



2404 E. Broadway, Alton, IL 62002

VOLUME 42 ISSUE 4

MAY 2012

Rosi Franke, Editor

Tel: 618-396-2509

e-mail: rgfranke@frontiernet.net

Bob Jones, John Gillespie and Jay Jones honored at 12th Annual MWHI Wetland Conservation Banquet



MWHI President Scott Bryant presents Bob Jones (r) and John Gillespie (l) with MWHI Milestone Award



Jay Jones (r) receives MWHI Conservationist of the Year Award, presented by John Gineris (l) and Senator Demuzio's assistant Michelle (m)

MWHI OFFICERS

President

Scott Bryant
618-535-0151 (cell)

Vice-President

John Gineris
Banquet Chairman
618-786-2596

Treasurer

Larry Franklin
618-465-5686

Membership Secretary

Mike Devening
618-259-6181

Correspondence Secretary

Craig Sondker
COE Chairman
618-593-8421

Recording Secretary

Blaine Jones
618-498-4724

MWHI DIRECTORS

Bob Jones
Area Projects Chairman
IFOR Board Representative
618-498-4724
618-578-9547 (cell)

Eric Rhuede
Wood Duck Nest Box Chairman
618-410-9853

Leonard Jacoby
618-570-1802

Dave Geisler
Nilo Chairman
618-576-9845

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

Brian Arnold
618-535-9979

Shane DeSherlia
618-639-0855 (home)
618-946-4520 (cell)
deshertia3@hotmail.com

Mike Arnold
Refuge Chairman
618-786-2300

Bob Schneider
618-960-9906

Don Taul
618-978-8285

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, May 5, 2012

MWHI 3rd ANNUAL

TIM WATSON MEMORIAL SHOOT

at Otter Creek Hunting Club, Jerseyville, IL

for more information call Craig Sondker 618-593-8421

Monday, May 7, 2012

MWHI BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

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

Monday, June 4, 2012

MWHI BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

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

Wednesday, June 20, 2012

MWHI GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

at Alton-Wood River Sportsmen Club

in Godfrey, IL at 7:00 pm

Monday, July 9, 2012

MWHI BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

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

September 28, 29, 30, 2012

MWHI HUNTER SAFETY COURSE

at K.C. Hall, Alton

for more information or to register, contact

Craig Sondker 618-593-8421

See upcoming Sentry issues for more details!

Visit us at our website:

mwhi.org

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 service.

Crazy Year So Far!

Duane Hahnenkamp

It seems like our weather has been off since last October when we had a colder than normal October. I thought for sure we were in for an early freeze up, but things just started going downhill from then on. A warmer November followed by a warm December equaled a real warm January. I could not even believe February, which was actually hot by the end of that month. It seemed like we had a real mild fall follow by a early spring and someone forgot to throw winter into the middle. Anyway, right now is the first week of April, but it feels more like the middle of May. We should be just starting to find mushrooms, but instead, they have been finding them for the last two weeks. Even worse, it looks like it's about over for the year and this last week has been too dry for a big mushroom crop. The best news has been that the crappie have already started this early spring but everyone is hoping that a screwy cold snap doesn't come along next that would mess everything up.

So much for the last six weird months, but who knows what could come next in the following six months. You know yourself that our winter was virtually without snow and without much rain either. This has meant no floods for us this spring, which has been great news, especially after the last five wet springs and summers we have had. The bad news is that the prairie pothole region also has gotten very little snow and almost no rain since last summer. If it doesn't start raining right away in that area, then there will be virtually none of the small temporary potholes that are so important to have a good duck hatch this spring. Then, if we would happen to have one of those unusually hot and dry summers up there, we could see a real turn around in the duck population. I'm not trying to throw doom and gloom at you yet, but right now the stage is set for what could be a bad hatch if it doesn't start raining. Going from water everywhere to semi-drought conditions on the prairie is a real possibility with the weird spring we are having.

So you may want to keep an eye on the weather maps the next two months and see how much rain they get in the pothole country. Who knows, as crazy as it has been, a strong series of storms could still turn things around up there. If the jet stream moved and it started raining, we could end up with summer floods ourselves. You know, with my luck, plus the way our year has been so far, we could have a great hatch, but the teal would come down too late, then we could get hit with a November flood and top it all off with an early December freeze up. Let's hope for our sake that things get back to normal soon.

