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SPOTLIGHT | ALGOMA

CAPTAIN LEE HAASCH

Algoma-As Good as it Gets

Winter wonderland awakens on the lakeshore

Magic seems to happen on the lakeshore when Mother Nature blows from the North with chilling winds and snow showers, leaving a whisking, fog-like pattern covering the roadways. Ah, yes, winter at its finest. Snow drifts, iced over lakes and barren, leafless trees leave the countryside with a special kind of clean-looking beauty. To the outdoors enthusiast, this is what we wait for, snow covered trails for cross country skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling and frozen lakes and ponds for ice fishing.

The Algoma area has all of that and then some. The Ahnapee Trail connects Algoma to Casco, Kewaunee and Sturgeon Bay and offers over 50 miles of perfectly groomed snowmobile trail; a white network that also connects to hundreds of additional miles of trails that wind through Kewaunee and Southern Door Counties. Cross country skiers also enjoy the groomed snowmobile trails and the many local county and city parks available to them.

There is something special about quietly sitting over an eight-inch

hole, cut through two feet of solid ice waiting patiently for a hungry fish to take your bait on the end of a three-foot ice rod and reel. It is a magical moment when that trout or walleye pokes its head into the hole and comes to the surface to present itself to the angler tugging at the other end of the line. Whether sitting on a bucket outside in the elements or in a wood fire-stoked ice shack, ice fishing in the Algoma area is more than a past-time, it can be an obsession.

Experience for yourself the great fishery Lake Michigan has to offer. And if you want BIG fish, check out Algoma! For charter information or fishing reports, visit my website at: FishAlgoma.com or call 1-888-966-3474. From Capt. Lee and the crew aboard the Grand Illusion 3, good luck and good fishing! 🎣

Capt. Lee Haasch is a charter captain out of Algoma. He has over 50 years of Great Lakes angling experience and has been instructing anglers for over 35 years with educational seminars and freelance articles in outdoor publications.



Across the peninsula, the Bay of Green Bay is only a short 15 minute drive to trophy Walleye fishing.

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**PHIL SCHWEIK**

Frozen Tundra

New hardwater explorations

As a fishing guide, I have a number of favorite lakes. During the winter, I typically fish those that I am most confident in and have the most experience on. I do a lot of my pre-ice fishing scouting during the open water season. I use what I discover during open water scouting trips and apply it during the winter. But what about targeting lakes during the winter that I am unfamiliar with and have never been on?

I spend a lot of time checking out unfamiliar lakes during the winter. These are lakes that I may have heard about or that I have wanted to fish in the past or maybe it's just a lake in an area that I am driving through and I want to give a try. Where to start? What to look for? The answers may be easier than you think.

Generally, when I want to scout a lake that I am unfamiliar with, especially in winter, the first thing I check for is to see if I can find a DNR contour map. From there I have a general idea

of what I am looking at under the ice and I can start putting together a game plan. Typically, I look for specific features, such as the deepest part of the lake, a main lake basin, mid-lake humps, and weeds or weed edges.

When targeting these areas, your electronic gear is of upmost importance. This gear will be your eyes under the water, showing you details of specific areas and indicating if fish are present. With this knowledge, you can devise a plan of attack to target particular areas and different species of fish.

Once you know what you are looking at and the type of fish you are targeting, you can narrow it down accordingly. I generally like to target the main lake basin for suspended panfish and humps and weed edges for larger predator fish. These are typically done by drilling a lot of holes and running and gunning with my electronics to find on-the-spot locations or until I find fish. Once I find what I am looking for, I set up camp and now it's time to see what we can catch.

Heather Schulta with
some nice bluegills.



Using a variety of jigging rods and tip-ups, I set up a variety of options for myself to make the most of my arsenal and by covering multiple areas. After you have done this for a while, you will start to get a feel for areas that hold fish and areas that do not. But the best feeling of all is when you put in your time, do your homework, find that one special location that is just loaded with fish and, when you look around, discover that you're the only one on the ice!

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CAPTAIN DAVE DUWE

Hardwater Fishing is Open for Business

Ice fishing is for everyone

Ice fishing has been gaining in popularity in recent years. The hardwater months allow a great opportunity to get outside, enjoy the outdoors and, hopefully, catch a delicious meal. Ice fishing is not a complicated activity. With a few pointers, a novice angler can be successful.

When starting your ice fishing adventure, choose a body of water you have experience fishing during the summer months. Select a lake with shallow water as these areas freeze first. As a rule, if fish were there in late fall, they'll be there at first ice.

To maximize your success, pick the days with low pressure and light conditions. These are the kind of days that tend to be the warmest. I have had limited success when it is bitterly cold. Weather changes with

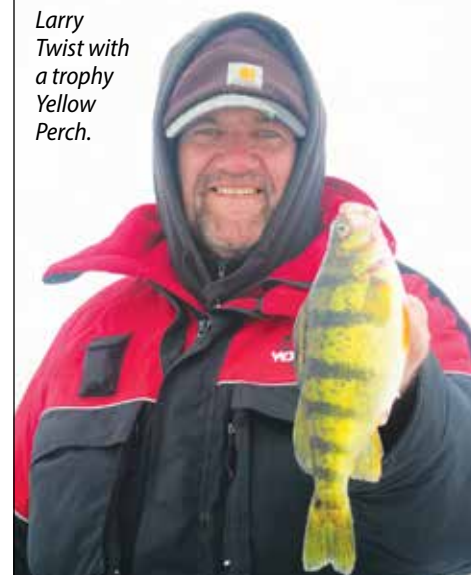
a little snow are always a good time to go. Like open water, first light and dusk can increase your chances of success.

Be prepared for weather conditions; warm clothes and good waterproof boots are a necessity. Sunglasses can be a huge asset with the snow glare. I choose loose fitting gloves that are easier to get on and off. Don't forget a hat; you really do lose most of your body heat from your head.

Safety should be your top priority. Respect the ice; there is no such thing as truly safe ice. When arriving to a new body of water, I always fish by other anglers. Try not to venture away from the crowds until you gain some experience with that body of water. Five inches of ice is

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Larry
Twist with
a trophy
Yellow
Perch.



On Wisconsin
Outdoors
With the Dick Ellis Experts

HUNTING • FISHING • TRAVEL
EXPLORE WISCONSIN

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www.williams.ca** **Explore Wisconsin****SPOTLIGHT | ASHLAND COUNTY**

Your 4-Season County

Winter has arrived in the northland. The snow is a welcome sight and the frigid temperatures help make for good, solid, ice for our big lake and inland lakes.

Ashland County is definitely a four-season county with lots of activities to do in the cold! The snowmobile trails are open and the groomers are on the job keeping trails ready for action.


Ice fishing opportunities can be found at a number of locations. Remember to check with the local bait shops to learn about the latest ice fishing conditions. Ice condition reports can also be found at travelashlandcounty.com.

**DUWE, FROM PAGE 3**

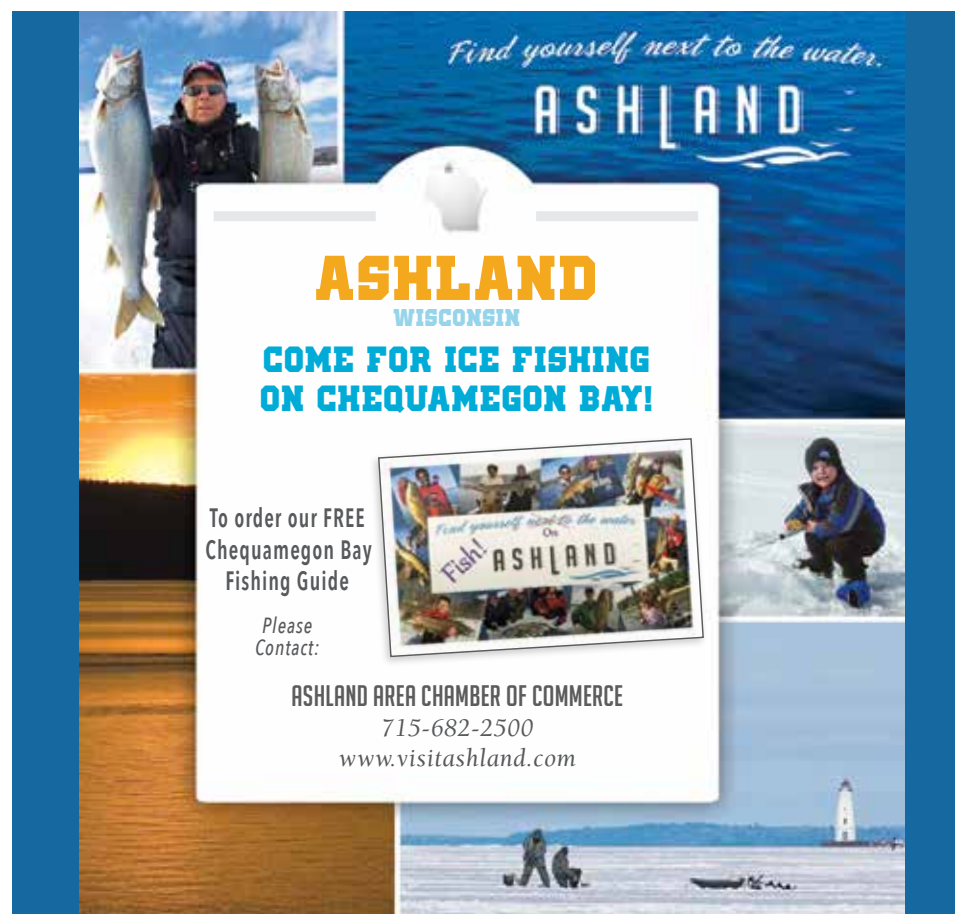
about the minimum for a venture out on the lake. The most important safety equipment is ice picks and ice cleats. Ice picks are used if you should fall through the ice; having them will help you get out of the water. Ice cleats fit on your boots to prevent a fall on the ice.

The two methods used to catch fish are tip-ups and ice fishing jig rods. The basic presentation is simple for tip-ups. Tip-ups are round or rectangle, they are designed to straddle the hole and have a flag for a bite indicator. Tip-ups are usually used for larger fish, like northern pike and walleyes. Spool your tip-up with 20- or 30-pound Dacron. Always use a monofilament leader. The mono leader is the least visible in the water. The leader length is 18 to 24 inches. I use a treble hook with a split shot on the leader. Use a sinker that is small enough to let your bait freely swim. Place your bait one foot above the weed growth. For bait, suckers or golden shiners work well. Hook the shiner by the dorsal fin; it seems to make them swim harder and attract more fish.

