

NORTH AMERICAN WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ASSOCIATION



"The Voice of Resource Law Enforcement"



Officer of the Year 2023

Joseph McBrine

Warden

Maine Warden Service

Conference Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/173505916518726/>

Fall 2023

80th Edition NAWEOA Newsletter

NAWEOA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

President Kurt Henry Manitoba , Canada	president@naweo.org
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Past President Rick Langley Arizona, US	ppresident@naweo.org
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Webmaster/Newsletter Editor Mike Reeder Pennsylvania, US	webmaster@naweo.org
Conference Liaison Jason Sherwood Wyoming, US	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 Kurt Henry



Good day to ya all!!!

I trust we all had a productive summer and spent some quality time with friends and family. Got a few of those honey do summer chores checked off the

list. Fall is upon us and as the leaves start to change and the cooler nights set in its back to long nights and many a missed family suppers and events. Trust me as a recent retired officer we don't get those back!! So please take the time when you can to grab a hug from your kids and spouse.

The summer convention in UTAH was a "blast" Sean and his crew did a bang-up job and hosted an amazing event. From the training seasons to the meals and activity it was a full 5-star week. I trust that those that attended will agree! For those that missed it we have BC hosting in July of 24 and I trust they will hit it out of the park as well. Look at the website and see what BC is offering and book your summer vacation plans around a trip to Canada!

As with any organization run by volunteers' effort and dedication shines from those that go the extra mile. As the President of NAWEOA I want to personally acknowledge VP Larry Hergenroeder, Sec/treasure Steve Beltran and web master Mike Reeder for making me look so good. With out these three men our association would not be what it is today. I am grateful for all the support they offer to me as your President and to you the membership!! Hats off!!

During the conference in Utah we had our business meetings and go the things done we needed to do. Attendance at these meeting was fair to moderate. Please if you can take the time to attend and participate in the discussion to keep NAWEOA going. If you have interest in any of the positions of the executive talk to anyone of us. We are always looking for

new ideas and eager enthusiasm. Keeping NAWEOA running takes all our nearly 9000 members so don't be shy to bring forward your vision.

Larry is busy planning our winter 24 meeting which is the next face to face time the executive has to keep the business of NAWEOA going. The call for agenda items will come out soon so if you have questions to why or how things are run send them in. Stay engaged with your local J rep and regional directors. I look forward to our winter meeting to work towards the future. As with any organization that runs any length of time it is difficult to keep the "intent" of how our bylaws and constitution was written. Trust me when I say this is of paramount importance to the board and we make every effort to acknowledge that as we carry out the day-to-day workings. One of the toughest roles is it reword those thoughts into today's situations. If you have an interest in looking into these documents and assisting us in this effort let us know help is always appreciated.

I hope and pray that this fall is a safe one for the men and women in green !! Be careful and come home at the end of each shift and detail we are assigned. Here is to seeing many of you in Penticton in July 2024.

Take care!

Kurt Henry



The Vice President's Report

By Larry Hergenroeder



Greetings NAWEOA members. The Utah Conservation Officers Association and Utah DWR presented an amazing conference in scenic Provo, Utah. Many accolades are extended to Conference Chairman Sgt. Sean Spencer and his conference committee for making every aspect of the conference memorable. An outstanding menu and

room accommodations made the week at the Provo Marriott very enjoyable for those in attendance. The raffle items exceeded expectations and another rewarding aspect was the number of new faces in attendance at this year's conference. As I enter my second year as your NAWEOA Vice-President, I am humbled by the support from our membership. One of the most rewarding duties as your Vice-President is the NAWEOA awards program. The awards program has shown much growth with nominations exceeding several of the recent years. A total of fourteen nominations for the officer of the year and multiple Torch Award, Muddy Boots and Loyal Partner nominations made for a competitive selection process to name the top performer in each category. With sights on Penticton, British Columbia, Canada, in 2024, I can only hope the nominations mirror those submitted in 2023. It's never too early to pen your nominations for these prestigious awards. Monitor the NAWEOA webpage after the first of the year by clicking on the "awards" tab to submit your nomination once the system goes live for 2024. As a friendly reminder, the nominating party as well as the nominee must be NAWEOA members in good standing for a valid nomination to be submitted. Check with your JRep or join NAWEOA as an individual member to be sure that you qualify for the NAWEOA awards program.

Please get involved with your Officer's Association and promote the NAWEOA mission. Many young officers in attendance this year benefitted from the support given by their agencies and/or their Officer's Association. NAWEOA is a "Training Confer-

ence", and agency Command Staff knows the value of sending their officers to NAWEOA for the benefit of quality training that isn't always available in their home State or Province. By starting the planning now, (Penticton Four Points Sheraton is one the host hotels for 2024, is already taking room reservations) you can secure your spot at next year's conference. I hope to see the many new faces from Utah in attendance as well as several veteran attendees from decades past.

If you have a concern or simply want to express an idea that can provide growth to the NAWEOA Summer Training Conference, please reach out to one of the Executive Board members. (You can access the email address through the NAWEOA webpage "contact us" tab). A simple critique or just a friendly message is welcome. Please allow for time to respond to your requests as some concerns may arise to the level of an agenda item at the winter meeting (Usually held in February or March) in order to take action by the Executive Board.

I am honored to represent the NAWEOA membership as your Vice-President and look forward to another year promoting NAWEOA, honoring those that perform at the highest level in Wildlife Conservation Law Enforcement.

An advertisement for Custom Cage. It features a black plastic cage with a diamond-patterned mesh. The text on the left side of the image reads: "CUSTOM CAGE", "Specializing in single prisoner transport cages since 1998.", "To find out more about our cages, or to receive a quote, visit our website at", "www.customcageinc.com". Below this, it says "Some of our satisfied customers" and shows logos for the U.S. Army, U.S. Marine Corps, and U.S. Navy. At the bottom, it says "America's #1 Police Cage Company" and provides the address "6102 N 23rd St, Ozark, MO 65721", phone number "605-642-7809", and email "sales@customcageinc.com".

The Past President's Report

By Rick Langley



THANK YOU, Utah for the incredible experience in Provo! We had great training, great field trips, great warden skills games, and some of the best social engagement I can remember. If you haven't been to a conference, you need to get to one! We are al-

ready looking forward to next July and our conference in British Columbia. Host hotels are taking reservations and it's a good time to start thinking about a trip to BC. British Columbia in 2005 was the first conference I attended and it hooked me for the last 18 years. Start a new tradition, reach out and explore new opportunities and I hope to see you in 2024.

