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On Wisconsin Outdoors



PHOTO BY GARY GREENE

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All Canada Show

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Mark your Calendars! The All Canada Show is set to visit the Midwest in the following cities in January of 2020:

MILWAUKEE: January 3rd-5th – Milwaukee County Sports Complex, Franklin, Wisconsin.

CHICAGO: January 9th-12th – Pheasant Run Resort, St. Charles, Illinois.

GREEN BAY: January 16th-19th – Radisson Hotel and Conference Center, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

The All Canada Show has brought you fishing and hunting lodges from across more than seven Canadian provinces for the past 37 years. It is the largest gathering of Canadian lodges, camps, outfitters, and resorts in the United States. The show gives you - the show guest - an opportunity to research and book a fishing, hunting, canoeing or outdoor adventure at these great lodges. "Canada's Best Fishing and Hunting Destinations!"

Now is the time for YOU to get back to Canada in 2020! Come research our lodges, book your trip ... then live the adventure this summer. Be the Trip Leader in 2020 and reconnect with family, friends, kids, or grandparents in a fishing or hunting trip north of the border. Whether you are going this upcoming summer or starting to plan for summers ahead get [HERE](#) and do your research! We gather many great lodges in one location for you to meet face-



to-face with owners and ask all your questions. Compare prices, trip details, amenities, and more.

What type of trip will you be booking? Driving directly into your cabin, or float planeing across the Canadian wilderness to a remote lodge or outpost? We have it. Do it yourself "Housekeeping" plan or kick back and have meals prepared for you with your own personal guide on an American plan? We have it. Are you cash strapped or do you have cash overflowing your pockets? Budgets? No problem. Fishing and hunting in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Northwest Territories, the Yukon and more you will find it at the All Canada Show.

Need help at the show or have questions? Stop at the "Canada Questions" area in the back of the show and ask our show Pro Staff. With over 100 Canadian trips



under their belts, they can certainly help any novice to experienced traveler. Questions about which lodges are at the show, packing lists, border crossing, forms, etc.? Name it and they will help.

Now that we have determined this is the place to be, here are some huge perks for attending the 2020 All Canada Show.

ADDITIONAL SHOW ATTRACTIONS: 2020 Grand Prize:

- With a purchase of a show ticket you can become qualified to win our 2020 Grand Prize – an American plan Fly-in fishing trip for two to Gangler's North Seal River Lodge in Northern Manitoba!

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



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2020 DATES & LOCATIONS				
PADUCAH, KY 1 ST ANNUAL January 17 TH -19 TH , 2020 Paducah - McCracken County Convention & Expo Center	LANSING, MI 34 TH ANNUAL March 13 TH -15 TH , 2020 The Lansing Center	COLUMBUS, OH 28 TH ANNUAL March 20 TH -22 ND , 2020 Ohio Expo Center (State Fairgrounds)	MADISON, WI 36 TH ANNUAL April 3 RD -5 TH , 2020 Alliant Energy Center	LAKELAND, FL 17 TH ANNUAL July 24 TH -26 TH , 2020 Lakeland Center RP Funding Center



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PHIL SCHWEIK

72 Bridge

November puddle holds walleye treasure

The last week of November still rekindles a welcome memory burned in my mind for more reasons than just the buck tag that I had filled in the central Wisconsin forests near Wausau. Ice fishing after the deer hunt was still on the horizon; any hardwater that had formed was not yet safe enough even for foot travel. I was fishing for something to do, and I would soon be rewarded beyond my wildest dreams.

Open water under a bridge on my way home from deer camp began to call me, taunt me actually. Finally, I listened to the message meant for an outdoorsman out of games to play, grabbed my wife Rhonda, a couple of rods and a handful of lead-head jigs and headed out. The local bait shop filled our fathead minnow needs, and we drove down to that bridge. One open pool of water no more than 15 yards across would be our target.

I must have stood there a little too long staring down at the water and wondering if we were going to catch anything. I still remember how Rhonda snapped me out of the trance. "Are you going to just stand there or are we going to fish?" she asked.

Within minutes, I had baited her rod and then mine and we both flipped a fathead into the dark water under the bridge. I am an optimist on the water, but the unwelcome thought of that moment was that this was most likely going

to be a waste of time...if any time on the water can be a waste. But at least we were fishing.

When I instinctively set the hook on the first, almost immediate strike, I could see Rhonda setting the hook too. We not only exchanged the look of anglers experiencing the welcome double, both of the fish were nice walleyes. I remember too the laughter as we both swung our fish up on the bank.

That one beautiful afternoon just looking for something to do we hooked into fish after fish. Time on the water, or next to it, could not have been better. We fell into a walleye treasure that day and although many of the fish were not keepers, a good number were and the action was just the prescribed medicine for a hunter booted from the treestand early.

I think about that afternoon often. I replay in my mind the afternoon of walleye fishing when most of Wisconsin was still on stand. It seems surreal. If I had not seen that single splash of open water under the bridge, I never would have gone back or found the spot.

I have returned to the bridge many times over the years; it still produces fish and it is still among my favorite late season walleye honey holes. Rhonda and I have christened that beautiful structure the "72 Bridge"; a reminder of the number of walleyes that we caught one November



Rhonda Schweik knows that walleye fishing with super guide husband Phil often has a big payoff.

afternoon through a tiny open water puddle.

When your deer season ends but ice fishing remains somewhere around the corner, take heart. Another hunt every bit as satisfying might be waiting somewhere out there in the shadows. 🐟

Phil is the owner of Hooksetters Guide Service in central Wisconsin and Hookset Adventures in Eagle River, Wisconsin, which keeps him on the water over 200 days a year. Phil lives in Mosinee, Wisconsin, and can be reached at pschweik@dwave.net, on his website: hooksetters.biz or hooksetadventures.com, at 715.693.5843 or on Facebook at Phil Schweik.

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MIKE YURK

Oldies Still Goodies

Yesterday's ice jigs

mean proven success

Ice fishing has seen an incredible explosion of technology during the last fifty years. But even with all the new equipment and gadgets, some of the old stuff is still producing today as good as ever. This is the case when it comes to ice jigs.

Using ice jigs has been a mainstay for decades for catching walleyes and saugers through the ice. I am astounded by how many different ice jig varieties and colors are now available to fishermen. It is easy to forget that older baits still catch fish. Some of the old ice jigs are still producing big catches of walleyes and saugers and are just as good as the newer baits. Here are two my all-time favorite old ice jigs:

THE SWEDISH PIMPLE

Perhaps the oldest ice jig still on the market today is the Swedish Pimple. It has been around for over a hundred years in Sweden where it originated and gave the jig its name. It has been marketed by the Bay de Noc Lure Company for decades.

As a young ice fisherman in the 1960s, I fished Lake Winnebago with my grandfather. He used only one ice jig and it was the Swedish Pimple in gold.

The Swedish Pimple now comes in four sizes from 1/10th to 1/2 ounce sizes in thirteen colors. Although it has been around for a century, it still is a very productive ice jig and should be in every ice fisherman's arsenal.

THE JIGGING RAP

About fifty years ago, I was first introduced to the Jigging Rap by Rapala. The first time I used it, I fished two jig rods baited with a silver and gold Jigging Rap. That afternoon I caught a mixture of perch, crappies and walleyes. The Jigging Rap has been one of my favorite jigs ever since.

Although I used only two colors to start to start with, the Jigging Rap does come in thirteen colors and five sizes. For most of my ice fishing today, I use either the W3 (3/16th ounce) and W5 (5/16th ounce) for walleyes. My favorite colors are still silver and gold as well as perch, glow tiger and gold red colors.

HOW TO FISH AN ICE JIG


Fishing an ice jig is easy. Add a minnow to the jig and drop it to the bottom. Lift it



Damien Aguilar, the author's son-in-law, shows off a walleye caught with one of the old jigs.

two or three inches off the bottom, then rip it upwards about a foot and let it free fall back. Most of the time fish will hit it on the uplift, but keep an eye on it as it falls, and if you see a bump in the line, set the hook.

From time to time, allow the jig to fall to the bottom. There will be a little spurt of sediment from the bottom as it hits, and many times a fish will look at it as a minnow feeding on the bottom.

Although these ice jigs are made for ice fishing, they are effective in the larger sizes and heavier weights for walleyes and sauger on rivers in late fall. Wisconsin is blessed with great fishing for walleyes and sauger in rivers like the Wolf, Fox, Wisconsin and Mississippi. In the fall, the Swedish Pimple and Jigging Raps can be counted on to catch walleyes and sauger just as much on open water as while ice fishing. 

Mike Yurk has been writing about Wisconsin outdoors for over 50 years. His stories have appeared in numerous newspapers and magazines. He has published 12 books on the outdoors which are available on Amazon. 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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JIM ONARHEIM

To the Future of Fishing

Youth Conservation Alliance's 9th Annual Musky Hunt

The Youth Conservation Alliance (YCA) is a charitable organization that focuses on teaching children about the environment through fishing and hunting. According to its founder and chair Kevin Bushnick, "We do this not only to ensure the future of these family-oriented sports, but also to provide kids with a tremendous opportunity for environmental education outside of the classroom." He added that "This event provides parents with an opportunity like no other to connect with their children. This is the most valuable aspect of what we do during this program and it's very powerful."

One of the YCA's main events is the annual Musky Hunt on Moose Lake, which is led by Kevin. The lake, located just east of Hayward, is known for being home to a great many musky. I worked with Kevin on the inaugural Musky Hunt nine years ago. Knowing that children are

the future of hunting and fishing, Kevin put a spotlight on musky fishing. After all, who doesn't want to catch a big fish? Musky are at the top of the freshwater food chain and a sure bet to attract young anglers.

From its inception, Kevin wanted the Musky Hunt to be an educational experience. He accomplished his goal by teaming up with good friend and university biology professor Michelle Groves. Michelle brought a great amount of fascinating information that helped young anglers understand the life cycle of fish and the ecosystem of a lake.

The first Musky Hunt was based at Mystic Moose Resort, which my wife and I owned at the time. Approximately 20 kids from southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois area participated. Since then, the event has grown to as many as 60 kids between the ages of six and 18. This year we had 52 kids involved, which

took place from September 19 - 21. They caught and released 50 muskies plus many bass and walleyes. Each child was accompanied by a parent or one of many Volunteer Musky Guides.

Michelle spent several hours with the young attendees discussing the connections between water, land and fish. She noted how catching fish is one way that scientists can determine a healthy ecosystem. Fish are bioindicators, she explained, especially the musky because it is at the top of the food chain.

Each youngster spent many hours trying to catch a musky and most were successful. Whether successful or not, they all learned a lot and had fun.

Muskie Grand Champion this year was Char Gaddy, age 10 from Bloomington Illinois. She caught nine Muskies over the course of the event. Char caught Muskies totaling 251 inches. Wow!

Big Fish Champ for the second year in a row is Calib Lindemulder, age 11 from Villa Park, Illinois. She caught this 41 1/2 inch beauty.

One of our event goals is simply getting kids to catch their first Muskie. Cale Scholer, age 12, from Lake in the Hills, Illinois accomplished just that.

The 10th anniversary Musky Hunt is now in the planning stages for next year. I'm looking forward to it. www.theyca.org

Jim Onarheim is a Board of Director member for the Hayward Lakes Visitor and Convention Bureau and has a weekly article that he writes for the Sawyer County Record newspaper. He also is a previous resort owner in Hayward, WI.



First Time Muskie Catch for 12-year-old Cale Scholer from Lake In The Hills, IL



Char Gaddy, 250+ inches of Muskies. 9 Caught total. Char from Bloomington, IL



Calib Lindemulder - 41.5in Big Fish Winner!

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JERRY KIESOW

Fly-Fishing in Wisconsin

The White Marabou Streamer-Part II

This article is a followup regarding the modified White Marabou spinner that I introduced in the May/June issue of On Wisconsin Outdoors. In this edition, I will describe its testing and performance.

Our youngest daughter, who lives on Lake of the Ozarks in Missouri, was the inspiration behind the White Marabou. She asked me to tie her a few flies to give to her money management clients. One of the flies was the Marabou Streamer. I revised it slightly by tying it on a Mustad # 4 red Aberdeen hook (one size larger than the original, which was not colored either).

After I tied them for her, and a few for myself, I needed to make sure they worked. I tried them out on the Lake of the Ozarks crappies, which is what they were originally designed to catch.

