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Fisheries staff takes part in Emma B. Ward Elementary Outdoor Day

Story and photos by Ryan Oster



A young angler excited to show off her nice bluegill catch at the Anderson County Community Park Lake.

Several members of the Fisheries Division enjoyed a day out of the office May 25th by taking part in an “Outdoor Field Day” for the entire third grade class at Emma B. Ward Elementary School in Anderson County.

As part of this “Outdoor Field Day” the children spent the day at the Anderson County Community Park rotating through sessions of kickball, soccer, basketball, playground, and fishing.

The Anderson County Community Park Lake is currently enrolled in the FINs (Fishing in Neighborhoods) program. Staff from the Fisheries Division provided fishing poles, tackle, and bait in an effort to teach the students about fishing.

Staff were partnered with 2-3 children and spent approximately an hour with each class fishing in the lake.

The day was a tremendous success with many of the children catching several fish, including channel catfish, bluegill sunfish, and even a few trout. The Department stocked the lake as part of the FINs program.

Overwhelmingly, students said the fishing portion of the rotation was their favorite part of the day. It brought many smiles upon Department staff faces to



FINs research biologist Dane Balsman poses with a nice channel catfish caught by a third grader from Emma B. Ward Elementary School.

see that fishing can still outrank basketball and kickball as enjoyable by young children.

Special thanks to Steve Marple and the staff at Pfeiffer Fish Hatchery for providing some surplus large bluegill for the event. Also, thanks goes out to the Fisheries Transportation staff for coordinating the stocking of these fish for the event. We couldn't have pulled off this event without their assistance.

I would also like to thank **Kathryn Emme, Erica Toles, Dane Balsman, Jeremiah Smith, Chris Hickey, Ryan Kausing, Dave Dreves, David Baker, Andrew Hollon, and Bill Spears** (Law Enforcement Division) for their assistance in working the event and spending time with the children.

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Terrell Field Project

A proposed project on the Ballard WMA with Ducks Unlimited is to install wells in the Terrell field to maintain huntable water.

Under current conditions it takes about three weeks to get enough water in Happy Hollow that can then be relifted into Terrell field. Since the relift pump lifts more water than what can be supplied,

pumping must shut down to resupply.

Without a constant supply of water going into the field, water is lost to sandy soil and we lose what water we have pumped.

We followed up on some discussion of possible old tile pipes in the ground by having a contractor come and dig an eight-foot deep ditch along the big slough to see if that was the problem. We ran into table water at about six feet.

We spot dug up to 15 feet deep and found that most of the water was around the six foot mark. The contractor found no tile pipe but ran into pockets of sand. There are spots where water was running into the ditch but no pipe was found.

DU is going to dig three wells to help supplement water. The new wells will help provide huntable water for five blinds in Terrell field. So with the new wells we will be able to provide more hunting opportunity for the sportsman.



Scouts Do a "Good Turn" for Wildlife

The Boy Scout slogan is "Do a Good Turn Daily." Scouts from Troop 721 in Williamstown performed this duty for wildlife recently at the Curtis Gates Lloyd WMA.

The Scouts completed an exotic plant removal and native landscaping project.

WMA foreman **Josh Lillpop** enlisted the troop's help with removing exotic yew shrubbery around the Clubhouse, and replacing it with native plants. The yews were laid atop log sections to create brush piles for wildlife cover on the WMA.

Scouts who participated in the Lloyd WMA service project were Russell Wallace, J. Marc Fisher, Grant Mulligan, Bradley Reeves, Billy Hinton, David Hinton, Lance Hunter and Charlie Wilcoxon.



Sgt. Suit presents water/boating safety to Ewing Elementary



For the fifth straight year, **Sergeant Andrew Suit** brought a water and boating safety message to the K-1 students of Ewing Elementary School last month.

The program was part of safety promotion day with the local fire department, electric co-op, and Forestry. They spoke with students about safety issues of which they should be aware. Every class in the school rotated through each safety presentation.



BROOD SURVEY

Wildlife biologist **Erin Harper** doing wood duck brood surveys on the KY River one morning last month. Wildlife Division conducts the surveys each year for 30 days beginning in mid-May.

John Brunjes photo

KDFWR staff help make DOE Eco-Fair a big success

Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife personnel recently participated in an Eco-Fair sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy's Citizens' Advisory Board at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant.

The event was held on the West Kentucky WMA, which is located on lands owned by KDFWR, U.S. DOE, and the Tennessee Valley Authority. The Citizens' Advisory Board is a group of local citizens appointed by DOE to interface with the general public and to exchange public concerns regarding the Paducah GDP.

Approximately 600 sixth-grade students from McCracken county public and private schools attended the event over two days. Students were broken into groups of twenty or less to enable a more hands-on experience at the Eco-Fair. The groups rotated through a series of nine stops, much like a golf scramble arrangement.

Each twenty-minute stop presented students with ecological or social aspects relating to the natural environment. Some stops presented by other organizations were related to recycling, groundwater quality, chemical spills in surface water, nuclear energy, and cyclical predator/prey relationships.

KDFWR Wildlife Division did a presentation centered on how biologists track migratory birds, where students were able to see how radio-marked birds are tracked, and how birds are banded in order to learn migration habits and pathways.

The highlight of this stop was when the students were shown how a live duck is fitted with a leg band, and could handle the birds to learn about their physiology, including oily feathers, webbed feet, and lamellate bills.

John Brunjes, Tim Kreher, and Jodie Swain did these presentations with the



assistance of Jack Sloan, Jeff Adams, Tyler Reagan, and Hunter Beyer.

