

NATIONAL SAFE BOATING WEEK RECOGNIZED BY OKLAHOMA'S DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

By Marta McCloskey
Staff Writer

■(GIT) As summer and Memorial Day approach, many Oklahomans will take their boats and start heading to the state's lakes. However enjoyable and relaxing, boating is not without risk. President William J. Clinton, proclaimed the week of May 18 through 24, as "National Safe Boating

Week." In accordance, Oklahoma's Department of Public Safety is gearing up for Memorial Day and summer by advising Oklahomans on safety measures when boating.

Lt. Bob Sanders, commander of the Department's Lake Patrol, explained that ninety percent of boaters drink alcohol, including passengers and operators. "Of course, most operators and passengers are of-age, but alcohol affects your judgment, which is compounded by the sun and the water hitting the boat," he said.

"In Oklahoma, it's legal to drink and operate a boat," Sanders added, "and testing doesn't work, because unlike a car, boat operators do not have to have a license."

Sanders further explained that the Department of Public Safety does have the authority to arrest a boat operator suspected of drinking, but most arrested operators are released from jail in a couple of hours and are back on the lake. "We could also give alco-

hol tests, but they are not admissible in court," he said.

Sanders said that until Oklahoma has something like a boat operator license, it will be "hard to keep drunks out of the water." He explained, "Losing a license is more of a deterrent...people will pay fines and sit in jail for a couple of hours."

"To help correct the problem, boat operators need more education, informing them of Oklahoma's rules... maybe in a written test form," Sanders added. "Now, all they have to know is how to put a boat in the water."

In addition to alcohol being a factor in most boating accidents, according to national studies, out of 77 percent of recreational boating fatalities, the victim was not wearing a life jacket. Sanders reinforced that statement. "Half of those lives would be saved if operators and passengers wore a life

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LOCAL LEGISLATOR WARNS OF DOOR TO DOOR FUND-RAISERS

From Senate Media



Sen. Mike Fair

■ (OKLAHOMA CITY) After receiving a number of complaints and questions from Surrey Hills residents Senator Mike Fair warned of the dangers of donating money to door to door fund-raisers who may mislead the

public about their fundraising efforts.

Fair, R-Oklaoma City, said individuals have called him about a group called Oklahomans United Inc. that has been canvassing the Surrey Hills area and telling local residents that a percentage of donations will go to Fair's re-election campaign.

"This is just not true. First, I have never heard of this group and second, it is illegal for corporations to donate to any political candidate," said Fair. "People should be wary of anyone who comes to their door asking for money. From what I've heard, these fund-raisers get about one-half of the money they raise."

Fair offered these tips to ensure donations are used as they are intended:

- ✓ at your door only donate to a well-known organization, such as the March of Dimes or American Heart Association;

- ✓ only donate to someone you know and trust, like a neighbor; and,

- ✓ feel free to ask questions about the charity and your contribution, such as how much of your contribution will actually go to the cause and how much will be used for the organization's overhead.

Fair said he has contacted Oklahomans United Inc., and been assured that they will no longer use his name in their fundraising efforts.

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scription drugs to be included under Section IV and Section II of the Uniform Controlled Dangerous Substance Act.

After adopting the bill's conference committee report, members passed the measure and its emergency clause with a vote of 47 to 1.

SB1209, by Helton modifies reverence relating to vehicle inspection fees.

The bill was laid over for further questioning.

SB1230, by Sen. Ben Brown, D-Oklaoma City, establishes a zero-tolerance standard for persons under the age of 21 who operate a vehicle while intoxicated.

Among its provisions, the measure would require an ignition interlock system be installed on vehicles belonging to drivers who are found guilty of a second or subsequent DUI offense before a driver's license would be reissued to them. With the mechanism in place, the car's engine would not start unless the driver passed the breathalyzer located near the driver.

Sen. Herb Rozell voiced concerns about the system's cost. He said the system costs roughly \$600 to install and approximately \$300 every few months to test.

Sen. Jerry Pierce, R-Tulsa, labeled the bill as "overkill." He said, when he was a practicing attorney, most of the DUI cases he saw involved people over the age of 21.

Additional points he opposed included a section directing the State Department of Education to instruct students on the dangers of drinking and driving.

"No wonder our kids' test scores aren't going up," Pierce said, "because we are not teaching them anything and we are teaching them more and more social policy."

Sen. Frank Shurden, D-Henryetta, objected to the measure, espousing his disagreement with the state's drinking age being set at 21.

"If you are 18, you can go die for your country," he said, "but you had better not take one swallow of beer or we're going to take your license away from you."

Shurden also objected to the bill's language on drinking "alcohol."

"If you are between the ages of 16 and 21 you better not drink any cough syrup while you are driving," he said. "We are making criminals out of these young people."

Members voted to reject the bill's conference committee report and request further conference.

Further conference was also requested for **SB1184**. **Senate Bill 149** had its conference committee report rejected and further conference was requested.

Members also adopted **SCRs 49, 65, 66** and **HCR1097**.

The Senate is scheduled to reconvene at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, May 21, 1996.