

# NORTH AMERICAN WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ASSOCIATION



*"The Voice of Resource Law Enforcement"*



2019 Annual Conference — Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
Renaissance Oklahoma City Convention Center Hotel & Spa  
July 15th thru July 20th

<http://okgamewarden.com/wp/2019-naweo-a-conference/>

Conference Facebook Page  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/173505916518726/>

**SPRING 2019**  
**71st Edition NAWEOA Newsletter**

# NAWEOA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

<b>President Shawn Farrell</b> 56 Lombardi Lane, Fredericton, New Brunswick, E3A 1N9	(506) 476-0377	president@naweo.org
<b>Vice President Rick Langley</b> PO Box 1352, Pinetop, Arizona 85935	(928)606-1667	vpresident@naweo.org
<b>Past President Lew Huddleston</b> PO Box 171 Rigby Idaho 83442	(208)881-1321 C	president@naweo.org
<b>Secretary/Treasurer Steve Beltran</b> P.O. Box 7, Leaf River, IL 61047	(815)243-7777	secretarytreasurer@naweo.org
<b>Director Region 1 Brock Lockhart</b> Creighton, Saskatchewan, Canada	(306)-688-8818	region1@naweo.org
<b>Director Region 2 Martin Thabault</b> Ottawa, Ontario, Canada	(613)990-5405 W	region2@naweo.org
<b>Director Region 3 Josh Thibodeau</b> Rusagonis, New Brunswick, Canada	(506)755-0251 H	region3@naweo.org
<b>Director Region 4 Jason Sherwood</b> Laramie, Wyoming	(307)-721-1390	region4@naweo.org
<b>Director Region 5 Jeff Jones</b> 405 S. Madison, Hartington, NE 68739	(402)254-9124	region5@naweo.org
<b>Director Region 6 Jason Blaylock</b> 16234 Williamsville Rd, Kosciusko, MS 39090	(601)416-8495	region6@naweo.org
<b>Director Region 7 Larry Hergenroeder</b> Grove City, Pennsylvania	(814)541-9752	region7@naweo.org
<b>Webmaster Mike Reeder</b> 78 Sweet Arrow Dr. Hummelstown, PA 17036	(717) 979-4901 C	webmaster@naweo.org
<b>Conference Liaison Rich Cramer</b>		conference@naweo.org



## SOUVENIR PATCHES AVAILABLE

2017 is the only current patch available.

The cost per patch (including shipping and handling) is \$7.00 each USD.

### MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: NAWEOA

Mail to: George A. Wilcox

P.O. Box 480

Millville, PA 17846

*[1996 through 2010 patches are only available over-the-counter at the Game Warden Museum]*

# The President's Report

By Shawn Farrell



Hello everyone. As I sit and type this message, it is hard to believe that this will be my final report as NAWEOA President. My two-year term is quickly ending and a new President will be elected at this summer's conference in Oklahoma City.

Spring is certainly in the air here in New Brunswick. A month ago, a person would have thought spring and bare ground would never come with the amount of snow we had this winter. Hoping we do not have a repeat of the spring floods we experienced last year. This year's training conference will be in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and will be hosted by the Oklahoma State Game Warden Association.

It appears that Oklahoma has an excellent handle on this year's conference. I am looking forward to this year's conference and I encourage all members to attend and to bring a new officer so they can be part of and experience what this great organization has to offer. It looks as though we have made a turn in respect to conferences and hosting agencies. Last years and the next few will be carried out the traditional way. I am hoping this trend will continue. Our conference liaison Rich Cramer has been working hard to line up host agencies for future conferences. If any other agencies/associations are interested in hosting please contact Rich Cramer.

This year's winter meeting was held in Waverly, Tennessee. I would like to thank VP Rick Langley as well as Josh Landrum and the Tennessee Wildlife Officers Association for planning and hosting the executive. All the board members chipped in to cook and clean during our stay. It was a busy week for the members as they worked long hours to tackle a variety of issues that NAWEOA is facing. On the final day the executive travelled to Nashville to visit potential conference host sites. It looks as though the 2020 conference will be held in Nashville, Tennessee.

It appears each year our Regional Directors struggle to receive reports from J-Reps. I can certainly attest to this as I once was a Regional Director. J-Reps are vital in the transfer of news and information from NAWEOA to its members. Also, other members from across North America are interested in what is hap-

pening in other areas. This being the reason why Directors like to receive reports. We all need to do our part to insure the health and vigor of our association. It is important for an association or agency to have an individual that is engaged with the j-rep role. At this winter's meeting, the executive developed two new awards which will be presented yearly. One of these awards is called the "Loyal Partner" award recognizing K9 Handlers and their K9. The other is the J-Rep of the Year "Muddy Boots" award. This award will recognize one J-rep for the outstanding work they do. We all felt the importance of recognition besides the j-rep breakfast that is done at every summer conference. As part of this award an early bird registration will be included. As a jurisdictional rep your duties consist of the following:

Each Jurisdictional Representative shall:

1. Be responsible for voicing the views of the members they represent
2. Hold at least one meeting with the members in their jurisdiction to discuss business to be put forth at the annual meeting.
3. Make sure that members in their jurisdiction live up to the Code of Ethics.
4. Distribute information, newsletters, etc. as requested by the executive board.
5. Participate and take an active role in projects of the association.
6. Promote total membership within the jurisdiction.
7. Promote associate and corporate membership.

If you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to contact your Regional Director. Thanks to all for your efforts.

In closing, I truly consider myself fortunate to have been part of this organization on so many different levels. It has truly been an honor to represent the membership. As I move onto my role as Past President, I would like to thank the executive board for their hard work and tenacity in promoting NAWEOA. They have all done an amazing job in their positions and are like family. I truly feel the membership is in great hands moving forward. Three of our executive board members will be moving on this year. Two of our regional directors Jason Blaylock (Region 6) and Jeff Jones (Region 5) have completed their two terms as Directors. Each have done a fantastic job representing their respective regions and I wish them well. Perhaps both will consider running for other positions in the future. Our third member is our Pat President



## The President's Report (Con't)

By Shawn Farrell

Lew Huddleston. Lew has dedicated 10 years to the organization and that is quite an accomplishment. Thank you, Lew, for all you have done and I look forward to seeing you at future conferences. Lastly, I would like to thank my wife and my two boys for supporting me through this journey. Without their support I likely would have finished years ago when my two terms of regional director were completed. Thank you all I am very grateful. Friendships and memories, I have made will last forever. I hope everybody has a safe and productive spring. See you in Oklahoma. Take Care and Stay Safe.

## The Vice President's Report

By Rick Langley



Ahhh spring is here which means it's the windy season here in Eastern Arizona. Allergies galore! We finally had a real winter here in Arizona and we are now reaping the benefits of mud and everything greening up at once. turning in nominations, so please try it out. If you are running short on time or cannot get into the site, please email the nomination to me or your regional director and we will make sure it gets submitted. It's only a little more work for an important cause. We have also created 2 new awards that are discussed at length in the rest of this write-up: "Muddy Boots" which recognizes the efforts of our Jurisdictional Representatives and "Loyal Partner" which recognizes an outstanding Officer and K9.

We'll take it. Spring also means that we have another Winter Executive Board Meeting behind us, we are almost at the end of another awards cycle, and we are rapidly heading toward Oklahoma and our summer conference. It's hard to believe that my term as VP is almost behind me and I am staring at the prospect of a 2-year President term, if I am nominated and elected. I do plan to seek the nomination for NAWEOA President and would appreciate your continued support. There are several potential candidates for Vice President out there and I hope they are considering running. I would love to see a little competition for this important position! Likewise, we will have a couple Regional Director positions open. These are challenging and rewarding, so please consider contributing to NAWEOA by running for these positions!

As I have previously mentioned, the awards are A LOT of work to pull together, and I am listening to feedback and we will make an effort to streamline the presentations at the conference. The hardest part is that I feel that recognizing our peers for the excellent work that they do is critical to our mission and I do not want to diminish that by being too brief. Either way, we are working to make it better. If you have nominated officers in the past, you will see that the new website provides a more streamlined approach to

The Board spent a lot of time at this past winter meeting cleaning up outdated language and procedures in the policy manual. It may seem ridiculous, but we are moving forward and trying to keep this organization solvent and relevant. We received important updates on upcoming conferences and I hope to see a couple bid presentations in OKC. Tennessee is rolling along and we should have a host hotel on contract in Nashville about the time you read this. I want to thank the Tennessee Wildlife Officers Association for their help in organizing and assisting with the winter meeting. What a great venue! The van rental was critical and saved NAWEOA valuable funds. We look forward to the 2020 conference in Nashville, you guys will do a great job.

I am seriously looking forward to the conference in OKC and what they have pulled together for all of us. There will be some great training and great networking. In closing, remember that NAWEOA is OUR Association and it is what WE put into it. Belonging to an organization that supports my way of life and my ideals and having that connection with others who support the Thin Green Line is important to me.



## The Past President's Report

By Lew Huddleston



For NAWEOA members that have attended the summer conference we commonly get asked by non-attendees members, just what happens at the summer meetings? Speaking from experience there is a long list of items that fit as answers. I.E.,

networking, catching up with longtime friends, making new ones, top notch training, hospitality night, local tours, raffles, live auctions, final banquet, dancing, business meetings, etc. A person could list a variety of answers according to their own experiences. One of the most important items that very few if anybody mentions or talks about is the annual Executive Board elections. Those elections are the means to determine just who serves on the Executive Board and leads the organization.

The elected positions on the Executive Board consists of 7 Regional Directors, three from Canada and 4 from the US. Positions elected also include the Vice President, President and Past President.

This year the Regional Directors positions from the US are up for elections. Regions 4, 5, 6, and 7. I'd like to take a minute to send a sincere "Thank You" to Jeff Jones from Nebraska and Jason Blaylock from Mississippi. They have done a great job of filling the regional Directors positions from Regions 5 and 6 for the previous 4 years. Jeff and Jason both have exhausted their eligibility of 2 2 year terms as a Regional Director.

The other Regional Director positions from the US are Regions 4 and 7. Jason Sherwood from Wyoming is the Region 4 Regional Director and Larry Hergenroeder from Pennsylvania is the Region 7 Regional Director. Both Jason and Larry are eligible to run again for another two year term.

The other positions up for election are the Vice President, President and Past President. Rick Langley from Arizona will be nominated for the President position. I know this because I know I will

nominate Rick for the position. He's done a great job as Vice President and I know is ready to take on the position of President. Speaking of the President, Shawn Farrell from New Brunswick, after a very successful two years as President, is going to be moving into the well-deserved pseudo advisory role of Past President.

That leaves the Vice President position. This year the VP is to be filled with a member from Canada. To be eligible as a VP, a member has to have time spent on the executive board. Any full member can nominate a Canadian member to the VP position. All a member has to do is turn in a nomination written on a piece of paper to any member of the executive board with somebody seconding the nomination. More information will come at the beginning of the week of the summer conference in Oklahoma City.

These positions are critical for the success of NAWEOA. Getting good energetic people to run for the Executive Board is paramount for the long term success of NAWEOA.

If anybody knows of a member that would be a good asset to the Executive Board please encourage that member to step up and run for one of the elected positions.

I hope everyone is looking forward to Oklahoma City. I know I am. Hope to see everyone in OKC.



# NAWEOA Financial Report

By Steve Beltran

Spring has finally arrived, although the enjoyable weather of the spring season has taken it's time to get here, It's nice to think that we can spending some time outdoors to help relieve us from this lengthy winter. Welcome to the spring newsletter for the North American wildlife enforcement officers Association 2019.

It appears our last year's conference in Wyoming was a success. During our annual winter meeting, in Nashville Tennessee, the Wyoming game wardens association presented a check for \$60,512.84. With \$42,756.42 going to NAWEOA and \$17,756.42 being shared with WGWA.

Currently our membership roster is going strong, please take this as a reminder to get your dues and if they haven't been paid yet. Contact your regional director if you need additional assistance on a custom invoice or have any questions regarding the amount that you owe. Also take that time to update your roster list and jurisdictional representative.

We look forward to seeing you in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma this year for another great conference. Attached is our 2020 proposed budget to be presented to the membership at the annual meeting as well as our profit loss statement from last year to this winter meeting date.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/sspkbgul4gzmhem/2018-2019BudgetWorksheet%20final.xlsx?dl=0>

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/j9kolvmthfrj7jt/Profit%20Loss%20Detail%20FY%2018%20to%202-26-2019.xlsx?dl=0>

July 15-20, 2019

## NAWEOA 2019



## OKLAHOMA CITY, OK



## North American Wildlife Enforcement Officer's Association

Invites you and your family to the:

**2019 Annual Conference in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma**

**July 15th thru July 20th**

**Register at—** <http://okgamewarden.com/wp/2019-naweo-conference/>



### **Renaissance Oklahoma City Convention Center Hotel & Spa**

Make your visit to downtown Oklahoma City one you'll remember when you stay at Renaissance Oklahoma City Convention Center Hotel. The hotel boasts an amazing location, connected to the Cox Convention Center and just steps from popular destinations including the Bricktown District, Chesapeake Energy Arena and The Criterion. Unwind after an exhausting day in our spacious rooms and suites with plush bedding and luxurious amenities. Enjoy a selection of delicious dishes at 10 North Grille, the on-site restaurant, or explore the local cuisine at the variety of restaurants surrounding our hotel. During downtime, relax while sipping coffee at our cafe, pampering yourself at our spa, swimming at our indoor pool or just enjoy the company of your law-enforcement friends and family. Use the link to book online or contact the Hotel directly by calling 1-800-468-3571 and let them know you are with the NAWEOA Group.



# 2019 NAWEOA Training Schedule

**Thursday July 18<sup>th</sup>**

**13:30-15:30**

**Stop the Bleed**

**13:30-15:30**

**What is Garrity?**

**13:30-17:30**

**Active Shooter Pt.1 (limit 26)**

**15:30-17:30**

**DNA Collection/Preservation**

**15:30-17:30**

**Thoracic Trauma**

**13:30-17:30**

**Financial Planning**

**Friday July 19<sup>th</sup>**

**08:00-10:00**

**What is Garrity?**

**08:00-10:00**

**DNA Collection/Preservation**

**08:00-12:00**

**Forensic Interview & Interrogation  
Techniques for Conservation Officers**

**08:00-12:00**

**Active Shooter Pt.2 (limit 26)**

**10:00-12:00**

**Hispanic Culture/Federal Case**

**10:00-12:00**

**Canada Wildlife Trafficking Case**

**Saturday July 20<sup>th</sup>**

**08:00-10:00**

**Grove Family/Fallen Officer**

**08:00-10:00**

**Kansas Operation Cimarron**

**10:00-12:00**

**Federal Case Study**

**10:00-12:00**

**Canada Wildlife Trafficking Case**

# 2019 NAWEOA Conference Schedule



The background of the schedule is a large, light blue shield-shaped logo with a red and white border. The logo features the text 'NAWEOA' at the top, '20' in the center, and 'OKLAHOMA' at the bottom. A central emblem depicts a globe with a torch and a wreath. A smaller circular seal is visible at the bottom center of the shield.

<b>Monday July 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Registration Opens</b>	<b>13:00-19:00</b>
<b>Tuesday July 16<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Registration Open</b>	<b>08:00-18:00</b>
	<b>NAWEOA Exec. Board Meeting</b>	<b>08:00-17:00</b>
	<b>Hospitality Room Open</b>	<b>19:00-24:00</b>
<b>Wednesday July 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Registration Open</b>	<b>08:00-18:00</b>
	<b>Opening Ceremony</b>	<b>09:00-15:00</b>
	<b>Officer March/Group Photo</b>	<b>09:00-15:00</b>
	<b>Officer Luncheon/Awards/Speakers</b>	<b>09:00-15:00</b>
	<b>Fallen Officer Memorial</b>	<b>09:00-15:00</b>
	<b>Spouse/Guest Luncheon</b>	<b>12:00-14:00</b>
	<b>Tipsy Artist-\$30 at the door</b>	<b>13:00-16:00</b>
	<b>Vendor Setup</b>	<b>13:00-17:00</b>
	<b>Youth Room Open (Laser Shot)</b>	<b>19:00-23:00</b>
	<b>Hospitality Room Open</b>	<b>19:00-24:00</b>
<b>Thursday July 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Registration Open</b>	<b>08:00-18:00</b>
	<b>Torch Run &amp; Breakfast</b>	<b>06:30-09:30</b>
	<b>NAWEOA Business Meeting/Officer Ex.</b>	<b>10:00-12:00</b>
	<b>Lunch on Your Own</b>	<b>12:00-13:30</b>
	<b>Exhibitors/Vendors</b>	<b>13:30-17:00</b>
	<b>Training</b>	<b>13:30-17:30</b>
	<b>Youth Room Open (Reptile Show)</b>	<b>19:00-23:00</b>
	<b>Hospitality Room Open</b>	<b>19:00-24:00</b>

**Friday July 19<sup>th</sup>**



Registration Open	08:00-18:00
Exhibitors/Vendors	08:00-13:00
Training	08:00-12:00
Lunch on Your Own	12:00-13:00
J-Rep Luncheon	12:00-13:00
Female Officer Luncheon	12:00-13:00
Warden Skills Games/Meal	13:00-19:00
Youth Room Open (Wildlife Bling & Lure Making)	19:00-23:00
Hospitality Room Open	19:00-24:00

**Saturday July 20<sup>th</sup>**

Training	08:00-12:00
Officer Luncheon	12:00-14:00
Retiree Luncheon	12:00-14:00
NAWEOA Business Meeting	14:00-UTC
Closing Ceremony	14:00-UTC
Youth Movie Night	18:00-23:00
Grand Banquet	18:00-UTC

**Sunday July 21<sup>st</sup>**

NAWEOA Exec. Board Meeting	09:00-UTC
OSGWA Board Meeting	09:00-UTC



# 2019 NAWEOA Tour Schedule

Booked directly through Destination Oklahoma the official tour partner.

Monday, July 15 <sup>th</sup>	10:00am-12:00pm	A Streetcar Named...
	1:00pm-3:00pm	A Streetcar Named...
	2:00pm-12:00am	Ok. Night Bat Encounter
Tuesday, July 16 <sup>th</sup>	9:00am-12:00pm	Iconic Oklahoma
	12:00pm-10:00pm	Pioneer Women
	1:00pm-3:00pm	A Streetcar Named...
	1:00pm-5:00pm	A Moment in Time
	3:30pm-5:30pm	A Streetcar Named...
	6:00pm-8:00pm	A Streetcar Named...
	7:00pm-9:00pm	A Moment in Time (Illuminated)
Wednesday, July 17 <sup>th</sup>	9:00am-12:00pm	Wild West
	10:00am-12:00pm	A Streetcar Named...
	1:00pm-3:00pm	A Streetcar Named...
	1:00pm-5:00pm	Mansions & Marvels
	7:00pm-9:00pm	A Moment In Time (Illuminated)

## Tours Continued

**Thursday, July 18<sup>th</sup>**

**9:00am-12:00pm**

**Iconic Oklahoma**

**1:00pm-3:00pm**

**A Streetcar Named...**

**1:00pm-4:00pm**

**A Moment in Time**

**3:30pm-5:30pm**

**A Streetcar Named...**

**7:00pm-9:00pm**

**A Moment in Time  
(Illuminated)**

**7:00pm-9:00pm**

**Spooks, Spirits, Scoundrels**

**Friday, July 19<sup>th</sup>**

**9:00am-12:00pm**

**Wild West**

**1:00pm-3:00pm**

**A Streetcar Named...**

**1:00pm-4:00pm**

**A Moment in Time**

**3:30pm-5:30pm**

**A Streetcar Named...**

**7:00pm-9:00pm**

**Spooks, Spirits, Scoundrels**

**Saturday, July 20<sup>th</sup>**

**9:00am-12:00pm**

**Iconic Oklahoma**

**1:00pm-4:00pm**

**Brew, Boom & Bust**

**7:00pm-9:00pm**

**Spooks, Spirits, Scoundrels**

# 19<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TORCH RUN

The 19th Annual NAWEOA 5K Torch Run/Walk will take place in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The event will be held on July 18th, 2019 as part of the Annual NAWEOA Conference. All proceeds will benefit the North American Game Warden Museum. Once again, we are asking for your support. Your generous donation will help ensure the future of the museum and help us continue to honor those that have fallen in the line of duty. If your association (or any individual) is interested in making a donation, please make your check or money order made payable to the North American Game Warden Museum and mail your donation to: Thomas Caifa, P. O. Box 26, Altamont, NY 12009. The deadline for donations is May 15th, 2019. With your support, we can continue to carry out the mission of the museum; Educating, Honoring & Celebrating Natural Resource Protection.

