

## THE GAME AND FISH ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM FROM THE YOUNG OFFICER'S VIEWPOINT

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I am doing the same thing that many other young men are doing, looking into the future and deciding what is best for my family and myself. The Tennessee Game and Fish program attracted me for several reasons; first of all, I like outdoor work; secondly, there is a chance for advancement for one who is willing; and third, I have always had a genuine desire to do this type of work.

I have now been employed by the Tennessee Game and Fish Commission for almost two years, and I can truthfully say I have no regrets for the move I made. There are times when the hours are very long, and sometimes the pay seems small; but I wouldn't trade for most other jobs with twice the pay. This statement may seem silly to some, but there is some solid feeling about this work that I can't explain.

The geographical layout of Tennessee is such that it can offer many choices of location, from the flat lands of west Tennessee to the mountains of the east. The county in which I am assigned is a very busy one. The main reason is simple; the Tennessee River runs 50 miles through my county and Pickwick Dam, also located in my area, attracts thousands of tourists and fishermen each year. We have our fair share of the hunting too with close to 100 bucks per year deer season. In addition to this, we have some of the finest quail, rabbit, and squirrel hunting the State has to offer.

One of the most admirable points as to the way the Game and Fish program is carried out is that the Officer in any assigned county is permitted to use his own judgement in carrying out the Commission's program. Most of the time in so many other occupations, a person cannot put his thoughts into action; but with Game and Fish, an Officer is left to make most of the decisions on his own. In my time with the Commission, I have found it best to apply common sense to any circumstance which might arise. One thing I always try to remember is to put myself in the other man's shoes; consideration for your fellow man is always justifiable.

One duty of ours of great importance is the school program. Each year we go to as many of the schools of our county as possible to show films, give talks, and have a question and answer period afterwards. I think this is good because we are molding young peoples' minds to the necessity of good conservation practices; when they grow into adults and leaders of this country, then its possible, just possible, that one of these seeds of thought implanted into a mind years before might come to the surface and be a decisive factor on a major decision where wildlife conservation is held in the balance.

The Tennessee Game and Fish Commission had its birth on February 25, 1949, when the 76th General Assembly met and enacted into law the bill that is known as "The Model Game and Fish Law." At this time, there was a nine-man Commission established; each member is appointed from one of three districts of each of the three grand divisions of the State.

The Commission is charged with the full and exclusive jurisdiction of administering all laws enacted by the General Assembly in relation to fish, game, and boating safety. Also any other law relating to hunting, fishing, boating, and the conservation, propagation, protection, or management of wildlife. The Commission's decisions are administered by the Director and two Assistant Directors; they are in turn given to the Chief of the respective divisions; and then passed on to the supervisors and the field enforcement personnel.

One thing I hope we as conservationists can do before its too late is put a stop to the pollution that is poisoning streams and rivers of the

south. It is true that industry and agriculture have some very good arguments—their main strength being the ideas of progress and economy. However, there must be some possible way for the wheels of progress to turn without destroying our natural resources. There must be some way to work out a coexistence between the two and it is our duty to see this is done.

I like to think of my employment with Game and Fish as a profession rather than an occupation because the duties performed take a certain amount of skill and intelligence combined with an unflinching sense of dedication to the services rendered. I think there is no man in this type work who honestly can say he enjoys it unless he feels a certain amount of dedication. Unlike other professions we have to acquire a jack-of-all-trades knowledge. To illustrate, let us say its nine o'clock this morning, and I have just finished compiling a staggering amount of reports and mailed them; next, I spend two hours of investigation on a report of an illegal deer kill which has taken place; when completing this, I find myself in the area of my water pollution surveillance station whereupon I make a pollution test to check the ph and oxygen content of the water. That afternoon I might have court and have to act with the knowledge of a lawyer on regulations pertaining to game and fish cases. That night I might be called upon by a civic organization to make a talk regarding the type work that I do. Of course, there are many other aspects of our work that an Officer must have a working knowledge of; and these are all obtained by practical experiences and the training program set up by the Commission.

