

Dick Ellis Experts

January/February 2011

Vol. 4, Issue 3

- **Wisconsin's Ice Warriors** Taking sturgeon with spears
- **Without A Paddle** Hike-in duck hunts prove outstanding
- **Four-Legged Heroes** Use a blood-trailing dog when the going gets tough
- Recipes By Suzette Why venison should be your New Year's resolution
- The 'Up Nort' Report The Fountain of Youth
- **Wisconsin's Muskie Shows** The 2011 muskie season starts right now!
- Sneaking In The Shadows A close-encounter with a southern Wisconsin cougar
- **Open-Water Walleyes** Don't put your boat away yet
- Dog Talk The errors of assuming
- Diaries Of An Outfitter Bears, bucks and changing times

ING, FISHING, TRAPPING, TRAVEL & OUTDOOR

OnWisconsinOutdoors.com

DIANE SCHAUER

Wisconsin's Ice Warriors

Sturgeon spearing: Stickin' it to 'em

or people who live around the Winnebago system, sturgeon spearing season is a big deal. The opening of sturgeon spearing on the second Saturday in February is a lot like the opening of gun deer season "Up Nort."

In fact, opening day of sturgeon spearing is even more important because there are a limited number of days to spear, based on the number and gender of the fish taken. The 2010 season lasted 6 days with more than 1,800 sturgeon harvested, and 82 of them weighed 100 pounds or more!

The excitement and rush of spearing and landing a big sturgeon is a lot like getting your first really big buck—it's that cool. In fact, the Friday before the Saturday sturgeon spearing opener, offices are as devoid of staff as they are the Friday before the gundeer opener.

The Christmas Tree Code

On the east shore of Lake Winnebago, from which I've enjoyed this event, preparations for sturgeon spearing season begin right after Christmas. Local fishing and Sportsmen's clubs collect used and unsold Christmas trees and place them on Lake Winnebago. The trees are positioned east-west at ¼-mile intervals with an extra tree marking the miles from shore. So, at 2 miles from shore there are two trees, at 3 miles there are three trees, with one tree marking each quarter-mile inbetween. Distances and directions can get confusing out on the ice, especially on a 137,000 acre lake.

Members of groups like the Quinney Fishing Club place metal bridges over cracks in the ice to help people stay safe. If Christmas trees are lying on their side, avoid them—that means bad ice. Learn the Christmas tree codes if you are venturing out on

Some of you might think sturgeon spearing would be fun, but the whole business of buying the equipment, getting a shanty out on the ice, cutting a large hole and spearing the fish seems a bit much. Well, that's no reason to stay away.

Sturgeon spearing season is an adventure and a great time even for people who don't spear or don't want to be on a frozen lake. Come visit any major launch on Winnebago, Buttes des Morts, or Winneconne the weekend before the opener

and watch the parade of ice shanties being towed to the lakes. This goes on all week, with Thursday and Friday before the opener being really busy. Shanties are painted different colors, decorated with logos and personalized in a variety of ways. Many are very nicely painted, some

Spearing sturgeon in Wisconsin is a family affair. You don't have to wield a spear to enjoy and appreciate the sport.

"It's a crazy party week, and it happens during February Smiles and big sturgeon among spearers go together like smiles and big bucks among hunters.

others not. Some have metal fins and

in Wisconsin!"

are just plain funny. Shanty decoration is an art form of its own.

rake in serious money. Hand-carved sturgeon decoys are sold from driveways and garages. The decoys are beauties; some look like sturgeon,

others are adorned with fluorescent polka-dots. Many of us collect decoys **Dealing In Decoys** hand-made and signed by different Enterprising local individuals can craftsmen. One fellow, so it's said, sold about 90 of his decoys during the 3 days before the Saturday opener. At

> Decoys are sold at many of bars and restaurants throughout the sturgeon spearing region, along with sturgeon pins, hats, shirts, sweatshirts, spears, pint glasses and an endless assortment of creative items. These items are fun, but are only a fraction of the overall financial impact of the sturgeon spearing season.

\$40-\$80 each ... do the math!



One local bar/restaurant owner admitted that 25 percent of his annual business occurs during the opening week. Another told me it's the second busiest weekend of their year; it's a crazy party week, and it happens during February in Wisconsin!

Sturgeon spearing season is important for non-profit





Continued on page 13

JJ REICH

The Reich Stuff

Spoon fed: Bro's powerful perch platter

Tee fishing spoons demand a fish's attention: They dart, flutter, vibrate, flash and glide from side to side. We know them, we trust them and we love them.

Fishing guide Brian "Bro"
Brosdahl, has a powerful fishcatching technique he's dubbed
"baiting up with a Medusa head."
Think of this baiting procedure as
presenting a smorgasbord on a platter,
not a single serving on a saucer. This
bait presentation is ideal for perch,
but giant-sized panfish love it, too.

To do this, Bro packs on a surplus of maggots (a.k.a. spikes or Euro larvae) to the treble hook of a small jigging spoon. He persistently and relentlessly packs them on. When one falls off, he knows the spoon has reached maximum capacity.

Because maggots stay alive and wiggle on the hook, his new go-to technique becomes a mass of grotesque movement that resembles the famously-ugly, Greek-mythology character, Medusa.

"When offered a hook with a single serving, finicky and wise fish grab enough to simply pluck it off your hook and run," explained Bro. "But offering up a huge score of bait triggers natural and instinctive greed. They don't pluck it, they deeply inhale it! As a result, you hook them every time."

Learn more about Bro at www.brosguideservice.com W

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



Loading a jigging spoon to max capacity tempts panfish and perch to inhale, rather than nibble.

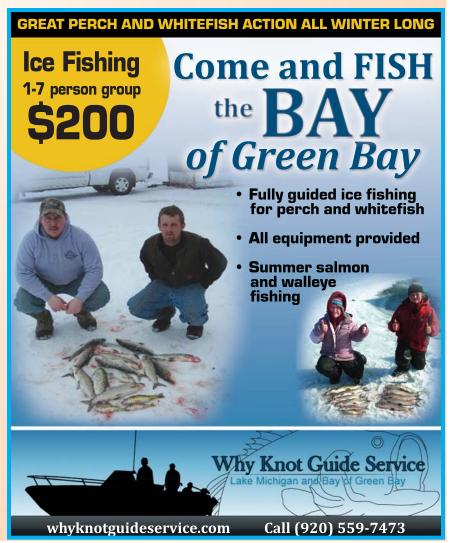


The author has learned to utilize Bro's "pack the hook" technique and relies heavily on it when chasing bluegills and jumbo perch through the ice.



Traveling light and bouncing from hole to hole is Bro's tactic for staying on top of the actively feeding fish.





DICK ELLIS

On Wisconsin Outdoors

Without a paddle: Hike-in duck hunts prove outstanding



Under a full moon, Roger Mayer shows a brace of mallards taken after hiking in to find potholes and wild rice still being sought-out by local and migrating ducks. (Ellis)

heboygan County was awakening slowly. Somewhere far to the east jammed into the overhanging branches of a hunter's version of a parking space, the paint on my old Chevy truck had surely earned a few new nocturnal battle badges. Black was turning to gray with the promise of a new sun soon to bathe the decoys that turned and bobbed in the creek wrapping around our oak ridge position in the northern unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest.

September in Wisconsin, especially during the opening of the duck season, is time to be in the field. But not necessarily with the masses of other hunters that come with any cherished opener. My brother, John Ellis, and I talked quietly and wondered if our tactic would work again. For the past many years, we often elect to leave the camo skiffs and bags of decoys

behind, opting instead to hike into creeks, rivers and potholes in northern and southern Wisconsin throughout the season to target ducks. With homework, the game continues to improve to the point that our hunting throughout the 2010 season was extraordinarily good.

In addition to the pure fun of calling in flocks and hoping for shooting opportunities, we entered the season with other goals. Four-year-old and gun shy, Dylan, my sister's yellow lab, continues to come out of his shell under the tutelage of John. And Micah, my golden retriever, now at 7 months, is a tenacious student with volumes of field lessons yet to digest.

We'd packed in from the truck, carrying four decoys in a bag over our shoulders, guns, duck calls, flashlights and little else. This creek was known to us from our boyhood days visiting Grandma's farm across the road from this state property.

But map work and scouting has also allowed us to find and hunt countless other water and food sources used by ducks in other parts of Wisconsin. Similar spots are available close to you, too, wherever you reside in our state. Our November duck hunting, in fact, would end by walking in to tiny potholes abundant with wild rice John found by first studying satellite and topographical maps from our northern Wisconsin cabin.

In the south, we were counting on opening morning pressure from duck hunters on bigger water around us keeping the ducks flying. Of higher importance, we were counting on the natural food source of acorns on the oak ridges, and the isolation of our tiny creek meandering through it, to call the wood ducks in.

Thinking Small

For three consecutive Saturdays, with mild weather allowing the wood ducks to remain in Wisconsin without heading to warmer climates, John, a talented waterfowl caller, screeched his wood duck welcome at legal first shooting and in the birds came. Often, the ducks first responded with their own call back, before Woody would streak in and waffle down to the

decoys, allowing just a few seconds to get on them and fire. Shooting was fast and furious, but fairy short-lived.

Despite our ... my ... less than impressive shooting, we still came home with plenty of ducks for the skillet.

Each hunt ended at 8:30 a.m., with one partner and the dogs circling off the water far downstream, moving in again to the creek and moving up the water toward the ambushing hunter left at the original spot. Without exception, each morning concluded with a bang as flocks, sometimes as many as 15 birds, took flight and followed the creek out seeking safety.

Most gratifying, Micah made his first Wisconsin retrieves in the shallow creek after being baptized in North Dakota, and Dylan hung right in during all the gunfire and showed new interest in retrieving. We're confident he would've performed if Micah hadn't interfered with retrieves that Dylan was contemplating. Micah's behavior led to more lessons. He was made to sit and wait and honor his Lab partner while Dylan was sent out to retrieve training birds.

With good friend Roger Mayer of Chicago joining us, we transitioned to northern Wisconsin to continue the duck hunt from our cabin on the Manitowish Chain as the season moved



Micah, just a few months old, sits with his first Wisconsin retrieve, a wood duck taken while creek hunting the Kettle Moraine oak ridges in the early morning

into later fall. Again, the keys would be available water and preferable food sources used by local and eventually migrating ducks from Canada.

Abundant wild rice was easily found. But on the Manitowish Chain, the water annually is drawn down by dams in the fall in part to make it easier for property owners removing their piers in front of first ice. For duck hunters like us, the practice is a nightmare also taking away existing backwaters so attractive to resting and feeding ducks in no hurry to move on if their world is right.

Without a Beavertail Backwater motor or similar model imperative to reach ultra-shallow water, often over the years, we've had to quit when potholes proved unreachable. This year, with the aid of the maps, we found different routes in to new water, hiked through national forest land, and set up on backwater potholes connected to larger water still holding unbroken "fields" of wild rice. Again, homework will allow you to inexpensively do this close to almost anywhere you live. Our average number of decoys carried in was just four.

Hunting northern Wisconsin from positions tucked under shoreline pines in front of small potholes was some of the best we've ever experienced.

Competition, except for hunters with mud motors far out on the bigger water keeping ducks moving, was non-existent. Mallards, widgeon, teal and the occasional diver and woody were taken with shooting opportunities excellent, often throughout the day.

The greatest source of accomplishment came when Dylan defeated 4 years of torment, and killed his "gun-shy demon" after hanging tough under the loud shotgun reports and making two perfect retrieves on mallards. You've never heard a greater celebration as that rising up from a small Vilas County pothole.

Wisconsin duck hunting: It's good. And it's so much better when it's inexpensive and non-competitive. Try the hike-in hunt next year. But stay off our potholes. W

More outdoors? Read Dick Ellis's weekly column at OnWisconsinOutdoors.com.

LEE GATZKE

Blood Brothers Outdoors

Four-legged heroes

ntil the early 1900s, dogs were a part of big-woods deer camps in Wisconsin. Typically, dogs would be turned loose on a fresh deer track to chase deer and get them to move past posted hunters. Hunters would take their best shot at a fleeing whitetail, that all too often, would've drawn fire from other hunters nearby.

This practice was a hunter safety nightmare, which led to many accidental shootings of other hunters and eventually contributed to outlawing the use of dogs for hunting deer. To this day dogs may not be involved in hunting deer, but they can be legally used to track wounded deer. There are rules to allow for the legal use of bloodtrailing dogs, and anyone who attempts to use a dog for this purpose needs to be aware of them.

