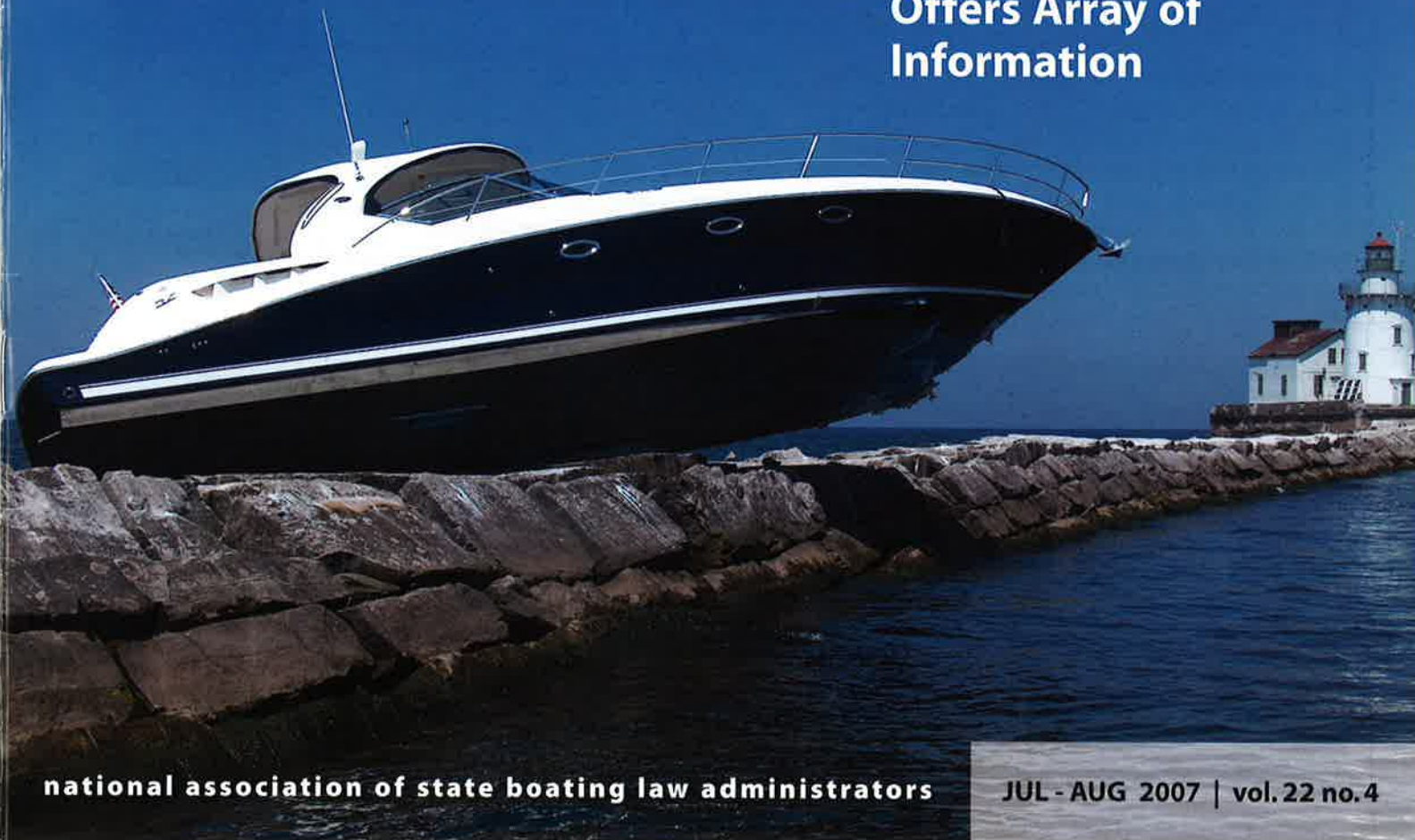


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- **NASBLA Develops Decision Matrix**
- **Boats to be Crashed for Training**
- **NASBLA Conference Offers Array of Information**



national association of state boating law administrators

JUL - AUG 2007 | vol.22 no.4

Departments...

from the HELM.....	1
nasbla NEWS.....	2
boating BRIEFS.....	12
PEOPLE	17
coast guard COMMENTS	18
partner PERSPECTIVES	20

Features...

Associate Sponsors Prestigious Award.....	3
<i>ACR Electronics continues sponsoring Boating Officer of the Year Award</i>	
WAKEKITE: New Sport Safety Analysis.....	4
<i>HO Sports Co Inc. provides information about new boat-towed water sport</i>	
Training Helps Officers Investigate Accidents.....	6
<i>NASBLA's course helps officers investigate boating accidents</i>	
In Oregon, Trends Determine Interventions.....	7
<i>State Marine Board uses accident data to improve boating safety</i>	
Too Many Boaters Learn Safety the Hard Way	8
<i>Intermediate boaters cause half of boating accidents</i>	
Crashing Boats in the Name of Safety	9
<i>NASBLA plans to conduct staged boat collisions</i>	
Boating Accident Reporting —A Measure of Success.....	10
<i>Decision matrix developed to help improve boating accident data</i>	

ABOUT THE COVER

Each year thousands of recreational boating accidents occur, causing countless injuries, hundreds of deaths and millions of dollars in property damage. Take for example, this accident that occurred on Lake Erie near Cleveland, Ohio, in 2005. The boat was only one month old and the owner, who was on board, let an inexperienced person take the helm. The four persons on board survived with minor injuries. However, boating accidents are often much more serious. U.S. Coast Guard statistics show that 70 percent of reported fatalities continue to occur on boats where the operator had not received boating safety instruction. Photo courtesy Dan Fuller/Ohio Department of Natural Resources



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NASBLA Continues Efforts to Minimize Boating Accidents



Jeff Johnson
NASBLA President

In our last column we summarized the public health approach to injury prevention, comparing that model's three areas of intervention (education, enforcement and engineering) to our association's mission, strategic plan and products. We also noted that before interventions can be designed, implemented and evaluated, we must first take a comprehensive look at what boating accidents are occurring and when, where, how, why and to whom. We recognize that interventions are only as good (or as relevant) as the information used to design them.

The first goal in NASBLA's strategic plan – *Provide national leadership and advocacy and focus policies and resources on reducing risks in recreational boating and waterway security* – guides us in identifying and quantifying risks to boaters. Additionally, the National Recreational Boating Safety Program's strategic plan relies heavily on accurate and comprehensive boating accident data. Methods for gathering this information include surveys, accident reporting by the public, trauma registry data, and accident investigation by responding officers, to name a few.

Because information gathering plays such a vital role in effective injury prevention program design and delivery, we must first determine exactly what information needs to be collected. Further, the quality and accuracy of this information is far more important than the quantity. We also must be smart about directing our limited resources to the greatest effect and ensure that the ground rules for collecting this information, such as accident reporting guidelines are clearly defined, understandable, and make sense to the public, the officers who investigate boating accidents, and boating program managers.

As in other injury prevention programs, boating safety intervention efforts should be directed in proportion to the "degree of risk" of an accident or a violation of the law. Most people would define risk in terms of probability of an event happening, but it is also important to define it in

terms of the cost of the outcome. For example, data may show that the likelihood of a boater experiencing a capsize or a fall overboard from a 21-foot motorboat per exposure hour is relatively low. However, because the highest number of boating fatalities involve these same events, it is the outcome of these occurrences (not the likelihood of occurrence) that indicates high risk. Once the degree of risk is determined, resources can be directed toward the areas of highest risk groups (to greater potential effect) rather than generically, or worse, toward areas with comparatively low risk.

For many years our association, through our Boating Accident Investigation and Reporting Analysis Committee, has been at the forefront of these efforts, addressing issues and projects such as promoting improvements in the quality and quantity of boating accident reporting, the analysis of boating accident data, identifying critical areas for intervention, analysis of human error, and updating and improving boating accident reporting criteria and reporting formats.

An effective boat accident information-gathering system also requires trained accident investigators. NASBLA has been offering accident investigation seminars since 1990. These classes train officers to better understand the dynamics of boating accidents. Later this year we'll be conducting a staged collision project that will take this training program to even higher levels.

This issue of *Small Craft Advisory* explores many of these aspects, and several presentations and discussions related to boating accidents are on the agenda for our annual conference in Burlington, Vt. Gathering and analyzing information is necessary to understanding the factors that lead to boating accidents and is critical if we are to continue to make progress in reaching and influencing the behaviors of high-risk boaters. NASBLA has and will continue to play an active, leading role in this process. ■



John Johnson
NASBLA Executive Director

Meet Indiana's New Boating Law Administrator

Major Felix Hensley became the boating law administrator for the state of Indiana in January 2007. Residing in New Washington, Ind. near the Ohio River, Major Hensley says he's currently not a boat owner but he's working to change that.

