

# News Advocate

Manistee, Michigan

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## Safe waters for everyone

'Buzzed boating' law enforced on Manistee, state waters

By SEAN BRADLEY  
STAFF WRITER

MANISTEE — A new law is helping boaters on Lake Michigan and Manistee's rivers and lakes to enjoy their time on the water responsibly. Passed in December 2014 by the Michigan Legislature, the "Marine

Safety Act" (aka the "Buzzed Boating" law) lowers the blood alcohol content (BAC) to .08 for boaters, snowmobilers and those operating other off-road vehicles. Also, the law prohibits the operation of a motorboat by anyone found to have a controlled substance, including marijuana, in their system. Penalties for drunken or drugged driving increase if anyone under 16 years old is in the vehicle.

The new law came into effect on March 31. John Stuve is an attorney with Grand Rapids-based law firm Mika Meyers Beckett and Jones.

In a statement, he said the legal definition of a "motorboat" is defined broadly.

"Every watercraft that can be used as a means of transportation on water is a 'vessel' and every vessel that is propelled wholly or in part by machinery is a 'motorboat,'" Stuve said. "If you never leave the dock, you are not 'operating' your motorboat."

The BAC limits only apply when the vessel is in motion, and not when it is docked, at anchor, idle or secured in any other way, he said.

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Sean Bradley/News Advocate

Passed in December, the Marine Safety Act (a.k.a. the "Buzzed Boating" law) lowers the blood alcohol content for boaters to .08, the content level for motor vehicle drivers. Many of the same penalties faced by drivers on the road apply to those operating boats.

## Wellston family dedicates time to volunteer firefighting

By LOGAN T. HANSEN  
STAFF WRITER

NORMAN TWP. — From within the burning walls of a home that caught fire this spring, Jesse VanderBie emerged and pulled from his pocket wedding photographs and a cell phone — personal items he'd managed to save for a family that had just lost everything.

Somewhere outside, Ann VanderBie was standing by, ensuring that the firefighters dousing the house were provided with their own hydration, and food, if necessary.

Or she may have been obtaining information from the homeowners, or on her way back to the scene after retrieving extra air tanks from the station; whatever was needed that day, whatever the situation called for.

Jack and Dillon VanderBie were going through training at the time, but were it the end of May, they would have been in on the action, as well.

All four VanderBies — brothers Jesse and Dillon, and their parents Jack and Ann — serve as volunteers on the Norman Township Fire Department.

The department is comprised of about 25 members — 18 certified firefighters and seven EMS personnel — who all volunteer their time to provide fire and emergency services for Norman Township and surrounding areas.

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Logan T. Hansen/News Advocate

(From left to right) Dillon, Jack and Jesse VanderBie are all certified Firefighter Type II, meaning they can participate in prescribed fire and wild land fire operations, including control, mop-up, suppression and monitoring.



Photos by David Novadeh/News Advocate

(From left to right) Peter "Madcat" Ruth, Drew Howard and Mark Shrock of Madcat Midnight Blues Journey kick off the Portage Lake Association's Concerts in the Park series Monday night. The series continues on Monday at 7 p.m. with Cool Lemon.

## OPENING NIGHT

PLA concert series kicks off with Madcat Midnight Blues Journey

FROM STAFF REPORTS

ONEKAMA — The Portage Lake Association (PLA) Monday night Concert in the Park series kicked off Monday with Madcat Midnight Blues Journey playing blues, American roots music, folk music, jazz and world music.

The concert series continues Monday with Cool Lemon.

The band's concert, beginning at 7 p.m. at Onekama Village Park in Onekama, showcases pop, big band and blues.

This eight-person big band was a crowd pleaser when they played last year; members hail from Midland and Saginaw.

Each concert is free to attend, however donations are encouraged.

Other performers throughout the summer series, which happens at 7 p.m. every Monday at the park, include:

■ **July 13:** Gratitude Steel Band — This Jamaican steel band is headed by Chaz Russell;

■ **July 20:** Belle Suite — A returning local favorite from Bear Lake;

■ **July 27:** Pico and Chown — Vocalist Miriam Pico and pianist David Chown will charm the audience with Pico's vocal range and song-writing talents alongside Chown's piano prowess;

■ **Aug. 3:** The Scottville Clown Band will rock the crowd with their classic Dixieland and big band music;

■ **Aug. 10:** Peter, Paul & Mary Flashbacks — This group revives many beloved hits such as "Puff the Magic Dragon," "If I Had a Hammer";

■ **Aug. 17:** Accidentals — This indie folk trio was named "one of seven favorite breakout groups" by Billboard magazine, following the Austin, Texas, South by Southwest music conference.

