

WISCONSIN Game Warden

Spring 2018



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SPRING 2018

in this issue....

- 4 Sturgeon Mania
- 7 The Use of Aircraft by Wisconsin Wardens
- 12 DNR Wardens on Ice
- 15 Milk Money
- 16 'Humbled and Embarrassed'
- 21 One Sunny Day
- 22 New Warden History Committee Seeks Your Help

departments

- 8 WCWA-Sponsored Programs
- 10 Fruits of their Labor
- 15 Obituaries
- 23 Looking Back

on the cover...

Warden Cara Kamke poses with Neil Schmude, of Omro, and the 61.1-inch, 49-pound sturgeon he speared in February 2018. This was Schmude's third sturgeon speared since he began the sport when the DNR began a lottery on the upriver lakes. *Photo by Tim McEnroe. See story on Page 4.*

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First WCWA member scholarship awarded

Ethan Schabacker, 18, of Janesville is the recipient of the first annual WCWA/WCEF \$1,000 scholarship. This new scholarship is available to active WCWA members and their immediate families who are enrolled, or going on to higher education at an accredited four-year college or university.

The scholarship is awarded upon successful completion of the first semester, or subsequent semester if a continuing student, with at least 12 credits earned and a minimum G.P.A. of 2.8.

Ethan graduated from Milton High



Schabacker

Eagle Scout project was planning and constructing an informational kiosk on the Bower's Lake portion of the Ice Age Trail

School in 2017 where he was involved in tennis and cross country.

Ethan is an Eagle Scout and performed more than 200 hours of community service during his high school career. His

in Rock County.

Ethan attends the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, where he successfully completed his first semester, earning 14 credits in classes such as plant biology, oral communication, English and people, resources and the biosphere. He hopes to eventually find a career in the environmental sciences, perhaps as a natural resources or outdoor journalist.

The application for the 2018-19 scholarship is due May 1, 2018. It can be found on the WCWA website.

6th WCEF banquet another big success

The Wisconsin Conservation & Education Foundation sold out for the second consecutive year at its sixth annual fundraising banquet on March 3, raising about \$20,000 to help fund scholarships, outdoor activities and more.

“This banquet would not happen without the great support that we get from our private donors and our long-term commercial donors like Mathews Bow, Vortex Optics, Slater Sales, Sustainable Habitat and others,” said WCEF President Bill Engfer. “They have been very good at supporting the foundation.”

It’s easy to back the WCEF when you know it’s supporting a good cause, said Craig Winkels, sales manager of Slater Sales, Inc. The WCEF work to “get more people involved in the outdoors,” as well as its efforts to provide scholarships to students seeking degrees in conservation or law enforcement make it an organization that Slater Sales is happy to support, he said.

One of the most popular raffles continues to be a week at a 4-bedroom cabin with pontoon boat near Drummond, donated by retired warden Jill Schartner. But this year, the winner could also



Mike Spors shakes up raffle tickets before picking a winner.

me money to do the bear learn-to-hunt... This is just an opportunity to give back,” she said.

In fact, the WCEF has supported many wardens and community conservation-related organizations.

“Together we have been able to support 88 college scholarships in the field of conservation, along with 248 grants awarded statewide to many different local organizations promoting not only the future of hunting, fishing and trapping, but also promoting outdoor skills in all the different activities that allow people to recreate in the great outdoors of Wisconsin,” Engfer said. Funds have also gone to support river and lake cleanups and DNR instructors teaching outdoor skills, as well as to help provide outdoor educational materials to schools and public libraries.

“This banquet continues to be a family-oriented event with numerous children attending in addition to adults,” Engfer said. “Being a volunteer organization allows us to put our dollars back into the local communities around Wisconsin without the costly overhead. A large thank you to the attendees and to the many volunteers who helped make this event a success.”



Photos by Barbara A. Schmitz

The WCEF banquet is not only about raising funds, but also about seeing old friends and meeting new ones. Here, retired warden Jill Schartner greets a group.

chose between the cabin vacation or a guided bear hunt there valued at \$1,500, she said.

As owner of Bearadise Guide Service and Cabin Rental, Schartner said she likes to support the WCEF because the organization supported her when she worked as a warden. “Many times they awarded



Warden Sean Neverman explains how one of the raffles to Dan Davis, Poynette.



Max Faust, 10, of Oregon, checks out what he could win in one of the WCEF raffles.



Photo by Bob Rashid

Crowds gather to watch DNR researchers measure and tag sturgeon during the annual spring run.

STURGEON MANIA

Guard program, new respect for species keeps this prehistoric fish safe

By **Barbara A. Schmitz**

Who would want to watch a bunch of prehistoric fish thrash around in 1- or 2-feet of water as they spawn on rock outcroppings?

A lot of people.

It's that growing interest in sturgeon, and an effort to keep the fish safe from poachers, that caused the Wisconsin DNR to create the Sturgeon Guard decades ago.

It's been so successful, according to Ted Dremel, lieutenant conservation warden for the Wautoma Team, that there are fewer poaching complaints today than there were years ago.

While the dates of the Sturgeon Guard program vary each year depending on water temperature, the interest in sturgeon does not. Last year's Sturgeon Guard program ran from April 17-23, and 90 volunteers and 19 wardens worked to keep

the fish safe. However, 315 people signed up for shifts that were later canceled because the sturgeon run hadn't started or had already ended.

"Sturgeon are very vulnerable in the spawning season and wardens are very few and far between," Dremel said.

"The Sturgeon Guard program started because there were complaints of people taking sturgeon illegally. A group of very dedicated volunteers work 12-hour shifts to protect these things, to basically babysit or watch these fish while they spawn."

Dremel said the number of volunteers needed each year vary on the length and intensity of the spawning season. "We've had hundreds of volunteers, or as low as 60," he said. "The water temperature dictates how and when these fish will spawn. We work closely with fish biologists to pinpoint a date as close

as possible, but we're at the mercy of nature."

DNR officials provide all volunteers with a fact sheet and meet with each of them, giving them a list of phone numbers, including of the local warden who is roving on duty, to contact if there are questions or problems. Thanks to Sturgeon for Tomorrow, they are able to partner with a Shiocton caterer and restaurant to provide free meals for their volunteers during their long shifts.

In fact, Sturgeon for Tomorrow is a big reason for the species' survival since the organization has raised and donated close to \$1 million toward sturgeon management activities, much of which has come directly to DNR projects. In addition, many of the Sturgeon Guard volunteers are SFT members.

For 2018, the DNR is altering its

Lake Sturgeon

Fast Facts

- Instead of a backbone with separate vertebrae, sturgeon have a continuous, flexible, cartilage-encased rod called a notochord that runs the length of the body and ends at the tip of the upper lobe in the tail fin.
- Lake sturgeon have long, tapering snouts that become shorter and blunter with age. Four feelers dangle in a row on the lower side of the snout just in front of the mouth. The feelers, or barbels, alert the fish to the presence of food as it coasts slowly over the lake bottom.
- The mouth and lips of lake sturgeon protrude to suck up food and retract when not in use. It has no teeth.
- Lake sturgeon exhibit considerable color variation due to age and differences in locality. Wisconsin's lake sturgeon are generally slate-gray, olive-brown or black over the body with a milky or yellow-white underside.
- The typical lifespan of lake sturgeon is 55-100 years for males and 80-150 years for females.
- The sexual maturity in females is usually reached between 20 and 34 years, and 14-20 years for males.
- Female lake sturgeon spawn once every 3-6 years while males spawn every 1-2 years. As a consequence, only 20-40 percent of adult sturgeon spawn during a given season.
- Female lake sturgeon lay 4,000 to 7,000 eggs per pound of fish.
- The spawning population of lake sturgeon migrate out of Lake Winnebago in the fall prior to the spring they are to spawn in. Most overwinter in the shallower Upriver Lakes or deep sections of the river.

Source: Wisconsin DNR, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



Photo by Bob Rashid

Each spring, workers net sturgeon so biologists can weigh and process the fish.

Sturgeon Guard program to include more of a public relations effort, Dremel said. "The Sturgeon Guard volunteers will be given fact sheets that they can hand out to the public," he said. "Conservation wardens will also be out to meet and greet the public, and they will be available to answer questions about all fish, and not just sturgeon. We also have an incredible white bass and walleye run on the Wolf River — it's just a very busy waterway."

Dremel guessed that poaching has been less prevalent in recent years because the Sturgeon Guard program is so well known. "They are aware that it runs 24 hours and that there is a good possibility that they will get caught." A heavy fine of \$1,500 or imprisonment also helps to keep poaching down, he said.

