

HARRODS CREEK FIELD & STREAM CLUB

P.O. Box 22592
Lyndon, Kentucky 40222

JANUARY MEETING WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 1992
NORTH OLDHAM LION'S CLUB 7:30

HAPPY NEW YEAR: The directors and officers of your club wish you and yours a happy and prosperous New Year. We look forward to even more fun and good work in 1992!

EXCITING SPEAKER: This month's speaker will be a representative from the Wild Turkey Federation. Mr. Jonathan Davis of the Federation will be speaking to this timely topic. He will address facts and figures regarding the turkey population, the history of the stockings, projected dates, safety and the ethics of turkey hunting. Whew! It looks like Jonathan can tell us quite a bit! What a chance to have a word bout' the bird! With wild turkey season coming up, this is the time to learn about the bird that came in second in for being the national bird.

SPORTSMEN WIN!: As I am sure that you know, Outdoor Systems ran a series of offensive billboards with an anti-hunter message. Your club, along with other concerned sportsmen, got right out front in the charge against calling such swill public service announcements. As a result of the sportsmen's efforts, Outdoor systems canned the responsible parties and removed the boards. The pen is indeed mightier than the sword when it is properly used. Good work, guys!. I am enclosing copies of letters from the Director of the Louisville Zoo, who helped us. He is a friend, and is always welcome here! Show Dr. Foster your thanks and give yourself a real treat by visiting our excellent zoo.

MY TURN: As stated in our last letter, we are starting the MY TURN column in this newsletter. This month's column is by none other than our immediate past president, Bruce Goodman. Here Goes!

Recently, several bills have been put before Congress that affect us sportsmen, I wrote letters to my congressmen about them. As a test of time involved, I wrote four letters about 125 words each and addressed the envelopes in less than one hour. Drafting the letter took the most time, about 25 minutes. The purpose of the letters was to air my resentment at the proposed Animal Rights Awareness week. The week that these zealots want for their week is the same weekend as the Kentucky free fishing days. This is a slap in the face to Kentucky sportsmen.

Keeping the letters brief and to the point, I had to only change the names on the inside addresses to get my point across to several legislators. I also reminded them that 1 out of three people in Kentucky holds either a hunting or fishing license, and that most of these license holders are of voting age.

The best part of my test is how I felt afterwards. I felt really good about myself that I took the time to sound off. A letter is said to have 40 times more impact than a phone call.

Another point that I would like to stress is not to patronize companies that sponsor organizations whose views are those that contradict ours, such as PETA, Fund for Animals, Coalition to Ban Handguns and those supporting the brady bill. Some of these businesses that come to mind are McDonalds, Long John Silver, Ear Extacy and Union Underwear. Write letters to those who can help us and don't buy from those who can hurt us.

Ray Frye has offered to write this column in February. We have openings for the rest of the months for 1992. Here's your chance to jump up on your soap box.

ONE FOR OUR SIDE: A bill has been introduced in the US House of Representatives called the Hunter Protection Bill. It is HR 371. A copy is enclosed. Please read it. It is one for our side. This bill makes it a federal crime to harass us when we are lawfully hunting. Because it makes it a crime to plan such a disruption by mail, it will be under the purview of the Postal Police as well as the other feds. It is history in the making. We've got to let our legislators that we mean business on this one. Please write Ron Mazzoli at 600 Martin Luther King Drive Louisville, Kentucky 40202 and Jim Bunning at 10301 Linn Station Road Louisville, Kentucky 40299 in support of this bill. **DO NOT LET THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF OUR SPORT SLIP AWAY. YOU CAN BE SURE THAT THE WEENIES FROM PETA ARE GOING TO BE WRITING IN FORCE!** Recently, I had the opportunity to speak with a lady from Wendell Ford's office regarding HR 301, the animal rights awareness resolution noted in your last newsletter. Yes, she read our letters. She was surprised that this inane resolution got so much attention. She now knows that most people believe that humans are the ones with rights. Our letters are working. Each and every member reading this letter should be proud of their actions. You should also realize that the pen is mightier than the sword. If we let them know we are interested and that we vote, we will get what we want.

SPEAKING OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY: Remember "V" day is March 1, 1992. Mail your old licenses with a big "V" across them to: Honorable Don Blanford Speaker of the Kentucky House Of Representatives Frankfort, Kentucky 40601 Mail them in on March 1, 1992. They will listen to us if we tell them how many of us are out here.

YET STILL MORE POLITICAL STUFF: A bill is before the house and senate that would repeal the boat tax. If your boat is over 16' and you use it on the river, you have to have this \$25.00 sticker. That means you guys with a 16' john boat with an 18 hp kicker! You'll need it for the Catfish Derby. What a crock! Your senator Mitch McConnell and your congressman Ron Mazzoli have yet to sponsor this bill. Do like Bruce says and write them a letter. This tax has the potential to wreck the Catfish Derby.

