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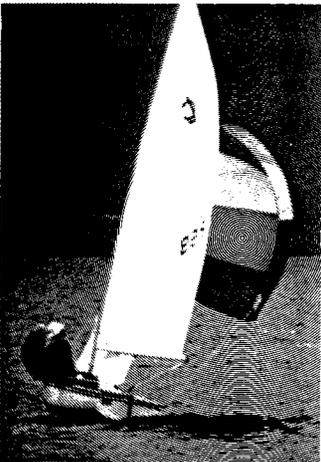
RECNOTES

NATURAL
RESOURCES
RESEARCH
PROGRAM

VOL R-88-2

INFORMATION EXCHANGE BULLETIN

MAR 1988



Old Hickory Lake Ranger, Angela Calos introduces Dupont Elementary School students to Freddie the Fish

Saving Lives with Water Safety Campaign

*Stony Merriman
Public Affairs Officer
Nashville District*

As tourism rises, drowning and fatality rates normally also climb. A primary goal of the Nashville District is to save lives through an aggressive, mostly free, public awareness water safety campaign.

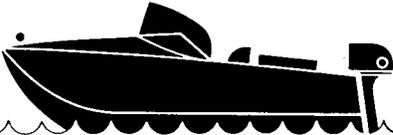
COL Edward Starbird, Nashville's District Commander said: "This campaign is customer care in action. What better way to show the American people the Corps of Engineers truly cares about this great nation?" The Nashville Dis-

trict is doing all it can to keep people alive on our waterways.

In 1986, 19 people drowned on Nashville District managed lakes; 14 died in 1987. Even though the Nashville District saw a decrease in drownings, the goal is to reduce the number of drownings even more. The task is made even more difficult by the increase in tourism. In the last 3 years Nashville lakes have witnessed a leap of more than 15 million visitors.



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Nashville District



Wear a life jacket.

Alcohol and water don't mix.

Test all safety equipment.

Ease into cold water.

Remember boat lights at night.

Swim with a companion.

Avoid strong current and turbulent water.

Follow all boating "rules of the road".

Every accident was preventable.

Think water safety.

You are important!

Water Safety
It's Up To All Of Us!

Spelling out "Water Safety"--tips on preventing accidents.

Resource managers and rangers and hydropower and safety employees continued their outstanding effort on the 10 projects along the Cumberland River and so did the lock operators on the Tennessee River.

Early on, an Intensified Water Safety team was formed in Nashville to research previous water safety programs and develop a proactive campaign. Darrell Lewis (CECW-ON) (on a detail to Nashville from OCE), Ron Rains, Todd Yann, Bill Carter, Emmett Forte, Lynn Bowden, and the author--all of the Nashville District--were members of the team. On some occasions, a local ranger provided the group background information about a certain project.

A Little Engineers' Day started the water awareness project, May 1, at a beach near Old Hickory Lake. DuPont, one of Nashville's Adopt-A-Schools, participated in the activities. The school was divided into five groups. Group 1 listened as "Bill the Beach Bum" explained how to wear a life jacket and which one to select. Group 2 toured a nearby nature trail. Group 3 was provided a "living" early American pioneer lesson. Freddie the Fish gave each student in Group 4 a water safety bag with items to take back to school and home. Group 5 ran a life jacket relay race. The five groups rotated on a signal from a ranger.

The new safety marketing plan began a few weeks before Little Engineers' Day. This plan called for obtaining free newspaper space and radio and television air time whenever and wherever possible. The idea was to use all available media in an attempt to make the general public aware of water safety.

The Nashville District was very successful in obtaining media assistance to increase the public's awareness by use of electronic message boards, milk cartons, grocery bags, television, radio, newspapers, billboards, marquees, and more.

Electronic Message Boards

Thirteen electronic message boards appeared in eight counties on banks, shopping centers, carpet stores, service stations, and on university football stadium signs. Not only did the City Bank and Trust officials in McMinnville grant the Corps time on their two-sided board atop the bank, but they also aired four messages on the time-and-temperature telephone service during the three peak drowning weekends: Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day. The First Trust



Lou Ilvoli (second from left), marketing representative for International Paper Co., meets with COL Edward Starbird, Nashville District Commander, Stony Merriman (left), and Janis Clark, Information Management Office, to discuss safe boating theme for milk cartons (photo by George Green).

and Savings in Oneida, the eastern bank of Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, also carried a boating safety message.

