

WISCONSIN

GAME WARDEN

Summer 2008



— WISCONSIN —

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DNR Secretary Matthew Frank releases a pheasant. See profile starting on Page 10.

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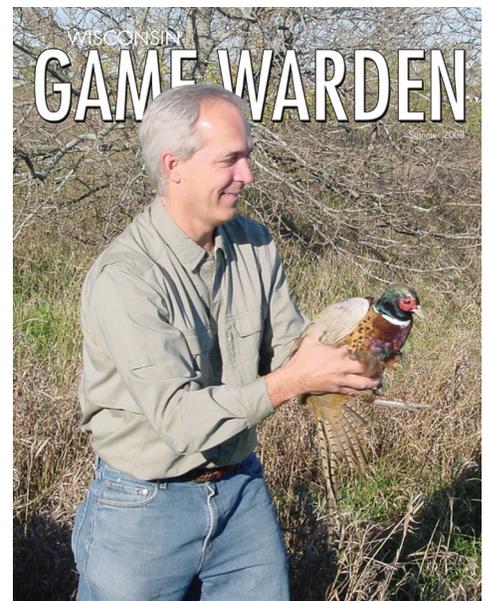
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Department formed with merger of two agencies

'It was completely different than it is today'

On the way home from church on a Sunday morning, a young Susan Miller would often find herself sliding from side to side, absent of any form of a safety belt, in the backseat of her father's car. The family would chase down vehicles and check hunters for violations. Miller's father was a conservation warden from the 1950s until 1987, and his personal vehicle was also his work vehicle.

Miller grew up and became a conservation warden as well, but now she is provided a vehicle with proper seatbelts.

Retired district warden Jim Blankenheim also recalls the difference in transportation. "Warden vehicles were regular sedans when I started, with select wardens receiving a pursuit squad," Blankenheim said. "Somewhere about 1980 we got a few trucks, again the most basic model and two-wheel drive."

Wardens now are equipped with heavy-duty four-wheel drive trucks with extended cabs that allow them to go wherever they need to, according to Blankenheim.

By Samantha Marx

Continued on page 30

The Moon Pie Bear

By Jim Blankenheim

I plugged the trail-cam into the TV and started looking through the latest two days worth of photos. I stared in disbelief as three new bear, ones that hadn't been seen previously, popped onto the screen. They were numbers seven, eight and nine.

This whole thing started when our youngest son, Josh, called and asked what I thought about him applying for a bear harvest tag for the '07 season. I thought about it for a minute. He had the necessary preference points. However, three of the four spots I had placed baits a few years back when I had a harvest tag had recently been clear-cut. The fourth spot was a piece of private land where a bear had visited the bait site but in three sittings had not showed up. I had the feeling it was an after-dark visitor. Twice in years prior to that I had baited that spot and never had a hit. I asked if he'd prefer to sit or hunt with hounds. He said he'd do either but would prefer to bait sit. I told him that the hound hunters go first in 2007 so he may want to wait until '08. He said he'd sleep on it and called back the next day. It was a go for '07.

I made a trip to Ladysmith and got a couple of 55-gallon drums of cookies and granola. A good friend of my brother-in-law is a candy salesman so I was able to get quite a stash of outdated candy, mostly Jelly Belly jelly beans. There were also several boxes of "Moon Pies," a cookie of sorts that is a popular item tossed out at Mardi gras parades. I sampled the Moon Pies and figured the bears would like them better than I did.

So in late July, I took my chainsaw and fashioned a fine looking hollow stump, complete with cover. It was placed in a likely spot and filled with cookies and



JOSH BLANKENHEIM and his moon pie bear. The bear, shot in 2007, dressed out at 321 pounds.

granola. I returned two days later and was surprised to see everything gone. I re-baited and left the woods feeling pretty good but knowing that I shouldn't put all my eggs in one basket. So I checked the piece of industrial forest land where I had killed my last bear, one of those pieces that had been recently clear-cut. It didn't look very promising. I walked another big area of public land that I had baited before, but got a sinking feeling when I discovered vehicle tracks going up and over an earthen berm, put there to keep vehicles out. It could be just kids wanting some privacy for a beer party. Or it could be someone else was baiting the area. Apples and corn scattered on the ground answered that question and raised another. Deer and bear droppings were abundant. Was



someone illegally baiting deer early or was someone placing uncovered bear bait, which is also illegal? A call to the local warden left that determination in his lap. I decided not to place a bait anywhere in that block of woods.

After a couple weeks of having the stump cleaned

out every two days, I opted to purchase a trail camera. I never had any use for one before as I don't use bait for deer and don't really feel a need to know what is walking the deer trails. But what if the only thing frequenting the bait site was a sow with cubs? I'd feel better staying with one bait site if I knew a legal bear was using it.

I filled the stump to the top early one Friday morning and chained an ammo box to a tree. I had cut out pieces of the ammo

box to line up with the camera's lens, infra-red flash and sensors. By the time I exited the woods it was getting close to 8 a.m. We left town for the weekend and when I got back Monday, the stump was laying some distance from its usual spot and all the bait was gone. Trees in the area had become clawed and bitten and now I'd get to see what was responsible. When I walked up to the ammo box, I could see that something had tried to chew on it. And I had been so careful to wear latex gloves when setting up the camera so as not to leave a food smell on it!

I took the camera home and plugged it into a TV. Yep, it had worked just fine. I had a pair of small bear, probably yearlings, that had arrived no more than 20 minutes after I left the previous Friday. A sow, with one cub, also got her picture taken. I called Josh with the news. Would he be satisfied with a small bear? I knew what the answer would be. Within the last year, Josh had done the unthinkable — he'd become a "Mud Duck." He took a job as a fish manager with the Minnesota DNR and had moved to Duluth. So now his non-resident harvest tag was going to cost in the neighborhood of \$250. He figured he was now 27 and by the time he again got enough preference points, he'd be in his 40s and the cost of a harvest tag would be \$400. So although he'd like something bigger, if a 125-pound bear was the only thing available, he'd take it.

Within a week or so, numbers five and six showed up. Number five was big and number six was bigger. This was getting interesting. Once the big boys showed up, the sow and cub soon quit coming. The six bears had come at all hours but there was a pattern. The pair of yearlings could show up anytime and quite frequently. The bruiser appeared only at night and not real regularly. The decent-sized bear was a fairly regular customer, usually showing up about an hour before sunset.

Then as the season neared, a sow with two cubs was caught on camera one night coming toward the bait. One of the big boys was already there. So they kept their distance. Then the other big bear appeared and the sow put her cubs up a tree and lay down next to it. When the big bears left, the sow and cubs came to the bait. They soon left and never returned.

Josh drove down the evening before the bait sitter's opening and we discussed the options. He could go out first thing in the morning and would likely see one or

more bear, but the best bet seemed to be to try the late afternoon. Later that day, I walked him into the bait. It had been hit, as usual. I had pinned a 42-inch log to the ground alongside the bait. A legal bear had to be that length from the base of its tail to its nose. I also told Josh that the tipped over stump would not touch either of the big bears' bellies. He loaded up the muzzleloader and climbed into an elevated stand.

I couldn't help but notice a few things as Josh was talking. He was out of breath, his hands were shaking and his voice was cracking.

I returned to the truck, parked some 500 yards away, and began to assemble blue goose rags into windsocks for an upcoming hunt. Four Jake turkeys and a doe wandered by while I was using the hood of the truck for a table. Then I heard the hollow sounding boom of the muzzleloader. I looked at my watch. It was about an hour before quitting time.

I called my wife, Susi, and told her that Josh just shot. "Should I come up and help?" she asked. I told her to get her headlamp and wait for another call. Soon I saw a figure trotting up the logging trail. It was Josh. He had seen three bear. The first was a legal bear, but he didn't think it was one of the bigger ones so he watched as it fed for about half an hour. After it left, a second smaller bear came to the bait. This one, too, was legal, but barely so. It was there about a half hour when it suddenly jumped to its feet, stared in his direction and loped off. Then he heard a single twig crack behind him. A bigger bear came directly to the bait and lay down. He hadn't had a chance to size it up against the stump or log. So he waited patiently. Finally, after about 20 minutes, it picked up a Moon Pie, stood up and turned to leave. Josh eyed up the bear against the log and lit the fire. It crashed off through the brush, heading downhill.

I couldn't help but notice a few things as Josh was talking. He was out of breath, his hands were shaking and his voice was cracking. Here's a kid who we watched win a sprint triathlon three weeks earlier, out of breath from a quarter-mile trot? A lone drop of blood had traced its way down his nose from a cut on his forehead. He had used a scoped rifle for 15 years without incident, but now somehow managed to get "kissed" by the 1X red-dot atop the muzzleloader. Priceless! I made the second phone call to Susi and said it was likely we'd need her help.

Josh and I returned to the bait and began looking for the Moon Pie bear while we still had light. Josh thought it took a well-used trail that led downhill. We followed the trail for about 200 yards with no sign of a wounded bear. I told Josh to go back to the stand, replay the bear's exit, and look for blood starting where it was standing when he shot. I slowly began to work my way back toward him when I decided to check a thick stand of small balsams and brush along with some blow-downs. About the time I spotted a black shape lying on the ground, Josh announced he'd found a good blood trail. The trail ended at the bear lying in front of me in the balsams. A couple quick photos, tag validation and gutting were interspersed with lots of smiles.

When Susi arrived, it was pretty dark so we got the rope attached and began the uphill drag. Josh, flanked by two AARP cardholders, was not going to make the top of the hill anytime soon. Fortunately, the nearest neighbor owned a six-wheeler and just happened to have his well-muscled son over for a visit. The six-wheeler was driven as close as possible and a long heavy rope was used to pull the bear up the steep hill. The five of us loaded it onto the six-wheeler and then into Josh's truck. He and I were up to about 2 a.m. skinning and quartering the bear so we could get the meat cooled down.

Sometime during the skinning, Josh asked what he owed me for bait and all the miles driven while baiting. "Not a thing," I said. "I probably enjoyed this as much as you did."

The truth be known, that evening and the previous six weeks were about as much fun as a guy could have, with his clothes on.

JIM BLANKENHEIM is a retired Wisconsin conservation warden living in Tomahawk.

A modern-day Andy Taylor

Bilgo enjoys working with youth, sharing love of outdoors

By Austin Heimann

Doug Bilgo said his first hunting trip triggered a spark in him, igniting his love for the outdoors.

"I was about 9 or 10," Bilgo said. "My parents didn't hunt so I went with my aunt."

Bilgo, now 52, said that he wasn't able to carry a gun on that trip, but he enjoyed just being outside. So when Bilgo neared the end of high school, he decided to pursue a career as a conservation warden, a job that would allow him to spend much of his time in the outdoors.

After graduating from Kewaskum High School in 1974, Bilgo enrolled at the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point the following fall. Bilgo graduated in 1978 with a major in resource management and a minor in environmental law enforcement.

College provided Bilgo with a good education, both in the classroom and in the field. But it was the field work that especially reaffirmed Bilgo's desire to become a warden.

"Even before I graduated I worked at Kettle Moraine (State Park) doing general maintenance every summer," Bilgo said. "The final two years I was there I worked as a patrol officer."

After graduating, Bilgo spent a couple of years working for various parks departments and in construction. Then, in 1980, he was hired as a conservation warden by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

After spending a few years at DNR stations throughout the state, Bilgo transferred to Campbellsport. And that's where he has been since 1983.

"It's unusual to stay in a location as long as I have," Bilgo said, adding that the close proximity to his family is a big reason why he has stayed.

Campbellsport is less than 10 miles from Kewaskum, so Bilgo feels a real sense that he is home and with family. It's this factor that makes Bilgo a great warden, says his boss, Warden Supervisor Todd Schaller.

"He's very committed and dedicated. He is very public-service oriented," Schaller said. "He is well known and respected in the community."

That means when he goes out on patrol, he often knows the people he runs into on a first name basis. The Campbellsport station covers southern Fond du Lac County, which contains a population that is relatively small compared to other stations.

Deputy Warden Brian Bausch, who has worked with Bilgo since he transferred to Campbellsport, said that it is Bilgo's sense of community that makes Bilgo such a great warden.

"His enthusiasm and sincerity help make Doug a great warden," Bausch said. "He's an excellent listener. But besides being a great warden, he's a great public relations person. He's very patient and understanding."

His patience and understanding have helped turned many



Conservation Warden Doug Bilgo and Mai Lee look over how the young girl did target shooting during the 2006 Youth Expo.

volatile or potentially volatile situations into calm ones, according to Bausch, mentioning a case where he and Bilgo came across an individual who was illegally shining deer.

"The shiner became extremely aggravated," Bausch said. "Then he raised an object above his head."

The object turned out to a glass gallon jug, but Bilgo was able to calm the shiner down and even give him a ticket for illegally shining — without any trouble.

It's situations like these that Bilgo doesn't like to talk about. He'd rather talk about the work he does with the public, especially youth groups. His work with boater, hunter, snowmobile and ATV safety classes is something that Bilgo is proud of.

"I get a lot of satisfaction working with youth," Bilgo said. "It's a big part of the job and it's something I enjoy."

By talking with the youth at safety classes, Bilgo hopes to ensure that another generation can safely and responsibly enjoy the outdoors as much as he does. Although work like this doesn't make headlines, Bilgo has had his share of the spotlight.

Most notably was in 2002. On July 4, Bilgo, two other wardens and the Fond du Lac County Sheriff's boat patrol were involved with the rescue of nine people in two different boating incidents on Lake Winnebago. The second one came just before dark.

"It (the water) was really rough that afternoon," Bilgo said. "I don't think we ever would have found them in the dark."

In November of that year, Bilgo and Schaller were involved with another life-saving incident. A 14-year-old boy had broken



Warden Doug Bilgo poses with his daughter, Whitney, and the Toms they shot in May 2007.

through some ice on Forest Lake, so Bilgo and Schaller commandeered a boat and slid their way on the ice to pull the boy to safety.

For his efforts, Bilgo received the Bureau of Law Enforcement Life Saving Award. While Bilgo was honored to receive the award, his reasons for his actions were simple.

