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A Message from Director Wayne Rosenthal

Fellow Conservationists,



I hope you will grant me a few moments to introduce myself. My name is Wayne Rosenthal, and I am the new Acting Director of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. I hope to have the opportunity to meet and talk with many of you over the coming months as we work together to manage and protect our precious natural resources.

During my first few weeks at IDNR, I have met many of the dedicated staff members that make this agency strong. I look forward to visiting our Illinois State Parks and other IDNR offices to meet more of our staff and hear first-hand about their accomplishments and concerns.

My passion is conservation. As many of our IDNR employees will tell you, I love to talk about my farm and the conservation practices I have put on the ground during the past 20-plus years. I also created the Wild Rural Park Hunting and Fishing Preserve, to provide opportunities for young hunters.

Before being appointed to this position by Gov. Bruce Rauner, I was a member of the Illinois House of Representatives since 2011. I also served in the Illinois Air National Guard for 30 years, retiring as a Brigadier General. I commanded hundreds of officers, non-commissioned officers and enlisted personnel. With that responsibility was a budget of \$15 million and military assets worth \$500 million. That experience, I believe, has prepared me well to lead IDNR's 16 divisions.

I live in central Illinois, hailing from Morrisonville. My roots in the community run deep. I have been a trustee on the Lincoln Land Community College Board, and a member of my local school board, the Morrisonville Community Unit School District. I also served on the Macoupin County Soil and Water Conservation District Board.

My first priorities as IDNR Director will be to strengthen our customer service and responsiveness to your concerns and questions. We also will get to work promoting the state's recreational assets to attract tourism and the dollars it brings in to the state. These are tough economic and budget times. Together, I believe we can make things better. I am looking forward to working with all of you.

MWHI welcomes Director Wayne Rosenthal and look forward to meeting and working with him and his staff.

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618-910-1420

Pat McCrae
618-444-6793

John Popov (Advisor)
Bob Schneider (Advisor)
Scott Bryant (Advisor)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, February 28, 2015

Jersey County Ducks Unlimited
Waterfowl Hunters Party & Gun Bash

at the Jerseyville American Legion Hall

Contact Denny Ward for more info or tickets at: 618-498-9855

Monday, March 2, 2015

MWHI BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

at 2404 E. Broadway, Alton at 6:15 pm

Saturday, March 28, 2015

MWHI 15th Annual
WATERFOWL CONSERVATION BANQUET

at K. C. Hall, Godfrey, IL

For tickets, contact John Gineris at 618-708-8117

Monday, April 6, 2015

MWHI BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

at 2404 E. Broadway, Alton at 6:15 pm

Wednesday, May 20, 2015

MWHI GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

at Alton-Wood River Sportsmen Club

in Godfrey, IL at 7:00 pm

Visit Us at:

www.mwhi.us

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Do YOU Have Rights?

By Gary A Liley

What about my rights? It's a good question. What about your rights?

It seems today that we are bombarded every time we turn on the radio or TV with some group demonstrating or marching for some profound belief they have. Some have been violent, while others have been quite peaceful and within the bounds of the law. In the United States, it's commonplace to see two, three or more of these groups every night on the National News. In fact, you can almost figure to see a couple reports of demonstrations in other countries and a couple from our own USA. Abroad, there have been some revolts from the citizenry that have actually lead to the country becoming a democratic society. Or, at least a facsimile of one. Leaders have been ousted and some even killed by the populace.

In today's society, one doesn't have to be "right" to exercise their constitutional freedoms under the 1st Amendment. Sometimes, groups march with great intensity, completely abandoned of any facts, letting only their feelings and perception fuel them. Other times, groups, not even under the compass of the 1st Amendment, feel so strongly about their belief that they are unwilling to accept any counter beliefs and see their only solution as to utterly destroy anyone who won't join them. Total control and no objection or objectors is their goal.

Do you have any beliefs strong enough to make you take action? Are your religious views such that you could take to the streets in demonstrating at some point? Do you have any beliefs about any of the various social issues so much "in our face" today, that you would march in support or opposition, regardless of the outcome of your actions? Would you be willing to die for them? Has right become wrong and wrong become right?

How about the Second Amendment? How bad would it have to get for you to boldly take a sign and not be deterred, as you take a place in front of City Hall, your State Capital, or the White House in Washington, DC?

