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small craft advisory

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- **Navy Assists Former Enemy in Boating Safety Efforts**
- **NASBLA Highlights Member States**

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ABOUT THE COVER

The young boater shown on the cover is wearing a life jacket his family borrowed from a BoatU.S. Foundation loaner station. Loaner stations are just one way government agencies and private companies are reaching recreational boaters with boating safety information. Boating safety education is a vital component to the National Recreational Boating Safety Program as well as the states' individual RBS programs. This education takes many forms, from formal classroom and online courses to more casual classroom visits, from life jacket loaner boards to rewards programs. *BoatU.S. Foundation photo*



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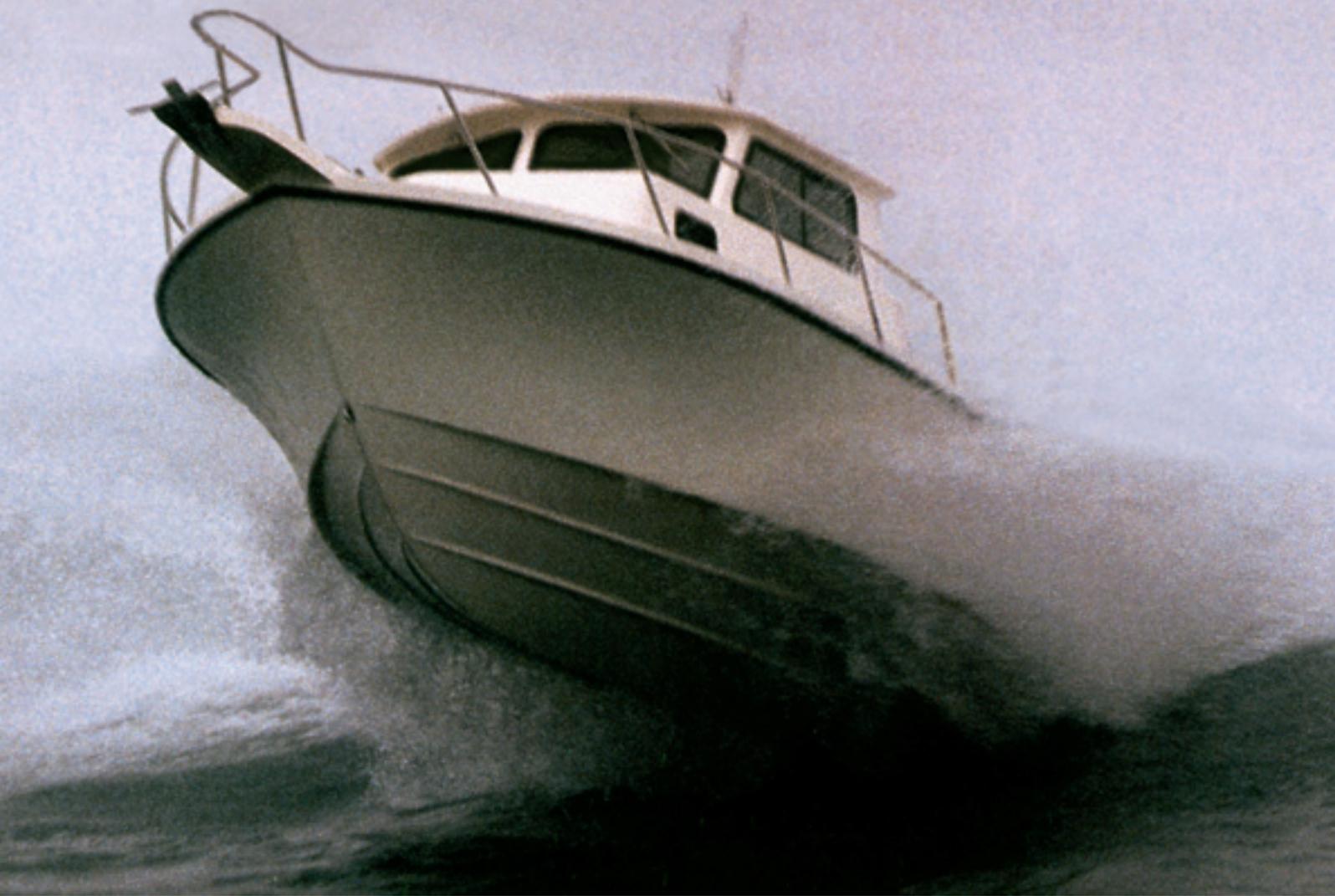
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Education Advances Strategic Agenda for Boating Safety



Richard Moore
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As this edition of *Small Craft Advisory* hits the street, NASBLA is set to convene its 50th annual conference in Corpus Christi, Texas, and kick off a yearlong celebration of the association's 50th anniversary. We couldn't have picked a better destination to begin this commemorative year, and we are eagerly anticipating the hospitality Texas Boating Law Administrator Alfonso Campos and his staff have planned.

Working cooperatively, NASBLA staff and the Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife have assembled a strong and engaging program that will yield fruit for our member agencies, partners and associates throughout the coming year. However, the key ingredient to a successful and productive conference is you. On behalf of the NASBLA staff and our leadership, we invite you to roll up your sleeves and join in the conversation. If you are reading along but won't have the opportunity to participate in person, we hope you will follow us through the NASBLA website, Facebook or Twitter, where postings of conference events will be shared throughout the week.

Although we will be covering numerous topics important to the National Recreational Boating Safety Program this week, central among them will be the theme of advancing our strategic boater education agenda. Throughout the week, no less than ten different conference sessions will touch on education and outreach and the strides we are taking to make education more accessible and effective for boaters and boating agencies nationwide. From the committee report-outs on Sunday afternoon to the general sessions presented near the end of the program on Wednesday, the 2009 NASBLA annual conference will showcase the research, analysis and policy position development that will guide our association's public education policies as we enter a new era in NASBLA's history.

A little over a decade ago, the National Boating Education Standards were formally adopted after a number of years were spent analyzing the accident and fatality data and determining what minimum content must be included in boating safety courses in order to reduce the risks to boaters. As the 10-year anni-

versary approached, NASBLA concluded it was time to analyze the current statistics to determine whether the standards were still meeting their goal of addressing and reducing risks. Researchers from Colorado State University who were involved in the original research have returned to work with NASBLA on this project and the results of their efforts and the recommendations brought forward by the project advisory committee will be unveiled at this year's conference.

Among the recommendations the members will consider are a series of refinements and clarifications to more than 45 sub-standards and the rationales for the standards. Despite the number of minor changes, however, the standards appear to have stood the test of time with relatively few major amendments proposed. One of the other ways the risk-based analysis will strengthen the standards relates to how we weight the questions on the final exams for boating safety courses. Those areas of the standards deemed to be of greater significance in saving lives and reducing accidents will be reflected in a larger number of exam questions for those particular standards.

This year the NASBLA membership will also consider the addition of a brand-new chapter in the education standards designed to provide minimum guidelines for how boating safety courses are to be offered online. Proposed as Standard 10, the Online Presentation and Delivery Standards, will guide the states and course providers in methods to strengthen the online boater education experience. Based on the concept of a time-managed course, these new standards were developed under the auspices of NASBLA's Boating Course Administration Subcommittee and supported in part by work conducted by online education specialists at the University of Missouri.

Building on findings from a Coast Guard research grant on the efficacy of online learning awarded to NASBLA last year, as well as existing online course requirements developed by some of the states, the proposed new standards afford students the opportunity to absorb the information and discourages bypassing material or skip-

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NASBLA to Participate in ANSI-CAP

NASBLA is one of 11 organizations chosen by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) to participate in the Certificate Accreditation Program (ANSI-CAP). ANSI is a private nonprofit organization that administers and coordinates the U.S. voluntary standardization and conformity assessment system.



ANSI-CAP is a pilot program that will provide neutral, third-party accreditation that a given certificate program meets ASTM E2659-09, Standard Practice for Certificate Programs. This American National Standard developed by ASTM International was selected by the ANSI-CAP Accreditation Committee, a group of volunteer leaders who were chosen for their expertise in the field. By demonstrating compliance to this standard, certificate programs will further the development of a well-educated and qualified workforce. The accreditation program is also expected to provide quality benchmarks for the design of future certificate programs. With these evaluations and benchmarks in place, workers and employers will be better able to determine the value and meaning of training and educational certificates.

The following organizations that issue education and/or training certificates to U.S. workers have been accepted to participate in the pilot program:

- EdTrek Inc.
- Federal Bureau of Investigation Behavioral Science Unit
- Federal Employee Benefits Specialist Inc.
- Food and Drug Administration Office of Regulatory Affairs (ORA), Division of Human Resource Development
- HVACReduction.net
- National Apartment Association Education Institute
- National Association of State Boating Law Administrators

- National Graduate School & University of Quality Systems Management
- SCIPP International
- Sullivan University
- U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center

“ANSI is pleased to welcome these eleven certificate-issuing organizations into the ANSI-CAP pilot – truly a diverse mix of certificate programs across a broad array of industries,” said Lane Hallenbeck, vice president of accreditation services at ANSI. “Through their participation in the pilot, these organizations are demonstrating their commitment to the continual improvement of their certificate programs, helping to boost the confidence of consumers and employers who rely on education and training certificates nationwide.”

As a participant in ANSI-CAP, NASBLA will first submit its Boating Under the Influence Detection and Enforcement training to be accredited through ANSI’s pilot program. NASBLA plans to submit its other training offerings for accreditation in the future.

ANSI-CAP will follow the accreditation process outlined in the international standard ISO/IEC 17011, General Requirements for Accreditation Bodies Accrediting Conformity Assessment Bodies. This process includes using specially trained assessors to review documents submitted by applicants against defined requirements, conduct on-site assessments, and make recommendations to the ANSI-CAP Accreditation Committee that is responsible for making the accreditation decisions.

The first round of ANSI-CAP accreditation decisions are expected to be made in early 2010. ANSI will host a follow-up meeting in January 2010 to further validate the standard and determine areas of improvement for the accreditation process.

NASBLA and Transport Canada to Sign MOU at NASBLA Conference

A decade ago, NASBLA and the Canadian Coast Guard signed an MOU (memorandum of understanding) in which NASBLA formally endorsed the mandatory Canadian boating education program and recommended and encouraged all states and territorial members to recognize the Canadian Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCOC) in their own state or territory.

NASBLA recently surveyed the states to request answers to two questions. The first question was whether a state would recognize Canada’s PCOC for a person temporarily operating a boat in that state. Of the 41 states that responded, 27 said that they would recognize the PCOC. This also included the states that don’t have any type of education requirement. A follow-up question was asked to determine whether states would accept a NASBLA-approved Canadian course and 38 of the 41 states responded affirmatively. As of press time, only the Canadian Power & Sail Squadrons course is approved by both NASBLA and Transport Canada.

As the responsibility for the Operator Competency Program has been transferred from the Canadian Coast Guard to Transport Canada, a revised MOU has been developed and a signing ceremony will take place at the NASBLA Business Meeting as part of the association’s annual conference in September. The new MOU will hopefully lead to more collaboration and exchange of knowledge between Transport Canada and NASBLA as we work cooperatively to advance safe boating knowledge and best practices in North America. ■



NASBLA Welcomes New Boating Law Administrators

As people pursue new opportunities, organizations reorganize and politics influence staff appointments, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators continues to see new faces among its members.

We welcome these new members aboard, and we encourage them to become involved in NASBLA and reap the benefits of their membership.



Brian Sandy
Colorado

Following work in Prince William Sound on Exxon Valdez oil spill research projects, Brian Sandy joined Colorado State

Parks in 1993 as a temporary parks officer. He was assigned to boat patrol at one of the busiest parks in the state. He hired on full-time two years later and was assigned to a water-based park on the western slope. He worked at that park for three years, two of which he was in charge of boating safety. He then transferred to a front range water-based park where he also worked for three years, two of which he was in charge of boating safety.

In 2001 he was promoted to senior ranger at a water-based park in Southern Colorado and was in charge of boating safety. After two years, he transferred to the Denver Metro area. There he took over as the senior ranger/boating safety specialist in charge of the Statewide Flat-Water Boating Safety Enforcement Program and was under the supervision of Chief Rick Storm, Colorado's longtime boating law administrator. Sandy's position was reclassified to a criminal investigator/boating safety specialist in 2005.

The past six years Sandy has worked closely with Rick Storm on boating safety education and enforcement, boat accident investigations, and boat theft investigations. After Storm retired on April 30, 2009, Sandy was selected as the state's new BLA.

