

PENNSYLVANIA  
**TURKEY TALK**

Fall 2007

Publication of the PA State Chapter of the NWTF



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# PENNSYLVANIA TURKEY TALK FALL 2007

Publication of the PA State Chapter of the NWTf

Volume 33 Number 1



Photo Credit: Henry Zeman/NWTF

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## PENNSYLVANIA TURKEY TALK

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**THE PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION**

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**The deadline for submitting articles for the next issue of Turkey Talk is December 2.**

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TOM KERLE - PHOTO SUBMITTED  
FOR SUCCESSFUL MENTORED  
YOUTH HUNT PHOTO**

# From the President

**Gene Alwine**

I can't believe it's time for another president's message already. This year has had me motoring in fast forward with little opportunity to look back and reflect until now, but here goes.

I hope everyone had a good time at the annual leadership workshop during our August meetings. I enjoyed all the conversations with those of you I've known for some time and with all the new friends I've just gotten to know better. Your thoughts, hopes, and concerns are on my mind as we "walk the walk and talk the talk" for the advancement of the wild turkey and all the other programs associated with the NWTF throughout Pennsylvania. You are all truly special, and I thank you for traveling this road with me.

Fall hunting should be enjoyable this year. I've been informed several times about the poult being different sizes this year. If you've taken notice to this, it's due to a not-so-common phenomenon known as "unsynchronized nesting." The very warm spell we had early in the year, then the cold snap, followed by warm temperatures returning is what causes this. I'll give the credit for this biology lesson to Mary Jo Casalena, as she reported on this at the June board meeting. While I rubberneck in my travels, looking for juvenile flocks controlling the grasshopper population, I'm seeing quite a few does with fawns foraging along busy roadways during midday hours. I hope you're practicing with your bow or, better yet, preparing a youngster for the early season with an inline

muzzleloader or rifle. We're going to be working towards including fall turkey hunting in the mentored youth hunting program in the future. I'm sure we'll keep you posted on that.

Things are winding down in the banquet and outreach departments. Thank you once again for your participation in these programs. There's just no substitute for the quality instruction and training offered at the JAKES, Women in the Outdoors, and Wheelin' Sportsmen events. I never tire of hearing about how grateful folks are for our presenting those events, especially when done at the volunteer level.

Of course, it's also back-to-school time. I hope you all have a great holiday season, from Labor Day to New Year, I wish the best of times and memories for all of you. Remember to get your chapter and school districts involved with the Scholarship Program. We have some quality seniors who are deserving of the assistance it provides, given the opportunity.

Until next time, "Be a straight shooter."

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## ATTENTION

### Attention Local Chapters

You will be receiving updated information from Edgefield pertaining to the Scholarship Program, JAKES Event reporting, and the Turkey Hunters Care Program. Please read these mailings and consider participating in them, if you don't already. They are very worthwhile. Thanks for another great year, and enjoy the hunting and Holiday seasons.

## NOTICE

Please send all change of address notifications or other problems with your Pennsylvania Turkey Talk subscription (duplicate copies, missing copies, etc.) to

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cmpanwtf@zoominternet.net –  
and not to the editorial office in Altoona.

## Phil Ferrare, Jr. Hired as New Regional Director



The National Wild Turkey Federation is proud to announce the hiring of Phil Ferrare, Jr. to serve as the Regional Director for the Northwest and North Central Pennsylvania regions.

Phil comes to us with more than 12 years of experience in the counseling and human services industry. He is a graduate of Gannon University with a bachelor of science degree in mental health counseling and human services.

He has been an active member of the NWTF for many years, where he served as chapter president of the Lakefront Gobblers Chapter. Phil was also a director on the Pennsylvania state board as well as an executive officer of the board. He is an avid sportsman with a deep respect and appreciation for wildlife conservation.

Phil and his wife, Missy, reside in Waterford with their children, Juliana and Philip.

See Larry Holjencin's farewell message on the back cover of this issue of *Pennsylvania Turkey Talk*

# Luke's Trail Disabled Access Project

BY BOB ERIKSEN,  
NWTF REGIONAL BIOLOGIST

When talk centers on ambitious projects with unique and innovative funding sources, the Luke's Trail Project recently completed by the Lykens Valley Longbeards Chapter definitely has to enter the discussion. This project shows what can be accomplished with cooperation, planning, and hard work. According to Harold Daub of the chapter, this project was first conceived a few years ago at a meeting with officials from Weiser State Forest in upper Dauphin County. Initially the project was simply to include some habitat restoration work along Wolf Pond Road. The chapter initiated tree-planting work in the vicinity using chapter members and local Boy Scouts as a labor pool. A larger project emerged from the original plans, but concerns about costs held back progress.

Dean Zimmerman and six other chapter members are employed by TYCO Electronics. Doug Machamer, Mark Machamer, Mike Oxendine, Charlie Krout, Kevin Miller, and Art Schumber had helped the chapter obtain grant funding for small projects through TYCO's "Dollars for Doers" program. Dean suggested to the chapter that they might be able to apply for a larger grant from the company under the "Dollars for Doers Team Award" program. This larger grant was available through the company to a team of three or more employees working on a worthwhile community-based project on their own time. Of course, competition for the Team Award dollars was keen. The chapter members who worked for TYCO filed an application for funding to develop a disabled-hunter access and shooting platforms on Weiser State Forest. In January of 2006, Dean and the others learned that their application had been approved, and the team was awarded a \$5,000 grant for the project.

On hearing about the chapter's successful grant application from TYCO, Regional Director Ray Smith suggested that they might consider applying for a Wildlife Forever Grant to supplement the dollars received through TYCO. Working with Rick McLeod of the Development Department of NWTF in Edgefield, chapter members filed for another grant using the TYCO grant as a match. In the fall of 2006, the Lykens Valley Longbeards learned that their labor was rewarded yet again and they received a \$2,500 matching grant through Wildlife Forever to assist with the project that was now in the serious planning stages. In addition, the chapter received Super Fund habitat project funding to the



Photo credit Lykens Valley Longbeards Chapter

tune of \$1,400 to establish a food plot adjacent to the shooting platform.

Chapter members worked cooperatively with Nick Zulli of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources at Weiser State Forest to choose and plan the site for their work. DCNR provided heavy equipment to clear the site and remove the trees. Greg Willard and Scott Bills of the Pennsylvania Game Commission provided valuable assistance in planning the food plot. The PGC also brought in tractors and small dozers to remove rocks, complete the site prep and apply seed and fertilizer. Additional lime application and seeding will be completed this fall.

Lykens Valley Longbeards Chapter members have gone above and beyond the call of duty to acquire funding and complete this project. The disabled access will provide hunters with disabilities with more hunting opportunity on the site and will help DCNR foresters achieve their desired deer harvest. We owe a debt of thanks to the Lykens Valley Chapter members who initiated this project and saw it through to completion. More than that, we want to extend our gratitude to TYCO Electronics, Wildlife Forever, the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry, and the Pennsylvania Game Commission for their valuable assistance in this cooperative venture. The Luke's Trail Project is another fine accomplishment of the Pennsylvania Chapter. The Lykens Valley Longbeards dedicated this effort to one of the greatest conservationists of Pennsylvania, the late Jerry Zimmerman, Regional Director for NWTF. We'll always miss Jerry, but I know he would be proud of the work these volunteers have accomplished. Way to go Lykens Valley Longbeards! You set a fine example for the rest of us.



**PENNSYLVANIA STATE CHAPTER  
2008 "TRIP OF A LIFETIME" RAFFLE**

TRIPS INCLUDE: LODGING, MEALS, AND GUIDE SERVICE

TRIPS DO NOT INCLUDE: AIRFARE, GRATUITIES, GUNS, TAGS, LICENSES, AMMO, TRANSFER FEES OR MISC. EXPENSES

3 WINNERS WILL BE DRAWN AT THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE CHAPTER OCTOBER 4, 2008 BOARD MEETING.

NEED NOT BE PRESENT TO WIN.

