

January/February 2010  
Vol. 3, Issue 3

# On Wisconsin Outdoors

with the  
Dick Ellis Experts

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*Off by 300,000?*

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





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DIANE SCHAUER

## THE ROOTS OF TRADITION

# Sturgeon spearing: As witnessed by a first-timer

**F**ebruary 14th, 2009. 5:30 a.m. My ride called and was on the way. I was bundled in layers upon layers of clothes. I tiptoed into the bedroom where my spouse still slept, whispered, "Happy Valentines Day," and left for opening day of sturgeon spearing on Lake Winnebago.

I had never been sturgeon spearing before 2009, and wasn't certain about what to expect. The spearing was only allowed from 6:30 a.m.-12:30 a.m.—not too bad, right? For me, it would be a great adventure of the coldest and craziest variety.

### PRE-GAME WARM-UP

But it began the day before, on Friday the 13th, of all dates. With above average temperatures the previous week, there were many thin spots and cracks in the ice on Lake Winnebago. Already afraid of being out on the ice, I exaggerated the danger in my mind. But I knew I would be as safe as one can be on a frozen lake because I was going out with a group of seasoned spearsers.

"Seasoned spearsers" is putting it mildly. Pete Hoelzel, who built the equipment to saw the dozen or so holes that day, comes from a family with a strong tradition of spearing sturgeon. His father told me they used to buy sturgeon tags for a nickel a piece. Pete's two children, Steven and Jenny, planned to be out opening day, too.

We headed to the lake, shanties in tow, and it was a good thing we hadn't hauled out the shanties the weekend before. On Tuesday, the warm winds out of the southwest were so strong that many shanties from Oshkosh were relocated miles away, near Neenah and

Menasha, and the owners had to search for them and haul them back.

We entered on the east side of Lake Winnebago, just north of High Cliff State Park. There were large patches of dark ice—not inviting. As the group gathered, we decided to move south. We stopped often to test for water clarity. Cloudy ... cloudy ... still cloudy, getting better ... finally, clear! Despite the runoff from the warm-weather melt that week, the water was 17 feet deep and clear to the bottom. Time to pick our spots.

There wasn't a flake of snow covering the ice, which made for treacherous treading and also created more work. Glancing around the lake, one could see dozens of trailers and pick-ups loaded with huge mounds of snow. I was told the snow is needed to pack around the edge of the shanty to block out any stray glimpses of sunlight. It was hard for me to imagine shoveling snow into a trailer or truck to haul to the lake. Wasn't this whole sturgeon spearing thing enough work already?

The teamwork and group effort I witnessed was impressive, and I began to understand that it was camaraderie and friendship that really seemed to motivate these men. I watched the guys measuring, sawing, shoveling, sliding and swearing. An unbelievable amount of effort is involved in preparation for opening day. But before leaving the ice on Friday, four sturgeon were seen in our freshly cut holes during our scouting mission. Maybe we picked the right place after all.

### GAME TIME

On Saturday we drove out onto Lake

*Continued on page 4*



From cutting big holes to landing big fish, Winnebago sturgeon spearing is a group effort from start to finish.

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**SCHAUER, from page 3**

Winnebago, enjoying the light snow, looking forward to the prospect of spearing The Big One. I was invited to share the shanty with Brian, a friend of mine from Ducks Unlimited. Brian had speared a 72-inch, 93-pound sturgeon in 2008, which was his first sturgeon in more than a decade. We hoped for a repeat performance.

By 6 a.m. we were in the shanty. Brian draped the ropes and positioned the decoys, getting ready for the day. I watched as a highway of cars with bright headlights streamed across the lake. *Amazing.* This shouldn't have been a surprise though: In total, 10,239 sturgeon tags

were sold and 6,853 shanties were on the ice for the 2009 season opener.

Finally, 6:30 a.m. came ...and went. The hole was still dark and the water was murky, but the heater was cranking and the beer was chilling outside in the fresh snow. By mid-morning, Ken Hoelzel speared a 63-inch, 87-pound sturgeon. When I got there, Mike Schroeder, using the same shanty, had speared a 42 inch fish. A 67 inch sturgeon was also speared within walking distance from us in the opposite direction. The fish were around, but we only saw walleyes. No sturgeon.

**PASSING THE TORCH**

Jenny hoped to get her first sturgeon. At 21, it was her fourth year in a shanty and she hadn't speared one yet. In 2008, her spear hit a sturgeon in the boney head and bounced off. Earlier this day she saw a sturgeon and waited; she didn't want to repeat last year's over zealousness. Jenny waited for just the right moment, only got two tines in the tail and the fish shook free a few feet from the surface of the hole.

But it was Jenny's day after all. By noon, she had perfectly speared and landed her first sturgeon, a 42½-inch, 27.8-pound beauty. Everyone's

first sturgeon is a beauty. Jenny smiled, laughed and danced in the snow. Her friends and family all flocked to congratulate her on the magnificent fish.

Jenny's father had brought the hole cutter, used it for all his friends, family and even some strangers. All his work, all his time and effort, made this day the best ever as Pete celebrated with his daughter. The family tradition will continue, as Jenny plans to introduce her daughter to the shanty on opening day in 2010. *W*

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



Jenny Hoelzel proudly hoists her first sturgeon, an event celebrated with elk burgers, venison brats and lots of smiles.



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TODD BOHM

## KIDS OF THE COLD

### *The salute of a different flag*



With sweat beads still dripping from my forehead after drilling over 50 holes with my Strikemaster ice auger, I bent over one of the holes and dropped a shiner down in anticipation of a tip-up flag indicating a big northern or walleye.

Suddenly, I heard the people in our group yelling, "Tip-up!" and turned to run to the bouncing red flag only 25 yards away. As I began the sprint to the flag, I was soon overtaken by several of the kids in our fishing group and realized my role would be to give advice to the young anglers swiftly closing ground to the flag.

The three girls swarmed around the hole and, within seconds, a plump 23-inch long walleye made its way onto the ice. As I made my way to the hole to help the girls and to take a quick picture, another yell of, "Tip-up!" had them running to the next flag. So began our annual Christmas ice fishing expedition.

#### A FORMAL EDUCATION

Ice fishing is an excellent way to introduce young anglers to the joy of fishing, and it's a great way for families to get together and enjoy the outdoors of Wisconsin. By planning and preparing, ice fishing with your kids can produce many lasting memories and strengthen their desire to be more involved in outdoor activities.

When organizing an outing with your kids, take time to look at the weather forecast. Although many of us are only able to fish on the weekends, trying to time your trip with decent weather will only help to make the experience more enjoyable.

Another key in planning your trip is to pack extra clothes for the kids to change into if they get cold or wet. Inevitably, kids find a way to get wet hands or feet, and an extra set of gloves or socks will be lifesavers.

On our expeditions, four wheelers and caravans of Otter sleds make taking extra equipment onto the ice a breeze. Utilizing ice shelters and heaters will also aid in making ice fishing comfortable for kids. The shelters are a place for kids to go and get warm as they play and fish on the ice and can also be used if they need a short nap to re-energize.

Packing plenty of food, drinks and snacks are also a must. Preparing a "shore lunch" on the ice is one of the greatest treats during our ice fishing trips and full bellies help make the stay on the ice more comfortable.

Finally, pick a lake or reservoir that will provide plenty of action for

the young fishing enthusiasts. During the past 10 years, we have focused our efforts on lakes that produce day-long action—and we haven't been disappointed. Most trips have had non-stop tip-up action.

There's no better way for kids to learn how to ice fish than to give them plenty of opportunities to practice. Setting up tip-ups, running to flags when they pop up, catching (and missing) fish and tangled lines are all part of the fun and excitement that will help form memories and fuel the fire for future trips of our young anglers.

Our annual Christmas ice-fishing trip has created many memories during the years. It's not uncommon to catch and release more than 100 northern pike during the event or walleyes pushing 8 pounds. But most importantly, it's helped create excitement and memories for our children who have accompanied us on this trip and, hopefully, one day will take their own children on the "Christmas Ice Fishing Expedition." *WB*

*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. Contact Todd at 715.297.7573 or visit [www.wisconsinanglingadventures.com](http://www.wisconsinanglingadventures.com).*



*Kids and ice fishing go together like Packer football games and tailgating. And at the end of the day, the number of fish produced matters little when compared to memories made and smiles shared.*



TOM CARPENTER

# YOU'RE SET FOR SONG DOGS

## Winter hunting action: coyotes

January and February—the real depths of winter—are tough on serious hunters, but not because of the snow and bitter cold. With today's modern clothing and footwear options, a little nasty weather shouldn't hold anybody back. What keeps us indoors is the fact that most of the hunting seasons have wrapped up.

Sure, there are rabbits to chase and squirrels to stalk, maybe some snow-time grouse to pursue. And there's always ice fishing; but even that can get ultra-slow in winter's doldrums. So here's what to do: Go coyote hunting!

You've probably heard about winter coyote hunting, said to yourself,

fresh air, you might even collect the raw material for another reward: a fine fur to tan and then honor with a spot on your trophy wall.

There's no better time to hunt coyotes than the depths of winter, when the harsh conditions mean that coyotes are on the prowl, hungry and eager for any meal they can get. And you probably already have most of the equipment needed to do the job.

Use your existing camouflage, gear and warm boots to ward off the elements, as well as a sighted-in deer rifle, and you're almost ready to go. Even better in the gun department, here's an excuse to set yourself up with

varmint call—primarily, a rabbit in distress call.

That's it! There's really no excuse to stay home. Sure, you can get more serious about your varmint-hunting gear once you're hooked, but these basics will get you into the field and into the coyotes just fine to start.

### YOU CAN'T HUNT FROM THE COUCH

Hunting coyotes isn't rocket science. That's not to say it's easy! But don't make it hard on yourself by over-thinking things. You want to get where you can see some open country, conceal yourself as much as you can

while still being able to get your rifle up for the shot, and make the sounds of a suffering rabbit (the makings of an easy meal) to lure a coyote into range.

Basically, I think of winter coyote hunting sort of like I would a long-range turkey hunt, but with the wind as a factor. Backing up against a fencepost, tucking into a rockpile in a field, slinking down in some cattails and sitting with my back to a big old tree have all been successful setups for me.

Just like turkey hunting, you want to break up your profile and stay perfectly still. But you have to consider the wind, too.

Like any canines, coyotes have a magnificent sense of smell. They use their noses to find prey and to identify danger. You want the breeze blowing in your face, or at least cross-lots to you. But be prepared for an incoming coyote to try and circle downwind in an effort to get a whiff of their prey before committing.

Don't be afraid to really wail on

that rabbit-in-distress call. Give it plenty of volume and lots of emotion. Call for a minute, go silent and wait for 5 or 10 minutes, then hit it again. Work for at least a half-hour at each spot. You might conduct four or five different setups in a morning or afternoon of hunting.

Hunting with a buddy is great, because you can set up back-to-back in some sort of fashion so that you are each covering different territory. I recommend arming one of the hunters with a shotgun, as some coyotes will come in very fast and almighty close. (Use a modified choke in a 12-gauge, loaded with magnum, copper-plated BB loads.)

Remember that coyotes will hang out in timber, brush, marshland or other cover, but will come out and cross open country to check out the opportunity for an easy meal. Farmland is ideal coyote-hunting country.

And that brings up another beauty of this winter pastime: Getting permission to hunt coyotes in this low-impact fashion is usually not a problem, even on land that's locked up for other hunting activities. It's far enough from deer season now that nobody cares much if you traipse around. And many landowners can appreciate the effort it takes, and the service you provide, when taking out a coyote or two.

So don't make any more excuses this winter: Get out there and chase a few coyotes. These cagy predators are common to abundant across Wisconsin's landscape, especially in farm country, and hunting them is pure, exciting fun. It's a great way to get out of the house for awhile, and that in itself is reward enough. And with a little time and effort, you will experience the heart-stopping excitement of watching a coyote stalk your calls. *W*

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



"Gee, that sounds sort of fun," and that was that. But what better things do you have to do on those bright, cold, sunny winter days? Or for that matter the snowy, blowy, cloudy and raw ones?

A half-day of coyote hunting will fill your lungs with fresh air, add a little excitement to an otherwise idle sporting life, and put a smile on your face. In addition to the exercise and

a sweet little whistler in .222 Rem., .223 Rem., .22-250 Rem. or other fast-shooting, like-minded caliber with bullets in the 50-grain range. All are prime varmint medicine and fun to just shoot at any time of year.

The only things you might need to purchase to get started on coyotes are "whites" to slip over your dark clothes as camouflage in the snow, and a

**On Wisconsin**  
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GARY ENGBERG

**GARY ENGBERG OUTDOORS***Deer Camp 2009: The tradition lives on*

*The early 80s marked the beginning of a decade-long run of harvesting big bucks at the Lochner camp.*

The 2009 Wisconsin firearms deer season is now history with the 9-day gun season closing on Nov. 29. This was the 158th year of deer hunting in the Badger State, which is always one of the country's leaders in deer harvested and number of licenses sold.

This season there were 626,404 licenses sold and the deer count after opening weekend (Nov. 21-22), was 100,330 deer harvested with 49,583 bucks and 50,478 antlerless deer registered. These numbers were down more than 20 percent from the 2008 opening weekend totals of 133,828 deer registered, including 52,477 bucks and 81,351 antlerless deer harvested.

**WHY THE DECLINE?**

The decline in harvested antlerless deer was the result of new regulations in the state to reduce harvest numbers in management units that are below the long-term average. Most counties in northern Wisconsin returned to the traditional 9-day buck-only season.

The other factors that contributed to the lower deer numbers were: fewer herd control units, no earn-a-buck units

outside the Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) zone, two tough winters in a row that resulted in poor fawn production, and a dense fog opening morning that prevented any visibility until late morning.

Usually, 60-70 percent of the total deer harvest occurs the first weekend of the season. Overall, deer numbers are down in many areas of the state and many hunters are expressing anger and dismay over the pre-hunt estimate of the size of the deer herd.

