

## Watercraft and Vessel Safety

THE NEWSLETTER FROM THE U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT OF BOATING

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### FROM THE DEPUTY

Bob Melvin, DC-Bd

This month at NACON 2006, *Soundings* Magazine Editor Bill Sisson, led attendees through "Troubled Waters", a gripping presentation of vessels run aground, vessels in collisions, and other vessel casualties that could (and should) have been avoided. Bill speaks with authority: he grew up on boats in Watch Hill, RI, and has been writing about them for more than twenty years.

Here in the Boating Department, we are always on the lookout for new insights and partnerships in preventing boating mishaps and casualties. In keeping with this goal, let me share some of Mr. Sisson's insights from the NACON presentation he graciously agreed to make on our request.

Sailors of all types – even the most experienced – experience mishaps at sea. Experience can easily spawn complacency and laziness when it comes to exercising safety and prudent navigation underway. But the worst "recipe for trouble", said Sisson, is inexperienced operators, with no boating safety education under their belts.

Whether the accidents were due to experience or inexperience, alcohol, excessive speed, inattention, poor judgment, lack of working or proper safety equipment, fatigue, over-reliance on electronics, or fighting Mother Nature to stay "on schedule" (hint: Mother Nature usually wins), most of these accidents could have been prevented with more education and experience and by following the basic rules of seamanship we should all practice.

#### 40-KNOT BOATS, 20-KNOT BRAINS

"What you're looking at here," said Mr. Sisson, "is the downside of too much power on too small a boat, compounded (I'm guessing) by a lack of education, not wearing a kill switch, and going too fast for conditions. You could probably add to that list."

"This photo shows a 23-foot Ranger, powered by a 275 hp supercharged Verado 4-stroke. The boat literally flew through the side of a fishing camp off Port Richey, FL, earlier this year.



"There was no one behind the wheel or even in the boat at the time of the crash. The driver and a companion had been pitched out when the driver apparently cranked the wheel over too hard while doing somewhere between 55 and 60 mph.

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"They wound up in the water, and the boat continued for another few hundred yards, struck a

small fishing skiff tied up to the cottage, and launched off it. As you can see, the boat impaled itself in the side of the fishing camp. The accident happened about 10 in the morning. At the time, there were two adults and one child inside the building, but luckily, they were in another room and escaped unhurt.

### ON THE ROCKS



What comes to mind when you see this picture? Poor navigation, perhaps? Over-reliance on electronic charts and tracklines? A misplaced aid to navigation? Or simply a very unlucky mariner?

This accident took place about two years ago in the Ouzinkie Narrows, near Kodiak, Alaska. Here is how Petty Officer Sara Francis (17<sup>th</sup> District Office of Public Affairs), who took the picture, describes the situation:

“The crew of the *Waters* had been en route to Kodiak from a lodge on the Katmai Coast to pick up supplies. The tide was high at the time, nine and a half feet. The skipper stated later that he had slacked the boat’s speed in the narrows because of the weather, and that his reduced maneuverability combined with the tidal current to drag the boat sideways onto the rock.

“He said the strong eddy had surprised him, because he had found no mention of it in his copy of the *United States Coast Pilot* [which actually recommends favoring the rock, which lies near deeper water, in order to avoid the nearby shoals]. He also said the dayboard wasn’t visible until the *Waters* was upon it...This particular skipper should have known better, since he was familiar with the area. He even mentioned having towed other vessels off the same rock.”

### A DAY ON THE BEACH

Ah, another beautiful day on the sugar sands of Florida with the boat. The sky is blue, the surf is light; condos rise amid the palm trees as a gentleman sits fishing leisurely. Only...



...only I bet this boat meant to moor up elsewhere!

A delivery captain’s plans to bring this boat from the Bahamas to Ft. Lauderdale, where the permanent captain was waiting to put it on a transport ship for delivery to Europe for the summer charter season, were – well – delayed slightly.

The delivery captain and crew member fell asleep, and the big 80,000 pound Ferretti steamed ashore south of Ft. Lauderdale at an estimated 20 knots. Fortunately, the motor yacht only suffered bent shafts, rudders and prop damage, no hull damage. Salvors needed only large orange lift bags (visible in the photo) to tow her off the beach.

To add to complications, turtles were nesting on this stretch of beach, which meant the salvors had to bring all their equipment in by landing barge.

“There is a lesson in this,” said Mr. Sisson, “besides making sure you don’t fall asleep. The next time you’re out on the water and someone in the distance is headed for you, don’t assume they see you and will turn. They could be asleep or not paying attention. Sometimes, there’s nobody even at the helm.”

“Boats have gotten safer and better – there’s no doubt about that. “But at the same time, they’ve gotten faster, they’ve gotten larger, and the waters have become more crowded. And more beginning boaters are stepping into larger and larger boats. All of that points to a crucial need for education as a foundation for a safe experience on the water.”

Good advice for us all.

– Bob

## NEW MOA SIGNED WITH BOAT U.S.

John Potts, DVC-BL

The Boat Owners' Association of the United States (BoatU.S.) recently approved a joint agreement (MOA) benefiting members of the USCG Auxiliary and USCG Auxiliary Association. This agreement was signed during a special ceremony at NACON 2006.

