

small craft ADVISORY

National Association of Boating Law Administrators

Vol. 13 No. 2 Dec. 1997/Jan. 1998

Inside:
NASBLA updates
New legislation
Kids and PFDs
Award winners



Michigan conservation officers Jeff Walker and Michelle Wiegand check out a personal watercraft rider. PWCs are the focus of this issue's survey, beginning on page 20. Several states use PWCs on loan from manufacturers for enforcement and education programs. (Photo courtesy Lt. Lyle Belknap, Michigan DNR)



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Administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.





President's Viewpoint by Ted Woolley

I hope you have a happy holiday season.

We are starting the year with a new look for *Small Craft*

Advisory. We hope you like it. A survey is on the inside of the back cover so you can tell us what you like and dislike about SCA and any other suggestions you may have to improve the publication. We want to hear from you. Please take the time to complete the survey and fax or mail it to us.

Members and associate members should have received the 1998 Committee Assignments and Charges. If you need a copy contact our Lexington office at (606) 225-9487. To have an impact on committee charges you need to attend the interim committee meeting. Most of the committee work is completed during the interim meeting, before being finalized at the annual conference.

The third edition of the *Reference Guide for State Boating Laws* is finished, and will be sent to NASBLA members and associate members. If you are not a member and would like a copy, please contact our Lexington office.

There are several *Federal Register* notices you need to be aware of and comment on before they close. Notices include: Federal Requirements for Education in Recreational Boating Safety

(closes February 2, 1998); Federal Requirements for Wearing Personal Flotation Devices (closes February 2, 1998); Standards for Navigation Lights Used on Recreational Boats (closes April 7, 1998); and Propeller Injury Prevention Involving Rented Boats (closes Feb. 17, 1998).

Federal Register notices and others may be viewed on the U.S. Coast Guard's home page at www.uscgboating.org.

NASBLA supports wearing personal flotation devices (PFDs) and boater education but has gone on record opposing federal mandates because such regulations should be addressed at the state level. NASBLA has created model acts on

these issues for states to use to assist in continued uniformity of boating laws.

In fact, over half of the states already have a PFD wearing requirement for young boaters and almost all of the states require PFDs to be worn while operating or riding a personal watercraft and while water skiing. The number of states requiring boater education is also increasing each year. If states are already moving toward boater education and required PFD wearing, is there a need for the federal government to get involved? Also, the inflatable PFD will go a long way to promote voluntary wearing of PFDs by boaters.

Coast Guard Comments

by Capt. Tony Stimatz

How did you measure success this year?

This is an important element for any venture, whether public, private, for profit or not. In a government agency this has become even more important with the focus on results for the dollars spent.

In looking ahead to what needs to be done next year, it is key that you know what your goals are, know if the changes you are making are improvements, and make only changes that will result in improvements.

More and more we are being asked to not only justify additional resources but also existing ones. Similarly we are being asked to assess the effectiveness of state programs.

In our budget process we are being held to task to meet our goals in the areas of safety, mobility, protection of natural resources, security of our borders and national defense. Our goal is to eliminate deaths, injuries and property damage associated with marine transportation, fishing, and recreational boating.

To reach that goal, we use our data—based on information provided by operator's and accident investigation reports—to determine the key factors and causes which led to those results.

With that data we target what we know are the major factors and variables.

If we want to eliminate deaths then we know lifejackets are the answer. If we want to reduce the number of collisions then we know education will have an impact.

You can do this same thing where you are, at the state, regional or local level. You need to sit down with stakeholders and experts to determine what the key goals ought to be in your area. Use the data you have to work on possible solutions, then try out your "solutions." Measure the impact. Based on what you learn, develop an action plan to move to the next level of improvement. The point is, you have the ability to decide what to act on.

Now the big question—*were you successful?* If you can't measure a real outcome in a tangible way then you're probably counting activity, i.e., number of patrol hours, tickets written, etc. What you need to see is a change in some measurable safety outcome. This winter take the time to think about setting real outcome goals. Stretch a little in making them and work up several interventions you think will work. Test them early in the year and measure their impact. Then make your next safety decision an informed one.

Best wishes for a safe and happy holiday season. Boat Safe, Smart and Sober at all times. Happy New Year!!

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Arkansas already planning NASBLA 1999 conference

LITTLE ROCK, Ark.—When the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission hosts the 1999 conference of the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, about 18 months of planning will have gone into the event.

According to Butch Potts, enforcement specialist with the Commission, the NASBLA conference will be held in Hot Springs. NASBLA's 1998 conference will be held in San Diego, Calif.

Potts and Boating Law Administrator Mike Wilson are also devoting time to more immediate issues, including the 100-plus accidents and 13-fatalities chalked up by Arkansas boaters this year.

Additionally, 19 new officers were recently graduated from the academy, and another 15 will be trained in time for the 1998 boating season. Training includes 45 hours of boat-related instruction and 24 hours of boat accident investigation and boating-while-intoxicated detection, Potts said. Plenty of time is spent on the water learning basic boat operation, the Emergency Vessel Operations Course, making stops and swimming one mile in full uniform.

Mandatory ed, PFD wear being considered by Coast Guard

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Recreational boaters and boating safety experts have until Feb. 2 to submit comments to the U.S. Coast Guard on two issues relating to boating safety: mandatory education and mandatory lifejacket wear.

Mandatory use of personal flotation devices is being considered as a means of reducing drowning deaths that result from boating accidents. Presently, PFDs are required equipment aboard all recreational vessels, for everyone on board. Some state regulations mandate wear by youngsters, but there is no uniform requirement nationwide that includes adults.

An education mandate is also being considered, though education is typically considered the province of state boating safety programs. Some 20 states currently require boating safety education for youths of various ages, but here again, there is no uniform requirement nationwide that covers all boaters, including adults.

Comments should be addressed to:
Executive Secretary
Marine Safety Council
U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters
2100 Second Street
Washington, DC 20593-0001

Identify the notice to which you are responding (CGD 97-059 for the PFD Mandate; CGD 97-066 for Mandatory

Education) when offering comment.

Copies of both notices are available by calling the Coast Guard Infoline at 800-368-5647, or on the agency's web site, at URL address: www.uscgboating.org.

NPS claims PWC ban report 'erroneous'

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Personal watercraft are not being banned by the National Park Service, and neither is there a temporary moratorium on their use.

In a letter to Howard Park, a consultant with Bombardier Motor Corporation, an NPS official claimed "erroneous information was posted on the internet" regarding a widely circulated report late last summer that a temporary ban was in the works.

"We have been adamant that we are not proposing a general ban, but rather adopting a process to determine appropriateness of PWC use," wrote an assistant to Maureen Finnerty, associate director of Park Operations and Education. The letter further stated that park superintendents are being asked to make determinations on PWC use the same way they make decisions on the use of snowmobiles and even bicycles.

Nebraska, NABA honor memory of BLA Leroy Orvis

LINCOLN, Neb.—Late Nebraska Boating Law Administrator Leroy Orvis will be memorialized twice in 1998, once by his colleagues in Nebraska, and again by his colleagues in the Northern Association of Boating Administrators (NABA).



Orvis passed away earlier this year following a long illness.

Here in Nebraska, Orvis will be remembered by two plaques at the main east entrance of Memorial Stadium at the University of Nebraska. Currently undergoing renovation, the entrance, when completed, will feature several cement benches, two of which will bear the Orvis plaques.

Noted Herb Angell, Nebraska's current BLA, "Leroy loved University of Nebraska football."

A memorial fund was established by Orvis' colleagues in the Game & Parks agency, through the University of Nebraska Foundation.

NABA's memorial to Orvis will be an award named in his memory. This award, to be presented annually, will go to someone in the boating education community whose efforts bring great credit to the cause of boating safety and education.

Plans call for Orvis' daughter, Cindy to present the first award, during the 1998 NABA regional conference, which will be held in Michigan.

Pennsylvania commission studies mandatory education requirement



John Simmons

HARRISBURG, Penn.—Personal watercraft operators in the Keystone State may be required to attend a boating safety course to legally operate their vessels, under a directive from the State Fish and Boat Commission.

According to Boating Law Administrator John Simmons, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, at its Oct. 19 meeting, directed staff to develop regulations that would require PWC operators to obtain a boating safety certificate. The directive was in response to the large number of PWC operators whose privileges were being revoked for negligent operation. The term of revocation was two years, dropped to one if the operator took a boating safety class.

After considering about 20 revocations under this procedure, the commissioners concluded that if education was good after a violation occurred, it would be even better if the operators had education before they went out on the water.

Under the proposed regulation, which would take effect Jan. 1, 2000, all operators of personal watercraft will have to complete a NASBLA approved Boating Safety

Education class. Simmons said the regulation will effect an estimated 60 - 90,000 operators.

Simmons assured the Commission that educating that many operators is possible, with assistance from

volunteers from the Coast Guard Auxiliary and U.S. Power Squadrons supplementing state volunteer instructors and state waterways conservation officers.

A final proposal will be considered by the commission at its January meeting, Simmons said. Following a period of public comment, the regulation could be adopted as early as May.

Looking back over the year, information officer Dan Martin reported 17 accidents resulting in 18 fatalities marred Pennsylvania's 1997 boating season. All were related to small boats averaging 14 feet in length including two in row boats, four in canoes and one each in a sailboat, kayak and hovercraft.

