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Rosi Franke, Editor

Tel: 618-396-2509

e-mail: [rgfranke@frontiernet.net](mailto:rgfranke@frontiernet.net)

## **MWHI Receives Certificate of Appreciation Award**



**from U. S. Corps of Engineers St. Louis District**

## MWHI OFFICERS 2015

President  
Banquet Chairman  
John Gineris  
618-708-8117 (cell)  
618-786-2596 (home)

Vice-President  
Mike Arnold  
618-786-2300

Treasurer  
Shane DeSherlia  
618-639-0855 (home)  
618-946-4520 (cell)  
desherlia3@hotmail.com

Membership Secretary  
Mike Devening  
618-259-6181

Correspondence Secretary  
Rosi Franke  
618-396-2509  
rgfranke@frontiernet.net

Recording Secretary  
Cheri Gineris  
618-786-2596

### ***MWHI DIRECTORS 2015***

Bob Jones  
618-578-9547 (cell)

Chris Tite  
618-610-3513

Dave Geisler  
Gun Raffle Chairman/Refuge Chairman  
618-535-3889

Eric Rhuede  
IFOR Board Representative  
618-410-9853

Justin Wolfe  
Carlyle Lake Area Projects Chairman  
618-377-0397

Don Taul  
COE Chairman  
618-978-8285

Brian Arnold  
618-535-9979

Ron Ragus  
618-977-2730

Kevin Dawdy  
618-444-8711

Bo Adcock  
Area Projects Chairman  
618-535-6585

Dennis Millner  
618-910-1420

Pat McCrae  
618-444-6793

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

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**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

**Monday, May 4, 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

**Monday, June 1, 2015**

***MWHI BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING***

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

*Visit Us at:*

**[www.mwhi.us](http://www.mwhi.us)**

The Sentry is published monthly except for December and January by Migratory Waterfowl Hunters, Inc., 2404 E. Broadway, Alton, IL, 62002. The Sentry deadline is always the second Monday of each month.

Statements and opinions expressed in the Sentry are those of the individual and do not necessarily represent the views of Migratory Waterfowl Hunters, Inc. Officers, Directors, Advisors, Members or the Editor. The appearance of an ad in this newsletter does not necessarily constitute an endorsement of a product or service. We encourage our members to take note of those businesses advertising in our newsletter and shop with them when they are in the market for their product or services.

## MWHI Receives Certificate of Appreciation Award



**Scott Bryant, IFOR President, receives Certificate of Appreciation from Colonel Mitchell.**



**Greg Franke, MWHI, receives Certificate of Appreciation from Colonel Mitchell.**



**Joe Webster, Batchtown Sportsmen's Club President, receives Certificate of Appreciation from Colonel Mitchell.**

On March 4, 2015, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers St. Louis District recognized local, state and federal partners on Batchtown Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Project during a ceremony held at the Pere Marquette Visitor Center.

Various people from the Corps of Engineers were also recognized for their efforts to bring the project to completion, as well as the IDNR, USFWS, the Alton Regional Convention and Visitors Bureau. MWHI hosted the event.

The Batchtown Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Project broke ground in the late 1990's and completed the last major component in 2013 at a total cost of \$19 million. The project restores habitat diversity for the benefit of fish and wildlife. The project protects wildlife areas from fluctuating water levels which increases acres of plant production, mudflats, and use of the areas by migratory birds, shore birds, and the public. The local economy also benefits from the project through recreational activities and eco-tourism.

The Batchtown Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Project is a partnership between the U.S Army Corps of Engineers St. Louis District, Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

“The Batchtown project is a great example of the success that can be achieved when multiple organizations and agencies work together,” said Brian Markert, Upper Mississippi River Restoration Program Project Manager, St. Louis District Corps of Engineers. “The features, designs, and progressive partnerships of the project are already a model for future ecosystem restoration projects.”



**Batchtown Obermeyer Gate - one of the project features**

# ISP merges FOID, Concealed Carry Application Processes

Two Rivers Outdoors 3/12/2015

Illinois State Police today announced the agency will begin accepting online FOID applications beginning March 16 to provide a more streamlined and modernized application process.

