Dary Fiorentino PhD., previous executive director of the Southern California Research Institute has since moved on and founded DF Consulting.*

# STATES share marketing tips

In 2007, the American Marketing Association unveiled a new definition of marketing:

Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.

"One of the most important changes to the AMA's definition for marketing is that marketing is presented as a broader activity," said Nancy Costopulos, CMO of the American Marketing Association. "Marketing is no longer a function – it is an educational process."

Many recreational boating safety stakeholders have been operating under the premise of marketing as education for many years now. Rather than simply encouraging the public to go boating, many state agencies utilize an approach that combines education with communication.

If you'd like to expand your marketing efforts, check out these ideas provided by state agencies:

## Boat Shows and Other Venues

Attend local boat shows, county and state fairs, expos and other events to highlight safety, education and boating opportunities. Answer questions and distribute information.

## Media

Provide timely news releases and public service announcements on boating-related topics – safety, new boating facilities, launch conditions and water temperatures, education courses, safety fairs – to statewide media.

For example, the Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB) is entering its fourth season with "Grant's Getaways," a television program aired on television and hosted through Travel Oregon's website. Outdoor reporter Grant McOmie covers boating, angling and camping opportunities in Oregon with a strong safety component.



Travel Oregon/Grant McOmie photo

## Online

Post boating-related activities and events, including boating subcategories such as canoeing, kayaking, rafting and tubing and waterskiing, as well as vendors, rental agencies, etc. Link your agency's website to all water-based recreation sites in the state park system, as well as additional sites for boating. Post reports on current launch conditions, fishing reports and water temperatures.

The Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission is establishing "recommended" segments for the state's water trails to create a user-friendly "pre-packaged" trip, to be included on [www.VisitPA.com](http://www.VisitPA.com).



PA Fish & Boat Commission photo

## Partnering

Team up with other organizations such as the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, United States Power Squadrons, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, fishing and sailing clubs to help spread boating safety messages and advertising boating safety education courses.

Take for example the partnering that the California Department of Boating and Waterways (DBW) maintains with multiple chambers of commerce, hospitality industries and tourism industries to promote boating.

In Utah, the Office of Tourism supports State Parks and Recreation in all tourism efforts, said Dave Harris, Utah's boating law administrator. "Each year, the Office of Tourism coordinates a 'close to home' marketing effort, which promotes in-state travel and focuses on Utah's state and national parks, including boating," he added.



Utah.com photo

## Publications

Provide print and electronic versions of boating guides, park brochures. Distribute publications to parks, regional travel offices and welcome centers. Include boating articles in the agency's magazine/newsletter.

## Social Media

Utilize social media tools to better reach the public. Various forms of social media – from blogging and podcasts to social networking and video and photo sharing – provide a low-cost yet highly efficient way to reach people.



## Wear It!

Participate in the national Wear It! campaign, a national outreach program focused on educating boaters about the importance of life jacket wear.

"Our current Wear It! patrol boat has been seen by tens of thousands of Arizonians. Hopefully seeing this eye-catching boat ignites the spark to go boating," said Kevin Bergersen, boating law administrator for Arizona. \*



AGFD photo



# Winning

**Arizona turns  
old boat into  
successful  
marketing tool**

By Kevin Bergersen and Tim Baumgarten,  
Arizona Game and Fish Department



*Officer Tim Baumgarten puts the final touches on the Arizona Game and Fish Department's new Wear It! boat. The display vessel was crafted from a retired patrol boat. AGFD photos*

**A**rizona has had a mandatory child life jacket law in place for over 30 years, and over time, while the Arizona Game and Fish Department's broad-based life jacket outreach approaches were informative, they were generally believed to fall short of effectively increasing adult and child PFD (personal flotation device) wear rates.

As we expanded our life jacket outreach efforts to mass audience venues such as boat shows, expos, sporting and public safety events, the Department quickly learned that

educating targeted audiences required increasing our one-on-one contact times. At first, we provided "outreach" by parking a cleaner looking patrol boat as eye candy to draw folks in, and hopefully then engage them in life jacket public relations.

However, the boat never really worked to pull folks in as envisioned. On those rare cases it did, most of our officers cringed at the thought of strangers, and especially energetic "wild-eyed" kids, getting sliced on the prop, breaking important equipment, pushing all the buttons or turning all

the dials. Consequently we began to feel that this type of "park and hope" outreach tool had little, if any, educational impact value.

While we had participated alongside 30 sister agencies in the previous six years, we were generally ineffective at engaging any children or their parents in that all-important face-to-face contact. Our Department simply could not compete with shiny red fire engines, S.W.A.T. teams and fully outfitted, mobile command posts. The Department realized we needed to develop a "kid friendly" outreach

platform to draw in and engage younger audiences while also indirectly educating their parents.

### **Creativity to the rescue**

Two months prior to the state fair, the Department received the annual invite from the Governor's Office of Highway Safety for the Public Safety Days at the fairgrounds. Seizing the moment, Department Officer Tim Baumgarten saw an opportunity to develop just such a "kid friendly" platform.

Tim's creative vision involved repurposing a retired patrol boat slated for excess state property auction. Using grant dollars from the U.S. Coast Guard, Tim worked feverishly in an excruciatingly short timeframe to realize his patrol-boat-for-kids vision in time for the "Public Safety Days." He removed the engine and fuel systems from a surplus patrol jet-boat and retrofit it into a kid friendly "bells and whistles" static boating safety show boat.

Converting a 21-foot aluminum patrol boat to an outreach platform seemed simple in concept, but time soon became our biggest enemy if we wanted the boat at the Public Safety Days. With the clock ticking, Tim set to work with a small army of empowered folks including marine service vendors, excited welders, the Department's purchasing unit, the Law Enforcement Branch's Administrative Assistant, and mechanics from the Motor Vehicle Department Shop.

### **Retired boat finds second career**

First the inboard engine, jet drive and gas tank from the 13-year-old patrol boat were removed, clearing the way for participation at indoor venues that routinely require all vehicles be void of any hazardous material. Then to lower the height of the platform for more effective one-on-one interactions with kids, the bunks and rails were removed from the trailer, and the hull was permanently bolted to the trailer



*During the two-day Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) "Public Safety Days," the AGFD's new public outreach boat attracted 600-700 young boaters.*

frame. A walkway was cut through the aluminum transom and the swim platform was fitted with a removable custom-welded stairway complete with handrails made to order for children. The remaining hull was then stripped of all removable riggings and a paint job matching the colors of the Arizona state flag and the National Safe Boating Council's "WEAR IT!" campaign logo was applied.

After retrofitting and painting, the console, T-top and riggings were reattached and a new deck was constructed and carpeted. The seat upholstery and canvas T-top cover received a makeover that also mimicked the stripes and colors of the state flag. To power the boat's strobes, flashing lights and outreach electronics, power converters, A/V pre-wired hook-ups, and 110 AC inlet plugs for venues that supply indoor electricity were installed. For mobile outreach at parades, dual marine batteries were installed to energize an overhead blue strobe, enforcement light bars and LED lights that were attached literally everywhere on the trailer, boat gunwales and T-top. Finally a full length, "WEAR IT ARIZONA!" decal was applied to the

sides of the boat along with Department badge logo to emphasize the law enforcement aspect of the platform. The day before the event, the final product was ready, and it was truly an amazing sight to behold. The Law Enforcement Branch finally had the professional static outreach platform they envisioned. All that was needed now was a critical life jacket outreach messaging component.