Martin said 16 of the victims might still be alive had they been wearing life jackets. One boater who was wearing a life jacket drowned in a low head dam accident, and another was pinned underwater by his canoe.

Over the past ten years, the state has averaged 15 recreational boating fatalities annually.

In a related matter, the Bureau of Boating and Education recently introduced a Personal Watercraft Course that tailored its successful Basic Boating Course to personal watercraft operators. This course has been submitted to NASBLA for approval and will be the core course for this program, Simmons noted.



Florida Marine Patrol hosts training, SSBLAA in 1998

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—It's going to be a busy spring for the Florida Marine Patrol, Boating Law Administrator Capt. Jim Brown confirmed.

For openers, there's a March 23-27 Underwriters Laboratory intermediate boating accident investigation course slated at the Epcot Center.

And in May, the Marine Patrol, in cooperation with the Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission, will host the Southern States Boating Law Administrators' Association at Key West.

Brown and his troops could use a little breather between now and March, too. It was a busy year on Florida's saltwater, though it appears that fatal boating accidents could hit an 11-year low. During 1997, preliminary reports indicate 61 boating deaths, of which seven involved personal watercraft.

Brown credits public education efforts and targeted enforcement details for reducing the number of accidents. Concentrating on BUI offenders also helped curb accident statistics, he indicated.

SSBLAA will gather at the Marriott Casa Marina in Key West. Brown said the agenda is not finished, and will be reported in an upcoming *Small Craft Advisory*.

West Virginia lawmakers consider mandatory education

CHARLESTON, W. Va.—When state legislators convene here early in January, they will be facing at least three proposals dealing directly with water safety, including one calling for mandatory education of boaters.

Colonel William B. Daniel, state boating law administrator for the Division of Natu-

ral Resources, told *Small Craft Advisory* that the education proposal will have support from the state administration. If successful, West Virginia will join a growing number of states requiring education of recreational boat operators.

Another bill would establish a comprehensive boating

under the influence statute, Daniel said. Presently, the state has a very simple BUI law, and Daniel said the new legislation will be patterned after West Virginia's driving under the influence law.

"It will be almost identical," Daniel said.

While the bill, as submitted, does not contain lan-

guage that would count a BUI conviction against someone's driving record, Daniel said a driver's license could be suspended with a conviction, "so there is some type of penalty."

Lastly, lawmakers will be asked to approve a fee hike for boat registrations. Currently, the fee is \$5, regardless of boat size. That has been in place since the 1960s, he noted, and the new legislation will seek a graduated fee structure based on boat size.

The boating fee hike could face tough opposition because, Daniel acknowledged, 1998 is an election year.

However, he said if the bills don't pass on their first go-around, they will undoubtedly be reintroduced in 1999.

Lone Star commission prepares to implement mandatory education

AUSTIN, Tex.—Mandatory education was adopted in Texas in September, and the Texas Parks & Wildlife Commission will set rules and regulations implementing the mandate in early January.

From all indications, said Boating Law Administrator Carlos Vaca, the commission may rule that any boating education course will be recognized, so long as boaters show proof they completed such a course (i.e. a certificate). This may include home study courses and any available via the Internet, he suggested.

Vaca has written rules for marine safety officer certification, which will also be presented to the commission when it meets Jan. 8. Under the new rules, any officer for any law enforcement agency in the state must complete training and be certified by Texas Parks & Wildlife. This requirement assures uniformity of training, he explained.

"This was promulgated by a lack of uniformity around the state," Vaca lamented. "Working water safety became popular a few years ago but other agencies were not

getting trained for it."

This resulted in conflicting information, sometimes erroneous, being given to the public by various agencies. The new rules will end that problem.

Vaca also reported that the Water Safety Task Force will be continued in 1998, and this year it may include a personal watercraft patrol contingent. Patterned after Michigan's highly successful program, the Texas effort will have PWC-mounted officers saturating specific waters, enforcing the rules. He said between ten and 15 officers will be working on PWCs during the upcoming boating season.

"In 1997," he recalled, "the task force did BWI saturation patrols that we felt were successful. The compliance rate was up. We did more boardings than we'd ever done before. The guys worked themselves hard. Unfortunately, our fatalities went up."

"Historically," he said, "every year when you have a low (accident) rate, the following year will be a high year. Last year, we had the lowest number of accidents on record, and this year was

in the pattern."

He noted that one contributing factor to the high death rate was multiple fatality accidents. There were "quite a few" in 1997, and some waters produced a high number of deaths.

Tennessee looks at mandatory education, operator licensing

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—Boaters in the Volunteer State may soon face a mandate for education and operator licensing, hinted Boating Law Administrator Ed Carter, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency.

A task force consisting of boat retailers, manufacturers and other interested parties is presently working on a proposal.

"They are looking at the whole education program," Carter said. "The legislature specifically told them to consider mandatory education and operator licensing, and come forward with a proposal for what they think would be best for the general public."

Another measure may require titling of boats and registration of trailers, two things presently not done in Tennessee.

And there's a third proposal to hike the boat registration fee for the first time in 19 years. Tennessee's minimum registration fee has been \$4 since it was set in 1979. If the change is approved, that fee would climb to \$10, Carter said, and allow the agency to "maintain the status quo."

Virginia completes comprehensive boating study

RICHMOND, Va.—A majority of Virginia boaters think the state should require completion of a boating safety course spanning six to eight hours before someone can legally operate a motorboat.

That's just one finding of a lengthy study of boating education in Virginia by the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, which examined the costs and benefits of instituting mandatory boating education.

Mandated by a resolution passed by the General Assembly earlier in the year, the agency undertook a comprehensive study of several boating safety issues that came before the assembly, including minimum age requirements and mandatory PFD wear by children.

Through the efforts of an internal work group, in combination with focus group meetings held across the

state, issues and concerns of the boating community were identified. These included:

- boating safety education
- operator licensing
- life jacket requirements
- operator age
- speed limits
- no-wake definition
- restricted operation zones
- water-skiing requirements
- levels of law enforcement

According to Charlie Sledd, boating and resource education manager for DGIF, the study group designed a survey around these issues and distributed it to a random sample of Virginia's registered and documented boat owners, and various homeowner organizations located on state waters. Also surveyed were boating safety organizations and local governments.

Among the findings:

- Fifty-eight percent of the respondents think the law should require completion of six to eight hours of boating

safety education for all motorboat operators. However, 68 percent said experienced registered boat owners should be exempt.

- Eighty-two percent think that boating on Virginia waters is safe. Only 13 percent believe boating is dangerous to some degree.

• Inconsiderate boaters are the top source of irritation, with 63 percent of survey respondents saying such boaters detract from their boating experience.

- An overwhelming majority believe that people who sell, demonstrate or rent motorboats should be required to successfully complete boating safety education and that the renters should also be required to complete some type of education.

• Only 38 percent of the respondents think a license should be required to operate a motorboat.

- Forty-six percent agree

with current law that does not require life jacket wear, while 22 percent believe the law should require PFD wear by all those aboard a boat under 20 feet long. Another 29 percent believe the law should require PFD use only for children under age 12 while aboard a boat under 20 feet in length.

- Eighty-one percent believe there should be a minimum age to operate any motorboat, and one-third think the minimum age should be 14 while another 40 percent suggest a minimum age of 16.

• A maximum speed limit on state waters is supported by 58 percent of respondents, with 48 percent suggesting 55 mph.

- A majority believes that the definition of reckless operation should be further defined to include a number of specific behaviors, such as weaving at high speed through congested traffic, and following another boat or skier so close as to endanger them should they stop or slow down.

In its report on the study, the Department offers several conclusions, with suggestions on how to provide safer boating. Among the conclusions is that boating safety can be achieved through programs related to voluntary education, incentives for people to complete safety education, effective laws dealing with specific problems and strict enforcement. Mandatory education was not recommended for all motorboat operators.

However, the study suggested that the General Assembly should consider new laws or changes to existing laws that implement its recommendations.

Maryland finishes boating regulations study

ANNAPOLIS, Md.—After wrapping up a series of public meetings in October, the Maryland Boat Act Advisory Committee will be making recommendations on at least a dozen requests for changes in boating regulations.

According to education officer David Street, petitions for regulations changes are studied during the summer, with officers making reports on boating activities, and other Department of Natural Resources staff doing boat counts. Along with this information are reports on arrests and warnings, all of which goes before the Advisory Committee, a citizen panel that meets four times each year. Twenty-one citizen volunteers, representing various boat groups in the state, make up the committee. Members serve three-year terms.

Street said some recommendations have already been issued by the panel, including recommendations that no action be taken to change regs in some cases.

Meanwhile, DNR officers have pulled navigation buoys for the winter, and the agency is preparing for annual in-service training during January and February. Officers must go through 18 hours of training annually.

Lake Tahoe PWC ban remains on schedule

TAHOE, Nev.—Recently-discovered fuel contamination in the waters of Lake Tahoe virtually eliminated any chance that a proposed ban of personal watercraft on the popular lake will be delayed until 2000.

Back on the fast track is a plan that will force carbureted two-stroke engine-powered PWCs off the lake in 1999. That decision, by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency board, could bring a flurry of lawsuits from PWC manufacturers and rental companies located on the lakeshore.