KDFWR Fisheries Division staff from the Murray office provided what was the most popular stop of the Eco-Fair, by showing students how an electrofishing boat works and by allowing the kids to handle and learn about fish from one of the WMA ponds. A 15+ pound grass carp provided excitement on one day with, as **Paul Rister** described, "the Sea World experience" by splashing the kids closest to the fish tank. **Paul Rister, Neal Jackson, Kenneth Bucy, and Rory Flynn** provided the fish demonstration, with the assistance of Kevin Tucker and Hunter Beyer.



A picture of the recently completed new ADA fishing pier at Marion County Lake.

Engineering completes new ADA Marion County Lake fishing pier

By Ryan Oster

Engineering Division recently completed the construction of a new ADA fishing pier at Marion County Lake, located just south of the city of Lebanon, Kentucky.

This lake is a 21-acre watershed style lake. It provides fishing opportunities for panfish, channel catfish, and large-mouth bass.

The fishing pier is the result of a partnership with the Marion County Fiscal Court, who will be providing the 25% match for the project. The remaining 75% cost of the project was funded using Federal Sport Fish Restoration Funds.

This project highlights Fisheries and Engineering Divisions' commitments to help improve bank fishing opportunities throughout the Commonwealth.

Another project recently completed by the Engineering Division was the paving of the recently constructed boat ramp and parking area along the Salt River near the city of Shepherdsville, Kentucky (Bullitt County).

This ramp will offer access to sections of the lower Salt River that had previously been very limited. This section of the Salt River offers some unique smallmouth bass fishing opportunities, as well as panfish and channel catfish.

This new boat ramp will help more than 10 vehicles and boat trailers at a time to access the lower Salt River.

These projects are a continuation in a series of excellent projects completed by the Engineering Division to help improve boating and bank fishing opportunities throughout Kentucky. Please thank the staff of the Engineering Division at your next opportunity.

Derby Day (Fish & Wildlife Style)

Marc Johnson and Zac Campbell (Aquatic Education, I&E), Dane Balsman (Urban Fishing), Capt. Richard Skaggs (6th District, Law Enforcement), and volunteer Todd Weeks staffed the annual Kids Fishing Derbies June 4th and 5th on the lakes at Fish & Wildlife headquarters.

The lakes were stocked by Fisheries and FINs in preparation for the events, which lasted three hours each on Friday evening and Saturday morning. A total of 87 youngsters took part in the event, and every participant took home a prize. Many were first time anglers or hooked their first fish.



Volunteer Todd Weeks, founder of the Frankfort Flyfishing Club, helps a youngster get rigged up to fish the derby, while his family gets registered for prize drawings.



Hailey Martin shows off her sixth catch of the day from the upper lake at Fish & Wildlife headquarters; she was aided by her parents, Matt (pictured) and Nikki of Franklin County



Northern Red Salamander.
Photo by Steve Bonney

Herpetology Weekend – A Nineteen Year Cooperative Event

May 7th-8th, 2010, marked the 19th year for Herpetology Weekend at Natural Bridge State Resort Park. For those unfamiliar with the term, herpetology is the study of reptiles and amphibians.

The focus of Herpetology Weekend is to share an appreciation for these fascinating animals and to improve understanding, with hopes that enhanced understanding will lead to further appreciation.

Nearly 100 professional and amateur herpetologists participated this year thanks to the collaborative efforts of numerous agencies and non-governmental organizations including the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, Kentucky State Parks, U.S. Forest Service, Kentucky Reptile Zoo, Kentucky Herpetological Society, Greater Cincinnati Herpetological Society, Kentucky Society of Natural History, and Copperhead Consulting.

Presentations both Friday and Saturday evening offered something for every-

one. This year Les Meade, a Kentucky native transplanted to Washington, wowed the audience with his slide show of the reptiles and amphibians of Washington.

Bill Love inspired the audience to take better photographs overall with his discussion of high-quality herp photography and pointers for getting decent photographs of reptiles and amphibians.

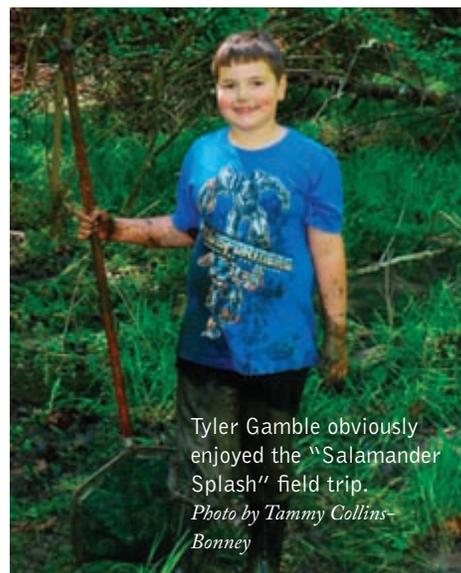
John Byrd's "Confessions of an Amateur Herpetologist" highlighted a career of incorporating herpetology and outdoor education into the public school curriculum in Anderson County, Tennessee.

Last but not least, Dr. Ed Zimmerman gave a presentation on Murray State University's efforts to monitor and assess



Herpetology Weekend offers something for all ages.

Photo by Steve Bonney



Tyler Gamble obviously enjoyed the "Salamander Splash" field trip.
Photo by Tammy Collins-Bonney

the status of Kentucky's cottonmouth population.

A highlight of Herpetology Weekend has always been what could be best described as the Saturday field trip buffet. Participants choose from a variety of morning and afternoon field trips where they can observe reptiles and amphibians in their natural habitats under the guidance of experienced field trip leaders.