###

Pike County Enacts Concealed Carry

Heartland Outdoors, Fri, March 23, 2012

PASA Park, Barry, IL—In the election held Tuesday, March 20, 2012, the voters of Pike County, Illinois, approved a firearms concealed-carry ordinance by a 3,214 to 550 margin. It was one of the largest voter turnouts in county history. The ordinance directly contradicts current Illinois state law. As presented on the ballot, the ordinance took effect upon passage, and applies only to Pike County. The ordinance was placed on the ballot by a citizen initiative petition process that garnered three times the number of signatures required by law.

The new "Constitutional Carry" Pike County initiative was spearheaded by local Second Amendment activist Dr. Dan Mefford of Pittsfield, who drafted the successful ordinance in conjunction with noted outdoor journalist and firearms law expert Dick Metcalf, who is also a resident of Pike County. According to Dr. Mefford, "The people are speaking, and what the people are saying is, 'Trust the people.'"

Historians have stated that this is the first time since 1862 that county voters in any U.S. state have explicitly reversed a state law. The previous example was when the five western counties of Virginia nullified that state's secession from the Union, and themselves seceded from Virginia to form the new state of West Virginia. It is widely anticipated that other rural and downstate counties will follow Pike County's lead. In 2007, the Pike County Board enacted a resolution stating that further restrictive firearms laws enacted by the Illinois State Legislature would be deemed by Pike County "to be Unconstitutional and beyond lawful Legislative Authority." That resolution was subsequently passed by 89 percent of all Illinois counties.

County and local law enforcement officers in Pike County are obligated by law to enforce country ordinances. State law enforcement officers and agencies are obligated to enforce state law. Legal observers therefore expect the inevitable court battle to be complex, because the new ordinance was enacted by the voters themselves, not by any county or local legislative entity.

Illinois Youth Wild Turkey Season Harvest is a New Record

IDNR 4/12/2012

SPRINGFIELD, IL – Young hunters in the Illinois youth wild turkey season harvested a preliminary record of 1,300 birds, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) announced today. The 2012 season dates were March 31 and April 1 for the south zone and April 7-8 for the north zone. The record harvest surpasses the previous record for the youth turkey harvest of 748 set in 2011. This year, 4,100 youth turkey permits were issued, including 137 for special hunt areas, compared to 3,718 last year with 131 for special hunt areas.

“Excellent hunting weather this year during both weekends was a very important reason for the record harvest,” said Paul Brewer, IDNR Wild Turkey Project Manager. “A wet spring in 2011 once again contributed to below-average turkey reproduction in many areas, but a good mast crop and a very mild winter were working in favor of late spring broods.”

Calhoun to Have Bike Trail Referendum

Excerpts from April 18, 2012, The Alton Telegraph, Tom Bott

HARDIN - The board also accepted the wording on a non-binding referendum on a biking/hiking trail in Calhoun County. After meeting with the Calhoun Trails Partnership earlier this month, commissioners decided to tie the question to the biking/hiking trail feasibility study currently being funded through a grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

"Do you support the biking/hiking trail currently being proposed by Calhoun Trails Partnership?" the referendum reads.

The feasibility study is scheduled to be completed in September, but CTP Chairman Dale Hagen said the preliminary report will be made public in August, so that voters will know what they are voting on. The CTP will publicize the results in advance of the November vote.

When Ethical Treatment Goes Wrong

Sportsmen's Alliance, Posted on April 19, 2012

Could it be true that in an animal shelter run by a society dedicated to the ethical treatment of animals the percentage of animals killed is nearly 95 percent? Is it true that the percentage of animals successfully adopted out is less than 1 percent?

A report in *Psychology Today* by Stanley Coren, Ph.D., F.R.S.C. in Canine Corner, details that nearly 95 percent of the animals entrusted to PETA are killed. The report also notes that the group cannot back up its recent claims that kennel crates are harmful to dogs. PETA ran half-page ads in many newspapers claiming that the standard kennel crates used in many homes to contain dogs were harmful to them. Dr. Coren went looking for the facts and could not find supporting details about crates being harmful to dogs anywhere, not even on PETA's website.