I am pleased to report that the new White Marabou worked very well. I caught more crappies with it than all of the other anglers with us combined - and they used live minnows fished on canepoles with bobbers and cast jigs, retrieving them slowly from the boat dock. I, on the other hand, could wade because the water was



The author's modified White Marabou streamer caught crappie, smallmouth.

drawn down and some of the lake bottom was exposed.

I cast the streamer toward the boat dock, where crappies were thought to be "sitting." I allowed the streamer to sink a bit, then retrieved it slowly in small, short, jerks, or used a steady retrieve. There was no best way. They "fed" on either retrieve. The fly even fooled a few small largemouth bass and bluegills, which were released.

The crappies I caught measured up to



The modified White Marabou streamer passes the test.

13-plus inches and were thick enough through the back to make great filets. We deep-fat fried them and rolled them into a special breadcrumb found only in Missouri. They made for good eating.

Having passed the initial test, the modified Marabou had to pass the Wisconsin acid test. I started by casting it in the Milwaukee River during the cool spring and high waters. Happily it did catch fish - smallmouth bass - but nothing of decent size.

I also tested the White Marabou on the Peshtigo River, where we have a cabin and I do most of my fishing. I cast it into the river and retrieved it by making it look and act like a wounded minnow. It did catch fish - crappies. They weren't as big

as the ones caught in the Ozarks earlier in the year, but I did catch enough over eight inches for a fresh fish fry.

Since it has proven to be a success, I will continue working with the modified White Marabou. I may even try it on salmon and steelhead.

See you in the river.

Keep a good thought!

Jerry

Editor's note: Jerry enjoys all aspects of the outdoors and shares them in many ways 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/or great gifts. They are available for purchase at Orange Hat Publishing, Amazon, and his website: www.jerrykiesowoc.com. Be sure to check his site out often to follow his updates and endeavors - which he does not always tell you about.

ALL CANADA, FROM PAGE 3

Float Plane Simulator:

- Come sit inside our float plane simulator, a virtual reality trip across Northwest Ontario in a 1940s Otter float plane. This five-minute flight will give you the real feel of float planeing into the Canadian Wilderness!

You Book It We Buy It:

- Book that Canadian fishing or hunting adventure at the show and you will qualify for a chance to have your trip paid for by the All Canada Show! (Up to a \$2,000.00 value).

Opening Night is Dardevil Night:

- ALL guests will receive a 2020 All Canada Show Dardevil collector lure the first night of the show. (Milwaukee - Jan. 3rd, Chicago - Jan. 9th, Green Bay - Jan. 16th) Seminars, Shore Lunch, Main Stage Video, Maps, and so much more!
- Kids 17 and under are FREE
- Adults are \$12.00 (Discounted tickets online at www.AllCanada.com)
- Veterans are FREE on Sunday of any Show

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

Please take a child into the outdoors fishing and or hunting.



On The Cover

Nate Greene and Nyjer enjoy a late, and successful, 2018 duck hunt in southeast Wisconsin with Nate's father. In fond memory of OWO writer Gary Greene.

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DAVE DUWE

Fall Feeding Frenzy

Shallow Perch in cooling waters

The days are shorter and there's a distinct nip in the air that can only mean one thing; winter is closing in on Wisconsin. This change also signifies a change in the fishing patterns as the fish move from their summer patterns to their pre-winter staging areas, typically going shallower. The yellow perch are no exception, and they will migrate from the main lake basin to the shallows. Like most fish this time of year, they are actively feeding.

The yellow perch feed by sight, so the daylight hours are the best time to catch them. Unlike most fish, perch are not affected by the weather as much, so don't let a cold front get you down.

In fall, I will look for the perch in a depth range of 8 - 12 feet of water. The key for me is finding a location in a lake that has hard bottom (sand/rock) with scattered weeds in close proximity to an area of soft bottom (muck). Finding areas of bait fish is also very helpful.

Once I locate the fish, I always anchor or

use the spot lock feature on my Minn-Kota trolling motor. The yellow perch tend to be in schools, so if you find one, you should find many. Move on if you aren't finding decent numbers. As a side note, perch are typically close to bottom, so anchoring will allow you to present the bait much more effectively.

Perch can be subtle biters, so a light rod is essential. I choose a slip-bobber rig. I will use a Thill bobber with a plain hook or an ice jig. Because perch are light biters, try using the smallest bobber you can; it will help you detect more bites. My preferred bait in November has always been small fat head minnows. By using minnows, you tend to catch bigger fish and prevent the small perch from nibbling your bait off. Don't be afraid of getting some bigger minnows. I have had great success on small golden shiners and caught some nice-sized fish.

When setting the slip-bobber, I will start positioning the bait 6 inches to 1


foot off bottom. The distance off bottom is dictated a lot of the time on how thick the submerged weeds are. When on an active school of fish, you need to get your bait into the water quickly, so you can catch another fish. Action can be one after another until the school moves. If fat head minnows aren't working, a good alternative would be leaf worms.

With the perch located in some of the shallowest water they will live in all year, shore anglers will also have an opportunity for success. The same approach can be used as if you were in a boat. The use of slip-bobbers will aid in longer casts getting

Big Lake Geneva
Yellow Perch



you away from the thicker weed pockets.

Fall is my favorite time of year to fish: actively feeding fish, fall colors, and low boat traffic. The yellow perch are some of the best eating as well. Enjoy every time on the water. Winter is coming soon. 

Dave Duwe is the owner of Dave Duwe's Guide Service, featuring the lakes of Walworth County. Dave has been guiding for over 25 years and is one SE Wisconsin's best multi-species guides. For more information, call 262-728-8063 or www.fishdelavanlake.com

Explore Wisconsin



SPOTLIGHT | HAYWARD

Snowmobile friendly community is waiting for you



The Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs (AWSC) formally announced nine Wisconsin Communities as a "Snowmobile Friendly Community" at their annual spring convention in Green Bay. The City of Hayward and Sawyer County were two of the nine awardees of the new program.

The City of Hayward and Sawyer County achieved their Snowmobile Friendly status by submitting a detailed, 21-page application describing how they and their snowmobile clubs advocate for safe and responsible snowmobiling in their areas. All SFC winners are awarded reflective, high visibility, 24' x 26' highway signs to let all visitors know they are entering a "Snowmobile Friendly Community."

Although created by the AWSC, the Snowmobile Friendly Community (SFC) Program partnered with the Wisconsin Department of Tourism to ensure the statewide SFC Evaluation Panel included a tourism professional to ensure the program accurately identified which communities and snowmobile clubs were "best" at welcoming, preserving, and providing snowmobile access, support, and services for snowmobilers. The SFC Award/Designation lasts for four years and communities may reapply for subsequent awards at the end of their term.

The Sawyer County Snowmobile and ATV Alliance is an organization made up of 10 clubs, both snowmobile and ATV, located throughout Sawyer County with a primary purpose of developing and maintaining safe trails. With over 600 miles of well-groomed and marked trails, the Sawyer County Snowmobile and ATV alliance is the largest organization of this type in the country and is the world's largest single owner of grooming equipment. This combined with the natural beauty our area has to offer makes Sawyer County a favorite for snowmobiling enthusiasts.

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PAULA CARLTON

Back to Basics

What these 3 vital factors mean for your health

Over the years at your annual check-ups, chances are the doctor, nurse or assistant wrote down your “vital signs” in your chart.

The next time you go, here are three factors you should focus on:

Your blood pressure

Your height and weight in order to calculate your body mass index or “BMI” (a measure of body fat based on height and weight)

Whether you use tobacco

These three vital signs are closely linked to four of the top five health conditions treated in the U.S.: diabetes, heart disease, asthma and hypertension (high blood pressure). When you’re outside of the

“healthy ranges” for blood pressure or BMI, you’re put at greater risk for these potentially life-threatening conditions. And smoking – even occasionally – increases your risks.

Knowing about these vital signs and taking steps to improve them can have a big impact on your health. Did you know:

Lowering your blood pressure reduces your chances of heart attack, stroke, chronic heart failure and kidney disease. Hypertension was listed as a primary or contributing cause of death in about 348,102 of the more than 2.4 million U.S. deaths in 2009.

Getting your weight under control can improve or eliminate a host of conditions

related to obesity: coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, type 2 diabetes, cancer, osteoarthritis, reproductive problems and even gallstones. (In one study, overweight people who increased physical activity to 150 minutes of exercise per week and had a five to seven percent weight loss reduced their risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 58 percent.)

Quitting smoking can lower your risk of: heart disease, stroke, cancer (all cancers, not just lung cancer), diabetes, emphysema and chronic bronchitis, cataracts, gum disease, reproductive problems, rheumatoid arthritis and more.

Vital sign guidelines


Your blood pressure should be less than



140/90, and ideally less than 120/80.

Your BMI should be between 18.5 and 24.9. Anything over 25 is considered overweight and 30 or more is considered obese.

If you use tobacco, talk to your doctor.

Keeping an eye on these three vital signs can help you prevent many serious illnesses or diseases. The key is to stay within healthy ranges. If your vitals aren’t where they should be, ask your provider what you can do to get them in shape. 

Paula Carlton is a nurse practitioner at Aurora Health Center in West Bend, Wis.

BY JOHN LUTHENS

Cabin Dreams

Memories built, tested, survive the ages

Cabins have architecture and settings as diverse as Wisconsin’s terrain, but they all have a common bond: Cabins are built on dreams, and they are designed to collect memories that drift through the years like wood smoke.

Scott Knoblock and his father set out from their Oshkosh home to stake their dream on 20 acres along U.S. Highway 8 near Tripoli, Wisconsin. Their cabin was meant to bloom for generations. Memories and stories weren’t yet smoke. They were just beginning to kindle.

“My grandfather found the land. He first came to Oneida County hunting for deer in the 1950s,” said Knoblock. Highway 8 was only a gravel road back then . . . He fell in love with the wildness. He never stopped talking about it.”

They built the cabin with knotty pine and windows looking out on pine trees and bird feeders. They filled the walls with wildlife mounts and relics found on their land. Their cabin dream had taken root, and the memories seemed poised to stretch for endless years like the forest surrounding them.

“It was August, 2004,” said Knoblock. “The entire family built an outdoor-themed float in the cabin yard for the local



“Cabin Dreams” An original, unsigned chalk drawing found in an abandoned cabin near the Chequamegon National Forest.

fireman’s picnic parade, and my dad pulled it with his tractor. We won first place, and the cabin was lit with cheer for the rest of the weekend. It’s a cabin memory that I’ll never forget.”

The happiest of times turned into the worst when Knoblock’s father was killed two weeks later in a tragic accident, and

it took Scott a long while to come to grips with the thought that his father would never again tromp through the cabin door. “I thought about selling. It was meant to be for both of us. The sadness of not seeing him in that setting anymore was almost unbearable.”

His father’s cabin journals helped keep

the dream intact, a record of every day that Scott and his dad had spent together hunting and exploring. And although it still brings tears to his eyes, the diary entries showed him that his father’s spirit would forever be alive in the forested landscape they had shared.

