

The Traditional Bowhunters of Maryland News

*Tenth
Anniver-
sary
Edition*



"After all, it is not the killing that brings satisfaction, it is the contest of skill and cunning. The true hunter counts his achievements in proportion to the effort involved and the fairness of the sport."

.....Saxton Pope, 1926

Spring 2001



Editor's Message

by Lou Compton

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On a winter's day back in 1991 a few visionaries happened upon each other at Assateague Island while doing what they all loved. These fellows had a vision. It was their intent to form a structured group of traditional bowhunters here in Maryland for the purpose of providing fraternalism and camaraderie for traditional bowhunters. They had expected the effort would see a total of 50 or so join their band of merry men and that they would at best have an organization that would serve as a common thread thus allowing its members an excuse to get together. Little could they have known the dividends their efforts would pay. In short order the group had a name, a motto, an official seal and a well thought out set of by-laws. Before they knew what had happened the *Traditional Bowhunters of Maryland* was born and the 50 member mark they thought they'd never reach was shattered. To say the least their idea took off like wildfire.

Today, TBM stands at 300 members strong. We've grown into a well organized and nationally recognized group of sportsmen. Our events such as the MATC and our annual banquet have become "must attend" items for traditional bowhunters from across the country. Our financial condition can best be described as very stable and steadily growing. Other state organizations look upon TBM as a model to be followed. Maryland DNR officials have even begun to acknowledge TBM as a group deserving to be heard from. We have much to be proud of.

This edition of *TBM News* celebrates TBM's 10th Anniversary. I hope you find the issue fitting to mark the occasion. Much thought and planning has went into making it something that members will want to hold onto. You'll find guest articles from some of bowhunting's most renowned authors along with columns from members recalling the past ten years. You'll also notice a bit more advertising than usual. The ads appearing here are from businesses, organizations and ordinary folks that just wanted to help us celebrate this milestone. A heartfelt note of appreciation goes out to them all and I encourage you to support those that support us.

I'd be remiss if I didn't make special mention of the ad on page 7. Be sure to check this one out closely. The PBS has chosen TBM to host their 2002 convention in Baltimore. This is truly an honor for TBM to be asked and is a good indication of the reputation that we have at the national level. Please make every effort to support this endeavor. Buy your tickets early and plan on volunteering to help out getting things set up.

A lot of hard work has gone into bringing TBM this far. To the founding members and the volunteers that have pulled more than their own weight over the years we owe much. These folks have certainly done all they could to "preserve the past for the benefit of the future". Somehow though I don't think they look back at it as a chore. You see they already know that the more involved you get in TBM the more you get back out of it. The next chance you have to get involved with a TBM committee or to volunteer for some other task jump in and help out. I guarantee you'll see what I'm talking about. Be an active member! This is what TBM needs to stay strong well into the next decade and beyond.

On a personal note I want to thank all who took the time to offer their condolences to me and my family as we dealt with the loss of my mother. Your kind thoughts, words and prayers were deeply appreciated. May God bless each and every one of you.

Enjoy your newsletter,

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On The Cover

Alright so they're not the best looking TBM members we have BUT Fred Specht and Andy Lupher were willing to "ham it up" a bit at last years (2000) annual TBM Pheasant Hunt. Both appear to be amazed at Andy's luck, err, I mean skill. Photo taken by fellow TBM'r Dan Creighton.

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To The Point

by Mike Mongelli

Happy 10th anniversary to the Traditional Bowhunters of Maryland. It doesn't seem possible that this organization has been in existence for 10 years. It's truly hard to believe. I am not sure if the founding members ever envisioned the success that this group would enjoy. It is amazing to think of all that has been accomplished in these few years. We have grown to almost 300 dedicated members who are passionate about their sport. At the risk of being boastful, we are a model traditional club...one of the finest in the country. Other traditional bowhunting groups have copied TBM with the goal of being as successful. A sincere "thank you" to our founders Lenny Brown and Ralph Griening as well as Beth Brown, Pete Bowman, Debbie Chapman, Fred Dolinger, Bill Fowlkes, Bill Hassenmayer, Otts Joseph, Tony Malpasso, Tom Parsons, Pete Ropshaw and Ronny Williams. These traditional

bowhunters were responsible for the birth of the Traditional Bowhunters of Maryland.

When the MATC and TBM banquets are mentioned as well as all our group hunts members should hold their heads high. It has been a cooperative effort that has paid off handsomely. The dedication of every member is a strong element in our formula. As I've stated in the past, our traditional values are the key. Look around and you will see members who are thoughtful, caring, passionate, family oriented with a deep religious commitment. It's hard to beat these ingredients, but enough horn blowing.

In order for TBM to stay on this successful path, we must continue to do what we have been doing with an eye on broadening our horizons. What are these new ventures? I'm not sure, but what I do know is that we can not stand still.

Maybe as our treasury builds we could become more philanthropic by donating to worthy charities. "Farmers and hunters Feeding the Hungry" comes to mind as well as any others that will help the less fortunate such as "Camp Sunrise". A camp dedicated to kids with cancer. We might also keep an eye on groups who fight the "anti's" while protecting our sport of bowhunting. We must keep our eyes and ears open to all possibilities in the future.

Please do all in your power to support TBM's upcoming events. Our

10th anniversary banquet will be history by the time this newsletter gets to you. I trust that you had a great time. Also, your participation and help would be greatly appreciated at the 10th anniversary of the MATC. This event has grown to be one of the most popular of the nations traditional classics. There will be many vendors and seminars along with 3-D targets for your enjoyment. This is your organization...

keep it number "1".

In closing, a sad note, Lou Compton's mother has passed away. I'm sure that he would appreciate your prayers and a kind word.

Mike Mongelli





Membership Report

by Andy Lupher

The membership renewals are pouring in. At present 60 percent of members have renewed their memberships. The membership cards have not gone out at this writing. At the fall meeting it was decided to send window stickers to all life, new and returning members. As the cost for stickers was over the limit imposed for new merchandise, the purchase had to be approved at the winter meeting. It was and hopefully you will receive a membership card and window decal soon.

Currently there are 300 members on the roster. This is a new record for the club. We will slip a bit, as some members will choose not to renew. Their loss.

Please join me in welcoming the following new members to the club.

Tom Turner
John Perrin
Gerald Long
Harold Rowe
Paul Ostheimer

Bill Pressnall
Charles Nitsios
Don Bittner
Mac Hicks
Scott Spencer

Thanks to the following members who have chosen to show their commitment to the club by signing up as life members.

Bill Wilhelm
Buzz Chamberlan
John Ritter

John Downham
John Frantsi
Ray Pridgeon

Regards and good shooting,

Andy Lupher

**Thanks to the Many Members
Who Have Made the Last
Ten Years so Special.
Happy Tenth
Anniversary
and
Best Wishes For Continued
Success.
Sincerely,
Bill Hassenmeyer**

**Congratulations TBM!!
Thanks to Those Who had the
Fortitude to Follow Their
Dreams. Your Efforts Have
Grown into an Outstanding
Organization. May TBM
Continue to Experience Success
in the Years to Come.
Sincerely,
John Burdyski**



Secretary's Report

by Bill Nash Jr.

Greetings to all, I hope this letter finds everyone well. We are enjoying a real winter for a change. Archery season came and went I didn't have an opportunity to even draw on a deer. However it was still a good season with mornings alive with the sounds of geese in the air and squirrels bouncing across the forest floor. I hope your season was a good one also.

Fall Meeting: The fall meeting was called to order by President Mike Mongelli. There were approximately 50 members in attendance.

Secretary's Report: The secretary's report was approved as printed in the newsletter.