ISP will no longer accept the current FOID paper applications after Monday, March 9; however, like the CCL, the new FOID application will be available through the department's website or through the paper alternative call center method for those individuals who do not have computer access.

Minors under the age of 21 without a state of Illinois Driver's License or Identification card and Amish applicants will be required to complete an alternative call-in paper application.

ISP has also made changes to the login for both the CCL and FOID applications.

Applicants will no longer be required to obtain a state of Illinois digital I.D. through the Department of Central Management Services.

This login change will allow users greater accessibility to the new application process.

All new applicants and returning CCL applicants will need to register with the Illinois State Police by providing some key identifiers found on their Illinois Driver's License or Identification card, creating a username and password, and answering four security questions.

The CCL website will be unavailable beginning Friday, March 13, 5 p.m., until Monday, March 16, 7 a.m., in order to implement the new FOID system.

Federal Firearm Licensed dealers will also have access to the web-based portal in order to conduct the required background checks of those wishing to purchase a firearm.

All FFLs in the state of Illinois are required to register with the ISP via the website at [www.ispffl.com](http://www.ispffl.com) or by calling 217-524-3847 to continue to perform background checks after the launch of the new system.

The old FTIP system will be closed on March 15, 4 p.m., to allow data to be transferred to the new system.

Beginning March 16, 8:30 a.m., firearm dealers will be able to submit firearm background transactions via the website and follow up on previously requested checks based upon a transaction number.

Firearm dealers using the web-portal during the first 30 days of implementation will be able to submit transactions at no cost.

The traditional fee of \$2 is being waived.

Firearm dealers will also still have the option of using the 800-number dial-up process; however, dealers will be charged the \$2 processing fee for this option.

The new CCL and FOID application process is intended to provide a user-friendly portal designed to ease and streamline both application processes.

ILLINOIS



DEPARTMENT OF  
NATURAL  
RESOURCES

## Fishing Information Guide

The 2015 Illinois Fishing Information guide is available in PDF format through the IDNR website:  
<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/fishing/Documents/IllinoisFishingInformation.pdf>

Regulations in the guide are effective through March 31, 2016. A reminder to anglers, and would-be anglers, that Illinois Free Fishing Days for 2015 are June 5-8, 2015.



## Legislation Update

John Popov

Let's talk some more about "Universal Background Checks. Many politicians think all we have to do is to solve crime problems is to have a universal background check on all legal transfers. This is a 'de facto' back door gun registration on every gun you own. This will eventually lead to a separate tax on each gun you own every year. Part of this tax could be used by the United Nations to enforce international law in the USA. How? Through an U.N. Arms Treaty. This is not in the best interest of legal law-abiding gun owners in the USA; unfortunately, we have an administration that would like to see this happen. Why would you want to criminalize gun transfers among family members and friends?

All these back door strategies will never stop the criminals. They break the laws to serve their own agenda. All of these laws and proposed laws put heavier and heavier burdens on the law-abiding citizens by claiming to make us all safer.

In 1995, Canada passed the Canadian Firearms Act. The citizens of Canada lost hundreds of thousands legally registered handguns. In Australia in 1996 the government gun confiscation program got 600,000 lawfully owned guns. In 1967, New York City required all rifles be registered. In 1991, New York City banned the ownership of several types of rifles. In 1976, the District of Columbia passed very strict handgun and gun ban laws. In 1977, The District of Columbia Superior Court upheld its hand gun ban.

The honest legal gun owner and law-abiding citizen tries to be open and honest, pay their taxes and break no laws. This in no way pleases the anti-gun people. How do we, the gun owners crows, stop this process? Don't give up, stay informed and be ready to support groups and legislators who support you.