For novice anglers, you don't need the most expensive jig rods. I use spinning rods in three- or four-foot lengths. The reels are spooled with four-pound monofilament line. There are braids out there, but they can be a little tougher to use as they are harder to tie and cut. My rods all have spring bobbers, but if you don't want to stare at a spring bobber, a tiny, fixed bobber will also work. When pan fishing, fish a five- or six-inch hole. The smaller hole prevents a lot of light penetration. Jig fishing wax worms or spikes are good choices.

Ice fishing requires thought and planning. Every year many ice anglers face embarrassing mistakes due to bad judgement. Safety must be your top priority. 

Dave Duwe guides the lakes of Southeastern Wisconsin. Call or text him at 262-728-8063.



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TOM LUBA

Reasons to Dance a Jig

Make this inexpensive, effective fish catcher right at home

When I think of one trophy-deserving lure that belongs in a tackle box, the swift-sinking leadhead jig wins hands-down. I became aware of this lure some years ago when I met an angler who made his own jigs. He gave me some pointers that worked great and I was soon making my own.

Initially, I got a round head mold covering light to heavy weights. Then lead, a melting pot, the suggested hooks and I was ready. Using jigs, my fish count soared. I was now able to cover the total water column with any number and types of soft plastics or live bait or jigs made with bucktail, feathers or other adornments. I can work to match the hatch, or offer something that might be totally “off the wall” to coax a bite.

Nowadays, there are numerous molds available, from round heads to bass jigs, football heads and others to fish a lot of trailers, from grubs to tubes, to a variety of soft plastics. I’ve accumulated about a dozen different molds over time. I’ve even modified some with a dremel tool that makes them more efficient for my fishing.

A large bankroll isn’t needed to get started. Decide what you like to fish for, then find the mold that fits your needs. Molds have suggested hook numbers and sizes on them. Usually customer service people can get you the right hooks. Even if you want to rig something a little bulkier, you can probably bend the existing hook up to widen the gap for a better hook set.

If you simply want to fish a jig tipped with live bait, or a plastic like a twister tail grub, you’ll need the mold, a small electric melting



pot, lead and hooks. I use a lot of plain lead heads, i.e., no color. But you can certainly paint them. Use a pliers to get them out of the mold when cast - burn resistant gloves help. Trim any edges and you’re set.

If you want dressed jigs, like maribou, bucktail, or other materials, you can buy as needed. For tying, you’ll need a vice. I look for inexpensive ones that will accommodate the bigger jig hook. For dressed jigs, thread, a bobbin to hold thread, cement - I use super glue - scissors and a small wire loop that will get your thread through the tiny bobbin tying tube. To tie, anchor thread on jig collar and place small amounts of material evenly around it, securing with thread and glue.

Paint with a white base coat first, then other colors. Fluorescent orange works for



Tools of the trade – a vise, bobbin and thread and a wire loop to pull thread through the nose of a bobbin.



A small melting pot that works quite well.



A dressed jig; this one is a bucktail, tied on a jig head author made.

walleye and fluorescent pink for crappie. For bass, use black and a matching black with blue fleck pre-slit skirt layer dressing. Most bass jigs use fiber weed guards and you can buy some already molded to start. If you like it, get a mold. Try jigs with “bass” or “grass” designations. I use a small needle-nose pliers to pull two skirt layers through a skirt collar. Stretch collar over open end of pliers, then slip hook through it, and slide up on collar behind head. You can get a tool to make skirts, but a pliers works for me. Trim to desired length. Black/blue jigs work most everywhere.

Check web sites for material cost estimates.



If you need some guidance, drop me an email at tomluba7@gmail.com. Tom Luba has been fishing jigs for years, and he likes it. You might, too.



A production mold for making one size head. And another making numerous weights of a jig worm bass head.

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On The Cover

In this issue of OWO, you will again see how many thousands of miles of well groomed trails Wisconsin offers the outdoor enthusiast throughout the state. Tens of thousands of snowmobilers and ATV riders take advantage to visit remote forests, reconnect with their favorite counties, or to find new treasures found by sledding this vast network.

For our cover shot of the 2023

Yamaha Sidewinder SRX LE, special thanks

to Donahue Super Sports, Wisconsin's Power Sports Headquarters located on HWY 54 East of Wisconsin Rapids, and Mark's Media Works.



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Wisconsin Fishing Expo is BACK with Epic Amounts of Inventory!

The Wisconsin Fishing Expo (WFE) returns and will take place February 24 - 26 in the Exhibition Hall of the Alliant Energy Center, in Madison. Consumers can find almost any fishing product imaginable with 345 + booths or get a deal on a boat with 11 dealers present representing over 30 brands. For 2023, WFE also has on-line ticketing that will help make the lines quicker with occasional deals or merchandise popping up online.

Dan Durbin, one of the owners of the Expo, said that inventory levels are about where they were pre-pandemic so consumers can expect to see packed booths and plenty of boats to choose from.

"Anyone who waited too long last year to pick up their favorite bait or to order a new boat may have found themselves disappointed," Durbin said. "Boat dealers are seeing more options come in, although they warn people not to wait too long if they want a specific color or model."

Jeff Bast, of the Expo ownership team, said that the show is well-rounded and also gives back to the community. "We allow dozens of non-profit groups in each year to exhibit for free or at reduced rates," he said. "From vets' fishing groups, to women's groups, to those who help get inner city kids out on the lake - this is our way to grow fishing and the groups that support it."

WFE Bingo is back again and sponsored by ACME lures, for kids 12 and under. "The kids can travel through the show with their parents and visit seven specific booths where a vendor will mark their bingo card," said Don Kirby, the floor manager for the event. "When they reach the final turn-in spot, they'll get a prize package consisting of lures, stickers, candy and more."

The Bumper Boats exhibit, The Touch of the Wild trailer from the Outdoor Heritage Education Center, and the always-popular minnow races, fishing pond, face painting, balloon animals, and trout pond will be on hand.

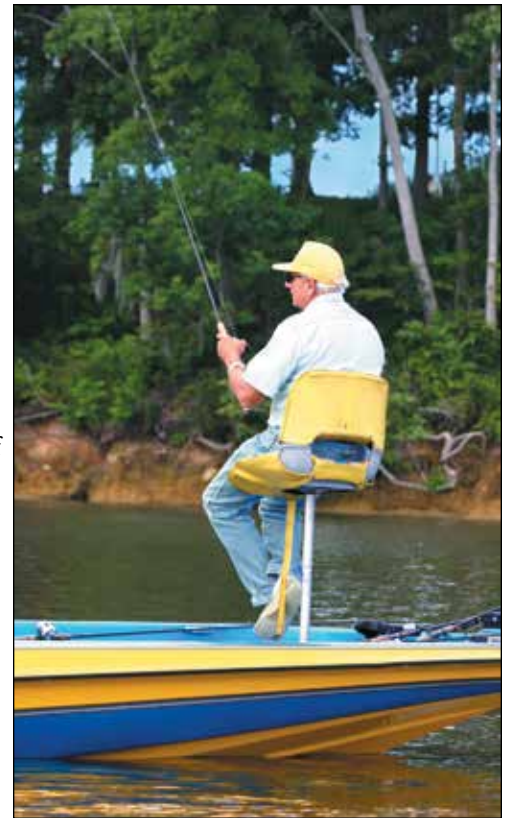
The WFE has always strived to get seminar speakers that are among the most knowledgeable in the industry, and 2023 is no different. Expo speakers include huge names like John Murray, Cody Meyer, Larry Smith, Steve Heiting, Jeff Van Remortel, Tommy Kemos, Capt. Barb Carey, Capt. Cheryl Smith, Brian Schiller, and Patrick Smith. Capt. Greg Karch will be giving away 75 rod and reel combos at one seminar or tackle boxes at another and t-shirts at another.

Whether you want to learn about bass, fly fishing, walleye, muskie, panfish, or get women into the sport, we have something every day for whatever a person wants to fish for," Durbin said.

The show runs Friday 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm, Saturday 9:00 am - 7:00 pm and Sunday 9:00 am - 4:00 p.m. Tickets are \$10 at the doors with \$2.50 off for veterans presenting a form of military ID. Kids 12 and under are free.

Sponsors include Wisconsin Outdoor News, Don's Marine, Lucas Oil, The Big 1070, National Professional Anglers Association, Future Anglers Foundation, Blackfish and Daiwa.

For more information about the WFE go to www.wifishingexpo.com





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RECIPES BY SUZETTE

Made with Venison

Christmas gifts that contain food or beverages are a big hit at our home. One such recent gift contained two packages of goose liver pâté (pâté de foie gras), which was truly delicious. After partaking of this rare delight, I thought I would share some pâté recipes made with venison. Enjoy!

Venison Liver Pate

- 1 pound venison liver

1 stick butter, softened

¼ cup mayonnaise

½ teaspoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

1 medium onion, chopped

2 hard boiled eggs, chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

Heat olive oil in large skillet. Cut liver into small pieces and sauté in olive oil until cooked through but still tender. Set aside to cool. Meanwhile, combine remaining ingredients in medium sized bowl and mix thoroughly. Place in food processor or high-speed blender and add cooled venison; blend until smooth.

Refrigerate, covered, for at least three hours. Serve with crackers, bread sticks, or crostini.

Pashtet (Courtesy of Aunt Marian)

- 1 pound venison liver

½ pound chicken or any game bird
- ½ pound butter

Salt & pepper

Boil separately chicken and liver until tender. Save the chicken bouillon. Put chicken and liver through grinder several times, using fine blade, until perfectly smooth. While still warm, cream in butter. Add warm bouillon until the mixture is a paste consistency and can be easily spread. Season to taste.

Pack in buttered mold and let set in cold place for five or six hours. Spread on crackers.

Venison Liver Paste (Courtesy of Mom)

- ¼ cup butter

½ cup flour

1 2/3 cup milk

1 1/3 pound venison liver

2/3 pound beef tallow
- 4 anchovy fillets

1 onion, diced

½ teaspoon allspice

Salt & pepper

Melt butter in saucepan over medium heat. Stir in flour; slowly add milk, stirring constantly. Continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until sauce has thickened. Remove from heat and set aside.

Run the liver, fat (tallow), anchovies, and onions through a meat grinder three times. Combine the meat mixture and the white sauce; add allspice and salt & pepper to taste. Pour into two greased loaf pans; set in hot water and bake in 350° oven for 1 to 1 ¼ hours. Serve with crackers or crostini.

Contact Suzette at recipesbysuzette@onwisconsinoutdoors.com.

