

THE MAINE BOWHUNTER

SEPTEMBER 2009

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



By Jerome Richard

Congratulations on being part of making Maine history! Apparently June 2009 went down in the record books as being the "wettest" June on record and you got to experience it! Was that great or what? July is starting out just as wet too. I think I have fungus growing on me from all this rain. I'm scared to tell anyone to "have a nice day" because some have already told me where to go and it's physically impossible to get there.

NASP Training & Events

The Maine Bowhunters Association held a training session for new NASP Basic Archery Instructor training at Camp Susan Curtis in Stoneham, ME on June 14, 2009. We were able to train 7 camp counselors plus 2 MBA members as new archery instructors. The training is an intense 8-hour session with a 100 question test covering whistle commands, range safety, archery equipment, equipment maintenance, and shooting form. I would like to thank my wife Tina and Pete Lamarre for being there to assist in the class. Paul St. John and

Steve Gray are our two new MBA NASP archery instructors.

I know the camp counselors at Camp Susan Curtis were very pleased with our emphasis on running a safe archery range. A study has shown that archery is safer than all other ball sports except table tennis. With the number of Youth Archery Events that the MBA does in one year, we will run well over 2,000 kids annually thru this program.

The very next day the MBA worked with Volunteers of America and the Maine Sheriff's Association at Camp POSTCARD which was held at Camp Cedar in Casco on June 15 & 16 using the NASP archery equipment. This was the third year in a row that the MBA has worked this event. When I pulled up,

two Somerset County Sheriff's deputies announced the "the archery guys are back!" My wife Tina worked with the same blind girl that we taught archery to last year. It's amazing to watch people with disabilities prove that nothing can hold them back when they have that drive to overcome! There's no doubt that the annual gathering really enjoys spending some quality time learning to shoot archery equipment the correct way. If you start off with the right equipment and training at a young age, these kids will stay with the sport for a lifetime.

Dan Long and Scott Robinson ran the NASP Youth Archery Event at the first annual Penobscot County Conservation Asso-

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Tina working with Jazmine at Camp Post Card.

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ciation's Fun Day on June 20. I hope some of you had the chance to read the great article in the Bangor Daily News, which started off talking about the kids at the archery event.

The MBA has been invited to attend the IF&W Maine Wildlife Park in Gray again! Last year was our first time with the archery range, and the youth archery event was a big success. This year we will be attending on Saturday, August 15.

The MBA has been asked to attend several events this year to run a NASP Youth Archery Event, but now it has become extremely popular, which has lead to scheduling conflicts. The weekend of September 18th thru 20th, 2009 put the MBA in a difficult situation to try to cover three (3) youth archery events in one weekend. The MBA had already scheduled the 3-day Maine Trapper's Rendezvous in Sidney, ME. Then we received a request to have my wife Tina attend the Becoming an Outdoors-Women (BOW) for Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to teach the women about archery using the NASP equipment. Then I received a special request from my friend Tom Doak at SWOAM to attend the Wonder of Wood Fair in Portland at the USM campus with the NASP

equipment.

This has actually been a blessing because it shows that the MBA can have an impact on archery and bowhunting thru education. By teaching and educating the general public we can dispel any myths about archery equipment and bowhunting. The vast majority of people are not going to wake up and walk into a pro shop to get into archery. A lot of people need that experience of seeing someone else practicing or someone explaining about the equipment and shooting form. The NASP equipment gives the MBA the ability to place a bow into their hands and spend a very brief time of letting them experience the joy of shooting archery equipment without spending a lot of money up front. In 2007 the MBA did 12 NASP Youth Archery Events, in 2008 we completed 21 NASP Youth Archery Events, and this year I don't where we will end up, but what a great spot to be in an exciting program.

TURKEY MANAGEMENT IN MAINE

The Maine Bowhunters Association has been asked to participate in a Wild Turkey Working Group starting on August 5, 2009 with an expected 2 to 3 meetings to discuss wild turkey issues. This came about due to LD 256 that read "Resolve, to Direct the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to

Explore Opportunities and Issues Surrounding Wild Turkey Hunting". At the present time there will be other groups such as the Maine NWTF, MDIF&W, SWOAM, SAM, Maine Farm Bureau, MPGA, Maine Audubon, and other at this Working Group.

BEAR SEASON & TAGGING FEE INCREASE

By the time you receive this newsletter the 2009 Bear Season will be just around the corner starting on August 31st with hunting bear over bait. One noticeable change starting with this years bear season is the tagging fee for bear, deer, moose, and turkey will increase to \$5 per animal harvested. Only \$1 will stay with the tagging station agent and the other \$4 will go to support MDIF&W. This increase, plus the hunting license fee increase, was one of the ways to prevent cutting any jobs at MDIF&W since the Governor took away money that had come from the general fund. That's a whole issue unto it's self, so I will not go there at this time. Just be aware in 2010 you will be eligible to shoot three turkeys for a total license fee cost of \$40, but then you have to add another \$15 in tagging fees for those three turkeys.