Hensley has served as an officer since 1980. He was assigned as a field officer to Clark County where he routinely patrolled the Ohio River. In 1997 he was promoted to the rank of District Lieutenant of District 8, which covers the south-central part of Indiana and includes more than 165 miles of Ohio River and the second-largest reservoir in Indiana (Patoka Lake). He was promoted to the boating law administrator position with the rank of Major on Jan. 14, 2007.

"I quickly discovered the water-related demands for the entire state were incredibly varied, from the glacial lakes and Lake Michigan of the northern part of the state to the reservoirs in the central state to the Ohio River that I had worked so many years on the state's southern border."

Major Hensley plans to work very hard to increase his agency's efforts in the area of public relations as it relates to water safety and safe boating. For example, this year the Indiana Department of Natural Resources began having media days at some of the state's busiest waters. Public information officers talked about the importance of wearing a life jacket, knowing the rules of the road for boating, and explaining the extra hazards of mixing boats and alcoholic beverages. In addition, the department has developed several public relations plans to implement before next year's boating season.

"We have also participated in exercises designed to enhance our security response and abilities," said Major Hensley. "We are working to increase our skill and ability



Major Felix Hensley

to operate within the [National Incident Management System (NIMS) Integration Center (NIC)]. In addition, we are working on memoranda of agreement with the U.S. Coast Guard for Homeland Security purposes."

Major Hensley has been very active with the Area Maritime Security Committee for Sector Ohio Valley. He was appointed to the Executive Steering Committee with nine other individuals two years ago. Part of the group's responsibility is to identify critical infrastructure, do risk and mitigation analysis for Sector Ohio Valley, and create port security plans.

Conference to Commence with Cheeky Comedian

An ongoing challenge for boating safety professionals is how to convince young adults to boat more safely. More specifically, these young boaters are those considered the New Millennium Generation (NMG), which includes people born after 1980. Young adults from this generation are often viewed as apathetic, lazy, selfish and arrogant. However, similar terms were used in the late 1960s to describe the up and coming generation of Baby Boomers. So it seems to be a clear case of the generation gap. Coming from a different background obviously results in a different mindset, and this must be kept in mind when developing messages to reach The Millennials.

To help explain the generational differences and ways to connect with these young adults, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) is featuring Meagan Johnson at its annual conference this year, which is being held Sept. 5-10 in Burlington, Vt. Bright, funny and delightfully obnoxious, Meagan Johnson is known as the Generational Humorist. Ordinarily, she entertains audiences by giving her spin on how to attract, train, market, manage and retain people from every generation. For this conference, she's tailoring her presentation to discuss ways to develop messages to reach recreational boaters from different generations as well as tools for improving your multi-generational relationships at work.

This promises to be a very entertaining and informative session. Be sure to catch Meagan's presentation at the conference. She's scheduled to speak Saturday (Sept. 6) morning, immediately following the Welcome/Agenda Review.

Several other interesting presentations fill in the rest of the conference's agenda. Topics include the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment, Marketing Boating, the Wear It Campaign, Aquatic Nuisance Species, Homeland Security, Podcasting, the Dangers of Carbon Monoxide, Navigation Rules, and much more. Associate NASBLA members will provide on-water demonstrations of various watercraft and safety equipment. Attendees will also be treated to a visit to the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum.

NASBLA's 48th annual conference is being held Sept. 5-10 at the Hilton Burlington (formerly the Wyndham Burlington) in Burlington, Vt. For more information on the conference, including the preliminary agenda and lodging details, visit www.nasbla.org. ■



Meagan Johnson

ACR Electronics Sponsors Annual National Boating Officer Award

Like many people, Michael Smith didn't want the extra expense of buying an Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) for his solo sailing trip from Rhode Island to the Virgin Islands. But, his wife, Terry, insisted on it and so they purchased a model produced by ACR Electronics – the AquaFix™ I/O P-EPIRB, with GPS interface.

The first leg of Smith's trip from Rhode Island to Bermuda was calm sailing for five days. It was so smooth that he put the boat on autopilot and went below to make breakfast. Without warning, the vessel was slammed sideways so violently that he thought he had hit something. Before he could climb out of the hatch, it rolled three times.

With conditions deteriorating, mast broken, no power, no one in sight and 260 miles northwest of Bermuda, Smith activated his AquaFix™, interfaced it with on-board GPS and anxiously awaited help. Three hours later he heard the roar of a U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) C-130 airplane.

USCG Lt. Jody Popp, co-pilot of the rescue crew from Air Station Elizabeth City, N.C., said, "It was pretty nasty out there. With whitecaps it was hard to see him without the [AquaFix™ 406] EPIRB to get us to his location," she said. "With the GPS we were able to fly directly to him."

The USCG directed two shipping vessels to Smith's position. Smith abandoned ship and was picked up by a 500-foot bulk carrier. He remained onboard until it arrived at its next port of call in Canada. Smith never dreamed he would end up in snowy Canada rather than the Virgin Islands, but he's very happy it ended the way it did. "None of this would have been possible without the EPIRB. It literally saved my life," he said.

This is the story of just one of the thousands of people who owe their lives to the high-quality products manufactured by ACR Electronics.

ACR Electronics Inc., part of Cobham's Avionics and Surveillance Division, designs and manufactures a complete line of safety and survival products and safety accessories. Recognized as the world leader in safety and survival technologies, ACR has provided safety equipment to the aviation and marine industries, as well as to the military, since 1956.



With ACR's focus on safety, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) was very pleased that the electronics company submitted a bid last year to sponsor Butch Potts Boating Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award.

"We are thrilled that ACR is the sponsor for our Boating Officer of the Year Award," said John M. Johnson, executive director of NASBLA. "Their safety-minded philosophy fits right in with our 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."

NASBLA developed the Boating Officer of the Year Award to recognize and honor outstanding service to recreational boating. The award symbolizes the highest level of achievement among boating law enforcement officers in the United States.

Ron Crowder, ACR's Executive Director of Sales, and Scott Swanby, ACR's Outdoor, Aviation and Government Sales Manager for North America, were eager to sign on last year as the sponsor of NASBLA's Officer of the Year Award. ACR inked a contract to sponsor the award through 2009.

"We know an integral part of boating safety is enforcement. The marine patrol officers around the country provide a tremendous service," said Crowder. "We are excited to be the sponsor of this award that recognizes those officers who excel at their jobs."

This year's National Boating Law Enforcement Officer of the Year will be announced during NASBLA's annual conference, which is being held Sept. 5-10 in Burlington, Vt.

Since its founding 51 years ago, ACR has endeavored to provide the best electronic life support and signaling equipment modern technology could devise. This commitment to the quality of its products catapulted the young company into the forefront of the safety and survival industry. ACR rapidly became established as a leading supplier to the search and rescue communities, both commercial and government. ACR's continuing commitment to excellence and the high quality and dependability of its equipment have made the company a world leader in the dynamic field of safety and survival.

For marine markets, ACR manufactures a full range of EPIRBs, emergency VHF radios, man overboard lights, personal locator beacons, emergency life jacket lights, search lights, strobe lights, and search and rescue transponders. ACR manufactures the world's smallest, fastest EPIRBs and continues to bring life-saving equipment to the marine market.

For more information about ACR Electronics Inc., visit www.acrelectronics.com. ■



WAKEKITE

NEW SPORT SAFETY ANALYSIS



Rider Controls the Kite!

The new sport of 'wakekiting' allows wakeboarders and water skiers to increase the distance and hangtime of jumping while greatly reducing landing impact. With nearly four years of engineering, testing and re-testing, WakeKite's launch product, the Superfly 9.0, is a masterpiece of safety-driven design and fun meant to add responsibly to the boating industry.

- Innovative, inflatable kite and safety system to be used with wakeboarding, waterskiing and more behind the boat.
- Provides longer duration jumps and softer, "reduced-gravity" landings.
- Rider controls the kite flight and is in control throughout the ride.
- The new sport of 'wakekiting' has a **STRONG learning curve**, requiring riders to master kite flying skills, edging techniques and wake approach timing to create jumps. Lack of perfect timing, equals little or no air.
- **High Winds and/or High Boat Speed Reduce Air Catching** - High winds and high boat speed make the kite very difficult to steer and greatly reduce the rider's ability to line up jumps and properly time kite steering for catching air. While higher boat speeds do cause some additional upward pull on the rider's handle, the result is that one's ability to edge with a wakeboard or water ski is greatly reduced. Without edging abilities, lining up to hit the wake for a jump is made very difficult.
- Riders are recommended to be 135lbs. or heavier and intermediate or above skill level on their riding craft of choice: water skis, wakeboard, kiteboard, etc.

