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Teri V.

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Chris & Teresa B.

If you want to deal with a straight shooter, ask to talk to Vince Ferrera, the man who runs the show at Engine Transmission Exchange's Milwaukee and Waukesha Locations. Tell Vince I sent you.

Dick Ellis, Publisher, On Wisconsin Outdoors



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TOM CARPENTER Badger Birds Red-Bellied Woodpecker

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

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 "zebrabacks" because of their barred, black-and-white backs and wings.

Understand how a red-belly's marvelously efficient tongue works. It extends two inches beyond the bird's long black bill, and is both barbed and coated with sticky saliva to capture insects and larvae as the bird probes bark crevices and tight spots.

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

Watch a red-bellied woodpecker stash food — an acorn, hickory nut, beechnut or pine seed — into a crack in a tree or stump: 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"

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

TOM CARPENTER

Cubs Corner

Why, and how, to let young or new hunters call their own turkey this spring

We all make mistakes in life. If this is the worst one that ever goes on my record, I guess I would be a lucky man, but here it is: When I started taking my kids turkey hunting, I did all the calling.

Not that I'm a calling pro, but I think I was missing the point by focusing so intently on getting them the kill and not teaching them solid hands-on turkey hunting skills. I've since changed my thinking. Now, when taking young or new hunters out after turkeys, I supply them with basic calls and the coaching needed to do at least some of the calling during the hunt.

Here's why my viewpoint changed.

For one thing, the more I hunt turkeys – and that's passing a quarter-century this spring – the more I realize that the worst-sounding turkey sounds out there come from wild turkeys themselves. Many to most hens sound horrible! That means you can't really make mistakes during a calling session, other than calling too much or too little, and that's why you are there as guide, mentor and coach.

In addition, calling really engages the young or new hunter, giving them involvement that keeps them occupied and interested in the hunt.

Finally, calling action also serves to give the new turkey hunter real skin in the game. Everybody wants to shoot a turkey, but that's just being an assassin. On the other hand, the satisfaction level soars when a beginning hunter has, even at the very least, gotten a turkey to talk back to him or her.

Here are a few strategies and secrets for equipping and instructing the new caller.


One: Start them out with a box call. Boxes are easy to master almost instantly, and both good yelps and seductive clucks are easy to make. That's really about all you need for turkey sounds, except or maybe a little purring. Push-but-ton calls are just great. Slates should be a second-step tool to master later. Likewise, save mouth calls for last, which can be extremely frustrating for you to teach and them to master.

Two: Consider your role to be as advisor and finisher. By advisor, I mean, coach your protégé on how often to call, how loud or soft, cadence of yelps, volume of clucks, and so forth. Remember – it's hard to make a "bad" call, but it's easy to do too much or too little calling. By finisher, I mean, once a turkey is talking and coming, you can and probably should

take over to finish the job. At this point it's okay to let the new hunter focus on killing the bird; take another step next time.

Three: Be free and easy with praise, and don't be judgmental on blurps and blips and squawks and mistakes and poor-sounding calls. Remember – some of the most horrible turkey sounds ever made come from turkeys themselves. Build up confidence, keep it all fun.

Four: Use calling as a tool to keep the new hunter occupied and engaged for longer. Calling extends the hunt, and every few minutes the hunt extends gets you that much closer to a turkey flopping on the ground.

I like my new role as advisor and finisher in the turkey hunting woods. And there really was no harm done with my own kids. They're learning fast now, and each has since killed a turkey or two on his own. But you might as well start them out right and just let 'em call. 

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

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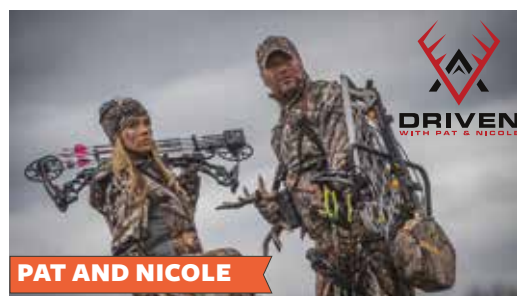
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SUZETTE CURTIS

Recipes with Suzette

Stuffed Meals-As wild as your imagination

We've been into "stuffed" meals lately at our house. Stuffed squash, stuffed mushrooms, and stuffed peppers have all been sources of creativity, and each one proved delicious. The "stuffings" can be as wild as your imagination, but here are a couple of pepper recipes to get you started. Enjoy!

Turkey and Wild Rice Stuffed Peppers

6 yellow or orange bell peppers	1 ½ cups cooked wild rice
1 T olive oil	½ cup dried cranberries
2 medium shallots, chopped	½ teaspoon salt
1 ¼ cups chicken broth, divided	¼ teaspoon pepper
2 teaspoons apple cider vinegar	¼ teaspoon rosemary
2 teaspoons brown sugar	¼ teaspoon thyme
1 pound cooked Turkey breast, finely diced	4 ounces Feta cheese

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Cut the tops off the peppers and remove the seeds. Place in baking dish and set aside.

Heat olive oil over medium heat in a large skillet and cook shallots, stirring frequently, until softened. Add ½ cup broth, vinegar and brown sugar and cook until liquid has reduced by half.

In large bowl, combine turkey, rice, cranberries, salt, pepper, rosemary and thyme. Add cooked liquid and mix well. Fill each pepper with turkey mixture and pour remaining broth over all.

Cover and bake for 40 minutes. Uncover and sprinkle feta cheese over each pepper. Return to oven and bake uncovered another ten minutes.

Fish Stuffed Peppers


1 ½ pounds firm fleshed fish	2 cloves of garlic, minced
6 red bell peppers	3 T olive oil
1 14 ½ ounce can of whole tomatoes	6 T grated parmesan cheese
1 T basil	

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Heat the oil in a large oven proof skillet over medium heat. Cut tops off the peppers and remove the seeds. Place peppers in skillet (open side up), reduce heat to low and cook for about 10 minutes to soften them.

Meanwhile, cook fish in boiling water for about 5 minutes. Drain and cut fish into bite-sized pieces.

Pour tomatoes into a large bowl, breaking them up with the back of a wooden spoon. Add fish, basil and garlic until well combined. Carefully stuff fish mixture into peppers.

Cover skillet, place in preheated oven, and cook for about 15 minutes. Remove from oven, uncover and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Serve directly from skillet or carefully transfer peppers to serving plate. 

Suzette Curtis, of Oshkosh, cooks for a family of hunters and fishermen and 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.



TOM CARPENTER

Pecking Orders

Create a backyard birdscape

You need not live in the wilderness to enjoy the color, song and action that birds bring to your yard. Anybody – whether in town, country, suburb or urban area – can attract birds.

Create a "birdscape" offering food, water and cover (plants) to get birds visiting your yard. Keep things simple; that means you'll keep things going, which keeps the birds coming back.

These resident songbirds comprise the foundation of Wisconsin's backyard bird life: black-capped chickadees, white-breasted nuthatches, downy and hairy woodpeckers, cardinals and goldfinches. In spring and summer, add rose-breasted grosbeaks, orioles, warblers and bluebirds to the mix. In winter, pine siskins, redpolls, juncos, evening grosbeaks and other visitors show up from places north.

FOOD

Black-oil sunflower attracts almost all songbird species that eat seeds. If you use no other seed, you'll do great with black-oil sunflower. Feed it year-round.

Hang a tube feeder or two to attract chickadees, nuthatches, goldfinches and other small songbirds. Cardinals, bluejays and other large songbirds like a more stable platform-style feeder.

Native sparrows and juncos pick up what drops out of the other feeders. You can also spread a little seed over the ground.

Thistle seed is essential too. These tiny

black seeds bring goldfinches all year, and attract pine siskins, redpolls and other finches in winter. A tube feeder works best. Put up a couple.

From fall through early spring, feed suet in hanging suet baskets. Woodpeckers, chickadees, nuthatches and creepers love this processed animal fat. When I'm lucky enough to shoot a deer, I use the trimmed fat from butchering instead of suet, and the birds go wild for it.

Orange halves impaled on a nail on a tree, and grape jelly in dishes, attracts orioles in late spring and summer.

Don't feed corn, or mixes containing corn, near your other feeders. Set it far away. Squirrels will go to the corn and not bother your other feeders. So will blue jays, starlings and other "bully" birds.

WATER

Birds need water year-round, and having a steady supply attracts and holds feathered visitors. In summer, a typical bird bath is easy to maintain. In winter, use a bird-bath heater to keep some water open and accessible.

Building a small pond – especially if it has a fountain effect or small waterfall associated with it – will really bring the birds in. There's something about the sound of moving water that really attracts birds.

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On Wisconsin
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With the Dick Ellis Experts

HUNTING • FISHING • TRAVEL
EXPLORE WISCONSIN

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TOM MUELLER

Hunting for Deer Sheds

Off-season retriever training

Wisconsin deer typically shed their antlers in January and February. During this time of the year, many hunters are frequenting the game farms and hunting preserves for some off-season action with their dogs. Come the end of March, that hunting comes to an end and the formal training season hasn't really started yet. For something to do with your retriever during that down time, you might want to try some shed hunting.

Hunting for antlers that deer have shed has grown in popularity from a little known pastime to the point where there are now shed hunting tests. What probably started out as a relaxing way to spend some time walking in the woods looking for shed deer antlers has evolved into a competitive activity utilizing retrievers. A recent Fox Valley Retriever Club shed hunting test drew almost 70 participants.

When trained for this game, a retriever hunts a wooded area, just as it does while hunting for pheasants. When it scents and finds an antler, it picks it up and brings it to you. Your retriever gets some hunting time, and if it finds a shed, you come home with a trophy.

Training your retriever for shed hunting is fairly easy. Like any training, it does require some consistent time and effort. Start with a deer antler or artificial antler and some antler scent. If you know someone who has already shed hunts, consider

borrowing one of their found antlers. Or, you can purchase real or artificial antlers and the scent online or at any of the outdoor sporting goods stores that sell sporting dog training equipment.

Once you have a set of antlers, the first step in the training process is to apply some scent and tease the dog with it. With a ten-to-twelve foot long rope attached to its collar, excite the dog to the point where it wants to take it from your hand. Let him take it and make it his so he holds on to it. Then call your dog to you, and have it deliver the antler just like a dummy or a bird. Use the rope as needed to make sure your dog doesn't run off with it. Once it has mastered this, move on to short retrieves.

After your dog has become proficient at retrieving a tossed antler, start teaching the dog to "find it." Do this by placing the antler in short grass without having the dog see you put it there. Next take the dog and have it hunt for the antler. Walk towards and around the antler, but not so close that you locate it for the dog. While doing this, you



FVRC member Kathy Oszewski, with Bo, and Stan Bullock, with Elvis, work together for antlers at a recent FVRC hunt test.

want to give your dog a specific command that it can associate with shed hunting. Do not use a command that you would use for hunting. Using a specific command for shed hunting tells the dog to look for deer antlers and not pheasants or waterfowl. Expand the area that your dog has to hunt and eventually plant the antler in a wooded area and mark it somehow so you can find it if your dog doesn't. Continue to train your dog in this fashion.

You and your partner are ready! Head for a wooded area that is known to have deer and start hunting for your trophy! 🦌

Tom has been avidly training retrievers since the early 1980s. His passion has evolved into helping others train their retrievers through the Fox Valley Retriever Club so they can achieve the satisfaction that he has had. For questions regarding retriever training or the Fox Valley Retriever Club contact Tom at winddancer.rtrvrs@hotmail.com



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GARY GREENE

Memories from an Old Hunter

Cherishing life, yesterday and tomorrow

I remember when my mom told stories of shooting partridge and pheasants out of our kitchen window in the late 1940s.