MBA BLIP

The MBA completed another Bowhunters/Landowners Infor-

mation Program (BLIP) class at Old Town Archery Center in Old Town, ME on June 7th. This is a 3 to 4 hour class that is mandatory training along with some other requirements to be involved in the BLIP program. We usually hold one or two of these classes each year and the classes are advertised in a few newspapers, our MBA newsletter, and the MBA website.

Our next MBA BLIP class will be held on Sunday, December 13th at The Sportsman's BARR in Gardiner from 8:00am to noon. Call me at 426-2082 to reserve your spot for the class. Again, this is mandatory training to be considered for any of the special BLIP events such as Marsh Island. Please check the MBA website for more details on the requirements for the Bowhunters/Landowners Information Program.

Marsh Island BLIP

The Marsh Island BLIP is progressing and becoming more organized since both the towns of Orono and Old Town have given their approval of expanding the amount of available public and private land that can be used for this year's event. Several officers and directors of the MBA have met with some of the private landowners that have given permission to include their land in this year's deer reduc-

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MBA AFFILIATES

Seven Islands Land Company
PO Box 1168
Bangor, ME 04402

Central Maine Archery, LLC,
PO Box 1297
Auburn, ME 04211-1297
(207)345-9503
<http://www.centralmainearchery.com>
LL Bean

95 Main Street
Freeport, ME 04032
(207)865-1082
<http://www.llbean.com>

The Old Town Archery Shop, 300
Main St. Old Town, ME 04468
(207)827-9489
<http://www.oldtownarcheryshop.com>

Wicked Whitetail Taxidermy
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Etna, ME 04434
(207)269-4731

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tion.

Last years event was successful despite the brutal winter weather in December, and it demonstrated that bowhunting can be safe and effective to resolve the problem on Marsh Island. It is the goal of the MBA get this area opened to the expanded archery season and thereby move away from the BLIP-only hunt as a controlled hunt. There are a lot of people who misunderstand what the BLIP program is all about and think that this program is for some type of "elite bowhunters". That is not true at all. The BLIP program is a tool developed by the MBA and the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to place bowhunters who qualify into areas that are not normally open to hunting to eliminate deer issues. In the Marsh Island situation this program is a great tool to help open the island to an expanded archery season. For those that might be upset, please hold your judgment and help us to work toward that goal. It is a winning situation for all bowhunters if we obtain that goal.

MBA Terminates the Wells BLIP

Due to the success of the BLIP program in Wells, the manager of the reserve is taking on the management of the annual hunt, and therefore the MBA has completed its mission of demonstrating that bow hunting is a safe, efficient, and cost effective means of wildlife management, and has terminated our participation in the effort.

I would like to thank the town of Wells, the Wells Reserve, and Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife for providing the opportunity to the Maine Bowhunters Association. I would like to especially recognize and thank Paul Dest of the Wells Reserve and Scott Lindsay, Wildlife Biologist for IF&W for being personally involved in this event over the past several years. Also, I would like to thank the past participants in the program, who gave their time to prove that this could be accomplished.

As with any program, the BLIP program has not been without its own internal issues. But we have resolved them in a way that continues to keep the BLIP program's integrity intact, and it keeps it open and fair to all BLIP participants for the future.

MBA Vice President's Report



By Dan Long
MBA Vice President

The days are getting shorter and as bowhunters, we look forward to our first steps into the woods with bow in-hand. I hope you have all identified hot spots to arrow your favorite table fare. There are a lot of opportunities for all bowhunters in this State and pre-scouting and planning will help to ensure you have places to hunt with high chances for success. Work to build landowner relationships and you'll have more opportunity than you know what to do with!

This summer has been an incredibly busy time. June offered a free Outdoor Family Fun Day hosted by the Penobscot County Conservation Association. This was a fantastic event that was designed to educate and connect youth and families with the outdoors and because of the magnificent efforts by the MBA

with our youth archery shoots, was right up our alley. A special thanks to Scott Robinson, Pat Cough, Lee Smith, and Scott Abbott for their time and efforts to set-up, run, and close this event successfully! The event was free, and offered Penobscot River canoe rides in a 28-foot canoe, fly casting and tying instructions, geocaching, air rifle shooting, IF&W search and rescue dogs, a microscopic look at pond water, a youth archery shoot and so much more. Kids and parents both had great things to do and those that attended stayed all day! I strongly urge you to plan to attend this event in June of 2010 –if you have kids, you should be there! You will be able to find out more by visiting the PCCA's website in the near future, or by going to the Brewer Cabin Fever Reliever in February.

