

January/February 2009
Vol. 2, Issue 3

On Wisconsin *Outdoors*

With the Dick Ellis Experts



Dick Ellis

- **The McCormick Files**
Diary of a Bayfield County deer guide
- **Snowshoes and the Hunter**
Another tool for winter
- **Is Your Voice Being Heard?**
Hunting access rights on Wisconsin public land
- **Surplus Firearms**
The heirloom
- **Quality Deer Management**
Seeing is believing
- **Hunting the Hunter**
A coyote challenge on the winds
- **Peeping Deep**
Electronics, pencil sinkers and Lake Mendota perch
- **The Quiet Ice**
Panfish on the perimeter
- **Badger Travel**
Alaska, and great fishing, on a budget
- **Winter Walleye**
Nighttime is the right time

■ Hunting, Fishing, Trapping, Travel & Outdoor Humor ■



GET YOUR HANDS ON THE ICE FISHING GEAR YOU NEED!



WISCONSIN GANDER MOUNTAIN LOCATIONS

Appleton, (920) 731-9400
Eau Claire, (715) 834-4594
Germantown, (262) 250-0600
Janesville, (608) 757-2010
La Crosse, (608) 783-2820
Sheboygan, (920) 208-0800

Baraboo, (608) 356-9800
Franklin, (414) 761-1500
Green Bay, (920) 491-9110
Kenosha, (262) 857-3757
Madison, (608) 242-9532
Waukesha, (262) 798-0424

Wausau, (715) 355-5500



JERRY KIESOW

SNOWSHOES*Another tool for winter*

Snowshoes can make field travel so much easier for the hunter during winters of deep snow.

Anytime the outdoor world becomes covered with snow that is over your boot tops, it's time to bring out the "webs" - snowshoes to the common man.

Generally thought of as big and bulky things, a lot of work and difficult to use, snowshoes can actually save a day of hunting or hiking, because they make life easier, not harder.

Allow me to explain.

It's February several years ago. My friend and I are hunting a game farm for pheasants. The snow covers

our knee-caps when we step from the truck. Fortunately, we have brought our shoes as well as his golden retrievers.

A bit into the hunt, I am making my way through scattered patches of small willow and alder, engulfed with marsh grass. My right snowshoe slides into one of those ever-present grass holes, unnoticed. As I step forward, the toe of the snowshoe catches the grass and I fall forward.

As I am falling, my buddy yells and fires two quick shots. I look in his



TOP: You have two basic choices of styles of snowshoes: traditional wood with webbing and aluminum with decking. RIGHT: There are times when crampons make all the difference between slipping and falling, or not.



direction just as a long-tailed cackle-bird folds its wings and tumbles to earth. My buddy is flat on his back. He too got snagged, but a bird got up and away from us as he was falling and he shot on the way down. You don't want to teach the technique in Hunter's Ed...but we were safe.

There we sat, covered with snow - laughing.

Even though you may not think of this as a positive endorsement for snowshoes, remember, without them we wouldn't even be hunting. Except for the marshy area, our day was spent skimming along on top of old snow covered by a new dusting. The dogs, meanwhile, were struggling.

Several hours later we returned to the truck with three happy, albeit dog tired goldens and six birds. Without those webs, we wouldn't have gotten 100 yards from the truck.

If you haven't added snowshoes to your outdoor accessories, we call them tools, here are some things you should know when it comes to selection. (By the way, we outdoor people have a lot of tools. Some refer to them as toys, but that is a misnomer. Toys are for playing. Outdoor activities are not

played, they are pursued; therefore, we have tools.)

Snowshoes come in a variety of shapes, sizes, and materials - from the traditional ash and rawhide, to aluminum with Hypalon or Nytex decking, to polyethylene plastic.

Which are best? Like any piece of equipment, there is no one answer. I have three pair of webs. My Alaskans and Ojibwas are wood-framed, and I also have one pair of aluminum frames. I did not buy them all at the same time. Actually, I made the Ojibs, which are my favorites.

If you buy wood frames, know that there will be times of the year, when the snow has enough crust to support your weight on 'shoes, when that type can be dangerous. Wood bases can slip precariously on hard snow. Crusted snow needs aluminum-decked webs with crampons. (Crampons are serrated pieces of metal below the balls of your feet that grip into the crust when you walk.)

That said, the wood frame is best when the snow is soft and deep. (The crampons catch the brush and grasses, and the smaller decks sink deeper than

Continued on page 4

WIN! Free Trips & Gear

"SHOW 'EM WHATCHA GOT!" PHOTO PAGE

Submit your photos online!

To submit your photo and brief story for *On Wisconsin Outdoors*, log onto www.MyHuntingPage.com and register. It's free and easy.

By submitting your entry, you will become eligible to WIN trips and prizes! Send a message to "Bigshot" from your profile page requesting your submission to *On Wisconsin Outdoors*. A limited number of photo submissions can be published in OWO, but all are published online at www.MyHuntingPage.com, and categorized into your local county areas too! Come on' ...

Show 'em whatcha got!



**On Wisconsin
Outdoors**
With the Dick Ellis Experts



177-¾ inch, 14 pointer bow kill in Waukesha County by Attorney Corey A. Montiho.

www.MyHuntingPage.com
www.MyFishingPage.com



18 inch, 11 point bow kill in November in Waukesha County by John Mourich.



KIESOW, from page 3

the traditional wood-framed snowshoes.)

What do snowshoes cost? Plan on spending from \$80.00 to \$200.00 or more. Any good dealer can fit your needs and pocketbook.

Still not convinced? Does the following sound familiar?

Remember the day you planned to hunt in the swamp, a mile and a half through the woods, to your most productive deer stand, but, because of the all-night snow, you had second thoughts about plowing through that knee deep "stuff." To your credit, you did it, but, God! It took forever! And when you got there you were sweaty and surely smelled the whole woods up. You did down that big buck, and with the snow still up to your knees, you dragged him a mile ... alone. It would have been an easier and safer day if you'd have had a pair of snowshoes.

Remember, any kind of outing when the snow is over your boot tops, be it hunting, or just going for a hike in the woods, is easier and safer on snowshoes. If you haven't added snowshoes to your toy box, I mean tool chest, give them some serious consideration.

If you do, then you too can get out



If you can't reach the birds, or deer, or rabbits ...you won't even have the opportunity to score. Good snowshoes will get you there.

and "walk on water." Well, crystallized water anyway, instead of plowing through it, or worse yet, staying indoors.

Jerry Kiesow lives in Grafton, Wisconsin. He has written a book, "Tales of The Peshtigo Putzer," which includes fishing and hunting and many other yarns on a

variety of outdoor activities (including snowshoeing). You can get a copy at www.publishamerica.com, or if you would like a personalized autographed copy, send \$24.00 to Jerry Kiesow, PO Box 203, Grafton, WI 53024. Cost includes book, tax, packaging and shipping. Makes a great gift.

**On Wisconsin
Outdoors**

With the Dick Ellis Experts

Hunting, Fishing, Trapping, Travel
and Outdoor Humor

PUBLISHER/EDITOR:

Dick Ellis
ellis@onwisconsinoutdoors.com

PRODUCTION & ADVERTISING:

Karen Cluppert, Not Just Words
ads@onwisconsinoutdoors.com

Published bi-monthly by ON WISCONSIN OUTDOORS, LLC. Subscriptions are mailed first class.

©Copyright 2008 ON WISCONSIN OUTDOORS, LLC with all rights reserved. Reproduction or use without permission, of editorial, advertising or graphic content in any manner is prohibited by law.

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS: All advertising is subject to publisher's approval and acceptance without recourse. Advertisers and their agencies assume responsibility for the condition of the contents of advertising printed, and agree to indemnify the Publishers of OWO for any and all claims and expenses arising there from.

CORPORATE OFFICES LOCATED AT:

20240 West Rustic Ridge Drive
New Berlin, WI 53146

Phone: 262.549.5550

Web site: www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com

Postmaster: Send address changes to:
20240 West Rustic Ridge Drive
New Berlin, WI 53146

DAVE SURA

SHORE BETS

Tactics for winter trout

Once the water hardens across Wisconsin, people begin to crawl out of fishing hibernation in search of these underwater adversaries. I too begin to work my way out onto frozen water. The only difference is that my fish of choice are trout: Great Lakes browns and steelhead. Although these fish are becoming more sought-after, I spend many days alone on stretches of river icing these magnificent fish.

WHERE TO FISH

There are two places to begin your search for Great Lakes trout through the ice. First, there are harbors, such as those in Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Racine, to name a few. Second, there are Lake Michigan tributaries -- my favorite places. I generally fish the Root River in Racine, but other rivers like the Kewaunee offer excellent opportunities for the angler. Once you've decided on a port or river, there are certain areas to fish, especially on rivers.

Harbors. When fishing harbors, look for structures like docks and rock jetties. Fish will use the available cover to ambush prey. Set your lines around these areas. Don't be afraid to fish next to piers; I've seen fish caught off of them before the ice was thick enough to walk on. Bring a locator along and search for the deeper channels connecting the inner harbor to the main harbor. Fish will use these channels as runways through the harbor. The last area to set in a harbor is around aerators. Some harbors use these to keep the docks from freezing in solid. These areas generate current, which attracts fish.

Rivers. When fishing rivers through the ice, look for the same areas you would open-water fishing for trout. Downriver sections of a river are the best for icing trout. More fish will over-winter here than in any other section of a river. When searching downriver locations, look for key areas such as bends or marinas, because these areas will likely have deeper water. I generally look for water five feet deep or deeper when searching for winter trout.

Get out and explore harbors and rivers. Finding the best areas will take time, but the rewards are worth it.

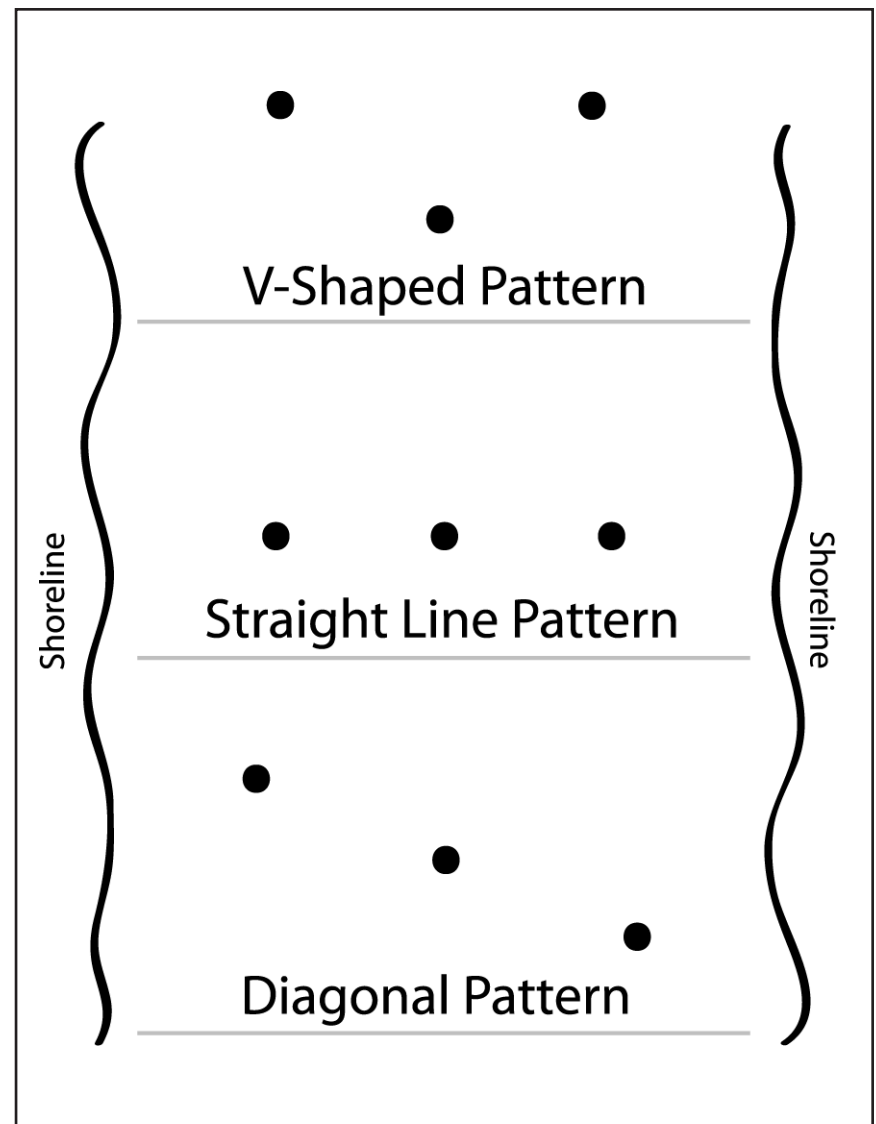
TECHNIQUES AND EQUIPMENT

Tip-ups. Although not my first choice in equipment when icing trout,

they work well, especially when fishing harbors. Set them lightly, because trout will drop the bait if they feel tension. I prefer using medium to medium-heavy action jig rods. Try to use rods more than 32" long because they provide more power to fight and hook these Great Lakes giants. Add a quality reel spooled with eight-pound mono or superline to your rod and you're good to go. It's important to add an eight- or ten-pound fluorocarbon leader to the end of the rod or tip-up, because the water clarity is usually much higher in winter. Terminal tackle such as hooks, jig heads, split shot, pliers, slip floats and stops are the basics you'll need. Many anglers bring a gaff as well; however, using a gaff makes it difficult to release fish. I use a power auger to cut holes, especially late in the season. Hand augers work well too. Use the largest hole possible, eight inches or larger, because these fish do get big and will not fit through small holes. I also carry an ice bar. It works great for cutting holes when the ice is thinner as well as being a safety measure for checking ice thickness.

Bait. The best bait in my opinion is spawn, fresh spawn. Other baits such as minnows, jigging spoons, tubes, and twister tails are also good choices. Some of my favorites are Berkley Power Tubes and Gulp Grubs, Swedish Pimples, Kastmasters, and Buckshot Rattle Spoons. When fishing, vary the depth of the bait. Set some near the bottom and others suspended below the ice. I do this by fishing the bait under a slip float on a jig rod or on a tip-up. They're easy to adjust and allow the angler to detect the lightest bites. If you're not getting bit, change depths. When using spawn or minnows, set your lines and wait. Check them periodically. Moving them can initiate strikes. Jig artificial baits. Vary the aggressiveness of the bait, because fish will want different presentations at different times. Change colors as well. Use spoons in silver or gold and plastics in white, orange, or pink. Have a variety of colors, sizes and styles with you, because fish can be selective feeders.

When I fish harbors, I spread my lines out more than I do when fishing rivers. I try to keep them within 50 feet of me so that I can get to rod or tip-up quickly. When fishing rivers, I like to cover as much of the river from shore to shore as I can. Spread your lines out



Tip up and rod placement patterns for river fishing winter trout.

in a straight line, a diagonal line, or a v-shaped pattern across the river. That way you can cover more of the river as the fish move up and down it. Be mobile. Don't be afraid to move around to locate active fish.

WHEN TO FISH

Get out as soon as the ice is safe. Remember that harbors and rivers have current. Ice conditions vary, so be careful. Try not to fish alone, and bring ice picks or wear a life jacket in case you fall through. As with most ice fishing, early and late ice is best. The best times of day are early and late. This is especially true on sunny days. Cloudy days allow the angler to catch fish all day. Fishing can be good after a melt. Runoff enters rivers and flows to harbors. This runoff can drag more fish

in to downriver areas of Great Lakes tributaries. Water clarity may go down, so use lures with more flash or scent. Fishing can be good for days after a melt because fish stack up in lower sections of a river prior to spring spawn. Get out often; weather changes don't affect these fish like they do inland lake fish. When the doldrums set in this winter, get out there and put some trout on ice. With this world-class fishery, you'd be crazy not to. *WS*

Dave Sura has fished Wisconsin waters for over 25 years. He specializes in shore and tributary angling for perch, steelhead and salmon on Lake Michigan. He can be contacted at 262.930.8260 or steelheadsura@yahoo.com.

DENNIS RADLOFF

THE STERLING APPROACH

Best of the best

On October 10, 2008, 50 teams arrived at the Green Bay Yacht Club to participate in the third annual "Best of the Best" Muskies Inc. Tournament. Teams from around the Midwest including Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota, Michigan, and even Colorado assembled to fish the waters of the Fox River and Lower Bay of Green Bay for two days of tournament musky fishing. While this may sound like "just another musky tournament," you'll see that this is a true one-of-a-kind event in more ways than one.

This was the third year for the event with the first year bringing only 15 teams who collectively CPR'd a total 47 muskies, with a 47-inch fish being the largest. The second year of the event drew a full field of 50 teams who would CPR a total 65 muskies, with the largest musky of the event measuring an impressive 53 inches! This year, 50 teams took advantage of pleasant weather and CPR'd 39 muskies with a

50-1/4-incher being the largest.

This event is not a huge "cash" event, with a modest entry fee of \$250 per team and payouts for the top five teams. Sixty percent of the entry fee money goes toward the payout prizes. The rest of the entry fee money, sponsor donations, and raffle collections are placed directly back into the fishery to support ongoing stocking and management efforts for the Green Bay musky fishery. The event is sponsored by Muskies Inc. International, and hosted by the Titledown Muskies Inc. chapter.