Looking now at our 1st anniversary of the Concealed Carry Law in Illinois, are you now complacent? Do you think the battle's over?

One only has to look as far as the latest headline to see that the war still rages. Within hypothetical shouting distance of the River Bend, murders, robberies, looting, car jackings, bombings, rape, and a host of other violent crimes are taking place. A lot of them, being committed with firearms, our elected officials are looking for ways to cut gun violence. And rightly so. The easiest way to do that, they claim, is "to cut down on the prevalence of guns in our society." Equate that to more gun laws against law abiding citizens. In other words, YOU, in some twisted way have become part of the problem.

While we have been quite fortunate on blocking more useless gun laws on the Federal level, many of our states haven't fared as well. New laws in Connecticut, New York, Colorado and even Illinois have all placed significant restrictions on lawful Gun Owners *without* any effect on crime.

I'll give some credit, and tip my hat, to the leaders in St Louis, MO who have strongly spoken out about the courts continually paroling repeat violent offenders and their vocalization to establish a "gun court" where crimes committed with firearms would be quickly and powerfully dealt with. Whatever happened to three strikes and you're out!? One strike should be enough to put you away if you commit a violent crime! LE & FBI figures have proven time and time again that 90% + of these crimes are being committed by repeat offenders who have been allowed back on the streets by lenient courts. So far, the cries have gone unanswered. Why do you think this has been so hard to establish? Should we be rising up against our criminal Justice system including judges? We vote judges in. We can vote them out!

My whole point is this: Do you feel strongly enough about your right guaranteed by the 2nd Amendment to the United States Constitution that you would peacefully take to the streets to protest further infringement, exercising your rights under the 1st Amendment? Well, would you?

We're over 80 million strong. If only half of us were passionate, considering the exposure and success much smaller groups have gotten whether their intent was admirable or not, what could we accomplish? With an estimated 1.4 million lawful Gun Owners in Illinois alone, what could we do if we peacefully took our case to the streets? What did Thomas Jefferson mean when he said, "The tree of Liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of Patriots and Tyrants"?

Join the ISRA and the NRA today. IGOLD (Illinois Gun Owners Lobby Day) this year is March 18th in Springfield, IL. It's a good place to try your wings. With a new Governor, we need to have a strong show of support. It's imperative. After all, we put him in office. Info can be found at - www.ISRA.org

MISSISSIPPI RIVER AREA

2014 WATERFOWL SEASON REPORT (Excerpts)

Submitted by Kim Postlewait, IDNR MRA Site Superintendent

2014 GOOSE SEASON

The central zone Canada goose season opened with duck season on Saturday , October 25, for twenty three days (Nov 16). Season then closed for 8 days, re-opened on November 26 and closed January 31. Hunting hours were one-half hour before sunrise to sunset, Daily bag limit was two (2), with a possession limit of four (6).

The central zone dates for white-fronted geese were season opening , November 19th, and ran through January 31st. Daily bag limit was two (2) with a possession limit of four (6). Shooting hours were one-half hour before sunrise till sunset.

Snow/Blue and Ross geese in the central zone opened on opening day of duck season and ran through January 31, 2013. Daily limit is twenty (20) with unlimited possession. Shooting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to sunset.

The following chart reflects the goose harvest as recorded at the check station areas during the duck season.

| GOOSE HARVEST AT CHECK STATION AREAS OCT. 25 TO DEC. 23 | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|---------------|--------|---------------|------------|--------|
| Species | Batchtown | Calhoun Point | Glades | Godar Diamond | Stump Lake | Totals |
| Canada | 43 | 23 | 20 | 37 | 56 | 171 |
| Snow/Blue | 12 | 0 | 1 | 9 | 7 | 19 |
| White Front | 5 | 27 | 2 | 6 | 11 | 12 |
| Totals | 60 | 50 | 23 | 52 | 74 | 259 |

Stump had the highest harvest of geese overall, and the highest harvest of Canada Geese. The total goose harvest on the MRA was up 29% from last season.

SPECIAL SEASONS FOR 2014

There was a special early Canada goose season, fifteen (15) days from Sept. 1 through Sept. 15. Shooting hours were one-half hour before sunrise till sunset. Daily bag limit was five (5) with a possession limit of ten (10).

