



Conservation News

Alabama Department of Conservation & Natural Resources



L-R: Conservation Commissioner Barnett Lawely, Joe Buschell and State Lands Division Director Patti Powell

BILLY POPE

Buschell Named State Executive Employee of the Year


Joe Buschell, Maintenance and Repair Supervisor at the State Lands Division's Five Rivers Delta Resource facility, has been named State Executive Employee of the Year.

Buschell is responsible for coordinating all aspects of building and grounds maintenance for the 5 Rivers facility and supervises a four-person labor and custodial crew. In the two years that Buschell has served in this position, he has made a remarkable visual impact to the 5 Rivers facility that is evident throughout the 80-acre site and has been a wonderful public ambassador for the facility – all while greatly improving the financial viability of the facility.

The most remarkable physical manifestation of his efforts can be found in the Apalachee Exhibit Hall. Buschell has been directly responsible for both the design and construction of several exhibits in the space, including four handcrafted live animal enclosures and a one-of-its kind interactive educational exhibit on the invasive Chinese tallow tree. The exhibits and enclosures he designed

are superior to anything that could have been purchased.

State Lands Division Director Patti Powell praises Buschell for his positive outlook and work ethic. "More impressive than his physical creations is the overall good spirit and can-do attitude he brings to the workplace," she said. "A typical week for Joe might include routine HVAC maintenance in seven buildings, construction of new displays, plumbing, yard work, equipment operation, leading impromptu guided tours of the facility, and supervising and cleaning up after a nighttime reception held at the facility. I truly believe that he can solve just about anything we throw at him and have great camaraderie and humor in the process."

Every year state agencies nominate an employee for the award, and Buschell was ADCNR's nominee. This is the second year that a Department of Conservation and Natural Resources employee has received the state employee of the year designation. 

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Annual Pier License Now Available for Nonresidents

Out-of-state visitors to the Alabama coastal waters are now able to purchase a reasonably priced license to fish the public piers on inside waters and the Gulf of Mexico.

The Alabama Legislature recently passed House Bill 386, which establishes a nonresident public pier fishing license for an annual fee of \$10. The legislation also changes the annual expiration date of public pier fishing licenses and saltwater pier fishing licenses to August 31. Alabama residents can still purchase an annual pier license for \$5.


The public piers include Gulf State Park Pier and Fairhope Pier. Dauphin Island Pier is landlocked and no fishing is available.

“A lot of people from out of state were not using the piers when they found out the cost of a nonresident saltwater fishing license,” said Major Chris Blankenship, head of Enforcement with the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources’ Marine Resources Division. “This gives visitors a

lower-cost alternative to use the piers.”

For most nonresidents, the annual Alabama saltwater fishing is \$45. For Louisiana, the fee is \$90, the same fee charged to Alabama residents in Louisiana.

Alabama residents and nonresidents possessing a current saltwater fishing license, and residents and nonresidents under age 16, as well as residents age 65 or over are exempt from the pier license requirements. Residents and nonresidents are required to purchase a fishing permit at Gulf State Park Pier in addition to the pier license. A one-day permit is currently \$8.


“The new pier license will remove a hurdle for many visitors to enjoy the great fishing offered at Gulf State Park Pier,” said Conservation Commissioner Barnett Lawley. “It was important that we make this outstanding facility, the longest pier on the Gulf of Mexico, available to everyone at a reasonable price.” 

Passport to Fitness

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is an eager participant of the new Passport to Fitness program. This project was developed by the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs to promote Alabama’s many fitness opportunities. Participating state parks include the following:

- Chewacla State Park
- Desoto State Park
- Gulf State Park
- Florala State Park
- Lake Guntersville State Park
- Lake Lurleen State Park
- Lakepoint State Park
- Oak Mountain State Park
- Wind Creek State Park

Each of the participating State Parks will provide you with an official Passport Guide that contains maps of the trails and points of interest. To make things even more fun, a section within the guide called the Passport Stamp Page can be presented on location for each featured walk you complete to receive an official passport stamp. As you collect the stamps, you will be walking your way to fitness and better health!

The Alabama Passport to Fitness website at www.adeca.alabama.gov/C4/PTF/default.aspx provides detailed information including a virtual map that contains street maps and aerial imagery for each trail. You can also download the Passport Guide and Passport Stamp Page from the website. 



Anglers on the new Gulf State Park fishing pier.

BILLY POPE



Alabama Teams Finish Big in National Archery Championship



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The Ashville Middle School Archery Team recently brought home top honors in the National Archery in the Schools (NASP) Championship held in Louisville, Ky. The students scored 3,378 out of a possible 3,600 points and placed first out of 106 middle school teams. Ashville qualified for the national championship when they won the middle school state title in Birmingham in April.