But peoples' attitudes about sturgeon have also changed in the last 35 years and that has also led to less poaching, he said. "Local people now value these fish as an economic engine since the people who come to watch them spawn are buying gas and food in the area. About 400-500 people literally show up at once to view the fish — and that's just at one location at one time. All of that makes people want to protect the fish and call if someone is poaching or harassing them."

People also enjoy coming and watching the biologists process the fish, Dremel said. Biologists capture, tag and measure the fish at known spawning sites each spring, some of which are publicly accessible. They also look to see how many sturgeon had been tagged in the

Do you want to volunteer?

Do you want to take part in the Sturgeon Guard program and protect these special fish from poaching?

It's easy to sign up. Just go to <http://dnr.wi.gov/SGsignUp/> and fill out the form. You can also call 888-936-7463 from 7 a.m. – 10 p.m. to sign up, or email the Sturgeon Guard Coordinator at DNRSturgeonGuard@wisconsin.gov.

past and use that information to assess movement, growth and survival.

"These fish are out there roaming Lake Winnebago throughout the year, but in spring they are only in 1- or 2-foot feet of water and their backs are sticking out. It is really the only time you can easily see them."

Ryan Koenings, Winnebago System sturgeon biologist, said in spring 2017, they handled 1,829 fish (1,605 males and 224 females). "This ranks as the second largest spring assessment on record behind only 2014 when 1,984 fish were handled."

The annual spawning run doesn't just attract Wisconsin residents to the banks of the Wolf River. "We have people come from all over the Midwest since we have one of the largest, most robust sturgeon population in the world," Dremel said. Additionally, the Winnebago System is one of few places where you can see this many fish spawn on shallow shorelines.

Sturgeon can also be found in the Fox



Photo by Bob Rashid

Sturgeon Guard volunteers “babysit” spawning sturgeon and protect them from poachers.

River, although the Sturgeon Guard program doesn’t operate there, he said. However, wardens have partnered with community members who live in spawning areas to create their own type of guard program.

Sturgeon spearing licenses have also been increasing, adding more to the value of the fish as a species, he said.

It’s respect of the sturgeon and the DNR wardens who protect the fish that keeps many Sturgeon Guard volunteers, like Melvin Meier and Bob Doepker, coming back each year.

Meier, of Chilton, said he’s been active with the Sturgeon Guard program for 15-20 years, and often guards two or three times each year. “I hate to see someone steal our sturgeon; I know if there wasn’t anyone to watch, the sturgeon would be disappearing.”

Only once in those 15-20 years, however, has he encountered a poacher. “But once they saw us, they turned around and went away,” Meier said. “That’s proof that the program works.”

Meier said the 12-hour shifts go quickly when you’re seeing sturgeon. “On one site, we saw about 300; another time, we saw about 500,” he said. “I like to bring

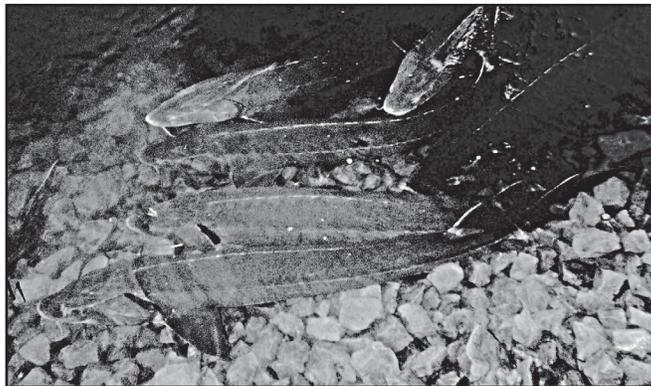


Photo by Melvin Meier

Sturgeon congregate and spawn near the rocky shore, giving visitors quite a show.

people with me who have never seen sturgeon spawn. They always say they want to go back the following year.”

Meier is also a sturgeon spearer who has been successful for nine years in a row. But this year, he knows he won’t be so lucky. He forgot to buy a tag, so he didn’t go out except to observe with a friend.

Doepker, of Appleton, has been volunteering with the Sturgeon Guard program for more than 30 years and he often guards multiple times each year. “If I can spear a beautiful fish like this, then I should also be able to protect them in the spring,” he said, explaining why he started with the program. “Where else can you go to see such a majestic fish?”

Doepker said he speared for 26 years



Grandfather, father and son all speared sturgeon in the same year. Bob Doepker’s fish weighed 90 pounds, his son, Steve’s fish weighed 64 pounds, and his grandson, Scott’s fish, weighed 77 pounds.

before he got his first sturgeon.

“It’s quite a thrill to be out there fishing and see one of those come through,” he said. But he’s also thrilled that his son and grandson are spearkers, too, and keeping the tradition alive in the family. About three years ago, all three of them speared sturgeon.

Plus, it’s fun, he said, adding that his wife, Shirley, often joins him since she retired.

“It’s always fun when we get stationed at Bamboo Bend in

Shiocton because that’s where the school kids come in and they ask a lot of questions,” said Doepker, who serves on the Sturgeon Advisory Committee. Shirley added: “I love watching the children; they are so enthralled, and so eager to learn about it. They just keep asking questions.”

Doepker and Meier’s advice to others is to try volunteering. “It’s always a thrill to see the sturgeon up close,” Doepker said. People in the area don’t understand how lucky we are to have this resource right here.”

Many people come from out of state to see this pre-historic fish up close, Shirley added. “They ask a lot of questions and are really impressed,” she said. “They understand it really is a wonder of the world.”



Photo by Staber W. Reese

Don Beghin, Watertown, and the new plane purchased in 1960 for the law enforcement division. This photo was taken at Traux Field in Madison.



Warden Earle Gingles in 1959.



Photo by Dean Tvedt

Assistant area supervisor Bill Rollmann and pilot Don Beghin check a map prior to flying in the new law enforcement plane.

The use of aircraft by Wisconsin wardens

By Harland Steinhorst

The first account of state wardens using aircraft appears in Walter Scott's book, *"The Wisconsin Warden."* According to the book, "Doc" Chase of Winnebago County became the first warden to use a privately owned aircraft to hunt troublesome coyotes in his patrol area.

The next use of aircraft appeared in the May 1956 *"Wisconsin Conservation Bulletin."* According to "Wardens Guided Posse in Danbury Manhunt," Wardens Russell DeBrock, of Webster, and Earle Gingles, of Luck, used a privately owned aircraft to guide a sheriff's posse to where the fugitives were hiding after a gunfight.

In 1960, the DNR's Law Enforcement Division purchased two Champion Challengers. The new planes were used to check water pollution and diversion cases, spot illegal hunting activity, water safety patrol, game census work, refuge patrol, and more. The DNR purchased two more in 1962 and added a fifth aircraft in 1963.

The two-seat Challengers were equipped with a 150-hp engine, navigation receivers, and aircraft and police two-way radios. All of the planes had a public address system, with the loud speaker located on



Warden Gingles and DeBrock used a plane to assist with the Danbury manhunt.

the side of the plane under the N number, and could be equipped with skis or pontoon floats. In addition, some also were equipped with mapping cameras.

The five original "flying game wardens" were Harley C. Peterson, at Woodruff; Ken Corbett, at Oshkosh; Don Beghin, at Nevin Fish Hatchery; David Froggatt at Black River Falls; and Gingles, at Spooner. James Palmer, Darwin Krall and Dan Doberstein eventually replaced them, and the warden pilots continued to fly "missions" until the late 1970s when a lack of funds ended the program.

While at Sturgeon Bay, I made use of

Corbett and his aircraft. I had him checking the 280-mile coastline of Door County for illegal fills. We chased commercial fishing boats back to Michigan water. We did surprise trips to the two largest islands, Washington and Chambers, and made cases during the deer season. I had him transport me to the State Crime Lab with drug evidence from state park cases.

I also had Ken fly deer shiner missions, sometimes flying from 3 a.m. until daylight, a prime time for illegal deer hunting. We checked sturgeon spearkers and ice fishermen on Lake Winnebago using skis to land on the ice. We also landed in cut hay fields to check small game hunters. One time, Ken located eight ponds with decoys set out during the short closed season.

All in all, law enforcement lost a great tool when the Warden Air Force disbanded. However, use of DNR aircraft continues to this day with non-warden pilots flying a variety of flights for law enforcement, forest fire control, wolf research, environmental protection and other Department activities.

HARLAND STEINHORST was a retired Wisconsin conservation warden and warden historian who died in April 2017.

WCWA-SPONSORED PROGRAMS



Look what I caught! Lots of fish were caught at the 2017 Ozaukee County Fishing Clinic.

Rain doesn't hamper clinic fishing, fun

By Tony Young

The weather didn't cooperate, but that didn't stop the fun or the fishing.

