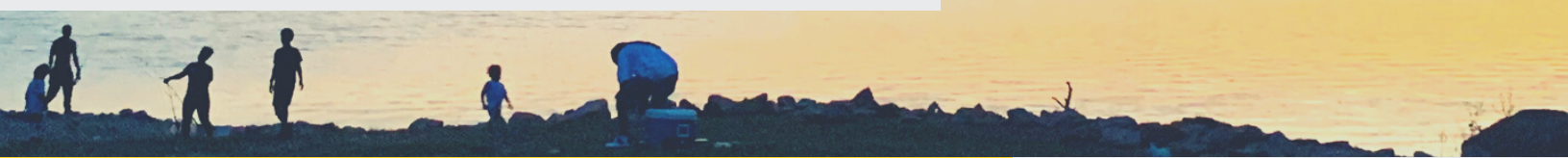




South Atlantic Division

WATER SAFETY INITIATIVES NEWSLETTER

Quarter 3 • Published July 2023



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. 25th

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

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

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

"I Got Caught" Campaign

Keep up the great work catching adults wearing life jackets!



Photo: Walter F.
George Reservoir

THIS ISSUE:

Announcements &
Reminders

Page 02

Jacksonville District

Page 03

Mobile District

Page 05

Savannah District

Page 07

Wilmington District

Page 10

SAD FY23 Q2
Award Winners

Page 11

ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS

2021-2022 PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Thanks to everyone who entered the 2021-2022 National Water Safety Photo Contest and congrats to all winners. Congratulations to David Schwartz from SAW for the honorable mention!

Winning photos are posted at the link below. The 2023-2024 photo contest guidelines will be posted at the same link.

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

WATER SAFETY SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

The National Water Safety Program's social media pages (Please Wear It on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter) that are managed in cooperation with The Corps Foundation will be posting regular water safety messages for offices and lake projects to share and post on Corps social media channels.

DLL-SAD-WATER-SAFETY

If you would like to be either added or removed from the DLL-SAD-Water-Safety listserv please email Emily Jones the SAD Water Safety Representative at Emily.A.Jones@usace.army.mil

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!

JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT (SAJ)

Photo: @JacksonvilleDistrict

Okeechobee Waterway



On 18 April 2023 James Norris and Robert Wiggins conducted a water safety interpretive outreach at the Bass Pro Shop in Port Saint Lucie, FL. The topics covered were directed towards Anglers who utilize a vessel on the waters of Southern Florida. The Saint Lucie Project Park Rangers discussed the importance of properly wearing of a life jacket and that the majority of deaths that occur while out recreating are on vessels smaller than 25 feet. The public was informed on the necessary gear to have on a vessel, and the importance of a vessel inspection prior to operation. The Saint Lucie Park Rangers spoke on the US Army Corps of Engineers mission at Saint Lucie as well as the duties of Park Rangers while patrolling the Okeechobee waterway.

Saturday 17 June 2023, James Norris Park Ranger Okeechobee Waterway, Southern Florida operations, attended a fishing Clinic held by the owner and designer of DOA fishing lures, Mark Nichols of Stuart, FL. "There were approx. 30 individuals who attended this clinic, I was able to discuss my job as a Park Ranger, speak on the topic of water safety, and the importance of wearing a proper fitting personal floatation device while on the water. The clinic allowed me time to speak with anglers of the community on a personal level and to volunteer my services to Mark Nichols at future DOA fishing lures events" stated James.



Park Ranger Norris and Park Ranger Leyro-Montalvo conducted a search for an obstruction in C-44 Saint Lucie River, Okeechobee Waterway that had previously been struck and reportedly caused damage to a Catamaran's hulls. A submerged hardwood tree was located off the south side shoreline A warning buoy was placed on the north side adjacent and in proximity of the submerged tree. This is a small part of how the Park Rangers are actively promoting water safety and safe boating on the Okeechobee Waterway.

JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT (SAJ)

Photo: @JacksonvilleDistrict

W.P. Franklin South Recreation Area

On May 4, 2023, Park Rangers Megan Parsons and Preston Heaton and volunteers Cassie and David, did a water safety outreach program at Sonshine Academy in Alva, Florida. This event consisted of two 45-minute sessions for 4th and 5th graders, reaching a total of 65 water safety contacts. We started with the “Sink or Float” demonstration using a peeled and unpeeled orange and related it back to wearing a life jacket. Next, we did a water safety relay where they had to properly put on a life jacket, throw a throw ring onto a cone, then throw a ball into a circle made of rope. After the relay, we taught the students the saying “reach, throw, row, don’t go.” With the extra time that we had, the volunteers taught them different swimming techniques that they demonstrated “on land.” The students loved the interactive activities and were sure to ask the rangers very good questions involving water safety.



