



“The newspaper for people who love the north”



Early April 2014
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Michigan's Conservation Sentinel Since 1953



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Spring break time: Is winter really over?

It's time for the *Call* gang's annual spring break and—after this past winter—a respite is sorely needed.

That means that the next *North Woods Call* will hit your mailboxes in late April—just in time to wrap those shiny trout you pull from Michigan waters. We recommend, of course, that you read it first.

Over the break, we'll be doing some spring chores around the house and perhaps taking a drive south in search of spring blossoms among the laurel and redbud trees.

Meanwhile, we're completing our tax forms for 2013, and have been examining income and expenses for the year. The good news is that *The Call* is operating in the black. But just barely. So we're still looking for more subscribers and advertisers.

An upcoming public radio piece about the publication should help in that regard. (More about that later).

We should be seeing April flowers and green grass popping out around here in the coming weeks, although at this writing—five days after spring officially arrived—it is 19 degrees and snowing outside our office window. Tomorrow may be even colder.

The prognosticators say that the spring season will likely be cooler than normal, due in part to the large amount of ice that accumulated on the Great Lakes during the winter.

So we might as well chill out, so to speak, and enjoy the rebirth of nature whenever it occurs. Some years it just takes a little longer than others.

Remember: Patience is a virtue.

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THE NORTHERN WOODS CALL
Michigan's Conservation Sentinel Since 1953



Ahhh, at long last...

—North Woods Call photo

Spring has finally arrived at northern Michigan's Interlochen Center for the Arts and across the region (we think). Creative students, artistic sculptures and outdoor-loving people of all kinds are looking forward to warmer weather and no more snow—for a while, at least. Easter Sunday will be here in a few weeks and the good folks of Kalkaska are preparing for the 78th National Trout Festival April 23-27. It's a great time of year!

Mining recyclables: Digging those landfills

The Clarkston-based TerRenova company reportedly wants to buy a Genesee County landfill and possibly mine it for buried recyclables.

Such an operation would be unique in Michigan, state officials said.

TerRenova offered \$1 million for the closed Richfield Landfill in Richfield Township about 50 miles northwest of Detroit, according to a recent story in *The Flint Journal*.

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality officials said the proposed mining operation hasn't been detailed in writing, but

it has been discussed in meetings with the company. TerRenova is also considering a waste-to-energy operation on the 272-acre property, they said.

The company has been negotiating with a U.S. Bankruptcy Court trustee to purchase the landfill, according to *The Journal*, and recently applied for a license to operate the landfill. The application is said to be under review by DEQ officials.

The planned mining operation has reportedly prompted concerns among area residents and township officials, who are worried about the possible impacts of dis-

turbing the buried waste on water resources such as the Holloway Reservoir, Buttercup Beach and the Flint River.

The plans call for reopening the landfill for garbage and mining during breaks in sorting out fresh material, a Richfield Township official said.

If the project doesn't materialize, the DEQ said it is prepared to move ahead with a closure plan for the landfill—a process that has apparently already started. The \$4.4 million cost to permanently close the landfill would be covered by a fund that was established by former operators of the landfill.



The tranquil Norwood area just down the road from Glen Sheppard's former North Woods Call office could be impacted if plans for a land swap between the State of Michigan and St. Mary's Cement Inc. are approved. Among other things, a new local entrance to Fisherman's Island State Park has been proposed.

—North Woods Call photo

St. Mary's claims benefits of land swap

St. Mary's Cement Inc. says a land swap between the company and Fisherman's Island State Park in Charlevoix County would benefit the community.

Opponents, however, say the public stands to lose much more than it would gain.

The company would pick up a more consolidated "quarry footprint," officials said, which means a shorter property boundary that is more isolated from residential areas. That means less fuel would be consumed hauling materials to the main plant, they said.

There would be less of an environmental impact, the company told Charlevoix-area residents during recent public meetings, and a shorter perimeter to repair once quarrying is completed and the quarry is eventually turned into a lake. The impact on the Nor-

wood Township neighborhoods of Clipperview and Cedarview will be "substantially reduced," they said.

Fisherman's Island State Park, meanwhile, would have a net gain of around 40 acres of land, they said, as well as about 4,000 feet of a trout stream known as McGeach Creek, including a diverse habitat with fields, woods and wetlands.

In addition, company officials said, there would be a new public access road to the park that would not pass through an industrial setting. Additional improvements could include a new ranger station and other infrastructure improvements close to the "day area," they said.

Anne Zukowski, Friends of Fisherman's Island
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North Woods Notes

WOLF HUNT PETITIONS: Opponents of Michigan's wolf hunt have turned in a second round of petition signatures to get the issue on the November 2014 general election ballot. About 225,000 signatures have been collected, they said, which is about 64,000 more than the minimum valid signatures required. If the state's Board of Canvassers approves enough of the signatures, a new law allowing the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to set a hunt would be put on hold until the public vote. A competing petition drive could derail the effort, however. Supporters of the wolf hunt have until May 20 to submit more than 250,000 valid signatures to reinforce the NRC's authority to designate game species and issue fishery orders. If enough signatures are collected, a bill would go to the Legislature, which would have 40 days to act and could neutralize the ballot efforts of hunt opponents.

OIL & GAS LEGISLATION: A four-bill package that was making its way through the Michigan Legislature during late March would give oil and gas companies tax breaks for re-using carbon dioxide to tap capped wells and have more power to obtain land for pipelines. The state Senate approved the measures and sent it back to the House for concurrence. Supporters reportedly argue that the tax break—a 4 percent rebate on the gross cash market value of total production (reduced from the previous 5 percent for gas and 6.6 percent for oil)—would apply only to extractions that would otherwise be impossible, but critics say it benefits big oil and gas companies that are doing fine already.

SCRAP TIRES: The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has announced \$357,450 in grants to clean up several scrap tire sites around the state and fund 27 community cleanup days. The grants will help clean up the equivalent of more than 283,530 passenger car tires, according to a report by the M-Live Media Group. Michigan alone generates an estimated 10 million scrap tires every year. As of last spring, more than 2 million scrap tires were stored at outdoor collection sites and some 450,000 were being illegally stored, a DEQ report says. The state has banned whole scrap tires from landfills since 2004.

ENERGY HEADACHES: The Lake Winds Energy Park south of Ludington has been online for about 15 months now and the promise of green energy is giving way to resident complaints and legal disputes. Seventeen plaintiffs in Scottville and Ludington who don't have turbines on their property have reportedly signed onto a lawsuit complaining of sleeplessness, headaches, dizziness, nausea, stress and fatigue, according to a recent *Detroit News* story. In the meantime, Mason County and Consumers Energy officials are looking for a way to deal with the noise issue and a court is deciding whether the utility has violated local zoning rules, writes *News* reporter Jim Lynch. Nearly 60 tall wind turbines dot the rolling hills and farmland, one of 17 operating wind farms in the state.

HAMLIN LAKE: The process of raising Hamlin Lake in Ludington State Park to its summer level will begin once all ice has melted off the water. It is expected to take two to six weeks to complete.

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Papa In Mancy

—North Woods Call Photo

Silhouettes depicting Nobel Prize-winning author Ernest Hemingway at various stages of his life adorn the side of this building in downtown Mancelona. The mural was painted in 2005 by Patricia Innis with the help of Mancelona High School art students. Hemingway—who summered with his family on Walloon Lake (formerly Bear Lake) near Petoskey—occasionally traveled through the village and featured the area in some of his short stories. Mancelona is the hometown of former North Woods Call co-publisher Mary Lou Shepard and the “laboratory” where the current publisher got his start in journalism. Go Ironmen!

Meetings to discuss Lake Michigan trout regulations

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is presenting information and taking comments on possible changes to lake trout size and daily catch limits for northern Lake Michigan trout management zones MM-3, 4 and 5.

DNR officials are hosting three more public meetings on the subject in April. They will be at the Leland Public Library, 203 Cedar Street, in Leland (5 p.m. April 9), the East Bay Township Hall, 1965 N.

Three Mile Road, in Traverse City (5 p.m. April 16) and the Frankfort City Hall, 412 Main Street in Frankfort (5 p.m. April 23). A previous meeting was held March 26 in Charlevoix.

“These meetings provide a great opportunity for anglers to engage in the regulatory process,” said Heather Hettinger, DNR fisheries management biologist. For information or special accommodations, contact Hettinger at (231) 922-5280, ext. 6870.