DENNY MURAWSKA

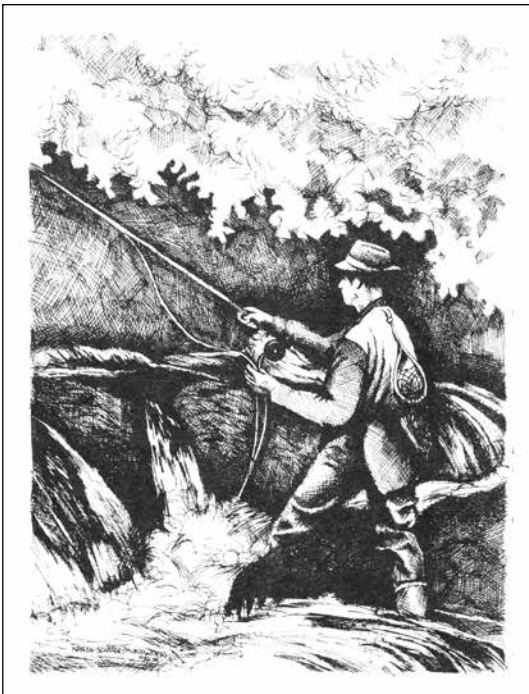
Auld Danged Line
Out with the old

It is that time of year again to resolve to do better. Time to relax in the warmth of your home and go through all your outdoors belongings. Time to clean up a bit and organize. So, let's make two piles, things to cast out, and things to save. No use holding onto a bunch of stuff that just clutters up your world. Here is how my comprehensive system worked for me this year.

Inside the tackle box is a bird nest of snarled line. No use for that! A hook with a mummified minnow on it. Tough little fellow to remove now. Wait, the cat might like it! Hang onto it. What the heck is in that Zip-loc bag? Hmmmm, it appears Power Bait needs to be tightly sealed. Toss it, or maybe not. Perhaps a little soaking in water will rehydrate those twister tails. Save pile, check!

Camouflage clothes will have to go through the wash. Better check those pockets. A couple of acorns, and nice big ones. Might be cute for ornaments. There is something else rattling around in there. Jackpot! Three sticks of jerky. Feels petrified and smells a bit like that empty bottle of doe urine, but there is no shelf life on jerky, is there? Great snack food for the next Packers game. Oh no! These pants had the crotch torn out straddling a barbed wire fence. Seemed a bit tight in the 38 inch waist, too. Probably best to toss them, but hang on! This is the year I resolve to lose those extra twenty pounds. Save pile.

Let's see. Ah yes, the freezer. What a mess! Here is an unlabeled package. Feels like, like, oh yeah, that roadkill you picked up three years ago. Looks like a bullsnake. Well, plenty of time now to skin it out and make that snazzy hat band. What does this package say? Deer suet 2008! That's a keeper. Been meaning to show the kids how frontier folk used to render fat to make their own soap. A meaningful lesson in history for sure. This is the real stuff kids need to

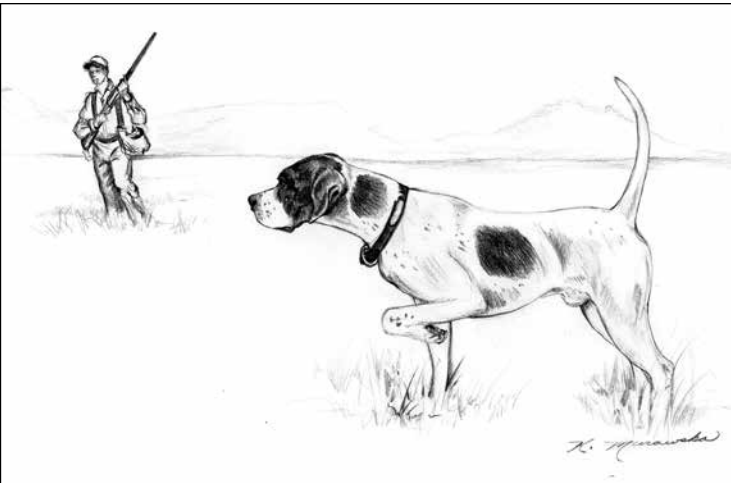


know.

Finally, before taking the mud-boggin' truck to the car wash, it might pay to spruce up the interior a bit. A 10 minute investigation into every nook and cranny reveals a treasure trove of items for the "save" box. Under the seat, a handful of reflective tacks and flagging tape, which allowed me once again to find my way in and out of the forbidding coulee I hunt. Here's a couple of lucky turkey feathers I should have stuck in my cap. Might have gotten that spike buck I missed. Everything adds up. Five Jolly Ranchers, a glove without a mate, chapstick, two empty airline bottles of brandy, and half a roll of perfectly good toilet paper.

All told, this was a productive and enlightening adventure. Even more encouraging, most of the stuff saved is perfectly useful. Quite a haul in fact. Reduce, reuse, recycle, that is the way to go.

Denny Murawska is the owner and operator of Angler's Art Fish Taxidermy and the author of "The Elk Pool." Check out his work and/or contact him at www.aa-taxidermy.com.





BEAR BAITING 101

What to Know Before You Go

As the days grow longer and thoughts of spring loom on the horizon, Bob's Bear Bait is planning for the 2023 season!

Our shops are located in Appleton, Wisconsin; Phelps, Wisconsin; Tomahawk, Wisconsin; Birnamwood, Wisconsin and Ishpeming, Michigan. We continue to search for quality bear bait for each and every location to fit the needs of every hunter, from guides to small groups. We plan to do some 'Shovel Your Own Products' events at a reduced price a few times throughout the year.

As the laws are changing, we're slowly phasing out the use of chocolate in our baits, but some will still be available at discount. Fall comes quick, so remember to shop early. Our natural baits, such as berries, nuts, peanut butter, etc., sell out fast. With that in mind, spring is a great time to scout before the spring blooms start! Look for creeks, water, or low dark conifer areas adjacent to hardwoods.

Another important tip to remember is to steer clear of sites that hunters baited the year prior, as they may be returning with somebody from their group that has drawn a tag. We hear many disappointing stories about several bear baits within a quarter mile of each other, so it's important to plan early!

Enjoy the entire season. Baiting is one enjoyable and gratifying part of the hunt.

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DAN MOERICKE

An 'Up Nort' Report Deer Camp Review from the Deer Desert

If I use two shells each year to sight in my rifle, then a box of shells could last a decade while hunting in the Northwoods. The past two years that was the extent of it. Two shells fired to make sure the sights were on, sit in the woods for nine days, then clean the gun and put it back on the rack.

Thankfully the gun deer season is about more than just shooting a deer. Once again this year our group of four grizzled hunting veterans gathered at Mark "Lard" Krueger's lake home to pursue the elusive whitetail buck in the Nicolet National Forest. If we had never set foot into the woods, the meals alone made it worth the trip.

Friday night we were treated to a fish fry courtesy of Lard's brother Kurt. Fish, fries, slaw and Scooter Brandenburg's famous tartar sauce made for happy bellies around the table. That evening, we paid a visit to the Yadro deer camp on the shores of Anvil Lake where stories were told and lies exchanged. You know, normal deer camp stuff.

Saturday morning was, in a word, miserable. Cold and windy, it

wasn't until 9:30 that I saw the first living creature from my stand. A red squirrel ventured out from its snug nest, scurried around for a bit, and quickly decided the weather was nastier than it was willing to tolerate. After hearing a total of eight shots all morning, I decided the same thing. For the afternoon hunt, I moved to an oak ridge that I'd scouted a couple weeks prior and was pleasantly surprised to jump a doe and a fawn on the way to my stand. In the Nicolet, just seeing a deer counts as a successful day. Three out of four of us saw a deer opening day, but no bucks.

The Saturday evening menu featured creamed pheasant and grouse over wild rice, again courtesy of Kurt Krueger. A fifth crew member, Deano Radke, showed up bearing pies, so dessert was extra special. Our deer camp is no weight loss clinic.

Sunday dawned even colder and nastier than the day before and no deer were sighted. A dinner of smoked, barbecued ribs, scalloped

Inflation is real as the author's ammunition budget soared by 50% this year.



CONTINUED ON PAGE 21



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TOM MUELLER

The Fox Valley Retriever Club

Retriever training close to home

It's that time again. The 2022 hunting season is almost over and it's time to begin preparing for the 2023 hunting season. Reflect on what was good and what wasn't when it comes to your retriever's performance. If your dog performed well, then it's just a matter of putting in some effort to keep it working at that level. If some of its work was disappointing, put some thought into what needs to be done, how you are going to do that, and where.

In previous articles, I have mentioned the Fox Valley Retriever Club. It is a club that,

over the years, has greatly benefitted my retriever training. One of only a few retriever training clubs in Southeastern Wisconsin, it is conveniently located near the Metro-Milwaukee area in the City of Muskego. Unlike some clubs, Fox Valley holds regularly scheduled training sessions throughout the spring and summer. Typically, the sessions take place on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings. The training season begins around early November and continues through the summer and into early September when training interests turn to hunting interests. By that time, most of the retrievers and their owners that have been attending the sessions are rock solid and ready for the hunting season. With the frequency of training days available, opportunities to work with your retriever are always there.

The club spans over 80 acres. Several years ago, four ponds were dug so dogs could be trained to do water and combination land and water retrieves. The club mows an area for teaching hand signals and casting. There is a small wooded section that can be used for shed hunt training. Both dead ducks and dummies are used in the training sessions and starter pistols and blank shotgun shells are used to condition the dogs to gunfire.



An aerial view of the Fox Valley Retriever Club training grounds.

Decoys are set out to mimic a hunting or hunt test scenario. Depending on you and your dog's knowledge and experience, concepts that a retriever should learn and know can be taught, improved, and perfected when training with the club. Everything from teaching a pup basic obedience to conditioning it to hold a dummy, deliver it to hand, and doing a triple retrieve with a double-blind retrieve through land and water can be taught and learned at the club training sessions.

With close to 70 members, there is a goodly amount of training knowledge and experience that can be tapped into. Any questions that

you may have about training retrievers can be asked and answered. Training scenarios can be set up to work out an issue that your dog might be exhibiting. If you're heavy into pheasant hunting, spending a few hours walking it around the club grounds is a great way to get it physically ready for that sport.

Whichever direction you're steering your retriever's training, the Fox Valley Retriever Club is the place to get it done. 🐾

For more information contact Tom at winddancer. rtrvr@hotmail.com or Facebook.

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NATALIE WEEKS

Random Lake High School Hunt Club

The beginning of life-long field journeys

The Highlands Hunt Club in Cascade was the setting for the second annual pheasant hunt for Random Lake High School's American Wilderness Science (AWS) class. The curriculum for this class was first written and taught by Natalie Weeks, Random Lake High School life sciences teacher. Students study topics ranging from archery, land management, National Parks, the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, hunter safety and wildfire science. The pheasant hunt was the culmination of their classwork related to hunter safety. Students who had already been certified in hunter safety got a great refresher on best practices while they helped their classmates learn the skills necessary for safe shooting and hunting.

