

New Arrivals and Departures

When a new Corps of Engineers employee is added to your lake family, that's news. Granted, it will not make front page, but when you are trying to constantly keep the water safety message before the public, here is another approach.

Simply take a mug-type photo of the new person, write a caption and a fill-in-the-blank type news release. It's really simple and the news release will not be long. Most likely it will only be four to eight paragraphs, depending on the person's background and awards. Always remember to add something about water safety down in the body of the release and maybe the last sentence or two of the caption, just in case the newspaper only prints the caption or news release. Or, if they print both, your water safety tidbit will appear twice.

If you are having problems writing the first "arrival" news release call the District PAO and they will assist you. However, it's really an easy project. All you need to do is tell the reader who the person is and when he/she arrived. Try to get the arrival news release and photograph in the newspaper the first week. It's news for only a short time. A person's history is important. Don't forget to add the hometown, awards received, where the person attended school, including the college or university, the major and degrees earned.

Furthermore, write what the person will be doing. Here is where to add the water safety information. You might add, "Ranger Sheila Bluewater will also be working with the boating safety program throughout the year." Maybe add a quote from the new arrival, "Ranger Bluewater said, 'I'm happy to be at Lake Umptyfrats and I look forward

to meeting and working with everyone to make the lake safer. Don't forget to wear your life jacket I'll see you on the lake.'" The lake/operations manager might want to also include an ending "welcome aboard" sentence.

When the person departs the lake, simply do the reverse. If an award was presented get a photo to go with the departure release. The most important area of the release is how long Ranger Bluewater served at the lake, what she did while there and where she is going. It is possible Bluewater's replacement is known. Therefore, the release might say, "Ranger Sheila Bluewater's replacement will be Ranger Bobby Boat. Ranger Boat is scheduled to report in next month from Lake Green in California."

Again, remember to add water safety to the Bluewater saying something like, "I have enjoyed the (ten-??) years working here. Lake Umptyfrats needs each of you to remember water safety. And, always wear your life jacket. Take care. So long."

If your lake has a radio or television show it will be perfect to get the arriving or departing person on the programs. Try not to overlook the electronic media. The news person could have worked with the water safety program at created something unique like a "Learn to Swim Program for Kindergarten Students," or a "Lakeshore Cleanup and Safety Outing for Senior Citizens," or a "Minority/Underprivileged Special Safety Day On-the-Lake Field Trip."

This small tidbit of information will help. Take care and good luck escorting your arrivals to the radio and television stations.