Sandy, an avid boater from Aurora, Colo., recognizes the importance of boating safety education, especially with regards to children.

"We need to continue to find creative ways to get the boating safety message out and to educate boaters of all ages. I believe educating kids is very important. If you can captivate the kids, then you have mom and dad's attention as well and we need to make the most of this opportunity," Sandy said.

"Being more engaging in our education efforts is also very important. Just hanging posters, handing out items with safety messages, putting videos out, and so on is not enough," he added. "We need to engage people personally to be able to emphasize the message we want to get out and to be able to address questions and concerns they have."

Sandy feels that education is not enough; it's important to have an effective enforcement plan in place.

"Education and enforcement are not mutually exclusive," explained Sandy. "It is great to be able to provide classes, educational items, and issue verbal or written warnings to educate boaters, but many times this is not enough to get the message to really sink in. Through enforcement there is the addition of fines, or worse, which emphasize the importance of the lessons and helps them stick in their memory much better."

Sandy continues to work in partnership with the Colorado State Patrol, Colorado Department of Transportation, other law enforcement agencies, as well as the media on boating under the influence (BUI) enforcement on the state's waterways for the HEAT IS ON program. He also testified before the Colorado Legislature regarding lowering the BUI blood alcohol limit from 0.10 to 0.08.

Although he's been Colorado's BLA only a few months, Sandy has already begun utilizing the resources NASBLA offers.

"Boating safety education and training also applies to Colorado's law enforcement officers and front line employees. It is important that we have very knowledgeable, educated, and well trained boating safety officers and administrative staff on the front lines," he said.

Last year he hosted the Level I – Comprehensive Boating Accident Investigation Course to provide training to law enforcement agencies in Colorado. He is also working on becoming a NASBLA Certified Level I Boat Accident Investigation Instructor. He hopes to be able to host NASBLA's Boating Under the Influence Detection and Enforcement training in the next couple of years.

A few other areas Sandy pointed out as needing improvement are "our inter-agency and interstate communications, recognizing those who put forth great efforts to making Colorado a safer place to boat, and our involvement in NASBLA, which has been absent for too many years."



Darren Rider Tennessee

Hailing from Ashland City, Tenn., a small community about 30 miles west of Nashville, Darren Rider was appointed

chief of the Boating Division for the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency on July 14, 2009. In this position he also serves as the state's boating law administrator.

As chief of boating, Rider serves as a liaison for legislation working with the Boating Law Administration for Tennessee as well as interacting with members of the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA).

"I'll work with committees, conferences and workshops," Rider said. "It's exciting to get plugged into NASBLA so I can network with other states to get advice on issues they've faced or give advice on those we've had to deal with, like wake surfing."

Rider will work with policy procedures, rules and regulations, administrative directives along with overseeing education, investigations and equipment training.

Rider served as the assistant chief of boating for the last four years. He had been the acting chief since March 2009 when Ed Carter, longtime chief and Tennessee BLA, was promoted to chief executive of the TWRA. Before serving as assistant chief of boating, Rider was the TWRA's boating investigator for five years, after having worked as a county wildlife officer for 15 years. Rider graduated from Tennessee Tech University with a bachelor of science degree in wildlife management.

An avid outdoorsman, Rider's boating is usually tied to his passions – duck hunting and fishing. For these pursuits, he has a 16-foot aluminum boat with a 25 hp engine. Rider has shared his enthusiasm for boating with his children.

"I was able to acquire a really nice 14-foot Carolina Skiff Lil Jon with a 9.9 hp and I made a deal with my 13-year-old son – if he would commit to taking the mandatory

Tennessee boating education course, I would commit to taking the course with him, and if he passed I would give him the Skiff," said Rider. "My son is now the proud registered owner of the boat with the caveat that he is not allowed to discuss with anyone how he was able to make a better grade than his father," added Rider with a smile.

State agencies have been facing budget crunches for the past several years. And the recent recession has certainly not helped matters. Rider says that he hates to belabor the obvious but funding is a top priority for boating safety these days.

With regards to specific plans, Rider said "Tennessee has been very fortunate to be a part of the national Wear It! campaign for two years now, and we will stay the course and continue our efforts toward moving the needle of increased life jacket wear for recreational boaters in the state." ■

from the HELM continued from page 2

ping to the final exam. In addition, the maximum "credited time" per page and the minimum number of content pages has been set to help students remain engaged throughout the online course. The promulgation of the new presentation and delivery standards represents a major milestone in the evolution of our state education programs and the National Boating Education Standards that support them.

Finally, NASBLA conference participants will hear a presentation from a research team at the Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO), an organization that has been conducting research on education and training for the U.S. Army for more than 50 years. HumRRO was contracted through a separate Coast Guard grant to assist the NASBLA Education & Awareness Committee in better understanding issues related to the retention of knowledge gained through boater education courses. In the first of what is hoped to be a series of research projects aimed at education program effectiveness, this conference report will share preliminary data on a baseline study to learn more about how students remember information learned through traditional classroom instruction. Often considered the gold standard in boater education, surprisingly little research has ever been conducted to find out to what degree these students are retaining the lessons they have learned and demonstrated in the classroom course final exams.

Using an online evaluation instrument, students will be asked to take a follow-up exam to measure the amount of knowledge they had retained following a four-month interval in their classroom training. If successful, this research could help the recreational boating community gain better insights on the post-instruction impact of boater education and potentially lead to new methods of providing educational outreach that sticks with the boater over the long haul.

These project-based presentations at the annual conference represent the confluence of more than two years worth of research, analysis and deliberation that is likely to leave a lasting legacy on our education programs nationwide. Whether you are at the conference in person or follow us online, be sure to watch for new material regarding these education initiatives to appear on the NASBLA website, www.NASBLA.org, immediately following the Texas event.

If boater education is truly one of the key elements in making our waterways safer and more enjoyable, as many believe it is, this year's contributions from the Education & Awareness Committee and the numerous partners and collaborators who have worked together to bring these research effort to fruition will pay huge dividends. Our thanks to all the individuals and organizations who have worked tirelessly on these initiatives to make recreational boating safer through education! ■

NASBLA Treasures its Member States

Ever since the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) was first established 50 years ago, our mission has focused on recreational boating safety. In that time, we've worked diligently with the U.S. Coast Guard, our member states, and numerous other partners and associates to improve recreational boating safety in the U.S. We are pleased that over the last several decades, these various partnerships have worked to decrease the recreational boating fatality rate by an impressive 50 percent.

As state boating programs have evolved, our mission has expanded as well to include law enforcement training, education standards, model acts, national leadership and advocacy. We gladly provide these valuable components to help our member states strengthen their ability to reduce death, injury and property damage associated with recreational boating and ensure a safe, secure and enjoyable boating environment.

Over the next 50 years, NASBLA plans to become an even more valuable resource for its member states. And in doing so, we hope to help further reduce boating-related fatalities and make the nation's waterways even safer and more enjoyable.

This article marks the first in a series that will run in *Small Craft Advisory*

throughout our yearlong 50th anniversary celebration. In honor of the countless recreational boating safety successes achieved through the invaluable collaboration and diligent work of all our member states, we will be featuring brief profiles highlighting these members and their state boating safety programs. We hope you enjoy this glimpse of the different paths our member states have embarked upon to save lives on the water.

Alaska

From power boating and air boating to rafting, kayaking, and canoeing, Alaska's boating opportunities are as superlative as they are diverse. Alaskans and visitors alike use boats to enjoy the state's world-class outdoor recreation resources. In addition, residents use boats to gather food (hunting, fishing and plant gathering), for basic transportation, to haul firewood or building materials, and to earn a living.

The State Office of Boating Safety was established by Department Order within the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation in June 1998. The Alaska Boating Safety Act (AS 05.25) was drafted and introduced in the 1999 legislative session. The act was signed into law on May 11, 2000, and Alaska became the last state to establish a state boating safety program. Currently, Alaska's Office of Boating Safety has four full-time employees, with 10 others that help out as needed.

Activities undertaken by the Alaska Office of Boating Safety include boating education programs and products for children and adults; law enforcement and law enforcement training; boat accident reporting; public policy/regulatory interpretive assistance; and social marketing/public awareness.

Georgia

Law enforcement patrols by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources on Georgia waters began in the early 1900s. These early patrols were focused on fisheries and wildlife protection. Registrations and life preservers were required by state statute in 1960. The current Georgia Boating Safety Act was enacted in 1973. The department currently has a workforce of 215 full-time employees. These employees are responsible for law enforcement, boating education and outreach, training, search and rescue, all hazards response, among other related duties.

Indiana

Boating safety responsibility was added to conservation officers' duties in 1937 when a statute prohibiting reckless operation of a motorboat was enacted by the Indiana Legislature. In 1957 the statutes governing watercraft operation and equipment

1: Indian conservation officers took on boating safety duties in 1937.

2: In 1996 legislation was passed to make boating education mandatory for anyone born after Jan. 1, 1984 to operate a boat on Missouri's lakes. Prior to the passage of this legislation the certified boating safety course was mainly taught in middle and high schools.

3: A ranger discusses boating safety with a local boater at Sand Hollow State Park in southwest Utah.





4: Officers with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources began patrolling the state's waters in the early 1990s.



5: Alaska developed the Kids Don't Float (KDF) in 1996 to address Alaska's high child and youth drowning rate.



6: The Missouri State Water Patrol began in 1959 as the Missouri Boat Commission.

were greatly expanded. Officers have patrolled all state waters since that date. Officers started the boating safety education program in 1976 and today certify from 3500 to 5000 students yearly. Today, it is very common to see Indiana Conservation Officers patrolling the waterways on a variety of watercraft, from personal watercraft to Jon Boats, airboats and Zodiacs, to highly visible, fully equipped cabin cruisers.

With 215 full-time employees, the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division is the sole state agency entrusted with performing the law enforcement duties pertaining to recreational boating laws and regulations, boating safety education, and security for waterside events and infrastructure. The agency is also heavily involved in programs promoting boating safety issues such as the "Wear It Indiana" Program.

Missouri

The Missouri State Water Patrol is also celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year. The agency began in 1959 as the Missouri Boat Commission and employed eight officers. Today the Missouri State Water Patrol consists of 96 sworn officers with statewide jurisdiction. The agency also has one civilian support staff member. In 1996 legislation was passed to make boating education mandatory for anyone born after Jan. 1, 1984 to operate a boat on lakes of the state. Prior to the passage of this legislation the certified boating safety course was mainly taught in middle and high schools. Once the new law went into effect, the demand and number of safety classes the department has taught in the community open to the

general public has tripled. The vast majority of certified boaters are still taught in schools that invite officers in for the course, but the opportunity for the general public to take a course in their community or online has increased exponentially. Last year officers taught the certified course to over 6,000 students in the state of Missouri. The course is also offered online. Additionally, active U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary flotillas and United States Power Squadron groups teach certified boating safety courses in Missouri. Water Patrol officers also engage in law enforcement, training and outreach activities.

Utah

The Utah Legislature passed the Utah Boating Act in 1959, establishing the focus of the state as "promoting safety for persons and property in and connected with the use, operation and equipment of vessels and to promote uniformity of laws and to adopt and pursue an educational program in relation thereto." The State Park and Recreation Commission was named as the organization responsible for administration and enforcement of the State Boating Act. The legislation required motorboats to be numbered and registered, required life jackets to be worn by each person on board, established a \$5 registration fee, and launched the nation's first "speed and proximity" requirement for boats. The Division of Parks and Recreation also took over numbering and registering motorboats in Utah.

In 1961, primary authority for enforcing the Utah Boating Act was provided to deputy state park rangers. Also, a regulation was passed requiring children 12 and under to wear a properly fitted life jacket. In 1977, the Boating Advisory Council required personal flotation devices to be worn by all operators and riders on personal watercraft.

The annual registration responsibilities of motorboats and sailboats was transferred from the Division of Parks and Recreation to the Division of Motor Vehicles in 1984. In 1986, a comprehensive law was passed prohibiting the operation of a watercraft while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Utah adopted NASBLA's Model Act for Motorboat Noise in 1991.

The Personal Watercraft Education Program, passed in 1995, required personal watercraft operators ages 12 to 15 to complete the education program in order to operate a personal watercraft without an adult on board. In 1997, Utah became the first state to require insurance for boats. This bill only addressed personal watercraft.

