

water Safety journal



Vol. 15 No. 4

Spring 2000

National Safe Boating Week kicks off 'Campaign 2000' in the nation's capital

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Boating safety experts, Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater, U.S. Coast Guard Admiral James Loy and Theodore Tugboat will gather here Thursday, May 18 for an early kickoff of the National Safe Boating Week campaign.

This year's NSBW observance runs May 20-26.

Ceremonies will be held next to the Metro Police Department's Harbor Patrol office, according to Virgil Chambers, executive director of the National Safe Boating Council. This will be the first U.S. appearance for the tugboat, a 65-foot animated tug.

Plans call for a Congressional reception that afternoon, featuring the presentation of the NSBC Hall of Fame to former congressmen Malcolm Wallop, John Breaux and Mario Biaggi, and Hunt Anderson from the U.S. Coast Guard.

National Safe Boating Week activities will begin across the nation the next day. Typically, kickoff events are held at the local level, with media attention focusing on water safety right before the long Memorial Day holiday weekend, which signals the start of the summer boating season.

Chambers reported that this year's NSBW campaign kits went out weeks

ago, and that requests for information have been heavy.

He also reported that the NSBC website is receiving about 5,000 hits a day.

"People are asking all kinds of questions about boating safety," he noted. "We have exhausted our initial order of 70,000 Sidekick booklets and I have reprinted an additional 250,000." NSBC's *Saved by the Jacket* manual became available in April.

NSBC recently received an "Association Award for Excellence" from the American Society of Automotive Engineers, and is being considered for one of 15 national ASAE awards.

Clock ticking toward Golden Anniversary celebration for Water Safety Congress

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Dust has hardly settled on the 2000 International Boating and Water Safety Summit in Las Vegas, yet plans are on the fast track for next year's summit here, which coincides with the 50th anniversary of the National Water Safety Congress.

NWSC organizers are already alerting their colleagues to circle the dates of

April 8-12, 2001 on their calendars.

"I think we'll have the biggest attendance we've ever had," predicted Carl Garner, NWSC Region 5 vice president, and possibly the longest-serving member of that congress.

Next year's gala event will be headquartered at Nashville's famous Opryland Hotel. The Golden Anniversary celebra-

tion will be, acknowledged NWSC Board member Emmett Forte, just one segment of the international summit, which is jointly sponsored by NWSC and the National Safe Boating Council. But it will be an important segment.

Expected at the conference will be many former NWSC members, including surviving founders. They will have an opportunity to gather and reminisce during a special luncheon followed by what Garner described as a "hospitality suite" function.

There is also the possibility that next year's awards banquet will be held on the famous *General Jackson*, a riverboat on the Tennessee River, which flows past the large Opryland complex.

Created in 1951 as a response to a tragic boating accident that occurred on Tennessee's Calfkiller River in May of that year, the NWSC's first meeting was in Nashville.

Originally called the Water Safety Congress of the Tennessee and



SIGNING a memorandum of understanding for cooperative water safety efforts, and continued joint sponsorship of the International Boating and Water Safety Summit were (l-r) Jim Hall, chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board, Larry Innes from the National Safe Boating Council and Lu Christie, National Water Safety Congress.

Continued on page 7.

President's Column

by NWSC President Steve Fairbanks

It is with great pride that I write my first column as the president of the National Water Safety Congress.

My thanks to Lu Christie for her confidence in my ability to direct the activities of the Congress; I hope I show the same leadership qualities that Lu has provided, and can live up to the trust the membership has placed in me.

We have just concluded the most successful International Boating and Water Safety Summit to date. When the final numbers are in I am confident that we had nearly 500 participants in Las Vegas. This is a reflection on the effort and dedication of both the NWSC and the National Safe Boating Council to provide quality training to our members.

The challenges facing the Congress are numerous and diverse as we approach the 50th anniversary of this organization. These issues will need to be addressed as the Congress continues to develop and mature as an organization. There are five main issues I plan to address in my tenure as president:

- **Strategic Planning.** In October 1999 I appointed a Strategic Planning Committee to develop a five-year Strategic Plan for the Congress. This committee, chaired by Arlyn Hendricks, is responsible for charting the future course of the Congress. It is extremely difficult to get where you want to go unless you know where you are going and the best route to get there. This committee will have its initial recommendations ready for the Board of Directors meeting in October.