**TICKET PRICE: \$50.00—ONLY 400 TICKETS WILL BE SOLD!!**

PROCEEDS USED TO BENEFIT THE NWTF WHEELIN' SPORTSMEN PROGRAM

**WINNER #1 SELECTS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TRIPS:**

- WYOMING ELK HUNT—6 DAYS
- UTAH MULE DEER HUNT—5 DAYS
- MEXICO COUES DEER HUNT—5 DAYS
- SOUTH AFRICAN SAFARI-(4 ANIMALS)—7 DAYS
  - ALBERTA MOOSE—6 DAYS
- COSTA RICA SPORT FISHING—6 DAYS

**WINNER #2 SELECTS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TRIPS:**

- SASKATCHEWAN TROPHY BLACK BEAR HUNT—6DAYS
  - ALBERTA TIMBER WOLF HUNT—6DAYS
  - FLORIDA OSCEOLA TURKEY HUNT—3 DAYS
  - NEW MEXICO ANTELOPE HUNT—2 DAYS
  - BRITISH COLUMBIA FLYFISHING TRIP—4 DAYS
- PIKE COUNTY ILLINOIS ARCHERY (NON-RUT) WHITETAIL HUNT—5 DAYS

**WINNER #3 SELECTS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TRIPS:**

- MEXICO LARGE MOUTH BASS FISHING—3 DAYS
  - KANSAS TURKEY HUNT—3 DAYS
  - SOUTH TEXAS WATERFOWL HUNT—3 DAYS
  - TEXAS WILD HOG HUNT (FOR 2 PEOPLE)—2 ½ DAYS
- FLORIDA PEACOCK & LARGE MOUTH BASS FISHING—3 DAYS
  - SOUTH DAKOTA PHEASANT HUNT—3 DAYS

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

CASH\_\_\_CHECK\_\_\_CREDIT CARD\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CARD TYPE \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

CARD # \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EXP DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Make Checks payable to: NWTF Wheelin' Sportsmen

Return application to: Ray Smith, 1133 Canoe Run Rd, Jersey Shore, PA 17740 or call (570) 398-0721

# NWTF presents award to Kreider and Henry

**T**he Pennsylvania Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation recently honored two Pennsylvania Game Commission employees – Wildlife Conservation Officer (WCO) Brad Kreider and Southeast Region Forester David Henry – for their outstanding efforts in wildlife conservation, wildlife habitat improvement, and wild turkey management.

## Brad Kreider

In 1990, WCO Kreider began his service with the Game Commission as a volunteer Deputy WCO in Lebanon County, while serving as a full-time Park Ranger at Swatara State Park. In March 1996, Kreider graduated from the Game Commission's Ross Leffler School of Conservation 23rd Class and was assigned to his present district in Northampton County, which comprises 340 square miles.

In 2005, Kreider was involved with an effort to trap wild turkeys in his district for the "NWTF Thanksgiving Turkey Release" at State Game Lands 196 in Bucks County. He also has an active turkey enforcement program within his district, concentrating on resident complaints about baiting, road hunting, and out-of-season violations.

Recently, Kreider has put in numerous hours, many of those hours on his own time, trapping and tagging turkeys for the ongoing gobbler banding study.

In his personal time, Kreider is involved in Scouting as a volunteer and regularly provides information and materials to a Daisy Group, Brownies, Cub Scouts, two Boy Scout Troops, and an Explorer Troop.

Kreider is a member of the National Rifle Association and an active member of two Ducks Unlimited Chapters. In his free time, he handcrafts goose calls, one of which he donated to a Ducks Unlimited auction that brought in \$165 to the chapter.

Kreider and his family are active members of Hope Lutheran Church in Cherryville. He and his wife and children enjoy canoeing and camping, when time permits.

"WCO Kreider is a well-respected officer among his peers and the public alike," said Game Commission Southeast Region Director, Douglas Killough, who nominated Kreider. "He is friendly, polite, and a pleasure to work with, as he is always upbeat. His attitude, manners, conduct, and personal appearance are outstanding and bring credit to the Game Commission."

## David Henry

Henry began his career with the Game Commission as a member of a survey crew in 1979 and two years later became a forester in the Southeast Region, where he has worked ever since.

Currently, Henry supervises a crew of



**From left to right are: Game Commission Board President Thomas E. Boop; PANWTF President Gene Alwine; Northampton County WCO Brad Kreider, recognized for his efforts to conserve wild turkeys; Southeast Region Forester Dave Henry, recognized for his wild turkey habitat efforts; and Game Commission Executive Director Carl G. Roe.**

three foresters and oversees all forest management on state game lands in the Southeast Region. His responsibilities require him to work with the five Land Management Group Supervisors in meeting the habitat needs on state game lands through the use of silvicultural techniques. He has been directly involved with a number of NWTF-sponsored projects in the region.

"Over the years, Henry has worked to keep wildlife considerations first on his list of priorities whenever he conducts timbers sales," said Killough, who nominated Henry. "He strived to enhance nesting and mast production, create openings for poult rearing and over winter supplemental grain fields, mast producing orchards and conifer blocks for thermal cover.

"Without Dave Henry's dedication to professional forest management and wildlife habitat creation, the southeastern part of the state would not be supporting the substantial number of wild turkeys we currently are enjoying."

Killough also noted that, within the Southeast Region, timber sales can be controversial and raise strong emotions. During a number of sales, Henry served as the point of contact to deal with public inquiries and comments. Along with region staff, Henry has been instrumental in developing a brochure that explains the habitat benefits of a timber sale. Through these public education efforts and informational

open houses, timber sales within the region are moving forward and improving habitat.

**The PA Chapter of the NWTF annually awards two PGC employees for their contributions of outstanding services toward the management of the wild turkey. At the April PGC meetings, I presented these to a couple of top-notch individuals for their efforts. The Joe Kurz, Outstanding Wildlife Manager of the Year Award went to the Southeast Region Forester, Dave Henry and the Outstanding Officer of the Year Award went to Northampton Co. WCO Bradley Kreider. Congratulations to both of you. — Gene Alwine**

# Pennsylvania represented well at recent leadership meetings

SUBMITTED BY JON D. PRIES

From June 28 through July 1, 2007, more than 30 Pennsylvania chapter presidents and representatives attended a powerful "One Team – One Voice" leadership meeting. Our three state Regional Directors, Regional Biologist, and Women in the Outdoors staff members were in attendance as well. The Pennsylvania contingent was joined by more than 1,000 state chapter presidents and representatives from virtually every state in the union, including Hawaii and Alaska.

It was a unique opportunity for all who attended to meet and talk with all of the NWTF leaders and national staff, as well as the dedicated volunteers from across the entire United States. The four days were packed with meetings and other organized events but still allowed for some social time to get to know some of the other people who we sometimes only get to read or hear about. Everyone came away from the weekend with a heightened awareness and renewed enthusiasm for all the National Wild Turkey Federation does for all of us as well as all sportsmen and sportswomen

across this land.

At a very relaxed social hour one evening, the chapter presidents had the opportunity to meet with national staff members. CEO Rob Keck, COO Carl Brown, and many others were very accessible as they chatted with all of the volunteers on hand.

The next morning, all chapter presidents gathered in a private meeting with Rob Keck and Carl Brown as they shared ideas and discussed ways to improve our effectiveness as volunteers within the National Wild Turkey Federation, emphasizing what each of us could do at the state and local level to better our organization. Throughout the rest of the day, the remainder of the volunteers arrived by car and plane to attend meetings and the evening social hour.

The following day, all those attending were bused from our hotels in Augusta, Georgia, to nearby Edgefield, South Carolina – the national headquarters of the NWTF. Then things really began to happen. Newly adopted programs and ideas were presented and discussed. We were entertained by a contingent from Georgia representing their school's marching band. After the group meeting, everyone was free to proceed on their own to a great variety of activ-

ities held throughout the day. Attendees could choose from trapshooting, black-powder shooting, fly-fishing, campfire cooking, archery, or sporting clays, just to name a few. The entire complex of buildings that make up the National Headquarters was open to all so everyone could have a firsthand view of what really goes on in Edgefield. The 2008 core package was on display, and a sizeable number of representatives from various companies and vendors who work with NWTF were on hand to show and discuss their products.