The early teal season was sixteen (16) days this year, opening on Sept. 6 with a closing on Sept. 21. Shooting hours were sunrise till sunset, with a daily limit of six (6) and a possession limit of eighteen (18).

In the central zone the youth hunt was held on October 18 and 19. Hours of hunting were, one-half hour before sunrise till sunset. Bag limits were the same as during regular waterfowl season this year.

The special conservation order light goose season was offered again this year. Immediately following the close of the Canada goose season (Jan. 31, 2014), the conservation order begins. The season will run through March 31, 2014, with shooting hours one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset. Unplugged shotguns and electronic calling devices are allowed. There are no daily bag or possession limits during the conservation order.

2014 Youth Hunt Results Oct. 18- 19

| | Stump Lake | Glades | Godar | RipRap | Reds | Fuller | Batchtown | Calhoun Point | Totals 2014 | Totals 2013 |
|-----------------|------------|--------|-------|--------|------|--------|-----------|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| # Hunters- 2014 | 93 | 33 | 42 | 15 | 22 | 31 | 75 | 21 | 332 | 298 |
| Birds/Hunter | .62 | 1.45 | .81 | .67 | .73 | .71 | .70 | .62 | .79 | 1.81 |
| Goose | 3 | | 1 | | | | | | 4 | 2 |
| Total Ducks | 58 | 48 | 34 | 10 | 16 | 22 | 52 | 13 | 539 | 539 |



Legislation Update

John Popov

Eternal Vigilance is the Price of Liberty.

We have a new Federal House of Representatives and Senate and a new Governor of Illinois. This is another phase of our lives where we still have to protect our freedom. You can all get involved in Illinois. On March 18th the ISRA is having their annual IGOLD, Illinois Gun Owners Lobby Day.

You can participate. You can talk to your State Representatives or Senators about your 2nd Amendment Rights. Contact: <http://www.isra.org>
Concealed/Carry is a year old with no real problems thanks to McDonald et al. vs. City of Chicago. Otis McDonald was at the early IGOLD days and look what happens when people get involved to protect their freedom.

The Brady campaign has a new target. It is your gun in your home. They are very upset about a Gallup Poll where they found six of ten Americans say guns make homes safer. They don't like that! Does that mean they are going to leave gun owners alone? I don't think so. Be prepared to stand up for your freedom.

Does the name of Michael Bloomberg sound familiar? He was mayor of New York City and is anti-gun. He is supporting the Obama administration's push for "universal background checks." That doesn't sound bad in the anti-hunting view, but it can put the federal government in everything you do with your gun, even giving your guns or just a single gun to a relative. The Antis spend millions of dollars in the State of Washington to pass Initiative 594. This, according to Wayne LaPierre of the NRA, is the President's backdoor gun registration.

The idea is to convince us that registering every one of our guns with the federal government is all they want. Seems like I read about a country where all of the people who had a gun or guns had to register them. That country was NAZI Germany. After people registered their guns, the government came and took them away. Read the article "Standing Guard" by Wayne LaPierre in the February 2015 NRA Magazine.

The 'lame duck' Senate after the election voted 51-43 to confirm Dr. Vivek H. Murthy. He is now the new United States Surgeon General. It's no secret Dr. Murthy is anti-gun and he will be going at it as a health care issue. This is how you make regulations that go around laws.

If it is to be, it is up to you and me.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

NRA Update on Gun Bills 1-800-392-8683

Federal Senate Office 1-202-224-3121

Federal House Offices 1-202-225-3121

Illinois State Rifle Association 1-815-635-3198
www.isra.org

Illinois Senate Information 1-217-782-4517

Illinois House Information 1-217-782-8223

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Tel: 202-224-2152 E-mail: dick@durbin.senate.gov

Sen. Mark Kirk
Tel: 202-224-2854 Email: kirk.senate.gov



Illinois State Rifle Association

Since 1903 - Dedicated to Education, Safety Training and Support of Illinois Firearm Owners

ISRA Alert - Contact ATF: Oppose 5.56 M855 Ball Ammunition Ban

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) has announced it is seeking to ban commonplace 5.56 M855 ball ammunition as "armor piercing ammunition." ATF is seeking public comment on the proposal, so all industry employees, target shooters and gun owners should contact ATF to oppose this unnecessary ban, which is truly a solution in search of a problem and that raises serious questions about executive agency attitude and overreach. Stopped cold on Capitol Hill, this action appears to be the Obama administration's attempt to pursue gun control by other means.