Our 61st Year: Looking Back to March 31, 1954
—Excerpts from *The North Woods Call*—

Spring fever and our roots

By Marguerite Gahagan

It is difficult to push human roots into the soil through the asphalt and concrete of city streets.

As a result, modern urban America is rapidly becoming suburban, or even bucolic.

For back in the ancestry of all of us are generations upon generations who lived and loved and tilled the soil in the centuries of the past. From them, most of us—unless we are descended from the Vikings of the north, or the Phoenician traders of the Mediterranean—have inherited a desire to return to the soil.

This is what sends millions of our people to the back woods for vacations each spring and summer. This is why a simple cottage on a lake becomes—in the mind’s eye of every wage slave—the utopia to which he dreams of retiring.

With faster and faster [vehicles] for travel now being made, it is safe to predict that cities of the future may be merely places where business is transacted and articles are manufactured by a race of men [and women] who live in the cool comfort and placidity of the woods.

This may be the answer to the modern tensions which bring on the degenerative diseases of man. This may be the vaccine against heart disease that our physicians seek. In any event, it is a fact that even the summer weeks of recreation on trout streams and lakes are serving their purpose in man’s fight against such modern killers.

So, when in the early spring the annual urge comes to the soul of man shackled in his city towers, it is really only an outpouring of his instinctive desire to return to the land. His subconscious knows that it is much easier to put down roots in the soil of the farm and the woods, and it is but urging him to go to those places where he can feel that he has “returned home.”

Don’t fight it, you victims of machine-age ennui. Rather, keep in mind that your “spring fever” is just your inner spirit expressing itself. It is the real you—the one that would like to shake off the cares and worries of the city and, for a time, trade them for the peaceful turbulence of the trout stream for the noisy silence of the woods.

And head north, man. Head north.



North Woods Notes

(Continued from Page 1)

APRIL NRC MEETING: The April 10 and May 8 meetings of the Michigan Natural Resources Commission (NRC) will be held at the Michigan State University Diagnostic Center, 4125 Beaumont Road, in Lansing. The June 12, Sept. 11 and Nov. 6 meetings will also be held at that same location, while the Oct. 9 meeting will be at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center, 104 Conservation Drive, on Higgins Lake near Roscommon. Other NRC meetings during 2014 will be July 10 at the Outdoor Adventure and Discovery Center, 1801 Atwater Street in Detroit; Aug. 14 at a location yet to be determined in Munising; and Dec. 11 at the Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan Avenue in Lansing.

COASTAL TRAILS: The Great Lakes Coastal Trails Conference is set for May 15-16 at the Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver Street, in Saugatuck, Mich. Registration is free. To sign up, visit www.lmwt.org. For more information, contact Dave Lemberg at (269) 352-8729 or lemberg@wmich.edu.

GREAT LAKES FISH POSTER: An updated poster showing fish of the Great Lakes is now available from the Wisconsin Sea Grant office. The updated 26.5- by 38.5-inch poster shows the Great Lakes ecosystem, which is historically home to 210 species of fish, according to Sea Grant officials. The fish are presented as colorful images created by Kansas artist Joseph Tomelleri. To get a copy of the poster, visit aqua.wisc.edu/publications. The cost is \$6, which includes shipping and handling.

BUDGET CUT: President Obama’s proposed 2015 budget offers a spending cut for a program that reportedly deals with some of the Great Lake’s most urgent environmental threats. The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative—which received \$475 million the first year it was funded and about \$300 million in most subsequent years—would be “scaled back” to \$275 million under the new budget. According to an *Associated Press* report, the program has funded projects across an eight-state region to clean up polluted harbors and river mouths, battle Asian carp and other invasive species, control runoff that causes algae blooms and restore wildlife habitat.

BEACH MONITORING: Coastal beaches in the Grand Traverse region will be healthier and safer this summer, thanks to a \$27,600 grant from the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians. The grant will fund weekly monitoring of e-coli bacteria at 13 beaches from Memorial Day through Labor Day, as well as a beach safety initiative.

FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN: The Michigan Department of Natural Resources has released its new five-year strategic plan to guide its work in sustainably managing and protecting Michigan forest resources. The plan, “Seeing the Forest, the Trees & Beyond,” can be found at www.michigan.gov/forestplan.

St. Marys claims community benefits of land swap

(Continued from Page 1)

State Park co-chair, said the community needs the north end of the state park and Bells Bay Road. “This is part of Charlevoix the Beautiful,” she said during a recent meeting of the Charlevoix City Council. “This portion of the park is the most popular and contributes to our tourism-based economy.”

Ultimately, Zukowski said, it’s up to the Department of Natural Resources to defend the rules and guidelines under which the park was formed and turn down the swap. “However, we need to let them know how important this park is to us,” she said. “We need to tell them to honor their obligations to protect the park the way it was intended to be protected.”

“We recognize that our area is a community with a certain character and charm that we all must work to preserve and protect,” said Dick Cox, St. Mary’s operations manager, in a concept paper prepared by the company. “For a concept as broad and long-term as the land swap, a meaningful conversation is needed where real issues can be identified, then discussed by objective people working together for the overall benefit to the community, the park, our company and our employees. That kind of dialogue has not yet occurred. As a result, St. Mary’s has not yet prepared, or submitted an application to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for a land swap.”

To that end, the company has proposed that a “working committee” be formed to objectively challenge existing assumptions and determine if practical solutions can be crafted. The findings and conclusions could then be re-

ported to the broader community, according to Cox. Such a committee would include people from Charlevoix Township, Norwood Township and the City of Charlevoix, he said.

“An open, direct and fact-based dialogue which leads to a constructive solution is the best way forward,” Cox said.

“Such a committee based on compromise starts from the premise that St. Mary’s has a right to this state land,” Zukowski said, “and we must bargain to see what perks and ‘improvements’ to the park we can get in return. This is the wrong premise. Taking of Fisherman’s Island State Park land should be non-negotiable.”

Although a vote was not taken during the recent discussion, Charlevoix City Council member Shirley Gibson reportedly said the proposed land trade sounds as if the public would “get a bone with no meat on it.” Fellow council member Leon Perron is quoted as saying, “It’s an unbelievably valuable piece of the earth and we’re going to take it away from generations if this goes through.”

Meanwhile, Water and Air Team Charlevoix (WATCH), an advocate for the Charlevoix County environment since 1983, expressed concern for a proposed lake-to-lake trail that has been in the works for years and is scheduled for construction this spring.

“We ask that the Charlevoix City Council and the Charlevoix Township Board oppose the land swap,” said Bill Henne, vice president of WATCH.

“The public is always the last to be informed in deals such as this,” Zukowski said, “and by the time public comment periods are formally established, the deals

have already been formalized. This is wrong. This is why we created the Facebook page—Save Fisherman’s Island State Park—to let the community know what is happening and to give the residents a voice. Over 1,300 people have ‘liked’ the page [so far]. We are asking St. Mary’s to withdraw their conceptual plan and stop the swap.”

St. Marys officials said it is premature to ask anyone to make a final judgment at this time. No formal application for the swap has been submitted, they said, so that a meaningful dialogue can occur before any binding decisions are made.

“It is just a concept,” the company said in its paper, and public input is important.

“We are not the first ‘Save Fisherman’s Island’ group,” Zukowski said, “and this is not the first time the park has been threatened by development.

“This was written in the *Charlevoix Courier* in 1971: ‘The land varies from rolling sand dunes to areas strewn with huge boulders from another age and limestone slabs, excellent beach sand and—behind the lake shore—forests which vary from cedar swamp ... to high ridges covered with hardwoods ... University students conduct archeological digs on the tract and have uncovered valuable early Indian artifacts. Petitions are presently being circulated in an effort to obtain some action from the DNR to save the land for the public.’

“This land was important to save back then,” she said, “and it is important to save today.”

A current petition to save the park can be found at the group’s Facebook page.

Chesapeake and Encana officials arraigned

Corporate representatives of Oklahoma-based Chesapeake Energy Corporation and Delaware-based Encana Oil and Gas USA were arraigned March 20 in Cheboygan District Court before Judge Maria Barton.

As reported in the Late March edition of *The North Woods Call*, they face criminal charges for allegedly collaborating to avoid

bidding wars against each other in Michigan public auctions and private negotiations for oil and gas leases.

The activity reportedly caused prices to plummet.

Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette filed the charges on March 5 following an investigation into the companies' alleged 2010 collaboration.

They face one count each of anti-trust violations relating to a contract, or conspiracy, in restraint of commerce and one count each of attempted anti-trust violations. The former charge is a high court misdemeanor punishable by up to two years in jail and/or a \$10,000 fine for an individual. The latter is a misdemeanor punishable by up to one

year in jail and/or a \$1,000 fine.

Both companies waived their right to a preliminary examination within 14 days and Judge Barton issued \$20,000 personal recognizance bonds for the company officials. They are next due in Cheboygan District Court for a preliminary examination scheduled to be held sometime between May 5 to May 8, 2014.



Young Archers

Hartland's archery teams swept Michigan's first live National Archery in the Schools Program tournament last month at Central Michigan University in Mt. Pleasant. The district, located in northeast Livingston County, won the championship trophy in all three divisions—elementary, middle school and high school—and the middle school's B Team finished as runner-up. Here (below left), Leea Strifule from the Team Home Schoolers in Gaylord, removes arrows from a target. Below right, Hartland students Emily Bee and Chris Bee with coach Rob Jellison. The brother and sister turned in the tournament's best scores overall. Gaylord St. Mary's Cathedral finished second among high schools and Fowlerville third among middle schools.

—Michigan DNR photos—



Propane supplier subpoenaed in pricing probe

Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette in late March was seeking civil subpoenas in an ongoing investigation into recent pricing and other suspect business practices related to this winter's unprecedented price hikes for propane.

Schuette said his office had been contacted by more than 700 Michigan consumers since January, who have complained of unfair pricing and other questionable business practices within the propane industry. Many of the complaints related to Ferrellgas Inc., he said, and review of the information gathered to date led to the subpoena requests.

"Michigan families have enough rising costs to worry about without being concerned that they may be taken advantage of by their energy supplier," said Schuette. "We are prepared to take legal action if it is determined that state law has been broken."

As noted in the petition for sub-

poena filed in Saginaw County Circuit Court, the attorney general has received 65 complaints against Ferrellgas Inc. and its affiliate Best Propane. The complaints include allegations of excessive pricing and misrepresenting the price that consumers would have to pay for propane.

Under the Michigan Consumer Protection Act, a retailer may not charge a price that is "grossly in excess of the price at which similar property or services are sold." Evidence gathered to date suggests that while the statewide average retail price for propane went as high as \$3.76 in early February, some Ferrellgas customers were apparently charged more than \$8.00 per gallon.

Additionally, the Consumer Protection Act also prohibits other conduct that misleads or deceives the consumer in relation to material aspects of the transaction in question. For example, the law prohibits gross discrepancies be-

tween verbal representations of the seller and the written agreement that covers the same transaction. In this regard, information gathered to date suggests that some Ferrellgas consumers ordering propane over the phone may have been misled as to what the actual price of the propane would be once it was delivered.

Saginaw County Circuit Court has ordered Ferrellgas to provide documents and testimony to the investigation of this and other suspected conduct.

Schuette said his review of consumer complaints related to propane pricing remains ongoing.

If consumers have additional evidence suggesting that a retailer engaged in behavior that violates the Consumer Protection Act, they are encouraged to contact the state Consumer Protection Division at 1-877-765-8388, or file an online complaint at michigan.gov/ag.

Additional Hall of Fame Inductees

In addition to the 2014 inductees mentioned in the late March edition of *The North Woods Call*—Norm Spring, Joan Wolfe, Don Inman, Dave Dempsey and the Clinton River Watershed Council—other new members of the Michigan Environmental Hall of fame include:

Mayville Elementary School in the college/schools category, which has 15 acres of land on the school grounds that are "certified wildlife habitat" by the National Wildlife Federation.

The wolf and moose of Isle Royale in the project category. **Durward Allen**, who initiated the project in 1958, was a pioneer among ecologists for having the foresight to understand the value of continuing observation where others would have drawn conclusions and moved on to study something different.

Ralph Bailey and **Tom Washington** in the legacy category.

Bailey, one of the last great DNR field bosses, was a mentor, friend, supervisor, conservation leader, consummate biologist, patriot and family man. He supported wildlife management based on sound science.

Washington was longtime executive director of the Michigan United Conservation Clubs and a lifetime advocate for the wise use of our natural resources. He also served as president of the National Rifle Association.

The induction ceremony will be held at 7 p.m. April 10 at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum in Grand Rapids (See story above).

Dave Dempsey to keynote hall of fame event

Author and environmentalist Dave Dempsey will deliver the keynote address at this year's Michigan Environmental Hall of Fame induction.

The event will take place at 7 p.m. April 10 at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum in Grand Rapids.

Dempsey's message—entitled "Michigan's Conservation Heroes: The Untold Stories"—will feature tales of citizens, many long-forgotten, who made Michigan a nationally recognized champion of natural resource protection. He will also discuss the need for present and future conservation heroes to take over where previous generations left off.

Dempsey, a Michigan native who now resides in Minnesota, is the author of five books and co-author of three. His works have included "Ruin and Recovery: Michigan's Rise as a Conservation Leader," "On the Brink: The Great Lakes in the 21st Century," and a biography of former Gov. Milliken entitled "William G. Milliken: Michigan's Passionate Moderate."

Winner of the 2009 Michigan Author Award, he holds degrees from Western Michigan University and Michigan State University, and has spent most of his professional career in environmental conservation.

Among other positions, Dempsey has been executive director of the Michigan Council on Environmental Quality, program director in the Michigan office of Clean Water Action, policy director and senior advisor for the Michigan Environmental Council, and member of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission.

The Michigan Environmental Hall of Fame is sponsored by The Muskegon Environmental Research and Education Society.

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The North Woods Call**

Opinion

Quote Box

"A true hunter talks little. The habit of his skill is silence."

— W.H.H. Murray

Don't forget these hall of famers

Oops. In our haste to get late-breaking information about this year's Michigan Environmental Hall of Fame inductees into the last edition of *The North Woods Call*, we inadvertently missed a few individuals (see related stories on Page 3).

Norm Spring, Joan Wolfe, Don Inman, Dave Dempsey and the Clinton River Watershed Council were prominently mentioned last time, but Ralph Bailey, Tom Washington, the Mayville Elementary School, and Durward Allen's wolf and moose project on Isle Royale got lost on the second page of the news release that came across our desk.

That doesn't mean their contributions were any less significant, or noteworthy.

All of these individuals and organizations are Michigan "conservation heroes" and richly deserve the recognition they are getting. If not for their tenacious efforts on a variety of fronts over many years, the state's environment and natural resources would have much less going for them.

This year's Hall of Fame honorees have all been in the trenches, trudging through the mud of political opposition and personal sacrifice. And they have helped us arrive in a better place.

Our respect and admiration for their efforts cannot be overstated. We thank them for the huge difference they have made.

Self-incriminating social media

We don't quite get this thing called social media.

Yeah, it's a means of finding long-lost friends and communicating with those to whom we may not otherwise connect, and it can introduce us to new acquaintances that may, or may not, offer something positive to our lives.

It's also an apparently addictive activity that seems to waste a lot of time. Worse yet, it compromises our privacy, which many people these days don't seem to care much about.

It's amazing what users post about themselves and others—as if social media represents a private conversation only accessible to those with whom we choose to share our innermost secrets. Judging from what we've seen, compromising photographs, self-incriminating posts and general foolishness are the order of the day.

And it's a bonanza for potential employers and active law enforcement officers searching for evidence of a person's character and criminal activity.

Michigan's conservation officers, for example, regularly collar people who have posted pictures of their fishing and hunting trophies, as well as text messages bragging about their catches and kills. Trouble is, some of these people don't have valid licenses, or perhaps they have chosen not to follow state regulations regarding legal practices and seasons.

It's a simple matter for law enforcement authorities to track these individuals electronically and pay them a visit—with all the computerized evidence they need in hand.

Is it just us, or is this a tad bit self-defeating?

Chilling the first amendment

Here's another one of those issues that some readers will say doesn't have anything to do with the conservation of natural resources.

But it does have something to do with the news business—so we figure it probably belongs in this space.

It seems the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) wants to monitor the nation's newsrooms—particularly those related to television and radio broadcasts—to study the nation's "critical information needs" and learn how reporters, editors and station owners decide which stories to run. The reported purpose is to explore "the process by which stories are selected," as well as "perceived bias" and "responsiveness to under-served populations."

