

THE MAINE BOWHUNTER

NOVEMBER 2009

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



By Jerome Richard

I think we experienced summer for about one month this year. June and July went into the Maine history books as the wettest in history. August was really nice, warm, and really dry for a change. Just like clockwork, the September temperatures started to drop and the leaves began to change, but it was still dry. The great news that I have been receiving is that the 2009 Bear Season was going great for just about everyone! As I am writing this article the regular archery season for deer has not begun, but hopefully the deer season in Maine will be good too.

Wild Turkey Working Group

I represented the MBA at the Wild Turkey Working Group meeting this summer. The group met for three meetings starting with the initial meeting at the IF&W Offices in Augusta on August 5, the second

meeting in IF&W Offices in Bangor on August 25, and the final meeting at the SAM Conference Center in Augusta on September 15. The state legislature under LD 256 directed IF&W to "Resolve, to Direct the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to Explore Opportunities and Issues Surrounding Wild Turkey Hunting". That sounds not too difficult until I attended the meetings and it branched out to nuisance turkeys, Animal Damage Control, and someone trying to sneak the crossbow into both the spring and fall turkey seasons.

I am not going to comment on the final report at this time as request by IF&W until after the state legislature has received the report. I will say that crossbows will not be in the turkey seasons anytime in the near future. The meetings were a great learning experience and showed me how different groups have different concerns that must be resolved.

One thing that the MBA will need to discuss with the membership in one of the future newsletters is the topic of the crossbow and how that will affect every Maine hunter. Some call the crossbow just another hunting opportunity and no big deal, but if that were really true than why do 22 other northern states from

Oregon and Washington to Maine and all of New England make it illegal except for the handicapped hunter? Now that I have posed this question I am going to make you wait for the answer. We, all hunters' not just bowhunters, have to have the right answer to save the existing deer hunting opportunities for our future and those of our kids.

MBA BLIP Class

The MBA will be doing another BLIP Class on Sunday, December 13th from 8:00am to noon at The Sportsman's BARR in Gardiner which is the day after the end of the muzzleloader season on deer. Please, if you are interested in this program and meet the qualifications as listed on the MBA website, do not postpone taking this class any longer. We usually put on one BLIP Class a year, but this year I had a special request to put on another one in the winter. If you miss this one it will be at least 6 to 8 months before the next one and the one-year waiting period to participate in any BLIP hunt does not start until you attend the class.

For more information on the BLIP program visit our MBA website and click on Bowhunters/Landowners

(Continued on page 2)

UPCOMING

EVENTS

Dec. 13, 2009—MBA BLIP class at the Sportsmans BARR in Gardiner, mE—FMI Call 207-426-2082

April 24, 2010—MBA Annual Banquet at the Calumet Club in Augusta

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

ARCHERY IN FRANK-	2
VICE PRESIDENT RE- PORT	3
BEAR HUNTING AD- VENTURE	4
BECOMING AN OUT- DOORS WOMAN	5
ALTERNATIVE TAXI- DERMY	6
PENDULUM EXPERI- MENTS	6
ETHICS	7
BOW TECH	11
MOXIE GORE BEAR	12

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(Continued from page 1)

Information Program. If you meet the qualification, then call me at 426-2082 to sign-up for the class. We need a head count far in advance of the class to pick up printed materials that each individual will need. This is a great opportunity to help communities and IF&W with some of the urban deer problems in Maine.

2010 MBA Annual Banquet

The MBA will be holding their annual banquet on Saturday, April 24, 2010 at the Calumet Club in Augusta. This will be our fourth year in a row at the Calumet Club and we have had a great time with great food. Last year was financially our best banquet that the MBA has ever had and the fellowship was fantastic.

I believe our membership during that last banquet showed that the leadership of the MBA is really trying to involve the whole family especially the kids. We had 6 youth bows that were donated to the MBA for the banquet last year by many of our local pro archery shops. As MBA members we need to grow the sport of archery and bowhunting by get the ladies and the kids involved.

We will probably start selling the banquet tickets sometime after February 1st, but please keep watching the newsletter and the MBA website for more information as it develops. To me it really is a great opportunity to fellowship and meet a lot of bowhunters in one place. I have many friends that I only get a few times a year to meet and one of those places is the MBA banquet.

NASP Youth Archery Events:

Big Success

By the time you receive this newsletter the MBA will have completed another year of very successful youth archery events throughout the state of Maine. Last year I was worried how the MBA would be able to handle two NASP Youth Archery events on the same weekend, but we were more than able to cover two events in two places at the same time. Then our success with the program grew to trying to put on 3 events on the same day in different places which we had to turn down due to a lack of resources. During the three years as your president of the MBA I have seen the NASP program become a tremendous public relations tool for the MBA and the sport. We have had doors open to more opportunities that most other hunting organizations don't experience. The best part still is that we have a chance to help influence kids in a positive, healthy way and it is something the whole family can get involved in.

We began our year with Cabin Fever Reliever in Brewer and then the three sportsman's shows (Orono, Presque Isle, and Augusta). We attended the Maine Trappers Association Sportsman's Rendezvous in Sidney and the Maine Wildlife Park in Gray again! A couple of new events were BOW: Becoming an Outdoors-Woman in Maine and the Gardiner Sportsman's Club Fall Outdoors Day. There were many other events too, but what really stood out to me was the number of repeat requests to return to do the event this year and hopefully in 2010, too.

Archery Program in Franklin County

By Mac Dudley

Mac Dudley, Franklin County Rep. offered her Junior Olympic Style Archery (JOAD) and bowhunting lessons for youth again this year at a local Sportsmen's Club in Rangeley. This year, Mac conducted her lesson program the first four weekdays of August starting Tuesday August 4th and ending Friday August 7th. Her program of four two-hour lessons was free and all equipment was provided.