Dr. Coren did, however, find revealing facts through Virginia's Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) through freedom of information requests.

In Virginia all animal shelters must report the number of cats and dogs they take in each year, how many animals were reclaimed by their owners, adopted out, transferred to other agencies, died of natural causes, were killed, and how many the shelter held alive at the end of the calendar year. This researcher's correspondence suggested that the proportion of animals being killed by PETA was extremely high and was causing public concern in Virginia.

Just more misleading of the public by a radical animal rights group that professes to help animals.



LEGISLATION UPDATE

John Popov

I have been writing for the Sentry for many years and I have seen many close calls on legislation pertaining to the Second Amendment and gun ownership. The election of 2012 is probably the most important election for the future course of our Country in our history. We already have powerful anti-gun people in our government. We need to get more who support the Second Amendment.

The gun owner has a chance to loose in many ways: (1) we can loose Supreme Court Justices who legislate from the Constitution not from the bench. We can loose a lot of gains we have made; (2) we can send the same President back and have a full scale war on all aspects of gun ownership. We can't overlook Operation Fast and Furious and our Attorney General Eric Holder's sandbagging of a congressional investigation.

I don't want to wear people out on legislation, but it's there and we have to deal with it every day. All I ask is that you become informed about the people who are running for office and the most important thing ... VOTE!

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

USSA Breaks Down Vote on Sportsmen's Heritage Act

U. S. Sportsmen's Alliance, April 18, 2012

Tuesday, April 17th, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the most significant pro-sportsmen legislation in the last 15 years. The vote was 274-146.

Partisan Vote Breakdown

Republicans: 235 voted Yes, 2 voted No

Democrats: 39 voted Yes, 144 voted No

**Support Your Club!
Sign Up a New Member!**

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 – 49th District
Tel: 217-782-8206

Sen. Kyle McCarter– 51st District
Tel: (217) 428-4068

Sen. John O. Jones – 54th District
Tel: 618-242-9511 E-mail: jojones@mvn.net

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

Rep. Jim Watson – 97th District
Tel: 217-243-6221 E-mail: jimwatson@localnetco.com

Rep. Dan Beiser – 111th District
Tel: 217-782-5996 E-Mail: dvbeiser@sbcglobal.net

Rep. Wayne Rosenthal – 98th District
Tel: 217-324-5200

Rep. Ron Stephens – 102nd District
Tel: 618-667-8669 E-mail: stephens@apci.net

Rep. John D. Cavaletto – 107th District
Tel:618-548-9080

Rep. Dwight Kay – 112 District
Tel: 618-307-9200

Rep. Thomas Holbrook – 113th District
Tel: 618-394-2211 tholbrook@housedems.state.il.us

Rep. Eddie Lee Jackson, Jr. – 114th District
Tel: 618-875-9950

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](mailto:dreiz@egyptian.net)

.....
Rep. Jerry F. Costello - 12th District
Tel: 618-233-8026 E-mail: jfc.il12@mail.house.gov

Rep. John Shimkus - 19th District
Tel: **618-344-3065** E-mail: house.gov/shimkus

Sen. Richard J. Durbin
Tel: 312-353-4952 E-mail: dick@durbin.senate.gov

Sen. Mark Kirk
.....

DNR Fisheries in “a World of Hurt”

Mike Conlin, Heartland Outdoors, Wed, February 29, 2012

EDITOR’S NOTE: Mike Conlin was long-time head of the Illinois fisheries department and in 2009 retired as head of the DNR’s office of resource conservation. He delivered this speech to the Illinois American Fisheries Society Meeting at Starved Rock State Park Lodge on Feb. 22.

First of all let me state that prediction is difficult, especially of the future. I’ve been around the Illinois fisheries scene for nearly five decades. Yet, as I stand here today there are only two things that I know for sure.....the first is that hip boots leak only in cold water.....the second is that the Division of Fisheries is in a world of hurt.