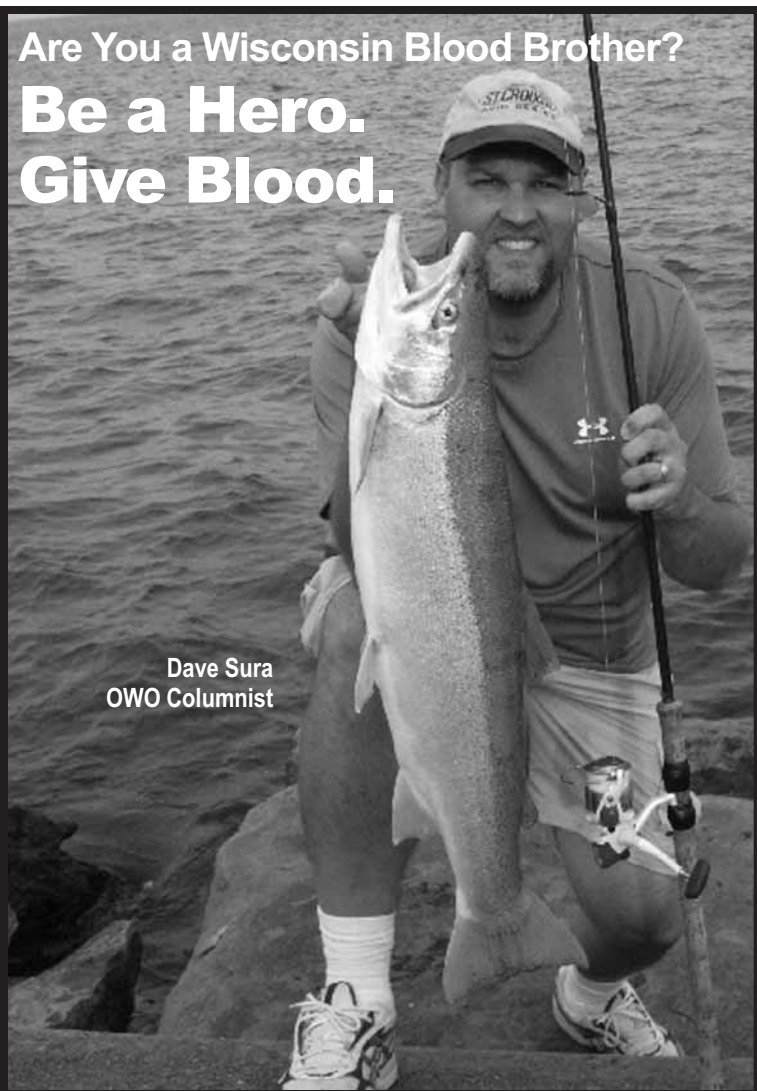
Since this is a total "Catch & Release" event, scoring is based on a 30-inch musky being worth five points. You get one point per inch above that. For example, a 39-inch musky is worth 14 points. You also get an additional five points for a healthy release, which encourages all anglers to take extreme care while landing and handling each fish. Any fish that cannot be released



Justin Gaiche caught Sarah Burdick in the boat with an engagement ring before Sarah caught and released the biggest fish of the tournament, this 50-inch plus spotted musky.

Are You a Wisconsin Blood Brother?
Be a Hero.
Give Blood.

Dave Sura
OWO Columnist



results in that angler being finished for the day.

Judge boats are used during the event to witness and verify the measurement of all tournament fish on a tournament bunk board. The boundary waters for the event are split into sections with a judge boat for each section. When a contestant catches a musky, the musky is kept in the water in a net, the judge for that section is called on a cell phone, the judge arrives, hands the bunk board to the contestant, witnesses the measurement, and the fish is released. This very effective system worked incredibly well with all tournament fish released successfully.

This year's top five teams were:

- **First place - \$5,000** – Mario Nanna and Josh Ebli: Day one – 38.5 inches and 39 inches; Day two – 42 inches and 46 inches.
- **Second place - \$1,500** – Brett Jolly and Lucas Molepske: Day one – 43 inches and 44 inches; Day two – 41 inches.
- **Third place - \$500** – Mike Herman and Eric Collins: Day two – 37 inches, 40 inches, and 47 inches.
- **Fourth place - \$400** – Ron Hedsend

and Don Petersilka: Day one – 39 inches; Day two – 38.25 inches and 42 inches.

• **Fifth place - \$300** – Justin Gaiche and Sarah Burdick: Day one – 43.25 inches; Day two – 50.25 inches.

The first place team of Mario Nanna (DePere, WI) and Josh Ebli (Green Bay, WI), sponsored by Anytime Fitness and Muskytails LLC, caught their four muskies by "sticking to the plan" with confidence in a pattern they established before the event. When I asked Mario what motivated him to compete in this event, he simply stated, "This is one of the things in life that makes my knees and legs shake!" Mario has been fishing muskies for 23 years, and with the success he and Josh experienced in their first tournament, they'll be back next year.

Local guide Brett Jolly (captain-jollycharters.com) is no stranger to the "Best of the Best" event. Brett has competed every year, taking second place the first year, fourth place the second year, and second place again this year with his partner Lucas Molepske. Brett and Lucas were one

Continued on page 7



The author's brother, Tyler Schwochert, caught his first musky during the Best of the Best tournament.

RADLOFF, from page 6

of the few teams to get out to a fast jump on the first day with two muskies, but on day two they were beginning to wonder if they should have tried something different as the clock started to work against them. With only an hour and a half left to go in the event, they CPR'd a 41-incher at 11:30 a.m., giving them second place.

Third place went to another local guide, Mike Herman (titletownoutdoors.com) and his partner Eric Collins. They didn't catch any muskies on day one, mounting an impressive "come from behind" charge with three muskies on day two. Ron Hedsend, local business owner (Sunset Bar & Grill, Little Sturgeon Bay) and his nephew Don Petersilka took fourth Place with their three muskies.

The fifth place team of Justin Gaiche & Sarah Burdick may have had the most unique tournament experience of all the contestants. At 7:00 a.m. on day one of the event, Justin and Sarah entered the waters of Green Bay as "boyfriend & girlfriend" of five years, but just before "ease-out," Justin took a knee on the floor of the boat, looked Sarah in the eyes, and asked her to marry him. "I have spent my whole life fishing; will you be my keeper?" was Justin's question, to which Sarah cried, "YES!"

Not long after while trolling, Sarah was on the phone with her grandmother sharing the news of her engagement when she caught her first musky...a nice 43.25-incher. The next day Sarah would catch her second

musky ever, a 50.25-incher, the largest of the event.

With my brother Tyler Schwochert, I was one of the 100 contestants entered in this event. Tyler and I used to fish and hunt together all the time. Since I have become a full-time guide, I don't have much open time to fish for fun anymore. So Tyler and I entered the event to first and foremost have fun, and maybe get a chance to place. We had the time of our lives together over the weekend. I ran the boat, and Tyler caught his first, second, and third muskies.

We weren't the only ones enjoying ourselves. The all-female team of Ellen Wells and Lori Place impressed the other 98 contestants with a dedicated effort to casting the variety of structure in the river. Ellen and Lori also received the first-ever "Most Colorful Footwear" award.

Jay Zahn, President of Titledtown Muskies Inc. chapter, said the event sponsors, judges, and contestants are what make it such a success. Jay said they've already applied for the 2009 tournament permit and will release the dates of the event as soon as they're approved. *W*

Captain Dennis Radloff owns and operates Sterling Guide Service. He guides on the waters of Green Bay and Southeastern Wisconsin seven days a week April through November. Contact Dennis at www.sterlingmusky.com, or call 262.443.9993.

THANKS TO OUR 2008 SPONSORS

| \$5000 | \$2000 | \$1000 | \$500 |
|--|---|--|---|
| Cabela's WORLD'S FOREMOST OUTFITTER Hunting • Fishing • Outdoor Gear HILLS FLEET FARM | Sportsman MERCURY "On The Water" www.mercury.com | ONEIDA www.oneida.com LAX SPORTSMAN www.sportsman.com | Holiday Inn City Center Super D WAL-MART WPS |
| UNDER \$500 Tackle Industries Robinson Wholesale King Pin Pizza Point Amber Beer Canterbury Tails Automatic Fisherman Dunwright Tackle | Maurice Sporting Goods The Dangler Beaver Dam Tipups Tilky Tails State Farm - Scott Folsom Jo to Go Skippers Choice Jimmie Seas Ed's Boats Sales Inc. | Hawg Seekers Tackle Rolie & Helen's Stealth Tackle Delong Lures Thorne Bros. Ponderosa Steakhouse DuckTail Lures | For More Information on becoming a sponsor of this event, please contact: Jay Zahn @ 920.660.7555 To sign-up and print a Release Liability Form, please log on to Muskies Inc's website for more details. |

MUSKIES



2008 BEST of the BEST

**-Headquarters-
Green Bay Yacht Club**

INTERNATIONAL MUSKIE FISHING
TOURNAMENT, GREEN BAY, WI
OCTOBER 10TH, 11TH, & 12TH
2008
Lower Bay of Green Bay and Fox River
7 miles up to De Pere Dam

WWW.MUSKIESINC.ORG

DAVE DUWE

THE QUIET ADVANTAGE

Pannies on the perimeter



Working holes on the edge of crowds is one way to find less spooked and more aggressive fish.

Panfish are one of the most sought-after targets available to ice fishermen. As a rule on most lakes, bluegills and crappies will winter in five to 10 feet of water in weedy bays. When the bite is good, the fishing pressure can be immense. The key to success is escaping the large concentration of anglers. I find the greatest success is always away from the crowds. The throngs of people tend to spook the shallow fish, and there's always a lot of four-wheeler traffic, hole drilling and shanty dragging noise. When I do encounter a crowd, I'll try to fish the perimeter of the group because fish have a tendency to move away from the noise and the crowd.

The technique is a simple one. I hand-auger a lot of holes so as not to create continuous noise. I prefer hand augers over power augers simply because of the noise. I'll make a "milk-run," jumping from hole to hole seeking active fish. I seldom fish a hole more than five to 10 minutes. I use a Vexilar FL-12 to determine the weed growth and presence of fish. This is a vital tool to eliminate unproductive holes or ones with excessive weeds.

Pressured and spooked fish do not bite well. A technique similar to one you'd use with pressured fish in

summer, downsizing the lure and line diameter, is critical to success. I seldom fish panfish with more than one-pound-test monofilament line. For the lure, Lindy's Fat Boy's size 12 jigs seem to work well, both for showing up on the Vexilar and for catching fish. I'll also downsize live bait. When the crowds are using wax worms, I'll choose to use one or two spikes. Spikes are substantially smaller than wax worms and also have a tougher skin to hook better. So now you have the Vexilar, correct line, small jig and small live bait. There's only one other essential item: a very light spring bobber. Pressured fish will always bite very lightly, so a good spring bobber is required to achieve success.

With good ice and a little perseverance, a nice limit of panfish can be found. If you remember only two things about ice fishing, the most important rules are: avoid the crowds and keep moving to find the active fish. *W*

Dave Duwe, owner of Dave Duwe's Guide Service, has been guiding the lakes of Southeastern Wisconsin for 15 years, specializing in Delavan Lake and Lake Geneva. Go to www.fishlakegeneva.com or www.fishdelavanlake.com.

Makes a great gift for the history buff in your life...

THE ECHO is dedicated to the past as well as history in the making. Life in the midwest is celebrated with its natural beauty and rich history.

A tabloid newspaper published six times a year, THE ECHO is beautifully designed with outstanding photographs. Very professional as well as personal in its commitment. Act now!



Historic prints, notecards, photographs and other gift ideas are now available on our web site

www.echopressonline.com

The ECHO Subscribe today!

Name _____

Mailing address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Subscription price (includes S&H): \$25.00 per year (6 issues). Send a copy of this form to and a check to: THE ECHO Attention: Jeff Peters, 31374 Long Lake Road, Mellen, WI 54546



Built Just For You

RMA

CONSTRUCTION, DESIGN
& LAND DEVELOPMENT, INC.

Building sites Available

262-367-3671

www.rmaconstruction.com



GARY ENGBERG

GARY ENGBERG OUTDOORS

Wisconsin River sloughs, a winter mixed bag

The sloughs and backwaters of the Lower Wisconsin River from Sauk City to Spring Green provide a varied and diverse fishery for the ice angler. Some of these backwaters are rarely fished during the summer and open-water fishing periods because they are basically inaccessible except during periods of high water and during the "hard water" or ice fishing season. The last dam on the Wisconsin River is at Prairie du Sac, the twin city of Sauk City, or as many call the area, Sauk Prairie. But besides this deep water close to the dam, the rest of the Wisconsin River is basically shallow with 10 feet being deep as the river flows west toward its confluence with the Mississippi River. This 90-mile stretch of river is slowly becoming wider and shallower. The Wisconsin is unlike the Mississippi which is navigable and maintains a channel that is at least 10 feet deep for barge traffic and the tremendous number of goods that are shipped south down the "Big Muddy."

To safely navigate and fish the river during the summer months, a flat bottom or Jon boat is a necessity. As I said, many of the river's sloughs and backwaters are only fishable when there is ice. Some of these backwater

should be able to see the frozen sloughs from the road. There are plenty of fishable waters along the highway where you'll see anglers and their ice houses scattered all the way to Spring Green.

The south shore of the Wisconsin River also has State Highway 14 running parallel to the river from Mazomanie to Spring Green. If you're driving west on Highway 14, just before you reach the town of Spring Green, you'll see signs for Helena Marsh to the north or on your right. The water is visible from the road and there's a parking lot with good access to the backwaters. Most of the slough's waters are shallow with water less than six feet. Helena Marsh has a few deeper "holes" that you need good electronics to find, but look where others are fishing and you'll likely see where fish are active. There are also some other good sloughs in the Spring Green area, like Jones, Erfurth, Hutter, Norton, and Bakkens Pond. Most of these waters are relatively small, running from five to 15 acres. But they all have water that runs in from the Wisconsin River which means that about any species of fish can be caught.

The most common species of fish you're going to catch are bluegills, crappies, perch, bass, northern pike and walleye. The panfish and pike are normally the most active fish that will provide action during winter. Although both walleyes and bass are present, they're not the biters or

as active as the 'gills and pike.

Wisconsin allows the use of three rods when fishing, so my suggestion is to jig for panfish with one rod and set tip-ups on the other two lines for pike or the odd walleye. Your panfish rod should be sensitive with a spring bobber attached to detect the light bite of a bluegill. Make sure to have a wide selection of ice jigs (Marmooska's, Dots, Rat Finkies, And Cobras) in many colors and sizes plus a good supply of wax worms and spikes. I'd recommend two- to four-pound Stren or Berkley Ice



LEFT: Jason Granger of Leland, Wisconsin, with a backwater pike. RIGHT: Gunnar Peterson with a nice pike.



A mixed bag from the backwaters of the Wisconsin River.

hot spots may entail a little walking while others are just a short walk off the road.

I'll try to give you some of the best areas to fish and the location of these river backwaters and sloughs. The north side of the Wisconsin River is bordered by State Highway 60 and travels about 15 miles from Sauk City to Spring Green. Badger and Rainbow Sloughs are both just off the highway and about halfway to Spring Green on your left if traveling west. You'll see cars parked along Highway 60 and you

line for the panfish. Using a fluorocarbon line can help and I recommend it if the fish are finicky or in a neutral mood.


For walleyes, first make sure that you're using a good quality tip-up like a Beaver Dam or Frabill. Then I'd use Tuf-Line, a super line (I like it in 65-pound test) excellent for larger fish like walleyes or pike. To the line's end, attach a barrel swivel and about three feet of a fluorocarbon leader (Berkley Vanish is good) to a #12 treble for walleyes. You may have to use a small split shot about 15 inches above the hook to keep your minnows down near the bottom. For pike, I'd switch to 80-pound test Tuf-Line and then use a Bait Rigs Quick-Set Rig which is made of a seven-strand wire with the hooks and swivel already attached to the rig. All you have to do is tie the Quick-Set rig directly to the Tuf-Line. Then use shiners, golden shiners, or smelt for bait and you're set for catching a large river northern pike.

Early in the ice season, try to find the greenest weeds possible and set your tip-ups in that area. Position your bait so there's one above the top of the weeds and if you're alone, the other just outside the weed edges. The water you may be fishing might only be three or four feet deep or as deep as 10 feet.

You'll catch pike in this shallow water and don't be surprised if you catch a few walleyes or saugers.

These backwater sloughs can be dynamite the first month of the season and they're always worth fishing and checking out. Call the local bait shops and talk to them for fresh information. Talking to other anglers you see fishing is worthwhile because most anglers love to share information, especially if they're catching fish. See what others are doing to catch fish, and do the same. Don't be afraid to ask questions because that's the only way you'll learn some of the local techniques and tactics for success.

Anything you could possibly want or need is available locally with numerous good motels and eating places.

Bait shops and information; Wilderness Fish and Game, Sauk City, WI (608)-643-2433. Sauk Prairie Live Bait and Tackle, Prairie du Sac, WI (608)-643-3700. Sauk Prairie Chamber of Commerce (608)-643-4168. Guides: Wally Banfi (608) 644-9823 and Ron Barefield (608)-838-8756. 

Contact Gary Engberg Outdoors at 608. 795.4208 or gengberg@chorus.net. Or visit www.garyengbergoutdoors.com.

DAN MOERICKE

AN "UP NORT" REPORT

Back and forth



Here's hoping that 2009 brings more of these! -Dan

Here by the campfire, a cold Leinie's Fireside Nut Brown in hand, I'm reflecting on the year that was and the one that's to come. So, for the first issue of 2009, I'd like to take a quick look back at 2008 and share a few resolutions for 2009.

2008 IN REVIEW

If it's true that you're supposed to learn from your mistakes, then 2008 should have qualified me as a Rhodes Scholar. One would think that as a guy gets older, he'd start to have at least the basics pretty well-mastered. In some cases, I think I may be going backwards.

Things I learned in 2008:

My skills as a lumberjack are greatly overestimated...at least by me. I was pretty confident that I could fell a tree exactly where I wanted. The large

dents in my canoe are testament to the fact that I cannot.

Sighting in your rifle before a hunt is a good thing. Since my trusty 30.06 is "never" off, I skipped this little detail prior to the 2008 T-zone hunt. There are two whitetail does in Shawano county that are pretty happy about that.

Believing that the word "waterproof" on a pair of boots means that my feet will stay dry is wrong. Two days of nearly constant rain on a Colorado elk hunt meant two days of very constantly wet feet.

If you're going to carry your cell phone in your shirt pocket, button it (your pocket, not the phone). An evening spent tracking a deer cost me \$60 and hours of re-loading numbers into the new phone.

It's important to carefully label and

store the keys to your treestand padlocks. A bolt cutter costs about \$20. I know.

When using a climbing tree stand, it's critical to have your bow pull-up rope actually tied onto the stand. Shooting your bow when it's lying 18 feet below you on the ground is difficult at best.

When a bearing cap on your boat trailer pops off, it's time to replace your bearings, not just the cap.

Measure twice, cut once. Don't ask.