Treasurer's Report: The treasurer's report was approved as read.

Membership Director's Report: Andy Lupher reports there are six new members and that we are on track to achieve the 300 member mark once everyone gets renewed. A motion was made to except the membership report as read.

Vice President's Report: Phil Harris reports that last years hunts went well. This years sitka hunt was well attended, but horrible rainy weather made it a washout. The deadline to sign up for the pheasant hunt has passed. Five groups are booked to attend the hunt.

Banquet Committee: Stan Trice reports that the hall arrangements have been made. As most of you know John Rook will be our guest speaker. Stan made it known that any donations of prizes for the banquet would be appreciated.

MATC: John Reed reported that the MATC committee have their preparations in order, but would appreciate cooperation from the membership in the way of help at the shoot. Will Land has the TBM booth, John Leck has the dealers, Mike Nauman has the gate, Mike Horst has target setup and takedown and specialty shoots. Jay Lancaster also made everyone aware of the need for help in the kitchen. So please see one of these guys at or before the Mid-Atlantic, and sign up to help. The MATC T-shirt contest was held. Jeff Trice, thanks and congratulations Jeff submitted the winning design.

Newsletter: Lou Compton reports that the bylaws issue needs to be resolved before we can purchase new newsletter covers, which we are in need of. Business card advertisements and boosters are being sold to help offset the cost of the 10th anniversary edition of the newsletter. Lou wanted to make everyone aware that all address and phone number changes need to be made to Andy Lupher, the membership director. Lou gets his mailing list from Andy.


Merchandise: Monty Cornwell reports that the 10th anniversary armguard is under construction. Monty made us aware of the need and cost of decals. A motion was made and approved to purchase 300 10th anniversary and 700 regular decals at a cost of \$485.00. There was discussion on ordering hats as our supply is down to 5 or 6 hats. There was some interest in getting some camo and some solid color hats with the TBM logo. Monty will be able to use his \$300.00 discretionary fund to purchase the hats.

Old Business: The club voted on the proposed change to the bylaws as printed on page 8 of the last newsletter. The vote was 22 against to 16 for implementing the proposed change. Therefore the bylaws will remain unchanged. There was discussion on purchasing liability insurance coverage for the club. A motion was made and passed to purchase insurance for the club, with a rider for the officers, for the cost of approximately \$325.00 per fiscal year. This would cover us during our shoots, hunts and functions.

New Business: The membership was made aware of the need for a new cd drive for Lou to use in the publishing of the newsletter. A motion was made and passed to purchase a writable cd drive for the computer to cost no more than \$300.00. The officers of the Traditional Bowhunters of Virginia visited the meeting. They applauded the success that the TBM has enjoyed and made it known that they would appreciate suggestions and any cooperation that we could give them that would boost the interest in their club. Any TBM member that may want to attend their shoots or functions can contact President Wayne Hill at (703)631-1798 or by e-mail at tbvnews@aol.com. The topic of defining the type of equipment allowed at TBM shoots and functions, was discussed and a decision was made to leave it undefined at this time. Bill Hassemayer brought us up to speed on the PBS Gathering that will be held on the last weekend in March 2002. Bill is going to need 25 to 30 volunteers to assist in moving merchandise for the event. Jeff Trice has contacted Schrade and Buck to etch a TBM anniversary edition knife for sale to the members. The knives will be on hand at the banquet for the purpose of taking orders.

This Is What You've Been Waiting For!

Mark your calendar
The Professional Bowhunters Society's Biannual Banquet
Is coming to a town near you... March 21-24, 2002
At BWI Airport Marriott • 1743 West Nursery Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21240



Raffles • Auctions • Dinners • Seminars • FUN


To receive information on the Gathering or order tickets, write:
Professional Bowhunters Society
Box 246, Terrell, NC 28682
PBS website: www.bowbsite.com/pbs
email: Bowhunters@worldnet.att.net
Phone: 704-664-2534
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E-Mail: roy.davis@longandfoster.com



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As many of you know the Maryland Bowhunters Society has been the political voice for Maryland bowhunters in the past. The MBS has endured some difficult times in the past. There is a renewed spirit guiding them at this time, four of the five current officers are TBM members. The new leadership of the MBS would appreciate our support in making the MBS once again the voice of the bowhunters of this state. You may contact Phil Harris for membership information.

On a more solemn note, I have been made aware that Lou Compton's Mom has passed away. Please keep Lou and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

God Bless,
Bill



Treasurer's Report 4th Quarter 2000

by John Reed

The year's end is a natural time to take stock of many things, financial and otherwise. I'm happy to report that our club continues to stand on very solid ground financially. A look at this report will show that we have over \$10,000 in operating funds on hand, as well as almost \$7,000 in Life Member funds in reserve. A year ago, these

same two figures totaled less than \$10,000. Soon, membership, banquet, and MATC income will continue to add to our bottom line.

At some point, we as a club are going to have to decide two things. One, what do we consider to be a safe and prudent reserve, ensuring our club can remain financially sound in spite of unexpected setbacks? Two, once we reach that goal, what is the best way to handle funds that are in surplus of our reserve? The time is approaching when these discussions need to be held. Come to our meetings and let your voice be heard!

We are an unusually successful club. A couple of things have served to remind me lately that it is very important that we recognize this, and not take our success for granted. How many of you have had experiences with other clubs, archery-related or otherwise, that were successful for a while, but eventually faded away? On our tenth anniversary, I hope every member takes a minute to celebrate our incredible past. But also take a minute to realize that this success has come from a lot of hard work, and a lot of caring, from a lot of great people. Our club is going to require a steady stream of members, new and old, to step forward and help to carry the load forward. If our next decade is going to be as successful (and as fun!) as our first, it will be because more and more members decide that it's their turn to share in the work and the responsibility that goes on behind the scenes. Make a commitment that you are going to be part of the continuing success that is the TBM. For now, congratulations and happy 10th anniversary to all!

Treasurer's Report: 4th Quarter 2000

Accounts Balance as of 9/30/00

Cash Box		100.00
TBM Savings Account	8,230.66	
TBM Checking Account	4,545.35	
Life Membership CD's	6,000.00	
Less Life Membership Dues	750.00	
Net TBM Operating Funds	12,026.01	

Debits (10-1-00 to 12-31-01)

2001 Banquet expenses	366.00
2001 MATC Expenses	632.50
TBM Web page	244.40
TBM Merchandise	400.00
TBM Greenridge expenses	168.48
Donation to Hunters & Farmers feeding the hungry	200.00
TOTAL DEBITS	2,011.38

**THE MATC NEEDS
YOUR HELP !!!**

The MATC requires more help from more people than any other single event of the year. Here is your chance to help TBM out! The following committee members need your ideas and your help. Please give them a call, or look them up at the Banquet, and volunteer a couple of hours of your time.

Thanks!