KDFWR employees **John MacGregor**, **Danna Baxley**, and **Steve Bonney** were among the numerous field trip leaders this year. The "Mesodon Farm" field trip for example, provided participants with a chance to see 13 reptile and amphibian species in the field while seeing first-hand how to develop and implement reptile and amphibian habitat on private property.

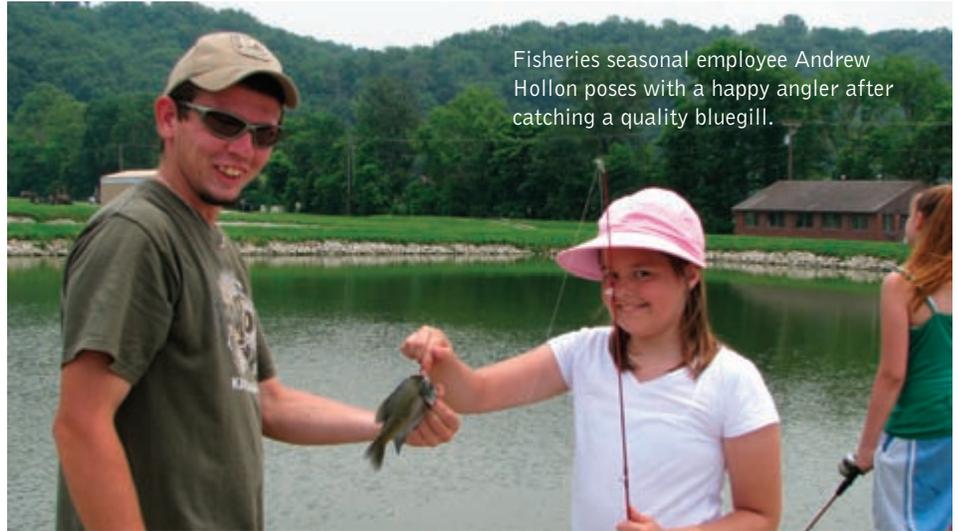
A perennial favorite of the kids, "Salamander Splash", gave the kids and kids at heart a chance to see just how many red-spotted newts they could catch, along with eight other reptile and amphibian species.

Approximately 100 people participated in the field trips this year and 32 species of reptile and amphibian were observed.

Watch for announcements for Herpetology Weekend 2011 next spring. The 20th anniversary Weekend is sure to be special.



A brave young girl decides she is ready to bait her own hook at the Hospice Kids Fishing Event.



Fisheries seasonal employee Andrew Hollon poses with a happy angler after catching a quality bluegill.

Fisheries Division Hosts 2010 Hospice Kids Fishing Event

By Ryan Oster
Photos by Kathryn Emme
and Chris Hickey

The Fisheries Division hosted the annual Hospice Kids Fishing Event on June 2, 2010 at the Pfeiffer Fish Hatchery in Frankfort. This event is sponsored by the Kentucky Chapter of the American Fisheries Society.

Similar to previous years, the event began with a cookout along the banks of Elkhorn Creek for the children and staff of the Louisville Hospice, as well as Department staff helping with the event. Chef **Don Bunnell** continued to master his culinary skills by providing burgers and hotdogs, as well as offering some of his own homemade bratwurst. To say the bratwurst was the best that I have tasted is a dramatic understatement.

After lunch, the children and staff

quickly moved over to one of the hatchery ponds to spend several hours catching fish. This year's pond contained large bluegill and channel catfish that providing hours of enjoyment.

As in previous years, the number of actual Hospice children was low, however, this event is also offered for siblings of Hospice patients. A total of eight siblings attended the event, with many of these children having never fished or even caught a fish before.

This event is always one of the highlights of the year for many of the Fisheries staff as it provides us the opportunity to partner up with children who are not exposed to fishing and watch the enjoyment

on their faces as they catch fish after fish.

This year's group was particularly memorable as many of the children were initially afraid even to touch a fish. However, by the end of the day, many of them were taking their own fish off of the hooks and releasing them.

As always, a big thank you goes out to **Steve Marple** and the staff at Pfeiffer Fish Hatchery for providing the pond space and bluegill and channel catfish for the event.

I would also like to thank the many **Fisheries Division employees** who assisted with the event. This event could not occur without everybody's help and participation.



Fisheries staff staying busy baiting hooks, netting fish, and helping remove fish.

Remodeled Fishing Jetty completed by Engineering Division

From this...



Engineering Division recently completed the redesign and construction of the fishing jetty at Kentucky Lake.

This jetty is located near Kentucky Dam State Park on the northern end of Kentucky Lake. This is definitely an impressive piece of work completed by the Engineering Division if you take note of the before and after photographs.

This fishing jetty offers bank fishing access all year long to a protected area on Kentucky Lake. During the spring, good numbers of bass and crappie can be caught from this jetty as fish utilize the protected cove for spawning.

Engineering Division also has con-

To this...

tinued to work aggressively to help improve boating access across the Commonwealth. They recently completed the asphaltting of two boat ramps, also on Kentucky Lake.

These ramps include the Boyds Branch and Patterson Landing boat ramps in Calloway County. Both ramps are located south of Blood River embayment, with Boyds Branch located north of the small town of Hamlin.

Patterson Landing boat ramp is located further to the south and provides ideal access for those anglers interested in fishing the Patterson Island chain that is unique to Kentucky Lake. Both ramps were constructed on land that is being leased to the Department by TVA.

We are certain that anglers and boaters will appreciate the efforts of the Engineering Division to make these ramps more accessible and user-friendly.