I was amazed with the vivid colors as I watched my dad's chessie King retrieve that first rooster pheasant that I ever saw. I was old enough to remember, but young enough to be on my mom's shoulders. 1955 was most likely the year.

After a fresh snowfall, playing in the snow consisted of finding new pheasant tracks and following them until the bird flushed.

I was allowed to use my dad's Fred Bear bow, but I could only manage a draw of a few inches.

I loved the independence of hunting alone with my Wrist Rocket slingshot and my ammunition bag of cat's eye marbles from Drew's Variety Store.



In 2009, Greene's matriarch lab Hershey with her first litter.

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can-am



JOHN CLER

Expanding Horizons

Early season snow goose hunt

March is a tough month for Badger State hunters. Most hunting seasons are closed and the first Wisconsin turkey season seems to be a long way into the future. There is an exciting opportunity waiting for those willing to travel a short distance beyond Wisconsin's borders. This is the spring snow goose hunt.

Snow goose populations exploded in the later part of the twentieth century to the point that there was concern they were destroying the habitat in their arctic nesting grounds. In 1999, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service implemented the Light Goose Conservation Order, establishing a spring hunting season for light colored geese, including snow geese, blue geese and Ross' geese. The goal was to reduce the population of these species by one half over 10 years. The Conservation Order allowed for the use of electronic callers, unplugged shotguns and unlimited bag limits in hopes of helping hunters impact the population. Hunters have been able to stop the population from expanding since 1999, but have not reduced the population by any appreciable amount.

Snow geese travel in flocks numbering in the thousands and are very difficult to decoy, even with an electronic call. A decoy spread of one thousand decoys, or more, combined with well-hidden ground blinds are required. If you cannot

afford the required equipment, there are many outfitters that will set you up for \$150-\$200 per hunting day. If all goes well, hunters may experience a tornado of thousands of geese circling their blinds and preparing to land. Some outfitters follow the northward migration from state to state, while others set up near a refuge used as a resting point by northbound geese.

My first experience with snow geese was with a couple of former students that had invited me to hunt in South Dakota. We used the "flock busting" technique. We drove roads looking for tornados of geese settling into a field. A plat book was used to locate the field's owner and secure permission to hunt. A plan was hatched to surround the flock as best we could and sneak as close as possible before the flock saw us and took to the air. The confusion of thousands of birds taking flight often resulted in one or more hunters being offered a shot.

No matter how you hunt them, the sight and sound of thousands of geese is a real spectacle that should not be missed. Be aware that Canada geese and speckled-belly geese are also migrating at the same time and may be mixed in with snow geese. These species are protected in the spring. Most hunters will not shoot when an approaching flock contains Canadas or specks.

The result of one "flock busting" hunt in South Dakota, an adult snow goose (l) and an adult blue goose (r).



Light geese are a great example of genetics and evolution. Snow geese are all white, except for their wing tips, which are black. Blue geese have dark gray bodies and a white head. These are both the same species, with some nests containing chicks from each color phase. The gene for the blue phase is rare, resulting in only about 25 percent of migrating birds being blue geese. The Ross' goose looks like a typical white snow goose, but it is slightly smaller and has a shorter bill. It is thought that the Ross' goose is a species recently evolved from snow goose stock.

States near Wisconsin offering spring snow goose hunts are Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, South Dakota and North Dakota. Most require some form of permit or registration to participate. Give snow goose hunting a try and be sure to take plenty of ammunition. 🦌

John Cler is a retired high school science teacher and principal. He hunts, fishes and traps from his home base in Richland Center.



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It can be hard enough to wait nine months between deer season each year, and for bear hunters, the wait between drawing tags can be much longer if you're in a draw state. What's a person to do? How about a spring bear hunt and fishing trip to Saskatchewan! I had the good fortune to take my son, Jacob, on a black bear and pike fishing trip there this past year. It is a trip that should be on every outdoor person's bucket list.

Saskatchewan has a rich history of trophy size black bears. Because a hunting guide is required of non-residents, we opted to go with Rocky Russo's Steepbank Outfitters. Every year, multiple Boone & Crockett black bears have been harvested by Rocky's hunters. Over the counter tags makes obtaining the necessary license easy.

Saskatchewan also means amazing fishing, so my preparation involved as much fly tying as it did bow shooting. I have always wanted to fish for pike with my fly rod. Jacob and I spent several hours watching YouTube videos on how to tie giant pike streamers. This was cool! It was much easier to see these versus the size 20+ midges I'm more used to starting at with my aging eyes. We used 2/0 and 3/0 hooks in a variety of bucktail & marabou color combos, with and without stingers. I also hand tied several tapered pike leaders to prepare for these fish with teeth.

Rocky runs his top notch outfit out of Eagle Lake Resort, just a few hours drive northeast of Saskatoon, the main hub for those that arrive by air. This was my first time flying to a hunting destination, and things couldn't have gone smoother in our travels.

Saskatoon is a large, well kept city, but it doesn't take long to get away from it all. We picked up a rental truck by the airport and met my guide, also Rocky's business partner, Alain. In two hours we left the blacktop behind, and anticipation grew as we entered, what Rocky calls, the "Land of the Giants."

The rest of the guys that would be joining us in camp arrived the next day and we quickly got acquainted. Eagle Lake Resort's cabins are very nice and comfortable. The six of us shared a two-story, three-bedroom log cabin that seemed to fall right out of a Terry Redlin painting. Boat rentals were our ticket to the pike fishing. Trucks and quads were the means to our bear hunting spots.

For five full days, we chased black bear from the ground, eye-to-eye in the "Land of the Living Skies." We were the season's first hunters and between the warm weather and the bears' stomachs not quite being adjusted from hibernation,



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Saskatchewan truly is the land of the living skies



Steepbank hunter, Chris Diperna, with his monster Saskatchewan black bear.

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LEE GATZKE

Taken to the “Would Shed”

Nature's assist helps buck survive another season

When a mature buck is discovered hanging around on land you can hunt, it's only natural to develop a plan that will end with him hanging on your meat pole. So it was when the photo of a beautiful eight pointer first came through on a trail camera during the late bow season.

He showed up in a place that offered heavy cover and protection from cold north winds. During the first week of January, in bitterly cold weather, the buck suddenly became active in daylight hours. My optimism for shooting him was short-lived as the last rays of a setting sun put an end to the final day of bow season without him ever offering a shot.

The following season Mr. Eight returned to again tempt me. I was only too glad to play this game. To gather important de-

tails, I chose to place trail cameras away from bedding areas that my spring scouting forays indicated he would probably use. I placed them in a manner that would allow me to monitor when he travelled to and from the bedding grounds, carefully staying far enough away to avoid alerting him.

During the early bow season, no particular pattern arose that told me when I could predict which bedding area he would use, or when. Rather than take a chance of randomly hunting each bedding area in hopes of a chance encounter, I stayed away until the cameras revealed he was on a more predictable routine.

Gun season arrived and we actually saw him a mile away in an area that surprised us, since we had never had any sightings or trail camera pictures of him there previously. That was the last we saw of him until he



After targeting this buck over two years and zeroing in on a likely encounter during daylight hours, the buck prematurely lost its antlers in December, ending the chase for another season. (Trail cam photo)

**If you've been bound...
let your friend untie you**

**Jesus taught that no one can rob a strong man
unless first he ties him up.**

**Today many have been taught that it's bad
to make judgments and in the process
they have been bound by fear.**

**Do not be afraid to distinguish between
what is true and what is not.**

**The truth will always stand up to close examination,
provide a solid foundation on which to stand,
and make you strong.**

The truth is always your friend.

showed up on trail camera during the last days of muzzle loader season. He was back in the heavy cover where we had pictures of him the year before during late bow season.

Now he was repeating a behavior he'd displayed before and trail cameras confirmed he was staying there. He even started feeding in daylight, so now the time was right to hunt him there. I ended the muzzle loader season trying to get him and then began

bow hunting him again. By mid-December I felt I was due to get a crack at him.

On December 11, I had a daytime trail camera picture of him in a hayfield. December 14, I had an even more important picture of him that would change the course of my hunt for him.

Sometime between December 11 and 14, he had shed both antlers! Pretty early I thought, as I recovered from the disappointment that temporarily waylaid me. The previous winter I had pictures of him into mid-January still carrying both antlers.

My hunt for this buck was over. I wasn't interested in shooting an antlerless mature buck. I still kept hunting for another buck I'd been seeing and, of course, during one of those hunts, a very large-bodied “baldie” walked past my stand within bow range. 🏹

Lee Gatzke is co-owner of Next Buk Outdoors, producers of tactical hunting videos. In between hunting seasons Lee is usually scouting for his next buck.

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The author's son, Jacob, experienced non-stop pike action.

ERDODY, FROM PAGE 9

the action was slow for Canadian standards. I passed on some smaller bears, including one that growled and snapped at us just 5 feet behind Jacob. We never saw the true giant I was there for, but fellow hunter, Chris Diperna, from Pennsylvania, went home with an absolute monster after three consecutive nights of intense encounters with the beast.

The pike fishing was non-stop action. It was spawning time, so we found the pike near a couple river mouths on the lake, and caught fish nearly every cast. Red and white was the killer color combo. The pike bit and bit hard, shredding nearly every fly we

threw by the time it was all over.

I couldn't have scripted a better ending to the trip when we soaked in a show of the northern lights for over an hour on our last night in camp. Jacob searched relentlessly for suckers to thrust his homemade spear at in the wee hours from the docks. Me, I just stood there taking photos, soaking it all in, trying as hard as I could to extend the memories of this father son adventure in the Saskatchewan wilderness. 


Jarrod Erdody is an owner of NextBuk Outdoors where he makes instructional hunting videos. He also operates Erdody Studios, which specializes in graphic design, photography, video production and web design.

TERRY RUSS

Coyote Tips

Three steps to success




1. Late winter and early spring is a great time of year to call coyotes in because mating season makes them more territorial and aggressive. So lone howls, challenge, and pup-in-distress calls work great. They are responding to protect their territory from stray coyotes.
2. Call for a few minutes and wait five to 10 minutes before calling again. Repeat for half an hour or as long as you can sit. Conclude the stand by sitting quietly for five to 10 minutes in anticipation of any wary coyotes that may be approaching.
3. A decoy works well this time of year because coyotes are very wary after being called all year. A decoy will keep their eyes off of the hunter, and allow you to get away with more movement. All coyotes still working the fields have had a crash course in survival. 

CARPENTER, FROM PAGE 2

with his beak near the hole. European starlings are a danger for evicting red-bellies and taking over the nest hole.

Attract these woodpeckers all year long, but especially in 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? Pretty smart! 

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

On The Cover

Dick Adair of Urbandale, Iowa is a longtime friend of the Ellis family and a welcome visitor to their Vilas County cabin...despite being a Hawkeye fan. Adair and Jim Ellis caught this stringer of crappies on the Manitowish Chain in spring, 2018. Photo by Jim Ellis.

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BOB SPIERINGS & MEGAN RADTKE

Bob's Bear Bait

With 2019's bear seasons fast approaching, we have been reminiscing on 2018's success stories, which of course are everyone's favorites. Here at Bob's Bear Bait, we've always supported young and disabled hunters by providing bait at discounted prices for the month of May and, as always, we encourage our seasoned hunters to consider donating their tag to someone who might otherwise not get the opportunity. This not only is fun for those that receive the tag as a gift, but those that give the tag away are often left with just as many memorable moments.

With that, here are a few tips as we head into the bear season 2019 bear season.