The Department's Education Branch provided the perfect tool for the job – the "Type IV Toss" game. The basic rules for kid participation were simple – before they could board the craft and turn on the lights, blow the horn or "drive" the boat, the kids must first find their appropriately sized life jacket in a pile of multi-sized PFDs (strategically placed at the foot of the stairs), then put it on properly. Then with Boating Education Branch volunteers providing guidance, the kids would stand on the foredeck at the bow and throw a Type IV to "rescue" an upright, plywood silhouette, simulating someone in the water. As an added tool to promote our boating safety message and enhance the experience, prizes for accuracy were awarded to the participants.





*The Wear It! boat's hands-on appeal invites boaters to turn on the lights, blow the horn or "drive" the boat.*

#### **Safety setup sees smooth sailing**

All the creative energy and ideas came together at the state fair as we deployed the boat for the first time. The public's response to the boat was overwhelming and unprecedented in our experience as outreach providers – clearly exceeding all our expectations. During the two days of "Public Safety Days," over 700 kids donned life jackets and boarded the new WEAR IT ARIZONA platform.

The minute Public Safety Days opened, a veritable tsunami of kids was drawn to the boat, validating the axiom that if you build it they will come. Several times during the event we had over a dozen kids on board the boat and dozens lined up at the stairway waiting for life jackets to become available, all in competition with rides at the State Fair. The new law enforcement WEAR IT boat helped create hundreds of lifetime memories as we drew kids like drawing moths to the light...in a word, it was totally awesome! We noted several kids who returned later in the day to play on the boat a second time, blowing past fire engines to "drive" the WEAR IT boat.

The boat was the missing link and brought new life to our Department's life jacket outreach program; it finally provided a powerful, unique, professional grade display tool that had the horsepower to effectively draw in and engage children with one-on-one "kid friendly" outreach.

Since the initial rollout, Arizona's law enforcement WEAR IT! boat has received numerous positive public comments and to date has been seen by tens of thousands of constituents. In

just two months following the State Fair, and additional 4000 children boarded the boat and experienced its boating safety message. Then as a year-end finale, the boat was decorated with over 4,000 lights for Phoenix's "Festival of Lights Parade" as an entry, where it was towed by the Department's orange WEAR IT ARIZONA! truck. Touching on the parade's theme "Through the Eyes of a Child," the Department loaded the boat with children wearing PFDs and thereby shared a vision of child life jacket wear before over 150,000 spectators!

For only a \$13,000 makeover to a boat going to retirement, our Department has provided over 5000 quality one-on-one life jacket awareness contacts, and for good measure exposed 150,000 spectators to our message in just two short months...not too shabby! The unexpectedly high popularity of the boat revealed a seemingly endless supply of deployment opportunities at statewide community events and holiday parades. Our life jacket campaign strategy has moved to a new level and we have clearly affirmed that there is no substitute for one-on-one contact. No longer will our Department have to sit in booths and wave at the kiddies as they stroll by, hoping their parents would stop for a message of boating safety...now they come to us. ✨



*All dressed up and ready to go – the Wear It! boat, along with several young passengers, made an appearance in the Phoenix Festival of Lights parade. Each entry was required to display 2,000 lights, plus each person riding on an entry had to have an additional 200 lights.*

# TESTING THE Waters

**Pilot marketing program uses direct mail to increase boat registration renewals.**

By Stephanie Vatalaro  
Senior Communications Manager  
Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation

**Y**ou can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink. And apparently, the same is true for boaters. Boat registrations are on the decline in many states and the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF) is working to reverse that trend with its Lapsed Boat Registration Pilot Program. Launched in 2009 with the Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB) and the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW), the pilot program, which has expanded to three new states in 2011, uses direct-mail marketing to remind boaters about the joys of the sport and the importance of renewing their registrations.

"We know that boat registration renewals help support states' critical fish and wildlife programs and boating

infrastructure," said RBFF President and CEO Frank Peterson. "We want lapsed boaters to understand that by simply getting back into boating, they are directly supporting efforts to help preserve their waterways."

## Early results show promise

Oregon kicked off its pilot program in April 2009 when the OSMB and ODFW sent direct-mail pieces about the importance of renewing to boat owners who had not renewed their registrations since 2007. These Oregon boat owners received one of three different remittance forms, which targeted both angler and non-angler households. A separate group of lapsed boaters was set aside as a control group for comparison, and their owners received no remittance forms.

The 2009 Oregon pilot program succeeded in generating more than \$20,000 in new revenue to the agency. The registration renewals also generated an estimated \$25,000 in additional revenue to the state of Oregon through state gasoline taxes and allocations from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund.

Results from the 2009 program inspired Oregon and RBFF to plan a second program in 2010, in which they achieved a successful 17.7 percent registration rate.

## New states come on board

Encouraged by Oregon's results, three new states joined RBFF's Lapsed Boat Registration Pilot Program in 2011. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Watercraft, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency are all implementing similar direct-mail programs with RBFF this year.

"Ohio's boat registration dollars are returned directly to the state's boating community through facilities, programming and services," said Pamela Dillon, who recently retired as the ODNR's Watercraft Chief.

"Working in partnership with RBFF on this direct-mail initiative, we can remind boaters of the pleasures of the sport while promoting Ohio's vast opportunities for fishing and boating on Lake Erie, the Ohio River and our many inland waterways."

RBFF will continue to expand the Lapsed Boat Registration Pilot Program and is working to enhance its efforts to increase boat registration renewals nationally.

For more information on how to get involved, e-mail RBFF State Initiatives Director Stephanie Hussey at [shussey@rbff.org](mailto:shussey@rbff.org) or call her at 703.778.5152. \*





# Adding fun to the message mix

**A small investment can produce huge dividends**

By Edwin Lyngar  
Public Information Officer  
Nevada Department of Wildlife



*Six-year-old Sophie Hammer of Las Vegas poses during a life jacket fashion show highlighting the fun side of boating safety.*

**T**he strategy of promoting recreation, alongside traditional safety messages, isn't a new one, but the nuts and bolts of constructing such a program can be complicated. The Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) has taken a partnership approach, combining safety messages with the concerns of the recreation industry in Southern Nevada. Now in its third year, the program combines advertising, prizes and events on the Colorado River System to promote safety and recreation opportunities together in one program.

"I wish we could take all the credit," said Nick Duhe, Nevada's southern region educator who oversees the program for NDOW. "But Forever Resorts approached us about working together, and we all sort of hammered it out in a room a few years back.

Honestly at first we never expected it to grow as large as it has."

The first year, according to Duhe, the outreach program spent around \$80,000 in actual advertising money, prizes and matching ads from participating radio stations, with NDOW bringing almost its entire yearly advertising budget to the effort. Forever Resorts with a large consortium of other private marine business brought prizes, publicity and resources for events held all summer long. The National Park Service (NPS), Lake Mead National Recreation Area, provided people, media outreach and the support that the program needed. The recipe proved successful.

"We got a lot of attention in our huge media market for what was an embarrassingly small investment," said Duhe. "We got more earned media and many more boaters calling the office to ask about it."

The program started with traditional advertisers, especially radio, with spots that promoted not only safety but recreation-related messages, too. The coalition used a one-stop website provided by the concessioners of the Lake Mead National Recreation Area, [www.funonthelake.com](http://www.funonthelake.com), where boaters could learn about safety and qualify for the prize drawing by, for example, taking a boating education class online.



