



What do I write about

Not long ago I was talking with some PA type folks. We were discussing newspaper articles and such.

One guy got up and said, "We get everything in. We announce our classes, and we write up our Change of Watch and that's all we have to put in the paper."

NO, NO, NO. That is not all there is. Unfortunately, that is all some folks are doing. Here are a few ideas for articles.

1. VSC. What is it? Why have one? Where do I go to get one? How much do they cost?
2. PE. Why take a boating course? How can I get one? How much does it cost?
3. Career Counselor. What is the AIM and RAP Programs? Features and benefits.
4. Safety check list before getting underway.
5. Hot weather warning. How do I protect myself and crew from sun and dehydration?
6. Taking your boat out of storage. What should I check before setting off to 12 Mile Island?
7. Carbon Monoxide dangers. What should I do to avoid them?
8. Winterizing boats. How do I do that? Are there any secrets?
9. Hypothermia. What is that? And should I be concerned?
10. Heat stroke and heat fatigue.

ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Is that really dangerous?

Symptoms? What do I do?

11. BUI. Alcohol and the marine environment. Drugs. What are the penalties / consequences?

12. Cell phones. Are they as good as a marine radio? Why not?

13. Fire and explosions. What are the things I should watch for when refueling by boat?

14. Life jackets. How many kinds are there? What's the differences? Why wear it all the time?

15. Swamping. Why do boats do that?

16. Capsizing. Why do boats do that?

17. Recruiting USCGA AUX. member. Why should I join?

18. State Boating Laws. New boaters don't know, and the others have forgotten. Remind them.

19. What do we do? Use your final IS readout to show how much you do to serve the public.

20. Major causes of accidents. What are they? How can I avoid them?

So, I stopped with 20. You can probably think of more now that

the sparks are flying. Some of you are saying. I can get two or three articles from some of these and a couple from those.

The other day I got a reprint from a local paper that talked about this CG Auxiliarist that has a hobby building models. Seems he goes to boat shows, schools and lectures and displays his models. Of course, being in PA, he wears the uniform. The next thing you know he is talking about The Auxiliary.

Phillis M. used to be a professional clown. She worked up a fantastic PA presentation with puppets, balloons and things. Jean S. made little PFDs for a couple of her Teddy Bears and put them in a little liferaft.

I guess what I am trying to get across is, go with your strength, don't hide your light under a bushel. You will find that, if you look around just a little bit, there are fascinating things about the Auxiliary, what we do and the people who do it. Your fellow boaters would like to know.

Let me know how you came out.

This is your newsletter and I want to report your success – and answer your questions.

Who should receive your publication?

We started with a simple discussion of postage; then we covered the proper way to format mailing and return addresses.

We have talked about how members control what mailings they receive (remember the Member Information form?). Now let's finish this discussion.

Who gets copies of your flotilla publication? Most folks don't realize just how large the distribution of your flotilla (division or district) newsletter should be. Many think that it only goes to the membership. Well that is only partly correct. You start with the membership and the retirees.

Then you should add the following folks for flotilla newsletters: SO-PB, DSO-PB, other FCs and FSOs-PB in your division, RCO, VCO, DCO, DIRAUX, DC-A, BC-ADN, BC-AIA and the Joyner Library.

At division level you should add the following in your mailings: all SOs-PB in district, DSO-PB, DCP, VCP, RCOs, DIRAUX, DC-A, BC-ADN, BC-AIA and the Joyner Library.

Flotillas, divisions and districts should include the OIC of your CG stations. If you have a Historian at any level, be sure to include that person in your mailings.

At district level, be sure to include the Joyner Library.

ON PUBLICATIONS

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Now that you have copies going to your membership (current and past), the division folks and the USCG personnel, who else should get a copy?

Under normal circumstances, the PB job is an internal job and the PA folks handle the outside affairs.

Well in every circumstance there are exceptions (also remember that there are no hard and fast rules in publications).

Here is where you may also send copies to the marine dealers and marinas, the local, county and state game/fisheries/boating folks, the local fire and rescue departments and those folks that have attended a one or more flotilla boating classes in the previous six months.

Why are we sending copies to all of these folks? Great question!

We send to our members and retirees, division and USCG folks because we want them to know what we are doing and where we shine.

You should include your unit

schedule (classes, patrols, fellowship events, etc.), then they will be able to plan around these events for multi-unit activities. You cannot plan around what you don't know about!

But what about the other folks? These people are those that are interested in boating.

They represent a great pool of the "unwashed" from which we can draw new members! How will they ever know what your unit is doing if you don't include them in the distribution of the newsletter?

Many folks think that we only do the Public Education courses or Vessel Safety Checks.

They will have no way to know what we are doing if we don't tell them!

So, even if you use electronic distribution for your membership – use printed versions for those copies that go outside of your unit.

Folks have a tendency to read something that comes in the regular mail – and they delete e-mail very quickly. So you, the PB officer will always be printing and mailing copies of your newsletter.

Well that about completes the discussions of stamps, addressing and distribution.

Next month – we start on CONTENT!