

# small craft ADVISORY

National Association of State Boating Law Administrators

Vol. 15 No. 4 April/May 2000

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*MARINE officers train across the country for encounters with boaters who may be under the influence. It is a necessary part of the job, designed to keep recreational boaters, and themselves, safe on the water. This spring training exercise, conducted in Oregon, was designed to give recruits hands-on experience with proper boat-to-boat techniques. For more on this type of training, see Part III of a series on Oregon training, which begins on page 12 of this issue. (Photo courtesy Oregon State Marine Board)*



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Administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.**







## President's Viewpoint by Paul Donheffner

The world is shrinking. The more I fly at 35,000 feet, the smaller it gets. Time flies and so is my term as President. As I write this column, somewhere in the

friendly night skies over South Dakota, bound for home on another coast-to-coast run, I'm pausing to reflect on what a great group of people I have the privilege of working for and with. The dedication and commitment to boating safety that we share is awesome, and I'm honored to serve you.

I'm making these circuits to Washington in hopes of securing better funding for state and local programs. March was our month to beat the drum in D.C. for boating safety ... and I stayed busy at it. I attended several Congressional hearings on the Coast Guard's budget and appropriations bill for FY 2001, and testified on March 15 before the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee. In addition, I represented NASBLA at a national conference on the future of the Maritime Transportation System in New York City, an event to promote the work of local Harbor Safety Committees and safety interventions for commercial as well as recreational boating traffic. I beat the drum for funding there too.

As a boy, I can remember my grandfa-

ther and father always telling me that "if there's a will, there's always a way." In regard to our funding dilemma, I am convinced that motto holds true. Collectively, we have the will. We need to find the right champion or champions in Washington to believe in boating safety and find the way. There's no doubt a better way.

In my last column, I spoke about the fact that recreational fatalities for 1999 had declined to a near record low of 734. That was the good news. The bad news is that by reducing accidents and fatalities, we really are having a more difficult time making the case for increased funding, but that's a good problem to have. As grim as it sounds, if those 734 boating fatalities had been in crashes involving 80 or 100 people at a time, boating safety would be top of the news. The fact

that these happen one and two at a time makes them no less tragic. We have to find a way.

Why should boating safety receive more funding?

Growing demand. Recreational and commercial waterway traffic is expected to double in the next 20 years. We can expect more congestion, greater speed and increased risk of collisions and accidents.

Inflation. Funding for boating safety, effectively capped at \$59 million, is a shrinking part of a growing pie. Boating safety deserves its fair share, as a percentage of motorboat gas tax, rather than a fixed dollar amount.

It's a national priority to "work toward the elimination of transportation-related deaths, injuries and property damage." The job's not done. At 734 deaths, boating is still the second lead-

*Continued on page 3*

## Coast Guard Comments

by Capt. Mike Holmes

It's finally that time of the year again! I spent a recent weekend in the annual ritual of uncovering the boat and starting to get it ready for the boating season.

A bit more pressure washing and a little engine work and it will be ready to launch. Thousands of boat owners across the country will be doing the same thing soon as their thoughts turn to a summer of fun on the water. Are we ready? Do we have effective programs in place?

One of the ways we judge our performance is the annual Boating Statistics. We know for example that there were 815 recreational boating fatalities reported in 1998 and that Florida had the most fatalities at 73 and that New Mexico, South Dakota, and Wyoming only had one apiece. Does that mean that we can compare the performance of Florida verses the other states based on the number of fatalities? Of course not. Florida not only has a year round boating season

but has an estimated 400,000 transient boats. Florida most likely leads the nation in boating hours.

There are limitations to the data we collect and report in the annual Boating Statistics. Here are some things you may not know about the data:

- Not all accidents are reported. The owner/operator is the one tasked by regulation with reporting to the state where the accident occurred. We don't know how many are not reported but we do have evidence that fatalities are reported better than injuries or property damage. Even so, we believe that reporting is a random sampling and that complete data is not necessary to decide where to focus boating safety efforts.

- Not all reported recreational boating accidents go into the BARD (Boating Accident Report Database) system. Of all accidents that involve loss of life, personal injury beyond first aid, damage exceeding \$500, or complete loss of vessel, only accidents that meet the criteria

*Continued on next page*

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# USCG proposes rule change to lower federal BAC to .08

by Dave Workman, Editor

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Recreational boaters and other interested parties have until July 14 to submit comments on a proposed rule change that would lower the Federal Blood Alcohol Concentration standard to .08 BAC.

According to John Malatak, chief of Program Development for the U.S. Coast Guard, the proposal was submitted because accident statistics indicate "a reasonable likelihood" that 27 percent of all fatal boating accidents are alcohol-related, according to 1997 statistics. He also noted a trend in the states to lower the BAC from .10 to .08, to bring the level into uniformity with the presumed intoxication level of motorists.

Currently 53 states and other jurisdictions have some form of BAC standard, Malatak said. Nineteen of those have lowered their BAC level to .08 while the remaining 34 are still at .10.

If adopted, the federal standard will not supercede any state standard. However, Malatak acknowledged that federal adoption of the lower standard might influence states to lower their BAC standards, eventually resulting in nationwide uniformity.

"We want to tie the highway to the waterway," Malatak said.

Under the proposal, the term "intoxicated" would be replaced with the phrase "under the influence of alcohol or a dangerous drug." This would allow federal regulations to conform with current statutory language.

Following the July 14 comment deadline, Malatak said a review period will take up to 90 days, after which findings would be publicly presented, and would also go to the Boating Safety Advisory Committee.

"There's always a likelihood something could be enacted this year, but it depends on the comments that come in," Malatak explained.

Respondents have several ways to submit their comments. By mail, they must be addressed to:

Docket Management Facility  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
Room PL-401  
400 Seventh Street SW  
Washington, DC 20590-0001

They may be hand-delivered to Room PL-401 on the Plaza level of the Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street SW in Washington, DC during regular business hours.

Comments may be faxed to (202) 493-2251.

Via e-mail, log onto the system website at: <http://dms.dot.gov>.

## Coast Guard Comments

Continued from page 2

listed in the Annual Boating Statistics as having potential of being addressed by boating safety programs are included in BARD.

- The Coast Guard collects fatality data from Search and Rescue cases that do not appear in BARD. We do capture fatality data in our Search and Rescue database (SARMIS) and studies have shown that somewhere between 50 to 60 of these fatalities do not get reported to BARD each year. We do not intend to "link" the databases for two reasons.

First, the SARMIS database does not collect the information necessary to determine if the fatality was indeed a recreational boating fatality for inclusion into BARD.

Second, SARMIS data only exists for areas where the Coast Guard has a presence and cases where the Coast Guard responds. That is a relatively small part of the country. Adding this data in would skew the data as many states would never, ever have SARMIS data to add even though we are certain that the under-reporting of accidents is everywhere.

- The Coast Guard has an annual GPRA goal of 720 or less fatalities per year. This goal was established to gauge how well the federal program is doing. We have had significant pressure to allocate these 720 fatalities across the states and territories and judge their performance in meeting the overall goal. Because of the limitations of the data this is impossible at the present time.

We are working to get better data that can be used to compare states and fine-tune our programs. We are doing surveys to get the hours of exposure by type of boat, and in a few years, by state. This will provide us with a "fatalities per hour of exposure" which will allow us to compare actual measures of risk. We will be implementing a plan to improve the reporting of accidents.

The data that we have is not bad but it does have its limitations. The front of the "Boating Statistics - 1998" has a good explanation of the limitations of the data; take a few minutes to read through it. If you have any questions give us a call. If you have any suggestions for improvement pass those along too!

## President's Column

Continued from page 2

ing cause of transportation-related deaths, and it remains on the NTSB's "most wanted list." It isn't getting off the list unless we adequately fund it.

Our customers already pay these taxes and deserve the services for which they already pay.

Prevention is less expensive than search and rescue, and if we don't provide it, who will?

Our message is simple: "We won't give up, we won't retreat, and we won't go away."

The Coast Guard Commandant, Admiral James Loy, has told Congress that the Coast Guard is "pulling back on the throttles" due to a lack of funding in certain areas. My reaction is that we can't

ford to pull back on the boating safety throttle ... unless we're willing to accept

higher casualties. I don't think any of our readers would accept that as an option. There has to be a better way.

Admiral Loy has told Congress, and assured NASBLA, that he wants to work with the States to push this funding issue to a higher level and resolve it. We welcome his full commitment and we stand ready to "find a way" to provide full funding for boating safety, as authorized by TEA-21. Let's keep boating safety in transportation safety.

As spring arrives, and thoughts turn to boating, let's stay on the throttles to keep boating safer. National Safe Boating Week is coming soon. Kits are in the mail. Here comes another busy boating season. Let's all do our part to make it safe and enjoyable for everyone.



## NTSB mounting 'Safe Kids' campaign, PWC education support lauded by Jim Hall

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Recognizing the Personal Watercraft Industry Association and Bombardier for their support of mandatory education and personal flotation device use, the National Transportation Safety Board has kicked off a "Safe Kids" campaign.

NTSB Chairman Jim Hall, speaking in Miami, Fla., lauded PWIA and Bombardier for supporting the Board's recommendations for mandatory boater education and PFD use, and product safety initiatives.

Those initiatives, announced last year by Hall, focus on child transportation safety. At that time, Hall called on states to approve:

- mandatory PFD use by children ages 12 and under;
- mandatory PFDs for all persons aboard PWCs;
- mandatory boater education for children who are allowed to operate high-powered vessels;
- safety instruction training for children and youth who rent PWCs.

Hall pointed to Bombardier's efforts to improve safety with the introduction of its SEA DOO Learning Key. This device enables first-time PWC riders and rental operators to reduce the speed of SEA DOO watercraft to 35 mph. By so doing, they give themselves time to learn the operating characteristics of a PWC, and how to operate it safely.



## Retail boat market going strong ... except for PWCs

According to figures for 1999 sales just released by the National Marine Manufacturers Association, recreational boat sales are up in just about every category, with the significant exceptions being personal watercraft and jet boats.

Mick Blackistone, NMMA vice president, said expanding boat sales is a result of a healthy economy, and the availability of "new technology" that makes boats run cleaner and quieter.

Last year, according to preliminary NMMA figures, from the organization's Retail Market Review, consumers bought 233,900 outboard boats, up from 200,900 the previous year. They also bought 96,200 stern drive boats, up from 91,000 in 1998, and another 8,200 inboard runabouts were purchased, up from the 6,900 bought in 1998.

There was a very slight increase in the sale of inboard cruisers, according to

NMMA data.

However, when it comes to the PWC market, it might just be that the novelty is wearing off. Retail sales of new units has plummeted over the past two years. In 1999, boaters purchased only 106,000 new PWCs, while in 1998, they bought a reported 130,000 and two years ago, the level was up to 176,000.

Why the drastic drop?

Roger Hagie, public relations director for Kawasaki — a leading PWC manufacturer — told *Small Craft Advisory* that there is a big "used" market of PWCs.