"I'm not a big fan of PDA (public displays of affection)," Bilgo said. "It's part of our jobs. It's what we're expected to do."

It's Bilgo's sense of modesty that both Schaller and Bausch said help make Bilgo not only a great warden, but a great friend.

"He's very easy going and laid back," Schaller said. "That helps him in his personal life and at work."

"Doug is a quality individual," Bausch said. "He's the ultimate. He's superb."

Bilgo's accomplishments over the years have set the bar high for future wardens. But Bilgo said that he just wants to be remembered as a fair person.

However, Bilgo might be remembered for something that he would just as soon forget.

In 2006, friend Rick Lisko ran over a deer, about 100 yards

BILGO AT A GLANCE

- **Hired by the DNR in 1980 and spent time training at Wautoma, Superior and Kenosha.**
- **Stationed at Kewaunee, Three Lakes and Brule, but his first permanent assignment was in Delavan.**
- **Married in 1982 to wife Mary, together they have three daughters: Kimberly, 23, Whitney, 21, and Danielle, 20.**

from his house. Lisko called Bilgo around 9:30 p.m. to see if the warden could come check the deer out and register it for him. But Bilgo didn't know that this was an unusual deer.

The deer Lisko ran over has been called a seven-legged hermaphrodite deer, but Bilgo said the extra three legs were no bigger than his finger. No matter, news agencies from England to China called Bilgo to talk about the unusual deer.

But Bilgo just laughs about it, reluctantly talking about the deer that made him internationally known.

"It's funny to think that that's what I could be remembered by," Bilgo said. "It wasn't one of the highlights of my career."

To the people who know Warden Bilgo, that incident is just a funny story, and not what they remember about him. Bausch, in fact, said that Bilgo is almost like a modern-day Andy Taylor.

"His discretion is excellent," Bausch said. "Doug is not a ticket machine."

But Bilgo looks at it differently.

"I always try to treat people with respect," Bilgo said, "even if they have done something wrong."

Austin Heimann is a journalism student at UW-Oshkosh.

LOOKING BACK

By Harland Steinhorst

125 years ago

- State Fish Warden A.C. Cooley of Ripon died in May. Commissioners of Fisheries appointed Harvey Durand to replace him. His patrol area was Big Green Lake and Lake Winnebago. Cooley was the first warden to die in office.

100 years ago

- The last cougar (puma) in Wisconsin was reported killed in Douglas County.
- Chief State Warden J.W. Stone reported that Wisconsin employed 61 full-time “deputy” field wardens.

75 years ago

- Conservation Warden “Lynn” Alderman of Portage, 45, died as the result of an automobile accident.
- The force of 68 wardens is termed “very inadequate.”

50 years ago

- The “warden” rocker was added to the Wisconsin Conservation Department shoulder emblem.
- In June, wardens responded to a tornado disaster that swept through Dunn County. For three days after the disaster, wardens supplied such services as establishing damage boundaries, maintaining roadblocks and controlling traffic, patrolling for looting, and attempting to locate missing persons.

25 years ago

- Selected field wardens are issued mobile telephones to reduce response time to ongoing violations.

HARLAND STEINHORST is a retired Wisconsin conservation warden.



Sgt. Kristopher Martin of the Ozaukee County Sheriff's Department Hunter Education Program presented his Fall 2007 class with the WCWA "Be Seen Be Safe" bandanas along with certificates at their field day. The students were told about the unfortunate hunting accident that brought about the "Be Seen Be Safe" program.

IN BRIEF

Contact WGW magazine with address changes

If you've moved, don't forget to tell Wisconsin Game Warden Magazine.

The post office does not forward or return the magazines, so the Association has no way of knowing what members are not receiving their magazines. For address changes, contact Kathy Oginski at kaoginski@cheqnet.net

Rod & Gun Club held 60th kids' fisheree

The Rod & Gun Club out of Ashland, Wis. hosted its 60th children's fishing party on Chequamegon Bay on Aug. 4, 2007.

Just under 200 children between the ages of 7 - 13 took part in this free event; every child went home with a prize.

The event is organized by club members and community volunteers, many who bring their boats to take the children out on the water.

Most of the funds raised for this event comes from the Rod & Gun Club's ice fishing contest held the first weekend of March each year. They also hold pancake breakfasts throughout the year, as well as accept donations from private individuals and local companies. The WCWA awarded the Rod & Gun Club grant money to help pay for the 2007 event.



First Hunt

By Brad Biser

This is a story that grandson and grandfather will never forget.

This is a story about 13-year-old A.J. Davidowski, an eighth grader who lives in Park City, Utah, and his first hunt in Wisconsin.

The story begins during the summer of 2007 when A.J. took hunter education to prepare for coming to Wisconsin to hunt during the gun deer season with his grandfather, Joe Davidowski. The hunter safety course, filled with 20 or 30 students, lasted 18 hours, or three weeks with three classes each week. After completing the course, A.J. shot at targets using a .22-caliber rifle that his grandfather bought him at Cabela's.

But the real story occurs in November 2007 when A.J. traveled with his family — including parents, Joel and Nicola Davidowski, and brothers Andrew, 11, and Trey, 7 — to spend Thanksgiving and the holidays with his grandparents, Joe and Jan Davidowski of Brule. But it was more than Thanksgiving — it was the 2007 deer gun season, too.

A.J. and his family arrived at his grandparent's house about 9:30 p.m. on Nov. 17, 2007. The following morning, A.J. and his grandfather woke up at about 5:30 a.m. and by about 6:30 a.m. were positioned in the hunting blind that Joe had constructed on Brule River State Forest property. When it was legal to shoot, A.J. loaded his gun and patiently waited for a deer.

He didn't have to wait long. At about 7:20 a.m. A.J. observed a deer and told his grandpa that it was a "big one." A.J. shot and hit the deer in the front shoulder. The deer traveled about 200 yards and went down, and A.J. tracked and retrieved the animal. Then afterward, the boy dragged the deer by himself while his grandfather held his gun. A.J. used his grandfather's gun, an Ithaca 6 mm rifle, to shoot the antlerless deer.

But A.J. also had further success. The following day, Nov. 19, A.J. shot a second antlerless deer, this time hitting it in the heart.

A.J.'s story is all the more special because his grandfather is



A.J. Davidowski poses with his deer, along with his grandfather, Joe Davidowski, and his brothers, Andrew and Trey.

a retired conservation warden who started with the Conservation Department in 1962 and retired after 31 years. During this time, Joe had many accomplishments within the agency. He received the Haskell Noyes award and the Edward Mathe and the John C. Brogan award for outstanding environmental achievement. Joe made an impact upon the agency and upon many other DNR wardens and employees throughout the years since he trained more than 20 new recruits with the FTO program.

Upon retirement Joe worked two years in Superior as a consultant for Kimmes Construction. Joe and Jan then moved in 1996 to Montana for three years, returning to the Brule area in 1999. Joe chose to move back to Brule to be closer to family and to fish the Brule River.

Joe and Jan Davidowski also have another son, Jay Davidowski, and his wife, Brenda. Jay and Brenda have two sons, and they live in Plymouth, Minn.

BRAD BISER is a conservation warden stationed in Brule.

Articles, photos sought for Fall 2008 issue

Wisconsin Game Warden Magazine is looking for interesting articles that deal with the great outdoors. The deadline for the fall issue is Aug. 15, 2008.

Possible topics include ecology, warden cases made, places to go, resource conservation methods, gotcha-type stories, animal rescues, history of the warden force, and articles dealing with the natural world.

Other possible story topics include vacations, recipes and the future of the warden force.

Aren't sure if your story is a good one? Contact Managing Editor Barbara A. Schmitz at (920) 235-0972 and ask.

Articles can be submitted to Schmitz at 1705 Graber St., Oshkosh, WI 54901, or e-mailed as a Word document to write2us@sbcglobal.net.

When possible include photographs to go with your story. They can be mailed or e-mailed to Schmitz. E-mailed photos should be at least 4" x 6" and 300 dpi or 8" x 10" and at least 72 dpi.

In addition, the magazine is searching for photos for its newest feature, *Fruits of their Labor*. Do you have a picture of your family with fish and game they've harvested in Wisconsin? Or how about one of you and some game? Send it in!

Photos can be mailed to Schmitz at the above address. They will be returned, if requested.

As before, photos can also be sent electronically to Schmitz. However, e-mailed photos should be at least 4" x 6" and 300 dpi or 8" x 10" and at least 72 dpi.

Contact Schmitz if you have any questions.

Meet Matthew Frank

DNR's new secretary has passion for state resources

By Tracy Rusch

Most people know Matthew Frank from the controversies surrounding his position as secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. But that's old news now—yes, Gov. Doyle appointed Frank on Sept. 1, 2007, not a seven-member committee as many would have liked, and yes, Frank's history is devoid of hunting.

These topics are bound to end up at the top of the results listed in an Internet search of his name. But what won't appear in that list is that Frank has changed that history—he went deer hunting for the first time last fall when he got invited after becoming secretary—and finally used the skills he learned in hunter safety 39 years ago.

The 51-year-old outdoorsman came back empty handed, in terms of hot sticks and antlers, but with memories of an irreplaceable experience.

"I thought it was important that if I'm going to be doing this job that I have a full appreciation for all of the work that's done," Frank said, "and certainly have more direct contact with hunting."

And he didn't just have a great time—he's planning on going again.

When Gov. Doyle asked Frank to take the appointment as head of the WDNR, he considered Frank's extensive work experience and character.

Frank's four-and-a-half years as sec-

retary of the Department of Corrections, and 22 years as the assistant attorney general for the Wisconsin Department of Justice—six of them in which he was also administrator of the Division of Legal Services—proved to Doyle that he fit the job description.

"Matt Frank brings over two decades of environmental enforcement experience and a lifelong love of the outdoors to the Department of Natural Resources," Doyle said in an e-mail response.

He also said that Frank's great love for Wisconsin and passion for protecting its precious natural resources were additional reasons for his decision. Frank was honored and jumped at the opportunity Doyle presented.

"I mean, the chance to head the DNR, to deal with all the issues we deal with, to really protect what we value so much in Wisconsin, is just—it's really the opportunity of a lifetime," Frank said.

Though Frank lacked a lifelong history of hunting, his cousin Patrick Durkin, a freelance writer and editor, said he was the ideal candidate even before he set foot on hunting grounds.

"Matt was a perfect example of what we need for hunting and fishing and the outdoor recreational sports," Durkin said. "You know, where you have a guy who doesn't necessarily hunt, but he definitely understands the outdoor ethics of the state, and the importance of natural resources."



Frank, a Cross Plains, Wis., native, grew up where hunting was as normal as wearing shoes. But he was probably too busy working at Frank's Market, his father's grocery store and meat processing business, to take on the sport.

He lived the hunting life vicariously through the deer hunters who came to get their meaty trophies turned into sausages and other delectable treats.

"I had a lot of contact with all the people who came in, including the hunters, so I really appreciate the hunting tradition in Wisconsin," Frank said.

His appreciation for the outdoors is deeply rooted in his love of nature. From little on, Frank spent almost every free chance outside breathing in the fresh Wisconsin air.

"In some ways, I feel like I grew up outdoors," he said. "You know, when you weren't in school you were outside."

While Durkin also visited memories of berry picking in the hills, both he and Frank reminisced of the five-to six-hour sandlot baseball games they played under the summer sun. Though Frank said he hung up his cleats a long time ago, Durkin remembers him being a skilled baseball player.

"And I'd say without blushing that he was a better baseball player than I was," Durkin said. "But he never went out of his way to make you aware of the fact that he was pretty good."



Matt Frank, second from left, met with many deer hunting enthusiasts after being named DNR secretary. Here, he meets with, from left, Jack Brauer, Al Hofacker and Dan Schmidt. Brauer and Hofacker are co-founders of Deer & Deer Hunting magazine and Schmidt is the current editor.

Whether Frank was fishing at Black Earth Creek, which runs through Cross Plains, playing in the woods or camping with his family, he loved the outdoors.

His father, Roland Frank, will attest that his son was very inquisitive as a young boy. And his mother, Helene Frank, who's a retired RN, said he has always been that way.

"Matt is very directed," Helene adds. "If he wants to know something, he finds that out. He researches and he reads and he interviews until he gets the answer to what he wants."

Roland also said that Frank has a nice personality and a way of dealing with people.

"If I'd been the same age and we had grown up together, he'd be the kind of kid I would want for a pal, you know?" he said of his son.

Frank credits his parents with instilling a love of nature.

"They're great people, hardworking, you know, they really taught us not just to enjoy, but also to respect the outdoors," he said.

Frank and his four sisters — Gina, Eileen, Mary Catherine and Ann Elizabeth

— spent most of their time enjoying the state's resources together. Many of their family vacations were spent exploring state parks.

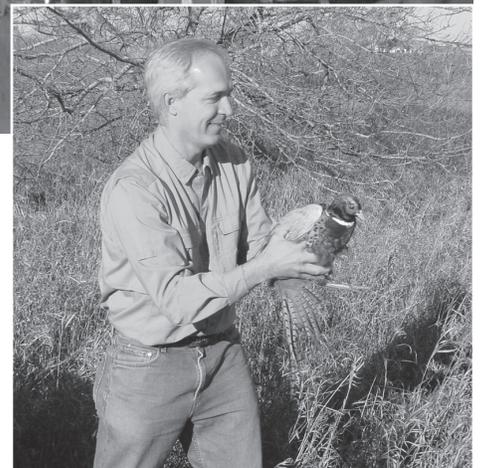
That's because his parents felt it was a great way to enjoy time together, Frank said. "My parents ... worked hard, but they also believed strongly in family."

Frank said his parents have influenced him greatly growing up, especially in terms of family. One of Frank's favorite things to do now is spend time with his own. Kay, his wife of 21 years, and their three sons, Grant, 18, Michael, 17, and Andrew, 14, enjoy any time spent together.

They all share the same interests and love of the outdoors—biking, canoeing, kayaking, camping, fishing, boating and hiking are just a few of the things they do when they're together.

And Grant, who's a college freshman, may even be showing signs of following in his father's footsteps.