On the surface, the Illinois DNR’s Division of Fisheries appears to be dead in the water. Consider that.....nearly half the counties of the state have no coverage by a District Fishery Biologist.....they are at half staff on the Lake Michigan Program.....the Division is one retirement away from having no one assigned to the Mississippi River Programthe Urban Fishing Program will shrink to nothing (1 person) after a key upcoming retirement.....there is no longer any Reservoir Fishery Management Program (Shelbyville, Carlyle, Rend).....there are only 11 staff presently instead of 24 to produce fish at Jake Wolf Fish Hatchery (and half-staff or less at Little Grassy and LaSalle Hatcheries as well).....over \$18 million is needed for basic maintenance and upgrading within the now 30 year old hatchery system of Jake Wolf, Little Grassy, and LaSalle hatcheries.....the Division of Fisheries has but one person under the age of 40.

What about the rest of the DNR? Pretty much the same story, really. Heading into the late 1990’s the DNR staff numbered around 2200. Today, that number has dramatically fallen to 1100-plus, with the retirement of many more baby boomers close at hand. At the same time that the number of DNR worker bees has fallen 50 percent, the number of DNR top Executive Staff has increased substantially. When the work force numbered 2200, there was a Director and two Deputy Directors.....today, with only 1100 employees, there is a Director, Assistant Director, THREE Deputy Directors, a Chief of Staff, an Assistant to the Director, and a plethora of Office Directors. Dr. Willard Klimstra (1979) once observed that patronage:

- Tends to foster non-professionalism
- Permits inefficient use of scarce dollars
- Hampers the role of leadership
- Inhibits freedom to address issues honestly and openly
- Tends to negate long-range planning based upon biological principles
- Creates an atmosphere of insecurity, and
- Promotes “politicking” in the interest of personal survival

I would just add that, in my view, it is criminal that a fat executive staff is thriving and causing, in part, the occurrence of a dangerously lean field staff. Everyone realizes that the amount of General Revenue Funds available for state government has shrunk dramatically in recent years. But why are the core functions and responsibilities of the DNR (conservation and management of our wildlife and aquatic resources and enforcement of laws protecting such) also so anemic, funding wise? After all, isn’t the Wildlife and Fish Fund (where all hunting and fishing license income is deposited) a special fund which can only be utilized for funding the core functions of the DNR?

Guess again. In 2005, the 25 year annual payment of \$1.4 million/year to pay for the expansion of the fish hatchery system was completed. Although an additional \$1.4 million of the fees anglers pay annually for fishing licenses was now available for other Division of Fisheries needs, Fisheries did not receive one penny of this money.

Resident fishing license fees were increased in 2010 (\$12.50 to \$14.50) but none of the monies generated from the increase went to the Division of Fisheries. It’s simply a matter of diversion.

As general revenue monies began to dry up the past decade, monies from the Wildlife and Fish Fund were directed toward programs it had not historically been utilized for. Seven years ago there was a \$45 million balance in the Wildlife and Fish Fund. Today, there is virtually a zero balance, with negative balances just on the horizon. Why does the Director of the DNR allow that?

Well, the sad fact is that the Director is really not the Director at all. To truly manage, one must have control of the budget and personnel. The Director of DNR in actuality controls neither one. The Budget and Personnel Directors within DNR answer not to the DNR Director, but rather to the Governor’s Office of Management and Budget and the Department of Central Management Services, respectively. What this all adds up to is that those really

Continued on page 11

in charge of the DNR haven't a clue regarding what conservation of our aquatic, wildlife, natural heritage, and forest resources consists of or why it is of such critical importance. The current ineptitude exhibited within the Executive Branch surely has no equal within State Government. Right? Wrong. One only has to look to the Legislative Branch. It seems that the defining characteristic of legislators these days is that "they do not know how to play well with others." They are so busy fighting amongst themselves and concentrating on getting re-elected that they are incapable of addressing the egregious problems which exist in the Executive Branch of our government.

So, back to the initial question. Is there any hope? Aldo Leopold once said "That the situation appears hopeless should not prevent us from doing our best." I think that in this one statement lies the foundation of our hope for the NEAR-TERM future of the Division of Fisheries. The current Division, as tattered and torn as it is, is comprised of men and women whose deep sense of professionalism give them the will to carry on in the face of extreme adversity. My college mentor (Dr. Leonard (Bull) Durham) and my first DNR supervisor (Leo Rock) both taught me that if one is to endure in the conservation business, he/she needed not only a proper education, but also a deep passion for what they are doing, accompanied by a tenacity exceeding that of the fiercest bulldog.

