84TH ISSUE



NORTH AMERICAN WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

THE VOICE OF RESOURCE LAW ENFORCEMENT



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2026 Conference

July 20-24th, 2026 (Opening ceremonies on July 21st and the closing banquet will be the night of July 24th



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The President's Report

By Larry Hergenroeder



NAWEOA

out the week as they attended a conference rich in Outfitters and many, many more. NAWEOA history and an abundance of modern training topics. One of the original fifteen NAWEOA Founding Fathers, Tom Bivins was in attendance (NAWEOA's 2nd President) and offered the back story of how it all began in Great Falls, Montana in 1980. The Keynote Speaker, Retired US Army Colonel Grey Berrier, confirmed his link to game wardens and the hosting state of Pennsylvania with the distinction of being the great grandson of Pennsylvania's first game protector, Big Joe Berrier. The Keynote Trainer, Kevin Behr told his story of triumph and perseverance over the critical incident that he endured while conducting a deer decoy detail in south central Ohio. Other trainings offered throughout the week were well attended by the membership, trainings included Lost person behavior, Underway boating procedures, the Below 100 program, Black Bear conflict management and Case preparation & prosecution just to name a few.

I would like to extend my appreciation to the command staff of the Pennsylvania Game Commission and the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission for their continued support providing for their officers attendance at the 2025 NAWEOA Conference.

Accolades to the Conservation Officers of Pennsylvania Association (COPA) for hosting the 2025 NAWE-

member- OA Conference. COPA President Mike Reeder and I ship, I am humbled by as your Conference Chairman, Co-Chairman Andy the incredible attend- Hueser and our fellow Committee Chairmen are honance and support at the ored to have had the opportunity to plan and execute a 2025 NAWEOA Sum- memorable event along the Bayshore of Lake Erie. mer Conference in Erie, Our deepest gratitude to our sponsors, Waste Manage-PA. The amazing venue ment, F.O.P. Conservation Police Officers Lodge of the Bayfront Conven- #114, Pennsylvania Game Commission, Fish USA, tion Center was a 5 star Engel Entertainment, Visit Erie, Edinboro Outdoors, host to 606 game war- Zappy Marketing & Publishing, Hallman Chevrolet, dens and their families Quietkat, Conservation Officers of Pennsylvania Asfor the 42nd annual sociation, Prairie Rose Outfitters, Last Chance Ranch, NAWEOA conference. Energy Transfer, Tennessee Wildlife Officers Associ-Our guests enjoyed first ation, Expand Energy, Straub Brewery, Vortex Opclass amenities through- tics, Seneca Resources, Hellyer Airbnb, Stony Brook

> The NAWEOA Executive Board is proud to announce the 2025 NAWEOA "Officer of the Year" Award recipient, Wildlife Investigator Kirk Kiefer, from the Ohio DNR, Division of Wildlife. Investigator Kiefer's 22 years of service has been stellar that includes the largest ginseng investigation and prosecution case in Ohio DNR history. Respected by the courts, command staff and his peers, Investigator Kiefer is very deserving of this honor that had one of the best reactions from a recipient receiving this prestigious award. Everyone, including his spouse, kept it a secret until his name was read by NAWEOA Vice President Chris Maier at the opening ceremonies presentation. Investigator Kiefer was also one of the trainers for the conference, presenting the investigation and case study of his complex ginseng case.

> NAWEOA presented Tennessee Wildlife Officer Brandon Taylor from Region 6 with the "Muddy Boots Award" for the associations top Jurisdictional Representative (JRep) of the year. Officer Taylor represents the Tennessee Wildlife Officers Association and is also their association's current President.

> NAWEOA presented Ohio DNR, Division of Wildlife Officer & K-9 Handler Jason Keller with the "Loyal

The President's Report

By Larry Hergenroeder

Partner Award". Officer Keller and his K-9 Partner across the US and Canada. My appreciation to our "Scout" were named the top K-9 and Handler team.

Several other wardens were recognized receiving the Torch, Valor, Lifesaving and Outstanding Service Awards. The NAWEOA Awards program has been a great success over the years honoring those that perform at the top of the wildlife life law enforcement profession.

I would like to extend my appreciation to out going Region 4 Director Jeromy Huntington (Colorado) and welcome newly elected Region 4 Director Sean Spencer (Utah). Congratulations to Region 5 Director Jesse Gehrt (Kansas), Region 6 Director Shawn Elmore (Georgia) and Region 7 Director Kris MacCabe (Maine), re-elected to their respective positions serving the NAWEOA membership.

Wearing two hats this year, I'm proud that the conference was a huge success connecting game wardens

officers from Canada that made the trip to Erie, PA to join their fellow game wardens from across North America. As I shift my focus back to the President's role, I am committed to continue moving NAWEOA forward and securing commitments from future hosts ensuring that this 45 year tradition continues.

Looking forward, I am elated that the Nebraska Conservation Officers Association will be the host for the 2026 NAWEOA Conference being held in Omaha, Nebraska. The dates are July 20th through July 24th and if you haven't booked your room yet, visit the NAWEOA.org website and click on the link to secure your accommodations. Don't miss out on the opportunity to experience all NAWEOA has to offer with certifiable trainings, warden networking and comradery. I hope to see you in Nebraska next July.

The Vice President's Report

By Chris Maier



pressures, I have to Hergenroeder,

Reeder,

erson Reeder (The official NAWEOA photographer), awards. COPA, and the state of Pennsylvania for hosting this past year's NAWEOA Conference.

Larry and the team did a tremendous job putting us all Ohio. Kirk was not aware that he was the recipient of together right on Lake Erie. With plenty of sights to the award until I called his name out. Kirk is exsee, tours to be had, fish to be caught, and of course a tremely respected amongst his peers and many of the few coins/patches to be traded, there was never a dull Ohio officers had reached out to me to discuss the moment at the conference. Like every conference it work ethic and excellent investigation techniques that

With Fall upon us, seems like you walk in the doors to register, blink and it is the best time of then you are saying your goodbyes after making new the year to be a friends and having many, many laughs. Thanks again warden. Larry and team for making so many great memories While we are all and building a lot of new and old friendships! I also shifting our focus hear that Straub brewery made sure that most people to the fall's hunting made it home with a souvenir bottle opener or 7.

throw out a big This past conference was also my first time handling Larry the awards portfolio for NAWEOA. This was an extreme honor for me. Recognizing all of the hard work Andy Hueser, Mike and successes of game wardens is something that we and the all take for granted. I encourage you all to nominate many helping officers, spouses, family members, Em- co-workers, colleagues, & partners for next years

> Congratulations to all of the award winners, especially the NAWEOA officer of the year, Kirk Kiefer from

The Vice President's Report

By Chris Maier

Kirk Kiefer displays to his team. Kirk also presented at this years conference on the illegal ginseng trade in July 2026 will be upon us soon. The Nebraska Con-Ohio. Kirk's multi-year investigation resulted in jail- servation Officers Association is busy getting things time, and very hefty monetary penalties. Well de- in place to host next years conference. If your associserved Kirk and it was my honor (Canadian spelling) ation can assist in any way please reach out to Alex to present Kirk with this award in front of his col- Hasenauer. This can be in form of monetary donaleagues and wife.

If you have any comments, concerns, suggestions for the awards program please email me or let your J-Rep Thanks again to everyone that continues to put in their know.

Over the next year we will be planning our winter will see you all in Omaha in 2026. meeting, as well as our summer meeting. We are always looking for different associations/agencies to Chris Maier host so if you are half interested. Please reach out to Vice President any of the board members.

tion, raffle prizes, silent auction items, or hosting a table at hospitality night.

blood, sweat and tears into ensuring that NAWEOA continues year after year. Take care, be safe and we

The Past President's Report By Kurt Henry



As past president I get to relax a bit during the week I looking forward to the Conference in Omaha in 2026 the general business meetings of the week. Lots of terest in hosting conferences into the future. work goes into these meetings to bring resolutions and ideas from the board to the membership. The main All the best be safe and take time to enjoy the outseveral candidates step up for a second term and had a members! pair run for one region director position. It's great to see and I encourage all that are interested in a board Kurt Henry position to contact myself and I can direct you forward Past President to reach this goal.

I did manage to get to several of the relevant training seminars. Very interesting pool of topics to pick from it was hard to choose at times. One that hit home for

Well if there is one me as a seat belt survivor from a patrol vehicle roll thing we cannot con- over was the seminar on Below 100 which is an effort trol its TIME!! Where to reduce the number of enforcement killed and indid the summer/fall jured in most often unnecessary serious vehicle accigo? It seems like only dents during patrol. Long and short slow down wear yesterday we were your body armor and seatbelt at all times when we are wrapping up an amaz- in our patrol units. I have brought this training idea to ing gathering at the our local Manitoba Conservation Officers Service to conference in Erie, provide a delivery to our officers. In Canada we are thanks to Larry and his well below 100 a year but any preventable death is the goal.

of conference. Keeping the boat going in the right di- so please mark your calendars and book your leave rection is a good analogy. I would say that we had early to experience what will be an amazing event. It some very productive executive meetings as well as is also great to see the years to come that we have in-

role of PP is to run the elections and this year we saw doors, family and our jobs that unite us as NAWEOA

Region 1 Director James Zucchelli



The fall season is here and its the best time to be a Game Warden in North America. We would like to give a heart felt thanks to COPA and 2025 NA-WEOA organizing committee for hosting a great conference in The training, July. comradeship and rela-

tionship building was on point and the food and accommodations were excellent as well.