"A certain number of people ... decided after one or two seasons to get rid of their unit," he said.

Hagie acknowledged that industry projections on sales had been higher than actual sales, and he predicted that PWC sales will flatten out.

## Las Vegas to host IAMI seminar in 2002

LAS VEGAS, Nev. — Nevada's Division of Wildlife will host the 2002 conference of the International Association of Marine Investigators, announced Boating Law Administrator Fred Messmann, deputy chief game warden.

That decision was reached in February, Messmann reported. More details will be provided in *Small Craft Advisory* as they become available.

More immediately, he noted, has been the use of a pair of Fatal Vision® goggles at the mid-March boat show in Reno. Messmann said these goggles, which distort vision to a degree similar to what an intoxicated person would see, have been used around the country primarily in public demonstrations by various state police agencies. They have been primarily aimed at preventing drunk driving, but now they can be utilized to simulate intoxicated boating.

He also reported that the agency chief

has implemented a policy of mandatory life jacket wear by officers on boat patrol, and mandatory completion of a NASBLA-approved boater education course before operating any department vessel. Messmann said this will become part of in-service training.

In May, Nevada and California will co-host a training session at Lake Tahoe which will help officers identify two-stroke compliant outboard motors for operation on the pristine lake. Tentatively set to convene at the Elk's Point Fire Station at the lake's south end, this session will address new regulations on outboard motors that have been adopted by the Tahoe Regional Planning Association.

"We want to be able to educate the public so they can ask our officers (about the regulations) and we can tell whether they can operate legally, pursuant to TRPA regulations," Messmann said.

## Coalition to teach hunters, anglers about boat safety



ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Pointing to a high number of boating-related deaths of hunters and fishermen, a coalition including representatives from the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators has been formed to push boating safety to outdoor sportsmen and women.

Called the Sportsman's Forum, this new coalition is a product of the BoatU.S. Foundation for Boating Safety, and is funded by a U.S. Coast Guard grant.

Joining NASBLA in this coalition are representatives from the National Rifle Association, Bass Anglers Sportsman Society, North American Hunting and Fishing Clubs, and Responsive Management.

During 1998 — the most recent year for which statistics are available — 250 hunters and fishermen drowned while boating, according to BoatU.S. This accounted for 30 percent of all boating

deaths that year. Using Coast Guard data, the Sportsman's Forum has created a profile of typical outdoorsmen who are involved in boating mishaps. This "typical" hunter/angler victim:

- Almost never wears a personal flotation device
- Is somewhere between the ages of 30 and 50
- Is in a boat less than 20 feet long.

The majority of these fatal accidents happened under pretty good weather conditions, with clear, sunny skies and calm water, whether lake or river.

However, the exception to that rule is among waterfowl and late-season big game hunters in some states. For example, Texas Boating Law Administrator Carlos Vaca said duck hunters in his state "invariably go out in bad weather." They have boats loaded with decoys, guns and other gear, they're

**"Duck hunters invariably go out in bad weather."**

— Carlos Vaca, Texas

typically wearing heavy clothing (including vests filled with shotshells), and if they capsize, or the engine conks out — a pretty typical pattern with hunting/boating mishaps in Texas — they panic and the results can be fatal.

**"We hold our breath through October and November."**

— Lt. Lyle Belknap, Michigan

Likewise in Michigan, BLA Lt. Lyle Belknap noted, "We hold our breath through October and November." A few years ago, in two consecutive hunting seasons, 13 Michigan hunters drowned, four one year and nine the other.

In Minnesota, DNR Education Specialist Tim Smalley noted that heavy emphasis on vessel safety prior to and during the hunting seasons has helped reduce fatalities.

"We used to lose six or eight (hunters)

a year, for a number of years," Smalley recalled. "That's changed. Duck hunters are now required to have

**"Duck hunters are now required to have PFDs ..."**

— Tim Smalley, MN

PFDs and we have done a fairly aggressive public relations campaign directed at duck hunters and fishermen. Now we seldom have a duck-hunter-related drowning."

## BoatU.S. Foundation awards grants for boating safety programs

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Twenty-eight different organizations, in communities ranging from Fairbanks, Alaska to Fort Myers, Fla. have been awarded Grassroots Grants for boating safety programs from the BoatU.S. Foundation totalling \$45,000.

This year's programs include such di-

verse strategies as theater advertising to handing out T-shirts to youngsters who wear life jackets. All are non-profit efforts, selected from among 225 applications.

Over the past 11 years, the BoatU.S. Foundation for Boating Safety has awarded over \$500,000 to 290 commu-

nity organizations. Funding for the grassroots effort comes from the nearly half-million members of BoatU.S.

Grassroots applications for 2001 grants will be available in July. For information, access the Foundation's website at [www.boatus.com/foundation](http://www.boatus.com/foundation), or call (703) 823-9550, ext. 3016.



# WELL DONE

## A Job Well Done

### Maine Marine Patrol boasting two 'Officers of Year' in March events

AUGUSTA, Maine — Maine's Marine Patrol has two, count em, *two* recipients of the Officer of the Year award, and both were honored during presentations held in March at two different locations, according to Sgt. Jeff Gallagher.



Sgt. Jeff Gallagher

At the Annual Fishermen's Forum in Rockland, Marine Patrol Officer Rene Cloutier was recognized for "his tireless diligence" enforcing the state's boating laws and regulations. Honored by the commercial fishing industry, Cloutier was described as "an outstanding officer who had an outstanding year."

"Rene is a great people person," Gallagher wrote, "who takes his job very seriously. He was also recognized last year by the Northeast Conservation Law Enforcement Chiefs Association." Cloutier has the Friendship patrol which is in Maine's mid-coast area.

Later in the month, in Charleston S.C., Sgt. Victor Cole was honored by the Northeast Conservation Law Enforcement Chief's Association, Gallagher continued.

Sgt. Cole is the Section 4 supervisor who lives in Port Clyde, Maine. Described as "a very hard worker," he supervises a section of seven officers. On two separate occasions, his contingent hauled and seized over 2,700 lobster traps which were being fished illegally.

Cole is a 14-year veteran of the agency, Gallagher said.

"Sgt. Cole's section has one of the busiest areas in our state," Gallagher reported. "His section covers an area from Thomaston to Stockton Springs and many off shore islands. The dedication of Sgt. Cole is a big bonus to the Department of Marine Resources and the great State of Maine."

### Altizer earns recognition as Virginia 'Officer of the Year'



PENHOOK, Va. — It isn't every day when an officer with Virginia's Department of Game and Inland Fisheries can earn recognition for a job well done from a member of Congress, but that's what happened to Officer Carson H. Altizer.

Named boating law enforcement officer of the year from Virginia, he received a pin from the Southern States Boating Law Administrators Association, and the presentation was made by Virginia's 5th District Congressman Virgil H. Goode, Jr. Altizer was also presented with a U.S. Flag and a letter of commendation from Rep. Goode during a brief ceremony.

Altizer is one of 13 officers in the southern states recognized for outstanding service in boating law enforcement for 1999.

According to Lt. Karl P. Martin, district supervisor in the Franklin County/Smith Mountain Lake region where Altizer is assigned, "In addition to his efforts in boating safety education and enforcement, Officer Altizer has been involved with three major boat theft investigations on Smith Mountain Lake over the past three years. All three investigations involved multi-jurisdictional efforts and resulted in felony

convictions for the perpetrators."

Altizer has served with the agency since 1994.

His first investigation involved the theft of ten boats, by five individuals who lived on the lake. These boats were used, Lt. Martin said, "to help carry out other thefts around the lake." All ten boats were eventually recovered, although one was deliberately set on fire.

In a second case, Altizer investigated the theft of two boats worth over \$40,000, stolen over the Fourth of July weekend. This investigation also led to the recovery of stolen personal watercraft, taken by companions of the boat thieves. That case resulted in the arrest of seven suspects.

Altizer's third investigation involved four PWCs, valued at over \$30,000, which were taken and stripped, with the parts and engines re-sold. This investigation lasted over a year, and resulted in two convictions for grand larceny.

Noted Lt. Martin, "Officer Altizer's outstanding service in boating safety and enforcement greatly enhances public safety and enjoyment of the recreational resources on Smith Mountain Lake."

# WELL DONE

## A Job Well Done

### Farrell lauded for activities at California Department of Boating & Waterways

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — As chief of the Operations Division for the California Department of Boating and Waterways, Dolores Farrell supervises 13 staffers who carry out various programs involving boating safety, education, enforcement, yacht and ship broker licensing and the state's Abandoned Vessel Abatement Program.

And, she controls an annual budget of \$17.3 million, apparently doing a pretty good job at it because interim Boating Law Administrator Carlton Moore has lauded her efforts.

"Her leadership and personal direction have resulted in the development of many prominent initiatives, especially in the area of boater education," Moore recently noted in a message to *Small Craft Advisory*.

Among Farrell's most prominent



achievements is the Aqua Smart Boating program for high school students. Recently completed, the course rounds off the full spectrum of boating education targeting various age groups, tailored for specific problems with water and boating safety that are common to each

group, Moore explained.

California's Aqua Smart program is just one of many developments that have gained national attention, and it was nominated for the Western Region National Boating Education Advancement Award last July at the Western States Boating Administrators Association meeting.

Farrell has also fostered several other innovative programs, Moore noted. These involve commercially produced radio spots, and strategically placed billboards reminding boaters enroute to launching areas to wear their life jackets.

"California's overall downward trend in boating accidents is due, in part, to professionals like Dolores Farrell who are dedicated to the goal of enhancing safety afloat," Moore said.

### Group accolades given to Maryland basic boating coordinators

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — For the third year in a row, the Maryland Natural Resources Police took time to thank a very special group of people, the state's Basic Boating Education coordinators.

According to Julie Sweeney with the Department of Natural Resources, over the past 15 years this group has been dedicated to offering the state's boating basics course at their facilities statewide. This includes 11 community college campuses and 15 county parks and recreation facilities.

The course has become so successful that many agencies offer classes beginning in February and running through the boating season, well into autumn. More than 250 basic boating classes were held last year, and an increase is predicted this year.



Coordinators met at the Eastport Yacht Club in Annapolis for their appreciation luncheon and used the opportunity to discuss plans for this year's activities. New materials, including student tests and test

sheets, answer keys, material order forms and course registration forms were distributed. The group also reviewed some of the new visual aids for this year's course.



## Mylnar named Minnesota Boat and Water Safety Conservation Officer of the Year

GARRISON, Minn. — Conservation officer Bob Mylnar has been named Boat and Water Safety Officer of the Year by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

According to Boating Law Administrator Kim Elverum, this honor is based on demonstrated leadership abilities and outstanding achievements in boating safety education, boating while intoxicated enforcement, and service to other law enforcement agencies.

Mylnar's DNR enforcement career began in 1996, when he was assigned to patrol 132,000-acre Mille Lacs Lake in central Minnesota. The following year, he attended the U.S. Coast Guard's National Boating Safety Instructor Course at Yorktown, Va. and was also assigned to his current station in Garrison, which is on Mille Lacs.