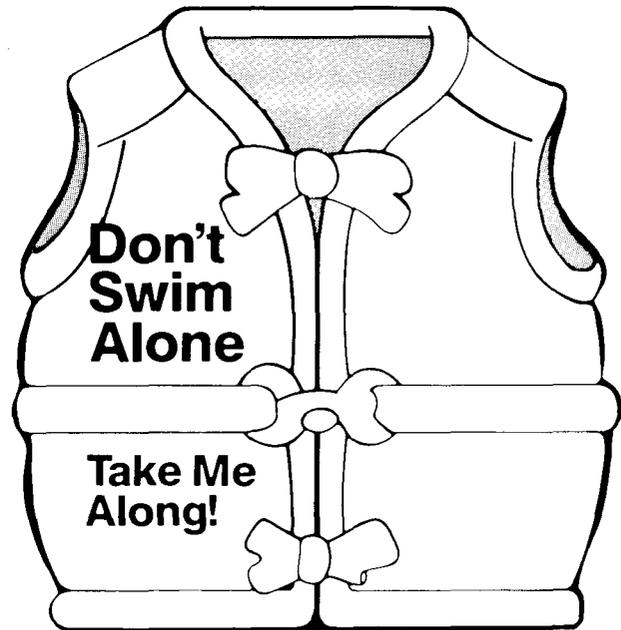
Milk Cartons

Purity Dairy in Nashville gave space on three one-half gallon milk product cartons for three months. Purity nominated the District's camera-ready art to the International Paper Company (IPC), which produces not only Purity's cartons, but also cartons for 439 other dairies. In late fall IPC selected Nashville's water safety art for their 1988 public service announcement theme. To date, three IPC Memphis-based representatives have visited the District Office and work continues on the IPC theme, "It Can Save Your Life."

Tommy Wilkerson, Resource Manager at Lake Cumberland, was able to convince the Southern Belle Dairy in Lexington, Kentucky, during late November, to print the "Don't Swim Alone, Take Me Along" life jacket art on their half pint cartons in 1988.

Grocery Bags

Foodtown Grocery in Carthage sponsored student workbooks in Smith County, Tennessee. Each kindergarten to grade 4 student receives a different workbook each month for the entire school year with a Corps life jacket message on the back page.



US Army Corps
of Engineers

Your Safety Our Concern

"Don't Swim Alone, Take Me Along" used on International Paper produced milk cartons for Purity Dairy to promote public awareness of the need for life jackets.

All of these were donated to the Corps free of charge simply for the asking. The same grocery store printed "Kids Aren't Drownproof!" messages on their grocery bags. Big John's 10 stores near the Big South Fork added a map of the project

and activities available inside the park which the Corps is building. The Corps' life jacket message will be used on future Big John's grocery bags. It should appear in early 1988 and run through the summer.

Food Center, with its 11 stores throughout the Nashville District, has also agreed to run the same life jacket message in 1988. In 1987 Nashville lost out to the "Just Say No" (the anti-drug campaign) theme, but was granted 1988 for safe boating tips.

Television

Emmett Forte, Nashville's Safety Officer, appeared on the Nashville's "Tennessee Outdoorsman Show" early during the campaign and presented the host with a National Water Safety Congress Award and talked about water safety for 30 minutes.

After a tragic boating accident on Center Hill Lake in August, a 30-minute water safety show appeared on Cookeville's "Sportsman's Trail" show. The show highlighted LTC Allen with drowning and fatality statistics; Center Hill's Resource Manager Richard Puckett providing do's and don'ts on the lake; and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency's Area Supervisor Mike Foster presenting safety tips from home to the lake, while on the lake, and on the way home. The show aired Thursday evening before Labor Day Weekend and again on Saturday morning during Labor Day.

Local Channel 22 also aired the OCE-produced public service announcements and provided the District with a sample of how the Cookeville station used the free air time. In addition, six cable television stations aired the water safety message and the Big South Fork Cablevision in Jamestown joined with the Corps on their station and the messages appeared the entire summer.

Radio

At least one representative from each of the 10 projects came to the Nashville studio and taped 10 to 19 localized public service announcements and delivered them to each of their radio stations. Local resource managers and rangers also appeared on local radio shows.

Newspapers

Newspaper articles were generated during the campaign to include National Boating Safety Week, marquees, and Freddie the Fish visits.



Ranger Cindy Jackson reads boating safety script for radio public service announcements (photo by Lynn Bowden).

Newspaper fillers (camera-ready art) were produced at the District Headquarters, and the White County, Tennessee, *Post* provided space in their regular edition and their TV supplement for several months.