We are hoping to rejuvenate the Canadian Participation in the next NAWEOA Conferences with Nebraska on the horizon to host in 2026. It cannot be understated that NAWEOA knows no boundaries and we are all North American Game Wardens putting our agencies and associations on the forefront to associate with the almost 9000 members across North America. We have strength through association and we need to maintain and strengthen those contacts at home and abroad. Please be safe and strong and know that you have NAWEOA support through your jurisdictional representatives.

Good luck in your personal and professional pursuits enjoying the natural resources that you work so hard to protect in the fall of 2025.

James A. Zucchelli Region 1

Region 2 Director Jason Pink



Greetings NAWEOA Canada. members. Yet another tractions.

worth a second visit!

cadets from the Ross Leffler School of Conservation join in on many of the activities and help out during the Warden Skills Competition. I am sure it was a great experience for these new and upcoming officers to network with wardens from all over the USA and

fantastic summer con- As Region 2 Director for NAWEOA, I am responsible ference has come and for overseeing the much-coveted Officer Exchange Set on the Program. During the NAWEOA officers luncheon, shores of beautiful two names of active members present in the audience Lake Erie, Pennsylva- are drawn, one Canadian officer and one from the US. nia, attendees had the I am pleased to announce that this year's winning US opportunity to visit officer is Jeffrey Mock (PA Game Warden) and he has many of the local at- chosen British Columbia as his host province. For the From Canadian winner, congratulations go out to Josh beaches to fishing to Thibodeau (New Brunswick CO), who has tentatively wine tours, PA has lots to offer. This was my second chosen Wyoming as his host state. I have no doubt time in Erie, having stayed overnight on our way to they will both have fantastic presentations to show the the Nashville conference in 2022, and it was well membership at the Nebraska conference next summer. Last year's winner from the USA, Isaac Cyr (Oregon State Trooper), presented his once in a lifetime trip to This was a very well attended conference with officers British Columbia. As he said, it was the golden ticket! from across Canada and the USA. Our hosts, the A big thanks to the Society of British Columbia Con-Pennsylvania Conservation Officers Association servation Officers and all those who gave their time to (COPA), and conference Chair Larry Hergenroeder showcase the province of BC. The Canadian winner, did not spare any details on this one. The facilities at Ben Beetlestone (BC CO) chose Georgia as his host The Bayfront Convention Center exceeded expecta- state and also had a fantastic experience thanks to tions and provided ample room for training, hospitali- Shawn Elmore and his crew. Unfortunately, Ben was ty, vendors and displays. The PA Game wardens and unable to attend this year's conference, but his presenthe PA Boat and Fish Commission Officers attended tation can be found in the Spring 2025 edition of the in large numbers, and it was a nice touch to have the newsletter. As a reminder, NAWEOA will reimburse

Region 2 Director Jason Pink

Officer Exchange Program winners up to \$1500.00 in Looking ahead to 2026, we are on track to be hosted for the Spring newsletter and be present at the summer conference to showcase their experiences.

In other news, elections were held to fill the USA Directors positions. Congratulations Spencer from Utah for securing Region 4 position. Sean was the conference chair for the Utah conference in 2023 and will certainly be an asset to the Board. No other positions were contested, and the following officers will continue on the Board for another term: Jesse Gehrt, Region 5 from Kansas, Shawn Elmore, Region 6 from Georgia, Kris MacCabe, Region 7 from Maine. A special thank you to Jeromy Huntington, outgoing Region 4 Director, for his great work and dedication to NAWEOA.

American The annual North Game Warden Museum Torch Run, another yearly highlight during the conference, was held at the picturesque Directors will gladly mail those out to the respective Presque Isle State Park. As usual, the tireless efforts agencies. of Sheila Paquette and her team made the event a huge success. I don't want to brag too much, but Looking forward to seeing old friends and meeting my lovely wife Sandra placed first among the new officers and their families in Nebraska! women runners over 50, and my eldest son Daniel placed third in the youth catego-

ry, with my youngest son James mere seconds behind. I, on the other hand, rolled across the finish line a little bit later...and a lot sweatier!

travel expenses and will cover the registration fee by Nebraska. The dates are July 20-24th, and the hotel for the next conference. Winners must write an article reservation link is now open for the Double Tree by Hilton in Omaha. I encourage members to book their rooms early to secure a spot! You can book through the NAWEOA web site, on the "Next Conference" page.

> I would also like to take this opportunity to remind members about the various NAWEOA awards available: Officer of the Year, Torch Award, Award for Valour, Lifesaving Award and K-9 Loyal Partner Award. Please nominate your fellow hardworking officers who you feel are deserving of such recognition.

Lastly, Regional Directors can issue retirement certifi-cates to officers who have hung up the badge. Please forward those names to your respective J-Reps so we can honor their years of service. The

Jason Pink Region 2

Information regarding NAWEOA Jurisdictional Representatives.

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

Can be found elsewhere on the NAWEOA website naweoa.org



Good day everyone, I am happy to
be submitting a
second Fall newsletter representing
the great agencies
of region 3. This is
my second year,
and I can't say
enough good
things I have been
able to learn and
engage with because of this. I am

happy to bring some updates from some of the great provinces of Eastern Canada.

First and foremost, if you weren't able to make it to 2025 Conference in Erie PA. Wow what an amazing conference put on by COPA and our president Larry. The training and comradery that was established in the few short days of the conference were life changing. I was able to surmise a couple of the great trainings I attended and can't say enough for the guest speakers that attended. Thanks again to all vendors that I spoke with and the great friends I made along the way.

I would like to also welcome Sean Spencer to the board, what a great addition, and thanks to Jeromy Huntington for all the contributions he made during his time with NAWEOA executive board.

Eastern Canada has quite the rocky summer and fall with a record year of draught and fires that kept all our members under region 3 extremely busy. I want to go and say a length of gratitude for my J-reps for reaching out and keeping up to date with ongoings in their region and safety of all the hardworking officers within them. I hope by the time this newsletter is released we will have gotten through the fire season with everyone safe and at home with their families.

A very large thanks goes out to Michel Morin for many years as the J-rep for Quebec region, I am sure most people reading this letter have many stories with Michel and am sad to see him pass the torch to a new J-rep. I would like to welcome the change to Etienne Daigle for the Association des agents de protection de la faune du Québec. I can't wait to continue to work with you and am happy to receive an update on your behalf in the Spring once you have settled into the position.

Many thanks to all contributors,

Shane Hellyer Region 3 Director Environment and Climate Change Canada

Quebec

Shane Hellyer on behalf of J – Rep Etienne Daigle – Association des agents de protection de la faune du Ouébec

Etienne Daigle would like to thank everyone for his role change as J-rep for Quebec and with the recent change and very busy times within Quebec Region will be giving an update for the Spring Newsletter. They are currently working with a large staff shortage and are in union negotiations due to the very busy and challenging work they all do within Quebec. I wish a safe and busy fall hunting season for all officers in Quebec.

New Brunswick

J-Rep Roger Selesse with contributions from the New Brunswick Conservation Officer Association Wow, what a rollercoaster of a summer for New Brunswick! From soggy weekends to wildfire emergencies. Mother Nature wanted to keep everyone on their toes—and Conservation Officers were right at the heart of it all. Here's a quick recap of the summer's highlights.

Persistent weekend rain at the start of the summer kept people indoors and reduced outdoor activity. Conservation Officers had fewer public interactions due to the rainy conditions. Then the Canada day switch happened, and summer finally arrived. By the third week of July the forests were dry, and the province was issuing burn bans.

During the first week of August, wildland fire starts in the north eastern part of New Brunswick began to stretch the provinces fire suppression resources. The province called upon its Conservation Officers to help with road closures, mandatory evacuations and even fire suppression.



The Palisades Fire above



Conservation Officer conducting fire suppression duties.

On August 11, 2025, Conservation Officers began to work extended shifts. These shifts were to focus patrols in rural areas to enforce the Forest Fires Act. Soon after the province closed Crown Lands

to any recreational and industrial activities. Officers were now tasked with patrolling these areas and removing people who violated the orders and shut down any illegal industrial operations. Over the month of August Conservations Officers issued 61 tickets and 29 warnings under the Forest Fires Act and another 9 tickets and 31 warnings for entering or occupying Crown Land in contravention of a sign or notice.

Wildland Fire Origin and Cause investigators from the conservation unit were also busy to investigating over 35 fires. Determining the cause of these fires is no easy task as the evidence they are looking for has usually burned or been disturbed by fire suppression operations. But by using their training they can eliminate certain causes and focus on what the fire is telling them. Causes determined from these investigations included Category 1 fires, powerlines, lightning and arson.



Hot flakes from break drums starting fires along highways

Conservation Officers were also tasked with responding to complaints of injured wildlife. This was in response to relieving Department of Natural Resources staffs of this responsibility and focus of fire suppression and response.

Buy the end of August the province received enough rain to and cool nights to slow down any wildland fire starts and to help control any active fires. At the time of this newsletter deadline New Brunswick reported 321 wildland fires burning over 2500ha. 9 fires remain active with one still listed as Out of Control. Conservation officers were relieved of their extended shifts on August 25, 2025, as the province reopened Crown Lands for New Brunswickers to enjoy the rest of the summer.

This summer also saw the roll out of the newly wrapped Conservation Enforcement trailer. This trailer tours all over the province to attend both community events and outdoorsman shows. The trailer is manned by local conservation officers who educated the public of hunting, angling and trapping practices. The trailer contains seized items from around the province including a polar bear rug.



A couple of NB Conservation officers were recognized for their dedication and hard work to protecting the natural resources and public of this province.

