

# SCA

small craft advisory

## 2013 OFFICERS OF THE YEAR

*Recognizing  
High  
Achievers*

**ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE  
DEEMED SUCCESS**



# SCA

small craft advisory

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

President **HERB ANGELL**

Vice President **ELEANOR MARIANI**

Treasurer **KEVIN BERGERSEN**

Past President **TOBY VELASQUEZ**

Members-at-Large

**TOM GUESS**

**DARREN RIDER**

**STEPHANIE WEATHERINGTON**

Executive Editor

**JOHN JOHNSON, CAE**

Editors-at-Large

**TOM HAYWARD**

**RON SARVER, CAE**

Managing Editor **KIMBERLY JENKINS**

Copy Editors

**JOSEPH McCULLOUGH**

**FRED MESSMANN**

Creative Director **ROLANDO ZERQUERA**  
**ANGSTROM GRAPHICS**

Circulation Director **SAM LYNCH**

## EDITORIAL OFFICES

1648 McGrathiana Parkway, Suite 360

Lexington, KY 40511

**PHONE:** 859.225.9487

**FAX:** 859.231.6403

**EMAIL:** editor@nasbla.org

## About the Cover

Juan Gomez, a conservation warden with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources since 2008, was named the national Boating Officer of the Year. Currently serving Walworth County, he is responsible for over 30 lakes including Lake Geneva, located southwest of Milwaukee and popular with tourists from metropolitan Chicago and Milwaukee.

*WDNR photo*

©Small Craft Advisory (ISSN: 1066-2382)

Published bimonthly by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, 1648 McGrathiana Parkway, Suite 360 Lexington, KY 40511 (six issues).

Contact NASBLA for permission to reprint articles at 859.225.9487 and editor@nasbla.org.

Send change of address to:

Small Craft Advisory

1648 McGrathiana Parkway, Suite 360

Lexington, KY 40511

## Departments

**2** from the HELM

**4** nasbla NEWS

**7** new BLAs

**16** partner PERSPECTIVES

**40** boating BRIEFS

**44** coast guard COMMENTS



## features



### **8** Information & Networking

Annual NASBLA Conference provides forum for exchange of information

### **12** Appreciation & Congratulations

NASBLA recognizes boating safety's rising stars

### **18** National Law Enforcement Museum takes shape

Lasting tribute to fallen officers to tell history of law enforcement

### **20** 2013 Boating Officers of the Year

NASBLA recognizes outstanding marine law enforcement officers

### **36** Clever consultant secures training

Retired BLA orchestrates regional training series for officers





**RESCUE | SECURE | PROTECT**

PROTECTING PROFESSIONALS  
AND PROUD SPONSOR OF NASBLA



As a proud sponsor and active member of NASBLA, and exclusive sponsor of NASBLA's Officer Water Survival Course, we are committed to developing and providing professionals like you with the latest flotation and personal protective equipment.

By partnering with leading law enforcement and rescue organizations, we identify and develop solutions specific to your needs. Your feedback drives our innovation and is integrated into our latest dry suits, inflatable PFDs and personal protective equipment solutions.

Learn more about our products for public safety and law enforcement professionals at:

[www.mustangsurvival.com/professional](http://www.mustangsurvival.com/professional)

FOCUSED AND READY, BOATING ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS TAKE TO THE WATER IN OUR HIT™ AUTOMATIC INFLATABLE PFDs WORN OVER BOAT CREW DRY SUITS THAT PREVENT THE ONSET OF HYPOTHERMIA UPON WATER IMMERSION.

OUR SENTINEL™ BOAT CREW DRY SUITS OFFER A LARGE RANGE OF SEMI-CUSTOM SIZES AND PROVIDE FIELD-REPAIR CAPABILITIES.

A Brand of THE SAFARILAND GROUP

Follow us on





from the

# Helm



Herb Angell  
NASBLA President



John Johnson, CAE  
NASBLA CEO

## Kudos to real-life officers

**M**ore likely than not, when people think about careers in law enforcement, their thoughts immediately turn to car chases, shoot'em-ups, and crime scenes. Influence from television and video games are the concepts most often associated with becoming a law enforcement officer.

However, the job of law enforcement officers involves so much more and is also so much more rewarding than the trumped-up action scenes we see in the movies. The truth goes much, much deeper and harder to pin to any one type of law enforcement officer. As a result, one can find a law enforcement officer in nearly every degree and specialty out there.

Officers are first and foremost tasked with enforcing the law. Put simply, this means their primary job is to make sure that state laws and local ordinances are being obeyed. The overall goal is to obtain voluntary compliance with the law from citizens.

Law enforcement specialties are as numerous as the stars in the sky. When it comes to boating or marine law enforcement, a whole specialty comes to light. Most NASBLA membership comes from the ranks of state fish and wildlife agencies and parks departments in addition to state patrol in some states and sheriff's departments in other states. In many cases marine law enforcement is not much more than a collateral duty in addition to many other responsibilities.

Regardless of the type of law enforcement they come from, all marine law enforcement officers will respond to the moniker of 'boat cop.' This specialty is often the envy of more traditional law enforcement officers, but when it comes down to the end of the day 'boat cops' have great days and very down days. Great days include no infractions by the boating public, and down days are when you end up working a fatality accident. The down days are the worst – ask any boat cop.

If you are ever asked what it takes to be a great boat cop, this edition of *Small Craft Advisory* is the answer to your question. In the pages of this magazine lie the stories of the best boat cops in the nation, bar none. As an administrator, wouldn't you just love to have all these men and women working for you!! What a list of all stars they are.

Hearty congratulations from our members and staff goes out to Wisconsin Conservation Warden Juan Gomez, recently named NASBLA's Butch Potts Boating Law Enforcement Officer of 2013. This marks the third time a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources conservation warden has netted top honors from NASBLA. "Juan has represented our department at its highest level," Wisconsin Chief Conservation Warden Randy Stark said. "Juan is known for his commitment to safe boating where he is stationed, which is a highly populated area with 30 lakes, including the popular tourist area of Lake Geneva."

Juan Gomez became a warden in 2008. In addition to Gomez's on-water patrol work

to make the waters safe for all to enjoy, he also does considerable education and community outreach. "Juan is dedicated to protecting the citizens enjoying Wisconsin's waters as well as spending time to educate youth about the importance of having safe fun on the water." Gomez was also recognized as officer of the year for the Northern Association of Boating Administrators region. Warden Gomez is the perfect example of what these men and women accomplish daily.

Congratulations also to Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks Master Sergeant David Holiday, who was selected by the Southern States Boating Law Administrators Association as the region's officer of the year for his outstanding boating law enforcement.

His nomination states, "With the high visibility of officers' presence and enforcement at Grenada Lake, Officer Holiday is assigned to the area and works with fellow officers and Corps of Engineers Park Rangers enforcing boating laws and conducting safety checks. This visibility has caused a decline in the issuance of citations to boaters. Officer Holiday states that boating laws will be enforced but safety is priority number one."

On April 4, 2012, Sergeant Holiday was involved with saving the lives of both stranded boaters and the officers who were en route to assisting those boaters on Grenada Lake. For this, he received an Award of Commendation from NASBLA.

(Continued on page 6)

# Let's make 2014 the safest year yet!



## Celebrating the year of the student

In 2013, we made a commitment to put our students, and their safety, first. We launched a proactive customer care service, provided a free online paddling course, worked relentlessly to improve our course content, and honored the amazing contributions of boating safety educators across the country.

It was a great year. But we're just getting started. Together, we can make 2014 the safest ever year for boating. Full steam ahead!

# NASBLA NEWS

## 2013-14 NASBLA President elected



NASBLA would like to announce Herb Angell as the newly elected NASBLA President. The 2013-14 executive board was installed at the recent Annual NASBLA Conference:

- President — Herb Angell, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission
- Vice President — Eleanor Mariani, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

- Treasurer — Kevin Bergersen, Arizona Game & Fish Department
- Member-at-Large — Darren Rider, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
- Member-at-Large — Stephanie Weatherington, Arkansas Game & Fish Commission
- Member-at-Large — Tom Guess, Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries
- Immediate Past President — Toby Velasquez, New Mexico Energy, Minerals & Natural Resources Department

Herb Angell is the 53rd President of the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators.

## NASBLA schedules National Instructor Development Workshop

NASBLA's Boat Operations and Training Program has seen consecutive years of success and growth since its inception. The NASBLA BOAT Instructors are the foundation of this program, and it is imperative to recognize the importance and criticality of their efforts.

In an effort to continue to cultivate, improve and enhance its programs, NASBLA is hosting a National Instructor



Development Workshop in Lexington, Ky., Dec. 3-5. This inaugural workshop will be heavily attended by Program Managers and Lead Instructors, representing every course offering within the BOAT Program's 2014 catalog.

## Agencies receive NASBLA BOAT Program accreditation

Five more agencies received their final NASBLA BOAT program accreditation. These agencies were recognized during the NASBLA 54th Annual Conference in Boise, Idaho. A total of seven agencies have now received this accreditation.



"Accreditation is the vehicle by which we replicate the elements of our BOAT program and empower those agencies to deliver, maintain and promote NASBLA's national training standards. Serving our member agencies and their maritime partners, accreditation is the program changing the way we all serve the boating public, assuring the safety and security of our maritime domain." said Toby Velasquez, NASBLA President at the time of accreditation, who now serves as NASBLA's Past President.

The following agencies were awarded their accreditation for 2013:

- Ohio Division of Watercraft
- Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
- Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Charleston Metro Marine Unit
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Bureau of Law Enforcement

## NASBLA panel calls for proposed revisions to the National Paddlesports Education Standards



NASBLA's Education Standards Panel has issued a Call for Proposed Revisions to the content of the most currently approved version of the National Paddlesports Education Standards (which went into effect Jan. 1,

2009). Submissions are encouraged from any party materially affected by the standard, including NASBLA members and non-members alike. The comment period will close on Dec. 2, 2013.

Originally adopted in 2009, the National Paddlesports Education Standards were developed for use by paddlesports education course instructors, paddlesports education text authors and other paddlesports education professionals who intend to submit course materials for NASBLA review and sanction. These standards apply to courses for operators of manually propelled recreational boats such as canoes and kayaks.

Input on the standard will be accepted exclusively via the EZ-ESP website, <http://esp.nasbla.org/esp>. Instructions for submitting comments (including how to obtain login credentials for the EZ-ESP website) and documents containing the current standard, the reformatted standard and the Education Standards Panel Rules are available for download at <http://esp.nasbla.org/esp>.



## Kudos to NASBLA Watermen

Congratulations to Sam Lynch, our director of membership services, and Cal Lawton, our technology guru, who participated in the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund's Ride & Run to Remember. They traveled to Oxon Hill, Md., and completed the 55-mile bike ride Oct. 12. Cal went on to run in the event's 5K the next morning, wearing duty boots and a duty belt configured to represent a NASBLA standard training load-out of 18 pounds!

The Ride & Run to Remember is designed to celebrate and bring awareness to the role of law enforcement in our communities. Net proceeds benefit the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, whose mission is to permanently record and appropriately commemorate the service and sacrifice of law enforcement officers and provide information that will help promote law enforcement safety. This year's event raised more than \$300,000. Sam was the top individual in fundraising for the event and the two-man Watermen team was fourth overall.

Sam and Cal participated in this year's event in memory of Officer Joel Campora with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. Officer Campora died while attempting a water rescue in western Arkansas with Scott County Sheriff Cody Carpenter this spring. The pair perished while trying to rescue two women who were stranded by the rising floodwaters.

*(Continued on page 6)*

### Sign up as bone marrow donor to help son of RBS educator

This year, Clifford Inn, boating educator with the Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources, has been learning all about a different danger — blood cancers. His son Matthew was recently diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukemia & Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (which is rare) and has been in Seattle for treatment since July.

On Cliff's behalf, the Hawaii DNR urges people to join the national donor registry or make contributions to the registry. To sign up, visit the national registry at [www.BeTheMatch.org](http://www.BeTheMatch.org) and follow the instructions for finding a nearby bone marrow donor registry drive in your area.

Operated by the National Marrow Donor Program, Be The Match connects patients with their donor match for a life-saving marrow or umbilical cord

blood transplant. People can contribute to the cure as a member of the Be The Match Registry, financial contributor or volunteer. Be The Match provides patients and their families one-on-one support, education and guidance before, during and after transplant.

Contributions are also welcome to the Hawaii Bone Marrow Donor Registry at 2228 Liliha St. #105, Honolulu, Hawaii, 96817.

Feel free to send words of encouragement to Cliff, his son Matthew and the Inn family by visiting [www.CaringBridge.org](http://www.CaringBridge.org). Search for "Matthew Inn" and then sign up, write in his guestbook or read the family's journal. The site also accepts donations.

You may also write to Cliff, Matthew and his family at Matthew Inn  
c/o Pete Gross House  
525 Minor Ave. N, #614  
Seattle, Wash., 98109 \*

Congratulations as well to Clackamas County (Oregon) Sheriff's Office Deputy Nate Thompson, who was named the 2013 Western States Boating Administrators Boating Law Enforcement Officer of the Year. As the award nomination for Deputy Thompson notes: "He is extremely productive in water patrol, is an Oregon State Marine Board instructor, and actively pursues opportunities to teach boating and water safety education to the community... [In 2012] Deputy Thompson completed 1,402 documented contacts — which is over 4% of the entire state total."

Deputy Thompson teaches whitewater jet-boating and drift-boating to other law-enforcement marine teams around the state, in addition to instructing at the State Marine Officer's Academy. He also teaches water-rescue techniques to local search-and-rescue groups and at local schools.

These three boating officers of the year join over 40 other men and women nominated by their respective states recognizing excellence in marine law enforcement. Congratulations to each and every one of them as they set the example for the rest of us to follow. \*



## ENHANCED VESSEL OPERATORS COURSE

# EVOC

*We have taken all the security out of the popular Tactical Operators Course and now offer a three-day intense course, teaching advanced vessel operations.*

*Learn what you and your vessel are truly capable of*

*View the course overview at [www.nasbla.org/EVOC](http://www.nasbla.org/EVOC)*

*For more information about NASBLA's training opportunities, visit <http://www.nasbla.org/boat>*

**John Fetterman**  
NASBLA Director of  
Law Enforcement  
[john.fetterman@nasbla.org](mailto:john.fetterman@nasbla.org)

**National Association of State  
Boating Law Administrators**  
1648 McGrathiana Parkway  
Suite 360  
Lexington, KY 40511  
859.225.9487

**Mark DuPont**  
National BOAT  
Program Director  
[mark.dupont@nasbla.org](mailto:mark.dupont@nasbla.org)



# BLA **NEW** AS

## **TY HUNTER** Utah



Born and raised in Plain City, Utah – a small farming community 12 miles northwest of Ogden – most of Ty Hunter’s recreational boating experiences have

been based around fishing trips with family and friends.

Hunter started his career with Utah Division of Parks and Recreation in December 1997 as a park ranger at Willard Bay State Park. Willard Bay is a 10,000-acre reservoir enclosed by the Arthur V. Watkins dam, which is 36 feet high and 14.5 miles long. Highlights of this assignment were being member of the group that received the Outstanding Team Award in 1999 and a shift commander for the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City.

Ty was promoted in October 2002 to assistant manager at Yuba State Park and then again in June of 2003 to park manager at Utah Lake State Park in Provo. While at Utah Lake, he rebuilt a functioning staff and boating program. He also created a strong working relationship with the Utah County Sheriff’s Office and received the first-time partnership award from the Sheriff’s Office Search and Rescue Team. He bridged a gap with municipal and county government leadership, creating trust and partnerships to assist the local community and the State Park in recreational endeavors. His efforts earned Ty the Park Manager of the Year Award in 2008.

After 10 years of service as a park manager, Ty was promoted to his current position as the boating program manager for Utah Division of Parks and Recreation. He was later officially recognized as the boating law administrator for Utah after the past BLA Dave Harris finished serving his term on the NASBLA Executive Board this October.

Among the biggest needs in recreational boating safety, he lists education of vessel operators and increased wearing of life jackets among the most important. As the state’s BLA, he plans to find ways to increase the number of registered boats within the state and build upon the level of training that RBS officers receive.

