

underway, unless the boater is inside a closed cabin. Today's life jackets are lighter, more compact and more comfortable than the bulky orange vests most of us are used to. New inflatable life jackets are no bigger than a heavy scarf, and many can be set to inflate automatically when the wearer is immersed in water.

7. Wear proper clothing. Make sure you can stay cool in the summer and warm in the winter. Temperature extremes can be a major stressor dramatically increasing fatigue and augmenting the side effects of medications.

8. Bring plenty to eat and drink. Stay hydrated! Drink plenty of cool water or other non-alcoholic beverages while boating. Bring food and snacks, which help with the proper absorption of medications and keep you alert and comfortable.

9. Take a boating safety course. Seventy percent of recreational boating accidents are caused by factors that are controlled by the boat operator; failure to pay attention, carelessness, recklessness, inexperience, excessive speed and failure to watch for hazards. No matter what your level of experience, you can benefit from a refresher on the navigation rules and important safety procedures. Today's boating safety courses are a great way to make sure that your spouse or other members of your family are capable of operating your boat safely should you become impaired.

The Coast Guard recognizes America's Boating Course (ABC) — a joint partnership between two of the country's most prominent boating safety organizations, the USCGA and the United States Power Squadrons® (USPS). ABC is available on CD-ROM, on the Internet at AmericasBoatingCourse.com.

10. Get a Vessel Safety Check every year. If you own a boat, take advantage of the free *Vessel Safety Check* program. You can get a bow-to-stern check of the condition and safety equipment on your boat — from canoe to a 65' yacht — from a qualified member of the USCGA or USPS. It's by far your best way to learn about safety problems or possible violations before they become a problem on the water. Visit VesselSafetyCheck.org for more details or to request a FREE *Vessel Safety Check*.

As a boat operator or owner, it's your responsibility to understand the factors like prescription medications that can affect your safety, or the safety of passengers or other boaters, on the water. That's why at the Coast Guard we say, "You're in Command. Boat Safely!"

Enjoy your time on the water. But never Boat Under the Influence of alcohol, drugs or prescription medications. For more boating safety information and resources, visit www.uscgboating.org.

2003 CAMPAIGN EVALUATION PRIZE WINNERS

As a result of campaign participants completing and returning Campaign evaluation forms, these lucky folks received some early Christmas presents.

Winners were drawn at random from all forms returned. The winners, state, their prize and the prize donors are listed below.

Terry Siler of Tennessee
WaterMark/SOSPENDERS
Inflatable PFD

Jim Chastain of Oklahoma
Stearns
Inflata-belt lite

Jack Cummins of North Carolina
Orion
First Aid Kit

Thomas Christman of Florida
Gateway Multi Media
Wheelhouse Companion

Kenneth Bell of Connecticut
Orion
Signal Mirror & Whistle

Congratulations to these folks and thanks to all the others for completing evaluations - this helps with future Campaign planning.

Congratulations to Randy Smith, campaign coordinator, all the members and volunteers who participated, the officers and staff of NSBC and all others on a great 2003 Safe Boating Campaign.



WILL IT FLOAT?

The Canadian Safe Boating Council (CSBC) commissioned SMARTRISK, a national injury prevention organization, to develop a background research paper summarizing the best available evidence pertaining to mandatory PFD use. This comprehensive study included information from the USA, including interviews with NASBLA representatives and interviews with representatives from 15 other countries.

In September 2003, the CSBC approved a motion to accept the report and to implement an action plan based on the building of stakeholder consensus to advocate for the required wearing of PFDs.

Funding for the report was provided by the Cook-Rees Memorial fund, established by Loreena McKennitt. You may download this report from www.csbc.ca.

GET YOUR WAY PAID TO THE SUMMIT ?

Nominate your safety program for this year's Boating Education and Advancement Award (BEAA). One program from each NASBLA Region will be selected to attend the 2004 International Boating and Water Safety Summit in Panama City Beach, FL, April 18 – 21. If your program is selected, you will get your way paid to the Summit where you will present your program. Each of the 3 regional winners will be in competition for the Grand Prize - \$1,500.00!

Sound good?

Coors Brewing Company sponsors BEAA.

The Boating Safety Youth Program Award is accepting nominations. The winner of this award gets a trip to the Summit plus \$2,500.00. *This award is sponsored by West Marine.*

You are encouraged to submit your program applications to the NSBC office by February 10, 2004. Please check the NSBC website for specific information on submitting nominations. But, do it now, because you could be a winner!!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS
TO YOU AND YOURS
FROM
ALL OF US
AT THE
NATIONAL SAFE BOATING COUNCIL
MAY YOUR HOLIDAYS
BE
SAFE AND HAPPY.



SEE YOU AT THE SUMMIT!