



NJ CONSERVATION OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

PO Box 613, Sicklerville, NJ 08081

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello,

As my Presidency nears closing, I would like to thank the membership who helped make the past four years a success. This recognition starts with Bill Honachefsky, Steve Murza, Tom O'Rourke, and Greg Szulecki; these officers have devoted much of their time and hard work in support of the New Jersey Conservation Officers Association. Secondly, a big thanks to our Treasurer Ed Markowski. He manages our finances and has mastered the fine art of controlled spending. I would like to continue my thanks to those members who understand that someone must *volunteer*. In doing so, these men keep the activities of the Association moving forward. Last but not least, a special thanks to retired officers who support the NJCOA by their attendance at meetings and events. They make our events more like a family reunion. Please keep coming because we love seeing all of you.

This year NJCOA will hold its *Annual Meeting* on June 11th, 2006 at the Central Regional Office, located on the Assunpink WMA at 1 Eldridge Rd., Robbinsville, NJ. The meeting will start at 10am. There are several important matters to discuss at the meeting: elections, By-Law changes, fund raising raffle and your concerns. If you have any concerns or suggestions, please email me at any time njco@comcast.net.

The NJCOA welcomes you to renew your membership or join our association. Now is the time to take action. We have maintained a regular membership between 60 and 85 officers. Last year we had 72 dues paying members. With a membership potential in excess of 200, we want to reach a modest goal of 100. Please help us reach our goal. Applications can be obtained on our website www.njcoa.com or requested by e-mail and

found at our annual meetings. If a membership application is attached to this newsletter your membership has expired. If you have any questions about membership please call 856-881-8347.

This year, the retired officers took things into their own hands and every third Friday of the month, they meet at the Central Region Office and head out to one of the local eateries for lunch. These not so "over the hill gang" members are super charged with energy and enthusiasm. They all enjoy Game Warden talk, so try to clear your calendars and join the boys for lunch. We will post the next gathering on our website.

In closing, with the summer rapidly approaching I wish all members and their families a healthy and happy vacation season. Please accept my sincere appreciation to the entire membership of the New Jersey Conservation Officers Association. I think our future looks promising and I predict that 2006 is going to be the year we reach 100 members.

Warm Regards,

Frank Virgilio
President of NJCOA

VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Make sure to check out the **NEW JERSEY CONSERVATION OFFICER ASSOCIATION'S** new website at:
www.njcoa.com

The website is intended to be a consolidated source of information for members as well as non-members. Available to all njcoa.com viewers is the Highlights sections which is updated monthly, the monthly NJCOA Newsletter, a store to purchase NJCOA merchandise, a links page, a photo gallery showing amazing photos of our local wildlife, a historical photo gallery, a children's section that is underway with sound files of local animals as well as informational and coloring pages.

Additional informative and related links such as a direct link to Operation

Game Thief, Membership information and downloadable applications, donations information, direct link to Fish & Wildlife's Regulations, local weatherforecasts, and upcoming events are also included on the site.

This website will only be a success as a continuing group effort. We would like to hear everyone's comments and suggestions. Furthermore, we would like to urge people to send submissions for the photo gallery, links, etc.

Best Wishes,
Tom O'Rourke
Vice President of NJCOA



How's That Saying Go? Extinction is ...

John J. Audubon began his ornithological field trips in 1810. To complete his famous "portraits" he often shot songbirds to facilitate their closer study. The killing of these "non-game" species for the table was common back in the day. Audubon even went so far as to comment on how the Carolina Parrot (now extinct) made fine table fare while the Pileated Woodpecker's "flesh is tough... and smells so strongly of the worms and insects on which it feeds, as to be extremely unpalatable."

Hold on... I bet you think this article is about how irresponsible America's hunters used to be... Well it's not. This article is about how today's sportsmen contributed to something nothing short of the miraculous.

