

2014 OFFICERS  
OF THE YEAR

ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE  
WRAP-UP

RECOGNIZING RBS  
DYNAMOS



# SCA

small craft advisory

The official publication of  
the National Association  
of State Boating Law Administrators

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## About the Cover

Game Warden John Thorne is the "go to guy" with Texas Parks & Wildlife when it comes to boating while intoxicated/boating under the influence enforcement. In recognition of his outstanding efforts, he was selected as the 2014 Boating Law Enforcement Officer of the Year by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators. Game Warden Thorne has filed or been directly involved in the filing of approximately 80 BWI/BUI cases during his 12-year career. His ability to clearly and convincingly articulate the facts of a case has resulted in an amazingly high conviction rate.

TPWD photo

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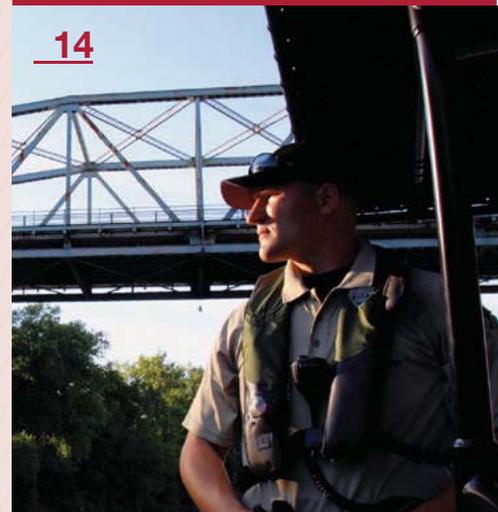
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# It's a seabird, it's a hydroplane, it's...



## Marine Officers!

Fitting lifejackets in a single-bound, performing on-water rescues in a flash, educating boaters day in and day out, it's time to recognize our Marine Officers as the true Superheroes of our waters. **We just wanted to say thanks!**



### It was great seeing you in Maine!

We're fresh off the heels (*do lobsters have heels?*) of presenting the 2014 Boatsey and doling out batch after batch of delicious Lobster Chowder. Now we're looking ahead to Kansas when we get to see all of you again!

# NASBLA NEWS

## Welcome to the digital SCA

This is the first all-digital version of *Small Craft Advisory*. Due to severe budget cuts this year in the 5% Nonprofit Grant, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard, we ceased printing and mailing copies of the publication. Right now, we're still bimonthly, but we're exploring our options and may bring the digital publication to you more frequently to ensure we deliver the most timely and relevant content. Encourage your colleagues to subscribe today at [nasbla.org/subscribe](http://nasbla.org/subscribe).

## NASBLA elects New President



NASBLA would like to announce Eleanor Mariani as its newly elected president. The 2014-15 executive board was installed at the recent 55th Annual NASBLA Conference:

- President – Eleanor Mariani, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection
- Vice President – Darren Rider, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
- Treasurer – Stephanie Weatherington, Arkansas Game & Fish Commission

- Member-at-Large – Mark Brown, Oklahoma
- Member-at-Large – Tom Guess, Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries
- Member-at-Large – Cody Jones, Texas Department of Parks & Wildlife
- Immediate Past President – Herb Angell, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission

Mariani is the 54th president of the nonprofit organization. She has worked in the Boating Division for the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection for 21 years and has served as the BLA for 16 years.

## NASBLA accredited as standards developer organization

NASBLA has been officially accredited by the American National Standards Institute as a standards developer organization. In the official notification, Jim Thompson, the recording secretary of ANSI's Executive Standards Council, states, "... the accreditation of the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators under its proposed operating procedures for documenting consensus on NASBLA-sponsored American National Standards has been approved, effective September 19, 2014."

This accreditation opens the path for review of the newly revised boating education standard, NASBLA 103-2015: Basic Boating Knowledge — Power, as an American National Standard. It also provides additional tools and opportunities to elevate state programs, unify community boating program efforts, and strengthen the work of state,

nonprofit, public and federal partners in targeted, meaningful and efficient ways.

## Increased participation in Operation Dry Water leads to increased boater outreach

Significantly more law enforcement agencies are participating in Operation Dry Water, the nation's year-round boating under the influence (BUI) awareness and enforcement campaign. This year 585 local, state and federal agencies joined forces in every U.S. state and territory for the Operation Dry Water 2014 weekend, June 27-29. A total of 318 intoxicated boat operators were removed from our nation's waterways during the three-day weekend.

The increase in law enforcement participation led to a positive increase in recreational boater outreach as well. The goal of Operation Dry Water and those who participate is not only to remove impaired boaters from the water. Equally important is the goal of raising awareness among recreational boaters about the dangers that come with the decision to operate a vessel while under the influence. During the three-day weekend, law enforcement officers made contact with 146,711 boaters as part of their educational and awareness efforts.

"With alcohol being the leading factor in boater deaths, we are proud to see the growth in both law enforcement participation and the level of outreach and awareness efforts taking place across the country. For every boater who comes in contact with a law enforcement officer or boating safety professional and, in turn, is educated about the dangers of boating impaired, that is a life potentially saved.

We want to thank the officers who removed so many intoxicated boaters from the water, giving friends and families a chance to have a fun and safe boating experience," says John Fetterman, NASBLA Deputy Executive Director.

## Magazine and editor land 2 MarCom Awards



*Small Craft Advisory* and NASBLA Editor Kimberly Jenkins have won two MarCom Awards, given annually by the Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals:

- *Small Craft Advisory* — Magazine/Association — Gold
- *Words of Wisdom* (March-April 2013) — Writing/Feature Article — Honorable Mention

One of the oldest, largest and most respected competitions in the creative industry, the MarCom Awards program honors excellence in communication. The competition has grown to perhaps the largest of its kind in the world with about 6,500 entries this year from throughout the United States, Canada and 15 other countries.

## FEMA approves NASBLA Tactical Operators Course

The Tactical Operators Course developed under NASBLA's Boat Operations and Training Program has been approved for inclusion in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Training and Education Division's (NTED) State/Federally Sponsored Course Catalog.

NASBLA CEO John Johnson said of the approval, "This is another milestone for

our BOAT Program's Tactical Operators Course. Already recognized by the U.S. Coast Guard (Course Code 502292), this course provides high-quality training to the maritime law enforcement and emergency response communities and NTED approval further validates the value of this training."

## NASBLA instructors to assist with revision of USCG Crew Seamanship Manual

The U.S. Coast Guard's Office of Boat Forces is revising its *Boat Crew Seamanship Manual* to generalize content, making the manual more appealing to multiple users (i.e., state and local partners). The manual plays an important role in promoting safe and effective boat operations.

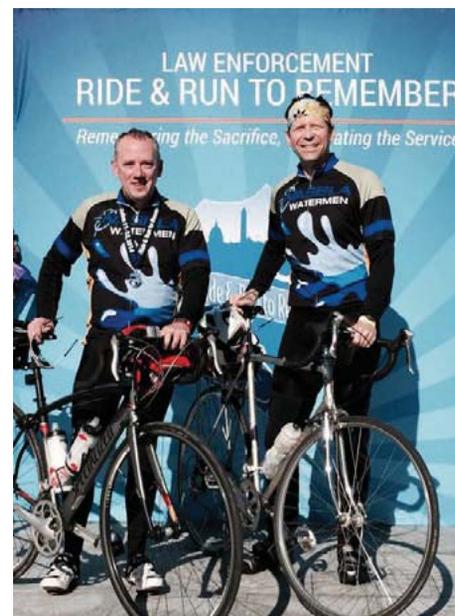
Boat Forces has asked NASBLA's BOAT Program instructors for their ideas and assistance in this revision effort. This is a great opportunity to bolster our partnership with the USCG and enhance the BCSM!

The *Boat Crew Seamanship Manual* provides approved methods and procedures for the conduct of Coast Guard boat operations. The subjects and principles include boat crew duties and responsibilities, first aid, boat handling, communications, weather and oceanography, boat characteristics and other subjects, theories and techniques learned over time by skilled mariners. Above all, the goal of this manual is to provide the safest, most efficient methods, techniques and informational guidance possible for personnel executing some of the most challenging and dangerous missions in the Coast Guard.

## NASBLA Watermen raise \$2,500 for NLEOMF

In October, the NASBLA Watermen participated in the Ride & Run to

Remember, a community-oriented athletic event designed to raise awareness of the service and sacrifice law enforcement officers make every day and to generate funds in support of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund. The team succeeded in meeting its fundraising goal and raised more than \$2,800. NASBLA director of membership services Sam Lynch was presented an award for being one of the top fundraisers for the event.



## NASBLA awards PWIA with safe boating seal

NASBLA has awarded the Seal of Safe Boating Practices to the Personal Watercraft Industry Association for its Personal Watercraft Renter Orientation DVD & Checklist.

The NASBLA seal certifies that PWIA's boating safety videos and other educational materials meet the highest standards in quality, accuracy and effectiveness. All materials must meet the requirements and guidelines set forth by NASBLA to receive the recognition. Recipients of this seal include the National Safe Boating Council, the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and numerous boating safety programs developed by government and private entities. ✨

# NEW

# B

# L

# A

Aaron Kerr is the new boating law administrator for Wyoming. Hailing from Green River, Wyo., he occasionally boats recreationally, mainly for fishing and scuba diving activities. Additionally, he and his wife own a canoe and a kayak.

Aaron graduated from the University of Wyoming in 1998 with a bachelor's degree in wildlife management. He began his career with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department in March 2000 as a game warden trainee. This position primarily involved watercraft safety/fishing enforcement during the summer boating season and hunting/fishing enforcement the rest of the year. He was stationed in several locations throughout the state from 2000 through 2004, and then in 2005 he was promoted to a district game warden position.

In July 2014, Aaron was promoted to the Wyoming Game & Fish Department law enforcement coordinator position, where he took on the role of Wyoming's boating law administrator in addition to several other duties. Aaron is also involved with the Wyoming Game Wardens Association and the Wyoming Peace Officers Association.

For Aaron, the most pressing need in boating safety is to improve public awareness of the dangers of boating under the influence and unsafe operation. "Wyoming traditionally has few boating accidents from year to year, but there are still too many," he said. "I plan to work with agency personnel and outside interests to improve our boating education and accident prevention efforts throughout the state." \*



**Aaron Kerr**  
Wyoming



# 1st Biennial International Ice Rescue Operations & Training Meeting

February 26 - 27, 2015  
Bay City, Michigan

## Cold Weather, Cold Water: Understanding and Preparing for Its Effect on Rescuers, Victims and Equipment

### FOR THE FIRST TIME!

All public agencies, first responders, EMS, and law enforcement officers are invited to join NASBLA, in partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard, in a national discussion forum to reduce risk and save lives on the ice and to share "best practices" in ice rescue techniques and equipment used by federal, state and local first responders.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Effects of Cold Water Injuries, presented by RADM (USCG Ret) Alan Steinman, M.D., M.P.H. Former Chief Medical Officer, Chief Safety Officer, U.S. Coast Guard
- Challenges of Dynamic Ice and Swift Water, presented by Jim Lavalley, Managing Director, Rescue Canada
- Responder's Perspective, presented by Butch Hendrick, President and Founder, Life Guard Systems
- Interactive panel discussions and demonstrations by subject matter experts and vendors to enhance first responders' understanding and preparation for effects of cold water on victims and rescuers
- Pre meeting Ice Rescuer Course (23-25 Feb) taught by U.S. Coast Guard and NASBLA experts at the CG National Ice Rescue School. This course meets and exceeds the NFPA 1670 Standard on Operations and Training for Technical Search and Rescue Incidents.

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# Information & Networking

By Kimberly Jenkins



NASBLA and Brunswick Commercial & Government Products unveil the new NASBLA edition patrol vessel.

The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) held its 55th Annual Conference in Bar Harbor, Maine, Oct. 16-19, 2014. Evaluations from conference attendees indicate this year's gathering was a rousing success, with attendees praising the amount of relevant content as well as the scenic location.

## Pre-conference training

On the day before the conference kicked off, Officer Paul Alber with the Palm Beach Police Department held another

round of the new GPS Forensics course, which debuted at last year's conference. Alber developed the course in cooperation with NASBLA's Boat Operation and Training Program. This introductory course provides law enforcement officers with a foundation for recovering evidence from GPS devices and preparing it for courtroom presentation.

## NASBLA unveils special edition patrol vessel

Immediately prior to the opening ceremonies, NASBLA and Brunswick

Commercial & Government Products unveiled the new NASBLA edition patrol vessel. The result of collaboration between the two organizations, the vessel has been specially designed for the recreational boating safety patrol officer and maritime first responders.

"NASBLA's Enforcement & Training Committee was assigned to select a vessel model and option package to meet the demands of maritime law enforcement and response. The boat had to be suitable for a single operator, capable of being towed,

launched and operated in near-shore coastal waters, rivers and lakes,” said John Fetterman, NASBLA deputy executive director. “The 21-foot Guardian fit the mandate, and the option package identified to be considered as the NASBLA Patrol Edition will support the functions most common to marine law enforcement and emergency response personnel across the country.”

## Opening ceremonies

This year’s conference was opened by Rear Admiral Linda Fagan, who serves as deputy director of Operations for Headquarters United States Northern Command. She welcomed conference attendees to the First Coast Guard District and extolled the value of partnership between the U.S. Coast Guard and the states, citing numerous resulting accomplishments, including 2013’s record-low number of recreational boating-related fatalities.



RADM Linda Fagan addresses the conference attendees in her keynote speech.

## General sessions

The next morning, RADM Fagan filled in for RADM Vincent Atkins, whose involvement with Ebola screenings precluded his attendance as keynote speaker for the conference. RADM Fagan provided an overview of the Coast Guard’s involvement in numerous aspects of the national recreational boating safety program.

She discussed the strategic plan and recreational boating statistics, explaining that numerous factors worked together to produce 2013’s record-low number of fatalities. She emphasized the importance of wearing a life jacket, likening it to buckling a seat belt in a car. Although the desired wear rate is 70 percent, the current rate has remained stagnant at 22 percent.

RADM Fagan closed by underscoring that we all have the same goal – to serve the public. Further highlighting the importance of partnerships, she added that “We are stronger together than apart.”



Next, the officers from North Woods Law discussed their experiences with becoming reality TV stars. When approached about being on television, officials with the ultimately decided to give it a try to gain public support for the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife and what it does. Potential recruitment was another draw for the agency.

Now in its third season, the show has garnered quite a following. At a meet-and-greet held in September, more than 1,000 fans lined up for hours to get autographs with their favorite game warden stars.

The show has improved recruitment for the department. Cpl. John McDonald, who serves as spokesperson for the Maine Warden Service, said that three to four years ago, they’d have an average of 150 recruits each year. Now, after the exposure provided by the show, that number is up to 500 to 750. During her engaging discussion on emotions in the work place, corporate trainer and facilitator Chris Olex explained how it is impossible to leave emotions at home and how humans are biologically wired for connection with other people. There are four basic categories of emotions: happy, sad, anger and fear – that’s one positive category to three negative ones. Olex discussed how emotions affect our behavior and

*(Continued on page 8)*

provided tips on managing our reactions and how we treat others.

Shawn Alladio, founder of K38, discussed some of the new hybrid offshoot production concepts that are showing up on the nation's waterways. Typically devices created by modifying personal watercraft and include a diving machine, a device that propels the user up to 30 above the water's surface, and a motorized wake board. She discussed the risks and hazards associated with people using these innovative, unfamiliar devices.

Tammy Terry with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources gave a presentation on the National Recreational Boating Survey. She covered what the survey was and some of the data it captured. She also discussed a new resource being developed to provide information to NASBLA members – the NASBLA Lighthouse. Developed by the Engineering, Reporting and Analysis Committee, the NASBLA Lighthouse serves as a repository of valuable information and documentation as well as a forum to discuss collecting, interpreting and applying recreational boating data.

Mike England, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, and Mike Sabaka, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, explained the interstate boating violators compact recently signed by their respective states. The boating compact is designed to function like agreements states have for other aspects of law enforcement, such as honoring each other's driver's licenses. With the agreement, the home state agrees to enforce the ticket, so an out-of-state motorist stopped for speeding isn't automatically hauled to jail to pay a fine or post a bond.