*A billboard reminds audience members at a baseball game to boat safely. As part of a safety outreach coalition, the Nevada Department of Wildlife partnered with the local AAA baseball team. NDOW photos*

Since that first year, the program has grown in total dollars expended each subsequent year. With almost the same financial commitment from NDOW, the overall value has grown to about \$120,000 in what is now the program's third year, with more than \$40,000 worth of prizes and \$42,000 in advertising. The biggest change in the program came in the second year, when the coalition added a sponsorship for the Las Vegas 51s AAA baseball team.

"The baseball promotion added a lot, and we have been really amazed by how the program has grown and changed over the past three years," said Darla Cook, vice president of public relations at Forever Resorts, one of the private marina operators helping to spearhead the effort. "We've added so many different elements that we are always talking to the boating public about one thing or another. It's kept the message out there and fresh."

The fact that safety alone isn't sexy is a hard truth for those who work in boating every day – handing out life jackets, literature or running classes. Adding messages about the fun of boating and recreational opportunities available helps open a door for those important safety messages that would otherwise fall flat.

The lack of multi-generational appeal is only one challenge for would-be educators. There has also been a historic difference between education messages and what some private businesses want to see. Businesses have long complained that some safety messages actually have a negative impact on boating participation. Even well-meaning – but frightening ads – can negatively impact recreation overall, businesses say.

"Since we've been working together, we have seen the messaging changing to reflect the fun of safety with boating," said Cook. "At the same time, our company has learned a lot about safety and passed it along to our

customers. We can do a lot of good without having to scare boaters."

Measuring the success of these efforts remains notoriously difficult, just like many public relations and marketing metrics. But fatal accident numbers have been trending down for the past few years and, in fact, Nevada had only one fatal boat accident on the Nevada side of the entire Colorado River System last year. The numbers are at historic lows, and this year Nevada's game wardens hope to keep fatal accidents equally low.

"I don't know how much of the program is having an effect, but my gut tells me we're reaching people that we weren't before," said Game Warden Captain David Pfiffner, Nevada's boating law administrator.

At the heart of the program is a prize drawing, managed over the Internet and with radio station partners. Boaters qualify for the drawing in several ways, but the most visible way to qualify is through taking a boating education course. Again, it's hard to attribute behavior changes to any one program, but last year, NDOW issued almost 1500 boating education cards – an increase of nearly 25 percent from the year before. Growth in the twenties is hard to account for, but Duhe thinks the program has had at least some effect.

"We've seen amazing growth in the number of educated boaters here in Southern Nevada, and I know some of that has to be attributed to our education program, and this initiative particularly," said Pfiffner. "Anytime we can make boating safety and education a part of the conversation, we're going to see fewer serious accidents."

*Nick Duhe, Nevada's southern region educator who oversees the outreach program for NDOW, poses with the Las Vegas 51s AAA baseball team's mascot. In the program's second year, the coalition added a sponsorship for the baseball team.*

This year's event was launched before the Memorial Holiday weekend. Just like in previous years it started with a public and media event during national safe boating week, coordinated by the NPS.

NDOW employees and other members of the coalition will be making periodic visits to the ballpark to talk about safety, demonstrate life jackets and answer questions that boaters might have. The centerpiece of this program is a life jacket relay race that will be held during every home game.

"We really do focus on the safety message," said Duhe. "People think that life jackets are really ugly, orange straightjackets, so we're trying to slowly change that perception. Inflatable life jackets, belt packs and new styles of PFDs are helping us to move the needle."

Safe boating isn't sexy. That's the bottom line that educators in Nevada have grappled with since the inception of the mandatory education program 10 years ago. It took guts to take the education resources and reallocate them to a program that emphasized fun and tourism related themes. But if you can't get a boater to listen to stodgy safety messages, the efforts and money spent to initiate the message are wasted. \*





# Made to order

*Custom PFDs help keep Alaska Natives safe.*

By Joe McCullough  
Education Coordinator  
Alaska Office of Boating Safety

**B**oaters (especially adult males) offer multiple excuses for not wearing their life jackets when on the water, and most are just that – excuses. In Alaska, however, hunters in the northernmost regions of the state have presented an anti-life jacket argument based on injury prevention that has been difficult to refute. And whalers, in particular, have been resistant to donning a personal flotation device because they felt that wearing anything but white would prevent them from blending in with the landscape of ice, and possibly scare away their prey.

In 2007, Robin Kling with the Alaska Office of Boating Safety was presenting a Kids Don't Float School Program in Point Wales when he met whaling captain Micca Kingga, who said he would be willing to make it

mandatory for his crew to wear life jackets, if the jackets came in white fabric. Robin promised to try, and so began a journey that drew together the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission, the Coast Guard, the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC), the Alaska Office of Boating Safety and Canadian gear manufacturer Mustang Survival. Over 51 whalers have already been outfitted with custom-made white "float coats" – full jackets with buoyant material to save their wearers from drowning. And more float coats have already been ordered.

Robin was attending an injury prevention conference in Anchorage in 2009 when he met Michael Folkerts, the recreational boating safety specialist for the Coast Guard in Alaska. Mike told Robin that when

Mike Swanson, Joel Casto (also with the USCG) and he were in Barrow as part of their Arctic Outreach mission earlier in the summer, they noticed there weren't any life jackets for sale at the local store. Asked if they used personal flotation devices (PFDs) on the water, the local hunters said they did not because the bright-colored jackets would scare the animals.

"We questioned if they would wear them in white, and the answer was 'yes,'" Folkerts reported.

Buoyed by the promises from these additional whaling communities, Robin began seeking a funding source and manufacturers who could make white PFDs.

Joe McCullough, education coordinator with the Alaska Office of

*Whale hunters in Alaska have traditionally worn white as camouflage, forgoing the use of life jackets because the bright colors would scare away their prey. In the frigid conditions, a boating mishap could turn deadly.  
Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium photos*



Boating Safety, suggested the idea to Steve Chambers, business development representative at Mustang Survival. Mustang has made survival gear for more than 40 years, including life jackets in almost every color but white. "Nobody wants white because it shows dirt so bad, plus grease and mud," Chambers explained.

Like other manufacturers Robin had contacted, Mustang was initially reluctant to try a new product for such a small customer base, despite Robin's optimism that white float coats could become a popular option in Northwest Alaska. In addition to the fabric, Mustang also had to locate white zippers, white wrist seals, white knitted cuffs and white belts. The end result was a float coat with a nylon shell and flotation foam filling – the coat is warm, flexible and totally white.

Funding was the next challenge. Neither the state nor the Coast Guard could spend public funds on a life jacket give-away program. So Jeff Johnson, boating law administrator for Alaska, proposed asking the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) for support. Hillary Strayer, the group's injury prevention specialist, placed the order with Mustang and Robin distributed the first order of float coats to two whaling crews in Point Wales.

The PFDs tie into a major concern for the Native health organization: Drowning is the most common cause of unintentional death for Alaska Natives, who suffer a disproportionate number of water-related fatalities. Of the 179 drowning cases in Alaska between 2000 and 2006, Alaska Natives comprised 45 percent, even though they only made up 18 percent of the population.

Wearing a full float coat greatly increases the odds of surviving frigid Arctic waters because the coats provide the wearer buoyancy as well as some thermal protection by

trapping warm air next to the body, and this gives rescuers more time. A person may only survive for about ten minutes without a life jacket if immersed in cold water, but with a float coat survival time could be an hour or more.