## **KRIS WAHLERS** Colorado



Originally from Stover, Missouri, Kris Wahlers and his family moved to Colorado in 1999 and have called Parker home ever since. While he’ll occasionally borrow a canoe or kayak

from friends and go to the lake or river with his family, Kris enjoys hiking (he’s working on summiting all of Colorado’s fourteeners now), mountain biking, hunting, camping and climbing. He’s a member and instructor for the American Canoe Association and recently became a leader for his son’s Tiger Scout den.

Wahlers joined Colorado State Parks in 2001 as a ranger at Chatfield Reservoir in the Denver metro area. “That was unique because of the density of boating; through the summer, we would average around

350 boats a day on the 1,300-acre lake,” Kris said. From there he moved on to become the senior ranger at Stagecoach Reservoir, a lake known for cold-water fishing.

Kris worked for the statewide trails program for a year managing capital projects, then became the boat safety education & outreach coordinator in 2008. In addition to being the education coordinator, he was – and mostly still is – involved with boat theft investigations, boat accident investigations, management of Colorado’s river outfitter licensing program and a law enforcement instructor.

Kris became Colorado’s boating law administrator in August 2013. “The most pressing issue I see is proper education/training of all boat operators because it affects so many other parts of the big picture. With adequate education across the board, operators should be able to make well-informed decisions for themselves,” said Kris. “That doesn’t mean they always will, so it’s also critical to balance great education with great enforcement. And it takes away the ‘I didn’t know’ excuse.”

In Colorado, a priority for Kris is to address the age for mandatory education. “Right now, we only require 14- and 15-year-olds to go through a boat safety class. So if a person doesn’t drive a boat until he or she is 16, which is the majority, that person will never have been exposed to the knowledge needed to be a safe boater. Compare that to going to a car dealership, walking out with a brand-new \$45,000 car and hopping on the interstate without a driver’s license. No one would ever consider that as reasonable – why is it reasonable for boats?” \*

## Annual Conference

# INFORMATION



By Kimberly Jenkins

# NETWORKING

**T**he National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) held its 54th Annual Conference in Boise, Idaho, Sept. 14-18, 2013. This year's conference evaluations deem it another success, with attendees satisfied with everything from the presentations and demonstrations to the networking and field trip.

### Pre-conference training

On the day before the conference kicked off, Officer Paul Alber with the Palm Beach Police Department debuted the GPS Forensics course, which he developed in cooperation with NASBLA's Boat Operation and Training Program.

This introduction to GPS Forensics provides law enforcement officers with a foundation for recovering evidence from GPS devices and preparing it for courtroom presentation. The class covered the history of the GPS system,

described the components of the system, and explained the basic concepts of how GPS works.

Students learned about the wide variety of devices that are on the market and the types of data the devices might hold. They learned the best practices for securing a GPS for examination and the legal guidelines that must be followed. Finally, students learned about the tools and software needed to conduct a basic examination of a GPS and how to present the results.



## Opening ceremonies



Rear Admiral Richard Gromlich addresses attendees during his keynote speech.

This year's conference attendees enjoyed a rare treat. During the opening ceremonies, the Boise Police Department's honor guard presented the colors amid the haunting sounds of a bagpipe. Two members of the guard regaled the attendees by performing completely a cappella with reverence, honor and military-like precision "The Star Spangled Banner."

Later, Rear Admiral Richard T. Gromlich, who serves as commander of the Thirteenth Coast Guard District

headquartered in Seattle, Wash., opened the conference with his keynote address. He explained how the U.S. Coast Guard is involved in all the states as well as overseas, adding that the American public truly appreciates the Coast Guard's efforts. He stressed the importance of the partnership between the Coast Guard and NASBLA, citing numerous resulting accomplishments, including 2012's record-low number of recreational boating-related fatalities. He emphasized uniformity among the states and implementation of quick phase-in education programs as key to an educated public. He closed by commending all involved in RBS for their dedicated efforts.

## General sessions

Larry Bowling with the National Transportation Safety Board kicked off the general sessions with an eye-opening presentation on the risks associated with commercial parasailing. The Board's joint investigations with the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission and the U.S. Coast Guard of several parasailing accidents show that tow lines are failing below manufacturers' stated strengths and inappropriate repairs to equipment are common. Bowling stressed the need to raise public awareness to the risks and to develop and implement



Larry Bowling with the National Transportation Safety Board provides revealing data on the risk associated with commercial parasailing

uniform standards and regulations to govern commercial operation.

Larry Meddock, executive director of the Water Sports Industry Association, spoke next, explaining how the WSIA, at the Coast Guard's request, has begun developing national parasailing safety standards. With poor weather being a factor in many accidents, the WSIA and ASTM International, with the help of the entire parasail industry, approved its first national industry safety standard on weather. The WSIA is working on four additional safety standards that it hopes to have adopted by April 2014.

*(Continued on page 10)*



Matt Gruhn, president of the Marine Retailers Association of the Americas, discussed the importance of collaboration and the need to educate boaters. He cites a lack of education as a barrier to entering boating and provided information on an initiative aimed at recruiting youth into recreational boating.

Opening with the fact that 57 million people have a disability, Janet Zeller, national accessibility program manager with the U.S. Forest Service, discussed accessibility and universal design of programs and facilities. She explained that water is the ultimate equalizer – a way for everyone, despite their abilities, to enjoy the outdoors. The U.S. Access Board is developing guidelines under the ADA for access to passenger vessels. The guidelines are available for comment through Regulations.gov until Jan. 24, 2014.

Representatives from the Coast Guard provided an update. Capt. Tom Boross, the new chief of the U.S. Coast Guard Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety, discussed the move of Headquarters to a new location and the status of the Sport Fish Restoration & Boating Trust Fund which will expire in 2014 unless Congress takes action to either extend it or pass the proposed updated version. Support for this effort will be needed in the upcoming months.

Capt. Boross then took time to thank the various groups present, including vendors, regulators, volunteers and first responders, for their commitment to recreational boating safety, encouraging continued vigilance in addressing “the menacing scourge that is boating under the influence.” Next, he discussed the Coast Guard’s objectives, the primary one being to improve recreational boating safety. He then presented a challenge: What are we going to do next in regards to reducing boating-related deaths and injuries? He discussed the 2011 resolution on mandatory life jacket wear and a cost benefit analysis to determine whether to proceed.

Jeff Wheeler, deputy chief of the Coast Guard’s Office of Boat Forces, discussed NASBLA’s Boat Operations and Training Program and how it functions to provide

force multipliers to help save boaters’ lives. He pointed out that with upcoming budget cuts, Boat Forces will rely on states even more.

A paddlesports panel provided insight on a number of issues, including safety concerns, user conflicts and registration challenges. Fred Messmann, deputy director of the National Safe Boating Council, discussed Boat Pro Point of Sale, an innovative program for educating sales professionals on how to help boaters make good decisions when buying safety equipment.

Next, a variety of representatives from NASBLA’s partner organizations provided updates on their grant projects, including the Wear It! Campaign, a life jacket loaner program, and trends in paddlesports.

Alaska Boating Law Administrator Jeff Johnson, who’s serving as chair of NASBLA’s Education Standards Panel, provided an update on the group’s work, and Brian Dorval discussed the progress of the National On-water Instruction Standards Team.

Closing out the conference, an accreditation panel provided information and insight on going through the NASBLA BOAT Program accreditation process.

## Annual business meeting



*Members hear updates and discuss topics during the 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 and

discussing some updates to the bylaws, NASBLA leadership presented representatives from the Ohio Division of Watercraft; Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management; Texas Parks and Wildlife Department; Charleston Metro Marine Unit; and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Bureau of Law Enforcement with framed certificates in recognition of receiving full accreditation under NASBLA’s BOAT Program.

The conference committee announced that the 2014 Annual NASBLA Conference will be held Oct. 16-19 in Bar Harbor, Maine and the 2015 conference in Wichita, Kansas.

Following NASBLA’s official business, Jeff Hoedt, chief of the U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety Division, discussed recreational boating safety statistics with regards to the National RBS Strategic Plan’s goals and objectives. The 2012 boating statistics show significant improvement; in fact, deaths decreased from 758 in 2011 to 651, marking an all-time low. Registered boats continue to decline with expectations that the 2013-2014 registrations will be even lower. This means that the monies for grants and state support could decline.

Hoedt also provided updates on a number of regulatory projects, including the North American Life Jacket Standard, propeller strike avoidance and the accident reporting system. He then provided preliminary results from the RBS Survey.

Next, John Shanks, acting senior director of development & law enforcement relations with the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, discussed the organization’s annual Ride & Run to Remember event and National Police Week, encouraging conference attendees to participate.

## Field trip

Conference attendees enjoyed an afternoon field trip to Boise River Park to learn how the city transformed a low-head dam into a popular play spot for paddlesports enthusiasts. The City of Boise has diverted the Boise River and created a wave park as part of a larger park complex which



A trip to the Boise River Park provides conference attendees the chance to check out an innovative way to repurpose low-head dams.

includes a lake and will have other water related activities.

Opened in 2012 and constructed primarily from private donations, the \$3.6 million project features two state-of-the-art wavershapers designed with pneumatically operated air bladders that inflate to elevate stainless steel flashboards. Wave technicians adjust the flashboards to control the size and shape of the waves.

## Breakouts



Breakout sessions provide conference attendees with a variety of information.

The last day kicked off with a variety of breakout sessions. One breakout garnering a lot of attention was a presentation on recreational boating accidents. Ernie Marshburn, director of the Office of Research Development in the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Studies at East Carolina University, dispelled the belief that accidents are primarily attributable to human or technological factors. He demonstrated how, instead, accidents occur through a chain of events stemming

from the interrelationship between human, technological and environmental factors.

Another popular breakout was the interactive Hands-on Education presentation by a group of education coordinators from different agencies. Providing demonstrations of creative, interactive activities, this session let participants experience firsthand these fun, educational activities.

Kansas Education Coordinator Erika Brooks discussed Boat Safe, Road Safe, a partnering concept for cross-promoting highway and waterway safety. Tennessee Education Coordinator Betsy Woods provided a helpful tutorial on NASBLA Connect, a resource that provides a platform for discussion, document searching, and announcements.

National Accessibility Program Manager Janet Teller provided a follow-up to her general session and addressed individual questions on accessibility and universal design. Brian and JoAnne Dorval provided an update on a national validation program for on-water powerboat standards.

Capt. Dan Kindig and Lt. Ben Keyes, with local sheriff's offices, discussed Idaho's unique boating program, in which county sheriffs are responsible for enforcing boating safety laws. In Data Mining for Educators, Alaska Education Coordinator Joe McCullough and Ohio Recreational Boating Accident Program Manager

Tammy Terry provided an overview of data that's available from BARD and other sources for use in teaching boating safety.

## Exhibits



Conference attendees enjoy chatting in the exhibit hall between sessions.

Opening during the President's Reception, the exhibit hall 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 54th Annual NASBLA Conference are available now. Access the Digital Hub via a link on NASBLA's homepage, <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

### **Peter Gionet New York**

Peter Gionet has been directly involved in New York's recreational boating education program for nearly 25 years, during which time he has developed and overseen every aspect of the state's boater education program. His ongoing efforts garnered him the Boating Safety Award, which is sponsored by the National Safe Boating Council.



Gionet's background is unique to recreational boating. He joined New York's boating safety office following a career as an officer in the U.S. Merchant Marine where he sailed as second officer aboard heavy lift vessels as well as aboard the reserve fleet during the first gulf war. Gionet is a graduate of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point and holds a bachelor's degree in Nautical Science.

In 1999, following New York's first major rework of its boater education statute, Gionet took on the task of updating the entire program from the creation of a new instructor/student database to the writing of New York's own textbook and associated lesson plans. Today nearly 20,000 students annually complete this course of instruction in the classroom.

As a result of Gionet's work, each of New York's 700+ instructors uses the same teaching materials. Program advancements pioneered by Gionet include the issuance of credit-card sized boater cards, an online course posting page, an electronic version of the textbook and a companion PowerPoint package.

## Bonner Award

### **Colonel Jim Brown Florida**

Col. Jim Brown retired from conservation and boating law enforcement in May 2013 after a long and distinguished career that began with the Florida Marine Patrol in the

Keys in 1981. He maintained a focus on boating safety issues throughout his robust career, and his efforts have made significant impact at both the state and national levels. Recreational boating is a safer and more enjoyable activity due to his commitment, and there are many recreational boaters who are alive today as a result of Brown's passion for boating safety.

As Florida's boating law administrator, he played a significant role in the creation of the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission when the Florida Marine Patrol and Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission were merged in 1999.

In 2002, he was appointed major over the Boating and Waterways Section and worked his way up to colonel of law enforcement, where he provided great leadership to nearly 1,100 personnel responsible for recreational boating safety and protecting people, property, fish and wildlife.

Col. Brown was heavily involved in efforts to improve boating safety in the Keys and across the state. He was instrumental in the development of some of the earliest standards for conducting boating accident investigations. He also actively worked with Florida's Legislature for the passage of Florida's boater education law, dive flag law, and a variety of other critical boating safety laws and regulations.



# Compass Award

## Ohio Department of Natural Resources Watercraft Division

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), Division of Watercraft created a water survival course for their own officers, and then worked with NASBLA's Enforcement & Training Committee to further develop and expand the Officer Water Survival Course under NASBLA's BOAT Program.



Next, the ODNR Division of Watercraft donated instructor time and travel costs to deliver a series of tuition-free course offerings over the summer of 2013. These course offerings went far beyond the two-day Officer Water Survival Course; they also included an additional three-day train-the-trainer module. Those graduates now have full access to the NASBLA curriculum and are contractually allowed to deliver that training within their own agency and to their partners.

"As a fully engaged member of NASBLA, ODNR Division of Watercraft could not have presented this association and our members with a greater gift," said NASBLA President Toby Velasquez when presenting the award. "Through their vision, talent and leadership they have lead the way in the creation of NASBLA's newest course. They have more importantly given us a compass bearing on how we define the relationship between this Association and the members we serve."

# Innovations Award

## Commander Dan Shipman 13th Coast Guard District

Commander Dan Shipman, Recreational Boating Safety Specialist for the 13th Coast Guard District received the Innovations Award, which is sponsored by Kalkomey Enterprises, Inc., parent company of Boat Ed, for his perseverance in delivering the Coastal Bar Warning and Information System in the coastal harbors of Oregon and Washington.

The system provides boaters with real-time access to information regarding Coastal Bar conditions using computers, smart phones and low-power AM radio technology to broadcast safety information in nearly real time. Since the system was implemented, the number of phone and VHF radio calls has decreased by about 30 percent and is expected to further decrease as use of the system becomes more widespread.



One reason for the success of the system is the new partnership between the NOAA and the USCG, as both agencies benefit from immediate access to weather patterns and sea conditions when forecasting. Other NOAA and Coast Guard regions are considering this system to assist with distributing timely safety information. This system also may be used in multi-agency efforts to address other water safety and drowning-prevention issues.

# Legislative Award

## The Honorable Senator Frank Wagner Virginia

State Senator Frank Wagner of Virginia Beach, Va., provided exemplary legislative leadership as the primary sponsor of Senate Bill 1117, Virginia Uniform Certificate of Title for Watercraft Act. The law provides a consistent and sensible system for registration of boats and is intended to conform to U.S. Coast Guard regulations regarding preferred mortgages for watercraft. It passed both Virginia Senate and House of Delegates with overwhelming support and was signed into law by Governor Bob McDonnell on April 3, 2013.

Through Senator Wagner's diligence and patronage, the commonwealth of Virginia became the first state in the nation to pass the Uniform Certificate of Title for Vessels Act, and the recreational boaters of Virginia and the nation are on their way to an improved system of identifying a vessel's chain of ownership and providing for a better environment for marine finance.

*Editor's Note: Senator Wagner will receive his award early next year.*

# Lifetime Achievement Award

## John Annino Connecticut

John Annino's 30-plus year career has exemplified professionalism and expertise in recreational boating safety education. He began his career with the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

*(Continued on page 14)*



(DEP) in 1983 as a volunteer boating safety instructor teaching the Basic Boating Program, which he

did passionately for 10 years. Annino then worked for the department on a seasonal basis, assisting the education coordinator in administering the boating education program. In on the ground floor of Connecticut's mandatory safe boating and personal watercraft education programs, Annino taught basic boating classes leading to certification for his own company and in 1999 was hired to supervise DEP's Boating Education Unit.