Photos by Walt Redmon

Avery takes conservation officer oath of office

Josh Adam Avery, 32, of Edmonton, is Law Enforcement Division's newest conservation officer.

Avery, assigned to Clinton County, graduated the division's 12-week academy and took the oath of office from Franklin District Judge Chris Olds Friday, June 4, at Headquarters with **Col. Bob Milligan** looking on.

Avery comes to fish and wildlife after eight years with the Edmonton Police Department. He served nine years with the U.S. Army, including a one-year tour in Iraq.

Avery says he grew up hunting and fishing and is looking forward to getting to work.





Department receives aquatic nuisance species funding

By Ryan Oster

The Fisheries Division is pleased to announce that it was recently approved to receive \$33,593 in Federal Aquatic Nuisance Species Management funding to help eliminate and combat aquatic nuisance species throughout the Commonwealth for Federal Fiscal year 2010.

This money is provided through the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and is eligible to be received by any state fish and wildlife agency with an approved Aquatic Nuisance Species Management Plan. For FY2010, a total of \$1,074,976 was available and distributed equally among 32 approved State/Interstate Aquatic Nuisance Species Management Plans.

The Fisheries Division plans to utilize this funding in a variety of manners. Informational signs will be developed and posted at water resources where aquatic nuisance species are present to inform the public of their presence and to help

prevent the continued spread of these species into aquatic resources. Funding will also be used to purchase equipment and chemicals to treat problematic areas of nuisance species to limit their negative impacts on anglers, boaters, and Kentucky's native species.

Examples of aquatic nuisance species present in Kentucky include silver and bighead carp, zebra mussels, didymo (rock snot), hydrilla, eurasian watermilfoil, curly pondweed, purple loosestrife, and Phragmites.

Asian Carp are well established in the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers in Kentucky. These non-native fishes grow rapidly and

Asian Carp (silver and bighead carp) are presently well established in the Mississippi, Ohio, lower Tennessee, and lower Cumberland Rivers in Kentucky. These fish are also present in Kentucky Lake and Lake Barkley.

compete with native fishes for limited food resources. Their reproductive potential is high which helps them outcompete many of Kentucky's native fish species. Silver carp are particularly problematic in that they jump out of the water and can potentially injure boaters and anglers.

Didymo is an aquatic nuisance member of the algae family that is found in the Lake Cumberland Tailwater. It has the ability to smother large sections of the substrate and negatively impact the growth of native plant species as well as invertebrate production. Dense colonies of Didymo can impede fishing opportunities for trout anglers.

Hydrilla is an aquatic nuisance plant species that can form dense stands of vegetation and grow in depths as great as 20 feet. When extremely abundant, it can negatively impact fish populations, native vegetation, angling, and boating opportunities. At present, hydrilla is found in many eastern Kentucky reservoirs, as well as Kentucky Lake.



GIRL POWER

During the 2009 camping season I noticed that a few of the women counselors were reluctant to handle fish or bait hooks. Since large numbers of young ladies attend our conservation camps each year I feel that it is important that our counselors set a positive example. As I&E Director I made my feelings known to our camp directors at several meetings last year. It seems I may have brought this issue up once too often and they decided to have a little fun at my expense. Pictured above are the women of Camp Currie - all holding fish.

- Tim Slone



A mating least tern pair sits on and guards a nest in the sand.

Threats to threatened least terns continue

Photos by John Brunjes

The interior least tern is the only endangered bird species which nests in Kentucky. It nests in groups or “colonies” on sandbars along the Ohio and Mississippi rivers in the western part of the state. This species has declined because of the loss of many of these sandbars. Kentucky is extremely important to the species, hosting up to 15% of the world’s nesting

population each season. In the last three years, flooding on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers has caused almost complete nest failure for the species. In addition to flooding, this species is highly susceptible to human disturbance. Human entry into nesting sites can cause nest failure and abandonment. KDFWR posts these nesting sites to protect this endangered species. Entry into these sites, such as the ATV traffic pictured here, destroyed multiple nests at this location on the Ohio River near Paducah and could lead to substantial federal fines. KDFWR Law Enforcement is working with US Fish and Wildlife Service Law Enforcement as well as the US Coast Guard to protect these sites.



Wildlife Division intern, Joe McDermott, drives a sign into the sand to post the important nesting area.



Wildlife Division technician Kerri Dikun places a marker a few feet from a nest holding a single egg that barely escaped ATV riders.



Another lets the sand fly as it prepares a new nest or “scrape” in the sand.



Buffalo clover, *Trifolium reflexum*, specimen in Woodford Co.
Photos by Joe Lacefield



Like his forebear and namesake, Daniel Boone is an outdoorsman. Here the buckeye botanist and Lacefield examine the rare find.

Biologist Joe Lacefield finds rare buffalo clover in Woodford

On a recent property visit, KDFWR Private Lands Biologist **Joe Lacefield** discovered a rare plant in Woodford County. It is buffalo clover, *Trifolium reflexum* (not to be confused with running buffalo clover, *Trifolium stoloniferum*--a Federally endangered species found in several locations in Kentucky, including the Blue Grass Army Depot).

Daniel Boone makes Special Appearance in the Bluegrass

The observation was confirmed through photos and a site visit by Daniel Boone, a clover expert from Cincinnati. (Yes, Dan is a direct descendant of our state's first game warden himself!)

Both native clovers have leaves advancing up the flowering stem (unlike non-native white or ladino clover). Buffalo clover has a hairy stem, and narrower leaves compared to the more rounded leaves of running buffalo clover. Flowers

of buffalo clover can be white to red in color, whereas the running species are all white.