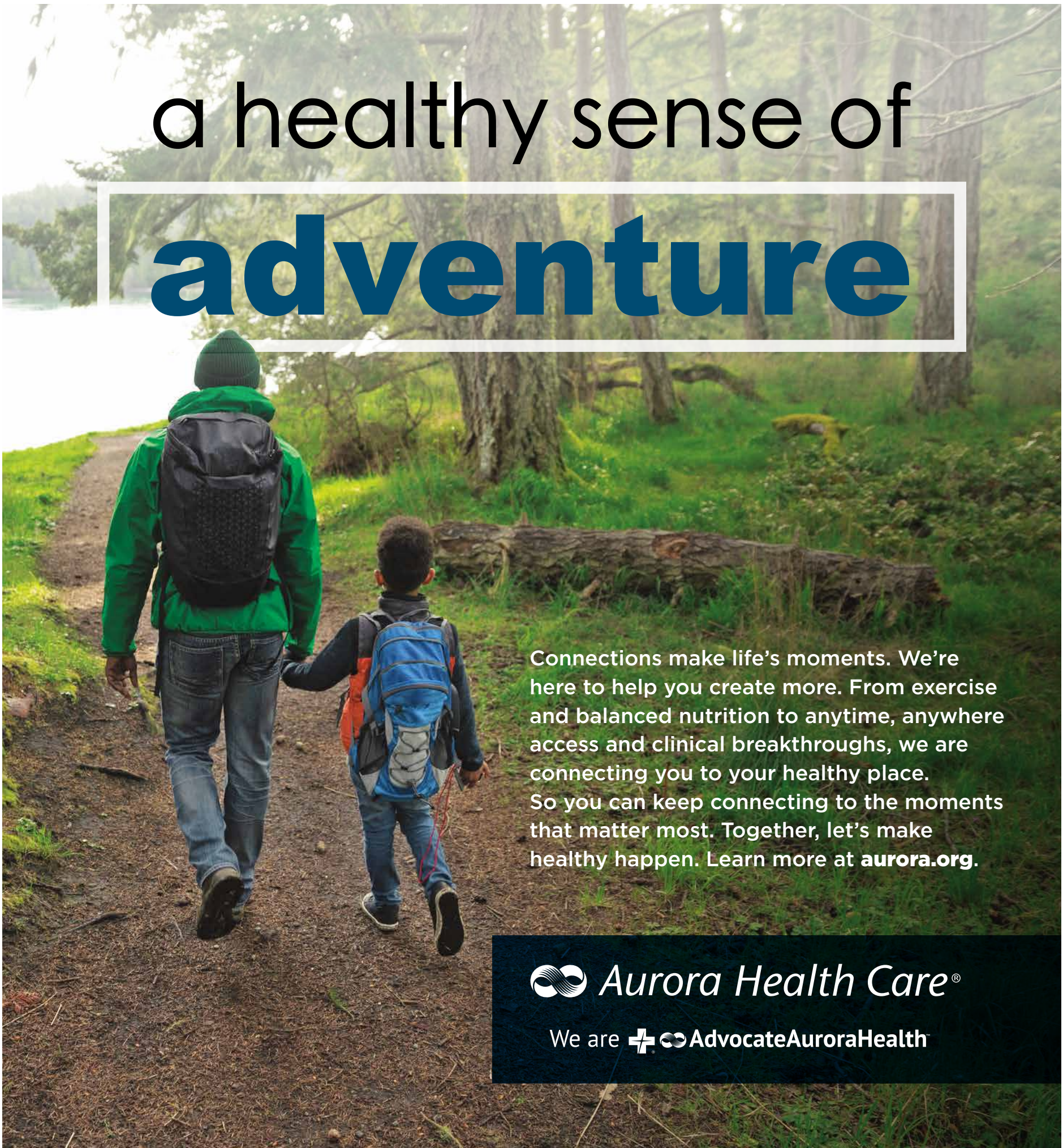
Knoblock was coyote hunting in January of 2007 when his cabin dreams were again tested. An ember lit through a crack in the fireplace chimney one night and smoldered in the insulation. It was 24 below zero when he climbed out of the cabin window and stood in the snow in shorts as the cabin burned down in front of him. His resolve was again tested.

“I lost all of the deer mounts and photographs, along with a bearskin rug from my dad’s bear.” A cabin that he and his father had built from the ground up was gone. Shivering in the frosted air, it took everything in his soul to search for the true meaning of the cabin. He came to realize that a cabin was measured by far more than a simple structure.

“The oaks that we’d planted were still standing,” said Knoblock. “I knew they would still be growing and feeding the wildlife long after I was gone. And my

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

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TOM CARPENTER

Badger Birds Northern Cardinal

A male cardinal makes a fine sight
any season of the year – bold and
handsome in his feathered coat
of resplendent red with black mask and
throat, topped off with a pronounced
crest. He looks especially striking next to
a backdrop of fresh white snow in winter,
silhouetted against a new-green thicket in
spring, or framed against a clear blue sky
any time of year.

Don't ignore the subtle beauty of the
female cardinal in her understated but
elegant plumage of tan, gray, cream and
olive, all washed with rosy red.

A cardinal's song – the male's familiar
*whit-whit-whit what-cheer, what-cheer,
what-cheer* – is a real spirit-lifter on any
clear day, but especially so in the depths of
winter. Believe it or not, the song then is a
harbinger of spring, as the male announces
his territory.

In a rarity in the songbird world, female
cardinals sing too, when on the nest,
probably to call for food from the male.


Cardinals are confirmed residents of
brushy places and dense thickets, so that's
where to look for them. Listen for the
short, crisp chip calls that cardinals make



as they travel and feed along.


On the other hand, there's nothing a
male cardinal likes better than singing
from the treetops! The birds are actually
very territorial, and the beautiful song is
actually a warning to other cardinals that
this spot is taken.

Attract cardinals with black oil
sunflower seed. Cardinals like solid
footing, so offer seed on a platform feeder,
or in a hanging feeder with a tray attached.
Safflower is good seed option too. If you
have brushy places and margins in your
yard or on your land, leave them intact
as cardinal habitat. Trim old brush to
reinvigorate it with new shoots.

Did you know that cardinals used to
migrate south in winter? But now, most
birds are residents across their range,
which has steadily advanced northward.
Logging and other land disturbance
creates brushy habitat the birds prefer,
and birdfeeding has also helped cardinals
expand their year-round range. 

LUTHENS, FROM PAGE 12

father's deer stand that I couldn't bring
myself to remove. It had fallen into
disrepair, but every year it became more
and more like a wild part of the land itself.
My grandfather's deer stories, the laughter
of my children when we were building
that parade float in the yard. The building
might have been gone, but the cabin itself
was still alive."

Memories and dreams; invariably, no
matter where they stand or what they look
like, it seems that all cabins are built on
these truest of foundations. 

John Luthens is a freelance writer and outdoor
journalist from Grafton, Wisconsin. His first novel,
Taconite Creek, is available on Amazon or at
www.cablepublishing.com, or by contacting the
author at Luthens@hotmail.com



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LEE GATZKE

Dodging a Bullet

Patriarch travels perilous road to deer camp paradise

Waking up at 5 AM opening morning of gun deer season is greeted with high hopes and expectations by everyone in our hunting party. Prior intelligence gathering has revealed some nice bucks are available and each hunter in camp has a game plan to cross paths with one. One of the seven hunters in camp had already accomplished his goal just by being there. Tom, the patriarch of this group, had been told by his doctor, 11 months prior, that he had stage four kidney cancer and had six months to live. An operation and a series of treatments with an immunotherapy drug led to him being cancer-free within eight months of his original diagnosis. Cutting edge medical treatment allowed him to “dodge a bullet.” Having Tom at camp lifted everyone’s spirits, especially since we are all family.

Opening morning, no shots were fired by our group, but that changed by late afternoon. A series of shots rang out from a valley where Tom and two of his sons were on stands. It sounded to me like the shots came from a .30-30. Tom has been a loyal .30-30 shooter for decades, and in our camp he is nick-named “Thirty-Thirty” to differentiate him from a nephew with the same given name who goes by the nickname of “Two-Seventy.” Chances were good that “Thirty-Thirty” would have a story to tell when we all



Tom Gatzke's opening weekend bucks.

gathered back at camp that evening.

When it comes to telling a story of Thirty-Thirty knows how to spin one. His recounting of how he downed the “big one” had us all in stitches. Five guys gladly tied a long rope to the mature nine pointer and dragged him uphill the half-mile back to camp. In a lifetime of deer hunting, it was the heaviest buck Tom had ever shot. No one had to mention the fact that this guy, who was just fortunate to be in camp, had beat the odds and downed a great buck to

boot. We all felt it. Justice was his and the world was right. Times like this emphasize that hunting is so much more than what occupies the meat pole.

The next day, Sunday, everyone headed out to take stands prior to first light. Again, things were quiet for our group until late afternoon. Around three 3:45 PM, a rifle barked twice. It had a familiar ring. It turned out Tom had taken a stand in a tree line bordering a picked bean field in a place that just felt right to him. An hour and a half into his post, a nice eight point entered the field ninety yards away. Both of his shots hit the boiler room. Tom commented that downing this buck made for “his best two days of shooting bucks ever.” Not his best two days of hunting ever mind you, because when you look back at all the days put in at deer camp, they’re all good. Especially when your doctor tells you that you’ll never see another one. 🍷

Lee Gatzke is co-owner of NextBuk Outdoors, producers of tactical hunting videos. In grade school, Lee Gatzke is co-owner of NextBuk Outdoors, producers of tactical hunting videos. In grade school he chased rabbits with his homemade bow and arrows, which lead to a passion for hunting bigger game all over the Midwest and western states. In between hunting seasons Lee is usually scouting for his next buck.

DENNY MURAWSKA

Ghosts of Deer Seasons Past

Treestand stories, secrets of the hunt touch writer's imagination

I am guilty of not having spent my many seasons of hunting whitetail rigorously haunting the woods and fields in search of that perfect spot to place a permanent stand. Rather, I have often allowed hunters of days gone by to silently point out where to stake my claim.

Regardless of the time of year, finding an old stand fills me with the kind of nostalgia one experiences when looking at an old, dilapidated barn or abandoned home starkly silhouetted against the horizon. It causes me to pause and take in the spirit of the place. Who was the person that hunted here? Why this spot? Is the hunter still alive, or passed on? The feeling can, at times, be eerie. In the fading light, it is not difficult to imagine a ghostly form sitting watchfully in the dilapidated structure, surveying the



The hunter remains forgotten by all but a few.

woods below for the slightest twitch of an ear or tail. In my mind’s eye, the spirit hunter chuckles to himself from time to time at the spiraling of squirrels chattering

while pursuing each other around a tree trunk, and admiring the colorful bluejays as they gather acorns and alert others with raucous calls.

Whatever the case may be, I am not so very far removed from my ephemeral vision. Our goals were the same. Times were different, I suspect better in many ways, but here we pause, in some lucid dream connecting past and present. Some of the ancient stands still show a degree of sound craftsmanship. Others remain a mere couple of two-by-fours hanging by the rusted remnants of nails. Some are so precarious, I wonder how anyone got up into them, let alone sat on with any degree of comfort or safety.

I have been musing about putting

together a calendar of iconic, old stands for those souls who, like me, pause in some reverence to the faded splendor of these artifacts. I have seen similar yearly planners put together with photos of old barns, covered bridges, and other vestiges of your past and heritage. I would love to edit such a production, and share the special spots that might resonate with this story. Please, feel free to connect with me by emailing to submissions@onwisconsinoutdoors.com.

This year, be sure to pay homage to the ghosts of tree stands past. 🍷

Denny Murawski has been a contributor to the wacky UP Magazine, Wishigan, Verse Wisconsin, and The Pulse. His church is the pine cathedral that surrounds him at his home near Black River Falls.



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JOHN CLER

Keeping Deer Inventory Using trail cameras and mock scrapes

Anyone serious about hunting deer knows that deer rely heavily on their sense of smell, or olfactory sense, to detect and evade danger. Research suggests that a deer's sense of smell may be ten thousand times better than our own at detecting odors. This olfactory superiority is due to a vastly larger number of scent receptors in a deer's nose and a brain that devotes a greater portion to the sense of smell.

Deer also use their olfactory sense to communicate and locate members of their own species. Deer have glands between their toes (interdigital glands), at two locations on their rear legs (tarsal and metatarsal glands), on their forehead (forehead gland) and in front of their eyes (pre-orbital glands). These glands are all used to communicate messages to other members of the species.

Deer scrapes are scent posts produced by bucks to attract does for breeding and to let other bucks know that they are in the area. A buck makes a scrape under an 'overhanging limb' that is four to six feet above the ground. This limb is often bitten off and rubbed by the buck's forehead and pre-orbital gland. The ground below the limb is pawed up with the buck's front feet, leaving an area devoid of leaves and other plant materials. The buck will, finally, stand in the scrape and urinate on its inner leg so that the urine passes over the tarsal glands, carrying scent from these glands into the scrape.

Bucks begin to make scrapes in early fall. These become bigger and more numerous, as the early November rut approaches. Scrapes are visited by deer of both sexes, but bucks seem to show more interest for a greater portion of the year.

Hunters can use what they know about scrapes to determine what kind of deer inhabit the area they hunt. This is done by making a "mock" scrape and placing a



Jerry Lynch posing with a freshly-made mock scrape.

trail camera nearby to capture images of the deer that visit. Good friend and hunting accomplice, Jerry Lynch, of Richland County, has been taking inventory of the bucks that visit his property like this for many years.