During the recent season, I registered and helped age deer with the DNR at the registration station at the Wilderness Fish and Game store in Sauk City. The store's owner, Bob Lochner, is an avid hunter who regularly goes out west hunting elk, and this spring harvested his first Wisconsin black bear. Like many Wisconsin deer hunters, Lochner and his family have religiously maintained and continued the "deer camp tradition" over the last 4 decades.

**DEER CAMPS OF WISCONSIN**

Wisconsin has developed a great history of deer camps during the past 100 years. In the early years, hunters would travel to northern Wisconsin for the deer season with family and friends and hunt for the entire season—no matter how many days it lasted. The deer numbers had rebounded from the days in the early 1900's when most of the northern white pine forests were clear-cut for lumber to help build America, and in return the deer herd was decimated.

At right is a little history of Wisconsin deer hunting since 1959, when Wisconsin led the nation for the third year in a row with 61,000 deer killed and 338,000 licenses sold.

**THE HIRSCH CAMP**

According to the DNR, the original deer camp goes back to the 1950s and was in Millston in central Wisconsin's Jackson County. This is about the time that a major change came to deer hunting in the state: A majority of the deer herd

*Continued on page 14*



*The Lochner family of hunters in the early 1970s at their first camp, the Hirsch Camp, located near Millstone.*

**WISCONSIN DEER HUNTING HISTORY**

**1962:** There was an estimated 400,000 deer in the state

**1970:** More than 72,000 deer were harvested, more than 500,000 licenses sold, and there were 13 hunting-related fatalities.

**1978:** A new record of 150,845 deer harvested.

**1980:** Blaze orange clothing was made mandatory.

**1982:** A new record of 182,715 deer registered.

**1984:** More than 255,720 deer registered.

**1987:** First year antlerless permits were issued.

**1989:** Herd estimated at 1.15 million deer, 310,192 deer killed, and 662,280 licenses sold.

**1990:** More than 350,000 deer registered and 699,275 licenses sold.

**1992:** Hunters are upset with the DNR deer herd estimates.

**1995:** A new record of 398,002 deer harvested in Wisconsin.

**1997:** The safest year on record with no hunting-related deaths.

**2000:** There were 694,957 licenses sold with a harvest of 442,581 deer.

**2001:** The deer herd is estimated at 1.5 million deer and CWD is discovered in SW Wisconsin.


**2006:** 469,385 deer registered

**2009:** There were 626,404 licenses sold, almost 10,000 new 10-11 year olds were allowed to hunt under the new Mentor Hunting Program to help bolster the number of new hunters to counteract the loss of "baby boomers." An online database recording hunting activities and number of deer and other wildlife seen while hunting is added to the DNR website, and hunter dissatisfaction continues with a lower deer harvest and reports of hunters seeing fewer deer.



SUZETTE CURTIS

**RECIPES BY SUZETTE***Venison delights*

**H**appy New Year! It's hard to believe that it's been an entire year since I've started sharing recipes with you. Because many of my own personal favorites have been published, I've done a little digging into the personal favorites of friends and family members. What a wonderful experience it has been to discover new ideas and even some "secrets" along the way. These are recipes from my mother, my sister- and brother-in-law, and our friends from Kentucky. Thanks to all who were willing to contribute. 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.*

**Hot Venison on a Bun***By Charlotte Shimel*

Venison rump roast: Brown both sides of the meat in a heavy skillet and season with salt and pepper

Slice 2 small onions over the meat after browning.

Add 2 bay leaves and 5 whole cloves.

Use 1/4 c. vinegar, 1/4 c. water and 1/2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce as cooking liquid.

Simmer slowly over low heat until meat can be pulled apart with a fork.

Leave in natural juices and serve on a buttered bun.

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**Venison Jerky***By Bill Shimel*

3 lbs. lean venison (round steak works well)

1 tsp. onion powder

1 tsp. garlic powder (may be doubled if more garlic flavor is desired)

1 tsp. ground black pepper

1/4 c. soy sauce

1/3 c. Worcestershire sauce

Venison should be trimmed of fat, sinew and other connective tissue. Then slice 1/2-inch thick by 1-inch wide, making all slices uniform to facilitate uniform drying of the jerky. Partially freezing the venison until it is firm prior to slicing will make it easier to obtain uniform pieces.

After slicing venison, place slices in a bowl and add all remaining ingredients and stir to completely coat all the venison slices. Cover the bowl and place in refrigerator overnight. Re-stir the meat and seasoning mixture a couple of times to insure uniform marinating of the venison.

Prior to placing the venison in a dehydrator, drain the excess liquid from meat. Place slices of venison in a single thickness on dehydrator trays with space between slices for uniform air flow and to avoid sticking. Spraying trays with a nonstick spray will make removal of completed jerky easy and facilitate cleanup of the trays. A dehydrator set around 140 degrees will require 8-9 hours to reduce the venison to a desired dryness for jerky.

Jerky being stored for any length of time prior to eating should be refrigerated, or it can be frozen for long-term storage.

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**Venison Parmesan***By Dorothee Bigler*

2 lbs. venison steak/chops, cut into bite-sized pieces

3 tbsp. olive oil

1 egg

1 tbsp. milk

1/3 c. parmesan cheese

2/3 c. Italian seasoned bread crumbs

1 large onion, finely chopped

1 6 oz. can tomato paste

2 c. shredded mozzarella cheese

1/2 tsp. salt

1 tsp. pepper

1/2 tsp. sugar

1/2 tsp. dried marjoram

2 cloves minced garlic

2 c. water

In large skillet, heat oil over med-high heat. Meanwhile, whisk egg and milk in a small bowl. Combine parmesan and bread crumbs in large plastic bag. Dip venison pieces into egg mixture and place into plastic bag. Toss venison in bag until completely coated. Brown coated venison in hot oil and transfer into greased 9x13-inch baking dish.

Add onions to skillet and sauté until tender. Stir in tomato paste, salt, pepper, sugar, marjoram and garlic. Slowly add water, stirring constantly. Bring mixture to boil, then reduce heat and simmer (uncovered) for 5 minutes. Pour mixture over venison in baking dish.

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JERRY KIESOW

# FLY FISHING IN WISCONSIN

## Tying your own tackle



Fig. 6

Last issue I promised we would begin looking at how to tie your own flies. I always (try to) keep my promises.

Once you get hooked on fly fishing, the next natural step forward is tying your own flies. Most think about tying flies in order to save money. Well, that might be true once you have the basic tools and supplies. (I'll expand on that later.) Some feel that tying your own flies will just add to the fun of catching fish, and that's definitely true. There is a special thrill the first time you catch a fish on a fly you tied yourself.

Also, once you get into tying, you realize you're learning more and more about what fish feed on at specific times of the year—you become a part-time entomologist/fish biologist—and that makes fishing a whole lot more interesting and fun.

All that said, before you rush out and buy a lot of stuff, let me tell you that not everyone enjoys tying make-believe critters. I have had an occasional student tell me, "Well, I learned a lot here, and the best thing I learned was that I will continue to buy my flies." Those comments are rare.

I said earlier that many anglers tie flies to save money. It will cost you a minimum of \$50 to purchase a starter kit. Some go for as much as \$250. You add from there. Over the long haul, you will save money per fly once you have the supplies. However, you cannot buy material for just six flies. When you buy material, the amount purchased will

probably tie 25-100 flies, in some instances—such as hackle necks—you can 1000s of flies.

Most kits come with a CD to show you how to get started. Some also include step-by-step manuals. Both methods work. What works better, if available in your area, are hands-on classes.

### FROM THE HOOK, UP

The very first fly I teach my students to tie is the basic hackle fly. This fly is tied with three materials—a hook, thread and one hackle.

This fly teaches how to mount a hook in the vice, how to use thread in a bobbin and one way of using soft hackle. The recipe looks like this:

Hook: #10 wet  
Body: Black thread  
Hackle: Ginger, multi-varmint, or badger—your choice.

Place the hook in the vice. Thread the bobbin. Wind the thread on the hook, beginning three turns behind the eye and winding tightly to the bend of the hook (Fig. 1). Wind back to the front, then back toward the back, always stopping shorter before returning to the front. Repeat this winding forming a tapered body—narrow in the back, heavy to the front. Be sure to leave two eye widths of space between the front of the body and the eye.

Select a hackle. When bent, the

barbs should be as long as or slightly longer than the hook. Strip the base (the wide part), of the hackle from the stem and attach to the top of the hook right behind the eye with four turns of thread (Fig. 2. Note the body shape). Grab the tip of the hackle (with a hackle pliers if you have one), and wrap the hackle around the shank of the hook forming a collar, wrapping from base of the body toward the eye of the hook. Make three wraps. Tie off the hackle with four turns of the thread (Fig. 3). Trim the excess hackle. Hold the hackle back with your thumb and two fingers, carefully, or you will feel the point of the hook, while you wrap and form the head (Fig. 4). Whip finish. Trim the thread and apply head cement.

Your first fly (Fig. 5)! How do you fish this fraud and what can you expect to catch?

This is a wet fly, fished below the surface. It represents small insects in the nymph stage. For bluegills and crappies, cast it to brush or stumps or the edge of weed beds, allow it to sink several inches, then retrieve in short jerks making it look like an escaping bug.

For trout, quarter-cast upstream, allowing the fly to drift as deep as possible, and at the end of the drift (if it gets that far), allow the current to make it rise to the surface, as an emerging nymph would do.

This is a pattern that should be tied in several hook sizes: 10, 12, 14 and 16. The smaller sizes 14 and 16 are best suited for trout, especially when they are favoring midges.

Once you have tied a few of these and are comfortable using the bobbin, add one new material—floss. Two effective colors are red or orange. Attach the floss after you have attached the thread to the hook and form the body using the floss.

If you use orange, find a hackle with barbs that are dark inside and light outside. When you have finished, you will have a pattern called the "Orange Fish Hawk" (Fig. 6). It has been catching fish, especially brook trout, for decades.

Begin and enjoy!

Keep a good thought! *W*

*Jerry Kiesow fly fishes in Wisconsin year round, and teaches fly tying and fly fishing in the Grafton area. If you have questions about his classes, contact him via email at [mrmrsprg8@wi.rr.com](mailto:mrmrsprg8@wi.rr.com).*

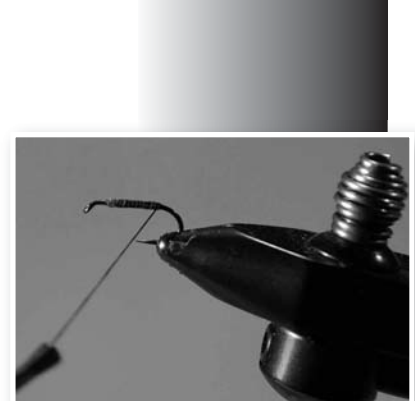


Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



PHIL SCHWEIK

# LINES FROM A HOOKSETTER

## Ice fishing ethics

This article is probably going to be a little controversial, but it's one that needs to be written and definitely one that needs to be read!

Every year a few we hear several stories about the guys who move in on an area that someone else is fishing, or the guy who "cut you off," and stories about the inconsiderate guy who took someone else's ice hole and just basically intruded on "their space."

None of these stories end well, and none are ever pleasurable to hear about.

Here are a few simple rules and guidelines to what I believe are proper ethics when targeting fish through the ice—and avoiding becoming a part of another angler's frustrating story.

### FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED

If you are the first one on the lake, go out and set up wherever you want—the lake is yours. But if someone else is out there or there is a group of guys fishing, it's incredibly inconsiderate to move in on them, even if they are catching fish. Keep your distance. That is their spot if they were there first.

When determining how close is too close or how close you can get without encroaching, remember to stay at least 10 yards away from them if they are jig fishing and 50 yards away if they are tip-up fishing.

This is just common sense. If the group invites you into their circle and you want to fish with them, by all means take advantage of it—but still keep a respectable distance.

More times than not, I've done better on my own at new locations than fishing with a large group simply because of the commotion and noise that they create. Or, sometimes, the spot that they are fishing has been burned out.

If you arrive to a lake and have set up a good distance away from other anglers and are not catching any fish, don't move closer. Try a new technique or target a new spot. And if you still can't catch any fish, try walking over and ask the fishermen that are catching fish how things are going. They will likely respect the fact that you didn't move in on them and, through the course of your conversation, ask about techniques and depths to try to get a feel for what is working.

\*\*\*\*\*

***"When determining how close is too close or how close you can get without encroaching, remember to stay at least 10 yards away from them if they are jig fishing and 50 yards away if they are tip-up fishing."***

\*\*\*\*\*

More than likely they will be happy to help you out.

### WAITING YOUR TURN

If you head out on the ice and there are guys sitting where you were previously fishing, you need to find a new spot for today. This has happened to me many times and, to be honest with you, I have found better spots because of this. It forces me to search out new locations where I would normally get stuck in the rut of staying in one place all the time, mainly because I caught fish there yesterday.

### STARTING FROM SCRATCH

If you head out on a lake and there

are a lot of ice shacks set up in an area, what do you do? It looks like a great place to start, right?

I would suggest buying a lake map and studying it to see just what type of structure or depth the houses are on and try to mimic it with my own spot.

Occasionally the locations where ice shacks are set are "community" spots that people have been going to year after year and have done well. When setting up around ice shacks and joining the community, don't set up right outside a guy's

door so that when he enters or leaves his shack he falls into your hole. Keep your distance and be courteous. You wouldn't want someone setting up right outside your shack would you? Move around and select a location that abides by the rules and everyone will continue having a good time.

Most of this is common sense, but to those new to ice fishing, this is worthwhile to note. A few simple rules and guidelines will create a lot fewer conflicts and make the day a lot more enjoyable for everyone.

Have a great season; I'll see you on the ice. *WS*

*Phil Schweik owns and operates Hooksetters Guide Service. As of October 19, Phil Schweik client's had caught and released 118 muskies, with a large fish of 51 inches and 35 pounds. Contact Phil at 715.581.2620 or by visiting [www.hooksetters.biz](http://www.hooksetters.biz).*



*Successful ice fishing extends far beyond the number of fish raised through a hole. Practicing on-the-ice ethics and employing common sense are the easiest ways to ensure all parties have a good time.*



TERRY BITZ

# OUTDOOR CONVERGENCE

## Hard-water 'gills



Traveling light with the willingness to be mobile is the key to staying in the action and landing a limit of big bluegills.