Mac has been offering this program in Rangeley for 10 years and states that "her free lessons are a wonderful opportunity for kids as the lessons elsewhere could cost as much as \$400.00 for the basics." During the summer of 2009, Mac also offered private lessons for both Olympic and bowhunting archery for a nominal fee. In preparation for the fall bowhunting season, she hosts an informal Sunday shoot during which Mac offers advice on shooting form at a target area and at a 3-D range she manages in Rangeley.

Here are some comments from Mac about the content of her lesson program and list of lessons learned.

First let me say, "To have fun with any sport you need to understand the safety rules, learn about the equipment and the skills of the sport, and to practice what is learned. So, each time we met, participants learned about archery safety, the equipment they used and shooting skills. They do get plenty of practice shooting and learn some

games that make the practice fun."

On Day One, the kids under go an Eye Dominance Check, this identifies if the child will be using a left handed or right handed bow. I define the archery safety rules and procedures including clothing and hair, safety equipment, equipment handling, archery range rules and procedures for whistle commands. Each day, I require the kids to do a warm-up exercise, prior to my classroom instructions on the steps to shooting bow and arrow and prior to getting them out in the field to learn how to shoot. I follow each hands-on shooting practice with a cool down & stretching activity. During each successive session, I review and build upon the lessons learned the previous day.

By the third day, the kids are singing an archery song, which helps them remember the steps to shooting a bow and arrow. They are competing with each other on the shooting range and as a group, they are identifying problems and corrections to their shooting form and identifying parts of a bow and arrow. On our final day, I conduct several different shooting games to help them with their shooting form and to keep a high level of interest in the sport. Competition levels are also increased and we have a lot of fun with the different games and I use various forms of for-fun competition to keep the interest and focus. This is a key to instructing kids, you have to focus on keeping attention levels high. In all my skill games, all the kids are winners, there is no last place. Each

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Bangor, ME 04402

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PO Box 1297
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LL Bean
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The Old Town Archery Shop, 300
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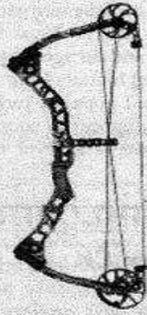
participant is awarded prizes to take home as a token of their archery experience.

Mac states "she has yet to have a disappointed child in her program and most come back the following year".

In addition to being the Franklin County Rep. for the Maine Bow-

hunters Association, Mac is also a National Archery Association (NAA) Level II Instructor/Coach as well as a MDIF&W Certified Bowhunter Instructor. Pictured below is Mac with some of the participants in this year's archery program in Rangeley





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MBA's Vice President



By Dan Long
MBA Vice President

It's late September at the time of writing this. The expanded archery season is underway. The State tells us that because of a harsh 2008 winter the deer herd is decreased around 27% from 2007. For this reason, a reduction in the number of any-deer permits was expected, and many agree that this reduction is a necessary step to reverse the negative effects of the harsh 2007-2008 winter. Where no any-deer permits were issued, bowhunters are restricted to bucks only.

Expanded archery areas typically have higher deer populations because of the less harsh winter conditions in those areas and because of the amount of private property in and around those areas where hunting is not allowed. This is why the State looks upon bowhunting as a viable option for deer management in the populated areas of Maine. Your MBA has helped establish the expanded archery season, and continues to work to increase and identify new expanded archery areas. The Bowhunters/Landowners Information Program (BLIP) works to improve landowner relations, opening doors for all bowhunters, and also can show municipalities how safe and effective bowhunting can be to reduce deer populations. In populated areas where hunting is not currently allowed, deer problems such as deer-car accidents, damage to shrubs and flowers, and threats of Lyme Disease exist. A successful BLIP effort can result in acceptance of additional areas to the expanded archery season creating bowhunting

opportunities for all licensed bowhunters in the State.

Maine's hunting tradition lives on because of the generosity of private landowners who allow access to their lands. They deserve respect.

"The willingness of private landowners to allow the public on their land to hunt is as much of a part of our heritage as the harvest itself," Commissioner Martin said. "To maintain this cooperative relationship with landowners, hunters should always seek permission first even if the land is not posted. If the land is posted, be mindful of the landowners' wishes and don't trespass."

As responsible bowhunters representing the bowhunters of this State, we must be accountable to know the law, and develop a relationship with the landowner where we hunt. Trespassing on land where you do not have permission to hunt or intentionally mudding up private roads is equal to poaching if as a result that land is posted. When land is posted as the result of a poacher (note I did not call this person a hunter) opportunity is stolen from us as a result of this careless act. I interpret it the same as if this person had taken an illegal deer; stealing from the hunter and future generations. Think about how hard you practice, and how much time you put into scouting. How much hard-earned money you spend on equipment and the vacation time you take to go hunting. The promise of a successful hunt and quality time in the field is what drives you. Meet the poacher: He or she just illegally shot a deer. Not working within the law and rules developed with input from our biologists to ensure a healthy deer population for you, you have just been robbed. This is how we need to look at those who are trespassing, poaching, or dumping trash on private land.

Poachers are cowards and liars. They steal from hunters, photographers, and wildlife watchers. They rob the deer herd of males and females that would contribute fawns

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

to future generations. If you know of an illegal act and you don't report that act, you are contributing to the act of stealing from your bowhunting brothers and sisters.

Call Maine Operation Game Thief 1-800-ALERT-US (1-800-253-7887), local or State Police.

If you are a Bowhunter, I know you are an avid outdoor enthusiast. You take pride in the skill you have developed. You look forward to the bowhunting season, and the thought of stalking, outwitting, and overcoming the awesome defense capabilities of the big game animals that we enjoy in this great State of Maine, especially with the short-range restrictions of the bow and arrow. These freedoms are a result of, and are upheld by involved, active and responsible bowhunters. Hold yourselves accountable and work hard to set a good example for the young people who have the future of our sport in their hands. Please help defend these things we love so much by joining the Maine Bowhunters Association today!

MOVING?

Don't forget to notify us if your address changes. We get mail back from too many of our members' former addresses with a "no forwarding address" stamp on it. We have lost a few life members this year because they haven't notified us of the change.