I want to thank Jason Sherwood for his extended terms as the Region 4 Director. Jason has been pulling double duty as the Regional Director and the Conference Liaison for several years now and he obviously has done a great job filling both roles. With Jason hitting his term limits, Jeromy Huntington from Colorado will be taking on the role of Region 4 Director. I just want to say WELCOME to Jeromy! I look forward to working with him this next year.

Obviously, this year is my last year as Past President and my last year on the Board. It's been a long run and the Association survived through COVID. While I am looking forward to attending future conferences without the responsibilities that go along with being on the Board. One more year, then its on to PA 2025. In the meantime, we will continue to work on Association business and keep working on our policies and moving forward.

An advertisement for the Night Ops Blackout System. It features a car at night with the system's name in green and white text. Below the car, it says "DON'T LET THEM SEE YOU COMING". A paragraph describes the system's history and function. A list of system features is provided. A QR code is shown with the instruction "Scan the QR code to visit our website". The 836 Technologies logo and website URL are at the bottom.

NIGHT OPS™
BLACKOUT SYSTEM

DON'T LET THEM SEE YOU COMING

The Night Ops system has been helping officers catch more criminals since 2009. Our system temporarily and safely disables the brake lights on your vehicle with the touch of a button.

SYSTEM FEATURES:

- Easily installs into any vehicle.
- System automatically shuts off when headlights are activated.
- The Night Ops only works at night.
- Engage or disengage other light sources with built in relays.
- Multiple built in safety features.
- Prevents liability.

Scan the QR code to visit our website

836™
Technologies

WWW.836TECHNOLOGIES.COM

Information regarding **NAWEOA Jurisdictional Representatives,**

- ♦ Names
- ♦ Contact information
- ♦ The jurisdictions they serve
- ♦ Etc.

Can be found elsewhere on the NAWEOA website
naweo.org

NAWEOA Financial Report

By Steve Beltran

It's was a great conference this year and as profit so we are a bit behind on the financials going always I enjoy sharing our membership and finances forward. Our draft budget is listed below. It was ap- with the group. Listed below are the current numbers proved by the general membership. Please let me as well as the approved budget and expenditures from know how the secretary treasurer may serve you bet- last fiscal year. Last years conference did not return a ter.

Draft Budget

Last updated 3/6/2023

Income	2023-2024	Comments
Conference	\$ 50,000.00	
Dues	\$ 35,000.00	Estimate base on recent years dues
IGW Profits Share	\$ -	
Interest	\$ 100.00	
Promotional Sales	\$ 1,000.00	coins
Travel Reimbursements		
Total Income	\$ 86,100.00	
Expense	2023-2024	
Administrative Costs	\$ 12,710.00	See Administrative Worksheet
Affiliation Dues	\$ 750.00	ANRET, IAFWA and NACLEC dues.
Awards	\$ 2,250.00	See award sheet for detail
Conference Expenses	\$ 17,600.00	See conference expenses sheet for detail
Donations	\$ 1,000.00	See Donation sheet for detail
Meetings/Travel-Executive	\$ 30,000.00	See Meetings and Travel sheet.
Meetings/Travel-Service	\$ -	See Meetings and Travel sheet.
Membership Services	\$ 3,750.00	See membership services sheet,
Memorial Donations and Expenses	\$ 3,350.00	See Memorial Services worksheet
Newsletter	\$ 4,900.00	See Newsletter Expenses worksheet
Promotional Items Expenses	\$ 2,850.00	Patches and pins
Web Site Expenses	\$ 150.00	See Website Expenses worksheet
Total Expense	\$ 79,310.00	

Income	\$ 86,100.00
Expense	\$ 79,310.00
Surplus/Deficit	\$ 6,790.00

NAWEOA Conference Liaison Report

By Jason Sherwood

With the dust still settling down from an excellent 2023 annual conference in Provo, work is already well underway on the next few upcoming conferences! If you weren't one of the 378 attendees in Utah, you missed a great event—and we hope to see you at the next one...

I'm already hearing a lot of buzz from, and about, the 2024 conference in Penticton, British Columbia. Many members fondly remember the last time BC hosted a conference, and a similar number are looking forward to a great reason to visit a beautiful part of the Canadian Rockies next summer.

The 2024 conference is scheduled for July 15 – 20, with opening ceremonies planned for the morning of Tuesday, July 16 and a full schedule through the closing banquet on the evening of Friday, July 19. Tours and a golf tournament are in the works for July 15. As usual, the conference will include all the popular events such as the Torch Run 5K, the Warden Skills Competitions, and plenty of opportunities for certifiable training hours and networking.

The bulk of the conference events will be held at the Penticton Convention Centre and the host committee, with the help of DayDay Howe and Conference Direct, has secured room blocks at several hotels surrounding the event space. The first, and main room block is at the brand-new Four Points by Sheraton. This hotel is scheduled to open in late September of 2023, so please utilize the conference room block web link, <https://shorturl.at/tuxLX>, to secure your reservation. Rooms are \$240/night for double queen rooms and \$260 for single/king rooms, with several rooms held at these prices for three days before and after the conference. Once this block is filled, we'll release the details on the options at the nearby Sandman and Days Inn hotels.

If you're planning on flying to the conference, Kelowna (YLW) will likely be the best option for flights (the hosts are looking into shuttle options from there to the conference site). After some of the hiccups observed in 2023 travel, it appears it may be helpful to utilize the bigger "brand-name" airlines, consider travel insurance, and plan extra time if connections include stops at locations with other busy summer events (such as the Calgary Stampede).



2024 CONFERENCE NEWS

PENTICTON, BRITISH COLUMBIA

JULY 15-20

BASIC SCHEDULE:

JULY 16 - OPENING CEREMONIES

JULY 19 - CLOSING/BANQUET

STAY INFORMED!

CONFERENCE FACEBOOK GROUP

[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/GROUPS/173505916518726](https://www.facebook.com/groups/173505916518726)

FROM \$240 CAN / NIGHT

FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON

[HTTPS://SHORTURL.AT/LQWR9](https://shorturl.at/LQWR9)

OR SEE THE 2023 CONFERENCE APP FOR CURRENT HOTEL LINKS

SUPPORT OUR HOSTS

**DONATIONS AND
SPONSORSHIPS**

IF YOU CAN BRING A DONATION TO THE CONFERENCE OR

HAVE A POTENTIAL SPONSORSHIP LEAD TO SHARE,

PLEASE LET THE HOST CREW KNOW!

CONFERENCE@NAWEOA.ORG



NAWEOA Conference Liaison Report

By Jason Sherwood

Please remember all prices for the 2024 conference will be posted in Canadian dollars, unless otherwise specified. While the US attendees may see some initial “sticker shock” on prices, I expect participants will also see quite a bit of relief when they factor in the exchange rate. Sadly, northern attendees may not see this same joy—but hopefully you can best appreciate the deals James Zucchelli and the BC crew are securing for us in this popular summer destination—and will have a reprieve from the exchange rate of going to the US.