- **Memorandums of Understanding.** We signed an MOU with the National Safe Boating Council at the IBWSS in Las Vegas. This MOU will be a vehicle for continued cooperation in hosting the Summit and will provide a basis for pursuit of other joint initiatives. We have opened dialogue with the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, as well as the regional boating law administrator groups, to pursue mutually beneficial joint projects. One such project

Continued on page 3

July 14 deadline set for public comment on proposal to lower federal BAC level

by Dave Workman, Editor

WASHINGTON, D.C.— July 14 has been set as the deadline to submit comments on a proposed rule change that would lower the Federal Blood Alcohol Concentration standard to .08 BAC.

John Malatak, chief of Program Development for the U.S. Coast Guard, told *Water Safety Journal* that 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.

Fifty-four states and other jurisdictions presently have some form of BAC standard, Malatak reported. 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 supersede 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>.

Water Safety Congress inaugurates website

Internet cruisers have another stop on their journey through cyberspace at a new website created recently for the National Water Safety Congress.

This web page is the handiwork of Idaho’s Bill Hagdorn, NWSC Region 7 vice president, and his colleague at the Bureau of Land Management, Kris Long.

A visit to the page reveals that there is information about the Congress’ beginnings back in 1951, plus details about upcoming activities and events, especially the NWSC’s 50th anniversary conference next year in Nashville. There will also be photos of NWSC award winners published on the site, and links to other water safety sites, Rushing said.

To visit the NWSC web page, go to www.watersafetycongress.com.

water safety journal

Vol. 15 No. 4

Spring 2000

A publication of the National Water Safety Congress, a tax exempt, non-profit, public service organization dedicated to water safety. President, Steve Fairbanks; Executive Vice President, Ron Riberich; Treasurer, Toni Rushing; Executive Secretary, Arlyn Hendricks. National Water Safety Congress, 73 White Bridge Road, Suite 103, Nashville, TN 37205

PUBLISHER
MANAGING EDITOR
EDITOR
LAYOUT & DESIGN
CIRCULATION

Bill Farden
William R. Ladd
Dave Workman
April Faires
Evelina Kushnir

Water Safety Journal is published quarterly by Outdoor Empire Publishing, Inc. P.O. Box 19000, Seattle, WA 98109.

Postmaster: Send address changes to *Water Safety Journal*, P.O. Box 19000, Seattle, WA 98109.

Subscription Rates: \$4 per year or FREE with an NWSC membership.

COE's 'Ranger Willie B. Safe' promotes water safety

POPLAR BLUFF, Mo. — He's not a mascot, nor is he a live person, but his influence is spreading across the map thanks to a growing legion of "helpers."

His name is "Ranger Willie B. Safe," and he is, according to Andrew Jefferson with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, an "icon" in the same sense — though admittedly on a far smaller scale — as Santa Claus.

But his reputation may grow this year, thanks to the focus being put on the Willie B. Safe persona by the Southeast Missouri Regional Water Safety Council. That group is calling its July 1-2 water safety

festival on Wappapello Lake the Ranger Willie B. Safe's Wet n' Wild Waterfest 2000. Activities at that event will include a cardboard boat race, inner tube and canoe races, sand castle/sculpture contest, puppet show, tug of war and seminars on basic water survival techniques.

The brainchild of two part-time COE employees, Sarah Berton and Kathy Dickson, Ranger Willie B. Safe was conceived in the mid-1990s, here, as the cornerstone of water safety education at Lake Wappapello. Berton and Dickson



were working at the time as "stay-in-school" employees. Dickson still works with the Corps and attends classes at Three Rivers Community College in Poplar Bluff, while Berton has left, and is now studying at Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau.

Jefferson, a park ranger and information officer at the Corps project, said the program is spreading to several other COE districts. It was recognized last year as the COE's Region 6 award winner, and also won the Corps' Lifeline Award and Award of Merit in 1998.