First, Officer Justin Galloway received the 2024 Shikar Safari "Wildlife Officer of the Year" Award. Justin is not only a dedicated officer in the field but also tremendous support behind the scenes. His professionalism, knowledge and willingness to lend a hand makes him a true asset to out team and the broader conservation community. Well deserved Justin.



Second, Officer Kody Little received the 2024



Torch Award. Kody's dream job was always to become a conservation officer. An import from Nova Scotia, Kody was hired in 2019 and has made himself right at home in New Brunswick. His wiliness to learn and adapt his new skills to his patrol work shows his dedication. He has also become an experienced trapper. Congratulations Kody, keep up the great work.

Usually, the month of August allows Conservation Officers a chance to catch their breath from their duties and enjoy vacations and their love of the outdoors. But with the events of the last month Conservations Officers will roll into September's opening of the early goose and fall bear

season on the 1st with the beloved 5-day 2025 Moose season starting on the 23rd of September. Never a dull moment for a New Brunswick Conservation Officer.



Newfoundland

Shane Hellyer on behalf of J – Rep Glenda Bateman – NL Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Officers Association

Along with the rest of the Maritimes Newfoundland has seen an unprecedented drought and have been dealing with everything that comes along with a very active forest fire season. Here are some great updates provided by the NL Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Officers Association.

Resource Enforcement officers with the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture recently seized a boat, motor, net and 10 Atlantic salmon following a poaching investigation. Two individuals were arrested for contravention of the Fisheries Act.

Shane Hellyer Region 3



Resource Enforcement Officers recently braved the cold for the annual Law Enforcement Torch Run Newfoundland and Labrador Polar Plunge in Massey Drive.



Resource Enforcement Division is proud to support this cool and worthwhile cause in aid of Special Olympics Newfoundland and Labrador



Region 4 Director Sean Spencer



I am thankful to the attendees at the Erie PA conference for their trust and support to elect me as the region 4 director. My name is Sean Spencer and I have been a conservation officer for the State of Utah for 16.5 years. Prior to that I lived in Texas where I my career and spent 4 years as the Bullfrog district officer and covered Lake Powell and the

Henry Mountains. Then I moved to Utah county and was an officer there for the next 6 years.

After that I promoted to a Sgt which I've been for 6 years now. I have really enjoyed my time working for Region 4 the State of Utah. When I'm not working, I spend time with my family. My wife is Shontel and we have

a 14-year-old daughter, 7-year-old son, and 2-yearold boy girl twins. We love to go outdoors when we can and spend time boating or paddle boarding. We also love to hike the many beautiful slot canyons in Utah. I attended my first NAWEOA conference in Tucson AZ 2012. I had a blast and immediately knew that I wanted to continue to attend. I have been to 10 conferences. Early on I knew I wanted Utah to host the conference someday, which happened in 2023. I was so proud of how our state and supporters represented and we put on a wonderful conference.

was born and raised. I started I have also been heavily involved with our officers' association and have worked hard to make huge advances for officer pay at the legislative level. Now that I am on the board, I hope to be able to continue to support future conferences and represent our members from across the US and Canada.

Sean Spencer

Region 5 Director Jesse Gehrt



Greetings you all safe and in good health,

of a new Records Management system with computers in patrol trucks and digital ticketing. Officers have welcomed the change, especially the expedited process for issuing citations to violators. NEW in 2025 is from the Taser 10. This new tool for the belt has been a Kansas, in NAWE- long time coming. I myself took the ride in training, OA's Region 5, to thank goodness it was only 5 seconds, but I was glad I all of my friends did. Kansas, like many states, has been plagued with and fellow officers multiple officer vacancies across the state, but we are across North Ameri- making headway with multiple hiring processes each ca. I hope this finds year and filling the spots with some great candidates.

and The 2025 NAWEOA annual conference in Erie, PA ready for the Fall wrapped up in mid-July. Wow, what a great conferhunting seasons. I ence. A big THANK YOU goes out to conference would like to send chair, and current NAWEOA President, Larry Herout a big THANK genroeder, all of COPA, as well as everyone else that YOU to all the Re- helped put on another great summer conference. As gion 5 J-reps for the work that they have done always, I strongly encourage officers that have never throughout this past year, making sure updated infor- attended a conference or have in the past but have not mation flows throughout the NAWEOA membership. in recent years, please consider coming to future ones. Your NAWEOA Board is diligently seeking out new Fall has rolled in bringing on hunting seasons, muddy ways to improve and to attract new attendees, as well roads, and long days/nights. Here in Kansas, the as new states to host a future conference. The nettemps have started to drop, and the deer are moving working each of you will gain is invaluable for you again. We are seeing our fair share of non-resident and to benefit your agency or organization. Attendees hunters from all over, which means busy times for our also gain valuable training, as well as potential new field staff. KDWP has made is through our first year technology and ideas to bring back to your respective

Region 5 Director Jesse Gehrt

to see what the Nebraska Delegation has in store for in one of the busiest times of the year for many of us. Good luck, and I hope to see you all there!

(Regional Directors) was up for election. I would like this year, by nominating them for our NAWEOA to personally welcome Sean Spencer, from Utah, as Officer awards. Please consider recognizing your the new Region 4 Director. Sean is definitely not new peers for their efforts thus far. to NAWEOA, but he is to our board. We welcome board looks forward to recognizing you all at the anhim and his new set of ideas. Thank you Jeromy Hun- nual conference next year. Everyone be safe, and I tington, from CO, for your time spent on the board look forward to hopefully seeing you all in Omaha, and I wish you the best of luck in the future! Re- NE in 2026! elected to their respective regions were myself, your Region 5 Director, Shawn Elmore form Georgia, in Jesse Gehrt Region 6, and Kris MacCabe out of Maine, in Region Region 5

> **Region 6 Director** Shawn Elmore



summer season! I know in the

woods. We've had a nice cool spell here lately and it more southern hospitality to future conferences! has the itch started for getting in the woods. I hope Stay safe and be ready!! each of you have a safe and plentiful hunting season, at work and personally!!

WOW, what a conference that the Conservation Offic-Region 6

7. Good luck to everyone, and I wish you all continued success in your roles. NAWEOA is in great hands, with a bright future ahead!

agencies. In July 2026, we are headed to Omaha, NE, As the summer boating fun winds down, this brings our officers; Hunting seasons. Even with a few months still left in 2025, now is the time to be think-At this year's 2025 PA conference, the US delegation ing about recognizing your peers for a job well done Your NAWEOA

ers of Pennsylvania Association hosted, y'all hit a grand slam and knocked it out of the park!! From the keynote speaker to hospitality nights, to the great training sessions, and the closing ceremonies, if you Greetings to all my fellow missed it, you missed some great training, networking, Game Wardens throughout the and great friendships!! Over the next year, the Neras-US and our brothers and sisters ka Conservation Officers Association (NCOA) will be north of the border in Canada!! putting together another great conference for all of our It is a pleasure to serve as your current and retired Game Wardens throughout North Region 6 Director, and I hope America. I know NCOA President Alex Hansauer y'all are safe and healthy. I and members of NCOA have been working hard to know each of you has had a keep the conferences as top shelf and no dust!! I highvery busy and hopefully safe ly encourage you to make plans to attend.

South, our hunting seasons are I want to send a big THANK YOU to the Region 6 Jright around the corner and folks are getting in the Reps for their continued support and let's bring some

Shawn Elmore

fantastic job hosting as always with a great venue, trainings and connections with peers from across North America. With the conference now behind us we are looking forward to a fantastic fall with leaves Greetings from Region 7, changing soon and hunting seasons going into full which was the host region for swing. Please stay vigilant and safe and we hope to this years summers conference. see you at the next conference in Omaha Nebraska.

Region 7 Director Kris MacCabe



With the conference hosted by Pennsylvania it had great at- Kris MacCabe tendance from Region 7 with Region 7 many of the states sending representation. Pennsylvania did a

Torch Run/Walk and Breakfast

Reviewed by Kris MacCabe

The 2025 Torch Run as always is a great way to pay 2ND Michael Bellan 23:02 PA tribute to all Wardens who have fallen in the line of 3RD Matt Fisher 25:21 OH duty. Game Wardens and families gathered Presque Isle State Park on the shores of Lake Erie for an early YOUTH DIVISION BOYS morning 5k fundraiser for the North American Game STATE Warden Museum.

This year the addition of group of ruckers was created 3RD Daniel Pink 25:30 ON by Ohio Game Warden Chris Gilkey. This group walked with weighted vests or packs for the 5k dis- WALKERS This group seemed to gain momentum and DIVISION MEN NAME TIME STATE most likely will continue in the 5k event in the future. 1ST Daniel Hohman 40:06 MD

The 5k run took off at a blistering pace with one run- 3RD Roger Selesse 44:28 NB ner falling down at the front. The lead pack was following the chase e bike which mistakenly went WOMEN DIVISION (18-49) NAME TIME STATE straight on the course shortly after the start and had to 1ST Paxton Kirby 21:09 GA make a hard u-turn causing a pile up. After these two 2ND Kaitlin Carle 22:02 PA mishaps the pack of runners fell in line and mean- 3RD Cheyanne Hudson 24:16 UT dered on walking paths and roads along the shores of Presque Isle bay.