**For more information, go to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/173505916518726/>**

**Thank you for your continued support honoring those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.**



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## VISITING OFFICER PROGRAM

The North American Game Warden Museum invites all conservation officers from across North America to participate in the museum's Visiting Officer Program. Visiting officers stay at the International Peace Garden and spend their day at the Museum in their agency uniform meeting the public. This is a great opportunity for officers to promote their agency and to share information or stories with visitors to the Museum. Officers are encouraged to bring any displays, power points, handouts or any promotional DVDs they may have. Presentations can be as simple as the standard "who we are and what we do" or can be more elaborate. Every officer has interesting stories and since every state is different, the material is always fresh. The museum has had visiting officers from Idaho, Arizona, New York, Utah, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Montana, Manitoba, North Dakota, Washington and USF&W. Typically, officers stay for two to three days over a weekend. We go by many different names: Game warden, conservation officer, natural resources officer, wildlife officer, environmental police and the list goes on. Whatever your badge says, we are all part of the same brotherhood. That brotherhood is celebrated by the North American Game Warden Museum. If you or your agency is interested in participating in this program, please contact Museum Manager Stephanie Lee at [nagwmuseum@hotmail.com](mailto:nagwmuseum@hotmail.com)

**For more information, visit the museum website at [www.gamewardenmuseum.org](http://www.gamewardenmuseum.org)**



# 2019 NAWEOA Winter Meeting Report

## Nashville, Tennessee

By Josh Thibodeau



The following is a summary report regarding various NAWEOA business items discussed during the winter executive meeting held in early March. One of my duties as your Regional Director is to provide a report to you following the winter executive meeting and summer conference. This report should reach all members that are interested in NAWEOA business throughout the year.

The minutes from the winter meeting will be posted on the private website once they have been reviewed and edits have been made as required.

Please note that with the updated NAWEOA website you will need to create a personalized account to login into to the protected site. You can register on the website and it is easy to do. Create username and password and the webmaster will verify your member account.

The NAWEOA Executive Board met at the new Tennessee Wildlife Officer Training Academy in Waverly, Tennessee for the 2019 Winter Meeting. This is the host state for the 2020 summer conference. The board was hosted by the Tennessee Wildlife Officers Association. A big thank you to association President Josh Landrum for the hospitality during our stay, which included a rental of a 15-passenger van for the board to get around. The Tennessee wildlife Officers agency owns a 2000-acre property that is being turned into their new training facility. It's a beautiful piece of property with cabins, a barn turned into a

meeting area along with wildlife, ponds, hunting stands and other features that will provide a great area for scenario based training for the wildlife officers. The board had accommodations at one of the onsite cabins which held all 11 board members who attended. Bedrooms were furnished with bunks and there was complete kitchen allowing the board members to cook their own meals onsite. Meetings were held at a beautifully renovated barn a mile or so down the dirt road on the property, we often seen wildlife on our short commute back and forth from the cabin to the meeting barn.

Everyone arrived on Friday; some were earlier than others. Excused were past president and Region 1 director as they could not make the meeting due to commitments back home. Thank you to Steve, Larry and Rich who picked up groceries for the week. Business began Saturday morning and continued Sunday and until early afternoon on Monday. Tuesday was devoted to visiting some sites in Nashville for 2020 conference planning including a meeting with a hotel as a possible host. On Monday afternoon we were joined by a few members of the Tennessee Wildlife Officers Association executive board for a discussion on the 2020 summer conference planning.

Business day one (Saturday)- the Winter Business Meeting was called to order by President Farrell at 0830 hours in the meeting barn. New directors Martin Thabault (region 2) and Josh Thibodeau (region 3) were welcomed. A review of the 2018 summer meeting minutes were reviewed and accepted. Individual board member reports were given, some highlights included the new website up and running and looking good, the idea of award promotion on the Facebook page, membership dues still outstanding for numerous states/provinces and IGW looking for an increase in group membership dues to cover increased costs of production and mailing which the board did approve an increase of a \$1.00 per membership group, Old business from the 2018 summer meeting was discussed and some highlights include, looking into Otter box and others as a long term NAWEOA sponsor, re-branding of the NAWEOA logo which will be visited again at the 2019 summer meeting and providing information to retirees for sponsorship of the torch award winners. New business began with the addition of 2 new awards. The muddy boots award which will

## 2019 NAWEOA Winter Meeting Report (cont.)

### Nashville, Tennessee

By Josh Thibodeau

recognize the great work J-Reps do and the loyal partner award recognizing the great work of a k-9 and their handler. The criteria for these awards can be found on the NAWEOA website.

Business day two (Sunday), the Executive Board convened at 0835 hours and continued the discussion of NEW business. Highlights include changing the award application date to February 1st each year beginning in 2020 for the officer of the year, torch, valor, and outstanding service awards. A request to the general membership will be taken to the membership for a membership due increase, the last increase was 18 years ago in 2001. There was lots of discussion on awards and criteria wording along with a discussion and review on executive board meal and travel reimbursement. This was another productive day of great discussions.

Business day three (Monday), the Executive Board convened at 0835 hours and the morning session began with a Conference call from 2019 conference chairman Jay Harvey from Oklahoma to give the board update on how things are going for the 2019 summer conference. Everything is on track and looking good. We were joined by members of the Tennessee Wildlife Officers association for a discussion on the planning of the 2020 summer conference in Nashville. It was a productive discussion. The rest of the day included Steve Beltran's Treasurers report in a detailed line by line list of income revenue and expenses. The board voted to accept next years projected budget.

Business day four (Tuesday), The executive board travelled into Nashville for a 10 am meeting with the Millennium Maxwell house hotel and 2020 Conference chairman Josh Landrum. It was a productive meeting and will be followed up on by Josh Landrum and conference Liaison Rich Cramer. The Tennessee Wildlife Officers Association treated the NAWEOA executive board to lunch at one of the local restaurants in downtown Nashville. The remainder of the afternoon was spent touring downtown Nashville to see all the sites and attractions which will be enjoyed at the 2020 summer conference.

The meeting covered several items under old business and new business that will be detailed in the meeting minutes. The following are a few highlights from the meeting.

#### Budget

Steve Beltran, Secretary-Treasurer was able to provide the updated budget report. Wyoming was a successful conference making just over \$60,000.00. NAWEOA received just over \$42,500.00. The board developed a proposed budget to present at the upcoming summer meeting in Wyoming. The current projected budget has a surplus of \$1384.00 with confidence that Oklahoma is going to have a profitable conference.

Financial reports can be found at:  
<http://www.naweo.org/protected/financial/FinancialReportsIndex.htm>

#### Fallen Officer Fund Report:

An update on the Fallen Officer Fund revealed that the fund could use some additional support. The US account has a balance of just over \$18,000.00, while the Canadian account has a balance of just over \$8,500.00. The following link will connect you to the FOF.

[http://www.naweo.org/protected/fallen\\_officer\\_fund/fallen\\_officer\\_fund\\_index.html](http://www.naweo.org/protected/fallen_officer_fund/fallen_officer_fund_index.html)

Just as a reminder on how the fund works. Participation is not limited to associations only, as we have several individual members who contribute to the fund. The Fallen Officer Fund is a separate account



## 2019 NAWEOA Winter Meeting Report (cont.)

### Nashville, Tennessee

By Josh Thibodeau



from NAWEOA and is only administered by the association. Participants in the fund contribute \$50.00 (or whatever amount you would like to donate) to “The Fallen Officer Fund” each time there is a Fallen Officer. Steve Beltran forwards a check for \$2500.00 from The Fallen Officer Fund to the Fallen Officer’s family on behalf of the fund participants. A \$100.00 donation is forwarded to families for non-in the line of duty deaths but that is from the NAWEOA General Account.

If you or your association is a contributor to the fund, please make sure your payments are current. For those jurisdictions (or individuals) that do not contribute to the fund at this time please considering doing so. Information on how the fund is managed and how you can contribute can be found at the following link, [http://www.naweo.org/protected/fallen\\_officer\\_fund/fallen\\_officer\\_fund\\_index.html](http://www.naweo.org/protected/fallen_officer_fund/fallen_officer_fund_index.html).

#### Group Membership and Roster Status

Steve Beltran reports that various group membership dues have been received for 2019 with others still outstanding. Please check with your individual association to insure your dues are paid. If there are any questions please contact me.

Please continue to remain current with your roster updates. Submit an updated roster, in its entirety, twice each year prior to the deadline for the newsletter (Oct 1st and April 1st) to your Region Director.

#### NAWEOA Membership:

The total NAWEOA membership currently stands at just over 8900 members.

#### Conference Liaison Position

Rich Cramer, Conference Liaison reported if there are any jurisdictions considering hosting a NAWEOA Conference, please contact him at [conference@naweo.org](mailto:conference@naweo.org). There is a great deal of useful information on hosting a Conference at the following link, <http://www.naweo.org/protected/conference/Conference%20Index.htm>. Any inquiries are appreciated and Rich will be happy to answer your questions. Maine and New York were discussed. Oklahoma is well on its way and have everything under control for a hosting a fantastic conference. Tennessee is on schedule and will have an additional site visit by Rich within the next few months. There has been no one step forward for 2021. Rich has one year and four months remaining on his three-year commitment.

#### Wyoming Conference Report

Conference Chairman Jason Sherwood your NAWEOA Region 4 Director, delivered a detailed report of the conference. Wyoming put together a great training schedule along with accommodating side trips to include horseback riding and multiple tours featuring the old west of Wyoming. Otter box Products stepped up as a major sponsor for the conference. US Fish and Wildlife and Wyoming Honor Guards presented at the conference. The feedback from the surveys produced very positive feedbacks and the conference made a profit of just over 60,000.00\$.

#### NAWEOA 2019 Conference Planning

Conference Chairman Jay Harvey delivered an update via telephone to the NAWEOA executive board. Everything is on track and looking good for the conference. There is some great training include active shooter with simmunition, DNA training, retirement information and a lawyer talking about self-protection to name a few. The officer march will begin at the hotel and end at the Oklahoma City bombing memorial. There is a park reserved for the



## 2019 NAWEOA Winter Meeting Report (cont.)

### Nashville, Tennessee

By Josh Thibodeau

warden skills games which includes a water splash pad for kids. The parking is private which will cost \$10/day. There are still minor details to be worked out but Jay is confident everything will come together and is looking forward to a successful conference.

#### Game Warden Museum Report

The Museum Board of Directors did not have a report available for the meeting.

The North American Game Warden Museum can be found at the following link <http://www.gamewardenmuseum.org/>

#### IGW

IGW Business Manager Marion Hoffman's report was presented by President Farrell. Finding Ads is a struggle. The cost of production and mailing has increased and Marion is seeking an increase in membership dues. The board voted to increase the group membership by a \$1.00 to \$18.00 a year. Information on the magazine can be found at the following link <http://www.igwmagazine.com/>. A reminder to all members that there is a 10% commission for securing advertisements for IGW. Contact your Regional Director or Carlos Gomez at [advertising@igwmagazine.com](mailto:advertising@igwmagazine.com)

#### Webmaster Report / Newsletter Report

Mike Reeder has redesigned a new NAWEOA website that is modern and more user friendly. A username and password will need to be set up on an individual basis. The reception for the new website is good and it has a great modern look. Steve Beltran and Mike continue to work together to for any issues

with archiving old business items. Newsletters are to be submitted to Mike through your Region Director by April 1st and October 1st to ensure timely dissemination to our members.

#### AWARDS

Rick Langley reported that nominations are minimal as of March 1st. Region Directors have been asking J-REPS to encourage someone from their agencies to take the time to submit applications for deserving officers from their jurisdiction. The muddy boots award which will recognize the great work J-Reps do and the loyal partner award recognizing the great work a k-9 and their handler. The criteria for these awards can be found on the NAWEOA website. award application date to February 1st each year beginning in 2020 for the officer of the year, torch, valor, and outstanding service awards.

#### Misc.

A number of other minor items of discussion occurred. Once the minutes from the Winter Meeting have been finalized they will be posted on the private site at the following link, <http://www.naweo.org/protected/minutes/index-minutes.htm>

#### Reminders

Please check out the redesigned NAWEOA website. Create an account to use the features of the website including making award nominations and viewing important documents.



# NAWEOA

## Region 1 Director Brock Lockhart



After a long cold winter in Saskatchewan, spring has finally broken through and is upon us in the north! A few mentionable items from SACO are outlined below.

First off, I will announce that Meadow Lake will be the host of this year's annual SACO Convention. We are all looking forward to the networking and comradery opportunities of that weekend in late April. Also, next weekend is the annual SACO Hockey tournament which will be held in Saskatoon once again. Both events are great fundraisers for the association and provide a chance for experiences to be had and stories to be shared.

Saskatchewan is still in a stretch which has seen many of our officers retire or preparing for retirement in the near future. SACO wishes all of those retirees a pleasant future and we express our appreciation for your dedication and commitments you've made to our agency and our province. I won't name each retiree in this write up, but I do feel it necessary to identify Kerry Wrishko as an officer who has recently announced his retirement.

Kerry has been involved with NAWEOA in a significant way for many years. Whether it was attending the majority of the conference, assisting with the organizing and hosting of the convention in Saskatoon twice, attending more conventions than I can count, as well as sitting on the executive for the NAWEOA as President at one point and having an honorary lifetime membership to NAWEOA.

After 42 years of service to Saskatchewan's fish, wildlife and Environment Kerry Wrishko has decided to call it a career. Kerry has mentored countless young officers in Saskatchewan, including myself. Kerry is one of the most passionate Conservation Officers I have ever worked with and his dedication to the Ministry, SACO, and NAWEOA is a testament to his outstanding career.

## Alberta

AGWA had there annual meeting and banquet last March in Camrose. During the meeting several topics and items were discussed such as load bearing vests, Government Bullying initiative, and new collective agreement articles. It was decided by the executive that it was time for AGWA to give back to the members. This includes donating to new causes and helping with fees during AGWA events. AGWA has decided to donate \$1000.00 to send kids to outdoor camps in Alberta. Camp has not been picked yet but it is being looked into.

AGWA held their annual campout at Gull Lake. During the campout AGWA purchased a pig to have a pig roast and also covered the cost of one nights camping fees for attending members. This was a way to thank our members for being apart of the association.

AGWA is holding their annual meeting and hockey tournament March 30,2019. This year will be a voting year for the executive positions. I will update you with the new executive.

**The NAWEOA board would like to congratulate Kerry Wrishko on his retirement after 42 years of dedicated service to Saskatchewan's fish, wildlife and Environment. Kerry has been an instrumental part of NAWEOA's success over the years and has served many roles from president to helping organize two conferences.**



## Region 2 Director Martin Thabault



Greetings from the Canadian Capital,

It's been a busy winter in Ottawa. In the last year our Department hired 30 new Wildlife Officers and, since early December, I have been involved in the planning and delivery of their basic training. The curriculum is broken down in three separate portions: Academic Training where new Officers learn about their mandate and the legislation they will be enforcing, Firearms Training and finally Peace Officer Training where they will learn about their authorities and train on use of force. This is the second time in recent years that I am fulfilling the role of Training Coordinator. I find it rewarding to work with people from various law enforcement backgrounds and help them become new Federal Wildlife Officers.

Early last month I also attended my first Winter Membership Meeting at the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency's facility in Waverly, TN. I would like to thank our Vice President, Rich Langley and our hosts in Tennessee for arranging the venue and making this meeting a success.

Please read on to get an update from the Region 2 Jurisdictions. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Central and Arctic Region has been without an Officer Association in recent years due to cutbacks. There should be an influx of new officers in the Region in the future and hopefully they will have an association up and running soon. Unfortunately I did not hear from Nunavut before the cut-off date for submitting my report.

Finally, I invite you all to register for the Summer Conference. The Oklahoma Game Warden's Association is working hard to make it a success. While you're at it, make your hotel reservations as well.

See you all in OKC!

## Environment and Climate Change Canada, Wildlife Enforcement Directorate

Amy Biensch  
Wildlife Officer, Saskatoon  
J-Rep, ECCC Wildlife Enforcement Directorate

The Wildlife Enforcement Directorate with Environment and Climate Change Canada has seen many changes over the past few months. Currently, we have approximately 30 new recruits who are completing their designation training and will fill roles as Wildlife Officers or Intelligence Officers in our Wildlife Enforcement program across Canada. Training will be completed by June. The increase in staff is a great boost to our enforcement program and it is great that vacant positions are being filled and new positions are being created.

Our agency is also in the process of transitioning to a new pistol, the Glock 17 Gen 5, from the Smith and Wesson 5946. We are also still in the process of updating our uniforms to a newer material as well as updating the carrier for our body armour so that officers have the ability to move enforcement tools from their waist to their upper body to help transfer weight.

The public now has the ability to call Crime Stoppers in Canada at 1-800-222-8477 to anonymously report wildlife crimes. An individual may be eligible for a reward up to \$2000.

Our officers have been busy in 2018/2019 enforcing the federal wildlife legislation that protects our native Canadian species as well as foreign species that are being imported and exported from our country. Some examples of files that have been completed in the last year:

On May 16, 2018, Victor Hugo Dias De Almeida, Claudio Meira, and Jorge Da Piedade Dimas, were sentenced in the Ontario Court of Justice after pleading guilty to one count each of hunting a Trumpeter Swan during a closed season contrary to the Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994. Combined fines totalling \$19,000 will be directed to the Environmental Damages Fund. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/>)



## Region 2 Director Martin Thabault Continued

[environmental-enforcement/notifications/three-ontario-hunters-sentenced-migratory-birds.html](https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-enforcement/notifications/three-ontario-hunters-sentenced-migratory-birds.html))

On June 14, 2018, Jeremy Fedun pleaded guilty in the Provincial Court of Alberta to one count of hunting illegally in a national wildlife area. This contravention of the Wildlife Area Regulations is an offence under the Canada Wildlife Act. Mr. Fedun was fined \$5,000, which will be directed to the Government of Canada's Environmental Damages Fund, and was ordered to forfeit the elk meat, skull, and antlers. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-enforcement/notifications/alberta-hunter-national-wildlife-area.html>)

On June 27, 2018, Simpson's Num-Ti-Jah Lodge Ltd., operating within the boundaries of Banff National Park, pleaded guilty in the Provincial Court of Alberta to violating the Migratory Birds Regulations contrary to the Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994 and the Canada National Parks Act. The defendant was fined \$27,000, which will be directed to the Government of Canada's Environmental Damages Fund. In addition to the fine, the defendant was ordered to write an article on the incident, for publication in a local newspaper. This was due to a joint file with Environment Canada and Parks Canada that started in August 2016 where employees of the lodge were removing active barn swallow nests from the lodge. The nests contained eggs and live young. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-enforcement/notifications/lake-louise-migratory-bird-nests.html>)

On July 10, 2018, Steve Gionet pleaded guilty in the Provincial Court of New Brunswick to violating the Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994 for hunting sea ducks during a closed season with toxic lead shot. Mr. Gionet was fined \$6,000, which will be directed to the Environmental Damages Fund. Equipment seized during the investigation—including a boat, two

shotguns, decoys, ammunition, and other hunting equipment—were ordered forfeited to the Crown. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-enforcement/notifications/unlawful-migratory-bird-hunt-results-fine-equipment-forfeiture-new-brunswick-hunter.html>)

On July 13, 2018, Nexen Energy ULC was ordered to pay a total penalty of \$290,000 in the Provincial Court of Alberta, after pleading guilty to one charge under the Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994. On July 15, 2015, a pipeline break occurred at the Nexen Energy ULC Long Lake facility located near Anzac, Alberta. The break released approximately 5000 cubic metres of emulsion product, consisting of bitumen, water and sand, into the environment. An Environment and Climate Change Canada investigation revealed that these substances are harmful to migratory birds and that the spill occurred in an area frequented by migratory birds. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-enforcement/notifications/nexen-energy-violation-migratory-birds.html>)

On August 17, 2018, Jeannot Pellerin and Yannick Boisjoly, of Lavaltrie, pleaded guilty to one count each of unlawful interprovincial transport of big game (moose) from New Brunswick to Quebec, an offence under the Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act. Pellerin and Boisjoly were each ordered to pay a penalty of \$5000, which will be directed to the Environmental Damages Fund. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-enforcement/notifications/two-quebec-hunters-fined-offences-under-federal-wildlife-law.htm>)

On January 2, 2019, Syncrude Canada Ltd. pleaded guilty in the Provincial Court of Alberta to one count of violating the Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994. Syncrude Canada Ltd. was sentenced to pay a fine of \$1.775 million, which will be directed to the Government of Canada's Environmental Damages Fund. On August 7, 2015, Environment and Climate Change Canada's wildlife enforcement officers

## Region 2 Director Martin Thabault Continued

received a report of 31 deceased great blue herons that were exposed to bitumen at the Syncrude Canada Ltd. Mildred Lake facility. Environment and Climate Change Canada's investigation confirmed 31 great blue herons were found in an abandoned sump, and 30 of the birds were deceased upon discovery. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-enforcement/notifications/alberta-company-violating-migratory-birds-convention-act.html>)

On January 18, 2019, Fredrick Thomson was sentenced in the Provincial Court of Alberta following his conviction on October 26, 2018, for two counts of illegally importing into Canada and possessing a black bear hide from the United States (Alaska). Thomson was sentenced to pay \$20,000 for violating the Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act. The penalty will be directed to the Government of Canada's Environmental Damages Fund. Thomson was required to forfeit the hide seized during the investigation. In addition to the fine and forfeiture, Thomson is prohibited from hunting outside of Canada for a period of two years and from importing and exporting animals or their parts to and from Canada for a period of two years for reasons not related to his taxidermy business. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-enforcement/notifications/alberta-based-taxidermist-sentenced-violations-federal-wildlife-law.html>)

On March 4, 2019, after entering a guilty plea, Topwin Trading Co Ltd. was ordered to pay a total of \$50,000 in penalties after pleading guilty to violating the Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act (WAPPRIITA). The company imported 51 boxes containing 10,200 vials of herbal oil that contained *Bletilla striata*, a species native to East Asia that is also known as the hyacinth orchid or Chinese ground orchid. In addition, the court ordered that the 51 cases of

seized product be forfeited. All orchid species are listed in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). A permit is required to import *Bletilla striata* into Canada. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-enforcement/notifications/bc-company-pay-50k-penalties-illegally-importing-orchids.html>)

Finally from January 13th to the 26th I had the opportunity to participate in the NAWEOA Officer Exchange. I spent the time on the Big Island in Hawaii and was able to job shadow the Division of Conservation and Resource Enforcement (DOCARE) officers during their patrols. Some days the patrols would be on the beaches and patrolling caves while other days were spent in the mountains checking bird hunters. It was an opportunity of a lifetime to see how another agency operates and to observe the similarities of resource enforcement even though it was in a very different part of the world. I will be presenting more on my experience in Oklahoma at the NAWEOA Conference this year. For those who won't be able to join us at the Summer Conference, you can read about my adventure in the 2018 Officer Exchange Column in the next few pages.