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**

**Sen. Wm. Sam McCann – 50th District Tel: 217-782-8206**

**Email: SenatorSam@frontier.com**

**Sen. Kyle McCarter– 54th Districted: 217-782-5755 E-mail:**

**senatormccarter@gmail.com**

**Sen. Chapin Rose – 51st Districted: 217-558-1006**

**Sen. William R. Haine – 56th District**

**Tel:618-465-4764 E-mail: haine@senatedem.state.il.us**

**Sen. James F. Clayborne – 57th District**

**Tel: 618-875-1212 E-mail: clayborne@senatedem.il.us**

**Sen. David Luechtefeld – 58th District**

**Tel: 618-243-9014 E-mail: sendavel@midwest.com**

**Sen. Gary Forby - 59th District**

**Tel: 217-782-5509**

**Rep. Dan Beiser – 111th District**

**Tel: 217-782-5996 E-Mail: dvbeiser@sbcglobal.net**

**Rep. Natalie A. Manley – 98th District**

**Tel: 217-782-3316**

**Rep. Adam Brown – 102nd District**

**Tel: 217-782-8398**

**Rep. John D. Cavaletto – 107th District**

**Tel:618-548-9080**

**Rep. Dwight Kay – 112 District**

**Tel: 618-307-9200**

**Rep. Jay Hoffman – 113th District**

**Tel: 217-782-0104**

**Rep. C. D. Davidsmeyer – 100th District**

**Tel: 217-243-6221**

**Rep. Mike Bost – 115th District**

**Tel: 618-457-5787 mikebost@midwestmail.com**

**Rep. Dan Reitz – 116th District**

**Tel: 618-443-5757 E-mail: dreitz@egyptian.net**

**Rep. Rodney Davis - 13th District**

**Tel: 202-224-3121**

**Rep. John Shimkus - 15th District**

**Tel: 618-344-3065 E-mail: house.gov/shimkus**

**Sen. Richard J. Durbin**

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

**Sen. Mark Kirk**

**Tel: 202-224-2854 Email: kirk.senate.gov**

## Shooting Sport Volunteers Wanted

Two Rivers Outdoors, 3.6.15

The 4-H programs in Greene and Calhoun County are looking for adults who qualify and are willing to become coordinators and instructors in Shooting Sports. The National 4-H Shooting Sports requires each county to have a coordinator and at least one instructor before a 4-H program in the county can offer Shooting Sports as a category. On May 1-3 a coordinator and instructor training will be held at the 4-H Memorial Camp in Monticello.

To qualify as a volunteer you must meet the following requirements: 21 years of age or older; an interest and knowledge of shooting sports; the desire and ability to develop in youth the skill and knowledge to enhance their abilities in shooting sports and as great citizens; and pass a background check. You do not have to currently have a child in 4-H to be a 4-H volunteer.

Shooting Sports encompass archery, rifle and shotgun. The instructors would provide the leadership to the youth while the coordinator is required to provide overall supervision of the entire shooting sports program and be present when any competitions or meetings are held.

If you are interested in attending or want more information on the program please contact April Littig, University of Illinois Extension youth development educator at [littig@illinois.edu](mailto:littig@illinois.edu) or 217-243-7424.



### License Reminder

Illinois' new license year begins April 1. Illinois fishing, hunting and sportsman's combination licenses for 2015 are available from DNR Direct license and permit vendors, online through the IDNR website at [www.dnr.illinois.gov](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov), or by calling 1-888-6PERMIT (1-888-673-7648). The 2015 licenses are valid through Mar. 31, 2016, unless otherwise noted. When buying a 2015 Illinois hunting, fishing, or sportsman's license, add a donation to the Illinois Conservation Foundation to support youth hunting and fishing programs.

## ATF Not Moving Forward With 5.56 M855 Ammo Ban

NRA American Hunter, March 10, 2015

The National Rifle Association (NRA) was instrumental in stalling the Obama Administration's initial attempt to ban commonly used ammunition for the most popular rifle in America, the AR-15. The announcement that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (BATFE) will suspend its proposed framework to ban M855 ammunition validates the NRA's assertion that this effort was nothing more than a political maneuver to bypass Congress and impose gun control on the American people.

"Today's announcement proves what we have said all along -- this was 100% political. President Obama failed to pass gun control through Congress, so he tried to impose his political agenda through executive fiat. But every gun owner in America needs to understand Barack Obama's hatred of the Second Amendment has not changed," said Wayne La Pierre, Executive Vice President of the National Rifle Association.

