

## Pamlico Sail & Power Squadron – Press Release

Washington Mayor Mac Hodge signs a Proclamation declaring May 18 to 24, 2019 as Safe Boating Week in Washington to coordinate with National Safe Boating Council’s Campaign in raising the public’s awareness of boating safety. Pictured to the left beside Mayor Hodges is Linda Erickson, Education Officer and to the right Walt Morrissey, Executive Officer, of the Pamlico Sail & Power Squadron a unit of the United States Power Squadrons® known as America’s Boating Club®. They support safety programs and public educational opportunities along with free boat inspections.



Most recreational boaters, sailors, personal water craft and fishermen are by now either on the water or making preparations to enjoy the enormous river/bay resources we are blessed to have in the Washington area. This year the theme of the National Safe Boating Campaign is “Ready, Set, Wear It”!

North Carolina ranks in the top 8 states for boater fatalities with a significant number of boaters drowning each year would be alive today had they worn their life jackets; boater education has shown to make a significant difference in boating accidents and related injuries.

Current published USCG reports, drowning has reported cause of death in three fourths of boating fatalities. With 83% of those drowned were not wearing life jackets. It is clear that hundreds of those might have been saved had they worn a life jacket. Also, it is further reported

that 77% of deaths occurred on boats where the operator did not receive boating safety instruction.

On Saturday, May 18th, the Pamlico Sail & Power Squadron will partner with West Marine at their Washington location to further spotlight the importance of safe boating. Squadron members will provide information concerning safety requirements, North Carolina state boating regulations, boating education and we will have several different types of personal floatation devices (PFDs) on display. For more information on America's Boating Club and your local Pamlico Sail & Power Squadron visit our website at [www.pamlicosailandpowersquadron.org](http://www.pamlicosailandpowersquadron.org)

#### PROCLAMATION

Recreational boating is fun and enjoyable, and the people of Washington are very fortunate that we have sufficient resources to accommodate the wide variety of pleasure boating demands. However, our waterways can become crowded at times and be a place of chaos and confusion. While being a marvelous source of recreation, boating, to the unprepared, can be a risky sport. Not knowing or obeying the Navigation Rules (Rules of the Road) drinking alcohol or taking drugs while operating a boat, or choosing not to wear your life jacket when doing so, is clearly NOT the smart thing to do and are all examples of human error or a lack of proper judgment. One particular behavior that can reduce the number of boaters who lose their lives by drowning each year by approximately 80% is the wearing of a life jacket. It is a simple task that has the potential to reduce terrible loss in lives.

Knowledge and boating skills are important in reducing human error and improving judgment. If people are aware of the risk, they are likely to take the precautionary measures to protect themselves and their friends and family. That is why we must continue to spread the messages of boating safety not just during National Safe Boating Week but throughout the entire year to our recreational boaters of Beaufort County.

**WHEREAS**, part of National Safe Boating Week, May 18 to May 24, we wish to raise the public's awareness of boating safety and our roles in boater education; and

**WHEREAS**, numerous seminars and classes are conducted each year to educate boaters on how to have a safe and enjoyable boating experience; in addition, hundreds of boats are inspected by certified members to help boaters insure their vessels are safe and will meet the laws regarding needed equipment; and

**WHEREAS**, North Carolina ranks in the top 10 states for boater fatalities with a significant number of boaters drowning each year they would be alive today had they worn their life jackets; boater education has shown to make a significant difference in boating accidents and related injuries; and

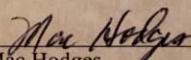
**WHEREAS**, both the Pamlico Sail & Power Squadron (PSPS) a unit of the United States Power Squadrons® (USPS) known as America's Boating Club is dedicated to providing recreational boaters with the knowledge and resources to practice safe boating and reduce boating accidents. It is a goal to make a difference in the way every boater in the greater Washington area experiences boating. Washington is a boating community and as such on-water safety is of particular importance to residents of Beaufort County; we conduct free Vessel Safety Checks by certified inspectors.

**THEREFORE, I, MAC HODGES**, do hereby support the goals of the North American Safe Boating Campaign and proclaim May 18-24, 2019 as **NATIONAL SAFE BOATING WEEK** and the start of the year-round effort to promote safe boating. The Pamlico Sail & Power Squadron will be at the West Marine location on May 18<sup>th</sup> to kick off the boating season and conduct FREE Vessel Safety Inspections.

**IN WITNESS THEREOF**, I urge all those who boat to "Boat Smart. Boat Safe. "Ready, Set, Wear it!" and practice responsible safe boating habits.

Given under my signature and seal of the City of Washington, this the 13<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2019.



  
Mac Hodges  
Mayor of Washington NC