Cindy Bellar with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources delved into state reciprocity for boat operator education. Issues range from boaters traveling to other states facing the obstacle of having to meet more than one state's mandatory boating education standards and educators and officers encountering difficulty in tracking other states'

requirements. Bellar provided an update on the work completed on the reciprocity challenge by NASBLA's Education Policy & Best Practices Subcommittee.

Carl Blackwell, senior vice president of the National Marine Manufacturers Association, provided an outlook on the recreational boating industry and an update on the Discover Boating campaign. Total retail expenditures on boating have begun to rebound the past couple of years from the Great Recession. An estimated 15.9 million recreational boats are owned in the United States. Of these, 12 million are registered by the states and 94,000 are documented by the USCG. An additional 3.9 million are non-registered boats – mainly canoes, kayaks, rowboats, small sailboats and other non-motorized boats. In 2015, the Discover Boating campaign will continue working toward getting more boaters on the water.

## Annual business meeting

NASBLA's annual business meeting served to wrap up the previous year's business and to begin the next year's work. After hearing the treasurer's report, the body approved a resolution requesting formal recognition by the U.S. Coast Guard as the ANSI-Accredited Standards Developer for "knowledge and competencies for recreational boaters and boating professionals working within or on behalf of the recreational boating community in North America," and to continue use of the widely known and referenced phrase, 'NASBLA-Approved,' for courses verified to be in compliance with NASBLA's conformity assessment process.

Next, NASBLA President Herb Angell signed a memorandum of agreement with the Western States Boating Administrators Association president, Ron Jendro, formally pledging to work together. Aftewards, NASBLA leadership presented representatives from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, the New Jersey State Police, and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources with framed certificates in recognition receiving full accreditation under NASBLA's BOAT Program.

The conference committee announced the upcoming Annual NASBLA Conference dates and locations:

Sept. 13-16, 2015 – Wichita, Kansas  
Sept. 10-13, 2016 – Seattle, Washington

## Breakouts

This year's conference featured numerous breakout sessions each day. One breakout garnering a lot of attention was a presentation on seated standardized field sobriety testing. Richard Moore, who is Florida's boating law administrator and the lead instructor for NASBLA's BUI course, explained how the seated battery was developed and discussed the training that NASBLA has been offering to law enforcement officers around the country. He also provided testimonials from officers who have experienced the successful use and courtroom challenges associated with the seated SFSTs.

Another popular breakout focused on the Certified Recreational Boating



Breakout sessions provided conference attendees with a variety of information.

Professional (CRBP) program. In an effort to elevate professional development opportunities for individuals whose chosen careers lie within the various nationwide recreational boating programs, NASBLA has embarked on the development of the CRBP program. John Malatak explained how participation in this program will to strengthen and solidify the management and professional delivery of safe and enjoyable recreational boating throughout the nation, leading towards the creation of a highly skilled and talented pool of professional candidates to fill the various positions within the recreational boating program. Kelli Toth, education specialist with the Alaska Office of Boating Safety, discussed her state's Kids Don't Float Program and gave tips on how to implement a children's boating safety program.

George Birdwell and Matt Majors, with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, provided information on using a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) in underwater investigations. They discussed cases worked on Tennessee and explained how the ROV was used to enhance and expedite the investigation process.

Fred Messmann, deputy director for the National Safe Boating Council, talked about the organization's Navigation Rules Awareness Program, BoatOnCourse.com, and how it has been expanded to go beyond the basics of navigation rules. The new content adds navigation lights, sound signals, sailboats, narrow channels, and recreational boating with commercial vessel traffic.



Conference attendees enjoy chatting in the exhibit tent between sessions.

## Exhibits

Opening during the President's Reception, the exhibit tent became a popular spot in the mornings and during breaks. Nearly 30 companies set up booths, with the range of products and services including safety education products, data management applications, boat and motor manufacturers, search and rescue equipment, safety and security products, among others. \*

## Digital Hub

Were you unable to attend the conference? Or, if you did attend, would you like to revisit a presentation? With NASBLA's Digital Hub, checking out the educational content from our conference and other events is as easy as a click of the mouse.

The Digital Hub houses informative and educational materials and videos from NASBLA events. PowerPoint presentations along with audio feed from the NASBLA annual conference are available now. Access the Digital Hub via a link on NASBLA's homepage, [www.nasbla.org](http://www.nasbla.org).

# Appreciation & Congratulations

NASBLA's leadership recognized numerous outstanding individuals and organizations throughout the organization's annual conference. These award recipients have provided invaluable assistance to NASBLA in undertaking its multitude of strategic objectives.

## Boating Safety Award

Captain Mike England, a 24-year veteran with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Law Enforcement Division, has been



Capt. Mike England receives the Boating Safety Award from National Safe Boating Council Executive Director Rachel Johnson and NASBLA President Herb Angell. The NSBC sponsors the award.

a longtime supporter of NASBLA and has volunteered his talents and efforts by serving on numerous committees since 2001, including Law Enforcement, Numbering & Titling, and Boats & Associated Equipment. He is currently on the Vessel Identification, Registration and Titling Committee.

England serves as the Georgia boating education coordinator. With his focus on boating safety, during the 2013 legislative session he was an integral part of his department's efforts to pass historic boating legislation and Georgia now has a .08 blood alcohol concentration limit for boating under the influence and mandatory boat education.

Capt. England also developed and implemented his department's new rental boat education procedures. He wrote, edited and produced a 10-minute rental boat education safety DVD, created a safety checklist, and reached out to all known boat liveries in the state to educate them on the new process and create a database to track the rental boat education safety certificates.

During the last legislative session Capt. England was instrumental in Georgia becoming the first state to pass and enact the Interstate Boating Violator Compact. Since then, the neighboring state of South Carolina has followed suit.

## Innovations Award

The Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB) has developed an innovative electronic document management and database reporting system that saves the agency time and money.

The Marine Board purchases and holds the lien on more than 100 law enforcement vessels of various sizes and types being used by 32 contracted sheriff's offices in flat water and whitewater rivers, lakes and the Pacific Ocean. Vessel maintenance, repair, and replacement are significant financial burdens on the agency, so being able to track usage, preventative maintenance, and platform reliability is important to ensure the highest return on investment for these assets.

With the new database, OSMB Inspector Mervin Lee, who led the team that developed the system, can go into the field and conduct a thorough inspection of a vessel and document it with related photos in real-time with a tablet and digital camera. He can then transfer the data and photos to the Law Enforcement



Randy Henry and Mervin Lee with the Oregon State Marine Board receive the Innovations Award from NASBLA President Herb Angell and Cindy Kalkomey with Boat Ed, sponsor of the award.

Database, clearly documenting any damage, corrosion, wear-and-tear, manufacturing flaws and other noted issues. The database also allows each sheriff's department to document routine maintenance and basic repairs.

The reporting requirement has had an unexpected benefit in helping the Marine Board recognize and solve problems more proactively. By quantifying the types of damage and mechanical malfunctions across the entire fleet, they have modified their boat building specifications to address these weaknesses or problems.

## Legislative Award

California Assembly Member Joan Buchanan, California State Senator Mark DeSaulnier, and California State Senator Bill Monning stepped up as primary sponsors of Senate Bill 941, Vessel Operator Certification Bill. Thanks to their efforts, California has a new law that will require boat operators to obtain a vessel operator card. The seven-year phase-in will begin in 2018 and will apply to everyone as of 2025.

*Editor's Note:  
The awards will be presented at a later date.*

## Lifetime Achievement Award

Alvin Taylor has been the boating law administrator for South Carolina since January 1992. As director of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, he serves as the chief administrator for natural resources



in the state and is responsible for managing and supervising the agency's five divisions: Outreach & Support Services; Land, Water & Conservation; Law Enforcement; Marine Resources; and Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries, with a staff of nearly 1,000 employees in locations across South Carolina.

Taylor graduated from Clemson University in 1976 with a bachelor of science degree in Zoology. He completed training at the U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Training Center in Yorktown, Virginia, in 1976, and graduated from the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy the following year. He began his career with the agency in 1977.

Taylor is an active member of NASBLA and served as its president in 2003. Over the years, he has been a champion for NASBLA funding from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund. In appearances before various groups in Congress, he has drawn upon both his field experience in responding to accidents & recovering boating accident victims and his work

as an administrator to bring home the importance of adequate boating safety funding to the states.

Alvin Taylor continues to provide trusted counsel and wisdom – particularly in NASBLA's government relations.

*Editor's Note:  
The award will be presented at a later date.*

## NASBLA Award

Chris Edmonston, president of the BoatUS Foundation, was selected as this year's prestigious NASBLA Award recipient in recognition of the exemplary cooperation and collaboration he has provided to NASBLA over the years.

Active in the recreational boating safety community for nearly three decades, Edmonston is a longtime member of



*(Continued on page 12)*

NASBLA's Education Committee. Due to his extensive work in boating safety education, he was appointed to serve as vice chair of NASBLA's 15-member Education Standards Panel in 2011. He also serves as chairman of the National Safe Boating Council and sits on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council and the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation's Board of Directors, among other boating-related groups and organizations.

Edmonston is committed to promoting safer recreational boating through education, outreach and training wherever and whenever possible. He has over 25 years of marine industry experience in many roles. As president of the nonprofit BoatUS Foundation, he works extensively with state and federal agencies to develop common sense approaches for educating boaters on how to be safe on the water and how to be good stewards of our nation's waterways. Edmonston can also be counted on to advocate for recreational boaters and works closely on boating safety issues with the angling and hunting communities.

*Editor's Note:*  
The award will be presented at a later date.

## President's Awards

John Adey, president of the American Boat & Yacht Council (ABYC), was honored with a President's Award in recognition of his exceptional guidance and mentoring of NASBLA as the nonprofit organization worked to achieve American National Standards Institute Standards Development Organization credentialing. From sharing copies of ABYC's Technical Board rules to sharing the web programming that ABYC created to track, modify and distribute standards, Adey went above and beyond as a partner and colleague.



South Dakota Boating Law Administrator Brandon Gust (left) accepts the President's Award from NASBLA President Herb Angell.

*Editor's Note:* Adey's award will be presented at a later date.

South Dakota Boating Law Administrator Brandon Gust and the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks received a President's Award for their invaluable help to NASBLA over the past year in measuring the effectiveness of boating

under the influence (BUI) training. Over the past year, Gust and the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks have been assisting NASBLA in completing a project designed to measure the effectiveness of the newly validated seated battery of SFSTs. South Dakota provided personnel and equipment and allowed researchers to observe BUI detection and enforcement stops as part of a new validation study of the Seated Battery of Standardized Field Sobriety Tests. The ongoing project is funded through a grant from the Sport Fish Restoration & Boating Safety Trust Fund, which is administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.

## Waterways Management Award

The last several years, Sgt. Scott Watkins with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission has focused primarily on the Spring River in Fulton County. Locally, the Spring River



Sgt. Watkins with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission receives the Waterways Management Award from NASBLA President Herb Angell.

is known as a trout stream, but nationally it is considered a “party” destination.

Sgt. Watkins has coordinated with other officers and departments to transform the river to a more family oriented environment. In 2009 he began conducting special operations on the river utilizing officers from seven enforcement districts across the state. The operations included both covert assignments and uniformed checkpoints. In that first year, 147 officer violator contacts were made, consisting of 103 AGFC violations such as littering, no PFD, and so on and 44 criminal violations for drugs, alcohol, disorderly conduct, etc. Each year more law enforcement saturations were established by Scott and there began to be noticeable improvements to the recreational experience on the Spring River.

In 2013 he conducted four operations on the river and the operations netted only 57 violator contacts. In a five-year period, his efforts decreased the total number of special operation detected violations from 147 to 57, while reducing the number of drug and alcohol arrests from 44 to 15.

## William B. Garner Boating Safety Leadership Award

Jeffrey Johnson, chief of the Alaska Office of Boating Safety, joined the Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation in 1981 as a law enforcement ranger and managed state parks in Southeast and south-central Alaska. In 1984, he became the first ranger assigned to Kachemak Bay State Park and State Wilderness Park, one of the nation’s largest. He transferred to the Division’s central office in 1994 to manage restoration projects in the aftermath of the Exxon Valdez oil spill. An experienced boat operator and

marine safety instructor, he developed the Division’s first powerboat operator certification program.

Shortly before the Alaska Office of Boating Safety was established in 1998, he was named Alaska’s first official boating law administrator. He worked closely with a coalition of partners including the U.S. Coast Guard, the Coast Guard Auxiliary, Alaska boating organizations, and legislators to draft the Alaska Boating Safety Act and to garner public and legislative support. The Act was signed into law in May 2000. Active in the professional boating

safety community, Johnson has served as president of NASBLA and the Western States Boating Administrators Association and has participated in numerous committees and task forces of both organizations. He is currently a member of the National Boating Safety Advisory Council, treasurer for the Western States Boating Administrators Association, and chair of the National Boating Education Standards Panel. Largely due to his leadership on the panel, NASBLA received ANSI recognition as an accredited standards developer in September 2014. \*



Jeffrey Johnson (right), chief of the Alaska Office of Boating Safety, accepts the Garner Award from NASBLA President Herb Angell.

*Editor’s Note: The Boating Officer of the Year and Boating Educator of the Year awards were also presented during the conference. To read more about the officers, turn to page 18. To read more about the educators, see the Sept-Oct 2014 Small Craft Advisory.*

# From Combat to Conservation

## New officers bring military backgrounds to their jobs

By Kevin Kelly

The skies over downtown Cincinnati explode with color as the Reds treat fans to a fireworks show after Friday home games at Great American Ball Park. The displays are popular with boaters on the Ohio River, too.

A flotilla masses and lingers as dusk turns to darkness on this first Friday in June. As the last shells explode above the riverfront stadium, infusing the night sky with a final burst of color, a light breeze carries the remnant smoke away. The boats scatter likewise.

Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources conservation officers Chris Fossitt and Michael Hudson are just now getting back onto the river for night patrol. They've spent the early evening at the Kenton County Detention Center after arresting a couple sitting on the riverbank on drug-related charges.

The twin 200-horsepower outboard motors of the law enforcement boat rumble as the officers idle out of Manhattan Harbor in Dayton, Ky. Before reaching the Daniel Carter Beard Bridge connecting downtown Cincinnati and Newport, they encounter a rush of oncoming boat traffic. They stop a handful of boats to advise the occupants about improper operation or unlit navigation lights. It's almost midnight before the river calms. The officers' patrol of the Ohio

River and just up the mouth of the Licking River is almost over.

"This is just an amazing job right now," Hudson said. "A week and a half from now, when I'm out on my own, it's going to be the best thing I've ever done."

The 26-year-old joined the department's Law Enforcement Division ranks earlier this year. He earned passage on the boat after completing the required 18 weeks of basic training at the Kentucky Department of Criminal Justice Training – the state's police academy – and 12 more weeks of training at Kentucky Fish and Wildlife's Law Enforcement Academy. Rookies must spend 16 weeks with veteran officers before they can work the field alone. Hudson was paired with Fossitt.

"He's going to be a good officer," said Fossitt, a 12-year veteran. "He's young but he's got more experience as a 26-year-old than most guys have in their 30s."

## From Kentucky to Combat

Hudson grew up a few miles south of the Ohio River in the Kenton County city of Crestview Hills. He played on the defensive line for Covington Catholic High School's football team and placed third and fifth in the shot put and discus at the boys' Class 3A state track and field meet as a senior.

Michael Hudson patrols the Kandahar province in Afghanistan. Photo courtesy Michael Hudson

He considered joining the U.S. Marine Corps after graduation, but wound up attending Eastern Kentucky University and enrolling in the U.S. Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC).

Hudson signed up for the Simultaneous Membership Program – it allows ROTC cadets to serve as officer trainees in the National Guard while completing college – and eventually joined the Kentucky National Guard full-time. After completing basic training at Fort Jackson in South Carolina, Hudson volunteered for deployment to Iraq because his unit was on the ground there.



"I felt like it was the right thing to do at the time," he said.