After finishing the 5k all participants loaded back on- 1ST Sandra Cook 32:50 ON to buses for the short ride back to the Bayside hotel 2ND Day Day Howe 33:16 ID conference center for well deserved breakfast. At the 3RD Kandy Klosterman 46:26 OH breakfast awards were presented to the top finishers by category and age. The host State of Pennsylvania YOUTH DIVISION GIRLS (>18) NAME TIME came in with very strong finishes taking the top three STATE times with overall winner from PA Jim Crown, blis- 1ST Makalya Stutts 20:24 ON tering the course with a time of 17:41. Second Josh 2ND Emerson Reeder 27:25 PA McCoy 18:50, and third Kevin Anderson 19:43.

In the Senior Division Pennsylvania also had a strong WALKERS hold in the medal count with Rick Finnegan finishing DIVISION WOMEN NAME TIME STATE at the top runner for Seniors at 21:30.

In the Womens division the Makayla Stutts of Penn- 2ND Cammie Harrison 41:50 sylvania finished first overall with a blazing time of 3RD Kirsten Gamble 44:21 CA 20:24. Paxton Kirby of Georgia 21:09 won the womens 18-49 followed by Kaitlin Carle of Pennsylvania 22:02, and Cheyanne Hudson of Utah 24:16.

MENS DIVISION (18-49) NAME TIME STATE 1ST Jim Corwn 17:41 PA 2ND Josh McCoy 18:50 PA 3RD Kevin Anderson 19:43 PA

SENIORS DIVISION MEN (50+) NAME TIME STATE 1ST Rick Finnegan 21:30 PA

(>18) NAME TIME

1ST Jared Johnson 23:40 NB 2ND Parker Lee 26:25 PA

2ND John Zuck 44:28

SENIORS DIVISION WOMEN (50+) NAME TIME STATE

3RD Alliana Johnson 28:26 NE

PROVINCE AGE 1ST Kim Huntington 39:59 ID



Warden Writing Workshop

Reviewed by Marshall Nych

dedicated game wardens recently crossed. It was not employing strong verbs. Examples: Simply getting the an intricate law enforcement detail, international wild- bad guy pales to apprehending one. Walking in the life operation, or well-orchestrated search warrant. snow falls flat, but trudging better describes the move-Good guesses. The game wardens, armed only with a ment. Wardens adlibbed pieces with bludgeoned vs. pen, united in the name of writing.

Marshall Nych, editor of NAWEOA's official publi- Our IGW editor then relayed three ways a game warstrive to make each issue a success.

members always have a home for their story in IGW a district as well as the game warden. magazine. After proving evidence of an audience thirsty for the game warden story, the presenter em- The Warden Writing Workshop concluded with tips WHERE they could submit work.

eventually be used in the 40-page publication, come to article. the appropriate theme or proper season. None would discussion pertaining whether the magazine should yours? preserve officer secrets and subscriptions stay within NAWEOA as a trade magazine or if it should expand to the general public.

The second half of the session dove into craft improvement. Wardens learned a few helpful tools to add to their duty belt with respect to writing. Nych then observed wildlife officers are men and women of

The paths belonging to fifty of North America's most action. Hence, warden writing should mirror this by hit, moved vs. writhed, and articulated vs. told.

cation International Game Warden magazine, led a den's unique skillset could advantageously establish Warden Writing Workshop. Attendees first heard a setting better than most communicators. First, warsample of the editor's writing titled "One More Hunt" dens can lean in on a deep knowledge of flora and then ventured through the many pages of IGW history fauna. It is the local game warden the general public and facts. Wardens learned many facets of the maga- asks questions about and trusts with wildlife. Second, zine, from its founding father Don Hastings in 1984 to game wardens also have the ability to paint a picture an overview of every column and staff member who with keen observations. While most careers are stuck on the phone, seated around a board room table or boxed into a cubicle, it is the game warden who is Nych stressed the two goals and objectives of the outside experiencing nature's beauty. A final facet to workshop: first, for wardens to feel more confident establishing setting is embedding natural history into and comfortable writing; second, to affirm NAWEOA one's work. Few know the culture and happenings of

phasized WHY wardens should write and offered and tricks from the experiences gathered by the editor's thousands of pages working with IGW. Audience learned "show don't tell" style writing using the Arguably most enlightening was the intelligent insight five senses. Nych also discussed the importance of and reflective discussion the audience fostered as to dialogue and commonly misused words. As the mornthe future of the magazine. High regards were given ing session closed, WHAT wardens could write about to Bruce Weild and how he harmoniously lays out the came to light. The seemingly infinite list included anfonts and photos. A plea was heard to alert wardens ything from a career case or interesting training to a who take time to write and submit their story would wildlife piece or warden perspective how-to or where-

ever enter a trash bin. A lively debate surfaced as to International Game Warden magazine is but a pulse, a when to write about a case and whether or not to pub- mere symbol of NAWEOA's heart and passion for the lish real names. Many urged the IGW to adopt a Field profession they have so bravely chosen. Thanks to the Notes section, wildly popular in the Pennsylvania devoted membership and board, the future of IGW is Game News, where officers submit a short, light hu- as bright as a polished badge. Think of the NAWEOA morous encounter. Others complimented the family family member who looks forward to the next issue, perspective (and requested more). There was healthy eagerly thumbing to a favorite story. Maybe it will be

Underway Boating Procedures

Reviewed by Shawn Elmore

Many of our Game Wardens have been tasked with (DHS)'s mandate to protect the U.S. border and its patrolling the waters of their patrol area by vessel. authority to enforce immigration and customs laws, as Whether it is checking hunting licenses, fishing li- well as from Presidential executive orders and statutocenses, or recreational boating in general, there are a ry authorities that established CBP and AMO. The few things different between each states/provincial mission of AMO is to conduct law enforcement operauthority. We were fortunate to have Pennsylvania ations between ports of entry using its unique aviation Fish and Boat Commission Waterways Conservation and maritime capabilities. They spoke about patrol-Officer (WCO) Matt Visosky and United States Cus- ling Lake Erie and working with Canadian authorities toms and Border Patrol Air & Marine Operations Ma- on border protection. USBP AMO stops suspected rine Interdiction Agents Jason Grossman and David drug running vessels and human smuggling vessels Singleton presented this class. WCO Viskosky pa- coming from Canada on Lake Eire. The vessel that trols the Erie County area including Lake Erie and patrols Lake Erie is a 38-ft SafeBoat equipped with Presque Isle Bay. He patrols in a 26-ft Pacific 2600V four (4) Mercury 300 outboards. equipped with two (2) Honda 225 outboards, enforcing recreational and commercial fishing regulations. He spoke about the PA F&B Commissions authority comes from state laws enacted by the state legislature and they only have authority within the state of Pennsylvania while patrolling Lake Erie. He emphasized that most of the vessel stops made by their officers are probable cause (PC) stops. During these stops, officers are checking for registration, boater education, PFDs, and other safety equipment. They also target and enforce Boating Under the Influence (BUI) on the waterways.



WCO Visosky explaining procedures to the attendees

United States Customs and Border Patrol Air & Maine Operation Marine Interdiction Agents explained that the USBP Air and Marine Operations (AMO) derives its authority from the U.S. Con- USBP AMO 38-ft SafeBoat used to patrol Lake Erie gress through the Department of Homeland Security



USBP AMO Interdiction Agents Grossman and Singleton explaining AMO authority and procedures.



Digital Investigations

Reviewed by James Zucchelli

dumps, triangulation and surveillance cameras investi- ing accuracy. gators can use all of this combined technology to gather evidence to solve crimes and reveal the com- Now place the suspects cell phone in that vehicle and plex networks of organized crime.

training and became Pennsylvania State Police's first cameras can be the crucial link. member certified in cellular analysis. In 2023, he pro-

vehicle theft ring, and located a missing elderly person in urgent need of medical care.

Almost every modern vehicle that is on the road with an internal onboarding tracking GPS system is being tracked as it navigates across the landscape. That data is readily availa-

ble through a judicial application given the standard solve a wildlife crime can be very satisfying. grounds necessary to meet the threshold that an offence has occurred depending upon the jurisdiction Sometimes we have the location and the suspect and and the seriousness of the crime...

one. Cell Phone Providers like AT&T (NELOS), Ver- ther a confession or a guilty plea. izon (RTT), and T-Mobile (TDOA) use proprietary systems to estimate device location based on signal This session was very high level and gave a brief tle as one week to up as long as 30 days for device dirt. location data.

LT. BONIN is assigned to the Bureau of Criminal In- Timing Advance and Time Difference of Arrival vestigation as the coordinator of the Cellular Analyt- (TDOA) techniques can estimate a phone's distance ics Technicians Unit. He has a very technical high from a tower, improving location accuracy. This data level of expertise in using cellular data intelligence to can use triangulation from different towers to accusolve crimes. Combining the use of cell tower data rately place a phone within a given area with surpris-

that it shows the same tower pings at the exact same times as the vehicle location data reveals. But now we Lieutenant Matthew Bonin received the award for his have a vehicle and a suspect's phone but how can we leadership in advancing the department's capabilities prove that our suspect was in the vehicle that day. A in recovering and analyzing evidence from mobile picture tells a thousand words and that is exactly devices. In 2020, Lt. Bonin personally funded his own where surveillance come in. Surveillance monitoring

posed and helped establish the department's Cellular Surveillance cameras are a very useful tool in putting Analysis Unit, the first in Pennsylvania. Since its in- the pieces of the puzzle together to place a person and ception, Lt. Bonin's team has played a key role in vehicle with cell phone in the place of interest at a hundreds of criminal and missing persons investiga- particular time. Surveillance camera networks are intions. In 2024, the team identified suspects in two stalled across the most heavily travelled routes at gas high-profile homicide cases, dismantled a large-scale stations and major intersections and state border

> crossings. These tools combine cellular alerts, GPS, and video feeds to provide real-time intelligence.

