

The Beacon



Saanich Peninsula Squadron



July/August 2006



**P.O. Box 2122, Sidney, BC V8L 3S6
A Unit of Canadian Power & Sail Squadrons — Vancouver Island South District**

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Tired of a listless sex life, the man came right out and asked his wife during a recent lovemaking session, "How come you never tell me when you have an orgasm?"

She glanced at him casually and replied, "You're never home!"



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The Official Newsletter of the Saanich Peninsula Squadron

A Unit of Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons

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***All email addresses are @ saanichpeninsulasquadron.org**

Meetings of the Squadron Executive Committee (the Bridge) are normally held on the **third THURSDAY** of each month at 1900 in the Sidney North Saanich Yacht Club, except in July and December. All members of the Squadron are welcome to attend.

The Beacon is our official newsletter. We also maintain a website

www.saanichpeninsulasquadron.org. We suggest you check the site regularly for notices of upcoming events, classified ads, etc. To receive *The Beacon* electronically rather than by mail click <http://www.saanichpeninsulasquadron.org>

The contents of this magazine reflect the opinions of the writers and are not necessarily those of the Editor, Canadian Power Squadron or Saanich Peninsula Squadron.

COMMANDER'S CORNER

It is with great sadness that I have to report that **Agnes Simpson** passed away on June 3rd after a lengthy illness. I cannot improve on the words of **Len Fallan** (Brentwood Bay Squadron), "We will miss her strength, knowledge and willingness to support safe boating in our Squadrons". CPS was well represented by many members of the District and local Squadrons attending her funeral in St. Stephen's Church on June 9th. On May 13th, C/C **Serge St-Martin** presented Agnes with her 20th Merit Mark and a Life Membership.



As the boating season is now in full swing with hopefully improved weather after a damp spring, it is hoped that we are going to enjoy a safe season. When was the last time you practised a "man-overboard" drill? At the moment the water is still a little cool for practising re-boarding a person, voluntarily (in a life jacket), however one can still do a practise man-overboard drill with a fender. Have a crew member pitch one over the side, cry man-overboard and time how long it takes to manoeuvre the boat and recover the fender. When I first got *Stealth*, **Cliff Cunningham** selected a new fender out of my cockpit locker and pitched it over the side; he felt I would try harder than with one of my old fenders.

I recently got challenged that the *Boating Course* does not teach methods of re-boarding the unfortunate (or the careless). The manual talks about re-boarding devices such as a ladder, lifting harness or other apparatus for boats over 6 m and freeboard over 0.5 m and section A4.2 on re-boarding equipment generally, but not how one actually performs the re-boarding operation. This will be addressed later in this Beacon.

At this time of year we should start thinking of what courses we would like to take in the fall to enhance our boating knowledge. Courses being offered are posted on our Squadron web site www.saanichpeninsulasquadron.org. Click on *Boating Courses* link on the left side. To encourage our recent *Boating Course* graduates a motion was passed at the May Bridge meeting, "To deduct \$25 from the "Piloting Course" fee for September 2006 session for any graduate of the last two *Boating* classes who became members".

If SPS is not offering the course you want, one of the advantages of having so many squadrons in this area is that you have an equal opportunity to a seat in any other squadron's courses.

As I said in the last issue, please hoist the CPS flag.



John Hudson
Commander

SUMMER BBQ AND BOATING SWAP MEET



**Saanich Peninsula Squadron BBQ/Picnic
and Boating Swap Meet**
Sunday, September 17, 2006 11:30am - 4:30pm
Sidney North Saanich Yacht Club
1949 Marina Way
Sidney, B.C.

Tickets \$7.50 per person available at the BBQ

Enjoy barbequed hamburgers, hotdogs, roasted corn on the cobb, salads, all the fix'ins, desserts, sodas and **a whole lotta fun!** Cash bar is available in the club.