BLIP members please check your information in the BLIP listing on our website. Updates to spelling errors, addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses should be sent to Director at large Jeff Hopkins.

MBA's Secretary



By Deanna Page

When I was young, I witnessed something that really made an impact on this outdoor girl. One day while visiting my cousin, I witnessed him wound a problem bear. The bear, when shot, let out 3 screaming growls and charged my cousin, who froze out of fear. Luckily for my cousin there was a wire fence between him & one angry bear! The bear hit the fence full force and then got up and ran in the other direction. That happened 30 years ago, yet I can still hear the bear today. Since then, of course, I have had a great fear of bears. In fact, my fear of bears has been a standard family joke.

Last bear season I videotaped my sister-in-law shooting her first bear and discovered it wasn't all that bad. As bear season approached this year, I was ready to go. I planned to do this the hard way, bait the bear myself. On August 1st my brother helped me set up three bear baits. One bait was near a small swamp way down behind my house, the second was the spot my sister-in-law shot her bear, and the third was the spot my brother shot his first bear. I checked my bait sites daily and on Aug. 7th, I had my first hit in my brother's lucky spot. The bear continued to hit, cleaning out my 5 gallon bucket every night. The first two bait sites were not getting any

My First Bear Hunting Adventure

hits, so by the end of the second week of baiting, I pulled those two baits. I had put up a trail camera on the hot bait and checked the bait & camera everyday. My brother helped me put up my treestand & switch to a 35 gallon barrel. With constant bear activity, it looked like I would be tagging out the first night on the stand with no problem.

Problem: I started writing this article in my head while sitting on stand on Sept. 26th, the last day of the bear baiting season. While sitting there motionless with only my eyes shifting to take note of any changes in or around the bait site I was watching, I was reflecting how this 2009 bear season had changed my "fear" of bears. I felt proud to know that I was able to overcome my fear and tend my bait and hunt from Aug. 31st-Sept. 26th. My first bear encounter with a bear coming to my bait came on the third anniversary of my brother killing his first bear at that very spot. I was standing up at 7:15 pm when the bear came into view at 22 yards. My video camera was on my camera arm beside me in record mode. I held my bow and was waiting for my chance. The bear needed to come to the barrel at twelve yards in order for a shot. The bear walked slowly up the trail towards me, stopping three times along the way. I had made a rookie mistake and brought my 5 gallon bucket back in to the bait site with some sweet goodies to help bring the bear in earlier. Apparently bear do not like change. As the bear stood 15 yards in front of me surveying the change, I was wishing my rifle was in my hands not hanging behind me. The bear turned around and started walking back to where he had come from. That's when I made my second rookie mistake. I reached for my rifle, which I was able to get into shooting position while holding my bow between my knees. As I flipped the safety forward, the bear paused as he heard the slight noise. I saw my chance and flipped the second safety forward with a jerk, leaving my release to go "clunk" on my gun stock, GOOD-BYE bear! He was gone in a wink, as if he were never there, if the video camera hadn't

been rolling, I may have thought I imagined it.

As the season progressed, my trail camera photos were revealing the bear were only hitting between 9:30pm and 3:30am, hardly shooting times. Just seeing the bear on the photos was very rewarding, but that alone would not fill my tag or my freezer. As luck would have it, I had a couple of offers to sit on other baits. It really pays to have friends who are as dedicated to hunting as I am. The hunting circle of friends is one of the best side affects of hunting.

On Saturday afternoon Sept. 19th, I had my second bear encounter on bait. I was sitting on a very active bait site in the North woods of Maine by 2 pm ready for some action. At 4:15pm, I heard a rustling just to the right of my stand in some thick firs. I looked down out of the corner of my eyes and there stood a bobcat, not 15 feet from me! He glanced up at the camo blob on the tree, twitched his short tail and continued on his way. I was thrilled to see my first bobcat! At 6:10pm, in broad daylight, a black blob appeared just to the left of the bait site, 35 yards in front of me. Because of the distance to the bait, the 7mm Mag was in my hands, not my bow. One day I will shoot a bear with my bow, but not in 2009. The bear was very cautious and did not want to clear those bushes. I didn't make a move, hoping the bear would relax and go to the bait and give me my chance. What appeared to be a very large bear behind those bushes decided it's time wasn't up and left the bait area never giving me a clear view. As darkness descended, I was happy for the opportunity and rejoiced in seeing my first bobcat. I was lucky enough to be invited back to sit Friday afternoon & Saturday, the last two days of the hunt. My boss let me leave early on Friday and I headed North to sit the same stand. After viewing the hundreds

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

of trail camera photos from that bait site during the week, I felt like I had a good chance at a bear.

After sitting Friday afternoon, and several hours Saturday morning it came down to the last evening. I was on stand at 3:00pm, and after being dropped off and getting settled in, I began thinking back on my first season of bear hunting. I learned a lot from my bear hunting friends, who have been great to share their knowledge with this rookie. I appreciate everyone who has helped me this season. From helping to get bait, to giving advice, and to my brother who helped me set up my sites and for being there every night when I clicked the radio to signal him to walk in to get me so I wouldn't spook bear off the site in the dark (not to mention I wouldn't have to walk out in the dark)! I appreciate everyone who helped me have a successful first bear season. Oh, did I leave that part out?

At 5:21pm, a bear came into the bait, as I was trying to judge the bear, knowing it wasn't the 300 lb plus bear in the photos, it grabbed a cucumber and left using a trail out the back of the bait site. It was there less than 20 seconds, and it was gone. However, I was sure it would be back. I was sure this bear was one of the possible two year olds that were visiting the site. When it did come back, I was going to be ready. After a long season and no real shot opportunities, I didn't want to end the season without a bear. At 5:25pm, the bear came back in on the same trail it left on. My gun was up, with my left elbow on my knee and the safety off. As the bear milled around the bait site, it turned broadside with its right side towards me. When the 7mm Mag went off, the bear rolled over and was rolling around the bait site. I gave it another for good measure. After one death moan it was over, and I still had one and a half hours left of the season, no problem! For those of you who think bear baiting is an easy way to fill your bear tag, think again! My hat is off to those of you who bear bait every year! I think I am about to join your ranks!