Frank said that Grant, who's pursuing a degree in biology and science, did an independent study with a DNR biologist when he was in high school. He spent two winters studying porcupine habits, and



DNR Secretary Matthew J. Frank releases a pheasant in the field. Frank says: "I am a big believer in law enforcement working pro-actively with the public -- anticipating and responding to potential law enforcement problems in advance -- and working with groups to enlist public support for our enforcement efforts. Wisconsin DNR wardens have a great record on this, and I intend to support and build upon these efforts."

was fascinated.

"And of course," Frank said. "One of the comments that he made to me when I got this job was, 'Dad, this is a great job—why couldn't you have gotten this job a long time ago?'"

But Frank's cousin, Durkin, had a different reaction to Matt's appointment at first. When he learned that Frank was

continued on next page

becoming DNR secretary, he felt like responding the same way Mr. Carlin did on the old Bob Newhart Show — after Newhart gave a speech because he decided to run for alderman, Mr. Carlin stood up and said, “Let me play Devil’s Advocate for a second; Bob, what the devil do you think you’re doing?”

Durkin said he wondered how his cousin could actually want the high-profile DNR secretary job. It plays such an important role in Wisconsin’s natural resources policy-making, but oftentimes gets bogged down with unimportant issues and nonsense, he said.

“Unfortunately, people in Matt’s position and others, instead of worrying about the big issues like air quality and water quality... (end up arguing) about whether or not the DNR knows how to estimate the deer populations.”

Durkin said Wisconsin has more information on deer populations, herds and hunters’ success rates than any state in the country—and yet these questions continue to clog the system.

“But I think again, it’s because he does give a damn,” Durkin said. “He cares about the state’s resources and just because he didn’t grow up hunting doesn’t mean he can’t have a real heartfelt interest in these issues.”

He may be family, but Durkin’s faith in his cousin runs deep because he knows too much about the Frank family and what matters to them.

In one word, he described Frank as sincere because he has always been a quick, smart study and an honest, what-you-see-is-what-you-get kind of guy.

“And the thing I’ve always liked about him, and I still see it in him today when I see him interviewed on TV, is that he can’t BS,” Durkin said. “He just can’t, you know, sit there and talk blarney.”

If Frank is asked a question that he can’t answer, Durkin said he is confident enough to say, “I don’t know.”

“I think Matt’s one of the few public officials who will say that,” he added. “He doesn’t come in there with any pretensions.”

His parents are proud of him for being a man of truth and integrity. He leads, but he doesn’t look down on the followers.

“He’s straightforward,” Roland said. “What you see is what you get—he doesn’t put on an air.”

“I think he’s kind of unimpressed with his own accomplishments,” Helene said.



DNR Secretary Matthew Frank answers a question during a press conference.

“We’re his parents so we’re glad to tell you how wonderful he is, but he’s kind of just [like], ‘nah.’”

Helene still raves about his knack for photography when he was younger. “He was into photography very much, so he had his own darkroom,” she said. “And did some beautiful pictures, actually. One nice picture he’s got is a blue heron that he took up north.”

His sister, Gina, said she shared in some of the excitement when her brother set up a darkroom in the laundry room. “It was fun—we’d be down there and he’d take a lot of black and white photos and he’d develop those,” she said.

Their parents said Frank and Gina were closest growing up, mostly because they were the oldest and shared babysitting duties. But they also shared similar interests.

Gina has worked for state government for more than 22 years, and is now at the administrator level of the Division of Enterprise Services. She said that it was interesting that they both started with careers in public service and then state government.

They’ve shared more than career paths, though—they have musical roots that reach out to Helene’s mother—she sang

semi-professionally according to Gina. But Helene also taught her children how to play the piano.

In the past, Gina and Frank sang together at weddings, played and sang at coffee shops and performed in musicals during high school.

If she remembers correctly, Gina said her brother starred as the lead in the musicals, “South Pacific” and “Fiddler on the Roof,” in which he had great performances. Today, he continues to share music, but this time with his own family.

His family could list a million additional activities that Frank loved to do when he was younger, as he grew and even today. His interests are just as endless as they were when he was a child living at home with mom and dad.

That may make him seem no different than anyone else. But one thing that separates him from the crowd is his ability to excel at anything and everything.

Most kids at some point say what they want to be when they “grow up.” Maybe a police officer or a ballerina, an artist or a teacher...but Frank didn’t have just one aspiration.

“He was always exploring different things, whether it be music or science,” Gina said. “So, I don’t think he was one of those people who kind of knew from an early age what they wanted to do.”

Frank agrees—he can’t think of one thing that he loves to do the most—there are too many things to choose from. But he does know that family and what people do on and to this earth matter. Maybe that’s why so many people who know him have such a deep-rooted faith that he will do a great job as the WDNR secretary.

“He’s good at many things so I think he could have done many things,” Gina said. “You know that he would have been successful at any of the things that he chose.”

Gina said that having the right combination of natural qualities is what it takes to be an effective leader, and that’s what makes her WDNR secretary of a brother so great.

“He’s just very genuine,” she said “And I think I admire that about him—he has had the ability to stay focused on things that are important, both, I think, in his professional life as well as his personal life.”

TRACY RUSCH is a journalism student at UW-Oshkosh.



It takes a lot of time and people to put on these Learn to Hunt programs, as shown above. Right, Tyler Halatek and Michaela Eugster, both 13, pose in front of some of the game harvested during the 2007 hunt. Michaela has bone and lung cancer and Tyler has spina bifida.

Terminally ill youth get Hunt of a Lifetime

By Dave Oginski

Conservation Warden Jeremy Peery of Ladysmith has gone above and beyond the bounds of what a warden's job entails to bring people together for one of the most compassionate and inspirational programs ever conducted by a warden.

Peery has conducted a Learn-to-Hunt deer and bear program for terminally ill youth for three years and in 2007, the annual hunt at Bill Rands' ranch in Radisson was again a huge success.

Michaela Eugster, a 13-year-old girl from Bryant diagnosed with bone and lung cancer, and Tyler Halatek, a 13-year-old Reedsburg boy with spina bifida, both got a chance to hunt for the first time.



Peery sat with Michaela in a ground blind hunting deer when she shot a bear at 8 feet — yes 8 feet as it looked into the blind. It obviously made for a very exciting hunt and an even more excited young hunter.

The video of this event says it all and is why Peery does the "Hunt of a Lifetime" hunts. Peery and all the people who assist have given these youth some of the most memorable experiences of their young lives.

Dave Oginski is the Conservation Warden Supervisor for the Park Falls Team and notes that he has nominated Peery for a recognition award for outstanding service.

FRUITS OF THEIR LABOR

a photo album

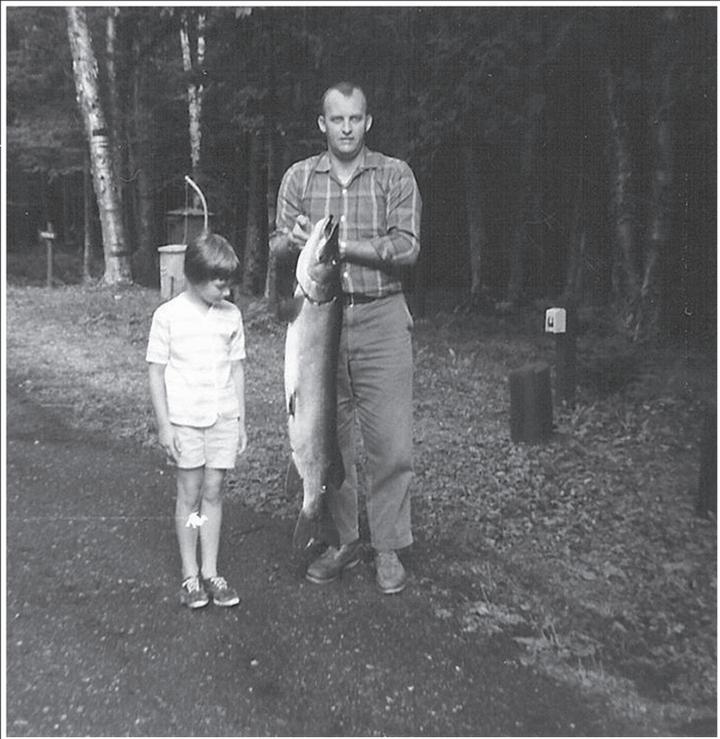


Submitted by Michael Nice

Deer hunting doesn't end when the gun deer season is over. This group did a little muzzleloading near Woodman, Wis. Pictures of hunting groups like this are coming obsolete as more hunters try for the big buck. "My 76-year-old dad stated it doesn't get much better than this picture as we harvested all 13 deer during a two-day hunt with friends," said Mike Nice. Two wardens, a retired warden supervisor, a retired deputy warden, and active DNR pilot have been part of this group for the last 10 years. Others are all friends. "It seems we always shoot deer, but more important it's a time to get together and tell stories and shoot the bull about previous years' hunts."



Dan Michels shot this doughnut-eating bear on Sept. 24, 2007. It weighed 230 pounds live, and dressed out at 196 pounds.



Don Bjork, now a retired warden from Ashland County, with his daughter Susan, then age 6, and a 33-pound Muskie caught in the Clam Lake area. Don earned first place in the 1968 Great Divide Association contest.



Photo submitted by Wendy Bjork

Logan Bjork, 2, caught his first fish — a 25-inch trout — and won first prize in a fishing contest in June 2005. Logan is the grandson of retired warden Don Bjork.



Abbi Quaintance, 6, and her dad, Clint, show off some of the perch Abbi caught at the ABC Sportsmen fishing party on Feb. 23, 2008 on Lake Superior. Clint is the son of warden Pat Quaintance and Abbi is Pat's granddaughter.



Photo courtesy Tom Heisler Jr.

Conservation warden Tom Heisler Jr. and his father, Tom Sr. show that any day of fishing is a good day. In early April they caught this brown trout and coho on Lake Superior. The browns ranged in size from 16 inches to 26 inches.



Photo by Tim McEnroe

Climate changes imminent for state

By Becky Disbrow

Wisconsin's Trout Unlimited chapters may have to shift their focus to an alternative fish species as climate change threatens trout habitat.

John Gremmer, director of chapter programs and activities for Central Wisconsin Trout Unlimited, said that the enjoyment of fishing will go on, despite decreases in trout numbers.

"Personally, at 65 years of age, I may not see the nasty effects of global warming, but I can always go farther north to do my trout fishing," Gremmer said.

Along with trout fishing, other outdoor recreation activities in Wisconsin could be altered by climate change.

Global warming has gained attention on national and global scales for its projected radical impacts. Wisconsin faces several of its own problems as the climate warms up and other changes become evident. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, along with other scientists and researchers, has begun to explore the changes our state may encounter.

Weather and climate changes

The state faces particular climate changes that impact Wisconsin residents and the environment.

Confronting Climate Change in the Great Lakes Region, a 2003 report generated by the Union of Concerned Scientists and the Ecological Society of America, provides climate projections and predicted effects on the Wisconsin landscape. John Magnuson, emeritus professor of zoology and limnology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, contributed to this study.

"We will have more extreme event rainfalls and snowfalls," Magnuson said. This will generate more problems with erosion and run-off near waterways. The most "robust findings" support this impact of climate change, he said.

While the *Confronting Climate Change* report suggests drier summers and more precipitation in other months, Magnuson said that updated assessments aren't as definitive on this particular prediction.

A 2007 report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which examines the global warming trend in relation to recent research, supports Magnuson's statement.

"It is very likely that hot extremes, heat waves and heavy precipitation events will continue to become more frequent," the report said.

With much of the annual precipitation accumulating in extreme events, there could be longer time spans between summer rainfalls, Magnuson said.

On average, the last 30 years have seen a 10 percent increase in annual rainfall than the previous 30 years, Magnuson said. This can be linked to weather cycles—a wet cycle, in this case. Magnuson explained that a difference exists between climate change, such as overall warming, and weather patterns, which appear and fade over the years.

Records of Wisconsin lake ice cover show this warming in climate, Magnuson said. The lakes freeze later in the year, thaw earlier, and have a shorter duration of ice cover, he said.

Another problem stemming from climate change and extreme event precipitation is the overflow of metro storm sewers, Magnuson said. During heavy rainfall, this overflow dumps wastewater into Lake Michigan, he said. The storm sewer system needs to be redesigned to recognize the increasing frequency of this problem, Magnuson said.

Changing lake levels

Lake Michigan is at its lowest level in 100 years, Magnuson said. Many factors contribute to the lake's water level, including municipi-

pal water withdrawal, a low in the oscillatory period and dredging near Lake Huron, he said.

Climate change lowers the water level by increasing water evaporation in warmer temperatures and creating more runoff after extreme precipitation events, Magnuson said.

Magnuson estimates that effects related to climate change are responsible for less than one foot of the 5-foot decrease in Lake Michigan's water level.

Inland lakes also experience effects of climate change, Magnuson said. Currently, northern Wisconsin lake levels are low; the opposite is true for their southern counterparts. According to Magnuson, deep-well pumping contributes to a drop in the water level. Lakes higher in elevation are also more sensitive to lack of precipitation, he said.

Changes in animal and plant populations

Climate change alters the present habitat for various animal and plant species, which would impact ecosystem composition, hunting and forestry.

"There will be species moving in that we presently don't have," Magnuson said. He cited well-documented cases of northern-moving possums and several bird species. Climate change creates a general northward movement of species, he said.

Deer could also be negatively affected by extreme weather events associated with climate change. "Deer behave differently in deep snow," Magnuson said. With a rise in extreme event snowfalls, there is an increasing problem of winter deer starvation, he said. As the climate change continues, there would be more rain precipitation in a warmer winter environment.