Jerry finds a likely location with an overhanging limb for a scrape along a field edge or deer trail and scrapes the ground using a rake or scrape-making tool. The scraped area ends up being about three feet in diameter. When this is done a forehead gland scent is sprayed on the limb and a scrape scent is added to the bare earth below. A trail camera is placed on a nearby tree to take photos of the



Trail camera picture of a buck visiting one of Jerry Lynch's mock scrapes.

animals that visit the scrape.

Jerry prefers a set of artificial products for his scrapes. These do not degrade readily like natural deer urine does and seem to hold up better to precipitation. Other hunters I know use natural deer urine and natural deer scents, collected from captive deer, to make mock scrapes.

It's important to eliminate human scent when making any mock scrapes. Jerry wears rubber boots and rubber gloves when making scrapes. He has had deer visit his scrapes within thirty minutes of making them.

Should an overhanging limb not be available in a good mock scrape location, a limb can be brought in and wired to a nearby tree. A limb that is too high may be bent down and tied into proper position. Some hunters have used a piece of stout rope hanging down over a mock scrape as their overhanging limb.

Deer will often "adopt" a mock scrape to make it their own. They do this by going through the entire scrape-making process used by bucks, as described earlier, on top of the scrape made by a hunter. Deer will begin visiting mock scrapes in late summer and will continue to do so well into the winter months. This makes them a great tool to help hunters take an inventory of local deer before, during and after the hunting season. 🍖

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



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Photos of this perfectly symmetrical eight-point buck show the buck scent-checking and chasing does in a cut soybean field south of Chetek during the last week of October in 2018. Tactics and tricks used during rut and post-rut can undoubtedly draw mature buck into shooting range.

TYLER FLORCZAK

Aggressive Attractants, Simple Tactics

Using scents, decoys and vocalization to trick a rutting trophy

November is finally upon us and tension is building throughout Wisconsin. Top-heavy, big-bodied bucks have testosterone pumping through their veins and are on the prowl looking to breed.

Hunters are also on edge right now as red-hot scrapes, fresh rub lines and daytime rutting activity increases daily. Playing the waiting game is fine if you know you're in the right spot. However, sometimes archery and firearms hunters need to get aggressive. Those having trouble connecting with the rut-crazed bucks in years past can increase the odds of harvesting a trophy this season by using some calculated tactics, whether it's the pre-rut in October, the main event in November or the post-rut/second rut in December.

Attack his ears

Personal experience and in-the-field observations can tell hunters many things. These observations and encounters ultimately help gauge the current deer behavior and movements of the local deer herd, along with their body language and reactions in specific hunting areas as the rut hits. Using devices such as estrous doe bleats, grunt calls, snort-wheezes and rattling are all smart choices when attacking bucks' ears. The in-field observations will help hunters fully understand deer behavior and allows them to customize and modify their calling methods according to the deer behavior and area.

In some instances, subtle grunts and doe bleats can be

successful and bring bucks in visible distance right into a shooting lane, while other situations call for a more aggressive approach. It may be necessary to include loud and agitated grunts, snort-wheezes and repeated rattling sequences in certain situations. Regardless of location, being able to diagnose the current situation and mood of the deer, while applying the correct calls, will most likely generate more shot opportunities.

Attack his nose

Statistics say a deer's sense of smell can be 1,000 times more acute than humans, which makes scent an essential part of hunting. As testosterone levels soar and bucks begin to seek mates during the rut, their senses are altered. However, they will always rely on their nose as their main line of defense. Tricking a love-stricken mature buck can be difficult, but they will toss caution to the wind in search of romance at times. This is why deer scents, doe estrous (the urine of a doe that is in heat) in particular, can be so effective.

Pulling drag-lines or rags pre-soaked with doe estrous scent are effective; hunters can drag them to their stand, tricking the big one to follow the scent trail. Hanging scent wicks or rags doused with estrous around your stand is another good technique as soon as you notice bucks beginning to chase tail-wagging does and your trail cams pick up increased activity.

Buck urine, used in conjunction with scrapes - real or

mock - or in other high-traffic areas, is a good transition attractant leading up to the rut. As aggression in bucks is building, they will become more competitive with does coming into estrus. The smell of an intruder in their domain, mixed with the sound of deep grunts and rattles, can draw a challenging buck into bow range.

Attack his eyes

Setting up decoys when hunting the rut is a visual tactic that can fool a prowling buck, especially when using a buck and doe decoy combination. Open areas with good visibility are prime setup locations for using decoys and are quite effective during the rut, as food sources become limited. Later in the season, any remaining fields with standing corn and soy beans can be deadly setups with a decoy deployed. Combining proper scent applications and effective calling tactics with the decoys attacks all three of a buck's senses and gives hunters a definitive advantage.

Tactics for attracting rutting bucks are important and can pay off when the timing is right. Carefully use these strategies while chasing these rut-crazed bucks and prepare yourself for hunting trips filled with action. 🍷

Tyler Florczak is a sports and outdoors editor for The Chetek Alert newspaper in Chetek. He has been working as a writer, photographer and videographer for more than five years. His 182-inch whitetail buck harvested in 2015 was accepted into the Boone & Crockett Club and was featured in Field & Stream, Deer and Deer Hunting and North American Whitetail.

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MIKE FOSS

Hunt Smart Intelligent bears mean bad-weather tactics must change

The 2019 bear season approached showing all the characteristics of a typical hunt. Guide reports filtered in during the summer baiting season tracking consistent and perfect south-southwest winds. Temperatures were higher than normal and with the heat hunters would as expected deal with swarms of insects and excessive moisture, but conditions seemed to promise that the state harvest would again be high as August turned to September and opening week for 2019 bait sitters.

Mother Nature had other plans. Temperatures dropped to the low 50s, with rain and the worst on-stand wind conditions a hunter could face; the dreaded east, northeast wind prevailed.

For too many guides, harvest numbers declined drastically. For too many bear hunters who wait years for a harvest permit, the tag went unfilled and often bears were not even seen approaching bait. From my own experience, and mistakes as a guide for many years and a lifelong student of bear behavior, difficult hunts like that experienced in 2019 hold lessons.

During summer you will most likely experience a welcome south, west or southwest wind, and your stand should be



Dan McGarry of Tomah, Wisconsin hunted in horrible weather conditions opening day but had this 358 pound boar cautiously approach his bait station. Dan hunted with Robert Haas of Northern Wisconsin Outfitters

set accordingly so as not to be winded by the approaching bear. One of the biggest mistakes a bait sitter can make is hunting at all when the wind is wrong. This can be very difficult when you have waited eight or nine years for the permit and your chance to be in the field and hopefully viewing bears.

Bears are habitual animals and will most likely find and do the same safe routine

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32



TOM CARPENTER

Deer Season Classics

5 farmland hotspots to place your stand

In the September/October issue of On Wisconsin Outdoors, we explored good spots for bowhunting on agricultural landscapes. As promised, and just in time for gun season, here's a rundown of five great places to shoot your farmland white-tail with rifle, slug gun or muzzleloader.

1) Bedroom

The idea is taboo to many deer hunters, but one of the best places to hunt farmland deer during gun season is right in the zone they want to occupy: Thick bedding cover where you have a chance of intercepting whitetails arriving from other places, or where you may get a little daylight movement out of the area's resident deer. You sacrifice shooting range for location, but it's a good trade.

Think spots like these: a thicket or wooded island deep in a marsh or wetland; the middle of a logged-over woodlot, or the thickest section of timber on the property; a brushy south-facing sidehill; a secluded hollow or gully out of the wind and away from all the other action.

2) Transition

Farmland deer naturally hang around, and travel along, edges and transition zones between cover types and food sources. In this scenario, you're taking advantage of the increased range of your firearm, and hedging your bets versus committing to the close quarters of a bedroom.

Consider: the transition from woodland to wetland, back from the cropfields; the edge between hardwoods and pine plantation; fallow field or forgotten pasture; and any zone where you can find three cover types meeting up (example: woodlot, wetland and crop field).

3) Corridor

Travel corridors make prime gun season stand sites. Whitetails may use the cover itself, or they might just follow the general flow of the landscape. That's the beauty of gun hunting: You don't have to get it exactly right; you just have to have the right idea.

Here are some of those ideas: a creekbottom where you can watch the fields; pastures or open areas alongside



The author's son, Jeremiah tagged this gun season buck in 2018 in a transition zone travel corridor in the Green County hills.

the cover; a brushy fenceline connecting patches of timber; a drainage or irrigation ditch between fields; a fenceline or ditch linking woodlots or wetlands.

4) Hideaway

One farmland gun season trick is to hunt where no one else thinks to go, where the whitetails retreat to find peace, quiet and safety. Whether the spot is just secluded and out-of-the-way, or right next to human habitation, changing things up can really pay off (be sure to get permission from the landowner to shoot close to buildings or livestock).

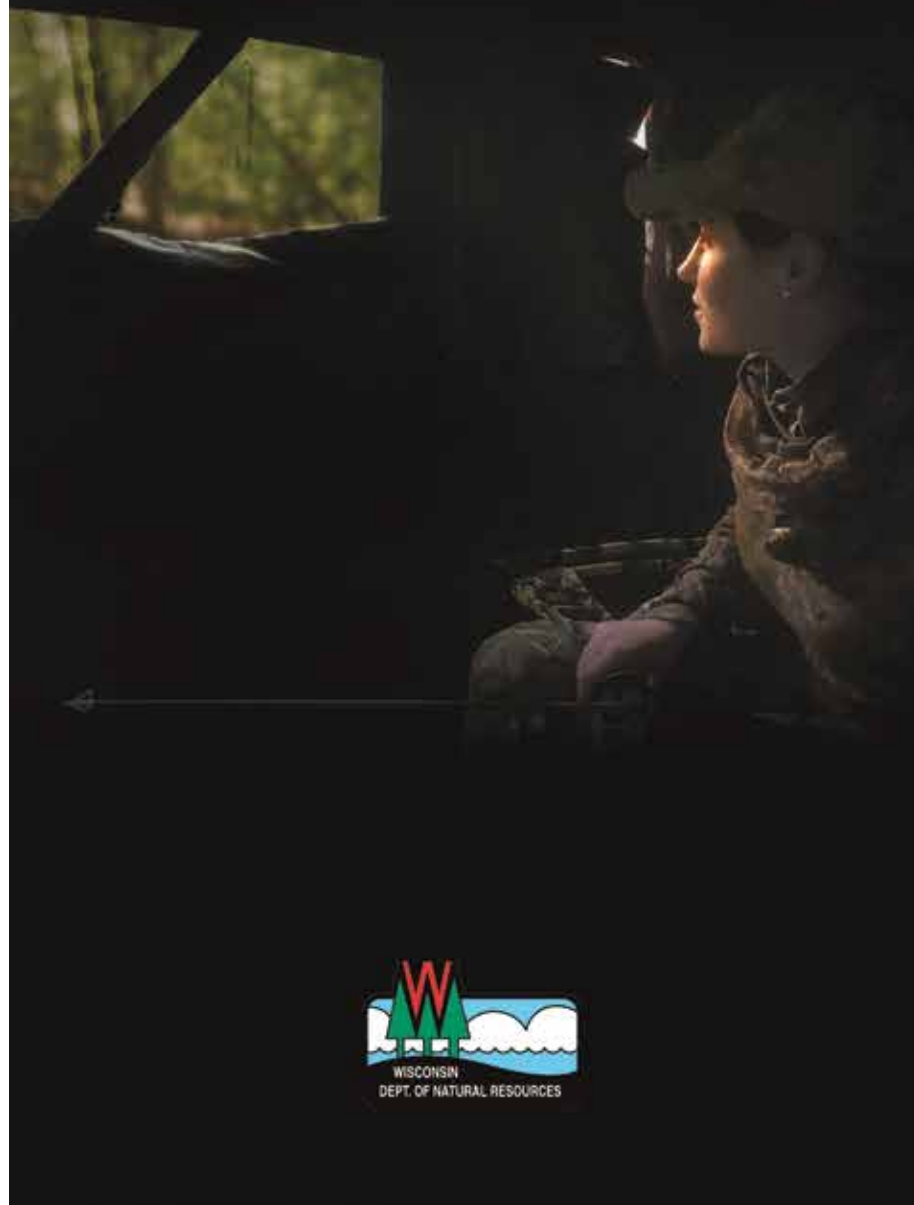
Even if there's not much cover there, a forgotten weed patch or gully behind the barnyard will pull in whitetails. Don't ignore a fallow corner that might be too steep or rocky to crop. Look for old, abandoned pasture or orchard that may have just enough brush to hide a deer. Remember: whitetails are just looking for seclusion.