Commonly available steel-core, "green tip" M855 and SS109 rifle ammunition that is primarily intended and regularly used for "sporting purposes," like target shooting, has been exempt from federal law banning armor piercing ammunition for decades. There is no question that the 5.56 ball ammo has been in wide use by law abiding American citizens for sporting purposes.

It is with the increasing prevalence of handgun versions of rifle platforms, that ATF now apparently sees an opening to now ban the widely used M855 and SS109 ammunition.

It would be legally permissible to continue to possess and use so-defined "armor piercing" ammunition currently possessed. However, rescinding the decades-old exemption will have a major impact. It will become illegal to manufacture, import, distribute or sell at retail this very popular rifle target ammunition.

ATF's proposed "framework" for applying the "sporting purpose" exemption test rewrites the law passed by Congress to disregard the manufacturer's intention that a projectile or cartridge is "primarily intended for a sporting purpose." ATF inappropriately places the focus on how criminals might misuse sporting ammunition in a handgun.

Just as disturbing, language used by ATF in its long white paper refers to criminals as a "consumer group." The implication that the industry purposely sells firearms and ammunition to criminals is misleading and echoes the shopworn charges of the gun control lobby.

Manufacturers will face serious limitations in their ability to develop and market alternative ammunition in other popular hunting rounds, such as .308 rifle hunting ammunition, if ATF's so-called "framework" is adopted. This will have a detrimental effect on hunting nationwide, especially in California where a total ban on traditional ammunition for hunting is being phased in now.

ATF is soliciting comments on how it can best implement withdrawal of this exemption while "minimizing disruption to the ammunition and firearm industry and maximizing officer safety". Under the proposed framework, 30-06 M2AP cartridges would continue to be exempt because there are no multi-shot handguns generally available that accept such ammunition.

The proposal is useless since standard lead-only 5.56 ammunition is "armor piercing" simply due to the round's velocity. Rifles in this caliber, or any caliber for that matter, are rarely used in crimes.

ATF will accept comments on this proposal until March 16, 2015. Email or write ATF today and tell them you oppose this unnecessary, misguided and damaging ban on commonly used ammunition for America's most popular sporting rifles.

Email: APAComments@atf.gov

Fax: (202) 648-9741.

2014-15 Season Report for Carlyle Lake State & Fish Wildlife Area

Submitted by Justin Wolfe, MWHI Carlyle Lake Area Charirman

Totals for 2014-15 Season

| Patoka | Cox's Bridge | Eckert's Wood | Eckert's Farm | Hitogi | PL#1 | PL#2 | PI#3 | Tamalco | Horsesh. Lake | Keyesp. |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| Hunters | Hunters | Hunters | Hunters | Hunters | Hunters | Hunters | Hunters | Hunters | Hunters | Hunters |
| 459 | 1523 | 9 | 28 | 265 | 1549 | 2955 | 626 | 893 | 185 | 305 |
| Ducks | Ducks | Ducks | Ducks | Ducks | Ducks | Ducks | Ducks | Ducks | Ducks | Ducks |
| 265 | 1863 | 17 | 18 | 253 | 1668 | 3898 | 705 | 1035 | 184 | 155 |
| D/H | D/H | D/H | D/H | D/H | D/H | D/H | D/H | D/H | D/H | D/H |
| 0.58 | 1.22 | 1.88 | 0.64 | 0.95 | 1.08 | 1.32 | 1.13 | 1.16 | 0.99 | 0.51 |
| Total Hunters | Total Ducks | Total D/H Avg. | | | | | | | | |
| 8797 | 10,061 | 1.14 | | | | | | | | |

Eagle Watching Open House Rescheduled Due to Winter Weather Advisory

Cortney Solum, USFWS Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge 2/20/2015

Brussels, Ill.- The Eagle Watching Open House scheduled for Feb 21 at Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge has been postponed to March 7, due to a winter weather advisory issued for Feb 20 and 21.

The March 7 Eagle Watching Open House will be held at the refuge visitor center from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Attendees will learn about eagles, wildlife, and eagle watching tips, and have an opportunity to see eagles and other wildlife.