The Superfly 9.0 package comes complete with everything necessary to begin riding, including: the patent pending WakeKite carbon fiber handle, all necessary lines, the 9-square meter inflatable kite (constructed from heavyweight Dacron), pump with psi gauge, user manual, instructional DVD and more.

Safety Engineering:

After four years of safety-driven design, and endless testing in all kinds of conditions, multiple safety features have been designed into the WakeKite Superfly 9.0 to provide safe use and product durability.

Safety Highlights:

- Rider has no harness
- "Letting go" of handle disconnects kite from tow line!
- Rider is in complete control
- Strong Learning Curve (novices *struggle* to catch air)
- Lift results from perfect timing of kite steering and wake approach.
- Multiple Safety Releases built-in.

Safety Release Systems:

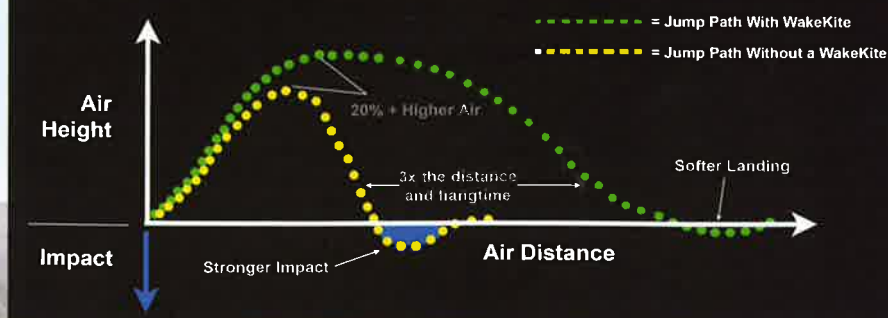
- **Shackle Release:** In boat, to release main towline from the boat, activated by an observer.
- **Handle Release:** When rider lets go, the handle releases from the towline via the Release Ball.
- **Kite Line Releases:** If the kite is overloaded, the kite and kite lines will separate from the handle via one or both kite line releases (re-loadable).

WAKEKITE Superfly 9.0 Layout



© 2006-2007 HO Sports Co Inc.

The WAKEKITE ALV Air Equation!



Over the last few years we have seen water-skiing, and especially wakeboarding, grow tremendously in popularity. More and more people are finding themselves seeking that thrill behind the boat, while at the same time sacrificing their knees and hips with those hard impact landings. Shown above you can see how WakeKite has enhanced the thrill, while making those hard impact landings a whole lot smoother.

WakeKite ALV vs. Flying Tube:

In the middle of the flying tube fiasco (spring-fall of 2006), HO Sports was busy evaluating Portland, OR - based WakeKite Sports for acquisition. Needless to say, safety, and the issues with the flying tube, were top of mind. With full awareness, after extensive testing in all kinds of conditions (including high boat speeds and high winds), HO Sports followed through on the purchase to create the new brand and sport category of WakeKite in November 2006. What HO saw was a truly well-engineered product that would not only bring new fun behind the boat, but also be truly complimentary to the industry as a whole.

Since the products' on going limited release, beginning in December of 2006, there have been no reported injuries or accidents by consumers.

When comparing the WakeKite ALV with the Flying Tube, a product that presents real danger to the public, many sharply contrasting facts exist. While several of these points are summarized in the chart to the left, there are a few important highlights to note: The WakeKite ALV 1) has a strong learning curve to catch air, 2) is fully rider-controlled, 3) has many safety releases built-in, 4) in no way fits the definition of a parasail, 5) it is not a tube.

	WakeKite ALV	vs.	Flying Tube
Is it a Tube?	No		Yes
Stability	Auto stable, Two lines		Single line, Un-stable
Learning Curve	Strong		None - hold on and go!
Boat Speed	18 - 24 MPH		25-28 Stated ^^
Air Catching	Hang time increased		Up to 40+ ft.
Wind Factor	Makes it hard to use		Can cause huge lift
Control	95% RIDER		95% Boat Driver
Landings	Softened		Can be catastrophic
Safety Releases	Four built-in		None!
Parasail?	Doesn't fit USCG definition		Possibly
Modify Lines?	Lessens Air		Increases Air
History	4 yrs; no serious injuries		3 deaths in first 6 months

Market Acceptance:

With a limited number of units released all over the world, WakeKite has already gained an un-ignorable acceptance from consumers and dealers everywhere. WakeKite was the buzz around boat shows nationwide, and people are really beginning to respect the product and its goal of safety first.

Quotes from dealers:

"For new products, the WakeKite has been the home run so far."
 - Andy Larson, Midwest MasterCraft, Minnesota.

"We had huge interest in the new WakeKite at the boat show - so there should be a lot of sales coming up for that product. It looked so unique at the show that people were stopped in the aisles."
 - Mike Bell, Adrenaline Water Sports, Washington.

With rider demo's taking place all across the country to educate regulators, dealers and consumers on this new product, it is no wonder people's reactions all seem to be: "That is the coolest thing I have ever done!" and, "Oh my gosh that is amazing!"



We are providing live product safety demonstrations. Please contact HO Sports at 800-938-4040 for more information.

See www.wakekite.com for more information on the product.

Training Helps Officers Investigate Accidents

By Kimberly Hermes Jenkins

Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Investigating Boating Death of Pennsylvania Man

State Authorities Investigate Boating Accident on Otter Lake

Erie Boating Accident Under Investigation

Maryland Natural Resources Police Investigate Fatal Accident on Elk River

Muskegon Co. Sheriff's Department Investigates Hit-and-Run Boating Accident

With an average of just under 5,000 boating-related accidents occurring each of the last three years, marine patrol officers have had their hands full with investigations. While most agencies tasked with boating law enforcement may opt not to investigate every single incident, there are still plenty of "big" accidents to keep investigators busy. Generally speaking, boating accidents that involve two-boat collisions, result in serious injuries or cause death are investigated.

Boating accidents are investigated to determine what caused them.

"From a law enforcement perspective, a boating accident is investigated to determine how and why it happened and who is at fault," said Jim Getz, retired captain with the Illinois Conservation Police and lead instructor for NASBLA's Boating Accident Investigation program. "To proceed with criminal prosecution, these all need to be proved beyond a reasonable doubt."

Through investigating boating accidents, law enforcement officers can also determine whether an incident was truly an accident or an attempt at insurance fraud or another criminal act, reveal compliance with applicable boating law and regulations, and so on. Moreover, by documenting the causes of boating accidents, officers compile data that will help prevent similar accidents from occurring in the future.

To assist marine patrol officers in their investigations, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) offers two courses – the

National Boating Accident Investigation and Analysis Course: Level I – Comprehensive; and, the National Boating Accident Investigation, Reconstruction and Analysis Course: Level II – Advanced. First offered under the direction of Underwriters Laboratories, these classes have been used for nearly 20 years and have trained thousands of marine law enforcement officers at the local, state and federal levels of government. Both courses are recognized throughout the United States and other countries as the premier boating accident investigation training available.

Filled with valuable information, these courses give law enforcement officers the opportunity to advance their skills in accident investigation. The seminars also provide critical data to help shape boating safety regulations across the country. Participants receive a wealth of information, including accident statistics, definitions, case histories, technical instruction, proven investigation techniques and more. The course involves a greater emphasis on the data collection at the scene and the reporting and analytical skills necessary to complete the investigation.

The dates and locations for the Level I – Comprehensive classes have been scheduled for 2008 (subject to change):

January 7-11	Montgomery, Alabama
February 4-8	Boulder City (Lake Mead), Nevada
March 10-14	Springfield, Illinois
April 7-11	Cleveland, Ohio
May 12-16	Helena, Montana

A Level II – Advanced course is being held Oct 15-19, 2007, at the National Transportation Safety Board's Training Academy in Ashburn, Virginia. Dates for next year's Level II – Advanced course(s) will be available after the first of the year.

The National Boating Accident Investigation courses are intended for ACTIVE local, state or federal marine law enforcement officers who are already versed in boating enforcement but who lack technical accident investigation training. Officers should be active recreational boating accident investigators. The course content and training aids provided in the course make it especially appropriate for boating law enforcement training personnel. The course is also recommended for supervisory personnel since it will enable them to support their investigators and will assist them in reviewing accident reports. Two billets are reserved in each Comprehensive class for boating accident investigation instructors.