In 2002 boating under the influence violations were directly tied to Driving Under the Influence violations by House Bill 4. The new law also prohibited a boat operator from possessing an open container. In 2006 all motorboats with 50 or more horsepower were required to have liability insurance. In 2007 the Division of Parks and Recreation and the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary entered an agreement for the Auxiliary to utilize surplus Division boats to increase their boating safety presence.

Utah State Parks and Recreation currently has 65 full-time and 29 part-time employees who undertake law enforcement, facilities maintenance, boating safety outreach, boating education, and search and rescue duties. ■

Achieving Boating Education through Multi-Level Support



Matthew Long
NASBLA Government Affairs
Director

In the vast arsenal of tools the states have at their disposal for saving lives on water, few have proved as important as having in place a comprehensive boating education program.

In a study of best practices in boating education conducted by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) in 2006, it was found that those states that have the longest history of boating education requirements also have the lowest average fatality rates of all the states. Also, the longer the boating education requirements have been in place, the lower the fatality rates have become, whereas the states with no boating education requirements have the highest average fatality rates. Put more simply, education clearly saves lives.

It would seem apparent then that states would be stumbling over themselves to implement mandatory boating education requirements. However, this has not always been the case, and every state has had its own road to enacting its boating education program and related legislation.

Prior to 2005, it can be safely said that Virginia was not on the path toward enacting mandatory boating education. It was not due to any lack of interest or regard on behalf of lawmakers, but rather such proposed legislation simply fell victim to party politics every year it was introduced. What served as a catalyst for the state was a horrific accident on Smith Mountain Lake that claimed two lives in August 2005. An immediate reaction to this accident was a series of bills introduced by state lawmakers from the Smith Mountain Lake area targeting boating safety, one of which was mandatory boating education.

Even given this tragic catalyst, the effort to enact a boating education program in Virginia was not an easy one. It took tremendous effort on behalf of a variety of user groups as well as national organizations. Finally, after a great deal of political wrangling, Virginia passed and enacted a boating education law in 2007, which mandates a phased-in approach.

The lesson to be learned from Virginia is that it was not solely the years of pressure by boating safety groups that eventually pushed Virginia toward a mandatory program, but rather

a single, tragic incident on a popular lake in the state.

Virginia also serves as a case study on the importance of a multi-tiered approach to implementing mandatory boating education. Even though the boating safety groups were not the catalyst for change, it was their tireless work over the years educating lawmakers and their staffs so that once the time came, they could move forward. These groups were also especially important during the debate of the measure through the legislative process.

Another factor contributing to Virginia's success is the careful coordination of support from federal partners, including the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG). The timely and unique input these partners provided through either direct testimony or statistical evidence during the legislative debate added a level of importance and gravitas unable to be duplicated by any other organization. Providing an important national, boating safety perspective to the debate was an integral part of ensuring success for Virginia's boating education legislation.

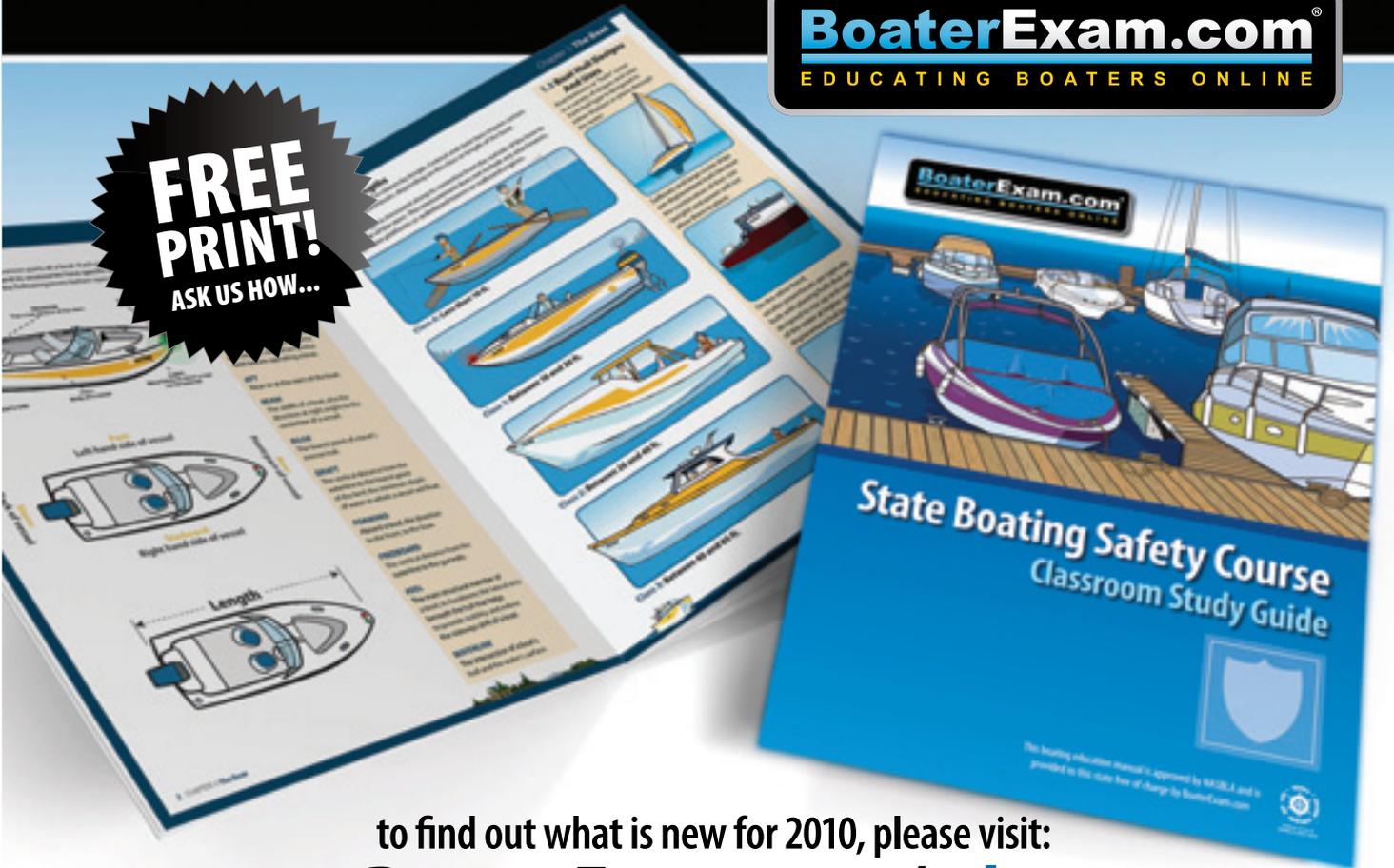
All states with mandatory boating requirements have achieved their legislation through many different paths; no two states' paths have been the same. State level public policy is necessarily made at the state level but cannot happen in a vacuum. Once a state decides to move forward on the path toward comprehensive boating education, outside groups and even the federal government become key players in the ensuing legislative push.

Federal involvement has not been limited, however, to responding to legislative inquiries from the states. Federal agencies can also be strong, cooperative partners in influencing boating safety policy.

An example of such a cooperative arrangement is a pilot program being undertaken by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. For several years, the Corps has been seeking a way to enact mandatory life jacket wear on Corps-owned waters nationally. Though a variety of different means were available – including a requirement that would be immediately effective on all Corps

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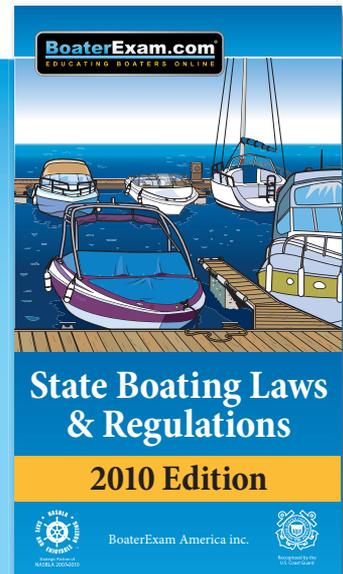
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Sailors Teaching Powerboaters?

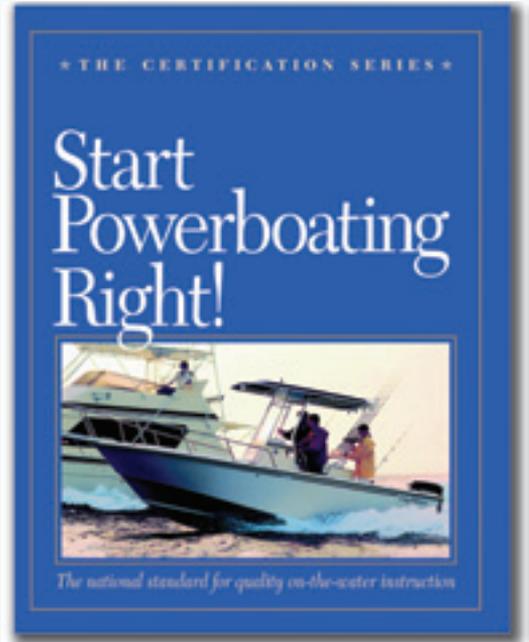
Sailors often run powerboats, so sailors should have the same safe powerboating knowledge and operating skills as all recreational boaters – including docking maneuvers, basic navigation and weather appreciation. We share the water with a great variety of boats after all, and we need to understand how different vessels behave. In reality, those who think of themselves as “pure” sailors often operate outboard dinghies, use skiffs for coaching at sailing programs, set up courses for racing, assist with safety and rescue with rigid bottomed inflatables, and, of course, run auxiliary sailboats under power when the wind dies. Sailors and powerboaters have more in common than they sometimes are willing to admit.

US SAILING recognized the need to teach powerboat operation in the same way it undertook sailing instruction standardization – by using trained and nationally certified instructors to teach students of all ages and backgrounds with substantial hands-on drills and practice time in runabouts for basic handling and in cruising powerboats for more advanced instruction. The top US SAILING training developers from all over the country, including Timothea Larr and Dick Allsopp, have used their substantial experience in

creating, conducting and managing instructional programs to develop powerboat handling courses that combine classroom and on-the-water training. US Powerboating™ was established as an affiliate of US SAILING to manage the certification series of courses, instructor training, and print and digital support materials.

The 16-hour, introductory Safe Powerboat Handling™ course has a blanket national approval by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA). Students are trained in boat operation skills and tested on the wealth of information covered in the accompanying text, *Start Powerboating Right!*. Like other US SAILING course materials, safety is not a subject covered in one chapter. Rather safety is implicit throughout the book in chapters such as “Preparation and Trip Planning,” “Equipment and Requirements,” “The Environment,” and “Launching and Trailering.” The interactive website www.uspowerboating.com features text, video and animation including boat maneuvers, anchoring and knots. Navigation rules and aids to navigation are covered in the text at a depth not possible in a two-day boat-handling course. Both the book and website are valuable for boat operators to involve their friends and family in safe boating practices and increase their comfort and confidence on the water.

“Development of the Safe Powerboat Handling course and student materials development were jump-started by a 2001 USCG Boating Safety grant of nearly \$34,000,” said Janine Connelly, director of the US SAILING’s Training Division. “We have seen 140 percent growth since the program was widely introduced five years ago. Last year the course was taught in 13 states, and we expect further growth as more instructors are certified and more boating facilities see the advantages of holding courses for their customers or members and their families. As responsible boaters, we recognize there is always more to learn.”



Along with its collaboration with NASBLA and the U.S. Coast Guard Office of Boating Safety, US SAILING has a cooperative relationship with the United States Power Squadrons (USPS). Together they support each other’s training and certification programs. The USPS



now recognizes US SAILING's Safe Powerboat Handling course for small boats as meeting the skill demonstration requirements for the *USPS Inland Navigator Certification* within its Boat Operator Certification program.

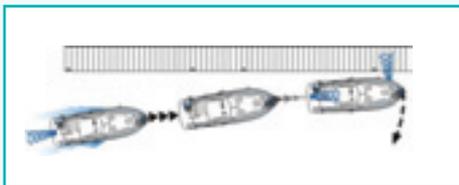
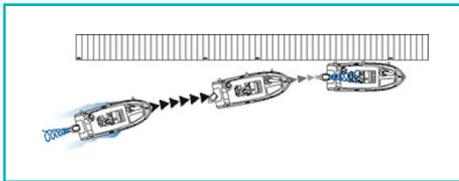
Even a casual observer would have noticed the increasing numbers of sport-fishing and trawler yachts in harbors and marinas around the country. These "homes away from home" have complex systems to monitor and very different handling characteristics from small boats. Since 2007, US Powerboating has offered the owners and operators of these bigger vessels the Cruising Powerboat course which combines the practical skills of close quarter maneuvering, systems checks, and emergency procedures with



the essential knowledge areas of navigation, rules and regulations, and safe practices whether underway or moored. The number of courses given at schools and waterfront facilities doubled in 2008. Growth is expected to continue as inexperienced operators learn that the course is an effective way to surpass the traditional trial-and-error method of self-teaching.

