

*Wildside Spring 1985*

Interview with Dr. Kirk Beattie *continued* . . .

and stole some of his responsibilities in this area. Dan's father was a Wisconsin Warden for many years and I think this has in part made Dan aware of the need for conservation law enforcement.

We don't have placement statistics for students who get jobs related to enforcement but I try to keep track of many students after they leave. We have students who are now wardens in Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, Minnesota, Iowa, other states and Wisconsin. In fact, about 40 percent of Wisconsin wardens attended and/or graduated from UWSP. This is a fantastic placement rate when you consider that wardens are not required to have a college degree in Wisconsin. Competition for warden jobs is high but the fact that there are 7,300 wardens nationwide makes the prospects better. Conservation officers constitute one-third of all employees in state fish and wildlife agencies. I don't keep up as much as I should with students who get jobs in the parks area related to law enforcement but I know many of them do get jobs.

Many of our students end up in basic law enforcement careers. We have graduates working as deputy sheriffs, policemen, state troopers, and university security police throughout Wisconsin and the nation. I think many of these graduates got turned on to basic law enforcement in our Minimum Standards Law Enforcement Training program and later pursued jobs in the enforcement area.

I want to mention that our enforcement program is offered as a minor, not a major. Students major in wildlife, resource management, forestry, or some other area. I think an enforcement minor gives many students an added advantage when looking for jobs in their major because so many types of jobs involve some enforcement. As an example, the Area Wildlife Manager and Area Forest Ranger in the Wisconsin Rapids area both have law enforcement training and credentials. They assist wardens at times or may have need to use their enforcement powers during the course of their normal duties.

I think the outlook is very bright for students interested in conservation and basic law enforcement.

How are DNR wardens trained in field

operations and does the WDNR conduct regular training sessions to keep its wardens current on game and fish laws?

When the DNR hires a warden, they send that person to a police recruit school to receive 320 hours of Minimum Standards Law Enforcement training. The new warden then receives 120 plus hours of specialized training through the DNR. The warden serves as a trainee during the probationary first year and may work with as many as four different supervising wardens across the state. Each supervising warden evaluates the performance of the new warden. DNR wardens attend four or more firearms sessions ("shoots") each year, to assure proficiency with their weapons. In addition, they receive many hours of specialized in-service law enforcement training each year, such as fur identification, crowd control, and pesticides enforcement.

Wardens are kept current on game and fish laws by receiving updates on new laws and changes in administrative code. Also, wardens meet once a year at a statewide meeting where changes in conservation laws are reviewed.

Finally, what advice can you give someone intending to go into the law enforcement field to improve his/her chances for employment?

My best advice is to get an academic degree in a conservation area (wildlife, resource management, etc.), complete a law enforcement minor, get some work experience on a seasonal basis, and be persistent in looking for employment. Students should take advantage of extracurricular opportunities such as the sturgeon patrol, volunteer to work with a warden or in a park's setting, get a law enforcement internship, work occasionally in federal, state, county, and local parks in law enforcement and get a diversity of work experience. This will greatly help in doing well on written and oral exams/interviews when looking for a job with the government. Be persistent. Be willing to accept a job anywhere in the U.S. and actively interview nationwide. I haven't met a student yet who didn't get a job in conservation law enforcement if they worked at it. Since many people are not persistent, a little effort goes a long way.

# Wisconsin Wardens Injured and Dead

—Wisconsin Natural Resources

Editor's Note: OTWS pays special tribute to the men behind the thankless badge of a conservation officer. The men who face confrontation with violators, often armed, throughout the course of their duties and go home and call it a day's work. The following list of Wisconsin wardens injured is longer than that of those who died, but all are gruesome stories of tragedy.

## Injured

1920's. H.W. MacKenzie, Crandon - Hit in the head with axe as he accosted men fishing trout out of season. MacKenzie survived to become director of the Wisconsin Conservation Department.

1920's. E.M. "Pop" Weaver, Woodruff - Beaten and left atop a beaver dam for dead.

1931. W.A. Cole - Shot in both arms and left leg while trying to make arrest for killing deer illegally.

1933. Stuart Hayner, Eagle River - Hit on the head and beaten, left near the Wisconsin River with a fractured skull and severe injuries after accosting beaver trappers trapping out-of-season.

1940's. "Doc" Chase, Oshkosh - Tied up to be thrown into the Fox River by illegal fisherman at Omro but saved.

1940's. Don Ewers, Green Bay - Nearly thrown into Lake Michigan after boarding a commercial fishing vessel from Two Rivers that carried illegal fish.

1948. Kenneth Beghin, Park Falls - Hospitalized with serious injuries after being beaten by deer shiners. He is now chief pilot for the DNR.

1949. Warren Holger, Mercer - Hit with a flashlight in an attempt to stop deer shiners as he clung to a car going 50-60 miles per hour.