2009 RESOLUTIONS

In looking forward to a new year, unblemished by the mistakes of the past, I resolve to:

- Sight in my rifle before the season.
- Make a list of all numbers stored in my cell phone.
- Check the gas tank on my boat before every trip. Also, I'll charge the batteries on a more regular basis.
- Fish at least three lakes that I've never fished before. There are at least a

dozen lakes on my list, but I figure three is a realistic goal.

- Replace the lights on my boat trailer (finally). I've got the new ones ...had them for almost a year now ...on the shelf in my garage.
- Get a new pair of waders. Twenty years is a long time.
- Make it a habit to take both my camera and my GPS in the field. Neither of these do you any good when they're in the glove compartment of your truck.

Like every year, my hope for 2009 is to spend as much time as possible with family and friends in the great Northwoods. Have a great new year and I'll see you on the ice! (Now, where the heck are my tip-ups?!) *W*

Dan Moericke is an avid and successful Wisconsin fisherman from Wausau and an occasional guest on outdoor fishing programs. On the water, he always tells us some version of the truth.



JOEL DEBOER

WISCONSIN ANGLING ADVENTURES

The night time is the right time ... for winter walleyes

There's something special about icefishing for walleyes at night. The creak of ice and snow underfoot is accompanied by the occasional call from an owl, and shadows cast by the moon appear almost specter-like. It's in this dark and mysterious world that the angler willing to forgo the comfort of a chair by the fireplace can experience some of the most exciting fishing of the hard water season.

Successfully targeting walleyes begins first and foremost with being in the right place at the right time: location, location, location. Here in North-Central Wisconsin, we're privy to rivers, lakes, and flowages in which to pursue marble-eyes, each presenting unique challenges when pursuing them through the ice.

Let's first look at finding winter walleyes in natural lakes. Prime locations on natural lakes for early winter walleyes are bars extending into deep water. While these areas will produce fish all winter long, they're an excellent place to begin your search early in the hard water season. Typically the best bars will have a hard bottom and a mix of cover such as vegetation or wood.

Although often overlooked in respect to natural lakes especially during the winter months, current areas such as where feeder creeks enter can also be productive this time of year. In-flowing water not only contains higher levels of oxygen but food for both predators and prey. This influx in return creates a concentration of fish species including walleyes. One thing to pay close attention to is the condition of the ice in these areas. Ice consistency may vary within a matter of feet and even change from day to day depending on flow and weather conditions.

A third key location for ice walleyes can be found in humps in the main lake basin. A common misconception is that the hump needs to top out at a shallow depth in order to be productive for night fishing. While walleyes do make a migration of sorts into the "shallows" during the low-light periods to feed, the term "shallow" is relative to the specific body of water, even to the section of the lake where the hump is found. For example, on a lake whose average depth may be 25 feet or more, a hump topping out at 15 feet may be considered shallow. In contrast, on a lake whose average depth may be less than 10 feet, shallow humps extending into as little as a couple of feet of water may be the key.

Walleye fishing during winter is not



There's nothing like a beam of light from a nearby tip-up letting the angler know another nocturnal walleye is knocking

"Identifying areas of current will not only help to keep you safe on the ice, but will locate likely holding spots for feeding walleyes ..."

an event limited to just lakes. Here in the greater Wausau area, the passing-through of the mighty Wisconsin River provides ample opportunity for night-time winter walleyes in the dam-created flowages and numerous river backwaters. In fact, some of the best walleye ice fishing I've experienced in the state has been on the Wisconsin itself or on its flowages in our area.

When looking to identify areas to locate and catch walleyes in rivers and flowages, current again is a key component to angler success. Identifying areas of current will not only help to keep you safe on the ice, but will locate likely holding spots for feeding walleyes. Current breaks such as bars and wing

dams will hold fish behind them during the day. At night, walleyes will often move right up on top of the structure given the size and depth of the water, or to adjoining flats to feed.

Walleye anglers often overlook secondary channels and adjoining bays during winter, thinking of them as spots for pike or panfish only. These two areas are solid options for finding numbers of active walleyes in early winter. If there is ample current and water depth, both secondary channels and bays will hold fish all winter long, making for often-overlooked and under-pressured angling opportunities. The best bays and channels will not only have current flowing through them, but

will also contain structure of some sort. My personal favorite is wood, especially stumps; my most consistent night-bite walleye bays contain a plethora of snags and blow-downs, and will produce evening action all season long.

Whether you're fishing a lake, river, or flowage, once you have identified likely fish-holding areas, it's time to get to work. When walleye fishing through the ice at night, I like to head out early and get in position well before the sun starts riding below the horizon. Not only does this allow me the time to ensure I am set up for when the bite turns hot, but it helps alleviate spooking fish with all the commotion drilling holes and so on. I begin by drilling plenty of holes when I get out on the ice in the area I intend to fish, ranging from shallow to deep. This allows me to jump holes again without drilling as the night progresses, depending on which areas seem to be getting the most activity.

I prefer to use Frabill's Pro-Thermal tip-ups when fishing at night because the round insulated design not only prevents any light from shining down the hole to spook fish, but also prevents freeze-up. In addition to having a Musky Armor headlamp on me at all times, to each flag I clip an Arctic Fire tip-up light. I have found large golden shiners or sucker minnows to work excellently at night due in part I'm sure to the larger profile and vibration they put off. It's important to keep your bait healthy and lively, because you want it to struggle while on your Mustad treble hook. I'm convinced that bait shaking and shuddering under the cover of dark will produce more bites than minnows that are sluggish.

Ice fishing for walleyes at night is by far one of the most productive methods for scoring all winter long. Not only is it effective, but exciting too – the distant blink of a tip-up light really gets the blood pumping, and as the golden head of a big walleye slides up through the hole, cold hands suddenly become quite warm! Enjoy the winter; it's here to stay a bit. I'll see you on the water...

Joel DeBoer owns and operates Wisconsin Angling Adventures guide service, and specializes in musky, walleye, and small-mouth bass, based out of the greater Wausau, WI area. He can be reached at 715.297.7573 or visit his website at www.wisconsinanglingadventures.com

TODD BOHM

WINTER COYOTES

Hunting the hunters

The sun was just beginning to peek over the horizon when a pack of coyotes cut loose with a series of howls and yelps just 200 yards from where I had settled into my first calling stand of the morning. I smiled to myself knowing that in a few minutes I'd hit the first sequence of calls on my Foxpro and would soon be settling the crosshairs onto my first coyote of the day. Wintertime coyote hunting is an exciting and growing sport. As the number of these prolific predators continues to grow, coyote hunting offers hunters an opportunity to hone their skills against an extremely worthy adversary. Getting started can be relatively inexpensive and offer hunters a chance to extend their season and to rid their hunting grounds of what is often considered a nuisance.

CALLS

I've used a number of different calls including mouth calls and electronic/digital calls. Many of the same manufacturers of quality deer calls also make mouth calls. I have used the Randy Anderson series of calls from Primos with great luck. However, with the effectiveness and downsizing of the new digital calls, I have switched exclusively to using electronic calls. The variety of sounds and ability to mix and switch calls have made them extremely effective for calling coyotes and other predators. Manufacturers such as Foxpro, Phantom, Johnny Stewart, and others all make quality digital calls with a variety of features and prices.

GUNS

Just like calls, there are a number of different calibers and types of guns used effectively by predator hunters. I am currently using a Model 70 Winchester bolt-action .223 caliber gun. The gun is extremely accurate and rugged enough to handle the demands of predator hunting. Most recognized gun manufacturers make predator rifles; hunter preference will determine which gun you should purchase or use. Coyote hunters often debate caliber. Whatever caliber you decide to use, it should be powerful enough to put the animal down immediately but not so big that the animal's pelt is destroyed. Popular rifle cartridges for coyote hunting include: .223, 22-250, 25-06, and .204 Ruger. Another gun not to be overlooked is a 12-gauge shotgun. For many calling situations, the coyotes may end up extremely close, making the shotgun loaded with T shot or small buckshot an ideal choice.

CALLING SET-UPS

Many of the same principles used for hunting deer can be applied to coyote hunting. Wearing quiet camouflage that blends well with your surroundings, paying extra attention to wind direction, and making sure to never skyline yourself when approaching your stands are crucial points for harvesting coyotes on a consistent basis. When scouting for deer, I'm also scouting for coyote hunting set-ups. Logging roads, beaver ponds, fencerows, and south-



facing hillsides are all ideal spots to search for coyotes.

When making your set-up, make sure the wind is not blowing toward the direction you want the coyotes to come. Many times, they'll attempt to work downwind of the call, so it's important that you're set up in an area that offers a shot before they wind you.

Start off calling softly! Loudly blowing on your call or turning the volume up on your electronic call will do nothing but scare coyotes away. After 10 to 15 minutes of quiet calling, you can begin turning the volume up. Remember when mouth calling to put emphasis and feeling into the call. You're trying to sound like a dying rabbit. With both mouth and electric calls, don't call continuously. Call for about a minute or so and then wait for two minutes. Repeat this process with plenty of quiet time built in. I usually

spend about 30 minutes on each stand. If nothing shows up, I will relocate to another stand approximately one-half mile away from this stand. Remember to stay patient. My success rate for calling is usually one out of four stands.

Coyote calling can be a heart-stopping experience the first time you spot a big coyote trotting into your set. It's also a great way to hone your hunting skills. Take some time this winter and hunt the hunters! *OW*

Todd Bohm is a lifetime educator and principal in the D.C. Everest School District. He is an avid fisherman and hunter who guides the waters of Central and Northern Wisconsin specializing in all species of fish including trout. He can be reached through Wisconsin Angling Adventures. Contact Todd at 715.297.7573 or at www.wisconsinanglingadventures.com.



DICK ELLIS

ON WISCONSIN OUTDOORS

Peeping deep with Mendota electronics



Mendota perch anglers like Bruce Keldahl in this shot taken several winters ago use electronics and large pencil sinkers to reach fish in 70 feet of water. (Dick Ellis)

Bruce Keldahl kneels on the ice of Lake Mendota, sends the jig south on the "hanger-rig" express through the augured hole and 70 feet of water, then watches the screen of his electronics as intensely as the rest of us might have watched an agonizing "4th and 26" the Sunday before. Keldahl has only assumed the position of the ice angler for ten minutes, but already four perch lay on the snow-less hardwater of Madison.

Mendota has had safe ice for about a week, and this endless piece of glass would make the perfect, 9,842 acre skating rink. Todd Passini of Middleton, in fact, pulls two sleds laden with ice fishing gear on hockey skates through a shanty town of 100 anglers or more one-half mile from the nearest shore.

Keldahl is seeking another day with a Mendota limit of 25 perch up to 12 inches in length. But he tolerates the intrusion and questions of a reporter with a camera waiting for perch number five to knock somewhere far below.

Within a minute, Keldahl watches as the blips marking his bait and another perch collide on the screen. The ultralight rod bends as the fish takes the meal and then takes the long ride up to join the growing pile.

"I got a limit Sunday through

Wednesday and I couldn't come out Thursday," he said. "They've been real nice fish, averaging nine or 10 inches. There are a few six and seven inches and a few 12 inches. But you don't have to wait long for a hit."

The road to Mendota January 16 actually begins on the 2,000 acre, shallower Waubesa with Gene Dellinger, owner of D&S Bait and Tackle. In the first five minutes in a heated shack talking Madison area options for the perch angler, Dellinger catches a half-dozen fish in the eight inch class before the school temporarily disappears.

Dellinger is waiting for ice conditions on the deeper Mendota to improve prior to moving his operation of shacks, equipment and sled transportation for interested anglers to that lake and its proven potential for significantly larger perch. He intends to make the move the week of January 19.

"This is the first year that we're on Waubesa," he said. "Normally we just hang on and wait for Mendota to freeze-up. Perch fishing there is cyclical and based on the success of the hatches and the size of the different year classes of perch. Last year was tough. Mendota is in kind of a rebuilding cycle so this year we were taking a wait and see approach and with only four inches of ice over there anyway, watching the early success. If fishing was going to be poor, I wanted to up the ante as far as success goes. I'd rather have people renting shacks on a lake where they can catch a lot of fish."

On Waubesa, he said, average eight-inch perch are most often bottom-holding at 30 feet. On Mendota the average fish is nine or ten inches with 12 inch perch fairly common. Mendota fish are routinely found in 70 feet of water, but suspended anywhere in the water column from just under the ice to just off the bottom.

Because of the vastness of the lake and depth of the water, a sensitive vexlar or equivalent electronic locator, is critical on Mendota, enabling the angler to see the bait in relation to the fish. Dellinger's jigs, most often a rat finkie in glow color, black or purple, are dressed with a spike and used with four-pound test line on ultralight spinning rods. To avoid line tangle, the light jigs are escorted to the depths by a long metal sinker commonly referred to as pencil sinkers, hanger rigs, or Mendota sinkers.

The forage base of perch found in the Madison area, he said, is also different than the primary food of perch found in other regions. Although they will take minnows here, microorganisms known commonly as water lice serve as the primary food source.

"It means you have to fish for them differently and makes the bite a lot more subtle," he said. "Perch

foraging on minnows often hit a lot harder. On Mendota, most guys will stay in a shack. The more successful angler will run and gun. It depends on the perch population, but as a rule if there are good numbers of fish you can stay in the shack and stay on the fish. When they are biting over there, the fishing pressure is extreme."

Soon, that point was emphasized on the shore of Mendota. A "creeper" highway, chips in the ice made by countless anglers over a week wearing

special strap-on cleats to keep from falling, stretched on toward the shanty town. Governor Nelson State Park on Mendota's north side and Governor's Island are two public access points.

Near shore, John Guld of Jefferson and Erv Stuntebeck of Marshall are just leaving Mendota with nine and 13 perch in their pails, respectively, to eleven inches. At the half-way point of the half-mile journey to the growing ice community, Jason Howell of Blanchardville in Lafayette County




Although cyclical, when Madison's Mendota is hot it's hard to beat for perch. A morning's catch for Jason Howell of Blanchardville in Lafayette County included 12-inch fish. (Dick Ellis)

shows his catch of 15 fish. And a good natured Jeff Cizek of Madison is bringing in the dreaded skunk. The last two perch of the day for Howell were fat 12 and 12-1/2 inches, the kind of fish that will call these anglers back.

"Last year was bad, but now it's picking up again," he said. "I just hope it doesn't fizzle out."

Finally in shanty town, I watch Keldahl add to his growing perch-pile, watch Passini skate to his spot of choice, and watch and talk with many other other ice men wallowing in a good Mendota perch bite. Before leaving, I find Robert Hamann of Milwaukee working the Mendota depths on the edge of Shanty town, catching perch, and catching yet another version of the Wisconsin natural high.

"This is just great fun, relaxing, and a good way to spend some free time," he said. "The perch are good eating too. This state offers so much, but there are just too many people who stay in the house during the winter months. Wisconsin has a lot to offer if you just prepare for it. Bundle up ... and enjoy." 

If You Go ...

Dick Ellis experiences Madison area ice fishing annually, and wrote this in 2004. Contact D&S Bait and Tackle in Madison at 1-608-241-4225 for fishing conditions, or directions to angler access points on Lake Mendota and other Madison area lakes. When fishing is hot, D&S also offers heated shanty rental, transportation to and from the shack, one rod and reel per angler, and one electronic fish locator per shack for \$40.00 per angler. "It's just a prediction but this winter I expect the Mendota perch fishing to be slightly below average and the bluegill action on Waubesa and Monona to be fair to good" said D&S owner Gene Dellinger on December 9, 2008. "Perch on Waubesa and Monona should be fair to good."

Also offered for those anglers not interested in renting a shack is a daily transportation pass for \$10.00. The pass buys rides on a sled-train pulled by an ATV to and from the shanty town far out on Lake Mendota.

JJ REICH

THE REICH STUFF

"Poor man's lobster"

Like every fine son of Wisconsin, well, the ones who were raised "right," I'm a sucker for a fresh fish fry. So for the majority of my time spent on water (open or frozen), I'm chasing dinner. My favorite catches are walleye and perch.

But once the Minnesota walleye season is closed in late February, I look for a fresh, new dinner menu. This means every second weekend of March is reserved for spending a few nights sleeping on the ice and targeting the ugly, yet awesome eelpout, AKA "poor man's lobster."

My old college buddy Noah Barnes and I usually head to the Bemidji area in northern Minnesota to meet my friend and fishing guide Matt Breuer for an overnight weekend trip. We stay in a heated four-man sleeper shack that Matt rents out and we always have a blast.

The elongated eelpout is usually in the vicinity of one to three pounds and varies in color from a mottled green or gray to black, and features a cream-colored belly, huge glowing eyes and eel-like tail. There are six reasons we target this fish:

First, eelpout breed during this time of year and strike often, needing food for energy and/or protecting their breeding grounds from intruders.

Second, my icehouse is a portable vacation home away from home. The 6.5-foot-by-14.5-foot portable trailer is a party house on wheels. It sleeps four and provides enough heat to fish comfortably in t-shirts and blue jeans when the temps outside are in the single digits. Plus, the shack-on-wheels has card-playing table and a cook stove for an instant fish fry. What more do you need?

Third, eelpout provide powerful fights. They hit hard and swim even harder. On an ultra lightweight ice rod, it feels like you're reeling in a 30-pound catfish.

Fourth, eelpout provide a night-time full of entertainment. You can be out and about fishing all day for panfish and perch, then continue the fun well into the early morning because eelpout will typically strike from 10:00 p.m. until 2:00 a.m.

Fifth, there is a valid reason why anglers call the catch "poor man's lobster." Simply put, the fish tastes great. We fillet out the back straps, skin the fillets, cut the meat in two-inch chunks and boil them in water



Matt Breuer, fishing guide in the Bemidji, MN area, posing with author and a fat eelpout inside his four-man sleeper shack.



Author's favorite fishing pal Noah Barnes holding up two good "eaters."

and lobster-boil seasonings, then dip the cooked fish in melted butter. Okay, lobster meat it's not, but the white meat definitely has a rich "seafood" taste, and is truly a treat when caught in ice-cold waters. When I serve it at home, wife and mother-in-law often ask for seconds and thirds.

Last, the fish look great in pictures. Of all the fishing adventure pictures in my album, the pout pics get talked about most!

We set several tip-ups with beepers around the shack. Our hooks are loaded with live shiners on glow jigs. Once the beepers go off, we rush out of the warm shack and yank up our meal. Inside, we sit with lightweight rods baited with shiners on rattle spoons, hoping to entice a fight on line and reel.