Finding a bait site may seem easy, especially if you already have bears coming in. But have you noticed they only arrive after dark? Wary bears, AKA the big ones, have wised up after living through many seasons. If something isn't just right about a bait site, they know enough to wait until night before popping in.

A spot that is more secluded with minimal hunting pressure can make a bear feel more comfortable, hopefully resulting in bears switching to daylight hours. Even moving 100 yards might make all the difference. As many seasoned bear hunters know, in a matter of just two weeks prior to the opener, everything can change. You can go from multiple bears arriving daily to a couple of cubs. At this time, bears start to prepare for hibernation craving their natural foods that are high in fat and proteins. Plan ahead for this by placing a bait site adjacent to hardwood ridges, corn fields and other habitats that are bountiful in natural foods which will keep bears close to your bait site

even when the natural forage ripens.

Knowing which direction the bears are coming from can be the make or break of a hunt, but thanks to advanced technology these days, the "I wonder" game doesn't have to be played anymore. Consider purchasing a camera that has video capabilities. This is a great tool to view bears three dimensionally and giving you better accuracy of actual size. Plus, you'll know which directions the bears are coming and going, giving you an idea as to where your stand should be placed without disrupting their natural movement. However, don't be afraid to have a back-up for when technology does fail, because, trust us, it will. By raking the soil to create a soft top layer, tracks will be easily visible and give you the chance to make a reasonable guess of the paw size and directions of travel.

For more great tips, stop in this season and chat with us. We have multiple staff on hand with over 20 years of combined experience bear hunting and 11 years in the bear bait business. We carry the largest variety of bear bait in Wisconsin, with multiple locations in Wisconsin and Michigan. We pride ourselves in being your one-stop shop for all your baiting needs. Once the season hits, bait sells out fast. Be sure not to wait too long. To stay up to date with our latest news and sales, follow us on Facebook and Instagram at Bob's Bear Bait. To see a list of our bait selection or locations, check us out at bobsbearbait.com.

If you wish to speak to Bob directly, email him at sales@bobsbearbait.com or call (920) 419-1238. As always, happy baiting and congrats to all the hunters that draw this year.

MIKE FOSS

Looking Back... and Straight Ahead When a hunter's memories, expectations collide

My thoughts these days of February and March seem to be in competition. I drift from memories of Wisconsin's deer seasons and close encounters with exceptional bucks, to great expectations already stirring that a massive black bear might again show on the bait I maintain for friends.

Long before the 2018 bear season even started, my mind was on deer. I had placed trail cameras scattered across Bayfield County trying to locate big bucks and decipher travel patterns. The QuietKat, an extraordinary, electric-assist fat-tire bike, has been a game changer in my back-country travels; a priceless tool for quietly accessing secluded hunting terrain via the cruise mode or pedaling. The latter has helped me to get back in condition post-surgery. The Kat has become my invaluable companion.

My tags in the early archery and gun seasons went unfilled. Waiting for the right buck will do that. In December, I remember silently moving through more new snow toward one of many carefully placed treestands, muzzle-loader slung over my shoulder.



QuietKat electric assist fat-tire bikes allows Mike Foss to recuperate post-surgery pedaling, or cruise the backcountry.

Visions of the big buck that I had been hunting for months stepping out into the over-grown pasture never materialized. I did flirt with success, and those "what if" thoughts more even than success bring me back for more.

Deer hunting is an education. I have learned over the years to expect three or four days following the rifle season

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13



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FOSS, FROM PAGE 12

for deer to settle down and reclaim their daylight movement patterns. With the 2018 rifle season falling early and on the tail end of the whitetail rut, it was day four of the muzzleloader season when things exploded. New snow revealed tremendous deer activity, and my trail cameras recorded the rest of the story.

A very welcome and exciting cat-and-mouse game ensued over the final days of the season. I would be on one stand, and two big bucks would be in the other area of a stand just 250 yards away. The fact that these bucks were together also verified the fact that the rut had ended and with it the mistakes that will often make a big buck more vulnerable to harvest. The very fact that these big bucks had made it alive into January was also reason to celebrate, and look forward.

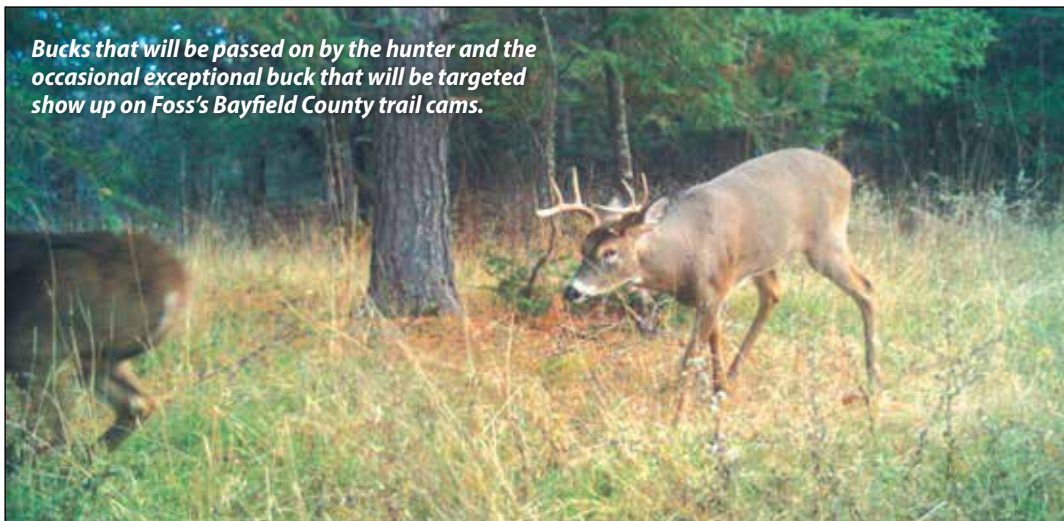
I didn't fill my muzzleloader or late archery tags. Younger bucks passed my stands several times as I waited for one the older, head-turning animals. Those special bucks are here if I just remember that patience is the hunter's most valuable tool. I did have wonderful close encounters with an exceptional buck that ignited a rapid debate over whether I should take him even as he walked just 20 feet from my stand. The smaller bucks that passed were easier to let walk when I envisioned what each of them will look like if they can make it through a brutal northern Wisconsin winter. But this one that also walked now makes more memories on long winter days.

Those memories will have to make room for expectations. My friend will be traveling north to Bayfield County in September. The baiting here will start with the melting snow. Somewhere, a massive bear will be stirring from his winter slumber very soon.

I hope the two meet. 🍷

Mike Foss was born and raised in Washburn, Wisconsin (Bayfield County) and spent many years as an accomplished bear and deer guide before retiring. Foss has written an OWO column for 10 years.

Bucks that will be passed on by the hunter and the occasional exceptional buck that will be targeted show up on Foss's Bayfield County trail cams.

CARPENTER, FROM PAGE 4
PLANTS

If you don't have mature trees, don't despair. Many birds don't need them.

Shrubs provide escape cover and a safe haven. Plant natives such as dogwoods and viburnums that also produce berries for birds to eat. Place shrubs in clumps or clusters to create "thickets." Wild grape vines are great. So are sumacs. Small evergreens such as junipers and cedars serve as important as winter cover.

Plant flowers. Sunflowers produce oodles of

seeds that the birds will flock to. Most perennials (coneflowers, cornflowers, black-eyed Susans, daisies, coreopsis) and tall annuals (zinnias, phlox, cosmos for example) also produce seeds that attract birds. Summer's blooms from any flowers -- but especially cardinal flower, daylilies, columbine, bee balm (monarda), impatiens -- attract hummingbirds.

Leave a wild, untamed corner. A patch of goldenrod, thistle, milkweed and mullein, or an overgrown thicket, offers birds both food and haven. 🍷

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

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The All-Canada Show has brought you fishing and hunting lodges from across more than seven Canadian provinces for the past 36 years. Our sport show is the largest gathering of Canadian lodges, camps, outfitters, and resorts. The show gives you -the show guest- an opportunity to visit, research, and book a fishing, hunting, canoeing or outdoor adventure at these great lodges. “Canada’s Best Fishing and Hunting destinations!”

If you came to any of the 2019 All-Canada Shows and have not booked that Canadian adventure, do so soon! Don’t skip a great opportunity to create outdoor memories with family, friends, or both. The Canadian Lodges have so much to offer; from do it yourself fly-in outpost trips where you will be the only group on the lake, to full luxury American Plan trips that are fully guided with all of today’s amenities, to anything in between! Visit the All-Canada Show “Lodge Search” area of the AllCanada.com website to find information on over 100 Canadian Lodges to help continue your research.

If you missed us in 2019, here is your “Save the Date” for the 2020 All-Canada Shows. Milwaukee: Jan. 3rd – 5th, Chicago: Jan. 9th – 12th, Green Bay: Jan. 16th – 19th. Planning has already begun and we look forward to seeing everyone next year!

Visit the All-Canada Show at www.AllCanada.com or follow us on Facebook for all of our latest information and news.

Please take a child fishing or hunting #leaveyourlegacy 

Thank you – Steve and Scott
The All-Canada Show



Explore Wisconsin



Winter, Spring Fun in Northwest Wisconsin


If you’re looking for wintertime fun, look no further than Northwest Wisconsin! We’re a top-notch destination for outdoor enthusiasts offering snowmobiling, winter ATV and UTV riding, fat tire biking, downhill and cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, skijoring, ice fishing, open water fishing (of course), hunting and some of the coolest events in the Midwest. After a day of outdoor fun, relax - our dining, lodging, and service establishments are second to none!



When outdoor fun makes you hungry, find yourself at one of Northwest Wisconsin’s supper clubs; they offer a unique dining experience. Brandy old-fashioned, relish trays, cheese curds, fish fries and steaks are some of the area’s specialties. Wisconsin’s Gemutlichkeit will shine through when you visit a warm and cozy trailside or lakeside lodging facility. Whether you like rustic cabins, quaint cottages, full-service resorts, or something out of the ordinary, you’ll find a place to stay tailored to every budget and need.

Events? We have them, too! Connect with us to see what world class events are coming up in March and April. We will see you here!

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Rusk County	www.ruskcountywi.com	715-532-2257
Sawyer County	www.haywardlakes.com	715-634-4801
Washburn County	www.washburncounty.org	715-635-9696

Join us in Northwest Wisconsin for some serious winter FUN as we look forward to spring. Golf anyone? We have great golf, too, but let’s not push it. Order a print version of our Outdoor & Trail Guide or the Northwest Wisconsin ATV/UTV and Snowmobile Corridor Map by calling 715-416-3256 or view the publications online at northwestwisconsin.com. We look forward to hosting you in our neck of the woods this winter season. 



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MAY-JUNE 2019

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Rummage Along the River


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Ashland's Smelt Hotline Puts You in the Game

Chequamegon Bay smelt run just around the corner

March and April mean spring in the North Land. Even though, brrrrr, it's really still winter with so many outdoor events and activities going on in Ashland County, you'll stay plenty warm having fun in the great outdoors! April brings the popular "Smelt Run" in the Chequamegon Bay. As soon as the ice moves out of the bay, which is usually the third weekend in April if Mother Nature cooperates, the smelt run will begin, usually lasting 10 days to two weeks.

The Ashland Chamber will have a Smelt Hotline (800-284-9484) starting in April, as soon as the smelt start running in the Chequamegon Bay. Start getting your nets, seines and buckets ready! Spring is around the corner!

For smelt rules and regulations, visit our website. For fair-weather friends who like to be inside, we suggest the Northern Great Lake Visitor Center, or a drive around Ashland and Ashland County to view the beautiful murals that depict the history of our area. For more information, events and activities, connect with visitashland.com. 