5) Pinch

Farmland whitetails aren't afraid to cross open country. A farm country whitetail wanting to get from point A to point B seldom has qualms about exposing itself for a few moments to get where it wants to go.



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CONTINUED ON PAGE 34

SUZETTE CURTIS

Recipes with Suzette Cranberries for Dinner

My husband has a “rule” in our house that when I prepare poultry for dinner, I should also serve cranberries, and when I prepare pork for dinner, I should also serve applesauce. Since he willingly eats all of my tried and true recipes along with my trials (and some errors), I don’t mind accommodating his request. When it comes to cranberries, however, I go one step further and add them to different Venison dishes as well. The flavor combination is delicious, and it’s an especially nice fall treat. Enjoy!

Venison Roast with Cranberries

1 - 3 pound Venison Roast	Salt & Pepper
3 cloves garlic, minced	1 can whole Cranberry Sauce
1 large onion, sliced in rings	

Place Venison in bottom of large slow cooker. Top with garlic and onion rings. Sprinkle with salt and pepper to your liking (I like lots of pepper in this) and pour cranberry sauce over all.

Cover and cook on low for 8 hours. Serve slices on platter topped with sauce.

Cranberry Horseradish Sauce for Venison Tenderloin

2 cups whole raw cranberries, washed	1 small onion, quartered
3/4 cup sour cream	1/2 cup sugar
2 tablespoons prepared horseradish	

Place cranberries and onion quarters in food processor. Chop to desired “chunky” consistency, but do not puree.

Place cranberry mixture into covered glass dish and add remaining ingredients. Mix well. Refrigerate if not using immediately. Serve cool or at room temperature alongside your prepared Venison tenderloin.

This can also be frozen in a freezer container and then thawed in the refrigerator a day before using.

Cranberry Venison Meatballs

Preheat oven to 350°

Cranberry Sauce:

4 cups whole cranberries
2 cups water
2 cups sugar

Heat water and sugar in large saucepan to boiling; boil 5 minutes. Stir in cranberries, heat to boiling again, and boil 5 minutes more. Let cool while preparing meatballs.

Meatballs:

2 pounds Venison, ground	1 T parsley flakes
1 cup uncooked quick oats	2 T soy sauce
1 large onion, chopped	1/3 cup ketchup
1 clove garlic, minced	1 teaspoon salt
2 large eggs	1/2 teaspoon pepper

Mix all ingredients in large bowl. Shape into meatballs and place in lightly greased 9 x 13 baking dish.

Spoon cranberry sauce over all and bake for 1 hour. 🍴

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.

MARK LABARBERA

Never Like This... *Paddle the quiet, wild Upper Dells*

Coni and I have stayed in the Wisconsin Dells nearly a dozen times, but never like this. Recently we discovered the other “wild and fun” side of this popular tourist attraction and vowed to come back often - and avoid weekend crowds.

On a Monday morning in September, we joined Thomas Meyer at the River Bay Camping Resort and Marina boat ramp on River Bay Road, about four miles north of the junction of I-94 and Highway 12 (Exit #85).

We joined nearly 20 Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin (NRF) members on a field trip. But anyone can put on your PFD and launch your boat, canoe or kayak here and experience the Upper Dells, a world-famous stretch of the Wisconsin River. The current was mild, no whitewater or technical paddling, and the wind was light.

The scenery was breathtaking, with towering sandstone formations, rocky overhangs carved by the river, hidden gorges and an occasional sandy beach. The gorge formed here by glaciers created a narrows that early French trappers and explorers called “dalles,” that is, layers of flat rock, and have since been angelized as the “Dells.” These sandstone layers of rock do, indeed, look like layers of stone, one laid upon the other.

Today, “The Dells” refer to the much bigger area around the village of Lake Delton and the City of Wisconsin Dells. The “Water Park Capital of the World” attracts many tourists from around the world, and some of them see the natural areas from tour boats. Guides using microphones and amplified speakers share the area’s history.

Our NRF trip leader Meyer, a conservation biologist with the DNR’s Natural Heritage Conservation program that includes State Natural Areas (SNA) such as the Dells of the Wisconsin River, also shares his deep knowledge of the area’s cultural and natural history. But he does it unplugged.

Picture him in his kayak backed into a quiet bay with sandy beach and towering sandstone walls as he describes how the Wisconsin River used to flow in the other direction. As a mature bald eagle soars overhead, temporarily distracting some of us in our wood, Kevlar or aluminum canoes and high-tech kayaks, Meyer explains how Glacial Lake Wisconsin flooded this area. We paddle a little closer to learn about



Paddlers of various skill levels used modern kayaks and wood, aluminum and Kevlar canoes.

the Laurentide Ice Sheet and its Green Bay Lobe that stopped short of the Driftless Area between 26,000 and 10,000 years ago.

Meyer doesn’t talk too long. He paddles downstream. We follow like ducklings, sometimes paddling to keep up and other times lingering to explore lichens, flowers or trees that took root among the cracks and crevices of the sandstone walls.

Not far from Chula Vista Resort, he points his paddle toward a nearly hidden opening.

“Most boaters and paddlers go right past this one,” he says as we slip single-file into a tiny gorge. At its head is a small waterfall created by runoff from recent rains. Meyer talks about the geology and hydrology in layman’s language that we understand before we return to the route.

During the day, Coni and I paddled under large rock overhangs. We canoed under exposed roots, hanging branches and dripping runoff until we noticed downstream a number of collapsed outcroppings.

One of the benefits of doing the NRF field trip here is the special access to a private lunch spot on a scenic overlook, a rare opportunity on this stretch of the river. There, Meyer shared maps, historic photos, folklore and fun tales that made us not want to leave this quiet side of the Dells. His knowledge and love of this cherished place flowed freely like the river itself.

For more information about NRF field trip offerings, visit wisconservation.org. 🍴

Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin Vice-Chair Mark LaBarbera of Hazel Green is past president and former board chair of Outdoor Writers Assoc. of America and Assoc. of Great Lakes Outdoor Writers, and founder of the charitable non-profit Outdoor Heritage Education Center organization.



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TOM CARPENTER

Cub's Corner

November light bathes forever young hunter's first buck

Every hunter thrills to the memory of his or her fist buck, or dreams of the milestone. As November and Wisconsin's traditional firearms gun season approaches and unfolds, please indulge my own tale.

It happened 40 years ago now, which is sort of a milestone itself, but it wasn't my first deer. After a couple "party permit" antlerless deer and even a doe with my bow, I was approaching that nexus of experience, desire, patience and instinct needed to outwit or outlast a crafty whitetail buck. I was 17.

At sunrise on opening morning, my brother Chuck had shot a nice little buck and after field dressing it, he and my brother Larry started to our car high on an Iowa County ridge.

"Go back to the bottom of the hill and wait," they instructed. "We'll walk back through the timber toward you a little later and see what we push up."

So I descended the slope and picked out



a spot, nestling in at the base of a pine tree toward the bottom of the steep sidehill, commanding a nice view where a couple deer trails spilled off the bush-choked slope and then paralleled it through the creekbottom below.

Deep anticipation turned into attentive waiting and then patient watching, which turned into lunch from my fanny pack, and finally a nap as early-afternoon sunshine finally swung around and hit the north-facing slope.

What took the guys so long, I still don't know or recall, but I heard a "hup" holler that woke me from my slumber. I knelt up on one knee, ready for action with the old Remington Model 742.

Soon a buck spilled off the hillside ahead, turned, and angled toward me along the creekbottom. He appeared again maybe 30 yards away, jogging along a deer trail, and I shot one, two, three times. He kept going.

Soon Chuck and Larry were upon the scene as I looked for blood where the deer had been. I reported hitting him twice. Chuck just said, "Well then he's dead; let's find him."

So we simply followed the trail and not 50 yards later someone said, "There he is."

He was a brute-sized, seven-pointer that, and probably – no certainly – was the most beautiful thing I had ever saw. I approached and knelt next to the magnificent animal and my brothers stood back, knowing both the gravity and magic of such a moment, before my Dad tootled up to the scene with the widest smile of all across his face.

That was about as fine a moment as I can ever remember, and I have lived a long time since. There I was, with my family and hunting partners, in a creekbottom thicket

on a warm and sunny November afternoon, with a buck at our feet, my hands shaking, and some years of work and wanting laying there at my feet in the form of a seven-point, whitetail buck that weighed more than I did.

We dressed the buck, then spent the rest of the afternoon getting him out of that coulee, a feat in itself, but we were young and strong and Dad trudged with all four guns.

I can, of course, recall every detail of that hunt: minutiae and emotions there isn't room for here and that probably live best with me alone. But most of all, I remember the November light – the way its warm rays put me to sleep, the way it glinted off the buck's antlers as he ghosted through the thickets, and the way it raked in low and orange and bathed every scene in happiness as we hunted and toiled together. 🍂

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

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Fox Valley Retriever Club

Training You To Train Your Retriever

FOXVALLEYRETRIEVERCLUB.COM



TOM MUELLER

Improving Hunting Performance

Reconditioning your retriever

The waterfowl hunting season in Wisconsin is just about half over. Hopefully, it's been a good one so far for all of you waterfowl hunting enthusiasts, and hopefully, it's been a good one for your waterfowl retrieving enthusiast as well. But, if your retriever hasn't been at its best during your duck and goose hunt outings, then now is the time to take stock of its performance and make a to-do list of what needs fixing.

Young, somewhat inexperienced hunting retrievers get supercharged when out on a hunt. Often, they will have a hard time sitting quietly in the boat or blind and will be constantly pacing back and forth or moving about. They might bolt when you stand up to shoot. They might be an incessant whiner or their response to commands might be lacking. They might even be in the habit of dropping the bird when it returns from a retrieve. If you're consistently experiencing any of these or other unwanted behaviors from your retriever while hunting, now is the time to get serious about some reconditioning training.

When running a retriever in a hunt test, your dog is evaluated and its performance critiqued. Not only by the judges, but also by you. After the hunt test, you know what its weaknesses are and can work on them so you can get a

better performance at the next test. Same during a hunting season. You might not look at it this way, but every time you head out for a hunt, you and your retriever are in a "hunting test" situation. Unless you've really worked with your dog to get it ready for the hunting season, just as in a hunt test, its flaws are going to show up. Now when you're out hunting, take the time to evaluate your dog. If it is consistently doing things that you would rather it not do, plan on working with it during the off-season. The retraining sessions don't have to be long drawn out ordeals and don't require going to any place special. Most of them can be done in your home or your yard after work or on the weekends.

They also don't require a lot of time. Very short sessions that last only 10 to 20 minutes each day are all that are necessary to recondition your dog. What is required is that you develop a training plan to fix the fault, work at it consistently, and patience. Patience is important because most young retrievers that are hunting are one to two years old. The issue you want to remove is already a habit and often habits are hard to change and this takes time.

Another requirement for reconditioning a retriever is to work on one concept at a time. This is also a rule for teaching any concept at any time that you're training.

If your dog needs to learn to sit quietly in your boat or blind for long stretches of time, then that's what you work on. If your dog's response to the "here" command isn't satisfactory, then working on that has to wait until the "sit" command is firmly entrenched. Once your dog has learned to sit patiently until allowed to move, then you can proceed with working on its recall. Consistently rewarding a good response is also critical to changing a not-so-good habit, more so than a correction. Positively rewarding a good response makes your dog enjoy the training sessions with you and keeps it in a learning and wanting-to-please frame of mind. When your dog gives a correct response, very short fun retrieves will keep it happy, eager to please, and a willing worker. Trying to set the dog up for a correction doesn't always work as a deterrent and can cause your dog to become sulky and even fearful about training with you. 🐾

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

RON STRESING

Wisconsin Rabbit Hunting

From tactics to table fare

Thousands of cottontail rabbits are harvested in Wisconsin every winter. Shotguns, rimfire rifles and pistols - and even archery tackle - are all legal ways to take rabbits. You can track, or spot and stalk, hunt solo, or with a group of friends. You can kick brush piles, or simply walk the fields around food sources. You can unleash a pack of beagles, or simply follow fresh tracks in the snow. That's the beauty of winter rabbit hunting; you can hunt just about any way you want, with a reasonable chance of success.