On May 27, 2023, Park Ranger Megan Parsons and volunteer Cassie Cullen set up a pop-up water safety table at W.P. Franklin South Recreation Area’s boat ramp to kick off Memorial Day weekend. We spoke with about 50 day use visitors as well as incoming boaters about the importance of wearing a life jacket, as well as things they can do to stay safe while around the water. For visitors that partook in conversation and/or were able to answer water safety related questions, they were given a water safety giveaway. Children who answered the question, “What should you wear to keep you safe on the water,” were rewarded with kid’s water safety bags. We also refilled our life jacket loaner station and pointed it out to any boaters without life jackets.



MOBILE DISTRICT (SAM)

Photo: @USACEMOBILE

Allatoona Lake



Allatoona Lake participated in a water safety event during National Boating Safety Week at the Cabela's Boating Safety Open House. Park Ranger Travis England, along with volunteers Jack and Linda Croach, participated in sharing water safety messages at the event. This event served as an invaluable platform to raise awareness about water safety practices, with a specific focus on USACE safe boating guidelines and the importance of adult boaters wearing life jackets. Through our collective efforts, we successfully reached an impressive total of 523 Water Safety Contacts. During the event, our primary focus was to highlight USACE safe boating practices. We emphasized the importance of adult boaters wearing their life jackets, emphasizing the role of personal safety equipment in preventing accidents and protecting lives on the water.



MOBILE DISTRICT (SAM)

Photo: @USACEMOBILE

West Point Lake

On May 17, Park Rangers Christine Dowell, Derrick Wilkerson, Susan Cromer, Jeff Mau, Danielle Woody, and Ben Williams participated in the Chambers County Groundwater Festival at West Point Lake and gave a water safety presentation to 4th graders. The presentation was combined with an activity that allowed kids to practice the techniques of "Reach, Throw, Row, Don't Go". Every Kids Outdoors (EKO) passes were also handed out to each kid. 250 kids participated in this event. Bobber the Water Safety Dog also made an appearance! (Picture credits: Huguley Elementary School in Valley, AL)



Park Ranger Christine Dowell and City of LaGrange, Georgia TV have worked together to create three water safety Public Service Announcements for the LaGrange TV's local channel and their social media sites. These videos cover important water safety tips such as lifejacket wear and water rescue techniques for drowning victims, highlighting "Reach, Throw, Row, Don't Go".

Since the first video's airing in May, these videos have reached 3,758 views on Facebook and YouTube. These videos can be seen on West Point Lake's Facebook Page and City of LaGrange Georgia Government's Facebook page and YouTube channel (City of LaGrange, GA). This partnership will continue to release water safety messages throughout the summer.

The Greater Valley Chamber of Commerce organized a kids' fishing rodeo at Hardley Creek at West Point Lake on June 3. Park Rangers Ben Williams, Christine Dowell, Derrick Wilkerson, Jeff Mau, and Danielle Woody, along with intern Courtney Wolchina, participated in the event, making water safety contacts by handing out water safety items and providing lifejackets. 3 tagged fish were caught by kids for a cash prize! Bobber the Water Safety Dog appeared to say hello and give hugs to the kids.



SAVANNAH DISTRICT (SAS)

Photo: @SavannahCorps

Hartwell Dam & Lake



Hart County High School (Georgia) and Western Carolina University (North Carolina) held their annual Job Fairs on February 09 and February 14, respectively. Hartwell Project Park Rangers were present at both events to promote water safety and provide information regarding career opportunities with the US Army Corps of Engineers. An estimated 450 junior and senior students attended the high school fair and an estimated 200 students attended the college fair.

Pictured to the left are Park Rangers Dale Bowen and Brian Peterson and below Park Ranger Scott Lusk.

Rangers gave a Water Safety and Hartwell Dam & Lake Information Presentation at Lavonia Elementary School in Lavonia, GA to 100 5th graders and their teachers totaling 106 water safety contacts at this program in March of 2023.

Hartwell GA Elementary School Career Day. May 17, 2023. 360 K – 5th Graders + 34 Adults. 394 Direct Water Safety Contacts. Careers with the Corps of Engineers and Water Safety were highlighted.



Midway Elementary School in Anderson County SC. May 19, 2023. 125 5th Graders + 10 Adults. 135 Direct Water Safety Contacts. Water Safety was being highlighted.

On May 24, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Hartwell Project Office, in partnership with other public safety agencies, held a pre-Memorial Day water safety media event at Big Oaks Recreation Area on Hartwell Lake. Patrol boats were available to transport media for footage and photos. Reporters interviewed Corps of Engineers park rangers, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources Officers, Georgia Department of Natural Resources Officers, and the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary regarding various safety topics to include state boating laws, boating under the influence, boating equipment requirements, boater education, the importance of wearing a life jacket, and other boating and water safety tips.