MBA Bowhunter Landowner Relations Program (BLIP) courses and Bowhunter Safety Classes also kept your MBA leadership busy. I was surprised to see so few attendees at the BLIP courses offered at Old Town Archery Center in Old Town. These courses were advertised in the BDN and Penobscot Times, and were advertised at the Old Town Archery Center, and on your MBA website. The big

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Bow Safety class held at Old Town Archery, July 18th



Photo by Bill Kuykendall 2009

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push to increase the number of Advanced Bowhunters in the program was needed to increase the effectiveness of the 2009 Marsh Island efforts with the State, the City of Old Town, and the Town of Orono. After last year's successful pilot program, the MBA has been asked to expand the program to include additional land which exceeds 500 acres spread across various parcels on the island.

The amount of effort required to administer this program is overwhelming. The Marsh Island BLIP Committee has worked with State officials to identify potential parcels, discuss the program with these land owners and businesses, visit the parcels for approval with regard to safety, proximity to adjacent landowners, and to pre-determine acceptable locations for stands. All information has to be documented and provided to Old Town and Orono prior to the October kick-off of the 2009 program. Additionally, the MBA BLIP Committee must identify all interested potential Advanced Bowhunters and prepare for qualifications in September. This task involves a lot of administrative paperwork to ensure that the program is conducted within the rules and regulations that have been created to keep the program un-biased and a low-risk effective solution to communities where deer problems exist and the regular or expanded archery option is not allowed. I am very proud to be a part of this program that continues to improve every year with "lessons learned". My ultimate hope is that Marsh Island, or parts of, will be eventually accepted as part of the expanded archery season. The effort required to administer and manage this BLIP program is enormous.

The real pay-off will be seeing Marsh Island residents, businesses, and the University see how safe and effective the BLIP program can be in reducing the problems associated with the high deer population and the threat and presence of Lyme Disease, and ultimately pushing to have the Island included in the expanded archery season.

As I proposed in the last issue of *The Maine Bowhunter*, with the help of all officers, directors, and county representatives I have completed a hefty document which defines the roles and responsibilities of the MBA. This includes a table of organization (TOO), the Mission/Vision/Core Principals of the MBA, Job Descriptions, the MBA Constitution and Bi-Laws, a list of archery shops in the state (so County Reps can be held accountable to visit each shop at least once per month), and a list of towns per county. These documents will work to keep the MBA organized and allow us to hold ourselves accountable to the high standards as described in these documents. The document has been e-mailed to position holders, and will be provided in hard copy form as I meet with these people in the near future. You, as a member of the MBA can support the mission by communicating to your county representative your thoughts and questions on any bowhunting related issue. If we are to represent you, we must know what you're thinking. We will work towards what is in the best interest of the organization.

The Great Recession has a lot of folks tightening their belts and volunteer organizations can suffer because of the limitations people impose on themselves: how much time or money they are willing to donate to organizations which support their interests. I hope the economic situa-

tion has not affected you. This time is more important than ever to step up to the plate and contribute to your MBA. If you are a position holder in the MBA, please reference your job description and be sure you are doing all you are accountable for. Just as important, all MBA members know someone who is a bowhunter, but is not a member of the MBA. Please work to educate friends and family of the benefits to being an MBA member and the great track record the MBA has in expanding bowhunting opportunities in the State of Maine, and helping to fend-off the anti's. We must remain strong and united, and to do so we must continue to increase our membership. You can now join through the MBA website. Please visit www.mainebowhunters.org

The fall 2009 hunting season is fast approaching. You can avoid being a part of a horror story of an unprepared bowhunter who missed the shot of a lifetime by practicing now. Take your bow to your local archery shop. Have them check out your equipment and replace/repair anything that is worn. Practice with your broadheads on! Don't forget to have an MBA stat sheet in your fanny pack and send it in with a picture of your game. Good luck!



Now that your animal is down... Greg Barnes

The bow season is around the corner and hopefully we can pull a string on our quarry whatever it may be. If one is lucky enough to arrow a trophy there will be taxidermy of some type in your future. You may desire an antler plaque or the European style skull mount. In either case you can get away without much worry over spoiling and such. But if a skin mount is desired you need to take a few steps to care for your animal.

Step one is in removing your animal from the field. Use of game carts or a stretcher type device is best. This keeps dirt off the animal, keeping hide and meat cleaner. This goes a long way with butchers and taxidermists. Rope is not recommended around the neck when you are dragging. This will cause damage to hair and fur during the drag. These "rope burns" will show up on your mount. Keeping the head UP as much as possible will keep hair from being pulled out of the neck area during the drag. Missing hair spots are difficult to repair on mounts and are quite common due to long arduous dragging. You should never drag by the back feet as this will break hair on deer and moose. Watch tailpipes on ATV's, hot metal and exhaust will burn hair off very

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easily.