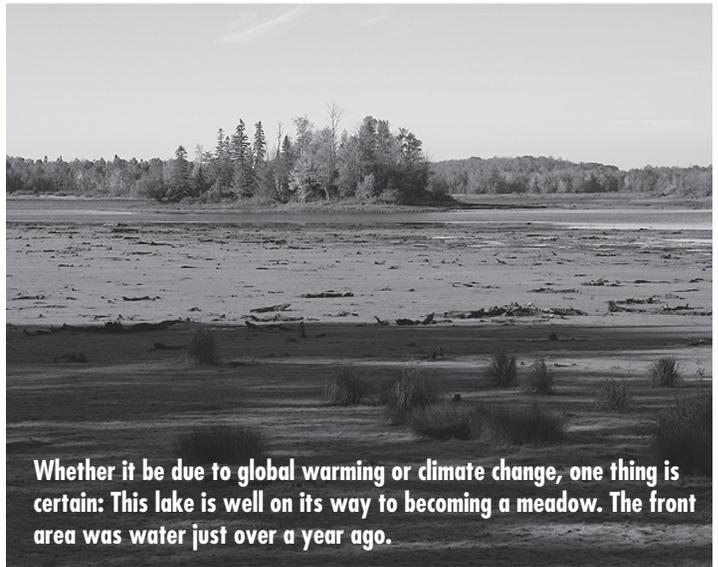
The *Climate Change* report predicts that some native species, such as deer, raccoons and skunks could fair favorably in a warmer Wisconsin.

The Wisconsin Environment Research & Policy Center's 2007 report "An Unfamiliar State" looks at projected effects of climate change on the state, including a change in forest composition.

"As temperatures increase in Wisconsin over the coming decades, tree species that had once thrived in the state will find their territories shifted to the north," the WERPC report said.

This could lead to the reduction and elimination of some tree species. "Wisconsin could lose at least five species of trees—balsam fir, paper birch, white spruce, jack pine and red pine—by the end of the next century given anticipated levels of warming," the report said.

These species changes, particularly the migration of pine forests, would hurt the paper and lumber industries in the state, the WERPC report said.



Whether it be due to global warming or climate change, one thing is certain: This lake is well on its way to becoming a meadow. The front area was water just over a year ago.

Photo by Tim McEnroe

Changes in fish populations

"There may be many mitigating factors that would dampen the effects of warming air temperatures on stream temperatures," said Matt Mitro, a research scientist for the Wisconsin DNR.

Changes in ground water inputs and precipitation could also affect trout streams. "It is not yet clear how a changing climate will affect ground water inputs, and to what extent ground water input protects streams from warming air temperature," Mitro said.

He said that the level and timing of precipitation would also affect stream temperatures. "An increase in the frequency of heavy spring rains would be detrimental to trout recruitment because brook and brown trout fry emerge from reeds in the spring and are highly vulnerable to being swept away by floods until they have grown larger," Mitro said.

"The best thing that can be done to help protect trout populations that may be subjected to a warming climate would be protecting high quality stream habitat and restoring degraded streams," Mitro said.

"Trout stream restoration typically involves reformation of the stream channel such that the stream is narrower and deeper, which helps keep the water cool and buffers the water from changes in air

UNDERSTANDING THE TERMS

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the terms global warming and climate change, while referring to the same phenomenon, account for different things.

Global warming refers only to an increase in the average temperature of the atmosphere and includes discussion of greenhouse gas emissions.

Climate change, the more preferred term, includes "any significant change in measures of climate, such as temperature, precipitation or wind, lasting for an extended period," according to the EPA Web site.

The EPA states that climate change can occur in response to actions by people that disrupt the atmosphere or environment. Examples include producing energy, destroying forests, and increasing urbanization. Natural factors and climate cycles also contribute to climate change.



John J. Magnuson, an emeritus professor of zoology and limnology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, stands at Cedar Bog. He has studied possible climate changes in Wisconsin and how those changes will impact the state's landscape and species.

temperature,” Mitro said.

There are 10,371 miles of trout streams in Wisconsin, according to a presentation by Mitro and Jana Stewart of the U.S. Geological Survey. Their report explains the effects of stream temperature on trout behavior and survival. A rise in temperature above the defined comfort zone results in problems with fish eating habits and growth patterns, their presentation said.

“Trout can detect 1°C change in temperature,” they said. Trout can seek cooler water and alter their behaviors, but these changes have other effects on trout numbers.

In their water temperature change models, Mitro and Stewart demonstrate that brown trout would do comparatively better than native brook trout in warmer water temperatures.

According to Mitro and Stewart, the following factors influence stream temperature: “air temperature, amount of light reaching water, water depth, water turbidity, groundwater input, and land surfaces in watershed.”

Climate change will impact trout populations. “Extreme precipitation events associated with climate change may limit trout recruitment,” they said. “Drought conditions associated with climate change will limit stream flows and fish habitat.”

Magnuson noted similar findings in his study of Wisconsin fish populations.

“The waters are going to warm up,” Magnuson said. “Cool- and cold-water fish have a harder time persisting.”

Mitro said that cold-water species will be most affected by climate change.

Trout are considered cold-water fish; cool waters are inhabited by walleye and perch. Cool-water fish currently mix in the same bodies of water as warm-water fish, such as bluegill, bass and carp, Magnuson said.

“If the warming trend continues, [some streams] will no longer be suitable for trout,” Magnuson said in considering the community composition of fish.

Other impacts on Wisconsin

The *Climate Change* report looks at the effect of climate change on agriculture in Wisconsin. “There are likely to be some positive impacts for agriculture from a warmer climate, although current evidence suggests that the negative consequences could outweigh the positive,” it said.

The WERP’s “An Unfamiliar State” found that a warmer Wisconsin is often viewed as a “good news story for agriculture.” It said, “On the positive side, scientists project longer growing seasons and increased farm yields. However, climate change also creates a series of threats.”

The *Climate Change* report cites heavy rainfall events and intermittent drought conditions as problems stemming from climate change. “Crop production in the region is already suffering from



Matthew G. Mitro, a research scientist with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources’ Fisheries and Habitat Research Program, says we must protect high quality stream habitat, if we are to protect trout populations.

problems associated with both excess and insufficient moisture, and these problems will only worsen,” the report said.

Warmer temperatures could also contribute to the northward movement and higher numbers of agricultural pests, it said.

The report suggests that renewable energy projects and programs to reduce emissions created by farms could help those in the agricultural sector combat climate change.

Tourism in Wisconsin could also be impacted by climate change, the report said. “The summer recreation season will likely expand as temperatures warm further, but extreme heat, heavy downpours, elevated ozone layers, and possible increases in risk from insect and waterborne diseases may dampen outdoor enthusiasm,” the report said.

The winter recreation season would also suffer with warmer winter temperatures and a decrease in lake ice cover, the *Climate Change* report said.

Solutions to climate change

The warming of our regional and global climate cannot be reversed with a few simple initiatives. However, researchers suggest that a proactive strategy could work to lessen the severity of some climate change problems.

“Some warming is inevitable...but the most extreme outcomes for the region can be avoided if responsible measures are taken locally, nationally and elsewhere in the world now,” the *Climate Change* report said. “Ignoring climate change is not an option.”

The reports’ authors recommend solutions for the different sources of Wisconsin’s climate change, harmful greenhouse gases.

While vehicles and power plants produce the largest volume of emissions, other sources of greenhouse gases must be looked at, they said. “In order to tackle the problem, emissions from industry, businesses and homes, as well as other locally important sources such as landfills will need to be reduced,” they said.

An EPA study of the Great Lakes region found that 30 percent of greenhouse gas emissions come from utility energy, 23 percent from transportation, and 18 percent from industrial energy. Byproducts of waste, residential and commercial energy, industry and agriculture account for less than 10 percent each.

According to the *Climate Change* report, “Forward-thinking energy policies that promote energy efficiency, renewable energy and cleaner fossil fuel generation can significantly reduce emissions from [energy] sources.”

The reports’ suggestions for the transportation sector include the following: “increasing fuel economy standards, providing state incentives for hybrids and other fuel-efficient vehicles, and investing in alternative fuel research.”

Other solutions to climate change support programs to reduce agriculture emissions and to encourage forestry growth and protection.

Becky Disbrow is a student at UW-Oshkosh majoring in journalism.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Bandana program pays off

Last fall an article about our “Be Seen Be Safe” bandana program appeared in *Wisconsin Outdoor News*. Shortly after, I received an e-mail from an interested sportsman asking how he could get some of the bandanas and supply them to “his warden, Mike Nice.” He went on to say that Mike has so many great youth programs and the safety and enjoyment of the young hunters was a priority.

He then asked what he could do in return for the bandanas. I suggested making a donation to the WCWA. This man went above and beyond!

Stanford “Kim” Williams joined the WCWA with a \$500 life membership along with life memberships for Douglas Williams, Will DeVries and Robert DeVries.

Thank you Kim, Douglas, Will and Robert for your generosity in supporting the Wisconsin Conservation Warden Association and our mission to enhance conservation warden/community relationships.

Also a well deserved thank you to Warden Mike Nice for your community involvement that has inspired others to support you so whole-heartedly.

Kathy Oginski
WCWA memberships

Donation to seminar appreciated

On behalf of the Association membership, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your generous contributions during our recent 2007 Rhode Island Environmental Police Officers Association (RIEPOA) Field Day & Professional Development Seminar held June 13, 2007 at Addieville East Farm in Mapleville, RI.

You, along with other outdoorsmen and law enforcement professionals, help to make it a success.

Thank you,
Joseph Buban
RIEPOA Secretary/Treasurer

Learn-to-hunt waterfowl program a big success

Thank you for the generous donation for our 2007 learn-to-hunt waterfowl program.

The Oakfield Conservation Club, Inc., local volunteers, and the Wisconsin DNR organized an event to teach youth and their parents about calling ducks, placing decoys and identifying waterfowl. In addition, volunteers taught boat safety, firearm safety, dog training, hunting techniques, waterfowl history, ethics and laws.

Every child who attended received a bunch of decoys, calls, hats, books and other miscellaneous gear. They were also offered a chance to participate in a waterfowl hunt on private property with a guide. Many of the youth took this opportunity and had a very memorable experience.

Everyone had a great time learning about waterfowl hunting, and we couldn't have done it without your financial support.

Oakfield Conservation Club

Retired Warden Group Check – 2007

By Pat Harkins

The retired Wisconsin Conservation Wardens group check, held every other year, took place at the nearly dry Rainbow Flowage on Sept. 19, 2007. The event was organized by Gary Scovel; Bob Tucker took care of the food and steak fry.

Nearly 40 retired wardens, a few special wardens, a few wives, and one retired Michigan warden attended the event.

The group gathering started about 12 or 14 years ago at Dick Abney's cabin. Everyone had a chance to renew old acquaintances, tell a few true stories, and have some good laughs.

In addition, I presented information about possible state legislation that would authorize retired law enforcement officers to carry concealed weapons. The proposed law would require approval from the officer's agency, the issuance of some type of credentials that would be renewed annually, and an annual firearms qualification. Agencies would likely charge a fee to cover cost of administration.

Most of those in attendance said they would support such legislation.

Federal legislation authorizing states to allow con-

cealed carry was approved a couple of years ago, but has been held up by state politics until now.



Photo by Cathy Schmude

More than 30 retired wardens gathered at Rainbow Flowage on Sept. 19, 2007, for the annual warden group check. Not pictured is Phil Ziemann.

Wisconsin Conservation Warden Association

Our purpose

The Wisconsin Conservation Warden Association (WCWA) exists to further conservation efforts within the state, without unionizing or collective bargaining, and is dedicated to all of the men and women who have served as Wisconsin Conservation Wardens since 1879.

Our objectives

- Promote natural resources education.
- Promote the profession of natural resources law enforcement.
- Strive to enhance conservation warden/community relationships.
- Provide encouragement, recognition and support to all members in their profession.
- Increase awareness and understanding of conservation and environmental issues.

Why join the W.C.W.A.?

- Receive the official W.C.W.A. magazine with information, pictures and stories that revolve around Wisconsin conservation wardens, past and present.
- Help support the W.C.W.A. Scholarship Program at UW-Stevens Point.
- Help establish and maintain a Conservation Warden Memorial Program.
- Help establish and maintain a Conservation Warden Museum.

Membership categories

- Regular Membership** — Active and retired, full-time permanent conservation wardens who have served part of their career as wardens; past and present special and county conservation wardens; and active and retired law enforcement officers from other agencies.
- Associate Membership** — Individuals, organizations and businesses expressing an interest in supporting the association.
- Sponsor Membership** — Any individual or organization that wishes to provide additional financial support to the association.
- Corporate Membership** — Any business that wishes to provide financial support to the W.C.W.A. Receive a free ad in this magazine with donation of \$500 or more.

I want to become a W.C.W.A. member

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

- Regular and Associate memberships**
\$20 for one-year membership
\$200 for life membership

- Sponsor Memberships**
 \$25-\$99 one year
 \$100-\$499, five year (with certificate suitable for framing)
 \$500 or more, life membership (with wooden plaque)

- Corporate Sponsorship**
\$250-\$500 one year (\$500 or more includes free ad)

Memberships expire on June 30. Please make your check payable to the W.C.W.A. and send it to the W.C.W.A., Post Office Box 44, Madison, WI 53701-0044.

Your email will not be shared with anyone. It is for the sole purpose of helping maintain membership status and contact with our members.

It's gun raffle time again!

The Wisconsin Conservation Warden Association needs your help to make its 2008 Super Gun Raffle a success. The raffle started in early February and will be held in August.

The raffle has not changed from previous years, according to raffle manager David Branley. "We guarantee odds at 1 in 25 to win a new gun."

Tickets are \$20 each, and anyone buying five tickets for \$100 will receive a free bonus ticket on another raffle.

"The price of guns raises every year, but the price of our raffle ticket remains at \$20 each," Branley said. "This means we must sell more tickets than ever to make up the difference so our proceeds from the raffle can be used for the WCWA nonprofit conservation projects."

Branley said the WCWA is a certified nonprofit group and donations to the WCWA and Wisconsin Conservation Education Foundation can be tax deductible.

"Many wardens are outstanding in ticket sales," he said. "Our retired warden ticket sellers are super. Many other supporters for WCWA go all out for us selling tickets. Plus, many conservation clubs buy our tickets and will sell them for us, if contacted."

