

LETTERS & STORIES

A "Thank You" from Mike Fassari

Dear Friends and Boating Safety Professionals,
I want to thank you all for your friendship and assistance throughout the years. Cpl. Sam Galbraith and I will be leaving the Marine Enforcement Unit effective July 5, 2008.

Since I will be 51 years old this year, and the Marine Enforcement Unit Supervisor position will now be on an 18-month rotation schedule, it is unlikely I will get another opportunity to work with all of you before I retire or "transfer" (it would have been presumptuous of me to say "promote"). The past 13 years have been a blast! Thanks to all of you that helped make that happen.

The new MEU Supervisor, and your new point of contact, will be Sgt. Clayton Bailey. Clayton is a good friend, and I will still be around to offer him help and advice. Clayton is fairly new to boating, but will be assisted by Cpl. Jimmy Trahin. Jimmy has worked the MEU, on and off, for several years. I know all of you will welcome them and work with them as you have with me. I have listed their contact information at the bottom of this page.

I do have some grants in the works, and I will follow through with them. I have also been assured that I will remain active in the DBW Boating Skills and Operations class, so you're not rid of me yet.

Once again, thank you for everything and, stay safe out there!

Sincerely,

Sergeant Mike Fassari

San Bernardino Co. Sheriff's Dept., Marine Enforcement Unit



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President Bush Passes Clean Boating Act

On July 30, President Bush signed the S. 2766, the Clean Boating Act of 2008, into law. During the last week of June, both the House and Senate passed the Act, a measure designed to permanently restore a long-standing exemption for recreational boats from EPA permit requirements under the Clean Water Act. The legislation now goes to the White House and awaits the president's signature.

Congressional action was prompted by a U.S. District Court decision in September 2006, under which an estimated 17 million recreational boats would have been required to carry EPA permits for non-polluting water discharges, such as deck runoff and engine cooling water exchanges. Without action, permits would be required this year.

While the goal of the court decision was to regulate invasive species carried in the ballast water of commercial ships, the action would have dictated maintenance and operation procedures for small recreational vessels and potentially subjected boaters to citizen lawsuits, as well as a penalty system designed for industrial polluters.

"This is a fabulous victory for common sense - and it just goes to show what can be done when the boating public, the marine industry and its representatives in Congress row together in a bipartisan way," said Nancy Michelman, president of the boat owners' organization BoatU.S.

This is welcome news for the recreational boating community, especially as the bill moved quickly through Congress and that the President moved so quickly to sign it.

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