As of 2009, US Powerboating has certified over 300 instructors who run courses at schools, colleges, clubs and commercial facilities around the U.S. and the Caribbean. The Powerboat Instructor certification requires attendance in a three-day course where the instructor candidates must demonstrate proficiency in vessel operations and seamanship skills, as well as an understanding of teaching techniques. They are evaluated on the professional and competent manner in which they present assigned topics and run practical on-the-water drills. As with all US SAILING/US Powerboating instructors, those who pass the course recognize that safety, fun, and learning are unbeatable motivations to create satisfied students and responsible boat operators.

US SAILING and US Powerboating are dedicated to improving the competency and enjoyment of all who venture on the water for recreation and sport whether they propel their boats by wind, gasoline or diesel. ■



government AFFAIRS continued from page 8

waters, many of which are jointly controlled with the states – the Corps decided to pursue a more cooperative means of enactment.

The Corps began a pilot program on several Corps-owned lakes to determine the real-world effects that such a mandatory wear policy would have on boaters as well as state and local partners. Should this pilot effort be successful, the Corps will most likely expand this program on a larger level with the end goal being mandatory life jacket wear on all Corps waters. This approach taken between partners has been extremely effective. Now, where some states may have been hesitant, perhaps they will be more likely to aid in the Corps' efforts.

Mandatory boating education is a vital component of any state's boating safety efforts and has been shown to dramatically reduce on water death and injury. The process, however, is a long one and must involve unique cooperation between the state, non-governmental organizations and the federal government. ■

Loans That Save Lives

By Kimberly Jenkins

Little Johnny was so excited! He was going to spend a whole week with his grandparents. And, even better, his big sister, Luci, wasn't going along, so this week he'd have his grandparents all to himself. Plus, Grandpa had promised they'd spend lots of time boating. Johnny couldn't wait! He'd never been boating before.

John and Helen were really looking forward to having Johnny visit. They didn't have any big plans scheduled for the week. Soon, Johnny would be starting school, so Helen wanted to keep Johnny's visit fun yet relaxed. She and John couldn't wait to introduce Johnny to boating. While at the dock cleaning the boat, John realized they didn't have a single small life jacket. What would they do?

John and Helen were facing a situation that many boaters encounter – not having the right life jackets for guests. Fortunately, many state agencies and private organizations have taken notice and provided remedies through life jacket loaner programs.

Alaska

Alaska is one of several states to have a life jacket loaner program. Dubbed Kids Don't Float (KDF), the program began in Homer, Alaska, in early 1996. It was

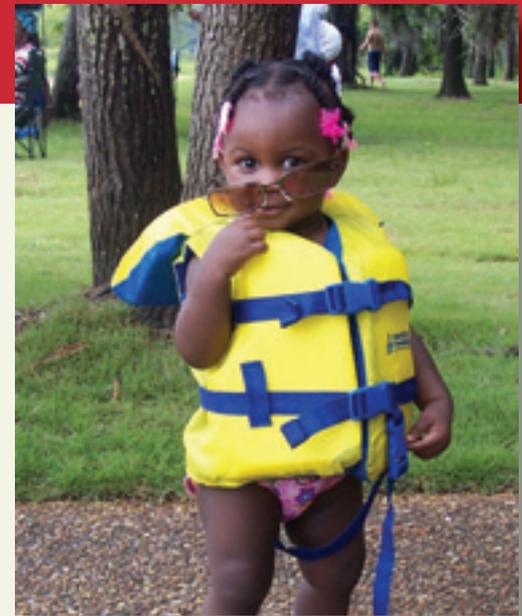
developed to address Alaska's high child and youth drowning rate.

Using a grant from the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, the Homer Fire Department collaborated with Homer Safe Kids, the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and the Homer School District to establish 15 life jacket loaner stations in communities around Kachemak Bay. The stations, or "loaner boards," display life jackets that can be borrowed at no cost and returned after use. The public response was so positive that in November of that same year, the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services Section of Community Health and EMS, the U.S. Coast Guard District 17 Recreational Boating Safety Program, and Alaska Safe Kids partnered to expand the program. In 2000, the newly established State Office of Boating Safety joined the partnership.

Today, more than 466 KDF loaner boards have been placed in communities around the state, hosted by many different agencies, organizations and individuals. At least 17 Alaskan children are known to have survived a near-drowning accident because of a Kids Don't Float life jacket.

Additionally, life jacket observation studies show that life jacket wear among children increases around 25 percent in areas with loaner boards.

In addition to the life jacket loaner stations, KDF includes an educational component. The Kids Don't Float School Program is a model curriculum for anyone wishing to teach boating and water safety concepts to K-12 students. The curriculum is comprised of several short lessons that include activities to emphasize boating and water safety, including the proper use of flotation devices. The course includes the KDF Peer



A young boater sports a life jacket borrowed from a BoatU.S. Foundation life jacket loaner board.
BoatU.S. Foundation photo

Education Program, which trains high school students to teach the Kid's Don't Float curriculum to elementary schoolchildren.

This summer, the state debuted another life jacket loaner program, this time geared toward adults.

"The kids have already gotten the message to wear their life jackets through a very successful 'Kids Don't Float' campaign in Alaska," said Joe McCullough, education coordinator with the Alaska Office of Boating Safety. "But like the rest of the country, we're really behind in convincing adults to wear a personal flotation device."

The state stocked popular boat ramps on the Kenai River with adult life jackets to try to save the lives of men who typically eschew the safety measure.

"In Alaska, nine of every 10 people who drown are adult males, with most riding in smaller, open boats and not wearing a life jacket," said McCullough.



A group of children in the village of Napakiak, Alaska, pose in front of a life jacket loaner station.
Alaska Office of Boating Safety photo

The state boating safety agency has provided dozens of loaner life jackets, and the Kenai River Sportfishing Association has paid for “Wear It Alaska!” signs that have been installed by Alaska State Parks.

McCullough hopes the Kenai River will be the first of many locations where “Wear It Alaska!” signs are prominent and loaner jackets will be made available.

BoatU.S. Foundation

The BoatU.S. Foundation for Boating Safety & Clean Water launched a nationwide life jacket loaner program after funding a grant for a successful loaner program administered by a water safety council in Iowa in the early 1990s. BoatU.S. Foundation began distributing life jacket loaner kits in 1998. Funded in part by donations from the 600,000 members of BoatU.S., the program has continued growing ever since and now has more than 500 loaner sites nationwide.

The primary goal for BoatU.S. Foundation in establishing its life jacket loaner program was to save kids’ lives and keep boating families safe. Those goals are being met. Each year, the BoatU.S. Foundation life jackets are loaned out more than 90,000 times. At least three lives have been saved because of the program.

“Our life jacket loaner program educates parents about the importance of putting the right-sized jacket on a child. By having these loaner sites in convenient locations there is no excuse for children to be unsafe while on the water,” said Ruth Wood, president of the BoatU.S. Foundation.

BoatU.S. Foundation accepts several new sites into its life jacket loaner program during each application cycle. When picked, a site receives 12 child-sized life jackets, plus signs, brochures and a sign-out binder. Sites include marinas, fuel docks, recreational areas and waterfront businesses, as well as other convenient

locations such as libraries and fire stations. The life jackets are displayed in a prominent location – for example, near a boating ramp, in a marina office or near a fuel dock. A boating family can then check out the life jacket for a day or a weekend, free of charge. At the end of the boating trip, they return it to the same location.

Since some states have limited funding for safety programs, BoatU.S. Foundation also has a limited state-administered life jacket loaner program. Through this program, marine patrol units from selected states are equipped with a few loaner life jackets that they can give to families with children who are not wearing life jackets on the water. Having free children’s vests available not only provides immediate protection for the child but, in cases where the boater is violating the law by not having their children in life jackets, the vessel operator will not be forced off the water for non-compliance. A state’s boating law administrator must request the donation of these jackets.

Another product from the program is to educate boaters on the significance of wearing the appropriate size and type of life jacket while boating. To help boaters further, BoatU.S. Foundation has created a video showing how to select and fit a life jacket for a child. The video is available on their website.

If you would like additional information on the program, contact the program administrator, Alanna Keating at AKeating@boatus.com or visit www.BoatUS.com/Foundation/LJLP.



Through its life jacket loaner program, the BoatU.S. Foundation lends kid-sized life jackets to thousands of families every year.
BoatU.S. Foundation photo

Sea Tow Foundation

One of the newest life jacket loaner programs was just launched in May 2009 by the Sea Tow Foundation for Boating Safety and Education. The Sea Tow Foundation developed its High-Risk Life Jacket Program to help keep boaters safe while being assisted by Sea Tow. The program also educates recreational boaters on the risks associated with boating without life jackets.

“Many boaters are diligent in their efforts to keep children and adult guests safe while aboard but become complacent about safeguarding their own safety as their experience and confidence in boating increases,” Sea Tow Foundation Executive Director Michelle Zaloom said. “We want to help ensure the safety of all boaters assisted by Sea Tow this season by providing life jackets to those who need them during tows and educating them on the importance of life

jacket use by all boaters.”

The Sea Tow Foundation provided more than 2,500 life jackets to Sea Tow franchises nationwide for use during on-water service calls. Formal launch of the Program coincided with National Safe Boating Week, May 16-22, 2009, and was made possible through a grant from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.

The Sea Tow Foundation also plans to expand the High-Risk Life Jacket Program to encompass community loaner programs. This will enable local Sea Tow franchises to establish life jacket loaner programs in cooperation with local marinas, yacht clubs, fuel docks or other organizations interested in becoming Boating Safety Stewards within their boating communities. ■

Breaking Barriers for Safety

By Joe McCullough, Education Coordinator, Alaska Office of Boating Safety

Meagan Morton's fourth graders were especially antsy this morning. The class had another guest presenter coming in to talk about safety, which meant they had some free time. She had just finished talking about showing respect, but secretly she feared another disruption like last month.

The small school on the Yukon River

who had visited before. He had a well-worn life jacket on over his green park coat, and his long curly black hair gave him a bit of a wild look as he lugged in armfuls of more life jackets. Fascinated, the kids gathered around the man with the life jackets and before Ms. Morgan could ask them to return to their seats he got down on his hands and knees and all the students sat quietly around him.

Robin Kling, who works for Alaska State Parks, has been an ambassador for boating safety since 2004, traveling through rain, sleet, wind, and lots of snow and ice across Alaska promoting life jacket use. In 2008, he was recognized as the state's "boating safety educator of year" in large part for his efforts in rural Alaska reaching over 2,000 students in over 50 communities.

Robin teaches the material in a way these kids can understand, according to his evaluations. "Cup your hands like you're holding raisins," he tells them. "Now turn those hands upside down and start paddling, doing the dog paddle." And they get it. For teens, he holds their attention by telling real-life stories that sometimes sets them on their heels, such as when he was the sole survivor of a fishing boat accident.

Like its "lower 48" counterparts, the state of Alaska has tried to increase life jacket wear – especially among the highest risk group, adult males. Alaska is consistently near the top of the states with the highest fatality rates, due in large part to the risks involved when boating on cold water and in remote locations. Alaska is also the second most culturally diverse state in the nation. Reaching everyone with the same method of delivery is not ideal. By varying the delivery method the Office of Boating Safety seeks to affect as many boaters as possible. Classroom presentations use the lecture format as well as hands-on skills. The Alaska Office of Boating

Safety has achieved recognition for its educational efforts including its award-winning Kids Don't Float School Program and peer education training. But it is the individual instructors, like Robin Kling, who really make the program work.

Injury prevention specialists have known for years the importance and challenge of educating rural Alaskans about safety. Presenters must be attentive to existing cultural differences while focusing on the introduction of safer practices. In addition, Native Alaskans are wary of "outsiders" coming into their isolated communities wearing urban attire and lecturing on what they should (or should not) be doing and hopping on the next flight out, never to be seen or heard from again. With this approach, no matter how well meaning, education efforts are ineffective.

Robin has consistently broken down the barriers to learning. Maybe it's his "grizzly" appearance, maybe it's his passion or maybe it's his energy. Maybe he can relate to his students through his commercial fishing experience. Whatever the reason, Robin has been able to increase awareness in areas where more polished instructors have failed.