The feds, of course, say this is simply an objective fact-finding mission. Participation in this study, they say, is "voluntary," although it's clearly understood that broadcast stations would be out-of-business without an FCC license—which must be renewed every eight years.

In an era where public distrust of government is growing by leaps and bounds, it's easy to wonder just what FCC officials are up to. Is the ultimate goal to censor the news, or to pressure broadcasters into covering only those issues that Washington bureaucrats determine to be "critical information needs?"

At this point, we can't assign motives with any certainty, but we don't think Big Brother belongs in America's newsrooms.

Granted, much of today's media is doing an abysmal job covering what free people need to know to govern themselves. But somehow inserting government observers into the decision making would only make matters worse.

A faithful shelter from the storm: My life in tents

In a fractured nation and topsy-turvy world, many of us are searching for some kind of shelter from the storm.

Which—for some weird reason—makes me think about tents.

I was first introduced to collapsible cloth structures as a toddler, when I threw a blanket over the backs of two kitchen chairs and crawled inside. Later, as my world expanded, I took the chairs and blanket into the back yard and reclined underneath on the cool, green grass.

From there, I graduated to the family cabin tent—made from heavy, weather-treated canvas—and a smaller A-shaped version that we called a "pup tent." I had no idea why the little two-person bungalow was called that, or what any of it had to do with dogs, but I may have since discovered why.

Most of these outings were uneventful—save for some apples dropping on the roof during a noisy rainstorm at Interlochen State Park during the late 1950s and admonitions from my parents to refrain from touching the canvas tent walls, which were sure to leak like a sieve.

Oh, and there was the snowy, sub-zero camp-out my college roommate and I experienced in the mid-1970s, and the windy lightning storm that blew my modern nylon tent over a Beaver Island bluff a few years later. (Don't worry, I escaped before that happened).

I began to understand the meaning of "pup tent," though, one dark night when I was sleeping in southern Michigan's Allegan State Game Area in my two-person Eureka Timberline model. I was awakened abruptly by what I thought was a raccoon, or some other wild animal, jumping on the rain fly and trying to push its nose through the zippered door.

I shoved back a few times, but the aggressive animal kept right on assaulting my woodland bed-

North Woods Journal

By Mike VanBuren



room, so I grabbed the large metal flashlight I kept at my side and whacked the intruder hard across the snout. I heard a single loud yelp, some retreating paw steps and then silence.

I climbed out of my sleeping bag and scooted outside to survey the area. To my surprise, the flashlight beam landed on a sheepish and whimpering beagle puppy several yards away—a normally joyful spirit that apparently was only trying to make friends with a paranoid outdoorsman.

My camp mate and I quickly dubbed him the "Pound Puppy" and I tried to make up for the violence I had visited on him. Fortunately, he was the forgiving type, graciously licking my hand and hanging around camp until late morning, when we convinced him to return to the home we were sure he had nearby.

For the past 40 years, that same Timberline tent has accompanied me to many other forests, rivers and lakeshores in Michigan, the Algoma country of northern Ontario, the beaches of Florida, the Bitterroot Mountains of western Montana and other locations.

But I haven't always been as faithful to it as it has to me.

Once—on a college-age spring break outing near Florida's Atlantic coast—we had 28 people from various states in another's six-person tent, consuming adult beverages, singing folk songs and generally enjoying each others' company as alligators waddled by on the narrow park road outside.

Ah, the exuberance of youth.

When my children were growing up, we camped for many years at campgrounds and bluegrass festivals in a 12- by 12-foot nylon umbrella tent covered by a

"Stormshield" fly that adequately kept some pretty ferocious rainstorms at bay. We have since spent a relative handful of nights in a 25-foot Wilderness travel trailer that is less damp and much warmer than any tent I've ever owned. Better yet, it's got a queen-sized mattress and indoor plumbing.

Still, the hassles of getting such a monstrosity out of the barn and putting it away again—not to mention upkeep, maintenance and extra-fuel costs—have kept me attached to my tiny Timberline for most trips to the forests and fields.

These days, though, I'm finding tent life and sleeping on the ground much less comfortable than I once did. I still enjoy doing it, but don't often rest as well as I once did and sometimes have to take a revitalizing nap when I get back home.

Mostly—especially on road trips—I'm much more inclined to check into a motel than to find a campground and pitch my tent on the cold, hard turf. There's always the chance, I guess, that the troubled economy will force me to reverse this trend.

But I've grown accustomed to such change. After all, there are plenty of slobbering puppies (and other less-desireable creatures) trying to push their noses into our proverbial tents these days.

Some of these intrusive forces are beneficial, but many are not. So it's good to have a well-manufactured tent to buffet the winds and keep the rain off our heads.

The quality and effectiveness of most tents has advanced over the years and improved upon the canvas structures of old.

I'm not sure I can say the same thing about the condition of our nation and world.

Letter to the editor

Why not leave the U.P.'s pristine Schwartz Creek alone?

Editor:

For folks that fish the native brook trout in the west branch of the Escanaba River, some concern and response must be offered.

Your article in *The Call* (early March 2014) gave printed reasons why this newly organized group headed by Trout Unlimited has decided on replacing the perched culvert in the crossing at Schwartz Creek Dam.

They say [it is] to improve fishing in the whole watershed and build a foundation to explore other opportunities on streams in the Upper Peninsula. [The group] claims, and it has been reported, that this culvert cuts off 20-some miles that brook trout could use for spawning. (There is very little back-up of water there).

The article also relates to issues of concern about why the group shouldn't create change (or [alter the] character) of the best "waters" in the west branch watershed.

For more than a 50-year span in my time, this pristine stretch of fresh water has maintained its character as Ma Nature intended.

The 20 miles of stream intended to be improved by spending \$100,000 to replace a perched culvert is being questioned by dedicated fishermen and ladies.

Native brook trout habitat cannot be bought (or replaced). It is very rare and must be protected from change. It is a spectacle in nature and is one of a kind. It requires people with vision and compassion to understand this unique quality.

Very few places are left that contain this character. Very few people have experienced the feel of a Schwartz Creek and its surroundings. Even members of the Watershed Partnership stated that a study upstream from Schwartz Creek Dam was inconclusive, because it was an inaccessible area.

From those who have experienced the "strike" of one of nature's most sought-after fish species (a three-year-old brook trout), please consider our objection to this intended project.

If nature has prevailed for more than a half-century and her bounty still remains, something tells us to challenge any change to such a

rare and natural place.

Our kids and next generations deserve the right to fish for a brook trout.

As a person who respects nature,

Doug Mummert
Gaylord, Michigan

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Letter to the editor**Sierra Club NOT anti-hunting**

Editor:

This letter is in response to the letter from David Gorenflo in the Early March edition of *The Call*. Mr. Gorenflo makes a number of points about a possible referendum on Public Act 21 (contrary to his claim, there is no referendum on a "wolf season"—the referendum is over who should declare game species).

He claims that Michigan residents are uninformed, not qualified and illogical. But it really comes down to this: "We can't let folks vote—they might vote wrong!" But given how factually challenged the letter from Mr. Gorenflo is, he might want to rethink whether having an informed opinion should be required in order to vote (as noted above, he doesn't even get it right what we're voting on!).

Let's start with some easy facts. Mr. Gorenflo claims that the Sierra Club is anti-hunting, and singles them out for this. (Full disclosure: I'm a full-time paid staff person for the Michigan Sierra Club. In addition to feeling the need to defend the Sierra Club against false accusations, I suspect that I'm a bit more familiar than Mr. Gorenflo regarding the Sierra Club and its positions).

If the Sierra Club is anti-hunting, it will come as a surprise and disappointment to my bird dog, a wonderful Gordon Setter named

Ruger. Ruger thinks we go out every fall hunting for grouse and woodcock, and have a wonderful time doing so.

The Sierra Club is not anti-hunting. The Sierra Club is not even anti wolf hunting. I represented the Sierra Club on the Michigan Wolf Management Roundtable. The unanimous recommendations of this group formed the core of the Michigan Wolf Management Plan. Mr. Gorenflo was not a member, and did not attend.

One of the recommendations agreed to by all (including myself, representing the Sierra Club), was approval of a managed wolf hunt to reduce human/livestock conflicts. Agreeing to that provision is hardly the action of an anti-hunting group. We don't oppose hunting, or hunting wolves. We simply think that the current proposal does not meet the requirement of the wolf plan.