Branley said ticket sellers will receive a chance on a gun for every 15 tickets sold. However, it is the ticket seller's responsibility to get him a list of the ticket buyers and ticket numbers to be eligible for the bonus prize.

"I urge everyone to make a special effort for the 2008 fun raffle to ensure its success," Branley said.

You can get tickets by contacting your area representative or Branley. Branley can be reached via e-mail at H20admiral@aol.com or by phone, (608) 222-3771 home or (608) 576-3771 cell. His mailing address is 3153 Zuercher Court, Madison, WI 53711.



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Selected 2007 Assembly Bills – Introduced from 1-1-07 through 3-20-08

Related to: Natural Resources, State Parks, Law Enforcement & Recreational Vehicles

- **AB 40 - Relating to:** disposal of dredged material that contains polychlorinated biphenyls in solid waste disposal facilities. Introduced by Rep. Owens. Referred to NR Committee. No action or hearing held as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 42 - Relating to:** appointment of the secretary of natural resources by the NR board to take effect after 1-3-2011. Introduced by Rep. Black. Referred to NR Committee. Public hearing held on 10-10-07.
- **AB 45 - Relating to:** personal flotation devices be worn by children under age 13 on boats under 26 ft. Introduced by Rep. Gottlieb. Referred to Tourism, Recreation and State Properties Committee. Public hearing held 3-29-07. Also see SB16.
- **AB 49 - Relating to:** aquatic plant permit control fees charged to qualified lake associations. Introduced by Rep. Friske. Referred to NR Committee. Public hearing held 3-21-07. Passed 8-6 by committee on 6-14-07 for scheduling before full Assembly. No further action as of 3-20-08
- **AB 52 – Relating to:** an exception for law enforcement dogs to the requirement that a dog that bites a person be quarantined. Intro. by Rep. Kerkman . *Signed into law: Took effect as 2007 WISCONSIN ACT 37 on Dec. 25, 2007.*
- **AB 59 - Relating to:** operation of ATVs on highways to access trails from residences and places of lodging. Introduced by Rep. Marsau. Referred to Rural Affairs Committee. Public hearing held on 5-8-07 and Assembly amendment offered and passed. Referred to Joint Finance. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 62 - Relating to:** electric receptacles at state park campsites. Introduced by Rep. Gottlieb. Referred to Tourism, Recreation and State Properties Committee. Passed by full Assembly 2-26-08 and referred to Senate. Passed out of Senate committee 5-0 on 3-11-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 86 - Relating to:** ballast water management. This bill requires a person who operates an oceangoing vessel that uses a port in this state to obtain a permit from the DNR. To obtain a permit, the person must demonstrate to DNR that the vessel is not capable of taking on ballast water or that the vessel is equipped with technology that DNR determines will prevent the introduction of aquatic nuisance species into the Great Lakes. Introduced by Rep. Molepske and referred to NR Committee. No hearings held by Assembly NR Committee. Motion made on 2-26-08 to withdraw from NR committee and refer to Committee on Rules failed by vote of 47 to 50.
- **AB 91 - Relating to:** voting by the members of the Conservation Congress. Under this bill, the Natural Resources Board may not accept the results of a vote on an advisory question made during any spring county meeting of the Conservation Congress if nonresidents were allowed to vote at that county meeting on the advisory question or to vote for delegates of the Conservation Congress. Introduced by Rep. Marsau. Referred to the NR Committee. Public hearing held 4-11-07. No further action taken as of 3-20-07.
- **AB 96 - Relating to:** possession, release, control, storage, sale, and transportation of fish of invasive species. Introduced by Rep. Schneider. Referred to NR Committee. Assembly amendment offered by Rep. Schneider to prohibit transport of any boat, trailer or equipment on a highway if it has any invasive species attached. Passed by Assembly and referred to Senate NR Committee. Public hearing held on 2-7-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 108 - Relating to:** free access to state parks and state trails by certain disabled veterans and former prisoners of war. Introduced by Rep. Musser. Referred to Tourism, Recreation and State Properties Committee. Public hearing held 3-29-07 and passed by this Committee. Then referred to Joint Finance Committee 10-30-07. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 117 - Relating to:** approvals for construction, enlargement, or modification of a dam that affects water levels. Introduced by Rep. Albers. Referred to Agricultural Committee 2-22-07. No action or hearings held as of 3-20-07.
- **AB 130 - Relating to:** hunting approvals for Wisconsin National Guard members. Under this bill, a nonresident who is a member of the Wisconsin National Guard will receive hunting approvals at the resident fee. Introduced by Rep. Hubler. *Signed into law. Took effect as 2007 WISCONSIN ACT 23 on Nov. 24, 2007.*
- **AB 131 - Relating to:** issuance of turkey, goose and other special deer hunting permits to residents of Wisconsin who are in active service in the U.S. armed forces outside the state but who are on furlough or leave within the state. Not required to apply by a deadline to get a permit or license. Introduced by Rep. Nerison. *Signed into law. Took effect as 2007 WISCONSIN ACT 24 on Nov. 24, 2007.*
- **AB 157 - Relating to:** greenhouse gases. This bill requires the DNR to promulgate rules requiring the monitoring and reporting of greenhouse gas emissions by significant sources of those emissions. DNR would be required to make rules implementing the interim measures, to take effect no later than Jan. 1, 2011. Intro. by Rep. Black and referred to Assembly NR Committee. No hearings held Motion to suspend rules to withdraw from committee on Natural Resources failed 46-51 on 2-26-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 180 - Relating to:** prohibiting the DNR from using the word squaw in the name of a lake or stream. If the word “squaw” is currently being used in that manner, the name must be changed. Intro. by Rep. Schneider and referred to committee on State Affairs. No action or hearing held as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 187 – Relating to:** creation of a ONE-DAY fishing licenses for residents

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and nonresidents. Amended on 1-14-08 to include a three-year sunset date to evaluate the effect and increase the fee to \$12. Introduced by Rep. Moulton and referred to Assembly NR committee. Passed by Assembly 3-12-08 and referred to Senate. No further action taken as of 3-20-08.

- **AB 198 - Relating to:** expanded authority for wardens employed by the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission. Introduced by JOINT LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. *Signed into law. Took effect as 2007 WISCONSIN ACT 27 on Nov. 27, 2007.*
- **AB 228 - Relating to:** transfer of licenses and permits to minors. Under current law, a person may transfer a Class A bear license to a minor. This bill expands this provision to allow a person who has been issued any license or permit under a random or preference selection system to transfer the approval to a minor who is eligible to use the approval and who has not previously been transferred that type of approval. Introduced by Rep. Gunderson. *Signed into law. Took effect as 2007 WISCONSIN ACT 65 on March 26, 2008.*
- **AB 296 - Relating to:** issuing hunting and fishing approvals to U.S. armed forces members who were residents when they entered the service. Under this bill, DNR must consider a person who is currently not a resident of this state but who was a resident of this state at the time he or she entered the military a resident for the purpose of issuing him or her hunting or fishing approval. Intro. by Rep. Gunderson *Signed into law. Took effect as 2007 WISCONSIN ACT 51 on Feb. 23, 2008.*
- **AB 297 - Relating to:** the regulation of piers and wharves in navigable waters and increasing the motorboat gas tax payment to the conservation fund for fiscal years 2007-08, 2008-09, and 2009-10. Intro. by Rep. Gunderson. *Signed into law. Took effect as 2007 WISCONSIN ACT 204 on April 16, 2008.*
- **AB 303 - Relating to:** lightweight utility vehicles (LUVs). This bill creates a new classification of vehicles called "lightweight utility vehicles," which have a gross weight of more than 700 pounds but not more than 1,999 pounds, are designed to travel on four or more low-pressure tires, are equipped with a cargo area, and are used primarily off highways. The bill applies many of the same rules of the road to operators of LUVs that are applicable to the operators of motor vehicles. The bill places restrictions on the operation of a LUV that are similar to the restrictions placed on operating an ATV. Introduced by Rep. Hubler and referred to Committee on Transportation. Public hearing held on 7-19-07. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 304 - Relating to:** public land acquired with stewardship funds. This bill requires the DNR to create and make available, for a fee, a directory of all land acquired under the stewardship program that is open to the public and provide an interactive mapping tool on its Web site that identifies these lands. Introduced by Rep. J. Ott, and referred to Committee on Natural Resources. Public hearing held 5-30-07. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB323 - Relating to:** voting by disabled persons on Conservation Congress spring hearing questions. This bill requires the DNR, in conjunction with the Conservation Congress, to provide a method by which persons with disabilities may vote from home on issues being considered by the Conservation Congress. Introduced by Rep. Vruwink and referred to the Assembly NR Committee. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 333 - Relating to:** disposal of ash resulting from the burning of a structure. This bill prohibits DNR from requiring that ash resulting from the burning of a structure for practice or instruction of firefighters or the testing of firefighting equipment be disposed of in a landfill licensed by DNR. Introduced by Rep. Suder and referred to NR Committee. Passed out of committee 12-2 on 1-7-08 and referred to full Assembly. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 334 - Relating to:** designating wild or feral swine as harmful wild animals. This bill requires DNR to designate by rule wild or feral swine as harmful wild animals. This would allow DNR to regulate wild or feral swine held in captivity. Intro. by Rep. Nerison. *Signed into law. Took effect as 2007 WISCONSIN ACT 119 on April 4, 2008.*
- **AB 342 - Relating to:** possession of certain nonnative wild animals of the family felidae. This bill requires that any nonnative "large cat" must be registered with the DNR by the person who owns or otherwise possesses the cat (owner). The large cats that are covered by the bill are lions, tigers, leopards, jaguars, pumas and cheetahs. The bill also prohibits an owner of such a cat to charge a fee for photographing or filming the animal. The bill requires DNR to maintain a database and to provide the information concerning each large cat to the county in which the cat is located and requires the Dept of Commerce to promulgate rules establishing minimum standards for enclosures in which these large cats are kept. Introduced by Rep. Albers. Referred to Assembly NR Committee. Passed out of committee 14-0 on 1-7-08 and referred to full Assembly. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 359 - Relating to:** the preference systems for issuing bobcat hunting and trapping permits and fisher and otter trapping permits. Under this bill, for bobcat hunting and trapping permits, fisher trapping permits, and otter trapping permits, an applicant may apply for a permit or only a preference point if he or she is not seeking a permit for the upcoming season. Introduced by Rep. Gunderson. *Signed into law. Took effect as 2007 WISCONSIN ACT 66 on April 1, 2008.*
- **AB 401 - Relating to:** effective date of an archery-hunting license for deer. This bill repeals the three-day waiting period for archery licenses. Introduced by Rep. Hraychuck and referred to Assembly NR committee Passed out of committee 14-0 on 1-7-08 and referred to full Assembly. No further action as of 3-20-08.

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- **AB 454 - Relating to:** the DNR issuing federal hunting, fishing, and trapping approvals and stamps. This bill authorizes the federal government to enter into a contract with the DNR so that Ft. McCoy permits and Federal Migratory bird stamps may be issued through ALIS. Introduced by Rep. Musser. *Signed into law. Took effect as 2007 WISCONSIN ACT 50 on Feb. 23, 2008.*
- **AB 473 - Relating to:** the naming of Whitefish Dunes State Park. This bill renames Whitefish Dunes State Park to Gov. John W. Reynolds Whitefish Dunes State Park. Introduced by Rep. Bies and referred to Committee on Tourism, Recreation and State Properties. *Also see SB 241.* No hearings or further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 479 - Relating to:** the admissibility of evidence of the discovery of an endangered or threatened species during the course of certain proceedings. This bill provides that evidence of the discovery of an endangered or threatened species by a person who is on the private property of another is not admissible during the course of a civil, criminal, legislative, or administrative proceeding unless certain conditions apply. The evidence is admissible if the person who made the discovery gave notice to the property owner by certified mail at least 48 hours before entering the property that he or she intended to enter the property. The bill requires the notice to be dated in a manner that shows that it was mailed at least seven days before the person entered the property. Introduced by Rep. Albers and referred to NR Committee 8-7-07. Passed by Assembly 55 to 40 on 3-5-08 and referred to Senate NR committee. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 498 - Relating to:** subjects arrested for operating ATVs, boats and snowmobiles while intoxicated paying for costs incurred by a law enforcement agency for blood tests. Introduced by Rep. Gundrum. Referred to Committee on Judiciary and Ethics. Public hearing held and passed 10-0. Passed by Assembly on 10-24-07 and referred to Committee on Judiciary, Corrections, and Housing on 11-6-07. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 504 - Relating to:** return appointment of the secretary of DNR to the NR board. Introduced by Rep. Gunderson, Black, etc. Referred to NR Committee. Public Hearing held on 10-10-07. *[Also see SB 15]* Passed out of committee 13-1 on 2-4-08 and referred to Committee on Rules. Refused to withdraw from Committee on Rules and place on Assembly calendar. Ayes 45, Noes 50.
- **AB 526 - Relating to:** extending the sunset date of the 55 mph night time speed limit for snowmobiles from July 2007 to July 2010. Introduced by Rep. Kaufert. *Signed into law. Took effect as 2007 WISCONSIN ACT 29 on Nov. 28, 2007.*
- **AB 543 - Relating to:** determinations of ordinary high-water marks by counties and by the DNR. Introduced by Rep. Meyer and referred to NR Committee. Passed by Assembly 50 to 47 on 3-5-08 and referred to Senate NR Committee on 3-7-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 546 - Relating to:** open burning of solid waste, illegal storage or disposal of waste tires. This bill would provide citation issuance authority for burning violations and illegal waste tire disposal. Introduced by Rep. Molepske 10-18-07. *See SB 284.* No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 575 - Relating to:** fees to support water safety patrols. This bill authorizes a municipality, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation district, or town sanitary district to charge a boat operator who is using a public boat launching facility that the municipality or district owns or operates an additional fee to support a water safety patrol that the municipality or district operates. Introduced by Rep. Gottlieb. Referred to Committee on Tourism, Recreation and State Properties. Passed by Assembly 2-28-08 and referred to Senate NR Committee 3-3-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 588 - Relating to:** increasing the maximum forfeiture for littering from \$500 to \$1,000. Introduced by Rep. Jorgensen and referred NR Committee on 11-27-07. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 600 - Relating to:** membership on the State Trails Council. Introduced by Rep. Mursau. Referred to Committee on Rural Economic Development. Passed out of committee 8-1 on 3-13-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 602 - Relating to:** authorizing hunting with a crossbow by nonresidents who have attained the age of 65 years. Introduced by Rep. Hubler. Referred to NR Committee. Passed by Assembly 2-28-08 and referred to Senate NR committee 3-3-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 634 - Relating to:** minimum harvesting requirements for Great Lakes fish. Under current law, in order to qualify for a commercial fishing license for fishing in the Great Lakes, an applicant must have harvested in the previous license year at least a certain amount of fish. This bill prohibits minimum harvesting requirements. Introduced by Rep. Van Roy and referred to NR Committee on 12-21-07. Passed by Assembly and Senate NR Committee. Referred to full Senate on 3-11-08. See also SB 357. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 639 - Relating to:** electronic access by law enforcement agencies to photographs on motor vehicle operators' licenses and identification cards. Introduced by Rep. Rhoades and referred to Assembly Transportation Committee on 12-21-07. Public hearing held on 1-17-08. Passed by Assembly 2-26-08 and referred to Senate Committee on Transportation on 2-28-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 645 - Relating to:** providing a penalty for failure of a person to disclose his or her name upon the demand of a law enforcement officer during an investigatory stop. Introduced by Rep. Friske and referred to Criminal Justice Committee on 12-21-07. Passed by Assembly 3-5-08 and referred to Senate Judiciary Committee 3-7-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 660 - Relating to:** the registration

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of antique snowmobiles. Under this bill, the owner of a snowmobile that is at least 30 years old at the time that the owner applies for registration may register the snowmobile as an antique snowmobile. Introduced by Rep. Vruwink and referred to Committee on Tourism, Recreation and State Properties on 1-3-08. Public hearing held 2-20-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.