This is your chance to find boating gems at great prices and to sell any items you no longer use. The Boating Swap Meet will take place at the same time as the BBQ. Feel free to bring boating items you want to sell and/or exchange. We will have tables set up for your items. Please tag each item with your full name and asking price. Bring your own change/small bills as we will not have a supply of change for everyone.

Our BBQ is waterside and we have a small beach at the Yacht Club. Feel free to bring your kayak, canoe, or dingy to enjoy!

DON'T MISS THIS FUN AND EXCITING EVENT

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Sept 12 **Boating Class registration** and 1st lecture
- Sept 21 **Bridge meeting** - 1900 hrs at Sidney North Saanich Yacht Club
- Sept 22-23 **Casual Cruise to Maple Bay Marina** (see "Bulletin Board" below)
- Sept 23 **Pot Luck Supper** at Maple Bay Marina (see "Bulletin Board" below)
- Nov 5 **Fall Student Cruise** - Anyone who would like to skipper their boat in the fall student Cruise, or anyone who would like to proctor on the cruise, please contact: Bill Miller 656-5190 or beemer@telus.net



BULLETIN BOARD



Ahoy Mateys!

Our squadron bridge officers request that you come along to a Casual Cruise to Maple Bay Marina on Sept 22-23rd. I have booked the Marina for our squadron, and we hope to have a good number of boats join in on the fun so mark this date on your calendar. If you can't come on Friday night, then cruise up to join us on Saturday. On the Saturday night we will have a Pot Luck dinner. More information will be sent out in late August.

Be sure to book your spot at the Marina - 1-866-746-8482 and also please advise me that you are booked in there. This will be a nice wind-down from a good summer of cruising and yet it will not be too chilly at night. See you then!

Gay Miller at oceantime@telus.net or 656-5190

Call for speakers for our Lecture Series

Do you have a special nautical interest or adventure that you would like to share with your fellow SPS members? Would you consider being a guest speaker in our Lecture Series? For information on our Notices page click

<http://www.saanichpeninsulasquadron.org/notices.htm#lecture>

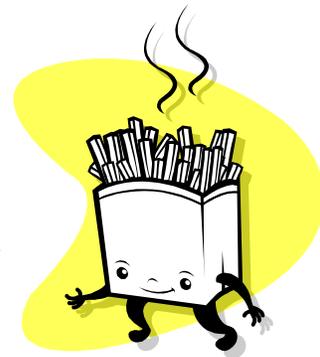
THE POTATO

Well, Girl Potato and Boy Potato had eyes for each other and finally they got married, and had a little sweet potato, whom they called 'Yam.'



Of course, they wanted the best for Yam and when it was time, they told her about the facts of life. They warned her about going out and getting half-baked so she wouldn't get accidentally mashed, and get a bad name for herself like 'Hot Potato,' and end up with a bunch of Tater Tots.

Yam said not to worry, no Spud would get her into the sack and make a rotten potato out of her! But on the other hand she wouldn't stay home and become a Couch Potato either. She would get plenty of exercise so as not to be skinny like her Shoestring cousins.



When she went off to Europe Mr. and Mrs. Potato told Yam to watch out for the hard-boiled guys from Ireland, and the greasy guys from France called the French Fries. And when she went out west to watch out for the Indians so she wouldn't get scalloped.

Yam said she would stay on the straight and narrow and wouldn't Associate with those high class Yukon Golds or the ones from the other side of the tracks who advertise their trade on all the trucks that say 'Frito Lay.'

Mr. and Mrs. Potato sent Yam to Idaho P.U. (that's Potato University) so that when she graduated she'd really be in the chips. But in spite of all they did for her, one-day Yam came home and announced she was going to marry Peter Mansbridge.



Peter Mansbridge!! Mr. and Mrs. Potato were very upset. They told Yam she couldn't possibly marry Peter Mansbridge because they wanted only the very best for her and unfortunately, he's just a "common tater".