On April 28th the National Wildlife Federation affiliate in Arkansas announced the first confirmed sighting of an Ivory Billed Woodpecker since the 1930's. The species had been believed to be extinct since the 1940's. Not too long ago, when I was in college, the Ivory Billed Woodpecker was the textbook example of how habitat loss, not sport hunting, can cause the direct extinction of a species.

The NWF credits sportsmen with the conservation of woodpecker habitat through the

creation of two National Wildlife Refuges (funded by the sale of Federal Duck Stamps of course). The rare hardwood bottomland forests the woodpecker needs are also wintering habitat for several duck species. The woodpecker had been sighted by a kayaker at the Cache River National Wildlife Refuge in August 2004. The NWF, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and Arkansas Game and Fish Commission worked together to confirm the presence of the Ivory-Billed Woodpecker at that refuge and the White River Refuge.

The Department of the Interior and Department of Agriculture have proposed \$10 million in funding to match funds from private sector conservation groups. According to the Fish and Wildlife Service web site, "Federal funds will be used for research and monitoring, recovery planning and public education. In addition, the funds will be used to enhance law enforcement and conserve habitat through conservation easements, safe-harbor agreements and conservation reserves."

It is often said that sportsmen are the greatest advocates of conservation. Unfortunately the non-hunting public seldom understands why this is. The next time someone asks you how hunters are involved in the conservation of species other than the game species they pursue, you can explain how sportsmens' dollars brought the Ivory Billed Woodpecker back from oblivion. And you can tell the hunters the amazing discovery their Federal Duck Stamp purchase brought about.

For further information on the rediscovery of the Ivory-Billed Woodpecker visit the following websites:

National Wildlife Federation: nwf.org
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission:
agfc.com

GREG HONACHEFSKY NAMED CONSERVATION OFFICER OF THE YEAR 2004

Greg Honachefsky, a veteran Conservation Officer with 22 years of service has been awarded the Conservation Officer of the Year Award. It is, in our opinion, an award well deserved.

Greg's career started out in the DF&W's Marine Law Enforcement Unit but eventually he exchanged his sea legs for a more terrestrial beat in the pinelands and marshes of southern New Jersey – a

place where his name would become a household word, mostly out of respect, but for some, out of fear. I'm sure many of you will recall the newspaper headlines during the first year of Greg's Southern District assignment;

"Five thousand dollar reward offered for anyone who kills the new warden"

Those for whom wildlife protection rules were meaningless had completely underestimated Greg's commitment and determination to bring a halt to the illegal activities that threatened the wildlife resource he so loved. In their frustration they had put a bounty on his head. Greg recalled; "I didn't take any extra precautions, but you can definitely bet I was looking over my shoulder a bit more".

The scofflaws also thought that their outdoor skills could outwit the new warden, but they quickly learned that Greg's skills as a hunter, tracker and wilderness survivalist had been honed to a keen razor edge in the woods of his northern New Jersey home since he was 4 years old. It was said he could even track his quarry by scent alone. In the inner circle of the wildlife scofflaws he earned the name of *"the voodoo warden"* – a derivative perhaps from Greg's propensity to wear a necklace of collected animal bones and other artifacts either while undercover or off duty. It was often rumored that if Greg shook that necklace in your direction, your days of illegal activity were numbered, and in fact other evils might befall you as well. Perhaps it is the reason that many of his former adversaries have reformed their ways and become not only advocates of wildlife protection but confidential informants as well. One of those reformed adversaries, recently recalled the time he placed a baited deer stand deep in the interior pinelands to escape Greg's sleuthing. He had deliberately chosen a lengthy, circuitous access pathway, which included the fording of several deep drainage ditches. Walking in under cover of darkness, he confidently climbed into his elevated stand, loaded his weapon, checked his flashlight and glanced at his wristwatch. It was 4 A.M. Unbeknownst to him, Greg had already been waiting for him since 3 A.M., uniform soaking wet and muddy from wading chest deep across two very cold drainage ditches. "I about fell out of the tree, when Greg's voice boomed out of the darkness".

