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TECHNICAL EDUCATION SESSION

A WELL ROUNDED INFORMATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENTS

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EVERY AVENUE OF APPROACH USED TO SELL CONSERVATION EDUCATION

The fellow who builds the better mouse trap would have grass growing in the path to his door in this day and time if he depended on the superiority of his article to sell his product. His trap would still be the best in the land but his sales would be almost nil and the business would go to the man who built an inferior trap, yet had the foresight to sell his article to the public through all media of advertising.

Not so many years ago a dictator all but conquered the world by the simple expedient of selling his people a bill of goods. The only trouble with his world conquest through advertising was his failure to see that even a semblance of truth would be necessary for his campaign to be successful. He built his advertising campaign of conquest on falsehoods which would not and will not stand the test of time.

SELLING THE PUBLIC

Today, more than ever perhaps, fish and wildlife departments throughout the nation are realizing that no matter how great their accomplishments, without a bit of advertising, or selling the public, their program will not endure. They are finding also that this advertising or educational program must be truthful. And therein lies the hope that fish and game departments throughout the nation

may survive the greedy hand of political machines which are ever grasping for a voice in the appointment of personnel of such departments and which also have an envious eye upon the dollar that the sportsman pays to have his domain protected and perpetuated. The "advertising" campaign of the departments must so mold the opinion of the people that a political machine would dare not reach out a grasping hand.

COOPERATION OF SPORTSMEN, FARMERS

Also, this advertising must secure for such departments the wholehearted support of the residents of their state, for surely without the cooperation of sportsmen and farmers, the accomplishments of such departments would be meager, to say the least.

After 10 years of operations, Kentucky's Public Relations Division of the Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources is now exploiting just about every avenue of approach in its information and education program. To say that all of these avenues have been developed to perfection would be the mis-statement of a lifetime, for perfection in an education program would simply mean that every radio and television station, every newspaper and magazine, every conservation officer or other personnel of a department would be cooperating 100 percent with the public relations division. This, of course can never be attained.

However, constant plugging and cooperation with newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations can close the gap to the point where every individual in the state will at some time during the year have access to information and educational programs espousing the need and the usefulness of a fish and wildlife agency.

EVERY AVENUE MUST BE USED

In the ten years of Kentucky's Public Relations Division, every avenue has been approached and in some instances the main street to public information has been reached.

For instance, in Kentucky there are approximately 60,000 members of Junior and Senior sportsmen's clubs. In September, 49,000 magazines were mailed by the Division of Public Relations. Again, Kentucky has 53 radio stations. Each week 45 of these stations carry the Division's KENTUCKY AFIELD, a 15-minute program. Further, four television stations are operating in the Commonwealth. Two of these stations carry regularly scheduled TV programs and the other two present programs originated by this Division from time to time.

NEWSPAPER COVERAGE MUST BE GOOD

Kentucky has 137 weekly and 35 daily newspapers. News releases from the Division are channeled to all these papers and as of last year 60 percent of these news releases found their way into the columns of all these newspapers. In addition, the wire services carry twice weekly fishing reports from the major lakes and streams of Kentucky which are used in the daily papers. Also, several of the dailies are called by phone a detailed description of fishing in the major lakes, twice weekly, and these papers catalogue these conditions for their readers. In respect to the news reports, photos are furnished throughout the year for the newspapers desiring such coverage. Feature articles are prepared from time to time for feature and magazine sections of the Sunday papers in the state.

Educational films on projects of the Department are prepared periodically and these films, some in color, are presented to sportsmen's and civic clubs throughout the state for showing.

Educational exhibits are prepared for travel shows throughout the nation and for the fairs within the state. One day of the Kentucky State Fair is set aside as Sportsmen's Day and the Department is in charge of this event. It is estimated that 90 percent of those more than 150,000 who annually attend the fair view the Department's exhibits and many of them pick up pamphlets and booklets, prepared by the Department, on various phases of its operations.

CIVIC CLUBS WANT SPEAKERS

Speaking engagements keep the personnel of the Department busy both winter and summer. Not a sportsmen's club in the state goes through the year without

having had at least one speaker from the Department and most of the civic clubs also build programs around speakers from the Department.

One of the best means of getting to the public is through the Junior Conservation Clubs, of which Kentucky has almost 800 with a membership of close to 30,000. This Junior organization is perfected with the full cooperation of the school officials in Kentucky, who have set aside periods in their curriculums for conservation education programs. Kentucky's Junior organization, the first one in the nation and still the largest and described by many as the best, reaches perhaps more families than any other one phase of conservation education, and reaches the families that it is imperative to reach—the farm families—since the rural schools take part in this program.

And what does the foregoing prove about conservation education in Kentucky? It simply points out that every avenue of approach to the sportsmen, to the citizens of the state is being utilized by the Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources.

The women are not to be overlooked. Along with the boys in conservation work the girls in the graded and high schools also have been enrolled and are taking to the outdoors with much vim. They were given a week's stay at the Junior camps the past summer and the work of conservation will indeed be spread when these young ladies become the mothers in Kentucky.