RE-BOARDING A VESSEL

The last time I wrote on this subject was in the Sept/Oct 2002 Beacon. As stated in the Commander's Corner, I recently got challenged that our Boating Course does not teach how to re-board. It talks of the hazards of going overboard and the equipment that must be in various sizes of vessel, but not HOW one gets a person out of the water. (Boating Course article B-7.2.3, old manual 15.2.3)



It is not as simple as “use the re-boarding ladder”. Not all boats have them bolted on the hull for ready use; it may be at the bottom of the locker under fenders and a deflated dinghy. Those who do have them bolted on may have to waste time dropping their transom-mounted dinghy in the water so that the ladder can be swung down into the water. Rolling the person onto a swim grid is a solution, but how many swim grids are wide enough to accommodate the rescued lying horizontal while at the same time have one or two rescuers also standing on the grid trying to pull the person up without throwing their backs out and becoming no help in the exercise.

With every vessel being different, it is essential that the re-boarding procedure be thought through and practised before an emergency occurs. One crewmember must be charged with keeping the victim in sight and continuously pointing in the correct direction and another with getting the lifebuoy in the water. The first task is to return the vessel to the person over-board. A planing hull powerboat with power cut off will stop fairly fast. It is best not to slow down too quickly as you may be swamped by the advancing stern wave. Once slowed down, the boat can be brought around to approach the victim, proceeding upwind preferably on the leeward side so the boat does not drift away. A displacement hull powerboat may take a little longer to slow down and turn back upwind. A sailboat close-hauled can bear away, gybe, reach and come back up into the wind alongside the victim. If the sailboat is reaching or running it can be brought back to an upwind direction beside the victim by sailing a figure of eight. Regardless of the vessel type, the boat should be stationary when alongside the victim. In the panic of the moment it is very important to remember to stop the engine as one makes one's approach, for obvious reasons.

Getting the unfortunate out of the water on a sailboat is easier due to the multitude of winches onboard. In my previous article, I quoted the common textbook practice of dropping the main halyard to put the mainsail in the water. The person floats into the sail and then is winched back up on deck. I am no longer in favour of this method because if anything goes wrong, you have just multiplied your problems. During a practice last summer, a crewmember jumped over the side in a Mustang self-inflating life jacket. The first thing that we noticed was that it took 30 seconds to start inflation; it was not instantaneous when hitting the water. Using a mooring line knotted to a spare halyard with a loop at the end to go under his arms, it was only with great difficulty that we winched him back on deck using the small, cabin top, halyard winch. In the next attempt, we used the main genoa winch only to have it bind, as it is not designed for the line to approach it from above the horizontal; we also scuffed the edge of the cabin with the halyard under tension. It was only on the third attempt by running the halyard back through the spinnaker block at the stern that the line was brought to the large winch at the right angle. With much less effort we could have had him swinging at the top of the mast.

It is a more difficult proposition in a powerboat. If one has manual, hydraulic or electric dinghy davits, a looped rope under the person's arms and attached to a davit can do the lifting.

If the person-in-the-water is able to help themselves, a mooring line with loops knotted 12 – 15 inches apart, and attached to the boat, can act as a makeshift stepladder. A variation of this can be seen in the Fisheries & Oceans "Safe Boating Guide", page 25 where a rope is slung between two stern stanchions so that it hangs 12 – 15 inches in the water and is used as a step to re-board a boat. This can be accomplished at the stern or the side of the boat. Several lines at different heights are even better.



If the person is unconscious, there is increased pressure for the helms-person to bring the boat close so a boat hook can pull the person to the lifting point. If there are two persons left onboard, two ropes about 2 feet apart can be tied to the aft end of the swim grid, and hung slack under the water. The unconscious person can then be pulled into the loops with the boat hook. It may then be possible to roll the person onto the grid by pulling both ropes in unison. When attempting this, do not have the engine running in case of injury to the person and risk of wrapping the lines in the propeller(s).