"Conservation Officer! Unload your weapon!"

"To this day I still can't believe a man could be so dedicated." That perhaps sums up best why Greg received this year's award. Congratulations Greg,

and on behalf of the state's natural resources we offer you a hearty and well-deserved thank you.



CO of the year Greg Honachefsky and Chief Dobelbower

Bureau Highlights

Northern Region Highlights

Lieutenant Cole, CO Kuechler and CO Panico have been selected to receive a Teamwork/Achievement Award for their activities relating to the Caldwell Taxidermy Investigation. The award is made through the New Jersey Public Service Recognition Awards Program and will be presented at the State House in May. Congratulations on a job well done.

Northern Region Conservation Officers assisted with public information duties at the Suffern Outdoor Show recently. Lt. Fletcher and COs Hutchinson, Nestel and Samona answered questions from the general public relating to wildlife and enforcement issues.

CO Paul investigated a fish-kill involving suckers and small-mouth bass on Chambers Brook in Branchburg, Somerset County. The mortality was the direct result of runoff from a petroleum products fire at a nearby warehouse. CO Paul assisted with the placement of a boom to control the runoff.

CO Applegate, assisted by Lieutenant Cole, conducted an inspection of records and wildlife at a taxidermist shop located in Ringoes, Hunterdon County. The investigation is continuing.

CO Williamson assisted the Province of Alberta Fish and Wildlife Division with the interview of a

Long Valley, Morris County, resident regarding hunting activities in Alberta during 2004 and 2005.

CO Kuechler attended the Essex County Federation of Sportsman Clubs meeting.

Captain Cussen attended the Bergen County Federation of Sportsman Clubs meeting.

CO Paul apprehended two individuals from a local hunting club participating in the Bridgewater Community Based Deer Hunt. The hunters had killed more than the number of deer allowed at one time, and were attempting to find additional tags for the deer when apprehended. The two individuals were removed from the list of participants due to the violation, complaints were signed and the extra deer were turned over to the food bank.

CO Williamson assisted with winter firearms qualifications for Deputy Conservation Officers.

Lieutenant Cole and CO Kuechler were interviewed by the Korean Television Broadcasting Company regarding their investigation of Caldwell Taxidermy. The interview was conducted for viewing in Korea, to inform the public of the duties of Conservation Officers in their country as well as worldwide.

Lieutenant Cole and COs Paul and Williamson are investigating a self inflicted hunting related shooting. The deer hunting incident took place during the closed season in Branchburg, Somerset County. The hunter shot himself through the upper left thigh with a 12 gauge rifled slug. The incident is still under investigation and the wound resulted in the loss of the limb.

A resident of the state of Florida charged with the possession of a road-killed bear plead guilty in Montville Municipal Court in Morris County from a complaint signed by CO Williamson.

Central Region Highlights

CO Fresco has recently investigated a number of illegal dumping cases located within the Colliers Mills Wildlife Management Area. He has also apprehended two individuals who were using the trash receptacles located on the Prospertown

Wildlife Management Area for the disposal of their household trash. Working in conjunction with the lands management crew, trash that contained identifiers was set aside. When a pattern of use was documented, Officer Fresco was able to issue the appropriate summonses. It is interesting to note that when both individuals were presented with the evidence they promptly admitted their guilt and were quite surprised that someone had taken the time necessary to make the case.

Lt. Sich and CO Fresco attempted to initiate a stop of four ATV riders that were illegally operating on the Colliers Mills Wildlife Management Area. When the subjects noticed the patrol vehicle lights and siren they immediately turned around and fled from the officers by driving on Hawkins road at a high rate of speed. The group split up in an attempt to elude the officers. Unfortunate for them, the officers who are very familiar with the area set up in an attempt to apprehend the riders before they could return home. With CO Fresco parked in a strategic location, Lt. Sich entered the woods and tracked the riders back to a location where they were all found hiding in the brush. When everything was sorted out three of the riders were issued a total of four motor vehicle summonses and three fish and wildlife summonses.