Chris Cox, Executive Director of NRA-ILA criticized the dishonest campaign to ban this common ammunition: "The lies used to justify the ban were shameful. This proposal was never about law enforcement safety – it was about the Obama Administration's desire to pander to billionaire Michael Bloomberg and his gun control groups. Since they haven't been able to ban America's most popular rifle, they are trying to ban the ammunition instead." Since the BATFE announced its plan to ban commonly used ammunition less than a month ago, the NRA rallied its five million members and tens of millions of supporters across the country in strong opposition. In addition, the NRA worked with congressional leaders in both the U.S. House and Senate to oppose this misguided proposal.

"The NRA would like to thank House Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte, Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley and House Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman John Culberson for leading the fight against this unconstitutional attack on our Second Amendment freedoms," continued Cox. "This was a significant victory for our five million members and tens of millions of supporters across the country. "Make no mistake, this fight is not over. We will remain vigilant and continue to fight against President Obama's attempt to dismantle the Second Amendment," concluded LaPierre.

# MWHI 2015 Scholarship Recipient

## *Robyn Johnson*

**Robyn attends Jersey Community High School and is one of our 3 MWHI scholarship recipients: The following is the writing sample she submitted:**

The wetlands of rural southern Illinois make an excellent habitat for geese and ducks, allowing Illinois sportsmen to continue a rich heritage of waterfowl hunting. In order to support this tradition, the Migratory Waterfowl Hunters Incorporated, along with other local environmental institutions, aim to continue the Illinois hunting heritage through a mission that fosters wetland ecosystems. To prepare myself for a future career in environmental science and outdoor education, I have pursued this mission by working for multiple environmental organizations that serve the southern Illinois Mississippi Flyway.

Two Rivers Wildlife Refuge is a major force for wetland preservation, and I have volunteered for this agency since 2013 to explore career possibilities with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Here I have conducted a refuge project on a Bald Eagle's nest, represented Two Rivers at a variety of public events, and hosted the Two Rivers Visitor's Center. This work has included answering questions from both children and adults to encourage their appreciation of river systems and wetlands. Located in a prime location along the Mississippi Flyway, Two Rivers works to support the sport of migratory waterfowl hunting by maintaining hunting areas including their Apple Creek division near Brussels, Illinois. Two Rivers reflects MWHI's mission by benefitting riparian ecosystems as a whole, rather than to solely assisting the sport of migratory waterfowl hunting. In further service to the MWHI mission, Two Rivers works with local land owners to discourage impractical wetland drainage as well as reaching out to the public with educational resources. My work with Two Rivers has expanded my knowledge of wildlife science. It has also empowered me to continue my study of environmental sciences by opening doors to college and career experiences. By supporting wetlands for a wide variety of wildlife, Two Rivers maintains the migratory waterfowl hunting heritage, and teaches citizens responsible stewardship of natural resources.

Treehouse Wildlife Center in Dow, Illinois, also supports the mission of the Migratory Waterfowl Hunters, Incorporated. I volunteer for this organization because it is dedicated to the "rescue, rehabilitation, and release of wildlife while promoting environmental awareness through education." Since I began work at Treehouse in 2012, my interest and ability in environmental science and outdoor education has increased. I began by cleaning squirrel cages, and have since learned how to feed and care for a variety of rescued birds, including majestic Barred Owls like "Squib" and meek American Kestrels like "Jack." I have also participated in events, such as The Treehouse Fall Festival, that educate both children and adults about wildlife and natural habitats. This past fall I published a story on the Fall Festival in the Jersey County Journal newspaper. I see immense value in Treehouse's goal of rehabilitating animals, as it brings people close to the animals and habitats MWHI wants to preserve and sustain. One of the most rewarding aspects of my Treehouse work was the chance to see animals return to their natural habitats. Unlike the Saint Louis Zoo, Treehouse shows people how they can become a seamless part of nature's "circle of life" by enabling animals, often times injured due to human contact, to return to their surroundings. Although my Treehouse work does not directly support waterfowl hunting, I believe it helps others understand that all ecosystems, including those of wetlands, are worthy of responsible stewardship.