Nevada Boating Law Administrator Fred Messmann noted that the delay had been seriously discussed, until deep-water sampling revealed gas contamination that was expected to appear only in surface waters. TRPA had originally eyed a delay to allow researchers to study lake contamination.

Tahoe is renowned for its

pristine water quality.

While the delay may have been scrapped, that doesn't

foot no-wake zone around the Tahoe shoreline administered by Nevada was rejected

...deep-water sampling
revealed gas
contamination that was
expected to appear only
in surface waters.

translate to a complete ban on PWCs. Bombardier Motor Corp. has developed a model that runs quieter and burns fuel more efficiently, which could conceivably be used on the lake. Other firms may follow.

A proposal to create a 600-

in mid-November by the Wildlife Commission.

According to Messmann, "The commission turned down the proposed rule based on concerns about pollution and the potential increase of pollution by tripling the distance and amount of time

that would be required to operate a two-stroke motor at an efficient speed."

Messmann said the commission was concerned that the public would be unable to comply and Division of Wildlife officers would not be able to enforce the rule without working the entire lake shoreline.

"This was not a reflection of nonsupport for the two-cycle engine ban," Messmann clarified. "It's just that this particular rule is premature, according to the commission."

Marked 200-foot no wake areas around marinas would have been lost with the rule change, he added.

Mandatory ed. chances look good in Kentucky

FRANKFORT, Ky.—Odds look pretty good that the Kentucky Legislature will pass some type of mandatory education requirement for boaters in 1998.

Initially reported in the last issue of *Small Craft Advisory*, the bill has been pre-filed by Rep. Royce Adams. He has reportedly garnered the support of marina associations and the Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife.

Colonel David Loveless, the state's boating law administrator, said that industry support could put this legislation through. In anticipation of the new law, Loveless said his agency is assembling a boater education booklet.

Meanwhile, 15 new officers have been hired and are now undergoing training with the Bureau of Justice. They will be in the field this spring.

California sets minimum age for PWC, motorboat operation

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—Golden State boaters must be at least 16 years of age to operate personal watercraft and motorboats with engines of over 15 horsepower, under new regulations that take effect Jan. 1, 1998.

New legislation also directly limits PWC operation throughout California, according to a spokesman for the Department of Boating and Waterways.

When the new year opens, youths under age 16 will no longer be permitted to operate PWCs, above 15 hp motorboats except for sailboats that are no longer than

30 feet.

Exceptions will also be made for youths ages 12-15 who are accompanied by an adult, or if they are participating in an organized boating event or operating a dinghy.

All PWC operators will have to comply with new requirements, which prohibit operation at night (one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise). Also, operators are prohibited from maneuvering their PWCs to jump wakes within 100 feet of another vessel so that they "unreasonably or unnecessarily endanger life, limb or property."

Other stipulations in the PWC law are a prohibition from disengaging a manufacturer-equipped self-circling device, and a requirement that lanyard-type kill switches are maintained.

Yet another new law signed by Gov. Pete Wilson will allow police to arrest BUI suspects on the basis of observations by U.S. Coast Guard officers.

"We believe that (this legislation) will reduce the number of boating accidents, injuries and fatalities, especially in regard to the operation of personal watercraft," Raysbrook said.

NABA

SURVEY: PERSONAL WATERCRAFT OPERATION

State	PWC minimum operator age?	Certification required for operation? Age restrictions?	Operational restrictions?
Connecticut	12	Yes, for all operators	PFD required; sunrise to sunset operation; no water skiing behind 6 mph limit within 200' of dock, pier, float, anchored/moored boat; no wake jumping w/in 100' of vessel
Delaware	14-16 must be certified & have parent/guardian aboard; 16 must be certified to operate solo	Must have driver's license to show if renting from livery	Headway speed only near rivers, marinas; 100' distance from skiers; no wake jumping w/in 100' of vessel; no ski tows w/o observer aboard & PWC designed for 2 people
District of Columbia	16	Yes, for all operators	100 yards from shore or other vessel; no wake jumping; PFD required
Illinois	10 w/supervision; 12 w/training on all motorized watercraft	12-17	No operation sunset to sunrise; PFD wear mandatory; no wake jumping unreasonably close
Indiana	15	Driver's license; age 15 and those without driver's license must have BMV photo ID and complete boating ed. course	Persons shall not operate a PWC on public waters that endangers human life or property—includes prohibition on wake jumping, cutting between boats & persons being towed
Iowa	12 unless accompanied by an adult	No	No
Maine	12	No	Sunrise to sunset operation; mandatory PFD wear; water safety zone 200' from shore; parent/guardian responsible for minor while operating a PWC
Massachusetts	16	Safety certificates (boat & PWC) 16, 17 year olds	No nighttime operations; PFD wear required; no towing skiers; headway speed only w/in 150' of shoreline, swimmers, docks, etc.
Michigan	12 with boating certificate; 16 without	Minimum age 12; 12-15 may operate when accompanied by 16 or older; without supervision must have boating safety certificate	Must wear PFD; no operation sunset to sunrise
Minnesota	13 with operator's permit & person at least 18 in unaided visual contact; 14 with operator's permit & no adult supervision	Operator's permit required for 13-17 years unsupervised	No wake within 100' of shore, dock, swim raft; no wake jumping w/in 100'; no operation sunset to 8am; PFD required; no wildlife harassment
Nebraska	14 to operate any boat	No	Under 12 must wear PFD; BUI is .10 BAC; speed limit 5mph w/in 30 yards of any vessel, harbor, marina
New Hampshire	16	N/A	Yes
New Jersey	16	Yes; all operators	Idle speed w/in 50' of bathing beach, shoreline, swimmers; kill switch lanyard attached; 100' away for wake crossing; sunrise to sunset operation; PFD required
New York	10	All power boaters age 10-18	No night operation; 500' designated swim area; wear PFD; cut-off lanyard; no wake jumping near other vessels; no weaving through traffic
North Dakota	12-15 upon completion of Boating Basics course; under 12 must be accompanied by person at least 18	Certificates are issued with letter of completion and grade achieved	Use kill switch lanyard; observer required for skiing; slow speed w/in 100' of person, boat, shoreline
Ohio	No one under 16 except 12-15 may operate if supervised by adult 18 or over on board	No	PFD required; lanyard kill switch; sunrise to sunset operation; no wake crossing w/in 100'; no following skier within 200'
Pennsylvania	12-15 must be accompanied by adult at least 18 or alone with certificate	To operate boats 10 hp or more: under 12 must be accompanied by person at least 16; 12-15 must be accompanied by person at least 16 or have boating safety certificate	PWC operators & passengers must wear PFD; sunrise to sunset operation; lanyard attached to operator; no wake w/in 100' of shore
Rhode Island	16	Under 16: education course required	200' zone; daylight operation; PFD required; reckless operation prohibited
South Dakota	14	No	PFD required; kill switch lanyard must be attached; no wake speed w/in 150' of dock, swimmer, swim raft, non-motor boat
Vermont	16	Minimum age 12 to operate power boat; 16 to operate PWC	No night operation; PFD required
Wisconsin	12 for personal use; 16 for rental	12-15	Sunrise to sunset operation; 100' from all persons & craft, dock, rafts

Restricted area use?	PWC accidents/fatalities in 1997	PWC percent of boating accidents/fatalities	Dealer/rental operator requirements?	Does agency utilize PWC industry loaner programs?
2 where PWCs are banned	6 PWC accidents; 0 fatalities	9% accidents	No, due to mandatory PWC education/certification	Yes
No	11 accidents; 0 fatalities	33% of accidents	Livery operators must explain where PWCs can & cannot operate, provide map or chart of area, provide manual	Yes
No	0	N/A	Yes	No
No	54 accidents; 4 fatalities	35% accidents; 30% fatalities	No	Yes
State-owned lakes less than 300 acres are restricted to boats powered by electric troll motors	29 PWC accidents; 1 fatality	28% accidents; 12% fatalities	No	No
No	41 accidents; 0 fatalities	N/A	No	Yes
No	11 accidents; 0 fatalities	7%	Not presently	Have in past
PWC prohibited on inland waters less than 75 acres	5 accidents; 1 fatality	10% accidents; 11% fatalities	Rental operators must provide or discuss the state PWC pamphlet to each customer	Yes, for education purposes
No	221 PWC accidents; 1 PWC fatality	±5%	No	Yes, 3rd year of program
One lake has reduced hours of operation	56 PWC accidents; 2 fatalities	36% accidents; 9.5% fatalities	Dealers & rental agents must provide certain info to PWC buyers & renters	DNR and county sheriffs depts. both use loaner PWC
Yes	31 accidents; 1 fatality	85% of all accidents; 20% of all fatalities	No	Yes, 4 Kawasaki loaners
Yes	8 PWC accidents; 0 fatalities	10% accidents	Yes	No
No PWCs in Pt. Pleasant and Cape May canals	66 accidents; 0 fatalities	27% accidents	Operator of rental PWC must be briefed by the rental agency about rules of the road, OUI rules, PWC regs and PWC handling characteristics	No
Within 500' from shoreline on Lk. George use no-wake speed	6 fatalities; 17% for 1997	28.5% accidents; 27.8% vessels	Rental operator must provide demo of operation of PWC and use of safety equipment, or show video	Yes
All motorboats must obey No Wake zones	7 PWC accidents; 4 with injuries; 1 fatality; 44% of all accidents	14% of PWC accidents were fatalities; 43% of PWC accidents had injuries	No	Yes
No	45 accidents; 1 fatality	30% accidents; 6.6% fatalities	No	Yes
No, except hp restrictions	120 total accidents, 18 fatalities; 31 accidents involving PWC, 0 fatalities	26% of all reported recreational boating accidents involve PWC	PWC livery operators must show video and explain rules to clients; no dealer requirements	PWC loaners are used by commission officers, not ed. specialists
No	Data incomplete; 0 fatalities	Data incomplete	No	No
Special regulations - waters-none specifically for PWCs	12 accidents; 0 fatalities	39% of total (31)	No	Yes
Yes	0	N/A	Must meet minimum education requirements	No
Local ordinances	54	26%	Yes	Yes

