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Boating safety classes 'very informative'

By Ollie Moyer

Editor in Chief

With only two of six scheduled classes of the Lake Murray Coast Guard Auxiliary's annual fall boating safety course behind them, students already agree the program conducted twice-a-year by seasoned veterans is "very informative," and represents an important contribution to safer boating.

Students like Jean and David Crump, who although they're not residents on Lake Murray have spent a lot of time on the lake this past summer, agree they have received "a lot of useful information" during the first two courses which have stressed the importance of such basics to seamanship as use of personal flotation devices and navigational information.

A lot of the information given by instructors from the Lake Murray Coast Guard Auxiliary is familiar to David. That's because he grew up on Lake Murray and has been involved in boating for many years.

"I'm quite familiar with Lake Murray," he said. "My parents had a place on the lake on Bear Creek out from Chapin when I was growing up and I spent a lot of time

on Lake Murray fishing and skiing and boating."

Even so, he felt he couldn't have too much knowledge about boating safety.

So when the Crumps purchased their new Sea Ray boat this past summer, they paid close attention to information from the salesman, Ed Jones, that the Coast Guard Auxiliary offers a boating safety course and they might want to take it. Jones, incidentally, is a member of the Lake Murray Coast Guard Auxiliary.

"Some of it is an refresher course, but we've learned a lot of new stuff," he said. "And some of it is common sense. It's all good information."

The Crumps agree that boaters who take this course would contribute greatly to the boating safety on Lake Murray.

"We've seen a lot of people on the lake who don't have any idea of what they're supposed to be doing," Crump said.

"It's kind of scary," added Ms. Crump. "Another thing we've noticed is that a lot of people are renting boats who have no knowledge of seamanship. You can definitely tell by the way they rip through the no wake zones."



Joe Richbourg (left), an instructor at the Lake Murray Coast Guard Auxiliary boating safety classes currently underway, explains a flair to Jean and David Crump, students at this year's fall classes. Looking on is Jerry Ruschkofski, who teaches classes in boat handling.

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Both say they have been alarmed by the jet skis on the lake. Officers of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) have identified jet skis as their biggest problem on the lake in recent years.

Both agree that boating safety instruction ought to be mandatory. "I think this is a great program as a renewal class, or as a class for beginners," she said.

Boating education is so important that Lt. Mike Williams, head of boating and hunting safety with DNR, has declared it to be the key to safer boating operations on all South Carolina Waters, and especially on Lake Murray, where boat traffic continues to grow each year.

The Coast Guard Auxiliary boating safety classes delve into all basic safety and federal requirements and introduce students to such important boating knowledge as the buoy system, basic navigation, knots, rules of the road, FHF radio and safety and safety equipment, along with various other information critical to boating safety.

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary was formed by an Act of Congress in 1929 to "indoctrinate all owners and operators of small craft in safety requirements of operation and navigation."

The Lake Murray Coast Guard Aux-



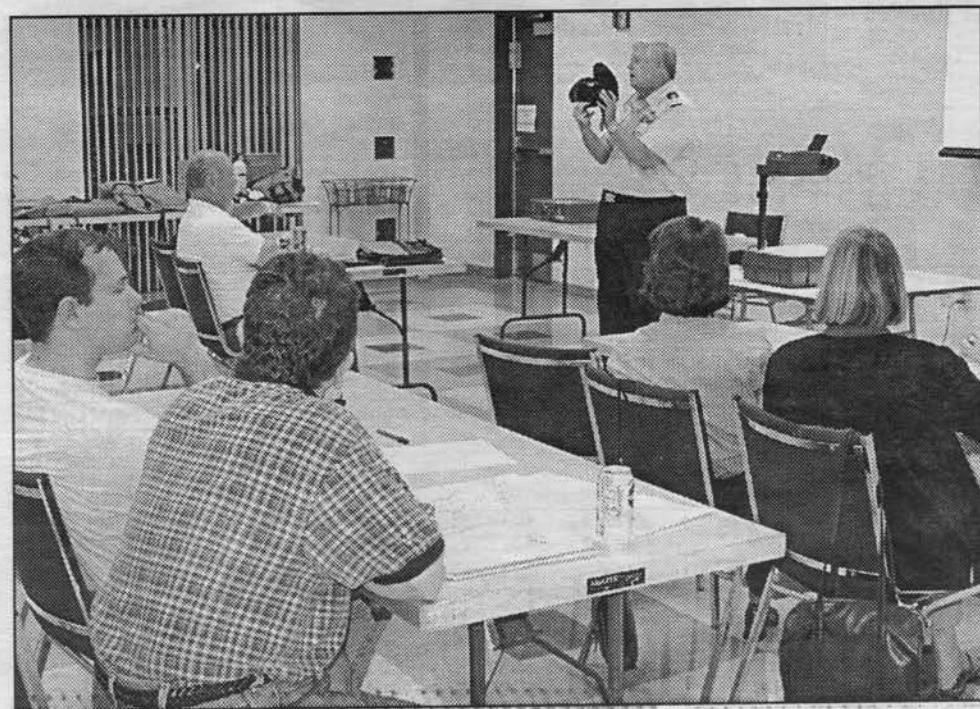
Joe Richbourg, an instructor for the Lake Murray Coast Guard Auxiliary's fall boating safety course, demonstrates how a life cushion can be thrown to a passenger who has fallen overboard.

iliary is a civilian organization functioning under the direction of the Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard.

Classes in boating safety are offered twice a year by the Lake Murray Coast Guard Auxiliary. Boating safety classes also are available through the Lake Murray Power Squadron as

well as the Department of Natural Resources.

Instructors for the Lake Murray Coast Guard Auxiliary classes include Al McCallister, John O'Farrell, Joe Richbourg, Carl Brown, Jerry Ruschkofski, Jay Dahlgren, Don Davis, Steve Davis and Bill Turner.



Jerry Ruschkofski, one of the instructors for the Lake Murray Coast Guard Auxiliary's fall boating safety course, discusses the importance of propellers during his lecture on boat handling at this year's class.