But awards are not what the Willie B. Safe is really seeking, Jefferson said.

"We do it because it helps us save lives," he explained.

Park rangers now identify themselves during public school appearances as members of Willie B. Safe's "team." Last year, Jefferson, Dickson and Wappapello administrative assistant Donna Adams took their show on the road.

While Dickson created graphic illustrations for the Willie B. Safe campaign, Adams has written and composed

five Willie B. Safe water safety songs, which have been produced professionally at studios in Huntsville, Ala., Jefferson said.

Another ingredient of the campaign is the Willie B. Safe coloring book. These are given away to youngsters, and they have already earned recognition for the graphic illustrations, Jefferson said.

A third level of the effort is still in production, he continued. Presently, Wappapello staffers are developing a compact disk with a Willie B. Safe screen saver for nationwide distribution.

Grant support has been provided by the Corps of Engineers for these efforts. Support for the Willie B. Safe program has also come from the Missouri Department of Public Safety (Highway Patrol and Water Patrol) and the Division of Highway Safety, Jefferson reported. Those agencies have also helped fund the billboard campaign.

Anyone wanting to join Willie B. Safe's growing cadre of "helpers" can get more information by contacting Jefferson at HC2, Box 2349, Wappapello, MO 63966, or call (573) 222-8562. Jefferson may also be reached via e-mail at: Andrew.Jefferson@mvs02.usace.army.mil .

President's Column

continued from page 2

is the potential sponsorship of the law enforcement track at the 2001 Summit by the Southern States Boating Law Administrators Association.

- Organizational Changes in the NWSC. The NWSC structure has remained unchanged since the 1950s. As part of the strategic planning process, we need to take a look at the Congress and objectively determine the most efficient organizational structure for the 21st century. This may involve consolidation of regions, realignment of regions, reduction in the number of regional vice presidents, and reduction in the size and composition of the board of directors. We are no longer an organization that can afford to have 40 percent of the people doing 90 percent of the work. Our increasing workload requires more effectiveness, not more numbers. We also need to increase the participation of our members on standing committees and utilize their knowledge, skills, and abilities to

further the work of the Congress.

- Website Development and Applications. Thanks to Kris Long and Lu Christie, the NWSC now has a website that is available to its members and the public. Future uses for our website are limited only by our imagination. I foresee the website as enabling us to provide increased services to our members and councils. The ability to download award nomination forms or local water safety council grant application forms, as well as gather information on NWSC programs and activities will soon be a reality. We also plan to make the Water Safety Journal available on-line to reduce printing and mailing costs.

- Support to Local Water Safety Councils. One of my goals as Chair of the Local Water Safety Council Liaison Committee was to increase both administrative and financial support of local water safety councils. The LWSC grant program has enabled local and regional water safety councils to implement wa-

ter and boating safety programs that otherwise would have languished due to lack of funding. Not only must we support existing councils, but must continue to support the development of new councils. The Congress will be completely revising its charter kit for promotion and development of new water safety councils. Through a Wallop-Breaux grant from the U.S. Coast Guard, the charter kit will be totally rewritten to meet the needs of local officials or individuals interested in starting new councils. The chartering kit will be downloadable from our website and should be available by January 2001.

- The next two years will be an exciting time for the NWSC. Please join with me and the other members of the Congress in realizing our mission of reducing water-related fatalities. "Be Water Wise, Save Lives" should be more than a slogan. It must be our commitment to those who use our lakes, rivers and waterways.

Third year for life jacket exchange expected to draw large response ...

FORTH WORTH, Tex. — For the third year in a row, the Tarrant County Safe Kids Coalition and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, with support from local marinas, will be conducting a life jacket exchange at three of the most popular lakes in the Tarrant County metroplex area.

The exchange is scheduled Sunday, May 21, the second day of National Safe Boating Week.

Started in 1998, this program has so far allowed over 500 youngsters to turn in worn or poorly-fitting life jackets for new ones, said Judy Marsicano, COE public affairs specialist for the Fort Worth district. The May

exchange will occur at three waters: Grapevine and Benbrook lakes, and Lake Worth.