1960's. Keith Reichenbach, Chilton - Beaten by deer shiners.

1960's. Jim Whalen, Eau Claire - Severely injured when his car was hit by a truck while he was investigating a deer shining case.

1968. James Chizek, Park Falls - Severely injured when struck by a truck while investigating a deer shining incident.

1975. Bill Mitchell, West Bend - Beaten by five snowmobilers when attempting to arrest one of the group for failing to have current license registration.

1977. Chuck Petrie, Green Bay - Unhurt when a commercial fisherman tried to stab him then threw a knife while Petrie served a search warrant at a Jacksonport bar.

1978. Dick Abney, Crandon - Suffered a broken leg when hit by a car while attempting to halt a vehicle used in deer shining.

1978. Mike Dresen, Beaver Dam - Run over

by a car along with a deputy sheriff while attempting to stop the vehicle during a deer shining incident.

1978. Winter Hess, Marinette - Suffered a broken cheekbone when struck from behind after stopping a pickup truck carrying a load of illegal lake trout.

## Dead

1923. J.B. Carter - Died from injuries received in an auto accident in Barron county.

1924. Michael Kleist - Killed in an automobile crash while chasing violators. Headquarters at Fond du Lac.

1928. A.P. Vanderkelen - Drowned when boat capsized in Little Sturgeon Bay while checking duck hunters.

1929. Einar Johnson - Shot and killed by violator while attempting to make arrest for illegal beaver trapping in Rusk county. His assailant was wounded in the shootout, but recovered and was later tried and convicted.

1930. W.H. Riebe - Killed by train while on a fur transaction assignment. Headquarters at Eagle River.

1933. Edgar L. Alderman - Killed in a car wreck. Headquarters at Portage.

1934. Albert Lee - Killed in an automobile accident. Headquarters at Luck.

1936. Robert Keeney - Stricken with appendicitis while on a beaver complaint in Forest county. Was unable to reach a doctor in time. He died from gangrene poisoning.

In 1938 in Jackson county a warden's pregnant wife, Mrs. Joe Jonas was shot from ambush and killed while she rode in the family car with her husband. He was uninjured.

1942. Albert Reif - Shot and instantly killed while checking a deer hunter. His murderer was caught and sentenced to twenty-five years in prison.

1950's. Mark Russell, Neilsville - Drowned in a boating accident while checking fishermen for licenses.

1960's. Robert Markle, Park Falls - Killed when his automobile crashed during pursuit of fish spearers.

1971. Neil LaFave, Little Suamico - Game technician with warden credentials shot and killed by a violator in the Sensiba Wildlife Area.

# Ernie Swift —Keith Endres

Ernest Fremont Swift was a legendary Wisconsin warden. He began his career as a bush cop and acceded to the highest levels of policy making.

In 1928, young Ernie followed three notorious Chicago gangsters to a secluded stream where fishing was prohibited. He knew he was in danger from the trio vacationing in the northwoods but undaunted, Swift stepped out from the trees. One of the mobsters pulled a gun, but Swift somehow managed to confiscate the weapon and the group's fishing gear and ordered them to appear in court the next morning. Two days later, Swift pushed his luck further and arrested Joe Soltis, the gang leader, for poaching. Years later, due to his aggressiveness as a game warden in his early days, Swift became the target of a Chicago assassination squad who tried to execute him at his Hayward home. However, Swift was tipped off just in advance of the assault and avoided any confrontations.

After such an adventurous field career, Swift became director of the Wisconsin Conservation Department (now WDNR) from 1947 to 1954. He proceeded to move biologists into his department for the first time. This was a move that brought him into a happy partnership with the great university of Wisconsin ecologist Aldo Leopold. The two were friends and neighbors in Madison and had a profound impact on each other. In 1954, Swift became assistant director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, but quit after just eighteen months of exposure to the bureaucratic trade-offs he saw all around him. Soon however, he ascended to the leadership of the National Wildlife Federation.

This man's career reflected and encompassed a monumental shift in wildlife conservation from the time when law enforcement was everything to the era when scientific management blossomed. The following excerpt from *By Which We Live* by Ernest Swift, is Swift's philosophy and insight into "The man with the badge."

## The Man with the Badge —Ernest Swift

Pinning a badge on a man does something to him; his mental outlook has to adjust to the responsibility and authority vested in him. The authority to restrict the liberty of fellow citizens should not be taken lightly nor should it be abused. The adjustment will determine a man's ability, self-restraint, judgement and courage. A badge can expose sadistic qualities formerly unknown or concealed.

A successful law man must be endowed with certain basic characteristics. Among the most important are judgment and decision; a split-second decisiveness to follow through, and in emergencies, to be able to shoot the works without thought of personal safety. Whereas one rookie can be ruined by a situation of sudden violence, in another it may spark latent qualities of firmness and leadership.