A Hunter's Best Friend

A friend of mine, Chris Noll, and his dog, Gander, have been called on each of the past three archery seasons by my son and by me to find bucks we've arrowed. Gander is a German Drahthaar, a breed well suited to blood trail, and trained by Chris to pick up the scent of a wounded deer and lead him to it. Having access to a qualified handler who uses a good blood-trailing dog is something everyone who hunts deer would benefit from. All three of the deer Gander has tracked for us were fatally hit but didn't leave much of a blood trail.

Archers aren't the only ones who benefit from a good blood trailing dog: gun hunters do, too. Not all fatally hit gun shot deer drop dead upon being shot, or even leave a good blood trail. Case-in-point was an 8-point buck our 2010 gun hunting party found dead in a cornfield. It appeared to have been shot opening day, and by the time we stumbled on it the following day the coyotes had claimed it. No blood trail was visible in the vicinity. Had the hunter who shot this buck put a dog on the trail, he likely would've recovered that deer.

It's All About Timing

The time to locate a blood trailing dog handler is before the season begins. Gun and archery shops, sporting goods



The author owes the recovery of this buck to his friend, Chris, and the impeccable nose of Chris' blood-trailing dog, Gander.

"Having access to a qualified handler who uses a good blood-trailing dog is something everyone who hunts deer would benefit from."

stores and the Internet are good places to find out about people who offer this service. Once you've located a handler, contact them to learn more about how to utilize their services during deer season. Handlers have a lot of time and money invested in their dogs, so expect to be charged a fee to track your deer. Whatever they charge, it will be less than a pair of good boots and well worth it.

Determining whether you need to use a dog to trail your deer depends on the blood trail left after the shot, and what type of weather conditions have occurred prior to taking up the trail. If it rained or snowed after the shot and the blood trail has been obscured, a dog will likely still be able to pick up the scent. Dogs can smell what the human eye cannot see.

It's also important to leave the trail as pristine as possible so the dog can pick up the subtle clues of the scent trail. Don't walk all over the landscape looking for a pin-drop of blood because that can ruin the scent trail the dog needs to follow. Once you've lost blood, mark the spot and bring in the dog.

You'll be amazed how the dog will pick up the invisible trail left behind by the wound.

Gander To The Rescue

My experience this past bow season had me calling Chris just hours after I hit a 12-pointer. I arrowed the buck just below the spine from a steep angle; the arrow drove down into the vitals but didn't pass through. Without an exit wound, I figured this blood trail would be sparse so I lined-up Chris and Gander for the job.

The only visible clues the buck left for the first 150 yards were a few tracks and a pin-drop of blood about every 30 yards. Because I didn't foul up the trail before Gander had a chance to get on it, he had a virgin scent trail to follow. Less than 200 yards and 20 minutes later, we found the buck. Only the last 50 yards left enough blood visible for a human to follow.

Thanks to a blood-trailing dog we found my buck before the coyotes did. Every deer hunter should have the peace of mind that comes with having a knowledgeable handler and a good blood-trailing dog available when you need them. ${}^{G}\!W_{O}$

Lee Gatzke is a member of Blood Brothers Outdoors, creator of practical and tactical deer hunting videos. Gatzke can be reached at www.bloodbro.com.



IERRY KIESOW

Fly Fishing In Wisconsin

Fly patterns you should know about: The Pass Lake

uring the past year, I've introduced some of you to tying flies and, hopefully, helped others with answers to some basic questions. What I intend to do this year is concentrate on specific patterns. Not step-by-step tying, but rather more interesting stuff, such as a little history when possible; variations, if there are any; and I'll toss in some personal experiences I have had with each pattern.

I might, that's a definite maybe, even reveal the actual places where each pattern has worked well for me. In this way you'll not only learn about different patterns and how and when they have been successful, you'll also learn about fishing for a variety of species. Some of these flies might be familiar, others will not.

We begin with a Wisconsin native, the Pass Lake Special.

A Bit Of History

I've found several versions of the "history" of this fly. All of them either go to, or come out of, Canada, in one way or another. The most common chronicle credits the origin of the pattern to Wisconsin. That's the one I always tell.

In 1938, the Reverend E. Stubenvoll, a Lutheran minister from Clintonville, created for himself a fly he called the Pass Lake Special. Why that name? Because he would be fishing for brook trout that lived in Pass Lake, near Thunder Bay, Ontario.

The fly was successful, so he continued to fish it with continued success in local waters. The interesting thing about this story is that Reverend Stubenvoll didn't say much about the fly. But his son-in-law, Earl Paape, told people about it and made it popular. Interestingly, nowhere can I find out why the Reverend didn't, and why his son-in-law did, bring out the details. Regardless, it's an old, homegrown

pattern that still catches fish.

The Pattern And Variations

In the same way that I found several versions of how the Pass Lake came to be, I also found that not all writers agree on what the "original" recipe was. The general consensus is that the original fly was tied with mallard flank for the tail, and peacock herl for the body. Most agree that the first pattern was tied as a wet fly. (I did find one account that claimed the first fly was tied for Atlantic salmon on a No. 10 or 12 double hook, as a streamer.)

Through the years, the majority of tiers, me included, have settled on the following basic recipe:

Hook: No. 10 to No. 18 wet fly Thread: Black, 6/0 Tail: Pheasant crest Body: Fine black chenille Hackle: Soft, brown Wing: White calf tail

I tie my wet flies both with and without weight. (There are times when the fish want that fly down deep, as opposed to drifting just below the surface.)

When the pattern is tied as a dry fly, it's tied in Trude fashion, which means wing tied down as opposed to the normal dry fly up-wing configuration. And, of course, it's tied with stiff, dry fly hackle, tied very heavy in front of the wing, so the fly floats with a silhouette similar to a caddis.

The hooks, of course, change—fine, dry fly hooks must be used. Sizes, as with the wet version, are limited only to the tier's ability to tie them small. The thread too must be fine to cut down on the fly's total weight so it floats well. Depending on the hook size, use 8/0 or finer.

The recipe remains standard.



The author displays three styles of the Pass Lake fly (left to right): Dry, wet and the author's own (new and experimental) streamer.

What I've done here for the tail, instead of strands of pheasant crest, is used two end tips of crest, tied back-to-back, for more attraction. The hook in the photo is an X-long No. 4 streamer. Because of the length of the hook shaft, I've used bucktail for the wing. I'll tie some of these weighted and some not. I think this might be a pattern where making a larger head, then adding an eye, would be quite attractive. I will keep you updated as 2011 moves ahead.

Where and How

Primarily a trout fly, fishing this pattern is done just like any other wet, dry or streamer fly. I've noticed that the wet fly pattern is often more effective when it's dead-drifted and then, at the end of the drift, allowed to "hang" for a few moments before retrieving in short, erratic jerks for several feet before lifting to recast. I will work the streamer the same way.

The Trude is one of the dry fly styles that are helped by adding floatant. Many tiers finish their dry fly ties by adding floatant as their final step before placing the fly in the lets-go-fishing box.

My best day by far with the Pass Lake fly was on the North Branch of the Pike, in Marinette County. It saved my day. I'd been fishing for several hours with very little luck. It was a great day to be out in the water and woods, but the fish were napping. I decided it was time to head back to the cottage. I tied on a No. 12 Pass Lake fly, wet, and fished it upstream, like a nymph, except I let it drift by me and did my "special" retrieve.

It took me 45 minutes to fish my way back to my climb-out-of-the-creek spot. Within that time, I took 10 native brookies between 6-10 inches. Think that made my day?

That's the Pass Lake fly, a Wisconsin fly that deserves to be fished. Keep a good thought! Wo

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.

PUBLISHER/EDITOR:

Dick Ellis ellis@onwisconsinoutdoors.com

MANAGING EDITOR:

Luke Hartle hartle@onwisconsinoutdoors.com

PRODUCTION & ADVERTISING:

Karen Cluppert, Not Just Words ads@onwisconsinoutdoors.com

On Wisconsin
Outdoors
With the Dick Ellis Experts

Hunting, Fishing, Travel and Outdoor Humor

Published bi-monthly by ON WISCONSIN OUTDOORS, LLC. Subscriptions are mailed first class. ©Copyright 2009 ON WISCONSIN OUTDOORS, LLC with all rights reserved. Reproduction or use without permission, of editorial, advertising or graphic content in any manner is prohibited by law. NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS: All advertising is subject to publisher's approval and acceptance without recourse. Advertisers and their agencies assume responsibility for the condition of the contents of advertising printed, and agree to indemnify the Publishers of OWO for any and all claims and expenses arising there from. CORPORATE OFFICES LOCATED AT: 20240 West Rustic Ridge Drive, New Berlin, WI 53146

Phone: 262.549.5550 Web site: www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com Postmaster: Send address changes to:20240 West Rustic Ridge Drive New Berlin, WI 53146

GARY ENGBERG

Gary Engberg Outdoors

The best waters for winter bluegills in southern Wisconsin

he southern third of Wisconsin has many lakes that have both large numbers of and good-sized bluegills. The waters that I'm recommending are all within 60 miles of Madison. The Madison

Chain of Lakes all provide good bluegill action if you do a little research, and although the lakes can be crowded on weekends, it's still possible to get away from the crowds and find your own fish without other anglers drilling holes closer to you every time that you catch a fish.

First, we'll start with the Madison Chain and go north from there. Here are some very good locations that will provide you with action and some tasty 'gills for the frying pan.

The 'Triangle' Area

Near downtown Madison, fish the "Triangle area." The Triangle is near Brittingham Park and Monona Bay. This is a good spot if you're taking the children and want action to keep them interested in fishing. You'll have to sort through the numerous smaller fish to get your keepers, but it's easy to find fish in this shallow and weedy bay. There are some eaters in the 8-inch range, but this is mainly a location for catching numbers and getting the youngsters interested in ice fishing. Access is easy and the walk is an easy one for both children and seniors.

Warner Bay

Warner Bay on Lake Mendota's northeast side is another high-quality spot during winter. There's a distinct break-line and numerous green weeds survive nearly all season. It's also a good idea to out a few tip-ups because the bay has a strong northern pike population with many fish over 30 inches. The

minimum length is 40 inches, so this is definitely a trophy lake for pike.

Lake Mendota

Lake Mendota, the largest lake in the Chain (nearly 10,000 acres), is one of the best bluegill lakes that I know of. This is the last lake to freeze in the Chain, but once it does be ready for big slab bluegills. The past few winters the bluegills started biting in University Bay by the middle of December and continued throughout the winter months. This bite was no secret and I worry about all the big bluegills that were taken out of this lake the past few winters.

The average bluegill was almost 9 inches long, with many fish measuring 10 inches and a few 11 inches long. A 10 inch bluegill weighs almost a pound, and that's a big bluegill! Though the limit is 25 fish, you don't have to keep that many fish for a few great meals. Keep 10 or 12 fish and leave some for the next guy or for brood stock. The fish move around the bay some, but basically stay in the same general location all winter.

Lake Wabesa

Lake Wabesa, south of Madison, also has good bluegill fishing at the north end and around Hog Island. There's also a steady bite directly out from the Lake Farm boat landing in water 7 feet deep or less.

Fish and Crystal Lakes

North of Madison about 30 miles are Fish and Crystal Lakes. They're a few miles from the small berg of Roxbury and 5 miles from Sauk City. Bluegills can be caught throughout the winter if you keep moving and "popping" holes until you find active fish

Fish Lake is weedy and the water level is still high, but it contains many bluegills that readily bite. This is another action lake where you have to sort through your fish for a good meal. But, you will catch fish! Crystal Lake has larger fish in addition to bluegills, crappies and perch, although the



Ice Guide Wally Banfi of Prairie du Sac relies heavily on the Madison Chain of Lakes for winter bluegill action.

deepest water is only 10 feet deep. A good location to start fishing is the east end where you'll find many stumps and trees which hold fish much of the year. Again, keep moving until you contact fish. Fish and Crystal Lakes are only a half-mile apart, and both can be easily fished the same day.

Gallus Slough

Gallus Slough is another top location north of Sauk City about 7 miles, on the north end of Lake Wisconsin's Moon Valley and off Highway 78 and 113. There's parking along Highway 113, and then a 10-minute walk to the slough and water. The walk might scare away a few anglers if there's snow on the ground, but its well worth it! Gallus Slough is shallow with all water less than 5 feet. The bluegills that you'll catch are some of the larger in

the area and I'd put this location on my must-fish list. Bluegills longer than 8 inches are the norm, and there are some 'gills bigger than 9 inches.