In addition to the professionalism he brought to the, now, DEEP in administering the boating education and certification program, Annino will leave the department a better place through his long list of achievements, including:

- Developing a Quality Boating Teacher Proficiency Certificate Program for all boating safety instructors statewide;
- Bringing California's AquaSmart program to Connecticut's schoolchildren;
- Bringing on-water boating education to Connecticut and ensuring that instructors are certified by the National Safe Boating Council.

Additionally, Annino has assisted NASBLA by serving on the association's education committee in numerous capacities for almost 15 years. He is currently a member of the newly formed Education Standards Panel that seeks ANSI accreditation for NASBLA's education standards.

### James French Washington

James French began his career in Ohio in 1963 as one of the first 16 officers hired for the state's Division of Watercraft. Within a few years he was promoted to Marine Patrol Coordinator and began organizing annual Marine Patrol Symposiums. French, along with other Division employees, led an effort to create the first swift-water training programs offered by a government for first responders. Alongside him in that effort was Pam Dillon, NASBLA's current education director. In 1983, French created

the Ohio Historical Canoe Route Association – a group still in existence today.

In the early 1980s French was promoted to the post of chief of operations, which he served in until 1984 when he moved out West to become Washington's first boating law administrator. French built Washington's Recreational Boating Safety Program from the foundation and set the trajectory for the program as it is today. Over the course of his career, French has served on various NASBLA boards and committees, including a term as NASBLA President in 1993.

An extremely hard worker, French is truly devoted to recreational boating safety. Last



October, just before heading to Spokane for the agency's annual marine law enforcement conference, French underwent

emergency surgery to treat a detached retina in his right eye. Since the surgery went well, French insisted on driving to the conference to teach the Adventures in Boating Instructor class that he'd been prepping for the entire summer.

## NASBLA Award

### Virgil Chambers, National Safe Boating Council

In 1978, after serving our country with distinction, both as a public school teacher in the classroom and as a highly decorated



soldier on the field of battle, Virgil Chambers became chief of the Boating Safety and Education Division for the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission.

One of his most significant accomplishments was the development and implementation of the Public School Boating and Water Safety Manual and Program. Many public schools have used the program with favorable results. He also founded the Pennsylvania Water Rescue Training Program which was then adopted by the National Association for Search and Rescue (NASAR). He served as director of this national program from 1987 to 1997. Chambers retired from Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission in 1995.

Chambers has been the executive director for the Council since 1996, where he served as the technical content advisor in direct support of the Council's education and information programs.

He was responsible for the planning and development of the year-round national boating safety awareness campaign administered by the U.S. Coast Guard. He also served as a representative of the Council to national and international boating and water safety organizations.

## President's Award



**John M. Johnson, CAE, NASBLA CEO and Executive Director,** for his quick actions, genuine support and dedicated efforts during a significant medical event.

**Ron Sarver, CAE, NASBLA Deputy Director**, for his quick actions, genuine support and dedicated efforts during a significant medical event.

**Darren Rider, Tennessee BLA**, for his quick actions, genuine support and dedicated efforts during a significant medical event.

**Chief Rodger Norcross, Ohio Department of Natural Resources**, for his inspiring participation in NASBLA and its many programs.

**Capt. Spencer Cole, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries**, for his inspiring leadership of the organization's Preparedness & Response Committee.

## Waterways Management Award

### **Lisa Randlette and the Aquatic Resources Program Washington**

Lisa Randlette led the effort to develop the Quartermaster Harbor Mooring Buoy Management Plan to address long-term conflicts arising from recreational mooring buoys in an environmentally sensitive portion of the Puget Sound. The plan, which dovetails with an over-arching plan for the Maury Island Aquatic Reserve, is an excellent example of an agency working with the stakeholders to resolve conflicts, facilitate navigation, minimize environmental effects, and enhance the recreational boating experience.

After reviewing physical and environmental conditions in Quartermaster Harbor, meeting with waterfront

landowners, members of the local community, and boaters, and conducting surveys and inventories of existing mooring buoys, DNR developed a list of

recommendations for the mooring buoy management plan. The agency held a public informational meeting and requested feedback from the public about the findings and recommendations in the plan. In conjunction with public review of the plan, DNR also conducted a State Environmental Policy Act review, with another public comment period. The Board of Natural Resources adopted the plan on April 3, 2013.

## William B. Garner National Boating Safety Leadership Award

### **Jeffrey Hoedt Coast Guard Division of Boating Safety**

Jeffrey Hoedt, chief of the Coast Guard Division of Boating Safety, has had an important impact on both state and federal policy outcomes for more than three decades by leveraging his unique career path within the National RBS Program to achieve success at multiple levels.

He began his career in 1979 as a watercraft officer with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and then served as assistant district supervisor in Cleveland, Idaho's boating law administrator, assistant chief of the State Affairs Branch at Coast Guard Headquarters, and Ohio's boating law

administrator before joining the Coast Guard's headquarters staff.

As the chief of the ODNR Division of Watercraft, he worked with the state's volunteer advisory group to navigate the legislative and political processes, resulting in widespread support for additional state gasoline tax revenues for boating. He also helped implement a number of important customer-focused improvements, including the introduction of mandatory boater education, a new online boat registration system and an increased enforcement presence on the state's waterways.

Over the last several years, Hoedt has worked diligently with the U.S. Coast Guard to seek Congressional action for a federal mandate for boater education and to seek NBSAC guidance relative to mandatory life jacket wear for recreational boaters on vessels under 19 feet long, on all PWC and human-powered vessels, and for any person towed while engaged in watersports.

Under his oversight and direction, the U.S. Coast Guard facilitated the first-ever national boater survey to establish baseline measures of effectiveness and to document boater attitudes and behaviors. Also during Hoedt's watch and with the support of the National Boating Safety Advisory Council, the USCG shepherded the development of two long-term strategic plans for the National RBS Program to guide dozens of RBS partners toward a common goal of casualty reduction. \*



**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 20. To read more about the educators, see the Sept-Oct 2013 Small Craft Advisory.



# PARTNER PERSPECTIVES

*Craig W. Floyd  
Chairman  
National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund*

**F**rom the State of Alabama, Loyd C. Hays, Frank Stewart Jr., Walter E. Sawyer . . . from the State of Wyoming, Clifford Dean Stevens, Kirk D. Inberg.” About three years ago, I had the opportunity to attend the 50th anniversary conference of the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA). To commemorate this special anniversary, about 250 boating law administrators, boating safety education specialists, marine patrol officers, Coast Guard representatives and other recreational boating safety stakeholders assembled in Honolulu, Hawaii. As part of the opening ceremonies, a memorial service was held to honor the 128 natural resources officers and U.S. Coast Guardsmen who had been killed in law enforcement service during NASBLA’s 50-year existence. The names were solemnly read one by one in order of the state in which they served.

I had accompanied my wife, Veronica, then-chair of the National Safe Boating Council, on the trip to the conference. For me, it was a vacation, but I very much wanted to be a part of the memorial service to this special group of fallen American heroes. John Johnson, NASBLA’s executive director, graciously arranged for me to speak before the honor roll of fallen officers was read.

## In valor there is

# hope

Given that the conference was held September 11, 2010, I opened my remarks with a special tribute to the 72 law enforcement officers who were killed in the terrorist attacks of 9/11—the deadliest day in law enforcement history. I told them about a friend of mine, Scott Williamson, a New York City police officer, who had lost many friends on that fateful day. When I visited with Scott at Ground Zero one week after the attacks, he said, “There is one thought that gives me comfort at this difficult time. Those officers were right where they wanted to be, doing exactly what they wanted to be doing. They lived for that moment when they could help innocent people in need,

regardless of the dangers involved.” Certainly, the same could be said about the natural resources officers and men and women of the U.S. Coast Guard who have given their lives in the name of public safety.

Just the day before the memorial service, my wife and I had visited Pearl Harbor where 2,400 members of our military were killed when the Japanese planes attacked on the morning of December 7, 1941. We took a short boat ride out to the USS Arizona Memorial, which honors the 1,177 lives that were lost when the battleship was sunk by Japanese bombers. It is a powerful memorial, especially knowing that the remains of those who died that day are still entombed in the ship’s bowels directly below the monument. Oil from the ship still leaks to the surface some 70 years later.

The visit reminded me of the parallel between the sacrifices made by our sailors and soldiers, and the sacrifices made by our law enforcement professionals. Both groups of patriots stand ready to risk their own lives for the safety and security of their nation. The conduct and service of those who serve in the military and law enforcement define the words inscribed on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, D.C., “In valor there is hope.” \*

# Officer of the Month Award



*Devotion to Duty.  
Exemplary Service.  
American Heroes.*



Read the inspiring stories of heroism and service of past award winners, and consider nominating an officer for this prestigious national award.

## Questions?

Contact Brian Lacey at  
202-737-3400 or [brian@nleomf.org](mailto:brian@nleomf.org)

[LawMemorial.org/Officers](http://LawMemorial.org/Officers)



National Law Enforcement Officers  
MEMORIAL FUND  
RESPECT. HONOR. REMEMBER.

# NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT MUSEUM TAKES SHAPE

*By Cary Arberg  
Communications & Special  
Projects Associate  
National Law Enforcement Officers  
Memorial Fund*

**A**t the core of the National Law Enforcement Museum is the idea that law enforcement is essential to a democratic society. Throughout history people have put their lives on the line for our freedom. Rooted in this fact, the Museum will be a natural extension to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial—a lasting tribute to those nearly 20,000 U.S. peace officers who were killed or died while doing their jobs. But the Museum won't just be a quiet place for reflection. It will go "behind the badge" to tell the rich story of American law enforcement through interactive exhibits, a comprehensive collection of artifacts, robust resources for research, and diverse educational programming.

## STEP INTO AN OFFICER'S SHOES...

Located adjacent to the Memorial in Washington, D.C.'s historic Judiciary Square, the 57,000-square-foot, mostly-underground institution will be a world-class experiential Museum where visitors may assume the role of a police dispatcher in the Motorola 911 Emergency Ops exhibit, make split-second decisions posed by the judgment simulator, analyze

forensic evidence and solve crimes in Take the Case, sponsored by Target, and much more.

Other major exhibits will focus on the history of policing, specialized law enforcement units, "tools of the trade," and a captivating look at a day in the life of an officer. The Reel to Real exhibit will allow visitors to compare real-life law enforcement to depictions in some of their favorite movies and TV shows, while rotating exhibits in the DuPont Gallery will focus on popular topics in law enforcement, such as the role K-9s play in policing.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE COLLECTION, FROM ELIOT NESS TO ROBOCOP

The Museum's artifact collection currently comprises more than 17,000 objects, including a sheriff's writ from 1703 (the earliest artifact in the collection); objects associated with infamous crimes, such as the wanted poster and trial pass from the 1932 Lindbergh baby kidnapping case, and the infamous Chevrolet Caprice and complete inventory of evidence from the 2002



Washington, D.C.-area sniper investigation; as well as objects related to lawmen and criminals, like the original law enforcement credentials that belonged to Eliot Ness of Untouchables fame, and gangster Al Capone's bullet-resistant vest. Also in the collection are handcuffs, nightsticks, and other tools and equipment dating back to the 1850s, along with pop culture items, including the RoboCop II movie costume and one of Jack Bauer's sweatshirts from the television show, 24.

### CONSTRUCTION STATUS

Like most ambitious endeavors, the National Law Enforcement Museum project has been a collective effort (of law enforcement agencies, corporate partners, and individual supporters) that has gradually progressed from a lofty dream to a concrete plan—and, in just a few short years—to a reality. By the end of 2012, all building and exhibit design documents were completed. And in August 2013, the District of Columbia issued building permits to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund to construct the National Law Enforcement Museum at 444 E St. NW, in Judiciary Square. HJ Sims will provide financing for the construction of the Museum through the offering of municipal bonds to institutional and retail clients. Additionally, the Museum signed a contract with Clark Construction to begin building the core and shell of the Museum. Once the bond offering closes, construction will begin, with a planned opening in 2016.

The story of law enforcement and the stories of law enforcement officers are a deep and rich well of information, history, and drama upon which to draw," said Joe Urschel, National Law Enforcement Museum Executive Director. "They are the building blocks of a great museum, and I look forward to putting them in place along with the bricks and mortar, glass and steel of the Museum's physical structure."

### HOW CAN YOUR AGENCY HELP?

One way law enforcement agencies can contribute to the National Law Enforcement Museum is through utilizing crime money or asset forfeiture funds your agency has acquired. As retired Orange County (FL) Sheriff Kevin Beary said, "Why not use money seized from criminals to help build the first National Law Enforcement Museum?" Just last year, more than \$453 million was provided in equitable sharing funds from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to local and state law enforcement agencies.

As you know, asset forfeiture money from the DOJ has very restrictive guidelines in its use. For instance, agencies cannot use these funds to pay for day-to-day purchases, salaries, or equipment. However, in 2008, the DOJ granted law enforcement agencies the opportunity to donate a portion of asset forfeiture funds to support the creation of the National Law Enforcement Museum. Under DOJ regulations,

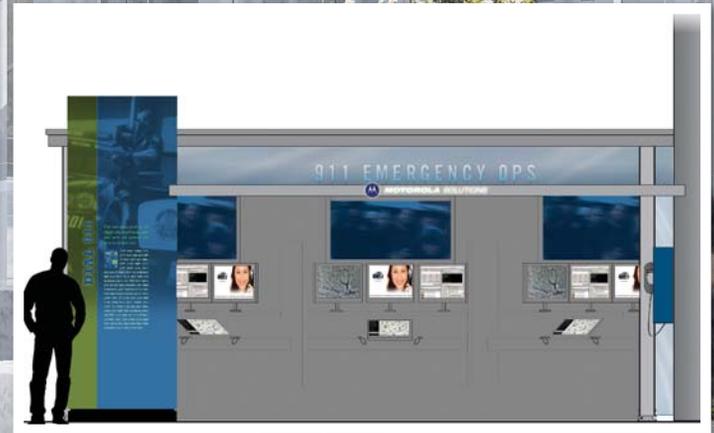
participating agencies are permitted to use up to 15 percent of the total federal equitable sharing fund in support of community-based programs by private, non-profit organizations that are "supportive of and consistent with a law enforcement effort, policy, or initiative."

Since gaining DOJ approval, 225 agencies have participated in raising more than \$1.5 million to make the Museum a reality. Individual agencies have donated as much as \$250,000—and each donation helps. We thank all those agencies and individuals who have helped to support the Museum project thus far.

The ability for your agency to help us bring local and national attention to the profession and legacy of law enforcement is very significant. This Museum is your Museum. We hope you will consider asset forfeiture and artifact donations as ways for your agency to become directly involved in the creation of the first-ever National Law Enforcement Museum.

For additional information regarding state or federal asset forfeiture funds to support the National Law Enforcement Museum, contact John Shanks at 202.737.8529 or [jshanks@nleomf.org](mailto:jshanks@nleomf.org).

For information regarding potential artifact donations to the National Law Enforcement Museum, visit <http://www.LawEnforcementMuseum.org/the-collection/donate-an-artifact.html>\*





# STARS *on the* WATER

## **2013 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 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 42 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

Conservation Warden  
**Juan Gomez**  
Wisconsin



During the 54th Annual NASBLA Conference, Conservation Warden Juan Gomez was named the national Boating Officer of the Year. Warden Gomez has been a conservation warden with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources since 2008, currently serving Walworth County. He is responsible for over 30 lakes including Lake Geneva, located southwest of Milwaukee and popular with tourists from metropolitan Chicago and Milwaukee.

Warden Gomez is a strong advocate for safe boating throughout Wisconsin, dedicated to protecting the citizens recreating on lakes in Wisconsin as well as educating youth. He has proactively addressed boating problems in his area, specifically operating while intoxicated (OWI) enforcement. In 2012, he issued 37 citations and 66 warnings for boating violations, including 10 for OWI.