The unit returned home in September 2009. Hudson deployed to Afghanistan less than two years later with the Kentucky Army National Guard's third Agribusiness Development Team. The team's mission involved maintaining relationships with Afghan farmers to help the country become agriculturally self-sufficient through the development of an agricultural marketplace. Its work included overseeing a commercial mulberry harvest in the Panshir Valley that yielded 75 metric tons of mulberries

and introduced a new juice product to the marketplace.

Hudson served on the security force tasked with ensuring the team reached its destinations safely.

"We would prepare the mission and conduct the convoys," he said. "When we got to the objective, we'd go through and clear everything first. I spent most of my time up in a turret. I was the truck commander about 25 percent of the time and a convoy commander a few times." Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan served as the team's first station before they transferred to a joint combat outpost.

The team returned home to Kentucky in March 2012.

Hudson knew what he wanted to do next. "I was going to go and finish school," he said. "That was my biggest thing: I wanted to push through school before everybody started hiring. I graduated in December of 2012 and January was when the hiring process started with the agency."

## Boyhood triggers job interest

Hudson shares his father's appreciation of the outdoors. Bob Hudson served in the U.S. Army and introduced his boys to hunting and fishing at a young age.

"We started fishing with dad," Michael Hudson said. "We were young enough that we screwed everything up and he got us cane poles because he figured we couldn't break those. We managed to destroy those."

"We used to go squirrel hunting when we were little, and duck hunting. I got him into deer hunting and he started taking up turkey hunting."

Bob Hudson worked for UPS and his route included Owen County. There he met Charles Phillips and the two became friends. Phillips served 10 years as an Owen County Sheriff's deputy before joining Kentucky Fish and Wildlife as a conservation officer in 1999. The Hudsons dove hunted on Phillips' farm; the officer made an impression on the youngster.

"I'd always think, man, that's a cool job right there," Michael Hudson said.

Hudson's politeness made an impression on Phillips as well. "He used 'sir' and 'please' and 'thank you.' You could tell he was just a good down-to-earth person," Phillips said. "And ever since he was little, he wanted to be a game warden."

*(Continued on page 16)*

Conservation officers help preserve and protect Kentucky's outdoor traditions and heritage by patrolling land and water and enforcing hunting, fishing and boating laws. Kentucky Fish and Wildlife employs 130 conservation officers across the state.

Hudson hoped joining the military might lead to his dream job at the department. However, the competition to become a conservation officer is fierce. For the most recent class, 651 people applied for 15 spots.

Applicants meeting the initial requirements must score at least 80 percent on a written test to remain in contention.

Physical fitness and swim testing, background checks, interviews, a polygraph exam, drug screening, a psychological assessment and medical exam are all part of the process to determine the best recruits. Around three percent of the initial applicants make the final cut. Hudson was one of them.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Law Enforcement Director Hank Patton, himself a retired U.S. Army major, called to ask Hudson if he would accept the position.

"Honestly, I kind of assumed that between having my military experience and my degree that I would have a good shot," Hudson said. "But I was on edge all the way up until June 15 when I got the call. Every step of the way was a stressful time."

The work wasn't done, not by a long shot. Hudson knew the mindset and physical condition necessary to handle the rigorous training ahead.

"Having been through basic training and air assault school, I knew to get ready to embrace the suck. It was going to suck. I just had to embrace it," he said. "That's what made it easier for me. I knew I needed to be in shape before I got there. I did it for basic training and it made my time there so much easier."

"It was grueling being away from home for six months. I've done year-long tours and they aren't as bad as those six months. It's a lot of time away from your family. You go home on the weekend and reset and have to go back out to it."

## Military bonds recruits

That there were other recruits with military backgrounds helped. Hudson bonded quickly with two of them, Casey Meek and James Mulholland. Meek was an officer with the Glasgow Police Department prior to joining Kentucky Fish and Wildlife as a conservation officer. In 2005, the Barren County native deployed to Iraq for convoy security with the Kentucky National Guard.

Mulholland, a Scott County native, graduated from Eastern Kentucky University in 2004 and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army. He attended flight school at Fort Rucker in Alabama and flew Black Hawk helicopters during deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan with a unit that provided general aviation support.

Mulholland later transitioned into a job as operations manager for the U.S. Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps program at Western Kentucky University.

Hudson and Mulholland were among seven Kentucky Fish and Wildlife conservation officer recruits who graduated in December from basic training at the Kentucky Department of Criminal Justice Training.

Mulholland received Class Leader honors while Hudson was Class Adjutant. Hudson also received the Physical Training/Defensive Tactics award after completing Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Law Enforcement Academy. The two became fast friends during their rigorous training.



Hudson checks licenses of anglers on the bank of the Licking River.

"In the military you have people from different walks of life," Mulholland said. "I didn't know a single one of these guys. I'm really good friends now with Mike. He's probably one of my best friends from the academy, but I had never met him in my life. When I realized he was an NCO (non-commissioned officer) in the military, it's just like you plug in."

## View of the world

Meek, William Bowles and Jeremy Meade were sworn in as conservation officers in September.

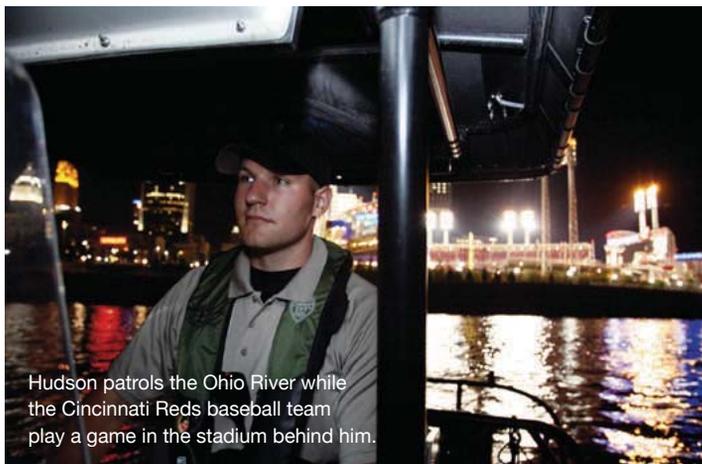
Meek received assignment to Warren County and has been working on his own since late January. He still stays in weekly touch with Hudson.

Mulholland was paired with Conservation Officer Barry McCoy for field training and assigned to Bath County.

"I've done work where you sit behind a computer all day," said Mulholland, a husband and father of two. "I don't mind it, but I like the fact that I can work on the computer and then I can go check fishing licenses or I could go check to see if somebody's baiting turkey or I can go look for somebody who's littering or dumping. "So far I enjoy it, I really do. You're not going to get rich from it. Half your salary is the view of the world every day, which is pretty cool."

Hudson received his assignment to Gallatin County. June 16 marked his first day working in the field alone. "It's been pretty great," he said. Hudson's shift the night of the Cincinnati Reds' fireworks included arrests of a man and woman on heroin-related charges. It ended with a final check of fishing licenses.

Two men inside a small aluminum fishing boat anchored downstream of the Taylor-Southgate Bridge along the Newport riverfront had lines in the water.



Hudson patrols the Ohio River while the Cincinnati Reds baseball team play a game in the stadium behind him.



Hudson patrols Licking River. KDFWR/Kevin Kelly photos

They produced fishing licenses as Fossitt negotiated the current and eased the boat alongside.

The glow from the stadium lights on the opposite bank helped Hudson confirm through his binoculars the validity of the licenses the men were showing them.

The officers thanked the anglers for their cooperation, wished them luck and started upriver to Manhattan Harbor, where they

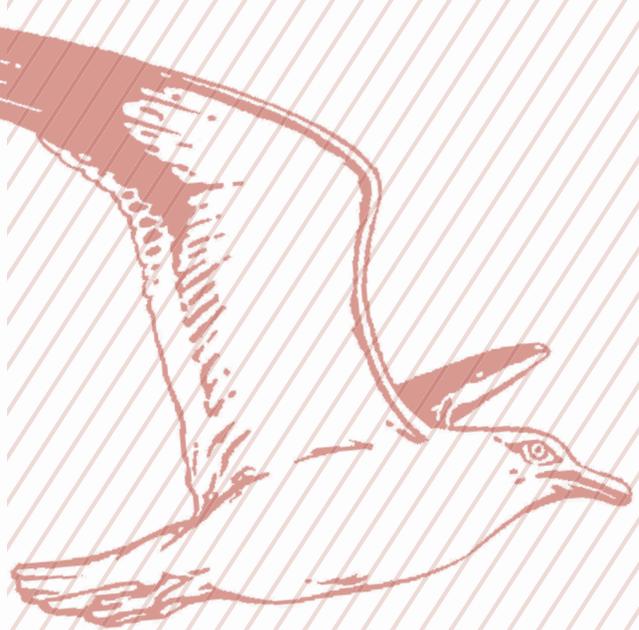
would secure the boat and call it a night. Fossitt answered succinctly when asked what advice he would give Hudson when he's out on his own.

"Enjoy it and have fun," he said. "Don't take advantage of your authority, and be honest. Always be honest."\*

*From Kentucky Afield Magazine [Summer 2014] Reprinted with permission of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources.*

# Stars on the water

## 2014 Boating Law Enforcement Officers of the Year



The responsibilities of today's marine law enforcement officers encompass a broad range of disciplines. Officers on the water do much more than patrol and enforce fish and wildlife conservation and boating laws.

Rising to a new level of public expectation and performance, they educate the boating public, conduct homeland security patrols, respond to environmental and natural disasters, and conduct search, rescue and recovery while undergoing rigorous training operations and professional development. Often these officers go well beyond the call of duty, and we honor these boating law enforcement officers in the following pages.

The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators created the Boating Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award in 2000 to recognize outstanding officers. This year we had nominees from 43 states and territories. The officers described in the following pages represent the top boating law enforcement officers in the nation.

# National Boating Officer of the Year

## Texas game warden named national boating officer of the year

### John Thorne

GAME WARDEN | Texas

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Game Warden John Thorne was named the 2014 Boating Law Enforcement Officer of the Year by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA). Thorne received the honor at the 55th Annual NASBLA Conference, held this October in Bar Harbor, Maine.

NASBLA established its Boating Law Enforcement Officer of the Year program in 2000 to celebrate the



Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Game Warden John Thorne receives the 2014 Boating Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award from NASBLA President Herb Angell.

nation's outstanding marine officers. The Boating Officer of the Year Award is presented to deserving recipients at three levels — state, regional and national. This year, 43 officers across the country were nominated for the national award.

John Thorne is the “go to guy” with Texas Parks & Wildlife when it comes to boating while intoxicated/boating under the influence (BWI/BUI) enforcement. He is also one of the agency's few Drug Recognition

Experts. Warden Thorne has filed or been directly involved in the filing of approximately 80 BWI/BUI cases during his 12-year career. Last summer, he and a less tenured warden filed five BWIs in one day. Not only is Warden Thorne a master at identifying and arresting BWI violators, he can clearly and convincingly articulate the facts of the case. His professionalism in handling these cases has resulted in an amazingly high conviction rate.

Warden Thorne worked with local prosecutors to implement/streamline a protocol for issuing search warrants for blood on those who refuse to provide a specimen. During the summer of 2013, he created an accurate and easy-to-understand guide to aid officers in BWI/BUI enforcement by assuring that they had the proper paperwork complete and followed the proper guidelines. This guide provides officers with something to double-check themselves during arrests.

Each summer, Warden Thorne coordinates water safety saturation patrols on Cedar Creek which covers 33,000 acres and is surrounded by 14 heavily populated municipalities. He also patrols Cedar Creek Lake every weekend during the warmer months. These efforts have been hugely effective in preventing accidents and removing intoxicated operators from the lake.

“John's dedication and enthusiasm is contagious as other wardens patrol with him and learn from his efforts and examples,” said Texas Boating Law Administrator Cody Jones.

*(Continued on page 20)*

# REGIONAL BOATING OFFICERS OF THE YEAR

## Northern Region

### Ryan Volenberg

CONSERVATION WARDEN | Wisconsin



Ryan Volenberg began his career as a conservation warden with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in 2002 and was assigned to the Two Rivers station as part of the Marine Enforcement Unit. After almost 11 years as a marine conservation warden, Volenberg transferred to an inland station in south central Wisconsin in June 2013.

Just months into his new assignment, he partnered with the Grade Boat Club on Lake Wisconsin to provide materials for the boat club, Boy Scouts, and Lions Club to construct four new life jacket loaner stations to promote life jacket wear among kids.

An advocate for safe boating, Warden Volenberg has dedicated himself to operating while intoxicated enforcement. In 2013 he participated in seven group enforcement efforts and assisted with a concentrated boating education and enforcement

effort to help reduce accidents as part of the Recreational Safety Enforcement Team. He is also active in noise enforcement and with a partner made six cases on loud boats in just one weekend. He made 10 boating OWI arrests and issued 43 boating citations.

Warden Volenberg also takes on many extra duties and is a leader in tactical training in the warden force. He is a Field Training Officer and a Firearms Instructor. In 2013, the WDNR created five new mission ready teams that can respond as needed around the state and Volenberg is a member of three of these teams – a Tactical Team that assists statewide with high risk events and warrants; the Tactical Boat Team, and the Remote Operated Vehicles Team.

craft law enforcement, education and safety on Flaming Gorge, Alcova and Pathfinder Reservoirs and the North Platte River during the spring and summer months.

While having only a couple watercraft seasons under his belt as a law enforcement officer, Gerharter has proven himself to be a top Wyoming watercraft safety officer. He has become one of the Game & Fish Department's top producers in documenting watercraft and fishing violations with a citation or written warning. His efforts prior to this year's watercraft season included 260 violations and 8 BUI arrests, the highest among all WGFD officers.

Warden Gerharter's productive boating enforcement effort is much more than just documenting violations. During each contact, he provides public information and education pertaining to watercraft laws and safety, with the intent of a safer boating environment on Wyoming's busiest waterways.

## Western Region

### Grant Gerharter

GAME WARDEN | Wyoming



Grant Gerharter's game warden career began in the spring of 2012. Since that time, his primary duty has been water-

In addition to his patrol duties, he assisted with seated battery SFST training for a County Sheriff's Office, assisted senior game wardens with in-service training relating to watercraft enforcement and took the lead as watercraft enforcement trainer for a new partner he was assigned in 2013. Grant was actively involved in providing watercraft and water related safety education programs to the public. This included family night at various Casper elementary schools, television news interviews and participation in local safety days.

# Northern Region

## State Boating Law Enforcement Officers of the Year



**Liam O'Brien**  
OFFICER  
Connecticut

Officer Liam O'Brien has been assigned to the Marine district, central sector, since being hired by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection in the summer of 2012. Prior to coming to the division he was employed as a municipal police officer for several years. Officer O'Brien quickly adapted to his new duties within the division, which includes boating investigations and enforcement.

In 2013, Officer O'Brien was one of the more active officers in the Marine District. He investigated three abandoned vessel complaints and one lengthy boating accident that resulted in the operator being charged with reckless boating, first degree while under the influence. He also issued 17 other boating citations, most of which were for insufficient flotation devices as well as several reckless boating charges, and participated in Operation Dry Water during the summer of 2013. He conducted boating enforcement activity both on the water and at the numerous state boat launches in one of the busiest summertime patrol sectors.

Officer O'Brien is constantly seeking training to further his boat handling and investigation skills. He is applying for his U.S. Coast Guard captain's license and is well respected by his coworkers for his cooperation and dedication to the division.



**Brian Pollock**  
CORPORAL  
Delaware

Cpl. Brian Pollock has worked as a Fish and Wildlife Agent with the Delaware Department of Natural Resources & Wildlife Enforcement since 2005. In 2013, he dedicated 918 hours toward recreational boating safety, conducted 273 boating safety compliance boardings, and spent 200 hours underway on Delaware's waterways. Cpl. Pollock made 365 arrests, 26 of which were for recreational boating safety violations, including two arrests for Operating Under the Influence (OUI), one of which involved a repeat offender. During the course of the year, Brian investigated three serious property value boating incidents which led to the successful prosecutions of negligent operators.

Cpl. Pollock strives through the changing seasons to be an active promoter of boating safety. He routinely devotes his time to public events including the department's annual youth fishing tournament where he successfully promotes the spirit of fishing and boating. His positive attitude coupled with a strong work ethic has allowed Cpl. Pollock to be one of the highest statistical producing officers in the Enforcement Section.