Eagle Watching Open House activities include:

- 10 a.m.-2 p.m. The visitor center will be open to provide information about eagle biology, nesting, diet, and conservation. Kids' crafts and activities will be available.
- 11 a.m. Refuge rangers will lead an hour-long eagle watching walking tour through the Gilbert Lake Division to spot eagles and learn about bird watching. Sign up by March 5 by calling the visitor center at 618-883-2524 or emailing TwoRivers@fws.gov.
- 10 a.m.-2 p.m. The Swan Lake levee will be open for a self-led auto tour. Volunteers will have scopes set up for eagle viewing at the entrance to the levee. This activity is dependent on weather conditions.

This event is free and open to the public.

For more information about the refuge open house, call 618-883-2524 or email TwoRivers@fws.gov.

MWHI Seeking Scholarship Applicants

Application Window: December 1, 2014 to March10, 2015

**For an application or for more information, please visit our website at www.mwhi.us
or contact MWHI President John Gineris at 618-708-8117**



U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG®

Kaskaskia Watershed Association to hold Annual Summit

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

CARLYLE LAKE - The Kaskaskia Watershed Association, Inc. (KWA) will hold the Annual Summit on Monday, March 9, 2015 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Mariner's Village Conference Center, 1 Resort Drive, Carlyle, Illinois. This year's theme "New Opportunities Built on Past Successes," will focus on new projects and past successes in the Kaskaskia River and the Kaskaskia Watershed.

The agenda for the day is as follows:

- 9:00 - 9:30 Registration
- 9:30 - 9:45 Welcome – Ed Weilbacher, KWA President
- 9:45 -10:00 Remarks - Mike Feldman, Deputy District Engineer for Programs and Project Management, St. Louis District Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- 10:00- 10:15 Shawn Sullivan, Strategic Planning Coordinator, St. Louis District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – "The Comprehensive Plan for the Kaskaskia Watershed"
- 10:15-10:30 Wes Cattoor, Water Supply Engineer, Illinois Department of Natural Resources – "Statewide Water Supply Planning and Success in the Kaskaskia Watershed"
- 10:30-10:45 Ted Beier, President, Carlyle Lake Association, Inc. – "Improving Carlyle Lake for the Future Through Partnerships"
- 10:45 -11:00 Break
- 11:00 -11:15 Dave Eustis, President, CEO, Heartlands Conservancy – "Farmland Protection Tools and Incentives"
- 11:15 -11:45 Legislative Briefing
- 11:45 -12:30 Lunch
- 12:30 – 1:00 Ed Weilbacher, General Manager Kaskaskia Regional Port District, President, KWA, – "Building and Growing the Kaskaskia Regional Port"
- 1:00 – 1:30 Ricky Raymond, Project Manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineer, Lake Shelbyville – "Facility Rehabilitation and Development"
- 1:30 – 1:45 Paul Rhode, Vice President, Midwest Area Waterways Council – "Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) and What it Means for the Nation and the Kaskaskia Watershed"
- 1:45 – 2:00 Ed Weilbacher – Closing Remarks

Pre-registration is required. To register for the event, contact Ms. Roberta LaSalvia at HeartLands Conservancy by calling (618) 566-4451 ext. 12 or by email at roberta.lasalvia@heartlandsconservancy.org. The deadline to register is Monday, March 2, 2015. The \$15.00 registration fee to cover the cost of lunch and refreshments can be paid at the door. Checks should be made payable to HeartLands Conservancy. For more information please contact the Carlyle Lake/Kaskaskia River Project Office at (618)594-2484 or email carlylelake@usace.army.mil.

Horseshoe Lake SP (Madison County)
2014 'Late' Goose Season Harvest Report
Jim S. Gowen, IDNR Site Superintendent, Horseshoe Lake S.P.

for the "Late" goose season held after our regular duck season, we had:

| | |
|---|--|
| Season: Dec 24th 2014 thru Jan 31st 2015 | Season length: 39 days |
| Days hunted by at least one hunter: 35 of possible 39 | Number of hunters: 301 |
| Number of Canada geese harvested: 102 | Number of speck/white fronted geese harvested: 6 |
| Number of snow geese harvested: 1 | Total number of geese harvested: 109 |
| Bird to hunter average of: .37 | |

**Will feds take their cue from Connecticut and try
to launch national gun registration?**

Patriot Headquarters 2/16/2015

Not all dictators are created equal. They all use different methods to gain power and keep it. But one thing they all have in common is that one of their first acts is to disarm the public. Once the people are powerless to protect themselves, a dictator can reveal his full agenda with no fear of retribution.