- John Reed, Chairman** 410 822 1543
johnineaston@webtv.net
- Michael Horst, Targets** 410 686 9135
horstm@nationwide.com
- Jay Lancaster, Facilities** 410 335 8917
no e-mail available
- Will Land, TBM Booth** 410 579 2229
wland@erols.com
- John Leck, Dealers** 301 607 6378
jpleck@ratedg.com
- Michael Nauman, Gate** 410 848 4943
Michael-nauman@usa.net
- Bill Shields, Seminars** 410 476 3461
teaser@dmv.com

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Sale

Continued from page 8

Credits (10-1-00 to 12-31-01)

CD interest	104.52
Membership	60.00
Newsletter ads	63.00
Green Ridge Hunt	30.00
TBM Savings interest	22.60
TOTAL CREDITS	280.12

Account Balance as of 9/30/00

Cash Box	100.00
TBM Savings Account	8,253.26
TBM Checking Account	2,791.49
Life Membership CD's	6,000.00
Less Life Membership Dues	<750.00>
Net TBM Operating Funds	10,294.75





Chaplain's Letter

by Otis Seese

This issue of our newsletter has been dedicated to the celebration of the tenth anniversary of TBM. We have an amazing organization, and a celebration is indeed called for. I'd like to thank our "founding fathers" for their vision for our club, but, even more than that, for acting upon their vision. All of us have good ideas that we just never seem to have the time, energy, or will power to make a reality. Like wise, I'd want to thank all the officers and working members who have been making our club function successfully over the years. It has taken a lot of work and sacrifice to bring us this far, and, in any organiza-



tion, it is usually a few who do most of the work. In our culture of selfishness the commitment needed to make clubs like TBM a success is rare. Even rarer

still is hearing the words "thank you". Please accept my "thanks", and I hope it's just one of many you receive as we celebrate this special milestone for TBM. I know I'm a little prejudiced, but I believe we have one of the finest state traditional organizations going. Our banquet, our MATC shoot, our hunts, and our newsletter are of the highest quality. We have a noble purpose for existing as explained in our constitution, "preserving the past for the benefit of the future". That part of the "past" we wish to "preserve" is the sport of archery as practiced with "traditional" equipment. I know that has a wide range of meaning to those involved. It covers the whole realm from self-bows and self-arrows to glass laminated, radically designed bows shooting carbon arrows. All these designs together make up a segment of archery we label "traditional", and we love it passionately. We are able to set aside our differences concerning the details of our equipment and allow our "traditional" philosophy to bind us together. There are so many eloquent spokesmen for our sport that have expressed the heart of our philosophy so profoundly, that I'm not going to use up space here to do it again, but just encourage you to read the work of authors that express and affirm our philosophy of archery. We have a rich supply of literature that will not only entertain you, but will also stir you up to grab your equipment, head to the open spaces, and fling some arrows. Some of my favorite authors include: the Thompsons, Pope, Massey, Munger, Bear, Stevenson, St. Charles, Asbell, Donnall Thomas, T.J. Conrads, and Monty Browning.

We all agree that what we believe is worthwhile, rewarding, and will "benefit" archers in the future, so we earnestly try to pass on our ways to others,

especially those of the next generation. Traditional Bowhunter magazine has featured many excellent articles touching on the philosophy of our sport. Over the years I've been stirred and challenged by some I've read. Recently in an article by Noelle Naiden, James Swan, speaking of his family's hunting heritage said, "I wanted my son to understand this legacy." I could instantly relate to his words, for, over the years, the finest times my son and I have had together were practicing in the yard, planning our hunts, traveling to and from the woods, and finally the hunts themselves. We relive past hunts over and over in our conversations. In my field notes on 1/31/98 I wrote of my rich memories of seeing Daniel grow not only in stature but also in hunting ability and as an ethical traditionalist. Our times together in archery related activities have filled me with precious memories I'll cherish all my life. I've included



some pictures that reflect a small bit of the joy we had together as I attempted to pass along not only bowhunting skills, but also the heart of my bowhunting philosophy. I'm now on the verge of a

Continued from page 10

new era, that of introducing my two grandsons to the world of the out-of-doors. I hope the stickbow will bring



them as much joy as it has my son and me.

When you feel as passionately about something as traditional archers do about their sport, you want everyone to experience the same feelings you have. We become active ambassadors for the sport. I think TBM has done a marvelous job of uniting very opinionated individuals for the benefit of a very worthwhile cause.

I have a book in my library by a living traditionalist who tells of the early years of the sport and of his attempts to promote it. Because he felt so strongly about it, he sometimes forcefully expressed his opinions. He stated, "I never took to this modern technology. I would get into arguments with different people. I argued with one guy all the time about the compound." On another page, "I've gotten into a lot of arguments with people about the compound. Their attitudes couldn't be changed." Earlier in the book he stated, "I almost got into a fight about that once when a guy showed me his bow... I told him what I thought of it." He certainly has a right to his opinion and even to express it as he feels proper, but the interesting part of his philosophy was stated on a later page. In speaking about "...guys that

wear hunting ethics on their sleeves. Like some of these religious fanatics once they get religion." Isn't that ironic? He sees nothing wrong with "arguing all the time about the compound", and "almost getting into a fight" over a man's bow because he felt so passionately about what he believed. However, if someone wants to share their faith, and have others know about their Lord, it is unacceptable. We have a time with the true priorities of life, for, as much as we love traditional archery—even to the point of fanaticism- in the light of eternity, what difference will it make if you shot a yew self-bow or even a "wheelie"?

I see in our by-laws that to be a member we must be "in full accord with the TBM constitution and by-laws." They have worked for ten years, even recently bringing us through a crisis time in our



club. For the Christian, the Bible is our absolute foundation and the final authority for life. It has stood as "truth" for thousands of years. Its principles are eternal, and, if we really believe (and I mean REALLY believe) what it clearly states, we must share our faith. First of all, we are under commandment of Jesus to share it. He stated in Mark 16:15, "You are to go into all the world and preach the good news to everyone, everywhere." We have no choice in the matter. In Acts 4:20, Peter and John exclaimed, "We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard." Paul even proclaimed, "Necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach

not the gospel." The reason for this desperation is found in verse 16 of the reference in Mark 16, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." The Bible says, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved." In Acts 4:12, "There is salvation in no one else. Under all heaven, there is no other name for men to call upon to save them." Do you see why, although we feel passionately about stickbows and do all we can to promote them, the followers of Jesus feel even more passionately about their faith and must share it. To really believe what the Bible says about Jesus, our sin, future judgment, heaven, hell, and the condition of those who reject God's gift of grace gives Christians a real burden for those people they care about. TBM has nearly three hundred members, and as I sat in the business meeting at Green Ridge and looked at the faces of all the members there, a tremendous burden hit me. I realized there are so many really fine men and women in TBM who aren't Christians yet. It's my prayer and desire that you will come to a faith in Jesus. Not that you will just be religious, but that you will experience the reality of a genuine relationship with the one who died that you might have an abundant and eternal life.

Enjoy your sport of traditional archery. Pursue it with a passion, but keep the total of life in perspective. Your decisions concerning archery equipment will affect your lives for a few dozen years at the most, but your decisions concerning Jesus and His gift of eternal life will affect you forever.

Thank you for allowing me to be your chaplain, to write articles in our newsletter, and to speak at the MATC for these seven years. Happy Anniversary, TBM, and God bless you.



The 10th Annual Mid-Atlantic Traditional Classic



Presented By
The Traditional Bowhunters of Maryland
and The Baltimore Bowmen

Friday May 18th thru Sunday May 20th, 2001

Two Seperate 3-D McKenzie Courses
Friday Nite Coon Shoot
Novelty Shoots
Running Deer Target
Traditional Vendors
Food & Refreshments
Seminars

Free On-Site Primitive Camping

Directions: From the Baltimore Beltway (rt.695) Take Exit 31
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Hotels in the Area:

Towson Days Inn	410-882-0900
Ramada Inn	410-823-8750
Williamsburg inn	410-335-3172



TEN YEARS IN REVIEW

I've always viewed experiences in three phases: anticipation, realization and recollection. Anticipation is the driving force and usually takes quite a bit of involvement for a plan or desire to become a reality; otherwise it dies as a wishful thought. Realization, as measured in actual time, is very fleeting, though can be most gratifying. Recollection is the greatest of the three in my estimation, for it allows the reliving of experiences as often as desired. Scanning back issues of the Traditional Bowhunters Newsletter, beginning with the 1991/92 Winter edition, I was reminded of how pleased I was to be able to share hunts written by Fred Dolinger and Joe Jordan. After bow hunting, mostly alone, for over 40 years I apparently finally found kindred souls. (I had to put re-reading many of the interesting stories on hold, otherwise I'd not



Pictured here is James Gurney with an outstanding sika stag taken while hunting with the author on Oct. 15, 1994 at Blackwater.