Late last January, I joined Jeff Waltz, of Dousman, and Paul Hanson, of Waukesha, on an ice fishing outing in Waukesha County. The initial plans had us going to the outstanding fishery of Delavan Lake in Walworth County, but a late change of plans sent us instead to a

small lake near Oconomowoc.

The day greeted us with foggy conditions and slick roads. However, by the time the three of us had unpacked the trucks and started making our way out onto the ice, the sun started peaking out from behind the clouds.

Waltz had fished this lake a number of times, and pointed out what the depths would likely be in each location. This lake might be small, but it features sharp break lines, quickly going from 5 foot deep to 15 foot deep. Waltz has encountered northern pike on this water in excess of 30 inches and he has seen big crappies caught there as well. Waltz and I were interested in the pike, Hanson was thinking about the crappies.

While Waltz and I have been ice fishing for years, Hanson is relatively new to the ice fishing scene.

"I started ice fishing 2 year ago," said Hanson. "Now I am an ice fishing monster. I love it!"

The three of us drilled numerous holes in a variety of

locations along the back side of the lake. After the holes were drilled and the water depths checked, Waltz and I rigged shiner and chub minnows onto our tip-ups and placed them in the ice holes. Meanwhile, Hanson tied a small jig onto his ice rod and then baited the jig

with a wax worm.

Hanson put a fish finder down into the hole he planned to fish in and announced that he was marking fish on the equipment. Within seconds he landed the first fish of the day, a big bluegill.

By the time Waltz and I had finished setting up our tip ups, Hanson had caught and kept a handful of large bluegills and released numerous small and medium sized ones, all from the same hole.

"This is not normal," Hanson said 20 minutes later. "Normally, I would have had to move to another hole by now to catch this many fish on other lakes."

Eventually, Waltz and I sat down near Hanson to wait for the orange flags to fly on the tip-ups. While we watched, Hanson continued to haul fish after fish out of his hole in the ice. They were mostly bluegills, but a couple large crappies were mixed in along with some undersized perch.

An hour later, things continued to be slow on the tip-ups. Outside of Waltz catching a small bass, the tip-ups were not living up to their name. Tip-down might have been more fitting.

Getting a little bored and also a bit envious of Hanson's non-stop fishing action, I decided to pull one my tip-ups out of a hole so I could get in on the jigging action. Hanson loaned me a panfish pole, some bait and offered instructions on how he was catching the fish. Seconds later, I was pulling bluegills out of the icy water.

Waltz, however, was not willing to stray from his pike chase. He kept all three of his allowed tip-ups rigged and set in their holes. Waltz said he would leave the pan fishing action to us.

About 2 hours before dark, we picked up and moved to the other side of the lake. Waltz had seen big crappies caught there by other ice anglers in previous outings and thought it might



Paul Hanson (left) and Jeff Waltz kneel behind a limit of bluegills caught by Hanson on a small lake in Waukesha County.

offer Hanson a better opportunity to catch some of the paper-mouthed panfish.

Once the new holes were drilled, Hanson again told us that the fish finder showed fish in every hole he checked. He started jigging and started catching more large bluegills. I started jigging in a different hole and found panfish willing to bite as well.

As the sun started skirting the horizon, we saw three deer making their way around the lake, likely heading for a local field to find some food. We packed up a short time later with food on our minds as well. Interestingly, we believe food is the reason the pike were unwilling to bite. With so many panfish in the lake, the game fish have all the food they need. It might be a good idea for the three of us to make return trips to remove some of those panfish. *W*

Terry Bitz is a freelance writer who resides in Pleasant Prairie, WI. He can be contacted at [tbitz@wi.rr.com](mailto:tbitz@wi.rr.com), or by visiting his website at [www.outdoorconvergence.com](http://www.outdoorconvergence.com).



"HANG ON! IT MAY BE A STATE RECORD!"



DAN MOERICKE

# AN 'UP NORT' REPORT

## Anticipation

On Halloween night, it happened. I saw the biggest buck I've ever seen from a hunting stand. After he finished making a scrape, standing on his hind legs to reach the licking branch, he turned and started down the trail toward my stand. It was then that I could see the long drop tine on the left side of his high, symmetrical antlers.

My heart rate and blood pressure both skyrocketed. Bow ready, I thought to myself, "This is really going to happen." It didn't. The buck came to an abrupt halt when he spotted a bedded doe decoy that I had placed about 25 yards to the right of my stand.

After what seemed like an hour (probably actually 2 or 3 minutes), he decided that something wasn't quite right, turned and slowly walked up the ridge and back into the thicket from which he had magically appeared.

For the next three weeks, I hunted that area—hard. Vigils on the stand were filled with the expectation that, at any moment, the big-racked bruiser would again emerge from the thickets. He didn't. As a matter of fact, nothing did except for one yearling doe the evening after my close encounter. No matter, those hunts were some of the best I've ever experienced due to the anticipation of what could happen



*The author and son, Steve, enjoy the kind of moment that both savor and look forward to repeating, year after year.*

next, what I believed would happen next.

As I think about turning the page on the calendar and all that 2010 will bring, it's the anticipation that fills me with hope and enthusiasm. A close

second to the experiences themselves, I think it's the pure anticipation of upcoming outdoor pursuits that we relish. Mentally scrolling through the calendar, I know that I look forward with great anticipation to:

- *The first tip-up flag springing to life* on a frozen lake, and watching the reel slowly spinning off line as a (hopefully large) walleye swims off leisurely treasuring my golden shiner offering.
- *The sight of a tip-down rod twitching*, and then teetering slowly toward the hole as a big crappie cruises away with my bait.
- *The sound of a big tom turkey* busting loose with a thunderous gobble in response to a seductive yelp in the misty dawn on a field edge in Shawano County. (My cousin Roy assures me there are plenty of the big birds in the area and that, if I can't shoot one, it's not his fault.)
- *That first "tap" of a walleye* on opening day as a 1/16 oz. jig tipped with a fathead minnow flutters slowly to the bottom of whatever lake is selected as the first target of the season. The lake selection process, of course, involves a long meeting with several buddies and a

few Leinie's ... which is something to look forward to in itself.

- *Spending a week in May with the "Leinie's Guys"* at the 26th annual Great Walleye Assault, a fishing trip filled with hook-setting, food, flatulence and fun.
- *The sight of crappie bobbbers* over a weed bed on a summer day, twitching and then lazily submerging left or right, depending on which way the crappie happens to be swimming at the time.
- *The sound of drag being peeled off a reel* as a lake trout hits a canoe-controlled spoon with a fury that is testament to the bitterness that only this species possesses.
- *A long drive to Colorado* where once again I'll try to get close to a bull elk with my bow. This will be my third attempt and hopefully the things I've learned on the two prior outings will allow me to realize the dream. Of course, shooting an elk would just be a bonus because simply hearing them bugle, the mountain scenery and catching big cutthroat trout make the trip something to treasure.
- *Climbing into a treestand with my bow* for the first hunt of the season while enjoying the luxury of shirt-sleeve comfort while watching the woods come to life with the new sunrise.

Which brings me back to that drop-tine buck that stepped into my life on Halloween. Hopefully, he's using the survival skills that have served him well the past 4 or 5 years to endure another Wisconsin winter. It's with great anticipation that I look forward to seeing him again. And, even if I never do, it's that anticipation that will make the pursuit worth all the effort.

Of course, none of these things are nearly as sweet if not shared with friends and family. Thankfully, I have both in large quantities. I can't wait. *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.*

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DICK ELLIS

## ON WISCONSIN OUTDOORS

### *Circular journeys bring beagles, bunnies back to hunters*

John Hansen took one more step along the brambles marking the lip of the meandering ravine on public land just outside Whitewater—and the rabbit bolted. Not a horseshoe's pitch from the hunter, the cottontail stretched across the dirt road for the safety of the switch grass, but the 20-gauge scattergun cradled in Hansen's arms never moved.

Hansen's first "shot" was a verbal barrage aimed solely at rallying the canine troops; Buddy, Oscar and Bud, methodically searching the near side the of ravine on this early Sunday morning with Bill Barton, of Racine, and his 12-year old son, William.

"Tally-Ho, Tally-Ho, Tally-Ho!" Hansen's voice reached out and tumbled down the ditch to pull the beagles toward the first reward-hanging fresh tracks on the snow of a cold, January morning.

"We won't take a rabbit unless the dogs have brought them around at least once," said the Union Grove hunter as Buddy hit the hot scent first and opened up in the ageless song of the tracking beagle. "Hopefully that rabbit will do a full circle and end up right where it broke cover. We'll be spread out along here waiting to see if that happens."

#### HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

The chase, and all others taken by this team each weekend day on public and private lands from Princeton in the north to Monroe in the south,



John Hansen works the brush near Whitewater, looking to start another rabbit chase with beagles Bud, Buddy and Oscar. (Dick Ellis)

was really born 15 years ago in the mind of Bill Barton. Already a hunter's son in Racine, the thought of the beagle chase called him, and he contacted the American Kennel Club to learn just where and how to begin.

"I didn't know much about any of it then," said Barton. "There are hunting beagles and show beagles. Brace beagles were a hunting dog developed for line control, and small-pack option beagles developed a faster working trial and hunting dog."

Brace beagles, Barton said, defines the development of a line of hunting beagle through breeding over generations, emphasizing painstakingly slow line control. The "line" is the scent path a rabbit leaves on the run. Brace beagles might take 15 minutes to travel on line 50 feet, Barton said, and will literally never take a step unless they smell the rabbit.

Small-pack option beagles, Maggie and Ben, became the foundation in the late 1980s for a Barton passion that would eventually see the number of dogs under his ownership grow as high as 23 beagles. Following his initial purchase, Barton had to also learn how to train a beagle already armed with the instincts to run a rabbit.

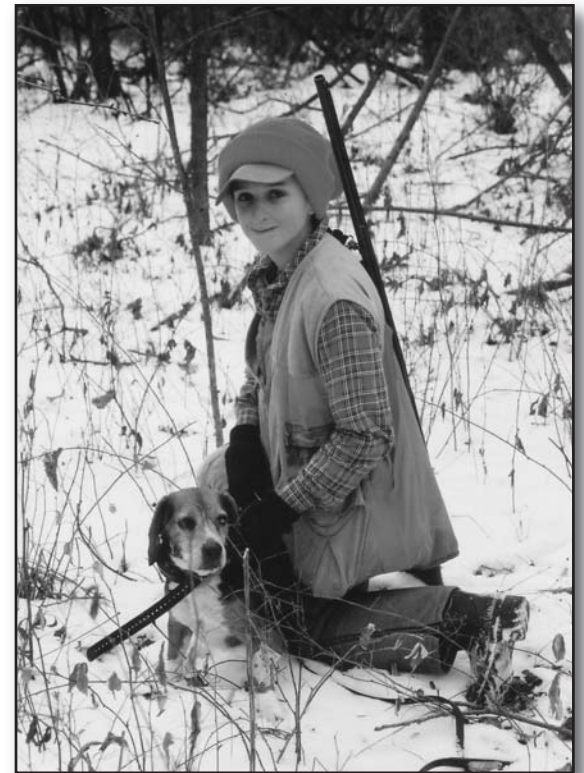
Initially, he joined an Illinois-based beagle club where his preference began to be honed for "medium-speed dogs that run the lines straight without losing the lines often." Clubs in Wisconsin, he said, including organizations located near Alma, Anston, Ashippun, Dale, Hebron, Hurley, Kewaskum, Lancaster, Manitowoc, Oconto, Phillips, Plymouth, and Wisconsin Rapids, can hand over the world of beagle hunting—even to a beginner.

"A club is good place to learn everything about beagles, and it's also a good way to compare your dog with other dogs," Barton said. "And they can show you how to start a dog, which is not easy."

According to Barton, "starting" a dog refers to the first time a beagle begins to instinctively bark when on the line of a rabbit. To achieve that milestone at a club, he said, at approximately 6 months of age a beagle is often released in a 1-acre enclosure holding 30-50 rabbits.

Prior to achieving its start in the pens, a young dog will often root the rabbit out from its holding spot, for example in a brush pile, and "sight chase" its prey. The transition from initial pen release to sight chasing to the beagle actually placing its nose on the ground to follow a line will commonly span 1 month's time. Even for veteran dogs, though, tracking conditions vary greatly and often dictate the success or failure of the field chase.

"You can never tell with scent," Barton said. "Dry leaves are hard on the dogs. Light fluffy snow can be hard, too, and crusty snow can also be difficult for dogs to work. Moisture is better. Yesterday the dogs couldn't stay on the rabbits for the first



Beagle, boy and bunny. William Barton, 12, of Racine and Oscar, one of eight Barton family beagles, with the first of nine rabbits to be taken on a Sunday in January near Whitewater. (Dick Ellis)

several hours. But by the end of the day, scenting conditions improved and we had nine rabbits."

#### WALKING THE LINE

The possibility of poor tracking conditions hits home again when Bud, Oscar and Buddy lose the first rabbit of the morning not far from the lip of the ravine. And several subsequent chases also end in the rabbit's freedom. A change is in the air, though, marked by better scenting conditions. Nine rabbits will fall on this afternoon—each chase marked by the mournful song of three beagles in distant chorus, and ends with a single shotgun report.

"Just about everyone we hunt with lets the rabbit circle before shooting," Barton said. "It's our belief that this sport is for the dogs to bring them around. When a beagle's nose goes to the ground, everything else shuts down. Other dogs hunt to please their masters—beagles hunt for themselves. We just happen to be along. Some people question their intelligence, but beagles sure are intelligent when it comes to figuring out just which way that rabbit went."

