



NFWF



THE GUY BRADLEY AWARD

2024 REQUEST FOR NOMINATIONS for State Agency and Federal Agency Wildlife Enforcement Officers to Recognize Outstanding Lifetime Service

NOMINATIONS DUE BY *Friday, January 19, 2024, by 11:59pm Eastern Time*

OVERVIEW

In 1905, a Florida game warden named Guy Bradley became the first wildlife law enforcement agent killed while performing his duties to protect the nation's wildlife. Law enforcement agents like Bradley are essential to virtually every aspect of wildlife conservation, from recovering endangered species to managing waterfowl and big game resources. In honor of Guy Bradley, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation established this lifetime achievement award to recognize individuals for their commitment and performance in the field of wildlife law enforcement.

The Guy Bradley Award will be presented to one state agency and one federal agency officer whose dedication and public service to protecting the nation's natural resources demonstrates outstanding leadership, excellence in implementation, knowledge, and actions that have advanced the cause of wildlife conservation.

AWARD

One state and one federal recipient will receive a check for \$2,500 and a commemorative plaque in recognition of their efforts. Recently retired officers and previously nominated officers are eligible to receive this award. In the event that a recipient cannot accept a cash award, as is the case for federal employees, a donation of \$2,500 will be made in the recipient's name to the organization/project of his or her choice.

SPONSORING AGENCY

Agency Name: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Agency Address: 101 South Webster Street, Madison, WI 53703
Contact Person Name: Captain Ben Trembl
Contact Person Email: benjamin.trembl@wisconsin.gov
Contact Person Phone: (920) 366-8270

NOMINEE'S CONTACT INFORMATION

Full Name: Christopher F. Shea
Job Title: Lieutenant, Conservation Warden Supervisor
Office Address: 625 East CTH Y # 700, Oshkosh, WI 54901
Email: christopher.shea@wisconsin.gov
Phone: 920-479-0846

NOMINEE'S YEARS OF SERVICE

List relevant job positions the Nominee has held and years in each position. (400 word limit)

2015 –present: Wisconsin DNR Lieutenant for Lake Winnebago Team

2011-2015: Wisconsin DNR Conservation Warden – Trempealeau Field Station

2010-2011: Wisconsin DNR Conservation Warden – Ozaukee Field Station

2008-2010: Idaho Fish and Game Conservation Officer

2007-2008: Wisconsin DNR Limited-Term Park Ranger

NOMINEE'S CAREER ACHIEVEMENTS

Describe in detail the Nominee's notable performance and accomplishments; especially those related to field work. Please provide specific examples, rather than generalities. (500 word limit)

Chris is a tenured Lieutenant for the Lake Winnebago Team, which is comprised of eight field conservation wardens within the Division of Public Safety and Resource Protection. Chris is instrumental in leading and curtailing the drug and other significant law enforcement concerns at High Cliff State Park. Though a law enforcement realignment and working with his staff, Chris set up work initiatives, group checks and collaborated extremely well with internal and external partners such as Parks, District Attorney Office, judges, Calumet County Sheriff Office, WI State Patrol, and the Fox Valley Metro Drug Unit. Chris has conducted and organized specialized training with his team and neighboring wardens to assist with drug, motor vehicle, domestic violence, mental health crises, and other various LE topics. Chris has kept up with the challenges of unique questions and phone calls from staff at all hours of the day, review and coordinate criminal complaints with the District Attorney, manage the plethora of drug evidence, and ensuring staff have appropriate equipment (operational, PPE, etc.). Chris and his staff have encountered hundreds of criminal drug cases at High Cliff State Park.

Chris has led the unique sturgeon spearing fishing enforcement efforts on Lake Winnebago since his time as the supervisor for the team. Chris has coordinated in addition with his team, other warden teams and regions to appropriately monitor the 10,000 plus spearers for a 16-day season yearly while maintaining relationships with fisheries, local law enforcement agencies and fire department staff for rescues, local fishing groups, registration stations, and businesses on Lake Winnebago. Chris is also the LE media spokesperson who handles multi-media requests daily from outlets from all over the state and sometimes throughout the nation. In addition during this time, Chris ensures adequate enforcement and public safety responses during "Battle on Bago", which is one of the largest ice fishing tournament the United States with 10,000+ anglers.

NOMINEE'S DEMONSTRATION OF OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP

Describe the Nominee's leadership qualities and instances that best represent them. (400 word limit)

Chris leads a high performing team with tenured and newer staff. Chris coaches and mentors staff to increase overall work performance while holding them accountable. Chris works with staff members afield to assist in patrol, interviews and investigations, and accident responses. Chris has the pulse of his team with check-ins and team meetings to ensure he hears their feedback and concerns while delivering the mission and vision of the division and the department. Chris is a supervisor who field wardens and supervisors look to for guidance and insight, as well as other department staff.