### National Capital Commission

Jason Pink  
Senior Conservation Officer  
J-Rep, National Capital Commission

Hello NAWEOA members! Things at the National Capital Commission (NCC) are ever evolving as an agency and for our Conservation Officers. Mr. Tobi Nussbaum is now the new NCC Chief Executive Officer after being appointed by the Federal Government in early February. After many years of being understaffed, several new full time positions have opened up for Senior and Junior Conservation Officers. These competitions have now closed and interviews are well under way. Once the process complete, our ranks will be better balanced and bring us to approximately 20 officers.

We have also had a risk analysis completed on our duties and functions and are awaiting the results

## Region 2 Director Martin Thabault Continued

of this process and the measures to be implemented. The purpose of the study was to better understand what tools and training the officers are lacking. Some major changes have already occurred, such as a better radio communication system coming soon to replace our existing outdated one. Officers will have a better radio coverage and be able to communicate directly with a police dispatcher for field checks rather than rely on the use of a cellphone. Along with this, our staff will undergo an intensive 3 week recertification training with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Officers will train on use of force, firearms and legislation among the many subjects in the curriculum.

Another notable file we are involved in is the chemical immobilization of large mammals in the city of Ottawa and on federally owned lands. The general species that we are called to deal with are bear, moose and whitetail deer. All current officers have re-qualified on the use of immobilization equipment and we are the only agency capable of intervening in human wildlife conflicts on a large scale in the city of Ottawa. Making us somewhat of an elite unit in this region! A considerable investment was made on equipment and training to perform these relocations effectively and safely.

Our region saw a large increase in black bear incidents near the Ontario-Quebec border. Hundreds of reports and sightings kept our officers busy over the spring /summer months of 2018. We immobilized and relocated 6 bears on our lands and on city property. We also assisted the Quebec ministry wildlife officers with bear issues. Some 80 bears were captured and relocated in their districts!

In July, we responded to a black bear call in downtown Ottawa. The Ottawa Police had closed several main roads as a 200 lb bear climbed up a tree and refused to leave. After some time the combined efforts of conservation officers, police and some On-



NCC Conservation Officer Jason Pink with young Black Bear.



NCC Conservation Officers removing a tranquilized Black Bear from downtown Ottawa

tario MNRF staff, the bear was immobilized and relocated a few hundred Kilometres away. The story made international headlines! As always, stay safe and enjoy the conference in Oklahoma!

### **Manitoba Department of Sustainable Development**

Joey Foxon  
Conservation Officer, The Pas  
J-Rep, Manitoba Department of Sustainable Development

The Department of Manitoba Sustainable Development in whole, including the Conservation Officer Service is currently in a reorganizational phase. Major changes to the Conservation Officer Services include the reduction of five enforcement regions, to



## Region 2 Director Martin Thabault Continued

only two enforcement regions throughout the Province.

This has created a reorganization of district boundaries (now referred to as Compliance Areas), and has changed the reporting structure for Conservation Officers.

Manitoba Conservation Officers have always had an instrumental role in the suppression of wildfires. This restructure will now separate the Conservation Officer Service from wildfire suppression duties and the Manitoba Wildfire Program, in order to focus more on the enforcement and protection of our natural resources.

This complete reorganization of our department, in addition to numerous retirements and resignations of some very knowledgeable and experienced Conservation Officers will bring some significant challenges ahead of us, but we are confident it will work out for the best.

In addition to our departmental changes, our long term association president Chad Moir has decided to step down and take a break from his role. Chad served as our Manitoba Conservation Officer Association president for four consecutive years, and as our vice president for two years prior to that.

We thank Chad for all the hard work and dedication he has put into the MCOA over the years, and hope to see him back in an executive position in a couple of years.

### **Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources**

Davis Viehbeck  
Conservation Officer, Thunder Bay  
J-Rep, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

Early spring is upon us in Ontario which means our southern officers are busy checking steelhead anglers on Great Lakes tributaries and gearing up for turkey season while most northern officers are still ripping around frozen lakes on snowmachines and ATV's checking ice anglers.

Our association has seen a passing of the torch in leadership with Sean Cronsberry taking the helm from Tim Rochette and Todd Steinberg (previous NAWEOA rep) taking on the VP role to replace Cronsberry in his previous position. Sean and Todd are passionate game wardens and we couldn't be more fortunate to have them in leadership positions with OCOA.

Our funding and equipment have held strong to date with a recent change in government in Ontario and we're hopeful that the current government continues to see

the importance and value of natural resource law enforcement in Ontario. We do have a number of vacancies across the province as a result of transfers and retirements. We're optimistic that some hiring for permanent positions is going to occur in the near future. On that note, there couldn't be a better time for any officers who have considered a career in Ontario to apply. We're in need of experienced officers and would love to see some talent from other provinces. If you've ever thought about Ontario as a possible career location, don't hesitate to reach out to any of the officers on the OCOA executive or any of the regional reps (<http://ocoa.ca/contacts/executive/>).

Over the course of the last year, all Ontario officers transitioned to a new duty pistol switching out our dated, yet trustworthy H&K USP's and P2000's in .40 cal for new Glock 17M Gen 5 in 9mm equipped with a Streamlight weapon-mounted light. Most officers have indicated they've been pleased with the performance and accuracy with this pistol. After years of lobbying by OCOA, our patrol trucks are now equipped with red and blue flashing lights to fall in line with other policing vehicles in Ontario. It really is amazing to see the difference in brightness having both colours illuminated versus the standard "reds" which we previously had on our trucks.

Our most recently hired officers from the last 18 months or so attended a training workshop in Thunder Bay, Ontario in late-February through the first week of March to build on what they learned while attending Ontario Police College. Twelve officers from across Ontario we're provided with training on legislation, policies, procedures and other topics specific to our positions in Ontario. Stay safe and never forget, "Game Wardens have more fun!"



Ontario CO's recently conducted a coordinated border waters patrol in the BWCA and Quetico Park area with CO's from the Minnesota DNR (March 23, 2019).

## Region 3 Director Josh Thibodeau



Hello everyone,

I hope everyone had a safe and productive Winter season in their respective jurisdictions. I would like to thank the J-Reps for passing along information and keeping us updated on news from their agencies. Snowmobiling is a huge tourism attraction here in New Brunswick and there was certainly no lack of snow this Winter. I survived my first NAWEOA executive winter meeting in Waverly, Tennessee in March. There was a lot accomplished at our meeting and it was a nice break from the freezing cold temperatures and copious amounts of snow here in the North.

We are hoping for a quiet spring flood season as we are coming off one of the worst flood seasons ever last year. The residents here in New Brunswick are hoping for a slow snow melt and some help from mother nature.

I am looking forward to a productive upcoming fishing season as our outdoor enthusiasts start to emerge from a long winter to come out and cast a line. We will also be busy with resident and non-resident hunters as spring Bear season is just around the corner.

I look forward to seeing everyone in Oklahoma for the summer conference. Take care and stay safe.

### **NEW BRUNSWICK**

Hi from New Brunswick. Hope everyone is doing well.

We were busy throughout the winter and being short staff doesn't help. In the last year we were instructed to play a bigger role outside of our core mandate, Slowly getting involved in DWI violations and other substances like Cannabis.

The North of the Province has been hit the hardest with half the staff missing. Recruitment of

bilingual officers is not easy. This is due in part to the fact that the Holland College in PEI only offers English courses and in Quebec we are not able to get seats since the classes are filled by officers already hired.

Some of our Conservation Officers were busy training officers from different branches of our department and our officers just finished their use of force training in February.

Last fall our officers worked with other peace officers from different branches in our department. This worked well and most of the officers liked this approach in some of the peak seasons.

Since the legalization of Cannabis last fall other policy has been brought up and is adding to our workload. Our core mandate is slowly being set aside, since we are frequently asked to assist the other branches of our department. Not all officers are welcoming the changes.



Several Special investigations were successful and other are still ongoing. With the court decision concerning an aboriginal being able to barter wildlife with the non-aboriginal, we are now faced with several illegal activities during the hunting and fishing season.

Our component has started negotiations with the employer. With the new government in place and the provinces economic situation, it will be difficult to get our fair share. Some of our younger officers are leaving our Unit and are going with other agencies because of poor wages. We are hopeful that we will get an adjustment to compensate all the new responsibilities that were added to our work load. In the last year we lost a few officers due to retirement, well deserved after all those years of service. Last fall we were visited Michael Reader who is a Pennsylvania conservation officer. Mike participated in the NAWEOA officer exchange. Several officers



## Region 3 Director Josh Thibodeau Continued

had the opportunity to show him different parts of our province. For those who are not familiar with the officer's exchange. It consists of a draw during the officer's lunch on the opening day of the NAWEOA convention. One officer from both countries are picked and the successful candidate get to choose the destination with an host agency.

Our Region 3 Director Josh Thibodeau attended his first winter meeting in Tennessee. As you may know this year 's NAWEOA summer conference will be held in Oklahoma City.

The New Brunswick Conservation Officers association had their annual meeting on March 30th in Moncton NB. Promoting youth education in various ways is the main objective of our association.

### NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

Currently the Newfoundland and Labrador Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Officers Association has 28 members, in total we have 43 active officers in our division. We are striving towards 100% member-

ship and is something we are working towards constantly to make the association stronger.

Our main focus here in Newfoundland and Labrador in the past few years has been salmon poaching/netting and has been a growing priority due to Atlantic Salmon's declining populations.

In the summer of 2018 officers laid 50 charges and received 128 public complaints of suspected illegal fishing activity – including 67 in the eastern region, 53 in western and eight in Labrador – and spent approximately 27,000 person hours in related investigations and enforcing inland fish-related legislation.

Fall here is also a very busy and exciting time for our members with the lengthy big game hunting and trapping seasons. A number of investigations were conducted that resulted in many big game charges and thousands of dollars in fines.

Again, the associations main priority right now is to grow our membership and to continue to build a trusting relationship with our employers, so we can work together to solve problems and to address present and future concerns for our members.



<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1563/upload/2018-Highlights-of-ISB-accessible.pdf>



## Region 4 Director Jason Sherwood



Yesterday's 60-degree weather didn't help compel me to sit in front of my computer to put together the reports from around Region 4. Being "Spring" in Wyoming, today's 20 degrees and blowing snow makes the office look much nicer. Hopefully your jurisdictions are warming up a bit more consistently!

I'm still excited to have had a hand in hosting the 2018 conference. Now that we turned in our conference report at the Winter Board meeting in Tennessee, the "work" now appears to be over. As I start to shift gears toward attending this year's conference in Oklahoma, I'm reminded of all the conferences I've attended, the other officers and families I've met, life-changing training sessions, and the stories shared amongst friends, new and old.

With our red shirts standing out on uniform day, I can't think of a conference where I didn't hear at least one, "You're from Wyoming, right? We should visit about a poacher I know who also hunts in Wyoming..." Apparently its not just our conspicuous shirts, as the officers from Hawaii just shared a similar story with me while reaching out to update rosters and start gathering news updates a few weeks ago. They wanted to throw some kudos to NAWEOA, as the "social nights and free beer" helped them develop a large Lacey Act case involving live fish illegally captured in Hawaii and later sold in New Jersey. As the case started to unfold, the local officers decided to reach out to Pennsylvania wardens they met at the conference. Those officers put them in direct contact with New Jersey officers who were quickly able to find more suspects and evidence of further violations once they knew where to look. NOAA officers are now working on the final prosecution.

Wildlife officers are generally a good bunch to work with, but it can be tedious to have your dispatch call another dispatch center and try to find the "right" officer you need to help put missing puzzle pieces together. It is much easier when you have a good contact point to start from. I'm proud to report the 2018 conference hosted 449 attendees from 46 different

agencies. That is a lot of "familiar faces" who are all willing to help another wildlife officer out whenever needed. Just like conference hosts before us, I'm excited for Oklahoma and Tennessee and the work they're doing to help us all share tips, tricks, and build cases against poachers.

### Alaska

(J-Rep Major Bernard Chastain) – Alaska State Troopers have a new Colonel, Doug Massie, replacing Steve Hall, who recently retired. There are quite a few ads around for their current recruiting efforts also. Check out <https://dps.alaska.gov/AST/Recruit/AWT> if you're interested in making a move to Alaska.

### Arizona

(J-Rep Shawn Wagner) – Winter turned out to be better than it has been in several years. Above average snow fell in the AZ high country and they even had snow in Scottsdale (forcing winter visitors to break out the orange golf balls!) The moisture was very welcome after enduring the worst year of drought in decades.

Officers at the AGFD recently got some good news concerning pay. The last raise in Arizona was about 10 years ago. In July 2019, officers are receiving a 5% raise. The Governor facilitated this raise for law enforcement officers statewide in an effort to increase recruitment and retention across several agencies.

The Arizona Law Enforcement Branch just created and hired a new investigator dedicated to computer and cell phone forensics. Many cases are blowing up due to the treasure trove of information stored in digital media and the "cloud" (whatever that is). He already has an overwhelmingly full plate.

Arizona continues to hire a new class of officer recruits every year. AGFD changed to a different police academy when the one they had been using decided the sending agency was going to pay \$15,000 per recruit! Previously the funding was covered by AZPOST. With the different academy comes an increase in length, from 16 to 24 weeks. Hopefully the new recruits get more quality training with the added time commitment.

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### California

(J-Rep Lorraine Doyle) – An Orland California man was recently sentenced to nine years and eight months in state prison for attempting to run over a game warden with his car. The 35-year old man had pleaded guilty to one count of attempted murder and one felony count of resisting a peace officer with violence. On September 3rd a warden had checked the man fishing and discovered he had multiple arrest warrants outstanding.

### Colorado

(J-Rep Lyle Sidener) – Colorado is preparing for the transition following elections. They have a new Governor, and, as expected, there is some trickle down that comes with a new personality at the top. Their Executive Director of the Department of Natural Resources and the CPW Director of the past 5 years is moving on to the Arizona State Parks Department and they wish him well. He's been a stalwart leader and moved the agency through some important times. The old adage is true—The only constant is change.

With the successful passage of the “Future Generations Act” in 2018, which allowed for license fees to come up to par with expenses, Colorado members are preparing to argue the need for a commensurate increase in fines to bring potential penalties in line with the cost of the license.

Colorado is also undertaking a revision to their big game season structure. This is a 5-year occurrence, and they are soliciting input on what the public would like to see for seasons, season timing, length, etc. for 2020-2024.

Hunting seasons were typical with a smattering of the usual subjects doing the usual misdeeds. As expected, harvest varied by region, but as whole Colorado has enjoyed a good year.

### Hawaii

(J-Rep Jim Ridzon) - Hawaii DOCARE will be changing uniforms in 2019, from the current blue uniforms to a more “traditional conservation officer” green and tan. With the new uniforms, they’ll also be getting new patches. The one pictured will be on

class A uniforms and a subdued green will appear on duty uniforms, with the Hawaiian Flag on the other arm. ETA of patches and new uniforms is currently unknown. Following a Supreme Court ruling, construction of a new thirty meter telescope on top of Mauna Kea is looming. After being a sore subject over the past 3 years, area officers are gearing up for more protesting.



### Idaho

(J-Rep Julie Lininger) – Idaho reports they will soon be changing their J-Rep to Clark Shackelford. We welcome him aboard, as well as wish Julie the best. After being a faithful link between ICOA and NAWEOA she is stepping down to have more time to take care of family and some health concerns of her own.

Idaho Fish & Game recently updated their officers firearms. They are now carrying Glock 9mm's and they just received new AR-15s with red dot optics.

One of two Region 4 cases involving Native American treaty hunting rights, Idaho vs. Tomaskin (Confederate bands and tribes of the Yakima Nation), involves a confederate bands and tribes of the Yakima Nation tribal member who claims his treaty rights allow him to hunt Moose and deer in Northern Idaho. In this case the tribal member admitted to shooting two moose and two deer while exercising his treaty rights, although Idaho does not currently recognize hunting treaty rights by the Yakima Nation in the state.

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Idaho Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) recently updated their Arrest and Defensive Tactics program to follow Los Angeles Police Departments Defensive Tactics Program (ARCON). All new Idaho Law Enforcement Officers who go through the POST academy will learn the ARCON program. To stay current and adapt to the changes, several Idaho Department of Fish and Game AT/DT instructors/Officers are going back to training to learn the new program, an 80+ hour undertaking.

ICOA recently purchased 3 horses from the Nevada Correctional Wild Mustang Adoption program for IDFG officers to use on back-country patrols. There is a movie coming out about the Correctional Horse Program. Idaho's K9 program has also expanded to four working dogs.

### New Mexico

(J-Rep Tyson Sanders) – New Mexico Department of Game & Fish Officer Andrew Armendariz, with help from wildlife officers in Missouri and Texas, recently made a great case involving Army personnel at Ft. Bliss who had poached oryx on the military base. The men's fines totaled \$5,200, plus \$2,000 in civil penalties, and \$761 in court costs.



### Wyoming

(J-Rep Aaron Kerr) - It is a time of transition for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, particularly in our law enforcement program. Our longest-tenured agency director, Scott Talbott, a former game warden, wildlife investigator, and regional supervisor,

retired in February after 8 years leading the department. Chief Game Warden Brian Nesvik stepped forward and was appointed by Governor Mark Gordon as our next director. Rick King, regional supervisor in Laramie, was selected as the next chief game warden. This shuffle in positions, along with several recent and upcoming retirements, will lead to quite a bit of movement in the game warden ranks over the next few months. The agency is in the middle of a game warden hiring process and hopes to hire at least six new officers to begin their law enforcement training in August.

