



President's Message

By Steve Shamion



Last summer we created a program called RIVERWATCH. The purpose of the program is to help reduce un-safe or illegal watercraft operation on the Spokane River. We plan to achieve this by creating a strong visual presence, which include placing signs at boat ramps and on member's docks, weekend patrol boats with banner signs and SRA members monitoring activities from their homes. Basically, we hope to create the impression that 500 pairs of eyes will always be watching. Un-safe or illegal activities will then be reported to the Sheriff's Marine Patrol. Our objective is not to keep people from boating on the Spokane River; we just want everyone to operate their watercraft safely and therefore reduce accidents.

However RIVERWATCH includes more than signage and observation. Other services provided by volunteers include tagging and moving aside floating deadhead logs, handing out river maps, SRA member applications and assisting other boaters in need. RIVERWATCH boat patrols occur on weekends and busy holidays. For those members who would like a more active roll in RIVERWATCH, please contact our Safety Chair, Ross Walkinshaw at 208-667-4105.

For those who haven't heard, the Idaho legislature recently passed a new law that will affect anyone boating on Idaho waters. Effective immediately, an Invasive Species Permit will be required to launch or operate vessels on Idaho waterways, which includes the Spokane River. This law requires all motorized & sail-powered boats on Idaho lakes, rivers and ponds to purchase a permit sticker. The cost of the permit sticker is \$10 per watercraft if boat is registered in Idaho and \$20 if it's registered outside of Idaho. Funds from permit sales will help prevent invasive species entering Idaho waters...including Eurasian Milfoil, Zebra Mussel and Mudsnails.

It seems that every year we are hit with more laws and regulations, and like everyone else, I also get frustrated at times. However we shouldn't allow those frustrations to negatively affect our river recreation activities. Because I still believe we live among the best places on earth, and for that we should be thankful.

Have a great summer season!



Which house got the pot of gold? Photo by Jette Noble



Photos by Jette Noble.

Submit your photos to
rivertalkeditor@spokaneriver.org
for newsletter filler.

Inside this issue:

Blackwell Island Marina Expansion	2
Annual Meeting & Dinner Report	3
Boating Considerations	4
Advertising	5
Post Falls Dam Tour Report	6
Advertising	7
Environmental Report	8
2009 Vendor List	8
Advertising	9
RiverWatch Signage Orders	10
Membership Q&A	11
Board Roster	11

Blackwell Island Marina Expansion

By Jack Domit, SRA Board, CCC Representative



I had planned to testify at the June 4, 2009, hearing regarding the Blackwell Island Marina Expansion; however, the issues I wanted to discuss were already introduced. Our interests are the location of the repository and the absences of any ongoing monitoring program. As I write this I am just informed a monitoring program is being developed.

Encroachment on Cougar Bay and public water along with the additional boat slips were also addressed as were many other issues.

A strong majority of the testimony was in favor of the project. Duane Hagadone sat quietly throughout the evening and received praise from many of the speakers for his outstanding contributions to our area and economy. The consensus was the project done with private dollars would be world class

when completed.

Idaho Department of Lands in conjunction with the Walla Walla District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will make their decision on granting the permits in the near future.



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SRA Annual Membership Meeting & Dinner

By Jim Brush, Events Chair



Your River Association had its' 2009 Annual Dinner Meeting at Templin's Resort May 18th, which was the warmest day Y.T.D.; a blistering 83 degrees. However this year, the air conditioning was functioning fairly well! Despite a glitch in the mailing (many of us did not get the flyer until Thursday or Friday before the dinner) we still had over 107 attendees! Thanks to all of you who did not give up and came anyway for this is your Association and we need your support!

The evening began with cocktails in the lobby where Harrison Dock Builders, Pacific Harbor Distributors, North Idaho Maritime, Century 21, Bank of CDA, and our River Watch Patrol (hosted by Sgt. Matt Street and SRA Board Member, Ross Walkinshaw) had display tables; each offering a free raffle item. In the main dining room, Hunter Financial, Inc. was set up, and drew much interest in their Investment Advisory Program. Hunter also provided the free extra meal for each member attending the dinner meeting.

During an excellent dinner buffet we were entertained by the **Coeur d'Nation, a Barbershop Quartet**.
(Jim Peters — Tenor & SRA Board Member; Joe Lykins — Lead; Bob Thackston — Bari; Dick Wagner — Bass).
They were fun listening too, and had a few clever tunes about some of our members.