On one of his first trips to Bethel, Robin received his only negative evaluation because, unbeknown to him, the school allowed only Yupik to be spoken within its



Robin Kling with Alaska State Parks is a passionate ambassador for boating safety. He travels the state tirelessly to discuss boating safety and promote the use of life jackets with those living in remote villages.
Alaska Office of Boating Safety photos

didn't get too many outside presenters – and sometimes that seemed like a good thing, since most of the visitors didn't seem to relate to the kids. The last presenter showed up wearing a coat and tie and complained the whole day about getting dirty. Then the kids wouldn't calm down enough for him, so he put on a video (during which most of the kids fell asleep). The presenter sat in the back of the room, counting the minutes until the class ended.

On this particular morning, Ms. Morgan had just asked Alexie to sit down for the second time, when the whole class went quiet. The large man who filled the doorway was unlike any of the presenters

walls. Robin did manage to locate an interpreter on short notice and salvaged the afternoon but the evaluators were unimpressed. Following the presentation, Robin had several handouts translated into Yupik, worked on his own time with the translator and convinced the school to allow him to return. This time the evaluations were filled with praise for his ingenuity and dedication.

Robin also has had to deal with the nuisances of bush travel (delayed or cancelled flights and missed hotel reservations) and he has always done it with a smile and great attitude.

Where many have seen obstacles, Robin has seen opportunity. On one of his trips to northwest Alaska, Robin was told that the reason the community didn't wear life jackets was because the bright colors made it hard to hunt seals and whales. When Robin left the community he had a



Alaskan children enjoy visits from Robin Kling.

promise from the community's elders that if white life jackets were available they would wear them. Working with Mustang and the U.S. Coast Guard, Robin changed the way people in that community viewed life jackets (as well as the way they view injury prevention specialists).

Despite a drowning rate that consistently leads the nation, Alaska has met with some success increasing life jacket wear. As an ambassador for boating safety Robin has encouraged communities to become involved in the Kids Don't Float Loaner Board Program, going above and beyond to meet with village elders and injury prevention specialists after teaching in the schools all day. The state's progress toward safer waters and the new positive trend in life jacket use is due, in part, to the dedication and commitment of Robin Kling and others like him. ■



Robin Kling is one of about 12-14 part-time instructors who take boating safety messages into the schools through the Kids Don't Float School Program each year. The KDF Program has only two full-time instructors, Joe McCullough and Megan Piersma with the Alaska Office of Boating Safety.



EDUCATION – *The True Path to Boating Safety Success*

Ed Huntsman, Boating Safety Education Program Manager, Arizona Game and Fish Department

Having been involved in boating for, well, let's just say a number of years, I'm amazed at how my attitude has changed regarding the value of enforcement when compared to education. Now don't get me wrong – I'm all for enforcement. In fact, I believe it to be the ultimate weapon for education! However, many will agree that we're not going to enforce our way to boating safety through compliance, and that only education will help us reduce boating- and water-related deaths and injury. They're not going to quit drinking and wear a life jacket until they're educated and understand why.

Back at Bluewater Lake in northwest New Mexico working with state parks and recreation staff as a young county deputy, we certainly had our hands full with boaters using and abusing alcohol. And forget trying to keep people in a kapok Type II life jacket. Back then, the Type IIIs we so often see those riding a PWC now wearing, were the advanced technology of those days. We wrote a lot of tickets for

all sorts of things but just as now, they were mostly equipment violations, not enough life jackets. In fact, if memory serves, the OUI (operating under the influence) violation was public intoxication and hardly a serious misdemeanor or low-level felony (thank you to MADD for helping strengthen OUI/BUI violations).

I remember well Mike Maddox, the park superintendent, doing what amounted to a vessel safety check similar to those done now by the United States Power Squadrons and U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary as he provided boaters a current registration sticker or other required documentation to use their boat on the lake. I listened, watched and learned as Mike took full advantage of his captured audience to educate them on what they needed with a touch of editorial opportunity to help them understand the reason why. I'm reminded of Sheriff Andy and Mayberry as I fondly remember those Saturday mornings and afternoons as we talked to people about their experience, their boats and equipment, and hazards they needed to be aware of. And, oh yes – "Don't forget to keep those life jackets handy!" as they headed towards the boat ramp. I also began to notice over those high-altitude summers that the boaters we'd talked with were rarely, if ever, cited for a violation. They weren't the boaters that harassed shore-based anglers, kids swimming near shore, or picnickers enjoying the serenity of nature and the outdoors.

Things have changed, and they continue to change. But education and enforcement, at least in theory, are constant. With the advent of the Federal Boat Safety Act of 1971, boating safety equipment and even education began to emerge as major topics and seemed to find new focus when the Coast Guard began working with the states to make their efforts more effective.

Many of us believe that education should be mandatory before allowing the public access to their state's waterways. Others of us would rather find ways to encourage

and incentivize boaters to find their way to class. In favor of full disclosure, I used to be aligned with those that support (absolute) mandatory education – even licensing, let alone certification and life jacket wear. Like many, I was more than willing to share my opinion with anyone unfortunate enough to be within earshot. I felt legislation and enforcement alone is the pathway to success in our endeavor. However, working in boating safety education alongside those in enforcement for the past 14 years or so has changed my mind. Listening to those heavily involved in both enforcement and education has made me pause and reflect on, at least in my mind, what is truly having an impact on the reduction of accidents, property damage, injuries and deaths. All too often I've watched, now on the sideline from an educator's perspective, as offi-



An Arizona Game & Fish officer discusses boating safety with a young boater.
AGFD photos

cers frustrated at the peril parents and other family members put their passengers in – all too often children – as they drink or abuse alcohol or other intoxicants then can't find life jackets or other required or necessary safety equipment. To make matters worse, these boaters are often ignorant on even the most basic laws, rules and regulations that will keep their day's activities safe and enjoyable. Oh yes, there's definitely a case to be made for the value of enforcement. But is getting the citation alone or being incarcerated the key to changing behavior in these individuals? Most, perhaps. I've come to believe that enforce-



While conducting vessel safety checks, AGFD officers use the face-to-face time to pass along boating safety information to boaters. Talking with boaters helps them understand why they should wear their life jacket, and equip their boat with more safety gear than what is merely required.

fine to voluntarily go to class. In fact, many of our most voracious boating safety advocates joined the ranks through an enforcement gateway. (You know who you are!) Yes, education is what will keep people from drinking alcohol on a hot summer afternoon while operating their boat. Education is what helps boaters understand why they should wear their life jacket, equip their boat with more safety gear than what is merely required to “be legal” and avoid a citation – even

ment actions help us get their attention. But education – making boating safety relevant, and helping boaters recognize why they need to understand the Rules of the Road, have safety gear and equipment along and wear life jackets – will ultimately make us successful.

Attending summits, workshops and seminars has convinced me that while enforcement certainly has its place, education is the real key to boating safety. And numerous boat officers often take full and complete advantage of their impromptu student's attention to conduct a brief subject-specific class on the water. There are those that need the incentive of a reduced

when the boat cops aren't around. Sure, we can enforce all kinds of laws on those signaled to the shore or dock area in a saturation patrol, checkpoint or other coordinated action. And we'll keep arresting many of them and they'll pay fines or do their time only to go out on the water once more and quite possibly injure or even kill someone before we can get to them again. Many will repeat their behavior when they're around the corner and away from law enforcement personnel. But it's also true that some will, through the encouragement of an officer, judge or insurance company find their way to class and start the pathway to education and even enlightenment, sometimes becoming vocal advocates for safer boating. And that's where we'll make the difference, as Virgil Chambers, executive director of the National Safe Boating Council, says, “It's got to be boater to boater – that's how we'll effect change!” And after all these years, I've come to agree that we can't expect people to comply because of legislation alone. I believe that enforcement has a major role in helping people get to class. But class is where we'll make the difference. Education, that's the true path to boating safety success. ■

ASSISTING WITH BOATING SAF

By Tim Gallagher, President, Gallagher 20/20 Consulting

As Dr. David Banks surveys the bustling coastlines and the lush deltas of Vietnam while helping the nation by performing a country assessment of the Vietnamese Search and Rescue Committee's capabilities he comes to one conclusion: "In spite of the physical differences, the problem is the same no matter where you are."

A half a world away, Banks' Center for Asymmetrical Warfare, a satellite campus to the Naval Postgraduate School, is working with the government of Vietnam to safeguard its people from the ravages of nature and the dangers of the sea. Despite its thriving fishing industry, and the fact that hundreds of thousands of its people live in low-lying deltas, the relatively young population of Vietnam has the capability to respond to disaster. The capacity is where there might be an issue.

According to Dr. Banks, who serves as executive director of the Center for Asymmetric Warfare (CAW), Vietnam's government has the ability to respond, but the lack of technology combined with limited ability to perform multiple rescue operations leaves the people of Vietnam in a vulnerable state.

Right: Vietnamese officials at an outdoor conference discuss establishing search and rescue capability.

Bottom: Vietnamese search and rescue personnel practice towing in a stranded ship. CAW photos

"Whether it is Hurricane Katrina or a typhoon in the Mekong Delta, aren't the issues all the same?" asks Banks rhetorically.

"First, you have to identify the threat. How do you know what's coming? How big is it going to be? Where do you get your information from?"

"Second, how do you notify your citizens when radios are a rare commodity among the many fishermen in the South China Sea?"

"Third, how do you handle the evacuation?"

"Fourth, how do you handle the response and recovery?"

"Vietnam has to do the same things as anyone does – only they have to do it with fewer resources. We have more

tools in the United States, but the problems are exactly the same," said Dr. Banks.

One of the CAW's central missions is to develop and execute complex scenario-based, Homeland Security/Homeland Defense exercises, involving multiple local, state and federal organizations, as well as the national intelligence community, academia and non-governmental organizations. The CAW's current work in Vietnam is a humanitarian effort supporting the U.S. Pacific Command's desire to strengthen the relationships between the United States and its former military enemy.

"It is also a diplomatic mission. Ties between our governments would go a long way toward peace in the region. If the governments and militaries of Vietnam and the U.S. can cooperate, then many diplomatic partnerships are possible," Dr. Banks said.

Banks' primary contact in the Southeast Asian nation is called the Vietnamese Search and Rescue Committee, a mixture of the equivalent of the U.S.

In spite of the physical differences, the problem is the same no matter where you are.

— Center for Asymmetric Warfare Executive Director Dr. David Banks



Coast Guard and individual state emergency management agencies. He has visited the nation four times with a fifth trip pending for the final Subject Matter Expert Exchange for this year. Over the past two years, the program has had several bilateral exchanges, and the government of Vietnam has expressed interest in technical exchanges, training, and the procurement of hardware to assist with meteo-

ETY HALF A WORLD AWAY



Top: CAW Executive Director of the Center for Asymmetric Warfare Dr. David Banks (center) attends a conference with Vietnamese officials.

Right: In a drill, citizens are evacuated from low-lying areas where flooding is anticipated.

rology and search and rescue (SAR) software.

There have been a few firsts in the program, one being that Vietnam's most senior military delegation visited Pacific Command's Headquarters located in Honolulu. The purpose was to observe the Makani Pahili, Hawaii's annual statewide hurricane preparedness exercise, while gaining a better understanding of U.S. civil military coordination function in areas of SAR and disaster management. The other major accomplishment was that Dr. Banks' team was granted permission by the Prime Minister of Vietnam to observe an exercise scenario that included a typhoon hitting the Mekong Delta.

The work with Vietnam is truly starting from the bottom, or with local first responders, and working its way up, which is different from Vietnamese Government procedures.

Governance is the key difference in how the nations operate on these matters. Vietnam, a Communist nation, is a "top-down organization." Power and



Dr. Banks. "And then we'll get bigger. Can we help with their processes and procedures?"

From shoreline, the plan is to move inland and into the areas that are ravaged by typhoons.

Dr. Banks recently praised Vietnam for being "a smart, forward-leaning country that benefits from having so many people who have traveled and studied abroad."

"It is the right thing and it is great strategy to provide safety and security for the people. That makes them loyal, it makes the government stable," he said.

One of the key factors that led to the success of this program for the CAW is its affiliation with the Naval Post Graduate School. Vietnam sees it as an educational project, instead of a defense project, which PACCOM accepts. "They are looking to build a relationship with Vietnam and see the benefit of a long term strategy for the Theater Security Operations Program," Banks said.