The Wyoming Game Wardens Association had its annual meeting March 29-31 in Rock Springs. In addition to some excellent training and case presentations provided by various wardens, Director Nesvik and Chief King spoke to the group about their visions for the agency and answered questions from the association membership. At the banquet on Saturday evening, Cindy Schroeder, a retired US Fish and Wildlife Service special agent, gave an interesting presentation about an undercover case she worked in Alaska investigating and taking down an illegal outfitting camp. The association's annual awards were also presented at the banquet:

WGWA Officer of the Year – Bill Brinegar, South Laramie game warden

WGWA Wildlife Manager of the Year – Jeff Short, West Green River biologist

WGWA Support Person of the Year – Brian Kent Jr., State Agency Law Enforcement Communications System dispatcher

WGWA President's Award – Jason and Trey Sherwood

In January, the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments in *Herrera v. Wyoming* and we are awaiting a decision. In 2014 Clayvin Herrera, a member of the Crow Tribe in Montana and former tribal game warden, was part of a group charged with taking several elk without a license and out of season in Wyoming. After he was found guilty in 2016, Herrera appealed his case to the US Supreme Court. The arguments centered on whether or not the Crow Tribe has existing treaty rights allowing them to hunt off the Crow reservation, without following state game laws. Previous cases testing this have been decided in Wyoming's favor. Depending on the court's decision, this case could significantly affect wildlife management across the region.



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Conference in our region this year, I would like to see our region well represented. See you in Oklahoma in July!!

### Texas

During the 85th Legislature, the TPWD was appropriated necessary funding to procure a new long-range vessel. TPWD has awarded a contract and is in the process of having the vessel built. We anticipate delivery in late 2019. This will improve our long-range patrol capabilities and allow a quick response vessel to be launched from the long-range vessel to deter and apprehend poachers.

#### 62nd Game Warden Cadet Class Graduates

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department graduated the 62nd Texas game warden and state park police officer cadet class July 30 at the Texas State Capitol. The class included 23 game wardens and seven state park police officers.

Following their seven-month preparation at the TPWD Game Warden Training Center in Hamilton County, the newly-commissioned state peace officers were recognized during a special ceremony that included a keynote speaker, oath of office and commissioning by senior-level department staff and TPWD Executive Director Carter Smith.

“We, the State of Texas, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, along with the people in the communities in which you will live and work and serve and raise your families, will expect you to be pillars of strength and leadership, resolute in character and virtue, fair beyond reproach, and unfailing in response in times of disaster and duress,” said Smith.

“When you are called for help, day or night, weekday or weekend, irrespective of the need or the cause or the caller for help, you will go and you will go dutifully.”

The 62nd cadet class joins a force of more than 500 game wardens and 160 park police officers in the field to help enforce TPWD regulations and carry the department’s high standards to every corner of the state.

Sabine County Attorney Robert G. Neal Jr. Awarded Inaugural TPWD Prosecutor of the Year Award

For his work prosecuting natural and cultural resource violations and environmental crimes in the state, Robert G. Neal Jr., County Attorney for Sabine County, has been recognized with the inaugural Texas Parks and Wildlife Department’s (TPWD) Prosecutor of the Year award.

“Mr. Neal has been a tremendous support to game wardens in his community,” said Col. Grahame Jones, TPWD Law Enforcement Division Director. “Every day, more than 500 extremely dedicated Texas Game Wardens work to protect our valuable and fragile natural resources and to keep Texans safe. Successful prosecution sends a strong message to the violators and acts as a future deterrent for others who are considering violating the law.”

For the past 10 years, cases Neal has prosecuted range from criminal trespass, hunting deer at night, illegal taking of Eastern Turkeys, drug possession cases, and boating while intoxicated and DWIs issued by game wardens and park peace officers.

Texas Game Wardens remove gill nets left by fishermen

Texas Game Wardens swept the Rio Grande River in early November, removing multiple gill nets set by commercial fishermen from Mexico.

Gill nets, which indiscriminately kill any fish which thrusts its head through the mesh and becomes trapped, are illegal in Texas, but not in Mexico.

During the patrol they came across these gill nets that were extended from one edge of the river to the other.

In August 2018, two Jeff Davis County Game Wardens assisted with serving a federal search warrant with US Homeland Security Investigations and

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USFWS agents at a local residence. The search warrant was a result of a lengthy investigation by federal agents involving the selling of the “living rock cactus” (protected species) to Asian countries. In over two years, approximately \$200,000 was paid to the resident and two of his partners for the cacti via PayPal. The wardens assisted with the search of the house and found more than was expected.

The individual was in possession of over 200 reptiles and amphibians inside the house which included snakes, geckos, and salamanders. After an extensive search, all reptiles were found to be non-native to Texas. After a 3-hour search and interview, the federal agents seized a small number of cacti located in the resident’s vehicle that was ready for shipment, several electronics for evidence, and a pistol. The wardens were able to get the individual to confess to several places in the area where he was collecting the cacti off the roadway and on private property without permission. That information is currently under investigation. While the case is still pending, violations of the Lacey Act and an undetermined amount of restitution are just a few charges this individual is currently facing. Law Enforcement appreciates all information received from the public regarding wildlife crimes. Tips that assist in solving wildlife crimes are received through the Operation Game Thief hotline. These types of cases exemplify the importance of citizen involvement in preventing and solving wildlife crimes.

### **Kansas**

We have had some Dept. Changes in 2018. They hired a new Col., from out of house, who took over Jan. 2018. A new Operations Major was also hired in the Fall of 2018. The newly elected Gov. then appointed a new Agency Secretary in Jan of 2019. So, we have had a lot of change in recent months. Some good and some bad, time will tell.

Our Game Warden I and II level officers are members of a union (FOP), and successfully negotiated a contract this past year, which allowed for a pay increase, the first since 2005, and kept a state classification. It is a step in the right direction, but definitely not over yet.

We currently have approximately 10 open positions across the state, and it doesn't look like we will

get to fill them anytime soon. When allowed, we do not have a very large number of applicants to be considered for the position. It seems like that number is decreasing every year.

Our state Game Warden Association is still not very active. Interest has dropped over the past few years. The ones that are members, are trying to recruit for a renewed interest in it. The Col. has promised to send a few officers to the 2019 Conference in OK this summer. We also expect to help sponsor a night in the hospitality suite.

### **Oklahoma**

Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation is using a new license app on officer’s cell phones which allows officers to tap into the license data base in the field for the first time ever. There are still lots of kinks and it’s dependent on service but will be a great tool when it begins to run smoothly. The app also allows us to access all check station data too.

Numerous officers have gone through a new version of WET (water enforcement training) that incorporates what to do when you end up in the water and how to fight bad guys in that element.

Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation patrol units will be 2019 Ram pickups. Dodge pickup trucks were previously issued in the mid-1990s. Oklahoma legislature has introduced a lot of negative legislation. Oklahoma State Game Warden Association has had to put up a fight this session as a result of this legislation. The association was successful in defeating all the bad bills that directly affected their jobs.

### **South Dakota**

The big project for the South Dakota Conservation Officers Association was the completion and release of Backroads Law- True Stories of South Dakota Game Wardens. The book contains stories from approximately 20 different Officers some of which are active but mostly retired. The stories range from how the association was formed, the inception of the TIP’s program to cases that are sometimes serious, funny or how guys got into the profession. Jona Ohm the author is the wife of current Regional Manager/ Officer compiled, edited and wrote many of the stories based off of interviews. The book is a fundraiser for the association and a proposal is going out at our winter meeting to take the proceeds and create a college scholarship for current Officers children who are entering or currently

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in college.

Other than the book, SDCOA conducted another wild game feed for the Becoming an Outdoor Women event this last fall. Approximately 11 Officer's prepped and cooked numerous species of fish and game for approximately 85 people. Department wise, many officers are excited about the creation of an Honor Guard. Years ago the SDCOA tried to get it started but it didn't have the department support. Today we are thankful to have that support and the department initiative to get it started. There are eight Honor Guard members who went through some basic training with the SD Army National Guard and further training with the South Dakota Highway Patrol at their spring training. The Honor Guard has participated in the Police Officers Memorial Week ceremony in Pierre this last May and conducted honors for a couple retired officers at their funeral and attended two funerals for MN officers who passed away.

### Nebraska

The 2019-2020 State Law Enforcement Bargaining Committee contract was accepted by the state and ratified by the membership. Bargaining Representative said bargaining is tough because Nebraska is comparable to other states in the comparability study. The state had the proposal for three weeks before accepting.

Our Holiday Comp issue was taken to the Court of Industrial Relations for an opinion. We did receive the Finding of Fact and Order. Some highlights of the way the SLEBC Board interpret the opinion are as follows.

- There will be no more accrual of comp time into the holiday comp bank after July 1, 2019.

- The hours that our people have in the bank currently will be treated under the holiday comp bank language that currently controls the bank (11.1.4), including the provision that the State can't schedule employees off below the 240 amount, or pay any hours down below the 240.

- After July 1, 2019, employees will be paid 1.5 x their ordinary hourly rate for hours worked on a holiday, either in cash or in comp time, still at the employer's discretion.

- After July 1, 2019, holiday comp time will NOT save overtime.

- Under contract provisions the employer is required to ordinarily pay out all the hours in cash after

you reach 120 hours. However, once there is an over-time budget shortage, they can start forcing people off for the time in that bank. (This would not affect the 240 hours of holiday comp that remains in the old bank).

The officer who want to carry Narcan have recently completed the required training and are waiting for it to be issued.

### Wisconsin

Funding & staffing:

Over the next 2-3 years the Bureau will likely see ½ of its upper level management team retire. There are another 14 Lieutenants that will also eligible to retire. That being the case, the Bureau hosted a succession planning event similar to a career fair for its credentialed and non-credentialed staff. Approximately 58 learners attended to find out some of the details on specific positions. Tables with coaches were set up for one on one discussions and meeting rooms were reserved for larger sessions. One of the larger sessions involved the Lieutenant position; 43 staff had interest in this.

Wisconsin's major conservation law enforcement trends:

In response to numerous coyote hunting contests the WI Legislature introduced Senate Bill 30 which prohibits the organization of and participation in contests for killing wild animals. "Contest" is defined as an organized or sponsored competition with the objective of taking, capturing, or killing a wild animal for entertainment or for the chance to win designated prizes. This bill appears to be written very broadly to include prohibiting the very popular "big buck" contests held throughout our state. This bill was introduced early in our legislative session so changes are likely.

WI held its first modern elk season during the fall of 2018. Based on the size of the herd and the management plan objectives 10 bull permits were authorized for harvest. Due to the Tribal Off-reservation agreement with our Chippewa Tribes they were provided 5 of the bull elk Tags. During the hunt 9 elk were harvested within the season. Despite the fact the state hunters attended a mandatory education training one state hunter was cited for shooting an elk off the roadway. Civil citations, restitution and other fees cost hunter close to \$3000.00 in penalties. The elk was also confiscated. Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission Wardens also issued a citation to a tribal member for harvesting a bull without a per-



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mit. The bull was also seized and enforcement action taken in tribal court. In addition during the firearm deer season two elk were shot which was outside the elk permit and season structure. One individual self-reported the violation and the other is still under investigation.

### Unique Cross Boundary or Cooperative, Enforcement Efforts:

Adam McGeshic was appointed the new Chief Warden of the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission. Adam was a GLIFWC Field Warden prior to his recent appointment so the transition is occurring very smoothly. State wardens continue to work proactively with our GLIFWC LE partners with resource protection and customer service needs.

The Bad River and Red Cliff Chippewa Tribes have signed a new 10 year Lake Superior Fishing agreement with the State of WI. The agreement took about 4 years of negotiations to ensure our Tribal partners and state commercial and sport fishery can utilize the resource while improving protections to ensure a viable fishery for future years. The agreement requires all parties to regularly meet to and evaluate the agreement. If changes are necessary amendments to the agreement can be agreed upon.

### New Innovations in Conservation Law Enforcement:

We are exploring and thoroughly researching the use of UAS (unmanned aerial systems – i.e. drones) for search and rescue, accident reconstruction and enforcement. This implementation will require approval from Department leadership (above LE), and requires careful consideration, planning, and an understanding of the vehicles.

Governor Evers designated 2019 as the Year of Clean Drinking Water and Assembly Speaker Vos established the Speaker's Task Force on Water Quality. Both initiatives are intended to protect and enhance drinking water quality. Wisconsin has over 11,400 public water systems, which is more than any other state, and over two-thirds of residents receive their drinking water from ground water. Significant areas of emphasis are expected to be reducing lead & copper in public systems and nitrate, which is the most common groundwater contaminant in our state.

### Conservation Congress Voting:

The department uses an independently run citizen input process to collect feedback and recommendations about conservation issues (thus the Conservation Congress). In the past, input has been collected by in-person voting. This year the Congress opted to allow electronic (on-line) and in-person input. Results will be reported after the Congress meeting to be held April 8, 2019.

### State, Regional and National Issues impacting Natural Resources Law Enforcement:

Legislative initiatives for conservation issues continue to trend towards de-regulation/regulation simplification—most likely because we are enjoying healthy wildlife populations with an ever sliding participation rate. Additional interest continues to be focused on increasing youth recruitment and hunter/trapper retention, and providing discounts/flexible regulations for diverse categories of veterans and disabled sportsman.

Bowfishing and hand-fishing (e.g. catfish “noodling”) continue to see increased prevalence and associated legislation, and recreational vehicle changes abound—particularly related to UTVs (e.g. Polaris RZR) and roadway usage (routes).

### Legal Issues:

Interactions between hunters/trappers and environmental protectionists/activists continues to be prevalent related to the use of hounds to assist with locating bear, bobcat, coyote, etc. These are challenging issues because they pit constitutional free speech concerns alongside state constitutional rights to hunt/fish/trap. An ongoing federal case is evaluating the constitutionality of the state's hunter harassment law. Warden authority under the 4th amendment remains an area of concern, particularly as related to open fields on private property, ice shacks, and tree stands. The combination of healthy fish and wildlife populations (no exigent public demand for aggressive enforcement), as well as the general erosion of privacy in light of technological advances (cell phones, social media, etc.), has increased public interest in maximizing privacy protection from government interference; this may ultimately present challenges for managing resources (held in common trust) that have previously been unseen in Wisconsin.

The proliferation of recreational vehicles, and associated accidents, continues to challenge the legal frameworks that govern their operations. In many respects, the reduced regulatory framework (as compared to generic motor vehicles) makes for prosecuto-

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rial challenges, particularly as related to –causing injury and –causing death accidents; a statutory overhaul is probably overdue for both snowmobiles and ATVs/UTVs to better reflect current culture associated with the devices and align their legal treatment with that of motor vehicles.

### Cost Savings Initiatives:

**Strategic Planning:** The BLE began strategic planning for FY 2020 and 2021. The two year plan cycle will coincide with legislative sessions into the future. A team of 20 BLE staff from all levels and disciplines began planning in late February and will conclude the process by June 30, 2019.

Our strategic plans help focus our efforts on both small adjustments and “big picture” ideas and changes, and include specific tactics to make those changes a reality. The current strategic planning process includes bureau staff from all generations, ranging from 25 years old to 45+. This diverse group of staff will provide valuable insight into current trends and upcoming issues, while still valuing historical knowledge and perspectives.

### Other Special Law Enforcement Issues:

Captive Wildlife issues continue to be very sensitive and time consuming. We have spent significant staff time and mileage working through these issues. Rehabilitator numbers have recently declined and that has magnified the problem. People are finding baby animals or injured animals more often and taking them home with good intentions of raising them or nursing them back to health so they can be released back into the wild.

We have seen increases of illegal activity on state land including smash and grab thefts and operating vehicles in unauthorized areas. Injuries have increased from cliff jumping and climbing in these state park and state natural areas over the last decade. Social Media has driven a part of this by drawing attention to these outdoor places.

Wardens in the southcentral portion of the state have been called up to respond to large scale weather events. Throughout the year wardens responded to floods, tornadic and wind events, wildland fires as well as large scale snow storms. Wardens were responsible for evacuating citizens from their houses

and properties as well as automobiles during these large scale events. It has been realized that we are looked to more and more by local municipalities as experts during these events as many Deputies and Police Officers no longer share these areas of expertise. This is leading to enhancing our training and equipment for our responding staff.

Over the course of 2018 warden staff took over law enforcement responsibilities on our recreational properties in the state. This led to training events that needed to be held for warden staff as well as and law enforcement refreshers on: Domestics, MV OWI, Evictions, Disorderly conduct, and Family law and Child/Minor law. Wardens across the state focused law enforcement efforts on these properties and made numerous arrests for OWI, Disorderly Conduct, Criminal Theft, Destruction of Property, Drugs, Warrants to name a few. Wardens were also heavily involved with suicidal subjects on these properties as well as injuries and fatalities stemming from rock climbing.

### Law Enforcement Squad Marking:

To improve marketing of BLE work and relevancy we’re moving toward marked patrol vehicles (door magnets and fully marked). This step also increases the impacts of patrol presence in all areas of our work (rec vehicle, fish/game, state property). Prior to this direct BLE had no marked squads.

This is from our WCWA President, Cara Kamke:

A Message from the Wisconsin Conservation Warden Association

It has been a busy year for the WI Conservation Warden Association. We coordinated the creation of a Fraternal Order of Police Lodge – WI Game Warden Lodge 18 – in order to help Wisconsin Conservation Wardens get easier access to legal protection. We also created a new shirt and challenge coin which can be purchased on our website - <http://www.wigamewarden.com/store.html>. Additionally, our annual Conservation Banquet was another success, so we will once again be able to award 6 \$1000 scholarships and up to \$7000 in conservation related grant money. Cara Kamke, WCWA President

### Indiana

Greetings from Indiana! Things are busy for us here in the Hoosier state. It seems like we always hear about a slow time of year, but never get to experience it. Many officers are awaiting the warmer weather in anticipation for spring turkey season and the start of the boating season. A majority of our officers are

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currently conducting background investigations as part of our current hiring process. Hopefully, we will be adding 10 new officers to the ranks later this year.

In the recent months, we experienced a leadership change atop the Indiana Department of Natural Resources-Law Enforcement Division. Lt. Col Steve Hunter was promoted to Colonel in late August. Col. Hunter has been with the department for 31 years and has held a variety of leadership positions. He brings with him an extensive knowledge of all aspects of our department and as a department, we are very excited for our future!

In early March, we held our statewide National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) state Tournament at the Indiana State Fair Grounds. This event keeps growing bigger and bigger each passing year. This year we hosted nearly 2,500 shooters from over 100 schools. Top shooters qualified to continue on to compete in Nationals. This type of event could not be possible if not for the numerous officers and volunteers that sacrifice their time to make it a success.

In early May, many of our officers, members of our command staff and honor guard will travel to Washington D.C. for National Police Week 2019. This year we will be honoring one of our own. On February 13, 2018, we lost Sgt. Ed Bollman in the line of duty. Sgt. Bollman made the ultimate sacrifice on this day trying to save another who had fallen through the ice. While attempting the rescue, Sgt. Bollman fell through the ice as well and drown. His memory lives on with us every day.

One current case of significance in Indiana concluded last year after multiple years of investigating illegal commercial fishing activities on the Ohio River between Indiana, Kentucky and Illinois. This was a joint investigation between Indiana, Kentucky and USFWS into the illegal taking of paddlefish. A Commercial Fishing Task Force was initiated by the Investigation Section and was headed up by Indiana Conservation Officer Detectives. The task force consisted of Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, Illinois, and USFWS officers/agents.

“Operation Charlie” (co-op Federal/State case) was the major enforcement result of the task force and many Federal/State charges are still pending against multiple defendants. Multiple Felony wildlife cases

where made using covert and overt law enforcement methods. Search warrants were served May 2017 at 5 locations in Indiana and Illinois by almost a hundred state and Federal wildlife officers. Commercial Fishing boats and trucks were seized and 1,500 pounds of caviar valued at 1.2 million dollars which was ultimately forfeited to the Federal government. Commercial fishing licenses were suspended for several subjects in Kentucky and Indiana. David Cox Sr. was sentenced to 54 months in Federal prison due to the investigation.

### Iowa

Wind whipped across the top of the flooded streets of Missouri Valley so hard it created whitecaps atop the waves. The whitecaps rattled the flat bottom of the boat carrying Iowa Department of Natural Resources Officer Adam Gacke and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Officer Zach Kincaid and a volunteer firefighter from Logan. “Whitecaps make the boat harder to control in ways a normal V-bottomed boat wouldn’t be bothered by,” Gacke said. “You’ve got to go slow even if you want to go fast.”

