



# Region 7



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Sr. Agent Joel Crompt  
Sr. Agent Lee Davis  
Sr. Agent Keith Francis  
Sr. Agent Robert Larsen

## REGION UPDATE

*Sr. Agent Todd Lewis*

I'm Senior Agent Todd Lewis and I'm the new LWAA Representative for Region Seven. I sincerely wish to thank those who blessed me with their vote of confidence by electing me to represent them. I promise that I'll try to do well by you.

**WELCOME TO THE WORLD!** Congratulations are in order for two proud sets of parents in Region 7! Mr. & Mrs. Hal Bridges celebrated the arrival of their second child Haley Makenzie and Mr. and Mrs. Will Roberts celebrated the arrival of their first child, Wyatt Joseph Roberts. Additionally, I became a grandfather in September when my first grandchild, Luke Lewis Kleynhans was born. All the moms and all of the babies are doing great. May they all enjoy long, happy lives!

**SYMPATHIES:** Sympathies are offered to Lee Davis with regard to the passing of his father.

**THANK YOU'S:** Sincere and heartfelt thanks are offered to all of the Region Seven Agents who so willingly gave a notable charitable contribution to Deputy Marilyn Mayo of the St. Tammany Parish

Sheriff's Office who was severely injured in a tragic accident. By the time this magazine goes to print Mary should be back home and I know she's looking forward to getting back to work. Those of you who work in her area should take some time to visit with her. She's a really great person who possesses a sense of humor that's hard to match.

**WELCOME BACK!** Sr. Agent Hal Bridges has returned to duty after a fifteen month assignment with the National Guard wherein he supervised a company of Military Policemen augmenting the New Orleans Police Department. We'd like to

offer Hal and all of our service men and women a \* crisp salute \* in appreciation for their service.


**REMINDE RS:** Hunting season is underway. Main contributors to hunting accidents are: Not properly identifying your target and accidents that involve falling from elevated stands. We'd like to remind everyone to be safe. Make darn sure you know what you're shooting at and what's behind it. Also please always wear a safety harness when hunting from elevated stands! Have a plan! Good luck and we hope you have a safe and successful season.

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# Region 7 Continued

## WELCOME

Kayla Kirby joined the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries on March 5, 2007 as the new Administrative Coordinator for the Region VII Enforcement office. Kayla transferred from Louisiana State Police with eight years of service with the Criminal Records Division. She is looking forward to continuing her career in assisting law enforcement officials within the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.



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## Region 7 Continued

### A Worthy Cause

The Louisiana Wildlife Agent's Association recently donated \$1000.00 to Deputy Mary Mayo of the St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's Office. Lt. Eddie Laviollette presented the check to Mary's father, Bob Mayo, of Slidell, on behalf of Mary.

A 26-year-old St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's Deputy, Mayo was paralyzed, and her fiance, sheriff's Sgt. Linden "Beau" Raimer, was killed, June 13, 2007, during the funeral for unrelated fellow Deputy Hilery Mayo. During the funeral procession in Covington, a violent thunderstorm toppled a tree that crushed the car in which Raimer and Mayo were trav-



Lt. Eddie Laviollette presents Mary's father, Bob Mayo with a \$1000 donation.

eling.

On Sept. 23, 2007, Mary returned home and was warmly welcomed by her "family" at the sheriff's office. She's looking forward to returning to work as a dispatcher for the sheriff's office as soon as she is able and has been deeply touched by the outpouring of support that has come from her brothers and sisters in uniform. Sheriff Jack Strain said, "To see Mary's tenacity to come back, and her spirit, is a tremendous uplift".



Mary will be living with her parent's whose home was flooded by Hurricane Katrina. The carpenter who rebuilt the home volunteered to donate time and materials to modify the house for Mary's return. He worked to widen doorways to accommodate Mary's chair and renovated a bathroom to fit her needs.

Mary inherited her mother's interminable wit and seems to always have a ready smile. She's faced horrific challenges and is rising to meet them with a strong spirit that surely makes her former Marine, two-tour Vietnam Veteran, father proud.


We hope that Mary continues to do well with her recovery and is able to return to her duties at the sheriff's office soon. The Association's donation is intended to assist with the purchase of a suitable vehicle equipped with hand controls so Mary can continue to increase her independence.