"As for the rabbits, if they get away—that's fine," Barton continued. "There's always another day. If we're chasing a really smart rabbit, we'll even take the dogs off of it and find another. That one deserved its freedom." *W*





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— Fishing Guide —

**DENNIS RADLOFF**

## On late-season boating pointers

By Dennis Radloff

Although winter has been forcing its icy thumb upon us for quite some time now, there are still multiple opportunities across Wisconsin to get your boat in the water and get your “long rod” fix. And although these locations are generally what the doctor orders when looking to subdue the symptoms of cabin fever, they often require special care to keep your equipment running at its best.

When taking to available open water through the winter months, here are a few pointers to keep you going:

### SILICONE SECRETS

If you have a carpeted, bunk-style boat trailer, spray your carpet with a silicone spray. This will prevent or reduce the freezing of “hull to carpet” during the cold nights. Be sure to use caution when launching your boat, making sure your boat is in the water when releasing the tongue strap as the silicone will create a slippery surface allowing the hull to slide freely.

### ICE-FREE INSURANCE

After launching your boat, pull your trailer out of the water slowly, stopping with the trailer still over the water, allowing the majority of the water to run fall back into the water instead of on the boat ramp.

This reduces the degree of ice build up on the ramp throughout the day, leaving a dry surface without ice when you want to pull out at the end of the day.

### PROPER IMPELLER PRECAUTIONS

After pulling your boat out of the water, lower your motor all the way down, allowing water to drain out of the lower unit. When all the water has stopped dripping, “dry start” your motor to spit any remaining water out of the impeller. Shut the motor off as soon as water stops shooting out of the impeller output. This will reduce or eliminate frozen impeller issues the next time you go out.

### CRANK IT UP

Keep your boat in a garage or enclosed port area overnight, and run a heater the night before any planned fishing trips. This will melt any frozen water in critical places such as pumps, impellers or bunks.

Following these simple pointers will help you fish longer and make the most of your open-water winter fishing trips. *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](http://www.sterlingmusky.com), or call 262.443.9993.

### ENGBERG, from page 7

started migrating down to the central and southern parts of the state, which were agricultural and contained much more food than the northern part of the state. The original camp was called the “Hirsch Camp” (German for deer camp). The deer camp was started by Bob Lochner’s father, Jerry, who is now 82 years old, and his brothers, Vic (86 years old) and Earl (60 years old).

At the Hirsch Camp, the brothers and sons used pool tarps run over timbers from a van to the camper, with a tent on the rear, red carpet under spread bales of straw and a wood stove. The extended family hunted in Millston until the 1980s when Jerry Lochner bought a farm in Spring Green and moved the family camp south, closer to their Sauk City home.

These days, the camp consists of Vic and sons Mike and Mark; Jerry and sons Bob, Denny and Fred; Denny’s son Tom; and Earl and son Nick. Bob told me that their hunter numbers are shrinking a bit and getting older with everybody more than 40 years old except Tom, who’s in his 20s.

All sons were not allowed to hunt until age 16, which was a family safety rule and as Bob recalled made “the language a little cleaner.” The Lochner clan now hunts like most area hunters, enforcing Quality Deer Management by holding out for larger bucks and doing little, if any, driving of deer. Bob says this leads to seeing fewer deer, but the buck numbers still are good despite lower over-all deer numbers.

The deer season for the Lochner’s

opens with a fish fry on Friday night when the family moves into a converted room in a horse barn filled with bunks, a woodstove, a card table and a refrigerator. The 300-acre farm is situated in a Wisconsin River valley with a great mixture of woods and crop land. All family members have had the same stand or blind for years. The valleys give hunters great visibility of the surrounding terrain and the group always harvests its share of quality bucks. This year, the oldest brother, Vic, shot the largest buck with a 19½-inch inside spread, 10 points and a brow sticker.

The Lochner Deer Camp is about much more than shooting deer and big bucks. It’s the family tradition of getting together and enjoying the camaraderie of family members, good times, laughs and stories of hunts past

are remembered as much as the deer shot.

The family hunts opening weekend and then the group comes and goes all week depending on their schedules. They then hunt Thanksgiving Day morning and the last weekend of the season.

Bob told me that his brother, Fred, had his daughters, Tayla (11 years old) and Jayda (8 years old) out with him while hunting during the season. The tradition continues. ... *W*

Contact Gary Engberg at 608. 795.4208. [gengberg@garyengbergoutdoors.com](mailto:gengberg@garyengbergoutdoors.com) or visit [www.garyengbergoutdoors.com](http://www.garyengbergoutdoors.com) for good fishing information.



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DICK HENSKE

## BEYOND WISCONSIN'S BORDERS

### To Canada we go

Now is the time to book your next fishing trip to Canada. Last year at this time, my buddy, Chuck de Carlo, and I planned a trip of a lifetime for our grandkids. Each of us had a teenager whom we knew would love the trip. We searched the Internet for an outfitter who had remote lakes, great facilities, solid aircraft, and of course, great fishing. Our search led us to L&M Outposts, which is based in Dryden, Ontario.

They were wonderful! They did everything possible to make our wilderness trip an extra-ordinary fishing adventure.

L&M Fly-In Outposts is family run by Larry and Mary Adams and their son, Shane. Their home and airplane base is located on Wabigoon Lake near Dryden, and is about 400 miles from northern Wisconsin.

The Adams and their 3 sons moved from Iowa in 1986 to run a Canadian resort. After a few more moves and acquiring their commercial pilot license, seven outpost cabins and two twin-beach float planes, they moved to their present spot in 2007.

All the outposts have great fishing, and we selected Otakakan Lake as our destination. It is 88 air miles north of Dryden and fully equipped. The cabin was on a rocky point with a wrap-around deck. We had solar-powered water and solar-powered lights, three bedrooms, lots of room, even a flush toilet. The pier, fish cleaning house, boats, and 9.9hp Yamahas were all great. We brought our own food, clothes, sleeping bags, fish locator, and life vests.

Otakakan Lake is 10 miles long and full of walleyes. Within the first hour we released more than 20 walleyes.

Larry, our pilot, marked numerous hot spots on the maps he gave us, with the advice that the fish were on the bottom. Our fish locators made it easy for us to mark the fish, which were on the bottom at 12 to 20 feet, depending on wind direction and time of day. We used jigs and twister-tails dressed with a partial nightcrawler or salted minnow.

The color of the jigs didn't matter, but we needed heavy enough jigs to keep the bait on the bottom. By back-trolling and drifting, we caught more walleyes and northern pike than we could count.

We fished during daylight hours for

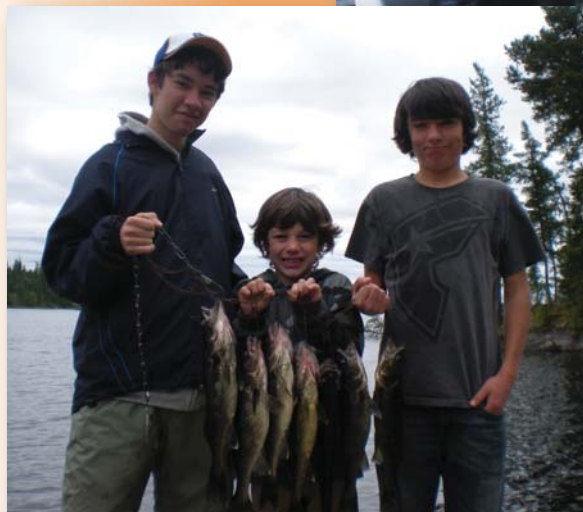


*The View from the cockpit as the Henske gang from Wisconsin completes the 88-mile ride north of the L&M Fly-In Outposts' base camp and approaches remote Otakakan Lake.*



*ABOVE: Chuck DeCarlo of Manitowish Waters shows off another Otakakan Lake walleye.*

*LEFT: Wisconsinites Austin, Jack & Austin show off a stringer of walleyes taken on L&M Fly-In Outposts' Otakakan Lake.*



3 full days, and found that the fish moved a lot depending on wind direction. We ate walleyes daily and the kids loved them. All of L&M outposts are catch and release operations, but you can enjoy eating the fish while you are there.

The catch and release policy makes these lakes walleye factories. The largest fish caught were a 38-inch northern and a 28-inch walleye. Using jigs worked great to easily release fish. Plugs with multi-hooks and grandkids would not have worked.

Our group totaled six people: my grandson, Austin, and me; Chuck's grandson also named Austin; Chuck's son, Paul; and Paul's 8-year-old son, Jack.


Taking the kids was a treat for everyone. They learned to skin and debone the fish. They learned to run the outboards, use the fish locators, release fish and clean up the outpost. They saw eagles, moose and loons and lived without TV, cell phones, computers and videogames.

The trip was also enjoyable because L&M provides lots of extras. We had extra boats, back-up outboards, marked maps, an outdoor grill, fire pit, and a back-up generator. Everything worked flawlessly.

The boys' highlights were the plane ride and fishing. They saw moose from the boat, car and plane.

Getting to L&M Outposts is easy. We crossed the border at International Falls, Minnesota, with little problem. Besides passports, it's a requirement to have letters from the boys' parents giving us permission to take the kids into Canada. Total driving time was 9 hours.

Do it now; set up a Canadian Wilderness fishing trip with L&M. You will love it. L&M does it right. They even provided a satellite telephone in case of emergency. They provide discounts for large groups and for children 16 years and under.

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



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**REVIEW: BY RICKY SOSEBEE, OFFROAD.COM****2009 Suzuki QuadSport Z400**

QuadSport Z400

**R**leased for the first time in model year 2003 the Suzuki LT-Z400 was the beginning to the race career many had dreamed of including myself. But even more than this the Z400, as it is affectionately referred to by all who love it, would set a new standard in technology. Not many years after its initial release the Z400 had made its mark on the industry and along with the ever changing world of fuel delivery it would under go yet another change in 2009. This brings us to the newest version of this awesome machine the 2009 Z400 EFI.

Having owned one of the first editions of this machine I really thought I knew what to expect for the next generation. Man I couldn't have been more off base with that. The ergonomics had shifted just a bit but first and more importantly I noticed the sudden start and rumble of the fresh power plant. The engine had primarily stayed the same but the addition of fuel injection made a difference that when first ridden was hard to describe. The motor fires to life in just a twitch of the eye and the power this technology had added had been what I spent thousands trying to find with aftermarket parts. Getting the Suzuki Z400 awakened is not a problem but controlling the fire within can be a challenge. The low and mid range power is very smooth yet powerful with a little left on the top if you need it. If your mind doesn't communicate with your thumb really well you are in for a surprise.

Digging deeper into the engine we noticed many changes. First was a fat little 36mm throttle body and new intake design. The new design gets the fuel into the engine in a straighter line. Getting the fuel in more

directly also helps with the low-end power gain. With a 12 hole Denso injector you will get very good atomization of the fuel you are burning. This just means more power and a cleaner running engine. Adding fuel injection was not the only adjustments made to the beast though. The cam profile and timing have also

been redesigned to assist in building a more powerful bottom to midrange boost. Everything is working together for more jaw dropping power. This engine has become far beyond what most would have expected and with just a few modifications it can be even more powerful than it is right from the showroom floor. Most riders at a moderate skill level can take this machine and go from a bench racer to a winner in just a few laps.

The ergonomics of this machine had several changes for 2009 and this started with the handlebars. The bars on the new LTZ400 have been moved forward 10mm giving more room to the riders who are not average like myself. Long arms and legs need room and that's where we benefit from these changes. The pegs were also relocated approximately 5mm down and 2mm rearward. This makes the rider position feel very different and it may take some getting used to. The "T" shaped seat is back on the 2009 Z400 and it still gives you plenty of room to move with loads of comfortable seating. The looks for this model year Z400 have been inspired by the racer in the family the QuadRacer R450. Sharp lines and bold colors lend to a very sporty look that I have grown to love.

The frame has thicker tubing and reinforcement in many places the 2009 Z400 should be strong enough to handle those long jumps and rough trails. With other items such as piggy back adjustable shocks on the front and rear and a more mechanically friendly back half the new Z400 is a pleasure not only to ride but to service as well. The controls are easily reached for the sitting rider but should be raised for the stand up trail king with longer legs. I have fallen in love with this machine all over again each time the newest version comes to the dealership. In today's market this is the secret weapon in the trails. Best bang for the buck in my opinion. *W*