Despite rain, an estimated 60-80 youth came out to the 2017 Ozaukee County Fishing Clinic at Puckett's Pond at Harrington Beach State Park and caught rainbow trout, bluegill hybrids and bullheads. And no one left empty handed as the Professional Angler's Association and the Grafton Youth Hunting Association donated rod/reel combos and starter tackle kits to all the children who participated. The GYHA also provided lunch and refreshments.

In addition, the WCWA contributed \$400 toward the fourth-annual event held in June 2017. The money was used to stock the pond with bluegills.

A core group of volunteers helped to remove weeds from the pond and stock fish. The DNR provided boater safety giveaways and loaner rods to use. Fat Boys Bait and Tackle also provided bait and tackle to use, while the Great Lakes Sports Fishermen – Ozaukee Chapter provided volunteers to help at the event.

Lots of fish were caught, but no sizes were documented. Most trout were about 10 inches, and the bluegills were mainly in the 4-inch to 8-inch range. All in all, it was a success and we can't wait to put it on again.

TONY YOUNG is a Wisconsin conservation warden stationed in Belgium.

10 from 5 states took part in C.O.P.S. hunt

By Pat Novesky

A Wisconsin Conservation Warden Association grant helped fund an annual Learn-to-Hunt event for children whose parents had been killed in the line of duty.

The Concerns of Police Survivors event is intentionally kept small to allow a laid back "hunting camp" type environment with 10 participants taking part in the four-day event. This year's event allowed families to participate in waterfowl, deer and pheasant hunts.

Families from Minnesota, Texas, Arizona, New Mexico and Nevada came to Wisconsin to enjoy four days of hunting, with all of their expenses paid thanks to donations and grants from individuals, the WCWA, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and the Wisconsin C.O.P.S. Chapter.

Mentors for the hunt are law enforcement officers from the Wisconsin DNR, Vilas County Sheriff's Department, Oneida County Sheriff's Department and the Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission.

The group has organized itself as Tin Star Outdoors. Learn more at https://www.facebook.com/pg/TinStarOutdoors/community/?ref=page_internal.



Participants in the annual C.O.P.S. hunt pose with pheasants they shot. The four-day event allowed children whose parents had been killed in the line of duty to also hunt for waterfowl and deer.

A celebration of many firsts

By Jon Scharbarth

It was a celebration of firsts.

For the first time, all first-time hunters participating in the annual Standing Rocks County Park Learn to Deer Hunt harvested their first deer.

Nine hunters ranging in age from 10-35 years, along with 11 dedicated mentors, took part in the hunt that was held Oct. 29, 2017, in the Portage County park.

The program is a collaborative effort involving the DNR, Portage County Parks Department, Bill Cook Chapter of the Izaak Walton League, Almond Rod and Gun Club, and the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Student Law Enforcement Association or SLEA.

The hunt not only serves to provide first-time deer hunters with an amazing learning experience, but also as a way to reduce the herd for the Portage County Parks Department. Standing Rocks Park is a 524-acre county park located southeast of Stevens Point. Over the years the deer population at the park had grown significantly with the result being very little forest regeneration. Other population control options were tried but had limited success or public support.

Due to the abundance of rolling hills, a network of hiking, biking and skiing trails, and a large lodge used for skiing in the winter, it would be difficult to find a more perfect setup for a learn-to-deer hunt event.

In 2015, Conservation Warden Jon Scharbarth connected with Matt Jacowski and Gary Speckmann to discuss the idea of using the program as not only a way to get first-time hunters a chance to experience the great tradition of Wisconsin deer hunting, but also as a management tool for the park. Jacowski was the Conservation Congress chairman for Portage County at the time and also a County Board representative and member of the Almond Rod and Gun Club. Speckmann was the Portage County Parks director; he retired from that position this December.

After several Portage County Park Commission meetings, Scharbarth got the green light to hold the hunt and planning began in earnest. Scharbarth enlisted the help of Mike Fuge, who is a member of the Bill Cook Chapter of the Izaak Walton League and huge supporter of



First-time hunters and mentors at the third annual Standing Rocks County Park Learn to Deer Hunt.

introducing new hunters, especially youth, to the outdoors. A plan came together, an application was created and made available, and a random drawing was done to select the hunters who participated that first year.

Safety during the hunt is always the utmost concern and so, with the help of park staff, the park is divided into 13 zones. Each zone had its own ground blind situated so that any possible shots taken by the hunters would be safe. Blinds were placed to not only minimize any safety concerns, but also to reduce the chances of any wounded deer running off the property onto adjacent private lands. Many other rules were put in place to ensure not only the safety of all involved, but also that each participant would have the opportunity for a quality experience.

Two weekends prior to the two-day hunt, a field day is held at the grounds of the Bill Cook Chapter of the Izaak Walton League where topics like deer management, hunting strategies and techniques, and proper care of game are discussed. A hunter safety talk is given and each hunter sights in the firearm he or she will use during the hunt. For many, this is the first time they have ever shot a rifle. Each hunter is also paired with his or her mentor or mentors at the field day.

Mentors for the hunt come from the Bill Cook Chapter of the Izaak Walton League,

SLEA, Almond Rod and Gun Club, and both active and retired DNR conservation wardens. After the field day, hunters and mentors are invited to Standing Rocks Park to locate their assigned hunting blinds and to scout their zones with their mentors. Participants are encouraged to return to the park with their mentors as often as they wish to continue to scout and to learn about what it takes to become a successful deer hunter.

During the weekend hunt, the park ski lodge serves as headquarters. Hunters check in each morning prior to shooting hours and return for lunch each day. A demonstration on how to field dress a deer is given so that each hunter at least has the opportunity to see how that process works. Every deer harvested is sampled and tested for Chronic Wasting Disease courtesy of a volunteer sampler from the Almond Rod and Gun Club.

Donations from the Wisconsin Conservation Warden Association, Izaak Walton League State Chapter, and local businesses help fund food and equipment costs to ensure all participants have a great learning experience. For hunters who do not have access to a rifle for the hunt, rifles are borrowed to them.

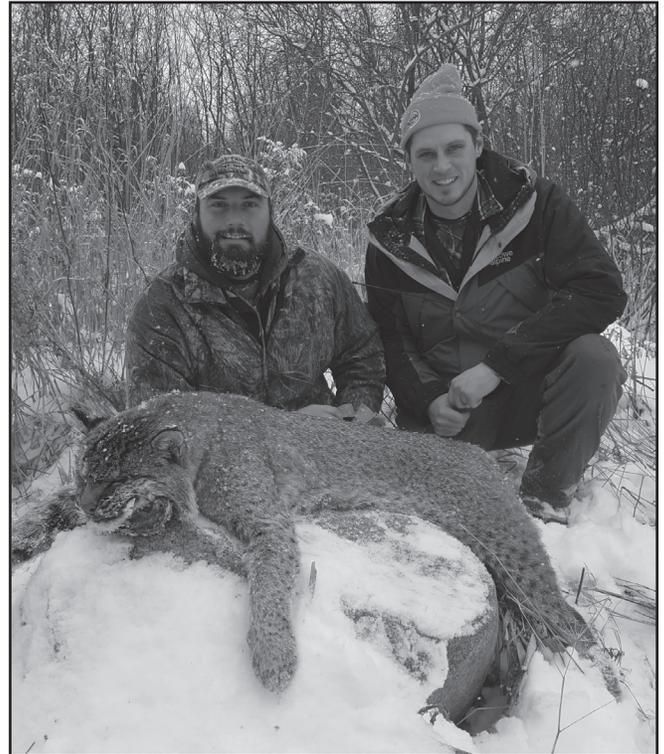
Over the past three years, 29 first-time deer hunters have participated in the hunt. One of the years a mother and son each shot their first deer during the event.

FRUITS OF THEIR LABOR | Photos of harvested fish, game

Do you have pictures of you or someone in your family who has harvested game? We would love to feature them! Email photos to barbara.a.benish@gmail.com, or mail them to 1705 Graber St., Oshkosh, WI 54901. Please make sure to include a brief photo description.



Conservation Warden Kaitlin Kernosky, New London, right, and Recreational Warden Heather Gottschalk, left, had a successful late season goose hunt in Waupaca County.



Warden Joe Paul, left, of the Phillips Station, was able to harvest this 36-pound bobcat with the assistance of Lt. Bryan Harrenstein.



Wardens Matt Groppi and Meghan Jensen with her first musky, a 38-inch fish caught in Canada in June 2017.



Before heading to the fur buyer, Warden Dan Michels, Park Falls, poses with his neighbor and trapping partner and a load of fur from the fall 2017 season. He also harvested a 32-pound bobcat in December 2017 with a little help from dogs owned by retired fish biologist Jeff Roth and his sons, Marc and Ryan.

in brief

Articles, photos sought for Fall '18 issue

Wisconsin Game Warden magazine is looking for articles. The deadline for the Fall issue is Aug. 15, 2018. We are particularly looking for stories that highlight the history of the warden force, as well as highlight the great work that wardens do in their communities to protect our natural resources and promote outdoor recreation.