During his career, Cpl. Pollock has taken advantage of training opportunities afforded to him. Most recently he completed NASBLA's Boating Under the Influence Train-the-Trainer Course and will be playing a key role in preparing his department's current and future officers in the enforcement of the state's OUI laws.



**Officer Tony Petreikis**  
CONSERVATION  
POLICE  
Illinois

Conservation Police Officer (CPO) Tony Petreikis is a 21-year veteran of the Illinois Conservation Police. His patrol areas include the Mississippi River and the Rock River. These areas are heavily used by recreational boaters, and CPO Petreikis diligently provides a law enforcement presence to ensure safety in his area of operation. His passion for protecting those who seek to use the waterways for recreation is evident in his daily work.

During the 2013 boating season, CPO Petreikis concentrated on alcohol enforcement, leading the region with five operating under the influence arrests. He also issued 20 citations and numerous written warnings addressing boating safety violations.

CPO Petreikis is well versed in investigating boating accidents. In 2013, he investigated three major accidents, two of which involved fatalities. One example of CPO Petreikis' dedication involved the investigation of a fatal accident involving two personal watercraft operators, who intentionally operated over a lowhead dam and then attempted to return upstream over the dam. One operator drowned and the other clung to a tree branch. After rescuing the survivor, CPO Petreikis began interviewing the PWC operator. His investigation led to charges and guilty pleas for Unlawful Operation of a Watercraft in Restricted Waters and Reckless Operation of a Watercraft.

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CPO Petreikis also conducted a complex investigation into a boat licensing and titling business. His investigation took more than 150 hours to complete and uncovered numerous cases of fraud by the business. His tireless effort was successful in addressing recreational boaters' concerns and ultimately protecting their investments.



**Jacob Carlile**  
OFFICER  
Indiana

Conservation Officer Jacob Carlile began his career with the Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division in 2006 and has been dedicated to boating safety, enforcement, and education ever since.

Officer Carlile attends many local lake association meetings, where he attentively listens to the needs and concerns of the boating public and lake residents and provides a wealth of information covering areas such as boating laws and water rights laws. Officer Carlile not only listens to the boating public's concerns, he follows up on these concerns by providing professional law enforcement service and taking appropriate enforcement actions to correct violations.

Officer Carlile spends most of his time focused on boating safety. Logging hundreds of hours of boating patrols in 2013, he took 124 boating enforcement actions, from minor boating violations to criminal arrests, which is a testament to Officer Carlile's attentiveness and knowledge of the law as well as its application.

Officer Carlile led the district with boating while intoxicated arrests. Through his patrol efforts, he removed seven intoxicated boaters from Lagrange County waterways. His vigilant and attentive patrols have no doubt made Lagrange

county lakes safer places for boaters to enjoy day and night.

Officer Carlile also spent much of his time educating the public on boating and water safety. He instructed over 19 hours of boater education, certifying hundreds of students. He was also very active in instructing water safety courses in the local school systems, spending over 44 hours instructing students on safety in and around the water.



**Matt Washburn**  
CONSERVATION  
OFFICER  
Iowa

Assigned to Cerro Gordo County, which contains Clear Lake, Conservation Officer Matt Washburn with the Department of Natural Resources is an expert in handling Boating While Intoxicated (BWI) enforcement. Over the years since he transferred to Cerro Gordo County, there has been a noticeable decline in the number of BWI violations on Clear Lake. This decline can be attributed to Officer Washburn's enforcement method and education program.

In 2013 Officer Washburn developed a project to curb the increasing problem of alcohol use by minors on Clear Lake. He took the lead and worked with other enforcement agencies to focus on trying to curb the problem of underage drinking that was causing problems at Farmer's Beach, an area on Clear Lake where boaters can anchor and congregate both on the water and on the beach. The enforcement project involved patrolling the beach and water to check for minors in possession of alcohol. This was done over several weekends, and the project was very successful, resulting in a visible decrease in the number of underage drinkers at the beach.

Officer Washburn developed a well-received boat education program for his

area, particularly with the Clear Lake School District. Each year the Clear Lake Elementary School third grade students go through a short field day that involves water and boat safety. Officer Washburn, with the help of neighboring conservation officers, teaches the third grade students about boat safety, the importance of wearing a life jacket, and being safe near water. It is a very successful program that the school district supports and values as important to teach.



**Christopher Hilton**  
OFFICER MARINE  
PATROL  
Maine

Officer Christopher Hilton was hired by the Maine Marine Patrol as a seasonal deputy in the spring of 2007. In the early days of his career, he distinguished himself early as an outdoorsman and an able operator of various watercraft. He quickly gained the respect of anglers and guides working along the river with his professional demeanor and enforcement practices. In just under two years, Deputy Hilton had contact with 1,476 vessels and 2,373 harvesters. Between those contacts, he drafted 534 warnings and 56 citations for watercraft safety violations as well as for fishery and criminal cases, while logging 873 hours underway.

In April 2009, Deputy Hilton was hired full-time and went to the Maine Criminal Justice Academy's Basic Law Enforcement Training Program. After successfully completing the Academy, he continued to maintain strong underway hours even along with his other responsibilities. Over the course of his next two years, he logged an amazing 1,376 hours underway with 1,471 boats checked and 4,206 harvesters, generating 343 warnings and 42 citations.

Officer Hilton now patrols on and around Casco Bay, one of the most heavily populated recreational boating areas on

the Maine coast. He has been involved in multiple searches for overdue and missing boaters. Officer Hilton was able to cross-train himself on three different models of patrol boats and make a difference in the Casco Bay area. He continues to have high numbers all around: 1,210 hours underway in just over two years with 379 warnings and 28 citations after having contact with 3,521 harvesters on 1,053 boats.



**John Tranghese**  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
POLICE OFFICER  
Massachusetts

In his 30-plus years with Massachusetts Environmental Police, EPO Tranghese has been the foundation for any region he is working in and has taken it upon himself to be his department's point man in marine issues. The first to offer assistance, he is calm and positive, prepared, under control, and willing to get whatever task is necessary completed.

Willing to work with other agencies, EPO Tranghese has fostered huge goodwill with those groups, allowing multi-agency patrols, searches, etc. to go that much more efficiently. EPO J. Tranghese is also extremely eager to teach, and it shows. He greatly enjoys taking newer EPOs with him and passing on vast knowledge and expertise to anyone willing to take the time to learn.

EPO J. Tranghese assisted with or was directly a part of several large-scale marine operations in 2013, along with numerous standard patrols. He is fantastic at dealing with the general public. Extremely respectful, he treats everyone as he would his own family, maintaining his composure at all times.

EPO Tranghese has a vast knowledge of the laws and uses discretion when dealing with violators. His vast knowledge and experience allows for everyone involved in any operation to be better. While the citation numbers for himself are not high,

those he works with are. Through his expert boat handling, he provides a skill set that is not recognized enough and his preparation/post operational expertise deserve to be recognized.



**Steve Converse**  
CONSERVATION  
OFFICER  
Michigan

Conservation Officer Steve Converse is a 14-year veteran with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division. His marine patrol duties take him on Lake Michigan as well as numerous inland lakes, big rivers, and streams. In 2013 CO Converse led his district in marine safety enforcement totaling 35 arrests and 33 verbal warnings.

Last year CO Converse worked a joint water quality patrol with the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) and Department of Environmental Quality. On April 8, 2013, CO Converse, along with several other team members, observed a significant amount of waste water flowing into the Manistee River from a storm sewer outfall. The City of Manistee Public Works was notified of the situation and immediately responded to assist. A malfunction and blockage of the sewage system had occurred and was quickly resolved.

On September 7, 2013, CO Converse along with COs Soper and Koscinski patrolled a huge annual marine event known as Hardy Gras. While on a routine marine stop for no navigation lights after dark, CO Converse heard cries for help. The officers disengaged from their stop and saw an overturned canoe approximately 200 yards away with individuals in the water. After responding, CO Converse threw out a life ring to one individual and hoisted him into the patrol boat. The officers then searched and located the two remaining subjects from the

overturned canoe. All three subjects were highly intoxicated, none of them was wearing a life jacket and each was unaware of the danger in which they'd been.



**Patrick McGowan**  
CONSERVATION  
OFFICER  
Minnesota

Conservation Officer Patrick McGowan is highly respected and motivated. Working for the Department of Natural Resources, he serves in a metro area, which includes busy sections of the St. Croix and Mississippi Rivers. CO McGowan is a true professional, treating members of the community with respect and courtesy during each contact.

Since 2008, CO McGowan has arrested over 10 individuals for boating under the influence of alcohol. He shares his knowledge by teaching other officers skills to prepare them for working these types of cases. Varying his work schedule to maximize his efforts, he is a leader in issuing citations and warnings related to a variety of boating regulations. In 2013 he worked 625 late hours and 817 weekend hours to achieve an "exceptional" rating on time management.

Officer McGowan always portrays a positive image of the department through his demeanor and appearance. He is confident in his abilities and will take charge of a situation when needed. He can be counted on to make the right decision when time is of the essence. He has worked with the U.S. Secret Service and Coast Guard on security details.

Officer McGowan made contact with the Dakota County Water Patrol to coordinate equipment and facilitate quick response to incidents. Deputy Matt Regis of the Dakota County Sheriff's office writes: "This partnership between agencies allows us to work

*(Continued on page 24)*

more efficiently while accomplishing our agency goals. This proactive approach to enforcement was not only safer for us officers on the water but also allows for better interoperability for water related incidents in the future.”



**C. George Wolsleben**  
SECURITY CHIEF  
Nebraska

C. George Wolsleben has been a professional law enforcement officer since 1981, beginning his career in the United States Army as a Military Police Officer. He spent five years with the Police Department in Lyman, Wyoming, as a patrolman and 10 years with the Uinta County Sheriff's Office in Evanston Wyoming, seven years of which he served as a criminal investigator. He has worked for the Saunders County Sheriff's Department since 1997 and his main area of responsibility is Woodcliff Lakes, which combine for 145 acres.

He has shown his dedication to the department and has exemplified himself as a team player; this is witnessed by his strong ability and his willingness to assist others. Chief Wolsleben's primary function is security of the area both on and off the water. He is a multi-talented officer, and boating enforcement is a collateral duty of Wolsleben. In 2012 he arrested a boat operator for manslaughter in a boating fatality case. Because of Wolsleben's successful investigation, the boat operator was convicted.

A certified Nebraska boating instructor since 1998, Chief Wolsleben is responsible for the certification of hundreds of students of boating safety education. He is also dedicated to community service and participates in the local volunteer fire department and in multiple events

throughout the year, including several community-based fundraising events on his own time. Saunders County Sheriff Kevin Stukenholtz reports that George works well with task force operations and all departments within Saunders County.



**David Jones**  
SUPERVISOR  
New Hampshire

Supervisor David Jones started his career as a member of the Department of Safety Marine Patrol in February 2008 and has been assigned to the state's largest patrol on Lake Winnepesaukee since that time. His patrol area covers 72 square miles of water located in two counties and eight towns. The lake offers a mix of highly concentrated areas frequented by tourists as well as quiet, undeveloped shorelines offering opportunities for observing wildlife and fishing activities. In addition, his patrol area includes 258 islands, of which 200+ are inhabited.

Supervisor Jones is responsible for supervising 10 fellow officers, including the four that accompany him on Lake Winnepesaukee's night shift. His duties include scheduling, administrative paperwork review, prosecuting criminal court cases, and conducting routine law enforcement patrols.

In 2013, Supervisor Jones demonstrated his passion for boating safety in many ways. Most obvious was his commitment to enforcement activity and service to the state's boating public. He conducted 146 boardings, issued 181 warnings, 93 summonses, and performed 12 boater assists. In addition, Jones took full advantage of his training in the use of the new seated battery of field sobriety tests. Having completed the BUI training offer by NASBLA's BOAT program, Jones arrested 11 boat operators for BUI and convicted ten. All convictions

resulted in loss of boating and motor vehicle operating privileges. Supervisor Jones takes great pride in his duties as a Supervisor. In addition to his service to the State of New Hampshire and its boating public, he serves as a part time officer with the Town of Alton, N.H.



**Angelo Paccione**  
MARINE PATROL  
OFFICER  
New York

Marine Patrol Officer (MPO) Angelo Paccione joined the Lake George Park Commission's (LGPC) Marine Patrol in 2008. Previously he spent 20 years with the New York Police Department working most of his career in plainclothes anti-crime and investigation units, including working as a detective in major crimes investigations. Following 9/11, he worked in NYPD's Counter Terrorism Bureau and NYPD's Dignitary Protection Unit until his retirement in 2005. He was also the past chief and safety officer of the Elmont Fire Department and has extensive training and experience in emergency services, incident command, and critical incident response.

A lifelong boater, MPO Paccione rapidly transferred his skills to the Marine Patrol and has taken a lead role in public safety and law enforcement on Lake George. Starting as a peak season patrol officer, he has moved into a full-time position.

MPO Paccione has also been integral in the development of the on-water component of the LGPC's Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) prevention programs, assisting LGPC staff with the cataloging of the almost 100 launch sites on Lake George. He has assisted in surveys of AIS infestation sites and with dive programs to monitor AIS site control measures. He actively

investigates alleged violations of LGPC regulations regarding dock construction, water quality, and marina use.

Angelo Paccione's inspired leadership and unwavering devotion have contributed immensely to the safe boating cause in New York. His actions reflect tremendous credit upon himself, the Lake George Park Commission, and the entire marine law enforcement community.



**Jackie Lundstrom**  
DISTRICT GAME  
WARDEN  
North Dakota

District Game Warden Jackie Lundstrom began her career as a North Dakota Game Warden with the Game & Fish Department in 1995. She spends much of her time patrolling the Missouri River near Bismarck. This area is known as one of the more highly used and more congested areas for boaters and water enthusiasts in the state.

Warden Lundstrom is very active with boat patrols on the water, boat ramp checks, and boat safety equipment checks. She is skilled in the detection, apprehension, and prosecution of boaters who are operating while under the influence of drugs or alcohol. In addition, she is often called upon to assist in the search for missing or stranded boaters.

In addition to her work on the water, Warden Lundstrom is involved with many of the duties of the Missouri River Boat Safety Task Force. Along with her own duties of patrolling, she is involved in organizing work details, scheduling personnel, obtaining equipment, and coordinating repairs for the river boats that work on the Missouri River. She is also very active in the training of other law enforcement personnel who assist with boating work on the river.

Warden Lundstrom is very knowledgeable, professional, and dedicated. She maintains a positive attitude even when things become difficult. Warden Lundstrom is dedicated to making sure that boaters are abiding by the regulations to ensure the water remains a safe place.



**Kyle Love**  
PETTY OFFICER  
THIRD CLASS  
Ohio

Petty Officer Third Class Kyle Love graduated from the Coast Guard's Maritime Law Enforcement Academy in April 2013 and immediately put his newfound knowledge and skills to use by leading boarding teams onto vessels operating in the western basin of Lake Erie to enforce federal laws and regulations.

Stationed at U.S. Coast Guard Station Marblehead during the 2013 boating season, he led 108 vessel boardings and successfully identified and removed 21 intoxicated vessel operators from the water. His efforts to build each case and to complete the files required to support a successful prosecution showed a level of professionalism uncommon in a newly certified officer.

Most notably, he pursued federal criminal charges against four vessel operators who had prior convictions for driving under the influence, an undertaking that required a lengthy process to request federal prosecution, but one which he successfully completed to levy the criminal charge and force the violators to answer for their actions in federal court. In the remaining 17 cases he pursued civil penalties, decisions that show a tempered approach to enforcement.

"His efforts to build each case have improved safety on the water," said Petty Officer 1st Class Phillip Null, the operations petty officer at Coast

Guard Station Marblehead. Demonstrating superior stamina, Petty Officer Love accumulated over 1,000 underway hours on more than 300 sorties for search and rescue, law enforcement, and training missions over the year. In total he led the response to more than 40 search and rescue cases.

In June, Love transferred to St. Petersburg, Florida, where he is assigned to the Coast Guard Cutter Venturous.