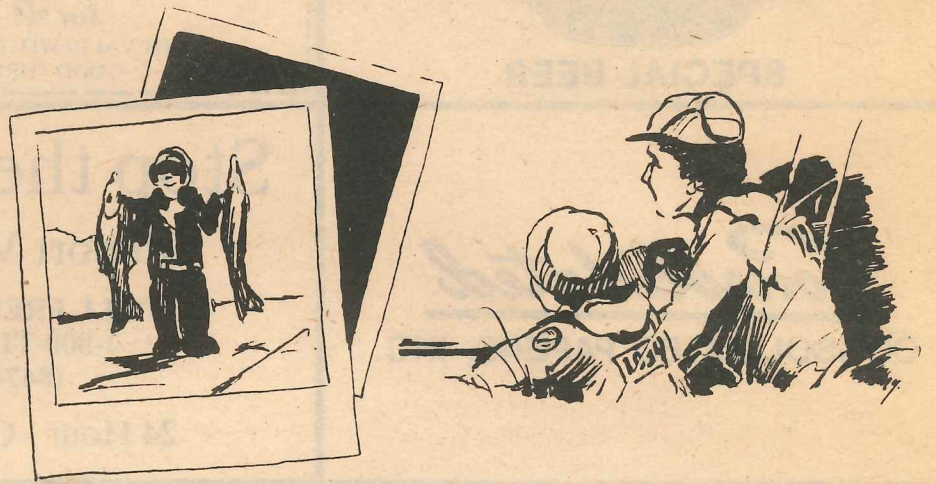
A successful game warden by nature is an individualist. He enjoys being his own boss, working out his own problems and the competition of matching wits with offenders of the law. He is not just a woods cop, although he must be a crafty manhunter, with the sleuthing ability of a city detective as well as a master craftsman in the woods. He must know the laws he enforces from A to Izzard and be something of a trial lawyer.

In this present day of automobiles and radio, he is beginning to lose affinity with nature; with the woods, fields and waters. He hikes less, rides more and does not put forth the physical effort of his predecessors; seldom carries a pack of sleeps in the brush.

Too few wardens ever reach their full potential in their own field or the broader field of conservation. They fail through lack of hard work and diligence to master all the many ramifications of the work so necessary for success. This is equally true with other specialists. When a warden allows the job to become routine, he is either slipping or lacks imagination. There is no place for routine in game law enforcement. In addition to knowing all the tricks of the trade in enforcement, the warden should be well grounded in the biological field of fish and game, and have a working knowledge of forestry and land management. All these specialties develop him into the over-all field man that he should be. By virtue of these additional attributes he will be less a cop and more of a conservationist; less sadistic and better balanced in humility and humor.

Above all, he must have an intense fever for his work, be fanatically conscientious, indifferent to hours, physical discomforts, poor pay and public abuse. Many are called, some are chosen, but too few really succeed. There is no better job in the entire field of conservation upon which to build decision and judgment for all specialties than some basic training in law enforcement.

—Courtesy Wisconsin Natural Resources



## Answers to Quiz:

1. Yes, this is a legal buck as only one spike has to be 3 inches long for it to be legally shot.
2. No, the squirrel was not shot illegally as landowners and family members may hunt foxes, raccoons, woodchucks, rabbits and squirrels year-round without a license on their land.
3. No, the three otter were trapped illegally. (If a trapper traps in both zones, the season bag limit for otter must not exceed two.)
4. Yes, the coyote was shot legally. Coyote can be hunted all year-round and shot at any time of day except during the gun deer season when specific deer hunting hours apply.
5. No, it is not illegal. However, the hunter must not be shooting out of a boat!
6. No, it is illegal to work more than 75 traps in the state of Wisconsin.
7. No, the skunk was shot illegally. (Although skunks are unprotected species, a hunter must have a valid small game license to hunt them on public land.)
8. Yes, it is legal to hunt bobcat with dogs providing that the hunter does not allow the dogs to actually kill the animal.
9. No. A bowhunter may hunt small game during such periods.
10. No for two reasons: number one - martens are a protected species; number two - traps must not be set any higher than three feet above the ground.
11. Yes, because the backtag must be visible and the backpack must meet blaze orange requirements.
12. No, because such students are only able to purchase resident small game and gun deer licenses.

## Grading the Results:

- 12-10 correct: Excellent score! You know your laws well.
- 9-8 correct: Good score. Maybe you misread some questions and could have scored better.
- 7-6 correct: Average. (You better brush-up on your game laws though.)
- 5-0 correct: You failed! I'd thoroughly read the game regulation pamphlets from cover to cover before setting foot in the woods with your gun or traps!