

SAFE BOATING

Thousand Islands Safe Boating Association, Inc. PO Box 142, Clayton, New York 13624

Summer 2005

COMMON SENSE AND COURTESY

Boating laws and regulations are based on common sense and courtesy. Most of us are in a hurry. Some of us are always in a hurry. But it sure is more relaxing—as well as safer—when we slow down a little. Give the other boat a chance; give yourself a chance. Just slow down a little and enjoy the River more. When you don't . . .

THE RIVER AT NIGHT WAKES (& COURTESY) (& COMMON SENSE)

The recent accident off Alexandria Bay, where three teenagers hit the steel channel marker off Boldt Castle, was another reminder just how dangerous it can be travelling at night, at speed. The speed was high enough that the metal ladder welded on the pole is now wrapped around it at the bottom. Fortunately no-one was thrown from the boat, and they were able to make it to shore, where an ambulance was called. This was speed at night, the most dangerous combination. This boater had reportedly already been ticketed earlier in the evening for speed, so the enforcement agencies can't do it all. We are all responsible for ourselves, and our children. It can be tempting to go fast at night since there is not as much traffic, but it is the worst time to hurry, and the most dangerous time on the River.

We should all slow down at night. Fifteen MPH is the law in the channel for good reason – the density of traffic – but it makes sense in most other areas too. A slow boat ride on the River at night is one of the pleasures of life. And it is a great deal safer for everyone.

WAKES (& COURTESY)

None of us are really innocent here—many of us obey the speed law, but in doing so leave a big wake by plowing along. With all the boats we have leaving these wakes, congested areas develop a “chop”, much like the ocean. If you mind your wake as well as your speed you do everyone a favor.

The recent example of not minding your wake—and a reminder that your wake is your responsibility—came with the 40+/- foot tour boat which was nearly swamped while docking at Boldt Castle by a cruiser wake, described as well over three feet high. This boat may not have been speeding, but the wake was big enough to throw people off balance on a 40 foot tour boat, and result in one injury which required hospitalization.

Chief Furman Alden of the United States Coast Guard recognizes the dangers of large wakes and encourages you (the Public) to call 482-2574 or 2575 to report unsafe conditions caused by wakes.

Your wake is your responsibility, and you will be courteous to your neighbors by controlling it.

THE RIGHT OF WAY (AND COMMON SENSE)

You may remember the rhyme from the time of being a junior boater:

*Here lies the body of Danny
O'Day*

*Who died maintaining the
Right of Way*

*He was right, dead right, as he
sailed along*

*But he's just as dead as if he'd
been wrong.*

Many of you read the story of the fatal accident in Hammond recently. A jet ski collided with a bass boat operated by a man fishing with three grandchildren, and the collision threw all into the water. The man died when his own boat continued in a circle and ran over him.

While details about the accident are not known, a collision like this often results from carelessness or failure to cede the right of way. Many people don't know the right of way rules—which are not quite as simple as we may remember—but there is one overarching consideration:

Give way to avoid a collision.

Never in his life had he seen a river before--this sleek, sinuous, full-bodied animal, chasing and chuckling, gripping things with a gurgle and leaving them with a laugh, to fling itself on fresh playmates that shook themselves free, and were caught and held again. All was a-shake and a-shiver--glints and gleams and sparkles, rustle and swirl, chatter and bubble. The Mole was bewitched, entranced, fascinated. By the side of the river he trotted as one trots, when very small, by the side of a man who holds one spell-bound by exciting stories; and when tired at last, he sat on the bank, while the river still chattered on to him, a babbling procession of the best stories in the world, sent from the heart of the earth to be told at last to the insatiable sea. — Kenneth Grahame, The Wind in the Willows

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Some years are filled with noticeable events, and some seem quiet. This year on the River seems a little quieter than some other recent seasons. Part of this is for good reason: the efforts of the Park Police, State Police and Coast Guard, working with the help and cooperation of the Mayor Simpson and the Alexandria Bay Chamber of Commerce, made the first Poker Run of the season a successful event for all.

It is interesting what a difference it makes when the event is well-run and under control. Many of these are beautiful boats, and beautiful to watch under way.

Also, the cooperative efforts of the Park Police and Mayor Simpson, with the help of John Peach, made the buoys marking Alexandria Bay's two Harbor Zones a reality. Many boaters still don't know what

they are, some thinking they are simply more shoal markers, but publicity is planned to help get the word out.

Speed regulation signs provided by the NYSOPRHP have been strategically located on both sides of the river from Alexandria Bay to Fischer's Landing. Just a reminder – 30 MPH-Day and 15 MPH-Night and this includes the Lake of the Isles. TISBA is working with NYSOPRHP on obtaining larger more effective signage.

The State Police and Park Police only have a few boats to patrol a large area so you can be helpful to them by being their eyes and ears. If you see speeding or reckless boating or hear the loudest of the loud—call 482-2525 and report what you saw or heard. Many offenders have been ticketed due to people calling.

So all in all, it's a little quieter out there. It has taken a great deal of time and effort on the part of many people to achieve this progress, and it will take more time and more effort to progress further. But we are moving forward.

John McCullough, President

PS

Thanks for your support, and . . . please renew your membership. We need your help and your support to continue these efforts.

POKER RUN

After last year's second Poker Run, broadly cited as out-of-control, the efforts made by all involved this year made an enormous difference: the boats followed the route they had planned, the State Police, Park Police And Coast Guard carefully monitored the whole event, and the result was a well-run success for residents of the River and its participants.

The second poker Run--which was out of control last year--proved far more challenging to all than the first. Even though it was sited on the Canadian side, and did not go through American waters, and even though enforcement levels on the American side were stepped up, the same problems of speed and noise were evident, particularly Friday night. This makes it more apparent that much, or possibly most, of the problem comes not from the Poker Run participants, but from the "wannabee" spectators, a large number of which trailer up and trailer right back Sunday night after running uncontrolled for the weekend. Increased presence of the Park Police and Coast Guard on Saturday and Sunday helped keep it down, but it was a long way from as well controlled as the first event, despite these efforts.

HARBOR ZONE MARKERS

The NYSOPRHP and Park Police committed to deliver buoys to mark the two Harbor Zones around Alexandria Bay (see attached map). The markers arrived this spring, and Mayor Pat Simpson personally put them in place with the help of John Peach. Sampie Sutton of the Town made sure there was adequate material to get them mounted ("It took a lot of chain" per Pat). This initiative will continue with more publicity about the Harbor Zones and the speed limits, but—even with little publicity—results are already encouraging. Jetskis appear to be the most persistent offenders, with increasing awareness and respect shown by most boaters. We will further step up public awareness of the Harbor Zones in the 06 season.

Thousand Islands Safe Boating Association, Inc.

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Visit our website at www.tisba.org

Thousand Islands Safe Boating Association, Inc. is dedicated to protecting and promoting safe and responsible use of the waterways in the Thousand Islands Region thereby assuring a safe and quiet environment for residents and visitors.

We will achieve this goal by working with villages, towns, Chambers of Commerce, various enforcement agencies, Thousand Islands International Tourism Council, and other appropriate organizations to improve their efforts of informing the public about safe boating practices as well as laws and regulations pertaining to boating in the region.



Mayor Pat Simpson and volunteer John Peach with the new Harbor Zone markers. Mayor Simpson worked with TISBA, the Park Police and Town Supervisor Sampie Sutton to get this program started. Pat and John Peach then personally placed all the markers in both Harbor Zones. "I think these markers will really help boaters understand where the Harbor Zones are located", said the Mayor.