Eelpout have many nicknames, such as freshwater cod, burbot, cusk, lawyer, ling, mother eel, mud blower,



ABOVE: Northern Minnesotan "good & ugly" cuisine preserved on ice. RIGHT: JJ Reich showing off some poor man's lobster caught on tip-ups the night before.



and spineless catfish. But "poor man's lobster" is definitely my favorite handle, due to how much I like to eat them. If you're lucky enough to taste one someday, you might agree.

See more pictures and learn more about Matt's services at: www.northcountryguides.com

JJ Reich is an outdoor writer who contributes product-related articles to several national magazines and websites. He is also the author of *Kampp Tales Outdoor Adventures* hunting books for kids. Learn more at www.kampptales.com.

Eat better. Eat venison.

by Suzette Curtis

New Year’s resolutions come in all shapes and sizes, but one of the most common resolutions involves better health. People vow to quit smoking, lose weight, exercise more, and maintain a better diet. Why not vow to eat more venison than beef this new year?

Venison is as versatile as beef in most every way, is a much leaner form of protein, and thus is a much healthier alternative than beef. Ground venison can be used interchangeably in all of our favorite recipes: spaghetti, chili, lasagna, and even meatloaf (with an extra egg to hold it together better). All of these “comfort foods” made with venison during a Wisconsin winter can give us our “fix” without all of the guilt of those fatty cuts of beef. Give it a shot; experiment with your favorite ground beef recipes by substituting ground venison instead.

We prefer venison over beef in our household, so we have a great variety of recipes tailored to the use of the whole deer. Here are some of our favorites. Enjoy!

Suzette Curtis of Oshkosh cooks for a family of hunters and fishermen, and says she tries to fill their menu with recipes for meals made with venison, upland birds, and fish. She does just that with great expertise.

Venison Bourgogne

This recipe started out as “beef” Bourgogne, but we thought it would also be good with venison. With a little tweaking of the original recipe, this version is even better.

- 2 to 2-1/2 pounds venison stew meat

2 tbs olive oil

1 tbs fresh chopped garlic

1/2 tsp dried thyme

3 bay leaves
- 1/2 cup beef broth or beef consomme

1/2 cup dry red wine (preferably burgundy)

2 large onions, sliced thinly

1 pound whole button mushrooms

salt & pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 350°. In Dutch oven on top of stove, brown venison in the olive oil. Add garlic, thyme, bay leaves, and liquids; bring to boil. Cover and put stew in oven, baking for 1 hour. After first hour, add sliced onions. If stew seems too dry, you may add more broth and/or wine. Return to oven and bake for an additional 1-1/2 hours. Mushrooms are added in the last 1/2 hour before serving. Stir in completely, and again add liquids accordingly. This dish is great on its own, but it may also be served over noodles or rice.

Serves 6-8

from the kitchen of Suzette Curtis

Venison Roast

This recipe comes in two forms. Both are equally requested in our home, so I can’t say which one is better. As far as which cut to use - be creative. We’ve used leg cuts (bone in), shoulder cuts, and even “unknown” cuts; and they’ve all turned out deliciously. Even the size is irrelevant. With bigger roasts you just end up with a little less sauce, but there is still plenty.

Version One

- Venison roast (2-5 pounds)
- 1 pkg. dry onion soup mix
- 1 can beer

Place roast in bottom of crock pot. Cover with onion soup mix and Cook on low 8-10 hours.

Cook on low 8-10 hours.

Version Two

- Venison roast (2-5 pounds)
- 3 onions, sliced in rings
- 1 can whole cranberry sauce

Place sliced onions in bottom of crock pot. Cover onions with , beer. roast and top with cranberry sauce.

from the kitchen of Suzette Curtis

Venison Liver Paté

Don’t waste that liver! Even though liver and onions is great, sometimes too much of a good thing is no longer a good thing. This paté recipe is a wonderful way to use extra liver. It can be frozen, too, so you don’t have to overload all at one time.

- 1 pound venison liver

1 stick butter, softened

1/4 cup Miracle Whip
- 1 tbs minced garlic

1 medium onion, chopped

2 hard boiled eggs, chopped

Cut liver into small pieces, and sauté in olive oil until cooked through, but still tender. Meanwhile, combine remaining ingredients in a bowl, and mix thoroughly. Place cooked venison and remaining ingredients in food processor; blend until smooth. If your food processor is small, do this in two halves, and then combine both mixtures together in large bowl. Serve with crackers, bread sticks, or small toasted breads.

from the kitchen of Suzette Curtis

Mediterranean Venison

For those of you who like trying different flavors, using curry in a recipe really adds a punch. Curry has a strong and distinctive flavor, and can sometimes be quite overpowering, but the sweet onion and tomatoes blend perfectly to make this dish superb!

- 2 lbs venison stew meat

1/3 cup flour

2 tbs olive oil

1 large sweet onion

sliced in thin rings
- 1/2 tsp powered ginger

2 tsp curry powder

2-15oz cans diced tomatoes, undrained

2 cups beef broth

Dredge meat in flour, shaking off any excess. Heat olive oil in Dutch oven, and sauté meat until browned. Add remaining ingredients; bring to boil. Cover, reduce heat to simmer, and cook for 1 to 1 1/2 hours until meat is tender. This is wonderful over egg noodles, brown rice, or open-faced baked potatoes.

Serves 6-8

from the Kitchen of Suzette Curtis

WORKS HARD WHEN IT NEEDS TO. PLAYS HARD WHEN YOU CAN.



SUZUKI
KINGQUAD 750AXI
4x4

WORK HARD. PLAY HARDER ON A SUZUKI KINGQUAD 750.

NO MATTER WHAT THE DAY BRINGS, YOU'LL BE READY. WITH FUEL INJECTION, FULLY INDEPENDENT REAR SUSPENSION AND PUSH-BUTTON SELECTABLE 4WD THERE'S NO JOB TOO TOUGH OR TRAIL TOO GNARLY. WE POURED ALL WE'VE LEARNED FROM 25 YEARS OF HAMMERING QUADS AND WINNING RACES INTO THE 2008 KINGQUAD 750. IF YOU WANT THE BEST OF EVERYTHING WITH NO COMPROMISES YOU'VE ONLY GOT ONE CHOICE. SUZUKICYCLES.COM



Power Sports Abrams

Abrams, WI
920/826-6000
PowerSportsAbrams.com

Black River Power Sports

Black River Falls, WI
715/284-2600

Team Motorsports

De Pere, WI
920/983-8326
Team-Motorsports.com

Pro Motorsports

Fond Du Lac, WI
920/922-8521
ProMotorsportsInc.com

T. A. Motorsports

Francis Creek, WI
920/682-1284
TAMotorsports.com

Wild River Sports Cycle

Grantsburg, WI
715/463-2548
WildRiverSportCycle.com

Ken's Sports

Kaukauna, WI
920/788-0220
KensSports.com

Ace Powersports

Kenosha, WI
262/654-3090
AcePowersports.com

Steiger Suzuki

La Crosse, WI
608/788-4514
SteigerPowersports.net

Engelhart Center

Madison, WI
608/274-2366
Engelhart.com

Mad City Power Sports

Madison, WI
608/249-0240
MadCitySuzuki.com

Power Pac

Marshfield, WI
715/387-1106
Power-Pac.net

Southeast Sales Corp.

Milwaukee, WI
414/463-2540
SoutheastSales.com

Portland 2

Oak Creek, WI
414/764-2800
Sportland2.com

Ecklund Motorsports and Marine

Oshkosh, WI
920/233-3313
EcklundMotorsports.com

Bearpaw Motorsports

Rice Lake, WI
715/234-8174
BearpawMotorsports.com

Vetesnik Powersports

Richland Center, WI
608/647-8808
Vetesnik.com

Ozaukee Suzuki

Saukville, WI
262/284-2725
CorseSuperbikes.com

Door County Motorsports

Sturgeon Bay, WI
920/743-3999
DoorCountyMotorSports.com

Leisure Time Sports

Tomah, WI
608/372-5939
LeisureTimeSportsTomah.com

Schauer Power Center

Union Grove, WI
262/878-3344
SchauerPower.com

Action Power Sports

Waukesha, WI
262/547-3088
ActionPS.com

Glenn Curtiss Motorsports

West Bend, WI
262/338-3684
GCMSports.com

Country Sports

WI Rapids, WI
715/325-5381
CountrySportsinc.com

OFFICIAL MOTORCYCLE & ATV OF:

ROAD *Racing*
AMERICA *at its Best*

ATVs can be hazardous to operate. For your safety, always wear a helmet, eye protection, and protective clothing. Always avoid paved surfaces. Never ride on public roads. Never carry passengers or engage in stunt riding. Riding and alcohol or other drugs don't mix. Avoid excessive speed. Be extra careful on difficult terrain. "Tread Lightly!®" on public and private land. Suzuki, the "S" logo, and Suzuki model and product names are Suzuki trademarks or ®. © American Suzuki Motor Corporation 2008

SUZUKI MOTOR CORP.

BUILT TO DO THE JOB, NOTHING MORE*... and priced that way!*

By Ben Hart

I just got a new cell phone. And it's a camera, and video camera, and computer, recorder, music player, game piece, gps, and more. Sure, it makes phone calls, too. And that's really what I want – to make phone calls. It took me a while to figure out how to do that. Maybe I should have just bought a phone; that would have saved me a bunch of money.

It's like that with ATVs. A lot of options are available, and you can spend a lot of money if you want. But – like with cell phones – you should answer a number of questions first. Do you need all those features? Can you afford all those features? What do you really want to do with your ATV?

If you have the money to spend, or absolutely need all the latest features (like me and this new cell phone – anyone seen my owner's manual?) then you should buy the newest ATV with power steering, differential lock, indy suspension, fuel injection and more.

If you are like the rest of us and absolutely need to watch your spending, plenty of ATVs are available to deliver function first, without sacrificing the performance you need.

Top of the list? The Suzuki KingQuad 400 ATVs have been around for a number of years, winning magazine shootout comparisons regularly, and proving themselves as leading candidates for those buyers looking to save money without sacrificing utility performance. Best of



all, you can keep the cost below \$6,000, and you will not need to forego features when considering a KingQuad 400 ATV. These ATVs can



KINGQUAD 400 4X4 SEMI-AUTOMATIC: \$5,349 (CAMO: \$5,699)

KINGQUAD 400 4X4 AUTOMATIC: \$5,499 (CAMO: \$5,799)

ANNIVERSARY MODELS: \$5,649 AND \$5,799

get the job done with the help of nice convenience features, and with a thoughtful eye on saving you money.

When looking at the KingQuad 400 family, you'll first notice you can choose between a fully automatic "CVT" transmission and a five-speed manual with auto clutch. No other ATV manufacturer gives buyers this option. And while utility ATVs with automatic trannies are more popular, some buyers just gotta have that foot-shift control. Plus, the five-speed model costs at least 100 bucks less at retail. You can also choose a color or camo plastic body work (for about \$300 extra) and then you are ready to ride.

You get a lot with either KingQuad option. These are full-size ATVs with 25-inch tires, nearly 10 inches of ground clearance, and a 4.2-gallon fuel tank. These are specifications similar to much more expensive ATVs. And no, it's not about size. But you should expect full-size features and specifications when spending more than \$5,000. And when you're out riding with guys who paid nearly twice as much, no one will know when looking at your

KingQuad 400.

Powering the KingQuad 400 ATVs is a 376cc single-cylinder engine. This simple four-stroke powerplant is proven reliable. It uses an air-cooled oil cooler to keep temperatures in check and maintain performance – even during long summer trail rides and work days. The engine includes a gear-driven balancer shaft to reduce vibration – resulting in a super smooth ride.

Both the automatic and semi-automatic versions of this ATV feature a two-range subtransmission, giving you high-range and low-range operating modes for superior control in a variety of riding conditions. If you want the ultimate engine-braking speed control on steep descents, drop it into low range. Back on the trail for a fun weekend ride, slip it back into high range. A gate-style shift arm located on the left side of the ATV gives precise shifting control.

To increase the versatility of this functional utility quad, you can select two-wheel drive or four-wheel drive operation by simply turning a switch located on the handlebars. Use two-wheel drive when traction is not a

concern and when you want the easy steering offered through the rear-wheel drive operation. When extra traction control is required, simply turn that switch to engage the torque-sensing limited-slip front differential. The Suzuki torque-sensing front diff is superior to other front differentials that can leave you hanging with three-wheel drive operation and no traction.

Suspension action is handled by a swingarm in the rear connected to dual shock absorbers. With the shocks positioned closer to the rear wheels than a centered-mounted single-shock swingarm, the King Quad 400 provides superior comfort. The front end uses fully independent double A-arm setup with coil-over shocks. The system delivers nearly seven inches of wheel travel at all four wheels.

Comfort and convenience is aided by a unique T-shaped seat. This Suzuki signature feature provides roomy and comfortable seating while



still allowing the room to move for more aggressive riding. You'll stay informed while riding with a complete instrumentation package. There is a speedometer, odometer, tripmeter and fuel gauge. The aggressive new body work is topped with full-size cargo racks to enhance the utility aspects. The body work also includes full floorboards with drainage holes and raised footpegs.

The Suzuki KingQuad 400 ATVs are often overlooked by shoppers thinking they need more features. If you really want all the features and can afford them, go ahead and enjoy. But do you really need to make videos with your cell phone? The Suzuki KingQuad ATVs deliver amazing performance for less than \$6,000.

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

JIM TOSTRUD

WILDLIFE VISIONS

Ice hole hopping

Early ice is a great time to cash in on a bonanza of unsuspecting fish that haven't seen a human offering for months. Most people are done fishing by mid-September and the lakes I fish are like ghost towns in autumn and as fall slips to early winter. We have the lakes to ourselves until the lakes get hard.

Before we get started on fishing tips, it's important to address safety. Already in 2008, young people have tragically lost their lives going through bad ice. I always have safety items with me, have pulled people out, and have gone through the ice myself. I bring 30 feet of rope, a throwaway boat cushion, the pick of life, ice cleats for my boots, and something to start a fire. An ice spud is also a good tool to have to check the thickness of the ice. Knowing how thick the ice is and how deep the water is may save your life or at least save you from a cold walk back to the truck.

Never try to drive out on the lake until you know you have at least more than a foot of good ice on the lake. I'm not a very big guy and when I was

younger, I used to lose an extra 10 pounds just so I was lighter than my buddies and could venture out to places they could not. This, I thought, was a good idea. It was, however, just a matter of time before I got a wet butt!

Now that we're all safe, let's go fishing! I start in the shallow bays in the lakes or the backwaters on the rivers. Most of these areas are safe because they freeze first and are usually fairly shallow—often not more than six feet deep. Most of these places have some vegetation. Find those weeds, find the fish. Some places might have more weeds than others, so I'm a "hole hopper."

A hole hopper finds a place to fish, pops five to 10 holes in the area, cleans each hole out before starting to fish, and then makes a base camp right in the middle of it all. This is where I keep all my gear, sled, tackle, auger, etc. Check each hole for depth and weeds. Lie right down on the ice and peer into the water to see your target. If the water is stained or dirty and you can't see much, then you know the fish can't, either. Use an underwater camera if

you have one, which is a lot of fun and very useful to the ice angler. You won't believe what swims right underneath you at times.

I like to travel light and use a seven and a half-gallon bucket as a chair with a nice cushion seat on it that stores gear, and fish too as the catch comes in. I have three jigging rods with me at all times. Each one is set up differently and each is a different

length. One rod, my "dead stick," is set up with a float and rigged for live bait, such as minnows or wigglers. This rod lets the bait do the work at a desired depth, with the angler only periodically jigging it or lifting it up and down in the water column to attract fish from a distance. Sometimes this action will trigger a strike from an interested but unmotivated suspended fish. If you're going to use more than one rod or walk away from this rod to do something else, open the bale on your reel. Many fishermen (okay, me too) have watched their rod disappear down a hole never to be seen again.

My second water weapon is a two and a half-foot rod with a very sensitive spring bobber attached to the tip that can indicate the slightest of bites. This rod is great when the fish are finicky or hitting very light. Sometimes the spring bobber only lifts up slightly. Set the hook and catch fish! You need to get used to watching that spring bobber. Once you do, I guarantee more fish.

The third piece is a three and a half-foot "go-to" rod with a very fast tip. I don't walk on the ice without it. When I am hole hopping, I can go from hole to hole very quickly most often with just this "run and gun" rod and my Vexilar to find an active school of



fish. A nice rod feature is that it's long enough for me to stand up and fish with it. Keeping the tip close to the hole so the wind doesn't affect the action of the bait or blow the line astray is imperative to not missing bites.

A Vexilar, if you're not yet familiar with it, is a state-of-the-art flasher fish locator and depth finder, a crucial piece of equipment for any serious ice fisherman. As a guide, I own the FL-18 model. If I'm going jig fishing for any species, in any depth of water, I will not leave home without it. It's amazing, fun, and very easy to use. The angler turns the system on, drops the Ice-Ducer (an ice transducer attached to the system) down the hole and lowers the bait that is immediately visible on the flasher screen. The bait shows up as a line between the top of the screen that is depicting the area right under the ice and the bottom of the screen that is the floor of the area being fished. Once the fisherman begins to work the bait, the electronic mark representing the bait also moves up and down on the flasher. When another line shows up on the flasher, this is a fish. You can watch as the line -- the fish -- approaches the bait. Get ready for the strike and set the hook. Believe that a Vexilar will decrease your time on the ice necessary

Continued on page 25

Celebrating its 25th Year!