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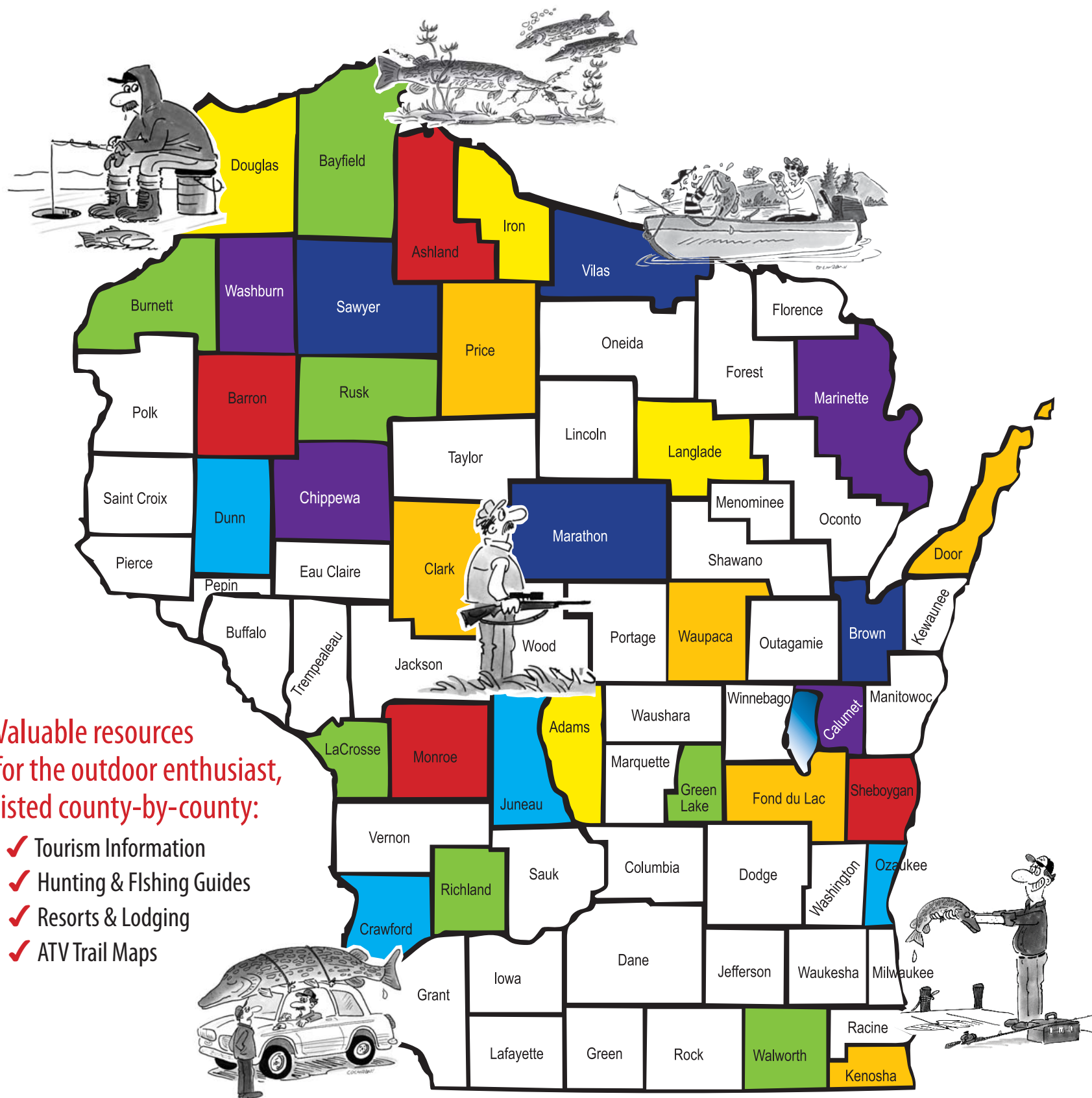
**4 One more thing:** Read the Dick Ellis "Dick's Trips" column on that same page. With more than 1,000 columns produced from the fields of Wisconsin, he might have an idea or two for you.

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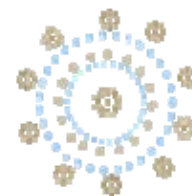




# JANUARY 21—24, 2010

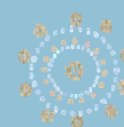
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JJ REICH

**THE REICH STUFF***Hunting with the Remington M887*

*Just like its famed counterpart, the Model 870, Remington's new M887 makes a reliable companion in the duck blind.*

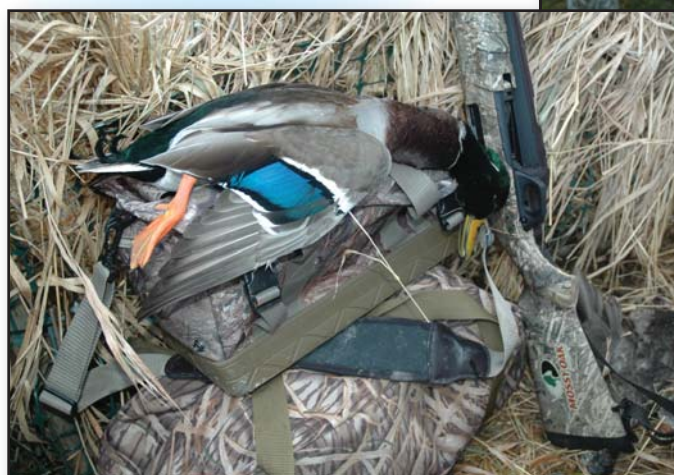
The new Remington Model 887 Nitro Magnum pump-action shotgun is inspired (and somewhat designed) on the old-reliable Model 870. But the M887 has fresh and hearty features such as a rugged ArmorLokt coating which prevents rust on most exterior surfaces, and new Super Cell recoil pad reduces the felt recoil up to 54 percent.

The 12-gauge handles up to 3-1/2-inch loads and is available in black synthetic or camouflage (of course). And, this new scattergun typically sells for only \$450 or so.

Remington knows something about pump guns. After all, the Model 870 is touted as the best-selling, most popular pump-action shotgun of all time. This time, however, Remington "over-built" the new Model 887 Nitro Magnum to better handle hard-core hunting abuse such as accidental encounters with barbed wire or a rough ride in the bottom of a Jon boat. And its synthetic stock and fore-end are ergonomically contoured to offer a positive grip, solid aiming and smooth shooting.

But action speaks louder than words. OWO's camera followed along as the new Mossy-Oak-adorned M887 performed flawlessly on a duck hunt in northern Ohio. But don't take my word for it; shoot one for yourself. *W*

*"OWO's camera followed along as the new Mossy-Oak-adorned M887 performed flawlessly on a duck hunt in northern Ohio."*



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

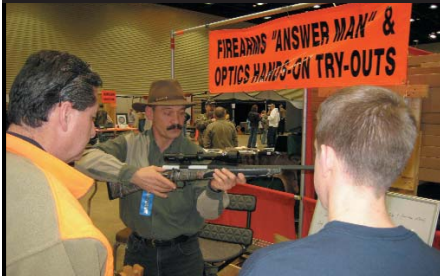


*A completely redesigned "armor" system makes the M887 one of the most durable shotguns ever produced; it's capable of withstanding the toughest hunting conditions you can find.*



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DAVE SURA

## SHORE BETS

### Going vertical for trout

Although I've talked about the importance of using spawn for catching trout and how effective it is, I've had many people ask how to catch these fish without it. My answer to that is, "Go vertical," vertical jigging that is. Vertical jigging is great way to get out this winter and enjoy the bounty our great lakes have to offer.

#### TROUT TIMING

As soon as the ice is safe enough to get onto, it's time to start searching for trout. Ice-up usually occurs sometime between mid and late December along the coast of Lake Michigan. And generally, these fish remain active and can be caught all the way until ice-out and beyond. I've caught them through the ice as early as the first week in December and as late as mid-March. Get out as often as you can. These fish move throughout the harbor and tributaries, so fish might not be found at all locations every day.

Trout in these rivers are not as affected by fronts as fish in lakes are, so these fish will bite, even in extreme conditions. Fish all day; I've had success at all times of the day. A general rule is if the ice is clear I prefer low-light conditions. When the ice is dirty or snow-covered, I like fishing the brighter, midday hours. Watch for current shifts as well.

#### LIKELY LOCATIONS

When fishing rivers, the best locations are those slower, deeper pools found near the lake. These locations are traditionally holding areas for both pre-spawn and post-spawn trout. The deepest areas are usually bends, marinas and pools below boulders or bridge pilings. These are areas of slower current where fish hold to conserve energy and feed.

Scout the rivers and look for fisherman. The locals know where these areas are as well as holes located away from traditional locations. But don't be afraid of fishing away from the crowds, either. These fish move throughout the area and travel from pool to pool. You might just find your own honey-hole. Try to fish the entire width of the pool as well. Cover as much water as you can to increase your chances of hooking up.

When fishing harbors, search for areas with current. Aerators and sewer pipes are good places to start. These areas can have poorer ice—so be careful. Fish hold here because of the current and



*Walleyes and northern pike aren't the only Wisconsin fish species susceptible to hard-water tactics. Taking the vertical approach for trout can produce some of the biggest fish of the season.*

***"Vary your presentation to invite more strikes from both active and inactive fish."***

the warmer water found near them.

Other places to look include areas along iron walls, under and near docks, and deep channels running through the marinas. These areas have structure that give fish cover in which to hide and ambush food. Fish as close to docks and walls as you can. These areas funnel fish along and are great places to catch them cruising because they force fish to be in specific places. Think of them as funnels deer hunters look for to find deer. Fish all depths of channels. Experiment by jigging at different depths throughout the water column as these fish will suspend, and use a locator if you wish to help search for suspended fish.

#### BAITS, TACKLE AND TECHNIQUES

Spoons and plastics are the most popular choices when going vertical for trout. The most popular spoons include Kastmasters, Swedish Pimples and Little Cleos. Any jigging spoon will work however, so if you have a favorite—use it.

Color choice preference varies from angler to angler. My favorites are silver; silver with green, blue, or orange; and gold with orange. The best sizes are 1/8 to 2/5 ounces, depending on depth and current speeds. Use lighter baits in

calmer or shallower waters and heavier ones in deeper or faster moving water. Experiment with colors because fish might change their minds from time to time.

Using plastics has become more popular than ever. My favorites include Berkley Gulp minnows, Gulp minnow grubs and Berkley Power Bait grubs. These baits have great action as well as releasing scents fish can't resist. I'm a firm believer that artificial baits that expel scents will out produce those that don't.

Color can also be an additional trigger for fish when using these plastic baits as well. My personal favorites for the Gulp baits are pearl white, pink and chartreuse. When using Power Baits, I like white, pink, orange—and my hot color last year—sunkissed. As with using spoons experiment with colors from time to time.

Size can also be a factor when fishing plastics. Jig head sizes from 1/16 to 1/4 ounce are the best options. Follow the same rules for depth and current with these baits as you would with spoons.

Fishing vertically is simple. Tie the bait to the line, drop it down and start fishing. Basically you use a lift and drop method to move the bait and give it

action. The only things you need to adjust to trigger fish are the speed and length of the lift.

Depending on their mood, fish might want a more aggressive snap-jigging presentation one day and a very subtle jigging motion the next. Vary your presentation to invite more strikes from both active and inactive fish. Most fish hit on the drop, so make sure you're prepared to set the hook any time you raise the bait.

When fishing rivers, I like to let the bait sit still in the current and swim. I've caught several fish just letting the bait hang in the strike zone. This is especially effective using grubs or twister-tail style baits. The current moves the tail and creates an action fish can't resist.

When drilling holes, use the largest auger you can get. I prefer using a 10-inch hole because it's easier to land these slippery fish, especially if you plan on releasing them or you're fishing solo. If you don't have one that large, I recommend using a hole no smaller than 8 inches. Fish more than 10 pounds are common and will not fit through small holes.

Rods should have a heavier action and be longer (more than 36 inches) than those used for walleye fishing through the ice. I like medium-heavy action rods the best, but longer medium-action rods work well, too. Reels holding line of 8-pound test or more should be used as well. I like using braided line with a mono or fluorocarbon leader tied to it for added strength and durability.

Last winter I had the opportunity to take Dick Ellis out and show him this technique. Neither he nor I was disappointed. We landed two beautiful browns, including one 13 pounder, and missed a few more in a couple hours of fishing. In fact, the 13 pounder was caught in the first 15-20 minutes. Our group was the only group there, so we had the entire section of the river to ourselves.

Get on the ice this winter and try your luck. Catching trout is possible without spawn. Go vertical this year and see for yourself how much fun and how good winter trout fishing can be. *WS*

*Dave Sura has fished Wisconsin waters for more than 25 years. He specializes in shore and tributary angling for perch, steelhead and salmon on Lake Michigan. Contact Dave at 262.930.8260 or steelheadsura@yahoo.com.*



BILL KURTZ

# THE BEARS OF BAYFIELD COUNTY

## *It ain't what ya got ...*



### **"So, what caliber do you recommend?"**

Every year, when the lucky holders of a bear tag call to book their bear hunt, about every second hunter asks that question. And it's a great question to ask, especially for a first-time hunter on his or her first bear hunt.

Everybody knows bears are supposed to be "man eaters," right? They are one of the reasons that many bowhunters are "packin' a peacemaker" or can of bear spray during the fall bowhunting season. So bear hunters want to make sure they bring the biggest, baddest cannon they have in their gun cabinet. The last thing these hunters want to be is "under gunned" during the moment of truth.

When I answer the questions of these excited hunters, my answer often seems a little disappointing to them. I know this because there's usually a long pause on the phone when I tell them, "Bring whatever you shoot the best."

### **POPULAR BRUIN BOOMERS**

There are many great calibers that make excellent bear medicine. Two of the most common in the 30-caliber range are the good ol' .30-30 and .30-06. These rounds have been used for hunting everything from swamp pigs in Florida to monster bull moose in Alaska. And they have been responsible for the death of millions of deer in America during the last 100 years. For the reloader, the variety of bullets available in 30 caliber from 125 to 220 grains make them a great choice. Even Theodore Roosevelt was a fan.

adequate—regardless of whether it's in a standard round or chambered for magnum loads.

### **IT'S HOW YOU USE IT**

But going back to the conversation over the phone with the new client, I believe a gun is useless if you can't hit where you aim.

Bear hunting in Wisconsin, whether it's with baits or dogs, is a close-range pursuit. This is not a spot-and-Vary your presentation to invite more strikes from both active and inactive fishstalk like the mountains of Idaho or Montana where your shot

forgot they bumped it last year and then simply forget to check the zero.

The second reason I think they miss is they are using too big of gun. Instead of the deer rifle that they know forward and back—inside and out—and can hit a fly at 400 yards and feel comfortable with, they borrow their friends .444 Marlin, .416 Weatherby Mag. or some other over-the-top caliber. Once they cracked off the first round during their practice session, they realize how much these guns hurt and in anticipation of the recoil, they flinch at the moment of truth.

The last reason I believe hunters miss is over-confidence. Like I said earlier, bear hunting is a close proposition. And when guys drive tacks at 300 yards, then are ready to pull the trigger at 20 yards, they simply put the bear in the scope and pull the trigger—not taking the time to make sure the crosshairs are behind the front leg. They simply get over-confident.

We've had several hunters go through the motions and unload the gun at the first sight of the bear thinking they were pulling the trigger, yet they never fired a round! One hunter lost all control of his bladder when his first bear strolled in about 20 minutes after getting on stand. He shouted at the bear and chased it off, then got down off stand and came back to camp. He left camp the next morning with his brother who shot a dandy that first night.

You must control your emotions; after all, that's half the fun. Slow down and relax. Watch how the bears feed and test the air for danger. Enjoy the show.

When you're ready to take the shot, don't think of pulling the trigger until you can hold the gun steady and are calm enough to make a clean kill. Bears are no different than deer: If you put a round through the pump station, they will not go far.

