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CONTACT: Better Bay Alliance, Steve Prime, sprime327@gmail.com, 401-447-8564

Better Bay Alliance Sounds Alarm for Boating Safety

NEWPORT, R.I. (September 11, 2022) – Both fatal and near-fatal boating accidents on Narragansett Bay have prompted local boating enthusiasts to sound the alarm for boating safety. The non-profit organization [Better Bay Alliance](#) was formed in January 2020 after racing sailor Sandra G. Tartaglino, while helming a catamaran in the New England 100 Regatta, was struck by a powerboat and killed. More recently, in August of this year, a 30-foot sailboat competing in the Aloha Cup was hit from behind by a larger powerboat and the sailboat’s skipper and three crew narrowly escaped serious injury if not death itself.

“In the time span between these two incidents, there have been an increasing amount of boating accidents on the Bay,” said Better Bay Alliance’s Co-Founder Steve Prime, himself a powerboat owner and a sailor. “It is not that one group or another needs to be educated but that we *all* need to take a step back and think about how we share the Bay with each other.”

Prime says the first – and easiest – step forward is rethinking your day on the water.

“Someone, along with the captain or skipper, should always be on watch to help assess the speed and path of approaching and nearby vessels. We can all be caught off guard, but the point is to make a concerted effort to avoid having to make a last-minute decision or, worse, be too late to avert disaster. As well, just as a distracted driver on the road can cause an accident, so too can a distracted driver on the water, and it goes without saying that driving while impaired in any way can be deadly.”

Tangible Resources for Boating Enthusiasts

Better Bay Alliance is working on a LIVE CHART initiative for roll-out next season. It proposes to

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graphically illustrate all on-the-Bay events, with their dates, times and locations; however, until then, a one-page schedule of events – including those for sailing vessels, power boats, kayaks, and SUPs – will continue to be distributed throughout the local boating community.

“We need event organizers to work with us to be included and boating enthusiasts to plug in and use/share this resource and have a voice with us,” said Prime.

The Better Bay Alliance website (www.betterbayalliance.org) shares links for [local/online boating safety training](#) through organizations such as Confident Captain, USCG Auxiliary, U.S. Power Squadron, US Sailing, In-Command and Freedom Boat Club.

“Those born on or after January 1, 1986, are required to have an operators’ license to drive a boat,” said Prime. “That’s the good news, but the sad news is that a large percentage of the 24,000 boats registered in Rhode Island may have operators who have not taken a basic boating course and don’t know the rules of the road. Where do they start?”

According to Prime, they start with the Better Bay Alliance website, which includes free online training material on [Rules of the Road](#), [safety topics](#), [aids to navigation](#) and other local knowledge topics, as well as [NOAA Weather Forecasts](#), [free quizzes](#) for testing safety at sea knowledge, and summaries of the latest local [Notices to Mariners](#).

“It is one-stop shopping for knowing boating and boating safety,” said Prime, adding that advanced versions of the LIVE CHART will include AIS, tidal and other boater/user traffic data.

Newport International Boat Show Charity of Choice

Because of the Better Bay Alliance’s worthy mission, Newport Exhibition Group (NEG) has chosen the organization to be the Charitable Partner for the 51st Annual Newport International Boat Show presented by BankNewport.

In addition to receiving a \$1000 donation from NEG, Better Bay Alliance has been given complimentary exhibit space at the Show, scheduled for September 15 through 18, 2022 at the Newport Yachting Center in downtown Newport, Rhode Island.

Visit the Better Bay Alliance team at **Tent G 29** for an events calendar and personalized boating safety resource assistance.

For more information, go to www.betterbayalliance.org. Follow Better Bay Alliance on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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