



Warwick police issue new patch in support of non-profit for veterans

by JESSICA A. BOTELHO, NBC 10 NEWS
Friday, October 16th 2020

AA



Veteran Angler Charters is a Connecticut-based non-profit organization that offers no-cost charter fishing trips to disabled veterans of all branches of the armed forces. (Photo courtesy of Veteran Angler Charters)

WARWICK, R.I. (WJAR) — With its popular patch program, the Warwick Police Department has raised nearly \$20,000 for various charities so far in 2020.

They kicked off the campaign in March, with the first patch raising \$8,000 alone for the National Autism Association.

Now, the fourth and latest patch honors military veterans, with proceeds being donated to [Veteran Angler Charters](#), a Connecticut-based non-profit organization that offers no-cost charter fishing trips to disabled veterans of all branches of the armed forces.





“We’re excited about this one,” Community Services Division Capt. Michael Lima told NBC 10 News during a phone interview on Friday.

“We’ve gotten a lot of positive feedback in sales,” he said. “We’re early on right now, but we’re hoping that it keeps pushing forward into November and Veteran’s Day, and throughout the rest of that month.”



Veteran Angler Charters is a Connecticut-based non-profit organization that offers no-cost charter fishing trips to disabled veterans of all branches of the armed forces. (Photo courtesy of Veteran Angler Charters)

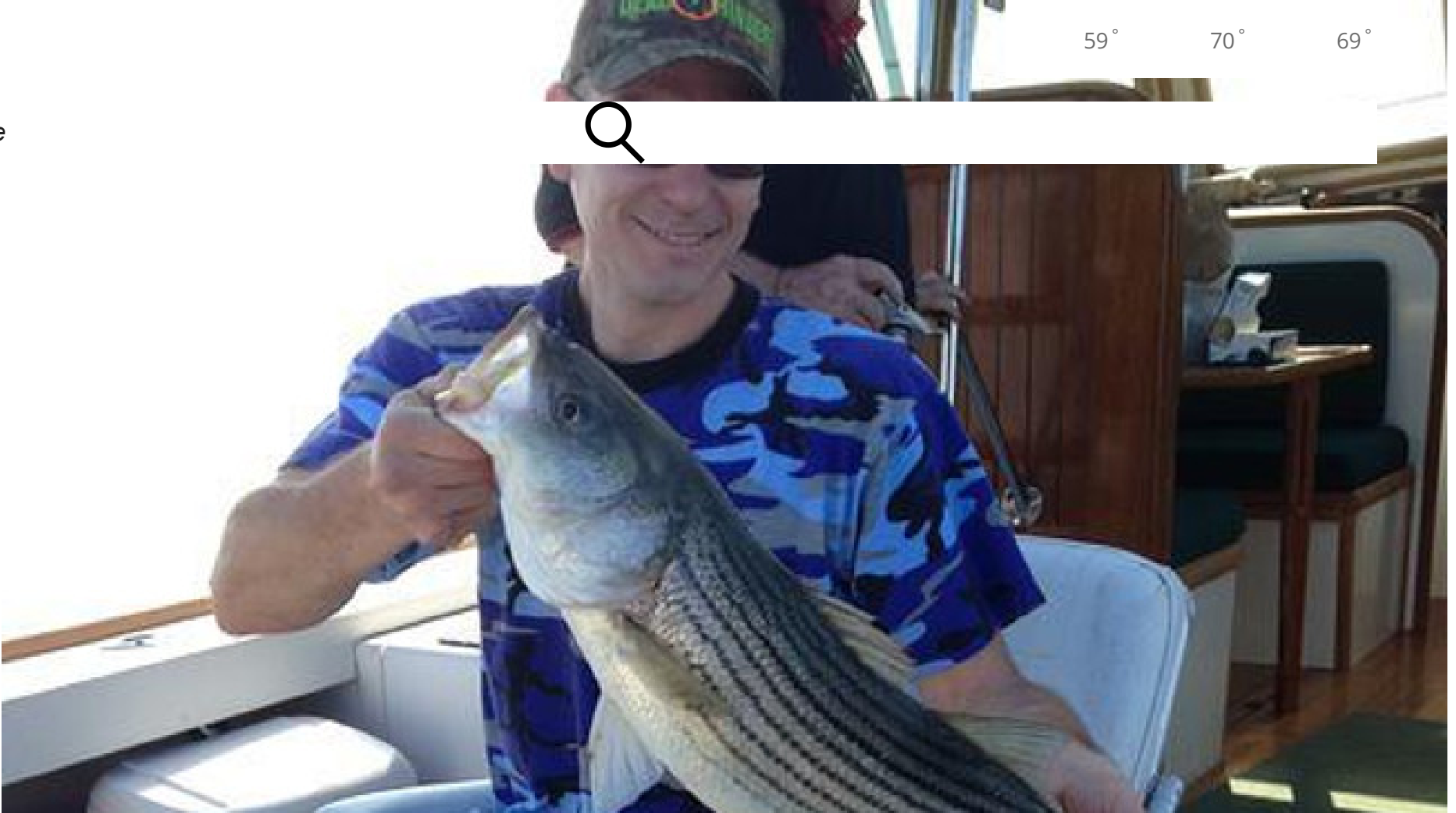
Lima said officers within the department will each wear a patch on their uniforms during the month. He said they are all proud to do so.