Spotting and stalking: Walk slowly in good rabbit habitat, looking carefully to spot sitting rabbits in or around cover. Check thick groves of small trees, brush, hedges, or multiflora rose tangles. Early morning on bright sunny days seem to



Winter cottontail taken with the author's 16 gauge over/under shotgun.

cover like fence rows, brush piles, and fallen trees. Look for fresh tracks. Food sources like picked corn fields or groves of small saplings where rabbits feed on tree bark, are also good starting points. Everything seems to prey on rabbits, so think like one. Look for the thick cover they can escape into. Overhead cover (small trees and brush) provides protection from avian predators like hawks and owls. Look for fallen trees with grass growing next to them; these are rabbit magnets.

Working in two-man teams: This is the most effective hunt strategy. While one hunter kicks the brush piles or busts cover, the other stands ready, watching any escape routes. Switch off brush busting and covering so both hunters get shooting opportunities. Following rabbit tracks into

a frozen cattail swamp can be interesting, as rabbits will really hold tight. We have also taken an occasional bonus rooster

CONTINUED ON PAGE 34



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DICK ELLIS

Love is Love

Micah's Fibrosarcoma changes life

Micah and I walked again into a new hunting season in 2019 like we've walked together into eight Septembers before. Mourning doves were calling us, more as a way to shake the dust off our paws and welcome a new autumn than anything else. That first traditional hunt would again turn to more "serious" annual pursuits of upland game and waterfowl, from creeks in Wisconsin's southeast, wild rice backwaters in the northern forest, and the rolling pheasant grasslands of North Dakota.

Extraordinarily soon after his first ride home as a new member of our family, Micah learned the field games well. He pushes the wing shot by hunting close with certain body language that tells his partners that a bird is holding tight, or "a runner" is about to flush. He will lean close against us in blinds and intently watch the skies for ducks, often locking on approaching waterfowl before we do. He will remain silent and nearly motionless until a shotgun report sends him again to shine as a retriever driven by his bloodline and a desire to please.

He is going to give us shots, and more importantly, he is going to recover the game. Very rarely in the wake of his work will there be hunter's remorse for leaving a behind a bird that could not be found.



Puppy Micah learns to sit and wait during retrieving session.

All of that is unimportant now. By early October, Micah was diagnosed with oral fibrosarcoma. In a matter of a week, Mikey's classic, male-dominant, confident look that made strangers stop me just to meet him, or to ask if I breed him, was devastated by a fast-growing cancerous tumor of the mouth. Seemingly overnight, his gums became swollen and inflamed, the bridge shifted and teeth separated, or were lost. I had hoped he was injured in the field. I knew better. Micah's cancer is inoperable.



Separated from mom, Micah never whimpered from day 1 and adopted his new family right back.

In a September and October scramble for answers and hope, I sought out experts in veterinary medicine at New Berlin Animal Hospital, Wisconsin Veterinary Referral Center (WVRC), Lakeshore Veterinary Specialists, UW-School of Veterinary Medicine and PetCure Oncology; consultations, appointments, examinations, tests, x-rays, scans followed. Would we have a counter-attack? If the decision is based on cost alone, the answer would be "no."

It is late October. I am scribbling longhand in another veterinary waiting room. Micah will soon emerge from his third consecutive and final day of Stereotactic Radiation (SRT/SRT) Treatment. Recently administered to people only, SRS/SRT treatment precisely targets tumors with high doses of radiation in hard to target locations. The goal is to damage the membranes and internal structure of cancer cells, shut off their blood supply, and extend Micah's quality of life for as long as possible.

Pain and inability to eat will take Micah. When life is too hard on him, we will let him go. Now, he is happy, without pain, and there would be no indication that he is even sick if this enemy we face was not so physically devastating.

I have watched many owners and their dogs in this and other waiting rooms over these weeks. I have watched owners kiss their dogs, show off their dogs in introduction to strangers or staff, talk to their dogs, worry, grieve over final



Another day in the field. Most valuable player Micah, and Dick Ellis

goodbyes, and delight over the antics of new puppies in for first examinations. They love their dogs. Like us, they want their dogs to come in to the world healthy, stay that way and leave easy...many years later. The pain of the final goodbye is a good trade for those years.

I read again this week the letter from Micah's breeder, Christine Ballewske, who gave it to Lori and me when we picked up our puppy nine years ago so that he could begin a new life with his new family. When we arrived, the litter of puppies was separated; only Micah and momma Piper waited for us together.

I think that Christine speaks for most of the breeders, veterinarians, dog trainers, and maybe most of all us, the dog owners when she let her words flow.

"We have loved these puppies as if they were our own," Christine wrote. "We expect you to continue to treat him as well as we have. Please don't hit him or be angry with him. They are after all babies and they need the same kind of love and teaching as a baby does. Be good to him and he will give back tenfold the love and caring that he receives."

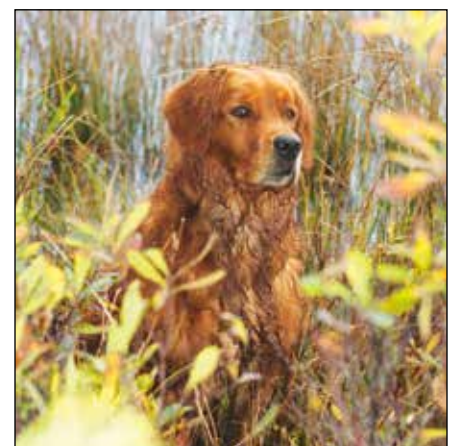
"Piper has been a wonderful mom. She takes very good care of her puppies. She makes sure they are okay every morning and throughout the day. She cleans them and loves them. She shows this by the way

CONTINUED ON PAGE 39

Micah's ability in the field also landed him with this photo on the cover of OWO.



Micah hunts another pheasant field, making sure the hunters are close.



A classic and familiar scene, Micah sits quietly, watches, and waits for ducks.

On Wisconsin Outdoors will publish columns in each of 6 issues in 2020 for the dog owner utilizing in part experts in veterinary medicine, from bringing home your puppy to the final goodbye. You will read about Micah in the field too. Hopefully, our final story ending will wait.

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SPOTLIGHT | LACROSSE

New Twists to Old Fashion favorites

5 Old-Fashioned Favorites

A classic Wisconsin staple – the old fashioned. Whether you're at a supper club, pairing it with your Friday Night Fish or you're sitting at a downtown bar who serves up the classic with a little upscale twist, there's nothing else quite like it.

HERE ARE JUST FIVE OF OUR OLD-FASHIONED FAVORITES...

Sullivan's Supper Club

Located next to Perrot State Park, Sullivan's overlooks the beautiful Mississippi River in the historical town of Trempealeau, Wisconsin. Just a short beautiful ride from La Crosse, we promise it will be worth it. If you're looking for that authentic supper club experience then this is your place. Grab an order of cheese curds while you wait for your Friday Night Fish and enjoy the view of the Mississippi River while sipping on an old-fashioned.

Mt. La Crosse Ski & Snowboard

One of our favorites after a fun day of hitting the slopes. Head to the Chalet and up to the ever famous St. Bernard Room and relax after a long day in the chilly weather with Mt. La Crosse's famous old fashioned. Not

into skiing or snowboarding? No worries, friend, all are welcome! Enjoy weekly live music or watch the action taking place on the hill as you sit next to the big windows overlooking the hills.

Drugan's Castle Mound


From golfing during the warmer months to a dining favorite in the middle of winter, Drugan's Castle Mound, located in Holmen is a place you want to visit. We all know fish and an old fashioned are a Wisconsin must, but how about trying out Saturday night's prime rib and pairing that with the infamous cocktail? Now that sounds pretty good to us!

Red Pines Bar & Grill

I think we've established that a fish fry and an old fashioned go hand-in-hand, right? Good. So you know that when a place has been voted as having the #1 Fish Fry, they must serve up a mean cocktail to go with it. Whether you prefer them sour or sweet, brandy or whiskey, it'll sit perfectly with Red Pine's shrimp and fish fry on Friday night.



La Cave at Le Chateau

La Cave, a basement bar of the popular french restaurant Le Chateau in La Crosse, offers a new twist on this old favorite. Take the spiral staircase down to what feels like a wine cellar with exposed brick walls and a relaxed atmosphere. Have a seat at the bar and let the show begin. The bartender will set a stack of hickory wood chips, soaked in either gin or bourbon, on fire which is put out when they set the glass over top, capturing the smoke. While the glass gathers condensation, the rest of the drink is mixed with either whiskey or brandy, house made bitters and simple syrup. Once mixed, the liquid will be strained into the smoked glass, providing a unique flavor to this old favorite. 

Disclaimer: This is just one perspective on La Crosse County events, businesses and activities. Explore the rest of the site to learn more on those that were not included.



Explore Wisconsin



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5 THINGS TO KNOW ROTARY LIGHTS

With 4 million lights and hundreds of thousands of visitors, The Rotary Lights is an impressively-large holiday display held annually in downtown La Crosse. Here are five things you should know before you go.



Photos by
Bob Good Photography

1 WALK OR DRIVE

Wisconsin weather is unpredictable, but don't worry about making the trip to La Crosse even if it's not exactly warm. You can always drive through the lights if you're not interested in bundling up for a walk. Turn your radio to the Christmas channel and join the caravan of onlookers from the comfort of your car.

2 SKATE OUTSIDE

A more recent addition to the event, the Chad Erickson Ice Rink allows visitors to skate in the glow of the lights. Depending on weather (freezing temps required), the rink has nightly hours and rental skates available.

3 FREE FUN

Put on each year free of charge, The Rotary Lights asks only for donations to view its spectacular display. Monetary donations or non-perishable food items are encouraged.

4 TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

Speaking of rides, you can also view the lights via carriage. Horse-drawn carriages are available most weekends for those hoping to snuggle up and take in the sights. Carriage rides are \$20-\$30 but if you're looking for a free option, there are family hayrides on select nights, as well.

5 NOT JUST LIGHTS

Did you know you can see Santa and his reindeer at The Rotary Lights? Santa shows up nightly from 5-8pm until December 23rd, so bring the kiddos to get those Christmas requests in to the big man. Take a peek at his reindeer while you wait at his workshop.



Location

Riverside Park
410 Veteran Memorial Drive,
La Crosse, Wisconsin

Hours

November 29, 2019 – December 31, 2019
5-10pm daily

Holiday Hours

Christmas Eve – 5-9pm
Christmas Day – 5-9pm
New Year's Eve – 5pm-1am

More information

rotarylites.org/

explore
LA CROSSE
.com



Explore Wisconsin

SPOTLIGHT | WASHBURN COUNTY

Enjoying the County Forest Land

There's something about the crisp fall air that just makes us want to venture out into the woods. Whether you're an avid bowhunter, horseback rider, ATV enthusiast or hiker, there's plenty of adventure to be found in the Washburn County forest land. With over 148,000 acres of county forest, Washburn County is made up of nearly one-third public land. The forest is comprised of a wide variety of forest types ranging from the Pine Barrens in the northwest; to the large unbroken tracts of aspen, hardwood, and swamps in the northeast; to the rolling oak hills and pothole lakes in the southeast. The management of this forest makes a wide variety of recreational uses in Washburn County possible.

Here are a few opportunities for some late fall adventure in the Washburn County Forest:

- Prime hunting land, shared by fellow outdoorsmen, offers great opportunities for bow hunting throughout the fall and the nine-day gun season. Additional hunting opportunities exist for pheasant and ruffed grouse as well.
- Over 30 miles of trails at Dugan Run offer incredible views of the forest and Harmon Lake in the Harmon Lake Recreational Area located between Spooner and Stone Lake.
- Over 100 miles of scenic ATV trails traverse the landscape, offering excellent riding opportunities even into the early winter. 🐾



Explore Wisconsin



SPOTLIGHT | PORT WASHINGTON

Winter beauty, charm...and great fishing

Winter in Port Washington has its own beauty and charm. Things slow down a bit, but the warmth and hospitality of this lakeside town can be experienced year-round.

Port Washington is a town where you can park your car and walk. Visit our specialty shops, galleries, and fun boutiques. Looking for specialty foods? Check out an old-fashioned butcher shop and a smoked fish market; a gourmet popcorn store; a yummy chocolate and ice cream shop; a winery; a tea room; or an artisan bakery. Stop in and warm up at any of our great restaurants, coffee shops, or pubs, including our new brewpub. Make sure you don't miss the Port Exploreum - a highly interactive museum that will appeal to the whole family. Learn about Lake Michigan, fishing, and local history - all while having a lot of fun!