I was also the Sierra Club representative on the Deer Management Roundtable. Like the wolf roundtable, the unanimous recommendations of this group formed the basis of the Michigan Deer Management Plan (also, like the wolf roundtable, Mr. Gorenflo was not a member and did not attend). At no time did anyone, especially me, attempt to eliminate, or restrict, deer hunting. As a matter of fact, the Sierra Club be-

lieves we have far too many deer. It became a joke at the roundtable that the club advocates deer hunting "with napalm."

These facts are easily checkable. The Sierra Club is not and has never been "anti-hunting."

Mr. Gorenflo then declares that, because he thinks we're anti-hunting, he didn't invite us to participate in "his" fight against the Graymont proposal. Let's leave aside for now the stupidity of refusing help from an ally on an issue because you don't understand their stance on an unrelated issue.

The Sierra Club and many others—the Sault Tribe, Bay Mills Tribe, Michigan United Conservation Clubs, the Michigan Resource Stewards and others—have all been very involved in fighting Graymont, all without invitation from Mr. Gorenflo. In fact, the Sierra Club has been involved for more than two years in this fight.

Given how factually wrong Mr. Gorenflo is on these easily checkable facts, it's hard to take the rest of his letter very seriously. But he may rest assured that no matter how ill-informed his views are, the Sierra Club still thinks he ought to get to vote.

Marvin Roberson
Sierra Club Forest Ecologist
Marquette, Michigan

Lake Huron fishery will be the subject of April workshops

Three regional workshops are being held this spring to highlight research and information about Lake Huron's fishery.

The workshops—free and open to the public—will provide valuable information for anglers, charter captains, resource professionals and other community members, according to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

The DNR is hosting the events in partnership with Michigan Sea Grant, Michigan State University Extension, the U.S. Geological Survey Great Lakes Science Center and local fishery organizations.

The workshops will focus on fish populations, angler catch data, native species, forage fish surveys, invasive species, fisheries management activities, and other related topics.

Each will be held from 6 to 9 p.m.—April 9 at the Hammond American Legion Hall, 1026 6th St. in Port Huron; April 22 at the NOAA Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center, 500 W. Fletcher St. in Alpena; and April 23 at the Les Cheneaux Sportsman's Club on M-134 in Cedarville.

To pre-register, contact Val Golding at (989) 354-9870, or goldingv@alpenacounty.org.

"Humble pie"**Apologies to the Sierra Club**

Recently I submitted a letter to the editor expressing my views concerning the Michigan wolf hunting issue. Due to some bad information from a third party and a lack of research (mostly) on my part, I mistakenly categorized the Sierra Club as an "anti-hunting" group.

Since that time, I have done my research, and I've also had an extensive conversation with a friend of mine, (who I just discovered is a Sierra Club member). So I now realize that my comments were highly inaccurate. While there may be some individuals within the Sierra Club who do not support hunting rights, (mostly in the more liberal areas of the country, according to my friend) these sentiments do not dictate the official policies of the club as a whole.

Though we may not always agree on every issue, (including this one) I do believe the club has only the best of intentions in mind to protect wildlife and the habitat it needs to survive. So with all of this in mind, I would like to extend my apologies to the Sierra Club for my hastily derived opinion of this organization. Lesson learned.

My opinion regarding wolf hunting in Michigan remains unchanged, however—it seems the club and I will agree to disagree on this one. I believe that voter referendums should be reserved for politics, not wildlife issues. While I am not a big fan of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) or the Natural Resources Commission (NRC), some of the policies they enact and the lack of "checks and balances" when implementing these policies, I have far less faith in the uninformed voter casting a vote that is based on an emotional response—and even less faith with decisions made by politicians! At least with policies derived from the MDNR, the NRC and politicians, there is the potential for change with every election cycle. The same cannot be said for referendums.

Referendums are costly and very difficult (if not impossible) to alter or reverse, inevitably leaving us handcuffed with "bad policy." This is why I believe that wildlife issues should be handled by the "professionals"—those who work in the field and are more keenly aware of what policies are effective, and which are not. Their opinions and recommendations need to carry more weight with the wildlife management hierarchy.

I am primarily a bird hunter, (grouse and duck), so it is very unlikely that I will ever hunt for a wolf—just not my thing. However, I firmly believe that hunting is an effective and valuable tool in managing wolf populations. Permanently eliminating this as an option is simply just "bad policy."

Ted Nugent said it best when he said, "... thanks to educated, caring conservationists, our undeniably successful heritage of hunting and fishing carries on—guaranteeing a healthy future for wildlife and the critical support network of habitat that just so happens to assure a healthy environment for all living things." He continues with "... the best thing you can do is purchase a hunting license, a fishing license, and trapping license. Join Ducks Unlimited, Delta Waterfowl, Pheasants Forever ... and any number of hunting organizations that are solely dedicated to conserving wildlife and wildlife habitat. We put our money where our mouth is ..." So true.

Thank you,
David Gorenflo
Traverse City, Michigan

Guest Editorial**Straits of Mackinac pipeline: Plan should be as clear as the water**

EDITOR'S NOTE: We ran across this editorial online and believe the author makes some interesting points about a controversial—and often misunderstood—issue. It is reprinted here with permission.

By Paul Rose

Within the past year, the nearly 60-year-old, twin oil transmission pipelines which lie at the bottom (mostly) of the Straits of Mackinac have gone from being largely unknown to a chief topic of conversation throughout our region.

Public awareness of oil and gas transmission lines here in Michigan seemingly received the equivalent of a steroid injection after the 2010 Kalamazoo River oil spill. This event also saw the Calgary-based pipeline owner, Enbridge Inc., move from its subterranean comfort zone to the lead story on local news.

Since the environmental risks associated with two 20-inch pipelines originally installed in 1953 have been described by the Great Lakes office of the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) and elsewhere, this discussion is largely focused on the economics of both the existing pipelines, as well as the merits of initiating a plan for its future.

I would like to preface what follows by

saying that I'm a fervent capitalist and do not believe in advancing conservation or environmental agendas by unfairly bashing corporations. In spite of anecdotal reports to the contrary made during the Kalamazoo River spill event, Enbridge is known to be a well managed company and a responsible corporate citizen. Yes, they have had and will have spills, but based upon what is publicly known about the Enbridge family of operations, if we have to have hydrocarbon arteries running beneath our land, lakes and streams, we could do far worse than having them owned and operated by Enbridge.

They (Enbridge) are also very good at providing a return on investment for their investors—as they should be. Over the past ten years, shares of their NYSE traded stock have risen from \$9.75 to roughly \$44.00 and dividends have increased at an annualized rate of 12 percent. Without any consideration to stock splits, this per share increase equates to 16.3 percent per year. When added to their current dividend yield of 2.9 percent, these annualized returns approach an industry-enviable 20 percent.

It is worth noting that in spite of the industry assertion that the physical life of some transmission lines may be "unlim-

ited," for accounting and income tax purposes this pipeline infrastructure was likely to have been fully depreciated over a period of less than 40 years. For those unfamiliar with such terms, depreciation is an expense which is allowed to provide for the recovery and eventual replacement of the capital investment. Based upon a review of Enbridge 2013 financial statements it appears likely that the cost of the original Straits of Mackinac pipeline investment was entirely "expensed" for accounting and tax purposes nearly 20 years ago.

While some could fairly contend that "physical" life should not be confused with depreciation schedules developed for tax and accounting purposes, that argument is far more valid when the company and its investors are assuming all of the risks. If a company truck dies on the side of the road after 20 years of use, besides the inconvenience posed to its driver and loss of productivity to the business, there is no societal or environmental cost which needs to be borne by others. In the case of the Straits of Mackinac pipelines, this is a risk which is shared by us all.

The issue of the physical life of a pipeline is a relatively new one. Historically, global oil and gas transmission lines were ex-

pected to outlive the sources of their production. As a result of new technologies and discoveries, however, we now find ourselves in "uncharted" waters. The difficulties associated with inspection and monitoring of these pipelines are understandably complicated by its lake bottom location.

Beyond the environmental considerations, there would appear to be many sound business reasons to consider more public engagement concerning this issue. It will be far easier to navigate the permitting and approval process for a new or improved transmission system if it were done in advance of a release event. From a community relations standpoint, a proactive plan which includes a more public dialogue would likely be viewed as favorably as Enbridge's investment in renewable energy.