While posting trout signs on the Toms River located in Jackson Township, CO's Tonnesen and Mutone noticed that sediment, debris and what appeared to be a petroleum product was being deposited into the stream leaving a sheen on the water. The two officers were able to trace the source of pollution back to a construction site where heavy equipment was being used to clean a retention basin. The officers noticed fuel leaking from a large pump that was being used to pump water from the basin into a storm drain that led to the trout stream. An Emergency Response Unit was dispatched and other state and local environmental enforcement agencies were notified. The construction site supervisor halted the work until the proper method of curtailing the pollution could be implemented. The investigation is continuing and summonses are pending.

CO McManus was on patrol posting for trout along the D & R Canal when he noticed a red fox mount displayed on a pickup truck at the Golden Nugget

Flea Market in Hopewell Twp. Upon closer inspection, he also saw a rattlesnake mount displayed on a table as well as deer skins and antlers. Since he was in uniform, he contacted Lt. Lacroix who was able to respond in plain clothes. Lt. Lacroix posed as an interested customer and told the two men she was interested in buying mounted wildlife. The men were very willing to talk and offered to sell the deer antlers for \$40. One of the men stated that he once had a great horned owl mount, but it was illegal to sell those. After identifying herself, the men were pretty upset that she had duped them. The appropriate summons was issued to the seller. Afterwards, another seller at the flea market approached the officers and stated that she sees lots of wildlife offered for sale at the flea market. She stated that several weeks earlier someone was selling a mounted owl.

CO's McManus, Martiak, O'Rourke and DCO Tindall were on patrol in the Caruso Village area of Greenwood Forest WMA, when CO McManus observed a motor vehicle pulling into a wooded area around 2120 hours. When CO McManus activated his emergency lights to approach the vehicle for an after hours inspection, he observed the front seat passenger making suspicious movements. CO Martiak approached the passenger side of the vehicle and observed the passenger bent over reaching under the front seat. The passenger and driver were asked to exit the vehicle and an open box of "test tube" shots was observed on the dashboard. The officers were given permission to look through the vehicle after the occupants stated that there wasn't anything in the vehicle. CO Martiak located a large plastic bag containing a green leafy substance that had an odor of marijuana under the front passenger seat. When asked if there was anything else in the vehicle, the passenger stated no but removed two smaller bags containing a similar substance and a pipe from his pant pockets. A case of beer was also found in the vehicle. The passenger was transported to Lacey Twp. Police Department where he was processed for possession of CDS as well as wildlife management area violations.

CO Martiak assisted Alberta Fish and Game with a case involving an Alberta hunting guide who had guided some New Jersey hunters last fall. The guide had specific zone permits where he was

allowed to guide and kill deer, but Alberta had received information that he had taken the New Jersey hunters to another zone and had killed several large deer. CO Martiak interviewed one of the hunters who lived in Middlesex County. The NJ hunter was unfamiliar with the area in Alberta but statements made during the interview confirmed the information that Alberta Fish and Game had received. The hunter became worried that he was going to lose the large deer that he had harvested and hired a lawyer. He then refused to talk when asked for another interview. Alberta Fish and Game will be pressing charges and is moving for a search warrant for the Alberta taxidermist in order to seize the illegal deer.

Southern Region Highlights

A man pled guilty to dumping on Union Lake WMA in Cumberland County. In an agreement worked out by Conservation Officer Risher he agreed to clean up his trash and pay a \$1000 fine.

Conservation Officer Risher also convicted a man for multiple violations involving riding an ATV on Winslow WMA in Gloucester County. The rider was fined \$700. He had a previous apprehension for the same offense.

Conservation Officer Kille obtained convictions for two different dumping violations on Glassboro WMA Gloucester County. One case involved a fraternity house that had been doing some early spring-cleaning. Three people were convicted in this case. The other incident involved a contractor that was dumping building materials. Both sites were cleaned up as well as fines being paid.