We've had more than one young lady, shooting her "girly" gun, bring in the biggest bear in camp. Like the ol' saying goes, "It ain't what ya got, it's how ya use it." *W*

*Bill Kurtz is head guide and long-time friend of OWO Columnist Mike Foss of Northern Wisconsin Outfitters. Northern Wisconsin Outfitters is now booking for the 2009 bear season. Go to [www.northernwisconsinoutfitters.com](http://www.northernwisconsinoutfitters.com) or call them at 715.373.0344.*



*When hunting bears, it pays to be prepared for everything from young bruins to Boone and Crockett bruiners. But when selecting a "bear gun," shot placement is much more important than caliber selection.*

Another popular and reliable caliber is the .270 Win. With common factory loads available in 130 and 150 grains—and even more for reloaders.

In handguns, the very minimum I would bring is a .41 Rem. Mag., using a heavy bullet, 200 grains or bigger. Muzzleloaders work super for bruins, too. Whether it's a .45 or .50 caliber, 100 grains of powder is more than adequate for these thundersticks.

### **BIG-BORES FOR BEARS**

Now there are many big bears running around Wisconsin and, for the hunter that's willing to put in the time, he or she stands a decent shot at one of these. The smallest caliber I would recommend would be the ".25s." The 250 Savage, .257 Roberts and .25-06 are the most common of the .25's. The bigger calibers, such as the .260s, .270s, 7mm and 30 calibers are more than

could be 200-300 yards or longer. Your shot in a treed bear might be 50 feet or less. And on a bait, 25 yards is the average shot distance.

Yet every year, many hunters miss or wound bears with their guns. I love to see the looks on our bear hunters' faces when, on the night before bear season during our question-and-answer-session, I tell them that gun hunters wound 10 times as many bears as bowhunters. The gun hunters stare in disbelief, but the bowhunters nod their head as every year our camp consists of about half gun hunters and half bowhunters.

I believe there are three reasons for so many misses and crippled bears every year.

First, half of the hunters that show up haven't shot their gun since the previous deer season. Since then, the gun has sat in the closet or safe. They



TOM CARPENTER

**BADGER BIRDS***Northern Cardinal*

A male cardinal makes a fine sight any season the year—bold and handsome in his feathered coat of resplendent red, topped off with a proud and pronounced crest. But he looks especially striking next to a backdrop of fresh white snow, or framed against a clear blue winter sky. Don't ignore the subtle beauty of the female cardinal in her stately plumage of tan, gray, cream and olive, all washed with rosy red.

A cardinal's song—the male's familiar *whit-whit-what what-cheer*,

*what-cheer, what-cheer*—is a real spirit-lifter on a clear, cold day in the depths of winter. Believe it or not, it's also a harbinger of spring as the male announces his territory.

Listen for the short, crisp "chip" calls that cardinals make as they travel and feed.

Look for cardinals on the ground or in low brush when feeding, and in the treetops when singing.

Attract cardinals with black oil sunflower seed. Cardinals like solid footing, so offer seed on a platform

feeder, or in a hanging feeder with a tray attached. Safflower is good too.

Did you know that cardinals used to migrate south in winter? But now, most birds are residents across their range. Logging and other land disturbance creates brushy habitat the birds prefer, and birdfeeding has also helped cardinals expand their year-round range. So even when it's bitter cold, brave the elements to keep your feeders stocked! *W*



TOM CARPENTER

**CUB'S CORNER***Plan now for youth hunts*

Miles O'Keefe is wearing camo and enjoying the statewide Youth Turkey Hunt 2009. Although no bird offered Miles a shot, gobblers and strutting Toms just out of range made the experience with mentor Randy Rothenbuehler memorable. (Randy Rothenbuehler photo)

Once you've got an eager young client secured, here are two special youth hunts to take them on. Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources, like game agencies in other states, is always busy trying to find opportunities to get young hunters into the field.

Special hunts like these—where only the young hunters can participate, at the direction and by the side of an adult—make a lot of sense in today's world. These outings give young hunters a special opportunity of their own, where all the attention and teaching is focused on them. And these hunts give the young outdoors person a prime chance to find some success in the field when there is little other hunting pressure.

The overall rich experience—combined with the solid likelihood for success—goes a long way toward hooking them on the sport.

**YOUTH TURKEY HUNT**

In 2010, Wisconsin's youth turkey hunt will be held on April 10 and 11. Things basically work like this:

Hunters from 10 to 15 years of age can participate in this very special experience, which occurs more than a week before the regular season (Period A) opening day. The young hunter must possess a turkey tag for the zone in which they are hunting. That tag is also valid for them during the youth season. For instance, a youth's license that is good for period A, B, C, D, E or

F is also valid for them on April 10 and 11.

The deadline for applying for spring turkey permits was Dec. 10, 2009. But if your young hunter didn't apply, don't despair. There is still a good chance for them get a license when leftover permits go on sale in late March. Take anything you can get for the zone you want to hunt, because it will be good for the special youth days.

Here are a few tips for hunting with young folks during this early hunt in "pre-season" kinds of conditions.

Usually, it's cold. A blind is a great idea, and makes things comfortable with a good propane heater thrown in. A blind also serves to cover up some of the fidgeting that naturally takes place with young hunters. Wear full camouflage and face masks though, and encourage good turkey hunting demeanor: move little, talk softly, watch a lot. Bring plenty of hot chocolate and snacks to extend the stay.

**YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNT**

Wisconsin's youth waterfowl hunts for 2010 won't be set up until late summer, but it usually occurs state-wide for two days, beginning one week before the regular northern zone opener. (Sept. 19 and 20 were the dates in 2009.) Basically, young hunters aged 10 to 15 can participate, and they must be HIP certified.

Here are a few tips for making success of the youth duck days:

Teal (mostly blue-wings), wood ducks and mallards are your most likely targets. A small decoy spread is sufficient—any where from half a dozen to 18 blocks. I frequentlyglom on to the number of 13! Mix up a few mallard hens with blue-winged teal decoys. Toss them out 12 or 15 yards, make a good hide in the reeds or cattails, and have fun.

Teal will readily decoy in. Sometimes you don't even have to call! A simple mallard call will do the trick when you do call, but I always carry a couple special teal calls; the high pitch (think of mini mallard quacks) attracts the little blue-winged bombers. I'll coax a few birds to land in the decoys, and then let the young hunter stand up and take a shot when the ducks flush, to try and get a bird or two under their belt at the start.

Winter's a fine time to start dreaming of, and preparing for, the exciting youth hunts to come. There are blinds to mend, guns to clean, equipment to secure, decoys to rig and touch up, videos to watch, and books to read. Do it all together, and keep the spirit of the outdoors alive all year long. *W*

With all the talk these days about getting our youth more involved—and more of our youth involved—in hunting, it pays to sit down right now and do a little planning for the year ahead. Do you have a son, daughter, niece, nephew, friend, acquaintance, church member or other young person to take hunting? If yes, great. If no, you've got plenty of time to find an interested soul.

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



JOEL "DOC" KUNZ

## ON WISCONSIN RIVERS

# Fishing through Wolf River ice

Although not a destination fishery, many anglers—especially locals—do quite a bit of fishing for walleyes on Wisconsin's Wolf River once it freezes. Back waters also offer opportunities for pan fish and pike. Those opportunities come first as river current keeps the main body unsafe for foot traffic for quite a bit longer.

Crappies, bluegill and perch can be caught throughout the Wolf River system, too, from the channels in Winneconne to the sloughs and bayous from there upstream. The Mill Bayou in Fremont, by Larry & Jan's Resort, is a popular early ice destination. Bluegills are usually the target, but perch are often found there also.

Other places, such as Pages Slough, The Big Cut, The Ox Bow and Old River, are locations that anglers also find crappies. Early ice anglers looking for walleyes will often fish the edge of the current in places where deep water is available. Because some of these locations can be very close to thin ice or even open water, I prefer to wait until the river ice is much thicker and target transition areas, current breaks and places adjacent to deep water.

Jigging is my favorite way of fishing for walleyes on open water or through the ice. The feel of the hit on the short rod and light line makes catching fish all the more fun. The first and most important item is your hole. I start by drilling down a few inches and then restart with the drill on an angle downstream to the current. This will help you get the fish on the ice, especially when landing a big fish.

Anglers fishing through Wolf River ice should not be surprised if they do catch one of a good number of large females in the system. These fish and schools of males are moving

upstream this time of year and staging in many available areas of deep water, especially those near spawning areas. Schools of fish will often move with fluctuating water levels and the availability of food. These movements

sand flats and inside turns below deep water. In both these areas, walleyes will rest in the bottom of subtle undulations waiting for the current to bring them food. Cashmore then finds the bottom with the minnow then lets out long



The author poses with an early ice, hard-earned, Wolf River walleye.

make a tactic pioneered by Don Cashmore of The Little Shoppe of Bait in New London, a great way to catch fish. That tactic is known locally as "long lining."

For long lining, Cashmore uses lightweight jigs attached to a short monofilament or fluorocarbon leader. That leader is attached to the old style Dacron tip-up line and spooled on a basic open bail reel. The rods he prefers are of a medium-heavy to heavy action.

Cashmore baits the jig with a minnow and positions himself along

sections of the Dacron line which flows downstream of the grounded jig. A tug on the line sweeps the jig downstream where it passes over these undulations. By letting out more line and repeating the process he can work a long area of river from a properly positioned hole.

Cashmore will explain this tactic to any angler who stops by. It's a great way to catch walleyes through the ice.

I prefer a more standard approach, choosing to fish an Oddball jig along current breaks, in deep water and transition areas. I prefer the Oddball for a

number of reasons. First, the large eyelet makes retying or changing colors easy on my aging eyes. Second, the wide gap and hook style allows me to hook the minnow deeply, with hook point protruding behind the head. This allows the minnow to remain horizontal when hovering and follow the jig to the bottom in "stand up" position.

This also provides better hookset opportunities and I rarely use a "stinger" for this reason. I pay attention to minnow size as the fish can have a preference on any given day. Hits are often subtle but can be quite aggressive. I like to drill a number of holes and work a transition from deep to shallow as the sun sets.

Tip-ups are also popular, with locally crafted box tip-ups the preferred tactic. I don't spend enough time on the ice to employ a set of box tip-ups, but know a number of anglers who swear by their effectiveness.

Walleyes can be very line and light sensitive especially in shallow water. Although other tip-ups also cover the hole, it's thought that the free spooling ability of the box tip-up is superior for catching finicky Wolf River walleyes.

Still, anglers do well with traditional setups, especially along flats and in deep water. A stop at your local bait shop or discussion with anglers on the ice will help you get set up properly. The biggest consideration is ice safety and good sportsmanship, and hopefully you can enjoy some great tasting Wolf River walleyes this year. *W*

Joel "Doc" Kunz is a 2005 "Readers Choice" Award winner, member of the Association of Great Lakes Outdoor Writers (AGLOW) and a member of the Wisconsin Outdoor Communicators Association (WOCA). Visit Doc's website at [www.wolfrivercountry.com](http://www.wolfrivercountry.com).



## RIVER ICE SAFETY

You'll hear it here, on TV, the radio and anywhere sportsmen gather, "Never consider any ice as safe." That's good advice for all ice anglers, especially those who are planning on venturing out on a river.

On a river, current can eat away at pockets of ice and put danger at any step. A small log or dead animal frozen in the ice can be enough to cause a boil that can keep ice from freezing properly. Some areas of the river have more current, are more open to wind and gather sun at greater levels than others. It's important to know where the current is strongest and avoid those areas until well into the season. Early ice anglers should use a spud bar, testing every step as they go. If you're being adventurous, a line tied to shore, a

good set of creepers, a PFD and a set of hand spikes are all good suggestions.

Ice conditions can change quickly. Anglers who fish early morning should not assume the ice is safe upon returning, especially on warm days. Make sure to not get over-confident about the thickness of the ice when going out the first few times. One warm day can change everything.

Also, never assume that a snowmobile track is a good place to walk. A snowmobile can travel over areas of thin ice and even open water, and you can't. Keep your cell phone in a Ziploc bag in an upper pocket and always let others know what your fishing plans are, especially if fishing alone. Dress warm, keep hydrated bring a few snacks to give your body something to burn and you are sure to have a good time. *W*



KEVIN MICHALOWSKI

**DOG TALK***Starting a pup on birds: when and how*

The best way to teach a dog to find birds is to put birds in front of the dog. Yes that's pretty simple and glib. But it's the truth. Bird dogs need birds and the best time introduce birds to dogs is when the dogs are young.

According to Dan Irlke of Green Acres Sportsman's Club in Roberts, Illinois, if you introduce the dog to birds at a young age, the pup will imprint on the birds and remember forever. The questions remain: At what age should you introduce the dog to the birds and what is the best way to do it?

**HOW OLD IS OLD ENOUGH?**

Irlke, a member of the DT Systems Pro Staff, says younger is better when introducing a pup to birds. At about 10-12 weeks your dog will imprint on birds ... wait much longer than that and you can do the training, but the desire will be a bit reduced.

So, the earlier you start, the stronger your dog will imprint on birds and the stronger the pup's hunting drive will be.

**MAXIMIZING INTEREST**

Now that we've established the younger-is-better premise, let's talk about how to best introduce the young dog to birds. The keys are to make sure the dog is having fun, getting a great and exciting reward for proper behavior and remains under your control so he or she doesn't get the idea that birds mean it should ignore the boss.

My suggestion is to start young dogs with pen-raised chukar partridge. I like chukars because they run. Pen-raised quail sometimes tend to sit too tightly, and pheasants can be too big and aggressive, scaring young dogs more than training them. So, use chukars. If you can't find them, try common barn pigeons; they are not as good as chukars, but they work. I'll explain the sequence.

Start with the pup on a long check-cord and use a dead bird. Let the dog sniff the bird. Then shake it, get the pup excited and toss the bird a few feet away. The pup should run after it and grab it. Once the dog grabs the bird, call the pup and pull on the check-cord.