Step two is getting the hide off. Skinning is best left to a pro, be it butcher, or taxidermist. Time is of the essence here. Sooner is better, get the animal to your butcher or taxidermist ASAP. Tell them what you would like for a mount, and they will skin accordingly. If you do your own butchering that is fine but, if you are going to have a mount you need to know how to skin. If you make a bad cut or cut too much off in the wrong place you will be charged by most taxidermists for repair or worse you may even need to get a replacement skin. This happens all the time. If you don't know how, take it to someone who does. You will be glad you did. (Get measurements around the neck after skinning. A string makes a great measuring device. Simply use the string to go around the circumference of the neck at two or three points behind the head down to the base of the neck.) This will give the taxidermist the best reference for an accurate mount.

Step three keeps it cold. A few hours at 50 degrees will cause bacterial slippage. What this means is bacteria makes the hair start falling out. If slippage occurs it is irreversible. Now if your butcher calls and says you can get your head and hide. Drop everything and go get it, it is likely in his cooler (NOT FROZEN) and in a box. Hair is a great insulator and so is cardboard, so trapped heat cannot escape, this is very bad. Get the hide spread out in a freezer for an hour or so, then put it in a garbage bag and freeze it solid. Or take it straight to the taxidermist.

These simple steps should go a long way toward a really great mount. I hope you will need them this fall. Happy hunting.

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What makes a *great* hunting and fishing store?

We're lucky in Maine to have a state that's rich with a strong hunting and fishing tradition. We have rivers, lakes, ponds, streams and the ocean to fish in, and countless square miles of country to hunt grouse, turkey, bear, moose, deer and much more.

It takes a lot of equipment and gear to do all of the great activities there are to do here and we do in fact have some good sporting goods store here in Maine...some of the best anywhere. But here at the Maine Bowhunters Association, we began to wonder what makes a truly *great* hunting and fishing store? We think L.L.Bean might have the answer, so to find out, we talked with Mac McKeever, senior public relations representative for L.L.Bean.

MBA: Mac, it seems the first thing a really great hunting and fishing store should have, of course is the right gear and apparel for hunting and fishing in Maine.

MAC: Let's face it, there's no shortage of hunting and fishing items out there. And while the universe of items is much larger today, a good store should have that local expert who knows what works, what doesn't and why. At our store, you won't find the biggest selection, but you will find the *best* selection and a *strong* commitment to offer superior products and provide world-class customer service to the hunters and anglers that come through the doors.

L.L. Bean himself once said, "Nine flies are all anyone needs for brook trout. If trout won't take one of these, they aren't rising." I feel the assortment in our store is the embodiment of that statement and resonates as loudly today, as it did when L.L. was catching his own brook trout here in Maine."

MBA: But a really great fishing store should have more than just the right gear and apparel, right?

MAC: I agree. I think it needs to be a total experiential and educational "shopping experience" for the customers. Here we have an indoor trout pond, as well as a Riverbed Aquarium, which gives you a realistic glimpse into what a real river in Maine might look like. We also have ongoing demos and clinics, as well as big weekend events and an indoor virtual archery range with live shooting. Our huge taxidermy display features local and regional examples, as well as plenty of exotic species.

We even have a full-service Pro Shop offering rod and reel repair, gun servicing and cleaning, arrow fletching and dipping, bow fitting and repair, custom fly tying and more. So even if you're not shopping for anything, it's great place to come and spend some time...we always have something fun and interesting going on!

MBA: L.L.Bean also has a long history of caring for our fisheries and wildlife resources, don't they?

MAC: That's correct. I feel a *great* hunting and fishing store should also care about the resource and have a strong commitment to preserving the environment. We're very pleased and proud to have supported dozens of organizations over the years, like the Maine Bowhunters Association, Ducks Unlimited, Trout Unlimited, Ruffed Grouse Society, Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Maine Professional Guides Association and many others. The Hunting and Fishing Store is also built to U.S. Green Building Council's LEED standards and incorporates environmentally friendly building materials and fixtures and uses systems and technologies to increase energy efficiency.

MBA: Thanks for visiting with us Mac. And we appreciate L.L.Bean's ongoing support and commitment to the Maine Bowhunters Association.

