

## **CLAIRE A. BAUER-BABIK**

### **BOATING SAFETY ADVOCATE**

Two years ago on Labor Day, Claire A. Bauer-Babik's brother, Bruce "Skip" Bauer, was enjoying a beautiful early morning northern California day on his 22-foot inboard/outboard cabin cruiser. The day was hot. The air was still. Before he went for his customary long swim, he started the boat so the generator would run and keep the refrigerator cool. He said goodbye to his wife, Joyce, and slipped into the water.

Thirty minutes later he was back. Joyce heard him splashing at the side of the boat and called out to welcome him back. He didn't respond. She came out of the cabin and found him hanging off the back of the boat, still in the water, arm caught in the railing, his eyes rolled back into his head. Two minutes – maybe – had passed since she heard his splashes.

Joyce acted fast. She got in the water and pulled Skip to the shore. She began mouth-to-mouth resuscitation on the beach. When that proved ineffective, she swam back to the boat and dialed 911 on her cell phone. Paramedics showed up quickly. But it was too late.

Skip, 62, had a history of heart problems. But the mandatory autopsy showed that he had an incredibly high level of carbon monoxide (CO) in his body. Joyce thinks he only took a few breaths.

Claire's message is simple: CO exposure is real, deadly, and very preventable. She wants her brother's accidental death to be a reminder to all boaters that the area directly behind a boat motor can be very dangerous. She encourages all boaters to be aware of the dangers of CO and how it accumulates both inside and outside your boat. She also urges boaters to install a marine CO alarm and to make certain their boats are in prime operating condition.

Claire A. Bauer-Babik is available for media interviews. Please contact Natalie Johnson or Vanessa French, PCI Communications, (703) 823-1600.