**Darrin Kephart**  
WATERWAYS  
CONSERVATION  
OFFICER  
Pennsylvania

Waterways Conservation Officer (WCO) Darrin Kephart is an eight-year veteran with the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission. He's assigned to the Southern York County District, which includes the recreational boating pools encompassing the lower 22 miles of the Susquehanna River.

During 2013, Officer Kephart logged 639 hours of recreational boating law enforcement, with 39 shifts conducted onboard various patrol boats. During that time, he initiated 403 vessel boardings resulting in 77 criminal summary citations and 486 warnings.

Officer Kephart is very proactive in Boating Under the Influence (BUI) enforcement. During 2013, he facilitated three BUI boating safety special enforcement details on the lower Susquehanna and assisted with three additional details hosted at other waterways throughout the region. As a result of these efforts, Officer Kephart apprehended and prosecuted three watercraft operators for BUI and assisted fellow officers with five additional BUI arrests.

During the 2013 boating season, Officer Kephart served as the lead investigator

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of a boating accident that resulted in two fatalities, garnering extensive media coverage and legislative interest. Partnering with the Pennsylvania State Police and Lancaster County District Attorney's Office, Officer Kephart led a thorough and meticulous five-month investigation that included forensic reenactments of the watercraft's loading, capacity and stability. Subsequently, evidence derived from this investigation led to the operator of the involved watercraft being criminally charged with multiple counts of homicide by watercraft, involuntary manslaughter, reckless operation of watercraft and numerous supporting summary offenses.



**Richard Browning**  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
POLICE OFFICER  
Rhode Island

Environmental Police Officer Richard Browning joined the Department of Environmental Management in April 2004 and has been a very active and effective field officer in the department's Division of Law Enforcement Marine Patrol. He is seen by his peers as an outstanding all-around boating officer, but he is particularly noticed for his work with the large offshore patrol boat.

Several years ago, the division, with much input from EPO Browning, worked with a boat builder to design and have built a 46' offshore diesel patrol boat. EPO Browning drew from his extensive boat handling experience from his time in the Coast Guard, his numerous hours offshore as a commercial fisherman, and his participation in high-end fishing tournaments to design a boat that is a tremendous offshore platform. Powered by a 1000hp diesel, the vessel is equipped with a complex array of fishing and navigational gear. EPO Browning is a master of all of the systems and in the operation of the boat. As part of the program he has trained a number of

other officers to become proficient in the operation of the boat. With this vessel, officers venture miles offshore in fishing gear compliance patrols, as well as more routine boating safety patrols.

Officer Browning's skills as a marine officer make him a credit to any boating program. He was also selected as Rhode Island's Boating Officer of the Year in 2008.



**Tony Stokely**  
CONSERVATION  
OFFICER  
South Dakota

An officer with South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks since 2002, Conservation Officer Tony Stokely has one of the most unique bodies of water to patrol – the Missouri River. He patrols over 50 miles of river, most of which is located within the boundaries of the Missouri National Recreational River. A significant portion of the river in his patrol area has been designated a Wild and Scenic River by the National Park Service and is one of the only stretches of river similar to what Lewis and Clark originally encountered on their expedition.

In 2013, Conservation Officer Stokely took part in the Seated Battery of Field Sobriety Tests transition and worked closely with attorneys in his area to garner their support for the newly validated Seated Battery Field Sobriety Tests. Using the training he received, he arrested two operators for boating under the influence in 2013. He also had two drug arrests while patrolling the waterways that summer.

One of the biggest challenges of working on the Missouri River is the fluctuating river levels, which present challenges in launching a boat at public access sites. Conservation Officer Stokely's relationship with local landowners has

mitigated this issue. He has access to several private ramps along the Missouri River which ensures that officers can still patrol the waters. Conservation Officer Stokely has also developed solid relationships with local deputies and troopers who assist in transporting individuals placed under arrest, saving time and creating a safer environment for the officers and the subjects.



# Southern Region

## State Boating Law Enforcement Officers of the Year



### Jessie Peacock

MARINE PATROL  
OFFICER  
Alabama

Marine Patrol Officer Jessie Peacock patrols one of the most remote and difficult posts in Alabama without support facilities, marinas or fueling stations. His work ethic, however, makes him at home in even the most challenging of work environments and a positive force for law enforcement and boating safety in south Alabama. MPO Peacock spent 273 hours on public outreach and education or roughly 16 percent of his annual work time. He was instrumental in the success of the Baldwin County Sheriff's Office Camp Shining Star for children, connecting with hundreds of youngsters in the process. MPO Peacock was also essential in helping the Outboard Drag Boat Association races return to Baldwin County after almost a decade-long absence.

As a chief petty officer in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve with over 20 years of experience, MPO Peacock serves as a crucial liaison to the department's federal partners in the region and coordinates many joint missions. He also serves on the Marine Police Division's Critical Response Team.

In addition, he was pivotal in dismantling an interstate methamphetamine manufacturing and distribution ring. On September 1, 2013, MPO Peacock was working a special detail along the Perdido River in Baldwin County and arrested a suspect for possession of controlled substances and drug paraphernalia. Having had previous contact with the

suspect, MPO Peacock used outstanding initiative in launching a multi-agency operation that resulted in the arrest of two Florida individuals who assaulted the arresting officers when caught in the act of manufacturing meth on State of Alabama property.



### Steve Paul

WILDLIFE OFFICER  
Arkansas

For the second consecutive year, Wildlife Officer Steve Paul was selected as Arkansas' Boating Officer of the Year. Working for the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission, he continues to take boating enforcement work in his district, and especially in his home county of Hot Spring, to a level never expected.

Officer Paul is self-motivated and committed to addressing the many boating-related problems in Hot Spring County. While working 383 hours of boating law enforcement in 2013, he made 1,383 boating contacts, wrote 104 citations of which four were BUI arrests, and assisted in 101 other boating-related violations. Officer Paul maintained a 100-percent conviction rate on all his cases.

In addition to the larger bodies of water, last year Officer Paul targeted his efforts on the Ouachita River. He had received numerous complaints regarding user conflict issues, so he developed and conducted two special operations to target those issues.

The two operations resulted in 54 Arkansas Game and Fish/Boating citations and 14 criminal citations.

Officer Paul takes a proactive approach to boating safety education. He was selected as a member of the Arkansas Fireboat Committee where he was instrumental in educating boat-based fire department volunteers in safe boat operations and rescue techniques on moving water. He taught five boating education courses, gave a presentation on boating law to the College of the Ouachita's Criminal Law Class, conducted boating safety training for the Arkansas Army National Guard, and was selected by the residents of Hot Spring County as one of their "Dynamic Dozen" community leaders who are making a difference for the betterment of the county.



### Tim Shearer

OFFICER  
Florida

During his five years of service with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission, Officer Tim Shearer has consistently exhibited a strong work ethic and can-do attitude. After serving his country in the U.S. Marine Corps for 22 years, Master Sergeant Shearer began his career with the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission in 2009.

Officer Shearer leads his area in derelict vessel enforcement, and he has embraced a proactive initiative to deter derelict boats. Florida's "at risk" vessel initiative focuses on contacting boat owners to make them aware of their boat's declining condition.

*(Continued on page 28)*

His efforts in this area have resulted in most boat owners bringing their boats into compliance or removing them from the water before they become derelict.

Officer Shearer's personal work-related statistics for 2013 provide a snapshot into his dedication to keeping Florida's boating community and visiting boaters safe:

- 995 boating safety hours
- 881 vessel patrol hours
- 298 land-based water patrol hours
- 1,371 vessel inspections
- 327 citations and warnings
- 10 BUI cases
- 23 manatee speed zone violations
- Nearly 4,000 personal contacts

Officer Shearer has organized various boating safety details targeting high-activity boating areas, and he leads his work area with BUI investigations and arrests. At the onset of the boating season he made several BUI cases, and it quickly became apparent to the public that BUI was not going to be tolerated in his area. In 2013, he had a 100-percent conviction rate for his BUI and DUI arrests.



**Jeremy Bolen**  
CORPORAL  
Georgia

Corporal Jeremy Bolen works a very active boating area within his region and put in a great deal of effort on boating safety related issues in 2013. These efforts are evidenced by the wide variety of activities with which he was involved. Cpl. Bolen sets an inspiring example for others to follow.

Working for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, he patrols four major reservoirs in his work section, including the Chattahoochee River. The reservoirs in his work section are all shared with the state of Alabama

and, as a result, Cpl. Bolen maintains a positive working relationship with Alabama's Marine Police, routinely working in conjunction with those officers. In 2013 he devoted 475 hours to boating safety patrols, checking 157 boats during these patrols.

Cpl. Bolen's public relations efforts last year were excellent. Programs included speaking to groups such as Georgia Power Lake Harding Homeowner's Association, three TV interviews about boating safety, BUIs, and National Safe Boating Week, and submitting a radio station public service announcement on life jacket use. Cpl. Bolen also participated in the Columbus Safe Kid's life jacket give-a-way.



**A.J. Meyer**  
OFFICER  
Kansas

Officer A.J. Meyer started off his boating safety duties for 2013 by working the boating education booth at the Kansas City boat show and assisting with eight additional boating safety programs that included 2510 participants. Officer Meyer has a very upbeat and positive attitude and reflects it towards his contacts with the boating public.

Officer Meyer also volunteered his time to help with the Department of Wildlife & Parks' boating safety awareness training day at Cheney Reservoir. This training consisted of providing awareness to department administrative staff in relation to what type of vessels and duties law enforcement performs while on public waters.

Officer Meyer had a great year educating boaters about safe and sober boating while performing his enforcement duties. He patrols a major reservoir centralized near several larger cities. Although Kanopolis Reservoir

had very low water levels and almost no recreational boating for nearly the entire summer, he still completed 77 vessel inspections by working routinely at three other area reservoirs. Officer Meyer led the division in 2013 with five BUI arrests.

Officer Meyer transferred to a new duty station in 2013 and quickly became a part of the district's team when it came to BUI interdiction. Meyer proved his benefit to the team by assisting with five BUI selective enforcements during 2013 that resulted in 12 BUI arrests. Meyer's enthusiasm, team work, and skill at BUI enforcement was a major factor to the success of these selective enforcements.



**Darwin Chesser**  
CONSERVATION  
OFFICER  
Kentucky

Working for the Kentucky Department of Wildlife Resources, Officer Darwin Chesser works hard to keep boaters from doing unsafe acts on the state's waterways and to enforce public intoxication laws. Assigned to Spencer County in Central Kentucky, his efforts have contributed to zero drownings or serious injuries on his watch for the past three years.

In 2013 he made 29 arrests for alcohol intoxication and issued 39 boating-related citations. He also participated in many boating-related partnerships including nine ride-alongs for the Spencer County High School 'Mentor Program'; State Fair; Oldham Counties Earth Day; Spencer County Fishing Derby for 104 kids; Redi Fest @ Spencer Co. High School; and a Farm Bureau meeting to answer questions.

Officer Chesser responded to a boating accident on June 19, 2013, at Taylorsville Lake. The boat operator did not see the wake of another boat and hit it at full speed, throwing a female passenger

out of her seat and onto the floor. The victim complained that her lower back was hurting. EMS was called and transported her to a local hospital. The cause of the accident was determined to be operator error. Officer Chesser checked on the injured boater later that week. The woman was sore but had suffered no serious injuries.



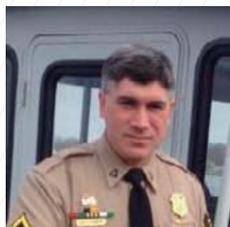
**James Hagan**  
SERGEANT  
Louisiana

Sgt. James Hagan has been a Wildlife Enforcement Agent with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries since 2001. His boating enforcement efforts contributed to his receiving the LDWF Region 2 Officer of the Year Award in 2004 and again in 2012. He has also been recognized twice with LDWF Life Saving Awards obtained from actions performed in the line of duty.

Sgt. Hagan represents the best that LDWF Enforcement has to offer in the field of boating safety law enforcement and education. As an LDWF Instructor in the NASBLA BOAT Program, Sgt. Hagan has taken a lead in the instruction of future LDWF cadets and current LDWF enforcement agents. His commitment to boating safety and education has made the waterways of Louisiana safer for recreational boating throughout the state and has played a part in record level lows for Louisiana in boating fatalities for 2013.

Sgt. Hagan has developed into one of Louisiana's top boating accident reconstruction investigators. Among the many accidents he investigated in 2013, Sgt. Hagan took the role as lead accident reconstruction investigator on two of the more complex, multi-vessel accident collisions involving injuries. His reconstructions were instrumental in providing the evidence needed to successfully identify the causes related to the incidents.

Sgt. Hagan concentrated his remaining patrol efforts on the enforcement of boaters operating under the influence. In 2013, he assisted with the coordination of nine DWI enforcement details and participated in specialized details. These coordinated details resulted in numerous driving while intoxicated arrests on the Ouachita and Mississippi Rivers.



**Hubert Brohawn**  
SENIOR OFFICER  
Maryland

Senior Officer Brohawn joined the Maryland Natural Resources Police in 2002. He is dedicated to conservation enforcement and the public safety mission that involves the boating safety activities of the Natural Resources Police. He is enthusiastic and dedicated to boating enforcement in Maryland, which has been documented with the high number of BUI cases made. This is the second year in a row that Senior Officer Brohawn has been selected as the Maryland Natural Resources Police Boating Safety Officer of the Year Award.

Senior Officer Brohawn's knowledge of safe boating practices is extensive and his quality of work was exceptional throughout 2013. His statistics are consistent with an officer spending quality time on patrol and targeting specific boating enforcement activities. Additionally, he was selected into the agency's Tactical Boat Operator's program, which is a highly sought after position. In this role he has attended training at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center for Boat Operator's Anti-Terrorism Training program.

Senior Officer Brohawn is well respected by his peers within the Natural Resources Police as well as

with allied agencies. He is frequently sought out for assistance due to his knowledge of criminal, boating, and conservation law. His ability to coordinate information and work as a team with other law enforcement has truly had a positive effect on boating safety in the area he works.



**Gilbert Barham**  
MASTER SERGEANT  
Mississippi

Master Sergeant Gilbert Barham is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg with a bachelor of science degree in English and a minor in biology. Working for the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, & Parks, he is assigned to Leake County, which has multiple waterways and two rivers – the Pearl and the Yockanookany – that flow several miles through the county and are popular waterways for fishing, boating and other water-related activities. He also patrols the Ross Barnett Reservoir.

Known by fellow officers and the local public as "Coach," his experience and knowledge of these congested waterways is a great benefit to the agency and the boating public. He relays this information to the public through teaching the Boating Education Program and appearing at public safety talks to schools, civic groups and other law enforcement agencies. Through these classes and safety talks within his region, he has talked to at least 915 people and certified approximately 150 students in boater education.

Master Sergeant Barham is a great team player with fellow officers and has established a good relationship with his region's boating coordinator. Keeping a high visibility of officer's

*(Continued on page 30)*

presence and enforcement at the Ross Barnett Reservoir, Master Sergeant Barham is assigned to the area and works with fellow officers and Reservoir Patrol enforcing boating laws and conducting safety checks. He issued 60 boating-related citations in 2013.

When confronting violators on the waterways he is firm but fair and uses these encounters as an educational opportunity by explaining to boaters the need for and importance of boating enforcement and the efforts of this agency in saving lives.



**Lance D. DeClue**  
CORPORAL  
Missouri

Corporal Lance D. DeClue with the Missouri State Highway Patrol is an outstanding officer who displays a strong work ethic. His dedication to duty, aggressive enforcement efforts, and in-depth knowledge of marine operations responsibilities directly attributed to the life-saving efforts he performed in 2013.

Currently a canine officer with marine operations responsibilities, Corporal DeClue answered 26 canine callouts in 2013, resulting in several felony and misdemeanor drug arrests. His main responsibilities on the water are the Meramec, Missouri and Gasconade rivers, and the Huzzah, Courtois and Bourbeuse creeks, arguably the busiest float stream areas in Missouri.

Corporal DeClue demonstrated his commitment to law enforcement and to the patrol during 2013. He produced a large number of arrests, volunteered for several overtime projects, and performed as a field training officer, all while remaining available for callouts.