Lawn chairs and blankets are encouraged.



Peter "Madcat" Ruth plays the harmonica at the first Concert in the Park at Onekama Village Park Monday night.



Drummer Mike Shimman of Madcat Midnight Blues Journey performs at Onekama Village Park Monday night.

## For service to your country

Manistee man receives World War II medals

By SEAN BRADLEY  
STAFF WRITER

MANISTEE — On May 14, 1945, John Pete, 18, went off to fight in World War II as part of a U.S. Navy that included 6,768 ships.

He served in the Pacific Theatre and was there during Japan's surrender to the allied forces.

Over 70 years later, the Manistee man, now 88, received medals recognizing his contribution to the war effort.

During a ceremony Monday at the Manistee VFW Walsh Post No. 4499, Pete received the following medals: World War II Victory Medal; American Campaign Medal; Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal; Discharge Button and the U.S. Navy Honorable Service Lapel Pin (Ruptured Duck).

"I should've had them a long time ago when I got out of the service," Pete said. "I'm proud of them. I earned them."

U.S. Rep. Dan Benishek, R-Iron River, said a debt of gratitude was owed to Pete for his service.

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Sean Bradley/News Advocate

John Pete's son David (left) pins one of the five World War II medals Pete was awarded during a ceremony Monday at the Manistee VFW Walsh Post No. 4499.

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Keno: 2-3-4-6-9-11-12-13-16-17-23-28-34-35-37-43-53-54-55-62-66-69

Wednesday's Classic Lotto 47 (jackpot is estimated at \$10.7 million); Tuesday's Mega Millions (jackpot is estimated at \$74 million).

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## FIREFIIGHTERS: FROM PAGE 1

Jesse VanderBie, 24, was the first to get his feet wet when he joined the department in July 2013.

"At the time I was working for a canoe rental, and there was an injury on the river where a person had a broken leg," he explained. "All of the fire department was down there and I could see they were really short-handed. Next Monday, I went down to the meeting and joined."

At first, Jesse mainly assisted with search and rescue missions. Soon, though, the biannual Manistee County fire academy rolled around and he did not hesitate to dive deeper into his involvement with the department.

Dillon VanderBie, 21, came on in the winter of 2013-14, after his older brother brought him along to various wildfires and a couple of training sessions, including an ice rescue training session that the younger VanderBie was especially intrigued by.

Ann VanderBie joined the department not long after, becoming an auxiliary aide officer.

Aside from providing food and beverages to the firefighters and EMS personnel on the scene, she also takes on other duties, like directing traffic, as necessary.

"When I'm there I do whatever is needed that I can do, without the training, that doesn't take a firefighter away from their job," she said.

Husband and father Jack VanderBie was the last of the clan to join on the wagon.

After his construction company built the new Norman Township Fire Station, which was completed in early 2015, Jack was inspired to join the corps of volunteers that already included his wife



From left to right, Dillon, Jesse, Ann and Jack VanderBie — all volunteers with the Norman Township Fire Department — pose in front of the recently constructed Norman Township Fire Station, which was completed earlier this year by Jack's construction company.

and both of his sons.

"Just seeing how everything worked at the department and listening to (Jesse and Dillon) come home and say, 'Yeah, we could have used a couple more guys out there today,' — that's why I decided to join," he said.

The men of the VanderBie family are now all certified Firefighter Type II, meaning they can participate in prescribed fire and wild land fire operations, including control, mop-up, suppression and monitoring.

Two hundred and eighty hours of training are required for Firefighter I and II, Jesse said, and it can be difficult for the VanderBies to manage time when they are all involved with Jack's construction company as well as the fire department.

"It's difficult, but it makes it worth it," Jack said. "We make it work."

Even though being involved with the volun-

teer fire department puts a strain on their time schedules, all four VanderBies are happy to be a part of an emergency service that covers 92-square-miles and provides assistance to people in rural areas that might otherwise experience a significant delay in emergency response.

"It's all worth it, seeing how appreciative the people are when you stop what you're doing, wake up in the middle of the night and show up to help them out," Dillon said.

In all likelihood, it's also helpful that the volunteers at NTFD work well together in a friendly atmosphere, the proverbial product of a small community.

"It's not just us, there's 20-some other people involved and everybody works together really well on the department," Jack said.