Flingin' Arrows

by Rob Davis

get this completed in time.) The first MATC in April 1992, was a great get

together. My wife (a non-shooter) enjoyed walking the natural setting of the course adding her knowledge of the spring flowering vegetation to the camaraderie. It was David Wachter's challenge in the "Rub Line" of the 1992 Fall issue to which I responded. Editor Clay Oliff included my letter in the following issue. When David took over the editor's duties, with the 1993 Summer issue, my "Flingin' Arrows" column commenced. My intent is, and remains, to share experiences of having fun using the bow-n-arrow year 'round. The first stingray hunt I headed took place on July 24, 1993, when 18 of the 20 people who signed up at the MATC showed. I did "blow-up" when individuals wanted to re-shuffle involved plans to suit their individual desires; even so the venture turned out to be quite a success with the boating of 36 rays. (Fall 1993 issue) I was quite disappointed the following year at the MATC when the sign-up sheet was blank. As the result I instigated taking individual members and friends on scheduled hunts. This has continued with many returns for most participants. Some members have conducted their own hunts, which is great, though I would like to share the fun by hearing about the trips. There are others who have yet to try a ray trip and I'd certainly like to encourage a phone call, or be contacted at one of our functions, so that a suitable date can be set. I have other long time friends who have been visiting for many years, so planning ahead is necessary. The sika hunt at Blackwater on October 14, 1994, when

James Gurney harvested an outstanding 6 point stag included my feeble involvement. I've shared other sika hunts, as well as various hunts, with TBMs. Just this year I enjoyed hunts for black bear at Ron Henry's, (Winter 2000 issue); antelope and mule deer hunted in Wyoming with Barry Bolinger and



Ed Wentzler, Muldoon, Bill Hassenmeyer, (foreground) Larry Krumrine and John laws (background) pose with rays taken after the author's expert tutoring in Greenbackville, Va. July 19, 1997

Larry Krumrine where we all filled out (plans for a future issue of TBM News); for monster white tail, in Iowa with Bob Bartoshesky, Bob Brillhart and Bill Hassenmayer where Bob Brillhart collected his biggest ever white tail; and the Green Ridge club hunt with many fellow TBMs. Though no deer was taken back to the Eastern Shore we had a terrific time and feast under Bob Ford's able hand. Thanks Bob, especially for the letter received at Christmas that will be forever treasured!

Flingin' Arrows

by Rob Davis

Continued from page 13

In the outset I also pheasant hunted with the club, but was concerned over so many shooters in a group. I have enjoyed smaller groups hunting pheasants with fellow TBMs over the years. The first nutria hunt that I headed was held on March 22, 1997, and was covered in that Fall issue along with the report of the very successful nutria hunt captained by Bill Shields in April of that year. That's another endeavor you should give a try, for not only is it fun, it's great eating. (stingrays also make for delicious eating.) Usually a few of us have at least one trip after nutria following the closing of deer season. In scanning the back issues of TBM News I was reminded of various pleasant experiences with fellow TBMs. It took much longer than I had stories, sharing the hunts with ing them, I'll just say thanks put your story on paper, shar-would like to tell his story, but a tape telling of our hunt and weather is spent outdoors), I'll it can be published in the TBM tance by the editor, of course. worth the price of membership of Maryland. The various edi-keeping the members in-



From L. to R. San Trice, Dale Price and Rob Davis with the result of TBM's first Nutria Hunt on March 23, 1996

planned, for I re-read many the writers. Rather than list-fellows for taking the time to ing the experience. If anyone not do the writing, just sent me during, rainy weather (good put it on a floppy disc so that Newsletter; bearing accep-The TBM News alone is well to the Traditional Bowhunters tors should be congratulated in formed. Today our publica

tion, under Lou Compton's very capable guidance and ability, is one of the best available that I've seen. Without a doubt the last ten years of my Flingin' Arrows has been the most gratifying of the almost 50 year endeavor. This is due to a very understanding, encouraging wife, and many members of the Traditional Bowhunters of Maryland. Listing individual experiences is impossible for the necessary space and time just isn't available. The sharing of time and resources has been unparalleled in my 75 years of living. My sincere heartfelt thanks guys! This also includes spouses, without which we wouldn't have the fellowship that we so enjoy. The TBM offers many outlets for individual interests and abilities without which the TBM wouldn't be the great organization that it is. This includes the officers and the many volunteers necessary for our banquet, MATC, club shoots and various hunts. At a recent meeting a member stated, "I am a TBM member just to be able to enjoy the club shoots." To each his own. Do become an active member and participate in whatever strikes your fancy and you'll enjoy the camaraderie even more. —>

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What 's happening iN mARYLAND



by Lou Compton

It's been a while since I've written one of these columns. Frankly the need really hasn't been there since the State Legislators were not in session for the last several months. The legislators went into session in January and as usual they've come up with some rather interesting proposed legislation.. There's no bowhunting specific legislation pending but there are a few pieces important to hunters and sportsmen and sportswoman in general. Topping that list would have to be HB 1125 sponsored by Delegates Oaks, Marriott, V. Jones, Kirk, McIntosh, and Paige. This dandy little sleeper proposes to impose a tax of either \$.50 or \$5.00 on, get this, **each round** of ammunition capable of being fired in a handgun. If the particular round is a hollow-point projectile then the tax would be the \$5.00 otherwise the \$.50 figure would apply. This could drive the cost of .22 caliber hollow-point ammunition to over \$250.00 for a box of 50!!! This is one piece of legislation that bears watching. Be sure to call or write your elected officials and let them know how you feel on the subject.

Close behind, in terms of impacting outdoor enthusiasts is SB 453 sponsored by Senator Sfikas which seeks to make leghold traps illegal. There's definitely some high emotions running on both sides of this issue. The wording, in this writer's opinion is *S C A R R Y*! It evens bans the use of leghold traps for controlling nutria.

Some other pieces of pending legislation follow with their sponsors and a brief synopsis. Please read them over and if you've got an opinion on them, one way or the other, exercise your right to be a part of the law making process by calling your elected officials and letting them know how you feel. For a complete list of your State Delegates and your State Senators visit the Maryland General Assembly Web Site at <http://mlis.state.md.us/>.

HB1383 Sponsored by Chairman, Rules and Executive Nominations Committee (Departmental - Natural Resources)

Synopsis: Creating a furbearer user's license; requiring persons to have the license when hunting or chasing fur-bearing mammals, including nutria and fox; setting the license fee, term, and qualifications; setting educational requirements for licensees; providing for exceptions to the licensing requirements; creating a fund to receive license fees; specifying the uses of the fund; providing for an advisory committee; prescribing penalties for violation; etc.

HB 1000 Sponsored by Delegates Guns and Weir

Synopsis: Providing an exception to bag limits established by the Department of Natural Resources for specified federal facilities; requiring the Department to authorize specified federal facilities to establish their deer hunting seasons and bag limits; etc.

HB 556 Sponsored by Delegates Shriver, Bronrott, Grosfeld, and Mandel

Synopsis: Authorizing the Child Support Enforcement Administration to request specified licensing authorities to suspend or deny specified recreational licenses of individuals who hold those licenses who are in arrears more than 120 days with respect to child support payments; requiring the licensing authorities to suspend or deny the recreational licenses under specified circumstances; providing for specified administrative procedures and due process protections applicable to the suspension or denial of the licenses; etc.