The Garrison assignment offers Mylnar



Left to right: Colonel Bill Bernhjelm, MN Dir. of Enforcement, Conservation Officer Bob Mylnar, and MN Boating Law Administrator Kim Elverum.

a mix of high boating and fishing activity, and his interest in boat safety, especially life jackets and navigational lights, has served him well, Elverum said. Due

partly to the high number of hours Mylnar spends on the water, he frequently responds to calls for assistance, taking the time necessary to locate and tow distressed boaters to safety.

Recently he has worked with other DNR and sheriff's personnel to bring the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary's services to the huge lake.

His supervisor, Lt. Rita Frenzel, praised Mylnar's exceptional attitude and approach.

"Bob's professionalism," she said, "and inclination to attend to extra details is outstanding. Through dedication and tact, he has earned the respect of those of which he comes in contact. His law enforcement efforts are tempered with common sense and good judgment. His strong public relations activities are geared toward resource users, both youth and adults."

## David Rosado is Florida's 'Officer of Year'

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Assigned to northern Florida's Duval County since becoming a fish and wildlife officer in September 1995, David Rosado has been named Law Enforcement Officer of the Year for the state Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Originally from Nevada, Rosado came to Florida and spent six years with the U.S. Coast Guard in Key West. After graduating from the academy in December 1995, he moved north to Duval County, where he is an active member of the local and state chapters of Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

Over the years, officer Rosado's performance has served as a benchmark for excellence, consistency, and professionalism for his chosen profession, according to Lt. Brett Norton, boat accident investigation specialist and last year's NASBLA Officer of the Year.

Rosado is a field training officer, academy counselor, and instructs BUI/DUI at the academy and on a local level, Norton said. He has taken a pro-active approach to BUI enforcement which has resulted in Duval County going from an average of

five BUI arrests per year to over 40.

One of Rosado's most accomplished efforts was "Operation Life Ring." This year-long operation was the largest multi-agency BUI detail ever mounted in the Sunshine State. Hundreds of boating and fishing pamphlets and educational materials were handed out to the public while on the water.

Once, when asked by supervisors how many BUI cases he thought the operation would net on a particular weekend, Rosado's immediate response was "our goal is ZERO."

"Our agency has noticed a considerable increase in citizens using 'designated operators' on the water in Duval County which is a direct result of Operation Life Ring," Norton reported.

Although very involved with BUI/DUI enforcement and training, Rosado is a well-rounded and diverse enforcement officer, Norton continued. During 1999 Rosado made over 445 arrests, issued 1,058 written and verbal warnings and conducted 1,139 boating safety inspections.

"However, we are more proud of the fact Dave has made over 3,000 citizen



contacts with not one resulting in a bad experience," Norton added.

"Officer Rosado's polite and professional demeanor with the public has earned the respect of his peers, his supervisors and most importantly, the citizens," stated Colonel Robert Edwards, Director of FWC's Division of Law Enforcement.

Rosado was accompanied by his Christine and daughter, Angela, to receive his award.



## Ohio's Hoedt, USPS members receive Chapman Awards

ORLANDO, Fla. — Ohio Boating Law Administrator Jeff Hoedt was among four recipients of the prestigious Chapman Awards, which are given annually by the United States Power Squadrons and *Motor Boating & Sailing* magazine.

Joining Hoedt in the spotlight were P/D/C Henry G. Griffin of New York, United Safe Boating Institute founder P/C/C Richard W. Miner, and P/D/C Wendell Seibert.

The award is named for Charles F. Chapman, past chief commander of the USPS and longtime publisher and editor of *Motor Boating & Sailing*.

In accepting his award, Hoedt pointed to the contributions of Ohio's entire Division of Watercraft staff to that state's boating safety program. He told *Small Craft Advisory* that without their efforts, the job simply could not get done.

"It's not 'my' award," he said. "It belongs to all of us."

Hoedt, chief of the Division, has also served as Idaho boating law administrator and also worked for the U.S. Coast Guard for a time between his Idaho and Ohio stints.

Griffin is a veteran captain from USPS District 4, having spent years in New York Harbor conducting educational cruises aboard a 130-foot yacht. Now a



Louisa Rudeen and USPS Chief Commander Arthur Farr present Chapman awards to P/C/C BLA Jeff Hoedt (top, right), P/D/C Henry Griffin (bottom left) and Richard Miner (bottom right).

member of the National Boating Activities Committee, Griffin coordinates the cruise program, which has been going on for more than five years, and has now expanded to several other communities around the country.

Seibert, who could not attend the awards ceremony — part of the USPS an-

nual meeting — was honored for his work in Texas. He has worked with the U.S. Coast Guard and Auxiliary, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, and the Beaumont and Orange power squadrons, creating the Southwest Texas Boating Coalition. This group promotes a personal watercraft course among recreational boaters in the region, offers team teaching and schedules boating events and classes.

Miner earned recognition for founding the Safe Boating Institute. This 14-year-old organization has contributed to boating safety throughout its history. Its membership includes representatives from USPS, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, U.S. Sailing Association, Canadian Power & Sail Squadrons, and the American Red Cross. They have produced a PWC video and safety brochures for houseboat operators, anglers and hunters.

Presenting the awards were Louisa Rudeen, editor-in-chief of *Motor Boating & Sailing* and USPS Chief Commander Arthur H. Farr.

Hoedt used his appearance to actually present an award. This one went to Farr, and came from the State of Ohio in recognition of Farr's lifetime contributions to boating safety.

## IAMI recognizes pair as 'Investigators of the Year'

GALVESTON, Tex. — Captain Lou Wary, P.E. of Brick, N.J. and Clackamas County Deputy Doug Olsen of Oregon City, Ore., have been named Investigators of the Year by the International Marine Investigators Association.

Wary received the non-law enforcement award, while Olsen was the recipient of the award for law enforcement. The awards are funded by, and given annually by BoatU.S., a nationwide recreational boat owners' association.

Olsen, assigned to the Clackamas County Sheriff's Office marine patrol unit, investigated a rash of boat and outboard motor thefts. Using secondary hull identification numbers and acid etching to raise numbers from metal parts, and by checking outboard motor serial numbers to see if they were sto-

len, the deputy was able to track down the rightful owners. He also frequented pawn shops looking for stolen outboards, and found several.

During the first half of 1999, Olsen rounded up 13 stolen outboards, two stolen personal watercraft, and a pair of stolen boats.

Oregon City is a community located a few miles south of the greater Portland, Ore. area, along the Willamette River.

Wary was honored for his investigation of a case in which a young man was run down by two "performance boats" while windsurfing. The boats were traveling one behind another. Two days after being struck, and suffering from a multitude of injuries that included amputations, the windsurfer died.

After the operator of the second boat

was convicted of causing the fatality, and reckless operation of his vessel, Wary, of B&K Marine Engineering, was called in to investigate the mishap. What he discovered caused the second boater's conviction to be overturned.

Wary, according to a BoatU.S. release, studied the autopsy report and photographs of the victim's injuries. He also made models of both boats' hulls that showed the victim's head wounds and propeller wounds could have only been made by two different boats, and not just the second vessel.

He went further in the investigation, using forensic accident reconstruction techniques, to prove that the first boat had actually been responsible for fracturing the victim's skull and causing massive brain damage resulting in death.

## Indiana will use high-visibility patrols at large public events

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. — This spring, summer and fall when large public gatherings unfold anywhere around the Prairie State, boaters will immediately notice a large law enforcement presence, said Major Sam Purvis, boating law administrator for the Department of Natural Resources.

These "targeted patrols" will appear at such events as bass tournaments and on-the-water rock concerts; everywhere there are large crowds, Purvis said.

It's part of a statewide effort this boating season to promote better community interaction with the DNR enforcement and education program. Lieutenant Ralph Taylor, commander of the state's northeast district, said this year's campaign goes beyond simple enforcement of the boating while intoxicated statute.

He detailed the three-tiered strategy of this year's effort:

- Continuation of the BWI enforcement

program, using two-officer patrols (at the minimum) on overtime at specific waters.

- Enforcement saturation patrols involving single officers, again on overtime, specifically targeting problem areas, with the intention of focusing primarily on operations and safety violations.
- Visibility patrols, which target public freshwater lakes that have high concentrations of adjacent landowners. Also done by officers on overtime, the focus of this patrol is not enforcement activity, but is designed to generate community support with near-shore patrols, using community interaction and routine boat stops designed to foster good officer support. At such stops, officers would do giveaways, whether they be T-shirts, free ice-cream coupons or some other goodwill strategy (not yet determined).

Another benefit of the high-visibility

campaign will be the appearance of patrols at specific waters where officers may not be seen very often by the public. This leaves the impression among would-be offenders, Purvis and Taylor suggested, that an officer is in the neighborhood and they should behave themselves.

Boat patrols may also be combined this summer, Purvis continued. There may be a Boating Safety Overtime Patrol established to add manpower when needed, using officers working outside their regularly scheduled patrols.

"There will be funds, and a budget, for each district," Purvis said.

Not everyone will be wearing a uniform during some of these "emphasis patrols," he confirmed. On such occasions, officers may show up with unmarked boats or personal watercraft, cruise around a lake or impoundment to spot violators and then, he explained, "they call in the cavalry."

## Washington state officers will train in BUI; radio PSAs target sportsmen

OLYMPIA, Wash. — Despite the death in committee this session of all boating bills before the Washington State Legislature, it was hardly the end of boating enforcement and education efforts by the state's Parks & Recreation Commission.

Enforcement specialist Mark Kenny told *Small Craft Advisory* that the agency had scheduled an April "vessel DUI" workshop for enforcement officers from around the state. The state contracts with 50 different law enforcement agencies for boating enforcement, including 35 county sheriff's departments and 15 city police departments. The most recent agencies to sign on, Kenny noted, are the Black Diamond Police Department and Grays Har-

bor Sheriff's Department. Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife agents also enforce boating laws.

Kenny said the seminar will be conducted with assistance from the Oregon State Marine Board, somewhere in south-central Washington, in the Tri-Cities area of Pasco, Kennewick and Richland near the confluence of the Snake and Columbia rivers.

Meanwhile, the commission will be targeting anglers and hunters in a series of "more aggressive radio spots." These will air in the spring and fall, because outdoor sportsmen apparently don't consider themselves boaters, even though they are on the water, in a boat.

Education specialist Dona Wolfe has been working with United States Power Squadrons, law enforcement and the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary. Kits are being assembled for classroom display that include navigation lights, small anchors, an air horn, personal flotation devices and other items that are both required or recommended for all boaters.

Presentations will be done in public schools.

The Parks Commission is also exploring ways to reach Washington's more diverse population, which may be separated by ethnic or linguistic barriers. Several segments of the state's population are apparently not being reached by current efforts.

## W. Virginia takes delivery of new patrol vessels

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — Settlement money from a big oil spill along the Ohio River some years ago has been churned back into public service by the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, according to Sgt. Tim Coleman.

Proceeds from the Ashland oil spill settlement have been used to purchase five new patrol boats and recondition five older vessels in the agency, Coleman said.

