



South Atlantic Division

WATER SAFETY INITIATIVES NEWSLETTER

Quarter 1 • Published February 2024



Goals for Water Safety Initiatives Newsletter

Why participate in this quarterly newsletter?

- Showcase what your project or office is doing
- Share water safety programs & initiative ideas between projects and offices
- provide a brief record of SAD water safety initiatives

Water Safety Initiatives Newsletter Timetable

Quarter 1 | Oct. - Dec. | Submit by Dec. 30th

Quarter 2 | Jan. - Mar. | Submit by Mar. 25th

Quarter 3 | Apr. - June | Submit by June 25th

Quarter 4 | Jul. - Sept. | Submit by Sept. 25th



Photo: Walter F. George Reservoir with Water Safety Giveaway Tree

THIS ISSUE:

**ANNOUNCEMENTS &
REMINDERS**

PAGE 02

JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT

PAGE 03

MOBILE DISTRICT

PAGE 05

SAVANNAH DISTRICT

PAGE 08

WILMINGTON DISTRICT

PAGE 09

AWARDS

PAGE 11

ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS

SAD Quarterly Awards Schedule

The SAD Water Safety PDT wants to recognize you for your outstanding efforts to educate the public on water safety, the environment, Corps mission, your project, and more!

- Awards program open to all employees within the Operations Community of Practice
- Recipients receive time off awards
- Nominations can be received from anyone (co-workers, supervisors, self-nominations)
- No effort is considered too small
- Can include - direct contacts, social media engagement numbers, EKO cards, and pictures

Quarter 1 | Oct. - Dec. | Submit by Feb. 14th

Quarter 2 | Jan. - Mar. | Submit by Apr. 28th

Quarter 3 | Apr. - June | Submit by July 28th

Quarter 4 | Jul. - Sept. | Submit by Nov. 30th

Send nominations to your district representative on the SAD WS PDT!

Feedback for National Water Safety Committee

Your input is important!

Emily Jones your SAD National Water Safety Committee Representative will be attending the Committee's in-person meeting the second week of March, so if you have any feedback for the Committee on water safety product item ideas, concerns, or other input please email or call Emily at Emily.A.Jones@usace.army.mil | 434.738.6143 ext. 6171.

Water Safety Product Orders

Did you submit a product order?

Water safety products to use from April 2024 through March 2025 will begin to be shipped around March 2024.

Sea Tow Foundation Life Jacket Loaner Online Conference

Dates: March 5 - 7, 2024

Upcoming 3-day online workshop. Registration is open now. Regular rate of \$30 from January 9, 2024 to February 29, 2024. The conference will also be recorded, allowing registered participants to access content up to three months post-event. To register and learn more about the conference, visit <https://www.boatingsafety.com/page/lifejacketloanerconference>

Water Safety Social Media Resources

Join DLL-SAD-Water-Safety listserv by emailing Emily.A.Jones@usace.army.mil to receive monthly emails with water safety graphics and text to post on USACE social media sites.

Water Safety on Corps NRM Gateway

<https://corpslakes.erdc.dren.mil/employees/watersafety/water.cfm>

JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT (SAJ)

Photo: @JacksonvilleDistrict

Okeechobee Waterway

On 21 Oct 2023, Saturday, Park Ranger James Norris of the Southern Florida Operations, Saint Lucie Office, Stuart, FL conducted an interpretive outreach program at FireFest, an event that educated and celebrated how Florida benefits from fire, this was held at Jonathan Dickinson State Park in Hobe Sound, FL. Park Ranger James Norris through interpretive discussions promoted the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Park Ranger mission for the Okeechobee Waterway. Highlights of topics covered included, water safety, with talking points covering proper fitting and the wear of personal floatation devices, rescue procedure using the reach, throw, row and go, and safe boating on the Okeechobee Waterway.