Chris has taken on the law enforcement program at High Cliff State Park and continues to lead the law enforcement efforts on the Lake Winnebago sturgeon spearing season and Battle on Bago ice fishing tournament event. Chris also ensures his team assists with the walleye fish runs on the Wolf River and assisted with the coordination in the Sturgeon Guard program where the sturgeon spawn from Lake Winnebago. This entails help coordinate volunteer citizens who patrol the Wolf and Fox Rivers to protect vulnerable sturgeon while they are spawning, and to help give the volunteers the knowledge to help educate the thousands of onlookers at various locations throughout the sturgeon spawning season.

Chris and staff also helped initiate a multi-year investigation with USFWS on illegal sturgeon caviar violations by working with investigators with reporting several violations observed and reported by staff, as well as a social media concern. Chris and team assisted in conducting multiple interviews on the large scale investigation and served a search warrant which eventually resulted in several charges with illegal sale/bartering of roe. This was a very controversial and sensitive investigation as it involved key members of the community.

Chris serves as a Firearms and Vehicle Contacts Instructor and trains wardens throughout the state including new wardens, was member of the recruitment committee to assist in maintaining interested warden candidates and trends in hiring, and served as a sub-committee team lead on our Strategic Planning Committee, specifically focusing on the wellness of staff. Chris also leads the Recreational Property training for new staff teaching specific recreational property law enforcement, is the LE advisor to Sturgeon Advisory Committee providing guidance and direction on sturgeon management, and LE representative on the Lake Winnebago Goby -AIS team focusing on the protection of Lake Winnebago waters from goby and other exotic and invasive species.

NOMINEE'S UNIQUE PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS (GOING ABOVE THE CALL OF DUTY)

Describe how the Nominee has demonstrated exceptional performance beyond the duties required by his/her job. Please provide specific examples, rather than generalities. (400 word limit)

Chris and a staff member assisted with tornado-like winds that severed a large tree limb onto several campers at High Cliff. Chris and his staffer were first on scene to treat those with head, back, and stomach lacerations and injuries. Chris applied pressure and bandage during heavy rain and kneel in a pool of water for over 45 minutes while making a makeshift tent while the subject was in and out of conscious. Due to blowdown throughout the park, Emergency Medical Staff could not get to injured for almost an hour. A doctor commented without Chris's quick thinking to get victims out of weather with makeshift shelter and treating the injuries, they may have not survived.

Chris and his team assisted in the investigation of a double boat fatality with other DNR investigators and Winnebago Sheriff Officers which led to a successful prosecution of homicide by use of a vehicle while intoxicated. The operator was sentenced to 3 years of prison and 3 years of supervision.

Chris and staff responded to an active shooter at Fox River Mall in Appleton, WI. Chris and his team helped with perimeter surveillance, assisting with identification, and interviewing individuals who were evacuated.

Chris assists with local law enforcement officers with domestic violence contacts and other emergency responses (i.e. armed robbery/burglary calls, etc.). Chris assisted Winnebago Sheriff with a reckless shooting case where a bullet struck a trailer park. Chris assisted with security concerns for a judge's residence along Lake Winnebago waterway system. Chris regularly attends LE Executive meetings in the counties he supervisors to share information with other LE agencies, and works with Emergency

Management on table-top exercises for planning of large-scale disasters such as Wisconsin's Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) event -the World's largest aviation celebration. Due to the size of the event and proximity of Lake Winnebago, Chris and staff have responded to several airplanes that flew into the lake. Chris also participated in a tabletop exercise with a school bus accident involving multiple agency responses.

Chris led a response to a hunting fatality where an adult hunter shot and killed his youth son while returning from gun deer hunting. Through the tragic situation Chris maintained he and his team's composure while securing the scene and seizing appropriate evidence. Chris also assisted with coordination of an emotional debrief, checking-in with staff, and assisting with other department related matters.

NOMINEE'S INNOVATION (PROGRAM STARTER)

Describe any programs or projects that the Nominee has initiated or improved. (400 word limit)

Chris was instrumental in curtailing the drug problem at High Cliff State Park. Chris focused and led his team by increasing law enforcement efforts through directed patrols and investigation. This included multi-agency cooperation and group checks to focus on high recreated days such as 4-20, summer holidays, summer weekends, and a large Halloween event. Chris trained his team on narcotic enforcement as recreational property work was a new responsibility for the wardens at that time. Chris partnered with experts in narcotic, traffic and traditional law enforcement to train staff and worked with the District Attorney's Office to charge and prosecute the hundreds of offenders.