My work with Two Rivers and Treehouse was inspired by my childhood experiences at The Nature Institute summer camp in Godfrey, Illinois. As a Nature Institute camper, the MWHI's mission "to aid youth through conservation education" was one I experienced firsthand. Additionally, since 2008, I have enjoyed working as a camp counselor for The Nature Institute every summer to share outdoor education and my love of the natural world with young children.

Continued from Page 11

I remember thriving as a camper in the inspiring, supportive atmosphere my counselors created through natural science activities. As a current counselor, I want my own campers to have a similar experience each summer. When I lead nature hikes each day, I make an effort to foster children's love for Illinois' outdoor traditions by encouraging original thought about the outdoors. For example, I encourage campers to observe their surroundings through their own senses before I provide relevant scientific knowledge and information about a unique plant or animal track. For a number of years, I have seen that encouraging youth to appreciate their natural surroundings serves a dual purpose. It provides them with vital knowledge for their lives as residents within the wetlands of the Mississippi Flyway—one of the world's largest riparian ecosystems. It also gives them the confidence to understand, protect, and conserve this ecosystem for future generations.

As I researched information on migratory waterfowl hunting, I learned how much Illinois waterfowl hunters do to support all wetland residents. The taxes and fees hunters pay—not to mention the contributions they make to organizations like Migratory Waterfowl Hunters, Incorporated—support the environmental institutions that inspired my study and work in the natural world. Two Rivers Wildlife Refuge, Treehouse Wildlife Center, and The Nature Institute all benefit from organizations like Migratory Waterfowl Hunters. Although I am not a waterfowl hunter, my respect for this sport motivates my scholarship application. The opportunity to apply for this MWHI scholarship has taught me even more about how the sport of waterfowl hunting is connected to my life as a wetlands resident. It has also shown me how migratory waterfowl hunting will continue to support my desire to study wetlands in ways that preserve them for future generations that include all forms of life.

## **Congratulations, Robyn!**

### **Virginia Sporting Dog Owners Spared From Legislation**

**U. S. Sportsmen's Alliance, March 2015**

Problematic legislation in Virginia that banned the sale or transfer of dogs in public places, such as parking lots, parks or rest stops, has been amended to exclude hobby breeders and transactions involving hunting dog. The original version of the bill would have penalized routine transfers of hunting dogs at neutral, public locations.

Senate Bill 1001 was amended by the House Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources Committee at the request of sportsmen and hobby breeders throughout Virginia to include a provision that exempts any transactions involving hunting dogs, as well as individual transactions from breeders who sell less than 30 puppies per year. The bill subsequently cleared the full House of Representatives, and the state Senate concurred with the changes intact.

“This legislation is a perfect example of sportsmen and dog enthusiasts working in a constructive manner to make sure their concerns were addressed,” said Adam Wright, USSA's associate director of state services. “Senate Bill 1001, as amended, will no longer make sportsmen and small, hobby breeders collateral damage in the legislature's efforts to go after problem breeders and fly-by-night operations.”

The bill is currently awaiting action on the governor's desk.





# Illinois State Rifle Association

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

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

**Richard Pearson, ISRA Executive Director - February 26, 2015**

By now you know the latest threat by al-shabaab, a Somali based Islamic terrorist group, has threatened to attack the Mall of America in Minnesota. This is not a new idea for al-shabaab. In September of 2013 this same group attacked the Westgate Shopping Mall in Nairobi, Kenya. Although statistics are somewhat muddled the casualties at last report are 72 dead and 240 wounded. This makes the Westgate terrorist attack one of the worst ever. Local authorities believe the al-shabaab terrorists were using local Somali citizens' homes as hide-outs prior to the attack. Minnesota has a large Somali population.

Despite the terrible losses at the Westgate Mall it could have been much worse. Local armed civilians, a few in the mall and some who gathered outside the mall entered on their own before police set foot in the mall. The civilians suppressed the terrorist fire and prevented the casualties from being much higher. Several hours passed before the police and military would enter the mall.