The trio patrolled the streets of flooded Missouri Valley on March 14, looking for people who needed help in the historic flooding disaster that has left parts of southwestern Iowa underwater. Dispatchers radioed the trio to check out a house in Missouri Valley where two elderly people were unable to move without assistance. Gacke got to the front of the boat with an oar and swept the path as the boat crept to the house. Floodwaters are a gray-brown mess — impossible to see into and filled with anything that floats, from raw sewage to debris, making traversing them especially dangerous.

The boat reached the house. The men yelled inside. Weak voices replied. They were stuck and couldn’t get out. Gacke jumped off the boat into the frigid waters, estimated to be about 34 degrees. Even with proper protective gear, Gacke felt the chill throughout his body. He was going to help people wearing only civilian clothes.

The water came up to Gacke’s chest. He forced the front door of the home open. In the living room, a woman was trapped on a couch that was afloat. Her body was partially in the water. Also in the room: a scared and barking dog perched upon a coffee table. The protective pup did not take an immediate liking to his rescuer. The woman told the rescue team that a man was in a bedroom. Gacke sent the boat around the



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side of the house to look. He tried to make fast friends with this cantankerous canine.

Kincaid and the Logan firefighter made their way to the bedroom window, where they found the man floating atop his mattress, also partially in the water. The man had a lung disorder and was in heavy distress. The rescuers broke out the window and got the man safely aboard the boat. The Logan firefighter went about stabilizing the elderly man's breathing so he could be transported by ambulance.

Back in the living room, Gacke and the dog made peace. "He decided I was friendly," Gacke said. Gacke stripped off his flotation jacket and wrapped it around the shivering woman. The trio got the woman aboard the boat. Everybody survived, including the dog, which was taken aboard the boat with its owners. It was a good moment in weeks of bad ones. When people think of DNR officers, they think of people who regulate fish and wildlife. They write people tickets for taking too many fish during a day of angling or shooting a doe during deer season. This is the side of the DNR people rarely see: rescuers. They are some of the best-equipped and best-trained first responders to work a disaster like the floods.

"A lot of the agencies in smaller towns just don't have the equipment we do," said Brian Smith, a DNR captain who oversees the conservation officers' work in that part of Iowa. "Small counties and towns aren't going to have a dive team."

Smith emphasizes that local first responders are critical to saving lives and preserving property. It is only through coordinated teamwork that they achieve maximum efficiency. And even then, fate has other ideas in mind.

After dark on March 16, a vehicle with two people inside either missed or ignored barriers warning of flooded roads ahead. Officials had cut power to the flooded zones to prevent electrocutions. In pitch-black darkness, the swollen waters of the East Nishnabotna River swept the car away. One man in the car climbed a tree to escape. The other man in the vehicle clung to vegetation along the roadside as winds pushed water into waves topped with whitecaps.

DNR Officers Marlowe Wilson, Aron Johnson,

Richard Price and Smith worked the incident. The water, again estimated in the mid-30s, left both men from the vehicle suffering from severe hypothermia. DNR officers were able to reach the man clinging to the tree and get him to a hospital where he survived.

Smith and his team worked for 40 minutes to keep the other man's head above water as they endeavored to get him out of the rushing water. They administered aid on the scene. But he died on the way to the hospital.

"Whenever you lose one," Wilson said, "well, you remember it. You do your best, but you sometimes can't save everybody." Between March 14 and 18, DNR officers led or assisted in the rescue of 31 people, 17 dogs and nine cats and one iguana in the floods of western and southwestern Iowa.

The stress is immeasurable. Yes, the officers are trained for this type of work. But it is also physically and mentally taxing. A few days ago, Smith called his superiors at the DNR. He said he was worried his team was on the verge of burnout. Within a few hours, Smith was in a conference call with every captain in the state. Smith laid out their needs.

They created a spreadsheet that could be accessed by every department for volunteers to sign up and work shifts in the flood zone. "I literally watched it fill up before my eyes," Smith said. "It was amazing. The offers to help just kept coming. "When you're dealing with a disaster like this, it's a powerful feeling to know how many people have your back."

The NAWEOA board would like to congratulate Jeff Jones on receiving the 2018-2019 SDCOA Cooperator of the Year Award. Jeff is Nebraska's Conservation Officer based out of Hartington along the Missouri River and Lewis and Clark Lake. In addition to being a field officer, Jeff has served as a training officer, firearms instructor, Nebraska Conservation Officer's Association President and Regional NAWEOA Director. Jeff has been recognized several times for his accomplishments as an officer, the most recent of which was his selection as the recipient of the Shakir Safari Officer of the Year Award for Nebraska.



## Region 6 Director Jason Blaylock



I hope this letter finds everyone doing well this year. I also hope it has not been nearly as busy for you as it has been for me this year. Most of the Southeast has been soaked by winter and early spring rains, some to such

an extent that they have produced record flooding in many areas. Here in Mississippi, as of the writing of this newsletter, we have nearly 500,000 acres of farmland still underwater. Turkey season is here for most of us and the early returns seem very promising for a successful hunting season in many states.

This year the NAWEOA winter conference was held near Hurricane Mills, Tennessee. The Tennessee officers provided us a cabin to stay in and the use of their new training facility for meetings every day. Meals were cooked each day by different NAWEOA board members, and clean up was a shared event. The Tennessee officers were a great host for the NAWEOA board and were truly gracious to us in their hospitality, thank you from all of us. This was my last winter board meeting as your District 6 director, and I am truly grateful for the friendships I have made, knowledge I have gained, and representing the men and women who share the same passion I do for the conservation of our natural resources. I recommend this position to those who share the same ideas and passion to further the badge we all represent. I again want to say thank you for the opportunity and look forward to seeing everyone in Oklahoma City this summer.

### Mississippi

Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks have been dealing with the effects of finding their first case of CWD last January. Since that time, nearly 8000 animals, through hunting season harvest, road kills, and other reported animals, have been tested with 19 animals testing positive. The 19 positive results have been found in 6 of the 82 counties in Mississippi. Mississippi has implemented the Game Check system for reporting turkey harvest during the

2019 Turkey hunting season. This system of collecting turkey harvest information on a county by county basis is required by law and requires all hunters to report their harvest by 10 p.m. on the day of harvest. Turkey harvest can be reported in three ways: Using the MDWFP app, online at [mdwfp.com/gamecheck](http://mdwfp.com/gamecheck), or by calling 1-800-BE-SMART.

### Florida

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation biologists working with the U.S. Forest Service captured a bear exhibiting dangerous behavior at a campsite near the Juniper Prairie Wilderness Area. The FWC captured the bear in response to complaints of a bear entering tents. After closing the area, the FWC set up an empty tent and trap. The same bear came to the tent twice and showed no hesitation when entering the tent. The male bear was captured by the FWC and, because the bear posed a threat to human safety, it was humanely killed.

The FWC and Attorney General Pam Bondi's Office of Statewide Prosecution announced the arrests of nine individuals after a year-long investigation into the illegal baiting, taking and molestation of Florida black bears by the use of dogs for commercial purposes. During the investigation, FWC officers gathered evidence of numerous illegal acts in several Florida counties on both private and public lands. Prosecution of this case is being coordinated by the Florida Attorney General's Office of Statewide Prosecution. "Thanks to the comprehensive action of law enforcement, led by the dedicated officers of the FWC, those responsible for these inhuman, acts will face the full force of the law in Florida, we have no tolerance for vile animal cruelty, and we will hold anyone accountable who commits this heinous crime," said Gov. Rick Scott. Several of the incidents were posted by the individuals to Facebook, Instagram, and SnapChat for their amusement. The charges consist of several felonies and misdemeanors including Animal Cruelty, Illegal Taking and Baiting of Black Bear and Florida Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization Act violations.

### Georgia

Major Thomas Barnard has been appointed to serve as the Colonel and director of the Law Enforcement Division of DNR succeeding Eddie Henderson, who retired in November. The Board of Natural Resources acted to approve Major Barnard's appointment at its December meeting. Major Barnard previously served

## **Region 6 Director Jason Blaylock Continued**

in the Law Enforcement Division of DNR where he worked for 25 years, most recently as Field Operations Major in charge of investigation and Region Offices. Since joining LED, Major Barnard has won Region Ranger of the Year three times, Investigative Ranger of the Year, and LED Supervisor of the Year.

### **Tennessee**

The Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency has been dealing with the deer disease CWD since it was initially confirmed in Fayette and Hardeman counties in December. Currently there have been 185 confirmations with a few more sampling results yet to be received by the TWRA. A total of 2999 deer have been tested from the eight county CWD Management Zone with 107 confirmations coming from Fayette County, 77 from Hardeman County, and one from Madison County.

The TWRA assisted the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation involving a recent homicide. TWRA SGT Scott Mansfield and K-9 Cane conducted an area search in a wooded area looking for specific evidence involved in a homicide. TWRA K-9 Cane and handler SGT Mansfield recovered the evidence after 20 minutes of searching. TWRA was glad to assist the TBI in recovering this essential evidence that lead to an arrest in the recent homicide.

### **North Carolina**

Officer Michael Nunnery of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission was named the Wildlife Law Enforcement Officer of the Year by the National Wild Turkey Federation for his dedication in upholding his state's game laws and working to preserve our hunting heritage. Nunnery received his award at the 43rd annual NWTF Convention and Sport Show. Each year Nunnery leads and coordinates efforts to apprehend poachers at illegal turkey bait sites in North Carolina, he found 15 illegal bait sites this past year alone.

### **Maryland**

Congratulations to retired Captain Eddie Somers. He was presented his Admiral of the Chesapeake certifi-

cate by Secretary Riccio in a ceremony on Smith Island. Captain Somers was a longtime captain of the department's vessel, the M/V Tawes.

### **West Virginia**

Hunters in West Virginia registered 108,856 white-tailed deer through the electronic game checking system during the recently completed buck firearm, antlerless, muzzleloader, archery, crossbow, youth, and Mountaineer Heritage seasons. The total harvest was within 1% of the 2017 deer harvest of 108,160 and 11% below the five-year average of 122,924. A breakdown of the combined 2018 deer season reveals 44,599 bucks harvested during the buck firearm season, 32,751 antlerless deer were taken during all antlerless firearm opportunities, 26,613 deer were harvested by archery and crossbow seasons, 4,234 deer were taken in the muzzleloader season and 659 deer were taken in the Mountaineer Heritage season.

### **Kentucky**

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Sgt. Chris Fossitt was selected by the National Wild Turkey Federation Kentucky State Chapter Board of Directors as the 2018 NWTF Conservation Officer of the Year. Fossitt represented Kentucky at the NWTF National Convention in Nashville, Tenn., Feb 14-17.

In February, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources conservation officers teamed up with in the headwaters of Buckhorn Lake. Kentucky Fish and Wildlife responded with boats and conservation officers to navigate through timber-choked floodwaters to reach approximately 50-100 households alone. In additions to delivering supplies, conservation officers evacuated a person who had medical conditions and did not wish to remain stranded at his house. Officers and county officials delivered some 70 boxes of food and water to residents by boat as well as transported employees of Kentucky Power to check electrical stations affected by flooding.

### **South Carolina**

The S.C Natural Resource Board, the policy making body of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources met Friday, March 22nd, 2019 in Columbia. During the meeting, the Hampton Wildlife Fund presented the agency with a check for \$150,000 to be used for state-wide projects during 2019. The total donated to SCDNR by the Hampton Wildlife Fund



## Region 7 Director Larry Hergenroeder



I have secured my room at the Renaissance Marriott, completed registration and purchased my airlines tickets to Oklahoma City, OK. Now, I start watching the calendar as another northeast winter turns to spring. The early mornings are greeted by the sounds of mature gobblers shaking the mountain sides of the Appalachians, to the sounds of boat motors firing up on every bass and walleye filled lake across the states of Region Seven.

Due to the multiple Natural and Wildlife Resource Agencies in Pennsylvania, vacation requests in July are almost always granted for State Game Wardens of the PA Game Commission. For the past decade the NAWEOA Summer Conference has been the first scheduled event on my annual leave calendar. Pennsylvania Game Commission's Executive Director Bryan Burhans reviews the training schedule for the NAWEOA Summer Conference and offers two to three days educational leave to his State Game Wardens that wish to attend. This type of agency support bolsters the importance of the accredited and professional trainings being offered at the NAWEOA Conference. Oklahoma's Conference Chairman Jay Harvey and his staff have secured a multitude of accredited trainings which will include the following: The Active Shooter, DNA Collection/Preservation, Stop the Bleed/Trauma, Financial Planning, Garrity Law Training and USFWS, Canadian & KDWP Case Studies as part of the four day conference. A highly anticipated presentation will be from Dana, Lucy and Jennifer Grove, the parents and sister of PA fallen Conservation Officer David Grove that was lost in the line of duty in 2010. The Grove's have put together a presentation of their life before, during and after the tragic loss of their son David.

As I plan to attend my tenth consecutive conference in Oklahoma City, I still fall back on the most important reason I have for attending each year and that has been the networking with Game Wardens and Conservation Officers from US and Canada. These

professional relationships have made multi-jurisdictional investigations a lot easier when you need assistance with an investigation in another State or Nation. Not to mention the comradery and lifelong friends that I now have, thanks to NAWEOA.

Region 7 would like to welcome its newest Jurisdictional Representative Jackie Peterson from Rhode Island. Jackie replaces Jen Ogren that represented Rhode Island for several years. Thank you Jen and best of luck in your future endeavors.

Before we know it, we will be staring down the road at the 2020 NAWEOA Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. The 2019 Executive Winter Meeting was held in Waverly, TN and the TWRA and TOWA were gracious hosts providing lodging with a full kitchen, travel, meeting space and a meal out at no cost to NAWEOA. The Executive Board got a sneak peek at a very promising conference already in the works for 2020. So if for some reason life, family or work prohibits you from joining the NAWEOA family in Oklahoma this July, start planning your trip to join everyone next year in Tennessee. Conference registration and airline tickets make great birthday or Christmas gifts for your favorite Game Warden and family members. Speaking of which, NAWEOA is very family friendly and I actually know several families that make the annual conference their annual family vacation.

Each of the Region 7 JReps have compiled the latest news out of their state for your reading pleasure. Continue below and see what has been happening in the Northeast corner of the US.

### Maine

Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Announces Commissioner

Commissioner Judy A. Camuso

Judy Camuso was nominated to serve as Commissioner of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife by Governor Janet T. Mills and is the first woman to lead the department, overseeing the preservation, protection and enhancement of the inland fisheries and wildlife resources of the state.

Judy was the Director of the Wildlife Division for MDIFW since 2013 and has been with the Department since 2007. As Director, she oversaw the development and implementation of policy decisions, leg-

## **Region 7 Director Larry Hergenroeder Continued**

islative proposals and rules related to the wildlife division, coordinated a budget of \$12 million to manage Maine's wildlife, and was the Department's voice on all matters regarding Maine's wildlife.

Camuso has over 20 years' experience with MDIFW and Maine Audubon, and has lead several statewide natural resource initiatives as wildlife director for MDIFW. She began her career in the department as an assistant regional wildlife biologist in southern Maine, then advanced to the Special projects coordinator for the Department, before being promoted to Wildlife Division Director.

During her tenure as director she directed the defeat of a statewide ban on bear hunting methods; she created and executed a statewide department communications campaign that has gained national attention; and crafted policy and oversaw the wildlife division. Her work at the department and her prior eleven years at Maine Audubon has earned her the respect of diverse groups and audiences.

In 2018, Camuso was named one of Maine Magazine's 50 Mainer's of Maine and, in 2015, she received MDIFW's Employee of the Year, Governor's Award. She is a licensed bird bander and an avid bird-er, as well as a hunter, who canoes, hikes and bikes.

MDIFW is charged with the protection and management of fish, non-game wildlife, and habitats, as well as restoration of endangered species like the bald eagle. In addition to its conservation duties, MDIFW is responsible for enabling and promoting the safe enjoyment of Maine's outdoors — from white-water rafting to boating, snowmobiling, hunting, fishing, and wildlife observation. The agency's constituents include the fish, wildlife, and people who call Maine home, as well as visiting outdoor enthusiasts and Eco tourists who visit Maine and contribute hundreds of millions of dollars each year to the state's economy.

Maine Warden Service Promotions:

Sergeant Mike Joy

In December 2018, Corporal Mike Joy was selected to be the next Section 15 Sergeant.

Mike began his career with Warden Service in 1993 and has had districts in the most remote portions of the State (Daquam) as well as in the most populated portions of the State (Kittery). In 2009 Mike was promoted to the rank of Corporal and head of the Maine Warden Service Dive Team. Mike's service to the Dive Team has been nothing short of exemplary, and during his tenure was able to secure grants for a Remotely Operated Underwater Vehicle, Underwater Dive Computers, and Ambient Breathing Valves for AGA Masks, and a new Dive Boat. Mike's strong leadership on the team has resulted in a team that operates with a high level of expertise and professionalism and has been used as a model for other states.

In addition to the Dive Team, Mike has served as a Field Training Officer, Color Guard Member, and is currently the Division A Airboat Team Leader. The experience Mike has gained over his 25 plus years of service will serve his section well as he starts the next chapter of his career.

Corporal Tony Gray

In February 2019, Game Warden Tony Gray was recently promoted to Maine Warden Service Dive Team Corporal position. Tony has been with the Warden Service since 2006, and has been an active member on the Dive Team since 2009. Tony's experience, quiet confidence, and drive make him the clear choice to lead the Maine Warden Service Dive Team.

### **MAINE WARDEN SERVICE ANNUAL AWARDS**

2018 Maine Game Warden of the Year:

Game Warden Investigator Josh Bubier

Investigator Bubier does an outstanding job at many levels in his position as investigator at the Maine Warden Service. He is assigned many tasks to assist with searches, manhunts, illegal hunting activity, search warrants and more. Investigator Bubier has a great working relationship with law enforcement and the DA's office in the Somerset County area. This past year, Inv. Bubier was selected to be a part of the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force. He often assists with training at the Advanced Game Warden School, instructing topics such as Hunting Incident Investigation as well as search and rescue and is a member of the Evidence Response Team.

Investigator Bubier is a mapper and planner for the Maine Warden Service Incident Management

## **Region 7 Director Larry Hergenroeder Continued**

Team and has been for many years. He has a unique skill set to identify and place resources in high probability areas. Investigator Bubier demonstrated this during the summer of 2018 when a high priority search came in for a missing elderly woman in Millbridge. The conditions were wet and cool and she was not dressed for the weather. Inv. Bubier's timely, accurate assignment of search resources no doubt saved her life.

On April 25, 2018, Inv. Bubier responded to the most serious and important call of his career in the town of Norridgewock. Inv. Bubier played a crucial role in the events that unfolded in the search for a suspect in the death of Somerset County Deputy Corporal Eugene Cole. In addition, Inv. Bubier's excellent attitude, personable demeanor and outstanding work ethic has earned him a seat at the 2019 National Conservation Law Enforcement Chiefs Leadership Academy. For these and many other outstanding attributes, Game Warden Investigator Josh Bubier is named the 2018 Maine Game Warden of the Year.

2018 Maine Game Warden Supervisor of the Year:

Sergeant Aaron Cross

Sergeant Aaron Cross has been a member of the Maine Warden Service for over 12 years. Through this time, he has been a district game warden, corporal, Washington county field sergeant and now the section six sergeant. Sergeant Cross has positively influences all game wardens he encounters. With the respect and loyalty he has displayed, Sergeant Cross has gained the trust and respect of game wardens in section six and has been named the 2018 Maine Game Warden Supervisor of the Year.

\*2018 Legendary Game Warden Award:

Retired (1970-2006) Game Warden Michael Eaton

Game Warden Michael Eaton's career spanned over 36 years, most of which was spent patrolling the woods and waters of Piscataquis County. Warden Eaton began his career in June of 1970, his first patrol was Jonesport where he worked until he transferred to Dover-Foxcroft in 1972. He took his responsibilities seriously and worked tirelessly to apprehend the inten-

tional violator. Warden Eaton's knowledge of fish and game enforcement is rivalled by few in the ranks of both retired and active game wardens. Warden Eaton knows the habits of hunters, trappers and fishermen, as well as intentional violators and developed a keen knack for being at the right place at the right time. Mike was recognized for his work several times during his career including the coveted Warden of the Year Award in 1985.

Mike is a Legend among both game wardens and sportsman alike and remains a respected authority among the Maine Warden Service. For his expertise in fish, game and recreational law enforcement, his efforts during his 36-year career and ongoing efforts to apprehend the intentional violator, Retired Warden Mike Eaton is named the 2018 Legendary Game Warden of the Year.