- **AB 672 - Relating to:** the minimum age for hunting and possessing a firearm, age specific restrictions for hunting and possessing a firearm while hunting, requirements for obtaining a hunting certificate of accomplishment, establishing a hunting mentorship program, and granting rule-making authority. Introduced by Rep. Gunderson on 1-10-08. Referred to NR Committee and public hearing held on 1-16-07. Passed by Assembly 3-5-08 and referred to Senate NR committee 3-7-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 703 - Relating to:** membership of the Natural Resources Board. This bill requires that, beginning in 2014, at least one member of the Natural Resources Board have an agricultural background. The bill also requires that, beginning in 2014, at least three members of the Natural Resources Board have held a hunting, fishing, or trapping license in at least seven of the 10 years before the year of nomination. If an individual served active duty in the military during the 10 years before nomination, the number of years in which the individual is required to have held an annual hunting, fishing, or trapping license equals seven minus the number of years of active duty. Introduced by Rep. LeMahieu on 1-18-08 and referred to the NR Committee. Passed by Assembly 2-26-08 and referred to Senate NR Committee 2-28-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 716 - Relating to:** prohibiting certain persons from obtaining a license that authorizes hunting with a firearm and providing a penalty. This bill prohibits a person who, under current law, is prohibited from possessing a firearm from obtaining a hunting license

that authorizes the person to hunt with a firearm, such as a small game hunting license or a deer hunting license. The bill requires the DNR to annually request that the Department of Justice conduct a firearms restrictions record search with respect to every person to whom DNR issued a hunting license during the 12 months immediately preceding the month in which the search is requested. Introduced by Rep. Smith and referred to NR Committee on 1-22-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.

- **AB 753 - Relating to:** Increasing the penalty provisions for illegal deer feeding for hunting or viewing purposes. Introduced by Rep. Gunderson and referred to the NR Committee on 2-4-08. Passed by Assembly 3-5-08 and referred to Senate NR Committee 3-7-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 782 - Relating to:** a floodplain zoning ordinance exemption for construction activities related to the veterans memorial building in the city of Burlington in Racine County. Introduced by Rep. Kerkman and passed 11-0 by Assembly NR Committee on 2-21-08. Public hearing held on 3-3-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 787 - Relating to:** psychological evaluations for law enforcement officers. Introduced by Rep. Hraychuck and referred to Committee on Corrections and Courts on 2-11-08. Passed out of committee 8-3 on 3-13-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 831 - Relating to:** hunting deer of either sex by the holder of a Class B hunting permit. Introduced by Rep. Jorgensen on 2-21-08 and referred to Assembly NR Committee. Passed by committee 13-0 on 3-11-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 839 - Relating to:** requiring the DNR to provide wetland maps to counties and restricting the enforcement of state shoreland zoning standards and county shoreland zoning ordinances that relate to wetlands. Introduced by Rep. Albers on 2-21-08 and referred to Assembly NR Committee. Public hearing held 3-6-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 877 - Relating to:** carrying

concealed weapons by law enforcement officers and by retired law enforcement officers. Introduced by Rep. Friske on 2-26-08 and referred to Committee on Criminal Justice. Passed out of committee 10-1 on 3-13-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.

- **AB 892 - Relating to:** increasing the fee for a snowmobile trail use sticker. Introduced by Rep. Musser and referred to Committee on Tourism. Passed out of committee 13-0 on 3-11-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 915 - Relating to:** notices concerning construction near or on lakes, streams, or wetlands that are given to applicants for building permits and other construction approvals, requiring the DNR to furnish informational brochures about wetlands laws, requiring the DNR to provide evaluations and statements about whether certain land contains wetlands, and making an appropriation. Introduced by Rep. Bies and referred to Committee on Natural Resources. Passed out of committee 13-0 on 3-11-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 925 - Relating to:** the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact, withdrawals of water from the Great Lakes Basin, water withdrawal and use, water supply planning, water conservation, granting rule-making authority, and providing a penalty. Introduced by Rep. Richards and referred to Committee on Natural Resources on 3-11-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 932 - Relating to:** Invasive species control grants. Under this bill, grants to nonprofit conservation organizations and lake districts to control invasive species for nature-based outdoor recreation purposes may be made from the property development and local assistance subprogram of the Stewardship fund. Introduced by Rep. Molepske and referred to Committee on Natural Resources on 3-11-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 936 - Relating to:** biodiesel fuel requirement in state-owned or state-leased trucks. Under this bill DOA must require state agencies that use

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state owned diesel-burning trucks to use biodiesel fuel that contains at least 5 percent biodiesel fuel unless the requirement would be cost prohibitive. Introduced by Rep. Molepske and referred to Committee on Biofuels and Sustainable Energy on 3-11-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.

- **AB 942 - Relating to:** use of motor vehicles on the beds of navigable waters. This bill creates an exception that authorizes a motor vehicle's use in order to destroy or prevent the spread of aquatic or terrestrial invasive species. Introduced by Rep. Nygren and referred to Committee on Natural Resources on 3-11-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 956 – Relating to:** the amount of the environmental surcharge. This bill would increase the environmental surcharge from 10 to 20 percent of a forfeiture or fine imposed for the violation of an environmental law. Introduced by Rep. Molepske and referred to Committee on Natural Resources on 3-11-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **AB 965 – Relating to:** the age for absolute sobriety for operating an all-terrain vehicle or a snowmobile. Under current law, for a person who has not attained the age of 19, the prohibited BAC for the purpose of operating an ATV or a snowmobile is any amount over 0.0. Under this bill, any person who has not attained the age of 21 may not operate an all terrain vehicle or a snowmobile with an alcohol concentration above 0.0. Introduced by Rep. Vruwink and referred to Committee on Tourism on 3-13-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.

Selected 2007 Senate Bills – Introduced from 1-1-07 through 3-20-08

Related to: Natural Resources, State Parks, Law Enforcement & Recreational Vehicles

- **SB 15 - Relating to:** appointment of the secretary of natural resources by the NR board to take effect after 1-3-2011. Introduced by Sen. Wirsch. Passed by Senate 10-30-07 and referred to Assembly NR Committee where an

amendment was introduced by Rep. Black. No further action as of 3-20-08.

- **SB 16 - Relating to:** personal flotation devices be worn by children under age 13 on boats under 26 ft. Introduced by Sen. Sullivan and referred to Environment and Natural Resources Committee. Passed with a vote of 22-11 on 5-9-07. Sent to Assembly and referred to Committee on Tourism, Recreation & State Properties. Also see AB 45. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **SB 29 - Relating to:** increasing the recycling fee imposed on the disposal of solid waste. Introduced by Sen. Jauch. Referred to Environment and Natural Resources Committee. No action or hearings held as of 3-20-08.
- **SB 49 - Relating to:** free access to state parks and state trails by certain disabled veterans and former prisoners of war. Introduced by Sen. Lehman. Referred to Veterans and Military Affairs Committee. *Signed into law: Takes effect as 2007 WISCONSIN ACT 165 on Oct. 1, 2008.*
- **SB 56 - Relating to:** fees charged to qualified lake associations for certain permits to control aquatic plants. Introduced by Sen. Breske. Referred to Environment and Natural Resources Committee. No action or hearings held as of 3-20-08.
- **SB 81 – Relating to:** greenhouse gases. The bill requires the DNR to promulgate rules requiring the monitoring and reporting of greenhouse gas emissions by significant sources of those emissions. Introduced by Sen. Miller and referred to Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. Passed out of committee 3-2 on 10-31-07. No further action as of 3-20-08. See also AB 157.
- **SB 110 - Relating to:** DNR revealing e-mail addresses of subscribers. Current law authorizes the DNR to refuse to reveal names and addresses of persons who subscribe to its periodicals and other publications. This bill authorizes DNR to also refuse to reveal the e-mail addresses of persons who subscribe to its periodicals and other publications. Introduced by Sen. Kreitlow. Passed by both Senate and Assembly and

presented to the Governor on 5-29-2007. *Signed into law: Took effect as 2007 WISCONSIN ACT 12 on June 14, 2007.*

- **SB 119 - Relating to:** ballast water management. This bill requires a person who operates an oceangoing vessel that uses a port in this state to obtain a permit from the DNR. To obtain a permit, the person must demonstrate to DNR that the vessel is not capable of taking on ballast water or that the vessel is equipped with technology that the DNR determines will prevent the introduction of aquatic nuisance species into the Great Lakes. Introduced by Sen. Cowles and referred to Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. Public hearing held on 5-23-07. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **SB 127 - Relating to:** removal of abandoned dams. This bill requires that, prior to beginning any of these procedures required for removal of a dam, the DNR must consider the results the dam removal will have on the safety, health and welfare of the persons who will be affected by the removal. Introduced by Sen. Leibham and referred to Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. No action or hearings held as of 3-20-08.
- **SB 158 - Relating to:** lightweight utility vehicles (LUVs). Also see AB 303. Introduced by Sen. Jauch and referred to Committee on Transportation, Tourism and Insurance. Public hearing held 7-31-07. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **SB 161 - Relating to:** naming the state trail system. Under current law, state parks are either named in the statutes or are named by the state legislature. The state park system consists of all of the state parks and a system of the state trails. This bill names the state trail system the "Aldo Leopold Legacy Trail System." Introduced by Sen. Miller. *Signed into law. Took effect as 2007 WISCONSIN ACT 35 on Nov. 30, 2007.*
- **SB 185 - Relating to:** trespass by operators of snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, and other off-road vehicles on public properties; increasing the

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- appropriations for certain all-terrain vehicle program fees; creating an all-terrain vehicle damage claim program; the all-terrain vehicle gas tax payment; creating a nonmotorized trails program; and requiring a certificate of title for an all-terrain vehicle. Introduced by Joint Legislative Council and referred to Committee on Transportation, Tourism and Insurance. No hearings or further action as of 3-20-08.
- **SB 198 - Relating to:** effective date of an archery hunting license for deer. See AB 401 also. *Passed by full Senate 10-30-07* and referred to Assembly NR Committee. No further action as of 3-20-08.
 - **SB 230 – Relating to:** group hunting by archers for antlerless deer. This bill authorizes certain persons hunting in a group with bows and arrows also to kill an antlerless deer for another member of the group. Introduced by Sen. Decker and referred to Senate NR Committee. No further action as of 3-20-08.
 - **SB 235 – Relating to:** appeals from the determination that a body of water is navigable, mapping of navigable streams, the exemption for certain drainage ditches from certain permit requirements, notices in forms for building permit applications and for offers to purchase real property regarding wetlands and navigable streams, and requiring the exercise of rule-making authority. Introduced by Joint Legislative Council and referred to Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. No further action as of 3-20-08.
 - **SB 241 – Relating to:** Renaming of Whitefish Dunes State Park. This bill renames Whitefish Dunes State Park to Gov. John W. Reynolds Whitefish Dunes State Park. Introduced by Sen. Lasee and referred to Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. No hearings or further action as of 3-20-08. Also see AB 473.
 - **SB 277 - Relating to:** a speed limit for the operation of snowmobiles during the hours of darkness. Extends the sunset date of the 55 mph night-time speed limit for snowmobiles from July 2007 to July 2010. Introduced by Sen. Erpenbach. *Signed into law. Took effect as 2007 WISCONSIN ACT 29 on Nov. 28, 2007.*
 - **SB 284 – Relating to:** open burning of solid waste, illegal storage or disposal of waste tires. This bill would provide citation issuance authority for burning violations and illegal waste tire disposal. Introduced by Sen. Lassa 10-10-07. Passed by Senate 2-19-08 and referred to Assembly NR Committee 2-21-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
 - **SB 357 - Relating to:** minimum harvesting requirements for Great Lakes fish. Under current law, in order to qualify for a commercial fishing license for fishing in the Great Lakes, an applicant must have harvested in the previous license year at least a certain amount of fish. This bill prohibits minimum harvesting requirements. Introduced by Sen. Hansen and referred to NR Committee on 12-17-07. Passed out of committee 4-1 on 3-11-08. No further action as of 3-20-08. See also AB 634.
 - **SB 361 - Relating to:** fishing licenses for nonresident disabled veterans. The fee for an annual fishing license for a nonresident who is a veteran with a 70 percent or greater military related disability is \$2.25 (same as a resident disabled veteran). Introduced by Sen. Lassa and referred to Senate NR Committee on 12-17-07. No further action as of 3-20-08.
 - **SB 385 - Relating to:** Boats required to operate at Slow-No-Wake within 100 feet of shore on all lakes. Introduced by Sen. Jauch and referred to Senate NR Committee on 1-14-08. Passed by Senate on for 3-11-08 and referred to Assembly Tourism Committee. No further action as of 3-20-08.
 - **SB 438 - Relating to:** petitions and management plans for the designation of managed forest land, transfers of ownership of managed forest land, establishing stumpage values and estimating withdrawal taxes under the managed forest land program, signatures and authentication requirements for orders under the forest croplands program. Introduced by Sen. Breske and referred to NR Committee on 2-1-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
 - **SB 441 - Relating to:** environmental regulation of mining and notice to transferees of interests in mining sites. Introduced by Sen. Hansen and referred to Senate NR Committee 2-1-08. Passed out of committee and referred to Joint Finance 3-6-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
 - **SB 443 - Relating to:** operation of all-terrain vehicles that have attached snowplows on roadways. Introduced by Sen. Decker on 2-4-08 and referred to Committee on Transportation. Passed by Senate and referred to Assembly Transportation Committee 3-5-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
 - **SB 454 - Relating to:** the transportation of invasive species on highways and providing a criminal penalty. This bill would make it illegal to transport invasive plants in or on vehicles (with a few exceptions) but only authorizes traffic officers to stop vehicles for such violations and allows these officers to order the operators to clean off the plants before proceeding. Introduced by Sen. Breske and referred to Committee on Transportation and Tourism on 2-5-08. Passed by Assembly and referred to Assembly NR Committee and Committee on Judiciary and Ethics 3-6-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
 - **SB 481 - Relating to:** fees to support water safety patrols. Introduced by Sen. Grothman; referred to Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee on 2-12-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
 - **SB 513 - Relating to:** increasing the fee for a snowmobile trail use sticker. Introduced by Sen. Breske and referred to Committee on Transportation and Tourism and passed out of committee 7 to 0 on 2-21-08. Passed by Senate and referred to Assembly Committee on Rules on 3-13-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
 - **SB 514 - Relating to:** all-terrain vehicle routes and trails that may be used by operators of lightweight utility vehicles. Introduced by Sen. Breske. *Signed into law. Took effect as 2007 WISCONSIN ACT 29 on Nov. 28, 2007.*
 - **SB 515 - Relating to:** voluntary