It is important to recognize that considerable public benefit is derived from the presence of these pipelines, which serve as a far better alternative to the Great Lakes shipping of oil. Its continued operational integrity is important for reasons which extend beyond those of an environmental nature. The closure of the pipelines for an indefinite period would have a significant

(Continued on Page 6)

River Reflections

By Betsy Hayhow Hemming



Au Sable trout opener: Not what this novice expected

I finally attended my first trout opener along the Au Sable River a few seasons back.

The trout opener always has been a spring tradition for my husband and his girls, while I came up with other important tasks to address. I finally delicately inquired as to whether there was room for one more; fortunately the answer was an enthusiastic, "Yes."

Now, I do understand that this is a weekend of grand tradition for many. Given that I was a newbie to the process, my husband spent considerable time reviewing the course of events. We would arrive early enough on Friday to open up camp. Waders and rods would find their seasonal homes on the proper fixtures. The new gadgets and equipment purchased at the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo would be organized and ready to go.

On Saturday morning, we would travel to Lovells for a big breakfast and the celebrations hosted by the Lovells Historical Society. Then, after lunch, some fishing would take place. We would return to camp to organize and clean, as well as plant little white pines from a local conservation club.

Dinner takes place at the riverside home of fellow anglers and dear friends. In previous years, they would call me during dinner and describe the grilled steak (not trout, of course), the bonfire overlooking the Au Sable and the highlights of the day. Is it any wonder that I decided it was time to attend my first trout opener?

On Sunday, a big camp breakfast would be created by Master Chef Hemming, with pancakes, bacon and lots of coffee. A final round of fishing would commence and then, with considerable reluctance, we would leave the stunning beauty of early spring on the river and head down south.

That was my expectation for the weekend. Do you think that's how it turned out? Of course you don't. It started so splendidly: Our pals of Saturday night fame were kind enough to pick up our white pines when they picked up theirs and drop them off at our place. In one of those moments of unsurprising coincidence, we arrived as they were departing our place on a brilliant Friday late afternoon in April, with temperatures in the '80s and a bawdy breeze blowing.

We were all so tickled at being in the same place at the same time that we immediately found adult beverages and toasted the trout opener efficiently and effectively. We enjoyed the happy river and even laughed at how I would be forever jaded in thinking that balmy weather was the norm for this early spring weekend.

Our friends reluctantly headed out to open their own place and we cheerfully jumped to the task of opening ours. Things were moving along smoothly when it suddenly became clear that we had some issues of the plumbing variety. In a nutshell, the drains—all of them—were backed up, the shower was leaking and only a trickle of water was coming out of the bathroom faucet. This did not amuse us. Following a trip to Grayling for essential supplies allowing us to at least use a chemical toilet, we ate dinner at 9:30 p.m., weary to the bone. But no worries! Saturday morning beckoned and it was supposed to be warm and wonderful.

Are you laughing a bit, dear reader? Saturday morning erupted with thunderstorms and downpours. The saturated land took in no more water, and our little camp flooded in moments. We slogged through three or four inches of standing water for the rest of the weekend. We had one pair of rubber boots, which we all shared. The brand new waterfalls on each side of the cabin were lovely, however. Fairly quickly, the temperature zoomed downward and insult was added to injury. Had I brought coats? Nope!

Fortunately, my husband came upon a neighbor on an early-morning walk. This helpful do-gooder cheerfully offered to come over and check on our plumbing woes. Before we knew it, he fixed two of the three issues, and we called for some professional help with the septic system. A few hours later, the float in the septic tank was fixed and drains were moving again. It was time for our wonderful Saturday night dinner with our friends, who welcomed us with a roaring fire in the fireplace and the well-deserved steaks referenced above.

As we told our friends the story of the 24 hours since we had seen them last, we talked about the incredible kindness of our neighbor, who waved off our incessant thanks by saying, "that's what neighbors do." That is one of the shining assets of this wonderful piece of heaven called the Au Sable and its surrounding lands.

We left our friends in good cheer and awoke Sunday to more rain and even colder temperatures, so we departed early. Should I mention that a few short hours later, the sun was out and it was in the '70s? Nope. Let's not go there.

So that was my first trout opener. Astute anglers will pause at this moment and ask the obvious questions. What about the traditions? What about Lovells? WHAT ABOUT THE FISHING? It didn't happen, dear readers. It just didn't happen. Instead of using words like "trout" and "opening," we dabbled with "septic" and "broken." The only opener that really mattered was the wine opener, accompanied by essential things like good neighbors, laughter with dear friends and heat. An opener for the ages, for sure.



Mackinac Light

—North Woods Call Photo

The old Mackinac Point Lighthouse assisted ships passing through the Straits of Mackinac—one of the busiest crossroads of the Great Lakes—from the 1890s until 1958. A steam-powered fog signal went into operation at the site on Nov. 5, 1890. Construction of the light tower and attached lightkeeper's dwelling began shortly thereafter and the light was first displayed Oct. 25, 1892. Heavy iron and brass castings were used throughout the structure and the light was visible to ships 16 miles away. The lighthouse is now a maritime museum overlooking the Straits.

Straits pipeline: The plan should be clear as water

(Continued from Page 5)

regional economic impact and potentially have national security implications. Although it is unreasonable to expect a zero spill risk, in this instance the issue of what constitutes an acceptable level of risk should be more clearly defined and disseminated.

The point of this discussion is NOT that Enbridge should be forced to initiate a replacement effort because they can afford it. However, what is clear is

that by nearly any economic metric the risks associated with the Straits of Mackinac crossing have increasingly shifted from Enbridge stockholders to Great Lakes stakeholders.

Paul Rose is senior editor at the Northern Michigan Conservation Network.

To view this and other original news and editorial pieces, visit nmconservationnetwork.org.

Spring is a good time to carve willow whistles

When I was growing up, my father would always make his children willow whistles when the sap began to rise.

Later, he would teach us to make our own. To us, it was a rite of spring.

Willow whistles can be carved all growing season, but I believe it is easiest when the sap is rising in the willows. I have never tried it during the winter, or dormancy.

As a naturalist, I taught interns and nature center staff to make them, too. Some got into it in an extreme way. As you can imagine, different diameters and lengths of willow branches will give different sounds.

Our nature center has an extensive boardwalk network of trails through the wetlands. One intern would select the hanging branch of a willow near the boardwalk, not cutting the branch from the tree but carving the whistle from the branch end. As he would lead a group of kids, he could wow them by pulling the branch down and blowing the whistle.

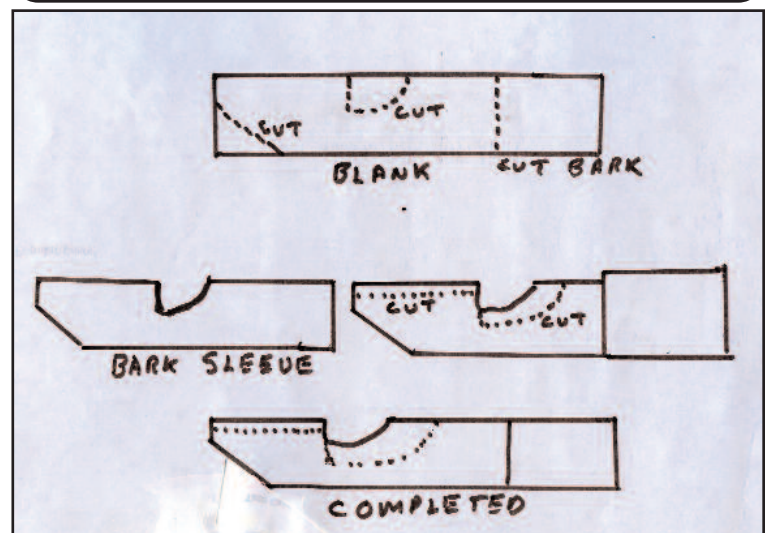
More than likely, such whistles can be made from most spring branches, but I have only done this with willow and basswood. The bark must be able to slip off easily. Basswood takes more care to not split the bark. As in any wood carving, good carving procedures must be followed to avoid injury.

HOW TO CARVE A WILLOW WHISTLE

As the sap rises, select a straight, smooth branch about

The Natural World

By Richard Schinkel



A blueprint for willow whistles.

one-half inch to three-quarter inches in diameter. Cut a six- to eight-inch length from the stem. At the end, cut an angle to resemble a whistle mouth piece, leaving about one-third of the top part square to the stem. On the top, cut an air hole, as the diagram shows—straight down and angle upward toward the end of the whistle opposite the mouth.