Conservation Officer Massey responded to a trapping complaint with Parks and Forest staff at the Brigantine Natural Area in Brigantine, Atlantic County. The complaint stemmed from an individual who was hiking the area and found several dead red fox in snares. All of the recovered snares appeared to be lawfully set and marked, however they just weren't tended properly. Conservation Officer Massey conducted an interview with the trapper whose name appeared on the snares and he admitted to having forgot the location of several of his snares. The appropriate summonses have been issued.

Conservation Officer Massey located several pieces of identification in a trash pile on the Great Egg Harbor River Wildlife Management Area in Mullica Township, Atlantic County. During an interview the suspect admitted to the illegal dumping and offered to clean the area. The suspect has contacted CO Massey three times to advise him that different areas of the WMA have been cleaned. Summonses are pending the final inspection of the areas to be cleaned. If the trash removal is successful a recommendation for the mandatory minimum fines will be made to the Judge.

The Atlantic City Aquarium currently has a permit to possess a Loggerhead turtle. Conservation Officer Massey received a complaint from a citizen stating that the turtle was in deplorable condition and in danger of dying. Lieutenant Cianciulli and CO Massey conducted an inspection of the facility and its records and believed that everything looked to be in order. Bob Schoelkopf from the Marine Mammal Stranding Center in Brigantine was called as expert and identified several minor deficiencies, but said that the turtle appeared to be in good health. The aquarium agreed to raise the water temperature a degree or two and to add some additional lighting. During the investigation the Camden Aquarium was asked if they could house the turtle if it was in need of immediate care. It became apparent that they were more than willing to house the turtle because they had loaned it to Atlantic City and are attempting to get the turtle back. The Camden Aquarium was advised that the issue of ownership of the turtle would have to be addressed in court and that we couldn't settle that dispute.

Conservation Officer Ely has spent a considerable amount of his patrol time working ATV's and motorcycles being operated unlawfully on our Wildlife Management Areas in Cumberland and Cape May counties. The mild winter and the warm weather have led to an increase in activity during a period when ATV and motorcycle activity is normally slow. As is usually the case, the majority of the riders encountered are fleeing apprehension.

Marine Enforcement Highlights

In early March Officer Petrucelli received a complaint of illegal trapping at Higbee Beach WMA. Living only a short distance away Officer Petrucelli located the trapper's vehicle and went back later that day to locate the trappers snares. Officer Petrucelli found several snares that were untagged, on private property and bait placed in an illegal manner. In addition, Officer Petrucelli found one illegally set spring loaded ram powered killer trap. On the following day Officer Petrucelli and Officer James observed 3 trappers enter private property and tend the untagged traps and illegally set killer trap. The trappers were apprehended and questioned about the trapping violations. The trappers were each charged with trespassing, littering, untagged traps, bait placed in an illegal manner and failure to report three coyotes. One trapper took responsibility for the illegal killer trap and if convicted he will lose his trapping license for a period of time determined by the court.

On March 11th, 2006 Lt. Yunghans was patrolling the shellpile section of Commercial Township in Cumberland County. As Lt. Yunghans passed the public wharf he observed the F/V Brandy Lee Bateman tied up to the Warf and the vessels catch visible on the dock. The F/V Brandy Lee Bateman is licensed to dredge blue crabs and conchs on the waters of the Delaware Bay. Lt. Yunghans inspected the vessels catch, license and dredge and everything appeared to be in order. As Lt. Yunghans was about to leave the vessel he noticed a hatch cover in the forward bow that was opened slightly. Lt. Yunghans lifted the hatch and observed three white bags filled with bulky objects. Upon further inspection Lt. Yunghans determined the bags were filled with horseshoe crabs. One summons was issued under the crab dredge regulations and three summonses were issued under the horseshoe crab regulations. Each summons carries a maximum of \$3,000.00 fine.

