

in Alabama is to be convinced without doubt of a hunter or fisherman's guilt before arrest. To do otherwise runs the risk of punishing an innocent person for which the arresting officer will never be forgiven.

Let me point out here that we do not rate our officers by the number of cases they make; neither do we rate them by the number of speeches or public appearances they make. Enforcement personnel of our Game and Fish Division are rated by a number of factors which reflect whether good judgment is used in making cases, proper attention to the requests of the community for talks and appearances, and adherence to policies set forth by superiors. Other points of rating include personal appearance, methods of handling complaints, and cooperation with fellow officers. Overall performance is the only fair way to appraise the work of the officer for it gives him the opportunity of exercising his own judgment and fitting his work to the needs of the community in which he works.

The enforcement officer should at all times work toward convincing the public that his job is not solely to catch violators, but instead, to protect the fish and wildlife resources through the best use of the tools with which he has to work. To prevent a violation which saves the fish and wildlife resources for the legal hunter or fisherman is far better than to have the violation take place just for the sake of making a case. Our future with the public is dependent upon a plan of action which will assure maximum protection of our game resources. This plan is simple; apply good, common-sense judgment to the work and you will seldom go wrong.

Bill, I want to again thank you and your committee for this opportunity and wish to assure all of you the cooperation of Alabama in the Southeastern States' Game and Fish program.

## MAINTENANCE OF COOPERATIVE RELATIONS WITH COURTS AND OTHER AGENCIES

By ELLIOTT H. LOTT, *Area Supervisor*  
*Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission*

Game and fish law enforcement is not easy. Any sheriff or highway patrolman will readily admit that a game warden—or wildlife officer, as we are known in Florida—has a difficult and potentially dangerous job. By virtue of the fact that a great many of the people with whom we deal have the idea that game and fish laws were made to apply, not to them but, to the "other fellow" our efforts are often not appreciated. Much of our work is in wilderness areas and the hunter or fisherman we meet is usually armed with a loaded, deadly weapon. In weather good or bad, we work long hours under the most strenuous conditions. This all adds up to one thing—we wildlife law enforcement officers have a tremendous job on our hands.

Since our jobs are difficult, it is sensible that we consider ways and means of making our work easier and, at the same time, more effective.

Being dedicated to good law enforcement, we are naturally interested in ways of achieving *better* law enforcement. As our efficiency increases, it is most certain that violations will decrease.

It is a fact that good law enforcement is *impossible* without good public relations, just as it is impossible to have an arch without a keystone. Without its keystone of good public relations, productive law enforcement will cease to be productive and will eventually collapse entirely. It follows, therefore, that the wildlife law enforcement officer who fails or neglects to place the proper values on his relations with the public will speedily arrive at the end of his career. From a *lame* duck he will become a very *dead* duck.

When we consider the mechanics of public relations, it is well for us to remember that in a democracy such as ours, we have and will always have what the majority of the people want. It is by this precept that we have conservation laws and enforcement officers, such as you and I, to enforce these laws. We enforcement officers, as such, are products of the people and of the people alone. Consequently, we are concerned with people and how to get along with them. Public relations is just that—*getting along with people*—nothing more or nothing less.

In getting along with people, and thereby establishing our good relations, we find that it is necessary for people to like us. People will like us after they have decided that we like them, and not one *minute* before. Only a fool would expect to reap a harvest without first sowing seed. The finest seed in the world for reaping a bountiful harvest in public relations and good law enforcement is the genuine desire and ability to like people, and to get people to like us. The old hound dog that comes up to us, wagging his tail in a friendly manner, is not a public relations expert, but he is doing a pretty good job of working at it. He has shown us that he likes us and that he wants us to like him, just by wagging his tail, and, as a result of this, he gets a friendly pat on the head and maybe a nice bone to eat. Therefore, why not profit from the simple example of that old hound? Let's show people that we sincerely want to like them, and then count our blessings in better public relations and top-notch law enforcement.

Judges are people, as are our prosecutors, sheriffs and other court officials. To us, the officers of our courts are very important people, and this is conceivably so because we, in our law enforcement, are just as strong and *no stronger* than our courts will let us be. We must have the support and cooperation of our courts in order to be effective in our work, just as surely as an automobile must have gasoline and oil to run. We can achieve the strength we need in our courts in one way, and in one way only. We must establish and work to maintain, at all times, good relations with our courts and our court officials.

