

I'm a jet skier. I know that many people consider jet skiers inherently dangerous people. I'm not. I use my jet ski like a boat, regularly traveling 50-100 miles or more in a day, learning so much about the southern New England coast line. I do this in a safe and confident way because I sat in a class for eight hours and was inspired by a boating safety instructor. He gave me a clear sense of the excitement that boating can bring, the dangers I needed to plan for, and my place as an operator of a very small boat on the rather large Long Island Sound.

In life, I am a senior computer professional and use computers in every aspect of my business and my life. Some things, though, still need to be done face to face, and this is one of them. Politicizing this boating training, putting it into the battle over gun control, is not right. Boating safety is something that is passed on person to person, eye to eye, by someone with indisputable authority to those new to the activity. While it's true that many people will learn (hopefully) good boating safety habits from a family member at a young age, many others, like me, come to boating much later in life, without any family boating history. My personal, physical boating safety class gave me what I need to be safe in the water- why change it?

Mike McClernon

Mmcclernon@smartsourcerentals.com