The new BoatU.S. MOA clarifies the following discounts offered to Auxiliary and Association members:

- Annual Membership Fee
- Towing Packages
- *Seaworthy* Magazine

A significant change from the old agreement is clarifying the method by which Auxiliary and "Association-only" members may qualify for the various discounts:

Auxiliary members may access their benefits online, by clicking on the [Member Benefits Sign In](#) logo at <http://www.shopauxiliary.com/>. Entering via this electronic portal verifies Auxiliarists' current membership status for any BoatU.S. discounts they wish to access online.

To access BoatU.S. incentives via telephone or postal mail, members must provide their member number in order to qualify for the discounts.

Immediately after ratifying the new MOA at NACON, the document was posted for viewing on <http://www.auxbdept.org>. Questions regarding this subject may be directed to **John Potts, DVC-BL**, [jpotts38@msn.com](mailto:jpotts38@msn.com).



## SAFE BOATING CAMPAIGN EXPANSION

Bill Griswold, BC-BLN

Are you familiar with the National Safe Boating Campaign? Here are some facts from their website, [www.safeboatingcampaign.org](http://www.safeboatingcampaign.org):



**The North American Safe Boating Campaign began in 1957 and has developed throughout the years into a large scale, international campaign...a targeted media effort, stretching across the United States and into Canada. Working with partner organizations such as the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators and the Canadian Safe Boating Council, the North American Safe Boating Campaign aims at spreading a message of boating safety, encourages boater education, and helps to save lives. The campaign produces a variety of safe boating information intended to enhance and supplement the individual campaigns that take place through groups, associations and organizations across the United States and Canada during National Safe Boating Week.**

Currently, the National Safe Boating Council and the State of California are working to expand the Safe Boating Campaign, specifically in the Delta region of northern California: the lands and waterways between the San Francisco Bay and the Sierra Mountains.

The Coast Guard is supporting this effort with funding from the Safe Boating Campaign grant. An initial organizational meeting was held in early August via a conference phone call to discuss objectives, time-lines, and achievable results. Various organizations including the Army Corps of Engineers, BoatU.S., and USPS are part of the steering "Tiger Team".

This targeted campaign aims at those in open motor boats – specifically, recreational fishermen – as open motor boats record the highest number of boating fatalities. The State of California will be supporting the effort, and will likely ask local Auxiliarists and other interested boaters to help. The specific outreach will be closely monitored by the Coast Guard via their PFD wear studies, as well as NASBLA, the National Boating Safety Advisory Council, and other interested parties.

# FLOTILLA COMMANDERS... SOUNDINGS IS DEPENDING ON YOU!

David Delich, BC-BLP

Here at WAVES (the Auxiliary Newsletter from the Department of Boating), we don't have any letter carriers or paperboys/papergirls to distribute our newsletters to the Auxiliary membership. We couldn't even fit carrier pigeons or signal flags in our budget. So the burden of responsibility falls upon each and every Flotilla Commander to pass issues of WAVES along to their flotilla members.

Sharing WAVES with your flotilla membership not only gives them the most breaking news from the Boating Department, it also clues them in to the latest and greatest money-saving benefits that our liaison officers have negotiated with companies supporting the Auxiliary.

These great discounts can be found online at <http://shopauxiliary.com/> by clicking on the [Member Benefits Sign In](#), as shown below:



## NOTE

*The following Vendors offer a "Direct Discount" to CGAUXA members and are available only from the [Member Benefits Page](#) - see "Sign in" above-left:*

In particular, the Boating Department has recently negotiated some great deals from Soundings Magazine specific to Auxiliary members. The agreement includes the following key benefits:

- Discounted annual Soundings subscription
- Free copies of Soundings for PE class students when requested by the FSO-PE
- Discount price for booklet; [101 Answers To Your Toughest Boating Questions](#)
- Free publishing of PE class schedules in regional editions of Soundings
- Free subscription to Trade Only journal for requesting FC's and PE officers at National, District, Division and Flotilla levels.

To access these benefits, pass through the "Members Only" portal shown above, click on the



**Soundings**

To view the complete Soundings MOA and a summary document, visit the Boating Department's website at <http://www.auxbdept.org>. For questions about the Soundings MOA, contact David Delich, BC-BLP, at [southcross@bellsouth.net](mailto:southcross@bellsouth.net).

# GRANT PROPOSAL TIPS: PART 4

Thomas Nunes, BC-BRG

*Editor's Note: In this final part of our series, we present the approved grant sources for the Auxiliary.*



The Boat U.S. Foundation is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting safe and environmentally sensitive boating. The Foundation's goal is to be the leader in boating safety and environmental education and outreach, aiming to reduce accidents and fatalities; increase stewardship of our waterways; and keep boating a safe, accessible, and enjoyable pastime.

The Boat U.S. Foundation for Boating Safety & Clean Water provides grants of up to \$4,000 to local community organizations for projects that focus on promoting safe boating. The Foundation has made up to \$40,000 in annual grant funding available, generally with an application deadline of 1 November of each year; grants are awarded in late January.