> Game wardens across North America have access to all these databases through the proper channels and the having the expertise and technical capabilities to put the pieces together to

some physical evidence that may be able to link the two but you need more to prove that that person in Cell phones constantly communicate with nearby tow- that vehicle was at that location on that day for a speers to maintain signal strength. Each tower is divided cific length of time. This is very difficult evidence to into sectors, and the phone connects to the strongest defend against for a guilty party will often lead to ei-

timing and log this activity for billing and network snapshot on what LT. BONIN was able to accomplish management. Each cell phone provider is different in the cellular intelligence unit to solve major crimes and maintains data for different amounts of time so it in PA. This brief snapshot gives us the ability to think is crucially important to have the judicial authoriza- outside the box when we are trying to prove or cases tion completed in a timely manner. This can be as lit- through digital footprints instead of footprints in the

Vendors

Reviewed by Jason Sherwood

COPA did a great job in rounding up a variety of ders, others have learned the NAWEOA Conference game warden-relevant vendors for this year's confer- is a great place to talk with field conservation officers ence, to the point that the "vendor area" overflowed and learn what officers are currently looking for, and into the outer hallways surrounding the convention to try to glean new ideas for future improvements to space! Vendors varied from a boat manufacturer to their products. Please keep this in mind for future condigital media producers, from a native plant seed ferences—even if you don't believe you're in the margrower to firearm manufacturers, from a custom bear ket to buy, this might be your opportunity to convince trap fabricator to a wildlife decoy manufacturer, and a company to build or improve the gear you really from conservation groups to personal hunting gear wish was available to you. dealers.

with agencies who might result in future purchase or- ness and thank them for supporting us!

Aside from the usual booths for the North American In visiting with the vendors present, it was interesting Game Warden Museum, International Game Warden to hear their various perspectives on why they chose Magazine, and NAWEOA itself, below is a listing of to participate in this conference. While some obvious- the vendors who participated in this year's event. ly come hoping to make additional sales or connect When you have a chance, please give them your busi-

Vendor	Contact Info	
Aimpoint	https://www.aimpoint.com/; 877-246-7646	
Athlon Optics	https://athlonoptics.com/; 855-913-5678	
Collision & Crime Forensic Solutions	https://www.collisionfs.com/; 402-339-1518	
Conservation Canine Officers Association	https://www.ck9oa.org/; https://www.facebook.com/CK9OA	
Conservation Officers of Pennsylvania Association (COPA)	https://www.pawco.org/	
Custom Robotic Wildlife	https://www.roboticwildlife.com/; 715-692-3000	
Edinboro Outdoors	www.Edinborooutdoors.com; 814-734-4927	
Ernst Seeds	https://www.ernstseed.com/; 800-873-3321	
Fluid Marine	https://www.fluidmarine.com/; 954-692-8335	
Fraternal Order of Police – Conservation Officers Lodge 114	http://www.pafop114.org/	
The Game Warden Channel/Engel Entertainment	https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmQfscDq5Pg9u4QMmn2PVbQ; https://www.facebook.com/TheGameWardenChannel	
Glock, Inc (US)	https://us.glock.com/; 770-432-1202	
Hallman Chevrolet	https://www.hallmanchevrolet.com/; 814-616-7291	
Merit Financial Advisors	https://www.meritfinancialadvisors.com/; 866-942-1218	
National Wild Turkey Federation – PA Chapter	www.nwtf.org	
Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission	https://www.pa.gov/agencies/fishandboat.html; 866-BoatReg	
Pennsylvania Game Commission	http://www.pgc.pa.gov/; 833-PGC-WILD	
QuietKat	https://quietkat.com/; 970-517-2469	
Shooter's Warehouse	www.shooterswarehousepa.com; 814-665-6363	
Sig Sauer	https://www.sigsauer.com/; 603-610-3456	
Spring Bank Welding Shop	814-349-8013; 127 Welding Dr, Rebersburg, PA 16872	
Wardens: Case Files/Winnercomm, Inc	https://www.winnercomm.com/; 918-496-1900	
Warden's Watch	https://wardenswatch.com/; wayne@wardenswatch.com	
WiseEye Technology	https://wiseeyetech.com/; 225-478-4026	

Case Preparation & Prosecution: Working With Your District Attorney

Reviewed by Jason Sherwood

For a training session titled, "Case Preparation & Prosecution: Working With Your District Attorney," Lock discussed ongoing duties for disclosure of evi-Pennsylvania Game Commission Attorney Andrew dence, handling and preparation of evidence for the Lock presented basic information and observations, courtroom (and what appropriate alternatives might be especially those from his previous role as an assistant considered before bringing a malodourous, bloody district attorney, tasked with prosecuting a variety of specimen in), and what to expect during preparations crimes in Greene County, PA. He was also able to and the actual trial. The class also had a discussion on provide a platform for the class to discuss various dif- various types of courts found across the continent, and ferences in classification of offenses and how various specifically prosecuting offices and courts operate as he drew ad- "MDJ" ("Magisterial District Judge") courts conduct ditional anecdotes and experiences from officers in trials with only the judge, officer, and suspect prethe audience.

Lock broke the class into segments, including specific discussion of tasks to do prior to starting a case, things Following the trial, Lock reminded attendees the case the prosecution.

Comparing trial preparation to a public-land deer hunt, Lock stressed the importance of "scouting" the local court system and building a relationship with your prosecuting attorney long before opening morning-or the start of a trial. Aside from allowing the prosecution a direct line of communication with you regarding cases, this step also can ensure you are providing information to the attorney(s) that will best help meet their expectations and needs—and also allowing them to most efficiently handle wildlife cases (and helping them like to work wildlife cases). It was noted the prosecutor's office may also have access to additional data, intelligence sources, and tools to help you develop future suspects and cases.

Consulting with the prosecutor prior to issuing charges, specifically in larger cases can also allow for inplace.

discussed how probate sent—where the officer likely serves as both the prosecutor and state's star witness.

to do during the case, what to expect from cases is not necessarily "over." The officer may need to prewhich go to trial, and things to think about following serve or retain court exhibits, follow up with processes for asset forfeiture, or submit additional research to build and support sentencing recommendations.



creased buy-in, suggestions of additional criminal Outside of the class session, it was very apparent charges which may also appropriately accompany the Lock appreciated the opportunity to visit with a wide obvious wildlife crimes, and provide opportunities to variety of wildlife officers, providing him with additalk through any novel circumstances or unusual fact tional insights into the field impact, and appreciation patterns long before any hearings or negotiations take of, the legal issues he now faces in his work directly representing the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

Surviving a Critical Incident

Reviewed by Jesse Gehrt

Kevin Behr started his career with the Ohio Depart- sage he gave everyone, to hopefully help make officment of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife in ers aware of the potential expectations and mental 1993, graduating from the Ohio Wildlife Officer preparation for surviving such an incident. Training Academy in 1996. His first duty assignment was the uniform officer assigned to Warren County, From all of NAWEOA, we thank you Kevin Behr for transferring to Adam County in 1999 continuing uni-sharing your story of your incident and your message, form patrol. In 2006, he was promoted to the investi- to hopefully help officers from across North America gation section where he conducted long term complex in their daily patrol and investigative efforts. Be safe investigations for both State and Federal cases.

On December 20, 2020, he was shot in the line of duty while participating in a law enforcement project. He sustained critical injuries that required 28 days in the intensive care unit, 11 days in regular hospital care, 50 days of in-patient care, and 18 months of outpatient therapy. To date, he has had 15 surgeries with potential for more. He medically separated from duty from the state of Ohio on May 5, 2023. Kevin and his wife Kathy currently reside in Adams County Ohio on their family farm where they raised their 3 children – Jack, Owen, and Alisan. They enjoy spending time outdoors, volunteering in the community, and visiting friends and family.

Kevin's message highlighted the potential dangers that anyone in law enforcement faces on a daily basis. This presentation brought awareness for officers to be curious and observant to detect in their daily patrol activities. I enjoyed listening to Kevin and the mes-

out there everyone and good luck!



J-Rep Breakfast Reviewed by Jesse Gehrt

This year's J-Rep breakfast was fairly well attended from each region. Our PA hosts had lined out a great breakfast once again. Each J-Rep present gave an introduction of themselves and a short update from their respective state/officer delegation. It was great to see everyone that attended. As a NAWEOA Board member, and current J-Rep out of Kansas, I understand the importance that this role serves. The J-Rep is truly the connection between the NAWEOA board and the officers/members in the field. Without this role, NAWE-OA is not what it is today. For that, I thank each and every one of the J-Reps across North America. This breakfast is just a small token of the executive board's appreciation to the J-Reps, and for what they do for our association. I hope to see more of you in Nebraska in 2026. Thank you again.



Peer Support Team Implementation

Reviewed by Chris Maier

The Connecticut Environmental Conservation Police sures and stresses at home that in combination with (EnCon Police) operate a Peer Support Team designed work can create some emotional and mental trauma. to assist officers in managing the emotional and psychological challenges inherent in their law enforce- The Peer Support Team provides confidential, nonment duties. This team is part of a broader initiative to clinical assistance to officers facing stress, trauma, or promote mental wellness and resilience among offic- personal challenges. Members of the team are trained ers working in high-stress environments.