This was found in a grazed woodlot of buckeye, ash, hackberry, elm and cedar, not in the dry hickory oak habitat of the only other known Kentucky population, near Mammoth Cave. According to Boone, finding it in the Inner Bluegrass is contrary to previously expected habitat requirements.

Buffalo clover is an annual/biannual species meaning it germinates and either

flowers that year or the next and dies. Boone states that one population he is familiar with has disappeared then recurred after a 14-year lapse.

Joe has observed a tremendous "bloom" of clovers in pastures and other areas this year, which he attributes to the extended snow cover we had over winter. Perhaps these conditions were also prime for this rare plant.

Mr. Boone indicated that this clover is likely the rarest Kentucky plant, although it is not federally listed.

Gosling released back into wild after officers track its captor

On May 24, 2010 conservation officer **James Nason** received a call from dispatch regarding the illegal taking of a Canada goose gosling from the Linton Recreation Area in southern Trigg County.

Dispatch said that an anonymous caller reported that the violation had occurred the previous afternoon and she had written down the license plate number of a vehicle involved. She said that two men exited a pickup truck and ran the adult geese toward the lake while a woman exited the truck, grabbed a gosling and then

they all left the area.

Nason and **Officer Dan Richardson** located the woman at her home. She admitted to illegally taking the Canada goose gosling and was keeping it in her residence.

Ms. Lisa Keene, 45, of Cadiz, was cited for illegally taking migratory birds. The officers returned the gosling to the Linton Recreation Area where it was successfully released back into the wild amidst a crowd of interested onlookers who applauded their efforts.

Herndon, Kuhn graduate DOCJT's APS course

Conservation officers **Sgt. Scott Herndon** and **Sgt. David Kuhn** were among 20 graduates from 19 police agencies who graduated from the Department of Criminal Justice Training's Academy of Police Supervision on May 21.

Herndon, a 9-year Law Enforcement Division veteran, is assigned to the Third District. Kuhn, an eight-year veteran is assigned to the Fourth District.

APS, also called the sergeant's academy, is a three-week, 120-hour training program targeted for newly promoted sergeants or officers who are on their agency's promotion list to become sergeants.

While in APS, students participate in classes focusing on the role of a supervisor, as well as leadership, resolving conflict, managing diversity, monitoring officer performance, professional image, legal issues for supervisors, ethics, interpersonal communication, effective written communication, making decisions, solving problems, managing critical incidents, public speaking, emotional survival, budgeting, media relations and others.

The graduating class was the 36th to complete APS since the program began in 2003.

Danville Police Assistant Chief Lt. Colonel Tony Gray served as guest speaker.

APS is a stepping stone to the Department of Criminal Justice Training's Kentucky Leadership Institute, which consists of a series of three progressive leadership courses aimed at developing and shaping future and current leaders in law enforcement agencies across the commonwealth.



Gravy Days at Camp Currie

Despite heaving flooding and other local issues, First District **Sergeant Denny Broyles** and **Officer Tony Dunker** helped a young shooter with his aim during the Gravy Days youth outdoor event at Camp Currie last month.

Broyles joined **Officer Scott Barrow** later to help another youngster score a hit.

Law Enforcement Division gets MDTs

The Law Enforcement Division has received the initial shipment (52) of Mobile Data Computers (MDT) that will be installed in the Conservation Officer's patrol vehicle. This equipment will enable the officers to have access to electronic forms-citations, boat accident reports, case report forms, etc.

They will also be able to check the license status of hunters and anglers as well as query the AOC system for wants/warrants.

In conjunction with the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system, the telecommunicators will have the option of silent dispatch to complaint calls-for officer safety-and the system has the capability of

re-contacting the officer is he/she is out of radio contact too long when dispatched to a complaint.

In 2011, the Administrative Office of the Courts will go electronic with their forms and printing cost for forms will be the responsibility of individual agencies. The Law Enforcement Division is scheduled to have all patrol vehicles equipped by the end of 2011.

Funding for the equipment is through, primarily, Federal Grants – Recreational Boating Safety (RBS), Homeland Security Buffer Zone Protection Plan (BZPP) and Homeland Security Port Security Grant which are administered through the United States Coast Guard.

Black Bear Update for Summer 2010

By Steven Dobey

With the summer months now upon us, it's that time of year when Kentucky's growing black bear population becomes most active. Since May, family groups have been dispersing and yearling bears are searching for suitable ranges.

More important, however, is the onset of the breeding season which generally peaks in June. This month males are roaming extensively in search for females, which greatly increases potential for human-bear interactions. So far in 2010, this has certainly proven to be the case.

Since January 1, KDFWR personnel have captured eight (7M:1F) individual bears as a result of nuisance activity. The



lone female was accompanied by three cubs and released on site after being equipped with a GPS-enabled radiocollar.