SSBLAA

SURVEY: PERSONAL WATERCRAFT OPERATION

State	PWC minimum operator age?	Certification required for operation? Age restrictions?	Operational restrictions?
Alabama	Yes	No	Yes
Arkansas	12 for all boats over 10hp	No	Mandatory PFD wear; no wake jumping close to boat
Florida	14 to operate; 16 to rent	Those born after 9/30/80 must be certified to operate any motorboat	Restrictions apply to hours of operation, wake jumping and PFD wear
Georgia	12-15 with certificate or accompanied by person 18+, or are supervised	12-15 with certificate	Yes
Kentucky	No	No	Yes
Louisiana	13	No	No operation after sunset; operators must wear PFD
Maryland	16	Those born after 7/1/72 must possess a boating safety certificate while operating a motorboat including PWC	No operation sunset to sunrise; 6-knot speed limit w/in 100' of shore, wharf, pier, people in water, other boats, etc. Mandatory PFD wear; cutoff switch required
Mississippi	16	Those born after 6/30/80 must take boating course	Certain parts of state
Missouri	14	No	No operation above idle speed w/in 50' of another vessel or person in water; no wake jumping w/in 100'; PFD wear mandated; kill switch lanyard
New Mexico	13	No	150 feet distance
North Carolina	No, except several local ordinances for young PWC riders	No	Yes
Oklahoma	Under 13 may not operate solo	None	10mph w/in 50' of other vessels when underway; mandatory PFD wear; kill switch lanyard
Puerto Rico	16	Operators born after 7/1/72 must have permit obtained only by passing NASBLA approved course	150' from other vessels; mandatory PFDs for those under 12; no wake jumping
South Carolina	No	No; if solo operator under 16, must take boater ed. course for all motorboats	No wake 50' from docks, anchored boats; no operation after sunset or before sunrise; mandatory PFD wear
Tennessee	Yes	No	Yes
Texas	13	13-17	50' from PWC, vessel, platform except at headway speed; sunrise to sunset operation only; PFD required; no wake jumping
Virgin Islands	18; 14-17 with proof of boating safety course	For persons under 18	Yes
Virginia	14	No	Hours of operation and PFD wear restrictions for PWC
West Virginia	15	No	No night operation; must wear PFD; reckless operation prohibited

Restricted area use?	PWC accidents/fatalities in 1997	PWC percent of boating accidents/fatalities	Dealer/rental operator requirements?	Does agency utilize PWC industry loaner programs?
No	90 accidents; 1 fatality	40% accidents; 4% fatalities	Yes	Yes
Yes	35 accidents	35%	No	Yes
Local governments may regulate them	448 total accidents; 7 fatalities	38% of total to date	Yes	Yes
N/A	52 accidents	38% accidents; 10% fatalities	Yes	N/A
Limit is 10hp motors on some waters	31 accidents; 4 fatalities	37% accidents; 4.75% fatalities	No	Yes
No	33 PWC-related accidents	26% accidents	16 or older	No
Deep Creek Lake has hours of operation rule	52 accidents, 29 injuries, 0 fatalities	0	PWC rental operators may give written test to customers w/o safety certificate	Yes
On the Gulf Coast	55 accidents; 3 fatalities	45%	Some areas	Yes
No	154 accidents; 3 fatalities	38% accidents; 15% fatalities	No	Yes
Several lakes	10	10%	No	No
Several local ordinances have restrictions	87 accidents; 3 fatalities	42% accidents; 18% fatalities	No	Yes
Waters controlled by municipalities may have restrictions	54 accidents; 0 fatalities	45%	No	No
All inland lakes and some lagoons & sanctuaries cannot have PWCs	20 accidents; 0 fatalities	0	Not at time of rental	Would like to
No	36 accidents; 0 fatalities	29% accidents	No	Yes
No	58 PWC accidents; 2 fatalities	42% (of 137 total) accidents; 9% (of 21 total) fatalities	Yes	Yes
No operation on holiday weekends; operate in clockwise direction	76 accidents; 11 fatalities	38% accidents; 16% fatalities	Instruction relating to safe operation required for rental vessels and boating regs that apply to areas of operation	Yes
Restrictions apply to all territorial waters	2 accidents; 0 fatalities	±1% of accidents	No, but encouraged by DPNR	Not presently but there are plans to utilize loaners for education
No	78 PWC accidents; 3 fatalities	36% accidents; 11% fatalities	No	Yes
No	None	N/A	No	Yes

WSRAA

SURVEY: PERSONAL WATERCRAFT OPERATION

State	PWC minimum operator age?	Certification required for operation? Age restrictions?	Operational restrictions?
Alaska	No	No	Mandatory life jacket wear for operators and passengers 13 years or younger only
Arizona	12	No	Yes
California	16 for all vessels of 15hp or greater. Persons 12-15 may operate under direct supervision of another 18 or older	No certification for any type vessel required	Must wear kill switch lanyard; no wake jumping within 100'; no spraying of other vessels; no night operation; no reckless operation
Colorado	14 with certificate; 16 without certificate	Yes, 14-16	Yes
Guam	Under 16 must be accompanied by someone over age 18	Permits required for commercial operators. No certificate required for personal use	Yes
Hawaii	15	No	Yes
Idaho	No	<i>Acknowledgment of instruction</i> card required to operate rental PWC	Only those required for all vessels
Kansas	12	Yes, 12-15 mandatory education to operate alone	Yes
Montana	13-14 cannot operate alone unless certified or have 18 year old aboard 12 and under must have 18 or older aboard	Yes, certificate 13, 14 years; 15+ do not need to be certified or have 18 year old aboard	PFD required; must wear kill switch lanyard; no wake speed within 100' of dock, vessel, swimmer etc. on lake, 50' on river
Nevada	12	No	Wake jumping prohibited by requirement of flat wake within five boat lengths of another vessel
Oregon	14 to operate; 16 to rent	No	Yes, speed restrictions near shore, other vessels, swimmers, boat ramps, docks etc. Mandatory PFD wear, also
Utah	Under age 18 must have adult on board unless PWC certified	PWC ed: 12-15 certified & operate under direct adult supervision; 16-17 certified	150' from all vessels when above wakeless speed; PWC operators & riders must wear PFDs
Washington	14	No	Sunrise to sunset only; mandatory life jackets; No reckless operation
Wyoming	16	No	Yes

Restricted area use?	PWC accidents/fatalities in 1997	PWC percent of boating accidents/fatalities	Dealer/rental operator requirements?	Does agency utilize PWC industry loaner programs?
No	6 accidents; 1 fatality	6.6% accidents 4.7% fatalities	No	No
No	200 PWC accidents; 2 fatalities (<i>numbers available in February</i>)	55%	No	Yes
Monterrey Bay bans PWCs	354 PWC accidents; 7 fatalities (prelim.)	17.5% fatalities	No	Local agencies do; state does not provide vessels
Some have hp restrictions; other areas don't allow motorized vessels	37 PWC accidents	50.1% of total accidents	Cannot rent, lease or hire out a boat to someone under 16 unless the person is over 14 & has a safety certificate	Yes
Yes	0	N/A	Commercial operators must provide safety briefing	No
Yes	0	N/A	No	No
Only those required for all vessels	N/A	N/A	Persons renting or leasing a PWC must take instruction; Businesses must provide instruction including PWC video & printed information	Local agencies are involved; Idaho purchased theirs
Some county- and city-managed lakes	2 fatalities (33% of accidents)	50%	No	Yes
Horsepower restrictions on some waters	6 accidents; 2 fatalities	.08%	No regulations, but they must provide proper equipment	Yes
No	175 accidents YTD; 4 fatalities	66%	Yes, livery operators—not dealers	Yes
Prohibited on most rivers	34 accidents	26%	Yes, operational safety decal; review operator rules & form verifying knowledge of rules	Yes, 6-8 county programs (out of 31) regularly participate
Not just for PWCs	N/A	N/A	Rental must provide law & rule information & required safety equipment	Yes
Yes by county ordinance	Data not complete	N/A	Not a state law; some counties	State parks don't; many county programs do
Yes	13 accidents	N/A	No	Yes

WELL DONE

A Job Well Done

Wood is Oregon's Marine Officer of the Year

NEWPORT, Ore.—Douglas County Sheriff's Deputy Pete Wood was named Oregon's Marine Officer of the Year by the Oregon State Marine Board. He was honored at the fall Marine Board annual law enforcement conference.