SAVANNAH DISTRICT (SAS)

Photo: @SavannahCorps

Richard B. Russell Lake



Park Ranger Annette Dotson presented a water safety message during Richard B Russell's annual Kid's Fishing Derby on April 29th, 2023. Ranger Dotson presented water safety tips and taught the 75 youth and their families the "Reach, Throw, Row, Don't Go" rescue method. The youth anglers then did their best to catch the 1150lbs of catfish that were stocked in a netted area of Russell Lake. For prizes, Ranger Dotson teamed up with two of the Corps national partners, Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA), and Academy Sports for \$3500 in prizes. Every child received a rod and reel, a water safety goodie bag and a chance at a table full of tackle and gear!



SAVANNAH DISTRICT (SAS)

Photo: @SavannahCorps

Savannah District

On Tuesday, 23 May SAS Colonel Geary hosted the district's first Water Safety Kick Off to usher in the "recreation season" at our lake projects. Colonel Geary also advised the group that he would like to see a post season follow up meeting to review challenges/successes.

Participating virtually and in-person were rangers and volunteers from all three projects, Corporate Communications, Safety, and Operations Division. Discussions were held on previous safety and fatality trends seen locally and nationally, recognition for outstanding water safety efforts, partnerships, including recent successes with Major League Fishing, and initiatives for additional and future safety with the recreating public. New innovations and previous ideas to return to discussed included attendance at boat shows, working with local baseball teams to reach the adult male population most at risk for drowning, continuing the use of billboards and investigating the cost of resuming PSAs in movie theaters. The topic for increasing outreach to non-English and non-Spanish demographics was raised as our projects have seen and increased population in the Eastern European communities.



WILMINGTON DISTRICT (SAW)

Photo: @PhilpottLake

John H. Kerr Dam & Reservoir

On April 4th, Rangers E. Crowder, Cross, and Jones participated in a career fair at Lunenburg County Central High School where over 500 middle school and high school students asked questions about working as rangers with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Students engaged with the many hats that Corps employees wear, animals pelts, and water safety activity. Photos taken by Rangers Jones and Central High School Staff.



On May 23rd, 2023 Ranger Will Daniel shared a water safety message and outfitted 25 youth and 25 adults with properly fitted life jackets at an event with partner organizations Vets-on-a-Roll and Families Embracing Autism Together (F.E.A.T) at Palmer Point Recreation Area. Other local agencies were present to share additional safety messages and speak with event participants.



On 15 June, John H. Kerr Park Rangers Emily Jones and Will Daniel attended HQ USACE Annual Organization Day at Anacostia Park in Washington, DC. They joined Park Rangers from Blue Marsh Lake in Pennsylvania (NAP) to promote our water safety message and provide general outreach for HQ employees and their families. Photos by HQ Staff.



SAD FY23 Q2 AWARD WINNERS

Q2 Team Water Safety Award J. Strom Thurmond Water Safety Team

The J. Strom Thurmond Water Safety Team is being recognized for their community engagement and work with partners during the 2nd quarter of FY23. Park Rangers along with support staff, volunteers and local partners worked diligently to present water safety and Every Kid Outdoors (EKO) programs to every 4th grade student in Columbia County, Georgia. Their efforts resulted in 2,170 water safety contacts, 2,104 EKO passes being issued, the donation of 50 life jackets and the creation of 2 new partnerships. Read more from one of several local articles below:

[Major League Fishing and the US Army Corps of Engineers teach water safety at North Columbia Elementary School | WJBF](#)

Q2 Water Safety Award Travis England, Allatoona Lake (SAM)

Park Ranger Travis England is being recognized for his efforts in leading the Water Safety Program at Allatoona Lake. During the 2nd quarter of FY23 he promoted water safety at four career day programs, one STEM showcase and two interpretive programs based on the ecosystems around Allatoona Lake, resulting in 1,953 direct water safety contacts.

Q2 Education Award Kathryn Christopher, John H. Kerr Dam & Reservoir (SAW)

Park Ranger Kathryn Christopher has been with USACE since January and has already proven to be a tremendous asset to the outreach program at John H. Kerr. Her efforts included taking photos for the popular #WhatParkAmI Facebook series, assisting with campground water safety and education programs, working with volunteers on a trail cleanup, redesigning the Kerr Reservoir Birding Checklist brochure and keeping the animals fed and habitats cleaned in the Joseph S. J. Tanner Environmental Education Center.

Congratulations