

## Safety Advisory Council Focuses on Education & PFD Wear

The National Boating Safety Advisory Council – affectionately known as “BSAC” – just completed its 71st meeting in Washington, DC. I have the pleasure of serving as the representative from your National Safe Boating Council to BSAC.

I want to share with you a few highlights from this meeting, and let you know that the Coast Guard is looking to BSAC and its broad cross-section of members (from industry, the public, states, and NGOs) for advice on a wide range of regulatory and public policy issues.

BSAC is a Congressionally mandated advisory committee to the Coast Guard. Sometimes the Coast Guard listens to BSAC, and sometimes not as much as I might like. But, this year, BSAC and the Coast Guard are working closely together on the recreational boating safety issues that are important to both organizations. Following are a few highlights of the meeting.

1. The Coast Guard announced a new risk-based management approach to boating safety, which will focus on high-risk areas of fatalities and boater education. The Coast Guard calls its new safety campaign, “You’re in Command—Boat Safely.” (see details on this campaign on page 3 of this publication)
2. In response to this new approach, BSAC adopted a resolution calling on the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators to develop a model act requiring the wearing of PFD’s on all vessels 21 feet and under while underway and calling on the states and territories to adopt such legislation.

3. The Coast Guard, in conjunction with the American League of Anglers and Boaters (ALAB), are working on new proposals to reauthorize the Wallop-Breaux Fund, which provides states and non-profit organizations federal funds for boating safety programs. This Fund will be reauthorized this year as part of the Congressional reauthorization of the federal highway bill, which the Administration calls “SAFETEA.” Importantly, ALAB has agreed to increase the funds available for boating safety programs and to establish a permanent source of funding for these purposes.
4. Increased attention is being paid by BSAC, as well as by national paddling organizations (e.g., the American Canoe Association) to the safety of canoeists and kayakers on the water. As more boaters are enjoying these forms of recreation, unfortunately drownings have increased. BSAC adopted a resolution calling on the Coast Guard to increase funding for a paddler safety boating education campaign. We expect the USCG will heed this advice.

As you can see from these brief highlights, the Coast Guard and BSAC are working harder than ever to decrease fatalities and other water accidents and to increase enjoyment of boating activities.

The next BSAC meeting is scheduled for late October in Chicago, Illinois. These meetings are open to the public and I encourage you to attend and to send me your thoughts on what issues should be brought to the Coast Guard’s attention.

(CAMPAIGN SUCCESS continued)

### New York Kick-Off Event:

Special thanks to the kids from Public School 217, Jamaica Queens, who showed up at 6:30 a.m. and stood in line for the “Today” show, and below, seen in life jackets with Snoopy at NYC Kick-off.



The NYC event was successful; however, media coverage was disappointing. Even with fantastic speakers and great venue, the NYC media market has no guarantees. For 2004, perhaps a weekend event will result in better public and media turnout.



### Los Angeles Kick-Off Event:

This event was a great success. Media attending included KABC-TV, KFBI radio, KSCZ-18 TV, the *Log* Newspaper, the *Argonaut* (local paper). KABC’s reporter and crew stayed throughout shooting a fair amount of footage and we had a showing in the *Los Angeles Times*.



The local helicopter rescue demo (as seen above) was amazing, there was a contest to win a huge powerboat, L.A. Lakers girls were there, Coastie attended, a huge Coast Guard cutter docked at the event and a school class added to the festivities. The small crowd really enjoyed receiving the free life jackets and caps!

## COMMANDING CAMPAIGN - DETAILS & PHOTOS

The 2003 North American Safe Boating Campaign is winding down with two major boating weekends completed and Labor Day quickly approaching. With our web site event posting board, members, media and the general public can stay abreast of boating and water safety events. Postings have been dramatically increased over last year. If your event is not posted, please do so NOW.

The demand for resources was higher than in past years with our supply running out earlier than previous years. Similar supplies from past campaigns usually lasted until August, but not this year! Thanks for putting these materials in the hands of our North American boaters.

Overall, the Campaign and associated events were a success because of our Partners. All worked together on a unified cause. Media coverage continues with satellite feed and press releases. We have received coverage in major markets for both TV, print and radio, and in our targeted markets -areas where most boating fatalities occur. The Radio Safety Pirate PSA was sent to a number of targeted area radio stations, and CA Boating and Waterways is pitching the PSA as well.

Planning for 2004 is already underway. **Partners, we are looking for a few good resource items for next year and looking for sponsors for our kick-off events.**