WISCONSIN DEER & TURKEY EXPO

APRIL 3-4-5, 2009
Alliant Energy Center
1919 Alliant Energy Center Way, Madison, WI 53713
www.alliantenergycenter.com

Exit 262 (Rimrock Rd) off the Beltline (Hwy 12-18)

FEATURING in '09 --

- **NEW** Deer Decoy Demo Area w/Gary Clancy
- **NEW** Traditional Archery Alley
- **NEW** Antler-Measuring Demo/Seminar
- **NEW** Firearms "Answer Man" Info Center
- **NEW** Broadhead Collection/Display
- **NEW** 3-Day Adult Ticket & Military Ticket
- **NEW** Outdoors Without Limits for disabled hunters
- 570+ Booths w/New Products • New-Products Special Display Area • Trophy Deer/Bear Contest - (Entries Fri. Noon - Sun. 10am, \$15, FREE Weekend Pass, new contest & non-contest rules) • Food Plot Seminars & Info Center • Trail Cam Photo Contest • Outdoor Photo Contest • Optics Try-Out & Info Center • Venison Butchering & Cooking Demos • Byron Ferguson, Archery Trick Shot (Sa. & Su.) • Hands-On Shooting Ranges • Live Game Animals and WI Fur-Bearers

375+ Huge Antlers

Trophy Contest Sponsor

WI Buck & Bear Club
Official Measurers
1-877-273-6408

| TICKETS | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| Adult 1-Day | \$10.00 |
| Adult 2-Day | \$17.00 |
| Adult 3-Day | \$23.00 |
| Military | \$9.00 |
| Htr Ed Grad 12-18 yrs | \$10/7 |
| \$7 w/ Htr Ed grad proof | |
| 1st Yr Hunters | FREE |
| w/ Htr Ed grad proof | |
| (details-www.deerinfo.com) | |
| Trophy Contest Entry | \$15.00 |
| (get FREE weekend expo pass) | |
| Youth (6-11) | \$3.00 |
| 5 & Under | FREE |
| Group Rates | Call 1-800-324-3337 |

HOURS

| | |
|----------|-------------|
| Friday | 2 pm - 9 pm |
| Saturday | 9 am - 7 pm |
| Sunday | 9 am - 4 pm |

For city info and directions call:
1-800-373-6376
Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau
www.visitmadison.com

Go to www.deerinfo.com for

• Seminar Schedule • Contest Details
• Hotel List • Directions & Map
or call 1-800-324-3337

MIKE HART

QUALITY DEER MANAGEMENT

Seeing is believing

Seeing, in the world of trophy white-tail hunting, is believing.

In 1998, after owning and hunting property in City Point, Wisconsin, my brother Tom Hart and I purchased 80 acres of land in Adams County. Soon after purchase, Tom and Scott Bartnik, who own 100 acres with his father, Jerry, adjacent to our new property, stated that we were going to attempt Quality Deer Management (QDM). If you are unfamiliar, QDM basically requires the hunter to pass on shooting one and a half to two and a half-year-old bucks, harvest a good number of does and finally, by all means, refrain from shooting button buck fawns.

At first I thought these guys were out of their minds, and I sang those blues. How could I pass up bucks? I had barely shot enough bucks to count on one hand. After 10 years of QDM, my tune has changed. We are shooting trophy bucks and I'm a big believer. In the past 10 seasons our group of about 20 "QDMers" hunting nearly 1,000 acres of collective QDM land has taken over 34 wall-hanging trophy deer. In fact, our group has gone one step further and insists that the hunter head mount the buck whenever a decision is made to harvest an animal. You can believe that many a buck has been saved by the thought of a 500 dollar taxidermist bill for a buck that suffers from...well...ground shrinkage.

Quality Deer Management is a hunting strategy that may not be for every hunter or hunting group. First, it obviously won't work on public land. It takes a commitment of hours of long work on food plots, setting and checking trail cameras, and holding meetings with other private land owners that might not share your same agenda when it comes to deer hunting. Our group of hunters supports this philosophy and believes in harvesting a good number of does. We allow first time or younger hunters the opportunity to shoot one buck before becoming full fledged QDM hunters. After that, any buck harvested requires a trip to the taxidermist and the congratulations of many hunters.

Many hunters think that the QDM principals of hunting are wrong and totally disagree with shooting does or letting bucks go by. They reason that the next group will tag the animal that you let pass. This can be true. We have that neighbor. Their party does enjoy the "fruits of our labor" and does shoot

many small bucks throughout the season. There will always be hunters that have to tie-the-tag. It is their right.

Others hunters believe that shooting does is harmful to the deer

We know our "soup" is not as tasty as the venison stew or chili. When



After many years, hard work and patience, the Hart boys, (clockwise from above) Jason, Jim and Mike, are seeing the benefits of QDM. These three bucks were tagged in 2008



population. Either way, the choice belongs to each hunter. Although we may disagree, that choice is personal.

If you do desire to shoot a trophy buck, however, you must be able to do two things: First, let smaller, immature bucks go so that they can become the trophies of tomorrow. A deer reaches trophy size at about three and a half years of age. Taking any deer older than this under normal circumstances assures the hunter that he is tagging a quality deer with good antler development.

The second requirement is to be able to "eat your buck tag." There will be many times when practicing QDM that your buck tag remains unfilled. In fact, from my experiences this happens more often than not. "Tag Soup" for QDM hunters hoping for back straps is seldom ordered but often served. These hunters rely on the experiences and stories of the hunt to provide them nourishment for the upcoming season.

we experience the thrill and success of taking a "shooter," though, that taste of success is so much more satisfying.

Our 2008 hunting season has been a great success. My son Jason took an 11-pointer with the bow. My brother Jim has scored on the biggest whitetail taken in our group, a huge 11-pointer that will score in the 150's. Although "trophy" is certainly in the eye of the beholder, both bucks are book bucks that match the definition of trophy in most hunters' minds.

Quality Deer Management may not be for you, but it works well for us. Harvesting does and passing on small bucks has allowed this group to enjoy hunting on a whole different level. Over the past 10 years we have come to appreciate the things that QDM has done for our area. Many hunters have


followed our lead. Others continue to hunt as they traditionally have. Again, this is their personal choice that I can understand and respect.

For me, though, there is no choice. After viewing the hunting albums again and again on cold November nights in a warm Adams County cabin, Quality Deer Management makes many of our seasons...picture perfect.

Mike Hart is a former professional baseball player currently teaching physical education in the Greenfield School District. He mentors students wishing to learn how to hunt on family property near Wisconsin Dells. Contact him at Mhart3631@yahoo.com.

... Innovation

...You can see it



For more information on our Handguards and our complete line of ATV/UTV accessories, please visit www.kolpin.com

KOLPIN All Terrain INNOVATION
THE COMPLETE POWERSPORTS COMPANY SINCE 1943

the ridge

community church love God. love people.



You're Invited!

2 Services


Sundays
9:00 & 10:30AM

@ the Ridge Cinema
5200 S Moorland Rd
New Berlin, WI 53151



(262) 432 - 0228 | www.theridgecc.com

Wisconsin Decoy & Sporting Collectibles Show



Saturday, March 7, 2009
8:30am - 2:30pm

Hilton Garden Inn
1355 W. 20th Avenue
Oshkosh, WI 54902
920-966-1300

Open to Public, Room to Room

| | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Wednesday Night | March 4, 2009 | Old & New Decoys | Duck Calls |
| Thursday Afternoon & Night | March 5, 2009 | Hunting Knives | Animal Traps |
| Friday Afternoon & Night | March 6, 2009 | Wildlife Paintings | Cartridges |
| | | Prints & Related Arts | Fishing Tackle |

Free Appraisals

DHS OUTDOOR SHOW

Deerfield High School, 1959 N. Waukegan Rd, Deerfield IL
Saturday and Sunday, February 28 & March 1, 2009, 9AM-5PM

**MORE THAN THREE HUGE GYMNASIUMS
FULL OF EXHIBITORS**


Seminars, Free Prizes, Casting Lessons, Paddle Boat Races, Rock Climbing, Shore Lunch, Guides, Resorts, Charter Boats, Tackle, and Much, More!!!

Win a New 14' Boat
With an Outboard Motor and Trailer brought to us with the help of Ahlstrand Marine in Mundelein

You can also win fishing rods, binoculars, a fully loaded tent and many other great prizes

Seminars
Bass, Muskie, Walleye, Trout & Salmon from Local Fishing Spots;
Dog training shows and fly casting competitions;
and Native Gardens to Attract Wildlife to your Yard.

Website: www.deerfieldoutdoorshow.com

Trou & Trou  **erehwon** mountain outfitter **anglers** INTERNATIONAL INCORPORATED

Ahlstrand Marine

MIKE FOSS

DIARY OF A WISCONSIN DEER GUIDE

The McCormick Files

In 2003, after donating a guided hunt to an archery benefit banquet, I met Mike McCormick, a businessman in the medical field and high bidder for our trip in the northern forests of Bayfield County, Wisconsin. After discussing details of the hunt that would target trophy whitetails, I felt some professional anxiety; McCormick has hunted various animals around the world. How would northern Wisconsin bucks and my own ability to put him in position to fill the tag compare? The 2004 archery season was upon us and Unit 3 for the first time was an EAB (earn-a-buck) unit. With just a five-day McCormick hunt scheduled, the clock was ticking; he had to shoot a doe before he'd be able to take a buck.

McCormick arrived in Washburn Sunday evening. The previous week's hunters from New York had just departed with great memories and a cooler full of venison that included a tag on a nice eight-pointer. McCormick's first morning hunt targeting a doe would be off a road cutting the middle of an old overgrown apple orchard. With worn deer trails crossing back and forth between orchards, I knew it was just a matter of time before he'd have the opportunity to fill his doe tag.

Three hours after McCormick was left on stand, I heard an excited voice on the cell phone. "Show me where the bucks are," he said. "I shot a nice doe and need help dragging her out."

For the remainder of Mike's hunt, the big bucks of northern Wisconsin eluded him. He was amazed at the size

of the forests of Bayfield County and excited and surprised with the number of deer he had seen. We parted in the same manner we had met: a handshake and anticipation of another hunt booked for the following year.

On November 7, 2005, McCormick and I sat at my kitchen table once again looking over aerial photos of newly-leased land in Bayfield County and planning strategies for the week. The forecast for the week ahead was not good. Rain or strong winds loomed. Being close to Lake Superior, wind directions late in the year can change multiple times in a single day.

On the final day of Mike's hunt, I was the one disappointed. The tag wasn't filled. Mike, in the good-natured way I had come to expect, stressed that he had once again enjoyed his stay immensely. "This is hunting," he said.

As daylight approached Friday morning, Mike was hanging on for dear life in his tree stand. I had second thoughts when I dropped him off at the stand in the predawn darkness, but he stressed that hunting was what he needed to do. With winds up to 40 miles per hour, I couldn't stand it any longer and for safety reasons traveled back to insist he temporarily surrender the hunt despite our fleeting sand in the hourglass.

By mid-afternoon, the winds had calmed and I moved him 20 miles north to a new food plot. Later, watching the headlights slicing the darkness, I



Mike McCormick with a Wisconsin Pope & Young buck taken in Bayfield County with Guide Mike Foss. (Mike Foss)

hurried out to the driveway to greet him. He didn't say a word. The look on his face spoke volumes. "You got one," I said.

With a bowl of hot soup to temper a cold afternoon on stand, we headed out to recover a Bayfield County trophy. Bouncing down the backroads, Mike described the hunt as "classic." Bottom of the ninth, two outs, bases loaded....

When we finally arrived at the point where we should have found the

buck, Mike's elation turned to bewilderment. "I dragged it right here to the edge of this field," he said. "Look at the blood. How could anyone steal my buck?"

No one stole your buck," I replied. "But it sure looks like a bear beat us to it."

After a short but hair-raising tracking job, we took back what was ours from a hungry Bayfield County black bear. Mike's reward was his first Pope & Young whitetail.

Continued on page 32

Watching the professional motorcycle championships last summer at Road America, I asked American Suzuki Midwest Regional Sales Manager Ron Klimcke why such uncompromising engineering effort is devoted to dominating the competition.

Suzuki created the race-replica sportbike market with its GSX-R750 back in 1985. The bike changed the motorcycling world. Today Suzuki is the sportbike sales leader. And it has dominated racing in the U.S., winning six consecutive championships in the AMA Superbike class.

"Win on Sunday," said Klimcke, who directs Suzuki motorcycle and ATV sales over the Midwest including Wisconsin. "Sell on Monday."

When American Suzuki became a major sponsor of "On Wisconsin

Outdoors" at Road America that morning, our team of guides and writers received two allies made for the fields and streams of Wisconsin to help us with our work; a pair of King Quad 750 AXI 4x4 ATVs. You've seen Wisconsin Hunting Guide and OWO columnist Mike Foss pull bears just shy of 500 pounds out of the Bayfield County wilderness with the King.

OWO Columnist Dick Henske rolled the King Quad to a stop last autumn in route to a moose hunt and walleye fishing trip in Ontario. "Two Canadian border guides walked over and circled the trailer," Henske said. "I thought they would ask for our paper work. All they said before leaving was... 'nice machine.'"

On Island Lake in Vilas County we too have experienced the King Quad. We pulled and launched boats, winched

downed trees from the cabin property, worked some more, and simply rode. When Wisconsin's first hardwater allowed us to test the first walleyes over the shallow sand flats, we had our machine to carry gear as far as shore.

She's a workhorse. I'm no mechanical expert. I need advice when my note pencil doesn't work in the cold. But I know what I like. And I wish you this, based solely on the reaction to the King Quad from my hunting and fishing partners. Before you buy an ATV, take a good look at Suzuki.

Oh, the Road America championship race? 68 miles long...30 bikes...and the only two Team Suzuki bikes in the race placed first and second.

The 3rd place bike was more than 30 seconds behind. —Dick Ellis

SUZUKI
Way of Life!



KINGQUAD 750AXI

KEVIN MICHALOWSKI

DOG TALK*Collar conditioning makes e-training easy*

Collar conditioning begins with the leash and the collar turned off. (Kevin Michalowski)

If you've decided to use an electric collar to help train your dog, you can't just buy a collar, charge the battery, strap it on the dog and expect perfect results. On the contrary; such actions will likely make life more difficult for you and the dog.

An e-collar is a training tool, just like a leash, just like a collar and just like a whistle. The collar does not teach the dog anything; you do all the teaching. And if you do it incorrectly, you'll only confuse the dog and end up frustrated and angry.

Let's take a step back. Before you can begin to use your e-collar, you must establish a sound base of obedience training with your puppy or young dog. Let's start with a basic discussion of puppy training before we move on to trying remedial work with an older dog.

Puppies learn by watching and doing and they learn by having success and being praised for that success. At the same time you have to give them general boundaries; but you can't come down on them too hard for mistakes because you can break their spirit and leave them too fearful to work properly. Let them be puppies and guide them along the way to encourage them to do what you want.

When puppies reach about six

months of age, you can change your training to what's called avoidance training. Put quite simply, the dog learns to follow orders in order to avoid correction. It should go without saying (but I'll say it anyway) that the dog must know what's being asked. If you just say "sit" and don't show the dog how to sit, you can't expect the right response and you should not give a correction. So we go back to the puppy days before the dog is six months old.

During those first six months, you need to give commands and show the pup what's expected. When you give the command "sit," you hold the collar and push down on the butt. When the pup is in the right position, praise the pup. Do this

with all your basic obedience commands including sit, heel, down... whatever you are training the dog to do. Here repetition and reward will guide the young dog. No harsh punishment should be used, and a calm, quiet demeanor from the trainer will help keep an overly-exuberant pup from getting out of line.

Having done initial training, you're ready to move onto the next phase. This is the avoidance training. It starts with a week's worth of corrections applied by a choke collar and six-foot leash. Get yourself a stout, properly-sized choker chain and a good nylon or leather leash and you're ready to begin. It goes something like this: Clip the leash to the choker around the dog's neck, command heel and start walking. If the dog doesn't follow, give a short jerk on the leash to get the dog at your side. Then make a turn and if the dog doesn't follow, give a short jerk on the leash to get the dog at your side. Then stop and command the dog to sit. If the dog doesn't sit immediately, give a short jerk on the leash. While keeping the dog at sit, move around. If the dog "breaks" from sit... you know the answer. Yep, a short, sharp jerk on the leash.

For the first day, do this without the dog wearing the electronic collar. On the



Here's a happy dog in the pheasant field just waiting for the next command. (Adam Michalowski)

second day, put the collar on in the morning, work the dog for 15 minutes, and leave the collar on until suppertime. If you can work the dog on the leash with the choker a couple of times between morning and suppertime, all the better. At suppertime, work the dog again and take off the collar for the night.

Notice that at no time did I say you should be using the e-collar's controller. Leave the controller in the house. Don't even turn the collar on for this first week of training. Just let the dog get used to the weight and feel of the collar.

At the start of the second week, you can now turn on the collar and start applying light stimulation. It works this way: Every time you give a correction with the leash, use the "nick" button on your controller, so the dog gets a brief stimulation.

The stimulation should be such that the dog does not vocalize. You should set the level so the dog simply glances to

one side and maybe has a bit of a confused look. All you want to do is get the dog's attention.

After a week of this, your dog should understand that your commands mean exactly what you say. The dog should also be none the wiser about where those corrections are coming from. Proper collar condition means the dog pretty much believes the correction is coming from thin air as a result of failure to comply with the command.

A properly-conditioned dog is happy to work and has no fear of the collar or the commands. Don't mess this up; it's the basis for future training.

Kevin Michalowski is author of "15 Minutes to a Great Dog" and "15 Minutes to a Great Puppy" (Krause Publications, \$12.95 each) and has been training dogs for 10 years. If you have questions or comments on dog care, email askdogtalk@hotmail.com.

JEFF NANIA

THE KNOWLES-NELSON STEWARDSHIP FUND

Is your voice being heard?

I address this to my most treasured colleagues, those who choose to spend time each year afield in the ethical pursuit of wildlife in our most time-honored traditions of hunting, fishing and trapping. In my lifetime I've met hundreds of you and enjoyed our conversations and the commitment we share for the perpetuation of our natural resources.

I'm honored to be part of your community. Like you, I'll never be able to put into mere words the enjoyment that's come to each of us through living an outdoor lifestyle.

If only I could paint a picture to hang on my wall of a fall duck marsh, November deer woods or summer musky lake that could convey all the feelings of having been there when the birds fly, or a whitetail appears out of nowhere, or the slam of the greatest of all fish hits my lure. If I could, I'd make

affected by land use changes than our outdoor traditions.

It's clear that the future of hunting, fishing and trapping is facing some challenges; we're okay for now, but overall there has been a decline in the number of people who choose to participate. If this number should drop significantly, the impact will be immediately felt.

First and foremost, hunters, anglers and trappers remain the backbone of conservation in this state. Anyone that tries to tell you different is either completely uninformed, or worse, motivated by an agenda not compatible with the best interests of Wisconsin sportsmen and women. Wisconsin has been a national leader in "on the ground" habitat restoration programs all driven by sportsmen and women. Our restorations benefit species of all kinds, few which are ever

detrimental to a unique biological community, or that hunting, fishing and trapping are incompatible with current property usership patterns.