Over the past 15 years, the Foundation has awarded nearly \$650,000 in Safety Grant funds to organizations to develop innovative projects that promote safe boating on local waterways. Successful grant projects have included distributing literature on the effects of boating under the influence and posting boat ramp signage informing the boating public about free vessel safety checks.

Flotillas that would like to apply for a grant may learn more about Boating Safety Grants by calling (703) 461-2878 x8353 or visiting the Boat U.S. website (where applications can be downloaded) at [www.boatus.com/foundation/Grants/index.htm](http://www.boatus.com/foundation/Grants/index.htm).

Additionally, through its Clean Water Grants program, the Boat U. S. Foundation annually awards local nonprofit volunteer organizations up to \$4,000 for activities that promote clean boating education. Over the past 6 years, the Foundation has awarded almost \$100,000 to local community organizations, yacht clubs, Auxiliary flotillas and Power Squadrons. The Foundation continues to seek creative and innovative projects that teach

boaters to reduce their impact on the waters they use for boating.

Project topics may range from petroleum pollution prevention, to pumpout education, to keeping trash out of our waterways. The application deadline for Clean Water Grants is 1 February of each year; grants are awarded in late April. For more information, visit the Clean Water Grants website: <http://www.boatus.com/cleanwater/grants/>.



The purpose of the National Safe Boating Council's (NSBC's) Local RBS Grant Program is to further the North American Safe Boating Campaign's efforts to reduce accidents and enhance the boating experience through public education, marketing and outreach, and expanding on the North American Safe Boating Campaign. Local projects of national significance are also considered. Funding from the Program aims to support, through its grants, local efforts addressing boating safety concerns.

Such programs may include developing and printing posters, purchasing billboard posters and leveraging additional free billboard space for a local flotilla or chapter, creating educational displays, or distributing promotional items with safe boating messages. Programs expanding on the North American Safe Boating Campaign will be given preference.

**Program Goals:** The goal of the Local RBS Grant Program is to reduce boating safety accidents and enhance the boating experience by distributing grants for local recreational boating safety programs. Such programs should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Improve the quality or quantity of essential safe boating services or materials
- Provide funds to small, local, non-profit groups to build on and support the national campaign's effort to enhance safe boating

- Develop innovative ideas that can be replicated by groups in other areas to improve boating safety
- Provide an opportunity to improve boating safety for specialized activities, including, but not limited to, canoeing, kayaking, and sportsmen programs
- Develop children's programs or adaptive boating for the disabled

**Funding Cycles:** The NSBC Board of Directors will appropriate funds for the Local RBS Grant Program each calendar year. There will be one funding cycle per calendar year. The Local RBS Grant Program must receive completed applications no earlier than October 25 and no later than January 25. Grants will be awarded in March. After the Grant Committee has selected the applications to fund, the recipients will receive written notification. Grant checks will be distributed following the execution of a letter of agreement with the recipients. Any eligible application not funded may be resubmitted for the next funding cycle.

**Program Criteria:** The Local RBS Grant Program does not require that the recipient match grant funds, however the grant amount awarded must represent at least 50% of the project's budget. The Program offers grants up to \$1,000 for each boating safety project. The project may not exceed one year in length. Methods to measure expected results must be identified and included in the application.

The NSBC will not provide grants to fund:

- Salaries, transportation, meals or lodging
- Purchase of laptops, projectors, or other non-expendable materials
- Start-up money for new organizations or businesses
- Membership drives for organizations
- Endowment programs
- Debt reduction
- General operating expenses

**Additional Information:** See the NSBC website: <http://www.safeboatingcouncil.org/localrbs.htm>

**Soundings Staff Members Complete  
"America's Boating Course"**



**From left to right:** James Causey, Trader Publishing VP of consumer and industry magazines; Garry Bismack, CGAUX FSO-PE; John Sullivan, CGAUX; Peter Mitchel, Publisher, *Soundings Publications*; Mary Anne Davis, CGAUX; John Ouellette, CGAUX; Rennold Hanson, CGAUX VFC; Helen Ouellette, CGAUX.

**EVENT DETAILS:**

On the evening of July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2006, twenty-three staff members from *Soundings* (the boating publication of *Real Boats, Real Boaters*) completed "America's Boating Course", taught by U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 24-8 of Clinton, CT. Well over two-thirds of the sixty-plus staff members employed by *Soundings* have now completed the "ABC" course.

During the intensive 2-day (8 hour) course, *Soundings* staff members reviewed boating topics ranging from boating laws, navigation, and safety equipment to common boating problems, trailering, and storage. The course also included topics such as hunting, fishing, waterskiing and river boating. Completion of this course enables students to apply for the state boating license, which is required of Connecticut residents to operate a boat in and on the waters surrounding Connecticut.

*[Many thanks to David Delich, BC-BLP, for helping organize this course and further build the partnership between Soundings and the Coast Guard Auxiliary.]*



**Distribution:** All FC's, DCO's, VCO's with email addresses in AUXDATA, plus NEXCOM, G-PCB-2, and G-PCX-1 via direct email from DC-B. Upon receipt, FC's are asked to copy and provide copies to Flotilla members.