In addition, Warden Gomez participated in major OWI enforcement efforts at special events at the Beloit River Fest, the

Milwaukee Big Bang, and the Okauchee Tie-Up. Enforcement efforts at the 2012 Okauchee event yielded 21 drunken boat driving arrests and one on-the-road driving arrest. Warden Gomez organizes the annual Lake Beulah tie-up boating group check. This event involves 10 conservation wardens and local boat patrol unit officers. Gomez arranged for the Field Operations Support Unit trailer to be deployed as a "portable precinct" for testing operators for blood alcohol concentrations. Wardens arrested eight boat operators for OWI.

Warden Gomez investigated three fatal boating accidents. A 2012 fatal accident involved a pleasure boat and a personal watercraft that was operated by an Illinois law enforcement officer. The investigation was very complex and Warden Gomez diligently worked on collecting facts, evidence, and interviewing suspects and witnesses for prosecution. His bilingual skills enabled him to successfully interview several witnesses, and his persistence and attention to detail were

instrumental in closing the case, while providing information to family members, community residents, and partner agencies.

Warden Gomez began the daunting task of resolving mooring buoy issues on Lake Geneva. He organized a fly-over of Lake Geneva to photograph the lake and each of the mooring buoys and then used GPS to further document the placement of the mooring buoys. He then partnered with the local pier installation company (who places the buoys), the local Recreational Safety Warden, and a retired warden, while also reviewing court documents and department records to determine the legality of the mooring buoys.

Warden Gomez's commitment to boating safety and education has certainly made Wisconsin waters a safer place to recreate. His desire to focus on OWI operators has resulted in boating safety being treated as a priority by area boaters, other agencies, and local courts.

# REGIONAL BOATING OFFICERS OF THE YEAR

## Southern Region Boating Officer of the Year



Master Sergeant  
**David Holiday**  
Mississippi

Master Sergeant David Holiday graduated in May of 1999 from the College of Forest Resources at Mississippi State University with a bachelor of science degree in Forestry and a minor in Wildlife Management. He was hired by the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries & Parks as a conservation officer in July 1999 and is assigned to Montgomery County.

During his 14 years with the department, working boating safety details on Grenada Lake has been one of his primary duties. In performing these duties he worked countless boating incidents, nine drowning and several recovery operations during 2012. Officer Holiday is also a member of the department's Special Response Team that performed search and rescue efforts during the Mississippi River flood in 2011 and the flooding caused by Hurricane Isaac in 2012.

Officer Holiday is involved with the Spirit of America Safe Boating Day Camp sponsored by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. This organization teaches kids about boating safety and gives them a hands-on experience. He also conducts safety talks with school groups and other clubs and organizations.

Officer Holiday is assigned to Grenada Lake and works with fellow officers and Corps of Engineers Park Rangers enforcing boating laws and conducting safety checks. This visibility has caused a decline in the issuance of citations to boaters. Officer Holiday states that the boating laws will be enforced but considers safety to be the top priority.

In addition to recognizing Officer Holiday as the Southern Region's Boating Officer of the Year, NASBLA presented Officer Holiday with an Award of Commendation for his life-saving efforts on the job. NASBLA developed the Award of Commendation in 2008 to recognize persons who have exhibited heroism and faced risks to their own lives in saving another person or people involved in a recreational boating safety incident. On April 4, 2012, Officer Holiday was involved with saving the lives of both stranded boaters and the officers who were en route to assisting those boaters on Grenada Lake.

## Western Region Boating Officer of the Year



Deputy  
**Nate Thompson**  
Oregon

Deputy Nate Thompson is a valuable and respected asset to the Clackamas County Sheriff's Office, the Oregon State Marine Board, other sheriff departments, and search and rescue organizations across the state of Oregon. His skill and dedication to serving Oregon's boaters is exemplary and is demonstrated in many ways.

In 2012, he completed 1,402 documented boater contacts, which is more than four percent of the statewide total for all marine officers. He has an excellent rapport with boaters in his county because of his high level of contacts, but he is also an avid angler and freely shares his knowledge with boaters. This rapport is effective at gathering information on violators, including poachers and other illegal operation.

In 2012, Dep. Thompson gave 36 one-hour boat- and water-safety classes to schools in his area, reaching 824 students. He has developed effective slide presentations designed to keep the interest of different age groups while informing them about key water and boating safety messages.

Dep. Thompson is one of the core instructors relied upon by the Marine Board to help organize and teach the OSMB two-week Marine Academy for new recruits each spring. His deft boat handling skills – honed on the white water of the famous Clackamas River – make him an important instructor at the annual Jet Boat Operations training on the Rogue River each summer. His excellent instructor skills are further put to use teaching PWC operations to other marine officers. He recently received training in white-water kayaking so he can participate in training other officers in white-water kayaking skills.

In addition to his other skills, he is trained as a swift water rescue technician and as a rope rescue technician, and he assists in training with Clackamas Fire District's training of other sheriff officers and search and rescue organization staff and volunteers.

# NORTHERN STATE BOATING OFFICERS OF THE YEAR



**Officer  
Laura Pettus  
Connecticut**

Officer Laura Pettus is a 13-year veteran of the Connecticut State Environmental Conservation Police. She has been assigned to multiple enforcement sectors throughout her career with the majority in the Northeast Sector. In 2012 she handled over 20 boating incidents, resulting in six arrests and seven written warnings for a variety of violations.

On April 21, 2012, at 11:30 p.m. she responded to a fatal boating accident on Mashapaug Lake in Union, Connecticut. A bass boat had crashed into boulders and trees on the shoreline of the lake resulting in the death of the passenger and minor injuries to the operator. The crash was particularly difficult to process due to the remote location.

After a lengthy and thorough investigation led by Officer Pettus, the operator was arrested and charged with Manslaughter Second Degree, Manslaughter Second Degree with a Vessel, Reckless Operation of a Vessel First Degree While Under the Influence, Failure to Maintain Proper Lookout While Operating a Vessel, Operating a Vessel at Speed in Excess of Slow-No-Wake within 100 feet of Shore, Failure to Comply with Federal Requirements Regarding Anchor Lights, Insufficient Personal Flotation Devices and Exceeding Speed Limit.

Officer Pettus successfully conducted an extremely difficult and thorough investigation coordinating with officers from multiple agencies and the Boating Accident Reconstruction Unit while employing exceptional skill resulting in the arrest of the vessel operator.



**Senior  
Corporal  
Drew  
Aydelotte  
Delaware**

Senior Corporal Drew Aydelotte has worked as a Delaware Fish and Wildlife Agent since 1999. Due to his thirst for training and his time spent under way, he has used his on-the-water boating skills during all seasons as a way to check for compliance to all natural resource rules, regulations and statutes.

His positive attitude coupled with a strong work ethic have allowed Cpl. Aydelotte to be the highest statistical producing officer in the Enforcement Section for several years. In 2012, he dedicated 1335 hours towards recreational boating safety, conducted 651 boating safety compliance boardings and spent 308.5 hours underway on Delaware's waterways. He made 132 arrests with 155 violations that resulted from a response to or from an investigation of 142 citizen complaints. Cpl. Aydelotte made 14 arrests for recreational boating safety violations, including two arrests for operating under the influence.

While most boat operators checked by Cpl. Aydelotte were found in compliance with Delaware's boating rules and regulations, during his compliance checks the officer made an additional 48 arrests for fisheries type violations.

During his career, Cpl. Aydelotte has taken advantage of any training opportunities afforded to him, such as the month-long FLETC Maritime Law Enforcement officer course.



**Conservation  
Police Officer II  
Mike  
Thompson  
Illinois**

Conservation Police Officer (CPO) Mike Thompson has continually been a regional leader in recreational boating enforcement, education and accident investigations throughout his 14-year career with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. In 2012, he again established his role as a leader simply with his positive work ethic. He conducted 158 boating inspections resulting in two operating under the influence arrests, several underage consumption arrests, nine citations and numerous safety violations addressed with written warnings. He also assisted 43 persons and 12 vessels while on boat patrol. In addition to on-the-water patrols, CPO Thompson conducted 19 registration inspections, preventing stolen vessels from being titled within Illinois.

A member of the Boat Accident Team (BAT), in 2012, CPO Thompson investigated two major accidents involving an extensive amount of time and effort to determine cause and contributing factors. His methodical approach and open concept allows him to excel in this area and he is acknowledged as the "go to guy" by his fellow officers when it comes to accident or boating related issues.

CPO Thompson volunteered to be an instructor for the newly implemented NASBLA seated field sobriety test training. After attending the instructor training, he assisted in developing new policy and procedure for the department and personally co-trained over 130 officers. CPO Thompson is also a certified NHTSA field sobriety test instructor and conducts refresher training yearly for his district. He is also a certified Breath Alcohol Operator which lends nicely to his enforcement and training abilities.

*(Continued on page 24)*



Conservation  
Officer  
**Ed Bollman**  
Indiana

An Indiana Conservation Officer since 2003, Corporal Ed Bollman is assigned in east-central Indiana. This area includes two large reservoirs which are located within the metropolitan area of Indianapolis, several smaller lakes and one navigable river. Selected as Indiana's boating officer of the year in both 2007 and 2013, he is a well-rounded officer that not only puts forth a great deal of effort with education and enforcement but also assists the public when needed.

Understanding the importance of furthering his and his fellow officers' knowledge through training, Cpl. Bollman has served as a standardized field sobriety test instructor since 2005. In the spring of 2012, he attended a NASBLA seated SFST crossover course and immediately began instructing veteran conservation officers across the state as well as officers from local police agencies. Corporal Bollman instructed seated field sobriety to new officers during their initial training process. In addition, he provided introductory training in seated field sobriety testing to local prosecutors, members of the local drug and alcohol task force, and members of the Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council. Corporal Bollman is currently helping to develop a continuing education program instructing SFSTs as part of the department's annual in-service training requirement.

Throughout the year, Corporal Bollman spends a great deal of time patrolling for boating violations on the reservoirs, lakes, and rivers. In 2012, he led all boating enforcement actions in District Four. An excellent role model for new officers, he is often found patrolling area waterways with new officers where he teaches them the needed skills to become a successful boating enforcement officer.



Conservation  
Officer  
**Nate Johnson**  
Iowa

Conservation Officer Nate Johnson is one of two officers in Dubuque County, which lies on the banks of the Mississippi River. In 2012 he covered two river counties for much of the summer while another officer was on special assignment. He spent over 440 hours on navigation related activities, including 252 hours of navigation patrol. He also spent nearly 120 hours on boat incident investigations.

Since Dubuque County is a metro area, the Mississippi River in the area is very busy. Officer Johnson helped keep the boating public safer last summer by handling eight boating while intoxicated cases and assisting with others. He also helped conduct a special boating safety project at Sabula.

Officer Johnson covered at least four boating incidents, including assisting with one fatal boat incident on the Mississippi River. The fatal boat incident was very difficult to investigate, taking many long hours of work to put the pieces together to reconstruct the accident.

With the assistance of Dubuque Police Department and other agencies, Officer Johnson and Conservation Officer Andrew Keil were able to obtain and secure witnesses and evidence before it could become misplaced. They then spent approximately 100 hours going over equipment and vessels to determine what was fact and what was fiction. Both officers maintained a professional demeanor and did not draw any conclusions unless those conclusions were substantiated with facts.



Game Warden  
**Michael Pierre**  
Maine

Michael Pierre began his career as a game warden in 2003, patrolling the Madawaska District in Aroostook County and the Biddeford District in York County. In 2011 he became the first warden assigned the newly formed Sebago Lake District, the most active boating district in the state.

Warden Pierre has demonstrated considerable dedication to boating enforcement, actively pursuing various violations. He has also been proactive in preventing the spread of Eurasian milfoil by conducting inspections at boat ramps and by working with volunteer groups. In 2012 Warden Pierre checked over 1200 watercraft and detected more than 100 violations on Sebago Lake. Warden Pierre was also closely involved in the implementation of the seasonal boating deputy game warden program and he supervised and mentored deputies assigned to the lake.

Warden Pierre has fostered good working relationships with fire and rescue agencies and the Cumberland County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) by maintaining open communication and coordinating interagency meetings. His hard work is evident in the flawless and smooth operations during the Sebago Lake ice fishing derby. Warden Pierre has also coordinated enforcement efforts between CCSO and the Maine Warden Service, resulting in increased protection of Sebago Lake while eliminating unnecessary duplication.

In addition, Warden Pierre has worked with various Sebago Lake associations such as the Lakes Environmental Association and the Portland Water District to ensure the protection of Sebago Lake so that boaters, anglers and the public at large can enjoy the lake for years to come.



Officer  
**Mark Griffin**  
Massachusetts

Officer Mark Griffin is a veteran police officer with 30 years of service. He is the senior serving member of the M-1 Region, having spent his entire career in the North Coast of Massachusetts.

His impact was paramount during the 2012 St. Peter's Festival in Gloucester, an event that draws thousands of visitors and hundreds of boaters to a small cove in Gloucester Harbor. His vigilance to providing a safe environment ensured the three-day event ended without a single major boat accident or injury. This was in no small part to his quick response to potential safety issues. His strong presence at public boat ramps in Newburyport, Ipswich, Rowley and Gloucester during peak boating times maximized the ability to interact and provide enforcement aiding in voluntary compliance with boating laws and safe operation.

Due to his ability to coordinate public safety and enforcement efforts with other law enforcement agencies Officer Griffin is requested personally by local police departments and the Coast Guard when a difficult water-borne operation is being planned. His well-earned reputation as a very capable and reliable officer makes him an invaluable asset to the MEP and he is quick to volunteer for challenging and diverse assignments. His knowledge and application of the boating laws are commendable and he is regularly sought out for advice and as a reliable referral by others. His on-the-spot correction to infractions and the discretion shown to violators demonstrates a man of solid reputation and fairness.



Conservation  
Officer  
**Jeff Ginn**  
Michigan

Conservation Officer Jeff Ginn has worked for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division for seven years. Assigned to Newaygo County, he is responsible for patrolling the Muskegon River system, including Croton and Hardy (two major dam impoundments) and Lake Michigan.

A world-class fishery for walleye, salmon, and steelhead, the Muskegon River system draws boaters from all over the country. With accessible fishing year-round many anglers pursue their quarry during some of the most treacherous water level conditions and temperatures. CO Ginn routinely works the Muskegon River in a jet boat targeting violations of reckless operation, litter, disorderly conduct, public urination, consumption of alcohol by minors, boating under the influence, charter boat requirements, marine safety equipment and trespass.

CO Ginn responded to a capsized vessel in the Muskegon River during 50-year high water level conditions that caused a Newaygo County state of emergency in April 2012. He launched his patrol vessel and navigated safely to the first angler clinging to his capsized vessel. CO Ginn loaded the victim into his patrol vessel and provided basic first aid. He then continued upstream to recover the second angler clinging to a log jam. CO Ginn again navigated safely to the victim and loaded the boater in his vessel to provide basic first aid. He then transported the two injured anglers to a nearby residence where emergency medical service personnel were waiting. CO Ginn was recognized for his heroic efforts that day with a life-saving award.



Conservation  
Officer  
**Jeffery Denz**  
Minnesota

Jeffery Denz is a highly motivated Minnesota Department of Natural Resources conservation officer with a very keen interest in boating safety. An enthusiastic team player, he volunteers to assist wherever needed.

Officer Denz was hired by the Minnesota DNR in February of 2007. Previously he had been a Three Rivers Park District police officer and sergeant in the western suburbs of Minneapolis. After completing his DNR training, he was assigned to the Willmar station and has remained there to the present. His station has numerous lakes that are heavily used for fishing, boating, sailing, canoeing and other forms of water recreation.

Officer Denz has a very strong work ethic and routinely exceeds the hourly goals for boating safety enforcement by working numerous weekend and night hours throughout the year. He also assists with organizing boating safety work details on Green Lake and other high-use lakes during the peak boating times.

Officer Denz has done an outstanding job in boating safety enforcement. During the past three boating seasons, he processed over 260 total violations (64 tickets and 196 written warnings). These include careless operation, insufficient life jackets, navigation lights, expired registration, boating while intoxicated arrests (10 during the last five years) and violations of the personal watercraft laws.