On August 6, 2013, Corporal Lance D. DeClue and then-Sergeant Justin L. McCullough responded to a low-water area along Mitchell Creek, where a Fort Leonard Wood Fire and Rescue boat had capsized. The officers rescued two Fort Leonard Wood firefighters on top of a shed that had washed into a utility pole guide wire, and a civilian male (with a broken leg) holding a small child in the water clinging to the same guide wire. After taking the subjects to safety, Sergeant McCullough and Corporal DeClue returned to the raging waters and rescued two women.

In light of the bravery and selfless courage of Sergeant McCullough and Corporal DeClue in rescuing and saving the lives of seven people impacted by the flood on August 6, 2013, Pulaski County Sheriff Ronald Long presented the lifesaving medal to Sergeant McCullough and Corporal DeClue.



**Reggie Barker**  
SERGEANT  
North Carolina

A 22-year veteran with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, Sergeant Reggie Barker strives to protect the public each year through boating patrols and education programs. His professionalism and excellence throughout his career is a model example of conservation enforcement.

Sergeant Barker recently received the 2014 Governor's Award for Excellence for responding to a boater in distress call on the rain swollen Cape Fear River. Sergeant Barker responded, evaluated the situation, coordinated the rescue, and led his men in conducting a dangerous nighttime rescue under hazardous conditions.

Sergeant Barker is a member of his agency's BUI training team and has

conducted training for every wildlife officer in the state as well as numerous other officers from other agencies. He is a certified SFST instructor and a NASBLA seated battery instructor. He also teaches SFSTs and the NASBLA seated battery at the commission's Wildlife Basic School.

Sergeant Barker was the Incident Commander for a week-long search and rescue effort on Jordan Lake for a subject who drowned while boating last summer. Sergeant Barker coordinated the rescue efforts from the different departments, conducted numerous media interviews, and was responsible for communications with the victim's family. His professionalism and compassion in this situation was appreciated by the victim's family as well as the Emergency Management Team.

Sergeant Barker is also the incident Commander for evacuation for Jordan Lake, Shearon Harris Lake and the Cape Fear River. Sergeant Barker has held this responsibility for over 10 years and has conducted several training exercises for FEMA evaluators.



**Jason Plemmons**  
FIRST SERGEANT  
South Carolina

First Sergeant Jason Plemmons' proactive approach while working the waterways and lakes in his area is evident by the number of boating contacts that he produces on a consistent basis. In 2013 he was at the top of his unit with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources in almost every boating enforcement effort. FSGT Plemmons had 247 boating hours, 13 boating cases, 55 boating warnings, 68 boating contacts, and inspected 371 boats. He worked three boating incidents resulting in 22 boating incident investigations hours. In addition

to normal patrol, Plemmons served as a dive team member with his agency and spent an additional 68 hours on search and rescue missions. In December of 2013, Plemmons was promoted to First Sergeant.

On the night of May 26, 2013, while patrolling Lake Wylie FSGT Plemmons saved a boater's life. FSGT Plemmons and a fellow officer encountered a boat with grossly intoxicated subjects on board in a panic. The boaters were convinced a third boater had jumped overboard and drowned. When FSGT Plemmons boarded the boat he noticed that the female subject had been assaulted by her husband and put the male subject in a life jacket and handcuffs and placed him under arrest for BUI.

After contacting family members, the third boater was located asleep at home, but the suspect was unconvinced and jumped out of the boat into the water. He unbuckled his life jacket and went under. FSGT Plemmons jumped in and grabbed the sinking subject by the handcuffs. The man began to fight with FSGT Plemmons as he pulled him to the side of the boat.

As both officers pulled the man into the boat, the suspect's intoxicated wife attacked FSGT Plemmons. The female subject was placed under arrest for Public Disorderly Conduct. The quick actions of FSGT Plemmons and his fellow officer saved a life that night. His willingness to put his life on the line to save a life is a perfect example of an outstanding DNR law enforcement officer.



**Joe Campbell**  
OFFICER  
Tennessee

Officer Joe Campbell's assigned area encompasses 12 counties in west Tennessee and contains two major reservoirs and two river systems that are popular destinations for fishing and boating activities.

Last year, Officer Campbell's law enforcement efforts with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency were outstanding. He inspected 614 vessels for compliance with Tennessee boating laws resulting in 34 citations and 52 warnings being issued. He also assisted 16 boaters who were stranded either for mechanical failure or for some other needed assistance.

In the category of boating safety education Officer Campbell excelled by monitoring and grading 417 boating education exams for Tennessee's mandatory education program. He also taught five boating safety courses. As a result of these efforts he was able to certify 597 students. He also developed a partnership with both the Henry County and Stewart County public school systems to provide in school boater education to students.

In addition to all of the above mentioned work, Officer Campbell was instrumental in establishing the agency's medical program and is one of two certified paramedics within TWRA. He received additional training in Tactical Combat Care and Tactical Boat Operations and was certified by the National Safe Boating Council as an instructor in open water boat operations. He also attended basic and advanced interview and interrogation training.

Officer Campbell uses his skills to help and train his fellow officers. He coordinated a high-level training course for officers on how to respond to an "officer down" call. He also assists in the training of officers at in-service by teaching combat casualty care and first aid.



**Brandon W. Harris**  
CONSERVATION  
POLICE SENIOR  
OFFICER  
Virginia

Brandon W. Harris graduated from Virginia Tech in 2005 with a bachelor

of science degree in Wildlife Science. In December 2007, he joined the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries as a conservation police officer. After completing the law enforcement training academy at the top of his class, Officer Harris was assigned to a district containing two of the state's largest inland bodies of water – Lake Gaston and Buggs Island Lake.

The volume of these two lakes draws a tremendous number of recreational users from different parts of the country. Along with these crowds, there are also problems often associated with alcohol use and reckless boating operation. Senior Officer Harris has committed himself to making these waterways safe for the boating public. Year after year, his alcohol, drug, and boating related arrests are at or near the top when compared to his peer district officers. In addition to these lakes, Senior Officer Harris also patrolled, in his issued kayak, many sections of the Staunton River that are inaccessible by motorized vessels, providing a law enforcement and public safety presence in an area previously overlooked by traditional patrol methods. In 2013, he made 46 boating-related charges including two OUI arrests.

Senior Officer Harris also employs this proactive approach on larger bodies of water in his district. Recognizing areas where he and his fellow officers continuously encountered alcohol and boating safety violations, in the summer of 2013, he created four new boating safety checkpoint locations on Buggs Island Lake and three new checkpoint locations on Lake Gaston to address these needs.



**Randall K. Kocsis**  
OFFICER  
West Virginia

Officer Randall K. Kocsis, stationed in Marion County, took the initiative to organize a boater's education course

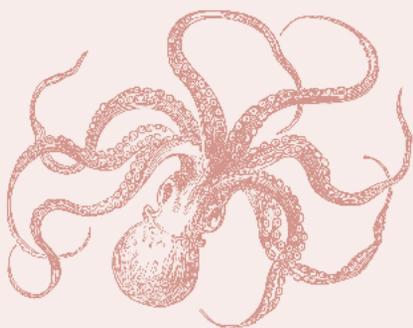
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geared toward first responders from Marion County Fire Rescue and Emergency Management Agencies. The training was well received by all in attendance.

Officer Kocsis also made great strides in public outreach in 2013. He contacted two newspaper writers to provide information for articles on boating safety. For a feature article on water recreation, Officer Kocsis invited a writer on a ride-along. The feature article presented a substantial amount of information related to the safe operation of watercraft and portrayed the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources' Law Enforcement section in a positive manner.

In 2013 Officer Kocsis arrested two adult males in separate incidents for boating under the influence of alcohol. With approval of his supervisor, Officer Kocsis met with the prosecuting attorney to discuss the cases to explain the goals of the DNR in regard to boating under the influence charges. The meeting could have positive benefits in regards to future boating enforcement efforts in Marion County.

In 2013 Officer Kocsis logged 236 hours toward boating activity. His number of contacts with the boating public, including warning and written citations, far exceeds that of his co-workers. He is extremely patient and understanding with the public. His goal is to educate and bring the boating public into voluntary compliance with the boating laws of West Virginia. Officer Kocsis is very proud of the fact that during the two years he has patrolled the waterways in his assigned area there have been no boating accidents.



# Western Region

## State Boating Law Enforcement Officers of the Year



**Timothy Abbott**  
TROOPER  
Alaska

Trp. Abbott epitomizes the mission of protecting Alaskans and their wildlife resources. His positive attitude, commitment to getting the job done, and willingness to take on any assignment given to him in a prompt, professional, and thorough manner truly enhances the image of the Alaska Wildlife Troopers. Assigned to the Aniak Post, he established himself as the detachment's leader last year in rural Alaska boating safety enforcement.

Trp. Abbott's boating safety efforts extended beyond boating safety enforcement patrols to include boating safety education in rural Alaskan schools along the remote Kuskokwim River of the Yukon Delta. His extra efforts are particularly noteworthy since rural Alaska leads the state in fatal boating safety incidents.

His personal boating safety enforcement statistics for 2013 included 67 hours dedicated solely to boating safety enforcement with 99 recreational boats contacted, and 46 warnings and 14 boating safety violations issued. He also coded five hours in boating safety education presentations in rural Alaska schools delivering this important message to 72 rural schoolchildren.

Trp. Abbott is well known for his advocacy of safe boating. He always takes the time with local boaters to explain the importance and reasons

behind the various safety items he inspected, thus leaving the public with a better understanding of boating safety requirements and the importance the state places on the safety of its recreational boaters. While Trooper Abbott's statistics are not the highest in the state, the fact that this is done in one of the most rural and remote locations of the state and they are all river patrols, adds credence to his work.



**Jes Antolik**  
OFFICER  
Arizona

Arizona Game and Fish Department Officer Jes Antolik is a game warden in Central Arizona. Until recently, he was the Kingman Regional Investigator where he aggressively patrolled the Colorado River from Topock Marsh north all the way to Lake Mead.

Since 2012, Officer Antolik has made over 30 BUI arrests, more than any other officer in the Arizona Game and Fish Department. He has an impressive career total of 64 BUIs. This is an especially significant accomplishment given he is not assigned to any specific body of water to patrol for the Department. In addition, his attention to detail and passion for marine enforcement do not stop at the point of arrest. His reports are always extremely well written and he pays attention to the seemingly minor details that can make or break a case. Further, Officer Antolik routinely finds time in his busy schedule to help organize and attend as many BUI checkpoints as possible.

Officer Antolik's forward thinking has helped advance Arizona's BUI detection program. He has used this knowledge to aid himself and other officers with BUI investigations and has helped at least 12 department officers effect their first career BUI arrests. In addition, he took it upon himself to become one of the Arizona Game and Fish Department's first Drug Recognition Experts and has made several BUI arrests since then for hard-to-detect drug-impaired subjects. Further, he is a go-to authority for officers when the need to craft, review and request telephonic search warrants during complex BUI investigations.



**Brian Sandy**  
INVESTIGATOR  
Colorado

Investigator Brian Sandy is an excellent leader in the realm of boating safety. Before coming to the Colorado Parks & Wildlife boating safety program in 2003, he coordinated boating education and enforcement at several state parks. For the past 11 years, he has coordinated and participated in the state's Flatwater Patrol program, which travels to a different lake/reservoir every weekend from May through Labor Day and conducts enforcement where normally there is none. The officers also act as a force multiplier for other federal, state and local agencies.

Investigator Sandy was instrumental in department efforts to change Colorado's boating under the influence law to be more inclusive of vessels and dropping the blood alcohol content to .08 to bring it in line with the state's driving under the influence laws. He also works with many county agencies to help develop their own marine patrols.

Sandy is also a top-notch investigator and trainer. A longtime boat accident

reconstructionist, he is incredibly thorough with each investigation he undertakes. Because of his work in the field, he's been able to disrupt multiple intrastate and interstate theft rings and was named as the agency representative to the Colorado Auto Theft Investigators Task Force. Additionally he has developed and presented courses on marine theft identification and investigation as well as boat accident investigation.

Investigator Sandy recently took on more responsibility by coordinating the state's education program. He has made great strides in that arena as well by helping develop a new tool and process for student registration that will help significantly reduce the "no show" rate.



**Donnie Wunder**  
CHIEF DEPUTY  
Idaho

Gem County Sheriff's Chief Deputy Donnie Wunder started his career in law enforcement with the county as a patrol deputy in 1987. He worked in dispatch, jail, patrol, investigations, and narcotics, and he was appointed Chief Deputy in 1993.

In 2011 Chief Deputy Wunder implemented a boating safety program in local schools, engaging more than 600 middle-school students with the Paddlesports America boat safety course. In addition to instructing this course, he has taught the Boat Idaho boat safety class for the past 10 years. Chief Deputy Wunder has successfully organized multiple outreach programs for county boating educational needs. As a result of his devotion and dedication to boating safety and education, the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation presented him the Educator of the Year Award in 2011. Since receiving this award, Chief Deputy Wunder, always

striving for improvement, continues to increase the number of successful youth in various boat and water safety programs. In 2013 he organized the installation of a life jacket loaner station on Black Canyon Reservoir.

In addition to his active role as an instructor he dedicates countless hours to the Gem County Search & Recovery Dive Team. Chief Deputy Wunder, a certified Master Diver, initially established this dive team in 2004 to address emergency situations on local and surrounding waters. This 12-person dive team has transformed itself into one of the best units in the state and under his leadership was able to successfully provide boater and waterway assistance on numerous occasions to the local community and surrounding agencies.



*(Continued on page 34)*



**Marc Burt**  
PARK RANGER  
Nevada

Park Ranger Marc Burt began working at Lake Mead National Recreation Area in 1987. He has held numerous positions over the years, and his dedication to safe boating operations has earned him a reputation as an expert boater. He is the primary contact working with the state boating law administrators for both Arizona and Nevada, as well as the U.S. Coast Guard.

His interest and aptitude in boat patrol was identified early in his career when Ranger Burt was often tasked with teaching new employees how to safely and effectively perform boat patrols as well as boat rescues. He was teaching boating to rangers prior to the existence of National Park Service and Department of Interior marine training. His curriculum and training tactics were used as the framework for the U.S. Department of Interior Motorboat Operator Certification Course. Ranger Burt has been an instructor and instructor trainer for this program the entire time. Besides the operator class, he has also instructed and coordinated annual heavy weather and water search and rescue boating classes.

Ranger Burt is known for meticulous care and attention to detail in vessel operation and maintenance. He has secured hundreds of thousands of dollars through the regional capital improvement funds used to upgrade the fleet. He spent countless hours working with park management, vendors, engineers, and operators improving fleet capabilities including the introduction of jet drive boats on the Colorado River above Lake Mead and on Lake Mohave below the Hoover Dam. As such Ranger Burt is recognized as a subject matter

expert and his opinion is sought nationwide on patrol vessel design and specifications.



**John Bock**  
DEPUTY  
Oregon

Deputy John Bock is a true partner to the Oregon State Marine Board's effort to serve Oregon's recreational boating public. Employed by the Lane County Sheriff's Office, he is well known for his level head, deep insights, helpful attitude, skill as a boat operator, attention to detail, and dedication as an instructor.

Lane County covers approximately 4,700 square miles of land in western Oregon, and Deputy Bock is part of a program that provides law enforcement on approximately 35,000 acres of some of the most diverse waterways in the state. From Waldo Lake at the crest of the Cascades, to the mouth of the Siuslaw River west of Florence, there are more than 120 boat ramps in this one county. According to some statistics, there may be more non-motorized boat use in this county than any other.

Within this realm, Deputy Bock contributed 1270 hours to the enforcement program and provided 121 hours serving as a Marine Board instructor for the basic Academy, Drift Boat and Whitewater Jet training last year. A member of several key Marine Board committees, he effectively interjects his unique experience and perspective into the discussion and brings a sense of reality to the table.

He has played an important role in helping the Marine Board implement a fair and transparent law enforcement boat procurement process and has provided important perspectives on

evolving policy issues. Dep. Bock is also skilled at addressing waterway hazards – a frequent issue in a heavily forested county.