The afternoon was highlighted by internationally recognized double-amputee Dana Bowman parachuting into the crowd, trailing a massive American flag. His precision and flawless landing was a thrill to all who watched, and he then took time to work through the crowd to greet as many as possible. And the evening was topped off with a beautiful display of fireworks.

Overall, the meeting was a powerful, educational, motivational, and awe-inspiring weekend, which left all who were fortunate enough to attend with a new appreciation and respect for all that the NWTF does. If you ever have the chance to attend this event, don't miss it.

## PANWTF Wild Turkey Management Report Card

In an effort to keep our membership better informed on the high-priority action items of the PANWTF, we are starting to track those action items on a regular basis and report on them in Pennsylvania Turkey Talk. The report card below lists several high-profile action items and the progress made on those items to date. With each new issue of Pennsylvania Turkey Talk, we will update the report card, as well as add new topics as they are introduced. Included in the report card is the date the action item was started along with its current status and, where applicable, when it was completed. Also listed is the amount of money the PANWTF has spent or raised in support of that action item. Since 1975, the PANWTF has raised and spent within the state of Pennsylvania more than \$4,300,000 for safety and education, habitat improvement, outreach programs, and college scholarships.

| PANWTF Wild Turkey Management Report Card                                   |            |                                  |                 |                     |
|---|------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Action Item   | Start Date | Status                           | Completion Date | \$spent/(raised)    |
| Meeting Objectives of Wild Turkey Management Plan                           | June 1985  | Ongoing                          | Ongoing         |                     |
| Habitat   |            | Ongoing                          | Ongoing         | \$ 2,475,635        |
| Informatin & Education  |            | Ongoing                          | Ongoing         | \$ 329,847          |
| Hunting Heritage  |            | Ongoing                          | Ongoing         | \$ 221,590          |
| Population / Research   |            | Ongoing                          | Ongoing         | \$ 80,892           |
| Turkey Protection   |            | Ongoing                          | Ongoing         | \$ 9,587            |
| PGC Management Plan 2006 - 2015   | Apr. 1999  | Complete                         | Feb 2007        | \$ -                |
| Mentored Youth Spring Season  | Oct. 2005  | Complete                         | June 2006       | \$ 7,500            |
| PGC Reveunue Raised from Second Gobbler Hunting License                     | June 2005  | Complete                         | Jan. 2006       | \$ (312,460)        |
| "Positively Identify Target" hunting safety signs                           | Jan. 2006  | Complete                         | June 2006       | \$ 430              |
| NWTF Turkey Hunting Safety Task Force safety DVD's for HTE training         | June 2006  | Complete                         | Aug. 2006       | \$ 440              |
| Turkey Biologist's spring season white paper to PGC Commissioners and Staff | Aug. 2003  | Complete                         | Feb 2004        | \$ 3,800            |
| Northeast Wild Turkey Population Model                                      | 2001       | Program CD received by Casaleria | Ongoing         | \$ 15,000           |
| Gobbler Banding Study   | Jan. 2006  | In second year of 4 year program | Ongoing         | \$ 42,000           |
| Extend Youth Spring Gobbler Day to all day hunting                          | Jan 2006   | Requested at PGC Meeting         | Ongoing         | \$ -                |
| Reduce Fall Season Length in WMU 2A, 2F                                     | Jan. 2006  | Requested at PGC Meeting         | Apr 2007        | \$ -                |
| Support Hunter's Choice on Orange in Spring Season                          | June 2006  | Requested at PGC Meeting         | Ongoing         | \$ -                |
| Extend Spring Gobbler Season to May 31                                      | June 2006  | Requested at PGC Meeting         | Ongoing         | \$ -                |
| PGC Joint funding of NWTF Biologist   | June 2007  | Ongoing                          | Ongoing         | \$ -                |
| Reduce Fall Season Length in WMU 4D to 2 weeks                              | Apr. 2007  | Proposed at PGC Meeting          | Ongoing         | \$ -                |
| Opportunity for Mentored Youth Hunters to hunt turkeys in Fall 2008         | Apr. 2007  | Proposed at PGC Meeting          | Ongoing         | \$ -                |
| Turkey Hunting License / General Hunting License Increase Proposal          | June 2006  | Ongoing                          | Ongoing         |                     |
| PGC Revenue Forecast  |            |                                  |                 | \$ (1,300,000 est.) |
| Hen mortality study   | future     | future                           | future          | \$ 60,000 (est.)    |
| Expanding regular spring hunting season to all day                          | future     | future                           | future          | \$ -                |
| Sunday Hunting Proposal   | future     | future                           | future          | \$ -                |



**33rd Anniversary  
 Pennsylvania Chapter  
 National Wild Turkey Federation  
 Annual Rendezvous and Awards Banquet**

**Saturday, January 5, 2008  
 Ramada Inn - State College -- 814-238-3001  
 (rooms \$67/night; please call for reservations  
 and mention NWTF for special rate)**

**Seminars Beginning 12:00  
 (see schedule on adjacent page)**

**Prime Rib &  
 Stuffed  
 Chicken  
 Dinner**

**JAKES Hunt of A  
 Lifetime on Live  
 Auction**

**Guest Speaker  
 Carl Brown  
 NWTF Chief Operating Officer**

Awards Banquet with the Premiere  
 Introduction of the 2008 Banquet Package  
 Along with Chapter and Individual Awards  
 5:30 p.m.

**Silent Auction,  
 Live Auction,  
 Guns, Prints,  
 Raffles**

**Drawings for Sponsor  
 and JAKES Hunt of a  
 Lifetime**

**\*\*Early Bird Core Package Raffle\*\*  
 \$300 worth of tickets for \$100 Deadline December 15**

Custom One-of-A-Kind Turkey Calls From Scott Baschore, Dale Rohm,  
 Mike Lapp, Dennis Strawbridge, Roger Parks, and others  
 plus other One of a Kind Items on the Live Auction

Make Checks Payable to: PA CHAPTER NWTF  
 Mail to: Rhonda Henry, 151 Trent Road, Friedens, PA 15541 (814) 443-6241

|   |          |                |          |
|---|----------|----------------|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Banquet Meal Ticket              | \$ 30.00 | TOTAL          | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Banquet Meal Ticket (10 & under) | \$ 15.00 |                | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Early Bird Raffle Package              | \$100.00 |                | \$ _____ |
|   |          | GRAND TOTAL \$ | _____    |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_

(Names of all people attending): \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\* Tickets Will Be Held At The Door \*\*\*\*\*



# RENDEZVOUS SEMINARS—January 5, 2008

## 12:00 p.m. — Food Plots and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement

by NWTF Regional Biologist, Bob Eriksen and  
NWTF Habitat Pro Staff, Bob Schmid

Food plots and other habitat enhancement projects have become increasingly popular in Pennsylvania. Property owners, state foresters, Game Commission land managers and others routinely establish and maintain food plots and herbaceous openings to attract game animals at certain times of the year. NWTF Habitat Pro-Staffer Bob Schmid and Regional Biologist Bob Eriksen will give you some guidance to help make your habitat improvement effort succeed. They'll discuss planning food plots, what to plant, when to plant, how to prepare your site and how to get the most out of your habitat work in this seminar using power point and audience interactions. January is the time to start planning your habitat work so come out and attend this informative seminar.



## 12:00 p.m. — Mentor Youth Hunting

by PA State Board of Director, Greg Caldwell

Greg was on the Mentor Youth Hunting committee and is President of River Valley Game Calls. He will cover guns, custom fitting guns, and how to make sure your mentor youth hunt is fun for both!

## 1:30 p.m. — Pennsylvania's Elk Herd

by Pennsylvania Game Commission Biologist, Jon DeBerti

Seminar will cover the history of elk in Pennsylvania, life history, population dynamics, current and past research, summation of past elk hunting seasons, and tips for success if you are drawn for a license.