CARRYING THE ENVIRONMENTALIST HUNTER CAPACITY, BOWHUNTING, AND THE #20

By John Hunt JR.
B.S. Environmental Science

In doing research for this article, I found dozens of definitions for the term "carrying capacity." However, all of them basically defined carrying capacity as "The maximum number of organisms of a species an ecosystem can sustain, without causing long term degradation of the ecosystem." When deer numbers get too high, they can extirpate local plant species that they favor, and sometimes even open a niche for less desirable and non-indigenous plant species. This has been evidenced here in Maine along the southern coast, where bayberry bushes have overtaken the understory of forest ecosystems. These plants are tough and spiny, and are non-desirable to whitetails as forage. In many places the bushes are so thick, it's nearly impossible to walk through the woods. Another classic example of deer exceeding carrying capacity occurred on the Kiabab Plateau, and involved Mule deer. The area was closed to deer hunting in the late 1800s, while at the same time, predator hunting was encouraged. By the early 1920's the herd had burgeoned well beyond carrying capacity, and then their populations plummeted once they had grazed off much of the vegetation. The population had risen to approximately 100,000 animals, and then 60% of the herd starved off in just two winters. The numbers continued to decline steadily until 1940, where they reached about 10,000. The estimated carrying capacity of the area, prior to the increase in deer numbers was about 50,000. The damage caused by the overpopulation of mule deer caused a long term degradation of the habitat and decreased the

carrying capacity to 30,000 or less.

Ever since the Kiabab Plateau experience, wildlife biologists and managers have been keenly aware of carrying capacities, and have used hunters, hunting seasons, and bag limits to maintain deer numbers at 50-60% below carrying capacity. In Maine, carrying capacity and actual deer densities vary greatly. In the southern and coastal parts of our state, deer numbers average 15-25 deer/sq. mi., with some areas much higher than the average. In northern parts of the state, numbers are as low as 1-2 deer/sq. mi. The main reason numbers are so low in the northern part of our State is winter severity and lack of wintering habitat. Winters in northern Maine are a "bottleneck" for deer. The reasons deer are more abundant in the southern and coastal regions is because the winters are not usually as severe, better habitat quality, and because some of the land is not accessible to hunters due to posting. Since the mid 1980's, the goal of Maine's Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife has been to achieve and maintain whitetail populations at about 60% of carrying capacity. That averages out to approximately 10 deer per sq. mi. (much lower in some northern regions, and much higher in some southern regions.)

Recently a new carrying capacity has entered the realm of wildlife management. It is called "social" or "cultural" carrying capacity. This new term refers not to a biological capacity, but to a capacity based upon the number of deer humans will tolerate in an area. This number is based upon things like car collisions, crop damage, shrub damage, and Lyme disease. In

most places, the social carrying capacity is much lower than the actual biological carrying capacity. Many hunters don't like the use of social carrying capacity, as it leaves them with fewer deer to hunt. Ironically, it is also disliked by anti-hunting groups, because it calls for the killing of more deer to get numbers down to a goal lower than biological carrying capacity. This "social" carrying capacity, however, plays well for bowhunters, as it's very applicable in suburban areas where firearms are discouraged or outright prohibited. Our MDIF&W addresses this issue with the "expanded archery season." This highly successful approach to deer management, by the way, was promoted by our MBA. Even though this has been a highly successful approach at reducing deer numbers and providing hunter opportunity, there are some areas where even that cannot work. These areas tend to be places where any hunting will be closely scrutinized by the public, and require stringent guidelines. These areas are perfect for the Maine Bowhunters Association's BLIP program (Bowhunters Landowners Information Program). BLIP archers are required to attend an additional course beyond the archery safety course, are required to pass proficiency testing with their bow, and must have demonstrated success at harvesting deer with a bow. The trend in hunting and hunting opportunities in Maine and around the country indicates that some of the best hunting in the future will be suburban bow hunting.

Oh yeah, "the # 20!" That is the number of deer per square mile that many wildlife managers across the country are targeting as the "social carrying capacity." This seems to be appropriate for some suburban areas, where the close proximity of deer and humans leads to a lower

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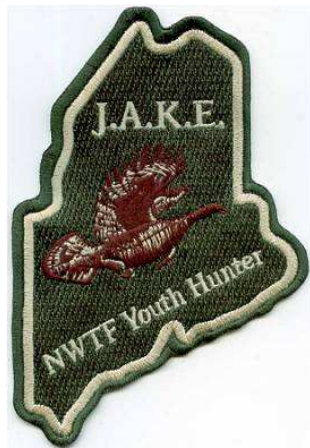
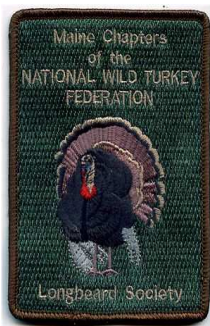
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tolerance for high deer numbers. It may also be appropriate for some forested areas that have limited browse. However, if the carrying capacity of a rural or forested area is 100 deer per square mile, as it is in some parts of our country, then 50 - 60 deer per square mile seems to be a biologically sound, and reasonably attainable management goal.