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## Region 7 Continued

### Doe Takes Buck

On Sept. 22, 2007, Sgt. Dane Thomas and Agt. Varnado received a complaint from a confidential informant in reference to a suspect (we'll call Mr. Doe) who had killed a young buck deer during closed season. According to the informant, the suspect had shot the deer three weeks earlier.

On Sept. 23, 2007, Sgt. Thomas, Agt. Varnado and Agt. Marques made contact with Mr. Doe at his residence in Tangipahoa Parish. Upon contact, Mr. Doe was read his rights and advised if he would fully cooperate we wouldn't book him into jail nor tow his vehicle used in the violation. Mr. Doe began to spill the beans and advised on Oct. 16, 2007, at approximately 11:30 a.m. (hmmm...opposed to night) he was walking in the woods next to railroad tracks, shot and killed a young spike deer using a .22 rim fire rifle (bolt action). Mr. Doe cleaned the deer and barbequed it the next day.

At this time we ran a history through LDWF and the Tangipahoa Parish Sheriffs Office. LDWF dis-

patch advised numerous prior wildlife violations including - Hunting/take deer illegal hours (obviously a lesson NOT learned yet!). The sheriff's office advised Mr. Doe has a criminal history including a pending warrant for second degree aggravated battery and faxed the necessary paperwork to the LDWF office requesting us to pick him up. Sgt. Thomas advised Mr. Doe the severity of the charges and placed him under arrest.



Mr. Doe was cited for Hunting/Taking Deer Closed Season which carries a penalty of \$900-\$950 or jail not more than 120 days or both plus court cost and forfeiture of anything seized AND Hunt Deer Illegal Methods which carries a penalty of \$250-\$500 or jail not more than 90 days or both plus court cost. Mr. Doe was cited for civil restitu-

tion for the illegally taken deer which cost \$524.54. The rifle was seized for evidence and Mr. Doe was then booked in jail by the Sheriffs Office for the felony warrant charge.

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## Region 7 Continued

### Reversed Roles

By Sr. Agent Lee Davis

On August 27, 2007, the roles got reversed. Like all of our Agents, I'm trained as First Responder. We're trained to deal with high stress situations, even life threatening ones. Well, this time it was me, in dire need of rescue.

Randall Barber, a friend of mine, and I, decided to go to our hunting lease to bush hog and prepare for the upcoming hunting season. I was bush hogging

on the backside of a gravel pit, when I came upon a downed, oak tree. I tried to use the front-end loader on my 4WD, 40HP tractor to push the tree out of the way. Unfortunately, it was still attached at the base. It resisted, so I moved around to push from the other side. (From here on out, the story will be from what I was told.)

The tree, which was not only attached at the root base, was wedged by another downed tree.

As I put a good bind on the tree, it jumped over the loader. It hit the hood, the muffler, then, me. I was struck in the right cheek, knocking me back into the rollover protection bars. At which point, I went unconscious. The tree then struck the bars so hard it knocked large chunks of bark off. I had been hit hard enough to bend the seat. I was pinned between the seat

and tree. The tree wedged itself between the steering wheel and fender. My foot had come off the clutch and the tractor continued to push into the tree. At this point Randall, who happened to have seen it all happen, rushed to my aid. He was able to get the tractor in neutral and the engine finally turned off. He slid the seat back, at which point, he said I gasped for air. All

*Continued on page 166*

### Richard's Floor Service

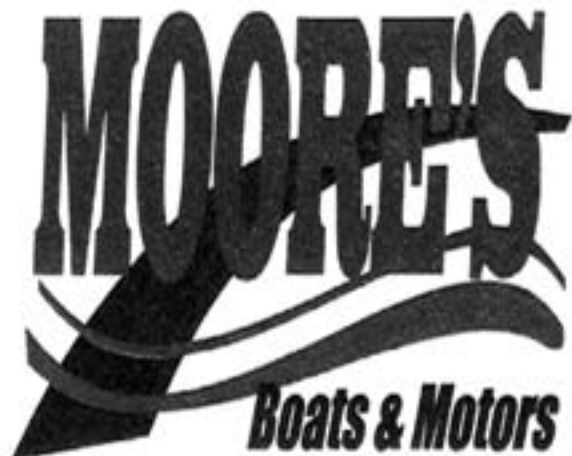
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## Reversed Roles

Continued from page 165

I remember, is hearing, "I'll be right back." He was finally able to get the tree cut off of me. I had been unconscious for about twenty minutes. He told me later, I got off the tractor and walked to the truck with him. I had sustained a medium laceration and a lot of swelling in the right side of my face.