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Turkey Misses Don't Count



Robert Savannah, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

by E. Donnell Thomas Jr.

Western turkey hunting often requires bowhunters to cover lots of ground. When I heard the first gobble on the ridge above me, I paused long enough to listen for a second call in order to determine the birds' direction of travel. As soon as I confirmed that they were moving away up the ridge, I set off to get in front of them, using terrain contour for cover. When I describe this kind of maneuver to my turkey hunting friends down south, they usually shake their heads in dismay. But here in Montana, you do what you have to do to get ahead of the birds, even if that means covering ground as if you were trying to outflank a bugling bull elk.

The hill hadn't grown any less steep over the course of the long winter, and by the time I reached the ridgeline I felt sweat pouring down my back in spite of the cool April breeze. According to my calculations, the birds should have been a quarter mile below me, which just goes to show that turkeys can walk uphill faster than I can run. For as soon as I poked my head over the last rim of weathered shale, to my surprise and dismay I saw a gobbler in full strut barely fifteen yards away.

Ordinarily, this kind of abrupt encounter spells an end to the turkey hunt, at least for those hunters crazy enough to try to kill turkeys with bows. But the bird stood facing straight

away from me, with his vision eclipsed by his own tail. Scarcely able to believe this stroke of good fortune, I hastily fumbled an arrow onto the string, drew... and sent the broadhead whistling harmlessly over the bird's back as he pivoted broadside. That turned out to be the only shot I took at a turkey that spring.

Why did I miss? Saying that I shot too high is a bit like the NTSB's occasional conclusion that the cause of an airplane crash is "uncontrolled impact with the ground" As my teenage daughter would say: "Like, DUH!" I shot too high because I didn't pick a spot. I didn't pick a spot (even after all these years of bowhunting during which I was supposed to learn better) because I couldn't believe a mature tom turkey was going to let me have a controlled shot at close range. But that's turkey hunting with the bow... and it's why turkey misses, in my humble opinion, don't count as such.

I don't think I've ever released a broadhead at a big game animal without believing I was going to kill it. (Not always the case as it turns out, but no need to go into that here.) And no wonder: even given the inherent limitations of the bow and arrow, disciplined big game hunters should be able to pick their shots in a state of near total control. They *shouldn't* miss.

Turkeys are different.

Because of their full-circle vision and incredible pattern recognizing ability, turkeys can see you just about anytime you can see them, and it seldom takes them more than a few seconds to figure out they're in the Red Zone. Unless you're hunting from a fully enclosed blind (which I seldom do for a variety of reasons), perfectly controlled shots are the exception. All seasoned big game hunters have had the experience of passing up a twenty-yard shot at a deer or elk because it looks as if the animal might wind up five yards closer. Turkeys seldom allow such luxury. The first shot opportunity you get at a tom is probably going to be the best, and the trouble is that after a few seasons most of us know it.

I don't want any misunderstanding. I am not advocating taking irresponsible shots at turkeys. If they are running or beyond your comfortable range, all you can do is hope for something better, no matter how unlikely. But if you have a reasonable shot at a stationary bird, it probably isn't going to get any better, so you'd better time your draw quickly.

Of course, those who have hunted turkey with the bow soon learn just how much can happen during the course of that drawing motion. Usually, that big struffing pile of feathers will have turned into a streaking blur

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by the time you reach your anchor point. And even when it doesn't, I often find myself so astounded that I rush my shot without taking time to focus on a spot instead of the whole bird. And we all know what that means.

Two weeks ago, I set out after work for a tree stand at the bottom of the hill below my house. It was mid-October and the whitetails were still in the doldrums. I really didn't expect to see a decent buck, but I thought I might fill a doe tag. Furthermore, I'd seen a flock of turkeys traversing the edge of the alfalfa field right in front of the stand several nights in a row. My parents were due to arrive for their annual fall pheasant hunt, and the thought of serving a freshly bow-killed fall turkey for our fist meal together frankly excited me more than the deer.

After thirty minutes of gentle relaxation in one of my favorite ponderosa pines, I caught a glimpse of movement near the edge of the field. Three young toms were working their way down the fence line on a route that would bring them close, although prob-

ably not close enough. Suddenly, I remembered that I still had an elk diaphragm in my shirt pocket, a leftover from the September bugle season. When the birds disappeared briefly in a terrain fold, I fumbled the call into my mouth and settled back to await developments.

When they reappeared, the birds were still walking along the far side of the fence. As they closed within thirty yards, I'll admit that I thought about the shot but it wasn't the right thing to do and I knew it. While turkeys certainly do look up (that's where hawks and eagles come from), I've occasionally fooled them from tree stands and I decided to see if a combination of luck and subtle calling would improve my lie.

When I offered two soft clucks, the birds veered in my direction and I suddenly realized that they were going to pass well within bow range. But I still had to draw my bow undetected. Fortunately, a thick pine eclipsed their approach path perfectly, and when they disappeared behind its outline I came

to full draw. The lead bird should have popped out eight yards away, giving me as easy a shot at a fall turkey as I can remember.

Should have are not popular words in the turkey hunter's vocabulary. When the first tom appeared, he was headed directly under my tree, and I do mean directly. Since I was already at full draw, there wasn't much to do but make the best of the situation. As the bird waddled underneath me, I leaned over, released... and hit nothing but tail feathers.

Back at the house, the look on my face must have told the story. "You didn't miss, did you?" Lori asked as I slumped into the nearest chair.

"Not really," I replied

"*Not really?*" she asked.

"It's pretty much a yes or no question. Either you missed or you didn't."

"It was a turkey," I sighed. Fortunately, I'm married to a woman who understands these things.

Continued from page 15

HB 728 sponsored by Delegates Guns, Weir, and D'Amato

Synopsis: Requiring the Department of Natural Resources to establish a program to control the population of mute swans; requiring the Department to include the managed harvest of adult mute swans in this program; requiring the Department to solicit licensed hunters to participate in the managed harvest of adult mute swans; etc.

SB 560 sponsored by Senators Colburn, Baker, Stoltzfus, and Middleton

Synopsis: Requiring the Department of Natural Resources to adopt an open season for hunting Canada geese in conformance with federal regulations; and requiring the Department to adopt a bag limit for hunting Canada geese in accordance with federal regulations, up to a bag limit of two birds.

The above information is in no way intended to present The Traditional Bowhunters of Maryland as a politically active entity. This column is meant only to inform the readers of this newsletter and encourage them to individually become a part of the law making process as they see fit.

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Robert Savannah, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Trophy Management In a Nutshell

What are the basic steps in managing a piece of private habitat for trophy deer? I don't profess to be a biologist, but these are some of the steps we use. In a state like Maryland that enjoys lots of limited access private property as well as fairly mild winters, management practices are a natural.

First of all, you have to start with a decent sized piece of habitat. Obviously, the more ground under control, the better off you are from day one. The key words in the last sentence are "under control." Managed parcels almost have to be limited access. They also must minimize gun pressure. On smaller parcels, a lot depends on surrounding property involvement, as bucks will often end up wandering and may be taken by your neighbors.

The first step is to determine approximately how many total deer you have to work with. Take an off-season census, trying to make a visually accurate head count. Don't go by tracks. Count deer as best as you can.

The second step is to determine carrying capacity of the habitat. This carrying capacity can be defined as the maximum number of deer the property can carry nutritionally year round. The key words are "year round", paying close attention to ratio of habitat with available food sources.