## 3:30 p.m. — Black Bears

by NWTF Regional Biologist, Bob Eriksen

Have you ever encountered a bear while you were turkey hunting? The North American black bear is the most widespread game animal on the continent. Popular with hunters and non-hunters alike, this intelligent critter is also the poster child for groups that oppose hunting. Black bear populations require management just as any large mammal population does, especially when bears live close to people. Regional Biologist Bob

Eriksen will discuss black bear behavior and ecology in a power point seminar with lots of pictures of these fascinating animals. Learn how biologists capture and study bears, how they attempt to control agricultural damage and other trouble associated with abundant bears and how they design hunting seasons. This seminar will feature some interesting stories about Bob's work with bears in the most densely populated state in the nation.

# NWTF Continues to Support the Fight to Defend Hunting

**T**he National Wild Turkey Federation has reached a landmark, having donated more than \$1 million to the U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance USSA and the fight to protect hunting in America.

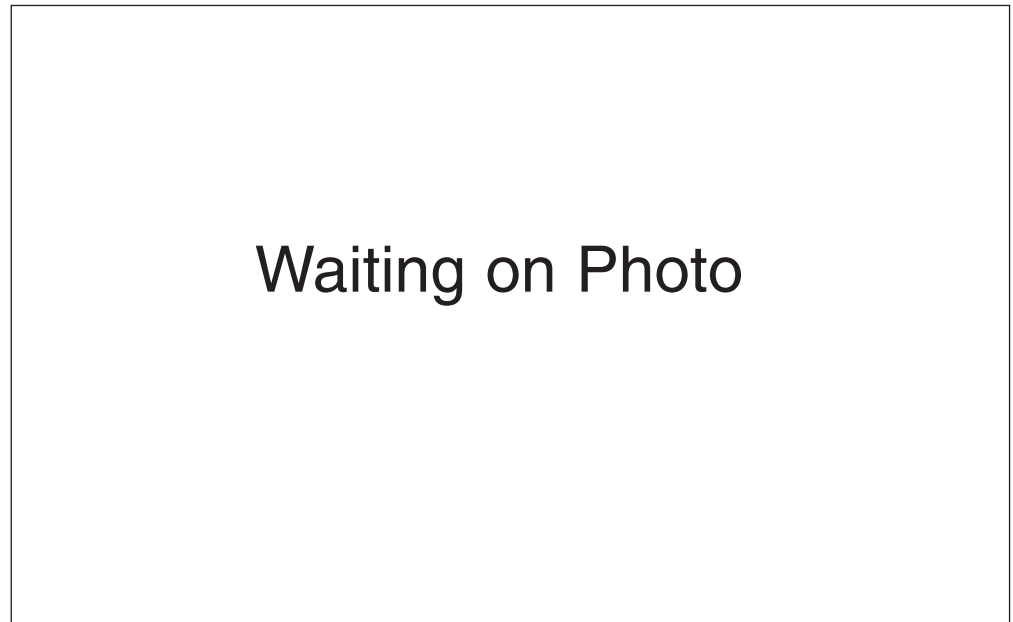
On Sept. 19, National Wild Turkey Federation CEO, Rob Keck, presented a \$100,000 check to Bud Pidgeon, president and CEO of USSA. The contribution makes the NWTF one of the top donors of all time to the nation's leading sportsmen's rights advocacy organization.

"This benchmark speaks volumes about the NWTF and its deep and steadfast commitment to the defense of outdoor sports," said Pidgeon. "Its investment in the battle to protect sportsmen's rights has paid dividends for hunters from Maine to California."

The NWTF and USSA have partnered on many projects to promote and protect hunting. The team, along with the National Shooting Sports Foundation, established the Families Afield program to eliminate unnecessary hunting age restrictions and ease hunter education mandates for first time hunters.

"Removing youth hunting barriers is one way to help ensure the future of our hunting heritage for generations to come," said Rob Keck, CEO of the NWTF. "By fighting for sportsmen's rights, the USSA is making a significant difference and we're proud to support them."

The NWTF has also fought alongside the USSA to ensure the defeat of ballot issues to ban bear hunting in Alaska and Maine, defeat legislation to ban dove hunting in California, and vanquish a bill that would have kicked sportsmen off the New Jersey Fish and Game Council and replaced them with environmen-



## Waiting on Photo

**National Wild Turkey Federation CEO Rob Keck (right) presents U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance President Bud Pidgeon (left) with the NWTF's \$100,000 donation.**

tal and animal rights activists. In Ohio, the two organizations worked to protect dove hunting at the ballot box.

"The NWTF understands that the anti-hunting threats to dove hunting or bear hunting are the tip of the iceberg, and if one of those pastimes falls, the turkey hunters will be one of the next in line," said Pidgeon. "Its support of the U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance demonstrates its commitment to the future of all hunting and wildlife conservation nationwide."

The USSA is planning to use the funds on its programs, which defend hunters from

attacks and expose the agendas of anti-hunters, show sportsmen that their rights are at risk, and inspire the next generation in the outdoor heritage.

The U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance is a national association of sportsmen and sportsmen's organizations that protect the rights of hunters, anglers, and trappers in the courts, legislatures, at the ballot box, in Congress, and through public education programs. For more information about the U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance and its work, call 614-888-4868 or visit its Web site, [www.ussportsmen.org](http://www.ussportsmen.org).

## Winchester Ammunition, Working for the Wild Turkey

**"D**o many things, and do them well," applies in the case of Winchester Ammunition and the National Wild Turkey Federation. The two groups work jointly on numerous projects and programs that add to the bottom line – conservation of the wild turkey and the preservation of the hunting tradition.

"Supporting our partners in conservation goes beyond writing checks," said Dick Hammett, President for Winchester Ammunition. "The Winchester and NWTF relationship grows because we find different ways to work together ... then, it's a matter of follow through."

Certain projects and program support that highlight the Winchester/NWTF collaboration include:

2007 Spring Turkey Promotion – Winchester Ammunition is donating its proceeds to the NWTF's JAKES program as announced in its spring turkey hunting promotion.



**WINCHESTER**



2007 Winchester Ammunition Conservation Sweepstakes – NWTF members have a chance to win a two-day hunt at Winchester's prestigious NILO Farms hunting preserve. Visit [www.winchester.com/nwtf-sweeps](http://www.winchester.com/nwtf-sweeps), for more information.

Funding for the Wild Turkey Center's Winchester Museum – a 7,200 square foot museum, which receives more than 10,000 visitors annually, and the only museum in the world dedicated to the restoration, management, and hunting of the wild turkey. Winchester Ammunition became the NWTF's first \$1-million corporate sponsor.

NWTF outreach programs – JAKES, Women in the Outdoors – use Winchester Ammunition at local chapter events.

The NWTF's national convention includes the Winchester Veteran's Breakfast – honoring all past and present armed forces.

For more information on Winchester products, visit [www.winchester.com](http://www.winchester.com).

# “Mandatory Orange” Expected to Change to “Voluntary” for Spring Gobbler Season

BY PHIL FERRARE, JR.,  
PA NWTF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The wearing of mandatory orange while spring turkey hunting in Pennsylvania is expected to change to a voluntary status. The mandatory wearing of orange while moving in spring gobbler season has been in effect since the 1993 spring turkey season. The Pennsylvania Game Commission placed this regulation in effect in hopes of lowering the Hunted Related Shooting Incidents (HSRI), which were at 4.2 per 100,000 hunters in 1992. Since 1993, the HSRI per 100,000 hunters has averaged 4.2 through the 2006 spring season. This data, over a 15-year period, supports the statement that “mandating hunters to wear orange does not make our coveted sport of turkey hunting any safer than before us hunters were mandated to do so.”