I have been part of a committee that has been meeting for the past several months to provide guidance to the DNR regarding the rules that need to be written regarding access to Stewardship properties. The essence of this rule will be to determine when you can and cannot hunt or trap on land purchased with public funds. By the way, when I say purchased I mean fee title acquisition, not easements.

This rule package will be drafted by the DNR and then sent on to the Natural Resources Board, then to the Assembly and Senate for passage. There's plenty of opportunity for public comment. When it's done...it's done.

So in a very few weeks, the ability for us to access publicly-funded land

"So in a very few weeks, the ability for us to access publicly-funded land for hunting, fishing and trapping will be decided—probably mostly by people that don't hunt..."

copies and give them to every prospective new hunter I could find.

I can't, and no painting or story or idiotic video game can ever replace having been there. We must all agree that in order for someone to understand our traditions and want to be a part of them, they have to experience them first-hand, be a real part of the whole picture.

There are, however, some realities that challenge this picture in the future; the world around us is rapidly changing. One of the biggest issues we'll face is land use. With the exception of the occasional volcanic eruption, ol' Ma Nature is not making any more land; what we have is what we have. We are making more people who want to use this finite amount of land to suit their needs and desires. Building your dream home. Putting up a superstore in your community. Rerouting a highway to make it safer. Growing crops to not only feed a nation but also feed our ravenous demand for energy. Football and soccer fields, baseball diamonds, all require the same thing: land.

It's a balancing act of Earth-size proportions. There's nothing more

hunted. Our sport is far safer than hiking, biking and most other outdoor pursuits. The chance of you being involved in a hunting accident is about the same as being struck by lightning, actually a little less. We provide billions of dollars annually to our state economy. These are healthy family-oriented pursuits that get everyone off the couch.

The problem is all this good stuff goes away unless you have a place to go, and as I said before they ain't making anymore land, and competition for that land has never been greater.

Last fall our Wisconsin legislature reauthorized the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program for an additional 10 years. An amount of \$86,000,000 a year was authorized (supported by the sale of bonds) to purchase land for the sole purpose of outdoor recreation.

This is the largest land acquisition program in Wisconsin history. The law as passed requires that all the land be open to hunting, fishing and trapping.

There are some exceptions: land can be closed if there are safety issues, or if it can be demonstrated that hunting, fishing or trapping will be

for hunting, fishing and trapping will be decided -- probably mostly by people that don't hunt. You need to be there, you need to be part of the process. If you belong to a group that relies on the generosity of hunters, anglers or trappers, they need to be there, and I mean be there. Lip service isn't good enough.

You owe it to our natural resources, you owe to the economy of our state, but mostly you owe it the generations that follow. If you choose to ignore this, then you can rest assured that you've been a part of the demise of our traditions, because they don't exist unless we have a place to go. The day will come when we'll be hit with the hard reality: the e-world we've built is a house of cards. It and most everything else will not stand long without clean water and the land to sustain us.

Our traditions have produced our greatest conservation leaders. If we let traditions slip away, who will have the passion to lead us when we need them?

Happy trails.

Jeff Nania is executive director of the Wisconsin Waterfowl Association.



**Jeff Nania
Honored as an OL 25**

Jeff Nania has been chosen as one of Outdoor Life magazine's OL 25. Selected under the category of Conservationists, the program honors 25 men and women who have changed the face of fishing and hunting.

Accomplishments that earned Nania this prestigious award include the thousands of acres of wetland and upland restoration projects he has directed throughout the state, and his commitment to preserving Wisconsin's hunting, fishing and trapping traditions.

His never-ending commitment to our heritage, and connecting kids with the outdoors is especially reflected in both the WWA's Outdoor Adventure Days program and its partnership with the award-winning River Crossing Environmental Charter School located in Portage, WI.

Sign-up today!
**E-NEWS
WISCONSIN
WATERFOWL
ASSOCIATION**

The list of subscribers is confidential and not used for any other purpose. You can unsubscribe at any time.

**Sign up for the WWA
E-newsletter at
wisducks.org**

TOM CARPENTER

BADGER BIRDS

Pine siskin



Winter is pine siskin time. When seed supplies dwindle in their boreal homes, these northern finches migrate into southern Canada and the northern tier of states -- Wisconsin among them -- on a feeding mission.

And feed they will: tight little flocks, packed with high-energy individuals scurrying and shuttling for position in a weed patch, on a tree or at a feeder. Pine siskins share the species name *Carduelis* with goldfinches, and the birds act similarly, eat the same kinds of seeds and make parallel

sounds.

Look for a slim, sparrow-sized bird with a streaked belly and yellow patches within the tail and on the wings. Note the pine siskin's distinctly forked tail and its slender, pointed beak. These traits help you distinguish a siskin from a sparrow.

Listen for the pine siskin's three-note chew-chew-chew song, and the bird's rattling bzzzzt calls as a group feeds. Siskins sound like raspy-throated goldfinches.

Watch pine siskins fly in their

roller-coaster flight pattern that is designed to confuse predators.

Attract acrobatic pine siskins with Niger thistle seed in tube feeders or feeder sacks. Hulled sunflower is a second favorite seed, followed by millet. Suet will attract pine siskins too. They also love to pick salt off roadways.

Did you know that the pine siskin's name is no coincidence? The bird loves pines and other conifers for seeds to eat and as places to nest. *W*

TOM CARPENTER

CUB'S CORNER

Put 'em on ice this winter

Winter gets tough on an outdoorsman and even tougher on kids you want to keep active outdoors. With hunting seasons pretty much over and open water months away, now is the time for some hard-water fishing.

Like any outdoor endeavor with kids, ice fishing takes a certain amount of consideration and planning. In fact, because of how and where you do it -- in cold conditions, on frozen water -- ice fishing takes a little more thought and preparation than many other outdoor activities.

Ice fishing with kids also requires a special mindset from you: the main goals of an angling excursion on a frozen lake should be to get out of the house, inhale a few hours' worth of fresh air, and have fun. Catching fish should be secondary to these priorities (although there are ways to increase your odds for angling success).

For winter anglers fortunate enough to have access to an ice fishing house planted on a lake, your "to do" list might be a little shorter than what follows. But for those of us in the rank-and-file, we have to freelance it. Here's how.

Consider safety. By January, Wisconsin lakes are often frozen enough to drive your vehicle on. Safety guidelines call for 12 inches of ice to hold a car or truck. Consider this the bare minimum. This is one area of life where it pays to be a follower; don't drive out until others have done so safely! For safe walking travel, at least

three to four inches of ice is recommended.

Bundle them up. Youngsters' regular snow wear works just fine for ice fishing. Pay attention to good warm hats and thick gloves. Add a facemask (or use a hat with one). Use layers. Err on the side of too many clothes rather than too few.

Locate special equipment. The sky's the limit for how much gear and gadgetry you can take on the ice. But in the end, what more do you need than rod, tackle and bait (see below), an ice auger (hand models do just fine, plus kids love to try to dig holes), an ice scoop, and a bucket to sit on?

Pick the right quarry. Fins down, panfish are tops. Bluegills in particular stay active all winter and give you the best chance for success. Crappies come in as my second favorite (as open water fish in winter, they're harder to catch), and perch rank a close third for kids (because perch run deep).

Pick the right place. Go for quantity, not quality, of fish. Select a lake or backwater slough known for its numbers of fish. Kids want action or you'll lose them fast.

Know where to fish. For bluegills, think weeds and edges. The bluegills will be anywhere from 10 to 20 feet down, often within a foot or two of bottom. Early and late in the day they might be up shallower. Look for crappies suspended at 10 to 15 foot depths over deeper water. Find perch near bottom in 25 to 30 feet of water.

Know when to fish. Who wants to

get up before first light to see dawn on the frigid tundra of a frozen lake? No place for kids. Wait until just after lunchtime. Winter afternoons are short, and you'll still be on the water for the afternoon (bluegills) and evening (crappies) feeds.

Use the right equipment. Pick out a good, light ice-fishing rod and reel combo from your favorite cataloger or store. Spool up with four-pound-test monofilament. But realize that small, cold hands might have trouble working a fishing reel under these conditions; you might be better off with an "old-fashioned" jigging rod with pegs to wind up the line. Kids love to pull fish up hand over hand, or else just walk backward, anyway!

Use the right lures and baits. Use tiny (size 10 or 12) teardrop jigs with one side of silver to provide attractive flash. This flash is more important than the color on the other side, but I've always had good luck with chartreuse, blaze orange, bright yellow and black. Use tiny foam bobbers, and no weight or as little as possible, for a natural presentation.

Little grubs are best for bait. Waxworms are okay, but don't forget about mousies, eurolarve or goldenrod grubs. (Goldenrod grubs provide, by the way, great activity in and of themselves -- spend an afternoon collecting the galls in an old field or meadow, then

occupy an evening by the fire cracking the bulbs open and saving the small, round, bright grubs).

Bring food and (hot) drink. A couple of thermoses of hot chocolate are essential, as are high-carb snacks like peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, oatmeal cookies or granola bars. A little break with some warm liquid and a full belly can go a long way toward keeping the trip going.

Create diversions. Never go ice fishing without equipment for alternative activities such as footballs, soccer balls or kites. When the fishing is slow (and even if it isn't), activities like these offer kids a chance to run and burn energy in the wide-open spaces.

Have fun. Some folks take their ice fishing pretty seriously. Not me ... especially when the kids are along. Sure, it's good to get prepared the smart and right way, and give the fishing a go. Nothing's better than a mess of bluegill or crappie fillets taken from cold winter water. But if the fish aren't cooperating, or you're all a little tired of hovering over a hole in the ice, don't be afraid to get up, run around, and be together. The fresh air is worth it, and the memories you create will be just as sweet. *W*

Native son Tom Carpenter writes about the outdoor world for a variety of national and regional publications.



RAY HOWELL

KICKING BEAR*Mariah's story*

The annual West Salem Rod and Gun Club Kicking Bear event has coordinated many fishing and hunting trips for kids who can't afford or don't have the opportunity to participate in the great outdoors. So often, it's just the introduction to our fields and lakes that ultimately makes the difference in turning the lives of troubled and at-risk young people in a positive direction.

The 2008 West Salem Kicking Bear event also included rope pulls, gunny sack races, hayrides, paint ball, tomahawk throwing, a water slide and a 30-target 3-D course. Hosted by the LaCrosse Sheriff's Department, the event went on well into the evening, with a bonfire, marshmallow fight and games like kick the can and kickball.

Tara and Shelly Seiler of Droptine Divas helped mentor the kids, and distributed DVDs showing the Diva hunts. My 12-year-old granddaughter, Mariah, attended the event and was "on fire" for hunting after viewing the DVD. Mariah's name was drawn as one of the youth who would be able to hunt with the Droptine Divas one-on-one. The Wisconsin Dells area has special Ag tags because of the over-abundance of deer, providing the perfect arena for youth hoping to harvest their first whitetail.

Mariah had gone through Greg Symon's gun hunter safety course. Greg has donated his time to these Kicking Bear kids so they may complete the mandatory course prior to hunting. Like all camp activities, it doesn't cost them a cent.

We made a life-size cardboard deer silhouette that helped Mariah learn how to follow the back of the front leg line up to the center of the deer for perfect shot placement. That's exactly what she did in practice. All three rounds from the .243 rifle were placed perfectly right behind the shoulder.

The following day we were on our way. Mariah was so excited you could



Droptine Divas Tara and Shelly Seiler and Mariah Nichols, 12, with the nice doe Mariah dropped in its tracks with one well-placed shot at 80 yards near Wisconsin Dells. Mariah was picked randomly to participate in the hunt at a Kicking Bear event sponsored by the West Salem Sheriff's Department.

not take the grin off her face. Arriving at Tara's log home, we talked hunting, enjoyed hunting photo albums, and practiced shooting archery in the backyard. Because of the warm temperatures, our hosts had placed a blind on the edge of an alfalfa field in a shady spot. There was enough room in the blind for everyone including me, which may have been a big mistake. Shortly after Mariah was settled in the blind to ensure comfortable shooting, I turned around and started talking into the video camera.

"Grandpa," Mariah said, grabbing hold of me. "There's a deer...shut up!" I couldn't believe it. The deer stood there just long enough to let me know that I had blown it. For the next 90 minutes, I felt about as low as a grandpa can get

knowing he had messed up a 50-yard "give me" shot for his granddaughter. As the evening progressed, we saw other deer but too distant for a comfortable shot. Then came the words I had been dreading all evening. "Mariah," I said, "We're going to have to pack up in about five minutes."

Shelly lifted my sinking spirits with one sentence. "There's a deer coming in from the back side of the blind," she whispered. Mariah very quietly turned around with her rifle and prepared for the shot at an adult doe walking at about 80 yards. It was amazing how calm and quiet Mariah was, as if she had done this many times before. I know for a fact I was way more shook up than she was. "Follow that leg line," I said. "Squeeze the trigger when you're ready."

Slow motion enveloped the next few seconds before the rifle report sounded the exclamation point on a perfectly-placed shot. The deer dropped right in its tracks, and never even moved. Mariah watched the deer and then yelled, "I got it...I got it...I can't believe I got a deer!"

Mariah and the Droptine Divas celebrated. It was an incredible experience to watch my granddaughter harvest her first deer with two of the nicest mentors she could ever have had the opportunity to hunt with. As they were admiring the deer, Shelly and Tara welcomed Mariah to the Droptine Divas with the revelation that she would be the newest and youngest member. Mariah lit up when they handed her a T-shirt with the Droptine Diva logo.

Although we wouldn't arrive home until after midnight, Mariah talked all the way. When I dropped her off at her house, the big hug and the kiss on my cheek are things this grandpa will long remember. Having the opportunity to share God's creation with Mariah and having her understand why these animals are here for us made for a most memorable weekend.

A weekend...and a granddaughter...to be thankful for.

Acts 10:13: "And there came a voice to him, 'Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.'"

Mariah and I are very fortunate to have met Tara and Shelly. They have a great love for outdoor sports and care about others who are less fortunate than they are. If you're interested in viewing any of the Droptine Diva's DVDs, please visit their website at www.droptinedivas.com. *W*

Recently honored by Outdoor Life, Ray Howell is founder of Kicking Bear, a national organization dedicated to enriching the lives of troubled and at-risk young people through outdoor experiences. Connect with www.kickingbear.org.

**TOSTRUD, page 18**

to put more fish right on that same ice with you.

I will work a hole for about 10 minutes. If I don't get a bite, I move. If I did mark fish, I'll make a mental note that there were fish there and I may return with a different offering. Once I find an active school of fish or a hot hole, I'll work it until the fish stop biting. Many times, once you're on them, you can have action for quite some time. Once it slows down and it seems you've caught all the fish in the area, move to the hole closest to your "hot hole." Often these schools are moving. When you can stay mobile too, the success continues.

I know we haven't discussed "secret" baits. There are so many different, effective icefishing jigs out there, and with the funniest names. Go to the bait shop closest to the water you plan to fish and simply ask. No one knows the hot baits better than the local experts. As a basic rule...dark water, bright bait...clear water, use something with some shine to it. Tip it with a waxy, weed worm, mousie, etc....

You're good to go. So go. Safely, successfully...and soon. *W*

Wildlife artist Jim Tostrud of Kenosha has dedicated his life to his love as an outdoorsman and a wildlife artist. He uses his art to share his respect and admiration for the outdoors and its inhabitants with others. www.wildlifevisions.net.

S. WILKERSON

SURPLUS FIREARMS

The heirloom

In recognition of my upcoming 50th birthday and expectation of the worse case scenario come November, my latest firearm purchase was an important one, fraught with anticipation and dread. I always look forward to having the scratch in hand to buy a gun, but knowing that another "assault weapon" ban was potentially on the horizon, there was a lot to consider. My first thought was that, if nothing else, the purchase of another EBR (Evil Black Rifle) would be a good investment in the likelihood of an Obama presidency and a left-leaning Congress.

On the other hand, I already own, by news media definition (not to be confused with fact), eight assault rifles. Please note that these guns differ from a typical Fudd hunting rifle only in their ability to accept a high capacity magazine and/or posses a bayonet lug, folding stock, flash suppressor or some other deadly combination of the preceding that would only make sense to Chris Matthews, Keith Olbermann and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. Assault rifles do not fire in a fully automatic mode, despite the fact that NBC and CNN almost always portray them of having that magical ability when doing one of their hard-hitting, inane and totally subjective rants on gun control.

A firearm as a wise investment opportunity gradually began to fall by the wayside as thoughts of mortality increasingly slipped into my conscience, sub and otherwise. Turning 50 truly gives one pause. My life is well over half over and, by the looks of me, maybe more than that.

defense, hunting and recreation. My further hope is that she will carry this tradition on to her children and firearms, used safely and responsibly, continue as part of my family's heritage.

Presently, this hope is not exactly burning bright. My eight-year-old's

"My daughter likes her bling, and if I was to entice her into the shooting sports, it would have to be with something attractive. Something with graceful lines, gloss blue finish, shiny and checkered walnut stock, and tasteful engraving on its machined steel receiver ..."

Decades of poor choices have left me wrinkled, hard of hearing, overweight, and unable to smell all but the most pungent and repulsive of scents. My knees are shot, my eyesight horrible, and my back pains me much of the day.

On the other hand, despite all of my faults, I did manage to help produce a beautiful daughter; one whom I hope will carry on my family's interest in firearms as tools for self-

primary interests are fashion, music and dancing. Earlier in the summer she did show interest in a toy pistol that shot foam balls. After some initial training in gun safety and the use of its very rudimentary sights, she proved to be a pretty fair aim and enthusiastic shooter. Unfortunately, during one of the many periodic cleanings of the basement my wife subjects us to; the toy disappeared into some box, shelf or worse.

Clearly, something larger in the way of a firearm that could be housed in a gun safe was needed if the spark of firearm interest was to be rekindled in my daughter. But what kind of gun? A .22 caliber rifle of some sort was the obvious choice, but which one? For the money, nothing beats a Ruger 10/22. On the other hand, current variations lack the high gloss bluing and walnut stocks of the earlier versions. Its designer, Bill Ruger, also was an advocate of banning EBRs, which still sticks in my craw.