Bear on Deanna Page's bait site.



Tina Richard and the BOW Women of 2009



Jerome Richard at the Trapper Rendezvous.



Shown here is Mike Moreau (Androscoggin County Rep.) with a group of Unity College kids that volunteered for the Trailblazer Day held by the Pine Tree Council, BSA on October 3, in Raymond, Maine Camp Hines. Mike helped out with the archery portion of the outdoor activities held that day. Approximately 500 kids were in attendance.

BOW: BECOMING AN OUTDOORS- WOMAN

BY Tina Richard

This past spring at the State of Maine Sportsman's Show in Augusta I was invited to the "Becoming an Outdoors-Woman in Maine" at Camp Caribou in Winslow, ME for the fall weekend. I was asked if I would be a volunteer instructor for "Introduction to Archery" and "Introduction to Bow Hunting", where archery is my passion I jumped on the opportunity.

The first session was on Friday afternoon, September 18th for 3.5 hours and another session was on Saturday morning, September 19th for another 3.5 hours where the ladies learned archery shooting form for target shooting. Both sessions involved two different groups of ladies for "Introduction to Archery". The ladies had plenty of time to learn about the different bows on the market and spend a lot of time shooting the bows at the outdoor range.

A third session was held on Sunday morning, September 20th called "Introduction to Bow Hunting". The ladies got to learn more about reading wildlife signs, various hunting techniques, types of equipment, and basic safety. They were given opportunities to shoot from a pop-up ground blind at a life-size deer target too.

The archery equipment that was used during this weekend event was the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife NASP Genesis bows which is exactly like the archery equipment that the Maine Bowhunters Association uses for its Youth Archery Events. All the ladies did a great job of learning the "11 Steps of Archery Success" and quickly learned to group their arrows on the target.

Many of the women became quickly addicted to archery and expressed that they were going to an archery pro shop to get involved in either target shooting or hunting. It's not a guy thing anymore! The kids and the women

are getting into the sport.

The "Becoming an Outdoors-Woman in Maine" program offers many different outdoor skills and activities for women who want to learn new things or just enjoying being together as a group. The three day event offers about 40 different activities for the ladies to choose from and experience hands-on workshops. The activities included Archery, ATV's, Outdoor Skills & Survival, Wilderness First Aid, Map & Compass, GPS, Canoeing, Kayaking, Fly Fishing, Turkey Hunting, Skeet Shooting, Knot Tying, Ropes Course, Birding, and many more activities. For more information on this program please go to the website at www.mainebow.com or call Emily Jones at IF&W at (207) 287-8069 or her e-mail at Emily.jones@maine.gov.

I really recommend this program and I have already told Emily that I want to come back next year as a volunteer instructor so I can have some more fun. Jerome will have to stay home and fend for himself!



Tina Richard giving instruction at the BOW of 2009

Alternative Taxidermy



By Greg Barnes
Appalachian Taxidermy

Most of us who hunt will someday bag something that we deem particularly special. Yes, the 180 inch wall hanger is what we all hope for, but the normal deer, bear or moose that you are most likely to tag can be very special too. In my honest opinion you should try to remember every hunt you go on. I am not saying you should mount everything you ever harvest, but there are a lot of alternatives to memorialize your days in the field.

I feel that after many years of being a hunter that sometimes things get taken for granted, even if it is subconsciously, for instance some of the deer of years past are getting tough to recall. There is always the memory of our firsts, but what about the in between years. If I try hard enough I can remember them all, but, a few years ago I had an ink pen made out of some old antlers from an "average" buck I shot. The antlers were in a box on a shelf and I did not think of them often. Then a guy called my shop to buy antlers to make some pens. I simply told him I did not want to sell my antlers but thought it might be neat to have such a pen. I told him I would give him a set of the antlers in exchange for a pen. He agreed, and a few weeks later I had my pen! It was a beautiful piece of rosewood for the grip, with a piece of the antler shaped on a

lathe for the top half, an absolute beauty of a pen. I use it often and in doing so I can recall the three point buck my dad nicknamed longhorn after seeing the deer a few times before I harvested it. Now I get to think of a great October morning on a hunt with my dad every time I use that pen. The same quality pen would probably cost around \$ 50.00 at a department store. The pen I had made with my antlers is roughly the same price, and is practical, unique, and a great way to memorialize a hunt.

I would like to recall here another hunt, in fact my wifes first big game hunt. Moose was our quarry and we succeeded on our first morning

. The bull was an average 35 inches. On the spot where the animal laid I made the comment the antlers will look nice on a plaque. She hastily reminded me that this was her first big game animal and that she knew a good taxidermist. That head is on our wall in the living room, and looking at it reminds me of the best hunt I have ever been on. I am sure glad we have it.

There are plenty of ways to save memories of great hunts. Antler plaques are inexpensive enough to justify on even a small buck and they are much nicer than in a card board box on a shelf. If you take a doe on a special hunt perhaps with a loved one or a first time hunter, hide tanning is an inexpensive alternative to a mount. I can promise you will remember the hunt every time you stop to look at the hide just as well as if you had the head mounted. The point is to remember the time you share with nature and even in tough economic times I can say it is worth the expense.

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Experiments With The Pendulum (Before and After Season: Part 1)



By Ryan C. Penney

Hello, my name is Ryan. I am a bow hunter and archery enthusiast. I have been hunting with a bow for over ten years now and have been fortunate enough to harvest deer with a bow. I do not consider myself a trophy hunter. In fact, I have yet to get the infamous wall hanger. I have had my chances though. I am one of those guys who has made many if not all the mistakes in the book when it comes to the moment of truth with "Big Daddy Longhorns." I do feel good that every year I have an encounter with a nice big mature buck. Unfortunately they have had the pleasure of escaping our little encounter and I am left in my tree stand muttering and sputtering a few expletives, the famous four-letter words.