Whaling crews themselves aren't particularly likely to have drownings; if anything, they are more safety conscious than other groups. Their traditional knowledge of the Arctic means they understand risk a lot more than the average recreational boater does. Whalers are out there to survive. They're subsisting – their attitude to risk is different, and they are very aware. But, as Strayer pointed out, even one death is a catastrophe, especially for tight-knit villages in the Arctic.

"Villages are very small and many people are related, so even one drowning hits a whole community,"

she noted. Also, whalers are role models in their communities, and Strayer said that ANTHC hopes that if people see whaling crews using PFDs they will be more likely to use them, too, not just for boating but also for other activities such as snow machining on frozen rivers.

Since the debut of the prototype coats, demand has already outstripped the coats that ANTHC purchased at about \$250 a piece. Sealers and walrus hunters have joined whalers in expressing interest. Designers are already looking at alterations, like ruff fur on the jacket's removable hood, to make the new PFDs more like a traditional parka.

Meanwhile, Strayer is hoping that ANTHC can get funding for more jackets in that signature white color. "It's Arctic camouflage," she concluded. \*



*Thanks to proactive thinking and partnership among a state agency, the U.S. Coast Guard and a life jacket manufacturer, hunters from several coastal villages now wear white float coats, as sported by Eskimo whalers on the Chukchi Sea north of Wainwright.*



# Great day for a (cold) swim

*Idaho officers take the plunge in the name of training.*

**By Dave Dahms**  
Boating Program Manager  
Idaho Department of  
Parks and Recreation

**T**he sun was shining high in the sky and it was a comfortable but breezy 65-degree day in May at Lucky Peak Reservoir. Located just north of Boise, Idaho, the lake was serving as the location of the on-water practical days at the annual marine law enforcement academy. While the air temperature was great for spending time on the water, the water itself was a frigid 48 degrees. Students at the academy were quite anxious standing on the dock late in the day pondering whether or not it was a good idea to jump in the water.

“Officer survival and self-rescue are aspects of marine law enforcement training that we try to hit home,” said Randy Herman, boating law enforcement training coordinator for Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation.



*As part of their training on cold water, students at the Idaho Marine Law Enforcement Academy have the opportunity to put their new skills to the test during a cold-water swim. The exercise is simple – students jump off a dock one at a time into the water, get their breathing under control, and swim approximately 15 yards to a patrol boat where they disengage the swim ladder and re-board the vessel. IDPR photos/Laytredda Schultz*

Herman is a 20-year veteran of marine law enforcement and was selected by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators as the Boating Officer of the Year in 2007. As part of his effort to increase officer awareness of the effects of cold water, Herman, along with the core group of instructors at the Idaho Marine Law Enforcement Academy, have integrated a simple yet practical exercise into the curriculum – students jump into cold water and re-board a vessel.

“We feel that marine officers are much more likely to accidentally drown in cold water than be a victim of a gunshot or assault,” said Sgt. Laytredda Schultz, marine supervisor for the Elmore County Sheriff’s Office and one of the instructors for the academy.

Sgt. Schultz goes on to say that feedback from the students has been outstanding and many have appreciated the wake-up call to have a better understanding of the potential dangers faced if they fall out of their patrol boat.

Students view the Cold Water Boot Camp video, produced by the National Water Safety Congress under a grant from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund administered by the U.S. Coast Guard, during the classroom portion of the academy to get a taste of the cold-water issue. It is one thing to hear about the dangers of cold water and see the effects on people while watching a DVD. But to truly understand how cold water may impact a marine officer during self-rescue, instructors decided to take it to the next level.

The day before the cold-water swim, students participate in the indoor pool session portion of the academy in which they must swim 100 yards both without aid and with an inflated personal flotation device (PFD), tread water, and swim with armor and weight belts. Other important aspects of officer safety are also covered, including manually inflating a PFD so students will know what to expect in a real-life situation. At the end of the pool session, students are offered the opportunity to test their skills in cold water the next day at the reservoir.

Safety is the top priority for this practical exercise. Students complete a medical history survey to determine if there are any physical conditions that would put the student in danger. Any student with a history of heart conditions and other similar ailments is not allowed to participate. In addition, two experienced rescue swimmers are in the water with the students at all times. Several of the instructors are certified EMTs and are available to respond at any point. During the exercise, students wear inflatable PFDs, provided by Mustang Survival, and are instructed to inflate the PFD if needed.

The swim occurs late in the afternoon and is the final task of the day. Students are not required to jump in and swim to pass the course, but once the first couple of individuals complete the exercise, everybody wants to participate. The exercise itself is simple – students jump off a dock one at a time into the water, get their breathing under control, and swim approximately 15 yards to a patrol boat where they disengage the swim ladder and re-board the vessel. Students then change back into warm clothes and are done for the day.

Throughout the academy instructors highlight cold-water issues and self-rescue. Two of the most important concepts covered:

- Getting back in the boat on the first try because of the energy that

*The IDPR's cold-water swim training has been incorporated into the curriculum of other marine law enforcement courses in Idaho. One of the closing exercises involves putting on a life jacket after being in the cold water for a minute. This demonstrates the effects of cold water on motor skills. IDPR photo/Dave Dahms*



- it takes to make repeated attempts,
- Making sure the boat is equipped with a mechanism to self-rescue, like a swim ladder or bow to stern line.

The cold-water swim has been incorporated into the curriculum of other marine law enforcement courses in Idaho, including that of several county sheriffs' offices. The half-day training session involves viewing of the Cold Water Boot Camp DVD, a discussion of PFDs and other safety equipment, and practical exercises involving proper use of throw bags and officer immersion in cold water. Another critical part of the block training involves a discussion of officer safety in irrigation canals, which are prevalent in southern Idaho. The risk/reward of a body recovery is discussed in depth along with the perils of submerged vehicles. In addition, officers receive information on other hazards such as foot entrapment and strainers, and dealing with panicked swimmers.

The highlight of the training is the actual immersion in cold water (48

degrees). A very small and shallow section of a river is roped off for the immersion. As with the cold-water swim portion of the academy, two rescue personnel are in the water at all times and officers wear inflatable PFDs. To give officers the perspective of dealing with cold water, they step down into the river, submerge their entire body, and stay in the water for two minutes. After one minute, officers are thrown a PFD and instructed to put it on. This really hits home the difficulties of using hands and fingers in cold water.

Student feedback on the cold-water portion of their training has been very positive. They unanimously agree that the training is worthwhile. One student from the last academy wrote this on his evaluation form: "The cold water submersion was the most valuable part. I had not been in water that cold before; it was an eye-opener."

For more information on this exercise or the Idaho Marine Law Enforcement Academy, contact Randy Herman at 208.799.5126 or [randy.herman@idpr.idaho.gov](mailto:randy.herman@idpr.idaho.gov). \*



## BOATING

# Briefs



## releases recreational boating stats

The National Marine Manufacturers Association reported key findings from its annual Recreational Boating Statistical Abstract.

The Abstract reveals that of the 231.5 million adults living in the United States in 2010, 32.4 percent, or 75 million people, participated in recreational boating. This is the highest proportion of participation in

recreational boating since 1999, when 33.4 percent of adults boated. These 75 million boaters represent an increase of 14 percent compared to the recessionary year of 2009, which saw 65.9 million boaters.