On pages 12 and 13 of this issue, we have again posted a fact sheet titled “Orange Facts.” These facts highlight the statistics from other states where HSRI were lower than Pennsylvania’s. One of these facts is that Pennsylvania is the only state that does require mandatory orange in any capacity in hopes of eliminating HSRI. The information collected from other states supports the premise that the foundation of

turkey hunting safety is hunter education – specifically proper turkey hunting safety and that you must positively identify your target before shooting. Hunter education and increased awareness are the keys to reducing and eliminating HSRI – not mandating the use of orange.

Another key fact that has played into the inability of mandatory orange to reduce HSRI is that scientific field research shows that the use of orange clothing reduces a hunter’s chances of harvesting a turkey by a factor of two to three times. This fact leads to another point: that hunter acceptance and compliance is a major consideration, and hunters usually resist the wearing of orange clothing.

These facts lead again to the core of the issue – Positively identify your target before shooting. Mandating the wearing of orange confuses this most important aspect of safety hunting and indirectly indicates to the Pennsylvania hunter to look for orange when seeing movement afield in the turkey woods, and if no orange is seen, it must be game. This mentality is a very dangerous one for all of us.

We have an opportunity to right a wrong – a wrong that encourages something other than to positively identify your target. Hunter education is the only way to ensure safe hunting practices. The NWTF Turkey

Hunting Task Force set out to make our safe sport of turkey hunting even safer and thus help keep it one of the safest recreational sports in the country today. The Pennsylvania Game Commission has purchased copies of an interactive DVD developed by the NWTF Turkey Hunting Task Force to use in hunter-education classes across Pennsylvania.

At press time, the agenda for the Game Commission meeting that was scheduled for October 2 included a proposal that would amend the current regulation to eliminate the requirement to wear orange while moving during the spring turkey season. PA NWTF supports the principle that Pennsylvania hunters should have a choice to wear or not wear orange, and we will offer our resources to help educate Pennsylvania turkey hunters on proper safety hunting tactics.

Please review the Orange Facts provided in this issue of Pennsylvania Turkey Talk. Then write or e-mail the commissioners at PGCCOMMENTS@state.pa.us and tell them that you want orange to be voluntary, not mandatory. If you place a commissioner’s name on the e-mail subject line and in the comments text, the e-mail should be forwarded to that commissioner.

Turkey hunter education is the answer to safe turkey hunting. Remember: Always positively identify your target.

## Pictures of successful mentored youth hunters



Stephanie Hellinger, 10 years old, shot this 17lb jake with a 4" beard on April 28th in Schuylkill County.



Brothers Joshua (on Left) age 15 and Justin Marshall age 12 (on Right) of Brockway ,Pa. both tagged their first spring turkeys while hunting with Mentor Uncle Max Cooper (center). They hunted in Washington Township, Jefferson County Pennsylvania April 21, 2007 during the mentored youth hunt.



Tanner Kerle, 6 years old, NWTF Jakes member, from Knox, PA. Shot this 18 1/2 lb. 9" bearded turkey in Clarion County. Pictured with dad, Tom who traveled to eight states this spring and shot 13 turkeys.

# ORANGE FACTS

**A goal of the PA Chapter NWTF is to have the regulation requiring hunters to wear an orange hat in the spring changed. We would like to see the use of orange in the spring be voluntary rather than mandatory.**

**FACT:** Nationwide spring turkey hunting incident rates were 8.1 in the early 1990's to a low of less than 3 incidents per 100,000 participants today.

**FACT:** Nationwide there is NO ORANGE REQUIREMENT during spring turkey hunting season except for Pennsylvania. In most of the other states their shooting incidents are lower than Pennsylvania.

**FACT:** Spring incident rates in New York (180,000 turkey hunters) averaged 3.5 per 100,000 participants between 1993 and 2003. Here in Pennsylvania the average for those years was 4.6. Orange is not required in New York.

**FACT:** Spring incident rates in other major turkey hunting states remain fairly low without the use of mandatory orange. Rates in Missouri (125,000 spring hunters) averaged 4.67 per 100,000 hunters between 1995 and 2006. In Wisconsin (168,000 spring hunters) the average incident rate was 2.75 between 1993 and 2003. Michigan's average rate of incidents (98,300 hunters) was 1.0 between 1993 and 2003. In West Virginia, where there are 140,000 spring hunters, the average incident rate was 1.2 between 2003 and 2005.

**FACT:** Hunter acceptance and compliance is a major consideration. Generally, turkey hunters resist using hunter-orange clothing.

**FACT:** Hunters must always assume full responsibility to clearly identify their target. Even if all hunters complied with hunter-orange regulations, there would still be many people in turkey hunting areas that don't wear it.

**FACT:** A combination of public awareness, turkey hunting information, training, and education strategies have been implemented since the 1992 task force, leading to a nationwide drop in the injury-incident rate by nearly half.

**FACT:** Scientific field research shows that the use of fluorescent-orange clothing reduces a hunter's chances of harvesting a turkey by a factor of two to three times.

**FACT:** Spring incident rates in Pennsylvania have changed very little since the introduction of mandatory use of fluorescent orange in 1992, while other states have seen a significant decrease in incident rates without the use of orange.

**FACT:** Orange is too closely related to red in the color spectrum and can be mistaken for the red of a gobblers head.

**RECOMMENDATION:** We believe that education and increased awareness are the keys to reducing spring gobbler hunting incident rates. The PA Chapter NWTF will support the PA Game Commission by providing information needed for Turkey Hunter Safety that can be used at the Hunter Education courses. If a turkey hunting license was initiated, NWTF would provide a safety pamphlet to all hunters buying the license. We are dedicated to outreach on this issue through the media, advertising, and magazine articles stressing safety prior to every turkey hunting season. In addition, the Game Commission has purchased copies of an interactive CD/DVD developed by the NWTF Turkey Hunter Safety Task Force for use in Hunter Education classes.

*E-mail your comments to the PGC Commissioners at: [PGCCOMMENTS@state.pa.us](mailto:PGCCOMMENTS@state.pa.us)*

*If you place a commissioner's name on the e-mail subject line and in comments text, the e-mail should be forwarded to that commissioner.*

# ATTENTION TURKEY HUNTERS

**It's time to change the regulations regarding the use of orange in the spring turkey season!**

The current orange requirements have been in effect for 15 years and there is NO indication that they have reduced safety incidents.

Pennsylvania is the only state with orange requirements for spring turkey hunting and while the number of incidents nationwide has reduced, Pennsylvania's rate has seen little change.

## **READ THE FACTS!**

Then write or e-mail the Pennsylvania Game Commissioners at [PGCCOMMENTS@state.pa.us](mailto:PGCCOMMENTS@state.pa.us) and tell them that you want orange to be VOLUNTARY not mandatory.

If you place a Commissioner's name on the email Subject line and in comments text, the e-mail should be forwarded to that Commissioner.

### **PA Game Commissioners**

Thomas Boop . . . . . President  
Roxane Palone . . . . . Vice-President  
Gregory Isabella . . . . . Secretary  
Russell Schleiden. . . . . Commissioner  
H. Daniel Hill III. . . . . Commissioner  
David Schreffler. . . . . Commissioner  
Jay Delaney . . . . . Commissioner

Or write your Commissioner at:  
**Pennsylvania Game Commission**  
2001 Elmerton Avenue  
Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797  
**717-787-4250**

**TURKEY HUNTER SAFETY EDUCATION IS THE ANSWER**

# Keep the Record Going

# The 2007 Safety Message

BY: BOB ERIKSEN,  
NWTF REGIONAL BIOLOGIST

The brothers saw the flock of turkeys from the road as they drove to their favorite hunting spot. Though they did not have permission to be on the property where the turkeys were feeding on the edge of a field, they decided to try for them anyway. After all, the land wasn't posted. Instead of stopping the truck in plain view of the birds, they continued down the road until they were out of sight and pulled to the side. They quickly got their gear together, loaded their shotguns, and headed into the woods. Their plan was to ease through the woods and use the stone fence along the field edge as cover to get close to the feeding flock of turkeys. Then if they could get a shot, they'd take it.