If your local officers association is interested in participating in the conference, sponsoring a hospitality night can be a great way to help out—and get some great exposure for your own group as well. Sponsorships for next year are available at \$2500 as a cohost (approximately \$1800 USD), or as an exclusive evening sponsor for \$5000. Aside from purchasing a booth in the vendor area or providing another

significant donation, this is the only approved way to be able to sell your own swag. This is also a great way to participate in conference hosting if your home jurisdiction or agency doesn’t believe it is ready or able to host the full conference.

Another way to take a more active role in NAWEOA is by offering class ideas and/or proposing to instruct during the conference. We are always looking for class ideas that apply to game wardens, can be POST-certified, and, especially if it is a class that may not be readily available through our home agencies. Aside from sharing your expertise with wildlife officers from across the continent, being an instructor may help you justify the travel through your home agency—and the host group typically offers a reduced registration fee or other trip savings as well. Shoot me an email (conference@naweo.org) with your ideas and I’ll pass it on to the BC crew (as well as future hosts in case it doesn’t get picked up this time around).



**2024 Conference
Penticton, British Columbia**



British Columbia 2023

7/15/22 - 7/20/22

**Opening Ceremonies - July 16th
Banquet Dinner - July 19th**



Region 2 Director Martin Thabault



Another summer conference has come and gone. The Utah Conservation Officers Association and Utah DNR were outstanding hosts. The UCOA ran the show like a well-oiled machine. The foothills of the Wasatch Mountains in Provo were scenic conference site.

Many attendees extended their stay in Utah and visited some of the many natural wonders this state has to offer. I had visited Utah in 2018, so this was my second visit, but it certainly won't be my last.

As the Region 2 Director of NAWEOA I am responsible to oversee the annual Officer Exchange Program. On the first day of the conference, during the Officers Luncheon, the name of two active NAWEOA members present in the audience were drawn. This year's winners were Tod Morgan from Utah and James Zucchelli from British Columbia. We have a winner from the 2023 host organization, and another from the 2024 organizing committee. What better way to reward people who worked hard, and those who are still working tirelessly to host our summer conferences. Tod is planning to visit British Columbia and Jim will be going to Tennessee this fall. During one of our business meetings, we had a presentation from Trevor Johnson, the Alberta Fish and Wildlife Officer who traveled to Oklahoma this past spring for his exchange trip. As a reminder NAWEOA will reimburse the winning Officers for up to the \$1500 in travel expenses and will cover the basic registration fee for the following summer conference. Winners must write an article for publication in an upcoming newsletter and will be presenting about their experience at the summer conference. I would like to personally thank the Oklahoma State Game Warden Association and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation for making Trevor's trip possible, and the Tennessee Wildlife Officers Association and Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency for hosting Jim Zucchelli this fall. A heartfelt thank you also goes to the Society of British Columbia Conservation Officers and B.C. C.O. Service for the numerous Officer Exchange trips they have hosted over the years, includ-

ing Tod Morgan's 2023 prize. There is a reason why so many U.S. Officers choose B.C. as their Officer Exchange destination. Come find out for yourself in the summer of 2024!

As I just hinted, next year we will be returning to Canada after a 7-year stint in the United States. We will be welcomed in Penticton (British Columbia) by the Society of British Columbia Conservation Officers and the B.C. C.O. Service. The name Penticton may sound familiar to some of you. We held our 2005 summer conference in this location. This will be a good opportunity to visit the Okanagan Valley for those of us who couldn't make it in 2005. If you are a U.S. Officer and are interested to attend the Penticton conference, please ensure you have a valid passport. Keep in mind that routine applications currently take 8 to 11 weeks to process. Don't delay! Also remember that your U.S. Dollar will take you much further in Canada. At the current exchange rate, \$100 Canadian is worth approximately \$72 USD. If you plan on flying, Kelowna B.C. is your best bet as a destination. Penticton is a 50-minute drive from Kelowna. The conference hotel will be the Four Points by Sheraton and reservations can be made by using the link on our website: <https://www.naweo.org/next-conferences/>

Finally, would like to use this opportunity to remind all NAWEOA members about our awards program, especially the Torch Award. This award presented annually to an officer from each region who has worked less than 5 years in the field of wildlife enforcement and who demonstrates great initiative and potential. I will ask your J-Reps for submissions early next spring. In the meantime, pay attention to your new officers, share your knowledge with them, help them progress and please think of them when the times comes for submissions for the Torch Award. Recognition by peers is most rewarding for a young Officer.

Please also keep in mind that I will gladly prepare and send out retirement certificates for our colleagues who have reached the end of their active careers. Ask your J-Rep for them and I will mail them out to you directly.

Region 3 Director Josh Thibodeau



this great Association.

The 2023 summer conference in Provo Utah did not disappoint, I would like to thank the Utah Conservation Officers Association, conference Liaison/Region 4 Director Jason Sherwood and all involved in putting this conference together. It was a great week of comradery, training and business. It was great to see new faces and old friends after a year apart.

During the summer conference there was some changes to the NAWEOA executive board as certain positions were up for election. I would like to thank former region 4 director Jason Sherwood for your dedication and commitment to NAWEOA. Jason will continue as the Conference Liaison and has been doing a fantastic job in that role. I would like to welcome and congratulate newly elected region 4 director Jeromy Huntington. I would also like to congratulate the other directors who will remain around the NAWEOA executive board table Kris MacCabe, Jesse Gehrt and Bandon Gavrock. I look forward to working with you all over the next year.

I would like to thank all the J Reps for their hard work and dedication being the connection between their jurisdictions and NAWEOA. The work you do is very important and does not go unnoticed. Thank you again!

Take care and stay safe!

New Brunswick

New Brunswick has been busy with training. This includes body worn cameras, Conducted energy weapons and Carbines. It has been a large undertaking

trying to roll out all the training and get all the officers qualified on these tools, but most officers are going to be certified on all these tools by the end of the fall. Conservation Officers are also busy assisting local law enforcement as their enforcement role has expanded considerably outside of the fish and wildlife mandate. Conservation Officers are now into the first year of an expired contract and officers are hopeful that the contract will reflect the expanded roles that Conservation Officers have taken on. We would like to congratulate Conor Critchlow who was the Region 3 recipient of the NAWEOA torch award.



New K-9 officer John Whitters with K9 Fiara.



