

THE ROLE OF THE LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER AND THE SUPERVISOR

by

William H. Buchanan

Before dealing with the role of the Conservation Officer, much consideration should be given to the selection of the person you expect to become an officer. Intensive investigation must be made of any applicant. Visit his home, look around, if you find everything untidy and out of order you might be getting this type of man. Discuss the job with his wife. If she does not approve of his potential work, there is no way for the man to succeed (if he intends to stay married). Contact the school he attended, find out what activities he entered into, how he associated with other students. Talk with his banker, his minister and his neighbors. After making all these investigations, you should have a pretty good picture of the individual. Discuss all the information you received with other Department personnel. Weigh the information carefully and compare it with the qualifications of other applicants; then choose the one man you think will be best suited for the job.

The following is a key to the necessary qualities a man should possess to become a good employee; however, let me point out that I do not think you would ever get one man with all these qualities, as long as salaries remain where they are now. Nevertheless, this is what I like for in a *WILDLIFE LAW OFFICER*:

W *Worthy* of the job and willing to work at it. Doing the job that needs to be done at the time it should be done.

I *INTELLIGENT* enough to master the job, to sum up the circumstances. *INDUSTRIOUS* enough to find out exactly what happened in any particular case.

L *LEARN TO LISTEN* to sources of information, to get the information exactly in the sequence in which it happened. Never divulge any source of information unless the informant agrees to testify in court. Make notes and keep them.

D *DEDICATED* to his task, for he will never be paid for all the irregular hours he must spend. *DIPLOMATIC* enough to lead informants into telling all ... or into "crossing" themselves so you know there is no truth to their story.

L *LABOR*: there is nothing that will take the place of good hard work and persistence. "Taking the easy way" leads to no place.

I *INTERESTED* in the out of doors and protection of wildlife. *INITIATIVE* to do the job without being probed.

F *FRIENDLY* and helpful to all contacts, but *FEARLESS* to stand up for what is right.

E *ENERGETIC*, with the stamina to stay with a job until it is complete.

L *LOYAL* to the cause, and to those with whom you associate and work.

A *ALERT* in detecting violations and active in doing something about them. There is quite a difference between just driving along and patrolling to detect violations.

W *WATCHFUL*: Look for every opportunity to win someone over to the cause of Conservation. Stay well advised on your subject so you can "sell" it to others.

O *OFFENSE*: stay on the offense, like a successful athlete. Carry your program to the public. No one ever won a ball game without the ball.

F *FIRM* standing on your own convictions. *BE FACTUAL*. Tell it like it is. Be honest and truthful in all dealings.

F FREE: from interference, always keep yourself in a position that you are not obligated to anyone. Many will try to use you to their interests if they can.

I INGENIUS: plan your work in a clever, skillful manner. Many court cases are won or lost by preparation prior to entering court. Sometimes the sequence of events will make a big difference in the outcome of a case. In cases with multiple witnesses, many times there is a difference in who testifies first.

C COURAGE to do your job but always in a *COURTEOUS* manner, if at all possible. Courage means never to be a bully. Loss of temper is often a loss of courage.

E EXPERIMENT with different tactics. The same pattern will produce only the same results.

R RESOURCEFUL: use equipment and materials to best advantage; always care for them as if they were your own personal property.

S SOBER: there is no place in Conservation for any drunk, in any capacity. Every officer must *SOLICIT* help from many contacts; therefore, he must build a reputation of respect.

THE ROLE OF THE OFFICER

The Law Enforcement Officer is a most important link in the Department's programs. He is the man who puts into effect the policies and procedures that are formulated by the Department's directors and administrators.

In law enforcement, the officer must first be a student of the law. He must master the laws he is to enforce in order to know what constitutes a violation. Secondly, he must be a detective in order to apprehend the individuals who are violating the laws. He must be capable of making arrests or giving citations when he detects a violation. He must prepare his own case and present it to the court of jurisdiction since most prosecutors are absent or busy with other matters when the officer's cases are coming to trial. He should be a diplomat to the court, making visits there even when he needs no particular help. And Lastly, the officer must have the proper equipment to meet the needs of his area; of course, he also plays the role of mechanic for the minor repairs his equipment may need.

The law enforcement officer is the local Game Agent. If there is a wildlife food planting project, a biologist prepares the technical advice; but when it comes down to actually getting the food plot planted, the officer must secure the site and on many occasions do the planting. If it is a stocking project or a survey research project, the procedure follows pretty much the same pattern.

The law enforcement officer is a Fisheries Aid. If there is a pollution case, the officer must first locate the source, get samples of the water and make a count of fish killed. If there is a pond to stocked, treated or checked, it's the same old story: the officer is the first man on hand. Creel surveys, research and many other fishery projects depend heavily on the efforts and cooperation of the local law officer.

In Kentucky the Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources depends on the sale of hunting and fishing licenses for its very existence. Therefore we must see that hunters and fishermen buy their licenses. The law officer keeps close check to be sure that the County Court Clerks have ample supplies on hand at all times to meet license needs. The Officer's next task is to make sure that all the hunters and fishermen are properly licensed for their sports. In these ways the officer provides some very real and very necessary assistance to our Division of Fiscal Control.