**Jon R. Wikan**  
RANGER  
Utah

A 19-year veteran of the Utah Division of Parks and Recreation, Ranger Jon R. Wikan is full of enthusiasm and personally made a goal to provide more proactive boating law enforcement in his area of responsibility. This resulted in 659 vessel safety inspections last season – an astounding 600 inspections over Utah's RBS officer average. While performing this proactive enforcement, Ranger Wikan indirectly saved one life and recovered a stolen boat and boat trailer.

In the spring, a boater named William R. Johnson was fishing on a lake in Gunlock State Park when he noticed an overturned kayak. The kayak's passenger was hanging on and being pounded against a rock wall. Johnson maneuvered close enough to throw a Type IV PFD. He pulled the kayaker away from the rocks and into his boat.

The water was only 52 degrees at the time and Johnson was the only other person on the lake, so this could have been a very critical situation. The reason Johnson had a Type IV PFD was that Ranger Jon Wikan had performed a vessel safety inspection earlier in the spring and pointed out that Johnson did not have the required throwable PFD.

During another vessel safety inspection, Ranger Wikan encountered a boat where the registration and numbering did not match. He ran a wanted and

warrants inquiry on the vessel's hull identification number and found that it was stolen. Continuing with the investigation, he discovered that the trailer was also stolen. This recovery and investigation resulted in several felonies charged to the occupant and the boat and trailer returned to its proper owner.



### **Jim Robarge**

SERGEANT  
Washington

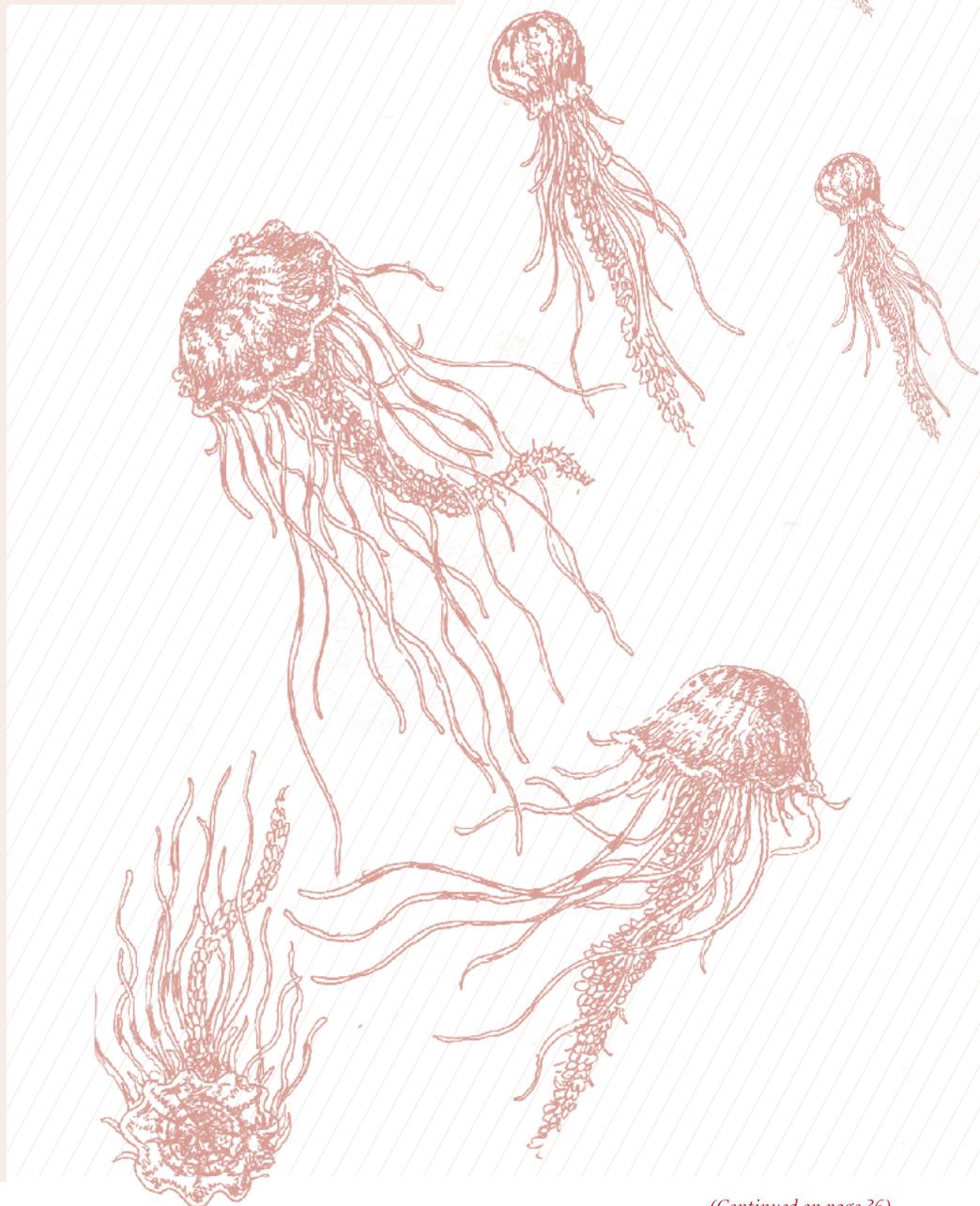
Sergeant Jim Robarge has brought an outstanding level of service and commitment to the safety and enjoyment of recreational boaters through enforcement and educational efforts. He has been a marine patrol officer and diver with the Mercer Island Police Department for 17 years and supervisor of the department's Marine Unit for the past three years. The MIPD Marine Unit provides year round service on Lake Washington, one of the busiest bodies of water in the state.

Over the past three years Sgt. Robarge has been instrumental in the organization and implementation of the annual SeaFair boating under the influence (BUI) emphasis patrol, which is co-sponsored by the Washington State Patrol Impaired Driving Section and the Mercer Island Police. The emphasis involves participation from Washington Fish and Wildlife, the United States Coast Guard, Seattle Police Harbor Patrol, Washington State Patrol, and the King County Sheriff's Marine Unit.

In 2013, through the SeaFair BUI emphasis, 473 boats were contacted and 34 BUI arrests were made, including the first under Washington's enhanced BUI law. More importantly, there were no serious boating accidents.

Since the inception of the emphasis in 2004, there have been over 750 arrests for BUI and over time, SeaFair accidents and injuries have been significantly reduced.

Sgt. Robarge also leads MIPD's boating/water safety education and outreach programs. Every year he and his partner Gregg Levinson visit 60 kindergarten classrooms and teach water safety to over 1300 students. In addition, Sgt. Robarge provides frequent media interviews throughout the year giving valuable information to the public on boating safety. \*



*(Continued on page 36)*

# Boating Briefs

## Funding up nearly 5 percent for Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund

Final Fiscal Year 2014 collection numbers for the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund are in and the news is good; receipts are up 4.9 percent over FY 2013 numbers for a total of \$624.9 million. Most of this increase comes from \$328 million paid by boaters at the pump. SFRBTF serves as the critical funding pool for vital state and national recreational fishing and boating programs, including recreational boating safety programs; fisheries management; habitat conservation; vessel pump-out stations; water and boating access infrastructure programs; and aquatic resource education programs.

## Pennsylvania's mandatory life jacket requirement began Nov. 1

Nov. 1 marked the beginning of Pennsylvania's mandatory cold weather life jacket regulation, which continues through April 30. In Pennsylvania, boaters, including hunters who use boats, are required by law to wear a life jacket on boats less than 16 feet in length or any canoe or kayak during this time. Laurel Anders, director of Boating and Outreach for the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, explains in [this video](#) why it is important to WEAR IT PA!



## Coast Guard to remove type codes from life jackets

The U.S. Coast Guard published a [final rule](#) to remove references to type codes in its regulations on the carriage and labeling of Coast Guard-approved personal flotation devices, or PFDs.

The purpose of this final rule is to facilitate future adoption of new industry consensus standards for PFD labeling that more effectively convey safety information, and to help harmonize our regulations with PFD requirements in Canada and in other countries.

Under these amendments, the number and kind of PFDs required to be carried on a vessel will not change, but the terminology used to refer to approved PFDs will. This final rule is effective Oct. 22, 2014.

## California governor signs boater safety education bill

California Gov. Jerry Brown signed into law a bill that aims to increase the safety of California waterways by requiring boaters to pass a safety course and obtain a vessel operator card.

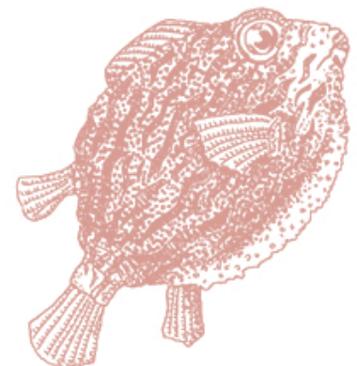
The bill was introduced this year by state Sens. Bill Monning, D-Carmel, and Mark DeSaulnier, D-Concord, after an NBC Bay Area investigation discovered that boaters who were inattentive or inexperienced caused the majority of boating accidents in the state.

## Design a better life jacket and win \$10,000

Are you an armchair inventor with a better way to keep boaters, sailors and anglers afloat? The BoatUS Foundation has teamed up with the [Personal Flotation Device Manufacturers Association](#) and the [National Marine Manufacturers Association](#) to seek out the newest technologies and design ideas with the [Innovation in Life Jacket Design Competition](#).

"We believe there are some creative folks out there that can help us rethink a 100-year-old design with fresh, out-of-the-box ideas," said BoatUS Foundation President Chris Edmonston.

A \$10,000 cash award goes to the winning designer and inventors have until April 15, 2015, to submit their idea to [www.BoatUS.org/design](http://www.BoatUS.org/design).



## \$10,000 available for safe and clean boating outreach projects

The BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water is looking to fund Grassroots Grant projects that utilize new, innovative approaches that encourage safe and clean boating among the boating public.

Organizations with the best ideas will be awarded grants of up to \$10,000 to implement their project. Applications need to be submitted by January 15, 2015, and public online voting on the applications will take place in early spring 2015.

*For information on how to apply for a Grassroots Grant, visit [BoatUS.org/grants](http://BoatUS.org/grants). To be the first to learn when voting for grant projects begins, "like" the BoatUS Foundation on Facebook at [www.Facebook.com/BoatUSFoundation](http://www.Facebook.com/BoatUSFoundation).*

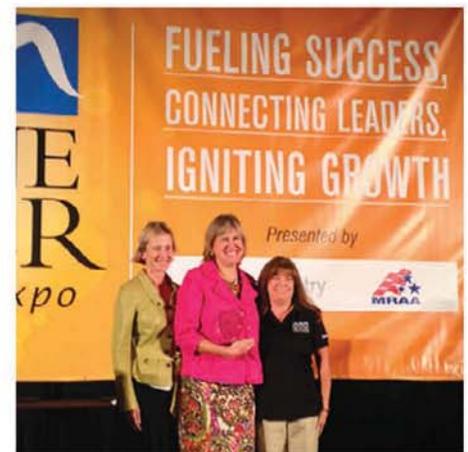


## BoatUS president named 2014 Darlene Briggs Woman of the Year

Margaret Podlich, president of the Boat Owners Association of The United States (BoatUS), the nation's largest boat owners' association, was recently named the 2014 Darlene Briggs Woman of the Year.

The Darlene Briggs Woman of the Year Award is presented annually to an outstanding woman in the marine industry who demonstrates leadership and commitment to the boating business. Recipients also must show a willingness to volunteer their time and effort in their communities and social organizations.

For the past 20 years, Podlich has served in various capacities for BoatUS, working her way up to the presidency in 2011. She began her two-decades-long career with the association back in 1994, when she was recruited by BoatUS to run its then-new, non-profit BoatUS Clean Water Trust. In 2005, Podlich was promoted to the position of vice president of government affairs. She ascended to BoatUS' top position more than three years ago, overseeing the group's membership activities, recruitment and retention efforts, government affairs and lobbying responsibilities, and consumer and public affairs, among other responsibilities.



Margaret Podlich (center) was named the 2014 Darlene Briggs Woman of the Year Nov. 19, during the Marine Dealer Conference & Expo in Orlando, Fla. Also present were (l) Marcia Kull, Volvo Penta, and Kathy Johnson, Boating Industry.

*(Continued on page 40)*

## New market research on Hispanics and boating

Valuable insights on marketing boat ownership to the country's large and growing Hispanic population are on the very near horizon. Funded by RBFF and an alliance of boating organizations, a study specifically designed to help promote boating to the Hispanic market is underway.

"RBFF already has done a great deal of research into engaging the Hispanic market in fishing," said RBFF President and CEO, Frank Peterson. "Now, thanks to the support of industry leaders, we are focusing on the very different dynamics of bringing Hispanics to boating."

The study will help stakeholders understand Hispanics' barriers and opportunities to boat ownership and chart the course for marketing boat ownership to Hispanics in the years ahead. The completed study is expected to be unveiled by Peterson at the February 2015 Miami Boat Show.

## Preliminary results show state marketing programs have positive impact

With results from all but a handful of states in, early indications are that the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation's 2014 State Marketing Programs are making a positive impact.

Early findings show that overall, 262,605 fishing licenses were sold and 43,287 boats were re-registered as a result of the fishing and boating programs. Together the two programs will deliver a total of more than \$6.8 million in gross program revenue to participating states.

The programs consist of attention-getting mailings that remind anglers and boaters to renew their fishing license or boat registration, and based

on preliminary figures, anglers and boaters have done just that.

*For more information on RBFF's State Marketing Programs, email RBFF Director of State Initiatives Stephanie Hussey at [shussey@rbff.org](mailto:shussey@rbff.org).*



## Boating, water safety added to Texas driver's education program

The Texas Education Agency has approved a parks and wildlife water safety program to educate young adults and teens who spend time boating, fishing and swimming in Texas waterways.

One video in the program, *Never Happens*, is dedicated to the families who lost loved ones in water-related

accidents. Young people believe it will never happen to them and the goal of this video is to change that behavior.

The Texas Education Agency has agreed to include *Never Happens* in the state's driver education program to help educate teenagers about safety practices when they're on the roads as well as on the water.



## Hawaii requires boater safety class

Beginning Nov. 10, boaters in Hawaii must take a boating safety class in order to operate a motorized vessel or else face fines, be sent to jail and be temporarily stopped from operating a vessel, according to state law.

Boaters are required to show proof on demand of successful completion of an

approved boating safety course. The rule is part of the state's Mandatory Education Rule for boaters, which was signed into law two years ago but allowed a delay to allow the state to develop multiple compliance methods and give the boating community time to become compliant.

## Wear It! Campaign continues to influence safe boating behavior

A survey of recreational boaters found the [North American Safe Boating Campaign](#) continues to have a positive impact on boater behavior. The year-long campaign promotes safe and responsible boating and the value of voluntary life jacket wear by recreational boaters through the national theme, Wear It!

The annual Wear It! Awareness Survey, conducted by Paul Werth Associates on behalf of the National Safe Boating Council, sought to determine the campaign's effectiveness, specifically the impact on life jacket wear, attitudes, and safety behavior of boaters.

Leveraging a team of trained volunteers, 605 on-site surveys were collected between June 16 and August 6, 2014 at 19 different bodies of water in seven states. Based on the locations' level of Wear It! campaign activity, the bodies of water were classified as no, medium or high activity. All surveys were self-administered. In addition, qualitative interviews were conducted with seven boaters for further depth and understanding of their responses.

## National Safe Boating Council snags 8 awards for life jacket campaign

2014 has been an exciting year for the [National Safe Boating Council](#) (NSBC) and agency partner Paul Werth Associates, who recently clinched

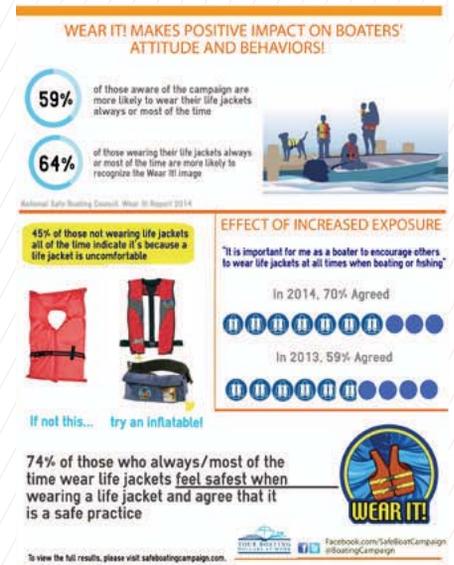
eight awards for its integrated communications efforts on behalf of the North American Safe Boating Campaign. This year-long campaign promotes safe and responsible boating and the value of voluntary life jacket wear by recreational boaters through the national theme, Wear It!