The third step is to de-

termine sex ratio. Most of the time this sex ratio is unbalanced, with far too many female deer. Getting the sex ratio closer usually calls for harvesting a considerable number of mature doe deer and immature doe fawns. Meat hunters can help here, as long as they understand your goals. Care must be taken not to remove button buck fawns. Some property necessitates shooting *no* bucks whatsoever for two or three years to allow immature bucks to gain some age.

After several years of controlled doe harvest, ratios will be in much better balance and selective buck harvesting can begin. Now is when many people make their first critical mistake. With a seemingly good proportion of decent sized bucks, its easy to get carried away. Be very careful to select a quota of bucks without overharvesting an age structure. Let me give you an example. Using round figures, let's say we have one hundred deer on a piece of property. After several seasons, the sex ratio has been carefully closed so that there are approximately thirty antlered bucks in that hundred deer total. Of the thirty bucks, let's say about eighteen are young, immature bucks. An additional eight are middle-aged bucks. Four of the bucks are mature with antler and body growth at maximum potential. It's real easy for too many effective deer hunters to cut loose on all

four of those bucks. In doing so, you wipe out an entire generation of the deer herd. *Never take more than fifty percent of an age structure.* Leave an overlap in the age structure. In a year or two, when the eight middle-aged bucks reach maturity, we can then slowly increase our quota of mature bucks, always keeping in mind we want to leave 50% of an age bracket.

Don't shoot spikes as genetically inferior deer. Year and a half old spikes are often genetically okay deer that are simply under nourished due to over population. Do not cull spikehorns until you're positive there is no nutritional deficiency on your management unit.

Any deer management plan is a 365 day per year responsibility. In most northern regions, it must incorporate a winter feed program, at least January through April when the deer herd is under most stress. Doe deer carrying unborn fawns and buck deer active during the previous rut have burnt up or depleted fat deposits.

Many people oppose winter-feeding for good reason. It can often do more harm than good. The trick here is to help deer along but *not* carry them through the winter. Winter feeding programs require carbohydrate foods for maximum strength as well as protein. Artificial feeding can include

The Traditional Bowhunters of Maryland News

corn, grain, alfalfa and/or clover hay, mineral supplements, etc. Be sure to cut plenty of fresh browse to supplement artificial feed programs. Read that last sentence twice. If your area has a browse line on trees, you have too many deer.

Don't start your winter feed program too late nor quit too early. Just because snow melts doesn't mean the stress period is over. Feed in dense cover if possible. Don't make deer burn energy by having to come to you. Don't over feed fawns. Fawns often gorge themselves. They could bloat and die from too much quality food.

Managing deer brings many unforeseen problems. Your area needs to be posted and patrolled, especially once you have large racked bucks. Poachers and trespassers will attempt to capitalize on your hard work. If you catch a thief, by all means prosecute them. A tongue lashing usually doesn't get it. Let the maggots know you're serious in your endeavor. Eventually, word will get around that trespassing is not worth the risk.

In northern climates, I'm

convinced deer can foresee the severity of a harsh winter. Intense rutting activity usually, but not always, precedes a mild winter. A "trickle rut" often forecasts a severe winter. It's mother nature's way of telling deer to conserve energy. Observation will also note that ant hills will be built higher preceding harsh winters.

Managed deer herds provide lots of benefits. First and most obviously, you will have lots more large antlered, healthy deer to hunt. Other by-products include tastier venison. Buck movement will be later in the morning and earlier in the evening, due to competition between bucks. Doe deer will choose healthy sires that carry on genes of the best bucks. Scrape hunting, rattling, calling, rubline hunting and other tried and true techniques will prove themselves over and above that in mismanaged areas.

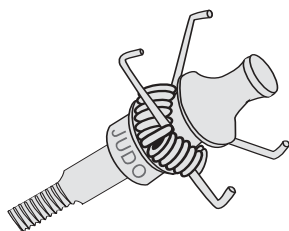
Everyone involved, including the landowner, has to agree by the rules and goals of your long-range plan. Each hunter has to follow a code

of ethics and unwritten laws pertaining to your common goals. If any member of your group fails to follow these set standards, they should be set straight, fined or expelled from your project.

Always try to provide deer with a sanctuary somewhere within your hunting area. Set aside ten percent of your area as a preserve to provide a place for pressured deer to retreat. Without this security area, some deer may move off your area and again defeat your purposes by getting tagged on surrounding property by neighbors. Any security sanctuary should be totally out of bounds unless an emergency situation arises.

Trophy antlers and selective hunting is not for everyone. Neither is selective fishing for that matter. Some states will continue to gear their deer hunting toward quantity rather than quality. That's not your fault and it certainly isn't mine either. But, nonetheless, intelligent management practices can provide big racks, lots of action and good venison not only for yourself, but for future generations as well.

Gene, along with his brother, Barry has developed a company that sells broadheads, videos, books, audio tapes and other assorted hunting gear. He also is offering memberships in some pretty impressive leases in several states. For more information check out 2XL Productions at www.2xlproductions.com/index.html



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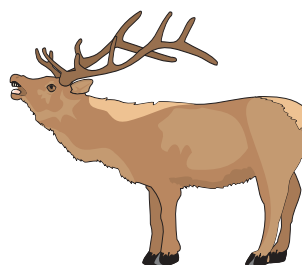
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So Where Did It All Begin? The Story of T.B.M.'s Origin

by Bill Hassenmeyer

As one of the founding members of TBM, I will try to put in writing how the TBM got started and some of our early history. I came to MD in November of '88 and found the "Bow Shack" in Salisbury. For lack of anything else to do, I hung around there almost every evening. I met quite a few traditional bowhunters there and befriended most of them. As they say, "birds of a feather flock together". In time I started hunting with many of these friends. A group of us hunted Assateague for sika deer almost every Saturday and holidays after the gun season. It included Otts Joseph, Bobbie Rayne, his son, Andy, Mike Daisey and his son. Occasionally Rob Davis and his son, Rob III, John Laws, Bud Malone, Bob Bartoshesky and James Gurney; all traditionalists. Occasionally a hi-tech or two were welcomed. We had a great time! It got so regular we each took turns supplying lunch. In late January of '91 one Saturday it was my turn to supply lunch. I had hunted caribou in August that summer and had brought a large amount of burger for lunch. On that morning we went to one of our hot spots and left the trucks before light, splitting up as usual for the morning hunt. When I came out from my morning hunt Otts asked me who the P.B.S.'ers were that he had met, all hunt-

ing with recurves. I had not seen anyone in the area I had hunted so didn't know. In a short time some of them came out, along with the rest of our crew. They were from the Waldorf area; Lenny Brown, Ralph Griening, Tony Malpasso and Bob Palel. We looked at each others equipment and had a good gabfest. It was lunch time and they were going to go off the island for lunch so we invited them to go to lunch with us. There was a picnic table down the island a mile or two that we had planned to eat at, so off we went. I remember riding in back of a small pickup truck and talking about bear hunting with Bob and Tony. Lunch was a great success. We all shot each other's bows. Lenny spoke up and said he thought it was time for a traditional organization in MD. We were having a great time of fellowship and all agreed. Lenny and Ralph agreed to look into it.

I was called back to N.Y. to help my mother out and spent six weeks away from MD. At the first P.B.S. off-year, in early April, I caught up with Lenny and he filled me in about the progress. I also met a few others from MD there. About a week later Lenny called me and said the first informal get together would be May 5th at the St. Charles Sportsmen club. He mentioned that the MD. Bowhunter's Society Banquet was held the night before and invited me and Otts to attend and stay at his home so we could put our input in at the meeting. I called Otts and he liked

the idea, so we went. I met a few more traditionalists there but we were sure outnumbered at the banquet by hi-tech shooters.