NMMA also reports that the 75 million Americans who took to the water in 2010 helped keep the industry afloat. Aftermarket accessory sales increased six percent to \$2.4 billion (from \$2.3 billion in 2009) and spending per boat averaged \$147 for 2010, also up six percent from 2009. NMMA notes there are an estimated 17 million boats in use in the United States.

"Despite decreases in new boat sales last year, the industry remains alive and

well as existing boaters took to the water in record numbers and had a willingness to spend on their boats and boating outings," said NMMA President Thom Dammrich.

**“**Increases in participation and spending on the aftermarket equal good news for the industry as it tells us boating remains a recreational activity Americans aren't willing to forego in times of economic recession.**”**

NMMA President Thom Dammrich

## Recreational boating fatalities at record low

### Coast Guard statistics show too many still perishing, injured

The U.S. Coast Guard has released its official 2010 Recreational Boating Statistics. Total fatalities fell to 672, the lowest number on record. Coast Guard officials, while heartened by the drop, were quick to caution that this number remains unacceptably high. The 2010 total is only slightly lower than the 676 deaths in 2004, the previous record low; but 26 deaths lower than the average number of fatalities for the last 10 years.

Total reported accidents were 4,604 in 2010, down from 4,730 in 2009, while injuries totaled 3,153, down from 3,358. Property damage was estimated at \$35 million.

"We're glad to see the numbers decline," said Rear Admiral Kevin Cook, director

of prevention policy for the U. S. Coast Guard, "but the real tragedy is that so many of these deaths could have been prevented had boaters taken some simple steps. I am optimistic that the number of deaths and injuries can continue to be reduced further because of the strong commitment to safe boating from our partners in the states, non-government advocacy groups, and the boating industry."



Operator inattention, improper lookout, operator inexperience, excessive speed, and alcohol use rank as the top five primary contributing factors in accidents. Alcohol use is the

leading contributing factor in fatal boating accidents; it was listed as the leading factor in 19 percent of the deaths.

Rear Admiral Cook went on to emphasize the importance of boating education saying, "There is a clear link between safety and boating education. Statistics indicate that boaters who have taken a boating safety course are less likely to be involved in an accident. In addition, almost three-quarters of all fatal boating accident victims drowned; and of those, roughly 90 percent were not reported as wearing a life jacket."

To view the 2010 recreational boating safety statistics, go to [http://www.uscgboating.org/statistics/accident\\_statistics.aspx](http://www.uscgboating.org/statistics/accident_statistics.aspx).

## Coast Guard seeks feedback on engine cut-off switches

At the recommendation of the National Boating Safety Advisory Council, the U.S. Coast Guard is developing a new regulation on the installation and use of engine cut-off switches, more commonly known as lanyards, for boats less than 26 feet.

Engine cut-off switches are simple, low-cost mechanisms that turn off a boat's engine should the operator be ejected from the boat, preventing boating injuries and casualties caused by persons being struck by the boat and/or its propeller.

The Coast Guard is currently seeking feedback on 29 specific questions as well as general input until Sept. 6, 2011. Comments should address the public safety aspects of the new requirements, as well as the cost implications and regulatory burden. You may submit comments identified by docket number USCG-2009-0206 using any one of the following methods:

1. Federal eRulemaking Portal:  
<http://www.regulations.gov>;
2. Fax: 202.493.2251;
3. Mail: Docket Management Facility (M-30), U.S. Department of Transportation, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, D.C. 20590-0001.

If you have questions on viewing or submitting material to the docket, call Renee V. Wright, Program Manager, Docket Operations, at 202.366.9826.

## BOATING

# Briefs

### Louisiana's first Boating Education Lagniappe Day certifies 264 boaters

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) certified 264 boaters statewide after its first ever "Boating Education Lagniappe Day" on May 14.

Boating Education Lagniappe Day ran from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at eight locations across the state and consisted of the NASBLA-approved boating education course, food and drinks, giveaways and door prizes – all free of charge to the public.

"We are extremely pleased with the turnout as more than 250 boaters will now be safer when boating on Louisiana waterways," said LDWF Lt. Col. Jeff Mayne, the state's boating law administrator. "We wanted to make this day full of fun and still be educational at the same time and I feel we accomplished both goals."

Each location provided a free lunch that included crawfish fettuccine, jambalaya,

pizza, chicken tenders and chilidogs. Sponsors also provided door prizes and giveaways such as gift cards, ice chests, personal flotation devices, sunglasses, sunscreen and boating whistles. LDWF also gave away key chains and cups with the LDWF logo.

"This won't be the last 'Boating Education Lagniappe Day' in this state and we are already planning on next year's event to make it even bigger," said Capt. Rachel Zechenelly, LDWF's Boating Safety Coordinator. "We heard nothing but good things from the public that attended the event. Even some of the parents that didn't need the course said they learned a lot about boating safety."

LDWF initiated the state's boating education program in 2003 and has certified over 40,000 boaters during that time.

### "Ready, Set, Inflate!" sets new life jacket world record

The second "Ready, Set, Inflate!" event has set a new life jacket world record.

On May 21, 1,685 people gathered at more than 99 events held around the world (37 U.S. states and territories and six countries) to set a new world record for the number of participants who inflated their inflatable life jacket or wore an inherently buoyant life jacket.

The annual event, hosted by the National Safe Boating Council (NSBC) in partnership with the Canadian Safe Boating Council (CSBC), serves as the kickoff to National Safe Boating Week, held May 21–27, 2011, and aims to heighten awareness of inflatable life jackets and life jacket safety.

The previous world record was set during last year's "Ready, Set, Inflate!" event, which tallied 1,154 participants.

The success of "Ready, Set, Inflate!" Inflatable Life Jacket World Record Day depends on local sponsors and partners. Cabela's served as the national sponsor in the U.S. West Marine also held events throughout North America as part of their National Safe Boating Week outreach and education efforts. Leland, Ltd. and iSi Components offered over 1,000 CO2 cartridges to allow participants the opportunity to inflate their life jackets and practice re-arming them. SmartBoater sponsored the event throughout Canada, bringing the important message of life jacket wear to boaters throughout the country.

More information about each regional event and to view pictures, videos and educational materials about life jacket safety are available at [www.ReadySetInflate.com](http://www.ReadySetInflate.com).







*Life Jacket "Safety Dance" recognized as best nonprofit social media campaign.*

## BOATING

# Briefs

### National Safe Boating Council lands Internet advertising award

The National Safe Boating Council (NSBC) has won the coveted "Best Non-Profit Social Media Campaign" Internet Advertising Competition (IAC) award presented by the Web Marketing Association. The NSBC won for its 2010 Life Jacket "Safety Dance" interactive campaign intended to spread the important message of life jacket safety and awareness. The IAC awards honor excellence in online advertising, recognize the individuals and organizations responsible and showcase the best in award winning Internet advertising.

The Life Jacket "Safety Dance" was created with collaboration between the National Safe Boating Council and Paul Werth Associates to find a fresh, new way to promote the "Wear It!" safety message utilizing new social marketing efforts to reach a larger audience than with more traditional advertising.

The "Safety Dance" used Facebook Connect to customize the male and female specific dances, creating a more personalized and, therefore, more emotional connection between the viewer and the video. "The 'Safety Dance' is a truly innovative concept that is helping to bring the

'Wear It!' campaign message to boaters in an entirely new way," remarks Virgil Chambers, executive director of the National Safe Boating Council. "It's very gratifying to be recognized as the best non-profit social media campaign by the WMA."