The AWS field experience was provided free of cost to the students thanks to a generous donation from the Wisconsin Chapter of Safari Club International. Organization members pride themselves in hunter advocacy through their humanitarian and education efforts. They support the AWS



Random Lake High School student Tyler Schoneman looks for birds.

class year after year and make this annual trip possible.

After arriving at The Highlands, students split into a group composed of experienced hunters and another of new hunters. Seasoned hunters headed into the fields to harvest birds with the help of several parent and community volunteer mentors and guides with their dogs. The students with less know-how headed to the 5-stand range to get assistance on shotgunning techniques from their teacher, Mrs. Weeks, School Resource Officer, Todd Traas, and community volunteers. Once birds were harvested and clays were broken and confidence gained, the students had lunch and switched groups for the afternoon.

The afternoon saw Mrs. Weeks teaching her experienced students shooting skill games and the new hunters harvested their first birds and learned how to field dress the pheasants. Many of the students who harvested birds had never even shot a gun until the day of the trip. Being able to share the experience



Ellen Klug and Grace Gibson pose in the field.

with their friends and positive role models in a safe and controlled environment was the perfect introduction to hunting. Students from last year's AWS class joined the field trip and helped mentor their classmates in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

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Advanced tickets are available until 3pm Friday, March 17 for just \$7 at ticket locations or online with convenience fee. Tickets available at the door Saturday and Sunday for \$10 per person, children 11 and younger are free all weekend. Special \$5 Friday from 3-8pm general admission, no advance purchase needed – Friday only!

MENARDS Tickets available at local Festival Foods and Menards stores starting February 1, 2023. **festival**

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Wisconsin Sport Show

15th annual outdoor extravaganza coming to Eau Claire

The 15th Annual Wisconsin Sport Show will take place March 17, 18 and 19, 2023, at the Chippewa Valley Expo Center in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Admission to this event is free for kids 11 and younger. For adults, advanced discount tickets are available on-line at WiSportShow.com or Eau Claire Menards and Festival Foods Stores for just \$7, or at the door for \$10. Special discount days include: \$5 Friday (general admission is \$5 for ages 12+ on Friday, March 17 from 3-8 PM, no advance purchase needed) and \$5 Senior Sunday (ages 63+ get in at the door for just \$5 from 10 AM to 4 PM on Sunday, March 19, no advance purchase needed).

This year's event is a true family affair featuring a petting zoo, seminars and presentations, over \$3,000 in door prizes, live chainsaw carving demonstrations, free parking, concessions and beer garden, and more.

Boats, ATVs, resorts and lodges, hunting and fishing guides and retailers, non-profit organizations and more will all be on hand and all indoors under one roof.

The Wisconsin Sport Show is also a great place to promote your business. "We still have exhibitor spaces and sponsorships available," said Joy White, Sales Director. "We expect to have 7,000-9,000 people go through our show and many of them are looking for new products to purchase, boats and blinds to take



home, and vacations to plan. You can give us a call at (715) 579-7127 or visit our website for opportunities at WiSportShow.com."

Guests at past shows have great things to say as well. "I like all the food options and the beer garden; there was almost too much to pick from," said Dan Clark, event guest in 2022. "The exhibits and new products were also fun for me. I'm always looking for new fishing gear and I definitely found a lot to take home."

The fishing seminars are great for last minute tips before the spring fishing opener, and there are new and custom tackle and bait dealers and other outdoor retailers with products you won't find in the big box stores. There really is something for everyone at this year's Wisconsin Sport Show. Get your tickets and information at www.WiSportShow.com.



Spring into the 2023 outdoor season by attending the 15th Annual Wisconsin Sports Show at the Chippewa Valley Expo Center in Eau Claire March 17 – 19.

TOM CARPENTER

Meet MacQuarrie

Fireside reading for a Wisconsin winter

Unfortunately, the work of many famed outdoor writers from “back in the day” seem to be fading into oblivion.

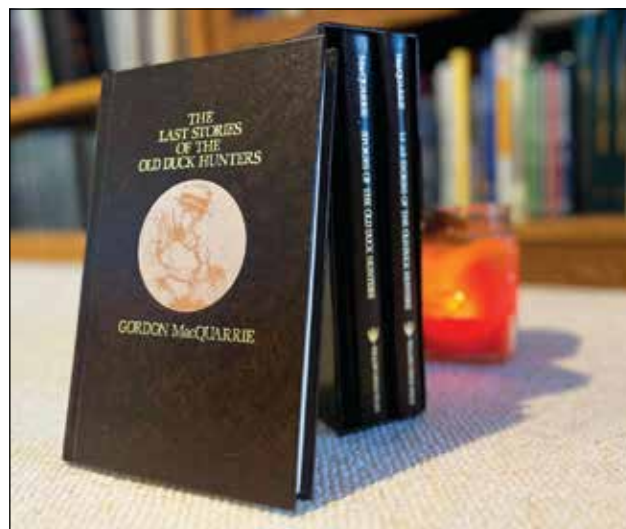
Even with their words still in print, or yet available on the used book market, stories from the likes of Charlie Elliott, Robert Ruark, Gene Hill, Nash Buckingham, Archibald Rutledge, Jack O'Connor, Burton Spiller and so many other craftsmen are being lost to a new generation.

These writers and their compatriots captured the essence of hunting, fishing, and the relationships between human and nature (and human and human), in fine and eloquent fashion.

There is another writer I'll add to that “starter list” of outdoor writing greats. He may be less well known, but his work, in my estimation, is every bit as perfect and impactful in capturing the spirit of the outdoors. To top that off, he is a native son, and most of his stories take place in Wisconsin.

His name? Gordon MacQuarrie.

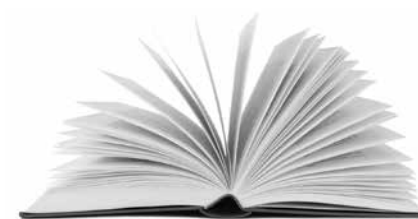
MacQuarrie was born in Superior in 1900, graduated with a journalism degree from the University of Wisconsin – Madison in 1924, and worked as a reporter and then editor at the Superior Telegram newspaper. On the side, he wrote hunting and fishing stories, many of which focused on the antics and escapades shared with his real-life father-in-law, Allan Peck, and their semi-fictional, two-man organization



known as The Old Duck Hunters' Association, Inc.

The “Inc.” stood for “Incorrigible.” Which gives you an idea of the delightful tone of MacQuarrie's tales.

The stories were collected posthumously into a three-book set entitled “Stories of the Old Duck Hunters & Other Drivel.” Later “MacQuarrie Miscellany” was published: a collection



of lost manuscripts that were found in an old trunk. What a treasure chest that turned out to be.

Don't let the Old Duck Hunters title fool you: MacQuarrie weaves tales about so much more than duck hunting. Sure, he was nuts about duck hunting. But MacQuarrie was also a deer hunter (“You've Got to Suffer!”), grouse hunter (“Pa'tridge Fever,” “Cause and Cure”), trout bum (“Now, in June”), basser (“If You Fish the St. Croix”) and so much more. Those are just a few of my favorites. Read him and you'll find your own.

In 1936, MacQuarrie accepted a position as outdoor editor with the Milwaukee Journal and moved there with his wife Helen, who died in 1952. In September 1954, MacQuarrie married fellow Journal reporter Ellen Gibson, and some of his later tales involve adventures with his new father-in-law in southwestern Wisconsin ... a change of scenery from the northern Wisconsin focus in many of his other stories.

Sadly, MacQuarrie died of a heart attack at age 56. Who knows what else was waiting in his pen to regale us with tales of Wisconsin's great outdoors?

I read MacQuarrie on cold winter nights and I find myself right there with him on his adventures. And before drifting off to sleep, I thank him for his gift of magnificent words. 🍷

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DICK ELLIS

Wisconsin Wildlife Federation challenges DNR Draft Wolf Management Plan

Wisconsin DNR posted a 167-page Draft Wolf Management Plan on November 11, 2022 that eliminates “a single numeric population goal”. DNR requested that respondents “invest time in reading the draft before submitting feedback”. Feedback, for reasons unknown, is accepted from Wisconsin residents and non-residents.



On *Wisconsin Outdoors* (OWO) received the letter to follow from the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation (WWF) responding to the plan. The WWF represents 211 affiliated grassroots hunting, angling and sporting conservation clubs throughout Wisconsin. OWO strongly recommends that your investment of time goes to reading the 1-1/2 pages below prior to connecting with DNR Draft Plan though the DNR website.

OWO sought input on the DNR plan from Laurie Groskopf, who we have learned to trust as a wolf management source of expertise. Groskopf is on the Board of Directors for the WWF, and a delegate to the Wisconsin Conservation Congress but stressed that she is commenting as an individual and not as a representative of any organization.

“My main reaction is disbelief that the spread of wolves and conflicts has not been recognized as the threat to rural life it is,” she said. “L. David Mech, the world’s longest and most experienced wolf researcher, said ‘Some zones for some periods can support total protection (of wolves), whereas in others, wolf numbers will have to be reduced to

various degrees or removed. They are prolific, disperse long distances, readily recolonize new areas where humans allow them, and are difficult to control when populations become established.”

“All of this is lost on the WDNR. DNR uses no science but makes the decision to extensively enlarge what they define as suitable wolf habitat. They use only the fact that wolves live there, so in their mind, it must be suitable habitat.”

In the Wisconsin Wolf Management Plan approved in 1999 and 2007, the population goal was 350 wolves. DNR is currently mandated by law to manage state wolf numbers to 350. Thirty-six Wisconsin County Boards have passed resolutions supporting a wolf goal of 350 or less. These 36 county boards are the elected representatives of 1,266,000 Wisconsin citizens.

DNR is using a 2022 “Social Science” Survey to claim majority public support for a wolf population clearly growing and expanding in Wisconsin. Groskopf pointed to the 2022 Spring Hearings, where Wisconsin residents approved a wolf goal of 350 or less (in favor: 12,978. Against: 6,410), a resolution supported in 69 of the state’s 72 counties.

“For reasons I don’t comprehend, the DNR is deaf to these and other opinions that the wolf population needs to be limited and controlled,” Groskopf said. “As every wolf expert said at an International Wolf Conference in October, 2022, wolves are fine in areas with minimal human presence and enough game to eat. However, Wisconsin has by far the highest human density of any wolf-recovered state. Unfortunately, the DNR is promoting wolf persecution

by insisting wolves be allowed to occupy all or portions of 37 counties in Wisconsin, with the great possibility they will expand into adjacent counties and states. There are no controls on their numbers. Very sad for the wolves. Very sad for people in wolf-occupied areas.”