“Since we have so many children who go out to our lakes, and they don’t have proper PFDs, or their PFD is in poor condition, this is a way to get the kids involved in (water safety),” Marsicano said.

Many of these youngsters come from lower income families and may not be able to afford a good life jacket, she explained.



GOOD TRADE — Rod Baker, left, president of the Fort Worth Jaycees, fitted a youngster with a new life jacket during last year’s exchange at Benbrook Lake. Park Ranger Scott Tackett holds the older life jacket that the youngster traded in.

They frequently visit local lakes with un-serviceable PFDs, and this exchange program is designed to prevent accidents.

Life jackets taken in exchange are often disposed of, or they might be used in displays as examples of PFDs that no longer function properly, Marsicano noted.

The Tarrant County Safe Kids Coalition includes several volunteer organiza-

tions concerned about drowning prevention, plus the Cook Children’s Medical Center, American Red Cross and YMCA.



JOHN MALATAK with the U.S. Coast Guard received the coveted Silver Schooner award from the United Safe Boating Institute. Malatak earned this award for his efforts and achievements in boating safety. It’s only the sixth time the award has been given in the past 20 years.

Low levels in Michigan lakes put focus on water safety issues

GRAND HAVEN, Mich. — “The last time we saw levels like this on the Great Lakes was in the mid-1960s.”

So stated Ross Kittleman, area engineer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. With water levels at their lowest since 1965, he told *Water Safety Journal*, “It’s going to be a nightmare for the recreational boating public ... A lot of marinas may not open due to insufficient water depths.”

Though long-range weather forecasters indicate conditions may improve a bit with seasonal rains in early summer, the Great Lakes region is still facing problems. Among them, Kittleman said, are underwater obstructions that may now be exposed, or only slightly below the surface, when last year they may have been a couple of feet down. Under these conditions, boaters will need to be more cautious.

“Places where people navigated (previously) may not be available,” he said. “You really have to know your charts.”



ACCEPTING the National Boating Education Advancement Award were Jimmy and Yvonne Laird, for the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries & Parks, for creating a puppet program that is used to introduce boating safety to youngsters of elementary school age. This award is sponsored by Coors Brewing Company, and is designed to recognize individuals who have developed and conducted programs that address safety for the benefit of all who use the waterways.

National Park Service announces PWC bans

by Dave Workman, Editor

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Calling personal watercraft use “inappropriate in most areas of the National Park System,” the National Park Service has announced a ban on the machines in most park areas, with certain specific exceptions.

The final NPS rule, which took effect April 20, “prohibits PWC use in national park areas unless the Service determines that this type of water-based recreational activity is appropriate for a specific park...” Identified as two specific locations where PWC operation “may be appropriate” are Lake Mead in Arizona and Nevada, and Glen Canyon in Arizona and Utah, both impoundments of the Colorado River.

While PWC operation “may be allowed” under the new rule in ten national recreation areas (NRAs) — all but one located west of the Mississippi — bans on PWC operation that had

already been in effect in Yellowstone and Everglades national parks, and the Buffalo National River and Ozark National Scenic Riverways remain in effect. Several other areas were closed as a result of the rulemaking: Florida’s Biscayne, Arizona’s Grand Canyon, Michigan’s Isle Royal, Utah’s Canyonlands, and Washington’s Olympic national parks. Several national recreation areas and other federally-owned areas were also closed.

Under the new rule, a two-year “grace period” was established that allows further consideration of PWC use in certain listed park areas where such use is currently occurring. This will give park managers time to develop special regulations for such use. Such regulations might include zoning or operating periods. Parks where this type of regulation may be permitted under the new rule are Assateague

(MD/VA), Cape Cod (MA), Cape Lookout (NC), Cumberland Island (GA), Fire Island (NY), Gulf Islands (FL/MS), and Padre Island (TX) National Seashores; Indiana Dunes (IN) and Pictured Rocks National Lakeshores (MI); Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (PA/NJ); and Big Thicket National Preserve (TX), according to the NPS.