\*The Legendary Game Warden of the Year award shall be presented to any retired member of the Maine Warden Service who, consistently in the past, conducted themselves in such a manner as to display exceptional expertise in the areas of conservation law enforcement and since retiring has continued to provide a passion for meeting the goals and mission of the MWS.

2018 K9 Search and Rescue of the Year Award:

Game Warden Jeremy Judd & K9 Tika

The team is recognized for a May 2018 search and rescue of a 58-year-old woman from Sanford.

2018 K9 Conservation Case of the Year Award:

Game Warden Lucas Bellanceau & K9 Breezy

The team is recognized for their efforts during a November 2018 illegal deer hunting evidence where they detected valuable case evidence.

2018 Meritorious Service Awards:

Game Wardens Jeremy Judd and Kris MacCabe

Recognized for their critical roles during the 2018 Norridgewock manhunt for the killer of Somerset County Sheriff's Deputy Corporal Eugene Cole.

Game Warden Lieutenant Dan Scott

Recognized for his initiative and courage while apprehending the thief of a motor vehicle near Husson College in December of 2018.



**Region 7 Director  
Larry Hergenroeder  
Continued**

**Game Warden Joe Bailey**

Recognized for his initiative and courage while apprehending a Bangor thief in March of 2018.

**2018 Exemplary Service Awards:**

**Game Warden Michael Latti and Penobscot Tribal Warden Logan Pardilla**

Recognized for their determination and teamwork in apprehending those responsible for an illegally killed moose near Eustis.

**Game Warden Kris MacCabe**

Recognized for his outstanding investigative skills and efforts during a November 2018 night hunting investigation in the town of Phillips.

**Game Warden Lieutenant Adam Gormely**

Recognized for his leadership efforts during an exhausting and emotionally tolling April 2018 search and recovery effort for a drowned boy in the Androscoggin River.

**Game Wardens Kim Bates and Jason Voter**

Recognized for their hard work and initiative during a complex fall 2018 bear hunting investigation.

**Game Warden Joe Lefebvre**

Recognized for outstanding efforts while investigating a fatal boating incident on Damariscotta Lake in August of 2018.

**Game Warden Sergeant Kris Barboza**

Recognized for his efforts involved in the organizational details surrounding the 2018 line-of-duty death of Somerset County Sheriff's Deputy Corporal Eugene Cole.

**Game Warden Kale O'Leary**

Recognized for his outstanding wildlife law enforcement efforts during the fall of 2018.

**Game Warden Will Shuman**

Recognized for his outstanding efforts to apprehend intentional fish and game violators during the year 2018.

**Game Warden Josh Beal**

Recognized for his outstanding efforts to apprehend intentional violators of fish and game laws while maintaining an excellent relationship with the district attorney's office during case management.

**Game Warden Lucas Bellanceau**

Recognized for search and rescue efforts for a search involving a father and five-year-old daughter while snowmobiling near the Saco River in Denmark in January of 2018.

**Game Warden Chad Robertson**

Recognized for outstanding fish and wildlife law enforcement and K9 search and rescue efforts during 2018.

Exemplary Service Awards were provided to the following members of the Maine Warden Service for their April 2018 efforts in the Norridgewock manhunt. Lieutenants Dan Scott (Hampden), Kevin Adam (Exeter), Sergeants Scott Thrasher (Madison), Chris Simmons (Morrill), Terry Hughes (Rome), Bill Chandler (Greenville), Alan Gillis (Orrington), Chief Pilot Jeff Beach (Fairfield), Pilot Jeff Spencer (Eagle Lake), Corporals John MacDonald (Pownal), Dave Chabot (Greene), Andy Glidden (Millinocket), Investigator Josh Bubier (Cornville), Game Wardens Josh Beal (Ripley), Chad Robertson (Pittsfield), Will Shuman (Saint Albans), Tom Mckenney (Norridgewock), Jared Herrick (Harmony), Scott Stevens (Coplin Plt.), Dave Simmons (Gouldsboro), Charles Brown (Dyer Brook), Chris Roy (China), Kim Bates (West Forks), Justin Fowlie (Boothbay), Dave Ross (China), Carleton Richardson (North Waterboro), Dan Christianson (Kingfield), Josh Polland (Greenville), Harry Wiegman (Leeds), Ethan Buuck (Mt. Vernon), Joe Bailey (Milford), Doug Kulis (Georgetown), Brock Clukey (Andover), Pat Egan (Rangeley) and Andrew Smart (Unity).

**Michigan**

Conservation officers David Miller and Kyle McQueen received the Depts. Lifesaving award for Search and Rescue efforts that occurred in May of

## **Region 7 Director Larry Hergenroeder Continued**

2018 that saved the life of a 25 year old L'Anse, Michigan woman. The woman was stuck partway down the face of a 70-ft cliff. The woman had Huntington's disease so she had very little strength in her arms and legs

Twenty four new Conservation officers graduated in December 2018 from the MI Dept of Natural Resources Conservation Officers Academy. The graduating class consisted of six women and 18 men. Thirty candidate initially were selected from nearly 500 applicants to be part of Recruit School #9, the DNR's 23 week training academy.

Conservation officers Jenni Hansen and Zach Painter rescued two snowmobilers from the ice of the Big Iron Rive in Ontonagon County. The officers had to use snowshoes to trek upstream to find the snowmobilers.

Conservation officers Mike Hearn located two missing kidnapped Cadillac teens with abductor in Kalkaska County. A bulletin had been put out with the description of the abductor "s vehicle description and also reported that the suspect may have a firearm in his possession and was therefore considered dangerous. CO Hearn located the vehicle and confirmed the information provided in the bulletin. CO Hearn and a Kalkaska County Deputy stopped the vehicle. The suspect was taken into custody without incident, and a firearm was found in the vehicle.

Conservation officers Ben Lasher and Steve Converse prevented a suicidal 25 year old woman from jumping off the MacArthur Bridge in Detroit.

Conservation officers Andrea Albert and Stephen Butzin received lifesaving awards for rescuing an unconscious female snowmobiler. The officers were first on the scene of a high-speed snowmobile accident in which the victim was found unconscious with her torso submerged in the Jordon River. The officers were able to rescue the victim from the freezing cold water and providing first aid until EMS personnel arrived.

Conservation Officer Brad Bellville received a Certificate of Merit for assistance he provided in Oge-

maw County. CO Bellville assisted at a vehicle accident, at the location of the accident two vehicles were in a ditch due to high flood waters. CO Bellville and three civilians entered the waist deep water and safely removed the 80 year old occupants.

Conservation Officers Corporal Kevin Postma and Calvin Smith played a vital role in the capture of child abduction suspects in Chippewa County. The officers located a 5 year old boy who had been abducted by the boy's biological father and a registered sex offender on a tether, and a another man

Conservation Officer Nick Ingersoll rescued a capsized kayaker in Lake Erie in March 2019. The kayaker had been fishing off shore from Sterling State Park in Monroe County. CO Ingersoll launched his patrol boat and was able to locate the kayaker using cellphone coordinates provided by Monroe County dispatch. The Kayaker was hospitalized and treated for hypothermia.

### **2018 Award Recipients**

Shikar Safari Officer of Year - CO Todd Thorn (District 8)

National Wild Turkey Federation Officer of the Year - CO Dan Prince (District 8)

Boating Officer of the Year - CO Mark Siemen (District 6)

Life Saving Awards - CO Jeff Panich (District 5)

CO Mike Evink (District 2)

CO Sam Koscinski (District 4)

CO Scott McNeil (District 4)

CO Andrea Albert

CO Stephen Butzin

CO David Miller

CO Kyle McQueen

Certificate of Merit - CO Brad Bellville

### **New Hampshire**

NH F&G's Conservation Officer force is currently at 37 officers with 2 trainees. We are in the process of hiring five (5) new trainees to help with our ten vacancies. Due to the growth of the outdoor pow-

## **Region 7 Director Larry Hergenroeder Continued**

ersports and the resulting enforcement demand, two of these new trainees will be dedicated solely to OHRV/snowmobile enforcement.

Animal Planet has recently begun airing another season of North Woods Law. This will be the first time in the four years of the TV show where they have been filming our COs in winter highlighting NH's busy snowmobile activity.

The LE Division now has three certified K-9 units with Moxie, a yellow lab, the latest addition. CO Eric Fluette is Moxie's handler. CO James Benvenuti and K-9 CORA are the recipients of the 2018 Vermont State Police Academy K-9 Detection Team award as the top evidence detection K-9/handler team at the academy.

Lt. Heidi Murphy, who was NH's third CO to attend and graduate from the National Association of Conservation LE Chiefs Leadership Academy, will return to the Academy this spring as a coach.

### **AWARDS**

Sergeant Geoffrey M. Pushee is the 2018 recipient of the Shikar-Safari International Wildlife Officer of the Year Award

Conservation Officer Kevin W. Bronson is the 2018 recipient of the Northeast Conservation Law Enforcement Chiefs Association Officer of the Year Award.

### **Retirements**

Major Jim Juneau, Assistant Chief of Law Enforcement - May 1, 2019

### **New Jersey**

The New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife is proud to announce that Conservation Police Officer Wesley 'Wes' Kille has been selected as our 2018 Conservation Police Officer of the Year. CPO Kille started working for the Bureau in 2002 as the officer assigned to Gloucester County and is currently still assigned to that position in the Southern Region.

During the 2018 deer season CPO Kille received additional information on a case that he had been

working for the last five seasons. Due to the accurate and detailed reports that he had generated over the last five years in reference to the illegal deer hunting, CPO Kille was able to identify a suspect and his residence. The last piece of the investigatory puzzle was used to secure a search warrant, which was served on the suspect's residence. The completed investigation and evidence collected during the warrant were used to file charges on the subject who had been shooting deer with a high-powered center-fire rifle at night from his residence with a spotlight. This activity spanned a period of over five years and involved the unlawful harvest or possession of over 14 deer. As a result of his case management and dedication to fulfill the mission of both the Division and the Bureau, CPO Kille was able to settle the case prior to trial for \$5,000.00.

One of CPO Kille's finer attributes as an investigator is his ability to recognize turkey hunting violations and apprehend the violators. During the 2018 season he made numerous cases involving baiting, tagging, trespassing, and stalking, permit and zone violations. One investigation involved CPO Kille conducting early morning surveillance of a baited area, but the hunter didn't cooperate and hunted in a location adjacent to the baited area. Using physical evidence collected from the scene and a good interview, he was able to conclude that the hunter had already unlawfully harvested a turkey from that blind the week prior, which resulted in charges. Another case involved the routine inspection of two hunters on posted private property. During the inspection both hunters provided CPO Kille permission slips allowing them to be on the posted property. However, due to his knowledge of the area, he suspected that the permission slips weren't valid. A call to the property owner confirmed his suspicions resulting in charges being filed.

Conservation Police Officer Kille exhibits confidence in his ability to conduct complex investigations and the dedication necessary to successfully complete those investigations. Chief Cianciulli says that it's an honor for him to say that we have officers like him in our ranks. Please join us in congratulating Conservation Police Officer Wes Kille as the 2018 Conservation Police Officer of the Year.

### **New York**

REGION 3: Illegal Commercialization of Live Sharks; Joshua Sequine



## Region 7 Director Larry Hergenroeder Continued

Marine Resources for the investigation that brought these crimes to light and the work of the Attorney General's office that Attorney General Letitia James and Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Basil Seggos announced the arrest of Joshua Seguire, age 38, of the Hamlet of LaGrangeville in Dutchess County. Seguire was charged in the Town of LaGrange Justice Court with the Illegal Commercialization of Fish, Shellfish, Crustaceans, and Wildlife (Environmental Conservation Law 71-0924(3)) for the alleged illegal possession with intent to sell seven Sandbar Sharks (*Carcharhinus plumbeus*), a protected species under New York law.

"The trafficking of protected species is both unlawful and harmful to these vulnerable creatures," said Attorney General Letitia James. "This individual is charged with knowingly putting these endangered species in harm's way to line his own pockets. My office will continue to enforce the laws that safeguard our wildlife and hold accountable those who seek to violate them."

"Harboring and selling protected species for one's personal financial gain is not only illegal, it's immoral. I applaud the work of DEC's Bureau of Environmental Crimes, Environmental Conservation Police Officers, and Division of is bringing this individual to justice," said DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos.

Seguire came to the attention of DEC Law Enforcement in July of 2017, after he was allegedly found in possession of five undersized sharks in the back of his truck. According to authorities, Seguire admitted that he was transporting the sharks to New York State, where he intended to sell them, and that he possessed additional live sharks at his house in New York.

DEC police subsequently obtained a warrant to search Seguire's house in LaGrangeville. DEC officers, accompanied by biologists from the Long Island Aquarium located in Riverhead, New York, and the Wildlife Conservation Society's New York Aquarium located in Coney Island, allegedly discovered an

above-ground pool at Seguire's house that contained seven live sharks. The sharks were identified as Sandbar Sharks, the possession of which is prohibited by New York law without a special license. The search also uncovered two dead Leopard Sharks, one dead Hammerhead Shark, and the rostrum (snout) of a Small tooth Sawfish, an endangered species.

Biologists from the two aquariums assessed the sharks and then transferred them to the Riverhead facility. The sharks were subsequently moved to the New York Aquarium in Coney Island where they've become part of the "Ocean Wonders: Sharks!" exhibit.



*Photo 1: Live sharks prior to seizure*



*Photo 2: Safe removal and relocation of sharks*

REGION 4: Illegal sale of a Black Rhinoceros skull; Greene County

On March 25, 2019, following a month-long investigation by the Bureau of Environmental Crimes Investigation (BECI), ECOs and investigators conducted an undercover operation into the sale of a Black Rhino skull. After selling the skull to an under-

**Region 7 Director  
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Continued**

cover investigator for \$1,000.00, the Greene County man was arrested and charged with misdemeanor illegal commercialization of wildlife. He is due back in court in April of 2019 to face his charges. The Black Rhinoceros is listed as critically endangered and the sale of any item made from them in whole or in part, is illegal under the New York State Environmental Conservation Law (ECL). It is estimated that somewhere between 5,000 and 5,500 Black Rhinos remain in the wild.



*Lt. Kevin Beiter holding confiscated Black Rhino skull*

**REGION 7: Disturbing a protected stream; Shayne A. Potter**

On April 06, 2018 R7 DEC Operations discovered an excavated area along the Susquehanna River, in the City of Binghamton. On May 30, 2018, during surveillance of the property, ECI Johnson and ECO Rigoli apprehended two suspects as they entered the excavated area to begin additional excavation. The person deemed responsible for excavation was identi-

fied as Shayne A. Potter of Endicott, NY. The excavation caused damages to property owned by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and by excavating 82.8 cubic yards of soil, caused extensive damages totaling an estimated \$7,385.10.

Shayne Potter was processed for arrest on March 13, 2019, charged with criminal mischief in the fourth degree and disturbing the banks of protected stream without a permit. He was issued an appearance ticket and is due to appear in City of Binghamton Criminal Court on March 27, 2019.



Shayne A. Potter

**REGION 8: Illegal Disposal of Asbestos Waste; Carl J. Rivers**

On Thursday January 3, 2019 Environmental Conservation Police Investigators arrested Carl J. Rivers, age 49, from Albion, NY for the Environmental Conservation Law (ECL) felony of Endangering Public Health, Safety, or the Environment in the 3rd degree, a class "E" felony, as well as a violation for unlawfully disposing of solid waste. This arrest was the result of a seven- month investigation into the unlawful disposal of asbestos on the Tonawanda Wildlife Management Area in the Town of Alabama, Genesee County.

In May of 2018, Environmental Conservation Police Officer (ECO) Gary Wilson was notified of an illegal dumpsite on Klosson Road. ECO Wilson immediately notified the DEC Spills unit and the DEC's Bureau of Environmental Crimes Investigation (BECI) who responded. Investigators located twenty large black bags of suspected asbestos waste. Subsequent testing revealed the waste to contain up to 50% friable



## Region 7 Director Larry Hergenroeder Continued

asbestos per bag. A thorough investigation later identified Carl Rivers, who was already in police custody on an unrelated charge, to be the alleged culprit behind the illegal dumping.

The charges carry a maximum penalty of up to four years in prison and/or a fine up to \$150,000. The DEC was assisted by the NYS Department of Labor – Asbestos Control Bureau, the US EPA, and the New York State Police.



### GUILTY PLEAS / SENTENCINGS

**REGION 2:** Illegal sale of unregistered pesticides; Super World Trading Co.

In December of 2018 Investigator Komonchak, Lieutenant David DiPasquale, and Captain Jesse Paluch met with the EPA and staff from the DEC's Division of Pesticides to share information of unregistered pesticides being sold at multiple markets in Queens and Kings County. Inspections were performed, and pesticide mothballs were found for sale that were not registered with the EPA. The source of the moth balls was narrowed down to a distributor in Brooklyn, who was purchasing them directly from a source in Asia.

A sample of the pesticide was seized for analysis and sent to the DEC's laboratory in Rensselaer, NY. The results showed proved that the product contained 100% Napthalene, a listed hazardous substance, commonly used to make moth balls.

Armed with this information, Investigator Komonchak and staff from the DEC's Division of Pesticides executed a consent search of Super World Trading Company. Evidence was seized that proved over 35,000 packages of unregistered pesticides were sold by Super World Trading in Brooklyn.

On March 1, 2019 Lt Eric Dowling met with the owner of Super World Trading and settled a consent order for \$5,000.00 for the past sales of unregistered pesticides.



**REGION 3:** Illegal sale of African Lion mount; Westchester County

In January of 2019, ECOs located an African Lion mount for sale on Craigslist for \$9,500. They enlisted the help of an investigator, who contacted the DEC's Special Licensing Unit to check for record of an endangered species license the owner may possess, to legally sell a lion mount. No such license had been obtained. Investigators then covertly contacted the owner, Patrick Costello, and set up a meeting to buy the lion mount.





## **Region 7 Director Larry Hergenroeder Continued**

On January 14, 2019, investigators met with Patrick Costello in Yonkers, who showed them the lion mount and confirmed a sale price of \$9,500. Investigators after confirming the authenticity of the item and the intent to sell, identified themselves as police officers and secured the mount as evidence. The seller was charged with ECL 11-0535(2), the unlicensed sale of an endangered species product, and issued a notice of violation for the illegal commercialization of an endangered species.

On January 18th, 2019, Lieutenant Nick Desotelle met with Patrick Costello and settled a consent order for \$500.00 for attempting to sell an endangered species item without a license. During this meeting, Mr. Costello did provide documentation that the lion mount was legally purchased prior to the species being listed as endangered. Mr. Costello, after completing an application, was granted a license to sell the item by the DEC. The lion mount has subsequently been returned.

**REGION 4: Hunter Related Shooting: Todd Barber, Rensselaer County**

On Thanksgiving evening 2017, Todd Barber fired two shots while deer hunting his own property with friend, Edward Brown. What began as a friendly holiday hunt, quickly turned tragic, as one of those gun shots went straight through Edward Brown's leg. After the call to 911 came in, Brown was taken immediately to Albany Medical Center. ECOs and investigators from DEC, as well as members of the State Police quickly responded to the scene. Upon arrival, Barber confronted the police and refused to allow entrance to his property. Police detected an odor of alcohol on his breath, and when asked, Barber admitted that he had been drinking. ECOs Isles and Curinga stood their ground and secured the scene without further entering, as Lieutenants Bobseine and Paluch worked with the State Police to obtain search warrants for Barber's blood BAC, and for access to Barber's property. Both search warrants were granted, and Barber was placed in police custody and ordered to provide a blood sample. With a search warrant for the property now in their hands, Bobseine and Paluch lead a team onto the property and began to search for evi-

dence. The team which included DEC investigators, ECOs and K9 officers; located, photographed, and flagged over thirty pieces of evidence, including the firearms used by both Barber and Brown. The team worked into the next day's light to thoroughly reconstruct the scene and secure as all physical evidence found. The evidence proved that Barber had shot Brown in a field clear of obstructions, from less than 100 yards away.

Further investigation into Barber found that he had previously pled guilty to Endangering the Welfare of a Child and was prohibited from possessing a firearm. Armed with this information, Barber was arrested by ECO Canzeri immediately after providing a blood sample and charged with Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 4th Degree. A Pittstown Court Judge swiftly ordered the removal of all firearms from his home. ECO Canzeri then seized eleven additional firearms and secured them as evidence.

