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Two records fall during Kentucky's 2012 bear season

By Steven Dobey

For the 2012 bear season in Kentucky, hunters had no need for the extra day of hunting that was available to pursue bruins in eastern Kentucky. For the first time since 2009, when bear hunting became a reality in Kentucky, hunters met the annual quota of 10 bears. It was fitting then when the last bear checked set a new state record by tipping the scales at 410 pounds... field dressed.

Overall, 11 bears were harvested this year with 9 of those taken on opening day of December 8. As such, the quota was not met and the season remained open until Sunday when 2 bears were harvested before rain moved into the area. Although the annual quota was exceeded this year, the season is structured for this possibility and the baseline quota will prevent an excessive harvest.

Doug Adkins of Jenkins, Kentucky took the 410-pound record male in Letcher County, besting the previous record bear of a 350-pound field dressed bear taken last year by Neil Perkins of Hallie, Kentucky.

All of the bears taken during this season came from Harlan or Letcher coun-



Doug Adkins and his record-setting black bear.

ties. Of those, 10 had never been handled before. One male had been previously captured for research efforts on Black Mountain.

Since 2009, 17 bears have been killed by hunters in Harlan County, seven in Letcher, and one in Pike. Seventy-six percent have been male, a direct result of our mid-December season structure that minimizes the potential for female harvest since most are in the den by this time.

Current sales data indicate hunters purchased 359 permits for the 2012 hunt, down from 484 permits sold in 2011. The apparent decline in sales, however, is likely weather-related as widespread rain was predicted throughout the bear zone during

the hunt. That prediction proved largely inaccurate for the first half of the hunt and local hunters took advantage of the unseasonably warm weather. This was apparent as hunters from the bear zone took 10 of the 11 bears harvested this year.

By meeting the annual quota for the season, the newly created bear quota hunt with dogs scheduled for Dec. 17 through Dec. 21 is now a chase-only season in which no bears may be killed. Harvest of bears would only occur if the bear quota was not met during the regular bear season. The scheduled late bear chase season with dogs will last from Dec. 24 through Dec. 28. Again, harvest of bears is not permitted during a chase-only season.

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WE GET MAIL

Letters to the Commissioner's Office

The following email came through LE Director Hank Patton regarding Officer **Josh Gunn**. "Hank, thanks for taking the time to talk to me today. My name is Andy Hodges. My family has owned a family farm in Clay, Ky. (Webster County) for 40 years.

There is a county road through two sections of the farm and poaching has been a huge problem. I called Josh last deer season with an issue and he has been a hell of an officer. I have called on him this year and he was more than helpful and went to great lengths to catch a poacher that has troubled us for years.

I am not sending this because Josh is a friend of mine; I am sending this because we have needed somebody like him for a long time and wanted you to know that we have a good one. Thanks for all you guys do to protect the wildlife and hunters rights."

The following comments came from John P. Russell, President of the West Kentucky Field Trial Club. "The West Kentucky Field Trial Club concluded its program of open field trials on November 30. The trials this year were of very high quality thanks largely to the quality of the grounds of the West Kentucky Wildlife Management Area. The work done over the last few years and in this year in particular to improve the quail habitat was much in evidence and greatly appreciated. We were able to observe a significant increase in the number of native quail encountered during the running of the trials!

The efforts of **Tim Kreher and his staff** to support the bird dog trials and other activities on the WKWMA are greatly appreciated.

The members of the West Kentucky Field Trial Club continue to work diligently to conduct high quality field trial events at Paducah. We appreciate the sup-

port of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources to provide such a valuable resource."

The following email message came from Floyd Willis regarding the Clay WMA Quota Quail Hunt. The message was addressed to **Nathan Gregory, Stephen Bonney, Scott Freidhof and Wes Mattox**.

"Just wanted to let you know what a wonderful hunt we had at the Quail Quota Hunt this past Sunday, Dec 9. We had over 30 flushes along with several flushes from woodcock. The habitat that you have created is outstanding. The quail were found in the warm season grasses just like they should be. The woodcock came out of the annual weed fields.

The hunt brought back memories of my uncles and other older folks stories of quail hunts way back when. Thanks for all of your hard work."