The local officer also serves as an educator. He must educate the public to the importance of game and fish resources to the entire community, and why these resources must be protected. He assists the Department's Division of Conservation Education by visiting schools with the Education Supervisor in order to become a more familiar person to the school children. These youngsters, in turn, will carry the message of conservation home to the parents.

The officer also spends one or two weeks each summer at the Department's Conservation Education Summer Camp. Here, he accompanies children from his area and serves as an assistant to the camp staff.

The Department has a Division of Public Relations that gathers all information from the field and other sources. This information is then relayed through the various media to keep the public informed of the Department's programs. But when it comes to getting the information "back across the tracks", back where the media do not always reach, it is the duty of the Conservation Officer to spread the word. He must work with local sportsmen clubs and outdoor groups to keep them informed of Department activities. It is also his duty to see that such clubs stay active and that worthwhile projects they begin are not allowed to fade away.

And the local officer is also an engineer, assisting our Division of Engineering, by seeing that all Department property is kept in a good state of repair. When he finds that repair work is necessary, he reports it to the proper authority. Most often, work comes back that the officer should secure the needed materials and initiate the repair work himself.

THE ROLE OF THE SUPERVISOR

A Supervisor is charged with the responsibility of coordinating all Department programs in a given area. He is the manager of most of the Department's affairs in his district. His main duty is law enforcement, and his staff usually consists of one officer for each county.

The very first thing any Supervisor must do is solicit the help of his staff and instill in each of them the necessity of doing the things that need to be done, the way they should be done and the time they should be done. He shouldn't just tell them, he should *train* them.

In law enforcement, the Supervisor must be familiar with the terrain and the hunting and fishing potential of each county. The only way he can become acquainted with these areas is to go with each officer and look over and discuss the challenges and problems the area presents. He must depend upon the officer to keep him informed of all activities in that county; by the same token, if the Supervisor gains some new information about the area, he should share it immediately with the local officer.

Give the officer some incentives for following your instructions. Honor his successful achievements. Let him know when you think he has done a good job. Never condemn an officer for an alleged failure or negligence until you can first discuss it with him.

The Supervisor must manage officers, group them as the needs require. He should use only the number of men needed for a job: too many can often be worse than too few on a special assignment. The Supervisor should know his personnel and select the right man for each operation. The Supervisor should always accompany his men on the more serious problems.

The Supervisor should be available to his staff at all times, or nearly so. Officers feel more secure if they know there is someone backing them, someone who will give assistance if and when needed. Sometimes I feel that the best place for me to be during busy seasons is by the Base Radio. There I am available to all, with all the materials at hand that any field force may need. It is much easier to look up needed laws, make phone calls, check records, car numbers, addresses, etc. and offer advice from a chair than it is from a Jeep seat on top of some mountain where snow is knee deep and the pressure is on.

The Supervisor must never set himself up as a dictator or fault-finder. He should work side by side with his officers. He should help them solve their problems and be sympathetic with mistakes. He should provide assistance in

preparing the details of difficult or unusual court cases. He should accompany his officers to the trials of such cases.

Never forget that the officer is human too. He likes to be with his family and friends once in a while. Let him off on some holidays and weekends. The world won't stop if he is off on these occasions. When you hunt, hunt with him; when you fish, fish with him. No association can be better than hunting, fishing, picking berries or catching frogs with your men. Learn to live and work together. There is no one who can do everything well; so when an officer is called upon to perform some civic duty which he is not capable of doing, do it for him. He might be the world's best law officer, but incapable of making a speech to the public. When problems arise with an officer (and this *will* happen), work them out privately. If you solve it, leave it right there. Nothing need be said about it again.

We have a one year probationary period for beginning officers. The Supervisor should know by then if the officer can or will do his job. If he cannot, explain to him the situation and help him get a job better suited to his nature. If you have a man who *won't* adapt to the demands of the job, let him go; if he won't do the job after a year's training, chances are he never will.

The Supervisor is the middle man in a Department. He must accept the policies and directives from his superiors and hand them down to his staff and, most importantly, see that they are put into effect. The Supervisor also has the duty to carry the ideas and feelings of his staff up to the superiors. Often times the best ideas you get are from the local officer. He is the "on-the-scene" contact and knows what will work in a particular area. Trust him.

THE CONSERVATION OFFICERS' ROLE IN HUNTER, NONHUNTER EDUCATION

by

David E. Samuel
Assistant Professor of Wildlife Biology
Division of Forestry
West Virginia University
Morgantown, West Virginia 26506

ABSTRACT

The increasing antihunting controversy and a lack of understanding of nature may some day curtail effective management programs, even in "nonurbanized" states. Law Enforcement Officers should play an ever-increasing educators role as citizens show increased interest in wildlife. My purpose is to present ideas, statements and action programs concerning antihunting which the Officer can use in his day-to-day tasks. Specific attention will be given to ideas for use by an individual Officer when meeting with either groups or individuals; both hunters and nonhunters.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years the antihunting movement has gained much public support and press. The mere presence of this problem has a deeper meaning to wildlife and wildlife management than just the threat to sport hunting.