"Our wildlife section received several boats, too," he reported. "We've gotten

aluminum boats, 34-footers. They are big for us, and they are like smaller U.S. Coast Guard patrol boats with enclosed cabins. They will work good on the Ohio River because we've got contraband going up and down the river, and speed boats had gotten used to running. Now we can catch them."

Each powered by a Merc 225 outboard engine, these new vessels will be highly visible during this year's boating season, Coleman assured.

On the education front, the DNR is working with the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and United States Power Squadron volunteers to set up this year's boating education courses. This is in response to last year's passage of mandatory education legislation, which takes effect in 2001. Coleman said the law requires anyone born after Dec. 31, 1986 to obtain a certificate of course completion, issued by the state. That certificate must be carried by boat operators while they are on the water.



## Michigan develops formula to allocate manpower, set patrol assignments



Lyle Belknap

LANSING, Mich. — Calling it a "work plan for allocation of marine hours for our officers," Michigan Boating Law Administrator Lt. Lyle Belknap is lauding an effort by one of his colleagues that could help

reduce boating accidents and fatalities in the Great Lakes State starting this year.

Using information from a Michigan State University boating survey, and other resources, Department of Natural Resources Sgt. Kevin Hackworth has combined data with the average boating accident rate for each county (both injury and fatality statistics), along with the total water acreage in each county to devise a formula for allocating marine patrol hours. Hackworth developed three criteria for manpower allocation that address patrol attention based on accident rates, how much water is in each county, and on which waters are people doing the most boating.

He then uses a grading system to determine final manpower needs.

Bottom line, according to Hackworth, is: "Where do we want to be seen the most?"

Hackworth spent considerable time on this study to develop his "methodology for distributing marine hours to Law Enforcement Division districts and areas." His formula actually scores the different criteria to help the agency allocate patrol hours.

This is a manpower allocation structure that could easily be adapted to other states, Sgt. Hackworth acknowledged. He will be discussing it during a program scheduled during the June 11-19 Midwest/Western Law Enforcement conference in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Belknap recalled that in the 1980s, an earlier study was conducted that helped the DNR begin manpower allocation efforts. That study identified the

most dangerous boating hours as between 2 and 7 p.m. on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and holiday Mondays, during the boating season.

DNR used that information, starting in 1987, and by the following year, Belknap recalled, "our fatality rate dropped." It's been consistently lower than in the pre-study days, he noted.

Hackworth's effort doesn't simply amplify what was learned in the earlier study, but gets right down to the details on where, and when, to best utilize DNR's enforcement officers to cut down on boating accidents and fatalities. In his summation, Hackworth notes, "The marine hours distribution process has been developed to allow for the allocation of hours to either LED districts or LED areas. It is believed that the allocation of hours on a district basis would allow for more flexibility for officer utilization than would an area basis."

Translation: Sgt. Hackworth's formula is not a lock-step piece of micro-management.

He further observes, "In the past, districts have been required to meet allocated marine hours exclusively with officers from their own district. It is believed that this distribution methodology inefficiently utilizes officer time relative to district level work when viewed on a statewide basis."

And he also concludes, "If the purpose of allocating hours is to maximize impacts on boater safety, LED could temporarily have officers from less active districts patrol in districts that experience a higher level of boating activity. In this case, the cost of travel and lodging would have to be weighed against the perceived increase in patrol coverage efficiency. If, on the other hand, the primary goal of LED is to balance the benefits of increased patrol efforts/hours with attaining its statewide marine hour goals, an effort should be made to distribute the hours among districts at a more equal level than the model does. This would allow for officers in more active districts a 'breather' to get non-marine work taken care of."

Hackworth told *Small Craft Advisory* that he uses this formula to also determine where to assign new officers.

## New York boating fatalities among lowest on record

ALBANY, N.Y. — Last year's total for boating fatalities was the third lowest recorded since the state began keeping statistics on boat deaths in the 1960s, said Boating Law Administrator Brian Kempf with the Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation.

Twenty-five Empire State boaters lost their lives on state waters during 1999, Kempf reported.

He said the average falls typically anywhere from the high 20s to lower 30s.

"Typically," he noted, "we had about 30 percent of them in small boats that are non-mechanically propelled ... canoes and kayaks."

One-third of those fatalities involved boats under 16 feet, and alcohol was involved in about 24 percent of all deadly mishaps, Kempf added.

**"Alcohol was involved in about 24 percent of all deadly mishaps"**

**— Brian Kempf**

To continue the trend this year, marine enforcement training programs have already begun, with a vessel operators course scheduled in Montauk during May, and two more courses slated in early June. A personal watercraft operator's course for law enforcement is slated at the Finger Lakes near Seneca Falls, also.

PWC education is foremost on Kempf's agenda, as New York operators are all now required to take a safety course, with the requirement being phased in over the next four years. That law took effect Jan. 1, and it is Kempf's intention to set up courses in each of the state's park regions. Also, his agency will insert an advisory that goes out with all boat registrations from the Department of Motor Vehicles this year.

## Training for Success, Part III: Changing attitudes on drinking and boating

*Editor's note: In the second story of this series, we looked at the Marine Safety & Law Enforcement Academy for the Oregon Marine Board Law Enforcement Program. Now we will look at the broad effort to change public attitudes on Boating Under the Influence of Intoxicants (BUII), using traditional law enforcement practices and advertising campaigns.*

by Randy Henry  
Oregon State Marine Board

SALEM, Ore. — "Hello, sir. I'm Deputy Puckett with Jackson County. Looks like you've been having some fun out there on the water this afternoon. Do you realize you came through the 'slow-no-wake' zone without slowing down? You also seemed to have a lot of trouble docking. Can I have you step out of the boat and ask you a few questions?"

The operator's actions are one clue, but the case of empty beer cans and his response to some basic questions are the proverbial nails in the coffin. After a series of field sobriety tests, it's apparent this man has been operating a boat while intoxicated, and in Oregon, that's a crime. A growing number of boaters are finding that out as law enforcement cracks down on drinking boaters. In Oregon, a multi-pronged approach is working to convince boaters that drinking and operating a boat is not only a bad idea, it's against the law.

Public attitudes on drinking and boating are slowly changing, fostered by new BUII laws, improved training of marine officers, BUII campaigns and carry-over from activist groups such as "Mothers Against Drunk Driving." Last year, 268 Oregon boaters were arrested for BUII. Ten years ago, that number was in the single digits.

Training Marine Patrol officers in the fine art of field sobriety tests and recognizing impairment is the enforcement portion of the equation to reduce alcohol and drug-related accidents on the water. Nationally, alcohol and drugs play a role in about half of all boating acci-

dents. In 1999 numbers, that means more than 350 fatalities. Oregon is making a concerted effort to reduce its portion of the number.

Oregon's current emphasis on BUII goes back to the mid-1980s but gathered speed and teeth when state legislators passed new BUII laws in 1991. To enforce the law, it was obvious Marine Patrol officers needed training.

"You can't enforce a law if you can't identify the crime," said Pat Rowland, Marine Board Law Enforcement Training coordinator.

So in 1994, BUII training became a regular part of the Marine Safety and Law Enforcement Academy offered each April to new marine officers. Rowland also took the two-day training on the road, reaching officers in all corners of the state.



"Hey officer!..." Marine officer recruits size up a training scenario in April, 1999.

"Changing the attitude of officers is very much part of the process," said Rowland. "Often, they don't believe there is a problem. Once they learn how to identify it, they see it and it becomes a priority."

In the training, officers learn a battery of standardized field sobriety tests and test their skills on volunteer drinkers. The Marine Board also provides officers with state-of-the-art intoxilyzers and led the effort to make Oregon the first state to get the CMI 1400 intoxilyzer court evi-



IN TRAINING — Marion County Marine Patrol put an alleged drinking boater through the paces of a field sobriety test.

dentiary certified.

Once trained, many officers begin making arrests immediately and begin focusing on impaired boaters.

"Not only do they get good at recognizing it, but they look for waterbodies that are particular problems, they schedule to be at the ramp or on the water when the violators are there. If you only work 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, you won't get many arrests. If you work flexible hours, you get a lot more. Most of our arrests are on weekends and especially weekend afternoons and evenings. You'd be surprised how quickly word spreads after the first few arrests," Rowland said.

**Training In The Courts** The BUII arrest is only the first step in a long, expensive process for the violator. It can end with a \$3,500 fine and a three-year boat registration suspension.

"But first, the violator has to appear in court," noted Bill Rydbloom, Marine Board law enforcement program manager. "Surprisingly, District attorneys and judges across the state have different views on the severity of this violation. We've had some counties refuse to file. In their view, it's just not a serious offense. One of our goals is to educate and convince them that BUII is dangerous and unacceptable."

How do you make this point to district attorneys and judges?

*Continued on next page*



"They're coming around," Rydbloom observed. "They see the public service announcements, the accident reports, talk with our program managers. We took an additional step, though, that has been very effective. In 1999, we developed the 'Oregon BUII Handbook' that includes Oregon Revised Statutes and Oregon Administrative Rules on BUII, case law supporting conviction, information on preparing a BUII case, and BUII facts and statistics. We then had our marine deputies hand-deliver the handbook to the district attorney and district court judge in their area. We've had positive feedback from these people. We're seeing more convictions and more people entering diversion programs who, in the past, would have been released without charges."

**The Gospel of BUII** Despite increased arrests and convictions, the goal is not simply to rack up big BUII numbers, Rydbloom said.

"Our goal is to change public behavior," he explained. "Ideally, we would like to change the behavior so the alcohol gets left at home. Couple an effective public relations campaign with broad and effective enforcement efforts, and people don't just know the law, they know what happens if they violate it."

Beginning in 1996, the Marine Board approved funding of an advertising campaign to proactively reach the general public. The campaign is now a \$75,000 annual investment in changing and monitoring public attitude.

The program uses print, radio, television and outdoor advertising designed to promote responsible boating. The firm also conducts focus group and public opinion surveys to track public attitude and adjust the campaign message to be as effective as possible.

In the world of multi-million dollar campaigns, \$75,000 a year only goes so far. To stretch the dollars, the campaign leverages as much free airtime, billboard space and print space as possible, concentrating efforts in high population areas where the bulk of Oregon boaters are found and during the season when boaters are heading to the water.

The campaign is entering its fourth year. The post-season survey conducted in November 1999 indicates that the cam-



**REWARDING CAREER** — Deputy Joe Puckett, of Jackson County, knows when and where to find drinking boaters. His skills payed off in 1999 with dozens of BUII arrests and an award for his efforts.

paign is educating boaters about drinking and boating laws. Based on the survey, the campaign will again emphasize BUII's immediate and inconvenient consequences and effective, but reasonable, BUII enforcement. So far, the public response to the campaign is following a similar course to the DUII campaign's early years.

**Film at Eleven** Dovetailing with the campaign and with the on-water enforcement is media reporting of the BUII effort. Boating is a picturesque, inviting activity for newspaper and, especially, television reporters. Throw in a sunny weekend, marine patrols, a motherhood-and-apple-pie safety message, and you have a good story.