Sr. Agent Joel Crompton happened to call during this time. Randall told him what happened and he arrived several minutes later. Joel contacted everybody and helped convince me to go to the hospital. (I was awake, but nobody was home!) When we got to

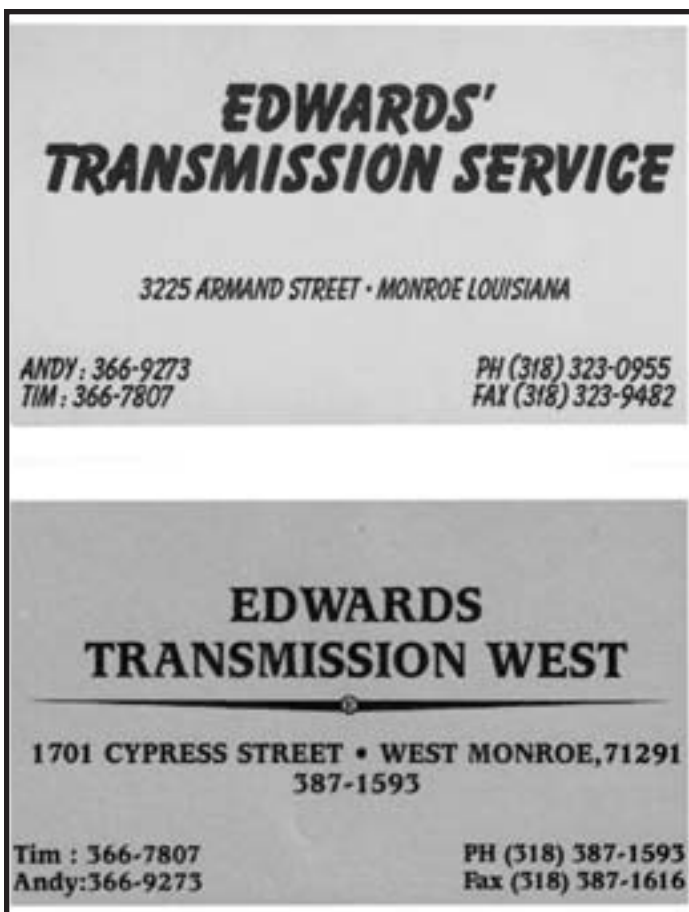
the hospital, I got stitched, stuck, X-rayed, MRI'd and sent home. I ended up with three stitches and no broken bones. My memory didn't start back until the trip home. To this day, all I remember are a couple five second clips for about 5 1/2 hours. I have to admit, I was very lucky. If I had been by myself, I'd have probably died right there. It must not have been my time. It's also comforting knowing there are friends and/or civilians out there that react courageously when met with grave situations.

A concussion, minor memory loss, a new scar

and four weeks leave, it could have been MUCH worse. If you are going off somewhere by yourself, let somebody know where you'll be. So, please be careful out there, at work or at play, you never know when something can go wrong.



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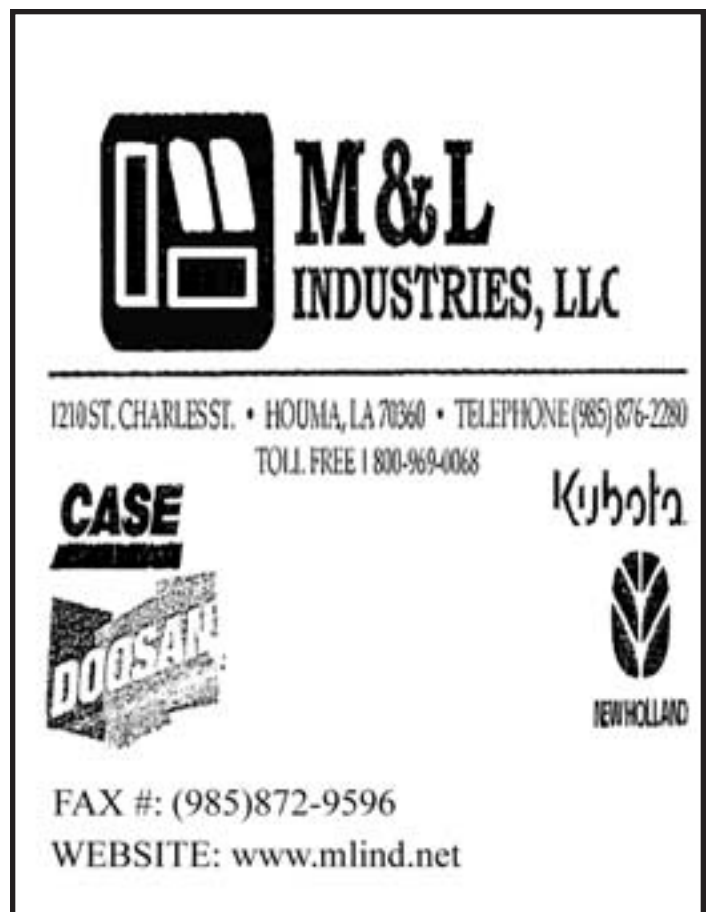
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## Region 7 Continued