FINALLY, MORE POLITICAL STUFF: On January 9, a settlement was announced on the Lake Cumberland Pipeline. It seems that the sewage will be run above ground into Big Lilly Creek. For the time being the Lake pipeline has been abandoned. The City of Jamestown and Union will have a year to look for alternative technology for treating this waste. The effluent into the creek and the water downstream will be monitored. This is not the perfect solution. The creek is already dead. The above ground effluent is more easily monitored than if it entered the lake 30 feet deep. The department of water will do the monitoring. It is headed in the right direction. Let's keep an eye out for future developments.

DUES DUE: Your 1992 dues of \$30.00 are due and payable. An invoice is enclosed. Please pay promptly and let me stop whining about money. Fill in the enclosed applications and send me the dough!

THE DRAWING: Each month, a drawing for \$20 will be made. To be eligible for this drawing, you must have your dues paid and be at the meeting. If no one wins, the pot will carry forth into the next month. This is big money. Pay your dues and get to the meeting. Who knows? This may be you alternative to winning the Kentucky Lottery!

MORE DRAWING NEWS: Our Fearless Leader, David O'Neil won the Christmas shotgun. Way to go, Dave. You might want to consider making it the president's gun and pass it from incoming president to incoming president each year. At any rate, we made \$150 on this raffle. Fun and money rolled into one!

SPORTS REPORTS: About 32,000 geese are wintering at Henderson Bottoms. Of these, 1200 have been harvested. About 36,000 geese are wintering at Ballard County, with a similar number killed. These figures are poor and can be contributed to the warm weather up north. Striper fishing has been hit or miss on shiners being drifted in the backs of creeks. The fishing has slowed down. Let me know about your success and the hunting and fishing conditions, and I'll print them each month.

BULLY PULPIT: Back in November, Ray Frye, Barry and I went rabbit hunting. It was no big deal. We took Ray's Brittany, Barry's beagle Mabel and his other beagle, best called "novocaine nose". We spent a pleasant three or four hours wandering around after the dogs. We didn't fire a shot. No rabbit lives were lost. The dogs did pretty well. Mabel got onto a rabbit and ran it for the better part of an hour. Ray's dog and novocaine nose joined in the fray. We never saw the bunny, but we had a dandy time listening to the dogs do what they were born to do. The first time I ever went hunting, I hunted rabbits. Since then, I have branched out a lot. With the exception of turkeys and western game, I have given all of it at least a cursory chance. Still, when it comes down to just having fun, give me rabbit hunting.

I am relating this amusing little tale with a purpose in mind. I recently learned two bits of information that caught my attention. The first is that as a group, rabbit hunters have the oldest average age of all groups of hunters. The second is that if a kid is not exposed to hunting or fishing by age 14, there is almost no chance that he or she will hunt or fish. I'd like to take a look at both.

I am guessing that the average age of rabbit hunters being high is due to the fact that years ago, almost anyone could walk out their back door and within a mile or so walk be in rabbit country. Anyone with an old single shot shotgun was ready to hunt. It was simple, cheap and easily attainable. In addition, it was one whale of a good time. Today, with the encroachment of civilization, the backyard habitat is gone. Liability insurance, crop damage, not knowing one's neighbors and a host of other "modern innovations" has further limited the places where one can hunt. With shrinking availability of hunting lands, a modern concept of bigger is better, and less time to hunt, the modern hunter has become more interested in the glamour species such as deer and turkey. Wildlife management agencies, being responsive to the hunter, have managed for these species. The emphasis of hunting has turned away from the panfish of hunting, the rabbit.

The other fact I mentioned is the one that is really scary. The future of our sport is tied to the future sportsmen/women. Kids are do not have the opportunity to get into the field to hunt or on the water to fish during their formative years. A big part of this is the same reason that rabbit hunters are old. There are no places to go. It takes effort to go rabbit hunting. In many cases, you have to go quite a distance to hunt. When you get there, you are likely to find that there are darn few rabbits to chase. A kid can no longer go by him or herself. They need an adult to drive them to their hunting grounds. Hunting rabbits is no longer a self taught sport.

Those of you who have hunted with kids probably know that taking a small kid deer hunting is, in most cases, a disaster. These little greenwings are not prone to sitting still and silent in cold, uncomfortable conditions. By the time most kids have developed the concentration to effectively deer hunt, it is too late. Without earlier exposure to the joys of hunting, they have become more interested in Super Mario, soccer, the mall or any of the other diversions to which an adolescent is subjected. Hunting, like most things in life, starts with learning the fundamentals. I think that rabbit (and all small game) hunting is fundamental. The fundamentals have to be learned before going on the the next step. It has become increasingly difficult to learn the basic art of small game hunting. I'm afraid that our sports have strayed a little from the basics.

I am going to make a new year's resolution right here before God and man. I am going to spend more time rabbit hunting in 1992. It's fun, and it keeps me in touch with the fundamentals. My kids are a bit young to be chasing bunnies yet. When they are old enough, I am going to make damn sure that I give them the opportunity to enjoy this sport at it's most basic level. I hope that those of you reading this will do likewise. We do this for fun. We owe it to our children to teach them to have fun. We owe it to our sport to bring these youngsters into the fold so that our sport has players into next century.

See you at the meeting. Until then, keep your lines wet and your powder dry!