

## **Training School Life**

The Ross Leffler School of Conservation has been the agency's training facility for Conservation Officers since 1932. The school is part college, part police academy and part museum. The training program is 50 weeks in duration. The curriculum consists of more than 1,400 hours of instruction on more than 140 subjects taught by nearly 200 instructors.

Weekly, Cadets report to the school Sunday evening and remain there until they are released Friday afternoon. Cadets are granted leave on Wednesday evenings for several hours. Otherwise, they are required to remain on the grounds. Evening classes or activities are held Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays unless the training schedule demands otherwise.

A Cadet's day is busy. First call is 0515. They are in formation for physical training (PT) at 0530 for one hour of PT. Breakfast is at 0700. Classes run from 0800 until 1200, and again from 1300-1700 after a lunch break. After dinner, evening classes run from 1800-2000 or later as needed. In addition to classes, Cadets are required to perform maintenance and cleaning details while at the school, and maintain their quarters and personal effects in order and pass daily inspections. "Lights

out" is at 2230 after which quiet hours are in effect. Any unoccupied time is used to perform daily details, prepare for exams, work on class projects or do extra PT.

Cadets are required to attend all classes. Classes may be indoors or outdoors depending upon the subject and type of instruction required. Cadets must listen to, read, and be able to assimilate large quantities of information. They must be able to observe, learn and perform many job related skills. Academically, Cadets are required to maintain at least an 80 percent average of all tests and quizzes. Certain critical subjects require 100 percent proficiency.





Cadets are required to pass physical fitness tests during the selection process to enter the school. At the school, they participate in a progressive physical training program designed to develop strength and flexibility related to performing job functions and reducing injury. Cadets must pass an exit physical fitness test in order to graduate.

Cadets are expected to demonstrate a high standard of conduct and be courteous and respectful to all staff, instructors, classmates, visitors and the public.

Failure to meet any standards set by the school or to follow Game Commission or Commonwealth regulations is cause for dismissal from the program.

The use of cell phones and other modes of electronic communications are restricted at the school. Cadets are permitted to possess and use these devices only at certain times.

Leave is granted only in extreme situations and Cadets are required to make up any class work they miss.



Cadets provide their own uniforms (khaki pants and black t-shirt) when they arrive. The Wildlife Conservation Officer uniform is issued as the training progresses. Other necessary equipment is issued as needed.

Classes are typically made up of 20-30 men and women of all backgrounds. Some have college educations or special certifications; some are military veterans. Some served as Deputy Wildlife Conservation Officers; some are former PGC employees, and some with other life experiences. No particular experience or background guarantees success. Candidates from each of these backgrounds have succeeded in the training and some from each have failed.

Personal character, interest and will to perform the job are equally important to a candidate's success.

Upon arrival at the school, Cadets shall adhere to the <u>Game Commission policy on grooming and appearance</u>.



