

Summer is just around the Corner.....  
And a USCG Auxiliary Boating Course may just be the ticket  
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It's March, and the weather has reversed itself. March is, if we believe in the old adage, "in like a lion, out like a lamb", been playing games with us. One day it was 25°; cold and clammy, and the next day it was 55° and sunny.

Warm weather days like the one's we've been having make all of us think about getting our boats ready. We start thinking of all the chores involved in making our craft seaworthy for the upcoming season. But of all the tasks that we have on our list, the one that never seems to make its way toward the top is EDUCATION.

The art and science of what we call boating changes with each new technological advance. Just look at the boating bible, Chapman's "Piloting Seamanship & Small boat Handling". Through the years, sections have grown and shrunk, been added and deleted.

Skills you may have learned have grown rusty, new gadgets have changed the way we apply our skills. But unless we update our skill sets, we may not be as safe a boater as we might be. Educational seminar and courses are the answer, and the Coast Guard Auxiliary is here to help.

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, with its 34,000 members, provides the boating public with fair number of boating courses. These courses range from "Boating Fun - Adventure on the Water" for the kindergarten child to the 3<sup>rd</sup> grader; to "Navigating with GPS", for the adult who like his toys.

Here are some of our courses:

### **Seminar Courses**

- *Boating Fun - Adventure on the Water* to teach the basic safety concepts to children in grades K-3.
- *Waypoints - A Guide to Boating Safely* for older children and youths in grades 4-6.
- *Personal Watercraft* for those who want a brief, very basic introduction to the safety issues involved when operating a PWC.
- *Navigating with GPS* for those who want a brief, very basic introduction to navigating with GPS.

### **Multi-Lesson Courses**

- *ABC -America's Boating Course-* oriented toward hunters, anglers, and beginning boaters who need to do home study.

- *Boating Safely* oriented toward hunters, anglers, skiers and operators of PWCs.
- *Boating Skills and Seamanship* for both beginning and experienced power boaters.
- *Sailing Fundamentals* for both beginning and experienced sailors (also known as "Sailing and Seamanship").
- *Basic Coastal Navigation* an introduction to coastal piloting.
- *Advanced Coastal Navigation* for serious boaters who want to learn piloting techniques.

Not all courses are given at all locations or all the time. The courses offered depend on your area, and the volunteers that make up the Auxiliary. Check with your local Auxiliary Flotilla or check the national web site at <http://www.cgau.org>.