In 1999, the Marine Board organized a series of "saturation patrols" on key waterways across the state. Deputies from a half-dozen counties converged on a single lake or reservoir on a busy weekend with the goal of checking every boat on the lake, perform routine safety exams and check for intoxicated boaters and other violations. Media interest in the saturation patrols grew throughout the summer. Interest in the growing number of BUII arrests also increased. By Labor Day weekend, the stage was set. The Marine Board issued an intentionally vague news release prior to the holiday weekend saying that somewhere in the state, a saturation patrol would converge on a busy waterbody. Virtually every daily newspaper and all the network television stations in Oregon carried the story. The media covered many major waterways, providing on-camera opportunity for officers to talk about drinking and boating.

**But Did It Help?** Oregon's boating fatalities vary greatly from year to year depending on weather, fishing seasons and other factors. Only one of the sixteen fatalities in 1999 had a confirmed link to drugs or alcohol. Rowland and Rydbloom contended that the marked decrease is a one-year anomaly likely to be higher in 2000. However, arrests and convictions are up and public awareness and media interest in drinking and boating is at an all-time high.

"Those numbers speak volumes but this is a long-term program. It will continue to evolve and change with the goal of making boating safer," said Rydbloom. "We get many phone calls from people who want drinking boaters off the water. They want their lakes to be safe for family activities. We know from these people that public attitude has already changed, and that's a gratifying measure of success right there."

### Idaho will offer PWC patrol and rescue courses

BOISE, Idaho — Boating enforcement specialists should circle June 20-22 and July 18-20 on their calendars, as those are the dates selected for courses on personal watercraft patrol and rescue techniques in Idaho.

According to Pat Beale, law enforcement specialist with the Department of Parks & Recreation, the June session will be held on the Payette River near Boise. In July, the course moves to the Clearwater River, about 60 miles upstream from Lewiston.

"The course uses both classroom and on-the-water skill development to expose the student to law enforcement patrol, towing and various rescue techniques on both flat and white water," Beale said.

Students operate on moving water, up to Class III, depending upon river flows and conditions. They will engage in a variety of self-rescues, practice one- and two-man rescue techniques and also learn rescue and towing PWCs in moving water, he added.

Registration is \$150 and covers both equipment and on-the-water lunches.

Contact Beale at his Boise office: (208) 334-4180, ext. 225, or e-mail him at <pbeale@idpr.state.id.us>.



## Connecticut DEP hosts UL advanced accident seminar, holds more public, LE training

OLD LYME, Conn. — Connecticut's Department of Environmental Protection Boating Division will host an advanced accident investigation seminar sponsored by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators and Underwriters Laboratory, May 3-5.

The course will be held at the DEP Marine Headquarters in Old Lyme, according to Allen Ames, special projects coordinator for the boating division.

This follows on the heels of the division's annual seminars for recreational boaters and marine enforcement officers.

Updates on state law and other matters were provided during the boating educators' seminar in March, Ames said. Volunteer instructors from the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, U.S. Power Squadrons, and about 20 commercial providers of boating safety courses in the state attended.

One of the major goals in the past year had been to assure that all boating



education providers in the state have accurate and up-to-date information on state law and that they teach that law in their courses.

In early April, the Boating Division scheduled its annual marine law enforcement seminar. As with the civilian

course, this seminar was designed to update all marine officers on state and federal law. This annual gathering is also an opportunity to bring together all levels of enforcement from State and DEP conservation enforcement officers to lake authorities, harbor masters, and local authorities to discuss mutual concerns. This year, Ames reported, DEP instructors demonstrated Coast Guard-approved manual and automatic inflatable PFDs in the pool. Other topics included definitions of accidents and accident scene preservation.

## Vermont facing common problem with seasonal enforcement hires

WILLISTON, Vt. — "We'll probably never get all 30 slots filled before the start of boating season."

That was the lament from Lt. Al Buck, state boating law administrator with Vermont's State Police. His dilemma is not unusual for agencies that utilize temporary or seasonal officers for enforcement duties during the summer.

Because many of those seasonal employees are actively looking for full-time positions in the law enforcement field, they're often hired away by other agencies, or they get full-time posts within the agency for which they're working part-time. That is the case in Vermont.

Buck noted that many of his previous seasonal officers have moved to full-time positions over the years.

"In the last ten years," he estimated, "and mostly during the last five years, I have lost probably 100 to 125 (seasonal officers) to a full-time position somewhere else. There are about 35 of

them on our department right now who started off as seasonals. Some of them are sergeants now. And, I have several in other state police agencies, and municipal departments."

When these people are lost, Buck observed, the whole process must begin anew. And, he added, the hiring process "has gotten a lot harder."

While some seasonal hires have been with Vermont's boating program for 20 years, the majority do not last that long. Buck estimated the average time served in the program before moving on is between 2 1/2 and 5 years.

Why the turnover?

"A lot of them are college students, still in school. They use this as a stepping stone," Lt. Buck said. "They want to get their degree, and this gives them experience in police work."

Buck is working toward a solution to this dilemma. When the State Legislature convenes next year, he will offer a plan

to have some of the state's gas tax revenue channeled to his division for hiring four or five full-time officers to provide a core group, around which the seasonal operation is built each year. This would create continuity in the division, and allow for officers to be on the job before and after the primary boating season, periods when seasonal employees may not be available, but emergencies do occur.

But with immediate needs being the priority, Buck noted, "I've got about 20 people in the hiring pipeline right now, and there will be a little extra money in the budget for overtime to work the boat program."

Meanwhile, Buck is also working on obtaining grant monies for two local police departments (for \$20,000 each) for equipment and service expenses, and to the state Department of Fish & Wildlife to purchase a boat for use on Lake Champlain.



## Missouri Water Patrol shifting focus?

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — Having led the nation in on-the-water drug and boating under the influence arrests for the past two years, according to Boating Law Administrator Col. Larry Whitten, the Missouri Water Patrol may shift its emphasis this summer to reducing boating fatalities.

Col. Whitten, commissioner of the Water Patrol, told *Small Craft Advisory* that while his officers have concentrated on nabbing alcohol and drug users, fatal boat accidents have gone up.

"So," Whitten explained, "I met with the officers and asked, 'Are we putting our emphasis in the wrong areas?'"

A result of that discussion is a change in the patrol emphasis, though Whitten offered assurances that this is not a green light for alcohol and drug users to take back the waters. Water Patrol officers will, he made clear, give the criminal element their undivided attention at every encounter.

"We are still going to do drunk and drug emphasis patrols," Whitten said, "because we've got to keep people honest out there."

But at the same time, eyes will be peeled for negligent boaters, the people

who typically cause boating accidents. Not all of them are drunk, but all of them are doing something wrong, whether carelessly speeding, running too close to other vessels, or otherwise not paying attention.

"This requires a dramatic shift in manpower hours," Whitten confirmed. "You cut down on shifts and manpower in other areas, and you risk accidents and other offenses picking up in areas that get less attention."

Whitten and his colleagues have been looking at accident statistics, to find out where they are happening, the time of day, which day of the week and so forth. (Michigan has adopted a strikingly similar strategy to reduce accidents this year. See related story on page 11 of this issue.)

"We're also looking at the type of boats involved, to see if we can come up with a common denominator on where to target, and the type of boat to look for," Whitten said.

Whitten said the public wants the Water Patrol to "cut down on the rowdies." That said, officers will be out during the hours, on days of the week, in high-use locations, when statistics show there are the greatest odds of serious accidents.

## D.C. marine officers will enforce new certificate mandate

WASHINGTON, D.C. — "One thing we will definitely be doing this summer, is ... looking for and enforcing the requirement to carry some type of certification of boating education."

So stated Lt. Langston Clay, boating law administrator for the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Police Department. His agency will issue a wallet-sized certification card to boaters, so it will be more convenient to carry than a large certificate. While acknowledging that officers will use their discretion about how best to enforce the requirement, he left no doubt that District boaters better have their card.

Enforcement, of course, will be confined to the District side of the Potomac River.

One tool that will help the harbor patrol this season is the acquisition of two Sea-DOOs on a loaner program. Officers have been trained to operate personal watercraft and Clay's intent is to use them not merely as an enforcement

tool, but also to increase the patrol's visibility, and as a public relations tool.

"We want boaters to know we are out there to assist them," Lt. Clay observed. "In addition, we have incorporated a section on personal watercraft in our boating safety class, because we have noticed a definite increase in PWCs in our waters."

Those PWC-mounted officers are already being noticed. They were out for the April 8-9 Blessing of the Fleet, an annual event that traditionally attracts about 200 boats, but this year was expected to bring out quite a few more.

Clay also said the harbor unit is undertaking a lot of training to increase enforcement against drunken boaters, and to conduct more safety checks. The division has obtained three new patrol boats for this purpose.

"We'll be standing tall out there," Clay remarked.

## Texas bracing for drought; low water could mean more boating accidents

AUSTIN, Tex. — Low water and high gas prices may combine to give Lone Star State boating authorities some real headaches this summer, said Boating Law Administrator Carlos Vaca.

While dry winter weather appears to be bringing in an even drier spring and summer, soaring fuel prices could make it tougher to patrol big lakes where most boaters congregate. It's a combination of circumstances that has Vaca and his colleagues at the Parks & Wildlife Department bracing for the worst.

"It's really premature," he acknowledged, "but everybody's holding on. The boating season could be affected by this. If we start having a lot of problems ... and if we have a drought, people tend to stay home but if you have an accident, it is more severe."

"There are a lot of ghost islands and stumps out there," Vaca continued. "They suddenly come up and we have had some serious accidents."

A prime example is Lake Travis, one of the state's most heavily-used waters. It began the boating season already 14 feet below full pool, and without a lot of rain and runoff, things could turn serious in a hurry.

Vaca's primary concern is drawdown on the larger, more popular impoundments, which feed water into downstream agricultural areas. People not familiar with a specific lake may see just smooth water ahead, but when they hit the accelerator, they might strike a stump or a bottom rise just below the surface.

One safety effort Vaca will try is to remind boaters to "know your lake." Another approach is the continued use of public service announcements, this year aimed at spouses, girlfriends and mothers of boat operators.

To deal with rising fuel costs, Vaca said enforcement efforts may increasingly lean toward "location" or "stationary patrols." Officers will move their boats into high-activity areas and just sit.

"It is very effective," Vaca stated.

## Utah will kick off Safe Boating Week with Willard Bay event



Ted Woolley

OGDEN, Utah — Beehive State boaters will be invited to the third annual National Safe Boating Week "launch" at Willard Bay Reservoir just north of here, where they

can avail themselves of various activities throughout the day.

Boating Law Administrator Ted Woolley said the May 20 event will include representatives from personal watercraft manufacturers, plus the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, and officers from the Division of Parks & Recreation. Visitors will be able to take a "short course" on PWC operation and safety, and actually take one out for a spin.