In achieving good cooperative relations with the courts in my area, I have found that truthfulness and sincerity are most important. A man of integrity is trusted and believed, whereas the man with questionable integrity is rarely believed or trusted, especially in his dealings with the courts. When we have attained a position of complete respect in the eyes of our judges and prosecutors, we have gone far in achieving the type of relation that is essential to strong law enforcement. So, at all times and in all things, be truthful, be sincere, and maintain your reputation of personal integrity.

Few wildlife law enforcement officers know what is in the collection of law books in their judge's library. By the same token, few judges know much about wildlife. Just as we know little of the judge's problems, he knows little of our problems. So, let's not just sit back and hope that our judges will some day understand what wildlife conservation is all about. Let's do something about it. We can start by visiting our judges regularly, and discussing conservation matters in a manner that will arouse their interest and broaden their knowledge on the subject. On these visits we can take the judge copies of our wildlife publications and other helpful literature. Your judge will appreciate your visits and you will soon find him looking forward to them. Encourage your judge to participate in fishing or hunting by taking him yourself, if necessary. It's worth every minute of the time it takes. Arrange to take your judge on routine patrols now and then. There is no finer place to "talk things over" with your judge than out in the woods over a cup of coffee or a barbecued steak. Do these things, and eventually you will find yourself on the firm and important ground of good mutual understanding with your court.

The officer who insists on bringing "border-line" cases into court may be compiling a record for arrests, but he is, at the same time, working directly against good law enforcement by deteriorating his relations with the court. No judge appreciates cases of this type. So, it is important that we bear in mind the fact that one good case is always better than several poor ones.

Another mark of the capable wildlife law enforcement officer, who works to maintain cooperative relations with his courts, is his courtroom demeanor. A good officer never fails to respect and uphold the dignity of the court. He bears in mind that he is just a witness, and, as such, is polite, courteous, and competent. He never allows an unfriendly lawyer to provoke him into losing his temper at the expense of his personal dignity.

Much can be said in regard to case preparation, but too much cannot be said as to the importance of properly prepared cases in helping us to maintain good relations with our courts. A prosecutor can successfully prosecute a case only when he knows the facts and has the evidence to prove them. It is our job to provide the facts and the evidence, and to provide them in a manner

that will enable the prosecutor to present them to full and complete advantage. I have found that nothing is more helpful to a prosecutor than a well prepared written account of the case, complete with maps and sketches. This summary should be prepared from notes made as soon as possible after the arrest, and it should describe in detail every event that occurred before, during and subsequently to the violation. Conversation, time, and distance should be accurately recorded. Whenever possible, especially in important cases where a trial by jury is likely, arrange to take your prosecutor to the scene of the violation, and assist him to make a personal investigation. Let your prosecutor know that you are ready and willing to spend as much time and effort as is necessary to help him obtain a conviction. In return, your prosecutor will be willing to spend extra time and effort on your cases, and he will vigorously prosecute your cases in court. The result will be more and better convictions that will add to the prestige of both you and your prosecutor in your community. Good convictions will also give your judge the opportunity of imposing fines and sentences to fit the convictions, and this will add to his prestige in the community. Apply the principles of good solid public relations when dealing with your prosecutors, and you will achieve good solid law enforcement.

There are times when every law enforcement officer feels prone to criticize his court. A smart law enforcement officer will, at these times, keep his mouth shut, and remember one thing—the judge may not always be right, but he is *always* the judge. In a baseball game, the umpire may occasionally call one wrong. Your judge is only human, and it is conceivable that he may call one wrong occasionally. But, like the baseball umpire, when he does make a mistake you can be sure that he knows it better than you do. It is good for us to remember that justice in America is predicated upon the proposition that it is better to let nine guilty persons go free than to convict one innocent person. It is the duty of our courts not only to punish the guilty, but to safeguard the innocent. The burden of this great responsibility rests upon the shoulders of our judges, and upon our judges alone. Your judge is constantly subjected to pressures from many sources of which you know little. He has his problems, just as you have yours, and at the times you feel justified in criticizing him, take a moment to think it over. Remember the proverb, "Do not find fault with your neighbor until you have walked one mile in his shoes." Then keep your mouth shut, and your court relations in good order.

