



Safety First - In 10 Easy Steps

by VINCENT T. PICA, II

Chief of Staff, First District, Southern Region (D1SR) United States Coast Guard Auxiliary



The United States Coast Guard characterizes their Auxiliary corps as a "force multiplier", enabling the active-duty and reserves corps to do more with the budgeted dollars allocated by the US Congress. USCG Auxiliaries donate 100% of their time to the tasks authorized by the Commandant of the United States Coast Guard. And no task is more important than promulgating and expanding the safety of life at sea. This column is about that.

The Ten Commandments

Well, that might be a bit of an over-statement (these are hardly divinely inspired) and an understatement (there are a lot more than 10 things you can do to enhance safety for you and your crew.) However, the numbers associated with these 10 steps that any skipper can do, or insist is done, are compelling.

#1 - Thou Shalt Wear a Life-jacket - If 16 mariners go into the water without a life-jacket - only 1 comes out. Conversely, if they fall overboard with a life-jacket, 15 come out. Which cadre do you want to be in? Always have an adequate supply of personal flotation devices aboard. Make sure that children are wearing life-jackets that fit correctly. Federal and State law requires that they have one on. Only you, the skipper, can insure that it fits them properly. (see SSP, "Do I Really Need To Wear a Life-jacket?", 9/24/08, and "Life-jackets Save Lives - Maybe Yours!", 2/11/09.)

#2 - Never Shalt Thou Drink and Drive - Whether a car or a boat, it is just plain crazy - and illegal - to drink and drive (see SSP, "Scotch & (Sea)Water - A Deadly Cocktail", 6/30/10.) Individual years vary but I have never seen alcohol account for less than 25% of boating accidents in a given year.

#3 - Taketh a Boating Safety Course - Yes, something as simple as an 8-hour boating safety class can make all the difference. 70% of boating accidents involve skippers who have never taken a boating safety course. If you haven't, start here <http://www.cgaux.org/boatinged/> or email me below and we'll get you squared away.

#4 - Safety Begins With Thou - Adults between the ages of 40 and 49 account for the highest rate of boating fatalities. You set the tone for safety for the entire crew and her passengers. Come on, Bunky, get that life-jacket on.

#5 - Thou Shalt Know The Rules of Navigation - Can you imagine giving the keys to the family car to one of your children - and they have never opened the book of driving regulations, much less taken a course (see #3 above, Bunky.) You can get them online at the US Coast Guard's Navigation Center (<http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/>) You can also get them from prior columns here. (see SSP, "What Side of the Buoys Do I Go On?", 10/22/08, for a starter.)

#6 - Thou Shalt Keep A Good Look-Out, While Driving Safely - You are required by law to always maintain a look-out. (see SSP, "Rule 5 - Proper Look-Out", 7/18/07.) You are also required to use all available means to do so. Have radar? Turn it on, Skipper. Speed is another matter because, like driving a car, speed should always be reduced if visibility and/or weather demands it. (see SSP, "Rule 6 - Safe Speed", 10/10/07.)

#7 - Knoweth Thy Weather - Clearly, if you've ever left the dock under beautiful skies and then came home under heavy weather, you know how important is to know - before you go - what to expect

during the course of your journey. Particularly for skippers of open boats, this can be all the difference, even between life and death. (see SSP, "Drill, Baby, Drill - Weather Analysis", 8/04/10.)

#8 - Haveth Thy Boat Meet Federal Standards - Can there be any easier way to ensure that your boat meets USCG requirements than getting a FREE vessel safety check? This is not a regulatory event - if the boat is missing some requirement, the examiner is very likely to give you his or her cell phone number and the advise to, "fix this and then give me a call - I'll come right down, complete the safety check and affix the safety sticker to your windshield." (see SSP, "No Fuss - No Muss - Free Vessel Exams!", 4/23/08 for details or just go to <http://safetyseal.net/GetVSC/>, put in your zip code and a vessel examiner will contact you directly.)