Among the remaining nuisance captures, five males were relocated and two were euthanized as a result of human-habituated behavior. Overall, the deaths of nine (6M:1F) bears have been documented this year in Kentucky. Five of those were the result of vehicle collisions. Another was an illegal kill, and one male bear was euthanized due to a previously

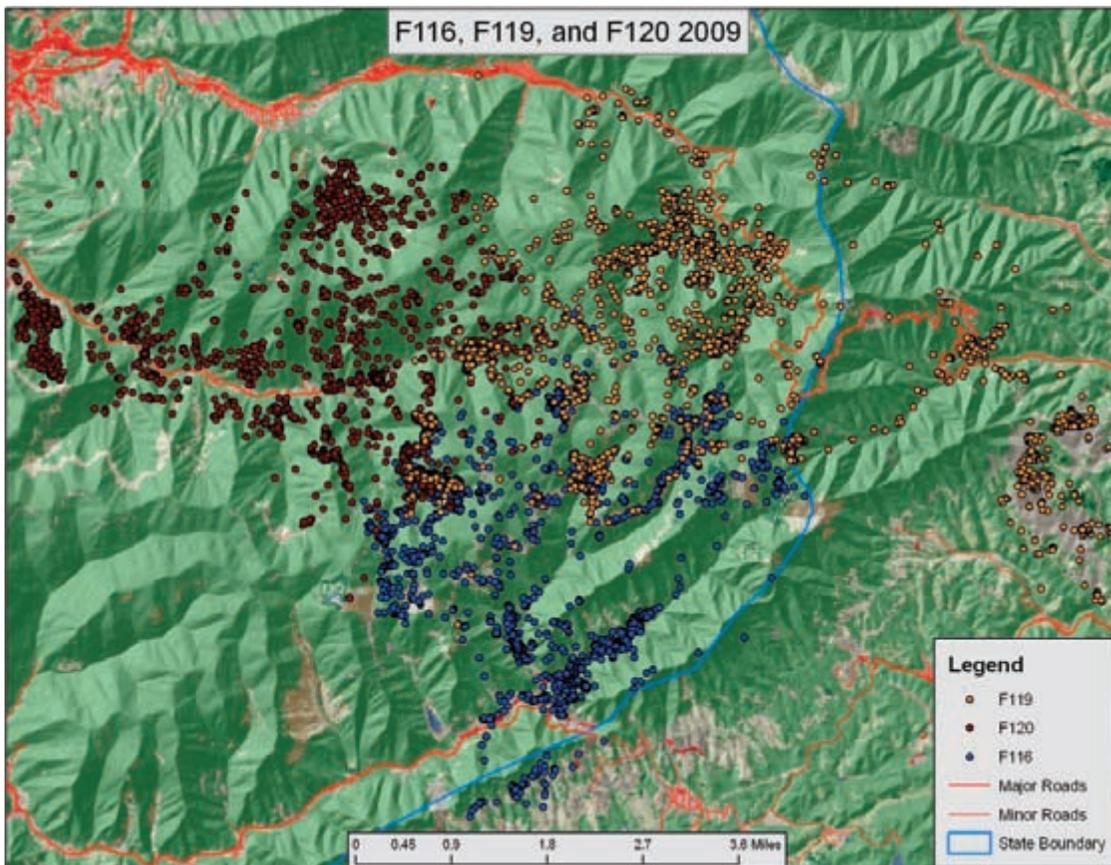
sustained injury. Collectively, there were three mortalities each in Harlan and Letcher counties, and one each in, Laurel, Perry and Pike.

Statewide nuisance activity this year has been on par with 2009 when KDFWR personnel had captured eight (5M:3F) bears by this time. Early indications are that 2010 will be a moderate to high year for human-bear conflicts, but much of that will be dependant on this fall's mast crop. Ultimately, acorn production will greatly influence the level of nuisance activity later in the year.

Summer has also marked another year of bear research in eastern Kentucky and it is off to a good start. Since late May of this year, researchers from the University of Kentucky have captured 15 (7M:8F) individual bears on 17 (8M:9F) occasions. In addition, five (3M:2F) of those initial captures were bears that had never been handled before.

One capture of particular interest was that of 10-year-old M004 on June 5, 2010. This adult male was first captured in Letcher County on July 10, 2002 in cooperation with the first year of bear research in Kentucky. Eight years ago M004 weighed in at 174 pounds—this summer his weight had to be approximated when he bottomed out the 500-pound scale used by researchers.

Modest estimates put this king of the mountain between 500 and 600 pounds. Trapping will continue through June as we hope to deploy as many GPS radiocollars as possible. Data collected from these animals will greatly benefit the management of black bears in the Commonwealth.



Buck Creek Land Purchase is second FILO purchase in year

The Department purchased 850 acres along Buck Creek in Pulaski County on May 4, 2010. The new tract is located east of Somerset, KY just east of KY 1003 and Pea Ridge Road.

The Buck Creek tract is the second land acquisition by the Division of Fisheries' KY Wetland & Stream Mitigation Program (also known as the FILO program) in the last 12 months. The total acreage purchased by the FILO program to date is 1,557 acres.

The acquisition was 100% funded by the FILO program and no agency general funds or state general funds were required. The tract has not been officially named at this time.

The FILO program is tasked with mitigating stream and wetland loss in Kentucky which includes restoration of degraded habitats and in exceptional circumstances the preservation of high quality areas. The FILO program is under the oversight of an Interagency Review Team (IRT) chaired by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The Buck Creek tract was approved by the IRT for preservation because it had high quality streams identified by KDFWR, the KY Division of Water, and



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and because it complemented another FILO project in the headwaters of this watershed.

Over one mile of Buck Creek borders the western edge of the new tract. The property is mostly forested with old field habitat found along the southern sections and several thousand feet of headwater streams. The tract is strategically situated in an aquatic conservation area identified in the Comprehensive Wildlife Action Strategy (CWCS) prepared by the Department in 2005 as part of the State Wildlife Grant Program.

The project area is within mussel and fish conservation zones identified in the CWCS: six mussels and four fish having the status of Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SBCN) are known from the vicinity of the Buck Creek tract, of which three mussels are federally listed endangered.