### An Impressive Sight

One summer evening, I was working Boating Safety Enforcement on the Pearl River just North of Poole's Bluff. About thirty minutes before dark, I observed two boats heading south around a bend in the river. I was heading north to intercept them.

All of a sudden, the second boat made a U- turn. I thought the operator must have recognized me and was going to try to run. As I sped towards them, I saw the second boat come back around the curve. As I neared, I saw that no one was in the second boat. As I passed the first boat, I yelled, "How many people in that boat?" The operator had a questioning look until he turned and saw the empty flat boat, out-of-control. He quickly replied "Just one".

At this point I saw the "ex-operator's" head pop-up out of the water only a few feet from the boat. The boat, a 15-foot aluminum flat with a 30 HP Yamaha, was at full speed, in a continuous circle. The "ex-operator's" head went under water just before being struck.

When I got to him, he had made it to the one branch hanging over the water, on the bluff side of the river. I told him to grab the PFD I was about to send him. He said "If I let go I'll drown." I maneuvered the boat in closer and told him to grab my hand on "Go." He just nodded slightly. When I got into position, I threw my motor in neutral and hollered "Go". He let go of the limb and I caught him, before he went under again. I pulled him into my lap then helped him onto the seat. He was out of breath and appeared exhaust-

ed.

His out-of-control boat finally lodged itself onto the sandbar on the opposite side of the river. The operator of the first boat jumped into the lodged boat and shut off the motor. The subject I had pulled out of the water stated, " Man, you saved my life." I told him I was just doing my job. He stated, "Well, I'm sure glad you were, I don't think I'd made it much longer." He turned out to be a Bogalusa City Councilman. We'll just call him Danny.

If you've never seen an unoccupied boat, wide open, in a 360 degree circle, trust me it is an impressive sight!!! Clamp-on seat brackets and a non-functioning shut-off lanyard were the two main contributors to this incident. The clamp-on seat brackets are only rated up to about a 5 HP motor. So if you see them on something else, please let those people know just how dangerous they can be.

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## Region 7 Continued

# Miracle's Still Exist

By Sgt. Dane Thomas

On Sept. 9, 2007, Sr. Agent Ed Ridgel and I were on what we thought was going to be a normal day patrolling the Tickfaw River. It was a Saturday and boating traffic had slowed down a bit due to school having started and dove season opening.

We decided to perform boating safety checks on vessels entering the no wake zone in front of tin lizzies lounge. Before we could check the first boat, we observed a man swimming in circles in the middle of the river. Then we observed people in other vessels yelling and flagging us toward them. We immediately responded thinking the worse. Yeah, you thought right. We thought someone had drowned. This is about the time we discovered the miracle.

As we approached the first vessel, the man who was swimming in the river was climbing aboard the vessel. The man was very upset and pointed to a large


yellow offshore racing vessel yelling, "That guy in that boat ran over my daughter (Erica Hailey Ballard, age 11) and a little boy (Terry Comeaux, Jr., age 6) on a tube."



We immediately checked the children for injuries who had just been pulled in. To our amazement they didn't have a scratch on them. In our eyes this was a true miracle; a 31-foot offshore racing vessel running over two children on a four foot tube and no injuries or fatalities. You tell me God wasn't with them and I'll introduce you to my preacher.