In the past year, Officer Denz assisted the DNR's Management Resources Safety Section with training for potential watercraft safety instructors. This training was conducted outside of his regular station and required preparation and planning prior to both the classroom and hands-on sessions.

*(Continued on page 26)*



Lieutenant  
**James  
McCarthy**  
New York

Lieutenant James McCarthy's relentless efforts have contributed significantly to New York's overall boating safety on Oneida Lake and the waters in and around Oneida County since 1980.

It was through the efforts of Lt. McCarthy that the sheriff's patrol became the force for boating safety that it is today. The Oneida County Sheriff's Marine Patrol is responsible for water safety and enforcement efforts on six lakes (Oneida, Delta, Hinckley, White, Kayuta and Otter) and portions of the Erie Barge Canal within the County of Oneida.

Recognizing that the key to reducing boating fatalities is a two-pronged approach involving a strong enforcement presence combined with a rigorous effort to educate the boating public, Lt. McCarthy has dedicated a significant number of hours toward boating safety education. Since 2008, he has helped 644 boaters, ages 10 and up, earn their safety certificates in New York State.

Lt. McCarthy has also played a key role in helping to train his fellow marine law enforcement officers. He has been assisting State Parks since 2009 as a lead instructor in the Basic Marine Law Enforcement course and Marine Patrol Vessel Operator Course.

Lt. McCarthy is truly dedicated to preventing loss of life with diligent enforcement and a determined education effort. His inspired leadership and unwavering devotion have contributed immensely to the safe boating cause in New York. His actions reflect tremendous credit upon himself, the Oneida County Sheriff's Office, and the entire marine law enforcement community.



District Game  
Warden  
**Ryan Tunge**  
North Dakota

Dedication, hard work, and perseverance define Warden Ryan Tunge. Since becoming a game warden in 2006, his work ethic and professional drive have created a safer boating environment on waters in southwestern North Dakota. Making a concerted effort to enhance safe boating on Lake Sakakawea and the Missouri River from the Garrison Tailrace to Bismarck, Warden Tunge dedicates long hours patrolling these waters.

The main body of water Warden Tunge patrols is Lake Sakakawea, the largest impoundment of water in North Dakota and one of the state's busiest boating areas. Warden Tunge has accomplished several rescue missions on the Missouri River and Lake Sakakawea using his knowledge of the lake, river, and contacts with other local law enforcement to organize and accomplish the mission.

In addition to his responsibilities on Lake Sakakawea, Warden Tunge operates the North Dakota Game and Fish side scan sonar and has worked numerous human recoveries in all conditions at all hours of the day and at a moment's notice.

Warden Tunge has taken numerous tours of duty working with the Missouri River Task Force enforcing safe boating on one of the most congested boating areas in North Dakota. He has completed many inspections on guided fishing boats ensuring the public's safety. When called upon to do extra patrols or help a boater in need, Warden Tunge enthusiastically meets the challenge. His professionalism, knowledge, and dedication to boat and water safety are great assets to the boaters of North Dakota.



Officer  
**Jeff Keller**  
Ohio

Officer Jeff Keller is an asset to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Watercraft. He has an excellent relationship with the boating community, showing admirable officer discretion. With over 2200 contacts in 2012, Officer Keller conducted 398 written inspections and 292 visual/spot checks, gave out 259 warnings and arrested 30 people, 10 of which were alcohol/drug related. He also attended 69 patrol events, gave 20 presentations, and helped to teach six Ohio Boating Education courses, reaching 274 people.

Officer Keller always has a smile on his face and is very approachable. An excellent listener, he ensures every person who calls is fully helped before hanging up, always asking again if they have any additional questions. Officer Keller readily lends a hand to anyone in need. He is the first to say "good job" and keeps a positive attitude motivating the rest of the crew on his shift.

Officer Keller has not only completed court tasks for the last two years, but he also took the initiative to contact the 13 different courts in his area of responsibility to review and set easy-to-remember bond/fine amounts for various citations.

During a time when the division tightened its purse strings, Officer Keller led the task of installing new electronics on three patrol vessels, including two from other offices. This required fabricating new dash panels and re-routing and re-wiring. By doing this he saved the division \$6,000.



**Waterways  
Conservation  
Officer  
Jim Smolko  
Pennsylvania**

Waterways Conservation Officer (WCO) Jim Smolko has been employed by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission for nine years. He is a role model to fellow officers, exemplifying professional service to boaters in the commonwealth and keeping the waterways safe.

Officer Smolko is assigned to the Eastern Erie County District, which includes Lake Erie and Presque Bay. Boating law enforcement is the strength of Officer Smolko's efforts. He possesses an outstanding knowledge of the Fish & Boat Code and demonstrates a high degree of expertise in his investigative work and observation skills. He engages in a fair, effective and productive law enforcement program.

WCO Smolko completed an outstanding year in 2012 in terms of overall law enforcement production. During the year, he logged 39 patrol days on Lake Erie, conducting 812 boardings and issuing 105 citations and 739 warnings. He also apprehended and prosecuted two boating under the influence cases and investigated 26 incidents, including four recreational boating accidents and seven environmental disturbances.

Officer Smolko conducts a very well-rounded boating law enforcement program for Erie County and is active in public relations within his district. Last year he attended 11 club meetings where he presented information on safe boating. He also conducted a Basic Boating class. Numerous marine events are held annually on Lake Erie during which Officer Smolko provides valuable assistance and security. His high visibility and law enforcement presence on Lake Erie has led to a much safer haven for boaters on one of northwestern Pennsylvania's busiest waterways.



**Officer  
Charlie  
Jackman  
Rhode Island**

A highly valued individual, Officer Charlie Jackman brings multiple assets to the table for the Rhode Island Division of Law Enforcement. He is a highly skilled boat handler, operating everything from the smallest vessels to the agency's 46' 1000-horsepower lobster boat. He is an integral part of the training program on the 46' boat, as there are a number of skills necessary that do not carry over from handling smaller boats.

Officer Jackman is also a certified trainer for the BOAT program, conducting trainings for all of the division's officers to move the agency closer to attaining NASBLA Accreditation. Officer Jackman coordinates the division's BOAT training and documents the various training exercises and hours of boat operation. He runs frequent boat patrols throughout the year – and in the New England winters, this is painful.

Wearing his other hat as a Coast Guard Reservist, Officer Jackman briefs newly transferred Coast Guardsman on the intricacies of the cooperation between the state agency and the Coast Guard. This has led to much smoother transitions.



**Conservation  
Officer  
Joe Keeton  
South Dakota**

Prior to becoming a South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Conservation Officer, Joe Keeton served with the United States Coast Guard for four years. After his service, he obtained a degree in wildlife management and became a conservation officer in May of 2005. His background with the Coast Guard has provided him with exceptional skills in the areas of boating enforcement and the education of the state's boating public.

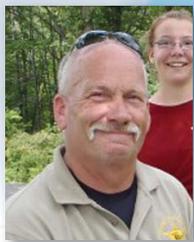
In 2012, Officer Keeton was selected to serve as one of five Boating Enforcement Instructors for the state. In his short time as an instructor, he has completed numerous hours of training for officers in his region and across the state, most recently focusing efforts on transition training for the agency's officers in the new seated battery of field sobriety testing.

South Dakota does not have mandatory boating education; nevertheless, Officer Keeton has always excelled educating the public in the safe and legal operation of recreational watercraft. In 2012, he developed, in conjunction with Boat Ed, one of the state's first classroom-based boating education courses. This course, which debuted in 2013, has already grown in popularity and will serve to better educate our boating public in the years to come.

Officer Keeton also spends countless hours patrolling on the water. Over the years, he has logged numerous BUI arrests and has investigated a number of serious boating accidents. He also served as a lead officer for special BUI operations. His dedication to the boating arena is unmatched in the state.

*(Continued on page 28)*

# SOUTHERN STATE BOATING OFFICERS



**Sheriff  
Ray C. Allen  
Vermont**

Ray C. Allen is the sheriff of Grand Isle County. Located in the northwest corner of Vermont, the county is home to five state parks and provides over 100 square miles of boating and fishing on Lake Champlain. The county's population increases by almost five times in the summer months, as many flock to their seasonal camps along the lake shores.

In 2012 Sheriff Allen approached the Vermont State Police to become a partner for recreational boating safety. He arranged training and obtained equipment for his deputies to provide boat patrol and boating safety inspections. Sheriff Allen works with local enforcement agencies to provide enforcement and search and rescue assistance.

In one situation, when an overdue boater was reported missing by his wife after dark, the Sheriff quickly learned that the lost husband who was not familiar with Lake Champlain was on a small sailboat with no lights or communication. Sheriff Allen's knowledge of the area brought the search to a quick and successful conclusion.

Sheriff Allen runs a summer camp that his late wife, Sheriff Connie Allen, started. Known as the R & R Camp for Respect and Responsibility, the facility provides a unique opportunity for youth entering sixth through eighth grades to participate in a program that emphasizes respect and personal responsibility through various team-building activities. One of the camps' highlights is when Sheriff Allen invites marine law enforcement agencies and fire units with their boats to teach the campers about water safety.



**Officer  
Steven  
Macleroy  
Alabama**

An officer with the Alabama Marine Police since January 2009, Officer Steven Macleroy is a well-rounded officer who places equal importance on enforcement, education, and community. He has been instrumental in building and maintaining positive relationships with local enforcement agencies and personnel.

In addition to being recognized as the Alabama Marine Police Officer of the Year, Officer Macleroy received a Life Saving Commendation from the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for his part in responding to a call about an attempted suicide.

Although he was off duty on August 29, 2012, Officer Macleroy was still monitoring radio traffic because he is also a volunteer fireman in his community. When he overheard radio traffic about a woman attempting to commit suicide by jumping off a bridge very near his home, he immediately responded to the scene in his patrol boat.

He found the woman in the water below the bridge, but she rebuffed his attempts to help and instead tried to drown herself by placing her head under the water. Officer Macleroy recognized the woman was emotionally disturbed, so he physical restrained her and kept her from further harm. Unable to get her into his patrol boat, he held onto her until additional assistance arrived. With the help of a local deputy he maneuvered the vessel and the woman to shore to receive medical care and transport to the local hospital. Without Officer Macleroy's quick response and actions while off duty, this woman may very well have died.



**Wildlife Officer  
Steve Paul  
Arkansas**

Ever since Wildlife Officer Steve Paul began his career with the Arkansas agency in January 2011, the boating enforcement work in his assigned county (Hot Spring) has been taken to a level never expected.

Officer Paul proved himself to be very self-motivated and eager to address the many boating-related problems in his county. Working a total of 441 hours in boating law enforcement last year, he made 1,141 contacts, wrote 100 citations and assisted in 83 other boating-related violations, including eight boating under the influence citations. Never before had so many BUI arrests been made in his county. Even more impressive is that Officer Paul maintains a 100% conviction rate on all his boating cases.

Officer Paul is very attentive to the possession and use of illegal narcotics and the prevalence of these activities encountered every day in this line of work. He actively pursued training and, after 84 hours of classroom training and 12 in-field evaluations, he graduated and is now a nationally certified Drug Recognition Expert (DRE). Officer Paul made 10 arrests for possession of a controlled substance while working boating enforcement.

After receiving numerous complaints about problems on the Ouachita River, including loud music, drinking, drugs, glass containers, fights, etc., Officer Paul devised two special operations to target those issues. He reached out to the Hot Spring County Sheriff's Department and the Arkansas State Police for their assistance, showing his ability to interact with other agencies. The operations resulted in 51 Arkansas Game and Fish Citations, 12 criminal citations and 6 arrests.

# OF THE YEAR



**Officer  
Dana Klein  
Florida**

With nearly 10 years of service with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Officer Dana Klein is responsible for boating safety and resource patrol along an 80-mile stretch of the St. Johns River and its tributaries from Jacksonville to the south end of Lake George. This patrol area requires an extensive knowledge of boating accident investigation techniques and both federal and state boating, hunting and fishing laws.

As one of Florida's nationally trained boating under the influence (BUI) enforcement instructors, Officer Klein has been instrumental in helping FWC provide transition training on the seated Standardized Field Sobriety Tests (SFSTs) to all FWC officers and marine law enforcement partners.

Officer Klein has enthusiastically put the new tests to use in her patrol efforts and speaks convincingly to her trainees as she describes how valuable and useful these tools are in dealing with impaired boat operators. She has made numerous BUI cases using the seated SFSTs, two of which carried enhanced penalties due to the vessel operators having a blood alcohol level over 0.15 while having minors onboard.

Education and outreach are an important part of Officer Klein's everyday job. Whether on a boat, at a dock or stopping to get fuel, she consistently makes contact with citizens and visitors of the state. Commercial fishermen in her area thought of her as the "enemy" a few years ago, but her personal efforts to build a strong rapport with them has led to reduced commercial vessel safety and resource violations in her area.



**Corporal  
Shawn  
Elmore  
Georgia**

Corporal Shawn Elmore with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement was the lead CIRT investigator in a tragic, high-profile boating incident on Lake Lanier. Working 233 hours directly involved in the reconstruction and documentation of this incident his expertise, training and experience in the field of boating safety related issues were instrumental in developing the reports in the case. His team-minded efforts spoke well of his attitude and outlook during this time of critical importance.

Cpl. Elmore also worked 547 hours carrying out his normal duties working boating safety in 2012. He presented 13 boating safety programs and conducted 127 boating safety inspections. He was involved in four HIN inspection details in his section. Cpl. Elmore is also very involved in teaching other rangers the proper protocol for working boating related issues and teaches courses in the agency's ranger school.

He planned and scheduled a PFD detail on the Etowah River, where a concentrated effort was made to enforce and educate the public on the requirements of state law. He made several boating related contacts this year but outside of the normal cases was the arrest of an individual for BUI that had previously been involved in another boating fatality case in 2009. He was also involved in the confiscation and charge of illegal drugs in another boating related case.



**Game Warden  
Michael  
Peterson  
Kansas**

Game Warden Michael Peterson made very meaningful efforts directed toward boating safety enforcement during the summer of 2012, particularly in his region's effort toward boating under the influence (BUI) interdiction. He primarily worked evening and night hours at Lovewell Reservoir, a lake that is known for its fishing and recreational boating opportunities.

Officer Peterson maintained a standard that all vessel operators believed to either possess or have been consuming alcohol would receive a standardized field sobriety test. If a boater failed the test, he or she received a preliminary breath test. If the boater failed the preliminary breath test, he or she was taken to an intoxilyzer for the chemical test. Refusing the intoxilyzer or testing over .08 BAC resulted in a criminal charge for boating under the influence. Officer Peterson operated with the attitude that anything less than this standard was unacceptable.

Officer Peterson also successfully coordinated selective enforcements at Lovewell Reservoir directed at BUI interdiction. These selective enforcements resulted in five BUI arrests in 2012, including Officer Peterson's first BUI arrest. He also assisted with Operation Dry Water and a second BUI selective at Wilson Reservoir.

Other boating related accomplishments of Peterson in 2012 include eight BUI arrests, assisting with a drowning recovery at Glen Elder, and working a boat accident at Lovewell Reservoir. Officer Peterson was one of a first group of officers to undergo training in the newly seated battery testing procedure and used it extensively while assisting other officers in applying the new standards.

*(Continued on page 30)*



**Officer  
Jarrod Alley  
Kentucky**

Officer Jarrod Alley has proven to be a vital resource to the Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources. His emphasis on boating safety and education has had a direct influence on waters within his area of responsibility.

In 2012, Officer Alley worked 649 boating hours. He conducted 607 boat inspections, wrote 141 citations and 128 courtesy notices. He also responded to 21 search and rescue cases, participated in seven water safety programs at schools and two boater education classes as well as seven civic functions, and made 18 BUI arrests and four Alcohol Intoxication arrests.

Officer Alley met with several bass clubs holding tournaments on Lake Cumberland to speak with them regarding their cutting of points, running of headlights and lack of navigation lights. He worked with them by first issuing courtesy notices and then citations as some did not want to heed the warnings. He also listened to their complaints and gave them a number to call when they encountered drunken boat operators or had problems with houseboats blocking the entrance to coves. At the request of club members, he also wrote to a couple of members for fishing inside a harbor, which violated state regulations as well as their tournament rules. Because of this, he now has a much better relationship with the tournament crowd and has been given a lot of tips from them.