The following message came through the FW Info Mail email. Clint Carpenter and Kevin Rose wrote, "Recently I have taken up falconry, and was invited on a trip to South Dakota by our sponsor. The invite came fairly quickly after we took our test, and thankfully we passed.

Our next big hurdle was the long grueling wait for our license to be processed, which generally takes up to ten weeks. In concern that we wouldn't receive our license, and be able to participate in the hunt I sent an email to the appropriate dept the first time luckily! The email reached a super lady by the name of **Naomi Wilson**.

I explained the situation of this trip of a lifetime, and how important it was for me. It seemed almost instantly she responded back, and left me with a hope

[See "Mail," page 3](#)



HOLIDAY GREETINGS

KDFWR Headquarters staff, commission members and field staff gathered on the stairway of the Black Bear exhibit at the Salato Wildlife Education Center for this group photo and the chance to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.



“Mail,” continued

that she would do all she could to help me out. A few days passed, and I then received another email from Mrs. Wilson stating that she had received my paperwork, and was rushing it out to Atlanta, where the federal license is handled.

My first thought was “I’m only five weeks out,” but not knowing that Mrs. Wilson was still helping me along. Within one week I received another email from Mrs. Wilson along with the most exciting phone call I can remember in a long time.

Mrs. Wilson told me that she had received confirmation that my letter and license should be in my mail box that afternoon. Sure enough, one and a half weeks from the start of an impatient, grueling wait to the beginning of a great new life of hunting!

After all this it’s not yet over, still another hurdle to cross, even taller than the one before it. My best friend Kevin Rose passed his test with only three weeks to go on the trip. He too was invited, but had little hope of going to

Frankfort, and Mrs. Wilson is concerned it’s not going to make it in time, so she wants to fax it!

participate with part of that three weeks being Thanksgiving week. I once again contacted Mrs. Wilson, and with little expectation, and feeling of guilt for worrying her, we pressed the send button on the email. Again we got response within minutes, saying she is on the job, and not to worry.

After she sent numerous emails to us

it was down to the wire, and all hope was lost. Two days before departure I got an email asking me to contact Kevin, she needed to speak to him ASAP. So I ran straight to Kevin, and his face was glowing. He said that the paper work is in



RICHARDSON HONORED

Officer Daniel Richardson (1st District) displays his plaque for the 2011/12 Waterfowl Protection Officer of the Year. This award is presented by the Mississippi Flyway Council Law Enforcement Committee for the officer in each state that excels in waterfowl education, wetlands protection, youth involvement, participation with waterfowl organizations and enforcement activity.

Frankfort, and Mrs. Wilson is concerned it’s not going to make it in time, so she wants to fax it!

Mrs. Namoi Wilson has went way beyond her job for a couple of knuckleheads in a no-win situation, and made it the most awesome experience of our lives. Please help us get this letter to the appropriate people, as high as it can go, and a very special thanks to Mrs. Naomi Wilson! Thanks for our life of enjoyment.”

New Hire

The IT Branch of Administrative Services welcomed **Katherine Hatchell** aboard on December 1. Katherine is a graduate of Western Hills High School in Frankfort and has a Bachelors Degree in Applied Information Technology/Web Engineering from Kentucky State University. She brings a valued set of skills and experience to our IT area. Katherine will be working on the creation and enhancement of our web and mobile applications as well as updating many of our legacy systems. Please welcome Katherine aboard.

Farewell

David Hise, Staff Attorney III, resigned in November and obtained new employment with an investment firm in Louisville. David was hired by the Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet but was assigned to our Department via an Agreement. In his one year tenure, David was very instrumental in assisting with the many legal issues associated with land acquisitions, easements and lease agreements. Especially important, he successfully assisted the Stream Restoration Program (FILO) with several back logs of issues associated with the necessary conservation easements for their stream work. We wish David the best and we know he will continue to support the Department as a hunter/angler.

O'Connell to head department Archery in the Schools Program

Patrick O'Connell has moved to the Information & Education Division to coordinate the Archery in the Schools Program. Patrick's passion, knowledge, and experience make him an excellent choice to lead Kentucky's Archery in the Schools Program.