About three inches down the stem, cut through the bark into the hard wood and through the cambium. Now, gently take your knife handle and pound the bark evenly all over to loosen it from the hard wood.

You can test it by gently twisting to see if it is loose. Don't pound so hard as to crack the

bark. Once the bark slides off, you can carve the sound chamber in the hardwood. To do this, start your cut from the bark top, carving further down to at least halfway through the wood and create a chamber extending beyond the open bark cut. (See diagram) This will provide the tone.

Next, slice a sliver of wood on the top—from the chamber back to the mouthpiece—to allow enough space to blow air over the sound chamber. Now slide your hollow bark over the whistle, position it as it came off, blow and you should have a whistle sound.

You can practice with different cuts and sizes to get different tones.

Thanks to all of you who have renewed your subscriptions

Conservation Officer Logs (2/17/14 through 3/3/14)**Ice shanty mess, duck doo doo, a chicken-killing bobcat & “poison” dog scraps****DISTRICT 1 (Marquette)**

CO Ryan Aho was on patrol in the Ishpeming area when he encountered a fishing shanty on Cedar Lake. The area surrounding the shanty was littered with beer cans and other garbage. CO Aho tracked the individual down and spoke with his father, who let the individual know that he had just received a visit from the “CO.” The subject quickly phoned CO Aho regarding the matter, exclaiming, “Yeah, it does look pretty bad out there.” The subject was ticketed for litter and advised to clean up the site.

CO Ryan Aho was on patrol in Marquette County and encountered a snowmobile without any registration displayed. Once stopped, CO Aho got a closer look at the “trail permit” that the subject had displayed on his machine. It turned out that the operator thought he could pass off his Crossbow Stamp from last deer season as a current trail permit, since it was the same color. A ticket was issued to the operator for the violation.

CO Grant Emery was finally able to track down an individual and serve a six-count warrant for three illegal deer, purchasing too many licenses and failing to tag deer. The individual posted a \$6,000 bond and is awaiting arraignment.

DISTRICT 2 (Newberry)

CO Kyle Publiski assisted the Michigan State Police with a suicidal subject on Neebish Island. CO Publiski and the troopers took snowmobiles to the island and located the subject at her residence. The subject had just swallowed a large amount of prescription medication with a pint of liquor. CO Publiski and the troopers assisted medical personnel with loading the subject into a rescue sled to be transported to the waiting ambulance on the mainland. CO Publiski then transported the victim’s daughter by snowmobile to the mainland to ride to the hospital with her mother.

CO Mike Hammill contacted a lucky angler who had taken a 45-inch Musky with a spear several days prior. CO Hammill checked the individual’s fishing license and observed an unused Muskellunge harvest tag issued only a few days prior. When CO Hammill questioned the angler about the unused tag, he admitted to spearing the Musky and failing to tag it. Enforcement action was taken.

Conducting a snowmobile patrol in Paradise near a busy intersection, **CO Jeff Panich** observed two snowmobiles drive through a stop sign. The CO contacted the operators and informed them of the reason for the stop. The two men became agitated with CO Panich and stated they didn’t see a stop sign and asked if the CO had anything better to do with his time than hassle them. CO Panich pointed back to the “Stop” sign the operators stated they couldn’t see. CO Panich then pointed further down the trail at the “Stop Ahead” sign and discussed how many accidents occur when snow-

mobiles run stop signs and collide with vehicles. Both men then agreed they were driving too fast and must have missed the signs. Enforcement action was taken.

DISTRICT 3 (Gaylord)

CO Mike Feagan responded to a complaint of a live elk calf being held at a weekend cabin and that the subjects were contemplating taking the calf downstate with them. Arriving at the cabin prior to their departure, CO Feagan found the elk calf lying down outside next to the porch. The subjects had found the calf struggling in the deep snow and brought it back to the cabin, feeding and watering it. The calf was monitored for a few days and was found to be staying in the same spot, and becoming aggressive toward humans. DNR wildlife and law enforcement employees captured the elk calf and transported it to a nearby herd of elk.

CO Jon Sklba reports a habitual violator recently received his sentence for hunting from a motor vehicle and recreational trespass in deer season, while killing an eight-point buck. The violator was sentenced in Presque Isle County court to serve 20 days in jail, over \$1,500 in fines, costs and restitution, and had his hunting licenses revoked for several years.

CO Duane Budreau received a complaint regarding waterfowl baiting. After calling the complainant, he found out the subject was tired of people feeding the ducks near his business, which resulted in customers stepping in the ducks’ droppings, and being carried inside on their shoes into his establishment.

CO Matt Theunick responded to a complaint of a live bobcat inside a chicken coop. The juvenile bobcat had killed several chickens. CO Theunick was able to get a snare pole around the bobcat and remove it, releasing it several miles away. A couple of days later, the complainants called back advising they had caught a larger bobcat in a live trap outside their chicken coop. Sgt. Greg Drogowski took the adult bobcat to the same release site as the juvenile bobcat and let it go.

DISTRICT 4 (Cadillac)

CO Carla Soper obtained an arrest warrant for a subject who had killed a black bear on the second day of the 2013 firearm deer season in Manistee County. After receiving the original complaint of a dead female bear lying in the woods, CO Soper investigated the complaint and put out a statewide press release seeking information regarding the poaching incident. Within four days, CO Soper had a suspect and was able to interview him. CO Soper presented her investigation to the prosecutor, who issued an arrest warrant for taking a bear without a permit and the use of excessive deer bait. With the assistance of **CO Kris Kiel** the suspect was arrested at his downstate residence.

COs Jeff Ginn and **Brian Lebel** were on a snowmobile patrol attempting to locate a group of coyote hunters on whom they



had received several complaints for trespassing, shooting from the roadway and transporting loaded firearms in motor vehicles. CO Lebel received information that a suspect he was trying to locate from an earlier trespass complaint was hunting in an area close to where the COs were patrolling. The COs canvassed the area and were able to locate the subject involved in the earlier trespass. Arrest warrants are being sought through the prosecutor’s office.

CO Jeff Ginn responded to a complaint of a subject injured in a snowmobile accident. It appears the subject was operating across a field in daylight when he came across a large ditch that he was unable to avoid, causing serious injuries. CO Ginn was able to use his patrol snowmobile to transport emergency medical personnel to the accident location and then assisted in the transportation of the victim to the ambulance waiting on the roadway.

DISTRICT 5 (Roscommon)

CO Matt Liestenz conducted an investigation into an untagged bobcat in Roscommon County. The investigation led to the husband trapping an extra bobcat. Instead of turning in the bobcat as an incidental, the suspect’s wife went out and purchased a license for the bobcat and attempted to claim it as her own. The bobcat was seized and a ticket issued for the violation.

CO Mike Hearn responded to the scene of a snowmobile accident that was only accessible by snowmobile. Upon arrival, CO Hearn observed that two snowmobilers had been operating on a power line near the Manistee River. Both snowmobiles appeared to have been traveling at a high rate of speed. Being unfamiliar with the area, they did not know that the hill they were climbing ended with a nearly straight drop off the other side to the river at the bottom. One rider was able to turn and stop his snowmobile prior to plummeting down the embankment. The second operator stayed the course and rode his snowmobile down the 40-foot bank. The only thing keeping the snowmobile and operator from splashing into the icy water was a small patch of saplings at the bottom. The sled was removed with assistance of Bear Lake Fire Rescue. Upon further investigation and interviews with the operator, it was also determined he had purchased the snowmobile over a year ago and had failed to transfer the registration. The operator was ticketed

for the registration violation, and both operators were warned about excessive speed.

DISTRICT 6 (Bay City)

CO Jeremy Payne received a recreational trespass complaint in Isabella County. When the CO arrived to the complaint, he located the suspect’s vehicle and fresh footprints in the snow. The CO followed the footprints and located the two hunters walking with loaded rifles on state land and not wearing hunter orange. When questioned about their activities, the hunters said they were just “plinking.” When the CO then questioned them about the camouflage and game calls around their necks, they then indicated they were hunting coyotes. A check of the computer license system indicated that one of the hunters had not purchased a 2013 small game license. Tickets were issued for the violations.