Registration is limited to 60 attendees per class so be sure to apply early. Officers can register online at www.nasbla.org or e-mail chris@nasbla.org to receive a registration form. Prerequisites are required for the train-the-trainer positions and the advanced course. Call NASBLA Headquarters at 859.225.9487 or e-mail Chris Moore, program manager, at chris@nasbla.org for details. ■

IN OREGON, TRENDS DETERMINE INTERVENTIONS

By Ashley Massey

Public Affairs Specialist, Oregon State Marine Board

Accident reporting is probably one of the most tedious yet necessary functions of any boating safety organization. For the Oregon State Marine Board, data collected from accident reports not only gets entered into the Coast Guard's database, known as the Boating Accident Reporting Database (BARD) but it's also a key element in developing publications, law enforcement training and public awareness campaigns. On average there are 70 boating-related accidents in Oregon and 15 fatalities per year.

When Marine Board officials looked at the year-end 2006 fatality statistics, several trends became apparent. Of the 20 boating-related fatalities, all of the victims perished in water between 40 and 50 degrees. Twelve of the victims (or 60 percent) were in non-motorized boats. Historically, non-motorized craft make up 35 percent of the boating fatalities. Only four of the 20 victims were wearing personal flotation devices (PFDs, or life jackets, and they died on white-water rivers.



With nearly 200,000 registered boats in Oregon, it's imperative that boaters practice safe boating practices. The state sees an average of 70 boating-related accidents and 15 fatalities each year. After examining accident report data, the Oregon State Marine Board developed several safety interventions for this year's boating season.

Photo courtesy U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

As these trends emerged, Marty Law, Education and Information manager for the Marine Board, developed several safety interventions for the 2007 season:

- Developed boat launch safety information kiosks highlighting what to look out for;
- Posted life jacket signs on the Deschutes River, where six of the 20 fatalities occurred (complements of the National Safe Boating Council); and
- Created PFD posters for statewide distribution at boat ramps, including properties managed by the Bureau of Land Management and the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department.

Law also worked closely with the Law Enforcement Program Manager, Bill Rydbloom, for any needed law enforcement training. In 2006, Rydbloom approved drift boat and white-water rescue training. When the end-of-the-year statistics were in, it was evident this training for law enforcement needed to continue. In addition, during the 2006 post-season conference training, a cold water immersion class was conducted by Joseph McCullough from the Alaska Office of Boating Safety where officers learned the best way to survive a cold water immersion is to always wear a PFD and have a plan for self-rescue.

The 2007 Oregon PFD Campaign will feature a 72-year-old hunter/boater who survived four hours in the water and a cold night on a Columbia River island and owes his survival to a float coat. This survivor's story is one many hunters, anglers and boaters can identify with since he represents a key boating demographic. Campaign efforts focus on purchasing media in close proximity to the behavior.

From messaging to training, Oregon hopes to decrease the number of accidents and fatalities by consistently striving to educate, train and bring about awareness to anyone in or around the water.

For more information about Oregon's accident reporting, contact Marty Law at 503.378.2612 or martin.law@state.or.us. ■

A black and white photo of John Gabriel, a survivor, wearing a life jacket and holding a fishing rod.

"I spent four long hours overboard. Without a life jacket, I would have died."

JOHN GABRIEL SURVIVOR

Boat smart. Wear a life jacket.

www.boatoregon.com

Oregon State Marine Board logo featuring an anchor and the text "OREGON STATE MARINE BOARD".

Too Many Boaters Learn SAFETY THE HARD WAY

By Wayne Stacey

Recreational Boating Safety Education/Instruction Specialist, U.S. Coast Guard

It's a story that is all too familiar to boating safety advocates and administrators: a pleasant afternoon, clear weather, calm water, then suddenly a shattering collision, injured people thrown into the water, and sometimes, tragically, a death. How does it happen? And why, with all of our technology, safety equipment and regulations, does it still happen?

One factor remains – the popularity of smaller, motorized watercraft. Open motorboats far outnumber other varieties of recreational boats. They go fast and typically have a low profile in the water, making them easier to capsize and harder for other boaters to see. According to the Coast Guard's most recent data, nearly 80 percent of all boating accidents and more than 80 percent of all fatalities occur on boats less than 26 feet in length.

But as we all know, there's more to accident risk than boat size and shape. Small open motorboats are often used by two types of boaters that have proven themselves a tough sell on safety: the operator with intermediate experience, and the operator who views the boat as only an accessory to another sport – fishing. For too many of these operators, safety is learned only through experience, with results that are costly and sometimes deadly to themselves and other boaters.

Since 2000, about half of all boating accidents have involved operators with 100 to 500 hours of experience on the water. These are boaters who have passed the beginner stage, where caution and awareness tend to govern, but have not spent enough time on the water to have learned, through experience or training, how to avoid most piloting and navigation mistakes.

He or she may have become familiar with basic minimums: starting, stopping and

steering. They may have developed a sense of how to get around local waterways. But complacency may also have set in: an open waterway may seem easy to navigate compared to a busy roadway at rush hour, but boats come with no brakes, no turn signals and there are no white lines down the middle of the road to designate which lane to stay in. Compared to the rules of the highway, the steering is different – as well as the rules of navigation. The operator begins to speed, to take risks, to stop keeping close watch on other boaters. They may forget essential safety equipment and maintenance. They may forget – or fail to ever acquire – the basic safety training needed to avoid and survive emergencies.

Those who fish for sport may think of themselves as anglers first and boaters only incidentally. Many use small open motorboats and have intermediate experience, but even more risk factors apply.

It's interesting to note that although anglers and water-skiers have similar overall accident rates, fatal accidents affect anglers at a rate about 10 times greater: 30 percent vs. 3 percent. What accounts for the difference?

Water-skiing is typically enjoyed on open water. If properly enjoyed, it involves at least three people: the boat operator, the lookout and the skier. Skiing is usually a warm-weather pursuit, increasing the chances that other boaters will be nearby to observe an accident and more likely to render immediate assistance. Most important, skiers usually wear life jackets.

Contrast this with fishing by boat. It is often a solo pursuit, with one angler fishing alone in a cove or creek. Angling is popular in "shoulder" seasons such as the spring or fall, or in the early morning, when crowds of recreational boaters are absent. Anglers often wear heavy clothes and no life jacket – a deadly combination if a boat capsizes or someone falls overboard, which happened in nearly 60 percent of boating fatalities in 2005.

These are just some of the reasons that these two groups of boaters – intermediate users of small open motorboats and anglers – are overrepresented in boating accident and fatality statistics. As these groups increase, and America's waterways become crowded with more and more recreational boaters, we as boating safety advocates and administrators must redouble our efforts to reach them with boating safety and navigation education.

The U.S. Coast Guard asks all boat owners and operators to help reduce fatalities, injuries, property damage, and associated healthcare costs related to recreational boating accidents by taking personal responsibility for their own safety and the safety of their passengers. Essential steps include: always wear a life jacket and require passengers to do the same; never boat under the influence; successfully complete a boating safety course; and get a Vessel Safety Check annually from local U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliaries, United States Power Squadrons®, or your state boating agency's Vessel Examiners. The U.S. Coast Guard reminds all boaters, "You're in Command. Boat Responsibly!" For more information, visit www.USCG-boating.org. ■

CRASHING BOATS

...in the Name of Safety

By Kimberly Hermes Jenkins

For the past few months, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) has been soliciting operable boats to crash. Now why would a nonprofit organization that is dedicated to helping make our nation's waterways safer want to crash boats? It's all in the name of science.

NASBLA has been awarded a grant from the U.S. Coast Guard to conduct a series of staged boat collisions over the next two years. The boats used in the staged collisions will provide more effective teaching aids for NASBLA's National Boating Accident Investigation and Analysis Courses.

The last series of staged collisions was conducted in 1999, also under a grant from the Coast Guard. The boats from these collisions continue to be used in the seminars today. However, they need to be replaced.

"The boats we've been using have begun falling apart," said Jim Getz, retired captain from the Illinois Conservation Police and lead instructor of NASBLA's boating accident investigation program. "All the wear and tear from time, travel and use is taking its toll on the vessels."

The staged collisions will involve accidents in which both boats are moving. The technology needed to accomplish this task was not readily available during the staged collisions held eight years

ago, so the crashed boats currently used in the training are not necessarily realistic examples of what most boat accident investigators encounter on the job. Additionally, the boats from the earlier collisions are almost all the same type and size, which again does not mirror reality.

With grant funding, NASBLA will develop scenarios indicative of events that are likely to occur on the water and conduct 12 staged two-vessel collisions over the course of two years. A variety of powered, trailerable watercraft from bass boats, open runabouts and cuddy cabins to pontoon boats and personal watercraft will be involved. The first set of collisions is slated to occur this September in Virginia.

After the staged collisions are performed, NASBLA intends to relocate the subject vessels to the National Transportation Safety Board's Training Academy in Ashburn, Va., where they will be used in future NASBLA boating accident investigation training. In addition to having these new collision vessels available for hands-on damage assessment, NASBLA will capture the collisions on film, providing future students

with video footage of the collisions and develop other training materials that can be used in future NASBLA boat accident investigation courses.