As the WWF states: The draft plan allows for a subjective process for managing wolves. The population goal was established in the 1999 plan due to lack of confidence in a subjective wolf management strategy. There is no accountability without a numeric population goal. The only scientific analysis of wolf habitat done to-date of Wisconsin landscape quantified the social carrying capacity as 350 wolves. The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation strongly requests maintaining the numeric population goal of 350 wolves in the final plan. 🐾

JOHN ELLIS

DNR Mismanagement goes far beyond Wolves

In the Winter 2022 edition of *Wisconsin Natural Resources Magazine*, Dana Fulton Porter writes “Due to climate change, the ice fishing season in Wisconsin is about 24 days shorter than it was in the 1970’s.” Let that sink in for a moment, and use your judgment. You don’t have to be a scientist to know that Dana’s statement is ridiculous. But it’s a great illustration of how Wisconsin DNR mismanagement, and misinformation, goes far beyond wolves. It’s everywhere. 🐾



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AFFILIATED WITH THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

December 10, 2022

Sarah Barry
 Deputy Secretary
 Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources
 101 S. Webster St.
 Madison, WI 53707-7921

Dear Deputy Secretary Barry,

At our Board meeting today, the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, with more than 211 affiliated grassroots hunting, angling, and sporting conservation clubs and alliances throughout the state, approved the following response to the WDNR 2022 Draft Wolf Management Plan and requests the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources take the necessary actions to address the following points in a revised draft or final plan:

Public Comment:

1. The current 60-day public comment period is not an adequate amount of time to gather input considering the timing of the release overlaps with hunting seasons and multiple holidays. We request the timeline be extended to 90-days.
2. Not all residents have email or computer access in their homes. For this reason, we request the WI DNR provide multiple and widely distributed announcements of opportunities and

methods for public input along with comment period deadlines.

3. There is no means for submitting additional supporting information to the WI DNR for consideration in the draft plan. The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation requests the WI DNR provide the public with an email and mailing address to submit comments and additional supporting information.
4. The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation strongly requests the WI DNR hold public hearings across the state and hold more in wolf affected zones for input on the draft plan.

Inclusion/Exclusion:

5. There is no provision for the inclusion of comments from county and local governments into the draft plan. Many county and local governments have taken positions on wolf population goals and must be included in the process.
6. A functional advisory committee with a balanced mix of impacted stakeholders would vastly improve this ongoing process.

Public Survey Methodology:

7. The public survey does not adequately represent those actively impacted by wolves. Use of county and zip codes to select samples does not accurately reflect those exposed to wolves and impacted by wolves. We request the WI DNR actively seek out those impacted by wolves and place greater emphasis on their perspective.
8. Survey design is flawed. Survey length discourages responses from some individuals. Terminology is undefined and could be seen as biased. Some questions lack balance in positive and negative responses, causing an imbalance in responses. All these features of the survey alienate some individuals causing them to not respond.

Population Estimates:

9. Approximately 40% of the wolf tracking units are not tracked to the required three-time standard and not all units are

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

WWF, FROM PAGE 18

- tracked. This lends itself to under-counting and under-reporting wolf population in those wolf tracking units.
10. Lone and dispersing wolves are not counted in the current population model as is done in western states. Some states add 12% or 15% to their estimates to account for lone and dispersing wolves. We urge lone wolves be included in Wisconsin's population estimate.
 11. The WI DNR is not taking full advantage of public reporting of wolf sightings. The online tool for reporting should be better advertised and the WI DNR should clarify that personal information is protected and not available as public record.
 12. GPS collar tracking provides the WI DNR with useful information on travel patterns and pack locations for counting. Increased use of GPS collars should be considered.

Conflict Management:

13. The draft management plan is passive and lacks active conflict management for depredations of non-agricultural domestic animals such as dogs and other pets. Increased harvest is not a method identified in the draft plan to reduce such depredations. Include targeted population reduction in areas of heavy depredation of dogs and other non-agricultural domestic animals. This should include all legal methods of harvest for targeted population reductions.
14. The draft plan does not address a numeric conflict reduction goal. We request a goal be set and included in the plan so effectiveness of methods can be measured.
15. The draft plan appears to have biases against hunting with dogs. Hunting with hounds has the same statutory and state constitutional protections as agriculture and should have equal active measures preventing depredations.
16. We oppose the plan wording encouraging low road densities in large tracts of public lands, which is another means to prevent hunting, fishing, trapping, and other public land use opportunities.
17. We oppose the plan wording that implies hunting conflicts are the fault of the hunter. The draft plan needs to address using population management of wolves as a method to reduce hunting conflicts. Hunters have Constitutional rights to hunt lands open to them despite the presence of wolves.
18. Currently there are multiple systems for sending alerts for livestock, hunting dogs, and non-agricultural animals, but the plan is missing human health and safety alerts. Receiving the same notification with a 4-mile radius map is necessary to help prevent potential conflicts for land users, pet owners, and dog hunters around those areas. We request the WI DNR provide equal notifications for equal protections for all

land users.

19. Those who have personally experienced conflicts with wolves may have traumatic experiences and stresses. The psychological impacts on humans caused by livestock and domestic depredations by wolves is real and needs to be considered. The draft plan ignores the psychological impacts wolf conflicts have on humans and this needs to be addressed in the plan.

Zone Changes:

20. The plan includes the creation of buffer zones surrounding reservations, effectively giving the management of the wolf population on both public and private lands to the tribes. We oppose the creation of buffer zones surrounding reservations that would take away the rights of private landowners and public land stakeholders. We also oppose giving away wildlife management authority.
21. The agricultural areas in these newly created buffer zones in the draft plan will go largely unprotected and have inadequate protections for pets and livestock. Private landowners will have unequal treatment under the law for which they are protected under the Constitution.
22. The zone restructure is now based on wolf occupancy and not based on suitable habitat. The unmanaged wolf population has forced wolves out of prime suitable habitat into inappropriate areas, creating conflicts. Not all areas are appropriate to have wolves. We request the zone structure return to the original science-based, habitat-based zones.

Goal Statement/Objectives:

23. The Goal Statement in the draft plan does not address where wolves are appropriate. The draft plan needs to take a hard look into what is good for wolves and what is good for humans. Low interactions between the two are best. Wolves should only reside in high-quality wolf habitat and not be managed to the maximum biological carrying capacity. No other species in Wisconsin is managed to its maximum biological carrying capacity.
24. The draft plan implies the elimination of hunting with dogs which is Constitutionally protected. It also implies wolves have more rights to the land than hunters. This narrative is not science-based and all such implications should be removed.
25. Objective B is missing long-term controls for agricultural conflicts. Wolves are known to move down the road and create conflicts with just short-term controls.
26. The goal statement or objectives do not address any form of population control. The official position of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation is a population goal of 350 wolves in the State of Wisconsin. We strongly request the numeric population goal of 350 wolves be maintained in the final plan.

Numerical Population Goal:

27. The draft plan allows for a subjective process for managing wolves. The population goal was established in the 1999 plan due to lack of confidence in a subjective wolf management strategy. There is no accountability without a numeric population goal. The only scientific analysis of wolf habitat done to-date of Wisconsin landscape quantified the social carrying capacity as 350 wolves. The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation strongly requests maintaining the numeric population goal of 350 wolves in the final plan.
28. For increased accountability the population goal needs to have a timeline for completion. The goal timeline allows measuring of progress towards meeting the set population goal with milestones along the way. We request a population goal timeline be added to the plan.

Quotas/Permits:

29. The western states have 13 years of harvest data in establishing quotas to reach their wolf population goals. We recommend including this data in the draft plan to aid in establishing quotas.
30. Permit issuing methodology should be based on the likely harvest methods used in the season they will be issued.
31. Western states have been unable to reduce their wolf numbers consistently despite high levels of human take. As wolf expert David Mech said, "Wolves are prolific, disperse long distances, readily recolonize new areas where humans will allow them, and are difficult to control when populations become established."

Delisting:

32. For lethal wolf conflict control and population management to take place federal delisting is required. To-date the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has had no visible involvement in planning, researching, and federal delisting efforts with the USFWS or with legal representation in delisting efforts. The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation strongly requests the WI DNR have a strong and visible presence, and active involvement in all federal delisting efforts that impact Wisconsin and in support of all other states actively working towards delisting wolves in their states.

The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation requests the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources incorporate the above actions and requests for updates into the 2022 Final Wolf Management Plan.

Sincerely yours,



Patrick Quaintance
President

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JACOB QUIGLEY

Bike Wisconsin

WinMan Trails among Wisconsin's best

WinMan Trails is one of the best single track mountain biking locations in Wisconsin. With nearly 20 miles of purpose-built mountain bike trails, WinMan has much to offer riders of all skill sets. During the winter, WinMan also offers nine miles of groomed fat tire biking trails.

WinMan Trails in Minoqua/Winchester began in 2011 on private property for the owners' family members to go mountain biking over scenic terrain. Over the years these trails have grown to attract visitors from all over the Midwest. Along with mountain biking, WinMan offers 14 miles of cross country skiing trails as well as six miles of running and hiking trails. If you prefer road biking, there are paved trails that go on for miles. WinMan Trails have become what they are today thanks to three full-time staff members and donations. One hundred percent of all donations go right back into WinMan for maintenance and improvements.

About a dozen of us recently ventured north from Wausau to spend a day at WinMan. We split into two groups. One group chose to ride on the paved paths along the roadway with their road bikes. The other group, which included me, selected the single-track mountain bike trails. Luckily for me as a novice, my friend Halle loaned me her fat bike. If you have never ridden one before, I highly suggest borrowing a bike or renting one before making a monetary investment in a fat bike. I very much enjoyed the experience, and am currently looking for a used fat bike with help and advice from more knowledgeable friends. Bikes can be very expensive, so it is important you find one that literally fits you, as well as your needs and preferences.

I have learned that trail riding is what I mostly enjoy. My adventure on WinMan Trails made for a great day and one where I was able to gain more knowledge and some tips on how to become a better rider along the way. 🚲

If you're interested in learning more about WinMan trails or making a donation, visit winmantrails.com/donate.



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Road America Renovation

A ribbon cutting on November 3 at America's National Park of Speed commemorated the completion of the long-anticipated replacement project of the racing surface that has not been overhauled since 1995. Milling and grinding the entire 4.048-mile racetrack, including the pit lane, began on October 3. Fine grading, a new base layer, and a new final surface asphalt layer followed in late October. Now the all-new race surface has the entire off-season to cure before the 2023 season.

The big news is that aside from the opportunity to make minor adjustments, the original configuration of the entire racetrack remained the same. Advanced Materials Services consultants, Walbec Group engineers, and their Northeast Asphalt team were mindful of the track's history and authentic character. Before milling off the old surface, the entire racecourse was surveyed to allow the engineers and Road America to review the track's unique characteristics and make decisions that guided the grade control process during each step of the repaving process. Over 7,000-grade control points were set to direct the grading and paving process to ensure that the track width, camber angles, and curbing locations were accurate within a tenth of an inch.