Their excitement mounted as they circled through the oak woods and approached the field. Moving as quietly as possible in the dry fallen leaves, they made their way toward the field the turkeys were using. They were about fifty yards from their goal of the stone fence when they encountered an old barbed-wire fence running parallel to the edge of the woods. They would have to cross the wire fence in order to approach the edge of the woods and get close enough to shoot at the turkey flock. Though the air was cool on this early November day, both brothers were sweating from the exertion of climbing the hill and from their eager anticipation of coming home with Thanksgiving dinner.

The younger brother was a bit taller, and he made it across the wire fence without making much noise or getting his clothes caught on a barb. Just as his older brother was attempting to go over the fence, they both heard alarm putts from the turkeys. They'd been had. The birds had noticed them and were starting to move away. In his hurry, the older brother's pants caught a barb and ripped. The younger brother heard the sound of tearing cloth and turned to see what was going on. At that moment, the older brother's shotgun discharged and a full load of number four shot hit his brother in the hip at less than five yards, breaking his hip joint. The younger brother screamed in pain, and the turkeys flushed.

These brothers became another statistic, another hunting related shooting incident (HRSI). Their incident was unusual in that it was an "accidental discharge." Most turkey HRSIs are usually caused by "mistaken for game" or more appropriately labeled "failure to identify the target." This was really not an accident. The brothers violated common sense rules of firearm safety

when they each crossed the fence without helping one another by passing their firearms across or unloading the shotguns. The older brother apparently had taken the safety off in order to be ready to shoot. He also did not have the muzzle of his shotgun pointed in a safe direction. Instead, it was pointed at his brother. There is no excuse for this type of incident, but hunters do make mistakes. Fortunately, both brothers lived to tell the story.

The fall turkey-hunting season is rapidly approaching. Pennsylvania hunters have posted remarkable fall turkey-hunting safety records for the past several years. The number of fall turkey hunting related shooting incidents dropped significantly in 2003 and has remained fairly low. In 2002, there were 13 fall turkey HRSIs in Pennsylvania. Nine of the incidents involved shotguns, and four involved rifles. There were no fatalities, thank goodness. Twelve of the incidents were classified as "failure to identify the target" situations, and in one incident, the victim moved into his partner's line of fire. In 2003, there were only two fall turkey hunting incidents, and both were "failure to identify the target" situations. Why the incident numbers fell so drastically is a mystery, but the trend moved in a good direction. In 2004, there were five fall incidents, and in 2005, there were three. The fall of 2006 was another good safety season for turkey hunters. Only two fall turkey hunting related shooting incidents were reported.

We would all like to know why the number of incidents grew terribly high in the late 1980s and early 1990s. More than that, we'd like to know why the number of incidents has been down for the past four fall turkey seasons. Regardless of the reasons, most of all we turkey hunters would like to see the number of incidents remain at these low levels. How can we accomplish that?

The Pennsylvania Chapter has dedicated itself to a continued effort to get the safety message out to turkey hunters. Some local chapters have sponsored billboards reminding turkey hunters to positively identify their targets. Other chapters have sponsored turkey-hunting seminars at which safety is emphasized. Prior to each season, the chapter issues press releases designed to remind hunters about being safe. Many of our volunteers are helping by being involved as hunter-education instructors. The Game Commission is incorporating the Hunting Safety DVD/CD packet from NWTF in their regular hunter education curriculum. As organizations, we're doing our part. But we need to step up the pace. Each of us needs to decide never to take chances and always to err on the side of safety.

As you prepare for fall turkey hunting in



2007, think safety and talk safety with your turkey-hunting partners. Remember the basic rules of firearm safety. In your mind, you should assume that every gun is always loaded. To think otherwise invites carelessness. Never let the muzzle of your firearm cross anything you are not prepared to destroy. Never touch the trigger until you are actually ready to shoot. Make sure your safety stays engaged until the last second before you shoot, and remember that safeties are not foolproof. Be sure of your target and what is beyond. Properly identify your target. Never assume that what you see is a turkey until you have a clear, full view of the bird within range. Never shoot at anything you cannot see clearly. Dress in full camo and do not wear colors that could be mistaken for parts of a turkey (red, white, blue, black). Set up with a large tree or other object against your back to break up your outline and reduce your visibility to a hunter approaching from behind. Obey all turkey hunting regulations, including the requirement to wear orange while you are moving and to display orange while set up.

Good luck this fall and "Hunt Safe"!

# a Gobbler for Rachel

SUBMITTED BY MIKE HAINES

A few years ago, when Pennsylvania started the youth spring turkey season, I used the opportunity to take my son Marty turkey hunting to see if we could score his first bird. My daughter Rachel, who was 12 years old at the time, also wanted to tag along, so she got a hunting license too. I took both kids out, and they both missed birds that day. I thought that would hook my son on the sport for life, but my daughter was the one who developed an interest in turkey hunting.

Each year during the youth hunt, she and I were in the woods chasing gobblers around but with no success. It would either snow or rain, or we were on the wrong hill. In spite of all of this adversity, Rachel maintained her desire to keep trying for a turkey.

Through my involvement of the Wapiti Roost Chapter of NWTF, I found out that we would be auctioning a youth turkey hunt at our yearly NWTF Hunting Heritage Banquet. The hunt was donated by Bob Friedl at his Timberdoodle Farms near Eldred Pa. On the night of the banquet, I was able to purchase the hunt for my daughter.

Matt Nicklas, who is on the pro staff with Mountain Hollow Game Calls, was to be our caller and guide and, if possible, would also video the hunt. We were up early that morning in anticipation of what the day might have in store for us. We did get to work two different gobblers, but both were with hens, and we just could not seal the deal. At the end of the day, Bob was disappointed for us because until then he was four for four in getting birds for youth hunters. Bob generously offered us the chance to come back later in the season, which we agreed to do.

Our next hunt came on the second Saturday of the season. We arrived on Friday and were able to roost a bird that evening. Unfortunately, that bird never made a sound the next morning. We did hear another gobbler tearing it up on the other side of Bob's property. Hearing the turkey gobble every few minutes, Bob indicated that we could get that bird in a very short time. Soon we were near the bird, and it was still on the roost, gobbling strong. By now, daylight was arriving fast. I heard the turkey fly down and thought we may have spooked him.

We were headed to a little point on the side of the hill, which had some small popular trees growing on it. As we set up there, the bird began to gobble on its own but was



down the hill quite a bit. I thought it would be tough to coax him up the hill to our location. I sat next to Rachel with Bob behind us. Once I started to call, things started to happen fast. The gobbler answered me but

*I'll never forget the moments after the shot, running up to the flopping bird, and looking back to see Bob spinning my daughter around in the excitement*

seemed inclined to stay down near a creek bottom. About a minute or two later, we heard a hen call to our right, followed by a second hen. Those birds started to move toward us. Suddenly, what sounded like five jakes started gobbling too. The hill was alive with gobbling. At the same time, the two hens would cut at everything call I made, and they, as well as the jakes, were coming fast to our setup. Rachel was ready to shoot if one of those jakes showed up, but there was a loud gobble to our left. I told her to move her gun to the left of me right now,

which she did. Again, a loud thunderous gobble to our left, this time much closer. And there he was, coming up over the edge of the rise looking to show to everyone who was the boss bird on this hill. I'll never forget Rachel sitting beside me, breathing big sighs of excitement, trying to calm herself down. And Bob and I saying, "Shoot. Shoot." Just then, however, the tom went into full strut, so she couldn't shoot, but what a show. Finally, Rachel fired her shotgun and scored on a mature gobbler. I'll never forget the moments after the shot, running up to the flopping bird, and looking back to see Bob spinning my daughter around in the excitement of what just happened.

After many hugs and much celebrating on the hill, we went back to camp to show off the success of our hunt. Rachel's gobbler weighed 23 pounds, sported a 9-inch beard, and had 1 3/8-inch spurs, a true trophy of a lifetime. I'll never forget the excitement of sitting on the porch of Bob's camp, having coffee, and reliving the events of that morning. Rachel called home, waking her mother, and later her uncle Joe, to share the excitement of the day.