He has been involved with NASP at the local, regional, state, national, and world tournament level. Archery is now an official Kentucky High School Athletic Association sport activity and the program is expected to grow even larger.

Katie Haymes, coordinator of the Explore Bowhunting Program, is also in the process of moving to the Information



Recruitment and Retention Branch employees Jamie Cook, Marc Johnson, Patrick O'Connell and Katie Haymes. *Dave Baker photo*

& Education Division. Katie and Patrick will work together on archery programs. Increasing the communication among these programs and sharing common goals with our other recruitment efforts will help make

all of the programs more effective.

Jamie Cook has moved from the Salato Wildlife Education Center to the Hunter Education Program. Jamie will focus on recruiting new hunters and hunter education instructors. Jamie will also work with other groups to develop mentor hunts and youth hunts. He has done an exceptional job in a similar role gaining volunteer support for the Salato Center and likewise will do well in his new role.

The Information and Education Division houses a Recruitment and Retention Branch which conducts work with various age levels and outdoor sporting interests to help keep the agency's primary constituent base strong. Interaction among these groups is key to developing more stability and long term participation in activities which help fund KDFWR's conservation work. Having the bulk of these efforts working in tandem within the same unit just makes sense.

Patrick, Katie, Jamie, and Aquatic Education Coordinator **Marc Johnson** will work together to promote outdoor skills and hunting and fishing, and expand agency influence into new territories to help solidify those pursuits and their benefits into the future.



LIFESAVING EFFORTS REWARDED

Conservation Officers Patrick Younts and Richard M. Waite II were awarded the Kentucky Conservation Officers Lifesaving Award, and Madison County Rescue Squad member Robert Mink received the Kentucky Conservation Officers Citizen Award after the three responded to save a fisherman whose pontoon boat lost power and was pulled into the turbulent waters immediately below Lock and Dam 11 on the Kentucky River on August 8, 2011. The three men climbed over the lock wall, navigated slippery terrain, pulled the boat to within reach and lifted and carried the fisherman to safety.

Richardson accepts new post promoting archery for manufacturers

While celebrating the fifth consecutive district championship with Whitley County High School girl's softball team in 1997, coach **Jennie Richardson** accidentally fell, separated her right shoulder, and changed her life forever.

Archery deer season loomed on the horizon. Richardson avidly bowhunted each fall with her two sons Dustin and Justin and her husband Michael. Now, Richardson couldn't pull back a bow with her bum shoulder.

"Kentucky Afield" television show host Tim Farmer uses his teeth to pull back a bow and this gave Richardson an idea. She went to her local bow shop to see if they could make a bow she could use like Farmer. They attached a leather tab to the bowstring and reduced the draw length and pull weight. After show-

ing such determination to shoot her bow in spite of her injury, her friends suggested she try competitive archery.

Immediate results followed. After her shoulder healed the following winter, she entered her first archery competition and accidentally shot from the longer stake intended for men, but beat the other women anyway. Several weeks later, she won her first national championship at the 1998 Cabela's North American Bow Hunters tournament. Richardson soon found herself on the pro staffs of archery equipment manufacturers Mathews, Easton and Sure-Loc.

The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources selected Richardson as the first state



Jennie Richardson spoke with Congressman Hal Rogers at an archery event a few years ago.



KENTUCKY AFIELD TO THE TROOPS

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife employees Zac Campbell (left) and Seth Stewart loaded 12 boxes of Kentucky Afield Outdoor Calendars and Kentucky Afield television DVDs this morning for shipment to Kentucky National Guard personnel stationed in Africa and Afghanistan. The boxes should arrive in time for Christmas. Kentucky Fish and Wildlife has shipped magazines, calendars and DVDs to Kentucky National Guardsmen stationed overseas since 2005.

coordinator of the Archery in the Schools Program when the department became the first state in the country to start a school archery program in 2002. She helped grow Kentucky Archery in the Schools into a model for the rest of the country.

Her efforts landed her on the cover of *Outdoor Life* in 2008 as one of the magazine's OL 25, a listing of 25 people who have a positive impact on hunting and fishing.

Richardson has moved on from Kentucky Fish and Wildlife to a job promoting 3-D archery shooting for some leading archery equipment manufacturers.