The "Safety Dance" resulted in more than 1,200 unique views during the 2010 North American Safe Boating Campaign. In 2011, the "Safety Dance" was re-introduced as a standalone public service announcement (PSA) currently available on the campaign's website at <http://www.SafeBoatingCampaign.com>.

### Top swimmers remind Ky. boaters to wear life jackets

The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources has joined forces with some of the world's most acclaimed swimmers in a series of radio spots to promote life jacket usage during the 2011 summer recreational boating season.

The department's division of law enforcement is reaching out to those who shrug off life jackets because they view themselves as good swimmers. From junior swim champs to Special Forces in the U.S. Navy, in time of calamity, being good may not be good enough. To emphasize the safety message that life jackets work best when worn, Kentucky Fish and Wildlife recruited some top people in their profession to pass the word along.

Rachel Komisarz received gold and silver medals in the 2004 Summer Olympic

Games in Athens, Greece. Along with being the first to lend her voice to this Kentucky initiative, she has been a Kentucky resident since 1995. Komisarz is currently an assistant swim coach for the University of Louisville.



Lt. Cmdr. Michael Naus (SEAL/Ret.) is a one-time resident of Lexington who returns to Kentucky routinely to mentor Navy special warfare and air rescue candidates. This area is regarded as the most physically demanding military

training in existence. In that field is Petty Officer Luigi Caprio. This Aviation Search and Rescue Swimmer has aided victims worldwide and reminds boaters that accidents can occur without warning. Even on a fishing lake on a sunny afternoon, you may be called upon to do his job.

In Louisville, Lakeside Seahawk swim coach Mike DeBoer has led many world championship teams and appears on an announcement with one of his nationally ranked junior swimmers.

Despite being incredibly gifted swimmers, these individuals still wear life jackets at work or while at play.

"Instead of hearing it from everyday people, they hear it from some of the most notable swimmers on Earth," said Kentucky's boating law administrator, Capt. Mike Fields.



USCG photo

# BOATING Briefs

## Oklahoma toughens BUI law

On May 10, the state of Oklahoma fortified its boating under the influence law. Governor Mary Fallin signed into effect Senate Bill 324, lowering the legal blood alcohol content (BAC) in Oklahoma from .10 to .08. The bill also includes an implied consent provision, which assumes that anyone who operates a vessel on state waters gives consent to breath or blood testing to determine alcohol concentration or drug use.

"The passage of this bill sends a clear message to Oklahoma citizens that the standard for alcohol is the same on the road or on the water," said Capt. Mike Mize, commander of the Lake Patrol Section of the Oklahoma Highway Patrol.

The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) fully supports Oklahoma SB 324 and BUI legislation like it. The bill directly benefits NASBLA's mission to "strengthen the ability of the state and

territorial boating authorities to reduce death, injury and property damage associated with recreational boating and ensure a safe, secure and enjoyable boating environment."

"This isn't to punish boaters; it's about public safety and making a safer Oklahoma," said Lt. Kurt McKean, Oklahoma Highway Patrol marine enforcement division supervisor. "People are dying on the water, and there has to be some control."

## Alaska chooses Boating Safety Educator of the Year



The Alaska Office of Boating Safety named Mike Morris as its 2010 Boating Safety Educator of the Year during the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary's District 17 Winter Conference on February 13, 2011. Morris is an auxiliary instructor, as well as a state certified Alaska Water Wise instructor and Alaska Marine Safety Education Association (AMSEA) trainer. The Alaska Boating Safety Educator of the Year award recognizes outstanding contributions or performance in educating Alaska's boaters from statewide nominees.

Morris has taught from Prince of Wales Island in southeast Alaska to Barrow and northwest Alaska, and many places in between. In the last nine years he has taught 186 boating and marine safety workshops.

Morris began teaching boating safety in November 2001 for AMSEA and was one of the first Alaska Water Wise instructors trained. He has also been very active in the USCG Auxiliary as a trainer and is head of the Sitka flotilla. He has been very active as a retired public school teacher in facilitating and teaching classes with numerous groups. His efforts have been tireless in coordinating classes that would not otherwise have been held. Much of this work has been as a volunteer.

"Mike has been an outstanding partner in the state's efforts to promote safe and enjoyable boating, especially with Alaska's future boaters," said Joe McCullough, education coordinator with the Alaska Office of Boating Safety. ✨

USCGAUX photo





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

# PARTNER PERSPECTIVES

**F**rom a partner's perspective, what we the Coast Guard Auxiliary markets is boating (safety). Every organization involved in boating in some way is marketing boating – each one with a different slant depending on our mission or vision statement.

Marketing boating (safety) as we all know can be a tough sale. One marketing metaphor says to “sell the sizzle before the steak.” Boating safety may not seem to have enough sizzle to sell that big old steak. So, how we market safety is crucial. The challenge is how to make that particular steak really sizzle.

An Internet search on “marketing boating” produces some amazing results. There actually was a blog about this topic, and wouldn't you know social media played a huge part. Basically, this blog gave tips on social marketing. My favorite was that social

media gives everyone the ability to join the conversation, with instant communication between readers and us. Our “fans/followers” will let us know if we're on track. The ability to be in the public view so easily and quickly is a big plus for social marketing and, as many of our organizations are starting to see, is paying off.

Newton's First Law says something along the lines of bodies at rest tend to stay at rest unless acted on by an outside force, and bodies in motion tend to stay in motion. Another take on that is the saying, “If you want something done, ask a busy person.” Marketing boating will happen from the very fact that we're out doing things in the communities. This applies even to boating safety. When our flotillas are “bodies in motion” by being on the ramps doing vessel safety checks, in the classrooms, out at events in public affairs booths,

people's awareness of boating is raised. The more we're in the public's view, the more boating is promoted.

Creating community-based events that showcase boating and water-related sports is successful for many organizations. The Auxiliary does a lot across the country with National Safe Boating Week, and we'll be encouraging our flotillas to think of other events they could develop – with community partners – to bring boating, boating safety and people together for a fun day. Education and safety are easily incorporated into events that feature boats, activities with boats, other water sports and fun activities for kids and adults alike.

By making ourselves visible and being active where the people in our communities can see us – both in person and online via social marketing – we'll be helping to market the wonderful activity of boating.

“Marketing boating will happen from the very fact that we're out doing things in the communities.”

# It's time to put the **FUN** back into boating **FUN**damentals

By Jeremy Oyen  
Curriculum and Training Specialist  
REI Outdoor School



**A**s we look ahead at boating safety, there are many things on the horizon (or just past that horizon line). The American Canoe Association (ACA) is constantly working to develop opportunities for paddlers of all ages and ability levels to enjoy the rivers, lakes, oceans and streams. These efforts are focused on the four tenets of the organization: Education, Stewardship, Competition and Recreation.

It is time that we all use what we have developed over the past 130 years to get the word out that the main focus of the ACA is to ensure that paddlers have safe and FUN opportunities on the water. It really doesn't matter if the activity is a lazy paddle down the river, a marathon or slalom competition, a class IV whitewater run, or a day standing up (yes...standing up) while poling a canoe or paddling a stand-up paddleboard. What matters is that people are out on the water having fun and being safe.

While there are some safety items that need to be considered while on the water, how the safety is presented can make a huge difference in how it is accepted and followed by the recipients. If all one hears from the ACA by an instructor, club or affiliate are the dangers of the sport and how to avoid them, then a great deal of folks will be turned off and could think one of two thoughts:

1. Wow...paddling is pretty scary. I think I'll do something else.
2. Hey, the ACA is missing the mark. They sure don't seem to be connected to us (the paddlers).