At this time we began an investigation to determine what happened. After interviewing all the wit-

*Continued on page 172*

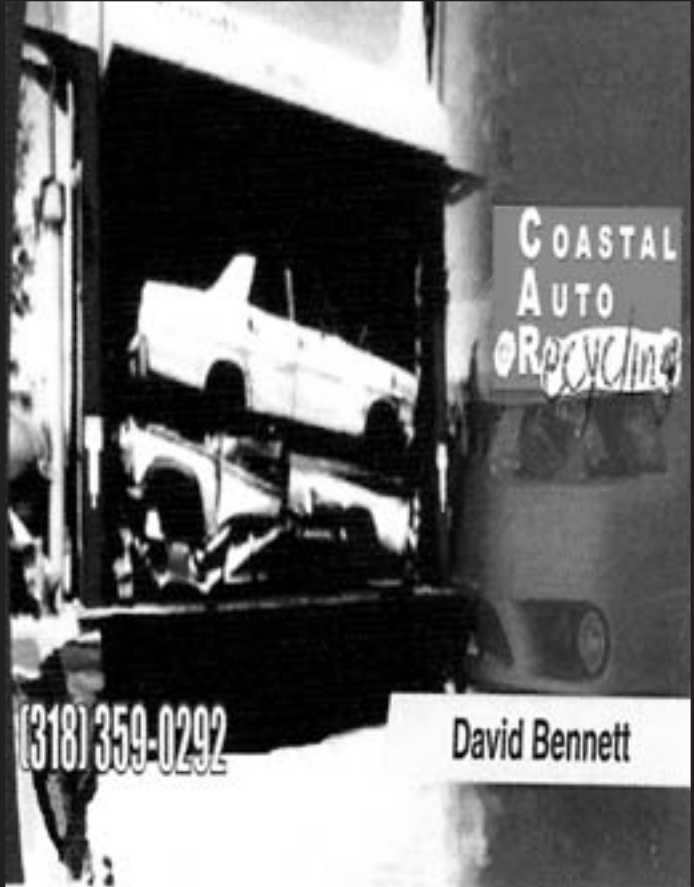


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## Miracles Still Exist

Continued from page 171

nesses and operators it was determined that the off-shore vessel did run over the children on the tube. When the vessel (#1) approached the no wake zone behind the vessel pulling the tube, he slowed to an idle, at which time the vessel raised at the bow and the operator, we'll call "Lucky," didn't see the children on the tube and ran them over. When everybody started yelling at him he killed his engines.

The only thing we can determine, other than God being with the children, is that when the vessel struck the tube, it pushed the tube downward into the water along with the children who were wearing life jackets. Next the children's PFDs forced them to the surface out from under the vessel on the port side. Children were then recovered by the vessel pulling them and they had no injuries.

Operator of vessel #1, who we are referring to as Lucky, was operating his vessel while intoxicated. He was operating his vessel too fast prior to the incident, following too close to other vessels and the alcohol in his system impaired his reaction



time and judgment which resulted in him running over the children.

We refer to the operator of vessel #1 as Lucky because this occurred in a no wake zone. Therefore, his vessel was traveling relatively slow upon impact which created more of a pushing effect to the children on the tube instead of a hitting effect. He's lucky because he is not going to prison for five or more years for vehicular homicide. Now we'll refer to him as "Unlucky" because he got to go to jail for operating his watercraft while intoxicated and reckless operation. Mr. Lucky or Unlucky, however you choose to see it, had blood alcohol concentration of .1138 grams percent.

After the investigation was completed and reported, I was contacted by Mrs. Debra Wolford the next day. She advised me that she had photos of the children being run over on the tube. I met with her in Denham Springs at which time she gave me a copy of the photos. I could only imagine what it looked like when this large vessel hit the children on the tube but now, looking at the photos, it really sunk in that this

Continued on page 175

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## Miracles Still Exist

*Continued from page 172*

was a true miracle. Again, I spoke with the children who advised they were scared at the time but still reporting no injuries.

Now, look at these photos and it will support what all you boaters repeatedly hear from agents every year during boating season: Wear your life jackets and it may save your life one day. Don't operate your vessel while intoxicated, have a designated driver if you must consume alcohol. Thank God for these children having responsible enough parents to ensure they were wearing properly fitted and adjusted life jackets or this may have been a catastrophe instead of a miracle.

Now for Mr. Lucky-Unlucky; yeah, he went to jail but just think of the penalties that would have been inflicted upon him if one of those children would have been killed or seriously injured. Not to mention the fact that he would have to live the rest of his life knowing, because he consumed alcohol, he took the life or seriously injured a child. **THINK, THINK** and then **THINK** before boating while intoxicated.



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