John Moses Browning, in contrast, was a great friend of firearm enthusiasts, as well as hunters, soldiers, and police officers. The designer of the Colt 1911, Baby Browning, and assortment of machine guns, pistols, shotguns, and Winchesters, he was the progenitor of one of the most recognizable, durable and finest semiautomatic .22 caliber rifles ever made, the Browning Standard Autoloader. A rifle that I didn't even bother pining over as a youth because of its cost and my family's limited financial circumstances. Besides, Grandpa's old

Remington Model 341 Sportmaster worked just fine on rabbits, squirrels, paper targets and cans.

The Browning is still expensive, around \$500, but we live frugally and some gun sales helped fund its purchase. It is also gorgeous, lithe and unique. My daughter likes her bling, and if I was to entice her into the shooting sports, it would have to be with something attractive. Something with graceful lines, gloss blue finish, shiny and checkered walnut stock, and tasteful engraving on its machined steel receiver. Weighing in at less than five pounds and only 37-inches long, my daughter should fit the Browning sooner than a lot of other options.

With all of this in mind, I bought the Browning and within a couple of days, had it out to the range. Shooting the Browning takes a little getting use to. The gun is extremely light. It loads from a tubular magazine located in the buttstock, not the usual tube under the barrel. In addition, it ejects from the bottom, not the right. This is a neat little feature, but also painful if one's shirt cuff isn't buttoned. Used on a rest, the Browning will eject hot spent cases right into the sleeve leaving painful marks on the skin.

The Browning is accurate, despite a too-heavy trigger undoubtedly there upon the urging of attorneys, and my lousy eyesight. At 50-yards, without too much effort, it can easily shoot two-inch groups. I think it will do better when I attach my Merit Optics aperture to my glasses. The gun did malfunction a few times with one brand of ammunition. Semiautomatic .22s, by any manufacturer, are often ammunition finicky. I also only cleaned the barrel before shooting, so the gun really wasn't properly oiled.

So the Browning is a keeper. But how would it appeal to my daughter? Shortly after I bought it, I showed it to her and explained it was my hope that someday she would shoot it with me. What did she think of that? Of the Browning, her remark was, "It's pretty, Daddy." Did she think she might like to go shooting with me, well, yes, she did.

It's a promising start. In the meantime, I will enjoy shooting and looking at my pretty Browning and potential heirloom.

S. Wilkerson is an award-winning Wisconsin journalist, firearms expert and student of the Second Amendment.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL 524

Big Muskego Ice Fishing Jamboree & Winter Card Party

at Boxhorn Gun Club

S90 W13960 Boxhorn Dr. Muskego

Saturday Feb 21

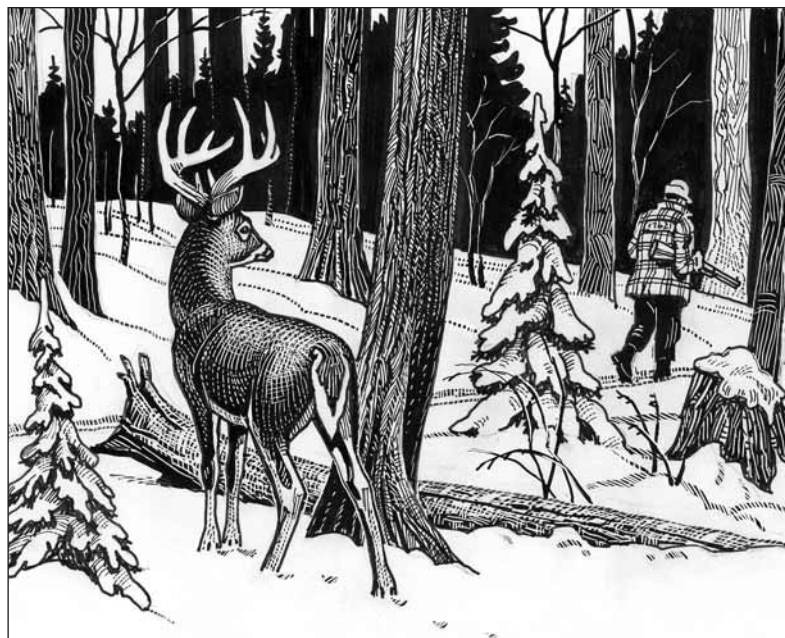
**\$10 Entry fee
for Heaviest Fish Contest 7am to 3pm**

Cash prizes for heaviest Northern, Bass, Crappie, Bluegill & Perch. Play cards with meat raffles, silent auctions, and door prizes all day. Grand raffle prizes include two round trip Midwest Airline tickets, GPS, and Aqua Vu underwater camera.

For information call Bob Mercier (262)719-2743 or the Knights of Columbus Council at 524 (414)327-5541

... HISTORICAL WISCONSIN ...

from the archives of *The Echo* - www.echopressonline.com



Back in the 1950s hunters took to the woods in pursuit of white-tails with a combination of skill, stealth and sheer determination. The trophy bucks weren't lured into a tree stand by bait, rather the hunter had to learn the deer's many natural tricks that often outsmarted the hunter. Watching your back trail was a lesson any hunter worth his salt learned quickly while in the field. (Sketch on right from the archives of The ECHO - www.echopressonline.com)

CURTIS

LAW OFFICE

TRIAL LAWYERS

2905 Universal Street (Hwy 44 West & Universal Street)
Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54904
(920)233-1010

1-888-818-1010

Email curtislw@execpc.com

**We represent injured people,
not insurance companies.**

GEORGE W. CURTIS
(Also Licensed in Florida)

BETH D. OSOWSKI
(Also Licensed in Minnesota)

BRIAN P. BEISENSTEIN

MICHAEL J. KUBORN
(Also Licensed in Arizona)

FREE INITIAL CONSULTATION

- INJURY AND DEATH*
- ACCIDENTS*
- WORKER'S COMPENSATION*
*No Fee Unless We Collect For You
- PROBATE
- REAL ESTATE
- FAMILY LAW
- GENERAL LITIGATION

DUE TO OUR REPUTATION,
MOST CASES SETTLE WITHOUT A TRIAL

Kuehl Kids Photo Contest

And the winner is Lauren Wicker



Lauren Wicker caught her first walleye on the Fox River in DePere. The walleye was 20". Lauren is our winner!

NOTE TO JOHN WICKER:
OWO needs your address so we can mail Lauren's caricature drawing.
Contact us at 262.251.1614.



Additional Submissions ...



←
Eddie Hackl, age 5 of Seymour, WI, with his first fish, a bluegill. Photo submitted by his father and fishin' buddy Bob Hackl.

Smile!



→
Colin Wicker caught his first 10-inch bass in St. Germain. Photo submitted by John Wicker.

Kuehl Kids PHOTOS



Submit your photo of a kid in the outdoors!
Winners will receive a caricature drawing of their photo.

Submissions will be printed in *On Wisconsin Outdoors*, and the winner will be mailed the original caricature artwork as our gift!

Photos scans or digital files must be provided at high resolution 300 dpi and emailed to submit@onwisconsinoutdoors.com.
If we select your photo, the original caricature drawing will be mailed to you at no charge.

Interested in purchasing a caricature drawing made from your photo?
Contact artist Johnathan Kuehl directly at kuehlarts@gmail.com or call (612) 812-9600.

DICK HENSKE

GOLDEN ROADS

Want to visit Alaska?

In August, Mariel and I teamed up with three other retired Wisconsin couples and spent 10 days in Alaska. We cashed in our credit card miles... grabbed our credit cards... and headed to Anchorage. We ordered our round-trip ticket (\$455) early and flew from Minnesota to Denver to Anchorage. Our goal was to sight-see and fish between Denali and Homer.

The cheapest way to tour Alaska would be to drive up in a camper or mini-motor home, or take a tent. In 2002, my wife and I took a mini-motor home. It took seven weeks to get to everything we wanted to see and do. But time is a problem, and we all hated to give up our summer, so this year we planned a short trip in late August.

We used the Internet to book on Frontier Airlines and rented two vans at \$700 each. We stayed in a small motel in Minneapolis, which secured our car for the 10 days we'd be gone, at no additional charge. One of our group enjoyed finding homes for all of us along our route in Alaska. We stayed in four different cities, averaging a little more than \$100 per couple per night. We ate evening meals of salmon and halibut in the homes. We shopped at

Fred Meyer stores, which are bigger than Wal-Mart. The food was good, but expensive. The roads are great in Alaska. We traveled the Parks and Alaskan Highway.

What did we do? We visited three different glaciers and could actually climb on them. We took a boat called the Ptarmigan to watch the blue glacier calving. Fishing was great for salmon and halibut aboard the 52-foot Legacy we booked in Seward. We caught more than 100 fish and kept enough to feed us for the entire trip. In Homer, the girls took a trip to Halibut Cove while we fished nearby.

In Wasilla, our main stop-over area, we attended the Alaska State Fair, toured Independence Mine, visited Denali Park, and caught grayling. We also went to a dinner show and we rode a dogsled at the Iditarod Headquarters.

Talkeetna was a near town for food and shopping. We also took a half-day trip up the Susitna River in a jet boat to fish salmon at the mouth of the Clear River. It was a wild ride and we caught chum and silver salmon using hardware.

Mariel and I were fortunate to take



a plane trip to see Mt. McKinley. It was only on our last day that the clouds lifted and allowed us to do this. What a breath-taking view of a 20,000-foot world wonder.

Overall we did a lot of driving, but with beautiful mountain views everywhere and a thousand things to do. You've got to love it.

Would we recommend this trip? Yes. But remember, if you rent a self-contained camper you will cut your costs a little.

Would we go again? Yes. But we have seen it all, and the next time I

would go only for four or five days to fish, and would stay in a small place along the Kenai River between Seward and Homer. There are lots of fish!

What is the downside? Alaska charges tourist prices, and tourists are everywhere. You just can't get away from the tour buses that accommodate the thousands of visitors who travel here by cruise ship.

On our first trip to Alaska, we put our small motor home on the "Kennico," which is a marine ferry on the intercoastal waterway. We had a quiet time and never saw a cruise ship. We docked at smaller cities along the way and really saw and enjoyed Alaska.

Another problem was ATVs. They are overrunning Alaska, gouging up mountain trails and streams. I'm sure they're trying to regulate them, but right now it's a mess.

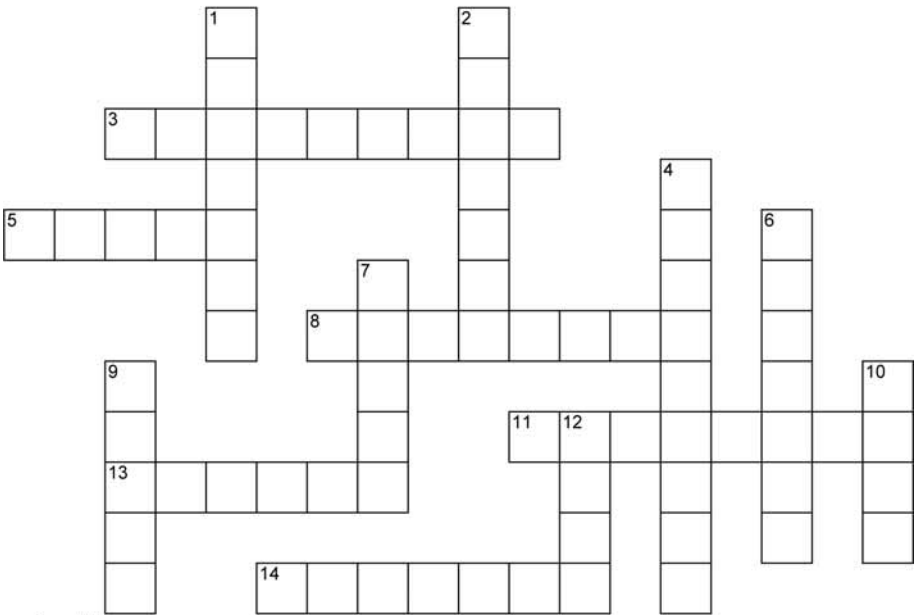
What to bring? Warm clothes. We wore longjohns on the boat trip, took a full rainsuit and bought waders from Cabela's that folded into a small package. A heavy-duty spinning rod and fly rod are necessary.

If you're planning a trip to Alaska, plan early and order a copy of the Milepost book to plan your trip online or call 1-800-726-4707. If you're not adventurous, fly to Alaska, rent a car, and book a one-week stay at Sheep Creek Lodge two hours north of Anchorage. Expect great food, great fishing and great sightseeing.

No matter how you do it, don't miss Alaska, one of our most exciting states. *W*

Dick Henske of Manitowish Waters hunts and fishes Wisconsin, Canada and the western states. Rarely does he miss a day in the field.

Outdoor Criss Cross



ACROSS

- 3 Common name for hard-skull trout.
- 5 Type of lure used when vertical jigging.
- 8 _____ Research Center sells deer scent.
- 11 Brett Farve promotes _____ jeans.
- 13 Salmo's _____ Darter.
- 14 Fish mentioned in 'The Reich Stuff' column.

DOWN

- 1 Binocular manufacturer from Germany.
- 2 Fishing term for 'dark water'.
- 4 A 'no-rod' gun-cleaning product.
- 6 Big name in icefishing electronics.
- 7 Brand of ice augers.
- 9 On a coyote hunt, use a call and a _____.
- 10 Color of a fox.
- 12 A Firearm's worst enemy.

Answers on page 33

DARRELL PENDERGRASS

OUT THERE*A quiet season brings reflection*

On the ninth day of the nine-day Wisconsin deer-gun season, I sat on stand as the sun ebbed further and further below the western horizon.

A covey of ruffed grouse that had loudly awoken each morning from a nearby brush pile skillfully and silently returned, each sailing in through the gray aspen with secrets they'll never share. I imagine they know where the doe are bedded down. I imagine they witnessed the hiding spots back in the pines where the bucks are waiting out these final minutes. And I imagine the grouse giggling amongst themselves at the hunter close by who has come up empty in his attempts at bagging a deer.

Around me the coldness of December began sweeping in. In the morning the calendar page will be torn away and November will be lost forever. I've already fought several bouts of violent body shakes brought on by dropping temperatures, and I can stay focused on the possibilities before me. When you go through these convulsions, oftentimes a sense of warmth takes over and you can manage another half-hour or so in the woods – before it happens again. Indeed, I am not leaving, and I am here for the duration.

As my hunting brethren know, the 2008 Wisconsin deer season was not what it has been in recent memory. Statewide, some reports have the hunt down as much as 25 percent or more. Locally in the Ashland, Bayfield and Douglas county areas, it's off as much as 40 percent. From my stand in Grand View I can report that I did not hear nearly the amount of shooting as I have in the past. There have been times when I've actually feared for my and my family's safety when we've gone out to feed the horses – but not this time.

I've heard from men of the outdoors who are inclined to speculate that the deer herd is down drastically, that a sizable bear population has taken too many fawns and yearlings, that a growing wolf presence is making itself known in our woods and forests, that bands of marauding coyotes are getting more aggressive, and that the always-evil Department of Natural Resources doesn't know its head from a hole in the ground. But I'm not saying this, because I don't know any of this.

I do know that on the afternoon of opening day, a doe stood 75 yards downwind stomping the ground in nervous anticipation, as my eight-year-old son and I hung high above the

ground in our stands. Jack smiled and gave the thumbs up on a shot, as his word dictates the events of our hunts. But then, back behind the doe a big deer moved through the brush. A buck? Possibly. Perhaps we should wait. I held off.

After the doe had snorted three or four times and loudly rushed from the scene, stirring up a good deal of havoc and chaos in our woods, Jack whispered up to me, "You just had to get greedy, didn't you?" But the season was still young, even if I'm not, and I was confident that I'd be successful.

I also know that two days later, as I sat alone on stand, with the hour hand about to turn to the five o'clock hour and the day's hunt over, finally, two doe came by. I'd waited, and waited, and waited for something to happen. Here it was, and too late to make a difference. The grouse were winging in to their brush-pile apartment, little smiles upon their beaks.

On Thanksgiving day I know that a group of my extended family and friends worked five hours of drives in the woods near our homes and kicked up just four or five deer. Shots were fired, but not successfully. At dinner later, our conversations centered

around Thanksgivings past, since there was nothing new to talk about.

Finally, my last deer encounter was merely an apparition in the fading light of yet another day. Behind me, calculated steps of some kind edged in close. I thought that possibly now would be my time. But then the sounds coolly edged away.

Climbing down this final time from my stand, before heading down the snow-covered path that would take me to the field where in the distance I'd see the warm lights of home where my family awaited my return, there was no sense of failure or regret. I had hunted with more determination than ever before, I had endured more cold and more hours on stand, and had less success than ever. I did not shoot a deer. I had not fired a shot.

But in doing this, I feel more like a hunter than I ever have. And it's still grouse season. *W*

"Out There: Twenty years of family, fishing, farming and a life afield," a collection of stories by Darrell Pendergrass, can be purchased by sending \$15 and \$3 for shipping and handling to Darrell Pendergrass, 52405 Otto Olson Road, Grand View, WI 54839.



OWO Cub's Corner columnist **Tom Carpenter** is the right man to introduce kids to the hunting and fishing sports. He tagged this monster in Green County in November.



OWO Contributor **John Kubiak** targeted spawning ciscoes to catch and release this 42-inch musky in Vilas County when most of us were hunting in November.



OWO contributing writer and Wisconsin guide **Lynn Nicklasch** led client **Craig Truemper** to this 53-inch musky on Green Bay estimated at 51 pounds. The fish had a 28-inch girth.



OWO writer **John Volkman's** wife **Amy Volkman** arrowed her first buck near Green Bay in 2008, this beauty with a perfect shot at 30 yards.

On Wisconsin Outdoors Board of Directors

Dear Hunter Daily,
I'm really upset. I just heard on the radio that the Wisconsin hunting and fishing regulations are available in mong and Spainerd. I don't know either of those.

—Sledge Nelson, Melllwalkie



Hunter Daily

Sledge Buddy,
Try the English version. And hang on, there's talk that the DNR Board may pass the Gomer Pyle-Forrest Gump commemorative regs for guys just like you.

—Hunter Daily



Conibear Smith

Dear Conibear Smith,
How can I live "green," reduce waste and become a more productive citizen?