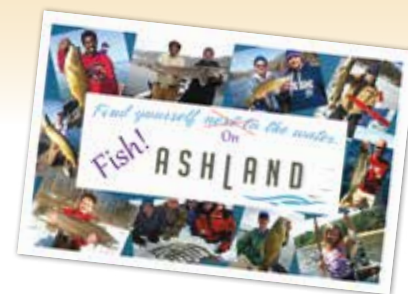


Chequamegon Bay smelters use seine nets to land the tasty fish from the spawning schools during the annual run.



Learn How, When to Fish Chequamegon Bay!

Ashland has a new fishing brochure! The new Chequamegon Bay Fishing guide is your complete how-to-guide to fish on the big lake. Year-round fishing fun on Chequamegon Bay, beautiful Lake Superior. Order your free guide today: www.visitashland.com



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Smelt Season on Chequamegon Bay. The 10-12 day "smelt run" typically starts around the third week in April, after the ice goes out of the bay. Check the Smelt Hotline during the month of April.
1-800-284-9484.

March: 29-31, Home & Sport Show

April: 6, Farm & Garden Show, 12, Relay for Life Carnival



Marinette County Biking

For beginners to back country adventurers


Bicycling in Marinette County is truly a family affair. From the minute the snow disappears, you can expect to see cyclists on every road and in every corner of the county. In fact, a bicycle tour of Marinette County should definitely include a visit to one of our many waterfalls, a ride along the scenic shores of Green Bay, or a trip through the canopy of the forest.

Marinette County offers trails that can be a bit difficult for the average bicyclist, but a welcome challenge for others. We offer many other road routes that anyone can enjoy covering over various types of geographical terrain.

Regardless of which type of cycling you like to engage in, Marinette County terrain ranges from flat to fairly hilly. You can expect to find a wide variety of biking opportunities as you travel along.

All the cycle routes in Marinette County are paved. The routes are scenic and most sections have very low traffic volume. If you want to venture off the beaten path, but aren't looking for an extreme experience, you can always ride the snowmobile and winter ATV trails for a milder off-road adventure.

Each June, bicyclists from all over the world come to Marinette to take part in the Leow Strong Bike Ride, formerly the Menominee River Century Bike Ride. The ride is perfect for both experienced and beginning riders. It is also a fun time to be with family.

Established as one of the Midwest's finest bicycle rides, it features routes from 10 to 100 miles. 

The Marinette County Scenic Bicycle Routes maps can be found online at www.therealnorth.com or by request at mebsch@marinette.wi.us or 715-732-5162.

Marinette County offers bicyclist opportunities from isolated routes to the Leow Strong Bike Ride.



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Outside in Sawyer County


Explore Wisconsin



Fat Bike Birkie



Sawyer County to host world's largest fat bike race March 8-9

The most visible evidence of Northern Wisconsin's dominance in the fat bike world is the Fat Bike Birkie, hosted each March by the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation (ABSF) on the Birkie Trail near Cable, Wisconsin. The Fat Bike Birkie, this year March 8-9, is North America's largest fat bike race. "While fat biking may have started as a fad, now even major retailers include them in their cycling offerings," said Ben Popp, ABSF executive director. "We're really proud to promote the sport as part of a healthy, active lifestyle option and to welcome riders to northern Wisconsin to enjoy the beauty of our north woods." 



Taylor Grace (left), fishing on the hardwater of a Hayward area lake, prepares to immediately release the musky she caught on a tip-up with a shiner minnow in early December. Paige Best (above) shows off her crappies. Fishing on open water or ice is worth the trip to Hayward, Wisconsin. PHOTOS SUBMITTED BY HAYWARD LAKES VISITORS AND CONVENTION BUREAU, SAWYER COUNTY.

Explore Wisconsin



Springtime in Hurley

According to the calendar, Spring arrives on March 21 every year. In Hurley, however, chances are the ground may still be covered in snow and ice on the inland lakes. If you're looking to have a unique springtime outdoor activity experience, look no further.

Depending on the type of fishing you prefer, you may find yourself ice fishing on one of the many inland lakes. Always remember to be safe, and ask at one of the local bait shops for the "unofficial" conditions and fishing report. If you prefer to stay on land, fishing the Montreal River may be exactly what you are looking for.

Snowmobiling continues in Iron County as long as the trails allow. Trail conditions are updated as needed and can be checked on our website at: www.hurleywi.com. Iron County does allow for ATVs/UTVs to have trail access as long as the temperatures are below 32 degrees. Again, our website is your best resource for information.

With the temperatures warming up, the spring thaw fills our rivers. Waterfalls are best viewed this time of year. There are 19 waterfalls in and around the Hurley area. Most are located in remote, wild areas unspoiled by the crowds. Some can be driven to while others require walking and a little bit of orienteering to get to. All are worth the trip. To request a guide, call our office 715-561-4334.

After a day of adventure, be sure to stop at any of the local establishments. A variety of cuisine is available from fresh

homemade pastas and pizzas to prime rib or a fresh hand packed burger. The locally owned bars and restaurants specialize in fantastic food and friendly service.

Plan a future getaway and participate in a variety of events



Memorial Day ATV/UTV Rally, Thursday, May 23 through Sunday May 26

Come to Hurley for the LARGEST parade of ATV/UTVs you have ever seen. Ride the trails. Participate in the Poker Run and other events. Attempt the INFAMOUS Mud Pit. Registration and details at: www.hurleywi.com

Snake Hunt on the Gile Flowage, Saturday June 15

This annual Northern Pike fishing tournament brings anglers to the Gile Flowage for the chance at cash prizes. Sponsored by the North Pole Tavern. Watch for details on our website.

Join us soon in Hurley!

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MIKE YURK

Simple, Effective, Time-Proven History of the Wolf River Rig

The Wolf River Rig is one of the simplest and most effective bait rigs ever designed to catch fish. Named after the Wolf River, it implies it was developed along central Wisconsin's Wolf River.

The Wolf River begins in northern Wisconsin and runs through New London, then Partridge Lake, through Fremont into Lake Poygan, past Winneconne into Lake Butte des Morts. The Fox River comes from the east through Eureka and Omro into Lake Butte des Morts meeting the Wolf River where both rivers become the Fox River, dumping into Lake Winnebago, ultimately heading north out of Winnebago and eventually into Green Bay.

These lakes and two rivers draw fishermen from throughout the Midwest to the legendary spring walleye run in late March and April and then the white bass run in May and early June. Fishing the two rivers can be challenging with early spring run-off and strong currents. Fishermen need to get their bait to the bottom of the river and keep it there. Enter the Wolf River Rig.

I remember the Wolf River Rig from my earliest fishing days in the late 1950s when my grandfather taught me how to fish. We fished Lake Winnebago and the Fox River and the only bait we used were minnows on Wolf River Rigs. In those days it seemed every bar, gas station and certainly every bait shop along both rivers and around those lakes sold the rigs. They were packaged in individual plastic bags stapled to cards hanging on the wall or in baskets, cardboard boxes or empty cigar boxes sitting next to the cash register.

The Wolf River Rigs began with a three-way swivel, a foot (or longer) leader to a three quarter or one ounce bell-shaped sinker, and a two-and-a-half to three-foot leader with a number four or six long shank hook.

As effective as the Wolf River Rig has been over the years, little is known of its origin. From its name, we can assume it was first introduced along the Wolf River rather than the Fox. Recently, I received an email from Peggy Laske of New Holstein after she read an article I wrote for the November/December issue of *On Wisconsin Outdoors* about innovations to the famed original Wolf River Rig.



Small plastic bags with Wolf River Rigs were commonplace during the 1950s and 60s in bars, gas stations and of course bait shops along the Wolf and Fox Rivers.

"I believe that my father Al Aeby developed the Wolf River Rig," Peggy wrote, explaining that her family owned the Red Banks Resort from the early 1940s to 1956. She remembered making Wolf River Rigs as a child to sell to fishermen in the spring when they came through her family's resort.

The Red Banks Resort was on the Wolf, upriver from Fremont, she told me. "We sold them (the Wolf River Rigs) for twenty five cents," she said, and recalled making ten rigs at a time and her father putting them on a card behind the bar. "People told us how good they worked."

Peggy said they had lots of fishermen coming from Chicago in those days. It seems to me, if they couldn't find the Wolf River Rigs anyplace else, then her claim that her father developed the Wolf River Rigs seems plausible. For now, Peggy Laske, her father the late Al Aeby and the Red Banks Resort have laid claim to being the originators of the Wolf River Rig.

If anyone else can add to the history of the Wolf River Rig, let us know. One indisputable fact is that the Wolf River Rig has been helping anglers catch fish on the Wolf and Fox Rivers for a very long time. 🐟

Mike Yurk has been writing about the outdoors for over 50 years. His stories have appeared in numerous newspapers and magazines. He has also published twelve books on the outdoors. He is a retired Army officer living in northwestern Wisconsin where he has found some of the best bass fishing in the country. He can be contacted at bassinmajor@yahoo.com

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A primitive campground operated by the county, Sawmill Park, is located on the property and offers campsites, hand pumps, pit toilets, pavilion and a fishing dock. This quiet little campground is open to camping year-round. If you'd like to camp even further off the beaten path, contact the Washburn County Forestry Department for a camping permit. This allows you to camp anywhere on the county forest land with a tent or even do some hammock camping to get away from the crowds. A few days at Sawmill are a great way to kick off your spring adventures. 🍷

Portage route maps and information on the campground can be found at WashburnCounty.org.



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PHIL SCHWEIK

Early Season Walleyes

No reason to wait

As the ice starts to diminish here in Wisconsin, we are offered first opportunities for outstanding early-season, open-water fishing. Open-water fishing season for gamefish is closed over much of Wisconsin during the months of March and April prior to reopening in May, with regulations providing exceptions for year-round gamefish angling, including on the Wisconsin River.

I call the Wisconsin River "home." I have fished it for over 45 years and have seen many, many changes. The one constant is being able to get out on very early spring walleye fishing that will challenge any bite, anywhere in the country, for pure quality.

A typical early spring day will start out with a simple search at various mid-state river locations for open water and then slipping my boat in the water below an area dam. These are familiar places that will normally have open water earlier in the year because of the heavier current provided via a power plant or a paper mill. Here in central Wisconsin, I reap the benefits of having several dams in our area; on any given day I could end up below any one of these structures depending on current and conditions.

Traditionally the area directly below the dam draws the crowd. I head down the river, sometimes several miles looking for

defined locations, with current conditions playing a major factor. If the water is fast and dirty, I choose a section of river where I can head a long way downstream where the current has slowed and the water clarity has cleared. If the current is slow, I look for deep holes located right in the main river channel and start fishing there. Or, I may find access to and fish a lake basin.

Fishing tackle for early season walleyes is simple and generally a choice of two tactics. I run a medium-lite 6'10" Elk River fishing rod and reel spooled up with 8# test monofilament armed with a simple jig and minnow combination or some variety of Wolf River rigs, which is no more than a hook and a sinker or two. Color does matter, so experimenting with several different colors is in your best interest. Orange and yellow or any combination of the two have been my best producers while spring fishing in the stained water of the Wisconsin River.

Once the target water is determined, I will typically set up on the top end of a hole and use the trolling motor to navigate a controlled drift through the area. While drifting, I am either casting my bait and slowly retrieving it along the bottom or I just allow the bait to drag slowly across the bottom as we drift. Everyone has a personal preference and the fish will often let you know what they



Chris Blank finds enough open water for great early walleye fishing on the Wisconsin River with guide and OWO columnist Phil Schweik

want as far as presentation.