The CAW (<http://www.cawnp.org>) is a government agency based in Point Mugu, Calif., on the grounds of Naval Base Ventura County. In 2008, it became affiliated with the Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey, Calif. The essence of the CAW is to prepare military, government and civilian agencies to deal with "asymmetric events," including everything from terrorism to earthquakes. The CAW delivers its expertise through live exercises, an experienced staff and tabletop discussions. ■

authority flow from the central government to the individual communities. In the United States, the rights of the states are given first priority.

"Their federal government can take over in any emergency with all rights. They are open to our way of doing things, but it has to make sense to them," stated Banks.

"If we can expand their capabilities in search and rescue, they can build a system that works for their culture, their people and their 8,000 fishing boats."

While Vietnam is rapidly developing a technology and textiles industry, its maritime industry is largely the product of legacy. Fishing boats that would never be certified as seaworthy in the U.S. provide financial support for thousands of Vietnamese. Introduction of state-of-the-art communication to such vessels, especially from a former enemy, is challenging.

"The idea is to start small – at a core level. Can we get some radio communication on the boats?" explained

Recreational Boating Fatalities Increase

The U.S. Coast Guard reported that while the numbers of recreational boating accidents and injuries decreased last year, the number of recreational boating fatalities increased.

According to the 2008 recreational boating safety statistics, the fatality rate increased from 5.3 in 2007 to 5.6 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational boats in 2008. The fatality rate is a measure of the number of deaths against the number of registered recreational boats.

Damages stemming from recreational boating accidents rose from \$53.1 million to nearly \$54.3 million.

Other casualty figures decreased in 2008, with accidents dropping from 5191 in 2007 to 4789 last year, and injuries declining from 3673 to 3331.

Operator inattention, careless or reckless operation, no proper lookout, operator inexperience and passenger or skier behavior rank as the top five contributing factors to recreational boating accidents. Alcohol consumption continues to be of major concern in fatal boating accidents and is listed as the leading contributing factor in 17 percent of the deaths.

Rear Adm. Kevin Cook, the Coast Guard's director of prevention policy, emphasized the importance of boating education. "The 2008 report shows a clear link between safety and boating edu-

cation by highlighting that only 10 percent of deaths occurred on boats where the operator had received boating safety education. This statistic indicates that boaters who have taken a boating safety course are less likely to be involved in an accident," he said.

"In addition, two-thirds of all fatal boating accident victims drowned; and of those, 90 percent were not wearing a life jacket. The Coast Guard urges all boaters, whether as an operator or passenger, to take a boating safety course and to always wear your life jacket."

To view the 2008 recreational boating safety statistics, go to http://www.uscg-boating.org/statistics/accident_stats.htm.



Deborah A.P. Hersman

Hersman Confirmed as New NTSB Chair

Deborah A.P. Hersman, who has been a member of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) for five years, was sworn in on July 28, 2009, as the agency's 12th Chairman.

Hersman was nominated for the two-year term as chairman by President Barack Obama in June. She was also nominated and confirmed for a second five-year term as Board Member, which runs through December 31, 2013.

"The NTSB is an outstanding organization that commands respect across the globe for its comprehensive investigations of transportation accidents," Hersman said. "I am grateful to have this extraordinary opportunity to lead a talented, dedicated staff to make a world-class organization even better."

"Hersman has a long history of working with the recreational boating safety community, and we are excited to continue our strong relationship with the NTSB into the future," said Matthew Long, government affairs director for the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators.

Hersman became an NTSB member in June 2004. She holds a commercial drivers license with passenger, school bus, and air brake endorsements. She successfully completed a motorcycle basic rider course and holds a motorcycle endorsement. She is a certified Child Passenger Safety Technician. She has also completed the 40-hour Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Standard training course.

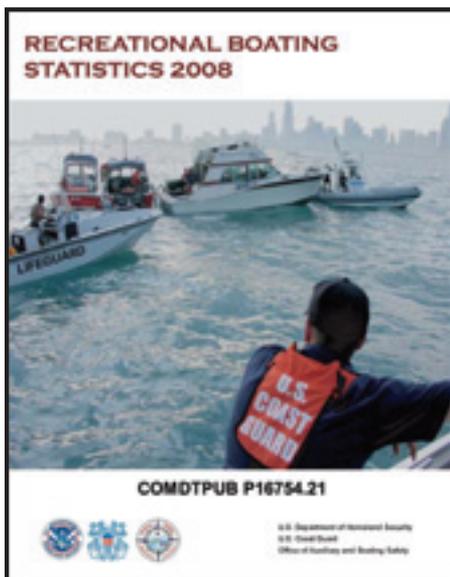
Chairman Hersman earned her bachelor of arts degrees in political science and international studies from Virginia Tech University in Blacksburg, Va., and a master of science degree in conflict analysis and resolution from George Mason University in Fairfax, Va.

Georgia Agency Deemed Excellent by FBI

The Georgia Chapter of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Academy Associates (FBINAA) recently presented the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Law Enforcement Section with the Phyllis Goodwin Agency of the Year Award. The annual award, presented at the FBINAA's summer conference in July, recognizes agencies that excel in support of the FBINAA Georgia Chapter.

As leaders in natural resources law enforcement, Georgia DNR's Law Enforcement personnel who have graduated from the FBI National Academy serve as active members of the FBINAA's Georgia Chapter.

"The involvement our supervisory officers have with the Georgia Chapter of the FBINAA has undoubtedly positively affected our agency and its operations," said Lt. Col. Jeff Weaver of the Georgia DNR Law Enforcement and graduate of the 226th session. "We are honored to receive this recognition."





Capt. Eddie Henderson (left) and Lt. Col. Jeff Weaver received the Phyllis Goodwin Agency of the Year Award on behalf of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Law Enforcement Section. The Georgia Chapter of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Academy Associates (FBINAA) presented the annual award during the FBINAA's summer conference in July in recognition of the Section's support of the FBINAA Georgia Chapter. Georgia DNR photo

Capt. Eddie Henderson of the Georgia DNR and graduate of the 211th session currently serves on the executive board for the Georgia Chapter of the FBINAA as First Vice President. Department personnel also have served on membership, finance and conference committees and provided assistance for the chapter's Web site redesign initiative.

Georgia DNR officers have benefited from the education and training received from the National Academy. Over the years, practices learned through the academy have been incorporated into agency procedures. Examples include the requirement of supervisory training for front line supervisors, the offer of risk management training and workplace issue management to staff and command officers and the opportunity for ethics and professionalism training.

The year 2011 will mark a century of service to the state of Georgia by the DNR's Law Enforcement agency. As the first and longest-serving state law enforcement agency in Georgia, DNR is committed to understanding and meeting the law enforcement needs of Georgia's citizens.

Continued involvement with the FBINAA and the training offered will aid DNR in its efforts to remain at the forefront of the state's law enforcement leadership.

North Carolina to Require Boating Safety Education Next Year

A new boating safety education law, initiated by the boating community and passed by the General Assembly, will be implemented by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission.

Beginning May 1, 2010, vessel operators will be asked by law enforcement officers to present a certification card or proof of compliance with General Statute 75A-16.2.

"The law, with certain exemptions, applies to anyone younger than 26 years old who is operating a vessel powered by a 10 horsepower or greater motor on public waterways," said Capt. Chris Huebner, the state boating safety coordinator. "Violation of the new law is an infraction, subject to a citation and court appearance."

Huebner added that "North Carolina has taken a step in the right direction when it comes to boating safety. I feel the new mandatory boater education law will reduce accidents and save lives."

The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission administers free boating safety education courses that, upon successful completion, satisfy the requirements of the new law. The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, United States Power Squadron and other organizations, including Internet providers, offer National Association of State Boating Law Administrators-approved boating safety education courses that can include a fee.

Canadian Mandatory Boating Education Law Takes Effect

On September 15, 2009, Canada will complete a 10-year phase-in of nationwide mandatory boating education requirements. These requirements apply to both Canadian residents and nonresidents visiting the country who wish to operate a recreational boat (the Canadians call them pleasure craft) that is fitted with a motor.

Since a number of U.S. boaters venture north for boating opportunities, there may be a number of questions about what they will be required to do in order to be in compliance with the law. Therefore, NASBLA consulted with Krista Kendall, acting manager of Operator Competency Program for Transport Canada. (For more information about Transport Canada, see NASBLA News on p. 3.)

Kendall explained that nonresidents of Canada must follow one of two rules depending on whether the person is bringing his own boat into Canada or is using a Canadian-licensed boat. If a person brings his own boat into Canada, he is exempt from the boating safety education requirements for 45 days as long as he carries proof of residence (driver's license or other identification). After the 45 days end, he must carry proof of competency showing that he has completed a boating safety course. For nonresidents, proof of competency can be a Canadian-issued Pleasure Craft Operator Card, a boat rental safety checklist, or a card that meets the requirements of the person's state or country. Therefore, a NASBLA-approved course that meets the requirements of the person's home state would suffice for the proof of competency. Nonresidents who are using a Canadian-registered boat must carry proof of competency.

For more information about the requirements for boating in Canada, visit the Transport Canada Office of Boating Safety website at <http://www.tc.gc.ca/marine-safety/debs/obs/menu.htm>.

Kentucky Officers Rescue Three from Ohio River

A veteran Kentucky Fish and Wildlife conservation officer and an officer in his first week on the job pulled three men from the Ohio River whose small boat had capsized and sunk around 6 p.m. on Aug. 20.

Officer Rick Mehlbauer and new officer Rodney Milburn rescued James Haggard, David Hockday, and Chris Dages, from the river at mid-channel several hundred yards west of the Brandenburg boat ramp.

“We just happened to be in the right place at the right time,” said Milburn, who recently became a conservation officer after retiring from the Louisville Metro Police Department. “They were exhausted and in a lot of trouble. We were able to throw them some flotation cushions and then get them into our boat and then to shore.”

Mehlbauer, a 10-year veteran conservation officer, said he and Milburn had launched a patrol boat and were checking its lighting and mechanics at a courtesy dock. They had let the boat run about 10 minutes when a woman ran up to them and said a boat had sunk downstream and its occupants were in the river.

The two officers took their patrol boat and rushed about a quarter-mile downstream, where they found the three exhausted men struggling to stay afloat. “There was some debris floating, but we never saw any part of the boat,” said Milburn. “It was gone.”

Haggard and Dages wore no flotation devices and were exhausted from trying to remain afloat. Hockday was the only one wearing a life jacket and even he was exhausted.

“The water conditions were really too bad for that kind of a boat,” said Mehlbauer. “The water was up and the wind was blowing hard upstream. That causes big swells that are really hard to see until you’re out there in them. The swells were even coming over our stern when we were trying to get them into our boat.”

Milburn, who started with Fish and Wildlife June 1 and recently completed the department’s academy, is currently with field training officer Mehlbauer. He is assigned Meade County.

“This is the reason we get into law enforcement,” said Third District Captain Myra Minton. “Our officers saved lives yesterday. They did a great job.”

New York Adopts Seasonal Mandatory Life Jacket Requirement

On July 11, 2009, New York Governor David A. Paterson signed legislation requiring the mandatory wearing of a personal flotation device by persons on board vessels less than 21 feet in length between November 1 and May 1. This legislative change takes effect November 1, 2009.

This new provision to section 40 of the New York State Navigation Law applies to all the navigable waters of the state including the tidewaters of Nassau and Suffolk counties. The requirement applies to any pleasure vessels less than 21 feet in length including rowboats, canoes and kayaks as well as mechanically propelled vessels. The requirement does not apply to commercially operated watercraft certificated by either the U.S. Coast Guard or New York State.

“The goal of this legislation is to save lives by reducing off-season recreational boating fatalities associated with sudden unexpected cold water immersion,” said Brian Kempf, boating law administrator for the state of New York. “It is hoped that this new law draws greater awareness of and a respect for the dangers of cold water especially during the late fall and early spring months of the year.”

As this landmark legislation goes beyond what is presently required on board vessels by the U.S. Coast Guard, the Marine Services Unit of the New York Office of Parks & Recreation encourages agencies to use this first time through as a learning period for boaters as word is spread about the new requirement.

Oregon’s Education Phase-in is Complete – Now What?

In May 2009, the Oregon State Marine Board met with course providers, instructors and other education stakeholders in a brainstorming session focused on ways to keep boaters informed about the state’s mandatory education requirements.

Oregon’s mandatory boater education age phase-in began in 2003 and ends this year. In 2010, all boaters will be required to take a boating safety course and carry a boater education card when operating a powerboat greater than 10 horsepower.