Devils Lake

Devils Lake, south of Baraboo, is known for its trout but has a sizeable population of high-quality bluegills, crappies and rock bass. The best fishing spots are at the south and east end of the lake. There's ample parking, but you need a state park sticker to park and fish, which you can buy at the park's office on the lake's north end. There are bluegills, crappies and sunfish close to and in the green weeds. I also suggest fishing near the creek mouth at the lake's south end, especially if the water is at a higher level. There also are big northern pike, so put out a tip-up or two.

Continued on page 9

SUZETTE CURTIS

Recipes By Suzette

Venison In The New Year

appy New Year! Once again, it's time to begin anew—new hopes, ■ new goals and new resolutions. With more and more pressure to eat naturally/organically, this is a perfect time to resolve to do just that during 2011. Utilizing venison as a staple for family meals is just one way to get on track for a healthier, more natural diet.

Venison Heart

Two years ago I shared a recipe with you for venison heart that could be sliced for sandwiches. While I still use that recipe, I've come across another one that makes a stroganoff with the heart, and it's absolutely delicious. W

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. Contact her at recipesbysuzette@onwisconsinoutdoors.com

Venison Heart

by Suzette Curtis

1 deer heart, cut into small chunks

1/4 tsp. sea salt 1/8 tsp. pepper

1/4 c. baking mix*

1 tbsp. chopped fresh parsley, or 1 tsp. dried parsley flakes

3 tbsp. butter*

 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. sour cream (optional)*

Place venison heart pieces in a large plastic bag along with salt, pepper and baking mix. Shake well to coat meat. Melt butter in large skillet over medium heat; add meat and sauté until meat is browned. Stir in remaining ingredients (except sour cream); reduce heat to low; cover and simmer until tender and thickened (approx. 1 hour). Remove pan from heat and fold in sour cream if desired. Serve over hot egg noodles.

st To reduce calories, use reduced-fat Bisquick , Smart Balance in stick form and lite sour cream.



"... just one way to get on track for a healthier, more natural diet."

Venison Roast With Horseradish

by Suzette Curtis

This recipe is great for 6-8 people, but if you're serving less, save the leftovers for sandwiches.

5 lbs. venison roast ½ c. heavy cream 2 tbsp. coarse cracked pepper ½ c. sour cream 1 tbsp. kosher salt 34 c. prepared horseradish 1 c. dry red wine salt and pepper to taste

Heat oven to 500 degrees. Rub entire roast with salt and pepper and place on rack in roasting pan. Cook roast in oven for 20 minutes; remove roast. Reset oven temperature to 275 degrees. Pour wine in bottom of roasting pan and return roast to oven. Cook an additional 2-21/2 hours depending on doneness preference. Remove roast from oven and let stand 5-10 minutes before slicing.

Meanwhile, prepare horseradish sauce. Whip cold cream in mediumsized bowl until stiff. Fold in sour cream and horseradish. Salt and pepper to taste. Serve alongside roast.

• OnWisconsinOutdoors.com •

Venison Stew

by Suzette Curtis

This is such a great winter night meal, and it's easy because it cooks in a slow cooker all day. When the snow is falling and the wind is blowing, stew is truly a comfort food.

3 lbs. venison meat, cut into bite-sized chunks

1 lb. fresh mushrooms, sliced

1 large onion, thinly sliced

6 large potatoes, peeled and diced

3 tbsp. flour

1 lb. carrots, sliced

½ tsp. salt

2 c. beef bouillon

1/4 tsp. pepper

2, 14-oz. cans diced tomatoes

2 large onions, coarsely chopped

2 tbsp. dried basil

3 tbsp. olive oil

Place cubed venison in large plastic bag along with salt, pepper and flour; shake until meat is well coated. Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add coated meat and onions to skillet; sauté until meat is browned and onions are translucent.

Place potatoes and carrots in bottom of slow cooker; add meat and onions on top; sprinkle with basil; pour beef bouillon and diced tomatoes over all. Cover and cook on low heat f or 8-10 hours, adding additional liquid if needed. Serve with hot bread.

OnWisconsinOutdoors.com

Find more WILD GAME Recipes Online

OnWisconsinOutdoors.com

DAN MOERICKE

An 'Up Nort' Report *The Fountain Of Youth*

"The first 90 years or so, they go by pretty fast." So said Grandpa Gustafson, played brilliantly by the late Burgess Meredith in "Grumpy Old Men."

Sitting long hours in my deer stand this fall and not seeing many deer, I had lots of time to contemplate Grandpa Gustafson's musings about life and mortality. Thanks to good health and good fortune, this past year I got the chance to acknowledge some milestones in my own life and, to paraphrase Grandpa ... the last quarter-century, well, it went by pretty fast.

You see, 25 years ago, my wife and I welcomed our son Steve into this world. In October, I saw him walk down the aisle and marry Kate, the beautiful young woman who set the hook on his heart way back in high school. In between, watching him grow up into the fine young man he's become all seemed to happen pretty fast. That's the blur of life that Grandpa Gustafson was referring to, I guess.

Somewhere along the line, the love for hunting and fishing manifested itself in Steve. I'd like to think it's in his genes. This fall, when his schedule allowed him to join my

buddies and me midway through "Rut Camp," I was thrilled. His excitement for the hunt was evident in the frequent phone calls I received during the days prior to his arrival.

Operation: Forever Young

The first evening in the stand, Steve had two bucks wander past and he managed to bleat one into bow range using just his voice. His shot was true and the deer went less than 50 yards before going down. When I met up with him at dark, I was greeted enthusiastically by the words, "Buck on the ground."

There's just something rejuvenating about having your son be so excited about the same things that mean so much in your own life. Sitting in my deer stand, the thought occurred to me that the process of passing on the hunting and fishing traditions seemed to slow (if not actually reverse) the aging process, even if only temporarily. That evening, I was 25 again.

Taking it up a notch, one of my buddies threw out the suggestion that hunting and fishing could, in a sense, actually make us immortal. He cited the fact that, even many years after a fellow hunter's passing, we all point to the same ridge in the Nicolet National Forest and acknowledge it as "Bob's Stand." To us, it was and always will be Bob's Stand ... no matter what other hunters sit it and what subsequent bucks are taken from it.

Contemplating that hypothesis,



The author's son, Steve, made time during a busy fall schedule to hunt with his family and friends at Rut Camp. And according to the author, his son's buck made him turn 25 all over again.

my thoughts drifted to some of other places that are etched in time due to the experiences shared there—Korny's Point, Puck's Corner and Mooner's Slough—all places that will continue to carry those designations long after their namesakes are gone.

Now, I certainly don't know how the coming decades will play out, but I've reason to be optimistic. During a stop at a friend's hunting camp this past fall, I got to listen to stories from his dad, Nick, just 92 years young. There was a smile on his face and a twinkle in his eye as he told me about all the deer he'd been seeing. Although limited in mobility, his enthusiasm for the hunt was still evident. The day after our visit, he downed a buck.

Yup, the next 25 years should be

great ones, even if they go fast. Whether or not deer are shot or even seen. Whether or not the big one gets away. You see, I've found the fountain of youth ... it's on the lakes, and in the streams, and in my deer stand. It's in the wild places shared with friends and family. And the really great thing is that I know my son has found it, too.

Want to stay young? Take a kid hunting and fishing. Their passion will keep you young. Heck, it might even make you immortal.

Just sayin'. Wo

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.

ENGBERG, from page 7

Wisconsin River Sloughs And Backwaters

The last locations that I'm recommending are the numerous sloughs and backwaters along the Wisconsin River, from Sauk City to Spring Green. Highway 60 runs along this 12-mile stretch with many of the sloughs visible from the highway. Traveling west from Sauk City, the sloughs will be on your left where you'll see the Wisconsin River. There's been enough moisture this fall, so the backwaters should be full. Rainbow,

Badger, Jones and Helena sloughs can all be productive for winter bluegills. Remember to be extra careful because there is flowing water from the river in all of these spots.

Tips For Success

- 1) Use a high-quality monofilament (Berkley Ice Line) in 2-pound test. The smaller diameter line really makes a difference for finicky fish.
- 2) Use a rod-mounted spring bobber to detect the slightest bites.
 - 3) Have a good selection of jigs in all

sizes and colors (Bait Rigs and Custom Jigs and Spins make great panfish gear). Change jigs and colors until you find what the fish want that day.

- 4) Try using some of the new plastics. I know many good fishermen who use nothing but plastics with great success.
- 5) If using live bait, wax worms and spikes seem to work best.
- 6) Trust your electronics, especially if fishing in water deeper than 5 feet. The new color units are great and easy to use.
- 7) Try drilling your holes before you start fishing so you don't keep spooking

fish. Keep moving and experimenting until you find the biting and active fish.

Now you're ready, so dress warm and get out and try some of these waters. W

Author's Note: D and S Bait and Tackle, Madison. Ask for Gene. (608) 241-4225. Wilderness Fish and Game, Sauk City. Ask for Wally, Wayne or Larry. (608) 643-2433.

Contact Gary Engberg at 608.795.4208, or gengberg@garyengbergoutdoors.com or visit www.garyengbergoutdoors.com



DENNIS RADLOFF

Wisconsin's Muskie Shows

The 2011 muskie season starts at the shows



Tom Elberson and Guide Dennis Radloff struggle to hoist a monstrous 52- by 26-inch muskie caught in October 2010.

with the 2010 muskie season officially behind us, and hopefully with some great memories to go with it, we can start planning our 2011 season. As I spent a

cold December afternoon looking at pictures from my 2010 season I couldn't help getting a little excited at the thought of what 2011 will have in store, especially when I looked at long

time client Tom Elberson's 52- by 26-inch muskie from October.

The "show season," which usually covers January through March, can be more than just a reason to get out of the house. Sport shows, especially the muskie-specific shows, can help get your upcoming season in order.

The Chicago Muskie Show (January 14-16, 2011) and the Milwaukee Muskie Show (February 11-13, 2011) will be loaded with seminars, products and information.

Seminars

Attending these seminars is a great way to learn "how-to" tactics from pros in the industry. Here you can see first-hand what these men and women are doing to generate consistent results on the water on a regular basis. You can also ask questions at the end of the seminars specific to the lakes you're fishing.

New Products

The muskie shows are always a hot-spot for manufacture's to profile new products. New lures and "custom" colors are often sought-after items. You can also talk with the people who build and design these products. Many of the lures today have "tricks" to getting

different presentations, and these are the people who can get you dialed-in on the spot.

Guides

You will always find a variety of guides at these shows with the opportunity of getting a "show discount" on booking a trip. You also have the chance to talk with these guides about the waters they fish, favorite lures, boat rigging and just about anything else pertaining to muskie fishing. Stop and ask questions about the things that stump you on the water. Better yet, ask the same question to every guide you see there and see if you get the same answer!

While the muskie shows are a great reason to get out of the house on a cold winter day, they can be a hotbed of information that can help you get a jump start on your 2011 season.

Stop by and say "hi" at the shows this winter; I'll be there.

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 through www.sterlingmusky.com or at 262.443.9993.

BEACOM, from page 15

hard-pressed to find organized hunt tests or trials in Wisconsin from January to March, but many of the retriever clubs scattered throughout the state offer year-round upland training sessions. With reasonable membership dues, retriever clubs not only offer good opportunities to challenge yourself and your dog with training opportunities, but they also offer fellowship to handler's, allowing you to share ideas, advice and stories.

Sobczak, who has been involved in both training and judging for more than a decade, says, "Training a good retriever is much easier within a group. When problems arise, someone in the group will usually have been there, and have the answers. The camaraderie is wonderful. And, you'll come out of it with a better dog. Very commonly, lifelong friendships start at training days."

Friendship is one of the best reasons for shared time in the cold with

your dog. The bond between a hunter and their dog is one that's almost impossible to articulate in words, but it's a companionship with immeasurable rewards.

Witnessing a hunting dog's sheer joy as they bounce ecstatically through the sorghum looking to flush, or holding point or returning a bird to your waiting hands after a water retrieve are only matched by the joy and pride you feel having participated in it. The dedicated training you both work toward take shape and blend with your dog's instinctual nature is very rewarding and shouldn't take the winter off. \hat{W}_{0}

Natalie Beacom is a librarian and freelance writer residing in New Berlin and enjoys spending time hunting and fishing throughout Wisconsin. Email natalie@onwisconsinoutdoors.com.



ALL-IN-ONE REDEFINED.

