


# Dan Baxter

Dan Baxter's father got into the army surplus business in 1947 and was a major buyer of military surplus rafts, selling them wholesale. He saw the opportunity to sell the inflatables as a fishing boat, which was a new concept at the time. Around 1956 the company began selling the rafts in their retail store. As the sale of surplus inflatables ended in the early 1960s it became difficult to procure the boats that Baxter was then selling to river outfitters.


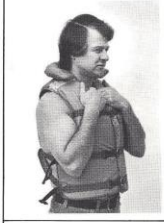

When Dan became part of Andy & Bax Army/Navy Store they were a big customer of Campways and sold their rafts made by Formosan Rubber in Taiwan. In the late 1960s Vladimir Kovalik, stopped into the store. Baxter had been selling the black bags used for dry bags to outfitters Ron Smith and Marton Litton in the Grand Canyon. Guides from Kovalik's Wilderness World were coming in and buying them and Vladimir was looking for a discount on quantities of the bags. He and Baxter hit it off. Kovalik mentioned he had been working with Holcomb Industries on the Havasu and they were having problems with the vinyl and leaking seams. He told Dan that he really needed someone to build this Havasu raft correctly.

As Dan recalls, "So I said 'no problem' Of course I was just running an Army/Navy store, a young kid, so I called on Harold Horne from Los Angeles and said I want to get into the rafting business because I had contacts with the outfitters. Harold made the arrangements with Formosan Rubber and I sent Vladimir to Tiawan to work with the engineers on the design and everything. I didn't really have all that much money, but in order to get Campways attention, I ordered 200 Havasu's. Construction started and we had samples of the materials. It was a beautiful gray Hypalon ripstop nylon about a 37 oz. fabric. The first 102 came in and they were of the 420 black neoprene!" "So I immediately stopped production and negotiated a credit. I still had about \$475 bucks apiece in them and I had 102 rafts I had to get rid of. I mean I even painted them silver! Despite that setback I still decided to go ahead with manufacturing the rafts. We went to Japan and worked with Okomoto Industries, and designed four rafts at that time: the Hopi, Miwok, Shoshoni and Havasu. The Apache wasn't designed and built until later. We brought in prototypes, kept working on them and within a year, year-and-a-half we had some pretty good looking rafts."



## WHITEWATER RAFTING VEST

Coast Guard Approval Type III, V.\*  
Type III — Approval No. 160.064/1830/0 for Recreational Boating  
Type V — Approval No. 160.055/123/0 for persons engaged in Commercial White Water service within the United States.



We felt that with the increased price of other manufacturers of commercial Type V vests, that we could build a better vest for less money. Look at these features!

- Insulation of Airex does not absorb water or deteriorate. Ultra-soft. Super light.
- Material of outershell Nylon/Oxford 200 denier. Color bright orange outershell. Heavy duty wide bands of webbing and trim in royal blue.
- High visibility reflective tape on shoulders offers additional safety feature. Hardware: Stainless Steel. Closures: Large black front snaps with smaller stainless side D rings. Full-length side adjustment straps make these vests adjustable to fit all persons, adult 90 to 280 lbs., children 50 to 90 lbs. Reinforced stitching at all points of stress, i.e., double stitched webbing on all trim.
- Double pocket has velcro closure full width of pocket. Grommet at lower point of pocket. Molded tubular Airex flotation collar. Does not flap in wind. Navy Style!
- Insulated kidney protector to fit below the waist comfortably. Folds up with velcro attachments. Folds down below waist for protection against gear behind boatman's seat and added warmth.

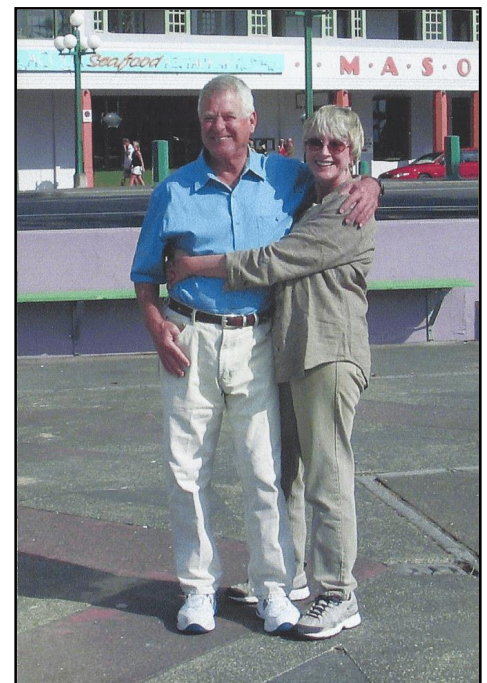
**SIZING**  
**Child's:**  
Children/Ladies 50 to 90 lbs.  
Flotation 12½ lbs.

**Adult:**  
Small/medium; Large/X Large  
Adults 90 lbs. up  
Flotation 25 lbs.

\*Coast Guard regulations specify that a Type V vest be manufactured in only two adult sizes. This is to eliminate the confusion of sorting through four sizes in case of an emergency. Thus: sizes s/m and l/xlg.

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{Dan Baxter modeling a Campways pfd ~ 1979}



{Dan & Jean in New Zealand ~ 2009}

Unlike most of today's raft manufacturers who only produce a limited number of boats each year based on pre-season orders, Dan's philosophy was you couldn't "sell from an empty wagon" and he kept an ample supply of all the Campways and Riken models on hand. In 2002 Dan Baxter sold his company, boat designs and "lock, stock and barrel" to Bill Parks of Northwest River Supply.


One of Baxter's river running accomplishments was running the Ganges River in 1977 for ABC's American Sportsman TV series starring Robert Duval. Dan ran rivers from early on in his career. Dan married Jean Moore who was a graphic designer living in Portland. She and a friend, Wayne Godare, were in California to run the American River. It just happened that Campways was there to do a photo shoot. They asked Jean and Wayne to be models for the shoot and that is where she met Jon Osgood. They hit it off and became friends. Later in the seventies, Dan asked Jon to go along on a Middle Fork of the Salmon River trip. Jon asked if a friend could go along. Jon went on to explain that it was Jean Moore and she lived in Portland. Jean came along with Dan to pick up Osgood at the Boise airport and that introduction led up to Dan eventually marrying Jean about 15 years later. Dan has a daughter, Kessley and a son, Riley who ran the boating department at Andy & Bax.



{Andy & Bax Surplus in Portland, OR}



{Wayne Godare and Jean Moore (Baxter) on a Campways photo shoot}



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Andy & Bax: Pre 1960; 1970s & 2015