Articles can be submitted to Managing Editor Barbara Schmitz at 1705 Graber St., Oshkosh, WI 54901, or emailed as a Word document to barbara.a.benish@gmail.com. (Please note the new email address and update your records.) Photographs are strongly

encouraged. Please remember to set your cameras to the highest resolution setting. Emailed photos should be at least 4" x 6" and 300 dpi, or 8" x 10" and at least 150 dpi.

Do you have a picture of you or your family with fish or game they've harvested in Wisconsin or elsewhere? These will be included in the "Fruits of their Labor" feature.

Photos can be mailed to Schmitz at the above address. They will be returned, if requested. If you have questions, you can also call Schmitz at (920) 235-0972.

Don't forget to notify us when you move

If you are moving or have moved, don't forget to tell *Wisconsin Game Warden* magazine.

The post office does not forward or return the magazines since they are mailed Third Class. That means the

Association has no way of knowing which members are not receiving their copies.

For address changes or general mailing questions, contact Ryan Propson at wcmembership@gmail.com.

Renew your WCWA membership online

If you want to subscribe or renew your membership to the Wisconsin Conservation Warden Association, all you need to do is go to its website.

Go to www.wigamewarden.com, click on the "About" link and then "Become a member" link.

All memberships expire June 30. A one-year membership is \$25, a three-year membership is \$50, and a lifetime membership is \$250.

If you have questions, contact Ryan Propson at wcmembership@gmail.com.

Another warden identified as a veteran

Editor's Note: As anticipated, the listing of wardens who served in the military was well received in our Spring 2017 issue. And, as we also anticipated, it was incomplete. Here is information on another retired warden who also

served in the military.

Art Schroeder, 93, served in World War II and Korean War. He worked in Neillsville, Milwaukee area and Eau Claire before his retirement.

WCWA merchandise available online

Check out the Wisconsin Conservation Warden Association online store for all your WCWA merchandise needs.

Go to wigamewarden.com and click on the "WCWA Store" icon. There you will find WCWA hats, shirts,

sweatshirts, posters, prints, cookbooks, and coaster sets. You can also place a phone order by contacting Sean Neverman at (608) 770-8096.

Don't see something you want? Contact Neverman and let him know what items you'd like to see.

to the editor

To the editor:

As I begin this letter, maybe you don't want to hear what I will tell you. But bear with me.

I am 82 years young and live near DePere, Wisconsin. I always wanted to be a game warden when I got out of the U.S. Army in 1956. I told my dad that I was going to go to college to be a

warden as the GI Bill was available.

But my dad said, "Don't go; stay home, help on the farm and someday you will get the farm."

Well, I never got the farm. The rest

is history.

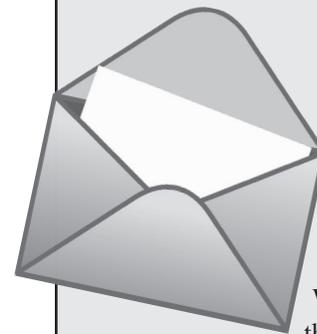
I was a very good hunter – deer, ducks, rabbits, etc.

Now I will tell you how I got to read *Wisconsin Game Warden*. I never knew there was a magazine like that. I go to the library in DePere to get books to read, as I love to read and I saw your magazine in a rack with others. I said to myself, "Wow, I never knew that was available," so I took the last copy home with me. It was right up my alley; I could not put it down till I was done reading it. It is super and a very good of what is put into it.

Enclosed you will find a picture of my grandpa, my dad and my uncle. (*Editor's Note: Because the photo was of poor quality, it could not be reproduced here.*) It was 1936 and they were hunting in Marinette County near Dunbar. My dad's deer was a 10-pointer that weighed 210 pounds. They were very good hunters and those were the good "old years." I am so proud of them.

I will be looking forward to your spring magazine as I'm sure there will be some very good reading.

Jim Hanamann, DePere





Photos courtesy Ed McCann

DNR wardens on ice

The Anti-Poaching Unit, a true hockey tale deserving of Beethoven's No. 9 as its soundtrack

By Joanne M. Haas

Nowhere near “Slap Shot” and more like the “Bad News Bears,” a crew of wardens tapped a 13-year-old basketball player to coach them through three games at their first-ever hockey tournament.

It was as bad as you could think: The top cop team from Thunder Bay mauled the Wisconsin wardens 10-3, after which the Thunder Bay feeder team lunched on them in the consolation round. Thunder Bay – where newborns get skates and mouth guards as they are carried to the cribs from the birthing room. But that’s Canada.

Some consoling. But it really was because Wisconsin’s DNR wardens know how to put teamwork and fun on ice! And, truth be told, there are some mighty

talented hockey players on the DNR warden team – and they are looking to sign more on the dotted line. Well, let’s just say join the line-up of the Wisconsin DNR Anti-Poaching Unit.

A friendly team strategy

While the Thunder Bay team traveled in their deluxe mobile unit to Duluth for the late winter tournament, the Wisconsin DNR Anti-Poaching Unit arrived in separate cars full of high spirits and snack crumbs. But, let the record show, the Wisconsin team had their manners! They did do a round of very pleasant introductions in the team locker room before hitting the ice. Slightly different game strategy based heavily upon beginner’s luck.

However, they did arrive with the

Want to have some fun?

The Anti-Poaching Unit hockey team is currently recruiting members. Any interested wardens can contact Ed McCann at wwardenhockeyteam@gmail.com.

The next competition will be March 23-24 in Duluth.

very important backing of the Wisconsin Conservation Wardens Association, which supported the hockey crew with tournament entry fee assistance. And, speaking of important support, if it wasn’t for the ability to withstand countless blows, the very talented goalie Trevor Tracey, who by day is the warden in Vernon County, single-handedly held the scores to respectable gaps. Plus, he left the ice with all his uppers and lowers.

There are no Hanson brothers on this team, but there are the Robinson brothers, an uncle-nephew pair, a father-son dynamo and acquaintances up for a good time on ice. And like little Lupus on the “*Bad News Bears*,” everybody gets a turn on the ice – no matter what is going on and no matter what their boy-coach is yelling.

We’re not kidding. Jack Thomson, a middle school basketball player, traveled to the tournament with his father, Warden Ken Thomson of Eau Claire, a hockey player best classified as enthusiastic. More on Jack’s coaching strategies and comments about this dad’s perceived hockey finesse in a bit.

What were they thinking?

The DNR Anti-Poaching Unit was launched by a trio: Gary Eddy, Ed McCann and Trevor Tracey. All three are wardens who like hockey and can actually play it quite well. It was at the statewide Bureau of Law Enforcement conference in Wisconsin Dells a couple years back when Eddy brainstormed the idea to have a family-focused hockey scrimmage. It was great fun! Basking in the glory of that success, the trio thought they should do it again, but this time they should be more organized. Oh, it made so much sense when they said it ... to each other.

The first idea was to create a wardens-only team. “But work and families made that impossible,” McCann said. “There were schedules that just didn’t allow it. People wanted to play, but real life demands were factors.”

Next step, the trio agreed to organize with warden family members on their team roster. Still not enough people. Their next strategy was to invite friends. Then, it came down to anyone who didn’t have a record and could spell hockey. Well, the spelling was optional but a nice touch.

The Tournament: Cue Symphony No. 9 by Beethoven

OK! They had a team. They had the super Robinson brothers, who truly are



The DNR warden hockey team is ready to fight for control of the puck.

good. Then, you had the Werner brothers – they spell defense with their blades. And take a guess what teammate Warden Kaitlin Kernosky’s nickname is? Yes, it is hockey – and we are not making that up.

Now, what to put on the bodies? Well, Eddy finagled some nice jerseys with numbers on the back like real teams. He also came up with the name – the Anti-Poaching Unit. He thought it had a nice ring to it. And who can’t support a team with that as its moniker!

The three coordinated everything, found hotels and got everybody there for the March 17-18, 2017, tournament. It

“We arrived, not really knowing each other or really what bracket to be in. How could we know? Many of the team members had never met each other.”

Warden Ed McCann

featured terrific all-law enforcement teams from Minnesota (another hockey standout state), Wisconsin and the aforementioned Canada.

“Teams showed up that actually practiced and do practice,” McCann said. “They are super competitive, but very nice and friendly.” Sure, it’s easy to be friendly

when you win.

“We arrived, not really knowing each other or really what bracket to be in,” McCann said. “How could we know? Many of the team members had never met each other.”