Sgt. Shawn Farrell during Carbine training

Region 3 Director Josh Thibodeau



Current and former NAWEOA board members at Maine Warden days

Prince Edward Island

Prince Edward Island has recently gone through re-branding. They have been issued new uniforms and a new department crest. The Officers are very proud of the new look.



New uniforms PEI

Region 4 Director Jeromy Huntington



I am honored to have been elected as the Region 4 Director during the International Game Warden Association Conference in Provo, UT. I am the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Area Wildlife Manager for Area 9 (Primarily Grand and Summit County) in

our northwest region. I was born and raised near Aurora Colorado with inspirations to become a Colorado Wildlife Officer. I started my full-time career in Colorado in 2006 as a District Wildlife Manager and first assigned to the Colorado Springs Area. In 2013, we relocated to Granby Colorado and I promoted to Area Wildlife Manager for Area 9 in 2020. My family and I started attending NAWEOA Conferences in 2016 and been an active member since. Since 2020, I have served as Colorado's Jurisdictional Representative to NAWEOA. Over the years, my family has made many great friendships and connections across North America by attending the International Game Warden conferences. Our experience at all the previous conference inspired me to want to join the Executive Board as an opportunity to serve and give back to everyone who has and continue to make our organization

great. I want to extend a thank you to Jason Sherwood for his previous work as the past Region 4 Director and for continuing as the Conference liaison. Please don't hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or ideas as we all work continuously to keep our International Game Warden Association relevant and bring forth high quality training and networking opportunities. Additionally, thank you to everyone in Utah for hosting a great conference and my family and I are looking forward to seeing you all in British Columbia



Region 5 Director Jesse Gehrt



Greetings from Kansas, Region 5, to all of my NAWEOA family and friends. I hope this finds you all safe and in good health. I would like to send out large THANK YOU to all of the Region 5 J-reps for the work that they have done throughout this

past year. You are all a great asset to making sure information flows to and from our NAWEOA family. The 2023 NAWEOA annual conference in Provo, UT just wrapped up in mid-July, and it was a great one. Kudos to all of the Utah/UCOA officers for all of their hard work in hosting a great conference this year. Also thank you to all of the Utah staff that played a big part in it as well. From the keynote speaker Brody Young's talk of his personal accounts of his ambush and survival, to all of the training sessions, job well done Utah. Again, I personally spoke with multiple first-time attendees at the conference who say they are now hooked and promise to return to many more! I encourage any of you officers that have never attended, or have in the past but have not in recent years, please consider coming to the conferences. Your NAWEOA Board is diligently seeking out new ways to improve and to attract new attendees. The networking each of you will gain is invaluable. Officers also gain some valuable training, as well as potential new technology and ideas to bring back to your respective agencies. For our next conference in 2024, we are headed back North of the border into Canada, to Penticton, BC. The BC crew has had a bit shorter time to plan the conference, but your NAWEOA staff has no doubt it will be a great one, and we plan to help out and support as needed. We are all grateful to that they stepped up and ready to head North.

At this year's 2023 Utah conference, board elections were held. I would like to personally welcome Jereny Hunnington, from Colorado DNR, as our new Region 4 Director. A huge thank you to outgoing director Jason Sherwood, who has served NAWEOA in that role for two terms, and then some, great work. There were three other director positions up for election, or the US delegates. Congrats to Kris McCabe,

from Maine in Region 7 who is elected as a board member, and to Brandon Gavrock from Tennessee who was reelected to a second term. I, Jesse Gehrt from Kansas in Region 5, was also reelected to fill a second term as your director. I truly look forward to this role and what it brings for the next two years. The future looks very bright for NAWEOA!

As the summer boating fun winds down, this brings in one of the busiest times of the year for many of our officers.....Hunting seasons. Even with a few months still left in 2023, now is the time to be thinking about recognizing your peers for a job well done this year, by nominating them for our NAWEOA Officer awards. Please consider recognizing your peers for their efforts thus far. Your NAWEOA board looks forward to recognizing you all at the annual conference next year. Everyone be safe, and I look forward to hopefully seeing you in BC in 2024!

North Dakota:

This past winter was in the top 3 worst winters on record for the amount of snow. A lot of areas of ND broke their previous record of snow this past winter which began in November with a blizzard during the deer rifle season. Deer, Antelope, and Fish took the biggest impacts from the hard winter. Many lakes had some level of winterkill with multiple lakes being deemed a "total kill." This summer some of those lakes that experienced winterkill are unable to be fished; while they were all restocked this spring, it'll take some time to get them back to where they were. Deer tag numbers dropped from last year because of the winter and antelope tags will follow suit; biologists are working on the surveys now. One species the winter didn't have as big of an impact on is the ringneck pheasant; our spring counts show a slight increase in numbers. Brood surveys will begin in the next couple weeks. We've had 2 retirements this summer causing revolving door of internal transfers to start spinning. We should have most positions filled with the couple we have recently hired and the couple full-time temporary officers we have available. Through the Legislative cycle this spring we were granted an Investigator position to assist our Investigations Supervisor; now we have two investigators for the state, far from where we'd like to be, but a great step in the right direction.

Wisconsin:

Into the peak of summer, Division of Public Safety and Resource Protections staff are staying busy patrolling the state's waterways, ATV trails, and state

Region 5 Director Jesse Gehrt

-owned recreational areas. Wardens have been involved in public relation events, search/rescue efforts, an OWI arrest, investigating fatal recreational vehicle incidents, along with other public service and enforcement activities. A new body camera program has been implemented, with approximately half of field wardens currently being issued BWCs and the hopes to equip more wardens in the future. Funding was also approved to move forward with the purchase a RMS, which is long overdue.

Oklahoma:

The big topic in Oklahoma right now is funding. License sales are down statewide. The rest of state law enforcement agencies got big raises this past year, but ODWC did not. ODWC is not funded by legislation money. The OK warden association is working on making more of a social media presence to put Wardens in the public eye for the future.

Nebraska:

The Nebraska Wildlife Crimestoppers have recently provided CO's with thermal imaging that attaches to the officer's smart phone. The Nebraska Conservation Officer Association has recently voted to move forward and place a bid to host NAWEOA Conference in 2026 and look forward to that opportunity. This will be the 125 Anniversary of Nebraska Conservation Officers, which were established in 1901, thus being the oldest state law enforcement agency in Nebraska. The law enforcement division has taken step to establish Sergeant as a pay line and permanent position in the State Law Enforcement Bargaining Council contract. The agency will be able to back fill 5 of these positions. July 1st, officers were given a 5% raise and those below step 15 a 2.3% step increase too.