Gun registration, which became the law in Connecticut on January 1, 2014, may not seem all that terrible on the surface, but it's always the first step toward disarming the public. Once government officials know where every legally-owned gun is, what kind of gun it is and what kind of ammunition it uses, they can take the necessary steps to eventually confiscate those guns and ammo. And all the while they will tell you that they have no intention of taking away guns, but merely want to protect innocent citizens from harm.

The tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newton, Connecticut, is what set this in play. Well-meaning but very misguided officials believe that taking guns out of the hands of law-abiding citizens will end these types of horrific incidents. They never seem to take into consideration that the types of people who commit these horrible acts are not going to register their guns. So, taking guns out of the hands of the good guys only allows the bad guys more time to shoot up schools and malls before they are finally taken down.

You know what happens when a bad guy brandishes a weapon and starts trying to harm people in Israel? Armed good guys take them down, pronto. If the liberals think there is gun carnage in the U.S. now, just wait until law-abiding citizens no longer are able to own and carry guns that they can use to save innocent lives when a madman starts shooting.

Law-abiding gun owners in Connecticut know that this registration is unconstitutional, but they have little choice if they want to be in compliance with the law. Of course, they could refuse to obey what they feel is an unjust law, but there could be consequences to pay for that.



Belle Starr: Bandit Queen

Was she a criminal mastermind, or a pawn in the games the Younger Gang played?

By Linda Hoff (RSS) December 31, 2014

After nine months of imprisonment for horse stealing, Belle Starr—also known as “the Bandit Queen”—was once again a free woman. As she emerged from the Detroit House of Corrections, members of the press crowded around, attracted by the novelty of a woman desperado.

“What are you going to do now, Miss Starr?” asked one.

Belle continued walking, looking neither left nor right. She was a rather homely-looking woman in her mid-30s, dressed in a long-skirted black riding habit, high-top boots and a hat with a large ostrich plume. A cartridge belt and two pistols looked totally out of place strapped across her hips. But she was, after all, known for being a fine shot.

“Will you be returning to your life of crime?” asked a second, eager reporter.

Again Belle did not respond.

“Miss Starr, is it true that you’re a friend of Jesse James?” questioned a third as he moved to stand in front of her, blocking her path.

Belle stopped abruptly and looked the reporter up and down. A small smile teased the corners of her mouth. “I am a friend to any brave and gallant outlaw,” she said, then neatly stepped around the reporter and continued on her way. There is some dispute among historians as to how much of an outlaw she really was. Some argue that Belle was a criminal mastermind, the brains behind the illegal activities. Others believe she lived a hard life made more complicated by the actions of the men closest to her.

In any case, most agree that her life changed following the Kansas-Missouri Border Wars and the subsequent death of her brother, a captain in Quantrill’s Raiders (Quantrill’s Raiders was group of men who banded together to fight Union soldiers and sympathizers in the area). Belle was just 16 at the time. Shortly thereafter, the town of Carthage was burned, and the family moved to Texas.

Later, some former Quantrill’s Raiders turned to robbery to make a living. Among them were Cole Younger, a childhood friend of Belle’s, Cole’s three brothers, Jesse and Frank James, and Jim Reed. In their flight from the law, these men would sometimes escape to the Shirleys’ Texas home, using it as their hideout. Legend has it that Belle quickly became a member of the Younger gang.

Belle would marry three times, starting with Jim Reed. Over time, he fell into robbery, horse stealing and cattle rustling with the James and Younger Gangs as well as the Starr clan, a Cherokee Indian family that also operated on the wrong side of the law. There were reports that Belle willingly sold the horses Reed stole. Eventually Reed committed one too many crimes and was apprehended after robbing a stagecoach. He was killed while trying to escape.

Belle’s second husband was Sam Starr, a Cherokee Indian. They settled on 62 acres of land in Oklahoma. There, they made a living rustling cattle, stealing horses and bootlegging whiskey. They also provided a safe haven for those hiding from the law.