Another means of managing PWC activity is through a Park Superintendent’s Compendium, which is a locally-based procedure for implementing restrictions, said NPS. This approach may permit continued PWC use on the following areas: Amistad (TX), Bighorn Canyon (MT), Chickasaw (OK), Curecanti (CO), Gateway (NY), Glen Canyon (AZ/UT), Lake Mead (AZ/NV), Lake Meredith (TX), Lake Roosevelt (WA) and Whiskeytown-Shasta-Trinity (CA).

NTSB vows to keep pressure on for mandatory PFD regulations

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Though delighted that 36 of the 50 states have set mandatory minimum age requirements for use of personal flotation devices, a spokesman for the National Transportation Safety Board lamented the fact that 14 states and the District of Columbia still do not require PFD use by children.

Bill Gossard, NTSB senior program

manager and Region 2 vice president for the National Water Safety Congress, told *Water Safety Journal* that the federal board will “continue to apply pressure on the states, and keep the spotlight on this.”

“It would be nice,” Gossard said, “if all the laws were uniform across the nation. Uniformity is the intent of this program.”

At press time, most states mandating

PFD use by children set their minimum age requirement at 12 years. There are some notable exceptions. Texas and Alaska set the minimum at age 13 and under. In Alabama, it’s 8 years. Other states set the minimum at age 10, California set age 7 and under, Missouri and Florida require age 6 and under, and in New Hampshire, it’s age 5 and under. (See accompanying chart for a complete listing, page 6)

There are no PFD requirements in 14 states and the territories of Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Puerto Rico has a minimum age of 12, but the District of Columbia has no requirement.

Kentucky and West Virginia, Gossard said, are the two most recent states to join the ranks of mandatory use states.

Nearly all states also have a minimum blood alcohol content level for presumed legal intoxication, and many states also have implied consent laws. There is a split between states that set their minimum BAC limit at .10 and .08. Ten states do not have implied consent laws.

Iowa has just passed a .10 minimum BAC law, which includes implied consent, said Boating Law Administrator Randy Edwards with the Department of Natural Resources.



GATHERING from across the country, various boating and water safety mascots and the Splash Test Dummies became a highlight of the International Boating and Water Safety Summit

NTSB State Laws on Recreational Boating Safety/PFDs

(Current as of April 12, 2000)

State	Age of Mandatory PFD Use	Illegal BAC Level*	Implied Consent Law
Alabama	Under Age 8	0.10	Yes
Alaska	Under Age 13	0.10	Yes
Arizona	12 and Under	0.10	Yes
Arkansas	12 and Under	0.10	Yes
California	Under Age 7**	0.08	No
Colorado		0.10	Yes
Connecticut	Under 12	0.10	No
Delaware	12 and Under	0.10	Yes
DC		0.08	Yes
Florida	Under age 6**	0.08	Yes
Georgia	Under Age 10	0.10	Yes
Hawaii		0.08	Yes
Idaho		0.08	Yes
Illinois	12 and Under	0.10	Yes
Indiana		0.10	Yes
Iowa	Skiing or being Towed	0.10	Yes
Kansas	12 and Under	0.08	Yes
Kentucky	12 and Under*	0.10	Yes
Louisiana	12 and Under	0.10	Yes
Maine	10 and Under	0.08	Yes
Maryland		0.10	No
Massachusetts	Under Age 12	0.08	Yes
Michigan	Under Age 6	0.10	Yes
Minnesota		0.10	Yes
Mississippi	12 and Under**	0.10	Yes
Missouri	6 and Under	0.10	Yes
Montana	Under Age 12	0.10	No
Nebraska	Under Age 12	0.10	Yes
Nevada		0.10	Yes
New Hampshire	5 and Under	0.08	Yes
New Jersey	12 and Under	0.10	Yes
New Mexico			No
New York	Under Age 12**	0.10	Yes
North Carolina		0.08	No
North Dakota	10 and Under**	0.10	Yes
Ohio	Under Age 10**	0.10	Yes
Oklahoma	12 and Under**	0.10	Yes
Oregon	12 and Under	0.08	Yes
Pennsylvania	12 and Under**	0.10	Yes
Rhode Island	10 and Under**	0.10	Yes
South Carolina	Under Age 12**	0.10	Yes
South Dakota		0.10	Yes
Tennessee	12 and Under	0.10	No
Texas	Under Age 13	0.08	Yes
Utah	12 and Under	0.08	Yes
Vermont	Under Age 12	0.10	Yes
Virginia		0.08	Yes
Washington	12 and Under	0.10	No
West Virginia	12 and Under*	0.10	No
Wisconsin		0.10	Yes
Wyoming		0.10	No
Puerto Rico, Guam, NMI, US Virgin Islands, Am. Samoa	12 and Under		

* Most state laws define the offense with BAC in a "per se" law, Massachusetts and South Carolina do not.