You can play outside in Port Washington, too. If you have been to Port Washington, you know that fishing season never ends here. The marina may close, but thanks to our lakeside parks, people cast their lines from shore all year round - successfully! There is a state park and a nature center nearby that offer trails for cross-country skiing, winter hiking and birding. Bring your



Shore and boat fishing doesn't stop with cold weather in Port Washington, and this beautiful town nestled on the big lake in southeast Wisconsin has much to offer the entire family.

binoculars! The lakeshore is on a flyway, so we often see some of the more unusual birds. Plus there are breathtaking views everywhere you turn. Make sure you bring your camera - winter provides dramatic photo opportunities along the lakeshore.

Our lodging establishments will provide you with that perfectly cozy place to warm up after your outdoor activities. Spend winter how you like it!

Close enough to be convenient - but what a great getaway!

Contact the Port Washington Tourism at 1-800-719-4881, log on to visitportwashington.com, or find us on Facebook, for more information. 🐾

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Explore Wisconsin



SPOTLIGHT | FERRYVILLE

Youth hunting in beautiful Mississippi River country

Youth Hunting in Ferryville, Wisconsin and Mississippi River Country... what a fabulous time for both girls and guys!

The Youth Hunt for Migratory Birds in Wisconsin was September 14 – 15 and the Early Goose Season State Wide was September 1 – 15. It was so exciting to see photos of niece Skye Hopkins in her camo, face paint, smiles and blue eyes that pop because “she bagged a goose!” Thank you Dad Jeff Hopkins for the years of nurturing this talent and teaching Skye that “the sky is the limit” for what she can accomplish.



Skye scores during a youth duck hunt with her dad, Jeff Hopkins and Jeff's yellow lab, Fred in Mississippi River Country near Ferryville.

Youth Hunts in Wisconsin are a super way for young people to be introduced to the sport of hunting, learn the rules that respect nature and conservation, plus build self confidence that pay rewards through a lifetime. The Youth Hunt provides young waterfowl hunters the opportunity to spend time afield with an experienced adult hunter pursuing waterfowl and allowing them to develop their skills without the pressures of the regular season. (Dates for Youth Hunts can be found by going to the www.dnr.gov website and select ‘Migratory Birds’ for the hunt calendar.)

Of course, there are always funny stories, excellent adventure and super food when out in the field or on the water for the hunt. Learning and laughing, having a fun time is a terrific reward. Then there is the reminder that “girls can do this, too, Aunt Sherry.” There is real excitement to being in nature and accomplishing a goal – like bagging a big goose or some ducks. Way to go Skye.

Hopefully more young people get this opportunity and “thank you” to all of the volunteers and mentors who help with the teaching and learning.

Sherry Quamme

SPOTLIGHT | ASHLAND

Premiere hunting, fishing and fun for the entire family



Brrrrrr. It's getting cold outside and time to partake in the many activities in the great outdoors in Wisconsin's Ashland and the Chequamegon Bay area! Fall fishing on Lake Superior and Chequamegon Bay is still going on before the frozen waters take over the season. Always be cautious of the gale winds of November and December, but when winds are calm, Chequamegon Bay presents anglers with trophy class small-mouth bass and shows true-to-life why Chequamegon Bay is known as Wisconsin's top smallmouth bass fishery.

The Ashland County Area is a hunter's dream come true with abundant wildlife and excellent opportunities. Grouse and waterfowl hunting draws many to the Ashland County Area until January 31st, with deer hunters taking to the November woods with a very real chance of meeting a trophy buck. Rifle hunting season runs from November 23rd through December 1st. In Ashland County, extended archery season that began in September and continues until January 31st.

When not in the field or on the water, head to the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center just 2¼ miles west of Ashland on US Highway 2 for indoor and outdoor things to see and do. The exhibit hall and a tower overlook Ashland and Bayfield County, offering frequent viewing of the area's numerous bald eagles. There is also a gift shop with regional items for sale and a scenic three-quarter mile boardwalk in the back of the center.

Mid-December will hopefully bring in the white fluffy stuff and another snowmobile and skiing season long-anticipated by our countless visitors. The Ashland Chamber will have a snowmobile report both on their webpage, visitashland.com, and their phone recording at 715-682-2500.

While visiting Ashland to partake in your favorite outdoor sports, keep in mind there are numerous lodging opportunities; a huge array of choices in shopping and dining; two, well-versed, veteran bait shops; fishing and hunting guides; historic murals; the Annual Garland City of the North Christmas Parade; and, of course, our friendly people.

For an Ashland County map or Ashland fishing map and information on hunting and fishing guides in the area, call the Ashland Chamber at 800-284-9484. Happy Hunting, Thanksgiving, Christmas and early winter!

Ashland, Where you'll Find Yourself, Next to the Water offers many events and activities all year long. Enjoy the great outdoors! visitashland.com.



Ashland area grouse hunting annually provides scenic walks, startling flushes and wing shooting challenge for hunters who return year after year to do it all over again.



Ashland's Garland City of the North Christmas Parade has everything for the entire family. We will see you here.



visitferryville.com

WINTER 2019

November 9, 2019

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Early ice is approaching and arguably the best ice-fishing of the year. Be ready when the window hits with this sonar system. Claimed to be "the world's easiest fishfinder" it is also reasonably priced compared to others. Simple menus, easy key functions, and autotuning sonar. Comes with high CHIRP ice transducer and a pair of storage boxes. Built-in, high-detail maps. 5-inch featured here, but also comes in 4, 7, 9, and 12-inch models. (\$399.00)

lowrance.com

RAW SCRAPE LURE

Having the right scent, at the right time can be a deadly combination for big bucks during the rut. This new scent may be worth a try as it claims to be "53.2x more effective" than standard, non-frozen deer scents. This scrape lure is perfect for mock scrapes to get the dominate buck in your area interested, or freshening up an actual scrape. 8-ounce container. Also comes in peak estrus, calming scent, and the new body blast formulas for versatility. (\$24.99)

rawfrozenscents.com

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henryusa.com

RAY'S HANDY WIPES

It's nice to have these along for cleaning up after dressing game, cleaning fish, or working in the woods. They are also great to have around the shop as you're working on projects. Lint free so they work for cleaning firearms and glass. If you have animals, they're perfect for that, too, so they are versatile. Available in rolls with dispensers or sheets. A variety of materials and sizes to choose from. (Prices vary/call for estimates)

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dryguy.com

Jim Servi is a freelance writer from Hamburg, Wisconsin, who spends every opportunity he can in the great outdoors with his family and friends.

FOSS, FROM PAGE 18

over and over again while approaching. Combine the wrong wind and a hunter on stand with that human scent drifting and blowing in the direction of the bait station, that mature bear your hunting will undoubtedly smell you long before you know he is there. You will not get away with it, period. When you're busted, his approach will become nocturnal or worse, he will disappear for good. Scent control is not an option. Have patience. Wait out bad wind conditions. Your odds of filling that tag will increase monumentally.

Remember, by mid-August your once-a day only

baiting routine is just that, routine. Those bears habitually committed to the bait now know to your bait know what time you arrive, how long it takes, every sound you make, what you smell like, your boot size and probably what type of vehicle your driving. When hunting season arrives, try and stay with that same baiting routine.

A huge mistake hunters make is checking bait stations and trail cameras to determine which stand will be hunted that evening. Approaching the stand twice that you will hunt is breaking your routine and will send bears on high alert that are certainly lying low nearby. Give them credit. Bears are extremely intelligent and they know when anything is out of the ordinary.

Back to the 2019 season. During the first week, bear hunters struggled in every camp and certainly the overall kill is down. When terrible weather conditions, including prevailing winds combine with vast natural food sources available to bears, don't help make the odds worse. Have patience, and hunt intelligently. Know when not to hunt at all. Now...you have a realistic chance to not only see bears, but to fill that tag too. 🐾

Mike Foss was born and raised in Washburn, Wisconsin (Bayfield County) and spent years as a professional bear and deer guide. He now assists Robert Haas Northern and Northern Wisconsin Outfitters. Connect with NWO at 715.373.0127 or northwiout@att.net.

Henry Big Boy All-Weather Declared "Coolest Thing Made in Wisconsin"

Henry Repeating Arms and their Big Boy All-Weather lever action rifle won the 'Coolest Thing Made in Wisconsin' competition organized by the Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce (WMC) from a contestant pool of over 150 different products and companies. The Big Boy All-Weather, which is manufactured in Henry's Rice Lake, Wisconsin facility, was nominated earlier this year in August and then went all the way through 4 rounds of popular votes. Over 30,000 votes were cast in the last round. The rifle, available in .44 Magnum, .357 Magnum and .45 Colt, is a popular choice for hunters that need a firearm that is less susceptible to harsh environmental conditions.

"It is incredible to see the diversity of products manufactured here in this state, and we are proud to call Wisconsin home," said Dan Clayton-Luce, Communications Director of Henry Repeating Arms during Henry's acceptance speech. Clayton-Luce continues, "We would like to thank all of the more than 500 Henry employees from both our Rice Lake, Wisconsin facility and Bayonne, New Jersey facility for being so dedicated to putting out a quality product every day."

Henry's 100,000+ sq. ft. Wisconsin manufacturing facility, managed by Henry Vice President and General Manager Andy Wickstrom, is responsible for about half of




The Henry Big Boy All-Weather won 'The Coolest Thing Made in Wisconsin' contest with a total of 30,000 votes cast in the final round. The rifle is manufactured in Rice Lake, Wisconsin.

Henry's entire product line, which encompasses over 200 different rifle and shotguns.

"This is a very exciting win for us," says Henry Repeating Arms President and Owner, Anthony Imperato. "We take so much pride in Made in America and it's clear that our fans and customers appreciate it just as much as we do. I would like to thank everyone who took the time to vote for us."

To learn more about the Big Boy All-Weather rifle from Henry Repeating Arms visit <https://www.henryusa.com/rifles/all-weather-big-boy/>.

Henry rifles and shotguns can only be purchased through a licensed firearms dealer. Most Henry dealers will offer a discount from the manufacturers' suggested retail price. For additional information about the company and its products visit [henryusa.com](https://www.henryusa.com). 

Henry Repeating Arms is one of the leading rifle and shotgun manufacturers in the United States and a world leader in the lever action category. The company motto is "Made in America, or not made at all" and its firearms come with a lifetime guarantee backed by award-winning customer service. The company is also known for its charitable endeavors under its Guns For Great Causes program, which focuses on sick children, both individual cases and children's hospitals, veteran and wounded veteran organizations, Second Amendment and wildlife conservation organizations. The company currently employs 535 people and has 250,000 square-feet of manufacturing space in its Rice Lake, Wisconsin and Bayonne, New Jersey facilities. The company is named in honor of Benjamin Tyler Henry who invented and patented the Henry rifle in 1860 – the first repeating rifle, the lever action rifle, which is America's unique contribution to international firearms design and is one of the most legendary, respected and sought after rifles in the history of firearms. Visit Henry Repeating Arms online at www.HenryUSA.com, on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/HenryRepeating, and on Instagram @Henry_Rifles.

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SPOTLIGHT | HURLEY

Traditions of fabulous winter fun

Tradition is defined as “a belief or behavior passed down within a group or society with symbolic meaning or special significance.” This is definitely true during the fall deer hunting seasons in Iron County. For many families, fall hunting camp is a symbol of tradition. So much goes into the planning, preparation, and participation of hunting camps. There is an excitement in the air as trail cameras are checked, stands are constructed, and bait piles are monitored, all in anticipation of “THE BIG ONE.”

As fall gives way to winter, north Iron County prepares for snowfall and ice, which provides many recreational opportunities. Iron County is THE snowfall capital of Wisconsin with an average of 180 – 200 inches of snow per year. Recently designated a Snowmobile Friendly County by the Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs, the Hurley area offers miles of groomed trails to snowmobile. The trails are maintained by the White Thunder Riders Club. For 50 years, the club has helped their community by devoting hours of volunteer time throughout the year to ensure that trails are safe and signed correctly. Call our office for a 2019 - 20 Iron County snowmobile map and plan your trip today!