When we are all putting together our plans to get out on the water and to share our passion with others, we need to emphasize the fun and excitement that

brought us to this point. When I was a young boy, thoughts of going for a paddle with my family were not overrun with the dangers but instead were about the cool things we would be able to do and see as we went down the river. Of course, safety aspects were covered, but the emphasis was on the experience, and associated safety was just a part of what we did.

Later on – when working for a parks & rec agency – we had great success with paddling programs (both canoeing and kayaking). This success was due to the fact the general public perceived the activities as FUN, RELAXING, and safe. Even when the programs were multi-day trips on rivers that included some moving water, the sell was that of the experience. Safety was just part of the culture.

Now we (all of us, from boating officer and boating safety instructor to the boating law administrator and the agency director) need to take a look at how we are promoting and presenting programs and our organizations to maximize the benefits of the experience and correlate the experience with all that we do.

Now, let's view ACA's organizational tenets from an experiential point of view:

**Education:** Offer educational opportunities that emphasize the experience and incorporate the needed safety.

**Stewardship:** Highlight the great works that can be achieved through cooperative efforts. The ACA offers a great deal of support (and even grant money) to clubs and organizations to achieve success.

**Competition:** This doesn't always mean super high-level/elite competition. Get out there and have a blast while competing against your friends and fellow paddlers. There are great opportunities at recreational, intermediate and elite levels in a variety of disciplines. It doesn't always matter who the champion is, but it sure is fun to be part of the mix.

**Recreation:** This is what the ACA is truly all about – getting people out on the water to recreate! Yes, we offer classes, river clean-ups and competitions, but the end goal is to get people on the water, having fun and enjoying the resources.

Our goal is to work on getting the ACA image to get back to incorporating the FUN aspects of paddling. They have always been there, but they need to be back at the forefront.

On Facebook there is a page called *Do One Thing for Paddling*. A lot of folks have "liked" the page and have posted things they will do this year. I challenge all of you to do one or more things for paddling in 2011, BUT make sure that everything you do involves FUN and share this enjoyment with others. Together we can show that the efforts being put forth by all members of the ACA indicate the true work that the organization supports and stands for, and has for over 130 years. ✨

*Editor's Note: This article was written when Jeremy was director of Safety Education, Instruction and Outreach for the American Canoe Association. He has since moved on to become the curriculum and training specialist for REI Outdoor School.*



coast guard

# COMMENTS

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



## Creating a *safety* CULTURE

Over the past year, you've heard more and more about the concept of a safety culture – from both foreign and domestic sources. Private industry has promoted safety for their employees' well-being. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has promoted it for motorists here in the U.S. And, some foreign nations have worked to create it within their recreational boating communities.

The concept is that if we get a population to adopt a safety culture, they will inherently respond to risks in a safe manner. It becomes second nature, like riding a bicycle after we learned how to as a youth. Relating that to boating, an

ideal safety culture is where boaters would want to learn more about the fun and the risks of boating before being required to take a course. They would operate their boats in an incredibly safe manner, paying close attention to their speed, their surroundings, the weather, and avoiding hazards. They would not drink alcohol when boating. They would take the initiative to learn about the various styles of life jackets, acquire the one most comfortable and effective for their activity, and actually wear it whenever they're boating and outside of a cabin, particularly on smaller boats.

While limited in number in the U.S., there are some exceptional examples of an effective safety culture. In the recreational boating world, the state of Minnesota is one of those examples. For decades, this state has repeatedly had either the lowest or near the lowest boating fatality ratio in the nation. In

2010, Minnesota had a rate of less than 1.5 deaths per 100,000 registered boats as compared to the national ratio of 5.4 deaths per 100,000 registered boats. That's phenomenal.

So how does Minnesota do it? Are their law enforcement or public education programs that much more effective than those programs in the other states? Is it the cold climate? (Better compare their results to the other cold states!) Or, could it be their safety culture, perhaps the marketing program that Minnesota has used so effectively and for so long, or maybe the water-based heritage of the people that settled in Minnesota, the Land of 10,000 Lakes?

We don't have definitive answers to these questions. However, we continue to study their situation. In fact, Congress even directed us to do so years ago. When the 1958 and 1971 boating acts were being considered, Congressional members stated that as the states took over more of the boating safety operational responsibilities, we were to study which ones were most effective and emulate those programs nationwide. That's exactly what we're doing now, where Minnesota's results continually set the bar for all of us to achieve.

So, as you look at your marketing programs, consider the success that has repeatedly shown itself in that cold northern state and see what you can borrow, make fit into your own constituency base, and move forward in making boating ever safer and even more fun. Oh, did I mention that Minnesota – with the use of their attention-grabbing, award-winning marketing approach (both serious and humorous) – has the highest per capita boat ownership in the nation? Yep, it's true. That safety culture in Minnesota fits right into their having a great time on the water.

# Influencing behavior through marketing

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

According to Mark Twain, “Many a small thing has been made large by the right kind of advertising.” A case in point is the Pet Rock in the 1970s, where Gary Dahl, an advertising executive from California, became a millionaire by selling millions of non-descript stones marketed as the perfect pet. For \$3.95 you received your rock, which came in a carrying case complete with breathing holes, straw to keep your rock comfortable, and a step-by-step training guide. For the record, yes, I had one, but when it’s all said and done Mr. Dahl was able to convince millions of other consumers to buy rocks as well.

As I have come to learn, marketing is not advertising. Advertising is a single component of the marketing process. Marketing is described in many ways, but the most common description I found is the ‘systematic planning, implementation and control of a mix of activities intended to bring together a mutually advantageous exchange or transfer of products.’

In the recreational boating community, marketing is done for a variety of reasons to achieve different outcomes. Recreational boat builders are in the business of selling boats. That’s what they do. Today’s recreational boaters have access to some of the finest equipment that has ever been offered when it comes to safety and reliability, but there is more to it than just having a great product. The

recreational boating industry wants to increase participation in recreational boating, which hopefully will lead to increased boat sales. To reach the potential boat buyer, the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) manages “Discover Boating,” a campaign to help increase participation and raise the level of interest in recreational boating by demonstrating the benefits, affordability and accessibility that potential boat owners may not be aware of.

With an estimated 82 million adult recreational boaters using our nation’s waterways, the U.S. Coast Guard, along with its partners who emphasize the safety in recreational boating, has had to figure out the best way to minimize those risky behaviors that account for the average of 700 fatalities that occur each year. I came across an interesting article written by Mr. Paul Esposito, a well respected Certified Industrial Hygienist, who stated that marketing and safety have a lot in common, “Marketing and safety both look to figure out how to best influence behavior. In both cases, feedback is essential to determine if you were successful. And success is not measured just in terms of sales or accident rates. Did behavior and attitudes actually change? Was there a direct cause and effect relationship between the marketing effort, the safety effort, and the result?”

An inordinate amount of energy and money have been expended throughout the years in an effort to reduce boating-related fatalities, injuries and accidents, but it wasn’t until the results of a 2002 survey commissioned by the U.S. Coast Guard and conducted by the Strategic Research Group were released that the customers gave us the feedback we needed to look at our boating safety messaging.

At the time, very little was really known about the boating community – what motivated them, where they got their information, and what they know or better yet don’t know about boating safety. One of the most telling results of the survey was that boaters believed if they have the equipment onboard, then they are safe. Safety wasn’t equated with

their own risky behavior. Another realization was that the boaters were suffering from “concept clutter” – the many different messages, from many different boating safety advocates all trying to simultaneously influence behavior.