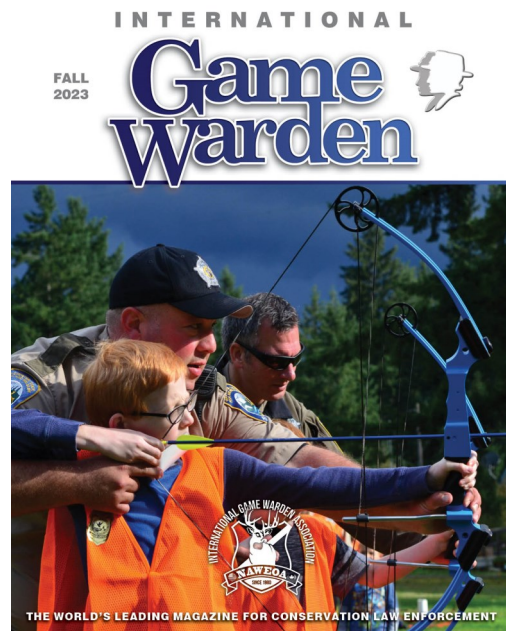
Minnesota:

Minnesota currently has an ongoing academy of 17 Conservation Officer Candidates. They will hit Field Training in mid-August. They are also in the midst of an expansion of compliment with the addition of a new Statewide Marine Unit that will consist of a Capt., Supervisor and 4 Marine Unit Officers.

Kansas:

Similar to many other state DNR agencies, Kansas still struggles to recruit applicants for open/vacated positions. We are still having a high turnover

rate and are currently at about 25% vacant. Currently only a couple of positions are being filled, with not many applicants for the process to date. Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks finally got legislative approval to move all certified officers, across three divisions (LE - Game Wardens, Parks, and Public Lands) to the Kansas Police and Fire Retirement system. This has been many years coming. Command staff also pushed through a pay raise for all levels, almost a 20% bump for some. The Governor also recently implemented a cost of living raise for management on up, but unfortunately not field staff. Game Wardens also recently went back green jeans and hats for duty uniform wear, and also upgraded duty rifles this past Spring. Sadly, back in April, one-year retired Game Warden Greg Salisbury passed away due to health reasons. Greg was very active for many years in NAWOEA and attended conferences with his family for several years. Greg will be missed by many. Lastly, as the weather turns from Summer to Fall, locals are really ramping up for the hunting seasons. Many non-residents are geared up for the KS whitetail deer seasons. Once again, there were a record number of applicants for a very limited number of big game deer permits. We all look forward to cooler temps and eventful Fall and Winter hunting seasons.



NAWEOA Training Sessions

Conductive Energy Weapon usage for Wildlife Management

By Chris Maier

In the state of Colorado, Conductive Energy Weapons (CEW) are approved for both law enforcement as well as wildlife management. CEW's have been used for aversive conditioning, hazing in wildlife and bears to increase the negative stimulus of the taser with human interactions.

CEW's have been used in Colorado since 2010, initially CEW's were used for brief capture for entanglements, health assessment, or to assist with euthanasia. Aversive conditioning began in 2014 for Black bears that were free ranging and trapped. Due to the success of the CEW usage on bears, usage was moved onto all species. The only restrictions were that they were not using it for "re-capturing," on fawns or on mountain lions.

The Agency goals were to:

Develop alternatives to highly regulated chemical immobilization techniques.

Develop effective techniques to wildlife management through current available technology.

Increase options prior to lethal control of wildlife.

Reduce the risk to officers handling wildlife.

Improve the efficiency of animal handling.

In Colorado they are currently using the Taser X2. This device has a computer that regulates and records usage. The X2 has a trigger as well as an "arc" switch. The trigger obviously deploys the probes, the Arc switch provides the audible and visual stimulus of the electric current.

There are many pre-deployment strategies that the officers will consider prior to using a taser on wildlife during an entanglement.

Function test, ensuring the taser is charged and working.

Situational awareness of the animal's mobility & obstructions (are they going to put the animal into greater distress or entanglement)

Consider the approach to the animal. How they can close the distance.

Make sure they have the appropriate tools to release

the animal (Bolt cutters, knives etc.)

Try to have appropriate cover, plan escape routes, and have a safety plan in place.

Ensure there is lethal options available for human safety as well as unintentional injury.

Through the presentation it was very evident that Kaknes & Westbrook considered safety, communication and planning with high regard on each planned usage of the CEW. As with any operation safety and communication are paramount and they stressed that in every aspect of the presentation. They also discussed numerous equipment needs that are important to have.

Tools for releasing

Personal protective equipment (safety glasses, gloves, etc.)

Recording device for training

Hobbles/blindfolds

Extra cartridges for the taser

Marking equipment/options (Paintball paint, livestock paint, ear tags, antler removal)

They also stressed the safety of using Tasers in conjunction with aerosols such as Bear spray and livestock paint. They showed a few test videos' that they did where they showed that both Bear spray as well as livestock paint could ignite with the electrical current of the taser.

When using the taser on Wildlife they discussed the importance of knowing your limitations with distance, how an accurate shot is important, the effectiveness on a probe spread (ideal probe location for moose/bear/elk is one probe in each of the front and rear shoulder). You may not get a second shot so make sure the first one works.

Kaknes & Westbrook had a lot of good training videos to share with the group. It was interesting to watch the moose struggle against the current of the taser and in some cases barely even go completely down, while bears typically go down during the initial tase, get up and take off running! One quick video of seeing a bear take off running that fast and determined and I was convinced.

After wildlife is tased they take off running, usually with the probes still attached. Kaknes & Westbrook state that the probes do not provide any long-

NAWEOA Training Sessions

Conductive Energy Weapon usage for Wildlife Management

By Chris Maier

lasting injury to the animal, and they fall out over time. In the time that Colorado has been using CEW's they have over 380 exposures with only 9 mortalities. While the presentation was highly informative, safety

was stressed throughout it. Just like every part of our jobs, there is always paperwork. It is important to document the usage of CEW's for wildlife and develop a policy with your agency. If your agency is interested in using CEW's reach out to Kaknes & Westbrook in Colorado.

Keynote Speaker: 9 Miracles –Brody Young, Utah State Parks, Assistant Boating Program Manager

By Jesse Gehrt

Brody Young is a full time Law Enforcement Ranger with the State of Utah and is currently the Assistant Boating Program Manager for Utah State Parks and Recreation, which manages the education and enforcement for all boating in Utah. Brody has been employed as a Ranger since 2006. Since then, his focus has been helping people and enforcing Utah's Laws and Rules on the water and on trails throughout the state. Brody's interest in Law Enforcement came from guiding passengers on river trips through the Grand Canyon, Cataract Canyon, Westwater Canyon on the Colorado River, and in Desolation Canyon on the Green River.