Z425 EZtrak™

- 23-HP
- 2-year or 120-hour limited warranty
- Shown with 54" Edge™ deck and 6.5-bushel 2-bag bagger

X534 Select Series™

- 25-HP
- Exclusive 4-wheel steer
- 4-year or 500-hour limited warranty
- Shown with 54" Edge Xtra deck and 17P poly cart



X324 Select Series

- 22-HP
- Exclusive 4-wheel steer
- 4-year or 300-hour limited warranty
- Shown with 48" Edge Xtra deck and 25-gallon pull-type sprayer



VISIT US AT WWW.JOHNDEERE.COM





MIKE FOSS

Diaries Of A Wisconsin Outfitter

Season's end

he Wisconsin muzzleloader deer season is in full-swing as I write this, and I'm already 3 days past the deadline to send in my story for this issue. With a tear in my eye I have a deer story to tell, but I want to shift gears back to early October, during the final days of the bear season (with the aid of bait) in Zone D.

With another great bear hunting season nearing its end, I was anxious to get the call from my, friend Craig Putchat. It's not that I didn't want Craig to shoot a bear on this night, but if he didn't, I would get to sit with him on one of my bait pits the next evening that was still getting hit on a regular basis.

This time of year can be very frustrating, but it can also be very rewarding. As October approaches, bear hunters often find that bear activity at their bait stations slows down—way down—but does it really?

During the later part of the season, temperatures drop, the leaves drop, days become shorter and a bear's eating habits slow down; it's nature's way of telling that bear it has enough fat to make it through the winter and it's time to go to sleep.

But for you die-hard bear hunters, just because your bait station activity has slowed way down and you begin to question whether bears are still using it, don't give that bait pit up just yet. My clients shot three bears at the end of this season, and all three were adult bears with gorgeous, prime hides.

Craig's Bear

Craig (owner and fishing guide of Outdoor Allure, just outside of Washburn) called me, and said he'd seen the same sow with cubs on his bait. He wanted to give my spot a try, but said he wouldn't be able to make it until 2 p.m. I felt like a kid on

Christmas day; I couldn't wait to get in that treestand and witness some possible action.

Craig arrived later than I expected, and we only had a few hours to hunt. We were in the stand by 3:15 p.m.; it was one of my "wilderness stands" and we had to take an ATV to get to it. Once settled in, I noticed the wind was totally wrong, swirling and blowing directly at the bait, but we had no choice: We couldn't back out—it was the last day to hunt.

When baiting, I use anise or bacon scent made by Bear Scents not just for an attractant but also as a cover scent for situations just like this. At 4:20 p.m., Craig elbowed me, "Bear, bear, bear!" The bear paused just before the bait site opening, and I was thinking, please don't smell us and run! The bear came right in, however, with its nose in the air, smelling the anise.

Craig whispered, "Is it big enough?"

"Take him," I whispered, and Craig made the fatal shot. What a way to end the season: a great hunt, and more memories with a good friend.

Wisconsin Deer: A Changing Tide

During this past firearms deer season I had a chance to visit some local long-established deer camps and interview hunters on how their season was going. I felt like a punching bag: All the hunters' disappointments came pouring out as my questions were answered. One hunter stated, "We can't all be wrong. Why doesn't the DNR listen to us? Can't someone see what's happening?" Too many wolves, way too many bears and the mismanagement of the deer herd were concerns on the minds of many hunters.

The times are changing; slowly I see members of the long-rooted deer camps lose interest. I'm not one to give up, but after the past 3 years of



Proof: Good things do come to those who wait. Craig Putchat shot this bear with Northern Wisconsin Outfitters during the final day of the 2010

increasingly disappointing firearms deer seasons, and to keep the interest alive for the young ones in my camp, we've decided to give up the traditional 9-day deer rifle season and are switching focus to the muzzleloader deer season.

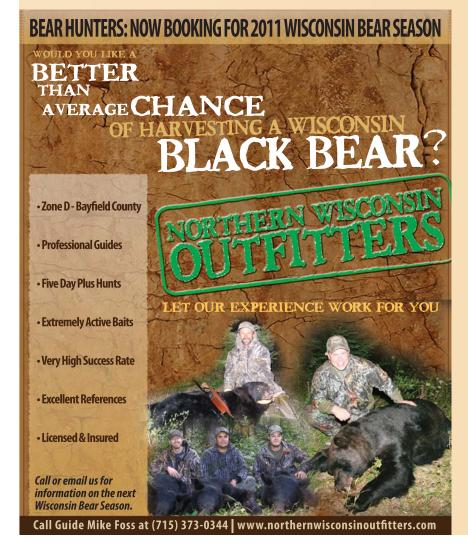
After my niece and nephews had a chance to shoot my muzzleloader, there was some great interest in hunting with one. With a renewed interest in the muzzleloader deer season for next year I hope I can keep some sort of deer hunting tradition, camaraderie and interest alive for the young ones—they are our hunting future.

Mike's Muzzleloader Musings

This brings me to the beginning of the story. Tuesday, the second day of the muzzleloader deer season, was my first day to hunt. With snow on the ground and a light rain/snow mix in the air, I found myself in my treestand waiting for light to arrive.

As many hunters do, I drifted off to seasons past, catching myself smiling about past hunts and memories. At

continued on page 25



Donated Wisconsin Bear Tag Wanted

Northern Wisconsin Outfitters is looking for a 2011 bear tag, to provide to a child with a life-threatening illness, for a bear hunting adventure. For more information, contact Mike Foss at NorthernWisconsinOutfitters.com.

SCHAUER, from page 1

organizations, too. On the ice off Quinney you can buy brats and burgers to benefit Fond du Lac youth baseball. At Waverly Beach the sign says "Sturgeon hole cutting \$15. Support area youth." At most major landings, services are offered and nonprofits benefit. Nice!

If you want to experience the sturgeon spearing season without going out on the ice, visit a weigh-in station. It's a great way to get up-close and personal with these enormous, ancient fish. Bring your camera and the family; children enjoy touching the sturgeon and learning about these fine creatures.

There are a lot of different ways to participate in the sturgeon spearing season. Grab your camera and check it out. Enjoy seeing the fish. Buy yourself a shirt and a decoy. Have a burger and a beverage while you listen to the fish stories. Become part of the fun. Maybe next year you, too, will venture out on the ice. W

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





TOM CARPENTER

Cub's Corner

10 projects to do with kids this winter

back and reflect on a fine year outdoors with kids. Spring brought open-water fishing, quite possibly a youth turkey hunt, and hopefully some bird watching. Summer saw more fishing, plus camping, canoeing, biking, hiking and any number of other summer pastimes. As fall neared, preparations for hunting began—gathering gear, practicing with bow, rifle or shotgun, setting stands and doing some scouting. Then, of course, there was the hunting itself. Deer probably occupied some time, but hopefully small game, upland birds and waterfowl mixed in. Once the lakes and rivers hardened up, there might have even been some ice fishing on tap.

Those are some of the highlights of a Wisconsin sporting year. But now what? Ice fishing, sledding, skiing, winter camping (only for the brave!) and other pastimes might keep you a little busy. But still, there's a lot of

downtime when the mercury plummets and frigid winds blow. So here are 10 project ideas to keep you and your young sportsmen or ladies busy this winter. These are great ways to pass a dark evening at home, or keep active on a day not suited to being outdoors.

Hold a Gun Cleaning Bee.

Hunting seasons keep many of us very busy, and rifles and shotguns are often put away after a quick wipe-down and light oiling. As relaxed as I am about gun-cleaning, a person should perform the task thoroughly at least once a year. Gather all the materials and cleaning solutions you'll need, pick put an evening, set up on old towels at the kitchen table and have at it together. It's fun, dirty, a little smelly ... and kids love gun cleaning.

2. **Build A Wood Duck House.** You don't have to be a woodworking pro to build a great wood duck

house and help these beautiful ducks. Go to Duck Unlimited's website (Ducks.org) or the Wood Dock Society (WoodDuckSociety.org) to find plans for easy-to-make wood duck houses you can build indoors now, and then erect outside during winter's last days.

Gear. When open-water fishing ends, I usually throw the gear in a corner and deal with it on a cold night indoors with the kids. Empty the tackle boxes. Sort and re-organize everything, keeping a list of what you need and buying it while the snow still flies. Go over rods and reels. Change line. Get rid of gear that doesn't work, or get it repaired now while business at the tackle shop is slow. Be ready to fish right away in spring!

Make Some Jerky. If you have a smoker, a relatively mild winter day is a great time to make some jerky out of venison, or goose meat. Many good marinade recipes are available on line. Get the meat out early to thaw, slice it thin, marinate it overnight, and then smoke it for 8-10 hours (watch it: don't over- or under-do it). Kids can help at every step of the process!

5. Feed The Birds. Try this simple project. Slather pine cones with peanut butter, roll them in black oil sunflower seeds, and then hang them outside and watch the chickadees and nuthatches have a winter feast.

Get Ready For Spring Turkeys.

Winter is the time to go through your calls and gear, make sure you're all set, and practice some calling. I like to stock the turkey vests right now, and shop early for whatever is needed. Make sure your camouflage all fits and is in good repair. Watching turkey hunting videos—especially those with some calling instruction—is fun for young hunters. "Yack" on your calls together.

Make A Sporting Journal. Print out the year's sporting pictures and have your young sportsmen and women make a memory book—



complete with stories—of all their outdoor adventures.

See if you have a young archer on your hands: Visit an indoor archery range and ask if they have bows to try out. Shoot some arrows and discover if you might have a young bowhunter or target shooter to cultivate.

Tune-Up Waterfowl Decoys.
Thus is one of my favorite winter projects. Lay out all your waterfowl decoys. Replace frayed lines and bad anchors. Wash the decoys in warm water. After they dry, check them over and tag ones for paint touchups. Get some little brushes and decoy paint (check out Cabala's or Mack's Prairie Wings) and touch up the paint schemes. Imperfection is fine—let the kids have fun doing a little artwork on your waterfowl fakes so they're all set for next fall.

Build An Igloo or Snow
House. Okay, so this one is outdoors. You've got to get outside sometime! What kid (of any age) doesn't love building something out of snow? Here's one website with some plans and instructions if you don't want to be your own snow-house engineer and architect:
Igloobuilding.org. Wo

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



www.dominanceiseverything.com

NATALIE BEACOM

Snow And Go!

Dog training during winter

epending on where your trust lies in the Farmer's Almanac, it appears as though Wisconsin's upcoming winter forecast is calling for brutally cold temperatures and lots of snow. For those outdoor enthusiasts wielding sleds, snowshoes and skis, this cold and powder is cause for celebration. But for those dog trainers out there who are clinging to their e-collars and bumpers and having difficulty saying farewell to the fall hunting season, the cheers are more muted.

Of course, our well-loved four-legged hunting companions enjoy their winter slumber indoors by a warm fire, relaxed and off-duty, but don't discount their desire to romp among the flurries. Those cold Wisconsin winter days offer prime opportunity to keep your hunting dog conditioned for the hunting seasons ahead.

Reveling In Routine

Maintaining a winter routine for your hunting dog in the off season will not only keep them conditioned and in shape, but will also provide mental stimulation for your dog that instinctually want and enjoy the hunt.

Jack Sobczak, president of the Horicon Marsh Retriever's Club, doesn't let winter slow his training activities down.

"The dogs can handle the cold," said Sobczak. "Upland training goes well, because the dogs don't tire so easily. It gives them the chance for longer runs, with more repetitions."

In fact, not only are hunting breeds resilient to the colder temperatures, they perform well seemingly to prefer it compared to the warmer temperatures and humidity they endure during their hunt tests and trials during the summer months.

Make The Most Of The Cold

Once the snow starts accumulating, use it to your advantage. Explore the options around your yard or at area parks and natural areas. Create natural obstacles and terrain changes amidst the white tundra. Fire-up your blower and throw the snow perhaps in a "T" or "TT" pattern to practice run-lining drills. Running blind retrieves for as little as 30 minutes a few times a week will get your dog running, will ultimately be less back-training



Jack Sobczak and his hunting dog, Mustang Sally Slo Down.

and it will keep both your skills sharp.

Year-round training doesn't just offer physical fitness and hone hunting skills. Practicing verbal and non-verbal commands and the obedience skills they require in the field can boost both handler and dog confidence for successful hunting outings and field tests.

Hunting For A Club

Unless you venture to warmer climates, you'll be Continued on page 10

BIGGER AND BETTER FOR 2011!

FEBRUARY 25-27

Exhibition Hall at Alliant Energy Center Madison, Wisconsin

Friday 4-9pm; Saturday 9am-7pm; Sunday 9am-5pm \$8 Adults • Kids 12 and under are FREE!