NASBLA's current Boating Accident Investigation and Analysis Courses – Level I – Comprehensive and Level II – Advanced – are already recognized as the premier recreational boating accident investigation training program throughout this country and by other countries as well. According to



Staged collisions, similar to the one shown above, are used to provide crashed boats for the National Boating Accident Investigation and Analysis Courses, which are conducted by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators.
Photo courtesy U.S. Coast Guard

Getz, who also serves as this grant's project coordinator, the results of these staged collisions will "ratchet it up another notch."

The BoatU.S. Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water is assisting NASBLA in its quest to secure donated boats for testing. Officers from the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries will help conduct the tests and TowBoatU.S. Potomac Marine is assisting with the on-scene logistics of the staged collisions. ■

Boating Accident Reporting — A Measure of Success



By Capt. Richard Moore

Boating Law Administrator, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

On a recent afternoon, a young man was zipping along on his personal watercraft when he suddenly ran aground on a slightly submerged oyster bar, causing quite a bit of damage to the hull and drive unit. The damage was bad enough that riding back to shore wasn't an option, so he made a phone call to the local Sheriff's Office for help. He was told to stay with the vessel, keep his life jacket on and that help would be there soon. A short while later, an officer found the disabled vessel and a life jacket, but the operator was nowhere to be found. Later that afternoon, the man was found floating in the water without a life jacket some distance from the scene, apparently the victim of drowning. Now we must determine whether this is a recreational boating fatality.

The Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) Program has relied heavily on boating accident data provided by the state reporting authorities for many years. The data from the states is sorted and assembled into a single annual statistical report to show trends in recreational boating accidents. Many states also generate lengthy annual statistical reports on their own state accident data. Ideally, this statistical information is a useful tool to help states in their boating safety awareness and law enforcement planning efforts.

The U.S. Coast Guard has recently adopted a new National RBS Program Strategic Plan. Completion of many of the plan's goals and objectives hinges on the data provided by state reporting authorities. Never in the history of the Program has the collection of consistent and accurate accident report data been more important. Even with occasional errors, omissions and underreporting of accident data, this statistical information has stood as a benchmark by which the Program is measured for many years. The

new Strategic Plan set annual numeric goals for boating accident injuries and deaths as Program measures, and it makes good sense to use this information to measure whether or not we are meeting our goal of reducing recreational boating accidents, injuries and deaths.

Now back to the original scenario. Should this death be counted as one of the nation's reportable recreational boating fatalities or not? If you ask around, you will likely find those who say the operator was told to stay with the boat and keep his life jacket on and surmise that he must have gotten tired of waiting and attempted to swim for shore. This makes him a swimmer leaving a place that would be considered safe under the circumstances, so his death is not a boating fatality. On the other hand, others might say that the grounding and damage to the vessel was the first event (a boating accident), so whatever happened to him while trying to "survive" the accident should be counted. As with many unusual accident scenarios, potentially valid arguments can be made either way.

Believe it or not, the scenarios encountered by state reporting authorities get even more complex. What about the time children climbed aboard a large chunk of plastic foam to float and play around and suddenly tipped over and drowned? Or how about the large group of people drifting down a lazy river on inner tubes and inflatable pool rafts when one person fell off and drowned? Maybe the scenario included an



Information gathered from the investigation of boat accidents is used to determine trends in recreational boating. The statistical information helps state boating authorities plan effective boating safety awareness and law enforcement strategies. Photo courtesy Maine Department of Marine Resources

all-terrain vehicle crossing a shallow river when it was swept away by the current and one or more of the occupants died. Unfortunately, untold numbers of these events have occurred over the years, and there are certainly many more to come.

In an attempt to address the topics of “consistency” and “accuracy,” the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) formally made a recommendation to the U.S. Coast Guard to adopt much simpler decision-making criteria for recreational boating accidents. This set of criteria became known as the “Decision Matrix” and involved a series of fairly simple, straightforward questions to be considered. Each question included some clarifiers and had to be answered in the affirmative before moving to the next. A “No” response to any one of the questions made the accident scenario non-reportable. While not completely foolproof, the “Matrix” greatly simplified the decision-making process for investigators and administrators and set the stage for greatly improved consistency.

It has been determined that adoption of the proposed “Decision Matrix” will require changes to the Code of Federal



The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators has developed a set of decision-making criteria for officers to use in determining whether boat accidents such as this one are considered reportable. Dubbed the Decision Matrix, the criteria will help improve the consistency and accuracy of data reported to the U.S. Coast Guard.

Photo courtesy Nevada Department of Wildlife

and nearly any floating object used by a person outside a swimming area could be classified as a “vessel.”

During the most recent meeting of the National Boating Safety Advisory Council last April, the Council formally recommended the following:

“The U.S. Coast Guard’s Office of Boating Safety engage key stakeholders in the recreational boating accident reporting issue, namely the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators and the boating public, to consider rule change proposals previously offered to the Office and OMB and to develop proposed language for regulatory changes to more adequately establish the criteria for recreational boating accident reporting. This effort should be initiated as quickly as possible and the regulatory changes should be diligently pursued by the Office of Boating Safety to assist in efforts related to the RBS Program’s Strategic Plan.”



Using boat accident data, boating authorities hope to reduce the occurrence of incidents such as running aground, falls overboard, collisions and other mishaps on the water.

Photo courtesy Dan Fuller/Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Regulation. The current Code is extremely broad in some areas, especially in the area of what “vessels” are to be counted for the purposes of accident reporting,

The state reporting authorities (states and territories) are eager to play an active role in seeing this effort get underway, especially since it will result in much greater consistency and accuracy of boating accident reports. Another important benefit is that both the boating public and law enforcement investigators will be able to decide quickly whether an incident should be investigated and reported. In a state where a single fatal boating accident investigation “costs” the state an average of 66 hours of investigative time and 325 vehicle miles (with a single event possibly requiring more than twice these time and mileage figures), the investigation and reporting of incidents that do not meet reporting criteria is simply not an effective use of already overburdened and limited state manpower and equipment resources.

Stay tuned for more information on this topic in the future. As we work together to become more effective in our collective efforts to reduce boating accidents, injuries and fatalities, we hope one day to be able to say that we did our part to make our nation’s waterways safer and more enjoyable. To really know if we made a difference, it is critical that we have a firm place from which to measure our efforts. Who knows, maybe you will have an opportunity to provide input and help our effort to plot the safest and most efficient course for consistency and accuracy in boating accident reporting. ■

Participation Increases to 73 Million Americans in 2006

One-third (73 million) of U.S. adults went boating in 2006, a participation increase of approximately 1.3 million Americans from 71.3 million in 2005, according to findings from the National Marine Manufacturers Association's (NMMA) *2006 Recreational Boating Statistical Abstract*, released in May. The Abstract highlights boating sales and participation numbers compiled on behalf of the recreational boating industry throughout calendar year 2006.

Coinciding with the increase in boater participation, the Abstract also reveals the number of boats in use increased to nearly 18 million, and boat registrations surpassed 13 million for the first time since 2001. Moreover, the industry grew to an all-time high of \$39.5 billion in U.S. sales and services in 2006, a six percent increase from the previous year.

"We are excited to see boater participation increase to 73 million because it reinforces our belief that more and more people are finding out that getting out on the water is one of the best ways to relax, have fun and enjoy time with friends and family," said Thom Dammrich, NMMA president.

While total boat unit and dollar sales were up more than five percent – buoyed by growth in ski/wakeboard boats, personal watercraft, canoes and kayaks – the traditional powerboat segment saw a decrease in unit sales of nearly five percent to 291,900 total units in 2006.

Total new boat dollar sales edged upward two percent to \$11.5 billion, reflective of an overall increase in the price of traditional powerboats, which also increased two percent to \$9.6 billion. NMMA attributes these increases to a rise in production costs for manufacturers, including the escalating price of petroleum-based inputs and efforts to develop cleaner, more fuel-efficient engine technology.

"These increases clearly demonstrate boating is well within the reach of average Americans," said Dammrich.

The *2006 Recreational Boating Statistical Abstract* is available only in a hard-copy format. It is available for purchase for \$250 for NMMA members and \$750 for non-NMMA members. Copies of the 2006 Abstract may be ordered by contacting NMMA fulfillment coordinator Chris Keil at 312.946.6209; orderdesk@nmma.org.

Sitcom Star Promotes Boating Safety

Christa Miller has signed on as a celebrity spokesperson for the national "Wear It" campaign – a boating safety effort that promotes the importance of wearing a life jacket at all times while on the water.