"Our goal was to put the track back exactly as we found it to maintain its distinct features and preserve the track's significance in the racing world," said Craig Donze, Engineering Manager for the Walbec Group. "High-quality aggregates were locally sourced

from Wisconsin, and the team used a highly polymerized asphalt mix to maximize durability. Multiple tests were performed throughout the project to ensure the surface would handle the weather and racing stresses. Teamwork from initial planning through construction resulted in a racing surface that will provide competitors and racing fans enjoyment for years to come."

Engineers and Road America worked collaboratively throughout the project to improve drainage around the property and upgrade features that cross beneath the racing surface before paving. This included increasing the size of culverts and running new conduits under the track to support the facility's events. Over 800 truckloads were removed during milling, with nearly the same number of trucks bringing in the new asphalt racing surface for paving. During the project, two paving machines ran in an echelon (side-by-side) pattern to minimize the center seam visibility and maintain a consistent density.

"This was a massive endeavor, and we are extremely excited to have a new racetrack for competitors and fans to enjoy," said Mike Kertscher, Road America's President and General Manager. "The goal was to keep it the same as our founder Clif Tuft envisioned, and we're certain we met that goal. We look forward to the future with this all-new track and pit lane, and we encourage everyone to get their season passes, tickets, and camping for what we anticipate will be an incredible season in 2023."

MOERICKE, FROM PAGE 12

potatoes with ham, and lots of pie kept spirits high in spite of the weather.

Monday morning found me back on my oak ridge stand. Around eight o'clock I heard three shots from the west that were definitely within half a mile. About 10 minutes later, a fork buck came up one of the trails I was watching, a third shell was fired, and my hunt was over. Blessed with a clean kill and a buck hanging on the meat pole, the deer camp rejoiced.

Monday night traditionally means a visit to the Pat Zingler camp on the banks of the Brule Creek for a pre-Thanksgiving feast. This year was no exception as 16 hunters gathered to share stories, libations, and enough food to feed a small army. By my count, the group had tagged three bucks after the first three days of hunting. That is significantly better than the success rate the prior couple of years.

So, even the deer desert gives up a buck occasionally. I might even have to spring for another box of shells next year. Just sayin'.



2023 SEASON SCHEDULE

AMERICA'S NATIONAL PARK OF SPEED

MAY 19-21

SVRA Vintage Festival Weekend

JUNE 2-4

MotoAmerica Superbikes & Vintage MotoFest

JUNE 15-18

NTT INDYCAR SERIES Sonsio Grand Prix Presented by AMR

JUNE 23-25

WeatherTech Chicago Region SCCA June Sprints

JULY 7-9

Trans Am Speed Tour

JULY 13-16

WeatherTech International Challenge with Brian Redman

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SPOTLIGHT | HAYWARD LAKES



Finding Friends on the Trails

January and February are generally the coldest and snowiest months of winter here in the Northwoods of Wisconsin. Some people escape the area and head south, but some of us wait all summer for the snow and ice to accumulate once again so we can be transported to the world beyond highways and open water.

Snowmobiling offers an opportunity to travel to places you cannot access by any other form of transportation. There is nothing like winding down a snow-covered trail surrounded by trees with their branches draped in white; it is truly magical. The Sawyer County Snowmobile Trail system not only travels through gorgeous forest land, but across frozen lakes, along roadways, and through fields.

It was through one of these fields and along a roadway that I discovered some new friends along the trail. After numerous trips back and forth on this connector route, I



Author Mindy Simons is Assistant Director-Hayward Lakes Visitors & Convention Bureau

noticed two resident horses in the field near the trail. Unfazed by the traffic going by, they just grazed on their big bundle of hay and looked on as if to provide a passing greeting. All winter I rode this route, beginning the tradition of waving to the pair of horses as our group would drive by. They even became a landmark for the trail groomer, who would often text me a location update along his route with just a simple word...“horses.”

As the season was coming to a close, I knew we only had a few more rides left before Mother Nature would put an end to things. When our group made plans to head south for a ride, I finally remembered to throw some carrots in my bag. As we came to a stop along the trail where the horses resided, they were hesitant at first. Likely, they were confused, as these machines usually just sail past and don't take too much interest in matters of shaggy ponies. I trudged through the snow in the ditch and up next to the fence. Their curiosity

was piqued, and slowly they came toward the fence to find a treat of carrot sticks waiting for them. They loved it!

There are many great memories to be made out on the trails, whether you are riding with a group of friends, meeting new folks at a warm-up spot, or making some new four-legged acquaintances. If you don't have your own snowmobile, visit one of the great rental businesses in the Hayward Lakes/Sawyer County area and they will help get you set up with all the appropriate gear and maps.

The Sawyer County Snowmobile & ATV Alliance builds, maintains, and grooms over 600 miles of trails within the county. The trails connect to gas, food, and lodging throughout Sawyer County. If you haven't ridden our trails yet, what are you waiting for? Come join us this winter in Sawyer County and the Hayward Lakes Area. I hope to see you out on the trail! 🐾



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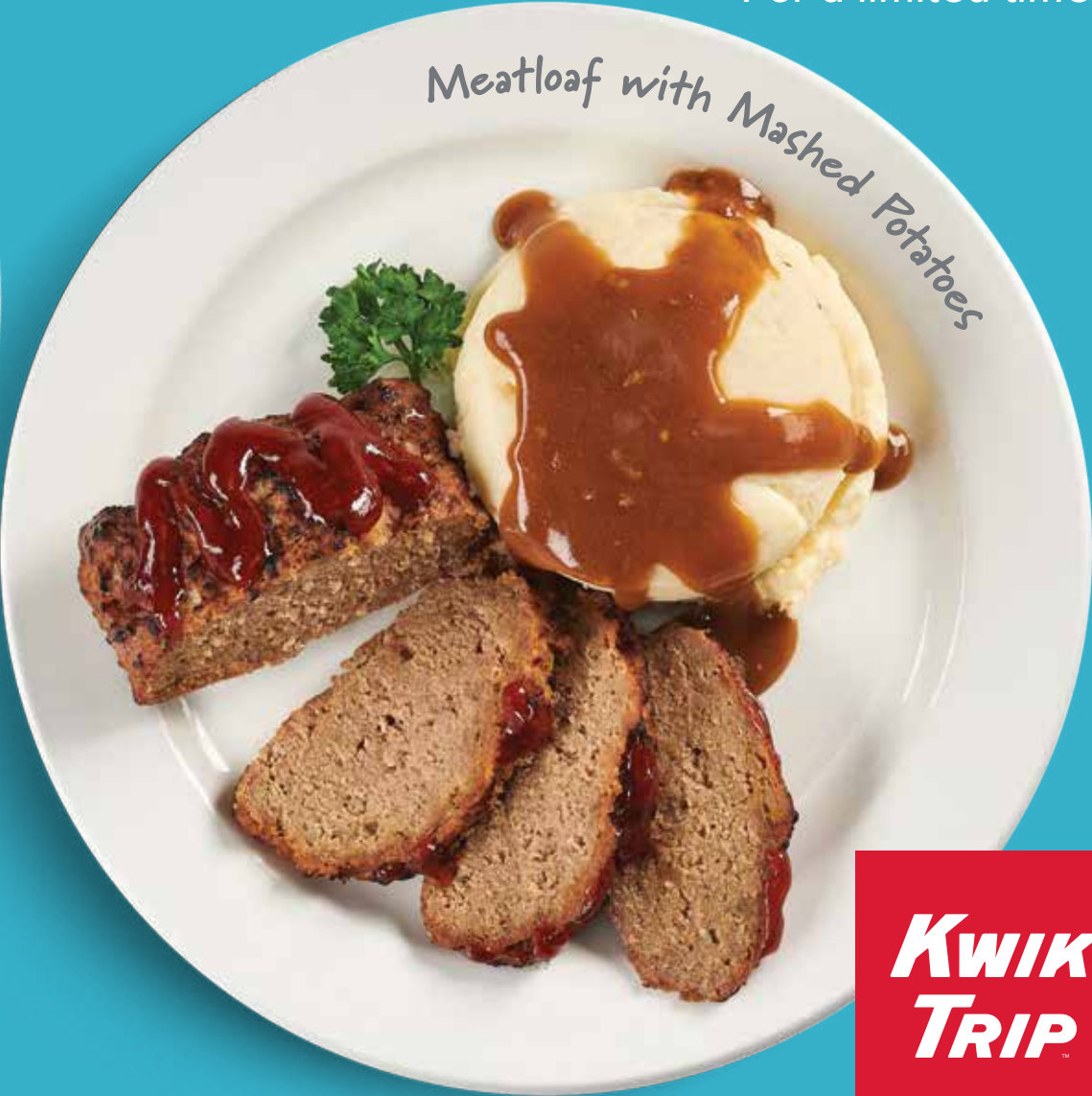
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DAVE FIDLIN

Apostle Islands Ice Caves

Natural, unpredictable wonder, guaranteed beauty

Very specific weather conditions are required for ice caves to form at the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore park site.

There is no shortage of beauty across Wisconsin in the depths of winter, particularly after a fresh snowfall has blanketed the terrain, and a sense of peace and wonder is abundant.

Nowhere is this sentiment truer, perhaps, than in one of the northernmost areas of the state: the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore park site, on the outskirts of Bayfield. The ice caves that dot the landscape in ideal, and specific, weather conditions are a particular draw.

Visitors far and wide have made it a point to visit the ice caves, which are located within the Meyers Beach area of the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, a natural terrain under the auspices of the federal National Park Service (NPS).

There are a number of reasons to take in the ice caves, including their sheer beauty. The awe-inspiring, unique formations are worthy of more than just one picture, and the temporal weather conditions within the caves makes the experience palatable even when the thermometer is in the low digits.

But the winter attraction also has gained notoriety because of its relative rareness, even in a state as noted for its cold weather as Wisconsin.

According to the NPS, the ice caves - which it describes as an "event" on its website - occur after a series of intertwined

natural phenomena come together. While below-freezing conditions are obviously required for the ice caves to form, there are other delicate factors in the mix as well.

Low to moderate wind conditions are required to support the ice formations. This is because of the caves' position along the northwest side of the peninsula that makes up the Meyers Beach area of the Apostle Islands.

A bevy of open water fronts the area, and the caves' ice will not form if wind conditions are heavy. Strong winds, particularly to the north, will whip up waves from Lake Superior that run the risk of shattering the delicate ice formations.

Beyond the weather itself, there are other important considerations to take into account before visiting the caves, including the hike required reaching them. Given the relative remoteness of the Apostle Islands and the NPS park site, visitors need to hike, at a minimum, two miles roundtrip to reach areas where the ice caves form.

Additionally, the NPS could close the entire area to public access on short notice if safety concerns arise. This is especially true if weather conditions begin warming up and ice thickness is diminished as a result.