Shortly after coming to work for the Game and Fish Commission, I received instructions to attend the Tennessee Law Enforcement Officers' Training Academy in Nashville. This was a two-week course which covered everything from public speaking to hand-to-hand combat. Other things covered in this two-week period were classes in search and seizure, collecting and preserving evidence, a twice-over coverage on the laws pertaining to game and fish, firing of the handgun, and a general first aid course.

The instructors for these courses were professional men from different fields, some were FBI Agents, others were lawyers, pathologists, doctors, and representatives from other law enforcement bodies within the State. I consider such a course a must for any man working for a Game and Fish Department of any state. The knowledge I received has been a great help to me on many occasions; and one case in particular in which I prosecuted a man a month after he had killed a deer out of season. The case was made because of the collection and preservation of evidence found at the scene where the deer was killed and some follow-up leads that were given to me. Again, I would like to emphasize strongly the necessity of a similar program for any Game and Fish Officer.

One thing I find very commendable to the Game and Fish program of this State is the very low turnover in personnel; this is the result of the superb manner in which the chain of command is carried out. This is done without harshness or harassment. It seems that everyone, from the Director down to the newest Officer, works for the same common goal—achieving a conservation program in this State second to none.

Another thing of which I am proud is that no matter where I am, in uniform or out, if conversation develops with a stranger and the subject of my occupation arises, I am always proud to say I am an employee of the Tennessee Game and Fish Commission. Usually, at this point the person with whom I am talking becomes very interested and this affords an opportunity to explain some part of our program.

In my opinion, there is no reason why a Game and Fish Officer shouldn't be a well liked and well respected member of any community and have the full cooperation of the citizens of that area. The individual Officer's outlook and attitude to his work and to the total program put forth by the Commission is the determining factor in establishing his image in the community.

Hunting and fishing in the State of Tennessee is a multimillion dollar business, so let's look at the game and fish enforcement program from a dollar and cents standpoint. Thousands of businesses benefit from the very fact that we have an abundance of both hunting and fishing. Let's assume that we all wake up tomorrow and suddenly find we have no fish in the streams and rivers and no game left upon the land. What would happen? Of course, we know several businesses dependent on their hunting and fishing customers for a livelihood and these would have to close their doors and go out of business. There are many industries operating in the state that make hunting and fishing equipment; either they would have to change to a different type of product or face bankruptcy. Then from a national and international standpoint there are many suppliers to these hunting and fishing product industries such as steel and plastics that would have to cancel shipments and stop production of materials made for these industries. By looking at it from this standpoint, we can readily see we have a part as big as anyone else in keeping the national economy solid. By our efforts and the efforts of others, we are helping to keep a good economic condition both locally and state wide.

To sum up my feelings as a young Officer, I would say, "I hope I am always blessed with the health and spirit I now have so that it may be possible for me to continue in this type work until I retire. At that time I think I will be able to look back over my life and not have a lot of second thoughts and regrets, but instead have contentment and fulfillment in my heart." What else could a young man ask for?

## **THE NEED FOR IMPROVING EMERGENCY CARE OF VICTIMS OF ACCIDENTS OR SUDDEN ILLNESS— THE NEGLECTED DISEASE OF MODERN SOCIETY**

*By* ARNOLD WINKENHOFER

### **IMAGINE**

Walking into the Rose Bowl in Pasadena on January 1, 1970 and instead of finding a multitude of exuberant football fans, you found a dead person propped up in each seat and fourteen thousand more piled up on the playing field. That would be a rather shocking experience, don't you think? I wonder what the headlines would say and how much time TV would devote to such a situation? I wonder what would be the reaction of the general public? These dead people, 114,000, equals the annual accidental death toll in this country.

### **IMAGINE**

Going into Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee, or Mobile and Mobile County, Alabama, and finding that every person living there had a permanent disability of some sort such as the loss of an arm, eye, leg, hand, both arms, hands, eyes, legs, etc. What would you think? Well, accidents permanently disable 400,000 plus persons each year in this country and that just about equals the total population of the places just mentioned.

### **IMAGINE**

Going into the states of South Carolina, Mississippi, Kentucky, and Georgia and finding that every person living there during the past year had lost a half day or more from work because of accidental injury. The population of these states approximates the 10,900,000 people temporarily disabled annually in this country.