Chris also spends much time on unique sturgeon spearing season on Lake Winnebago, the largest lake sturgeon fishery in the world. Chris coordinates 20+ wardens from multiple teams to ensure law compliance. This takes much time as he is the law enforcement expert and leader on lake sturgeon enforcement media spokesperson for LE. Chris also coordinates patrols during the sturgeon spearing season to for the Battle on Bago fishing tournament. Chris has worked with tournament directors on ensuring donated fish to local food pantries meet compliance of state laws.

Chris is the LE lead for the Goby- AIS Lake Winnebago workgroup. Chris ensures his staff are educating the public on invasive species and importance of keeping the Lake Winnebago system free of invasives due to the important sturgeon populations, which is one of the largest North America's lake sturgeon populations. Chris and staff provide education talks, work with Fisheries staff, and assist in signing the area with ways to identify different invasive species and best management practices.

NOMINEE'S IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

Describe how the Nominee is/has been instrumental in initiating or leading efforts to benefit the local community (e.g. public outreach, community engagement, etc). (400 word limit)

Chris is heavily engaged with his community and endorses a high effort of community outreach with his staff. Chris has excellent customer service and places high customer service with staff, returning calls and emails promptly as well as investigating complaints and concerns with fish and game, boat, ATV/UTV, snowmobile, Off-highway motorcycle, trapping, and environmental laws without delay. Chris and staff routinely participate with various outreach events such Run with a Cop where various law enforcement officers run in uniform to generate money for various outreach programs. While there Chris and staff bring ATV/UTV and boats to provide education outreach to the public. Chris and his staff routinely give law enforcement talks at boat, ATV/UTV, Snowmobile, Hunting and Trapping Education

Classes, public relation talks to fish and game clubs, State Park Friend Groups, Camp Hosts, and other outdoor user groups. Every year, Chris and his team provide outreach to the Hmong National Labor Day Festival in Oshkosh, WI, as well as Wisconsin Waterfowl Expo and the Wisconsin Ice Fishing Expo. Chris participated in charitable initiatives such as Salvation Army's Ring the Bell and Northeast Wisconsin's Lights for Christmas (receiving donations while serving food at Culver's restaurant and giving the proceeds to needy people). Chris also has attended multiple Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC) meetings to meet with respective delegates on proposed natural resource law proposals, which is unique to Wisconsin as those meetings set the stage for the citizens of WI to attend and vote on those proposals. Chris provides LE updates and feedback to those delegates. Chris also coordinated a WCC youth recruitment by showcasing outdoor events and warden roles and responsibilities.

Chris connects with local media outside of the sturgeon spearing season where he does interviews upon requests for various fishing, hunting, recreational vehicle, state park, and other topics. Chris has written news articles for local partners such as Wisconsin Waterfowl Association and has served as a LE representative in several social media question and answer sessions.

NOMINEE'S MENTORING ACTIVITIES

Describe the contributions made by the Nominee to peers and junior officers. (400 word limit)

Chris is a true coach and mentor who expects the best out of his staff and ensures they are performing to an acceptable or often an exceptional level. This includes checking in with staff and being available to answer their calls day or night. Chris works with each staff member in the field to understand his staff, assist their workloads, and coach when needed. Chris regularly has team meetings virtually and in-person to provide updates to the mission and direction of the Department and the Division of Public Safety and Resource Protection. Chris supervises with a fair and consistent approach while holding his staff accountable to the expectations. Chris has coached and mentored several new and inexperienced staff to where they are leaders in the team. Chris also has several field training officers where Chris reviews reports and work activities to ensure the officers in training are performing to expectations. Recently, Chris worked and mentored a part-time warden within his team and who recently became hired as a full-time warden within WI-DNR. Chris cares much about his staff and their well-being on and off-duty. Chris organizes off-duty events with his team to enhance relationships and get to know his staff member's family.

Chris also spends much time instructing firearms safety to help our wardens return home safely at the end of their shift. This includes his team, regionally, and on a state-wide level. Chris trains firearms to our newly hired wardens. In addition, Chris coordinates and trains newly hired wardens in the 3-day recreational property enforcement training with vehicle OWI, domestic violation, narcotic enforcement, and mental health crises.

ANY OTHER INFORMATION YOU WOULD LIKE TO INCLUDE ABOUT YOUR NOMINEE

Please consider Chris for this prestigious award as he is a true leader and a person who has the highest degree of integrity, character, and service to the public he serves. He does phenomenal work in all aspects of his job and can always be relied on to get the job task completed, no matter what is asked of him. Chris is fair and reasonable, but firm; and believes in a balanced approach of education, enforcement, and community involvement.

Thank you for consideration-

Ben Trembl

SUBMISSION & SUBMISSION ASSISTANCE

Please fill out this form and email it to AFWA Communications Director, Patricia Allen (pallen@fishwildlife.org).

For more information or questions about this request for nominations, please contact Patricia Allen.