So the current Fisheries Crew on the listing DNR Ship realize that "conservation is a marathon, not a sprint."

In other words, they know that all the present day political ineptitude, lack of leadership, and economic hardship just goes with the territory. As the famed outdoor writer, John Madson, noted at the Division of Fisheries Statewide Meeting in 1979, "There are times when professionalism will sustain a person when about everything else seems to have failed.

It's a hedge against discouragement and failure, and the true professional is likely to still be churning along when the ribbon clerks and bush-leaguers have fallen by the wayside. Why? Because it's their style. It's what they are trained to do, and dedicated to doing, and take pride in. Professional wildlifers (conservationists) are literally and figuratively defending ground against overwhelming forces. You are buying time for the principles of ecological diversity and quality and hoping for reinforcements that may never come. You are professionals and you may not have a helluva lot, but you've got each other, and your work and some awful good people out there who are depending on you to help give them a world worth living in.....and that's enough."

So, for the present, professionalism is sustaining those who have toiled in the conservation vineyards for the past 20 years or more. This culture which has developed within the Division over the past 60 years is a formidable asset during these most trying of times. But what really bothers me for the long-term is that as the present highly experienced and older work force continues to retire and dwindle, who will pass on the Division culture? And to whom?

DNR biologists have two separate masters.....a political master and a science master. Certainly future DNR fisheries biologists will continue to have a scientific influence from their technical college training. What will be missing on the science influence side is the lack of experienced DNR staff. After all, training is what you get in the classroom, education is what you get on the job out in the boons.....and if there be no trained experienced field biologists to assist in both development of the technical and philosophical education of the leaders to be of the next generation, there will be a tremendous price to pay in terms of things natural and free. No transfer of culture will occur as it has automatically happened during the past six decades. The "can do philosophy" so deeply ingrained into the very fabric of being of present fisheries managers could well wither and die. Another potential nail in the coffin of future Division culture and professionalism is the ever-increasing lack of opportunity for interaction.....not only with each other, but with their professional society, university, and private sector counterparts. In the past, the extremely strong interaction between the aforementioned entities has formed the basis for an informal, but extremely powerful force which provided balance against the ever-present Division of Fisheries political master. The strength of this unofficial alliance cannot be overstated. Losing it would be like a prize fighter losing the protection of his good left jab. Should such a constrained environment continue to drag on for a significant time period, then the political master may well gain the cultural upper hand and deliver a knock-out punch to science-based professional fisheries management within State Government. Such an eventuality would prove extremely detrimental, not only to the Division and it's colleagues (universities, professional society, private sector), but more importantly, to the aquatic resources with which they are charged to manage and protect for all citizens of the State.

Another point of extreme concern to me relative to the future of the Division is the apathy of the public in matters of fisheries and aquatic resource conservation. At one time there was a strong and very vocal voice relative to matters relating to state funded fisheries activities. No more. Whether this has occurred due to continuing growth of the public's lack of faith in government or the fact that our population is now urban rather than rural, I don't claim to know. What is for sure is that anglers (except for a few select fishing organizations, which comprise only 2-3% of Illinois fishers) don't seem to much care what happens to the DNR or its fisheries programs.....and the public at

Continued on page 12

large with it's deadly malady of Nature-Deficit Disorder certainly doesn't give a whit. We can no longer count on public outcry to assist with the perilous trials and tribulations of the Division. Unfortunately, the Division can not succeed without public support.

It's a hard pill to swallow, but the once closed circle of mutual respect and need between the public and the DNR is broken, and the DNR is crumbling as a result. At this point, permit my personal note: if you are not confused, you are not thinking clearly. Just what does the future hold? Is there genuine hope? Right now you might feel somewhat like President Harry Truman did when seeking advise from his economic adviser. Truman complained that his staffer would say, "On the one hand the outlook for the economy looks good.....but on the other hand, there are dark clouds on the horizon....." That is exactly what I've done to you today.

