

Parades

Oh no,” you’re saying, “parades require too much work for so little exposure.” Not so.

Here are a few ideas to make parading easy. Check with every town surrounding your lake to see how many parades are held each year and when. Then, check to see who you must call, and when, to enter. You are not trying to win float honors, simply save lives on the lakes.

Idea Number One. Simply take the Corps of Engineers truck, wash it, put two members of the Corps lake family, preferably in uniform - ranger, resource manager - smile, drive slow and wave.

Idea Number Two. Take the same clean truck and hook a boat trailer and boat to the back and away you go. If you’re shorthanded, the driver will be sufficient. Again, wave and smile.

Idea Number Three. Add a ranger holding up a life jacket. Maybe have “Bobber the Water Safety Dog” or the “Seamoor Safety” robot along to help you get the water safety message out.

Idea Number Four. Simply have a resource manager, or ranger in uniform walking next to one of the three costume/robot devices. The uniformed person could use the small portable PA system and talk about water safety as the costume/robot devices gain audience attention.

Remember the media person alongside the parade route taking photos or videoing. Have Bobber or Seamoor head toward them, waving, or holding/carrying a life jacket. Get that photo in the newspaper or on the nightly news for an extra dimension to your parade coverage.

If the local radio station is doing a remote broadcast, both the uniformed person and the costume/robot devices could “chat” briefly with them, then continue in the parade. You might come back afterward, during their wrap-up and chat again. They often have “dead time” and desperately need fillers.

Idea Number Five. During some parades the parade announcer will need people on the platform to also fill dead time or to judge. Here’s where another Corps person might be. If the radio remote team needs a sidekick to fill dead time, volunteer. Maybe there will be a live or taped television crew there. They also could be looking for someone to chat with. Here’s your chance to be a “boating safety media star.”

Idea Number Six. Ride with another law enforcement agency or have joint boat “floats,” with, say, the game and fish department or river patrol. Maybe drive down the parade route side by side, if the road is wide enough, like the sheriff and police chief.

If you have the time and material, you could create a poster or two with water safety info “Please wear your life jacket on the lake.” Hang them don the side of the boat or pickup door.

Good luck in your parading.