The lowest bracket was the retired guys. “We thought, ‘no way’ should we be in that one,” McCann said. But the top bracket had the ex-National Hockey League players. “We thought, ‘no way’ should we be in that one.”

Somehow they were placed in the middle bracket. “But that didn’t go as well as we would have liked,” McCann said.

Maybe not, but they had the most popular coach in the joint! Thirteen-year-old Jack Thomson’s coaching strategy is more like friendly teasing the players he knows. “I was hoping my basketball knowledge would transfer to hockey. But it didn’t,” Jack said. “I don’t know much about hockey. Maybe if I knew a little bit about hockey, it would’ve helped.”

The boy coach takes command

Jack’s foray into coaching some law enforcement officers came when the referee said to him, “You can’t be in the box unless you are a player or a coach.” Jack knew they needed a coach so he shot back to the ref with, “I’m the coach.”

You have to give it to him, right? After all, he hadn’t actually planned to be there. Jack ended up at the tournament after a family weekend in nearby Superior was affected by a family illness. It sounded

like fun to go to the tournament with his dad, sit in the team box and cheer.

That’s when the tournament referee stopped him, smiling when the boy answered his title – and the team went on to lose 10-3.

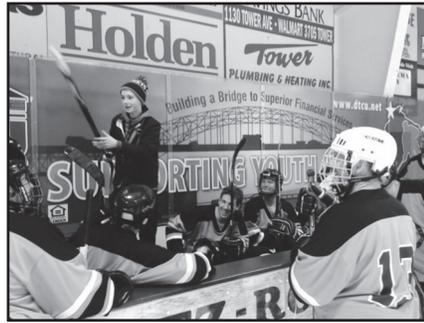
But that didn’t deter Jack – he soldiered on!

“We knew we were in trouble when the Thunder Bay teams scored four goals against us in 10 minutes,” McCann said.

Jack told his dad he needed to skate harder or he’d make the other players mad. However, this wasn’t the first time he



Team members wait in the box for their turn on the ice.



Jack Thomson 13, is the team's coach and said his basketball knowledge, unfortunately, didn't transfer to hockey.



The start of another losing game ...



It's not always about winning. Right? While the DNR's hockey team lost all three of their inaugural games, the players said the most important thing was that they had fun.

saw his dad play. He also played on a rink at a park near their home. "You can look a lot better on the little rink playing with 7th graders" Jack said. "It was pretty funny. I told my dad to skate faster and get some new hockey gear."

Other players and people in the audience caught on to the boy coach, and, Jack said, "they were kinda laughing."

Jack said he would also like to play next time. "I would've at least scored. I can be the player coach."

To help them play, Thomson says the players each had a beer ... one beer ... in the box. "I'll never be father of the year, but I had Jack go into our locker room and bring out a case of beer."

The ref came over, looked over the box wall, eyed the case and said, "Well, that explains it."

Thomson said he really hasn't played hockey in a couple of decades. So when he went in, he fell down and took out one of the Thunder Bay players. The ref didn't call him for checking – an intentional foul act in hockey – because it seemed quite obvious it wasn't an intentional act.

"Then, I couldn't get up. I was like a turtle," he said. "The other player was nice and told me he knew I didn't mean

it. He said, 'I know you couldn't control yourself.'"

When it was all over, the ref came over, put his hands on Jack's shoulders and said only what a referee could say: "You did a pretty bad job." And he smiled.

"Sure, we lost all three games," McCann said after the game and game and game. "But, we were pretty darn competitive during the last two games – and that last game? Well, that was really, really close."

You bet it was. And guess what? Jack said he would be back. In fact, McCann, the team manager when not boosting morale, and Thomson, the enthusiastic player, also said they are coming back and hope other players will join them for some friendly competition on the ice. Give it some thought. Sure, they got creamed in front of an international audience in spite of their high-spirits and can-do skating courage of sorts.

But at the end of the day, it all comes down to this from McCann and Thomson, "Everybody had fun."

And that's always a winner.

JOANNE M. HAAS is public information officer of the DNR Bureau of Law Enforcement.

Meet the team

Wardens, friends, family and acquaintances who have played on the Anti-Poaching Unit hockey team include:

- Trevor Tracy
- Tim Werner
- Dan Werner (Tim's brother from Michigan who is a State Trooper)
- Travis Hilliard (Lt. with the Sauk Prairie Police Dept. and past deputy warden for John Buss)
- Bryan Harrenstein
- Edward McCann
- Brad Goetz (Ed's nephew)
- Corey Robinson
- Brian Robinson (Corey's brother)
- Gary Eddy
- Kaitlin Kernosky
- Meghan Jensen
- Rick Peters
- Ken Thomson
- John Welke
- Eric Grudzinski
- Adam Hanna
- Mike Simon (Adam's brother-in-law)
- Scott Beckfield
- Brian Gutweiler
- Andy Koenig
- Nick Burgette
- Eric Mattila
- Jim Sweeney



Dale Hochhausen

Angler gets more than lots of panfish

Conservation Warden Dale Hochhausen, with assistance from his warden team, observed a fisherman from Onalaska take two limits of bluegill sunfish in the same day.

Contact was made with the fisherman who was found to have double tripped that day on sunfish. A search warrant was executed on the home and wardens found the fisherman in possession of 2,572 panfish (see chart below for breakdown). He pleaded guilty to four counts of over limit of fish and he paid \$4,803 in fines. In addition, his license was revoked for 12 years, and his boat, equipment and freezers were confiscated. Fish fillets were donated to local food pantries and community organizations.

The La Crosse Sheriff's Department investigators assisted with the search warrant of the home and also found drug evidence. They arrested the fisherman's adult son on possession and distribution of drugs. Sheriff's department investigators seized 1.21 pounds of processed marijuana, approximately 1/2 ounce of powder cocaine, prescription medications, numerous packaging items and several paraphernalia items.

	Total # of fish (Rounded down)	% of total panfish
Bluegills	2,066	80.3%
Crappies	88	3.4%
Perch	418	16.3%
Totals	2,572	

Milk money

By Kaitlin Kernosky & Ted Dremel

It was a crisp November night when Wardens Kaitlin Kernosky and Ted Dremel were working the “run of the mill” shine-and-shoot complaint in Waupaca County. The complainants stated they were hearing shots in the late night while they were sleeping.

At about 9 p.m., Kernosky and Dremel tucked their squad in the woods to watch over a cut soybean field. After two uneventful hours of sitting in the black abyss, Kernosky saw headlights coming toward them – and then they saw a large handheld spotlight shining from the driver's side of the vehicle. The wardens watched the light sweep across the field several times, stopping when the light illuminated a deer.

When the vehicle passed the wardens' location, Kernosky pulled out of the hiding spot and initiated a traffic stop with the emergency lights activated. Eventually, the vehicle pulled over to the side of the road and the wardens approached.

The driver still had the handheld spotlight near his lap, but he had placed a pair of gloves over the spotlight. His wife was sitting in the backseat with the rear windows open and the vehicle's heat blowing on the highest setting. As the doors of the vehicle opened, Kernosky quickly saw the wife was wearing heavy winter clothes and on one hand, she wore a large, heavy glove. A cocked crossbow with a thermal imaging scope was lying next to her and the bolts were at her feet.

Dremel asked the driver of the vehicle to step outside while Kernosky spoke with his wife. Despite being a chilly night with temperatures in the single digits, the driver was sweating profusely and continually wiping the sweat from his forehead. The driver said he and his wife were hunting in the Iola area and were “just looking at

deer” on their way back to their home in Fond du lac – and neither of them had any intentions of shooting a deer. The driver was not able to articulate why his wife was in the back seat of the vehicle with the windows down and wearing heavy winter clothing and one glove.

Meanwhile, Kernosky talked to the wife, who said she was sitting in the back seat because her breast pump was in the front seat. Kernosky asked what was in the front seat, and the wife again replied “my breast pump.”



Wardens confiscated this crossbow and the husband and wife were both convicted of shining deer with a crossbow.

So when the wardens asked why they didn't move the breast pump from the front seat to the back seat, the wife replied that she wanted the breast pump plugged into the cigarette lighter, in case “she needed it.” The wife added that she also suffers from motion sickness and said she prefers to sit in the back seat while “viewing deer.” The wardens said most people they know who suffer from motion sickness generally prefer to sit in the front seat.

The husband added that he placed a thermal imaging scope on the crossbow because he enjoys hunting small game at night with his crossbow.

After obtaining verbal consent to look in the vehicle, the wardens found a blue plastic tarp laid out flat in the rear seat and it appeared to be ready for a messy deer.

Kernosky and Dremel ended up confiscating the crossbow and spotlight and the husband and wife were both convicted of shining deer with a crossbow and after legal hours.