In January of 2018, after a review of all evidence related to the shooting, Investigator Matt Nichols charged the shooter, Todd Barber, 39 years old, with Assault in the 2nd Degree, a D felony and Reckless Endangerment in the 2nd Degree, an A misdemeanor. In February of 2019, following an indictment by a Grand Jury, Todd Barber pled guilty to Assault in the 2nd Degree and was

Sentenced to a 6-year probation term and ordered to pay full restitution to the victim for medical expenses. Restitution costs amounted to over \$4,000.00.

**REGION 5: False Filing of Business Records / Tampering: Thomas French**

On April 27, 2018, investigators arrested chief operator Thomas A. French following a year-long investigation by DEC's Bureau of Environmental Crimes Investigations (BECI) Unit into allegations of fraudulent testing and treatment of sewage at the Town of Bolton Wastewater Treatment facility (WWTF) and Public Drinking Water plant. The Chief Operator and Superintendent, Thomas A. French, 37, of Bolton Landing, was processed and arraigned in Albany, NY. He was charged with four counts of falsifying business records in the second degree (a misdemeanor), four counts of offering a false instrument for filing (a class E felony), and two counts of tampering with or knowingly rendering inaccurate

## Region 7 Director Larry Hergenroeder Continued

any monitoring device or method required (a class E felony).

On Jan. 11, 2019, Thomas A. French pleaded guilty to one count of Penal Law Section 175.30, offering a False Instrument for Filing in the second degree, a class A misdemeanor. Mr. French was sentenced to 3 years of probation. In addition, the court ordered a permanent revocation of his license/certificate to operate a wastewater treatment facility in the State of New York.



*Thomas A. French escorted by ECOs George Lapoint and Alan Brassard*

### SAMPLING TEAM & ENVIRONMENTAL FORENSIC UNIT CASE RELATED DEPLOYMENTS

SAMPLING TEAM:  
10 ACTIVATIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL FORENSIC UNIT:  
3 ACTIVATIONS

In January of 2019, 16 new sampling team members comprised of ECOs and investigators from the Division of Law Enforcement, attended a 40-hour block of OSHA instruction held by the New York Operating Engineers Training Fund. This training provided members with hands-on HAZMAT skills that will now enable them to safely respond to contaminated crime scenes involving hazardous materials, and to properly document and obtain forensic evidence used in environmental investigations.



## Ohio

2018 was a very busy year for the Ohio Division of Wildlife with the hiring and training of ten wildlife officer cadets to fill some longstanding vacant field assignments. The cadets of the 29th Wildlife Officer Training Academy graduated on March 15th, 2019 and are working in their new areas while in the six month field training program. We are extremely excited to have them in the field and are hoping to hire another class of cadets in the next year or so.

With the election of a new governor, changes in agency leadership were announced with a new Division of Wildlife Chief and two new Assistant Chiefs. The new leaders have extensive experience within our agency and immediately voiced their support for wildlife officers and the important work we do, now and into the future.

The exciting addition of five new K-9s to our Law Enforcement Program. The K-9s and their handlers completed extensive training that included obedience, area searches, building searches, tracking, criminal apprehension, handler protection, and culminating in the certification of the handlers and their K-9 partners by the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy. Additional training in selected wild game detection, gunpowder detection, and ginseng detection was certified in-house.

## **Region 7 Director Larry Hergenroeder Continued**

The Division of Wildlife closed the adjudication phase of what has become the largest case in its 146 year history. The case, dubbed Operation North Coast, culminated in 2016 with the execution of search warrants, arrest warrants and dozens of simultaneous interviews. The case primarily concerned the illegal taking and sales of Lake Erie sportfish and white-tailed deer meat products in counties along the Lake Erie shoreline. Nine defendants were subsequently charged with engaging in a pattern of corrupt activity and associated crimes for operating as a criminal enterprise. In all, the cases resulted in 46 individuals being assessed a combined \$131,763.00 in fines and restitution, sentenced to 8.6 years of jail with the majority suspended, received 79 years of hunting and fishing revocation, and paid in excess of \$18,000 in court cost. The items forfeited were three vehicles, 96 deer and turkey mounts, 35 sets of antlers, over 200 pounds of filleted sportfish, and 400 pounds of deboned venison and processed deer meat.



A number of Wildlife Officers were recognized with their outstanding work with awards over this past year. The following are the officers that were recognized for their achievements:

Wildlife Officer Brennan Earick - Wildlife Officer of the Year from the Ohio Bowhunter's Association

Wildlife Officer Gus Kiebel - Wildlife Officer of the Year from the National Wild Turkey Federation

Investigator Kirk Kiefer - Fraternal Order of Police, Wildlife Officers Lodge 143 Officer of the Year

Wildlife Officer Nick Turner - Ducks Unlimited Em-

ployee of the Year

Wildlife Officer Austin Dickinson - NAWEOA Torch Award Winner from Region 7

Wildlife Officer Nathan West – Ohio Wildlife Officer of the Year from the Mississippi Flyway Association

Law Enforcement Supervisor Jeff Collingwood – Ohio Wildlife Officer of the year, Association of Midwest Fish and Game Law Enforcement Officers

### **Pennsylvania**

#### **Fish & Boat**

2019 has been off to an excellent start for the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's Bureau of Law Enforcement. Currently, the Bureau is recruiting the 22nd class of Waterways Conservation Officers to continue and further the enforcement of laws and regulations relating to fishing, boating, and environmental crime in the Commonwealth.

In addition to recruitment efforts, the Bureau recently recognized WCO Cory Girt as the recipient of the Top Gun Award, which recognizes officers for efforts in the detection and apprehension of individuals boating under the influence. WCO Bob Plumb was recognized as the recipient for the NECLECA Officer of the Year award. WCO Travis Miller was recognized as the recipient for the Greiner Environmental Protection Award, which recognizes officers who exemplify ideals of "Resource First" during the performance of their duty.

#### **Game Commission**

Since the fall there are several things to report as far as what's been happening with the Pennsylvania Game Commission. The 31st class of game wardens graduated and started in their respective regions.

We've just completed the statewide conference in Gettysburg, PA. This was the first one that most of the current employees have ever been to or heard about. Back in 2010 when PA hosted NAWEOA, some can remember the fraternalism / camaraderie felt amongst those who attended. Well, as this was a short-lived event, the conference was a similar feeling and shared amongst all employees of the PGC. The 4-hour presentation on Wednesday morning by Kent Williams was very well received by the officers - most of what was presented really hit home.



**Region 7 Director**  
**Larry Hergenroeder**  
**Continued**

**Retirements:**

SGW Dennis R. Warfel  
LMGS Linda Swank  
SGW Donald G. Chaybin  
SGW Ronda Bimber  
SGW Rodney Burns  
SGW John Morack  
DGW James M. Hoppes Jr.  
DGW Gerald T. Trainer  
Tim Grenoble retired after 12+ years as the director of training at RLSC. His leadership will be missed.

**NEW Director of Training:**

Kyle Jury was selected as the new director of training at the Ross Leffler School of Conservation.

**Southwest Region:**

Fayette County SGW Brandon Bonin was selected as 2018 PA NECLECA Officer of the Year. Attending upcoming NEAFWA conference in Connecticut in April.

SWR IES/SGW Patrick Snickles recognized by Armstrong County Sportsmen's & Conservation league at upcoming banquet as "Conservationist of the year for 2018."

**Northeast Region:**

The PGC Northeast Region respectfully submits PA State Game Warden Bryan Mowrer, District 5 -45-2, and Monroe County, as our nominee for the Conservation Law Enforcement Chief's Association Officer of the Year Award.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission Northeast Region nominates Land Management Group Supervisor Phillip Kasper for the NWTF Joe Kurtz Excellence in Wildlife Management Award.

The Northeast Region respectfully submits Land Management Group Supervisor James McCarthy as our nominee for the National Wild Turkey Federation's Wildlife Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award.

Bill Williams received the Directors Award for Excellence at the statewide conference.

**Southcentral Region:**

Amy Nabozny received NWTF officer of the year for 2018.

SGW Skipper, SGW Macklem, CAS Zellner, SGW Pfister, DGW Clevenger, and SGW SI Daly & K9 Gunner all received lifesaving awards for tracking and locating a suicidal juvenile.

**Northcentral Region:**

Mark Gritzer received a lifesaving award

**Northwest Region:**

Darin L. Clark Shikar-Safari Award winner (2018)

**Harrisburg HQ:**

Mike Reeder received the Directors Award for Excellence at the statewide conference.

**Deputy Awards:**

**Deputy of the Year**

Northwest	Marshall Nych
Southwest	Stephen W. King
Northcentral	Kale M. Geiswite
Southcentral	Jeremy M. Elliott

**Rhode Island**

The Rhode Island Environmental Police had an eventful year in 2018. The state hosted the 2018 Volvo Ocean Race at Fort Adams State Park in Newport. The Volvo Ocean Race is described as the longest and toughest sailing events in the world and draws a large international crowd. The lively Volvo races gave way to an action-packed summer. Rhode Island parks and beaches received record numbers of patrons this year. In addition to park's enforcement the division was still able to make fish and wildlife enforcement a priority. The marine division focused in on Striped Bass poaching. Officer Jeff Mercer apprehended a Massachusetts commercial fishermen poaching Rhode Island Striped Bass intended for sale in Massachusetts. 13 commercial size Striped bass were seized and the fisherman was charged with exceeding the daily limit and failure to remove the right pectoral fin.

Two new officers will be added to the ranks this May, as the department gears up for another busy summer. Sergeant Michael Schipritt is organizing his

## 2018 Officer Exchange (Runner Up) By State Game Warden Mike Reeder Pennsylvania to New Brunswick

On Sunday October 21st, I left Harrisburg for Fredrickton, New Brunswick. The day before I talked to NAWEOA President Shawn Farrell about what time to be picked up at the airport and asked how long it would take to get my bags. He laughed and said not long. He was right. When I landed, the airport's one baggage carousel was right as you walked in the airport. After getting picked up we headed toward Moncton and Federal Canadian Wildlife Officer Brad Seller's home. Waiting there was Brad and Cpl. James Mundle, a warden with New Brunswick Dept. of Justice and Public Safety. As we know, all wardens like to eat, and this night was no exception. Brad had prepared quite a spread, including moose steak.

The next morning, I started the day riding with Brad. It was their first day of the rifled deer season. We headed east and checked a few hunters along the way. We made our way to the Confederation Bridge connecting Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick. Completed in 1997 it is 8 miles long! We made our way back to the district office where Cpl. Mundle was waiting to prepare lunch. As we grilled burgers, several black bears were brought in for processing. Just like Pennsylvania New Brunswick captures data from there harvested black bear.

After lunch I continued patrolling with Cpl. Mundle. We saw a car coming at us on a dirt road and could see two men in orange. He said "let's check them". In PA we can't stop a vehicle unless we have reasonable suspicion they are committing a violation. So, I was a little surprised when he hit the red and

blues and stopped them! After checking them I basically asked "what the heck are you thinking" he said in New Brunswick it is legal for them to stop and check those in the activity of hunting. All I could think is how nice that would be back home.



*Peat moss along the coast*



*Vehicle stop first day of rifle deer season*

We made our way up the coast and stopped at some peat moss harvesting facilities. These businesses would clear the bogs and then use rakes to loosen the top couple inches of peat moss and then when dry, use large vacuums to suck up the moss for processing and packaging. Some of the peat moss bogs are up to 20 feet deep. We then stopped at a memorial at Escuminac Wharf. Much of the coast in New Brunswick fishing is the way of life and a main part of the economy. Here in 1959 several boats were out fishing when a hurricane blew in. The waves reached 50-60 feet in



## 2018 Officer Exchange (Runner Up) By State Game Warden Mike Reeder Pennsylvania to New Brunswick (cont.)

height. 22 boats were lost, and 35 fishermen lost their lives.



*Escuminac Wharf memorial*

Toward dark we met up with Sgt. Bruce Woulds. After putting my gear in his truck, we headed for the town of Marimachi. We patrolled the area around town including Sunny Corners. We managed to see two cow moose and a couple deer. New Brunswick's deer population is very low in the interior of the province. In fact, there are many areas that are closed to deer hunting. Moose on the other hand are found just about everywhere and is their top poached animal.

Bruce lived right on the north side of the Marimachi river. The river used to be a great salmon river but in recent times become a striped bass fishery. We arrived at his house after dark and I unpacked my gear and put on civies. As we finished dinner his phone rang with a call for dispatch of a spotlight and shots fired. He said he would try to find someone to go and made several calls to find an officer willing to respond but had no luck. He looked at me and said you want to go. Even after a long day I was quick to say yes. We threw our uniforms back on and jumped in the truck. We patrolled the area for a while but didn't see or hear anything so we headed back home.

The next morning, we stopped by the district office before heading out to investigate a possible moose poaching call. The caller said they found a dumped moose carcass at an old dumping site along a

dirt road. We located the hide not far off the road and after examining it we determined it was probably a legal kill from the season and someone just dumped the hide and ribcage after butchering. We made our way north and met up with additional officers at a fishing camp. We again ate well as they made moose chili. After eating lunch, we made our way to the barrier. This was an area where they build a barrier out of conduit pipe to block the salmon from continuing up river to protect them from poachers. The area is manned 24 hours a day and they run generators to keep the area lit up at night. Once they feel they are ready to spawn they open the barrier and allow the fish to head up stream.



*Feeding a Canada Jay*

While we were walking along looking at the barrier, I couldn't help notice all of these gray birds following us. Bruce said they were Canada Jays and had little fear of humans. He went back to his truck and gave me some pieces of a roll and they would fly right in and take it from your hand.

Leaving the barrier our final stop was Popple Depot, a warden camp deep in no man's land. Arriving around dinner time, they had a great feast for us. About 15 officers showed up to meet the guy from PA and to eat garbage can turkey. Yes, you heard right, they use a garbage can to cook the turkey over coals and I must say it was delicious.

The next morning, we awoke to it snowing. While we were eating breakfast Inspector Francois



## 2018 Officer Exchange (Runner Up) By State Game Warden Mike Reeder Pennsylvania to New Brunswick (cont.)

said we better head out because the snow is going to start piling up. So, Nadine and I loaded my gear in her truck and started off. On the way we checked several hunters and then came upon a strange wire laying across the road. After trying to see where it led we could see a truck parked up the road a good distance. We found 2 mining employees testing for minerals using the wire. After making sure they had the proper permits to be doing this on crown land we kept heading to the coast. We made our way to the coastal town of Dalhousie. By now the snow was light and melting on contact.



*Mining Company conducting testing*

We stopped at the district office and transferred my gear to Sgt. Roger Selesse's vehicle. While at the office he showed me some of their equipment and their motorized moose decoy. The decoy was made of foam and could be easily carried and set up. The even had reflective tape on the eyes to fool he



night hunters. After the tour we headed to check a fishing camp along the Restigouche river. After about a 30-minute drive through the back country we arrived at the camp. Even though all the clients were long gone the care taker was still there and I think glad to see someone to talk to. While we were driving out a large black bear ran right out on the road in front of us and disappeared in the thick brush.



*Restigouche Lodge*

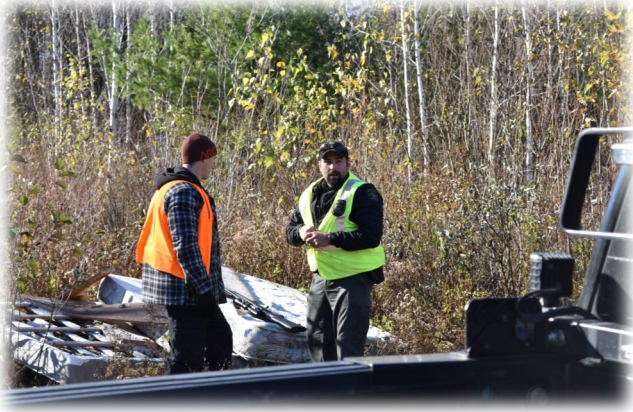
It was getting dark, so we made our way to the Restigouche River Lodge to spend the night. Roger knew one of the owners and was able work it out we could stay there that night. I was expecting a rustic lodge and it was far from that. It was a top of the line salmon fishing resort! We spent the evening talking politics with the owner around the fireplace.

After breakfast we headed out and Roger took me through one of the reservations near the town of Campbellton. There are several first nations throughout the province. This was new to me as in PA we do not have anything like this. He explained they have tribal hunting rights and can hunt and fish without a license. This causes problems as they do not have a good handle on how many animals they kill, and it also aids in poaching when non-natives take a native out hunting and just have the native claim the animal.

We made our way to Roger's home and picked up his personal car and headed south to meet my next officer. The drive took about 4 hours to get from the very top

## 2018 Officer Exchange (Runner Up) By State Game Warden Mike Reeder Pennsylvania to New Brunswick (cont.)

of the providence to just about the bottom. We met up with Officer Josh Thibodeau. It was late, and we go to his house around 9pm. The next morning, we started out on patrol and he asked if I had enough of the French. I said it was hard to understand some of the people we were running into up north. Soon we spotted a hunter at the end of a dirt lane and when we started in to check him he disappeared. We have all had that happen and now there is something wrong. We soon found him and without an orange hat. The funny thing was is he spoke French forcing Josh to



*Officer Josh Thibodeau checking hunter*

provide him service in French. After the interaction Josh said I was bad luck because it had been several years since he had someone that strictly spoke French. We drove around a little checking hunters and came across a guide and his client just heading out for a woodcock hunt. As we were checking them we found the hunter did not have the federal permit to hunt migratory birds. As we were talking to him the guide pulled us aside and said he was a billionaire. Of course, this wasn't going to change anything. Josh issued the ticket and later that night I googled the name and low and behold he was a billionaire from New York City.

We spent the rest of the day driving around the country side and checking a few hunters. We stopped by a memorial that was built for a story of a merchant that was murdered by three men as he traveled between towns.



My last two days were spent with Inspector Roy Marchand. We got up early the first morning and headed out to some impound areas to check water-fowlers. We can across a truck and soon heard shots. We walked out into the impound and found the hunter.



After checking him and finding nothing wrong we walked back to the truck with him and his dog. We then headed to the cable ferry. There are many cable ferry's operated by the government and provide the crossing service for free. Since I had never rode on one Roy made sure we took it across the river.

The second day we made out way to the coast and the lower area of the Bay of Fundi. We drove up as far as we could, but the park was closed for the winter. We stopped at some of the beaches and you could see how dramatic the water level changes when the tide is in or out.



## 2018 Officer Exchange (Runner Up) By State Game Warden Mike Reeder Pennsylvania to New Brunswick (cont.)



*Cable ferry*



*Coast of the Bay of Fundi*

When we decided to head home, Roy said we would take the back way. This proved to be the long way. We ran in to several individuals out cutting wood on crown land and did not happen to have permits nor trucks that were road worthy. It seemed every time we turned a corner there was another one.

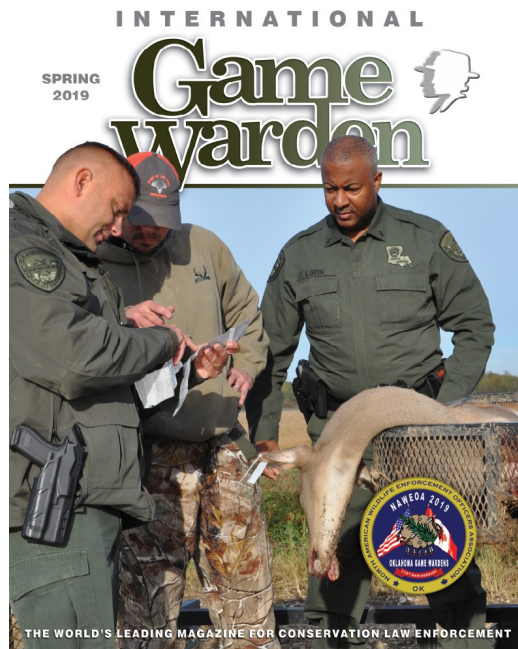
On the last day Shawn picked me up to head back to the airport. I have to say; New Brunswick has some of the most beautiful country I have seen. I would like to thank NAWEOA for the sponsorship, Shawn for putting the trip together and everyone in New Brunswick that hosted me. I am truly thankful for the experience and the extreme hospitality I received.

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### IGW Spring 2019 Issue

Featured article this issue is, **Guam Calling**, by By Texas Game Warden Will Plumas

[Click here to read the article](#)





## 2018 Officer Exchange By Lieutenant Kevin Clayton

### Off to Manitoba from Cape Cod, Massachusetts

I did it! I got to slap a polar bear on the butt. I attended the 2018 annual conference of the North American Wildlife Enforcement Officers Association. (You already know that's how you gain eligibility to the Officer Exchange. Right?)