** Law applies to power boats less than a length specified in the state law — length varies from less than 16 ft. to less than 27 ft. depending upon the state.

Nevada mounts multilevel campaign to promote safety

RENO, Nev. — Promoting the use of life jackets with at least two approaches this summer, the Division of Wildlife will soon kick off its 2000 water safety campaign, coinciding with the National Safe Boating Week observance.

Fred Messmann, deputy chief of enforcement for the DOW and Region 8 vice president of the National Water Safety Congress, said the effort will kick off May 19. National Safe Boating Week runs May 20-26.

One segment of the campaign will involve a promotion aimed at getting people to voluntarily wear their life jackets.

"We're teaming up with an ice cream company and popular soft drink beverage manufacturer for free 'life jacket' floats," Messmann said.

The theme of this giveaway program will be giving floats for wearing something that floats, he explained.

"This will emphasize the importance of being able to float in your life jacket," Messmann said.

Another level of the program will be what Messmann calls "the Porter Family campaign." Last fall, at Pyramid Lake, a Reno family found themselves caught on the water in the middle of a thunder storm. Their three children had been wearing life jackets from the moment they left the dock, and when the storm came up, both parents donned their life jackets, also.

Their boat capsized, and the family spent a night floating on the lake. Messmann said that when they were res-

cued, they were "awfully close" to succumbing to hypothermia.

"The mother credits life jackets with saving their lives," he noted. "When I interviewed the family, to sit there and look into (their) eyes and see the smiles of those kids and know they were alive because of something we've been promoting nearly brought tears to my eyes."

Radio public service announcements and advertising will remind Silver State boaters that if they are observed on the water by a state game warden, and everyone aboard is wearing a life jacket, they will be stopped and the operator will be given an envelope. Inside that envelope will be some type of prize, "from a coupon to Dairy Queen to cash money to maybe winning a new boat."

Parents form coalition for PWC safety in Texas and Oklahoma

FORT WORTH, Tex. — Parents of two youths who died in personal watercraft-related accidents have formed a coalition whose goal is to post signs about PWC safety at every lake in Texas.

Calling their organization the Coalition of Parents and Families for Personal Watercraft Safety, this group formed in January and has already gotten support from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, according to Judy Marsicano, public affairs specialist for the Fort Worth District.

Organizers Ed and Nita Boles' daugh-

ter was killed two years ago after being struck by a PWC. Jim and Connie Hues' son died five years ago in a PWC mishap, on Lewisville Lake.

Boles told *Water Safety Journal* that the fledgling organization has three major objectives:

- Better public awareness of the "true nature of PWCs as vehicles without the capacity to steer when off-throttle, and without brakes."

- Legislation requiring certification of all PWC operators, with a minimum

age for operation being 16 years.

- Manufacturer compliance with National Transportation Safety Board recommendations for development of off-throttle steering, braking and better warning devices.

Signs being posted at Lewisville and other lakes caution PWC operators that there is no braking or steering when the machines are off-throttle.

"As a proactive entity," the fact sheet states, "the Coalition is taking stock of current law and proposed laws governing PWC. Laws limiting operation of PWC to those who have shown proficiency in a hands-on course are endorsed."

The Coalition also vows to work for "more appropriate laws" especially if they include funding for enforcement.

Boles said her group is working with the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department's education department to develop some public service announcements.

Presently, the Coalition is an all-volunteer effort, entirely self-funded.

For information on the group, visit the website at www.pwcwatch.org.

ASSEMBLYMAN
Bob Beers (right)
earned the
Legislative Award
for his work in
boating safety in
Nevada. Region 8
Vice President Fred
Messmann, who is
also Nevada state
boating law admin-
istrator, presented
the award.



