

The Southern Region is proud to announce that **Gretchen Stokes** of Apex, North Carolina (near Raleigh), will be serving as the 2010-2011 Southern Region Sea Scout Boatswain.

Gretchen succeeds Abby King of St. Petersburg, Florida, who has now completed an outstanding term. Gretchen's duties include reporting on the state of Sea Scouting at the meetings of the Southern Region Board and serving as a member of the Southern Region Venturing Officers Association.

Gretchen is a student at North Carolina State University, where she is a Park Scholarship Recipient and active in the University Scholars program, Leadership in Action, Relay for Life, Sustainability Club, and the Service Raleigh Partners Committee. An avid preservationist of our natural resources, she has been involved with the education, outreach, and summer camp programs of the North Carolina Museum of Natural Resources since 2005, as well as the Save What's Left Environmental Club at her high school. She is also a trumpet player with the NC State Pep Band.

Gretchen has just finished her first year pursuing a major in Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology, along with minors in Biology, Spanish, and Botany. She has a sincere passion for conservation biology and wants to help people live more sustainably with their environment. She hopes to continue on to graduate school for ecology and eventually work towards a PhD.

Gretchen has been involved in Sea Scouting for over five years and earlier this year earned the Quartermaster Award. Her training includes the state Safe Boating Course, Coast Guard Auxiliary Sailing Skills & Seamanship Course, Red Cross CPR, and BSA Lifeguard certifications. In 2008, she placed well in the SEAL Competition and Training program, earning the designation of Top Boatswain of the course. She is also a recipient of the Venturing Leadership Award and a PADI Dive to Adventure Scholarship.

Gretchen has been spending time over the last couple of years motivating and educating Sea Scout Venturers in the Carolinas, and now looks forward to doing that at the regional level. She sees this not just as a personal growth opportunity, but more importantly as a way to "give back" to many across the Southern Region. She believes that her passion for the things she loves is what drives her to succeed, and the Southern Region wishes her all the best to do just that.

Gretchen may be reached via email srboatswain@srventuring-bsa.org

Bravo Zulu to Abby King for a watch now ended and to Gretchen Stokes for a watch now underway.

Yours in Sea Scouting,
Barry Ekle,
Southern Region Sea Scout Commodore