Warden supervisor Jen Burrow-Niemeyer and warden Mike Hirschboeck with geese, a hen mallard, Sandhill crane and shotgun confiscated after they watched a hunter illegally shoot a Sandhill crane. They contacted the group of five hunters and discovered two didn't have federal stamps, two possessed lead shot, two had no plugs in the guns and one hunter had no license at all. In addition, the group had shot a mallard earlier out of season.

'Humbled and embarrassed'

Hirschboeck earns 'The Watch' top warden award

By Barbara A. Schmitz

"Faithful able service." Just three little words inscribed on a gold watch. But for Wisconsin wardens who receive that watch, it means much more than those simple words.

Warden Mike Hirschboeck became the latest to receive the top honor, when on May 20, 2017, Haskell Noyes III presented him with the Haskell Noyes Wisconsin Conservation Warden Efficiency Award, more commonly known as "The Watch."

Haskell Noyes, a noted conservationist from Milwaukee, established the award in 1930. Since then, his family has presented the award annually to a deserving field warden.

"I was not one of those kids who always knew they wanted to be a warden," Hirschboeck says. So after high school, Hirschboeck joined the Marine Corps Reserves, spending most of his



Mike Hirschboeck and his wife, Geri, and daughter, Ellie.

time in Operation Desert Storm and in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. About six years later, in 1994, he was back as a civilian and finishing up his associate's degree in police science. His first law enforcement job was with the Waterford Police Department, which hired him in 1996; it was there that he became more familiar with the work of wardens.

"When I was working at the police department, I kept on bumping into (warden) Russ Fell, and he kept telling me to apply for a job with the DNR," Hirschboeck recalls. In the late 1990s, he also worked as a special warden, helping Fell and other wardens with shining and shooting cases. (Coincidentally, Fell

received the Haskell Noyes Award in 2012.)

Finally following the advice, Hirschboeck applied to the DNR and was hired in 2006. He's still in Racine — his first station — and he says he plans to stay there.

Hirschboeck says his success as a warden hasn't depended on the things he has done. "For me, it's about the relationships you build around yourself; that's how you make your program strong," he says. It's been his relationships

with the community, the local law enforcement officers and others that have made him effective.

Hirschboeck has helped crack wildlife shining and poaching rings, rescued stranded wildlife and much more. But one case that stands out was busting a supervisor for ordering staff to use heavy equipment to bury garbage at the Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Union Grove.

"The supervisor was turning the property into his own personal landfill," he recalls. "The house he lived in flooded, so he gutted it and cleaned out his garage, and told his employees if they weren't busy to dig holes." The supervisor filled those holes with everything from household items like furniture, to chemicals, to roofing shingles. He also owned a few rental properties in Milwaukee, and when one tenant died and had no family, he also buried the tenant's belongings, Hirschboeck says.

That case started with an anonymous tip, but the dumping had been going on for two years before someone contacted the DNR, he says. The cost to clean up the site was \$45,000.

Hirschboeck has also been active with children's programming, working with teacher Trent Tonn to offer an outdoor skills club for students.

Hirschboeck says he was both humbled and embarrassed to receive the top award. He knew something was up when his supervisor, Jen Burrow-Niemeyer, called him and asked if she could stop by his house. But he had no clue that she would be telling him he had won "The Watch." "I looked at Jen and said, 'Are you kidding me?'" he recalls. "All I could think of

were the many other wardens who are so deserving of this award."

Burrow-Niemeyer says she wasn't surprised by his response. "He is so deserving of this award. But in his mind, he believes

his success is due to the people who surround him. That's just who he is."

Burrow-Niemeyer nominated him for

the award, mainly because of the impact he's had on the people in Racine County. "It's a very urban community and when you can touch that many people in such a short amount of time, you're doing something right," she said. "Mike is a people person. He's involved in a lot of things locally. Talk to any officer from the police or sheriff's departments in Racine County and they will all know who Mike is because he's always willing to assist... He goes out of his way to help."

Hirschboeck is a good warden, she says, because his career has never been a job for him. "He lives this life of being a game warden nonstop. Even on his off days, he's calling people just because he was thinking about something for work. He loves what he is doing and lives and breathes this job."

That sometimes creates interesting situations. Burrow-Niemeyer recalled a time when she was in court and received a phone call from a teen in a panic. He told her he had rescued a snapping turtle, put it in a pail in his car, and the turtle somehow escaped from the bucket and was now sunning itself in the back seat window. He panicked, pulled over in a city park and called the police, who promptly suggested he contact the DNR.

"Mike is a guy who will pick up the phone, day or night, regardless of who you are."

Warden Brad Latza

"I couldn't go so I called Mike," she recalls. Mike promptly responded and found the upset teen standing near his car. "The turtle had gotten its claws stuck underneath the speaker in the back window, and Mike had a heck of a time getting it out for this guy," she says. "It took an hour ... but Mike got it out and released it. And he advised the guy to let nature be nature."

Warden Brad Latza shares duties with Hirschboeck in Racine County and agrees that Mike's work ethic makes him stand out. "Mike is a guy who will pick up the phone, day or night, regardless of who you are," he said. "It may not work out the best for his personal life, but it is great for the community and me."



The Watch Ceremony. From left, back row, are Chief Warden Todd Schaller, Ann and Chris Noyes, Hack and Meg Noyes and their daughters, Stefanie and Lindsey. Front row, from left, are Geri, Mike and Ellie Hirschboeck.

Latza said if he has a question, he often calls Hirschboeck for advice. "When you are in the field and need to make a decision, it's priceless to be able to run a situation by him and get his input."

Hirschboeck is married to Geri, and they have a daughter, Ellie, 12. When he's not working, he says he enjoys archery deer and goose hunting, as well as ice or open water fishing.

WARDEN IN THE SPOTLIGHT

By Stephanie Daniel-Merkel

Developing relationships and creating a sense of belonging are things that have always been important to Matt Koshollek. As conservation warden in southern Bayfield County, he makes listening to the concerns of the citizens he serves a priority and prides himself in being an active member of his small Northwoods community.

Koshollek calls it community wardening and says it is important if one is to be effective.

“I make sure I am available to my community and handle complaints and questions that people have,” he explains. “People want a game warden in their area. They want to protect their resources.”

Koshollek’s attitudes about the outdoors were instilled at a young age while growing up in the Stoughton area.

“My grandfather, Henry, and dad, Hank, were the biggest influences on my decision to become a warden,” he says. “They taught me the values of being a sportsman and how to respect the outdoors.”

Koshollek recalls spending countless hours in the outdoors as a child. He also remembers the admiration he felt for the first game warden he met. Koshollek says he initially wanted to become a DNR fish biologist because of his love of fishing, but when he entered high school, a strong desire to become a police officer took over. The warden profession was the perfect combination of conservation and law enforcement.

“I looked into becoming a warden and set my career path that way after high school,” he says. “I wanted a chance to protect the outdoors and make sure other people get to enjoy it like I do.”

After graduating from Stoughton High School, Koshollek attended Madison Area Technical College before transferring to UW-Oshkosh and earning a degree in criminal justice. After graduating from college, he attended MATC’s Law Enforcement Academy, and then spent a summer working as a LTE park ranger at Yellowstone Lake State Park in southwest Wisconsin. He also worked as an LTE deputy conservation warden for the Poynette team.

For four years, Koshollek worked as a security officer at Meriter Hospital in Madison, followed by two years full-time work as a park ranger at Governor Dodge State Park in Iowa County.

He admits it was hard work, but that hard work finally paid off. After applying three times to the DNR, he was hired for his dream job. He was part of the class of 2015, which was the first warden class to utilize the 720-hour law enforcement academy based on the Department of Justice standard.

Koshollek says he loves his job because of the variety each new day brings.

“I like the variety of enforcement I have in my station from ATV, boat, snowmobile and dirt bikes, to traditional fish and game (enforcement) and assisting various law enforcement agencies,” he explains. “My station is a destination for people to be on the trails and lakes. I like to be visible and try to prevent accidents to keep the community safe and the people enjoying the trails.”

He and his wife, Amanda, moved north to Cable from the Stoughton area, which was a big change for them. But Koshollek



Matt Koshollek with wife, Amanda, and daughters, Autumn and Norah.



Matt Koshollek duck hunts on the Yahara River in Stoughton with Ranger, his yellow Labrador.

says he and Amanda, their two daughters, Autumn, 7, and Norah, 4, and their dogs, Tucker and Ranger, have adjusted well because of their love of the outdoors. The family enjoys spending time camping, hiking and visiting state parks.

When not working or spending time with family, Koshollek enjoys duck, turkey, deer and grouse hunting, as well as fishing.