On Sunday morning Lenny's wife, Beth fixed us a great breakfast and off to the club we went to shoot. She followed later. After shooting we met in the club house. The provisional by-laws were read and different ideas discussed. There were 14 in attendance; Lenny Brown, Ralph Griening, Tony Melipasso, Pete Bowwman, Beth Brown, Debbie Chapman, Fred Dolinger, Bill Fowlkes, Tom Parsons, John Quinn, Pete Ropshaw, Ronny Williams, Otts Joseph and myself. It was suggested we officially start up right away; all agreed. Lenny Brown was appointed acting president. He appointed Ralph to treasurer and membership director until we could have our first meeting and shoot August 3, 1991 at St. Charles Sportsmen Club. At the meeting the official election saw Lenny elected as president and Ralph treasurer-membership director. I was elected vice president-secretary. Tom Parsons even presented a design for our patch. We had a total of 32 shooters at the shoot. That was 19 more members than what we started with on May 5th, just a short 3 months earlier. Our total membership now stood at 34. What a start for a group who thought we would never have more than 50 members. Of course, that growth has continued and today's TBM membership roster stands at approximately 300.

Continued from page 20

History of "Firsts"

First News Letter Summer of '91. Clay Oliff, Editor.

First Sika Hunt scheduled Jan. '92 - canceled due to island closed from storm damage.

Pheasant Hunt Feb. 23, '91 at Native Shore. Dave Wachter chairman, 13 hunters.

First Sika Hunt, Jan 13, '93 - over 40 hunters.

First banquet - March 21, '92 at Ebtide Restaurant on Kent Island. Ronny Williams chairman, Stacey Grosscup speaker.

First Mid-Atlantic - April 24-26 '92 - 160 in attendance - dealers set-up in front of club house. Tom Cole and Stacey Grosscup speakers.

First Ray Hunt - July 11, '92 - Rob Davis huntmaster

Topped 100 members by Summer '92, actually 133 with 100% renewal in Jan. '93.

First whitetail hunt Oct. 5-7. Hurricane washed it out. Only 3 attended but we had fun. Otis Seese huntmaster.

First nutria hunt March 23, '96 - Bestpitch - Rob Davis huntmaster.

In closing I would like to say that the more active one is in this, or any other organization, the more one will get from it. I have made many friends, "real friends", hunted many places with some of them. I remember saying to Bob Brillhart as we were dragging his buck out sweating and grunting, "it's so much fun, I certainly would not work this hard."

Bill Hassenmayer

Continued from page 17

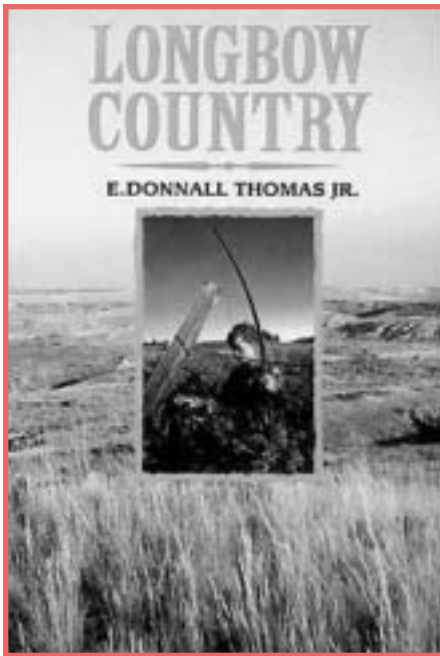
Maryland Bowhunters Society Update

Many TBM members have been asking the same question for some time now; "What's going on with the Maryland Bowhunters Society?" Well, I'm happy to report that a lot has been going on with that organization since last December. A group of concerned bowhunters from across the State has banded together and has stepped in to fill vacant officers positions. They also exercised the provisions of that club's bylaws and ousted the sitting president at a general membership meeting on Dec. 17, 2000. Those officers have begun the rebuilding process and in less than three short months organized club records, re-established the "800" phone number, published two newsletters, sponsored a booth at a Salisbury, MD outdoor expo, and even organized (from scratch mind you) a banquet. It should be noted that the MBS Banquet, much like TBM's, is their main fund raising event of the year and at the time of takeover there were NO reservations made, NO guest speaker, NO menu and NO door prizes. This dedicated group has made sure that MBS will have a banquet, and a pretty substantial one at that. It will be held on March 31, 2001 and will feature Gene Wensel as the guest speaker. There will be plenty of door prizes and the usual spot at Snyder's Willow Grove Restaurant was even secured.

As TBM'rs you can be especially proud. You see, four of those five officers have come right from TBM's ranks. The one exception would be Tom Rooney who is a long time MBS member. Stepping up to the plate in the following positions were; Tom Rooney as President, Phil Harris as Vice President, his wife, Cindy Harris as Membership Director, Monty Cornwell as Treasurer and yours truly, Lou Compton as Executive Secretary. There has been plenty of help from other TBM members in getting things going again with MBS. Mike Mongelli and Bill Wyland have been instrumental in helping Phil get the banquet up and running. There would be no MBS right now if it hadn't been for TBM. The spirit of camaraderie and dedication to preserving bowhunting here in Maryland was instilled in each of the new MBS officers as a direct result of the positive experiences each of them had as TBM members. You all helped instill that pride and dedication in them (us) and for that I want to thank YOU.

Please take the time to investigate the "new" MBS. Sign up for membership and start attending some meetings. Do for MBS what you've done for TBM. The present officers will not repeat the mistakes made by former MBS officers. The organization belongs to all the members and lines of communication have already been opened up. The new officers are dedicated to returning the club to its members and making it accessible to all members regardless what part of the State your from. Please put us to the test.

On a final note, please don't interpret my, or the other TBM members listed above, willingness to help MBS out in this time of restructuring as a signal that my/our interest and dedication to TBM has waned. I assure you nothing could be further from the truth.



"Longbow Country"

by E. Donnell

Thomas Jr.

A Book Review

by Ron Herman

Having broken bread with TBM a couple of years ago at our 1999 banquet, Don Thomas is no longer an untouchable outdoor writer found between the pages of "Bowhunting," "Traditional Bowhunting Magazine," and the "Professional Bowhunter Society" newsletters. He now is a face with a story to tell. He is now a hunter with a conscious with a story to tell. He is now one of us. It is only fitting that this special Anniversary Edition of our newsletter carry a review of one of his recent literary works.

Mr. Thomas' first collection of stories were a regional herd of hunting tales found throughout the vast wilderness of Alaska. He lived Alaska and all its beauty, which is much more than many writers do that visit for a multi-thousand dollar hunt, a record book animal, and some promo shots for one of his equipment manufacturers. Such is not the case here where the stories tend to reflect the personal goals of hunting afield rather than the competitive hint found in other published writings.

Longbow Country is not tied down by state, country, or even game animal pursued. This book meanders through hunts again in Alaska but also Montana, Arizona, Hawaii, and even Africa. Something that is becoming standard for Mr. Thomas' writing that seems to be lacking in most manuscripts

save a few is the lack of "book" animal stories. He writes of the misses, the hits, the long trails, the unrecovered animal, and the hunts with only the satisfaction of a noble chase... more closely related to a game of chess where checkmate is more of a goal than an absolute.