Rachel and I can't thank Bob Friedl enough for being such great host and for all the hard work to make her hunt a success – and most of all for helping to be part of the memory of a lifetime for a father and a daughter.

# Wild Turkey Population Questions and Answers

BY BOB ERIKSEN,  
NWTF REGIONAL BIOLOGIST

All spring I had trouble with “henned up” gobblers. Do lots of hens mean that there are fewer gobblers in the population? If there is a skewed sex ratio in wild turkeys, does it necessarily mean that the breeding season is inordinately long as is the case with deer?

**Answer:** Turkeys are not deer. Their population dynamics, survival, life expectancy, and reproductive success are not comparable with those of deer. The skewed buck to doe ratios reported in some deer herds occur after many years of intensive harvest pressure targeted specifically at males. In longer-lived species like deer, such harvest strategies can be problematic. Deer can live quite a long time, and where there is little harvest of does, sex ratios can become unbalanced pretty quickly. Deer have the capacity to increase their population by 40 percent per year, owing to high productivity, good survival, and their life expectancy.

When biologists discuss the skewed sex ratio in deer and its impact on breeding-season length, we are dealing with a species in which as much as 85 percent of antlered males may be removed each year through unrestricted harvest. Such a heavy harvest rate has never been reported for male wild turkeys, even where liberal seasons with a longstanding history occur, such as in Missouri, Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina, and the list goes on. We're also dealing with mammals, the females of which undergo estrus cycles. If not successfully bred, the doe recycles after a period of time. Many does enter estrus simultaneously. If there are too few bucks, a number of does will pass out of estrus without being

bred. Another month will pass before these does are fertile again, extending the “rut” or breeding season. This, in turn, extends the period of time in which fawns are born and late-dropped fawns will fail to mature and produce good antlers the next fall.

There is no evidence to suggest this is an issue with birds. Once hen turkeys begin to ovulate, they continue to do so throughout the breeding season. If a hen is bred, she can produce fertile eggs for a long time. In fact, hens can maintain active sperm in their oviduct for as long as 56 days following breeding. She can continue to produce fertile eggs for more than a month if she loses a nest to predation. Egg production stops when the hen begins to incubate a clutch, but hens seem to have no trouble initiating production again if a nest is lost. Deer do not have that capability.

If too many gobblers are harvested now that we have a second tag available, will there be too few gobblers to breed the hens?

**Answer:** Under some conditions, overharvest of adult gobblers may affect the age structure of the population for a period of time, but there is no evidence that a reduced number of adult gobblers would affect breeding. The jakes would step up to the plate if not intimidated by adult males, and breeding would happen anyway. So there might be fewer adult gobblers to keep turkey hunters happy, but the population would maintain itself. By the way, harvest of adult gobblers would have to exceed 60 or 70 percent for that to happen. In a study in western Kentucky, sustained harvest of 62 percent of adult gobblers annually did not reduce the availability of adult gobblers in subsequent years (though long-spurred old-timers were harder to come by). Kentucky has a three-gobbler bag limit.

If poult hatch late, will they survive

the winter? If the hatch occurs over an extended period, will predators spend more time seeking young turkeys and reduce survival?

**Answer:** While late-hatched wild turkeys might have a slight winter survival disadvantage over birds hatched earlier, much of that disadvantage is made up before winter ever sets in. Wild turkeys mature to their “normal” juvenile stature in about 16 weeks. So a turkey hatched in September – unusual but it has happened – will be “full grown” by January. Most late hatching is completed by July. Extended nesting and late hatching in wild turkeys is the result of weather conditions that influence nest losses and cause re-nesting to occur at higher than normal rates. This is not detrimental to poult survival. On the contrary, it can serve as an insurance policy to offset the weather-related losses that occurred in the earlier hatch.

So, can there be too many hens in the turkey population?

**Answer:** Not likely. As a major prey species wild turkeys are subject to high annual mortality. Maintaining a good number of hens helps the turkey population to thrive. Simply put, the more hens there are to be bred, the more gobblers a hunter can expect to see in future seasons.

Does that mean we should not shoot hens in the fall season?

**Answer:** Definitely not. In most years in good turkey habitat, there are enough turkeys in the fall population to allow for plenty of hunting opportunity without too much affect on the turkey population. Fall hunters can take turkeys of either sex as long as fall hunting regulations allow it. Hens are fair game and are a great trophy in the fall season. Agency biologists watch turkey harvests closely and will adjust season lengths and bag limits if necessary.







## Nittany Valley Longbeards host 2007 JAKES field day

**T**he Nittany Valley Longbeards sponsored their annual JAKES field day on July 28. The chapter has been providing annual JAKES events for the State College area since 1996. A total of 83 kids plus parents showed up this year for a fun-filled day of outdoor activities. The kids shot archery, shotguns, and .22s, went fishing and learned the wild turkey and how to call them, safe gun handling, and tree-stand safety. Each young person went home with a t-shirt and a box call as well as some new skills, friends, and memories.

The kids also competed for trophies in various events in several age groups. Those winners were:

### XTREME JAKES

Archery: 1st – Jonathon Judd, 2nd – Chase Vonada, 3rd – Timothy Clevenger  
 Casting : 1st – Timothy Clevenger, 2nd – Cody Stover, 3rd – Jonathon Judd  
 .22 Shoot: 1st – Jonathon Judd, 2nd – Colin Lucas, 3rd – Dakota Sweitzer

### JAKES

10-14 Year Olds  
 Archery: 1st – Hayley Hassinger, 2nd – Becky Layng, 3rd – Adam Kuhn



Shotgun: 1st – Andrew Albaugh, 2nd – Chris Witmer, 3rd – Aaron Albaugh

Fishing: 1st – Adam Kuhn  
 8 and 9 Year Olds

Archery: 1st – Trent Shaw, 2nd – Andrew Fichter, 3rd – Megan Royer

Shotgun: 1st – Jonathon Rossman, 2nd – Jacob Oakman, 3rd – Emily Clevenger

Fishing: 1st – Dalton Gillette, 2nd – Chole Case, 3rd – Jacob Oakman

7 and Under

Archery: 1st – Patrick Carr, 2nd – Corby Koleno, 3rd – Trenton Decker

Shotgun: 1st – Trenton Decker, 2nd –

Nate Pritts, 3rd – Joseph Meyer

Fishing: 1st – Trenton Decker, 2nd – Hannah Thomas

The Nittany Valley Longbeards would like to thank all the kids and parents for their participation. We would also like to thank all the local State College businesses who were sponsors this year. Without them, we would not be able to provide this event free to the families. If you are interested in next year's event, which will be held the last Saturday of July, you may email us at [nvlongbeards@hotmail.com](mailto:nvlongbeards@hotmail.com) or check out the NWTF national Web site at [NWTF.org](http://NWTF.org).

## Honey Hole Longbeards host JAKES Event

**T**he Honey Hole Longbeards Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation held its annual JAKES Event on June 16 at Nescopeck State Park. There were 35 children in attendance. In addition to the children, there were 24 parents that attended and over 12 volunteers. The Butler Township Recreation Board was a cosponsor of the event, which included presentations by: Rick Mikula, "The Butterfly Guy", Carbon County Environmental Education Center; Leo R. McHugh and Eric Maselkevich of Boy Scout Troop 63; archery by Jack Overton of JnD Archery Shop; Turkey Calling by NWTF members; and fishing by PA DCNR.

The Event was a tremendous success, and the children enjoyed a day in the outdoors learning various activities and environmental education topics. The Honey Hole Longbeards thank all the donors who made the event possible: Butler Township Recreation Board; Hazle Park Packing Co.; Cargill Meats; Stroehmanns Bakery; and all



the instructors and the volunteers who made this event special for all the young folks.

"For the most part, the NWTF has been and remains a leader in conserving and preserving our country's environment and the restoration of the wild turkey to our coun-

tryside. If you enjoy the outdoors, observing wildlife, and the wild turkey, we would like you to become one of those individuals to further the legacy of the many before us that worked so hard to restore the wild turkey," said Jan Pasdon.