Memorable cases

Koshollek's most eventful case occurred in his first week

By Stephanie Daniel-Merkel

On his first week on the job, Warden Matt Koshollek worked on a case that will remain one of the most memorable of his career.

While he was conducting ice fishing enforcement, Bayfield law enforcement officers contacted him regarding a potential deer poaching incident in the nearby town of Mason.

Koshollek went to meet with the landowner. The two went out on snowmobiles until they came upon tracks from both snowshoes and a horse; they also found blood.

Deer season had been closed for about one week. Along with the drag trails, the landowner had noticed that the SD card from his trail camera was missing.

Koshollek followed the trails for a couple hours in frigid temperatures. He eventually found a deer, buried in snow with two snowshoes used to mark its location, so he called in Warden Matt Mackenzie from Ashland County to assist.

The two wardens drove around the area until they found a farm with fresh horse tracks leading into a field.

"It was after dark and we waited," recalls Koshollek. "After about a half hour of waiting we saw a headlamp. I used night vision goggles and could see a horse dragging a deer."

They approached the individual who at first claimed he found the deer shot, but later admitted to shooting it without a license.

"It was very exciting and pretty awesome to make a case like this my first week on the job," Koshollek says. "It solidified why I wanted to become a warden and showed that my training paid off. It was a once-in-a-lifetime case to catch a guy red-handed dragging a deer out with a horse."

Koshollek says adaptability, along with a sense of humor, are required traits for a Wisconsin conservation warden. He knows that first hand.

Last spring, he was invited to give a safety talk at the Wisconsin Governor's



During his first week as a warden, Matt Koshollek, above, made a case against an individual who shot an illegal deer. Warden Matt Mackenzie and Koshollek caught the individual dragging the deer out with a horse, as pictured below.

Fishing Opener on Lake Namekagon near Cable.

"Being it was my first fishing opener, I was pretty nervous and wanted everything to go well," he recalls.

While getting ready for the event at home, he received a call regarding two eagles that were locked together from fighting. Koshollek told the caller that the eagles were locked together because it was nesting season, and asked him to call back later in the day if the eagles were still locked together.

"I ironed my uniform, so I would look professional for the banquet, and was just about to leave," he says. "Then the landowner called back and said the eagles were still locked together and had not moved, and that one eagle had put a talon through the other eagle's eye."

Koshollek told the landowner he was on his way. While traveling there, Koshollek kept telling himself that by the time he arrived, the eagles would have already flown off and that he would have plenty of



time for his safety talk.

But as soon as he arrived, he knew that wouldn't be the case. The eagles were still locked together — in a swamp.

Koshollek put on his raptor gloves and carefully walked through the swamp to get to the eagles and free them. All was going well — until on his way back, he stepped into a mud hole.

Even though his uniform pants were quite dirty from the excursion and he had no time to change, he was able to clean up enough to give his presentation, he says.

obituaries

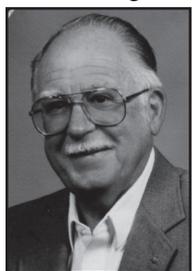
Donald Bruendl

Donald A. Bruendl, 87, of Green Lake, died on Jan. 22, 2018, in Ripon. Bruendl was born Sept. 10, 1930, in Port Washington, the son of Joseph and Marcella (Buchholz) Bruendl. He graduated from Port Washington High School in 1948 and then enlisted in the U.S. Army. He completed his basic training with the 101st Airborne, Army Ordnance School in Baltimore, Maryland. From 1949-1952, he served as master sergeant with the 127th Infantry with the occupation forces in Germany during the Korean War. When he returned, he worked as unit administrator with the Hq 127th Infantry National Guard in Ripon for three years.

On Oct. 15, 1955, Bruendl married Joan Henning in Ripon. He served as vice president and salesman for Van Metres, Inc. in Ripon until 1964 when he became owner of Bruendl Pontiac Buick, Inc. until 1972.

For 10 years, he worked as a special deputy with the DNR and the sheriff's department. He was a member of the riot squad and the Tri-County drug enforcement unit, as well as a radio operator, jailer, county investigator and undersheriff. Bruendl was elected sheriff in 1987 and retired in 1992.

He was also director and life member of the Wisconsin Rifle Pistol Association, and team captain of the Wisconsin State Civilian Rifle Team. He was a member and former president of the Green Lake Rotary Club and was awarded the "Paul Harris Fellow" award. He was also a member of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Izaak Walton League of America and Ripon Rifle and Pistol Club, as well as the Green Lake County Deputy Sheriff's Association, Wisconsin Law Enforcement Officer's Association and Wisconsin Sheriff's and Deputy Sheriff's Association.



He won many awards for rifle shooting including Distinguished Marksman. Bruendl loved hunting and fishing, especially in Montana and Alaska.

Survivors include Don's special helper, Kathy Ratering, of Green Lake; and sister-in-law, Elizabeth Henning, of New Glarus.

He was preceded in death by his parents, wife, mother and father-in-law, Herbert and Myrtle Henning, and brother-in-law, Kenneth Henning. Private interment took place Jan. 30.



Keith Reichenbach teaches one of the early hunter safety programs at Chilton in 1967.

Keith L. Reichenbach

Keith L. Reichenbach, 86, of Eau Claire, died on Dec. 23, 2017, at Chipewewa Valley Hospital, Durand.

Reichenbach was born on March 19, 1931, in Black River Falls, to Raymond and Bessie (Bibby) Reichenbach. He grew up on a farm where he enjoyed picking morel mushrooms and wild berries. Keith graduated from Black River Falls High School. In 1951, he entered the U.S. Navy as a Sea Bee and served during the Korean War, after which Reichenbach enjoyed 31 years as a Wisconsin conservation warden. His career path took him from Trempealeau to Chilton to Jefferson and finally to Oshkosh. He spent his retirement living between Eau Claire and Apache Junction, Arizona.

Keith took great pride in "babysitting the sturgeon" and was awarded the prestigious Shikar Safari Award in 1983.

In 1955, he married his wife, Margaret (Kubina), and they recently celebrated their 62nd anniversary.

Keith's sense of outdoor adventure began as a child where his activities ranged from catching and selling fish in the

neighborhood to looking for arrowheads. Through the years, he enjoyed many activities, including hunting, fishing, traveling and going on desert excursions in Arizona. Dear to him was the annual Jellystone camping trips with grandchildren.

Survivors include his wife, Margaret; daughter, Cindy (Mike) Retzloff, of Durand; son, Mark (Sharon) Reichenbach, of Mendota Heights, Minnesota; four grandchildren, Andrew (Jessica) Reichenbach, Lisa (Micheal) Persons, Julie Retzloff and Jordyn Reichenbach; one great-granddaughter, Analeigh; step-great-grandson, Ian; and sister, Alice (Robert) Comstock, of Merrillan, Wisconsin.

He was preceded in death by his parents; brother, Lynn (Gerry) Reichenbach; and sister, Marie (John) Prochaska.

Funeral services were held on Jan. 3, 2018, at Grace Lutheran Church in Eau Claire. The Wisconsin Conservation Warden Honor Guard was in attendance.



One Sunny day

By Dave Sabrowsky

Sometimes you just have to share your day with others.

When I woke this morning, I felt energized. The forecast was for temperatures over 50 degrees, but more importantly, we were going to have sunshine. We had been having Seattle-like weather during September and October. It was gray, cold, and just miserable weather for more than three weeks.

I like sunshine. I need sunshine. I love sunshine. I was pumped for the day. I had an early dentist appointment and nearly skipped to town for my checkup and cleaning. During the routine checkup, “Doc” broke a tooth. Heck, better to have it happen while sitting in the chair even though my bill for a routine checkup tripled in cost. But the weather was beautiful and nothing could ruin my day.

When I looked for my credit card to pay the bill, it was not in my wallet. I looked

everywhere, but it was gone. I had used it the previous day so in the last 24 hours I had lost it. I rushed home, made the appropriate calls to cancel the card and my world was right again. The sun was shining.

After an early lunch, it was time to varnish the half log siding for my basement

so I moved over to the garage porch to varnish the lumber. I’d been waiting for over three weeks for good weather. I was working in short sleeves, and Walt Disney characters were dancing and singing in the woods. Nothing was going to ruin this day.

I noticed the sun was shining through the trees along the south side of the garage porch and figured this was a perfect place to dry the 16-foot pieces.

After the first few were moved to bask in the sun, I noticed some brown muddy-looking boot prints had traced my route back up onto the porch. Closer examination revealed not mud, but rather evidence that my faithful companion, Meadow, had made a recent deposit over by my lumber drying location. Simply a speed bump on life’s highway and after cleaning my boots and the porch, I resumed whistling while I worked, until I noticed that more of God’s little creatures were also enjoying the sun shining through the trees at the south end



Meadow

of the porch. Thousands of God’s little creatures in the shape of small fruit fly-looking bugs were swarming around my recently varnished paneling. I hoped the flies buzzing around were simply admiring my work, but I was wrong. They

had formed quite an attachment for the recently varnished pieces — literally.