When I discuss fishing specific locations, typically we're targeting water depths of at least 18 feet of water and up to 30 feet of water with reduced current. This doesn't mean that all the fish will be this deep. This is just a starting point. On sunny days, walleyes will on occasion move to shallower water and can be found in as little as eight to ten feet of water. At this time of year water temperatures are in the low-to mid-30s and these fish are very lethargic. Give them a little sun-generated heat and walleyes will move in mass to shallower, warmer water. Use the same presentations in the shallow water that I recommended for the deep,

but remember the key is that you are on cold, sluggish fish; work your presentation very slowly.

The next time you are patiently waiting for the general fishing opener, remember Wisconsin, especially our river systems, allows anglers great early season opportunities at some of the best walleye fishing of the year. Check local regulations before venturing out, but regardless of where you live, a main vein is virtually right out your back door. 🐟

Phil is the owner of Hooksetters Guide Service in central Wisconsin and Hookset Adventures in Eagle River, which keeps him on the water over 200 days a year. He can be reached at pschweik@dwave.net, hooksetters.biz, 715-693-5843 or on Facebook at Phil Schweik.

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DAVE DUWE

Springtime is Sauger Season

Rivers mean excellent fishing before opening day

The end of March through April is the best time to pursue the pre-spawn and spawning saugers. Saugers are in the same family as the walleye, although they are typically smaller. They are identified by spots on their dorsal fin, without a white tip on their tail.

During March and April, saugers will be concentrated in river systems, making them an easy target for anglers. My favorite spots for sauger fishing include the Wisconsin River, near the Wisconsin Dells, the Illinois River near Starved Rock, Illinois, and the Mississippi River near Alma, Wisconsin. All of these locations offer a chance of 100-fish days. The Illinois River is known nationwide for its trophy class fishery. The Mississippi and Wisconsin River also have opportunities for trophy fish along with a lot of quality eating fish. Saugers make great table fare.

I have three preferred methods for catching sauger: a jig and minnow combo, a lindy rig, and the three-way swivel rig. My favorite is the tried and true jig and minnow combination. I prefer using the Arkie 1/4 ounce red sickle jig in pink or chartreuse or the Bait Rigs Odd' Ball jig. The weight and size of the jig head is dependent on the river current. To prevent snags, you want to use a jig weight that will keep your line vertical to the bottom.

When the fish are in a non-aggressive mood, always use a stringer hook. A stringer hook is a small treble hook on monofilament line attached to the jig. I prefer not hooking the minnow in the stringer hook, letting it swing freely. This will not detract from the natural swimming action of the bait. Tip the jigs with large fathead minnows or lake shiners. To prevent line twist, I will attach a small snap swivel to the main line - this also makes changing jigs much easier. Be aware that the fish will often hit as the jig falls.

The lindy rig is a "walking sinker" from 1/4 ounce to 3/4 ounce with a hook or floating jig head. The leader length will vary; you need to adjust it to determine what the fish want. As a rule, I prefer a 24-inch length. I use a small split shot to hold the walking sinker into place. Another option would be using a barrel swivel; however, you can't change your leader length without re-tying. Like the jig, you want your fishing line to be vertical with the bottom. When I get a strike, I will allow the fish to take a couple of feet of line before setting the hook.

The third method, and one of my favorites, is the three-way swivel rig. It can be fished from shore or boat. The rig is composed of a three-way



A bit of snow on the bank and promise of spring puts guide Dave Duwe in the mood to target sauger.

swivel, a heavy sinker, 3/4 ounce to two ounce, any shape will work, and a hook. A slight adjustment I like is to replace the sinker with a heavy jig, usually a Bait Rig Odd' Ball; this doubles your chances by presenting a lure on and slightly above bottom. Maintain a short dropper, 12 to 18 inches and an 18 to 24-four inch leader. The length of the dropper (sinker) line depends on the location of the fish relative to the bottom. Shorter leaders will reduce snags. Again, experiment to see what the fish want. Unlike the lindy rig, three-way rigs don't slide up your line, so you do not need to feed out line to the fish. Bow your rod slightly before setting the hook. The three-way rig can be trolled into the current or drifted with the current, always working the rig vertical to bottom.

The sauger bite is usually so good that fishing pressure can be tremendous. Try going during the week or when the weather isn't quite perfect to avoid the crowds. Most rivers have specific bag limits so make sure you know the rules before you hit the water. 🐟

David Duwe is owner of Dave Duwe's Guide Service. He specializes in southeastern Wisconsin Lakes, particularly Delevan Lake and Lake Geneva. Contact him at fishlakegeneva.com or fishdelevanlake.com or 262-728-8063.



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JERRY KIESOW

Fly-Fishing in Wisconsin

The Parmachene Beau & Parmacheene Belle

In last month's issue we tied the Green-butt Skunk. It is a good streamer, designed especially for steelhead (but works on other species), and is not too difficult to tie. We now move on to a pattern that I have evaded for decades. Why? Because it involves marrying feathers.

What does it mean to marry feathers? It means you have a recipe that requires two or more colors. For example, wet fly wings positioned back to back, with those wings made up of two (or more) colored segments, one on top of the other, with the goal being to blend those colors into one wing.

The key to marrying, according to a recent article I read, is having matching wing feathers of the colors needed, left and left, right and right, and to cut each section from the same area of the corresponding feathers. Cut a section from the wing of one color and a matching section from the wing of the other color. Then put one section on top of the other and move the top feather so the barbs of the feathers lock together, or marry, and forming one feather. Then repeat the operation for the second wing.

Simple? Not really. But with time and practice, you will be able to do this with very little difficulty for simple wings or tails. With experience, you may even progress to making the fancy, old, classic, salmon flies.

While researching the fly pattern listed below, I learned that the Parmachene Beau has



Materials - Please note that there are not a lot of materials or tools required to tie these complicated looking flies.



Beau & Belle - Notice the difference between the Beau (left) from Ray Bergman in his writing, "Trout" and the Belle (right) as seen in Mary Orvis Marbury's, "Favorite Flies and Their Histories."

a near twin, the Parmacheene Belle. In addition to slightly different names, each also has a slightly different recipe, and both are very old indeed.

The Belle was invented by Henry P. Wells in 1876, to be used primarily for Brook trout in the Rangeley Region of Maine. It was published in 1883 in the book, "Fishing with the Fly" co-authored by Charles F. Orvis and Albert Nelson. It was later published in 1892, by Mary Orvis Marbury in, "Favorite Flies and Their Histories." In addition, Ray Bergman published it in, "Trout," with the Beau recipe, in 1938.

The recipe below is for the Beau, and slightly more difficult to tie.

Hook: #10 wet

Thread: Black 6/0 Uni (The Belle uses red)

Tail: Scarlet over white, married (I used duck quill wing feathers)

Butt: Black ostrich herl (You can use natural peacock herl)

Body: yellow floss (You can use dubbing or thread if you do not have floss)

Ribbing: Flat silver tinsel


Hackle: White backed by scarlet (not all versions call for this, some just mix the two colors)

Wing: White, scarlet, white, married (Note, these wings use three narrow strips of duck quill wing feathers, in comparison to the Belle using only two, slightly wider.)

Eyes: Jungle cock (used only on the Beau)

Tie a few of these, and let me know how they work on our brookies or any other fish that swim here in Wisconsin. I have now that I know how to marry!

Happy tying. See you in the river.

Keep a good thought! 

Jerry enjoys all aspects of the outdoors and shares them through his photos, words, and workshops. He has written two books, "Tales of The Peshtigo Putzer," and "Photos, Poems, and a Little Bit of Prose" Both make great additions to your outdoor library and great gifts. They are available on his website: www.jerrykiesowoc.com, at Orange Hat Publishing.com, and/or Amazon.



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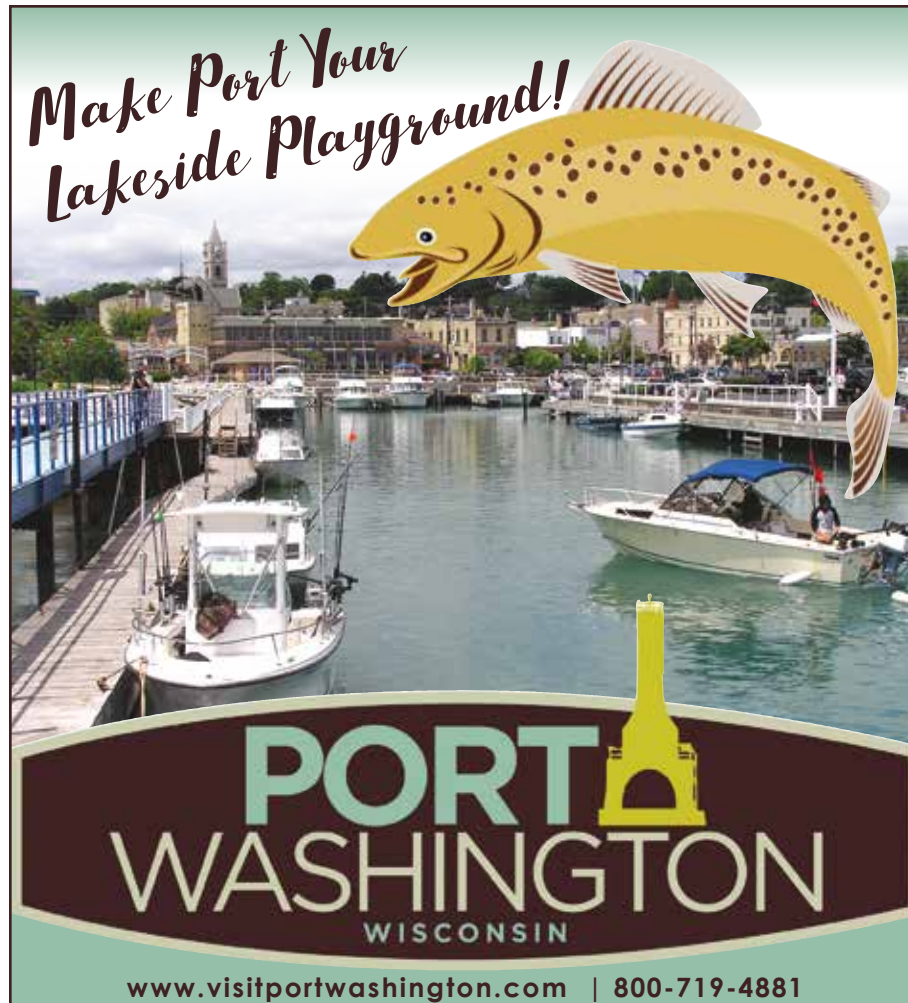
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JOHN LUTHENS

Cold Weather, Hot Fishing

Steelheading Lake Michigan's southeast tributaries

The temperamental Ides of March crested in on the Lake Michigan waves in Port Washington as I watched Sauk Creek snake through town in the freezing mist. The sound of flies and spinners ticked upward through the fading shelf ice, my fishing companions for the day, Sa Lee and Zack Regazzi, of Oshkosh, steadfastly warming up to their trade.

"Four fresh steelhead surfacing at the pool head," Lee said with a knowing grin. "We hooked one at first light on a stonefly. They're still in here somewhere."

Silently blowing warmth into fingers, Regazzi broke ice from his rod guides and watched his strike indicator with his polarized glasses reflecting the swirling current. He was either too cold to talk or

too intent on watching for the slightest, lurking shadow. In the frying-pan waters of early-spring steelheading, both of these traits tend to scramble together like eggs in a spawn sac.