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

contributions for funding aquatic invasive species grants. Introduced by Sen. Breske and referred to Committee on Environment and Natural Resources on 2-19-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.

- **SB 523 - Relating to:** the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact, withdrawals of water from the Great Lakes Basin, water withdrawal and use, water supply planning, water conservation, granting rule-making authority, and providing a penalty. Introduced by Committee on Environment and Natural Resources on 2-22-08. Passed by Senate on 3-6-08 and referred to Assembly NR Committee on 3-7-08. Public hearing held in Assembly NR Committee on 3-10-08. Motion made on 3-11-08 to withdraw from Committee on Natural Resources and refer to Committee on Rules failed by vote of 47 to 50.
- **SB 529 - Relating to:** the minimum age for hunting and possessing a firearm (Same as AB 672). Introduced by Sen. Wirsch on 2-25-08 and referred to Senate Committee on Transportation and Tourism. Public hearing held on 2-27-08. Passed by Senate Committee on 3-5-08 and available for scheduling before full Senate. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **SB 550 - Relating to:** Managed forest land. This bill allows the owner of managed forest land to apply to the DNR for an extension of a managed forest land order by an additional 10 years from the date of the expiration of the original order if 30 percent or more of the merchantable timber on five or more contiguous acres of the managed forest land was adversely affected by a catastrophic loss. Introduced by Sen. Lassa and referred to Committee on Environment and Natural Resources on 2-29-08. No further action as of 3-20-08.
- **SB 553 - Relating to:** notices concerning construction near or on lakes, streams, or wetlands (Same as AB 915). Introduced by Sen. Miller on 2-29-08 and was passed by Senate 33-0 on 03-13-08 and referred to Committee on Rules in the Assembly. No further action as of 3-20-08.

OBITUARY

Jack A.C. Kunath

MERCER, Wis. — Jack A.C. Kunath, 72, of Mercer, died Monday, March 17, 2008, at home with his family by his side.

He was born on May 5, 1935 in Milwaukee, son of the late Adolph and Claris (Schuenemann) Kunath. Jack attended Milwaukee schools and graduated in 1953 from the West Division High School in Milwaukee.

During the Korean Conflict, he served in the U.S. Army in Korea and Germany from April of 1954 until he was honorably discharged in March of 1956.

He attended the Milwaukee School of Engineering and Marquette University.

Jack was employed as an electrical engineer for AC Electronics until 1962. Jack's 29-year-career with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources started in 1963 when Jack passed the civil service exam for conservation warden, first serving in the Clintonville area until 1990. He then took a transfer to the Mercer area where he served until retirement.

He and his wife, Judy, moved to Fisher Lake in 1994. While in Mercer, Jack served on the school board for 12 years and was instrumental in establishing the Little League program. He was an avid outdoorsman with many hobbies, including raising and racing homing pigeons and showing horses. His fondest memories were made hunting, fishing and sharing his love of the outdoors at Fisher Lake with his children, grandchildren, friends and his dogs.

On Oct. 29, 1960, he married the former Judith "Judy" Felker in Milwaukee at the Summerfield Methodist Church. She survives.

Also surviving are children Clay Kunath, Ellen (Kevin) Spatt, Karl Kunath-Malgorzata Kutynia, and Beth (Douglas) Wolma; grandchildren Nicolas and Jamie Spatt, Veronika Kunath and Jessica and Bryce Wolma; brothers and sisters Nora Retert, Ricky Kunath, Claris "Lallie" Smith and Nancy Kind.

Besides his parents, Jack was preceded in death by brothers and sisters Verda Kunath, Anton "Tony" Kunath, Gerdy Megos and Jerry Kunath.

Creation took place at the Range Crematory in Hurley. A memorial service was held at the Manitowish Waters Community Presbyterian Church on March 20, with the Rev. Chips Paulson officiating.

Wardens' work lauded in state report

While other agencies got blamed for an "inadequate response" to a February snowstorm that stranded 2,000 vehicles on I-90/39, a report lauded Wisconsin conservation wardens for their work in ensuring travelers' safety.

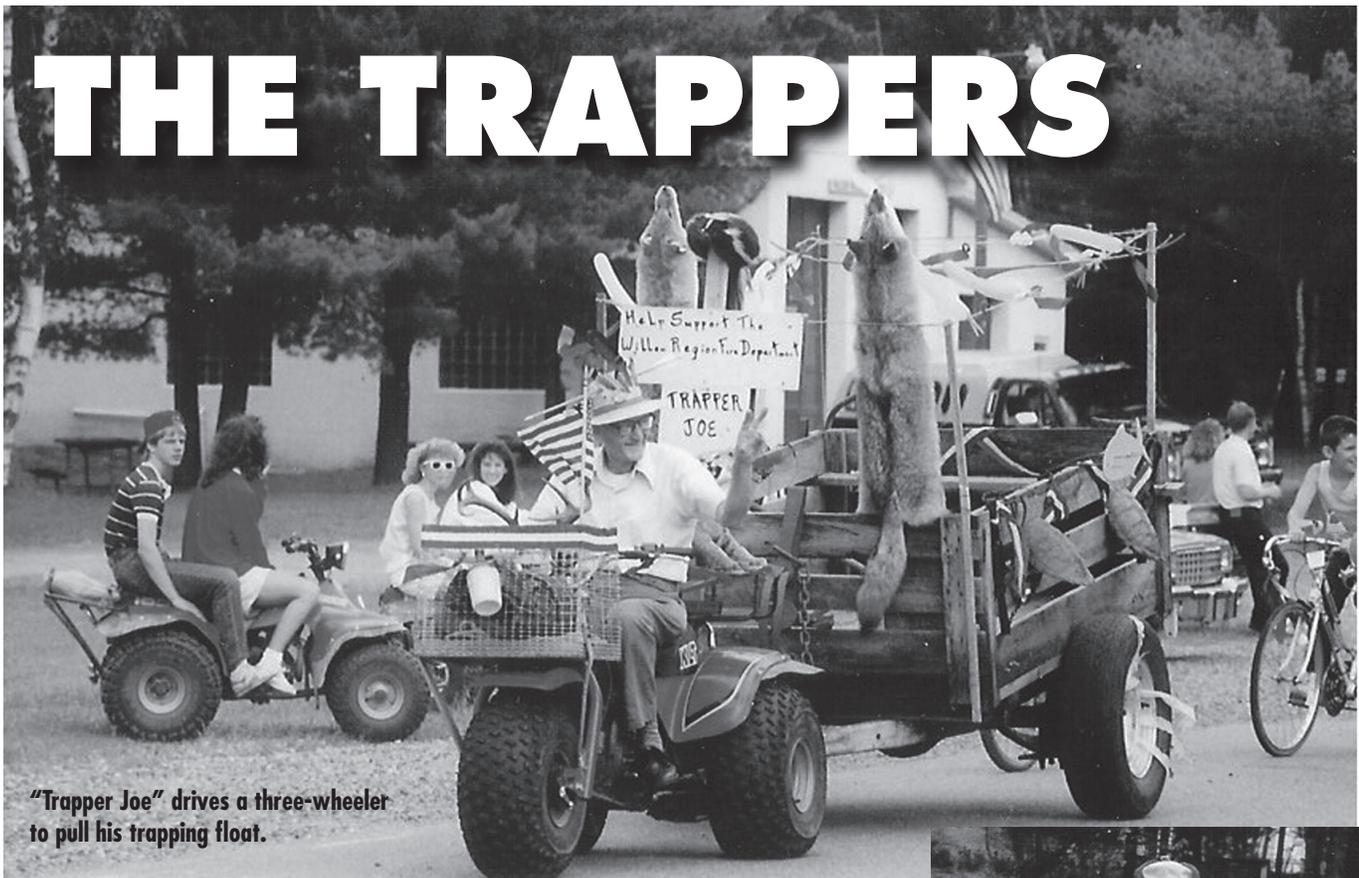
The massive logjam stranded drivers for 10 hours or longer on a 19-mile stretch of the interstate from Madison to Janesville.

The Adjutant General's "Response to Traffic and Public Safety Issues in February 5-6 Winter Storm" wrote

that the State Patrol "was slow to recognize that an emergency existed." But the report praised the DNR for mobilizing its wardens, as well as the National Guard.

"The Department of Natural Resources, which had no obvious role in a traffic-related event, promptly sent its wardens, who partnered with the State Patrol early on to search Interstates for stranded vehicles, and responded with snowmobile crews for well in excess of 12 hours," the report states.

THE TRAPPERS



"Trapper Joe" drives a three-wheeler to pull his trapping float.

Editor's Note: Like any experienced trapper, Pat Harkins continually surveys the surrounding area for possible signs and items of interest. A mature couple at one of his favorite watering holes caught his attention. The spry man was talking about trapping weasels and his trapping partner was also actively involved. Nothing too unusual as lots of people cut their teeth trapping weasels, including Harkins at the age of 7.

What is unusual, however, is the story about their life. After becoming acquainted with "Jumbo" and Betty Varsho of rural Tripoli, Wis. over several years, Harkins realized they have enjoyed a nice adventure and they agreed to let him share it.

By Pat Harkins

Joseph "Jumbo" Varsho was born on March 19, 1927 and raised in the small town of Hewitt, five miles east of Marshfield, Wis. At about 5-feet 11-inches tall and 140 pounds soaking wet, Jumbo earned his nickname on the schoolyard playground while playing "cops and robbers." The schoolyard "boss," Dick Kraemer, told Joe to squeeze between the two-hole outhouse and the cyclone fence. Joe got stuck and was dubbed "Jumbo." The name stuck as well.

While Jumbo's father was a hunter, he did not trap. Jumbo's trapping adventure began at 14, shortly after his father died in 1941. Jumbo had acquired three traps and along with his brother, Andy, then 10, they captured five 'rats

during their first trapping season. The rats were sold through Sears & Roebuck, with the best 'rat bringing \$6 and a nice paycheck.

The seed was planted. Jumbo has trapped in some fashion every year since except 1946-1948, when he was in the military, and September 2007, when he had six heart bypasses. During the interview, Jumbo was again feeling good and will no doubt be back on the trap line in the fall of 2008.

Recalling his early trapping ventures, Jumbo said he expanded like most trappers in those days, by trial and error. Trappers were a secretive bunch, keeping the "tricks of the trade" to themselves for fear that someone else would catch "their fur."

One of Jumbo's adventures involved



Jumbo holds up two red fox trapped on Oct 28, 2004.

his brother, Andy, their dog and the black and whites of the fur industry, Mr. Skunk. Jumbo noticed that the dog would chase a skunk and circle around, probably trying to stay away from the "business" end. At night, Jumbo and Andy, in tag-team precision, would use a light to distract or blind the skunk while grabbing it by the tail and quickly lifting it off the ground. The theory was that the skunk was unable to spray, and

thus Jumbo and Andy were able to collect a fair number of the black and whites.

They had the detainees in a large wooden crate on the farm waiting for the season to open. (Who knew we had a closed season on skunks?) Grandpa came along one day and decided to investigate the smell and accidentally unleashed the hard-earned catch. I'm sure recapturing skunks is not exactly like rounding up the cows or normal farm animals. Jumbo and Andy also learned that if Mr. Skunk gets too close to your leg while being held by the tail and gets a chance to dig his hind feet in, he can and will spray you. Jumbo's teachers didn't appreciate his new cologne.