“Compliance has been high and accidents and fatalities have fallen,” said Marty Law, Education and Information Manager for the Marine Board. “We need to continue to reach out to the folks that are new to boating, people coming of age, new residents and even those boaters who don’t have their education card yet,” added Law.

Everyone in attendance agreed about the importance of keeping the media attention high. Media releases, posters and counter cards all need to continue. All of the stakeholders recognized the power of social media methods and other innovative ways of informing people through internet technology and social networking sites.

“We need to develop and share podcasts, YouTube videos, and think about creating appealing print media targeted to high school students, that link to interactive, visual media,” Law added.

Other stakeholders offered tremendously valuable insight on practical ways to reach boaters, ranging from one-on-one contact with boaters at the launch ramp, to advertising or signage in more common shopping venues



Oregon began its mandatory boater education age phase-in in 2003. Beginning next year, all boaters will be required to take a boating safety course and carry a boater education card when operating a powerboat greater than 10 horsepower.
OSMB photo

where inflatable craft and toys are sold. Many of the Marine Board's publications also have website links and contact information directing people where to look for even more information.

"It's also very important to continue offering a variety of high quality, low cost classroom and Internet courses that cater to people's schedules," Law said. "We need to keep fine-tuning how we can encourage people into the classroom and improve online applications that make the learning process fun."

During the discussion, it became clear that in order to effectively inform the public about the requirements, a continuous and consistent effort needs to happen over the long term with everyone who's invested in boater education.

"When boaters are informed about the law and are in compliance with the law, they quickly realize when they're out on the water that everyone is safer and apt to have a great experience," said Law.

To see what Oregon's doing with education and outreach, visit <http://www.boatoregon.com/OSMB/BoatEd/index.shtml>.

RBFF Re-Launches Passport to Fishing & Boating Program

The Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF) has re-launched its Passport to Fishing & Boating Program with a new look and updated content. The program, which provides skills, techniques and information that instructors need to teach boating and fishing, is available for free on <http://www.RBFF.org>.

"Attracting newcomers, especially young people, is a cornerstone of our mission," said RBFF President and CEO Frank Peterson. "We're pleased to provide an updated version of the Passport Program, which has proven to be a successful, engaging youth education tool."

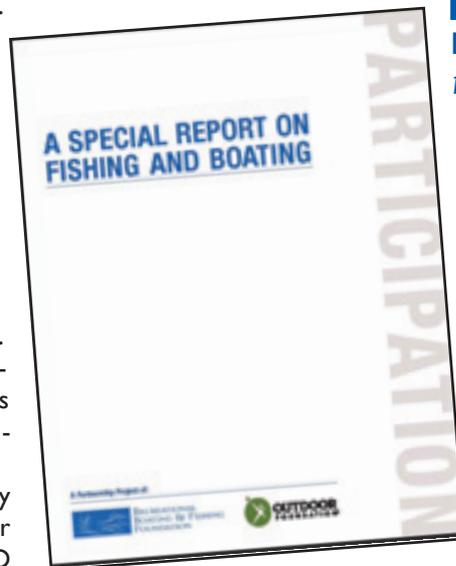
The Passport to Fishing & Boating Program includes six different "hands-on" stations with activities focused on fishing, boating and conservation. The program's easy-to-use design equips instructors with all they need to give students the

chance to be actively involved in the stations, which include:

- Fish habitat and handling
- Fishing knots and rigging
- Casting
- Smart boating, safe boating
- Ready, set, boat
- Local information

"Boating and fishing help kids and their families lead a healthy outdoor lifestyle, and the Passport Program is a great first step for getting involved," said RBFF Board Member and Boy Scouts of America Community Alliances Team Director Charles Holmes. "Everyone should have an opportunity to experience the outdoors and this practical education tool makes it easy with activities for kids who have mixed skill and education levels."

Originally introduced in 2002, the Passport to Fishing & Boating Program is just one of RBFF's boating and fishing education resources. The Take Me Fishing™ Event Planning Kit is a step-by-step guide for communities to plan, promote and host successful boating, fishing and conservation events. Additionally, RBFF's National Youth Fishing & Boating Initiative offers education grants to youth-focused boating, fishing and conservation organizations annually.



RBFF Report Details Boating, Fishing Links

from Trade Only Today

The Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation revealed new boating and fishing research at the International Convention of Allied Sport-fishing Trades held July 15-17, 2009, in Orlando, Fla.

The Special Report on Fishing and Boating, conducted by RBFF and the Outdoor Foundation, provides detailed information on participation by gender, age, ethnicity, income, education and geographic region. The report revealed that of the 48.5 million anglers in the U.S., 8.5 million are interested in owning a boat.

Other key findings include:

- Greater access to more and better fishing is the leading motivation for anglers consid-

ering boat ownership.

- Fishing is the most popular gateway activity to get kids interested in other outdoor pursuits.
- Fishing continues to be a strong pathway to boating.

"We know that there are strong ties between boating and fishing, and it is critical to understand this relationship to grow participation in our beloved outdoor sports," RBFF president and CEO Frank Peterson said in a statement. "The research finds that anglers who don't currently own a boat represent a great potential for boat sales."

The methodology and full study is available online at <http://www.RBFF.org>. ■



Educating the Boating Public - A Key to Safety



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

Over the past 38 years, a great deal of success has resulted from the combination of initiatives that have been implemented to reduce boating accidents and casualties. We've reduced the actual number of recreational boating deaths from a five-year average of 1400 deaths per year (1967-1971) to 696 per year (2004-2008). And, this 50 percent reduction in deaths is exponentially larger when you consider that the number of registered boats more than doubled during that timeframe.

Many of these successful initiatives were the result of the enactment of the Federal Boat Safety Act of 1971. They included such things as establishing manufacturing standards; establishing a new federal grant program to support the states and national nonprofit organizations in their law enforcement, public education/awareness, vessel numbering, aids to navigation and access programs; establishing an improved accident reporting system; and updating federal carriage requirements for recreational vessels. (Kudos also goes to the boating industry for their enhancements in technology and design.)

Over the first 30 years of this period, there was a steady decline in the number of boating deaths. We were not really sure of exactly which initiatives were being successful. We just knew that, in combination, they were being successful.

Also during the first nearly 30 years, we witnessed a steady growth in the number of registered boats. The number of these boats grew from about 5.5 million in 1971 to 12.7 million in 1999.

Then, in the years 1999 and 2000 we saw the trend lines plateau for both of these measures. Every year since then, the number of deaths has been consistently around 700 deaths; and the number of registered boats has been approximately 12.7-12.9 million.

Some would say that given the prior trend line, and since the number of registered boats has plateaued, that the number of deaths would be expected to decrease even faster each year. However, this has not been the case. Thus, we've had to ask ourselves whether we have maximized the level of success that we can expect with the initiatives that we have been implementing.

If that is the case, what new initiatives might we consider that would get us back on the

decreasing trend line of reducing boating deaths? Two possible initiatives come to mind quickly: increasing life jacket wear (which would reduce drowning – our most common form of boating death) and significantly enhancing the education of the boating public (which could potentially reduce boating accidents altogether).

The focus of this article is education – an essential key to enhancing boating safety. Since the adoption of the Model Mandatory Education Act by NASBLA at the Salt Lake City Conference in 1987, many states have enacted mandatory education requirements. They vary greatly from state to state, with 48 states now having some form of education requirement for at least a small segment of the boat operators in their state.

We strongly believe that an education requirement that more quickly affects the greater share of boat operators will have a more significant impact. We also believe that an education requirement that addresses both education and skill will have a more significant impact.

These types of education and skill-level courses are available now in many parts of our country, offered by governmental entities, volunteer organizations, and for-profit enterprises. Further, these courses are readily available through multiple formats. There are classroom courses, take-home courses, online courses, and on-site courses. Each has its benefits, but are they being utilized by enough of the boating public?

The main challenges to our boating safety community now are related to how we can make our education programs more effective in changing behavior. How can we reach a significantly larger part of the boating community and do so faster? How can we enhance the skill level of the boat operators? How can we achieve uniformity more effectively and quickly?

These are all significant challenges, but who better to consider these issues than you? We challenge you to consider them, and we challenge you to look outside the box.

In Wayne Stacey's article on the next page, you'll learn more about what's happening with boating safety education in the U.N. and particularly in Europe. And you'll learn a little more about what they've done to enhance effectiveness, uniformity, and reciprocity to a higher degree. So, please read on.

Navigating Regulations Can Be Rough Going

By Wayne Stacey, Boating Safety Division Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety U.S. Coast Guard

When it comes to recreational boating, few things can be more frustrating for boat operators than trying to figure out which regulations apply to a particular boat, with particular passengers aboard, operating in particular waters. The federal government sets minimum equipment carriage requirements that boaters must adhere to, but these requirements may be preempted by more stringent state boating regulations. In 48 of the nation's 50 states and six territories, some form of mandatory boating education requirement is required to operate a boat.

Let's use the state of New Hampshire as an example. Currently, New Hampshire requires that all those operating a personal watercraft (PWC) or motorboat of more than 25 horsepower be at least 16 years of age and possess a state boating education certificate or the equivalent. Those younger than 16 are barred unless accompanied by someone who meets the age requirement and has passed the 60-question proctored exam. That means safer boating in New Hampshire for sure, but possible disappointment if your 12- and 14-year-olds have been looking forward to driving their PWC solo on Lake Winnepesaukee.

When cruising in foreign waters, keeping track of applicable boating skill and safety regulations gets even more complicated, as requirements can change drastically from one country to the next.

For several years, there's been a push within the European community for greater assurance that recreational vessel operators are competent to navigate safely and ensure the protection of coastal and inland waterways. In 1998,

the United Nations adopted UN Resolution 40. This established a reasonably strict international standard that applied not only to recreational vessels but also to bare-boat charter vessels bound for, or operated on, the inland and coastal waters of foreign countries.

Resolution 40's provision for an International Certificate for Operators of Pleasure Craft (in the United Kingdom, the International Certificate of Competence or ICC) sets forth nautical, regulatory, and technical competency requirements and a minimum age for operating a recreational vessel without supervision at 16 years of age.

As many who've qualified for an ICC can attest – including those who qualified after decades of experience at the helm – it can be a real eye-opener in revealing gaps in your knowledge about boating.

In addition to setting 16 as the minimum age for going solo, obtaining an ICC also requires proof that the boat operator is physically fit and mentally able to operate a recreational vessel. In addition, they must possess adequate vision and hearing.

Qualifying for an ICC requires a passing score on a written proctored exam demonstrating clear understanding of the regulations concerning safe vessel operation. The exam topics include the nautical/technical knowledge required for safe navigation on coastal and/or inland waters, knowledge about weather conditions, and knowledge of such nautical publications as the European Code for Inland Waterways, Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, and Aids to Navigation. It also requires knowledge of appropriate conduct under special circumstances, including the use of lifesaving devices and equipment, fire prevention and fire fighting, and appropriate action in case of collisions, engine failure or running aground.

Finally, it requires that operators of recreational vessels demonstrate in a practical exam the ability to apply this knowledge on the water, including knowledge of vessel operation, maneuvering in locks and ports, anchoring and mooring in all conditions, conduct in meeting and overtaking another vessel, and more.

Although only 22 countries (not including the United States) have adopted UN Resolution 40, which has replaced the previously adopted UN Resolution 14, the standard has gained ground. Today, many more than 22 nations accept, or even ask for, this International Certificate as proof of competence.

In the United States, recreational boating requirements above the federal minimum for equipment carriage, including any boating education certification, is currently established at the state level. While this doesn't alleviate the confusion for those boating across state lines, the trend – in the U.S. and abroad – will hopefully head in the right direction and call for more training, higher standards, uniformity of education, reciprocity, and greater safety on the water. ■

Informal Education Proves Valuable to Boating Experience



Robin Freeman
National Directorate Commodore
for Recreational Boating Safety
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

Educated boaters mean safer boaters. We know this to be true. We also know that collectively we reach a minute percentage of the huge boating population with our educational efforts. We realize, too, that for many of the boating public, they have years of time on the water and see no need for any education other than what they've learned via experience.

What can we do? I've been thinking of more ways to utilize informal education, meaning ways to share vital information outside of a more formal, classroom setting.