On a final note: As an environmentalist hunter, it makes sense to hunt deer in areas where their high numbers are causing biological or social problems. I therefore like to focus my hunting effort in these areas, and will avoid areas where numbers are way below carrying capacity. This is an admittedly selfish decision also. Not only is my hunting effort helping the environment, my success rate also goes way up by hunting in areas with high deer densities. I actually don't have much interest in hunting areas with deer densities below 20 deer/sq. mi., as is the case in most of the state of Maine.

Remember to make every shot as ethical as possible, and take as much pride in the deer you pass up as you do the ones you shoot. Safe, legal, ethical, and responsible hunters are the true environmentalists.

ABOUT THE NWTF



As a board member of both MBA & NWTF I would like to pass on some info that you as members of the MBA might not know. The Maine State Chapter of NWTF has a Long Beard Society. We offer two different patches. If you harvest a turkey in Maine with either a bow or shotgun and the turkey has an 8 inch beard or longer you can register the turkey with NWTF. The cost is \$5.00, if you are a member of the National Wild Turkey Federation or if you are not a member the cost is \$8.00. Each registered turkey hunter will receive a Long Beard Society Patch.

The second patch is meant to encourage and to celebrate the young hunter who successfully harvests a turkey with a beard less than 8 inches. If the youth hunter is a member of the NWTF the cost is \$5.00, if not a member the patch is \$8.00. The forms can be printed from the web site www.mainenwtf.org and mailed to: Maine Long Beard Society 1111 Station Road, Stacyville, ME 04777. If you would like to become a member of the NWTF, you can also print a membership form from the web-site.

Considering a New Arrow Rest

By Tom Hartford

This article will hopefully make you more aware of what to look for and the questions to ask yourself or local pro-shop representatives when considering a new arrow rest. Let's start by saying that no matter what kind of rest you use, you can get accurate out to 20 yards with practice and field points. The debate on the rest is a touchy subject. Manufacturers only tell you the positives about a rest from their point of view. After all, it is their job to make, market, sell, and profit from their arrow rest. Many magazines get advertising dollars to market certain products, so you will only hear the positives from them as well. We will try to sort this out. Every rest that has been made has positive and negative aspects to it. There are a lot of factors to consider, which is why communication with an EXPERIENCED bow technician is critical before you buy. A service and sales center that includes installation with the purchase of their product AND the range for you to try the product before you leave is critical. It will provide the technical support and confidence that you need to have in your equipment and ability to harvest an animal. Here are a few questions to help guide you to making the best decision for your bowhunting needs.

First, **are you hunting from a tree stand, ground blind, or stalking?** These will all play a factor in the decision on what rest to buy. A ground blind tends to allow for movement needed to nock an arrow on a drop away rest whereas, a contained rest like the Whisker Biscuit allows you to walk with a knocked arrow while stalking a deer or have it hanging off a bow hook next to your tree stand

while keeping your hands warm in your pockets. There is no chance of an arrow dropping off the rest and clanging on the riser if it's snug inside the bristles of a Whisker Biscuit. However, there is 100% fletching contact on the vanes which requires a more durable and smooth vane like VaneTech to hold up to the friction without curling under the heat.

Second, **what type of arrow do you use?** The arrow shaft finish makes some shafts noisier than others. For example, Easton's ICS Hunter has a smooth and shiny finish, which is quiet during the draw cycle and release, whereas a PSE Radial X-Weave has a matte finish of criss-crossed carbon that can be quite noisy when drawing back the string on a forked or self-contained rest of any kind.

Third, **how much do I shoot my bow before opening day?** The more you practice, the more you will understand the pros and cons of your equipment and what to be aware of to compensate for any disadvantages.

Fourth, **is the rest easy to adjust?** Generally, your inexpensive rests won't offer the small adjustments offered by most higher-priced rests. Deluxe models have micro-adjustment lines painted right on the rest to help keep track of small changes in the placement of the rest, so you can best monitor the impact any change has on arrow flight and shot placement. If the lines aren't already on there, mark your rest with a silver Sharpe before you move anything so you have a point of reference to go back to. When paper tuning, you want a bullet hole regardless of which rest you choose. If there's a tear to the left, move the rest to the right. This will help with consistent accuracy over longer distances.

Fifth, **which fletching offers the optimal performance for arrow flight and shot placement off your rest?** Four inch fletchings are the standard for adult arrows. As long as the fletching profile, (the height of the back of the fletching) remains the same, going down to a three inch vane does not have a notable impact on speed or accuracy at 30 yards or less in wind or rain. (You may gain up to 2 ft/sec) Fletching with a one degree offset versus a helical works well with any mechanical release setup. Helical will NOT work with a Whisker Biscuit. With some rests, the profile may eliminate the option of using some vanes. For example, the Blazer has such a high profile that it comes into contact with the housing that holds the bristles on the Whisker Biscuit.