But the federal agency could close off access to the caves even if frigid temperatures are ideal. In the past, for example,



there have been reports of ice being locked between specific areas that make pedestrian travel challenging or impossible.

The Apostle Islands and its winter ice caves are a true natural wonder - and an unpredictable one. It is always advisable to check NPS information about the site before venturing out to take in the beauty to ensure it is safely available for viewing. 📷

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SPOTLIGHT | PRAIRIE DU CHIEN



Prairie du Chien 73rd Annual Ice Fisheree

Get your lines a jigin' at the 73rd Annual Ice Fisheree in Prairie du Chien. Held Saturday and Sunday, February 4-5, the event unofficially kicks off on Friday, February 3, at the Crooked Oar Bar and Restaurant, three miles north of Prairie du Chien. Friday night events include a true Wisconsin fish fry, meat raffle, and Karaoke from 7 to 11 p.m.

It's rise and shine on Saturday as the Fisheree officially kicks off with registration at 7 a.m. Activities run both days, including an Ice Fishing Expo at 11 a.m. for children 12 and under, teaching the fundamentals of ice fishing. Adult and kids fishing prizes will be awarded, along with the grand raffle prize of a Kawasaki Mule PR-MX, which will be given away at the end of the Fisheree on Sunday, at 2 p.m. Prize money fish will be released in Gremore Lake with a chance to win up to \$15,000 depending on Fisheree participations.

Bald Eagle Appreciation Days

Then set your sights on the 17th Annual Bald Eagle Appreciation Day on Saturday, February 25. Featuring new programs and presentations by state and local birding experts, this event will consist of educational and fun hands-on activities for the whole family, as well as birding and nature exhibits throughout the day.

Saturday programs are from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Hoffman Hall, 1600 S. Wacouta Avenue. The highlight of the day is the exciting live birding program featuring a bald eagle and other

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

Prairie du Chien
www.prairieduchien.org WISCONSIN

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SPOTLIGHT | BELOIT



The Perfect Taste of Wisconsin Dining Tradition

The City of Beloit, and the region, is known for its gourmet cuisine and locally-owned restaurants offering the perfect taste of Wisconsin tradition. Beloit's collection of legendary supper clubs, local hot spots, and family-run restaurants and cafés are sure to provide you with amazing dining experiences. In addition, there are several pubs and breweries to enjoy a delicious craft brew. Be sure to complete the Visit Beloit Craft Beer Trail and get a free shirt if you are staying for a few days.



There is also a Café Trail with a custom mug for your prize with a chance to win a basket-full of prizes from the cafés on the trail. Taste the difference and indulge your senses.

The Beloit foodie scene is where you'll be creating stories to remember for years to come. 🍷

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SPOTLIGHT | HURLEY

The Badger State's Snow Capitol

Come see us in Hurley and ride over 500 miles of groomed snowmobile routes and trails in Iron County. We offer a variety of riding experiences, from former railroad grade trails to heavily forested land to the wide open spaces of marked trail across the Turtle Flambeau Flowage. You will not be disappointed! The weather has been a great partner, ensuring you will have perfect conditions. We aren't called the Snow Capitol of Wisconsin for nothing.

Enjoy tasty finds from any of our dining establishments located right on the trails. Trail maps are available at the Hurley Chamber office located at 316 Silver Street or give us a call ahead of your visit at 715-561-4334 and we will send you one. Maps are also available at most local businesses.

We also have snowshoeing, cross country skiing and downhill skiing. Try out a new sport or activity. The Hurley Chamber can help you plan your winter vacation or check out our website at hurleywi.com.

While you are here, take in one of the local events. Willy's Still on Island Lake is holding their annual fishing tournament on January 14, 2023. Opi's Timeout and Bank Club each have their tournaments on January 21 on the Gile Flowage.

Plan your weekend away today! 📞



Find the natural highs of Hurley outdoors. On foot, skis or machine, you will not be disappointed.

A Place Where Everyone Can Play!

May 25-28
ATV/UTV Rally Iron County
July 29-Aug 13
Heritage Days Iron County
Aug 12
Paavo Nurmi Marathon Hurley
Sept 2
Festival Italiano Hurley

**SNOWMOBILING
ATV/UTVING • SKIING**

Nestled in Northern Iron County, the Hurley area is an outdoor adventurer's paradise. With access to hundreds of miles of snowmobile trails, downhill skiing, inland lakes to catch that record breaking fish, cross country ski and snow shoe trails, everyone has plenty to keep them active.

Hurley's historic past of mining, logging and stories from Prohibition gives Silver Street some exciting stories. Visit the museum and take a walk right into the past. Explore a variety of flavors at local eateries.

Hurley Chamber of Commerce
 316 Silver Street, Hurley WI 54534
715-561-4334
hurley@hurleywi.com





SPOTLIGHT | FERRYVILLE



Watch Eagles Soar and Discover Places to Explore

Eagle and other avian watching opportunities are at a peak along the Mississippi River. Seeing eagles having a “coffee klatch” amongst the trees while they wait for a fish meal to pop up on the surface is a regular sight along the shores of the river. Bring your camera and binoculars to capture the many thrilling sights that await you.

Now is an excellent time for winter hikes, ice fishing, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling. Get your list of winter-fun-things-to-do and map out your itinerary. Exciting times are ahead!

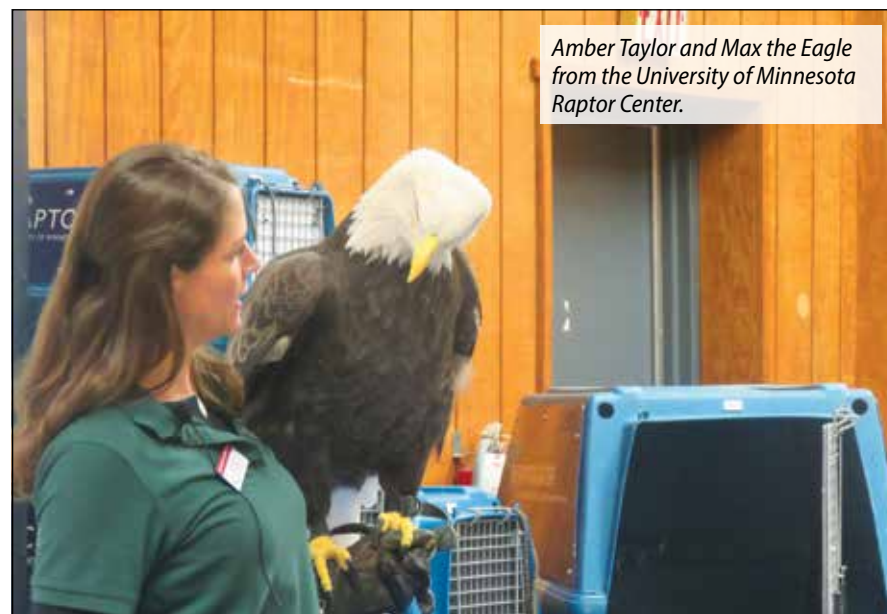
Gather up your earmuffs, gloves and warmest coat and head out the door. You'll find adventure and small town charm when you book a vacation rental in or around Ferryville. Check out the vacation offerings at visitferryville.com

The following are just a few of the many adventures that you will find in the Ferryville

area. January 12 and February 9 are both Soup and Salad nights from 5 pm – 7 pm at the Ferryville Village Hall where you can choose from seven homemade soups, many salads and desserts. Payment is a free-will offering. Local community organizations are working together to raise funds to improve the Village Hall. You decide what you pay on February 25 at the Sweetheart Pancake Breakfast from 8 am – 11 am.

March 3 is the big Eagle Day event from 9:30 am - 3 pm at Ferryville Village Hall. The event is co-sponsored by Friends of Pool 9 and the Ferryville Tourism Council. This is a family friendly event and features the University of Minnesota Raptor Center Eagles and Owls plus a program by John Howe of the Raptor Resource Center, Eagle Cam Project in Decorah, Iowa.

Happy Trails from the Mississippi River Coast of Wisconsin where you're treated like a local! 🐾



Amber Taylor and Max the Eagle from the University of Minnesota Raptor Center.

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March 4

Bald Eagle Day

Ferryville Village Hall • 10AM – 3PM

2 programs with a Bald Eagle, Kids crafts, nest building and very special treats.



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May 13

**International Spring
Bird Migration Hike**

Sugar Creek Bluff

Meet at Trailhead at Sugar Creek Bluff
Natural Area at 7:00am for treats and
information.

May 19-20

Rummage Along the River

8AM – 4PM • 70 mile garage sale full
of antiques and bargains. Hwy 35 –
Stoddard, Genoa, Bad Axe Neighborhood,
Victory, De Soto, Ferryville, Lynxville,
Seneca, Mt. Sterling, WI

May 20

Ferryville Farmers Market

Every Saturday thru October 28th
Sugar Creek Park, Hwy 35.



SPOTLIGHT | OCONTO COUNTY

Oconto offers everything from equipment rental for beginners to a green light for experts to go out and explore this beautiful country on their own. We'll provide the maps.



You'll Wish Winter was Year Round

As the temperatures cool down, the fun heats up in Oconto County with a wide variety of winter outdoor activities for the entire family.

From cross-country and downhill skiing, to snowmobiling and ice fishing, there's so much fun to be had in Oconto County this time of year, you'll wish we had winter year-round. Plus, the activities are not only family-friendly, they are also budget friendly, making it an affordable way for all to enjoy this beautiful time of year.

- Snowmobile the hundreds of miles of trails winding deep into the forest and link to other trail systems throughout the state. Don't own snowmobiles? Not to worry. Northwoods Powersports Adventures in Lakewood offers equipment rentals and guided tours through the majestic forest and across the vast frozen lakes of the region. Plus, the trails start from or lead to a variety of excellent dining and lodging facilities, allowing for full-day or



complete weekend or longer of fun.

- Lakewood cross-country ski trails winding through scenic Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, are among the state's highest quality trails and they are free to

access. Five color-coded trails of varying lengths and difficulty provide skiers with an ideal location for a casual ski with friends or a challenging ski to prep for competition.

- Paul Bunyan Ski Hill, the "Biggest Little

Hill" in the Midwest, offers excellent downhill skiing including a newly added terrain park for skiers seeking a thrilling new challenge. You can also go tubing, allowing the whole family to enjoy the outdoor activities no matter what age. Equipment rentals are available, along with a full-service restaurant.

- Ice fish on one or more of the hundreds of lakes within Oconto County that are abundant with a variety of fish species, such as blue gill, bass, perch and the prized walleye. Never ice fished before? We have local guides, complete with the equipment and ice shanties to put you onto the region's fishing hotspots.