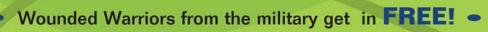
Speakers from every category from fly fishing, to fishing from Kayaks, to bass, to walleye, to musky! Plus, special Fishing 101 Seminars from Charlie Grimm for beginners who have barely fished at all! From beginners to experts, we have topics for everyone!

Things to do:

- Shop for deals on boats and motors to hard to find lures!
- Book a trip for nearly anything that swims!
- Enter to win trip giveaways!
- Fish the trout pond!
- Too much to list!

Youth Activities:

- The Kids Pond (brown bags at 50¢ a try)
- Minnow Races all weekend long
- · Make Your Own T-Shirt all weekend long
- Face Painting 10am-2pm Sat/Sun
- Sun Ballon Art 10am-2pm Sat/Sun
- Kids Casting ... And more!













All proceeds go to

improving fishing in Wisconsin!



KIDS

UNDER 12



Explore Wisconsin | County-by-County at www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com

County Teasers

Explore Wisconsin, it's as easy as 1-2-3.

Valuable resources for the outdoor enthusiast, listed county-by-county:

- ✓ Tourism Information
- ✓ Hunting & Fishing Guides
- ✓ Resorts & Lodging
- **✓** ATV Trail Maps







ADAMS COUNTY

Adams County Park & Recreation

ASHLAND COUNTY

· Ashland Area Chamber

BARRON COUNTY

Barron County

BAYFIELD COUNTY

- · Bayfield Area Chamber
- Cable Area Chamber
- Northern Wisconsin Outfitters

BROWN COUNTY

Greater Green Bay

BURNETT COUNTY

• Burnett County Tourism

CALUMET COUNTY

Calumet County

CHIPPEWA COUNTY

Chippewa County Tourism

CLARK COUNTY

Clark County Tourism

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Grandview Motel Flyway Fowling - Todd Lensing

DOOR COUNTY

Sterling Guide Service

DOUGLAS COUNTY

 Superior-Douglas County Convention & Visitors Bureau

FLORENCE COUNTY

Wild Rivers Interpretive Center

See what our **Explore** Wisconsin partners are planning just for you ...

Our four cross-country ski trails offer you a beautiful way to experience the wonderful winters in Langlade County. The lakes, hills, forests & kettles make Langlade County skiing amazing. Crosscountry skiing allows you to experience the quiet serenity of a winter's day in Langlade County! Click on Langlade County.

Visit Chippewa County and enjoy many great outdoor activities, which includes over 300 miles of snowmobile trails, 30 miles of cross country ski trails, ice fishing, and more. If indoor activities are your style, take in a musical/theatrical performance, a local restaurant or shop, or a brewery. Click on Chippewa County.

Plan an early May fishing trip at the Big **Chetac Resort** and enjoy the beauty of spring in the Northwoods. Watch the area come to life as the trees leaf out and the woods come alive with the wildflowers. The water will be clear and the fish will be hungry. Click on Sawyer County.

We have so many 4-season ways to enjoy the outdoors that people actually look forward to winter! It's no wonder with 400+ miles of snowmobile and winter ATV trails to ride, 90k of X-C skiing, snowshoeing and skijoring trails to explore, and 431 inland lakes, streams, and Lake Superior to icefish. Click on Douglas County.

Spend hours of fun in Calumet County this winter with our tubing hill, cross country skiing trails, ice fishing, snowmobiling trails, ice skating, and of course **Sturgeon Spearing in February!** Check out Discover Wisconsin in February for the East Central Wisconsin Discover Wisconsin show that highlights Calumet County! Click on Calumet County.

Wolf Pack has all the new toys and will put you on the bite for Walleyes, Brown Trout and Pan fish. Relax at the pool while we clean your days catch. Click on Sheboygan County.

Explore the **Snow Capital of Wisconsin**, Iron County! Our 214 inland lakes offering a wide variety of ice fishing opportunities. Try out the vast Turtle Flambeau or Gile Flowages or any number of smaller lakes. Contact us at ironcountywi.com to get a lake guide and map. For the snowmobiler, Iron County offers hundreds of miles of groomed trails and thousands of acres of off trail boondocking. Click on Iron County.

Sneak Preview of Sport Show Featured Properties from First Weber. *Click on* Waushara County.

The Flambeau Trail System and Georgetown Trail remain open to ATV use through March 14th – enjoy an ATV ride this winter! Several ice fishing tournaments will occur in Price County this winter, providing an opportunity to get outdoors with family and friends. Have fun fishing and win great prizes! Click on Price County.

Washburn County offers the enjoyment of 240+ miles of Northwest Wisconsin's great Snowmobile trails, connecting to the largest network of trails in the Midwest. For your FREE Trail Map, call 1-800-367-3306. Be sure to check out Jack Frost Fest, Jan. 15th-Antique Snowmobile **Show & Ride, Pond Hockey Tournament, Ice Fishing, Turkey Bowling** & much more! Click on Washburn County.

Enjoy Winter With Us! Polk County is home to over 350 miles of groomed snowmobile trails ranging from remote trails to the Gandy Dancer State Trail. How about an Ice Fishing Contest? St. Joseph's Ice Fishing Contest in Amery on January 30. On February 5, head over to Wanderoos for the Lion's 20th Annual Ice Fishing Contest on Lake Wapogasset. Click on Polk County.

Stay warm after your winter fun at **Lakeview Log Cabin Resort** on Lake DuBay. You can use our boat ramp to access the ice by four-wheeler for a great

day of ice fishing. If skiing and snowmobiling is your preference there are trails and hills close by. Click on Marathon County.

GOT FISH!? Are you up to the challenge of a **Canadian fishing adventure?** Then come visit us at Manotak Lodge on world famous Perrault Lake. Gear up to set hooks! Click on Waupaca County.

Celebrate Winter with us in Fremont Come to the "Fire on Ice" snowmobile races on February 12 and 13 at the Waupaca County Fairgrounds. Try the cross country, snowmobile or hiking trails at Hartman Creek State Park. Warm up in one of our great restaurants and stay the night. Click on Waupaca County.

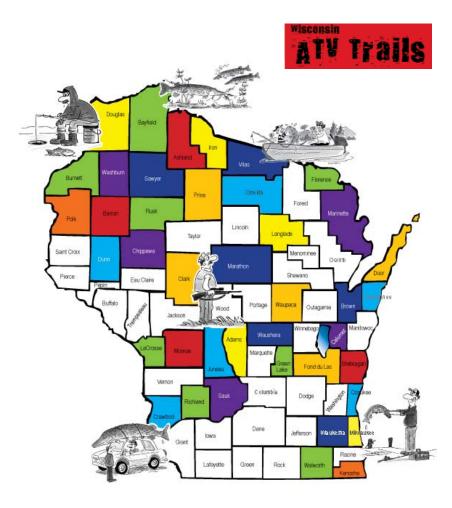
Manitowish Waters invites you to enjoy some of the best hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation! Ski, snowshoe, snowmobile & ice fish in our winter wonderland. Don't miss Winterfest Rendezvous, February 19, on Rest Lake. Travel U.S. Hwy. 51 or fly in to D25. For complete area information, click on Vilas County

It's time for winter fun in Marinette **County** – the real north! Whether you enjoy back-country snowshoeing, SWISSSHING along cross country ski trails, the quiet of ice fishing or the exhilaration of snowmobiling, we have plenty of room for you to set your own pace in the real north. Click on Marinette County.

January & February in Port Washington offer opportunities for cross-country skiing and winter hiking - and even swimming! January 1 is the **Annual Polar Bear Dip** for those hardy (or foolish) souls. The Interurban Recreation Trail, heading north out of Port Washington, is also a favorite for skiers. Click on Ozaukee County.

Get ready to discover winter in Ashland County where you will experience beautiful snowmobile trails filled with Natures breathtaking scenery. Ice Fishing is a winter pastime for anglers waiting to pull in freshwater fish through the ice. Receive updated reports on ice fishing and snowmobiling. Click on Ashland County.

Explore Wisconsin | County-by-County at www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com



Enjoy all the winter outdoor activities in the **Hayward Lakes area**. Ice fish hundreds of frozen lakes, cross-country ski or snowshoe over 250 kilometers of groomed Nordic trails, browse our unique shops, dine at our excellent restaurants and visit our casino. *Click on Sawyer County.*

Great accommodations - great rates at Treeland Resort while enjoying your favorite winter outdoor recreation.

Snowmobile or icefish from your door or just an easy 15 minutes to the world-class American Birkebeiner cross country ski trails. Call (715) 462-3874 9am-noon M-F office. *Click on Sawyer County.*

Adams County Castle Rock and Petenwell Parks are open **year round for camping with heated shower/restroom facilities.** Bring your snowmobiles and access the trails right from the county parks or try your luck at ice fishing in the 2nd and 4th largest lakes in Wisconsin! *Click on Adams County.*

How do you find find suspended crappies and walleyes under the ice? Hooksetters Guide Service has that answer. *Click on Marathon County*.

February 26 and 27, 2011 is the date slated for the 1st Annual Buckeye Run Dog Sled Race. These races will be 2-4-6 and 10 mile sprint races with a number of different classes/age brackets, drawing mushers from around the Midwest. Cash prizes totaling over \$3500 will be awarded. *Click on Florence County.*

Juneau County is home to Castle Rock Lake, Petenwell Lake, the Wisconsin River, Lemonweir River, Yellow River, Baraboo River, Necedah National Wildlife Refuge, Meadow Valley Reserve, Buckhorn State Park, Castle Rock County Park, and Wilderness County Park. Sportsmen, need we say more? Click on Juneau County. The Cable Area invites you to join us this winter for all kinds of fun! Ski our 150+ kilometers of trails, ride 1,200 miles of snowmobile trails, fish on any of our 963 named bodies of water. Shop and eat in our fantastic one of a kind restaurants and shops. *Click on Bayfield County.*

Feb 19-20 Richland Center Fairgrounds Vetesniks Screaming Half Mile Ice Oval USSA Sanctioned Snowmobile Race, just like Eagle River, only in Southwest Wisconsin. Two days of nonstop action, warming tent, trails to fairgrounds and concessions on grounds. Visitwww.hybridredneck for all the details. Click on Richland County.

The Sparta Area has much to offer! **300** miles of Monroe County snowmobile trails are open - www.sledsparta.com- Get out there and hit it now! *Click on Monroe County*.

Ever wonder what a whitefish would feel like on the end of your ice rod? Or a 12-inch plus perch? Come try out the Bay of Green Bay with **Why Knot Charters & Guide Service** and and find out for yourself. You'll be surprised how affordable it is. Call Zach at (920) 559-7473. *Click on Kewaunee County*

Winter in Rusk County offers traditional winter silent sports activities like cross-country and snowshoeing on world class trails like the Ice Age and Blue Hills trails. Want to get out on the ice? Quality ice fishing with easy access and no launch fees can be found on m dozens of lakes. No crowds-great fishing-what more could you ask for. Click on Rusk County.

Ice fishing on the Mississippi backwaters

is in full swing and there are plenty of places to try on Pool 9. Also, mark your calendars for March 5th when there will be a **live bald eagle** visiting the Community Center in Ferryville. *Click on Crawford County.*

Looking to spend some time with the family? La Crosse has events for everyone. In January we have Winter Rec-Fest, the Great Tri-State Rail Sale. February brings the Boat, Sport and Travel show and the Wisconsin State Ski and Snowboard event. Click on LaCrosse County.

FOND DU LAC COUNTY

Green Lake Country Visitors

GREEN LAKE COUNTY

Green Lake Country Visitors

IRON COUNTY

• Iron County Development

JUNEAU COUNTY

Juneau County

KENOSHA COUNTY

Wildlife Visions

KEWAUNEE COUNTY

• Why Knot Charters & Guide Service

LACROSSE COUNTY

• LaCrosse Area Visitors Bureau

LANGLADE COUNTY

· Antigo/Langlade Chamber

MARATHON COUNTY

- Hooksetters Fishing Guide
- Lakeview Log Cabin Resort

MARINETTE COUNTY

- Marinette County Tourism
- A River Guide (Jason Guarke)

MILWAUKEE COUNTY

• Fish Chaser Guide Service

OZAUKEE COUNTY

Port Washington Tourism

POLK COUNTY

• Polk County Information Center

PRICE COUNTY

- Park Falls Area Chamber
- Price County Tourism
- Wounded Warriors in Action

RICHLAND COUNTY

Hybrid Redneck Events

RUSK COUNTY

Rusk County

SAUK COUNTY

Birchcliff Resort

SAWYER COUNTY

- Hayward Lakes Visitors Bureau
- Treeland Resort

SHEBOYGAN COUNTY

- City of Sheboygan Tourism
- Wolf Pack Adventures

VILAS COUNTY

Manitowish Waters Chamber

WALWORTH COUNTY

Dave Duwe's Guide Service

WASHBURN COUNTY

• Washburn County Tourism

WAUPACA COUNTY

- Fremont Area Chamber
- Manotak Lodge, Ontario
- Wolf River Outfitters Resort

WAUSHARA COUNTY

• First Weber Real Estate

onwisconsinoutdoors.com/explore-wisconsin

JOEL "DOC" KUNZ

On Wisconsin Rivers

Last-ditch efforts

"So, what are my favorite spots? Here they are, all December, January and February, tested and proven productive in previous years ..."