—David Holmes, Cedarburg

Listen... Holmes is it? The DNR website says an average Wisconsin resident generates 1,259 pounds of municipal solid waste annually, or nearly three and a half pounds each day, which includes both household waste and an individual's share of commercial waste. Instead of worrying about that, let's just flush out the politicians in the U.S. Senate and House, we'll make up for all of that garbage and millions of tons of waste. Holmes, don't listen to your college professors or local newspaper so much ... it sounds like you're about to wreck your God-given brain.

—Conibear Smith

Dear Rex Rodsalotta,
Did you know that in the old days musky fishermen used to dispatch fish with a .22 caliber handgun? What happened to that law, which allowed the incorporation of both the shooting sports and the hook and line sports?

—Paul Rettenbocker, Neenab

Dear Paul,
They banned handguns from dispatching muskies for two main reasons. Three Wisconsin boats sunk in 1957 from an average of 27 holes in the floor, courtesy of excited fisherman. And, with the growing popularity of catch and release, a state study in '63 that cost \$500,000 proved conclusively that very few fish survived with six or seven rounds of hot lead in the noggin.

—Rex Rodsalotta



Rex Rodsalotta

On Wisconsin
Outdoors
With the Dick Ellis Experts



MAILED TO YOUR HOME
6 ISSUES (1 YEAR)
Only \$23.95

PRINT CLEARLY

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

E-MAIL ADDRESS

☐ PAYMENT OF \$23.95 ENCLOSED Payable to On Wisconsin Outdoors LLC

Mail to: 20240 W. Rustic Ridge Drive, New Berlin WI 53146
ALLOW 4-6 WEEKS TO PROCESS

DIANE SCHAUER

AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES

Shutting down a Wisconsin threat

Most residents of Wisconsin consider hunting, fishing and other forms of outdoor recreation to be activities grounded in family traditions. Unfortunately, those traditions are being challenged as many of our native plants and animals are being overrun and destroyed by invasive species. Invasive species are plants, animals and insects that were introduced to this area from another region or country. In their home environment, the invaders have checks and balances to keep them under control. Placed in a different environment, they have no natural controls and spread aggressively. These invaders displace native species and disrupt entire ecosystems.

The majority of aquatic invasive species arrived in the discharge water of ocean-going vessels arriving from Europe and Asia. Zebra mussels are one such invader. They are D-shaped clams with yellow and brown stripes, often smaller than one inch, but they can grow to two inches. Zebra mussels are filter feeders, removing the plankton that is an important source of food for young fish.

Zebra mussels attach to any hard surface, including piers, boatlifts, boats and motors, and are difficult and messy to remove. When they die, their sharp shells litter beaches and cut the feet of swimmers.

Vegetative aquatic invaders include Eurasian water-milfoil (EWM) and curly leaf pond weed (CLPW). These plants form thick mats of vegetation, making it difficult for native plants to get the sunlight they need and making boating and fishing difficult and swimming unpleasant. Invasive plants can damage the economy of an entire community by decreasing the value of lakefront properties.

People are the primary means of transport of aquatic invaders, usually moving the invasive species from one water body to another on boats, trailers and personal watercrafts. But this can be prevented. When leaving a body of water, inspect your equipment. Drain water from your boat, motor, bilge, and live wells. Remove all plants, plant fragments, and animals from your equipment. Do not move bait or other aquatic plants or animals to another water body. If you plan to move your recreational equipment from one body of water to another, disinfect your equipment or allow it to dry for at least five days. This will help stop the spread of invasive species.

More aquatic invaders are lurking nearby, waiting to be transported to a lake near you. Round gobies, quagga mussels, and fish hook and spiny water fleas are in Lake Michigan now. Yet despite what seems like a difficult situ-



There is nothing pretty about the threats posed by invasive species on Wisconsin waters. (Bob Korth)

ation, you can control the spread of aquatic invasive species simply by cleaning your gear and draining all water before leaving a lake.

For additional information on the identification or impact of invasive species, visit the DNR website www.dnr.state.wi.us. For invasive plants, the websites for the Invasive

Plant Association of Wisconsin, www.ipaw.org, and the Midwest Invasive Plant Network, www.mipn.org, provide great photos and information.

Diane Schauer is the aquatic invasive species coordinator for Calumet County.



Jim Foss, the guide's brother, shot this buck scoring 172 seven days after McCormick's archery season close encounter with the same animal.

FOSS from page 21

McCormick's 2006 season lasted only two hours. With fresh snow on the ground, a big 10-point slowly scent-checked the trail where Mike held vigil and met his demise with one well-placed arrow. With several big bucks patterned for the 2007 archery season, Mike again stepped into the thick of things just two hours into day one of the hunt.

"I passed up on one Pope & Young buck and shot a bigger one," he said on the cell phone. "It's big... bigger than last year's buck, but the shot didn't look good."

By listening to the scenario replayed by this experienced hunter, evaluating the recovered arrow and the lack of trailing blood and the color of it, we came up with the disappointing conclusion that the shot had grazed the big buck's back. Our significant solace came from the belief that the buck would live another day. Ultimately, it would only be seven days. My brother, Jim, shot it seven days later during the rifle season, as it moved briskly in rut down a ridge not 200 yards from Mike's archery stand. The massive buck scored 172.

After Mike passed on another trophy on day two of the hunt due to the uncertainty of making a clean kill, he was called home with a family emergency. His 2008 hunt is on the books, with November on the horizon and one question looming...

How will the next chapter of the McCormick Files play out in Bayfield County, Wisconsin?

(Editor Note: This Foss story was written prior to the 2008 season. With the kill down 50 percent in Bayfield County, Mike's clients including McCormick saw very few deer. His quest for another Wisconsin trophy resumes in 2009.) *W*

Contact Mike Foss, Northern Wisconsin Outfitters at 715.373.0344 or at www.northernwisconsinoutfitters.com

BILL CUNNEA

COMPANION AND HUNTER

Young Bert, the not-right dog

Twenty years ago this year, I moved to Wisconsin from Chicago. The following January, I found and bought Button, a German wire-haired pointer. She was easily the best dog I've ever had, and I was the most mature I'd ever been in training a dog. I had a great companion.

She died after 11 years, and I spent a year dog-less. I visited breeders while meandering on a motorcycle. One Sunday I dropped by, and we chatted. They exchanged looks and said, "Uh, we sold a dog a couple of years ago and they were going to put him down, so we took him back, refunded most of their money even though they neutered him and he can't be shown or bred. You should meet him."

Uh-oh.

So "El Cazador" (give me a break) was let into the breeder's house, bounded around, sniffed a bit, messed with some of the other dogs, and finally came to me when the interesting stuff was done.

He was a chronic barker and the former owner would let him loose at night, hoping he'd get run over by some car in their Chicago suburb. One night he walked into a Walgreen's through the electric doors, and made new friends. When I first saw him, he was shaved to the skin. The vet stuff the breeder got with him included a monthly prescription for tranquilizers and a history that included treatment of all four feet for blisters, because the former owner had taken him out on an asphalt parking lot during the summer and kept him there for four hours.

I said, "I'll think about it. I'm on a motorcycle so I couldn't take him now, anyway." I was thinking, No. You don't need other folks' problems and you've gotten used to life without a dog.

They happily replied, "We'll follow you home."

So, I started with teaching him to "speak" on command. Then I taught him to be quiet the rest of the time. From there, we wandered. I let him teach himself about rabbits and squirrels and some pheasants, as he could find them. He loved the crick and would literally run a full half-mile in shoulder-high water as I walked along. He lost weight, gained muscle, and came to view the outside the way a four-year-old kid views Toys-R-Us. Each time, "out" was (still is) a dash to the greatest adventure a creature has ever experienced.



"His retrieving is phenomenal. He is (I say reluctantly) as good as, or maybe better, than Button. I wing-shoot some birds, and pheasants are runners. YB has run down pheasants that had virtually no damage to them..."

I did a lot of kitchen training: fetch, sit, stay, whoa, come. I teased him with pheasant wings. I got some quail, frozen, and went about teaching him to fetch without chewing -- that took a while. In the kitchen the dog was catch-able. I sat on the floor so there'd be no chasing, and we went through stuff over and over and over and.... He had great drive, good instincts, and a reluctant awareness of obedience.

I started shooting .22s outside when he was in the house... then, on a lead on the other side of the house... then as he chased a training dummy. He was rained with praise, praise, and praise. I repeated the program with a .410, then a 20 gauge. He developed no gun shyness. He was hearing just a noise at first, then a noise with which he associated hunting, and finally with pheasants and rabbits. This took time, but we had no set-backs.

The pointing came naturally. I reinforced each point with "Whoa" and praised him and then went in to flush, gun or not. I personally want my bird dog to break on flush. It gives him an advantage on the retrieve, as long as he stops when I yell "No," and comes back to the hunt.

His retrieving is phenomenal. He is (I say reluctantly) as good as, or maybe better, than Button. I wing-shoot some birds, and pheasants are runners. YB has run down pheasants that had virtually

no damage to them. He's retrieved a bird I didn't shoot at. (I missed my shot, he went after it, and came back with a hen he stumbled over.) He has gone back after I winged a bird the day before, tracked it the following day from the high ground it landed on, and (in spite of my cursing him for disobedience) kept on the trail until he found and brought back the still-alive bird -- a very chagrined, still-alive bird.

But, he ain't "right." He refuses to give up adolescence. He is adamant that that cat needs to be killed. He took on a raccoon without a second's hesitation. If I let him, he'll rough-house, mouthing but not biting my hands. If I laugh, and I often do, he'll bark and look for something to play with. If I bend down when he's in this mode, he'll snatch my knit cap off my head and play keep-away. A friend (a veterinarian, for crying out loud) sent a squeaky toy. I have heard that piercing squeak one billion times. Often, I make him stay in one room and hide the toy in another, then command "fetch." He'll stay at it forever, although he's learning to look inside my boots in the kitchen. I may try the cutlery drawers next.

He's a 70-pound dog. If I sit in the rocker in front of the TV, drape a sleeping bag over my legs and put my

feet up on the footstool, I will have all 70 pounds of him lying on my lap and legs, with his head strategically positioned to block the television.

And...sigh...he sleeps with me. I resisted for a long time, but realistically, that's a 70-pound bed warmer in an old farm house. He's my companion.

But... he ain't right.

Bill Cunnea has been a writer, teacher, consultant and outdoorsman for over 30 years. He continues to be taught lessons by his dogs in southwest Wisconsin, where he's lived for 20 years. He's never caught a lunker, nor shot a 12 point buck, and he's got the lack of trophies to prove it.

PUZZLE from page 29

Outdoor Criss Cross





Great gear for the woods, fields and waterways

By JJ Reich

Here's the rundown on six hunting and fishing products that you may find useful in the woods, fields and waterways. We did.

BUTCHER-LITE PROCESSING SET

For \$70, this lightweight, portable, eight-piece meat processing kit includes all the tools needed to butcher big game, stored in a nylon roll that converts to a belt scabbard. The kit includes: three-inch caping knife, four 1/4-inch gut hook skinner, six-inch boning/fillet, wood-bone saw, sharpener, ribcage spreader, and gloves.



With the economy the way it is, more and more hunters are processing their own game. For less than the average price to process a deer, this kit provides it all. The company also sells very good instructional DVDs to help you out.

Outdooredge.com
(800) 447-3343

SPORTSMAN'S GOLD BOURBON ESSENCE

For \$7 a jar, Sportsman's Gold marinades offer twelve different flavors that are created by experienced chefs. Rich and sweet, Bourbon Essence (pictured)



combines the flavors of bourbon whiskey and teriyaki glaze with hint of smoky black pepper and allspice.

Other marinades on the market are extremely salty. But this definitely has great taste without a ton of salt. They are made by a company that is well established in the gourmet food world, but new to the outdoor industry, so their distribution in major retail stores is not built up yet. You most likely need to order online. Try one.

Sportsmansgold.com
(800) 338-8899

TIE BOSS BLOCK & TACKLE KIT

For \$50, the Tie Boss Block & Tackle easily handles tough lifting jobs. Its mechanical advantage makes hoisting 200 pounds feel like only 50 pounds. The kit includes: stow pouch, 35 feet of rope, removable hooks, two durable pulleys, and a 3/8-inch, self-locking-and-release, instant tie-down mechanism.

Did you strain your back struggling to heave your buck up the meat pole this year? I didn't. I used this thing instead and it worked like a dream. Plus the innovative, self-locking-and-release, instant tie-down mechanism can be used for other jobs like tying down other gear to your truck or trailer.

Tieboss.com
(877) 900-2677

WOODHAVEN HOTWING MOUTH CALLS

For \$27, this is a three-pack of high-quality mouth calls all featuring the popular "bat wing" cut. The kit

includes the orange latex, three-reed, all-purpose CopperWing; the 2.5-reed, sharp-toned YelloWing; and the three-reed RedWing, which offers combinations of throaty-yet-sweet tones.

Winter is in full swing; it's time to perfect my turkey calling while driving into work every morning. It's cold outside and my windows will be rolled



up, so I won't freak out any old ladies while waiting at a stop sign... again. Anyway, these calls come complete with Woodhaven's legendary craftsmanship and special latex which makes them worth their price.

Woodhavencustomcalls.com
(256) 463-5657

WILEY X BRICK POLARIZED SUNGLASSES

For \$130, these sunglasses are designed specifically for boating and fishing. These innovative sunglasses feature a removable, multi-layer, facial-cavity gasket that blocks out wind, debris, and glare. Light-adjusting lenses can handle bright or dim conditions.

The thick-yet-comfortable gasket



makes these glasses feel more like protective ski goggles. Your eyes will thank you for wearing them while you're whipping across a cold lake. They come with several accessories and are available in a variety of lens and frames styles, including polarized smoke lenses with black gloss frame (pictured).

Wileyx.com
(800) 776-7842

SHOWDOWN DIGITAL FISH FINDER

For \$270, this ice-fishing fish finder has a vertical display matching the entire, vertical water column for easy signal interpretation. It features a simple seven-button no-menu operation, silent operation, cool-white backlit display, auto-bottom lock zoom and digital depth display, and has many other features and accessories.



Although I haven't tried this one myself, folks tell me it's easy to use right out of the box. The unit is easy to read because of the innovative display screen and it works well in both shallow and deep water.

Naturevisioninc.com
(218) 825-0733

JJ Reich is an outdoor writer who contributes product-related articles to several national publications and is the author of *Kampp Tales™* hunting books for children (www.kamptales.com).



A large, framed advertisement for Leinenkugel's 1888 Bock beer. The central image shows a condensation-covered bottle of beer and a tall glass filled with the same beer, topped with a thick head of foam. The bottle's label features the Leinenkugel's logo, '1888 BOCK', and a banner that reads 'CAREFULLY BREWED BY THE LEINENKUGEL COMPANY FOR FIVE GENERATIONS'. The background is a scenic painting of a forested landscape with a waterfall. A red banner in the upper left corner says 'NEW SPRING SEASONAL'. The text 'Spring Is Bock.' is overlaid on the left side of the bottle. At the bottom left, a bottle cap is shown next to some stones. The bottom right contains the Leinenkugel's logo, a 'BEAR IN MIND' logo, and copyright information.

NEW SPRING SEASONAL

Spring Is Bock.

Leinenkugel's
1888 BOCK

CAREFULLY BREWED BY
THE LEINENKUGEL COMPANY
FOR FIVE GENERATIONS

The recipe is 120 years old. But the taste is completely original. That's the spirit of Leinenkugel's® new, easy-drinking 1888 Bock. First brewed back in 1888 to celebrate the coming of spring, we revisit our legendary recipe using today's finest dark and pale roasted malted barley and select hops. So now you can experience the same deep ruby color and genuine malt kick that will draw you out of one season and into the next.

Beer lovers looking to get out and experience time-honored craft flavor in a whole new way can join us at leinie.com.
©2009 Jacob Leinenkugel Brewing Co., LLC, Chippewa Falls, WI

Leinenkugel's
LEINENKUGEL

BEAR IN MIND
LEINENKUGEL'S 1888 BOCK

Northeast Wisconsin Sport Fishin' Show

March 6-8, 2009

Shopko Hall
Veterans Memorial Complex
GREEN BAY

Hours: Fri 3-9, Sat. 10-8, Sun. 10-5
Admission Still Only \$8.00!

NEW! KIDS UNDER 12 FREE!
when accompanied by an adult



The Show With MORE FISHIN' INFO!



Bob Mehsikomer
Musky Master!



Mike Mladenik
Find and Catch
BIG FISH!



Tas Kaliska
A Woman's
Perspective



Lee Haasch
Lake Michigan

MANY MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED!

Don't Miss The MUSKY SYMPOSIUM!

One seminar room will be dedicated to ALL MUSKIES, ALL DAY, ALL THREE DAYS of the event! Check back often for an exciting lineup of the nation's top musky authorities!



Check Our Website For Updates! www.greenbaysportshows.com

DISPLAYS - DEMONSTRATIONS - ATTRACTIONS FOR EVERY FISHING ENTHUSIAST! Rods - Reels - Lures - Boats - Motors - Electronics - Charters - Resorts - Publications - Trout Pond - TONS OF TACKLE AT GREAT PRE-SEASON PRICES!

Info: 920-434-SHOW 800-628-7971 www.greenbaysportshows.com

HUNTING'S BEST AT THE CLASSIC!

Wisconsin DEER CLASSIC and Hunting Expo

Feb. 27 - Mar. 1, 2009

Shopko Hall
Veterans Memorial Complex
GREEN BAY



HOURS:

Fri. 3-9PM
Sat. 10AM-8PM
Sun. 10AM-5PM

Seminars By Top Hunting Authorities!



C.J. Winand
Deer Biologist



Steve Bartylla
Scouting Expert



**Roger Sigler's
Antler Dogs**
Find Sheds, Tracking

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND!
"Game ON" Cooking Demos



Get Wild!
Gourmet Venison Recipes With Chefs
ANDREA AND AMY

More To Be Announced!

**Displays - Outfitters - Antler Contest - DNR Wall of Shame
State Championship Taxidermy Competition
Kids' Archery & Air Rifle Ranges**

ADMISSION Still Only \$8

NEW! KIDS UNDER 12 FREE

(Must Be Accompanied By An Adult)

BRING THE WHOLE FAMILY!



Info: 920-434-SHOW 800-628-7971 www.greenbaysportshows.com