The acquisition of the Buck Creek tract and other similar tracts has strategic benefits to the Department. First, FILO funds are considered non-federal, the value of the lands can be used to meet the match requirements of federal land acquisition grants. This means that the Department

could use federal funds to build upon the lands purchased by FILO without using any fish and game funds.

Second, it is important that the lands purchased by the FILO program are located in recognized conservation areas with high quality streams and rare species of fish and wildlife. Acquiring lands in identified conservation areas creates opportunities with other sources of federal land acquisition funds that would not be otherwise available.

State Wildlife Grant funds, Recovery Land Acquisition Grants, or the traditional Pitman-Robertson funds could potentially be used to purchase surrounding acreage without requiring any agency general funds. This means the 1,557 acres purchased by the FILO program could be increased to approximately 4,000 acres without using any fish and game funds.

Finally, purchasing these unique lands in important watersheds is an important tool in protecting the unique fish and wildlife resources.

For more information on this and other FILO projects, please contact the FILO staff at 502-564-5159 in Pine Hills Plaza in Frankfort.



Bourbon Festival is huge success

The Kentucky Bourbon Festival at the Salato Wildlife Education Center June 12 attracted about 450 guests and raised about \$18,000 for the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Foundation. One highlight of



the evening was the Elk Tag drawing that brought in an additional \$126,000. The Bourbon Festival featured the finest from eight Kentucky distilleries, Kentucky Lake catfish, barbecued buffalo and pork, and much more.

The Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Foundation used funds raised at last year's festival to build or renovate Conservation Camps and send youth to camp.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Foundation president Jon Woodall, Chad Miles

and Rachel Shipley pulled the winning ticket in the elk tag drawing as a crowd watches. Nancy Jenkins of Lexington purchased the six-ticket option through the Foundation's web page for her husband, Don. His Kentucky October bull elk hunt will be featured on Kentucky Afield TV with host **Tim Farmer**.

Retired law enforcement major **David Casey**, volunteer **Jim Miller** and Taylorsville WMA foreman **Bill Mitchell** keep the crowd supplied with fried catfish.



Gassett to head Southeastern Association of Fish And Wildlife Agencies

Dr. Jonathan Gassett, commissioner of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, was recently elected president of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA) for the 2010-2011 year. The organization

took the action at its Spring Directors' Meeting on May 14-16, which was hosted by Kentucky Fish and Wildlife in Lexington.

SEAFWA consists of the agencies with the primary responsibility for management and protection of fish and wildlife resources in 15 states and two territories. Among the organization's responsibilities is to serve as a clearinghouse for the exchange of ideas concerning wildlife and fisheries management, research techniques, wildlife law enforcement, hunting, outdoor safety, and information and education programs.

"Election as President of SEAFWA is a reflection of the esteem in which Commissioner Gassett is held by his peers in the other 14 southeastern

states," said Bob Brantley, SEAFWA executive secretary. "It also speaks to their high regard for the leadership the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources provides in fish and wildlife conservation and management."

Gassett, commissioner since 2005, served SEAFWA as its vice president for the past year. He succeeded outgoing president Scott Henderson, director of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.

SEAFWA members include fish and wildlife agencies in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Frankfort Christian Academy Fish & Wildlife field trip



Forty-three kindergartners took part in the fishing derby, lining the banks of KDFWR HQ's lower lake with an equal number of parents or grandparents helping to keep hooks baited and lines untangled during the 1.5-hour event.

Kindergarten students from The Frankfort Christian Academy recently spent the first day of June at KDFWR headquarters.

They toured the Salato Wildlife Education Center and learned more about native wildlife and habitats, enjoyed a picnic lunch, and then participated in a fishing derby facilitated by KDFWR staff members **Zac Campbell** (Aquatic Education) and **Brian Clark** (Wildlife).

Several kids caught their first fish ever! Thanks to all the teachers, parents and grandparents for taking the time to get these kids outdoors!



Students won prizes (rod and reel sets) for largest bluegill and catfish, and most fish caught. Aiden Bryan (pictured with his father, Jonathan) caught the largest catfish.

The Center for Mollusk Conservation is expanding its staff as a result of funds acquired from a mitigation project on the lower Ohio River working with the endangered fat pocketbook mussel. The following two staff will complement our existing personnel and increase our efforts to conserve and manage native mussel populations in Kentucky. Both staff started in early June 2010.

Travis Bailey is a native of Owen County, KY. He received his B.S. degree from Morehead State University in Animal Science and his M.S. degree from Kentucky State University in Aquaculture. He started at the Center for Mollusk Conservation as seasonal technician in November and recently received the fisheries technician II position.

Ben Davis is a native of Chattanooga, TN. He is a 2006 graduate of Tennessee Technological University (B.S. Fisheries Science). He worked for three years as a fisheries technician II with the Tennessee Cooperative Fishery Research Unit. He has extensive experience in mussel propa-

NEW HIRES June 2010

gation. He recently received the fisheries biologist II position with the Center for Mollusk Conservation in early June.

The Green River Region recently hired **Curt Divine** to be the new Game Management Foreman for Higginson-Henry & Lee K. Nelson WMA's. Curt graduated from Murray State University in 2002 with a B.S. degree in Agriculture/Animal Science, and has extensive experience managing agricultural & hunting lands. He was previously a fulltime farmer and ran his own wildlife habitat management business, but has spent the last 5-years as a Tech II & Tech III at H&H WMA. Curt's vast knowledge of both H&H and Lee K. Nelson WMA's, as well as his habitat management experience from both the public and private sectors, will be invaluable to the region.