Ithough winter's icy grip takes away most open-water fishing opportunities, there are a few places where anglers can get the boat in the water and catch a few walleyes and sauger all year long.

New clothing specifically designed for cold-weather fishing has made it easier to brave the weather and spend some quality time in the boat catching cold-water fish. I remember the days when cotton long underwear, a hooded sweatshirt and wool jacket were what kept me warm. Now, \$150 worth of manmade fibers

provide the bottom layer while an ice suit made for the elements is the outer layer that keeps me warm and dry.

Additionally, the old "sunflower" heater and 20-pound propane tank has been replaced by a smaller, selfigniting heaters that operate off of the little green 1-pound tanks. My favorite spots remain the same, as does the 1973 Mirro Craft I've fished in during the winter months so many times. Now, thanks to the efforts of a few hardy souls, I can continue to enjoy a winter day on the river catching walleyes and sauger.



Fishing during January and February doesn't necessarily have to involve ice. Here, the author hits a favorite spot with his boat near the Dells during a winter day.

The Wisconsin and Mississippi Rivers provide a number of spots where I've been able to fish during all but the coldest or snowiest years. Access is the main factor. During mild years, opportunities increase as many boat launches in proximity to a dam can be open. In cold years, boat launches directly adjacent to a dam and private launches maintained to provide access are the only choice.

Snow is also a factor as some public facilities are not plowed or maintained to allow access. These would be a "use at your own risk" situation unless posted or marked as closed. Reliable, local information is always important. Nothing is more frustrating than showing up at a spot and not being able to access the water. Local information also gives you the best chance of finding out what bait, product or tactic is producing the most fish.

So, what are my favorite spots? Here they are, all December, January and February, tested and proven productive in previous years—as long as Mother Nature doesn't punish us too badly and completely freeze everything shut.

Mississippi River, Pool 4

I start with the stretch of river where I spent my honeymoon, and that's Pool No. 4, below lock and dam No. 3, near Red Wing, Minnesota. Hagar City is the Wisconsin counterpart, home to Evert's Resort and possibly the king of the "last-ditch effort" for open-water fishing. Here, owner Dean Marshall does what's

necessary to keep his launch open. His location on an outside bend in direct line of the Mississippi current makes this pretty much a year-round openwater fishing destination. Marshall has a complete bait and tackle shop that includes an extensive display of the "plastics" known to catch fish in the area. Known for good walleye fishing, the area also boasts some dandy sauger, with 3-pound fish a common occurrence.

Evert's is located about 2 miles downstream of the dam where large numbers of fish congregate during winter. Wisconsin anglers can fish with their Wisconsin resident license in these noted "boundary waters" and are allowed to keep six fish in any combination of walleye and sauger. Walleyes must be at least 15 inches in length. Cabins are available, and you can bet I'll be dippin' the boat this year at Evert's.

Mississippi River, Genoa Area

Farther down stream the Genoa area, at lock and dam No. 8, is a wellknown late-season fishery. There's a boat launch located just below the power plant, which is plowed by the local township and stays open late in to the season. At times shore ice can make the launch un-usable for trailers, so local anglers push small Jon boats out to open water.

You don't need to go far to catch fish. Bait is available at Captain Hooks in Genoa, and the area is known for

27th WISCONSIN DEER & TURKEY EXPO April 1-2-3, 2011 • Alliant Energy Center, Madison



New in 2011 -

- Women's Hunting Clothing & related Gear Center - Fitting rooms avail. -WOMAN HUNTER magazine Info Ctr.
- Puppies & Kids Sunday
- Gun Auction Sunday
- DVD Theater
- USSA Raffles & Sweepstakes
- Deer Hunting "Answer Man"
- Turkey Hunting "Answer Man"

Other Hiahliahts

- 590+ Booths and 50+ Seminars
- Archery Trick Shot (Sa & Su only)
 Tech Info Center expanded,
- Trophy Contest (WI Deer & Bear)
- Trail Cam & Outdoor Photo Contests
- New-Product Display Area
 Flint Knapping
 Mountain Men Camp

- 3 Shooting Ranges
- Live Game Animals & Predators
- Tradeshow Sunday (dealers invited)



EXPO HOURS

Go to www.deerinfo.com

for Directions/Map, Hotels, Exhibitor List, Seminars, Tech Info Ctr, Contest Rules & all event details. Or call 1-800-324-3337.



www.facebook.com/deerinfo www.twitter.com/deerinfo www.youtube.com/Deerinfo

Bring this coupon to the i **27th Annual Wisconsin I** DEER & TURKEY EXPO April 1-2-3, 2011 Alliant Energy Center Madison, WI ONE COUPON PER CUSTOMER Price includes lax and admission only the model of the coupon of the coupon

continued on page 22

KEVIN MICHALOWSKI

<u>Dog Talk</u>

The problem with assuming

You can't assume the dog can do it. This is true for corrections as well. If a dog makes a mistake you must provide a correction immediately after the mistake if you hope to change the behavior. This means your corrections must be consistent, regular and, again, immediate. Those are the only two ways to change a dog's behavior: positive reinforcement and correction of mistakes.

Learning To Learn

We run into trouble with our training when we don't allow the dog enough successful repetitions to learn what we're trying to teach. This can be tricky, especially if you assume the dog knows what you expect.

I recently came across a great example with a dog during a field hunt for geese. The dog was well trained and stayed quiet in the blind, was steady to the shot and charged hard on command for the fallen bird. Then the poor pup got the shock of his life: Suddenly he was faced with a 10-pound bag of feathers and had no idea how to haul the thing back to the boss.

Luckily, the boss was reasonable and immediately identified the trouble. Some handlers might have gotten angry, screamed at the dog or worse yet stung him with the electronic collar for his refusal. The hunter saw this as a teachable moment and, despite some groans about getting out of the blind and going to get the goose himself, the hunter did the right thing. He walked out into the field, picked up the goose and taught his dog how to grab something so huge.

Up until that hunt, the dog had only seen training dummies and pen-raised pheasants. Don't get me wrong—these are great training aids—but neither will mimic the size and weight of dead goose. For that, you need something bigger.

Hallmark Dog Training Products in Hubertus, Wisconsin, makes an oversized training bumper, and Tom Dokken makes a huge foam-rubber goose. You need at least one of these products to make sure your dog is ready to haul back heavy items. Ideally, having both will be better and speed your training.

Dealing With Heft

Teaching a dog to handle a goose is almost like getting back to Basic Retriever Training 101. You're going to have to make short throws of the dummy or dead fowl trainer and see what the dog does.

In the case of my young dogs, I tease the dog with the training tool and encourage the animal to take it properly in its mouth. Once my dog is holding the training dummy dead-center with a good grip, I start backing away and calling the dog to encourage her to carry it around.

Picking up a goose is a big job for a dog. You need to teach this before you get to the field. Once the dog figures out how to handle the heavy goose trainer you can be assured that its actions in the field will be what you expect.

Then I give it a short toss and send the dog on a short retrieve. Slowly, we work our way to longer and longer marked retrieves, and then we try some blind retrieves by placing the dummy in the field and sending the dog.

All of this gives the dog the confidence to handle something as large as a goose.

Making the assumption that your dog knows how to do something is one of the fastest ways to mess up your training and get angry at your dog. If the dog has never seen anything bigger than a standard training dummy, how can you expect it to pick up something the size of a goose? What do you think will happen to that dog when he heads out after his first wounded goose?



Picking up a goose is a big job for a dog. You need to teach this before you get to the field. Once the dog figures out how to handle the heavy goose trainer you can be assured that its actions in the field will be what you expect.

Before you let that happen, you need to get your dog on some live birds that have the ability to resist. Wing-clipped pheasants running around inside a pen or out in the grass at a shooting preserve can really get a dog excited about catching a wounded bird. You should make sure you have control of your dog before you start this program. You don't want the dog thinking it doesn't have listen to commands when it gets a nose full of bird scent and sees some flapping wings.

The key is to start slow and work under control with a check cord and lots of praise. Remember, the dog needs to know that chasing birds is fun, but the fun stops when the boss calls. That only happens through repetition, just like all other dog training.

So, remember the basics: Show the dog how to succeed. Put the dog in a situation where it can succeed and repeat that until you get the desired results. Don't ever simply assume your dog knows how to do the task at hand. Wo

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 at askdogtalk@hotmail.com.

41st Annual Wisconsin

Decoy & Sporting Collectibles Show

Wednesday-Saturday March 9-12

Hilton Garden Inn, 1355 W. 20th Avenue, Oshkosh (Hotel 920-966-1300)

OPEN TO PUBLIC-ROOM TO ROOM TRADING: Wednesday night, Thursday and Friday before the show.

For more information contact Roger Ludwig (920) 233-0349 RogFuzz@charter.net

Show is Saturday 8am to 2:30pm



S.WILKERSON

Surplus Firearms

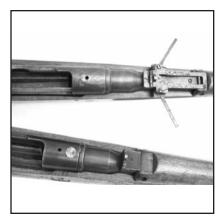
The Ugly Duckling: Type 38 and Type 99 Arisaka

apan's World War II (WWII) infantry rifles will never become beautiful swans, but their values sure have increased.

Japanese Arisaka rifles sat unwanted, plentiful and cheap for decades after WWII at gun shows and in gun shops. The guns, like most Japanese products from the 1950s through the early 1970s, had a reputation for being junk. They looked ungainly, had stocks even uglier than Joan Behar's personality, and looked like they were broke from the first day of manufacture.

The Arisaka also had some pretty strange features. Perhaps the weirdest were the "wings" on the rear sight.

They were intended to help the shooter "lead" low-flying enemy aircraft that came within range. While the chances of shooting down an air plane with a rifle are pretty remote, it was not unheard of in World War I and WWII.



Other Arisaka peculiarities included a monopod that probably did nothing to aid accuracy due to its flimsy nature, and a bolt dust cover that rattled like a can of rocks and was almost universally removed.

The Sacred Stamp

Most Arisakas are found with their chrysanthemum receiver stamp ground-off or defaced. Why this was done is still a point of conjecture. There's evidence that the 'mums were allowed to be removed by order of General Douglas MacArthur as a concession to the surrendering Japanese. This seems to makes some sense. The 'mum was the symbol of the Emperor, and surrendering a weapon with his mark intact was

considered dishonorable. MacArthur was pragmatic, and if grinding off the symbol of the Emperor helped gain compliance from surrendering Japanese soldiers, so much the better. MacArthur was also realistic enough not to bring Emperor Hirohito up on war crime charges, even though there was ample evidence to prosecute him.

One of the reoccurring myths about Arisakas, mostly reserved to old blowhards at gun shows and uninformed gun store clerks, is that the guns are unsafe to shoot. Arisakas often do, indeed, look "unsafe" to shoot, especially the last-ditch versions. These rifles are often found with fixed sights, wooden butt plates, bolt handles with a crude knob welded on them and no forearms. Guns made from 1943 on supposedly don't have chrome-lined bores and chambers.

Other than those made in the waning days of the war, Arisakas should be safe to shoot. In fact, tests of their barrel and receiver steel by U.S. armories after the war found them to be made of stronger steel than that of Allied forces infantry weapons.

The Two Types of Arisakas

World War II Japanese Arisakas came in two general types: the Type 38 in 6.5 mm and the Type 99 in 7.5mm. The most commonly found is the Type 99, which is comparable in performance and power to the well known .30-06 round. Both versions hold five cartridges in their magazine and are similar in appearance, have actions based on the Mauser system, weigh more than 9 pounds and are more than 4 feet in length. More than 10 million Arisakas were made by the time production ended in 1945.

Type 38 Arisakas were first fielded in 1906 and were superseded by the Type 99 in 1939. The Type 38 first saw action in the Russo-Japanese War where they performed well. Arisakas were also used in service by Mexico, Russia, Britain and China. American soldiers and Marines faced them again during the Korean and Vietnam Wars.