Wood had a busy year on Douglas County waters, according to Marty Law, education specialist for the Marine Board. During the 1997 boating season, Wood completed more than 515 boat inspections, issued over 525 citations or warnings, put in 1,100 hours on boat patrol, devoted another 6,000 hours to the program, delivered water safety education to 40 schools reaching some 1,550 students, and promoted boating safety in the local media.

Wood was accompanied to the conference by Douglas County Sheriff John Pardon.

Honors went not only to Deputy Wood, but to other law enforcement efforts, and a seasonal officer.

Jackson County Deputy Bob Grantham, a seasonal officer with Jackson County's department, was honored for his efforts, which included seven arrests for boating while intoxicated, and more than 655 boat inspections. He also issued over 350 citations or warnings during the boating season.

Jackson County's marine patrol was honored with "Marine Program of the Year" for its development of a BUI Diversion Program, which has become a role model for similar programs statewide. According to Law, BUI diversion sends offenders to a "boating school." Accepting the award were Jackson County Sheriff Bob Kennedy, Sgt. Ken Curtis and deputies Ron Oachs, Wally Ramsay, Mike Buschke and Grantham.

During the boating season, Jackson County deputies conducted 3,150 boat inspections, made 25 BUI arrests, spent 1,415 hours on boat patrol and took the Marine Board's education program to 26 schools, reaching over 1,200 students.

The "Seasonal Program of the Year" award went to the Baker County Sheriff's Department Marine Patrol. Sheriff Terry Speelman accepted the award, accompanied by Deputy Amos Rasmussen, who was recognized for his outstanding individual performance.

Last summer, Baker County completed more than 600 boat inspections, wrote 330 citations or warnings, and turned in 500 boat patrol hours, while visiting nine schools to reach over 400 students with the water safety message.



Deputy Pete Wood (center) was honored as Oregon's Marine Officer of the Year. Also shown is BLA Paul Donheffner (left) and Sheriff John Pardon.

South Carolina DNR names Mills 1997 Officer of the Year

CHARLESTON, S.C.—Sergeant Lee "Skeet" Mills has been named "Officer of the Year for 1997" by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources.

He will represent South Carolina at the 1997 Southeastern Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies and is a candidate for the Southeastern Officer of the Year, according to Major Alvin Taylor, state boating law administrator.

Sgt. Mills has served with the DNR for 23 years, and was a founding member of the agency dive team in 1977. He has recovered some 130 drowning victims and been involved in over 4,000 dives during his career.

One of his larger accomplishments was creation of an underwater hazard removal program, which has cleared boating and diving hazards from state waters. A significant use of that program was a project to remove hazardous pilings along a channel in Lake Murray, utilizing a special underwater hydraulic chainsaw. The pilings were later replaced with floating buoys.

Mills is a certified SCUBA instructor and has trained all the agency's law enforcement divers, and other local law enforcement and rescue squad divers. He also coordinates DNR's "Aids to Navigation" program and is a member of the B-SAF (Boating Safety Action Force) team.

In addition to Mills earning statewide honors, district Officers of the Year are PFC Gary Wilson (District 1), PFC Gerald Moore (District 2), PFC Mike Pritchard (District 3), Cpl. Gentry Thames (District 4), Sgt. Darryl Williams (District 5), PFC George Dukes (District 6), B/Sgt. Jerry Parkman (District 7), B/Sgt. Jimmy Tidwell (District 8), and B/Sgt. Michael Thomas (Investigations).

North Dakota's Warren Enyart receives NWSC Award of Merit

BISMARCK, N.D.—Warren Enyart, a member of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and a volunteer boating safety instructor for the North Dakota Game & Fish Department, recently received an Award of Merit from the National Water

Safety Congress.

Enyart received the award from Joe Hall, manager of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Lake Sakakawea project.

According to North Dakota Boating Law Administrator Wilmer Pich, Enyart

was once before recognized for his efforts, in 1993 when he was named volunteer Instructor of the Year by the Game & Fish Department.

"Warren has been instrumental in the 'Kids In Boats' program since its inception," Pich said.

Enyart is credited for creating much of the original program.

A sailboat and powerboat operator for many years, Enyart has considerable knowledge and expertise in the boating arena, Pich reported.

"That's a valuable asset when teaching young people," Pich observed. "Warren has rapport with youngsters akin to a grandparent, thus the students are more apt to learn and remember the lessons taught."

Swiftwater rescue award nominations sought

SOUTH BEND, Ind.—Nominations are being sought for the 1997 Higgins and Langley Memorial Awards for outstanding achievement in the field of swiftwater rescue.

Sponsored by the Swiftwater Rescue Committee of the National Association for Search and Rescue, the Higgins-Langley award memorializes civilian rescuer Earl Higgins and firefighter paramedic Jeffrey Langley, both of whom died in the line of duty. Higgins was swept away while attempting to save a child from the flood-swollen Los Angeles River in February 1980, and

Langley died in a helicopter crash in March 1993.

In addition to recognizing outstanding achievement in the field of swiftwater/flood rescue, the awards focus on individual acts of heroism, team efforts, and lifetime achievements, including implementation of rescue training programs, public safety education efforts and more.

Deadline for nominations is March 1, 1998. Recommendations may be sent to Paul McMinn, National Association for Search and Rescue, Swiftwater Rescue Committee, c/o South Bend Recreation Department, 727 Eddy Street, South Bend, IN 46615.



Warren Enyart, center, is congratulated on receiving his NWSC Award of Merit by North Dakota BLA Wilmer Pich as Joe Hall from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers looks on.

Maine's Muir reaches kids as 'Officer Salty'

AUGUSTA, Maine—A long held principle in the hunting and fishing fraternities is that youngsters have to be recruited at an early age or they may never take up the sports.

That principle seems to apply quite well in Maine, where Marine Patrol Officer Ronald Muir has developed a program called "Officer Salty," that he takes to the elementary schools. He teaches youngsters about marine resources by taking an aquarium into the classroom, giving a small program on Maine marine life, then leaves the students to observe and care for such species as lobsters, oysters, clams and sea cucumbers. A month or so later, he returns and students discuss what they have learned.

In 1998, Muir will incorporate boating safety education into his program. He is also training other officers to become "Officer Salty" in their respective patrol areas.

"This has been a highly successful education program," said Sgt. Jeffrey Gallagher of the Marine Patrol, "and he's never been awarded or recognized for this. It's a great, great program."

Gallagher said the ultimate benefit of this program will be an increased awareness of marine life by the next generation.



Ron Muir

Maine Marine Patrol plans strategies for new year

AUGUSTA, Maine—There may be snow on the ground in Maine, but the Marine Patrol is already thinking warm weather and sunshine.

"We're planning strategies for 1998 on how to increase boating safety on the saltwater," said the Marine Patrol's Sgt. Jeffrey Gallagher.

Among the steps that will be taken, he said, are setting of minimum patrol hours for

officers assigned to certain patrol vessels.

"We're setting a minimum number of boating hours on the 21-foot class boats at 150 hours per officer," Gallagher

said. "Many of the guys who have a 21-foot boat already go over 300 or 400 hours."

That in mind, he acknowledged, meeting the minimum patrol hours requirement will

not be that difficult.

For officers assigned to a 35-footer, Gallagher said the minimum patrol time is 500 hours.

This year, Gallagher and his colleagues logged over 6,000 hours on patrol. He didn't say whether that figure includes the over 500 hours of flight time that Marine Patrol pilot John Fetterman logged over the past year on air patrols.

Another of Gallagher's goals in 1998 is to do emphasis patrols for operating under the influence violators. Prior to the start of boating season, Gallagher will analyze enforcement and accident statistics, "to see where the greatest problems occur." Once the hot spots are identified, concentrated enforcement efforts will be mounted.

Helping the effort will be five new officers, who should be trained and on the job by the time boating season opens in the spring.

Computer update in Puerto Rico speeds boat registrations

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—Speedier registration renewals, and the ability to do them year 'round are benefits of a computer upgrade that's now on line for the Department of Environment & Natural Resources.

According to Hector Bird, who handles registration and titling, the new system will enable the agency to issue new registrations in a matter of minutes. Also, registrations will now be renewable 12 months of the year, rather than under the old system, which put a June 15 deadline on registration renewals.

For example, a boater who registers a vessel in mid-April now has one full year before the new registration is required.

Bird reported 44,050 registered vessels in Puerto Rico, including over 9,000 personal watercraft. Some of those are commercial vessels, he acknowledged, but the majority are recreational craft of some sort.



Florida's Marine Patrol and Mothers Against Drunk Driving joined forces with the Boat Safe, Boat Smart, Boat Sober campaign.

Florida Marine Patrol, MADD join forces to combat drunk boating

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Florida's Marine Patrol and Mothers Against Drunk Driving have joined forces to launch the *Boat Safe, Boat Smart, Boat Sober* campaign in the Sunshine State.

According to Virginia Wetherell, secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection, "Nearly 30 percent of boater fatalities in Florida and 50 percent of boating accidents nationwide are alcohol-related."

"Our goal is to reduce the number of boating accidents, injuries and deaths that occur in Florida waterways," added Marine Patrol Director Mickey Watson. "If boaters are made aware of BUI dangers through campaigns such as the DEP/MADD campaign before they take to the water, there is a better chance of reducing boating accidents. Saving lives is our number one priority."

The campaign began in August. Thanks to legislation passed in 1996, cases against Florida BUI offenders can be influenced by prior convictions for driving under the influence. Since most drunk boaters become drunk drivers when they get back to dry land, MADD and the Marine Patrol felt it was only proper to cooperate in their campaign.