**Senior Agent  
Nicholas  
Guillory  
Louisiana**

Senior Agent Nicholas Guillory is a five-year veteran with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries and has been working on the coast his entire career. His experience as a coastal agent along with his superior seamanship take center stage in search and rescue missions. Sr. Agent Guillory has consistently demonstrated his willingness to go beyond the call of duty by successfully carrying out numerous offshore federal fishery patrols and apprehending major violators, both recreational and commercial.

Sr. Agent Guillory always leads by example. He gives excellent verbal direction, but he's willing to teach by working side-by-side with fellow agents in the field, and his good attitude motivates coworkers to do good work and be good public servants. Sr. Agent Guillory's professional officer presence and good communication skills typifies his daily interactions with the public, whom he always addresses in a respectful and fair demeanor. His patience and tactfulness, even when dealing with the most irrational violator, is most often handled without conflict or physical intervention.

Sr. Agent Guillory has been the lead agent in boating under the influence cases and has conducted several boating accident investigations. His knowledge of the laws, areas and his dedication to preserving the wildlife of this state make him an excellent example for younger agents to mirror. He always goes above and beyond to complete tasks given to him, making sure they are completed timely and to perfection. Sr. Agent Guillory understands a positive public perception of our department is very crucial especially now when funding remains in the forefront.



**Corporal  
Robert G.  
May II  
Missouri**

Corporal Robert G. May II is an outstanding officer, displaying a model work ethic. He has demonstrated his commitment to promoting safety on the waterways and highways of Missouri and reducing the number of fatalities and injuries by his obvious hard work and dedicated efforts.

During 2012, he wrote 899 citations and 658 warnings, including 94 criminal arrests, mainly the result of drug or alcohol related arrests on Missouri's waterways. Aside from his diligence in productivity, Corporal May investigated nine traffic crashes and recorded 139 reactive/self-initiated calls for service during the year.

Dedicated to the training of others in marine enforcement, boat operation, swift water rescue, and swimming safety, during 2012, Corporal May served as a field training officer, a tactical water survival trainer, and an instructor in Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC) boat stop and approach, and the seated battery Standardized Field Sobriety Tests (SFSTs). He assisted in training approximately 25 students in the Swift Water Rescue course; assisted in training approximately 90 students in Basic Boat Operations; and taught several other courses for the four-week Marine Operations training course.

In 2012, Corporal May was instrumental in the development and presentation of the annual Bull Float enforcement plan. He briefed the troop command staff on multiple occasions and conducted the operational brief to multiple agencies on the day of the event. This event, which included approximately 4000-5000 people, went off without any major problems or concerns, which can be attributed, in part, to the planning and forethought by Corporal May.



**Senior Officer  
Parks Moss  
North Carolina**

Stationed in Beaufort County for the last three of his five years with the North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission, Senior Officer Parks Moss's patrol area consists of two large river basins, the Pamlico Sound and more than a dozen navigable creeks.

On November 24, 2012, one of the coldest mornings of the year, Officer Moss and fellow enforcement officer Brian White were patrolling duck hunting and fishing activity in Northern Beaufort County near the Pungo River. While heading north on the river, they observed a boat approximately a half a mile ahead doing tight circles.

As they approached the circling boat, Officer Moss noticed what appeared to be someone's head in the water. Officer Moss immediately engaged his patrol boat to full throttle and quickly approached a subject in the water who was merely feet from the out-of-control boat. Officer Moss positioned his patrol boat between the subject and the unmanned boat, and then he and Officer White grabbed the boater, who was not wearing a life jacket.

The elderly man was weighted down by his waterlogged winter coat and overalls, as well as exhausted and unable to help, making it impossible for the two officers to lift him out of the water. They held onto the man until two nearby duck hunters arrived and helped lift the man into the patrol boat. The elderly man later made a full recovery. Without the quick response and actions of Officer Moss and White, they more than likely would have been investigating a fatal boat accident and a recovery mission.



**Lance Corporal  
Brian  
Crawford  
South Carolina**

Lance Corporal Brian Crawford is an officer who loves being in a boat on the water. His passion has resulted in him being a key member of his unit's effort to maintain safety and educate the public while enforcing the state's boating laws on some of the most congested waterways in coastal South Carolina. His patrol area has 31,567 resident registered watercraft, not including non-resident tourist watercraft that utilize the Santee Cooper lakes and coastal waterways.

A leader in his unit in public contacts on the water, during 2012 LCPL Crawford issued 59 summons, eight of which were for BUI, and 293 warnings for boating violations. He is sought out by both local contacts and his fellow officers and senior staff regarding boating enforcement issues. He is a valued officer who is requested at marine events throughout the region. In addition, he volunteers to work patrols at large boating events. His expertise in boating and BUI enforcement, training and certifications and his desire to aggressively enforce safety laws are tremendous assets for these events.

LCPL Crawford understands that in addition to enforcement, the boating safety mission is about educating the public to gain compliance with the laws and to create a safe boating environment on the water. He devotes time to local schools and is quick to get the children interested in conservation, boating and hunting safety and the career of a game warden. Many of these children have never had this type of positive exposure to law enforcement or safety instruction.



**Officer  
Nick Luper  
Tennessee**

Officer Nick Luper's assigned work area encompasses 12 counties in northern middle Tennessee and contains three major reservoirs and two river systems. These waterways are popular destinations for fishing and boating activities.

Officer Luper's law enforcement efforts in 2012 were outstanding. He inspected 575 vessels for compliance with Tennessee boating laws, resulting in 43 citations and 69 warnings. He also arrested 19 operators for boating under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and while on patrol he assisted 30 stranded boaters. In addition, he issued citations for other violations including 40 for hunting violations.

Officer Luper did a great job in public outreach last year. He assisted marina owners in his district by instructing employees in boater education and partnered with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Wild Turkey Federation, and local sportsmen's groups to promote boating safety. He participated in back-to-school programs and career days at schools throughout his district to promote boating safety.

Officer Luper was also responsible for scheduling, setting up and monitoring the BUI simulator at fairs and other public functions to provide awareness of the dangers of alcohol and boating. He initiated a media event on Center Hill Reservoir in preparation for Operation Dry Water along with the Dekalb County Sheriff's Department to enhance boater awareness. He successfully reached the public through other forms of media by submitting eight newspaper articles, several radio interviews and public service announcements, as well as television interviews. Officer Luper, through his outreach efforts, has had personal contact with over 3,000 sportsmen and recreational boaters.

*(Continued on page 32)*



**Game Warden  
Kevin Glass  
Texas**

Kevin Glass has been a Texas Game Warden for over 20 years. An example of dedication and true professionalism, he is a leader year after year in his district in terms of cases filed, boat hours (over 2000 in the last four years), and training hours instructed.

Warden Glass is very active in training fellow game wardens. He is currently one of 15 trained instructors in the standardized seated field sobriety tests and the primary instructor for the DWI/BWI/SFST refresher for his district.

Warden Glass has filed 21 boating while intoxicated cases since 2009. Personally and professionally invested in the success of his partners in the enforcement of BWI laws and statutes, he spends many hours and late nights on the water assisting and teaching his partners. As a result Warden Glass is involved in nearly all BWI arrests in his district. He consistently assists, guides and mentors other game wardens in different facets of the BWI process.

In 2011 Texas Parks and Wildlife began implementing the standardized battery of seated SFSTs. Warden Glass was selected by his supervisor and requested by the Texas Game Warden training staff to assist in the full implementation of the tests and the development of policy regarding the tests. In June 2011 Warden Glass took the initiative and arranged a meeting with the Harris County (Texas) District Attorney to discuss the new seated battery, demonstrate the tests and to invite assistant district attorneys to ride along and witness the tests being administered in the field.



**Conservation  
Police Officer  
Dallas Neel  
Virginia**

Conservation Police Officer Dallas Neel consistently displays an outstanding ability to handle complex situations thus maintaining smooth operations in his district. He emphasizes boating safety and responsible boat operation techniques to everyone he meets. He fosters a positive relationship with other law enforcement agencies, officers and constituents. Time and again, his innovative methods and communication skills prove to be invaluable assets.

Neel joined the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries in 1997. Working in Bedford County he is responsible for enforcement duties on the heavily used Roanoke River, James River and Smith Mountain Lake.

Officer Neel is well known for his firm but fair law enforcement practices. In 2012, he spent over 800 hours on boating enforcement related activities. He has averaged 265 arrests over the last three years with about 73 of those being boating related. Of those, a significant number were boating under the influence and reckless boating cases.

Officer Neel utilizes unique enforcement tactics – such as employing unmarked boats, working high traffic areas during times of increased activity, and conducting covert surveillance – to gain compliance with Virginia’s boat laws and regulations. Utilizing an unmarked, 1973 model jon boat, Officer Neel has maneuvered, mostly unnoticed, into rarely patrolled waterways to enforce boating laws. These patrols have proven very effective as violations relating to safety equipment, alcohol use, and drug abuse have been detected in these newly patrolled areas. Boaters and other outdoor recreation users in these areas enjoy a safer experience today due to Officer Neel’s efforts.



**Natural  
Resource  
Police Officer  
Jonathan R.  
Casto  
West Virginia**

With more than 80 miles of rivers to patrol, Natural Resource Police Officer Jonathan R. Casto logged over 100 hours on the Little Kanawha and Ohio rivers in 2012. In addition to writing many warning tickets and citations to recreational boaters, he investigated four BUIs, two of which he conducted himself and two that he used as a training opportunity for new officers. He uses his extensive knowledge of the waterways not only to help train new officers but more importantly to help keep the public safe.

Officer Casto was essential to a near-fatal boating accident investigation when he served as lead investigator. During early boating season last May, a reckless personal watercraft operator struck a boat. After a thorough investigation of the incident, Officer Casto determined that both parties were at fault. The driver of the boat was intentionally creating a wake for the personal watercraft to jump.

Not only does he perform his duties at an exceptional level, but he also shows great dedication to the community. Officer Casto was contacted on his day off to assist in a search and rescue of a 16-year-old male. Without hesitation, Officer Casto accepted the request, arrived on the scene and immediately took control of the situation. He organized search efforts and advised the local dive team and fire departments. Because of his extensive knowledge of the river, he was able to put the dive team in the correct location to recover the victim and quickly give closure to the family.

# WESTERN STATE BOATING OFFICERS OF THE YEAR



Trooper  
**Trent  
Chwialkowski**  
Alaska

Trooper Trent Chwialkowski has shown extreme dedication in his job by not only enforcing boating rules and regulations but also by educating the community on boater safety. Stationed outside of Homer, Alaska, which is a boating destination for Alaskans across the state, he works in one of the busiest recreational and commercial fishing ports in Alaska.

Trp. Chwialkowski, in addition to his other fish and wildlife enforcement duties, is fully committed the safety of the boating public. He demonstrated this commitment by conducting 235 boating safety inspections in 2012. During these inspections he ensured all safety gear was on board and provided additional education to the boating public. Undoubtedly, Trp. Chwialkowski's efforts helped prevent injuries and possibly even deaths among the boating public of Alaska.



Deputy  
**Alberto "AJ"  
Calderon**  
Arizona

Deputy Alberto Calderon has been assigned to the Lake Patrol Division of the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office for a little over two years, and his efforts toward boating safety are making a difference. His drive to educate the boating community along with setting goals for himself and his squad has garnered much respect among the community and his peers. During a recent boat stop, the boater informed Deputy Calderon and Sgt. A. Romer (who nominated Calderon as boating officer of the year) that his eight-year-old daughter would much rather go boating at Canyon Lake because she feels safe seeing the deputies patrolling the lake. Statistics are nice. However, words such as those validate Deputy Calderon's daily performance.

In the spring of 2012, he attended the Arizona Game and Fish Boating Enforcement School, which included NASBLA's Seated Battery Transition training for boating under the influence enforcement. Deputy Calderon took this valuable training and applied it to his daily patrol on Canyon Lake. He also took time to educate and inspire other deputies working around him, and Canyon Lake increased their BUI arrests by over 778% for a total of 78 BUI arrests, 51 of which were Deputy Calderon's.

On the outreach side of things, Deputy Calderon has created a program for boaters with inadequate number of life jackets to be issued "loaner" jackets that he carries on his boat. The jacket is issued to the occupant (along with a citation to the operator) in order to allow the boaters to enjoy a safe day on the lake.



Officer  
**Eric Los**  
Colorado

Eric Los joined Colorado State Parks in September of 2007 and was assigned to Highline Lake State Park. He took an immediate interest in boat patrol and enforcement as well as training, and in 2010 he began serving as an instructor, assisting with training full-time and seasonal rangers. Officer Los has also taken over the boating program at Highline Lake where he trains seasonal employees on safe operation as well as boating enforcement.

Since taking charge of the boating program, Officer Los has continued to obtain as much training as possible on boating safety and enforcement. He attended BUI training in 2012, taking a strong interest in the seated battery for BUI. In 2012 Officer Los had the first BUI conviction in Colorado using the seated battery in which he received kudos from Chris Halsor, Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor, Colorado District Attorney's Office for his exceptional report on the case. In 2013 he attended a BUI train-the-trainer so he could take the lead on BUI enforcement training in the region.

In addition to the increase in BUI enforcement Officer Los has issued over 100 boating safety violations with the largest percentage of these citations going to operators for allowing children under the age of 13 on their vessel without wearing a life jacket and for allowing underage operators. With the heavy boating use on Highline Lake these public safety violations as well as numerous boating equipment violations he has written has kept Highline Lake much safer for all visitors.

*(Continued on page 34)*



Conservation  
Enforcement  
Officer II  
**Pat Chong Tim**  
Hawaii

After serving eight years with the Honolulu Police Department, followed by starting a successful construction company and a security business, Officer Pat Chong Tim became a Conservation Enforcement Officer II (DOCARE) with the Hawaii Department of Land & Natural Resources (DLNR) in 2011.

From the beginning Officer Chong Tim proved to be a tremendous asset to the agency. He immediately gravitated toward the water-related activities that fall under the division's jurisdiction. Officer Chong Tim became a certified personal watercraft (PWC) operator and logged an impressive amount of water patrol time over the last three years.

The consummate professional, Officer Chong Tim utilized his network and prior connections with the police department to establish exceptional interagency cooperation. At no cost to DLNR, he secured communication equipment as well as the appropriate permissions to allow state officers to establish seamless communications with the county police, county fire department, county lifeguards, EMS and U.S. Coast Guard. This is an unprecedented accomplishment that had been stuck in the discussion stage for many years.

In 2012, Officer Chong Tim served as a coordinator and patrolled in some of the highest profile marine events in agency history, including providing direct PWC waterborne security for the former CIA Director General David Petraeus; training alongside and providing PWC waterborne escort for U.S. Navy Seals teams; and patrolling on a PWC as a support platform for U.S. Secret Service Rescue Swimmers in providing up close and direct security for the President of the United States, the First Family and their entourage.



Sergeant  
**Jason Speer**  
Idaho

Jason Speer began his law enforcement career with the Valley County Sheriff's Office in 2000 and was promoted to the rank of sergeant in 2006. At the time of his promotion he was assigned to manage the marine law enforcement program as well as the entire recreational enforcement program for the county. In addition, he oversees all the county search and rescue activities. Prior to his county law enforcement career Sgt. Speer served in the U.S. Air Force for seven years, many of which were spent as a military police officer.

Valley County is home to many power boaters as well paddlecraft users. The Payette River is one of the most heavily used rivers in the state and contains rapids ranging from Class I to Class IV. Each year Sgt. Speer leads his team to deal with multiple search and rescue events and boating fatalities involving paddlecraft.

One of the busiest lakes in Idaho, Payette Lake is home to many boat accidents. In August 2009 Sgt. Speer led search and rescue activities after a serious boat accident involving 12 individuals (including four children) which occurred just after midnight. None of the passengers was wearing a life jacket. Several passengers made it to shore and called 911; others made it to an island. When Sgt. Speer arrived, five individuals were still missing. Sgt. Speer immediately coordinated search efforts and located one adult and two children that were clinging to part of the hull. All of the children ended up safe but unfortunately two adults perished.