As a result of the survey, we have realized changes in how we have managed the National Boating Safety Outreach effort. We have realized our goal of creating a nationwide recognizable identification of our community’s boating safety messages, breaking through the oversupply of boating safety information.

The branding of messages has continued to evolve as we look to empower the boater to boat safer, with messages such as the National Safe Boating Council’s “Wear It!” campaign, the Coast Guard’s “You’re in Command. Boat Safely!” campaign that has evolved into the current “Boat Responsibly!” campaign, which has generated our latest initiative under the National Program, “Don’t Wreck Your Summer.” For those of you who may be unfamiliar with the campaign, it utilizes a high impact approach that, according to the Pew Research Center, focuses on our target demographic: males 17-34 years old who need to “get the message.”

How we deliver the message has changed as well with the advent of social marketing, which has become the way of the world. It’s gone well beyond brochures in a rack. In order to get the word out, you must use the Internet to reach boaters on Facebook. You must “tweet” on Twitter. Boaters want the information instantaneously with strokes of a few keys on the computer. Marketing boating safety makes sense. The desirable outcome of these messages is to modify the boater’s behavior – to have them boat responsibly!

That change has been difficult to achieve. It takes hard work, creativity, energy and passion of many who work in this field to do what we do on a daily basis. Donald Trump said that, “Without passion you don’t have energy; without energy you have nothing. Nothing great in the world has been accomplished without passion!” ✨



# Government

# Affairs



*Matthew Long  
NASBLA  
Government Affairs Director*

## Selling safety

In April of this year, the National Boating Safety Advisory Council (NBSAC), the Federal Advisory Council to the United States Coast Guard Boating Safety Division voted resoundingly to support mandatory life jacket wear for adults on recreational vessels less than 18 feet in length. This remarkable vote, however, comes with it a variety of challenges for everyone in the boating safety community.

First, the facts. The Council recommended to the Coast Guard that they consider pursuing regulation that would require life jackets to be worn at all times on the following vessel types:

- ◆ personal watercraft regardless of length;
- ◆ human-powered vessels (such as canoes, kayaks, rowboats, etc.) regardless of length;
- ◆ any vessel less than 18 feet in length; and
- ◆ for any person towed while engaged in watersports.

The Coast Guard must now decide internally whether or not they wish to pursue regulation that would conform with these recommendations. IF they decide to move forward, then the long regulatory process will be initiated.

It was clear from NBSAC that, should the Coast Guard decide to move forward, there must be a robust process of public engagement. More than just an announcement in the

Federal Register, the Coast Guard must go out of its way to seek input from the boating public. Ultimately, such a strategy is in the best interest of the entire boating safety community.

Mandatory wear has been long discussed, and the boating safety community has gradually been progressing toward this policy over the decades. Most states require mandatory life jacket wear for children and personal watercraft users – important first steps in the battle to combat incidents of drowning among the boating public.

Over the last few decades, we have been fortunate enough to see a steady decrease in the rate of boating-related fatalities, while at the same time seeing a dramatic increase in the number of boaters. This achievement has been due in part to increased on-water enforcement, greater public understanding and new boating laws and regulations targeted at saving lives.

However, in recent years the number of boating-related deaths has remained stagnant. Despite the best efforts of federal and state partners, nothing has been successful at further reducing the number of people who are killed each year while boating. The majority of those more than 700 individuals died from drowning, and most of them were not wearing life jackets. Noting this trend, the Coast Guard and many other

entities determined that the best way to further reduce the number of on-water, boating-related fatalities would be to mandate some level of life jacket wear.

For this approach to be effective, the boating safety community will have to gain the support of the boating public. Boaters outnumber state boating law enforcement officers by nearly 700 to one. Records show that there are 12 million registered boats in the United States, plus an untold number of paddlecraft. More than 6 million of these boats will be affected by this new regulation. On the other side of the coin, there are 18,000 state boating law enforcement officials in the United States. It seems evident that the ONLY way to make this a truly successful program is to have public support, otherwise a lot of life jacket enforcement specialists will need to be hired.

Should the Coast Guard pursue this policy, the change won't be immediate, but it will be deliberate. In order to make it work, everyone involved in the recreational boating community, from the boat manufacturer, to the boating law administrator and to the user enjoying the resource, will have to work together and help the Coast Guard initiate this vital regulation. Ultimately, this isn't about anything other than saving lives. Even if we only save one life, that is a noble goal on which we should all be clearly focused.\*

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# SCA

small craft advisory

July-August 2011 | Vol. 26 No. 4

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## 2011-12 Recreational Boating Safety Calendar

### August

#### 24-28

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary  
National Conference  
Charlotte, North Carolina  
<http://www.cgauxa.org>

### September

#### 10-14

National Association of State  
Boating Law Administrators  
Annual Conference  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
<http://www.nasbla.org>  
[tom@nasbla.org](mailto:tom@nasbla.org)  
859.225.9487

#### 11-14

Association of Fish  
& Wildlife Agencies  
Annual Meeting  
Omaha, Nebraska  
<http://www.fishwildlife.org/>  
[cindy@delaneymeetingevent.com](mailto:cindy@delaneymeetingevent.com)  
802.865.5202

#### 12-17

United States Power Squadrons  
Governing Board Meeting  
Greensboro, North Carolina  
<http://www.usps.org>

#### 22-26

Canadian Safe Boating Council  
Annual Symposium  
St. John's, Newfoundland  
<http://csbc.npts.ca/>

#### 26-29

States Organization for Boating  
Access Annual Conference  
La Crosse, Wisconsin  
<http://www.sobaus.org/>  
312.946.6283

#### 30-Oct. 2

American Canoe Association  
National Paddlesports Conference  
Louisville, Kentucky  
<http://www.americancanoe.org>  
[aca@americancanoe.org](mailto:aca@americancanoe.org)  
540.907.4460

### October 8

National Boating Federation  
Fall Meeting  
Dallas, Texas  
October 8, 2011  
<http://www.n-b-f.org>  
728.409.0280

#### 14-16

National Boating Safety Advisory  
Council Fall Meeting  
Washington, D.C.  
[Jeffrey.A.Ludwig@uscg.mil](mailto:Jeffrey.A.Ludwig@uscg.mil)

#### 17-19

International Boatbuilders'  
Exhibition & Conference  
Louisville, Kentucky  
<http://ibexshow.com>

#### 26-29

US Sailing Annual Meeting  
Annapolis, Maryland  
<http://www.ussailing.org>  
[karendavidson@ussailing.org](mailto:karendavidson@ussailing.org)  
401.683.0800

### November

#### 7-10

Professional Paddlesports  
Association Paddlesports Pro  
Sandusky, Ohio  
<http://www.propaddle.com/>

## 2012

### January

#### 25-29

United States Power Squadrons  
Annual Meeting  
Jacksonville, Florida  
<http://www.usps.org>

### February

#### 19-22

International Association of  
Marine Investigators  
Annual Training Seminar  
San Diego, California  
<http://www.iamimarine.org/iami>

## NASBLA



SEPTEMBER 10-14, 2011  
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Register online at [www.nasbla.org](http://www.nasbla.org).

#### HOTEL INFORMATION

The Pfister Hotel  
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For the most up-to-date information:  
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[tom@nasbla.org](mailto:tom@nasbla.org)



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