This year I decided to try a pendulum bow sight. My reason for this is that one of my biggest problems in the woods is that I have a hard time judging yardage. Oh yeah, I've shot under, over and even had the awful experience of losing/wounding a good buck – frustrating to say the least. I used to pace out my shooting lanes before I could afford the trusty range finder. That did not work out so well. I now own one and it is a very useful tool.

I do shoot 3-D archery targets for practice and shoot all year round to keep "in shape." Thus the pendulum.

A pendulum sight is a pivoting single pin that adjusts the yardage for you. Most pendulums have a maximum range of 1-30 yards, so all you have to do is focus on a single pin and shoot. You also have to know where that 30 yard mark is. I've

been stewing on it for a few years and have talked with many people about it. Of course, archery is funny – its like opinions, ask five people and you will most likely get five different suggestions. However, the people that used pendulums said that they really liked them and have no desire to go back to the 20, 30, 40 and up pins. I shoot a 60 lb. bow and there is a difference between a 20 yard shot and say, 35 yards – my arrow drops. Oh yea, and I suck at judging yardage in the woods. I'm not proud, I admit it. If I know the distance, look out – I will hit the target, but hunting is not a controlled environment. Murphy seems to be a good friend of mine.

Last year, I had very little time to hunt, and had a bow set up with a 3-pin sight that I trusted. Call me superstitious, but I am not one of those people that make last minute changes before the season starts. I like to be "dialed in" well before opening day and I do not change anything.

So fast forward to April 2009, I did enjoy venison over the winter. Now it is time to change to the pendulum. I work in the archery field and did some investigating on these sights. There are a few companies producing them with a few different options. I am primarily a tree stand hunter, so I chose one that is tree stand specific. There are models available where you can use them as a one pin adjustable sight, if you are on the ground.

The sight that I chose is made by Tru-Glo. It is very simple in design and has an advertised range of 1-35 yards. It is under \$100.00, though prices will vary from shop to shop – not by much though. It is a single pin with a fiber optic wrap and light. I like having the light, but never used one when shooting a deer.

After reading the "destructions" I sighted my bow in at 20 yards at a range on flat ground. This particular pendulum states that you need to be 12 feet or up in order for it to be accurate. So after I sighted in at 20

yards, it was time to climb a tree.

My good friend Steve at Lakeside Archery in North Yarmouth has the perfect set up for this. Not only does he have a 15-lane indoor range and 3-D range, but he has bags set up at 20, 30, 40 and 50 yards. Oh but even better, a tree that has been trimmed for shooting access to all of those bags.

So on a day off, I took my climber, field points, bow, range finder and goodies to the range. Time to find out how this thing shoots. I guesstimate that I was 14-16 feet high in my tree. On my first shot at a range finder distance of 20 yards, I was 3-4 inches to the left of my black bulls-eye. Second shot, same story. Third shot, ditto. Granted this would have been a kill shot, but I was not happy with this result. A quick adjustment was made and I was shooting bulls-eyes.

The package states that once you sight in at 20 yards on the ground, you are now ready to shoot 1-35 yards from a tree stand. I quickly found out that this was not the case, at least with my equipment. I then took shots at 5-35 yards. I noticed that on a 35 yard shot my arrow dropped 3 inches. So my maximum range with extreme accuracy is really 30 yards. At five yards everything worked beautifully, ditto for every other distance out to 30.

I am constantly asked the question, "What is the best broadhead?" My response is always the same – that is the best broadhead, mechanical or fixed blade, is the one that you have practiced with and the one you can hit the target with.

This little paragraph leads up to my next experiment. Even though I knew that I could hit a bulls-eye with a field point, I still wanted to try this sight out with my broadheads. I have been using mechanical broadheads for the entire time that I have been bowhunting and have had good results from them. I have heard many horror stories and opinions about them as well. So.... on a day off I grab my climber, bow, broadheads, range finder, etc. and head for the range.

I used two different types of mechanical broadheads: Rocket Steel-

heads and Rocket Sidewinders, both 100 grains. With the help of a fine young man by the name of Martin, I proceeded to take some shots at 20 yards with broadheads up in my tree stand. To my surprise, I was hitting about 3-4 inches low. Granted, it would have been a kill shot again, but my broadheads did not hit the bulls-eye, even though they are supposed to fly just like field points.

With Martin's help fielding arrows and moving targets, I was able to re-adjust my sight. The final result of this was a real confidence builder. I shot two different types of broadheads at many angles and distances out to 30 yards. My arrows were hitting one inch bulls-eyes consistently every time. Yeah, I trashed six broadheads, 3-each, but I now know that if I miss, I have nobody to blame but myself. I also learned that even though the box said you would be "good to go" after sighting in on the ground, my results were not the case.

As I stated before, I am one of those guys that has had a real hard time making split decision yardage guesses when there is a nice buck in front of me. I have even shot a few nice alders in my career. It's funny how you don't notice them when your heart rate is above 200 and you are focused on aiming.

This season I will feel a lot more confident with my shooting and sight. I hope that it has been informative and somewhat entertaining. I will check in after my season to share my experiences.

Happy hunting.



ETHICS

By John Hunt Jr.
B.S. Environmental Science

I'd like to preface this article by stating that ethics are a very personal issue. Just because I have certain opinions about what is right and wrong, does not mean that my opinion is right for everyone. This article is meant to be a "discussion" of ethics, not a statement of what is and is not ethical. At the same time, I am not afraid to state my opinions about situations that I believe are clearly unethical, and will do so freely. Again, they are my opinions, that is all. As hunters, it's also important to discuss and think about ethics regularly. The more ethical all of us behave while hunting, the better it is for the sport we love.