On the one hand, I've given a possible NEAR-TERM SCENERIO with a bit of light at the end of the tunnel; on the other hand I've given a potentially dark LONG-TERM SCENERIO. You, like Truman, are likely wishing for a one-handed economist. My crystal ball is cloudy, but let me take a crack at predicting where things might be headed. I think that we will never again see the Division of Fisheries as it once was. The "Good Old Days" will not return. Government is too dysfunctional, bureaucratic, corrupt, and politically polarized to fix it. In the future I believe that many of the fisheries programs once provided will be seen as too expensive, if for no other reason than the pension and health care costs of the personnel involved. Programs like Urban Fishing, management and stocking of Private, Public, and State ponds and lakes, Commercial Fishing, and Aquaculture will become privatized. The Division of Fisheries will continue to exist, albeit in a smaller role than previously (although it may become combined with other present DNR Divisions and/or State Departments (like Illinois EPA for example). I believe that environmental review of proposed projects with potential effects on rivers and streams, pollution fish kill investigations, Aquatic Nuisance Species, watershed management, etc. will continue to be handled by state employed biologists. The same goes for management of the state's one million acres of Lake Michigan. How long it will take before this new order of things restores fisheries services to what they were in the late 1990's is anybody's guess. If complete restoration does indeed someday occur, it will likely not be before the passage of two or three decades. After all, it required 50 years to build the Division to its peak, and only 10 to raze it.

I am no Chicken Little, but if one takes a long hard look at all the factors involved, I think that my view of the eventual outcome is fairly close to reality. It's not the end of the world, but there is a long, long road ahead with many rugged peaks to climb. In the end, this scenario can eventually provide protection of the public trust and the availability of what use to be public (now privately provided) services. I think that is where we will find ourselves down the line. As difficult as it is presently for our professional fisheries folks, challenges laying in wait around the corner in the fisheries arena will require even more courage and intestinal fortitude of folks if they are to achieve and hang on to their professionalism. Huge changes, lots of heartache, and many lost opportunities in the meantime.....but the sun will continue to rise and "there will still be water in the crick come mornin'." So rejoice and roll up your sleeves, there is work to be done.

###

12th Annual MWHI Waterfowl Conservation Banquet Held at K.C. Hall, Godfrey, IL on March 31, 2012



Sen. Sam McCann (r) and Bob Jones



Rep. Dan Beiser



Sen. Demuzio with Assistant Michelle

Thank You Sponsors of the 12th Annual MWHI Waterfowl Conservation Banquet

Auto Zone
Bank of Kampsville
Barefoot Restaurant
Bay Wash Autowash
Beasley Fish Market
Belk Park Golf Course
Cabelas
Carrollton Bank
Carver's BBQ
Cassens Bait Shop
Castelli's Restaurant
Cross Midwest Tire
Dutch Hollow
Farmers State Bank, Pittsfield
Fin Inn Restaurant
Flooded Fields Outdoor
Supply
Friedel Grocery
Glutton Club
Grafton Amoco
Grafton Technology

Grafton Winery
Hansen Car Wash
Hardin Package Liquor
Hilltop Auction Service
Illinois Riverdock Restaurant
IRB Ducks and Bucks
Iron Décor and More
Jersey County Dodge Dealer
Jersey County Grain Co.
Jersey Farmer Elevator
Jersey State Bank
Joe Carey
Johnson's Corner
Kampsville Inn Restaurant
Liberty Bank
Lumiere Place, Casino and
Hotel
McKays NAPA
Medford Oil
Mississippi Half Step
Restaurant

Piasa Motor Fuel
Piasa Winery
Pluester's Meat Market
Quail Country Hunts,
Greenville
Quiller's Boat and Motor
Red Lobster Restaurant
Ruebel Hotel & Restaurant
Shell Oil Products U.S.
Shop & Save
St. Peters Hardware
Straight Home Bar & Grill
Stutz Automotive Service
Tractor Supply
Tri County FS, Inc.
Truck Centers Inc.
Updike's Jerseyville Gas
Wes Townzen Custom Calls
Wolves Crossing Golf Course

Thank you Sponsors!



Cheri Gineris (l) won one of the 9 baskets on the Ladies Raffle. It was presented to her by Sue Arnold (r), who put together this year's absolutely outstanding Ladies Raffle. Thank you, Sue.



**And here comes...
Little Miss Rheude!
What a doll!**



Josh Carroll had the winning bid for the chocolate Lab pup on the Oral Auction. But instead of keeping the puppy, he gave it to his neighbor Christine who recently lost her dog. How nice was that!