Training Highlights

Three days were devoted to rifle training for CO's and Wildlife representatives involved in Bear Response.

Firearms training for the winter quarter got underway. Emphasis will be on low light shooting.

Captain Boyle assisted with a Firearms instructor class conducted by the Division of Criminal Justice Academy at Fort Dix.

The Division hosted a two-day training put on by Amour Holdings. Forty Law Enforcement Officers from around the state attended.

Deputy Awards



Chuck Fee receives the Outstanding Service Award 2004



Gary Voorhees – Deputy of the Year 2004

News Items

From Glen Hawswell:

My youngest son, Brent, graduated in Dec. from the State Police Academy at Sea Girt and is a trooper assigned to the Totowa Barracks, Troop B. In Nov., we welcomed the birth of a second grandchild, Caleb. He joins his 2 year old sister who lives with

our daughter and son-in-law in the Harrisburg area.

Retirees Find Time to Hunt



Retired Capt. Steve Murza and I enjoyed a memorable Nov. day of crow hunting in Blairstown. After lots of shooting, we were able to bag at least 20 crows. We plan to get together for another hunt this fall.

From CO Sean McManus:

On March 29, 2006 I, Conservation Officer Sean McManus, was on a routine patrol along the Delaware River in Trenton City. As I pulled up to the parking lot on Lamberton Street I saw a man tying a white plastic bag that appeared to have a large fish in it. The man looked around the area then placed the bag in the back of the truck behind the spare tire and returned to the river and started to fish.

I approached the man and asked if he caught any fish. He replied "No". I then asked what kind of fish was in the bag that he placed in the truck. After a long pause and some stuttering he claimed it was a carp. I requested to see it. He retrieved the bag from the truck. I open the bag and found that it contained a 34 _ inches long shortnose sturgeon. I photographed and measured the fish. The fish was still alive so it was released.



From CO Tom O'Rourke:

NJCOA.com Website

The domain is registered and www.NJCOA.com is official! We have the skeleton of our soon-to-be website established and up and running. We are looking for any contributions, i.e. stories, pictures for the galleries, ideas from everyone. Please submit all of your ideas, articles, text, links or pictures electronically to torourke@njcoa.com

Any requests for your own personalized e-mail address at this domain should be e-mailed directly to Tom at torourke@njcoa.com. Directions for setting up your e-mail will be sent back to you.

Items that need to be constructed at the present time:

1. Our "Mission Statement" text
2. Postings of current news/events
3. Start to compile our "links". This section can be further sub-divided into categories such as fishing, hunting, state departments, suppliers, etc - suggestions always welcome!
4. Start to put up pictures in our Gallery
- Record catches, Current Events, People.

We are looking to incorporate a merchandise for sale section on our website selling NJCOA items via Café Press.com. [Café Press](http://Café Press.com) (www.cafepress.com) is an online company that allows its members to sell customizable products such as t-shirts, cups, and other apparel. As a member they allow you to create your own theme-based paraphernalia. Another benefit is the

company will host your store, produce the items as purchased, and take care of the billing and shipping to the customer. You do not have to worry about stocking inventory or laying out money up front to have items produced. When you set up a store they let you make your own mark up, and Café Press has a standard deduction for all products.

We will have a line of apparel and items featuring the NJCOA patch immediately. However, we are looking to expand that line and incorporate concepts and designs to promote awareness of wildlife and conservation with sportsman and game warden themes. Again, please submit any ideas for these products to torourke@njcoa.com

2005 NJCOA Fundraiser

Award-winning local woodcarver John Fields has generously donated 3 bird carvings to be raffled off at this years Tuckerton Decoy Show. First prize is a life-size Canadian Goose decoy, second prize is male wood duck, and third prize is a whimbrel carving. You can read more about John Fields in his biography herewith:

John F. Fields
Allentown, New Jersey

John was raised in the Menlo Park area of Edison, New Jersey back when there were still woods to walk, explore, hunt and fish. He caught his first fish at 5 and started rudimentary hunting in his teens. Hunting and fishing are still major pursuits, but the crowds of New Jersey have led him to cut back on those activities.