A final word on stern re-boarding: if the seas are anything but relatively calm, it is safer to re-board on the lee side as reported by UK Halsey Sailmakers on their web site www.ukhalsey.com/LearningCenter/mob.asp as the swim grid coming down on someone's head can be lethal.

In conclusion:

- it is hard to beat an unencumbered re-boarding ladder
- it is necessary to plan what will work with the kit you have on your boat
- it is only by practising while not under pressure of a person actually overboard that the necessary skills can be developed
- when the water is warmer at the end of summer and while at anchor, try re-boarding a clothed person (wearing a life-jacket in case your first attempt does not work!)

John Hudson
Commander

SUNDAY MORNING INTERLUDE

I will never hear church bells ringing again without smiling...



Upon hearing that her elderly grandfather had just passed away, Katie went straight to her grandparent's house to visit her 95-year-old grandmother and comfort her.

When she asked how her grandfather had died, her grandmother replied, "He had a heart attack while we were making love on Sunday morning."

Horrified, Katie told her grandmother that 2 people nearly 100 years old having sex would surely be asking for trouble.

"Oh no, my dear," replied granny. "Many years ago, realizing our advanced age, we figured out the best time to do it was when the church bells would start to ring. It was just the right rhythm. Nice and slow and even, nothing too strenuous, simply in gentle rhythm with the Ding and the Dong."

She paused to wipe away a tear, and continued, "He'd still be alive if the ice cream truck hadn't come along."

2006 SAILPAST

What a wonderful day to be on the water; a sunny, hot day with calm water, perfect weather for honouring our new commander, **John Hudson**. And we had fun! We gathered outside Tsehum Harbour then set off in stately fashion following our Executive Officer, **Ted Meadley**. He led us toward Sidney Wharf where our Commander had *Stealth* at anchor just outside the buoys.

During the Sailpast, with one of Her Majesty's navy ships standing by, we witnessed quite a display of ignorance and rudeness on the water. Some 'cigarette boats' on a Poker Run cut in between our parade while members were giving the salute. John had to cling to the shroud to keep from being pitched overboard.

Then it was back to SNSYC, to continue socializing and dining in that lovely setting by the water.

11 boats participated in the Sailpast including 2 sailboats and 9 powerboats. They were:

Stealth----- **John Hudson, Carolyn Hole** with guest **Marg Griffin**
Mr Mustoffalees----- **Ted & Maureen Meadley** with guests **Bill & Joyce Morrow**
Sea Scooter----- **Richard & Cynthia Funnell**
Dawna 2----- **Len & Dawna Burton**
Magic Mist----- **Stephen & Marjorie Denroche**
Charlotte Time----- **Bill & Gay Miller** with guests **Glenn Gallins & Kathy Eakins**
All I Need----- **Bob Stewart & Tony Kluge**
Linger----- **Dave & Irene Campbell**
Traa Dy Liooar----- **Kathryn McDougall & 3 guests**
Miscamel----- **Roger Hind, Michael & Scott Hind**
The Smith's Boat----- **Ed & Anne Smith**



Joining us at the dinner that evening, where we gathered on the deck of the yacht club, were additional members and family: **Ken & Joan Clarke, Ray & Joyce Berry, Wendy Kluge, Ralph & Joyce Hodd** and **Fred Griffin**. Important to mention is the fact that this was the inaugural run for the Denroche's new boat, *Magic Mist*, which they have been building for the past 4 years. A big moment for them! It was good to see so many Past Commanders attending: **Marg Griffin, Glenn Gallins, Stephen Denroche** (Kelowna), **Ken Clarke** (also P/D/C), **Joyce Berry** (Don Valley & also P/D/Lt C York East), **Ray Berry** (PRC National) & **Gay Miller**.

Thanks to all **38 people** who participated in making this a memorable occasion.

Submitted by Gay Miller, P/Cdr

TRAINING UPDATE 2006/07

This is a great time to plan what courses you'd like to register for to continue your boating education. We run courses starting early September 2006, and early January 2007. Some of these require a certain number of students be signed up to run the class, and also have a maximum class size.