I was surprised to learn that I won the fabled opportunity to select a jurisdiction. My Journey of a Lifetime was a total surprise. I was called into the room by a number of officers. My response was unpublishable here. But, alas, I won the trip. I had long thought that I'd return to British Columbia. My first visit to B.C. was during the Penticton conference. However, why take a Once in a lifetime trip to someplace you've already experienced? After some quick deliberations, Manitoba was selected. P.O.L.A.R. B.E.A.R.s.

I departed Boston on 20 September 2019 for a trip to Manitoba. I was to return on 3 October, 2018. Two weeks ought to be sufficient. And I had to hurry because polar bear migration can be missed if ice appears early!

An angel from Pennsylvania, whispered in my ear that this may be a better time than when he visited on his Officer Exchange. I spoke with then Regional Director Kurt Henry, Murray Breemersch (Pas) and others from the province and established a plan. Departure from Boston to Winnipeg via Toronto had me suffer a 6-hour layover. K9 Officer Chad Moir met me and we grabbed some chow. A whirlwind tour included facetime with the Chief Jack Harrigan, issuance by him of a muskrat cap (AWESOME!) \_ and a sweater before returning to the airport.

Next stop: Thompson

Thompson had me overnight locally with a mid-morning departure via otter/float plane to Croll Lake. The island upon which we moored the plane was a forward station/bunkhouse for caribou patrols. Little caribou were seen by the staff on this trip. A quick turnaround for refueling found us in a heavy snow squall. I'm not fond of visual flight rules...just sayin'. I'm a low lander who believes that you believe your instruments...we departed in the helicopter in low visibility. Soon enough, we could see well and,

on our way, south east (with the pilot and my host, Kurt, we saw my first moose.

It was browsing on willow along a river bank. It wasn't much longer after that I saw a lone white wolf (now my spirit animal) and beluga whales AND my first polar bear. It was odd for me to see that his bear was splayed out on the wrack line of this river delta. I'm aware that polar bears are a legendary marine predator. I am aware that polar bears are dark, near black under their opaque hair/coats. I was surprised to see a bear on a beach. It reminded me of a seal, often seen here on the shores of southeastern Massachusetts and Cape Cod.

Over the next several days, Kurt and I met the Polar Bear Alert Team. They are a hearty bunch, 2 men and 2 women. Patrolling the town, they keep bears from interacting with children awaiting the school bus or any which may wish to help them trick or treat on Halloween.

Before my departure on the 4th day in Churchill, I had the chance to haze a bear from town toward the northwest. The bear was hazed using cracker shells, and vocalizations. I had never seen a bear this close. Granted, I wasn't closer than a couple hundred yards. The bear was white as it ran across the rocky terrain. It was an interesting contrast against the rose and pastel hues of the boulders, with blue waters of the Hudson Bay beyond. I was so excited. I stood on the same beach as a legendary predatory maritime mammal, *Ursus maritimus*.



## 2018 Officer Exchange By Lieutenant Kevin Clayton

### Off to Manitoba from Cape Cod, Massachusetts (cont.)

We departed the Churchill following the immobilization of a 400-pound bear held in the holding facility. I applied a green marker dye to the shoulders. This dye indicates that the bear was drugged. The stark color alerts native hunters to avoid eating this animal. The bear was ultimately removed via helicopter to parts unknown and distant from the village.

Departure from Churchill via helicopter included other views of bears, moose, beluga whales, snow geese and a Major experience. At one point we executed a corkscrew landing to a river bed. Kurt Henry initiated a stop and inspection of a pair of hunters in a jet boat. AWESOME and VERY EXCITING! Violations were observed. The Tribal member was cleared as he is permitted to possess a loaded firearm in a vessel. The non-tribal hunter was cited for that same violation.

Our trip toward Thompson included several views of mines, hydroelectric plants. There is a lot of water in Manitoba. I was surprised by the amount. I was informed that much of the extra energy generated is sold to the United States.

The balance of my trip included joint operations in "the pit". I assisted with surveillance at a roadside moose site. As in most places, road hunting is prohibited. We observed several vehicles stopping to view the decoy. One vehicle was stopped after it hung around too long... the driver and passenger exited the vehicle to approach the decoy. These dudes were found to be in violation of an open container



(alcoholic beverage) regulation.

Paired with local officers across the province, was fun and a great opportunity to discuss issues involving fire suppression, Metis and other tribal issues and patrol procedures.

I met some great officers and some unique citizens of Manitoba.

What did I learn:

Officers in Manitoba are well aware and vocal about their 'Mandate'.

Officers in Manitoba and in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are similar, i.e., "Let us do our job, without politics!"

We're all passionate about our work, guarding the thin green line.

Excerpts from my thank you letter to Chief Harrigan, Manitoba Department of Sustainable Development:

"Dear Chief Harrigan, Kurt and Friends,

Now that I have caught my breath and returned to a "reasonable climate" (19 degrees Celsius), I extend my gratitude to you all.

Please also extend my thanks to my "air Ubers", Bruce and Evan... even though Bruce scared me near to death, by asking me if I know how to start a



## 2018 Officer Exchange By Lieutenant Kevin Clayton

### Off to Manitoba from Cape Cod, Massachusetts (cont.)

fire with a cell phone battery while high above the tundra. My favorite event was falling out of the sky so Kurt could check hunters on a river. Corkscrew descent to the riverbed! I told my, now, Acting Director, "WE NEED A HELICOPTER!"

And, please to Jeff in Churchill and the Polar Bear Alert team. The pictures of my face, while standing near the bear clearly convey my ambivalence about being so close to one of North America's legendary predators.

I have absolutely learned much from you. Hopefully, you have gleaned something about me and how the Massachusetts Environmental Police operate.

If any of you need anything from me, please do not hesitate to contact me for any little thing. I am in your debt.

I've described my time with you as thrilling, exhausting and terrifying (in a good way).

Thank you again for the wonderful memories and for sharing yourselves with me. I'll likely be conveying some of these experiences through a presentation in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma in July and through an article in International Game Warden Magazine.

“ . . . , we press onward as best we may, establishing relationships to support the essential work of standing guard on the thin green line...”

I hope that you get to attend an annual conference of the North American Wildlife Officers Association. Your opportunity to participate in an Officer Exchange is one worthy of your time. It will enhance our career and your life.



# NAWEOA



## 2018 Officer Exchange By Federal Wildlife Officer Amy Biensch Big Island, Hawaii

I met Officer Jim Ridzon on the plane from Toronto to Sault Ste. Marie in 2017. We happened to sit next to each other and from the camouflage hat and Oakley sunglasses, I had a feeling that we were going to the same conference. When I heard that he was an officer in Hawaii, I immediately asked if they were taking job applications! Since the conference in Ontario, Jim and I have kept in touch and when my name was drawn for the 2018-2019 Officer Exchange, Hawaii was my first choice.

Game wardens in Hawaii work for the Division of Conservation and Resource Enforcement (DOCARE), which is a part of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). There are approximately 120 DOCARE officers that work on six of the islands – Hawaii Island, Maui, Lanai, Molokai, Oahu and Kauai. The Hawaiian Islands are made up of eight major islands that were formed by volcanic activity. The youngest of the Hawaiian Islands is Hawaii and is commonly referred to as the Big Island. The DOCARE Enforcement on the Big Island is split into three districts with the officers operating out of Waimea, Kailua-Kona and Hilo. This is where I was able to spend two weeks for my officer exchange and

was able to work with officers from all of the districts. I arrived in Kailua-Kona late on Sunday, January 13 after a long day of plane rides. Jim picked me up from the airport and after a quick tour of his house, he showed me where my bed was and said that we started our shift at 0730 hrs the next morning.

The next two weeks seemed to fly by! Some days we would spend on the beach where we would check fisherman's net sizes, inspect boats coming off of the ocean for limits, and make sure that the public were obeying the laws in



*Officer Ridzon inspecting a site where a homeless camp had been in the State Park. Officers had told the camp to clean up and move out.*

the state parks. These “state park sweeps” are done using a side by side and the officers drive along the coast and on the beaches. Some of the common enforcement issues that DOCARE Officers run into are people overnight camping, drinking on the beach, and having dogs on the beach.

Other days were spent on Mauna Kea Mountain checking bird hunters. It is interesting because prior to going hunting, hunters have to check in at the check-in station and record the time they entered along with their hunting information. When the hunters are driving back out after hunting, they then have to check out with the time and how many birds were harvested. I did not realize how much hunting is actually done in Hawaii! When I was there, it was the end of their game bird season. They have a large variety of game birds, including grey francolins, black franco-



*Sea turtle on the beach*



*Checking a group of individuals in the Mauna Kea hunting area. This group had a stolen firearm, marijuana and open alcohol in the vehicle.*

## 2018 Officer Exchange By Federal Wildlife Officer Amy Biensch Big Island, Hawaii

lins, urkel francolins, turkey, chukar, quail and pheasant. They also have seasons to hunt for goats, wild pigs and mouflon sheep. During our bird checks, DOCARE officers found one hunter with a loaded firearm in the vehicle and another vehicle where alcohol, drugs and a stolen firearm were seized. One evening, Jim and I also went on the side by side almost to the top of the mountain to see a critically endangered plant called the silver swords.



*Side by side patrol to the top of Mauna Kea Mountain*



*Critically endangered silver swords plant*

One day we were able to go for the day and do a patrol out on the ocean with two other DOCARE officers from the Kailua-Kona District. The DOCARE has a Joint Enforcement Agreement with the federal government to enforce the legislation regarding protected marine species. On the day that I went out, the officers were making sure that the commercial tour boats, as well as the public, were not harassing the

spinner dolphins that come close to the shore to rest during the day. The officers were also inspecting the commercial vessels to make sure that they had all of the appropriate safety equipment such as dive flags and life jackets. Although I did not see any humpback whales while I was on the boat, I usually saw them breaching every day when we were driving the coast-line.

An interesting enforcement experience that I was able to observe was one afternoon when the DO-



*Cave in State Park with a sign stating that people are not to enter*

CARE officers inspected a huge underground cave in one of the State Parks to make sure that no one was inside. Caves are of great cultural significance in Hawaii because in the past, many burials occurred in caves. To enter a cave in Hawaii, you need landowner permission. In the State Parks, there are signs that forbid people to enter and the penalty for entering is a \$1000 fine. Jim and I met up with two other DOCARE officers, and together we conducted an inspection in one of the caves where people often enter, although there are numerous signs stating that they cannot. That day there were five individuals in the cave and they all left with paperwork and a court date in February.

The scenery on the Big Island is beautiful and the landscape is incredibly diverse. On the west side of the island, you drive through old lava flows that is all black and red rock. On the north and east coast, it is more lush with numerous waterfalls and some parts look like a rainforest. Inland and higher up on the mountains there are also completely different cli-



## 2018 Officer Exchange By Federal Wildlife Officer Amy Biensch Big Island, Hawaii

mates and vegetation. We spent most of one day patrolling the Kohala Forest Reserve, which is restricted to the public in order to protect the watershed from threats such as invasive species. It is unique because the watershed is on the top of a mountain! In the forest reserve, you have a wonderful view of the valleys and the landscape below. My pictures do not do the scenery justice.



*At the top of the Pololu Valley hiking trail.*

On his days off, Jim and his wife, Kenya, took me all around the island to make sure I was able to get the entire experience. I spent quite a few mornings and evenings after work on the beach and learned how to paddle board on the ocean. One day we hiked Pololu Valley, which is where the opening scene to Jurassic Park was shot. On my last full day in Hawaii, we drove across the island to Kilauea, which is the volcano that erupted last summer. There was no flowing lava when I was there, but I was able to see the damage that the lava caused as well as set foot on the new-



*Hardened lava that had flowed through the community*

est black sand beach that was created from the lava flowing into the ocean.

During my trip, I also was able to see so much wildlife that is not native to my land-locked province of Saskatchewan. This included spinner dolphins, humpback whales, sea turtles, a Hawaiian monk seal and an incredible number of cool fish. The state fish of Hawaii is the humuhumunukunukuāpuaʻa (just sound it out). There were also different species of upland game birds that I already mentioned, NeNe geese (which are descendants of Canada geese) and mouflon sheep.

I purposely booked my trip in January because I thought that I would miss some of the colder weather that Saskatchewan gets in the winter. I arrived back just in time for record-breaking cold temperatures in Saskatoon. One morning made it to -43 (which is the same in Celsius or Fahrenheit).

My trip to Hawaii is an experience that I will never forget. I find it so interesting that although the location and the plant and wildlife species may change, resource enforcement is the same. Speaking with officers in Hawaii, they deal with similar enforcement challenges that I have where I live.

I would like to thank NAWEOA for giving me the opportunity to have an experience that I will be able to draw on throughout the rest of my career as a wildlife officer. Thank you to my organization, Environment and Climate Change Canada, for allowing me to go on this exchange and have an once-in-a-lifetime experience. I would also like to thank the Division of Conservation and Resource Enforcement in Hawaii for allowing me to come and be a part of the team for a couple of weeks. Thank you to all of the DOCARE officers on the Big Island for taking me on your patrols and taking the time to show me the ropes of being a resource officer in Hawaii. Last but certainly not least, thank you to Jim and Kenya Ridzon, for taking me into your home and making sure that I was able to see and experience so much of the Big Island in the two weeks that I was there!

Mahalo!



## NAWEOA Awards

N.A.W.E.O.A. believes deeply in recognizing the commitment of the wildlife law enforcement professional. The awards recognize people and agencies that have performed outstanding work, exemplary service to the public, or have contributed to wildlife law enforcement in other ways. Look at the award categories below and consider nominating your fellow officers for accomplishments. Submitting an award is easy. Go to [NAWEOA.org](http://NAWEOA.org) and sign in to the webpage. If you do not have an account register for one.

In the main menu under “**Awards**”, is “**Award Application**”. Click that link after you are signed in and you will be taken to the online Award Application.

### **N.A.W.E.O.A. OFFICER OF THE YEAR AWARD**

1. Must be a fully certified conservation officer in the state, province, territory, or country in which employed.
2. Must be a full time field officer, up to and including first line supervisors from the field in the last calendar year.
3. Both nominee and person submitting nomination must be a member of NAWEOA.
4. An officer whose character is beyond reproach.
5. An officer who is competent, knowledgeable and capable.
6. An officer who promotes wildlife law enforcement.
7. An officer who demonstrates professionalism in every facet of life.
8. The person submitting the nomination shall provide background material when submitting the nomination. Background material shall be in written narrative format, not exceeding 5 pages. Other supportive articles, certificates, awards, media coverage, etc. may be included with the nomination.
9. All nominations must be received by the Vice President of NAWEOA not later than April 15th each year. The successful officer will be notified by May 1st..

### **NAWEOA TORCH AWARD**

- Presented annually to an officer from each region, to encourage the professional development of recently appointed officers. The selection criteria are as follows:
- Both nominating and nominated officers must be regular NAWEOA members.
- Nominated officer must not have worked as a wildlife enforcement officer more than five years.
- Must have demonstrated a genuine desire to protect the resource and develop professionally.
- Must demonstrate exceptional ability and initiative in the performance of his or her duties, including public education.
- Must be respected by his/her peers and the general public.
- Nominations must be received by April 15th each year. Winners will be notified by May 1st.
- Awards will be presented at annual conference; attendance encouraged but not mandatory.

### **OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD**

Anyone who is eligible for regular or deputy membership may be nominated for this award. It is given for outstanding achievement or service in the field of Wildlife Law Enforcement, to NAWEOA executive or outgoing NAWEOA Directors. (Amended Winter 2003, West Palm Beach)

### **CERTIFICATE OF RETIREMENT**

Anyone who is eligible for regular or deputy membership may be nominated for this award. It is given to honour years of service to the profession. This award is distributed on behalf of NAWEOA by regional reps and is not subject to executive review.

### **AWARD OF VALOUR**

Anyone who is eligible for regular or deputy membership may be nominated for this award. It is given to the officer who performs a heroic act, or risks or receives serious injury, in the line of duty in an attempt to protect him\herself or a member of the public from a dangerous situation or circumstance. It infers bravery in the face of adversity.

### **LIFESAVING AWARD**

Anyone who is eligible to be a regular or deputy member of the association or anyone who is a member of the association may be nominated for this award. It is given for any act at any time which saves the life of another person. (Amended Winter 2003, West Palm Beach)

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION**

Anyone who in any way is helpful to the association and/or it's members may be nominated for this award. This includes, but is not limited to speakers, conference or workshop hosts, fundraisers, committee or special project members, citizens or politicians.

### **HONOURARY LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP**

Anyone who has performed an extraordinary service to the association over a number of years may be nominated for this award. It is one of our most prestigious awards and may only be given in rare circumstances. Anyone who is eligible for regular membership in the association who receives this award shall maintain their voting privileges within the association.

### **K-9 AND HANDLER "LOYAL PARTNER AWARD"**

1. Must be a fully certified conservation officer in the state, province, territory, or country in which employed.
2. Must be a full-time field officer, up to and including first line supervisors from the field in the last calendar year.
3. Both nominee and person submitting nomination must be a regular member of NAWEOA.
4. Three years minimum experience and active as a K-9 handler at time of nomination.
5. All nominations must be received by the Vice President of NAWEOA not later than April 15th each year. The successful officer will be notified by May 1st.
6. Both K-9 and handler must demonstrate exceptional ability and initiative in the performance of his or her duties.
7. Award will be presented at annual conference; attendance encouraged but not mandatory.



# **NAWEOA**

# THE NORTH AMERICAN GAME WARDEN MUSEUM

The Board of Directors of the North American Game Warden Museum recently met at the Museum in the International Peace Garden. Each year the group meets to review the previous seasons activities, approve financials, plan for improvements and new exhibits and hire personnel to manage the Museum for the upcoming season. Attending were Past President Dave Grant, (Manitoba) President Blake Patterson, (Manitoba) Vice President Tom Caifa, (New York) US Treasurer Jonathan Toftland, (North Dakota) Jason Greff, (US Fish and Wildlife) Terry McClelland (Pennsylvania) and Chris Kuntz (South Dakota).



Due to two resignations the Board now has three vacancies for Canadian positions and one vacancy for a US position. **All current and retired Officers** are eligible to volunteer for these openings. Each member volunteers for various responsibilities involving fund raising, program planning and exhibit planning. We meet only once a year, expenses covered, and a very limited amount of personal time is required throughout the year. If interested, contact us through Facebook or at 724 372-3605.

We welcomed a new hire as Museum Manager, Stephanie Hecklowski. Stephanie has many accomplishments and skills that fit very well with the Manager responsibilities. We are looking forward to improvements to Museum programming and exhibit development. A new exhibit in the early stages of development will focus on Fallen Officers, highlighting the Pogue and Elms deaths which caught the attention of our Countries and brought to light the work, dangers and accomplishments of Conservation Officers. Another will exhibit the uniforms, tools, and equipment used by Conservation Officers in the performance of their duties. **We are currently looking for current or historical uniforms and equipment donations. If you can donate or provide us any leads, please contact Stephanie at the Museum.** These two exhibits are scheduled to be completed for the 2020 season, depending upon success of acquiring items for exhibit.

A reminder to all that each year the Museum has various opportunities for you to visit and be a part of the Museum activities. You can take part in our **Visiting Officer Program**, where you spend a day or two officially representing your Agency presenting a program or just interacting with visitors. The Museum will assist with local accommodations.

Another option is to commit to spending a few days at the Museum assisting in daily activities, sales, interacting with visitors and perhaps even some light maintenance work. This **Officer Assist Program** also provides assistance with accommodations.

If you would like to visit during a special event, the **FALLEN OFFICER MEMORIAL SERVICE** weekend which is scheduled for JULY 13 would be a memorable time. And of course, there is the Annual **WARDENS ON WHEELS** motorcycle rally fundraiser which is held in August.

PLEASE CONTACT STEPHANIE, THE MUSEUM MANAGER IF INTERESTED  
IN ANY OF THESE PROGRAMS

We are continuing working with individuals to build the Website we want, which will include a store offering a few collectable items and some apparel. The site is currently under construction, but please keep checking the progress at [gamewardenmuseum.org](http://gamewardenmuseum.org)

**WE WILL BE AT NAWEOA 2019...  
HOPE TO SEE YOU IN OKLAHOMA CITY**