The Director of Homeland Security told us all to be careful when going to the mall - really, how comforting. The lessons learned from the Westgate Mall attack are these:

- \* Armed citizens are going to be the first responders, like it or not.
- \* It takes a while for any police organization to respond. They need to get to the scene and execute a plan.
- \* Uniformed security guards are the first targets.

Think about how many "soft targets" there are. Next time you drive somewhere see how many you can identify. You will be astounded. Armed citizens can become hard spots in soft targets. That requires training on your part.

In the mean time I never cease to be amazed at the minions who make our foreign policy. They must have all graduated from the Ostrich School of International Relations. Good grief!

As you can see we are adding new bills every day to the State House and Senate bills list. One of our more important bills, SB1857 is known as the Due Process Bill. This bill is designed to ensure a fair hearing before the Appeals Board for the concealed carry applicants who were denied a CCL. The deadline for introducing bills in the House is Friday, February 27th.

Thanks for being a member.

## **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**

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

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



## Snow Goose Hunters Asked to Report Dead Waterfowl

IDNR News Release, March 4, 2015

### Avian Cholera Outbreak Earlier This Winter Claimed 300 Birds; Not a Threat to Overall Waterfowl Populations

SPRINGFIELD, IL – As temperatures warm this weekend and migrating waterfowl return to Illinois, snow goose hunters should be aware of the potential presence of avian cholera. Dead waterfowl found at sites along the Illinois River and at Carlyle and Horseshoe Lakes earlier this winter have tested positive for avian cholera. The total number of dead birds at all sites was less than 300. Most birds affected were lesser snow geese, but smaller numbers of greater white-fronted geese and some ducks also were reported.

Avian cholera is caused by bacteria that can spread from bird to bird and also remain in the environment. Avian cholera poses a low risk to people and pets, but safe handling of waterfowl and good hygiene practices are recommended. Illinois Department of Natural Resources waterfowl biologist Randy Smith said dead birds were discovered in late December and early January. The outbreak ended when the weather turned colder, and laboratory results were not available until migrating waterfowl had moved farther south.

“With warmer temperatures forecast for this weekend, we expect migrating birds – especially snow geese – to be back in Illinois in the coming days,” Smith said. “We are asking hunters to report any sightings of dead birds they may encounter.”

Birds infected with avian cholera usually succumb very quickly. A flock of geese may settle on an area, and take off a short time later, and dead birds may remain. Sick birds are rarely found, but will appear lethargic and have poor muscle control and may die within minutes of being observed. Although avian cholera may affect substantial numbers of birds in some areas, it is not a threat to the overall population.

Smith said an outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza is ongoing in western and Pacific coast states, but the disease has not been found in Illinois.

For more information, visit the National Wildlife Health Center website:  
[http://www.nwhc.usgs.gov/disease\\_information/avian\\_cholera/index.jsp](http://www.nwhc.usgs.gov/disease_information/avian_cholera/index.jsp)

Hunters that find dead birds can contact Illinois waterfowl biologists: [doug.dufford@illinois.gov](mailto:doug.dufford@illinois.gov);  
[randy.smith@illinois.gov](mailto:randy.smith@illinois.gov) or [roy.domazlicky@illinois.gov](mailto:roy.domazlicky@illinois.gov)

Hunters should follow these routine precautions when handling game:

- Do not handle or eat sick game.
- Prepare game in a well-ventilated area.
- Wear rubber or disposable latex gloves while handling and cleaning game.
- Wash hands and thoroughly clean knives, equipment and surfaces that come in contact with game.
- Do not eat, drink, or smoke while handling animals.
- All game should be thoroughly cooked to an internal temperature of 165 degrees F.