Richard Cook started in the En-

gineering Division on the 8th of June. Richard has over 15 years of experience in construction work, and is experienced in operation of heavy equipment. Richard also brings with him a class "A" CDL license which will be a valuable asset to the Division. Richard will be working in the boating access section.

Aaron Cox joined the agency on May 16th as an Internal Policy Analyst I. Aaron will be responsible for the SWG, Hunter Education and Archery in the Schools grant programs.

Aaron has a Bachelor's degree from the University of Kentucky in Management & Marketing. He came to us from the Department of Revenue where he worked in the collections of Corporate taxes. There he was responsible for analyzing financial documents to determine the most appropriate collection action.

Aaron is an avid snow skier and loves to hunt and fish in his free time. He and his wife also just gave birth to a new addition, Elijah Thomas on June 7th. Please join us in welcoming Aaron to the department in his new position.

WE GET MAIL

Letters to the Commissioner's Office

June 2010

Joshua Palmieri wrote these comments on Facebook about **Jeff Spalding** in our Information Center, "Whoever Jeff is that answered my email, I want to thank you. Great guy! He will be making this year's Pack 395 fishing derby one of the best ever. The boys really deserve it! They work so hard all year, and this is one of the events they enjoy. Thanks Jeff! I will post photos after the event!"

This note comes from Neil Ward, Bell County Attorney. "This is a thank-you letter for the help that the KDFWR provided to our 2010 Fish Fest. Biologist **John Williams** was able to secure approximately 400 rainbow trout to release in the Middlesboro City Canal. Hundreds of youth took advantage of the non-competitive, non-pressured, day of fishing. Some of the boys and girls had not been fishing since last year. Our local Conservation Officer, **Ray Lawson**, helped to encourage the novices as fishing lines often twisted into unusual shapes." He also provided a CD with a program that their local tv station ran about the event.

These comments came from Mr. Bob Robertson, Taylor, MI. "We really enjoyed our visit to the **Salato Wildlife Education Center** about 3 years ago, we still talk about it. Being a one-time amateur herpetologist (when I was younger) I really appreciated your snake exhibits. You folks are educating the kids and adults about the fact that not all snakes are bad." He also included a donation to help with the work at the Center.

Jeff Thurmond, Lexington, wrote a very nice letter regarding the "Outdoorsman Fishing Adventure at Camp Earl Wallace". He writes, "My son, Will and I recently attended this event on Lake Cumberland. We were one of six families chosen to

attend. It was outstanding! The kids had a wonderful time and the parents enjoyed the event as well. We particularly enjoyed the fact that we were able to share the time with our sons and daughters in a beautiful, safe and carefree environment such as Camp Earl Wallace. The event was conducted in a safe and educational environment. I would like to thank the **staff** at the camp for providing more good food than we could eat. They were friendly, courteous and just good people. **The guides and KDFWR chaperones** were excellent. They were wonderful with the kids and all fishing expectations were exceeded. I would like to thank all and let them know that we appreciated them very much. Several names that I do have are: **John Coffey, Travis Neal** and **Melinda Driskell**. Thanks to everyone involved in making this event a memorable and unforgettable weekend for us all." Mr. Thurmond stated he attended Camp Wallace as a camper in 1966 and hopes the camp will endure for future generations of Kentucky sportsmen and sportswomen.

**KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK,
KDFWR STAFF!**
You DO make a difference and
people notice!

These comments come from Donna Phillips, Louisville, who also attended the "**Outdoorsman Fishing Adventure at Camp Earl Wallace**" with her son, Alex. She writes, "As a parent, I am not naïve to think that my boys are not greatly influenced by sources outside of my control. They are exposed to both good and bad on a daily basis. This weekend was totally a positive experience for Alex. I could not have hand picked a better group of people. The whole excursion was well organized and full of empowerment to make it a moment that the kids would remember for a lifetime. My hopes are that more kids get to experience moments like this, because in the end it was more than just fishing."

These comments come from Cindy L. Stivers, "I just wanted to take a moment to tell you about the wonderful customer

service experience I had over the past few weeks by working with a fish and wild-life employee by the name of **Amy Glass**. "My husband's family own a lot on Guist Creek Lake and for more than a year my father-in-law has experienced multiple problems trying to replace a boat dock that was destroyed by weathering and a drought from a few years ago. He experienced so many issues that he stopped all construction on the dock and initiated efforts to sell the property to someone else. This piece of property is a very special place that held many memories for my husband and our children and we were saddened to know it might be sold, so we bought a boat in an effort to change my father-in-law's mind set last fall but the drama of getting the construction completed continued. My husband passed away in March so I made it my mission to find a way to get this property in order so my children, grandchildren and I could continue to make more memories and remember those we had made with my husband.

I got on the FW website and sent an email to the business email account outlining my issue and asking for help to resolve it. I received a very prompt response from a gentleman monitoring those emails and he did me the biggest favor ever by referring me to Amy Glass. Amy and I corresponded late into the evening by email one day and then spoke by phone several times. She has great listening skills, she was extremely kind and compassionate for my loss, and her knowledge and customer service skills are beyond top notch. I would certainly want to know if someone in the division I supervise gave such great service, so I thought this warranted taking time to let you know how wonderful she has been.

This customer service just didn't end with Amy; I also visited the office one afternoon to drop off some papers and while I sat on the couch I had several people who worked for FW walk by and ask if they could help me, if I had been helped, or those who just offered a friendly smile and wish me a good afternoon or friendly hello. So many times those who are in a leadership position only hear when something goes wrong and I just wanted to make sure that someone was aware of the great experience I had while working with your **staff**."