Let's talk about two types of rests; **containment and drop-away.** Overall, the **drop away rest** is more forgiving, accurate, and some can be very quiet with the use of fleece or shrink-wrap and an arrow holder. Some are quite noisy as the arrow pops out of the arrow holder or the arrow shaft grinds against the cradle or fork that lifts the arrow as the hunter draws to the target. The angle of a shot when in a tree stand can present a challenge with some drop-aways as well. For example, if the deer is nearly underneath you, as you draw, the arrow is lifted from the riser and may clang against the riser or the top of the containment cradle of the drop-away housing. It is certainly good enough for 3-D and paper target archery and most ground blind situations. Trophy Taker, PSE Phantom, and RipCord all have easy installation and good adjustability. The **arrow containment rest**

(Continued on page 9)

The MBA offers these raffles tickets through The Maine Bowhunter newsletter only. Cut out the tickets, fill them out and send them into the MBA.

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(Continued from page 7)

is not as forgiving or as accurate compared to a drop-away. If you are shooting a three inch group at 20-30 yards, a drop-away can cut that in half, but for the hard core hunter, containment is great! It holds the arrow in place with little to no worry of falling out of the rest.

I use the Whisker Biscuit Deluxe with a large hole for hunting with my Easton Flatliner arrows with a matte finish to avoid the noise issue as I draw back. The large hole allows me to draw silently and not slow down the arrow. I haven't experienced any tuning problems from shooting this oversized biscuit. Most of my hunting staff at Central Maine Archery shoots a Trophy Taker Drop-Away rest. The most popular is the Extreme Top Slot. It offers containment and accurate shooting.

What it comes down to is confidence in your equipment, knowing your equipment, and what you are capable of. If you aren't sure what is best for you, ask a knowledgeable person. If I want to know what works best for me, I speak with a few reputable bow hunters and try a few different rests before I make up my mind. Any reputable pro-shop will let you try before you buy.

Best of luck! If you have any questions, give us a call at 783-3060 or e-mail us at cmarcher@roadrunner.com.

Central Maine Archery

Why shop Central Maine Archery? Unlike big box stores, we provide the family atmosphere that builds relationships as you refine your archery skills. Also, we reinvest in our community, especially our youth. We also provide hours of free lane time and a free bow tune up with the purchase of your new CMA bow.

- The biggest factor that sets us apart from a big box store is our family atmosphere and rapport with customers. We have over 2,000 families that shop and shoot here. There are positive and knowledgeable professionals here to help you with your equipment choices, fine tuning of your bow and improve your technique. Also, unlike the a big box store, it's the same staff here every day for the past seven years. Tom & Jess Hartford, and Mark Brown are all certified archery instructors, experienced bow technicians, and retail sales specialists. We consult a pro-staff for product knowledge and to help test equipment. They also provide support on the shooting line for the professional or recreational archer in the various forms of archery; target and 3-D archers, bow hunters, and traditional archers. These elite archers help create the good-humored energetic atmosphere that we're known for and they make connections that hold our archery family together. It's such an encouragement when a person hears about a need and lends a helping hand. What goes around comes around and relationships are the best investment we have ever made...as people and as business owners. In this economy, it's best for all of us if we try to support local area business and make community connections to keep a positive perspective on life's circumstances... or perhaps to look beyond the circumstances so that some day soon we can look back and be even more grateful for what we have and where we've come from.

- Secondly, we reinvest in our archery family and community. Every Saturday morning approximately 15 youth members of Central Maine JOAD practice the best techniques for optimum performance on the range. JOAD is a training program identified with the National Archery Association and stands for Junior Olympic Archery Development. Keeping youth positive and productive benefits all communities. Last year we donated thousands of dollars in equipment to area school programs, Boy Scouts, church groups, and a rod and gun club that upgraded their archery range. In addition, we helped financially support the four Maine youth that made the USArchery team that traveled to several states and foreign nations to represent our country. We also provide 10% off all regularly priced merchandise to MBA members who show their card at the time of purchase.

Finally, we trust our product and the optimum performance provided at the time of sale, that we give the customer time to, not only try before they buy, but refine their technique on our lanes. Recurve and compound bow purchases come with hours of free shooting time in one of our 18 indoor lanes. Here the lighting is always good and there are no mosquitoes or black flies to distract the archer. You are also guaranteed to find your arrows. There's always someone here to give some pointers on how to improve technique and consistency of shot placement. All new equipment and archers need some time to get acquainted, so they work together as one. Over time, equipment may need some adjustments and TLC, especially with growing youth. This is why we tune up your bow for the first year, free of charge. Any accessories purchased here are put on for free. We do our best to ensure customer satisfaction and optimize the performance of archery equipment. We don't want to meet your needs; we want to exceed your expectations. Here at CMA, archery is not a department, archery is at our center!