After graduating from the Rutgers College of Engineering, he started his employment with the N.J. Department of Environmental Protection, which continues today. He lives in Allentown with his wife Tess and has two college age children. He also continued his woodworking training, which had started with his father, working for a while with a Master Craftsman furniture maker. Eventually tiring of that, he returned to carving, this time decoys, having carved various crude objects from the ages of about 7 to 15.

Having made the decision in January 2001 to carve decoys, he headed to the Tuckerton Seaport and was immediately enthralled by the art as taught there. He has taken numerous classes at the Seaport and now assists in teaching some. He has also served as a demonstrator in Seaport's Parker carving shack. The various carvers at the Seaport are extremely knowledgeable and more than willing to share. Malcolm Robinson in particular has been incalculably instrumental in his progress, and a large influence. Others who have helped him include George Murray, Dick Jesson, David Rhodes, Joe Walton and Ray Norcross.

John carves strictly working style decoys and shorebirds, and attempts to recreate the look of the "Old time" decoys, but when they were new. There is nothing fancy in the carving or painting but they are sturdy and useable. Most carving is done with traditional tools, but he is not beholden to them and will use what works to get the job done.

He agrees with his mentors that competition forces you to look at your work more critically. Since venturing into the competitive world of decoy carving John has had increasing success even while getting some real doses of humility. His largest success has been the winning of the Harry V. Shourds Memorial Master Carver's Award at the 2004 Ocean County Decoy and Duck Hunting Show in Tuckerton with a rig of traditional Barnegat Bay mallards.

Some of John's work will be on display at the Tuckerton Seaport this fall as he has been honored with being chosen the featured carver for that quarter. He should also be demonstrating there on some weekends during that time. Stop on by with any questions you may have.



Lt. Virgilio, John Fields, and CO Massey at the Decoy Show. John donated the three carvings, which were raffled off for \$370. The money was donated to wildlife officers in LA & MS.

From Tod Eisenhuth:

April 7, 2006

**To NJ law enforcement officers, NJ
Division of Fish and Wildlife
Representatives, New Jersey State
Federation of Sportsmen and outdoor
enthusiasts:**

Please support Senate Bill #1680 and Assembly Bill #3249.

These proposed bills would amend two statutes within Title 23, New Jersey Fish and Game law, removing the authority given to civilian members of a New Jersey fish and game protective association to patrol and enforce fish and game laws.

References to members of these associations within N.J.S.A. 23:10-3 and 23:10-5 date from 1879, a time when game enforcement was in its' infancy, and wardens were often unpaid and untrained. This was a time when game wardens needed help, and the world of law enforcement and society was much different than today. The vestiges of those times are still reflected in laws that date back over 127 years. While laws that allowed the formation of these associations or societies were repealed in 1909, existing groups were grandfathered in and still exist today.

In recent years, several members of this relatively small association have become active, patrolling in their personal vehicles and stopping sportsmen and sportswomen with increasing regularity, especially in Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem Counties. Without any requirements other than attendance at monthly meetings and sponsorship by an existing member, without training in police procedures, constitutional rights, search and seizure, or even the laws they patrol to enforce, and armed with just a badge, these civilians act as New Jersey Conservation Officers. They do not have to pass any sort of physical or psychological tests.

Fish and game protective association members who identify themselves as "fish and game" would naturally lead someone to believe they were dealing with a New Jersey Conservation Officer.

New Jersey's professional law enforcement community is held to a very high standard for good reason.

The integrity of New Jersey's professional, State certified law enforcement officers, as well as the safety of the general public is eroded by the actions of members of fish and game protective associations.