"We want to thank Jennie for all of her hard work, dedication and enthusiasm in leading the Archery in the Schools program here in Kentucky," said Tim Slone, director of the information and education division of Kentucky Fish and Wildlife. "She's made a difference in the lives of thousands of Kentuckians in a positive manner. We wish her great success in her new endeavor."



Pre-restoration. *Joseph Zimmerman photo*



Post-restoration/tree planting. *Mike Hardin photo*

Environmental Section completes Green River bank stabilization project

Staff from the Environmental Section recently restored 1,400 feet of eroding bank of the Green River.

The project site was located in Adair County on the Green River Lake WMA. This section of the river bank had been excessively eroding at a rate of 20 feet per year, causing large amounts of sediment to fall into the river and eventually move into Green River Lake. The adjacent field historically was used as cropland and more recently managed for wildlife habitat and public access/use.

The Environmental Section received grant funding for restoration through the Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership (SARP). SARP is a regional collaboration of resources agencies, conservation organizations and private groups that promote conservation projects throughout the southeastern United States.

The project entailed bankfull bench construction, bankfull slope stabilization, terrace grading and tree planting. The reduced sediment loads into the river will greatly benefit the aquatic community, and the diversity of riparian plantings will provide food and cover for both game and nongame wildlife species.

This project has effectively stopped

the active erosion of the adjacent field and reduced sediment loading of the Green River Lake. Several KDFWR personnel were involved with various aspects of the

project.

Thanks are due to personnel from the Engineering Division, Wildlife Division, and FILO Program.



NEW OFFICERS HONORED

New conservation officer Matthew Parmley, valedictorian of the most recent class of Law Enforcement Division's recruits, accepts his plaque from Commissioner Jon Gasset during a ceremony earlier this month. Parmley also shared the Firearms Award with new officer Stephen Jenkins. Jeff Hall and Zachary Brooks received Defensive Tactics awards.

Poor habitat on land, great habitat under the water

Using the old adage that “one man’s trash is another man’s treasure,” the crew from the Northeastern Fisheries District has been taking cedar tree tops, discarded from the cedar harvest at Clay Wildlife Management Area and turning them into useful habitat in area lakes.

By harvesting the cedar trees at Clay WMA, the diversity of wildlife cover and food resources can increase. Understory oak seedlings, which have little chance of becoming oak trees under a canopy of dense cedar, prosper with the increase in sunlight hitting the forest floor.

In addition to benefiting wildlife habitat on the ground, the logs from these trees can be turned into cedar planks which can be used in the future to make bird feeders or houses. The remaining tops of the cedar trees can then best be utilized to create fish habitat structure in surrounding lakes that lack adequate habitat.

Following harvest from Clay WMA, Fisheries Division staff recently transported a large number of these cedar trees to the Minor Clark Fish Hatchery office. From there, the trees were drilled with a hole through the base and sent off to either Cave Run Lake or Grayson Lake where they were tied in bundles of six trees and sunk at various locations throughout the lakes in order to provide important fish habitat for a variety of game and for-



Above: Staging of the first load of cedar trees tops at Cave Run Lake. Below: Chad Nickell (Northeastern Fisheries District) and Kevan Lane (Minor Clark Fish Hatchery) dump a bundle of cedar tree tops into Cave Run Lake.

Tom Timmermann photos



age fish species.

Overall, the staff from the Northeastern Fisheries District maintains approximately 12-15 permanent tree sites in each of the lakes. Each site is typically refurbished a minimum of once every three years. If more trees become available in a particular year, each site is often refurbished more frequently or additional sites

may also be created.

Cedar trees provide a natural option for creating high quality fish habitat because they do not decay as rapidly as other, more soft wood species. Additionally, cedar trees provide an ideal substrate for development of algae which helps attract smaller bait fish and ultimately larger predators in turn.

This project continues to highlight the great working relationships between the Fisheries and Wildlife Division’s and their staff. Such collaborative efforts help each Division meet their individual goals and objectives as they work towards improving and conserving fish and wildlife populations and their habitats. Similar types of projects also occur throughout several other regions of the state.