We weren't alone in our frigid pursuit. From the concrete channels of the Root and Milwaukee Rivers to the tree-lined reaches of the Sheboygan River, when steelhead trout push into the early spring tributaries of southeastern Wisconsin to spawn, fishermen statewide roll out of hibernation to intercept them.

Cold rains and late-season snow squalls are a green light for fish to start moving and, depending on water conditions, the tactics used in hooking the speckled giants can vary as much as the churlish Wiscon-

sin weather. Not surprisingly, networking and firsthand reports are worth their weight in steelhead-silver when it comes to early-season ventures.

John Klinzing, fishing manager at Orvis-Milwaukee in Glendale, marks a daily chalkboard in his store to share reports on the Milwaukee and Root Rivers. "It's all about hearing from seasoned anglers and sharing with newcomers to the sport," says Klinzing. "Talking favorite gear and seeing local steelhead patterns firsthand while trading fishing stories, in my book, springtime in Wisconsin doesn't get much better than that."

Klinzing prefers fishing with natural-colored streamers that mimic baitfish in



Sa Lee, of Oshkosh, with a Lake Michigan steelhead caught in the tributary waters of Sauk Creek in Port Washington.

the open water, but he says that experimenting with bright colors such as pinks and purples will often trigger strikes from the aggressive fish.

Fellow writer and steelhead fisherman, Jerry Kiesow, also favors streamers, as well as tying his own yarn and egg flies to mim-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 35



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DENNY MURAWSKA

Homemade Caviar

Which came first, the fish or the egg?

Have you ever cleaned a trout or perch bulging with eggs? They get discarded with the rest of the innards, right? Oh what a mistake! While I know the term caviar refers to a high brow version of sturgeon eggs that are produced in Russia, any fish eggs can be made into this gourmet treat. It could not be simpler, quicker, or more satisfying.

The eggs within a fish are covered in a membrane. Extracting them from the membrane is the only tricky part. Soak the masses of eggs in a brine solution. This can be six cups cold water to 1/3 cup of non-iodized salt. It penetrates quickly and makes membrane removal easier. The egg mass can be carefully cut down the center, and the membrane side of the sac laid down flat. The dull side of a knife can be used to scrape them off very carefully into another bowl of brine. Bits of membrane can then be removed by hand and the eggs carefully strained.



Another method is to lay the mass membrane up on a wire screen like one used in a smoker for jerky. Anything with as small as a quarter-inch opening works. Run some cold water over this under a little pressure, and it helps the eggs come loose. Let them rest refrigerated in the brine for about an hour in the fridge. Drain and rinse. Some folks add a bit of olive oil at this point, but it is not necessary.

Take a small taste. If too salty, distilled water can be used to draw some of the salt out just by rinsing through a strainer a few times. Really good caviar is not overly salty

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

DICK ELLIS

Wisconsin's Pier of d'Nort

"World's Greatest Pier" award-winner answers consumer needs

Like anyone who owns or maintains a pier, Carl Surges faced problems when putting in and taking out his parents' pier in St. Germain twice each year. Damaged framing and deteriorating decking, rusted hardware from outdoor storage, and the time-consuming transportation of pier sections and accessories to and from over-winter storage and the lake were all too familiar companions. In Wisconsin, ice often magnifies the aggravations or flat out wreaks havoc on permanent structures.

It is often said that necessity is the mother of invention. When professional skills and personal passion include product design and development, perhaps Mother calls a bit louder and with a bit more urgency.

"After putting in and taking out my parent's pier for years and watching people with their own piers, I thought there had to be a way to carry the sections upside down from a position in the middle of the frame like a nicely balanced pair of water buckets," Surges said. "The legs would be folded next to



Inventor/owner Carl Surges demonstrates the one-man ease of putting in a Pier of d'Nort pier. At right, Surges is shown at work in his St. Germain plant.

the frame when carrying. It's all just logical."

Each section would be tilted down by the installer with swiveling hooks meeting and coupling with the previous section already in the water, then simply flipped over to take its place in line. He also wanted to develop a way to drag each section from the water that would ultimately prove even easier than installation and to make "T" or "L" extensions to the pier as easy as the rest for the purchaser.

"I had questions during the design process," he said. "Had these things been tried? Could I ask the opinion of anyone? I was



investing time not knowing if any of these ideas could be patented or were they already patented."

The fundamental design was completed and incorporated in a miniature working model by the summer of 2002. "The patent report came back free and clear," said Surges. "Everything in our design is so logical. Why wasn't it done before? They (patent office) said we had to break our design down into five or six different patents. They ultimately issued one patent that gave us everything we wanted."

Pier of d'Nort was officially born. Surges

Publisher note: Read this entire Wisconsin success story at www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com under Outdoor News or Inland Fishing.

launched his company in a garage in Conover in the summer of 2003. The pier offers standard welded aluminum frame sections with dual-braced folding legs on one end and swiveling hooks on the other. There is no bolting or unbolting between seasons. Each frame is topped with two or three easy to manage separately installed deck panels of optional color and material. Simple one person installation and removal is guaranteed.

Height adjustment is also simple and reliable. If the consumer wants to raise the pier, he lifts the pier and steps down on the footpad designed by Surges. "The secret is a one-way cam," he said. "The leg can slip one way but not the other. We mount the cam so that it holds the pier up rather than the other way around. When you lower the pier, all it takes is a quarter turn of the wrench to loosen the cam mechanism. When you let go of the wrench, the pier stays."

Surges also said that storing and caring

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

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TYLER FLORCZAK

Tips for topping the leaderboard at ice fishing tournaments

Competitive traditions on the hardwater

It was 6 a.m., pitch black, eight degrees below zero and I was all alone; it was perfect. My favorite day of the year had arrived—the first ice fishing tournament of 2019—and I was one of the first people out on the ice.

You see, ice fishing tournaments are special occasions for my family, considering we've been fishing fanatics since we could walk. There's hundreds more hardcore ice fishing families across Wisconsin who take a great deal of pride when competing in these contests.

After months of preparation and practice, it's finally game day. It's a chance for anglers to put forth their best effort on a specific lake for an allotted time where winner/winners earn a pay check or prize. But more importantly, they earn respect.

Sure, a handful of lucky first-time anglers will sneak into the leaderboard from time to time, but all too often, the seasoned veterans and diehards end up in the top spots.

Anglers trying to gain an edge on the competition and improve their odds of winning at the next ice fishing tournament should consider these tips and strategies to propel them to a first-place finish:

Background information: If the tournament is on an unknown body of water, seek intel from bait shops, anglers out on the lake or those who frequent the lake and online fishing reports. Don't be afraid to stop at a nearby tavern, bar or restaurant and converse with locals for pointers as well.

Homework at home: Use the internet as a study tool. Novice anglers can find a handful of possible hot spots just by studying lake maps, online forums and fish reports or by downloading the app Navionics. The easy-to-use app provides detailed electronic navigation charts and allows users to view contours, breaklines, dropoffs, underwater points, structure/cribs, weedlines, GPS coordinates and more of lakes and rivers right from a mobile device.

Pre-fish: It's a little trickier pre-fishing for game fish than panfish, but a good rule of thumb is to not overfish a potential tournament-day fishing spot. Find a spot that is holding active fish—the bigger the better, obviously—and repeat. Create a milk run of spots you know that holds fish. This way, if someone beats you to your primary location, you have other spots to fall back on. Pre-fishing also gives anglers a chance to figure out where fish are feeding, what type of forage they are eating and the best method/equipment to catch these fish.

Don't follow the crowd: most people assume that be-



Chetek resident Jena Florczak, wife of OWO contributor Tyler Florczak, holds a monster 43-inch northern pike she caught to win the pike category during Chetek Fire Department's 25th annual Adult and Kids Ice Fishing Tournament on January 19.

cause there is a colony of ice anglers, there's good fishing amongst the crowd. That can be true at times, but pressured fish—especially elusive, trophy fish that have never been caught—have likely moved on to other nearby spots where there is little to no pressure. It takes big fish to win fishing tournaments.

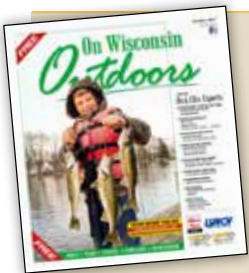
Prep the night before: make sure your heater, portable shack, ice cleats, tip-ups, jig poles, minnows, waxies, etc., are ready to rock the day before an event. Electric augers and cell phones should be charged up, and remember to bring enough propane tanks, food and beverages for an all-day excursion. Thoroughly inspect the line and hooks on all tip-ups and jig poles—reline and rig up those with nicks or cuts in the monofilament to ensure all fish hooked are landed. Load up the truck the night before and park in the garage, so you're ready to hit the hardwater shortly after the alarm goes off.

During the tournament, consistently monitor your tip-ups to make sure all of the hooks are baited with fresh bait and there are no tangles or mishaps. Other useful tactics include chumming ice holes with dead shiners and using Berkley Powerbait Attractant on live bait.

Remember to have fun!

Ice anglers who take these extra measures to ensure they are set for success will likely be on the top of the leaderboard at the next ice fishing contest. 🍷

Tyler Florczak is a sports and outdoors editor for the Chetek Alert newspaper. He is a writer, photographer and videographer. His 182" whitetail buck harvested in 2015 was accepted into the Boone & Crocket Club and featured in several outdoor magazines.



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Things to Know: Driftless Outdoors Show

Do you love outdoor activities?

Or are you a newbie hoping to learn the ropes? Come check out the 2nd Annual Driftless Outdoors Show held May 17- 18, 2019, at the Onalaska Omni Center in Onalaska, Wisconsin. Here are some things you should know before you go.

It's not just for water enthusiasts

Sure, there is paddling, fishing, and the DockDogs Aquatic Competition but this is truly an event for all outdoor enthusiasts. Top experts and retailers will be present to help outfit you for other "silent sports" like camping, hiking, fishing, and biking, too.

You'll be entertained

Make a day of this event by dining at the available food trucks and enjoy presentations by various outdoor enthusiasts and organizations including a live eagle demonstration with the National Eagle Center. The Driftless Outdoors Show isn't just for shopping and learning, it's for enjoying and celebrating the culture of the Driftless Region.

Try before you buy

Many vendors at the event will have equipment for you to demo before you make any investment. Get their expert opinions and a firsthand chance to try out their gear.

It's FREE

With the help of generous sponsors, attendees will get free admission to 50,000 square feet of Driftless Outdoors fun. Food and gear is available for purchase, but hanging out with you friends and family is free of charge thanks to Mayo Clinic Health System.



You can learn more at driftlessports.com



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vanguardworld.us**GILL SHIELD**

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gillshield.com**MISSILE BAITS CRAW FATHER**

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missilebaits.com**SPORTSMAN BUMPER**

This was a product that caught my eye – at first it made me laugh, then I stopped and thought, "That's a great idea!" How many times have you been looking for a place to set your shotgun, rifle, or fishing rod before or after a day in the field, only to set it on the ground? This creative product gives you a perfect place to secure them on your vehicle. Magnetic for ease of use and removal while keeping your vehicle scratch-free. Lifetime guarantee. (\$19.99)

sportbumper.com**LIFELIKE COLLAPSIBLE DECOY
JAKE STRUTTER**

Nothing makes a big gobbler angrier than a strutting Jake moving in on his hen. The detail and realism in this decoy, combined with the aggressive strut, will get those gobblers running your way. Compact, lightweight, and collapsible with a carrying bag for when you are on the go. Realistic tail fan or the option to add your own feathers. Even comes with a collapsible stake. (\$119.99)


avian-x.com**PRIMOS WATERBOARD
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I love slate calls and use them almost exclusively, but there are times when they just don't work. Once they get wet, for instance, they're useless, and light rain is one of the best times to sneak up on a big gobbler. A box call like this is your solution. It works in the rain and when it gets wet from snow early in the season. Produces a variety of realistic sounds including yelps, clucks, and purrs. Become an expert with a little practice and don't let a little rain keep you inside. (\$44.99)

primos.com**MURAWSKA, FROM PAGE 28**

as is commonly believed. An example of this would be "lumpfish" caviar sold in most stores. It is from paddlefish and looks black.