# Recent lawsuit highlights need for hunter liability insurance

(This article was originally published in the September 2007 issue of **Pennsylvania Outdoor Times**.)

BY KEN SKUBA

**T**he financial settlement in the high-profile 2004 Lehigh County shooting case has sent a shudder through Pennsylvania's sporting community. Prior to that accidental shooting of a woman by a stray bullet fired by a hunter, Pennsylvania landowners had little to fear from such incidents. Landowners enjoy liability protection under the state's Recreational Use of Land and Water Act (RULWA), which protects landowners who permit hunting on their land free of charge.

All that changed when a jury found the North Whitehall landowner 10 percent liable for damages from the accidental shooting. The stray bullet traveled half a mile, well off the property from where it was fired, before it struck the victim in the head. The victim recovered from the injury and sued the hunter and the landowner. The amount of the settlement was not disclosed but was reported to be substantial.

In the wake of this case, many landowners who permitted hunting for free on their properties had to reevaluate the benefits in light of the risks, even though the case did not test RULWA because the Act was never invoked by defense counsel.

The good news is that RULWA is still on the books and new legislation has been passed in Pennsylvania to further protect landowners from liability from this type of accident in the future. The bad news is that hunters enjoy no such protection under the law.

## Hunters Still at Risk

Most of the notoriety of the Lehigh County case has focused on the potential liability for landowners. The bigger story, though, may be the affect on hunters.

While landowner in that case agreed to pay 10 percent of the damages, his share pales in comparison to the 90 percent of damages that the hunter would pay. Assuming the hunter has homeowner's insurance, the chances are that his policy covers the claim up to the limits of the policy. Homeowner's policies are designed to follow and protect the homeowner wherever he goes, even into the woods.

However, there is no guarantee that a homeowner's policy will defend a hunting liability claim. According to Dan Hilder, a professional risk manager and owner of The Hilder Group, Inc. located in Buffalo Grove, Illinois, "There are many different forms (of

**Modern hunters need to know how to protect themselves from legal claims. The Lehigh County case will force hunters and landowners to pull out the reading glasses and review their insurance.**

policies) in use by various homeowner's insurers." In other words, homeowners have to read the fine print of their policies.

This much is certain, though: a covered claim that exceeds the policy limits can easily cause financial ruin to the average hunter, Hilder said. For example, if the damage award is \$2 million and the homeowner's policy provides for liability coverage only up to \$1 million, the homeowner will be personally liable for the other \$1 million.

Hunters should review their homeowner's policy with an expert to be sure hunting risks are covered. They should also consider purchasing insurance specifically covering their hunting activities. These specialized policies exist and are offered by hunting organizations such as the National Rifle Association, Quality Deer Management Association, and Buckmasters.

These policies typically offer \$1 million per occurrence with a \$2 million aggregate limit. This means there is coverage up to a limit of \$1 million per claim with a limit of \$2 million for all claims. The insurance from Quality Deer Management Association and Buckmasters is available only to members of hunting clubs. However, many hunters already hunt together, so setting up a club is not difficult, and this inexpensive insurance is worth any inconvenience.

Landowners can also benefit from hunting insurance, whether they charge a fee to hunt or not. Requiring hunters to carry insurance is just smart business, especially if landowners require hunting policies that name them as an additional insured. As an additional insured, the property owner typically enjoys the same coverage as the hunting club in the event of an accidental shooting. Being named as an additional insured, though, is not automatic. Landowners must spell out this requirement to the hunters and be sure to obtain a certificate of insurance that identifies the landowner as addi-

tional insured.

Concerned landowners should require the insurance regardless of any new legislation that protects them. As in the Lehigh County case, there may be circumstances, particular to the case, that do not fit neatly under the protective language in the law. Some people have speculated that because the stray bullet traveled off the landowner's property in the Lehigh County case, RULWA would not apply. Even if the new legislation fills all liability gaps, it is still prudent to have additional protection as an additional insured under a hunting club's policy.

It is also wise for landowners to have a written lease with "hold harmless" language that indemnifies the landowner against liability resulting from the activities of the hunters. The indemnification language is simply another firewall that protects a landowner's assets.

Hunters whose homeowner's policies do not exclude hunting can further protect themselves by purchasing umbrella liability coverage on top of their homeowner's coverage. Typically, a homeowner can purchase an extra \$1 million of umbrella coverage. If he carries \$1 million in homeowner's coverage, the umbrella would provide \$2 million of total protection per occurrence. The umbrella coverage is typically inexpensive and worth the money, if hunting is not excluded in some way in the policy.

It's no longer enough to know the habits and behavior patterns of the game we hunt. Knowledge of gun safety and firearms, while essential, is also not enough. Modern hunters need to know how to protect themselves from legal claims. The Lehigh County case will force hunters and landowners to pull out the reading glasses and review their insurance.

*Ken Skuba is a field conservation agent with Wyoming Land Conservancy, Inc. which leases thousands of acres of land for hunting in several northeastern Pennsylvania counties. He may be contacted by telephone at 570-708-0336 or by email: kskuba@epix.net.*

## ATTENTION

### PA Turkey Talk Address Change

Please take note of the new address for *Pennsylvania Turkey Talk*.

PO Box 930  
Altoona, PA 16603



## Women in the Outdoors Update

BY TAMMY MOWRY, NATIONAL COORDINATOR

If you weren't able to attend a Women in the Outdoors event this year, I wanted to share some photos that were taken. We had so much fun, learned a lot of new outdoors activities, made a lot of new friends, and just plain had a great time.

I hope you'll be able to attend an event in your local area in 2008. Events will begin again in March with the State Event that takes place at Camp Soles in Somerset County.

Be sure to look for the upcoming list of events that will appear in the Winter issue of *Pennsylvania Turkey Talk*.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me at 724-284-9201 or via email at [tammynwtf@zoominternet.net](mailto:tammynwtf@zoominternet.net).



# Thanks for Memories, Milestones, and Friendships

BY LARRY HOLJENCIN,  
SR. REGIONAL FIELD  
SUPERVISOR

Some decisions in life come easy and some come hard. Twelve years ago, I left my job of eighteen years to become a regional director for NWTF. It wasn't an easy decision, but I was ready for a change and taking the job with NWTF proved to be a good move.

After much thought and deliberation, I have decided to make a career change again. I have known since March that this would be my last year of doing banquets and notified my boss of my decision at that time. We made the announcement of my resignation to staff in late June and to my chapter presidents and state board soon after that. My last day was October 1.

There is an old saying about

leaving something better than you found it. I feel that I am doing just that. I am proud to have played a small part in the growth and success our state has enjoyed.

I consider myself blessed to have had a job working for an organization that does so much good for wildlife and hunters. A side benefit of the job was being able to make friends with so many extraordinary people from across the country, many of whom will remain my friends forever. I wouldn't trade the past twelve years for anything.

I plan to remain involved with NWTF at the local chapter level. Julie and I also look forward to attending the state rendezvous and awards dinner and the national convention from time to time.

I want to thank all the volunteers and NWTF supporters from across this great state of ours for your time, dedication,



and all you do for the wild turkey and NWTF. You are the NWTF, and without you, our organization cannot accomplish all the great things it does. Julie

and I also want to thank you for the good times we have shared and for your friendship, which we truly value. Until we meet again, may God bless you all.

## JOIN THE NWTF — THE RESOURCE NEEDS YOUR HELP!

**YES** I'd like to join the National Wild Turkey Federation, a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of the wild turkey and the preservation of the hunting tradition. This membership also enrolls me in my state and local chapters.

Sign me up as: *(check one)*

- Regular Member - \$30       Women in the Outdoors Member - \$25
- Sponsor Member - \$225       JAKES Member \$5
- Wheelin' Sportsmen Member - \$25

Charge my:  Master Card;  Visa

Credit Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name: *(please print)* \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Make checks payable to the NWTF)*

**Send completed application to:**

**Tammy Mowry, 288 Crisswell Road, Butler, PA 16002**



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