Indiana hosting UL seminars

MICHIGAN CITY, Ind.—Two Underwriters Laboratory boat accident investigation courses will be held in Indiana in the spring, reported Major Larry Rhinehart, boating law administrator for the Department of Natural Resources.

Tentative dates are May 11-15, with the two courses running consecutively. Rhinehart said there are 18 openings for each class, which will be held "on the Lake Michigan shoreline area."

Rhode Island to work with local authorities on PWC complaints

PROVIDENCE, R.I.—Educating personal watercraft operators in an effort to reduce complaints will be high on the priority list for Rhode Island authorities in 1998, said Mike Scanlon, education specialist with the Department of Environmental Management.

"We get complaints from coastal ponds mostly," Scanlon explained. "The problem is that a lot of it is ignorance of the operating regulations."

One major headache stems from PWC operators harassing wildlife. Scanlon said that is mainly a situation where operators aren't aware of the crime they are committing, and the penalty that could be assessed, up to \$500. Primarily the problem involves

PWC riders moving in on rafting ducks, he said.

"Some of the people who do this," he observed, "I don't think they know what they're doing and how serious the penalty is. A lot of it is just ignorance. It's an awareness issue."

To curb this sort of thing, Scanlon will work with local police agencies and other local entities to educate PWC riders and bring the number of complaints down.

Rhode Island finished out the year with two fatalities, 11 injury accidents and an overall total of 40 accidents.

"It was a relatively safe summer," Scanlon said. "We're getting a lot less complaints about negligent operation because people understand those laws."



South Dakota PWC winner

It was a pretty good summer for Melissa Myron of Vermillion, S.D. She wound up holding the keys to a Kawasaki Jet Ski and a pair of life jackets donated by Kawasaki. Myron won a boating safety promotion that ran through the summer, according to Boating Law Administrator Bill Shattuck. Sponsored by the Department of Game, Fish & Parks and state Kawasaki dealers, the giveaway was designed to promote safe PWC operation. Entrants had to correctly answer ten questions about PWCs to have their entries considered for the grand prize drawing. Shown with Myron, who is seated on her new Kawasaki, are Scott Charbonneau (left) of the Game, Fish & Parks agency and Ross Petersen of Petersen Motors, one of eight sponsoring dealers. (Photo courtesy Dorinda Daniel, Pierre Capital Journal)

STATE ROUNDUP

New Mexico sending officers for training, sets winter activities

SANTA FE, N.M.—Marine enforcement officers with the New Mexico State Parks Department will be training both in state and on the road this winter, said Boating Law Administrator Ben Hoffacker.



Ben Hoffacker

Over the winter, he's sending officer Mike Ormand for advanced marine police training in Miami, Fla. with Tactical Advantage Consultants, a private enterprise operated by officers with the Florida Marine Patrol. Another officer, Norman Baca, will travel to Yorktown for training from the U.S. Coast Guard.

Instate opportunities include a two day International Association of Marine Investigators course Jan. 14-15 in Albuquerque with Randall Fricke of Arizona and Jimmy Laird from Mississippi serving as instructors. This will be an inter-agency seminar involving employees of the state Motor Vehicle Division and parks agency, Hoffacker said.

An innovative program that pairs marine enforcement officers with partners from the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary to teach the state's basic eight-hour boating course is also in the works.

"We're looking to increase the number of communities where we offer this course," Hoffacker said. "We now offer the basic boating course in Albuquerque at the Rio Grande Nature Center, and hope to have other (programs) on line by spring."

Also during the winter, parks officers will transition from their present sidearms to the Glock Model 22 in .40 S&W caliber.

"It's a four-day transition course and we will also work using OC spray into it," Hoffacker said. "We will be using Corbon as our duty ammo."

The Parks agency recently launched two 25-foot Boston Whaler Sentry patrol vessels, one on Elephant Butte Lake and the other on Navajo Lake.

Florida Game & Freshwater Fish Commission teams with Disney World on boating safety

ORLANDO, Fla.—Excursion boat operators at Walt Disney World got a recent dose of training from the officers with the Florida Game & Freshwater Fish Commission, and this was no “Mickey Mouse” operation.

True, Mickey, Pluto, Donald Duck and the rest of the Disney menagerie are well-represented by Disney World boat operators, but at this hands-on session, cartoon characters took a back seat to the professionals.

Taking a proactive approach to boating safety education, Walt Disney World joined forces with the Commission for boat operator training, said Capt. Paul Ouellette.

Disney World’s record is impressive. Over the past 26 years, some 42 million hours of boat operation, with millions of guests on board, have pro-

duced only one boating-related fatality and less than ten injuries requiring anything beyond basic first aid, Lt. Richard Moore reported.

Wayne Mitchell, senior safety administrator at Walt Disney World, teamed

with Lt. Kathleen Kelley to develop a plan for training and selection of Disney World employees to become boating safety instructors. The program worked, and now Disney employees will be able to train their colleagues.

In addition to the Boat Disney ’97 project, commission officers have completed an education campaign entitled Project B.O.A.T. (Boaters On Alert for Trouble). This short term project focused on reminding boaters of the basics through pamphlet distribution on Labor Day weekend. Pamphlets contained information that stressed the importance of wearing life jackets, being alert to other boaters and avoiding alcohol while boating.

“This project was the result of a suggestion from one of our boating accident investigators,” Moore said.



Oregon State Farm agents pitch safety

Summer 1997 saw several State Farm insurance agents pitch safety instead of sales, by sponsoring an advertisement promoting life jacket use and sober boating. In recognition of their effort, Oregon Boating Law Administrator Paul Donheffner presented a NASBLA Public Service Award to State Farm field consultant Larry Rodman, and a special Oregon Boating Safety award to State Farm agent Michael Spence of Portland. Footage for the advertisement was filmed by a producer with KTPV Channel 12 along the Willamette River. Shown here are KTPV account executive John Lawrence, Donheffner, Spence and KPTV general manager Marty Brantley.

Bad year for boat accidents in Empire State

ALBANY, N.Y.—“We’re going to have a bad year for boating accidents,” lamented New York Boating Law Administrator Nelson Potter, Office of Parks, Recreation and Preservation.

Based on preliminary figures, Potter expects this year’s total to run into the 30-plus category, well above last year’s 23 fatalities. As of early November, the state had suffered 314 accidents, and all the figures are not yet in on nonfatal

accidents, either.

So far, there’s no indication that a nasty trend is in the making. Complete data will be available early in 1998.

Potter said two instructors will be sent to Yorktown for additional training early next year, and he’s also planning a Boating-While-Intoxicated course, a vessel operator school and marine law enforcement school. Those will likely all be held somewhere along the Hudson River val-

ley, to allow attendance by officers from several communities.

Schools will likely be scheduled in late April.

Looks like personal watercraft may be the subject of legislation this session, Potter added. There is a bill in the State Senate that would mandate education for PWC operation, and there was recently a hearing on a similar measure before the State Assembly.

North Dakota's 'Kids In Boats' program a success inside-out

STATE ROUNDUP

JAMESTOWN, N.D.—It may be frozen solid outside here Dec. 30, but inside the YMCA pool facility, there will be plenty of warm, and maybe even fuzzy, hands-on instruction for youngsters when the year's last "Kids In Boats" program is conducted.

"Kids In Boats" is a popular, and successful, program here that teaches boating safety to youngsters primarily in the 7 to 11 year age group, though a lot of adults join in. According to Boating Law Administrator Wilmer Pich with the Game & Fish Department, several eight-foot boats, powered by Minn Kota electric troll motors, are provided to the program by the U.S. Army Corps of En-

gineers.

It's a cooperative effort that also involves the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, North Dakota Safety Council, and state volunteer instructors, Pich said.

Approximately eight classes are scheduled in 1998, and they will be held around the state during the months of June, July and August, when youngsters are out of school. This holiday-season course is something new.

Pich said the Kids In Boats session lasts about two hours, and it covers all the boating basics for its youthful audience.

"We teach safety and rules of the road," he explained.

Maine wardens will train to computerize accident information

AUGUSTA, Maine—If Maine Boating Law Administrator Parker Tripp can swing it, a district meeting slated here in April with the U.S. Coast Guard will offer a seminar on computerized boating accident reporting.

"We're looking for a little more training," Tripp said.

Maine does not have as many accidents or fatalities as some other states, but there was one this fall that killed three hunters. Tripp said the trio was taking a canoe across Moosehead Lake to a hunting camp, and was apparently overtaken by a sudden storm. Two adults and a youth drowned in that mishap.

Meanwhile, Tripp said some holdover legislation dealing with management issues in the Great Ponds basin of south-central Maine still is before the Legislature.

Montana educates public about drowning

MISSOULA, Mont.—A joint effort this year to educate Montana residents, particularly children, about water safety seems to be paying off.

According to Boating Law Administrator Jean Sewell with the Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks, her agency, along with the state Department of Health, Red Cross, YMCA, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, and the Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies coalition, mounted a campaign called "Stay On Top Of It." Simply put, the message is to stay on top of the water.

Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies received a Health Department grant to implement the program. The organization also opened a toll-free information hot line, and callers were asked a few questions, which garnered some interesting results: 42 percent of callers had not taken swimming lessons, 63 percent did not own recreational boats but 79 percent go boating.