Despite their ungainly appearance and heft, Arisakas with good bores and crowns are very accurate shooters. Groups of less than 2 inches at 100



yards from earlier models with adjustable elevation sights are possible with decent ammunition. Those with fixed sights are less predictable.

Almost Had An Arisaka

During the early 1970s, at the age of 13, I had an opportunity to purchase an Arisaka brought back by a veteran who served in the Pacific. I never actually saw the rifle, but my father did. It belonged to an Allis-Chalmers co-worker. Dad said that the stock was all dinged up and told the owner that it wasn't worth more than \$10.

As I recall, he wanted \$50. He also told my father that he had shipped two Arisakas home, the one for sale and a sniper rifle. The sniper rifle never arrived state-side and he suspected that his supply sergeant had stolen it from him.

I didn't buy the vet's rifle, although to this day I wish that the opportunity had actually been presented to me. Today, decent Arisakas go for upwards of \$200 and those with mums bring about a 20 percent premium. Sniper rifles, like the one stolen from my dad's co-worker, are worth thousands of dollars.

I hope that my father's co-worker thought better of selling his Arisaka and it was—or will be—passed on to a relative who will appreciate it and his time in the service. I also hope that the thief that took his sniper rifle, and no doubt other items from those who actually earned the title "Greatest Generation," was eventually caught and spent a long time in the brig. "Wo

Photos courtesy of Checkpoint Charlie's. See these and other collectible weapons at CheckpointCharlies.com.

S. Wilkerson is an award-winning Wisconsin journalist, firearms expert and student of the Second Amendment. Contact him via email at cheapshots@onwisconsinoutdoors.com.





Arisaka rifles are known for their weird features, such as "wings" on the rear sight, a bolt dust cover and a less-than-effective monopod. Despite their rugged appearance, Arisaka rifles fitted with an adjustable rear sight are very accurate.

AMY VOLKMAN

A Time To Sow

Every deer hunter only gets one first buck



Twelve-year-old Chloe Volkman downed her first buck with a perfectly placed heart shot from 110 yards.

In the field last year at 11 years old with her dad, and under the provisions of Wisconsin's new mentoring law, Chloe tagged a buck fawn during the regular gun season, followed by two adult does with her muzzleloader during the herd control hunt. All three kills were heart shots.

"As exciting as that was for both of us, especially me, she still really wanted a buck but it just wasn't in the cards last year," Volkman said. "With the demands of school and athletics we didn't get the time in the treestand we would've liked. Finally, with one weekend left in the muzzleloader season this year, Chloe decided she wanted to spend both afternoons trying for her first buck."

On stand again near Neenah, day No. 1 ended with several deer spotted but no shot opportunities. After half a Packer game on Sunday, the father-daughter team headed out again and Chloe dropped another doe with another heart shot. Back on stand, an opportunity at the elusive buck drained away with the season.

"With less than 5 minutes left of shooting hours, a buck appeared 110 yards away," Volkman said. With time running out Chloe put another perfect shot on a great 9 -point buck. After the smoke cleared Volkman watched the buck run 100 yards and stop. His hands were shaking so bad he could barely hold his binoculars.

"Go down...go down," Volkman said he repeated over and over. After a few seconds that Volkman said felt like minutes, the big buck toppled. A few minutes more and Daddy and daughter stood next to a tremendous first buck taken with another great shot.

The apple that didn't fall too far from the home tree is also obviously the apple of her daddy's eye.

"Without question it was the best moment I've ever experienced hunting," he said. "Wo

Amy Volkman loves spending time with her husband, OWO Expert John Volkman, and their daughter, Chloe, enjoying Wisconsin's woods, waters and fields.

Find MORE Outdoors ... online!

Visit our website for more outdoor columns from these Ellis Experts:

Terry Bitz

Boat Fishing the Milwaukee Harbor

Todd Bohm Ice Walleyes

Don Kirby

Release

Winter
Waterfowler's Blues

Dave Sura
From Capture to



OnWisconsinOutdoors.com



ANDREA ELVERMAN

Wisconsin's Secrets

Close-encounters of the cougar kind

t was early spring and I was out hiking in my mother-in-laws **▲** woods with my trusty pit-bull, Bob. We often wandered through this dense area of woods where a creek meanders through. I enjoy searching for animal skulls to add to my ever growing collection.

We were nearing the end of the path at the far northwest corner of the property when something jumped and rustled ahead of me. It caught me offguard because it wasn't a deer. I frequently stir-up deer in that area as they sleep and travel. When I do run across them, they run only as far as the next place of cover, stop and then look back to see if they're still being followed. Only then will they continue to run.

I kept walking forward despite the fact that Bob was behaving differently than when we have jumped deer in the past. I can't explain it; he was just different.

When we arrived at our destination, a giant oak tree about 500 years old, instantly I felt a presence. The hair on the back of my neck stood up. For some reason I started looking up into the tree, feeling as though I was being watched from above. Seeing nothing, I moved down the slope to a small creek and saw fresh animal tracks in the mud. There was also a bit of scat and it was fairly large, dog-sized

That was it. I quickly got out of there, my mind racing. Was it a cougar? The tracks were pretty big, and the fresh scat? A cougar had traveled through the area one year prior and was shot by police in a Chicago suburb. Could there be another? Not a chance, two cougars traveling through this area in a year's time?

Then, I made an executive decision...do not tell Fearless Husband. He already looks at me with a twinkle in his eye when I tell him about my adventures. He never mocks, but his thoughts come through as he shakes his head back and forth, over and over.

Too Close To Home

I spent the next 2 days keeping silent about my cougar sighting, or complete lack of it—until the third day, when I was forced to talk. The local newspaper ran a story of a woman in the neighboring town seeing a cougar in her back yard just days earlier. While it was not confirmed, she did report seeing a "cat" with a very long tail. I immediately told Fearless Husband the whole story. Listening intently, I told him about the scat, the large tracks, our dog's behavior and my feeling of being watched. He was sold, or at least humoring me.

He loaded up his shotgun; I readied my camera, the dog and a paper bag. We went to find the cougar. Upon arriving at the not-so-much-ofa-sighting, I took pictures of the prints and collected the scat. We decided it would be a good idea to contact the local Wisconsin DNR office and turn in the scat.

The local wildlife biologist for the DNR came out and took additional photos of the tracks, which were now fairly compromised, and collected my paper bag of evidence. For whatever reason, I never called him to get the results of the scat testing. But later that summer I learned: maybe I didn't need

A local newspaper reported that at 12:15 a.m. Kenosha County 911 received an urgent call reporting "a woman screaming for help" in the Fox River Park in Silver Lake. The officers went to the location with night vision, where one of the deputies "got a visual on the animal." The following day the officers researched the internet and found a recording of a mountain lion that was identical to the screams they heard the night before.

My mother-in-laws property sits directly across from the park. Wo

Andrea Elverman is an outdoorswoman who enjoys bass fishing, cat fishing, pheasant hunting, turtle trapping, skull collecting, hiking, morel mushroom hunting and securing permission with private landowners to do these things. She takes young children on these adventures and teachs them about wildlife and nature.

KUNZ, from page 18

located below the Petenwell dam is the one that will stay open the longest—if someone plows the parking lot. Located on 18th Avenue just north of Highway 21 on the west side of the river, this ramp is located directly below the dam. You don't need to go far here, either. Just get on the edge of the current or find the big mid-river hump and you are sure to get a tug on the line.

Year-Round Boating Tips

To me, there's no more fun than

watching eagles soar while catching walleyes and sauger from the boat, especially during January and February.

Make sure to take proper precautions and check out everything on your boat and trailer before making the trip.

Wear a life jacket, plug all intakes in your boat and think about putting some RV antifreeze in the bilge of your boat to keep pumps from freezing and cracking, which can allow water in your

Put your fish on a stringer or in a cooler instead of using your livewell. And remember, call ahead to check conditions and try to limit your time on the water to the warmest part of the day.

When pulling your trailer out after launching and retrieving your boat, make sure to allow it to drain while over the water to limit how much gets on the boat ramp.

Make sure to bring salt and sand and don't even try it without a 4-wheeldrive vehicle. Getting off the water

before temperatures fall below freezing at dusk will also save you some potential problems.

Dress warm and have a type of fun most people don't get to experience. Wo

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.

TOM CARPENTER

Ice More Bluegills!

Tactics and tricks for catching more winter-time bluegills

Tee fishing for bluegills, sunfish, pumpkinseeds and related members of the panfish clan might seem like child's play—but it's not. Hitting the ice with an organized plan, and taking care of details, makes the difference between going home empty-handed or hauling in a mess of real bruisers. So employ these tactics, techniques, tips and tricks to catch more—and bigger—bluegills this winter.

Fish Shallow Early. During the first couple weeks of early ice, sunfish will be shallow. Look in as few as 3-4 feet of water, down to as many as 8-10 feet deep. You'll be somewhat close to shore. Look for weed tops poking above the clear ice, then drill your holes along the outside edges of the weed beds.

Move in a little Cocloser or out a little farther as needed to locate fish.

Find Green Weeds. During winter, as in summer, weeds and bluegills go together. After drilling and clearing a hole, get down on the ice, drape a coat over your head and peer into the hole. Spy any green weeds? If so, try your luck. If not, or if the weeds are brown and dead, move on. In clear water, you might even be able to spot cruising sunnies.

Use Tiny Lures. Use tiny lures when fishing for sunfish. Size No. 10, 12 and even 14 hooks are the norm, so that light-biting 'gills can inhale your offering into their small mouths. Lures with some flash (usually bright silver) on one side seem to attract more fish than many others.

Make An Eye. Lures with a single dot or "eye" on them catch the most bluegills, probably because most bluegill prey has an eye. If a lure doesn't have an eye, paint one on.

Try Different Colors. Don't sit around jigging the same lure all day. If you don't change lure styles, at least

change color! Bluegill preferences change by the day and even the hour. In dark or stained water, start with bright colors such as blaze orange, bright yellow and neon chartreuse. In clear water, opt for darker colors such as green, blue or black.

Use Goldenrod Grubs. For sunnies, goldenrod grubs make the best live bait. Goldenrods are small (fit easily into a bluegill's mouth), juicy (scent attracts fish) and they seem to glow in the water (bluegills can see them easily.) Collect goldenrod "balls" while hunting all fall; I have pockets full of them after pheasant and deer hunting seasons.

g Offer Other Baits. Other grub selections to tip your lures with include Continued on page 21 waxworms, o mealworms, spikes, mousies and euro larvae. Carry several kinds of grubs and try them all.

Jig 'Em In. Sunfish respond to different jigging patterns every day, so change things up. Here's one consistently good jigging pattern: Rapidly twitch your bait for several seconds as you raise it up about a foot, then drop your rod tip back down so the bait flutters freely back to where it started. Fish will hit on the drop or when the lure settles, so be ready to set the hook.

Move Out Deeper. You can still catch bluegills after first ice. During midwinter, look for fish suspended off the fringes of the deeper weeds, often 15-20 feet down, over deeper water. Another midwinter hotspot is a bar or hump that rises out of deep mid-lake water. Early and late in the day, fish "up" on the hump and around and its edges, from 5-15 feet down. During mid day, back off the structure and fish "down," exploring the surrounding water from 20-25 feet deep.

Fish Early, Late. Early in the morning and later in the afternoon,



The author fishes often with OWO contributor JJ Reich, who has a knack for putting big 'gills on the ice. With proper tackle and techniques, catching big bluegills can provide fast and fun action, as well as excellent table fare

while the sun is in the sky but not too high, are the best times to fish for big winter bluegills. The fish are most active during these times, and they'll be in the shallowest water of the day. From late morning through early afternoon, look deeper.

Thread Your Bait. If you're getting bites but can't hook any fish, thread a waxworm or other grub lengthwise onto your hook, instead of leaving it dangle. Then the sunfish has to bite where there's a hook instead of nibble at a hanging morsel.

Conclusion

Like most outdoor activities, ice fishing is what you make of it. If getting out of the house and drowning a few waxworms makes you happy, then it's a successful outing.

But if solving the ice-fishing puzzle of finding good-sized bluegills, making an effective presentation and then catching a mess of sunfish for a winter fish fry makes you happier, then put these ideas to work on the ice this season. Wo

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

Gearing-Up For Hard-Water 'Gills

Rods And Reels: Mount a small, high-quality, open-face reel onto a 24- to 36-inch graphite rod with a light, sensitive tip.

