PROMOTES BOATING YEAR ROUND

Boat Club Accents Fun, Safety

By ANN VINCENT
Advertiser Staff Reporter

Increasing in popularity annually, boating is a family activity which gives great pleasure to many South Louisiana residents. Members of the Lafayette Boat Club not only enjoy the sport as individual families but also have fun year round as a group with cruises, picnics and socials to liven up many weekends, especially in the summertime.

The club had its beginnings in October, 1955, when a group of racing people and boating enthusiasts met and joined into a formal organization. There were 96 initial memberships. The men pay for membership, which includes their families.

From the first, the club has had as one of its main purposes the promotion of boating and boating safety. Members are shown films on safety in boating and are kept up to date with new features in boats and boating equipment.

One of the club's annual highlights is an all-day outing they sponsor for children at St. Mary's Orphanage, cruising down the Vermilion or other steamers. The children and their families look forward to this treat.

In addition to the recreational activities the club members enjoy, there is a more serious side of the organization.

During times of disaster or flood, they are always available to help evacuate persons who might be stranded by rising waters. The sheriff's department and local civilian defense agency have a list of members on whom they can rely for aid in emergencies. They were of tremendous help in the Lafayette area when Hurricane Hilda dealt the city a severe blow several years ago.

Boats vary in length from 12-footers to about 35-footers. About 13 cruises are scheduled this year, and socials are held every three months. There is also a fishing contest for members and trophies are given.

Another annual event of the club is a Boat Show and the choosing of a Boat Queen. Miss Lydia Gonzales was chosen Queen of the Boat Show and the Lafayette Boat Club about two months ago.

Pete Broussard is commodore of the club and Roy Cormier is currently serving as vice-commodore. Other officers are Carrie Bileau, secretary; Ray Beaugh, treasurer; Jeanette Broussard, program chairman; Rick Patin, membership chairman; and Doris Cormier, attendance chairman.

A. J. Robichaux was the club's first commodore. Other past commodores have included Aby Broussard, Bert McCoy, LeRoy Guidry, Eddie Domingue, Ray Beaugh, V. L. Perrou and Glenn Bileau. Some have served more than one term.

The Lafayette Boat Club is also a member of the Greater Gulf Coast Boating Association and was, in fact, instrumental in organizing the Association. It is now composed of 11 clubs, including the cities of Port Arthur, Orange, Lake Charles, Shreveport, Crowley, Jennings, Lake Arthur, Abbeville, Delcambre and Opelousas.

All the clubs get together about three times each year for an election of officers, installation of officers and an annual weekend cruise which includes a social and barbecue.

Sam Glorioso of Port Arthur is president of the Association and Glenn Bileau of Lafayette serves as vice president. One of the main reasons for forming the association was to promote boating legislation as well as to encourage boating safety and disseminate information on boating rules and regulations and safety precautions.

The Wild Life and Fisheries Commission has also been instrumental in pointing out do's and don'ts of good boating to club members.

Headquarters for the Lafayette Boat Club is at the American Legion Hall near the Surrey St. Bridge. The club meets the first Wednesday of each month.