Park Ranger Norris also spoke with those who visited the outreach site about native and invasive flora that was common to the region, what type of wildlife is common to the Okeechobee Waterway and Lake Okeechobee. Park Ranger James Norris was able to inform over 50 attendees of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers mission on the Okeechobee Waterway, and begin preliminary discussions for developing partnerships within the community with individuals of the Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla out of Jupiter, FL, Martin County Emergency Management, Stuart, FL, Florida Forest Service, Okeechobee, FL, Bureau of Land Management Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse, Tequesta, FL, as well as continuing to build a working relationship with the Park Rangers and staff of Jonathan Dickinson State Park in Hobe Sound, FL.



JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT (SAJ)

Photo: @JacksonvilleDistrict

Okeechobee Waterway

On Thursday and Friday 2,3 November 2023, the Southern Florida Operations, Okeechobee Waterway Park Rangers met with 250 students during a safety day. The Park Rangers discussed water safety with the students during 15-minute rotations. The discussion covered proper fitting and wear of personal floatation device, throwing a ring buoy and discussed tips for safe swimming.



Bobber the Water Safety Dog and Toys for Tots Campaign December 2023. On 6 December 2023, the Saint Lucie Park Rangers, Volunteers, met with Sergeant Taylor from the U.S. Marine Corps Florida Reserve. For a photo opportunity to promote Toys for Tots and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.



MOBILE DISTRICT (SAM)

Photo: @USACEMOBILE

Alabama River Lakes

Alabama National Fair- October 6th- 15th- Montgomery, Alabama. Rangers had a booth set up at the Alabama National Fair to promote water safety and the project's parks. 4,100 contacts were made.



Selma Fair- October 30th- November 4th- Selma, Alabama. Rangers had booth set up at the Selma Fair to promote Water safety and the project's parks. 600 water safety contacts were made.



MOBILE DISTRICT (SAM)

Photo: @USACEMOBILE

West Point Lake

On October 5, 2023, West Point Lake held its 44th annual “Special Day for Special People” event at Rocky Point Recreation Area. This event gave the mentally and physically challenged individuals in the local community a chance to experience outdoor recreation. Activities in this event included boat rides, a photo booth, bouncy castles, music, and food. Bobber the Water Safety Dog made a special appearance to interact with the participants. As always, Bobber was a hit! Over 800 participants showed up for the event, making it one of West Point Lake’s largest events of the year.



On October 27, 2023, West Point Project staff participated in a “Trunk or Treat” event at Fairfax Elementary School in Valley, AL. Park Rangers and staff gave out water safety items and candy to over 660 kids. Bobber the Water Safety Dog was also present to help spread the message of water safety by interacting with the kids.

West Point Park Rangers and Bobber the Water Safety Dog had the incredible opportunity to participate in two Christmas parades this year! Rangers Mike Linville and Kevin Parsons, along with Bobber and some helpful volunteers, brought joy and water safety to the City of LaGrange, Georgia, for their annual Christmas parade on November 30. Park Rangers Christine Dowell, Derrick Wilkerson, and Bobber the Water Safety dog brought water safety to the annual Greater Valley Area Christmas Parade on December 7, 2023. This parade started in West Point, Georgia, and ended in Valley, Alabama.



MOBILE DISTRICT (SAM)

Photo: @USACEMOBILE

Walter F. George Reservoir

Walter F. George Reservoir attended the annual National Peanut Festival in Dothan, AL from 3-11 NOV this year. There were 3,141 contacts made at the festival. However, this festival was unlike festivals in the past; we gave away PFDs to infants, children, and youths in need of PFDs for swimming and boating. Nine PFDs of sizes infant, child, and youth were brought to the festival, totaling 27 PFDs, and 25 of them were given away at the fair. America the Beautiful, military/veteran's, EKO, and COE annual passes were also sold or given to visitors there. Overall, the festival was a blast and a great success!