NEED COOPERATION OF PERSONNEL

Before going into further details of Kentucky's organization, which is singled out simply because it is the Public Relations Division about which we know more than any other, we would like to point out that all these avenues can be attained by all states, providing these various public relations divisions have the cooperation of all personnel of the Department and provided the director and the commission of such agencies have been sold on the idea of spreading conservation education to the public. Kentucky has been fortunate in having as heads of its various divisions personnel who cooperate with the Public Relations Division 100 percent with a commissioner and commission which are sold on selling Kentucky. This cooperation extends to all personnel of the Department. The men in the field have an important part in public relations operation in dealing with the general public. They sell conservation even when checking hunters or fishermen.

Conservation education is vital from several aspects. There's no need to dodge an issue and so we plunge right into the most vital aspect of public relations with the expectation that our statement will draw a round of criticism, which also will be welcomed, for any newspaperman or radio announcer will know that criticism is what motivates to a great extent the members of this profession.

IT'S STRICTLY A MONEY MATTER

In Kentucky we sell conservation education so that the people of the state will spend more money with us. That is basic. Without the sale of hunting and fishing licenses, no fish and wildlife agency can long exist. Then, as we see it, we are selling the people of this state on more hunting and fishing which means more money in the till which means broader and more expanded conservation projects, which means more game and fish, which comes right back home and means more license fees.

Simply, it is this—Every public relations division, be it with state agency, or be it an agency of a nationally known company, is trying to sell a product to the people. Nationally advertised products enjoy greater sales than others. Fish and wildlife agencies that are known and recognized throughout the length and breadth of a state are the better agencies and regardless of the aptitude of its scientific corps, regardless of its beneficial projects, regardless of its providing more game in the field and more soil saved and more fish in the streams, without a public relations division to put across to the public all these myriads of accomplishments, and without additional money from the public, these projects cannot long endure.

ALL-MEDIA CAMPAIGN NECESSARY

The utilization of radio and television in conservation education is nothing new or unique, but the way in which Kentucky has gone about it adds a wrinkle to the all-media campaign which might give other states facing monetary and personnel limitations a helping hand.

Kentucky, admittedly, has never had too large a Public Relations budget, and it is Public Relations that bears the brunt of our public education campaign. Our yearly allotment averages \$55,000 and from this amount we've managed to produce a radio and television campaign that completely saturates the state—plus the other activities already outlined.

Saturation is of prime importance. The success of the program depends upon that. It is axiomatic in radio advertising circles that in order to sell your product effectively you must hit upon the largest possible listenership and hit them repeatedly with your message. Essentially, we are selling—selling Kentucky hunting and fishing. And our campaign is built around this idea of saturation.

RADIO STATIONS ARE ANXIOUS

At the moment, the Kentucky Afield radio series enjoys the largest listener potential of any program in the state. Every city in Kentucky that boasts a radio station, with the exception of two, carries the series on a regularly scheduled basis—which makes it available to just about every man, woman and child in the Commonwealth who has access to a radio set.

TV-wise, coverage is equally adequate. Two of the four Kentucky TV stations carry Kentucky Afield. A once-every-other week half-hour studio production over WAVE-TV in Louisville covers the major portion of the state, with a once-a-week 15-minute stint on WLEX-TV, Lexington accenting the Bluegrass and Eastern Kentucky regions. Staff limitations prevent the utilization of stations which cover Kentucky's fringe areas. However, the stations apparently are eager for the program and from time to time we manage to stage periodic programs on the out-of-staters.

In order to put the programs across initially we had to do a double selling job. One to the broadcasters who would be airing the series, and one to the sportsmen who would be hearing it.

Our pitch to the broadcasters was strictly a programming one. We offered them a show which would give on-the-spot coverage of the state's major hunting and fishing events plus the expert advice of competent outdoorsmen on all phases of hunting and fishing—a show they could do for themselves only at considerable time and expense. They jumped at the idea.

The sportsmen-listeners required a different attack. We had to produce a program which would be both interesting and informative and still not sound like propaganda. So we hit on the idea of using the sportsmen themselves as the "stars" of the show, recording what they were doing and why they were doing it and tying in as much advice from conservation experts as feasible.

SURVEY SHOWS INTEREST

Is it working? Reports from radio and television stations carrying the series indicate it is. For instance, a recent Conlan survey conducted in the greater-Cincinnati area for WZIP, Covington, reported Kentucky Afield radio has a greater listenership than any other program on the air at the same time. This in a metropolitan area not necessarily noted for its interest in the out-of-doors.

Kentucky Afield radio now is entering its third year; Kentucky Afield TV its second year. This indicates Kentucky broadcasters and their listeners are well satisfied and interested. And most educators will tell you it's easy to teach an interested group.

And so, in Kentucky we find that the radio and TV stations like our Kentucky Afield; we find that the newspapers cooperate with the Division in the publication of news releases; we have determined that the sportsmen and the general public are interested in what our agency is doing. Is there any other argument to be made for the fullest public relations exploitation by every fish and wildlife agency?