When Belle was 34, she and her husband were sentenced to jail for stealing horses, but returned to crime on their release.

Sam would eventually die in a gunfight and Belle would marry one last time. Jim July was a member of Sam Starr’s extended family, and by all accounts, the two fought continuously.

Two days before Belle’s 41st birthday, she was gunned down in an ambush. Suspects included a neighbor, her husband, daughter and son, but the murder was never solved. She was buried on her ranch. Her tombstone bears the image of her favorite horse, a bell, a star and the epitaph:

Shed not for her the bitter tear,
Nor give the heart to vain regret;
’Tis but the casket that lies here,
The gem that filled it sparkles yet.

Illinois Deer Hunters Harvest Preliminary Total of 145,804 Deer during 2014-2015 Seasons Deer Hunting Seasons Closed January 18

IDNR News Release 1/22/2015

SPRINGFIELD, IL. – Hunters in Illinois harvested a preliminary total of 145,804 deer during all 2014-15 seasons, which concluded Jan. 18. The total preliminary deer harvest for all seasons of 145,804 compares with a total harvest for all seasons of 148,614 in 2013-14. During this year's deer seasons, hunters took 47 percent does and 53 percent males. A breakdown of Illinois deer hunting seasons is as follows:

- Archery: Archery deer hunters in Illinois took a preliminary total of 56,083 deer during the archery season (Oct. 1, 2014-Jan. 18, 2015), compared with the archery deer harvest of 57,364 in the 2013-14 archery season.
- Youth: Young deer hunters harvested 2,768 deer during the 2014 Illinois Youth Deer Season (Oct. 11-13, 2014), compared with 3,016 deer in 2013.
- Traditional Firearm Season: Hunters took a preliminary total of 76,729 deer during the 2014 Illinois Firearm Deer Season (Nov. 21-23 and Dec. 4-7, 2014), compared with 74,318 taken during the 2013 season.
- Muzzleloader: Hunters using muzzleloading rifles harvested 3,478 deer during the 2014 Muzzleloader-Only Deer Season (Dec. 12-14, 2014), compared with 3,536 in 2013.
- Late-Winter Seasons: The 2014-15 Late-Winter Antlerless Only and Special CWD deer seasons concluded on Jan. 18, with a combined preliminary harvest total for both seasons of 6,746 deer, compared with a harvest of 10,380 deer taken during those seasons in 2013-14. Season dates for the Late-Winter and CWD seasons were Jan. 1-4 and 16-18, 2015.

With the addition of Will County this year, 12 northern Illinois counties were open to the Special CWD Season, compared to 11 in 2013-14. The Special CWD season is used to assist in slowing the spread of chronic wasting disease in the Illinois deer herd.

Twenty fewer counties were open for the Late-Winter Antlerless Season in 2014 because they had reached deer population goals. The number of open counties went from 55 to 35 this year. Counties that are at or below their individual goal for two consecutive years may be removed from the late-winter season.

Tables with Illinois preliminary deer harvest county totals can be found at this link:

<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/news/Documents/IllinoisPreliminaryDeerHarvestTable2014-2013.pdf>

2015-2016 MWHI Gun Raffle

One Winner Every Month - Ticket Drawn on First of Every Month - Beginning April, 2015

Subject to availability at Draw Date - Pick-up at Outrageous Outdoors, Jerseyville

\$40.00 / Ticket

Only 500 Sold

| | | |
|---------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| April 2015 Gun | - | S&W S&P Shield 9mm |
| May 2015 Gun | - | Tristar 12 ga O/U |
| June 2015 Gun | - | Henry 22 lever action |
| July 2015 Gun | - | Ruger 10-22 |
| August 2015 Gun | - | Savage 17 HMR |
| September 2015 Gun | - | Remington 870 Supermag 3 1/2" |
| October 2015 Gun | - | Beretta A300 3 1/2" |
| November 2015 Gun | - | Remington |
| December 2015 Gun | - | Glock 42 .380 auto |
| January 2016 Gun | - | Savage Axis 22 - 250 w/scope |
| February 2016 Gun | - | FNH 9mm |
| March 2016 Gun | - | Winchester sX3 |

For tickets, please contact Gun Raffle Chairman Dave Geisler at 618-535-3889 or any MWHI Board Member