Oconto County is just a short drive from many larger Wisconsin cities, including Green Bay (50 minutes), Wausau (1 hour, 30 minutes), and Milwaukee (2 hours, 15 minutes). Just a short trip will get you to some of state's greatest winter activities. 📍

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Trail Reports

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WEEKS, FROM PAGE 14

the field and teach field dressing skills. One student underwent knee surgery before the trip and was worried he wouldn't be able to participate. Luckily, Riveredge Nature Center in Newberg is home to two ATV wheelchairs from AccessAbility Wisconsin. These battery operated track wheelchairs are available to the public, free of cost, for use by people of all abilities to enjoy outdoor activities.

In the following days back at school, students continued their learning with a field-to-fork experience. Using the harvested pheasants and a deer harvested by Mrs. Weeks and one of her friends, the students

got to taste many different wild game dishes. Former chef and Mrs. Weeks' father, Dave Salkowski, helped her to make BBQ pulled pheasant sliders, jalapeno pheasant poppers, an Asian inspired pheasant dish and venison chili. The students then learned how to make summer sausage from Mrs. Weeks who has been making it with her family since she was a young girl. Each student received a stick of sausage as a means to relate their hunting and food preparation adventures to friends and family.

Special thanks to TJ Sommer and his staff at The Highlands for a Grade-A experience for our students. 📍

PRAIRIE DU CHIEN, FROM PAGE 25

interesting raptors, presented by the Schlitz Audubon Society.

Bald Eagle viewing is at its best in the Prairie du Chien area, with multiple open water locations along the Mississippi River. While in the area, be sure to stop by Lawler Park on St. Feriole Island, Blackhawk Avenue and the Washington Street bridges as well as a viewing station at the Travel Wisconsin Welcome Center – Prairie du Chien.

This special Bald Eagle program is free and open to the public and is sponsored by the Prairie du Chien Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Council. For a complete listing of both events, as well as times and location of all activities, contact the Prairie du Chien Area Chamber of Commerce at 800-732-1673, or visit prairieduchien.org. 📍

Robert Moses is President/CEO of Prairie du Chien Area Chamber of Commerce.

STUART WILKE

Witness to History

The Birth of the Rat Gun Phenomenon

Rat Rods are a peculiar breed of custom car. If a glistening, run-of-the-mill, super-expensive street rod trailer queen is the automotive equivalent of a suburban McMansion, then a Rat Rod is analogous to a four-wheeled tarpaper shack in rural Kentucky.

Custom cars are generally beyond the reach of people lacking the financial resources to farm out paint, body, and mechanical work to professionals. Not so typical Rat Rod builders. They take pride in their ingenuity to hammer together a totally unique, high-performance car or truck as cheaply as possible from a multitude of discordant parts sourced from barns, salvage yards, and thrift shops. Patina, lots of horsepower, modern underpinnings, and a low stance, are the hallmarks of Rat Rods.

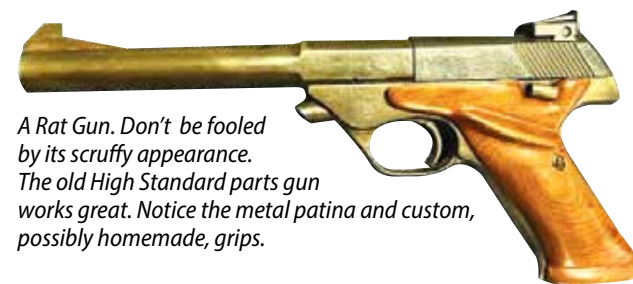
Recently I witnessed the birth of what should be a firearm phenomenon, the gun equivalent to the Rat Rod, the "Rat Gun." The movement was spawned at a gun show when former co-worker and comic relief Tooth Pick Jim (TPJ) stumbled across a scruffy, abused, legendary Remington Nylon 66 semiautomatic .22 caliber rifle. The Nylon 66s were made mostly of just that - nylon, inside and out. What wasn't nylon was stamped metal of some sort, probably zinc. Nylons were innovative, lightweight, accurate, and reliable. A Remington magazine ad in the 1960s featured a competitive marksman



A Rat Rod, the inspiration for the Rat Gun.

nauling over 100,000 airborne targets without a jam from three Nylon 66s.

TPJ's examination of the forsaken 66 revealed a heavily scared exterior, a bore full of who-knows-what, and a pockmarked receiver cover. Best (?) of all was the tacti-cool camouflaged paint scheme applied with a rattle can. The chances of the 66s functioning looked slim, but TPJ was up to the challenge and the gun was cheap. Besides, if beyond repair, a tidy profit could be made by selling the gun piece-by-piece.



A Rat Gun. Don't be fooled by its scruffy appearance. The old High Standard parts gun works great. Notice the metal patina and custom, possibly homemade, grips.

High Standard .22 auto pistols were among the best of their kind, comparable to similar offerings from Colt, Smith & Wesson, and Browning - and just as expensive. They still are. The original High Standard Company is long defunct, but the .22 autos are revered and sought after. TPJ found one at another gun show that no one was actively seeking. Long of tooth, beat to heck, lacking in finish and assembled of parts from different hosts, it was the gun world's answer to Frankenstein's Monster. Like the 66, it was was bargain basement priced and if it couldn't be brought back to life, the sale of its parts would realize a great return on investment.

The two guns were taken apart by TPJ and cleaned up. A few missing or broken parts were sourced from Flea Bay, and metal finishes were prettied up with cold blue where possible. The guns looked better after being addressed but still retained their Rat Gun look. On the range, they performed like Rat Rods. The Nylon proved to live up to its reputation for accuracy, as did the High Standard. The Nylon worked without a bumble or a bobble. Not so the High Standard, which failed

CONTINUED ON PAGE 31



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Presents Firearms Info from Ron Stresing

RON STRESING

All I Want for Christmas *Caring for your new firearm gift*

Every Christmas season thousands of firearms are gifted to friends and family. The freedom guaranteed by our 2nd Amendment to allow us to do this cannot be understated. Unlike other countries where personal freedoms are restricted, any US citizen with a clean record can purchase a firearm. Less durable gifts wear out, become obsolete, or are outgrown. Properly maintained and cared for, a firearm is a gift that will last a lifetime and can be passed down to future generations.

It's up to the new owner to take a few moments to insure it's operated safely, cleaned, maintained, and the proper ammunition used. Take a few minutes to ensure you know all about your new firearm.

Read the owner's manual from cover to cover. Whether the firearm is shotgun, rifle or handgun, the owner's manual will be a big help! Unsure how to disassemble / reassemble your firearm? Consult the manual, and if you still have any questions, review a few of the videos on YouTube. Other good information in the manual will tell you how to safely store the firearm to avoid rust or corrosion. In short, use the manual to help protect your investment in a quality firearm. A future generation of your family may thank you.

Whether you plan to hunt with it or not, I highly recommend a Wisconsin DNR Hunter Safety Course. The course covers safe handling of any firearm. Safety first, last, and always.

Shotguns: Just about all shotguns on the market today come with interchangeable choke tubes, including some lower price point single shots. Never fire or clean your shotgun without a choke tube installed, as you will damage the threads in the barrel. Many times, the choke tubes are marked on the top of the tube with notches. One notch equals full choke, two notches equals improved modified, three notches equals modified, four equals improved cylinder and five notches equals skeet choke. Your shotguns owners' manual will tell you what chokes are safe to use with steel shot. It will also recommend a type of anti-seize lubrication to apply to the threads of the choke tubes. A stuck choke tube can potentially damage your shotgun, void your warranty, and make for an expensive trip to the gunsmith. Follow the advice on cleaning the barrel, action, and trigger group.

Rifles: The owner's manual will discuss the usual maintenance and cleaning, and provide details like the rifling twist and bullet weights that will stabilize in that barrel. It may also include advice on accessories like scope mounts, slings, muzzle brakes and more.

Handguns: With more handguns being bought by first time gun buyers than ever before, it's never been more important than to review the owner's manual. I also suggest if you are a first time buyer, seek professional instruction and safety training as well. 🎯



Explore Wisconsin



SPOTLIGHT | SPOONER | WASHBURN COUNTY

Snowmobile Haven in Spooner

Winter is in full gear in the Wisconsin Northwoods and one of the very best ways to take in the many different charms of this Winter Wonderland is on a sled. Whether you are looking to enjoy the towering pine trees in surrounding hardwood and evergreen forests, or lakes, rivers and streams, Spooner's snowmobile trails will leave you awestruck!



Photo Credit: Washburn County Tourism Association.

Dedicated area snowmobile clubs work hard all season long at expertly grooming the over 240 miles of trails countywide.

The trails going through Spooner offer access to a variety of lodging and dining options, specialty retail stores, a large parking area for trailers, as well as access to the largest network of snowmobile trails in the Midwest. Be sure to stop in at the Visitors Center at 122 Vine Street in Spooner and pick up trail maps before you head out.

The trails aren't the only place to enjoy snowmobiling in the Spooner Area. Save the date for January 21, 2023, when Heartwood Resort will be hosting "Journey to Heartwood Winterfest Snow Drags." Among the many activities taking place at this fun event are a craft fair, vintage sled show, and the fan-favorite snow drag races! Heartwood Resort is a beautiful 700-acre property just outside of Spooner that also offers groomed trails for cross country skiing, winter fat tire biking, and backcountry snowshoeing.

Don't miss your chance to get out and hit the trails this winter in Spooner! Plan your trip today at spoonerchamber.org. 🎯



JOHN ELLIS

Editorial- Media's Skillful Deception

The December 16th edition of Special Report with Bret Baier is a classic example of how virtually all media outlets today facilitate misinformation. The Fox News program began with correspondent David Spundt reading portions of Elon Musk's newly released 6th installment of the Twitter Files. Those files showed the FBI and other government agencies working directly with Twitter employees to stifle the free speech of American citizens before the 2020 election. Even though the evidence showed very serious and potentially illegal activity by one of our government agencies, a smiling Spundt simply described the relationship between the FBI and Twitter as "cozy". Bret Baier then read a media release from the FBI assuring viewers that the activity was completely normal. On the left, media outlets have almost without exception given no air time to what is likely the biggest scandal in American history. But the left is not alone in their effort to deceive you. 🗣️

WILKE, FROM PAGE 29

to feed and extract with magazine number one. Magazine number two was a winner and the gun performed flawlessly. With just a little bending of the feed lips, magazine number one was made operable.

You can invest a lot of money into a pretty gun or car. But if looks aren't important, you can get comparable performance by putting together a Rat Rod or Rat Gun yourself for a lot less.

The choice boils down to what's most important - form or function? 🗣️

Contact Stuart at submissions@onwisconsinoutdoors.com.



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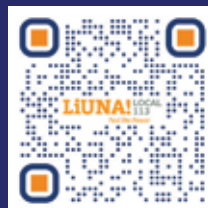
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