Also taking top honors were ninth grader Stephanie Whisenant from Ashville High School, who tied for first place in the individual high school female division; and tenth grader Joshua Clarke of Alma Bryant High School (Irvington, Ala.), who tied for second place in the individual high school male division. Both Stephanie and Joshua shot a near perfect 296 out of a possible 300 points.

Alabama was represented by 16 teams from 11 different schools at the national event. Alabama schools that placed in the top five in team competition include: Ashville Middle School, first place, middle school team division; Breitling Elementary (Grand Bay, Ala.), second place, elementary school team division; and the Alma Bryant and Ashville High School teams placed fourth and fifth place respectively in the high school team division.

More than 7,000 students from 33 states and one Canadian province were represented

at this year's national tournament. Scoring for the championship is based on Olympic style, target archery in three divisions: elementary, middle and high school. Competition included team and individual levels. NASP archery is a co-gender sport with every team required to contain boys and girls.

The NASP was founded in Kentucky in 2002 and has since spread around the country. The program was introduced in Alabama in 2003, and approximately 202 Alabama schools participate in the NASP program. In Alabama, the NASP is a joint venture between the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division and the Alabama Department of Education.

The program promotes participation in the lifelong sport of archery as part of a school's physical education course and after-school programs. The NASP program can also be included as a unit or activity in the Lifelong Individualized Fitness Education (LIFE) course as part of the Alabama Course of Study. The program meets the criteria of one credit for physical education required for high school graduation. 

Individual Alabama students who placed in the top ten include:

Stephanie Whisenant

Ashville High, 1st
high school division, female

Joshua Clarke

Alma Bryant, 1st
high school division, male

Tabitha Tucker

Ashville Middle, 4th
elementary school division, female

Jessica Sybert

Ashville Middle, 4th
elementary school division, female

Nathan Owens

Ashville High, 6th
high school division, male

Ryan Whisenhunt

Ashville Middle, 6th
elementary school division, male

Jeremy Stewart

Ashville Middle, 7th
middle school division, male

Miles Wilson

Breitling Elementary, 7th
elementary school division, male

Bailey Felps

Breitling Elementary, 9th
elementary school division, female

Boat Safe This Summer!

WWW.SAFEBOATINGCOUNCIL.ORG



With 1.3 million acres of recreational waters, Alabama is a boater's paradise. Unfortunately, each year a few easily preventable boating deaths and injuries occur. In 2009, there were 12 fatalities on Alabama waterways. Each person lost was a tragedy that could have been prevented with proper boating safety.

According to Lt. Erica Shipman with the education section of the Alabama Marine Police, wearing a life jacket is the best and easiest way to stay safe on the water. "Here in Alabama most of the boating fatalities are the result of capsizing or falling overboard where people actually end up in the water without a life jacket on," Shipman said. "Most of these boating-related deaths could be prevented if the person had just worn their life jacket. Boaters need to make sure that the life jacket fits properly and that it's in good condition, and above all they need to remember that it doesn't work if they don't wear it."

Here is a brief check list boaters should go through before hitting the water. Doing so could be a lifesaver.

- **Boat Maintenance:** Make sure your boat is in good working order before taking it out for the first time.
- **Safety Equipment:** Make sure all required safety equipment, including life jackets, are on the boat and in good working order.
- **Take a Boating Class:** An informed boater is a safe boater, and in Alabama if you drive a boat you must have an operator's license.
- **Courtesy on the Water:** Remember the "golden rule" while on the water.
- **Be a Weather Watcher:** Keep an eye to the sky; it could save your life.
- **Don't Drink and Drive:** Just like on the highway, drinking and operating a boat is against the law; and on the water it can be even more dangerous.

For these and more boating safety tips and online boating courses visit www.outdooralabama.com/boating.

READY, SET, INFLATE!

Gov. Bob Riley issued a proclamation promoting safe boating practices on May 20, 2010. During the ceremony Riley encouraged all Alabamians to wear a life jacket while boating the many lakes and rivers in the state. After his speech, several Alabama Marine Police officers and other state leaders joined Gov. Riley in a demonstration of how to operate inflatable life jackets.

The deployment of the inflatable life jackets was part of a nationwide launch of National Safe Boating Week. At venues all across North America, inflatable life jackets were deployed on the same date and time. The purpose was to raise public awareness of the importance of life jacket wear and general boating safety practices.



Conservation Commissioner Barnett Lawley and Gov. Bob Riley deployed inflatable life jackets to promote boating safety.

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