"Life is full of surprises and it can either be tragic and/or wonderful. We have the choice in how we handle it." Such was the case for Utah Ranger Brody Young as he began his patrol on the early evening of November 19, 2010. What happens next defies explanation. Brody was on patrol and stopped to check on an occupied vehicle. During that contact he was gunned down and left for dead. He pushed himself to survive and made it through it all. Brody's experience can bring hope and reflection. 9 Miracles will motivate and hopefully inspire you for years to come. "You can't help but search for the meaning and miracles in life," echoes Young. Attendees experienced the first-hand accounts from Brody's survival of the ambush, and his life experience of what happened after that. Discussions were had about survival mindsets and the balancing all aspects of your life. "Do some good! Shake off the regret from the borrowed time we

have. Live everyday as if it was your last," quotes Brody Young. His message inspired many conversations after the presentation throughout the week that followed at the conference. Brody's website is listed below.

<http://rangerbrodyyoung.com>

From all of NAWEOA, we thank you Brody Young for sharing your story and for your inspiring message that you shared with your fellow officers! Be safe out there.



NAWEOA Training Sessions

Horse Patrol By Rick Langley

As an Officer who uses horses and mules in my field work, I was really excited to see this workshop offered at the Provo conference. My department has not conducted any training on horse-use for a couple decades, so I figured I could pick up some tips as we have had some newer officers express the desire to use horse or mules in their field patrols. We understood going in, that this was not a “riding” class and we were not going to be riding or learning to ride. Our small group consisted of 4 of us (a bunch of no-

health and safety of the equine and human participants. After that we started with the basics, tacking up our horses, selecting pack equipment, then going through loading panniers, then actually hanging our panniers and tying hitches. We worked on the basket hitch and the double diamond hitch. We tied on elk racks and worked with a variety of gear.

Our instructors were super knowledgeable and the stock they brought was well behaved, which is critical in the teaching environment. I truly appreciate their time and effort they gave teaching this type of course. This was not the typical training environment and it really demonstrated the commitment of UDWR and UCOA to put on a first-rate training opportunity.



shows): 2 Officers from Colorado, 1 from Canada, and me from AZ. We were transported by bus out to the UDWR Regional Office where we met our trainers and immediately jumped into the curriculum. We first went through a presentation that showed us how Utah uses horses in their backcountry patrol efforts, which included important lessons on safety, equipment, packing and backcountry travel. They also had an impressive display of equipment that they use during horseback patrols. There is a lot of variety in equipment available for backcountry use and many riders and packers have their favorite system, so it was good to see what our instructors prefer for tack and equipment.

After we went through the equipment, we were assigned a horse for each pair to work with. First, we worked on some basic horse handling to ensure the



NAWEOA Training Sessions

Support & Recovery After an Officer Involved Critical Incident

By Chris Maier

Jason Blaylock presented 2 different times at this past NAWEOA, on both the Thursday and Friday of the convention.

In 2020 Officer Jason Blaylock was involved in an incident at work that affects him and his family to this day. In November of 2020 Jason was attending a church board meeting when he received a phone call from a landowner regarding some illegal night hunting on his property. The landowner's son went out to investigate and came across a pickup truck on their property. The driver of the pickup truck fled the scene and fired a gun at the landowner's son but not before he got the licence plate info.

The tag information was forwarded to local deputies and game wardens in the area. Blaylock was heading towards the caller's residence when he heard the description of the vehicle over the radio and just by chance he happened to be passing by the vehicle at that moment. The suspect vehicle noticed Blaylock's patrol vehicle and accelerated at a high rate of speed. Blaylock pursued the suspect vehicle for several miles with his partner and eventually the vehicle came to a dead end in the road. As officer Blaylock exited his vehicle to check the suspects and their vehicle, they put their vehicle in reverse and struck officer Blaylock's vehicle causing the door to strike him and slam him into the frame of his vehicle. The truck continued on, and officer Blaylock and his partner continued on in the pursuit. The vehicle approached a road block set up by the local deputy sheriffs and just barely avoided a collision with not only the roadblock but also with a civilian vehicle. The vehicle drove off the road to avoid the roadblock and continued back on the road only to strike officer Blaylock's partner Derrick Scott's truck. Blaylock stopped his patrol vehicle and opened the door to get out and check on his partner only to see the suspect's vehicle turn and head in his direction at a high rate of speed. Officer Blaylock knew his partner had been in an accident but also knew he had 2 deputies and a civilian vehicle directly behind his position. As the vehicle continued toward Blaylock's vehicle, he noticed the window down on

the driver's side of the suspect vehicle. Officer Blaylock knew a shot had been fired out of that window earlier in the night at someone and he knew in his mind he might not make it home that night. Officer Blaylock dove back in his truck as the vehicle struck the front driver's side tire of Blaylock's truck. Blaylock was lucky to have not been seriously injured, and his saving grace was the fact that his wheel was turned to the left and the suspect vehicle glanced off the tire, putting Blaylock out of the path of the vehicle.

To this day Blaylock remembers grabbing his carbine, the next thing that he recalls was seeing the suspect vehicle in the ditch, having hit a tree. Blaylock was yelling at the occupants of the vehicle to show him their hands. A voice ringing out from the truck "Don't shoot Mr. Jason, he's hit". Blaylock did not know who was calling him at that time until after they cleared the 2 subjects out of the vehicle.

The passenger was an 18 year old male that Blaylock had coached in football years prior, the driver was a 15 year old male. In the back of the truck was a poached deer, on the inside the vehicle were 2 rifles, one of them a 30-06 rifle. These firearms were taken away from the 15 year old only a week earlier by his grandmother and turned over to the sheriff's office. The 15 year old's mother had gotten them back for him that day.

During the lapse in time Blaylock had shot at the suspect vehicle 7 times. One of the bullets entered the rear of the cab and hit the driver in the shoulder. Medical attention was given to the young male and both were arrested immediately.

After the incident was over came some of the hardest parts for Officer Blaylock. Blaylock presented some of the challenges that officers and agencies can expect to face.

You will feel like you are in the spotlight, the investigators will take your firearms. This was not a good feeling when they take something you carry with you daily for work.

Media – Be prepared for media to paint a darker perspective of what happened.

Social Media – members of the public will look for

NAWEOA Training Sessions

Support & Recovery After an Officer Involved Critical Incident

By Chris Maier

you, your family, your spouse's work. People will share your home address, especially in the small communities.

Get a lawyer – This lawyer will be your best friend over the next coming months.

