

“To Infinity and Beyond!”

Cook’s Cadre Expedition #2

By Bob Newbert

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Capt. James Cook was not the only explorer who dared go where no man has gone before. In modern times, there is another intrepid adventurer who traveled far beyond the “everyday” to explore new worlds and chart a path forward: Buzz Lightyear.



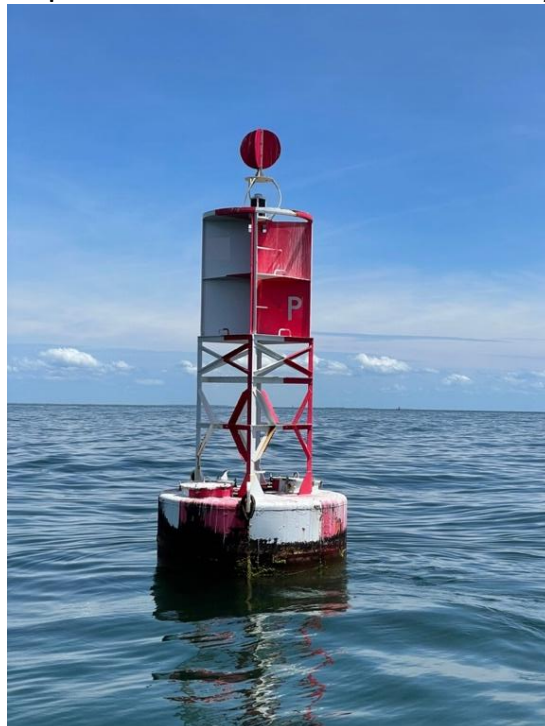
Yes, Buzz. Known for his signature phrase (“To Infinity and Beyond”), Buzz represents endless possibilities, the spirit of adventure, boundless devotion and pushing past all known limits.

The same can be said of **John Westervelt, Kevin Thienemen, James Dickie, Stefan Gantenbein, John Brink, and Jim Iannacchino** for they pushed past inshore boundaries to survey “open ocean” ATONs along Baypoint Range and Tybee Range. As members of “Cook’s Cadre,” they traveled out-of-sight-of-land to inspect Navigation Aids guiding the big ships to Savannah and Beaufort. Indeed, with boundless energy and daring spirit they went to “infinity and beyond.”

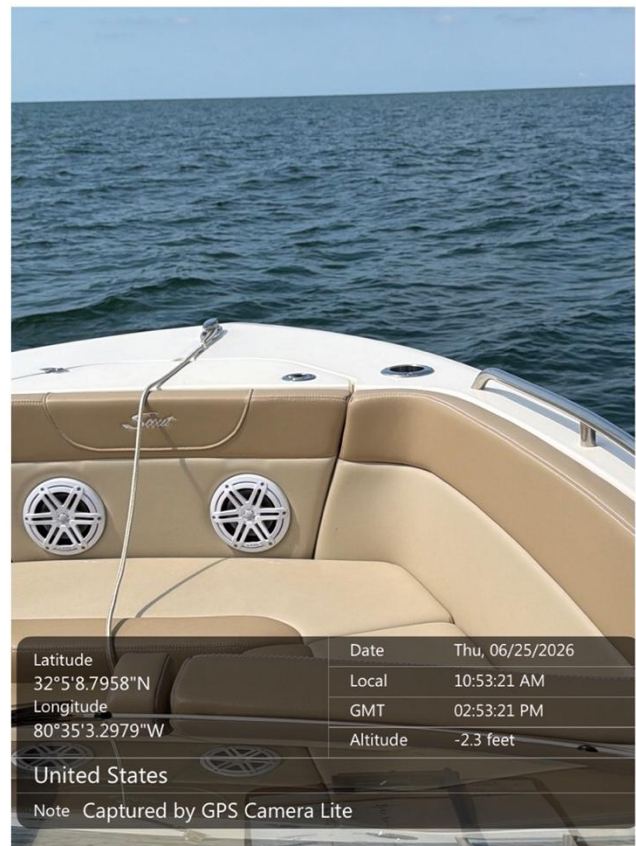
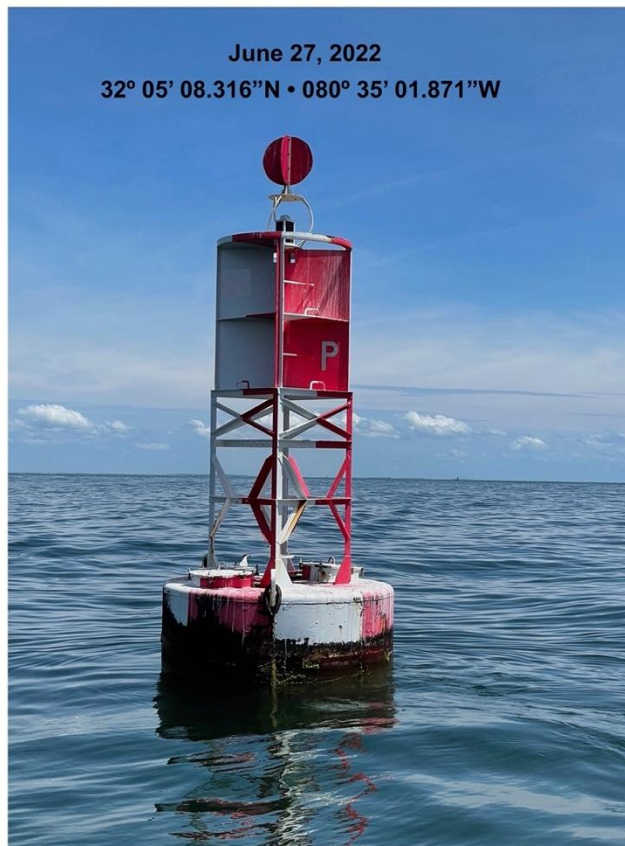