As we are all aware, Conservation officers (police/ seling services if needed. This peer-based approach cies, conducting criminal investigations, and patrol- share experiences and coping strategies. ling state/provincial lands and waters. These responsibilities can expose officers to traumatic incidents, in- The establishment of the Peer Support Team reflects a

PEER SUPPORT

to offer emotional support, facilitate stress debriefings, and guide colleagues toward professional counwardens) duties often involve responding to emergen- fosters a supportive environment where officers can

cluding accidents, fatalities, and environmental disas- growing recognition of the importance of mental ters. Outside of work our officers may also have pres- health within law enforcement agencies. By addressing the psychological well-being of officers, the En-Con Police aim to enhance overall job performance, reduce burnout, and ensure that officers are equipped to serve and protect the public effectively.

> While your agency may or may not have an official Peer support team, it is important that we continue to look out for each other. If you are interested in creating a team the members of the EnCon Peer support team are more than interested in providing you with any information. Please contact erin.flockhart@ct.gov for more information.

Golf Outing

Reviewed by Kris MacCabe

On Friday morning NAWEOA members hit the links Friendly wagers were made for Longest Drive and at The Ridge Golf Club in Erie Pennsylvania for a Closest to the Pin. The winners were Kevin Harrison. friendly golf scramble. The early morning start with Saskatchewan Longest Drive winner, Closest to the cooler temps made for a great day on the course. The Pin Jesse Gerht Kansas. course was in great shape until the wardens hit the fairways. To be fair no one was injured and no animals were harmed while members were driving golf balls around the course.

The course provided great entertainment for the group and opportunities to partner with members from other states and provinces.

(Kevin Harrison from Saskatchewan second shot from longest drive competition)



Hospitality Night

By Steve Beltran

This July, our group had the privilege of at- ment throughout the night and showcased the deep ment Officers Association (NAWEOA) Conference in tendance. Erie, Pennsylvania—a gathering that continues to maraderie.

an evening of relaxed celebration. The atmosphere a nod to the fieldwork that brings us all together. was fun filled with laughter, shared stories, and the unmistakable spirit of community.



A major highlight was the bucket raffle, featuring an impressive range of donated items for men, women, and children. From outdoor gear and tech gadgets to toys, apparel, and handcrafted goods, the tables were overflowing thanks to the incredible support of our sponsors and contributors. The raffle generated excite-

tending the 2025 North American Wildlife Enforce- appreciation for the law enforcement families in at-

unite wildlife enforcement professionals from across Adding to the fun were the competition games, in-North America in shared purpose, innovation, and ca-cluding crowd favorites like bags (cornhole) and Plinko, which sparked friendly rivalries and plenty of smiles. Another standout attraction was the target One of the most memorable events of the week was trailer, offering a simulated hunting experience that Hospitality Night, where generosity, connection, and drew a steady stream of participants eager to test their good fun came together in full force. Attendees were skills. It was a hit with both seasoned outdoorsmen welcomed with free beer and wine, setting the tone for and curious newcomers, blending entertainment with

> We extend our sincere thanks to the sponsors who joined us each night, not only for their generous donations but for their presence, enthusiasm, and continued support of the wildlife enforcement community. Your contributions helped create an unforgettable experience that reminded us all of the strength, unity, and shared mission that define our work.

> Thank you again to the organizers, volunteers, donors, and hosts who made Hospitality Night such a success. We look forward to continuing the partnerships and friendships forged in Erie.



Youth Room

By Sandra Cook

Dan Schmidt and the rest of the team responsible for The hard-working men and women who organise and job of keeping our junior wardens safe and entertained heroes of the NAWEOA conference. Thanks to their joy.



ties, including dissecting owl pellets, building blue tre; and Mark Signorino. bird boxes, archery, a virtual hunting simulator, and fly-casting and -tying workshops, kept the young ones engaged and entertained. Many of the kids took advantage of the available fishing gear and the incredible location directly on the shores of Lake Erie to spend time outside catching Bluegill, Perch and Gobies right off the pier, just steps away from the Erie Bayfront Convention Centre. For those not wanting to be left out of all the fun the adults were having, there was an exciting Junior Warden Skills competition and corn hole tournament. It all ended with every kid's favorite: pizza and movie night!

organizing this year's youth room did a phenomenal staff the youth room every year are truly the unsung while their parents enjoyed the many conference dedication (and patience!), the annual conference is events, or just a well-deserved break! With various truly a family event that is enjoyed by all. Speaking activities organized throughout the week, the kids from my own family's personal experience, it has were able to reconnect with old friends and make new been the highlight of our year for the past 10 years. ones, have fun, and learn new skills along the way. On behalf of all the parents whose kids participated in From games and crafts, to presentations, to interactive this year's youth room, thank you to all who were inexperiences, there was something for all ages to en- volved*. My kids are already looking forward to next year's trip to Nebraska!



Thanks go out to the PA Game Commission: Dan The officers weren't the only ones who benefitted Schmidt and family, Bailey Kozalla, Sergeant Sue Edfrom amazing training opportunities during the con- miston, Game Warden Meagon Aikey, Heather Flick, ference. Youth room participants learned about owls, Madysen Ewing, Game Warden Matt Savinda, Ethan mushroom and plant identification, wilderness surviv- Beale, K9 Wardens Steve Brussese, Derek Daly & al, the Pennsylvania Game Commission K9 Unit, and William Kreider, & Jared Schibik; the PA Fish and endangered species and wildlife rehabilitation Boat Commission: Erik Shellgren and his wife Sha-(complete with live animals from the Erie Zoo and ron; the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Tamarack Wildlife Rehab Centre). Hands-on activi- Resources; Erie Zoo; Tamarack Wildlife Rehab Cen-



Below 100 Training Review

By Larry Hergenroeder



enforcement profession. Photos of mangled patrol ve- come home to at the end of every day. hicles where officers were able to walk away from serious accidents due to simply fastening their seat Slow down, Fasten your seatbelt and Wear your body losing their lives and leaving loved ones behind due to you!

Pennsylvania State Police the unnecessary risks while operating their patrol ve-Corporal Geoff Bush pre- hicles. The training makes you think, reevaluating sented a two hour version your past and instilling changes with how you operate of the Below 100 program or conduct yourself on a daily basis behind the wheel on Wednesday afternoon of your patrol vehicle, as well as in your personally and Thursday morning in owned vehicle. One LODD is one too many if it can West Grand Ball be avoided by making the conscious decision to do Room. The Below 100 pro- what you know is right as a law enforcement officer. gram is designed to lower The end of the presentation is a video of a toddler the number of annual law speaking to her daddy. The voice ages as she proenforcement in the line of gresses through life speaking to her daddy who is no duty deaths to below 100, longer there to raise her through her childhood and that can be avoided by simply putting on your seat teenage years or present on her most important day, to belt, wearing your body armor and slowing down. An walk her down the aisle. When I hear that voice emotional training filled with video and still photos of speaking to her daddy, I hear my wife's voice. The the tragic results that complacency lends to in the law one person that I made a promise to be safe and to

belts. Followed by heart breaking stories of Officers armor and come home every day to the ones that love

Black Bear Conflict Management Review

By Jason Pink

Game Warden Brehun specializes in the capture, data Thank you, GW Brehun, for an interesting and inrecovery and release of bears in his district area. The formative training session! State of Pennsylvania has a very large population of black bears and as a result, the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Wildlife Division has, for decades, managed a database of bear information. Detailed data is recorded whenever nuisance bears are chemically immobilized for relocation, and includes information on the bear's health status, age, size and weight. The information collected is used to help manage and sustain a healthy bear population for both hunters and non-hunters alike.

GW Brehun's presentation provided tips and tricks he has acquired over the years on various capture methods such as live trapping, foot snare trapping and chemical immobilization via the Pneu-Dart delivery method. It was interesting to view the many photographs and videos included in the presentation. The audience was able to see a play-by-play from the moment a bear is darted and sedated, through all the various samples that are collected such as teeth, hair, blood, etc., to the moment the drugs are reversed.



Game Warden Skills

Reviewed by Mike Reeder

As always the game warden skills competition did not disappoint. Whether you were a competitor or observer, everyone had a great time. No matter how your team try's to prepare for this event there is no way to foresee the unique stations that are developed. This year was no different.

This years stations included bear snaring, tactical nerf assault, corn hole, flag ID and many others.

I believe the highlight station was the blindfolded Pennsylvania foods identification. As team members were led in you could sense the tension about eating something that you do not know what it is. I think the spectators had more fun watching the faces of the competitors.

Congratulations to the winning teams!

1st Place—NH/OH

2nd Place—Pink Pony Club

3rd Place—PA-MAN







Closing Ceremonies

Reviewed by Jason Pink

As they say, all good things must come to end. The annual conference is no different and the closing ceremonies are an integral part of the event. NAWEOA President and Host Chair Larry Hergenroeder had the honor of striking the gavel one last time to close out what was a fun, educational and busy week.

During these last few moments before the banquet, officers and family reflected on their time in Pennsylvania, the great trainings, fun activities and excursions, and new friends and contacts that were made.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission Honor Guard closed things out by passing the flags and fallen of-ficer remembrance candle to next year's host - Nebraska. As we look forward to the 2026 conference, one can't help but be impressed by all of the time, work and dedication it takes to host this event. Looking forward to the next Opening Ceremonies in Omaha, Nebraska, in July 2026!



Conference Updates

By Jason Sherwood

I'm guessing the board's reports are all providing glowing reviews of, and personal highlights from, the 2025 NAWEOA Conference in Erie, and I hope everyone is sharing gratitude for the work the Conservation Officers of Pennsylvania Association (COPA) accomplished in putting another great event together, so I'll use this space to start shifting everyone's focus toward the next event...