There will also be soft drinks and prizes for children, including free whistles and coloring books. Also on hand will be "Capt. B Safe," the agency's remote control boat, and the Splash Test Dummies, Splish and Splash.

USCGA volunteers will do boat safety checks, Woolley added.

On the training front, he said state parks officers have scheduled a week-long training session April 26-30 at Stateline Marine on Lake Powell. Volunteer instructors from the USCGA will attend, and activities include search-and-rescue exercises, towing and a "wet" lab in which officers brush up their skills on handling drunken boaters.

About 30 officers will attend, Woolley said.

## Puerto Rico concentrating on making boating compatible with swimming

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — Though strides have been made over the years to alleviate conflicts between recreational boaters and swimmers around this island's beaches, more is being done this year to keep the two groups apart.

Throughout the spring and summer, according to Boating Law Administrator Ramon Martinez, a second line of swimming buoys with high-visibility float lines, is being installed all around the island.

"The law here requires that public beaches have a buoy line," Martinez explained. "This second line of buoys will be 50 feet apart from the line that now is in place in high traffic areas."

This effort, Martinez indicated, is particularly important when it comes to separating personal watercraft from swimmers.

"In Puerto Rico," he lamented, "they get real close to the swimming buoys and have a conflict with swimmers."

By installing a second buoy line parallel to the original lines placed at beach

swimming areas, Martinez hopes to prevent future problems.

One thing that may slow up the process is the onset of hurricane season. Martinez noted that the tropical storm season begins in May, and if storms hit this island territory, beach buoy efforts will be placed on hold.

This is no small undertaking, he added. Puerto Rico's shoreline stretches 32 kilometers, and there are 50 designated public beaches.

"We have plans to have at least 80 percent done by the end of the year," Martinez disclosed. "That is some kind of ambition, because we have to install everything, including the buoy anchors."

On the education front, Martinez confirmed that Puerto Rico is in the process of forging agreements with both the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and United States Power Squadrons for working together on providing safe boating courses. He also said the Department of Environmental and Natural Resources is designing and editing new safe boating materials.

## Virgin Islands authorities recover stolen boats, brace for arrival of hurricanes

ST. THOMAS, Virgin Islands — With hurricane season just over the horizon here, boating safety authorities with the Department of Planning and Natural Resources are hoping for the best and preparing for the worst.

DNR is already getting set to allow boats to move into sheltered bays when storms threaten, noted Boating Law Administrator Lucia Roberts. These areas are normally off-limits to boats because they are fish and wildlife sanctuaries. However, when a hurricane or tropical storm hits this island paradise, those sanctuaries become safe havens for recreational vessels, and preparations are already underway to make them even more hospitable for boats.

Protected by DNR, they are open only when it appears the islands are in the

direct path of a storm. Bulletins are broadcast to boaters on True Virgin Islands Radio, and through other media.

Roberts said plans call for installation of hurricane moorings in these restricted areas, and in the meantime, DNR is holding meetings with the civil defense committee, and refreshing rangers on procedures for dealing with hurricane preparation and aftermath.

Evidently, the rangers have been busy. Roberts reported that they had recovered one of two boats recently stolen, and are working on other cases.

They are also preparing for National Safe Boating Week activities. Roberts said an education program is kicking into gear, with rangers visiting public schools on the islands. There will also be a boat parade in St. Thomas harbor, for the third consecutive year.



## Alabama boater licensing on schedule; more boaters than registered vessels

Alabama's boater licensing program, which kicked into high gear last year, has licensed about 45,000 more boat operators than the state has registered boats.

According to Boating Law Administrator Bill Garner, director of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' Marine Police Division, 1999 finished with approximately 312,000 boat operator licenses issued, yet the state shows only 267,000 registered boats. Figures were confirmed by Capt. Bob Huffaker.

Alabama's license requirement took full effect in April 1999, after a five-year "grace" period during which boaters were given the opportunity to take a course and get their license. However, last year saw the majority of those boaters — 187,000 in all, according to Huffaker — actually get around to taking a boating course. Courses were taught by all 48 Alabama marine officers, who taught a total of 620 classes around the state. And boaters are still signing up for courses, leading Garner to acknowledge, "I don't know how many operators we have."

However, this all makes perfect sense to Garner and Huffaker, since thousands of boats are operated by more than one person, whether it be a family member

or acquaintance.

Huffaker noted a very positive result of all this boater education.

"We ended up with 48 percent fewer fatalities than we had in 1998, and we attribute that to the boater education program," Huffaker insisted. "People took the courses and they became aware of boating regulations and safety issues."

**"These classes reach approximately 20,000 teens annually..."**

— Capt. Bob Huffaker

Huffaker also noted that high school driver education courses now have a segment on boating regulations. These classes reach approximately 20,000 teens annually, and that will have dividends down the road as students become adults and many start operating their own boats, with a strong basic education under their belts.

Coming up this boating season in addition to strict enforcement of the licensing law, Garner hinted, is a continuation of the designated operator program.

"It is working good for us, it really is," Garner declared.

## Mississippi boat registrations up

JACKSON, Miss.

— Recreational boat registrations are up "quite a bit" over last year's level, reported Boating Law Administrator Liz Raymond with the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries & Parks.



Liz Raymond

According to Raymond, data shows that boat registrations are up an estimated 10,000 over last year's figures. She credited a healthy economy, and recovery from drought conditions that put more water on the landscape. She said there are now about 285,000 registered boats in the Magnolia State.

Raymond said boating coordinators in each of the DWFP district offices have been setting up course schedules, and she is anticipating boating safety classes in every county.

"They will run courses into the summer," she said.

Mississippi boaters are required to take a course if they were born on or after June 30, 1980. That law took effect in 1997.

## PWC mishaps continue to decline in Virginia

RICHMOND, Va. — For the second consecutive year, recreational boating accidents involving personal watercraft have declined in Virginia, reported Boating Law Administrator Charlie Sledd, Department of Game & Inland Fisheries.

With an estimated 21,000-plus PWCs registered in the state, Sledd recalled that there had been a consistent increase in accidents involving the small vessels during the early to mid-1990s.

"In 1994," Sledd said, "we estimated that they accounted for about three percent of the registered boats, and were involved in about 30 percent of the accidents."

The trend continued through 1997,

and then came a turnaround, Sledd noted. During the 1998 boating season, PWC-related accidents declined to 27 percent of all mishaps, and last year, it dropped to 26 percent.

"We're pleased with that trend," Sledd noted.

Last year there was only one fatality involving a PWC, and in 1998, three such mishaps were fatal. This coincides with the 1998 adoption in the General Assembly of several new laws relating to PWCs that became effective in January 1999. The new laws drew plenty of attention from local and national media, and that may have heightened public awareness about PWC safety.

"We also during that time frame de-

veloped our own stand-alone eight-hour PWC course," he said, "and we began offering a full NASBLA-approved course that spent its time focusing on PWCs. Mix in an increase in patrol boat hours from our law enforcement division and I think all of those things simply come together."

Last year, Sledd added, the agency logged a 55 percent increase in the number of students taking the various boating courses.

Overall last year, 21 boaters died in Virginia accidents. There were 20 deaths in 1998 and 27 in 1997, Sledd said. In each of those two previous years, three fatalities involved PWCs.

## Louisiana officers use new UL skills on investigations

BATON ROUGE, La. — Attending an Underwriters Laboratories Advanced Boating Accident Investigator School here in mid-February may have been one of the best moves made by wildlife enforcement agents from Louisiana.

According to Lt. Robert Duthu with the Department of Wildlife & Fisheries, this course hosted the state's largest-ever contingent of wildlife agents, and the agency is hopeful of sending more officers in the future. Attending the course were agents Richard McCarthy, Cullen Sellers, Chuck Strain, Alan Bankston, Lane Kincaid, Peter Oliver, Kevin Hill, Scott Watson, John Tarver, Chris Cormier, Bobby Buatt, Dave Fisher, Scotty Boudreaux, Stephen Clark, Billy Vosbein, Bryan Marie and Richard Purvis. Duthu also attended, for a refresher. He had taken the course some years ago.

"I talked to one officer who went out the weekend after the course and actually investigated a boat accident, and he said the training was very valuable to him," Duthu recalled.

Teaching the UL course were instructors Bob Loeser, Dale Morey and Paul Ouellette.

Of the officers who went through the UL course, several have also been sent to the U.S. Coast Guard's Yorktown facility for even more training. Agents Marie, Watson, Fisher and Vosbein were joined by Scot Keller, Todd Lavoilatte and Glen Jackson at Yorktown.

"This was an unprecedented opportunity for Louisiana to send this many people to Yorktown to attend that course," Duthu noted. "They learned a myriad of things on lesson plans, DWI, boat accident reconstruction and teaching methods"

## Georgia officers give high marks to emergency vessel ops course

SOCIAL CIRCLE, Ga. — Operating vessels in real on-the-water emergencies rarely plays out like it does on the theater screens, and thanks to a course offered in Oklahoma, six officers with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Wildlife Resources Division now have training they can pass on to their colleagues.

Boating Law Administrator Col. Bob Brown pointed *Small Craft Advisory* to the Brunswick office of Sgt. Rod Ellis, one of the six Georgians who traveled to Oklahoma's week-long training session. Conducted by the Oklahoma Highway Patrol's Lake Patrol, the "Emergency Vessel Operators Course" (EVOC) is based on the same philosophy as a standard motor vehicle EVOC course that has become part of common training for all law enforcement officers.

Sgt. Ellis noted that Oklahoma is one of the first states in the country to create a marine EVOC program.

"You basically take experienced boat operators," Ellis explained, "and put them on a slalom course, a serpentine course and they learn about things like high speed maneuvering and emergency object avoidance. You are timed on this, and there's a standard set for this particular course."

For the purpose of this course, "ob-

jects" to be avoided include simulated swimmers, and other boaters who may suddenly come into an officer's path not realizing that a speeding patrol boat is bearing down on them.

Ellis said the course utilized several types of vessels, from a 17-foot Boston Whaler to 21-foot Webcraft runabout; "everything from center consoles to small jon boats."

"This course is not so much about chasing people as it is learning the operating characteristics of boats in emergency situations," Sgt. Ellis stressed. "I grew up running boats, and I've run all kinds, but I never did anything that teaches you the kinds of things we learned in this course. I have never been to a training seminar like this."

The entire Georgia contingent, Ellis noted, "had a blast." They have now been certified to teach the course in their own state, and that's exactly what they will be doing henceforth. Ellis said the 29 new rangers that Georgia will field this year will be going through the marine EVOC training sometime this spring.

Ellis also reported that four officers — rangers Tim Davis, Morty Wood, Rowe Finch and Bobby Lynn — went through the full six-week marine enforcement program at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center here.

## New Jersey's 'State Naval Militia' revived to support marine efforts

WEST TRENTON, N.J. — Out of action for nearly 50 years, the New Jersey State Naval Militia has been revived by Governor Christine Todd Whitman to serve in a variety of efforts.