Over the past several years, substantiated complaints from the public and reports concerning inappropriate and illegal behavior by protective association members have come to the attention of

the NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife. In April of 2004, one member was convicted of impersonating a game warden in Monroe Township, Gloucester County. This individual had attempted to persuade a man to allow him and his friends to hunt private ground in exchange for security that their association would provide. In another episode in 2003, a protective association member checked a fisherman and his grandson at Corsons Park in Millville. Despite the fact that the grandfather was not fishing and the juvenile did not need a license (under 16 years old), the fish and game protective association member held the individuals until he learned from a State Conservation Officer there weren't any violations. In another incident, a Conservation Officer received a complaint from hunters that they had been evicted from public hunting grounds in Atlantic County by protective association members who had told them that they were trespassing. The hunters believed that the protective association wanted to gain exclusive hunting rights to the property. Conservation Officers also received information that a protective association member was checking individuals for boating violations at Union Lake in Millville, beyond their authority.

Your support of these bills requires only time. To have untrained civilians acting as a militia that is motivated by personal gain or the desire to carry a badge risks tragedy. For the safety of themselves and the public, and for the integrity of the institution of professional, trained law enforcement officers throughout the State, please act on S1680 and A3249.

Tod Eisenhuth

Senate Environmental Committee

Chair
 Senator Bob Smith
 216 Stelton Road
 Suite E-5
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 732-752-0770

Senator Stephen Sweeney
 Kingsway Commons
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Senator John H. Adler
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Senator Henry P. McNamara
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Hooked On Fishing – Not On Drugs®

2004 Evaluation Survey Results

The purpose of this project is to evaluate the effectiveness of the Hooked On Fishing – Not On Drugs® program in reaching its youth participant outcomes for sport fishing participation, skills development and stewardship awareness. These results are from the second year of a 4 year evaluation. This purpose was accomplished by surveying students in HOFNOD programs and comparing their responses with a similar group of students involved in fishing-related programs with equivalent content and duration.

- Students in HOFNOD programs reported stronger interest in fishing after their class than students in the comparison fishing programs at all skill levels.
- Slightly more than half (56%) of the students in the comparison fishing programs said their interest was stronger, while 75% of the HOFNOD students reported stronger interest in fishing.

- HOFNOD students were much more inclined to want to fish more often in the future (65%) than students in the comparison group (48%).
- HOFNOD students rated the importance of these stewardship behaviors significantly higher than students in the comparison group whether or not their skill level changed or not.
- HOFNOD students placed higher importance on stewardship behaviors at all levels of interest.
- The HOFNOD curriculum appears to be much more balanced than those used by the comparison group and resulted in greater increases in fishing skills, interest in fishing, stronger fishing intentions, and the an increased importance of steward behaviors. Teachers in the HOFNOD programs reported spending time in most curricular areas than comparison group teachers.



James 1st B-day, cake

Caitlyn Fletcher



HOFNOD: Train the Trainers at Sandy Hook

Future Conservation Officers

James Massey, was born on 6/14/03, he was 8.7 lb. Below is a photo celebrating his 1st birthday with cake.



What's New With Bruce Young!



John Hedden reports that Bruce lives in a rural area with lots of access to large lakes and streams and was getting his boat ready for a summer of freshwater fishing.

Anyone wishing to drop Bruce a line, his address is:

Bruce Young
348 County Road #32
Dennis, Mississippi 38838-9767

Many of us have Bruce in our thoughts especially since the passing of his wife, Etta in October 2005. John Hedden recently visited with Bruce and gives us an update on his activities. Bruce has continued to keep busy with deer hunting this past fall, and enjoyed a two day waterfowl hunting trip on the lower Mississippi Delta with Dixie Duck Outfitters during the winter. A two week trip to southern Florida to visit old friends enabled Bruce to tour the Everglades by airboat and swamp buggy.

This spring Bruce, along with his daughter and her husband, did some trout fishing on the Red River in Arkansas. Spring turkey hunting has been unsuccessful so far, as Bruce has only had young Jakes within range.



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