Billboards

Lake Cumberland purchased three billboards in strategic locations. Lamar Outdoor Advertising Agency, Nashville, provided free space for some boards near Old Hickory and J. Percy Priest Lakes. An Old Hickory ranger, Angela Calos, knew a person who worked at Lamar and before long the Corps' water safety boards were viewed near the lakes.

Marquees

At least a dozen marquees near Nashville District projects were provided at no expense. A dry cleaners in DeKalb County, Tennessee, provided one side of their marquee for the entire summer and a photo of the marquee appeared in the local newspaper.

Freddie the Fish

Freddie the Fish costume and slides were used near the projects. In conjunction with Freddie's visits, an in-house produced coloring book--the one the Pittsburgh District produced years ago--was reproduced and presented to each child at the schools. A video of Freddie's visit to some schools was produced--as a pilot project--and presented to the teachers to show throughout the school year.

Local newspapers also reported Freddie's school visit.

Camera-ready Art

The Public Affairs Office and Audio-Visual and Reproduction Section, Information Management Office, created and produced three camera-ready slicks for milk carton panels, grocery bag side panels, and newspaper fillers.

Video

A 42-minute how-to video about the 1987 water safety campaign was produced in-house and shown at the Resource Supervisors Conference in Chattanooga on December 3 and to the Louisville and Nashville Rangers in Lexington on December 8. A more polished 20-minute video is now being produced. Both videos show actual footage of the 1987 campaign.

Future Plans

The Nashville District does not intend to stop or slow down its efforts in its public awareness water safety plan. The planning continues each day. Nashville is currently working on these items:

- International Paper Company for milk carton ads.
- McDonald's and Hardee's to print the ads on their tray liners.
- Colonial bread to print and insert messages in their bread wrappers.
- Produce (in-house) TV public service announcements with singers John Anderson and Charlie Daniels.
- Life jacket messages on page 2 of telephone books and to appear in the monthly telephone newsletter.
- Electronic message boards in other cities. Thirteen have been located, bringing the total to 26.
- Kellogg's and Nabisco cereal box tops to highlight the life jacket ad.
- Crest toothpaste flaps with the life jacket message.
- The same life jacket message on drinking cups from the Hardee's and Dairy Queen fast-food chains.



Another life jacket message produced by the Nashville District.

- Clip art to appear on the Armed Forces base newspaper and civilian newspaper clip sheets, along with the National Safe Boating Week in June.
- Locally produced National Boating Week ad slicks to be given to the local newspaper a couple of weeks before June and also a proclamation to be in the hands of the local lake managers and rangers.
- Magazine articles to spread the word about how to obtain free publicity for the water safety program.
- Golden Flakes potato chip bags to highlight the life jacket ad.
- The downtown Nashville American General Building to light up the side of its building with six evening messages before and during two summer holiday weekends.
- Our goal is to triple the number of public affairs and news type radio and television shows and get more newspapers involved in the public service campaign, along with more grocery bag messages. Kroger is one of our grocery bag targets for 1988.

For additional information on the public awareness campaign of the Nashville District, contact Dr. Stony Merriman at (615) 736-7161 or write to the author at US Army Corps of Engineers, Nashville District, PO Box 1070, Nashville, TN 37202-1070.



NATURAL RESOURCES RESEARCH PROGRAM

This bulletin is published in accordance with AR 310-2. It has been prepared and distributed as one of the information dissemination functions of the Environmental Laboratory of the Waterways Experiment Station. It is primarily intended to be a forum whereby information pertaining to and resulting from the Corps of Engineers' nationwide Natural Resources Research Program can be rapidly and widely disseminated to OCE and Division, District, and project offices as well as to other Federal agencies concerned with outdoor recreation. Local reproduction is authorized to satisfy additional requirements. Contributions of notes, news, reviews, or any other types of information are solicited from all sources and will be considered for publication so long as they are relevant to the theme of the Natural Resources Research Program, i.e., to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Corps in managing the natural resources while providing recreation opportunities at its water resources development projects. This bulletin will be issued on an irregular basis as dictated by the quantity and importance of information to be disseminated. The contents of this bulletin are not to be used for advertising, publication, or promotional purposes. Citation of trade names does not constitute an official endorsement or approval of the use of such commercial products. Communications are welcomed and should be addressed to the Environmental Laboratory, ATTN: A. J. Anderson (CEWES-EP-R), U.S. Army Engineer Waterways Experiment Station, PO Box 631, Vicksburg, MS 39180-0631, or call AC (601) 634-3657.

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