***FAR OUT TO SEA, Cook's Cadre inspected ATONS lying somewhere between
--take a look around-- Infinity and Beyond.***

This charting expedition was to be a celebration of sorts for me because almost four years ago to the day (*June 27, 2022 vs June 25, 2026*) I charted the same ATONS. I was especially eager to chart Port Royal Sound Buoy "P" at the outside, Atlantic edge of Baypoint Range for it resembles a colorful, lighted birthday candle – the perfect metaphor to celebrate the anniversary of my return.



Imagine my disappointment when I arrived at **32° 05' 08.316"N • 80° 35' 01.871"W** and lighted buoy "P" was not there. It was missing!



BUOY "P" on June 27, 2022 on LEFT and empty space on June 25, 2026 on RIGHT

This triggered a "Discrepancy Report" to the Coast Guard which is a layer of reporting over and above our reports to USPS Cooperative Charting. Normally, if an ATON is where it should be, and in good shape, we photograph it; verify its Longitude & Latitude; and report that it is "properly located and in excellent condition." Missing ATONS are a whole different level of reporting which I nobly undertook upon our return.

But that's a story for another day ("How do you photograph something that isn't there?"). In any event, missing Buoy "P" was my last stop in Baypoint Range so with a sad heart, I made the 20-mile journey to land where we gathered for lunch at Bubba Gumbo's and a dignified Awards Ceremony inducting Kevin Thienemen, John Westervelt and John Brink into the elite corps of ABCHH – "Cook's Cadre."

Cook's Cadre are the Navy Seals of ABCHH. They are an exclusive group of overachievers who travel afar assuring our waterways are safe for mariners.

Now, all elite operators have a distinctive symbol they wear signifying their status. For Navy Seals it's the gold-filled Trident they wear on their uniform. Other elite groups have special headwear i.e. maroon beret of Army Airborne and green beret of Army Special Forces.

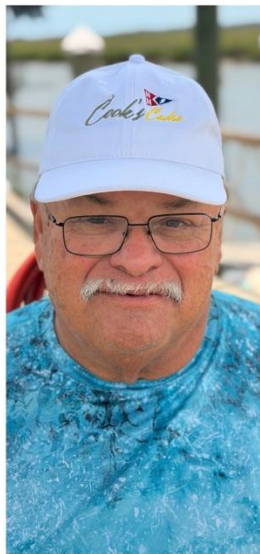
Hats fit ABCHH's budget better than gold-filled pins so we commissioned distinctive headgear for all Cook's Cadre members to be proudly worn while in the field (I mean on the seas) carrying out our mission.



And a successful mission it was for we charted 42 ATONS and discovered everything from missing numbers on buoys (leading to misidentification of a mariner's location) to buoys that simply weren't there. Moreover, like Buzz Lightyear, we did it with a spirit of adventure and boundless devotion as we traveled far from land to...infinity and beyond.



AWARDS CEREMONY where newly minted Cadre members receive their coveted Cook's Cadre hat.



BEST of the BEST (from left): John Brink, John Westervelt, Kevin Thienemen



THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN -- Cook's Cadre members who traveled far offshore charting our sea lanes (L to R): Kevin Thienemen, Stefan Gantenbein, Jim Iannacchino, Bob Newbert, James Dickie, John Westervelt and John Brink.



BAYPOINT RANGE R "4" and JOHN WESTERVELT are both "properly located and in excellent condition." (R "4" is located at the correct coordinates in the Atlantic and Capt. John Westervelt by the bar in Bubba Gumbo's, the R&R stop for Cook's Cadre Expedition #2).



CAPT. JIM IANNACCHINO, super hero adventurer and Cook's Cadre leader, without his uniform.