The story titles could be out of a Steinbeck novel or a documentary on wildlife on Sunday evening...many alluding to other dealings besides killing an animal with stick and string. A story named "The Long Road Home" could be confused with any LIFETIME Channel drama while "Sticks and Strings and Black Limousines" brings up many images but nothing relating to bowhunting massive black bear. When reading these stories, much more than in his previous work, I tend to notice the philosophical and spiritual context to his hunting and love affair with the outdoors. His views on hunting have universal appeal and leave me thinking... Right at the beginning he sets the tone for the remainder of the collection when stating, "*I kill when I hunt and I do not apologize for that, although I reserve the right to think about its implications. I also hunt without killing—whether by accident or design—and I do not apologize for that either. There is room in longbow country for a spectrum of tastes and attitudes, and that is as it should be.*"

Within its pages, this mantra is repeated with each story as it unfolds. You do not automatically expect a successful kill with the closing sentence but you do find closure in the quality of the hunt and the nobleness of the game pursued. Take for example this excerpt describing his love for elk hunting by saying, "*If circumstances were suddenly to deprive me of my sense of hearing, I can imagine a painful list of sounds whose loss might move me to tears: the cry of geese winging their way south ahead of an Arctic cold front; the plaintive wail of a blues guitar; the uninhibited enthusiasm of my children's laughter. These are all sounds capable of evoking an emotional bouquet of responses, like an epileptic aura loose inside the brain. This is music without notes, and I would miss none of it more than the sound of bugling elk.*" How is that for illustration and comparison? Many people make parallel conclusions that elk hunting and turkey hunting have nearly identical strategies and the level of excitement is without equal. I have never hunted elk but have killed a few turkey with a shotgun and one with a recurve...and the heart pounding, breath robbing excitement as the old tom struts and purrs within 10 yards is enough memory to last a life time. Then you are expected to gather enough composure for a steady bow arm, a clean re-

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lease, and a true flying arrow. Quite a tall order for a mere mortal...huh? But as Mr. Thomas adds, this experience "...has made me a better human as well as a better hunter!"

This book, much more than his other, seems to cross over beyond just "HUNTING BOOKS" into something that could be found on the shelf next to a collection containing Aldo Leuopold, Audubon, Jay Massey, and the notes of Lewis and Clark. The reader receives a healthy dose of ethics, emotion, and insight into the world of bowhunting. The continuous underlying message remains the same. *"When you release an arrow at an animal however; the rules of engagement change. You assume an obligation whenever you do so: to recover the animal or to prove to reasonable satisfaction that it is not recoverable. This obligation may incur debts measured in miles, hours, or days. If you are not willing to accept this responsibility, don't shoot."* This is something passed from wise hunters to young hunters but seldom, if ever, printed for the world to absorb. This is the reason that his last book, **Longbows of the Far North**, received so many compliments from people that do not hunt with the bow, and even from non-hunters. His expressed goal in that book was to produce good outdoor writing that appealed to people outside of the bowhunting/hunting community. I believe he is consistently hitting his mark with even this published account of a man engaged in the pursuit of the hunt...where the kill is anticlimactic. These collections of stories run the gamut of a true hunter's life. Stories of lung squeezing climbs in pursuit of mountain lions, or freezing in the blowing wind and rain of the tundra, and even the sweltering and humid pursuit of feral hogs in Hawaii only support his belief that hunting is more than blood on an arrow and a heavy pack frame on the hike to camp. One story that completely caught me by surprise because of its honesty and emotion was that of one of his first lion hunting dogs named Dan. Dan had a fault though and his uncontrollable aggressiveness towards his wife, friends, and even himself ...led him to the conclusion no hunter or dog lover ever expects. Mr. Thomas relates the life and death of his hunting companion and chooses not to give us the "Disney Ending" many expect in today's storyline. Instead we get the gut wrenching decision he was forced to make and the final outcome as he felt "...the final shudder in the snow, and hear the dull report disappear forever in the mountain wind."

This book seems to dig a bit deeper in topics that run through the undercurrents of most hunting situations but usually are reserved for moments of inner contemplation while alone on stand or placing one foot before the other during a long journey home. If your tastes in outdoor writing are fueled by hunting techniques, action, and successful hunts then this book will seem trivial and boring. If your library holds pure hunting drama mixed with the classics such as "A Sand County Almanac," "The Witchery of Archery," and "Bowhunting Alaska's Rivers" then this book will round out your collection nicely. I found myself having to read some portions twice. Casual reading allows too much of the underlying story to be superficially covered and an intense study of his writing allows the full impact of the story to hit home and evoke your own thoughts on the subject. For my own personal taste in outdoor writing, this book is an *8-Point* with minor deductions due to it requiring more than just casual attention to grasp many of the writers ideas. For the general traditional bowhunting clan I give the book a very respectable 6-Point rating with heavy mass and an enormous spread. A competent and worthwhile reading adventure but may only be personally satisfying for a smaller percentage of our number. Though this book has been shelved so that Glenn St. Charles new book may be opened, it is worthy of a second reading and I believe that like a good wine...it will be more appreciated as time passes and its contents have been savored.

Keep em Sharp,

Ron Herman
rchermanjr@hotmail.com



Schedule of Events

The 2001 TBM Nutria Shoot

April 7, 2001

Time once again for the Annual TBM Nutria Hunt. This year's affair will kick off with lunch at Kay's Country Kitchen on US 50 just east of Woods Road in Cambridge. We will meet there at 11:00 am and after eating proceed to Shorter's Wharf to load up into boats and take off in pursuit of the elusive nutria. We hope to be underway no later than 1:30 pm. For more information and/or to sign up please call Tony Sanders at (Home): 301-736-4288 (Work): 301-227-5112 or 227-4386. Tony can also be reached by E-mail at sandersje@nswccd.navy.mil

Spring TBM Meeting and Shoot

April 21, 2001

TBM's 1/4'ly meeting and shoot for the Spring season will be held this date at Tuckahoe State Park. Meeting gets underway at noon. Range opens at 9:00 a.m. Directions: take US 50 to Rt. 404 Eastbound to Rt. 480 where you'll turn left. Follow this to Eveland Rd. and turn left again. Stay on Eveland until it ends at Crouse Mill Rd. and turn left once more. Follow signs to Tuckahoe Bowmen. Range will be on your left.

Isaac Walton League, Bethesda/Chevy Chase Chapter Shoot

May 5, 2001

The Bethesda-Chevy Chase Ikes will be holding a traditional shoot at thier facility in Poolesville, MD. There will be free primitive camping available but reservations are required. This is a competitive (\$10) or fun (\$8) shoot depending on your choice. Trophies will be rewarded to competitive shooters. For further information call Thoran Menser at 301-972-8353 or visit their web site at www.bcciwla.org.

10th Anual Mid-Atlantic Traditional Classic

May 18-20, 2001

TBM, in conjunction with The Baltimore Bowmen will once again hold this very popular event. Plenty of 3-D targets set in realistic hunting situations. Food concessions, traditional archery vendors, novelty shoots and much more. Free primitive camping avaiable. For full details refer to the ad on pg. 12 of this issue.

Strictly Sticks Traditional Rendezvous

June 9 & 10, 2001

The East Huntington Sportsman's Club in Scottsdale, PA is sponsoring this weekend traditional only shoot. Primitive camping on site, 40+ targets to shoot, novelty shoots and traditional vendors to browse and buy from. For more information call Bob Hildebrand at (724)-446-9384 or e-mail: bows4u1544@aol.com .

TBM Summer Shoot and Meeting

July 28, 2001

TBM's quarterly shoot and meeting will be held at The Eutaw Forest Archers in Waldorf, MD. Range will open at 9:00 am and the meeting will get underway promptly at noon. Take Rt. 301 south into Waldorf. Turn right onto Rt. 228 and travel approximately 6.4 miles. Turn left onto Rt. 229 West. Continue on Rt. 229 for about 3.3 miles and then turn right onto Elsa Ave. Go approx. .6 miles to the club on your right.

Next Deadline for Submissions is May 31, 2001