#9 - Useth a Carbon Monoxide Detector - If you have an enclosed cabin, equip it with a Carbon Monoxide detector. Nothing else will protect you from the odorless, tasteless gas that can kill you and yours. (see SSP, "Flu Symptoms But No Sniffles? Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Is a Killer - an update", 9/1/10.)

#10 - Thy Shalt File a Float Plan - The US Coast Guard recommends that you always tell a friend or family member where you plan to go and when you'll be back. Make it a habit before leaving on any boat trip. (see SSP, "Float Plans - Nothing but Upside", 10/04/06.)

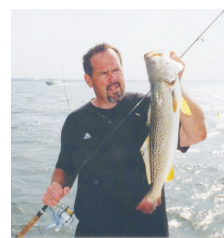
BTW, if you are interested in being part of USCG Forces, email me at JoinUSCGAux2010@aol.com or go direct to John Blevins, who is in charge of new members matters, at FSO-PS@emcg.us and we will help you "get in this thing..."

Mastic Sports Club Kyle Sports Baseball Team Picture

We had our team pictures taken on May 25th at the Shirley Calabro Airport Field on a beautiful sunny afternoon. There will be a summer baseball program at Legion Field in Mastic Beach registrations will be available. Our inclusion baseball team having a wonderful season and we want to thank all our parents for their support. We will be having the MSC Kyle Sports For Special Needs Saturday Program until the end of June and our summer events will be posted check for all information on the web site at www.kylesportsforspecialneedsmc.com Anyone interested in joining the MSC Kyle Sports Program please contact me directly on my cell phone or email for the fall session at the Wm Floyd Middle School. There are tickets available for our 3rd MSC Kyle Sports Dinner Dance on June 5th if you are interested call for details. Please show your support and all donations can be made to the Mastic Sports Club Kyle Sports Programs.



Debbie Metz
Commissioner of Special Needs
Mastic Sports Club



FISHING WITH TONY

PORGIES AND FLUKE GALORE ON BOTH SHORES

by TONY SALERNO

With consistent mild weather this past week, the fluke and porgies responded in a big way as plenty of summer flatties situated inside and outside of Shinnecock and Moriches Bays as well Smithtown Bay to Mt. Misery Shoal.

The waters around Shinnecock are currently the hot spots as anglers applying their efforts inside the bay west of the bridge, and just outside the inlet in 50 feet of water are cashing in on quality fish and legal limits. Both open boats the Shinnecock Star and Hampton Lady have been sending their fares home with smiling faces and nice bags of tasty fluke fillets. In addition, some stripers and bluefish mix into the coolers to spice things up a bit.

Just to the west along Moriches Bay, the summer flatties are now all over the bay and just outside the inlet with some impressive fish in the area. Captain James Russo of the open boat the Rosie has been doing a great job keeping rods bending and patrons happy with the action. The keeper ratio is about 10 to 1. Nevertheless however, those keepers hitting the filet table are ranging between 4 and 7-pounds. This past Thursday, I fished with my good friend Tony Lima along with his father in law Dennis aboard Tony's boat Top Gun where the three of us enjoyed a good pick of keepers east of Moriches Inlet in 60 feet of water. The highlight of the trip was a 10.05-pound flattie that found my 3-ounce pink bucktail tipped with spearing.

Up north, the fluke have situated along the shoals and when conditions are right, action has been fast and furious. The open boats the Celtic Quest and the Osprey V have been keeping fares busy with fluke action. And while fluke are the pursued species during the daytime trips on these boats, the evening trips are focused on porgies, where each evening just before dark, its mayhem with the scup as fares find an easy limit with fish to three pounds.

Also along the Sound loads of blues and stripers dominate the waters around buoy 11 and on the Middle Ground. Chunk bunker and sandworms are working best, however diamond jigs and popping plugs are also getting the job done. Fishing is red hot right now, and no time than now is the best time to hit the water and put some tasty fillets on the table.



Tony caught this beauty just outside Moriches Inlet in 60 feet of H2O on a Pink bucktail