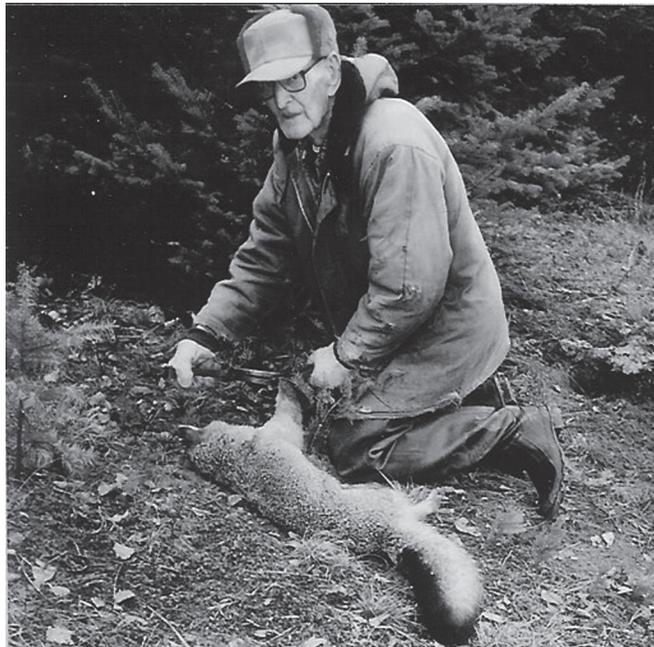
As Jumbo progressed, he tried his hand at red fox. He recalls checking his first two fox sets that contained a cat — oops — and a rabbit. He reset and had nothing the next day. By day three he was surprised with two reds. He was getting the hang of things.

Jumbo's family had moved to Marshfield and back to Hewitt in the early years and once back to Hewitt, Jumbo was in for the biggest catch of his young life. Jumbo was the prey in this case, however. It seems that the handsome Jumbo was attracting the attention of the opposite sex, even with his unusual smelling perfume.

An attractive young lass by the name of Betty Fehrenbach and her sister were both trying to capture the heart of the wily Jumbo. During this interview, Betty told me that "her sister wanted him, but I got him." On my way home that evening I thought now that's a trapper. Betty and Jumbo married in 1950. Like some trappers' wives, Betty would go with Jumbo on the trap line and skin the rats in the Rambler. (A good use for a Rambler).

During the ensuing years Jumbo worked for the Marshfield City and Water Department, the Marshfield city garage, and Gottchalk Blacktoppers. They always had an interest in the north and in 1971 became caretakers at the exclusive Island Club, west of Minocqua, Wis.

In 1974, Jumbo and Betty built their current home near Willow Lake and



Top photo: Jumbo & Betty Varsho have made trapping part of their life. Bottom photo: Jumbo takes a gray fox out of a trap in this 2001 photo.

started trapping beaver, otter, fisher, coon, bobcat, fox and especially weasels.

Weasels, weasels, and more weasels. I remember the little trapping books that I cherished as a kid; there were trappers with strings of weasels hanging around their necks and bodies. I didn't know there were that many weasels. I digress.

While Jumbo has taken his share of many species in the north over the years, he tells me that he catches 80-100 weasels per year. His best weasel year was 2005 when he trapped 190. Jumbo also has a TOP LOT certificate from North American Fur Auctions dated 6/25/07 for his Northern Ermine pelts. It's no wonder that the mouse population is making a comeback around the Willow region!

One year a fur operation docked Jumbo for not having the black tips on

all of the weasel pelts. So from then on, Jumbo always has some black shoe polish available. That takes me back to a saying that I overheard my dad say, "They don't know sh-t from Shine-ola." although I'm sure it was brown shoe polish in my father's case.

Another trade secret, until now, is that Jumbo also caught some beaver that had white spots and was docked by the fur buyer. The wily trapper soon became an expert in the use of "women's hair dye" and was never docked again. Just imagine the horror of some tanner, pulling a pelt from the vat to find a nice pelt with large white spots! A new fashion design in the making.

Every trapper has his or her share of stories, and Jumbo is not an exception. He drove school bus for a few years, and one day a large beaver was along the route. Doing what every good "beaver damage control" trapper would do, not necessarily a bus driver, Jumbo stopped the bus and had the kids dispatch the problem beaver, then they dragged it on the bus. No use in letting a good pelt go to waste.

Another competitive trapper in the area discovered that Jumbo had trapped 18 coyotes one fall and came over to look at them. After inspecting them, the trapper offered to teach Jumbo the secrets of catching coyotes in the snow if Jumbo would teach him how to catch them in the dirt. Of course the wily Jumbo thought to himself, the secret to catching coyotes in the snow was to catch them first in the dirt. No need to wait until snow falls. Jumbo declined the friendly offer.

And so it is, Jumbo, the trapper, became trapped by the love of his life, Betty. They have trapped for about 65 years and it would not surprise me to see them after those weasels in the fall, now that he has had his heart patched up. Happy trapping, Jumbo and Betty.

DNR Birthday from page 3

This year celebrates the 40th anniversary of the Department of Natural Resources, and the mode of transportation is far from the only change.

Jim Chizek, a field and district warden for 31 years, has seen many changes since he started in 1955, including the formation of the DNR. In 1968 the Wisconsin Conservation Department merged with the Resource Development Department to form what is now the Wisconsin DNR.

“It was completely different than it is today,” Chizek said. “The biggest difference was that we only enforced game and fish (laws).”

This merger decentralized the regulation of Wisconsin’s natural resources and created more supervision, Chizek said. Regulation was originally done by law enforcement officers, but after the creation of the DNR, wardens had more control over fish, game and firearm control.

The DNR created division among responsibilities of those wardens and made it difficult for a warden of one area to know everything about another area.

“When I was first working we could very easily answer questions about regulations in any area of the state,” Chizek said. “Now it would be impossible because there are so many regulations the wardens cannot absorb them all.”

Before the decentralization, wardens supervised wardens, Chizek said. But the changeover meant that, in most cases, non-wardens supervised wardens.

“They were and still are supervised by people from other disciplines,” Chizek said, noting that a supervisor’s success depends on his or her knowledge of law enforcement.

Miller began as a conservation warden in 1985 and said the complication of regulations has not stopped after the creation of the DNR.

“It just used to be about fish and game, and as time goes on boating became part of our function,” Miller said. “Now we’re having to deal with snowmobiles, ATVs and environmental issues.”

Miller also said there will be more pollution monitoring and competition for the resources for industry and recreation.

“The increase



Cal Clark, right, polishes the badge of Warden Jim Chizek at the Mackenzie Center.

in regulations was due to such things as re-introduced and newly introduced wildlife, new outdoor ‘toys’ such as personal watercraft and a wide variety environmental laws, all aimed at making Wisconsin a quality outdoor experience for generations to come,” Blankenheim said.

“The legislature has added many new regulations and seems to like to do so without any accompanying funding,” Blankenheim said.

One legislative move that stands out to Blankenheim is the decriminalization of many DNR laws.

“At one time, operation [of] a boat without a personal flotation device on board was a crime,” he said. “Yep. If you were convicted of that, you had a criminal record.”

Boating regulation first began in 1959 and the laws were not taken kindly by boaters, Chizek said.

“When the boating laws first began we would have a plane fly over and announce it was the DNR,” Chizek said. “If they didn’t have a life vest they would be arrested immediately. They called us the Gestapo from the sky.”

According to Blankenheim, warden boats were smaller, less powerful and did not have electric start when he started as warden.

“Now most wardens will be running 16 to 20 footers with electric start, probably 60 to 150 horsepower engines complete with red light, siren, police radio, depth finder and even GPS,” Blankenheim said.

Despite the changes, liked and disliked, prevention remained the DNR’s main goal.

“Much of the job changed drastically over the years, although the main purpose remained to deter folks who may consider disregarding the laws and rules,” Blankenheim said.

To achieve this everlasting goal, Blankenheim said, one needs education and enforcement. This is seen in the hunter education program.

Hunter education began with wardens training hunters on their own, Chizek said. In the 1950s it became more of a goal and instructors were appointed.

According to the 2006 Wisconsin Hunter Education



Photo illustration by Laura Benish

Newsletter, the program began in 1967, when a year earlier there were 44 accidents for every 100,000 hunters. In 1994 the accidents were down to four for every 100,000 hunters.

The hunter education class was not mandatory until 1985, when anyone born on or after Jan. 1, 1973, was required to complete it in order to obtain a hunting license. In 1966 there were 265 incidents with 21 fatalities, compared to 38 incidents and three fatalities in 2005.

As of 2006, the program has certified 846,347 students in hunter education.

According to the 2002 deer gun season report, since 1976 the number of juvenile citations has also declined. In 1976 juveniles comprised 13 percent of all arrests, and in 2002 they only made up 2.2 percent. This is seen as a result of the hunter education program.

Wisconsin's program also was the first in the world to use CD-ROM to teach hunter education, according to the newsletter.

Technological advancements such as this are seen throughout the DNR.

When Miller first started she did not have a government-issued computer, but she had a personal computer with a monochrome screen. Since then, computers have played an important role in the job, good and bad.

"I'm not sure it is necessarily all positive though," Miller said. "We spend more time doing data entry because of computers."

She also said that keeping up with all of the technical information may become a challenge in the future for wardens.

"You have more and more responsibility, and more and more knowledge and training," Miller said. "At some point they're going to have to divide up the responsibilities. Right now one person does all of it and it takes a lot of time to cover everything we're responsible for."

Blankenheim said computers were carried in warden trucks

DNR MILESTONES

- 1968- The Wisconsin Conservation Department merged with the Resource Development Department to form the Department of Natural Resources
- 1970- United States Congress passes the Clean Air Act, setting standards for six pollutants and giving individual states the power to meet those standards on their own
- 1971- Wisconsin became the first state to ban DDT, which protected eagles and other wildlife
- 1983- Wisconsin became the first state to meet the Clean Water Act set by the U.S. Congress
- 1986- Wisconsin became the first state to pass a law to control acid rain to protect lakes in northern Wisconsin
- 1990- In order to accomplish watershed restoration and lake protection goals, the DNR, Wisconsin Association of Lakes and the University of Wisconsin- Extension launched the Wisconsin Lake Partnership
- 1996- The DNR became a cabinet agency, allowing Governor Tommy Thompson, rather than the Natural Resources Board, to appoint the department secretary
- 2001- Wisconsin became the first state to pass legislation to restore protection to small wetlands, in response a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that left them unprotected

Source: Wisconsin DNR Web site



This photo of Jim Blankenheim was taken in January or February 1977 when he was stationed in Juneau County. A couple of guys from neighboring Monroe County shot these two tom turkeys from their vehicle. It just so happened that the landowners' children were getting dropped off the school bus at the time and wrote down their license plate. The next day Blankenheim and neighboring warden Jim Kincannon paid the men a visit. Jim recovered the birds and Blankenheim retrieved a .22 semiautomatic rifle from the garage rafters.

and used to log daily reports and operation figures after he retired.

"In fact, since retiring 10 years ago I'm sure the computer technology has leaped forward to where I'd be amazed," Blankenheim said.

Having done undercover work later in his career, Chizek said that technology allowed for better cold tracking of violators. In the past people were either caught in the act or not caught at all, but technology has allowed people to be caught after the fact, he said.

Although technology has taken great strides in assisting the efficiency of the DNR over the years, an underlying issue has seemed to progress little over time, and may need more attention.

When Miller began as conservation warden in 1985 she was the third female warden. She said the public was very accepting of her as a woman in the position, but she still faced some challenges throughout the years.

"The biggest issue with acceptance was with male coworkers," Miller said. "I think it has changed. There's more acceptance now, but a lot of it still goes around."

As a new recruit, Miller said she had to deal with untrue rumors and it was a shock being only 24 years old. However, after 23 years, she said now it is more of a shock to see it still happens.

"You kind of just ignore it," Miller said. "As you get older it still exists, you just deal with it differently."

Miller said it is still a disappointment to see women so underrepresented, but she said she hopes that as the numbers rise, the attitudes will change. As of 2006, there were only 14 female wardens, according to Miller.

"They don't seem to recruit women, and if they do, they don't retain them," she said. "I help with the interview process and hiring, and over the years it has been frustrating to see the numbers so low."

Continued on next page

Miller said there are other states that aren't having as much of a problem retaining female wardens, such as Minnesota and Michigan. Miller said this might be due to the department not putting forth as much of an effort to encourage females to become wardens.

Despite her struggles, Miller is still very proud to be part of the DNR. She said it is a service-oriented job and she hopes to make a difference and protect people and resources.

"I hope that I have made a difference, whether they know it or not," Miller said.

Blankenheim, like Miller, has faced issues he felt needed change. He has taken an active role to improve the DNR and is very proud of it.

"I think the biggest milestone in the DNR history, as it relates to the warden force, was having the department back off their stance that wardens could not be involved in investigating environmental violations with one or two exceptions," Blankenheim said. "I'm happy to say I played a significant role in having that policy reversed."

Although Blankenheim has helped to change some policies, he still has hope for more changes. He said he is hopeful that the removal of the appointment of the department secretary from the authority of the DNR, made by Gov. Thompson, is reversed.

"Wisconsin's long history of sound natural resource decision making, free from the petty bickering of partisan politics and moneyed special interest groups, is, in my opinion, deteriorating," Blankenheim said. "And the warden force has taken on a much more professional look and role among Wisconsin's law enforcement agencies. I hope that will continue to grow."

Looking back on his history as a warden, Blankenheim is simply proud to be a part of such an organization. His best day was his first, and his proudest was his last.



DNR Warden Susan Miller met with a Junior Girl Scout troop in Hayward to talk about her job. The number of women conservation wardens in Wisconsin is low, and Miller works to educate girls about the possibilities of working for the DNR.

"I found it hard to believe I was actually going to get paid for a day I found so enjoyable," Blankenheim said. "That feeling stayed with me, for the most part, my entire career."

His proudest day was when he left the Rhinelander district office on his last day of work. "During those last few hours I looked back and knew I had done the best I could for 30 years, willingly giving the state more hours than I ever got paid for."

Chizek is also very proud of his time spent as warden and although he's retired, says he still feels like a part of the organization.

"It's sort of like being a Marine: once a Marine always a Marine," he said. "Once a warden, always a warden."

Samantha Marx is a journalism student at UW-Oshkosh.

Wisconsin Conservation Warden Association

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