If you love sushi and sashimi, you may have had salmon eggs or "ikura," which are my favorite. The large, orange, eggs can be popped one at a time, or enjoy a mouthful. If there was one food I could live on forever, this would be it. Supposedly this is also a healthy baby food as well.

We've all heard the benefits of fish oil touted. Well, these little baubles are full of it. Whether served on a bit of bread, a bagel, or straight up, they are irresistible. My favorite presentation is on a small square of seaweed wrap, or nori, which is readily available in larger grocery stores. 

Denny Murawska has been a contributor to UP Magazine, Wishigan, the Pulse and others. His church is the pine cathedral that surrounds his home near Black River Falls.


ELLIS, FROM PAGE 29

for the pier is just as easy. Frames are stored upside down with folded legs without leg-caps removed and can be stacked as high as the owner likes. Panels are stacked vertically allowing for minimal storage space in your shed or shore.

"We've weight-tested our pier," Surges said. "The more weight you put on our pier the more secure it is. Each 4 by 8-foot section will hold over 7,000 pounds. That's about 40 people."

The company has sold thousands of piers all over the USA, including Alaska, and in Canada and Europe. Several Pier of d' Nort piers are on the Great Lakes, and several on Lake Winnebago. Persons interested in the product work directly with pier experts to create a pier just right for the customer. When the pier is received, most consumers find the instructions so informative that a seven-section pier installation is likely to take less than two hours the first time and considerably less time with experience.

"Nothing on our website is exaggerated or untrue," Surges said. "People with piers are sophisticated; they live on lakes, they're doing well, they're smart. We understate the quality of our piers. To have customers discover that it's even better than they expected leads to more referrals than the other way around."

Pier of d' Nort was recently chosen as the World's Greatest pier by How 2 Media's television show, "World's Greatest". See the piers in person at the St. Germain showroom and manufacturing facility, or connect with Pier of d' Nort at www.pierofd'nort.com or 715-477-3232. 

DAN MOERICKE

An 'Up Nort' Report Friends in LOW Places

A couple of my friends are real low-lives. (My wife would probably say that most of them are.) But, when I say LOW, I'm referring to Lake of the Woods. The LOW lives I'm referring to are Bob Peterson and Chuck Schmoller, two Marshfield Clinic retirees who annually make at least a couple trips to Lake of the Woods to do some ice fishing.

I've been told about these junkets for years and finally weaseled an invitation to join them this winter. "Bring a friend," they said, so my life-long buddy Mark "Lard" Krueger got enlisted to round out our crew.

Our destination was Arneson's Rocky Point Resort on Lake of the Woods south shore. I'd seen this resort advertised many times on outdoor TV shows, so I knew the place actually existed and we weren't being taken on some snipe hunt. From Wausau, it's about an eight-hour drive and we were fortunate to have good weather and dry roads.

The plan was to drive up on a Sunday, fish all day Monday and Tuesday, a half day on Wednesday and then drive home. Chuck took care of making the reservations and we arrived to find ourselves staying in a spacious, well-appointed cabin. Cocktails and dinner at the main lodge became the nightly routine.

In this country, ice fishing is big business and Arneson's Resort has 135 ice shacks on Lake of the Woods. With years of experience on Lake of the Woods under their belts, Chuck and Bob had their favorite areas to fish and the guides did their best to accommodate us. We arrived at the landing at about 6:30 each morning to be loaded into one of the heated snow machines and shuttled out to our shacks. Upon arrival, the guides opened the holes and got the heaters going. Bait was provided and the guides stopped back at least once mid-day to see if we needed anything or wanted to move. The guides will even clean your

CONTINUED ON PAGE 39

GREENE, FROM PAGE 6

As a young hunter, I shot my first pheasant with my J.C. Higgins bolt action. My dad congratulated me as he was reloading his Brown-ing. Now I'm not so sure that I shot that bird, but I still count it.

I shot only one pheasant in flight with my bow. I had my mom take a picture of me and my trophy. I lost the photograph and that still bothers me.

Hunting with my dad and neighbors, a rooster flushed from under my feet. I took careful aim, but forgot to release the safety. My dad asked me why I didn't shoot. I tried to save face and I replied that I thought it was a hen. 54 years later, I can still see that rooster.

I was in seventh grade when Barney, an English springer spaniel, became my first hunting dog. My dad supposedly bought him in Horicon Marsh for two dollars, but at times, my father stretched the truth. I named him after the TV character Barney Fife. I didn't have the knowledge or the time to train him. We were young and we weren't very skilled hunters, but in the field we shared our lives together. For those many hunts, I wish to thank him.

Lynn was my pheasant hunting partner for 42 years. Recently, he has hung up his gun, a Remington 870 Wingmaster that never failed him. However there was plenty of human error and for that he was on the receiving end

of my harassment. Now that he can no longer hunt, we don't see each other much. It was a very good run.

My son Nate's his first shotgun, like my first, was a J.C. Higgins. He had a double flush of roosters, and within seconds, using that bolt action, he dropped both birds. I was a proud father.

My first hunting dog I owned as an adult was Libby, a yellow lab. She was an intelligent, natural hunter that made my life easy, despite my skills as a dog trainer.

My chocolate lab Hershey is the matriarch of my lab family. During one of her labors, I had to leave for work. While she was in labor, I had two of my young neighbor girls stay with her. She did not give birth until I came home nine hours later. She immediately had nine pups in 45 minutes. I truly believe she waited for me to come home. We have that trust relationship.

Due to health issues, this past fall, I missed my first pheasant hunting season in 55 years, but every weekend Nate still took me duck hunting. I cherish each and every memory and each day of life. 🍷

Gary Greene is a life-long bird hunter and was a pheasant hunting guide for many years. Gary and his veterinarian wife Chris and their four labs live in East Troy. You can contact him at ganggreene2002@yahoo.com

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STUART WILKE

Shorty's Back in Town

And he returned with an assortment of unique and noteworthy firearms for sale

Mike "Shorty" Govas is back from his annual Minnesota shopping excursion for gun dealers and his shelves are filled with a variety of new and unique firearms. "Unique" may be an understatement, especially when you consider products like the new Lifeguard .22 magnum pistol. Outwardly, the Lifeguard is the about the height and length of a credit card when folded. Open it, and it unfolds into a tiny single shot concealed carry pistol with storage space for three rounds. Talk about concealability!

Mossberg, which hasn't manufactured a viable handgun in a century, has re-entered the market with its subcompact MC1sc 9 mm pistol. The polymer MC1sc comes with both six-round flush and seven-round extended magazines and is garnering excellent reviews for its ergonomics, accuracy, reliability and affordability.

Those looking for a more traditional revolver will be pleased to learn that Colt recently brought back a version of its highly respected Cobra in .38 Special/.38 + P. The six-round, stainless steel, double action revolver closely resembles its classic predecessor that ceased production years ago. The "new" Cobra was originally offered with only a two-inch barrel. Colt added a 3-inch version this year which enhances shootability and real-world accuracy without sacrificing concealability.

Ruger's venerable .22 semiautomatic pistol no longer needs a rocket scientist to disassemble and assemble without paying painful attention to the owner's manual. The .22/.45 frame version is now available with a threaded barrel for use with a suppressor and in a variety of colors, including gold, purple, green, bronze and red.

There is currently quite a wide variety of compact 1911s on the market, but one of the most intriguing - and prac-

The Lifeguard pistol in .22 WRM. The ultimate in concealed carry pistols.



tical - is the new Springfield 911 in 9mm. Only slightly bigger than its .380 sibling, the 9mm 911 is one of the most compact, and shootable, 1911-type pistols on the market. Among the gun's many attributes are tritanium sights, a Hogue short re-set trigger, Hogue Thin Line grips and a broached steel barrel for enhanced accuracy and long life.


GLOCK has introduced the G43X and G48. Both feature a silver nPVD military-grade finish on their slides, front slide serrations, built-in beavertail, reversible magazine catch and a match-grade GLOCK Marksman Barrel. The G43X has a longer grip to accept a 10-round single stack magazine, two more than the standard G43. The 43X's extended magazine also gives the owner's pinky finger some place to go when gripping the gun, unlike the standard G43, which leaves the smallest of fingers looking for something to do. The Model 48 is a thinner, easier-to-carry version of the popular Model 19 and features a 10-round, single stack magazine.



GLOCK has added to its line of highly respected concealed carry line of pistols.

In a similar vein to the G43X and G48 is SIG's P365, the thinnest, double-stack magazine pistol currently on the market. The P365 is a striker fired pistol that can hold as many as 12 rounds of 9mm with an optional magazine. Like GLOCKS, the SIG has a textured-polymer grip module. The Nitron stainless steel slide resists corrosion and the XRAY3 Day/Night sights are exceptional.

Shorty's newest offerings range from traditional to exotic. Among the most exotic is the SIG Copperhead, a kind of latter-day, shoulder-stocked Mauser M96 "Broom Handle" pistol. Like the Mauser, the MX Copperhead is one unique pistol. The Copperhead bares 30 fangs of 9mm ammunition in its magazine, has a compact, pistol-size 3.5-inch barrel, a pivoting arm brace, copper-colored cerracone finish (Copper-colored Copperhead. Get it?), is only 14.5 inches in length and weighs a scant 4.5 pounds.

Check out the Copperhead and Shorty's amazing array of firearms at his West Allis shop. 


Stuart Wilke has written for On "Wisconsin Outdoors" since its inception over a decade ago. His work is focused on historical firearms, gun reviews and concealed carry firearms.

KIESOW, FROM PAGE 28


ic natural spawn. Kiesow ritually fishes the Sheboygan River and shares results on the OWO website, providing a wealth of knowledge when it comes to deciding to wade right in or stay indoors and tie flies.

Even during the peak of the big steelhead runs, changing colors and lures to find the right combination can make all the difference. A live spawn sac with a fluorescent bead tied above the hook turned the trick for us that morning. Line hissed through the chill of early spring as Lee's

rod bent double. Regazzi stumbled over the rocks for the net.

Shaking hands all around, we admired five pounds of silver before melting on into the rising sun. Steelhead fishing along the icy tributaries of Lake Michigan has a way of turning up the heat in a splashing hurry. 

John Luthens is a freelance writer from Grafton, Wisconsin, as well a printing press operator at Castle Pierce in Oshkosh. His first novel, Taconite Creek, is available on Amazon, or by contacting his publisher at www.cablepublishing.com




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Presents Firearms Info from Ron Stresing

RON STRESING

Trap Chat

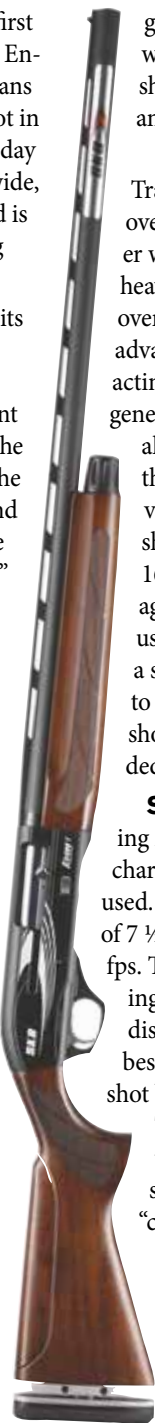
Join a summer league

Trap is by far the oldest of all the shotgun sports. By 1793 when the first articles on it were published in England, it was “well established as a means of sport.” The first organized trap shoot in the US took place in Ohio in 1831. Today trapshooting remains popular worldwide, is featured in two Olympic events, and is probably the most affordable shooting sport of all.