Ethics start by obeying the laws of hunting. Let's consider this statement. I think most people would agree that if you take a deer illegally, you are stealing that deer from someone who hunts legally. There is only a limited amount of deer in a state like Maine, and many of the laws are established to ensure the fair distribution and healthy balance of this "shared resource." Let's look at a specific law in example. Baiting deer: I personally don't believe shooting a deer over a bait pile is unethical. On face value, it is no more unethical than killing a beef cow for food. However, because it's illegal in Maine, I consider it unethical to do so here in Maine. If I were to kill a deer around here over bait, I will have probably shot a deer that one of my neighbors could've taken legally. I don't consider stealing from my neighbors to be ethical behavior. Food plots are legal. I have no issue with someone shooting a deer in a food plot that they have put effort into, or over crops, or apples, etc. Let's look at another example. In Maine it's illegal to shoot a deer and have someone else tag it. Statistics show that a disproportionate number of teenage girls and women tag does and fawns early in deer season, and I have had people tell me that they shoot deer and have their family tag those deer. They see nothing wrong with it. I disagree strongly on a number of points. First of all, they are teaching their family that it's OK to break the law. Their

family members are breaking the law when they tag a deer they didn't shoot. Secondly, they are stealing that experience of hunting from their family members. Get them involved, and let them feel the same joy. Finally, as stated earlier, they are stealing a shared resource from those who hunt legally. If Maine had a "party tag system" like some states, where doe tags were shared, I would have no problem with this. Now, are there any situations where I would disobey the law and consider it ethical? I've tried to think of a situation and after doing so would have to say probably, yes. How about this? I don't have an any deer permit, and I see a badly wounded doe limping along through the woods. I would probably take that doe. Then, I would immediately call the game warden on myself and donate the deer to Hunters for the Hungry, and willingly pay my fine. Oh, and for those who say they are feeding their families; that excuse is no longer valid. There are so many programs available for needy families now, that there is no need to steal to get food.

2008 was an interesting year for me when it comes to ethics, and the decisions I made while hunting. During the regular archery season in my area, I passed up 9 kill opportunities. All of the deer I passed were does and fawns. Now, normally I am not opposed to shooting does or fawns, and have killed many of them. However, the severe winter we had greatly reduced deer numbers around here, and I thought the ethical thing to do in this situation was to pass up on does and fawns to allow the herd a chance to rebuild. In contrast, on a BLIP hunt, in an area that is overpopulated with deer, I was focused on does, and would have taken a doe standing next to a buck. When deer numbers are too high, it makes sense to focus on killing does. When the numbers are too low, bucks should be the ones we kill. And, just because I made the decision to pass on does in my area last fall does not make those who didn't pass on does unethical. It was just a personal decision I made. Ethics are personal.

What makes an ethical shot? We are discussing bow hunting here, so I'll keep it to bow hunting scenarios.

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

I don't believe it's ever ethical to shoot a deer that is coming straight at you, or quartering to you. The problem with a "quartering toward" shot is the greatly reduced size of your kill zone, due to the front shoulder covering most of the lung area. Some people have no problems with the quartering toward shot, and say they have enough kinetic energy in their arrow to shoot through a deer's shoulder when it's quartering toward them. My answer to this is "why take the chance" when you can let the deer pass you and get that desirable quartering away shot? A broadside shot is much better than a "quartering toward" shot, as it provides a full sized lung area to aim at. A quartering away shot is the best of all, as it provides both the area of the near side lung, and the far side lung. This gives you the largest possible kill zone. A very sharp downward angle shot should also be avoided. One reason is because it is so difficult to maintain your same anchor points. It's very typical to draw on the deer and aim down by dropping your shooting arm. This will change everything about your shooting form. The best thing to do whenever you shoot downward from an elevated position is to bend at the waist, maintaining your upper body/bow alignment. Another problem with straight down shots is that you will most likely get only a single lung shot. An admitted advantage to the straight down shot is an excellent blood trail if you get a complete pass-through shot, as the exit wound will be underneath the deer. The key word is "if" you get a complete pass-through shot. Distance to your target is another consideration when deciding whether or not to shoot. There is no set ethical distance for bow hunters in general, or even for any individual bow hunter. I use a "rule of thumb" for myself. Whatever the distance is that I can hit the vital zone of a deer 9 out of 10 times, while shooting from an elevated stand; I subtract 5 yards, and use that as my maximum ethical shooting distance. Many bow hunters using modern compound archery equipment should not shoot past 20 yards. Others may be able to shoot ethically out to 60 yards or more.

Once you've established your "maximum" ethical shooting distance, you must be ready to reduce that distance depending upon conditions. Wind, brush, visibility, cold temperatures, and other variables may reduce your ethical shooting distance drastically. In the end, you are the one responsible for making that decision and you can't take it back once the arrow leaves your bow. Another thing I like to do when taking that nice broadside or quartering away shot, is to wait for the deer to step forward with the near side front leg. This opens up the kill zone dramatically by moving that front shoulder right out of the way.

A discussion of ethics should also include our behavior toward other hunters. If you head out to hunt in an area, and notice there is another hunter there, give the other hunter a wide berth, or avoid hunting there all together. There will be times when you inadvertently stumble into another hunter's area. Be ready to apologize, and leave the same way you entered, so as not to do more damage. Other hunters will inadvertently stumble into your area too. Give them the benefit of the doubt, and wish them the best of luck. When hunting with others, place them in the best spots, and take as much, if not more, joy in their success than you do your own. If someone kills a big buck you've been hunting, they did not kill "your" deer. They killed "a" deer, and now it is theirs. Take joy in that, and not remorse. Spend time with novice hunters to help them improve their skills. Try to help instill ethics in novice hunters early. Share shooting and hunting skills with other hunters you know and respect. We can all continually learn from each other.

