

Update

by Sgt. Richard Purvis, Region 9 Representative



SGT. RICHARD PURVIS

As I write this update, it's the beginning of December so there are a few months of lag time between writing and publication, as is the case with all quarterly magazines.

So far the hunting season has been pretty dismal here in South Louisiana. Most of us attribute it to the hot weather. It is hard to hunt when it is in the mid 70s. The hot weather along with rain has put the hunters at a disadvantage. Here's hoping the duck hunters have a better second split. Historically, that's usually the case.

As far as deer hunting is concerned, it needs to get cold and stay cold to knock down tall grass and get deer moving. In my opinion, if a deer doesn't have to move far to forage for food, it won't. If they have to travel to eat, that's when you will see them. So far, there is so much vegetation they can "eat in bed," so to speak.



Sgt. Davis Madere with daughter, Faith Claire, and a nice doe.

Now for the regional news. Sgt. Max Dupre has decided to retire after 28 years of service. See page 44.

Davis and Jenny Madere now have a beautiful baby girl. Faith Claire Madere was born Sept. 5, 2004. Davis sent in a photo of a nice doe that he took during the deer season and a picture of baby Faith. It is no question which one he is more proud of—the baby, of course.

Two of our agents have settled down. Joe Arnaud and Jeff Boyd have tied the knot. (Not to each other!!) Joe married his long-time love interest Lori Torrito. Jeff married Ashley Matassa. That's it, the downfall of two more great heroes! Just kidding guys, we are proud to welcome two more wives into our enforcement family.

That's all for now. Until next time, be safe. 🍀

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Sr. Agent Jamie Folse
Agent Joe Arnaud

PHOTO GALLERY



Region 9's cache of seized firearms is transported to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries in Baton Rouge to become state property.

Sgt. Max Dupre Retires After 28 Years of Service

by Sgt. Richard Purvis

Any enforcement agent who's been with the department for more than a couple of years likely has had the opportunity to come to the bayous of south Louisiana and work with Max Dupre.

Max has been around the department a long time. At least once on every patrol, I hear someone ask, "Hey, where is ole Max today?" He has definitely made a name locally and probably statewide. But now when someone asks about "ole Max," I have to tell them that after 28 years, he decided to retire.

Max began his career on Oct. 25, 1976. (We have agents on the job now who were not even born in 1976). Max was assigned to work in Lafourche Parish, which at that time was part of Region 8. Region 9 didn't yet exist.

When I say Max was assigned to Lafourche, that was pretty much just on paper. He has worked anywhere he was needed—Assumption, St. Mary, St. Charles, St. James, St. John, Terrebonne, Jefferson and St. Martin Parishes. Anytime there was a need for

good, dependable manpower, Max was there. As a result, he came to know just about every square inch of woods, lakes, bayous and marsh from New Orleans to Baton Rouge. To say he has an amazing retention of area is an understatement. Truth is, if he went to a spot one time in 1982, he can get you there again to this day. In addition to his command of the area, Max has a deep knowledge of the law. There is no law, no matter how obscure, that Max doesn't know. He can tell you the law, when it was enacted and, more importantly, why it was enacted.

Max came up when south Louisiana was "the wild west." He had to work hard and long to keep outlaws at bay. Today if you make 15 or 20 cases a month, you have done something. During the early days of his career, Max would make that many cases in a day. If you think about your best year, it won't come close to his. Max had years when he personally wrote more than 900 cases. And that doesn't include the cases he assisted on.

When younger agents



Sgt. Max Dupre was Region 9's Agent of the Year in 2003.

would talk about how hard the work is today, Max would reply, "I've never had it so easy." Our caseloads today are no comparison to his hard work back in the day.

You would think that as an agent gets a little older, he would slow down. Not Max. Up until his retirement on Dec. 5, he was still one of the top producers statewide. That effort earned him the Region 9

Agent of the Year Award in 2003, as well as a promotion to the rank of Sergeant.

It has been a pleasure to work alongside Max. He has taught me plenty of new ground, and shown me a lot of the tricks of the trade. In short, he has laid a good foundation for his fellow agents and those up and coming. We wish Max the long and happy retirement that he definitely deserves. 🐾



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Patience Is a Virtue

by Agent Joe Arnaud

It was a Saturday morning in September and the second weekend of teal season. I was scheduled to work the Bayou Black area on this beautiful day.

I thought about the first open weekend of teal season and was reminded of the mosquitoes and the hunters complaining about the heat and asking me one of the most popular questions an agent is asked: “Where are the ducks?”

After checking several duck hunters and not seeing any ducks, I decided to patrol the Intracoastal Waterway, in hopes of checking a few fishermen. But as I traveled the waterway, there was not a vessel in sight.

It was approximately 11:15 a.m., and I had been at it since five that morning. My stomach started to let me know that it was empty and wanted to be refilled. I was traveling east on the Intracoastal Waterway, when I saw a fishing boat. As I prepared to stop the boat for a check, I realized that it was an elderly gentleman whom I had checked earlier that morning. While speaking with him, I heard several shotgun blasts coming from the back of the canal. After hearing the shots, the gentleman said, “Someone is slaughtering the birds back there.” I wished him good luck with the fishing, bade him good day and promptly set off in the direction of the shots.

I tried to be inconspicuous as I entered the area, but it was a bit hard to pull off, con-

sidering that I was driving a 19-foot Boston Whaler with a blue light. When people see it, they refer to it as “the boat that ‘the man’ drives.” I stuck out like a Tulane fan at an LSU game. But I was determined to do what I could.