The Nebraska Conservation Officers Association has already been hard at work for the past several months, getting ready for the 2026 NAWEOA Conference in Omaha. The convention is scheduled for July 20 – 24, 2026, with opening ceremonies and the fallen officer memorial on Tuesday, the 21st; Warden Skills Competitions on Wednesday, the 22nd; the Torch Run 5k on Thursday, the 23rd; and the closing banquet on Friday evening, the 24th. As always, there will be plenty of certifiable training hours, relevant and personal to game wardens, conservation officers, and environmental police officers—and, of course, networking opportunities galore for officers, retirees, and our families.

Once again, plan for some great hosted, local tour opportunities the day prior to opening ceremonies (Monday, and, I'm sure some families will roll into town and start doing some sight-seeing on their own in the days leading up to that...). Maybe you've heard of an ammunition and component company from Nebraska? If the "Hornady" name is familiar to you, be sure to put your leave request in now, as I'm already hearing some strong rumblings of a factory-tour option. The host committee is also working on some other really fun and interesting options for those who won't fit on the bus to the Grand Island "ammo plant."

The convention will be based out of the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, Omaha Downtown. Once again, DayDay Howe and ConferenceDirect have helped secure very nice accommodations for us, at a very reasonable rate (\$122/night). The hotel is located within minutes of Omaha's Eppley Airfield (OMA), and they offer a free airport shuttle service. There is a fee for parking, for those of us who will drive there. The reservation link is now available at https:// tinyurl.com/349h53y4, which will close June 18, or when the block is full (please use the link, as there are



CONFERENCE HOTEL:

\$122/NIGHT

DOUBLETREE BY HILTON HOTEL OMAHA DOWNTOWN

https://tinyurl.com/349h53y4

STAY INFORMED!

CONFERENCE WEBSITE

HTTPS://WWW.NAWEOA.ORG/NEXT-CONFERENCES/

CONFERENCE FACEBOOK GROUP

HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/GROUPS/173505916518726

SUPPORT OUR HOSTS

DONATIONS AND SPONSORSHIPS

PLEASE SHARE CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP

AND VENDOR LEADS:

CONFERENCE@NAWEOA.ORG

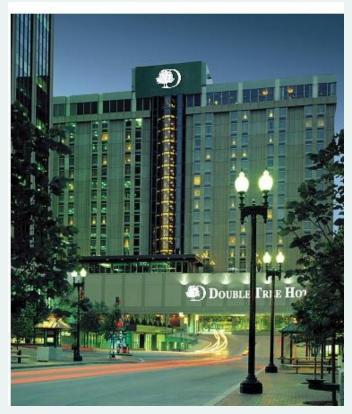




Conference Updates

By Jason Sherwood

a few other DoubleTree Inns scattered around town and the surrounding area).



vention center), and nearly a billion dollars in mod- ence, please reach out to me ernization at Eppley Airfield.

see more than one quarter of the beautiful property. ficers (which helps us all catch more poachers...).



(The area is also known for beef and corn production. so it turned out to be a nice spot to stop for a hearty supper, also...)

Registration will open later this winter. The host committee is working on some great ideas that should help keep costs to families and agencies at a minimum while continuing to provide a great, well-attended event.

For those interested in looking even further into the future, the Ohio Wildlife Officers Lodge (with the support of the Ohio DNR Division of Wildlife) has committed to hosting the 2027 International Game Warden Conference. Work is just starting on selecting a venue, but there are several great options to choose from and I'm already expecting great things from this team.

Omaha is very centrally-located for all of North There are still openings to host in 2028 and beyond. America. Aside from making it relatively easy for all Bringing a NAWEOA conference to your home jurisof us to travel to, this fact has also added to the in-diction is a great way to support the greater game wartrigue of the area for the past 100+ years. Important den community, as well as a huge opportunity to tactically, both in protecting important national assets, showcase your unique working conditions, skills, and and in being able to produce and provide important agency to other officers. It would take a big investequipment to the rest of the continent (and around the ment for your agency or officer association to send world) quickly and reliably, this area has a very fifty or more officers to most conferences, but it is unique story (and some great museums). Private and attainable when the conference comes to you—and public entities have also invested enormous amounts most of us have lots of young officers who should exof money in improvement projects, recently including perience a big networking and training event. If you a \$450 million revitalization in the downtown river- or your local association might be interested in hostfront area (centered a few blocks away from the con- ing, or even helping with an event at another conference@naweoa.org. Hosting can be a great moneymaker for your officer association, a strong recruit-The Henry Doorly Zoo occupies 130 acres and is con-ment tool and leadership development opportunity for sistently ranked as a top zoo in America. During a re-your agency, is an appreciated economic booster for cent road-trip, my wife and I recently stopped there your local community, and allowing more of your lo-"to stretch our legs for a couple hours." We ended up cal officers to attend helps us to grow NAWEOA's staying until closing time—and we probably didn't network of professional wildlife law enforcement of-

Game Warden Museum Field Notes

By Thomas Caifa

Greetings from the North American Game Warden Museum, where we celebrate the game warden pro- WHAT'S NEW AT THE MUSEUM? fession and honor the officers who have given their The paving stone area at the front of the museum has lives in the line of duty. It has been a busy and excit-been improved with an expanded concrete walkway ing year so far. Here is a summary of what's been and several new paving stone frames. We were havgoing on at your museum.

MUSEUM OPERATIONS

The museum is open from May through September Are you interested in ordering a paving stone? It's every year, six days a week and is also open a few easy. Just visit our website and fill out the online times outside that window for special events at the form. Peace Garden. Last year the museum had over 9,000 visitors. The final numbers aren't in yet, but we will probably be down a little bit this year due to current events. Hopefully, 2026 will have us back on track. People from all over North America and many other parts of the world come to the museum every year.

Our museum manager, Stephanie Lee, and her staff are knowledgeable about our profession and make folks feel welcome as they walk inside. Steph has been with us for six seasons now. She is our boots on the ground. Once people see the exhibits, the questions start coming. Educating the public about game wardens is what we do! Outside, our Fallen Officer profession can be.

probably be another big project not far down the road. their dive team for special operations. We also plan to do a much needed "freshening up" of the inside with paint and new rugs. On the museum The museum is always looking for game warden back on the trail.

stone masons didn't use the best mortar for freezing have questions about donating. cold weather. We are committed to repairing the memorial and making improvements to the construction FALLEN OFFICER MEMORIAL CEREMONY come.

ing trouble keeping up for a while, but now all the paving stones are on display with room for dozens



Memorial paints a picture of just how dangerous our We have a few new exhibits this year. Virginia Wildlife Resources has given the museum some nice otter pelts that came from a big trapping case they dealt The museum building was constructed in 2005, and with, complete with an interesting back story. Iowa it's showing the signs of wear and tear that you might DNR donated a full uniform, which is now on a manexpect (and some that you might not). Winters on the nequin that sits on the vintage snow machine they do-Canadian border can be harsh as many of you know. nated a few years back. For the 2026 season, South We've already replaced the siding, and the roof will Carolina DNR is donating a full dive suit used by

grounds, we will be working with the staff at the "tools of the trade" as display items. Does your de-Peace Garden to re-open our nature trail in 2026. In partment have any old equipment that could be used addition to routine maintenance, some repairs need to for a display? Before you toss those things out or relbe made on the bridges before we can allow people egate them to the nearest musty quartermaster closet, please consider donating those items to the museum. We will consider any items in decent condition, no Our most immediate concern right now is our Fallen matter how old. Sometimes the historical stuff is the Officer Memorial Cairns. To put it bluntly, they are most interesting! Feel free to contact any museum in bad shape. Apparently when they were built, the board member if you would like to donate items or

that will allow it to withstand the weather for years to The museum's Fallen Officer Memorial Ceremony was held on Saturday, August 9th. The ceremony

Game Warden Museum Field Notes

By Thomas Caifa

started at 1:00pm and was live streamed on our Face- of the game warden profession, speaking with visitors book page. The museum would like to thank the hon- at the museum and answering all their questions about or guards from the Manitoba Conservation Officer who we are and what we do. Service and the Saskatchewan Conservation Officer Service for travelling to the museum to perform the Are you interested in coming to the museum as a visceremony. The following names were added to the iting warden? We will be accepting applications for museum's Fallen Officer Memorial this year.

Ananias Green, New Mexico, EOW 11-15-41 James B. McClain, Kentucky, EOW 4-28-59 Raymond A. Birdsong, Kentucky, EOW 10-21-65 Bernard D. Ratliff, Kentucky, EOW 6-21-99 William Bailey, Kentucky, EOW 11-1-24

Go to our website and check your jurisdiction's mestone. gamewardenmuseum.org/wp/fallenofficer-memorial/fallen-officer-cairns/



WARDEN'S WATCH PODCAST

Wayne Saunders, retired New Hampshire Conservathe Warden's Watch podcast that chronicles his trip.

VISITING OFFICER PROGRAM

Every year, one game warden is selected to be our end for his visit. He spent his time as an ambassador 112 golfers and 14 volunteers in attendance. Thank

the 2026 season in February. Watch for the announcement on Facebook.

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

To be eligible for the scholarship program, applicants must have plans to major in some type of natural resource management and/or conservation law enforcement degree program. Applications are reviewed Are all your fallen officers listed on our memorial? based on the students' overall academic achievements, volunteer activities and community spirit. Congratulations to this year's winners Colby Morris of Virginia and Hailey Knowles of Colorado, both of whom are children of active game wardens. These hard-working students received \$500 for their upcoming educational expenses.