Colonel John Dwyer, public affairs officer for state's Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs, said the Naval Militia had been active during the years prior to WWII. When that war broke out, the unit "went away" and it was not revived after the war ended.

Now, more than a half-century later, this all-volunteer organization is once



again needed. Whitman signed legislation reviving the organization in February of last year, and the unit officially started up in September. It will be commanded by Rear Admiral Timothy Beard,

*Continued on back cover*



## High-tech equipment will help Idaho authorities recover boating fatality victims

HAYDEN, Idaho — Authorities in the Gem State are mounting an effort to raise funds and obtain sonar equipment to help recover the bodies of boating accident victims.

It's a multi-agency effort involving the state and several counties.

According to Pat Beale, law enforcement specialist for the state Department of Parks & Recreation, "Everyone works hard to reduce boating fatalities (but) once a body slips below the surface, the number of options available (to recover the victim) quickly diminishes."

To that end, members of the Idaho Mountain Search & Rescue, and deputies from the Ada, Boise, Clearwater and Kootenai County sheriff's departments converged on Hayden Lake in February to test new underwater sonar equipment. They used that gear in an attempt to locate a boater missing since November.

These agencies, and others, hope to share costs of sonar equipment, which does not come cheap.

"It's too much money for one agency to afford, but if they pool their resources," Beale observed, "they could purchase this equipment and use it throughout the state."



For the three-day February exercise, John DeMille, sales and training representative with Marine Sonic Technologies, brought his equipment to Hayden Lake. This 200-foot deep lake, which covers 4,000 surface acres, had apparently held the body of a boater who had been missing since last fall, and was presumed drowned. IDPR and the Kootenai County Sheriff's office coordinated the search, which was not successful despite a day-long effort.

Acknowledged Rod Knopp, a member of the Idaho Mountain group, "It's just a tool, just like using dogs, persons or anything else. They all have their limitations and their uses."

However, failure to locate the victim did not blunt the enthusiasm of Kootenai County Sgt. Andy Boyle for the equipment.

"I'd love to have one," he said. "We have five persons missing in Coeur d'Alene Lake that I know of."

Yet costs are the main roadblock to having a sonar at the state's disposal, Beale explained. However, a non-profit

group has been created to raise funds for, develop policies for use, and provide training with the sonar gear, he reported.

"I've seen local program budgets decimated while conducting a body search," Beale said. "There just isn't enough money in the county budgets to pay for lengthy and expensive body searches. Some last two or more weeks. For the divers' safety and to keep the county operating budget together, we need to find something faster."

## Florida will crack down on alcohol, drug users after fatality rate for BUI jumps dramatically

TALAHASSEE, Fla. — While boating fatalities declined last year overall in Florida, the rate of alcohol- or drug-related fatal mishaps jumped sharply from 35 to 55 percent.

Lieutenant Brett Norton told *Small Craft Advisory* that state Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission officers will be cracking down on drunk or drugged boaters in an effort to bring the statistics down this year.

"We plan alcohol emphasis patrols to combat this," Norton stated.

One strategy will be to hand out Croakies to sober boaters, bearing the message "Stay Afloat, Don't Drink and Boat." Of course, they will also be on the lookout for impaired boaters to get them



off the water.

In a prepared news release, FWC Executive Director Allan Egbert noted, "Boating fatalities attributed to boating

under the influence are at record levels in the state of Florida. Tragically, these accidents and fatalities are preventable. Raising public awareness and providing strong deterrents to boating under the influence are two actions that can prevent such needless loss of life."

In 1997, the Sunshine State posted 67 boating fatalities. That number spiked to 73 in 1998, and actually declined to 58 last year. But the involvement of drug- or alcohol-impaired boaters in those crashes jumped 20 percent last year.

The statistics, compiled from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 1999, by the FWC Division of Law Enforcement show that Florida actually had the lowest fatality rate per 100,000 registered boats in seven years.

## Rising fuel prices prompt change in Tennessee enforcement strategies

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Maintaining a desired level of visibility while keeping within a budget for fuel is going to present some tough challenges this spring and summer for officers with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency.

"We're dreading on-the-water patrols," said Boating Law Administrator Ed Carter, chief of the boating division. "We may concentrate on local high-density areas. We contact more people with the least amount of running."

Carter reported that one ranger expects the price of boat fuel at one marina to climb to \$3 per gallon.

"Even in the two dollar range," Carter observed, "which is entirely possible, that hurts bad."

The agency's budget, which receives no support from federal Wallop-Breaux funds to pay for fuel.

Carter suggested that the agency may cut down on number of on-the-water hours. He acknowledge a plan in place to reduce the number of patrols.

On a positive note though, he noted that boaters face the same fuel cost dilemma, so it is likely they will be on the water, but limit their movements.

"They aren't going to run so much," Carter predicted. "They will pretty much stay in one area."

Carter plans to keep track of boating accidents to see if there may be a correlation between the high fuel cost and the number of mishaps. He's also going to watch whether boaters who own conventional vessels and personal watercraft use PWCs more due to their slightly greater fuel efficiency.

## Oregon boat accidents claimed 16 lives in '99; Marine Board developing mandatory education rules

SALEM, Ore. — Boating accidents claimed 16 lives in Oregon last year, and the Beaver State logged a total of 100 accidents, according to the Oregon State Marine Board.

The good news is that this is down from 20 fatalities and 120 accidents in 1998.

According to the Marine Board, several common factors contributed to these fatalities, including failure to wear personal flotation devices and operating small craft in rough conditions. Of the 16 fatalities, 14 of the victims were not wearing life jackets; 12 of the fatalities involved boats under 20 feet in length; most were the result of boats capsizing, and 13 occurred on rivers.

"Sadly, most of these deaths would likely have been prevented if the victims had been wearing life jackets," said Marine Board Director Paul Donheffner. "Wearing PFDs continues to be the most effective step boaters can take to protect themselves on the water. Simply having them on board proved ineffective for most of these victims."

Most of the fatalities involved small boats, including non-motorized craft such as canoes, kayaks and rafts.

"For example, in one drowning that occurred while crossing an ocean bar, the craft capsized so quickly the boater didn't have time to grab the life jacket hanging on the seat," Donheffner recalled.

In another accident, a boater was wearing a PFD which was not buckled. Once the craft capsized, the PFD slipped

off and the boater drowned.

Meanwhile, despite adoption by the 1999 Oregon Legislature, boaters here are still surprised to find out about upcoming Mandatory Boater Education requirements. As a result, a steady stream of calls is still pouring into the Marine Board phones and web site use has more than doubled in recent months with people seeking information on the program.

"We've had strong interest in the program," said Marty Law, Marine Board education program coordinator.

"The key thing to know about this new law is that no identification cards will be required in 2000 or 2001. We are developing the rules to implement this program now and will take the draft out for public review this summer. The Board will set the rules to implement the program next fall."

Details on the program are posted at the agency web site: [www.boatoregon.com](http://www.boatoregon.com). Boaters who have taken a U.S. Power Squadron, U.S.

Coast Guard Auxiliary, Marine Board Boating Basics or other approved classroom or homestudy course, will meet the new requirement. They will need to apply for the official I.D. card next year, though.

Experienced boaters will be able to take a challenge test beginning in 2001 in lieu of a classroom or home study course. The law applies to operators of all recreational boats greater than 10 horsepower, and operators age 12 to 15 of any size power boat.

Boater Education I.D. cards will be issued beginning in 2001.

"... most of these deaths would likely have been prevented if the victims had been wearing life jackets"

— Paul Donheffner



## A Nickels' Worth

by George Stewart and Ed Carter



WASHINGTON, D.C. — Both the House and the Senate have begun work on the fiscal 2001 appropriation.

In all probability, they will agree on an appropriation bill to fund the federal government in fiscal 2001, which begins Oct. 1, 2000. In this bill, we had hoped to see \$70 million in the Coast Guard budget as a line item to augment the states' boating safety program. A lot of effort has been made by our membership and associate members on the House side to show the positive benefit to our state boating safety program from the Federal Boat Safety Trust funds. This same effort will be directed to the Senate side.

To summarize our funding problem, with a folksy kind of analogy, is that when Congress reauthorized the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund (Wallop-Breaux), they gave us \$70 million in blank checks (authorization). But before we can cash any of them, somebody has to make a deposit (appropriation). The Coast Guard did not ask for any money from their paycheck to be deposited so we are trying to convince the appropriations committee that boating safety programs are important enough to take money from the overall transportation budget and place it in our account. We are competing with things such as railroads and mass transit systems, so it's not an easy sell. However, if our efforts fail, all is not lost as we have an automatic deposit of \$59 million from the tax on marine fuel (Aquatic Resources Trust Fund). Not bad, but we could do so much more with additional funding, and that brings us to the next enigma.

We have been so successful utilizing the money that we have been able to secure, that some are questioning why we need additional funding and what we would do with it if we had it. We know that our past success is due to the synergy created by all the groups and organizations involved in boating safety and the fact that they are highly dedicated and unselfish of their time. Another huge factor is that the states feel so

strongly about boating safety that they put up four dollars in state money for every dollar handed down from the federal system. That's why it is so important that we continually document the great programs and success stories that may seem everyday to us but would be astounding to our Congressional leaders. Then maybe they'd say, "if they plowed that big of a field with a team of mules, think what they could do if we gave them a tractor."

Yes, we have been successful and yes we are proud of our accomplishments. The Coast Guard credits the states in saving more than 23,000 lives and especially noteworthy is the fact that the number of annual boating fatalities in the United States has dropped from 1,754 deaths in 1973 to 734 deaths in 1999, despite more people on our waters in a wider diversity of craft than ever before.

We can all agree that 734 lives lost is *too many* and we need to continue and improve our boating safety efforts and further reduce the fatality rate. We all want to see boating safety removed from the NTSB "Most Wanted" list for safety improvements as we set our objectives to reach our goal of *"safe and enjoyable boating for all who take to our nation's waterways."*

The Federal Boat Safety Trust Funds are critical to the success or failure of our state recreational boating safety programs. We hope that all of our members will radiate to their elective members of Congress the positive use of the trust funds and for them to lend a hand to insure the states receive \$70 million as authorized in TEA-21 for Fiscal 2001-2003, and allow these trust funds to be carried as a line item on the Coast Guard's annual appropriation so that the trust funds add to their budget rather than subtract from it.

Never let anyone forget that our reward is saving a life and what a wonderful reward it is.

## California reports record number of recreational boats registered

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Looks like recreational boating is back on top in the Golden State.

California has reported an all-time high in the number of registered recreational boats for 1999, up 6.7 percent from the previous year and a significant contrast to the mid-1990s, when increases were nominal. According to the California Department of Boating and Waterways, last year saw 954,716 boats registered, the first time that number has passed 900,000.

Figures from the U.S. Coast Guard show 22,713 documented vessels in the state.

And, said a DBAW spokesperson, this figure is on the low side for the total number of recreational vessels in the state, since there is no requirement to register canoes, kayaks and rafts, and there are thousands of those. DBAW estimates there could be well over a million recreational vessels in the state.

