My command philosophy and safety philosophy are both interdependent and a continuation of thought. Over the course of my military career, I have heard some good one-liners that can sum up a good safety philosophy:

-Professional and by the book.
-Safety is a byproduct of professionalism.
-If there is a doubt, there is no doubt.
-Brilliance in the basics.

Looking back through the years at my personal life, I think the one-liner could be even simpler. To me, the one-liner that sticks out in my mind is this:

"*Don't be stupid*."

You may laugh, but every time I have done something inherently unsafe or took risks that I should not have accepted there was a level of doubt challenging me. Ultimately, a small voice whispered, "This is stupid." When I elected not to listen, the outcome was unpleasant. Immediately following, there was another voice that said, "….that was stupid." Over the years, I consistently tried to listen to that voice more often and heed its warning. When I hear it now, I pay attention. This causes me to change my course of action or just stop what I am doing.

I am convinced that I'm not the only one that hears that little, still, small voice. I am also convinced that if more of us listened to that voice we could save a lot of lives in our off-duty activities and prevent most mishaps.

<u>**This is what I request of all of us, including myself**</u>:

1. Before we strap into an aircraft or mount that motorcycle, before we turn on that table saw or climb the side of that mountain, before we decide to go 90mph on the highway or drink more than we should; <u>we remind ourselves and each other; "Don't be stupid."</u>

2. Whenever we hear that voice whispering, "this is stupid", listen to it immediately. We then, either stop what we are doing or change our course of action to one that is not stupid, but that is:

Smart, Exceptional, Professional, Resilient, and exemplifies a Leader of United States Marines.

A. J. BRUNK