> Do you know a student that might be interested in a scholarship? Applications for 2026 will be accepted in January. Watch for the announcement on Facebook and check our website for the application link.

FUNDRAISING & DONATIONS

The North Dakota Moose Raffle, which provides a ND moose tag for the first-place winner, was announced on June 16th. This tag can be used by a nonresident of North Dakota, making it a much sought after prize. Second prize is \$2000. Third, fourth and fifth prizes are all long guns. The raffle brought in \$42,000 this year.

tion Lieutenant and host of the Warden's Watch pod- The 23rd Annual NAWEOA Torch Run/Walk was cast, came to visit the museum during our annual held at the NAWEOA conference in Pennsylvania on meeting and Fallen Officer Memorial Ceremony. It July 16th. Thank you to the PA Game Commission was Wayne's first visit to the museum, and he kept and NAWEOA for their support. A special thank you himself busy! Keep an eye out for a future episode of goes out to all the officer associations who graciously made donations to the torch run. This event raised \$4,600. See the Torch Run write-up in the conference section.

guest at the museum for a long weekend with all ex- The 22nd Annual Manitoba Golf Tournament was penses paid. This year's visiting officer was Indiana held in LaSalle, Manitoba on August 6th. This event Conservation Officer Brent Bohbrink. Brent selected is a "scramble" type tournament that golfers of all the dates of August 22nd, 23rd and 24th as the week- skill levels can enjoy. A great time was had by the

Game Warden Museum Field Notes

By Thomas Caifa

you to all the sponsors who made the tournament and CONTACT US raffle a big success again this year. The tournament Website: gamewardenmuseum.org raised \$8,500.

A special thank you goes out to Randy Nelson, Todd Vandivert and Bud Holste for donating a portion of Blake Patterson (MB) President the proceeds from their book sales to the museum. Contact for Fallen Officer Cairns We really appreciate their support!

Would you like to make a donation to the museum? president@gamewardenmuseum.org We make it easy. Just go to our website, where you will find several different ways to donate.

WEBSITE

The museum website gets about 13,000 hits a year. us-treasurer@gamewardenmuseum.org Our webmaster, Rob Brandenburg, has been working hard to update the website and make it more user Sheila Paquette (RI) Secretary friendly. He's added quite a few new warden photos Contact for Scholarship Program as well. Would you like your agency's wardens to be 401-222-3070 featured on our website? Feel free to send us some secretary@gamewardenmuseum.org photos. You can email them to gamewardenmuseum@gmail.com

We will be updating our online store with new mer- gordon.cox@lethbridgecollege.ca chandise this winter. Stay tuned!

MUSEUM BOARD OF DIRECTORS - NEW MEM- (864) 353-0104 BER AND FAREWELLS

The Museum Board of Directors held their annual meeting on August 7th and 8th at the museum. We Tom Caifa (NY) Vice President had the pleasure of welcoming our newest board Contact for NAWEOA Torch Run member, Shawn Hanna, who joins us from South Car- Contact for Visiting Officer Program olina DNR – welcome Shawn!

Just prior to the meeting, Terry McClelland (PA) announced his resignation after 11 years of service on Jessica Avery (MB) Canadian Treasurer the board. Terry had so much passion for the museum. Contact for Manitoba Golf Tournament There isn't enough room here to list all his contribu- (204) 641-1455 tions and great ideas. He will be sorely missed.

BOARD VACANCIES

Do you know someone who might be interested in (970) 593-8503 joining the Museum Board of Directors? We current- kuntzca@gmail.com ly have two US vacancies and one Canadian vacancy. Feel free to contact any board member if you are in- Chad Moir (MB) Director terested.

Email us at: gamewardenmuseum@gmail.com Visit us on Facebook

Contact for Paving Stones (204) 281-5300

Jon Tofteland (ND) US Treasurer Contact for ND Moose Raffle (701) 201-0703

Gord Cox, (ECCC) Director (403) 999-7848

Shawn Hanna, (SC) Director shawnhanna153@icloud.com

(518) 424-0408 vicepresident@gamewardenmuseum.org

ca-treasurer@gamewardenmuseum.org

Chris Kuntz (SD) Director

(204) 868-6000 crmoir@hotmail.com

NAWEOA Award Recipients 2025

OFFICER OF THE YEAR:

Kirk Kiefer - Ohio Division of Wildlife

MUDDY BOOTS:

Brandon Taylor - Tennessee WRA

LOYAL PARTNER:

Jason Keller, K9 Scout - Ohio Division of Wildlife

TORCH AWARDS:

Region 1: Mackenzie Fisher - Saskatchewan Provincial Protective Services Branch,

Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety

Region 3: Cody Little - New Brunswick Justice and Public Safety-Conservation Enforcement

Region 4: Austin Smith – Arizona Game and Fish Department

Region 5: Samuel Haferkorn - Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Region 6: Adam Kimbrough - Georgia DNR Law Enforcement Division

Region 7: Mario Alteri - Pennsylvania Game Commission

VALOR:

Jeffrey Jones - Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

Evan Jones - Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Mike England - GA Department of Natural Resources - Law Enforcement

Kris MacCabe - Maine Warden Service/Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

LIFESAVING:

Melanie Kotulak - Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

Tyler Grant - Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

Mark Wickham - Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

Dylan Peterson - South Dakota Game Fish and Parks

Anna Sells - South Dakota Game Fish and Parks

Dillon Bates - South Dakota Game Fish and Parks

Michael Carroll - Florida Fish and Wildlife

Amanda Simmons - Florida Fish and Wildlife

Lonnie Brevik - Florida Fish and Wildlife

Josh Lawrence - Florida Fish and Wildlife

Markiel Curbelo - Florida Fish and Wildlife

Paul Godward - Florida Fish and Wildlife

Matthew St. Martin - Florida Fish and Wildlife

Peter Gaudion - Florida Fish and Wildlife

Michael Hopkins - Florida Fish and Wildlife

Justin Counts - Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks

Jacob Spear - Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks

Scott Stoughton - Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks

Blake Stromgren - Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks

Lucas Arnold - Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks

Ian Petkash - Colorado Parks and Wildlife

TR Dooley - Georgia DNR Law Enforcement Division

NAWEOA Award Recipients 2024

LIFESAVING:

Mark Hutcheson - Maine Warden Service/Maine Department of Inland Fisheries

Scott Andrew - Saskatchewan Provincial Protective Services Branch,

Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety

Cory Loitz - Saskatchewan Provincial Protective Services Branch,

Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety

Logan Opfer - Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission

Abigail Luteri - Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission

Erin Czech - Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission

Jesse Janosik - Ohio Division of Wildlife

OUTSTANDING SERVICE:

Daniel Hahr - Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Jeremy Foell - Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Keith Williams - CT EnCon Police

Gregory Ulkus - CT EnCon Police

Matthew Stone - CT EnCon Police

William Logiodice - CT EnCon Police

Patrick Kiely - CT EnCon Police

Sean Welsh - CT EnCon Police

Michael Huber - CT EnCon Police

Kyle Davis - CT EnCon Police

William Kerr - CT EnCon Police

Eugene Diefenbach - CT EnCon Police

Bradley Waite - CT EnCon Police

Karen Reilly - CT EnCon Police

Alexandra Blackwell - CT EnCon Police

Lindsay Gerzabek - CT EnCon Police

Robin Landry - CT EnCon Police

Sean Lynch - CT EnCon Police

Joshua Tefft - CT EnCon Police

Brandy Lenois - CT EnCon Police

Derek Dillard - GA Dept. of Natural Resources - Law Enforcement

Drew Weathersby - GA Dept. of Natural Resources - Law Enforcement

Shawn Elmore - GA Dept. of Natural Resources - Law Enforcement

Phillip Nelson - GA Dept. of Natural Resources - Law Enforcement

John Carter - Maine Warden Service/Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

Nick Johnson - Maine Warden Service/Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

Timothy Coombs - Maine Warden Service/Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

Paul Mason - Maine Warden Service/Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

Troy Dauphinee - Maine Warden Service/Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

Davis Viehbeck - Ontario Conservation Officers Association / Ministry of Natural Resources

Jotham Dumesnil - Ontario Conservation Officers Association / Ministry of Natural Resources

Jordan Piecowye - Provincial Protective Services Branch, Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety

Travis March - South Dakota Game Fish and Parks

Grant Gerharter - Wyoming Game and Fish Department

NAWEOA Award Recipients 2024

OUTSTANDING SERVICE:

Marshall Reigh - Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation

Jacob Wild - Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Daniel Smith - Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources

Ross McGee - Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Matthew Cook - Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks

Brad Dahlquist - WI Department of Natural Resources

West Rhodes - Delaware Natural Resources Police

Lee Leudeker - Arizona Game and Fish Department

Eric Crouse - North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission

Cory Bohannon - GA Department of Natural Resources - Law Enforcement

William Bohannon - GA Department of Natural Resources - Law Enforcement

Ethan Buuck - Maine Warden Service/Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife









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 NAWE-OA.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 to the officer who performs a heroic act, or risks or receives serious injury, in the line of duty in an attempt to pro-

NAWEOA Awards

tect 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"

Must be a fully certified conservation officer in the state, province, territory, or country in which employed. Must be a full-time field officer, up to and including first line supervisors from the field in the last calendar year.

Both nominee and person submitting nomination must be a regular member of NAWEOA.

Three years minimum experience and active as a K-9 handler at time of nomination.

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.

Both K-9 and handler must demonstrate exceptional ability and initiative in the performance of his or her duties.

Award will be presented at annual conference; attendance encouraged but not mandatory.