Sewell added that Montana's boating safety program is allocated \$28,000 annually for equipment, but no decisions have been made yet what equipment will be purchased this fiscal year.

D.C. harbor police practice ice rescue

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Soon as ice forms over the tidal basin here, the metropolitan harbor patrol police will begin practicing for ice rescues, said Boating Law Administrator Lt. Ralph McLean.

"We've got two new ice rescue sleds," he reported, "and a new side scanning sonar that is just great."

Harbor patrol officers will train for all sorts of hard water emergencies, McLean explained. All it takes is some ice.

Garden State officers continue cross-training

WEST TRENTON, N.J.—Cross-training of New Jersey state troopers and marine officers is continuing this winter, with the effort now concentrating on first line supervisors.

Boating Law Administrator Capt. Warren Backer said training involves a four-week boating course, followed by 160 hours of boat certification. The latter schooling certifies officers to operate patrol boats on their own.

Training coordinator Edward Docker, a 12-year veteran of the agency, said the initial four-week course involves both classroom time and hands-on boat handling.

"We're taking people basically from road duty and teaching them about marine law enforcement, boating law and boat handling," Docker explained. "We cover the basics, including federal and state requirements, piloting, navigation, radar and Loran, then we take them out and teach them how to run boats."



Jean Sewell

Oregon adds Intoxilizers, boat

SALEM, Ore.—Nine new Intoxilizer 1400 units, and one new 21-foot patrol boat, will beef up Oregon's ability to patrol its waters and keep the drunks off in 1998, reported Carol Mitchell with the Oregon State Marine Board.

Mitchell said the new Intoxilizer units bring the Marine Board's total number to 21 units, which are placed with county marine patrol units, where they do the most good.

"We will evaluate the placement needs this winter and have them located prior to the 1998 boating season," Mitchell said. "These intoxilizers continue to be used in nearly all BUI arrest cases."

On the water for the 1998 season will be a 21-foot SAFE Boat for the Coos County Sheriff's Department marine patrol. Mitchell said this new boat will increase the law enforcement presence and boater assistance capabilities in and around coastal bars.

Meanwhile, the Marine Board has approved new rules for personal watercraft operators in 1998. Mitchell provided the highlights to *Small Craft Advisory*. Under the new requirements, an operator who rents, leases or charters personal watercraft must provide:

- A Type I or III life jacket to be worn by each person on the PWC. Fully-inflatable devices are not acceptable for PWCs under the new rules.
- A decal explaining safe operation affixed to every rental unit, and displayed so it is clearly visible to the operator while at the controls. This decal must, at a minimum, have information on proper use of controls, steering, speed and distance rules, rules of the road and life jacket requirements.
- A written copy of the state PWC rules for the renter and anyone else who would operate the craft. Both the operator and customer will review and sign a copy of the rules and the renter will carry a copy on board as required equipment.

Nebraska will mount selective enforcement patrols in 1998

LINCOLN, Neb.—Though the Plains states are in the grip of winter, Nebraska Boating Law Administrator Herb Angell is thinking spring already.

Specifically, he's planning a schedule for selective enforcement patrols at various lakes in the Cornhusker State to concentrate on nabbing drunken boaters, and those without valid registrations. While acknowledging there are also complaints about personal watercraft operation, Angell noted, "I don't know if they're getting a bum rap and if it's not just (a few) people causing all

the problems."

Angell's strategy at this point is to place a high-visibility patrol vessel on the problem waters, where people will immediately take notice and, hopefully, behave accordingly.

During 1997, Nebraska reported four boating fatalities and some 75,000 registered boats.

Over the winter months, the Game & Parks Commission will concentrate on education. Angell said many boaters spend their off-season time taking a home study course.

Michigan approaches education on two levels, scores double header

LANSING, Mich.—A double-barrel approach to boating safety education seems to be working in Michigan, where Boating Law Administrator Lt. Lyle Belknap indicated personal watercraft accidents are dropping slightly.

"We have two programs that seem to be very effective in Michigan," Belknap

reported. "Under our marine education program, we certified 50,554 students in classroom courses. We look at it as not only 50,554 students, but that we had an impact on over 50,000 families."

Michigan's second program is the PWC Education/Enforcement effort. This began in 1995 with a dozen officers assigned to PWC patrol, and this year that number grew to 30 officers. Belknap applauded the Personal Watercraft Industry Association for its support of the loaner program.

Of the two, Belknap said the PWC effort has the higher profile. He's gotten plenty of positive feedback from city, lake associations, other law enforcement agencies and other officers within the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for training.

From all indications, the effort is working. In 1995, PWC accidents accounted for 45 percent of all boating accidents. In 1996, that percentage dropped to 41 percent, and this year it is hovering around 42 percent.

There were seven PWC-related fatalities in 1994. The following year there was only one, followed in 1996 by two, and a single death this year.

"All this with over 950,000 registered boats, along with an estimated 250,000 other boats that the boating industry says are brought into the state each summer," Belknap observed.



Officer Sherry Chandler promotes PWC safety as part of Michigan's PWC Education/Enforcement effort.

Majority of Mass. fatal victims were not wearing life jackets

BOSTON, Mass. —Eighty percent of this year's fatal boating accident victims were not using personal floatation devices, according to preliminary data available to Col. Richard Murray, state boating law administrator.

He also noted that half of this year's fatal boat mishaps involved canoes or kayaks.

Massachusetts suffered a slight increase in boating fatalities this year, despite only two deaths during the first five months. However, June brought eight boating deaths. Year-end figures will not be available for several weeks.

Murray is sending possibly nine officers for training at the Coast Guard's Yorktown facility this winter, and another four for training at Glenco, Ga.

"Those guys go down and bring back the training to share," he said.

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Meanwhile, just about all Massachusetts patrol boats have been wrapped for the winter, literally, Murray confirmed.

"We shrink-wrap the boats with a real heavy plastic wrap and suck all the air out," he said. "We started doing this about three or four years ago, because it eliminated the need to get a lot of them out of the weather. This keeps the boat dry and protected, and the snow slides off."

Come spring, the plastic wrap is simply peeled off and the boat is ready to be launched.

Boats in need of maintenance are worked on through the winter, but this shrink-wrap process relieves the Department of Fisheries, Wildlife & Environment from having to house the vessels in buildings. Murray said several Massachusetts marinas do the same thing to recreational boats kept at their facilities.

Voluntary titling begins next July in Mississippi

JACKSON, Miss.—Gearing up for the arrival next July 1 of voluntary titling is no small task, acknowledged Mississippi Boating Law Administrator Elizabeth Raymond.

"I am trying to get more office space, more personnel and get all the materials and data ready," she said.

She has six months to accomplish it all, while also riding herd on the state's ongoing boating safety education and enforcement efforts.

The big question: Will Mississippi boaters voluntarily title their boats?

"I would think they would want to, if their boat is financed through a lending institution," Raymond observed. "Wouldn't you want your boat titled?"

In addition to the vessels, motors may also be titled.

Meanwhile, the state's mandatory education program has been more successful than Raymond anticipated during its first six months. She said state instructors scheduled more classes and educated more students than had been expected, and she's delighted.

Five new patrol boats on Vermont agenda

WILLISTON, Vt.—Marine patrol officers with the Vermont State Police will have the use of five new boats come spring, reported Sgt. Al Buck, state boating law administrator.

Plans now call for the five vessels to be fiberglass. Four will be in the 16- and 18-foot class, and there will be one 21-footer

which will double as a patrol vessel and buoy boat, he said. Three of the smaller boats will be assigned to smaller lakes, while one 18-footer and the 21-footer will be on duty along Lake Champlain.

Over the winter, Buck said training will be on the agenda. In-service training typically begins in February.

Wisconsin clamps down on drunken boat operators



Bill Engfer

MADISON, Wis.—Felony convictions have been handed down against three Wisconsin boaters, charged in separate boating fatalities this year, all of which involved alcohol.

Boating Law Administrator Bill Engfer, Department of Natural Resources, told *Small Craft Advisory* that more cases are pending. Charged under the state's "homicide by intoxicated use of a motorboat" statute, these boaters face jail time and fines. Engfer said the number of people being charged under this statute is climbing.

"We take BUI very seriously," Engfer stated. "Our field staff has done one ex-

cellent job."

Engfer credits field officers who have been trained in boating accident investigation for turning up the heat on boozing boaters here. They have been trained in special schools, and are now putting their skills to work.

Officers may be able to serve more as examples of boating safety come summer of 1998, provided their use of inflatable personal flotation devices gets final approval from the agency. Testing of inflatables was done in 1997, and Engfer said the decision is up to the management team.

"We feel this is a very positive way to get officers to wear PFDs," Engfer said.

With the devices visibly in use, he predicts the public will be influenced more to use PFDs.

California T-shirt giveaway promotes youth water safety

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—Reminding kids about water safety in California was much easier in 1997, thanks to a T-shirt giveaway program sponsored by the Department of Boating and Waterways.

