



Man Overboard!

■ by VINCENT T. PICA, II Flotilla Commander, 18-06 (1SR) United States Coast Guard Auxiliary



When I take young boaters out for seamanship exercises, I start the man-overboard drills with an example. I bring the boat up to 20 knots and ask one of the youngsters to throw a fender overboard and count to ten before yelling "Man Overboard!" During those ten seconds, two things happen. The fender disappears behind the boat, well over a full football field behind, and the faces of the youngsters turn white and their jaws drop.

Don't Fall Overboard!

1. No "bow riding," i.e., sitting up on the bow with your feet dangling over the side (a violation of federal regulations - no limbs outside the boat while underway). Assuming the prop misses you as the boat whizzes over you, you could very likely be rendered unconscious by the boat passing over you.

2. No sitting on the gunwales - the edges of the boat - even if you are holding on tight. The skipper takes a wake too hard and you are airborne. If you land in the boat, it is a small miracle. If you were sitting on the transom, unless the boat is in reverse, physics demands that you end up in the water.

That is if you are lucky enough to land behind the propeller. A variation of sitting on the gunwales is holding the taff rail (railing around the stern of the boat) and jumping up and down with the swells as the boat passes over them. This is swell fun until the boat gets sluiced to one side or the other. Then, instead of coming down inside the stern of the boat, you come down in the water.

3. The failure to use the "3 point system" while working the boat can get even the most seasoned mariner. Always have 3 parts of your body in contact with the boat at all times, i.e., 2 hands, 1 foot; 2 feet, 1 hand. Try toppling over a 3-legged stool and you can see how much more stable this is than a 2-point system.

You Have Fallen Overboard!

If the boat steams way, start saving yourself - and that starts with conserving energy and heat. Eventually, someone will start to look for you. Don't panic and waste life-sustaining energy. Assume the HELP position or at least float with your arms across your chest and your legs crossed. If you slip below the water, don't thrash and waste energy. Lie there for a few

seconds and then dog paddle up. Get back in the prone position and start over. If the water isn't too cold, you can do this for hours. I never go on a boat without a knife, flash light and whistle on my person. The light and the whistle are to attract attention. The knife is to cut me away from the line I am tangled in that is dragging me below the water.

Someone Has Fallen Off The Boat!

Train your crew in the following:

1. The first person who sees someone fall overboard does two things simultaneously. First, shouts at the top of his lungs "Man Overboard" and second, never takes his eyes off the person in the water and points at him constantly. I tell my crew, "Even if you have to watch him drown in front of you, never take your eyes off him." Why? If you lose sight of him, we may never see him again. It is unbelievably difficult to find a head sticking up out of the water. This is why the USCG sends helicopters first to look for people in the water.

2. Someone else throws a cushion, fender, life-jacket - anything and everything - towards the victim to give them something to swim toward and

hold onto.

3. The boat driver brings the boat to neutral. The skipper then determines what side the victim is on and turns the boat to the same side as the victim is on. It keeps the victim inside the turning radius of the boat - and keeps the propeller moving away from the person in the water.

4. Call the USCG and tell the watch stander you have a "man overboard!" Your crewmate may be injured, have swallowed a lungful of water or be having a medical emergency (how about a heart attack?) Get the "rescue starts now" clock started ASAP!

5. Once you get alongside the victim, turn off the engine. Those props are potentially dangerous. Stop the engine entirely - especially if you are getting him back aboard via a swim platform.

Try the 10-second exercise one day with your crew. And watch their faces as the fender disappears astern...

If you are interested in being part of USCG Forces, email me at USCGAUX2006@aol.com or go direct to MaryJo Cruickshank, who is in charge of new members matters, at FSO-PS@emcg.us and we will help you "get in this thing..."

OPERATION: Wounded Warrior

As the holidays approach, please take a moment of your time to imagine the situation of a wounded soldier recovering among strangers overseas, without the benefit of regular visits from family and loved ones.

Operation Wounded Warrior was founded to help our wounded soldiers recovering at the U.S. Armed Forces Medical Center in Landstuhl, Germany.

Seriously wounded soldiers are flown from battle to Landstuhl, where they are treated at the U.S. Army's largest medical facility outside the United States. The soldiers arrive in a hospital gown; everything else they own is left behind where they were deployed. Unless they are sent home due to the severity of their wounds, the troops heal in Germany and are sent back to their units in Iraq, Afghanistan or elsewhere.

This program provides convalescing troops with a variety of supplies. The hospital is also asking for "Get Well Soon" cards, holiday cards, and drawings and pictures from children. This campaign will run until Friday, December 8. At which time we are arranging to have everything shipped out of a base from upstate New York directly to Germany.

Please help us to help them. Together we can make this campaign a success.

Very truly yours
Michelle Edwards

The following is a list of contacts and Requested supplies: Contacts for this campaign and drop off points:

USO of Garden City
Helen (516) 222-1899

Sr. Vice Commander of the VFWs
Richard Woltman
(631) 360-3397
VFWSCCWOLT@aol.com

All Suffolk county local VFW Posts
For drop off points check your area.

Operation Love Our Troops
olotliny@gmail.com
olotliny@wordpress.com
Michelle Edwards (631) 399-3276 Pat
Lorenzo (631) 399-2506

American Legion Post#1533 of Mastic
Beach (631) 395-1981

SUPPLY LIST INCLUDES

Winter jackets •Gloves •Hats
Scarves •(Can be gently used, we
will get the items clean)

New items:

(Adult sizes: M-XL)

Sweat shirts
Sweat pants
Black with no writing or logos
Tee-shirts
Socks and underwear
Stationary
AT&T global phone cards
Books
Shaving kits

Women Suspected in Identity Theft

Female duo makes unauthorized withdrawals
in Hampton Bays



Crime Stoppers and the Identity Theft Unit are asking the public's help to identify two suspects who unlawfully used the ATM card of a Center Moriches man.

On five separate occasions between August 31 and September 1, 2006, two women entered the King Kullen supermarket in Hampton Bays and withdrew over \$2,000 using a stolen ATM card.

Images of the suspects were caught on surveillance video and police are hoping that someone will recognize the suspects. The

first subject is described as an elderly white female, approximately 65-70 years old, medium to heavy build with white hair. The second subject is described as a white female, 25-33 years old, medium build with shoulder length brown hair.

Anyone with information about this crime is asked to call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-220-TIPS. All calls will be kept confidential and the caller will be eligible for a cash reward of up to \$2000 for information that leads to an arrest.