A regular on such hits as "The Drew Carey Show" and "Scrubs" – and mom of three – Miller will lend her voice to encourage women and moms in communities across America to be proactive about making sure their family members and friends wear life jackets at all times on the water. The latest U.S. Coast Guard statistics indicate that in 2005, approximately 87 percent of boaters who drowned were not wearing a life jacket.

"It only takes a second to put on a life jacket – but that second could save your life – or the life of someone you love," says Miller.

In her support of "Wear It!", Miller stars in a public service announcement (PSA) that is being aired on television stations in Northern California. The PSA is also available at www.SafeBoating.Campaign.com.

Miller is also helping promote the national "Be a Survivor!" contest. The summer-long initiative highlights the importance of life jacket wear as it invites recreational boaters of all ages to submit personal accounts of how life jackets have made a difference in their boating experiences. Boaters can enter online at www.SafeBoatingCampaign.com, as well as pick up an entry form at West Marine® stores, the contest's co-sponsor along with the National Safe Boating Council.



Boating Industry Explores Water Access Issues

The first national symposium on water access was held May 9-11, in Norfolk, Va. Designed as a catalyst to organize and share the most current thinking regarding the growing impediments to boating and fishing access, "Working Waterways & Waterfronts 2007" brought together stakeholders from across the boating community.

Through presentations and panel discussions, the nearly 200 attendees learned about local, state and national-level initiatives designed to address issues of water access and water-dependent industries.

This symposium provided a unique opportunity for stakeholders from across the boating community, including coastal zone, city and regional planners, public officials, resource agency staff, water-based enterprises (marinas, boat yards, etc.), academics, aquatic resource educators, fishery management professionals, and the fishing and boating industries, to exchange ideas and develop potential collaboration strategies that address public access needs.

As part of the symposium, BoatU.S. recognized several groups for their efforts to preserve access for recreational boaters:

- Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission, Va.
- Shoreline Property Owners and Contractors Association, Wash.
- Carryover of the Carolinas, N.C.
- Scituate Marine Park, Mass.
- Port of Bellingham, Wash.
- City of Trenton, Mich.
- North Carolina General Assembly

"These access award winners show us that with creative thinking and concerted action, we can gain better access to the water," said Richard Schwartz, BoatU.S. founder and chairman.

The desired outcomes of the conference include: commitment to work together and make public access a high priority; set a national agenda for action as well as ideas for state policy, and develop a structure for communicating among the diverse constituencies impacted by this issue.

Detering Terrorism Discussed at Security Summit

On June 19-20, 2007, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) held a National Small Vessel Security Summit in Washington, D.C. The purpose of the summit was to educate small vessel stakeholders of the maritime security risks, to provide a forum for stakeholders to discuss security issues, and to create an after-action report for public, industry and government to develop small vessel security measures in order to protect the homeland in the maritime domain.

A key element discussed was the importance of advance intelligence about possible terrorist attacks. Summit participants largely agreed that America's Waterway Watch should be promoted and enhanced. To learn about the program, visit www.AmericasWaterwayWatch.org.

NASBLA Vice President John Fetterman spoke on the need for strengthening resources to the state and local authorities. He presented the *Partners on the Water* legislative proposal that NASBLA currently supports. The legislation would build on the successes some states have had in working to extend the Coast Guard's capabilities by serving as force multipliers in homeland security and emergency response. It would also strengthen the state/Coast Guard partnership on the water.

The Department of Homeland Security is currently developing its comprehensive after-action report for dissemination to summit participants, as well as to key security stakeholders.



CSI: Minnesota State Releases New Series of Boating Safety Radio Ads

Minnesota's 2007 boating season is in full swing, and soon there will be mishaps involving watercraft of all sizes from canoes to cabin cruisers. To help prevent these incidents, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resource's Boat & Water Safety section has released a series of four boating safety radio public service announcements. Two of the new ads take a cue from the television series "CSI" that continue to occupy the top 10 shows of the TV Nielsen ratings.

"The causes of certain kinds of boating accidents can be very technical. Using a CSI theme lets us explain how water-related accidents happen and how to prevent them without having an announcer simply read a dry and boring script," said Tim Smalley, Minnesota boating education coordinator.

In the 60-second spots, two "investigators" dissect boating accident scenes, determine the causes and explain how the mishaps could have been prevented.

"We're hoping that by entertaining the listeners, they'll be more likely to understand how some accidents happen and follow boating safety practices they need to avoid these senseless tragedies," Smalley noted.

The producers were fortunate to find actors that sounded a lot like David Caruso and Emily Procter, the stars of *CSI: Miami*. The owner of the studio where the ads were recorded is a virtuoso guitarist. He played a few power chords at the end of the spot to sound like the song by the series' theme group "The Who" – without actually being one. The tagline at the end of the ad is "Stay Afloat, Stay Alive. Wear your Life Jacket."



Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff address attendees at the DHS Small Vessel Security Summit in Crystal City, Va., during the two-day event held June 19-20, 2007. Photo courtesy USCG



While Teri Parker-Brown and John Borgfelt don't LOOK like the actors from CSI, they did a great job of sounding just like them in two "CSI: Minnesota" radio ads. Borgfelt is a dedicated CSI fan and had a great time mimicking David Caruso. Photo by Tim Smalley/MN DNR

Besides donated airtime, time has also been purchased for the spots statewide. The MP3 audio files are available for download from the "newsroom" on the Minnesota DNR's website, www.dnr.state.mn.us.

California Releases 2006 Boating Accidents Statistics

In 2006, 758 accidents, 445 injuries and 42 fatalities were reported to the California Department of Boating and Waterways (Cal Boating). The number of accidents and fatalities has dropped from those reported in 2005, but injury totals are slightly higher.

Fishing-related fatalities continue to be a concern, accounting for 38 percent of California's boating fatalities in 2006. Nearly all the victims drowned and only one was wearing a life jacket. Half of the fishing-related fatalities involved alcohol.

Alcohol factored into 48 percent of fatalities where testing could be conducted. Half of the victims were passengers, several of whom contributed to their deaths by exhibiting unsafe behavior aboard vessels. Cal Boating continues to emphasize that no one on board a vessel should drink alcohol – this includes operators and passengers.

One hundred and eighty accidents involving personal watercraft (PWC) resulted in 145 injuries and five fatalities. PWC-related accidents were at the lowest level since 1991. There was a substantial decrease in these accidents in California in 1998 after two new laws went into effect. The first law banned certain types of horseplay activities such as doing donuts and jumping wakes within 100 feet of another vessel. The second law raised the minimum age to operate a vessel from 12 to 16. Accidents involving PWCs have decreased 54 percent since those laws took effect.

The number of accidents involving towing sports including traditional water-skiing, wakeboarding, inner tubes, wake skating, wake surfing, have been decreasing since

2004. Accidents involving traditional waterskiing have decreased substantially when compared with 2005 totals, while accidents involving wakeboarding and inner tubes remained unchanged.

For a copy of California's Boating Safety Report for 2006, which contains a compilation of accident statistics, visit www.dbw.ca.gov.

Kentucky Agencies Combat Drunken Driving and Boating

The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources' Law Enforcement Division and the Kentucky State Police have been working to curb a key factor in summertime fatalities: alcohol.

"Bottoms Up" can have a completely new meaning when you drink and boat, but the danger doesn't end at the water's edge. Too often, drunken boaters become drunk drivers. In 2006, nearly half of all boating fatalities involved impaired operation – enough to rank Kentucky in the top 10 for alcohol-related boating fatalities, according to the U.S. Coast Guard. Kentucky State Police statistics indicate that approximately one in four of Kentucky's highway fatalities are related to alcohol use.

To save lives, Kentucky Conservation Officers and Kentucky State Troopers have partnered in a public service effort coined "KISS," which stands for "Keep It a Safe Summer."

The "KISS" message appears on billboards near Kentucky's most popular lakes. Officers from both agencies appear in radio advertisements as well as in a dramatic television commercial highlighting the agencies' mutual concern for alcohol impairment behind the wheel.

"In tandem with radio and strategically placed 'KISS' billboards in lake regions, the message should reach the boating public throughout the summer season," said Sgt. John Anderson, Kentucky Fish and Wildlife's Boating Education coordinator.

While the two law enforcement arms have shared a long history providing a safe and secure commonwealth, this is the first time they have joined forces so publicly. "Together, we can make a difference. This isn't a risk unique to our waterways. It can follow you all the way home – if you make it that far," Anderson added.

In Kentucky, Fish and Wildlife Conservation Officers are the authority in marine law enforcement. Teaming with Kentucky State Police will boost public safety for the state as a whole. Heightened enforcement and increased media awareness will mean fewer lives lost on Kentucky waterways and highways this summer.