When I arrived at the end of the canal, I could hear shooting coming from the marsh, but I was unable to see what was going on. As I waited, and listened to my stomach growl, I began to think these guys would never come out of the marsh. But I remembered what I had heard several times from experienced agents: “Patience is a good game warden’s best asset.”

I waited. About an hour later, the shooting stopped. Through my trusty binoculars, I could see a small boat coming out of the marsh with three men dressed in camo. As their boat exited from the other side of the marsh, I cranked up the ol’ Opti-Max and headed to the canal that I expected them to come from. Sure enough, I arrived at the entrance of the canal at the same time they did. After identifying myself, I casually asked, “You guys do any good today?”

The man driving the boat replied, “We didn’t kill any teal, but we did kill a couple of gallinules.” As I spoke with him, I spotted a pile of birds stuffed under the front deck of the boat. So I began a check as usual, asking to see guns, licenses and game.

When I asked to see the game,



Agent Joe Arnaud with seized American coots in Terrebonne Parish.

all three guys looked at one another, and had that “deer-caught-in-the-headlights” expression on their faces. One of the hunters started taking the birds from the front deck and we began counting them. When we stopped, the total was 102. One of the men asked, “What is the limit for gallinules?”

I advised 15 per hunter and possession limit of 30. He replied, “I guess we shot a few too many.” I responded with a laugh, “Yes, I would say so.”

After instructing the hunters to put the birds in my boat, I explained that I had to issue tickets for over-limit hunting. As I wrote the tickets, the hunters were friendly, cracking jokes the entire time. One joked, “Please don’t let my wife find out.” Like most men, they were more scared of their wives than the law. At the end of the check, we shook hands and gave our good-byes.

The moral of this story for new agents is that *patience* is a good game warden’s best asset. 🦆

I tried to be inconspicuous as I entered the area, but it was a bit hard to pull off, considering that I was driving a 19-foot Boston Whaler with a blue light. When people see it, they refer to it as “the boat that ‘the man’ drives.” I stuck out like a Tulane fan at an LSU game.

A New Christmas Poem by an Unknown Marine

by Sgt. Richard Purvis

When I received this e-mail around the holidays, it touched me so much that I had to share it with you. Although the Christmas season has now passed, there are more holidays coming—Memorial Day, Independence Day—as well as birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, births and deaths—that will be missed by the service men and women who are fighting on our behalf.

The author of the poem was never mentioned. But he or she made the following request at the end of the poem:

“Please. Would you do me the kind favor of sending this to as many people as you can? Christmas will be coming soon and some credit is due to our U.S. service men and women for our being able to celebrate these festivities. Let’s try in this small way to pay a tiny bit of what we owe. Make people stop and think of our heroes, living and dead, who sacrificed themselves for us. Please, do your small part to plant this small seed.”

’Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone, in a one bedroom house made of plaster and stone.

I had come down the chimney with presents to give, and to see just who in this home did live.

I looked all about, a strange sight I did see, no tinsel, no presents, not even a tree.

No stocking by mantle, just boots filled with sand, on the wall hung pictures of far distant lands.

With medals and badges, awards of all kinds, a sober thought came through my mind.

For this house was different, it was dark and dreary, I found the home of a soldier, once I could see clearly.

The soldier lay sleeping, silent, alone, curled up on the floor in this one bedroom home.

The face was so gentle, the room in such disorder, not how I pictured a United States soldier.

Was this the hero of whom I’d just read? Curled up on a poncho, the floor for a bed?

I realized the families that I saw this night, owed their lives to these soldiers who were willing to fight.

Soon round the world, the children would play, and grownups would celebrate a bright Christmas day.

They all enjoyed freedom each month of the year, because of the soldiers, like the one lying here.

I couldn’t help wonder how many lay alone, on a cold Christmas Eve in a land far from home.

The very thought brought a tear to my eye, I dropped to my knees and started to cry.

The soldier awakened and I heard a rough voice, “Santa don’t cry, this life is my choice;

I fight for freedom, I don’t ask for more, my life is my God, my country, my corps.”

The soldier rolled over and drifted to sleep, I couldn’t control it, I continued to weep.

I kept watch for hours, so silent and still and we both shivered from the cold night’s chill.

I didn’t want to leave on that cold, dark, night, the guardian of honor so willing to fight.

Then the soldier rolled over, with a voice soft and pure, whispered, “carry on Santa, it’s Christmas day, all is secure.”

One look at my watch, and I knew he was right. “Merry Christmas my friend, and to all a good night.” ❧

Wild Game Cookoff Benefits Children’s Hospital

by Sgt. Ross Mire

LWAA participated in the seventh annual wild game cookoff sponsored by the St. Mary Shriners Club last September. The event raised \$25,886, which went to the Shriners Hospital for Children in Shreveport.

Held at the Morgan City Auditorium in St. Mary Parish, this event offers local sportsmen and businesses an opportunity to give to a worthy cause while sharing a taste of wild game with others in the community.

All of the participants take great pride in the dishes they serve and in knowing that they are helping a worthy cause.

Mike Vanover of the St. Mary Shriners Club invited LWAA to participate in the cookoff. Representing LWAA were Lt. Leslie Rulf, Sgt. Ross Mire, Sgt. Richard Purvis and Sr. Agent Jason Romero. The agents served venison chili, which Sgt. Purvis and his wife, Tracy, prepared.

Vanover has extended an open invitation to LWAA, and we look forward to participating in the 2005 cookoff. ❧