To make sure you're included, sign up early. You can sign up online at www.saanichpeninsulasquadron.org/registration.htm, or by calling the Course Registrar, **Hugh Richards** at 656-9227. If you'd like to contact any of the bridge officers mentioned in this article, just go to <http://www.saanichpeninsulasquadron.org/bridge.htm> for positions, names, email links and contact numbers. For more details on the contents of these courses, go to www.saanichpeninsulasquadron.org/courses.htm.

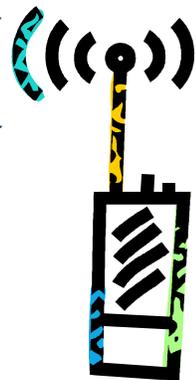
Following is a very brief summary of the courses. All courses are run at the North Saanich Middle School from 1900 to 2200. The school is at 10475 McDonald Park Rd. Sidney B.C.

Boating

If you receive "The Beacon" you've likely passed the *Boating* course already. Our method of presentation has improved substantially over the past few years, helping to clarify complex material and maintain student interest. If you've already passed this course and would like a refresher, consider volunteering as a proctor by contacting our Chief Proctor, **Dawna Burton** at 656-6450. Our squadron is fortunate to have a pool of experienced instructors from a variety of backgrounds to teach this course.

If you have friends or family who spend much time on your boat, consider recommending this course to them. In addition to giving them the knowledge to participate in operating the boat, especially in an emergency, it will also enable them to acquire a 'Pleasure Craft Operator Card' (PCOC). This card is being phased in over time for motorized pleasure craft on the following schedule.

- All operators of craft UNDER 4 meters.
- All operators born after April 1, 1983.
- All operators as of September 15, 2009.



If you've passed the *Boating* course and just need the PCOC (to operate your dinghy, for example), you can just take that test. Contact our Executive Officer, **Ted Meadley** to set that up. If friends or offspring need the card and haven't taken the course, I strongly recommend they take the course to ensure they truly understand the basics.

The next *Boating* course starts on September 12 and runs for 13 weeks (including the exam). There will be another *Boating* class starting January 9, 2007.

Marine Radio Telephone

This course runs in December following the exam for the *Boating* course. There are now two components to this course. The first covers the basic VHF material that has been taught for some time. This course leads to the Restricted Operator's Certificate (Maritime), allowing holders to use VHF radios on boats.

The new section added in 2005 covers 'Digital Selective Calling' (DSC). DSC has been phased in as a requirement on commercial vessels starting in 1999. VHF radios equipped with DSC are now widely available at reasonable prices for pleasure craft, and bring important safety and convenience features. This section leads to the 'DSC endorsement' on the Restricted Operator's Certificate, required for the operation of VHF radios equipped with DSC features.

The next *Marine Radio Telephone* course starts December 12 and runs for two consecutive nights that week, including the exam. There will be another class on April 17/18, 2007.

Piloting

The *Piloting* course is the next logical step after the *Boating* course. Whether you operate a power or sailing vessel, the *Piloting* course will offer a great deal of useful knowledge building on what you learned in *Boating*.

Piloting classes are typically quite small, generally fewer than 10 students. This allows plenty of interaction with the instructor, **Cliff Cunningham**. Virtually all students I've spoken with who've taken this class have found it not only very useful, but also most enjoyable. If you want to achieve a better understanding of the marine environment and the various navigation skills that were touched on in the *Boating* class, consider registering for *Piloting*. The next *Piloting* course starts on September 12 and runs through December. Plans for January 2007 are not yet completed, and may not include a *Piloting* course.

Marine Maintenance

The *Marine Maintenance* course taught in our squadron continues to be substantially enhanced by **Len Burton**. Len teaches from actual experience, and has added a great deal of hands-on study. This is supported in every class by an immense inventory of marine parts, components and tools that are brought each night to add a solid dose of reality to the theory covered in the basic material. Guest instructors are used to cover specialized material, resulting in an abundance of expertise for the class being taught and providing students the opportunity to get answers to tough questions.