#### **IDNR Newsbits March 2015**

Spring Trout Season Opens April 4: The 2015 Spring Trout Fishing Season in Illinois will begin at 5 a.m. on Sat., April 4. The catchable trout program is made possible through the sale of inland trout stamps to those anglers who participate. Unless exempt, anglers must have a valid Illinois fishing license and an inland trout stamp. Check the IDNR website for a list of sites open for trout fishing starting April 4:

<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/news/Pages/IllinoisSpringTroutFishingSeasonisJustAroundtheCorner.aspx>

Fishing Information Booklet: The 2015 Illinois Fishing Information guide is available in PDF format through the IDNR website: <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/fishing/Documents/IllinoisFishingInformation.pdf>

Regulations in the guide are effective through March 31, 2016. A reminder to anglers, and would-be anglers, that Illinois Free Fishing Days for 2015 are June 5-8.

# Jen “The Archer” Cordaro: On Communicating with Non-Hunters

U. S. Sportsmen's Alliance, Posted on March 12, 2015, By Cameron Pauli, USSA Digital Media Specialist



Having to defend the outdoor lifestyle of hunting, fishing and trapping on social media and in conversation has become all too commonplace for many sportsmen. These scenarios, which set the stage for the formation of the U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance Hunter Advancement Task Force, often escalate into situations highlighted by verbal abuse, physical threats and a perpetual bashing of beliefs between hunters and non-hunters.

Very few people in the outdoors know this better than Jen “The Archer” Cordaro, who was the target of a major online attack conducted by the anti-hunting community earlier this year. People from across the globe posted threats and sent hateful messages through Cordaro’s Facebook page. Some even went as far to wish physical harm and death upon her. Another individual started a petition to

ban hunting in California because of Cordaro’s activities in the state.

Instead of countering attacks with emotionally charged social posts, Cordaro has decided to take the high road.

Cordaro, a petite young lady with a passion for promoting wildlife conservation and shooting sports, was a vegetarian for 10 years and has a unique perspective when it comes to addressing hunter harassment.

“As hunters, we need to stop being reactive and answering out of emotion,” said Cordaro. “Anti-hunters are using emotional-based campaigns to target hunters. So, if we’re going to respond with emotion, we’re playing the same game as them. We’re not any better.

She believes sportsmen can communicate more effectively with both anti-hunters and non-hunters by just giving people the opportunity to speak and listen to their point of view.

“The first way we can educate others is to simply give people the time of day. It’s okay to disagree,” said Cordaro. “If there is an opportunity to talk with a non-hunter, have that conversation. While it may not seem like it’s worth your time or effort right now, that person might go to the polls later, and even though they’re not a hunter, when an issue comes up, they might vote in your favor if they had a positive experience talking to you.”

Cordaro also expressed that sportsmen need to be less apprehensive when approached by people of different walks of life who would like to converse about hunting and other outdoor activities.

“I talk to outdoor people who hunt and believe that anti-hunters and non-hunters are all vegetarians,” said Cordaro. “This is certainly not the case, and we can bridge these communities by calling out stereotypes.”

Cordaro knows all too well about stereotypes. Anti-hunters routinely label her as a trophy hunter who is on a mission to teach children to murder innocent animals. While Cordaro encourages youth participation in the outdoors, her main objective is to create dialogue between hunters and non-hunters.

“I really think it would be in our best interest that we (sportsmen) not position ourselves as an exclusive community,” she said.

Having lived as a vegetarian for a decade before learning to hunt, she can relate to the barriers and hardships non-hunters face when trying to integrate with the outdoor community, especially if they come from a background that differs from traditional sportsmen. In fact, Cordaro says vegans and vegetarians reach out to her frequently with questions about learning to hunt for food proving that not all vegetarians and vegans are anti-hunting.

Cordaro now works on making the outdoors more accessible to youth in California through her Bring a Kid Campaign, which encourages adults to introduce youth to their first outdoor experience. She has been encouraged by many to create another campaign for adults who want to give hunting, fishing and the shooting sports a try which may be in the works soon.

“We’re excited to work with Jen to advance our outdoor sports, particularly in California and the western U.S.,” said USSA CEO and President, Nick Pinizzotto. “She brings a level of passion and enthusiasm that seems to resonate with not only hunters, but those who simply want to learn more about living an outdoor lifestyle.”

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