Make the dog come to you with or without the bird. If he drops it, you



*"So, the earlier you start, the stronger your dog will imprint on birds and the stronger the pup's hunting drive will be..."*

go pick it up, tease the dog again and start the process over. After about four or five sequences of tossing the dead bird, it's time to switch to a live bird.

For the live-bird training, grab a handful of flight feathers from one wing and pull them off. You don't want the bird flying off—you want it to run, to inspire the dog to chase and track. So, after you pull out the feathers drop the bird on the ground in front of the dog and let the chase begin. Try to keep up so you are not using the check-cord to pull the dog off the bird. At the end of the chase, there should be flurry of activity as the pup tries to figure out how to grab the struggling bird. Encourage this. Make it a happy time. Let the dog have some fun.

Once your pup grabs the bird, then call the puppy and pull on the check-cord. Once again, the pup has to come to you when you call, with or without the bird. He'll figure out to hold on sooner or later.

If things work out correctly, you should be able to use the running bird two or three times before it expires. And you want to do this quite a bit, so make sure you have at least three birds with you. Four would be better, but you don't want to over do it.

You can stretch out the introduction over 2 weekends; at that point, your pup will be imprinted on birds and you can go on about the rest of your obedience training. Don't worry: your puppy will remember what birds are. *W*

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 Kevin Michalowski at [askdogtalk@hotmail.com](mailto:askdogtalk@hotmail.com).

*Starting a pup on birds early will help pique interest and develop a long-lasting interest, helping to ensure the pup understands its roll as a hunter at a very young age.*



DARRELL PENDERGRASS

**OUT THERE****Canada, Walleyes & 20-20 Vision**

We'd been fishing on Lac Seul in Ontario, Canada, for the better part of 5 days, catching dark golden brown walleyes in droves, hooking into an occasional red-eyed northern pike here and there, and having the time of our lives. Canada is truly an angler's heaven.

About 4 hours northwest of International Falls, Lac Seul is a massive crescent-shaped lake that's 150 miles long. It's the second largest body of water entirely inside Ontario and is home to trophy pike and walleyes. And in my little angling community here in Wisconsin, we love it.

But this visit north of the border was drawing to a close. Our time on Lac Seul was through and we were heading in from the lake on our last day near Sioux Lookout, on this our last time out fishing. The sun would set in a few short hours, and we'd have one last night left in the cabin. The time to head home was quickly approaching.

The guys with whom I fish have been coming to Lac Seul for years. Through experience and wit, these guys know where to go to get into the fish and there never really is any chance that we won't catch wave after wave of walleyes. Mike Best always figures that each boat catches at least 100 walleyes each day up here, and he's probably pretty close in his calculations. He might even be figuring a little low; it seems like we do better than that.

The reality is we catch so many walleyes here it's impossible to keep

count. In fact, it's nothing to get 12 to 18 walleyes in the same number of casts—imagine, a fish on every cast? That's hard to beat. During one stretch on the boat we got 85 walleyes in 2 hours.

The biggest fish on this trip was 26 inches in length, with several others being landed that went well over 20 inches. We've had 29-inchers in the past. The elusive 30-inch walleye we chase each time continues to elude us, but someday one of us will get her; it will probably be Charlie Best.

My in-laws, who fish for muskies nearly every chance they get, also had their plates filled with a main course they prefer. On nearby Vermillion Lake, the two of them had three follows in less than an hour and my brother-in-law landed a pretty 40-inch muskellunge. We've got a dandy photograph to remind us of that moment.

Seventeen of us came here, ranging in age from 60-something to 5. Away from the angling our noon-time shore lunches were deliciously filling, back at camp the evening marathon wiffle-ball games were entertaining, and the cabin nights and subsequent card games were relaxing. I'm sure our laughter could be heard throughout the campground. Time away from real-life worries and struggles has its rewards.

But we were done. It was time to put the boat back on the trailer and head on home.

At the landing, my father-in-law had gone up the road to get the truck



Jack Pendergrass, right, shows off a nice Lac Seul walleye, measuring 25-3/4 inches, caught in Canada in 2009. Hayden Bonk, John Bonk and Dane Bonk celebrated the catch.

*"The reality is we catch so many walleyes here it's impossible to keep count."*



and trailer and my brother-in-law had swung the boat back out onto the water to wait. I stood on the dock.

About 150 yards away I could hear two swimmers laughing near a swim raft. It sounded like a couple of women enjoying the water, which was unusual because it was pretty darn cold. Our first 2 days had been surprisingly hot, in the high 80s, and now it was just as surprisingly cold, in the mid 50s. We'd spent the day fishing in heavy jackets and coats. Here were two women swimming. Oh well.

Now, I'm near sighted, which never was a problem until this very moment. I can't see far away. I wasn't sure at first, but when the two lady swimmers climbed up onto the raft and stood side by side, they appeared to be naked. It sure looked like it. Eventually, through squinted eyes, things came into focus, and I pretty much confirmed these two women were indeed swimming in the nude.

When I turned around and saw others looking out from their boats and back at the raft, I knew I wasn't alone in my suspicions. In fact, as boats were put on the trailers grinning whispers spoke volumes about what was going on at the raft. Thankfully no boats collided and sank during the turmoil that began to boil around the dock. Truth is, it was mostly a blur for me.

Naked swimmers and big walleyes, who could ask for anything more? Maybe 20/20 vision.

I love Canada.. *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.*



DICK ELLIS

# ON WISCONSIN OUTDOORS

## The DNR deer count-off 300,000?

*Dick Ellis Note to OWO Readers:*

Because the following report on the five hour Open Hearing held in Madison Thursday, December 17 on Deer Management is restricted by newspaper space, DNR Secretary Frank's unedited four page report will be posted at [www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com](http://www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com). We will also post reports given by organizations including the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, Wisconsin Bowhunters Association, the Wisconsin Hunter's Rights Coalition and more.



A packed house of concerned hunters attended the Joint Committee Open Hearing on Deer Management in Madison on December 17. The five hour Hearing included presentations by DNR Secretary Matt Frank, his management team and representatives of numerous Wisconsin Fish & Wildlife organizations. (Dick Ellis)

Stating that the evidence points to current Wisconsin deer population estimates being off by up to 300,000 animals, Former DNR Secretary George Meyer and scores of other speakers at an overflowing Joint Senate and Assembly legislative committee open hearing expressed a loss of confidence in the state's deer management team Thursday in Madison. Although the general consensus among speakers representing numerous Wisconsin fish & wildlife organizations was that the DNR's sex-age-kill (SAK) formula of estimating deer numbers is sound when utilized as intended, most also said that state managers have not implemented the system correctly, over-harvesting does and exponentially multiplying a severe problem with each recent passing season.

Statewide the 2009 deer season saw the deer harvest decline 29 percent from 2008 and 51 percent from 2007. 195,000 deer were harvested this year, compared to 401,000 deer in 2007. All 72 Wisconsin counties experienced harvest declines this season with some northern counties suffering decreases of 50 to 59 percent.

"Having worked on deer management issues for the better part of three decades, historically I have had a great deal of confidence in the deer herd

population numbers estimated by the DNR," said Meyer, current board member of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation. "In the last couple of years I have lost confidence in the accuracy of the deer herd predictions. While I am not a biologist and surely do not portray myself an expert, the evidence is leading me to believe that the deer population estimate is off by at least 200,000 to 300,000 deer."

Meyer said that the 2009 total harvest and buck harvest "takes us back" to 1980-81 levels when the DNR was estimating the over-winter deer population at around 600,000 deer. He said also that frequent hunter comments regarding the lack of fawns in the field had factored in his belief that the population is drastically over-estimated.

"I would not be surprised if next year's harvest does not reach this year's 195,000 deer," Meyer said. "We may well have reached the statewide over winter goal of 737,000 deer. Earn a Buck is an extremely effective herd reduction tool. It is my belief that it has been overused and along with increased predation and weather related mortality has led to the major decline in the deer population."

The DNR was represented in the hearing by Secretary Matt Frank, Big Game Ecologist Keith Warnke and

*"In the last couple of years I have lost confidence in the accuracy of the deer herd predictions . . . the evidence is leading me to believe that the deer population estimate is off by at least 200,000 to 300,000 deer."*

—Former DNR Secretary George Meyer

Wildlife Biologist Tom Hauge. Frank gave a four page presentation on Wisconsin's deer herd which included a focus on deer management units and populations goals. (Frank's unedited copy will be posted at [www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com](http://www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com).)

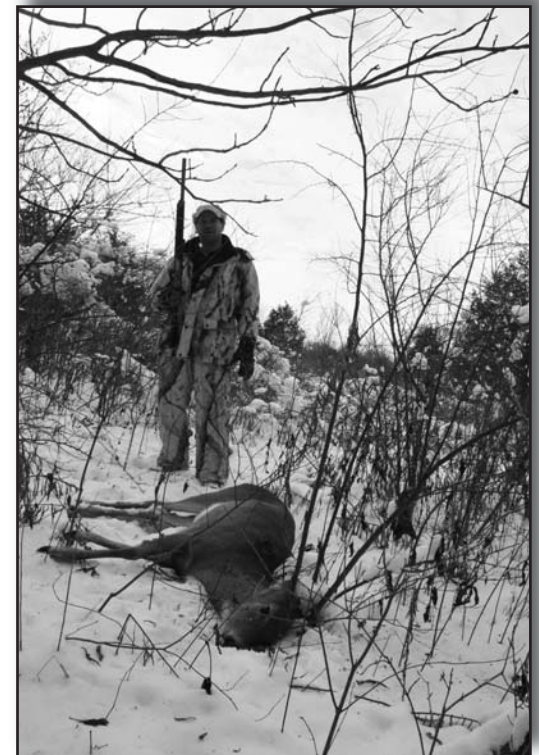
After offering many positives of Wisconsin deer hunting heritage including facts from the 2009 season, Frank said that there is no subject that generates more controversy or criticism than deer herd management. "That was true 50 years ago when the old Conservation Department was in charge and it will probably be true 50 years from today," Frank said. "People are passionate about their opinions. Our challenge is to have a good system in place for public input, and to make the best science-based decisions we can on how we manage the herd."

Frank said that understanding deer and how they interact with their ecosystem is a significant challenge. Areas of DNR focus, he said, include the impact of natural predators; wolves, bears and coyotes, in the ecosystem, and taking steps to improve the SAK population estimate model.

Specific to deer population goals, Frank said that the DNR remains committed to supporting Wisconsin's hunting traditions and managing for a healthy, sustainable and ecologically balanced deer populations. "In the early part of this decade the deer population reached unsustainable levels

in much of the state," he said. "It's the department's job to bring populations down to the population goals approved through an extensive public process with ultimate review by the legislatures. There are many factors to consider when establishing deer goals-preserving Wisconsin great deer hunting traditions for future generations, forest impacts, agricultural impacts, public safety as measured by car-deer collisions,

*Continued on page 33*



Wisconsin hunter Kurt Kromm took this deer in southeast Wisconsin during the statewide four-day antlerless only special season December 13. Angry hunters are calling on the DNR to eliminate antlerless only hunts in the wake of a statewide 29 percent decline in deer harvest numbers from 2008 and 51 percent decline from 2007. (Dick Ellis)



DICK HENSKE

**ONTARIO BOUND***Tales from the Not-So-Over-The-Hill gang*

George VanDruska, Russ Cerk, Bob Bradley, Mike Carley, and Bill Emanuelson with part of the Ontario catch.

Every summer for 19 consecutive years, the “Not-So-Over-The-Hill Gang” has traveled northward from Wisconsin to experience Ontario’s fishing. Unfortunately, with a mean age of 73, we’ve lost a few close friends along the way, but with a few new welcome faces, nine mostly-retired Badgers made the trip north again in July of 2009.

If reminiscing with old friends and listening to loons while catching walleyes after walleye and a stunning limit of Canadian wilderness sounds good, set your own GPS on Ontario in 2010.

In 2008, we had decided to find a new lake. During the previous winter, we used the internet and the Ontario Fishing Map and Guide to Lodges, Camps and Outfitters to do just that. Our group prefers to be on a lake by ourselves at an outpost cabin. We also prefer to “drive in” to keep our costs down. We narrowed our search to outfitters who offer remote cabins, and settled on Vista Lake near Savant Lake, Ontario.

Vista Lake Outfitters operates five outpost cabins spread out over the lake’s 12-mile length.

Competition is not a problem. We only saw one or two other fishermen. There were also many small portage lakes nearby that had boats available for our use.

We traveled through Thunder Bay, then on to Highway 17 and Highway 599 north to Savant Lake. The 510-mile trip from northern Wisconsin took more than 12 hours. Vista Lake Outfitters is run by Dennis and Evelyn Mousseau, who also operate a restaurant and motel in Savant Lake.

We met our hosts at the restaurant, where our licenses were also waiting. Dennis and Evelyn provided us with all necessary details of the camp

and directed us to drive 22 miles to their private, gated boat landing in Visa. We drove two trucks and pulled one boat and trailer loaded with outboard motors and gas. The outfitter provided all the boats we needed.

When we arrived at the landing, a camp attendant helped us load our motors and gear on the boats and we headed to Beach Camp Cabin. With our vehicles parked in a secure lot, we arrived at camp following a 10-minute boat ride.

Beach Camp Cabin was excellent featuring five bedrooms, a great room, solar power full bath, and sauna. A great boat dock and fish cleaning station rounded out our accommodations.

We brought along a flat of nightcrawlers in paper bedding from Wisconsin, along with 7 pounds of minnows that we preserved in canning salt. Remember that you can’t take live minnows or nightcrawlers in dirt into Canada.

Fishing was not a given. We knew there were abundant walleyes and northern pike in Lake Vista, but it took until the second day to find the walleyes. The fish were holding on the deep flats in 16-20 feet of water—on the bottom, of course—and absent from the bars and humps.

We could cast a plug all day and catch nothing. Good fishing was found when we dressed a heavy jig with a minnow or nightcrawler, with or without a twister-tail, using almost any color, and put it right on the bottom.