Jesse remarked that he had known and been good friends with others on the department at the time

he joined two years ago, and the situation hasn't changed.

Together, the VanderBies and other volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel at NTFD have experienced some rough car accidents, witnessed the homes of families reduced to ash and dealt with the aftermath of many painful and destructive incidents.

However, they've also been there to make those incidents a little more bearable for those affected; they've saved lives and continue to provide a vital service to their community.

"As a firefighter, you see things that you can't un-see, and it can be very stressful," Jesse said. "But for us to be able to show up and help make (somebody's) day a little bit better — whether it be taking wedding pictures off the inside of a burning house or comforting somebody while they're being cut out of a car after an accident — that makes it very rewarding."

## BOATING: FROM PAGE 1

Adrian Ledesma, petty officer with the U.S. Coast Guard Station Manistee, said Manistee is fortunate in that there have been no Boating Under the Influence (BUI) cases prosecuted by the Coast Guard in the last year.

"One thing that's very unique about this area is that people are very responsible with their boats," Ledesma said. "It's nice to see people are making the right choices. It's not something you see around here, and that's surprising given the high number of people who participate in boating."

He said citations can be given out for not having correct safety equipment on board the boat, which changes depending on the size of the boat, however items such as life jackets, noisemakers and flares are required for everyone on board no matter the boat size.

"Flairs are required if you're going out to the big lake," Ledesma said. "You can be cited for these if you don't have them. If you don't have life jackets, we'll immediately terminate your voyage and escort you back to your dock or pier."

As with deputies and police officers on road patrol, officers on the water look for signs of visible intoxication of either a driver or passenger.

He said last weekend, the Coast Guard Station Manistee and other stations, as well as the Manistee County Sheriff's Office and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources held Operation Dry Water, a nationwide, three-day event encouraging boater safety and reminding people not to drink and drive a boat.

If found to be drinking and boating, the case moves back on land — with many consequences. "BUIs are treated much the same as a DUI case on land," Ledesma said. "If found guilty you're facing fines, jail time, loss of boating privileges and even loss of driving privileges."

Manistee County Marine Deputy Mike Sekuris patrols many rivers and lakes in Manistee County including the Little Manistee River; Big Manistee River; Portage Lake; Arcadia Lake; Bear Lake; Sand Lake and Pine Lake.

Sekuris said that no arrests were made by the county's marine division last year but verbal warnings were given out.

"You can operate your boat and drink but you just can't be intoxicated and drive it," he said. "We're not out there to tell people 'no, you can't drink' but that they're operating their boat safely and they're not intoxicated while doing it. We want to make sure it's safe for everybody."

**"It's nice to see people are making the right choices."**

**PETTY OFFICER ADRIAN LEDESMA, U.S. COAST GUARD, MANISTEE STATION**



U.S. Rep. Dan Benishek, R-Iron River, (left) addresses Manistee man John Pete (far right) during a presentation Monday at the Manistee VFW Walsh Post No. 4499 to award Pete medals he earned from his time serving in World War II.

## MEDALS: FROM PAGE 1

"Sometimes I look at veterans like Mr. Pete and I realize that when he went off to war, he was a young kid," Benishek said.

Benishek also presented a gift from the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians (LRBOI) during the presentation.

Manistee VFW Walsh Post No. 4499 commander Donald Vadeboncoeur detailed how Pete came to receive his medals.

"He never requested them (after his service)," Vadeboncoeur said. "In the last two to three years he requested them."

Vadeboncoeur said the VFW post's service officer and commanding sergeant major Sam Scarborough helped Pete obtain the medals, as did members of the American Legion Post No. 10 in Manistee.

"It's more or less a vet helping a vet," Vadeboncoeur said.

During the ceremony, Pete's son David, 41, and Pete's grandson, Jacob, 10, pinned the medals on Pete.

"It was kind of a surprise thing," David said. "I didn't think it would be these big doings."

He said it's a great honor and privilege to see his father obtain the medals.

Also attending the ceremony were the



Manistee man John Pete was awarded the following medals Monday during a ceremony at the VFW Walsh Post No. 4499: a World War II Victory Medal; an American Campaign Medal; a Discharge button and a U.S. Navy Honorable Service Lapel Pin (Ruptured Duck).

Manistee County Sheriff Dale Kowalkowski and Undersheriff John O'Hagan; LRBOI ogea Larry Romanelli; members of the Boy Scout troop 101 and many friends and family of Pete.

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