Respect for landowners is another very important aspect of hunting ethics. Always seek permission to hunt on another person's land. It is required by law in Maine if you hunt from a tree stand, and is basic courtesy anyway. Park your vehicle in a way that doesn't block farm equipment or other vehicles. Don't litter, and make a point of picking up trash left by someone else. If you harvest a deer on their property, offer them some of the meat. Be willing to help them with a chore or two that might

need to be done. Don't shoot too close to their home or other buildings. Basically, use good common sense, and common courtesy. It'll go a long way toward maintaining a good, long term, mutually beneficial relationship, as well as promote the sport of hunting overall. It only takes one bad experience to have a piece of property closed to hunting virtually forever.

How you represent yourself as a hunter is also important. Remember, that the majority of people are not hunters, and are not anti-hunters. They fall in the category of non-hunters, and their perceptions of hunting vary widely. If they hear you discuss hunting in a cavalier callous manner, they are likely to be swayed into the anti-hunting category. If they hear you discuss hunting in a responsible manner that displays knowledge, as well as re-

spect for the game you hunt, they are much more likely to see hunters as playing an important role in managing a valuable shared resource. Avoid arguments with non and anti-hunters. Keep your conversations at the level of a "discussion." And, for those who think anti-hunters can never be converted, don't be so sure. I have seen more than one anti-hunter who has at least moderated their position on hunting over the years.

Since this is meant to be a discussion, which should be two-way. If you have any comments about this, or other articles I've written, please feel free to email me at huntfish@tdstelme.net.

Hunt ethically, and you are the true environmentalist, not the anti-hunter.

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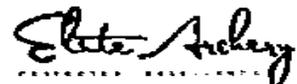
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Dean Jackson with his bear from the 2009 baiting season.



Brian Smith, MBA Washington County Rep. and his bear of the 2009 season.

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Bow Tech Talk



By Chas LaVersa

This time of year I always get questions about setting up for bow season

and tuning is the main sticking point. Paper tuning in particular. For those of you not familiar with this technique, you shoot an arrow through a piece of paper attached to a frame, and observe the tear it creates. When I am not close to the shop I cut a square out of the bottom of a good size box and tape some newspaper to it. This will allow you to adjust it to shoulder height and shoot through the paper into your normal backstop. I like and use it, but only under very controlled circumstances to get reliable data. Many factors play into how reliable this method is and interpreting what you see can be daunting. An arrow shot through paper obviously shows you the tear the arrow makes.

Realize that when you shoot through paper you are getting a snap shot of what the arrow is doing at that precise distance from the bow. Just because that arrow "prints" a perfect bullet hole does not mean that your bow is tuned. It only means that your arrow was in precisely the right position at that distance from the bow. In reality that arrow could be in the middle of a very ugly oscillation but, just the way a stopped clock is right twice a day, that arrow must pass through the correct position (straight) between each extreme. Conversely, just because your arrow prints a less than perfect tear this does not necessarily mean your rig is not tuned! I can hear it now! What the heck is he saying!?! You will see Grasshopper!

To execute this technique correctly the arrow should be shot at several distances before deciding that it is indeed flying straight. I prefer 6', 10', and 18'. If I get good bullet holes at all those distances I will try it at ten and fifteen yards as well. When the arrow prints a good tear at all distances then I know my rig is ready to start tuning! Yes I said START tuning. Let me come back to this point in a minute as I want to discuss paper tuning thoroughly first. Among the other factors to consider is form. We all think we have great form because we think we look like we should, it certainly feels like other people look, however, really subtle things can effect the tale on the paper. If a shooter torques his bow at any time in the sequence it will show up on the paper. It may be, by "happy" circumstance, that your arrow flies straight through the paper because of your torque when the bow is not tuned and it may be that the arrow flies crooked through the paper because of the torque when the bow is tuned! You may not be able to tell which is which!?! Someone else can shoot your bow and get different results because they shoot better or because they make the same mistake you do, or shoot worse! The dilemma is how do you tell who's paper tear reflects the true condition of the rig? Yours or his, maybe neither!

Also you may have an inconsistent release/ follow through and sometimes the arrow doesn't clear the rest properly or just loads up differently. These things may give you inconsistent results or consistent results that again do not reflect the true tune of your rig. These are some of the reasons I don't advocate paper tuning. Done correctly by a knowledgeable person it is a valuable tool. So, while I like and use paper tuning, I don't believe for a second that it is the be all end all of tuning techniques and instead regard it as a good beginning. There are many more pitfalls and factors involved that don't need deeper explanation as I am sure you get my point.

Naturally, once you have a reasonable paper tear, the logical question is what do I do next? I prefer group tuning with broadheads and field points. I will assume for the time being that all your arrows spin perfectly. (See my prior articles about building arrows for accuracy.)

The objective of tuning by the hunter is to make sure your broadheads hit where they are supposed to. Once I have clean flight and good groups with field points it is time to bring on the hunting arrows which, as I stated, spin perfectly. If these arrows make groups as good as my field points do I am ready to procede. Try a few practice shots from close, maybe 10 yards to make sure you will be on the target and adjust the sight as necessary then leave the sight until the end. When you are sure you will be on the target move to your normal shooting distance, perhaps twenty yards. Put four spots on your target. Shoot three field pointed arrows (FPs) into a group on one spot and then shoot three fixed blade broadhead equipped arrows (FBBHs) each into it's own spot. (So as not to ruin your FBBHs by them hitting each other.) You can tell if all the FBBHs are in the same spot relative to what you aimed at, what kind of group you have. Realize that they may NOT hit where the FPs did on the target but if they all hit the same area relative to each other you can gage your group. Example, all you FPs

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

are within an inch of the center of the spot and all your BHs are within an inch of an imaginary point 5" to the low left of the center of the spot, this still constitutes a group. They all hit in about the same proximity to each other as the FPs did. You most likely will see a difference like this. If your FBBH groups are significantly larger than you have other problems I cannot solve here. Find professional help.

Once you are to this point with good groups from all arrows you are almost there. Using very small, gradual adjustments of your rest move the point of your arrows (in my example) up and over to the right to meet the FP group. Do not resight yet. The FBBH equipped arrows will move further than the FP equipped arrows. Most bows will allow you to get the FPs and the FBBHs to strike the same point of impact (POI). Some will not, get as close as you can and then resight for the FBBH!