Golden Anniversary for Water Safety Congress

Continued from page 1

Cumberland River Valleys, NWSC initially included representatives from the Tennessee Valley Authority, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard and American Red Cross.

By 1956, the organization had grown to

include half the states. In 1958, NWSC adopted its current name, and continued to reach out until all the states were involved.

Three years ago, NWSC's annual water safety summit took on international status when the organization decided to jointly sponsor the International

Summit with the Safe Boating Council. Also involved in that event are representatives from the U.S. Coast Guard and Auxiliary, Canadian Coast Guard, United States Power Squadrons, and water safety authorities from Australia and Europe.

Midwest Water Safety Council coordinates NSBW campaign

DES MOINES, Iowa — The Midwest Regional Water Safety Council will be coordinating a statewide campaign during National Safe Boating Week, May 20 - 26, thanks to funding from the National Water Safety Congress under the local Water Safety Council grant program.

According to Steve Fairbanks, newly-elected president of the National Water Safety Congress, the grant will allow the MRWSC to procure floating key chains and Lifesavers to give to safe boaters and kids wearing their life jackets.

Patterned after a successful program in Georgia, the Iowa DNR and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will conduct safety checks of boats during National Safe Boating Week.

Boat operators wearing their life jackets or passing courtesy safety checks by the Des Moines Power Squadron and U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary will receive a floating key chain for their boat. Children found wearing their life jacket will receive a four-roll pack of Lifesavers with the MRWSC logo and the message "Boat Smart from the Start, Wear Your Life Jacket." Youngsters will also receive a packet containing stickers, a coloring book, and other boating and water safety information from member organizations.

Other activities will include courtesy vessel inspections, distribution of water safety trading cards, continued use of the infant PFD loan program, and a water safety poster contest sponsored by IMT Insurance Company and the Iowa DNR.

Areas slated for the campaign include three Corps of Engineer lake projects: Saylorville Lake, Lake Red Rock, and Coralville Lake. Clear Lake and the Iowa Great Lakes (Spirit Lake and Lake Okoboji) will also be included in the campaign. The week-long effort will target areas that receive heavy use during the Memorial Day weekend. In addition, media interviews and printed information will stress the theme of National Safe Boating Week across the state.

The campaign will continue through Memorial Day weekend, or as long as the supplies of give-away items last. For more information on the program or to contact council members, call Fairbanks at (515) 276-4656, ext.226.

Watercraft safety work group earns award from Interior Dept.

BOISE, Idaho—An award of merit, one of two given out each year by the Department of Interior, has been earned by a five-member Watercraft Safety work group; and Bill Hagdorn, with the Bureau of Land Management, is one of the recipients.

Hagdorn is Region 7 vice president for the National Water Safety Congress. His colleagues on the committee were Jim Meredith, safety manager for the Mid-Pacific region, BLM; Edward M. Wickersham, special agent, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service from Vancouver, Wash.; Thomas K. Edwards, hydrologist with the U.S. Geological Survey in Portland, Ore., and Vern E. Hunt, safety

manager for the Midwest, National Park Service in Omaha, Neb.

Meredith accepted the award on behalf of the group during a recent presentation in Washington, D.C.

In the past five years, the safety group had established a national training program for government agency motorboat operators. This project included creation of an instructor's course and the standard student's course, Hagdorn said.

The project involved setting up a training program on a national scale, so that courses may be offered for federal employees, plus state and county law enforcement officers.

SUBSCRIBE NOW

Water Safety Journal

National Water Safety Congress, C/O Ron Riberich, 73 White Bridge Road, Suite 103, Nashville, TN 37205. Please enter my subscription to *Water Safety Journal*. I will receive 4 issues a year for \$4.00.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

No. of subscriptions @ \$4.00 ea. _____ Amount enclosed \$ _____

If ordering several subscriptions, send a mailing list on a separate sheet of paper.

Please make check payable to: National Water Safety Congress

**National Water Safety Congress
73 White Bridge Road, Suite 103,
Nashville, TN 37205**