For Agencies

Offer counsellors – Critical incident Stress Management team

Know policies and procedures of what to do during an Officer involved shooting

Immediately after an officer involved shooting occurs: Officers should be provided physical and psychological first aid. They should be given:

Medical support

Emotional support

Spiritual support (if wanted)

Assign a companion officer to them

Remove them from the scene (immediate area)

Officers should be allowed to contact family immediately (if able to do so).

Facts are not given to the family, just to let them hear your voice and for you to tell them that you are OK.

Officers should talk with an attorney and get advice before anything else is asked of them

Investigative process at the scene

This is extremely stressful for the officer. Removal from the scene will help that individual.

Confusing – starting to feel like your actions were not warranted, being questioned starts putting doubts in your mind.

Emotional – this is a traumatic event, having to turn your firearm over is tough.

After the Officer Involved Shooting Occurrence

Agency time off – Depending on your agency and how much time you are given off can be challenging to the officer. Sitting at home, with your mind running. In Blaylock's case he was off for 10.5 months.

Counselling – This should be offered to individuals on a continuous basis until the officer and the counsellor feels he does not need it. Blaylock was offered a 1 hr session which was a peer group setting (other officers

that were involved in incidents).

Legal contact – Lawyers working for the individual's best interests is important.

Official agency paperwork – this needs to be completed in a timely fashion after an OIS or incident.

Use of Force report

Incident report

Investigative and legal process – Interviews with investigators, prosecutors etc. Blaylock was never interviewed by the district attorney. Blaylock's partner was interviewed and he was asked to change his story to reflect poorly against Blaylock. (For those that don't remember what took place in 2020 with policing, a quick google search will jog your memory)

No charges were pursued by the DA.

Blaylock's OIS was not publicized, which was probably a blessing, considering no charges were laid.

Officer needs

Contact with others:

Be there for your partners and each other.

Some of the most important calls you will receive will be from connections outside of your agency.

Agency Support – Make every effort to help expedite completion of the incident and keep the officer involved/informed

Fellow Officer Support – Partners need you!!!

Call them

Get them out of the house

Be there for your "Buddy"

Effects of an OIS

Family will be affected.

Withdrawal – Officer & family will stop doing things that are normal

Aggression – misplaced anger

Bullying of children – school age kids will get bullied by peers.

Spouses, friends and co-workers will act differently.

Social Media – people will comment horrible things, give out your address, kids school, spouses place of work, family, etc.

Alcohol

Suicide – Increased incidents of suicide after a critical incident

How can we help

Briefing strategy after each incident for the agencies.

Assist the officer with psychological treatment

Department must keep officer confidentiality in re-

NAWEOA Training Sessions

Support & Recovery After an Officer Involved Critical Incident

By Chris Maier

gards to the officers psychotherapy and psychopharmacology.

Get the officer back to work as soon as they are deemed "Fit for Duty".

Co-workers – How you can help

Help the officer get back into their job, and get comfortable with their roles and duties

Ride with them. Be there to support them as they transition back into their duties.

Monitor your partner's well being, watch for warning signs

Loss of interest

Statements of helplessness and hopelessness?

Making detailed arrangements with insurance and finances

Giving away valuable possessions

Talking about suicide.

Monitor their home life

Is the marriage deteriorating?

Is the officer pulling away?

Alcohol and drug abuse?

Any Red flags?

For the officer involved

Get back in the saddle. The best therapy for you is to get back into your routine!

If you need help, Ask for it!

Talk about the incident once you can. This is part of the healing process.

The biggest takeaway from Conservation Officer Blaylock's presentation was "to be there for each other, and to talk to each other". It is important that we don't isolate an officer involved in any incidents, and that we check in routinely. If your agency does not have a policy, peer support group, psychological assistance, or legal assistance set up, start asking those questions why not?



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NAWEOA Training Sessions

Operation Deceiver By Martin Thabault

The Utah Conservation Officers Association and Utah DNR put together a high-quality array of keynote speakers, seminars, and training sessions for our 2023 Summer Conference. The training agenda is one of the key features of our annual conference, and this year's offer did not disappoint.

I sat through a few sessions myself, including D.J. Dillon's presentation on Operation Deceiver. D.J. and me both work for the Wildlife Enforcement Directorate of Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC-WED). ECCC-WED is the Canadian counterpart of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and one of our mandates is to regulate the international and inter-provincial wildlife trade. D.J. is a keen member of NAWEOA and has been a regular attendee at our summer conference since 2017. I can say that he was extremely enthusiastic about having the opportunity to present at NAWEOA.

D.J. started his Public Service career with the Canadian Military Police in 2005, he then moved on to become a Security Analyst for another federal department, worked a few years with the Halifax Regional Police as a Crime Analyst before being selected in 2017 as our Regional Intelligence Analyst in the Prairie and North Region. He is based out of Saskatoon.

Operation Deceiver was initiated by D.J. in 2019. His presentation highlighted how illegal wildlife imports originating from Thailand and couriered to Canada are

connected to insurgent groups fighting for autonomy in neighbouring Myanmar (Burma). Typically, this illegal trade focuses on Traditional Asian Medicine and bushmeat, and the Canadian clientele tends to be war refugees from Myanmar.

D.J. indicated that by looking at the parties involved in this illegal trade, he was able to link them to Burmese insurgent groups who have a presence in North America. He explained how smuggling likely takes place through the border between Thailand and Myanmar. Smugglers bring in illegal goods (including wildlife) to Thai public markets and trade them for firearms and supplies which are brought back to Myanmar. The illegal wildlife is then sold in Thai markets and shipped via courier overseas. The management and employees of the courier companies involved are supportive of the Burmese insurgents' cause. The overseas importers are also active supporters and raise funds both for humanitarian aid, and for the Burmese insurgency. The North American end users are typically refugees sharing the same origins and consume the illegally imported wildlife as traditional food or medicine. There is a high likelihood that these end users are involved in domestic poaching and commercialization both in Canada and in the USA, their motive being food security and financing the fight for freedom in Myanmar through commercialization of illegally taken wildlife.

If this topic is of further interest, I encourage you to contact D.J. Dillon via email at Daniel.Dillon@ec.gc.ca



"Awesome course. Very relevant, interesting and informative. I will definitely use this very valuable information. It made me feel more comfortable in my job."
Australian Commonwealth Compliance Officer

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NAWEOA Conference

Business Meeting By Steve Beltran

The heart of any good business meeting is the financial report. It's the most exciting and oftentimes the most scrutinized. Each year the executive board meets and goes over the expenditures and budget with a fine tooth comb. Some years are tougher than others, especially when it comes to conference income. Naweoa's goal is to grow in members and finances. We need income to remain sustainable. The business meeting isn't only about numbers. We present bylaw changes and constitutional requests. We answer questions from the general membership, take motions, and have heartfelt discussions on the future of our organization. This year's meeting had the budget presentation and spending balance sheet. Both

items were voted on by the general members for approval.