This course will give you the confidence to start doing your own basic maintenance. It will also provide the knowledge to understand more complex work that you may choose to farm out, helping to ensure that the work is done to your requirements. If you own or operate a boat, you would benefit from taking this course.

The next *Marine Maintenance* course starts on January 10, 2007. These courses are only run once per year in January.

Summary

The **Canadian Power Squadron** is about training in the safe operation of boats. If you know of anyone who is looking for excellent training from a highly respected source, recommend they turn to us. The **Saanich Peninsula Power and Sail Squadron** is fortunate to have a full complement of bridge officers, course instructors and proctors. Class sizes are very manageable, and everyone involved is keen to ensure a rewarding educational experience for the students. Thank you for helping to spread the word, **making boating safer** for all of us.



Richard Funnell, Training Officer 704-9026
training@saanichpeninsulasquadron.org

Ready to take more courses? Expand your knowledge... meet new people?

For **upcoming courses**: <http://www.saanichpeninsulasquadron.org/courses.htm>

For **on-line registration for courses** - <http://www.saanichpeninsulasquadron.org/registration.htm>

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REMINDER

Saanich Peninsula Squadron members received their annual *Membership Renewal Notice* from CPS Headquarters some time ago; some members have received a reminder notice as well. The membership year is from May 1 to April 30 of the following year.

Thank you to those squadron members who have renewed their membership for 2006/07. You will continue to receive the many benefits of membership including the opportunity to take advanced courses offered by the squadron, discounts on your boat insurance, subscription to *Canadian Yachting* magazine, *The Beacon*, etc.

Also, a friendly reminder to those who have not yet paid their dues for this year, you can pay online at <http://cpsdues.cps-ecp.ca> or phone CPS Headquarters toll-free at 1-888-CPS-BOAT (1-888-277-2628).

Moving? Please advise the squadron if there are any changes to your mailing address, phone number or e-mail address.

Tony Kluge, Membership Officer

ASK YOUR GRANDMOTHER

Little Tony was visiting his grandmother for a few days. He'd been outside playing with the neighborhood kids for a while, when suddenly he burst into the house and asked,

"Grandma, what is that called when people are sleeping on of each other?"

She was somewhat taken aback, but, after a little thought, decided it would be best to be truthful with the boy....."It's called sexual intercourse, Darling."

Little Tony just said, "Oh, OK," and went back outside to friends. A few minutes later, he came running back in the house and said angrily,

"Grandma, it is NOT called sexual intercourse! It's called Bunk Beds!!"



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DOG OVERBOARD – NOT!

Do you boat with your furry family member – your dog? We do. My husband and I live aboard and sail with our loyal cocker spaniel, Winston Harris 1st. As boaters we know that an accident will happen when you least expect; in the dark, in the wee hours of the morning, in foul weather, tied to the dock or under way. Let's give consideration to the following: Not all dogs swim. Not all swimming dogs are good swimmers. Dogs that are strong swimmers will fatigue and dogs will panic. What happens when your dog panics? Put yourself in his paws.

As a dog, you have had a lazy day sleeping in the cockpit, you decide to stretch your four legs and you lose your balance. Splash! You are under water! Which way is up? Frantically you get your head to the surface and gulp fresh air. Survival is the only thing you can think about. In this frenzied state, your heart rate increases, your breathing rate increases, your eyes are wildly darting about looking for a way to get out of the water. Under the water your legs thrash about to keep your head above water and guide your body in whatever direction appears to be the best option at the moment. Wait! You change direction again and again not knowing where to go. Ultimately, you choose a course. You swim and you swim and you swim. Your irrational thinking has prevailed. You believe you are heading to safety, but you are not. Your energy is waning, you are exhausted...