Iron County offers more than snowmobiling in the winter. Some of the remotest trails in Wisconsin – the Uller and Montreal systems – are transformed into miles of groomed cross country ski trails. West of Hurley, Whitecap Mountains Resort offers three mountains with 45 trails spread over 400 acres to downhill ski.

Along with significant snowfall, we have ice on the 214 inland lakes, which includes the Gile Flowage. Spanning over 3,380 acres with a maximum depth of 27 feet, the flowage is home to walleye, smallmouth bass, muskie, northern pike, crappie, bluegill and perch.

After a day of adventure, be sure to stop at any of the area's many bar/restaurant establishments. Locally owned, they specialize in friendly service and fantastic food, including homemade pastas and pizzas, prime rib, and fresh, hand-packed burgers, among many others.

Explore Wisconsin




Hurley offers the most snowfall in Wisconsin and the beautifully groomed and scenic trails that you and your machine were made for. Photo courtesy of Marks Media Works

Plan a getaway and enjoy these upcoming local events:

- Pro Vintage Ice Oval Races, Saturday December 28, 2019
- USSA Pro Star Ice Oval Races, January 4 & 5, 2020
- Bank Club Ice Fishing Jamboree, January 18, 2020
- Willy's Still Ice Fishing Tournament, January 18, 2020
- Annie's Pub Ice Fishing Tournament, January 25, 2020

Join us soon in Hurley! www.hurleywi.com

CARPENTER, FROM PAGE 19


When hunting fields, look for pinch points that will minimize the deer's exposure. Set up along a point of timber or brush that juts into the open. Where two brushy fencelines cross is prime. Set up where two woodlots come close together or adjoin. In hill country, find saddles or low points in ridgetop fields, to catch deer sneaking between drainages. 

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

STRESING, FROM PAGE 23

pheasant (if in season) out of that frozen landscape.

Hunting with dogs: Hunting buddy Dale Marsen hunts with a small pack of beagles. Dale's dogs put dozens of rabbits in front of his 28 gauge shotgun, as well as those of his friends. I've hunted with Dale a few times, and the excitement of a chase is amazing! The beagles catch a fresh track and stay on it, chasing the rabbit until it circles past the hunter. At least that's how it's supposed to work. Sometimes the rabbit will go to ground, or take a detour and lose the pack. Once the dogs are on a rabbit, stay alert! Safety first, and be sure any rabbits you shoot at are well away from other hunters or pursuing dogs.

Rabbits are excellent table fare. Simply dress and skin the rabbit, then cut into five pieces. Rabbits fed the early pioneers as they settled the land and made their way west. Cottontails also fed rural families during the Great Depression of the 1930s. Hunting them today continues the proud American tradition of self-sufficiency and putting food on the table. 

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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Most rifles today come out of the box already shooting MOA (Minute of Angle) or better. Every now and then you get a rifle that just won't group. No matter how hard you try, the rifle isn't attaining that nice 1-inch accuracy that it should be. It can be very frustrating and can lead you to lose faith in the rifle. Once that happens, the rifle starts to work its way to the back of the gun safe. The good news is there are a lot of things that can get that rifle to perform to its potential. Here are a few suggestions that we can help you with:

Good optics. I hate to say it, but your great-grandpa's Tasco scope most likely won't cut it. Today's optics are amazing. With clear glass and a solid mount, your groups can improve a lot with modern, quality glass. At MJ Gunsmithing we sell Leupold and Vortex optics. It's never a bad idea to spend a little more on a scope.

Barrel crown. Cutting a new crown on the rifle can greatly increase accuracy. The last thing that the bullet touches is the end of the muzzle. Having a cleanly cut crown is very important. At MJ Gunsmithing we cut an 11-degree target crown. We take it one step further and also cut a 60-degree chamfer at the end of the rifling.

Trigger Job. Many factory rifles come with very heavy triggers. It is very difficult to shoot groups with a 5-pound trigger. MJ Gunsmithing can adjust most factory triggers, or we can install whatever aftermarket trigger you want. We would recommend Trigger Tech or Timney. Both can be set as low as 1.5 pounds!

Muzzle brake. It's not uncommon for people to flinch from recoil and not even know they are doing it. This can throw shots all over the place. The proper muzzle brake can greatly reduce perceived recoil and muzzle jump. This can lead to faster and more accurate follow-up shots. Sometimes muzzle jump is reduced to the point that the shooter can even watch the bullet impact through their optic! At MJ Gunsmithing we have our own brake that reduces recoil 60%.

Free-float barrel. Lots of factory barrels do not come free-floated. This can have a negative affect on barrel harmonics and lead to inconsistent groups. Opening the barrel channel can get the barrel free floating and relieve uneven press on the barrel



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CONTINUED ON PAGE 39

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STUART WILKE

If I Could Only Own One Gun

The practical and versatile AR

Mike "Shorty" Govas, owner of Shorty's Shooting Sports in West Allis, has bought, sold, and owned more firearms than most of us could imagine. Given that experience, you'd think he'd have to think about which one he would keep if he could only have one. Shorty doesn't blink an eye. "If I could only own one gun, it would be an AR," he said. "Even an inexpensive base model will be accurate and reliable, and you can hunt with them. They're also great target rifles and three-gun competitors."

The AR15 has often been referred to as "America's Gun," and for good reason: Depending on which source you refer to, United States citizens own somewhere between six and 16 million of them, making it the most popular firearm in the country. In its select-fire M16/M4 military configuration, it is the longest serving service rifle in United States history. Note that semi-auto civilian versions are commonly referred to as "ARs."

Eugene Stoner of the ArmaLite Corporation was the brain child behind the AR15 family of firearms, Shorty said. The rifle was developed during the

1950s as a proposed replacement of the aging semi-automatic M1 Garand and in response to the Soviets Union's select-fire, detachable-magazine fed, Avtomat Kalashnikov 47 ("Kalashnikov's Automatic 47"). The AR, originally chambered in 7.62 x 51 NATO (.308), was nothing like the semi-automatic Garand. The Garand was constructed of steel and had wood stock furniture. It held only eight rounds of .30'06 ammunition, which fed from a clip at the top of the receiver. The select-fire AR was a completely different animal that was made largely of aluminum, had plastic stock furniture and a carrying handle. Cartridges were chambered via a detachable magazine.

For any number of reasons too numerous to mention, the Army rejected the ArmaLite in favor of the M14 in .308, which was very similar to the Garand. The M14 proved to be big, heavy, and uncontrollable in fully-automatic mode, and was soon replaced by the M16, which was patterned after the ArmaLite, only now in 5.56 x 45 (.223) caliber. The M16 was much smaller and lighter than the M14, but it hadn't been properly vetted prior to its introduction to the jungles

of Vietnam, where it soon developed a reputation for jamming in battle.

Shorty notes that the M16 rifle, which evolved into the current M4 carbine, has been the US armed forces' standard service rifle for more than 50 years, longer than any other in our nation's history. All of the bugs that US troops experienced decades ago have long since been resolved, he said, making it virtually trouble-free, if properly maintained and fed good quality ammunition.

"You can buy a perfectly good, basic, AR for around \$600," Shorty explained. "It will shoot about saucer-sized groups at 100 yards, and with heavier bullets, can probably put down a deer at 100 yards. Anything beyond that is a crap-shoot, although some people might argue. On the other hand, you can buy a different upper in .300 Blackout and have a perfectly good deer hunting rifle for not a lot of money. Bargain-priced ARs will have okay barrels, heavy trigger pulls, and basic plastic stock furniture. None of that contributes to accuracy. Yeah, you can make a basic AR more accurate and ergonomic, but it's going to cost money, probably a lot of it."



Shorty's offers a variety of AR-type rifles, including this incredible Doug Turnbull Restorations' TAR-15 with a brilliant color case hardened finish and beautiful American Walnut stock furniture.

You might be better off initially paying more for a high quality, factory AR, rather than pouring money into a base model to make it more accurate."

Shorty says that without a doubt, no firearm ever produced in history is as versatile as an AR. The variety of optics, accessories, furniture, triggers, etc., is mind-boggling. ARs are made for every shooter's needs and budget and will range in price from about \$600 up to \$3,000,

Save yourself time and energy; visit Shorty's. He and his expert staff will help you make the best AR decision at a cost you can afford. 🍷

Stuart Wilke is a long-time contributor to On Wisconsin Outdoors. Contact him at mail. onwisconsinoutdoors.com. He would especially like to hear your ideas for future articles.

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Presents Firearms Info from Ron Stresing

RON STRESING

Giving a Gun to a Loved One *A gift that transcends generations*

Guns as Christmas gifts were made famous in the classic “A Christmas Story” movie with little Ralphie’s quest for his Red Ryder BB gun. Way back in 1966, my late father Herbert H. Stresing gave me a well-used Mossberg bolt-action .410 shotgun for Christmas. This was a quantum leap for me; before this I had hunted my first small game season with a 1930’s vintage Model 37 Winchester single-shot. The Mossberg held three of those long, green Remington shells, instead of just the one of the break action Winchester.

The little Mossberg is a fine example of the bargain priced (cheap) bolt action shotguns that were so popular back in the 1950s through the early 1960s. The stock is stained birch, and the bluing rather thin. It’s fit and finish are on a par with some of the war time Mosin-Nagant rifles I’ve seen. It doesn’t even have a serial number. Thing is, despite its negligible sale or trade-in value, I’d be hard pressed to trade it for its weight in gold. I harvested my first rabbit and duck with it, and took my first rooster pheasant on the wing with it. My son Adam learned to shoot using the little .410, and took his first small game animals with it. I have no idea what the other gifts were that I received that Christmas, but I still know that’s when I got the .410 shotgun.

A quality firearm is a gift that can be passed down for generations, and make a lifetime’s worth of memories for each generation that utilizes it. I can still remember the rooster busting out of a fence line, and swinging the .410 on him as he cackled and clawed for altitude. Or my son Adam making a difficult overhead shot with the same gun almost 40 years later on a pigeon. A good quality firearm is also an investment. Many, like high-end double guns or lever action rifles, often appreciate substantially in value. Besides making a memorable Christmas gift like mine was, it’s also a great way to commemorate a first deer season, high school or college graduation, and other important milestones.


If buying a firearm for a child, their level of maturity is the main consideration. My rule of thumb being, have they passed a Hunter Safety course? My sons were taught to respect firearms from little on, and were shown the real life effects of shot or bullets on harvested wild game. My older boy Josh lacked any interest in outdoor pursuits, but my younger son Adam was hooked! At age 12 he passed Hunter Safety, and had me apply for Horicon Zone



*Top: My son Adam’s 20 gauge graduation gift.
Bottom: My Christmas of 1966 bolt-action .410.*

goose tags for him. I bought him a single-shot 20 gauge and he harvested Canada geese with it that fall. When he graduated with honors from UW-Stevens Point, he was gifted a shotgun he had been looking at, a lovely 20 gauge over/under.

I’ve always thought of it as giving a “coming of age” sort of gift, saying that we are now trusting you to act responsibly, like an adult. The person giving a firearm also has the responsibility of making sure that the person receiving it knows how to clean, store, and maintain it, as well.

I guess the “moral of the story” is that a quality firearm is a gift that will be remembered, cherished and handed down. My dad has long since passed on, the sporting goods store where he bought the .410 was demolished years ago, and the farm where I shot my pheasant is now a subdivision. Even the dairy farm where Adam harvested his game 14 years ago has been sold. My little .410, however, still sits in the gun vault, waiting to teach a future generation how to shoot, and pass along a family legacy. 

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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MJ GUNSMITHING, *FROM PAGE 35*

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Elijah Jahns is the Head Gunsmith at MJ Gunsmithing

ELLIS, *FROM PAGE 24*

she plays with them and snuggles with them and kisses them. Rest assured they were given the best start and all the love that we could for the short time that we have had them. Please continue this when you take your puppy home. This is all they know."

"If there comes a time, God forbid, that you cannot keep your puppy or dog, for whatever reason, however old he is, please do not give him away to just anyone. Give him back to us. We will find him a new loving, caring home. We promise this to you."

And I promise this to you, Christine; Micah has been loved every day for nine years. For better or worse. He is out of his radiation treatment now, groggy with anesthesia, but he had a familiar tail wag for me and his head is buried between my legs for the comfort he knows will come. I'll kiss Micah when he feels better; right on those deformed lips and bucked teeth of his. Now people think we're twins.

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