DBAW's Phaedra Bota told *Small Craft Advisory* that the T-shirts, bearing a likeness of Cal Boating's mascot "Splasher the Frog" and the message, "I got caught wearing my life jacket." Cal Boating's AquaSMART program also handed out personalized certificates bearing the child's name, with ten safety rules printed on the back:

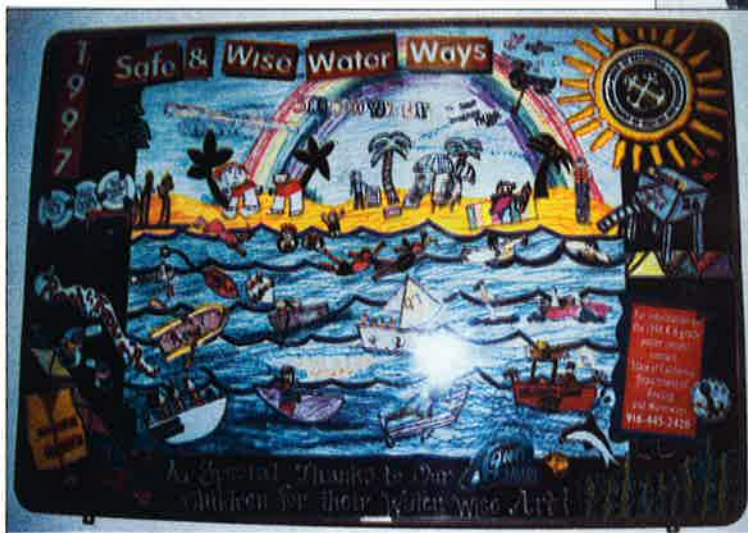
- Learn to Swim
- Wear a Life Jacket
- Learn to Float
- Reach, Throw or Row
- Look Before You Leap
- Don't Overload Your Boat
- Stay With Your Boat
- Learn the Boating Rules of the Road
- Alcohol, Drugs and Boat-

ing Don't Mix

- Be Polite, Don't Pollute

T-shirts went to youngsters age 10 and younger who were spotted wearing life jackets while boating.

According to Boating Law Adminis-



Poster displayed at four California airports contained art elements from this year's Safe and Water Wise youth contest.



Vanessa Nunes shows off a T-shirt given to youngsters this year in California as part of the state's water safety campaign.

trator Chuck Raysbrook, "The program was so successful, we plan to do it again in 1998."

Twenty-eight agencies, including sheriff's departments in San Joaquine, Contra Costa and Fresno counties, participated in the T-shirt giveaway program.

Alabamans procrastinate on getting boat licenses

MONTGOMERY, Ala.—Alabama residents may be getting their required boater education courses out of the way, but they're hardly flooding into state offices to get their operator licenses.

Out of an estimated 500,000 people who may need those licenses starting April 28, 1999, only about 50,000 so far have obtained the documents, lamented Boating Law Administrator Bill Garner. There are some 264,000 registered boats in the Yellowhammer State, and Garner suspects there are nearly twice as many people who occasionally operate those boats. They will all need licenses under a law passed three years ago that man-

dates education and licensing of Alabama boaters.

"We're trying to get them to get their licenses," Garner said. "A lot of people are taking courses, but they're not following through and getting their licenses."

Over the next 16 months, that's go-

ing to have to change, or a great many boaters will be in for an unpleasant reminder that they should have gotten their licenses, come spring of '99.

This spring, Garner will be adding six new officers to the enforcement staff, though four of them will be replacements.

Alaska reports registrations

JUNEAU, Alaska—Boat registrations may be low in the 49th State, but according to Sue Hargis, 17th District Boating Safety specialist with the U.S. Coast Guard's office here, virtually every registered vessel sees some recreational use.

"We have 33,767 registered boats overall," Hargis reported. "and 25,395 recreational vessels. The reality is most (if not all) of the other vessels are also used recreationally."

Virgin Islands registrations

ST. THOMAS, Virgin Islands—Tourists and seasonal boaters are flocking once again to the Virgin Islands, reported Boating Law Administrator Lucia Roberts.

She's planning on a busy season, which runs through the winter months generally into April.

According to Roberts, there are about 4,000 registered boats in the Virgin Is-

lands, and an additional 1,000 at St. Croix. She said the bulk of boating activity will involve regattas.

Meanwhile, enforcement personnel with the Department of Planning & Natural Resources, have received training in marine sanitation, which will help them enforce provisions of the Clean Vessel Act, she said.

Connecticut officers had busy summer; off-season training plans announced

OLDE LYME, Conn.—Thanks in part to a grant from the Department of Transportation, Connecticut's Department of Environmental Protection enforcement officers had a busy year that produced several citations and arrests.

Major Randy Dill, state boating law administrator, said the \$6,200 grant funded overtime for a special enforcement patrol at launches. Officers checked for intoxicated boaters, and checked hundreds of vessels. In all, 695 boats were checked, and 46 written warnings were issued. Officers also found 66 infractions and made 18 arrests, ten of which were for BUI, Dill reported.

Planning is already underway for in-service training early in 1998. Dill is planning "a whole bunch of things," including extensive refresher sessions on laws and regulations, hands-on boat operation, a seminar on new life jacket technology and legal advice from the state prosecutor's office.

STATE ROUNDUP

Delaware officers train on interview techniques

DOVER, Del.—In-service training over the winter months for officers with the Department of Natural Resources' Division of Fish & Wildlife will include boning up on interview techniques.

That's the word from Major James Graybeal, boating law administrator for the agency. With the end of boating season, officers shifted their attention to waterfowl and other hunting enforcement chores, but training is a top priority in the "off" season over the winter months.

Graybeal said this winter's training block could stretch about 30 hours, with courses on wildlife and fish identification. Every February, he noted, officers go through the new fin fish regulations they will be enforcing during the upcoming season.

Small Craft Advisory Readership Survey

NASBLA is conducting a readership survey of *Small Craft Advisory*. We plan to use your suggestions and comments to improve the magazine in the coming year. Thank you for your time and help with this project.

1. Which of the following features do you regularly read? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ President's Viewpoint
- ☐ A Job Well Done
- ☐ Coast Guard Comments
- ☐ State Surveys

2. What do you like most about *Small Craft Advisory*?

3. What would you change if you were editor?

4. How do you receive your copy of *Small Craft Advisory*?

- ☐ direct subscription
- ☐ from BLA's office
- ☐ Auxiliary District/Division
- ☐ inter-office routing
- ☐ other _____

5. How many people read your copy of *Small Craft Advisory*?

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ More than 5

6. What agency/organization do you work for?

7. What is your title?

8. Please list any topics related to recreational boating safety that you would like to see covered in *Small Craft Advisory*.

Please feel free to send along additional comments.

Thank you for your time and input. Please fax this survey to NASBLA headquarters at 606-231-6403 or mail it to PO Box 11099, Lexington, KY 40512-1099.

Minnesota's Smalley taking on bigger vessel these days

USS Des Moines



Official U.S. Navy photo courtesy Seapower Magazine

DULUTH, Minn.—Tim Smalley, one of the creative geniuses of recreational boating safety with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, has his hands full these days with a project—and vessel—considerably larger in scope.

Smalley was tapped earlier this fall to head up an ambitious project that involves securing a decommissioned battleship for a WWII memorial here. No small feat, he acknowledged, since this is hardly a “done deal,” and if it all works out, the ship, the *USS Des Moines* will have to first be cleaned of asbestos and PCBs, then towed

through the St. Lawrence Seaway and the Great Lakes to this, the western-most point of Lake Superior.

Presently, the *Des Moines* is in Philadelphia, Pa. It could cost several million dollars for the project to become reality, and it's Smalley's job to try and make it happen.

“I was asked by the DNR's director of parks to be the project coordinator, on a six-month to one-year ‘mobility assignment’,” Smalley explained. “The job is to establish a Veteran's Memorial State Park in Duluth with the *Des Moines* as the centerpiece.”

Smalley chuckled about

the rumors that have circulated since he stepped out of his position as DNR's boating education coordinator.

“No, it's not true I'm moving to Des Moines, Iowa,” he said. “I will be returning to my job as DNR boating education coordinator as soon as this job is done...or I fall flat on my face.”

Not that it is likely Smalley would goof things up, but a project of this magnitude can be horrendously complicated. Even someone of Smalley's enormous talent might be unable to pull it off.

First, a successful application must be submitted to the Navy in order to obtain a

lease on the ship, for the modest sum of \$1 annually. If that happens, then the ship must be cleaned of asbestos and PCBs and lead paint must be scraped or sealed in.

Next, the ship will have to be towed, and then moored at a still-to-be-developed park.

The capper, Smalley admitted, is funding. It all falls apart unless the Minnesota Legislature agrees to provide \$5.1 million in bonding, and another \$5 million from the state general fund to finance the project.

According to Smalley, the *Des Moines* is the last remaining ship of her class. Her guns are sealed, and she has been decommissioned since 1961. But during her career, the *Des Moines* was the 6th fleet flagship in the Mediterranean. Smalley believes it is fitting that her final resting place will be to watch over a memorial honoring those who served.

“I was asked by one BLA how I could leave a job where I was responsible for the safety of thousands of Minnesota boaters,” Smalley noted. “I told him that I felt I was getting a little stale and the ideas weren't coming as fast as they used to and that I thought this temporary change of pace—doing something I believe in to honor the nation's WWII vets before they were all gone—would recharge my batteries and give me valuable experience I could use when I return to boating safety.”

If this plan comes together, the ship will have conference facilities on board.

Observed Smalley: “If we are successful in getting it to Duluth, it might be a neat place for a NASBLA conference some day.”

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