Every year in the months of OCT-NOV, Walter F. George partners up with the Eufaula Recreation Center in Eufaula, AL to put on swimming lessons and water safety programs to 2nd graders of the city. There are a total of 3 days that the water safety programs are performed in conjunction with the swimming lessons. Of those 3 days, there are 3 classes each day, typically 20 children per class, that attend the program to learn about the importance of life jackets and drown victim rescue tactics. This year about 180 students learned about this. Ranger Shannon Schaefer conducts the water safety programs for the children and even helps them rescue their instructors from drowning in the pool.



Christmas parades of 2023 in Abbeville, AL and Blakely, GA yielded 2 static unique messages for Walter F. George Reservoir (pictured). Other parades this year included Eufaula, AL and Fort Gaines, GA, totaling 4 messages. Rangers Boatwright, Whitlock, Strickland, Turley, Davis, Dollar, Schaefer, and Brown, along with Volunteers, Terry and Joann Brown, Brenton and Denise Vedder, Ken and Vicky Lambert, and our IT staff, Kenneth Tate, was the Buddy Beaver mascot. The annual Christmas tree was erected and decorated by Ranger Staff and Volunteers, Terry and Joann Brown and Ken and Vicky Lambert (pictured). Visitors to the Resources Management Office can take water safety items from the tree to bring home with them.

SAVANNAH DISTRICT (SAS)

Photo: @SavannahCorps

Hartwell Lake

Hartwell Lake Park Rangers conducted 4 presentations to area students this fall. Park Rangers conducted career day and water safety programs at North Hart and South Hart Elementary Schools (Hartwell, Ga) reaching over 400 students in Sept and Oct. In Nov, 35 McCormick Co. High School students came to Hartwell to learn about water safety, project history, and USACE careers. In addition, Hartwell Park Rangers hosted a Clemson University class studying Climate Resilience in Nov. The Clemson students were presented an in-depth project overview and toured project facilities.



Above Left: Park Ranger Scott Lusk explains how “Life Jackets Save Lives!” to McCormick Co. High School students.

Above Right: Chief Ranger Tanya Grant with Clemson University Climate Resilience students.

Left: Park Ranger Eddie Faust at South Hart Elementary School making sure students know how to put on and wear a properly fitted life jacket.

WILMINGTON DISTRICT (SAW)

Photo: @PhilpottLake

John H. Kerr Dam & Reservoir



On November 2nd, Rangers Will Daniel and Emily Jones participated in the Night in the Park Launch into Learning event hosted by Victoria and Kenbridge Elementary Schools located in Victoria, VA. Rangers Daniel and Jones spoke to approximately 75 event participants about native nocturnal animals and handed out water safety giveaway items.



On November 27th, Rangers Emily Jones and Richard Brown participated in the Warren County Middle School Career Fair where they interacted with hundreds of students. Rangers described careers and job duties for park rangers, foresters, and biologists, and discussed other opportunities for employment within USACE. Additionally, water safety was discussed with the students as well.

Over the first two weekends of December, the staff from John H. Kerr Reservoir participated in four area Christmas Parades; Clarksville, South Hill & Boydton, VA and Henderson, NC. These events provided an excellent opportunity for community involvement and allowed the staff to promote water safety and the Corps mission.

WILMINGTON DISTRICT (SAW)

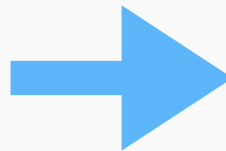
Photo: @PhilpottLake

Philpott Lake

October 17th, 19th, 24th and 26th, we had black willow planting days with local 4th graders. On planting day, they rotate through environmental stations and a USACE water safety station. At the station they are shown how to wear, and size a lifejacket, “reach, throw, row, don’t go”, and rescue throwable techniques. Over the 4 days over 500 people were in attendance.



Before



After



On October 8th, partners from Dan River Basin Association, partnering organization with Philpott Lake, took a boat tour with Ranger Dillon Brown. Discussed was swim beach safety, access, and potential natural resource projects such as erosion control.