This will give you the best possible tune with all the gear you are mating together.

Remember, the better the tune, the deeper the penetration. Good luck and good hunting!

Chas LaVersa is a consultant for The Old Town Archery Shop in Old Town Maine and can be reached through the shop (207-827-9489)

Moxie Gore Bear

By Berta Estes

YOU AND I, HEADING NORTH
 DUSTY ROADS, BACK AND FORTH
 RED TRUCK HAULING
 CAMO RANGER CRAWLING
 UMBER DONUTS, TOFFEE DONUTS
 BLUE BAIT, WHITE BAIT
 TRINE CUT A TREE OLD' MAN', WATCH AS IT'S FALLING
 PINE NUT IS FREE OLD' MAN', TREESTANDS YOU ARE INSTALLING
 KEEP THE LADDER STEADY, KEEP THE LADDER HERE
 IS THE LANE READY, IS THE LANE CLEAR
 THE BLUE BAIT IS HEADY,
 THE WHITE BAIT IS NEAR
 MUSHROOMS ARE SPRAWLING, WHILE MOSQUITO'S ARE GALLING
 WATCH THE WIND BLOWING, WATCH THE WIND WAIL
 INDIAN PIPES ARE GROWING, INDIAN PIPES ARE FRAIL
 THE CANON IS SHOWING, THE CANON LEAVES A TRAIL
 THE BLUE BAIT IS FLOWING,
 THE WHITE BAIT IS A VEIL
 NATURE'S FOOD FIRST, AS BLUEBERRIES QUENCH THE OLD' MANS THIRST,
 HUMAN FOOD LAST, AS THE RASPBERRIES WRENCH AT THE OLD' MAN' AS HE PASSED

BUNCHBERRIES ARE AGEING, THE CHOKECHERRIES ARE UNCHANGING
 BUCKETS OF UMBER DONUTS, BUCKETS OF TOFFEE DONUTS
 THE BLUE BAIT'S BELL IS RINGING,
 THE WHITE BAIT'S PAIL IS SINGING
 WATCH THE TRAILS, UNDER THE MOON,
 VIEW THE TRACKS, MOOSE, BEAR, OR COON
 THE MUD SHOWS THE WAY, THE ANIMALS PASS
 AS THE MOSS WON'T SAY, THE ANIMALS FORECAST
 IS IT NOON, OR AFTER THE MOON
 THE BLUE BAIT IS IN TUNE,
 THE WHITE BAIT HAS BEEN STREWN
 AUGUST WAS HERE, NOW AUGUST HAS GONE
 SEPTEMBER IS NEAR, AS SEPTEMBER HAS DRAWN
 A HUNTERS HORN CROWS, WHEN THE HUNTERS HORN BLOWS
 THE CLIMB WILL BE SLOW, UP THE TREESTANDS WE GO
 THE LEAVES START FALLING, AS THE CEDARS ARE LOLLING
 THE BLUE BAIT KEEPS STALLING,
 THE WHITE BAIT IS APPALLING
 THE SQUIRRELS ARE ACTIVE, A BLUE JAY IS BALD
 THE GEESE ARE REACTIVE, WHEN THE NORTH WINDS CALL

PILEATED WOODPECKERS HAMMER, AS A COW MOOSE CLAMORS
 THE LOONS DID NOT STAMMER, AS THE RAVENS SHOWED GLAMOUR
 A GORBY IS A THIEF, AS A COYOTE MAKES IT BRIEF
 THE BLUE BAIT STILL HANGS, THE WHITE BAIT HAS GANGS
 DID YOU SEE HER TERRY, DID YOU SEE HER JAY
 THE BLACK BEAR DID SHE TARRY, THE BLACK BEAR DID
 SHE SWAY
 HER GHOST IS UPON US, AS THE MOON WILL SOON SHOW
 HER SILHOUETTE IS OMINOUS, AS SHE PASSES BY SLOW
 THE BLUE BAIT INDUCES,
 AS THE WHITE BAIT PRODUCES
 THE MOXIE GORE BEAR SHE CAME, AS THE OLD' MAN WATCHED THE DAME
 LET'S NOT HURT HER, SPOKEN QUIETLY TO BERTA
 THE REMINGTON WAS QUIET, WHILE THE CANON DID RIOT
 THE ANXIETY WAS REAL, WHILE THE MOXIE GORE BEAR ATE HER MEAL
 THE BLUE BAIT WAS BARE,
 THE WHITE BAIT HUNG THERE

The Maine Bowhunters Association is organized and shall be operated:

- To provide a State-wide organization within which people through individual memberships, with a common interest in bow-hunting, may recognize and have means of furthering their interests.
- The Maine Bowhunters Association shall recognize ALL vertical bows as acceptable under the definition of bows provided by the International Bowhunter Education Program, which reads: "one that is hand held, hand drawn, and released with nothing attached to the bow that will allow the bow to be mechanically held in a drawn or cocked position." The Maine Bowhunters Association shall not recognize the crossbow under this definition and shall oppose attempts to make the crossbow acceptable for use in bow hunting only seasons.
- To foster a spirit of sportsman-like fellowship among all bowhunters.
- To initiate or support selected activities and programs intended, or expected, to emphasize the responsibilities inherent in any proper use of the bow and arrow and to protect such continued use and possession on the part of citizens of good repute.
- To strive toward upgrading the sport of bowhunting through education, training, demonstration, dissemination of information, and related activities.
- To encourage by education, training, and demonstration, the support of appropriate legislation or other activities, a high level of sportsmanship and ethics in any use of the bow and arrow in activities related to the interests of the association.
- To educate archers to the fact that bowhunting is a sport of separate from and not to be confused with the sport of target/field archery.
- To further the purpose of this association by means of education, demonstration, or other appropriate activities directed to the recognition and protection of the rights of others, insofar as they relate to property rights, and enjoyment and use of property, and the enforcement of laws and regulations.