“Everyone knows a veteran, whether they are family members or friends,” he said.

Capt. Tom Bremer is the vice president of Veteran Angler Charters. He’s also a veteran, as he served in the United States Coast Guard from 2003 to 2013, retiring as an E-6 Petty Officer First Class.

“We don’t accept any money from the veterans at all,” he told NBC 10. “All they have to do is show up.”

Bremer said the purpose of the trips is to provide veterans with therapeutic support and recreational rehabilitation. He added that it gives them an opportunity to forget about PTSD, mental disorders, or a physical disability, and get out on the water for the day.



Veteran Angler Charters is a Connecticut-based non-profit organization that offers no-cost charter fishing trips to disabled veterans of all branches of the armed forces. (Photo courtesy of Veteran Angler Charters)

“The only thing they have to focus on is camaraderie with other vets and catching a fish or two and enjoying some nice weather,” Bremer said. “They are really able to open up and enjoy themselves and get a fresh outlook on life. We have individuals who were on suicide watch, with is a very big issue in the veteran’s community right now, that have come out with us and told us after the fact that the trip has given them the courage to look forward to tomorrow.”

Founded in 2009, Berman said Veteran Angler Charters started operations in 2010 with one boat, The Black Mariah, led by Capt. Kathy Granfield, who helped spearhead it all.

“In 2007, she realized she wanted to help veterans, so she organized these trips out of her own pocket,” he said. “She would take a small group of people out on her charter boat.”

The demand for the trips continued to grow, so with the support of friends, Granfield eventually established the non-profit.

“We started with just her boat and quickly expanded into Massachusetts, and then Rhode Island, and lastly, into Maine,” Berman said. “It’s been growing year after year since then.”

Now, Bremer said they partner with six boats, with two in Connecticut, two in Rhode Island, one in Massachusetts, and one in Maine. They average about 70 trips per year throughout New England, with the number of participating veterans fluctuating between 300 to 500 each year.



He added that many of the volunteers are veterans, with all donations helping the non-profit get boats on the water.

“We are 100 percent donation based,” he said. “The vast majority of our donors are small businesses and individuals. The support from the organizations we receive, like the Warwick Police Department and a lot of other people, are what keep us going. Without the support, we wouldn’t be able to keep doing this.”

Lima said the police are happy to raise both funds and awareness. He said the veterans all deserve some rest and relaxation.

“It’s a good chance for these guys and girls who have seen a lot and have been through a lot to get out on the water and this is something that we can give back to them,” Lima said. “We’re honored to be partnered with them and we hope this patch does as well as the other patches and raise as much money as we possibly can.”

The department also issued a “Law Enforcement Memorial” patch in May to benefit the First Responder Children’s Foundation, a non-profit organization that provides financial support to children who have lost a parent in the line of duty, as well as families who have encountered financial hardships due to the circumstances.

In September, they released a pink patch to help raise funds and awareness for people battling breast cancer.

“You can still get any of the patches,” Lima said, noting that 100 percent of the funds go toward the respective charities. “All the money goes directly to that organization. A lot of these organizations say their fundraising is down dramatically, especially this year with COVID, so we’re giving them a boost.”

Lima said staff from the National Autism Project were so moved when they accepted the donation that one of them was crying.

“She was in tears when we gave her that check,” Lima said. “It’s a big deal for some of these organizations because fundraising is how they survive and if they don’t have that money, the programs suffer and the people that rely on those programs suffer.”

While Lima said [the patches are available online](#), as well as at the station by appointment, Berman noted that they are always looking for disabled, wounded, and recovered veterans who would like to join them on trips.

“All they have to do contact by us by email,” he said.

Learn more at [VeteranAnglerCharters.com](#) or by emailing Berman at tbremer@veterananglercharters.org.

MORE TO EXPLORE

Closings

Motorcyclist dies after crash in Warwick

Warwick couple finds 1940s artifacts during house renovation

SPONSORED CONTENT

Tommy Chong: Throw Out Your CBD Now

Tommy Chong's CBD

Faith Hill's Daughter Is Probably The Prettiest Woman In The World

Noteably

ADVERTISEMENT

TRENDING

Providence police cruiser strikes man on moped

Man on scooter critically injured in crash with Providence police cruiser

UPDATED Crash in Warwick snarls morning commute for hours

UPDATED Stray b inside apartme

ADVERTISEMENT

STAY CONNECTED

Like Us

Follow Us

ADVERTISEMENT

NEWS IN PHOTOS: "Local"

Providence police cruiser strikes man on moped

UPDATED

Stray bullet strikes woman inside apartment

Man on scooter critically injured in crash with Providence police cruiser

Providence residents to discuss crime

Loading ...