Each year we encourage all members to attend the general meetings. It's one of the ways the executive board gets to hear your concerns and desires for future growth. Some of our meetings can become exciting when new logo topics arise or members have questions about the operations of our organization. It's important that each member realizes that this is your organization. These are your business meetings and we as the executive board are here to represent you and your fraternal family to the best of our ability. Please continue to support your organization and attend the business every year. We welcome your input.

Opening Ceremonies By Steve Beltran

The opening ceremonies were delightful and heartfelt bringing family and friends together yet another year to celebrate each other and mourn the loss of our beloved fellow officers. Four officers were added to the memorial this year, three from New York and one from Florida. The corner of the room was dressed with photos, flags and memories.

Utah stepped with precision, caring our nations flags into the grand ballroom to kick off this years events. The color guard looked immaculate.

The members and families were greeted by dignitaries and executive shining the way to an exciting training event. Utah has spent a volume of hours in man power to make this conference one to remember.

Shortly after the ceremony we had a swift walk to secure our annual group photo and then back to the venue for our key note speaker. The excitement continues for the rest of the week.



NAWEOA Conference

Firearm Evidence of Investigations By Jason Sherwood

During the 2023 NAWEOA Annual Conference, Tony Latham, published author and retired wildlife officer from the Salmon, Idaho area, presented a two-hour course on utilizing ballistic evidence in the field to quickly link suspects to specific poaching activities, with the typical lack of immediate access to a forensic lab.

Latham briefly shared his background in law enforcement, both as a conservation officer and as a regional investigator, and outlined a few key cases that helped shape and prove his techniques, while also demonstrating how these skills and simple tools could work to efficiently solve cases. An accomplished author, he also brought along a few “give-away” books to encourage class engagement.

Latham offered a quick history of ballistic evidence, starting with the 1835 murder case worked by Investigator Henry Goddard, but also referencing more recent examples from popular culture to demonstrate the interest in forensic evidence, as well as the need to triage evidence quickly. As stated in every episode of “The First 48” television series, the odds of solving major cases “drops by 50% if a solid lead is not found within the first 48 hours” after the crime.

For one early example, Latham discussed how a moose was found with two bullet wounds. Further investigation located bullets with twelve, right-hand twist, sets of lands and grooves apparent; relatively shallow penetration of the bullet wounds; and observations that the animal had been shot horizontally through the rear, but the shot into the neck was angled downward. After referencing the General Rifling Characteristics (GRC) data available through the FBI, these observations quickly helped narrow the suspect pool to one likely brand and caliber of rifle—which happened to match what was initially somewhat of an unlikely suspect. Besides identifying the correct suspect, the shot angle observations also helped determine the order of events and affirmed the suspect’s eventual proximity to the dying moose.

Latham detailed the tools needed for these

types of field observations, including a caliper capable of making accurate measurements to one thousandth of one inch (easily available from tool shops such as Harbor Freight), a 10 or 15x eye loupe (commonly used by jewelers), silly putty for making simple casts of firearm muzzles for a quick visual comparison to a bullet, a kinetic bullet puller (reloading tool) to disassemble loaded cartridges and facilitate looking for brand markings or particular characteristics of an unfired bullet from a suspect, and a reloading manual to reference information about various caliber bullets and the cartridges they are commonly used in. He also discussed observations of the brands of ammunition and ammunition components and how to determine the number and direction of rifling marks. Numerous observations can also be made on fired cartridge cases, such as looking for types of firing pin impressions, milling and other tool marks made on primers or cartridge bases from the breech face, and marks made from ejectors and extractors.

The group also discussed the difference between “class” and “individual” characteristics, noting that “class” characteristics can be utilized from a fired bullet to determine potential brand and models of firearms that could have been used in the associated crime. “Individual” characteristics are marks created by one specific firearm part, such as a particular scratch across the face of a rifle’s bolt that causes a unique mark on the base of cartridges fired in that gun.

While this was a condensed version of the full course Latham often instructs to various enforcement agencies, he was still able to provide great information on many of the tools and skills required to make these important observations in the field, and we appreciate his continued work in helping game wardens efficiently catch poachers!

NAWEOA Conference

Game Warden Torch Run By Kris MacCabe

In the early morning hours of July 12, 2023 active and retired Wardens and Conservation Officers as well as family and friends participated in the annual NAWEOA Torch Run to benefit the North American Game Warden Museum. With temperatures consistently in the low to mid 90's throughout the week it was a warm but cooler run in the morning hours with the race starting as the sun was rising over the Wasatch Front Mountain Range.

Utah DWR chose the spot for the 5k along the shores of Utah Lake at Utah Lake State Park. The 5k started in the parking area of the State Park and meandered through the cottonwood lined trail following a small stream. If you had never seen a cottonwood stand of trees that lined the area of the 5k the only imagine that came to mind was a pillow fight gone wrong along the trail. The trail was covered with what appeared to be cotton from the blossoming trees.



Some may have swallowed some of the blowing cotton balls as they navigated the narrow paved course but were no worse for wear in the end. The course went along open agriculture fields with the turnaround at one main road crossing.



As the last several years have shown youth rises to the top with the young Pennsylvania Finnegan sprinter taking the lead and not relinquishing it with a blistering standalone pace.



After completing the 5k Utah DWR cooked the breakfast of champions along the shores of Utah Lake. First starting with the often-misinterpreted donuts that law enforcement show graciously invites to all breakfasts with a coffee. The breakfast buffet continued with pancakes, eggs and sausage, coffee and orange juice.

NAWEOA Conference

Warden Skills By Mike Reeder

Another conference, another warden skills competition. Every year, the stations continue to show the ability of conservation enforcement professionals to design complex tasks for attendees.

Often the stations emulate the host states wild-life diversity and hunting traditions. That was again present this year with several stations involving elk and other western game species.

Another great thing to see was the offspring or “Warden Spawn” join in the games. As we all know, NAWEOA is very family oriented. It is always great to see the friendships built between the NAWEOA youth from across North America.

When the day was over it came down to a tie for second and third place, which resulted in a corn hole toss off. In the end Team Z took first place, Mutts took second and North and South took third.

I am sure everyone is looking forward to the unique stations next year in British Columbia.



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

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 1st each year. The successful officer will be notified by April 15th..

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 1st each year. Winners will be notified by April 15th.
- 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 honor 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

en 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 1st each year. The successful officer will be notified by April 15th.
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.