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desire to do the work for you. Whether you plan to do the work yourself or not, it is helpful to know what is going on.

It doesn't matter what system your bow uses they all have parts that need a little tweaking from time to time if you want to get the performance you paid for.

Single cams DO need to be timed! Yeah, I know, some companies have claimed otherwise in the past but simply put... they lied! Sure a bow will shoot but it won't shoot as well or as fast if it is not correctly timed. Timing has to do with the relationship of the cam(s) to the BOW. Synchronization of the cams to each other as in a multi-cam system is an entirely different thing and single cams DON'T have to be synchronized to the other cam because there isn't one! The other wheel is just that, a round idler wheel. It doesn't matter what rotation it is in. To get optimum performance, single cams still need to be properly timed to the rest of the bow. If you think you have mysteriously gotten stronger since last year, I would bet your cable is stretched! A little twisting may fix that!

The draw length will feel better as well. If your bow is maxed out and still does not make full draw weight it is usually right there in the stretched buss cable and twisting it tighter could fix it. Caution is necessary here because these cables are only capable of so much and will actually cut themselves if over twisted. This is the value of a PRO shop, they have the experience and the tools to make your day while unassisted tinkering on the newbie's part may ruin your physical and mental health. It is not rocket science but you need to respect it.

Cam and a half systems have the same problem with the buss cable but it affects the accuracy a bit more. When the cams rotate differently, one a little more advanced than the other because of cable stretch, the back wall gets a little mushy and people tend to have trouble duplicating full draw position which causes high/low spreading of groups. There can also be some nock travel issues introduced as well.

Some systems are a hybrid of two cam and cam-and-a-half and they perform very well with some of the shortcomings of each but not all of them and not necessarily to the same degree.

Typical two cam systems will have the same issues as cam -and-a-half for the same reason unless they are Binary.

The Binary system doesn't have Y type buss cables attached to the limbs. Instead they connect the end to the other cam which spreads any cable stretch over the whole system, so it behaves more like a single cam system. Binary

Typically the buss cable, the one with the Y end, will stretch considerably. This will drop the draw weight significantly. I often see seventy pound bows only drawing 62 pounds with the limbs at maximum! They shoot OK but are not generating the kind of speed and flat trajectory many guys are after. The shooter may also wonder why his draw feels so long and why the bow keeps trying to suck him through the peep sight if he relaxes a little! This is all due to stretch and is a simple fix for the PRO. He will take a few twists where appropriate or replace the cable if it is too badly stretched and off you go with a bow that will make full weight again if you

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Bow Tech Talk



By Chas LaVersa

NAME THAT TUNE!!

Spring and summer we are so busy trying to enjoy the all too short warm season in Maine that sometimes we don't think about

our hunting gear much. That is too bad because it is an excellent time to get our rigs ready.

Tuning is a source of constant questions here so let me run down a couple basics. First you do need a good bow press designed for your bow. Not any press will do all bows. Some will terminate your bow! You will also want a draw board, which allows you to draw the bow with a pulley system so that you can observe the draw cycle without the danger of whacking yourself while trying to draw, hold, and look. (Spell that DISASTER looking for a place to happen!) Your pro has this stuff and the

(Continued from page 11)

systems are less likely to lose accuracy and maintain nock travel but still won't perform optimally when out of spec.

Let me speak to string and cable sets for a minute. Many manufacturers have used inferior strings sets in the past. They cut costs there figuring that anybody who recognized the difference was probably going to put on real good after market sets anyway and everybody else wouldn't know the difference anyway! Well consumers have a way of becoming more sophisticated every year. Many would protest having to go and put \$150 more into cabling a brand new bow they just paid \$700 for! RIGHTLY SO!

In 2005 Bowtech brought their string manufacturing process in-house to get tighter control over this and produced stock strings to rival the top name Winner's Choice. Since that time most manufacturers are upgrading the quality of their stock string sets. Other skilled string makers have

stepped forward with new lines that are much better than stock strings just a year or two ago. The Truth comes with Winner's Choice sets stock. PSE bought up America's Best and now uses those high quality sets stock. All of this is because we, the consumers, demanded it, GOOD WORK!

I like all these systems and find really good representations of them on the market daily so shoot what you like, just maintain it correctly and you will get years of great service from your equipment.

Chas LaVersa is a consultant to The Old Town Archery Shop and can be reached at chaslav-ersa@yahoo.com or info@theoldtownarcheryshop.com



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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.