President Steve Shamion opened up the meeting taking care of some required issues. Sgt. Matt Street talked about River Safety and the new Sheriff's Patrol Boat Houses at Templin's, new boating rules, milfoil stickers, and boat traffic. Joel Pearl discussed river front property values, sales, and taxes. Avista's Pat Maher and Speed Fitzgerald updated us on the snow pack, river flows, lake and river elevations. For the latest, listen to Pat's daily update at (208) 769-1357. As soon as the Lake get's down to 2,128.00 feet in elevation, Avista will start closing the gates at the dam. They expect it to get down to this elevation by June 5th or 6th. However the gates will probably not be fully closed until the 3rd week in June.

During the meeting, drawings were held for the various gifts donated by each of our Vendors. They included the following:

- **Hunter Financial, Inc.:** \$250 gift certificate to Z-Spa won by **Cheryl Carrico**, wine for qualifying couples (\$50.00) and dinner (\$30.00) per couple
- **Harrison Dock Builders:** \$250.00 Fiji Rave Island Float toy won by **Carolyn Wickenkamp**; and a \$200 dock inspection won by **Dick Phenneger**.
- **Pacific Harbor Distributors:** \$200 Davenport Hotel Certificate won by **Walt Singer**
- **North Idaho Maritime:** \$200 pair of Dock Wheels, installed won by **Don Carrico**
- **Joel Pearl, Century 21:** \$150 CDA Resort Certificate won by **Traci Brush**.
- **Bank CDA:** \$50 Saving Account Gift Certificate won by **Ray Peterson**

Note Sgt. Matt Street drew all the names from a hat, so we were guaranteed everything was above board!

A BIG Thank You to all of the above Vendors!
And THANK YOU to all who attended our event. We enjoy getting to connect with you at least once or twice a year!

We will see you at our Fall gathering. More on this later!

Mandatory Education and Age Requirements:

The Idaho Department of Parks & Recreation recommends taking a boating safety class such as those offered by the Coast Guard Auxiliary or US Power Squadrons. Additionally, internet courses, such as the BoatU.S. The Online Boating Safety Course is a good way to learn how to make boating safe and enjoyable for everyone.

Although Idaho has no mandatory state-wide education requirement, certain counties such as Benewah, Bonner and Kootenai, have age restrictions for minimum operator age. Please check with the counties and cities in which you plan to boat and familiarize yourself with local requirements. Special situations include:

- Businesses that rent PWCs must provide education to all operators and passengers prior to rental. Proof of this education must be carried by the operator during use.
- Persons convicted of operating under the influence and those who are repeat boating law offenders will be required to take a court-ordered boating safety class.

Boat Speed Limits:

Boat speed limits are regulated by law for certain areas and conditions. When no speed limit is posted, operate your boat so that it will not endanger others. Always keep a proper lookout and never load a boat with passengers or cargo beyond its safe carrying capacity. You are responsible for your wake!

- White buoys with red markings and black letters will indicate speed limits and no-wake zones.
- When operating your boat in a no-wake zone if you cause damage to another person's boat or property, you are responsible. Proceed slowly in these areas.
- In times of restricted visibility such as fog, stormy conditions or nighttime operation, you must be able to stop your vessel within half the distance of forward visibility. At all times, operators must be prepared to avoid a collision and have engines ready for immediate maneuvering.

In Idaho, No-Wake Speed is no greater than 5 miles per hour!

- It is illegal to operate your vessel at greater than no-wake speed (5 miles per hour) while within 100 feet of a dock or returning a skier to the vicinity of a dock. Effort must be made by the ski boat operator to minimize the time spent at speeds greater than 5 miles per hour when within the 100 foot zone.

Operating Under the Influence:

State Boating Under the Influence (BUI) laws are becoming more stringent. As on the roadways, on-water enforcement officers may administer sobriety tests and conduct a blood alcohol content (BAC) examination. In Idaho:

- No person shall operate any vessel, personal watercraft, water skis or similar device while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Boaters that are 21 years of age or older who have a BAC of 0.08% or greater are considered "under the influence".
- Boaters that are under 21 years of age who have a BAC of 0.02% or greater are considered "under the influence".
- Those convicted of BUI will be required to successfully complete a course on safe boating.
- Idaho law prescribes fines and jail times for those who violate state BUI laws and will revoke boating privileges for up to 2 years.
- Refusal to submit to a chemical test for BAC may result in increased penalties upon conviction

For more Idaho Boating Law Basics go to <http://www.boatus.org/onlinecourse/statelaws/Idaho.html>