Game Warden  
**Chuck Bartos**  
Montana

Game Warden Chuck Bartos went beyond his duty as a game warden with the work he did on Echo Lake the summer of 2012. Echo Lake is a heavily used 695-acre lake that is very popular for recreational boaters and anglers. The lake's shoreline is almost all privately owned, and it is made up of a lot of narrow bays and islands. For years, Warden Bartos has been dealing with this hot bed of water safety complaints and conflicts between recreational boaters, anglers and landowners.

Echo Lake is a closed basin lake with no outlet. During periods of high snow pack and precipitation, its water level rises and stays high all summer long. This exaggerates the conflicts on the lake. Landowners are more emotional because the wakes from boats are now washing away yards, shorelines, up against foundations and into houses.

In the summer of 2011, Echo Lake reached the highest water level ever recorded. In 2012, Echo Lake water levels rose again to extremely high levels. The complaints started coming in and Warden Bartos's already well-known dedication to his job came out.

Although Warden Bartos has a large and busy district, he spent 32 of the 71 days he worked (45% of his time), from June to August, on Echo Lake. During that time, he checked nearly 550 boats. He was out in the hot sun day after day, dealing with angry people on both sides. Despite that, Warden Bartos dedicated his summer to protecting that resource and enforcing Montana's water safety regulations.



**Game Warden  
Brady Phillips  
Nevada**

Game Warden Brady Phillips has shown tremendous initiative and concern for the public in everything he does. For nearly five years, he has been the only game warden stationed in Laughlin, Nevada, one of the busiest and most dangerous boating areas in the western states.

His supervisor is over 100 miles away, but Warden Phillips needs little to no supervision to keep an active patrol schedule, maintain the office, boats and equipment, and run the most demanding one-officer duty station in Nevada.

Not only does Warden Phillips take care of his own work, but he also plays host to other officers, supervisors and dignitaries that visit his area in the busy summer months. As the only officer permanently stationed in Laughlin, Warden Phillips handles a multitude of visitors, regional conflicts and other issues that other game wardens don't have to deal with.

Despite his busy schedule and remote location, Warden Phillips has found the time to become certified to instruct taser and firearms courses for the department. He is also a Division Firearms armorer. Not only is he a stellar boat patrol officer, but he is also a leader for his division. He wrote more than 140 boat citations and made two arrests last year for operating under the influence, handled numerous boating accidents, including serious injury accidents and one fatality, but statistics don't capture the wide diversity of boating safety patrol he encounters every day.



**Lieutenant  
Eric Stucki  
Utah**

Lieutenant Eric Stucki has served Utah State Parks and Recreation since 1995 and continually maintains a high level of water patrols, including vessel inspections, warnings and citations, and boating under the influence enforcement. Lt. Stucki was honorably recognized for having the fifth highest number of vessel safety inspections performed statewide. This is particularly impressive as he serves in an administrative position.

Lt. Stucki is responsible for law enforcement activities on the many water bodies in the northern region of Utah. Approximately 89 percent of Utah's 2.8 million residents live in the northern region, which also has the greatest concentration of Utah's lakes and reservoirs.

Lt. Stucki ensures adequate boating coverage throughout the northern region during special operations, including Operation Dry Water and a concentrated enforcement project on the Weber River to increase life jacket compliance. He also implemented undercover on-water patrols to reduce user group complaints.

As division legislative liaison, Lt. Stucki tracks and fosters support for boating-related legislation. "He works to strengthen our mission goals with our legislative representatives, and as such, is one of the Utah Boating Program's strongest assets," said Dave Harris, Utah's former boating law administrator.

Last summer, Lt. Stucki rescued a female boater on the Weber River who had been separated from her raft and was stranded on the opposite shore with no chance of self-rescue. With injured feet and suffering from heat exhaustion, the victim fell into shock. Lt. Stucki commandeered a raft, rowed across the river, treated her symptoms, and brought her back safely.



**Sergeant  
Philip  
Johnson  
Washington**

Sergeant Philip Johnson has been the driving force in establishing the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's Recreational Boating Safety program as the premiere curriculum in the state.

WDFW began looking for a master boating instructor shortly after deciding to pursue recognition as an official state boating program. At that time, Sgt. Johnson was a Fish and Wildlife Officer whose duties included serving as one of WDFW Enforcement's boating instructors. Officer Johnson's eight boating-instructor peers unanimously elected him to take the helm as the master boating instructor.

Officer Johnson quickly stepped up to the challenge of becoming a master boat instructor and set the toughest goal possible: Making his agency's boating safety program the best in the state. To do this, he continued his own boating education by attending the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center's Marine Law Enforcement Training Program and becoming a certified Basic Marine Law Enforcement course instructor. He also received his United States Coast Guard 100-ton Master license.

He then established a training curriculum that resulted in all 140 WDFW Fish and Wildlife Officers becoming certified as Washington State Recreational Boating Law Enforcement Officers. WDFW recognized Officer Johnson's accomplishments by promoting him to the rank of Fish and Wildlife Sergeant.

As part of his duties, Sgt. Johnson oversees all aspects of WDFW's Boating Safety Program, including training, assessment, and vessel-inspection tracking. He also helped to develop an agency-wide boating safety program for all other WDFW employees who operate vessels. This program ensures that these employees have the best boating-safety training possible. \*

# *Clever* consultant secures *training*

By Kimberly Jenkins



**T**hrough a partnership initiated by a retired boating law administrator, 120 first responders from 11 local and state agencies in Kentucky and Indiana received crucial on-water training this summer. Felix Hensley, who recently retired from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources where he served as the state's boating law administrator, coordinated with the local, state and federal agencies to organize a series of training offerings in basic boat crew operations, tactical operations, pursuit and stop, and search and rescue.

Hensley had hoped to orchestrate a comprehensive training opportunity for officers when he was Indiana's BLA, but it just wasn't in the cards. Following retirement, he joined the city of Jeffersonville, Ind., on a part-time basis.



The city and fire departments had obtained boats using money from a Port Security Grant, and Hensley worked with them to provide basic training to get them operational.

He urged them to apply for another grant to obtain more advanced training. From his work with the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, specifically on the Homeland Security Committee, Hensley was well acquainted with the Boat Operations and Training (BOAT) Program.

Launched in 2010, the BOAT Program covers the spectrum of professional training for the marine law enforcement officer as well as emergency search and rescue personnel. On May 11, 2012, the U.S. Coast Guard, with the signing of a memorandum of understanding, formally adopted and recognized NASBLA's BOAT Program as the national standard for the training and credentialing of state, local, county and tribal maritime law enforcement officers and rescue personnel.

When talking with the fire departments about obtaining more training, Hensley discussed the importance of including other agencies so all personnel would have the same standard of training. The mayor and the officials of the City of Jeffersonville quickly realized the huge benefit of other agencies participating in standardized training and agreed to take on the burden of administering the grant, while allowing half of the slots to go to other agencies. Hensley wrote the grant, which was approved.

As a result of the resulting partnership, 120 officers from 11 agencies completed the Basic Crew Member course. Because

*(Continued on page 38)*

of the more individualized training in the Tactical Operators and Boat Operators Search and Rescue courses, hence the smaller class sizes, officers from five agencies completed those training offerings. Following this summer's training series in the Louisville/Jeffersonville area, the Port of Louisville now has more people trained in NASBLA's BCM course than any other area within Kentucky or Indiana.

Hensley encourages any agency that hasn't had training through the BOAT Program to do everything in its power to get this training. "I don't know anywhere else to get this level of consistency," he adds.

For those interested in obtaining training through the BOAT Program, Hensley invokes the power of force multipliers. "Do not conduct training for just one agency. Do something that will provide regional benefit and involve every agency capable of responding on the water," he wisely advises.

In addition to learning invaluable skills, the training has facilitated strong partnerships. "People that normally wouldn't interact are now working together. For example, the Indiana Department of Natural Resources officers are now letting fire department personnel on their boats for extra time on the water. Responding to an emergency is not the time to be practicing," says Hensley. \*



Thanks to a Port Security Grant obtained by Felix Hensley, 120 area responders from 11 agencies participated in critical on-water training:

- Jeffersonville Police Department
- Jefferson County Fire Department
- Jeffersonville Police Department
- Clarksville Fire Department
- Louisville Metro Fire Department
- Louisville Metro Police
- Indiana Department of Natural Resources
- Indiana State Police
- Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources
- Clark County Sheriff's Department
- New Albany Fire Department
- Harrison County Emergency Management

*A special thank-you to Felix Hensley and Mark Farmer for contributing many of the photographs for this article.*



# NEVER BOAT UNDER THE INFLUENCE

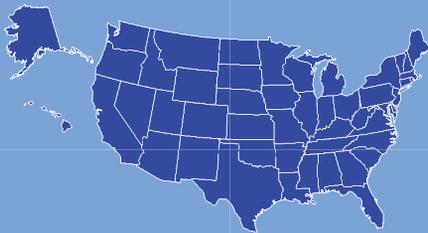
OPERATION DRY WATER | JUNE 28-30, 2013

**6,219**  
OFFICERS

NUMBER OF  
AGENCIES  
**513**

**144,044**  
BOATERS  
CONTACTED

**17,159**  
CITATIONS & SAFETY  
WARNINGS



**290**  
BUI ARRESTS



**58,971**  
VESSEL CONTACTS

HIGHEST BAC  
REPORTED  
**.243**

Number of Officers Participating

2013 **6,219**

2012 **4,519**

2011 **3,687**

Learn more: [www.operationdrywater.org](http://www.operationdrywater.org)

# BOATING

# Briefs

## ACA works to expand paddlesport instruction



*Through a grant project, the American Canoe Association will provide 14 Instructor Certification Workshops for selected state, law enforcement entities, and related organizations.  
ACA photo*

Under a grant from the U.S. Coast Guard, the American Canoe Association (ACA) is working to create more paddlesport instruction certification opportunities for law enforcement personnel and other state entities and organizations. As part of the project, ACA, national leader in paddlesports safety, education, and instruction since 1972, will offer an Introductory or an Essentials course pertaining to each of the following: Stand Up Paddle Boarding, Canoeing, or Kayaking.

Fourteen states are targeted for the training: Alabama, Alaska, California, Florida, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, North Carolina, Oregon, Puerto Rico, Tennessee, Texas and Wisconsin. The ACA will provide the facilitating instructor trainers, equipment, and the educational standards and materials. The ACA will then need the help of various state and local organizations to set a date and location for

the course and seek possible instructor candidates for the Instructor Certification Workshops (ICW).

If you're in one of the 14 states and would like to participate in the project, contact T.J. Turner, the Paddlesport Training Grant Coordinator for this project, at [tjturner@americancanoe.org](mailto:tjturner@americancanoe.org). He is excited to work with different state entities to create more paddlesport awareness and safety through these courses.

"This grant project will allow the ACA to increase our current capability to conduct on-water instruction for a range of individuals and organizations across the country," said Turner. "This opportunity will promote your organization as a recognized member of the ACA, increase your instructor's skills and abilities, and better promote your state entity in the paddling community," he added.

By the completion of the grant on September 30, 2014, there will be 140 new paddlesport instructors and four new instructor trainers. These new instructors will act as a force multiplier to expand paddlesport education in their respective regions. For more information, please visit the ACA's website at: <http://www.americancanoe.org/InstructorTrainingGrant>.

## BoatUS Foundation President elected chairman of National Safe Boating Council

BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water President Chris Edmonston has been elected chairman of the National



Safe Boating Council (NSBC). "The industry is increasingly seeing the value of educating people on how to boat safely, and the Council is a great bridge between industry

and the general public," said Edmonston. "I look forward to working with the Council to strengthen and grow this great coalition. It does a great job of bringing state and federal agencies together with industry partners to address boating safety issues."

A native Marylander, Edmonston has been boating his entire life and currently boats with his family on the Chesapeake Bay.

The National Safe Boating Council is responsible for the annual National Safe Boating Week (May 17-23, 2014) and the "Wear It" life jacket promotional program. It offers a series of safe boating courses for instructors, research publications, educational tools, an informative boating safety newsletter, and more. Go to [www.safeboatingcouncil.org](http://www.safeboatingcouncil.org) for more information.

Created in its current form by the Federal Boating Safety Act of 1971, the Council is the nation's principal public-private boating safety advocacy organization with a coalition of over 330 U.S. and international member organizations. Its mission is to promote a safer recreational boating experience through education, outreach and training.

## Boating safety organization receives coveted award

In October, the National Safe Boating Council received the Summit Award from the American Society of Account Executives (ASAE) for its Ready, Set, Wear It! Life Jacket World Record Day. This event to help raise awareness about the importance of life jacket wear is doing its part to "make the world a better place to live."

The Summit Award is the highest recognition under The Power of A Awards, part of The Power of A campaign, which ASAE launched in 2009 to increase awareness about the wealth of knowledge and resources in the association community with policymakers and other audiences.

## Indiana DNR announces 'Wear It' winner

To stress the importance of water safety to Hoosier youth, Indiana Conservation Officers from the Department of Natural Resources and Boys & Girls Clubs join forces annually and host a coloring contest under the guise of "Wear It Indiana." The joint effort stresses the importance of wearing a proper-fitting life jacket when on a boat or participating in water activities on lakes, rivers or streams.

Lexis Haden, 9, was recently named the 2013 winner and presented her very own life jacket by Chet Walker, CPO of the Rush County Boys & Girls Club, and DNR officer Gary Catron.



Recently named the 2013 winner of Indiana's Wear It! coloring contest, Lexis Haden receives a life jacket from Chet Walker, CPO of the Rush County Boys & Girls Club, and DNR officer Gary Catron (holding Lexis's winning entry).

Catron said the public outreach campaign is designed to enlighten and encourage the use of life jackets while boaters and swimmers are enjoying Indiana waterways.

## NY legislation mandates boaters to take safety class

On Sept. 27, 2013, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo signed legislation to improve safety for boaters in New York's waterways by requiring safety classes for all boat operators.

"New York State has some of the best recreational and thriving commercial waterways in the country, and it is our responsibility to ensure they remain safe for all boat operators and passengers," Governor Cuomo said. "This legislation will make sure that those who operate any kind of boat have the necessary training and experience, and they are aware of the risks and proper protocol for handling their vessels. I thank Senator Carlucci and Assemblywoman Galef for putting together this important new law to protect all those traveling on our waterways."

The new law (A.3471-A/S.1639-A) requires all boat operators to obtain a boating safety certificate by completing an eight hour safe boating course. The requirement will be put into effect over a period of years, beginning next year with all 18-year-old boaters. Certificates can be obtained and the safety course completed with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historical Preservation, U.S. Power Squadrons, or the U.S. Coast Guard.

Previous law only required the operator of a personal watercraft to obtain a boating safety certificate or be accompanied on the vessel by a person over 18 years of age who is the holder of a safety certificate. The new law extends the requirement to all motorized water vessels.

## Coast Guard recognizes NY officers

Earlier this year, two New York officers were recognized by the U.S. Coast Guard for their work in recreational boating safety. Each officer received the Certificate of Merit, which recognizes significant endeavors such as displaying initiative in advancing one or more of the Coast Guard's missions and significant effort that resulted

in the completion of a project or program significantly beneficial to the Coast Guard's missions and responsibilities.



Police Officer Joel Fuoco with the Nassau County Police receives the USCG Certificate of Merit from Rear Admiral Joseph M. Vojvodich and Master Chief Terry Lathrop.

Police Officer Joel Fuoco of the Nassau County (NY) Police Department was recognized for his commitment to regional maritime safety; his role in the development of Operation Gateway – a New York regional border waterway security initiative; his service as training co-Chairman of the Department of Homeland Security (Domestic Nuclear Detection Office) Securing The Cities Program – Maritime Sub-Committee; his service to the Port of Long Island Sound Area Maritime Security Committee; his continuing efforts to coordinate with regional facilities regulated under the Maritime Transportation Security Act; and his liaison work with the U.S. Coast Guard for both the annual Jones Beach Air Show and the national Operation Dry Water initiative.