Interim DBAW Director Carl Moore noted that this "is yet another indicator that California's economy is very healthy."

Overall, there are 28.3 vessels for every 1,000 people in California, DBAW estimated.

In 1960, there were 177,800 registered vessels in the state, climbing to 420,800 by 1970. Ten years later, in 1980, California reported 556,000 registered recreational vessels, showing that the 70s was a decade of slow growth in the boating population.

However, by 1990, that number had jumped over 200,000 to 795,335 boats. And, during the past ten years, almost 200,000 more recreational vessels have been registered with the state.

According to figures published in the February issue of *Boat & Motor Dealer*, an industry publication, the total value of recreational boats in California in 1998 — the most recent year for which figures are available — was estimated at over \$283 million.

## NABA conference in Toledo to include PWC rescue course, marine patrol open house

TOLEDO, Ohio — A personal watercraft rescue course, National Safe Boating Council instructor certification course, and a marine patrol open house are just three of the highlights scheduled around this year's Northern Association of Boating Administrators (NABA) conference here.

Headquartered at Toledo's Wyndham Hotel which fronts the Maumee River not far from the shores of Lake Erie, this year's NABA conference is slated July 18-22. It will be preceded by the NSBC instructor certification course July 17-18 and the Personal Watercraft Rescue Specialists instructional course July 16-18.

Pam Dillon with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' Division of Watercraft said, "We also have other ac-

tivities planned."

Perhaps an understatement, considering the tentative agenda. Dillon said July 18 will see a presentation by former football coach Harvey Alston, and a marine patrol open house for units from Ohio, Michigan, Indiana and Canada on the invitation list. There is moorage on the Maumee River ample enough to hold their patrol boats, she noted.

Opening ceremonies will be held on Wednesday the 19th, with breakout committee work following. The President's Reception that evening will be co-hosted by the Lake Erie Marine Trades Association.

On-the-water activities are scheduled the following day, with a trip out to the Lake Erie Islands. This area is renowned for its walleye fishery, and a fleet of sev-

eral hundred boats should be working the vicinity, Dillon said.

"We're taking everyone on a short bus trip to board the Jet Express ferry, and go out to the village of Put-In-Bay," she detailed.

Friday will feature a program with the Maritime Training Institute. Groups of conferees will get the opportunity to try their hand at piloting and commanding a freighter on the Institute's full bridge simulator. This simulator features a 180-degree video screen with scenes from every port in the world where such freighters dock. Each session will include a debriefing with a master instructor, Dillon said.

For reservations, contact the Wyndham Toledo at (419) 241-1411. Be sure to note you are coming to the NABA conference.

### Wisconsin DNR hosts training conference



John Lacenski

WAUSAU, Wis. — Officers from over 100 municipal police departments around Wisconsin participated in a patrol training conference here recently, with updates on new and pending

legislation, sound level enforcement and more.

According to Boating Law Administrator John Lacenski, this training session was for agencies with municipal boat patrols, which does not include all the police departments in the state. During the one-day classroom session, there were also reviews of recent court decisions, and tips on how officers could improve their patrols.

More training is on the schedule. Lacenski said new conservation warden recruits were scheduled for training the week of April 10 at Lake Columbia, and another session is slated the week of May 15 at Swan Lake. Both are hands-on exercises on boat operation.

## NASBLA begins approval process of revised boater ed. manuals

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Minnesota, Nevada and Massachusetts have all received NASBLA approval of their revised boating education courses, as have several individual organizations, noted Fred Messmann, NASBLA Education Committee chair.

Minnesota's course won first approval in January, while the others soon followed. States must have their courses re-approved by NASBLA every three years, and these recent actions have involved courses written to meet the new education standards.

Messmann told *Small Craft Advisory* that the process normally involves having the new course material first reviewed within the state, to make certain it meets each state's specific requirements. Then the material is sent to a regional reviewer and finally it comes to Messmann.

"It took about six months working on it off and on as time permitted," said Tim



Fred Messmann

Smalley, Minnesota DNR education coordinator. "I suspect it would have taken a bit less if we didn't have the new NASBLA standards to include."

Smalley added that after the project was completed, it was a good exercise to go through to consider why they had or didn't have certain boating information in their basic boaters' home study course.

"It made us rethink our choices we made a few years ago during the course's last major rewrite," he said. "We were going to rewrite the book anyway, due to the need for additional information necessary on Personal Watercraft and new trends in boating."

Besides adding items to meet the new standards, Smalley also wrote a full chapter on personal watercraft rather than the three or four pages in Minnesota's previous course. He also had a lot of new art created and added number of photographs to illustrate points.



## When disaster looms

### After Hurricane Floyd, N. Carolina has emergency response down pat

by Dave Workman, Editor

RALEIGH, N.C. — Last summer's Hurricane Dennis was bad enough, but when that storm was followed only a few days later by monster Hurricane Floyd, North Carolinians learned a new definition of the term "hammered."

Certainly for officers with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, Floyd's aftermath became a proving ground, not just for their equipment and training, but for their mettle.

Floyd was awesome, and even now, several months later, as a new hurricane season looms, Lt. Mitch Kuykendall, the Commission's emergency response coordinator, noted, "I don't know that some people will ever recover. This really devastated a lot of lives."

Kuykendall, appointed to the position just one year ago, told *Small Craft Advisory*, "Hurricane Floyd was my first disaster."

After this, all else will hopefully pale by comparison, he indicated.

Whatever else Floyd did, the storm demonstrated that, while it is impossible to plan for every eventuality, it showed that planning does prevent chaos.

According to Boating Law Administrator Ed Jenkins, the state's emergency management setup is headquartered here in Raleigh. In addition to the Commission, personnel from the Department of Motor Vehicles, Highway Patrol, State Fire Marshall, Alcohol Law Enforcement and other agencies man this facility.

"Before a hurricane hits," Jenkins said,

"we're paying attention and standing by, but things don't kick off until we have an actual projected landfall."

That, added Kuykendall, is when officers shift into high gear. They take care of all the "minor details" that can trip up overall strategies once disaster strikes, from charging spare portable radio batteries to stocking up on bottled water.

"They gas up their boats, gas up their vehicles and have their equipment ready to roll," he said.

Major Kenneth Everhart noted that whenever possible, emergency vehicles and boats are moved to a secure location on high ground ahead of a hurricane. These might be Department of Transportation equipment sites or other areas where parked boats and trucks are not in danger of being hit by falling trees or other storm debris.

Not much can be done in the midst of a hurricane's fury, but soon as the storm subsides, work begins. Kuykendall said manpower is assigned as needed and available. Command posts in affected areas run assignments, detailing people and equipment to address specific requirements.

Response troops are frequently housed in motels and fed at command posts. After Floyd, many motels were flooded on lower levels, and officers actually stayed in the upper floor rooms, Kuykendall recalled.

A good lesson from Floyd is that manpower is cycled. Officers were relieved after a few days on the line, de-

spite their eagerness to stay on scene and continue working, Everhart stated. However, for their own health and fitness, they were sent home to rest, and fresh personnel were rotated in.

"Nobody asked to be relieved," Everhart stressed.

Communications are handled from local command posts, though North Carolina has a statewide radio communications network based at Raleigh from which officers are dispatched all over the state. However, once on site, everybody takes their signals from the local command post. Following Floyd, Commission officers sometimes worked assignments on their own or in tandem with local agencies.

For example, one critical power plant at Greenville was in danger of flooding. Commission officers were dispatched to enforce a no-wake zone to prevent flood water from rippling over a barrier and into the facility. Other officers were involved in rescuing people from rooftops, and in some evacuated areas, they were responsible for protecting property from looters.

Floyd is gone, but what about next time?

"With hurricanes," Maj. Everhart observed, "you never really know what to expect."

After Floyd, North Carolinians will most likely expect the worst, hope for the best, and be grateful if they wind up somewhere in between. The best way to make that happen, of course, is to *plan* for the worst, and be delighted if your plan never needs to be activated.

### New Mexico officers adopt 'Operation Bright Idea' to assist boaters

SANTA FE, N.M.— Borrowing an idea he learned about during last year's NASBLA conference in Hot Springs, Ark., state Boating Law Administrator Ben Hoffacker has instituted a new boater-assist program called "Operation Bright Idea."

It's one of two new programs that marine enforcement officers with the Department of Energy, Minerals & Natural Resources will be instituting. The other, Hoffacker said, is a loaner program for personal flotation devices, with support from BoatU.S.

Operation Bright Idea will equip marine officers with light bulb kits. With

these kits, officers will be able to assist boaters who are on the water and find themselves with defective running lights due to a burnt out bulb. He said officers will be able to replace the bulbs on the spot, "so boaters will not have to terminate their voyages."

Over the winter months, Hoffacker said marine officers went through seasonal training at Elephant Butte Lake. They practiced boat operation skills for a week, and everyone tried their hand with every boat the agency owns, from the large Boston Whaler Sentry patrol boats to jon boats.

"We used all the boats we have in the fleet so no matter where officers are stationed, they will be familiar with the types of boats we have," Hoffacker explained. "They practiced slipping, docking, parallel parking, pivoting, rescue and man overboard drills. They also practiced trailering skills, launching and retrieving."

New Mexico boaters will see a new patrol boat on Elephant Butte waters this season, a 27-foot cuddy cabin model that replaces the 11-year old 24-footer previously on the impoundment. Plans call for the purchase of another 27-footer next year.

## New Jersey's 'State Naval Militia' revived

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a Naval reservist who now carries a state commission.

Col. Dwyer told *Small Craft Advisory* that there are three types of members in the Naval Militia. They will not have any law enforcement authority.

State Boating Law Administrator Lt. Charles Liber already has several ideas

other reserve groups, such as U.S. Navy Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Coast Guard Reserve and even the National Guard.

"Being a member of the Naval Militia will not change their commitments to those other organizations," Dwyer said. "But it does make them available to the state in case of emergency, where no federal troops are involved."

For example, he recalled when Hurricane Floyd struck New Jersey. The aftermath was an emergency, but not declared a federal disaster. While the National Guard was called up, no federal forces were involved. However, individual members of those reserve groups, had they been part of the Naval Militia, could have been called upon.

The second "battalion" consists of people who have served another com-

ponent, especially Navy and other maritime veterans, who still wish to serve. Many of these people, Dwyer acknowledged, bring with them key skills and expertise, such as knowledge on how to respond to hazardous materials spills, how to work a maritime special event, or handle other types of emergencies or special tasks. These volunteers attend regular drills, go through training and are uniformed by the state, Dwyer noted.



Rear Admiral Timothy Beard



Pictured, left to right: Rear Admiral Timothy Beard, Commander NJNMJC; Lt. Cdr. Don Cooperman, Ops commander; Ed O'Lawski - Ops officer, and Commander Rich Gorish, executive officer.

how the Naval Militia can be utilized. For example, he expects the Militia to be deployed during "Operation Sail" this July, when thousands of vessels will be on the water participating in a sailing event.

"They will be a 'force multiplier'," Liber said.

The first "battalion" consists of men and women who are already members of

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