The awards represent honors from the Academy of Interactive & Visual Arts, Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals, PR Daily, Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) and VEMA Arts and Standards Council.

## Vamos A Pescar website reels in five Davey Awards

The [Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation's](#) Vamos A Pescar campaign website was awarded five 2014 Silver Davey Awards, judged by the Academy of Interactive and Visual Arts. [VamosAPescar.org](#) competed against more than 4,000 small firms in winning its awards in the Websites, Mobile Websites and Mobile Marketing categories.

Launched in April 2014, [VamosAPescar.org](#) is a one-stop resource for Hispanic boaters and anglers to learn, plan and equip for a day on the water. The site is part of a larger campaign launched by RBFF to engage the rapidly growing Hispanic community in boating and fishing. In addition to [VamosAPescar.org](#), the campaign also includes Spanish-language advertisements and experiential marketing. RBFF stakeholders are encouraged to utilize the free Spanish-language resources available in the [Take Me Fishing Resource Center](#).



## Mercury Marine works with industry professionals to promote boating, fishing for kids

Mercury Marine has partnered with Bill Dance, host of [Bill Dance Outdoors](#), and [Fox Sports Outdoors](#) host Barry Stokes to create videos that promote the value of boating and the importance of getting kids to experience life on the water.

According to new statistics released by the NMMA, fishing is the number-one boating activity, followed by tubing and waterskiing. Both Stokes and Dance, with the help of Mercury Marine, encourage families to experience the water and teach kids the importance of family time at an early age.

Both Dance and Stokes have released videos promoting the boating and fishing lifestyle for kids. You can view those videos on the Mercury Marine Youtube page.



# All boats are not created equal

As any seasoned boat operator is aware, all boats are not created equal. Boat characteristics including, but not limited to, hull design, weight, cabin/open, inboard, outboard, jet, etc. affect how a boat handles and maneuvers. Different forces act on a vessel's hull, causing it to move in a particular direction or to change direction. These include environmental forces, propulsion, and steering.

Environmental forces that affect the horizontal motion of a vessel are wind, seas and current. The operator has no control over them and must take the time to observe how the wind, seas and current, alone and together, affect the vessel. The operator should also determine how these forces cause the vessel to drift, and at what speed and angle.

The current fleet of high-speed rescue craft, with incredible amounts of power available to the operator, is still susceptible to these dynamic forces. A skilled operator can use the environmental forces to his or her advantage and apply proper throttle and helm commands to counteract the effects of the wind, sea and current, resulting in smooth, safe boat handling.

Environmental conditions can range from perfectly calm and absolutely no current to a howling gale and spring tides to 10-knot river currents. Chances are that even if operation does not occur at either extreme, some degree of environmental forces will be in action. The marine environment is incredibly

dynamic, with a variety of forces working to maintain equilibrium and keep your boat on an even keel.

In high-performance patrol and rescue boats, use of excessive power in tight turns can cause loss of control or ejection of crew, operator or both. It is highly recommended that the operator utilize an engine cutoff switch lanyard or proximity device for all rescue craft, especially vessels of open construction such as t-top and center console models.

A major contributor to the turning characteristics of any vessel is the hull design, coupled with the propulsion plant. Some shallow-draft, jet-propelled boats will slide across the water's surface in a tight turn. Whereas a deep-V, twin outboard boat similar to the Coast Guard's Response Boat-Small will dig deep into a tight turn, resulting in a very tight turn and high g-forces.

The U.S. Coast Guard conducts extensive operational testing and evaluation on all new boats to gain an understanding of how a boat will handle in a given environmental state or mission. As with every new acquisition, the organization evaluated the capabilities of the new Response Boat – Medium and, recently, the second generation Response Boat – Small (RB-S II).

Often, we find that new platforms require additional training and familiarization before crews are fully mission capable. In the case of the 45-foot Response Boat – Medium, we fielded a highly capable boat



**Jeff Wheeler**  
Deputy Chief  
Office of Boat Forces  
U.S. Coast Guard



**Senior Chief Rob Goley**  
Officer In Charge  
Coast Guard Station  
Chatham, MA

with more than 1,600 HP pushing twin water-jets, replacing the venerable 680 HP, twin-screw 41-foot Utility Boat. The new RB-M operates in a completely different manner than the UTB. The same goes for outboard powered boats. We are replacing the 25-foot RB-S with the next generation, 29-foot RB-S II. While both boats are equipped with the same propulsion plant and are both deep-vee planning hulls, their operating characteristics are different, and Coast Guard boat crews must familiarize themselves with the new platform before conducting operations.

As professional boat operators and maritime first responders, we all must take the time to learn and understand how our boat will best operate in varied conditions and applications. This is especially true as new vessels enter service. Before placing a boat in operation, set aside some dedicated training for your agency to learn the characteristics. It's always recommended to take a crawl, walk, run approach...start slow and work your way up in speed to ensure safe and effective boat operations. ✨



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# Everyday a Hero Chapter Two

A couple of years ago I penned an article for Small Craft Advisory titled “Everyday a Hero” (March-April 2012). It was about those men and women of the state and local marine patrols, fire and rescue departments, and the Coast Guard who place themselves in harm’s way every day to rescue those in peril on the water. This is Chapter Two of that story.

It was again my honor this year to attend the awards ceremony at the NASBLA Annual Conference. As a former marine law enforcement officer, I feel a sense of pride, comradeship, and deep respect for those named as the State, Regional, and National Boating Law Enforcement Officers of the Year. I can think of no greater reward than to be recognized by one’s peers as being at the top of your game. In all honesty, to be singled out in this particular group is pretty amazing. Let’s consider a few facts.

According to the 2013 reports from the states, there were 12,261 marine patrol officers on duty nationwide. That is about 1,200 officers less than what are on duty in the city of Chicago, and about a third of what are on duty in New York City. Granted, New York and Chicago are big cities, but let’s look at another fact. The combined officers for these two great cities total approximately 47,500 with a total combined population of 11.1 million. That is about one officer for every 233 persons. By comparison, with the reported number of participants in recreational boating at over 73 million, the average boating law enforcement officer shoulders the

burden for nearly 6,000 persons. That’s a heap of responsibility. Let’s keep going.

Those same 12,261 officers conducted nearly 4 million hours of law enforcement and SAR activities with over 1.6 million of those hours on the water. They physically inspected over 1.5 million vessels, and were there for nearly 52,000 people in need of assistance. We’ve all seen the statistics on this herculean effort, but have you really ever thought about the officer at the business end of these stats? There is a lot of work represented here. Add to these facts that in most cases, these officers’ RBS responsibility only represents about a quarter to a third of their work activity. And there’s more.

I had the opportunity during the conference to talk with John Thorne of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (he was the only other guy in the room with a sharp lookin’ hat). As with all honorees, he is humble about his award but passionate about his work. Nearly all boating law enforcement officers I speak with around the country are dedicated to the mission with a real sense of purpose. I’m not just talking about those recognized in an awards ceremony – I mean nearly all!

This was reinforced in my conversations with the officers of the Maine Warden Service and Maine Marine Patrol who did such a fantastic job of hosting this year’s conference. The passion for the mission comes ringing through. It is a big part of who they are, but what you discover, it is not all of who they are.

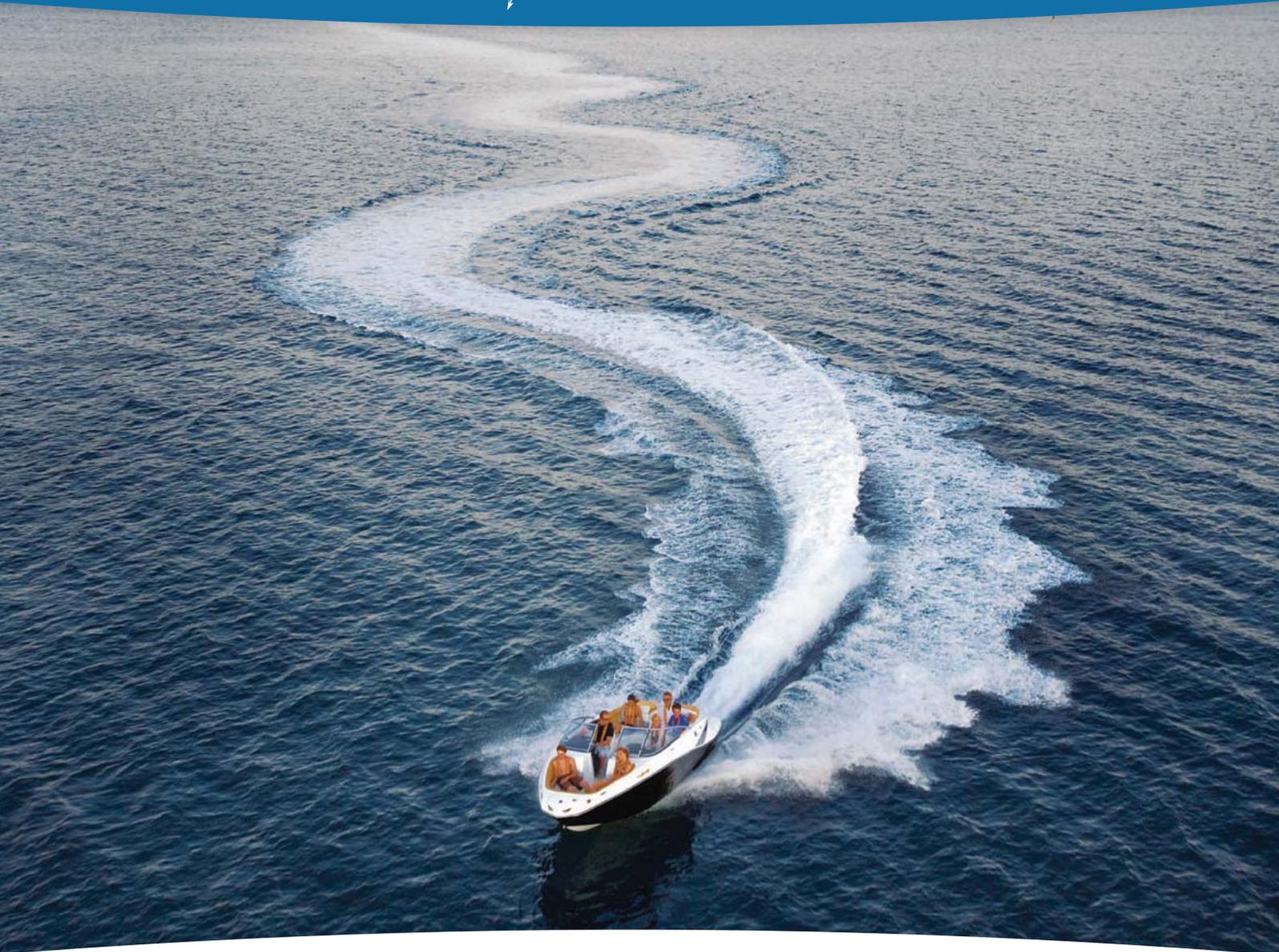


**By W. Vann Burgess**  
Senior RBS Specialist  
Boating Safety Division  
Office of Auxiliary  
and Boating Safety  
U.S. Coast Guard

They are dedicated parents working to make a better world for their, and all, children. They are dedicated servants to their neighbors and community by volunteering their time and talents to help others less fortunate. As I write this it is Veteran’s Day, and I am poignantly reminded that many of these men and women are veterans and members of the Guard and Reserve of the United States Armed Services. I don’t know about you, but in my book this is pretty amazing stuff.

In truth, these officers are heroes. Each and every one of them wears the mark of a hero. So what is a hero? A simple definition is someone who is willing to help those who are in need in any way deemed possible. That’s who these officers are, and this is what they do. To recognize them as such and honor their efforts is supremely important. Abraham Lincoln once said, “Any nation that does not honor its heroes will not long endure.”

Again, I was honored to attend the NASBLA Annual Conference Awards Ceremony. I was honored to be in the presence of these boating law enforcement officers. Congratulations to those chosen, for you represent some of the best that our country has to offer. ✨



Congratulations to the Oregon State Marine Board, winners of the 2014 NASBLA Innovations Award!

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small craft advisory

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# 2015 RECREATIONAL BOATING SAFETY CALENDAR

## January

**12-15**

**American Boat & Yacht Council Standards Week and Annual Meeting**

Seattle, Washington  
abyc.org  
llipsey@abycinc.org  
410.990.4460 ext 118

**12-16**

**NASBLA**

**Level I – Comprehensive Boating Accident Investigation Course**

St. Clair, Michigan  
nasbla.org/14a/pages/index.cfm?pageID=4117  
chris@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487

**18-25**

**United States Power Squadrons Annual Meeting**

Jacksonville, Florida  
usps.org

**22-23**

**Colorado River Law Enforcement Association Annual Conference**

Laughlin, Nevada  
crlea.org  
bvanhairsma@ndow.org

**28-30**

**Association of Marina Industries International Marina & Boatyard Conference**

Tampa, Florida  
marinaassociation.org  
imbc@marinaassociation.org  
401.682.7334

## February

**21**

**American Canoe Association Board of Directors Meeting**

Fredericksburg, Virginia  
americancanoe.org  
wblackwood@americancanoe.org

**23-25**

**US Coast Guard Ice Rescuer Course**

Bay City, Michigan  
internationalicerescue.com

**26-27**

**NASBLA and US Coast Guard International Ice Rescue and Training Meeting**

Bay City, Michigan  
internationalicerescue.com

## March

**1-4**

**International Association of Marine Investigators Annual Training Seminar**

Mobile, Alabama  
iamimarine.org/iami

**2**

**NASBLA**

**Executive Board Meeting**

Lexington, Kentucky  
ron@nasbla.org

**3**

**NASBLA**

**Enforcement & Training Committee Meeting**

Lexington, Kentucky  
nasbla.org  
john.fetterman@nasbla.org

**4-5**

**NASBLA**

**BLA Workshop**

Lexington, Kentucky  
nasbla.org  
info@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487

**6**

**NASBLA**

**Engineering, Reporting & Analysis Committee Meeting**

Lexington, Kentucky  
nasbla.org  
deb@nasbla.org

**6**

**NASBLA**

**Vessel Identification, Registration & Titling Committee Meeting**

Lexington, Kentucky  
nasbla.org  
ron@nasbla.org

**28-29**

**NASBLA**

**Education & Outreach Committee Meeting**

Destin, Florida  
nasbla.org  
pam@nasbla.org

**29-April 1**

**National Safe Boating Council National Water Safety Congress International Boating & Water Safety Summit**

Sandestin, Florida  
ibwss.org

## May

**11-13**

**National Marine Manufacturers Association American Boating Congress**

Washington, D.C.  
nmma.org

**13**

**National Safe Boating Council Congressional Reception**

Washington, D.C.  
safeboatingcouncil.org

**15**

**Wear Your Life Jacket to Work Day**

readysetwearit.com

**16**

**"Ready, Set, Wear It!" Life Jacket World Record Day**

readysetwearit.com

**16-22**

**National Safe Boating Week**

SafeBoatingCampaign.com

## June

**26-28**

**Operation Dry Water**

operationdrywater.org

## August

**27-30**

**U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary National Convention**

San Antonio, Texas  
cgauxa.org/nacon

**30-September 6**

**United States Power Squadrons Governing Board Meeting**

San Diego, California  
usps.org

## September

**13-16**

**NASBLA**

**Annual Conference**

Wichita, Kansas  
nasbla.org  
info@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487

**21-24**

**SOBA**

**Annual Conference**

Vergennes, Vermont  
sobaus.org

## October

**9**

**American Canoe Association Swiftwater Rescue Conference**

Dillsboro, North Carolina  
americancanoe.org  
whitewatersam@gmail.com