Even as the sport has evolved from its early English roots, some things have stayed the same. Twenty five shots are fired, five shots each, from five different positions, in a semi-circle in front of the house. For an average round of trap, the distance is 16 yards. Shooters often find a spot to hold on above the trap house as they call for a target or “bird.” “Pull” is the most often used command for the puller to release the target, but variations up to and including what sounds like yelling from a cattle drive can be heard. The best way to break the target is generally agreed to let it reach its apex, or high point in flight, then hold under (straight away) or swing in front of, pull the trigger, and follow through.

Summer trap shooting leagues generally start in late April or early May and run 20 weeks. The 20 weeks of shooting means 500 targets, so a shooter will need at least two, 10-box cases of shotgun shells, plus whatever shells needed for practice shooting. For shooters who don't reload, most of the “big box” sporting goods stores often run specials and rebates on cases of shells in spring.

Guns: Most serious trap shooters use 12 gauge dedicated trap singles or over/under shotguns made to withstand the rigors of the thousands of rounds shot for league and practice. Back when I started trapshooting in a league about 40 years ago, I tried using the same gun I duck hunted with. Two blown off ejectors later, I wised up,




Some shooters prefer semi-auto shotguns like the SKB model RS400 for absorption of significant recoil.

and bought an SKB Century I trap single. I later moved on to an over/under with an adjustable stock, and went on to shoot my personal best scores of 98 /100 and 99/100 with it.

Today SKB makes the Century III Trap single and dedicated 90TSS trap over/under. Some shooters like the lighter weight of a trap single. Others like the heavier, recoil absorbing weight of an over/under. An over/under also offers the advantage of the barrel that's not in use acting as a radiator to dissipate the heat generated. Shotguns with adjustable stocks allow the shooter to fine tune the fit of the gun to them. This was a BIG advantage for me, I know it helped me to shoot much improved scores for both 16 yard and handicap (added yardage) shooting. Yes, some shooters do use a semi-auto shotgun. If you do use a semi-auto, the use of a shell catcher to keep your empties from hitting other shooters is required. My advice, get the dedicated trap gun that fits you the best.

Shells: The ATA (Amateur Trapshooting Association) sets limits on the shot charge and velocity of shells that can be used. Most shooters rely on 1 1/8 ounces of 7 1/2 or 8 shot traveling from 1150 – 1200 fps. That's the basic load, but I suggest trying different brands and loads until you discover the combination that patterns best out of your trap gun. My over/under shot best with 1 ounce of 8 shot at 1200 fps.

Test on a patterning board, and out on the range on targets. Breaks on targets should be solid and not lots of single “chippy” breaks.

Summer league is a great time to fine tune your shooting, and enjoy some friendly competition. Who knows, you might even win a trophy. 

Ron Stresing has been an outdoor writer since 1996 and has had articles published in Midwest Outdoors, Fur-Fish-Game and Badger Sportsman magazines. He lives in South Milwaukee with his wife Donna.

SKB Shotguns' model HS300 will make a great turkey gun.



RON STRESING

Patterning Your Turkey Shotgun for Success

You've drawn your turkey tag, checked your gear, and practiced your calling until the neighbors complained. But what about your shotgun? Don't just assume where you point your shotgun is where your shot pattern is going to center. You need to send shotgun pellets downrange to make sure the pattern will deliver a lethal dose of pellets to the turkey's head and neck.

Point-of-Aim vs. Point-of-Impact:

Shotguns are not aiming weapons like rifles or pistols. They are made to deliver a pattern of pellets to a moving target, usually by swinging through and past the target, then pulling the trigger. Shotguns designed for this use lack a rear sight, unlike shotguns designed for deer hunting. Most shotguns are laser bore-sighted at the factory to align the barrel to a point of impact in line with where the bead is pointing. Some are fairly close, others not so much.

Shoot from a bench or solid rest and hold the stock in tight to your shoulder. Center your shotgun on your aim point and make a conscious effort to slowly pull the trigger. The bead on the end of the shotgun barrel will function as a front sight. The top of your receiver can be used as a rear sight. Settle the bead above the receiver and line it up on the target. If your pattern centers a little high, lower your aim by holding with less of the front bead exposed above the receiver. You can also raise your point of impact with a little “hold over” of the bead above the receiver. Right or left will require using “Kentucky windage” or holding off center to compensate.

Optical sights: Bore-sight your scope or optical sight before heading to the range. This will save a lot of time, effort, ammunition and frustration. As with any sight, make sure everything is securely tightened down, especially after shooting

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at the range. Adjust your crosshairs or aiming dot to the center of the shot pattern.

Choke tubes: That extra-full, ultra tight, constricting choke tube just may not be the best choice. Try several choke tubes, starting with Full, to see what gives you the best, consistent patterns at the ranges you are going to engage a turkey at. Patterns should be dense, but look for signs of trouble like pellets clumping up together or vertical stringing. Different loads, with different size pellets, will all pattern differently. The object is to find the right combination of ammunition and choke to optimize the number of pellets on target.

Turkey shot shells: Turkey loads run the gamut from plain lead pellets to copper or nickel plated pellets. My advice: before simply figuring "more is better," test several loads on the patterning board. Size 5 or 6 shot seems to work best at flowing through tight choke tubes. I suggest trying several loads with various payloads of shot and shot sizes. The pay-off will be a clean kill on a nice tom.

Sight-in using a paper plate with a center dot, fixed to a large piece of cardboard. Adjust your point-of-aim until you can get the approximate center of the pattern on the dot. After you get "dialed in," bring out a turkey head/neck target. This is when you can begin trying your gun at various ranges to determine your maximum effective range. You can use a laser rangefinder to judge yardage in the woods.

Range time is the only way to find the magic combination of choke and ammo that will work best out for your gun. Odds are you will only get one shot at that turkey, so you have to make that one shot your best one. 🦃

Ron Stresing has been an outdoor writer since 1996 and has had articles published in Midwest Outdoors, Fur-Fish-Game and Badger Sportsman magazines. He lives in South Milwaukee with his wife Donna.



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JERRY DAVIS

Clean Deer Rifles Now

Guns, if not already cleaned, should be sooner rather than later

Did you forget something at the close of the 2018 gun deer season? Many hunters forgot or have never given their deer rifle a once-over and cleaned it from muzzle to stock butt before stowing it away after deer hunting season. The 2019 season will be here before you know it. Now is the time to start the preparation for that opener. That begins with cleaning.

Adrian Alan, range manager at Vortex Optics in Barneveld and former Madison police officer knows from experience that the moment a hunter comes inside from the last day's hunt is the time to begin thinking about next year.

"Don't just put the rifle in a case, zip it up and leave it until next year," Alan said. "If the gun was exposed to moisture or it's coming in from the cold conditions, rust and problems can begin."

Safety first, even before the cleaning begins. Unload, remove or empty the magazine, double check the chamber to make sure it's all empty.



Bolt action deer rifles can be easily cleaned and should be at season's end and properly stored during humid weather.

Even if the rifle was not shot last season, wipe it down, Alan says. Better yet, clean the gun as though it had been shot, but don't overdo it. "Shooters can over-clean a gun," Alan said. "Carbon and copper in the barrel do not cause rust; moisture causes rust."

Begin by removing the bolt if it's a bolt ac-

tion gun and wipe the bolt down with cleaning solvent. Run several patches down the barrel, starting at the breach end, never the muzzle end, because the barrel crown could be damaged.

If the barrel has not been cleaned in a while or been shot through numerous times,

send a brush with solvent through the barrel, followed by wet patches and then dry patches. "The inside doesn't have to be white glove clean," Alan noted.

If the gun has been exposed to moisture, and the stock can be removed, lightly oil all the metal surfaces. Make sure the torque on the action is correct when putting the gun together again.

A light, all-in-one oil is okay, but do not oil the wood. Check the wood for cracks and other parts for wear, particularly the extractor.

Store the gun in an area not conducive to rusting, such as a gun safe if humidity won't build up, but not in a zipped case. Open air circulation is okay if a gun safe is not available. Think cool and dry, which usually does not mean a basement unless the humidity is controlled.

Scopes should be checked; use compressed air or a soft brush to dust off the lenses followed by a soft microfiber cloth

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Turkey Hunting

Turkey season is fast approaching! Come in and check out the latest and greatest product in the sport, Federal TSS turkey loads at MJ Gunsmithing.

TSS is a heavy shot tungsten pellet that packs a punch. The advantage of these loads is their ability to increase pellet count on target and still hold the same energy as your standard lead shotshells. These are available in #7s and #9s. Number 9s for turkeys may not seem right, but #9 in TSS carries the same energy as #5s in lead, while increasing your pellet count substantially.

For example, one ounce of #5 lead will deliver 172 pellets, while #9 TSS will deliver 362! That means denser patterns, which is a huge advantage. Couple this with the new TSS chokes from Carlson, and you have yourself a DEADLY combination!

Get in while it's here because this hot new product is not always in stock. When we have it, it goes FAST!

Thank you, and good luck this season from MJ Gunsmithing. 

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fish for you or, if you're a do-it-yourself type like I am, there's a well-equipped, heated fish cleaning facility at the ramp.


Lake of the Woods is a big body of water over 70 miles across with over 14,000 islands, so in spite of there being hundreds of shacks within view, we never felt crowded. The limit for walleye/sauger at the time of our trip was eight fish, with no more than four being walleye. There is no minimum size limit, but fish from 19 ½ to 28 inches may not be kept. One trophy fish over 28 inches is permitted.

While Chuck and Bob were somewhat disappointed in the fishing since the bite wasn't as fast and furious as it was on their previous trip, Lard and I thought it was great. During our 2 ½ days of fishing, we probably caught over a hundred fish, several in the protected slot. In addition to the walleye/saugers, we landed one whitefish, several eelpout, a handful of perch and a couple tullibee. Cost for three days lodging and 2 ½ days fishing was about \$450/person.

So if you're looking for a winter get-



Mark Krueger proudly displays the first fish of our Lake of the Woods excursion.

away to wet a line and bend a rod, I'd give Arnesen's Rocky Point Resort two thumbs up. Comfortable accommodations, friendly folks, and lots of fish. Sometimes it's good to have friends in LOW places. Just sayin' 

Dan Moericke fishes and hunts in the Northwoods, occasionally actually catching a fish and tagging a buck. He had a cane pole put in his hands at the age of three and has relished every hook set since. He is fortunate to have an understanding wife and a group of buddies to share his days afield. On most days, he is able to remember where he parked his vehicle.

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after a breath of moist air. Cover the glass with lens caps.

Trigger mechanisms are usually more complicated to take apart and clean and are best left to a gunsmith.

Check the gun periodically during the off season for rust or dust build up. If caught soon enough, very, very fine steel wool with a drop of oil can usually take the rust off.

"The time goes by quickly during the off season, so checking periodically and not

leaving major problems go until the last minute before pre-season sighting works best," Alan said.

Next October attend a supervised sighting session to catch hidden problems.

A properly working gun can help make a season successful. 

Jerry Davis, a Wisconsin native, retired from university biology teaching and now lives in rural Iowa County. He applies arts and sciences to writing and enjoying Wisconsin's outdoors. Contact him at sivadjam@mhtc.net.



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