When your court has cooperated, and helped you to obtain an important conviction, do not forget for one second that good court relations helped make the conviction possible. Use the conviction to help further your relations with your court by seeing to it that the judge and prosecutor receive full credit for what they have done. Tell them, yourself, how much they have helped the cause of wildlife conservation. Stress the fact that it is not you that the violator fears, but your judge and your prosecutor. Keep letting your judge and prosecutor know that you feel this way about it at every opportunity, and you will see your court become the most unhealthy place that a violator can be. At each and every opportunity, speak a good word for your judge and your prosecutor, especially to the honest sportsmen in your community. These sportsmen also appreciate the cooperation that you get from your court, and they will tell the judge that they do. You and I appreciate getting credit that we are due. It is right that we should. But, let us remember that it is also right to *give* credit where credit is due. In short, apply the Golden Rule in your relations with your courts, and you will find that it pays golden dividends in the type of good law enforcement wanted by the majority of the people, our commissions, and ourselves.

In our efforts to make our jobs easier, and to increase our productivity, it is exceedingly important that we create and maintain good cooperative relations with our sheriffs and other law enforcement agencies. We need the assistance they can provide us in helping to locate wanted persons, setting up roadblocks, analyzing fingerprints, tool marks, hair and bloodstains, making ballistics tests, and many other things such as furnishing us information, and giving expert testimony in court. Our sheriffs and other law enforcement agencies often need our help. We should show our appreciation for the help we receive and welcome the opportunity of giving our assistance whenever needed.

Good public relations with your press—your newspaper editors and reporters—is vitally important to good law enforcement. It has been said, "The pen is mightier than the sword." Whether or not this is true, you can be sure that a story in a newspaper can have a mighty profound effect upon public opinion. Therefore, our newspapers can retard our efforts, or they can be a powerful law enforcement tool. They can help us to educate the public to the need for wildlife conservation, and they can serve as a deterrent to the would-be violator. The effectiveness of your newspaper can be decided by you and the relations that you maintain with it. Again, we find that good, effective law enforcement depends upon good, effective public relations.

To me, hunters and fishermen are the finest people in the world, and I let them know that I feel that way about them. I have found that a word or two of praise for the fish or game they have bagged goes a long way in establishing the sort of friendly relations that we must have with our sportsmen. Our hunters and fishermen can help us in many ways to achieve productive law enforcement. We can cultivate this help through the application of a little sensible public relations.

It may sound strange to say that we law enforcement officers need good relations with our known violators. But, it is true. Good relations with the game law violator can be summed up in a few words: "Speak softly and carry a big stick." The officer who is foolish enough to threaten a violator is wasting his time, and the threat he makes will be construed as a sign of weakness and incompetency. You cannot gain respect from a violator by threatening him, but you will gain his contempt. The best way to deal with the violator, and the only way to gain his respect, is to catch him at his game, arrest him, take him into court, and convict him. Conduct yourself like a gentleman while you are doing it, and when you have done it, do not brag about it. But, be ready to do it again if necessary. Many of the finest sportsmen that I know are reformed violators who learned the hard way and have profited by it. Good relations and in the right way with good law enforcement can help to reform the violator, and make a friend of him for you and your commission.

It is good to consider the fact that we must maintain good relations with our own agencies. The good law enforcement officer cooperates with his superiors, his fellow officers, and with the other divisions or departments within his commission. He tries to spread good will, and he is the sort of fellow who believes that success comes from pulling together. He believes that his organization is the best in the world, and he strives to be a credit to it. He knows the value of public relations, and uses them wisely for the betterment of himself and his agency.

To achieve good public relations, the good law enforcement officer values the respect of everyone with whom he comes in contact, for he knows that no one is more disrespectful than disrespected law enforcement officer. He lives right and acts right, and each day he plows something into his job in order to get something out of it. He likes people, and he wants people to like him. He believes that better law enforcement is possible only through better public relations.

In closing, I am reminded of a little poem in which an old game warden used a little public relations on St. Peter, himself. The title is "HOW TO GET TO HEAVEN", and it goes like this:

A man knocked at the heavenly gate.  
His face was scarred and old;  
He stood before the man of fate  
for admission to the fold.  
What have you done, St. Peter  
asked, to gain admission here?  
I have been a game warden, sir  
for many and many a year.  
The Pearly Gates swung wide open,  
St. Peter touched the bell.  
Come in and choose your harp,  
he said,  
You have had your share of hell.

Gentlemen, I thank you.