There were hundreds stuck to the paneling. My knotty pine lumber now looked like it had a 5 o’clock shadow. The sun was still shining, but the sky had darkened. I couldn’t hear Walt’s little creatures singing in the woods, either.

I had no choice; I needed to get the varnishing done so I looked around for an alternative drying location. I found

it between the house and garage on the driveway. The trees were shading an area sufficient for laying out the 16-foot pieces and the bugs weren’t warming themselves in the shade. The little pests only liked sunshine.

I laid out some furring strips, and went back to work. The sky brightened a bit. I may have even whistled again. I was getting down to the last few pieces when Meadow, who had been laying on the garage porch all afternoon admiring my work, decided it was time to go back to the house. Of course she took the most direct route, which was over the top of my drying paneling.

I only became aware of her departure when I heard the stomach churning noise of dog paws bouncing off recently varnished 16-foot knotty pine tongue and grooved half log siding panels off a gravel driveway. I was horrified and reacted instinctively by calling out “Meadow.” This was a mistake.

Meadow is a well trained dog. When she hears her name, she comes. Meadow came, retracing her route back to her beloved master over the paneling.

I’ve been sitting inside ever since, sipping on brandy, and watching an old western on TV — in the dark.

DAVE SABROWSKY is a retired Wisconsin conservation warden from Elcho who served from 1977-2002.



Many historic photos of wardens and their work await cataloging for future reference in publications and displays.



Warden museum items are currently stored in Madison in a temperature and humidity controlled environment. *Photos by Bill Schwengel*

Looking forward through our past

New warden history committee seeks your help

By **Bill Schwengel**

Most people like to look at an old family photo, read a passage about some past event that may have involved them, or look at a relic that may have had a connection to their lives. History is one of those pursuits that one could dabble in or become obsessed with. Many parts of conservation warden history have been preserved in newspaper accounts, photos, artifacts and in the memories of retired wardens.

Fortunately, a lot has already been done to preserve this history. For example, the Wisconsin warden museum has accessed about 2,500 artifacts into its computer database. The accession process documents date received, donor, description and location for each item in the museum storage area.

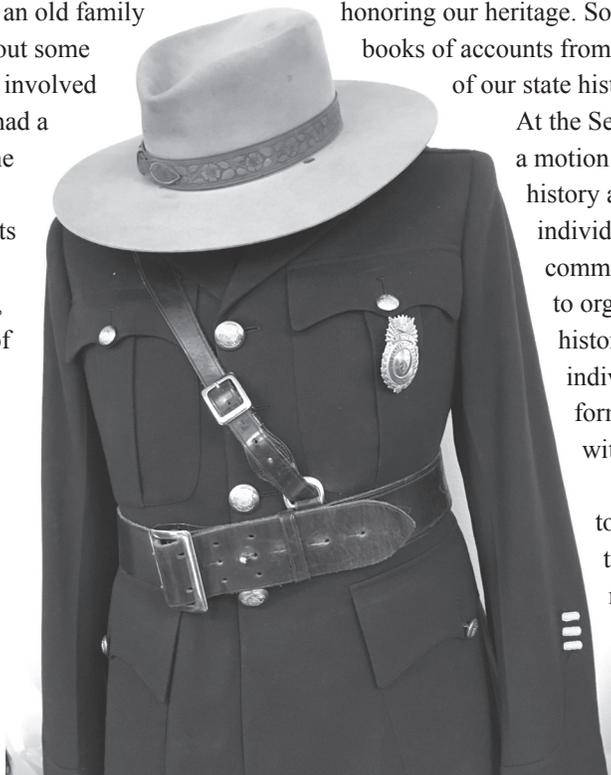
Benefits of studying warden history may include enhancements in training, developing legislation, understanding cultural issues,

appreciating accomplishments in wildlife conservation, and honoring our heritage. Some retired wardens have published books of accounts from their careers. Warden history is a part of our state history and needs to be preserved.

At the September WCWA board meeting, a motion was made to continue the warden history and museum efforts of various individuals through a warden history committee. This committee is forming plans to organize the various facets of warden history – museum, photos, literature and individual recollections. The task is formidable, but it can be accomplished with the help of many.

The committee is seeking members to assist with this effort, in addition to continued contributions of memorabilia for the archives. If you would like to help out in any way, please contact Bill Schwengel, committee chair, at william.schwengel@gmail.com.

BILL SCHWENDEL is a retired Wisconsin conservation warden from Eau Claire.



The museum contains a 1930's era mountie-style warden uniform in excellent condition.

LOOKING BACK

Excerpts from the Wisconsin Conservation Bulletin

By Bill Schwengel

May 1937

- Humane Society members condemn hunting with bow and arrow on the theory that an arrow is more painful than a bullet. Archers reported hitting a single deer last year.
- The fire lane controversy was aired in the legislature. Nature lovers generally wanted fewer roads through wild areas and demanded that all fire lanes be closed to general traffic. But people living in the forest area believed some of the fire lanes should be open for convenience.

June 1960

- The Wisconsin Conservation Commission, the predecessor to the Natural Resources Board, approved the sale of 12 acres of unneeded land with farm buildings on Peterson Creek, Polk County.
- The commission also adopted regulations to control the harvest of wild rice, requiring a license be purchased. Only state residents were allowed to purchase the license.

September-October 1960

- Hunting regulations were changed to include one general statewide opening for deer gun season, with the date being Nov. 19. Other regulation changes included:
- At least two members of a hunting party must be present when a party deer (antlerless bonus deer permit issued to a group of four hunters on a lottery system) is registered.
- It is unlawful to have single ball or slug ammunition in your possession or under your control except during the open firearm season for deer or bear. It is also now unlawful to transport any deer in or on any motor-driven vehicle from the time it was killed to the time it is lawfully registered unless the deer is carried openly exposed and in such a manner that the deer tag cannot be handled or manipulated by any occupant of the vehicle.
- There was no early fall bear season this year. The bear season will be open during the deer-gun season in the area where the deer party is legal. The bag limit on bear is one per year.
- The code was changed to recognize pellet guns, allow their use, and control them the same as .22 caliber rifles. You may now use pellet guns of .177 caliber and larger in the same manner and for the same purpose and subject to the same restrictions as .22 rimfire rifles.

Note: Some of these laws have changed or have been repealed – consult your current hunting regulations. As Warden Allan Galston, assistant law enforcement supervisor, Oshkosh, wrote in his article back in the day, “We suggest you get your pamphlets, examine them closely, and then if you have any questions, contact your friend, the local conservation warden, for clarification.”

BILL SCHWENGEL is a retired conservation warden from Eau Claire.



Randy Dunkel



Ryan Volenberg

Active WCWA members leave the Wisconsin DNR

Three longtime Wisconsin Conservation Warden Association members who were active on the Board of Directors or on committees have left the Department of Natural Resources.

Randy Dunkel served as WCWA president from May 2012 to January 2018, and also served as vice president from 2011-2012. Dunkel was hired by the Wisconsin DNR in 2007 and was assigned to Racine, Cornell (Chippewa County), and most recently, Wausau. He is now working with the Everest Metro Police Department in Weston.

Ryan Volenberg, who moved to the Division of Criminal Investigation with the Wisconsin Department of Justice, served as WCWA president from 2011-2012, and also served as vice president for a long time before that. He had worked for the DNR for 15 years, and was previously assigned to the Manitowoc Marine station and most recently worked in Poynette.

Jeremy Cords was also an active member of WCWA who had served as a representative of the Northeast Region, and also volunteered his and his son's time to work at the annual Wisconsin Conservation & Education Foundation banquet.



Jeremy Cords

Cords is an 18-year veteran of the Wisconsin DNR where he worked as a conservation warden and, most recently, as a recreational safety warden in the Northeast Region. In that role, he trained county and municipal authorities on recreational law enforcement concerning ATVs, boats and snowmobiles. He also oversaw recruitment, retention and recertification of roughly 850 volunteer instructors that provide the recreational safety programs in communities throughout the Northeast Region, many of whom live in the Fox Valley.

Cords began his new job as chief executive officer for the Fox Locks in November 2017.

With Dunkel leaving, Cara Kamke was elected president at the last WCWA Board Meeting. She previously served as vice president.

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Warden Supervisor Jeremy Peery and sons, Kale and Conner, pose with a beautiful gray fox caught on the trap line. See more Fruits of Your Labor photos on Page 10.