Coast Guard Seeks Members for NAVSAC

The U.S. Coast Guard seeks applications for membership on the Navigation Safety Advisory Council (NAVSAC). NAVSAC provides advice and makes recommendations to the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security on a wide range of issues related to the prevention of collisions, ramming and groundings.

NAVSAC consists of not more than 21 members considered to have particular expertise, knowledge and experience in the Inland and International Rules of the Road, Aids to Navigation, Navigational Safety Equipment, Vessel Traffic Service, Traffic Separation Schemes and Vessel Routing. To assure balanced representation, members are chosen from the following groups: (1) recognized experts and leaders in organizations having

Wireless Technology Shown to California Congressman



This May, U.S. Congressman Wally Herger, 2nd District California, met with the principals of MariTech Industries onboard their demonstration boats on Shasta Lake in California. He offered his congratulations for MariTech's recent Marine Industry of the Year Award from the Canadian Safe Boating Council. He also wanted to see demonstrations of MariTech's technologies. To learn more about MariTech's safety products, visit www.powerboatsafety.com.

Photo courtesy MariTech Industries

an active interest in the Rules of the Road and vessel and port safety; (2) professional mariners, recreational boaters, and the recreational boating industry; (3) individuals with an interest in maritime law; and (4) Federal and state officials with responsibility for vessel and port safety.

The Coast Guard will consider applications for seven NAVSAC positions that expire or become vacant in November 2007. The application form is available at www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/advisory/index.htm or

by contacting John Bobb at 202.372.1532 or john.k.bobb@uscg.mil or by writing to Commandant (CG-3PWM-1), U.S. Coast Guard, 2100 Second Street, SW, Washington, DC, 20593-0001. Application forms are due on or before September 1, 2007.

New Boating Advisory Group Seeks Members

A new organization in Rhode Island hopes to become the voice of recreational boaters on Narragansett Bay and its tributaries. The Rhode Island Boating Safety Forum began as a U.S. Coast Guard pilot program to address boating safety issues, especially regarding the recreational boating interface with commercial shipping.

The forum now stands on its own and includes members from many diverse interests on the Bay, including the Coast Guard, United States Power Squadrons, boating educators, marine surveyors, sail race organizers/managers, yacht clubs, harbormasters, marine weather forecasters and the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management.

The group invites recreational and commercial anglers, marine-related

businesses, suppliers, marina operators, boat dealers, kayakers and hunters to join in order to better represent all boaters. Anyone interested in joining this forum should contact Chairman Paul Hitchen at phitchen@comcast.net or call 508.674.6593.

Delaware Officers Train to Thwart Marine Terrorism

Enforcement agents from the Division of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Section joined the Wilmington Public Safety Departments in May for two training courses covering how to handle terrorism and other critical incidents in a maritime setting. Funding for the training was provided by a state Homeland Security grant.

The first course, "Critical Incident Management in the Maritime Environment," introduced the participants to the growing threat of terrorist

attacks on shipping, maritime industries along our coastal waterways, and our harbors and ports. Next, the "Tactical Marine Operators Course" provided hands-on tactical response training for enforcement officers working in the maritime environment.

During the four days of training, Fish and Wildlife Enforcement officers, Wilmington's Crisis Management Tactical Team, and the Wilmington Marine Unit received instruction on identifying and pre-planning response to terrorist targets along our shoreline and on our waterways and participated in simulated terrorist scenarios where they learned and practiced tactical considerations and techniques.

Delaware's Fish and Wildlife Enforcement agents are Council On Police Training-certified officers who work closely with the U.S. Coast Guard, the Delaware State Police and other local law enforcement agencies to protect the citizens of Delaware and enforce state laws.

James H. Graybeal, chief of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement and Delaware's boating law administrator, said the specialized maritime training he and his agents received is very important in this time of heightened risks and heightened security.

"This training provided a good basic foundation to assist us in accomplishing our maritime security mission in Delaware. Maritime Homeland Security is a new mission for our agency, which stands with the U.S. Coast Guard in providing a presence on the water to fend off possible terrorist attacks on our chemical and energy plants, our commercial water traffic and our infrastructure," Graybeal said.

New Study Shows Fishing Leads to Boating

A study released in April by the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF) provides insight about the relationship between boating and fishing. The marketing research, conducted by Market Strategies Inc., evaluated three market segments – Boater Only (those who participate in boating but not fishing), Angler Only (those who participate in fishing but not boating), and Boater + Angler or "Boating Angler" (those who participate in both boating and fishing). Two key findings were revealed:

- (1) Promoting both boating and fishing is good for the market, and
- (2) Fishing is a strong pathway to boating.

The national telephone survey of about 1,000 people also collected data about early experiences with fishing and boating, current activities, fishing license sales and more.

"We know that fishing motivates many people to get out on the water in a boat. We also know that half of all boats sold are used primarily for fishing, with another quarter for occasional fishing," said Thom Dammrich, RBFF Board chairman and president of the National Marine Manufacturers Association. "These two activities and their futures are strongly linked, and RBFF has done a terrific job in getting its boating and fishing stakeholders to work together to create a brighter future for both."

"We want to help our stakeholders increase participation in boating and fishing," said RBFF President Frank Peterson. "This is a comprehensive study with a lot of great data. Stakeholders can use it to their advantage by focusing on the analysis that's most important to their organization and pulling out the key findings and implications."

The full study, in addition to the focus group results, a "Quick Facts" document and PowerPoint presentation of topline results, is available to view or download at www.RBFF.org.

Free Hurricane Preparation Guide Available for Boaters

Recreational boaters and marinas in hurricane country now have help for making vessel storm preparations. *Preparing Boats and Marinas for Hurricanes*, a free 12-page downloadable guide, produced by BoatU.S., is based on over 40 years of experience in preparing boats for the severe wind, waves, rain and storm surge. Included is a valuable storm preparation checklist that can help boaters methodically and carefully take the right precautions.

The guide presents up-to-date information based on experiences of boaters and marinas during the recent hurricane-intensive years. It is packed with information on the causes, types and prevention of hurricane damage to recreational boats. Also included are pointers on preparing boats for storms while they are kept at docks, on boat lifts, in canals, on moorings, in high-rise storage boatels and on trailers. Additional information on how to reduce "chafe," which causes lines that secure a boat to piers or pilings to snap, is provided.

The guide can be downloaded at the BoatU.S. Hurricane Resource and Tracking Center at www.BoatUS.com/hurricanes and hard copies are available at West Marine stores.

Boater 101, Marine Retailers Association Partner for Boating Safety

Boater 101 by Marine University and the Marine Retailers Association of America (MRAA) have joined forces to promote recreational boating safety and the enjoyment of boating.

The presidents of each organization signed a three-year memorandum of understanding (MOU) formalizing the partnership during the American Boating Congress held May 6-8, 2007.

The agreement outlines individual and combined tasks and responsibilities for each organization. The joint promotion focuses on the Boater 101 program, which is a dealership-based, interactive boater safety education program provided by marine dealers at the point of sale throughout the United States.

"Boater101 is committed to assisting dealers in educating the consumer, eliminating the fear of the unknown and creating an enjoyable boating experience at point-of-sale. It is important to us to reach consumers during their initial boating experience," said Boater 101 President Susan Engle.

MRAA President Phil Keeter added, "This MOU gives us the opportunity to direct those consumers to the premier program in boater education. We are encouraging our members to get involved with this program as an added benefit for their consumers."

Vessel Safety Check Celebrates Milestone

2007 marks the 60th anniversary of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary's oldest recreational boating safety program, the Vessel Safety Check (VSC). Beginning in 1947 as the Courtesy Motorboat Examination (CME), the program quickly became one of the Auxiliary's most important assignments. In May 1947, the Auxiliary issued more than 1,000 CME decals in the Miami area alone.

In 1999, the Auxiliary changed to adapt to market perceptions and renamed the examinations Vessel Safety Checks (VSCs) and partnered with the United States Power Squadrons to increase the number of boats being examined annually.

Today the Auxiliary, Power Squadrons and other authorized providers account for approximately 200,000 VSCs each year. In addition to checking the vessel's required safety equipment, vessel examiners also discuss key safety behaviors with the boater.

Texas Game Warden Drowns While Searching for Teen

A Texas game warden died and another was injured on May 30 when their boat capsized while they searched for a missing teenager.

Teyran "Ty" Patterson, 28, apparently drowned while searching the swollen Paluxy River, southwest of Fort Worth, during a search and rescue operation. Patterson and his partner, Game Warden Danny Tuggle, were attempting to recover the body of a 17-year-old suspected drowning victim when the accident occurred.

Tuggle, a 25-year veteran game warden, suffered near-drowning injuries and was airlifted to a hospital.