I recently had an experience that convinced me that experience is excellent but education comes up trumps. I'd spent an entire day with friends at a beach party. One friend brought two kayaks, and she and I decided to go out for an early morning paddle. It was a gorgeous day, with a light marine layer and no winds. We planned to paddle the kayaks about 100 yards off a very populated shore inside the harbor. Now, while I have hundreds of hours on the water in this very area, it's all been on my 24-foot boat. I have a whopping three hours total time in a kayak – none of which include time on the ocean. My friend is very experienced in kayaking, and many things boating for that matter, but has never had a boating class. Two events that morning really screamed "Boating Safety Education!!" to me.

First off, as we carted the kayaks to the water, my friend said it was too hot to wear the life jacket. (After all, we were just paddling in the harbor, right?) I agreed that it was very calm and flat and we were within 100 yards of shore. However, my training from my boating safety classes wouldn't let me keep quiet. I reminded her that the water was very cold, that I was very inexperienced at kayaking, and it would not be prudent to leave her life jacket ashore. She thought about it and decided to wear her life jacket.

We paddled along toward the breakwater. As we neared the breakwater, my friend suggested that we go on the outside and get a photo of me with the lighthouse in the background. Had I never had a boating class, I would have gone without hesitation because she had so much experience. My boating class taught me, though, that we didn't have the gear (VHF radio, flares, float plan) to transit into open ocean. Plus, I'd

learned from those classes to know your own limits. With just three hours total time in the seat of a kayak, and none of that on the ocean, no way was I ready for the challenge of meeting what the ever-changing sea could throw at us. My boating education made my choice easy. I said, "Thanks, but let's leave that for another time when we're prepared to go offshore."

We had a great, fun day on the water, and I came home realizing even more how important basic boating and watersports education awareness is. I realized, too, how this awareness can be informal, and that I should be looking for more such opportunities.

The WEAR IT! campaign is a great way to promote life jackets, but not just during National Safe Boating Week. Do you WEAR IT while working on the water, while teaching classes, in public affairs outreach events (boat shows, etc.), during vessel safety checks, and even when recreating on the water yourself? People are intrigued by the inflatable life jackets and inevitably ask, "What's that you're wearing?," opening an excellent avenue to talk about life jackets and other safe boating practices.

I like to consider public education, vessel safety checks and public awareness outreach events as our "front line" where we have the most contact with the boaters. If we're wearing a life jacket during those times, we capture the interest of the boater as well as reinforce the image that wearing life jackets is part of the boating gear. And, getting them interested and talking to us is informal education – what a great way to reach the experienced boaters who may not think about taking a formal class. Let me rephrase that – they may not have thought about taking a class YET. Maybe after talking with us they'll think it's a great idea.

I'm going to ask my friend if she'd like to take our next boating safety course, and tell her that her experience would be a great addition to the class, as well as a wonderful way for her to brush up. I'll report back. In the meantime, I plan to look for lots more ways to WEAR IT! and be on my toes to find other informal educational opportunities. ■

We Can Do Better to Keep Our Waterways Safe



Maureen Healey
Executive Director
Personal Watercraft Industry
Association

To legally drive a car, you must be at least 16 years old, carry a valid license with you as evidence of your age, and have passed a state-approved driver's education course.

The operation of a boat, specifically a personal watercraft (PWC), should be no different. We do not think twice about getting behind the wheel of a car until we have met all applicable legal requirements. Similarly, we should not consider operating a boat – specifically a PWC – on our waterways until such comparable laws are passed.

Thanks to the hard work of boating law administrators and elected officials, states have made significant and positive steps in the right direction to reduce boating accidents. Still, we must not rest on our laurels since more can and should be done.

The PWC industry strongly encourages all states to enact regulations promoting responsible behavior, whereby we can ensure all boaters will have an enjoyable time on the water without incident or tragedy. To this end, we urge state legislators to enact the industry's model legislation. The key elements of this bill set a minimum age requirement of 16 years to operate a PWC (18 for rentals) and require all PWC operators, regardless of age and experience, to pass a boater education course.

If 16 is the minimum age for our roadways, then that same requirement should be applied to our waterways. We would not allow a 12- or 14-year-old to operate a car. Why, then, would we allow them to operate a PWC?

As an industry, we feel advocating for these reasonable regulations promoting responsible user behavior is the right thing to do. Currently 16 states require a minimum age of 16 to operate a PWC.

Education is also particularly crucial. According to the U.S. Coast Guard, nearly 80 percent of the 709 boating fatalities in 2008 occurred on boats where the operator had not taken a boater education course.

At last count, 48 states and territories have enacted one of three types of boating education requirement in place:

1. requiring all boaters to complete a boating safety education course;

2. requiring boaters born on or after a certain date to complete a boating safety education course; or
3. requiring boaters within a certain age range to complete boating safety education.

Six states and territories require education only for PWC operators.

The measures requiring operators born after a certain date to take a course can largely leave out older skippers. However, Coast Guard data consistently shows that, on average, those involved in accidents are at least 40 years old. Thus, the majority of boat operators are not covered by youth-based education policies.

For instance, Florida's mandatory boater education law applies only to those under 21 years of age. But like the Coast Guard, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), found in its 2008 Boating Accidents Statistical Report that "the boat operator most likely to be involved in a boating accident is a middle-age or older male who has plenty of boating experience yet has never learned the most important safety considerations by having taken a boating safety course."

We know boating safety education works and Florida, is a great example of that. Since enacting its boater education law in 1996, Florida has seen a nearly 48 percent decrease in boating accidents even though the number of vessels registered in Florida has increased by 34 percent, according to FWC data. Imagine if that law was expanded to include all boaters. It might be an inconvenience to go back to class for a few hours, but it is a worthwhile investment.

In terms of operation, boats are no different than vehicles on the road. Therefore, boaters, particularly those operating personal watercraft, should be held to the same legal standards as drivers on the road. Accidents can occur both on land and water. However, if all states do their part to enact reasonable and responsible safety measures, we can prevent most of these tragedies.

Boating, in my opinion, is America's greatest pastime. Over the next five years, my hope is to see more states adopt these key elements of our model legislation. As an industry, we're committed to doing our part. ■

Caught Being Safe

A collaboration to keep kids safe on the Ohio River

By Keri Shain, Senior Marketing Manager, Kosair Children's Hospital

Drowning is the leading cause of unintentional injury-related death among children up to age four, and the second leading cause up to age 14, according to Erika Janes, R.N., Children's Hospital Foundation Office of Child Advocacy of Kosair Children's Hospital. Every year, nearly two dozen children in the United States drown after falling out of boats, and approximately 200 children are seriously injured or killed while riding personal watercraft. Most children who drown are not wearing personal flotation devices (life jackets), and an estimated 85 percent of boating-related drownings could have been prevented by life jackets.

To encourage children to wear their life jackets, the Louisville Metro River Patrol teamed up with Texas Roadhouse and Safe Kids Louisville and Jefferson County, a program led by Kosair Children's Hospital, to create the "Caught Being Safe" Program to reward children who are wearing their life jackets.

The river patrol distributes Texas Roadhouse coupons and gifts to children who are "Caught Being Safe" by wearing their life jackets correctly when their boat is pulled over for routine inspection. Since the inception of the program five years ago, more than 1000 children and families have been rewarded for their safe behaviors.

"We now see children flagging us down to inspect their boat because they know they will get a prize for wearing their life jacket," said Officer Brian Hinton, Louisville Metro River Patrol. "This program has been successful because it rewards good behavior rather than punishing bad behaviors."

Kentucky and Indiana statute requires that children under 12 years of age wear a Coast Guard-approved life jacket, or personal flotation device (PFD), while on a boat. According to the River Patrol of the Louisville Metro Police, boats they stop may have the required number of PFDs on board, but the children are not wearing them. More important than the law that boaters are breaking, Safe Kids



To encourage children to wear their life jackets, the Louisville Metro River Patrol reward children who are "caught being safe" on the water. The river patrol partners with Texas Roadhouse and Safe Kids Louisville and Jefferson County to distribute restaurant coupons and gifts to children who are wearing their life jackets correctly when their boat is pulled over for routine inspection. Over the last five years, more than 1000 children and families have been rewarded for their safe behaviors.
Kosair Children's Hospital photos

members worry about the consequences of children not being prepared in case of a boating accident.

"It is unrealistic to believe that everyone will be able to get his or her life jacket once the boat overturns or hits something," says Janes, R.N., also coordinator of Safe Kids Louisville and Jefferson County.

For added safety, Safe Kids and Officer Hinton recommend that children ages 14 and under wear PFDs not only on boats but also near open bodies of water or when participating in water sports. Even with a PFD, certain activities on the water are still unsafe for children ages 14 and under.

"Don't let kids operate personal watercraft," says Hinton. ■

Safe Kids Louisville and Jefferson County remind parents and caregivers:

- Do enroll your kids in swimming lessons taught by a certified instructor, but don't assume swimming lessons or life jackets make your child "drown-proof." These precautions are important, but they're no substitute for constant adult supervision.
- Nobody should swim near a dock or marina with electrical hookups or lighting — swimmers can be electrocuted in the water and drown.
- Make sure the skipper or pilot of the boat your child is on has passed a boating safety course approved by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators. For more information about safe boat operations, contact the local state boating office or Coast Guard Auxiliary.
- Learn cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). In less than three hours, you can learn effective interventions that can give a fighting chance to a child who has fallen into water and become unconscious. Local hospitals, fire departments and recreation departments offer CPR training.

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SEPTEMBER 2009

- 26-30 **NASBLA**
Annual Conference
Corpus Christi, Texas
www.nasbla.org
ron@nasbla.org
859.225.9487
- 28-Oct. 1 **States Organization for Boating Access**
Annual Conference
www.sobaus.org
312.946.6283

OCTOBER 2009

- 9-10 **National Boating Federation**
Fall Executive Committee Meeting
Las Vegas, Nevada
www.n-b-f.org
DavidKutz@aol.com
- 12-14 **International Boatbuilders' Exhibition & Conference**
Miami, Florida
www.ibexshow.com
- 21-25 **US Sailing**
Annual Meeting
League City, Texas
www.ussailing.org
KatieOuellette@ussailing.org
401.683.0800
- 23-25 **American Canoe Association**
National Paddlesports Conference
Fredericksburg, Virginia
www.americancanoe.org
- 27-29 **NASBLA**
Executive Board Meeting
Lexington, Kentucky
ron@nasbla.org
859.225.9487

NOVEMBER 2009

- 9-12 **Paddlesports Industry Association**
Annual Convention
Jamestown, Kentucky
www.paddlesportsindustry.org
502.395.1513

JANUARY 2010

- 6-9 **National Safe Boating Council**
Board Meeting
Coral Gables, Florida
www.safeboatingcouncil.org
- 10-13 **International Association of Marine Investigators**
Annual Training Seminar
Galveston, Texas
www.iamimarine.org/iami
iamimarine@aol.com
541.776.8601

FEBRUARY 2010

- 1-6 **United States Power Squadrons**
Annual Meeting
Orlando, Florida
www.usps.org
888.367.8777
- 3-7 **US Sailing**
National Sailing Programs
Symposium
Portsmouth, Rhode Island
www.ussailing.org
KarenDavidson@ussailing.org
401.683.0800
- 11-15 **Miami International Boat Show**
Miami, Florida
www.miamiboatshow.com
- 27-28 **American Canoe Association**
Board of Directors Meeting
Fredericksburg, Virginia
kcosgrove@americancanoe.org

MARCH 2010

- 18-20 **US Sailing**
Spring Meeting
Providence, Rhode Island
www.ussailing.org
KatieOuellette@ussailing.org
401.683.0800
- 28-31 **National Safe Boating Council & National Water Safety Congress**
International Boating & Water Safety Summit
Daytona Beach, Florida
www.safeboatingcouncil.org
www.watersafetycongress.org

APRIL 2010

- 13-14 **NASBLA**
Spring BLA Workshop
Arlington, Virginia
ron@nasbla.org
859.225.9487

MAY 2010

- 5-6 **National Marine Manufacturers Association**
American Boating Congress
Washington, D.C.
www.nmma.org/abc

JUNE 2010

- 5-13 **National Fishing & Boating Week**
www.rbff.org
- 12-13 **American Canoe Association**
Board of Directors Meeting
Fredericksburg, Virginia
kcosgrove@americancanoe.org

AUGUST 2010

- 30-Sept. 4 **United States Power Squadrons**
Governing Board Meeting
Bellevue, Washington
888.367.8777
www.usps.org

SEPTEMBER 2010

- 11-15 **NASBLA**
Annual Conference
Honolulu, Hawai'i
www.nasbla.org
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