During the 2013 firearm deer season, **CO Bob Hobkirk** had received a complaint of a couple of dogs chasing deer and ruining people’s hunts. CO Hobkirk contacted the owner of the dogs and warned him of the violation. The owner of the dogs claimed that he would keep the dogs tied up and in control. Just recently, CO Hobkirk received another complaint that the same dogs were chasing deer and that the dogs had killed a small deer near the complainant’s home. CO Hobkirk located the deer carcass and determined that it had been killed by dogs. The CO contacted the owner of the dogs and after a short conversation, the individual was charged for the unlawful taking of the deer and for not keeping his dogs under his control.

DISTRICT 7 (Plainwell)

Sgt. John Jurcich assisted **COs BJ Goulette** and **Ivan Perez** in the investigation of an overlimit of otter taken in Ottawa County. A third party registered otters for the harvester, which is a violation. Two interviews led to admissions of obtaining otter harvest tags after the taking of the animals and possibly a license purchased after the fact. One subject was ticketed for taking an overlimit of otters. The vehicle home.

COs Paul Higashi and **Gary Raak** conducted a routine patrol for ice fishing activity over the weekend on Gull Lake in Kalamazoo County. Contact was made with one subject who was in possession of twice the legal limit of northern pike, and was actively reeling in another one. When asked if he knew what the legal possession limit is, he indicated that he did and was planning on giving the extra ones away. Enforcement action was taken.

DISTRICT 8 (Rose Lake)

CO Jeff Goss backed up local deputies on a call of a man with a

gun threatening to kill several people inside his house. Upon arrival Officers quickly apprehended the subject. Further investigation revealed that there was not a gun involved; however, a hatchet that the caller had mistaken as a gun was recovered.

CO Kyle Bader investigated a complaint of a subject who put out buckets of antifreeze mixed with food scraps. The complaint was that the subject was trying to poison the neighbor’s dog. During the investigation, CO Bader found out that the subject was trying to scare his neighbor because the neighbor’s dog was always in his yard. So the subject put snow in buckets, colored it with food coloring and then wrote in large letters on the outside “antifreeze” and “dog scraps.” The subject said he has no intention of harming any animals; he only wants his neighbor to restrain his dog.

DISTRICT 9 (Southfield)

CO Jason Smith followed up on and received a confession from a hunter without a license who shot a seven point buck on opening day. The hunter in this case shot the deer and then posted photos on Facebook. Enforcement action taken

CO Kris Kiel reports that the subject who intentionally ran over a family of geese, killing three, in a Wal-Mart parking lot was sentenced to \$900 in fines and costs, \$1,500 reimbursement and \$30 conservation fees in a Macomb County court.

CO Kris Kiel also reports that a subject who shot an overlimit of bucks this past deer season, where the second buck was taken without a license, was sentenced to \$350 in fines, costs, and conservation fees, \$2,000 reimbursement and hunting license revocation.

While checking ice anglers at the Hall Road Access Site, **CO Todd Szyska** contacted an angler who had some perch, but did not have a fishing license. The angler stated he did not know he needed a fishing license to just go out and catch yellow perch. A subsequent check on the angler revealed two warrants for his arrest—one for DWLS and one for drug charges. The warrants were confirmed and Macomb County Sheriff met CO Szyska. The subject was also ticketed for fish/possess fish no license.

COs Mark Ennett and **Chad Foerster** were working the late shift on Belle Isle and observed a vehicle displaying an improper temporary license plate. A traffic stop was made and a LEIN check of the driver yielded the fact that his license was revoked and suspended 19 times, and he had 15 confirmed traffic warrants. His passenger was identified and checked and was found to have a total of 10 confirmed traffic warrants. Both were arrested.

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Potential high risk around TB-positive deer

The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) has established two "potential high risk areas" for bovine tuberculosis (TB) after the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) confirmed one bovine TB-positive free-ranging white-tailed deer in Presque Isle County, and another in northwestern Montmorency County.

This designation requires all cattle and bison herds located within a 10-mile radius of a TB-positive deer be tested for bovine TB within the next six months. If a whole herd test was conducted on a farm less than six months prior to March 17, 2014, the herd

will not need another test.

A Potential High Risk Area is established when a TB positive free-ranging deer is found. Cattle farms are tested to assure trading partners that the disease has not been transmitted from local deer to cattle.

Cattle and bison farms in Presque Isle County, Cheboygan County and Otsego County townships within a 10-mile radius around the Presque Isle County TB-positive deer—and those within a 10-mile radius around the Montmorency County deer—will have to be tested in the next six months. Cattle farms in the Modified Accredited Zone are already

TB tested on an annual basis, so there is no additional TB testing required in those townships.

All impacted cattle owners will be privately contacted by MDARD and asked to schedule a test to avoid the inconvenience of a quarantine being placed on their farms during fair season, or sales.

A meeting will be held to discuss the TB Program and the designation of the potential high risk areas at 7 p.m. April 8 in the Presque Isle District Library, 181 East Erie Street, in Rogers City.

For more information on bovine TB in the state of Michigan visit: michigan.gov/emergingdiseases.

—MDARD report

Fish egg collections on Muskegon, Little Manistee rivers

Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) personnel will be taking walleye eggs this spring on the Muskegon River below Croton Dam.

They will also be collecting steelhead eggs at the Little Manistee weir in Stronach.

Approximately 62 million walleye eggs from the Muskegon River, which will result in 13.4 million fry for transfer to rearing ponds throughout the Lower Peninsula. These walleye will be raised to fingerling size and stocked in late spring, or early summer, in lakes and rivers throughout the state.

The DNR planned to collect walleyes with an electro-fishing boat beginning as early as the week of March 24 and conclude by April 15. Eight days of

fish collections are expected during this period. The actual date when collections will begin depends on water temperatures and the presence of "ripe" fish.

The Little Manistee River weir has served as the sole source of winter-run steelhead eggs for fish hatcheries in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana since 1968. Egg-take scheduling information is available from the Little Manistee weir hotline at (231) 775-9727, ext. 6072. The facility is open to the public for up-close viewing during egg-take operations. Formal tours will be offered Thursday, April 10, and Friday, April 11, at 11 a.m., noon and 1 p.m. Those interested in tours should call 231-389-2551. Fish also can be observed in the river below the weir at any time.

Final Shot



Easter Blessing

—North Woods Call photo

This historic cabin church in Old Mission is a rustic reminder of the upcoming Easter celebration among Christians and the refreshing renewal of the Michigan springtime. May you and your families have a blessed holiday as believers mark the resurrection of Christ—this year on April 20—and the hope of salvation it offers all mankind.

Hunters and anglers provide record support for venison collection program

Thanks to the generosity of many hunters and anglers, Michigan food banks and kitchens will have more fresh venison for meals provided to their visitors.

During the 2013-14 license year, the Michigan Sportsmen Against Hunger (MSAH) program received more than \$50,000—a record amount—in donations from Michigan outdoorsmen and women.

This voluntary donation program has been part of Michigan's hunting and fishing license-buying experience since 2005, but achieved a record donation level last year.

"Our retail sales system that is used to sell hunting and fishing licenses was upgraded in 2013, and one of the benefits was making the donation process more conven-



ient for both the buyer and seller," said Ray Rustem, MSAH advisor for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. "This improvement led to a four-fold increase in the number of donors—44,000—and helped us achieve this amazing level of support."

When a hunter or angler purchases a license, the sales system is set up to ask if

they would like to make a donation to Michigan Sportsmen Against Hunger, a nonprofit organization that coordinates the venison collection for the DNR. Collected funds are then turned over to MSAH. During the deer hunting season, hunters also are encouraged to donate a deer to the program by dropping it off at a local participating meat processor, which then submits a voucher back to MSAH for reimbursement of processing costs. Processed venison then makes its way to a local food bank or kitchen.

Dean Hall, chairman of the MSAH board of directors, is pleased with the level of donations.

"This additional revenue will help us in-

crease our ability to encourage more processors to participate and increase the pounds of venison that we distribute across the state."

Hall said that last year more than 30,000 pounds of venison were distributed through the MSAH program.

"This donation allows the food banks and food kitchens to provide a nutritional source of protein in over 150,000 meals," Hall added. "Many of those who benefited were elderly people on fixed incomes and families who work, but need additional support."

For more details on Michigan Sportsmen Against Hunger, or how to make a monetary or deer donation, visit the organization's website: www.sportsmenagainsthunger.org.

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