Patterson was a graduate of the 51st Texas Game Warden Academy in 2005 and had been stationed in Johnson County. He is survived by his parents, Viann and Joe Patterson of Seguin, Texas.



Teyran "Ty" Patterson

"Ty died doing what he loved. He died serving a Texas family dealing with its own tragic loss," said Col. Pete Flores, TPWD Law Enforcement Division director. "We are going to miss this courageous young game warden, and our hearts and prayers go out to his parents and loved ones."

Industry Bestows Award to Minnesota Congressman

In early May, the States Organization for Boating Access (SOBA) presented its Congressional Award to Congressman James L. Oberstar (D-Minn.) during the 2007 American Boating Congress.

Rep. Oberstar received the award in recognition of his many years of service, dedication and support of boating access. Through his support, Minnesota was able

to fund and develop quality access facilities as well as develop the Lake Superior Safe Harbor Program.

"Congressman Oberstar has been instrumental in working to ensure adequate funding and support of boating access not only in Minnesota but also throughout the United States and its territories," said SOBA Past President Larry Killien.

Oberstar, now in his 17th term, serves as chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

Formed in 1986, SOBA was designed to promote the acquisition, development and administration of recreational boating facilities nationwide. For more information about SOBA, visit sobaus.org.

Kentucky Officer Hurt During Boat Mishap

Two conservation officers with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources escaped serious injury after their boat struck a submerged rock and overturned on the Licking River on May 14.

Conservation Officers Corey Ellis and William Earlywine were searching for illegal nets along the river when their 14-foot johnboat struck a submerged rock and flipped in swift water. While Earlywine was not seriously injured, Ellis lost consciousness after suffering a blow to the head.

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

Ellis was transported to the hospital and received treatment for multiple injuries, including a concussion, a cracked vertebra in his neck and a large cut to his scalp.

"This could have had a tragic ending," said Colonel Robert Milligan, director of law enforcement for Kentucky Fish and Wildlife. "We are thankful that both officers were wearing their life jackets when the boat overturned. Both of these officers have trained extensively in boat operation and water survival."

Mississippi Marine Patrol Rescues Boaters

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (DMR) Marine Patrol responded to a call May 20 at 5 p.m. about four people stranded on the south side of East Ship Island when their 22-foot Bayliner was swamped and washed ashore.

Lt. Olin Gunter, Officers Kyle Wilkerson, William Freeman and Jeffrey Payne arrived on the scene, finding the four boaters, three adults and a juvenile, safe and on the beach. Officers Freeman and Payne located the vessel on the south side of East Ship Island.

Lt. Gunter and Officer Wilkerson took the four boaters onboard their patrol boat and transported them to the Ocean Springs Harbor. Two of the individuals were wearing life jackets and all were left unharmed by the incident.

National Park Service Rangers Ben Moore and Valerie Saferite also responded. ■

Preventing Boating Accidents



Commodore Jesse L. Harrup Jr.
National Directorate
Commodore for
Recreational Boating Safety
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

The U.S. Coast Guard defines a "boating accident" as an occurrence in which (1) a boat passenger dies or becomes seriously injured; (2) a boat passenger disappears and death or injury is suspected; or (3) a vessel causes or sustains damage. Therefore, boating accidents are not limited to collisions but may occur whenever someone is killed, is injured or disappears while boating. Too many people fail to realize driving a boat is just as serious as driving a car, and in some ways more risky. Automobile drivers have well-defined roads, traffic signals, brakes and seat belts to ensure safe motoring. Boating is much less controlled, multiplying the opportunities for accidents.

Another problem is the number of inexperienced boaters on the water today. Years ago, we didn't have as many boats, and the people who used those boats grew up around them. They learned safe

navigation; boating accidents and rescues; cold water immersion; emergency radio calls; carbon monoxide; hunting and fishing concerns; water-skiing; river boating and much more.

With the Vessel Safety Check program, in addition to examining a vessel to ensure it has the proper safety equipment, each vessel examiner also delivers a recreational boating safety (RBS) message to the recreational boaters who avail themselves to the examination. The message includes: a) the value and maintenance of recreational boat safety equipment, b) safe boating techniques; c) promotion of additional boating safety education; that knowledge is the key to a safer boating experience, d) use of personal flotation devices; e) dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning, f) cold water safety issues, and g) alcohol and its impact on the recreational boater.



In an effort to prevent boating accidents, the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary strives to educate recreational boaters. The Auxiliary's primary means of reaching boaters are through public education (as shown above) and vessel safety checks. Photo courtesy U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

Most people would not think of our Vessel Examiners (VE) as EDUCATORS; but they are, educating the public and those with close ties to the public with the RBS message with each exam. With this mission comes a primary focus to educate more and more individuals. The VE must educate and expose as many new customers as possible each year to the RBS message. The key to preventing boating accidents with this program is that the examination and education occur with the boater right at the water, even before launching in most cases. This means that the boating education and safety messages are fresh with them as they spend the remainder of the day on the water.

The causes of boating accidents are many, but in almost every case, each could have been prevented had the boaters followed common sense safety precautions. This is evident when examining some of the factors most often responsible for boating accidents: excessive speed, no proper lookout, overloading, boating in hazardous waters, alcohol use, faulty equipment, operator inexperience and operator inattention.

Since we, as recreational boating safety advocates, see boating accident statistics all too often, I didn't want to discuss a lot of data and figures. Rather I wanted to approach this topic from a prevention aspect. I hope you see how our messages are "out there." Our continuing challenge is to reach more recreational boaters. ■

boating when they were young. Today, there are thousands of people on the water with very little experience with boats. It's not surprising they don't know everything they should about boating safety. This is where the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary steps in to provide our two most important recreational boating safety programs: Public Education and Vessel Safety Checks.

By exposing the boater to various topics through public education, we hope to educate and encourage them to be safer boaters and not accident statistics. The classroom topics covered include introductory information about various types of boats; operating safely and reporting accidents; boating safety equipment; safe boating practices;

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ALWAYS WEAR YOUR LIFE JACKET!



Produced under a grant from the Aquatic Resources (Wallops/Beaver)
Trust Fund administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.

www.SafeBoatingCampaign.com



Change Service Requested



CALENDAR

2007-08 RECREATIONAL BOATING SAFETY

AUGUST 2007

31-Sept. 2 U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary
NACON
Portland, Oregon

SEPTEMBER 2007

4-9 United States Power Squadrons
Governing Board Meeting
Norfolk, Virginia
888.367.8777
www.usps.org

5-10 NASBLA
Annual Conference
Burlington, Vermont
859.225.9487
info@nasbla.org

16-21 Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Annual Meeting
Louisville, Kentucky
202.624.7890
www.iafwa.org

20-22 Canadian Safe Boating Council
Annual Symposium
Lunenburg County, Nova Scotia
symposium@csbc.ca

OCTOBER 2007

6 National Boating Federation
Fall Meeting
Irving, Texas
972.580.2425

6-9 States Organization for Boating Access
Annual Conference
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho
401.247.2224
www.sobaus.org

10-12 National Marine Manufacturers
Association
International Boatbuilders' Exhibition
& Show (IBEX)
Miami Beach, Florida
207.359.4651
www.ibexshow.com

15-19 NASBLA
National Advanced Boating Accident
Investigation & Analysis Level 2 Training
Ashburn, VA
859.225.9487
chris@nasbla.org

24-27 Canadian Power & Sail Squadrons
National Conference
Ottawa, Ontario
888.277.2628, ext. 26
hqg@cps-ecp.ca

24-28 U.S. Sailing
Annual Meeting
Phoenix, Arizona
401.683.0800
www.ussailing.org

NOVEMBER 2007

5-9 NASBLA
Executive Board Meeting
Lexington, Kentucky
859.225.9487
info@nasbla.org

JANUARY 2008

9-13 U.S. Sailing
National Sailing Programs Symposium
St. Petersburg, Florida
401.683.0800
www.ussailing.org

FEBRUARY 2008

3-6 International Association of
Marine Investigators
Annual Conference
Baton Rouge, Louisiana
866.844.4264
www.iammarine.org

4-8 NASBLA
Winter Executive Board Meeting
Location TBA
859.225.9487
info@nasbla.org

19-24 United States Power Squadrons
Annual Meeting
Dallas, Texas
888.367.8777
www.usps.org

APRIL 2008

16-18 National Safe Boating Council &
National Water Safety Congress
International Boating and
Water Safety Summit
San Diego, California
703.361.4294 or 440.209.9805

JUNE 2008

3-6 Western States Boating
Administrators Association
Annual Conference
Juneau, Alaska
info@nasbla.org

JULY 2008

14-18 NASBLA
Summer Executive Board Meeting
Location TBA
859.225.9487
info@nasbla.org

SEPTEMBER 2008

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

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