December 1st and 2nd, Philpott Rangers decorated the patrol boat and pulled it in 2 local Christmas parades. They through out water safety frisbees with decorated the boat with life jackets and wore their own lifejackets. Also present was Bobber the Water Safety Dog Mascot.

SAD FY23 Q4 AWARDS

FY23 Q4 Education Award

Grace Trimble, W. Kerr Scott Reservoir (SAW)

Ranger Grace Trimble, W. Kerr Scott, is awarded the 4th Quarter FY23 SAD Outstanding Education Award. In the 4th quarter, Grace made over 1,000 educational contacts and presented 18 programs. Grace is commended for building partnerships with the YMCA, Wilkes County Early College High School, Wilkes Soil & Water Conservation District, and others to deliver programs to diverse audiences. Grace also supported a unique outreach effort remotely by providing a virtual program for the Caring Place which assists homeless, working families with children in Wake County. Grace Trimble's exceptional work reflects greatly upon herself, the Wilmington District, the South Atlantic Division, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

FY23 Q4 Water Safety Award

Eddie Faust, Hartwell Dam & Lake (SAS)

During the 4th quarter of FY23, Contracting Section Park Ranger Eddie Faust provided water safety programs at two events at South Hart Elementary School, Hartwell, Georgia. The first event (SAIL) reached over 60 students and teachers. At the second event, the South Hart Elementary Career and Ag Day, Ranger Faust spoke to over 300 students and teachers (by class) throughout the day about water and boating safety as well as introducing students to the duties of park rangers. Ranger Faust brought one of Hartwell's patrol boats and plenty of life jackets, so students had the opportunity to try on and properly wear life jackets in addition to seeing into Hartwell's patrol boat.

Congratulations

ANNUAL AWARDS

SAD Annual Water Safety Award & National Water Safety Award Recipient Travis England, Allatoona Lake (SAM)

Travis stands out for his innovative and comprehensive contributions to water safety. His remarkable creation of Allatoona Lake's first-ever detailed documentary within a challenging one-week timeframe highlights his dedication and creative talent. His efforts extend beyond cinematography, as evidenced by his interactive and effective water safety education during the SAD Corps Day Program, where he skillfully demonstrated the importance of proper life jacket usage to both children and adults. His dynamic role in educating nearly 2,000 students about water safety and environmental stewardship, coupled with his effective management of the Life Jacket Loaner program, further showcases his commitment to public safety. Travis's innovative approach, exemplified by the introduction of the Golden Jacket award, has fostered a culture of safety and excellence within the team.

SAD Annual Water Safety Team Award West Point Lake Team, SAM

The West Point Project Team implemented new and interesting programs during 2023 to promote their water safety mission. Despite staffing shortages, the Team produced new water safety outreach initiatives such as water safety videos and a Kid's Fishing Rodeo using partnerships with local communities. These partnerships allowed the Team to have an exceptional water safety program that utilized a variety of methods to reach diverse audiences. While finding success with these new initiatives, the Team also relied on traditional methods of interpretation with both on-site and off-site programs plus social media ensuring that as many people were reached as possible. The Team's 2023 water safety program successes can be credited to their use of a variety of outreach methods including on-site and off-site presentations, on-site roving contacts, grant proposals, and new partnerships with the local community.

SAD Annual Education Team Award Wilmington District Water Safety & Envr. Education Team

The Wilmington District Water Safety and Environmental Education Team is awarded the FY23 South Atlantic Division Outstanding Team Education Award for their innovative efforts producing the "Rangers to the Corps" podcast. During FY23, the Team began the podcast which features a longer monthly topic and shorter weekly "ranger minutes." The podcast strives to educate listeners about the various missions and programs within the Corps from a ranger's perspective and is invaluable to both internal and external audiences. In all, the podcast was a true success with over 180 web views and 760 downloads in FY23. "Rangers to the Corps" is a prime example of teamwork and each team member should be commended for their exceptional efforts.