Chief Harbor Master Edward Michels of the East Hampton Town (NY) Police Department Marine Patrol was recognized for his commitment to regional maritime safety and his service as a prominent law enforcement partner; his leadership role in the development of the Long Island East End Marine Law Enforcement Task Force; his stewardship in coordinating the resources of 13 marine law enforcement agencies at the federal, state, county and local levels; his efforts to identify maritime

(Continued on page 42)



Chief Harbor Master Edward Michels with the East Hampton Town Police Department receives the USCG Certificate of Merit from Rear Admiral Joseph M. Vojvodich. Mrs. Debra Michels is also present.

vulnerabilities in Suffolk County and to work with USCG maritime security hierarchy; his continuing service as the lead instructor of the Standard Marine Patrol Vessel Operator Curriculum – a regional marine law enforcement training program; and his dedication to marine safety and security preparedness in support of the U.S. Coast Guard’s mission in the region.

## US Coast Guard releases Propeller Guard Test Procedure report

The U.S. Coast Guard’s Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety has released the Propeller Guard Test Procedure report, intended for use by developers of propeller guard devices and independent third-party testing entities to test propeller guard products in a consistent and repeatable manner.

“The report provides the means to evaluate the boat performance characteristics and the level of protection of personnel in the water resulting from the installation of a propeller guard on a particular sterndrive or outboard-powered recreational boat,” said Phil Cappel, chief of the USCG’s Recreational Boating Product Assurance Branch.

The test procedure was developed through comprehensive on-water testing of various available propeller guards to compile evaluative performance criteria and laboratory testing of the personnel protection capabilities of these same propeller guards.

The diagnostic test equipment required for the performance testing will be made

available on a loan basis to interested parties on a first-come, first-served basis for the cost of shipping and insurance. The point of contact to arrange the logistics of borrowing the equipment is Eric Johnson at 202.372.1101 or via email at Eric.A.Johnson@uscg.mil.

The test procedure will be reviewed in approximately three years or earlier, if necessary, and will consider any comments received from interested parties. The test procedure was developed for the Coast Guard by the American Boat and Yacht Council and may be viewed and downloaded at [www.uscgboating.org/safety/default.aspx](http://www.uscgboating.org/safety/default.aspx).

## New research shows first-time anglers twice as likely to lapse than repeat anglers



First-time anglers are two times more likely to lapse out of fishing than repeat anglers, according to new research from the

Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF). The analysis, which was conducted in partnership with Southwick Associates, looked at license sales data in 36 states. The findings highlight the importance of retention efforts and will help RBFF shape future state marketing programs to increase fishing license sales.

“There are a significant number of people who lapse out of fishing each year,” said RBFF President and CEO Frank Peterson. “We took a close look at both first-time and repeat anglers to identify and characterize their differences, so we can better target our messaging to these audiences, and keep them engaged in fishing.”

### Key Findings

- First-time anglers are two times more likely to lapse than repeat anglers, with renewal rates of 31% and 68% respectively.
- First-time anglers are more likely than repeat anglers to be: younger, female, Hispanic, live in metro and urban communities and have families with young children.
- On average, repeat anglers spend 47% more annually than first-time anglers on fishing licenses, tags and permits.

“If we can convert first-time anglers to repeat anglers, we can have a significant positive impact on fishing license sales and revenue for state conservation and wildlife management efforts,” added Peterson.

RBFF is conducting additional research to gain further insights into first-time license buyers’ preferences and motivations to develop an effective retention strategy that will compel first-time anglers to renew their license. Additional findings will be shared in December in conjunction with RBFF’s State Marketing Workshop and in March at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference. The full report is available on [TakeMeFishing.org/Corporate](http://TakeMeFishing.org/Corporate).

## Access Board issues final guidelines for federal outdoor recreation sites

The U.S. Access Board has issued new accessibility guidelines for outdoor areas developed by the federal government. The guidelines provide detailed specifications for accessible trails, picnic and camping areas, viewing areas, beach access routes and other components of outdoor developed areas when newly built or altered. They also provide exceptions for situations where terrain and other factors make compliance impracticable.

“The Board is eager to release these guidelines, which were long in the making, to explain how access to the great outdoors can be achieved,” states Access Board Chair Karen L. Braitmayer, FAIA. “The greatest challenge in developing these guidelines was balancing what’s needed for accessibility against what’s possible in natural environments with limited development.”

Requirements for trails, outdoor recreation access routes, and beach access routes address surface characteristics, width, and running and cross slopes. Exceptions are included for these and other provisions under certain conditions stipulated in the guidelines. Departures are allowed where compliance is not practicable because of terrain or prevailing construction practices. Exceptions are also recognized where compliance would conflict with mandates such as the Endangered Species Act and other laws or where it would fundamentally alter a site’s function or purpose.

The guidelines originate from recommendations prepared by an advisory panel chartered by the Board, the Outdoor Developed Areas Regulatory Negotiation Committee. They were made available for public comment twice and finalized according to the feedback received. The rule applies only to national parks and other federal sites, but the Board plans to follow up with rulemaking to address non-federal sites under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The rule applies to federal agencies that develop outdoor areas for recreational purposes, including the National Park Service, the Forest Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Bureau of Reclamation. The new requirements became mandatory on November 25, 2013, as part of the Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards, which apply to facilities that are built, altered, or leased with federal funds.

For further information on the rule, visit the Board's website at <http://www.access-board.gov> or contact Bill Botten at [outdoor@access-board.gov](mailto:outdoor@access-board.gov), 202.272.0014 (v), or 202.272.0073 (TTY).

## AMI hands out scholarships for trade groups



The Association of Marina Industries presented its first two Neil Ross awards to the California Harbormasters and Port Captains Association (CAHMPC) and the New Jersey Marine Trade Association (MTA/NJ). Each trade association then selected the individual to receive the awards.

The MTA/NJ chose executive director Melissa Danko to receive the award and attend the International Marina and Boatyard Conference. CAHMPC chose harbor operations manager Mick Kronman, who will attend advanced marina manager training.

The Neil Ross Scholarship was formed in recognition of the numerous contributions that Neil Ross has made to the Association of Marina Industries and to the marina industry overall. As a founder of the International Marina Institute, Ross helped

set the standard in education in the worldwide marina industry. The award is given annually to provide financial assistance for training.

## Mercury Marine, US Army partner in recruiting program

Mercury Marine and the U.S. Army recruiting command signed an agreement in September to provide priority interview status to qualified soldiers participating in the Army's Partnership for Youth Success (PaYS) program.

"Mercury Marine is proud to partner with the U.S. Army as a member of the PaYS family," said Mercury President Mark Schwabero. "The program provides direct access to prospective employees who have developed professional work habits and have been held to the highest standards. It also provides participating soldiers with Army training in a particular job skill or set of skills that match our needs."

After soldiers enlist in the Army, they are provided an opportunity to link with a PaYS partner, such as Mercury Marine, that will reserve future interview opportunities that relate to the soldier's military occupational specialty. Throughout their active duty status, the soldiers receive hands-on training, experience and field instruction in that specific career field, working toward any required certification. They also gain discipline, work ethics and maturity while learning to work as part of a team, in addition to developing leadership skills and Army values.

More than 150 veterans are currently employed by Mercury Marine in Fond du Lac. Coinciding with the PaYS agreement-signing ceremony, Mercury announced the formation of a Veteran Employees Network, which will allow veterans an increased opportunity to communicate with and support each other while transitioning to a life beyond the military. It will also serve the veteran community through participation in community service events.

## Maryland approves online boating safety course

Until recently, the only option for Maryland boaters wanting to take a required boating safety course was to pay for one out of their own pocket. However,

the Maryland Department of Natural Resources now offers Maryland boat owners a free option with the availability of the no-cost BoatUS Foundation Online Boating Safety Course. The BoatUS course fully meets the state's education requirements for boaters and PWC operators born on or after July 1, 1972 and is also approved by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators and recognized by the U.S. Coast Guard as exceeding the minimum requirements for the National Recreational Boating Safety Program.

"Our goal is to make boating safety education as accessible as possible to as many boaters possible," said BoatUS Foundation President Chris Edmonston. "By making Maryland's course free, it removes the last possible barrier toward ensuring everyone's safety. And because you can work on it as you go, it fits in with today's busy schedules."

The course is loaded with interactive animations, videos and photos to give boaters an education that goes well beyond the basics of boating. Videos show important safety devices such as visual distress signals, how to get help in an emergency, how to prevent fires aboard your boat, and the best way to fit a child's life jacket.

## ATA Associates boat-testing techniques featured on Discovery Channel

In July 2013, video production crews from The Discovery Channel – Canada visited the facilities of ATA Associates in Houston to film a documentary featuring ATA's methods and techniques involving recreational boat testing.

Ziya Tong, the program's host, interviewed CEO Robert Swint and Chief Engineer Ed Fritsch regarding boat testing instrumentation and data collection techniques developed by the company to collect vessel performance data in accident reconstruction cases. Video segments included interview portions at the ATA facility as well as exemplary boat-test segments recorded at an area lake.

The five-minute feature will air on the Discovery channel in the near future. For additional information, go to the ATA Associates website at <http://www.ataassociates.com>.\*

# coast guard COMMENTS

By Joseph Carro  
U. S. Coast Guard  
Boating Safety Division



## Top officers exemplify excellence

Once again it is my honor and pleasure to pen remarks for the *Small Craft Advisory* Boating Officer of the Year issue. This special title is reserved for recognition of our highest achievers, our best officers, our top performers, literally, our Officers of the Year. We have all known, met, or even been that top performer. We all know the characteristics of an Officer of the Year.

The words found on various achievement awards are the same ones used to describe these officers' daily behavior: "dedication to duty," "surpassing the highest standards," and "in keeping with the highest traditions." Sometimes we use ordinary words to describe unremarkable behavior: "doing the right thing right," "it is just my job," or "you would have done the same thing if you were there." These ordinary words and the described unremarkable behavior couldn't be further from what usually has occurred – that is, extraordinary and remarkable behavior in anything but ordinary situations.

This is what contributes to our Officer of the Year. We are all dedicated and committed to our jobs and the life's work we have chosen. These extraordinary officers want to go – can't stop themselves from going – a little further, staying on patrol a little longer, and providing a little

more of whatever is needed. This behavior is never for fortune and glory, or any kind of self-elevation. It is always because something inside says to keep doing what you know is right, mostly for the love of it all and providing for a life of service.

A quick comparison shows that all of our outstanding leaders have the same descriptors: motivated, dedicated, and committed. Many of us have these same characteristics. The top-tier performers have something more going on. It's not always easy to describe, but you know it when you see it. Whether it is in the eyes of the new officer from the mountains of the North falling in love with the swamps of the bayou, or the homegrown officer who grew up just down the road a piece from his area of responsibility – they all have "it." We can learn most of it and apply it to our lives, but some of us may never fully understand. We do many of our tasks as part of our jobs. For others, it is way more than just a job that they love; it borders on obsession in the best possible way.

I have had the pleasure of meeting, training and working with many state officers, some of whom have been selected the Officer of the Year in their states as well as the NASBLA Officer of the Year. With most, after a short conversation, it's apparent why they are the Officers of the

Year. They all have "it"! Subdued confidence, not boastful; deliberate, not arrogant; full of pride with not a prideful word spoken. In a word, they seem ordinary, but in truth they are extraordinary.

I recently read an article about a fly fisherman, an outdoorsman born in the hills of Pennsylvania, who found a home in the Florida everglades. He had sharpened his skills and behavior so when the first class of Florida Fish and Game officers came along, he was among the graduates. I am sure he could have been an Officer of the Year candidate today. These men and women all looked like they could be Officer of the Year any time, any place. I am speculating, but it seems logical that the mettle in those first Florida officers is the same mettle in today's officers, with an extra portion for an Officer of the Year.

I want to congratulate Wisconsin Conservation Warden Juan Gomez on his selection as NASBLA's Officer of the Year. While I don't think I have met Warden Gomez, I would say he has an "extra portion."

Congratulations to all the candidates and thanks for your service! \*

# Boat Ed® congratulates the 13th Coast Guard District for winning the 2013 Innovations Award.



Consider the ways you innovate.  
You could win in 2014.

Dan Shipman (middle) accepted the award from Jason Alexander (left) and Cindy Kalkomey (right) of Boat Ed®, which sponsors the Innovations Award.



**boat-ed.com**<sup>TM</sup>

Get Safe. Get Certified.

Contact: Mitch Strobl  
mstrobl@kalkomey.com

214-437-9900



kalkomey.com



## 2013-14 Recreational Boating Safety Calendar

### December

**10-12**  
NASBLA  
**Boating Under the Influence  
Train-the-Trainer Course**  
Jefferson City, Missouri  
www.nasbla.org/bui  
chris@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487

### 2014 January

**14-16**  
NASBLA  
**Boating Under the Influence  
Detection & Enforcement Course**  
Clive, Iowa  
www.nasbla.org/bui  
chris@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487

**15**  
**National Recreational  
Boating Safety Coalition Meeting**  
Washington, D.C.  
NRBSCoalition@aol.com  
202.257.2836

**26-February 2**  
**United States Power Squadrons  
Annual Meeting**  
Jacksonville, Florida  
www.usps.org

**27-30**  
NASBLA  
**Comprehensive Boating Accident  
Investigation Course**  
Waco, Texas  
www.nasbla.org/accident  
chris@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487

### February

**5**  
NASBLA  
**Boating Under the Influence  
Transition Course**  
Anchorage, Alaska  
www.nasbla.org/bui  
chris@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487

**18**  
NASBLA  
**Executive Board Meeting**  
Lexington, Kentucky  
www.nasbla.org  
info@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487

**18**  
NASBLA  
**Enforcement & Training  
Committee Meeting**  
Lexington, Kentucky  
www.nasbla.org  
john.fetterman@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487

**19**  
NASBLA  
**Boating Under the Influence  
Transition Course**  
Columbia, South Carolina  
www.nasbla.org/bui  
chris@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487

**19-20**  
NASBLA  
**BLA Workshop**  
Lexington, Kentucky  
www.nasbla.org  
info@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487

**21**  
NASBLA  
**Engineering, Reporting & Analysis  
Committee Meeting**  
Lexington, Kentucky  
www.nasbla.org  
deb@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487

### 24-26

**Water Sports Industry Association  
Summit in the Snow**  
Steamboat, Colorado  
www.wsia.net/summit-in-the-snow-2014  
info@wsia.net  
407.251.9039

### March

**4-6**  
NASBLA  
**Boating Under the Influence  
Train-the-Trainer Course**  
Biloxi, Mississippi  
www.nasbla.org/bui  
chris@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487

**5**  
**National Recreational  
Boating Safety Coalition Meeting**  
Washington, D.C.  
NRBSCoalition@aol.com  
202.257.2836

**10-12**  
**Homeland Security Outlook  
Maritime Security East**  
Boston, Massachusetts  
www.maritimesecurityeast.com

**17-20**  
NASBLA  
**Comprehensive Boating  
Accident Investigation Course**  
Sea Girt, New Jersey  
www.nasbla.org/accident  
chris@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487

**19-21**  
**National Drowning Prevention  
Alliance Educational Conference**  
Orlando, Florida  
http://ndpa.org/home

### April

**7-10**  
NASBLA  
**Comprehensive Boating  
Accident Investigation Course**  
Grand Rapids, Michigan  
www.nasbla.org/accident  
chris@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487

### 11-12

NASBLA  
**Education Standards Panel Meeting**  
Lexington, Kentucky  
www.nasbla.org  
pam@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487

**13-14**  
NASBLA  
**Education & Outreach  
Committee Meeting**  
Nashville, Tennessee  
www.nasbla.org  
pam@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487

**14-17**  
**International Boating & Water  
Safety Summit**  
Nashville, Tennessee  
www.ibwss.org

**15**  
NASBLA  
**Boating Under the Influence  
Transition Course**  
Saratoga Springs, New York  
www.nasbla.org/bui  
chris@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487

**17**  
NASBLA  
**Boating Under the Influence  
Transition Course**  
New London, Connecticut  
www.nasbla.org/bui  
chris@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487

### May

**5-8**  
NASBLA  
**Comprehensive Boating Accident  
Investigation Course**  
Spring Grove, Illinois  
www.nasbla.org/accident  
chris@nasbla.org  
859.225.9487