For more information about the locations of these fish attractor sites at Cave Run or Grayson Lakes, please feel free to contact the staff of the Northeastern Fisheries

District at 606-783-8650. Or you can obtain a map of all Department owned or managed lakes showing the locations of such fish attractor sites by going to the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources webpage. Under “Fishing and Boating,” click “Where to Fish,” and select “Department Lakes with Fish Attractors.”

2012 Landowner, Business Partner & Conservationist of the Year award recipients



Landowner of the Year Edward Anthony



Business Partner of the Year Loretto Motherhouse



NRCS Conservationist of the Year Kurt Mason

The Wildlife Division recently honored thirteen of the top landowners and land managers from across the state on December 6. The annual Landowner, Business Partner, and Conservationist of the Year awards banquet was held at the quarterly Commission Dinner in Frankfort. The winners and their guests filled the Salato Wildlife Education Center, where they enjoyed dinner and an awards presentation.

Each of the five wildlife regions selected their best landowner and business partner. These winners went on to face off for the coveted Statewide Landowner or Business Partner of the Year. In addition, the wildlife regions and the division's Farm Bill Program selected the top 3 Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Conservationist of the Year.

LANDOWNER OF THE YEAR

- Purchase Region – Edward Anthony
Nominated by Kevin Tucker
- Green River Region – Chess Riddle
Nominated by Thomas Young
- Bluegrass Region – Hank Whitman
Nominated by Clay Smitson
- Northeast Region – Jeff Bunch
Nominated by Wes Mattox
- Southeast Region – Herb Davis Sr.
Nominated by Chris Mason

BUSINESS PARTNER OF THE YEAR

- Purchase Region – Livingston County Fiscal Court
Nominated by Pat Brandon
- Bluegrass Region – Loretto Motherhouse
Nominated by Jason Nally
- Northeast Region – Catlettsburg Refining
Nominated by Harley Weaver
- Southeast Region – Cumberland Woodlands Inc.
Nominated by Chris Mason

NRCS AREA CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR

- Area 1 – Craig Givens
Nominated by Tyler Reagan & Danny Hughes
- Area 2 – Kurt Mason
Nominated by Terri Estes, Jason Nally & Danny Hughes
- Area 3 – Greta Steverson
Nominated by Zak Danks

OVERALL STATEWIDE WINNERS

Landowner of the Year – Edward Anthony
Business Partner of the Year – Loretto Motherhouse
NRCS Conservationist of the Year – Kurt Mason
Wildlife Steward Award Winner – Kentucky Utilities,
Tyrone Plant

McCreary County Adult Day Care Fishing Derby



Eugenia Jones photos

Submitted by Joe Metzmeier with USDA, Forest Service, Daniel Boone National Forest

Through KDFWR's reimbursement program to host fishing derbies, and a participating agreement with Stearns Ranger District, Daniel Boone National Forest (DBNF), a fishing event was held for clients of the McCreary County Horizon's Adult Day Care Center on October 3rd.

Horizon provides daytime care for adults with various mental and physical challenges.

Nearly 50 clients from Horizon participated in the event. At least four participants said that it was their first time fishing and everyone caught at least one fish! One participant caught 22.

Others said they hadn't been fishing in many years but the event reminded them of how much they enjoyed it.

Personnel from the Southeastern Fisheries District and DBNF Stearns Ranger District assisted with baiting and tying hooks, plus cleaning fish. The day care staff took the fish back with them to have a fish fry for their clients. On October 9, agency folks battered and fried the

fish for the clients at the daycare center which also turned out to be a great success.

This event would not have been possible without the assistance from KDFWR through the reimbursement program to host fishing derbies. Because of money reimbursed from the annual kid's fishing derby held annually on the first Saturday in June, fish were able to be purchased to provide a fun fishing day to reach clientele



that sometimes are overlooked.

KDFWR staff who assisted with this event are as follows: **Marc Johnson, Marcy Anderson, Dirk Bradley and Jamie Alton.**



FIRST and SECOND DEER

Nine-year-old Kendall Harrison's first and second deer ever. She took both this year. Kendall is the daughter of Lt. Jim Harrison of the Law Enforcement Division's Sixth District.