12th Annual MWHI Waterfowl Conservation Banquet



Bob Becker from IFOR with Dave Geisler



50/50 Winner Pat Croxton



Decoy Raffle winner Matt Wolfe



Pallet of Decoys winner Ien Heisten (r)



Rick Williams (m) had the winning bid on the Wounded Warrior Package. All proceeds went to the Wounded Warrior Project. Thank you, Rick!



Winner of the Predator Package Raffle was Rhonda Jackson with Sarah and Katie (Gineris)



**Cutest grandchild contest winner ...
Mr. and Mrs. Kim Postlewait**

MWHI 2012 Scholarship Winners

Congratulations Emily Stewart, Blaine Jones and Samantha Bolen!

Emily Stewart's Winning Essay

A little red bow started it all. To this day, I can remember practicing my limited archery skills with a little red bow in the backyard. Later, I traded the finesse of the bow and arrow for the power of gunpowder as my dad introduced me to rifles and shotguns. After passing my Hunter's Safety Course, I was allowed to test my shotgun skills in the field when my dad took me on my first deer hunt. Deer hunting was the extent of my hunting experience until two years ago, when I joined Dad on a goose hunt.

At three thirty in the morning of my first goose hunt, my dad woke me up, and I can still remember the feeling of excitement warring with sleepiness. Excitement and anticipation won out. I stumbled out to the kitchen to grab a Pop-Tart that I ate while changing into my many layers of hunting clothes. About thirty minutes later, I worked my feet into my boots and grabbed a few final things and headed out to the truck where Dad sat waiting with the heat cranked up. We arrived at the dock within ten minutes and slept until launch time. Since I did not know how to run the boat or how to back the trailer down the ramp, I was sent to stand on the dock and wait. I remember looking out over the lake, watching the fog roll in and feeling the chill in the air. Others might think the scene was eerie, but to me, it was peaceful.

Dad finally brought the truck around and began backing the trailer down the ramp. After unhitching the boat from the trailer, I was given the rope to guide the boat around the dock so we could board. No matter what one does, climbing into a boat is *not* graceful, and the situation is made worse when one is clumsy from the multiple layers of insulated hunting clothes. We both managed to climb into the boat without any mishaps and pushed away from the dock, with Dad starting up the motor before steering the boat to our hunting spot, the lucky number seven.

That day, we each shot two Canada geese, and from that day forward, I was hooked. I so thoroughly enjoyed the day- from helping Dad with the decoys to having a breakfast of eggs and sausage fried on the heater- that I could not wait to go again. Dad outfitted me properly in waterfowl hunting get-up, complete with a pair of waders, which allowed me to become more involved in the decoy-deployment process. We ventured out on the lake a few more times that season, but we never filled our geese quotas as we had that first day. I still enjoyed- and continue to enjoy- our hunting excursions on the lake, however, the experience continues to justify forsaking a warm bed for freezing temperatures at three in the morning. Every time we go out on the water, I never know what nature will decide to unveil. One gray morning, we watched a swan swim through our decoys. Needless to say, it was a beautiful sight. Another morning, I glimpsed a pair of otters frolicking in the water. Recalling these memories still brings a smile to my face and I am reminded that waterfowl hunting is not about fulfilling bag limits, but instead, hunting is more about appreciating the grace and beauty of nature. Hunting is about immersing oneself in the rhythm of nature and trying to understand the life around us every day, which usually goes unnoticed. As soon as I notice the fall chill in the air and the leaves beginning to change, I start looking forward to opening day.

Some have questioned my passion for hunting since I am a known animal-lover. In my opinion, hunters provide balance. An environment can support only a certain number of individuals, and hunters are part of the balance- by preventing overpopulation of a species- that keeps environments healthy. Beyond just helping to maintain a healthy population, hunters also provide the means to protect the environments. By participating in legal hunting practices, every hunter supports the protection of the environment for all to enjoy.

Please see next Sentry Issue for Blaine Jones' and Samantha Bolen's Essay!



Emily Stewart (l) with her parents Beth and Scott Stewart at the Banquet.

Winner of the 2011-12 MWHI Gun Raffle - April Raffle

Rem 870 Supermag Turkey Gun - Jeff Buback

For more information, please contact Eric Rheude at 618-410-9853