We back trolled and drifted to keep our lines vertical, and waited for the hits. Due to the late spring, the fish were mostly males in the 2- to 3-pound class. Unfortunately, the larger females were not active.

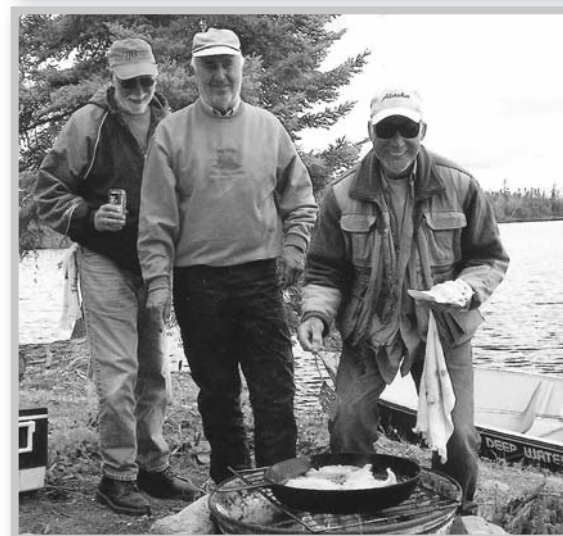
We fished only during the day. Our daily fish meals included shore lunches made with rye bread, Vidalia onions, fresh walleye fillets, tarter sauce, beans and potatoes.

We had a great time, enjoying the wilderness and fishing. We have already booked our trip with the Mousseaus next year—same time, same place!

The next time we’ll drive up two boats with an extra motor on each transom. That way we’ll have four boats to use. The Mousseaus rent extra motors if you need them as back-up. This trip cost a third of a fly-in trip. Just do a little homework or call the Mousseaus at 1 (800) 665-LAKE, or visit their website at [vistalake.com](http://vistalake.com).

The Not-So-Over-The-Hill-Gang has hunted and fished in Wisconsin for decades. Life is good. With annual trips to the western states to hunt, and fishing journeys north to places like Vista Lake in Ontario, life is great. You can never look back. Look dead-ahead. *W*

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



Bob Bradley, Dick Plummer, George VanDruska and Dick Henske take a few more walleyes and then take time for another shore lunch. Cabin accommodations were wonderful.



## On Wisconsin Outdoors Board of Directors



Rex Rodsalotta

*Dear Rex Rodsalotta,  
Do you guys on the Board of OWO have a Healthcare Plan?*  
—Pete Sawyer, Lake Geneva

Here's the plan Pete,  
We throw out the senators and members of congress trading our freedom and one-sixth of the economy to pass a healthcare bill none of them read. A healthcare bill that none of them would take themselves.

Call Herb Kohl at 414-297-4451.

Call Russ Feingold at 608-828-1200

Find all contact numbers and e-mails for Wisconsin Congressional Representatives on both sides of the aisle by Googling "Wisconsin in the 111th Congress." Leave a message: "November of 2010 can't get here soon enough."

—Rex Rodsalotta



Hunter Daily

*Dear Hunter Daily,  
Do you hunt bears? How do I learn  
how to bait?*

—Ron Beasley, Omro

Ron,  
It's not a hard thing to do. Bears follow their nose and live to eat. They also have a sweet tooth. Give them favorite . . . donuts, pie filling, gummy bears . . . and an occasional fawn decoy.

—Hunter Daily



Conibear Smith

*Dear Conibear Smith,  
I'm 12 years old and I seen a  
deer in Vilas County.*

—Ben Brown, Sun Prairie

Sure you did, kid.  
And I'll bet it was standing next to Elvis and the Loch Ness Monster . . . but your camera didn't work.

—Conibear Smith

## Win 2 Nights at the Americinn Lodge & Suites in Ashland!

It's easy to enter the "Explore Wisconsin" contest!

**YOU WON'T  
WIN  
IF YOU DON'T  
ENTER**

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2. Click on the "Explore Wisconsin" page
3. Click on the "Explore Wisconsin Giveaway Contest" link
4. Complete the Contest Entry form and submit!



[www.ashlandsplashland.com](http://www.ashlandsplashland.com)

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**Win a 2-Night Stay for Four\***

Located on the shores of Lake Superior in the City of Ashland, Wisconsin, the Americinn Lodge and Suites offers deluxe guest rooms and suites along with the wet and fun Splashland Waterpark.

One entry per person. Winner will be drawn randomly. Employees and writers for On Wisconsin Outdoors are not eligible. Winner will be notified by telephone. \*Two nights lodging at Americinn Lodge & Suites in Ashland is valid for up to two adults and two children (one room), some exclusions may apply. See complete contest rules online at [www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com](http://www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com)



S. WILKERSON

**SURPLUS FIREARMS***I missed it by that much*

Blood froze in my veins as I watched in horror as the greasy, hairy paw of Toothpick Jim slowly descended into the box of moldy holsters, slings and other assorted junk at a recent gun show. A crowd of porky pundits stood between me and the box, exchanging their latest conspiracy theories about the Obama administration. Toothpick, more determined than I, squeezed his way through the flannel-clad know-it-alls.

Blessed with more leisure time than I, Toothpick had developed a keen eye through the years for hidden treasures at estate sales, Goodwill Stores, thrift shops and alleys. Wherever there is junk, there is a good chance you'll find Toothpick, scoping out the action, not unlike a vulture hovering over a rotting carcass, waiting to pounce.

And here he was again. What did I miss this time? Soon I would find out. With any luck, it wasn't anything I would be interested in, but because if it was, he'd be gloating about it for the next several years or so. Unfortunately, it was something that I was very interested in—a very nice replica of a World War II German "potato masher" grenade for only \$35. When they can be found, they generally sell for twice as much. Toothpick had struck again.

"Well, Mr. Wilkerson, what have I here?" he rhetorically exclaimed in that annoying tone he always took on in such moments. "Oh, it's a replica German potato masher. Weren't you looking for one of these, Mr. Wilkerson? How nice it will look among my other World War II

collectibles. He who hesitates is lost, you know."

Clenching my teeth, I spoke not a word. He was driving and I was 175 miles away from home.

Well, Mr. Toothpick, you may have won this bout, but there are still many more tables to go. In fact, several aisles over, I would soon find myself breathless and my knees buck-

pretty unlikely scenario.

"How much do you want for it?" I asked, hopefully.

"Oh, it's not for sale," he answered. "I just bought it."

"Can I ask how much you paid for it?"

"Sure. \$425. The seller was asking \$475. It's a Pedersolli replica."

"You're kidding."

*"Well, kids, what have we learned today? One, keep your eyes open. Always focus on the trees and the box under the table, not the forest of tables or the all-too-infrequent gun show hottie."*

ling at the sight of a replica Colt single action Army .45 which, the sale tag said, was made by the best of the Italian replica firearm makers and priced far below market value.

Except it wasn't. The maker's name on the barrel was completely different from what the sale tag said. The gun wasn't made by one of the best companies, but arguably one of the worst; and it was overpriced at that. This was either a case of false advertising or just plain stupidity on the seller's part. In either case, it wouldn't be part of my collection.

Not long afterwards, a gentleman walked by with a beautiful Trapdoor Springfield replica. I had recently decided I would like one of these, if I could find one cheap enough—a

These guns sell new for more than \$1,000. Unless this thing was broken, this was a steal. I told Toothpick as much. "I would have bought it for that," I said.

"Well, why didn't you?" he responded. "It was at the table where I bought the hand grenade. Clearly marked '\$475.' Geez, Wilkerson, are you asleep?"

No, I'm not asleep. I'm too frickin' polite. While I'm patiently waiting for a gaggle of nutballs to move their obese rumps out of the way, Toothpick is snatching prizes out from under my nose and I'm missing out of the gun deal of the season.

Worse, I am unfocused. For whatever reason, I can't see the trees

through the forest, as Toothpick will again demonstrate to me. Later in the show, he casually mentions a Chinese Model 44 Mosin Nagant that he had seen for \$150 at the show.

"What?!" I exclaim. "Where is it?"

"In the other room."

Frantically, I raced through the assorted throng. I reached the room and began my search. I spotted it on the other side of the room and practically ran to the object of my desire. It looked beautiful. How could I have missed you? Now you are mine. But first ...

"How's the barrel?" I asked.

"Perfect," the seller responded.

"I've heard that before," me thinks.

A poke with the muzzle gauge indicates that the barrel is either counter-bored, or worn out. I can live with a counter-bored barrel. The bore light demonstrates that the barrel could only be described as "perfect" for a 100-year-old, rusty, iron sewer pipe.

Disappointed, I put it down.

Well, kids, what have we learned today? One, keep your eyes open. Always focus on the trees and the box under the table, not the forest of tables or the all-too-infrequent gun show hottie. And for goodness sake, "Buyer Beware." Outside of used car salesmen, no one is as dishonest and as full of the beans as those on the selling end of the table. *W*

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

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**ELLIS DNR, from page 31**

preventing animal disease transmission, and others."

Senator Neal Kedzie told Frank that his office had coordinated an informal and non-scientific survey of Wisconsin hunters and had been overwhelmed with more than 8,400 responses over one week. The responses comprised 385 pages (single spaced 10-font) in a file Kedzie brought to the hearing. 70 percent of respondents blamed DNR management for a reduction in deer numbers to unsatisfactory levels and a decline in the overall satisfaction of the hunting experience.

Kedzie said that 40 percent of hunters responding were unsure if they would participate in the hunt next year and labeled that number very troubling. "What can the DNR do to turn this around and regain the hunter's confidence in less than one year?" said Kedzie, also referencing the tremendous economic impact the deer season brings to the state. "If we lose the Wisconsin deer hunter... we lose the war." Without hunters, there is no management."

Frank said that the DNR did listen to hunters concerns, and "without hunters, there is no management" but stated that the Department is directed by the legislature to factor in other concerns when setting deer management goals that include agriculture and forestry damage, and deer-car collision as well as hunting. He said he would not recommend removing those other factors from consideration in managing the herd. Some speakers took exception to the comment that the DNR does listen to hunters when both Frank and Warnke left the five hour meeting after their own presentation and prior to public feedback. Hauge remained throughout the entire hearing.

Former Secretary George Meyer said that for the SAK formula for estimating deer numbers requires five years of stability to be effective. "There isn't that stability right now," Meyer said. "The southern part of the state can rebound in two or three years (with does often dropping fawns or triplets) but I wouldn't want to say no herd reduction should be used five years out in case you do need it. That wouldn't be sound management. It will take four or five years to recover in the north.

Baiting and feeding were also briefly discussed with Secretary Frank expressing his wish to rekindle that discussion in the near future, in part because of the spread of deer diseases through saliva. The department would need an April 1 "drop-dead" date to implement any changes to the 2010 deer hunting seasons. *W*

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JJ REICH

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The buzz surrounding these Shark augers is mostly due to the lightweight engines that boast reliable cold-starting abilities, high RPMs with strong torque ratings, and a heavy-duty transmission for vigorous cutting. Combined with a durable auger that spins sharp (yet replaceable) blades, and you have a powerful and dependable ice opener.

**GetEskimo.com****NORTHLAND HEXI FLY**

For \$3.50, The Hexi Fly is designed, shaped and engineered to pick up twice the amount of sonar signal compared to similar-sized lures. Equipped with a Mustad Ultra-Point fine-wire hook, this miniature lure attractively swims, darts and scoots when jigged.



I'm a fan of anything that allows me to see tiny jigs more clearly on my flasher. The Hexi Fly is available in two-packs with several hook size options, and in eight different color patterns, including Fruit Fly, Tiger Beetle and Wood Tick (pictured).

**NorthlandTackle.com****MARCUM LX-5 ICE SYSTEM**

For \$449, Marcum's LX-5 has technical highlights includes a movable zoom feature that allows the user to zoom in on a segment of water anywhere within the water column. And, it's TrueColor Display that provides improved-and-enhanced clarity and crispness of colors shown on the flasher's display screen, even in bright daylight.



There are many reasons why Marcum's LX-5 is trusted and used by several of OWO's top guides: it's powerful, sensitive and loaded with features. This total package also includes a soft-pack carrying case, digital LCD charger, adjustable transducer arm, dual beam 8- and 20-degree transducer, and much more.

**MarcumTech.com****SLAM'R 2 DECOY SYSTEM**

For \$130, this motorized ice fishing decoy system provides keeps attracts and keeps fish to the catch zone. The device provides visual stimulus by rotating a set of flashing spinner blades that imitate a school of feeding fish. The lightweight, compact system includes long-life rechargeable battery and convenient carry bag.



Reports I heard back from avid ice fishermen say that the Slam'r 2 attracts all kinds of fish including perch and crappie, and holds them near your ice hole longer. If you're an ice-fishing fanatic, you'll want to learn more about this decoy system.

**20BelowProducts.com****QUICKFISH 3 VALUE PACK**

For \$309, Eskimo's QuickFish 3 Pop-up Portable ice fishing shelter is now available in a value pack that includes two folding chairs with travel bags, ice anchors with tie-down ropes, a sled sized-right to transport the pop-up shelter, and a protective travel cover—you just need to find the hot spot on the lake to set up shop.



Pop-up ice fishing shelters are becoming more and more popular. Why? Because they conveniently fit in the backseat of any vehicle, they're lightweight and easy to lug onto the ice, they're a snap to set up, and they do a great job shielding you from icy winds. The QuickFish 3 Value Pack is a complete package that's definitely a good value.

**Ardisam.com****YETI TUNDRA COOLER**

For \$330, this 65-quart cooler is made of virtually-indestructible material. It features three inches of insulation in the lid, 2 inches of insulation in its sidewalls, a freezer-style sealing gasket, replaceable nylon-rope handles with textured grips, and built-in padlock and tie-down holes.



This top-of-the-line cooler is worth every penny. Anyway, this high-quality cooler is built to last a lifetime and keeps ice frozen a whole lot longer.

**YetiCoolers.com**

*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.kampptales.com).*

**Read JJ's Field Test of the new Remington Model 887 Nitro Magnum pump-action shotgun on page 21**





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