As a dog owner you could have prevented this accident. In addition to prevention, it is imperative to know what to do if your dog does fall overboard. It takes simple but strict rules and a few pieces of readily available canine equipment. Let us consider overboard prevention and overboard rescue not only from the boat but from the dock as well.

The Boat: A life vest for your dog does not prevent an overboard incident. A life vest will add buoyancy to your dog and colour to assist with keeping your canine in sight in the event he goes overboard. Life vests for canines come in many different styles and sizes. When we purchased, for Winston, consideration was given to his comfort and the ease of plucking him from the water and the construction of the vest. Many styles and brands were tried on Winston. While in the store we had Winston stand, sit, lie down and walk. Furthermore, using the handle of the life vest, we picked him up and evaluated the support of the under belly strap(s). I strongly encourage you to go online, visit pet and marine stores, ask other boaters, and then choose the best for your 'best friend'.

Overboard prevention from the boat begins with knowing where your dog is every moment. This means visual contact. Should an "overboard" happen, you can assign a crew member to spot your dog. In many instances, a dog is overboard several minutes before his absence is noticed. The lost rescue time is twofold. Once visual contact is lost, it is near impossible, especially in rough seas, to regain and, you are that much farther away for backtracking to the overboard point. On our boat, while underway, we restrict Winston to the cockpit. We never encourage him to roam the deck alone.

In rough weather, consider tethering your dog in a safe location that is out of your way. Dogs can be unpredictable in new situations. In rough weather you need to focus your attention on your seamanship skill for the safety of your crew, your boat and your dog.

Many boaters will attach netting to lifelines to contain their dogs. Often you will see this safety setup on sailboats. On the other hand, some boaters will restrict their dog to a safe location below deck.

Rescuing a dog overboard is similar to a man overboard given that the rescuee may or may not be conscious. It is dissimilar because your dog may or may not respond to your commands plus, your dog cannot assist you by attaching a rescue line or grasping a life ring. Having noted the above concerns, you will need to plan ahead then for numerous scenarios then practice, practice, practice. As with a man overboard, on your vessel, will you conduct the rescue from your transom? How will you get your pooch aboard? Will you need the aid of a line, a winch or your dinghy? How fast can you launch and board your dinghy? Do you have the strength to pull your dog into the dinghy? You may have to tow him to the boat where crew can then assist. Above all, ensure the safety of the rescuer. Avoid rescue practices that will result with an extra body in the water!

The Dock: Overboard prevention at the dock starts with your dog never being left unattended. Allowing two or more dogs to frolic on the dock is a no-no. I have seen it many times and at least one dog ends up in the drink. Funny - could be if the dog overboard avoids injury. Dangerous – absolutely! Consider the consequences if the overboard dog strikes his head against the dock, a boat hull or a piling. Your pet may get trapped between the boat and the dock. This situation is magnified if a human available to render immediate assistance does not witness the preceding incident.

Leash your dog while strolling the docks. When your dog is leashed and by your side you **will** have peace of mind. Yes, I like to see my dog off leash, playing, running, and socializing however, I do know that there are many areas that are far more appropriate for doggy freedom than docks, marinas and boatyards.

While it will not prevent your dog from going overboard, it is prudent to have your dog wear a life vest while on the dock. This is not always practical or comfortable for your dog but again, if your pooch goes over, most likely the life vest has a handle for grabbing and pulling the dog to safety.

If the life vest is not a practical choice, always, always have a harness or collar on your dog. A harness is preferable as it gives you a handle to scoop your pooch to the safety of the dock. Additionally, the harness will cradle your dog for a more comfortable lift. A collar can be used as a lifting device but will offer less comfort than the harness. It is important to know that when you lift your pooch by the collar, the strain will be on the neck and throat area; possibly hindering breathing.

In summary, prevention is the key. To get started, take stock. Do you have a life vest, a harness, a tether and a collar for your furry crewmember? Assess the environment; your boat and each location you dock or anchor. Have a plan and share that plan with your crew. This along with common sense just may save the life of your best friend.

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