Line: Use high-quality 4-pound test monofilament. Two-pound-test is even better if you can deal with its wispiness and susceptibility to nicks and abrasions. Cut off the terminal couple feet and retie your rig often.

Weight: Use enough weight to get your bait quickly down to the fish; err on the side of a little more weight, because with more weight your connection to the fish will be tighter; you'll feel more bites.

Bobbers: Try to fish without bobbers. Watch your rod tip and use your sense of feel to identify light bites. However, tiny slipbobbers are good for fish suspended over deep water because you can get right back to the correct depth.

Lure Suggestions: Genz Fat Boy; Genz Worm; Fire-Eye Minnow; Rocker; Pounder; Glow Ant; Marmooska; Moon Glow; Banshee; Purist; Demon; Standard Teardrop Jigs; Plain Hook: Fine Wire No. 12 or No. 14.



amed for the faint red wash on its belly and not its striking scarlet head patch, this handsome but misnamed woodpecker brings great joy to those who observe it. Red-bellied woodpeckers inhabit wooded neighborhoods, treed parks and secluded woodlands across Wisconsin, where they forage for nuts and fruits, and probe tree bark for insects and larvae. Red-bellies live in Wisconsin year-round. TOM CARPENTER

Badger BirdsRed-bellied woodpecker

Look for a good-sized woodpecker with mostly buff undersides and a distinctive scarlet head patch running from nape (back of neck) to bill on males. Red-bellies are often called "zebra backs" because of their barred, black-and-white backs and wings. The bill is long, sturdy and black, and a barbed tongue extends 2 inches beyond.

Listen for the red-belly's loud chuck-chuck-chuck call, or a rolling and harsh kwirrrrrrr.

Watch a red-bellied woodpecker stash food—an acorn, hickory nut, beechnut or pine seed—into a crack in a tree or fencepost, which serves as a little savings account for harder times. Know that the male red-belly excavates a nest cavity in a dead or dying tree, and attracts a female by "drumming" with his beak near the

Attract these woodpeckers all year long, but especially during winter, with peanuts, suet and sunflower seeds.

Did you know that a red-bellied woodpecker will wedge a nut into a tree crack or bark crevice and then pound the item open with its beak? That's pretty smart! ${}^{\circ}W_{\circ}$

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

MIKE YURK

Bassology: Old-School

Uncle Josh: a Wisconsin friend

ld is still good when it comes to bass fishing, and it's most evident in a well known Wisconsin bait company that's been helping bass fishermen put more fish in their boats for nearly a century. That company is the Uncle Josh Bait Company in Fort Atkinson, making pork frogs, strips and other baits

Uncle Josh Bait Co. began in 1920. Two fishing buddies, Alan P. Jones and Urban Schreiner, had been making an annual fishing trip to Jordan Lake near Oxford, Wisconsin, ever since Jones had gotten out of the Navy after World War I. They had a routine to their yearly fishing trips: In the morning they would fish plugs and in the afternoon they would catch frogs and fish them for the remainder of the day.

Both the plugs and live frogs worked well until their 1920 fishing trip. That year the men couldn't find any frogs, and thus their bass catching in the afternoon dropped of dramatically. The two young fishermen gave it some thought, went into a butcher shop in Oxford and bought some pork back fat. Back at the lake they carved chunks of fat into something resembling a frog.

They attached their new back-fat frogs to hooks, went out and started catching bass again.

The Birth Of A Bait

Jones' family owned the Jones Dairy Farm where they raised pigs for sausage. Jones had lots of pork skins to work with and he continued to experiment with his newly discovered bait. In 1922 he began to commercially produce the baits, and from the very beginning fishermen loved them because they caught fish.

The Uncle Josh Bait Company initially only offered pork frogs and pork strips in green and white colors. As time went by they offered a lot more baits and colors, but even today the pork frogs and strips—in green and white—remain some of their most popular baits.

The name "Uncle Josh" was inspired by a farmer who rented boats to Jones and Schreiner at Jordan Lake. Apparently, he sounded just like a popular comedian of the day named Uncle Josh. They nick named the farmer Uncle Josh, and although they kept it a secret from the farmer, Jones

decided to name his company after him.

Their company logo was a fisherman with a felt hat and a pipe. The logo has remained the same today, although now it's in color.

After World War II, new dyes allowed Uncle Josh to offer more colors. Also, after a lot of experimentation, Uncle Josh added more designs and new baits to its line of pork baits. Although Uncle Josh baits caught fish from the very beginning, it was during the 50s and 60s that the name truly caught on with fishermen.

Finding A Friend

I rediscovered Uncle Josh about the same time I rediscovered The Johnson Silver Minnow spoon. As I started fishing the Johnson Silver Minnow, I added pork strips to the hook and found that they added more movement to the bait that other plastic baits could not.

I also found that the white stripes, which was one of their first offerings, still works the best. I suspect that using Uncle Josh strips is only limited by one's imagination.

In the late 1970s and early 80s, when the pig-and-jig style of bait

became popular, a whole new legion of bass fishermen rediscovered Uncle Josh pork frogs. Again, the original white and green were still popular as well as many of the new colors.

Uncle Josh is still a Wisconsin company and produces its pork baits at a 35,000 square-foot plant in Fort Atkinson. The sons of Alan Jones continued to own the company until 2002. They sold the company to two Milwaukee area businessmen, but the company has no plans to move.

Not only is it nice to support a Wisconsin-based company, but it's easy to do so because Uncle Josh Bait Company baits continue to catch fish, just as they have for almost 100 years. W

Mike Yurk began writing about the outdoors for newspapers in central Wisconsin in the late 1960s. During the past 40 years he has published more than 600 articles in national and regional outdoor publications. He has published five books, both fiction and nonfiction, on outdoor subjects. He is a retired Army officer and lives in Hudson, Wisconsin, near to some of the best bass fishing in the country.

FOSS, from page 12



Northern Wisconsin Outfitters Owner Mike Foss missed this big 9-point whitetail during the late muzzleloader season.

10:05 a.m. I decided to call it quits for the morning and check my scouting cameras in a different area. I wiped down my Thompson/Center .54-caliber smokepole and put it in the garage.

To my surprise I had some great buck pictures on my Cuddeback camera watching a trail leading to my stand. A cold front was moving in and the wind was going to be perfect. I found myself perched in my treestand at 1:30 p.m., with my muzzleloader again in service. With 10 minutes left to the evening's hunt, a great buck suddenly appeared 70 yards away in the aspen thicket. Instantly, my heart was busting out of my jacket.

I shouldered my gun and waited to see which direction he was headed. The big 9-pointer made his way toward me, and at 20 yards gave me a perfect broadside shot. I centered my sights on the vitals and squeezed the trigger: Snap ... sizzle ... boom! The delayed shot—though only for a second—caused me to flinch and miss completely. The gut-wrenching feeling that I haven't felt for so long is still there.

As I write, I have 3 more days to hunt with my muzzleloader; maybe there will be a happy ending in the next issue. ${}^{C}W_{O}$

Author's note: With the increase in available bear tags for the 2011 bear season, and to accommodate more bear hunters, Northern Wisconsin Outfitters will be offering a 2nd week of great bear hunting. Visit our website at Northern Wisconsin Outfitters.com for details.

Mike Foss was born and raised in Washburn, Wisconsin. As a guide and owner of Northern Wisconsin Outfitters, has harvested bear and many deer, including several record book bucks. Off season, Mike spends time with his family and constantly scouting for new hunting areas and adventures. Northern Wisconsin Outfitters is now booking for the 2011 bear season. Go to northernwisconsinoutfitters.com or 715.373.0344.

PRICE Plan Your Adventure!

Park Falls • Phillips • Prentice



18,000 acres

Flambeau River, Pike Lake Chain & Phillips Chain of Lakes and many more!

Walleye, Musky, Bass, Pike, Sturgeon & Panfish

185 miles of ATV trail

Flambeau Trail System, Tuscobia State Trail, Georgetown Trail, and the Flambeau River State Forest Trail





340,000 acres of public land

Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, Flambeau River State Forest, Price County Forest and MFL

White-tailed Deer, Ruffed Grouse, Bear & Turkey

www.pricecountywi.net | 800-269-4505

OWO STAFF

Product 6-Pack

Great gear for the woods, fields and waterways

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

QUICKFISH 4 PORTABLE

For \$260, the lightweight Quickfish 4 by Eskimo features a unique Cold Air Barrier, which is an added layer of ceiling insulation. Plus, eight removable windows provide a great view from nearly any angle, and two large D-shaped doors offer easy entry and exit so you won't disrupt your gear or other fishermen.



"If you're looking for a new ice fishing shack, a portable shelter like this one is a great solution. It stands tall—92 inches—for plenty of room to stand up and fish. Total floor space adds up to almost 50 square feet, so you can stretch out and not feel cramped. And, it really is big enough for four people."—L.H.

GetEskimo.com

FRABILL BRO SERIES COMBOS

For \$40, this ice fishing rod-andreel combo includes a solid cork-handled rod and a 3-plus-1 ballbearing reel. It features aluminum oxide line guides, deluxe folding hook keeper, solid graphite blank technology, and "Sub-Zero" lube allows smooth reel operation in cold temperatures. It's available in a variety of lengths and strengths.

"Quite simply: If you want more fish in the bucket, you need a good rod with a sensitive tip. Cheap icefishing rods leave you out in the cold. This rod combo is an excellent choice: It features perfect balance between the rod and reel. And, the quiet action of the reel is super smooth." –J.J.R.

Frabill.com

NORTHLAND PUPPET MINNOWS

For \$4-\$6, Northland Fishing Tackle's Puppet Minnows are some of the most versatile and deadly swimming lures ever developed for vertical jigging below a boat or ice hole! The Puppet Minnow's hydrodynamic, airplane-style body design allows it to swim in a semicircle when jigged, pumped or dropped on a free-fall.



"The horizontal bait craze during icefishing season is here. It's no secret: Aggressive horizontal hard baits like this one bring fish in. The shape and various color schemes produce a lot of action, movement and flash to attract fish to your area."—D.E.

NorthlandTackle.com





REMINGTON R-15

For \$1,275, the Remington R-15 modern sporting rifle touts a fluted barrel design for rapid barrel cooling and an ergonomic pistol grip for quick aim and control. It comes dressed in Realtree AP HD camouflage and includes a four-round, single-stack magazine and lockable hard case. (Scope not included.)

"AR-Style rifles are not just for predator hunting. This rifle is chambered in .30 Rem. AR, which features ballistics similar to the .308 Win, making it perfect for hunting big game. Hey, if it looks like a gun, smells like a gun and acts like a gun; then take it into the woods and have some fun."—L.H.

Remington.com

MINERAL MIZER BAG

For \$30, the Mineral Mizer Bag provides a constant fresh drip of nourishing minerals to the surface of the ground with the help of moisture in the air and an occasional rain shower, to maximize the growth of whitetails on your property. The product comes prefilled with minerals and is also refillable.

"Did you know the time to start putting out mineral licks in Wisconsin is late February? Start now if you want to grow big-

bodied, large-antlered deer on your property for fall 2011 hunts. This is a good one: Deer find this mineral lick as it drips on the ground, as well as licking at the base of the bag. I have trail cameral photos to prove it."—J.J.R.

MineralMizerBag.com

WILEY-X AIRRAGE

For \$86, these sunglasses from Wiley X combine great looks and maximum eye protection, clarity and contrast—and they feature a comfortable nose bridge and temple gloves to provide a secure and snug fit.



"Summer is not the only time you need good sunglasses. The sun, snow and ice can be brutal when driving your ATV, practicing your shooting, and on the ice fishing for wall hangers. This package also includes important accessories like removable facial cavity seals and a high-quality retention head strap for additional protection against the elements."-D.E.

WileyX.com

Product 6-Pack contributors include Dick Ellis (D.E.), Luke Hartle (L.H.) and JJ Reich (J.J.R). If you have recommendations for good gear that works for you, tell us about it: email ellis@onwisconsinoutdoors.com.

CHECK OUT PAST PRODUCT 6-PACK

COLUMNS ON OUR ARCHIVED ISSUES PAGE, ONLINE AT:

onwisconsinoutdoors.com



Northeast Wisconsin Sport

Fishin's Shaw

February 25-27, 2011

March 4-6, 2011

Shopko Hall, Green Bay, WI Show times:

Friday 3pm 9 pm Saturday 10 am to 8pm Sunday 10am to 5 pm



Three full days of seminars.

Please visit our web site for speakers and times. www.greenbaysportshows.com

Phone: 920-434-7469

Email: sajeevents@new.rr.com

